

SLOVENE REACTIONS TO WILLIAM FAULKNER'S WRITING

Nataša Intihar Klančar

Abstract

The article deals with Slovene reactions to William Faulkner's writing: a lot of critical attention was given to the author twice, namely after he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1949 and after his death in 1962. The articles and reviews published in Slovene magazines and newspapers focused on themes, characterization, style and structure of his novels. Thus the Slovene reading public got the chance to get to know one of the greatest novelists of 20th century, his troubled, decaying, socially, racially, religiously and historically challenged American South and through it -- themselves and their attitude toward the world and its problems. Faulkner also had a strong influence on some of the Slovene writers of 1950s and 1960s: they adopted his themes and writing techniques, namely a cyclic structure of the novel and stream-of-consciousness technique, thus forging the new Slovene modernist fiction that started to emerge from the late 1960s onwards.

It should be mentioned right at the beginning that Faulkner's attitude toward critics and their reviews was rather unconventional and unorthodox, for the author did neither recognize nor read them, the consequence being he did not want to and could not take their comments into consideration when working on his novels. Gwynn and Blotner's *Faulkner in the University – Class Conferences at the University of Virginia 1957–1958* combines a series of interviews with Faulkner at the time when he was a lecturing professor at the above-mentioned university and at the same time offers an insight into the author's thoughts on various subjects. Let us take a closer look at an excerpt focusing on his view regarding the critics' influence on him:

There's nothing anybody can tell me I don't know about it, and the critic, nor I either, can improve it any by that time and the only way to improve it is to write one that will be better next time, and so I'm at that and I probably just don't have time to read the critics. (60)

Furthermore:

I don't read [them]. I'm too busy [...] I'm sure it would be valuable, but the writer, if he's as busy as I am and has got as much that he needs to say as I have and knows he never will live long enough to say it all, he ain't got time

to read what anybody else says about his work because he already knows what it is—it ain't good enough, that's why he's writing another. (90)

Faulkner does not stop there but goes on to confess: "I don't read the critics. I don't know any literary people" (Gwynn, Blotner 1959: 65). It might be true that Faulkner did not spend (much or any of) his time dealing with critical responses but it should be pointed out that these same literary circles did spend quite some time analyzing his works, both in his native country and in Slovenia where numerous articles and reviews can be found in magazines and newspapers, concentrating on themes, characterization, style and structure of his writing, as discussed in the article. Most of these written records appeared no sooner than after 1950 (it was in the same period that Slovene writers adopted Faulkner's themes and writing techniques), when Faulkner – as the fourth American, following in the footsteps of Sinclair Lewis, Eugene O'Neill and Pearl Buck – was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

It is this honorable event that the critic Vlado Habjan looks at in his article "Nekaj misli o sodobni ameriški književnosti" (Some Thoughts on Contemporary American Literature) published in the newspaper *Primorski dnevnik*. Habjan calls the readers' attention to the fact that the younger generation of American writers cannot measure up to the acknowledged and respected literary creators, such as William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald and (before them) Walt Whitman, Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis, who all reached their glory abroad first, whereas native literary recognition came later. Habjan thinks: "The most problematic among them all, the melancholic and pessimistic Southerner William Faulkner right [now] received the highest award a novelist in the Western world can win" (Habjan 1951: 4).

Habjan puts into perspective the authors of the so-called "Lost Generation" with the ones blossoming in the 1950s, he concludes that the former enjoy the fruits of their labor, "while the young authors still have to strive for success with critics and publishers to acquire at least a basic understanding of their problems and their way of writing" (Habjan 1951: 4). The article moves on to introduce a few young authors, whom "American criticism according to its usual practice diminishes their quality and calls them "The New Lost Generation" (Habjan 1951: 4), but at the same time optimistically wonders which one of them is to become the new Steinbeck, Dreiser or Faulkner, suggesting John Dos Passos, Erskin Caldwell, John Steinbeck, Truman Capote and Eudora Welty as the possible candidates. The older generation of writers has been living in the spotlight and enjoying their fame, whereas the younger generation of novelists will have to face the hardships of getting there and direct all their efforts toward becoming recognized and famous.

