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KOSOVELOVA POETIKA

KOSOVEL'S POETICS

Uredili / Edited by

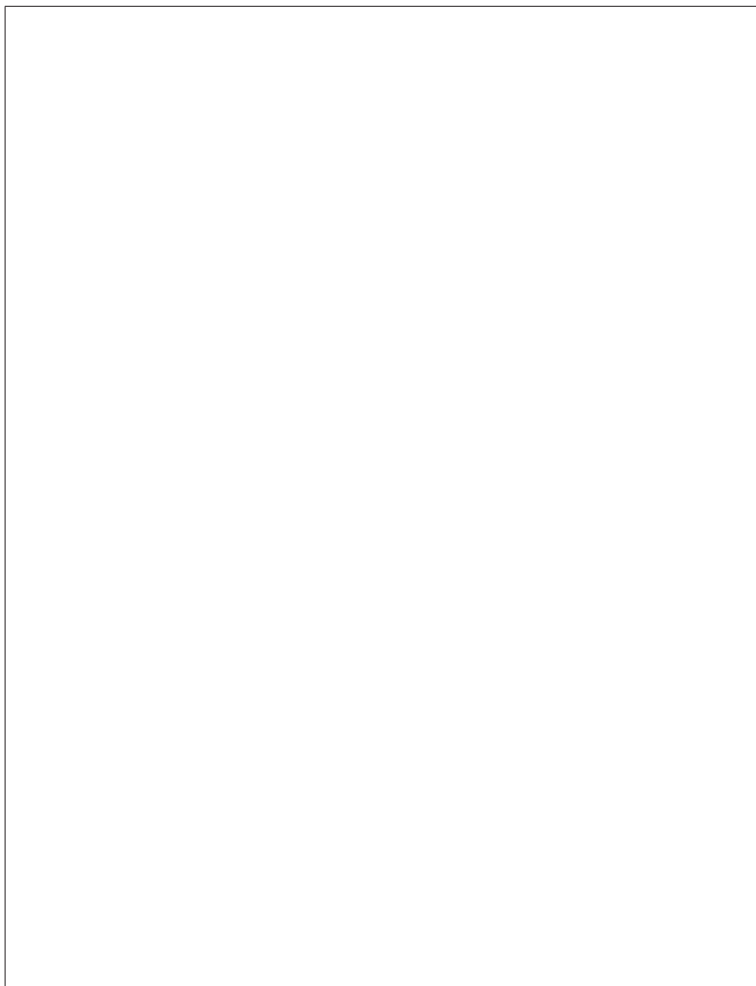
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Uredili

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UREDNIŠKI PREDGOVOR

Pesnik Srečko Kosovel (1904–1926) je ustvaril nenavadno bogat opus, preden je tragično umrl, star komaj dvaindvajset let. Njegova poetika sega od mehkih, poznosymbolističnih pesmi, v katerih opeva lepoto svojega rojstnega Krasa, do radikalnih eksperimentov s pesniškim jezikom, ki so primerljivi s futurističnimi, konstruktivističnimi in dadaističnimi; sega od upovedovanja globokega in bolečega eksistencialnega izkustva do neposrednih političnih sporočil, ki naznanjajo bratstvo vseh ljudi in stvari pod zvezdami.

V počastitev stoletnice pesnikovega rojstva sta Slovensko društvo za primerjalno književnost ter Oddelek za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo Filozofske fakultete pripravila simpozij, ki je potekal septembra 2004 v okviru mednarodnega pisateljskega srečanja Vilenica. Zahvaljujemo se organizatorjem tega pomembnega dogodka, da so drugič zapovrstjo v Lipico, na Kras, kjer se vsako jesen zberejo mojstri pesniške besede, gostoljubno povabili literarne znanstvenike. Tehni prispevki in živahna razprava, ki jim je sledila, so potrdili naše prepričanje, da je Kosovelova poetika vznemirljiva, aktualna in vredna poglobljenih analiz. Razpravljavci so se prijazno odzvali na vabilo, naj svoje prispevke razširijo in predelajo za objavo v tematski številki revije *Primerjalna književnost*. Za to, da je ta zdaj pred nami, so poleg piscev znanstvenih razprav zaslužni tudi sodelavci, ki bi se jim radi enako toplo zahvalili: Katarina Jerin in Ana Jelnikar sta v angleščino prevedli ne samo slovenske razprave, ampak tudi številne Kosovelove verze; Philip Burt je kot lektor poskrbel za končno podobo prevodov; slovenska prevoda sta delo Vere Troha in Nika Ježa; Alenka Maček je revijo pripravila za tisk; Seta Knop je razprave dokumentacijsko opremila. Hvala tudi ustanovam – Znanstvenemu inštitutu Filozofske fakultete, Ministrstvu za kulturo in Društvu slovenskih pisateljev –, ki so denarno omogočile izid dvojezične publikacije, za katero upamo, da bo Kosovelovo poetiko približala tudi neslovenskim bralcem in raziskovalcem njegovih pesmi.

* * *

Razprave, objavljene na naslednjih straneh, obravnavajo različne vidike Kosovelove ustvarjalnosti: analizam verza, podobja in avantgardnih pes-

niških paravrsti sledijo prispevki, ki se ukvarjajo s problemi literarno-zgodovinske umestitve in kanonizacije pesnika, z njegovim odnosom do nihilizma ter z bralskimi odzivi; razpravi, ki sta objavljeni na koncu, obravnavata Kosovelovo poetiko tako, da jo postavita v kontekst sočasnega italijanskega, predvsem tržaškega literarnega dogajanja.

Boris A. Novak v svoji analizi Kosovelovega verza ugotavlja, da je mladi pesnik, ki je imel prirojen posluš za ritem, vendar ni bil spreten verzifikator, krizo verza premagal tako, da je napake spremenil v vrline. **Darja Pavlič** je proučila podobe v Kosovelovi poeziji in prišla do zaključka, da je velik del njegove poezije romantičen, realističen in ekspresionističen, medtem ko je moderno metaforiko uporabljal samo v manjšem delu svoje poezije. **Božena Tokarz** se je v svojem prispevku osredotočila na prepoznavne značilnosti dveh pesniških paravrsti, *konsov* in *integralov*, ki ju je uvedel Kosovel. Razprava **Janeza Vrečka** raziskuje pesnikovo zadržanost do italijanskega futurizma in balkanskega zenitizma, pri čemer ugotavlja, da so njegovi znameniti *konsi* posebnost in eden od vrhov evropskega literarnega konstruktivizma. **Marko Juvan** je v hibridni koprezenci raznorodnih Kosovelovih poetik prepoznal pomemben simptom modernizma – modernistično večjezičnost, relativizem, ambivalenco, prezentizem in perspektivizem. Prispevek **Marijana Dovića** opozarja, da so odločilno vlogo pri kanonizaciji Kosovela odigrali drugi akterji v literarnem sistemu, saj proizvajalec ni zapustil natančnejših načrtov, kaj storiti z njegovo zapuščino. **Matevž Kos** ugotavlja, da Nietzsche ni ključna oseba, ki bi odpirala vrata Kosovelovega pesniškega sveta. Pesnik v nasprotju s filozofom zagovarja poudarjeno etično-moralno držo, saj se mora človek vsakič znova odločati med dobrim in zlim, pravičnim in krivičnim. **Alenka Jovanovski** se v svojem prispevku ukvarja s komunikativno funkcijo estetskega izkustva, pri čemer raziskuje, na kakšen način je Kosovel usmerjal bralca v družbeno aktivno vlogo. Prispevek **Katie Pizzi** se osredotoča na obširen korpus sočasne tržaške pesniške produkcije in na ta način ponuja oceno o Kosovelovem mestu v kontekstu evropske avantgarde. **Darja Betocchi** na osnovi komparativne analize Kosovelovega opusa ter pesmi in pisem milanskega pesnika Clementeja Rebore (1885–1957) ugotavlja, da o pravem ekspresionističnem gibanju pri Italijanih ni mogoče govoriti.

Uredniki

KOSOVEL, VELIK PESNIK IN SLAB VERZIFIKATOR

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Kosovelova zgodnja pesniška dela – če v primeru pesnika, ki umre pri dvaindvajsetih letih in za seboj pusti ogromen opus, sploh lahko uporabimo priljubljeno literarnozgodovinsko frazo »zgodnja dela« – ponujajo sijajen material za analizo razpada vezane besede v prosti verz. Mladi pesnik se je očitno trudil, da bi obrzdal verzifikacijo, vendar mu je uhajala iz rok; obupno si je prizadeval, da bi svoj prirojeni posluš za pesniški ritem prilagodil (pre)ostrim metričnim omejitvam, vendar njegovi verzi nerodno štrlijo iz pravil tradicionalne metrike; rimo je očitno še zmeraj doživljal kot nepogrešljivo znamenje pesniškosti pesniškega besedila, vendar so se mu le redkokdaj posrečile na umetniško poln in prepričljiv način. V zgodovini slovenske poezije ni bolj drastičnega primera »krize verza«, če naj uporabimo Mallarméjevo formulacijo. Kaj naj naredi nadarjen mlad pesnik, če ne obvlada materiala svoje umetnosti – pesniškega jezika? Ustvari nov jezik. Kako? Tako da napake spremeni v vrline, da pomanjkljivosti prevede v prednosti, da iz šibkosti skuje novo moč.

Če govorimo o napakah, jih je mogoče ugotoviti le na ozadju določene sistema pravil. Še več: napaka kot taka je učinek pravila. Od tod sledi zelo preprosto pravilo: če v določenem sistemu naredimo napako, jo najbolj učinkovito odpravimo tako, da jo ponovimo. Ponovljena napaka ni več napaka; je že sistem. Na začetku svoje pesniške avanture je Kosovel intuitivno sledil prav tej umetniški strategiji: ponoviti napako! Iz formalne napake narediti umetniško resnico!

Začetnik ne najde novih in svežih rim, zato nenehno ponavlja iste dvojice rim ali pa zadrego razreši s ponavljanjem istih besed v funkciji rim, kar je postopek, ki ga je tradicionalna poetika močno odsvetovala, češ da gre za mehanično ponavljanje. Toda oglejmo si, kako tovrstno ponavljanje v Kosovelovi pesmi *Vas za bori* paradoksalno obogati pomen:

*V oklepu zelenih borovih rok
bela, zaprašena vas,
poldremajoča vas
kot ptica v varnem gnezdu rok.*

*Sredi dehtečih borov postanem:
Ni to objem mojih rok?
Velik objem, velik obok
za takó majhno gručo otrok.*

*Za zidom cerkvenim je pokopan
nekdo. Na grobu šipek cveté.
Iz bele vasi bele poti –
in vse te poti v moje srce.*

Besedi *roke* in *vas* pesnik večkrat ponovi v verzni izglasjih, v funkciji rime; ponovljeni besedi tako vstopita v različne semantične kontekste in razvijeta niz pomenskih odtenkov, ki razširijo vsebinsko polje teh obrabljanih besed daleč zunaj območja tradicionalnega svetobolja in nanj navezane poetike. Pozneje bomo natančneje analizirali ta postopek in ugotovili, da gre za svojevrstno oživitvev trubadurskega principa *za-ključnih besed*.

Besedo »*bolest*« prenesemo le v poeziji Srečka Kosovela, pri katerem koli drugem pesniku zveni obupno »zateženo«. Zato ker je le pri Kosovelu tako pomensko bogata, da učinkuje sveže. Pesniški zven je vselej učinek pomena. Spomnimo se uvodne kitiče v pesem *Slutnja*:

*Polja.
Podrtija ob cesti.
Tema.
Tišina bolesti.*

Večina zgodnjih Kosovelovih pesniških besedil, ki jih slovenska literarna zgodovina z ne preveč natančno oznako imenuje »*impresionistična lirika*«, sodi po formalnih razsežnostih v okvir tradicionalne verzifikacije, točneje: v obdobje njenega razkrajanja in zatona. Gre za vezano besedo, določeno z metričnimi zakonitostmi silabotonične verzifikacije, ki so pa že zrahljane in kažejo v smer prostega verza.

Pesniški jezik v teh pesmih je zelo preprost: verzni ritem je utemeljen na najbolj pogostih in priljubljenih metrih, podedovanih iz dolge tradicije, za evfonijo so značilne že nešteto krat slišane in zlizane rime, kompozicija pesmi pa je členjena v najbolj razširjene kitične oblike. Najpogostejše so štirivrstičnice, pri čemer čuti Kosovel posebno afiniteto do pesemske povezave treh štirivrstičnic, kar je znotraj njegove poezije daleč najbolj frekventna kitična kompozicija.

Podrobnejši pregled verzni ritmov v tem segmentu Kosovelove lirike kaže sila raznovrstno podobo: približno enakovredno naravnost k trohejskim in jamskim metrom ter za slovensko pesniško tradicijo nenavadno pogosto rabo trizložnih stopic (daktilov, amfibrahov in celo anapestov, ki so zaradi maloštevilčnosti slovenskih besed s tem naglasnim profilom v slovenski poeziji zelo redki). Glede na variabilnost verznega ritma znotraj pesmi in celo znotraj verza je tradicionalni pojem *metra* v Kosovelovem primeru večinoma neuporaben; bolj primerna je oznaka *metrični impulz*, ki vsebuje tudi možnost ritmičnih variacij, odstopanj in celo kršenj prvotne metrične sheme. V mnogih pesmih se meter oz. metrični impulz spremi-

njata iz verza v verz: če ritem opazujemo na ravni posameznega verza, je pravilen, naslednji verz pa nas preseneti, včasih celo šokira z drugačnim, a metrično pravilnim ritmom. Ta Kosovelova pesniška besedila so torej *izometrična* na ravni posameznega verza in *polimetrična* na ravni celotnega besedila. V mnogih pesmih pa se ritem nenehno spreminja, celo znotraj verza, zato raba metričnih obrazcev pri njihovi analizi kratko malo nima smisla.

Temeljna zakonitost vezane besede je podrejanje sintakse zunanjim, metričnim omejitvam. Preprosto povedano: stavek se mora podrediti omejitvam, ki jih narekuje metrična shema (mreža naglasov, število zlogov itd.), zvočni vzorci (rime, asonance, aliteracije itd.). Ko se na prelomu 19. in 20. stoletja, po dolgi prevladi vezane besede, tradicionalna verzifikacija »izpoje« in zbledi v kliše, pesniki začutijo legitimno potrebo po razbijanju kalupov, ki dušijo živ navdih. (Namenoma uporabljam sentimentalno tradicionalno besedo *navdih*, *inspiracija*, ker se v njej etimološko skriva koren *dih*, *dihanje*, torej ritem pljuč, krvi, srca, telesa.) Resnici na ljubo pa je treba priznati, da razpad metričnih pravil dejansko povzroči tudi razpad pesniškega jezika. V organizmu verza nastane strukturni vakuum, saj verza ne organizirajo več metrične zakonitosti in omejitve. Za verz v poeziji, pisani v vezani besedi, je značilno, da nenehno opozarja na svojo pesniškost, da nenehno vpije oz. poje: »*Jaz nisem proza, jaz sem verz!*« Signali za pesniškost verza so (bili) pravilen (metrično organiziran) ritem, »cingljanje« rim v verzni končnicah itd. Kako naj verz dokaže, da je verz, da je vzvišena poezija in ne zgolj banalna proza, če se odpove svojim najmočnejšim sredstvom? Kriza metra torej povzroči potrebo po novem organizacijskem, urejevalnem principu, po novem načinu ritmotvornosti. Temeljno ritmotvorno vlogo zdaj prevzame sintaksa, skladnja. – Kosovelova »imprezionistična« lirika zelo natančno kaže ta razvoj. Znotraj zgodovine slovenske poezije nam pravzaprav ponuja najboljši material za opazovanje in razumevanje tektonskega preloma, dramatičnega in daljnosežnega prehoda iz vezane besede v prosti verz.

Izraz *prosti verz* je nevaren, ker sugerira iluzijo popolne umetniške svobode, ki je v pesniškem jeziku ni in ne more biti. Verz mora vselej temeljiti na močnem ritmu, pa naj je ta organiziran metrično ali kako drugače, sicer ni verz.

Namesto ponavljanja ritmičnih in evfoničnih (zvočnih) vzorcev, značilnega za vezano besedo, prosti verz temelji na ponavljanju sintaktičnih enot ter besed oz. skupin besed, pogosto v funkciji retoričnih figur *anafore* (ponavljanje besed na začetkih več verzov ali stavkov) in *epifore* (isti postopek na koncu več verzov ali stavkov). Ta način ritmične organizacije verza pa je v osnovi enak pradavnemu, zgodovinsko prvotnemu principu pesniškega jezika, ki ga poznamo iz egipčanskih delovnih pesmi in čudovitih psalmov Svetega pisma Stare zaveze in ki ga imenujemo *paralelizem členov*. Tako urejena, retorično organizirana besedila seveda ne potrebujejo dodatnih metričnih ponavljanj in omejitev. Sonet *Želja po smrti* je psalmodičen tako v vsebinskem kot v formalnem smislu, saj se sedemkrat ponovi anafora *Daj* (v uvodnem verzu s formulacijo *Daj mi, Bog*):

*Daj mi, Bog, da mogel bi umreti,
 tiho potopiti se v temò,
 še enkrat kot zvezda zažareti,
 onemeti, pasti v črno dno,*

*kjer nikogar ni in kjer ne sveti
 niti ena luč in ni težkó
 čakati poslednjih razodetij,
 kar od vekomaj je sojeno biló.*

*Daj, da stopim stran izmed ljudi,
 daj, da stopim in da se ne vrnem,
 daj mi milost: temò, ki teší,
 da v bolečini s Tabo se strnem,
 daj, da odidem od teh ljudi,
 daj, da odidem in da se ne vrnem.*

Natančnejša analiza te pesmi pokaže, da trohejski metrični impulz trikrat presekaajo jambsko intonirani verzi. Tu lahko opazujemo tudi postopek, ki je pri Kosovelu zelo pogost: da metrično shemo, ki jo vzpostavi in spoštuje na začetku pesmi, pozneje zrahlja in celo krši. Živi ritem, temelječ na nav-dihu, pač pelje pesnika stran od metričnih zapovedi in prepovedi.

Še posebej je zanimiva Kosovelova raba rime: njegov slovar rim je – če naj bomo povsem iskreni – izjemno reven, s prevlado tako imenovanih *glagolskih rim*. (Med vsemi besednimi družinami je zaradi sovpadanja končnic glagole v slovenščini najlaže rimati, rime, ki so prelahke, pa so pomensko – in torej tudi zvočno – revne.) Kot da Kosovel nenehno ponavlja rime, ki se jih je na pamet naučil iz pesniškega kanona slovenske poezije 19. stoletja. Pri vsakem drugem, manj nadarjenem sočasnem pesniku bi zatekanje k tako znanim in domačim verznim končnicam pomenilo znamenje obupno sentimentalne, zastarele in konzervativne poetike. Pri Kosovelu pa te neštetokrat uporabljene in zlorabljene rime nenadoma zazvenijo drugače, sveže, umetniško pristno. Znotraj okvirov tradicionalne verzifikacije se zgodi tih, a globok in daljnosežen prelom: drugačna raba jezika tudi tem podedovanim ritmom in rimam podeli nov zven in pomen (kajti v poeziji je zven vselej tesno povezan s pomenom).

Ena izmed strategij, s katerimi Kosovel preseže semantično in evfonično revščino svojih rim je – paradoksalno – prav postopek ponavljanja, o katerem smo govorili zgoraj. Ponovljena napaka ni več napaka. Pomensko in zvočno šibka rimana beseda, ki se ponovi, ni več šibka, saj spremenjeni semantični kontekst podeli tej besedi nov in drugačen, močan pomen. Ponavljanje rimanih besed, ki je bilo morda na začetku izraz zadrege in nerodnosti, nezmožnosti najti novo besedo na isto rimo, se spremeni v za-vesten in ploden postopek. Kosovelova raba tega postopka je tako intenzivna, da ne gre več za rimo v tradicionalnem smislu (spomnimo se: definicija rime je, da gre za ponavljanje vseh glasov od zadnjega naglašene- ga vokala naprej), temveč za postopek, ki ga italijanska literarna veda imenuje *parole rime*, kjer se torej rimajo cele besede, kjer ponavljanje besed nadomešča rime. Sam imenujem ta postopek *za-ključne besede: zaključne besede* v verzu so ritmično, zvočno in pomensko *ključne*. Ta postopek so

radi uporabljali provansalski trubadurji 12. in 13. stoletja, in sicer na sila različne načine: za-ključne besede so se bodisi ponavljale v vsaki kitici na istem mestu (na koncu prvega, drugega, tretjega itd. verza) ali pa so po zapletenem ključu spreminjale svoj položaj, kar najbolj prihaja do izraza v *sektini*, pesemski obliki, ki jo je izumil Arnautz Daniel in kjer se za-ključne besede ponavljajo po vzorcu 6 – 1 – 5 – 2 – 4 – 3. Po šestih sekstinah, šestvrstičnicah, se v sklepni trivrstični *tornadi* oglasi prvotno zaporedje za-ključnih besed, po dve v vsakem verzu. Z izjemo sekstine, ki zahvaljujoč Danteju in Petrarci preživi, ta jezikovni postopek trubadurske umetnosti žal izgine iz repertoarja evropske poezije; kako nenavadno in lepo je, da ta postopek ponovno oživi nerodni mladi pesnik s slovenskega Krasa! Naj kot primer rabe za-ključnih besed navedemo pesem *Ne, jaz nočem še umreti*:

*Ne, jaz nočem še umreti,
saj imam očeta, mater,
saj imam še brate, sestre,
ljubico, prijatelje;
ne, jaz nočem še umreti.*

*Ne, jaz nočem še umreti,
saj še sije zlato sonce,
saj mladost me drzna spremlja,
saj so cilji še pred mano;
ne, jaz nočem še umreti.*

*Kadar pa ne bo nikogar,
staršev ne, ne bratov, sester,
ljubice, prijateljev –
in jesensko tiho sonce
bo čez Kras, čez Kras sijalo,
kot bi za mano žalovalo –
res, ne bom se bal umreti,
kaj mi samemu živeti?*

Za-ključne besede v tej pesmi so *umreti*, *sestre*, *prijatelji* in *sonce*, ponavljajo pa se tudi druge besede znotraj verzov ter celo prvi in zadnji verz prvih dveh kitic, kar učinkuje kot refren. Kitična členitev je nenavadna: dvema petvrstičnicama sledi daljša, osemvrstična kitica, kot da je pesnik začel pisati pesem z načrtom, da bi jo zgradil iz simetričnih petvrstičnih kitic, nakar mu je nav-dih podaljšal tretjo, sklepno kitico. Z izjemo zadnjih štirih verzov, ki so zaporedno in glagolsko rimani (sicer lahka in bombastična postopka, ki pa tu dobro učinkujeta), je besedilo nerimano; odsotnost rim Kosovel kompenzira s trdnim, metrično organiziranim verzom (trohejski osmerci, z izjemo dveh sedmercev, ki imata enak, trohejski meter). Če seriji nerimanih verzov sledi rima, zveni ta zvočni stik toliko močneje, ker ga ne pričakujemo; enako učinkuje odsotnost rime po seriji rimanih verzov; Kosovel je očitno intuitivno čutil pesniško in čustveno moč tovrstnih sprememb postopkov.

Rima seveda ni le evfonični, temveč tudi ritmični in semantični fenomen. Sovisnost ritma in rime (ne pozabimo: ti dve besedi sta tudi etimološko povezani!) se dobro kaže v mnogih Kosovelovih besedilih, ki se odmikajo od tradicionalne verzifikacije: tam, kjer je pesniški ritem metrično

neoporečen, si Kosovel dovoli opustitev rime, z močnejšo rabo rime pa kompenzira labilnost ritma v besedilih, kjer se odpove metrični pravilnosti. Še ena potrditev zakonitosti, ki smo jo zgoraj orisali, da je strukturni vakuum ob razpadu vezane besede treba nadomestiti z drugimi sredstvi: če umolkne rima, spregovori ritem; če ritem drsi, daje verzu oporo rima. Iz številnih primerov, ki nam jih ponuja Kosovelova poezija, lahko izluščimo tudi splošnejšo zakonitost, da v obdobju razpada vezane besede velja obratno sorazmerje med metrom in rimo. Pesem *Spomnim se* je tipičen primer, ko okrepljeni metrično organizirani ritem (trohejski osmerek) zapolni strukturni vakuum, ki je nastal zaradi opustitve rime in simetrične členitve kitic, k večji organiziranosti pesniškega besedila pa prispevajo tudi anafore (*in; tiho, da ni*) ter sintaktični paralelizmi:

*Spomnim se, ko sem se vrnil
in molčal sem kakor cesta,
ki vse vidi, a ne sodi.*

*Tam pod tistim temnim zidom
sem poslavljaj se od tebe
in sem te težko poljubljal
na oči otožnovdane
in na tvoje temne lase
in tajil besede rahle,
da bi Krasu bil podoben.*

*In ko sem domov se vračal,
sem na cesti se razjokal,
tiho, da ni čulo polje,
tiho, da ni čula gmajna,
da drevo ni zaihtelo
sredi gmajne, tiho, samo.*

Naj kot primer nasprotnega postopka, ko rime kompenzirajo odsotnost metra, citiramo pesem *Mati čaka*:

*Tujec, vidiš to luč, ki v oknu gori?
Moja mati me čaka in mene ni,
vse je tiho v noči, polje temno,
zdaj bi stopil tja, pokleknil pred njo.*

*Mati, poglej: nič nočem več od sveta,
reci besedo, besedo, besedo od srca,
da bo v njej mirna luč in topel svit
zame, ki tavam okrog ubit, ubit.*

*Joj! Ugasnila je luč. Zakaj, ne vem.
Šel bi pogledat, tujec, a zdaj ne smem.
Daj mi, da morem umreti tukaj, sedaj,
glej, meni je ugasnil edini, poslednji sijaj.*

Metrični impulz te pesmi je trohejski, ki pa doživi številne variacije, ritem se spreminja, enako kakor število zlogov, ki niha od 10 do 15. Da bi presešel labilnost tovrstnega verznega ritma, Kosovel poleg zaporednega

načina rimanja, ki je najbolj preprost in »glasen«, tu poseže tudi po simetričnem, pravilnem kitičnem členjenju. K pravilu o obratnem sorazmerju med metrom in rimo v času razpadanja vezane besede v prosti verz lahko torej pritegnemo tudi kitično členjenje. Pri metrično razpuščenih pesmih Kosovel in drugi pesniki tega prehodnega obdobja vztrajajo pri simetričnih, pravilnih kiticah, medtem ko metrična strogost omogoča razpustitev simetričnega kitičnega členjenja v različno dolge kitice, ki jih organizira predvsem »vsebinski«, se pravi sintaktično-semantični vidik.

Mnoge Kosovelove zgodnje pesmi so v zvrstnem in formalnem smislu modernizirane balade. Zanimivo je, da z oznako *Balada* Kosovel naslovi drobno in preprosto pesem, ki je ena izmed njegovih najbolj priljubljenih:

*V jesenski tihi čas
prileti brinjevka
na Kras.*

*Na polju
že nikogar več ni,
le ona
preko gmajne
leti.*

*In samo lovec
ji sledi...*

*Strel v tišino;
droben curek krvi;
brinjevka
obleži, obleži.*

V tej pesmi Kosovel kombinira pripovedne in lirske prvine. Ta zvrstni vidik in tragični konec sta najbrž razloga, zakaj je pesnik naslovil to besedilo kot *Balada*. Po drugi strani najdemo pri Kosovelu mnoge pesmi, kjer – zavestno ali podzavestno – poleg zvrstnih in sporočilnih razsežnosti upošteva tudi formalne značilnosti balade, kakor jo poznamo iz slovenskega ljudskega slovstva. Najboljši primer tovrstne »prave« balade je znamenita pesem *Bori*, ki je zgrajena na verzem ritmu trohejskega osmerca, enem izmed najpogostejših ritmov baladnega pesništva ne le pri nas, temveč tudi pri drugih narodih. Naj med tipično baladnimi elementi omenimo tudi rabo dialoga v tej pesmi. Namesto rim tu ponovno srečamo princip za-ključnih besed (*groza, bori, gora, bratje, mati, oče*), k trdni organizaciji tega besedila pa bistveno prispevata tudi retorični figuri *geminacije*, se pravi ponavljanja besed (predvsem besede *bori*), in anafore (*bori, ali, ko da*).

*Bori, bori v tih grozi,
bori, bori v nemi grozi,
bori, bori, bori, bori!*

*Bori, bori, temni bori
kakor stražniki pod goro
preko kamenite gmajne
težko, trudno šepetajo.*

*Kadar bolna duša skloni
v jasni noči se čez gore,
čujem pritajene zvoke
in ne morem več zaspati.*

*»Trudno sanjajoči bori,
ali umirajo mi bratje,
ali umira moja mati,
ali kliče me moj oče?«*

*Brez odgovora vršijo
kakor v ubitih, trudnih sanjah,
ko da umira moja mati,
ko da kliče me moj oče,
ko da so mi bolni bratje.*

Bori so ena izmed najboljših Kosovelovih pesmi in zgovoren dokaz, da je mladi pesnik prvotno verzifikacijsko nerodnost s pomočjo principa ponavljanj presegel v smer globoko osebnega pesniškega izraza, kjer je zelo zgodaj dosegel nenavadno umetniško zrelost.

Vrhunec Kosovelovega truda, da bi obvladal tradicionalno verzifikacijo, so nedvomno soneti. Gre predvsem za petdeset pesmi, uvrščenih v II. razdelek *Pesmi*, prve knjige *Zbranega dela* Srečka Kosovela, ki jo je uredil Anton Ocvirk (DZS, 1946). Manj poučeni bralci teh besedil najbrž niti ne prepoznajo kot sonete, saj dvema kvartinama sledi tretja, šestvrstična katica (tercini sta torej združeni v sekstino). A tudi ta kitična kompozicija je znotraj bogate zakladnice podzvrsti sonetne oblike možna in po kitični sestavi regularna. Tu si Kosovel pogosto prizadeva doseči zgodovinsko prvotni ritem jambskega enajsterca, posreči se mu celo t. i. *simplex*, kakor je Antonio da Tempo v 14. stoletju poimenoval zahtevno razporeditev rim ABBA ABBA CDC DCD (oklepajoče rime v kvartinah, v tercinah pa verižne – *rime incatenate*), kar je najpogostejša oblika Prešernove recepcije soneta in torej temeljni model rimanja v zgodovini slovenskega soneta. Primer tovrstnega rimanja je sonet *Truden, ubit*:

*Truden, ubit grem iz dneva v večer,
na mojih ustnih ni več molitve,
v moji duši prekrute žalitve
in brez miru sem, miru ni nikjer.*

*Kakor da sem že izgrešil smer,
v dalji ne vidim več odrešitve,
ah, v moji duši ni več molitve
in miru več ne najdem nikjer.*

*Dvigni se, duša pobita, steptana,
dvigni, zagori, zapoj do Boga,
da boš kot harfa prijetno ubrana
kot med večernim žarenjem srca,
da spet bom zaslutil krajevstva neznana
tam preko morij, tam onkraj sveta!*

Obenem velja poudariti, da te rigorozne razporeditve rim Kosovel ne kombinira z verznim ritmom jamskega enajsterca, zgodovinsko prvotnega in tudi pozneje najbolj pogostega sonetnega ritma. Metrični impulz tega soneta sloni na daktilih, zasledimo pa tudi odstopanja od tega metra in nihanje števila zlogov.

Poleg te variante rad uporablja v kvartinskem delu tudi prestopne rime (ABAB), v tercinskem pa *ponovljene rime* (*rime replicate*: CDE CDE) ali *obrnjene rime – rime invertite*: CDE EDC). Zanimivo pa je, da Kosovel poseže tudi po razporeditvah rim, značilnih za *francoski* in *angleški sonet*, kar je v slovenski poeziji sila nenavadno. Kot primer francoske razporeditve rim (ABBA ABBA – ali ABAB ABAB – CCD EED) naj navedemo sonet *Iz cikla: Peto nadstropje*.

*V petem nadstropju so dobri ljudje,
v petem nadstropju in v vlažnih kletih,
tam se nikoli ne utrne smeh,
oči tiho, mrliško brne.*

*In otroci, ki se rode,
kot da imajo žveplo v očeh,
brezglasno leže, zvijajoč se po tleh,
v cunje gnijoče ihte, ihte...*

*Toda peto nadstropje in klet
kadar pregnije, se zruši svet
in stisne smeh veselih ljudi.
Tropa vojakov s puškami gre,
a še ti se nad mrliča zgroze –
kako da bi mogli streljati?*

Med Kosovelimi soneti srečamo kar petkrat razporeditev rim, značilno za t. i. *angleški sonet* (ABAB CDCD EFEF GG). Kot primer prisluhnimo jedki pesmi *Gospodom pesnikom*:

*Kot v peklu zakajeni vinski kleti
od jutra zbrani pa do polnoči
pisatelji, slikarji in poeti
dušijo svežost rože in moči.*

*Obrazi njih mrtvaški so in blede,
njih srca jih peko kot ogenj vic,
popivajo ob bedi in besedi
in javkanje, to njihov je poklic.*

*Gostilna je njihova zavetnica.
Pa naj velja še, kar je že nekdej?
Jaz pojdem tja, kjer beda in krivica
temnita zlati kraljevski sijaj,
ponižanje, trpljenje, glad in beda,
tam naj spoznanja željni duh spregleda.*

Na prvi pogled se sicer zdi, da Kosovelovi soneti po kitični sestavi (4 – 4 – 6) ne ustrezajo strukturi angleškega soneta (4 – 4 – 4 – 2), vendar

je pri vprašanih pesniških oblik zvočna narava (tu razporeditev rim) bolj bistvena kakor grafična členitev oz. vizualna podoba pesmi.

V nasprotju s Prešernovo izključno rabo ženskih izglasij in rim v sonetih in vseh pesmih, zgrajenih na verzem ritmu jambskega enajsterca, Kosovel pogosto posega po moških izglasjih in rimah (ali po t. i. *razširjeni moški rimi*, kjer daktilska končnica in rima nadomeščata možko), kar je tudi nasploh tendenca slovenske sonetistike po Prešernu. Raba moških rim je ena izmed razsežnosti, kjer Kosovel in drugi pesniki odstopajo od Prešernovega modela soneta, ki sicer nenehno lebdi nad slovenskimi sonetisti, celo takrat, kadar se od njega oddaljujejo. Pomenljivo je, da Kosovel v pesmih s kritično in politično tendenco (npr. pri sonetih *Revolucija*, *Predkosilni sonet* pa tudi pri zgoraj citiranem sonetu *Iz cikla: Peto nadstropje*) skoraj izključno uporablja možka izglasja in rime.

Sonetistika predstavlja vrhunec Kosovelovega formalnega napora; med njegovimi soneti je tudi nekaj močnih pesmi, ki sodijo v antologijo slovenskega soneta. To gotovo velja za *Sonet smrti*:

*In vse je nič. Te žametne oči
so kakor žalost, ki strmi v sivino,
njih temni sloj prodira med tišino
kot zvok, ki se v šumenju izgubi.*

*Te tihe, črne, žametne oči
mi s svojim temnim bleskom in milino
poljubljajo to sivo bolečino,
ki mojo dušo vsak dan bolj duši.*

*Te tihe, črne, žametne oči
so kakor črno, žametno nebo,
nad ostro rano Krasa razprostrto,
so kakor luč, ki dušo pomiri;
ko ugasne nad pokrajino razdrto,
se v mehko temo duša potopi.*

Ena izmed najbolj pretresljivih Kosovelovih pesmi je gotovo sonet *Ena je groza*:

*Ena je groza, ta groza je: biti –
sredi kaosa, sredi noči,
iskati izhoda in slutiti,
da rešitve ni in ni.*

*Včasih se med ranjene skale
tiho razlije zlati svit
jutranje zarje – šel bi dalje,
pa že čutiš, da si ubit.*

*Kakor da se zarja rani,
kadar razgrne svoj pajčolan,
kadar razlije goreče slapovje
in ti zakliče pod goro: Vstani,
glej, že gori razbito gorovje! –
Ti čutiš ga in ne veruješ vanj. –*

Kot vemo, pa je pesniška avantura peljala Srečka Kosovela drugam, v avantgardistične jezikovne eksperimente. Ritmotvorna vloga sintakse ter princip ponavljanj besed, ki sta značilna za njegov izstop iz območja vezane besede v prosti verz, sta osnovi njegovega nadaljnega iskanja in raziskovanja.

Skratka: korpus Kosovelovih pesmi, napisanih v vezani besedi, nam ponuja obilo šolskih primerov, da umetniško močna poezija ni vselej zgrajena na enako spretni verzifikaciji. Srečko Kosovel je slab verzifikator in velik pesnik. K sreči verzifikacija v poeziji ni vse. Verzifikacija se s časom tudi spreminja. Napake znotraj starega estetskega sistema rade postanejo kvalitete v naslednjem obdobju.

■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / verzifikacija / metrika / rima

Večina zgodnjih Kosovelovih pesniških besedil, ki jih slovenska literarna zgodovina z ne preveč natančno oznako imenuje »*impresionistična lirika*«, sodi po formalnih razsežnostih v okvir tradicionalne verzifikacije, točneje: v obdobje njenega razkrajanja in zatona. Gre za vezano besedo, določeno z metričnimi zakonitostmi silabotonične verzifikacije, ki so pa že zrahljane in kažejo v smer prostega verza.

Pesniški jezik v teh pesmih je zelo preprost: verzni ritem je utemeljen na najbolj pogostih in priljubljenih metrih, podedovanih iz dolge tradicije, za evfonijo so značilne že nešteto krat slišane in zlizane rime, kompozicija pesmi pa je členjena v najbolj razširjene kitične oblike (najpogosteje štirivrstičnice).

Še posebej je zanimiva Kosovelova raba rime: njegov slovar rim je – če naj bomo povsem iskreni – izjemno reven, s prevlado tako imenovanih *glagolskih rim*. (Med vsemi besednimi družinami je zaradi sovpadanja končnic glagole v slovenščini najlažje rimati, rime, ki so prelahke, pa so pomensko – in torej tudi zvočno – revne.) Kot da Kosovel nenehno ponavlja rime, ki se jih je na pamet naučil iz pesniškega kanona slovenske poezije 19. stoletja. Pri vsakem drugem, manj nadarjenem sočasnem pesniku bi zatekanje k tako znanim in domačim verznim končnicam pomenilo znamenje obupno sentimentalne, zastarele in konzervativne poetike. Pri Kosovelu pa te nešteto krat uporabljene in zlorabljene rime nenadoma zazvenijo drugače, sveže, umetniško pristno. Znotraj okvirov tradicionalne verzifikacije se zgodi tih, a globok in daljnosežen prelom: drugačna raba jezika tudi tem podedovanim ritmom in rimam podeli nov zven in pomen (kajti v poeziji je zven vselej tesno povezan s pomenom).

Skratka: korpus Kosovelovih pesmi, napisanih v vezani besedi, nam ponuja obilo šolskih primerov, da umetniško močna poezija ni vselej zgrajena na enako spretni verzifikaciji. Srečko Kosovel je slab verzifikator in velik pesnik. K sreči verzifikacija v poeziji ni vse. Verzifikacija se s časom tudi spreminja. Napake znotraj starega estetskega sistema rade postanejo kvalitete v naslednjem obdobju.

KOSOVEL IN MODERNA POEZIJA: ANALIZA PODOBJA

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Rože

Podobe rož ne sodijo med najpogostejše in najpomembnejše v Kosovelovi poeziji. Ker je pesnik svoje občutke rad projiciral v naravo, so rože kar nekajkrat metafore za občutke in razpoloženja. Podoba »jesenska roža je zaprla čašo / in tiha se nagnila v siva tla« (I 42)¹ je npr. metafora za melanholijo lirskega subjekta in ne le opis jesenskega umiranja narave. Pogosta metafora, ki človekove bolečine pripisuje cvetju, je »krvavenje« (131, 132, 151).

Kosovel je redko uporabljal posebna imena za cvetje, to je ponavadi storil takrat, kadar je hotel poudariti njihov posebni vonj. Lastnosti, zaradi katerih je Kosovel pisal o rožah, so največkrat njihova lepota, omamen vonj, minljivost ipd. Manj običajna je metafora: »Moje besede so ostre rože« (I 313). Rožam je pripisana ostrina, vendar to ni tako nenavadno, če upoštevamo, da gre za rože, ki so zrasle sredi kraškega kamenja: ostrina kamenja je (metonimično) pripisana rožam. Kosovel je podobe rož uporabljal tudi zaradi njihovih zdravilnih lastnosti (45, 404).

Podobe cvetja najdemo tudi v Kosovelovih *Integralih*; to zbirko literarni zgodovinarji opisujejo kot sinkretični spoj različnih literarnih gibanj in tokov: omenjajo ekspresionizem, konstruktivizem, dadaizem, nadrealizem in futurizem. Sprememba, ki jo v Kosovelovi poeziji pomenijo *Integrali*, je najbolj očitna na kompozicijskem nivoju: podobe so postale fragmentarne, tematsko niso trdno povezane, lirski subjekt se pogosto umakne v ozadje in beleži vtise na način filmske kamere. Pobudo za tak način pisanja je Kosovel lahko dobil iz nemškega ekspresionizma ali od kod drugod. Pesem »Cvetje na oknu« je značilen primer približevanja modernističnemu načinu nizanja podob, vendar so same podobe še čisto tradicionalne. To nam pokaže tudi primerjava z Župančičevo pesmijo »Prva pomlad«, v kateri beremo: »Pa kdaj si, glog, si cvetja nabral? / Kot iz snežink posneto / je v bele čipke speto« (II 10). Kosovel je enako predstavo upesnil drugače: »Okna odprta, veter / diha od

¹ V bibliografskih navedbah rimska števila označujejo zvezke *Zbranih del*, arabska števila pa strani. Kadar je v istem odstavku zaporedoma citiranih več podob iz istega zvezka, je številka slednjega izpuščena.

polj. Na oknu / je glogova vejica. / Kakor da nanjo nežno / zapal je sneg. / Sonce na oknu. / Okno je belo. / Čipke na glogu kot sneg« (II 100).

Kosovel rožam praviloma ni pripisoval simbolnega pomena. Presenetljivo je, da je izjem največ v *Integralih*. Rože v »Kons: XY« lahko simbolizirajo ljubezen, ki se mora potajiti zaradi zunanjega, političnega angažmaja. Tudi v pesmi »Kons: mas« je roža simbol ljubezni. Celo tulipanom iz vprašanja »Ali še cveto tulipani?« (II 114) lahko pripišemo simbolni pomen ljubezenskega upanja, ki pa ga izniči ugotovitev: »Ah, na grobovih krizanteme« (prav tam). V isti pesmi je Kosovel uporabil še en tradicionalni simbol: obraz dekleta je lilijsko bel. Bele vrtnice (178) simbolizirajo izgubljeno nedolžnost človeka, ki je postal suženj mehanike. Asociativno logiko nizanja podob, ki so same po sebi deskriptivne, lahko opazujemo v pesmi »Sferično zrcalo«: rdeča krizantema kot roža grobov se pojavi zaradi verza »obesi se na klin«, asociacija, ki jo vzbudi, pa je Ivan Cankar.

Drevesa

Drevesa spadajo med najpogostejše in najpomembnejše podobe v Kosovelovi poeziji. Pesnik je v več kot tridesetih primerih uporabil rodovno poimenovanje drevo, o borih pa govori v vsaj dvajsetih pesmih. Z lastnimi imeni omenja še naslednja drevesa: topole (osemkrat), kostanje (šestkrat), brest (trikrat), lipe (dvakrat), cipreso (dvakrat), jagned (dvakrat), oreh (enkrat), hrast (enkrat), akacije (enkrat), trepetliko (enkrat). Brinje, ki je sicer grm, ne spada med pogostejše podobe. Z njim je Kosovel opisoval kraško pokrajino, ni pa mu pripisoval drugih funkcij.

Anton Ocvirk je kot urednik Kosovelovega Zbranega dela njegovo poezijo razdelil po motivih in oblikah. V prvo skupino pesmi je uvrstil »impressionistične in čustvene tvorbe« (I 428). V tej skupini so svoje mesto našle praktično vse Kosovelove pesmi, ki govorijo o borih. Ocvirk je ob pesmi »Bori« zapisal, da so se Kosovelu »kakor brinovke tudi bori za časa Italije razrasli v simbol domače zemlje« (441). Seveda bi bilo napačno trditi, da so bori prav v vsaki Kosovelovi pesmi simbol domače zemlje. Podoba: »Borovo morje šumi temno« (I 16), sestavljena je iz metafore (borovo morje) in sinestezijske (šumi temno), podaja pesnikov vtis, je samo impresija. V komparaciji: »Vse te besede bi morale biti / dehteče kot borovo morje« (64), je pesnik uporabil isto metaforo – tokrat zaradi močnega, prijetnega vonja borovcev. V »Pesmi s Krasa« je o njihovem vonju zapisal, da je zdrav in močan. V tej pesmi so bori personificirani, pesnik jih imenuje »tihan drugovi kraške samote« (60). Bori niso samo prijatelji, ampak tudi stražarji (26, 61), skupaj s pesnikom ščitijo ter ljubkujejo vas (136), pesnik jim pripisuje svoje občutke: »Bori, bori v tih grozi [...], vršijo [...] ko da umira moja mati, / ko da kliče me moj oče, / ko da so mi bolni bratje« (61). Možna je seveda tudi simbolna interpretacija teh verzov: »bore« lahko razumemo kot simbol za ljudi s Krasa, ki doživljajo grozo potujčevanja. Simbol za Kraševce v času italijanske okupacije so lahko tudi temni bori (63) in bori – stoiki mirni (67). Gre za klasični simbol v smislu Goethejeve definicije, torej za spoj sinekdo-

he in analogije: usoda borov je del usode Krasa, hkrati pa obstaja podobnost med njihovo usodo in usodo Krasa oz. primorskih Slovencev sploh.

Kosovel je rad uporabljal podobe, v katerih drevesa vršijo (I 19, 50, 59, 62), šumijo (40, 41, 146), se mehko zibljejo (49). Gre za deskriptivne podobe ali impresije, ki posredno govorijo o vetru oz. burji. Zanimiva je naslednja personifikacija: »Topol, jagned in trepetlika / tiho šepčejo preko polja / z nekom od onkraj sveta« (59). Drevesa se v tej podobi pogovarjajo s transcendo, ki pa je oddaljena, odsotna. Kosovel v naravi ni odkrival korespondenc z višjimi sferami, pač pa je v naravo rad projiciral svoje občutke in se identificiral z njo. Podobe dreves je uporabljal zaradi različnih podobnosti, ki jih je odkrival med seboj in drevesi, pa tudi zato, ker je na drevesa projiciral svoje občutke, predvsem žalost. Primerov eksplicitne komparacije ali metafore, pa tudi prikrite komparacije z drevesom, je v Kosovelovi poeziji zelo veliko.

Pesmi oz. podobe, ki govorijo o hrepenjenju po neznani, daljni skrivnosti, morda niso najbolj značilne za Kosovela. Toda njihovo skupno število ni tako majhno, da bi jih lahko odmislili. V komparaciji: »Ko da daljinam prisluškuje / in jim proži roko, / v snegu, v zlatu samuje / tiho, črno drevo« (I 58), so drevesu pripisane simbolne lastnosti hrepenjenja po transcendenci. Podobna je komparacija: »Ko da nad [dnom] prisluškuje / ob ribniku črno drevo« (56). Črno drevo je v obeh primerih metafora za lirski subjekt. V *Integralih* najdemo podobo belega drevesa (II 122) – nosilec simbolnega pomena je v tem primeru predvsem barvna oznaka. Skrivnostni mrtvi človek, ki je bil spočet ob belem drevesu, je verjetno Kristus. V naslednjem primeru se lirski subjekt izrecno primerja z drevesom: »Kakor drevo iz blestečega mozaika / rastem tja v nevidno drevo, v Sredino sveta« (I 324). V tej podobi je simbol drevesa, ki se vzpenja proti transcendenci, združen s simbolom središča, ki predstavlja samo transcendo.

V *Integralih* so deskriptivne podobe dreves nekajkrat vključene v asociacijske nize po načelu nasprotja (II 25, 32), najbolj očiten primer je pesem »V žalostni krčmi«. Podoba: »Tam zunaj / topoli in sonce in lipe / bleščijo, šumijo« (63), je antiteza dogajanju v krčmi oz. v ljudeh. Podoba golega, črnega drevja (91), s katerega odpada listje, je metafora za umiranje Evrope. Komparacije v *Integralih* sicer niso zelo pogoste – to lahko razumemo kot znak modernosti – v motivnem območju dreves pa je tehnično zanimiva komparacija, ki preobrne prvotno razmerje med komparatom in komparandom: »Črni topoli ob cestah / so kakor vdove, v črno zavite – / njihove koščene roke, / rumene, / so kot zapuščene veje« (135).

Živali

V Kosovelovi poeziji pred *Integrali* so pogoste podobe ptic, medtem ko ostalih živali pesnik skoraj ne omenja. Kapitana iz »Tragedije na oceanu« imenuje zver (I 407), zobovje koles primerja z zobovjem zveri (397), pohlepen svet, ki voha denar, pa s psom (168). Nekajkrat je uporabil podobo metuljev, po enkrat pa kačjega pastirja in panterja. Kosovel je podobno kot

Župančič številnim stvarjem ali pojavom pripisoval krila in jih tako implicitno identificiral s pticami (21, 141, 199, 383).

Povezava duša – ptica se pri Kosovelu pojavi trikrat (I 35, 383, 384), prav tolikokrat pa tudi povezava misel – ptica (9, 43, 199). Pogoste so komparacije in metafore, v katerih se s pticami neposredno primerja ali identificira lirski subjekt. Kosovel je v nekaterih podobah razvijal tudi simbolne lastnosti ptic kot tradicionalnih posrednic med človekom in absolutom (362, 383). Kot čisti simbol lahko interpretiramo »ptico, ki v svetli sinjini / se ziblje in plava / in mimo gre v lastni mirni tišini / brez pozdrava« (244). Za ptico v sinjini, ki je notranje mirna in samozadostna, strmi socialno depriviligirana množica ljudi. Ptica jim pomeni (nedosegljivi) ideal. V kontekstu Kosovelovih pesmi s socialno tematiko je ptica, ki leti mimo brez pozdrava, simbol brezbrizne transcendence, ki ne reagira na stisko ljudi. Ko Kosovel opisuje svoje vznesene občutke ob odločitvi, da se bo boril »za človeka, človeštvo, ljudi«, uporabi komparacijo: »Ko da so tihe, bele peroti / se razprostrle preko sveta« (252). Peroti so v tej komparaciji sinekdoha za ptico, morda celo za angela, zato jih lahko interpretiramo tudi kot simbol absoluta. O prihodnosti novega človeka se je Kosovel večkrat izražal s pomočjo religioznih podob, opisuje jo npr. kot bodoči raj na zemlji. Podobo ptice v sinjini je uporabil tudi v pesmi »Padati« (397), v kateri govori o svoji želji, da bi umrl.

Med pticami, ki jih Kosovel imenuje z lastnim imenom, so: labodi (štirikrat), golobi (trikrat), brinjevka (trikrat), vrani (trikrat), pelikan (enkrat), orel (enkrat). Labode je uporabljal kot komparand ali vehikel zaradi njihove beline: podobni so jim oblaki (I 37) in pianistove roke (321). Zanimiva je podoba, v kateri so labodi hkrati komparand in tenor: »Bel plašč, ki se svetlo blešči / kakor labodi – pomladni oblaki« (346). Labodi so bili ena najpogostejših podob v poeziji simbolizma, povezava labod – pesnik pa je zelo stara, labod je npr. v elevzinskih misterijih simboliziral »moč pesnika in poezije«, drugod je bil »emblem navdahnjenega pesnika, svetega duhovna, belo oblečenega druida, nordijskega barda itd.« (Chevalier, 301). Labod v Kosovelovi »Labodji pesmi« (137) je simbol pesnikove nemoči, le da ta ni povezana z ustvarjanjem kot v znameniti Mallarméjevi pesmi, ampak je čisto eksistencialna: labod oz. pesnik mora ubogati »strašen ukaz [...], vase strmeti, živeti proti svoji volji« (137). Kosovelovo samorazumevanje, njegov odnos do lastne eksistence se je spreminjal. Komparacija: »Tu sem kot orel med sinjinami / blizu Boga« (46) je npr. optimistična, samozavestna podoba pesnika, ki ga ne mučijo nikakršni dvomi. Povsem drugačna je metafora: »Jaz nisem krvaveči pelikan« (226), ki jo dopolnjuje zagotovilo, da pesnik ne bo žaloval zaradi neizpolnjenih sanj. Občutek življenjske razočaranosti stopnjuje podoba vrana, pribitega na križ in prikrito primerjanega s Kristusom (266). Motiv ujetega in mučenega vrana je uporabil že Župančič v pesmi »Vran«, ki je izšla l. 1902 v almanahu *Na novih potih*. Joža Mahnič je opozoril, da je bil Župančičev »Vran« motivni osnutek za kondorja iz pesmi »Grobovi tulijo«, ta lik pa je »nastal seveda tudi pod vplivom avtorja *Les fleurs du mal*« (Mahnič, 30). Simbolni pomen vrana izhaja iz germanske mitologije, v kateri je vran znanilec smrti. Nemški

ekspresionisti so »podobo stopnjevali do skrajne odurnosti, ta pa kot izraz notranjih razmer ne dopušča nobenega dvoma o obsegu duševnega pretresa« (Cosentino, 57). Kosovelov ujeti vran bolj spominja na plemenitega albatrosa ali kondorja, kot npr. na Traklove vrane, ki »zateglo vrešče«, ko zavohajo mrhovino (»Die Raben«).

Najbolj značilna Kosovelova ptica je brinjevka. V »Pesmi«, ki jo je Anton Ocvirk postavil na začetek prve knjige Zbranega dela, je brinjevka v vlogi komparanda: pesnik govori o besedi, ta »kakor brinjevka na Kras / privrši v lahnem letu« (I 9). Brinjevko ustrelijo in pesnik se vpraša: »Pokaj si prišla, misel, na Kras / v ta turobni jesenski čas?« (9). Beseda ali misel ni natančno opredeljena, o njej izvemo le to, da je nekaj izjemnega v množici ostalih besed. Če predpostavimo, da gre za pesnikovo besedo oz. njegovo poezijo, ostane odprto vprašanje, kdo so metaforični lovci. Motiv ujetega ptiča je znan iz Baudelaira, njegov albatros je simbol pesnika, ki se v svoji ustvarjalnosti bliža absolutu ali neizrekljivemu, dokler mu tega ne preprečijo skrivnostni lovci. Župančičevega ujetega kondorja (*Čez plan*, 112) omejuje povprečnost ljudi, za Kosovelove lovce pa je uveljavljena razlaga, ki izhaja iz politične situacije na Krasu po 1. svetovni vojni. Po tej razlagi lovci, o katerih piše Kosovel, niso metafora, ampak realni italijanski lovci na brinjevke. Tako kot so ti lovci iztrebljali ptice, so italijanski fašisti ogrožali primorske Slovence. Brinjevke se torej običajno interpretira kot simbol klasičnega tipa: njihova usoda je analogna usodi primorskih Slovencev, hkrati pa so tudi sinekdoha, saj predstavljajo del ogroženega življa. S to interpretacijo seveda ne odpade možnost, da bi brinjevke razlagali kot metaforo za pesnika oz. njegovo poezijo, lovce pa kot metaforo za ljudi ali sile, ki to poezijo ubijajo. Poleg italijanskih fašistov je bil to morda še kdo drug. Tudi v ciklu »Muke« (I 265–268), v katerega je vključena že omenjena podoba vrana, pribitega na križ, Kosovel neposredno ne pove, kdo je vranov mučitelj. Vran je metafora za pesnika, ki išče (neobstoječo) resnico, edina resnica je muka oz. smrt. Kosovel s krvavečim vranom primerja človeka, ki »hodi po promenadi in laže« in zaman išče »besedo, / zaman prirodu« (267). Njegovi mučitelji so morda predstavniki meščanskega, kapitalističnega reda, toda lirski subjekt je ogrožen predvsem zaradi splošnega stanja dobe: vstopil je v zlagani, zmaterializirani svet in ne zmore več občutiti »mehkega valovanja sanj« (265). Ko spozna resnico o odrešujoči moči smrti, pravi: »In zdaj ne trepečem več / in kri ne curlja več od perutnic« (268). V zaključnih verzih vran prerašča v simbol, soroden ptici v sinjini: tako kot ona se tudi vran prepusti smrti in s tem transcendenci (268). Vran kot metafora za pesnika izhaja iz romantične predstave o vzvišenosti pesniškega poklica. Kosovel je stopnjeval temo o ogroženosti, saj njegov vran doživlja prave eksistencialne muke v razčlovečenem svetu. V podobah, s katerimi je opisano mučenje, zlasti v prikriti komparaciji s Kristusom, je prisotna hiperbolika, ki bi jo lahko imeli za znamenje ekspresionizma.

Delež podob, ki govorijo o živalih, je v *Integralih* zelo velik. Podobam ptic in metuljev je Kosovel pridružil pravi bestiarij: mačke, konje, žabe, podgano, orangutana, tigra, martinčka, kačo, ribe, kuščarico, netopirje. Podobe ptic so zelo tradicionalne, ne razlikujejo se od podob, kakršne je

Kosovel uporabljal v poeziji pred *Integrali*. Značilna je naslednja sinekdoha, ki človeka enači s ptico: »V prsih čutiš peroti, / pa bi se razpel« (II 22). Nenavaden je le kontekst, v katerega je umeščena ta podoba.

Toda Kosovel je z nekaterimi podobami živali presekal tradicionalni, logični model ustvarjanja podob. Take podobe se izmikajo interpretaciji in jih lahko imenujemo absolutne metafore. Mednje sodita naslednji podobi: »Enooka riba / plava v temi, / črnooka« (II 82); »orangutan« (48). Interpretacijsko zanimiv je naslednji primer: »Zeleni žabji kralj / jaha na kostanju« (48). Ta podoba je zgleden primer nadrealističnega ustvarjanja, saj je sintaktično pravilna konstrukcija napolnjena z elementi, ki semantično ne sodijo skupaj. Kontekstualna obravnava ublaži drznost podobe: kostanji so zelenje, za katerim spi okno, v njem »blesti mesec / in čudežna pokrajina«. Glagol jahati lahko razložimo kot metaforo tradicionalnega tipa, zeleni žabji kralj pa pripada semantičnemu polju čudežne pokrajine. V pesmi so omenjene nekatere države in sklepamo lahko, da je v žabo spremenjen politični voditelj. Taka razlaga podobe nas seveda ne more pripeljati do pravega pomena, ki bi se ga dalo izraziti opisno, govorimo lahko samo o učinku. V pesmi z naslovom »Žandarji« je Kosovel še enkrat uporabil podobo žab, tudi tokrat v političnem kontekstu: »zeleni parlament žab« (62). Tokrat so žabe metafora za poslance, ki regljajo, lahko pa tudi za žandarje, ki so – kot opozarja Ocvirk – nosili zelene uniforme (pomenljiva je tudi ponovitev zloga ža). To pomeni, da je Kosovel poslance posredno izenačil z žandarji, za katere je zapisal, da so ljudje najnižje kvalitete.

Opazen delež živalskih podob v *Integralih* pomenijo komparacije (II 36, 62, 105, 109, 168), precej pa je tudi simbolov. Podgano iz »Pesmi št. X«, ki umira na podstrešju, lahko interpretiramo kot simbol klasičnega tipa: njena usoda je podobna usodi ljudi, hkrati pa na način sinekdohne opozarja na neuresničevanje »človeških idealov«, med katerimi je na prvem mestu prepoved ubijanja. Ob modrih konjih, pojavijo se na več mestih, je Anton Ocvirk opozoril na ekspresionistične slikarje, ki so si nadeli skupinsko ime »Modri jezdec«. Med njimi je bil Franz Marc, znan po velikem številu slik, ki prikazujejo modre konje. Kosovel jih je uporabil kot simbol, Ocvirk jih je imel za »znanilce bližajoče se smrti« (II 656). V podobi, ki je tehnično genitivna metafora, je ta simbolni pomen dešifriran: »Modri konji mrliškega sna« (177). Ocvirk je isti simbolni pomen pripisal tudi Kosovelovim metuljem iz *Integralov* (140, 153, 173). Smrt, ki jo simbolizirajo modri konji, pomeni združitev s transcendenco, podobe metuljev pa po naši pre-soji simbolizirajo bližino transcendence.

Voda

V motivno področje vode spadajo Kosovelove podobe morja, jezer, ribnika, rek, slapov, vrelcev in gejzirjev. Njihovo skupno število je zelo veliko, dodatno pa ga povečajo še podobe mornarjev, čolnov, veslačev ipd. Podobo same vode je Kosovel uporabil v »Ekstazi smrti«, kjer ugotavlja, da »vode ni več v Evropi [...], vode ni, da bi opral svojo krivdo, [...] da pogasil bi z njo / žejo

po tihi, zeleni jutranji prirodi« (I 304–305). V tej podobi Kosovel dešifrira simbolni pomen vode kot vira življenja in sredstva za očiščenje, preporod.

Podobo morja je Kosovel uporabil več kot dvajsetkrat. V nekaj primerih je morje metafora za množico nečesa: borovo morje (I 16, 64) je metafora za borov gozd, zeleno morje (325) je metafora za travnike, zvezdno morje (286) pomeni zvezde. Morje je komparand za nemir (196) in za obraze maščevanj, »ki dvigajo se kot morje vsak hip / v tej ozki strugi gnijočih rib« (259). Ta podoba je razmeroma redek primer estetike grdega v Kosovelovi poeziji. Ozka struga gnijočih rib je metafora za življenjske razmere delavcev, nastala je zaradi metonimične bližine rib in morja.

Za vse simbole je značilna ambivalentnost – morje je npr. dajalec in hkrati uničevalec življenja. Kosovel razvija tako pozitivni kot negativni simbolni pomen morja, največkrat s pomočjo barvne simbolike. Bela morja (I 72, 328) so zaradi beline pozitiven simbol, ob njih poteka mirno, urejeno življenje. Sinje morje (291) je simbol duhovnega očiščenja, ki poteka s pomočjo transcendence, pa tudi simbol svobode, o kateri sanjajo jetniki (I 371; II 57). Isti pomen ima srebrno morje (I 373) oz. morje, ki je z metaforo imenovano srebrna ravan in srebrna perut (371). Rdeče morje je metafora za svetlobo zahajajočega sonca, ki Evropi prinaša uničenje (304). Oblaki, ki krvavijo, so obarvali tudi »rdeče morje bolesti« (339), ki pa je metafora za pesnikove bolečine ob ljubezenskem neuspehu. V pesmi o jadrju, ki ne more s srede morja, je barva morja simbolne narave: sivina žvepljenih voda (400) simbolizira neuspešno iskanje zarje. Črni ocean smrti (354) je dešifrirani simbol. Tudi teman ocean (406) je dešifriran kot uničevalec vseh živih, vendar je hkrati tudi simbol preporoda, saj je bodočim življenje (410).

Kosovel je večkrat uporabil simbol potopa, njegova raba ustreza razlagi, da je potop »znamenje klitja in preporoda, uničuje samo zato, ker so forme izrabljene in izčrpane, vedno pa mu sledita novo človeštvo in nova zgodovina. [...] Potop čisti in obnavlja kot krst, je neizmeren kolektivni krst, o katerem ne odloča človeška vest, temveč višja in suverena vest« (Chevalier, 472). Motiv potopa ni samo svetopisemski, saj o njem govorijo številni miti. Konec sveta ali biblično apokalipso so ljudje pričakovali v številnih zgodovinskih obdobjih, npr. ob koncu 1. tisočletja, pa tudi ob koncu 19. in celo 20. stoletja. Nemški ekspresionisti so idejo o koncu sveta povezali s kritiko civilizacije, v obdobju pred 1. svetovno vojno so celo verjeli, da bi vojna pomenila tako očiščenje, kot ga simbolizira potop. V Kosovelovem času je evropsko javnost še vedno razburjala Spenglerjeva knjiga *Propad Zahoda*. O svojem razumevanju ideje o propadu Evrope je Kosovel pisal v predavanju »Umetnost in proletarec«: »Ako govorimo o propadu Evrope, mislimo na propad razpadajočega kapitalizma, ki sicer še skuša z vsemi sredstvi kraljevati po Evropi, ki pa bo kakor vsaka krivica moral tekom let propasti. Tako je tudi razumeti mojo pesem Ekstaza smrti« (I 485). Simboli v »Ekstazi smrti« ustrezajo Kosovelovi (samo)interpretaciji: sonce najprej poskrbi, da vse utone v žgočem, rdečem morju, potem pa sije na mrlič z zlatimi žarki (304–305). Simbolni pomen potopa je v tem primeru pripisan soncu, običajno pa se očiščenje dogaja v pravem morju. Čeprav je potop nujen za prenovo človeštva, je samo dogajanje grozljivo. Grozljiva je tudi po-

doba človeka, ki se »utaplja, [a] ne more utopiti / se v težkih, svinčenosivih valovih« (253). Utopitev pomeni smrt, vendar tudi preporod. Motiv potopa je najbolj razvil v »Tragediji na oceanu«: ocean simbolizira uničenje in očiščenje. Tudi v tem ciklu je Kosovel uporabil podobo utopljenec, ki »ne morejo / se potopiti do dna, do dna, / a se ne morejo rešiti« (407). Ta podoba se navezuje na napoved iz Razodetja: »In v tistih dneh bodo iskali ljudje smrti, a ne bodo je našli« (9, 6). Rešitev je – paradoksalno – samo v strašni smrti. Zato je ambivalenten tudi simbol kapitana rešitelja oz. zveri, ki tistemu, ki ni »dobro dovolj potopljen, / z veslom razkolje glav« (407). Simbol zveri je znan iz Razodetja, pomeni antikrista. Tudi štirje veslači spominjajo na štiri biblične jezdece, le da jim je Kosovel pripisal nekoliko drugačno vlogo: namesto da bi katastrofo oznanjali, prosijo kralja, naj pride na pomoč.

V slovenski poeziji so podobe mornarjev in čolnov značilne za Antona Vodnika, ki govori o rdečih (grešnih) in belih (nedolžnih, Bogu vdanih) mornarjih; njegova je tudi identifikacija »bil sem čoln na zlati vodi sanj«. O mornarjih in čolnih je pisal tudi Kosovel. Vodnikovemu hrepenjenju po transcendenci se je zelo približal s podobo: »Vozil sem se z zlatim čolnom / po rdečih vodah večera / med drevjem / in travnatimi bregovi. / Vozil sem se / jaz, zlati mornar« (I 319). Znano je, da je Kosovel pred svojo smrtjo pripravljaval zbirko, ki naj bi nosila naslov *Zlati čoln*. Napisal je celo predgovor, v katerem pravi, da se je poslovil od mladeniča, ki je pisal »baržunasto liriko« (I 426). O tem slovesu govori tudi pesem, ki se začne s prej citirano podobo. Pravo nasprotje zlatega mornarja je mornar iz »Nokturna«, ki je svoj obraz skril za žolto jadro (213). Tudi ta mornar je metafora za pesnika, le da so njegove sanje prevrat. Svoj obraz skriva, ker hoče biti podoben Beethovnu, jadro pa je žolto zaradi sonca, ki gori. Podobo zlatega čolna je Kosovel trikrat uporabil v *Integralih*, Ocvirkova razlaga je, da je z njim označeval svojo neizdano pesniško zbirko. Ta interpretacija gotovo drži za vprašanje: »Zakaj si izpustil zlati čoln v močvirje?« (II 31), v obeh ostalih primerih (38, 46) pa je zlati čoln bolj verjetno metafora za pesnikove duhovne avanture in iskanja, o katerih govorijo tudi druge podobe. V pesmi z naslovom »Moja velika Nada« je Kosovel zapisal: »Mesec / nad mestom odhaja. / Sam / sem na beli obali. [...] Jutri, čez teden, čez leto / mogoče odplavam« (118). Ideja odhoda je, kot ugotavlja Lado Kralj ob programatičnem tekstu »Spomladi odjadramo!«, sorodna neprevedljivemu ekspresionističnemu geslu »der Aufbruch«, vendar jo je Kosovel verjetno razvil kongenialno (Kralj, 182–183). V omenjeni pesmi je Kosovel samo nakazal, da gre za odhod v vesolje oz. v transcendenco. Bolj neposredna je naslednja podoba: »Vsak dan / jadramo v veliki Prostor / na belih čolnih Sanj« (169). Tudi to podobo lahko primerjamo s prej citirano Vodnikovo podobo: tako Vodnik kot Kosovel se v transcendenco podajata z metaforičnimi čolni in s pomočjo sanj.

Vodnikovi mornarji so alegorija bogoiskateljstva. Tudi Kosovel je uporabil metaforo potovanje – iskanje. »Nemi mornarji, neumrjoči« (I 400) so ujeti na jadrnico sredi morja in ne morejo uzreti zarje jutranje. Graditelji, ki so podobni »mornarjem na potovanju, / ki vozijo skozi sivo sivino« (294), ugotavljajo, da je vsaka aktivnost zaman. Podobe ujetosti in nemoči sredi

morja so metafore za pesnikovo doživljanje sveta oz. dobe. Metafora za nemoč je tudi podoba mladega mrliča, ki leži med rožami na ladji (401) oz. podoba mornarja med strupenimi rožami (404), saj se pasivno prepušča potopu. Anton Ocvirk je domneval, da je Kosovel motiv mornarja, ki umre med rožami na svojem čolnu, prevzel iz ljudske pesmi. Šele v *Integralih* je Kosovel zapisal podobo, ki razodeva optimizem: to je metafora mornarja, »izstreljenega v večnost« (II 124).

Sonce

Podob, ki spadajo v motivni krog sonca, je v Kosovelovi poeziji več kot osemdeset, če prištejemo še pesmi iz *Integralov*, pa več kot stodvajset. Poleg podob, ki omenjajo sonce ali zarjo, lahko v to območje uvrstimo tudi podobe bleščanja in žarenja, če to prihaja od sonca. Izvor svetlobe so namreč tudi ogenj ali požar, luč na oknu in nekajkrat elektrika.

Kosovel je rad opisoval bleščanje sonca in sončne zahode na Krasu. Pri tem je velikokrat uporabil metaforo ognja ali gorenja (I 19, 20, 22, 213). Za sijanje sonca je uporabljal tudi druge metafore (58, 83, 323) ali pa je žarenje sonca metonimično pripisal oblakom (30, 31, 49, 80, 354). Ker je pesnik soncu pripisoval tudi simbolne lastnosti, je presoja o tem, v katerih podobah je sonce samo opisano in v katerih je simbol, velikokrat otežena. Sonce lahko skoraj vedno interpretiramo tudi kot simbol. Kosovel je simbolni pomen sonca včasih nakazal ali dešifriral, npr. kot vir življenja in optimizma (21). Ta simbolni pomen imajo tudi zlati večerni oblaki (30). Ko pesnik vzklika: »Sonce, ah, to zlato sonce!« (323) ali »Sonce. Sonce. Sonce« (325), mu prav tako pripisuje simbolni pomen.

Kosovel se je v nekaterih svojih pesmih oz. podobah sonca zelo približal Župančičevemu vitalizmu, toda simbolni pomen sonca je v drugih podobah drugačen. Kosovel sam se je te spremembe zavedal, saj je zapisal, da »sonce je palo / s svojih višin, / in kot da je zasijalo / vse drugo, manj zlato, / bolj jasno, bolj živo, / sem kot prerojen / stopil na breg« (I 319). Manj zlato je npr. sonce, ki »odseva, / kot da bi mrtvo na nebu sijalo« (253). Kosovel je v podobi: »Krvavo sonce že gori« (233), sonce spremenil v simbol prihajajočega upora množic. Manj socialno je naravnana pesem »Večerno sonce«, v kateri ugotavlja, da »sonce še to travo bo požgalo / in še sonce, sonce bo ugasnilo« (131). Simbolni pomen, ki ga privzema sonce v tej podobi, ni več življenjski optimizem, ampak prej obratno: namesto da bi sonce dajalo življenje, ga uničuje. Tudi v »Ekstazi smrti« je zahajajoče sonce simbolni uničevalec, vendar hkrati omogoča, da se bo lahko razvilo novo življenje. Šele ko bodo vsi ljudje mrtvi, bo sonce spet sijalo »z zlatimi žarki« (305). V podobi »sonce večerno žge, / žge, a me ne more izžgati« (344) je sonce prav tako ambivalentno: ko uničuje staro življenje, pripravlja pot novemu. To novo življenje simbolizira »sončni bog Svetovit« (346), za njim hoče iti pesnik.

Podobe sonca so zelo pogoste tudi v *Integralih*. Velikokrat so soncu pripisane pozitivne simbolne lastnosti, malo pa je podob, ki sonce deestetizirajo kot naslednja komparacija: »Debelo sonce se izprehaja / kakor debela

mesarica / po vasi. / To sonce je žalostno« (II 21). V pesmi z naslovom »Sodobna mrtvila« pesnik ugotavlja, da se je treba boriti za »novo religijo sonca«, ker je sonce »edino, kar je še lepega / na svetu« (148), vendar se v resnici zavzema za religijo človeka, saj na koncu pesmi zapiše metaforo »sonce – človek«. Bolj drzna je metafora »sonce srebrno, / admiral« (60), Kosovel jo je uporabil v pesmi »Detektiv št. 16«, potem ko je v pesmi paralelno razvijal motiv sonca v zimskem jutru in hišne preiskave na pesnikovem domu. Anton Ocvirk je opozoril, da je Kosovel poznal dadaistično pesem z naslovom »Admiral«. Ker je Kosovel med drugim zapisal, da pesem hiti »na srebrnih perutih / zimskega sončnega / vetra«, je »sonce srebrno, / admiral« morda dvojna metafora za pesem. V »Žalitvi bele postelje kralja Hiponeandra Hopu« so žalilci imenovani »skrunilci Sonca« (49), s tem je postelja kralja Hiponeandra (pračloveka) posredno izenačena s soncem. Drzna je tudi metafora »policaji sonca« (12), vendar je iz konteksta mogoče razbrati, da gre za ljudi, ki so brez duha in zato ne marajo svetlobe.

Srce

Podobe srca so v Kosovelovi poeziji približno tako pogoste kot podobe sonca, to pomeni, da so ene najpogostejših. V skladu s tradicijo je srce simbolno središče čustvenega življenja. Kosovel srce opisuje kot podvrženo spremembam v razpoloženju, največkrat je bolno, žalostno, poteptano, nanj lega smrt itd. Podob, v katerih je srce simbolno duhovno središče, je razmeroma malo (I 206, 207). Metafora »moje srce je razbito svetišče« (309) govori o izgubljeni veri v lastne sanje. Toda srce je našlo novo vero – verjame v bodočega človeka (240). Melanholijo srca je nadomestil »val svetel poguma, moči«, ki prihaja iz srca (237).

Podobe srca so zelo pogoste tudi v *Integralih*, v tej zbirki pesnik ne govori več toliko o lastnem srcu in njegovem trpljenju, kot o srcih drugih ljudi. Njegovo srce je »odprto v večnost [...] iz kaosa v kozmos« (II 181), a hkrati socialno čuteče (43) in tako veliko, da skozenj »stopa veliki slon« (34). Nasprotno pa so srca ljudi majhna (34), v njih so zlati dolarji (20), »njihova srca so kamen [...] so suha« (168). Kosovel je svojo kritiko moderne družbe izrazil s številnimi metaforami o srcu: srce v alkoholu (29), srce – Trst je bolno (55), civilizacija je brez srca (73), v srcih ni oltarja človeku (92). Tudi njegovi pozivi k preobrazbi in uporabi so namenjeni srcem: »Rad bi šel skozi srca ljudi« (34), »srca budim« (48), »lajajte, srca« (72).

Duša

Podobe duše in podobe srca so približno enako pogoste, prav tako lahko primerjamo lastnosti, ki so pripisane srcu oz. duši. Duša je tako kot srce središče čustev in občutkov. Tudi duša je pogosto bolna, potrta ali preplašena in tako kot srce hrepeni po Božji tolažbi. Kosovel je v ljubezenskih pesmih pogosteje uporabljal podobe duše kot podobe srca. V sveti samoti naj bi duša spoznala Boga (I 207), toda tudi v motivnem območju duše se

zrcali Kosovelov prehod k socialnim temam (213, 242, 279). Več podob govori o tem, da morajo duše doživeti preobrazbo, značilna je metafora gorenja: »Bolni človek naj pade, / bolne duše, izgorite!« (260).

V *Integralih* so podobe duš redkejšje od podob srca, vendar so z njimi tesno povezane, velikokrat celo nastopajo v nizu. Ljudje so brez src in brez duš, Kosovel govori o »evakuaciji duš« (II 73). Najbolj drzna podoba z motivnega območja duše je metafora, dopolnjena s komparacijo: »Torpedovka jadrna / kot krogla, / pognana v noč, / beži moja duša« (124). S to podobo se je Kosovel motivno oddaljil od tradicionalne poezije, vendar je za njegove podobe srca in duše značilno, da na direkten način izražajo čustva.

Religiozne podobe

Religiozne podobe so v Kosovelovi poeziji še pogostejše od podob sonca, duše ali srca: čez stodvajset jih je. Med religioznimi podobami je najpomembnejši delež podob, v katerih nastopa Bog. Kosovel pogosto izraža hrepenenje po Bogu, tolažbe ne bi prinesel samo Božji glas, ampak tudi njegov objem (I 21), poljub (207) in sploh njegova prisotnost, ki jo pesnik včasih čuti (46, 68, 201, 272, 293).

Poleg podob, s katerimi je jasno izražena vera v Boga, se nahajajo podobe, ki govorijo o odsotnem, nespoznanem, skrivajočem se Bogu: Bog je skrivnosti skrivnost, pesnik ga sprašuje, ali je širjava, globokost, brezsmernost in vsemu smer, nevidno Središče vseh središč, ali je Oče ali Brat, ki samo v daljah duš živi (I 196). Naštete metafore niso edine, s katerimi je Kosovel opisoval Boga, imenoval ga je tudi Neznani (382, 383) in duše moje tečajnik (383). Kljub silovitim prošnjam, naj pomaga posamezniku in človeštvu, Bog molči (383), štirje veslači ga kličejo zaman (411). Ugotovitev, da ga ni (383), v kontekstu Kosovelove poezije ne pomeni nujno, da Bog ne obstaja, ampak zgolj to, da Bog ne posreduje na prošnjo ljudi, da se ne prikaže človeškim očem, da ostaja skrit ali odsoten.

V *Integralih* je Bog omenjen samo nekajkrat, ugotovitev, da je Bog »na razpoloženju« (II 32), je po Ocvirkovih besedah zamenjala prvotno podoba Boga, ki je bil na dopustu. Ta podoba bi se ujemala z idejo o odsotnem Bogu. Podoba Boga, ki je »na razpoloženju«, govori predvsem o odnosu ljudi do Boga.

Kosovel je religiozne podobe pogosto uporabljal v pesmih s socialno ali politično temo. Metafori za bodočnost sta npr. paradiz (I 286) in nov tempelj (180); pričakovanja množic so sveta, pesnik jih metaforično izenači s svetiščem, nanašajo pa se na kralja, ki bo vstal (181). Kralj je v tem primeru metafora za maščevalca politično zatiranih Kraševcev. Kosovelove predstave o voditelju socialne in politične revolucije so (tako kot predstave nekaterih ekspresionistov) religiozno obarvane. V beli bodočnosti je mesto tudi za Boga (250). Religiozni motivi so v nekaterih podobah izrazito preoblikovani (230, 249, 287). V *Integralih* so pogoste podobe, ki govorijo o novi religiji (II 148), o veri v človeštvo (179). Človek naj bi dal svoje življenje za novo cerkev ter roke in srce za oltarje bodočnosti (153).

Glasba

S podobami, ki spadajo v motivno območje glasbe, je Kosovel med drugim izražal to, kar bi s pojmom iz francoskega simbolizma lahko imenovali stanje duše. Gre za razpoloženje, ki ga ni mogoče natančno določiti in opisati, saj niha med žalostjo, melanholiijo, nemirom, hrepenenjem itd. V pesmi »Rad te imam« (I 338) igra klavir ljubljeno dekle, lirski subjekt pa »poslušča kot kamnit«, ker njeno igranje dojema kot izraz duše oz. njene boleti. Pesem je verjetno vsaj deloma avtobiografska, saj vemo, da je bila Kosovelova sestra odlična pianistka.

Da bi izrazil razpoloženje, je Kosovel večkrat uporabil sinestezijo, ki sicer ni najbolj značilno sredstvo v njegovi poeziji. Poleg obledelih sinestezij kot sta sladka pesem (I 68) in svetli akordi (128), je uporabljal tudi drznejše: mehek je zvok Ave Marije (23), blesteče in svetlo zvonjenje (47), ostra tišina (195). Zvoki zvonov, orgel, predvsem pa klavirja v nekaterih primerih pre-raščajo v simbole, ki med drugim izražajo minljivost vsega. Namesto drhteče violine, ki je značilna za francoske simboliste, je Kosovel uporabil podobo ihtečega klavirja: »Na mrtvem klavirju akord zaihti / in v večnost spet potopi se« (166). Značilno za to podobo je, da sta glasbilo in zvok personificirana. Tudi v pesmi »Skica na koncertu« je klavir personificiran, toda nato je pozornost preusmerjena na pianista, ki je »sprostrl bele roke [...]. // Tiho, ko da na črnem / mramornem jezeru / odplavala laboda bela sta / neskončnosti iskat« (321). Kosovel je največkrat ravnal tako, kot v tej pesmi: čeprav je klavir personificiral in mu pripisal simbolni pomen, je pravi subjekt ali nosilec razpoloženja pianist, s tem pa je simbolni pomen klavirja dešifriran.

V pesmi z naslovom »Meditacija ob klavirju« je Kosovel med drugim zapisal metaforo: »Moje besede so rahlo igranje klavirja / iz zlatega okna v noč« (I 313). Povsem drugačno predstavo o lastni poeziji je izrazil z metaforo »Moja pesem je eksplozija, / divja raztrganost. Disharmonija« (229). S pomenskim poljem (glasbene) disharmonije je povezana tudi naslednja identifikacija iz pesmi z naslovom »Nokturno«: »Pianist sem z železnimi rokami« (213). Železne roke sovzpostavljajo pomensko polje raztrganosti, eksplozije, z njimi pesnik »razbija svoj beli Kras« (213). Metaforo rahlo igranje klavirja je torej nadomestila metafora pianista, ki razbija. Kosovel je domiselno izkoristil dvojni metaforični pomen glagola razbijati: poleg že obledele metafore razbijati po klavirju je metaforično tudi razbijanje Krasa. Metaforična veriga poteka torej takole: pisati nesentimentalne pesmi – razbijati po klavirju – razbijati Kras.

Podobe klavirja so v *Integralih* manj pogoste kot v prvi knjigi Kosovelovega *Zbranega dela*, vendar še zmeraj raznovrstne. Podobe, ki izražajo veselje (II 112), žalost (114) in nemir (103), so v vseh pogledih tradicionalne. Bolj nenavadno je gradivo, ki ga je Kosovel uporabil v pesmi »Kons: mačka«. Mačka, ki skače po klavirju in se čudi, da ta poje, je verjetno metafora za ljudi, ki mislijo, da znajo pesniti. Kosovel se ni spuščal v radikalne jezikovne eksperimente, ki bi bili sami sebi namen, njegova poezija je vedno ohranjala sporočilno plast – ta pa ne more biti plod naključja. V pesmi z naslovom »Moj črni tintnik« se je Kosovel posmehnil pesnikom drugačne šole: »Na senu leži melanholični maček. / Cvili s svojo zlato vi-

olino!« (24). Omenili smo že, da je bila violina instrument simbolistov, posebno ljubezen do mačk pa je gojil npr. Baudelaire.

Tehnika

V Kosovelovi poeziji prevladujejo podobe narave, večjo koncentracijo urbanih podob, predvsem prevoznih sredstev, prinašajo šele *Integrali*. Kosovel največkrat omenja vlak (osemkrat) in avtomobile (petkrat), po dvakrat aeroplane in tramvaj, enkrat torpedovko. Podobe so pogosto deskriptivne, Kosovel jih vključuje v asociativne nize, uporablja tehniko montaže disparatnih podob, redko pa doseže impersonalnost. Značilen primer je »Kons: ABC«: »Ostani mrzlo, srce! / Cinik. / Transformator. / Orient ekspres v Pariz na viaduktu. / Okovi na rokah. / Avtomobili tečejo. / Jaz ne morem. / Moja misel – elektrika je v Parizu.« (II 13). Podobi vlaka in avtomobilov sta deskriptivni, šele v povezavi z ostalimi podobami pridobita metaforično vrednost: označujeta gibanje, ki si ga lirski subjekt samo želi, ne more pa ga uresničiti. V nasprotju s futurističnim glorificiranjem gibanja in tehnike je v Kosovelovi pesmi v središču pozornosti nemoč lirskega subjekta. Podoba »Aeroplani širijo obzorje, / dvigajo kozmično zavest« (160) iz pesmi »Jesen« se vsaj na videz približuje ideji o napredku, ki ga prinaša moderna doba tehnike – toda kako naj potem razumemo zaključna verza: »2000 metrov v zraku / perspektive ni več« (160)? S stališča futurizma je povsem nesprejemljiva komparacija vlaka in polža (29), pa tudi ugotovitev, da je »duh hitrejši od orient-ekspresa« (15), ni ravno pravovernna. Kosovelova poetika izhaja iz ideje o novem človeku, ki »ni avtomat« (33). Ta humanistična ideja ni združljiva s futurističnim povečevanjem tehnike, pa tudi s pogledi ruskih konstruktivistov ne, kot je ugotovil Franc Zdravec (1988, 214).

Kosovel je z razširitvijo kataloga podob na področje tehnike pridobil pomemben vir za drzne metafore in komparacije: lirski subjekt se primerja z »električno iskro, / ki skače« (II 46), se identificira z rdečo raketo (125), svojo dušo imenuje »torpedovka jadrna / kot krogla, / pognana v noč« (124). Vse te podobe izražajo fizični in psihični nemir človeka, ki hoče doseči osebno in socialno preobrazbo.

