

CROATIAN POPULAR SERMONS OF THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY

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Literary and culturo-anthropological research of Croatian popular sermons of the 18th and 19th century has been carried out along two lines: in relation to everyday life, and in relation to the reaction of those to whom the sermons were delivered. In the literary sense, the taste of a broad auditorium, near to the tradition of oral literature, together with worldview, was built up by way of the written and the spoken word, on the basis particularly of 18th century sermons, on numerous examples, a literary folk sermon type, of Western European literary tradition. Research of sermons from the 18th century, with a selection of the sermons themselves, was published in the book *Fear of God* (Zečević 1993), while the study on Croatian folk sermons of the 19th century, which monitors the changes which occurred in relation to the 18th century, was published in the journal *Književna smotra* (Zečević 1994:213 — —238).

My intention in research of 18th and 19th century Croatian popular sermons was to present the outlines of the contemporary on the basis of the multitude of texts, which means personal literary and culturo- -anthropological reading i.e. analysis of popular sermons, a literary type of utilitarian literature oriented towards concern for Humankind's salvation. The sermon popularisation of concern for salvation primarily developed fear of punishment, rather than fruitful fear from not being saved, particularly in the temperamental sermons of the 18th, but also of the 19th century.

The sermons offer advice for living a righteous Christian life by which man saves himself in this world for life ever after; therefore, what is in question is practical instruction and advice; the sermons are utilitarian in the same sense, for example, as the *listari*, advice on writing letters which provide models for letter covering all life situation and the appropriate manner of communication between people. The sermons also provide patterns for man's moral behaviour, which will be discussed in this study. The objective of correct moral behaviour - the benefit - is: salvation for the eternal life.

The sermons act as intermediaries in establishing communication between God and man; they serve man with advice and admonitions on how to live and address the supreme addressee - God - in the hope of help and salvation.

My intention was not to research the sermons, for instance, of only one author or preacher, but the *phenomenon of prose intended for oral and written communication*. When authorship is in question, we encounter the understanding of this concept characteristic to popular literary creation, the concept of authorship somewhere between collective, oral literature and the modern concept of individualised authorship of art literature. Authors, preachers, motivated by concern for Humankind's good in this world and the next, usually mentioned in the forewords to their books how they used that which they considered to be the best among the work of those who went before them and then developed, rewrote and adapted it for their listeners and readers.

In this sense, a characteristic example is Ivan Mulih (18th century) who defends himself in advance from possible malicious accusations and writes that he considers everything he uses, tradition, to be collective property, or, in other words, a paternal heritage:

"If you should regard me as guilty of thievery, I shall answer with wise Theodore: let no-one consider us thieves, if they should find something in these sermons already said by the holy Fathers. For we do believe that we too in interpretation accepted from them. *This is not thievery, but a paternal heritage*, although we added to that which we took from them, which is ours: *stones and timber for building the house was taken from others, but building the house was my work*" (Mulih 1782:VII).

The way of writing and issue of the sermons did not change in the 19th century, which draws attention to the specificity of utilitarian popular literary prose. Working my way through the host of sermon texts, the proximity of the preacher's address to the auditorium was particularly evident:

1. In an uninterrupted dialogue and polemics with contemporaries whose manner of life is constantly shown in a form differing from the desirable, Christian way of life. The sermons uncover the permanent presence of doubt and unbelief in the community being addressed; it is shown that the nature of the process of evangelisation lies in the very process of persuasion, permanently overcoming the opposition of those who resist, doubt and challenge Christian teachings.
2. As part of their dialogue and polemic communication with their auditorium, the sermons register man's constant carnival need to disrupt what is holy; it can be said that the sermons are created and define the character of their speech between two magnetic poles: the sacred and the profane.

Research of the popular sermons of the 18th and 19th century showed the dynamic and mutually conditioned relation between the sacred and the profane. Reissues of sermons from the 18th during the 19th century demonstrate the process of elimination of the profane through "cleansing" of

the many examples found in abundance in the original 18th century sermons. During the nineteenth century, there is an absence of examples as a "proving" means of persuasion, particularly in addressing the auditorium, in dialogues with those who doubt or are unbelievers; while in the 18th century, the example is mentioned in the function of proof i.e. literary proof, in the function of popular literary threats and punishment intended for those who question the words of the preacher.

