

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ECOLOGY THROUGH POETRY (OF JURE DETELA)

organized by
Literary Association IA and the Slovenian Comparative Literature Association
from 16 to 20 March 2012
Škocjan na Krasu – Ljubljana, Slovenia

Conference Chair: Jelka Kernev Štrajn, M.A., Slovenian Comparative Literature Association

Program Co-Chairs: Darja Pavlič, Ph.D., Journal *Primerjalna književnost*

Iztok Osojnik, Ph.D., Literary Association IA

Invited participants: **Jelka Kernev Štrajn** (Ljubljana), **Raymond H. Miller** (Brunswick, Maine, USA), **Richard Jackson** (Chattanooga, Tennessee, USA), **Alenka Jovanovski** (Ljubljana), **Iztok Osojnik** (Ljubljana), **Zdravko Zima** (Zagreb, Croatia), **Darja Pavlič** (Ljubljana), **Ravel Kidrič** (Trieste, Italy), **Miklavž Komelj** (Ljubljana), **Luka Omladič** (Ljubljana), **Gordana Beltram** (Škocjan), **Agnieszka Będkowska-Kopczyk** in **Michał Kopczyk** (Bielsko-Biała, Poland), et al.

The conference was sponsored by **Slovenian Book Agency, Regional park Škocjan Caves, Cultural Association Vilenica, Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts, Tourist Association Škocjan, Community of Sežana, Krka, d. d., Polica Dubova Cultural and Artistic Association, Journal *Monitor*.**

www.ia-zlaticoln.org

1. THEME:

Ecology through Poetry (of Jure Detela)

This year's Škocjan symposium may be understood on the one hand as a continuation of last year's symposium, which focused on the political dimension of poetry and on Kosovel (along with a number of other poets), while on the other hand it ties in with the topics raised by last year's 9th International Comparative Literature Colloquium that was part of the programme of the Vilenica Festival and was dedicated to a reflection on the interactions of the sciences, humanities and literature and conceived in a clearly interdisciplinary manner. The Škocjan symposium, which bears the title *Ecology through the poetry (of Jure Detela)*, may not be interdisciplinary in the same way, but in view of the topics it covers it will also attempt to consider the findings of interdisciplinary approaches to literature. This is inevitable, since we have decided to open a discussion of the poetic treatment of the natural environment from various perspectives.

Man's relationship to the natural environment has long been the subject of artistic representation, particularly in fine art and literature. We need merely think of landscape painting in the centuries following the Renaissance, the pastoral romance and bucolic poetry, or the descriptive poetry of nature, to mention merely a few examples where nature as an artistic theme and motif has been most in the foreground in programmatic terms. Today the problem of the artistic representation of the landscape and the human environment in general in literature and art appears in an entirely new light and from new perspectives which have for decades been the subject of intensive research even within literary studies, where they have made their home under the umbrella term "ecocriticism". Ecocriticism, like ecolinguistics and ecophilology, is one of those new coinages that come into being whenever a particular situation reaches a crisis point. In this case the crisis is the one connected to the natural human environment and the environmental movements that

emerged as a response to it or, more precisely, as a response to humankind's increasingly possessive attitude towards everything that exists. Their efforts, however, often appear to be merely another way to control nature and another form of anthropocentric orientation. We have therefore put forward as a starting point for discussion at the symposium the idea that man's relationship with everything that is not human is still trapped in a vicious circle, in most cases based on the traditional, binary, oppositional relationship between nature and culture. It is therefore right to ask how we can break out of this circle. The first step might be for man to withdraw from the centre of the circle to its periphery, and here we can turn for help to art, which has long been a forum for experimenting with such shifts. The perception and exploration of these shifts will be the main subject of this year's symposium.

Our starting point will be the poetry of Jure Detela (1951–1992), along with that of a number of other poets of similar sensibilities. Detela has in common with Kosovel the fact that his poetry, most of which was written in the 1970s and 1980s, was, like Kosovel's (written in the 1920s), considerably ahead of its time. The work of both poets may be said to be politically engaged and, in a sense, intertextually connected. Kosovel's lines "Man is an animal / The animal is man", for example, point directly to a number of lines from Detela's poetry, which in fact is remarkable for its unique treatment of animals. Not only of animals, but also of the environment, particularly the natural environment, with which Detela's poetic narrator shaped a specific relationship using what was at the time an entirely new poetic attitude. We must realise, however, that this relationship did not only concern the material environment. It was also a relationship with language, with the formulation of a new poetic language which allowed Detela to examine this specific attitude towards everything existing. Here, once again, parallels with Kosovel can be seen. The political involvement of the two poets, which is also apparent in their challenging of the binary view of the relationship between human beings and everything that is not human, was something deadly serious – no less serious than their poetry itself. Detela went a step further than Kosovel, since he developed his original poetic reflection and expression to the point of no return to the onetime anthropocentric attitude.

