

Sodobna dramatika je do neke mere dedinja neoavantgarde s konca šestdesetih in iz sedemdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja. Takrat se je namreč zgodil t. i. performativni obrat, ki je gledališče potegnil stran od reprezentacije k prezentaciji. Razvoj, ki je sledil, označujemo z različnimi oznakami, npr. postdramsko gledališče, estetika performativnega, v primeru dramskih besedil pa kot ne več dramski gledališki tekst, gledališče »u fris« ipd.

Tudi na Slovenskem se je konec šestdesetih let zgodil odločilen zasuk od besedila k dogodku. Takrat so nastali prvi hepeningi in performansi, ob *Pupiliji* pa je Venó Taufer razglasil kar smrt literarnega gledališča. Na prvi pogled se torej zdi, da sodobna dramska pisava ponavlja prejšnje vzorce. Da morda radikalneje ubeseduje jezikovne in estetske igre, dekonstruira dramsko formo in torej radikalizira nastavke neoavantgard, a vendar v zadnjih dveh desetletjih govorimo o vračanju k dramskemu, o postpostdramskem, o (spet) dramskih tekstih itd.

S primerjalno analizo dveh radikalnejših besedil iz zbornika *Generator:: za proizvodnjo poljubnega števila dramskih kompleksov* (*Sinopsis za happening Hlapci* Dušana Jovanovića in *Generator, ki iz določenih enot in po preprostih pravilih proizvaja poljubno število dramskih kompleksov* Rastka Močnika) ter dveh besedil Simone Semenič in Varje Hrvatin (*mi, evropski mrliči* in *Vse se je začelo z galažem iz zajčkov*) razprava pokaže, da gre pri neoavantgardah za vprašanje gledališke uprizoritve in forme dramskega teksta, pri sodobni dramatikii pa bolj za način iskanja avtentičnosti in dramatičnih učinkov.

Ključne besede: Dušan Jovanović, Rastko Močnik, Simona Semenič, Varja Hrvatin, slovensko eksperimentalno gledališče, slovenska dramatika

Gašper Troha je doktoriral na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani. Ukvarja se s sociologijo literature, še posebej z vprašanji sodobne svetovne in slovenske dramatike ter gledališča. Deluje kot raziskovalec na AGRFT Univerze v Ljubljani. Objavljal je v številnih domačih in tujih znanstvenih revijah. Med drugim je soavtor knjig *Zgodovina in njeni literarni žanri* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), *Literarni modernizem v »svinčenih« letih* (Študentska založba, 2008) in *Lojze Kovačič: življenje in delo* (Študentska založba, 2009). Leta 2015 je izdal monografijo *Ujetniki svobode* o razvoju slovenske dramatike in gledališča pod socializmom.

Sodobna dramatika in vprašanje dediščine neoavantgarde šestdesetih in sedemdesetih let

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Uvod¹

Sodobna dramatika je do neke mere dedinja neoavantgarde s konca šestdesetih in iz sedemdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja. Takrat se je namreč zgodil t. i. performativni obrat, ki je gledališče potegnil stran od reprezentacije k prezentaciji. Kot ugotavlja Barbara Orel ob razvoju performansa, je »pot v performans tudi v slovenskem prostoru šla prek estetike performativnega, pri kateri so imele vodilno vlogo ritualne oblike gledališča ter ritualom sorodne umetniške in družbene prakse, ki vse udeležence povezujejo v skupnost.« (»K zgodovini« 278) Razvoj, ki je sledil, označujemo z različnimi oznakami, npr. postdramsko gledališče (Lehmann), estetika performativnega (Fischer-Lichte), v primeru dramskih besedil pa kot ne več dramski gledališki tekst (Poschmann), gledališče »u fris« (Sierz) ipd.

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Vprašanji, ki se nam postavljata, torej sta:

Kje so razlike med eksperimentalnimi besedili druge polovice prejšnjega stoletja in sodobno slovensko dramatikó? Kaj so njihove skupne značilnosti?

¹ Zahvala: članek je nastal v okviru raziskovalnega programa Gledališče in medumetnostne raziskave (P6-0376), ki ga sofinancira Javna agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije iz državnega proračuna.

