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Clandestine Resistance Literature as the Literature of Trauma

Abstract: This chapter is devoted to examining the literatures of clandestine resistance as literatures of trauma. Clandestine literature emerges as a response to active aggression on the part of a power-holding group and therefore aims to inform and inspire people to protest and fight; it also serves a testimonial function. At the same time, clandestine resistance literatures channel collective and individual trauma, contributing to self-inflicted trauma. To illustrate general trends, the examples used in the chapter are deliberately taken from diverse literatures that differ in their social objectives, historical context, or aesthetics. These include the Soviet clandestine literature of the 1930s, the Dutch anti-occupation resistance literature of World War II, and the Soviet dissident literature of the 1960s.

Keywords: clandestine literature, marginalisation, power, resistance, trauma

1 Introduction: Philology of the unspoken word

Philological studies of the spoken and written word lead us to explore the opposite phenomenon: the word that is unspoken or spoken under circumstances that force one to remain silent. The painful overcoming of dumbness, and, even more so, doing so under conditions that endanger one's own life and well-being, is of undeniable interest to philology. Therefore, the approach to the literature of trauma in this chapter is interdisciplinary; incorporating physiological and cultural theories of trauma into the study of literary phenomena seems particularly necessary now that literature has acquired the additional function of a channel for trauma release. At the same time, however, trauma has always been among the interests of philology, if not always explicitly. As noted by Werner Hamacher, language is "the *euchē,* the plea, the prayer, the desire" (Hamacher 2009, 26). From this philological perspective, resistance takes the form of the desire to withstand, and of trauma – of a plea to be heard. The engage-

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ment of philology with pain, trauma, and suffering was described in detail by Hamacher in reference to Paul Celan's verse.

> How does philology answer these verses of Celan? By refusing all attempts at measurement through a norm of language that shatters in them. By recognizing that the psychiatric diagnosis of these verses as manifesting an aphasic disorder is itself a disorder of language. By [. . .] adopting them as a memorandum of a language that would be human in a different way – a language of pain which can only say that it is allowed to babble but which injures its own law: which does not bring pain to language but language to pain. (Hamacher 2009, 34)

Literary texts studied in this chapter share a common background: they were all created under social conditions that militate against their writing. In other words, the chapter focuses on texts created in spite of the social situation. To varying degrees, all these texts call for disobedience and were thus created at the risk of the author's well-being, freedom, or even life. Working under such conditions has a lasting traumatic effect on the authors. Consequently, the philological material is explored here through the lens of research on trauma theory, both individual and cultural. Traumatic experiences of authors influence the content and style of their texts, while the reverse is also true: writing and reading these texts contributes to the constitution of the traumatic experience. Applying trauma studies to the material of clandestine resistance literature highlights the connection between resistance literatures that emerge at different times and places. It also offers a new perspective on the authors of resistance texts: not only as strong and brave figures, but also as humans confronting fear, confusion, and loneliness daily.

Combining literature, resistance, and trauma calls for engaging in a wide range of issues. On the one hand, it highlights what has been referred to as "Discourses of the Unsayable" (Coupland and Coupland 1997). On the other hand, studies in trauma require multidisciplinary perspectives, as they deal with "a set of centripetal tensions: between the everyday and the extreme, between individual identity and collective experience, between history and the present, between experience and representation, between facts and memory, and between the 'clinical' and the 'cultural'" (Wertheimer and Casper 2016, 4).

Another key aspect of the multidisciplinary approach in this regard is the relation between language and power and the language response to shifts in culture, politics, and ethics. The interdependence of language and social realities was addressed by Antonio Gramsci in 1935, when he observed that the question of language invariably foregrounds the issues of obtaining and holding power and reorganising cultural hegemony as such (Gramsci 2000, 357). Notably, this statement holds true for exploring issues of resistance in literature but is not necessarily applicable to discussions of the literature of trauma. The literature of trauma is undeniably means by which the authors and the communities they represent find their voices, but it is not always aimed at a total restructuring of powers. In other words, while literatures of resistance to war, occupation, and violence make an undeniable and intentional contribution to

the active struggle for social power, the work of resistance literature under conditions of political pressure in totalitarian societies is sometimes more focused on preserving the author's identity and hope for justice. In this context, combining the study of literature, resistance, and trauma enriches their understanding, expanding their interpretation far beyond the classical paradigm.