Sklep

Če presojo o tradicionalnosti in modernosti poezije Srečka Kosovela opremo na analizo podobja v njegovi poeziji, lahko ugotovimo naslednje:

1. Analiza podobja na strukturni ravni je pokazala, da je Kosovel sredstva t. i. moderne metaforike uporabljal samo v manjšem delu svoje poezije. V *Integralih* je mogoče najti precej drznih metafor, nekaj primerov absolutne metafore (enooka riba, zeleni žabji kralj, skrunilci sonca) in posamezne primere analogij oz. identifikacijskih podob (moja misel – elektrika; sonce, admiral), kar pa je veliko premalo, da bi Kosovela lahko povezali s futurizmom ali nadrealizmom. Simbolističnih simbolov, ki izražajo hori-

zonalne korespondence, Kosovel ni uporabljal, izjema sta klavir in jezero. Kosovel je uporabljal veliko t. i. naravnih simbolov, toda njihov pomen je konvencionalen in največkrat dešifriran. Poleg naravnih je uporabljal tudi biblijske simbole, ni pa preoblikoval mitoloških simbolov ali spajal abstraktnega s konkretnim (izjema je klavir), kar je po mnenju Anne Balakian bistvena značilnost simbolizma. Kosovel je simbole največkrat vključeval v metafore ali komparacije, t. i. čistih simbolov je malo. Uporabljal je veliko deskriptivnih podob. Velik del Kosovelove poezije je bližji realizmu (predvsem v čistih impresijah) in romantiki (predvsem v pesmih, ki izražajo podobnost med naravo in človekom), kakor simbolizmu.

2. Hugo Friedrich je ob slovnični analizi modernih metafor opozoril na približevanje k popolni identifikaciji dveh predmetov ali členov. V skupino identifikacijskih metafor modernega tipa pri Kosovelu sodijo tiste redke metafore, ki so nastale z apozicijo. Njegove genitivne metafore so še povsem tradicionalne. Tehnike prelivanja v njegovi poeziji nismo zasledili.

3. Na kompozicijski ravni so za simbolistično poezijo značilne mreže simbolov, teh pa Kosovel ni uporabljal. *Integrali* so primer montaže dispartatnih podob. Pobudo za tak način pesnjenja je Kosovel lahko dobil iz različnih virov, saj je značilen za vsa modernistična gibanja. Kosovel je mestoma uporabljal tudi nominalni stil, vendar je, kot opozarja Lado Kralj, pravi zgled nominalnega stila v slovenskem ekspresionizmu Voduškova pesem »Mesto v noči« (Kralj, 179). V Kosovelovi poeziji je – poleg povezanosti podob na tematski ravni – močan kohezivni element predvsem lirski subjekt. Impersonalne so samo nekatere pesmi iz »Integralov«.

4. Motivna območja, iz katerih je Kosovel največ zajemal, so: rože, živali, voda, sonce, mesec, noč, zvezde, nebo, srce, duša, religiozne podobe, glasba, tehnika. Ker se isti motivi pojavljajo v različnih smereh in gibanjih, presoje o tem, v katero smer ali gibanje spada Kosovelova poezija, ne moremo opreti samo na katalog podob. Če upoštevamo tematsko funkcijo posameznih podob, lahko ugotovimo predvsem sorodnost z romantično in ekspresionistično poezijo.

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■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / pesniško podobe / metaforika / metafora / simbol

Razprava je zastavljena tako, da ob analizi motivnih sklopov, iz katerih je Kosovel največkrat jemal svoje podobe, ugotavlja tudi strukturne, slovnične in kompozicijske značilnosti njegovega podobja. Glavne ugotovitve je mogoče strniti v štiri točke:

1. Kosovel je sredstva t. i. moderne metaforike uporabljal samo v manjšem delu svoje poezije. V *Integralih* je mogoče najti precej drznih metafor, nekaj primerov absolutne metafore in posamezne primere analogij oz. identifikacijskih podob, kar pa je veliko premalo, da bi Kosovela lahko povezali s futurizmom ali nadrealizmom. Simbolističnih simbolov, ki izražajo horizontalne korespondence, Kosovel ni uporabljal, izjema sta klavir in jezero. V njegovi poeziji je veliko t. i. naravnih simbolov, toda njihov pomen je konvencionalen in največkrat dešifriran. Velik del Kosovelove poezije je blizu realizmu (predvsem v čistih impresijah) in romantiki (predvsem v pesmih, ki izražajo podobnost med naravo in človekom).

2. V skupino identifikacijskih metafor modernega tipa pri Kosovelu sodijo tiste redke metafore, ki so nastale z apozicijo. Njegove genitivne metafore so še povsem tradicionalne, tehnike prelivanja v njegovi poeziji nismo zasledili.

3. Za simbolistično poezijo so značilne mreže simbolov, teh pa Kosovel ni uporabljal. *Integrali* so primer montaže dispartnih podob. Pobudo za tak način pesnjenja je Kosovel lahko dobil iz različnih virov, saj je značilen za vsa modernistična gibanja. Kosovel je mestoma uporabljal tudi nominalni stil, impersonalne so samo nekatere pesmi iz *Integralov*.

4. Motivna območja, iz katerih je Kosovel največ zajemal, so: rože, živali, voda, sonce, mesec, noč, zvezde, nebo, srce, duša, religiozne podobe, glasba, tehnika. Ker se isti motivi pojavljajo v različnih smereh in gibanjih, presoje o tem, v katero smer ali gibanje spada Kosovelova poezija, ne moremo opreti samo na katalog podob. Če upoštevamo tematsko funkcijo posameznih podob, lahko ugotovimo predvsem sorodnost z romantično in ekspresionistično poezijo.

IDEJA INTEGRALOV V KOSOVELOVI POEZIJI

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Hitro pridobljene umetniške izkušnje so začele pri Kosovelu zbujati določeno distanco in nezaupanje. Skrbelo ga je, da se mu utegne v razmerju med poezijo, človekom in resničnostjo zamegliti ideja celote. Podobno kot veliko drugih avantgardistov je verjel v organskost sveta in človeka, Zemlje in Vesolja. Njegova koncepcija je bila usmerjena izrazito antropocentrično, zato je trdil, da nova resničnost potrebuje novega človeka, ki bi bil človeški, torej logičen, občutljiv, predvsem pa etičen. Zapletenost zenitistične pesmi ga je z uporabo postopka montaže spominjala na gibanico ali jabolčni zavitek.¹ Čeprav je v njej videl številne možnosti, je sam iskal drugačen pesniški izraz, da bi se lahko približal celostnemu človeku. Ko je zapisal: »Jaz nisem estetični lik,« se je distanciral od elitne umetnosti in njene estetizacije. Izraz teh iskanj so estetsko-nazorska vprašanja, povezana s *konsi* in *integrali*. Zaradi Kosovelovega intenzivnega umetniškega doživljanja nove umetnosti, slovenskega pesniškega izročila (predvsem Župančiča), spreminjajoče se tehnične civilizacije, ki je ustvarjala nove vedenjske vzorce in občutja, pa tudi zaradi njegove mladostniške odzivnosti, mu je zmanjkalo časa za urejanje in preciziranje lastne umetniške vizije, ki se mu je izoblikovala pred smrtjo, vendar na ravni ideje; poetika je še ostajala v sferi kristalizacije. Ni se hotel ukvarjati z besedami, kar ne pomeni, da ni videl potrebe po prilagajanju umetniške ustvarjalnosti novi zaznavi, izoblikovani pod vplivom ikonosfere. V njegovi poeziji, kratki prozi in dnevnikih je veliko dokazov za to. Zaradi pesnikove osebne usode imamo opraviti z zapisom genialne intuicije, s potencialnostjo, ne pa z dokončanim delom. Prav zaradi potencialnosti, poetike nasprotij in načina pesniškega videnja je ta avantgardni pesnik postal najbolj priljubljen v času postmodernizma, ki je sicer daleč od vsakršnega urejanja resničnosti in vere v celostne vizije. Kosovel si je vendarle prizadeval, da bi, tako kot drugi avantgardisti, zajel celoto, morebiti niti ne sveta, ampak človeka, čeprav je dvomil o konvencionalni povezanosti teme s sredstvi, ki jo konstruirajo; predstavljal je besedila, ki so bila blizu načelu „odprtega dela“ z zrahljano kompozicijo; zavračal je mimetizem na račun drugih metod izražanja resničnosti, npr. beleženja, navdihovale so ga druge umetnosti in sredstva sporazumevanja – slikarstvo, časopis, fotografija; razglašal je

krizo umetnosti, v okviru teorij literarnih zvrsti pa je povzdigoval zvrstne konvencije. Za njegovo literarno in estetsko zavest je bila značilna izredna intuicija, ki je mdr. kazala na omejenost jezikovnega gradiva. Zato je izkoriščal vizualne možnosti besede: grafijo in tipografijo.²

Kosovelov pesniški izraz in umetnostni nazor naj bi se brusila v obračunu s konstruktivizmom in z vstopanjem v območje konstruktivnosti oz. intelektualno-estetskega prostora med *konsi* in *integrali*. Vsi razlagalci Kosovelove ustvarjalnosti soglasno poudarjajo, da so *konsi* izraz konstruktivistične estetike, *integrali* pa revolucionarnega humanizma v težnji k celostnemu človeku. Po mojem mnenju so *integrali* pesniško še neobdelana ideja človeka in ideja poezije. *Konse* je namreč mogoče brati kot pesniško konstrukcijo, *integrale* pa kot pesniški razkroj. Mednje lahko uvrstimo vse tiste pesmi, ki obravnavajo človeške vrednote in vrednote pesnika kot človeka. V Kosovelovi predstavi naj bi bili predvsem posledica vseh pesniških konsekvenc, izhajajočih iz obdajajoče ga resničnosti. Na tako zamisel kaže sam naslov neizdane zbirke.

Integral, ki v slovenščini nastopa kot izraz za celoto, je matematično-fizikalni pojem, ki se je Kosovelu izkazal za uporabnega v obdobju njegovih konstruktivističnih izkušenj, ko je v pesemski zgradbi izkoriščal informacijske kode, med njimi tudi kemijske in matematične, da bi prikazal množstvo informacij pri spoznavanju in razumevanju resničnosti. Pesniška izpoved naj bi bila nekakšna njihova rezultanta, ki obenem ustvarja komunikacijski mozaik. Izhodiščno načelo je bilo, v novi neomejeni strukturi umetnostnega besedila prodreti do bistva resničnosti z vanjo vpisanim človekom. Ker je Kosovel videl poezijo v tesni povezanosti z resničnostjo, lahko domnevamo, da je intuitivno iskal dostop k njenemu skriteму mehanizmu in smislu, za to pa so potrebni čuti in razum. Čuti so mu narekovali vključitev vizualnega sporazumevanja v besedilo in iskanje pesniškega ekvivalenta, skladnega z ikonosfero in načini zaznavanja kot njenim rezultatom. Razum je narekoval iskanje ključa za kar najbolj objektivno urejanje izkustva; verjetno je prav on usmeril pesnikovo pozornost k matematiki.

Podobna prizadevanja je avtor *konsov* lahko opazil pri likovnikih (slikarji in arhitekti), ki za organizacijo prostora uporabljajo matematične izračune. Številčne zakonitosti so radi uporabljali slikarji konstruktivisti. Vendar pa je bilo to načelo pogosto vzrok za nesoglasja med slikarji in pesniki, ker besed ni mogoče zgolj šteti, saj so nosilec pomenov in obenem stvar. Vsi pesniki niso bili in še vedno niso pripravljeni pristajati na materialno konkretnost besede. Zato med drugimi Julian Przyboš ni bil zadovoljen z grafično opremo svoje pesniške zbirke *Sponad (Iznad)*, ki je bila delo Strzemiškega (v prvi izdaji je bil pravopisno drugačen zapis naslova: *Z ponad (Iz nad)*). V taki obliki ga ni več ponatiskoval, ker je sodil, da je bila grafična oprema za pesmi škodljiva, čeprav so bili odnosi med Władysławom Strzemińskim in Julianom Przybošem obojestransko ustvarjalni.³ Przyboš je podobno kot Peiper menil, da pozna poezija drugačne načine za oblikovanje celote kot slikarstvo. Likovni kod sta videla kot sestavino besedila, ki pa ne more biti podrejena izključno vizualni urejenosti, zlasti ne številčnim zakonitostim. Številčna mera je bila tudi razlog, da je Peiper zavrnil predlog Strzemiškega

(konstruktivističnega slikarja), naj bi uporabljal *stalne besedne sklope, razvrščene v različne sestave na podlagi številčnih zakonitosti*,⁴ kar je v svojih unističnih kompozicijah delal Strzemiński.

Kosovel je, podobno kot poljska pesnika, čeprav iz drugih vzrokov, nasprotoval matematični avtomatizaciji besede. Matematika pa mu je hkrati vendarle bila vzorec za objektivizacijske možnosti človekovega razuma. Zato je navezoval nanj v iskanju bistva človeštva. Prizadeval si je spoznati elementarnega človeka tako, kot se v matematičnem procesu integriranja s pomočjo izvedene funkcije išče prvotna funkcija. Poznal je Malewiczev suprematizem in rusko različico konstruktivizma, iz *Zenita* in od Černigoja je izvedel o teoriji E1 Lisickega. Zanesljivo mu nista bila neznana – kot trdi Janez Vrečko⁵ – Erenburgov konstruktivizem in prostorski konstruktivizem Tatlina. Vendar v njih ni našel načela, ki bi združevalo zaznavo, čustvo in razum, kar bi ustrezalo Peiperjevi zasnovi metafore in stavka. Hkrati je zavračal preproste transpozicije enega področja umetnosti na drugo, čeprav jih je sam uporabljal kot posebne informacijske kode. Brez dvoma je za konstruktivisti povzel idejo o estetski preobrazbi poezije, da bi se približala resničnosti. Pomembna razvojna stopnja v kristalizaciji tega stališča je bil ruski konstruktivizem (ne neposredno, ampak morebiti prek Grahorja in *Zenita*), na katerega se je skliceval z določenimi zadržki. V pismu Fanici Obidovi z dne 27. 7. 1925 je zapisal: »[...] sem se odločil, da stopim na levo. Iz absolutne negacije, nihilizma [...]. [...] škoda, da ne morem priznati „absolutno nobene diktature“. Klub temu, da sem vedno simpatiziral z levo, nisem mogel razumeti njihove ozkosrčnosti. [...] stojim na njihovi strani, čeprav teoretično še daleč ne soglašam.«⁶ Pritegnila ga je njihova idejna angažiranost in približevanje resničnosti, a se je bal skrajnosti. Manjkala mu je celota (vsaka diktatura je redukcija), pa tudi koherentna umetniška vizija z vidika življenjski potreb in potreb poezije. *Integrali* naj bi bili pot k njej, drugačna kot pri vseh različicah konstruktivizma, saj naj bi temeljila na antinomiji življenja in umetnosti, pripadnosti in avtonomiji. *Integrali* naj bi bili rezultat logično razumskega dela v procesu konceptualizacije stvari, dogodkov in njihovih zaznav. Na to kaže že sam naslov, ki se sklicuje na urejevalne lastnosti razuma.

Integral je rezultat procesa, integriranja, ki temelji na iskanju prvotne funkcije s pomočjo izvedene funkcije. Funkcija omogoča najti svojo izvedenko, temeljno informacijo, ki vsebuje kar najmanj neznank. Tako izvedena funkcija opredeljuje nekatere njene konkretne lastnosti, npr.: padajoča ali rastoča vrednost, maksimalna ali minimalna točka. Izvedenka je tudi funkcija, vendar nekako »nižje« stopnje. Torej nosi v sebi (skrite) informacije o prvotni funkciji. Torej je mogoče na podlagi izvedene rekonstruirati izvorno funkcijo. Poleg tega lahko označeni integral predstavlja določene abstraktne matematično-fizične velikosti. Da bi razumeli, kaj je integral, se je treba zavedati, kaj so funkcija in njene izvedenke oziroma preprostejše oblike zapletene funkcije (celote ali vzorca celote), ki so hkrati samostojne oblike. Z integriranjem preučujemo nekaj, kar je obenem samostojni pojav (posebna vrednost), hkrati pa je izvedenka drugega pojava, pomembnejšega oziroma temeljnega, torej nosi v sebi informacijo o nečem bolj prvotnem.⁷

Kljub zavračanju avtomatizacije, ki je prinašala s seboj nenehno razvijajočo se tehniko, temelječo na znanstvenem dognanju, je Kosovel videl veliko vrednost znanosti v spoznavanju resničnosti. Ni se izrekal o znanosti, temveč so njegove pesniške zamisli vsebovale sledove njenega navdiha. Obenem pa je umetnosti priznaval spoznavne vrednosti, te pa naj bi seveda služile človeku. *Integrali* naj bi postali temelj njegovega pesniškega programa, ki se je začel oblikovati z izpričevanjem resničnosti (beleženje nasprotij) in se končal z izvorno pesniško koncepcijo. Nemara prav zato ni poimenoval z integrali tistih pesmi, ki naj bi prišle v zbirko, ampak se je omejil le na eno pesem in naslov zbirke. Posamezna besedila so imela različne naslove, ker so bila udeležena v procesu integriranja, torej prodiranja s pomočjo funkcije tako do bistva stvari v obliki izvirnika – kompleksnega pojava, kot tudi do drugih prvotnih informacij, skritih v izvedenkah. Simbolični jezik poezije ustvarja take možnosti zaradi hkratne denotacije in konotacije. Povezovanje pesmi, imenovanih *integrali*, z znanstvenim mišljenjem poudarja delež razuma v umetniškem urejanju sveta. To ni toliko pritrjevanje razumu, kot dopuščanje, da sprejema pesniške odločitve. Tako zamisel kaže projekt zbirke *Integrali*, sama njegova ideja, kajti sestava ne zna rekonstruirati nihče. Integral namreč ponazarja logično nepretrganost porajanja s posredovanjem oblik in pojavov; za samostojne oblike se zmeraj iščejo prvotne in ... bolj zapletene se zmeraj odkrivajo v izvedenih funkcijah. Medtem pa bi različica označenega integrala, prenesena v poezijo, omogočila prikazati določene abstraktne vrednosti, zadevajoče človekov aksiološki sistem: estetski, etični, filozofski, družbeni, politični itd. Tako postaja pesniška intervencija v resničnost poseganje v samo resničnost. Verbalizirano načelo razuma predstavlja njen opis; paralizirana v opisu ne more delovati. Zaradi tega je težko reči, kako bi se naprej razvijala Kosovelova poezija. Gotovo pa bi kazala težnje k zaobseganju celote v ustrezni formuli – v pesniški konstrukciji. Izkoriščanje procesa integriranja ne bi smelo izravnati nasprotij, ki jih pesnik opaža, vendar pa je težko predvideti, kako bi poudarjeno logiko mišljenja povezoval z objektivno danim fenomenom nasprotij, servilnost poezije z njeno specifikko, izvirajočo iz ustvarjanja sveta, alternativnega v odnosu do resničnosti. Ko Kosovel govori o takem svetu, pogosto navaja figuro o titanski poeziji. Pesnik se kot subjekt bori za človeštvo, za nov svet, posveča mu svojo energijo, poživljajočo moč (npr. *Jesensko tiho*, *Rdeča raketa*, *Smrt* itd.). Glede na to, da v slovenski poeziji ni titanske ali mesianistične tradicije, ampak samo ekspresionistični izrazi prizadetosti in upora, lahko domnevamo, da se je v Kosovelovi poeziji obnavljala ideja pesnikovega uporniškega sveta. On je namreč kot subjekt nosilec procesa integriranja. On odstira vse zastore, ki skrivajo resnično človekovo bistvo. V njegovih ekspresionističnih pesmih pritegujejo pozornost take ključne besede, kot so: *pajčolan*, *zastor*, *pajčevina*, *krinka*, *zavesa*. Na semantični ravni pesniškemu mehanizmu integriranja ustreza trganje zaves, izrez kadrov, odsevi in beleženje.

Kosovelove *konse* je mogoče obravnavati kot nedokončno identificirane poskuse reševanja integralov. V enih in drugih si je pesnik prizadeval za isto stvar – prikazati raznorodnost sveta v individualnem pesniškem doži-

vetju. *Konsi*, pa tudi lepljenke, ki so nastale pod vplivom futurističnih pesniških izkušenj, označujejo razvojno stopnjo oblikovanja pesniške koncepcije jezikovnega izraza. Tudi *integrali* niso končni dosežek, ampak izraz umetniške zamisli, ki je Kosovel ni utegnil uresničiti. Zamisel o integralih ga močnejše veže na konstruktivizem kot *konsi*, pri katerih je uporabljena tehnika konstruktivizma, kajti v njih naj bi se dovršila ustvarjalna sinteza čutnosti (videnje), čustvenosti in razuma. Vprašljivo je tisto, kar naj bi bili po avtorjevi zamisli. Pri tem ne smemo pozabiti, da – kot sicer kaže poetika *konsov* – naj bi prav tako bili le razvojna stopnja pri prodiranju v esencialnost sveta, človeka in naverjetneje tudi poezije. Bili so prav tako integrali, torej analitični postopek, ki šele omogoča presojo o nečem. Poezija, ki je nastajala v času, ko so nastajali *integrali*, pa ne kaže na izrazitejšo prevrednotenje v okviru pesniške ekspresije, ampak na idejo gradnje boljšega sveta s pomočjo poezije. Pri tem procesu prihaja do trenja med destrukcijo in konstrukcijo. Lahko bi rekli, da destrukcija služi konstrukciji tako v smislu ideje in vrednosti kot v strukturi pesniške izpovedi.

Zlasti v *konsih* destrukcija poteka v imenu konstrukcije, ki naj bi se zgodila v duhu naslovnika, in ima svoje besedilne signale predvsem v kompoziciji (ki daje vtis naključnosti, čeprav v resnici ni) in v raznorodnosti izkoriščanja jezikov.

Anton Ocvirk, glavni urednik zapuščine Srečka Kosovela, je *konse* dvakrat uvrstil med besedila, imenovana *Integrali*: leta 1967, ko je izdal zbirko *Integrali*, in 1974 – ko je v drugem zvezku *Zbranih del* ločil te pesmi pod skupnim naslovom. Že izdaja *Integralov* je zbudila veliko dvomov in vprašanj, povezanih z ustvarjalnim razvojem tega avantgardnega pesnika.⁸ Razprave Janeza Vrečka, predvsem pa njegova knjiga *Srečko Kosovel, slovenska zgodovinska avantgarda in zenitizem* (1986), na podlagi preučevanja temeljnega gradiva in metapesniških izjav pojasnjujejo fenomen Kosovelove poezije, pri čemer je pomembna tudi oznaka strukture in funkcije *konsov*.

Ne glede na spore, ki jih med slovenskimi literarnimi zgodovinarji sproža ta poezija, je zbirka *Integrali* v izdaji Antona Ocvirka zaslužna, da je bil Kosovel opažen kot izjemen pojav v slovenski poeziji, in to predvsem zaradi konstruktivističnih pesmi. Vendar ta konstruktivizem ni tako konstruktivističen, kot so ga predstavljali ruski pesniki, npr. Ilja Selvinski, ali na Poljskem Tadeusz Peiper, katerega poezija je veljala za najbližjo konstruktivizmu. Kosovel je v pismih in manifestih večkrat izražal vero v novega človeka, toda opažal je tudi nevarnosti, ki jih prinaša civilizacija. Novi človek je bil zanj utelešenje ideje absolutnega človečanstva oziroma kompleksnosti njegovega obstoja.⁹ Torej ga ni reduciral na družbeno funkcijo, povezano s tehniko, ampak ga je videl v širšem kontekstu.

Konstruktivizem je bil za pesnika ena od faz v iskanju absolutnega človeštva v poeziji, izraženega v kompleksnosti in integralnosti pesmi.

Kompleksnost v *konsih* je predstavljena v tematski in slogovni raznorodnosti, ki ustvarja vtis množstva glasov sveta. Vendar ne ustvarjajo kaosa, kajti v besedilu ima bralec opraviti z njihovim izborom, ta pa je izveden z namenom poudariti obstoječa nasprotja, da bi se po razrešitvi le-teh odprla

možnost oblikovanja integralne podobe. Ko razdira tradicionalne mehanizme sklenjenosti lirskega besedila, na videz ne ponuja novih, ampak nalaga bralcu dolžnost povezovanja vzporednih informacij in dokončno konceptualizacijo stanja ali pojava. Načine konceptualizacije največkrat kaže različno poudarjen semantični vozle besedila (grafično in verbalno ali samo verbalno). Aktiviranje bralca k dejavni udeležbi pri ustvarjanju in percepciji besedila je bilo povezano s funkcijo, kakršno je slovenski ustvarjalec pripisoval poeziji. Pesem naj ne bi le zbujala estetska doživetja, temveč naj bi spodbujala k mišljenju in delovanju, estetski problemi pa naj bi se reševali pri izpolnjevanju pragmatične funkcije. Kosovel je gojil nezaupanje v odnosu do opazovane resničnosti.

Za *konse* ni značilna integralnost pesmi. Na primarni ravni izpovedi so nekoherentni, ker se tudi subjekt zdi enako dezorientiran kot zbrana pričevanja resničnosti, celo takrat, ko izdaja svojo navzočnost v besedilu. Vendar obstaja nekakšna nit, ki povezuje navidezno neodvisne in medsebojno nepovezane informacije, izjave, krike. Povezovalno funkcijo najpogosteje izpolnjuje negacija, izvirajoča iz sestave različnih fragmentov, ki govorijo o kakšnih dejstvih, dogodkih, odzivih ali dejanjih, ki se nahajajo v eni jezikovni prostranosti in ustvarjajo notranja razmerja, obenem pa kažejo na zunajbesedilno resničnost. Te informacije, iztrgane iz svojega konteksta, kažejo razpoke, pomanjkljivosti v realnem svetu in obenem zbujajo upor in zanikanje.

Konsi pritegujejo pozornost zaradi navidezno nedokončane oblike in umetniške diferenciacije posameznih besedil ter zaradi svoje notranje raznorodnosti. V njih prevladuje ideja odprtosti, kar je vidno že na ravni zgradbe. Temeljno načelo zgradbe *konsov* je mozaik, kar omogoča vključevati različne informacije in informacijske kode v strukturo pesmi: od stavka prek matematičnih, logičnih in kemijskih znakov do etiket, gesel, citatov iz časopisov in brošur, pa tudi stilizacij ljudske pesmi in različnih oblik navajanja literarnih odnosnic. Mozaik tvorijo sestavine, uporabljene že v drugem kontekstu, iz katerih nikoli ne bo nastala dokončna celota, ampak dinamična celota, ki je podvržena spremembam. Urejevalno funkcijo v njej ima semantika, smisel dela pa je spoznaven skozi semantični vozle besedila ali skupni asociativni krog. Zaradi raznorodnosti gradiva pesmi in dvoumnega stališča subjekta večina *konsov* nima značaja monocentrične izpovedi, tipične za liriko. Subjekt ne ureja sveta niti si ne prizadeva venomer na novo ubesedovati lastno čustveno stanje. Kosovelovo izogibanje redukcionizmu subjekta daje bralcu večjo možnost za interpretacijo sveta.

Ko je Kosovel zavnil prvenstvenost tehnike in sprejemal njeno uporabnost, je izkoriščal zaznavne mehanizme, ki jih je v človeku izoblikovala tehnična civilizacija. Poskusi, vsebovani v *konsih*, jasno kažejo na uporabo zaznavne tehnike, izoblikovane v njegovi dobi. Navidezna destrukcija v *konsih* je rezultat mozaične konstrukcije z uporabo kontrasta in paralelizma.

Kljub uporabljenim pesniškim tehnikam konstruktivizma, futurizma in ekspresionizma se *konsi* od drugih avantgardnih pesniških oblik ločujejo po zgradbi osnutkov. Ko se je Kosovel v pesmi odpovedal homogenosti (stališč in gradiva) na račun heterogenosti, je zanikal tako imenovano čis-

tost besedne umetnosti. Ko je opazil nevarnosti civilizacije dvajsetega stoletja, je obenem ponotranjil v poeziji najbolj značilne poteze dobe.

Integrali naj bi torej v poeziji pozunanjili popolnega človeka z njegovo raznorodno občutljivostjo, etiko, družbenimi in nacionalnimi zvezami, torej človeka, ki je središčna figura na Zemlji (*sonce-človek*) in element Vesolja, kar se je deloma vezalo z utopično teorijo zgodovinske avantgarde. Usmerjeni so bili k ideji absolutnega človečanstva, njihov naslovnik pa naj bi bil konstruktivni človek, razumljen brez redukcionističnih omejitev. Take so glede na temo nekatere pesmi, objavljene v Ocvirkovi izdaji *Integralov*, npr.: *Sodobna mrtvila*, *Svetilka ob cesti*, *Kalejdoskop*, *Majhen plašč* in druge. Za cikel *Integrali* je torej značilna vsebinska sklenjenost, medtem ko se v formalnem pogledu ne razlikujejo od drugih oblik avantgardnega svobodnega verza. V večini primerov je zanje značilna kitična zgradba, dosledna odsotnost rim in ritmična regularnost ter monocentričnost izjave, ki poudarja urejevalno funkcijo lirskega subjekta. V nasprotju od *konsov* je v njih omejen delež zunajpesniških kodov. *Integrali* tvorijo daljše celote in imajo zaradi uporabe zaprte strukture, temelječe na različnih vrstah ponovitev (med drugim tudi na antimetaboli) izrazito formulirano idejo, npr.:

Bodi svetilka, če ni ti
mogoče biti človek;
ker težko je biti človek.
Človek ima samo dve roki,
pomagati pa bi moral tisočerim.
Bodi zato obcestna svetilka,
ki sveti tisoč veselim v obraz,
ki sveti samotnemu, blodečemu.
Bodi svetilka z eno lučjo,
človek v magičnem kvadratu,
z zeleno roko znamenja dajoč.
Bodi svetilka, svetilka,
svetilka.¹⁰

Pri oznaki *integralov* je treba jasno poudariti, da je s tem imenom mogoče označiti vse pesmi razen *konsov*, ki so bile napisane v obdobju od pomladi do jeseni leta 1925 in v katerih prevladuje ideja celostnega človeka. Do nepreciznosti prihaja, ker slovenski literarni zgodovinarji niso mogli določiti ustreznega korpusa besedil, kar ne spreminja ocene te ustvarjalnosti. Iz pisem in zapiskov v *Dnevnikih* je znano, da je Kosovel v istem času pisal *konse* in *integrale*, v pismu Obidovi pa beremo o načrtovani pesniški zbirki z naslovom *Integrali*, ki naj bi imela uvod. Morebiti bi lahko bilo tako zaporedje: *kons* (kot uvod) in pesem – kar bi se ujemalo z miselno intenco *integrala*. *Integral* je operacija, ki temelji na določenem miselnem procesu, ki omogoča dostop do informacije, torej izhodiščne točke. Pomeni proces preučevanje samostojnega pojava, hkrati pa izvedenega iz drugega pojava. Zato bi *konsi* lahko bili v vlogi parcialnih funkcij, povezanih z načelom nastopanja v sklopu s pesmijo, v kateri je uporabljen učinek te operacije. V takem primeru bi Kosovel lahko bral svoje pesmi na literarnem večeru (o

pripravah nanj je pisal Obidovi) razen tistih *konsov*, ki so za to neprimerni (glede na grafično-vizualni element). Na verjetnost takih domnev kaže primerjava njegove poezije z zapisi v *Dnevnikih*. Zelo pogosto so to sheme pesmi ali osnutki člankov in predavanj, čeprav – kot je mogoče domnevati – so bili to zapisi spoznanj, refleksij in dejstev, šele pozneje pa gradivo za pesmi. Vtis, da gre pri *konsih* za osnutke, v precejšnji meri izvira iz njegovega načina zapisovanja. Ni znano, ali naj bi bili *Integrali* ciljna točka v njegovi pesniški koncepciji. Najbrž ne, saj je v pismih (mdr. Obidovi) pisal, da se mora še veliko naučiti, intenzivno delati, potovati v tujino, da bi spoznal najnovejše ustvarjalne dosežke: nazore in umetniške rešitve.

Če velja, da je bil Kosovelov končni cilj pesniško oblikovanje popolnega človeka in njegove vizije, so sledovi tega navzoči tudi v *konsih*, ki so nesporno veljali za konstruktivistične pesmi. *Konsi* vsebujejo elemente konstruktivistične poetike, a njihova struktura se z namernim razbijanjem podobe nagiblje k odprtosti; ni zaprta konstruktivistična celota.

Konsi temeljijo na prevladi načela reprezentativnosti oziroma na sekundarnem rojevanju resničnosti z njenimi replikami v obliki fragmentov ali pričevanj, vključenih v pesem (npr. geslo, naslov, etiketa, jezikovnemu kodu tuj kod ipd.). *Integrali* ustvarjajo predstave z izrazito opredeljenim glediščem in perspektivo opazovalca. Njihovo sporočilo je za bralca čitljivo, besedilo pa ne zahteva kreativnega sodelovanja bralca. Kljub temu, da se sklicujeta na literarnozvrstno nejasno opredeljene predmete, pa sta oba parazvrstna pojma značilna za Kosovelovo pesniško in filozofsko zavest. Njena konstitutivna lastnost je nasprotje, ki je značilna tako za kaos kot tudi za fenomen celostnega obstoja, ki presega predstavne možnosti poezije. Reprodukcijska resničnost je zmeraj obsojena na negotovost, zato je avtor *konsov* izbral fragment, prepričan o njegovi pripadnosti kakšni celoti. Tako kot nasprotje lahko obstaja v celoti, tako je konstrukcija možna v destrukciji in obratno, ker subjektivno soobstaja z objektivnim, mirkozmos z makrokozmosom. Razmerja med njimi se oblikujejo na podlagi neprestano vzpostavljajočih se razmerij med subjektom in objektom in drugimi subjekti. Njihov porok so bili za Kosovela zmeraj čustvo, duh in razum, navzoči v procesu sporazumevanja, ki je dosegljivo zaradi sočutenja in človekovih etičnih potreb.

Iz poljščine prevedel Niko Jež.

OPOMBE

¹ Prim. Srečko Kosovel: *Zbrano delo*. Tretja knjiga (Prvi del). Ur. Anton Ocvirk. Ljubljana : DZS, 1977, s. 688.

² Prim. Grzegorz Gazda: *Słownik europejskich kierunków i grup literackich XX wieku*. Warszawa: PWN, 2000, s. 34–44.

³ Prim. Seweryna Wysłouch: *Literatura a sztuki wizualne*. Warszawa: PWN 194, s. 36–61.

⁴ Tadeusz Peiper: *Rytm nowoczesny*. V: N. d.: *Tędy. Nowe usta*. Predgovor, komentar, biogr. podatki Stanisław Jaworski. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1972, s. 90.

⁵ Prim. Janez Vrečko: *Srečko Kosovel, slovenska zgodovinska avantgarda in zenitizem*. Maribor: Obzorja, 1986, s. 147.

⁶ Srečko Kosovel: *Zbrano delo*. Tretja knjiga (Prvi del)... , s. 400.

⁷ Prim. *Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna*. T. II. Warszawa: PWN 1963, s. 272–275.

⁸ Prim. Matijaž Kmecel: »Torej še enkrat o Srečku Kosovelu«. *Jezik in slovnostvo* 1971/72, št. 4; Franc Zdravec: *Srečko Kosovel*. Koper - Trst: Založba Lipa in Založništvo tržaškega tiska 1986; Boris Paternu: »Slovenski modernizem«. *Sodobnost* 1985, št. 11; Janez Vrečko: *Srečko Kosovel, slovenska zgodovinska avantgarda in zenitizem...*

⁹ Prim. Janez Vrečko: »Konstruktivizem, futurizem in branje Kosovelovih konsov.« [1]. *Delo* 1988, št. 121, [dodatek:] *Književni listi*, s. 4. Te razlike ni opazil Anton Ocvirk, ko je predstavljal *konse* in *integrale* kot celoto – prim. Anton Ocvirk: »Srečko Kosovel in konstruktivizem«. V: Srečko Kosovel: *Integrali* '26. Ur. Anton Ocvirk. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1967, s. 5–112 in Srečko Kosovel: *Zbrano delo*. Tretja knjiga (Drugi del).

¹⁰ N. d.: »Svetilka ob cesti«. V: N. d.: *Zbrano delo*. Druga knjiga. Ur. in opombe napisal Anton Ocvirk. Ljubljana: DZS, s. 149.

■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / pesniške oblike / konsi / integrali

Kosovel je, podobno kot veliko ustvarjalcev, spadajočih v avantgardo, verjel v organsko zvezo sveta in človeka, Zemlje in Vesolja. Poezija je bila zanj izraz občutljivosti, razuma, čustev in človekovega vživljanja. Pomenila mu je vir estetskih doživetij in sredstvo spoznavanja. V želji, da bi se približal celostnemu človeku, je videl potrebo po umetniški analizi in sintezi pojavov, čemur mdr. ustrezajo *konsi* in *integrali*; te literarne parazvrstne oblike vsebujejo njegova estetsko-nazorska iskanja.

Integral je v slovenskem jeziku oznaka za matematično-fizikalni pojem, katerega analitično-sintetično uporabnost je Kosovel odkril v obdobju svojih konstruktivističnih iskanj. Integral je namreč izid procesa integriranja, ki temelji na iskanju prvotne funkcije s pomočjo izpeljane. Z izpeljavo funkcija omogoča odkriti prvotno ali prvotnejšo informacijo s kar najmanjšim številom neznank. S procesom integriranja raziskujemo nekaj, kar je hkrati samostojen pojav in izpeljava drugega, pomembnejšega oz. temeljnega, vsebuje torej informacijo o nečem, kar je prvotnejše.

Na tak način je vzpostavljena povezanost in kontinuiteta pojavov, ki neposredno ni opazna. Konsi vsebujejo na videz neodvisne elemente (so izpeljave); z njimi skuša pesnik mdr. v *integralih* priti do celostnega človeka, do bistva človečanstva, torej do prvinskega človeka.

SREČKO KOSOVEL

IN EVROPSKA AVANTGARDA

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1.

Srečko Kosovel se je rodil 18. marca 1904 v Sezani blizu Trsta, takrat še v avstroogrski monarhiji. Odraščal je v narodno zavedni učiteljski družini. 1916 je odšel na realko v Ljubljano, ker so ga starši želeli rešiti pred strahotami prve svetovne vojne. Po koncu te vojne je ena tretjina Slovencev spod habsburške dinastije prešla pod savojsko kraljevino, kar je zanje pomenilo katastrofalen zgodovinski prelom. Že konec leta 1918 so fašisti vdrli v prostore slovenske škofije v Trstu in škofa kasneje prisilili, da se je odpovedal škofiji. Sredi leta 1920 so fašisti s tihim soglasjem oblasti požgali Narodni dom, najvidnejše in najmočnejše središče slovenske navzočnosti v Trstu. Ta požig je bil ognjeni krst prihajajočega fašizma in uvod v divjo raznarodovalno politiko, ki se je še posebej stopnjevala od oktobra 1922, ko so fašisti prevzeli oblast v Italiji. Razpuščali so vse, kar je bilo slovenskega, od političnih strank do kulturnih društev, prepovedali slovenski jezik v javni rabi, poitalijančevali slovenske priimke in zatirali periodični tisk. Šolska reforma je leta 1923 predpisala kot učni jezik v šolah samo italijanščino. Ožjo domovino Primorsko so morali zapustiti številni pesniki, pisatelji in publicisti.

Usoda Primorske po prvi vojni je bila za Kosovela nadvse travmatična. Solidarnost z rojaki onstran meje, ki so bili pod oblastjo »vojaške fašistične okupacije«, je Kosovel obsojal v svojih pesmih in pismih. S strahom je opazoval, kako se nacionalizem in militarizem krepita in kako Trst iz odprtega večjezičnega mesta postaja prostor nestrpnosti in surovih obračunavanj z nasprotniki režima, med katerimi je bilo kar nekaj Slovencev, Kosovelovih prijateljev. Podobno kritičen je bil Kosovel tudi do države južnih Slovanov, kraljevine SHS, saj je kmalu spoznal, kako postaja velikosrbski nacionalizem za Slovence ogrožajoč. V svoji centralistični zagnanosti so srbski politiki v sleherni kulturni in družbeni dejavnosti odkrivali separatistične težnje. Po bengalskem piscu Tagoreju je Kosovel povzel ločevanje narodnosti, ki mu je pomenila nekaj duhovnega v primerjavi z nacionalizmom, ki ga je imel za materialno silo. Fašizem v Italiji in velikosrbski nacionalizem v kraljevini SHS je Kosovel zavrnil kot »militarizirani nacionalizem«. Agresivnost velikosrbske politike je pesnik kmalu občutil na lastni koži, saj mu ni bila

dodeljena štipendija, ki bi jo nujno potreboval po očetovi prisilni upokojitvi – službo je izgubil kot narodno zaveden Slovenec. (Pirjevec, 12). Očetova želja je bila, da bi se izšolal za gozdarskega inženirja, ker bi na ta način lahko strokovno sodeloval pri pogozdovanju Krasa, a se to ni zgodilo, saj je sin 1922 začel s študijem slavistike in romanistike na ljubljanski univerzi.

2.

Kosovel se je Slovencem razkrival sila počasi. Leto po smrti, 1927., so prijatelji izdali izbor *Pesmi*, 1930. so izšle *Izbrane pesmi*, 1946. prvi zvezek *Zbranega dela*, ki se je zaključilo šele 1977. s tretjim zvezkom. Leta 1967 je v samostojni pesniški zbirki izšla Kosovelova eksperimentalna poezija in takrat se je razkrilo »dotlej neznano poglavje slovenske književnosti, lahko pa bi dejali tudi – evropske avantgarde.« (Flaker, 1983, 7).

Njegov pesniški opus obsega impresionistično liriko, ko pa se je v letih 1924-25 seznanil z italijanskim futurizmom, nemškim ekspresionizmom, zenitizmom ter berlinskim in ruskim konstruktivizmom, je njegova poezija prešla v eksperimentalno fazo, v njegove znamenite *konse*, kot jih sam poimenuje. Od poznega poletja 1925 dalje se je predajal tudi revolucionarni liriki. Zanimivo pri Kosovelu je prav to, da se je z vsemi tremi »smermi« ukvarjal sočasno, da torej v času avantgardizma in politično orientirane lirike ni opustil svoje impresionistične ustvarjalnosti. Bralci so Kosovela dolga leta poznali le po njegovi impresionistični in deloma zadnji politični ustvarjalnosti. Kot rečeno, je sredi šestdesetih let postal aktualen tudi kot avantgardistični pesnik, saj je bilo dotlej objavljenih le kakšnih petnajst pesmi iz »oddelka konstrukcij«.

Prav takšna Kosovelova izredno intenzivna pesniška in miselna usoda je spodbudila vrsto literarnozgodovinskih raziskav. Tako je bilo sredi osemdesetih let dokončno ugotovljeno, da smo bili Slovenci na intenziven način vključeni v avantgardistična gibanja dvajsetih let 20. stoletja, ki jih danes skupno poimenujemo zgodovinska avantgarda, s tem pa se je pokazalo, da je šlo prav pri Kosovelu za pojave, ki so v celoti ustrezali merilom evropskih avantgard. Tako je bila dokončno spodnesena Willetova teza, da južno od črte Dunaj – Budimpešta ni bilo avantgardnih gibanj. (gl. Willet, 9).

Slovensko zgodovinsko avantgardo je potemtakem mogoče videti kot enotno in kontinuirano gibanje, saj z intermedialnega vidika seže vse od literarnega prek likovnega do gledališkega in glasbenega eksperimenta, vsebuje pa tudi konstitutivne elemente sleherne avantgarde, vse od javnih nastopov, skupinske dejavnosti, manifestov, revij in logičnega zaporedja posameznih faz od estetskega, etičnega in političnega prevrednotenja. Kosovel predstavlja njeno notranjo konstanto.

3.

Literarno vedo je doslej k povezovanju Kosovela s konstruktivizmom navajalo dejstvo, da je predvsem v dnevniških zapiskih in korespondenci po-

gosto omenjal ta pojem, da je svoje pesmi poimenoval s kratico *kons*, enako pa je želel nasloviti tudi revijo, ki bi jo izdajal in ji bil glavni urednik.

4.

Kljub temu so ga nekateri povezovali z italijanskim futurizmom, čeprav že bežen pogled na njegov manifest *Mehanikom* pokaže, da Kosovelu ni bilo do futurističnega oboževanja kinetične lepote in moderne tehnike. Zavrnil je Marinettijevega mehaničnega človeka in njegove »osvobojene besede« (parole in libertà) in se zavzel za novega človeka, ki ga piše z veliko začetnico. Podobno velja tudi za zenitizem in njegove »besede v prostoru« (Worte im Raum), ki so mu pomenile le golo igračkanje.

Kosovel je v svojem poetskem repertoarju zapisal skoraj vse pomembnejše besede iz tedanjega tehničnega arzenala, od avtomobila, brzovlaka, letala, torpeda, motorja itd. in imel do njih ambivalenten odnos. Jasno mu je bilo, da je prav razvoj moderne tehnike zanesel med ljudi kali izobrazbe. »Radio, brzojav, pošta, železnica, parobrodi, časopisi, knjige so pospeševalci razvoja«. »Avtomobil je senzacija«, »Avtomobil 4 km, misli 1 km, stremljenje 100 m«. Kosovelu je bilo jasno, da je tehnika plod razuma in za sodobnega človeka bolj zanimiva kot umetnost (gl. 3, 111), je pa tudi tista, ki odtuja človeka, ga mehanizira in brezdušno civilizira. Zato je Kosovelovo izhodišče, da »ljudi se ne da mehanizirati«, »človek ni avtomat«, zato »Padi, mrtvi človek ... suženj mehanike«. Če je bil prej zanj avtomobil senzacija, je postal zdaj naprava, ki »škropi blato«, »Avto nima svobodne volje«, »V mehaniki ni kulture«, »Vlak je počasen kakor črni polž. Misel je kakor blisk.« Podobno velja za Kosovelov odnos do mestne civilizacije, do njenih številnih slepil, ki pritiskajo na človeka in vodijo Zahod v neizbežen propad, v smrt Evrope. Svet tehnike je svet, v katerem človek izgublja svojo prvobitnost, organskost, sposobnost paradoksnega mišljenja, to je svet »trudnega evropskega človeka«, ki je v »ekstazi smrti«.

Vse to potrjuje, da je bil Kosovel zares daleč od Marinettijevih stališč, da je imel distanco do velemestnega, zabaviškega, cirkusantskega, verižniškega, prešuštniškega in taylorjanskega docela zmehaniziranega ambienata tekočih trakov, da je opozarjal pred slepo glorifikacijo »stoletja, ki se mehanizira« in pred tem, kar je učil Marinetti – da bo preživel le, kdor se bo pustil mehanizirati. Rešitev vidi Kosovel v paradoksu, ki mu pomeni »skok iz mehanike v življenje«, s čimer se navezuje na zenitistično terminologijo, v kateri je paradoks razumljen kot gibljivost duha, kot obči pogoj obstoja, ne pa kot nesmisel. Iz Kosovelovega manifesta tedaj razločno veje nasprotje med življenjem, ki je živo, iskrivo, paradoksalno, električno – in mehničnim in mehaniko, ki je brezdušna, ne razume paradoksa. Čeprav je manifest napisan kot živi apel mehanikom in soferjem, upravljalcem modernih strojev, je njegova vsebina namenjena tistim, ki so zmožni skočiti iz mehanike zato, da bi uničili človeka-stroj. Zato je drugi del Manifesta hvalnica Novemu človeku, človeku iz krajev, kjer »svita se; ali čutite to svetlikanje?«, ki ga bo Kosovel imenoval tudi konstruktivni človek, dobo,

ki ji bo pripadal, pa dobo konstruktivnosti (gl. 3, 591 -783). Kosovel sam na več mestih pove, kje si mora umetnost tega novega človeka iskati vzorov in zgledov: tam, kjer »jutro prihaja, od vzhoda prihaja, ... z rdečim plaščem prihaja«. (3, 93).

4.

Pomembno avantgardistično gibanje, ki ga je Kosovel odlično poznal, je bilo zenitizem. Revija *Zenit*, ki je sodila med pet najpomembnejših avantgardističnih revij v tedanji Evropi, je od ustanovitve leta 1921 propagirala novo umetnost, ki ne bo več elitistična, muzejska in kavarniško dekadentna, ampak bo temeljila »na novih temeljih konstruktivizma«, ki bodo prerodili in balkanizirali Evropo. Pri tem bo prišlo do novega tipa kulture in človeka z balkanskim žigom etike in neposredne človečnosti. Kosovel je bil nekaj časa že nevarno obremenjen z zenitizmom, saj ga v dnevnikih omenja kar vsakih nekaj strani, prisostoval je obema zenitističnima večeroma v Ljubljani, v njegovi zapuščini se je ohranilo nekaj zenitističnih tiskov, *Zenit* in dela iz Zenitistične biblioteke pa si je prinesel celo na poletne počitnice domov v Tomaj. Korespondenca in dnevniški zapiski leta 1924 pokažejo, da razen *Zenita* Kosovel drugih revij sploh ni omenjal. Od poletja 1924 pa do pozne pomladi 1925 je bil *Zenit* edina avantgardistična revija, ki jo je resno študiral, celo »za nazaj«, vse do prvih števil. Tu se je lahko informiral o berlinskem konstruktivizmu, o usmeritvah De Stijla, o ruskih produktivistih, čeških poetistih, italijanskih futuristih itd. S tako zasnovanim *Zenitom* je urednik Micić pokazal »model sodelovanja med avantgardami, kakršen je sicer veljal po vsej Evropi. Šlo je za hitro povzemanje stališč, vzorcev, izkušenj ...« (Krečič, 17). Kos s tem v zvezi opozarja kar na vzore in primere konstruktivistične poezije, ki so mu bili »morda najbližji, če že ne kar edini praktični zgled pesnjenja v modernističnem načinu.« (Kos, 45). Naj vnaprej opozorimo, da bo treba razlikovati med Kosovelovo zenitistično teoretsko fazo v »novem načinu« in praktično izvedbo konsov, ki bodo seveda daleč od zenitističnih »praktičnih zgledov.«

V tem smislu so posebej zanimivi Kosovelovi Dnevniški zapiski VII, ki so nastajali v aprilu in maju 1925, se pravi v času, ko se je pesnik nadvse intenzivno ukvarjal z zenitističnim konstruktivizmom in se ob nastopih zenitistov tudi prepričal o njihovi metodah in ciljih. Spoznal je, da poezije ne bo več mogoče graditi na »ekspanzivnosti čustva«, da »pesem ne more biti iz samih luninih žarkov spletena«, pesem Rime vsebuje številne elemente Micićevega Kategoričnega imperativa, od rim do fraz, deklamatorstva in sentimentalnosti. V Konsu ABC ukazuje srcu, naj ostane mrzlo, »Steklenica v kotu pove več kakor zbirka praznih rim«, v Prostituirani kulturi se sprašuje: »Ali si norec ali kaj, da jokaš z listjem v vetru?« Lajež postane edina protiutež poetu, ki »javka po mesečini« in za katerega je edino primeren klistir. Sentimentalno hrepenenje po ženski je odlično ironizirano z onomatopetičnimi zvoki veslanja: klap, klap. Micićev Kategorični imperativ je za Kosovela postal »program in temelj za delo z jasnimi načeli anti-estetike«,

njegova Zenitozofija pa ga je prepričevala, da se je potrebno osvoboditi poslušnega kruha sentimentalnosti. (*Zenit*, 1924, 26-33). Kosovel je sprva računel z revolucionarno razsežnostjo zenitističnega konstruktivizma, kmalu pa se mu je zadel le kot verbalno in zgolj formalno opredeljivo igračkanje s plitkim in kratkotrajnim učinkom, zato se je odločil za kritiko *Zenita*, kot se je s podobnih stališč lotil tudi italijanskega futurizma, s tem pa za preusmeritev svojega svetovnega nazora in za drugačno pesniško prakso.

5.

Iz vsega povedanega je videti, da je Kosovel dobro poznal številne *izme* svojega časa, vseh žal nismo mogli omeniti, a se za nobenega ni odločil, ker jim je šlo le za eksperimentiranje s formo, le za spremembo literature in umetnosti, ne pa življenja v celoti. Zato je moral naposled svoj pogled usmeriti k tistim smerem, ki so ob formalno-revolucionarnem upoštevanju tudi človeka prihajajoče »konstruktivne dobe«, ki so torej ob revoluciji forme upoštevale tudi »revolucionarno vsebinskost«. Takšen pa je bil med gibanji dvajsetih let predvsem ruski konstruktivizem, ki je idealno povezal moderno tehniko in novega človeka, Kosovelovega človeka prihodnje konstruktivne dobe, kar je bilo pri njegovem obratu k takratni politični levici na Slovenskem odločilno, seveda pa tesno povezano z njegovim pisanjem konsov.

Primerjava med idealiziranjem in fetišiziranjem strojev in moderne tehnike v italijanskem futurizmu, ki je poskušal mehanizirati tudi človeka, in to do tiste mere, da ga bo mogoče kadarkoli nadomestiti ali zamenjati z drugim mehaničnim človekom ali njegovim mehaničnim delom – in simbolom ruskega konstruktivizma, Tatlinovim spomenikom III. internacionali, pove dovolj. Ta žal nikdar udejanjena zamisel takrat najvišje stavbe na svetu bi bila namreč vsa posvečena človeku, saj bi z vgrajenimi geometrijskimi telesi stožca, piramide in valja, ki bi krožili okoli lastne osi, v njih pa bi bili radijska postaja, največja knjižnica na svetu in ura, s svojo informacijsko gostoto skrbela za kar največjo informiranost novega, »prihajajočega« človeka. Tatlinu torej ni šlo, kot futuristu Marinettiju, za golo idolatrijo strojne tehnike, kjer je bil lahko dirkalni avtomobil lepši od Nike Samotraške (pri Kosovelu je »avtomobil naprava, ki škropi blato«), ampak za proces, ki se začneja pri človeku in njegovi duhovni preobrazbi, tej pa bo sledila tudi sprememba ekonomskih odnosov. Kosovel je deloval na isti valovni dolžini. Na svoj spis, ki je v rokopisih ohranjen pod naslovom Propad družbe in umetnosti (gl. 3/1, 807), je Kosovel pod naslovom v oklepaju in s svinčnikom pristavil: »Bela nova družba bodočnosti«, do katere bo mogoče po njegovem priti samo prek »belih barikad«, torej z nekrvavo, duhovno revolucijo.

Zanima nas, koliko je Kosovel poznal temeljna načela ruskega literarnega konstruktivizma, ki je deloval kot Literarni center konstruktivistov (LCK), s katerimi ga je lahko seznanil njegov prijatelj Ivo Grahor, ki je sredi leta 1924 ilegalno prebegnil v Sovjetsko zvezo in se pozimi 1925 vrnil domov.

Za LCK je bil značilen poskus sinteze številnih evropskih izmov, Po Grüblovem mnenju se v tem kaže »sintetični« moment konstruktivističnega literarnega gibanja, »poskus, kako vse znane postopke združiti v skupni poetski inventar«.

Poznavanje načel LCK-ja je Kosovelu končno omogočilo modifikacijo njegovih konsov za potrebe slovenskega pesniškega prostora, v katerem je bilo še vedno treba upoštevati specifičen položaj jezika in s tem pesniške besede. Literatura je imela namreč v novejši slovenski zgodovini narodno konstitutivno funkcijo, kar je sicer veljalo tudi za nekatere druge narode v Avstro-Ogrski monarhiji. Angleški zgodovinar Taylor je zanje uveljavil misel, da so jih preprosto rodili pesniki. Ustanovitev države SHS po prvi svetovni vojni je bila za Slovence po dolgih stoletjih prvo upanje v samostojno državnost, zato bi zdaj lahko razpadla funkcionalna zveza literarne in nacionalnega. Kosovel je spočetka pristajal na to, da so se zgodovinske potrebe naroda »glede na literaturo že povsem spremenile«, kmalu pa se je pokazalo, da jih bo moral še zmeraj upoštevati, saj je sprevidel ničnost države SHS prav zaradi velikosrbskega nacionalizma.

Šele z osrednjim postopkom LCK-ja, z načelom *gruzifikacije* ali maksimalne obremenitve teme, je Kosovel lahko popolnoma uveljavil svoj pesniški eksperiment. V konsih je sintetiziral intenzivne lirske elemente z matematičnimi, kemijskimi, pikturalnimi, tipografskimi in drugimi intervencijami skupaj s političnimi izjavami. Vendar se do tod njegovi konsi ne bi v ničemer razlikovali od zenitističnih in drugih praktičnih zgledov. Ker pa smo ugotovili, da teh ni mogel sprejeti, saj so ti izmi izhajali iz transracionalnega, abstraktnega pojmovanja besede, iz njihovega naključnega kolažiranja, kot je to veljalo za Marinettijeve parole in libertà, za Micićeve Worte im Raum, za zaumni jezik ruskih futuristov, se je moral Kosovel odločiti za »pesmi iz besed«, kjer je »vsaka beseda svet zase«, to možnost pa mu je edini ponudil prav LCK. Teoretik LCK-ja Zelinski je namreč postavil zahtevo, da mora pesem ohranjati svojo logično pomensko razsežnost glede na celoto pesmi. Ta zahteva je Kosovelu še posebej ustrezala, saj je imel s konsi resne namene glede objave. V svoji definiciji konstruktivizma je Kosovel jasno povzel zahteve LCK-ja in Zelinskega: »Vsebina se hoče izražati v živi, svobodni organični obliki, biti hoče vsebina in oblika obenem, od tod konstruktivizem.« (3, 13). Iz Kosovelovega pristanka na sintetični moment LCK-ja so končno nastali konsi, kot jih poznamo danes in pomenijo posebnost v evropskem konstruktivističnem kontekstu in enega njegovih vrhov. (gl. Flaker, 1983, 77). V njegovih konsih »znotraj dezintegracije deluje integracija in znotraj modernističnega razbitja še zmeraj klasični red stvari ... Antipoezija se spreminja v poezijo, v 'pesem', ki jo je Kosovel v resnici še zmerom branil.« (Paternu, 102). Kosovel je ustvaril prostorsko, arhitektonsko in vizualno pesem, v kateri ni bilo prostora za abstraktno, naključno, zaumno, samoilustrativno pojmovanje besede. »Črke rasto v prostor, glasovi so kakor stavbe, ... Svetlikanje prostora ... svetloba besede.« »Vse je arhitektura, pesništvo, muzika, slikarstva ni več.« (3, 718). »Razvoj k prostoru. Vsaka beseda je svet zase / gibanje med temi svetovik. Umetnina – arhitektonski problem.« (3, 703). Le takšna koncepcija besede

je Kosovelu dovoljevala restitucijo pesmi kot moderne pesmi s smotno in logično porabo besednega in arhitektonskega gradiva, kjer se je vse še zmeraj dogajalo v »svetlobi besede« kot njene pomenske razsežnosti.

Vse to nam omogoča razumeti Kosovelovo vztrajanje v konstruktivizmu, saj mu noben drug izem, nobeno drugo gibanje tistega časa ne bi dopustilo takšne sinteze eksperimentalnega, lirskega in levo ideološkega, prežetega z najvažnejšim, s pomensko razvidnostjo pesmi. Prav na tej točki se je Kosovel odločil zoper vsa gibanja, ki tega niso dopuščala ali upoštevala, od zenitizma pa do futurizma. Ob tem pa je treba omeniti, da je Kosovel iz ruskega literarnega konstruktivizma prevzel še zahtevo, da mora biti pesemski material akcentuiran ali zveden v fokus na vnaprej določenem mestu konstrukcije, ki se tako vzvratno nanaša na celoto pesmi. (Grübel, 125).

Če si priključimo v spomin Kosovelovo definicijo konstruktivistične pesmi, ki se je glasila »Pesem mora biti kompleks«, in če ta kompleks razumemo kot nekaj, kar je med seboj speto, zvezano, sestavljeno v celoto iz več delov, potem vidimo, da je bila ta opredelitev blizu načelu konstruktivistične gruzifikacije, saj se je kompleks tu nanašal na montažni princip, ki je prvi pogoj in material za gruzificirano pesem, v kateri je načelo montaže preseženo. V tem je tudi razlika med Kosovelovo začetno zgolj teoretsko opredelitvijo za konstruktivizem, ko je pesem še definiral kot kompleks, in njegovo poznejšo praktično izvedbo, ko se je že seznanil z ruskim literarnim konstruktivizmom, čeprav je probleme in rešitve za svoje konse že prej genialno anticipiral.

Kosovel je potemtakem v svojih konsih sintetiziral številne tedanje avantgardistične tendence in jih gruzificiral na estetskem in ideološkem nivoju. Ruski literarni konstruktivizem se je med vsemi izmi dvajsetih let ob tipografskem, pikturalnem, ideološkem in estetskem gradivu edini zavzemal tudi za pomensko razsežnost besede in za restitucijo pesmi po načelu hermenevtičnega kroga, hkrati pa poskušal uveljaviti človekovo ustvarjalnost in svobodo, zato je Kosovelu nadvse ustrezal. Rigorozno pa je zavračal vse tiste usmeritve, ki so se zavzemale le za svobodne besede brez slehernega pomena, ob tem pa pristajale še na mehaniziranje človeka, strojno dinamiko, glorifikacijo moderne civilizacije brez distance. Zenitizem, italijanski futurizem in berlinski konstruktivizem so bili tu posebej na udaru.

Zdaj je šele mogoče razumeti, kaj je imel Kosovel v mislih, ko je v svojem manifestu *Mehanikom* govoril o prvi bojni napovedi vsem mehanizmom v državi SHS, ki da se je zgodila v Sloveniji. Očitno je bil mnenja, da bi se z njegovimi konsi prav v Sloveniji dogodil premik, ki ga v okviru SHS niso zmogli opraviti ne zenitisti in tudi ne kdo drug.

Po vsem povedanem je tudi razumljivo, zakaj se Kosovel ni intenzivneje ukvarjal z lepljenkami; ohranjene so samo tri, ena iz aprila 1925, dve pa s konca decembra 1925/26. Lepljenke namreč temeljijo na montažnem postopku, na naključnem verbalnem kolažiranju, za konse pa je temeljno izhodišče že omenjena konstruktivistična gruzifikacija, kjer je montaža le eden od elementov pri t. i. maksimalni obremenitvi vsebine, ki mora biti razvidna od začetka do konca. Z avantgardističnega stališča so lepljenke konservativnejše, saj sodijo v čas nereflimiranih avantgardističnih postopkov,

v katerem sta bila pomembna predvsem estetski vidik in prelom s tradicijo, gruzificirani konsi pa so v službi etičnega in političnega prevrednotenja.

6.

Kosovel se je za javno nastopanje in za svoj vstop v slovenski kulturni prostor, ki ga imenuje prostor laži, začel pripravljati s povsem drugačnim pesniškim programom, ki pa naj bi, tako kot njegovi konsi, stopal »vzporodno z evropskim razvojem«. (3,658).

Eksperimentiranje s konsi mu ni prineslo odrešitve, pomenili so mu le pot »preko mostu nihilizma na pozitivno stran« (3, 398), ki ga opiše tudi kot premik na levo: »Iz absolutne negacije, nihilizma, sem polagoma stopil z zaprtimi očmi na pozitivno stran. Z zaprtimi, da se najprej malo privadim, potem jih odprem ... Škoda, da ne morem priznati absolutno nobene diktature. Kljub temu, da sem vedno simpatiziral z levo, nisem mogel razumeti njihove ozkosrčnosti. Danes vidim več: oči se odpirajo tudi njim, ki so bili do sedaj zaprti v teorije. In jaz sem z njimi.« (3, 400). V istem pismu Kosovel napoveduje tudi, da bojo »okupirali list *Mladino*« (3, 400/1), v kateri se bo dalo »marsikaj napisati«, čeprav to ne bo več s področja »najmodernejšega«, marveč s področja »ekstremnega« v politično-revolucionarnem smislu. Že 1. septembra 1925 namreč beremo v pismu Obidovi, da pripravlja zbirko pesmi *Zlati čoln*, ki jo kani jeseni »definitivno prodati«. Obenem pa jo obvešča, da je »začel hoditi tudi v pesmih ekstremno pot; moj najnovejši cikel pesmi, ... Integrali, ima popolnoma svoj lasten, poseben značaj. Mislim, da bom z njimi priredil recitacijski večer.« (3, 402).

Kosovel v tem pismu najprej pove, da je začel z ekstremno poezijo, ki bo imela »poseben značaj«, kar pomeni, da je morala nastajati konec poletja 1925, ko je tudi sicer »prestopil na levo«, pove pa tudi, da z njo misli pripraviti recitacijski večer. Gre torej za poudarjanje vsebinskih razsežnosti nove poezije, kar se docela sklada z njegovo ugotovitvijo, da je bila »revolucija forme preplitka in prekratkotrajna, revolucija, ki jo oznanjamo, je revolucija vsebine evropskega človeka.« (3, 658). Nova vsebina je vezana na »ekstremno pot«, ekstremno v politično-vsebinskem, revolucionarnem smislu. Gre seveda za konspirativno oznako revolucionarnega značaja teh pesmi iz cikla Integrali, saj ne smemo pozabiti, da je to pismo pisal politični aktivistki, poznejši članici KP Italije, ki se je s poezijo ukvarjala le kratek čas, ves preostali del življenja pa je posvetila politiki. Zato ji je Kosovel v pismu 27. 7. 1925 zapisal, da je iz njenih besed v zadnjem pismu spoznal, kakšno pot hodi, in dodal, da je tudi sam »na isti poti, to se pravi, k istemu cilju grem.« (3, 399).

Kosovel je potemtakem načrtoval Integrale kot »socialistični pisatelj«, ki piše za novega »konstruktivnega človeka«, hkrati pa se je jasno zavedal, da se »natihoma približuje čas, ko bomo morali definitivno izreči, izpovedati svojo besedo« (3, 568), kar je že spet povezano z Integrali in recitacijskim večerom, ki ga je Kosovel načrtoval. Prav prikrievanje lastnih konsov pred prijatelji in širšo javnostjo in sprotno podiranje vseh načrtov v zvezi

z njihovo objavo, kot sta bila načrtovana revija Konstrukter in KONS, pa tudi usoda *Zenita*, ki v danem trenutku ni znal izrabiti svojega položaja in se povezati z levico, so Kosovela silili na realna tla, k okupaciji *Mladine* in k politično ekstremni poeziji, zbrani v ciklu Integrali, s katero bo javno nastopil.

Ali ni po vsem povedanem preobrat Kosovelove poetike od konsov k integralom očitna posledica informacije od zunaj, informacije o vsem tistem, kar se je dogajalo v Rusiji, kjer so konstruktivisti na podoben način skušali rešiti zavoženo futuristično revolucijo prav s ponovno in veliko skrbjo za ljudske množice? S tem je tudi Kosovelova poezija dobila razsvetljenke in pedagoške razsežnosti («Pri nas bomo vse ljudi izobrazili»; 3, 690). Dobila je tudi novo ime: konstruktivna poezija, zbrana v ciklu Integrali, ki ga bo izdala založba proletarskih piscev SHS Strelci.

S tem premikom »na levo« je povezana prav Kosovelova zamisel za »internacionalno zvezo proletarskih pisateljev, najprvo pri nas, SHS, potem v inozemstvu« (3, 698), ki znova dokazuje Kosovelovo izjemno obveščenost; znano je, da v prvi polovici dvajsetih let v Evropi še ni bila formirana mednarodna književna organizacija, kar je videti tudi iz Kosovelovega zapisa, saj ve, da česa takega v inozemstvu še ni. Domnevati smemo, da je tudi ta pobuda, kot številne druge, ob Grahorjevem posredovanju prišla iz Rusije. Tu se je leta 1923 LEF formalno povezal z Moskovsko zvezo proletarskih pisateljev (MAAP). Leta 1924, v času Grahorjevega bivanja v Rusiji, se jima je pridružil še Literarni center konstruktivistov in nastala je Federacija sovjetskih pisateljev.

Načrtovana zveza pisateljev SHS bi po Kosovelovih načrtih izdajala Integrale, zbirke z uvodi, romane itd., vse skupaj pa bi izhajalo v prav tako načrtovani založbi Strelci, ki bi bila založba že omenjene zveze proletarskih pisateljev. Da so Integrali vezani na tip socialno-revolucionarne poezije, je videti tudi iz tega, da Kosovel omenja vsa zgoraj navedena dejstva v enem samem Dnevniku (IX, na straneh 18, 19, 20 in 21). Med konsi in Integrali je bila s tem začrtana nadvse ostra meja.

Zanimivo je tudi, da je Kosovel v poletnih mesecih 1925, ko je pri prestopu »na levo« preživel ustvarjalno krizo, začel s pisanjem proze, vse od črtic pa do velikega načrta z romanom *Kraševci*. Tovrstna Kosovelova prizadevanja kažejo, da je tudi po tej plati sledil dogajanjem v Evropi, kjer se je v tem času »na evropski levici težišče premaknilo z avantgardne poezije na družbeno-funkcionalno prozo.« (Flaker, 1982, 186). Tega ne bi omenjali, če ne bi bilo prav tako odvisno od dogajanja v ruskem literarnem konstruktivizmu. Vemo namreč, da so po letu 1924 v Literarni center konstruktivistov začeli vstopati tudi prozaisti (Grübel, 147), kar je bilo povezano z že omenjenim premikom od eksperimentalne poezije k funkcionalni prozi, vse seveda zaradi socialnega naročila, ki pa ni, kot bi naivno pričakovali, prihajalo od spodaj, iz proletarske baze, ampak od zgoraj, od partije. Partija je namreč sprejela ideologijo avantgard, ne pa tudi njihove umetniške govornice, kar je že zgodaj nakazovalo spopad med političnimi in umetniškimi revolucionarji, spopad, ki se je za slednje končal tragično in brezizhodno.

Če k temu dodamo, da je eden najpomembnejših teoretikov ruskega konstruktivizma, že omenjeni Selvinski, v Kodeksu konstruktivizma 1930 govoril o »dubelrealizmu« ali realističnem realizmu, pot vanj pa je videl v uvajanju proznih postopkov v poezijo, kar naj bi odrinilo na stranski tir patetični futuristični jezik, potem je zadeva okrog Kosovelove prozne dejavnosti še toliko jasnejša. Prav načrtovana zveza proletarskih pisateljev SHS nas prepričuje, da so bili tudi Kosovelovi načrti s prozo resni in predvsem zelo sistematični in da je za njimi stalo dobro poznavanje vseh bistvenih dogajanj v takratnem LCK-ju.

6.

Treba pa je poudariti, da Kosovel tudi pri tem svojem odločilnem obratu na levo ni izgubil kritičnega pogleda in distance do svojega dela. Vzporedno s snovanjem Zveze proletarskih pisateljev je razmišljal o takrat zelo aktualnem vprašanju o položaju inteligence v porevolucijskem razdobju, njenem prebujanju iz spanja (gl. 3, 673), o odnosu pesnika do revolucije, o tem, ali je revolucija pesniku nasprotna ali ne, predvsem pa o tem, da bo pri svojem delu in sodelavcih zahteval »duševno atmosfero, ki (pa) ne bo izbrisala z naših obrazov posebnih potez ...« (3/1, 811), kar se je v tem času že dogajalo v Sovjetski zvezi in, kot smo videli, tudi v LCK-ju. Podatek, da so se tudi člani LCK-ja intenzivno ukvarjali s funkcijo in mestom intelektualcev in inteligence v ruski porevolucijski družbi (Grübel, 167), je glede Kosovelovega poznavanja LCK-ja zgovoren sam po sebi.

Z »okupacijo« *Mladine* je Kosovel končno dobil lastno glasilo in z njim prevzel pobudo na tedanji levi fronti. Prevzel jo je od Samostojne kmetске stranke jeseni 1925. Postala je dobra osnova levemu intelektualnemu delu do druge vojne in po njej. Kosovel se je oprijel *Mladine*, potem ko se jima z Grahorjem niso posrečili načrti za mesečnik *Volja, Mladina* pa je imela zagotovljeno finančno podporo, ki je Kosovelu prinesla denarno brezskrbnost, kakršne še ni izkusil. S Kosovelom je *Mladina* dobila novo, konstruktivistično naslovnico kot zunanje znamenje za notranjo vsebinsko spremembo, sam pa je postal vodilni član uredniškega odbora in uredil prvo številko drugega letnika. »Model 'proletarske literature' je prav v Sloveniji začel v jugoslovanskih razmerah časopis *Mladina*, se pravi, časopis, ki ni bil oganiziran iz središča mednarodnega gibanja. Ta model dobi občejugoslovanski pomen zato, ker uveljavi t. i. socialno literaturo, kar je v času ostre cenzure kriptonom za proletarsko in revolucionarno literaturo.« (Flaker, 1981, 187).

Svoj izrazito politično priostren program, s katerim je Kosovel februarja 1926 nastopil med rudarji v Zagotju – zelo odzivno jim je predaval o Umetnosti in proletarcu in jim bral svojo Ekstazo smrti – je želel čez nekaj dni ponoviti v Ljubljani, pri tem pa je prišel v konflikt z oblastniki, saj mu je tedanja oblast odpovedala gostoljubje kar v dveh ljubljanskih dvoranah. Naslednji njegov korak bi bil molk ali ilegala, morda pa tudi spor z njegovimi preveč dogmatskim prijatelji. Umril je dvaindvajsetleten, ne da bi

mogel izdati že pripravljeno in z uvodno besedo opremljeno zbirko pesmi *Zlati čoln* niti uresničiti katerega od številnih projektov. Nedoumljivo pa ostaja, kako je bilo kljub temu mogoče tolikšen pesniški in miselni potencial zgostiti v človeško kratkih dvaindvajset let. Na to je odgovoril sam, ko je zapisal, da je bilo njegovo življenje »slovensko, sodobno, evropsko in večno.« (3, 321).

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■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / literarna avantgarda / konstruktivizem

Razprava skuša raziskati Kosovelov odnos do italijanskega futurizma, balkanskega zenitizma in ruskega konstruktivizma. Iz celotnega Kosovelovega opusa, tudi iz pisem in dnevniških zapiskov je jasno, da se ne more zglodovati po italijanskih »osvobojenih besedah«, saj kot slovenski pesnik in še posebej kot primorski Slovenec besedo razume kot sveto in nedotakljivo. Manifest Mehanikom to njegovo zadržanost do Marinetijevega gibanja še dodatno potrjuje. Podobno se Kosovel odvrne tudi od Micičevega zenitizma, ki ga razume kot »igračkanje«, njemu pa gre v umetnosti in v življenju za resnost, za »revolucioniranje vsebine in oblike hkrati«. Zato mu po Grahorjevi vrnitvi iz Sovjetske zveze šele ruski literarni konstruktivizem ponudi priložnost, da z načelom gruzifikacije in fokusizacije uveljavi tip svojih

znamenitih konsov, v katerih gre ob prevratni formi tudi za ohranjanje pomena, objaviti pa jih misli v specializiranem glasu KONS, ki bi ga sam urejal in izdajal. Poleti 1925 pride pri njem do »obrata na levo«, s tem pa tudi do ustvaritve drugačne, »konstruktivne« poezije, ki bi jo izdajal v proletarski založbi, ki bi se imenovala Strelci. Vse te načrte prekine zgodnja smrt, saj umre pri svojih 22. letih. Njegovi konsi pomenijo danes posebnost in enega vrhov evropskega literarnega konstruktivizma.

KOSOVEL

IN HIBRIDNOST MODERNIZMA

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Posredovanost tekstov in aporije Kosovelove recepcijske podobe

Prelomna ideja, da je zgodovina pripovedna konstrukcija, interpretacija, se je v zadnjih tridesetih letih spremenila tako rekoč v truizem, ki se je v *vulgati* humanistike že kar obrabil in se udobno ulegel tudi v 'zdravo pamet' literarnih zgodovinarjev.¹ Ti se danes načelno dobro zavedajo, da je pri interpretiranju in zgodovinskem kontekstualiziranju književnosti še kako odločilna vloga oblik, praks in institucij za posredovanje literarnih del. (prim. Dolinar – Juvan, ur., 2003). Z drugimi besedami: spoznavna občutljivost za mehanizme reprezentacije preteklosti, za kanale in medije, prek katerih jo opazujemo in (si) ustvarjamo podobo o njej, sodi danes h kuhnovski 'normalni znanosti'. V ta splošen epistemološki okvir se prilega tudi sistemski pristop – s perspektivo, ki tekste zajema sredi literarnega življenja, vpete v družbene in kulturne okoliščine njihove produkcije, distribucije, recepcije in diskurzivnega procesiranja prek medijev, kritike, znanosti ali šolstva (prim. Dović 2004). Če sprejmemo opisana načela literarnega zgodovinopisja, se nam odpre drugačen vidik na paradoks Srečka Kosovela:¹ neverjetna raznorodnost njegovih pesniških tekstov, zbita v zelo kratko obdobje, že desetletja bega literarnozgodovinske pripovedi in vztrajno izigrava vsakršne periodizacijske instrumentarije.

Ob upoštevanju konstruktivistične ali sistemske epistemologije pri obravnavi konkretnega, Kosovelovega primera, lahko bolje razložimo konfliktno literarnozgodovinske klasifikacije njegove poezije, aporije v njeni recepciji, kanonizaciji in zadrege pri oblikovanju pesnikove kulturne ikone – nezanimarljivi razlogi za vse to so namreč prav anomalije v zgodovinskih procesih objavljanja in distribucije njegovih spisov. Povedano na kratko: v svojem kratkem življenju je Kosovel objavljaj razmeroma malo, in še to največkrat v marginalnih revijah (v besedilnem korpusu, ki ga je on

¹ Ta prispevek temelji na moji študiji »Srečko Kosovel med modernizmom, avantgardo in modernizmom«, ki je bila že objavljena v zborniku *Literarni izzivi*, ur. M. Štuhec idr., Ljubljana – Maribor: SAZU – Pedagoška fakulteta, 2003.

sam uspel spraviti v tisk, manjkajo mnoga dela, ki danes veljajo za največje mojstrovine); vse knjige Kosovelove poezije so bile natisnjene šele po njegovi smrti, nobena med njimi ni bila sestavljena po avtorjevih zamislih, pač pa po strategijah, s katerimi so gradili temelje Kosovelovega kanona uredniki (prim. Dović v tem zborniku); šele leta 1967, tj. 41 let po njegovi smrti, so njegovi radikalni pesniški teksti, prej znani samo v zelo omejenem obsegu, s knjižno objavo in spremno besedo dobili veljavo enote, ki je za Kosovelov opus ključnega pomena, pa čeprav je ustvarila vtis osupljive disonance s predstavami, ki si jih je o pesniku s Krasa javnost z literarno stroko vred ustvarila dotlej.

Ko je Srečko Kosovel julija 1925 svoj položaj v svetu opredelil s pojmom »paradoks« (ZD 3/1: 399-401), si bržčas ni mogel misliti, koliko nasprotij se bo nakopičilo v recepciji in periodizaciji njegovega dela ter v konstrukciji njegove kanonične podobe. Kako to, da je kljub eruptivni ustvarjalnosti – izpričuje jo skoraj nepregledna zapuščina hlastno popisanih listov in lističev – objavljal tako malo? Samo zato, ker kot mladenič s podeželskega obrobja in brez socialnega kapitala ni mogel prodreti v etabliрана nacionalna glasila? Ker uredniki niso znali dojeti njegovega umetniškega formata (v njem so videli zapoznelega dediča ali celo epigona slovenske moderne)? Morda zato, ker se je pesniško iskal tudi sam, in napisal na desetine tekstov, ki bodo težko kdaj delovali drugače kot začetniško? Ali zato, ker je bil do diskurza osrednjih slovenskih kulturnih revij precej kritičen, saj se mu je zdel estetsko in politično odvisen od prevladujočih meščanskih ideologij, v primerjavi s sodobnimi dogajanjmi po svetu pa zapoznel in premalo radikalen (prim. Zadavec 1986: 412)?

Vsaj toliko verjeten razlog kot omenjene možnosti je po mojem tudi ta, da je Kosovel vse od leta 1922 – opogumljen z zgledom Podbevškovih avantgardističnih nastopov in poznejših revijalnih poskusov (*Trije labodje* in *Rdeči pilot*) – snoval svojo lastno distribucijsko strategijo, drugačno od tistih, ki so bile tedaj v navadi na slovenskem literarnem polju:² za objavo svojih besedil, zlasti najdrznejših, je skušal vzpostaviti alternativen medijski kontekst, kakršnega so po Evropi razvile zlasti umetniške ali politične avantgarde. Ta bi moral biti v primerjavi z uveljavljenimi literarnimi institucijami primernejši tako avtorjevi etični občutljivosti za sodobno življenje kakor tudi njegovemu antiestetističnemu razumevanju umetnosti in utopični družbeni angažiranosti. L. 1924. je v rokopisu *O poslanstvu umetnosti* zapisal, da umetnost ni namenjena konvencionalnemu »uživanju lepote«, saj je »prav tako mogočna sila, ki življenje vodi, kakor, recimo, politika, gospodarstvo, le s to razliko, da je religiozno duhovna sila, ki je obenem predpoda človekove enotnosti in popolnosti« (ZD 3/1: 86).

Izhodiščna socialna oblika za obtok in uveljavljanje modernih estetskih, etičnih in ideoloških matric je bil vse od jenske romantike (in njenega *Athenäum*) do modernizma in avantgard 20. stoletja literarno-umetniški krožek, krog generacijsko povezanih somišljenikov. Šlo je za razne variante združevanja intelektualne elite, ki je – na obrobju uveljavljenih družbenih nazorov, estetskih konvencij in dominantnih kanalov javnega kulturnega komuniciranja – znotraj sebe, med člani skupine razvila neverjetno inten-

zivno izmenjavo potencialno relevantnih informacij 'od zunaj', predvsem pa svojih lastnih koncepcij, programov in dosežkov, kar je početju vsakega člana dajalo individualni smisel, ki je odtehtal morebitni izostanek javnega priznanja. Na podlagi okrepljene interne komunikacije, občutja solidarnosti ter vrednostne, vedenjske in diskurzne kohezije so takšne skupine iskale še raznovrstne, včasih nasprotujoče si zunanje opore – bodisi v navezovanju na sorodne skupine doma in na tujem, v preteklosti in sodobnosti, bodisi v pridobivanju naklonjenosti vidnih kritikov, mnenjskih voditeljev in v novih oblikah mecenstva, zbirateljstva, špekulativno vezanih na potencialno rast vrednosti del svojih varovancev, bodisi v zavezništvi s subverzivnimi političnimi gibanji (prim. Levenson 1991: 6; Rainey 1991). Tudi Kosovel se je oprijel takšnih vzorcev.

Že leta 1922 je ustanovil ambiciozno srednješolsko glasilo *Lepa Vida*. Okrog sebe je zbiral generacijske somišljenike; v tem krogu je z debatami in branji, v katerih sta se vzajemno oplajali pesniška in teoretska govornica, ustvarjal utopično vzdušje. Na izrazito humanistično idejno ozračje v Kosovelovem krogu so vplivali Nietzsche, utopični socializem, ekspresionistični in tagorejevski humanizem, marksizem, socialno krščanstvo, odporiški slovenski nacionalizem (usmerjen proti italijanskemu iredentizmu in jugoslovanskemu unitarizmu); svojo estetiko so si profilirali ob protimesčanskih, modernih umetniških tokovih od moderne in ekspresionizma do futurizma, zenitizma, konstruktivizma, dadaizma in nadrealizma (prim. Zadavec 1986: 344–368). S krožkom, ki ga je ustanovil leta 1925 in – z gesto poklona estetsko-političnemu izročilu moderne – poimenoval po Ivanu Cankarju, je Kosovel prirejal predavateljske in umetniško-recitacijske nastope.

Namesto meščanske in prestolnice publike, ki je s svojo skupino tako ali tako ni uspel pridobiti na svojo stran, je Kosovel – kot etično tenkočuten in vse bolj tudi razredno osveščen »kulturni delavec« – hotel na novo ustvariti posebno občinstvo, in to predvsem z nastopi med proletariatom v provinci (Vrečko 1986: 186–212). S slikarjem Avgustom Černigojem, šolanem v Bauhausu, je leta 1925 neuspešno pripravljaval konstruktivistično revijo *Konstrukter*, z levičarskim pisateljskim vrstnikom Ivom Grahorjem še literarni mesečnik *Volja*, poleg tega pa snoval radikalno levičarsko založbo Strelci in podobno usmerjeno knjižno serijo Integrali. Leta 1925 je s svojo skupino vendarle uspel zavzeti uredništvo *Mladine* in jo v številkah, ki jih je pred smrtjo še utegnil urediti, obarval umetniško in politično avantgardno. Sodeloval je z mladimi marksisti, člani komunistične partije in sovjetofili. Toda vsa ta njegova prizadevanja so prav zaradi družbeno obrobni kanalov in medijev dolgo ostala skoraj neznanana. Kosovel zaradi zgodnje smrti ni utegnil zadostno razviti oblik alternativne literarne distribucije, prek katerih bi lahko ustrezno publiko našli in izoblikovali njegovi moderni pesniški izdelki. Čeprav je bil avantgardam naklonjen in se je v pomembnem delu svojega opusa v obdobju 1924–26 oprijel avantgardnega pisanja, sam nikdar ni postal vzorčni avantgardist, ki bi vodil skupino, imel program, manifeste in bi provokativno razglasil kakšen nov izem. Edini manifest, ki ga je napisal (*Mehanikom*, julij 1925), je ostal v rokopisu. Vprašanje, če bi avantgardist sploh kdaj postal, saj se je – kot razločno

kaže njegovo predavanje *Umetnost in proletarec* iz februarja 1926 – v zadnjih mesecih lotil pisanja in delovanja v smislu »proletarske umetnosti«, vse do konca pa je vztrajal tudi pri pisanju ekspresionističnih, impresionističnih in modernističnih pesmi, ki so bile tuje udarnim avantgardističnim postopkom (Gspan 1974: 102, 106–107; Zadravec 1986: 197–198; Vrečko 1986: 121–128).