The newspaper *Slovenski poročevalec* published Janez Gradišnik's article "Nov roman Williama Faulknerja" (William Faulkner's New Novel) that also deals with the fact that Faulkner earned recognition as a talented author by foreign literary critics first, the American critical response following later. Gradišnik believes the reason for this lies in the duality of understanding and perceiving Faulkner's work. The Americans saw parallels between his complicated, bloody and painful stories and the decline and decay of the American South, while Europe "in this same world of passion, violence, corruption, malice, hatred and killing" (Gradišnik 1951: 4) noticed a new dimension and

found something new – something which reacts to the changes of the modern world and is the consequence of today's way of living or is the real exhibition of “the decomposed, worn out man of the twentieth century” (Gradišnik 1951: 4).

In her article “Pisateljska pot Williama Faulknerja” (William Faulkner's Literary Path) Marta Gliha summarizes the critics' opinion “that after Edgar Allan Poe American South has not had a writer of such a profound insight about its social conditions and touching human destinies” (Gliha 1951/1952: 172). Both authors share the love of “horror, anxiety, feelings of life that lead people to despair, violence and crime” (Gliha 1951/1952: 172). Then the article touches upon another aspect of Faulkner, namely his composition and style. “[T]he power of fantasy, the vivacity of character description and narrative congestion” (Gliha 1951/1952: 174) are prominent in his early works, whereas later on he experimented with form: the composition is fragmented, the style becomes exotic, even bombastic, full of rhetoric and countless repetitions. The length and complexity of sentences pose a great problem for the reader whose reading ability and understanding of the text is threatened.

Anton Ocvirk's article “William Faulkner in njegov roman *Krik in bes*” (William Faulkner and his novel *The Sound and the Fury*) was published in the fortnightly review for intellectuals *Naši razgledi* and – as the title suggests – focuses on the above-mentioned novel. The critic enumerates the main characteristics of the novel, namely the difficulties of style, the complexity of events and their distorted chronology where past and present go hand in hand. Ocvirk also spends time dealing with the characters who reveal themselves to the reading public only step by step, their personalities coming forth only eventually and through close reading. He is rather poetic in saying that: “everything in the novel is as if it were enchanted and moves [...] in a sort of foggy atmosphere, filled with horror and concealed pain” (Ocvirk 1952: 22). The readers can get a full insight into the work as a whole only after they have finished reading the novel, i. e. after all the thoughts, ideas and images that caused anxiety, uneasiness and agitation throughout the reading process have been settled down and have found a logical explanation.

As for the presentation of characters, Ocvirk emphasizes the characterization of literary persons in general and argues that Faulkner's approach is direct, natural and concrete, his characters are shown in all their complexity which gives a feeling of disorder and confusion and as such disables the reader to read quickly and without any burdens. Therefore Faulkner's writing appears “confused and artificial, [even] pathological” (Ocvirk 1952: 22) to all who are used to the conventional way of story-telling and narrating, having the expectations concerning unity and coherence of plot and characters.

The author states that not only characterization can cause reading problems, there is also the specific literary technique used by Faulkner and based on the contemporary guidelines of realists and surrealists of the 19th and 20th century. Ocvirk describes the development of the modern novel form and dwells on Marcel Proust as a pioneer and the most typical representative. The critic states that the modern novel gives prominence to inner will and intentions, to memories and thoughts that stay hidden until they are triggered off by the right stimulus and/or motive and then cause a man to react.

One of the main Faulkner's priorities when writing, similarly to Marcel Proust, James Joyce and John Dos Passos, is his wish to penetrate deep into human consciousness and to find out all the mysteries that pervade the man's inner side and prevent

them from a simple and logical insight and explanation. Internal monologue as a new narrative technique developed as a consequence of new tendencies to illustrate the inner workings of the human mind at work, to record the internal or emotional thoughts or feelings of an individual, to show the man's inner side in all its complexity, to show the fights and processes that go on there. Ocvirk believes that it is one of Faulkner's main ideas to represent through the use of this literary technique the characters' consciousness, his subconscious and conflicts between them, thus creating a living and breathing mechanism that pushes people into certain (re)action(s).

Further on Ocvirk expresses his opinion that the majority of Faulkner's characters are common, simple people who follow their instincts primarily. Dark forces raging in their subconscious cannot be controlled, they occupy their "owners" to the maximum and bring them to crime: "They all stand on the verge of grand, peaceful life as genuine outcasts – lonely but proud and rebellious" (Ocvirk 1952: 22, 23). They differ from Proust's and Joyce's heroes not only by the exceptionality and intensity of their experiences but also (and mostly) by the high level of consistency and tension through which they constantly express themselves. The critic suggests that the heroes are haunted by their ideas and as a consequence their actions are highly dependent on them. These ideas are hidden deep in their subconscious and represent the essence and center of their being, weaved into the past which follows them closely.