2 Expressions of resistance in literature

The literature of resistance, which has experienced multiple surges throughout the twentieth century in Europe, continues to be relevant at the end of the first quarter of the twenty-first century. Physics defines resistance as "the opposition offered by a body or substance to the passage through it of a steady electric current" (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v. *resistance*, n.), a definition that metaphorically applies to resistance movements and literatures of resistance. Conforming to the universal laws of physics, resistance literatures have persistently emerged in the face of violations of human rights and freedoms by occupations and totalitarian regimes. At its core, resistance to historical conditions and personalities is driven by a physical and moral desire for freedom. In Taiwo Afuape's words, the choice to engage in reactive or reflective resistance "is often heavily determined by the wider social context, such as the social circumstances, opportunities and restraints we experience" (Afuape 2011, 37). Resistance can manifest itself in multiple ways, including through creative activity, where it takes the form of reflections on the state of affairs as well as direct calls for disobedience and change. Literature of resistance is, therefore, as Barbara Harlow observed, a political and politicised activity, a conscious act of involving oneself in the struggle against ideological or cultural forms of oppression (Harlow 1987, 28–29). By its very nature, resistance to oppression calls for literary activity: the desire to fight injustice and change the environment requires communication with other dissidents or comrades-in-arms, and literature is ideally suited for building the emotional bonds necessary for such solidarity.

The contexts of resistance are diverse and can vary in the intensity and frequency of direct contact with opposing forces. Narratives of resistance have been widely studied in relation to post-colonialism (Carbajal 2014; Davies et al. 2017; Ward 2015), racism (Ernest 2012; Huggan 2007; Kerkering 2003), feminism (Beard 2009; Oldfield 2015; Sandoval 2008), queer studies (Grindstaff 2006; Rand 2014; van Klinken 2019), and disability and healthcare (Hall 2016; Krentz 2022). Research on these narratives of resistance has, therefore, focused on various contexts of human rights violations and on finding ways to restore justice. In this regard, resistance is both a destructive and a creative force, as it seeks to defy oppression and promote justice.

Among the diverse forms of resistance literature, a special place is occupied by those born in the underground and outlawed from their inception. Clandestine litera-

tures are distinguished by their origin – unauthorised writing and distribution – and punishments imposed upon its authors and distributors, which can range from fines and public censure to imprisonment, compulsory psychiatric treatment, and even death. Even when the themes and objectives of clandestine resistance literatures align with more open forms of resistance, the traumatism of the underground narrative is exacerbated by the very conditions of their existence.

This chapter is devoted to examining the literatures of clandestine resistance as literatures of trauma. I deliberately choose very dissimilar examples – literatures that vary significantly in their social objectives, time and place of origin, and aesthetics. These include the Soviet clandestine writings during the Great Purge of the 1930s, the literature of the Dutch anti-occupation resistance of World War II, and the Soviet dissident literature of the 1960s. Against the background of the divergence in key parameters of these literatures, a unifying feature emerges: their clandestine origins and illegal status, which are associated with an ever-present danger of which the authors of clandestine works are acutely aware. This awareness contributes to the subsequent romanticising of clandestine literary activities over time. The halo of romanticism and the belief that clandestine authors and publishers knew neither fear nor pain has, it seems, impeded the active studies in clandestine writings in the context of trauma literature. In this chapter, I aim to dispel the remnants of stereotypes and explore the intersection of clandestine literary activity and trauma. I believe this approach holds great potential for further research on literature, resistance, trauma, and coping.

3 Resistance literature under clandestine conditions

Given its nature and purpose, the literature of resistance is never mainstream. The reverse, however, is not always true: not every non-mainstream work of literature can be classified as literature of resistance in the directly political sense of the word. In challenging existing power, resistance literatures also work towards empowering the communities they represent. The defining feature of clandestine literature is its official illegality, both in terms of its content and in terms of its reproduction and distribution to readers. Clandestine literature emerges as a reaction to active aggression on the part of a group holding power, which is sometimes local but more often national. The power-holding group imposes, among other things, explicit rules on the publication and distribution of literature or holds a complete monopoly on literary activity.

Clandestine literature thus represents an illegal alternative to the forcefully imposed mainstream. At the same time, involvement in clandestine literary activities is regarded by those in power as a criminal act deserving punishment, including, in extreme cases, death. Engaging in clandestine literary activity – whether through organ-

ised publishing or individual writing with little prospect to be read or heard – is always an act of social transgression, reflecting individual dissent and refusal to accept the prevailing state of affairs. The most acute and, probably, most powerful description of this feeling is found in the memoirs of Lidia Chukovskaia, who was a close friend and confidante of poet Anna Akhmatova for many years.