Kosovel je načrtoval več lastnih pesniških zbirk, a prav nobena ni izšla. Od že pripravljene zbirke *Zlati čoln* (1925) se je ohranil samo njegov *Predgovor*, vendar prav simptomatično zaznamovan z distanco do svoje lirike, ki jo je po »prevratu« v umetniški in politični »ekstremizem« označeval kot mladostniško sentimentalno, »baržunasto« in preseženo (ZD 1: 426–427). Navzven kritično razmerje do tovrstne lirike je razvidno še iz mnogih njegovih avtoreferencialnih podob: na primer »pianist z železnimi rokami«, ki razbija Kras, tj. kronotop pesnikove »baržunaste lirike«. ³ Poleg redkejših ljubezenskih pesmi so v kontekst »baržunaste lirike« najverjetneje sodile značilne »kraške pesmi«, po žanru krajinsko-razpoloženske, slogovno pa neoromantične, impresionistične in simbolistične (prim. Ocvirk 1967: 52–53; Zadravec 1986: 13–42). Kosovelovo občudovanje slovenskih impresionistov in njegove »kraške pesmi«, ki so prevladovala tudi v prvih postumnih knjižnih objavah (Gspanovi iz l. 1927 in Ocvirkovi iz l. 1931), so izzvali recepcijsko predstavo o njem kot dediču slovenske moderne, ⁴ poznem impresionistu in simbolistu, melanholičnem pesniku samote, bivanjske stiske, rodnega Krasa. Toda to, da je Kosovelu v letu pred smrtjo uspelo natisniti monumentalno *Ekstazo smrti* v prestižnem *Ljubljanskem zvonu* (1925), še bolj pa dejstvo, da so bile po smrti objavljene številne ekspresionistične in »proletarske pesmi« (na primer sonetni cikel *Rdeči atom* v *Ljubljanskem zvonu* 1931), sta bila dejavnika, ki sta prej opisano podobo pesnika že v desetletju pred drugo svetovno vojno vznemirljivo dopolnjevala z likom ekspresionističnega vizionarja, humanistično zavzetega glasnika krize zahodne civilizacije in iskalca »novega človeka«.

Mehanizmi kanonizacije in ideoloških prilagoditev so Kosovela po 2. svetovni vojni, ko je na Slovenskem vladal komunizem – ta je dialektiko kot doktrino sicer razglašal, v javnem diskurzu pa je idejno konfliktnost dejansko zatiral, jo spodrival s totalizacijami –, dolgo predstavljali harmonično, kot dediča moderne, pesnika Krasa, obenem pa ekspresionističnega oznanjevalca konca buržoazne Evrope in angažiranega socialnega realista. Tako je bilo vse do leta 1967, ko je Anton Ocvirk, urednik Kosovelove zapuščine, izdal *Integrale '26*. Ocvirk je kot urednik niza knjižnih izdaj Kosovelovega dela (od *Izbranih pesmi*, 1931, do zadnje knjige *Zbranega dela*, 1977) skoraj polovico stoletja krojil pesnikovo podobo. Do razcveta neoavantgard, ko se je v razmerah ublažene partijske oblasti s tveganimi poskusi izoblikoval umetniški in teoretski diskurz, dovteten za politične in estetske transgresije, je zadrževal izid tistega segmenta Kosovelovega poznega pesnjenja (v glavnem iz leta 1925), ki je bil najmodernejši, sam pa ga je še pri sestavljanju *Zbranega dela* (1946) – morda tudi zaradi efemernega in kaotičnega videza množice rokopisnih listov in lističev iz pesnikove zapuščine – imel za »neizdelane, bežne zapise, polne aktualne politične

in ideološke tematike« (Ocvirk 1946: 436).⁵ Gre za Kosovelove kolaže, konstrukcije oziroma konse in druge pesmi modernističnega ali avantgardističnega značaja. Leta 1967 jih je Ocvirk presenetljivo, v nasprotju s svojimi nekdanjimi javnimi stališči, postavil v sam vrh pesnikovega opusa. Paradoksalno je, da je o smiselnosti objave teh tekstov moral dvomiti tudi pesnik sam, saj jih je skrival celo pred najboljšimi prijatelji.

Kosovel je po Ocvirkovi zapoznani in šokantni objavi »konsov« zbudil zanimanje literarne vede prav kot lik avantgardista in ta podoba prevladuje v javnem diskurzu še danes.⁶ Literarni zgodovinarji so v glavnem soglašali, da je bilo njegovo pesnjenje v zadnjih letih življenja nenavadno heterogeno: avtor pesmi, ki povzemajo poetološke modele pozne romantike, moderne (zlasti impresionizma in simbolizma), je pisal tudi ekspresionistično, proletkultovsko in avantgardistično.⁷

Ko je paradoksalna raznovrstnost Kosovelove ustvarjalnosti končno prišla v celovit razvid, se je literarno zgodovinopisje znašlo v zagati, ki sta jo še zaostriili navajenost zgodovinarjev na pripovedne sheme razvoja in napredka ter predstave o literarnih smereh in obdobjih kot notranje enovitih, homogenih enotah. Ocvirk (1967: 17–18, 58 in sl.) je tako zagovarjal stališče, da so Kosovelove poetike časovno razporejene: pesnik naj bi sredi leta 1925 naredil odločilni in dokončni »prevrat« v »konstruktivizem«. Drugi poznavalci pa so dokazali, da je pesnik vse do konca vzporedno prakticiral različne literarne smeri, in to tako 'tradicionalne' kakor tudi 'moderne' (prim. M. Kos 1997: 164). Ocvirk je v spremni študiji k *Integralom* vzorec za Kosovelov presenetljivi preobrat v avantgardno pisanje odkril v ruskem konstruktivizmu. Iskanje prvotnega in za Kosovela odločilnega avantgardističnega vzora – poleg konstruktivizma so literarni zgodovinarji poudarjali še futurizem, delno še dadaizem in nadrealizem – po moje vodi v slepo ulico. Ne le zato, ker je avantgardizme sprejemal predvsem prek eklektičnega južnoslovanskega zenitizma, ampak tudi zato, ker so zlasti v Srednji Evropi, literarni coni »vmesne periferije« (Tötösy 1999), avantgardistični tokovi iz Italije, Rusije, Francije in Nemčije že na splošno ustvarjali »nenavadne mešanice«. ⁸ Avantgarde pa so se – ne glede na bučne manifeste, ki so poudarjali njihovo prelomno novost – tako ali tako medsebojno kopirale; celo radikalni dadaisti so zajemali od futuristov in ekspresionistov. Že zaradi tega se mi pri Kosovelu zdi primernejše govoriti o *avantgardističnih* tekstih kot pa o konstruktivističnih, zenitističnih, futurističnih ali nadrealističnih.

Heterogenost obdobj in Kosovelov hibridni modernizem

Tako poskuse literarnih zgodovinarjev, da bi natančno določili avantgardistično smer, ki naj bi ji Kosovel v resnici pripadal, kakor – na splošnejši ravni – prizadevanja, kako poimenovati in periodizirati njegova ustvarjalna obdobja, iz ozadja usmerja predstava, da sta sleherno obdobje ali literarna smer notranje koherentna, utemeljena v istem 'duhu časa' oziroma izvedena iz enovitega umetniškega koda, stilne konvencije. Takšna predstava je že

sama na sebi problematična, ker spregleduje sociolektalno razplatenost in dialoško konfliktnost sleherne kulture. Še posebej pa odpove pri književnosti od obdobja t. i. moderne na prelomu iz 19. v 20. stoletje naprej (prim. Tamás 1991: 131–32; Matajc 2004), če ne že od romantike, dobe, ko je normativna poetika z načelom posnemanja vzornih avtorjev vred izgubila primat, s tem pa so se razsuli tudi pogoji za večjo enovitost stila in duha časa. To je čas, ko se je, če parafraziram znamenito Barthesovo študijo, dezintegriralo »klasično pisanje«, postopno pa ga je nadomeščalo moderno pisanje, zaposleno s problematiko netransparentnosti samega jezika (Barthes 1953). Romantika je bila – ne samo v merilu sistema svetovne književnosti, temveč tudi znotraj nacionalnih tradicij – nedvomno že zelo raznorodna; politično je bila razpeta med revolucionarno svobodomiselnost, nacionalizem, bidermajerski konformizem in zavzeti katolicizem, modalno med tragični patos in ironijo, estetsko pa med folklorizem, obujanje historičnih slogov, zavzemanje za naravnost, pristnost in poudarjeno subjektivno, umetno imaginacijo. Še bolj neenovita je mešanica sočasno obstoječih literarnosmernih kodov v drugi polovici 19. stoletja, ki jo je literarna zgodovina, tudi slovenska, v spoznavni resignaciji poimenovala z zasilno oznako »med romantiko in realizmom« ali s kakšno podobno etiketo. Toliko bolj se preplet raznorodnih usmeritev odraža v modernizmu. Zato je posebej za to obdobje smiselno zavreči vsakršen poskus nasilnega homogeniziranja obdobjnih pojmov in namesto njih sprejeti pojmovanje, da se posamezno obdobje vzpostavlja ravno kot sistem raznorodnih, a med seboj dialogizirajočih diskurzov, ki se vsak po svoje odzivajo na kompleks problematike, tj. na probleme, značilne za določen čas – v modernizmu oziroma v širši tradiciji modernosti od Baudelaira naprej je to na primer ambivalenca subjekta (prim. Zima 2003). Če sprejmemo takšen premislek o naravi literarnozgodovinskih obdobj, potem raznorodnosti Kosovelovega pesništva v dvajsetih letih 20. stoletja ni treba razlagati samo z anomalijami v distribuciji in recepciji njegovih tekstov, v tem, kako nam je bila književnikova podoba zgodovinsko posredovana (kar je bila tema prejšnjega poglavja), temveč jo je treba dojeti kot eminenten simptom modernizma kot sistema divergentnih sociolektov, ki se odzivajo na skupen problemski kompleks.

Kosovel v številnih metapoetskih izjavah nakazuje, da je svoje tekste postavljajl v neposreden stik z »življenjem«, s sodobnostjo, se soočal z materialnostjo sveta in paradoksalnim soobstojem resnic: »Moderni pesnik razdira formo, da pride do živega neposrednega življenja.« (ZD 3/1: 740); paradoks je zanj energetsko sredstvo, ki spodbija »praktični razum« meščanstva in kaže, »da eksistira mesto ene dvoje resnic« (ZD 3/1: 399). Modernizem se odpira neposredni, grobi in neurejeni realnosti v njenem zgodovinskem dogajanju. Kontingenčna resničnost stopa v zavest kot prehodna, strogo so-dobna s temporalnostjo eksistence. Tako se doživljajoča zavest (subjekt govora) umešča v množstvo ideologij in jezikov, ki so historično v neprestanem spreminjanju (prim. de Man 1997; Škulj 1991, 1995). Zato je, če presojam prav, Kosovelovo vztrajanje pri sočasnem ustvarjanju v različnih estetskih kodih treba brati kot prvovrsten simptom modernosti – kot posledico izkušnje, da vsak od teh kodov zajame določeno perspek-

tivo, tematizira en segment resničnosti, ne more pa več simbolno obvladati celovite slike sveta; to je v tisočernih fasetah zmožen zajeti le odprti dialog med sociolekti.

Takšna zavest je dosegla zenit v modernizmu, ki ga Peter V. Zima v luči širšega pojma moderne – z izhodišči že v sredini 19. stoletja – sinonimno označuje z izrazom pozna moderna (*die Spätmoderne*);⁹ modernizem je zanj »čas krize, v katerem se tradicionalne metafizike in ideologije izkažejo za vprašljive, čas, ki izziva kritiko« (npr. heglovske sistematične metafizike) in občutja protislovja, antinomije, dvoma, epistemološke in metajezikovne skepse (Zima 2001: 130–31; po K. Jaspersu, K. Rosenkranzu in D. Fokkemi). Za pozno moderno oziroma modernizem je ključna ambivalenca vseh vrednot, kritika pojma resničnosti, reprezentacijskih oblik in individualnega subjekta (ibid.: 132–33). Zato je razumljivo, da je modernizem s svojo transnacionalno širitvijo – spodbujeno s sodobnimi komunikacijskimi tehnologijami, prostovoljnimi ali prisilnimi eksili avtorjev, z migracijami in življenjem v urbanih metropolah, kjer so se križali kulturni vplivi s cele oble – uveljavljal soobstoj in prežemanje umetnostnih idiomov, pluralizem pesniških diskurzov. Modernizem je »umetnost dobe modernega relativizma, časa, ko so se meje živahno in pogosto nevarno premikale« (Bradbury - McFarlane, ur., 1991: 13), zanj so značilni »multikulturna raznovrstnost«, »velikanska medsebojna oplajanja« (14), »slogovna pluralnost« (21), urbani »kulturni kaos [...], kontingenčni in poliglotski babilonski stolp« (98), »besnilo form in umetniških energij, ki so se izražale in opravičevale na razne načine« (199), »beda razstreljene zavesti, ujeta v razbito vesolje« (224–25). Modernizem je odziv na »scenarij našega kaosa«, je »umetnost, ki dosledno razstavlja skupnostno resničnost« (27). Iskanje stila v dobi brez skupnega stila in enovite reprezentacije realnosti zato postane izrazito samorefleksivno početje (29).

Modernizem je torej konstelacija raznorodnih, včasih nasprotujočih si poetik in etik; te pa se ne samo v posameznih tokovih, temveč tudi v avtorskih opusih in celo pesniških tekstih, kakršna je paradigmatična Eliotova *Pusta dežela*, mešajo v hibridne in ambivalentne spoje (prim. Tamás 1991:130-36). Pri tem ni nič izjemnega tudi »dvojna lojalnost«, kakršna morda koga preseneča pri Kosovelu, ki iz neoromantičnega lirskega sentimenta preskakuje v cinične citate časopisov: mnogo največjih modernističnih umetnin, med njimi romani Thomasa Manna, ohranjajo tradicionalno realistično predstavljanje in ga združujejo z modernim rentgeniziranjem zavesti in jezika, tako da se različne koncepcije sveta v enem samem delu medsebojno preskušajo (Bell 1991: 12–13; Longenbach 1991: 125).

Vrednostne in politične usmeritve modernističnih pisateljev in pisateljic so nihale med aristokratizmom in plebejstvom, med hermetično estetsko ezoteriko in robotstjo popularne kulture, med obujanjem konzervativnih verskih prepričanj, boemskim individualističnim imoralizmom in političnimi radikalizmi, med nihilistično depresivnostjo, odami moderni tehniki in groteskno karnevalskostjo, nekateri so se spogledovali s fašizmom, drugi s komunizmom, mnogi pa so bili žrtve obeh totalitarizmov (prim. Blair 1991: 157). Spektre modernističnega pisanja se je razpenjal od neoklasicizma do

destrukcije vseh tradicionalnih form, od jezikovno-literarne samonanašalnosti, cepljene na simbolistično aluzivnost in šifriranje prek 'dehumaniziranega' abstrahiranja, evociranja neposrednega psihično-eksistencialnega izkustva, fantastike, mitizacije in primitivizma do fragmentariziranega popisovanja stvarnosti ter korenite družbeno-ideološke kritike, včasih povezane z deklarativnim političnim angažmajem (prim. Hough 1991: 315–320).

Kosovel je ustvarjal sredi 20. let 20. stoletja, ko je v Evropi in ZDA mogoče govoriti že o visokem modernizmu,¹⁰ in ko so veliki avtorji, na primer Picasso, Eliot, Rilke ali Joyce, že suvereno prepletali izrazna sredstva, ki so jih izbirali v »imaginarnem muzeju« predhodnih smeri in izmov; mnogi pomembni modernisti se niso držali proklamiranih poetik posameznih smeri (prim. Bradbury – McFarlane, ur. 1991: 191, 205; Hough 1991: 316; Tamás 1991). S tega vidika se nam Kosovel, pa naj je bil še tako mlad, začetniško išoč 'svoj stil', kaže kot avtor visokega modernizma. Kosovel je modernistično pluralnost in sočasnost raznoterih umetniških govoric očitno dobro dojel. Vztrajal je prav v vmesnem prostoru, *med* različnimi literarnimi diskurzi 20. let: poznim impresionizmom in simbolizmom, ekspresionizmom, avantgardizmom, proletkultom, novo stvarnostjo in eksistencialnim modernizmom.

Kosovel se v tistem tipu svojih pesmi, kjer prevladujejo neoromantične, impresionistične in simbolistične podlage, navezuje na tradicijo estetske komunikacije, kakršno je poznala lirika od predromantike do *fin de siècle*. Ta vzorec lirike poudarja izvzetost pesniškega sveta iz zgodovinskega in družbenega konteksta, ga v razmerju do aktualne problematike javnega diskurza postavlja v položaj ontološko-eksistencialnega molka ali razpoloženskega čutenja temeljev bivanja, ki ga na obrobju civilizacije omogoča le narava.¹¹ Iz edninskega lirskega subjekta, ki je v besedilu navzoč prek psihološko verjetnih znakovnih sledi, izvira prvoosebni izpovedni govor in predpostavlja prav tako osamljenega, privatnega bralca in njegovo doživljajsko kontemplacijo estetske podobe. Dejanska zgodovinska konteksta avtorja in bralca sta ločena, nadomešča ju ontologija eksistencialne sedanosti. Ločenost lirskega diskurza od družbene resničnosti ni samo jezikovna, konotirajo jo tudi predmeti predstavljanja – za Kosovela značilne teme samote, tesnobe ter podobe mirne in prazne kraške pokrajine, drevs in ptic.

Za Kosovelove pesmi, ki so jih literarni zgodovinarji označevali kot ekspresionistične (prim. Zadravec 1986: 80–135), je odločilna drugačna os pesemske komunikacije: subjekt besedila naslovniku sugerira, da sta njuna referencialna svetova zgodovinsko stična, da si avtor in njegovo ciljno občinstvo delita isti družbeni kontekst. S tem se lirska paradigma individualne estetske kontemplacije razdre. Nad estetskim prevlada etično, etika pesniškega pisanja pa se večkrat izostri v politiko govornega delovanja. Ekspresionizem je na splošno in pri Kosovelu hibridna poetika. Omaha je med tradicionalno izpovedjo in držo avantgardista, ki skuša prek meje estetske literarne konvencije poseči v realnost sodobnega sveta.

Kosovelove pesmi s pretežno ekspresionistično dikcijo zato na eni strani označuje hipertrofija govornega subjekta, ki je izvor teatralnih, panoramskih predstavitev kronotopa, ki večinoma ni več podeželski, krajinski

(kraški), temveč neomejen, urban, globalen, celo kozmičen in mitologiziran (arhetipi kaosa, vesoljnega potopa). Kosovelov subjekt izreka nietzschejevsko kritiko vrednot krščansko-meščanske civilizacije in opeva njeno »destrukcijo«. Tako je pravzaprav že sam »novi človek«, tisti, ki ga sicer utopično oznanja. Po drugi strani pa se pesemski 'jaz' prepozna tudi kot 'sub-jekt' (v pomenu 'podložnika') krizne zgodovinske dobe, doživlja stisko negotovega metafizičnega obzorja. Nič se pri Kosovelu pojavlja prek simbolov in pojmovnih besed (»nič«, »ničišče«, »nihil«, »nihilomelanholija«), včasih pa nastopi s predmetno gostoto (»iz tihe praznote raste Nič. / Voda se v žlebu odteka«).¹²

Kosovelov ekspresionistični kronotop je določen z globoko vrednostno, ontološko, spoznavno, politično in socialno krizo meščanske družbe v 20. letih 20. stoletja. Ta družba se je s svojimi državnimi in mednarodnimi političnimi mehanizmi, z uveljavljenimi umetnostnimi in kulturnimi ustanovami ter vodilnimi ideologijami in verskimi predstavami izkazala za nemočno pri spoprijemu s silovitimi izzivi modernega časa. Sunki, ki so spodnašali tradicionalne načine samoosmišljanja, so prihajali iz različnih smeri in prizadevali različne družbene podsisteme: od ekonomske stagnacije prek komunistične revolucije in vzpona fašizma do pohoda tehnike in širitve znanstvenih spoznanj, ki so relativizirala stare temelje subjekta in resnice. Kosovel svojo zgodovinsko sodobnost napravi za poglobljeno referenčno področje pesniških znakov, predstavlja pa ga bodisi v prvem planu in poudarjeno bodisi v ozadju in prikrito, zgolj nakazano. V obeh primerih kontekst evocirajo tropi, na primer alegorična tipizacija, mitologizacija ali derealizacija. Takšne so na primer slike ognjene stihije, ki preplavlja »zlate stolpove Zapadne Evrope« (*Ekstaza smrti*), ali mitološke in folklorne aluzije na vesoljni potop, cepljene na groteskno ironijo (*Tragedija na oceanu*).¹³

Subjekt v ekspresionističnih pesmih postaja pluralen, zliva se v skupnost, za katero čuti etično odgovornost, dialoško išče skritega Boga ali pa briše besedilne odtise svoje osebnosti. Enači se s predmeti ali pojmi. Prvoosebni subjekt se včasih pojavlja le še v obrobju med množtvom glasov, ki naseljujejo izjavno strukturo. Tuji glasovi v Kosovelovih pesmih (na primer cikel *Kraška vas*) so citati neopredeljenih govornih dejanj.¹⁴

Kosovelove »delavske pesmi« (na primer sonetni cikel *Rdeči atom*) imajo podobno narativno shemo (kritična destrukcija stare družbe in utopična konstrukcija nove) in intimno izpoved posameznemu bralcu prav tako preobrazijo v oratorski nagovor kolektiva. Toda njegovo »proletkultovsko« pisanje je sociološko in politično konkretnije, razvidno zasidrano v industrijsko okolje. Bliza se poetiki »nove stvarnosti«. Slog »delavskih pesmi« je retoričen, a dokaj prozaičen, preprost, obarvan s političnimi termini, revolucionarnimi parolami. Pesmi izdajajo držo intelektualca-pesnika, ki se istoveti z množico delavskega razreda.

V središče svojega radikalnega modernizma nas pesnik bleščče vpeleje z avtotematsko metaforiko: »Duh zbira vtise. / Iščem premikajočih se slik. ... Sem kot električna iskra, / ki skače. ... Aktivni duh zbira slike ... Fakti preganjajo umetnost.«¹⁵ Lirski subjekt je decentriran, ostaja brez razpoznavnega glasu in stabilne perspektive ali pa je cona njegovega govo-

ra – ta je lahko 'tradicionalno' izpovedna, lirski – omejena, fragmentarno postavljena v mozaik brezosebnega nizanja slik, citatnih izjav, brezimnih informacij ali nedoločenih odlomkov iz pogovorov. Izjavna struktura Kosovelovih modernističnih besedil je zato že dialogizirana, ambivalentna, večglasna, predvsem pa medbesedilna: humanistično zavzetost, politično pozivanje in subjektivistično liričnost združuje z ironijo, cinizmom in grotesko; povzema in parafrazira aktualne kulturne, politične in znanstvene novice iz časopisov; intermedialno namiguje na avantgardistične slike (na primer na Franza Marca), se aluzivno navezuje na druge avantgarde ali z njimi polemizira (na primer z dadaizmom in futurizmom).

Kompozicija teksta pripada Ecovemu modelu »odprtega dela«: namesto enovitega motiva in perspektive imamo opraviti z montažo fragmentov, osamosvojenih slik, ki pa v kontrapunktu evocirajo in razvijajo skupno pomensko polje; srečujemo se s filmskimi rezi, z 'zoomiranjem' na detajle in z brezbrežnimi panoramami, s pluralnim in neomejenim kronotopom, v katerem se simultano prepletajo Kosovelovi čisto zasebni prostori s planetarnimi in kozmičnimi. Stilna struktura besedila je pogosto hibridna. Pesemska govornica se slogovno ne naslanja zgolj na istorodne vzorce iz preteklosti, torej na tradicijo t. i. pesniškega stila, ampak se odpira za sodobne diskurze, tudi tiste, ki ne sodijo v domeno tradicionalnih literarnih zvrsti: od tod v Kosovelovih konsih filozofski, teološki, psihološki pojmi, matematični simboli, besedišče sodobne tehnike, fizike, naravoslovnih znanosti, politične fraze, publicizmi, od tod mešanje vznesenega in prozaičnega registra.

Kosovel že v svoji ekspresionistični in proletkultovski pesmi opušča tradicionalno obliko individualistične estetske komunikacije. Pesemski subjekt s svojo etično držo nakazuje, da z naslovnikom bivata v istem kriznem svetu. Medtem ko je ekspresionistična reprezentacija družbenosti posredovana prek pesniških tropov in s tem enovitega pesniškega jezika, pa se Kosovelov radikalni modernizem s sodobnim svetom sooča tako, da ga predstavlja medbesedilno ali pa prek »zbiranja slik«, ki jih v »aktivnega duha« prinaša spremenljiva empirična resničnost. V modernističnem tekstu se subjekt spusti na raven, ko estetska sfera, ki je bila v tradiciji avtonomna, stopa v očitno interakcijo z diskurzi znanosti, politike, tehnike, filozofije in religije, pa tudi z deli, imaginarijem in govoricami drugih umetnosti. Radikalni modernizem, ki prehaja v avantgardizem,¹⁶ potemtakem določa velik del Kosovelovih »konsov«. Toda takšna modernistična struktura se pri Kosovelu marsikje infiltrira tudi v tekste, v katerih na videz prevladuje impresionistična ali ekspresionistična poetika, na primer prek montažne kompozicije, 'zoomiranja' na razne detajle razdrobljenega motiva, marginalizacije subjekta v izjavni strukturi teksta, uvajanja nedoločenih citatov tujega govora ali dezorientiranosti lirske perspektive in deteritorializaciji subjekta.

V prikazanem sobivanju, prepletanju in hibridiziranju raznorodnih poetik je Kosovel povsem primerljiv z drugimi modernisti. Pablo Picasso je sredi 20. let brez zadržkov simultano razvijal različne stile, ki jih je zaporedno snoval poprej, tako da se kubistična dela srečujejo z bolj tradicionalnim figuralnim slikarstvom (gl. Mallen 2004). Tudi eden najzgodnej-

ših in najvplivnejših modernističnih pesnikov, Guillaume Apollinaire (gl. Apollinaire 1992),¹⁷ je ob pesništvu, ki se je vsaj na pogled držalo tradicionalne, čeprav mestoma ironizirane in profanizirane neoromantične erotične izpovednosti in klasičnih verzifikacijskih pravil, gojil še fragmentarizirane, kubistične, sintaktično razdrobljene urbane pesnitve, asociativno nadrealistično fantastiko ter vizualne konstelacije. Vse to je hibridno spjal tudi v posameznih besedilih. Modernistični pluralizem in hibridnost pesniških govoric pa je do pojma privedel in ga nemara najbolj dosledno, življenjsko udejanjil Fernando Pessoa v svoji shizo-poetiki. Med svoje heteronime, okrog katerih je stkal pravcate biografske mistifikacije, je razporedil poetike, ki segajo od skorajda futuristično bučnega avantgardizma do sublimirane simbolizma, pri čemer pa vendarle ni mogoče zgrešiti njihove skupne podlage – melanholične razrvanosti, psihične disociacije, ujete v podvojen zrcala skrajne modernistične samorefleksivnosti, a odprte za eluzivnost biti zunaj metafizike (prim. Pessoa 1997).

Manj premišljeno, a nič manj dramatično je svojo pesniško identiteto gradil tudi Kosovel. Selil se je iz govornice v govorico, predvsem pa jih je hibridno prepletal. S tem je v slovensko literaturo med prvimi vtisnil izrazit pečat modernosti.

OPOMBE

¹ O teh vprašanjih je pod naslovom Kosovelov paradoks pred nekaj leti razpravljal Matevž Kos (1997: 152–165).

² Kosovel se je za Podbevškovo futurizem sprva navduševal, napisal nekaj pesmi v Podbevškovi maniri, a že kmalu je do prvega slovenskega avantgardista postal polemičen (češ da ta ni uspel ustvariti generacije in da je bil za kaj takega preveč meščanski), ne le v korespondenci, ampak povsem izrecno celo v poeziji: v *Pesmi o zelenem odrešenju*, napisani okoli 1924 v Podbevškovem slogu in obliki, omenja, da se je »naveličal igranja Podbevškovega« – ta zanimiva palinodija je natisnjena v *Ocvirku* 1967: 41–42. Kosovel je bil torej do Podbevškove avantgarde kritičen (*Ocvirk* 1967: 32–44; *Zadavec* 1986: 408–409; *Vrečko* 1986: 79), podobno kot do zenitizma in dadaizma, a je v dialoškem razmerju z njo vendarle oblikoval svojo pesniško identiteto in načine javnega nastopanja.

³ *Nokturno*, ZD 1, 213; *Rime*, ZD 2, 9, *Moja pesem*, ZD 1, 229.

⁴ Leta 1931 je v *Domu in svetu* France Vodnik Kosovela izvzel iz »stvariteljev našega novega pesniškega stila« in opozoril na njegovo navezanost na dediščino Cankarja, Župančiča, Gradnika in Murna, Božo Vodušek pa je menil, da je bil Kosovel pred smrtjo »duhovno in stilsko še epigon, vendar se je tudi že v njem nakazoval prevrat« (nav. po: M. Kos 1997: 157).

⁵ Kakšni so bili razlogi za to, se v glavnem le ugiba: mogoče so se mu »konsi« zdeli preveč nedodelani, fragmentarni, kaotični za njegov okus, čeprav je bil evropskemu modernizmu dokaj naklonjen; mogoče je mislil, da bi objava teh tekstov v razmerah, ko so v Sloveniji vladala realistična estetska načela in dokaj akademistični okus oblasti, škodila Kosovelovemu ugledu; mogoče je uredniško delo zavirala njegova bolezen in nezaupanje, da bi lahko urejanje zapuščine prevzel kdo drug.

⁶ To se, resnici na ljubo, ni zgodilo toliko zaradi literarne zgodovine kolikor po zaslugi postmodernističnega retrogardizma (Neue slowenische Kunst) in njegovih satelitov; po osamosvojitvi Slovenije jim je s pomočjo sofisticiranega teoretskega marketinga uspelo, da so svojo, za časa komunizma izzivalno pozo »državnih umetnikov« uveljavili kot realno, vplivno pozicijo znotraj kulturnega imidža vladajočih strank. Retrogardizem je celo na ravni estetsko-političnega oglaševanja kanoniziral imaginarij slovenske zgodovinske avantgarde, vključno s Kosovelom.

⁷ Jedrnata in značilna je tale formulacija: »Poezija Srečka Kosovela je zelo heterogen pojav. Nastajala je vsega nekaj let [...], vendar je v njej na eksploziven način zbrana ta rekoč celotna duhovna in slogovna izkušnja poezije 20. stoletja: od poznega impresionizma in simbolizma mimo ekspresionizma in konstruktivizma pa do realistične socialno programske lirike. Vse to obstaja na skrajno temnem prostoru, skoraj simultano in kaotično, brez klasičnega zaporedja faz [...].« (Paternu 1989: 149–150).

⁸ Na to po Jeanu Weisgerberju in Evaldu Korenu opozarja tudi Vrečko 1986: 12.

⁹ Nekoliko drugačno, a še ne dovolj jasno, je razumevanje pojma *Spätmoderne*, kot ga predlaga Ernő Kulcsár-Szabó: ko se zavzema za hermenevitično, dekonstrukcionistično in recepcijsko zasnovano literarnozgodovinsko metodo, ki upošteva izkustvo postmoderne, namesto periodizacijskega binoma moderna – postmoderna zagovarja trihotomijo »klasična moderna – pozna moderna – postmoderna«; pozna moderna po njegovem zajema umetnost poznih 20. let in 30. let 20. stoletja, ki v nasprotju z avantgardistično diseminacijo in decentriranjem subjekta in stila teži k zgodovinsko novemu formiranju literature na podlagah dialoške, intersubjektivne, jezikovno-semiotične in samorefleksivne koncepcije umetnine (Kulcsár-Szabó 1999).

¹⁰ Kulcsár-Szabó (1999) bi na tem mestu uporabil pojem pozna moderna.

¹¹ To se ujema z analizo ostankov romantičnega sindroma »lepe duše« v Kosovelovi poeziji, ne le impresionistično-simbolistični in ekspresionistični, temveč – v omejenih legah in disonančnih spojih – tudi v avantgardistično-modernistični (M. Kos 1997: 141–152).

¹² *Jesen*, ZD 2, 160–161; *Nihilomelanholija*, ZD 2, 177; *Večer pred zimo*, ZD 1, 297.

¹³ *Ekstaza smrti*, ZD 1, 304–305; *Tragedija na oceanu*, ZD 1, 403–412.

¹⁴ *Kraška vas*, ZD 1, 14–16.

¹⁵ *Kaj se vznemirjate?*, ZD 2, 46–47.

¹⁶ Razliko med Kosovelovim radikalnim modernizmom in avantgardizmom je mogoče razložiti tudi s teorijo govornih dejanj. Kosovelovi avantgardistični pesniški teksti reprezentirajo govorna dejanja, ki so posneta iz javnega diskurza avantgard, na primer iz manifestov. Kosovelovi avantgardistični konsi torej delujejo tudi kot pozivi, apeli, skušajo neposredno vplivati na bralca, na njegovo etično-politično stališče, ga s tem zavezati določeni »optimalni projekciji«, ki presega zgolj estetsko-umetniško področje. Modernistična besedila, ki jih je napisal Kosovel, pa te pozivnosti nimajo: odpirajo se sicer za stvarnost, sodobnost, večjezičje drugih diskurzov, a to dialoškost izrabljajo predvsem za samorefleksijo subjekta in pesniškega pisanja.

¹⁷ Ob njem so se oplajali oziroma se nanj sklicevali dadaisti in nadrealisti.

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■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / literarna recepcija / modernizem / avantgarda / hibridnost

Zaradi anomalij v distribuciji in recepciji pesniških tekstov Srečka Kosovela so se o njem oblikovale kontradiktorne predstave (da je zapozneli dedič slovenske moderne, ekspresionistični vizionar ali radikalni avantgardist), literarna zgodovina pa se je soočila s problemom, kako periodizirati njegov heterogeni opus. V Kosovelovih poetikah (impresionistično-simbolistični, ekspresionistični, proletkultovski, avantgardistični in modernistični) se sicer očitno spreminja model pesniške komunikacije: gre za preseganje estetske avtonomije in odpiranje pesniškega teksta za govorice, sporočila, tekste, teme in podobe sodobnega sveta. Toda Kosovel si je svojo pesniško identiteto do konca življenja vzpostavljaj prav v hibridni koprezenci raznorodnih poetik, ki se je ne da vkleniti v tradicionalno literarnozgodovinsko naracijo o razvoju in prelomih. V tem vidim ne samo značilno mladostniško iskanje 'svojega izraza', temveč pomemben simptom modernizma – modernistično večjezičnost, relativizem, ambivalenco, prezentizem in perspektivizem. Hibridnost stilov in poetik je ena izmed razpoznavnih potez umetnosti modernizma, pojavlja se tudi znotraj opusov posameznih avtorjev.

KANONIZACIJA

»ODSOTNEGA« AVTORJA

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Pričujoči razmislek o Srečku Kosovelu, ki je nastal v letu stoletnice pesnikovega rojstva, bo vsaj na začetku deloval kot nekakšen pogled od zunaj, torej takšen, ki nima notranje zveze s Kosovelovo poezijo in se zato oddaljuje od razpravljanj, kakršna so v navadi, ko beseda teče o kakšnem pomembnem mojstru lirike. Morda se bo na prvi pogled zdel celo »skrunilen«, pa se bo – tako vsaj upam – na koncu izkazalo, da je zunanost tega razmisleka le navidezna. Ukvarjal se bo namreč s problemoma avtorstva in kanonizacije, ki sta ob Kosovelu nehote zbudila v oči in tudi sčasoma nista postajala manj zanimiva, saj so se ob njima porajala vprašanja, ki ne zadevajo le Kosovela, ampak odnose med avtorjem literature, literaturo in zunajliterarnimi konteksti nasploh. Teoretično ogrodje, s katerim si je mogoče pomagati pri tej analizi, je povezano na eni strani s sodobno kritiko avtorstva, kot so jo razvili Barthes (1995), Foucault (1979) in ostali, na drugi pa z modelom literarnega sistema in njegove evolucije, ki ga je razvil Schmidt s sodelavci v okviru empirične literarne znanosti (Schmidt 1980, 1989), v veliki meri pa tudi s sodobnejšimi analizami literarnega kanona in procesov kanonizacije (Guillory 1983, Juvan 1994, Dovič 2003).

Dobro je znano, da se je Srečko Kosovel (1904–1926) v slovensko literarno, a tudi kulturno in politično zgodovino vpisal kot pesnik mnogih obrazov: kot melanholični pesnik Krasa, senzibilen pesnik z izrazito slutnjo smrti, kot socialno-revolucionarni vizionar in tudi kot pravi pesniški avantgardist. Že kmalu po smrti je postal prava ikona, morda najpomembnejše pesniško ime 20. stoletja, nacionalni literarni klasik. Njegovo ime se je malodane preoblikovalo v blagovno znamko, po njem so poimenovali šole, odlično je zastopan v antologijah poezije in literarnih zgodovinah ter do današnjih dni podrobno predstavljen in razčlenjen v srednješolskih učnih programih. K statusu Kosovelove klasičnosti so bistveno prispevali literarni zgodovinarji, ki so mu posvečali obsežne študije in monografije. V letu stoletnice Kosovelovega rojstva je intenzivnost ukvarjanja z njim seveda še porasla – in konec koncev veljavo nekega avtorja v kanonu lahko pač merimo tudi s količino pozornosti, ki spremlja njegove jubileje. Vrstile so se okrogle mize, simpoziji, branja, proslave, na poti so nove znanstvene študije, poljudni eseji, časopisni komentarji in posebne monografije o Kosovelu in njegovem delu.

Nedvomno je Kosovel torej klasična, malodane kulturna figura slovenske kulturne zgodovine. In na kakšen način je danes dostopen? Potencialni sprejemnik Kosovelove poezije je soočen z goro različnih izdaj, kompilacij in izborov pesmi: od redkeje dostopnih predvojnih do malih broširanih, žepnih, takih z ornamentami ipd. Najbolj pa seveda tistega, ki hoče nadgraditi shematično srednješolsko izkušnjo Kosovela, usmerjata referenčni izdaji zbranih del (zbirka *Zbrana dela slovenskih pesnikov in pisateljev*) in seveda legendarna ilustrirana izdaja tako imenovanih *Integralov* iz leta 1967. Ob tem si je mogoče zastaviti nekaj zanimivih vprašanj, povezanih s procesom kanonizacije.

Ker se podobna vprašanja pogosto odpirajo tudi pri drugih avtorjih, si lahko ob primeru opusa Janeza Trdine ogledamo problem, ki postane pri Kosovelu še bistveno bolj zapleten. V nekem trenutku se jasno pokaže, kakšna zgodovinska konstrukcija – skorajda laž – je kanonizirani »Trdina«, kot nam je na voljo v zbirki *Zbranih del*, oziroma koliko truda je potrebno vložiti, da razbiramo prvotni kontekst, ki se nam trdovratno izmika. V Trdinovem primeru imamo v omenjeni zbirki dvanajst knjig z enotnim formatom, vezavo, tipografijo itd., skratka opraviti imamo z neko celoto, ki je urejena, homogena, sama po sebi nas navaja k misli o nekakšni sklenjenosti, celovitosti in notranji harmoniji avtorjevega opusa. V resnici pa zbir dvanajstih knjig prinaša popolnoma različna tekstovna gradiva: od relativno neurejenih rokopisnih zapiskov, ki očitno nikdar niso prišli v fazo zaključene avtorske redakcije, do urejenih, relativno izpiljenih in zaključenih besedil – kakršna je npr. večina *Bajk in povesti o Gorjancih*. Kljub temu, da so ta dejstva zadovoljivo pojasnjena v opombah, je očitno tole: pomešana so besedila, pri katerih je intenca objave nesporna, in besedila, za katera niti približno ni jasno, ali bi jih avtor želel objaviti v taki obliki; ter da je hkrati ta mešanost skrita v enotnosti izdaje.

Pri Trdini je torej mogoče reči, da je že urednik prve izdaje *Izbranega dela*, tj. Etbin Kristan za založnika Schwentnerja, in še bolj urednik *Zbranih del* Janez Logar, na neki način postal soavtor: sooblikoval je »Trdino« za prihodnje generacije. In vendar je Trdina dolgo živel (od 1830 do 1905) in aktivno usmerjal usodo svojih besedil, vplival je lahko, če na nič drugega, vsaj na to, ali jih je za življenje objavil ali ne. Popolnoma drugače je pri Kosovelu. Kot je dobro znano, je Kosovel umrl v Tomaju leta 1926 zaradi meningitisa, star komaj 22 let. V kratkih letih aktivnega pesnjenja je zapustil neverjetno obsežen, pa tudi osupljivo raznolik pesniški opus – v rokopisni zapuščini v NUK-u je v 12 mapah ohranjenih prek 1000 pesmi. Zapustil je torej goro pesmi, a zelo malo podatkov o njih. Njegovo avtorsko delo se je končalo pri zapisu besedila, ni pa se moglo nadaljevati v selekcijo, piljenje, izbor, strategijo nastopa v javnosti, strategijo uveljavljanja med sodobniki v literarnem sistemu itd. – vsi ti postopki pa so vedno del življenja literarnega proizvajalca. Da je Kosovel lahko postal klasik, je moral nekdo to delo opraviti *namesto njega*.

Tisti, ki so se tega lotevali, so se najprej soočili z dilemo, kako se spopasti z množico gradiva. Ko sem se na rokopisnem oddelku NUK-a prebijal skozi ta resnično impresivni material, sem ugotovil, da je vodil, s pomočjo

katerih bi lahko razvrščali gradivo, izrazito malo. Težko bi utemeljeno urejali gradivo po tematskih sklopih, enako velja za načelo slogovne sorodnosti. Natančne časovne zaporednosti nastajanja pesmi ni mogoče zanesljivo ugotoviti. Edina opozicija, ki bi lahko služila kot hierarhizacijski znak, je podpisano – nepodpisano; pa vendar ta ni in ne more biti zanesljiva, saj nikakor ni rečeno, da so pesmi, na katerih se je pesnik podpisal, v resnici boljše ali bolj dodelane, ali da bi jih pesnik prej objavil, če bi jih sploh itd. Ali se morda opreti na kvaliteto papirja? Eden od najboljših poznavalcev Kosovelove zapuščine, urednik Aleš Berger, meni, da je mogoče ugotoviti, kdaj gre za prepise oziroma čistopise, in da bi te pesmi lahko imeli za bolj izdelane. Pa vendar niti to ne more biti zares zanesljivo vodilo. Opozicija naslovljeno – nenaslovljeno ravno tako ne vodi nikamor. Z borimi nekaj omembami načrtov in s pesmimi, objavljenimi za časa pesnikovega življenja, si ravno tako ni mogoče zadovoljivo pomagati.

Pravzaprav je ironično – ampak najbolj smiselno je rokopise razvrstiti enostavno kar po abecedi, kot se nahajajo tudi v NUK-u. V trenutku, ko želi kdor koli »nekaj« narediti s to zapuščino, se kot edina smiselna možnost pokaže – konstrukcija, ki je lahko kvečjemu bolj ali manj ozaveščena. Konstrukcija nekakšne kontinuitete, neke zgodbe. Na mesto avtorja mora stopiti neki drug delovalnik v literarnem sistemu: bodisi drug avtor, bodisi urednik ali kritik. Vsak opravi svoje avtorsko delo, postane sodelavec, soavtor Kosovelu. Ocvirk s Kosovelom, Gspan s Kosovelom, Brumen s Kosovelom ... Pomen dejstva, da je Kosovel kot avtor na nek način odsoten, nedostopen, je pravzaprav težko oceniti. A nikakor ga ne smemo zanemariti, nikdar ga ne smemo izgubiti iz vida, sicer vsako razpravljanje o njegovi poeziji, ki skuša preseči raven analize posameznih pesmi – in sem sodijo problemi slogovnega razvoja, problemi modernizma, avantgardizma itd. – vsako tako razpravljanje izgublja kredibilnost.

Literarni kanon

Ob problemu avtorja, ki je na opisani način »odsoten«, nekako razločen od lastnega dela in podobe – ker sam ni mogel uresničiti vseh tistih dejanj, ki jih od literarnega proizvajalca pričakujemo – pa se je vseeno tako rekoč z zlatimi črkami vpisal med »Velike avtorje«, je mogoče in potrebno premisliti temelje poteze literarnega kanona in procese njegovega oblikovanja. Literarni kanon je gotovo eden pomembnejših v sodobni literarni teoriji in je aktualen tedaj, ko literature ne preučujemo zgolj kot literature, tj. kot celote literarnih besedil in avtorjev, ki jo pišejo, temveč v njenem širšem kulturnem in družbenem kontekstu. V tem kontekstu se vloga literature izkaže kot mnogoplastna: literarni kanon ni le izbor najbolj cenjenih besedil v neki kulturni skupnosti, temveč širša celota, ki vključuje tudi imena kot »blagovne znamke« avtorjev, celoto pomembnejših interpretacij besedil, vsakdanje fraze, prirojene iz kanoničnih besedil, popreproščene formule in citate »za vsakdanjo rabo«, tipična vrednotenja in podobno. Poenostavljeno rečeno, v literarni kanon ne sodijo le Kosovelova besedila, recimo najboljši

»Integrali« ali »Konsi«, temveč tudi dejstvo, da gre za bolehnega pesnika, ki je umrl mlad, da gre za »pesnika Krasa«, pa celo zgodovina bralske recepcije njegovih pesmi se vpisuje v to zgodbo. Literarni kanon je pomemben del »temeljev« neke skupnosti, tekstualna baza, na podlagi katere neka družba gradi svoj zgodovinski spomin, ga vzdržuje in reciklira; je nekakšno zrcalo, prek katere vzpostavlja svojo identiteto, kot poudarja Marko Juvan (1994). Prek tekstov, ki so del literarnega kanona, se merijo in legitimirajo vsa pretekla, pa tudi aktualna kulturna dogajanja v tej skupnosti.

Kanon je seveda močno selektiven in se s časom spreminja; predvsem zaradi dotoka novih svežih avtorjev so kanonični izbori iz oddaljene preteklosti vse bolj selektivni in shematični. Za svoje uspešno funkcioniranje v vlogi družbenega veziva kanon potrebuje učinkovite reprodukcijske mehanizme, med katerimi je najpomembnejši šolski sistem (Guillory 1983). Kosovel ostaja »Kosovel« torej predvsem zato, ker ga kot takega producira in reproducira šolski sistem – ta je v tem smislu zadnja postaja kanonizacije in ultimativna točka potrditve veljave. Pred tem pa je moral kanonizirani avtor čez nešteta sita in rešeta. Oglejmo si to potovanje, kot so ga temeljito analizirali predstavniki nizozemske empirične šole, npr. Kees van Rees (1989). Posameznika, ki ima ambicijo postati literarni avtor, najprej obdelujejo uredniki, tako da se večini piscev sploh nikdar ne uspe dokopati do objave; ko kaj izide, se ga lotijo kritiki – pa še to le, če ima srečo – in če zbudi zadosten interes kritike in esejistike, ga postopoma v svoje znanstvene primeže stisne literarna zgodovina, ga »očedi« in po potrebi tudi ideološko prilagodi, asimilira. Šele za tem se avtor in tekst lahko pojavita v šolskih kurikulumih, berilih, obveznih čtivih in maturitetnih listah. To je »idealna« in poenostavljena slika tega procesa. Na te procese avtor lahko do neke mere vpliva tudi sam, seveda če je živ. Že skozi prvi, uredniško-založniški filter avtor mnogo lažje precepi tekst, če pozna tehnike lobiranja, se druži s pravimi ljudmi (uredniki, kritiki) ipd., enako velja za vse kasnejše faze – podoba »dobrih avtorjev«, ki pride do faze znanstvene obdelave, je pogosto precej popačena, obremenjena s paratekstualnimi procesi, osebnimi poznanstvi in podobno.

Kosovel je za življenje objavil malo, napisal pa neverjetno veliko besedil. Besedila je gotovo želel objaviti, vendar mu je za uresničitev prevratnih zamisli o njihovi ustrezni distribuciji zmanjkalo časa – od vseh načrtov mu je uspelo deloma uresničiti le dijaško zamisel glasila, *Lepo Vido*, in pa literarno-dramatični krožek, poimenovan po Ivanu Cankarju; s kolegi pa se je za nekaj mesecev dokopal tudi do uredništva revije *Mladina*. Samostojna pesniška zbirka, revija *Konstrukter* in knjižna zbirka so ostale le neuresničene vizije. Stanje po Kosovelovi smrti je bilo nenavadno: sodobniki so imeli nepregledno morje rokopisov in skoraj nobene hierarhije med njimi; skoraj nobenega načrta ali vsaj osnutka o zgradbi bodočih pesniških zbirk, ki jih je Kosovel gotovo imel v mislih.

Konstruiranje klasika

In tu se začenja zgodba o Kosovelu, ki nima prave zveze s pokojnikom. Da se je rokopisov sploh kdo lotil, imajo zaslugo njegovi prijatelji – kaj lahko bi namreč ta poezija ostala zgodba iz predala oz. sploh neobstoječa zgodba. Kosovelova pot med klasike je polna arbitrarnih odločitev, bolj ali manj upravičenih uredniških presoj in vrtanja po rokopisih, pa tudi zgodovina specifične, celo kontradiktorne recepcije. Vse to velja že za prvi skromen izbor pesmi iz leta 1927, ki je izšel leto dni po pesnikovi smrti. Pesmi je izbral Alfonz Gspan, a tako, da je v izbor uvrstil pretežno tradicionalne pesmi. Enako je v izboru iz leta 1931 ravnal utemeljitelj slovenske komparativistike in znanstvenik Anton Ocvirk, mlajši Kosovelov sodobnik. Prav Ocvirk je temeljna figura, povezana s tem, čemur lahko rečemo »konstruiranje« kanoničnega Kosovela. Ocvirk je namreč prevzel večino rokopisov in po vojni je bil Kosovelov opus kot eden prvih potrjen za izdajo v okviru ambiciozne zbirke *Zbranih del slovenskih pesnikov in pisateljev*. Ocvirk je leta 1946 izdal prvo knjigo Kosovelovih *Zbranih del*. Vanjo je vključil precej pesmi, vendar *ne* tistih najradikalnejših, in sicer – kot sam kasneje pojasnjuje – zato, ker so se mu slednje zdele fragmentarne, nedokončane; zdelo se mu je, kot da so to šele nekakšni zasnutki, ki jih je v ustvarjalni vročici Kosovel metal na papir, ne pa prave, estetsko dodelane pesmi. Je pa Ocvirk že v prvo izdajo uvrstil tudi nekaj radikalnejših »Konsov«.

Toda prava zgodba se tu šele začenja. V zapuščini je namreč ostalo še mnogo pesmi, predvsem tiste, ki jih je danes mogoče označiti za najbolj radikalne. Zato je bila potrebna revizija *Zbranih del* iz leta 1946. Nastala je nova verzija prve knjige (1964), leta 1974 pa je izšla še druga knjiga, ki je vključila tudi t. i. *Integrale*. Te radikalne pesmi, ki so dobile uredniški naslov *Integrali*, so prvič izšle že leta 1967, in tudi to prestižno izdajo je pripravil Anton Ocvirk, grafično opremil pa Jože Brumen. V javnosti je knjiga seveda delovala kot šok: kje so bile doslej »najboljše« pesmi tega slovenskega modernista in avantgardista? Prst se je naperil v Ocvirka, ki je dolga leta pri sebi »zadrževal« rokopise. Toda ta prst je na neki način zgrešil poanto: ker Kosovel ni živel in ni zapustil načrtov, so bili izbori gradiv in celo naslovi zbirk ali sklopov in skratka vsi uredniški posegi tako ali tako *docela arbitrarni*. To pa pomeni, da je vsak urednik vedno izbiral po lastni presoji in v skladu s svojim okusom in estetskimi vrednotami; lahko bi rekli, da je konstruiral, celo »proizvajal« svojega Kosovela. In tu šele lahko odgovorimo na izhodiščno vprašanje, kako je Kosovel lahko postal pesnik tako različnih obrazov: njegov heterogeni opus, srkajoč vplive najrazličnejših literarnih smeri in gibanj, je omogočal tudi diametralno različne konstelacije estetskih in ideoloških preferenc. Zato je treba zgodovino Kosovelove recepcije in kanonizacije brati kot zgodovino uredniških prisvajanj in prikrajanj: pred drugo svetovno vojno je bil Kosovel narodni pesnik, ki je imaginarij Krasa postavil kot »slovenski imaginarij« – in to v času, ko je bil Tomaj globoko v Italiji in je Kosovel študiral v drugi državi. Povojni Kosovel je lahko privzel oblasti všečen obraz revolucionarnega socialista in simpatizerja delavstva. V dobi, ko so se pri nas razmahnile

umetniške (neo)avantgarde, pa se je izkazalo, da je Kosovel pravzaprav izjemno moderen pesnik in avantgardist; ugotovljene so bile paralele s futuristi, konstruktivisti, zenitisti ipd. Avantgardni Kosovel, za katerega je zanimanje utiral tudi francoski pesnik Marc Alyn, je torej pesnik docela drugačnega obraza, kot je bil некоč samotni pesnik Krasa.

Ravno z izdajo *Integralov* leta 1967 so slovenske neoavantgarde dobile legitimnost in postale del neke zgodovinske kontinuitete. Toda knjiga *Integralov* sama po sebi ni nekakšna nedolžna zamudniška tvorba: spet gre za arbitraren izbor z arbitrarnim in morda celo ponesrečenim naslovom in s sočasno grafično opremo, ki nikakor *ni nevtralna*, ampak Kosovela izrazito asociativno postavlja v avantgardistični kontekst dobe, v kateri je knjiga izšla. V tem smislu je zgodba z *Integrali* povezana s časovno specifično *interpretacijo*, ki je *ideološko* motivirana. S tega stališča je pogosto tematizirano vprašanje zgodovinske avantgarde v zvezi s Kosovelom mogoče na nek način videti kot umetno vprašanje, ki ga je za nazaj sprožila literarna zgodovina, da bi dokazovala sinhronost slovenskih literarnih gibanj z Evropo – in tudi tu je morda treba iskati enega od vzrokov za posebnosti pri kanonizaciji Kosovela.

Sklep

Ko skušamo nekako povzeti tisto, kar se nam tu zdi pomembno, nam je lahko v oporo tudi sodobna empirična oziroma sistemska teorija literature S. J. Schmidta in drugih. V sistemskoteoretični shemi je namreč avtor kot literarni proizvajalec neločljivo povezan z drugimi vlogami v literarnem sistemu: vlogo posrednika, sprejemnika in obdelovalca. Ravno Kosovelov primer je s tega vidika posebej zanimiv, saj kot literarni proizvajalce Kosovel ni dejavno posegal v sistemske odnose oziroma je vpliv teh posegov (redke objave, uredništva, grupiranje), ki jih je utegnil izvršiti v kratkem času svojega življenja, zanemarljiv v primerjavi s tem, kar so za »Kosovela« storili tisti, ki so prevzeli nase vloge, ki jih v običajnih okoliščinah vsaj delom prevzema, gotovo pa vsaj nadzira in usmerja, sam literarni proizvajalec. Zato je mogoče trditi, da je kanonizacija Kosovela, ki danes nesporno velja ne le za enega najboljših slovenskih pesnikov, temveč tudi za najradikalnejšega predstavnika zgodovinske avantgarde, potekala docela »mimo« njega. Kot kanonični avtor (in hkrati tudi ustrezen *tip* slovenskega pesnika – s tako življenjsko usodo, ki jo najdemo že v modelu »cukrarne«), je Kosovel v celoti *konstruiran*, saj sam ni imel na svojo kulturno usodo nobenega vpliva.

Seveda s tem ni rečeno, da drugi avtorji lahko bistveno vplivajo na kanonizacijo: nasprotno, ti procesi so večinoma posmrtni, dokončno podoba pa jim krojijo armade institucij, vključenih v relativno kompleksno dogajanje. Kosovel je po smrti zmagovito vstopil v literarno areno, a pri tem so odločilno vlogo odigrali drugi akterji v literarnem sistemu, zato se zdi še posebej zanimiv za preučevanje različnih procesov v literarnem sistemu in vloge avtorja v njih. Po drugi strani lahko razumemo naše ugotovitve

v zvezi s Kosovelom tudi v kontekstu sodobne kritike tega, kar Barthes imenuje »tiranija avtorja« oziroma kot prispevek k razumevanju nastajanja »avtorske funkcije« (Foucault 1979). V številnih študijah se je že večkrat izkazala historično-kontingenčna narava individualnega avtorstva, ki je lahko vzniknilo v posebnih družbenih pogojih, se pravno kodificiralo z reguliranjem avtorskih pravic ter se utemeljilo z romantično retoriko navdahnjenega genija (Bennet 2005). »Tiranija avtorja« resda še vedno obvladuje večino družbenih diskurzov, povezanih z literaturo – založniki, revije, kritiki, državne institucije, pa tudi pomemben segment tradicionalne literarne vede s pridom izkoriščajo mitizirane razsežnosti Avtorja – toda na teoretični ravni je že močno načeta. S tega gledišča se ne zdi več sporno priznati, da Kosovel kot kanonični avtor ni identičen s historično osebo, temveč je rezultat »avtorske koprodukcije«, v katero sta vključena tudi mašinerija literarnega sistema in znanstveno opazovanje literature. Ne enega ne drugega ne bi smeli zanemariti, če želimo natančneje razumeti, kaj se zares dogaja v procesu družbene »proizvodnje« avtorja.

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■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / literarna recepcija / kanonizacija / literarni sistem

V sistemskoteoretični shemi je avtor kot literarni proizvajalec neločljivo povezan z drugimi vlogami v literarnem sistemu: vlogo posrednika, sprejemnika in obdelovalca. Kosovelov primer se zdi s tega vidika posebej zanimiv, saj kot literarni proizvajalec Kosovel ni dejavno posegal v sistemske odnose oziroma je vpliv teh posegov (redke objave, uredništva, grupiranje), ki jih je utegnil izvršiti v kratkem času svojega življenja, zanemarljiv v primerjavi s tem, kar so za »Kosovela« storili tisti, ki so prevzeli nase vloge, ki jih v običajnih okoliščinah vsaj delom prevzema, gotovo pa vsaj nadzira in usmerja, sam literarni proizvajalec. Zato je mogoče trditi, da je kanonizacija Kosovela, ki danes nesporno velja ne le za enega najboljših slovenskih pesnikov, temveč tudi za najradikalnejšega predstavnika zgodovinske avantgarde, potekala docela »mimo« njega. Kosovel je posmrtno zmagovito vstopil v literarno areno, a pri tem so odločilno vlogo odigrali drugi akterji v literarnem sistemu, saj natančnejših načrtov, kaj in kako storiti z obsežno in hierarhično neurejeno zapuščino, ni zapustil. Zato se zdi še posebej zanimiv za preučevanje različnih procesov v literarnem sistemu in vloge avtorja v njih. Hkrati pa je mogoče trditi, da večina dosedanjih obravnav Kosovela in njegovega dela spregleda ta pomemben kontekst in obravnava »Kosovela« kot nekaj vnaprej danega in razpoložljivega, kar zlahka vodi k poenostavitvam.

KOSOVEL IN NIHILIZEM: POSKUS KONSTRUKTIVNE DESTRUKCIJE

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Srečko Kosovel danes stoji trdno v kanonu slovenske literature, kljub svoji *klasičnosti* pa sproža najrazličnejše, tudi ideološko motivirane polemike in z njimi neločljivo povezan boj interpretacij – te se zvečine lomijo na hrbtu njegovega obsežnega pesniškega opusa.* Slovenci imamo s Kosovelom težave še danes, osemdeset let po pesnikovi smrti. Eden zadnjih takšnih »simptomov« je bilo dogajanje ob peti obletnici osamosvojitve Slovenije 26. junija 1996, ko je na Trgu republike v slovenski prestolnici potekala državna slovesnost. Njen uradni naslov se je glasil *Kons. 5 – Slavolok peti obletnici osamosvojitve Republike Slovenije*. *Kons. 5* je sicer naslov ene najbolj znanih Kosovelovih pesemskih »konstrukcij«, avtorji proslave pa so si njen naslov sposodili v bolj »simboličnem« smislu, češ da gre za peto obletnico konstituiranja države. *Kons. 5* med proslavo nato ni bil neposredno uporabljen. Za izstop nekaterih pomembnih političnih mož iz častnega odbora prireditve, med njimi tudi ministra za kulturo, je bila dovolj že uporaba (po njihovem prepričanju zloraba) naslova pesmi. Pri tem pa ni bil toliko moteč naslov kot tisto, kar se za njim, naj bo izgovorjeno ali ne, skriva. To pa je seveda sama pesem. Glasi se takole (ZD II: 23):

Gnoj je zlato
in zlato je gnoj.
Oboje = 0
0 = ∞
A B <
1, 2, 3.
Kdor nima duše,
ne potrebuje zlata,
kdor ima dušo,
ne potrebuje gnoja.
I, A.

* Razprava je predelana različica poglavja »Srečko Kosovel«, objavljenega v moji monografiji *Poskusi z Nietzschejem. Nietzsche in ničejanstvo v slovenski literaturi*, Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 2003.

Kons. 5 na prvi pogled niza raznorodne, nenavadne, ne posebno »lirične« elemente, kot so matematični znaki in simboli ali pa zvočni posnetek oslovega riganja, s katerim se pesem pomenljivo glasno sklene. Malce nenavadno, na prvi pogled trivialno, pa vendarle: oslovo riganje pri Kosovelu je najbrž v zvezi z Nietzschejem. Najverjetnejši izvir »oslovske« skovanke je namreč Nietzschejeva knjiga *Tako je govoril Zaratustra* – Kosovel jo je bral in, kot je dokumentirano, celo priporočal v branje. »I, A« se v Nietzschejevi knjigi *Tako je govoril Zaratustra* pojavi kar nekajkrat, ima pa podobno – ironično-subverzivno, tudi norčavo – funkcijo kot pri Kosovelu.

Kons. 5 je obenem pesem, katere branje skorajda zahteva poznavanje nekaterih okoliščin, v katerih je nastala, pa tudi širšega konteksta Kosovelovega pesnjenja. Urednik Anton Ocvirk v opombah v *Zbranem delu* opozarja zlasti na kmetijski priročnik *Gnoj je zlato*, ki je Kosovelu med bivanjem v Tomaju po naključju prišel v roke in nato neposredno spodbudil nastanek pesmi. Nič manj pomemben ni Kosovelov dnevniški zapis iz leta 1925, ki je zasnova za *Kons. 5*: »Zlata mrzlica. / Ljudje imajo zlato mrzlico. Kapitalizem / Gnoj je zlato. / Zlato je gnoj, ker ga za to uporabljajo / Kultura = dekla / dekla kapitala.« (ZD III: 688)

S pritegnitvijo teh »zunajpesemskih«, kon-tekstualnih okoliščin postaja ena izmed temeljnih intenc pesmi *Kons. 5* razvidnejša. Gre predvsem za njeno proti-kapitalistično ost, vendar – in to velja poudariti – nikakor ne na način transparentne ideološke agitacije. *Kons. 5*, skupaj z nekaterimi drugimi tovrstno naravnanimi Kosovelovimi teksti, to ost ubeseduje posredno: privajeno, udomačeno podobo »meščanskega«, »buržoaznega« sveta razstavlja, de-harmonizira in jo tako zarisuje kot izrazito nestabilno, dinamično strukturo, ki sama – takšna, kakršna pač je – kliče po radikalni spremembi.

Oslovo riganje na koncu pesmi *Kons. 5* ne priča samo o nekakšni norčavosti in ironično-parodični distanciranosti, temveč obstoječemu zgodovinskemu svetu izreka temeljno nezaupnico.

Tu pa se odpira nekaj zanimivih vprašanj. Na primer: katera je tista instanca, mesto, s katerega Kosovelova poezija nekemu zgodovinskemu svetu – slovenski družbi, pa tudi Evropi dvajsetih let 20. stoletja – izreka temeljno nezaupnico? Zakaj je ravno poezija medij izrekanja te nezaupnice? Kateri so tisti ideali, v imenu katerih Kosovelova pesem protestira? Sem sodi, konec koncev, še vprašanje, kaj pomeni to, da Kosovelova pesem protestira, da očitno sama ima neke ideale in podobno – kaj vse to pomeni za *modernistično strukturo* Kosovelove poezije? Ne nazadnje se lahko vprašamo tudi, kaj je s temi ideali, če na njih pogledamo iz perspektive Nietzschejeve filozofije, na primer v luči zahteve po prevrednotenju vseh vrednot ali pa v luči kritike vseh tako imenovanih modernih idej?

Kot lahko razberemo iz številnih Kosovelovih esejističnih sestavkov, posebno vlogo pri slovesu od starega sveta in vzpostavitvi *novoga* pripisuje pesniški besedi, literaturi oziroma kar celotni kulturi. Kosovel svojega pesništva in umetnosti nasploh nikakor ne razume kot nekakšno izolirano dejavnost, ki bi bila zgolj estetska in v tem smislu »avtonomna«. *Kons. 5* in podobni Kosovelovi, pogojno rečeno, modernistični teksti bralcu, ki jih vzame v roke, morda sicer vzbujajo estetsko »avtonomističen«, »ne-

mimetičen« vtis – skorajda v smislu (ultra)modernistične poetike in njenih zahtev po »izgonu smisla« iz poezije, ki so bile na Slovenskem popularne ravno v času prvega izida *Integralov*, tj. v drugi polovici šestdesetih let 20. stoletja. Kontekst pesmi *Kons. 5*, na katerega sem že opozoril, pa tudi Kosovelove besede o »kulturnem gibanju«, v osrčje katerega postavlja pesniško besedo, pričajo o nečem drugem.

Najprej se moramo ustaviti ob Kosovelovem odnosu do slovenske pesniške tradicije. Kosovel je ne razume kot nečesa, kar sodi v muzej in kar je, v avantgardistični maniri (najbolj bombastično pri »antipasatizmu« futuristov), treba preseči in zavreči. Ravno nasprotno: Kosovel ima samega sebe za dediča in nadaljevalca slovenskega literarnega izročila. Se pravi, da svoje pisanje utemeljuje v prizadevanjih in stremljenjih starejših predhodnikov. V tej Zgodbi pa izpostavljeno, iniciacijsko mesto pripada Francetu Prešernu, *središču* slovenskega pesniškega kanona.

A rad bi eno, da v tej temni dobi, ko smo pozabili, čemu živimo, da vzamemo v roke njegove poezije in da poizkušamo dobiti v njih one moči, ki pomaga v trpljenju in v borbi, ki daje človeku vero v življenje, ki kaže življenju cilj. Kajti posebna lastnost globokih in lepih duš je, da pokažejo svoje življenje, da pokažejo edino pot, ki jo mora hoditi duša: k Lepoti. In taka duša je Prešeren. (ZD III: 122)

Kosvelo razmišljanje je ponekod obarvano ničejansko. Ta vtis podkrepljuje še omenjanje Nietzscheja v Kosovelovih spisih. Leta 1923 je očitno bral Nietzschejevo knjigo *Tako je govoril Zaratustra*, saj jo v tem času kar nekajkrat omenja, med drugim v svoji korespondenci (ZD III: 382, 481). Kosovel se sklicuje na Nietzscheja kot na nekakšno avtoriteto, če ne kar duhovnega učitelja. Vendar pa v tem kontekstu Kosovel govori tudi o svojem prizadevanju, še več, govori, recimo, o »žrtvovanju za Lepoto in Resnico«. Tudi v besedilu z naslovom *Stojimo*, prav tako leta 1923, omenja Nietzscheja, takoj nato pa govori o »borbi za človeka in človeštvo«, o Slovanih, ki bodo »trudnega evropskega človeka« odrešili »s svojo veliko voljo po življenju, s svojo sočno barbarsko veselo življenja željnostjo« (ZD III: 42). Istega leta je Kosovel v neki oceni zapisal tudi tole: »Ako hoče človek živeti [...] mora stopiti med okolico. To ni človek gnile družbe, tudi ne človek najidealnejše kolektivnosti, to je človek-bog, Nietzschejev nadčlovek. Z njim vstane in pade svet.« (ZD III: 236)

V dnevniškem zapisu iz tega obdobja pa je Kosovel še precej bolj neposreden: »Kadar mi je najgrenkejšo pri srcu berem Nietzscheja« (ZD III: 703).

Vendar je tu treba takoj, že kar vnaprej pripomniti, da Kosovel sicer dialogizira, včasih nemara koketira z Nietzschejem, vendar ga razume dokaj po svoje. Z eno besedo: daleč je od radikalnosti in še manj konsekvantnosti izvorne Nietzschejeve misli. Kosovel namreč, podobno kot pred njim že Ivan Cankar (gl. Kos 2003: 147–180), tako voljo kot moč *humanizira*, in zgolj v tem, izrazito *humanističnem* kontekstu ju razume kot sredstvo človeške (individualne in kolektivne) emancipacije. Podobno velja tudi za pogosta Kosovelova gesla o človečanstvu, novem človeku, pravici, novi

družbi, novem etosu in podobno, v katerih sicer nemalokrat odmevajo programska načela tako imenovanega »mesijanskega ekspresionizma«.

Vse te – po Nietzscheju izrazite »moderne« oziroma »dekadentne« – ideje pa znotraj Kosovelovega horizonta nimajo globlje vsebinske zveze z Nietzschejevo perspektivo. Natančneje rečeno, s *perspektivizmom* pri Nietzscheju, kar pomeni: gledati vse bivajoče v luči volje do moči in večnega vračanja enakega, s tem pa tudi »onkraj dobrega in zlega«. V perspektivizmu, kot ga pojmuje Nietzsche, namreč ne gre za to, da bi gledali na življenje iz perspektive razvoja v smislu eshatološkega napredovanja k nekemu Cilju, še najmanj v luči kakšnega izmed etičnih postulatov. Nietzsche, zgoščeno povedano, izhaja iz volje do moči kot temeljnega »ustroja« narave, »gona« bivajočega – kot »večnega vračanja enakega«. Tisto, kar se vrača vedno znova, je volja do moči kot sebe hoteča moč (gl. ndr. Nietzsche 1991: 577–578).

Pesništvo in umetnost nasploh za Kosovela ni utelešenje prekipevajoče moči in volje do življenja v Nietzschejevem smislu, temveč moč, ki je vnaprej omejena. Drugače povedano: moč, ki jo omenja in na katero stavi Kosovel, ni moč, ki bi hotela samo sebe, ni moč, ki bi bila vrhovni princip življenja. Kosovel se omejuje na toliko moči, kolikor je potrebno, da je trpljenje še mogoče nekako prenesti in ga nato osmisлити z angažmajem *znotraj* gibanja za uresničitev kakšne izmed *človečanskih* idej. Zato ta moč tudi ne more biti ekspanzionistična, obrnjena navzven, temveč nasprotno. Meje njenega sveta, če uporabim sintagmo, ki je Kosovel bržkone ne uporablja po naključju, so meje *lepe duše*. Svet, v katerem prebiva lepa duša in v katerem se počuti kot doma, pa je poezija. Cilj pesniške lepe duše je »hoja k Lepoti«.

Ob tem pa moram dodati še to, da so izhodišča Kosovelove »poetike«, kakor jih lahko razberemo iz njegovih diskurzivnih besedil, heterogena, nemalokrat protislovna. Izpostavljena Kosovelova beseda za resnico pesništva je sicer Lepota, vendar je, po Cankarjevem zgledu, ne razume v smislu harmonije kot ene izmed kategorij »klasične« estetike. Pa tudi ne larplartistično oziroma esteticistično. Značilen je denimo Kosovelov osnutek iz leta 1925 za spis *Sodobno evropsko življenje in umetnost*, ki ga je imel tedaj v načrtih. Med drugim govori o tem, da umetnost

... ni več kakor nekateri katederski esteti mislijo samo estetični problem, ampak estetični, etični, socialni, religiozni, revolucionarni, skratka življenjski problem. [...] Kajti le umetnik, ki je izstopil iz močvirja sodobne družbe in stopil v novo družbo, ki jo je začutil sam, le ta je novi duhovnik resnice, pravice, človečanstva in dobrote. (ZD III: 650)

Temelj temu prenovljenju, v nadaljevanju zatrjuje Kosovel, je »etična revolucija«: »Mi hočemo dejanja. In brez etične revolucije ni mogoče preiti k dejanju.« (ZD III: 651)

V zadnjem obdobju Kosovelovega življenja je takšno prepričanje dobilo konkretnjšo, socialno-politično vsebino. Svoja stališča je najizraziteje razložil v predavanju *Umetnost in proletarec*, ki ga je imel konec februarja 1926, to je tri mesece pred smrtjo, v Zagorju. Kosovel tu razpravlja o sodo-

bnem umetniku in nujnosti njegove vključitve v gibanje, ki se »bori z razrednim bojem za brezrazredno družbo«. Subjekt tega gibanja je proletariat, Kosovelovo razmišljanje gre v tej smeri, da je emancipacija proletariata, če rečemo z Marxom, pogoj za emancipacijo vsega človeštva.¹ Udejanjenje Pravice bo prineslo »novo, proletarsko, človečansko kulturo«. Zato je, sklepa Kosovel, »proletarska kultura nujnost, brez katere proletariat svoje naloge ne more rešiti« (ZD III/3: 29).

Tu se z vso ostrino zastavlja vprašanje, ki bi mu lahko rekli kar »vprašanje poezije«. Namreč: kako na takšni podlagi naravnati pesniško besedo, da bo ustrezala resnici *nove dobe*? Vsej borbeno aktivistični programatiki navkljub je namreč pesniška beseda pri Kosovelu predvsem *beseda hrepenenja*. Hrepenenje pa je po svojem temelju brez-ciljno in odprto, zadeva srca, duše in nedoločljive bolesi, če uporabim te Kosovelove besede, ki jih srečamo v vseh »razvojnih etapah« in »žanrih« njegovega pisanja.

Ali je zapeljivost siren *nove družbe* kot eshatološkega projekta – pri nje-govem udejanjenju Kosovel podeljuje literaturi iniciacijsko vlogo – tolikšna, da bi lahko postavila pod vprašaj tudi vsa dotedanja Kosovelova pesniška prizadevanja? Zanje so namreč konstitutivni ravno iskanje, »ontološka« negotovost, notranja protislovnost, nihanje med solipsizmom in aktivizmom, temu ustrezno konstantno krizno stanje, predvsem pa skupni imenovalec Kosovelovega pesnjenja ostaja elementarni *lirizem* »lepe duše«. Ta – ne glede na tehnopoetske, tematskovsebinske in druge metamorfoze Kosovelove poezije – ostaja njegova določujoča podlaga (prim. Kos 1997).

Ob teh dilemah moram spet opozoriti na nekaj formulacij iz Kosovelove korespondence. Gre za stavke, ki jih je Kosovel zapisal poleti 1925 v pismu Fanci Obidovi: pesnik govori o velikem prevratu, sredi katerega je, nato o ustvarjalni nervoznosti, ki je del tega prevrata, obenem pa je ta nervoznost širši, že kar metafizičen pojem: »Nervozen človek je medij kozmičnih tragedij.«

Za nas pa je posebej zanimiv tudi Kosovelov stavek, ki govori o tem, da mora človek »preko mostu nihilizma na pozitivno stran« (ZD III: 397–398).

Ta stavek je pravzaprav malce drugačna različica misli, ki jo lahko odkrijemo v enem izmed Kosovelovih dnevniških zapisov iz tega obdobja: »Skozi ničišče negativizma bo potreba iti, da pridemo res na pravo *konstruktivno pot*.« (ZD III: 700)

Sicer pa je v Kosovelovem opusu raztreseno še nekaj podobnih formulacij. V enem izmed pisem, prav tako Fanci Obidovi, je zapisal denimo tole: »Iz absolutne negacije, nihilizma, sem polagoma stopil z zaprtimi očmi na pozitivno stran.« (ZD III/2: 400)

¹ Pa tudi prvi pogoj emancipacije malih – po Marxu (in Heglu) »nezgodovinskih« – narodov. Kosovelova vizija »proletarske revolucije« namreč ni anacionalna v smislu »svetovne revolucije« in z njo povezanega »odmiranja narodov«. Dovolj pomenljiv je Kosovelov dnevniški zapis iz leta 1924: »Potom socializma revolucije do svobode narodov.« (ZD III: 624) Podobno na drugem mestu: »Narod je nad državo, ker je narod organičen, naturen in upravičen, a država mehaničen, politično gospodarski faktor.« (ZD III: 659)

Kosovel v tem pismu pojasnjuje svoje aktualne pesniške dileme in obenem napoveduje, kaj in kako bo z njegovo poezijo. Ob takšnih in drugačnih Kosovelovih samooznakah in pojasnilih moramo biti pozorni na več stvari. Najprej na to, da tisto, kar označujejo Kosovelove besede o »pravi konstruktivni poti« oziroma o »pozitivni strani«, seveda ni zgolj nekakšna estetska »kvazirealnost« ali literarna domislica, temveč je Kosovelova misel tu naravnana izrazito družbeno.

To pa spet ne pomeni, da svojo lastno poezijo (ali literaturo/umetnost nasploh) postavlja v neposredno službo ideologije ali politike. O vsem tem je Kosovel dokaj jasen v že omenjenem pismu Fanci Obidovi 27. julija 1925:

Mi sicer moramo poznati *politiko*, a moje delo je v *literaturi*. Jaz danes popolnoma razumem svoje delo in svoj delokrog: jaz moram delati v literaturi tisto, kar delajo naši najmlajši v politiki, to se pravi: prikazovati dobo, v kateri propada en, a vstaja drugi svet. *Zakaj in kako, to je individualno.*

To, vidite, je naša naloga. Literatura mora v ljudeh buditi *spoznanje!* Stopnjevat mora življenjsko silo. (ZD III: 401)

Literatura mora torej v ljudeh stopnjevat *življenjsko silo*. Ta Kosovelov imperativ nas ponovno vrača k primerjavi med Kosovelom in Nietzschejem. Kar zadeva Nietzscheja, smo ugotavljali, da lahko njegov pojem »volja do moči« pri Kosovelu uporabljamo samo pogojno, in sicer v pomenu *konstruktivne* volje do moči. Gre za takšno voljo do moči, ki bo v službi človeka kot »poosebljenega etosa«, če uporabim Kosovelovo sintagmo. O tem, kako in kaj je s tem »poosebljenim etosom«, najbolj plastično govori Kosovelovo predavanje *Kriza*, ki ga je imel novembra 1925 v Ljubljani. Ob tem ni odveč opozorilo, da je prvi stavek tega predavanja enak naslovu – in prvemu verzu – slovite Kosovelove pesmi *Evropa umira*. Že bežen pogled na to pesem nam pokaže, da je pravzaprav sestavljena iz dveh polovic oziroma iz dveh ravni. Na eni ravni smo priča izraziti, malodane transparentni družbeni kritičnosti. To so seveda verzi o tem, da Evropa, takšna, kakršna pač je, umira, ali pa, da je društvo narodov laž. Drugi obraz te družbene kritičnosti, malodane ekstatičnosti, kakor jo omogoča navzven obrnjena pesniška subjektivnost, je poudarjena intimistična refleksija.

Ta dvojnost družbene kritičnosti in izpostavljene individualnosti, ali pa družbenega angažmaja in samotne melanholije je konstitutivni element tiste pesniške držje, ki bi ji lahko nasploh rekli »Kosovelov paradoks«.

Kosovelovo predavanje *Kriza* je eno njegovih najbolj znanih publicističnih besedil. Ob tem predavanju se sicer ponujajo podobne ugotovitve kot že ob pesmi *Rime*, kjer srečamo verze, ki govorijo o tem, da je treba »spraviti fraze v muzeje«, ali pa, da je »vse izgubilo svojo vrednost«. Izguba vrednosti se je zgodila v imenu in v luči prihodnosti. Ta prihodnost se kaže na tistem horizontu, ki ga odpirajo besede o »smrti Evrope«. Smrt Evrope je pogoj za rojstvo novega sveta in novega človeka. Tu pa dobi poseben pomen ravno umetnost. Še več. Kosovel je v predavanju *Kriza* v prvi osebi množine zapisal celo, da »mi« prihajamo »v znamenju umetnosti«. Obenem to umetnost razume v izrazito humanističnem smislu, v smislu

približevanja človeku: »Človečanstvo umetnosti obstoji v tem, da se človeku približamo« (ZD III: 20).

Takoj nato sledi (predzadnji) stavek, ki je parafraza znanih Nietzschejevih besed oziroma gesel, vendar je Nietzschejeva misel tu pravzaprav že kritično zavrnjena. Kosovel pravi takole: »Ne onkraj dobrega in zlega, pravičnega in krivičnega, ne z nadčloveško lažjo; kakor ljudje prihajamo sredi dobrega in zlega, pravičnega in krivičnega.« (ZD III: 20)

Kosovelov angažma je na tej ravni jasen: zahteva angažma v imenu človeka in človeštva, ta angažma je obenem angažma v imenu dobrega proti zlemu, pravice naproti krivici. Če Nietzsche odpravlja *moralno* razlikovanje med dobrim in slabim in nasploh moralo kot tako (*morala je nemorala*), če je socializem zanj le ena izmed »modernih idej«, se pravi manifestacija dekadence na družbeni ravni (gl. zlasti Nietzsche 1991: 78–88), če je t. i. dobri človek zanj le drugo ime za modernega človeka, za kristjana oziroma nihilista (Nietzsche 1989: 197), pa je Kosovelova zahteva ravno nasprotna: gre mu za poudarjeno etično-moralno držo, saj se mora človek – človek kot etični subjekt – vsakič znova odločati med dobrim in zlim, pravičnim in krivičnim. Od tod konec koncev tudi Kosovelove besede o človeku kot »poosebljenem etosu«.

V enem izmed Kosovelovih dnevniških zapisov iz leta 1925 (*O samomoru*) srečamo formulacijo, ki govori o nihilizmu. In sicer gre za to, da nihilizem izvira neposredno iz sodobne družbe: »*nihilizem* [je] edina filozofija, ki organično izvira iz sodobnega razprtja, razkola družbe in človeka, sodobna kultura ne more producirati boljše 'filozofije'« (ZD III: 648). Alternativa temu nihilizmu ni volja do moči kot aktivno počelo življenja v Nietzschejevem smislu, temveč gre Kosovelova poanta v drugačni smeri: govori namreč o etični revoluciji, ki je obenem duhovna revolucija, in sicer ne v imenu nadčloveka kot figure volje do moči, ampak v imenu novega človečanstva in njegovih moralnih atributov, ki so, če uporabim Kosovelov besednjak, predvsem ljubezen, poštenost in resnica.

V tem kontekstu moramo razumeti pesnikove besede o velikem prevratu, sredi katerega stoji. O tem, da moramo »preko mostu nihilizma na pozitivno stran«. Sicer pa si je Kosovel že leta 1924 v svojo beležnico zapisal tole osamljeno, a dovolj pomenljivo, kritično-distancirano, misel: »Sanje o nihilizmu; vse ubiti, vse razdreti, umreti, slast, razdejati, razdejati.« (ZD III: 617)

* * *

Kar zadeva Kosovelov odnos do Nietzscheja – in s tem do problematike »evropskega nihilizma« – se da potemtakem zgoščeno reči, da ta odnos plastično potrjuje kompleksnost Kosovelove pesniške in življenjske situacije. Ravno ta situacija je pesniku najbrž narekovala *napačno* branje Nietzscheja, obenem pa poskuse ne samo prebolevanja, temveč tudi *premagovanja* nihilizma. Ti poskusi so, po logiki same stvari, onkraj pravilnosti ali napačnosti *razumevanja* – pri Kosovelu so v najtesneši zvezi z njegovo

živo, neposredno osebnostjo, pa tudi z »negativnim totalom« povojnega slovenskega sveta dvajsetih let 20. stoletja.

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■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.:1 Nietzsche F.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / filozofski vplivi / Nietzsche, Friedrich / ničejanstvo / nihilizem

Prispevek se loteva vprašanja Kosovelovega odnosa do nihilizma. Natančneje: kaj je Kosovel razumel pod tem pojmom, ki ga je sam poznal in uporabljal, in v kakšni smeri je nihilistično problematiko skušal preseči. V tem kontekstu se razprava ustavlja zlasti ob Kosovelovem odnosu do Nietzscheja, kakor ga lahko rekonstruiramo s pomočjo Kosovelovih formulacij v njegovih pismih in dnevniških zapiskih. S pomočjo teh navedkov se da podrobneje argumentirati tezo, da za Kosovela alternativa nihilizmu ni volja do moči kot aktivno poče-

lo življenja v Nietzschejevem smislu, temveč gre Kosovelovo prizadevanje v drugačni smeri. Pesnik govori namreč o etični revoluciji, ki je obenem duhovna revolucija, in sicer ne v imenu nadčloveka kot izpostavljene in osamljene figure volje do moči, ampak v imenu *novega človeka*, *novega človečanstva* in njegovih moralnih atributov.

Če Nietzsche odpravlja *moralno* razlikovanje med dobrim in slabim in nasploh moralo kot tako (*moralna je nemoralna*), pa je Kosovelova zahteva ravno nasprotna: gre mu za poudarjeno etično-moralno držo, saj se mora človek – človek kot etični subjekt – vsakič znova odločati med dobrim in zlim, pravičnim in krivičnim. Od tod tudi Kosovelove besede o človeku kot »poosebljenem etosu«.

Nietzsche ni ključna oseba, ki bi odpirala vrata Kosovelovega pesniškega sveta. Je pa v Kosovelovem odnosu do Nietzscheja neka pomenljiva ambivalenca. K tej ambivalenci je svoje prispevalo tudi tisto, čemur bi lahko rekli *nehote napačno razumevanje* Nietzscheja.

KOSOVELOVI KONSI: NELAHKO RAVNOTEŽJE MED SUBJEKTOM IN DRUŽBO

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Obravnavo Kosovelovih konsov z vidika recepcijske estetike začenjam s tezo, ki jo H. R. Jauß razvil na podlagi Aristotelovega koncepta *katharsis*, Avguštinove kritike samoužitka v *curiositas* in Gorgiasovega nauka o vplivu afektov na prepričljivost govora (Jauß 1998: 102). Bistvo katarzičnega ugodja in same komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva tako prikaže kot »vzajemno igro samoužitka v uživanju tujega, izkustva samega sebe in izkustva drugega. Recipientu torej že od začetka pripisuje dejavno udeležnost pri konstituciji imaginarnega, ki mu ni bila priznana, dokler je bila esetska distanca v tradicionalni teoriji pojmovana le enosmiselno, kot zgolj kontemplativni in brezinteresni odnos do odaljenega predmeta« (Jauß 1998: 102). Dialektična igra ima torej dva pólá: samougodje in ugodje v »drugem«. Razmerje med njima v idealnem primeru vključuje sprejemnikovo obrnjenost k »jazu« in k »drugemu«, ki je po svoje ravno tako del sprejemnika samega. Jauß opozarja tudi na možnost redukcije enega ali drugega pola, ko estetsko izkustvo »poide bodisi v brezdistančnem uživanju objekta ali v sentimentalnem samoužitku, s tem pa katarzično izkustvo podleže nevarnostim ideološkega zavzetja in porabe ter izgubi svojo pristno komunikativno funkcijo« (Jauß 1998: 102).

