

## THE INTRODUCTION OF SYMBOLISM TO SLOVENE LITERATURE

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The introduction of symbolism to Slovene literature cannot be explained without a short presentation of Slovene realism, together with the naturalist intermezzo that was its continuation. First of all, however, the role of Slovene literature between 1848 and the end of the nineteenth century should be defined within the European context. If we draw a comparison with preceding periods a certain continuity can be traced; but there were also some changes.

The general orientation of Slovene literature in the second half of the nineteenth century was basically Central European—i.e., with a predominantly Austrian and German component—a fact that results from the historical position of the Slovenes. At that time Slovene ethnic territory, divided into 'lands,' belonged to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. There was also a growing interest in English literature. On the other hand, the ties of Slovene literature to Romance cultures were considerably weaker than at the beginning of the century, and in this there was a marked difference from France Prešeren's times. In the 1870s and 1880s communication with contemporary Russian literature was on the increase, reflecting a shift in the esthetic perception of a few Slovene authors. The stylistic orientation of prominent Slovene authors was, however, even more illustrative of their response to the spiritual worlds of European literature. In this respect the dissimilarity with Prešeren is quite striking. Slovene literature after 1848 began to develop in all genres—including narrative prose and dramatic writing—which had not previously been the case; yet, in the light of contemporary European movements this development represented an expressly retrograde stylistic orientation. Specifically, after 1848 there was a notable return to the eighteenth century, to the period of Enlightenment and pre-romanticism. Slovene poetry and prose therefore corresponded to European romanticism and to the intermediate period which was no longer romanticism but was also not yet realism. In this way German late-romanticism, and particularly Heine's lyrical poetry, appears to be the latest contemporary trend with which Slovene poetry could prove to have ties; and this does not hold true only for Simon Jenko, but also for a number of other Slovene poets of the time. The prose writing of Josip Stritar, Josip Jurčič and Ivan Tavčar shows a similar trend; their connections with European literatures lasted, at the most, through the middle of the century, being parallel to German village prose and the German short story, and to post-romantic French prose. An exception to this parallelism is Janko Kersnik, who shows influences from Russian realism but had no noteworthy stylistic impact on Slovene prose. The naturalistic writing of Fran Govekar, similarly, only outwardly resembles naturalism; in fact, it remained foreign to the naturalist doctrine, and there were endeavors in the first years of the twentieth century to re-introduce this style into Slovene literature.<sup>1</sup>

What does all this mean? It means that nineteenth-century Slovene literature—in spite of Kersnik and partly in spite of Anton Aškerc—did not develop a genuine realism, let alone a naturalism. It means that it was not engaged in a committed analysis of Slovene society, an analysis which was true of European realism. This situation can be explained by the fact that Slovene society in the second half of the nineteenth century was not so stratified, ideologically or socially, as to present a pressing and immediate challenge to literature. It took another couple of decades for pronounced ideological and social antagonisms to develop: the crisis of the peasant population then became more intense, and in

the political arena the role of the working class grew stronger, as was the young, upwardly oriented middle class. Under these new circumstances art could no longer keep its distance from real life. Thus the demand to deal with contemporary socio-political reality that was so characteristic of European realism and naturalism was met at this later time. The socially critical function of realist literature was therefore fulfilled by the Slovene *Moderna*.

This fact has not hitherto been given due consideration; yet it played an important role in the formation of Slovene symbolism. Without it, the rather specific nature of Slovene fin de siècle literature cannot be satisfactorily explained. There is yet another point to be considered concerning the introduction of symbolism: namely, that the different spiritual and ideological tendencies that were represented by the different literary styles of the end of the century penetrated into the Slovene sphere neither gradually nor sequentially (in the order of their appearance elsewhere); rather, they all appeared simultaneously, moulded into one heterogeneous, even internally contradictory movement.<sup>2</sup>