In the literary-instructional, but also in the theological sense, the preacher is not a neutral transmitter of the Word but, primarily, an interpreter of Truth i.e. Christian teaching. Analysis of 18th century sermons showed literary and social features of the period in which they came about, and by the same token, measured the interval which separates them from the closing decades of the 20th century when sex is also taken into account in sermons as part of Humankind's reality and as God's gift. Tolerance seeks to teach, rather than to threaten and intimidate, as was done for centuries (see Duda 1990:51).

In contemporary sermons one no longer encounters disgust with the human body and damnation of pleasures of the flesh, threats of impending decay and worms:

"Wait, burning after a few days in hell, the soul will burn, and the body below the ground will decompose in worms and stench (...) And the same God... will only remember you to more strongly point his almighty right hand above you, to stoke up the flames which burn you and to say in his righteous wrath: 'You are not mine! I know you not!'"
(Zuzorić 1793:11, col. 1–2).

Instead of fulmination, the approach is benign with admonitions for Christian love filled with respect for the body and soul of the other person. Teaching emphasises the indivisibility of body and soul, which was not the case in popular preaching in prior periods. It should be borne in mind that the contemporary preacher too faithfully adheres to the Words, just as his predecessors, such as Bernard Zuzorić (1683–1762) did; the difference lies in the interpretation of the Word in the spirit of the times and environments in which the preacher is active.

Sermons by 18th century Croatian authors which were intended for a broad stratum of believers confirm that it was popularisation of Christian teaching which put into effect and established the spiritual membership of the widest strata of the Croatian common folk and Croatian popular literature in the Western European cultural and literary circle. The Western European spiritual horizon infers the preaching to and teaching of all social classes and, of course, the illiterate for whom listening to sermons was the sole source of theological and instructional literary-religious information, based on primary oral literary tradition.

Both the Croatian popular sermons of the 18th century and the Western European Christian circle from the 14th to the 18th century, as was shown by Jean Delumeau in his studies, were a common sphere for dissemination and interpretation of the Gospels by arousing and maintaining newly-created or encountered fear; elementary fear of death and the created fear of Hell and infernal torture, insistence on a feeling of guilt and awareness of deserved and inevitable punishment. The sermons meant the spreading of fear primarily by oral means, and then by reading. It was from the oral approach to the auditorium that the dialogue and, in some cases, polemic character of the sermons derived. Through a feeling of guilt, consciousness of sin, of the fall, of deserved punishment, Humankind was included in both the religious and literary, drama and dramatic existential context. Religious popular songs also reported on the dramatic nature of the human predicament: even if you fall asleep at night, waken from fear!

Characteristic data from recent field research (1987) is the instance in which all the members of the household hid behind the door, in fear of Judgment Day (Zečević 1991:310–311). Fear of Hell, of infernal torture, of Judgment Day and the awesome Judge, is not a characteristic of the faithful sunk in the past, but, in changed circumstances, has been retained to the present day. In the global sense, the difference between the western and eastern Christian spiritual sphere can be determined by the fact that the western is characterised by a utilitarian orientation towards Salvation, while the eastern Christian sphere shows a more marked tendency towards mysticism.¹

Analysis of 18th century Croatian sermons showed an anthropologically unavoidable and significant relation towards folk culture and customs; and this is also the source of the concept of the "customary sin". In addition to customs, songs, oral transmission, the *kolo*, or round-dance, but also books in the urban environment (books as the enemy!), everything which shows itself to be as either in part or in whole contrary to Christian anthropology; this is a relation which is demonstrated from time to time as a conflict between Paganism and Christianity, which was in confrontation with the non-Christian and Eastern Christian customs. Instruction was given on how and where one should look - and this related particularly to women - how they should conduct themselves in church and in the street, how to observe Nature and what to "read" from it, as God's creation opened up before humans like a book; instruction was given on how to celebrate holy days, weddings, Carnival, how to enjoy oneself and how to mourn.

¹ About this difference, as well as on the need for the adaptation of the Christian metaphors with the civilisation context at the end of the 20th century a lecture was given by dr. Tomislav Šagi Bunić at the *Institute of Theological Culture for Laymen* in Zagreb, during the winter semester in 1985–1986. (Course of lectures: *History of Christian Teachings*.)