Tukaj bi rada dodala dvoje: prvič, skupni imenovalc dveh polov komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva je vedno spoznanje, s pomočjo katerega sprejemnik kot posameznik in kot družbeno bitje dobiva kritični vpogled vase. A ker se nikoli ni mogoče razumeti do konca, je bralnemu dejanju lastno samorazumevanje vedno *proces*, ki vključuje celo vrsto bralčevih odzivov. Afirmacija, negacija in kritična presoja so samo najpogostejši med njimi.

In drugič: o dveh polih komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva ne smemo razmišljati kot o nečem fiksnem, ne na sinhroni in ne na diahroni ravni. Pravzaprav sta bila *oba* pola v toku zgodovine podvržena številnim spremembam. Recimo: v srednjem veku, pri trubadurjih, je bil »drugi« strukturiran kot *variacija* na družbeno normo, ali pa je to bil božanski Ti (njegov predstavnik Jezus Kristus). V novem veku je »drugi« lahko mišljen kot nezavedna intimna vsebina ali kot neuzaveščeni družbeni vzorci v individuumu. Ker me zanima problem Kosovelovih konsov, ne nameravam

govoriti obširno o raznih historičnih udejanjenjih »drugega«. Moj shematični in poenostavljeni opis komunikativne razsežnosti želi zgolj ilustrirati historično ozadje oziroma kontekst, v katerem nameravam začrtati problem komunikativne zmožnosti ob Kosovelovih konsih.

Novoveški model komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva sem ob Jaušu opisala kot subjektovo zrenje intimnih vsebin in neuzaveščenih družbenih norm ter kot odziv na vse to. Obstaja pa tudi možnost ideološkega zavzetja estetskega izkustva – bodisi v primeru nekritično afirmativnega odziva na družbo bodisi v primeru odsotnosti kakršnega koli odziva (Jauš 1998: 102). S tem je seveda ogrožena osrednja pridobitev novoveške estetike, namreč avtonomija umetnosti, ki pade, kadar se razmerje med umetnostjo in družbo poruši (prim. Adorno 2002: 5).

Gadamerjeva teza o subjektivaciji estetike s Kantom in Schillerjem opozarja, da je abstraktna estetska zavest nastala z ločitvijo umetnosti od življenja. Jaušovo razumevanje bistva komunikativne zmožnosti je v soglasju s sklepom, da je umetnost varna pred ideološkim zavzetjem le, kadar sta ohranjena oba pola komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva. Moje samorazumevanje je skratka popolno le, kadar je »jaz« (kot posameznik in kot član družbe) v dinamičnem, nenehno odprtem dialogu z »drugim« (kot posameznikom in članom družbe). Če eden od elementov manjka, to ne vpliva le na dialog med dvema poloma komunikativne zmožnosti, pač pa ovira in onemogoča moje samorazumevanje. Ali samorazumevanje sploh lahko doseže polni obseg, če zanika bodisi »jaz« bodisi »drugega«?

Po Adornu je podlaga avtonomne umetnosti ravno ravnotežje med posameznikom in družbo. Toda v novem veku ta odnos ni bil vedno uravnotežen, zato bi historični pregled najverjetneje pokazal neuravnoteženost, ki do določene mere blokira potrebo po igrivi oscilaciji med »jazom« in »drugim«. Tudi tukaj ponujam le površen vpogled v problem.

Kantov model estetskega izkustva vsebuje vrsto elementov, ki podpirajo sprejemnikovo usmerjenost v družbo; takšna je zapoved, naj lepo občuegaja, naj bo čista estetska sodba subjektivno občueveljavna, za kar skrbi tudi *sensus communis*;¹ vse to pa je povezano s trditvijo, da je lepota simbol npravnega (KRM § 59.259; Kant 1999: 193). Nekatere sodobne interpretacije berejo Kantovo estetsko teorijo kot pripravo na udejanjenje njegove moralne filozofije, saj je estetski princip brezinteresnega ugodja hkrati tudi sredstvo preseganja želja in interesov (prim. Marquard 1995: 37–69).

Toda od Kanta dalje se je rahlo ravnotežje med posameznikom in družbo začelo čedalje bolj nagibati k redukciji družbenega, kar je estetsko izkustvo vodilo v nevarnost sentimentalnega samoužitka. Čeprav bistven premik v to smer nakazuje že interpretacija Kantovega modela estetskega izkustva pri poznem Schillerju, so postale posledice te interpretacije vidne šele konec 19. stoletja. Takratna pesniška produkcija je namreč omogočala odziv, v katerem je estetsko uživajoči sprejemnik konstituiral lastno subjektiviteto – predvsem da bi jo učvrstil pred pritiskom vsakdanje realnosti.

O. Marquard zato prav ob poznem Schillerju oblikuje tezo o estetiki/umetnosti kot anestetiki, ob kateri se je sprejemnik lahko čedalje bolj zapiral v slonokoščeni stolp lastne notranjosti. Takšna umetnost/estetika skrat-

ka postane uspavalo ali vsaj sredstvo za blažitev bolečin (Marquard 1995: 21–35), ki jih (post)romantični subjektiviteti povzročajo družbeno–historični horizont. Umetnost to drago plača, kajti ko prereže popkovino z družbenim okoljem, iz katerega raste, postaja vse bolj eskapistična, vse bolj postaja ne-umetnost (an-estetika), spreminja se v uspavano lepoticu, v skrajni fazi pa lahko v svojem molčečem potrjevanju nepravilnih družbenih norm do smrti uspava samo sebe. Njena avtonomija je ogrožena ali pa celo obstaja zgolj še kot videz.

Če Marquardovo tezo prenesem na komunikativno zmožnost estetskega izkustva, ugotovim, da je bila kriza umetnosti konec 19. stoletja hkrati tudi kriza komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva. Mallarméjeva želja, da bi v govorici izrekel celo neizrekljivo, je sicer pomenila izhod iz krize umetnosti, vendar pa se je umetnost tako še bolj ločila od življenja (družbe) in se je znašla v še globlji krizi komunikativnosti.² Umetniško manj prepričljivi segment pesniške produkcije *fin de siècle* se je zadovoljil z enako neuravnoteženo različico komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva, kjer sprejemnik uživa v bolešno nasladnem opazovanju lastnega svetobolja, melanholije in depresije, z eno besedo – v kvalitetah lepe duše, pahnjene v grdi svet.

Na to stanje so se kritično odzvale različne oblike evropskih literarnih avantgard, ki so izrojeni model komunikativne zmožnosti skušale uravnovešiti z maksimo o povezavi med umetnostjo in življenjem. Avantgardistična prenova komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva pa je imela vsaj dve ravni. Po eni strani ji je šlo za neposredni napad na abstraktno estetsko zavest. Vendar domet gesel o požigu muzejev in o zavrnitvi kanonizirane umetnosti in literarne tradicije skoraj nikoli ni presegal gole subverzije tradicionalnega, s konca 19. stoletja podedovanega modela komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva.³ Avantgardistični umetniki so skušali raztreščiti tako Pesnika kot tudi njegov slonokoščeni stolp, kamor se je zatekal bralec, da bi lahko kontempliral svoja, v melanholično tančico zavita čustva. Opisano težnjo, ki je najočitnejša v italijanskem futurizmu, je Kosovel odkril tudi v Micičevem zenitizmu.

Po drugi strani so si avantgardisti prizadevali, da bi sprejemnika obrnili nazaj v družbo, tudi če se je za to bilo treba odreči subjektivemu samopremisleku. Že Benjamin je opozoril na temeljno razliko med italijanskimi in ruskimi literarnimi avantgardisti.⁴ Prvim je šlo za estetizacijo družbe, za prilastitev realnega s strani imaginarnega, in to celo, ko so glasno oznanjali nujnost vojne, ki bi očistila bolni Zahod. Drugi so zdrsnili v podružbljenje umetnosti in s tem v ideološko prilastitev imaginarnega s strani realnega, kar naj bi omogočila permanentna družbena revolucija. Vse negativne in pozitivne strani takšnih prizadevanj so se v sovjetskem režimu pokazale razmeroma zgodaj. Avantgardisti so resda želeli ozdraviti ogroženo avtonomijo umetnosti, toda radikalne doze njihovega zdravila so jo ogrožale še bolj.

Oba tukaj prikazana modela povezovanja umetnosti in življenja si je treba ogledati še v luči Iserjevega razumevanja fiktivnega. Fiktivno namreč posreduje med poljem realnega in poljem imaginarnega (prim. Iser 2001 in

1993). Italijanski avantgardisti so si prizadevali, da bi iz polja imaginarnega preko polja fiktivnega vstopili v polje realnega in ga estetizirali. Ruska avantgarda pa si je po drugi strani prizadevala, da bi polje realnega razširila v imaginarno, tega pa strukturirala v skladu s principi realnega. Očitno je, da je bil polju fiktivnega v obeh primerih odvzet avtonomni status, zato ta poezija ni umetniško prepričljiva.

Zdaj si lahko ogledamo, kako je na krizo avtonomije umetnosti reagiral drugi val slovenske avantgarde. Kosovel, ki je bil njegov vodilni predstavnik (Vrečko 1986: 81), je globoko razumel splošno krizo umetnosti, njene specifično slovenske poteze, a tudi krizo komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva.⁵ V spisih *Kriza, Umetnost in proletarec, Kriza človečanstva, Razpad družbe in propad umetnosti* je kot bistvo te krize označil prepad med umetnostjo in življenjem/človekom (ZD 3/1: 12–21). Krizo bi bilo mogoče preseči le, če bi (slovenska) umetnost črpala iz vsakdanjega življenja, ne pa bežala v umetnost zavoljo umetnosti.⁶ Vir povezave med umetnostjo in življenjem je lahko le umetnikovo »spoznanje« (ZD 3/1: 41),⁷ torej spoznanje sebe in sveta okoli sebe. Edinole takšno spoznanje lahko udejanji abstraktno nalogo povezovanja umetnosti in življenja; edino spoznanje je tisti pravi most med umetnostjo na eni strani ter življenjem, človekom, človeštvom in resnico na drugi strani. Drugače rečeno: umetnost ni *le* »estetski«, pač pa *tudi* »življenjski problem« (ZD 3/1, Dnevnik VII/9: 650).

Rekla sem, da je italijanskim futuristom šlo predvsem za lahkotno, čeravno inventivno povezovanje umetnosti in življenja; njihova umetnost je želela rušiti predvsem tradicionalni model komunikacije s sprejemnikom, toda nič več kot to. Kosovel pa je izhod iz krize komunikativne zmožnosti in krize umetnosti videl v drugačni, v *etični, vsebinski, duhovni* revoluciji,⁸ ki bi privedla do globinske povezave med umetnostjo in življenjem.

Takšno je interpretativno ozadje, ki bo spremljalo mojo interpretacijo Kosovelovih konsov. Ob tem si zastavljam dvojce vprašanj: (1) ali konsi omogočajo uravnotežanje obeh polov komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva in (2) ali je Kosovel z njimi presegal »izgubo komunikacije v avtonomni umetnosti« (Jauß 1998: 103)?

Odgovor na ti dve vprašanji bom začela graditi s strukturno značilnostjo Kosovelovih konsov, ki jo sama imenujem ironizacija. Ironizacija je eden izmed pesniških postopkov, s katerimi skuša Kosovel onemogočiti izrojeno obliko sprejemnikovega soočanja s samim sabo in hkrati doseči bralčevo kritično oceno družbenih norm. Pravzaprav je ironizacija minusna funkcija – te pa so po Iserjevem mnenju značilne za modernistične tekste. S pomočjo minusnih funkcij strukturirani tekst ne izpolnjuje bralčevih, ob modernističnih tekstih privzgojenih pričakovanj: ne ponuja namreč nobenega ključa za konstitucijo tekstovnega smisla. Minusne funkcije so tisto, kar ostane po razveljavitvi bralčevega pričakovanja; so torej eden od vzrokov, da modernistični tekst namesto ključa za branje in konstitucijo tekstnega smisla bralcu ponuja zgolj prazno mesto. Prazna mesta pa ne spodbujajo le prenosa teksta v bralčevo zavest, ampak tudi pospešujejo bralčevo interpretativno dejavnost. Bralec mora skratka nenehno iskati interpretativni

ključ. Ker pa se vsaka interpretacija v nadaljnjem poteku branja izkaže za zmotno, lahko bralec radikalnih modernističnih tekstov vsakič doseže zgolj zasilno interpretacijo, ki jo bo že naslednji trenutek nadomestil nov interpretativni ključ.⁹

Ironizacija kot bistvena oblika minusne funkcije pri Kosovelu temelji na pojmu *lepe duše*. To pomeni, da njena funkcija ni povezana le s tehnikalijami bralnega dejanja, ampak posega prav na polje subjektovega samozavedanja. Funkcija Kosovelove ironizacije je zato hermenevtična.

Treba je poudariti, da je celotna Kosovelova lirika, ne le njegove zgodnje pesmi, zares močno zaznamovana s pojmom *lepe duše*.¹⁰ M. Kos pri Kosovelu najde dve obliki *lepe duše*: prva se pojavlja v njegovi zgodnji poeziji, in je povezana s heglovski lepo dušo oziroma z njeno postromantično izpeljavo. Nekateri dnevniški zapiski kažejo, da se je Kosovel pogosto bojeval s to obliko *lepe duše*.¹¹ Druga oblika *lepe duše* pri Kosovelu se je razvila na podlagi vrste dejavnikov: cankarjanskega etosa, travmatične izkušnje prve svetovne vojne, dodelitve slovenskega Primorja Italiji, izkušnje fašizma v Trstu in izkušnje etičnega ter umetniškega spanca ljubljanskega slovenstva. V Kosovelovih esejih dobi ta druga različica *lepe duše* obliko novega človeka/umetnika, človeka, ki je »duhovnik resnice, pravice in lepote« (ZD 3/1: 650). Še več: druga različica *lepe duše* pomeni most od postromantične, vase zasanjane *lepe duše* do Kosovelove socialne in socialistične angažiranosti.

Čeprav je Kosovel prvo obliko *lepe duše* v določenem trenutku prerasel, pa v konsih ni tematiziral njene zrelejše oblike, ampak ravno to naivno inačico. Konsi so namreč pogosto tako strukturirani, da bralca vabijo v identifikacijo z 'lepo dušo', v nekakšno »harmonijo trudne bolečine«, kakor da želijo obuditi melanholično in osamljeno razsežnost bralčeve subjektivitete. Seveda je imel Kosovel povsem določen namen: bralcu je namreč želel pokazati, kako etično zgrešeno in v modernem svetu popolnoma neuporabno je, če samega sebe dojema kot melanholično lepo subjektiviteto. Ta rez v bralčevi identifikaciji z lepo dušo konsi dosežejo ravno z ironizacijo, ki bralca prisili v distanco od *lepe duše* in od lastne naslade v njej. Če bralec udejanji takšno estetsko distanco, ima dobre možnosti za kritičen premislek o družbi in sebi v njej. Dober primer takšnega postopka sta konsa *Prostituirana kultura* in *Srce v alkoholu*.

Znamenit primer ironizacije v kombinaciji z metaforo pa najdemo v prvih treh verzih pesmi *Sferično zrcalo*.¹² Sferično zrcalo kot metafora za umetnost, ki poudarja vse napačno, tu stopa v kontrast z navadnim umetniškim zrcalom. Podoben učinek dosega *Sferično zrcalo* z montažno tehniko sopostavljanja časopisnega fragmenta, razprave o umetnosti in fragmentarnega posnetka romantičnega modela poezije o kostanjih, ki šumijo za vodo (v. 7–9). Vse to je zgolj vaba, ki je lepi duši nastavljena, da bi sprejemniku preprečili napačen tip estetske identifikacije (v. 10–11).¹³

Vendar pa je nadaljevanje pesmi bolj kot za bralca pomenljivo za Kosovela, za pesnika samega: ta namreč ironizira lastno nihilometafizično subjektiviteto, sprašuje se o lastni pesniški produkciji in o njenem učinku v družbi. V obliko sferičnega zrcala oblikovan pripis *ZAKAJ SI SPUSTIL/*

ZLATI ČOLN V MOČVIRJE se nanaša na baržunasto liriko in njej lastno obliko lepe duše, ki pa je v popolnem anahronizmu z močvirjem družbe, saj jo bo to samo nemo pogoltnilo. Pripis berem kot izjavo lepe duše, a hkrati kot kritiko šibkosti izrojenega Kantovega-Schillerjevega modela komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva, kjer sprejemnik nemo, pasivno, nereflktirano pristaja na družbena dejstva.¹⁴ Obenem je pripis mogoče brati tudi kot izhod iz šibkosti izrojenega modela estetskega izkustva: pesnik je preprosto moral spustiti zlati čoln svoje baržunaste lirike v močvirno (družbeno) realnost vsakdanjega življenja, zlati čoln je preprosto moral preobraziti v sferično zrcalo. S tem se je ustvarila povezava med življenjem (močvirjem) in poezijo (čolnom, ki je postal sferično zrcalo).

Toda v takšni poeziji se je izrazito okrepila spoznavna razsežnost: sferično zrcalo ni navadno zrcalo, ampak poudarjeno, se pravi izrazito ostro in karikirano odslikava močvirno realnost družbe. Medbesedilno poigravanje s Cankarjevo belo krizantemo, ki jo Kosovel obarva socialistično rdeče, pa doda še eno razsežnost te nove umetnosti. Socialistično rdeča krizantema-umetnost družbe ne šiba z neke vzvišene pozicije, ampak ostaja v družbi, šiba njene napake, vendar tudi deluje znotraj te družbe.

Kosovelovi eseji in njegov prestop v socialistično stranko kažejo, da se mu je možnost plodnega delovanja v družbi vse jasneje kazala ravno v povezavi z razrednim bojem. Samo takšna umetnost bi postala tisti družbeni in življenjski faktor, ki bi pripomogel k preobrazbi močvirne, z metafizičnim nihilizmom okužene slovenske in evropske družbe v zdravo, živo, konstruktivno družbo, kjer vsak posameznik svoje poznavanje drugega (sočloveka, družbe) usklajuje z nenehnim samopremislekom.

Toda s tem se je pesem *Sferično zrcalo* nenadoma pretvorila v razmislek o sodobni umetnosti in o pesnikovih (Kosovelovih) ustvarjalnih hotenjih. Bralec je tukaj potisnjen v precej nehvaležen položaj; na voljo ima samo dve možnosti. Lahko zavzame vlogo nekoliko tihega, voyeurskega opazovalca pesnikove nihilistične samodestrukcije in njegovega premisleka o možnosti poezije. Kosovel se je nesmiselnosti te bralčeve vloge zavedal, saj je v svojih dnevnikih večkrat zapisal, da mora fazo nihilistične destrukcije in spusta skozi ničišče vsakdo preživeti v sebi.¹⁵ Vsakdo – zlasti pa pesnik – mora sam in osamljen čez most nihilizma, da bi s pesnimi stopil pred javnost, ji nastavljal sferično zrcalo, začel s konstruktivnim delom. Zato je konse, ki jih je morebiti celo sam imel zgolj za mimobežne rezultate lastne človeške in estetske preobrazbe – vse do jeseni 1925 pisal v strogi tajnosti (prim. Vrečko 1986: 110).

Druga možna vloga, ki jo lahko zasede bralec Kosovelovih konsov, je nekoliko pogumnejša in tvega konstitucijo smisla tam, kjer smisla ni. Bralec mora v tem primeru premagati hromečo estetsko distanco, v katero ga kons zapleta. Hkrati se mora spopadati s svojo, ob nemodernističnih tekstih privzgojeno recepcijo literarnega teksta. Svojo željo po pasivni recepciji mora nenehno presegati z dejavnostjo. Na ta način postaja njegova recepcija pesmi poudarjeno aktivna, konstitucija tekstnega smisla pa vse bolj zavestna. Pesem skratka sili bralca, naj privzame vlogo, ki jo je zanj v 19. stoletju opravljal literarna kritika.

V naporu konstitucije tekstnega smisla pa se skriva še neka druga naloga. Ta naloga je konstitucija bralčeve subjektivitete in je pomembnejša od prve, hkrati pa je tipično modernistična. Za konstitucijo subjektivitete v modernističnem tekstu je značilno protislovje: na eni strani imamo željo po subjektiviteti, ki naj bo celovita in urejena, toda na drugi strani imamo svet-tekst, ki je razlomljen, kaotičen, oropan referenčnega okvira. Zato je želja po celoviti subjektiviteti tu kar naprej frustrirana. Konkretizacija takšnega teksta je možna le, če se branje sproti preobraža v interpretacijo. Bralec ob konsih izgrajuje subjektiviteto, ki ne doseže celovitosti, pač pa ostaja zgolj interpretacija – na moč nestalna, krhka, zavezana edinole razumevanju kot neskončnemu (osebnemu in zgodovinskemu) projektu. Subjektiviteta kot interpretacija je skratka zavezana razumevanju kot večjezikovnemu projektu. (Pri tem zadnjem možnem primeru konstitucije tekstnega smisla je prav gotovo na delu naša, postmoderna recepcija Kosovela, ki v konstituiranem smislu/subjektiviteti vidi zgolj eno izmed mnogoterih možnih subjektivitet/interpretacij.) Subjektiviteta kot (zgolj) interpretacija, ki jo bralec konstituira v recepciji Kosovelovih konsov, potemtakem temelji na estetski distanci. Natančneje: estetska distanca je tista, ki med branjem nenehno rahlja konstituirani smisel/subjektiviteto in ji spodmika tla pod nogami!

Zdi se, da je Kosovel v fazi, ko je poezija konstruktivnosti začela prevladovati nad konstruktivistično poezijo, to tudi zaznal – in v dnevnik zapisal: »Pišete s srcem? Ne | s peresom. A kar ne pride iz duše ne gre do duše in nima cene. Forma« (ZD 3/1, Dnevnik XII/16: 735). Kar sprva diši po anti-modernizmu, je v bistvu znova zelo moderno. Pisati s »peresom« namreč vodi v redukcijo človeka na razum in s tem na popolnoma ne-estetski in nečloveški mehanizem. Pisati iz »srca« zato ne pomeni le, da nekaj, kar je nezavedno že vseskozi »tu«, prinašamo na površino; pomeni tudi etično kvaliteto in željo, da bi to kvaliteto predali bralcu. Je interpretabilnost modernistične subjektivitete pri Kosovelu našla svojo fluidno trdnost natanko v »srcu«? Čeprav to zagotovo presega domet konsov, se vendarle zdi, da si je Kosovel začel prizadevati za prav takšno rešitev, kakor hitro se je njegova raznolika pesniška dejavnost začela osredotočati na poezijo konstruktivnosti.

V pesmi *Sferično zrcalo* je premoč estetske distance posledica različnih postopkov, ki sprejemnika ovirajo pri tem, da bi konstituiral in v sebi tudi učvrstil lepo dušo kot napačni tip subjektivitete. Toda hkrati se ponesreči tudi sprejemnikov zaobrat v družbo: tudi ta v konsih ostaja na ravni distancirane refleksije, na ravni interpretacije. Pisanje s peresom tako ostaja na ravni očitavanja forme in ker je ta redukcija življenja, je seveda ni moč prenesti nazaj v življenje. Premoč estetske distance postane vzrok za izgubo komunikativnosti. Za povezavo umetnosti in življenja se tako kot nujna znova izkaže estetska identifikacija. Na podoben problem je ob estetski distanci naletel tudi B. Brecht (Jauß 1998: 113).

Če torej nekateri konsi še kar uspešno uravnotežajo oba pola komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva in s tem povezujejo umetnost z življenjem, pomeni *Sferično zrcalo* kritično zamejitev te težnje. Sprejemnik se morda celo ukvarja s kritičnim pretresom vloge sodobne umetnosti v

družbi, vendar se ob tem izgublja v poudarjenem miselnem in teoretskem naporu – v interpretaciji in samointerpretaciji, ki sta takorekoč vprogramirani v besedilo pesmi in ju bralno dejanje udejanja vsaj do neke mere. V poudarjeni samorefleksivnosti smemo videti samo nekoliko finejšo, čeravno samokritično obliko sprejemnikove nasladne samozazrtosti. Na ravni razmišljanja o ravnotežju med obema poloma komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva to znova pomeni, da tudi konsom kljub svobodni refleksiji, v katero silijo bralca, ne uspeva dejanska povezava z družbo.

Kosovel je do takšnega sklepa prišel tudi na zavestni ravni, ko je po nastopu Zenita v Ljubljani aprila ali maja 1925 spoznal, da preobrazba, kakršno so propagirali zenitisti, ne more biti zgolj esteticistično in formalistično – prazno igračkanje. Preobrazba umetnosti ne more biti zgolj onemogočanje določenih tipičnih estetskih odzivov, temveč mora postati prav vsebinska preobrazba. S tem je mislil na notranjo prenavo posameznika in nato družbe, vzrok in obenem posledica takšne preobrazbe pa bi bila ravno nova umetnost.¹⁶ To spoznanje ga je po vključitvi v socialistično stranko poleti 1925 že jeseni istega leta spodbudilo, da se je središče njegovih sicer zelo raznolikih ustvarjalnih hotenj od pisanja konsov počasi začelo premikati k poeziji konstruktivnosti in k načrtom za prozo.

Bistvo tega prehoda bom skušala opisati s principom gibljivosti. Toda kaj pomeni ta gibljivost? Tukaj nimam v mislih hitrosti gibanja, nad katero so se navduševali italijanski futuristi, Kosovel pa je imel ambivalenten odnos do nje.¹⁷ Ravno tako v mislih nimam montaž kot strukturnega principa gradnje pesniškega teksta.

Montaže od bralca zahtevajo neverjetno asociativno hitrost; silijo ga v preskakovanje iz enega semantičnega polja v drugo, v lepljenje enega fragmenta z drugim. Silijo ga celo v modernistični kolaž različnih modelov poezije in bralec je zaradi vsega tega prisiljen v poudarjeno dejavnost. Lastno subjektiviteto mora pripoznati kot nekaj dinamičnega, fluidnega, interpretabilnega – kot nekaj, kar je v dobi nestabilnosti postalo radikalno nestabilno. S tem pa mora priznati popoln neuspeh prizadevanja sodobnega človeka, da bi iz kaotičnega sveta oblikoval neko urejeno celoto. Bralec lahko to spoznanje sprejme, v njem igrivo uživa, morda ludistično žonglira z njim – toda enako legitimno je, če ga zavrže in si reče »ne, moja subjektiviteta je lepa in celovita, le svet okoli nje je tisti, ki jo subvertira in pripravlja njen tragični konec«.

V zadnji izmed naštetih možnosti za recepcije Kosovelovih konsov smemo videti enega izmed osnovnih vzrokov, zakaj slovenski prostor vse do 70-ih let 20. stoletja ni mogel sprejeti avantgardistične oziroma modernistične umetnosti (tudi Kosovelove). Bralec, čigar estetska vzgoja je temeljila na izrojeni Kantovi-Schillerjevi shemi, je v konsih preprosto moral videti 'slabo poezijo'. Nenazadnje so te drobne eksplozivne pesmi radikalno rušile njegov horizont pričakovanja. V jedru zavrnitve Kosovelovih konsov pa je v resnici šlo zgolj za to, da je bila subverzija predstave o subjektiviteti kot absolutni ali že kar monolitni celovitosti (subverzija predstave o postromantični lepi duši) za večino nekdanjih bralcev popolnoma nesprejemljiva.

Ko torej izključimo obe navedeni razlagi principa gibljivosti, nam ostane le še tretja. Princip gibljivosti je lahko samo tisti princip, s pomočjo katerega je Kosovel svojo poezijo želel zares konstruktivno odpreti v družbo. Tukaj nikakor ne gre za gibanje, ki ga lahko opišem s prisposodbo premice in je značilno za prej opisana principa gibljivosti. Princip gibljivosti, o katerem govorim, je bolj vektor – je usmerjeno gibanje, ki stremi k določeni cilju in hoče doseči nek *učinek* v bralcu samem in v družbi. Prav takšen tip gibanja je možno povezati s pojmom »gibljiva filozofija«, ki Kosovelu pomeni akcijo, delovanje v družbi.¹⁸ Kosovelova pesniška dejavnost se je začela neposredno vgrajevati v družbo ravno z recitacijskimi večeri, predavanji, z načrtovanjem različnih krožkov in z načrti za založbo Strelci (gl. Vrečko 1986: 168–214, 218–229). Pesniško ustvarjanje se je tu začelo preobraziti v ustvarjanje znotraj družbe, ki naj bi posredovalo med posamezniki kot različnimi deli družbe, družbo preobrazilo in jo povežalo v dinamično celoto. S tem se je Kosovel začel bližati tisti vlogi, ki jo je *poiesis* imela pri Grkih pred Platonom. Pesniška *poiesis* je zanj postala *poiesis* družbe. Ne estetizacija politike in ne politizacija umetnosti.

Če to drži, potem bi to bila najučinkovitejša možna rešitev zmanjšane komunikativnosti moderne umetnosti. Dejavni obrat v družbo, v življenje in v resnico, ki ga je Kosovel želel doseči v poeziji, je iskanje ravnotežja med obema poloma komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva postavilo pred nove izzive in nove nevarnosti. Slednjim je sčasoma podleglo pesniško delo nekaterih ruskih avantgardistov, kjer je opaziti (1) redukcijo sprejemnikovega soočanja s samim sabo, (2) manipuliran »premislek« o družbenih normah in (3) spodbudo, da bi se ideološko nadzorovani »premislek« neposredno vgradil v družbo.

Kosovel bi se tej nevarnosti najbrž izmaknil, tudi če leta 1926 ne bi umrl. V njegovih spisih namreč vse pre pogosto beremo, kako resnična umetnost raste iz umetnikovega spoznanja, ki je njegovo osebno, notranje spoznanje, spoznanje iz časa samotne hoje čez most nihilizma. Nuja po vitalnem obračanju vase je dobro zagotovilo za to, da bi tudi v svoji konstruktivni poeziji bralca zmogel zvabiti v samokritično refleksijo.

To hipotezo bi bilo po drugi strani treba preveriti še z analizo Kosovelove etične drže, podlaga katere bi bila najbrž kar neka posebna oblika religioznosti, ki se hkrati izmika ideologiji. Prav v slednji pa bi lahko prepoznali žlahtni ostanek tistega zunajestetskega polja, h kateremu se je estetsko izkustvo obračalo še pred novim vekom, medtem ko se pri Kosovelu udejanji skozi poudarjeni etos ali ob izrazih *človek*, *človečanstvo*.¹⁹ Nelahko ravnotežje med obema poloma komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva bi v Kosovelovi socialistično-revolucionarni poeziji verjetno zagotavljalo ravno vztrajanje na kritičnem sprejemnikovem samopremisleku kot sredstvu, ki blokira podivjano dejavnost stranke ali totalitarnega režima kot nadsubjekta.

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OPOMBE

¹ KRM § 20, 64 isl. (Kant 1999: 78), § 21,65 (Kant 1999: 79), § 40,158 (Kant 1999: 134).

² »V istem času se je umetnost odzvala z doktrino *l'art pour l'art*, se pravi, s teologijo umetnosti. Tako je prišlo do vznika nekakšne negativne teologije v obliki ideje 'čiste' umetnosti, ki ni le zanikala kakršno koli družbeno funkcijo umetnosti. (V poeziji je bil Mallarmé prvi, ki je privzel takšno stališče)« (Benjamin 2000: 326).

³ Gl. *Manifesto del futurismo* (I futuristi 1990: 29 isl.). Benjamin govori o šoku kot glavnemu namenu dadaistične umetnosti (Benjamin 2000: 335).

⁴ »*Fiat ars – pereat mundus*«, trdi fašizem in, kot priznava Marinetti, pričakuje, da bo vojna omogočila umetniško zadoščenje zmognosti zaznavanja, ki jo je

tehnologija spremenila. Takšna je očitno poraba *l'art pour l'arta*. Človeštvo, ki je v Homerjevem času bilo objekt kontemplacije olimpskih bogov, je zdaj samo svoj objekt. Njegova samo-odtujitev je šla tako daleč, da mu izkustvo lastnega uničenja ponuja prvorazredno estetsko ugodje. Tako je namreč s politiko, ki jo fašizem estetizira. Komunistem odgovarja s politiziranjem umetnosti« (Benjamin 2000: 337).

⁵ ZD 3/1, Dnevnik VII (1925): 656,28: »Da je umetnost gibalo življenja ne pa uspavalno sredstvo za uživanje, marveč sredstvo za duševno gibanje, ki se bo nadaljevalo v življenju.«

⁶ ZD 3/1, 35 (Razpad družbe in umetnosti): »Ta namišljeni pogovor je verna slika našega duševnega življenja. Izmikanje realnosti, bojazen pred trdo in brezobzirno palico vsakdanjosti in kot nujna posledica popolna desorientacija v vseh še tako neobhodnih in važnih življenjskih vprašanjih.« ZD 3/1: 37: »da postane njemu samemu [umetniku] ideal življenja brezdelje in uživanje, izgubi ono agresivno silo, ki izvira le iz trdega kontakta z vsakdanjimi življenjskimi borbami. S tem, da postane njegov edini cilj samoizpopolnjevanje, izgubi moč za reševanje vsakdanjih vprašanj, izgubi stik s celotnim življenjem.«

⁷ Pismo F. Obidovi z dne 27. 8. 1925 (ZD 3/1: 401), kjer spoznanje ni stvar prazne didaktike: »Literatura mora v ljudeh buditi spoznanje! Stopnjevatí mora življenjsko silo.«

⁸ ZD 3/1, Dnevnik VII/10: 651 in Dnevnik VII/35, 37, 38: 658 isl.

⁹ »Neizpolnitev tako temeljnih pričakovanj je prazno mesto, ki ga je tradicionalni roman vedno zapolnil« (Iser 2001: 310). To Iserjevo ugotovitev je zlahka mogoče prenesti na Kosovelove konse. Za prazno mesto gl. predvsem Iser 2001: 303–304. Za »minusno funkcijo« gl. mdr. »bolj ko je besedilo 'moderno', bolj izpolnjuje svoje minusne funkcije« (Iser 2001: 310–311).

¹⁰ M. Kos opozarja na številne »baržunaste« besede v konsih, »kot so na primer duša, trpljenje, bolečina, lepota, sanje, srce, samota, boleost, trudnost« (M. Kos 1997: 163. Gl. tudi str. 145–152 in 154–160).

¹¹ Za ilustracijo tega občutja gl. pismo F. Obidovi z dne 25. 8. 1923 (ZD 3/1: 381): »Danes je jesen, ki ropa Lepoto, da odgrinja Resnico [Smrt, op.p.], ki je brezmejna groza. Ali mislite kdaj – na lepoto jeseni – na tisto brezmejno žalost, v kateri je človek sam in se vda v naročje žalosti kakor otrok materi, ko je človek harmonija trudne bolečine in bi rad legel in zaspal.«

¹² »Ali je krivo zrcalo, / če imaš kljukast nos. / Slava Heineju. / Poglej se v sferično zrcalo, / da se spoznaš! / Nacionalizem je laž. / Kostanji za vodo šumijo, / k starinarjem je prišla jesen. / Njih trgovine so polne starin. / Cin, cin. / Obesi se na klin. / Rdeča krizantema. / Jesenski grob... / Beli grob. / Ivan Cankar. // ZAKAJ SI SPUSTIL/ ZLATI ČOLN V MOČVIRJE?«

¹³ Sferično zrcalo, v. 10–11: »Cin, cin / Obesi se na klin.«

¹⁴ Gl. ZD 3/1, Dnevnik VII/9: 650 (iz leta 1925): »[...] le umetnik, ki je izstopil iz močvirja sodobne družbe in stopil v novo družbo, ki jo je začutil sam, le ta je novi duhovnik resnice, pravice, človečanstva in dobrote.«

¹⁵ ZD 3/1: 398 in 400 (pismi F. Obidovi z dne 12. 7. in z dne 27. 7. 1925).

¹⁶ »Revolucija je vsebinski ne formalen pojem. [...] Revolucija forme je preplitka in prekratkotrajna, revolucija, ki jo oznanjamo, je revolucija vsebine evropskega človeka, revolucija življenja sploh, kajti brez te ne more nastati nova umetnost« (ZD 3/1, Dnevnik VII/37: 658).

¹⁷ Gl. manifest *Mehanikom!* Gl. tudi Vrečko 1996.

¹⁸ ZD 3/1, Dnevnik VII/7: 650; gl. še Vrečko 1986: 105–110.

¹⁹ O tem piše Kermauner 1993.

■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / recepcijska estetika / estetsko izkustvo

Obravnava Kosovelovih pesmi se osredotoča na komunikativno zmožnost estetskega izkustva kot razmerje med sprejemnikovo obrnjenostjo »vase« in k »drugemu«. Kriza Kantove-Schillerjeve sheme estetskega izkustva je avantgardiste vodila k poskusu, da bi porušeno ravnotežje med dvema poloma komunikativne zmožnosti uravnotežili s povezavo umetnosti in življenja. Podoben poskus zaznamo ob Kosovelovih konsih, kjer ironizacija »lepe duše« bralcu onemogoča nasladno zazrtost vase, ga sili v estetsko distanco od sebe in slednjič v kritični premislek o sebi ter o družbenih normah. Nekateri konsi omogočajo uravnoteženje obeh polov komunikativne zmožnosti estetskega izkustva, v pesmi *Sferično zrcalo* pa samo branje pesmi zahteva sprotno interpretacijo. Zaradi tega ne more priti do ravnotežja med obema poloma komunikativne zmožnosti. Ker je nasledek poudarjene sprejemnikove refleksivne dejavnosti zgolj (subjektiviteta kot) interpretacija, se sprejemnik ne razpre dovolj v družbo. Izhod iz takega stanja je Kosovel videl v socialističnem delovanju in v integralih, kjer naj bi se umetnost končno povezala z življenjem. Bistven del ravnotežja komunikativne zmožnosti pa v tem primeru ostaja sprejemnikov samopremislek.

»QUALE TRIESTINITÀ?«: GLASOVI IN ODMEVI IZ ITALIJANSKEGA TRSTA

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Pri vnovičnem vrednotenju kar se le da obširnega korpusa tržaške poezije v italijanščini se poskuša moj članek približati tudi poetiki in ustvarjanju Srečka Kosovela. Zame kot proučevalko tržaških literarnih identitet je izziv ocenjevanje 'stanja poezije' v posebnem obdobju tržaške zgodovine – ocenjevanje njene obrobnosti glede na središčni 'drugje': glede na misel in delo znamenitega slovenskega pesnika Srečka Kosovela. V razpravi se bom najprej dotaknila nekaj italijanskih pesnikov, ki so bili, *grasso modo*, Kosovelovi sodobniki in je nekatere izmed njih poznal; to so Scipio Slataper (1888-1915), Giulio Camber Barni (1891-1941) in Umberto Saba (1883-1957). Nadalje bom mimogrede opozorila na skupino komajda omembe vrednih pesnikov, povezanih z vzdušjem glasne *italianità*, ki je pomagala pri nastanku in ohranjanju fašizma. Posebno pozornost bom posvetila futuristični avantgardi, ki je v svoji konstruktivistični inačici seveda še posebno pomembna za Kosovela. Futuristi so si že zgodaj prisvojili Trst kot radikalno moderen urban prostor, ki je bil kot takšen idealna tribuna za izražanje njihovega ideološkega in estetskega kreda. V svojem izvajanju se bom dotaknila tudi nekaj izrecno lokalnih zadev, kakršni sta *irredentismo*, ki je težka dediščina *risorgimenta*, ter nerazrešena, zapoznela navezanost na romantično tradicijo, ki je bila vse do nedavnega hudo breme tržaškega pesništva.

Generacija tržaških in julijskih avtorjev, ki so v zgodnjih letih 20. stoletja kulturno odrešitev in legitimnost iskali v Firencah, med njimi še zlasti Scipio Slataper, je imela dejavno vlogo pri definiranju italijanske tržaške književnosti, kakor jo navadno razumemo. Od poznega 19. stoletja je v kulturi prevladovalo prepletanje konservativnega romanticizma in pozitivizma. V Italiji sta ti dve smeri ideološko in estetsko vplivali predvsem na pesnika Giosuèja Carduccija, katerega delo je poznal tudi Kosovel, in mu omogočili, da je kulturno legitimnost iskal v oziranju v preteklost. Nasprotno pa je posebna geopolitična lega Trsta omogočila nadaljnjo in veliko svobodo pri literarnem eksperimentiranju. Rezultat vsega tega je bilo neposredno prepletanje asinhronih kulturnih teženj. Nekatere predvojnje avtorje, med njimi Slataperja in brata Carla in Gianija Stuparicha, je močno zaznamovala kriza identitete, ki so jo občutili med eksilom v

Firencah, pridružil pa se ji je skrajno individualiziran avtobiografski slog, ki je črpal iz najbolj obrabljene staromodne italijanske literarne tradicije; Ernestina Pellegrini je to poimenovala 'spiritualni enciklopedizem', v katerem so bili združeni številni heterogeni, včasih celo nezdružljivi kulturni in zgodovinski elementi.¹

Ali je res, da na začetku 20. stoletja Trst ni imel ne kulturne tradicije ne kulturne scene, kakor je provokativno napisal Slataper v pogosto citiranem spisu »Lettera triestina«² Odgovor mora biti nikalen, saj mesto v tistem času nikakor ni bilo kulturna puščava: med drugimi dogodki se je Trst ponašal tudi s prvimi futurističnimi večeri in prvo italijansko izvedbo Wagnerjeve *Tetralogije*. Kulturno življenje slovenske skupnosti, čeprav je bila to po besedah Marine Cattaruzza 'protikultura', je bilo živahno, o čemer pričajo gledališke, glasbene in pesniške dejavnosti, ki jih je podpiral *Narodni dom*, ter številne periodične publikacije, od *Edinosti* do *Novega rodu* in *Ženskega sveta*, da naštejemo le nekatere, ki so bile pomembne za Kosovela.³ Slataperjeva izjava je zatorej povsem provokativna, z njo je hotel vznemiriti okolje na kulturnem obrobju Italije, o katerem so menili, da je preveč pogreznjeno v trgovino in da si želi zagotoviti prostor v nacionalni sferi. Slataper in njegovi privrženci so upali doseči nacionalno integracijo tako, da so se potopili v najbolj idealizirano in kanonizirano kulturno tradicijo, to je florentinsko. S tem, ko je Slataper 'vdrl' v Firence skoraj kakor barbar, ki hlepi po civilizaciji, je leta 1909 pomagal vplivni reviji *La Voce*, leta 1910 pa prevzel uredništvo.⁴ Po Slataperjevem zgledu je cela generacija mladih tržaških intelektualcev (že omenjena brata Stuparich, Virgilio Giotti, Biagio Marin, Alberto Spaini, Gemma Harazim in drugi), ki jih je v številnih primerih prepričala preteča možnost, da jih bodo poklicali k orožju, v Firencah obiskovala univerzitetna predavanja in oblikovala strnjen krožek, ki je redno sodeloval pri reviji *La Voce*, in širila modernistične, proevropske teme, ki so bile sestavni del časopisne politike.⁵

Ta generacija je 'izumila' – kakor da bi šlo za resnično 'izumljanje tradicije' – tržaško literaturo v času, ko je bila zunaj Trsta, v Firencah, mestu, ki je po njenih občutkih Tržačane zelo dejavno vračalo k njihovim domnevnim vseitalijanskim koreninam.⁶ Glavni cilj te generacije je bil delovati kot katalizator, someščanom olajšati odkrivanje njihove domnevno 'pristine tržaške duše'. Vendar je v resnici prevladujoča dejavna sila ostala *toscanità* sodelavcev revije *La Voce* – in to skorajda ne glede na usmeritev revije, ki je zahtevala modernizacijo in internacionalizacijo literarne kulture, ter na vznemirljivo navzočnost neitalijanskih kultur v Trstu –, ki je legitimizirala in v Tržačanih podpirala prav tako močno idejo o zvestobi svojemu kraju in njegovim posebnostim.⁷ Mistično in revolucionarno 'odkritje' lastne regionalne duše se mi zdi, pogledano поблиže, kot pesniška pretveza, s katero je že izoblikovana *toscanità* postala vzorec za v veliki meri 'izumljeno' in izmišljeno *triestinità*.⁸ Zmedeno mesto, iščoče literarno identiteto, ki bi jo lahko imenovalo svojo, je bilo nedvomno občutljivo za razprave, osredotočene na predstave o znameniti, nesporni in predvsem edinstveni nacionalni in kulturni identiteti.

Izjave, ki zagovarjajo odločilno vlogo Trsta kot 'centro del mondo' [središča sveta], kot zgodovinskega sedeža konflikta med duhom težko opredeljive kulture in predmetom vse preveč otipljive trgovine, se ponavljajo tudi v Slataperjevem leposlovlju.⁹ V liričnem proznem delu *Il mio carso* (1912) »la storia è vissuta liricamente, perciò non compresa«.¹⁰ V njem se zanimivo prekrivajo zapozneli sturmunddrangovski romanticizem, retorični *vitalismo*, ki spominja na D'Annunzia, in mistične splošne izjave o urbani modernosti 'la città', in sicer kot popolno nasprotje pomanjkanju samozavedanja ruralnega Krasa, pokrajine, ki jo Slataper obuja z veliko naklonjenostjo, a je v njegovih očeh tudi brez kulture in zazrta v pretklost.¹¹ Povedati je treba, da je Slataperjev *Mio carso* navsezadnje postal skorajda vzorčno besedilo moderne tržaške književnosti. V Italiji je objava tega dela domala *ex novo* ustvarila literarno provinco in tlakovala pot za uspehe drugih pomembnih italijanskih lokalnih avtorjev, na primer, Itala Sveva in Umberta Saba.

Čeprav Slataper tržaških Slovencev 'nikakor ni obravnaval velikodušno', kakor je prepričljivo pokazal Boris Pahor, je ostala njegova vloga pomembna zato, ker se je zavedal narodnostne raznolikosti in vitalnosti Krasa (upoštevati je treba, da je bil Slataper nemara prvi tržaški Italijan, ki je pozornost – četudi pristransko – namenil Slovincem iz Trsta in zaledja), in zaradi etičnih korenin njegovega evrofilstva.¹² Oba pojma je mogoče, *mutatis mutandis*, uporabiti tudi v zvezi s Kosovelom; primerjalne študije o obeh avtorjih so dobrodošle, še zlasti, če osvetljujejo jezikovni in tudi širši kulturni vidik: Kosovel je verjetno dobro znal italijansko, četudi je italijansko književnost in misel spoznaval s posredovanjem, ne Slataperja in 'vociani triestini', ampak mnogo vplivnejšega duhovnika in humanista Ivana Trinka (1863–1954), uglednega prevajalca in posrednika med dvema kulturama, zatem tesne prijateljice in sodelavke *Lepe Vide* Mirijam (Fanice Obidove) in prijateljca Carla Curcia iz Neaplja.¹³

Še močnejše so vračanje v idealizirano vseitalijansko preteklost in naraščajočo privlačnost domače tradicije občutili po koncu prve svetovne vojne. Zgodovinski dogodki so Trst ločili od njegove avstroogrske preteklosti, vendar so idealizirano dediščino monarhije vedno bolj cenili in predajali iz ene generacije v naslednjo.¹⁴ Potem ko so dezertirali iz avstrijske vojske in se pod lažnimi imeni pridružili italijanskim četam, so Slataper in številni tržaški pisatelji njegove generacije, med njimi Enrico Elia, Carlo Stuparich, Ruggero Timeus Fauro, umrli v spopadih, tisti, ki pa so preživeli, so prevzeli njihovo dediščino skorajda nedotaknjeno in s tem pokazali, da se niso sposobni (ali da se morda niso pripravljani?) ločiti od florentinske predvojne kulture in so jo še dalje spodbujali. Še posebno Gianija Stuparicha je preživetje vojne katastrofe, v kateri sta bila ubita njegov brat Carlo in najboljši prijatelj Slataper, navdalo z močnim občutkom krivde in sramu, za katerega se je zagrenjeno spokorjeval z vztrajnim ponavljanjem tematike in sloga iz časa pred vojno. Stuparich s tem ni izkazoval le spoštovanja generaciji mrtvih pesnikov, ampak je prispeval tudi k ohranjanju lokalnega literarnega dogajanja, s čimer je nevede krepil *triestinità*.

Vsi vemo, kolikšen vpliv je imela prva svetovna vojna na razvoj Kosovelove osebnosti, kakšne so bile izkušnje iz otroških let, ki so pustile v

njegovi poetiki neizbrisna znamenja. Zbirka pesmi *La Buffa*, ki jo je napisal Giulio Camber Barni v strelskih jarkih in je bila objavljena šele leta 1950, priča, kako močan, četudi anahronističen vir inspiracije je ostal v Trstu *risorgimento*. Moralna in estetska vodila Barnijeve izpovedne poezije izhajajo iz predvojnega iredentizma in iz splošno razširjene ideje o vojni kot socialnem in nacionalnem regulatorju. Ob številnih vojnih dnevnikih te vrste pa *La Buffa* vendarle razkriva, da se je Barni polagoma odrekel idealizirani 'pravični vojni'. Značilno je, da se vizije titanskega boja umikajo vedno pogostejšim temam človekovega ponižanja, mržnje, bridkosti in razpadanju domoljubnih idealov. Zgovorni sta zlasti pesmi »Simone« in »Il capellano«: »Simone, amico caro, / purtroppo la guerra è finita. / Che cosa ne faremo / di questa nostra vita.« in »Il cappellano militare / disse che Gesù Cristo / amava tanto la guerra. / Concluse: / 'Viva l'Italia! / Evviva S. Antonio!'»¹⁵ Barnijeva poezija, v kateri odmevajo številna, Kosovelovim podobna stališča, je zelo prepričljivo ujela občutje praznine in ničevosti, nemoč, antiklerikalizem, vse tiste dejavnike, ki so pripomogli k vzponu fašizma. Barni kot klasični vojni pesnik – v smislu jezikovnega in pripovednega realizma – je odstranil vsakršno lirsko ali retorično okrasje: dogodki, ki jih opisuje, so vedno kratki in brez vsakršnih detajlov, vanje se spontano vključuje neposredni govor, pogosto z narečjem posameznega vojaka. Tudi prevladujoči epski ton izhaja neposredno iz italijanskega zedinjenja: značilno je, da prvo svetovno vojno slavi kot zadnjo vojno *risorgimenta*.¹⁶

Eden izmed največjih Barnijevih privržencev v Trstu je bil pesnik Umberto Saba, ki je napisal iskreno in laskavo spremno besedo k zbirki *La Buffa*, objavljeno v prvi izdaji. Moj očrt 'položaja italijanske poezije' v Trstu bi bil nepopoln, če ne bi posvetila nekaj pozornosti tudi Sabu in njegovim zgodnjim pesniškimi zbirkam. Saba slika rodni Trst kot stvarni urbani prostor, obdan s svojo lastno ontološko dimenzijo, gosto poseljen s človeškimi skupnostmi, ki delajo, se pogovarjajo, jedo in se sprehajajo: kot mesto, ki vrvi od ljudi, živali in zgradb.¹⁷ Sabove običajne poti vodijo po številnih starih tržaških ulicah, ki jim s tem zagotavlja literarni status: Via del Lazzaretto Vecchio, Via della Pietà, Via del Monte, Via Domenico Rossetti. Navdih za poezijo je pesnik našel zvečine v svojem domačem mestu in izpričeval obsesivno, četudi protislovno zanimanje zanj; Trst je pogosto omenjal v pismih, pesmih in proznih delih, ga mrzil, ko je bil v njem in ga neizmerno pogrešal, ko je bil drugje.¹⁸ Vendar za Saba Trst ni bil modernistična 'ville tentaculaire' in ne futuristična dinamična metropola, ampak prej 'urbano podeželje', kakor ga je označil Russo.¹⁹ Njegovi bistveni značilnosti sta izoliranost in domači videz lagodne počasnosti, ki pesniku omogoča odmaknjeno življenje, docela ločeno od sodobnih gibanj in šol. Saba piše o predvojnem Trstu, kakršen je bil pred uničenjem Cittavecchia: o mestu, skratka, ki še ni postalo plen zlega duha modernizma; in v tem je Saba popolnoma drugačen od sočasne futuristične avantgarde, ki je slavila Trst prav zaradi nasprotnih razlogov, kakor bomo videli v nadaljevanju. Najpomembneje pa je, da je bil v tem pogledu Saba drugačen tudi od Kosovela, pri katerem Trst obvladujeta lepota in pogubljenje, ki je sledilo požigu *Edinosti* (1925); zanj je to mesto, ki so ga oslabili močni emigra-

cijski valovi Slovencev, ki so boljše prihodnost iskali v Amerikah, Trst, ki izpričuje svoje 'bolno srce' (prim. še zlasti »Blizu polnoči«).²⁰

V Sabovi zbirki *Trieste e una donna* (1910–12) je postalo mesto literarni lik s svojo lastno veljavo: je antagonist samega pesnika.²¹ Njegov protislovnostni odnos do mesta se zelo pogosto kaže v primerjavah Trsta z ženskimi figurami, še zlasti z materinsko. O tem priča zgodnja eksperimentalna pesem za Bianco, ki jo je pozneje izločil iz zbirke *Il Canzoniere*. Materinski kompleks je pri Sabu tako močan, da lahko poezijo samo razumemo kot drugo, *dobro* mater, ki zmore zapolniti čustvene vrzeli, ki jih je v pesniku pustila njegova resnična, *slaba* mati Rachele Poli.²² S Pellegrinijevimi besedami: »La poesia di Saba [...] narra la lotta del poeta contro il complesso materno«. Trst postane 'mesto maternica', zgrajeno kot zrcalna podoba mesta v mestu: legendarnega judovskega geta Cittavecchie.²³ Znamenita pesem »A mia moglie« je hvalnica Sabovi ženi Lini, v kateri vidi arhetip vseobsegajoče materinskosti: sam pesnik je priznal, da se verzi berejo kot pesem, ki bi jo otrok napisal svoji materi, če bi mu bilo dovoljeno, da se z njo poroči.²⁴ Podobno kot Petrarkova Laura je tudi Lina konec koncev 'mati', vznemirljiv lik, ki se grozeče dviguje, medtem ko mesto polagoma izginja – kot da sta si Lina in Trst nasprotna in lahko eden preživi samo v škodo drugega.²⁵ Predvsem v zbirki *Trieste e una donna* Saba raziskuje različne položaje trojice ženska – mati – Trst: pesmi »Trieste«, »Verso casa«, »Città vecchia«, »Dopo la tristezza«, »Tre vie«, »Via della pietà«, »Il fanciullo appassionato«, »Il molo«, »Più soli« upodabljajo Trst, prikazan kot simbol matere. Vseprežemajoča razsežnost ostaja domačnost in prav pod krinko domačnosti ima Trst v Sabovi poeziji pomembno vlogo. Na kratko, Sabova intimistična, ojdipska, na mesto samo omejena obravnava Trsta se zdi zelo daleč od Kosovelovega družbenega in političnega spopada z mestom.

Sabov poudarek na tolažilnem provincializmu domačega mesta nima nič skupnega s takratnim razpoloženjem glasne *italianità* niti z nacionalistično in internacionalistično držo futuristične avantgarde. Močnejše kot kjer koli drugje je poskušalo fašistično uradništvo v Trstu institucionalizirati globoko zakoreninjeno zanosno *italianità*.²⁶ Raznoliko in zapleteno etnično sestavo Trsta so na veliko izpodrivali z 'izumljanjem tradicije' in pri tem, denimo, bajeslovne rimske rodovnike pripisovali raznim italijanskim političnim elitam.²⁷ Prisilni jopič italijanske birokracije so vsilili multietnični in multikulturni identiteti mesta – velikokrat z nasiljem in preganjanjem slovenske skupnosti. *Italianità*, ki so jo često razglašali z dramatičnimi, mističnimi besedami kot *fatalità*, neizbežno usodo, in pogosto združevali s prav tako nejasno *triestinità*, je enačila raznorodno lokalno identiteto edine s kulturno in literarno tradicijo Italije.²⁸

Vsi ti dejavniki so prispevali k tistemu, kar je Ernesto Sestan definiral kot 'ipertrofia del sentimento nazionale', kot bohotenje nacionalne zavesti, ki so jo napihovali *liberal-nazionali* in jo v nadaljnjo rabo predali fašističnemu establishmentu.²⁹ Zgled, ki so ga postavili z dogajanjem na Reki v letih 1919–20, še posebno karizmatični vodja Gabriele D'Annunzio, je prav tako prispeval k izenačevanju *italianità* z vzpenjajočim se fašističnim režimom, ki se je vneto prizadeval utrditi na tem območju. Celo vrsto dvo-

umnih, z *italianità* tesno prepletenih diskurzov (psevdoklasično obredje, uprizarjanje preteklosti rimskega imperija, retorika 'discorsi dal balcone'), so v letih 1910–1929 najprej preizkušali na tržaškem prizorišču, šele zatem so jih sprejeli v preostali Italiji. Še odločneje je postala *italianità* sinonim za *anti-slavismo*; naj navedem en sam primer, to je požig Narodnega doma, hotela Balkan 13. julija 1920. Ne bom se zadrževala pri obilici malo vredne poezije, napisane in objavljene v Trstu, ki je slavila fašistični režim in njegovega vodjo Benita Mussolinija. Navedla bom nekaj imen in datumov, ker pač sodijo v kontekst: Alma Sperante (psevdonim Carla Mionija; 1871–1946), Corraj (psevdonim Raimonda Corneta; 1887–1945), Nella Doria Cambon (1872–1948). Značilno je, da sta Corraj in Cambon prikazovala Mussolinija kot katalizator, ki je sposoben združiti tradicijo in modernost brez protislovja: to je seveda paradoks, vendar pomemben, eden od tistih, ki si ga je fašizem sposodil pri futurizmu. Zmagoslavje estetike stroja in začetnega potrošništva, ki so ju slavili fašisti, spominja na zahteve, ki jih je najprej zagovarjala futuristična avantgarda.³⁰

Na tržaški oder niso postavili le prvih futurističnih performanc v letih 1908 in 1909, ampak 12. januarja 1910 v gledališču Rossetti tudi prvo pravo futuristično *soirée*. Kosovel, ki je pozneje občasno obiskoval gledališče Rossetti, je bil seveda še premlad, da bi bil med občinstvom. Leta 1908 se je Marinetti dejavno udeležil demonstracij v Trstu, ki so zahtevale 'vrnitev mesta Italiji'. Skorajšnji vodja futurizma, »je govoril v Gimnastičnem društvu, zagovarjal tržaške študente, ki so bili ustreljeni na Dunaju, in izjavljal, da bo imel Trst nekoč svojo univerzo [...]. Vse dogajanje se je končalo z divjim pretepom in Marinettija so zaprli.«³¹ Vendar je posebna futuristična skupina v Trstu nastala šele leta 1922 (po drugih virih leta 1924) pod samozvanim vodstvom Bruna Sanzina (roj. leta 1906). Sanzin je uredil in izdal brošuro *Marinetti e il futurismo* (1924) in v reviji *Italia Nova* objavljaval futuristično kolumno, ki je pozneje prerasla v poseben časopis z naslovom *Energie futuriste*; urejal ga je Kosovelov prijatelj Giorgio Carmelich. Sanzin je v svojo poezijo vključeval dinamiko, hitrost, mehaniko in domoljubni heroizem.³² V pesmi »Pensieri in libertà« je upodobil v vetru vihraječe zastave v Trstu: narodnostno tematiko je tu prepletel z dinamiko boja, 'la lotta', razumljenega kot bistvo življenja.³³ S slikovitim impresionizmom prizora, z vetru izpostavljenimi in barvno poudarjenimi zastavami, skupaj z rabo onomatopoiije in repeticije, se je Sanzin oddolžil futurističnemu ideološkemu in estetskemu kedu. Pesnik poudarja tako domoljubno kot tudi urbano potezo futurizma in jo še zlasti v zbirki 'aeropoezije' *Fiori d'Italia* (1942) prepleta z drugim temami, ki so navdihovale avantgardo – od dinamizma do energije in 'trascendenza artistica'.

Tudi Vladimiro Miletta (roj. 1913) je brezpogojno sprejel avantgardo. Miletta so opisovali kot arhetipskega elegantnega in agresivnega futurista, kot »giovane poeta elegante, sportivo, aderente all'avanguardia più strepitosa«.³⁴ V pesmih, kakršni sta »Pioggia veloce« in »Manicure«, privzema poudarek na dinamizem in hitrost nadrealističen, ironičen zven: Miletta je očitno prevzel futuristični jezikovni ikonoklazem in mu dodal lahkotnejšo, živahno prvino, ki spominja na poezijo Alda Palazzeschi: »Mi sembra un

tuffo / scagliarmi in macchina / nell'acquazzone, / mentre scodinzola il ter-gicristallo, / lieto che piova.« »Le forbicine, beccuzzi ghiotti / di passerotti, / sulle ciliegie / delle tue unghie.«³⁵ Značilen za tržaški futurizem, pa tudi za Milettija, je nespoštljiv, ironičen pristop.³⁶ Domoljubje je postalo drugotne-ga pomena, saj je prevladovala poetika nelogičnega in nedoslednega.

Po Milanu in Parizu so futuristi izbrali Trst kot futuristično mesto *par excellence*.³⁷ Trst kot mesto 'brez preteklosti' je bil povsem usmerjen v pri-hodnost dosledno urbane in mehanične modernosti. Vendar je dejstvo, da je mesto sprejemalo vse, kar je bilo modernega, skupaj z negotovostjo, ki jo je porajal njegov 'outsiderski kompleks', prinašalo nova protislov-ja. Navsezadnje so Trst spodbujali, da se je z nekritičnim navdušenjem še naprej oprijemal najbolj tradicionalnega literarnega izražanja v Italiji. Fašistična ideologija je tržaško *italianità* še nadalje združevala z moder-nostjo in s svojo lastno promocijo industrijskega preporoda, še posebej preporoda umirajočega tržaškega pristanišča; to sodelovanje so simbolično proslavili 20. maja 1924, ko so Mussoliniju podelili častno meščanstvo.

Docela ločeno od zgoraj omenjene nacionalne ideologije so nastajali poskusi pravega modernizma, bolj odprtega za evropske vplive in zato tudi pomembnejšega, ki sta se jih lotevala Giorgio Carmelich in Emilio Mario Dolfi. V letih 1922–23 je Carmelich sestavil brušuro *Epeo* in dadaističi *Eet* (ki je na naslovnici napisan z 18 e-ji), eksperimentalno 'anti-knjigo' (anti-libro), v katero je vključil note, risbe, svobodne besede in gledali-ške 'sinteze'. Svoja eksperimentalna nagnjenja je Carmelich uresničeval v »Bottega di Epeo«, leta 1924 pa je tržaška revija *Crepuscolo* začela objav-ljati 'futuristično stran'.³⁸ Leta 1925 je Carmelich izdal revijo 25.

Še pomembnejši in doslej sorazmerno malo raziskan je prispevek Trsta h konstruktivistični izkušnji, ki v Italiji verjetno nima primere. Umetniki Milko Bambič in Venio Pilon, Ivan Čargo in Avgust Černigoj so sodelovali pri reviji *Tank* in v Ljubljani videli zelo zanimivo središče. Zaradi zgod-njega ničejanskega prepričanja je verjetno konstruktivizem še posebej pri-vlačil Kosovela. Močan vpliv nanj je imel zlasti Černigoj, ki je ustvarjal v konstruktivističnem slogu, z značilnimi svobodnimi besedami in tipograf-skimi sintezami, s katerim je izražal zaskrbljenost za svojo lastno nacio-nalno identiteto. Kosovel je šibal slovenski narod ter ga spodbujal k delo-vanju (prim. »Jaz protestiram« in »Rodovnik«) in razmišljanju o evropski prihodnosti; to ga je seveda pripeljalo k načrtovanju časopisa *Euroslave: Revue pour une vie neuve en Europe*.³⁹

Naj za konec strnem: skupaj z Borisom Pahorjem ostajam prepričana, da je najbolj temeljno modernističen in najdragocenejši pomen Kosovelovega konstruktivizma v njegovem po humanistični, pacifistični in etični plati so-cialističnem prepričanju: socialna revolucija mora ostati konstruktivna in ne destruktivna. Leta 1927 je Černigoj v Trstu objavil manifest »Gruppo costruttivista«: tragično je bilo, da zaradi prezgodnje smrti leto poprej Kosovel tej izjemni izkušnji ni mogel dati svojega prispevka.

Iz angleščine prevedla Vera Troha

OPOMBE

¹ Prim. E. Pellegrini, »Aspetti della cultura triestina tra Otto e Novecento«, *Il Ponte*, 4 (1980), 354–71.

² S. Slataper, »Trieste non ha tradizioni di cultura«, prvič objavljeno v reviji *La Voce*, 11. februarja 1909, zdaj v: *Scritti politici*, ur. G. Stuparich, Rim: Stock, 1925, 3–7.

³ M. Cattaruzza, »Slovenes and Italians in Trieste, 1850–1914«, v: *Ethnic Identity in Urban Europe*, ur. Max Engman, Strasbourg: European Science Foundation; New York: New York University Press; Aldershot: Dartmouth, cop. 1992, 182–219 (201). Prim. tudi: Boris Pahor, *Srečko Kosovel*, Pordenone: Studio Tesi, 1993, še zlasti 34–39.

⁴ Pojem 'calata' (vdor) Slataper pogosto uporablja v najbolj znanem delu *Il mio carso*, Firenze: La Voce, 1912.

⁵ V reviji *La Voce* je začel G. Stuparich objavljati leta 1913: to sta bila članka o federalizmu ter o češkem in nemškem narodu. Tudi prvi Stuparichevo monografijo, *La nazione czeca*, Catania: Battiato, 1915 je bila objavljena pod okriljem revije in je bila posvečena njenemu vplivnemu mentorju Giuseppeju Prezzoliniju.

⁶ Misel o 'izumljanju tradicije' je iz knjige *The Invention of Tradition*, ur. Eric Hobsbawm in Terence Ranger, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. V intervjuju z Giorgiom Baronijem je A. Spaini izjavil: »*La Voce* servi come ponte tra Trieste e l'Italia« [*La Voce* je bila most med Trstom in Italijo]; prim. G. Baroni, *Trieste e 'La Voce'*, Milano: Istituto Propaganda Libreria, 1975, 91.

⁷ Ko se Stuparich spominja poznih nočnih branj Slataperjevega dela *Il mio carso* v Firencah, pravi: »[...] era proprio la scoperta poetica della mia anima triestina. [...] Io sentii, per merito della sua [Slataper] creazione, nascere il Carso dalla Toscana.« [...] bilo je resniško pesniško odkritje moje tržaške duše. Prav njegovi [Slataperjevi] stvaritvi gre zahvala, da sem začutil, kako se Kras rojeva iz Toskane.]; G. Stuparich, »Romanticismo e 'Il notiziario della III armata'«, v: *Trieste nei miei ricordi*, Milano: Garzanti, 1948, 29–39 (30–32). Za Slataperja in Stuparicha je imela toskanska pokrajina celo značilnosti julijske: domača pokrajina seveda lahko močno zaznamuje oblikovanje identitete.

⁸ O *toscantità* revije *La Voce* prim.: Walter L. Adamson, *Avant-Garde Florence: From Modernism to Fascism*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993. V delu *Anni di Trieste*, Gorica: Goriziana, 1989, 92 je Giorgio Voghera spodbijal misel, da imata *La Voce* in tržaška kultura nekaj skupnega: »Non so davvero come non si faccia a non accorgersi *prima facie* che la 'civiltà' triestina [...] differisce dalla civiltà vociana forse altrettanto che da quella azteca. Di vero c'è soltanto che i vociani hanno aiutato molto i triestini.« [Res ne vem, kako da se že na prvi pogled ne sprevidi, da se tržaška 'kultura' [...] razlikuje od vocianske nemara prav toliko, kakor od azteške. Drži le to, da so vocianci zelo pomagali Tržačanom.]

⁹ Prim. S. Slataper, »L'avvenire nazionale e politico di Trieste«, v: *Scritti politici*, 93: »Trieste è posto di transizione – geografica, storica, di cultura, di commercio – cioè di lotta. Ogni cosa è duplice o triplice a Trieste, cominciando dalla flora e finendo con l'etnicità. Finche Trieste non ha coscienza di sé, finche gli slavi parlano italiano e la cultura si compie e si soddisfa nel commercio, nell'interesse commerciale, la vita è discretamente pacifica. Appena nasce il bisogno di una cultura disinteressata, la crosta fredda è rotta e si scoprono dibattiti ansiosi.« [Trst je prehodni prostor – geografski, zgodovinski, kulturni, trgovski – se pravi prostor spopada. V Trstu je vse dvojno ali trojno, od rastlinstva do narodov. Dokler se Trst samega sebe ne zaveda, dokler Slovani govorijo italijansko in se kultura izvršuje in zadovoljuje v trgovanju, v trgovinskih koristih, je življenje kolkor toliko mirmo.

Takoj ko pa se rodi potreba po nepristranski kulturi, se hladna zunanost razbije in na dan privrejo nestrpne razprave.]

¹⁰ Anco Marzio Mutterle, *Scipio Slataper*, Milano: Mursia, 1965, 77. [... je zgodovina doživeta lirično, zato ni razumljena.]

¹¹ Prim. Alberto Abruzzese, *Svevo, Slataper e Michaelstaedter: Lo stile e il viaggio*, Benetke: Marsilio, 1979, 141: »Slataper [...] partecipa ideologicamente al mito di una società in ascesa. La macchina, il denaro, la merce, il commercio sono tutte cose fundamentalmente buone, per lo scrittore triestino: ma contemporaneamente sente il peso schiacciante di questa nuova dimensione umana che ha compreso e della quale è entrato a far parte.« [Po ideološki plati je Slataper udeležen v mitu o vzpenjajoči se družbi. Za tržaškega pisatelja so stroj, denar, trgovsko blago in trgovina v temelju vse dobre stvari: obenem pa čuti nespodbitno breme te nove človeške rezsežnosti, ki jo je dojel in del katere je postal.]

¹² B. Pahor, *Kosovel*, 48: »trattamento [...] tuttaltro che generoso«. [nikakor velikodušna obravnava].

¹³ Hvaležna sem profesorju Claudiu Magrisu, da me je spomnil na konferenco v Trstu, ki se je ukvarjala s Krasom pri Kosovelu in Slataperju s primerjalne perspektive, čeprav nisem mogla najti nobene publikacije, ki bi bila povezana s tem dogodkom.

¹⁴ Po letu 1936 je os Berlin-Rim cesarsko preteklost Trsta izenačevala z nacistično Nemčijo pod splošnim 'germanskim' dežnikom. Takrat je postal Trst pravi branik, ki je hkrati s obrambo svoje preteklosti podpiral najbolj usodno politično in vojaško zavezništvo s fašizmom.

¹⁵ G. Camber Barni, »Simone« in »Il cappellano«, v: *La Buffa*, Milano: Mondadori, 1950, 197 in 156. [Simon, dragi prijatelj, žal je vojna končana. Kaj bova naredila s tem najinim življenjem? – Vojni kurat je rekel, da je imel Jezus Kristus zelo rad vojno. In končal: 'Naj živi Italija! Živel sv. Anton!']

¹⁶ Prim. G. Camber Barni, »La canzone di Lavezzari«, v: *La Buffa*, 170: » Il 24 maggio, la notte della guerra, Giuseppe Garibaldi uscì di sotto terra. E andò da Lavezzari, che si beveva il vino; gli disse: 'Lavezzari, vecchio garibaldino, Lavezzari, vecchio fante, è scoppiata un'altra guerra, ma io non posso andarci: perché sono sotto terra. Camerata di Bezzecca, mio vecchio portabandieta, và te sul Podigora, e porta la mia bandiera!'» [24. maja se je v noči med vojno Giuseppe Garibaldi dvignil iz zemlje. In je šel k Lavezzariju, ki je pil vino; rekel mu je: 'Lavezzari, stari garibaldinec, Lavezzari, stari pešak, izbruhnila je še ena vojna, ampak jaz ne morem zraven: ker sem pod zemljo. Tovariš iz Bezzece, moj stari zastavonoša, pojdi na Podigoro in nosi moji zastavo!'] Povsem ogolela prozaičnost razodeva, do kakšne mere je bil Barnijev intervencionizem pristen, pa tudi iredentističen, čeprav nujno kratkega veka, kot je opozoril Saba; prim. U. Saba, »Di questo libro e di un altro mondo« (spremna beseda k zbirki *La Buffa*), v: *Prose*, ur. Linuccia Saba, Milano: Mondadori, 1964, 690. Prim. tudi pacifista E. Elia (1891–1915), zlasti njegovo vojno poezijo, zbrano v *Schegge d'anima*, Pordenone: Studi Tesi, 1981.

¹⁷ Prim. E. Pellegrini, *Le città interiori in scrittori triestini di ieri e di oggi*, Bergamo: Moretti & Vitali, 1995, 57: »Trieste è per Saba [...] una città concreta, particolare, piena di persone che lavorano, parlano, mangiano, e piena di animali e di oggetti particolari.« [Za Saba je Trst [...] stvarno, samosvoje mesto, polno ljudi, ki delajo, govorijo, jedo, in polno živali in posebnih predmetov.]

¹⁸ Strnjen prikaz Sabovih raznovrstnih, celo protislovnih stališč do Trsta sem podala v: K. Pizzi, *A City in Search of an Author: The Literary Identity of Trieste*, London; Sheffield; New York: Sheffield Academic Press-Continuum, 2001, 67.

¹⁹ Fabio Russo, »Saba, le cose, l'eco, l'ombra«, v: Stelio Mattioni in drugi, *Il Punto su Saba: Atti del Convegno Internazionale (Trieste 25–27 marzo 1984)*, Trst: Lint, 1985, 346–359 (347).

²⁰ Cit. v: B. Pahor, *Kosovel*, 43–44. Vendar se pokaže, da imata Saba in Kosovel tudi nekaj skupnih potez, na primer, rabo ritma in metafor, še posebej tistih, v katerih nastopajo ptice – o tem prim. poučen prispevek D. Pavlič v tem zborniku.

²¹ Prim. številne pesmi v: U. Saba, *Il Canzoniere*, Torino: Einaudi, 1978⁵. Znamenita je primerjava mesta z 'ragazzaccio aspro e vorace' [težaven in pohlepen pobalin] v pesmi z naslovom »Trieste«; v pesmi »Città vecchia« pesnik med sprehodom razmišlja o različnih človeških tipih, ki spominjajo na staro četrt: 'prostituta', 'marinaio', 'il dragone', 'il friggitore' (str. 81) [prostitutka, mornar, dragonec, prodajalec ocvrlih jedi]: Sabova drža je razmišljujoča do te mere, da 'non si attua mai la fusione [...] di soggetto e oggetto' [da nikoli ne pride do združitve subjekta in objekta], kakor pojasnjuje E. Pellegrini, *Le città interiori*, 55.

²² O vlogi Sabove matere prim. zlasti: Mario Lavagetto, *La gallina di Saba*, Torino: Einaudi, 1989, 162–63 in Giacomo Debenedetti, »Saba e il grembo della poesia«, *Galleria* 1.2 (1960), 114–21.

²³ E. Pellegrini, *Le città interiori*, 55 in 67. [Sabova poezija pripoveduje o pesnikovem boju zoper materinski kompleks.] V pesmi »A mamma« iz zbirke *Poesie dell'adolescenza e giovanili* (1900–1907) je Saba naslikal spoštljiv, četudi na trenutke naiven portret matere, ki obvladuje njegova širša psihološka in pesniška obzorja (prim. M. Lavagetto, *La gallina*, 137: »La figura della madre si staglia [...] come un oroscopo che accompagna la vicenda del protagonista, come un idolo silenzioso ed enigmatico che si innalza sulla prima raccolta.« [Lik matere se izrisuje kot horoskop, ki spremlja življenje protagonista, kot tihi in skrivnostni malik, ki se dviguje nad prvo zbirko.] Pesem »Il bersaglio« iz zbirke *Versi militari* (1908) enači vojakovo tarčo z njegovo lastno materjo: streljati v tarčo pomeni znebiti se matere in vsakršne strašljive sence, ki bi jo lahko metala na sinovo odraslo življenje (M. Lavagetto, *La gallina*, 157).

²⁴ M. Lavagetto, *La gallina*, 89. Pesem »A mia moglie« je iz zbirke *Casa e campagna* (1909–10).

²⁵ M. Lavagetto, *La gallina*, 95.

²⁶ Prim. Anna Millo, *L'élite del potere a Trieste: Una biografia collettiva 1891–1938*, Milano: Franco Angeli, 1989, 137. Na misel pride lokalna domoljubna pesem »El campanil de San Giusto«, uglasbena leta 1904, v letu Kosovelovega rojstva, ki je tako kot številne druge poveljevala *italianità*; besedilo je napisal Augusto Levi, nav. v: Paolo Zoldan, *Poesie patriottiche dei tempi passati: 1891–1914*, Trst: Italo Svevo, 1968, 55.

²⁷ Podesta Valerio, na primer, naj bi domnevno izhajal iz *Valeria Gens* – prim. A. Millo, *L'élite del potere*, 137.

²⁸ Prim. Angelo Ara in Claudio Magris, *Trieste: Un'identità di frontiera*, Torino: Einaudi, 1982, 1987, 17.

²⁹ E. Sestan, *Venezia Giulia: Lineamenti di una storia etnica e culturale*, Rim, Edizioni Italiane, 1947, 402 in nasl.; nav. v: A. Millo, *L'élite del potere*, 140.

³⁰ Prim. Ugo Sartori, Paolo Veronese in Gino Villasanta, *Trieste 1934–XII: La storia, la vita, il domani*, Trst: Comitato per 'Giugno Triestino', 1934, 64: »La vita economica di Trieste batte con martellante cadenza d'un motore e somiglia al turbinoso giro di un'elica. Motori ed eliche: strumenti e simboli della sua potenza.« [Gospodarsko življenje Trsta udarja v vztrajnem ritmu stroja in je podobno vrtinčastemu kroženju propelerja. Stroji in propelerji: orodja in simboli njegove moči.]

³¹ Günter Berghaus, *The Genesis of Futurism: Marinetti's Early Career and Writings 1899–1909*, Leeds: Society for Italian Studies Occasional Papers, 1995, 82.

³² Prim. Giorgio Baroni, »Bruno G. Sanzin e il 'suo' futurismo«, v: *Umberto Saba e dintorni: Appunti per una storia della letteratura giuliana*, Milano: Istituto

Propaganda Libreria, 1984, 243–51 (244): »Le opere del primo Sanzin [...] sono caratterizzate da tematiche ispirate ai miti futuristi: macchina, eroismo, patria, velocità, audacia; con una tinteggiatura del superomismo.« [Začetna Sanzinova dela zaznamuje tematika, ki so jo navdihovali futuristični miti: stroj, heroizem, domovina, hitrost, drznost; obarvani z mitom nadčloveka.]

³³ B. Sanzin, »Pensieri in libertà«, v: *Il proprio mondo nei ricordi e nella fantasia*, Padova: Rebellato, 1979, 68–69: »[...] garrire le bandiere su gli spalti della storia. Con tanto vento che le anime di ondeggiamenti schiocchianti, perché senza vento le bandiere sembrerebbero mute. Con tanto sole che riverberi il tripudio dei colori, perché senza sole le bandiere sembrerebbero spente. Bandiere di gloria, bandiere di fede, bandiere di tutte le vittorie. Simboli di eterna sfida, poiché la lotta è l'unica costante della vita.« [...] plapolanje zastav na okopih zgodovine. Z veliko vetra, ki jih oživlja z valujočim tleskanjem, saj bi se brez vetra zastave zdele neme. Z veliko sonca, ki odseva prekipavanje barv, saj bi se brez sonca zastave zdele ugasle. Zastave ponosa, zastave vere, zastave vseh zmag. Simboli večnega izziva, saj je borba edina stalnica življenja.]

³⁴ Prim. Marcello Fraulini, »Prefazione«, v: V. Miletti, *Orme di impulsi*, Trst: Società Artistico Letteraria, 1967, 9. [Mlad, eleganten, športniški pesnik, pripadnik najsijajnejše avantgarde.]

³⁵ V. Miletti, »Pioggia veloce« in »Manicure«, v: *Orme di impulsi*, 68 in 72. [Kot skok v vodo se mi zdi, ko se med nalivom vržem v avto, medtem ko se brisalec ziblje, vesel, da dežuje.] [Škarjice, požrešni kljunčki vrabčkov na češnjah tvojih nohtov.] Prim. tudi tržaškega futurističnega pesnika Maria Cavedalija, ki ga F. T. Marinetti omenja v besedilu »Battaglia di Trieste (aprile–giugno 1910)« iz zbirke *Guerra sola igiene del mondo* (1915), v: *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, Milano: Mondadori, 1983, 245–53.

³⁶ Claudia Salaris omenja nekatere nespoštljive vzdevke, ki so si jih izbrali tržaški futuristi: Sempresù, Escodameè in Chissenè; C. Salaris, *Storia del futurismo*, Rim: Editori Riuniti, 1985, 245.

³⁷ Prim. Roberto Curci in Gabriella Ziani, *Bianco rosa e verde: Scrittrici a Trieste fra Ottocento e Novecento*, Trst: Lint, 1993, 109; prim tudi Joseph Cary, *A Ghost in Trieste*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993, 85–86.

³⁸ C. Salaris, *Storia del futurismo*, 173–176.

³⁹ Prim. B. Pahor, *Kosovel*, 69–70.

■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.131.1.09-1(450.361)»1900/1920«:821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / italijanska poezija / Trst / literarna avantgarda / futurizem / literarni vplivi

Prispevek se osredotoča na italijanski Trst in na kar se le da obširen korpus sočasne tržaške pesniške produkcije, da bi tako razprl pogled na Kosovela "od zunaj". Posebno pozornost sem posvetila futuristični avantgardi: Marinetti, vodja italijanskih futuristov, je v Trstu videl futuristično mesto *par excellence*, prve futuristične soareje pa so v Gledališču Rosetti prirejali med leti 1909 in 1910. Futurizem je privlačil veliko skupino lokalnih umetnikov, med katerimi je nekatere (Carmelicha in Černigoja) Kosovel celo osebno poznal ali pa so mu

bili blizu. Podobno velja za pesnika Sanzina in Miletija, ki sta se navdušeno predajala futurističnim jezikovnim eksperimentom in narodnostnim oziroma nacionalističnim tendencam futurističnega gibanja. V kontekstu tržaške poezije je prav tako izredno pomemben narodnostno obarvan tip romantične poezije: komparativistična obravnavava je ravno zato zajela tudi Slataperjev vitalistični pristop k skalnatemu Krasu izpred začetka prve svetovne vojne. V tržaško kulturno pokrajino dvajsetih in tridesetih let 20. stoletja pa sodi tudi nacionalistična poezija, ki se je pogosto uradno spogledovala s fašističnim režimom (Cambon, Corraj, Alma Sperante). Prispevek skratka osvetljuje dobršen del poezije v italijanščini, ki je nastajala v razburkanem, a v veliki meri sovražnem tržaškem kulturnem okolju, in na ta način ponuja bolj kot ne implicitno oceno o Kosovelovem mestu v kontekstu evropske avantgarde in prispevku njegove poezije k avantgardni umetnosti.

ANALOGIJE MED POEZIJO S. KOSOVELA IN C. REBORE OZIROMA ALI OBSTAJA ITALIJANSKI EKSPRESIONIZEM?

Darja Betocchi

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Na vprašanje, ali obstaja italijanski ekspresionizem, sodobna italijanska literarna kritika odgovarja pritrdilno, saj pripisuje delom mladih literatov, ki so začeli objavljati v florentinski reviji *La Voce* (1908–1914, 1914–1916) in ki so zato znani pod imenom »i vociani«, izrazite ekspresionistične slogovne in tematske značilnosti. Kritika Cesare Segre in Clelia Martignoni trdita celo, da so »najboljši 'vociani' predstavljali resnično literarno avantgardo predvojnega obdobja.«¹ Navedena ocena – ki s tem, da označuje »vociane« kot »resnično literarno avantgardo« posredno izraža celo dvom o avtentičnosti ostalih italijanskih avantgard – zveni pretirano in tendenciozno. Po drugi strani pa se poraja vprašanje, ali ni morda nekoliko preveč radikalna tudi trditev Lada Kralja, da »italijanska literatura nima nobene tekstualne baze, da bi jo lahko označili za ekspresionistično.«²

V svojem referatu skušam vsaj delno odgovoriti na vprašanje o upravičenosti oz. neupravičenosti zgoraj citiranih ocen o obstoju italijanskega ekspresionizma. Pri tem se opiram na komparativno analizo Kosovelovega opusa ter pesmi in pisem milanskega pesnika Clementeja Rebore (1885–1957). Slednji velja za »enega izmed najvidnejših predstavnikov 'vocianškega' ekspresionizma,«³ zaradi potrebe po čim večjem kronološkem sovpadanju analiziranih del obeh avtorjev s časovnim razponom ekspresionizma pa sem pri Rebori upoštevala le pisma in pesmi, ki jih je napisal do leta 1926 oz. 1927.⁴ Vodilo moje komparativne analize je bilo seveda iskanje skupnih in sorodnih ekspresionističnih prvin.

Naj pa takoj povem, da – nasprotno od Kosovela – Rebori skoraj gotovo ni poznal nemškega ekspresionizma. V 835-ih pismih, ki jih je napisal do leta 1926, zelo pogosto omenja najrazličnejše pisatelje in pesnike, a nobenega ekspresionista. Poleg tega pa sta se literarna izkušnja »vocianov« in pojav nemškega ekspresionizma razvila istočasno, kar – glede na slabo informiranost italijanskih literatov o nemški sodobni književnosti – še dodatno izključuje možnost katerega koli vpliva nemškega ekspresionizma ne le na Reboro, pač pa na vse »vociane«. Italijanski ekspresionizem naj bi torej bil avtohton pojav, ki naj bi izviral iz iste kulturno-zgodovinske krize zahodne civilizacije, ki so jo zaznavali in v svojih delih izražali nemški ekspresionisti.