Although it is not possible to address such an intense and all-embracing commitment with the equanimity of the observer, it will nevertheless be necessary to discuss the concepts involved. In view of the fact that we have decided to talk about ecology through the prism of poetry (and vice versa), it will first be necessary to clarify terms such as environment, culture and nature, establish why connecting poetry and ecology is urgent and topical, and incorporate into the discussion and exploration of the epistemological, poetological, linguistic-pragmatic, ethical and other dimensions of our environment; and establish what intertextual relationships exist between ecocritical, ecolinguistic, literary critical, literary and scientific discourse. We must be aware that dialogue about how we understand nature, how we interact with it and change it, cannot take place separately from everything that defines us; this is above all the position from which we make our declarations, itself dependent on the culture – however we define this concept – in the middle of which we find ourselves.

It will therefore make sense to consider the main philosophical conceptualisations and ideological appropriations of nature in the tradition of modern European thought (and perhaps further afield). The idea that the body (both human and animal) can become an important fulcrum when reflecting on rearticulations of the boundary between nature and culture and the crossing of that boundary may be a productive one. However, we conceptualise the body and its relationship with the mind on the one hand and the environment on the other, we must understand that for the time being we cannot place ourselves outside our own human view of the world, and we should not forget that the human animal as well as the non-human animal are by no means the entities that are defined once and for all.

With this in mind, and taking into account historical perspective and a series of theoretical and artistic texts, the symposium participants will reflect critically on the boundaries which over the course of its long history humanism has established between man and the rest of nature.

Jelka Kernev Štrajn

2. PROGRAM

Friday, 16 March – Arrivals

19:30 Dinner

Saturday, 17 March

9:30 – Presentations

10:45 – Coffee break

11:00 – Presentations and discussions

13:00 – Lunch

15:00 – Presentations

17:30 – Free time (walk in the area)

19:00 – Dinner

Sunday, 18 March

9:30 – Presentations

10:45 – Coffee break

11:00 – Presentation and discussions

13:00 – Lunch

14:45 – Presentation and discussions

16:30 – Visiting Škocjan caves (or Tomaj)

19:30 – Dinner

Monday, 19 March – Excursion to Ljubljana

9:00 – Departure

11:10 – Presentations and discussions (Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts)

13:30 – Lunch

15:00 – City tour of free time

19:00 – Return to Škocjan

20:00 – Farewell dinner

Tuesday, 20 March – departures

3. GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Primerjalna književnost (Comparative Literature Journal)

All papers are peer reviewed.

Submit papers via e-mail: darja.pavlic@uni-mb.si

Articles should be in word format (or compatible), Times new roman 12, single spaced, and **not longer than 30,000 characters** (including spaces).

The full title of the paper is followed by author's name, institution, address, country, and email address of the author.

Articles have a **synopsis** (up to 300 characters), and **key words** (5-8); both set in *italics* directly before the main text. The **longer abstract** (up to 2000 characters) is set after the main text.

Endnotes are numbered (numbers follow a word or punctuation directly, without spacing) and placed at the end of the main text (no footnotes!). Endnotes do not contain bibliographical citations.

Quotations within the text are in quotation marks; omissions are marked with ellipses and adaptations are in square brackets. Longer quotations (more than five lines) are set off in block paragraphs. The source of quotations appears in parentheses at the end of each quotation. When the author of a quotation is mentioned in the accompanying text, only the page numbers (42-48) are in the parentheses at the end of the quotation. When the author of a quotation is named in parentheses, there is no punctuation between the author and page number: (Pirjevec 42-48). Different works by the same author are referred to by an abbreviated title in parentheses: (Pirjevec, *Strukturalna* 42-48).

The bibliography at the end of the article follows MLA style:

– Independent publications (monographs, collections of papers):

Pirjevec, Dušan. *Strukturalna poetika*. Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1981. (Literarni leksikon 12).

– Articles in periodical publications:

Kos, Janko. "Novi pogledi na tipologijo pripovedovalca." *Primerjalna književnost* 21.1 (1998): 1-20.

– Contributions in collections of papers:

Novak, Boris A. "Odmevi trubadurskega kulta ljubezni pri Prešernu." *France Prešeren – kultura – Evropa*. Eds. Jože Faganel and Darko Dolinar. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2002. 15-47.

– Digital sources:

McGann, Jerome. "The Rationale of HyperText." Web 24 Sept. 2009

<<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/~jjm2f/rationale.htm>>.

(or)

Kirschenbaum, Matthew G. "Done: Finishing Projects in the Digital Humanities." *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 3.2 (2009). Web 24 Sept. 2009 <<http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/>>.