Previously, other Central European literatures had witnessed the same development, and it was from them that the new Slovene generation—Ivan Cankar, Oton Župančič, Josip Murn, and to a lesser degree Dragotin Kette—obtained their first information about contemporary literary trends.<sup>3</sup> The not very obvious diachrony in the evolution of new artistic trends was now replaced by their synchronic expansion all over Europe.<sup>4</sup> This suggests that it was the successors of French symbolism that the Slovene writers first came into contact with: these were either the actual works of the Austrian and German poets and prose writers Hermann Bahr, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Stefan George, Richard Dehmel, and Gerhard Hauptmann, or secondary reports about them. It should not be overlooked, either, that the Slovene *Moderna* was not exposed to European symbolism alone; there was a mixture of contemporary literary trends, which shared an anti-mimetic esthetic orientation. In this pluralism—even syncretism—of turn of the century styles, naturalism cannot be easily distinguished from impressionism, or decadence from symbolism, especially when the intertwining of several styles was to be found in one author, even in one artistic work.

Symbolism at the end of the century manifested itself in an intensive denial of the realistic and the naturalistic in art, a denial of the philosophical, ideological, and esthetic principles of the literary tradition. Impressionism with its relatively materialistic depiction of reality and its sensual and empirical attitude toward life can still be related to naturalism, as can the sensualistic hedonism of decadence. But symbolism, consistently and on all levels, differs from other artistic movements of the second half of the nineteenth century. Its fundamental philosophical conception is described by such notions as “spiritualism,” “irrationalism,” “mysticism.” The main means of expression became a symbol that enabled writers to express ideas in a sensuous way, to discover “an esoteric resemblance to primary ideas,” as Jean Moréas wrote in his manifesto of 1886.<sup>5</sup> In most cases, however, the symbol only alludes to the transcendent—unknown, unattainable, and inaccessible to the intellect. Thus symbolism expressed dissatisfaction with realistic language, and strove to free language from the conventional models of communication, to overcome their limitations. This led to the paradoxical situation that language, which made literature possible, at the same time functioned to the contrary by being indefinite and opaque. Therefore, the vague multi-semantic language of symbolism cannot be described without simplifications; it cannot be translated into a spoken, referential language—unless we consent to the use of semiotics, which on the esthetic level does not differentiate between the sign symbol and the poetic symbol.

Focusing now our attention on poetry, we can say that in Župančič from the very

beginning there is a clash between tradition and counter-tradition. It is also obvious that in *Čaša opojnosti* (1899), his first collection of poems, symbolism left fewer traces than expected. In the concluding verses of his poem "Na pot" Župančič calls his early poems "daughters of the moment," a term that belongs to the poetics of impressionism; but there are almost no true impressionist poems in this collection. The most impressionist in style, in fact the only one in the collection that can be labeled as such, is "Večer." At the root of Župančič's early poetry lies symbolism rather than impressionism, although the traditional forms as well as the functions of images are still very frequent. In *Čaša opojnosti* there is a series of poems in which images and metaphors taken from nature are merely used to illustrate the spiritual world of the lyrical subject; or else the landscape serves as a parallel of expression.<sup>6</sup>

The poems in which the message is subordinated to the esthetic role of nature represent an intermediary stage in the evolution of Župančič's poetry. Nature no longer serves as a reflection of individual confession as it had in the period of romanticism or impressionism. Now nature themes are unrestricted, and hardly imitative. One such poem is "Padale so cvetne sanje." In such rare poems Župančič is closest to symbolism: his images are neither logically construed allegories nor conventional denotations for something external. Instead of explicit directness, his images disclose a new meaning, a higher meaning or symbol. Thus in the second part of the sonnet "O, ljubica, kedar spusti večer," the image of the poet's soul, its journey in space, and its delight in the beauty of heaven suggest an erotic game which ends in "sweet restlessness" (*sladki nepokoj*). The soul is also the lyrical subject of the poem "Divje polje duša moja," and here also in a symbolized metonymy the soul discloses a personal eroticism.