> The confine that materially had swallowed up entire city neighbourhoods and spiritually – our thoughts in sleep or in waking, the confine that shouted its own crafted lies from every newspaper page, from every radio broadcast, demanded of us at the same time that we should not mention its name in vain, even within four walls, one to one. We were disobedient, we constantly mentioned its name, vaguely suspecting that even when we were alone, we were not alone, that someone was keeping an eye, or rather ears on us. Surrounded by muteness, the confine wished to remain both omnipotent and nonexistent at the same time; it did not want to allow anyone's word to summon it out of the omnipotent nothingness; it was near, at hand, and at the same time it was as if it did not exist. (Chukovskaia 1997, 12–13)[1]

The withdrawal of literature into the underground and secrecy is directly related to its aesthetic and social goals of challenging oppression. From a genre perspective, confronting aggression can take many forms, including autobiographies, dystopias, reflective poetry, or defiant calls for active resistance (Harlow 1987). An optional but common feature of clandestine writings is their relative brevity, which greatly facilitates distribution. For instance, clandestine literature is often disseminated in manuscript form, which calls for shorter texts, as the dangerous circumstances and the required speed of production make it difficult to rewrite larger texts. Another method of dissemination is underground periodicals, which can sometimes publish larger literary forms in instalments; however, their existence is not stable enough to guarantee the publication of sequels. Consequently, an important feature of clandestine literature is its considerable slant towards poetry, which, due to its mnemonic qualities, is designed to be memorised to be later reproduced without visual support, as Chukovskaia did for Akhmatova in the 1930s (Chukovskaia 1997, 13).

Crucially, clandestine authors do not always view themselves as conspirers against the political powers. Regine Büchel notably observed that, concerning the German resistance, hardly any resistance fighters initially considered themselves as conspirers (Büchel 1975, 51). The reasons for joining the literary resistance are not typically framed as a great mission; rather, authors might speak of their inability to remain silent, their desire to resist injustice, or their search for like-minded people, or they may not comment on their literary activities at all. Nevertheless, clandestine literature is always a form of resistance and, as Sybil Oldfield put it, echoing Virginia Woolf, a "mental fight" against oppression (Oldfield 2015, 1). Another important aspect of defining clandestine resistance literature is its perception by the readership and its recognition as an act of forbidden resistance against authority. Quite importantly, the

1 All translations of literary examples in this chapter are mine unless otherwise indicated.

authorities' recognition of a work of literature as an act of defiance of their rule is also a marker of illegal resistance. Among the non-textual features of clandestine literature is also the heightened caution involved in its dissemination, if not on behalf of the authors, then on behalf of the publishers. Thus, a regular, though not obligatory, feature of clandestine literature is its anonymity or use of pen names as a means of self-protection from political persecution. Over time, the authorship of works can remain obscured; for example, the authorship of the new Geuzen songs in the Netherlands under the Nazi occupation was not revealed until the early 1960s (Dewulf 2010, 106).

Hindered by political circumstances and performed in dangerous conditions, the production of clandestine literature can be intermittent and hasty. In such precarious environments, the focus of attention can shift from form to content and the urgency to communicate the message to the reader quickly; consequently, editing may be minimal or even absent. Breaches in literary quality are more common in literature produced under official pressure compared to works written in more socially favourable circumstances. Describing the production of the new Geuzen songs mentioned above, Jeroen Dewulf noted the comparatively poor literary quality of the poems, which he ascribed to the authors' wish to reach the widest possible audience rather than to achieve artistic perfection. This led to post-war descriptions of Dutch clandestine literature as "unimportant rhymed propaganda," despite its significant cultural and social impact (Dewulf 2010, 106, 166).

On the other hand, the means of resistance in clandestine literature are not restricted to the content and topics of literary works. In the literatures of totalitarian regimes, for example, forms and genres often function as means of resistance, especially when the regime establishes a literary monopoly and dictates aesthetic principles. In February 1965, a group of young poets and writers in Moscow established a creative union called *SMOG*. The Russian acronym humorously stands for *Samoe Molodoe Obshchestvo Geniev* [Society of Youngest Geniuses] and reflects its slogan *Smelost', Mysl', Obraz, Glubina* [Courage, Thought, Image, Depth] and the creative motto *Szhatyi Mig, Otrazhennyi Giperboloi* [The Compressed Moment Reflected by Hyperbole]. The group's manifesto circulated at the time reads:

> We are very, very few. But we are the new sprout of the coming one, which has sprung up on fertile soil. [. . .] Now we are fighting desperately against everyone: from the Komsomol to the middlebrow, from the Chekists to the common herd, from the mediocre to the ignorant – everyone is against us. (Mal'tsev 1976, 85–86)

