

Multimedia Project *The Two of Them*

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ABSTRACT: The topic of the multimedia project *The two of them* is the presentation of novels by Serbian writers in which the characters are having romantic relationships. The final year students of the Department of Librarianship and Information Science at the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade participated in the project. The project was realized within the subject Multimedia documents of the academic year 2019/20. Each of the students created a web page containing additional information about the writer and the novel for one chosen novel, using HTML language. In addition, a website containing all the papers in one place was created, as well as a list of students who participated in the preparation of the document.

KEYWORDS: multimedia documents, literature, Serbian novels, Serbian writers, love novels, literature awards.

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1 Introduction — About literature and reading

Literature uses language the way painting uses colors or music tones, but language is not only a natural material, but an extremely complex spiritual creation (Solar 2005). Literary works and reading are an important element of human life. “Reading has often been compared to traveling (...). As a traveler sees and experiences more than the one who has never left his own doorstep, the reader discovers unknown worlds and other people’s lives. (...) The worlds of poetic imagination have no limits in space or time and their number is constantly increasing.” (Тартаља 1998)

Today, books and reading are increasingly exposed to the competition of new means of acoustic, visual and multimedia communication. So there are

many novels that have their theatrical adaptations or are screened. In the multimedia project *The two of them* novels in a theatrical adaptation can be found along with the screen adapted novels.

2 About the novel as a literary genre

The novel is the most popular and most published literary genre today. From the 13th century, a Chivalric romance appeared, and the name *le roman breton* referred to works (in prose and verse) of Celtic and Breton origin in which the love and warrior adventures of Christian knights were described (Живковић 1992). Novels were considered fictional love stories. Ancient and chivalric novels owe the most to old epic poetry and fairy tales, while the newer European novel relies on the tradition of humorous stories, anecdotes and short stories (Тартаља 1998). In the 18th century, the novel became the most represented literary genre. Over time, it became a story about the private world and about individual personalities, in a more realistic and intimate manner. An individual's reaction to the action of the outside world is a key part of developing a plot in a novel. From the 18th to the 20th century, the characterization of individual characters in the novel became more and more important, generalizing the important characteristics of one environment and epoch. The novel depicts the life of a society through the history of the destiny of individuals while the modern novelist has become increasingly interested in man himself (Живковић 1992).

2.1 Types of novels

There are many different types and kinds of novels. We can classify them according to various criteria. They are often classified according to the topic (historical, adventurous, romance, social, psychological, etc.), the method of topic analysis (humorous, satirical, sentimental, etc.), the form of the novel (travel, novel-essay, novel in sequels, etc.), the direction and epoch of their origin (medieval, postmodernist, etc.). Novels can also be classified according to the elements that dominate the novel itself. Thus, a novel can also be: a novel of a character, a family novel (developed from a novel of character which generally follows the members of one family), a novel of space, a novel of time, as well as a novel of time and space, and so on. (Ђорђевић and Лучић 2008)

3 Briefly about Serbian literature and prominent writers from the 19th to the 21st century

The emergence and development of Serbian literature was influenced by many Serbian and foreign writers. We will list only some Serbian writers who are important for the development of Serbian literature, and most of whom are part of this multimedia project.

Of all the modern literary genres, the novel appeared the earliest in our literature. Translations first appeared, while the original novels appeared at the beginning of the 19th century, with Atanasije Stojković (1773–1832) and Milovan Vidaković (1780–1841). Atanasije Stojković wrote the didactic-*idyllic* novel *Aristid i Natalija* (1801), which represents the first appearance of this type of literature in our language. Jakov Ignjatović (1822–1889) is considered to be the creator and one of the most important representatives of the Serbian realistic novel in the 19th century. Among the important novelists of the 19th century, we should also mention Svetolik Ranković (1863–1899) — the creator of the Serbian psychological novel. He left behind several works, among which is a significant novel — *Seoska učiteljica* (1899), which is one of the first novels depicting a woman as the main character. At the end of the 19th century, in Serbian realistic prose, a lot was written about the village — about the decay of the village or its *idyllic* images, but also about customs and relations between people.