It is obvious that Župančič's symbolism cannot function without the concept of a soul, especially as the soul is closely intertwined in the poetic language of *Čaša opojnosti*. But because the soul, as a symbolized metonymy, is mostly associated with erotic sensualism, it is also obvious that Župančič's symbolism includes strong elements of the decadent attitude towards life. Yet, besides *soul*, there is also frequent mention of *heart*. The numerous poems in which the heart of the lyrical subject is talking lead us to the conclusion that, alongside the contemporary characteristics of Župančič's early lyric poetry, there were also elements of traditional romantic poetic diction.<sup>7</sup>

Even in the pre-*Moderna* period there were traces of pure lyricism in Slovene poetry. This impressionist tendency can be found in Jenko and the rhetorical harmony of the verses of Simon Gregorčič, and Župančič's purely lyric poetry does not therefore represent anything new; rather, it restored the romantic and late-romantic tradition. The combination of stylistically dissonant elements in the early Župančič can however be considered as innovative for Slovene literature. He achieves dissonances by combining asyndeton and polysyndeton. In earlier Slovene poetry stylistic dissonances are not as frequent and not as explicit; this may therefore be regarded as one of the most important poetic characteristics of Župančič, when he is compared with Slovene poetic tradition. There are also other differences. His choice of fixed poetic forms in *Čaša opojnosti* deserves special attention. Besides the six sonnets with a modernized internal composition and form and a modified rondel, the collection also includes a cycle of seguidillas and a cycle of romances.<sup>8</sup> The lyrical and epic cycle was originally entitled *Romance in balade*, but in the final version the author eliminated "ballads" from his title. Having rejected the German version of the Spanish romance, he remained faithful to his affinity for Romance poetic forms (e.g., the Italian sonnet; the French rondel; the Spanish seguidilla and romance.) His orientation towards Romance forms is so striking that they can be duly considered a dividing line

between his work and Slovene realistic poetry.

To sum up: the following should be stressed about Župančič as a representative of Slovene symbolist poetry. The intrusion of the decadent attitude, the traces of an impressionistic rendering of reality, as well as the presence of a symbolist style in *Čaša opojnosti* are the features that speak to the modern orientation of his poetry, for its being in step with contemporary European poetry. In addition, there is also dissonance as a linguistic and stylistic characteristic, and also dissonance in the world of experience; these place the poet among his European contemporaries. Yet, at the same time, Župančič's early poetry reveals elements that do not belong to contemporary European poetry. In *Čaša opojnosti* there is evidence of his attachment to the romantic and late romantic poetic tradition, to its ideological and stylistic orientation. In this early poetry there is no tendency to deny reality, or to incorporate completely the lyrical subject into an imagined reality. In some poems, though rarely, there are fragments where artistic formality overshadows the message. But Župančič's artistic creativity is still oriented towards imagery and ideas, and not toward abstract, meaningless language. The poet never remains alone with language; he has nothing in common with the non-confessional, depersonalized lyric subject. Župančič's early poetry preserves the unity of the empirical life of the author and his poetic imagination. It recognizes the subjective principle of art, although not exclusively as a romantic confession from the heart, but rather as a symbolist disclosure of the soul and of ideas. *Čaša opojnosti* does not contain enough elements opposed to classical beauty, or those that express the alternative (the ugly, the disgusting, the grotesque, or the disintegrating) to identify the collection as a symptomatic example of modern poetics. Župančič's early poetry also lacks the presence of the big cities and of technical civilization which indelibly marks the poetry of the more developed literatures of the time. The absence of this theme is however historically conditioned and understandable.

Similar, though not quite the same, features of symbolism can be found in Ivan Cankar's writings. Impressionism as a narrative technique is present in Cankar's writing up to the middle of his "Vienna period," while symbolism occupied his creative powers for much longer. In one form or another it can be identified in all periods of his artistic development. It began to be evident in his first collection of sketches and short stories, *Vinjete* (1899), and was still present in his last book, *Podobe iz sanj* (1917). Although symbolism is characteristic of all periods of his writing, it is not equally strong in all genres. In his poetry (a marginal genre for him) there are almost no symbolist elements. Similarly, it permeates some of his dramas—e.g., *Pohujšanje v dolini Šentflorjanski* (1908), and his dramatic poem *Lepa Vida* (1912)—but not all. On the other hand, it definitely pervades his prose writing. Here Cankar develops its expressive and communicative values to the utmost.