SMOG members were persecuted: some were expelled from educational institutions, others were banned from residing in the capital, and the most active members were forcibly placed in psychiatric hospitals. Until its forced dissolution in April 1966, *SMOG* members published several poetry collections and a single issue of the journal *Sfinksy* [*Sphynxes*]. The literary works published by *SMOG* were remarkable for their styles and images; see, for instance, the final paragraph of the story "Metempsychosis"

by Mark Edvin published in *Sfinksy*: "The flat smelt strongly of gas, but he was still alive. (His soul was moving into the fish. A mistake occurred.) He was discharged from the hospital a month later and lived for twenty-six years" (Mal'tsev 1976, 87). The surrealism of the situation described clashed sharply with the principles of the Soviet literary mainstream, whose reaction was swift and cruel.

Even under military occupation, literary aesthetics and form may well become a means of resistance fit only for clandestine dissemination. A good example in this regard is the Dutch clandestine journal *De Schone Zakdoek* [*The Clean Kerchief*] created in one copy between April 1941 through March 1944 by Gertrude Pape and Theo van Baaren (van Baaren and Pape 1981). The journal focused on publishing modernist and surrealist literary works, which clashed with the Third Reich's policy against "degenerate art." The journal also published translations of works by authors like T. S. Eliot, Paul Eluard, Louis Codet, Benjamin Péret, Gerald Gould, W. H. Auden, Rainer Maria Rilke, Georg Trakl, and Langston Hughes. The editors and authors created surrealistic poetic *cadavres exquis* at private gatherings. These pieces were composed during a game involving folded paper, where a text was produced by different people, each unaware of what had been written so far. Some of these *cadavres exquis* were published by *De Schone Zakdoek*, with one of the most famous being by Eric Terduyn [Emiel van Moerkerken] and Christiaan Johannes van Geel (Terduyn and van Geel 1981, 18–19).

Given the above, one might assume that clandestine literature would have disappeared with the advent of the internet and social networks, which enable literature to reach a significant readership quickly and efficiently. The very definition of "clandestine" begins to acquire blurred contours when applied to the realities of the twenty-first century. However, clandestine literatures still exist today, though their movement to the internet can be metaphorically described as a shift from the "underground" of physical clandestine presses to the "overground," as they are communicated virtually by air. Despite this shift, the characteristics of clandestine literature have not changed as significantly as one might think. Firstly, the control of social networks, however regrettable it may be, has turned out to be quite effective. While Bill Clinton once likened the dream of controlling the internet to nailing Jello to the wall ("Clinton's Words on China" 2000), the first quarter of the twenty-first century has demonstrated that controlling and blocking internet access, individual sites, or social networks is quite possible. In a number of countries with stringent control over citizens, access to blocked sites or social networks may be possible through VPNs, but accessing these sources is automatically considered an offence by state authorities. Consequently, publishing on "banned" social networks and ignoring officially "authorised" ones has become a technique of clandestine literature, akin to the use of underground printing presses in the pre-internet era.

The subject matter of the works published in the internet underground closely resembles that of traditional underground literature, with the main distinction being the potential for collective discussion. This interactivity allows for additional com-

ments, references to other texts, and allusions, which increases the impact of publications. However, the internet readership, not unlike that of paper editions, may include provocateurs – often in the form of real people, but increasingly in the form of bots – as well as informants. Unlike clandestine paper publications, the internet allows for the individual publication of large literary forms. Nonetheless, poetry continues to maintain a prominent role in resistance literature. The quality of published works varies, depending in particular on the discerning nature of the cohort of followers gathered around the author, who can impact the literary quality and encourage the author to edit. Despite this, editing of works clandestinely published on the internet remains challenging due to the necessity of VPNs, which work intermittently and are regularly jammed by the authorities. Authors are in constant danger of provocation or denunciation, with their lives and freedom at risk even if they publish under fictitious names. Given these circumstances, I do not think it is timely or sensible to speak substantively about the clandestine literatures that currently exist. In any case, the objective study of trauma requires a temporal distance from its source, which makes one hope that studies of this material will take place when the time is right.