For Proust the past is something that yet needs to be searched for and found, whereas for Faulkner it is "the living force that penetrates directly into the subconscious and influences it" (Ocvirk 1952: 23). Supporting this view, the hero's monologues intensify and enumerate, giving Faulkner the ability to build tension. Ocvirk is very clear in this thoughts that it would be inaccurate and inadequate to see Faulkner's heroes and their actions through the struggle between consciousness and subconscious only, the critic points out that a wider perspective should be taken where the hero's needs, wishes, distresses, problems, discomforts, misfortunes, dilemmas, delusions and mistakes should be seen also as a consequence of conflicts with environment and society. I share Ocvirk's opinion that the hero cannot and should not be seen as an individuum only, but should be put in social perspective where his actions, reactions and living in general should be observed. It is this wider dimension that can give us a better understanding of both, Faulkner's works and his characters and can thus enable us to get closer to understanding this great writer and the message he was trying to convey.

Similar themes also haunt Herbert Grün in his article "Zapiski o Faulknerju" (Notes on Faulkner), where he admits that Faulkner's difficult novels should be read many times in order to grasp their meaning fully. The characteristics of modern novel contribute largely to the complexity of Faulkner's writing, which Grün deals with in detail. His article focuses on both, Hemingway and Faulkner, the latter being introduced to the Slovene reading public no sooner than at the beginning of the 1950s. The critic draws the attention to the fact that in modern American novel "it is about evil passions, here people pursue and kill each other, they hate and love each other with biblical, basic drive [where the core of Faulkner's heroes is made up of] bootleggers, racial and religious fanatics, unreasonable lovers, criminals, and the like" (Grün 1953: 50, 51).

Grün – similarly to Ocvirk above – spends some time dealing with Faulkner's narrative technique. He is of the opinion that it is: "a jungle [where] images, events,

conflicts, memories, feelings, thoughts, stories are accumulated in a hard-to-follow and pathless arrangement” (Grün 1953: 51). He mentions Faulkner’s typical use of moving the narrative into the past through the mechanism of memory where the thread of the narrative is lost and clung to another, whereas at the end this thick and at first glance unconnected ball of thread is untwined and it gets its meaning, individual threads are untied, ended, wiped out, destroyed or lost.

The complicated narrative technique is also in the focus of Kajetan Kovič’s article “Moderni avtorji v izdajah Cankarjeve založbe” (Modern Authors in the Cankarjeva založba Publishing Company Editions) published in a magazine mainly intended for librarians *Knjiga*. American authors Faulkner and Hemingway are put to the foreground, the former through his novel *Light in August* where two intertwining stories are presented and based on the chronology and sequence of events by which the author manages to create a dramatic effect of showing the dark secrets of life in the South, “trapped between deeply rooted passions of racial and religious fanaticism” (Kovič 1955: 540). The linear flow of Faulkner’s narrative is disrupted, his novel abundant in contents and structurally complex. Kovič shares a wide critical consensus in his thinking that the world cannot be understood on the basis of external factors and circumstances only, but mainly and mostly through “an internal atmosphere of human beings who move in dark circles of faith” (Kovič 1955: 541). It is precisely the apparent racial prejudice and unsolved passions that drag from one generation to another and eventually seal Joe’s fate. There is Christmas who is internally shaken, unstable, insecure, his thoughts blurred, and there is Lena who is full of living power and energy that help her overcome all her difficulties. Kovič states that by using such different characters Faulkner demonstrates the dual quality of living and existing in the American South: on the one hand he offers an ethically charged accusation of negative, uncontrolled human passions and deeply rooted prejudice, on the other he leaves a ray of light by keeping faith in human existence and survival. All the above-mentioned characteristics “help promote the artistic power of his novel which belongs to one of the summits of contemporary world literature” (Kovič 1955: 542). The meaning of Faulkner’s work and modern novel in general is touched upon by Kajetan Kovič in his “Leposlovna bilanca 1945–1970” (Literary Review 1945–1970) published in the regional newspaper *Večer*. The author comments on the works of Faulkner, Dos Passos, Hemingway, Joyce, Wolfe and others. He sees and recognizes the great power of these novels on Slovene reading public whose horizons widened. Moreover, a brand new and different world opened to the readers with the help of high-quality translations.