Osvetlili ju bomo z analizo dveh radikalnejših besedil iz zbornika *Generator:: za proizvodnjo poljubnega števila dramskih kompleksov (Sinopsis za happening Hlapci Dušana Jovanovića in Generator, ki iz določenih enot in po preprostih pravilih proizvaja poljubno število dramskih kompleksov Rastka Močnika)* ter njuno primerjavo z besedili Simone Semenič in Varje Hrvatin (s tekstoma *mi, evropski mrlič* Simone Semenič in *Vse se je začelo z golažem iz zajčkov* Varje Hrvatin).

Še preden pa se lahko lotimo analize izbranih besedil, moramo premisliti osnovne teoretske pojme, s katerimi teatrologija in literarna zgodovina opisujeta razvoj dramske pisave zadnjih 60 let.

Performativni obrat in njegove posledice v gledališču in dramski pisavi

Kot smo že opozorili na samem začetku, je ob koncu šestdesetih let v Evropi, ZDA pa tudi v takratni Jugoslaviji prišlo do radikalnih sprememb v umetnosti in njenem odnosu do družbe. Te je kasneje Erika Fischer-Lichte v svoji temeljni knjigi *Estetika performativnega* poimenovala z naslovnim terminom. Utemeljila ga je ob performansu jugoslovanske umetnice Marine Abramović *Lips of Thomas*, ki ga je ta izvedla 24. 10. 1975 v galeriji Krinzinger v Innsbrucku. Poanto spremembe avtorica opiše na naslednji način:

Takšen performans se izmika prijemom tradicionalnih estetskih teorij. Trmasto se upira hermenevtični estetiki, ki meri na to, da bi umetniško delo razumela. Tu namreč ne gre toliko za razumevanje dejanj, ki jih je izvedla umetnica, kot za izkustva, do katerih je pri tem prišla sama, pa tudi za tista, ki jih je izzvala v gledalcih; na kratko: gre za transformacijo udeležencev performansa. (19)

Da bi takšne dogodke lahko opisali in jim pripisali določene pomene, je potreben drugačen pristop, ki ga Fischer-Lichte imenuje estetika performativnega, saj tradicionalne estetske teorije umetnosti niso zmožne misliti umetniškega dela po performativnem obratu. »Ključnega momenta obrata, spremembe od dela in z njim vzpostavljenih relacij do dogodka – namreč subjekt proti objektu ter materialni status proti znakovnemu – niso zmožne doumeti« (31). Te pojmovne dvojice se namreč prekrivajo in s tem proizvajajo učinke liminalnosti, praga, ki udeležence transformira oz. ima za posledico emergenco (naključno pojavljanje) učinkov oz. pomenov.

Drug avtor, ki je pomembno konceptualiziral razvoj gledališča in gledaliških besedil po performativnem obratu, je Hans-Thies Lehmann s svojo knjigo *Postdramsko gledališče*. Tudi Lehmann izhaja iz spoznanja, da je gledališče v prvi vrsti stvar skupnosti. »Gledališče pomeni: čas, ki ga skupaj preživijo in skupaj porabijo igralci

in gledalci v *prostoru* [...]. Gledališka predstava na podlagi vedenja na odru in v prostoru za gledalce proizvede *skupni tekst*, tudi če ni izrečena nobena beseda« (20). Poudarjena je torej najprej zmožnost gledališča, da oblikuje skupnost, nato pa je problematizirana pozicija besedila, ki je bilo tradicionalno izvor in merilo uspešnosti gledališke uprizoritve ter element, ki je gledališkim znakom garantiral sintezo.

V postdramskem gledališču se ta hierarhija zamaje, elementi uprizoritve postanejo enakovredni, poudarjeni pa sta njihovi simultaneost in večpomenskost. Kot zapiše Lehmann že v uvodu svoje knjige:

Naslov »postdramsko gledališče« s tem, da namiguje na literarno zvrst drame, signalizira povezanost in izmenjavo, ki med gledališčem in besedilom obstaja še naprej, četudi je tu v središču diskurz *gledališča*, zaradi česar upošteva besedilo le kot element, plast in »material« odrske stvaritve, ne kot njenega vladarja. (21)

Postdramsko gledališče posledično proizvaja drugačna dramska besedila, ki jih Gerda Poschmann imenuje ne več dramski gledališki teksti, »v katerih jezik ni govorica likov – kolikor liki, ki jih je mogoče definirati, sploh še obstajajo – pač pa se pojavlja kot avtonomna teatralika« (21). Ne moremo več govoriti o elementih tradicionalne teorije drame, kakršni so dramska oseba, dramsko dejanje, ustvarjanje iluzije ... (prim. Kralj), ampak govorimo o jeziku, ki se osamosvaja, o govornih ploskvah, kakor jih imenuje Elfriede Jelinek, ki ustvarjajo napetost in odsevajo sodobni svet.