Hermann Bahr interpreted the essence of symbolism in the same way as the French and other Western European symbolists: he repeated the belief of the French symbolists that external, visible things are merely symbols of the Eternal and the Infinite. Sensuality is an expression of a higher spiritual world, the symbol of metaphysical thought.

Cankar was undoubtedly closest to Western European symbolist poetics in his early Vienna years, from 1896 to 1899; as a young man he was receptive to new literary trends. Evidence of this can be found in his statement in the "Epilog" to *Vinjete*, where he regrets in his short naturalist intermezzo—which here he completely rejects—having eliminated from literature the "idea," "eternity," "world soul" and (ironically) "other trash;"<sup>9</sup> in addition, symbolism can be traced in several other *Vinjete* sketches.

The tendency toward symbolist expression is present also in Cankar's prose writing after *Vinjete*, but it is not always realized within the poetics described above. If a symbol cannot

be translated, if it cannot be fully rendered in any other language, we cannot talk about much symbolism in Cankar's work before his novel *Na klancu* (1902).<sup>10</sup> Before then he frequently uses a traditional metaphorization, which is obvious, logical, and comprehensive. The symbol is merely a sign of something external. This kind of interpretation of the symbol is not in accordance with symbolist poetics, since—according to Carl Hausman—it does not differentiate between the artistic and the non-artistic symbol.<sup>11</sup>

In distinction to the classic metaphor, or to those metaphors which a writer himself translates in straightforward, non-metaphorical, referential language, the description of landscape in *Križev pot* (1901) plays a different role. The repetition of the description of the landscape with the same, or with almost the same, words takes on a symbolic value. This repetition increases the coherence of narration and also imparts a new meaning to the events in the sketch. The plot evades a concrete, monosemantic interpretation, as toward the end of the text empirical reality becomes inseparably bound to the social idea which the author wishes to convey to the reader.

This shows how slowly the symbolist style penetrated Cankar's prose. The reason for this diminished stylistic flexibility must be sought in the strengthening of the realistic tendency in his writing, and in his involvement in social, political and national topics. Even for erotic scenes Cankar turned to the naturalist narrative technique, which only serves to illustrate what a mixture of literary styles influenced the artistic identity of his early writing.

In Cankar's prose, symbolism manifests itself almost continually, although mostly in an allegorical way, often in individual components of his tales and sketches, never in the structure as a whole; yet in the novel *Na klancu* the role of the symbolist treatment of the subject becomes stronger. It may sound unbelievable, even contradictory, but the symbolist style in Cankar's Vienna period manifested itself most comprehensively in his longest prose piece.

The primary motif in *Na klancu*, which keeps being repeated and thus becomes the so-called leading motif, is that of a tiny girl running uphill after a cart full of pilgrims along a muddy path scattered with sharp stones; only when she is completely exhausted do they stop and take her aboard. The description of the girl's running behind the cart in Chapter I is rather long, and contains various details that describe the landscape as well as the path; they also reveal the girl's inner world. The narrator was well aware that a comprehensive and psychologically realistic scene of this kind, although stylistically in accord with the first chapters of the novel, presented a quite definite and particular event rather than its idea. In order to expose the idea underlying the event, he had to deprive the description of the girl running of its concrete character: this is achieved at the moment when the girl, in an inner monologue, thinks about herself and, in her running behind the cart, recognizes her own fate. All of a sudden she sees the running as a metaphor for her life. Thus the motif from the first chapter of the novel (entitled "Za vozom") may be interpreted as a unique event and also as a symbol; later in the narration the event takes on a strictly symbolic role. The symbolic function is not acquired merely through its repetition (in Chapters II, IV, V, VII and VIII): besides the principle of repetition, there is a special esthetic structure to the symbol which must be taken into consideration. In all the chapters where the scene of the running girl appears—be this as a memory of her unhappy youth, a vision of her dark future, or a presentiment of death—the scene is depicted briefly, almost schematically. The details are discarded, and the living, concrete reality which might lead the reader to a realistic understanding is considerably constrained, thus exposing the fatal significance of the girl's running along behind the cart.