Faulkner serves as the main topic also in a contribution by Stanko Klinar. The article “Faulkner in pisateljvanje” (Faulkner and Writing) was published in the fortnightly *Naši razgledi* and is in fact a summary of the famous interview given by Faulkner to Jean Stein in 1956 for *The Paris Review*. It deals with various subjects, for example with Faulkner’s contempt for journalists who keep asking personal questions and with Faulkner’s attitude toward art. According to him, the artist “is above the critic – for the artist is writing something which will move the critic. The critic – on the contrary – is writing something which will move everybody but the artist” (Klinar 1956: 421). Faulkner’s writing belongs to the area of psychological novels, a detailed discussion of the subject is given in Klinar’s article “Psihološki roman 1900–1950” (Psychological Novel 1900–1950) published in

Naši razgledi. Klinar emphasizes the authors' (Faulkner included) orientation toward the heroes' inner world, their memories, experiences, feelings and imagination. Faulkner's power lies in the fact that through his heroes he reveals the secrets of the world to the readers. The third article on Faulkner by Klinar was published in *Naši razgledi* under the title "Nekaj misli o Williamu Faulknerju" (Some Thoughts on William Faulkner). In it the author writes about the Slovene reading public and their enthusiasm growing over the translation of Faulkner's *Light in August* (*Svetloba v avgustu*). The novel arouses the feelings of frustration based on fragmented, non-chronological forms and techniques used but nevertheless the reader can – using all the information from the novel – feel a certain connection, unity and coherence in the end.

Faulkner and his literary achievement are again put under thorough inspection in articles by Rapa Šuklje. Her article simply entitled "William Faulkner" and published in *Naši razgledi* examines the lively critical response to Faulkner that only happened twice in the States: first after the author was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature and second after his death. Šuklje offers a summary of Faulkner's biography and novels. She also mentions his writer-in-residence position at the University of Virginia where he participated actively in question-and-answer sessions which are collected and published in *Faulkner in the University – Class Conferences at the University of Virginia 1957–1958*. The critic thinks that Faulkner is neither a powerful orator nor a profound thinker, but it is the power of his written work directly connected with digging through human subconscious that makes him unique and special. According to Šuklje practically all Faulkner's writing is based on trying to discover and understand family relations in the American South through different generations, the dynamics being built on the black-white relationship, especially miscegenation when "white owners' blood mixed with their black slaves' to such an extent that the whites and the blacks are often actually brothers; and this is the special, quiet tragedy of his imaginary Yoknapatawpha" (Šuklje 1962: 275).

Šuklje also discusses the hero's need to fill the aching void left by the incompetence to stick to religious beliefs based on puritanism, which Faulkner does by clinging to nature and to virtues characteristic of Christianity. A few of them are mentioned by the critic: love, compassion and self-sacrifice. A sum of all can clearly be seen through Faulkner's writing about the South, the problems and dilemmas of which are confronted directly, openly and without prejudice. Šuklje claims that if Faulkner's Jefferson stands for the whole South, than the South represents the whole world and it is "through their mistakes and delusions that the writer's faith is shown – faith in man who is 'reparable' and therefore worth being shown his deformed face in a mirror" (Šuklje 1962: 275).

In the same year Janko Kos wrote a long preface to the Slovene translation of *Light in August*. In it he sees Faulkner as an important author writing in the stream-of-consciousness technique (along with James Joyce and Virginia Woolf), he has praise for his writing techniques used in the novels *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying*, namely internal monologue, indirect internal monologue, soliloquy and an omniscient narrator. Kos states that in *Light in August* direct inner monologue was substituted by indirect inner monologue that pervades the narrative. According to Kos "the authors' attitude towards physical material is not only objectively refreshing or just impartial [...] it is actively involved or even participating" (Kos 1962, 10), thus making these passages

subjective in nature. A traditional approach to narration is rejected, time and place in Faulkner's novel represent a frame inside which everything is included.