4 Clandestine writing as trauma self-infliction

The classical view of trauma literature emphasises narratives of resistance describing war, physical violence, and discrimination. These themes are the predominant focus of major publications on trauma in literature (Alexander et al. 2004; Davis and Meretoja 2020b; Kurtz 2018), which is understandable given their prominence in contemporary life. Despite the direct relation of clandestine literatures to these narratives, their proportion on the world literary scene is comparatively small. In addition, the stereotype of the resistance fighter complicates the classification of clandestine resistance literature as trauma literature. To the uninitiated, a resistance author may appear to be a physically strong and fearless revolutionary leader, capable not only of inspiring the masses but also of fighting back against opposing forces. A close study of underground literatures, however, provides evidence to the contrary: the conditions of their production and dissemination, as well as their content, are profoundly traumatic and regularly have adverse effects on those involved in the literary process in the long run. Engagement with clandestine writing is not simply a conscious decision but a deliberate self-infliction of traumatic experience, as the clandestine author may come from a quite prosperous environment, mostly unaffected by the ongoing events. The decision to broadcast misfortune – and clandestine literature does not emerge in times of social optimism and justice – is a conscious act of self-inflicted moral suffering for a greater cause. The endeavour is undertaken with the clear awareness that it may increase moral suffering and potentially lead to physical deprivation, as well as endanger one's life and freedom. These sentiments are vividly expressed in the poem

by Jan Campert "Rebel, mijn hart" [Rebel, my Heart], written shortly after the occupation of the Netherlands and Paris in 1940.

> Rebel, mijn hart, gekerkerd en geknecht,
> die aan de tralies van den al-dag rukt,
> weest om Uw tijdlijk lot geenszins bedrukt,
> al zijn Uw kluisters hard, de muren hecht. (Campert 2005, 104)
>
> [Rebel, my heart, imprisoned and enslaved heart,
> That shakes the bars of daily life around you,
> Be not distressed by your temporary fate,
> no matter how hard your shackles and thick the walls.]

The term "trauma," derived from the Ancient Greek word for "wound" (τραῦμα), has come to encompass a much wider range of phenomena. Among other things, it is used to describe a psychological injury resulting by tragic events or severe distress (Davis and Meretoja 2020a, 1). Trauma can affect both individuals and social groups. In the latter case, it is a culturally mediated event that "occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways" (Alexander 2004, 1). While the term "trauma" can describe a traumatic event itself, it also refers to the psychological effect of the event on an individual or a community. According to the classic definition given by Kai Erikson, an individual trauma is "a blow to the psyche that breaks through one's defences so suddenly and with such brutal force that one cannot react to it effectively," whereas a collective trauma is "a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality" (Erikson 1976, 154). Collective trauma affects the identity of a social group, which, in turn, seeks "to represent social pain as a fundamental threat to their sense of who they are" (Alexander 2004, 10). However, collectives do not engage directly in making claims about social reality and responsibilities; instead, they are represented by collective agents of trauma processes, otherwise called carrier groups. These carrier groups can come from various social origins, including generational, institutional, and national backgrounds, and can be part of any social stratum, including denigrated and marginalised classes (Alexander 2004, 11).

By linking the trauma process to the theory of speech acts, Jeffrey C. Alexander identified key components such as the speaker (the carrier group), the audience, and the situation within which the process takes place (Alexander 2004, 11). Applying this scheme to clandestine literature, we see that it occurs under oppressive or even life-threatening circumstances, under which an active carrier group endeavours to communicate its disagreement with the state of affairs first to fellow dissidents and then to a wider audience. The choice of fellow dissidents as an initial target audience is common in trauma narratives; as Alexander observes, expanding the audience of the traumatic claim is only possible after achieving the initial illocutionary success (Alex-

ander 2004, 11). In the case of clandestine resistance literature, the need for the author to establish links to the carrier group is of even greater importance; in fact, sometimes the further broadening of the readership is unwise, as it increases risks. One of the primary functions of resistance literature is to create a community, which it often achieves despite the risks, the highly traumatic content of literature, and the profoundly traumatised members of the community, whose individual stories and opinions invariably increase stress. In this regard, as Erikson notes, "trauma has both centripetal and centrifugal tendencies. [. . .] The human chemistry at work here is an odd one, but it has been noted many times before: estrangement becomes the basis for communality" (Erikson 1995, 186). Uniting is one of the traditional themes of resistance; for example, in 1940, the resistance poet Klaas Heeroma spoke of its vital role for the Dutch nation.

> . . . Dit groote lijden
> Maakte ons tot één volk: niemand kan scheiden,
> Die staan vereenigd om eenzelfde graf. (Heeroma 2005, 47)
>
> [This great suffering
> made us one people: no one can separate
> those who stand united at the same grave.]