Croatian sermons during the 18th century show how everyday life and relations were constantly evading and breaking free of desirable Christian literary order (partly too because of customary sin) which was fortified by instruction and presented in the numerous examples whose origins reached far back into the prior centuries of Christianity. The examples also created and developed literary taste, by oral and written i.e. printed means, side by side with worldview. On the other hand, audience resistance, in fact, a permanent doubt in Christian teaching which exists to the present day, was also registered. Almost all the Croatian preachers of the 18th century speak polemically about resistance and non-belief in the sermons analysed in this paper.

The primary literary taste for folk (oral) literature also participated in the manifestation of resistance by accepting but also transforming Christian themes (see Zečević 1989; 1991) and, in a specifically creative way, participating in resistance to the process of evangelisation; a mutuality existed in the resistance. Information on the preaching successes of Bernard Zuzorić indicate the dissemination of the popularity of Christian teaching, point to acceptance and inheritance. Changes occurred on both sides in that process, slowly but surely moving the focus in theological interpretation of the Word can be observed in relation to the history of everyday life which does not, of course, have to be the sole reason for and source of change.

Hell and the infernal flames

In his 16th century *Meditations on Hell* Ignatius Loyola (1492–1556) admonished people to "see the length, breath, and depth of hell through the eyes of the imagination (...) the powerful torrents of fire and the souls entrapped in the fettered bodies"; one should hear the "weeping, the shouted curses, the laments" smell the "smoke, the sulphur, the stench and the decay, feel the tears, the sorrow, the worm of conscience, grope for the hotness of the souls disintegrating in the flame" (Hocke 1991:81).

The 18th century preachers eclipsed Loyola's demands in describing Hell and the infernal tortures. Imaginative descriptions of that which was inconceivable, outside of experience, invisible, thus, to make the idea of Hell, Sin, Judgment and Fury visible and "tangible" showed itself to be completely unattainable despite all endeavours, so it was just this unattainability and weakness of all comparisons and all mathematical measurements, in fact, in which the relation with the sum of all visible and tangible earthly realities was constantly being emphasised.

In keeping with the Age of Learning, the immeasurable nature and uncountability, the inexpressibility of the infernal tortures were stressed. The Age of Learning can be recognised in these very efforts to define precisely the *large* and the *size*, as well as the opposite, the smallest part, *small to*

nullity. The literary, "scientific" and instructional attempt to count everything, to enumerate, to numerate, gather and then to place it into a relationship with virtue and punishment. The truth is tested in order to confirm its authenticity, but also in order to emphasise the inevitability of Christian truth which surpasses all by its sacrament, mystery - including human wisdom. Eternity shows itself as a threatening immeasurable force, just like the height of the heavens which Štefan Zagrebec (a Cappucin monk) measures and describes with the aid of the fall of a mill stone (Zagrebec 1718:166–167).

Bernard Zuzorić (1683–1762) gave the lesson on the immeasurability of Eternity in the form of a mathematical problem: if one sinner doomed to eternal hell fire sheds only one tear every one hundred thousand years, how many years are necessary for his tears to fill: "all the depths of all the seas spread out over all the world". With the final solution of the problem which would calculate the volume of the water of all the seas and oceans, together with the years necessary to shed the tears, we would be only at the beginning of the hellish immeasurability of Eternity.

Eternity is the threatening mathematical force which admonishes and calls for a righteous Christian life. It is the very uncertainty of Death which is emphasised in the sermons, while the stressing of that uncertainty leads to psychosis which permeates the sermons of the 18th century, as well as the period which foregoes it i.e. the period from the 14th to the 18th century (Delumeau 1986).

In the clash between culture and tradition, Christian teaching on the one hand and oral literary tradition, everyday life and pre-Christian customs e.g. the celebration of Carnival, on the other, there is manifestation of repulse of the fear of death and thoughts of decomposition, decay and the stench of Hell and the infernal tortures. The resistance of the auditoria commits itself to the Carnival of "sweet enjoyment and a tender and licentious friendship" and rejects the prayers: "the rolling of the Lord's Prayer" and "the thundering of the preacher". Resistance negates the psychosis of possibility of choice: *all* or *nothing*, salvation or the fall into Hell, fear of making the wrong move, fear of sin, in a word: fear of God! If the fear of God is understood sufficiently broadly and identified with religion, according to the *Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, this would mean a resistance to and rejection of religion and religious norms of behaviour, which are shown in relation to everyday life as an ambivalence: orientational and obstructive.

