of this chapter is its explanation of the difference between cultural workers and cultural saints on the one hand, and priests and saints on the other, which in the Western tradition yields a synchronic space occupied by cultural saints (the immortal) and mediocrities (e.g., Mozart and Salieri). The essential contradiction is between cultural saint and cultural worker, not cultural saint and religious saint. A second spatial consideration, one that is key to the volume is center and periphery. This returns us to, for example, Vidmar's chapter on Gaudí and Plečnik.

This selective look at the collection's contents shows the depth and breadth of thought and research underlying all the contributions, and how this field of scholarship continues to evolve even as there are new developments in its objects of study.

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Cvetka Lipuš. *Kaj smo, ko smo/What We Are, When We Are*. Translated by Tom Priestly. Edmonton: AU Press, 2018. IX + 92 pp. ISBN: 9781771992497.

Kaj smo, ko smo (*What We Are, When We Are*) is the seventh volume of verse by the accomplished Carinthian Slovene poet, Cvetka Lipuš, and the fourth published in Ljubljana (Beletrina, 2015). Now, with the appearance of this elegant little bilingual edition, it has become the first of her books to be translated into English. The translator is Tom Priestly, past editor of *Slovene Studies* and a specialist in Carinthian Slovene linguistics who has been translating Slovene poetry into English since 1992—thus a natural choice to introduce Lipuš to a broader Anglophone audience. While naturally there are things one can quibble with, his renderings of this complex, sophisticated verse are generally most impressive.

Cvetka Lipuš, who is the daughter of the important Carinthian writer Florjan Lipuš, has already earned an impressive array of awards for her poetry, including the Carinthian Provincial Literary Prize, an Austrian State Grant for Literature, and, in 2016, a prestigious Prešeren Fund Award. Born in Železna Kapla/Eisenkappel in southern Austria, she has also lived in Ljubljana and—for fifteen years—in the U.S. before settling in Salzburg in 2009. Not surprisingly, *bivanjska problematika* ("the problem of permanent residence") has been a major theme of her poetry from the beginning.[1] In the

[1] See, for instance, Tanja Petrič in her review of Lipuš's 2008 collection *Obleganje sreče* (*Sodobnost* 2008: 1,681–85, especially 1,681).

afterward to *Kaj smo, ko smo/What We Are, When We Are*, Tomaž Toporišič calls her a "nomadic poet" who thinks in German and English, as well as Slovene, and he points out that the poems in this book "originated in America."[2] Indeed these poems display a casual cosmopolitanism: several have English titles, including "Lake Mendota" (66–69),[3] which apparently describes a Memorial Day weekend in Madison, Wisconsin; words and phrases in English, Latin, Italian, and other languages are sprinkled throughout; as are references to the New York City subway, Kuala Lumpur, the last Hawaiian princess, Shanghai, and many other people, places, and things from around the world.

However, Lipuš delves far more deeply into *bivanjska problematika* than mere word- and name-dropping. In many of these verses she grapples with the loss and displacement it can entail. "Novi naslov/The New Address" (42–43), for example, is one of several poems that invoke that weird sense of "neither here nor there" that comes with moving into a new home; it ends with the unsettling lines, "On the mailbox is written my name. Now I/check every day to find out if I have arrived at the new address." Other poems seem to record the unpleasant end to a relationship precipitated by the move; for instance, "Slovo/Saying Goodbye" (34–35), which ends just as memorably: "… because/someone is slamming doors inside you/someone who has crossed the threshold." (These are but two of the aphorism-ready lines Lipuš has produced for this collection!) But the poet can go even further than this: at least eight of the poems treat questions of kinship, to the point of genetics, like the remarkable "Dediščina/Inheritance" (20–21): "… since I came back,/I go to funerals to see what is passed on/from generation to generation. The cocktail of genes…" Lipuš explores what it means to be "a nomadic poet" when parts of your very own DNA are still on display in the homeland you left long ago. Petrič makes the same connection, and suggests that, for Lipuš, DNA and geography are among those things that both inhibit your journey to self-discovery but also inevitably define what that "self" is in the first place. These are the things that she still wishes to escape through imagination and creativity.[4]

Critics and commentators like to use words like "playful," "irreverent," "vivacious (*razigran*)," and "mischievous (*hudomušen*)" to

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2 See 87. Incidentally, the four collections before *Kaj smo, ko smo* were actually written in the US.