The idea of the symbol (which, through repetition, loses all its details) remains more

or less the same: the persevering and enduring attempts of a girl who cannot reach her goal, her yearning, her futile desire, her inevitable doom. In this way the symbol of running after the cart, the so-called theme symbol, contains the message of a human individual. Although this symbol evokes this human destiny by itself, Cankar also uses the symbol of a cross, thereby underlining the girl's suffering. The cross as a visual symbol is frequent in Cankar's writing, although it does not always represent suffering; the flexibility of meaning carried by this symbol is quite extensive.

Besides the "running after the cart" there is also, in *Na klancu*, the symbolic significance of the hillside itself, which symbolizes the life of the poor. This is not only as powerful a metaphor as the "running"; since it embodies the central idea of the novel (cf. the title!) it even surpasses it. The hillside thus becomes the key symbol in this novel about the writer's mother, his family, and their social background. In the beginning, it is simply a topographical reality; but in the fourth chapter this geographically definable location, full of details, and already bearing a social stamp, begins to break out of its mosaic-like picture. It begins to turn into the steep slope of the poor, of those resigned to their fate and to death. The social issue becomes the more pronounced, the more the hillside is contrasted with the festive-looking, dignified square and its bright white houses. The hillside is disclosed to be the symbol of a given social and mental make-up, a vast domain encompassing a multitude of poor proletarians, if not the Slovene nation as a whole. In this way the symbolic aspect of the novel is completed and established by the hillside, as a locational symbol.

It becomes obvious that the novel *Na klancu* cannot be considered a realistic novel of location, which would abound in characters and settings and would have a complicated social and objective reality, i.e., a so-called narrative content. The story in *Na klancu* does not consist of parallel events, it is neither dramatically condensed nor structurally centered around a plot and a denouement; it is composed linearly, in cycles. Events follow each other in a temporal-causal sequence, while the consecutive aspect that is so characteristic of realistic prose is obliterated. Thus, individual components in the novel take on the role of symbols, e.g., events, locations, and scenes; the whole story is founded on symbols and their referents.

In Cankar's other novels there is much less symbolism. In *Hiša Marije Pomočnice* (1904) only individual thematic elements or scenes are symbolically allegorical. In the novel *Križ na gori* (1904) the cross is the central symbol, either in passages foretelling suffering, or in serving as an illustration of the pessimistic vision of the future which haunts the main heroine. At the end of the narrative, however, the cross represents more than an illustration or poetic accompaniment to events; it becomes a symbol of hope and all-redeeming love. Here also, the author chooses the symbol of a bird, and thus hints at the discordant denouement of the story. *Križ na gori* is not linear; it is not composed as a cycle of chapters that could be considered relatively independent narrative units linked together. In its composition the principle of cause and effect is carried out consistently. The realistic subject-matter grows stronger, and every so often there appear elements of socio-political reality. The latter are even more noticeable in the novel *Gospa Judit* (1904), with its critical and polemical introduction. This very intrusion of social reality into the novel explains why symbolism, to a much greater degree than in the previous two novels, is confined to two allegorical metaphors. The evidence of how Cankar moved away from symbolism and drew closer to a realistic style also lies in the fact that he had to defend *Gospa Judit* from being labeled a "roman à clef." Contemporary society as a subject matter is completely predominant in the novel *Martin Kačur*, written at the end of 1905.

Although it seems as if a growing interest in contemporary social problems impaired his symbolistic style, Cankar's *Nina* (1906) contradicts this kind of dependence on a literary style for a theme. In this profoundly impressionistic novel, composed of a series of fragmentary scenes depicting life at the edges of society—a theme to be exposed in all its complexity by naturalism—the elements of symbolism are scarce, but perceptible. In the second chapter, an autobiographic story from the narrator's childhood, we come across well-known symbols, e.g., the steep slope as a locational symbol; a bundle as a visual symbol. Symbolism is also present in the "fourth night" of the novel, in the description of the Cukrarna,<sup>12</sup> which becomes a symbol of inconsolable yearning; the huge, dark building is the embodiment of a hopeless spiritual state from which the Slovenes cannot escape.