In the case of clandestine literature, engaging with the carrier group readership is difficult and gaining feedback in the case of paper presses or manuscript circulation can be next to impossible. Reading clandestine literary works is usually considered a criminal activity by authorities, and the consequences for readers might not differ much from those for writers and publishers. In contemporary online publications, the readership response can partially be gauged by likes, comments, and reposts; however, these metrics are not always indicative of the full reality. Likes, comments, and reposts may also be penalised, leading many readers to remain silent and invisible while closely following the author. In any type of media, authors of clandestine writings can experience the feeling of working in void, totally alone. Quite notably, this sense of isolation is often more pronounced for online authors, as paper publishing traditionally involves a collective effort, engaging a group of clandestine writers or publishers, whereas online publishing can be a very lonely business.

It is significant that, unlike authors writing freely, clandestine authors almost never openly complain about the absence of readers. However, the fact that the readership is blurred and unstructured is sometimes mentioned in their works, albeit metaphorically. Such references crop up in both anti-war and dissident literature. For instance, the collection compiled by Willem J. H. B. Sandberg in 1943 was entitled *Lectura sub aqua* [*Underwater Readings*], a metaphor for the necessity of many Dutch readers to go into hiding. Sandberg opened the collection by repeating the image: "Part of the Dutch nation lives under water, another part just manages to keep its head above water" (Sandberg 1943, 8 in Dewulf 2010, 86). The limited dissemination

and the small circle of readers were referred to by the Russian poet-dissident Aleksandr Galich in 1966, as he described the dissident literature's opposition to the mainstream.

> Их имён с эстрад не рассиропили,
> В супер их не тискают облаточный:
> «Эрика» берёт четыре копии,
> Вот и всё!
> . . . А этого достаточно. (Galich 2006, 144)

> [Their names have not been turned to syrup by pop stages,
> They are not squeezed into super covers:
> "Erika" takes four copies,
> That's it!
> . . . And that's enough.]

The "Erika" mentioned by Galich is the name of the typewriter used for Soviet underground publishing. The GDR typewriter manufactured by "VEB Dresden" made it possible to simultaneously print four readable carbon copies on thin paper, though the top one was bold and the bottom one barely legible. The typewriter, however, is not the most unusual tool used in the history of clandestine literature. Because of electricity shortages, some Dutch resistance publishers had to power the printing press by hooking it up to a bicycle, which someone had to pedal continuously (Dewulf 2010, 90).

The feeling of alienation from the readership continuously intensifies the traumatic experience of clandestine authors, who are already facing a traumatic environment, traumatic messages of writings, and the constant threat of discovery. Yet the feeling of loneliness is not only a risk for clandestine resistance authors; it is also an object of struggle. Totalitarian and occupation regimes portray resistance as an anomaly, reducing it to isolated instances of protest led by individual protesters who are unstable, criminally inclined, or even mentally ill. In this context, the refutation of loneliness becomes an additional task that significantly increases traumatic stress. Even when clandestine literature is able to reach an audience and have an impact, the reaction of the central resistance group can sometimes be negative. For instance, some members of the Dutch resistance criticised clandestine literature of protest, arguing that the resources involved should rather be used to physically fight the occupiers, dismissing clandestine poetry as "silly romanticism" and "an elitist waste of paper" (Dewulf 2010, 161).

In cases of clandestine literary opposition to the political mainstream, the authors can be written off as graphomaniacs. With little feedback from the readership, it is difficult for writers to refute such accusations. The profound loneliness of a non-mainstream writer was poignantly described by Andrei Siniavskii (also known under his pen name Abram Terz) in his 1960 short story "Graphomaniacs."

> Admirers, bibliographers, memoirists . . . And who will write memoirs about me? Who will remember and immortalise me, I am asking you? [. . .] Then I broke loose, halting abruptly, stopping at full acceleration, and almost falling down, and looked spitefully into the dark sky that hung low over my forehead. I spoke not loudly, but weightily enough, addressing directly into there,
>
> Hey, you, you graphomaniac! Quit your job! Everything you write is worthless. How inept your writings are. You are impossible to read . . . (Terz 2008, 55)

Painful discussion topics, self-inflicted moral suffering, low readership response, potential denial, the necessity to keep up one's morale, and, finally, dangerous circumstances clearly qualify clandestine literature as literature of trauma. Clandestine literary works represent a channel for raising traumatic issues, seeking solutions, and hoping for justice and punishment for the perpetrators. It has been observed that any engagement in resistance is preceded by affect, which in turn is linked to a threat to one's own identity (Afuape 2011, 44; Smelser 2004, 40). The urge to communicate one's position on injustice under trauma becomes inevitable, as, in Cathy Caruth's words, "to be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event" (Caruth 1995, 4–5). This possession is comparable to the steady electric current that was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter; the reaction begins when the body and mind are pierced with pain. Authors of clandestine resistance works are carriers of trauma, be it wittingly or unwittingly; the initial traumatic trigger can be of any nature, from physical violence to vicarious trauma. The clandestine literature readership response is blurred to the degree that authors might feel completely invisible and muffled by the mainstream, which increases the traumatic experience.