A detailed account of the novel's themes and characters follows, Kos states that *Light in August* is "a combination of opposites, tensions and thrusts, everything in it is in constant movement and plotting" (Kos 1962, 19–20). Joe Christmas and people who suffer like him could only be saved through understanding based on forgiveness and love. He points out that all Faulkner's thinking is set in belief that man's salvation lies in closeness with society. Racial dilemmas that pervade the main character's life (and the narrative as such) serve as "a façade [...] that in itself is only a curtain [...] behind which real human conflicts can be found" (Kos 1962, 37).

Women's principle is introduced through Lena whose calm posture, strength and patience help her in life. She does not give up and she resembles mother nature. Kos believes that Faulkner presents both, female and male principles in the novel, the author's attitude is "conservative and even patriarchal" (Kos 1962, 41). Society plays an important role in an individual's life for peace, life energy and forgiveness of sins can be found in it, a person's destiny is shaped with the help of this very same society. Kos ends his preface by establishing that Faulkner manages to answer some basic questions of human existence in *Light in August*.

As already mentioned, Faulkner's presentation of the American South is based on the intertwining of time entities where past and present collide, mix and together constitute a significant part of heroes' lives and of the Southern society in general. The structural combining of events from the past with those from the present enables Faulkner to shift the time frame constantly between the two and to surpass the linear and chronological sequence of events. Mirko Jurak, who wrote two articles on Faulkner and his work (in 1979 and in 1985), in his article "Tragika modernega človeka v romanu Williama Faulknerja *Krik in bes*" (The Tragedy of Modern Man in William Faulkner's Novel *The Sound and the Fury*) examines the subject in detail, saying that for Faulkner "there is almost not a simple, linear time period, but there is – for his narrative so typical – retreat into the past about which he talks from either past or present perspective and from it highlights both, future and present" (Jurak 2001: 57). It is precisely for these reasons that the present is multilayered and closely connected to and intertwined with the past, Faulkner's characters being a product of a society of a certain period. Dilemmas, anxieties, wishes and needs of Quentin Compson, for example, are typical of a young male born in Jefferson in the American South around 1890. His problems arise from childhood experience, from his parents' attitude toward him, from racially and socially divided Southern society and from its attitude toward traditional values. It can be noticed that Quentin is an individuum but still – his story is only a part of a much bigger and more universal story that could be applied and understood widely; as a modern man's fate. It is in a similar way that Ike McCaslin from "The Bear" denies his past and the cruel heritage from his ancestors. The action is deeply rooted in the society he grew up in (elderly parents, boy's spiritual leader and father Sam Fathers) and in his ancestors' doings known to him from tales (grandfather manhandling his own mulatto daughter and treating her like sexual property). Jurak states that both of the above-mentioned stories serve as an example of a wider and more universal problem which arouses considerable interest among the reading public.

As already seen, a critical response to Faulkner in Slovenia did not come before 1950s, the same was true for translations of his novels. Another interesting feature is that many interviews with Faulkner were also translated into Slovene and appeared in the foremost Slovene newspapers and magazines. They described Faulkner's techniques and creative process as a whole, thus shaping the Slovene writers' literary opinions and efforts. And indeed, quite a few major Slovene authors adopted at least some Faulknerian literary methods.

The first Slovene author to show the influence of these methods was Prežihov Voranc (1893–1950), the foremost representative of Slovene social realism. His major topics of interest were the hardships of peasant and proletarian families in his native Carinthia (Koroška). His attitude towards the subject is critical and intertwined with all its social and economic peculiarities, all set in a certain historical frame. One of the key instruments is played by the war (the Great War), parallels with Faulkner's Civil War can clearly be seen. Carinthia – in the same way as the American South in Faulkner – represents the background against which the struggles of a simple man are set, the characteristics of the specific region, its people, their way of living, acting and speaking is of utmost importance for it exercises a strong influence on the heroes.

Voranc's novels *Požganica* (1939), *Doberdob* (1940) and *Jamnica* (1945), which bear highly symbolic geographical names practically untranslatable into English, represent a complex social and historical entity of life in Carinthia between the two wars. All the novels are told by numerous narrators who "carry the events where the community's destiny is decided upon and where this destiny is a part of historical process" (Kos 1991: 399).