3 In this article, the page numbers given generally refer to both the Slovene original and the English translation; these are always on facing pages, the original on the even-numbered pages, the translation on the odd-numbered pages. Occasionally, when I am referring to one specific line, I give only the number of the single page that contains it.

4 See Petrič (2008: 1,683). See also Canadian poet Donna Kane in the foreword to the present volume, viii.

describe Lipuš's style, but when I shared some of these poems with a friend who enjoys poetry and is an astute reader, her immediate response was, "Oh, my God, this is all so *dark*!" Indeed, given the primary themes described above, the prevailing moods in *Kaj smo, ko smo* are closer to disorientation, depression, and anger than to fun. A lot of the "playfulness" people pick up on sometimes only adds an extra level of creepiness to the proceedings: "Nespečnost/Sleeplessness" (36–37), for example, contains a series of surreal, silly images (the poet's multiple husbands—*and* wives, geographic entities interacting with one another like human beings, etc.), but when you read them as things an insomniac might conjure up as she tries to fall asleep, and then recall all the wrath and melancholy of the other poems, they can become rather disturbing.

Cvetka Lipuš's poetics are as rich and striking as the profound themes she takes on in her verse. I can only imagine how stunning it must be to hear her work read aloud: not only is there always a striking rhythm, the sound orchestration of these poems is often astonishing, with rich assonance and alliteration sometimes virtually creating tongue-twisters (e.g., "krvni tlak trka" [32], "ko tema ovije svoje tace" [48], and my favorite "mačke: mehte/tačke*"* [60]). Even more audacious are the images and metaphors she creates. In "Kje si, ko si/Where You Are, When You Are" (56–59), the poet describes three poems she is have trouble finishing as difficult people—"the poem that would like to go to a party …," "the poem that shuns the light…," "the poem that has deceived me right from the very beginning …"; while in "Gibalo/Perpetuum Mobile" (54–55), she imagines her two deceased grandmothers unstitching the threads that hold in place their contributions to the family's genetic make-up. It is images such as these that have earned Lipuš those "playful" epithets, but as Donna Kane writes in her foreword (ix), "… at the same time [they are] often so startling as to have a visceral effect." *This* is the most important thing to emphasize, I believe: many of these poems are so daring and original that mere "playfulness" seems beside the point.[5]

So, in terms both of form and content, Cvetka Lipuš's verse presents the translator with some formidable challenges. Tom Priestly meets these head-on and often achieves stunning results. Inevitably, a few errors creep in here and there, and there are places where the English diction could be more elegant. In the end, however, none of this in any way detracts from the book's many virtues. Perhaps of greater interest are those places where Lipuš presents translators with real puzzlers, lines that all but defy any elegant translation at all. For example, one metaphor she regularly uses in her verse to express escaping from the quotidian is "shed one's skin" (i.e., like a snake

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[5] But there are also moments when it feels like Lipuš is trying a bit too hard to be precisely "mischievous," as in "Zaposlitev/Employment" (16–17), which is a rather overly precious "ad" posted by the sky for "a specialist, male or female, in the production of clouds."

does). She employs a variety of terms for this, including *preleviti se*, which has acquired the figurative sense of "change into." In part two of the poem "Odprti konec/Open End" (4), she writes: "V hipu se prelevim v kraljico modre krovi," which in everyday discourse would be understood right away as "In a moment, I change into a blue-blooded queen." But here, the verb also automatically echoes a regular leitmotif of her verse and prefigures images in a number of the poems that follow. To maintain this connection, Priestly creates "In a moment I change my skin into that of a blue-blooded queen" (5), which unfortunately sacrifices the grace and clarity of the original. The poem "To-Do List" (74–75; this is the title of both versions) contains an even more daunting passage. In what seems to be the description of a day of quiet desperation, she employs some remarkable wordplay on the popular idiom, *vreči puško v koruzo* ("to give up"), literally "to throw the rifle into the corn." In his rendering, Priestly gamely tries to build something similar on "to throw in the towel," a fine-enough English equivalent of the Slovene, but to my mind the wordplay that follows just sounds clunky and opaque. However, here and in the previous example the question arises: How can one do better? Honestly, I have no answer in either case! Translating poetry inevitably demands that something in the original has to be sacrificed.[6]

