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*Lyric Subject in the Poetry of Milan Milišić*

*Summary*

The paper offers an interpretation of the key features of the dominant aspects of the lyric subject in Milan Milišić's poetry. At the beginning, we present the theoretical basis of the analysis. The lyric *I* is understood as the subject of the uttering in the "fictional speech situation" (Culler), and the provisional identity of this uttering instance is recognized as the persona. Following this, we single out the characteristics of the neoimpressionist lyric subject in Milišić's poems. As early as his debut collection, the utterances of such a lyric *I* are contextualized by the borderline space positions (the seashore) and/or liminal periods of the day (dawn, dusk). Also conforming to this are the distancing from the cerebral (self)foundation and the articulation of the ephemeral sensations, most frequently achieved through luminous effects, the dynamics of light and shadow, or unstable audio stimuli. In later collections, the presence of the interrogative and emphatic utterances declines, but the relativization of the border between the lyric *I* and non-*I* and staying in the positions of the diminished ideological and symbolic implications are more frequent, i.e. the lyric *I* is striving towards deterritorialization.

Another important type of the lyric subject in Milišić's poetry is the uttering instance with a higher social-critical awareness; as in the examples of the neoimpressionist lyric subject, the lyric *I* is usually deprived of nuanced psychologizing. In certain cases, this is a persona of the witness to a situation which is specific because of the lyric characters from the social margins. However, what predominates is the shaping of the lyric subject whose utterances carry a parabolic undertones and whose social-critical awareness is revealed through the ironic deviation from the criticized social/political/cultural phenomena. Irony turns out to be a sort of resistance to the processes of interpellation and, on the formal-expressive level, it enables the production of parabolic constructions, i.e. the indirect, distanced demystification of the instances of power and social gaps and codes.

In these poems the critique is especially directed towards the alliance of poetry and ideology and towards the opportunistic social-political positions. With the aim of realizing the critical ethos, the context of the lyric *I*'s utterance is often determined by the communicative relations and situations, in which the lyric subject apostrophizes or becomes the recipient of the utterance. Within this practice, the uttering instance could take over the persona rendered concrete by a certain social status, which is followed by the stereotyping of the speech idiom. For the purpose of demystifying the political/ideological "jargon", the persona of an ironist himself can assume a certain mask, e.g. an infantilized "face" whose uttering carries satiric-sarcastic implications.

Whether we deal with a neoimpressionist lyric *I* or a lyric subject of a heightened social-critical awareness, the shaping of the uttering instance often reflects the elements of existentialist poetics. The presence of existentialist "tones" brings Milišić's lyric poetry closer to many modernist poetics present in the South-Slavic context in the 1970s and 1980s. On the other hand, the neoimpressionist lyric *I* can be considered a key contribution of Milišić's poetry, when it comes to the typological spectrum of the modernist lyric subjectivity in the suggested (South-Slavic) framework.

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