The cyclic structure of the narrative can clearly be seen in *Doberdob*, a collective war novel where military life behind the front is depicted rather stoically, because Voranc avoids the discussion of battlefields as epic places. In his article entitled "Faulknerian Literary Techniques in Contemporary Slovene Fiction" Igor Maver noted parallels between *Doberdob* and *The Sound and the Fury* for both the authors "did not develop the situation by incorporating it into a simple linear plot; [they] circled round and round it, looking at it from different points of view, allowing new depth and meaning to be revealed with each new episode" (Maver 1993: 169).

Jamnica deals with the curse of the land and represents tragic life-stories of people belonging to all spheres of society. It is set between 1920 and 1935 – at the time of the economic crisis. The author sends a clear message that money dehumanizes people and makes them morally, socially and generically crippled. A comparison with materialistic Jason (and a part of society that shares his opinions) from *The Sound and the Fury* is obvious. Voranc and Faulkner both share the view that materially-striven individuals end up morally and ethically destroyed by forces such as violence, brutality, alienation, self-deceit, obsession, imprudence.

Literary style that appears in *Jamnica* is similar to Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, both being characterized by clear, straightforward style that rests on personal (mainly love) destinies of the heroes. The heroes of the two novels are characterized by an untamable, violent, instinctive (sexual) world that forces them to speak with gestures and deeds rather than words. These people are the people of the region that have been isolated and socially self-contained for centuries. They are caught in the society surrounding

them, their destinies are written and determined by their own personal, biological and psychological attributes and qualities. The influence of environment and society with its expectations regarding the roles people play should not be overlooked as well.

The second wave of Faulkner's influence on Slovene literature started in the late fifties with Ciril Kosmač (1910–1980). His novel *Balada o trobenti in oblaku* (*The Ballad about the Trumpet and the Cloud*, 1957) thematically still belongs to the sphere of social realism, although Kosmač uses associative, memory and stream-of-consciousness technique, typical of Faulkner, Virginia Woolf and Marcel Proust. In his morally-charged text Kosmač disapproves of violence and has praise for struggle and sacrifice for others. Various stories are interwoven (about a lonely struggle of a determined old man and his brave wife, about a weak man, and about the strength and weakness of literary creation) and different times and places introduced. It is narrated in a typical humorous style and filled with reflections, grotesque, fantastic and audio-visual elements. But – as Igor Maver believes – “despite the introduction of formal and stylistic innovations, [Kosmač's writing] still cannot be considered the true beginning of modernism in Slovenia” (Maver 1993: 170).

Lojze Kovačič (1928–2004) represents modern psychologistic Slovene fiction which subjectivizes dreams, visions, symbols, generally the entire inner psychological world of Man. Events are described in first person – in the same way as the young man experiences them: directly and with all the details and abilities of memory. There are plain facts, everyday reality is presented – such as seen by the hero in his consciousness, i. e. with memory laps and jumps, dreams, visions and presumptions. Stream-of-consciousness technique is used (compare Faulkner), it is realistic, matter-of-fact, his prose is autobiographical, it could be said that it is a declaration, an opinion and a monologue about one's own self. Reality is presented in its purest form, language is genuine and real, descriptions prevail, dialogues are scarce. It feels as if the hero's internal monologue moves from matter-of-fact descriptions to poetics. It is these very characteristics that link together the novel *Deček in smrt* (*The Boy and Death*, 1968) with modernism.

Still more significant is Dominik Smole (1929–1992) in his psychological cyclic novel *Črni dnevi in beli dan* (*Black Days and Broad Daylight*, 1958), which shows the adoption of several Faulknerian techniques. Apart from the cyclic narrative structure, which ensures that almost identical and only slightly modified stories reappear on various levels, there is also the ‘mad’ narrator, the ‘prompter’ of the protagonists who now and then intervenes »in the [protagonists'] action and reduces them to puppets, further soliloquy, cinematic montage, involuntary memory, limited omniscient narration, etc.« (Maver 1993: 170). Inner states of individuals are presented and the novel is based on the main characters' consciousness. Thus everyday dull life is shown through an unnamed painter and professor of painting, through unsuccessful actress Maruša and through the little whisperer. The novel can aesthetically and stylistically be described as Faulknerian.

The final consideration of Faulkner's influence on Slovene literature shows a strong and somewhat delayed influence of Faulknerian literary techniques on the novels of Rudi Šeligo in the late sixties (1935–2004). He deals with an individual's destiny, their intimate experience and universal existential, moral and erotic problems that surpass the

limits of time. Šeligo uses his novels and short stories to describe young people, workers and employees, whose problems are shown through the hero's consciousness and through perception of the world around her. *Triptih Agate Schwarzkobler* (*The Triptych of Agatha Schwarzkobler*, 1968) is written in a consistent realistic manner where Agata's moves and deeds are followed as if by video camera.