The sermons show that the world is full of unseen and concealed dangers. In the book *Pripovidanja nauka krstjanskoga* [Sermons on Christian Teachings] the Franciscan Jeronim Filipović (1759) devotes two sermons to speaking out against "spell-casting"; acquainted from written sources with the "fact" that many more women are involved in business with the "Devil" than are "people" i.e. men; the preacher does not doubt the power of the "sorcerers and wizards". He shows that children should be baptised as early as possible

so that the Devil does not overtake their souls; therefore it is also necessary to baptise the aborted embryo, if it is compact and not in a liquid state.

Everyday life and behaviour finds its way into the sermons as a banal but permanently tenacious contrast with the elevated place and ritual: a girl enters a church wearing a cap wreathed with flowers (an extract from female costume in the Dinaric region), as can be seen in the *kolo*-dance, and the *kolo* and dance generally are an impetus and source for serious sin. Without any change in bearing, thus, directly from sin, the girl joins the other Christians in the confessional, with her unchanged deportment and also with her unchanged thoughts. It is demanded of sinners that their behaviour differ from everyday behaviour, and when such behaviour is adopted, it is recommended as constant and everyday behaviour, the only worthy and meritorious behaviour for a god-loving person.

The Devil is Humankind's *enemy within*, invisible but present in the body and in the World, which means present in everyday life. Inconstant and impermanent man has within him and about him a constant and permanent enemy. Although the Devil is a spirit, they address him as a man (male) defeated by the Virgin Mary through her immaculate conception, she is pure, the heavenly Eve, and thus has the power to protect people from the Devil's temptations. Nonetheless, when they want to offend the Devil and his strength and power over people, then they say that his strength is not really strength, because he was defeated - by a woman! The Devil-Male should be devaluated by this fact; the male in the Devil really cannot bear this:

"Therefore the holy fathers when tempted by Satan, would say: Depart, you wretch, because what are your powers if a woman could defeat you! And he, being vain, could not bear these words and would thus flee" (Filipović 1759:486, col. 1.).

The affective concern of the popular preachers for man's salvation is not a phenomenon linked only with the 18th century but also with the previous ones, thus, it was not an attribute only of the Baroque period. The preachers also expect the reverse reaction of the also strengthened i.e. awakened affectiveness of their listeners - believers; strengthened affectiveness is a sign of recognition, of membership in the community of the faithful among whom the indifferent have no place; indifference in relation to the Absolute, in relation to God, is the attribute of an incorrigible sinner.

A witticism which has been orally disseminated can serve as illustration. Everyone was crying after the sermon except for one girl. When they asked her reproachfully why she was not crying, she answered that she was not from the parts in which the parish was located.

A strong emotional reaction, consequently, was a sign of participation in the common faith and ritual. Reading the sermons, however, shows that

after the sermon people went to the tavern, despite efforts being made in connection with their emotional engagement.

**Everyday metaphoric: trade with God.
A lucrative interest rate: one hundred to one!**

The attention given to numbers and the incalculable, to measure and the immeasurable, literally interprets God's mercy as the possibility of Humankind's trading with God: "... who as a special Lord and Giver of Laws allows you to ask without sin for one hundred to one and one hundred to one is promised and returned to you." Giovanni Battista Campadelli writes, in translations into the Croatian language done three times in the short period of sixteen years, although the supply was so favourable:

".. people do not wish to make deals with God. Stop your complaining that your business is not doing well, that profits are low, that returns are continually less: all this happens to you because you do not trade with God through charitable gifts..." (Campadelli 1754:333, col. 1.).

Here the paradoxical moment of Christian teaching appears: trade with God is recommended primarily for the poor, and not the rich. God gives interest at one hundred to one, and it is the poor who are the ones for whom this trade can be favourable, the rich already being sufficiently well off not to be particularly interested in giving charity, while the poor are advised to give alms instead of resorting to forbidden means, such as theft at night. Preaching about alms-giving in three sermons or speeches, Jerolim Filipović (1690—1765) develops neo-Platonic teaching which was a general trend, the result of the popularisation of Christian teaching, that alms of the spirit were much more worthy than alms of the body i.e. material alms, because the spirit was more perfect than the body; therefore he deduced that the poor were much more necessary to the rich, because, by distribution of alms, the rich saved themselves for eternal life, while by giving charitable contributions they help the poor "only" to keep themselves physically alive, which is less worthy help than the spiritual made possible for them by the existence of the poor:

"The rich, consequently, have need for the poor, and the poor for the rich, but the rich have a much greater need for the poor than the poor for the rich, because the rich save their souls through the poor, while the poor only maintain themselves in physical life through the rich. The rich give the poor what is of this world, and the poor give the rich what is of the heavens. That is why Chrysostomic said: Give, my man, the poor a little land in order to receive heaven; give money in order to receive the kingdom; give a crumb in order to receive everything" (Filipović 1759:97, col. 2—98, col. 1.).

