

prejeto: 2004-06-03  
UDK 314.554:159.974(450.361 Trst)"1741/1743"

## CIVILNE ŽRTVE TRŽAŠKEGA ZRAKA. JE BILA MELANHOLIJA V STAREM REŽIMU SLABOST ALI ZLOČIN?

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### IZVLEČEK

Članek je posvečen problematiki propada kariere in zakonske zveze zaradi psihičnega nasilja kot posledice domnevne "melanholije", vprašanju "zločinskosti" duševnih bolezni ter oblikovanju podobe storilca in žrtve v javnosti in na sodišču v 17. in 18. stoletju. Rdeča nit je ločevanje zakona kratkotrajnega predsednika Komerčne intendance in tržaškega glavarja Wolfa Sigmunda grofa Gallenberga in žene Jožefe Marije, vnukinje avstrijskega dvornega kanclerja Filipa Ludvika Sinzendorfa, v letih 1740–1743. Iz ohranjenega gradiva se prepričamo, da je v njenem zakonu res šlo za "zločin", vendar predvsem psihološki oz. zločin proti časti. Ker moč v prejšnjih letih ni mogel postati kranjski deželni glavar, je s polresnicami, ustrahovanjem žene in služabnikov o sebi ustvaril v javnosti podobo melanholične žrtve tržaške klime in po nekaj tednih službovanja v neljubem Trstu leta 1740 samovoljno zapustil Trst. Osramočena žena je nasedla njegovi igri bolnika, ga zapustila in prepričana, da je ona žrtev nasilnega melanholika, zahtevala ločitev. Moč je ženino zapustitev uspešno izrabil: žrtev svoje intrige je javnosti predstavil kot brezčutno do bolnika, sebe pa za njeno žrtev in žrtev melanholije. Melanholija kot blažja duševna motnja je bila namreč za cerkveno sodišče opravičljiv razlog za razvezo le, če je bil "melanholik" nagnjen k norosti že pred zakonom, če je zaročenca zavedel k poroki, ali če je pozneje res ogrožal partnerjevo življenje. Zato so tožniki krčevito prepričevali javnost in sodišča, da so tudi fizične žrtve melanholikov, kar pa je bilo zvečine nemogoče dokazati tudi zaradi mehke percepcije družinskega nasilja v javnosti.

*Ključne besede:* melanholija, nasilje, žrtve, ločitev, 17.–18. stoletje, Kranjska, Trst, Srednja Evropa

## VITTIME CIVILI DEL CLIMA DI TRIESTE: LA MELANCONIA ERA CONSIDERATA ALL'EPOCA DELL'ANTICO REGIME UNA DEBILITAZIONE O UN CRIMINE?

### SINTESI

L'articolo tratta la rovina di una carriera e di un matrimonio provocata dalla violenza psichica (conseguenza di una presunta "melanconia"), la questione della "criminalità" delle malattie mentali, nonché la creazione dell'immagine del colpevole e della vittima tra il pubblico e il tribunale nel Seicento e Settecento. Il filo rosso è rappresentato dal divorzio nel 1740–1743 di Wolf Sigismondo Conte di Gallenberg (per breve tempo governatore di Trieste e presidente dell'Intendenza Commerciale del Littorale Austriaco) dalla moglie Giuseppa Maria, nipote del Cancelliere di Corte austriaco Filippo Lodovico Conte di Sinzendorf. Dalla documentazione si evince che in seno al loro matrimonio era stato commesso davvero un "crimine", ma soprattutto di natura psichica, o meglio un crimine contro l'onore. Poiché negli anni precedenti non era riuscito a diventare governatore della Carniola, con l'ausilio di mezze verità, spaventando la moglie ed i servitori aveva creato di sé tra l'opinione pubblica l'immagine di una vittima della melanconia provocata dal clima triestino; e dopo alcuni mesi trascorsi in servizio nell'indesiderata Trieste, nel 1740 lasciò arbitrariamente la città. La moglie umiliata cadde nella trappola del falso malato, lo lasciò e convinta di essere vittima di un melanconico violento, chiese il divorzio. Egli, invece, utilizzò con successo il fatto di essere stato abbandonato: la vittima dei suoi intrighi fu presentata al pubblico come una persona insensibile nei confronti di un malato, e se stesso come un suo martire ed un perseguitato dalla malinconia. Per il tribunale ecclesiastico, infatti, la melanconia – quale leggera forma di turba mentale – rappresentava un fondato motivo per il divorzio, però solo nei casi in cui il "melanconico" fosse stato incline alla pazzia già prima del matrimonio, avesse sedotto il partner, o in seguito ne avesse davvero minacciato la vita. Gli accusatori cercarono perciò di convincere con tutte le loro forze l'opinione pubblica ed il tribunale che esistevano anche le vittime dei melanconici, una cosa quasi impossibile da dimostrare, vista la debole percezione della violenza familiare che aveva all'epoca la società.