A great turning point, both in European and Serbian literature, occurred at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. At that time, Serbian literature acquired all the basic features of modern national literature. Serbian literature started making its way out of the former *rural* realism, at the time. Borisav Stanković, Petar Kočić, Milutin Uskoković, Veljko Petrović, Isidora Sekulić and others are among the prose writers who went towards the modernization of prose expression. Borisav Stanković (1876–1927) is the most important narrator in the modern phase of realism. The development of the Serbian modern novel and short story begins with him, while his novel *Nečista krv* (1910) is one of the best novels in Serbian literature.

The twentieth century affirmed women's creativity in literature more than ever before. Along with Isidora Sekulić (1877–1958), a significant role in literature had Jelena Dimitrijević (1862–1945) and Milica Janković (1881–1945). It can be said that the novel *Đakon Bogorodičine crkve* (1919) by Isidora Sekulić and the novel *Nove* (1912) by Jelena Dimitrijević are among the best novels written by women at the beginning of the 20th century in Serbian literature. Milica Jakovljević (1887–1952), better known under the

pseudonym Mir-Jam, is a writer whose love novels and short stories marked domestic literature between the two world wars. She was the most popular writer in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and her works were the most read ones.¹ And even today it can be said that her novels, as well as her name, i.e. pseudonym, are very well known to the Serbian public, owing to her novels that were screen adapted and very popular.

The expansion of the novel, as a literary genre, began in the early fifties of the twentieth century, and continues to this day. Dobrica Ćosić (1921–2014) is a writer who marked the post-war period. He wrote the novel *Koreni* (1954), which became the basis of the modern Serbian post-war novel and which led to great recognition. After the above mentioned as well as many other Serbian writers, the tradition of writing novels was continued by the new ones.

We could not find data on the historical development of Serbian novels that are classified as love novels, because such novels are difficult to find in the history of Serbian literature. Although there are many Serbian novels with the love motive as an important element, they are not defined as such. They are most often defined only as social, historical or novels about individuals, etc., or a combination of these genres. Today, love novels are quite popular and have large circulations, although most people consider them to be less valuable literary works. Mirjana Bobić Mojsilović (1959–), Jelena Bačić Alimpić (1969–) and Vesna Dedić (1967–) stand out among the most popular contemporary Serbian writers of love novels.²

The writers mentioned here, as well as others covered by this project, are known to the Serbian public (some to a wider and some to a narrow extent). What most of them have in common is that they received awards for their works and that their works have been translated into some of the foreign languages. As part of some, there are also awards named after them. These include: Borisav Stanković, Isidora Sekulić, Meša Selimović, Miloš Crnjanski, Momo Kapor, etc. Some of the awards the writers have received for the novels covered by this project are:

- Award of the Serbian Literary Cooperative for lifetime achievement — the novel *Dosljaci* by Milutin Uskoković (1884–1915) (as the best manuscript in 1909);

1. Retrieved from [Wikipedia](#) (accessed on August 10, 2021.)

2. Retrieved from [Wikipedia](#) (accessed on August 10, 2021.)

- NIN's Award³ which was first won by the novel *Koreni* by Dobrica Ćosić in 1954, *Roman o Londonu* by Miloš Crnjanski (1893–1977), 1971, *Sudbina i Komentari* by Radoslav Petković (1953–), 1993;
- Award for the most read book in Serbian libraries⁴ — *Roman o Londonu* by Miloš Crnjanski in 1973, *Dorotej* by Dobrilo Nenadić (1940–), 1978.