Kot je Kosovel ne le izpovedoval nelagodje tedanje »mrtve generacije, ki je v svoj mladi organizem vsesala glad in grozo vojne ter [...] čuti v sebi kaos«,⁵ pač pa tudi eksplicitno, npr. v znamenitem članku *Kriza*,⁶ povezoval rojstvo ekspresionizma s predvojno agonijo Evrope, tako je tudi devetnajst let starejši Rebor ne le govoril o »gnilobi«⁷ tedanjega časa⁷ in presunljivo opisal tragičnost predvojne generacije, ki ji je usojeno, da »znori ali pa da se ekspandira v ogromno razžarjenost«,⁸ pač pa tudi posvetil svojo prvo zbirko iz leta 1913⁹ »Prvemu desetletju XX. stoletja«. Pomen tega posvetila pa je Reborov brat Pietro osvetlil s sledečimi besedami: »Prva leta (20., o. p.) stoletja so predstavljala zanj (za Reboro, o.p.) [...] mračno slutnjo poloma v letih 1914–18, kajti ta datum pomeni propad nekega sveta [...], strahoten orkan, začetek brodoloma vseh nas.«¹⁰ Tudi Rebor je torej očitno povezoval genezo svoje prve poezije s percepcijo krize predvojne Evrope.

Podobno kot pri nemških ekspresionistih je zaznava o razkrajanju zahodnega sveta tudi pri Kosovelu in Rebori tesno povezana z dvojno reakcijo, in sicer po eni strani s polemiko proti sodobni civilizaciji, po drugi, komplementarni strani pa z občutkom odtujenosti od te civilizacije, in torej osamljenosti in samote, bivanjskega nesmisla, notranje disharmonije in razklanosti, skratka t. i. disociacije subjekta.

Kar se tiče prvega izmed teh aspektov, in sicer polemike proti modernemu zahodnemu svetu, se je le-ta pri ekspresionistih izrazila predvsem kot kritičen odnos do urbanizacije, tehnike in industrializacije z mehanizacijo.¹¹ V tem pogledu je morda tematsko razhajanje med Kosovelom in Reboro največje. Kosovel je namreč v svojih ekspresionističnih pesmih ali bolje rečeno pesmih, ki vsebujejo ekspresionistične prvine (mislim na *Konse*), zelo kritičen predvsem do tehnike in mehanizacije, do modernih proizvodnih odnosov, ki privedejo do razčlovečenja človeka in človeških odnosov. Kot manifest tega stališča lahko citiramo proglas *Mehanikom!*, ki naznanja smrt vseh mehanizmov in »človeka-stroja«,¹² verjetno pa ni pretirano trditi, da je kar precejšen del Kosovelove poezije zadnjega obdobja nastal iz podobnega polemičnega vzgiba. V tem pogledu je zelo zgovorna npr. pesem *Kons*, ki se zaključuje z ugotovitvijo, da »človek ni avtomat«¹³ in da je zato potrebno uničiti »taylorjanske tvornice«,¹³ ali pa nadalje pesem *Kons: novi dobi*, ki ponovno oznanja smrt »tehnično mehaničnih problemov«¹⁴ in »taylorovega sistema«, saj prihaja »nova doba [...] / ko bo vsak delavec človek, / ko bo vsak človek delavec.«¹⁴ O podobni tematiki pa v Reborovi poeziji ni nikakršnega sledu. Kot izhaja iz nekega Reborovega eseja o Leopardiju (1910), se milanskemu pesniku mehanizacija kaže predvsem v luči toge klasifikacije realnosti in konformističnega izenačevanja idej in obnašanj, ki uničuje bogastvo in svobodo človeške ustvarjalnosti in ki je značilno za moderno civilizacijo.¹⁵ Vendar pa se odklonilno stališče do sodobnega sveta v Reborovih pesmih izraža predvsem v polemičnem zanosu proti urbanizaciji, proti turobnim, skorumpiranim, razpadajočim mestom, za opisovanje katerih se avtor pogosto poslužuje stilističnih sredstev deformacije in groteske, kar je seveda značilno za ekspresionizem. Motiv demonskega velemesta, peklenskega močvirja, ki je s svojimi norišnicami, bolnicami, bordeli, ječami, kasarnami in tovarnami utesnjujoči simbol smrti in pogubljenja, je značilen za nemški

ekspresionizem in ga najdemo predvsem pri Heymu, a tudi Werflu, Traklu, Lichtensteinu, Sacku, van Hoddisu in drugih.¹⁶ Tudi pri Rebori je mesto, se pravi rodni Milan, predvsem v prvi, že omenjeni zbirki iz 13. leta, eden izmed osrednjih pesniških motivov z dvojno simbolno valenco razdvojenosti/konflikta na eni strani in osamljenosti na drugi. Citirala bom le dva primera. V pesmi št. XIV (*Le poesie 1913–1957*, cit., str. 27), je deževno mesto, v katerem je življenje »v kletki zaprta zver«, simbol tako pesnikove osebne razdvojenosti med senzualnostjo in duhovnostjo, med »mesom in srcem«, kot tudi simbol konflikta med »gnilobo« tedanjega časa in neko svetlejšo bodočnostjo, ko bosta iz propada in uničenja pesnikove generacije nastali »izbrano znanje« in »nesmrtna lepota«.¹⁷ Mesto pa je pogosto tudi kraj tragične osamljenosti, kjer se pesnik, zatopljen v lastne papirje, z »mračnim obrazom« zaman sprašuje o »resnici življenja«, medtem ko z oddaljenega vrveža mestne ulice prihaja njemu nedosegljiva radost »strastne pesmi« in smejanje »moških in žensk, / ki si med delom pripravljajo poželenje« (prav tam, LV, str. 93–94).¹⁸ Omeniti velja tudi dejstvo, da so pesnikova urbana prizorišča zelo pogosto označena s tipično ekspresionističnimi atributi gnilobe, razpadanja, sesutja ali pa nanje asociirajo. Za Reborov Milan in za njegove prebivalce so npr. značilni »gniloba«, »kloaka«, »blato«, »razbitine«, »nesnaga«, »garje«, »umazanija«, »smeti«, »izplake«,¹⁹ v pisnih pa se milanski zrak »zdi zatohel in nečist kot bolničin zadah«, samo mesto pa je prikazano kot »ogromen« in »smrdljiv vamp«.²⁰

V Kosovelovi poeziji je ekspresionistični topos mesta prisoten mnogo bolj bežno in posredno, predvsem z omembo posameznih urbanih elementov kot npr. ulice, kavarne, črni zidovi, hiše, tovarna, stolpovi (ki imajo običajno simbolno valenco velemesta), ali pa meščanskih figur kot npr. kabinetni ljudje iz istoimenske pesmi, bankir iz *Tragedije na oceanu*, frizerji, sociologi, analitiki, družbeni kritiki ipd., ki ponavadi predstavljajo razčlovečenega človeka, kateremu se zoperstavlja novi, pravi Človek bodočnosti. In če je v Kosovelovih pisnih Ljubljana predvsem mesto, ki ubija »s svojo meglo in svojo moralo«,²¹ so v njegovih pesmih mestne kavarne večkrat prostor osamljenosti in nekomunikacije (*Vis-à-vis v kavarni; Dva človeka v kavarni*), prazne ulice simbol nesmisla (*Večer pred zimo*), hrupne ulice, polne hitečih ljudi, vzbujajo občutke odtujenosti in potrebo po odrešujoči samoti (*Krik po samoti*), tovarne in predvsem orjaška kolesja njihovih motorjev pa so simbol zmehaniziranega človeka-stroja (*Ob orjaškem kolesu; Proti človeku*) ali pa, obratno, predstavljajo gradnjo novega sveta (*Alarm*). Večkrat pa je velemesto z nihajočimi hišami in stolpovi simbol umirajoče sodobne civilizacije, iz katere bo po neizbežni katarzični katastrofi nastal nov svet (*Ljubljana spi, Ljudje s križi, O pojte vigilije, Modri konji, Iz tečajev, Ekstaza smrti*): »Slabi so bili temelji, dragi, / naj padejo stavbe!« pravi Kosovel v pesmi *Rad bi upodobil*.²²

Kot sem že omenila, je bil polemičen in odklonilen odnos do moderne sveta, ki je bil značilen za ekspresioniste, nerazdružljivo povezan z občutkom osamljenosti, odtujenosti, notranje disharmonije in razklanosti ter eksistencialnega nesmisla. Podobna počutja izražata tudi Kosovel in Rebor, ki o tem pišeta v toliko pesmih in tudi pisnih, da je človek pri

selekciji gradiva kar v zadregi. Glede motiva tragične osamljenosti se bom torej omejila na podobo drevesa, saj je le-ta v ekspresionizmu pravi topos.²³ V neki pesmi se tako tudi Kosovel primerja z drevesom, ki med divljanjem viharja in šviganjem strel trepetajoče stoji »sredi polja«; enako osamljen se počuti tudi pesnik, ki »stoji sam sredi vsega sveta / duše, srca, mu nikdo ne pozna«,²⁴ v pesmi *Daj mi bolest* pa se Kosovel primerja s »črnim drevesom, ki je izgorelo« in ki je zato usojeno popolni osamljenosti in marginalizaciji, saj v svoji »ubitosti« ne more več šumeti »z vetrovi večernimi«. Podoben motiv najdemo tudi v nekem Reborovem pismu iz aprila 1910, kjer pisatelj izpoveduje prijatelju svojo bolečino in samoto: »Trpel sem in še vedno nepopisno trpim«, »počutim se kot drevo brez vej, ki je postalo neplodno ravno v trenutku, ko naokrog valovi pomlad s tisočerimi vabami in klici po preroditvi«. ²⁶

Z osamljenostjo je povezan tudi izrazit občutek odtujenosti. Slednjega je Rebor morda najbolj nazorno izrazil v poznem ciklu *Curriculum vitae* iz leta 1955, v katerem pa je opisan, kot nakazuje že sam naslov, potek pesnikovega življenja do leta '29, ko se je odločil, da stopi v duhovniški stan. V 9. pesmi ali bolje fragmentu omenjenega cikla, se pesnik pritožuje nad »skrito napako«, ki ga je mučila že od predvojnih let, in sicer občutkom, da je »zgrešil planet!«: svet, v katerem mu je bilo usojeno živeti, mu je bil namreč popolnoma in brezupno tuj.²⁷ Pesnik in kritik Franco Fortini je odtujenost, ki predstavlja eno izmed osrednjih tem Reborove prve zbirke, označil kot posledico »izmikanja realnosti«:²⁸ pesnikovo odtujenost povzroča namreč stvarnost sama, ki se mu absurdno izmika in odteguje, kot nazorno prikazujejo npr. naslednji verzi: »Oh spreminjanje stvari, ki jih gledam / in si jih želim! / Oh spreminjanje življenja, ki ga čutim / in si ga želim! / [...] a kar me vabi od daleč, / se mi potem izmakne: / in ko grem mimo, mi ne ostane nič.«²⁹ Sicer pa je opis podobnega pojava izmikanja realnosti in njegovih posledic mogoče zaslediti tudi pri Kosovelu, npr. v pesmi s pomenljivim naslovom *Sam*: »Svet se je čudno daleč pomaknil, / blodiš in tavaš kakor izgubljen, / vse je odplaval, sam ne veš kam. / [...] O zakričal bi, da bi odmevalo, / [...] pa se bojim, da sam bi ostal / s potisočerjeno praznoto.«³⁰ Kot dokazujejo ravnokar citirani verzi, je pri Kosovelu motiv osamljenosti in odtujenosti zelo pogosto povezan s strahom pred tišino ali še huje pred konvencionalnimi in neiskrenimi besedami, ki jih pesnik občuti kot najhujšo negacijo slehernega pristnega človeškega stika: ko »vsak zase / skriva poraze svojih iskanj« (*Zbrani*),³¹ ko »govorimo zaviti, / skriti«, ko »nismo odkriti« (*Solze mask*),³² ali pa ko celo »sami ne čujemo / svoje besede« (*Pesem iz kaosa*),³³ smo si tujci, se pravi, da smo zgrešili prvi in najvažnejši cilj Človeka.

Od tod do občutka totalne brezciljnosti pa je potreben le majhen korak. V razglašanju eksistencialnega nesmisla sta oba pesnika radikalna in do krutosti eksplicitna: »Nič, obupen nič, / odsekan štor«³⁴ (*A L.*) pravi Rebor, ki med drugim tu spet uporabi ekspresionistično metaforo mrtvega drevesa in ki mu Kosovel kot v nekakšnem idejnem odmevu odgovori: »Iskanje, stremljenje / zaman« (*Bedno življenje, I.*) »Iz tihe praznote raste Nič« (*Večer pred zimo*).³⁵

Toda bistven pri ekspresionizmu je predvsem občutek notranje razklanosti, ki izvira iz nerešljive disharmonije med pesnikom in svetom. Tematika razklanosti in disharmonije je ključnega pomena, saj je ravno ta konfliktnost glavni izvor ekspresionistične umetnosti. V tem pogledu bom pri Kosovelu navedla le dva citata: preznane začetne verze *Moje pesmi*, ki zvenijo kot nekakšen programski manifest ekspresionistične lirike: »Moja pesem je eksplozija, / divja raztrganost. Disharmonija,« in nič manj zgovorno izjavo: »Konflikt bistvo umetniškega dela« (*Mislím*).³⁶ Tudi glede Rebore gotovo ne primanjkuje izjav, izpovedovanj in analiz pesnikovih notranjih protislovij, ki so nedvomno tudi v tem primeru osrednja tema njegove poezije in obenem glavni povod zanjo. »Protislovje« oz. »kontrast med zunanjim in notranjim, med navideznim in bistvenim, med čutnim in duhovnim, med omejenim in neomejenim«, je po mnenju kritika Vallija najvidnejša »stalnica v Reborejevi poeziji«. ³⁷ Za izražanje tega konflikta se pesnik skoraj obsesivno poslužuje retorične figure antiteze in, kot je v svojem temeljnem eseju o Reborovem jezikovnem ekspresionizmu osvetlil kritik Bandini, predvsem primerjav, ki temeljijo na sopostavljanju abstraktnih in konkretnih pojmov.³⁸ Toda podobno kot Kosovel se je jedra in navdiha lastne poezije zavedal tudi pesnik sam, kot priča pismo iz leta 1911: »Bijem se v nasprotjih, med večnim in minljivim, med tem, kar čutim (in ljubim) kot potrebno in tem, kar bi želel, da bi ne bilo, med možnostjo in udejanjenjem, med obvladljivim in izmuzljivim, med kovačevo grobstvo in vzkipljivostjo nestrpnega. [...] Če bom kdaj objavil svoje lirične fragmente – svojo grozljivo *poezijo* – boste v njih občutili vsa ta nasprotja.«³⁹

Takšno, v marsičem ekstremno stanje disociacije subjekta je seveda terjalo katarzično rešitev, le-ta pa v ekspresionistični literaturi odgovarja dvojni tipologiji, saj se izraža po eni strani v povelečevanju odrešilne vloge poezije in preroške funkcije pesnika, po drugi strani pa v oznanjevanju zatonah zahodnega sveta in rojstva novega sveta in človeka.

Kosovel je temo orfejskega upora proti nesmislu in kaosu⁴⁰ in borbobodrilne vloge pesnika obravnaval v številnih pesmih,⁴¹ med katerimi je ena izmed najbolj izrazito programskih znana *Stopil je pesnik mlad na Parnas*, v kateri avtor poziva pesnike-marionete, naj stopijo s Parnasa, kjer je Muza »v molk [...] odeta«, in naj se borijo: »Jaz te kličem, poet: Stopi dol / med ostre ritme, boritve, / prebudi, prebudi se / iz svoje tihe molitve!« V pesmi *Pred bariero* je poziv k boju še bolj neposreden: »Bratje borilci, z mano naprej!«, istočasno pa citirani verz uvaja tudi motiv bratstva med ljudmi (z veliko začetnico), katerim je zaupana velika naloga gradnje novega sveta. Značilni ekspresionistični motiv novega Človeka in bratstva med ljudmi, ki izhaja iz strašne izkušnje prve svetovne vojne in ki ga je nekako anticipiral že Werflov pred in medvojni humanitarizem (v tem smislu sta zelo zgovorna že sama naslova Werflovih pesniških zbirk *Wir sind*, 1913, in *Einander*, 1915), se je v ekspresionistični liriki izrazil tudi z opuščanjem zaimka »jaz« v prid množinskega »mi«. To je opazno tudi v Kosovelovi poeziji, npr. v pesmi *Naš spev*, kjer je množinski »mi« zopet v funkciji oznanjevalsko-aktivistične vsebine o »himni boja« in o »strastnih«, »nekrotnih« borcih, ki jim v srcu gori »kaos ognjak.«⁴² Podoben premik izraža

tudi naslov druge Reborove zbirke, *Canti anonimi* (Anonimni spevi, cit.), ki so izšli leta 1922. Folco Portinari je »anonimnost« Reborovih spevov eksplicitno povezal s tragično pesnikovo vojno izkušnjo, ki naj bi »neizbežno privedla [...] do preseganja osebne dimenzije« in potrebe po prikazovanju »vseh zgod in nezgod vseh ljudi tedanjega časa«. ⁴³ Kar se pa tiče orfejske tematike, je le-ta v Reborovih pesmih sicer prisotna, a le kot nekakšen daljni odmev. V LXIII. pesmi prve zbirke (cit., str. 104–106) so npr. pesniki definirani kot »borci« in »heroji«, ⁴⁴ a celotna vsebina zveni v primerjavi z resnično borbenimi Kosovelovimi pesmimi kar precej nebulozno. Tudi vera v preroško in odrešilno funkcijo poezije je pri Rebori manj prepričljiva in bolj abstraktna kot pri Kosovelu, čeprav je morda v pesmi XLIX (prav tam, str. 80–81) mogoče celo zaslediti sicer nekoliko meglen namig na ekspresionistični topos odhoda na pot do velika cilja novega sveta: »O poezija, / [...] ti si fanfara / si ritem poti, / [...] si radost / ki daje pogum, / [...] gotovost / novega dne.« ⁴⁵

Motiv poti je prisoten tudi v nekem Reborovem pismu iz leta 1921, v katerem pesnik izpoveduje bratu, da se »mu včasih zdi, kot da ga nekdo kliče, a ne ve, ne kdo ne čemu; kljub temu pa se odpravi na pot.« ⁴⁶ Zdi se torej, kot da je tudi Rebor občutil zavest o poti, ki jo mora prehoditi njegova generacija, kot da bi se zavedal neke velike naloge, ki naj bi bila zaupana mladim, ki so doživeli in preživeli tragedijo prve svetovne vojne: »Ko v povprečju se mi čas izteka,« pravi v pesmi iz leta 1926, »že čakam, da glas zadoni / *Clemente!* Ne odlašaj! Začni! / Izpolni nalogo človeka...« ⁴⁷ Tudi v tem primeru je mogoč paralelizem s Kosovelom, saj, kot ugotavlja Kralj, so tipični elementi ekspresionistične predstave »velike poti« prisotni tudi v njegovem tekstu *Spomladi odjadramo!*, ki je izšel leta 1922 kot uvodnik v prvo številko lista »Lepa Vida«. Kraljev nadaljnji komentar glede omenjenega teksta pa lahko mirne duše apliciramo tudi na prejšnja Reborova citata: »Tu Kosovel verjetno ni imel nobene tuje spodbude, predstava (o »veliki poti«, o.p.) se je bržkone v njem razvila kongenialno, zaradi podobnih (z nemškimi ekspresionizmom namreč, o.p.) duhovnih in družbenih okoliščin.« ⁴⁸

Sorodnosti družbenega in duhovnega konteksta ne smemo spregledati, sicer bi bile določene analogije med Kosovelovo in Reborovo poezijo res nerazložljive, predvsem ob upoštevanju radikalne različnosti ali celo antitečnosti njune psihologije, svetovnega nazora in življenjskih izbir. Parabola ekspresionistične faze se kljub tem korenitim razlikam pri obeh avtorjih kronološko in idejno zaključí na presenetljivo podoben način, in sicer s preokrobo strašne katastrofe, iz katere se bo rodil nov svet bratstva. Še najbolj pa preseneča dejstvo, da sta se oba avtorja osredotočila na motiv katastrofalne povodnji: Kosovel v ciklu *Tragedija na oceanu*, ki predstavlja morda vrh njegove ekspresionistične lirike, Rebor pa v pesmi s sicer zelo medlim naslovom *Versi* iz – verjetno – leta 1926 ali '27. Obravnavo motivno-tematskih podobnosti med Kosovelovo in Reborovo poezijo naj torej zaključim s citatom zaključnih verzov ravnokar navedene Reborove pesmi: »Odtogle bodo vode / z blagih domovin, / spregovorilo bo, kar zdaj molči, / razjasnile se bodo poti. // Iz stare snovi / nastal bo nov svet / [...] Mnogo skrite dobrote / si ne upa na dan: / čaka, da se človeškemu odgovoru / odzove srce.« ⁴⁹ Težko pričakovani človeški odgovor pa je seveda: bratstvo. ⁵⁰

Sedaj pa še nekaj besed o slogovnih karakteristikah Kosovelove in Reborove ekspresionistične poezije. Za Kosovelovo ekspresionistično liriko so značilne razne retorično-stilistične rešitve, ki so dejansko tipične tudi za nemški ekspresionizem, kot npr. eksplozivne metafore, kričeči barvni kontrasti, raba čustveno nabitih, intenzivnih glagolov in nasplošno čim bolj ekspresivnih podob in besed, geminacija oz. podvojitve ali celo potrojitev besede, sintagme ali celo verza, hiperboličnost in še marsikaj drugega,⁵¹ po formi pa so te pesmi še vedno tradicionalne. Resnična formalna inovativnost je namreč v Kosovelovi poeziji očitna šele v fazi *Konsov* in *Integralov*, za katere so značilni nominalni stil, katahrestična montaža in raba paralingvističnega materiala; vendar pa Kosovel pobude za te prelomne inovacije ni dobil pri nemških ekspresionistih, pač pa pri drugih evropskih avantgardah. A tu me zanima predvsem Ocvirkova ugotovitev, da se Kosovel »od nemških ekspresionistov razlikuje po preprostosti in čustveni pristnosti, saj ni nikjer nabrekel« ne »nasilno patetičen«.⁵² Ravno v tem pa je tudi najvidnejša razlika med Kosovelovim in Reborovim stilom. Slednji je namreč kar se da nabrekel, pesnikovo izražanje je čim bolj napeto, prisiljeno, krčevito. Jezik je skrajno napet, sintaktično skrotovičen in morfološko deformiran; leksika pa je razpeta med stilistično nezaznamovanimi izrazi in kopicjo nekongruentnih arhaizmov, dantizmov, tehnicizmov. Nasilje, ki ga Reborova izvaja nad jezikom, je v funkciji izražanja lastne duhovne razklanosti, tako da se bralcu zdi, da je jezikovno zmaličenje in izkrivljanje obupen poskus posnoviti, kar je duhovno, in poduhoviti, kar je materialno. Reborovi stavki in besede učinkujejo kot jezikovni ekvivalent deformiranih teles in likov ekspresionističnega slikarstva, ali pa kot stilistični *pendant* ekspresionističnega krika. Potencialno pomirjujoči učinek tudi pri Reborovi še tradicionalne forme⁵³ pa dodatno razblini bogat repertoar podob in metafor, ki odgovarjajo ekspresionističnemu načelu estetike grdega.

Na začetno vprašanje, ali obstaja italijanski ekspresionizem, lahko torej na podlagi navedenega odgovorim na sledeči način: o pravem italijanskem ekspresionističnem gibanju – v smislu zgodovinske avantgarde – gotovo ni mogoče govoriti, tudi zato ne, ker je bil italijanskim sodobnikom nemški ekspresionizem popolnoma ali večinoma tuj. To pa ne izključuje prisotnosti izrazitih ekspresionističnih prvin v delih posameznih italijanskih avtorjev, pri čemer včasih presenetljive analogije z nemškimi oz. slovenskimi ekspresionisti izvirajo iz skupne zaznave kulturno-zgodovinske krize tedanje zahodne civilizacije.

OPOMBE

¹ C. Segre – C. Martignoni, *Testi nella storia, La letteratura italiana dalle Origini al Novecento, 4 – Il Novecento*, Mondadori, Milano 2001, str. 492. Prevodi vseh italijanskih citatov so moji. Prevodi Reborovih verzov so zgolj informativni.

² L. Kralj, *Ekspresionizem*, DZS, Ljubljana 1986, str. 72.

³ C. Segre – C. Martignoni, cit. str. 507. Med drugimi ekspresionistično usmerjenimi »vociani« kritika običajno navaja predvsem Giovannija Boineja in Piera Jahiera, občasno in vsekakor obrobno pa Dina Campano in Scipia Slataperja.

⁴ C. Rebora, *Frammenti lirici*, Libreria della Voce, Firenze 1913; *Canti anonimi*, Il Convegno editoriale, Milano 1922; *Poesie sparse (1913–1927)*, v: Clemente Rebora, *Le Poesie (1913–1947)*, ur. Piero Rebora, Vallecchi, Firenze 1947; *Lettere I (1893–1930)*, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, Roma 1976.

Citati Reborovih pesmi so iz knjige: C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, All'insegna del pesce d'oro, Milano 1961.

⁵ S. Kosovel, »Kritika, gibalo življenja v umetnosti«, v: ZD, III, DZS 1977, str. 210.

⁶ Idem, str. 12–20.

⁷ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, str. 27.

⁸ C. Rebora, *Lettere I (1893–1927)*, str. 327. V izvirmiku: »(Chi di noi potrà o avrà coraggio di rimanere), o finirà pazzo o espanderà un'enorme incandescenza«.

⁹ C. Rebora, *Frammenti lirici*.

¹⁰ Pietro Rebora, »Clemente Rebora e la sua prima formazione esistenzialista«, v: *Clemente Rebora*, All'insegna del pesce d'oro, Milano 1960, str. 88.

¹¹ Prim. L. Kralj, *Ekspressionizem*, str. 41 in 167.

¹² S. Kosovel, ZD, III, cit. str. 113–114.

¹³ S. Kosovel, ZD, II, DZS 1974, str. 33.

¹⁴ Idem, str. 74.

¹⁵ C. Rebora, »Per un Leopardi mal noto«, v: *Omaggio a Clemente Rebora*, Bologna 1971, str. 153. Zanimivo je dejstvo, da je Reborova polemika proti mehanizaciji človeških odnosov in družbe zelo podobna izjavi Kurta Pinthusa, urednika najbolj znane antologije ekspresionistične poezije (*Menschheitsdämmerung. Symphonie jüngster Dichtung*, 1920), ki je v spremni besedi pripisal natanek ekspresionističnega gibanja med drugim tudi »človeški ureditvi, ki je v celoti nagrmadena na mehaničnosti in konvencionalnosti.« (citirano v: L. Kralj, *Ekspressionizem*, str. 20).

¹⁶ Glede motiva velemesta v nemškem ekspresionizmu prim. *Deutsche Großstadt – Lyrik vom Naturalismus bis zur Gegenwart*, ur. Wolfgang Rothe, Reclam, Stuttgart 1978, str. 14–21.

¹⁷ V izvirmiku: »belva in una gabbia chiusa«, »il vario contrasto / della carne e del cuore«, »il marcio del tempo«, »un' eletta dottrina«, »un'immortale bellezza«.

¹⁸ V izvirmiku: »ottenebrato / il mio volto«, »la verità della vita«, »canzone appassionata«, »un rider sento d'uomini e di donne / che nel lavoro preparan le voglie«.

¹⁹ V izvirmiku: »il marcio« (cit., XIV, str. 27), »fogna« (X, 21), »fanghiglia« (VI, 15), »sfasciume« (XXXVI, 58), »pattume«, »rogne«, »rifiuti«, »rivoli di spurghi« (LXIX, 114).

²⁰ C. Rebora, *Lettere I (1893–1930)*. V izvirmiku: »a Milano [...], ove l'aria pare viziata e impura come il fiato di un'ammalata« (str.5), »Milano che pare ora un ventre enorme; e pute tosto che si risveglia« (str.29).

²¹ S. Kosovel, ZD, III, cit., str. 339.

²² S. Kosovel, ZD, II, cit. str. 496–497.

²³ Glede motiva drevesa v Kosovelovi ekspresionistični liriki glej F. Zadravec, *Srečko Kosovel 1904–1926*, Lipa–ZTT, Koper–Trst 1986, str. 81–83.

²⁴ *Kakor drevo, ki se strele boji*, ZD, I, DZL, Ljubljana 1964, str. 127.

²⁵ Idem, str. 367.

²⁶ C. Rebora, *Lettere I (1893–1930)*, str. 63. V izvirmiku: »Ho sofferto e soffro indicibilmente«, »son rimasto come un albero sfrondata, che proprio ora si spoglia e tutto isterilisce quando intorno gli fluttua la primavera con mille inviti e richiami di rinascenza«.

²⁷ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, str. 278. V izvirmiku: »guasto occulto«, »ho sbagliato pianeta!«.

²⁸ F. Fortini, »Frammenti lirici di Clemente Rebora«, v: *Letteratura italiana. Le opere, IV – Il Novecento*, ur. A. Asor Rosa, Einaudi, Torino 1995, str. 246–255.

²⁹ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, pesem LI, str. 87. V izvirniku: »Oh il variar delle cose ch'io guardo, / e le vorrei! / Oh il variar della vita ch'io sento, / e la vorrei! / [...] quel che da lungi m'invita, / va sempre più in là: / e nulla è mio al passaggio.«

³⁰ S. Kosovel, ZD, I, str. 358.

³¹ Idem, str. 353.

³² S. Kosovel, ZD, II, str. 147.

³³ Idem, str. 159.

³⁴ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, str. 181. V izvirniku: »Nulla, più nulla, / ceppo reciso.«

³⁵ S. Kosovel, ZD, I, str. 261, 297.

³⁶ Idem, str. 229 in ZD, III, str. 108.

³⁷ D. Valli, *Anarchia e misticismo nella poesia italiana del primo Novecento*, Milella, Lecce, 1973, str. 288–289.

³⁸ F. Bandini, »Elementi di espressionismo linguistico in Rebora«, v: *Ricerche sulla lingua poetica contemporanea. Rebora, Saba, Ungaretti, Montale, Pavese*, več avtorjev, Quaderni del circolo filologico linguistico padovano, Padova 1966, str. 3–35.

³⁹ C. Rebora, *Le lettere I (1893–1930)*, str. 105–106. V izvirniku: »Mi sbatto nel contrasto fra l'eterno e il transitorio, fra quello che sento (e amo) necessario e quello che vorrei non fosse, fra la potenza e l'atto, fra la cosa conosciuta e il lasciarla partire, fra la rozzezza del fabbro e la permalosità di un insofferente. [...] S'io pubblicherò alcuni pochi frammenti lirici – orribili come *poesia* – rivedrà codesti contrasti.«

⁴⁰ »Kaos« je ena izmed ključnih besed ekspresionizma, vendar pa je v Reborovih delih iz obravnavanega obdobja prisotna le enkrat, in sicer v krajši pesniški prozi *Fonte nella macerie* (Vodnjak med razvalinami, 1915), in sicer v stavku: »Obelisco del caos, il campanile muto« (Obelisk kaosa, nemi zvonik), v: *Le poesie 1913–1957*, str. 197.

⁴¹ Glede orfejske in oznanjevalske tematike v Kosovelovi poeziji glej. F. Zadravec, *Srečko Kosovel 1904–1926*, str. 117–122.

⁴² S. Kosovel, ZD, I, str. 230, 243, 228.

⁴³ F. Portinari, »Milano«, v: *Letteratura italiana. Storia e geografia, III, L'età contemporanea*, ur. A. Asor Rosa, Einaudi, Torino 1989, str. 261. V izvirniku: »(lo spettacolo tragico) può solo condurre [...] a un superamento della dimensione personale«, »tutta la storia, di tutti gli uomini del suo tempo«.

⁴⁴ V izvirniku: »combattenti«, »eroi«.

⁴⁵ V izvirniku: »O poesia, / [...] sei la fanfara / che ritma il cammino, / [...] sei la letizia / che incuora il vicino, / [...] sei la certezza / del grande destino«.

⁴⁶ C. Rebora, *Le lettere I (1893–1930)*, str. 410. V izvirniku: »Mi pare poi, a volte, d'essere chiamato, e non so da chi né per cosa; in ogni modo rispondo, e m'incammino da qualche parte«.

⁴⁷ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, str. 190. V izvirniku: »Mentre lavoro nei miei giorni scarsi, / mi pare deva echeggiar imminente / una gran voce chiamando : *Clemente!* / Per un'umana impresa ch'è da farsi...«

⁴⁸ L. Kralj, *Ekspresionizem*, str. 182–183.

⁴⁹ C. Rebora, *Poesie sparse (1913–1927)*, str. 191–192. V izvirniku: »Decresceranno le acque, / emergeranno patrie pie, / parlerà ciò che più tacque, / si chiariranno le vie. // Il vecchio mondo disfatto / materia al nuovo darà / [...] C'è tanta bontà nascosta / che non osa uscir fuori: / attende s'aprano i cuori / a un'umana risposta.«

⁵⁰ Idem, str. 193.

⁵¹ Za analizo Kosovelovega ekspresionističnega stila prim. F. Zadavec, *Srečko Kosovel 1904–1926*, str. 123–135.

⁵² S. Kosovel, ZD, II, opomba na str. 647.

⁵³ Glede problema forme v prvi Reborovi zbirki glej P. Giovannetti, »I 'Frammenti lirici' di Clemente Rebora: questioni metriche«, v: »Autografo«, III, 8, str. II–35. Kar se pa tiče Reborovega jezikovnega ekspresionizma, glej F. Bandini, »Elementi di espressionismo linguistico in Rebora«.

■ POVZETEK

UDK 821.131.1.09-1 Reboro C.:821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Kosovel, Srečko / italijanska poezija / Reboro, Clemente / ekspresionizem / literarni vplivi

Na vprašanje, ali obstaja italijanski ekspresionizem, sodobna italijanska literarna kritika odgovarja pritrdilno, saj pripisuje delom mladih literatov, ki so začeli objavljati v florentinski reviji *La voce* (1908–1914, 1914–1916) in so zato znani pod imenom »i **vociani**«, **izrazite ekspresionistične slogovne in tematske značilnosti**. Kritika Segre in Martignoni (*Testi nella storia 4, La letteratura italiana dalle Origini al Novecento*, 2001) trdita celo, da so »**najboljši 'vociani'** predstavljali resnično literarno avantgardo predvojnega obdobja⁵⁰. Navedena ocena zveni tendenciozno in je verjetno ideološko pogojena; po drugi strani pa se poraja vprašanje, ali ni morda nekoliko preveč radikalna tudi trditev, da »**italijanska literatura nima nobene tekstualne baze, da bi jo lahko označili za ekspresionistično**« (Lado Kralj, *Ekspresionizem*, 1986).

V svojem referatu skušam načeti vprašanje o upravičenosti oz. neupravičenosti zgoraj navedenih ocen o obstoju italijanskega ekspresionizma. Kot eksemplaričen primer (domnevnega) italijanskega ekspresionizma navajam enega izmed najbolj uglednih in tipičnih »**vocianov**«, **milanskega pesnika** Clementeja Reboro (1885–1957). Pisma in pesmi, ki jih je napisal do leta 1926 oz. 1927, sem analizirala in jih primerjala s Kosovelovim opusom. Vodilo moje komparativne analize je bilo seveda iskanje skupnih in sorodnih ekspresionističnih prvin.

Zaradi potrebe po sintezi sem svojo primerjalno analizo z vsebinskega vidika omejila na tri tematske sklope, ki so najbolj značilni za literarni ekspresionizem, in sicer: prvič, zavest o krizi in polemika proti sodobni civilizaciji; drugič, občutek osamljenosti in samote, bivanjskega nesmisla, odtujenosti, notranje disharmonije in razklanosti, izgube identitete, skratka, t.i. »**disociacije subjekta**«; tretjič, **reakcije na zgoraj navedeno počutje, se pravi po eni strani poveליčevanje preroške funkcije pesnika in odrešilne vloge poezije**, po drugi strani pa oznanjevanje zatona sodobne civilizacije in rojstva novega sveta ter novega človeka.

Rezultati analize so pokazali, da so v Reborovi poeziji prisotne vse zgoraj navedene tematike in motivi; včasih je podobnost s Kosovelovimi pesmimi celo presenetljiva (npr. motiv katastrofalne povodnji in rojstva novega sveta).

Slogovna analiza pa še dodatno krepi tezo o Reborovem ekspresionizmu.

Kaže pa, da Rebor – kot tudi drugi »vociani« – **(nasprotno od Kosovela)** ni poznal nemškega ekspresionizma. Poleg tega pa sta se literarna izkušnja »vocianov« **in pojav nemškega ekspresionizma razvila istočasno, kar glede na** slabo obveščenost italijanskih književnikov o nemški sodobni literaturi še dodatno izključuje možnost kakršnega koli vpliva nemškega ekspresionizma na »vociane«.

Na začetno vprašanje lahko torej verjetno odgovorimo na sledeči način: o ekspresionizmu kot pravem literarnem gibanju v Italiji ni mogoče govoriti; mogoče pa je govoriti o močni prisotnosti ekspresionističnih prvin pri posameznih avtorjih. Njihove včasih presenetljive analogije z nemškim oz. slovenskim ekspresionizmom izvirajo iz skupne zaznave kulturno-zgodovinske krize tedanje zahodne civilizacije.

SODELAVCI

Darja Betocchi poučuje italijanski jezik in književnost na Državnem znanstvenem liceju Franceta Prešerna v Trstu in se ukvarja z literarnim prevajanjem slovenskih avtorjev v italijanščino (zadnji prevod: M. Sosič, *Ballerina, ballerina*, 2005). Trenutno pripravlja doktorsko disertacijo, v kateri ob problemu prevodov Kosovelove poezije v italijanščino obravnava tudi njihovo recepcijo v italijanskem kulturnem prostoru.

Marijan Dovič dela kot mladi raziskovalec na Inštitutu za slovensko literaturo in literarne vede ZRC SAZU. Že kot študent primerjalne književnosti in slovenščine na ljubljanski Filozofski fakulteti je objavljial kritične eseje in članke v strokovnih in znanstvenih revijah ter sodeloval na različnih konferencah. Predvsem ga zanimajo sodobne systemske teorije literature, literarno vrednotenje in literarni kanon. Zanima se tudi za zgodovinsko avantgardo (Kosovel, Podbevšek) in literaturo 19. stoletja (Trdina). Leta 2004 je v zbirki *Studia litteraria* objavil teoretični prvenec z naslovom *Systemske in empirične obravnave literature*. Trenutno raziskuje problematiko avtorstva in razvoj vloge slovenskega literarnega proizvajalca od razsvetljenstva do danes. Poleg tega se ukvarja z uredniškim delom, kot izvajalec in skladatelj pa tudi z jazz glasbo.

Alenka Jovanovski, mlada raziskovalka na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani, je objavljala članke in besedila v različnih strokovnih in znanstvenih revijah, leta 2001 pa je izdala knjigo *Temni gen*. V svojem znanstvenem delu se osredotoča na problem estetskega izkustva v poeziji v povezavi z mističnim izkustvom, ob tem pa piše tudi literarne kritike, večinoma o sodobni slovenski poeziji.

Marko Juvan je raziskovalec na Inštitutu za slovensko literaturo in literarne vede ZRC SAZU, profesor literarne teorije in slovenske književnosti na Univerzi v Ljubljani. Iz novejših objav: *Intertekstualnost* (2000); "On Literariness: From Post-Structuralism to Systems Theory", *Comparative Literature and Comparative Cultural Studies* (2003); »O usodi 'velikega' žanra«, *Kako pisati literarno zgodovino danes: razprave*, ur. D. Dolinar, M. Juvan (2003); "Literary Self-Referentiality and the Formation of the National Literary Canon", *Neohelicon* 31.1 (2004), "Spaces of Intertextuality, the Intertextuality of Space", *Literature and Space: Spaces of Transgressiveness* ur. J. Škulj, D. Pavlič (2004); "Generic identity and intertextuality", *CLCWeb* 7.1 (2005). Ukvarja se z literarno in kulturno teorijo (medbesedilnost, literarni diskurz, kulturna identiteta, literarno polje, kanon, literarno zgodovino, pisarje, genologija), z evropsko romantiko in slovensko književnostjo 20. stoletja.

Matevž Kos je docent na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani. Doslej je izdal štiri knji-

ge: *Prevzetnost in pristranost* (1996), *Kritike in refleksije* (2000), *Poskusi z Nietzschejem: Nietzsche in ničejanstvo v slovenski literaturi* (2003), *Branje po izbiri* (2004). Pripravil in komentiral je tudi nekaj antologijskih izborov (V. Taufer, S. Kosovel, F. Nietzsche, *The Slovenian Essay of the Nineties*, *Mi se vrnemo zvečer: Antologija mlade slovenske poezije 1990–2003*). Področja raziskovanja: Nietzsche in slovenska literatura, literatura in filozofija, modernizem in postmodernizem, sodobna slovenska literatura. Ukvarja se tudi z literarno kritiko in esejistiko. V devetdesetih letih je bil glavni urednik revije *Literatura*.

Boris A. Novak je pesnik, dramatik, esejist, prevajalec, mladinski pisatelj ter profesor na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani. L. 1991 je bil gostujoči profesor za poezijo na Univerzi Tennessee (Chattanooga) v ZDA. Doslej je objavil 61 knjig, med njimi številne leposlovne. Osnovna področja njegovega strokovnega dela so primerjalna verzologija (*Po-etika forme*, 1997, *Sonet*, 2004), srednjeveška in renesančna književnost ter simbolizem (*Simbolistična lirika*, 1997). Njegove pesmi in igre so prevedene v mnoge jezike. Novak prevaja iz francoščine (S. Mallarmé, P. Valéry, P. Verlaine, E. Jabès), angleščine (S. Heaney), nizozemščine (M. van Paemel) in južnoslovanskih jezikov (J. Osti). Izdal je obsežno antologijo *Moderna francoska lirika* ter prvi slovenski izbor lirike staroprovansalskih trubadurjev. Za svoje dosežke je prejel številna priznanja, med drugim *Zlati znak* Znanstveno-raziskovalnega centra Slovenske akademije znanosti in umetnosti za znanstveno delo s področja teorije verza (1998).

Darja Pavlič je docentka za primerjalno književnost na Oddelku za slovanske jezike s književnostjo na Pedagoški fakulteti v Mariboru, kjer predava svetovno književnost in literarno teorijo. Od leta 2003 je glavna in odgovorna urednica revije *Primerjalna književnost*, ki jo izdaja Slovensko društvo za primerjalno književnost. Objavila je knjigo *Funkcije podoba v poeziji K. Koviča, D. Zajca in G. Strniše* (2003). Raziskovalno se ukvarja predvsem z literarno retoriko, romantiko, moderno poezijo in slovensko poezijo.

Katia Pizzi je diplomirala na univerzi v Bologni in na Cambridgeu. Trenutno predava na Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London. Veliko piše o literarni, zgodovinski in kulturnozgodovinski problematiki Trsta in severovzhodne italijanske meje (glej predvsem njeno delo: *A City in Search of an Author: the Literary Identity of Trieste* (2001)). Ukvarja se s kulturnim spominom, nacionalizmom, futurizmom (zlasti z likovno umetnostjo in igro) in popularno kulturo (zlasti s stripi in otroško literaturo).

Božena Tokarz je redna profesorica na Inštitutu za slovansko filologijo Šlezjske univerze (Poljska), vodja Oddelka za literarno teorijo in prevajalstvo, raziskovalka poljske in slovenske poezije 20. stoletja. Ukvarja se s primerjalno književnostjo, teorijo literature in prevajanja ter zgodovino

poetike. Napisala je več kot 100 razprav, člankov, recenzij in literarnih esejev, objavljenih na Poljskem, v Sloveniji in drugod, in sicer o spremembah umetnostnih oblik v primerjalni perspektivi (mdr. v slovenski in poljski poeziji), o teoriji prevoda, kulturnem dialogu v književnosti in literarni kritiki. Je avtorica več knjig, med njimi: *Teoria literatury. Metodologia badań literackich* (1980; soavtor: S. Zabierowski); *Mit literacki. Od mitu rzeczywistości do zmiany substancji poetyckiej* (1983); *Poetyka Nowej Fali* (1990); *Wzorzec, podobieństwo, przypominanie* (1998); *Między destrukcją a konstrukcją. O poezji Srečka Kosovela w kontekście konstruktywistycznym* (2004).

Janez Vrečko je redni profesor na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani. Ukvarja se z zgodovinskimi avantgardami, zgodovino poetik, antičnim epom, tragedijo in romanom, literarno teorijo itn. Doslej je objavil več knjig: *Misel o moderni umetnosti* (1981), *Srečko Kosovel, slovenska zgodovinska avantgarda in zenitizem* (1986), *Ep in tragedija* (1994), *Atiška tragedija* (1997), *Med antiko in avantgardo* (2002, 1. ponatis 2003). V domačem in tujem znanstvenem in strokovnem tisku je objavil več kot 200 naslovov in sodeloval na številnih domačih in tujih znanstvenih srečanjih. Več kot dve leti je študijsko in kot gostujoči profesor prebil na tujih univerzah (München, Salzburg, Bruselj, Dunaj, Katowice).

KOSOVEL'S POETICS

Edited by
Janez Vrečko
Boris A. Novak
Darja Pavlič

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EDITORS' PREFACE

Before his tragic death at only 22, Srečko Kosovel (1904-1926) created an extraordinarily rich poetic opus, ranging from mellow, late symbolist poems, celebrating the beauty of his native Karst landscape, to radical experiments with poetic language, parallel to futurism, constructivism and dadaism; it encompasses the articulation of profound and painful existential experience and direct political messages prophesying the brotherhood of humanity and all things under the stars.

In September 2004, to honour the centennial of the poet's birth, the Slovenian Comparative Literature Association and the Department of Comparative Literature and Literary Theory at the Faculty of Arts organised a symposium, as part of the Vilenica International Literature Festival. We would like to thank the organisers of this important event for kindly inviting, for the second year running, literary historians to Lipica, to the Karst, which every autumn hosts masters of the poetic word. The constructive contributions and the animated discussion that followed have confirmed our belief that Kosovel's poetics is exciting, contemporary and worthy of in-depth analyses. The contributors kindly responded to our invitation to expand their papers and adapt them for publication in a special issue of *Primerjalna književnost*. Besides the contributors, there are others who helped make this possible, to whom we extend our warm gratitude: Katarina Jerin and Ana Jelnikar translated not only the papers, but also quotations from Kosovel's; Philip Burt acted as lector; the two Slovenian texts were translated by Vera Troha and Niko Jež; Alenka Maček prepared the publication for print; Seta Knop contributed publication data. We would also like to thank the Scientific Institute of the Faculty of Arts, the Ministry of Culture, and the Slovenian Writers Association for their financial support for this publication, which we hope will make Kosovel's poetics more accessible to non-Slovenian readers and researchers.

* * *

The studies on the following pages approach different aspects of Kosovel's creativity: the analyses of verse, imagery and avant-garde poetic para-gen-

res are followed by papers discussing the problems of situating the poet within literary history and the literary canon, the poet's attitude towards nihilism, and readers' responses; the two closing papers examine Kosovel's poetics by placing it in the context of the simultaneous Italian, and particularly Triestine, literary scene.

In his analysis of Kosovel's verse, **Boris A. Novak** argues that the young poet, who had an inborn ear for rhythm, but was not a skilful prosodist, overcame this shortcoming in his verse by turning his errors to his advantage. **Darja Pavlič** examines the imagery in Kosovel's poetry, and concluding that it is for the most part romantic, realist, and expressionist, whereas modern figures of speech are relatively rare. In her paper, **Božena Tokarž** focuses on the recognisable characteristics of the two poetic para-genres - the *cons* poems and *Integrals* - that Kosovel introduced. The discussion by **Janez Vrečko** explores the poet's guarded attitude towards Italian futurism and Balkan zenitism, characterising his famous *cons* poems as unique, and one of the pinnacles of European literary constructivism. In the hybrid co-presence of the Kosovel's diverse poetics, **Marko Juvan** has recognised an important symptom of modernism - modernist multilingualism, relativism, ambivalence, presentism and perspectivism. **Marijan Dovič** explains how a primary role in the canonisation of Kosovel was played by other actors in the literary system, because the author left no clear plans about his legacy. **Matevž Kos** maintains that Nietzsche was not a key person to open the doors to Kosovel's poetic world. Contrary to the philosopher, the poet argues for an emphasised ethical and moral stance, because people have repeatedly to choose between good and evil, right and wrong. In her paper, **Alenka Jovanovski** examines the communicative function of the aesthetic experience and explores how Kosovel directs the reader towards a socially active role. The contribution by **Katia Pizzi** focuses on a wide range poetry produced in contemporary Trieste, thereby assessing Kosovel's position within the context of the European avant-garde. On the basis of a comparative analysis of Kosovel's work, and the poems and letters of the Milanese poet Clemente Rebora (1885-1957), **Darja Betocchi** argues that we cannot speak of a proper expressionist movement in Italy.

The editors

KOSOVEL: A GREAT POET BUT A POOR PROSODIST

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Kosovel's early poetry – and it is debatable whether the literary historicist term “early poetry” is at all fitting for a poet who died at the age of twenty-two and left behind such a vast opus – offers excellent materials for an analysis of the loosening and deterioration of the traditional metrical structures into free verse. The young poet was visibly making an effort to keep versification in check, but it kept slipping out of his control; he was desperately trying to accommodate his inner sense of poetic rhythm to rigorous prosodic designs, but his verses stand awkwardly beside the traditional metrical line; and rhyme to him was still an indispensable mark of the sheer poetic quality of a poetic text, but only rarely did he rhyme in a way that was entirely satisfying to the ear. In the whole history of Slovenian poetry there is not a more drastic instance of a “crisis in verse”, to use Mallarmé's formulation. What is a gifted young poet to do if he is not in command of the material of his art, poetic language? He must create a new language, but how? By turning flaws into virtues, defects into strengths, and by forging a new vigour out of shortcomings.

When we speak of faults, we can only do so against the backdrop of a defined system of rules. Moreover: faults as such are the outcome of a rule put into effect. A very simple truth follows from this: if we make a mistake in a given system, the most effective way to neutralise it is to repeat it. A repeated mistake is no longer a mistake; it is already a system. At the start of his poetic adventure Kosovel intuitively adhered precisely to this artistic strategy: repeating mistakes. Fashioning an artistic truth out of a formal flaw!

A beginner cannot find fresh new rhymes, so he keeps repeating the same rhyming pairs, or even resorts to repeating the same words, a procedure that was strongly discouraged by traditional poetics, which saw in it simple mechanical repetition. In Kosovel's poem *Vas za bori* (Village Behind the Pines) such repetition paradoxically enhances the meaning of a poem.

*V oklepu zelenih borovih rok
bela, zaprašena vas,
poldremajoča vas
kot ptica v varnem gnezdu rok.*

Clasped in green pine hands
a white, dusty village,
a half-drowsing village,
like a bird in a safe nest of hands.

*Sredi dehtečih borov postanem:
Ni to objem mojih rok?
Velik objem, velik obok
za takó majhno gručo otrok.*

*Za zidom cerkvenim je pokopan
nekdo. Na grobu šipek cveté.
Iz bele vasi bele poti –
in vse te poti v moje srce*

Amid the fragrant pine trees I halt:
Is **this not the embrace of my own hands?**
a big embrace, a great arch
Afor such a small group of children.

Someone is behind the church wal
On his grave a briar blossoms.
From the white village, white paths –
and all these paths lead to my heart.¹

The words *hands* and *village* are repeated more than once in the verse endings as rhyming words; the repeated words thus enter different semantic contexts and develop a set of semantic connotations that broaden the thematic field of these worn-out words far beyond the traditional *Weltschmerz* and its related poetics. Later, I will analyse this procedure to establish that what in fact we are dealing with is a quite singular re-animation of the troubadour principle of what I have referred to as *final/key words*.

Only Srečko Kosovel can get away with a word like “*bolest*” (“grief”, “affliction”, “sorrow”) in his poetry. With any other poet this word is so “heavy” it is unpalatable. Only in Kosovel’s usage is it semantically rich and diverse enough to be positively fresh. Poetic sound is always the product of meaning. Let us look at the introductory stanza in the poem *Slutnja* (A Premonition):

*Polja.
Podrtja ob cesti
Tema.
Tišina bolesi.*

*Fields.
A wrecked house by the road.
Darkness.
The silence of grief.*

Most of Kosovel’s early poems, which Slovenian literary history has somewhat loosely labelled “impressionist lyrical poetry”, formally fall within the framework of traditional versification; more precisely: they belong to the period of its disintegration and demise. These texts follow formal metrical structures based on the rules of the accentual-syllabic versification, but which have already been significantly relaxed and are leaning towards free verse.

These poems are marked by simplicity of poetic language: verse rhythm is derivative of the most common and popular metres borrowed from long tradition, euphony is characterised by hackneyed rhymes, and the poems employ the most common stanza structures. Quatrains top the list, and Kosovel seems particularly fond of joining three quatrains into a poem, this being the form he employs most frequently.

¹ All the translations of Kosovel’s poems in this paper were made with the aim of facilitating the reader’s understanding of the content of Srečko’s poems, but not the rhyme and metre. They have no pretensions to literary merit and should not be read as Kosovel’s poems translated into English. In order for this paper to make sense to an English reader, I was obliged to keep to the original syntax as closely as possible, and did so as long as this was still within bounds of intelligibility. Rendering the formal properties of the poems in translation, assuming this could even be done, would inevitably change the content of the original poems to such an extent that many of the points made by the author of this text would be lost.

A careful assessment of the rhythms in these poems gives a highly diversified picture: a more or less equal predisposition to trochaic and iambic metres, and frequent use of a trisyllabic foot, which is less usual in Slovenian poetry (dactyls, amphibrachs, and even anapests, very rarely be found in Slovenian poetry, since few Slovenian words support the anapest stress pattern). The variability of the rhythm within a poem or even within a single line renders the traditional tool of *metre* in the case of Kosovel's poetry largely useless; it seems more appropriate to adopt the term *metrical impulse*, which allows for rhythmic variation, deviation from, and even violation of, the original metrical scheme. In many poems, the metre, or rather, the metrical impulse changes from one line to the next: the scansion of one line of verse reveals a regular rhythm, but already in the next line the rhythm changes, although it may still be metrically regular. Such texts are therefore *isometric* on the level of individual verse lines and *polymetric* on the level of the poem as a whole. The rhythm of a large number of Kosovel's poems constantly changes, even within one line, so that a metrical analysis is futile.

The underlying principle of traditional versification is the subordination of syntax to external, metrical criteria; or to put it simply, the sentence needs to yield to the limitations imposed by the metrical scheme (stress pattern, number of syllables, etc.). When after a long stretch of domination, at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, metrical verse had run its course and was beginning to wear down to a cliché, poets were overcome by the need to break out of standard moulds that were stifling living inspiration. (I have deliberately used the traditional, rather sentimental word *inspiration*, because etymologically it stems from the Latin root *spirare* (= to breathe), suggesting the rhythm of lungs, blood, heart and body.) But the collapse of metrical rules, in fact, leads to the collapse of poetic language. In the organism of a line there emerges a structural vacuum, because the verse line is no longer organised by metrical laws and rules. In a sense, a regular metrical line constantly draws attention to its own poetic qualities, we could say, "sings out": *I am not prose, I am verse*. The signals of the poetic qualities in the traditional verse are regular (metrically organised) rhythm, the "jingle" of rhymes in verse endings, etc. How is a verse to prove that it is a verse, that it belongs to elevated poetry and not banal prose, if it has turned its back on its most powerful tool? The crisis of metre thus calls for a new organisational and ordering principle, a new manner of generating rhythm. The primary metre-forging function is now taken over by syntax. This development is demonstrated vividly by Kosovel's "impressionist" lyrics. In fact, it makes for the best case study within the entire history of Slovenian poetry, perhaps, to observe and understand the tectonic shift, the dramatic and far-reaching transition, from traditional metre into free verse.

The term *free verse* is dangerously misleading, suggesting as it does the illusion of complete artistic freedom, which is simply not possible in the domain of poetic language. A verse is invariably constituted through strong rhythm, be it metrically organised or organised in some other way, or it is not a verse.

Rather than repeating rhythmic and euphonious (sound) patterns characteristic of traditional verse, free verse is based on the repetition of syntactic units and words or phrases, very often functioning as rhetorical figures of *anaphora* (the repetition of the same words at the beginning of lines or sentences) and *epiphora* (the same procedure at the end of lines or sentences). This way of rhythmically organising a line, *syntactic parallelism*, in effect the same as the ancient – historically the earliest – principle of poetic language, which has come down to us, for instance, through the marvellous psalms of the Old Testament. In Kosovel's psalm-like sonnet *Želja po smrti* (Longing for Death), the anaphora *Daj* (literally = “give” or “let”, but here best translated as “grant”) is repeated as many as seven times in the introductory line with the phrase, *Daj mi, Bog* (Grant me, God):

*Daj mi, Bog, da mogel bi umreti,
tího potopiti se v temò,
še enkrat kot zvezda zažareti,
onemeti, pasti v črno dno,*

Grant me, God, that I should die,
quietly sink into the dark,
once again like a star blaze forth,
grow silent, fall to the black rock bottom,

*kjer nikogar ni in kjer ne sveti
niti ena luč in ni težkò
čakati poslednjih razodetij,
kar od vekomaj je sojeno bilò.*

Where there is no one and nothing shines
not a single light and where it is not difficult
to wait for the final revelations,
because for ever it has been destined thus.

*Daj, da stopim stran izmed ljudi,
daj, da stopim in da se ne vrnem,
daj mi milost: temò, ki teší,*

Grant me that I should step aside from people,
grant me make this step, and never return,
grant me mercy: darkness which consoles,

*da v bolečini s Tabo se strnem,
daj, da odidem od teh ljudi,
daj, da odidem in da se ne vrnem.*

so that in pain with You I merge,
grant me that I leave these people,
grant me that I leave, and never return.

An analysis of this poem reveals that a trochaic metrical pulse is undermined three times with iambically intoned lines. It also demonstrates a procedure that is commonly observed in Kosovel: the loosening or even violation of the metrical scheme established at the beginning of the poem. A rhythm that pulsates and inspired cannot but steer the poet away from metrical dictates and limitations.

Particularly interesting is Kosovel's use of rhyme: in all honesty, his rhyming dictionary is extremely poor, with a prevalence of the so-called *verbal rhymes*. (Of all the parts of speech in the Slovenian language, verbs are the easiest to rhyme because of their corresponding inflections, and easily-formed rhymes tend to be semantically – and thereby also musically – poor.) It is as if Kosovel were endlessly repeating rhymes he had learnt from the poetic canon of 19th-century Slovenian poetry. For any other, less talented poet of Kosovel's time, drawing on such a familiar and worn-out domestic stock of rhyme endings would be a sign of grossly sentimental and conservative poetics. Not so with Kosovel: in his verses, these rhymes, a hundred times used and abused, suddenly ring out in a different, fresh, and artistically authentic way. A silent, but a deep and far-reaching break was effected within traditional versification: even those inherited rhythms and rhymes were now endowed with new sound and meaning through the different use of poetic language (for in poetry, sound and meaning are always closely bound together).

One of the strategies Kosovel employed in order to overcome semantic and euphonic bareness is – paradoxically – precisely the strategy of repetition, of which we have already spoken above. A repeated mistake is no longer a mistake. A semantically and musically weak rhymed word that is repeated is no longer weak, since the changed semantic context recharges the word with a new meaning. The repetition of rhymed words, which may have initially been an expression of the poet's shortcomings and awkwardness, an inability to find a word that would rhyme, became a conscious and productive *modus operandi*. Kosovel's use of this procedure was so thoroughgoing that his poetry no longer presents us with a rhyme in the traditional sense (that is, the repetition of all the sounds following the last accented vowel in a word), but with a procedure which Italian literary theory refers to as *parole rime, end-words*, where entire words are rhymed, where repeated words stand in for rhymes. I myself have termed this *za-ključne beside* (final/key words): the *final words* in a line are rhythmically, musically and semantically *key words*. The Provençal troubadours of the 12th and 13th centuries were fond of this method, and used it in many different ways: they either repeated end-words in each stanza in the same position (at the end of the first, second, third etc. verse line) or, following a complicated key, they repeated words in varied order. The most prominent example of the latter is a *sestina*, a poetic form that was invented by Arnaut Daniel and which repeats the end-words in the order of 6 – 1 – 5 – 2 – 4 – 3. After six sestinas, six stanzas of six lines, the final tercet *tornada* usually goes back to the original order of the end-words, two in each line. With the exception of the *sestina*, which has survived thanks to Dante and Petrarch, this troubadour technique sadly disappeared from the repertoire of European poetry; how unexpected and lovely to see it reanimated by an awkward young poet from the Slovenian Karst. The following poem can serve to demonstrate Kosovel's use of end-words:

*Ne, jaz nočem še umreti,
saj imam očeta, mater,
saj imam še brate, sestre,
ljubico, prijatelje;
ne, jaz nočem še umreti.*

No, I do not want yet to die,
for I have a father, mother,
I still have brothers, sisters,
a sweetheart, friends;
no, I do not want yet to die.

*Ne, jaz nočem še umreti,
saj še sije zlato sonce,
saj mladost me drzna spremlja,
saj so cilji še pred mano;
ne, jaz nočem še umreti.*

No, I do not want yet to die,
for the golden sun still shines,
for bold youth is still with me,
for there are goals still ahead;
no, I do not want yet to die.

*Kadar pa ne bo nikogar,
staršev ne, ne bratov, sester,
ljubice, prijateljev –
in jesensko tiho soncebo
čez Kras, čez Kras sijalo,
kot bi za mano žalovalo –
res, ne bom se bal umreti,
kaj mi samemu živeti?*

But when there is no one left,
neither parents, nor brothers, sisters,
my sweetheart, friends –
and the quiet autumn sun
shines across the Karst, the Karst,
as though it was in mourning for me –
then no, I will not be afraid to die,
for why would I live alone?

The final/key words in this poem are: *to die, sisters, friends, and sun*, but other words within the lines are also repeated, as is the final line of the first two stanzas, which gives the effect of a refrain. The stanza composition of this poem is somewhat unusual: two five-line stanzas are followed

by an eight-line stanza, as though the poet had set out to write according to a plan of five-line symmetrical stanzas, but suddenly, in a flight of inspiration, prolonged the third, concluding stanza. With the exception of the last four lines, which have successive verbal rhymes (a facile and rather bombastic procedure, but in this particular instance very effective), the text is unrhymed; the absence of rhymes Kosovel compensates for with compact, metrically organised verse (trochaic octosyllabic verse, with the exception of two seven-syllable lines with the same trochaic metre). If a series of unrhymed verse lines are suddenly followed by a rhyme, the unexpectedness of this acoustic transition makes it all the more powerful; the same effect is achieved by the absence of a rhyme after a series of rhymed lines; Kosovel must have intuitively felt the poetic and emotional charge of such shifts in rhyme and metre.

Rhyme, of course, is by no means merely a euphonic device; it is also a rhythmic and semantic phenomenon. The interdependence of rhythm and rhyme (note the etymological kinship between the two words) is a marked feature of many Kosovel's texts which move away from traditional versification. In other words, in those poems where the rhythm is metrically irreproachable, Kosovel allows himself to drop rhyme, and in those texts where the poet has abandoned metrical regularity, a stronger use of rhyme makes up for the instability of rhythm. This is yet another proof of the law mentioned earlier, that a structural vacuum left behind after the collapse of the traditional system of versification needs to be filled with other structural means: if rhyme is barely audible, rhythm speaks forth; if rhythm does not flow smoothly, lines are reinforced by rhyme. On the basis of the many examples Kosovel's poetry provides, one can derive another, more general, maxim: the period of deterioration of the traditional system of versification metre and rhyme are inversely proportional to each other. The poem *Spomnim se* (I Remember) is a good example of when a reinforced metrical design (a trochaic octosyllabic line) fills the structural vacuum which is left when rhymes and symmetrical stanzaic composition are abandoned. The organisation of the poetic text is made more compact also through anaphora (*in/and; tiho, da ni /quietly, so*) and syntactic parallels.

*Spomnim se, ko sem se vrnil
in molčal sem kakor cesta,
ki vse vidi, a ne sodi.*

I remember when I returned
and was mute like the road
that sees all, but judges not.

*Tam pod tistim temnim zidom
sem poslavljaj se od tebe
in sem te težko poljubljaj
na oči otožnovdane
in na tvoje temne lase
in tajil besede rahle,
da bi Krasu bil podoben.*

There beneath that dark wall
I was taking leave of you
and heavy were my kisses
on your sad devoted eyes
and on your dark hair
and I kept tender words secret
to resemble the Karst more.

*In ko sem domov se vračal,
sem na cesti se razjokal,
tiho, da ni čulo polje,
tiho, da ni čula gmajna,
da drevo ni zaihtelo
sredi gmajne, tiho, samo.*

And on my way home,
I burst out crying on the road,
quietly, so the field could not hear,
quietly, so the woods could not hear,
so the tree did not weep
amid the woods, quietly, alone.

As an example of the reversed technique, let me cite the following poem *Mati čaka* (Mother Is Waiting), in which rhymes compensate for the absence of regular metre:

*Tujec, vidiš to luč, ki v oknu gori?
Moja mati me čaka in mene ni,
vse je tiho v noči, polje temno,
zdaj bi stopil tja, pokleknil pred njo.*

Stranger, can you see this light in the window burning?
My mother is waiting and I am not there,
everything is quiet in the night, the field dark,
I would go there now, kneel down before her.

*Mati, poglej: nič nočem več od sveta,
reci besedo, besedo, besedo od srca,
da bo v njej mirna luč in topel svit
zame, ki tavam okrog ubit, ubit.*

Mother, look: there is nothing more I want from the world,
say a word, a word, a word from the heart,
so it will hold calm light and warm gleam
for me, who am wandering around beaten, beaten.

*Joj! Ugasnila je luč. Zakaj, ne vem.
Šel bi pogledat, tujec, a zdaj ne smem.
Daj mi, da morem umreti tukaj, sedaj,
glej, meni je ugasnil edini, poslednji sijaj.*

Oh! The light has gone out. Why, I do not know.
I would want to go and see, stranger, but cannot right now.
Grant me that I should die here, now,
You see, the one, final glow has died.

The metrical impulse of this poem is trochaic, but one that undergoes numerous variations; the rhythm changes, as do the number of syllables, which vary between 10 and 15. In order to counterbalance these rhythmic fluctuations, Kosovel resorts both to consecutive rhyme, which is the simplest of rhyme schemes and the “loudest”, and to a symmetrical, regular stanza organisation. My notion of the inverse relationship between metre and rhyme in a period of deterioration of the traditional system of versification can be extended to include stanza organisation. In metrically looser poems, Kosovel and other poets of this transitional period insist on symmetrical, regular stanzas, whereas whenever a poem adheres to strict metrical composition, it allows for a more relaxed stanza composition and symmetrical stanzas give way to stanzas of different lengths, organised mainly according to the “thematic”, that is to say syntactic and semantic, aspect.

From the generic and formal point of view, many of Kosovel’s early poems are modernised ballads. It is interesting to note that Kosovel uses the title *Balada* (Ballad) for one of his short, simple and most celebrated poems:

*V jesenski tihi čas
prileti brinjevka
na Kras.*

Into the autumn quiet time
a fieldfare flies
to the Karst

*Na polju
že nikogar več ni,
le ona
preko gmajne
leti.
In samo lovec
ji sledi...*

In the field
there’s no one left,
only the bird
flying
over the woods.
And only a hunter
following it...

*Strel v tišino;
droben curek krvi;
brinjevka
obleži, obleži.*

A shot through the quiet;
a tiny trickle of blood;
the fieldfare
falls dead, falls dead.

Kosovel's combination of narrative and lyrical elements and the poem's tragic conclusion are probably why he chose the title, *A Ballad*. On the other hand, there are many poems to be found in Kosovel's work where, beside the dimensions of genre and theme, the poet also takes into account, consciously or unconsciously, the formal properties of the traditional Slovenian ballad. The best example of a ballad "proper" is the well-known poem *Bori* (Pines), which is based on the trochaic octosyllabic verse metre, universally one of the most common metres of the ballad. One other element of Kosovel's poem that falls within the characteristic features of the ballad is the use of dialogue. Instead of rhymes, the poem resorts to the principle of final/key words (*groza*/terror, *bori*/pines, *bratje*/brothers, *mati*/mother, *oče*/father); the rhetorical figures of *gmination*, the immediate repetition of a word (here, the word *bori*/pines); and the anaphora (*bori*/pines, *ali*/or, *ko da/as* though), all of which contribute toward a tighter structure.

*Bori, bori v tihi grozi,
bori, bori v nemi grozi,
bori, bori, bori, bori!*

*Bori, bori, temni bori
kakor stražniki pod goro
preko kamenite gmajne
težko, trudno šepetajo.*

*Kadar bolna duša skloni
v jasni noči se čez gore,
čujem pritajene zvoke
in ne morem več zaspati.*

»Trudno sanjajoči bori,
ali umirajo mi bratje,
ali umira moja mati,
ali kliče me moj oče?«

*Brez odgovora vršijo
kakor v ubitih, trudnih sanjah,
ko da umira moja mati,
ko da kliče me moj oče,
ko da so mi bolni bratje.*

Pines, pines in silent horror
pines, pines in mute horror,
pines, pines, pines, pines !

Pines, pines, dark pines
like guards at the foot of a mountain
across the stony woods
whisper heavily, exhausted.

When a sick soul arches
on a clear night across the mountains,
I hear stifled sounds
and can sleep no more.

"Exhausted, dreaming pines,
are my brothers dying,
is my mother dying,
is my father calling me?"

Without answer, they swish
as in beaten, spent dreams,
as though my mother were dying,
as though my father were calling me,
as though my brothers were sick.

Pines, one of Kosovel's best poems, bears suggestive evidence that the young poet had overcome his initial prosodic awkwardness with the aid of the principle of repetition, and evolved it in the direction of a deeply personal and unusually mature poetic expression.

The crown of Kosovel's mastery of traditional versification is his sonnets – fifty poems brought together in part II of *Pesmi* (*Poems*) of Srečko Kosovel's first volume of *Zbrana dela* (*Collected Works*), edited by Anton Ocvirk (DZS, 1946). Some readers will not recognise these texts as sonnets, for the quatrains are followed by the third, six-line stanza (the tercets are combined into a sextain). But even this stanzaic composition has a place within the rich and diverse storehouse of the subgenres of the sonnet form, and is not Kosovel's invention. In these poems Kosovel is striving for the historically earliest metre of the sonnet verse line – the iambic hendecasyllable. And he achieves the so-called *simplex*, as Antonio da Tempo in the 14th century has referred to the demanding organisation of rhymes ABBA ABBA CDC DCD (the envelope pattern of rhymes in the quatrains, and

interlocking pattern of rhymes in the tercets – *rime incatenate*), which is the sonnet form most frequently used by the great Slovenian Romantic poet France Prešeren, and constitutes the basic rhyming model in the history of the Slovenian sonnet form. An example of such rhyming is Kosovel's sonnet *Truden, ubit* (Tired, Spent):

*Truden, ubit grem iz dneva v večer;
na mojih ustnih ni več molitve,
v moji duši prekrute žalitve
in brez miru sem, miru ni nikjer.*

Tired, spent I go from day to evening,
on my lips there is no more prayer,
in my soul, insults too cruel
and I am without peace, there's no peace anywhere.

*Kakor da sem že izgrešil smer;
v dalji ne vidim več odrešitve,
ah, v moji duši ni več molitve
in miru več ne najdem nikjer.*

As though I have already lost the way,
in the distance I no longer see salvation,
ah, in my soul there is no more prayer
and peace is nowhere to be found.

*Dvigni se, duša pobita, steptana,
dvigni, zagori, zapoj do Boga,
da boš kot harfa prijetno ubrana
kot med večernim žarenjem srca,
da spet bom zaslutil kraljestva neznana
tam preko morij, tam onkraj sveta!*

Rise, beaten soul, down-trodden,
rise, flame up, sing forth all the way to God,
so you will be like a harp sweetly fine-tuned
as when the heart in the evening glows,
so that once again I will intuit realms unknown,
there beyond the oceans, there beyond the world!

It needs also to be said that Kosovel did not combine this rigorous rhyme scheme with iambic hendecasyllables, historically the foremost and also subsequently the most frequent sonnet metre, but instead based the metrical impulse of his sonnet on dactyls, with some digressions and some oscillation in the number of syllables per line.

Besides this variant, Kosovel also liked to employ cross rhymes in the quatrains (ABAB), and repeated rhymes (*rime replicate*: CDE CDE) or *inverse rhymes* (*rime invertite*: CDE EDC) in the tercets. It is also interesting to note that Kosovel drew on a rhyme scheme characteristic of the *French* and *English* sonnet, which is highly unusual for Slovenian poetry. Here is an example which adopts the French rhyme scheme (ABBA ABBA – or ABAB ABAB – CCD EED) – *Iz cikla: Peto nadstropje* (From the Cycle: Fifth Floor).

*V petem nadstropju so dobri ljudje,
v petem nadstropju in v vlažnih kletih,
tam se nikoli ne utrne smeh,
oči tiho, mrliško brne.*

On the fifth floor there are good people
on the fifth floor and in damp cellars,
where laughter never erupts,
the eyes silently, deathlike, whirr.

*V petem nadstropju so dobri ljudje,
v petem nadstropju in v vlažnih kletih,
tam se nikoli ne utrne smeh,
oči tiho, mrliško brne.*

On the fifth floor there are good people
on the fifth floor and in damp cellars,
where laughter never erupts,
the eyes silently, deathlike, whirr.

*In otroci, ki se rode,
kot da imajo žveplo v očeh,
brezglasno leže, zvijajoč se po tleh,
v cunje gnijoče ihte, ihte...*

And children who are born
as though with sulphur in their eyes,
lie soundlessly in convulsions on the floor,
burying their eyes in rotting rags, weeping, weeping

...

*Toda peto nadstropje in klet
kadar pregnije, se zruši svet
in stisne smeh veselih ljudi.
Tropa vojakov s puškami gre,
a še ti se nad mrliči zgroze –
kako da bi mogli streljati?*

But the fifth floor and the cellar
when rotted through, the world collapses
and crushes the laughter of cheerful people.
A troop of soldiers with rifles is coming,
but even they shudder at the sight of the corpses –
how could they possibly shoot?

In Kosovel's sonnets there are five which adopt the rhyme scheme characteristic of the so-called English sonnet (ABAB CDCD EFEF GG). The following rather bitter poem, *Gospodom pesnikom* (To Gentlemen Poets), is a good example:

*Kot v peklu zakajeni vinski kleti
od jutra zbrani pa do polnoči
pisatelji, slikarji in poeti
dušijo svežost rože in moči.*

*Obrazi njih mrtvaški so in bledi,
njih srca jih peko kot ogenj vic,
popivajo ob bedi in besedi
in javkanje, to njihov je poklic.*

*Gostilna je njihova zavetnica.
Pa naj velja še, kar je že nekdanj?
Jaz pojdem tja, ker beda in krivica
temnita zlati kraljevski sijaj,
ponižanje, trpljenje, glad in beda,
tam naj spoznanja željni duh spregleda.*

In a wine cellar smoky as hell,
from morning till midnight
writers, painters and poets are gathered,
smothering the freshness of flowers and strength.

Their faces are deathlike and pale,
their hearts smart like the fire of purgatory,
they drink over misery and talk,
and whingeing – that is their calling.

The tavern is their patroness.
Does what has always been, still to hold true?
I am going there, for misery and injustice
are dimming the golden regal glow,
humiliation, suffering, hunger and misery,
that's where any spirit thirsty for knowledge should
have its eyes opened.

Given their stanza organisation (4 – 4 – 6), it would appear that Kosovel's sonnets do not match the structure of the English sonnet (4 – 4 – 4 – 2), but with questions of poetic form, the sound aspect (in this case, the rhyme scheme) takes precedence over the graphic division or the visual make-up of the poem.

In contrast to Prešeren's exclusive use of feminine endings and rhymes in his sonnets, and all the poems written in iambic hendecasyllables, Kosovel often employs masculine endings and rhymes (or draws upon the so-called extended masculine rhyme, where the dactyl ending and rhyme replace the masculine rhyme), which has in fact been the general tendency of the Slovenian sonnet form since Prešeren. The use of masculine rhymes is one dimension in which Kosovel and other poets deviate from Prešeren's model of the sonnet, which, however, has continued to have a firm hold on many Slovenian sonneteers. It is significant that in the more socially critical and political poems (eg. in the sonnets *Revolucija/Revolution*, *Predkosilni sonnet/Pre-lunch Sonnet*, as well as in the poem above, *Iz cikla: Peto nadstropje/From the Cycle: Fifth Floor*), Kosovel uses almost exclusively masculine endings and rhymes, the tone of which is markedly sharper than that of the feminine endings and rhymes.

For Kosovel, writing sonnets was the apex of his metrical achievement; some sonnets are worthy of inclusion in an anthology of Slovenian sonnets. This would certainly apply to *Sonet smrti* (Sonnet of Death):

*In vse je nič. Te žametne oči
ki strmi v sivino,
njih temni sloj prodira med tišino
kot zvok, ki se v šumenju izgubi.*

*Te tihe, črne, žametne oči
mi s svojim temnim bleskom in milino
poljubljajo to sivo bolečino,
ki mojo dušo vsak dan bolj duši.*

And all is nothing. These velvet eyesso *kakor žalost*,
are like sadness which stares into greyness,
their dark layer penetrates silence
like a sound that is drowned by a rustle.

These quiet, black, velvet eyes,
with their dark shimmer and soft grace,
kiss away this grey pain
that suffocates my soul more with each passing day.

*Te tihe, črne, žametne oči
so kakor črno, žametno nebo,
nad ostro rano Krasa razprostrto,
so kakor luč, ki dušo pomiri;
ko ugasne nad pokrajino razdrto,
se v mehko temo duša potopi.*

These quiet, black, velvet eyes,
are like the black, velvet sky,
spread above the sharp wound of the Karst,
are like the light which appeases the soul;
when the lights go out above the shattered landscape,
the soul sinks into soft dark.

One of the most poignant poems is the sonnet *Ena je groza* (One Is Terror).

*Ena je groza, ta groza je: biti –
sredi kaosa, sredi noči,
iskati izhoda in slutiti,
da rešitve ni in ni.*

One is terror, that terror is: being –
amidst chaos, in the middle of the night,
seeking a way out and sensing
salvation will not come, will not come.

*Včasih se med ranjene skale
tiho razlije zlati svit
jutranje zarje – šel bi dalje,
pa že čutiš, da si ubit.*

At times the golden dawning
of daybreak quietly spills
between wounded rocks – you would go on,
but you already feel your are beaten.

*Kakor da se zarja rani,
kadar razgrne svoj pajčolan,
kadar razlije goreče slapovje
in ti zakliče pod goro: Vstani,
glej, že gori razbito gorovje! –
Ti čutiš ga in ne veruješ vanj. –*

As though the dawn hurts itself
when it spreads its veil,
when it spills its burning cascades,
and calls to you below the mountain: stand up,
behold, the shattered mountains are already ablaze! –
You feel him, but don't believe in him. –

After this early period of sonnet writing, Kosovel's poetic adventure took a different direction, towards avant-garde linguistic experimentation. The rhythm-forging function of syntax and the principle of repeating words mark the poet's withdrawal from traditional versification and his entry into free verse.

To conclude: the body of Kosovel's poetry written in regular metre offers many examples which show that artistically strong poetry does not necessarily rest on skilful versification. Srečko Kosovel is a poor prosodist and yet a great poet. Fortunately, in poetry versification is not all. Moreover, versification undergoes significant changes through time, and Kosovel's example demonstrates that shortcomings within one aesthetic system can become advantages in the next.

Translated by Ana Jelnicar

■ ABSTRACT

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Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / versification / metrics / rhyme

Formally, the majority of Kosovel's early poems, which Slovenian literary history has unsatisfactorily labelled "impressionist lyrical poetry", fall within the framework of traditional versification; more precisely, they belong to the period of its disintegration and demise. Awkward in prosody, young Kosovel somewhat weakened traditional accentual-syllabic versification, thus bringing it closer to free verse.

In these poems, Kosovel's poetic language is very simple: verse rhythm is derivative of the most common and popular meters taken from a long tradition, the verse endings are marked by hackneyed, unoriginal rhymes, and the poems are usually divided into the most prevalent stanza structure (mainly quatrains).

Particularly interesting is Kosovel's use of rhyme: his rhyming dictionary is, in fact, extremely poor, with a prevalence of so-called verbal rhymes. (Of all the parts of speech in the Slovenian language, verbs are the easiest to rhyme because of their corresponding inflections, and easily-formed rhymes tend to be semantically – and thereby musically – poor.) It is as though Kosovel were endlessly repeating the rhymes he had learnt from the poetic canon of 19th-century Slovenian poetry. For any other, less talented, poet of Kosovel's time, drawing on such a familiar and worn-out domestic stock of rhyme endings would be a clear sign of a grossly sentimental and conservative poetics. Not so with Kosovel: in his verse, these rhymes, a hundred times used and abused, suddenly ring out in a different, fresh, and artistically authentic way. Kosovel surpassed the weakness of his versification by repeating his mistakes: a repeated mistake is no longer a mistake; it is already a system. A silent, but a deep and far-reaching break was effected within the traditional versification: even these inherited rhythms and rhymes were endowed with new sounds and meaning through a different usage of poetic language (for in poetry, sound and meaning are always closely bound together).

In short, this segment of Kosovel's poetry offers plenty of textbook examples which show that great poetry does not necessarily rest on skilful versification. Srečko Kosovel is a poor prosodist, but a great poet. Fortunately, in poetry, versification is not everything. Moreover, versification undergoes significant changes through time, and Kosovel's example demonstrates that the shortcomings within one aesthetic system can become advantages in the next.

KOSOVEL AND MODERN POETRY: AN ANALYSIS OF IMAGERY

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Flowers

Images of flowers are not the most common or the most important in Kosovel's poetry. Because the poet liked to project his feelings onto nature, flowers quite often become metaphors of his feelings and moods. The image "the autumn flower shut its calyx/ and leaned silent into the grey ground" (I 42)¹ for example, is not only a description of nature dying in autumn, but also a metaphor of the lyric subject's melancholy state. A frequent metaphor ascribing human pain to flowers is "bleeding" (31, 132, 151).

Kosovel rarely used names of individual flowers, and mainly when he wished to emphasize their special fragrance. Generally flowers feature in Kosovel on account of their beauty, opulent fragrance, brief existence, etc. Less common is his metaphor: "My words are sharp flowers" (I 313). The flowers are ascribed sharpness, but this is hardly unusual, considering they grew among the stones of the Karst: the sharpness of stones is (metonymically) attributed to flowers. Kosovel also used flowers as images because of their healing properties (45, 404).

Images of flowers also appear in Kosovel's *Integrals*; literary historians describe the collection as a syncretic conjunction of various literary movements and currents, from expressionism and constructivism to dadaism, surrealism, and futurism. Most significantly, *Integrals* represents a change in Kosovel's poetry in terms of composition: the images become fragmentary, thematically loose, the lyric subject often steps back and records impressions like a film camera. Kosovel could possibly have got the idea for this style of writing from German expressionism, or somewhere else. The poem "Flowers in the Window" is a typical example of approaching the modernist style of stringing images; however, the images themselves are still fully traditional. This also becomes evident from a comparison with Župancič's poem "Early Spring", which reads: "When have you, white-

¹ In bibliographical quotations, the Roman numerals stand for volumes of *Collected Works* and the Arabic numerals for page numbers. When images from the same volume are quoted in the same paragraph, the number of the volume is omitted.

thorn, gathered your flowers?/ As though skimmed from snowflakes/ they are tied in white lace" (II 10). Kosovel portrays a similar image in a different way: "The windows opened, the wind breathing in/ from the fields. In the window/ a whitethorn branch./ As though gently/ covered with snow./ The sun on the window,/ the window is white./ The lace on the whitethorn like snow" (II 100).

As a rule, Kosovel did not ascribe symbolic meaning to flowers. Surprisingly, most of the exceptions are found in *Integrals*. The flowers in "Cons: XY" may symbolize love, which has to lie low due to external, political engagement. In "Cons: MAS", again, the flower is a symbol of love. Even the tulips in the question "Do the tulips still blossom?" (II 114) can be ascribed a symbolic meaning of a hope for love crushed by the acknowledgment: "Ah, the chrysanthemums on graves" (*ibid.*). In the same poem Kosovel used another traditional symbol: the face of a girl is lily-white. White roses (178) symbolize the lost innocence of man, who became a slave to machines. The associative logic of stringing images, which are descriptive in themselves, can be observed in "Spherical Mirror": the red chrysanthemum as a grave flower appears because of the verse "hang yourself on a hook", and the association it evokes is Ivan Cankar.

Trees

Trees are among the most common and most important images in Kosovel's poetry. In over thirty cases the poet uses the generic word tree and he speaks of pines in a further twenty at least. He also mentions the following species: poplars (eight times), chestnuts (six times), elms (three times), limes (twice), cypresses (twice), black poplar (twice), walnut (once), acacias (once), aspen (once). Juniper, a bush, is not a very common image. Kosovel used it to describe the Karst landscape, but ascribed no other functions to it.

As editor of Kosovel's Collected Works, Anton Ocvirk arranged his poetry according to the motifs and forms. The first group of poems thus contains "impressionist and emotional compositions" (I 428). Almost all of Kosovel's poems about pines are in this group. As a commentary on the poem "Pines", Ocvirk wrote that to Kosovel "during the times of Italian rule, pines, like fieldfares, grew to represent the symbol of homeland" (441). Of course, it would be incorrect to claim that pines represent the homeland in all of Kosovel's poems. The image "The sea of pine rustles dark" (I 16), comprised of a metaphor (the sea of pine) and synaesthesia (rustles dark) conveys the poet's perception, it is merely an impression. The simile: "All these words should be/ fragrant as the sea of pine" (64) uses the same metaphor – this time because of the strong, pleasant fragrance of the pine trees. In "Poem from the Karst" he wrote that their fragrance is healthy and strong. This poem personifies the pines and the poet calls them "the silent comrades of the Karst solitude" (60). The pines are not merely friends; they are sentinels (26, 61), together with the poet protect-

ing and caressing the village (136), and the poet ascribes to them his own feelings: “The pines, the pines in silent horror [...] howling [...] as though my mother were dying,/ as though my father were calling,/ as though my brothers lay ill” (61). A symbolic interpretation of these verses is also possible: “the pines” could be seen as a symbol of the Karst people who live through the horror of foreign rule. Another symbol of the Karst people during Italian occupation could be “dark pines” (63) and “pines – still stoics” (67). This is a typical symbol in terms of Goethe’s definition, a conjunction of synecdoche and analogy: the fate of the pines is a part of the fate of the Karst, and at the same time there is a similarity between their fate and the fate of the Karst, or rather the Slovenians in Primorska in general.

