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 Župančič'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 greyness 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-aesthetisise 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 synaethesias 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 Zadravec, this humanist idea is compatible neither with the futurists' glorification of technology, nor with the views of Russian constructivists (Zadravec 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

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■ ABSTRACT

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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.