As it is, the choices Priestly made have produced a collection of superb English-language poems. They are aurally striking, with potent rhythms and a rich sound texture that occasionally mirrors that of the original. In "Nespečnost/Sleeplessness" (36–37), for example, Lipuš's "Potone kakor pomornica in se/pojavi sredi Mediterana," with its rich mix of *p*'s and *o*'s, is matched by Priestly's "It sinks like a submarine and surfaces/in the middle of the Mediterranean," with a plethora of *s*'s and *m*'s. With such careful attention to Lipuš's mechanics and his own sharp poetic sense, Priestly does full justice to the Slovene poet's daring images, as in this from part 4 of "Poglej nas, kako lebdimo/Watch Us Float" (46–47):

> …Širi se šum pločevinaste gosenice,/ki iz predmestja leze v blišč sredine, kjer si baročni vrt/popravlja pristriženo pričesko v ogledalo tankega ledu,/nared za kamere neštetih gostov, ki še dremajo po/hotelskih sobah…
>
> …The noise of a tin caterpillar/reverberates as it creeps from the suburbs into the glare of/ the centre, where a baroque garden fixes its clipped haircut/in a mirror of thin ice, ready for the cameras of countless/guests who are still dozing in hotel rooms…

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[6] In this connection, I would have liked a "translator's forward" or "afterword" in which Dr. Priestly explained his approach to translating and the particular challenges that Lipuš's verses presented him.

"Watch Us Float" is especially brilliant, in my opinion, as is Priestly's work in "Prehod/ Passage" (62–63), but the reader will find gems for him- or herself throughout this collection.

In conclusion, *Kaj smo, ko smo/What We Are, When We Are* is a wonderful introduction to a superb poet who deserves a wider readership. Finally, special thanks to the AU (Athabasca University) Press for including this unique work in their special Mingling Voices series.

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Matej Šurc. *Patriotism for Sale: How Independent Slovenia Fell Foul of Crooked Arms Dealers*. Translated by Vasili Volarič. Ljubljana: Sanje Publishing, 2018. +441 pp., $7.50 (e-book) ISBN: 978-961-274-521-9

It starts with a whodunit murder mystery. A former officer of the Slovenian Territorial Defense is killed in what looks like an accident, his body found at the bottom of a ravine, having fallen from a steep bluff above it. But further investigation suggests that he had no business being at the precipice to begin with and that this could not have been an accident. Further, his body appears to have been dragged to the place where it was found. This is one of a series of mysteries that *Patriotism for Sale*, by Slovenian investigative journalist Matej Šurc,[7] seeks to address. The book reads like a police procedural, covering the story of illegal arms dealing during the Yugoslav Wars, with a focus on Slovenia's ten-day war of independence in 1991. While the book goes into great depth about how the illicit arms trade functions throughout Europe, following several key players instrumental to this illegal activity, the core of the book is an hour-by-hour (in some cases minute-by-minute) account of that ten-day war.

As an American professor living for many years in Slovenia, I've tried to read as much as I can, to educate myself about my adopted homeland. Never have I found such impressive historical detail as I have in *Patriotism for Sale*. I learned a tremendous amount about the illegal arms trade in Europe, which encompasses both individuals and nations. A handful of actors were responsible for a large percentage of illicit arms trade worldwide, profiting from conflicts in Africa, the Middle East and beyond, not just in the former Yugoslavia. The means to acquire military equipment on a large scale and smuggle it anywhere they liked was hugely lucrative. But the story goes

[7] Šurc was the RTV correspondent in Belgrade for many years, then in Washington, D.C., and he now works for Radio Slovenija.