By the principle of the paradox characteristic to Christianity, the disparate and opposite are united, the richness and the poverty; *paradox* means: the unbelievable, the inconceivable, the unheard of, the indescribable, the strange. The interest mentioned is based on the same principle: one hundred to one, while God is the supreme guarantor of such a relationship by which, in fact, *all* and *nothing* is made one and the same. Because of only one sin man may lose salvation and eternal life, but, at the same time, he can be saved by only one good deed or repentance before death, despite all the mortal sins he may have committed.

Sermon literature with its host of examples which dealt with the violations of the ten commandments, but also with many venial sins which were punished by disproportionately harsh torments in Hell, as taught, for instance, by Hilarion Gašparoti, could be called the literature which deals with the gloomy chronicle of Christian everyday life, and was eagerly read; Hilarion Gašparoti provides evidence of this in his foreword to a religious reader (Gašparoti 1752:5).² Gašparoti presents a series of small, venial sins and examples of "God's justice" which exhorts a terrible price for every sin. The first example is that of a monk who did not make a "worthy obeisance" at the words "Gloria patri": "... so he had to sit and sweat in that flame for many years".

There is also the interesting case of the sister of the Blessed Peter Damian "who was punished with eighteen days of hell fire in Purgatory because she listened to street songs: *because of listening to songs in the street*". It was difficult to supervise street songs, but it was much easier to supervise the listeners.

Purgatory - the transitional region between everyday life and Eternity

Purgatory appears as a mediating link with the everyday life of the believer, and it is here that an exchange of goods takes place: the living pay off the fines of the dead by prayer and money. In Purgatory, punishment is the form of serving a term; it is connected with Hell through the effects of the same hell fires, just as man's everyday life is linked with the length of the term and the possibility of influencing the salvation of the soul from Purgatory by acts in everyday life. The location of Purgatory is immediately above Hell:

"Hell is in the centre of the Earth, while this place of cleansing is in the ground above Hell, in the opinion of the Holy Catholic Church"
(Filipović 1759:108, col. 1.).

² Gašparoti's book is published in four volumes, about 3800 pages in total. See the paper by Olga Šojat (1984).

However, when sinners have to be threatened, then educational and intimidating effects cannot be achieved with terms of punishment and the transient torments of Purgatory, despite the hellish intensity of the flame, so threats are made concerning eternity i.e. eternal and infernal torments! The preacher complains that people do not think a lot about Heaven, but in the midst of their everyday, transient troubles they pay more attention to the possibility of even more harsh and, in addition, unending suffering. In oral communication there exists the "comfort" that there is always a worse evil than evil, a more terrible suffering than suffering!

Personal interest - the motivation for charity

Jeronim Filipović concluded that "now", in the middle of the 18th century (1759), the body was cared for more than the soul, there was more concern for physical life than spiritual, that people were not inclined to fast and "to torment their bodies" and so he called upon the logic of everyday life - - seeking for personal benefit so as to convince people to perform good deeds:

"If you cannot be moved to love, to give help to those souls for the sake of their dignity and their troubles, let your own benefit move you"
(Filipović 1759:117, col. 1.).

The call to believers to think of their own benefit seems resigned (*If you cannot be moved to love*), but it remains within the borders of conviction that Christian morals and faith can be taught by the terminology of everyday relations in which the moving force is personal interest and benefit of material and non-material nature. Filipović's "now" which means the everyday life of his time, the orientation of people to what is of this world, the concern for physical existence and the lack of inclination to the spiritual life, indicates permanent efforts to overcome resistance and the resistance to the efforts being made to evangelise people; therefore the "now" prolongs the duration of the present in which preachers complain about the un-Christian behaviour of Christians in various historical periods, as lasting, it can be said, to the present day.