Another important feature of clandestine narratives is that they acutely respond to ongoing events, reacting to what is happening in near real time. This feature clearly distinguishes clandestine narratives from other traumatic narratives: whereas most trauma literature is considered a delayed response to traumatic events (Davis and Meretoja 2020a, 3–4), clandestine resistance authors channel traumatic events with minimal distance from their occurrence. This absence of latency places clandestine authors' work in a very specific mode, in which the reliving and releasing of psychological trauma is sidelined for the sake of the social and aesthetic struggles. As a result, these authors continually live within the trauma, even self-inflicting it in the service of their cause.

5 Clandestine writing as fighting injustice

Clandestine literature, as a reaction to ongoing events, plays a crucial role in informing and inspiring its audience to resist pressure and injustice, while also functioning as potential testimony. In the framework of the Remember/Know paradigm (Jensen 2019, 36), clandestine writing aligns closely with "knowing" due to the immediacy of

the creative response. The testimonial function is ingrained in resistance writing and especially clandestine literary activity. As Meg Jensen observed, testimonies are frequently constituted by "marginalized populations in response to oppressive systems and institutions" (Jensen 2020, 67). Testimonies in resistance literatures are not solely focused on finding allies and fighting aggressors; they also serve the more far-reaching purpose of preserving memory for the sake of restoring justice when the time comes. For clandestine literature, the act of testimony is particularly important given its inherent vulnerability: printed and handwritten copies are not plentiful, and online publications are often destroyed in a matter of minutes by authors or their families in moments of personal danger or a sudden escalation of social issues.

Literary testimonies written clandestinely can initially be created for dissemination or for introspective purposes: to ensure that events are not forgotten, to make sense of them later, and, crucially, to avoid being accused of exaggerating the scale of what occurred. At the time of writing, such works of literature already belong to the underground by virtue of their content and, if discovered, may serve as evidence of their author's supposed criminal thinking and actions. Their circulation only increases the potential risk for the author. This is exemplified in Anna Akhmatova's "Requiem," an elegy about the terrible Great Purge of the 1930s, in course of which Akhmatova's son and husband were arrested several times. Prefacing the elegy, Akhmatova gives an account of the event that inspired the work, emphasising that her primary motivation was to preserve the individual and collective memory – to serve as a testimony for the restoration of justice and a proof of personal sanity.

> In those dreadful years of the Yezhov terror, I spent seventeen months in Leningrad's prison queues. On one occasion someone "recognized" me. A woman standing behind me, who of course had never heard of me, awoke from the stupor we all shared and murmured in my ear (for we all spoke in whispers there),
>
> "So can you describe this?"
>
> And I said,
>
> "I can."
>
> And as I answered, something resembling a smile slipped briefly across what had once been her face. (Akhmatova 2016 [1957], translated by Rupert Moreton)

Akhmatova worked on her poem intermittently, starting it in the 1930s and returning to it in the 1950s. Manuscripts of "Requiem" were regularly burned by Akhmatova after reading them to people she trusted, as described in this chapter above. "Requiem" began circulating in Russian underground literature in the 1960s, but its first full publication occurred abroad, in Munich in 1964. It was not fully published in Russia until 1987, twenty-one years after its author's death.

A similar fate of delayed recognition and justice befell Iulii Daniel's poem "And at this time . . .," which he wrote in a prison camp at the end of the 1960s while serving a sentence alongside Siniavskii for illegal literary activities and publications abroad. Daniel's poem is also an attempt to record the fates of people imprisoned in Soviet labour camps and preserve their testimonies for posterity.

Нам – не идиллия, не пастораль,
Не бессловесный гимн –
Обречены мы запомнить всё
И рассказать другим. (Daniel' 1971, 84)

[To us – this is no idyll, nor a pastoral,
Nor a wordless hymn –
We are doomed to remember it all
And tell it to others.]

Clandestine resistance writing is, therefore, an activity with a potentially deferred effect, which is also a feature of trauma. Caruth describes the issue as "not, fundamentally, a problem of representation, but a question of address" (Caruth 2020, 79). The lack of a clearly defined readership and sometimes uncertainty about its minimal existence exacerbate the traumatic experience. Additionally, the longevity of clandestine works is questionable by the nature of the circumstances of their creation, making it difficult to imagine future readerships of people who would want to reconstruct the true state of affairs.