Za nas je zanimiv še Lehmannov pogled na neoavantgardo, ki jo razume kot tretjo etapo razvoja postdramskega gledališča, saj v to obdobje spadajo tudi besedila, ki so objavljena v *Generatorju*. Kot neoavantgardo sicer razume predvsem dramo absurda in lirsko dramo, a se zaveda, da v »60. letih nastane, v gibanju 68 pa doseže vrh nov duh eksperimentiranja v vseh umetnostih« (66). Pri tem omenja tudi hepeninge in performans ter posebej omenja, da je »Richard Schechner uprizoril *Dioniza 69* (*Dionysius 69*), pri katerem so bili gledalci povabljeni, da stopijo v telesni stik z igralci« (67). To pa nas že pelje v polje postdramskega. Za Lehmanno je namreč določujoča lastnost postdramskega prav položaj dramskega besedila. Ko skuša najti razlike med epskim gledališčem in gledališčem absurda na eni in postdramskim na drugi strani, zapiše:

Vendar je storjen korak proti postdramskemu gledališču šele, ko so gledališka sredstva onstran jezika enakopravna z besedilom in jih je mogoče sistematično misliti tudi brez njega. Zaradi tega ne bi govorili o »nadaljevanju« absurdnega in epskega gledališča v novem gledališču, temveč bi označili prelom, da se tako epsko kot tudi absurdno gledališče z različnimi sredstvi držita predstavljanja fiktivnega in fingiranega besedilnega kozmosa kot dominante, postdramsko gledališče pa nič več. (69)

Ker je dramsko besedilo znotraj uprizoritve detronizirano, se zamaje tudi pomen celote. Ta nima več koherence in je težko določljiv. Postane fluiden in odvisen od

interpretacije posameznika. Z Lehmannovimi besedami: »Gledališče nič več ne stremi po celovitosti estetske gledališke zgradbe iz besede, pomena, zvoka, geste, temveč dobiva značaj fragmenta in parcialnosti« (70). Prav to pa so, kot bomo videli v nadaljevanju, tudi poglavitne značilnosti obravnavanih dramskih tekstov. V njih izginjajo elementi drame, besedilo postaja razpoložljivo in ureja tudi ostale elemente gledališke uprizoritve. Pomen se izgublja oz. ostaja skrajno odprt, kar pelje v fragmentarnost in poljubnost interpretacije.

Opisani razvoj gledališke uprizoritve in umetnosti na sploh, ki je izšel iz duha študentskih nemirov leta 1968, se je v nekdanji Jugoslaviji ujel s težnjami po popolni svobodi ustvarjanja in po iskanju novega načina življenja. Kot ugotavlja Barbara Orel, je ta generacija sledila »imperativu kreativnega življenja, svojo radikalno držo pa je vzdrževala v svobodomiselnem levičarskem duhu, ki se upira vsakršnim oblikam političnega, družbenega, gospodarskega in kulturnega despotizma« (»K zgodovini« 278, 279). Ta zahteva po svobodi pa je seveda peljala stran od ustaljenih načinov uprizarjanja, od hierarhičnih razmerij znotraj uprizoritve in k oblikovanju skupnosti.

Nikakor pa tu ni šlo za slovenski fenomen, ampak za širše jugoslovanski. Tako Branislav Jakovljević v svoji natančni raziskavi razmerij med razvojem performansa in jugoslovanskega socializma prav tako zazna spontani nastanek študentskega gibanja leta 1968, ki pa je bilo kmalu nevtralizirano. Samoupravljanje se je namreč ponujalo kot družbena oblika, ki dopušča skrajno svobodo posameznika, torej nekakšno izpolnitev študentskih zahtev, ki pa seveda nikoli ni bila neproblematična. Tako Jakovljević analizira performans Raše Todosijevića *Odločitev kot umetnost*, ki ga je prvič izvedel avgusta 1973 v Galeriji Richarda Demarca v Edinburgu. Le nekaj mesecev kasneje ga je izvedel v Študentskem kulturnem centru v Beogradu na razstavi *Informacije II*, kjer je performans dobil povsem drugačne konotacije. Performans je umetnik izvedel s svojo partnerko Marinelo Koželj, ki je negibno sedela na stolu na odru. Raša je najprej pobarval štiri fikuse z belo barvo. Nato je svoje telo prekril s soljo in vzel iz akvarija živega krapa ter ga položil na tla. Potem je sam začel goltati velike količine vode, krap pa se je premetaval po tleh in umiral. Umetnik golta vodo in bruha, dokler riba ne pogine. Performer si pobarva eno uho v belo in se obrne proti občinstvu. V rokah drži baterijsko svetilko, dokler se baterija ne izprazni ali dokler ne more več zdržati v tem položaju (prim. 169).