Kosovel liked to use imagery in which the trees howl (I 19, 50, 59, 62), rustle (40, 41, 146), and sway gently (49). These are descriptive images or impressions speaking indirectly of the wind, of the *bora*. Another personification is interesting: “A poplar and an aspen/ whisper silently across the field/ with someone from beyond this world” (59). The trees in this image communicate with transcendence, which is – however – distant, absent. Kosovel was not discovering correspondences between nature and higher spheres, but he did like to project his feelings onto nature and identify himself with it. He used images of trees because he was discovering various similarities between himself and the trees, and also because he projected onto them his feelings, particularly his unhappiness. Examples of explicit similes or metaphors, as well as hidden similes involving trees are numerous in Kosovel’s poetry.

Poems, or rather, images speaking of yearning for an unknown, distant mystery may not be very typical of Kosovel. However, they are not so few to overlook. The simile: “As though listening in to distances/ and reaching out to them with its hand/ in the snow, in the gold it stands alone,/ a silent, black tree” (I 58) ascribes to the tree symbolic attributes of yearning for transcendence. Similarly, this simile: “As though above [the bottom] it listens in/ by the pond, a black tree” (56). In both cases a black tree is a metaphor of the lyric subject. There is an image of a white tree in *Integrals* (II 122) – the symbolic meaning in this case lies mostly in the colour. The mysterious white man conceived beside a white tree is probably Christ. In this next instance the lyric subject explicitly compares himself to a tree: “Like a tree from a shiny mosaic/ I grow into the invisible tree, into the Centre of the world” (I 324). In this image a symbol of a tree ascending towards transcendence is combined with a symbol of the centre, representing transcendence itself.

In several cases the descriptive images of trees in *Integrals* are incorporated into associative strings according to the principle of opposition (II 25, 32); the most obvious example is the poem “In a Sad Tavern”. The image: “Out there/ poplars and the sun and lime-trees/ are glistening, rustling” (63) is the antithesis to what is going on in the tavern, in people. The image of bare, black trees (91) shedding leaves is a metaphor for the dying of Europe. Similes as such are not very common in *Integrals* – which could be understood as a sign of modernity; however, in the motif cluster of trees

there is a technically interesting simile which overturns the initial correlation between the tenor and the vehicle: "Black poplars by the roads/ are like widows wrapped in black -/ their bony arms/ are yellow/ like abandoned branches" (135).

Animals

In Kosovel's pre-*Integrals* poetry, images of birds are common, whereas other animals are hardly ever mentioned. The poet calls the captain from "The Tragedy on the Ocean" a beast (I 407), compares the gear wheels to the teeth of a beast (397) and the greedy world sniffing for money to a dog (168). Occasionally he uses the image of butterflies, and once a dragonfly and a panther. Similarly to Župančič, Kosovel attributes wings to many things and phenomena, and therefore implicitly identifies them with birds (21, 141, 199, 383).

The connection between a soul and a bird appears three times in Kosovel (I 35, 383, 384), as does the connection between a thought and a bird. There are frequent similes and metaphors in which the lyric subject is directly compared to or identifies with birds. In certain images Kosovel also develops the symbolic attributes of birds as traditional intermediaries between man and the absolute (362, 383). The following can be interpreted as a pure symbol: "a bird in the light azure/ swaying and floating/ and passing by in its own calm silence/ without a greeting" (244). Staring after the bird in the azure, which is calm and self-sufficient inside, is the socially underprivileged masses. To them the bird represents an ideal. In the context of Kosovel's poems with social subject matter, the bird passing by without a greeting is a symbol of a callous transcendence which does not respond to peoples' anguish. When Kosovel describes his elated feelings upon deciding to fight for "man, mankind, people", he uses the simile: "As though some silent, white wings/ spread themselves across the world" (252). The wings in this simile are a synecdoche for a bird, possibly an angel, so they can also be interpreted as a symbol of the absolute. Kosovel often expresses the future of new man through religious imagery – he describes it as the future heaven on earth, for example. He also used the image of a bird in the azure in his poem "To Fall" (397), which is about his desire to die.

Kosovel mentions several kinds of birds: swans (four times), pigeons (three), fieldfare (three), crows (three), pelican (once), and eagle (once). He uses swans as a vehicle because of their whiteness: they are compared to clouds (37) and pianist's hands (321). There is an interesting image in which swans are a vehicle and a tenor at the same time: "A white coat shining brightly/ like swans – the clouds of spring" (346). Swans were one of the more recurring images in the poetry of symbolism and the connection between a swan and a poet is a very old one; in Eleusinian Mysteries, for example, a swan symbolised "the power of a poet and poetry"; elsewhere it was "an emblem of an inspired poet, of a sacred priest, of a druid dressed in white, of a Nordic bard etc." (Chevalier, 301). The swan in Kosovel's

“Swan Song” (137) is a symbol of the poet’s helplessness, which, however, does not concern creativity, as in the famous poem by Mallarmé, but is purely existential: the swan or the poet needs to obey “the terrifying command [...], to stare within himself, to live against his will” (137). Kosovel’s self-understanding, his attitude towards his own existence was changing. The comparison, “I am here like an eagle among the azures/ close to God” (46) is optimistic: a self-assured image of a poet free of doubt. “I am not a bleeding pelican,” (226) is a very different metaphor, which is followed by an assurance that the poet will not grieve for his unfulfilled dreams. The feeling of disappointment in life is deepened by an image of a crow nailed to a cross and covertly compared to Christ (266). The motif of a captured and tortured crow had already been used by Župančič in “The Crow”, published in 1902 in the almanac *On New Paths*. Jože Mahnič pointed out that the motif of “The Crow” in Župančič was a sketch for his condor in the poem “The Graves Wail”, and that the creature “originated also under the influence of the author of *Les fleurs du mal*” (Mahnič, 30). The symbolic meaning of the crow comes from German mythology, in which a crow is a harbinger of death. German expressionists intensified the image to an ultimate repulsiveness, and as an expression of one’s inner state, it leaves no room for doubt as to the extent of mental distress” (Cosentino, 57). Kosovel’s caged crow bears more resemblance to the noble albatross or condor than e.g. to Trakl’s crows “screeching tautly” at the smell of carcasses (“Die Raben”).

The most typical bird in Kosovel is the fieldfare. In “A Poem”, which opens the first volume of the Collected Works, the fieldfare has the role of a vehicle: the poet speaks of the word which “rushes in a soft flight/ like a fieldfare to the Karst” (I 9). The fieldfare is shot, and the poet asks, “Oh thought, why have you come to the Karst/ in this gloomy autumn time?” (9). The word or thought are not specifically identified, and we only learn that in the multitude of other words it is something exceptional. If we assume that it is the poet’s word or his poetry, there still remains the question of the metaphorical hunters. The motif of a trapped bird is known from Baudelaire; his albatross is a symbol for the poet who approaches the absolute or the unutterable through his creativity, until he is stopped by mysterious hunters. The trapped condor in Župančič (*Across the Plains*, 112) is confined by peoples’ ordinariness; as to the Kosovel’s hunters, there is an accepted explanation which derives from the political situation on the Karst after World War I. According to this explanation the hunters of which Kosovel writes are not a metaphor, but actual Italian fieldfare hunters. These hunters were wiping out the birds, just as Italian fascists were endangering Slovenians in Primorska. So the fieldfares are usually interpreted as a symbol of classical type: their fate is analogous to the fate of the Slovenians of Primorska; and they are also a synecdoche, because they represent a part of life endangered. This interpretation does not preclude us from seeing the fieldfares as the metaphorical poet or his poetry, and the hunters as a metaphor for the people or forces killing this poetry. The Italian fascists may not have been the only ones. Similarly,

in the "Pains" series (I 265–268), which contains the image of the crow nailed to a cross, Kosovel does not directly tell us who the torturer is. The crow is a metaphor for the poet seeking the (nonexistent) truth, and the only truth is pain or death. Kosovel compares the bleeding crow to a man "walking the promenade and lying", looking in vain for "the word/ in vain for nature" (267). His torturers could be members of the bourgeois, capitalist order; however, the lyric subject is under threat mainly from the general situation of the times: he has entered the fake, over-materialistic world and can no longer feel "the soft rolling of dreams" (265). When he learns the truth about the releasing power of death, he says: "And now I shiver no more/ and the blood no longer trickles from my wings" (268). In the closing lines, the crow grows into a symbol similar to the bird in the azures: the crow, too, succumbs to death and thus to transcendence (268). The crow as a symbol for the poet originates from a romantic vision of the sublimity of the poet's profession. Kosovel intensified the theme of endangerment, because his crow experiences true existential pains in the dehumanised world. The images used to describe torture, and particularly the covert comparison to Christ, include hyperbolae, which could be viewed as a sign of expressionism.

The share of animal imagery is extensive in *Integrals*; Kosovel added a whole menagerie to birds and butterflies: cats, horses, frogs, a rat, an orang-utan, a tiger, a sand lizard, a snake, a fish, a wall lizard, bats. His images of birds are very traditional, and are no different from the images he uses in his pre-*Integrals* poetry. The following synecdoche likening of man to a bird is typical: "You feel wings in your chest/ and wish to spread" (II 22). What is unusual here is the context in which the image appears.

However, with certain animal images Kosovel breaks the traditional, logical model of creating images. Such images defy interpretation, and could be called absolute metaphors. Among them are the following: "A one-eyed fish/ swims through the dark,/ black-eyed" (II 82); "orang-utan" (48). In terms of interpretation the following example is interesting: "The green king of frogs/ rides on a chestnut" (48). This image is a model example of surrealist creativity because a syntactically correct construction is filled with elements that do not belong together semantically. A look at the context softens the boldness of the image: the chestnuts are the greenery behind which a window sleeps, and there "the moon and/ a miraculous landscape shine". The verb "to ride" may be explained as a metaphor of a traditional type, whereas the green king of frogs belongs to the semantic field of a miraculous landscape. The poem mentions certain countries, and we may assume that it is a political leader who has turned into a frog. Such an explanation of the image, however, cannot lead us to its true meaning – one we could express and describe; we can only talk about an effect. In "Gendarmes" Kosovel again uses an image of frogs, and once again in a political context: "the green parliament of frogs" (62). This time frogs are a metaphor for M.P.'s, who croak, or even gendarmes who – as Ocvirk points out – wore green uniforms. This means that Kosovel indirectly identified M.P.'s with gendarmes, who were, he claimed, people of the lowest quality.

A significant portion of animal imagery in *Integrals* consists of similes (II 36, 62, 105, 109, and 168) and there are also a number of symbols. The rat in “Poem No. X”, which is dying in an attic, can be interpreted as a classic type symbol: its destiny is similar to that of people, but at the same time, as a synecdoche it calls our attention to the non-realisation of “humanitarian ideals”, of which the prohibition on killing is the most important. With regard to blue horses – they appear in several places – Anton Ocvirk mentions a group of expressionist painters called *Der Blaue Reiter*. Among them was Franz Marc, known for a number of paintings of blue horses. Kosovel used them as a symbol, and Ocvirk saw them as “harbingers of approaching death” (II 656). In the image, which is technically a genitive metaphor, this symbolic meaning is decoded: “Blue horses of eternal sleep” (177). Ocvirk ascribed the same symbolic meaning to Kosovel’s butterflies from *Integrals* (140, 153, 173). Death symbolised by blue horses implies a union with transcendence, and the images of butterflies, I think, symbolise the imminence of transcendence.

Water

The water motif is found in images of the sea, lakes, a pond, rivers, waterfalls, springs and geysers. All together they are very numerous, particularly if we add images of sailors, boats, rowers and so on. The image of water as such was used by Kosovel in “The Ecstasy of Death”, where he claims that “there’s no water left in Europe [...] no water [...] to wash away/ his guilt [...] that would help him quench/ his thirst for the silent, green morning nature” (I 304–305). In this image Kosovel decodes the symbolic meaning of water as a source of life and as a means of purification and rebirth.

Kosovel used the image of the sea more than twenty times. In some cases the sea is a metaphor for a host of things: the sea of pine (I 16, 64) is a metaphor for a pine forest, the sea of green (325) is a metaphor for meadows, the sea of stars (286) stands for the stars. The sea is a vehicle for unrest and for the faces of revenge “which rise every moment like the sea/ in this narrow riverbed of rotting fish” (259). This image is a relatively rare example of the aesthetics of ugliness in Kosovel’s poetry. A narrow riverbed of rotting fish is a metaphor for the workers’ living conditions, and was created because of the metonymic closeness of fish and the sea.

Ambivalence is typical of all symbols – the sea, for example, is the giver, as well as the destroyer of life. Kosovel develops positive, as well as negative symbolic meanings of the sea, primarily through colour symbolism. Because of their whiteness, the white seas (I 72, 328) are a positive symbol; life on their shores is peaceful and orderly. The blue sea (291) is a symbol of the spiritual purification which accompanies transcendence, but also a symbol of the freedom of which prisoners dream (I 371; II 57). The same meaning is carried by silver sea (I 373) or the sea metaphorically called a silver plane and a silver wing (371). The red sea is a metaphor for the light

of the setting sun, bringing destruction to Europe (304). Bleeding clouds have also coloured “the red sea of grief” (339), which is a metaphor for the aching of the lovelorn poet. The colour of the sea in the poem about a sail that is confined to the middle of the sea is symbolic in nature: the grey-ness of the sulphuric waters (400) symbolises an unsuccessful quest for the dawn. The black ocean of death (354) is a decoded symbol. Similarly, the dark ocean (406) is decoded as a destroyer of all life and at the same time stands as a symbol of rebirth, because it brings future life (410).

The symbol of a flood is used several times; this fits the explanation that the flood “is a sign of germination and rebirth, and it only destroys because the forms are worn out and drained, but is always followed by new humanity and new history. [...] The flood purifies and renews like baptism; it is an immense collective baptism, which is not governed by human consciousness, but rather by a higher and sovereign consciousness” (Chevalier, 472). The motif of the flood is not purely Biblical; it appears in a number of myths. The end of the world or Judgment Day has been expected in several periods in history, e.g. at the end of the first millennium, as well as at the end of the 19th and even 20th centuries. German expressionists bound the idea of the end of the world to criticism of civilisation, and before World War I it was even believed that war would bring the same purification as symbolised by the flood. In Kosovel’s times European society was still stirred by Spengler’s book *The Decline of the West*. Kosovel wrote about his understanding of the idea of European decline in his lecture ‘Art and the Proletarian’: “If we speak of the decline of Europe, what we have in mind is the decline of decaying capitalism which tries by hook or by crook to reign across Europe, but which like every injustice, must decline in the years to come. It is in this sense one should understand my poem *The Ecstasy of Death*” (I 485). The symbols in “*The Ecstasy of Death*” correspond to Kosovel’s own interpretation: first the sun makes everything sink into a scorching red sea, then it shines on the dead with its golden rays (304–305). The symbolic meaning of the flood in this case is ascribed to the sun, but usually the purification takes place in the sea itself. Although the flood is necessary to restore humanity, the events themselves are horrifying. As horrifying as the image of man, “drowning, [yet] unable to drown/ in the heavy, lead-grey waves” (253). The drowning means death, but it also means rebirth. The motif of the flood is most fully developed in his “*Tragedy on the Ocean*”: the ocean symbolises destruction and purification. In this series, too, Kosovel used the image of drowned people, who “cannot/ sink to the bottom, to the bottom,/ yet cannot set themselves free” (407). This image relates to the prophecy in the Book of Revelation: “And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.” (9, 6). The only solution – paradoxically – is a terrifying death. This makes ambivalent the symbol of the captain saviour/beast who will “split with his oar the heads/ of those not fully sunk” (407). The symbol of the beast is known from the Book of Revelation, where it stands for the Antichrist. The four rowers evoke the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse; however, Kosovel gives them a slightly

different role: instead of announcing the disaster, they ask the king to come to their aid.

In Slovenian poetry images of sailors and boats are typical of Anton Vodnik, who speaks of red (sinful) and white (innocent, devoted to God) sailors; his is the identification “I was a boat on the golden water of dreams”. Kosovel, too, wrote of sailors and boats. He came very close to Vodnik’s yearning for transcendence with his image: “I steered a golden boat/ on the red waters of the evening/ among the trees/ and grassy banks./ I steered the boat/ I, the golden sailor” (I 319). It is well known that before his death Kosovel was preparing a collection to be called *The Golden Boat*. He even wrote a preface, in which he claims he has said goodbye to the young man who wrote “velvety lyric poetry” (426). This is the theme of the poem that begins with the above-quoted image. Very different from the golden sailor is the sailor from “Nocturno”, who has hidden his face behind a yellow sail (213). The sailor is once again a metaphor for the poet, only this time he dreams of a revolt. He hides his face because he wants to be like Beethoven, and the sail is yellow due to the burning sun. The image of the golden boat is used three times in *Integrals*, and according to Ocvirk it refers to his unpublished collection of poems. This interpretation seems likely in the case of the question: “Why did you drop a golden boat into the marshes?” (II 31), whereas in the other two cases (38, 46) the golden boat is more probably a metaphor of the poet’s spiritual adventures and searching, supported by other images. In the poem “My Great Hope” Kosovel wrote: “The moon/ over the city, leaving./ I stand on a white shore./ alone. [...] I might swim away tomorrow,/ in a week, in a year” (118). The idea of leaving, as Lado Kralj speculates in his analysis of Kosovel’s programmatic text “We Sail in the Spring!”, is comparable to the untranslatable expressionist slogan »*der Aufbruch*«, but was probably developed simultaneously (Kralj, 182–183). The poem only hints at a departure for space, or transcendence. The following image is much more straightforward: “Every day/ we sail into vast Space/ in white boats of Dreams” (169). This image is also comparable to Vodnik’s: both poets embark on their respective paths to transcendence in metaphorical boats and dreams.

Vodnik’s sailors are an allegory of God-searching. Kosovel also used the metaphor of a quest. “Silent sailors, the undying” (I 400) are trapped on a boat at sea and cannot see the morning dawn. Builders who resemble “sailors on their voyage,/ travelling through a grey greyness” (294) come to realise that all action is in vain. The images of being trapped and helpless in the middle of the sea are metaphors of the poet’s experience of the world and his time. Another metaphor of impotence is the image of a young corpse lying among flowers on a ship (401), and an image of a sailor among poisonous flowers (404), because he passively accepts the flood. Anton Ocvirk assumed that Kosovel adopted the motif of a sailor who dies among the flowers in his boat from a folk poem. It is only in *Integrals* that Kosovel writes an image which expresses optimism: it is the metaphor of a sailor “shot into eternity” (II 124).

The Sun

There are more than eighty images involving the sun; and well over a hundred and twenty if we add the poems from *Integrals*. Besides the images referring to the sun or dawn, we may include images of glittering and glowing – if they come from the sun. That is, other sources of light are also referred to: fire, a light in a window and, a couple of times, electricity.

Kosovel liked to describe the glittering of the sun and sunsets on the Karst, for which he often employed a metaphor of fire or burning (I 19, 20, 22, 213). He also used other metaphors for sunlight (58, 83, 323) or metonymically ascribed the gleaming of the sun to the clouds (30, 31, 49, 80, 354). Because the poet also ascribed symbolic qualities to the sun, it is often difficult to judge whether an image of the sun is a mere description or a symbol. The sun can almost always be interpreted as a symbol. At times Kosovel hinted at or decoded its symbolic meaning, for example, as the source of life and optimism (21). His golden evening clouds have the same symbolic meaning (30). When the poet cries: “The sun, oh, this golden sun!” (323) or: “The sun. The sun. The sun” (325), he again ascribes a symbolic meaning to it.

In some poems, or rather images of the sun, Kosovel comes very close to the vitalism of Župančič; however, in other images the symbolic meaning of the sun is different. Kosovel himself was aware of this change and he wrote that “the sun has fallen/ from its heights/ and as if everything else,/ less golden, shone at once/ more clear, more alive,/ as if born anew/ I stepped onto the shore” (I 319). Less golden, for example, is the sun that “shines/ as if it shone dead up in the sky” (253). In his image: “The bloody sun is already burning” (233), Kosovel turned the sun into a symbol of the approaching uprising of the masses. Less socially oriented is the poem “The Evening Sun”, where he says: “the sun will scorch this grass/ and then the sun, the sun itself will go out” (131). The symbolic meaning that the sun acquires in this image is no longer life’s optimism, but rather the opposite: instead of giving life, the sun destroys it. Similarly, in “The Ecstasy of Death” the setting sun is a symbolic destroyer, while at the same time enabling new life to develop. Only when everyone is dead, will the sun shine again “with its golden rays” (305). In the image: “The evening sun is burning,/ burning, yet it cannot burn me out” (344), the sun is once again ambivalent: as it destroys the old life, it prepares a path for the new. This new life is symbolised by “Svetovit, the sun god” (346) and he is the one that the poet wishes to follow.

Images of the sun are also very frequent in *Integrals*. The sun is often ascribed positive symbolic qualities, but there are a few images which de-aesthetise the sun, such as the following simile: “The fat sun strolls/ like a fat butcher’s wife/ around the village./ This sun is sad” (II 21). In “Contemporary Lethargy” the poet contemplates the necessity of fighting for “a new religion of the sun”, because the sun is “the only beautiful thing/ [left] in the world” (148), but in reality he speaks for a religion of man, because at the end of the poem he writes the metaphor “sun-man”.

More daring is the metaphor “the silver sun,/ admiral” (60) Kosovel used in “Detective No. 16” after simultaneously developing a motif of the sun on a winter morning and a house search at the poet’s home. According to Anton Ocvirk, Kosovel knew of a dadaist poem called “Admiral”. Because Kosovel also wrote that the poem hurries “on the silver wings/ of the winter solar/ wind”, “the silver sun,/ admiral” could be a double metaphor for a poem. In “An Insult to the White Bed of King Hypponeandrus Hoppu” the insulters are called “desecrators of the sun” (49), and this indirectly identifies the bed of the king Hypponeandrus (early man) with the sun. Another bold metaphor is “the sun’s policemen” (12), but it is clear from the context that it aims at people who have no spirit and therefore are not fond of light.

The Heart

Images of the heart are about as frequent in Kosovel’s poetry as the images of the Sun, therefore among the most common ones. Consistent with tradition, the heart is the symbolic centre of emotional life. To Kosovel, the heart is subject to mood changes: it is repeatedly ill, sad, downtrodden, death comes over it, etc. Images with the heart as a symbolic spiritual centre are relatively rare (I 206, 207). The metaphor “my heart is a smashed sanctuary” (309) speaks of his lost faith in his own dreams. However, the heart has found a new faith: it believes in a future man (240). The melancholy of the heart has been replaced by “a wave of bright courage, strength”, coming from the heart (237).

Images of the heart are also very common in *Integrals*; in this collection the poet no longer speaks as much of his own heart and its sufferings, but more of the hearts of others. His heart is “open to eternity: from Chaos to Cosmos” (II 181), yet at the same time socially sensitive (43), and so large that a “huge elephant slops” through it (34). On the other hand, human hearts are small (34), they contain gold dollars (20), “their hearts are stone [...] are dry” (168). Kosovel often uses heart metaphors to express his criticism of modern society: the heart in alcohol (29), the heart-Trieste is ill (55), civilization lacks heart (73), no altar to man in the heart (92). His calls for transformation and uprising are aimed at the heart: “I would like to go through human hearts” (34), “I awaken hearts” (48), “bark, hearts” (72).

The Soul

Images of the soul are about as frequent as images of the heart, and their ascribed qualities are comparable. Just like the heart, the soul is the centre of emotions and feelings. The soul, too, is often ill, depressed or fearful and, like the heart, yearns for God’s comfort. In his love poems Kosovel used the soul images more often than heart images. In sacred solitude the soul should discover God (I 207), but in the motifs of the soul we can also ob-

serve Kosovel's switching to social themes (213, 242, 279). Several images imply that souls should undergo a metamorphosis; a metaphor of burning is typical: "The sick man should fall,/ sick souls, burn out!" (260)

In *Integrals*, images of the soul are less frequent than images of the heart, yet both are closely connected and often even appear in sequence. People have no hearts and no souls; Kosovel speaks of "evacuation of souls" (II 73). The boldest image of the soul is a metaphor coupled with a simile: "a fast torpedo boat/ like a bullet,/ propelled into the night -/ my soul flees" (124). In terms of motifs, this image represents Kosovel's departure from traditional verse, yet it is typical of his imagery of the heart and the soul that it expresses feelings directly.

Religious Imagery

Religious imagery in Kosovel's poetry is even more frequent than images of the sun, the soul or the heart: there are over one hundred and twenty. The most important among the religious images are those connected with God. Kosovel frequently expresses a yearning for God; not only God's voice would bring consolation, but also his embrace (I 21), kiss (207) and his presence in general, which the poet sometimes feels (46, 68, 201, 272, 293).

Besides images which clearly express faith in God there are images of an absent, hidden God who cannot be known: God is a mysterious mystery; the poet asks him whether he is the wideness, the deepness, the courselessness and the course to everything, the invisible Centre of all centres, whether he is the Father or the Brother, who lives only in the remoteness of the soul (I 196). These are not the only metaphors Kosovel uses to describe God; he also calls him the Unknown (382, 383) and the pole of my soul (383). Despite desperate pleas to help the individual and mankind, God remains silent (383), the four rowers call on him in vain (411). In the context of Kosovel's poetry the conclusion that He is not there (383) does not necessarily mean that God does not exist; it only means that God does not interfere upon request from people, that He does not appear to human eyes, that he remains hidden or absent.

In *Integrals* God is only mentioned a couple of times; according to Ocvirk, the supposition that God is "on hand" (II 32) was replaced by an image of a God who is on leave. This image would correspond to the idea of an absent God. The image of a God who is "on hand" speaks mainly of people's attitude towards God.

Kosovel often used religious imagery in poems with social or political subject matter. Metaphors for the future include, for example, paradise (I 286) and a new temple (180); the expectations of the masses are sacred, the poet metaphorically equates them with a sanctuary and they refer to a king who will arise (181). The king in this case is a metaphor for the avenger of the politically oppressed people of the Karst. Kosovel's conceptions of the leader of the social and political revolution are (like the conceptions of certain expressionists) religiously coloured. In the white future there is also

a place for God (250). Religious motifs are distinctively transformed in certain images (230, 249, 287). There are a number of images in *Integrals* which speak of a new religion (148), of faith in humanity (179). Man should sacrifice his body for a new church, and his hands and heart for the altars of the future (153).

Music

With the images drawn from music Kosovel expressed among other things what one could call the state of the soul – to use a concept from French symbolism. It is about a mood that cannot be precisely defined or described, for it oscillates between sadness, melancholy, unrest, yearning etc. In the poem “I love you” (I 338) a beloved girl is playing the piano, while the lyric subject “listens as if made of stone”, because he perceives her playing as an expression of the soul, or rather, its grief. The poem is probably at least in part autobiographical, because we know that Kosovel’s sister was a brilliant pianist.

In some cases, to express his mood, Kosovel used synaesthesia, which is not his typical poetic device. Beside tired synaesthesias like a sweet song (I 68) and bright chords (128), he used some bolder ones: the soft sound of the Angelus (23), glimmering and bright ringing (47), sharp silence (195). The sounds of bells, organ, and particularly piano, in certain cases grow into symbols which among other things express the transitoriness of all things. Instead of a trembling violin typical of French symbolists, Kosovel has an image of a weeping piano: “A chord sobs out on a dead piano/ and then once more sinks into eternity” (166). Typical of this image is the fact that the instrument and the sound are personified. Similarly, the poem “A Sketch at a Concert” personifies the piano, but then turns its attention to the pianist, who “spread his white hands [...] Silently, as if on a black/ marble lake/ two white swans had floated away/ seeking infinity” (321). This is how Kosovel usually proceeded: although he personified the piano and ascribed to it a symbolic meaning, the true subject and the source of the mood is the pianist, and thus the symbolic meaning of the piano is decoded.

In a poem entitled “Meditation at the Piano” we find the following metaphor: “My words are a gentle playing of the piano/ from the golden window into the night” (I 313). He expressed a very different vision of his own poetry with the metaphor “My poem is an explosion./ Disharmony. Wild corrosion.” (229) There is the same connection with the semantic field of (musical) disharmony in this next identification from the poem “Nocturne”: “I am a pianist with iron hands” (213). Iron hands co-establish a semantic field of disruption and explosion; with them the poet is “pounding on his white Karst” (213). The metaphor of gently playing the piano has therefore been replaced by the metaphor of a pianist pounding. Kosovel ingeniously used the double metaphorical meaning of the verb to pound: besides the worn-out metaphor of pounding on the piano there is the metaphorical pounding on the Karst. The metaphorical chain goes therefore like this: to write unsentimental poems – to pound on the piano – to pound on the Karst.

Images of the piano are less common in *Integrals* than in the first volume of Kosovel's *Collected Works*, but they are still diverse. Images expressing joy (II 112), sadness (114) and unrest (103) are in every respect traditional. More unusual is the material Kosovel used in the poem "Cons: Cat". A cat jumping on the piano and wondering that it sings is probably a metaphor for people who think they can write poetry. Kosovel never entered into self-serving radical linguistic experiments, and his poetry always retained a level of meaning – which cannot be a coincidental product. In a poem entitled "My Black Ink Bottle" Kosovel mocked poets of a different school: "A melancholy cat lying on the hay./ Squeaking on its golden violin." (24) We have mentioned that the violin was an instrument of symbolists, and Baudelaire, for example, had a special affection for cats.

Technology

Images of nature are predominant in Kosovel's poetry; a stronger concentration of urban imagery, particularly means of transport, is only later present in *Integrals*. Kosovel mentions most frequently a train (eight times) and cars (five times); he twice mentions aircraft and a tram, and once a torpedo boat. The images are often descriptive, and incorporated in associative strings, in a montage of disparate images, but they only rarely achieve impersonality. A typical example of this is "Cons: ABC": "Stay cold, heart!/ Cynic./ Transformer./ The Orient express for Paris on a viaduct./ Wrists in chains./ Cars run./ I can not./ My thought – electricity/ is in Paris." (II 13). The images of the train and cars are descriptive, and only achieve metaphorical value in connection to the other images: they indicate a movement that the lyric subject only wishes for, but cannot achieve. At the centre of Kosovel's poem, contrary to the futurists' glorification of movement and technology, is the impotence of the lyric subject. The image "Aeroplanes widen the horizon./ raising cosmic consciousness" (160) from the poem "The Autumn" at least seemingly comes close to the idea of progress brought about by the modern technological age – but how then are we to understand the closing verses: "2000 meters in the air/ perspective is no more" (160)? From the point of view of futurism a comparison of a train and a snail is unacceptable (29), and the conclusion that "spirit is faster than the Orient Express" (15) is not really orthodox either. Kosovel's poetics stems from the idea of a new man who "is not an automaton". According to Franc Zadavec, this humanist idea is compatible neither with the futurists' glorification of technology, nor with the views of Russian constructivists (Zadavec 1988, 214).

By broadening his catalogue of imagery to the field of technology, Kosovel obtained an important source for bold metaphors and comparisons: he compared the lyric subject to "an electric spark/ jumping" (II 46), identified himself with a red rocket (125), called his soul "a fast torpedo boat/ like a bullet,/ propelled into the night" (124). All these images express the physical and psychic unrest of a man trying to achieve personal and social transformation.

Conclusion

If we use the analysis of imagery in Kosovel's poetry as an indication of whether his poetry is traditional or modern, we can establish the following:

1. The structural analysis of Kosovel's imagery has shown that Kosovel used so-called modern figures of speech only in a limited number of poems. One can find some rather bold metaphors in *Integrals*, some cases of absolute metaphor (one-eyed fish, green king of frogs, desecrators of the sun) and individual cases of analogies or images of identification (my thought – electricity; sun, admiral), but this is not enough to link Kosovel to futurism or surrealism. Symbolist symbols expressing horizontal correspondences were not used by Kosovel, the only exceptions being the piano and the lake. Kosovel used many so-called natural symbols; however, their meanings tend to be conventional, and for the most part decoded. He also used Biblical symbols, but he did not transform mythological symbols or fuse the abstract and the concrete (with the exception of the piano), which is, according to Anna Balakian, a key trait in symbolism. Kosovel tended to subsume symbols into metaphors or similes; so-called pure symbols are rare. He used many descriptive images. The bulk of Kosovel's poetry is closer to realism (particularly in pure impressions) and romanticism (particularly in poems expressing similarities between nature and man) than symbolism.

2. In his grammatical analysis of modern metaphors, Hugo Friedrich observed a shift towards a full identification of two objects or parts. The group of modern-type identification metaphors in Kosovel includes the rare metaphors made with apposition. His genitival metaphors are still wholly traditional. The technique of merging has not been established.

3. On the level of composition, symbolist poetry is characterised by networks of symbols, which Kosovel never used. *Integrals* are montages of disparate images. The idea for this style of writing could have come from any number of sources, since it is typical of all modernist movements. He occasionally used a nominal style; however, according to Lado Kralj, a prime example of a nominal style in Slovenian expressionism is a poem by Božo Vodušek "A Town at Night" (Kralj, 179). The main cohesive element in Kosovel's poetry, besides that of the thematic interconnections between images, is the lyric subject. Only a few poems from the *Integrals* collection are impersonal.

4. Kosovel drew most extensively on the following motifs: flowers, animals, water, the sun, the moon, night, the stars, heart, soul, religious images, music, technology. Since these motifs appear in different literary trends and movements, it is impossible to identify Kosovel with a particular movement solely on the basis of the catalogue of imagery he used. In terms of the thematic function of his images, Kosovel's closest affinity seems to be with romantic and expressionist poetry

Translated by Katarina Jerin

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■ ABSTRACT

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Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / literary imagery / metaphor / symbol

Besides analysing the images that Kosovel used most frequently, the paper also discovers their structural, grammatical and compositional characteristics. The main conclusions can be summarised in four points:

1. Kosovel used so-called modern figures of speech only in a limited number of poems. There are some rather bold metaphors in *s*, some cases of absolute metaphor and individual cases of analogies or images of identification, but this is not enough to link Kosovel to futurism or surrealism. Kosovel did not use symbolist symbols expressing horizontal correspondences, the only exceptions

being the piano and the lake. He used many so-called natural symbols; however, their meanings tend to be conventional, and for the most part decoded. The bulk of Kosovel's poetry tends to realism (particularly in pure impressions) and romanticism (particularly in poems expressing similarities between nature and people).

2. The group of modern identification metaphors in Kosovel includes rare metaphors made with apposition. His genitival metaphors are still wholly traditional. A technique of merging was not established.

3. Symbolist poetry is characterised by networks of symbols, which Kosovel never employed. *Integrals* consists of montages of disparate images. The idea for this style of writing could have come from any number of sources, since it is typical of all modernist movements. He occasionally uses a nominal style; only a few poems from the *Integrals* collection are impersonal.

4. Kosovel drew most extensively on the following motifs: flowers, animals, water, the sun, the moon, night, the stars, heart, soul, religious images, music, and technology. Since these motifs appear in different literary trends and movements, it is impossible to identify Kosovel with a particular movement solely on the basis of his imagery. In terms of the thematic function of his images, Kosovel's closest affinity seems to be with romanticism and expressionism.

THE IDEA BEHIND THE INTEGRALS IN KOSOVEL'S POETRY

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At a certain point, Kosovel began to distance himself from the rather too reckless acceptance of new art practices and became somewhat concerned that the idea of totality behind the inter-related spheres of poetry, man and reality, might be clouded over or even lost. In line with many other avant-garde artists he believed in the organic unity of the world and man, the Earth and the Universe. His outlook had a keen anthropocentric thrust, which led him to believe that the new reality needed a new kind of human being – Man who was humane, that is to say rational (Srečko would say *logical*), sensitive, and above all ethical. The complexity of a zenitist poem with its composition process of montage reminded him of layer cakes¹ or an apple strudel.² Even though he saw in it a source of numerous possibilities, he was himself searching for a different kind of poetic expression, one that would enable him to come as close as possible to the totality of human existence. When he wrote: “I am not an aesthetic figure”, he clearly moved away from elitist art and its bent toward aesthetics. These preoccupations of Kosovel found expression in questions of both aesthetic and ethic nature related to his *konsi* (*cons poems*) and *integrali* (*integrals*). He became intensely involved in the appreciation of emerging new art, the Slovenian poetic tradition (particularly Zupančič), the fast-changing technology that was creating new behavioural patterns and modes of feeling, the receptivity pertaining to his youth only intensifying this involvement, so that Kosovel had no time for sorting out and elaborating his own poetic vision that had been forming in the months leading up to his death. His poetics was therefore still within the sphere of crystallisation. Kosovel did not just want to deal with words, which is not to say he saw no need to mould his artistic creativity according to the new perceptions formed under the influence of the iconosphere. This can easily be established from his poetry, short prose and journals. What Kosovel, having suffered the fate he did, left us with are writings of tremendous intuition, great potential, and work that is by no means finished or completed. It is precisely because of this potentiality, his poetics of contradiction and his poetic vision that this avant-garde poet became most popular in the postmodernist age, which is in itself a far cry from ordering reality into any kind of vision of wholeness. Kosovel nevertheless strove, in line with other avant-garde poets, to encapsulate the

whole, if not of the world, then of man, in spite of having doubts about the conventional connections between this topic and the means with which it is constructed. He presented texts which were close to the principle of "an open piece of work" with loose composition; he rejected the mimetic approach in art, favouring other means of lending expression to reality, such as note-taking. He was inspired by other arts and means of communication: painting, newspapers, photography. He was professing a crisis in art, and within the field of literary genre theory he promoted genre conventions. His literary and aesthetic consciousness was characterised by exceptional intuition, which among other things made apparent the limitations of language as communicative means. For this reason he went on to exploit the visual potential of words: graphic and typography³.

It is said that Kosovel's poetic expression and artistic outlook were sharpened through the settling of accounts with constructivism and by entering the domain of constructivism, more precisely, the intellectual and aesthetic space between *cons poems* and *integrals*. All interpreters of Kosovel's creativity unanimously claim that *cons poems* are the poet's expression of the constructivist aesthetics, whereas the *integrals* convey revolutionary humanism aspiring for consummate man. I would argue that the *integrals* are poetically as yet an unworked idea of man and the idea of poetry. Whereas *cons poems* can be read as poetic construction, *integrals* are an instance of poetic disintegration. Under the designation of *integrals* fall all those poems that concern themselves with human values and values of a poet as a human being. Kosovel himself envisaged them above all as the sum of all poetic consequences drawn from the surrounding reality. This idea is suggested also by the title of the unpublished collection.

Integral, which in the Slovenian language denotes totality, is a mathematical and physical concept. Kosovel found it useful when he was going through his constructivist "stage", and was incorporating into the poetic structure different information codes, including chemical and mathematical signs, so as to demonstrate the great wealth and diversity of information bearing on our perception and understanding of reality. A poetic rendering should be some kind of a resultant of these codes, creating at the same time a communication mosaic. The main idea was to penetrate the essence of reality, a reality into which man is fully inscribed, through a new, unrestricted structure of an artistic text. Because poetry for Kosovel was closely bound up with reality, we can assume that he intuitively sought access to its secret mechanism and meaning. For that he needed both senses and reason. The senses told him to include visual communication into the text and to search for a poetic correlative in consonance with the iconosphere and modes of perception deriving from it. Reason commanded a search for the key to the most objective possible ordering of experience. More than likely it was this that made Kosovel turn his attention to mathematics.

The author of *cons poems* could observe similar strivings in artists, particularly in painters and architects, who used mathematical equations for organising space. Numeric laws were a favourite with the painters constructivists. This principle, however, was commonly a source of disagree-

ment between painters and poets, since words cannot be merely counted, being carriers of meaning as well as concrete things. Not all poets were willing – and neither are they today – to acknowledge the concrete materiality of words. Julian Przyboś, for example, was not happy with the graphic design of his poetry collection *Sponad* (Beyond), which was the work of Strzemiński (the title of the first edition was written out differently: *Zponad* (Be yond). He refused to have it reprinted in this form, because he felt that the graphic make-up was detrimental to the poems. In spite of this the relations between Julian Przyboś and Strzemiński continued to be creative all-round⁴. Przyboś, like Tadeusz Peiper, felt that the ways of creating the whole in poetry are different to the ways this is achieved in painting. In the pictorial code they saw an element of the text that could not be made subordinate exclusively to the visual ordering, especially not the numerical laws. Numerical yardstick was also the reason why Peiper rejected the suggestion of the constructivist artist Strzemiński to use *fixed clusters of word, ordered into different compositions on the basis of numerical laws*⁵, which is what Strzemiński did in his unist compositions.

Like the two Polish poets, Kosovel objected to mathematical automatization of words, but for different reasons. Still, mathematics was to him a model for the objectifying potential of human reason, which is why he drew on it in his search for the essence of humanity. He strove to understand the quintessential man in much the same way that the original function is determined in the mathematical process of integration with the aid of a derived one. He was acquainted with Malevich's Suprematism and the Russian variant of Constructivism; through the literary journal *Zenit* and the Slovene painter Avgust Černigoj, he was introduced to the theory of El Lissitzky. It is impossible to believe – as the Kosovel scholar Janez Vrečko⁶ purports – that Kosovel was unfamiliar with Ilya Ehrenburg's constructivism and Vladimir Tatlin's spacial constructivism, though they did not provide him with a rationale that would integrate perception, feeling and reason, and which would have corresponded to Tadeusz Peiper's conception of metaphor and sentence. Kosovel also rejected facile transpositions from one field of art to another, even though he himself drew upon them as distinct information codes. It goes without saying that it was from the Constructivists that he adopted the idea of bringing poetry closer to reality by transforming it aesthetically. What contributed significantly to Kosovel's precipitation of this view was Russian Constructivism (the influence was not direct but possibly came through Grahor and the literary magazine *Zenit*), to which he made references with some reservations. In his letter to Fanica Obidova dated 27 June 1925, he wrote:

[...] I've decided to cross over to the Left. Out of absolute negation, nihilism. [...] pity I cannot consent to "any form of dictatorship whatsoever". Even though my sympathies have always been with the Left, I could never understand their narrow-mindedness. [...] I am on their side, though theoretically I am very far from agreeing with them.⁷

Kosovel was drawn to the Left by their ideological commitment and their striving for reality, but he was afraid of extremism. What he saw as

lacking in the Left was a wholeness (every dictatorship is a reduction), and also a coherent artistic vision both from the perspective of everyday needs and the needs of poetry. The *integrals* were to be a way of achieving this artistic vision, as yet different to all the existing variants of constructivism, since it was to be based on the antinomy of life and art, of both belonging and being autonomous. The *integrals* were conceived as the outcome of the logical, rational process of conceptualisation of things, events and our perceptions of them. The title itself points to this, appealing as it does to the organising faculties of reason.

Integral is the outcome of the process of integrating – of finding a new function with the help of a derived one, or, to put it differently, integral is a new function the derivative of which is the original function. A function can help us establish its derivative, its basic information which contains the smallest possible number of unknowns. Such derived function conveys some of the function's concrete characteristics, such as falling or rising value (slope), maximum or minimum point (limit). A derivative is also a function, but a function of a "lower" rank. It carries hidden within itself information about the original function. Thus it is possible to reconstruct the original function on the basis of the derivative one. In addition to that, a given integral can represent certain abstract mathematical and physical quantities. In order to grasp what integral is, we need to understand what function and its derivatives are, or what the more elementary forms of a complex function (the whole or a sample of the whole) are, and whether these are at the same time autonomous forms. By bringing integration into play, we are investigating what is at the same time an autonomous phenomenon (a special value) and a derivative of another more basic, fundamental phenomenon, which thereby carries within itself information about something more elementary.⁸

Kosovel strongly objected to the automatisisation which was the by-product of the perpetual technological development grounded in scientific findings, but he did not reject science as such; science could play a vital part in making sense of reality. Although he was never very explicit about science, his poetic ideas were clearly – and visibly – inspired by scientific thinking. He also endowed art with cognitive powers, which were, of course, to be put to man's service. The integrals were to become the core foundation of his poetic agenda, which he had already embarked upon with his articulations of reality (recording of polarities) and which was to culminate in an original poetic conception. Perhaps this is why Kosovel did not use the word integral as a designation for all the poems that were to feature in the poetry collection but limited himself to one poem and the title of the collection. Separate texts bore separate titles, since they were all partaking in the process of integration, which is to say in the process of penetrating not only the essence of things with the help of a function in the form of the original – a complex phenomenon – but also other basic items of information embedded in the derivatives. Symbolic language in poetry creates such possibilities because it at the same time denotes and connotes. Connecting poems referred to as integrals with scientific thinking underwrites the part

played by reason in the artistic ordering of existence. This is not so much commending reason as it is allowing it to take poetic decisions. Again, the very project of the collection *Integrals* – and we can surmise only on the level of its conception, since the actual content of the volume cannot be reconstructed – bears this out. Namely, integral demonstrates the logical seamless process of engendering new forms and phenomena; for autonomous forms we always seek out the elementary forms and ... more complex ones are always discovered in derivative functions. A variant of a given integral translated into poetry would thus enable the presentation of certain abstract values which bear on man's axiological system: aesthetic, ethical, philosophical, social, political, etc. Poetic intervention into reality thus becomes the seizing of reality itself. The principle of reason in verbalized form is a description of reality; if paralysed in the process of describing, it cannot work. It is therefore hard to say what direction Kosovel's poetry would have taken, but it would undoubtedly have retained strong tendencies towards encapsulating totality in a valid formula – in poetic construction. Exploiting the process of integration should not lead to leveling out the contradictions the poet observes. It is difficult, however, to predict how the reinforced logic of thinking would be squared with the objectively given phenomena of polarities, the servility, or the utilitarian function, of poetry with its specificity derived from creating a world which is an alternative to the world of reality. When Kosovel speaks of such a world, he often resorts to the figure of titanic poetry. The poet as subject puts up a struggle for mankind, for a new world, devoting to this his energy and his replenishing powers (as for example in poems *Autumn Quiet*, *Red Rocket*, *Death*, etc.). Given that Slovenian poetry has no titanic or messianic tradition, but only expressionist lyrics of affliction and revolt, we can surmise that Kosovel's poetry was a reanimation and a reworking of the idea of the poet's rebellious world. Kosovel as subject is in fact the agent of the process of integration. He is the one removing all the blinds concealing the true essence of man. In his expressionist poems such key words as *veil*, *blind*, *cobweb*, *mask*, *curtain* crop up frequently. The poetic technique of integration, on the level of semantics, correlates to the tearing of curtains, cutting out film shots, reflections and notations.

Kosovel's *cons poems* can be seen as attempts to solve integrals which elude generic categorisation. In both *cons poems* and *integrals* the poet strove for the same goal – to present the heterogeneity of the world in his own poetic experience. The *cons poems*, as well as collages, which emerged from the poet's encounter with futurism, mark an evolutionary stage in Kosovel's shaping of his conception of poetic expression. Neither are the integrals the end result or achievement of anything, but merely an expression of an artistic idea, which Kosovel did not manage to realize. In fact, his own conception of the integrals binds him more strongly to constructivism than do his *cons poems* which draw on the constructivist technique, for it was the *integrals* that were to complete the creative synthesis of sense perceptions (seeing), emotional response and rationality. Which were the poems Kosovel had in mind remains grounds for speculation. We should

not fail to notice, however, that *cons poems* – as is clear from their poetics – were conceived as a stage of development in penetrating the essence of the world, man and most probably also poetry. In this sense they were also integrals, that is to say, an analytical procedure that makes evaluation of things possible in the first place. The poetry that Kosovel was writing at the time of the integrals does not however suggest any major re-evaluations within the framework of poetic expression, it simply suggests the idea of constructing a better world with the help of poetry. In this process destruction and construction come into friction. Destruction could be said to serve construction not only on the level of idea and value but also on the level of poetic rendering.

Particularly in the *cons poems*, destruction runs its course in the name of construction, to be consummated in the spirit of the addressee, and which has its textual signals primarily in the composition (which gives the impression of arbitrariness, though in fact there is little that is arbitrary about it), and in the exploitation of diverse languages or linguistic codes.

Anton Ocvirk, the editor-in-chief of Srečko Kosovel's legacy, had included *cons poems* among the texts designated as *Integrals* on two occasions: first in 1967, when he published the collection *Integrali (Integrals)*, and then in 1974, when he set these poems apart under the joint heading in the second volume of Srečko Kosovel's *Zbrano delo (Collected Works)*. The publication of *Integrals* has in itself raised a lot of doubts and good many questions related to the artistic evolution of this avant-garde poet⁹. Janez Vrečko's contribution to the debate, particularly his book *Srečko Kosovel, slovenska zgodovinska avantgarda in zenitizem (Srečko Kosovel, the Slovenian Historical Avant-garde and Zenitism)* (1986), through the assessment of all key materials and the poet's meta-poetic statements, helps throw light on the phenomenon of Kosovel's poetry, least part of which is also defining the structure and function of *cons poems*.

In spite of the disputes that this segment of Kosovel's poetry generated among the Slovenian literary historians, if it were not for the publication of the collection *Integrals* under the editorship of Anton Ocvirk, Kosovel would not have been perceived as an extraordinary phenomenon in Slovenian poetry, and that mainly for the constructivist poems. His constructivism, however, was not as constructivist as that of the Russian poets, for example Ilya Selvinski, or in Poland of Tadeusz Peiper, whose poetry has been designated as closest to constructivism. In his letters and manifestoes, Kosovel often expressed his faith in New Man, but he also perceived the forthcoming dangers of civilization. New Man for Kosovel was the embodiment of the idea of absolute humanity and the complexity of existence.¹⁰ Kosovel did not reduce him to a social function circumscribed by technology, but was able to perceive him in a wider context.

Constructivism for Kosovel was but one stage in his search for absolute humanity in poetry, expressed in all complexity and integr(al)ity of a poem.

The complexity of *cons poems* is communicated through their thematic and stylistic diversity, which gives the impression of a multitude of voices.

But these do not engender chaos, since the text of the poem presents the reader with a carefully orchestrated selection of voices intended to first accentuate existing polarities and contradictions so as to resolve them, and thus open up a possibility of an integral image. When Kosovel is breaking down the traditional mechanisms of a closed definitive lyric text, it seems he is not providing ready-made new ones, but fully engages the reader to make connections between parallel items of information and derive a final conceptualization as regards a state or phenomenon. Ways of conceptualization, however, are most often implicated by a more or less emphasized semantic knot in the text (be it graphically and verbally, or just verbally). Drawing the reader into active participation in creating and perceiving a given text was connected with the function Slovenian artists prescribed to poetry. A poem should not only generate aesthetic experience, but also stimulate one to think and to act. Aesthetic problems should be resolved along with the fulfilling of the pragmatic function. Kosovel harboured doubts in relation to perceived reality.

Cons poems are not characterized by the integr(al)ity of a poem. On the basic level of what a poem says, they are incoherent, and the speaker of the poem seems just as disorientated as are his collected articulations of reality, even when his presence is revealed in the text. Nevertheless, there is a kind of thread connecting the apparently autonomous and disconnected items of information, the various statements and cries. This connective function is most often fulfilled through negation, which stems from the fragmented composition, the various fragments relating some fact, event, response or act, and which inhabit one linguistic space, forging inter-textual relations while at the same time directing towards extrinsic reality. These bits of information, when taken out of their context, point to fissures and shortcomings of the real world, thereby evoking feelings of resentment and negation.

The attraction of *cons poems* is in that they are – seemingly – unfinished, that there is such differentiation among the texts, and that they are internally so heterogeneous. The overriding idea of these poems is that of openness, which is apparent already on the level of construction. The underlying principle of their construction is a mosaic, which enables the inclusion of different items of information and information codes into the structure of the poem: anything from a sentence, mathematical and logical signs, chemical symbols, labels, slogans, newspaper and magazine quotes, to stylization of folk songs and the various forms of inter-textual referencing. The mosaic is constituted from entities which have already been used in another context, and from which a completed whole can never emerge; what can emerge is a dynamic whole subjected to constant changes. Its ordering function is assumed by semantics, and meaning is accessible through the semantic knot of the text or the common associative circle. Given the heterogeneity of the poems' materials and the ambivalent stance of the subject, most *cons poems* are not characterised by a mono-centric delivery typical of lyrical poetry. The "I" of the poem is neither ordering the world nor striving to verbalize its own emotional state every time anew.

Kosovel's shunning of reductionism gives the reader greater possibilities for interpreting the world.

When Kosovel rejected the primacy of technology but accepted its usefulness, he was exploiting the perception mechanisms that were engendered by the technical civilization. *Cons poems* were clearly attempts at using the various perception techniques created by his day and age. What appears to be destructive in these poems is in fact an outcome of the mosaic construction with its uses of contrast and parallelism.

Even though *cons poems* employ the poetic techniques of constructivism, futurism and expressionism, their sketchy or draft construction nevertheless sets them apart from these avant-garde poetic forms. When in his poetry Kosovel gave up homogeneity (of stance and material) on account of heterogeneity, he renounced the so-called purity of verbal art. When he saw the coming dangers of the 20th-century civilization, he internalized in poetry the most characteristic features of his age.

Integrals were therefore meant to materialize – in poetry – consummate man with his multifarious sensitivity, ethics, social and national awareness: a human being who is the central figure on Earth (*the Sun-Man*) and an element of the Universe. In part, this idea overlapped with the utopian theory of the historical avant-garde. The orientation of these poems was towards the idea of absolute humanity and their addressee was envisaged as a constructive man, understood without reductive constraints. Some poems from Ocvirk's edition of *Integrals* bear direct thematic correspondence to this idea, as for example: *Contemporary Lethargy*, *A Streetlamp*, *A Kaleidoscope*, *A Small Coat* as well as many others. The collection *Integrals* is thus characterized by a unity of content, and their formal aspect puts them on a par with other forms of the avant-garde free verse. In most cases they follow the stanza structure, lines are consistently unrhymed and rhythmically regular, and they are characterized by mono-centric enunciation which enhances the ordering function of the lyrical subject. Unlike the *cons poems*, they feature a limited scope of codes external to poetry. *Integrals* form longer entities, and on account of their closed structure, which is based on various kinds of repetition (including anti-metabola), they set forth explicitly formulated ideas:

Be a lamp, if
 you cannot be man;
 For it is hard to be man.
 Man has only two hands
 But he should help thousands.
 Therefore be a streetlamp shining
 Onto the faces of a thousand happy ones,
 Shining for the lonely, for the wandering.
 So be a lamp with only one light,
 Be man in a magic square
 Signaling with a green hand.
 Be a lamp, a lamp,
 A lamp.¹¹

It needs to be expressly stated that the term *integrals* can be used to designate all poems, with the exception of the *cons poems*, which were written in the months between spring and autumn 1925 and which are dominated by the idea of consummate man. Why there has been so much speculation and imprecision over this question is because Slovenian literary historians could not determine a definitive corpus of texts, which does not in any way alter the estimation of this segment of Kosovel's creativity. The letters and notes in his *Dnevniki (Journals)* make it clear that Kosovel was writing *cons poems* and *integrals* at the same time, and in his letter to Obidova we read of his planning a book of poems entitled *Integrals*, which was to have an introduction. Perhaps this could have been the poems' sequence in the collection: a *cons* (as a lead-in) followed by a poem. This would be in consonance with the expressive purpose of the *integral*: *integral* is an operation based on a particular mental process, through which we can access certain information, and derive the starting point. It conveys a process of investigating an autonomous phenomenon that is derived from another phenomenon. Therefore *cons poems* could have been envisaged in this role of partial functions, following the idea of appearing in combination with another poem which builds on the result of the undertaken operation. This would also enable Kosovel to read his poems at a literary reading he was planning (he wrote about the preparations leading up to this event in a letter to Obidova), with the exception of those *cons poems* whose graphic and visual components rendered them inappropriate for public reading. That these assumptions are not at all far-fetched can be seen if we read Kosovel's poetry alongside his notes and journal entries. Kosovel's notes in *Journals* are very often sketches of poems or drafts of articles and lectures, though – it seems – they were first notes of ideas, thoughts and facts, and only then became material for poetry. The impression that *cons poems* are really drafts largely stems from Kosovel's manner of note taking. We cannot establish with certainty whether *Integrals* were the end goal in Kosovel's poetic conception. Probably not, since in his letters (including to Obidova) he often wrote not only of his need to work intensely but also of having still so much to learn and a long way to go, and of wanting to travel abroad in order to find out about the latest creative achievements, artistic outlooks and solutions.

If it is true that Kosovel's end goal was the poetic formation of "integral" man and his vision, traces of this are discernible also in his *cons poems*, which were unquestionably taken to be constructivist poems. Although *cons poems* do entail elements of constructivist poetics, their structure, bent on exploding an image, strives for openness rather than a closed constructivist whole.

Cons poems are predicated on the prevailing logic of representation, that is on reality emerging as second-hand, with its replicas in the form of fragments or observations incorporated into the poem (for example: a slogan, title, label, linguistic code, etc). *Integrals* create performances, the focus and perspective of which are for the observer largely determined. Their meaning for the reader is legible, and the text does not strictly de-

mand creative participation on the part of the reader. Both *cons poems* and *integrals* refer to vaguely defined categories of literary genre, but precisely as such trans-genre terms they characterize Kosovel's poetic and philosophical consciousness. The constitutive feature of this consciousness is polarity, which applies as much to chaos as to the phenomenon of consummate existence. The latter transcends the representational possibilities of poetry. Reproduction of reality is by necessity doomed to uncertainty, which is why the author of *cons poems* chose a fragment, convinced it must be a part of some whole entity. In the same way that polarity can exist within a totality, construction is possible as part of destruction and vice versa, for the subjective is coexistent with the objective, microcosm with macrocosm. The relations between these arise out of connections perpetually generated between the subject and the object and other subjects. For Kosovel the warrant for these ever-emerging connections had always been emotion, spirit and reason, all partaking in the process of communication, which is made possible by feelings of compassion and man's ethical needs.

Translated by Ana Jelnicar

NOTES

¹ The cake referred to in the original "gibanica", layers of pastry filled with cottage cheese and poppy seeds, traditional for the east and south-eastern part of Slovenia.

² See Srečko Kosovel: *Zbrano delo* (Collected Works). Third volume (part I), ed. by Anton Ocvirk, Ljubljana: DZS, 1977, p. 688.

³ See Grzegorz Gazda: *Słownik europejskich kierunków i grup literackich XX wieku*. Warszawa: PWN, 2000, pp. 34–44.

⁴ See Seweryna Wystouch: *Literatura a sztuki wizualne*. Warszawa: PWN 194, pp. 36–61.

⁵ Tadeusz Peplier: *Rytm nowoczesny*. V: N.: d.: *Tędy. Nowe usta*. Foreword, commentary, biographical commentary: Stanisław Jaworski. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1972, p. 90.

⁶ See Janez Vrečko: *Srečko Kosovel, slovenska zgodovinska avantgarda in zenitizem*. Maribor: Obzorja, 1986, p. 147.

⁷ Srečko Kosovel: *Zbrano delo*. Vol III (Part I), p. 400.

⁸ See, *Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna*. T. II. Warszawa: PWN 1963, pp.272–275.

⁹ See Matjaž Kmecl: »Torej še enkrat o Srečku Kosovelu«. *Jezik in slovstvo* 1971/72, no. 4: Franc Zdravec: *Srečko Kosovel*. Koper-Trst: Založba Lipa in Založništvo tržaškega tiska, 1986; Boris Paternu: »Slovenski modernizem«. *Sodobnost* 1985, no 11; Janez Vrečko: *Srečko Kosovel, slovenska zgodovinska avantgarda in zenitizem*.

¹⁰ See Janez Vrečko: »Konstruktivizem, futurizem in branje Kosovelovih konsov«. [1]. *Delo* 1988, no. 121, [supplement:] *Književni listi*, s. 4. This difference was not noted by Anton Ocvirk when he was presenting *cons poems* and *integrals* as an undivided whole – see Anton Ocvirk: »Srečko Kosovel in konstruktivizem«. In:

Srečko Kosovel: *Integrali* '26. ed. by Anton Ocvirk. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1967, pp. 5–112 and Srečko Kosovel: *Zbrano delo. Volume III (Part two)*...

¹¹ "A Streetlamp" tr. by Nike Kocijančič Pokorn, from *Srečko Kosovel: Integrals*, tr. by Nike Kocijančič Pokorn, Katarina Jerin, Philip Burt (Ljubljana: Slovene Writer's Association, 1998), p. 173.

■ ABSTRACT

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Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / cons / integrals

Like many avant-garde artists, Kosovel believed in the connection between the world and humanity, the Earth and the Universe. He regarded poetry as an expression of human sensitivity, man's reason as well as his emotional and empathetic faculties. Thus, he recognised the aesthetic, as well as gnoseological value of poetry. In striving for the integral human being, he saw the need for art and literature to analyse and synthesise the phenomena of life. His efforts resulted in poems denominated as "konsi" ("cons" poems) and "integrali" (integrals) – both of which encapsulate his aesthetic quest and his Weltanschauung.

The word integral is a concept from the fields of mathematics and physics. Kosovel discovered its analytic and synthetic utility in the period of his constructivist experiments. The integral is the outcome of a process of integration, in which the primary function is determined with the aid of a derived one. The derived function enables the discovery of a primary and more elementary piece of information on the basis of the smallest possible number of unknowns. The process of integration is therefore used to study what is simultaneously an autonomous phenomenon and a derivative of some other, more elementary or fundamental phenomenon.

This yields a sense of the interconnectedness of phenomena and their continuity, which is not always immediately apparent. Kosovel's "cons" poems include elements that seem to be autonomous, but are, in fact, derivatives. The poet subjects them to a process of integration in order to reach or construct the integral human being, the essence of humanity, that is, the quintessential human being.

SREČKO KOSOVEL

AND THE EUROPEAN AVANT-GARDE

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I.

The Slovene poet Srečko Kosovel was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire on 18th March 1904 in Sežana, near Trieste. He grew up in a nationally conscious teacher's family.¹ In 1916 he went to the polytechnic school in Ljubljana, since his parents wished to spare him from the horrors of the First World War. After this war, a third of the Slovene people found themselves transformed from subjects of the Habsburg dynasty into subjects of the Savoy kings, which for them was a catastrophic historical rupture. Even by the end of 1918 the Fascists had broken into the premises of the Slovenian bishopric in Trieste, and later forced the bishop to quit his diocese. In the middle of 1920, with the tacit consent of the authorities, the Fascists burnt down the *Narodni dom* cultural centre, the most visible and powerful focus of Slovene presence in Trieste. This arson attack was a baptism of fire presaging Fascism, and an introduction to the oppression that escalated especially after October 1922, when the Fascists came to power in Italy. They dismantled everything that was Slovene, from political parties to cultural societies, banned the Slovene language from public use, Italianised Slovene surnames, and suppressed periodical publications. School reforms in 1923 made Italian the exclusive language of instruction in schools. Numerous poets, writers and journalists had to leave the narrow confines of the Primorska (coastal) region homeland.

The fate of the Primorska region after the First World War was extremely traumatic for Kosovel. He observed with fear how nationalism and militarism were growing, and how Trieste was being transformed from an open, multilingual city, into a place of intolerance and brutal settling of scores with opponents of the regime; among them were quite a few Slovenes who were friends of Kosovel. He had similar criticism, too, for the state of the southern Slavs, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, for he soon

¹ The article was first published in: Srečko Kosovel, *Man in a Magic Square*. Translated by Nike Kocjančič Pokorn, Katarina Jerin, Philip Burt. Ljubljana: Myra Locatelli, k.d. and Mobitel, d.d., 2004.

realised how much of a threat to the Slovenes Serbian nationalism was becoming. In their centralising zeal, Serb politicians detected separatist tendencies in every single cultural and social activity. Along the lines of Bengali writer Tagore, Kosovel separated nationality, which meant to him something spiritual, from nationalism, which he held to be a material force. Kosovel rejected Fascism in Italy and the nationalism of 'Greater Serbia' of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes as "militarised nationalism". The poet soon felt the aggression of the Greater Serbia policy himself, for he was not given a grant that would have been essential for him after the forced retirement of his father, who lost his job because he was a proud Slovene (Pirjevec, 12). His father's wish was that his son train as a forestry engineer, and in that way he could have worked professionally in afforesting the Karst, but this was not to be, for in 1922 Kosovel began Slavonic and Romance studies at University of Ljubljana.

II

Who was the poet Srečko Kosovel, who confidently wrote at the age of 20 that his "life is Slovene, modern, European and eternal" (3, 321)? Although he belonged to one of the smallest European nations, as a poet and thinker he sought solutions not just for himself and his own nation, but acted for the "salvation of mankind". We have a good reason to ask, therefore, how did he understand his poetic calling and the position of the intellectual in a Europe devastated by the First World War and in the early stages of a new world crisis?

III

Kosovel was revealed extremely slowly. A year after his death, in 1927, his friends published the selection *Poems*; 1930 saw the publication of *Selected Poems*, and in 1946, the first volume of *Collected Works* was published, this collection only becoming complete with the third volume in 1977. In 1967 Kosovel's experimental poetry appeared in an independent collection, and this then exposed a "hitherto unknown chapter in Slovene literature, which we might also call the European avant-garde" (Flaker, 1983, 7).

His poetic opus embraces impressionist poetry, but in 1924 and 1925, when he became familiar with Italian futurism, German expressionism, zenitism, Berlin constructivism and Russian constructivism, his poetry progressed to an experimental phase, into his famous *cons* poems, as he himself called them. From the late summer of 1925 on, he also devoted himself to revolutionary poetry. What is specifically interesting about Kosovel is that he was involved in all three "orientations" simultaneously, and therefore did not abandon impressionism during his avant-garde and politically orientated phase. For many years, readers only knew Kosovel from his impressionist poetry and partly through his later political writings. In the mid-sixties he

also became appealing as an avant-garde poet, for until then only around 15 poems from the “department of constructions” had been published.

It was precisely Kosovel’s exceptionally intense poetic and intellectual fate that spurred a range of literary-historical research. In this way it was finally established in the middle of the eighties that the Slovenes were involved in an intensive way in the avant-garde movements of the 1920’s, which today we label collectively the historical avant-garde, and this then showed that it was precisely Kosovel who was responsible for phenomena that entirely satisfied the criteria of the European avant-gardes. This overturned conclusively Willet’s contention that there were no avant-garde movements south of the line running from Vienna to Budapest (Willet 1978, 9).

The Slovene historical avant-garde may consequently be seen as a single and continuous movement, since from the intermediary aspect the experimentation stretches from literature through to the fine arts, theatre and music, and also incorporates the constitutive elements of every avant-garde, complete with public appearances, group activities, manifestoes, magazines and a logical sequence of aesthetic, ethical and political re-evaluation. Kosovel represents the internal constant of this movement.

IV

Thus far, literary doctrine has been led to link Kosovel with constructivism by the fact that primarily in his diaries and correspondence he frequently mentioned this concept, and that he called his poems by the abbreviation *cons*, which was also to be the name of the magazine which he intended to publish and manage as editor-in-chief.

Despite this, some linked him to Italian futurism, although a merely fleeting look at his manifesto *Mehanikom* (To Mechanics) shows that Kosovel was not one to join in with the futurist reverence for kinetic beauty and modern technology. He rejected Marinetti’s mechanical man and his “liberated words” (*parole in libertà*) and espoused a new man, which he writes with capitalised initials. He felt similarly about zenitism and its “words in space” (*Worte im Raum*), which to him was mere tinkering.

In his poetic repertoire Kosovel used almost all the main words from the contemporary technical arsenal, such as automobile, express train, aircraft, torpedo, motor and so on, and he had an ambivalent attitude to them. It was clear to him that it was the development of modern technology that had sown the seeds of education among people. “The radio, telegram, mail, railway, steamships, newspapers, and books are the promoters of development” (3, 26). “The automobile is a sensation”, “Automobile 4 km, thoughts 1 km, ambition 100 m”. It was clear to Kosovel that technology was the fruit of intellect, and was more interesting to the modern person than art, (see 3, 111), but that it also alienated people, mechanised them, and heartlessly civilised them. Hence Kosovel’s principle that “people cannot be mechanised”, “man is not an automaton”, and “Fall, dead man... slave of mechanics”. If at first he found the automobile to be a sensation, it

had now become a device that “sprays mud”, “The “car has no free will”, “There is no culture in mechanics”, and “Trains are as slow as black snails. Thought is like lightning”. Kosovel’s had a similar attitude to urban civilisation, to its countless illusions, which pressurise people and lead the West into inevitable destruction, to the death of Europe. The world of technology is a world in which man loses his original and organic qualities, his capacity for paradoxical thinking, that is, the world of the “exhausted European man”, who is in an “ecstasy of death”.

All this confirms that Kosovel was indeed far from Marinetti’s view, that he maintained a distance from the metropolitan, amusement, circus-like, profiteering, treacherous, and entirely mechanised Taylorian environment of conveyor belts, that he warned against the blind glorification of the “century that is mechanising” and against what Marinetti taught: that only those who allow themselves to be mechanised will survive. Kosovel sees the solution in a paradox that signifies for him a “leap from mechanics into life”, whereby he links himself to zenitist terminology in which the paradox is understood as flexibility of the mind, as a general condition for existence, and not as absurdity (*Zenit*, 1922, 13, 17). Emanating distinctly then from Kosovel’s manifesto is the opposition between life, which is alive, sparkling, paradoxical and electric, and mechanics and the mechanical, which are soulless and cannot comprehend paradoxes. Although his manifesto is written as a living appeal to mechanics and drivers, or to the operators of modern machines, its substance is intended for those capable of leaping away from mechanics in order to destroy the man of the machine. The second part of his manifesto is therefore a panegyric to the New Man, the man from places where the “day breaks; do you feel this glitter?”, whom Kosovel will also call the constructive man, and the age that will belong to him, the age of constructiveness (see 3, 591 -783). Kosovel himself tells us in several places where the art of this new man must seek examples and models: where “morning comes, arriving from the east...arriving with a red mantle” (3, 93).

V

An important avant-garde movement, which Kosovel knew extremely well, was zenitism. The magazine *Zenit*, which ranked among the five leading avant-garde magazines in contemporary Europe, had since its founding in 1921 propagated a new art, which would no longer be an elitist art of museums and coffee-shop decadence, but would be based on the “new foundations of constructivism”, which would regenerate and Balkanise Europe. This would lead to a new type of culture and person, with a Balkan stamp of ethics and direct humanity. For some time Kosovel was quite dangerously burdened with zenitism, mentioning it in his diaries every few pages. He attended two zenitist evenings in Ljubljana, and his estate includes several zenitist publications, with *Zenit* and works from the zenitist library even accompanying him home on his summer holidays in Tomaj (see 3, 454).

Correspondence and diary entries from 1924 indicate that Kosovel made no mention at all of other magazines apart from *Zenit*. From the summer of 1924 until the late spring of 1925, this was the only avant-garde magazine that he studied seriously, even “retrospectively”, back to the first issues. This provided him with information on Berlin constructivism, the orientations of *De Stijl*, on the Russian productivists, Czech poetists, Italian futurists and so on. Through this editorial approach for *Zenit*, its editor Micić showed a “model of cooperation between avant-gardes that was in fact valid right across Europe. It involved a rapid adoption of views, models, experiences ...” (Krečič, 1981, 17). In this connection, Kos points out the examples and cases of constructivist poetry that were for him “perhaps the closest, if not the sole practical model of writing poetry in the modernist manner” (Kos, 1981, 45). It should be pointed out in advance that a distinction will need to be made between Kosovel’s zenitist theoretical stage in the “new manner” and the practical execution of the *cons* pieces, which will of course be far from the zenitist “practical models”.

Especially interesting in this respect are Kosovel’s Diary Notes VII, recorded in April and May of 1925, in other words at a time when the poet was involved intensively with zenitist constructivism, and learned of their methods and aims first hand, at zenitist public appearances. He realised that poetry could no longer be built on the “expansiveness of emotion”, that “poems cannot be woven out of moonbeams alone” (3, 555), and the poem *Rhymes* (Rime) contains numerous elements of Micić’s Categorical Imperative, from rhymes to phrases, declamations and sentimentality. In *Cons ABC* (Kons ABC) he orders his heart to stay cold, “A bottle in a corner says more than a collection of empty rhymes”, and in *Culture’s Prostitution* (Prostituirana kultura) he wonders: “Are you a madman or what, weeping with leaves in the wind?” Barking becomes the only counterweight for the poet, who “howls at the moon” and for whom the only cure is an enema. Brilliant irony is levelled at the sentimental longing for a woman, through the onomatopoeic sounds of rowing: *clap, clap* (ibid.). For Kosovel, Micić’s Categorical Imperative became the “programme and foundation for working with the clear principles of anti-aesthetics”, and his zenitosophy convinced him of the need to free himself from the obedient bread and butter of sentimentality (*Zenit*, 1924, 26-33, unpaginated). Kosovel first reckoned with the revolutionary dimensions of zenitist constructivism, then soon after, it seemed to him merely verbal and formally definable tinkering with superficial and short-term effects, so he opted for a criticism of *Zenit*, just as he had dealt with Italian futurism, and in this way for a reorientation of his world view and for a different poetic approach.

VI

From all the above it is clear that Kosovel was well acquainted with the numerous ‘-isms’ of his time; unfortunately, not all of them could be mentioned here; but he did not espouse any of them, since they involved merely

experimenting with form, merely changing literature and art, and not life as a whole. For this reason he had ultimately to turn towards those orientations which, alongside the revolutionised form, also took account of the man of the coming “constructive age”, and which, therefore, alongside a revolution of form, also observed a “revolutionary substance”. Among the movements of the 1920's, Russian constructivism came closest, perfectly linking modern technology and the new man, Kosovel's man of the future constructive age, which was decisive in his turn towards the then political left in Slovenia, and was closely connected to his writing of the *cons* poems.

A comparison between the idealising and fetishising of machines and modern technology in Italian futurism – which also attempted to mechanise man, and to the extent that it would be possible at any time to substitute or replace him with another mechanical man or a mechanical part of him – and the symbol of Russian constructivism, Tatlin's monument to the Third International, speaks volumes. This idea was never realised, unfortunately, for at that time the tallest building in the world would have been entirely devoted to man, since through the built-in geometric frames of the cone, pyramid and cylinder, revolving around their own axis and containing a radio station, the biggest library in the world and a clock, its density of information would ensure that the new, “coming” man would be superlatively informed. Contrary to the futurist Marinetti, Tatlin was not interested in the mere idolatry of mechanical technology, where a racing car could be more beautiful than Nike of Samothrace (for Kosovel, the automobile was “a device that sprays mud”), but in a process beginning with man and his spiritual transformation, which would in turn be followed by a change in economic relations. Kosovel was working on the same wavelength. To his essay, preserved in manuscripts under the title *The Collapse of Society and Art* (Propad družbe in umetnosti ; see 3/1, 807), Kosovel added in parentheses and in pencil a subtitle: “The New White Society of the Future”, at which in his opinion it would be possible to arrive only via “white barricades”, in other words, by a bloodless, spiritual revolution.

We are trying to establish to what extent Kosovel was acquainted with the fundamental principles of Russian literary constructivism, which functioned as the Literary Centre of Constructivists (LCC), to whom he could have been introduced by his friend Ivo Grahor, who illegally emigrated to the Soviet Union in the middle of 1924 and returned home in the winter of 1925.

The LCC was characterised by its attempt to synthesise numerous European ‘-isms’. In Grübel's opinion, this indicates the “synthetic” moment of the constructivist literary movement, an “attempt at merging all known procedures into a common poetic inventory” (*ibid.*).

Familiarity with the principles of the LCC finally enabled Kosovel to modify his *cons* poems for the needs of Slovene literary circles, in which there was still a need to accommodate the specific position of language, and thus the poetic idiom. Indeed, in recent Slovene history, literature had a nation-building function, something that also applied to certain other nations in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The British historian A. J. P. Taylor established for them the notion that they were simply the brainchildren of

poets. For the Slovenes, the establishment of the state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SCS) after the First World War after many long centuries offered the first hope of independent statehood, so the functional alliance of the literary and the national could now dissolve. At first, Kosovel concurred with the idea that the historical needs of the nation “in terms of literature have entirely changed” (3, 710), but it soon turned out that they would still need to be observed, for he realised that Serbian nationalism made the kingdom of the SCS worthless.

It was only through the central process of the LCC, through the principle of “gruzification” or the maximum loading of the subject, that Kosovel could undertake a complete poetic experiment. In the *cons* poems he synthesised intensive lyrical elements through mathematical, chemical, pictorial, typographical, and other elements, with political statements. Up to this point, however, these poems did not differ from zenitist and other practical models. Yet since we have established that he could not accept these, for these ‘-isms’ derived from a trans-rational, abstract conception of the word, and from their random collaging, as was the case for Marinetti’s *parole in libertà*, for Micić’s *Worte im Raum*, for the trans-sense language of the Russian futurists, Kosovel had to opt for “poems from words”, where “each word is a world unto itself”; and only LCC offered him this possibility. The LCC theoretician Zelinsky had indeed established the requirement that a poem as a whole must retain its logical semantic dimension. This requirement suited Kosovel particularly well, for he had serious intentions regarding the publication of his *cons* poems. In his definition of constructivism, Kosovel clearly summarised the requirement of the LCC and Zelinsky: “The substance seeks expression in a living, free, organic form, it seeks to be the substance and the form at the same time, hence constructivism” (3, 13). It was Kosovel alighting on the synthetic moment of the LCC that finally produced the *cons* poems as we know them today, signalling as they do a special feature in the European constructivist context and one of its peaks. This is “an unusual combination of political declaration and authentic intimate poetry, and there without a doubt lies its greatest value” (see Flaker, 1983, 77). In these poems, “within disintegration there operates integration, and within the modernist wreckage, there is still a classical order of things...Anti-poetry is transformed into poetry, into the ‘poem’ which Kosovel, in truth, still defended” (Paternu, 1985, 102). Kosovel created spatial, architectural and visual poems in which there was no place for abstract, coincidental, trans-sense or auto-illustrative conceptions of words. “Letters grow into the space, voices are like buildings...The gleaming of space... the light of the word”; “Everything is architecture, poetry, music, there is no more painting” (3, 718). “Development towards space. Each word is a world unto itself/movement between these worlds” (3, 769). “Works of art – an architectonic problem” (3, 703). Only such a conception of the word allowed Kosovel a restitution of the poem through the sensible and logical use of verbal and architectural material, where everything still took place in the “light of the word” as its semantic dimension.

All this enables us to understand Kosovel's perseverance with constructivism, for no other '-ism', no other movement of that time would have allowed him such syntheses of the experimental, the lyrical and left-wing, infused with the most important aspect - a recognisable meaning. This was the point that made Kosovel decide against all movements, from zenitism to futurism, that would not permit or accommodate this. We should mention here that Kosovel also adopted from Russian literary constructivism the requirement that poetic material must be accentuated or made to focus on a previously determined point of construction, which in turn refers back to the entire poem (see Grübel, 1981, 125).

If we recall Kosovel's definition of the constructivist poem, whereby the "Poem must be a complex" (3, 601), and if we understand that complex as something that is connected within itself, bound, composed into a whole from several parts, then we see that this definition was close to the principle of constructivist "gruzification" or loading, since the complex related to the montage principle, which is the first condition and material for a 'loaded' poem, in which the montage principle has been superseded. Here too is the difference between Kosovel's initial, merely theoretical definition of constructivism, when he still defined a poem as a complex, and his later practical implementation, when he had already become familiar with Russian literary constructivism, although he had already previously anticipated brilliantly the problems and solutions for his *cons* poems.

In these, Kosovel consequently synthesised numerous contemporary avant-garde trends and 'loaded' them on the aesthetic and ideological levels. Of all the '-isms' of the 1920's, with their typographical, pictorial, ideological, and aesthetic material, Russian literary constructivism alone was committed to the semantic dimension of words and to the restitution of the poem according to the principle of the hermeneutic circle, while at the same time attempting to establish human creativity and freedom; this is why it suited Kosovel so well. He rigorously rejected, however, all those orientations which simply advocated free words without meaning, and at the same time supported the mechanisation of man, mechanical dynamics, the glorification of modern civilisation with no critical distance. Zenitism, Italian futurism and Berlin constructivism in particular were in his firing-line.

Only now is it possible to comprehend what Kosovel had in mind when he wrote in his manifesto 'To Mechanics' of the first declaration of war on all mechanisms in the kingdom of the SCS, which seemed to have occurred in Slovenia. He was obviously convinced that the shift which neither zenitism nor anyone else within the SCS state was capable of, was actually accomplished in Slovenia, with his *cons* poetry.

In view of all the above, it is also understandable why Kosovel did not devote himself more to collages. Only three survive: one from April 1925, and two from the end of December 1925. The collages are based on the montage process, on random word collaging, while the fundamental principle of the *cons* pieces was the constructivist 'loading', where montage was only one of the elements in what was termed the maximum loading of the content, which must be evident from start to finish. From the avant-

garde standpoint the collages are more conservative, belonging to a time of unreflected, avant-garde processes in which primary importance was given to the aesthetic aspect and breaking with tradition, while the ‘loaded’ *cons* poems were in the service of ethical and political re-evaluation.

VII

Kosovel began preparing for public appearances and his entry into the Slovene cultural arena, which he called an arena of lies, with an entirely different poetic programme, which should, however, just like his *cons* poems, advance “parallel to the European development” (3, 658).

Experimentation with the *cons* poems did not bring him liberation; he only saw it as a path “over the bridge of nihilism to the positive side” (3, 398), which he also describes as a shift to the left. “From absolute negation, nihilism, I have gradually moved, with my eyes closed, to the positive side. With my eyes closed, so that I might first get a little used to it, and then open them... What a pity that I cannot acknowledge any dictatorship whatsoever. Despite the fact that I always sympathised with the left, I could not understand their narrow-mindedness. Today I see more: my eyes are opening also to those who until now were locked in theory. And I am with them” (3, 400). In the same letter, Kosovel predicts that they will “take over the *Mladina* paper (3, 400/1), and will be able to “write a good deal”, although this will no longer be in the area of the “most modern”, but in the area of the “extreme” in the politically revolutionary sense. Indeed, as early as 1st September 1925 we can read in a letter to Fanica Obidova that he was compiling a collection entitled *The Golden Boat* (*Zlati čoln*), which he intended “to sell for sure” in the autumn. At the same time he informs her that “I started to take an extreme path in my poems, as well; my latest series of poems... The ‘Integrals’ have an entirely unique and special character. I think I shall hold a reading with them” (3, 402).

In this letter Kosovel first says that he has begun composing extreme poetry, with a special character. This would suggest that he must have been writing this poetry at the end of summer 1925, when he also “crossed over to the left”, and he also says that he is thinking of holding a reading. He therefore emphasises the content of the new poetry, and that corresponds perfectly with his finding that the “revolution of form was too superficial and short-term, while the revolution we are heralding is a revolution of the substance of European man” (3, 658). The new substance is tied to the “extreme path”, extreme in the sense of political substance and revolution. This is, of course, a vague description of the revolutionary nature of these poems from the ‘Integrals’ series, since the letter was written to a political activist, later a member of the Italian Communist Party, who was involved with poetry for only a short time, devoting the rest of her life to politics. So Kosovel wrote to her on 27th July 1925 that he had realised from her last letter what kind of path she was taking, and added that he himself was also “on the same path, in other words, I am heading for the same goal” (3, 399).

Kosovel consequently planned *Integrals* as a “socialist writer”, who was writing for the new “constructive man”, while at the same time he was clearly aware that “the time is coming when we will have to unequivocally state and declare our words” (3, 568); this, again, is tied to *Integrals* and the reading Kosovel was planning. The fact that he was hiding his *cons* poems from his friends and the general public, and that all his plans regarding their publication ultimately failed - e.g. the planned magazines *Konstrukter* and *KONS*, as well as the fate of *Zenit*, which at the critical moment was not able to exploit its position and link up with the left - forced Kosovel towards more realistic goals, such as the takeover of *Mladina*, and politically extreme poetry in the ‘*Integrals*’ series, which he would recite in public.

Surely, then, the transformation of Kosovel’s poetry from the *cons* poems to ‘*Integrals*’ is a clear consequence of information from outside, information about everything that was happening in Russia, where the constructivists were attempting in a similar way to rescue the futurist revolution that had lost its way, precisely with a renewed and great concern for the masses. In this way Kosovel’s poetry also acquired enlightenment and didactic dimensions (“Here we will educate everyone” 3, 690). It was also given a new name: constructive poetry, as collected ‘*Integrals*’, which would be published by *Strelci*, the publishing house of proletarian writers of the SCS state.

Tied to this shift “to the left” is Kosovel’s idea of an “international federation of proletarian writers, firstly here, in the SCS, and then abroad” (3, 698), which again proves how exceptionally well-informed Kosovel was, since in the first half of the 1920’s no such international literary organisation yet existed in Europe (Flaker 1982, 182). We may assume that this initiative too, like many others, came through *Grahor*’s intercession from Russia, where in 1923 the LEF established formal ties with the Moscow Federation of Proletarian Writers. In 1924, during *Grahor*’s stay in Russia, they were joined by the Literary Centre of Constructivists, and the Federation of Soviet writers was born.

According to Kosovel’s plans, the intended federation of SCS writers would publish ‘*Integrals*’, collections with introductions (3, 698), novels etc, all of which would be published by *Strelci*, the intended publishing house of this federation of proletarian writers. That the *Integrals* collections were supposed to bring social and revolutionary poetry can also be seen from the fact that Kosovel mentions all these facts in one single *Journal IX*, on pages 18, 19, 20 and 21. He therefore drew a very clear boundary between the *cons* poems and *Integrals*.

It is also interesting that during the summer months of 1925, when Kosovel was suffering from a creative crisis in his crossing over “to the left”, he began writing prose, including everything from a few lines to a grand plan novel to be called *Kraševci*. These attempts of Kosovel indicate that once again he was abreast of events in Europe, where at that time “the centre of gravity of the European left shifted from avant-garde poetry to socially functional prose” (Flaker, 1982, 186). This would not be mentioned were it not also dependent on events in Russian literary constructivism. We know that after 1924 prose writers began joining the Literary Centre of

Constructivists (see Grübel, 1981, 147); the reason was the already mentioned shift from experimental poetry to functional prose, which was not commissioned as we might naively expect, from below, from the proletarian base, but from above, from the Party. The Party indeed adopted the ideology of the avant-garde, but not their artistic idiom, and that anticipated early on the clash between political and artistic revolutionaries, a clash that ended tragically and hopelessly for the latter.