Looked at as a whole, in the sermons of the 19th century, the comments and warnings concerning the everyday way of life of those for whom the sermons were intended became so few that they almost disappeared completely. This does not mean, however, that one does not find testimony to 19th century social changes which directly influence the relation towards teachings on Christian virtues and faults e.g. towards the sin of wastefulness. The concept of squandering money was modified in a certain sense because at the mid-

19th century a new dimension, concept and, later, an imperative to spend was on the horizon. If spending money is a socially inescapable, and even a duty, then the concept of wastefulness changes, as is demonstrated in the sermons of Vilhelm Švelc; spending is not squandering, if it is reconciled with income. Listeners are taught that money must not simply lie in a heap, or, in other words, there should be no dead capital but it should be placed in circulation. It is interesting that the inevitability of spending is taught in sermons on literate purity of life and habitation: "O vanjskoj čistoći" [On outer purity], although, despite the title, one would also expect association with moral purity (Švelc 1855: vol. I, 10).

Links with everyday life were made abstract, which is not to say that this link was not considered abstract in a certain literary manner during the 18th century too; but data on everyday life faded and disappeared in a changed, new manner of teaching. During the mid-19th century, reading of newspapers, a new detail worthy of attention, was also mentioned among the futilities of enjoyment and entertainment pertaining to this world.

Baroque naturalism vanished: the unchanged and unchangeable stench of Hell and Hell's torments contained in the threats and threatening examples, spilled guts, decomposing corpses but also living bodies, digging up graves and wrenching off the flesh of dead and living sinners and saints in the instructional purpose of the sermon examples. The reasons for the broad omission of the examples could be found outside of them themselves, primarily in endeavours that sermons "be cleansed" of permanent efforts to animate, drawing the attention of listeners by texts of the type mentioned above, the examples, and to develop in the changed social circumstances a more appropriate manner of persuasion (in the faith) and conviction, as many of the examples seemed, in the 19th century theological sense, unconvincing and unbelievable.

The Church excluded many of the examples, because it recognised them to be primarily an exciting and entertaining type of prose which was too successful in attracting public attention, drawing it away from the sacral. As an accompaniment to the commandment "Thou shall not commit adultery!" in Jeronim Filipović's sermons, one of the examples, for instance, contains scenes similar to those found in sentimental novels in which the dying adulteress believes that love is stronger than Hell itself (Filipović 1759:328, col. 2.).

Avoiding many examples which flowed through the 18th century sermons in the newly published sermons, in this case those of Jeronim Filipović, indicates that the Church took into account the existence of the secular entertainment prose in the 19th century, but also that it did not forget nor fail to pay attention to the process of secularisation of society, to the increasingly vociferous presence of those who were not believers. Cleansing the sermons of the examples is only a noticeable form of change which took

place in the 19th century, while at the end of the 20th, the need would be articulated for further reconciliation of language and metaphorical Christian teaching with changes in civilisation:

"Mit gutem recht sagt man, daß das Christentum die Sprache seiner Lehre verändern und sich den zivilisatorischen Umgestaltungen anpassen müsse. Das hat es, nicht ohne enorme Schwierigkeiten, schon mehr als einmal getan, und immer entsteht in diesen Anpassungsprozessen die Gefahr, daß auf der Suche nach neuen Formen der Inhalt vergessen wird. Es scheint wahr - worauf viele Menschen immer wieder hingewiesen haben -, daß die heutigen Europäer gegenüber der herkömmlichen Sprache der Theologie meistens Taub sind. Daß der Thomismus in der Kulturgeschichte von riesiger Bedeutung war, braucht man nicht erst zu beweisen. Als begriffliches Netz aber, wodurch wir heute das Weltall zu erfassen vermögen, ist er erfolglos geblieben" (Kolakowski 1981:17).

Academic discussion concerning Hell and contradictions

The call to spend and the interpretation of the appropriateness of spending to decorate dwellings, which had previously been regarded as wasteful, did not exclude teachings about Hell. Vilhelm Švelc warned of the indescribability of the torments of Hell (he divided them into bodily and spiritual torments), but the description of the torments, despite everything, was not so frightening and served more, in academic discussion, as proof of God's justness and goodness; the preacher's intention is not to frighten his listeners but to prove (to those, at least, who doubt) the justification of the existence of Hell, of God's mercy and justice; there is a lack of harsh affectiveness in reproach of the sinner.