When it comes to novels by female writers, there are other awards. The manuscript of the first novel by Grozdana Olujić (1934–2019) — *Izlet u nebo* won an award in 1957 at the competition of the Sarajevo National Education. Her second novel — *Glasm za ljubav* (1963) won the Zagreb Telegram Award for Best Short Novel. Marija Jovanović (1959–) was awarded the Women's Feather Pen for her novel *Spletkarenje sa sopstvenom dušom* (2000)⁵. Vida Ognjenović (1941–) received the award for the best book in the public libraries of Serbia for the novel *Preljubnici* (2006)⁶. And Jelena Bačić Alimpić was awarded the Golden Hit Libero for her novel *Ringišpil* (2010)⁷.

4 About the multimedia project *The two of them*

The main topic of the project is the presentation of novels by Serbian writers whose characters are in romantic relationships. In addition, writers and novels were presented. These novels are diverse in type — not all of them are purely love novels, but they have a love motif as one of the main elements of the novel.

There are about 10 love novels,⁸ along with novels listed in two genres, one of which is love, while there are more novels that belong to the social, historical and novels about individual people. Most of the novels from the 20th century can be found in the project, but there are also a few from the 19th and 21st centuries. There is a total of 25 novels, as many as participants in this project.

3. Prestigious Serbian, and formerly Yugoslav, literary award that is awarded every year for the best new Serbian (formerly Yugoslav) novel.

4. It was awarded by the National Library of Serbia from 1973–2004. years, with interruptions.

5. It was awarded by the women's magazine *Politika Bazar*, for the best novel or collection of stories by a female writer.

6. It was awarded by the National Library of Serbia from 2005–2013. years.

7. Recognition to the authors and publishers of the most sought-after books in the current year, which was awarded by the RTS Culture and Art Editorial Office and the Hit libris show.

8. Due to the lack of clear data on the genre, this number is not accurate.

The novels are presented in the form of web pages made by the final year students of the Department of Librarianship and Information Science of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, academic year 2019/2020. Assistance to students was provided by Prof. Dr Cvetana Krstev and Dr Branislava Šandrih Todorović, who were mentors on the project. This project is an integral part of the subject Multimedia Documents, which is part of the curriculum in the fourth year of undergraduate studies at the Department of Librarianship and Information Science.

5 Novels and writers covered by this project

The novels that the students chose to present were: *Aristid i Natalija* (1801) by Atanasije Stojković, *Čudan svet* (1869) by Jakov Ignjatović, *Seoska učiteljica* (1898) by Svetolik Ranković, *Došljaci* (1910) by Milutin Uskoković, *Nečista krv* (1910) by Borisav Stanković, *Nove* (1912) by Jelena Dimitrijević, *Čedomir Ilić* (1914) by Milutin Uskoković, *Dakon Bogorodičine crkve* (1919) by Isidora Sekulić, *Plava gospođa* (1924) by Milica Janković, *Pokošeno polje* (1934) by Branimir Ćosić, *Srpska trilogija* (1937) by Stevan Jakovljević, *Pesma* (1952) by Oskar Davičo, *Koreni* (1954) by Dobrica Ćosić, *Izlet u nebo* (1958) and *Glasam za ljubav* (1963) by Grozdana Olujić, *Tvrđava* (1970) by Meša Selimović, *Roman o Londonu* (1971) by Miloš Crnjanski, *Dorotej* (1977) by Dobrilo Nenadić, *Una* (1981) by Momo Kapor, *Cvat lipe na Balkanu* (1991) by Gordana Kuić, *Sudbina i komentari* (1993) by Radoslav Petković, *Spletkarenje sa sopstvenom dušom* (2000) by Marija Jovanović, *Preljubnici* (2006) by Vida Ognjenović, *Ringišpil* (2010) by Jelena Bačić Alimpić and *Nikad nisam* (2019) by Vesna Dedić.