Čeprav je britanska monarhija daleč od absolutizma 18. stoletja, njeno ideološko, politično in teološko ozadje v prvo izvedbo Todosijevićevega performansa *Odločitev kot umetnost* vnese noto plemenite in poudarjeno protidemokratske *umetnosti odločanja*. Ko ga vnovič izvede v jugoslovanski porevolucionarni družbi, isti performans postavi v ospredje popolnoma nov niz vprašanj. »[Č]e je bila prva v celoti integrirana v mrežo umetnostnih ustanov, je bil drugi izraz in nadaljevanje duha komune iz beogradskega junija '68« (172).

Kar je v Veliki Britaniji delovalo kot komentar kapitalističnih družbenih razmerij v monarhiji, je bilo v Jugoslaviji razumljeno kot oblastni obračun s študenti po letu 1968. Umetniki so torej s svojim umetniškim iskanjem postavljali tudi komentar svobode izražanja in pravice do posameznikove izbire življenjskega sloga, s čimer so posredno izražali družbeni komentar.

Na prvi pogled eksplicitnejši je performans Marine Abramović: »Ko je 20. aprila 1974 Marina Abramović po tistem, ko si je najprej porezala nohte na rokah in nogah ter si odrezala del las, nato pa vse to vrgla v ogenj, zgodaj zvečer stopila v gorečo peterokrako zvezdo, je stopila v presečišče umetnosti in politike, konceptualizma in politike, kar je bilo za Jugoslavijo po letu 1968 nekaj edinstvenega« (Jakovljević 206).

Marina Abramović je veliko eksplicitnejše pokazala na zvezo med oblastjo in umetnostjo, kar je kasneje še ponovila (npr. uporaba peterokrake zvezde v *Lips of Thomas*). Vendar pa tega dejanja ne moremo brati kot simbol oblastnega nasilja ali izgorevajočih revolucionarnih idealov. »Položaj v Jugoslaviji je bil veliko bolj zapleten, zato bi bilo znatno primernejše, če bi pet glavnih točk te plameneče strukture razlagali kot konstelacijo vzajemno nasprotujočih si sil, ki so v tistem času delovale v Jugoslaviji« (Jakovljević 208). Podobno ugotavlja Gašper Troha ob raziskavi slovenske dramatike in gledališča med letoma 1945 in 1990, ko prikaže občutljivo ravnovesje med večinoma nasprotujočimi si težnjami umetnikov, oblasti in publike, ki so omogočile razcvet slovenske dramske pisave in gledališča po letu 1960 (prim. *Ujetniki*). Razprava o odnosih med umetnostjo in oblastjo v socializmu pa seveda presega naš pričujoči namen, zato na tem mestu le povzemimo spoznanje, da je umetnost z estetskimi prelomi in iskanji v nekdanji Jugoslaviji dobila tudi politični učinek.

Sodobna dramska pisava med postdramskim in dramskim

Prav zaradi zgoraj omenjene pozicije alternativne kulture, ki je z margine prišla v center v osemdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja, se je po letu 1990 gledališče na splošno, eksperimentalna umetnost pa še posebej, znašlo pred izzivom, ki ga lucidno formulira Barbara Orel: »Kako ohraniti in vzdrževati identiteto alternativnega, če ne nagovarja več s strukturnega mesta marginalnega, saj je razlika med centrom in margino načeloma razveljavljena?« («K zgodovini» 320).

Odgovor na to vprašanje je bilo iskanje novih konceptualnih in estetskih izhodišč, ki bi pomenila alternativo v novih kulturnopolitičnih razmerah samostojne države. Ta alternativa se je vzpostavila po letu 2000 v radikalizaciji postdramskega in kasneje v njegovem soobstoju z vračanjem k dramski formi.