The preacher Stjepan Grdenić (1845) ponders on the contradiction - - how is it possible that there rules a great darkness in Hell beside the great fires, while in the 18th century, Jeronim Filipović explained this inconsistency by the fact that the flames of Hell did not give light but instead had a blinding effect (Filipović 1759:329, col. 2.). The subject of consideration between natural and supernatural fire (obviously not thinking of Hell as a metaphor) is a sign that there was a new manner of paying attention to possible reactions of listeners who, it seems, were increasingly asking questions. In examples which are only individual at first glance, in separate cases of sermons and preachers, one can monitor the course of change in the manner of persuasion and changing minds. Even today, Hell is described as an empirical phenomenon.³

Audience resistance was present in the 19th century. In a sermon on Hell in 1879, Adolf Veber Tkalčević wrote that the faithful could listen when one spoke of Heaven, but when:

"... according to the same Holy Bible Hell is described, they become terribly angry mumbling to themselves: - Whence does this person know what it is like there? Who in our educated age would still believe that Hell exists! (...) These are the concoctions of stupid time when people still allowed themselves to be intimidated; nobody today believes any longer in such stupidities. - And thinking something along these lines, they depart from the church" (Veber Tkalčević 1890:98).

In 19th century sermons worms continue to appear for the purpose of frightening people, as a heritage from the previous century, but now they are mainly used in the metaphorical context. Lascivious thoughts are compared with flies, and desires with worms. Women must be constantly busy, because they are the ones who are regarded as the source of the sins which are perilous to Humankind. Bernardin from Sienna advises:

³ Cf. a hectographed edition published after WWII, probably in 1950: Borić [s.a.]:50— 51.

"If you get her accustomed to doing everything, she will become a good piece of flesh. Do not allow her to live comfortably, I tell you!" (Delumeau 1987:437).

During the 19th century in Croatia, and not only in sermons, there began a loud trumpeting about diligence as a form of suppressing sins, particularly the sin of lasciviousness. The bible teaching and warning that one should labour for six days and dedicate the seventh to God excluded sloth, but in the 19th century emphasis was placed on an indivisible religiously and secularly programmed campaign for industriousness, aimed particularly at women from a very early age.

The battle of sermons against the dangers of lust was marked in the 19th century in a positive way, not so much as a battle *against* lust, but as a battle *for* diligence, thus, in the spirit of the historical time (after the first Industrial Revolution), a great ode to diligence to attain two objectives.

In German scientific literature, Rudolf Schenda (1986) compiled a survey of material which registered the process of indoctrination with diligence. In Croatia, diligence was denoted as a *virtue* in the sense of: to be diligent: "Are you worthy?"; he who is not diligent, namely, is not worthy, is less worthy as a person i.e. worthless. In the foreword to his instructional book of prayers intended for girls, *The Fiancée of Jesus*, Franjo Šic (1863) calls laziness putridity; worms hatch in what is putrid; particularly in the sermons of the 18th century, worms are a literary extract of transient physicality. It is shown that laziness and lasciviousness are closely linked.

Although the celebration of virginity is indivisible from Christianity, it having been written about from patristic literature to the present day, in the 19th century there occurred an intensive literary-instructional popularisation of virginity. Secular literature sketched the moral identification of the religious and secular ideal of womankind, while at the same time the focus in the sphere of theology moved towards the celebration of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The presence and influence of social changes may oscillate in the sermons as a discontinued, irregular phenomenon, diverting from standard, regular teaching and contrary to "development" in the sense of constant advancement, in this case in the direction of suppression of differences between the religious and the secular. Diversions appear as unexpected and conspicuous exceptions, islands surrounded by customary (regular) Christian teaching.

Working on research of the sermons of the 18th and 19th centuries, unexpected traces of polemics with those who doubted i.e. did not believe, show themselves as "markers" which mark the course of time, and it can be concluded that the process of evangelisation continues up until our time; this is a process in which one cannot "stop for breath" with the thought that the

process of evangelisation has been completed. Those who resist evangelisation with their doubts and criticism are always present and active; dialogue and polemics with them draws attention to the line of thinking that people have always been equally inclined to believe and to disbelieve. But the ways in which preachers reacted to this inclination were different.

(Translated by Nina H. Antoljak)

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