In conclusion it can be said that the literary influence of William Faulkner in Slovenia was quite significant. The lively critical response in Slovenia as discussed in the article – both, about author's life and about his work have proven an inexhaustible subject matter that has captivated the readers' imagination. In such a way also Slovene readers could get to know one of the greatest novelists of the 20th century and at the same time form an opinion about the author, his heroes, about the American South of the past and of the present and, last but not least, about themselves and about the world they live in.

Slovene authors of the 1950s and 1960s partly followed Faulkner regarding his subject matter and themes as well as writing technique and style: cyclic structures and stream-of-consciousness technique were adopted in their work, the latter being particularly decisive in forging the new Slovene modernist fiction that had started to emerge from the late 1960s onwards. These authors introduced heroes who depend on the society's demands and expectations, who are in constant battle with themselves and the environment, much the same as in Faulkner's writing.

Ljubljana, Slovenia

WORKS CITED

- Gliha, Marta. "Pisateljska pot Williama Faulknerja." *Beseda* I (št. 4) 1951/1952: 172–4.
- Gradišnik, Janez. "Nov roman Williama Faulknerja." *Slovenski poročevalec* XII (št. 268) 15. 11. 1951: 4.
- Grün, Herbert. "Zapiski o Faulknerju." *Beseda* II (št. 1) 1953: 46–53.
- Gwynn, Frederick Landis in Joseph L. Blotner. *Faulkner in the University – Class Conferences at the University of Virginia 1957–1958*. Charlottesville: The U of Virginia Press, 1959.
- Habjan, Vlado. "Nekaj misli o sodobni ameriški književnosti." *Primorski dnevnik* VII (št. 213) 09. 09. 1951: 4.
- Jurak, Mirko. "Tragika modernega človeka v romanu Williama Faulknerja *Krik in bes.*" *Ameriška proza: od realizma do postmodernizma*. Ur. Mirko Jurak, Jerneja Petrič. Ljubljana: Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete, 2001. 53–60.
- _____. "Spremna beseda o avtorju." W. Faulkner. *Absolom, Absolom!* Ljubljana: CZ, 1979. 379–395.
- _____. "Spremna beseda o avtorju." W. Faulkner. *Krik in bes.* Ljubljana: CZ, 1985. 329–342
- Klinar, Stanko. "Faulkner in pisateljstvo." *Naši razgledi* V (št. 17) 08. 09. 1956: 421.
- _____. "Nekaj misli o Williamu Faulknerju." *Naši razgledi* V (št. 12) 23. 06. 1956: 304.
- _____. "Psihološki roman 1900–1950." *Naši razgledi* V (št. 21) 10. 11. 1956: 510.
- Kos, Janko. *Književnost – učbenik literarne zgodovine in teorije*. Maribor: Založba Obzorja Maribor, 1991.
- _____. "William Faulkner: *Svetloba v avgustu.*" V: Faulkner, William. *Svetloba v avgustu*. Prevod Mira Mihelič. Ljubljana: CZ, zbirka Sto romanov, 1966. 5–42.

- Kovič, Kajetan. "Leposlovna bilanca 1945–1970." *Večer* XXVII (št. 276) 26. 11. 1970: 25.
- _____. "Moderni avtorji v izdajah Cankarjeve založbe." *Knjiga* III (št. 10) 1955: 536–42.
- Maver, Igor. "The Usage of Faulknerian Literary Techniques in Contemporary Slovene Fiction." *Faulkner, His Contemporaries, and His Posterity*. Ur. Waldemar Zacharasiewicz. Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag Tübingen, 1993. 167–73.
- Ocvirk, Anton. "William Faulkner in njegov roman *Krik in bes.*" *Naši razgledi* I (št. 18) 31. 10. 1952: 22–3.
- Šuklje, Rapa. "William Faulkner." *Naši razgledi* XI (št. 14) 28. 07. 1962: 275.

Note: All the translations from Slovene sources were done by the author of this article.

The article is partly based on the author's Ph.D. thesis, supervised by Professor Igor Maver.