Novels known to most students (before starting to work on this project) were: *Nečista krv*, *Koreni*, *Tvrđava*, *Cvat lipe na Balkanu* and *Došljaci*. Novels not known to most students were: *Spletkarenje sa sopstvenom dušom*, *Preljubnici*, *Aristid i Natalija*, *Nove*, *Seoska učiteljica*, *Plava gospođa*, *Čudan svet*, *Dorotej*, *Sudbina i komentari*. The writers known to most students were: Borisav Stanković, Isidora Sekulić, Oskar Davičo, Dobrica Ćosić, Meša Selimović, Miloš Crnjanski, Momo Kapor, Jelena Bačić Alimpić and Vesna Dedić. The writers not known to most students were: Marija Jovanović, Milica Janković, Dobrilo Nenadić, Atanasije Stojković, Svetolik Ranković and Jelena Dimitrijević.

5.1 Division of chosen novels by genre

As for the typological, i.e. genre divisions of the mentioned novels, it should be emphasized that such data are difficult to find. Novels such as *Izlet u nebo* and *Roman o Londonu* are not divided by genre, while the novel *Dorotej* is considered to be on the border of genres — it contains historical, love and psychological motives.⁹ Of all the selected novels, the novels that are classified as love novels are: *Plava gospođa*, *Glasam za ljubav*, *Una*, *Spletkarenje sa sopstvenom dušom*, *Preljubnici*, *Ringišpil* and *Nikad nisam*. In addition to these, there are novels: *Došljaci*, *Čedomir Ilić* and *Đakon Bogorodičine crkve*, which also belong to other genres — both Uskoković's novels also belong to social novel, and Isidora Sekulić's novel also belongs to a religious novel. Other novels are classified into different genres (mainly social, historical, psychological and novels about individuals).

5.2 Dramatic adaptations of novels and/or novels that are screened

One of the important elements of the project is the information about the adaptations of the novels. As for the dramatization and screen adaptation of these novels, seven of them (out of 25) do not have their own theatrical or screen adaptation.¹⁰ These include the novels: *Aristid i Natalija*, *Nove*, *Plava gospođa*, *Spletkarenje sa sopstvenom dušom*, *Preljubnici*, *Ringišpil* and *Nikad nisam*.

Fourteen novels have been theatrically adapted. These are: *Čudan svet*, *Seoska učiteljica*, *Došljaci*, *Nečista krv*, *Čedomir Ilić*, *Đakon Bogorodičine crkve*, *Pokošeno polje*, *Srpska trilogija*, *Pesma*, *Koreni*, *Izlet u nebo*, *Tvrđava*, *Roman o Londonu* and *Sudbina i komentari*. Among these plays, there are those with a title that differs from the original title of the novel. This includes performances, i.e. novels: *Vrela krv* (*Nečista krv*), *Sile* (*Pokošeno polje*), *Hromi ideali* (*Čedomir Ilić*), *Đakon* (*Đakon Bogorodičine crkve*; based on the motives of this novel and the short story *Ambicije, dim* by Isidora Sekulic) and *Na leđima ježa* (*Srpska trilogija*).¹¹

Movies are made based on eight novels: *Pesma* (1961), *Izlet u nebo* (1962, known as *Čudna devojka*), *Glasam za ljubav* (1965), *Došljaci* (1969),

9. Data taken from the website of the [online bookstore Laguna](#) (accessed on August 15, 2021)

10. No information was found through an internet search.

11. Data taken from [the website of the Museum of Theater Arts of Serbia](#) (accessed on August 10, 2021)

Pokošeno polje (1980, known as *Beogradska razglednica 1920*), *Dorotej* (1981), *Una* (1984) and *Nečista krv* (1996 and 2021). The screen adapted novels are: *Čedomir Ilić* (1971), *Pesma* (1975), *Roman o Londonu* (1988), *Cvat lipe na Balkanu* (2011–2012) and *Koreni* (2018).¹²

6 Student assignments on the project

Before the creation of the multimedia document itself, it was necessary to accomplish several tasks. The first task for each student was to find books that would fit the topic of the project. All students, along with the professors, gave book suggestions while in the following class each student chose a book to read at home and make the MS PowerPoint presentation about it. The presentations contained basic information about the writers and books — the name and surname of the writer, the title of the novel, the year of its first edition, the biography of the writer, the list of characters and the description of the theme of the novel. Some of them also contained some interesting facts from the novels or information on whether those novels were screened or had theatrical adaptations. The next main task was to create web pages based on that, using HTML¹³ language at home, along with CSS¹⁴ for visual design and embellishment. Everyone designed and created a web page for the chosen novel independently (according to their wishes and knowledge).