The stereotype of the underground hero fighting in the name of restoring truth and justice makes it very difficult to perceive the clandestine resistance author as a suffering party. Reference to the dictionary confirms the stereotype: for example, *Merriam-Webster* compares a "fighter" to a warrior, a soldier, or even a boxer (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v. *fighter*, n.). A literary resistance fighter does not overtly conform to conventional notions of victimhood, which involve passivity, helplessness, and the uncomplaining endurance of suffering. This misrepresentation can lead, as Susana Onega ruthlessly puts it, to a shift in the society's "attitude to victims of trauma or loss if they do not fulfil their expected sacrificial roles" (Onega 2020, 94).

In this regard, the most important parameter of clandestine resistance literature is the constant struggle with fear. This struggle has both a social orientation, as it informs and inspires the readership and works towards building a community of fellow dissidents, and an individual introspective orientation, as it is a constant battle with the relentless fear of censure, obscurity, reprisal, and potential denial of readership. This dual struggle is captured by Siniavskii in "Graphomaniacs," in which he speaks of the suppression of creative endeavours, the imposition of limits on what is allowed in literature, and the enforcement of prescribed forms as forms of violence and injustice that authors must resist by continuing their independent work. The last paragraph, full of determination to persist despite all the fears and dangers of clandestine activity, resonates with underground literatures across eras. These are the words of a man who was crushed by adversity but who refuses to surrender, steadfast in his faith in the mission of his work.

> Write! Don't be afraid. Let them laugh at you and call you a graphomaniac. They're graphomaniacs themselves. Graphomaniacs are around us. We are many, many more than necessary. And we live in vain and die in vain. But one of us will get there. Either you, or me, or someone else.

> He'll get there, he'll bring it there. Write, Pavel, write your tales about your funny dwarfs. And I will write about mine . . . You and I will make up so many fairy-tales . . . A dime a thousand. Just don't say anything to Mum. (Terz 2008, 56–57)

6 Conclusion

Studying clandestine resistance literature in the context of trauma research allows us to expand our understanding of the nature of underground resistance in general. Clandestine literature is not a separate genre, theme, or singular historical phenomenon. However, it functions within a specific narrative that distinguishes it from other literatures of resistance and protest. The realisation that what one creates at a given moment has already been banned and thus renders oneself an outlaw – even if the content of one's writing is harmless on the universal human scale – is a source of trauma in itself. The traumatism of clandestine literature increases with the number of obstacles such literature encounters. The trauma of resistance inevitably translates into the themes and motifs of clandestine literature, further increasing the individual trauma of the author. Over time, the author is transformed into a fighter and conspirator in the eyes of the public, even if he or she never aspired to such roles.

This chapter aims to bring the clandestine resistance literary narrative into the framework of trauma literature research. This vision of clandestine literature presents us with a whole range of issues and challenges. For example, a crucial point for further consideration of trauma in clandestine resistance literature is the issue of victimhood and individual responsibility for the ongoing events. The burden of individual responsibility can have serious traumatic consequences, potentially even manifesting as perpetrator trauma. Regarding the structure of clandestine traumatic discourse, translations from other languages published in underground periodicals can be of particular interest. Traditionally studied for their selection criteria, literary translations must also be analysed as actions that contribute to the increase of collective and individual traumas. Translations tend to reduplicate the traumatic experience across languages, attesting to the universality of traumatic experiences and adding to the trauma experienced by translators themselves. Finally, it would be extremely interesting to apply a quantitative approach to the study of clandestine resistance literatures to measure changes in traumatic markers as the danger posed by historical events increases or decreases.

The literature of clandestine resistance, as was indicated at the beginning of the chapter, is in many ways a literature of loneliness. It is a literature of solitude by the fact of its creation, a literature of strength by the inner resilience of its authors, and often a literature of heroism by its impact on the contemporaries. Each of these elements – loneliness, strength, heroism – has the potential to participate in the formation and infliction of trauma. Therefore, an examination of clandestine resistance literatures that does not consider trauma theory cannot do them justice. Integrating

trauma theory into the study of resistance literatures does not diminish the author's greatness and heroism; on the contrary, it recognises the power inherent in overcoming fear, which is where true greatness lies. Understanding how people find their voice in literature and confront the fear of death through language is a crucial philological task. By addressing trauma theory in philological studies, we gain deeper insights into the power of literature and its role in enabling humans to transcend their circumstances, thereby becoming true creators of their own destinies and a source of hope for others.

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