Stylistically the unfinished novel *Marta*, from the second half of 1906, is quite logical and deliberate. The author's intention was to create a heroine diametrically opposed to the one in *Na klancu*, to write a novel rather than a "Stimmungsbild;" it is therefore no wonder that the symbolist elements in *Marta* are negligible, almost imperceptible.

In Cankar's novel *Novo življenje* (1908), too, there are no symbols in the sense of the symbolist poetics of the end of the nineteenth century. The three inserted stories have an illustrative, complementary role in the narrative, rather than serving as symbols. There are also no symbolist motifs or scenes in the novel *Milan in Milena* (1913). The structural parallelism in this "tale of love" cannot, however, go unnoticed. The chapters in this simultaneously multi-local narrative are arranged in parallel; thus one chapter tells Milan's story and the next tells Milena's concurrent story, and the pattern is repeated through to the last chapter in which both protagonists appear together and commit suicide in the same way. This parallelism of the two schematically presented human destinies reveals Cankar's utter pessimism; it is used to expose the theme that transcends the layer of concreteness in the novel, and attaches a higher spiritual meaning to it.

To sum up our observations about Cankar as the main representative of the Slovene *Moderna*, and about his symbolism, the following may be said:

A non-rational symbolism that cannot express its own concepts, which are not translatable into the language of discourse, appears largely in Cankar's early short prose; immediately after *Vinjete*, however, his symbolism undergoes changes due to the ideological and thematic orientation of his literature, with the aim of expressing a contemporary critical message. By the turn of the century his tendency toward the rationalization of his symbolistic language has grown rather marked. His symbols, therefore, never have the effect of self-sufficient images, not even when they express non-rational, non-translatable spiritual ideas. There is almost no metasymbolism in Cankar's work, except maybe in a few passages in *Vinjete*. Christian allegorical symbolism, applied mostly to the social context, pervades his writing; his characters are often archetypal, grounded in folk and mythological tradition; quite frequent also is an illustrative symbolization of people, animals, and landscape. The special traits of his symbolism are determined by the circumstances which also determine the nature of literature in the Slovene *Moderna*. The role of realistic literature, with its demand that socio-political topics be dealt with—which became possible in Slovenia about this time—required writers to use an indirect, disguised manner of writing, due to the politically sensitive circumstances.

Besides an artistic and esthetic motivation, Cankar's symbolism in his early period thus took on a socially critical, extra-literary motivation, which in turn necessitated a symbolism of a rather special kind. Its traces appear as early as 1900, with the introduction of social themes into his writings. This is of course not the symbolism that was grounded in the irrational of a Maeterlinck or of a Verhaeren, nor even the symbolism of the forerunners

of and first adherents to this literary style in the nineteenth century. Rather, it was the social and socially reformative role of art that, throughout, proved to be the force which significantly influenced Cankar's relationship with any literary trend or style at the end of the century. The national and social-historical orientation of Cankar's art was strongly intensified by circumstances during the First World War; and in this way the tendency for his symbolist expression to find a deep social reflection can be better understood. Apart from *Nina* and *Lepa Vida*, his symbolism persistently rejected the less obvious, dark, and enigmatic polysemantics.

To conclude: when we interpret Slovene symbolism, we must take into account the limited literary tradition of the second half of the nineteenth century in the Slovene lands. This limitation was to a large extent due to the underdeveloped social consciousness among Slovenes of the time. Thus art's socially critical role, which could be expressed in realism, came to pervade Slovene literature just at the moment when it was opened up to the innovative tendencies in European *fin de siècle* art. This also influenced the reception of contemporary trends, and especially of symbolism, in Slovene literature. From the European viewpoint it could be said that this was the reason why Slovene symbolism adopted moderate and relatively shapeless forms, rather than extreme, highly developed ones; why it did not represent an art which categorically denied tradition; why it could not be considered the art of radical stylistic innovation. From a different viewpoint another picture may be seen: namely, that Slovene literature at the turn of the century was more than a passive receptacle for European initiatives; that it established a productive, esthetically creative relationship with them. It was possible to attain this level because, thanks to its artistic self-sufficiency, Slovene literature did not renounce its national and social-historical identity.