*Parole chiave:* melanconia, violenza, vittime, divorzio, Seicento – Settecento, Carniola, Trieste, Europa centrale

CIVIL VICTIMS OF 'TRIESTE AIR': WAS MELANCHOLY UNDER THE OLD REGIME A WEAKNESS  
OR A CRIME?

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SUMMARY

*The gist of the present contribution is an 'autopsy' of the disintegration of matrimony as a result of psychological violence and the formation of the image of crime, the perpetrator and the victim within family relations, in the public and, in the end, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century court. The central case taken up to examine these complex issues is 'melancholy', one of the acknowledged causes for various deviations in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. From 1734 to 1743, they were associated with the tempestuous matrimony of the Trieste president of the commercial commissariat and governor, Wolf Sigmund Count of Gallenberg, and his wife Josephine Maria, granddaughter of Philip Luis Count of Sinzendorf, the Austrian Court Chancellor. Although the cause for their separation between 1740 and 1743 was not common, it caused no problems for the judges: as Josephine had no firm proof that her suffering was due to the husband's 'melancholy' before marriage and during it, and as she did not convince the court that there was any danger to her life, no divorce was granted. For the church court, such insanity was an excusable reason for divorce, if the 'melancholic' was inclined to insanity already prior to marrying, if he/she misled the partner in his/her judgment, and if it was eventually proved that he/she had threatened his/her life. As in cases of melancholy it was illness that was at stake and not crime; the plaintiffs did their best to convince the public and courts that there were both physical as well as psychological victims of melancholics. This would enable them to acquire at least a provisional divorce, which would be a (socially) positive consequence of a deviant conjugality, in spite of the society's tolerance towards violence in marriage (particularly towards wives).*

*We see that there was indeed crime at stake in marriage of Gallenberg's, although mainly psychological and moral. According to her own words, Josephine had been a victim in the judgment of her bridegroom, the unscrupulously careerist and 'melancholic' Sigmund, already prior to marriage, for he married her and persisted with her for six years only due to his desire to be named Carniolian Governor General by the Emperor. However, as he failed in this particular endeavour, he began to publicly present himself, with the aid of half truths, deception, and effusion of emotions, as a melancholic victim of circumstances – i.e. – of air, intrigues taking place in his surroundings and at the Vienna Court. To be more persuasive, he deserted Trieste in 1740. The socially disgraced Josephine was imposed upon Sigmund's role of a sick person, left him, and, convinced that it was in fact she who had become a victim of a violent melancholic, demanded a divorce. Here however, she overlooked two highly important 18<sup>th</sup> century elements: first, by fleeing to her family in Vienna she exhibited her distrust in the institution of matrimony's sanctity, and second, the social conventions of persisting in matrimony and subordination to the husband were still upheld by the average Christian. Sigmund publicly presented the victim of his intrigues as a dreamer and a person totally unfeeling towards a sick person in need of help, and at the same time presented himself as her victim. The life of the Gallenberg couple provided us as with a somewhat broader discourse on the more complex issues of violence, immorality, etc., within the family cell. In fact, such cases after all confirm the presence of some kind of permanent 'insanity' and 'victim' in conjugal relations some centuries ago. Here we do not have in mind merely the outbursts of hatred and intrigues, but especially the impacts of social pretences, status, public condemnations and social conventions on the family life.*

*Key words: melancholy, violence, victims, divorce, 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> century, Carniola, Trieste, Middle Europe*