In addition to these tasks, group tasks were also assigned — creating web pages for the entire project (designing and creating HTML code) and choosing music, i.e. a song that will bring the project to life. Two groups of students were formed for these group tasks. The group in charge of music consisted of students: Marija Despić, Ana Ivanović, Anica Jovanović, Sofija Hebar and Nikola Šibalić. The second group, which was in charge of coming up with the design and the technical production, consisted of students: Katarina Glavonjić, Magdalena Lukić, Jovan Janković and Stefan Joksimović. The group in charge of music first made a list of songs from YouTube, followed by voting for the song to be used on the site. An adaptation was chosen of

12. Screening data is mostly retrieved from [Wikipedia](#) and the [IMDb](#).

13. HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) — A hypertext markup language, i.e. a descriptive language specifically designed to describe web pages. Retrieved from [Wikipedia \(HTML\)](#) (accessed on May 27, 2021.)

14. CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) — A cascading style sheet, a formatting language that defines the appearance of web page elements. Retrieved from [Wikipedia](#) (accessed on May 27, 2021.)

Richard Clayderman's composition *Love Story* from the film with the same title.

For better organization of tasks, in addition to email correspondence, Google Drive was also used. All the necessary documents and information about the assignments were placed there and were available to every student at all times. There was a table created (in the free online program Google Sheets) for the list of novels and student assignments, which was upgraded over time. There were, also, folders made for students to add their works to (presentations, HTML documents and accompanying elements that were used to create web pages, such as photos, etc.).

6.1 Data collection

Finding novels that are suitable for the topic of the project (those whose content encompasses the story of people in a romantic relationship) was not a very difficult task. At the beginning, there were small doubts about the topic itself, that is criteria for selecting novels and writers, because students were not quite familiar with such novels. But soon enough, with the help of the professor, a list of suitable novels was made. The proposals were discussed in the classes, and that is how the initial list was made, which was later upgraded by the students. Everyone had the task to find at least one novel and to upgrade the table with their suggestions (by adding the title, the name of the author and the year of the first edition of the novel). Thus the final list of novels was formed.

The reasons for choosing these novels were different — someone had heard of a novel that matched the topic or had already read it, someone asked for recommendations (mostly from family members), and some students found chosen novels on their own, by searching the Internet, while the others chose among the listed ones. Undoubtedly, the significance and popularity of most writers and novels helped students decide which work of Serbian literature they want to present.

After the final selection of novels, students read them and collected data on writers and novels afterwards. One of the main sources was certainly the chosen novels, which the students analyzed and presented (focusing on the topic of this project). In addition to the content of the novels, data from the books' covers were also used, as well as data from the prefaces and afterwords. Other sources of information were mainly Wikipedia, writers' websites and electronic newspapers (with various articles about writers and novels, which also contain information about plays, films, etc. as well as interviews with

writers) but also various other websites (mostly for finding photos, videos and other details and interesting facts).