Slovenska Akademija Znanosti in Umetnosti  
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## NOTES

1. France Bernik, *Slovenska književnost v evropskem kontekstu (do konca devetnajstega stoletja)*, manuscript.
2. Anton Ocvirk, *Slovenska moderna in evropski naturalizem* (1955) 517-518; Dušan Pirjevec, *Ivan Cankar in evropska literatura* (1964) 168.
3. Pirjevec, 158.
4. For a different but not very convincing view, see Viktor Žmegac, "Die Jahrhundertwende (um 1900) als literarhistorischer Begriff," *Neohelicon* 11/2 (1984) 23-24.
5. Jean Moréas, "Un manifeste littéraire," *Figaro littéraire* (Paris), September 18, 1886.
6. Cf. the poems "Milostno nebo ti bodi," "Pod tvojim oknom," "Berta," "Premnogo noč," "Ti gizdava devojka," "Julijana!," "Nad mestom belim dremlje težek," and "Nedolžnost."
7. Cf. the poems "Moje srce je," "Pred božji grob pokleknil sem kristjan," "Prižgal si plamen mu resnice čiste," "O ljubica, kedar spusti večer," "Ti skrivnostni moj cvet," "Ti roža mogota," and "Kot bi viseli zlati sadovi."
8. Cf. the sonnets "Pred božji grob pokleknil sem kristjan," "Prižgal si plamen mu resnice čiste," "Kako je poln kristjanov temni hram," "O ljubica, kedar spusti večer," "Parček," "V galeriji slik," and the rondel "Milostno nebo ti bodi."
9. Ivan Cankar, *Zbrano delo VII* (1969) 195.
10. France Bernik, "Simbolizem v Cankarjevi prozi," *XII seminar slovenskega jezika, literature in kulture, 1977. Zbornik predavanj* (Ljubljana, 1977) 70-71.
11. Carl H. Hausman, "Art and symbol," *The Review of Metaphysics* (New Haven) 15/2 (1961-62) 256-70.

12. The name of a building in Ljubljana.

## POVZETEK

### ZAČETEK SIMBOLIZMA V SLOVENSKI KNJIŽEVNOSTI

*Razvoj slovenske književnosti v začetku tega stoletja je bil iz več zgodovinskih razlogov drugačen kot v drugih evropskih književnostih, s katerimi je bila slovenska kultura sicer organsko povezana. Še posebno je to opaziti v recepciji in praksi simbolizma v delih Otona Župančiča in Ivana Cankarja, obeh najvažnejših predstavnikov slovenske moderne. Župančičeva poezija je simbolistična v drži in stilu, a še zlasti v rabi disonance; na drugi strani pa je Župančič manj abstrakten kot pravi simbolisti in je zato v tem oziru bolj romantičen kot simbolisti. Cankar, ki je bil na samem začetku svojega pesniškega obdobja močno pod vplivom evropskega simbolizma, je simbolistične prijeme uvedel tudi v svojo zgodnjo prozo (roman Na klancu, 1902). Toda celo Cankar je pod pritiskom okoliščin slovenske kulture in družbe svojega časa spreminjal te prijeme. Na splošno lahko rečemo, da je bil slovenski simbolizem eden od številnih evropskih kulturnih tokov, ki so ob začetku stoletja dokaj istočasno in nedosledno prihajali v slovenske dežele. Vendar ga pesniki in pisatelji slovenske moderne niso sprejemali pasivno; kot marsikatero druge tokove kulturne zgodovine, so ga ustvarjalno in spretno prilagajali potrebam slovenske kulture v tem važnem obdobju slovenske zgodovine.*