If we add to this the fact that Selvinsky, a leading theoretician of Russian constructivism, spoke in the Code of Constructivism in 1930 of a “double realism” or a realistic realism, and saw the path to it lying in the introduction of prose processes in poetry, which would sideline the inflated language of futurism, Kosovel’s prose writing makes even more sense. It is the planned federation of SCS proletarian writers is a very good indication that Kosovel made serious and above all very systematic plans for his prose writing, which were based in very thorough knowledge of all the essential developments in the then LCC.

We should emphasise that even in this decisive shift to the left, Kosovel did not lose his critical eye and objectivity towards his work. Parallel to the creation of the Federation of Proletarian Writers, he was pondering what was then the very salient issue of the position of intellectuals in the post-revolutionary period, their awakening from sleep (see 3, 673), the attitude of the poet towards the revolution and whether the revolution was in opposition to the poet or not (see 3, 746). But above all he intended to demand in his work and from his associates an “intellectual atmosphere that will not erase the special features from our faces...” (3/1, 811) And all this was already happening in the Soviet Union and in the LCC, as we have seen. The fact that the members of the LCC were intensively debating the function and place of intellectuals and the intelligentsia in Russian post-revolutionary society (see Grübel, 167), is another indication that Kosovel was familiar with the LCC.

Through the “takeover” of *Mladina*, Kosovel finally acquired his own outlet and seized the initiative on the left-wing front of his day. He took over from the Independent Farmers’ Party in autumn 1925. The magazine became a good basis for left-wing intellectual work up to the Second World War and onwards. The reason for Kosovel taking hold of *Mladina* lies in the fact that his plans with Grahor for a monthly magazine *Volja* (Will) did not succeed, while *Mladina* had assured financial support, which brought Kosovel financial security he had never known. With Kosovel, *Mladina* acquired a new, constructivist title page as the outward sign of a different approach, while Kosovel himself became the leading member of the editorial board and edited the first issue of its second year. “The model of ‘proletarian literature’ within Yugoslavia was introduced in Slovenia, by the magazine *Mladina*, in other words a magazine that was not organised from the centre of an international movement. This model is significant for the whole of Yugoslavia, because it introduced what was called social literature, which during the time of strict censorship was a cryptonym for ‘proletarian’ and ‘revolutionary’ literature” (Flaker, 1981, 187).

Kosovel took his pronounced, politically honed programme to the miners of Zagorje in February 1926, where he gave a very well received lecture on "Art and the Proletarian" and read his *Ecstasy of Death*, and hoped to repeat this a few days later in Ljubljana. However, he came into conflict with the authorities and they denied him hospitality in two Ljubljana auditoriums. Afterwards he might have fallen silent or gone underground, or even quarrelled with his too dogmatic friends. He died at the age of 22, without succeeding in publishing the already prepared – complete with introduction – collection of poems *The Golden Boat* (*Zlati čoln*), and without realising any of his numerous projects. Nevertheless, it is difficult to comprehend, how such vast poetic and intellectual potential could have been condensed into such a short human life. The answer was given by the poet himself when he wrote that his life was "Slovene, modern, European and eternal." (3, 321).

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■ ABSTRACT

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Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / literary avant-garde / constructivism

The paper explores Kosovel's attitude towards Italian futurism, Balkan zenitism and Russian constructivism. Kosovel's work as a whole, including his letters and diary entries, makes it clear that he would not follow the Italian "liberated words" (*parole in libertà*), because to him – being a Slovenian poet, and particularly a Slovenian from the Primorska region – the word was sacred and untouchable. His manifesto "To the Mechanics" is further proof of his guarded attitude towards Marinetti's movement. Similarly, Kosovel rejected Micić's zenitism; he saw it as "playing", whereas he wanted art and life to be about seriousness, about "simultaneously revolutionising meaning and form". So it was only after his friend Grahor had returned from the Soviet Union that he was given a chance - through Russian literary constructivism – to use the principle of "gruzification" and "focalisation", and introduce his famous cons poems, which combine revolutionary form with recognisable meanings. His aim was to publish them in a specialised magazine KONS, that he himself would edit and publish.

In the summer of 1925 he experienced "a shift to the left" and began to create a different, "constructive" poetry. It was intended for publication by a proletarian publishing house, which he would call *Strelci* (Shooters). These plans were cut short by his untimely death at 22. Today, his cons poems are unique, and represent one of the pinnacles of European literary constructivism

SREČKO KOSOVEL AND THE HYBRIDITY OF MODERNISM

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The Distribution of Texts and the Aporias of Kosovel's Reception

The revolutionary idea that history is a narrative construct, an interpretation, has in the last thirty years become all but a truism, appearing even a little worn-out in the *vulgata* of the human sciences, and resting comfortably in the “common sense” of literary historians. In essence, they are nowadays well aware of the importance of the forms, practices and institutions of distributing literary works for the interpretation and histori”al contextualisation of literature (cf. Dolinar - Juvan, eds., 2003). In other words, the cognitive sensibility for the mechanisms of representation of the past, for the channels and media through which it is observed and judged, is today a part of Kuhn’s “normal science”. The systemic approach also fits the general epistemological framework – with its perspective which captures texts amidst their literary life, attached to the social and cultural circumstances of their production, distribution, reception and discursive processing through media, criticism, science or education (cf. Dovič 2004). If we recognize these principles of literary history, a different aspect of the Srečko Kosovel paradox opens up:¹ the incredible diversity of his poetic texts, condensed into a very short period of time, has been baffling the narratives of literary history and consistently outwitting any and all tools of periodisation.

If we apply constructivist or systemic epistemology to the actual example of Srečko Kosovel, we might better explain the conflicting classifications of his poetry within literary history, the aporias of his reception and canonisation, and the difficulties in shaping the poet’s cultural icon – the not so negligible reasons for this are precisely those anomalies in the historical processes of publishing and distribution of his work. Briefly, in his short life Kosovel published relatively modestly and mainly in marginal newspapers (he never succeeded in publishing a number of the works that are today considered his greatest masterpieces); all of his books of poetry were published posthumously and none were edited according to his ideas, but rather according to strategies by which various editors built the foundations of Kosovel’s canon (cf. Dovič in this publication). It was only in

1967, 41 year after his death, that his more radical poetic texts, which up to that point had only been known in a very limited scope, received recognition in the form of a book and a preface. They turned out to be a crucial part of Kosovel's body of work, despite creating the impression of an astounding discord with the perceptions that the public and the literary profession alike held about the poet from the Karst.

When in July of 1925 Kosovel defined his position in the world as a "paradox" (*Collected Works 3/1*: 399–401), he probably could not have imagined quite how much controversy the reception and periodisation of his work and the construction of his canonical image would generate. How is it possible that despite his eruptive creativity – to which an unbounded legacy of hastily written pages bears witness – he published so little? Was it just because as a young man from the rural margins and without social capital he could not make his way into the established national journals? Because the editors were unable to grasp his artistic importance (he was seen as a belated heir to, or even an epigone of the Slovenian "Moderna")? Perhaps because he was still searching for his poetic outlet and wrote dozens of texts which will hardly ever appear anything more than beginner's attempts? Or because he was rather critical towards the discourse of the main Slovenian cultural magazines, which he found aesthetically and politically too dependent on prevailing bourgeois ideologies, and out of date and not radical enough in comparison to what was going on elsewhere in the world (cf. Zadavec 1986: 412)?

To my mind, another equally plausible reason would be that since 1922 Kosovel – encouraged by the example of Podbevšek's avant-garde performances and, later, his attempts at magazines (*Trije labodje* [The Three Swans] and *Rdeči pilot* [The Red Pilot]) – planned his own distribution strategy, different from those common in the Slovenian literary field:² for the publication of his texts, particularly the bolder efforts, he tried to establish an alternative media context, as was developed throughout Europe by mainly artistic and political avant-gardes. In comparison to the established literary institutions it should have been more congenial to his ethical sensibility towards modern life, as well as his anti-aesthetic perception of art and his utopian social engagement. In his manuscript *On the Mission of Art* (*O poslanstvu umetnosti*, 1924) he wrote that art was not meant for the conventional "delight in beauty", because it was "just as strong and life-governing a force as, for example, politics, economics; the only difference is that it is a religious and spiritual force, which is at the same time a pre-image of human unity and perfection" (*CW 3/1*: 86).

From the Jena Romanticism (and its *Athenäum*) to modernism and 20th-century avant-gardes, the fundamental social form of distributing and establishing modern aesthetic, ethical and ideological matrixes had been a literary and artistic circle, a group of people of the same generation with similar views. These circles were different ways of bringing together the intellectual elite which – on the fringes of established social norms, aesthetic conventions and dominant channels of public cultural communication – developed among its members a remarkably intense exchange of

potentially relevant information “from the outside”, but mainly of their own ideas, programmes and achievements. This gave the actions of each individual member a significance which recompensed for the possible lack of public recognition. Over and above the strengthened internal communication, feelings of solidarity and axiological, behavioural and discursive cohesion, such groups also sought diverse, sometimes mutually opposing support from the outside – either by drawing parallels to or trying to establish contacts with similar groups at home and abroad, from the past and the present, or by gaining praise from prominent critics, opinion-makers, and by new forms of patronage and collecting, which speculated on potential increase in value of the works of protégés, or by forming alliances with subversive political movements (cf. Levenson 1991: 6; Rainey 1991). Kosovel, too, followed some of these patterns.

In 1922 he launched an ambitious high-school paper *Lepa Vida* (Fair Vida). He gathered around him members of his own generation with similar views; he created a utopian atmosphere in which poetic and theoretical discourses were mutually enriched through debates and readings. The distinctly humanistic tone of the ideas of Kosovel’s circle was influenced by utopian socialism, expressionist and Tagorean humanism, Nietzsche, Marxism, social Christianity, Slovenian nationalism of resistance (oriented against Italian irredentism and Yugoslav unitarism); they profiled their aesthetics along anti-bourgeois, modern artistic lines, from the Slovenian “Moderna” and expressionism to futurism, zenitism, constructivism, dadaism and surrealism (cf. Zadavec 1986: 344–68). With his circle, which was established in 1925 and named after Ivan Cankar – as a gesture of tribute to the aesthetic and political tradition of the Slovenian “Moderna” – Kosovel organized lectures, artistic performances and readings.

In place of the bourgeois and metropolitan public, whose acceptance the group could not anyway gain, Kosovel – as an ethically sensitive and also more and more class-conscious “cultural worker” – intended to create a special new audience, mainly by performing for the proletarians in the provinces (Vrečko 1986: 186–212). In 1925, together with the Bauhaus-educated painter Avgust Černigoj, he was unsuccessfully preparing a constructivist magazine *Konstrukter* (Constructor), also a literary monthly *Volja* (The Will) with his leftist fellow writer Ivo Grahor, and making plans for a radical leftist publishing house, Strelci (Shooters), and a similarly oriented series of books called *Integrali* (Integrals). In 1925 he and his group nevertheless managed to take over the editorial board of *Mladina* (Youth magazine); in the issues he edited before his death he made it artistically and politically avant-garde in tone. He collaborated with young Marxists, members of the communist party and admirers of the Soviet Union. However, precisely because of the socially marginal channels and media, all his endeavours remained obscure for a long time. Due to his untimely death, Kosovel was unable to develop sufficiently forms of alternative literary distribution, to find and create a suitable public for his poetic production. Although he favoured avant-garde movements and devoted an important part of his work from 1924 to 1926 to avant-garde writing, he nonetheless never become

a sample avant-gardist, who would lead a group, have a programme and manifestoes, and provocatively proclaim a new “-ism”. The only manifesto he wrote (*To Mechanics* [Mehanikom], July 1925) remained in the form of a manuscript. It is debatable whether he would ever have become an avant-gardist, because in his last months – as clearly shown in his lecture *Art and the Proletarian* (Umetnost in proletarec, February 1926) – he took up writing and projects concerning “proletarian art”, and at the same time, until the end, continued to write expressionist, impressionist and modernist poetry that was foreign to radical avant-garde techniques (Gspan 1974: 102, 106–7; Zadavec 1986: 197–8; Vrečko 1986: 121–8).

Kosovel intended several collections of his own poetry, but none were published. Only the *Preface* to the edited collection *Zlati čoln* (The Golden Boat) remains, with a characteristic detachment from his lyric poetry, which he characterised – after his “revolt”, which led him to artistic and political “extremism” – as juvenile and sentimental, “velvety” and surpassed (*CW I*: 426–7). An outwardly critical attitude to such poetry can be seen in many of his auto-referential images: for example “a pianist with iron hands”, pounding on the Karst, that is, the chronotope of the poet’s “velvety poetry”.³ Besides the occasional love poem, the “velvety poetry” probably included his typical “Karst poems”, in the genre of landscape and sentimental poetry, neo-romantic, impressionist and symbolist in style (cf. Ocvirk 1967: 53–3; Zadavec 1986: 13–42). Kosovel’s admiration for Slovenian impressionists and his “Karst poetry”, which was prevalent in the early posthumous editions (Gspan’s from 1927 and Ocvirk’s from 1931), created in the eyes of the public an image of him as heir to the Slovenian “Moderna”,⁴ as a late impressionist and symbolist, a melancholic poet of loneliness, of existential distress, of the Karst homeland. However, the fact that in the last year of his life Kosovel had his monumental poem *The Ecstasy of Death* (Ekstaza smrti) published in the prestigious journal *Ljubljanski zvon* (1925), and even more so the fact that after his death a number of expressionist and “proletarian” poems were published (for example the sonnet cycle *The Red Atom* [Rdeči atom] in *Ljubljanski zvon* in 1931), were the two factors that even in the decade before WW2 added to the accepted image of the poet and made him into the exciting figure of an expressionist visionary, an engaged humanist and harbinger of the crisis of Western civilisation, seeker of the “new man”.

After WW2, when Slovenia was communist – and although it proclaimed dialectics as its doctrine, the state actually repressed the conflict of ideas in public discourse and replaced it with totalisations – the mechanisms of canonisation and ideological adaptation presented Kosovel very harmoniously for a very long time – as heir to the Slovenian “Moderna”, the poet of the Karst and at the same time as an expressionist herald of the end of bourgeois Europe and an engaged social realist. Until 1967, that is, when Anton Ocvirk, Kosovel’s literary executor, published *Integrali ‘26* (Integrals ‘26). As the editor of a number of books of Kosovel’s poetry (from *Izbrane pesmi* [Selected Poems, 1931] to the last volume of collected works [*Zbrano delo*, 1977]), Ocvirk moulded the poet’s public image for nearly half a

century. He had held back the publication of that part of Kosovel's late production (mainly from 1925) that was the most modern, until the rise of post-war neo-avant-gardes, when risky experiments in the more relaxed circumstances of the communist regime enabled some artistic and theoretical discourse susceptible to political and aesthetic transgression. When editing the *Collected Works* (1946) – possibly because of the ephemeral and chaotic appearance of the multitude of pages and tiny pieces of paper from the poet's legacy – Ocvirk still saw them as “fragmentary, incidental notes, full of current political and ideological issues” (Ocvirk 1946: 436).⁵ These were Kosovel's collages, constructions or Cons poems and other modernist and avant-garde poems. Suddenly, in 1967 Ocvirk surprisingly and contrary to his previous openly stated opinions, put them at the top of the poet's opus of work. Paradoxically, the poet himself obviously had doubts about publishing these texts, because he was hiding them even from his closest friends.

After Ocvirk's belated and shocking publication of Cons poetry, Kosovel stirred the interest of literary science precisely as an avantgardist figure and this is the image that prevails in the public discourse to this day.⁶ Literary historians more or less agreed that his creativity in the last years of his life was unusually heterogeneous: the author of poems which follow poetological models of late romanticism and modernity (particularly impressionism and symbolism) also wrote expressionist, Proletcult and avantgardist poetry.⁷

When the paradoxical diversity of Kosovel's creativity finally appeared in its entirety, it put the literary historiography in a quandary. This was made even worse by the fact that historians were used to narrative schemes of development and progress and saw literary trends and periods as internally homogeneous entities. Thus Ocvirk (1967: 17–18, 58 ff) claimed that Kosovel's poetics followed one another in a temporal sequence: in the middle of 1925 the poet was supposed to have made a decisive and final “revolt” and turned to “constructivism”. However, other authorities have since proven that the poet simultaneously practiced various literary trends, “traditional” as well as “modern”, right to the end (cf. M. Kos 1997: 164). In his introduction to *Integrals*, Ocvirk discovered the pattern for Kosovel's surprising switch to avant-garde writing in Russian constructivism. To my mind, however, the search for Kosovel's primordial and decisive avant-garde ideal – besides constructivism, literary historians have stated futurism, and partly dadaism and surrealism – will lead us nowhere. Not only because he took in avant-garde movements mainly through eclectic South-Slavic zenitism, but also because, particularly in Central Europe, the literary zone of “in-between peripherality” (Tötösy 1999), the avant-garde streams from Italy, Russia, France and Germany in general were creating “unusual mixtures”.⁸ And in any case, despite their boastful manifestoes stressing their revolutionary innovations, the avant-gardes copied each other; even the radical dadaists borrowed from futurism and expressionism. On these grounds alone I prefer to speak generally of avant-garde texts as opposed to constructivist, zenitist, futurist or surrealist ones.

The Heterogeneity of Periods and Kosovel's Hybrid Modernism

The attempts of literary historians to pinpoint the avant-garde trend that Kosovel belonged to, as well as – on a more general level – efforts to label his creative stages and arrange them in chronological order are guided by the underlying idea that every literary period or trend is internally coherent and grounded in the same “spirit of the time” or arises from a homogeneous artistic code, or stylistic convention. The idea in itself is problematic, because it overlooks the inherent sociolectal stratification and dialogic conflict within a culture. And it fails in particular with regard to the literature of the so-called “Moderna” period, from the turn of the 20th century and onwards (cf. Tamás 1991: 131–2; Matajč 2004), if not of romanticism, when normative poetics, with its principle of imitating model authors, lost its primacy and the conditions for a greater homogeneity of style and spirit of time dissipated. This is when – to paraphrase Barthes’ study – “classical writing” disintegrated and was gradually replaced by modern writing, preoccupied by issues of the non-transparency of language itself (Barthes 1953). Romanticism was – not only in the scale of world literature, but also within national traditions – very diversified; politically it ranged between revolutionary liberalism, nationalism, Biedermeier conformism and passionate Catholicism; modally, between tragic pathos and irony; and aesthetically, between folklorism, the restoration of historical styles, tendencies towards naturalness, authenticity and explicitly subjective, artificial imagination. Even more heterogeneous is the mixture of co-existing codes of literary trends within the second half of the 19th century. Literary historians, and Slovenians are no exception, resignedly labelled them as falling “between romanticism and realism”, or with some similar makeshift designation. The intertwining of diverse orientations comes through even more in modernism. So, for this period in particular it makes sense to let go of any kind of attempt at forced homogenisation of its concepts, and accept instead P. V. Zima’s notion that a period will establish itself precisely as a system of diversified, but dialogic discourses, each in its own way reacting to a set of problems emblematic of a certain time – in modernism, or rather, in the wider tradition of modernity from Baudelaire onwards, the ambivalence of the subject would be one such example (cf. Zima 2003). If we accept this view of the nature of periods in literary history, then we should not explain the diversity of Kosovel’s poetry of the twenties only through anomalies in the distribution and reception of his texts, that is, in terms of how the writer’s image was historically mediated to us (which was the theme of the previous chapter). We should see it as an eminent symptom of modernism, as a system of divergent sociolects which react to a common set of problems.

In many meta-poetic statements Kosovel suggests that he put his texts into direct contact with “life”, with contemporaneity; that he faced the materiality of the world and the paradoxical co-existence of truths: “A modern poet takes apart the form to get to the living, straightforward life.” (*CW*

3/1: 740); paradox to him is an energy source, undermining the “practical reason” of the bourgeoisie, and demonstrating “that there exist two truths instead of one” (*CW* 3/1: 399). Modernism is opening to immediate, crude and disorderly reality in its historical becoming. A contingent reality enters consciousness as something transitory and strictly simultaneous with the temporality of existence. This is how the experiencing consciousness (the speaking subject) takes its position in the multitude of ideologies and languages, which are in a constant historical flux (cf. de Man 1997; Škulj 1991, 1995). Therefore, if my judgement is correct, Kosovel’s insistence on creating simultaneously in several aesthetic codes should be read as a prime symptom of modernity – as a result of the experience that each of the codes covers a certain perspective, thematising one segment of reality, but can no longer symbolically capture a total picture of the world; only an open dialogue among sociolects can still represent it, although only through thousands of facets.

Such consciousness was at its peak in modernism, which Peter V. Zima in light of a wider concept of modernity – with its origins in the middle of the 19th century – synonymously calls late modernity (*die Spätmoderne*);⁹ to him modernism is “a time of *crisis*, in which traditional metaphysics and ideologies prove doubtful; a time which instigates *criticism*” (e. g. of Hegelian systematic metaphysics) and feelings of contradictions, antinomies, doubt, epistemological and metalinguistic scepticism (Zima 2001: 130–1; from K. Jaspers, K. Rosenkranz and D. Fokkema). For late modernity or modernism the ambivalence of all values, criticism of the concept of reality, representational forms and the individual subject are crucial (ibid.: 132–3). Therefore it is understandable that modernism by spreading across national borders – encouraged by modern communication technologies, the voluntary and enforced exiles of artists, by migrations, and life in urban metropolises where cultural influences from all over the globe mingled – instituted the co-existence and pervasion of artistic idioms, a pluralism of poetic discourses. Modernism is “the art of an age of modern relativism, and of a time when frontiers were in vital and often dangerous flux” (Bradbury - McFarlane, eds., 1991: 13), it is characterised by “multi-cultural variety”, “enormous cross-fertilization” (14), “stylistic plurality” (21), urban “cultural chaos...a contingent and polyglot Tower of Babel” (98), “a frenzy of forms and artistic energies variously expressed and variously justified” (199), “plight of an exploded consciousness caught in a fragmented universe” (224–5). Modernism is a reaction to “the scenario of our chaos”; it is “the art consequent on the dis-establishment of communal reality” (27). A search for style in an age with no style in common, and no homogeneous representation of reality therefore becomes a highly self-reflexive endeavour (29).

Modernism, therefore, is a constellation of diverse, sometimes opposing poetics and ethics; and they – not only in individual literary currents, but also in individual authors or even individual poetic texts, like Eliot’s paradigmatic *The Waste Land* – combine into hybrid and ambivalent amalgamations (cf. Tamás 1991: 130–6). There is nothing exceptional in “double

loyalty” – the kind that may surprise someone in Kosovel, who jumps from the neo-romantic lyric sentiment to cynical newspaper quotes: many of the greatest modernist masterpieces, among them the novels of Thomas Mann, preserve traditional realistic representation and combine it with a modern x-raying of consciousness and language, so that in one work of art various conceptions of the world test each other. (Bell 1991: 12–3; Longenbach 1991: 125).

The axiological and political orientations of modernist writers oscillated between aristocratism and plebeianism, between hermetic aesthetic esotericism and the crudeness of popular culture, between restoring conservative religious beliefs, bohemian individualist immoralism, and political radicalisms, between nihilist depression, odes to modern technology and grotesque carnivalism, some flirted with fascism, others with communism, and many fell victim to one of the two totalitarianisms (cf. Blair: 1991: 157). The spectrum of modernist writing ranged from neo-classicism to the destruction of all traditional forms, from linguistic and literary self-referentiality (blended with symbolist allusionism and encoding through “de-humanized” abstraction), evocations of direct psycho-existential experience, fantasies, mythologisation and primitivism, to the fragmented recording of reality and radical criticism of society and ideology, sometimes combined with a declared political position (cf. Hough 1991: 315–20).

Kosovel was creative in the middle 1920's, when one can already speak of high modernism¹⁰ in Europe and the USA, and when great artists like Picasso, Eliot, Rilke and Joyce had already confidently intertwined means of expression chosen from their “imaginary museum” of earlier trends and -isms; many important modernists did not stick to the proclaimed poetics of individual trends (cf. Bradbury - McFarlane, eds. 1991: 191, 205; Hough 1991: 316; Tamás 1991). From this aspect Kosovel, as young as he was – still a beginner looking for “his style” – comes across as an author of high modernism. It would seem that Kosovel understood perfectly the modernist plurality and simultaneity of diverse artistic voices. He persisted in this inter-space, *in between* various literary discourses from the 1920's: late impressionism and symbolism, expressionism, avant-gardism, Proletcult, *Neue Sachlichkeit* and existential modernism.

In his poetry grounded in neo-romanticism, impressionism and symbolism, Kosovel follows the tradition of aesthetic communication typical of lyric poetry from pre-romanticism to the *fin de siècle*. This pattern of poetry emphasises the exclusion of the poetic world from historical and social contexts. In relation to the relevant issues of public discourse, it puts it in a position of ontological and existential silence, or in a position of sensing the foundations of existence, which at the limits of civilisation is possible only through nature.¹¹ From the singular lyric subject, which appears in the text through psychologically plausible semiotic clues, comes a first person emotive speech, assuming an equally lonely, private reader and their emotional contemplation of the aesthetic image. The actual historical contexts of author and reader are separate; they are replaced by an ontology of the existential present. The disconnectedness of the lyric discourse from social

reality is not only linguistic; it is also denoted by objects of representation, which in Kosovel are typically themes of loneliness and anxiety, and images of the peaceful and empty Karst landscape, trees and birds.

Crucial for Kosovel's poems denoted by literary historians as expressionist (cf. Zadavec 1986: 80–135) is a different axis of poetic communication: the subject of the text suggests to the recipient that their referential worlds are historically correlated, that the author and his target audience share the same social context. Thus the lyric paradigm of individual aesthetic contemplation is taken apart. The aesthetic is overpowered by the ethical, and the ethics of poetic writing often focus on the politics of speech acts. Expressionism in general, as well as in Kosovel, is a hybrid poetics. It wavers between traditional expression and an avant-garde stance which attempts to go beyond the boundary of aesthetic literary conventions and into the reality of the modern world.

Kosovel's poems with a predominantly expressionist diction are therefore characterised by the hypertrophy of the speaking subject, which is the source of the theatrical, panoramic presentations of the chronotope, which for the most part is no longer rural, bucolic (Karstic), but unlimited, urban, global, even cosmic and mythologised (archetypes of chaos, the Flood). Kosovel's subject expresses a Nietzschean critique of the values of Christian-bourgeois civilisation and praises its "destruction". Thus he is already the "new man" of his utopian proclamations. On the other hand, the poetic "I" perceives itself as a "sub-ject" (in the sense of a subordinate) of the historical age in crisis, and experiences the distress of an uncertain metaphysical horizon. Nothingness in Kosovel appears through symbols and abstract words ("nothing", "nothingness", "nihil", "nihilo-melancholy") and sometimes appears as a concrete substance ("from silent emptiness grows Nothing. / The water from the drainpipe flows away").¹²

Kosovel's expressionist chronotope is defined by the deep axiological, ontological, epistemological, political and social crisis of the bourgeois society of the 1920's. With its national and international political mechanisms, with the established artistic and cultural institutions and leading ideologies and religious concepts, this society had proven incapable of coping with the fierce challenges of modern times. The thrusts that undermined traditional ways of self-substantiation came from different directions and affected different social subsystems: from economic stagnation through communist revolution and the rise of fascism to the advancement of technology and expansion of scientific findings, which relativised the old foundations of subject and truth. Kosovel makes his own historical contemporaneity the main referential field of poetic signs, and portrays it either in close-up and emphasised, or in the background and concealed, merely outlined. In both cases the context is evoked by tropes, for example, by an allegorical type, mythologisation or de-realisation. Such are for example the images of the fiery disarray overflowing "the golden towers of Western Europe" in *The Ecstasy of Death* (Ekstaza smrti), or mythological or folklore allusions to the Flood combined with grotesque irony in *Tragedy on the Ocean* (Tragedija na Oceanu).¹³

The subject in the expressionist poetry is becoming plural, merging into a community for which it feels ethically responsible, dialogically searching for a hidden God, or erasing the textual imprints of its personality. It identifies with objects or concepts. The first person subject sometimes appears only on the margins, among a number of voices which inhabit the structure of utterances. The foreign voices in Kosovel's poems (for example, in the cycle *The Karst Village* [Kraška vas]) are quotations from undefined speech acts.¹⁴

Kosovel's "workers' poems" (for example the sonnet sequence *The Red Atom* [Rdeči atom]) have a similar narrative scheme (the critical destruction of the old society and a utopian construction of the new), and also transform an intimate revelation to the individual reader into an oratory address to the collective. However, his "Proletcult" writing is sociologically and politically more concrete, clearly situated in an industrial environment. It approaches the poetics of the "new reality" (*neue Sachlichkeit*). The style of the "workers' poems" is rhetorical, but rather prosaic, simple, coloured with political expressions and revolutionary slogans. The poems reveal the position of a poet-intellectual identifying with the proletarian masses.

The poet takes us brilliantly into the centre of his radical modernism with his auto-thematic imagery: "The spirit collects impressions. / I search for moving images. ...I am like an electric spark / jumping. ...An active spirit collects images ...Facts drive art away."¹⁵ The lyric subject is de-centred, it remains without a recognisable voice or a stable perspective, or the zone of his speech – which can be "traditionally" sentimental, lyrical – is limited, fragmentarily placed in a mosaic of impersonal strings of images, quoted statements, nameless pieces of information, or vague fragments of conversation. The structure of utterances in Kosovel's modernist texts is therefore already dialogised, ambivalent, polyphonic, and above all, intertextual: it combines humanistic eagerness, political demands and subjective lyricism, with irony, cynicism and grotesquery; it sums up and paraphrases the current cultural, political and scientific news from newspapers; it hints intermedially at avant-garde paintings (for example, by Franz Marc), and through allusions, relates to other avant-gardes or debates with them (for example, with dadaism and futurism).

The composition of the text belongs to Eco's model of an "open work": instead of a homogeneous motif and perspective, we have a montage of fragments, autonomous images, which in counterpoint nevertheless evoke and develop a common semantic field; we encounter film cuts, "zooming in" on details and boundless vistas, with a plural and limitless chronotope in which Kosovel's entirely private spaces simultaneously intertwine with planetary and cosmic spaces. The stylistic structure of the text is often hybrid. The style of the poem does not simply follow similar patterns from the past – the tradition of so-called poetic style; it is also open to contemporary discourses, including those which do not belong in the domain of traditional literary types: this accounts for the philosophical, theological, and psychological terms, mathematical symbols, the vocabulary of modern technology, physics, natural sciences, political slogans, journalistic lan-

guage and the mixture of elevated and prosaic registers in Kosovel's Cons pieces.

Kosovel had already begun to omit the traditional form of individualistic aesthetic communication in his expressionist and Proletcult poems. By its ethical stance, the subject of the poem suggests that it inhabits the same world of crisis as the recipient. While the expressionist representation of societality is mediated through poetic tropes, and therefore a homogeneous poetic language, Kosovel's radical modernism copes with the modern world by presenting it intertextually or through "collecting images", which are brought into the "active spirit" by a changing empirical reality. In a modernist text the subject descends to the level where the aesthetic sphere, which was traditionally autonomous, openly interacts with the discourses of science, politics, technology, philosophy and religion and also with works, imaginary and languages of other arts. Radical modernism turning into avant-gardism¹⁶ therefore defines a major part of Kosovel's Cons pieces. However, such modernist structure in Kosovel often infiltrates the texts with seemingly prevailing impressionist or expressionist poetics, for example, through montage of composition, "zooming in" on certain details of the crumbled motif, the marginalisation of the subject in the structure of a text's utterances, the introduction of undetermined quotations of someone else's speech or the disorientation of the lyrical perspective and deterritorialisation of the subject.

The co-existence, intertwining and hybridity of diverse poetics that we have described make Kosovel utterly comparable to other modernists. In the mid-1920s, Picasso was developing simultaneously and without hesitation the different styles that he had successively devised, so that his cubist work meets his more traditional representational painting (see Mallen 2004). Guillaume Apollinaire, one of the earliest and most influential modernist poets (see Apollinaire 1992),¹⁷ created fragmented, cubist, syntactically disintegrated urban poetry, associative surrealist fantasies and visual constellations alongside poetry which, at least seemingly, held to traditional, although at times ironic and profanely erotic, expression and classical rules of versification. He even combined them in a single text. However, the pluralism of modernism and hybridity of poetic speech were conceptualised and perhaps most consistently, vitally actualised by Fernando Pessoa in his schizo-poetics. Among his heteronyms, accompanied by mystifying biographies, he placed poetics reaching almost from the futuristically buoyant avant-garde to sublimated symbolism; yet their common ground is unmistakable – a melancholy turmoil, psychic dissociation, caught in the duplicated mirrors of the ultimate modernist self-reflection, but open to the elusiveness of being outside metaphysics (cf. Pessoa 1997).

Kosovel built his poetic identity less deliberately, but with equally as much drama. He moved from one poetic discourse to another, but above all, intertwined them into hybrids. Thus he became one of the first to imprint Slovenian literature with a distinctive seal of modernity.

Translated by Katarina Jerin

NOTES

¹ Matevž Kos discussed these questions some years ago (1997: 152–65) in the chapter entitled “Kosovel’s Paradox.”

² At first Kosovel was enthusiastic about Anton Podevšek’s futurism and he wrote a couple of poems in his style, but he soon began to criticise the first Slovenian avant-gardist (he accused him of not being able to attract followers and that he was too bourgeois for such a task), not only in his correspondence, but very explicitly also in his poetry: in *Poem of the Green Salvation* (Pesem o zelenem odrešenju), written around 1924 in Podevšek’s style and form, he mentions that he “grew tired of Podevšek’s games” – this interesting palinode was published in *Ocvirk* 1967: 41–42. Kosovel, therefore, was critical of Podevšek’s avant-garde (*Ocvirk* 1967: 32–44; Zadavec 1986: 408–9; Vrečko 1986: 79) – just as he was critical of zenitism and dadaism – but nevertheless developed his own poetic identity and types of public performance in a dialogical relationship with it.

³ *Nocturne* (Nokturno), *CW 1*, 213; *Rhymes* (Rime), *CW 2*, 9, *My Poem* (Moja pesem), *CW 1*, 229.

⁴ In *Dom in svet*, an important journal influenced by Catholic aesthetic and intellectual modernism, in 1931 France Vodnik excluded Kosovel from “creators of our new poetic style” and pointed out his debt to Cankar, Župančič, Gradnik and Murn; and according to Božo Vodušek, Kosovel before his death was “ideologically and stylistically still an epigone; however, he did exhibit traces of revolt” (quoted from: M. Kos 1997: 157).

⁵ As to the real reasons for *Ocvirk*’s views on Kosovel’s Cons poetry, everything is mainly speculation: he may have thought it was too fragmentary and chaotic for his taste, although he looked quite favourably upon European modernism; maybe he thought that the publication of these texts in the circumstances when Slovenia was governed by realistic aesthetic principles and rather academic tastes of the authorities would damage Kosovel’s reputation; maybe his editorial work was slowed down by his illness and his mistrust, which did not allow him to leave the editing of the legacy to anyone else.

⁶ The truth be told, this was not so much due to literary history as to postmodern retro-gardism (Neue slowenische Kunst) and its satellites. After Slovenia had become independent, they managed through sophisticated theoretical marketing to establish their attitude of “state artists” – so provocative in communism – as a real, influential position within the cultural image of governing parties. Even on the level of aesthetical and political marketing, retro-gardism canonised the imaginary of the Slovenian historical avant-garde, including Kosovel.

⁷ Here is a succinct and typical formulation: “The poetry of Srečko Kosovel is a very heterogeneous phenomenon. It was created within a space of a few years [...], yet it explosively contains more or less the whole of spiritual and stylistic experience of the 20th century poetry: from late impressionism and symbolism through expressionism and constructivism to the realist socio-programmatic poetry. All of it existing in a very narrow space, almost simultaneously and chaotically, without a classical progression of phases.” (Paternu 1989: 149–50.)

⁸ After Jean Weisgerber and Evald Koren, Janez Vrečko (1986:12) makes the same point.

⁹ Somehow different, but still unclear, is the understanding of the concept of *Spätmoderne* as suggested by Ernő Kulcsár-Szabó: when he argues for a method of literary history based in hermeneutics, deconstruction and reception, which takes into account the experience of the post-modern, promotes the trichotomy “classical modernity – late modernity – post modernity” instead of the periodisation of

binomial modernity – post modernity; in his view, late modernity includes the art of the late 1920's and 1930's, which contrary to the avant-garde dissemination and de-centralisation of subject and style, leans towards a historically new formation of literature on the basis of a dialogic, inter-subjective, linguistically-semiotic and self-reflexive conception of art (Kulcsár-Szabó 1999).

¹⁰ Here Kulcsár-Szabó (1999) would use the term late modernity.

¹¹ This corresponds to the analysis of the remnants of the romantic syndrome of the “beautiful soul” in Kosovel’s poetry, not only in his impressionist, symbolist and expressionist poetry, but also – in limited positions and dissonant conjunctions – in avant-garde and modernist poems (M. Kos 1997: 141–52).

¹² *Autumn* (Jesen), *CW 2*, 160–1; *Nihilomelancholy* (Nihilomelanholiija), *CW 2*, 177; *An Evening before Winter* (Večer pred zimo), *CW 1*, 297.

¹³ *The Ecstasy of Death*, *CW 1*, 304–5; *Tragedy on the Ocean*, *CW 1*, 403–12.

¹⁴ *The Karst Village*, *CW 1*, 14–6.

¹⁵ *Why Get Upset?* (Kaj se vznemirjate?), *CW 2*, 46–7.

¹⁶ The difference between Kosovel’s radical modernism and avant-gardism can also be explained by the theory of speech acts. Kosovel’s avant-garde poetic texts represent speech acts adopted from a public discourse of avant-gardes, for example, from manifestoes. Kosovel’s avant-garde Cons poems therefore also act as appeals; they attempt to directly influence the readers’ ethical and political opinions, and therefore bind them to a certain “optimal projection” which goes beyond the sheer aesthetic and artistic field. Modernist texts written by Kosovel do not contain such appeals: they are open to reality, contemporaneity, the multilingualism of other discourses, but they use this interlocution mainly for the self-reflection of the subject and the poetic process.

¹⁷ He was an influence on and point of reference for the dadaists and surrealists.

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■ **ABSTRACT**

UDK 821.163.6.09-1 Kosovel S.

Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / literary reception / modernism / avant-garde / hybridity

The anomalies in the distribution and reception of Srečko Kosovel's poetry texts have engendered contradictory perceptions of the poet (as a belated heir of Slovenian Impressionism, an expressionist visionary, a radical avant-garde author), and literary history had to face the problem of the periodisation of Kosovel's heterogeneous oeuvre. Kosovel's poetics (impressionist and symbolist, expressionist, proletarian, avant-garde and modernist) do reveal perceptible changes in their mode of poetic communication, in which the author aims to transcend aesthetic autonomy and open up his text to various discourses, texts, messages, themes and images of the modern world. But Kosovel – throughout his entire life – forged his own poetic identity precisely through the hybrid coexistence of diverse poetics; thus his identity refuses to be contained within the narrow bounds of the traditional historical narrative of literary evolution and ruptures. This reveals not only a young man's search for his own "authentic expression", but constitutes an important symptom of modernism – modernist heteroglossia, relativism, ambivalence, presentism and perspectivism. Stylistic and poetic hybrids are trademarks of modernist art; it can also emerge within the oeuvre of an individual author.

THE CANONISATION OF AN 'ABSENT' AUTHOR

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The following reflection on Srečko Kosovel, written in the year of the centenary of the poet's birth, may appear, at least at the outset, to be a type of exterior observation, the type that has no inherent connection to Kosovel's poetry, and is therefore moving away from the discussions customary when one speaks of such an important poet. It may even appear "sacrilegious" at first sight, but – I hope – it will transpire that the reflection only seems to stand on the outside. It will address the problems of authorship and canonisation that inadvertently strike the eye, in the case of Kosovel, and would not lose their appeal with time, because they have given rise to questions that not only concern Kosovel, but also relations between the literary author, literature, and meta-literary contexts in general. The theoretical framework that may help in this analysis is partly related to contemporary criticism of authorship as developed in the late 1960's by Barthes, Foucault and others, partly to the model of the literary system and its evolution as developed by Schmidt and co-workers within the field of empirical science (Schmidt 1980, 1989), and to a great extent to modern analyses of the literary canon and processes of canonisation (Guillory 1983, Juvan 1994, Dovič 2003).

It is well known that Srečko Kosovel (1904-1926) entered Slovenian literary, cultural and political history as a poet of many faces: as a melancholy poet of the Karst, a sensitive poet with a distinctive premonition of death, a visionary of social revolution, and also as a truly avant-garde poet. Relatively soon after his death he became a true icon, perhaps the most important name in 20th century Slovenian poetry, a national literary classic. His name virtually became a trademark; schools were named after him; he is well represented in anthologies of poetry and literary histories; and he has to this day received a thorough introduction and analysis in the high-school curriculum. Kosovel's classic status has been due largely to literary historians, who have published extensive studies and monographs about him. In the year of the centenary of Kosovel's birth even more time was devoted to him – and after all, a poet's worth within the canon can also be measured by the amount of attention accompanying his jubilees. There were numerous round tables, symposia, readings, celebrations, there are

new scientific studies underway, popular essays, newspaper commentaries and special monographs on Kosovel and his work.

Without a doubt Kosovel is a classic, almost a cult figure in Slovenian cultural history. And in what way is he available to us today? A potential recipient of Kosovel's poetry faces tons of various editions, compilations and selections of poetry: from rare pre-war editions to small, paperback, pocket and ornamented editions, etc. Those who wish to upgrade their high-school experience of Kosovel are, however, primarily guided by the reference editions of his collected works (from the collection *Collected Works of Slovenian Poets and Writers* (Zbrana dela slovenskih pesnikov in pisateljev)) and, of course, by the legendary 1967 illustrated edition of so-called *Integrals* (Integrali). With regard to this, one may ask some interesting questions about the process of canonisation.

Because similar questions come to mind with regard to other authors, the case of Janez Trdina may serve well to present the problem, which becomes much more complicated with Kosovel. There is a moment when it becomes blatantly clear what a historical construct – almost a lie – the canonised “Trdina” is, as available to us in *Collected Works*, and how much effort is required to make out the original context, which stubbornly eludes us. In the case of Trdina, the collection contains twelve volumes of the same format, binding, typography etc., so we are dealing with a whole which is organized, homogeneous, and in itself gives the impression of a kind of coherence, unity and inner harmony in the author's body of work. In reality, however, the compilation of the twelve volumes contains completely diverse textual material: from relatively jumbled manuscript notes, which obviously never reached the phase of final authorial editorship, to arranged, relatively polished and completed texts – like most of the *Tales and Stories about Gorjanci* (Bajke in povesti o Gorjancih). Even though these facts are more or less adequately explained in the endnotes, one thing is evident: the pieces which the author undoubtedly intended to publish are intermingled with those about which it is anything but clear whether the author would wish to have published them in such a form; it is also obvious that this mixture is hidden by the uniformity of the edition.

In the case of Trdina, therefore, it is possible to claim that the editor of the first edition of the *Selected Works*, Etbin Kristan, (working for the publisher Schwentner), and even more so the editor of the *Collected Works*, Janez Logar, became co-authors in a way: they co-modelled “Trdina” for successive generations. And yet Trdina lived long (from 1830 to 1905) and was actively in charge of the fate of his texts; if nothing else, he had control over whether he would publish something during his lifetime or not. The situation with Kosovel is very different. As is well known, Kosovel died at twenty-two of meningitis in Tomaj in 1926. In the few years of his active literary production he created an incredibly vast, and also remarkably diverse range of poetry – there are over one thousand poems in the twelve folders kept at the manuscript department of the National Library. He left, therefore, heaps of poetry, but very little information about it. His authorial work ended at writing the text, and could not go on to include selection,

polishing, the method of presentation to the public, the means of winning recognition from his contemporaries in the literary system etc. – all these practices are always a part of the life of a literary producer. But for Kosovel to become a classic, someone had to do this work for him.

Those who undertook this job were first faced with the dilemma of how to cope with the mass of material. As I was ploughing my way through this truly impressive material, I discovered that there are extremely few guidelines by which to classify it. It would be difficult to arrange the material into thematic fields with any justification; the same goes for the principle of stylistic affinities. It is not possible to determine with any kind of certainty the chronological order of the poems. The only opposition that might serve as a sign of a hierarchy would be the opposition signed/unsigned; however, this is not and cannot be reliable, because it really is insufficient evidence that the signed poems are indeed better or more accomplished, or that the poet would have preferred them published or would have wanted them published at all. Should we consider the quality of paper? One of the best authorities on Kosovel's legacy, the editor Aleš Berger, believes that it is possible to determine when the poems are fair copies, and that we could consider these poems to be more complete. But even this is an unreliable guideline. The opposition titled/untitled also leads nowhere. The odd mention of his plans and the few poems the poet published during his lifetime also do not provide significant help.

It seems ironic, but it makes most sense to organize the manuscripts alphabetically, as they are stored in the Library. The moment anyone wishes to do something with this legacy, the only sensible alternative turns out to be a construction, which can only be more or less informed, a construction of a continuity, of a story. Another agent in the literary system has to take the place of the author: another author, editor or critic. By doing their authorial work, they each become a co-worker, a co-author to Kosovel: Ocvirk with Kosovel, Gspan with Kosovel, Brumen with Kosovel... The significance of the fact that Kosovel as author is somehow absent, unavailable, is actually hard to assess. But it should by no means be neglected, or lost sight of, or any discussion about his poetry trying to go beyond the level of the analysis of individual poems – this includes the issues of the development of his style, issues of modernism, the avant-garde etc. – will lose its credibility.

The literary canon

The problem of an author “absent” in the way we have described, somehow detached from his own work and image – because he could not accomplish all the tasks expected of a literary producer – and yet with a name written in gold letters among the “Great Authors”, enables and forces us to think through the basic features of the literary canon and the processes of its formation. The literary canon undoubtedly holds one of the most important roles in modern literary theory, and becomes crucial when literature

is not studied as literature alone – that is, as a sum of literary texts and their authors – but in its wider cultural and social context. In this context, the role of literature proves multi-faceted: the literary canon is not only a selection of the most appreciated texts in a cultural community, but a wider whole, containing also the names as authors' "trademarks", all of the important text interpretations, everyday sayings adapted from canonised texts, simplified formulas and quotes "for everyday use", typical evaluations, and so on. Put simply, not only Kosovel's texts, for example the best "Integrals" or "Cons" pieces, are part of the literary canon, but also the well-known fact that the poet was in poor health and died young, that he was "the poet of the Karst", and even the history of readers' reception seems inseparable from the whole image. The literary canon is an important element in "the foundations" of a community, a textual basis on which a society builds, and also maintains and recycles its historical memory; it is a kind of a mirror through which it establishes its identity, as Marko Juvan points out (1994). Against the texts that are a part of the literary canon, all past, but also current cultural experiences of this community are measured and legitimised.

The canon, of course, is highly selective, and changes with time; particularly due to the influx of new, fresh authors, canonical choices regarding the distant past are more selective and schematic. To function well in its role as a social cohesive, the canon needs effective mechanisms of reproduction, and the school system is the most important (Guillory 1983). Kosovel remains "Kosovel" mainly because he is produced and reproduced as such by the school system – in this sense, it is the terminus of canonisation and the ultimate point of validation. Before that, however, the canonised author has to pass countless screening processes. Let us look at this journey, as analysed in detail by representatives of the Dutch empirical school, for example Kees van Rees (1989). An individual with literary ambitions is first scrutinised by editors, so the majority of writers are never published. When someone does publish something, the critics will, with luck, pay a certain amount of attention to the text. If the author stirs enough interest among the critics and essayists, literary history will gradually seize him or her in its scientific claws and "clean up the author", who is then, if need be, ideologically adapted and assimilated. Only after that may the author and the text appear in school curricula, in textbooks, on mandatory reading lists, or among high-school diploma examination materials. This is an "ideal" and simplified picture of the process. The author can have some bearing on the processes, if he is alive, that is. It is easier to pass one's text through the initial filters of editors and publishers if one knows the techniques of lobbying, mingles with the right people (editors, critics) etc. The same goes for all the later stages – the image of "a good author" which reaches the stage of scientific examination is often rather distorted, burdened with para-textual processes, personal connections, and so on.

During his lifetime, Kosovel published very little, but he was incredibly prolific. He most definitely wanted to publish his poems, but he ran out of time to carry out his radical ideas for their proper distribution. The

only ideas he put into practice were the high-school paper *Fair Vida* (Lepa Vida), and the literary and drama circle named after Ivan Cankar; for a couple of months he and his colleagues managed to take over the editorship of the magazine *Youth* (Mladina). His own collection of poems, the magazine *Constructor* (Konstrukter), and a book collection, all remained unrealised visions. The circumstances following Kosovel's death were unusual: his contemporaries were left with an endless sea of manuscripts and almost no hierarchy among them; with almost no plans or even outlines for the structure of the future collection of poems that Kosovel surely had in mind.

Constructing a classic

And thus begins the story of Kosovel that has little to do with the deceased. His friends deserve all the credit for the fact that the manuscripts were even tackled – this poetry could quite easily have remained a story from a drawer, a non-existent story. The path which led to Kosovel being considered among the classics is full of arbitrary decisions, more or less justified editorial judgements, and of digging through the manuscripts; but it is also the history of a specific, very contradictory reception. All this was already true of the first modest selection of poems in 1927, published a year after the poet's death. The selection was made by Alfonz Gspan, who decided on mainly traditional poems. The same was true of the 1931 selection by Anton Ocvirk, a scientist and founder of comparative literature in Slovenia, and Kosovel's younger contemporary. It is Ocvirk who was the main actor in what we may call the "construction" of the canonical Kosovel. Ocvirk took over most of the manuscripts, and after the World War II, Kosovel was one of the first authors confirmed for publication within the ambitious collection of *Collected Works of Slovenian Poets and Writers*. In 1946 Ocvirk published the first volume of Kosovel's *Collected Works*. He included many of the poems, but *not* the most radical ones, for the reason – which he himself later explained – that they seemed to him fragmentary, unfinished; he felt they were still first drafts that Kosovel was throwing onto paper in a creative fever, and not real, aesthetically refined poems. However, Ocvirk did include some of the more radical Cons poetry in this first edition.

But this is where the real story only just begins. There were many poems left in the legacy; most of all, those that are now considered the most radical. For this reason a revision of the 1946 *Collected Works* was needed. The new version of volume one was issued in 1964, and the second volume, which included the so-called *Integrals* (Integrali), appeared in 1974. The most radical poems, which were given the editorial title of *Integrals*, were first published in 1967, and this prestigious edition was also edited by Anton Ocvirk, with design by Jože Brumen. The book shocked the public: where had these poems, "the best" of this Slovenian modernist and avant-garde writer been all this time? The finger was pointed at Ocvirk, who

had “held back” the manuscripts for all those years. This finger, however, somehow missed the point: because Kosovel was dead, and had left no plans, the selections of materials and even the titles of collections or series of poems – in short, all editorial interventions – were *totally arbitrary* in any case. This means that every editor could always pick according to his own judgement, according to his own taste and aesthetic values. It could be said that the editors constructed, even “produced” their own Kosovel. And we can only now answer the opening question of how Kosovel could become a poet of such diverse faces: his heterogeneous opus, soaking up influences from all kinds of literary trends and movements, permitted even diametrically opposed constellations of aesthetic and ideological preferences. Therefore the history of Kosovel’s reception and canonisation must be read as a history of editorial appropriations and adaptations: before World War II, Kosovel was a national poet who had established the imagery of the Karst as the “Slovenian imagery” – at a time when Tomaj was far inside Italy, and Kosovel was studying in another country. The post-war Kosovel could adopt the state-approved face of a revolutionary socialist and sympathiser of the working class. With the flourishing of the neo-avant-garde art in Slovenia, it turned out that Kosovel was actually a modern, avant-garde poet; parallels were established with futurists, constructivists, zenitists, etc. The avant-garde Kosovel – interest in him also grew due to the French poet Marc Alyn – is therefore a poet with a completely different face from that of the once lonely poet of the Karst. By the publication of the 1967 *Integrals*, the Slovenian neo-avant-gardes had acquired legitimacy and become part of a certain historical continuity. However, the *Integrals* book in itself is not a kind of innocent belated publication: it is once again an arbitrary choice, with an arbitrary, possibly even flawed title, accompanied by graphic design which is far from neutral, because it associates Kosovel very closely with the avant-garde context of the period when the book was published. In this sense the story of *Integrals* is related to a chronologically specific interpretation which is ideologically motivated. From this aspect, the often-thematized question of the historical avant-garde in relation to Kosovel can in a way be seen as an artificial question, created in hindsight by literary history to prove the synchronicity of the Slovenian and European literary movements – and here might lie one of the reasons for the particularities in Kosovel’s canonisation.

Conclusion

As we somehow try to sum up what we consider important here, we may find support in the modern systemic and empirical approaches to literature of S. J. Schmidt and others. In the scheme of systems theory the author as a literary producer is inextricably linked with other related roles in the literary system: the roles of a mediator, receiver, critic. In this regard, Kosovel’s case seems particularly interesting, since as a literary producer Kosovel did not actively engage in systemic relations; or rather, the impact of his

very few engagements in his short life (few publications, editorial work, socialising) is negligible in comparison to what has been done for Kosovel by those who took it upon themselves to do what in normal circumstances is undertaken or at least directed and supervised by the literary producer. It is possible, therefore, to claim that the canonisation of Kosovel, today unanimously regarded not only as one of the best Slovenian poets, but also the most radical representative of the historical avant-garde, took a course which completely “bypassed” the poet. As a canonical author, he was entirely *constructed*, because he had no influence over his own cultural fate.

This does not mean, however, that other authors can play a decisive role in their own canonisation: on the contrary – this happens mainly posthumously, and the authors’ ultimate images are tailored by an army of institutions which take part in relatively complex processes. Posthumously, Kosovel victoriously entered the literary arena, but the primary role was played by actors in the literary system other than him. For this reason he seems all the more interesting a case study for various processes in the literary system and the author’s role in them. On the other hand, we may also understand our findings regarding Kosovel in the context of a modern criticism of what Barthes calls “the tyranny of the author”, or as a contribution to understanding the creation of the “author-function” (Foucault 1979). Several studies have shown the historically contingent nature of individual authorship, which was able to develop in specific social circumstances, became legally codified by the regulation of copyright, and was based in the romantic rhetoric of an inspired genius (Bennet 2005). “The tyranny of the author” still controls most social discourses related to literature – publishers, magazines, critics, state institutions; and also an important segment of traditional literary science benefits from the mythologised dimension of the Author. However, it has been seriously questioned on the theoretical level. From this point of view it is no longer contestable to claim that Kosovel as a canonical author is not at all identical to the poet as a historical person; he is the result of an “authorial co-production” involving the mechanisms of the literary system, as well as scientific observations of literature. We should neglect neither of them if we wish to understand better what is really going on in the process of the social “production” of an author.

Translated by Katarina Jerin

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■ ABSTRACT

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Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / literary reception / canonization / systems theory

The author as a literary producer is inextricably linked with other related roles in a literary system: those of mediator, receiver, editor, critic. In this regard, Kosovel's case seems particularly interesting, since as a literary producer Kosovel did not actively engage in systemic relations, or rather, the impact of his very few engagements in his short life (scarce publications, editorial work, socialising) is negligible in comparison to what was "done for" Kosovel by those who have taken it upon themselves to do what in normal circumstances is undertaken or at least directed and supervised by the literary producer him/herself. Thus it is possible to claim that the canonisation of Kosovel, today unanimously regarded as not only one of the best Slovenian poets, but also the most radical representative of the historical avant-garde, had taken a course which totally "bypassed" the poet. Posthumously, Kosovel victoriously entered the literary arena, but the primary role was played by other actors in the literary system, since he left no instructions as to what should be done with his extensive and hierarchically disordered legacy. For this reason he seems all the more interesting a case study for various processes in the literary system and the author's role in them. By the same token, most discussions of Kosovel and his work to date have overlooked this important context, approaching "Kosovel" as something pre-given and at disposal, which can easily lead to simplifications.

KOSOVEL AND NIHILISM: AN ATTEMPT AT CONSTRUCTIVE DECONSTRUCTION

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Today, Srečko Kosovel holds a secure position in the canon of Slovenian literature, yet despite being a *classic* author, he is the cause of diverse, also ideologically motivated polemics and a corresponding struggle of interpretations – which use his vast poetic opus as a battleground. Slovenians have problems with Kosovel even now, eighty years after the poet's death. One of the latter such "symptoms" were the events surrounding the fifth anniversary of Slovenia's independence, on 26th June 1996, and the state celebration in one of the main town squares of the Slovenian capital. It was officially called "Cons. 5 – The Triumphal Arch to the Fifth Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Slovenia". *Cons. 5* is one of the most famous of Kosovel's poetic "constructions", and the authors of the celebration borrowed its title for a more "symbolic" meaning, as they said, since it was the fifth anniversary of the construction of the new state. *Cons. 5* was not even directly used in the celebrations, however, for some important political men, including the minister of culture, the use (or misuse, in their belief) of the poem's title was reason enough to withdraw from the honorary organizing committee. The title itself was not so much a problem as what was hidden behind it – whether spoken or not. And that, of course, was the poem itself. It goes like this (*Collected Works II*: 23):

Dung is gold
and gold is dung.
Both = 0
 $0 = \infty$
A B <
1, 2, 3
He who has no soul
needs no gold,
he who has a soul
needs no dung.
EE-AW.

At first sight, *Cons. 5* strings together diverse, unusual and not very lyrical elements such as mathematical symbols or the onomatopoeic

sound of a donkey's bray, which is a mockingly loud conclusion to the poem. Somewhat unusual, trivial at first sight, and yet: a donkey braying in Kosovel is probably related to Nietzsche. The most likely source for the "donkey" is in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Kosovel read it and, as it is documented, even recommended it to others. "I, A" (ee-aw) appears in Nietzsche several times, and has a similar – ironically subversive, also mocking – function as in Kosovel.

It is almost necessary to know something about the circumstances in which the poem was written, as well as the wider context of Kosovel's poetry, to understand *Cons. 5*. In the notes to *Collected Works*, the editor Anton Ocvirk points to the agricultural manual *Dung Is Gold*, which Kosovel came across during his stay in Tomaj and was the direct inspiration for this poem. Equally important is Kosovel's diary entry from 1925, which is the draft for *Cons. 5*: "Gold fever./ People have gold fever. Capitalism/ Dung is gold./ Gold is dung, because it is used as such/ Culture = a maid/ a maid to the capital." (*Collected Works III*: 688)

By bringing in these 'meta-poetic', con-textual circumstances, we make one of the most basic intentions of *Cons. 5* clearer. Above all it is an attack on capitalism; however – and this should not be overlooked – not by way of transparent ideological agitation. Together with some other similarly oriented Kosovel's texts, *Cons. 5* puts the sting into words only indirectly: the comfortable, domesticated image of a 'bourgeois' world is taken apart, disharmonised and thus presented as an extremely unstable, dynamic structure, which in itself – as it is – calls for radical change.

The donkey braying at the end of *Cons. 5* not only expresses a certain mocking and ironically parodic distance, but also declares a fundamental vote of no confidence in the existing historical world.

At this point, a couple of interesting questions arise. For example, what is the instance, the position, from which Kosovel's poetry declares a fundamental lack of confidence in a certain historical world – Slovenian society and the Europe of the 1920's? Why is poetry the medium of this lack of confidence? In the name of what ideals does this Kosovel poem protest? And also, what does the fact that the Kosovel's poem protests, that it apparently has certain ideals and so on, what does this mean for the *modernist structure* of Kosovel's poetry? After all, we may also ask ourselves, what happens to these ideals if we look at them from the perspective of Nietzsche's philosophy, for example in the light of his demands for a revaluation of all values or in the light of the criticism of all so-called modern ideas?

As it becomes clear from many of Kosovel's essays, in parting with the old world and setting up *the new*, he ascribes a special role to the poetic word, to literature, or rather to the culture as a whole. Kosovel does not see his poetry or art in general as an isolated pursuit, which would be purely aesthetic and in this sense "autonomous". *Cons. 5* and similar – provisionally speaking – modernist texts may give the reader an aesthetically "autonomist", "non-mimetic" impression – almost in the sense of (ultra)modernist poetics and its demands for "expelling sense" from poetry, which were popular in Slovenia at the time of the first publication of

Integrals (Integrali), that is, in the late 1960-ies. The context of *Cons. 5*, which I have already mentioned, as well as Kosovel's words about "the cultural movement" with the poetic word at its centre, however, speak of something else.

First, we have to look at Kosovel's attitude towards the Slovenian poetic tradition. Kosovel does not see it as something belonging in a museum that, in the avant-garde manner (most bombastically in the "*antipassatismo*" of the futurists), needs to be surpassed and discarded. On the contrary: Kosovel sees himself as heir to and a continuer of the Slovenian literary tradition. This means that he bases his writing in the endeavours and aspirations of his predecessors. And the most prominent, initiatory place in this story is that of France Prešeren, who is the *centre* of the Slovenian poetic canon.

Kosovel expressed his attitude towards the author of *The Toast* (Zdravljica) in several places. Let me quote the final passage from Kosovel's paper *Prešeren*, written in February 1924. The incentive was the anniversary of the poet's death.

I would wish for one thing – that in this dark age, when we have forgotten why we are alive, we reach for his poetry and try to obtain from it the power that helps in suffering and in struggle, that gives a person faith in life, that shows the aim to life. Because it is a special trait of deep and beautiful souls to show their own lives, to show the only way that the soul needs to take: towards Beauty. And Prešeren is such a soul. (*Collected Works III*: 122)

From this passage, written in Kosovel's typically elevated style, we may discern some suggestive thoughts. Prešeren's poetry is the target source of life's power, which helps in suffering and struggle. Is therefore the will to poetry that Kosovel demonstrates by referring to Prešeren as the ultimate poetic authority, the will to *more* power, to a surplus that qualifies a person for active entry into life's arena? This is where the question of Kosovel's attitude towards Nietzsche becomes relevant.

Kosovel's thoughts are sometimes Nietzschean. The impression is corroborated by references to Nietzsche in Kosovel's writings. In 1923 he apparently read Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, because he mentions it several times in this period, also in his correspondence (*Collected Works III*: 382, 481). Kosovel refers to Nietzsche as a kind of authority, if not a spiritual teacher. However, in this context Kosovel also writes of his endeavours; not only that, he writes, for example, of "sacrificing for Beauty and Truth". In his text *We Are Standing* (Stojimo), also from 1923, he mentions Nietzsche and immediately goes on to talk about "the struggle for man and mankind", about the Slavs, who will save "the tired European man with their great will for life, with their juicy, barbarically joyous *lust for life*" (*Collected Works III*: 42). The same year Kosovel wrote in a review: "If man wants to live...he must step into the surroundings. He is not a man of a rotten society, neither is he a man of the most ideal collectivity; he is man-god, Nietzsche's Übermensch. With him the world stands and falls." (*Collected Works III*: 236)

In a diary entry from the period, Kosovel was even more direct: "When I feel most bitter in my heart, I read Nietzsche." (*Collected Works III*: 703).

However, we must say in advance that Kosovel indeed dialogises, at times perhaps flirts with Nietzsche, yet he understands him very much in his own way – far from the radical nature or consistency of the original Nietzschean thought. Like Ivan Cankar before him (See: Kos 2003: 147–180), Kosovel *humanises* will and power, and only in this explicitly humanistic context understands them as the means of human (individual and collective) emancipation. The same goes for Kosovel's frequent slogans about humanity, new man, justice, new society, new ethos etc., which otherwise often resound with the programmatic principles of so-called messianic expressionism.

Within Kosovel's horizon, all these ideas – explicitly "modern" or "decadent" according to Nietzsche – however, have no deeper conceptual connection to Nietzsche's perspective. Or more precisely, with *perspectivism* in Nietzsche, which means: to see all being in the light of the will to power and the eternal return of the same, and therefore also "beyond good and evil". Perspectivism according to Nietzsche is not about seeing life from the perspective of development in the sense of an eschatological progression towards a certain Goal, least of all in the light of any kind of ethical postulate. In short, Nietzsche proceeds from the will to power as a fundamental "structure" of nature, the "instinct" of being, as "the eternal return of the same". What keeps returning is the will to power as a self-willing power (cf. among others, Nietzsche 1991; 577–8).

For Kosovel, poetry and art in general are not the embodiment of ebullient power and the will to life in the Nietzschean sense; power is limited in advance. In other words: power, which is limited, and on which Kosovel wagers, is not power which would will itself; it is not power which would be the ultimate principle of life. Kosovel limits himself to the amount of power necessary to somehow bear suffering and then give it meaning through engagement *within* the movement for the realization of a certain *humanitarian* idea. This is why this power cannot be expansionist, turned outward. On the contrary, the limits of this world, to use a phrase that Kosovel probably does not use by coincidence, are the limits of the *beautiful soul*. And the world in which this beautiful soul lives and feels at home is poetry. The aim of the poetic beautiful soul is "to walk towards Beauty".

It is necessary to add that the foundations of Kosovel's "poetics" as they appear in his discursive texts are heterogeneous, often even contradictory. Kosovel's watchword for the truth of poetry is Beauty; however, following Cankar's example, he does not understand it in the sense of harmony as one of the categories of "classical" aesthetics, nor in the sense of art-for-art's-sake or aestheticism. A typical example is Kosovel's 1925 draft of the essay *Modern European Life and Art* which he was planning at the time. Among other things, he says that art

... is no longer, as seen by some professorial aesthetes, an aesthetic problem, but rather an aesthetic, ethical, social, religious, revolutionary problem, that is, the problem of life.... Because only the artist who has stepped from

the swamp of modern society and entered a new society that he himself felt, only this artist is the new priest of the truth, righteousness, humanity, and kindness. (*Collected Works III*: 650)

The foundation of this renovation, claims Kosovel as he goes on, is an "ethical revolution": "We want action. And you cannot move on to action without an ethical revolution." (*Collected Works III*: 651)

In the last part of Kosovel's life this persuasion was given more concrete, social and political content. He explained his views most clearly in his lecture *Art and the Proletarian* (*Umetnost in proletarec*), which he gave towards the end of February 1926, three months before he died, in Zagorje. Kosovel discussed the modern artist and the necessity that he enters the movement which "fights within the class struggle for a classless society". The subject of the movement is the proletariat, and in Kosovel's mind, the emancipation of the proletariat, in Marx's words, is a prerequisite for the emancipation of the whole of mankind.¹ The realisation of Justice will bring "a new, proletarian, humanitarian culture". Therefore, surmises Kosovel, "proletarian culture is a necessity, without which the proletariat cannot fulfil its task" (*Collected Works III/3*: 29).

Here, a question, which could be called "the question of poetry", arises in all its clarity. Namely: on these foundations, how does one adjust the poetic word so that it fits the truth of the *new age*? Because, in spite of all his confrontational activism, the poetic word of Kosovel is above all *the word of yearning*. And yearning in itself is aimless and open, it concerns the heart, the soul, and an unspecified sorrow, if I use the poet's words, which we encounter in all the "developmental stages" and "genres" of his writing.

Is the allure of the sirens of *the new society* as an eschatological project – in its realisation, Kosovel bestows an initiatory role on literature – such that it could put into question all of Kosovel's previous poetic endeavours? Because, constitutive to him are searching, "ontological" uncertainty, inherent discrepancy, wavering between solipsism and activism and the corresponding state of crisis; but most of all, the common denominator in Kosovel's poetry remains the elementary lyricism of the "beautiful soul". Despite the techno-poetic, thematic and other metamorphoses of Kosovel's poetry, – this remains his defining foundation (cf. Kos 1997).

With regard to these dilemmas I must once again point to certain formulations from Kosovel's correspondence. These are sentences that Kosovel wrote in his letter to Fanica Obidova in the summer of 1925: the poet speaks of being in the midst of a great revolt and of the creative nervousness that

¹ And also the first prerequisite for the emancipation of smaller – according to Marx (and Hegel) "non-historical" – nations. For Kosovel's vision of the "proletarian revolution" is not nonnational in the sense of the "world revolution" and the related "dying off of nations". Kosovel's diary entry from 1924 is meaningful enough: "Through the socialism of revolution to the freedom of nations." (*Collected Works*: 624) Similarly: "Nation is above state, because nation is organic, natural and legitimate, whereas the state is a mechanical political and economic factor." (*Collected Works III*: 659)

is part of this revolt; at the same time, this nervousness is already a wider, almost metaphysical notion: "A nervous man is a medium for cosmic tragedies."

Particularly interesting for us is the sentence in which Kosovel speaks of the fact that man must "cross the bridge of nihilism to the positive side" (*Collected Works III*: 397–8).

This sentence is actually a slightly different version of a thought we find in one of Kosovel's diary entries from that time: "We will have to go through the nothingness of negativism to get to the true *constructive path*." (*Collected Works III*: 700)

There are other, similar formulations scattered through Kosovel's writing. In another letter to Fanica Obidova he wrote, for example: "From absolute negation, nihilism, I have gradually moved, with my eyes closed, to the positive side." (*Collected Works III/2*: 400)

In this letter Kosovel explains his current poetic dilemmas and also envisages where his poetry is going. Kosovel's self-labelling and self-explanations of all kinds should make us aware of several things. First of all, Kosovel's words about "the true constructive path" and "the positive side" do not simply denote a kind of aesthetic "quasi-reality" or literary quirk; Kosovel's thought here is explicitly socially oriented.

This, in turn, means that he puts his own poetry (or literature/art in general) directly at the service of ideology and politics. Kosovel is quite clear on this in the letter cited earlier to Fanica Obidova, dated 27th July, 1925:

Although we must know politics, my work is in literature. Today I understand my work and my domain perfectly: I have to do in literature what our youngest do in politics; that is: portray the age in which one world is decaying and another is arising. *Why and how, depends on the individual.*

You see, this is our task. Literature must awaken knowledge in people! It must intensify the power of life. (*Collected Works III*: 401)

Literature, therefore, should intensify the *life force* in people. Kosovel's imperative brings us again to a comparison between Kosovel and Nietzsche. As far as Nietzsche goes, we have been establishing that his term "will to power" can only be used provisionally in Kosovel, in the sense of a *constructive* will to power. It is the kind of will to power that will serve man as a "personified ethos", to use Kosovel's phrase. He gives the most vivid explanation of this "personified ethos" in his lecture *Crisis* (Kriza) in November 1925 in Ljubljana. The first sentence of this lecture is the same as the title and the first line of Kosovel's poem *Europe is Dying* (Evropa umira). Even a casual glance reveals that the poem is made up of two halves or two levels. On one level we witness an explicit, almost transparent social criticism. These are the lines which state that Europe, such as it is, is dying, or that the League of Nations is a lie. The other side of this social criticism, or almost ecstasy, as much as is possible by the poetic subjectivity turned outwards, is an emphatically intimate reflection.

This duality of social criticism and emphatic individuality, or social engagement and lonely melancholy are constitutive elements of the poetic attitude we could in general call "Kosovel's paradox".

Kosovel's lecture *Crisis* is one of his more famous publicity texts. This lecture offers similar findings as the poem *Rhymes*: that clichés should be put in museums, and that "everything has lost its value". The loss of value happened in the name and in the light of the future. This future appears on a horizon that begins with words about "the death of Europe". The death of Europe is the condition for the birth of the new world and new man. And this is where art acquires special significance. Moreover, in his *Crisis* lecture, Kosovel even wrote in the first person plural that "we" come "in the sign of art". At the same time, he understands this art in a distinctly humanist sense, in the sense of *getting closer* to man: "*the humanitarianism of art consists in getting closer to man*" (*Collected Works III*: 20).

This is immediately followed by the (penultimate) sentence, which is a paraphrase of a Nietzsche's well-known Nietzsche's words or rather slogans; however, Nietzsche's thought is already critically rejected. Kosovel says: "Not beyond good and evil, just and unjust, not with the superhuman lie; we come as people through good and evil, just and unjust." (*Collected Works III*: 20)

Kosovel's engagement on this level is clear: he demands engagement in the name of man and mankind, and this engagement at the same time is in the name of good versus evil, justice versus injustice. If Nietzsche abolishes *the moral* distinction between good and evil and morals in general (*morality is immorality*), if socialism to him is just a "modern idea", a manifestation of social decadence (cf. particularly Nietzsche 1991: 78–88), if the so-called good man to him is just another name for modern man, for a Christian or a nihilist (Nietzsche 1989: 197), than Kosovel demands precisely the opposite: he calls for an emphasised ethical and moral attitude, because man – man as an ethical subject – must decide again and again between good and evil, just or unjust. After all, this is where Kosovel's words of man as "personified ethos" originate.

In one of Kosovel's diary entries from 1925 (*On Suicide*) there is a formulation about nihilism. It is about the fact that nihilism comes directly from modern society: "*nihilism /is/ the only philosophy which organically originates from modern discord, the split between society and man; modern culture cannot produce a better 'philosophy'*" (*Collected Works III*: 648) The alternative to this nihilism is not the will to power as the active source of life in Nietzsche's sense; Kosovel's point takes a different turn: he speaks of ethical revolution, which is at the same time spiritual revolution; and not in the name of the *Übermensch* as the figure of the will to power, but in the name of the new humanity and its moral attributes, which are, to use Kosovel's language, primarily love, honesty and truth.

It is in this context that we must understand the poet's words about the great revolt he is in; about the fact that we must "cross the bridge of nihilism to the positive side". After all, as early as 1924, Kosovel wrote this isolated, but meaningful, critically distanced thought in his notebook: "The dreams of nihilism: to kill all, to tear it all apart, to die, the delight, to lay waste, to lay waste." (*Collected Works III*: 617)

* * *

As far as Kosovel's attitude to Nietzsche goes – and to the issues of “European nihilism” – it manifestly confirms the complexity of the circumstances of Kosovel's poetry and life. And these are circumstances that probably dictated the poet's *incorrect* reading of Nietzsche, as well as his attempts to not only recover from nihilism, but also *overcome* it. These attempts are, according to the logic of this, beyond correct or incorrect *understanding* – in Kosovel they are in close contact with his vivid, straightforward personality, as well as with “the negative total” of the post-war Slovenian world of the 1920's.

Translated by Katarina Jerin

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■ ABSTRACT

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Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / philosophical influences / Nietzsche, Friedrich / nihilism

The paper proceeds with the question of Kosovel's attitude towards nihilism. More precisely, what Kosovel understood under this term, which he was acquainted with and himself used, and in what sense did he try to transcend the subject of nihilism. In this context, the discussion primarily turns on Kosovel's attitude towards Nietzsche, as far as it can be reconstructed with the help of Kosovel's own formulations in his letters and diary entries. On the bases of these, it is possible to advance the thesis that the alternative to nihilism for Kosovel was not "will to power" as the active life principle in Nietzsche's sense. Kosovel's aspirations followed a different path. Namely, the poet spoke of the ethical revolution, which was simultaneously a spiritual revolution, but not in the name of superman as an exposed, isolated figure of the will to power, but in the name of new man, new humanity and its moral attributes.

If Nietzsche abolishes the moral differentiation between good and bad and morality as such (morality is immoral), Kosovel's endeavours go in the opposite direction: he aspires to a decidedly ethical and moral stance, since man – man as an ethical subject – needs constantly to choose between good and bad, justice and injustice. It is in this light that Kosovel's formulation of man as "ethos incarnate" should be understood.

Nietzsche is not a key figure to open doors into Kosovel's poetic world, and yet in Kosovel's perception of Nietzsche there is some kind of significant ambivalence. This ambivalence was somehow bolstered by what could be referred to as an unintentional misreading of Nietzsche.

KOSOVEL'S "CONS" POEMS: AN UNEASY BALANCE BETWEEN INDIVIDUUM AND SOCIETY

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Let me approach the subject of Kosovel's "cons" poems from the perspective of the Aesthetics of Reception by considering a thesis which H. R. Jauß develops on the basis of Aristotle's catharsis, St Augustine's criticism of self-enjoyment in his *curiositas* and Gorgias' doctrine on the persuasive potential of affects in speech-making (Jauß 1982: 92). The cathartic pleasure and the very essence of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience are thus defined as "the dialectical interplay of self-enjoyment through the enjoyment of what is other and makes the recipient an active participant in the constitution of the imaginary, something which is denied him as long as aesthetic distance is understood according to traditional theory as one-directional, as a purely contemplative and disinterested relationship to an object at a certain remove" (Jauß 1982: 92). The dialectical interplay has two poles: self-enjoyment and the enjoyment of "what is other". The relationship between them thus ideally encompasses both a turning in on oneself *and* out towards the other. Jauß, however, acknowledges the potential of reduction of either of the two poles whenever "the state of suspension characteristic of the attitude of aesthetic pleasure becomes one-sided and either a distance-less enjoyment of the object or sentimental self-enjoyment, that cathartic experience thus runs risk of being used for ideological purposes or of becoming prefabricated consumption, thereby losing its genuinely communicative efficacy" (Jauß 1982: 92–93).

I would like to add two things: first, the common denominator of the two poles of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience always derives some kind of realization through which one gains an insight as both an individual and a social being. However, one does not merely understand oneself to a point of closure, but rather finds oneself continually in the *process* of self-understanding. This triggers a set of reactions: affirmation, negation, critical appreciation, to name the more obvious ones.

Second: the two poles of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience should not be thought of as fixtures, synchronic or diachronic. In fact, throughout history they have undergone a number of variations. To give an example: in the Middle Ages, the pole of 'the other' was structured as the divine Thou, or rather, his representative, Jesus Christ, whereas in modern

times the other can be perceived as either the individual's personal unconscious content or the social conventions not yet made conscious. Since the problem of Kosovel's 'cons' poems interests me from the perspective of the contemporary model of communicative efficacy, I will not go further into historical parallels. The somewhat schematic and inevitably simplified description of the medieval model of communicative efficacy simply serves to illustrate the historical background or context, against which I will map out the problem of the communicative quality of Kosovel's 'cons' poems.

According to Jauß, the modern model of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience can first be seen in terms of the subject's regarding their own subjectivity and the unconscious social norms. Only secondly does the recipient react (or not react) to social norms and their own intimate content. The risk of aesthetic experience being invaded by ideology is highest in the case of utterly uncritical affirmative responses to society or in a total lack of response (Jauß 1982: 92–93) This, of course, endangers the core achievement of modern aesthetics: the autonomy of art. Moving on from here to Adorno's thesis about the autonomy of art as an aesthetic and social fact, it becomes clear that this autonomy collapses when the balanced relationship between art/aesthetics and society becomes unbalanced (Adorno 2002: 5).

Gadamer's thesis of the subjectification of aesthetics after Kant and Schiller turns on the notion that an abstract aesthetic consciousness is caused by the separation of art from life. Also, Jauß's understanding of the essence of the communicative efficacy can be fine tuned to the conclusion that art is safe from ideological attacks only when both poles of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience are preserved in their entirety. In other words, my self-understanding is complete only when *the self* (as an individual and a member of society) is in a dynamic, ever open dialogue with *the other* (as an individual and as society). Therefore, if one of the elements is missing, this not only affects the dialogue between the two poles of an aesthetic experience, but it also obstructs and hinders my very self-understanding. Can my self-understanding gain a true dimension if it neglects either the self or the other?

According to Adorno, the warrant of art's autonomy is precisely the balance between the individual and society. In modern times, this relation has not always been in perfect equilibrium; a historical overview would probably give a picture of a constant imbalance between the individual and society which, in turn, also frustrates the need for a continuous and playful oscillation between the self and the other. Here I can offer only a cursory glance at the matter.

Kant's scheme of aesthetic experience assumes a number of factors which support the recipient's orientation towards society: one such factor, for instance, is the imperative for universal liking/pleasing,¹ for the subjective universality of a pure aesthetic judgement, of its general communicability, all of which can be linked to the maxim that "beauty is merely a symbol of what is moral" (KU § 59.259). On the other hand, there is the so-called *sensus communis*² that comes into play here, which connects the

aesthetically affected subject with society. Moreover, according to some contemporary interpretations which approach Kant's third *Critique* in the light of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, aesthetics, particularly with the principle of disinterested pleasure, acts as key support to moral philosophy as a tendency towards surpassing one's desires and interests (for example, Marquard 1995: 37–69).

From Kant onwards, what was a tentative balance between the individual and society began to lean further and further toward the subject's confrontation with the contents of his/her own inner world. In other words, the appreciation of the 'self' in relation to the 'other' was considerably reduced by the abstract aesthetic consciousness. The danger of this for aesthetic experience was that it could ultimately lead to sentimental self-indulgence.

A crucial shift in this direction is already visible in Schiller's more radical extrapolation of Kant's scheme of aesthetic experience. In the 19th century, Schiller's shift postulated such aesthetic experience whereby the reading act enabled the recipient to constitute his/her own subjectivity – mainly with the aim of reinforcing it, so as to withhold the pressure of day-to-day reality even after coming back to the everyday world.

Marquard derives his thesis of aesthetics as non-aesthetics* precisely through late Schiller to describe the effects of those works of art which make the recipient turn increasingly in on him/herself to contemplate his/her own personal contents (Marquard 1995). Effectively art/aesthetics began to have the effect of a sedative and became a means of alleviating the pain and shock (Marquard 1995: 21–35) that the romantic – and even more so the post-romantic – subject would experience against the backdrop of the socio-historical horizon. Such isolation of art, such severing of the social umbilicus from which art grows, however, can lead to its degeneration, into escapism, whereby art loses its vitality. This is not to say that art/aesthetics as non-aesthetics is (simply) non-art, or beauty temporarily put to sleep. On the contrary, in its radical form, it anaesthetises itself, sleeps the sleep of death, thereby passively, silently, consenting to – and thus upholding – unjust social norms. This, of course, means that its autonomy *is* threatened, or even that it exists merely as facade.

If I apply Marquard's concept of non-aesthetics to the field of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience, then I can say that the end of the 19th century crisis in art went hand in hand with the crisis of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience. Let me demonstrate by way of the French symbolists. Mallarmé's wish to utter in *langue*, down to the last nuance, also that which is unutterable, served as a way out of the crisis in art; that is, it further separated art from life (society), pushing it deeper into a crisis of communication. Those lesser creative moments of *fin de siècle* – lesser in their powers of artistic persuasion – were not ultimately concerned with penetrating the innermost depths, but seemed content with presenting Weltschmerz, melancholy and depression as the quintessence of

* The Latin term Marquard uses, *Anaesthetica*, carries the double meaning of aesthetics as non-aesthetics and also aesthetics as that which anaesthetizes (transl.).

subjectivity – in other words, those qualities that characterise the unified beautiful soul against the ugly fragmented world.

It is precisely to this state of things that the various European literary avant-garde movements reacted, with the aim of adjusting the degenerate model of communicative efficacy by re-introducing the maxim of the interconnectedness of art and life. The avant-garde renewal of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience operated on at least two levels, and was in itself highly ambivalent. On the one hand, it was concerned with a direct attack on abstract aesthetic consciousness. The scope of slogans about burning down museums and the rejection of canonised art and literary tradition³ almost never went beyond the mere subversion of the 19th century “traditional” model of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience. The avant-garde artists strove to shatter both the Poet and his ivory tower, in which the reader, in all his or her pathetic aloofness, contemplates the Poet’s feelings wrapped in a decorous veil of melancholy. This tendency is most transparent in Italian futurism, and Kosovel saw it also in Micić’s zenitism.

The avant-garde renewal of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience was equally concerned with opening the recipient to society at the cost of neglecting the subject’s personal self-reflection. W. Benjamin has drawn the main distinction between the Italian and the Soviet avant-garde.⁴ The Italian avant-garde artists, even as they were announcing, with great vehemence, the necessity of a war that would destroy the terminally sick western world, their concern never went beyond the aesthetics of society/regime – into enlarging the aesthetic sphere so as to encompass life fully, making it aesthetic. This would then be the source from which art could draw its vital sap. In contrast to the Italian avant-garde artists, the Russian avant-garde was not concerned with the aesthetisation of society, but with making society bear crucially on art – infusing art with society/regime. In other words, they strove to broaden the sphere of reality into the sphere of art. The aesthetic renewal, that is the subversion of the traditional scheme of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience, in this case needed to join hands with a revitalisation of content – with a social revolution. All the negative and positive sides of such strivings showed themselves fairly early on in the Soviet regime. Thus we can conclude that the radical dose of avant-garde medicine administered to the autonomy of art in fact endangered autonomy just as much, if not more so, than was the case with art based on the degenerate Kant-Schiller model.

Both the models of connecting art and life we have looked at will need to be considered in the light of Iser’s understanding of the fictive, the fictive as the mediator between the field of the real and the field of the imaginary. (Iser 1978 and 1993). Italian and Russian avant-garde artists dealt with and developed the connection between art and life in different ways. The Italian avant-garde sought for the field of imaginary to penetrate the real via the field of the fictive, and – through the process of aesthetisation – structure it according to its own principles. The Russian avant-garde, on the other hand, strove for the field of the real to break into the imaginary via the fic-

tive sphere and subordinate it to its own principles. Clearly, the fictive was deprived of its autonomous status in both instances, and poetry thereby weakened in its force of artistic persuasion.

We are now ready to consider how the second wave of the Slovenian avant-garde reacted to the crisis of autonomous art. Kosovel, who was the leading proponent of this wave (Vrečko 1986: 81), perceived the general crisis of art with profound insight and also saw the specifics of the Slovenian situation. In his essays *Crisis, Art and the Proletarian*, *Crisis in Humanity*, *the Breakdown of Society and Collapse of Art*, Kosovel perceived the gulf between art and life/man (Collected Works (CW) 3/1: 12–21) as being at the heart of a general European crisis. It could be overcome only if (Slovenian) art was to draw from everyday life, rather than run away from it into art for art's sake.⁵ According to Kosovel, the source of connection between art and life lies in the artist's understanding (CW 3/1: 41)⁶ of him/herself and the world around: only understanding can bring this somewhat abstract task of connecting life and art to fulfilment, and extending it to encompass the wider connections between art, life, humanity, and truth. In other words, art, according to Kosovel, is not merely an "aesthetic question", it is "a question that concerns life itself" (CW 3/1, Journal VII/9: 650).

Kosovel was also aware of the crisis of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience.⁷ As already mentioned, the Italian futurists strove for rather facile, even if inventive, connections between art and life; their art admittedly attacked the traditionally passive role of the reader, but no more than that. Unlike them, Kosovel saw the way out of the crisis of communicative efficacy and the crisis of art in an *ethical, spiritual* revolution, a revolution on the level of *content*, not form,⁸ one that would connect art with life at a deep level.