7 Project websites

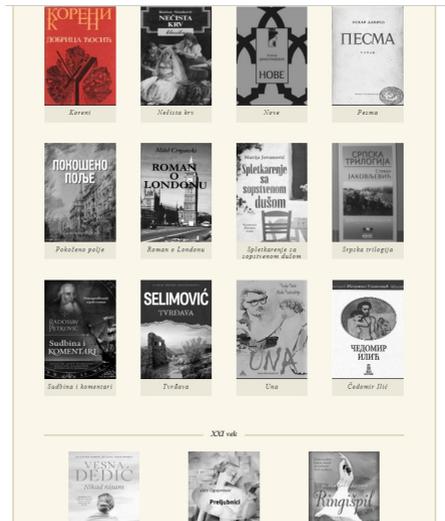


Figure 1. View of the first page where all the novels are listed

Multimedia project *The two of them* consists of three basic web pages. The first page of the project contains all the novels grouped according to the period of creation, from the 19th to the 21st century (Figure 1). There are photographs of books' covers used to show the novels, and below each there is its title. By clicking these photos, the pages created by the students open (figures 2 and 3 that represent parts of HTML and CSS codes of one web page). Each of these pages is different in appearance and content from the others. The second page contains photos of all students who participated in the project, while the third page contains information about the project itself (Figure 4) — what is the purpose of the project, who are the authors of the project, what the web pages contain, while the names of the students who worked on creating the site (designing and creating the main pages) are placed in the bottom. These pages are enhanced by links to the website


```

67 |ul#menu {
68 |  list-style-type: none;
69 |  margin: 0;
70 |  padding: 0;
71 |  overflow: hidden;
72 |  background-color: #333333;
73 |  text-align: center;
74 | }
75 |
76 |li.menu {
77 |  float: left;
78 |  border-right: 2px solid white;
79 |  width: 250px;
80 | }
81 |
82 |li#poslednji {
83 |  border-right: none;
84 |  border-left: none;
85 |  float: right;
86 | }
87 |
88 |li.menu a {
89 |  display: block;
90 |  color: white;
91 |  text-align: center;
92 |  padding: 10px 16px;
93 |  text-decoration: none;
94 |  font-size: 14pt;
95 | }
96 |
97 | /* Change the link color to #111 (black) on hover */
98 |li.menu a:hover {
99 |  background-color: #111;
100 | }
101 |
102 |img {
103 |  display: inline;
104 |  margin: 0;
105 |  padding: 0;
106 | }
107 |
108 |ul#nagrada_sa_roman {

```

Figure 3. Display of CSS code for one HTML page of one novel

Since the project *The Two of them* focuses on the novels of Serbian writers, the multimedia project of previous generations of students that is most similar to this one is the project *Literature on Film* (Меглић 2019), as well as the project *Pop Ćira i Pop Spira* (Коврлија, Тасић, and Топаловић 2012). These works include novels by Serbian writers, namely those that have been screened, and the screen adaptation of the novel is one of the additional elements in the project *The Two of them*. In addition to them, the project *Around the World in 80 Days* (Перић, Гогоић, and Николић 2014) is similar by the topic because it also includes a novel that was screened.

9 Conclusion

Before starting to work on the project *The Two of them*, the students were familiar with many writers and novels that were on their list of novels suitable for this project. All of them easily got the necessary data (information about the writer, novel, photos, etc.), but minor problems arose while creating web pages because students had to revise HTML, which they studied in the second year of studies. A slight problem for some was the time needed to create the website, but in the end everything was completed without



Figure 4. Third page

major problems and within the scheduled deadline (although the Covid-19 pandemic somewhat changed the original work program plan).

This project was not too demanding for the students, they had the opportunity to use and improve their knowledge acquired at the university, but also to be creative in their own way. They discovered and read new books, learned more about writers, fictional characters or real people, as well as the society, place, period in which they lived, etc. Afterwards they presented it in front of the class, and then, after a while, they made websites for those novels. Finally, they united them all into one joint project, available to everyone on the Internet.¹⁵

The project combined research work (finding information on the Internet), knowledge of HTML, CSS and MS PowerPoint. All of this students could learn or improve during their studies at the Department of Librarianship and Information Science. PowerPoint lecture is part of the course Practicum of Informatics 1, which is held in the first year of undergraduate studies at the Department, while HTML and CSS are part of the course Digital Text 2, which is held in the second year. As far as research work is concerned, it has improved throughout academic studies through various tasks in many subjects, while it has reached even higher level within this subject.

15. On the website of [Dr. Branislava Šandrih Todorović](#) and the home page of [Prof. Dr. Cvetana Krstev](#)

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