Having established the theoretical framework which will guide my interpretation of Kosovel's 'cons' poems, I now wish to posit two main questions: firstly, do the 'cons' poems manage to hold in balance the two poles of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience? Secondly, did Kosovel in these poems overcome what was widely acknowledged as "the refusal of communicative identification", typical of the contemporary experience of art (Jauß 1982: 94)?

I will approach these two questions by looking first at a structural element that features frequently in Kosovel's 'cons' poems, and which I will refer to as *ironisation*. Ironisation is one mode of poetic expression with which Kosovel tries to put a hold on the degenerate form of recipient's confrontation with him/herself and generate a critical evaluation of social norms in the reader. In fact, ironisation is a minus function. Such functions, according to Iser, typically characterise modernist texts. Namely, a text structured by means of minus functions does not fulfil the expectations readers cultivate through reading nonsmodern texts: it offers no key to the production of textual meaning. As such, minus functions are the reason modernist texts, instead of offering the reader a key to reading practice and the production of textual meaning, offer a blank – that which remains once

the reader's expectations are abandoned. Blanks in modernist texts not only stimulate a textual transfer into the reader's consciousness, but also enhance the reader's interpretative activity. In other words, the reader is constantly searching for a key to interpretation. But since each such interpretative act reveals itself to be deficient the more one reads into the text, the reader of the more radical modernist texts can only ever reach a provisional interpretation, which is then displaced by the next interpretative key.⁹

In Kosovel, ironisation as the crucial type of minus function is based on the concept of the *beautiful soul*. What this means is that its function is not only related to reading act techniques, but crosses over into the field of the subject's self-consciousness. The function of Kosovel's ironisation is therefore hermeneutic.

It needs to be said that Kosovel's *entire* body of poetry, not only his early poems, are most strongly marked with the notion of the *beautiful soul*.¹⁰ M. Kos differentiates between two forms of this concept: the first can be traced in Kosovel's early poetry, and bears close resemblance to the Hegelian beautiful soul, more precisely, its post-romantic extrapolation. Some of Kosovel's diary entries suggest that this form of the beautiful soul was a source of great struggle for him.¹¹ The other form of this concept was prompted by a number of factors: Ivan Cankar's ethos, the traumatic experience of WWI, the allocation of a part of Slovenia's coastal region to Italy, the experience of fascism in Trieste, and a strong sense of both artistic and ethical dormancy on the part of the Slovenes in Ljubljana. In Kosovel's essays this other variant of the *beautiful soul* acquires the dimension of the new man/artist – a human being who is "the priest of truth, justice and beauty" (CW 3/1: 650). Moreover, the other variant of the *beautiful soul* is, in fact, a bridge from the post-romantic beautiful soul to Kosovel's social and socialist commitment.

Although, at a given moment, Kosovel left behind the early form of the *beautiful soul*, his 'cons' poems did not articulate the other, more mature form, but precisely this naive one. "Cons" poems often lure the reader into identification with the "beautiful soul", into some kind of "harmony with weary pain". It is as though they were appealing to the melancholy and lonely aspect of reader's subjectivity. Kosovel, of course, knew exactly what he was doing: he wanted the reader to see how utterly useless and ethically futile it was, in that day and age, to regard yourself as a beautiful, melancholy subjectivity. It is through ironisation that "cons" poems achieve this rupture in the reader's identification with the beautiful soul – by *distancing* readers from the beautiful soul, as well as from their own indulgence in it. Having achieved such an aesthetic distance, the reader is more likely to think critically both about his social environment and his relation to it. A good example of this can be found in two poems: *Culture's Prostitution* and *The Heart in Alcohol*.

A famous example of ironisation combined with metaphor appears in the first three lines of the poem *Spherical Mirror*.¹² The spherical mirror is a metaphor for art that highlights deficiencies, and in this way stands in contrast to the normal mirror. *Spherical Mirror* achieves this through mon-

tage, by juxtaposing a newspaper fragment, a treatise on art and a snippet imitating a romantic model of poetry where chestnuts rustle by the water (l. 7–9). All of this is bait to entice the beautiful soul, with the aim of preventing the recipient from undergoing the wrong type of aesthetic identification (l. 10–11).¹³

The continuation of this poem, however, seems to carry more meaning for Kosovel than the reader. Namely, Kosovel is ironic towards his own nihilo-metaphysical subjectivity, and wonders about his own poetic production and the scope of its influence on society. The marginal line, in the form of a spherical mirror, “WHY DID YOU DROP/A GOLDEN BOAT INTO THE MARSHES?” refers to his early, ‘velvety-style’ lyrics, with their own form of the beautiful soul that is a total anachronism in the marshes of society – it can only be swallowed up. To my mind, this marginal line is uttered by a beautiful soul. At the same time it presents a critique of the weakness of the degenerate Kant-Schiller model of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience, in which the recipient passively and uncritically acquiesces and consents to social norms.¹⁴ At the same time it is possible to read it as a way out of the deficiency of the degenerate model of aesthetic experience: the poet simply had to drop the golden boat of his velvety verse into the marshy (social) reality of the everyday; he simply had to transform the golden boat into a spherical mirror. In this way he was able to forge a link between life (the marshes) and poetry (the boat/the spherical mirror).

The cognitive dimension of such verse suddenly gains in prominence: the spherical mirror is not simply any normal mirror; it is more distinctively shaped, one which throws the marshy social reality into sharp relief and makes a caricature of it. Inter-textually playing with the reference to Cankar’s white chrysanthemum, which Kosovel steeps in socialist red, the poem offers another possible reading of new art. The socialist red chrysanthemum does not condemn society from an elevated position, but stays firmly *within* society, criticising and operating from inside. Kosovel’s essays and his signing up with the socialist party show that he began to see the possibility of a productive social function more and more in connection with the class struggle. Only such art could become the social and true-to-life factor that would bring about a transformation from the marshy Slovenian and European society infected with metaphysical nihilism to a healthy, vibrant, constructive society, in which each individual adjusts his or her understanding of the other (human being, society) in the light of an on-going self-reflection.

In this way *Spherical Mirror* is suddenly transformed into a much wider reflection on contemporary art, as well as the poet’s creative strivings. The reader, however, is pushed into a rather unpleasant role: there are only two possibilities at one’s disposal. One can take on the role of a somewhat quiet, voyeuristic observer of the poet’s nihilistic self-destruction and his contemplation of the possibilities of poetry. Kosovel was aware of the absurdity of such a role for the reader; on more than one occasion he wrote in his diary that each person has to go through the phase of nihilistic destruction and descend into nothingness within him or herself.¹⁵ Everyone – but

especially a poet – must walk across the bridge of nihilism alone. Only then can he go public with his poetry, confront it with its spherical mirror and begin constructive work. This may be why, until the autumn of 1925, Kosovel was writing his 'cons' poems – and he himself might have understood them as merely fleeting products of his own personal and aesthetic transformation – in utter secrecy (Vrečko 1986: 110).

The other role the reader of Kosovel's 'cons' poems is offered to take up is more daring, as it ventures to make sense where no sense can be made. The reader in this case needs to overcome the paralysing aesthetic distance imposed by them. At the same time, one needs to tackle one's own (in)ability to receive literary texts, having been exposed to predominantly non-modernist texts. One has to constantly confront one's desire to indulge in passive reception and, instead, overcome it with activity. The reception of a given poem thus becomes markedly more active. In short, the poem forces the reader to take on the role which in the 19th century was reserved for the literary critic.

In the effort to create textual meaning, there is yet another, hidden task: the constitution of the reader's subjectivity. It is arguably even more important than the first, and is typically modernist. Subjectivity formation in an early modernist text is characteristically marked by a contradiction: whilst guided by a desire for a unified and ordered subjectivity, it is also presented with the world-as-text that is fragmented, chaotic, and robbed of a unified referential framework. The desire for a unified subjectivity is thus constantly frustrated. Pinning down such a text becomes only possible through the simultaneous transformation of the act of reading into an act of interpretation. In reading the 'cons' poems, the reader is therefore creating an infinite subjectivity as mere interpretation – highly unstable, fragile, bound only to understanding as an endless (personal and historical) project. In other words, subjectivity as interpretation conceives of understanding as a multilingual project. (The latter possibility of the constitution of textual meaning undoubtedly informs the Slovenian post-modern reception of Kosovel, which sees in the constituted meaning/subjectivity only one of the myriad possible subjectivities/interpretations.) Subjectivity as (mere) interpretation is therefore founded on aesthetic distance which, in the process of reading, constantly undermines meaning/subjectivity as something definite!

It seems that when Kosovel's constructivist poetry gave way to his poetry of constructiveness, Kosovel was able to see this quite clearly – in his journal he wrote: "Do you write with the heart? No / with a pen. But what comes not of the soul does not go soul-deep and has no price. Form" (CW 3/1, Journal XII/16: 735). What might initially smack of anti-modernism in fact turns out to be very modern. To write with "a pen" is to reduce oneself to reason and therefore to an utterly non-aesthetic and inhuman mechanism. To write from "the heart" does not mean merely bringing to the surface what was unconsciously already there; it also implies an ethical quality and a wish to communicate that quality to the reader. Can it be that the interpretability of modernist subjectivity has in Kosovel found its *fluid*

solidity precisely in “the heart”? This would certainly go beyond the scope of the ‘cons’ poems, and yet it seems that Kosovel did strive for such a solution at the time when his main focus within the multi-faceted world of his poetic creativity did fall on the poetry of constructiveness.

In *Spherical Mirror* aesthetic distance gains the upper hand through the various “techniques” of preventing the reader from constituting and strengthening the beautiful soul as a false type of subjectivity. At the same time, however, the recipient’s turning outwards to society also fails to achieve its end: it remains on the level of a distanced reflection, on the level of interpretation. “Writing with the pen” thus never moves beyond outlining the form, and is an impoverishment of life as such, and therefore cannot be introduced back into life. The primacy of aesthetic distance thus becomes the cause for a loss of communicativeness. Brecht, who faced a similar problem in relation to aesthetic distance, came to the conclusion that the *sine qua non* of connecting life and art is aesthetic identification (Jauß 1982: 105).

If there are ‘cons’ poems that succeed fairly well in balancing the relation between the individual and society, the poem *Spherical Mirror* represents a strong impediment to this effort. The recipient might even stop to critically ponder the role of contemporary art in society, but this will inevitably be along the lines of pronounced mental and theoretical exertion – in interpretation and self-interpretation, both of which are, as it were, built into the text of the poem, and which the reading act needs to realize at least to some degree. This pronounced self-reflection is merely a slightly finer, even if self-critical, form of the recipient’s indulgent self-preoccupation. To come back to the question of the balance between the two poles of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience, I am once again led to conclude that, despite the freedom to interpret which the ‘cons’ poems push the reader towards, they nevertheless fail to establish an entirely living connection between art and life.

Kosovel himself consciously came to such a conclusion: after attending the reading of the zenitists in Ljubljana in April or May 1925, he acknowledged that the transformation they championed could not merely be aesthetic or formal empty play. The transformation of art should not merely prevent certain typical aesthetic responses, but needs to become an inner transformation. What Kosovel had in mind was an inner transformation, first of the individual, and then of society. The cause as well as the consequence of both was new art.¹⁶ This realisation led Kosovel gradually (soon after joining the socialist party in the summer of 1925) to shift the focus within his admittedly very diverse creative aspirations from the writing of ‘cons’ poems to the poetry of constructiveness, and eventually to plans for writing prose.

I will try to get to the core of this shift by bringing in the principle of movement – but movement in what sense? I do not take it in the sense of speed, which is what the Italian futurists so enthused over. Kosovel, if anything, had an ambivalent attitude towards such a meaning of movement.¹⁷ Nor do I mean it in the sense of montage as the structural principle of constructing a poetic text.

Montage compositions demand great associative speed on the part of the reader. They force one into leaps from one semantic field to another, into gluing together various fragments, into a modernist collage of various poetic forms; in short, they force the reader into greater mental activity. One is asked to see and acknowledge one's own subjectivity as something dynamic, fluid, interpretable, as something radically unstable in an age of instability; to acknowledge defeat in modern man's striving to create an ordered whole from a chaotic world. The reader can accept this recognition, even delights in, or juggles with it – but it is just as legitimate to discard it, thinking, “No; my subjectivity is beautiful and whole; it is the world around me that is subverting it, setting me up for a tragic fall.”

This latter possibility of receiving Kosovel's ‘cons’ poems is possibly one of the main reasons that Slovenia, until as late as the ‘seventies, was unable to receive avant-garde or rather modernist art (also Kosovel's) as a relevant form of art. The reader, whose aesthetic education was based on a degenerate Kant-Schiller schema, simply could not perceive ‘cons’ poems as anything but bad poetry. After all, these small explosive poems blew the reader's (traditional) horizon of expectations to smithereens. The core of rejection of these poems thus turned mainly on the fact that the subversion of the idea of subjectivity as an absolute or even a monolithic totality (the subversion of the post-romantic concept of the beautiful soul) was totally unacceptable to the great majority of the Slovenian readers.

Once both of the mentioned explanations are discarded, we are left with a third possibility. The movement principle can only be the principle with which Kosovel strove – in the most constructive way – to open out his poetry into society. But this movement cannot be compared to a straight line, which is what characterises the above-mentioned principles of movement. The principle of movement I am speaking of is more a vector – it is movement with direction, which aims for a given goal and a certain effect in the reader and in the society. It is this type of movement which can be linked with the concept of “movement philosophy”, which Kosovel understood as action: being actively engaged with social questions.¹⁸ Kosovel's poetic activity gradually began to build itself directly into society with literary readings, lectures, and various plans for starting clubs and societies, and the Strelci publishing house (see Vrečko 1986: 168–214, 218–229). In other words, Kosovel's poetic creativity began to take on the form of social creativity, creativity which would mediate between – and connect – different individuals as different parts of society, at once transforming it and binding it into a dynamic whole. In a sense, Kosovel's poetic activity was beginning to resemble the role of *poesis* in ancient Greece before Plato. In Kosovel, poetic *poesis* becomes the *poesis* of society.

If what we have said is true, then this would be the most effective solution to the communication crisis in modern art. This active engagement with society, with life and truth that Kosovel strove to achieve in poetry, however, poses new challenges as well as threats to the search for balance between the two poles of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience. The poetry of some Russian avant-garde artists, for example, did not

rise to meet the challenge, but instead succumbed to the threats, showing (a) a reduced recipient's confrontation with him/herself, (b) a manipulated "reflection" of social norms and (c) a push for the ideologically controlled "reflection" to be socially in-built.

Kosovel would probably have avoided this danger, even if it were not for his untimely death. His essays are full of references to "true" art growing out of the artist's *personal* inner realisation – from the time of walking alone across the bridge of nihilism. The strong emphasis Kosovel laid on the need to turn vitally into oneself is a fairly good guarantee that also in his own constructive poetry he would succeed in drawing the reader into critical self-reflection.

This hypothesis, however, would need to be tested against an analysis of Kosovel's ethical stance, the basis of which would most probably be a special form of religion that has managed to avoid ideology. And it would probably reveal the precious remains of that extra-aesthetic field to which the aesthetic experience turned before the modern age, whereas in Kosovel it realized itself through greater emphasis on ethos or through expressions such as *man, humanity*.¹⁹ An uneasy balance between the two poles of the communicative efficacy of aesthetic experience would probably have been achieved in Kosovel's socialist revolutionary poetry through an unabated insistence on the recipient's self-understanding as that tool which puts a hold on frenzied party activity or a totalitarian regime as the super-subject.

Translated by Ana Jelnicar

NOTES

¹ KU § 6.18, § 8.24–25, § 9.32, § 22.67.

² KU § 20.64, § 21.65, § 40.158.

³ See *Manifesto del futurismo* in Grisi 1990: 29, 30. Benjamin talks about the shock as the main intention of the Dadaist art (Benjamin 2000: 335).

⁴ “*Fiat ars – pereat mundus*”, says Fascism, and, as Marinetti admits, expects war to supply the artistic gratification of a sense perception that has been changed by technology. This is evidently the consummation of *l'art pour l'art*. Mankind, which in Homer's time was an object of contemplation for the Olympian gods, now is one for itself. Its self-alienation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order. This is the situation of politics which Fascism is rendering aesthetic. Communism responds by politicising art” (Benjamin 2000: 337).

⁵ CW 3/1, 35 (*The Breakdown of Society and Collapse of Art*): “This fictive conversation is a faithful portrayal of our soul life. Eschewing reality, fearing the hard and unbending stick of the everyday, and what inevitably follows – utter disorientation in all questions regarding life, even the most vital.” CW 3/1: 37: “... if to him (the artist), life's ideal becomes inactivity and leisure, then he loses that potent force that originates from hard contact with everyday life's battles. If his sole aim is self-fulfillment, he loses the power to solve everyday questions, he loses contact with life in its entirety.”

⁶ See Kosovel's letter to F. Obidova, dated 27/8/1925 (CW 3/1: 401), where the act of realising is not empty didacticism: "Literature must bring about some kind of a knowledge [spoznanje] in people! It has to intensify life's power!"

⁷ CW 3/1, Journal VII (1925): 656, 28: "... art is the vehicle of life and not a sedative drug to be taken for pleasure, it is a stimulus for the soul's activity to be continued in living."

⁸ CW 3/1, Journal VII/10: 651 and Journal VII/35, 37, 38: 658 isl.

⁹ "The frustration of such basic expectations leaves a blank which the traditional novel had always filled" (Iser 1978: 207). Iser's statement can easily be applied to Kosovel's 'cons' poems. For 'a blank', see also Iser 1978: 202–203. For 'the minus function', see Iser 1978: 207 – 210. "the more modern the text, the more will it fulfill its 'minus functions'" (Iser 1978: 208).

¹⁰ M. Kos draws our attention to a number of 'velvety' words in the 'cons' poems; "for example: soul, suffering, pain, beauty, dreams, heart, solitude, sickness/grief, weariness" (M. Kos 1997: 163, see also p. 145-152 and 154-160).

¹¹ For an illustration of this, see his letter to F. Obidova, dated 25/8/1923 (CW 3/1: 381): "It is autumn today, which robs Beauty to reveal the Truth [this Truth is Death, comment by A. Jo.], which is infinite terror. Do you ever think about – the beauty of autumn – that infinite sadness, in which you find yourself alone, and give yourself over to this embrace of sadness, as a child would to his mother, and you are a harmony of weary pain, and all you want is to lie down and sleep?"

¹² "Is it the mirror's fault / if you have a hooked nose./ Hail to Heine!/ Look in a spherical mirror / to know yourself!/ Nationalism is a lie./ Chestnuts rustling by the water./ the autumn has come to antiquaries./ Their shops are full of antiques./ Ting-a-ling./ Hang yourself from a swing. / Red chrysanthemum. / Autumn grave... / white grave./ Ivan Cankar. // WHY DID YOU DROP / A GOLDEN BOAT INTO THE MARSHES?"

¹³ Spherical Mirror, l. 10-11: "Ting-a-ling./ Hang yourself from a swing."

¹⁴ See CW 3/1: Journal VII/9: 650 (from 1925): "...only the artist who has stepped out of the marshes of contemporary society and walked into a new society he himself has felt – only he is the new priest of truth, justice, humanity and goodness."

¹⁵ CW 3/1: 398 and 400 (letters to F. Obidova, dated 12/7 and 17/7/1925).

¹⁶ "Revolution is a phenomenon that effects content not form. /.../ The revolution of form is too shallow and too short, the revolution we herald is the revolution of the content of the European, the revolution of life as such, because if there is no such revolution there can be no art" (CW 3/1, Journal VII/37: 658).

¹⁷ See the manifesto *To The Mechanics!* in Kosovel 2003a. See also Vrečko 1996.

¹⁸ CW 3/1, Journal, VII/7: 650, see Vrečko 1986: 105-110.

¹⁹ About this, see Kermauner 1993.

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■ ABSTRACT

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Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / reader-response theory / aesthetic experience

A reader's response analysis of Kosovel's poems focuses on the break in the communicative efficacy of an aesthetic experience, in as much as this is suggested by the poet's shift away from his "velvety" lyrics in search of a new poetic expression. The paper's starting point is the relationship between the recipient's turning in on him/herself and his or her openness into the extra-aesthetic sphere. The crisis of the Kant-Schiller scheme of aesthetic experience led avant-garde artists to revolutionise their poetic forms in an attempt to counterbalance the recipient's self-indulgent introspection with an opening out into society, into life itself. Through ironisation of the "beautiful soul", Kosovel's "cons" poems prevent the reader from indulging in introspection; rather they force him to adopt aesthetic distance, from where he/she is able to

evaluate him-/herself as well as the values of society. In some “cons” poems the two poles of the aesthetic experience’s communicative efficacy are in balance, but in others this balance is disrupted through too great an aesthetic distance. In these poems, the constitution of meaning is enabled through a pronounced interpretative activity on the part of the recipient, whereby the interpretative effort corresponds to the effort needed to constitute one’s own subjectivity. Since the outcome of both is merely subjectivity as interpretation, the recipient once again fails to open out into society to the satisfactory extent. Kosovel saw a way out of such a condition in socialist activity and in integrals, which would lead the recipient to transform his/her critical self-evaluation and an evaluation of his/her society into action, thereby directly incorporating it into society.

'QUALE TRIESTINITÀ?': VOICES AND ECHOES FROM ITALIAN TRIESTE

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In re-evaluating as large as possible a corpus of Triestine poetry in Italian, my article intends to court the poetics and production of Srečko Kosovel. As a scholar of Triestine literary identities, it is a challenge for me to assess a 'state of poetry' at a specified time in Triestine history in terms of its marginality *vis-à-vis* a central 'elsewhere': the thought and work of the eminent Slovene poet Srečko Kosovel. My argument starts with singling out a number of Italian poets who were, *grosso modo*, contemporary to Kosovel, some of whom may well have been familiar to him, such as Scipio Slataper (1888–1915), Giulio Camber Barni (1891–1941), and Umberto Saba (1883–1957). I will subsequently mention, if in passing, a cluster of hardly memorable poets who were associated with the climate of virulent *italianità* that helped give rise to and sustain the fascist phenomenon. Finally, I plan to devote special attention to the Futurist avant-garde, who, in its Constructivist inflection, is, of course, particularly relevant to Kosovel. Early on, the Futurists appropriated Trieste as a radically modern urban space and, as such, an ideal platform to voice their ideological and aesthetic credos. In the course of my exposition, mention will also be made to a small number of exquisitely local concerns, such as *irredentismo*, the grave heritage of the *Risorgimento*, and the unresolved, belated attachment to the Romantic tradition, a burden that weighed heavily on Triestine poetry up until relatively recently.

The generation of Triestine and Julian authors who sought both cultural escape and legitimisation in Florence in the early years of the XX century, and Scipio Slataper in particular, played an instrumental role in defining Italian Triestine literature as it is commonly understood. Since the late XIX century the prevailing cultural orientation combined conservative Romanticism and Positivism. Its Italian inspiration, ideologically and aesthetically influenced more specifically by the poet Giosuè Carducci, whose work was also familiar to Kosovel, allowed a backward-looking search for cultural legitimisation. Conversely, Trieste's particular geo-political position allowed the freedom to experiment further and wider. The result was an unmediated combination of asynchronous cultural trends. A number of pre-war authors, to include Slataper and the brothers Carlo and Giani Stuparich, powerfully

affected by a crisis of identity emerging during their Florentine exile, combined a self-centred autobiographical style with outmoded *repêchages* into the most hackneyed Italian literary tradition: a 'spiritual encyclopedism', as Ernestina Pellegrini puts it, combining a number of heterogeneous, at times even incompatible, cultural and historical elements.¹

Is it true that Trieste had neither a cultural tradition nor a cultural scene at the beginning of the XX century, as Slataper provocatively declared in a frequently quoted 'Lettera triestina'?² The answer must be in the negative, for the city at the time was by no means a cultural desert: Trieste boasted, among other events, the first Futurist soirées and the first Italian performance of Wagner's *Tetralogy*. The cultural life of the Slovene community, though a 'counter culture' as Marina Cattaruzza puts it, was vibrant, as testified by the theatrical, musical and poetic activities promoted by the *Narodni dom*, the numerous periodical publications, from *Edinost* to *Novi rod* to *Ženski svet*, to quote only a few that are relevant to Kosovel.³ Slataper's statement is therefore entirely provocative, designed to shake up an environment at the cultural margins of Italy perceived as being too steeped in trade and eager to secure a place for itself in the national sphere. Slataper and his acolytes hoped to achieve this national integration by diving into the most canonical and idealised cultural tradition, that of Florence. Having 'descended' on Florence almost as a barbarian gasping for civilization, Slataper contributed to the influential periodical *La Voce* from 1909 and took over its editorship in 1910.⁴ On Slataper's example, a whole generation of young Triestine intellectuals (the already mentioned brothers Stuparich, Virgilio Giotti, Biagio Marin, Alberto Spaini, Gemma Harazim and others), persuaded in many cases by the impending contingency of being called up to arms, attended University courses in Florence and formed a close circle, contributing regularly to *La Voce* and disseminating the Modernist, pro-European agenda that was integral to the periodical.⁵

This generation 'invented', as if in a veritable 'invention of tradition', Triestine literature away from Trieste, while in Florence, a city they perceived as instrumental in bringing the Triestines back to their alleged all-Italian roots.⁶ Their main aim was to act as catalysts, facilitating the discovery of an alleged 'genuine Triestine soul' in their fellow citizens. In reality, however, and quite apart from both *La Voce's* calls for modernization and internationalisation of literary culture and the vibrant presence of non-Italian cultures in Trieste, the main force at play here remained the pre-eminent *toscanità* of the *vociani* that both legitimised and sustained an equally powerful idea of a local loyalty and singularity in the Triestines.⁷ The mystical and revolutionary 'discovery' of one's own regional soul seems to me, at closer scrutiny, as a poetic disguise whereby a constructed *toscanità* became the model of a largely 'invented' and contrived *triestinità*.⁸ A confused city, in search of a literary identity it could call its own, was clearly vulnerable to discourses centred on the notion of an eminent, undisputed, and, above all, single national and cultural identity.

Statements advocating the crucial role of Trieste as 'centro del mondo', historical seat of a conflict between the spirit of an elusive culture and the

matter of an all too tangible trade, recur in Slataper's fiction.⁹ In the lyrical prose *Il mio carso* (1912) 'la storia è vissuta liricamente, perciò non compresa.'¹⁰ Slataper produces here curious overlaps of belated *Sturm und Drang* Romanticism, a rhetorical *vitalismo* reeking of D'Annunzio, and mystical, generic statements on the urban modernity of 'la città' as opposed to the rural lack of self-awareness of the Karst, a mental landscape evoked with great affection but also as culture-less and backward-looking.¹¹ It is important to mention that Slataper's *Mio carso* was eventually to become almost the prototype text of modern Triestine literature. Its publication created, almost *ex novo*, a literary province in Italy and paved the way for the success of other major local Italian authors, such as Italo Svevo and Umberto Saba.

Despite Slataper's 'ungenerous treatment' of the Triestine Slovenes, as argued persuasively by Boris Pahor, his figure remains relevant in terms of his awareness of the ethnic diversity and vitality of the Karst (it should be borne in mind that Slataper was possibly the first Italian Triestine author who granted attention – albeit partially – to the Slovenes of Trieste and the hinterland) and the ethical roots of his philo-Europeanism.¹² Both notions are of course applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to Kosovel himself and studies of the two authors in a comparative perspective are welcome, particularly if shedding light on the linguistic as well as widely cultural aspect: Kosovel had a conceivably good knowledge of Italian even though his awareness of Italian literature and thought appears mediated, rather than through Slataper and the 'vociani triestini', via the far more influential minister and scholar Ivan Trinko (1863-1954), an eminent translator and mediator between the two cultures, his close friend and fellow contributor of *Lepa Vida*, Mirijam (Fanica Obid), and his Neapolitan friend Carlo Curcio.¹³

The return to an idealised all-Italian past and the growing appeal of a local tradition were perceived even more intensely after the end of the Great War. Historical events severed Trieste from its Austro-Hungarian past, but the heritage of the Empire was also increasingly being cherished in an idealised form and handed down from one generation to the next.¹⁴ After defecting from the Austrian army to join the Italian troops under false names, Slataper and many Triestine writers of his generation, such as Enrico Elia, Carlo Stuparich, Ruggero Timeus Fauro, died in battle, and the survivors took on their heritage almost intact, demonstrating an inability (perhaps an unwillingness?) to detach themselves from Florentine pre-war culture, and move forward. In particular Giani Stuparich's survival of a war catastrophe that had killed his brother Carlo and best friend Slataper was experienced with intense guilt and shame and subsequently bitterly atoned for through his diligent repetition of themes and styles belonging to a pre-war world. By doing this, Stuparich was not merely paying tribute to a generation of dead writers: he was also contributing to perpetuating a local literary repetition, unwittingly reinforcing *triestinità*.

We are all aware of the influence, indeed of the formative role, exercised by the Great War on Kosovel, a childhood experience that left indelible marks in his poetics. The collection of poems *La Buffa* by Giulio Camber

Barni, written in the trenches and published only in 1950, demonstrates the extent to which the *Risorgimento* remained a powerful, if anachronistic, source of inspiration in Trieste. Barni's confessional poetry finds moral and aesthetic premises in the pre-war, in *irredentismo*, and the widespread notion of the war as a social and national equalizer. Alongside many war diaries of this type, however, *La Buffa* illustrates the progressive demise of Barni's idealised 'just war'. Visions of titanic struggle typically give way to increasing instances of human degradation, resentment, bitterness, and collapse of patriotic ideals. See, in particular, the poems 'Simone' and 'Il cappellano': 'Simone, amico caro,/ purtroppo la guerra è finita./ Che cosa ne faremo/ di questa nostra vita?' and 'Il cappellano militare/ disse che Gesù Cristo/ amava tanto la guerra./ Conclude:/ "Viva l'Italia!// Evviva S. Antonio!"'¹⁵ Resonant of several of Kosovel's own positions, Barni's poetry captures very effectively the sense of emptiness and futility, the powerlessness, the anti-clericalism which were all contributing factors to the rise of fascism. A classic war poet in terms of his linguistic and narrative realism, Barni bans any lyrical or rhetorical embellishment: the episodes he describes are invariably brief and stripped naked of detail, with direct speech inserted spontaneously, frequently in the dialect of the individual soldiers. The prevailing epic tone is also descending directly from the Italian unification: the Great War is typically celebrated as the last war of the *Risorgimento*.¹⁶

One of the greatest supporters of Barni in Trieste was the poet Umberto Saba, who wrote a frank and complimentary preface to *La Buffa* published in the first edition. My outline of a 'state of Italian poetry' in Trieste would be incomplete without devoting some attention to Saba and his early collections of poems. Saba portrays his native Trieste as a concrete urban space, invested with an ontological dimension of its own, densely populated with human collectivities who work, talk, eat, and walk: a city buzzing with people, animals, and objects.¹⁷ Saba's habitual itineraries run along many of the old Triestine streets, thereby granting them literary dignity: Via del Lazzaretto Vecchio, Via della Pietà, Via del Monte, Via Domenico Rossetti. The poet found most of his inspiration in his home town and displayed an obsessive, if ambivalent, interest in it, referring frequently to Trieste in his letters, poems and prose works, loathing it while there and missing it terribly when staying elsewhere.¹⁸ For Saba, however, Trieste is not the 'ville tentaculaire' of Modernism nor is it the dynamic metropolis of the Futurists, but, in the words of Russo, rather an 'urban georgic'.¹⁹ Its key features include its insularity, its domestic air of cosy backwardness allowing the poet a secluded existence, quite apart from contemporary movements and schools. Saba writes about a pre-war Trieste, prior to the destruction of Cittavecchia: a city, in short, which has not yet fallen prey to the devil of modernity –here Saba is antipodean to the contemporary Futurist avant-garde, who, as will be argued below, praised Trieste for opposite reasons. Most importantly, in this respect Saba appears to be also antipodean to Kosovel, whose Trieste is dominated by beauty and doom following the arson of *Edinost* (1925), a city emasculated by the large waves of emigrant

Slovenes looking for a better future in the Americas, a Trieste who is a witness to the 'sick heart' of the poet (see, in particular, 'Blizu polnoči').²⁰

In Saba's collection 'Trieste e una donna' (1910–12), the city takes on the role of a character in its own right: the poet's own antagonist.²¹ His ambivalence towards the city results most frequently in contiguity of Trieste with female, specifically maternal, figures. The early, experimental poems to Bianca, later excluded from *Il Canzoniere*, testify to this. In Saba, the maternal complex is so overwhelming that poetry itself can be viewed as a second, *good* mother, able to fill in the emotional gaps left by the poet's real life *bad* mother, Rachele Poli.²² In Pellegrini's words, 'la poesia di Saba [...] narra la lotta del poeta contro il complesso materno' -Trieste becomes a 'uterine city' constructed in the specular image of a city within a city: the legendary Jewish ghetto of Cittavecchia.²³ The celebrated 'A mia moglie' is a hymn to Saba's wife Lina regarded as an archetype of all-encompassing maternity: on the poet's own admission the poem reads like one a child could have written for his own mother if he were allowed to marry her.²⁴ Similarly to Petrarch's Laura, Lina here is ultimately 'la madre', a disquieting figure who looms large as the city tends to disappear, as if Lina and Trieste were antithetical and one could only survive to the detriment of the other.²⁵ It is especially in collection *Trieste e una donna* that Saba explores various positions of the triad woman-mother-Trieste: the poems 'Trieste', 'Verso casa', 'Città vecchia', 'Dopo la tristezza', 'Tre vie', 'Via della pietà', 'Il fanciullo appassionato', 'Il molo', 'Più soli', all deal with a Trieste antagonised as a mother symbol. The pervasive dimension remains domesticity, and it is precisely under the guise of domesticity that Trieste comes to play a powerful role in Saba's poetry. In short, Saba's intimist, Oedipal, parochial approach to Trieste appears to be far removed from Kosovel's social and political engagement with the city.

Saba's emphasis on the comfortable provincialism of his home town are also alien from both the contemporary climate of virulent *italianità* and the nationalist/ internationalist attitude of the Futurist avant-garde. More vigorously than elsewhere, in Trieste a Fascist officialdom attempted to institutionalise a deeply seated emphasis on *italianità*.²⁶ Trieste's diverse and complex ethnic make-up was largely replaced with an 'invention of tradition' whereby, for instance, legendary Roman genealogies were assigned to various Italian political elites.²⁷ A straightjacket of Italian officialdom was imposed on the city's multi-ethnic and multi-cultural identity, notably through acts of violence and persecution directed towards the Slovene community. *Italianità*, frequently proclaimed in dramatic, mystical terms as a *fatalità*, an ineluctable fate, and frequently conflated with the similarly ambiguous *triestinità*, equated the composite local identity with the cultural and literary traditions of Italy alone.²⁸

All of these factors contribute to what Ernesto Sestan defined as 'iper-trofia del sentimento nazionale', a powerful national feeling inflated by the *liberal-nazionali* and handed down to the fascist Establishment, who carried it forward.²⁹ The example set by the Fiume enterprise of 1919–20, and particularly by its charismatic leader Gabriele D'Annunzio, similarly

contributed to identifying *italianità* with a rising fascist regime eager to establish itself in the area. A whole set of discourses which were deeply, ambiguously enmeshed with *italianità* (the pseudo-classical ritual, the staging of a Roman imperial past, the rhetoric of 'discorsi dal balcone') were experimented on the Triestine stage in the course of the 1910s and 1920s before being adopted in the rest of Italy. *Italianità* became even more firmly synonymous with *anti-slavismo*: to quote one example for all – the arson of the *Narodni dom*-Hotel Balkan on 13 July 1920. I will not dwell here on the copious, eminently forgettable poetry composed and published in Trieste in praise of the fascist regime and its leader Benito Mussolini – I will quote few names and dates, for the sake of contextualisation: Alma Sperante (pseudonym of Carlo Mioni; 1871–1946), Corraj (pseudonym of Raimondo Cornet; 1887–1945), Nella Doria Cambon (1872–1948). It is significant that both Corraj and Cambon portrayed Mussolini as a catalyst able to draw together tradition and modernity without contradiction: this is of course a paradox, but an important one, and one that fascism borrowed largely from Futurism. The triumph of mechanical aesthetics and proto-consumerism celebrated by the fascists are redolent of claims that were advocated in the first place by the Futurist avant-garde.³⁰

Not only were the earliest ever Futurist performances staged in Trieste between 1908 and 1909, but also the first proper Futurist *soirée* took place at Trieste's Politeama Rossetti on 12 January 1910. Kosovel, who later was to attend occasionally the Teatro Rossetti, was obviously still too young to have been in the audience. In 1908 Marinetti took an active part in demonstrations in Trieste advocating the city's 'restitution to Italy'. The soon-to-be leader of Futurism, 'spoke at the Gymnastic Society, defending the Triestine students shot in Vienna and declaring that one day Trieste would have its own university [...]. The whole episode ended in tumultuous fights, and Marinetti was arrested.'³¹ However, a Futurist group proper gathered together in Trieste in 1922 (1924 according to other sources) under the self-appointed leadership of Bruno Sanzin (b.1906). Sanzin collected and printed the pamphlet *Marinetti e il futurismo* (1924) and edited a Futurist column in the periodical *Italia Nova*, later to become a journal in its own right with the title *Energie futuriste*, edited by Kosovel's friend Giorgio Carmelich. In his poetry, Sanzin incorporated dynamism, speed, mechanism, and patriotic heroism.³² In the poem 'Pensieri in libertà', Sanzin visualised flags waving in the wind in Trieste: the nationalist thematic is here combined with dynamism of the struggle, 'la lotta', understood as the essence of life.³³ The graphic impressionism of the scene, windswept and punctuated with colours, together with the devices of onomatopoeia and repetition clustered around the iconic flags, are Sanzin's tribute to the ideological and aesthetic credo of Futurism. Sanzin emphasises both the patriotic and urban bias of Futurism, and combines them with other themes of avant-garde inspiration, from dynamism to energy, to 'trascendenza artistica', particularly in his 'aeropoems' *Fiori d'Italia* (1942).

Vladimiro Miletto (b.1913) also embraced unconditionally the avant-garde. Miletto was described as the archetypal elegant and aggressive

Futurist, 'giovane poeta elegante, sportivo, aderente all'avanguardia più strepitosa'.³⁴ In poems such as 'Pioggia veloce' and 'Manicure', the emphasis on dynamism and speed acquires a surreal, ironic ring: Miletti obviously espoused the linguistic iconoclasm of Futurism with a lighter, airy element, reminiscent of the poetry of Aldo Palazzeschi: 'Mi sembra un tuffo/ scagliarmi in macchina/ nell'acquazzone,/ mentre scodinzola il tergicristallo,/ lieto che piova.' 'Le forbicine, beccuzzi ghiotti/ di passerotti,/ sulle ciliegie/ delle tue unghie.'³⁵ As typical of Triestine Futurism, Miletti is characterised by an irreverent, comic approach.³⁶ Patriotism becomes here a secondary preoccupation as the poetics of the inconsequential and the inconsistent prevail.

The Futurists elected Trieste, after Milan and Paris, as Futurist city *par excellence*.³⁷

As a city 'without a past', Trieste was ideally projected towards a future of uncompromisingly urban and mechanical modernity. However, the city's embrace of all that was modern, together with the insecurities generated by its 'outsider complex', brought about further contradictions. Ultimately, they prompted Trieste to cling further to the most traditional literary expressions of Italy with indiscriminate enthusiasm. Fascist ideologies continued to espouse Trieste's *italianità* with modernity and their own promotion of industrial renovation, particularly renovation of the moribund Triestine port, a partnership celebrated symbolically in the city's granting of honorary citizenship to Mussolini on 20 May 1924.

Quite apart from the national ideology mentioned above, a more properly Modernist, more open to European influences, and therefore more noteworthy, experience, was attempted by Giorgio Carmelich, together with Emilio Mario Dolfi. In 1922–23, Carmelich put together the pamphlets *Epeo* and the Dadaist *Eeet* (spelled with 18 'e's on the frontispiece), an experimental 'anti-book' ('anti-libro') composed of notes, drawings, words in freedom, and theatrical 'sintesi'. Carmelich pursued his experimental inclinations within a 'Bottega di Epeo' and in 1924 the Triestine periodical *Crepuscolo* included a 'Futurist page'.³⁸ In 1925, Carmelich edited the periodical *25*.

Even more worthy of note, and relatively under-researched as yet, is Trieste's own contribution to the Constructivist experience, which is arguably quite unique in Italy. Artists such as Milko Bambič and Venò Pilon, Ivan Čargo and Avgust Černigoj, all contributed to the periodical *Tank* and looked to Ljubljana as a powerful centre of attraction. Constructivism was of course likely to be particularly attractive to Kosovel via his early Nietzschean persuasion. Černigoj, in particular, was to exercise the deepest influence on Kosovel, who employed a Constructivist style, composed of words in freedom and typographic syntheses, to voice his concerns over his own national identity. Kosovel scourged the Slovene nation, spurring it into activity (see 'Jaz protestiram' and 'Rodovnik') and into looking ahead to a European future, which, of course, was to lead to the experience of the journal *Euroslave: Revue pour une vie neuve en Europe*.³⁹

Alongside Boris Pahor, and to conclude briefly, I remain persuaded that the more profoundly Modernist and most valuable significance of Kosovel's

Constructivism lies in his humanist, pacifist and ethically Socialist conviction: a social revolution must remain constructive rather than destructive. In 1927, Černigoj published a Manifesto of the 'Gruppo costruttivista' in Trieste: tragically, and due to his premature disappearance a year earlier, Kosovel was unable to bring his contribution to this unrivalled experience.

NOTES

¹ Cf. E. Pellegrini, 'Aspetti della cultura triestina tra Otto e Novecento', *Il Ponte*, 4(1980), pp.354–71.

² S. Slataper, 'Trieste non ha tradizioni di cultura', first published in *La Voce*, 11 February 1909, now in *Scritti politici*, ed. By G.Stuparich (Rome: Stock, 1925), pp.3–7.

³ M. Cattaruzza, 'Slovenes and Italians in Trieste, 1850–1914', in *Ethnic Identity in Urban Europe*, ed. by Max Engman (Strasbourg: European Science Foundation; New York: New York University Press; Aldershot: Dartmouth, c.1992) pp.182–219 (p.201). See also Boris Pahor, *Srečko Kosovel* (Pordenone: Studio Tesi, 1993), esp. pp.34–39.

⁴ Slataper's 'calata' (= 'descent') is a term widely used in his best known work *Il mio carso* (Florence: La Voce, 1912).

⁵ G.Stuparich, for instance, started contributing to *La Voce* in 1913 with two articles dealing with federalism and the Czech and German nations. Stuparich's first monograph, *La nazione czecca* (Catania: Battiato, 1915) was also published under the auspices of *La Voce* and dedicated to its influential mentor Giuseppe Prezzolini.

⁶ The idea of an 'invention of tradition' is in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). A.Spaini declared in an interview with Giorgio Baroni: 'La Voce servi come ponte tra Trieste e l'Italia' –see G.Baroni, *Trieste e 'La Voce'* (Milan: Istituto Propaganda Libreria, 1975), p.91.

⁷ In recalling Slataper's late night Florentine readings of excerpts of *Il mio carso*, Stuparich comments: 'era proprio la scoperta poetica della mia anima triestina. [...] Io sentii, per merito della sua [Slataper's] creazione, nascere il Carso dalla Toscana.' –G.Stuparich, 'Romanticismo e "Il notiziario della III armata"', in *Trieste nei miei ricordi* (Milan: Garzanti, 1948), pp.29–39 (pp.30–32). **For both Slataper and Stuparich even the Tuscan landscape bore empathic traits with the Julian one: local landscapes can of course also act as powerful markers of identity formation.**

⁸ For the *toscanità* of *La Voce*, see also Walter L.Adamson, *Avant-Garde Florence: From Modernism to Fascism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993). See also Giorgio Voghera who disputed the notion that *La Voce* and Triestine culture had anything in common in his volume *Anni di Trieste* (Gorizia: Goriziana, 1989), p.92: 'Non so davvero come non si faccia a non accorgersi *prima facie* che la "civiltà" triestina [...] differisce dalla civiltà vociana forse altrettanto che da quella azteca. Di vero c'è soltanto che i vociani hanno aiutato molto i triestini.'

⁹ See S.Slataper, 'L'avvenire nazionale e politico di Trieste', in *Scritti politici*, p.93: 'Trieste è posto di transizione –geografica, storica, di cultura, di commercio –cioè di lotta. Ogni cosa è duplice o triplice a Trieste, cominciando dalla flora

e finendo con l'etnicità. Finchè Trieste non ha coscienza di sé, finchè gli slavi parlano italiano e la cultura si compie e si soddisfa nel commercio, nell'interesse commerciale, la vita è discretamente pacifica. Appena nasce il bisogno di una cultura disinteressata, la crosta fredda è rotta e si scoprono i dibattiti ansiosi.'

¹⁰ Anco Marzio Mutterle, *Scipio Slataper* (Milan: Mursia, 1965), p.77.

¹¹ See Alberto Abruzzese, *Svevo Slataper e Michelstaedter: Lo stile e il viaggio* (Venice: Marsilio, 1979), p.141: 'Slataper [...] partecipa ideologicamente al mito di una società in ascesa. La macchina, il denaro, la merce, il commercio sono tutte cose fundamentalmente buone, per lo scrittore triestino: ma contemporaneamente sente il peso schiacciante di questa nuova dimensione umana che ha compreso e della quale è entrato a far parte.'

¹² B.Pahor, *Kosovel*, p.48: 'trattamento [...] tutt'altro che generoso.'

¹³ I am grateful to Professor Claudio Magris for drawing my attention to a conference taking place in Trieste focusing on the Karst in Kosovel and Slataper in a comparative perspective, though I have not been able to track down any publication attached to the event.

¹⁴ After 1936, the Axis Berlin-Rome equalized Trieste's imperial past to Nazi Germany under a generic 'Germanic' umbrella. Trieste became then a veritable bulwark that, while defending its own past, at the same time upheld fascism's most fateful political and military alliance.

¹⁵ G.Camber Barni, 'Simone' and 'Il cappellano', in *La Buffa* (Milan: Mondadori, 1950), pp.197 and 156.

¹⁶ E.g. cf. G.Camber Barni, 'La canzone di Lavezzari', in *La Buffa*, p.170: 'Il 24 maggio, la notte della guerra, Giuseppe Garibaldi uscì di sotto terra. E andò da Lavezzari, che si beveva il vino; gli disse: "Lavezzari, vecchio garibaldino, Lavezzari, vecchio fante, è scoppiata un'altra guerra, ma io non posso andarci: perché sono sotto terra. Camerata di Bezzecca, mio vecchio portabandiera, va te sul Podigora, e porta la mia bandiera!' **The down-to-earth prosiness reveals the extent to which Barni's interventionism was both genuine and irredentist, even though, as Saba pointed out, inevitably short-lived; see U.Saba, 'Di questo libro e di un altro mondo' (preface to *La Buffa*), in *Prose*, ed. by Linuccia Saba (Milan: Mondadori, 1964), p.690. See also the pacifist E.Elia (1891–1915), and particularly his war poetry, collected in *Schegge d'anima* (Pordenone: Studio Tesi, 1981).**

¹⁷ Cf. E.Pellegrini, *Le città interiori in scrittori triestini di ieri e di oggi* (Bergamo: Moretti & Vitali, 1995), p.57: 'Trieste è per Saba [...] una città concreta, particolare, piena di persone che lavorano, parlano, mangiano, e piena di animali e di oggetti particolari'.

¹⁸ For a resumé of Saba's multiple, even contradictory, attitudes towards Trieste, see K.Pizzi, *A City in Search of an Author: The Literary Identity of Trieste* (London-Sheffield-New York: Sheffield Academic Press-Continuum, 2001), p.67.

¹⁹ Fabio Russo, 'Saba, le cose, l'eco, l'ombra', in Stelio Mattioni and others, *Il Punto su Saba: Atti del Convegno Internazionale (Trieste 25–27 marzo 1984)* (Trieste: Lint, 1985), pp.346–359 (p.347).

²⁰ Cit. in B.Pahor, *Kosovel*, pp.43–44. **However, Saba and Kosovel appear to have traits in common as well, such as the use of the rhyme and metaphors, especially the ones featuring birds –for the latter, cf. the illuminating contribution of Darja Pavlic in this collection.**

²¹ See multiple poems collected in U.Saba, *Il Canzoniere* (Turin: Einaudi, 5th edn, 1978). **In the poem entitled 'Trieste', the city is famously likened to a 'ragazzaccio aspro e vorace' (p.79); in 'Città vecchia' the poet is contemplating, while walking, various human types redolent of the old quarter: 'prostituta', 'marinaio', 'il dragone', 'il friggitore' (p.81): Saba's attitude is contemplative to the**

extent that, as clarified by Pellegrini, 'non si attua mai la fusione [...] di soggetto e oggetto' –cf. E.Pellegrini, *Le città interiori*, p.55.

²² For the role of Saba's mother, cf. esp. Mario Lavagetto, *La gallina di Saba* (Turin: Einaudi, 1989), pp.162–63 and Giacomo Debenedetti, 'Saba e il grembo della poesia', *Galleria* 1.2 (1960), pp.114–21.

²³ E.Pellegrini, *Le città interiori*, pp.55 and 67. In the poem 'A mamma', part of the collection *Poesie dell'adolescenza e giovanili (1900–1907)* Saba draws a reverent, if at times naïve, portrait of his mother as dominating his wider psychological and poetic horizons (cf. M.Lavagetto, *La gallina*, p.137: 'la figura della madre si staglia [...] come un oroscopo che accompagna la vicenda del protagonista, come un idolo silenzioso ed enigmatico che si innalza sulla prima raccolta'). In the collection *Versi militari* (1908), the poem 'Il bersaglio' identifies a soldier's target with the poet's own mother: shooting the target equals getting rid of mother and any frightening shadow she may cast on her son's adult life (M.Lavagetto, *La gallina*, p.157).

²⁴ M.Lavagetto, *La gallina*, p.89. The poem 'A mia moglie' is in the collection *Casa e campagna (1909–10)*.

²⁵ M.Lavagetto, *La gallina*, p.95.

²⁶ See Anna Millo, *L'élite del potere a Trieste: Una biografia collettiva 1891–1938* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1989), p.137. A local patriotic song comes to mind, 'El campanil de San Giusto', composed in 1904, the year of Kosovel's birth, like many others praising a dubious *italianità* – lyrics by Augusto Levi, cit. in Paolo Zoldan, *Poesie patriottiche dei tempi passati: 1891–1914* (Trieste: "Italo Svevo", 1968), p.55.

²⁷ For example, Podestà Valerio was alleged to have descended from the *Valeria Gens* –cf. A.Millo, *L'élite del potere*, p.137.

²⁸ See Angelo Ara and Claudio Magris, *Trieste: Un'identità di frontiera* (Turin: Einaudi, 1982, 1987), p.17.

²⁹ E.Sestan, *Venezia Giulia: Lineamenti di una storia etnica e culturale* (Rome: Edizioni Italiane, 1947), pp.402ff. –cited in A.Millo, *L'élite del potere*, p.140.

³⁰ See, for instance, Ugo Sartori, Paolo Veronese and Gino Villasanta, *Trieste 1934–XII: La storia, la vita, il domani* (Trieste: Comitato per il 'Giugno Triestino', 1934), p.64: 'la vita economica di Trieste batte con la martellante cadenza d'un motore e somiglia al turbinoso giro di un'elica. Motori ed eliche: strumenti e simboli della sua potenza.'

³¹ Günter Berghaus, *The Genesis of Futurism: Marinetti's Early Career and Writings 1899–1909* (Leeds: Society for Italian Studies Occasional Papers, 1995), p.82.

³² See Giorgio Baroni, 'Bruno G. Sanzin e il "suo" futurismo', in *Umberto Saba e dintorni: Appunti per una storia della letteratura giuliana* (Milan: Istituto Propaganda Libreria, 1984), pp.243–51 (p.244): 'Le opere del primo Sanzin ([...]) sono caratterizzate da tematiche ispirate ai miti futuristi: macchina, eroismo, patria, velocità, audacia; con una tinteggiatura di superomismo.'

³³ B.Sanzin, 'Pensieri in libertà', in *Il proprio mondo nei ricordi e nella fantasia* (Padua: Rebellato, 1979), pp.68–69: 'garrire di bandiere su gli spalti della storia. Con tanto vento che le anime di ondeggianti schiocchianti, perché senza vento le bandiere sembrerebbero mute. Con tanto sole che riverberi il tripudio dei colori, perché senza sole le bandiere sembrerebbero spente. Bandiere di gloria, bandiere di fede, bandiere di tutte le vittorie. Simboli di eterna sfida, poiché la lotta è l'unica costante della vita.'

³⁴ See Marcello Fraulini, 'Prefazione' in V.Miletti, *Orme d'impulsi* (Trieste: Società Artistico Letteraria, 1967), p.9.

³⁵ V.Miletti, 'Pioggia veloce' and 'Manicure', in *Orme di impulsi*, pp.68 and 72. See also the Triestine Futurist poet Mario Cavedali, mentioned by F.T.Marinetti in

'Battaglie di Trieste (aprile-giugno 1910)', in *Guerra sola igiene del mondo* (1915), in *Teoria e invenzione futurista* (Milan: Mondadori, 1983), pp.245–53.

³⁶ Claudia Salaris records some irreverent nicknames chosen by Triestine Futurists, including Sempresù, Escodamè and Chissenè –C.Salaris, *Storia del futurismo* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1985), p.245.

³⁷ See Roberto Curci and Gabriella Ziani, *Bianco rosa e verde: Scrittrici a Trieste fra Ottocento e Novecento* (Trieste: Lint, 1993), p.109; see also Joseph Cary, *A Ghost in Trieste* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp.85–86.

³⁸ C.Salaris, *Storia del futurismo*, pp.173–176.

³⁹ See B.Pahor, *Kosovel*, pp.69–70.

■ ABSTRACT

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Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / Italian poetry / Trieste / literary avant-garde / futurism / literary influences

In focusing on Italian Trieste and, in particular, on as large as possible a corpus of Triestine poetry contemporary with Kosovel, my paper provides a perspective that is entirely peripheral and 'exterior'. Special attention is paid to the Futurist avant-garde: the Futurist leader Marinetti considered Trieste as Futurist city par excellence and the first Futurist soirees took place at Teatro Rossetti between 1909 and 1910. Futurism attracted a large group of local artists, some of whom (e.g. Carmelich and Cernigoj) were personally known by and became close to Kosovel, including the poets Sanzin and Miletti, who enthusiastically espoused Futurist linguistic experimentalism, as well as the movement's national/nationalist tendencies. Poetry of national and romantic inspiration is also of fundamental importance: Slataper's vitalist approach to the rugged Karst region, though pre-War, provides scope for comparative approaches. Nationalist poetry, much of which officially compromised with the Fascist regime (Cambon, Corraj, Alma Sperante), is equally integral to the Triestine cultural landscape of the 1920s and '30s. By shedding light on a significant portion of poetry in Italian arising from the vibrant, if largely hostile, cultural environment of Trieste, my paper invites an implicit rather than explicit assessment of Kosovel's role and contribution to the European avant-garde.

ANALOGIES BETWEEN S. KOSOVEL AND C. REBORA, OR: IS THERE SUCH A THING AS ITALIAN EXPRESSIONISM?

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Italian literary critics have little doubt that Italian expressionism, in fact, does exist. They discover explicit expressionist traits in the style and subject matter of the young writers who began publishing in the Florentine magazine 'La Voce' (1908–14, 1914–6) and are, accordingly, known as 'I vociani'. The critics Cesare Segre and Clelia Mortignoni even go so far as to argue that the "best 'vociani' represented the true literary avant-garde of the pre-war era".¹ This view – which, by referring to 'vociani' as 'the true literary avant-garde', indirectly casts doubt on the authenticity of other Italian avant-garde movements – does seem excessive and biased. On the other hand, one might wonder whether the claim by Lado Kralj that 'there are no texts in Italian literature which could be defined as expressionist'² is not also somewhat radical.

In my paper I attempt to give at least a partial answer to the question of whether the above-mentioned contentions about the existence of Italian expressionism are legitimate. In order to do so, I make a comparative analysis of Kosovel's work, and poems and letters by a Milanese poet, Clemente Rebora (1885–1957). The latter is believed to be "one of the most outstanding representatives of 'vocian' expressionism";³ however, in order to make a fair comparison of both authors and the period of expressionism, I only consider Rebora's letters and poems written up to 1926 and 1927 respectively.⁴ The aim of my comparative analysis, of course, was to look for common and related expressionist elements.

To begin with, unlike Kosovel, Rebora almost certainly was not familiar with German expressionism. In the 835 letters that he wrote up to 1926, he mentions all kinds of writers and poets, but no expressionists. Besides, the literary experience of 'Vociani' and the emergence of German expressionism occurred simultaneously, and – considering the Italian writers' poor knowledge of contemporary German literature – this makes it even less possible that German expressionism would have any kind of influence on either Rebora or any other 'Vociani'. Italian expressionism, therefore, would have had to be an autochthonous phenomenon arising from the same cultural and historical crisis of Western civilisation that was observed and subsequently articulated by German expressionists.

Kosovel not only conveyed the uneasiness of the then 'dead generation, which soaked up into its young organism the hunger and horrors of war and...feels chaos inside'⁵, but also explicitly, e.g. in his famous article *Crisis* (Križa)⁶, associated the birth of expressionism with the pre-war agonies of Europe. In the same vein, nineteen years older Rebora not only spoke of the 'rotteness' of the times⁷ and gave a dramatic description of the tragic pre-war generation, which was destined to either 'go mad or expand into a vast incandescence'⁸, but also dedicated his first collection of poems in 1913⁹ 'To the first decade of the 20th century'. Rebora's brother Pietro shed some light on the meaning of this dedication: 'To him (Rebora) the first years of the (20th) century were...a dark premonition of the devastation of 1914–8, which is the date of the downfall of a world... a terrifying hurricane, the beginning of our collective shipwreck.'¹⁰ Rebora, therefore, also associated the beginnings of his poetry with the perception of the crisis in pre-war Europe.

Similarly to German expressionists, the reaction to the perception of the decaying Western world in Kosovel and Rebora was twofold – it consisted of polemics against modern civilisation, and, complementarily, of the feeling of being alienated from this civilisation, and therefore of loneliness and isolation, existential meaninglessness, inner disharmony and division – of dissociation of the subject.

In expressionism, polemics against the modern Western world came across mainly as criticism of urbanisation, technology and industrialisation with mechanisation.¹¹ This is where Kosovel and Rebora probably have the least in common. In his expressionist poems, or rather poems with expressionist elements (Cons poetry), Kosovel appears very critical particularly of technology and mechanisation and of contemporary production relations, which cause the dehumanisation of people and human relations. This attitude is manifest in his proclamation *To Mechanics!* (Mehanikom!), which declares death to all mechanisms and to the 'Man-automaton',¹² and one could argue that a considerable part of Kosovel's later poetry originated from similar polemic tendencies. His poem *Cons* (Kons) is also very indicative of this; its conclusion is that 'Man is not an automaton' and it is therefore necessary to destroy 'Taylor factories'¹³. Similarly, the poem *Cons: to the New Age* (Kons: novi dobi) again declares death 'to technomechanical problems' and 'Taylor's system', because 'The new age is coming/ when every worker is man/ when every man is a worker.'¹⁴ There is no trace of anything like this in Rebora's poetry. Judging from Rebora's essay on Leopardi (1910), the Milanese poet apparently saw mechanisation mainly in the light of a rigid classification of reality and a conformist equating of ideas with behaviours, which destroyed the affluence and freedom of human creativity and was typical of modern civilisation.¹⁵ However, the negative view of the modern world in Rebora's poems is expressed predominantly in his keen criticism of urbanisation, and dismal, corrupt, decaying cities, which the author often describes with stylistic tools of deformation and grotesquery – typical features of expressionism. The motif of a demonic metropolis, a hellish swamp, with its madhouses, hospitals,

brothels, prisons, barracks and factories, is a constricting symbol of death and doom, and is typical of German expressionism, found mainly in Heym, but also Werfel, Trakl, Lichtenstein, Sack, van Hoddiss and others.¹⁶ Let me quote just two examples. In poem XIV (*Le poesie* 1913–1957, op. cit., p. 27), the rainy city, where life is ‘a caged beast’, is a symbol of the poet being torn between sensuality and spirituality, between ‘flesh and heart’, as well as of the conflict between the ‘rotteness’ of the times and a certain brighter future, when the downfall and destruction of the poet’s generation will create an ‘assorted knowledge’ and ‘immortal beauty’.¹⁷ The city is quite often also a site of tragic loneliness, where the poet, absorbed in his own papers and with ‘a gloomy face’, ponders in vain ‘the truth of life’, while he discerns in the distant street-noise the unattainable joy of ‘a passionate poem’ and laughter of ‘men and women/ who build up their desires during work’ (ibid, LV, p. 93–4).¹⁸ One should also mention that the poet’s urban sites are very often denoted by or associated with typically expressionist attributes of rotteness, decay and collapse. Typical of Rebora’s Milan and its inhabitants are ‘rotteness’, ‘cloacae’, ‘mud’, ‘ruins’, ‘filth’, ‘scab’, ‘dirt’, ‘garbage’, ‘swill’¹⁹, and in his letters, the air in Milan ‘seems stuffy and unclean as a patient’s bad breath’, whereas the city is depicted as an ‘enormous’ and ‘stinking belly’.²⁰

In Kosovel’s poetry the expressionist *topos* of the city is much more casual and indirect; he writes mainly of certain urban elements, like streets, coffee houses, black walls, houses, factories, towers (which normally carry the symbolic valence of a metropolis), or urban characters like clubmen from the poem of the same title, a banker from *Tragedy on the Ocean* (*Tragedija na oceanu*), hairdressers, sociologists, analysts, critics of society etc., who normally stand for a dehumanised man, set against a new, true Man of the future. If Kosovel’s letters describe Ljubljana primarily as a town killing ‘With its fog and morality’²¹, his poems often depict its coffee houses as places of loneliness and absence of communication (*Vis-à-vis in a Coffee House* (*Vis-à-vis v kavarni*); *Two People in a Coffee House* (*Dva človeka v kavarni*)). Its empty streets are symbols of meaninglessness (*The Evening before Winter* (*Večer pred zimo*)); its loud streets, full of rushing people, stir feelings of alienation and the need for a liberating solitude (*A Cry for Solitude* (*Krik po samoti*)); and factories and most of all the gigantic wheels of their machinery symbolise a mechanised man-automaton (*By a Giant Wheel* (*Ob orjaškem kolesu*); *Against Man* (*Proti človeku*)) or, inversely, represent the building of a new world (*The Alarm* (*Alarm*)). The metropolis, with its swaying houses and towers, is often a symbol of a dying modern civilisation which will experience an unavoidable cathartic catastrophe, and then a new world (*Ljubljana is Asleep* (*Ljubljana spi*), *Men with Crosses* (*Ljudje s križi*), *O, Sing the Vigils* (*O pojte vigilije*), *Blue Horses* (*Modri konji*), *From the Poles* (*Iz tečajev*), *The Ecstasy of Death* (*Ekstaza smrti*)): ‘The foundations were weak, my dear/ let the buildings fall!’ , says Kosovel in *I Wish to Portray* (*Rad bi upodobil*).²²

As mentioned before, the polemic and negative attitude towards the modern world typical of expressionists was inseparable from feelings

of loneliness, alienation, inner disharmony and division, and existential meaninglessness. Kosovel and Rebora express similar sentiments in a great number of poems and letters, and one cannot help but be overwhelmed in selecting the materials. I will therefore narrow the motif of tragic solitude to the image of a tree, which is a true *topos* in expressionism.²³ Thus, in one of his poems, Kosovel compares himself to a tree, which stands 'in the middle of the fields', amidst the rampage of the storm and streaks of lightning; just as lonely is the poet, who 'stands amidst the world alone/ and no-one knows his heart, his soul',²⁴ and in the poem *Give Me Grief* (*Daj mi bolest*) Kosovel compares himself to 'a black tree, which has burnt out' and is therefore sentenced to total isolation and marginalisation, because in its 'demise' it can no longer rustle 'with the evening winds'.²⁵ A similar motif is used by Rebora in a letter written in April 1910, where the author confides in a friend about his pain and loneliness: 'I have suffered and I still suffer immeasurably'; 'I feel like a tree with no branches, which has become barren just as the spring is surging all around with its thousand taunts and calls for a rebirth.'²⁶

With solitude comes a strong sense of alienation. Rebora portrayed it perhaps most clearly in his later poetic series *Curriculum vitae* (1955), where he describes – as the title suggests – his life up to 1929, when he decided to become a priest. In the ninth poem or rather fragment of the series the poet complains of a 'hidden error' which he suffered since the pre-war years, of a feeling that he had 'missed the planet!', that is, the world he was destined to live in was totally and hopelessly foreign to him.²⁷ The poet and critic Franco Fortini has described alienation, which is one of the main themes of Rebora's first collection, as a result of 'evading reality':²⁸ the poet's alienation is caused by reality itself, absurdly evading him and withdrawing from him, as is clearly shown e.g. in the following lines: 'Oh, the changing of things that I see/ and wish for!/ Oh, the changing of life that I feel/ and wish for!/ ... but what tempts me from afar/ then shuns me:/ and as I pass by, I am left with nothing.'²⁹ A similar description of such evading of reality and its consequences is also found in Kosovel, in a lyrical poem with the suggestive title *Alone* (*Sam*): 'The world has shifted oddly far away/ you roam, you stray as if adrift/ all is washed away, but to where you do not know./ Oh, I would make my cry resound/ but then I am afraid I would be left alone/ and empty a thousand times.'³⁰ As these lines demonstrate, the motif of loneliness and alienation in Kosovel was frequently linked to the fear of silence or, even worse, to the conventional and dishonest words that the poet considered the worst negation of any genuine human contact: when 'everyone for himself/ hides the failures of his searching' (*Gathered* (*Zbrani*)),³¹ when 'we speak enveloped/ hidden', when 'we are not open' (*The Tears of Masks* (*Solze mask*)),³² or when even 'we do not hear/ our words' (*Poem from Chaos* (*Pesem iz kaosa*)),³³ we are strangers to each other, which means we have missed the first and foremost objective of Man.

There is but a small step to total aimlessness. In proclaiming existential meaninglessness both poets are radical and cruelly explicit: 'nothing, a dreadful nothing/ a chopped off stump'³⁴ (*A L.*), says Rebora, who once

again uses the expressionist metaphor of a dead tree; and his idea is echoed by Kosovel: 'Searching, striving/ in vain' (*A Pitiful life, I* (Bedno življenje, I)). 'From the silent emptiness grows Nothing' (*Evening before Winter* (Večer pred zimo)).³⁵

But what is of the essence in expressionism is the feeling of an inner divide springing from the insoluble disharmony between the poet and the world. The subject matter of a divi and disharmony is crucial, because this conflict is the main source of expressionist art. With regard to this I will quote only two examples from Kosovel: the well-known beginning of *My Poem* (Moja pesem), which reads like a programmatic manifesto for expressionist poetry: 'My poem is an explosion./ Disharmony. Wild corrosion'; and the equally indicative statement, 'Conflict is the essence of the work of art' (*I Think* (Mislim)).³⁶ In Rebora's case, too, there is no shortage of statements, expressions and analyses of the poet's inner contradictions, which are once again the main theme of his poetry, and at the same time the main reason for it. According to the critic Valli, the 'contradiction' or 'the contrast between outer and inner, between appearance and essence, between sensual and spiritual, between limited and limitless' is the most obvious 'constant in Rebora's poetry'.³⁷ To express this conflict, the poet almost obsessively uses the rhetorical figure of antithesis and most of all – as the critic Bandini points out in his central essay on Rebora's linguistic expressionism – comparisons based on juxtaposing abstract and concrete concepts.³⁸ But like Kosovel, the poet was aware of the essence of and the inspiration for his poetry, as demonstrated by a letter of 1911: 'I slam into contrasts between the eternal and the transitory, between what I feel (and love) and what I wish didn't exist, between the possibility and embodiment, between the biddable and the elusive, between the roughness of a blacksmith and the temper of an impatient man... If I ever publish my lyrical fragments – my scary *poetry* – they will let you feel all these contrasts.'³⁹

This –, in many ways extreme –, position of the dissociated subject, called for a cathartic solution, which in expressionist literature was twofold: it either came across as a glorification of the redemptive role of poetry and the prophetic function of the poet, or as a proclamation of the decline of the Western world and the birth of a new world and a new man.

Kosovel approached the subject of Orphic revolt against meaninglessness and chaos⁴⁰ and of the antagonistic and encouraging role of the poet in several poems⁴¹; *A Young Poet Stepped on Parnassus* (Stopil je pesnik mlad na Parnas) is one of the most explicitly programmatic poems, in which the poet calls to the poet-pawns to step down from Parnassus, where the Muse 'is quiet and withdrawn', and fight: 'I call on you, poet: Embrace/ sharp rhythms, violence/ wake up, wake up/ from praying in silence!' In the poem *In Front of the Barrier* (Pred bariero) the call to fight is even more direct: 'brothers fighters, follow me onwards!'; at the same time, the verse introduces the motif of the brotherhood of the People (with a capital P), who are given the great task of building the new world. Another manifestation of the typical expressionist motif of a new Man and human brotherhood – arising from the horrifying experience of World War I and some-

how anticipated by Werfel's humanitarianism before and during the war (the titles of Werfel's two poetry collections *Wir sind*, 1913, and *Einander*, 1915, are indicative of this) – is the abandoning of the pronoun 'I' for the plural 'we', which Kosovel also employs, for example in *Our Chant* (Naš spev), where the plural 'we' once again carries the prophetic and activist themes of 'the anthem of the fight' and of 'passionate', 'untameable' fighters, with 'the chaos of fire' in their hearts.⁴² A similar shift occurs in the title of Rebora's second collection, *Anonimous Chants* (Canti anonimi, op. cit.) published in 1922. Folco Portinari has explicitly linked the 'anonymity' of Rebora's chants to the poet's tragic wartime experience, which 'inevitably led... to exceeding the personal dimension', and to the need to depict 'all the fortunes and misfortunes of the people of that time'.⁴³ As far as the Orphic subject matter goes, it is present in Rebora's poems, but only as a distant echo. In poem. LXIII of the first collection (op. cit, p. 104–6), for example, poets are defined as 'fighters' and 'heroes'⁴⁴, but in comparison to Kosovel's fighting poems, the content comes across rather vaguely. Similarly, the belief in the prophetic and liberating function of poetry is less persuasive and more abstract in Rebora than in Kosovel, although there is a somewhat hazy hint in poem. XLIX (ibid. p. 80–1) of the expressionistic *topos* of heading towards a great goal, which is the new world: 'Oh poetry/ ...you are the fanfare/ the rhythm of our way/ ...you are the joy/ which gives courage/ ...the certainty/ of the new day'.⁴⁵

The motif of the 'way' is also present in a Rebora's letter dating from 1921, in which the poet confides in his brother: 'I sometimes feel as if I was being called by someone, yet I don't know by whom or why; and yet I go on my way [...]'.⁴⁶ It seems therefore that Rebora, too, had a sense of the path that the new generation had to take, and the sense of the huge task entrusted to the young who had lived through and survived the tragedy of World War I: 'As my time of averageness is running out', he says in a poem written in 1926, 'I am already waiting for a voice to sound out/ *Clemente!* Do not delay! Begin!/ Fulfil the task of man...'.⁴⁷ Once again, we can draw parallels with Kosovel, because – as Kralj points out – the typical elements of the expressionist image of the 'great way' are present in his editorial in the first issue of the *Lepa Vida* magazine published in 1922, *We Sail Off in the Spring!* (Spomladi odjadramo). Kralj's commentary on the text could easily relate to the two Rebora quotations: 'There was probably no encouragement from the outside, the idea (of the 'great way' – author's note) had probably developed in Kosovel congenially, due to similar spiritual and social conditions (as German expressionism – author's note).'⁴⁸

The parallels in social and spiritual context indeed should not be overlooked, otherwise certain analogies between Kosovel's and Rebora's poetry would be inexplicable, particularly when taking into consideration the radical difference or even antithesis of their psychology, world view and choices in life. However, despite the radical differences in both authors, their expressionist phases chronologically and conceptually end in a surprisingly similar way – with a prophecy of a terrible disaster, which will give birth to a new world of brotherhood. Quite extraordinarily, both authors focused on

the motif of a disastrous flood: Kosovel in his cycle of poems entitled *The Tragedy on the Ocean*, which is possibly the high point of his expressionist lyrics, and Rebora in a poem with the very vague title of *Verses (Versi)* from – probably – 1926 or 1927. Let me conclude my comparison of motifs and subject matter in Kosovel's and Rebora's poetry by quoting the closing verses of Rebora's poem: 'The waters will subside/ from gentle homelands/ what remained silent will now speak/ the paths will clear. // From the stuff of the old/ a new world will arise/ ... A lot of hidden good/ dares not surface:/ it waits for the heart to respond/ to the answer of man',⁴⁹ the eagerly anticipated answer of man being, of course, brotherhood.⁵⁰

I continue with a few words on the stylistic characteristics of Kosovel's and Rebora's expressionist poetry. Kosovel uses numerous rhetorical and stylistic approaches also typical of German expressionism, e.g. explosive metaphors, strong colour contrasts, the use of emotionally charged, intensive verbs and generally strongly expressive imagery and words, gemination or doubling, even tripling of a word, a syntagm or even a verse, hyperbole and so on;⁵¹ however, the form of the poems remains traditional. The true innovative form in Kosovel's poetry only appears in his *Cons* and *Integrals* phase, with the nominal style, catachrestic montage, and the use of paralinguistic material; however, Kosovel's source for these radical innovations was not so much German expressionism, as other European avant-gardes. Significant in this context is the finding of Anton Ocvirk that Kosovel 'differs from German expressionists in his simplicity and emotional honesty, because he is never inflated' or 'aggressively emotional'.⁵² And this is the most obvious difference between Kosovel's and Rebora's style. That is, the latter *is* inflated, and the poet's statements are strained and forced. The language is overwrought, its syntax twisted and morphology deformed; the words fluctuate from stylistically neutral expressions to incongruent archaisms, Danteisms, and technical terms. By his violent treatment of the language, Rebora expresses his own spiritual division, and the reader has the impression that the linguistic mutilation and distortion is a desperate attempt to materialise the spiritual and to spiritualise the material. Rebora's sentences and words act as the linguistic equivalent of the deformed bodies and characters of expressionist paintings, or a stylistic pendant to the expressionist scream. The potentially soothing effect of Rebora's equally traditional form⁵³ is even further dissipated by the rich selection of imagery and metaphors, which respond to the expressionist principle of the aesthetics of ugliness.

Is there, then, such a thing as Italian expressionism? With regard to what has been discussed, one might respond in the following manner: we cannot speak of a true Italian expressionist movement – in terms of historical avant-garde, and also because Italian contemporaries were completely or largely unaware of German expressionism. That, however, does not rule out clear expressionist elements in the works of individual Italian authors, whose sometimes surprising analogies with German or Slovene expressionists come from a common awareness of the cultural and historical crisis of Western civilisation at the time.

NOTES

¹ C. Segre – C. Martignoni, *Testi nella storia, La letteratura italiana dalle Origini al Novecento, 4 – Il Novecento*, Mondadori, Milan 2001, p. 492. The translations of Rebora's verses are purely informative.

² L. Kralj, *Ekspresionizem* ('Expressionism'), DZS, Ljubljana 1986, p. 72.

³ C. Segre – C. Martignoni, p. 507. Among other expressionist-oriented 'vociani', critics normally mention Giovanni Boine and Piero Jahier, and occasionally and definitely marginally also Dino Campana and Scipio Slataper.

⁴ C. Rebora, *Frammenti lirici*, Libreria della Voce, Florence 1913; *Canti anonimi*, Il Convegno editoriale, Milan 1922; *Poesie sparse (1913–1927)*, in: Clemente Rebora, *Le Poesie (1913–1947)*, ed. Piero Rebora, Vallecchi, Florence 1947; *Lettere I (1893–1930)*, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, Rome 1976.

Quotes from Rebora's poems are from: C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, All'insegna del pesce d'oro, Milan 1961.

⁵ S. Kosovel, 'Kritika, gibalno življenje v umetnosti' ('Criticism, the drive of life in art'), in: ZD, III, DZS 1977, p. 210.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12–20.

⁷ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, p. 27.

⁸ C. Rebora, *Lettere I (1893–1927)*, p. 327. In the original: '(Chi di noi potrà o avrà coraggio di rimanere), o finirà pazzo o espanderà un'enorme incandescenza'.

⁹ C. Rebora, *Frammenti lirici*.

¹⁰ Pietro Rebora, 'Clemente Rebora e la sua prima formazione esistenzialista', in: *Clemente Rebora, All'insegna del pesce d'oro*, Milan 1960, p. 88.

¹¹ Cf. L. Kralj, *Ekspresionizem* (Expressionism), pp. 41 and 167.

¹² S. Kosovel, ZD, III, op. cit. pp. 113–4.

¹³ S. Kosovel, ZD, II, DZS 1974, p. 33.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹⁵ C. Rebora, 'Per un Leopardi mal noto', in: *Omaggio a Clemente Rebora*, Bologna 1971, p. 153. It is interesting that Rebora's polemics against the mechanisation of human relations and society is very similar to the statement of Kurt Pinthus, the editor of the most widely-known anthology of expressionist poetry (*Menschheitsdämmerung. Symphonie jüngster Dichtung*, 1920), who in his preface ascribed the origins of the expressionist movement also to 'human order, piled up in its entirety upon mechanicism and conventionality.' (quoted in: L. Kralj, *Ekspresionizem*, p. 20).

¹⁶ For the motif of the metropolis in German expressionism see: *Deutsche Großstadt – Lyrik vom Naturalismus bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Wolfgang Rothe, Reclam, Stuttgart 1978, pp. 14–21.

¹⁷ In the original: 'belva in una gabbia chiusa', 'il vario contrasto / della carne e del cuore', 'il marcio del tempo', 'un'eletta dottrina', 'un'immortale bellezza'.

¹⁸ In the original: 'ottennebrato / il mio volto', 'la verità della vita', 'canzone appassionata', 'un rider sento d'uomini e di donne / che nel lavoro preparan le voglie'.

¹⁹ In the original: 'il marcio' (op. cit., XIV, str. 27), 'fogna' (X, 21), 'fanghiglia' (VI, 15), 'sfasciume' (XXXVI, 58), 'pattume', 'rogne', 'rifiuti', 'rivoli di spurghi' (LXIX, 114).

²⁰ C. Rebora, *Lettere I (1893–1930)*. In the original: 'a Milano [...], ove l'aria pare viziata e impura come il fiato di un'ammalata' (p.5), 'Milano che pare ora un ventre enorme; e pute tosto che si risveglia' (p. 29).

²¹ S. Kosovel, ZD, III, op. cit., p. 339.

²² S. Kosovel, ZD, II, op. cit., pp. 496–7.

²³ For the tree motif in Kosovel's expressionist poetry, see: F. Zadavec, *Srečko Kosovel 1904–1926*, Lipa-ZTT, Koper-Trieste 1986, pp. 81–3.

²⁴ *Kakor drevo, ki se strele boji* ('Like a Tree Afraid of Lightning'), ZD, I, DZL, Ljubljana 1964, p. 127.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

²⁶ C. Rebora, *Lettere I (1893–1930)*, p. 63. In the original: 'Ho sofferto e soffro indicibilmente', 'son rimasto come un albero sfrondata, che proprio ora si spoglia e tutto isterilisce quando intorno gli fluttua la primavera con mille inviti e richiami di rinascenza'.

²⁷ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, p. 278. In the original: 'guasto occulto', 'ho sbagliato pianeta!'.

²⁸ F. Fortini, 'Frammenti lirici di Clemente Rebora', in: *Letteratura italiana. Le opere, IV- Il Novecento*, ed. A. Asor Rosa, Einaudi, Torino 1995, p. 246–55.

²⁹ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, poem LI, p. 87. In the original: 'Oh il variar delle cose ch'io guardo, / e le vorrei! / Oh il variar della vita ch'io sento, / e la vorrei! / [...] quel che da lungi m'invita, / va sempre più in là: / e nulla è mio al passaggio.'

³⁰ S. Kosovel, ZD, I, p. 358.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 353.

³² S. Kosovel, ZD, II, p. 147.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

³⁴ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, p. 181. In the original: 'Nulla, più nulla, / ceppo reciso'.

³⁵ S. Kosovel, ZD, I, pp. 261, 297.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 229 and ZD, III, p. 108.

³⁷ D. Valli, *Anarchia e misticismo nella poesia italiana del primo Novecento*, Milella, Lecce, 1973, p. 288–9.

³⁸ F. Bandini, 'Elementi di espressionismo linguistico in Rebora', in: *Ricerche sulla lingua poetica contemporanea. Rebora, Saba, Ungaretti, Montale, Pavese*, several authrors, Quaderni del circolo filologico linguistico padovano, Padova 1966, pp. 3–35.

³⁹ C. Rebora, *Le lettere I (1893–1930)*, pp. 105–6. In the original: 'Mi sbatto nel contrasto fra l'eterno e il transitorio, fra quello che sento (e amo) necessario e quello che vorrei non fosse, fra la potenza e l'atto, fra la cosa conosciuta e il lasciarla partire, fra la rozzezza del fabbro e la permalosità di un insofferente. [...] S'io pubblicherò alcuni pochi frammenti lirici – orribili come *poesia* – rivedrà codesti contrasti.'

⁴⁰ 'Chaos' was one of the key words of expressionism, yet it only appears once in Rebora's works from this period – in a short poetic prose *Fonte nella macerie* (A Well Among the Ruins, 1915). The sentence goes: 'Obelisco del caos, il campanile muto' ('Obelisque of chaos, a mute campanile'), in: *Le poesie 1913–1957*, p. 197.

⁴¹ For the Orphic and prophetic subject matter in Kosovel's poetry, see: F. Zadavec, *Srečko Kosovel 1904–1926*, pp. 117–22.

⁴² S. Kosovel, ZD, I, pp. 230, 243, 228.

⁴³ F. Portinari, 'Milano', in: *Letteratura italiana. Storia e geografia, III, L'età contemporanea*, ed. A. Asor Rosa, Einaudi, Torino 1989, p. 261. In the original: '(lo spettacolo tragico) può solo condurre [...] a un superamento della dimensione personale', 'tutta la storia, di tutti gli uomini del suo tempo'.

⁴⁴ In the original: 'combattenti', 'eroi'.

⁴⁵ In the original: 'O poesia, / [...] sei la fanfara / che ritma il cammino, / [...] sei la letizia / che incuora il vicino, / [...] sei la certezza / del grande destino'.

⁴⁶ C. Rebora, *Le lettere I (1893–1930)*, p. 410. In the original: 'Mi pare poi, a volte, d'essere chiamato, e non so da chi né per cosa; in ogni modo rispondo, e m'incammino da qualche parte'.

⁴⁷ C. Rebora, *Le poesie 1913–1957*, p. 190. In the original: ‘Mentre lavoro nei miei giorni scarsi, / mi pare deva echeggiar imminente / una gran voce chiamando: *Clemente!* / Per un’umana impresa ch’è da farsi...’

⁴⁸ L. Kralj, *Ekspressionizem*, pp. 182–3.

⁴⁹ C. Rebora, *Poesie sparse (1913–1927)*, pp. 191–192. In the original: ‘Decresceranno le acque, / emergeranno patrie pie, / parlerà ciò che più tacque, / si chiariranno le vie. // Il vecchio mondo disfatto / materia al nuovo darà / [...] C’è tanta bontà nascosta / che non osa uscir fuori: / attende s’aprano i cuori / a un’umana risposta.’

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁵¹ For an analysis of Kosovel’s expressionist style, see: F. Zadavec, Srečko Kosovel 1904–1926, pp. 123–35.

⁵² S. Kosovel, ZD, II, note on p. 647.

⁵³ For the problem of form in Rebora’s first collection, see: P. Giovannetti, ‘I Frammenti lirici’ di Clemente Rebora: questioni metriche’, in: ‘Autografo’, III, 8, p. II–35. For Rebora’s linguistic expressionism, see: F. Bandini, ‘Elementi di espressionismo linguistico in Rebora’.

■ ABSTRACT

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Key words: Slovene poetry / Kosovel, Srečko / Italian poetry / Rebora, Clemente / expressionism / literary influences

According to contemporary Italian literary criticism, examples of both futurism and expressionism can be found in Italian literature. Segre and Martignoni detect explicit expressionist characteristics of style and theme in the work of the so-called ‘poeti vociani’, who were first published in the Florentine review *La voce* (1908–1914, 1914–1916). In fact, they go as far as to say that “the best ‘vociani’ represented the true literary avant-garde of the pre-WWI period (*Testi nella storia 4, La letteratura italiana dalle Origini al Novecento*, 2001).” Their opinion seems rather tendentious, if not ideologically biased, but one can equally question the somewhat radical thesis of Kralj which claims a total absence of expressionistic texts in Italian literature (Lado Kralj, *Ekspressionizem*, 1986).

A close analysis of the poems and letters of C. Rebora (1885–1957), one of the most eminent “poeti vociani”, puts such propositions about the existence of Italian expressionism to the test. Comparing Rebora’s opus (up to 1926/27) with the opus of S. Kosovel, I searched for any shared expressionist elements, taking the three major expressionist themes as guideline clusters for my analysis:

- an awareness of crisis and a revolt against modern civilization;
- feelings of loneliness, solitude, existential meaninglessness, alienation, inner disharmony, loss of identity, in other words – “dissociation of the subject”.
- responses to these feelings: either glorifying the poet’s prophetic function and praising the soteriological role of poetry, or prophesying the demise of European civilization, and announcing the birth of a new world and new human.

Rebora's poetry deals with all these themes, revealing, at times, a striking similarity with certain motifs in the poetry of Srečko Kosovel. Despite the fact that a stylistic analysis also confirms the thesis about Rebora's expressionism, there is insufficient evidence to show that Rebora – along with other “vociani” poets – was familiar with German expressionism. This, on the contrary, cannot be said of Kosovel.

The lack of influence of German expressionists on the Italian “vociani” may be explained first by the simultaneous appearance of the “vociani” poets and the German expressionists on the literary scene; and second, by scant knowledge of contemporary German literature among Italian writers at the time. Any possibility of German literature influencing the “vociani” poets should thus be excluded.

To conclude: expressionism as a literary movement proper did not exist in Italy. There were, however, decidedly expressionist elements in the work of certain authors. The surprising analogies observed between German and Slovenian expressionism can, on the other hand, be explained by a general awareness of the cultural-historical crisis of Western civilization of the time.

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* * *

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