Ker smo postdramsko gledališče in ne več dramski gledališki tekst že opisali, si pogledajmo, kakšne so najnovejše tendence v dramski pisavi, ki se pri posameznih avtorjih mešajo s postdramskimi ali bolj tradicionalno dramskimi elementi.

Birgit Haas ob sodobni nemški dramatiki ugotavlja, da je kljub dolgemu postdramskemu obdobju spet začela uporabljati nekatere dramske elemente. Kot zapiše ob dramatiki Dee Loher:

Kljub uporabi potujitvenega efekta se ne prepusti niti postmodernistični dekonstrukciji subjekta niti koncu pripovedi. Prav nasprotno, Loher gradi na konceptu revolucionarne marksistične estetike Walterja Benjamina, s katero je slednji skušal ohraniti človeškost v umetnosti, element človeškosti, ki bi lahko kljuboval tehničnim inovacijam njegovega časa. (Haas 74)

Pri tem pa ne gre za vračanje k realizmu, ampak za skrajno fragmentarne tekste, ki nosijo pečat postdramskega, saj avtorica

namenoma gradi občutek negotovosti kot posledico mešanice zasebnih in javnih političnih diskurzov. [...] Njeno delo je kreativno in uspešno obujanje brechtovskega gledališča v kontekstu postmoderne dobe, dobe, v kateri so ljudje ponovno zavzeli gledališki prostor. [...] Gledališče Dee Loher je gledališče opravnomočenja, politično gledališče, ki gledalca ne pusti povsem zmedenega pred podobo družbe po koncu zgodovine. (Haas 85)

Podobna spoznanja srečamo pri Tomažu Toporišiču, ki analizira dramsko pisanje po postdramskem. Pri tem ugotavlja, da avtorice Anja Hilling, Milena Marković in Simona Semenič na različne načine presegajo ne več dramsko gledališko pisavo. Tako detektira nezmožnost komunikacije in razstavljanje telesa in glasu ob Anji Hilling, dekonstrukcijo in rekonstrukcijo reprezentacije realnosti ob dramah Simone Semenič in kontaminacijo z lirskim in epskim ob delih Milene Marković. Pogledajmo si le njegov opis strukture dramatike Simone Semenič, ki nas bo v nadaljevanju posebej zanimala:

Dialoško obliko sicer vztrajno predeluje v družbi z raznorodnimi besedilnimi strategijami: od odskih smernic do opisov, ki so bližje romanu in prozi, pripovednih, esejističnih, teoretičnih in drugih tehnik, ki občinstvo opominjajo, da to, kar bere ali gleda, ni več realen dialog. Toda pri tem proizvede izrazito dramatične učinke, ki bi jih Haasova najbrž imenovala »dramatično dramske«. (»Dramska« 114)

Élisabeth Angel-Perez pride do podobnih ugotovitev. Namreč, da postdramsko gledališče preko dekonstrukcije drame pravzaprav kreira novo fikcijo, s tem pa se vrača k elementom, ki jih je prvotno dekonstruiralo. Kot zapiše sama ob koncu članka »Nazaj k verbalnemu gledališču«:

Avtor na odru izrisuje novo vrsto lirskega subjekta, ki obstaja nekje vmes med gledališčem in performansom in, čeprav se giblje v polju avtobiografskega [govori o

Zanimivo je, da Angel-Perez tu vzpostavlja povezavo med gledališčem in performansom, torej med eksperimentalnimi praksami iz šestdesetih in sedemdesetih let in sodobnim gledališčem, ki prav prek vdora realnosti ponovno ustvarja fiktivni svet drame, s tem pa tudi zunanjo referenco.

Z druge strani se problemu približa Anne Monfort v članku »Po postdramskem: pripoved in fikcija med odrsko pisavo in neodramskim gledališčem«. Odrska pisava ji pomeni celoten sistem znakov uprizoritve, med katerimi je besedilo le eden od njih in ostalim ni predhoden. Uprizoritve tako lahko vsebujejo neko besedilo, a se to ves čas meša z realnostjo odrske uprizoritve. Primer tega so izstopi igralcev iz vlog, pripovedovanje o prikazovanem svetu, elipse, zgoščevanje itd. Vse to pa seveda pomeni vdor pripovedi v gledališče. Na drugi strani gre za neodramsko gledališče, pri katerem obstajajo dramski liki in dejanje, čeprav so skrajno fragmentarni in se ves čas poigravajo z dvojnostjo fikcije in realnosti v gledališču. Kot zapiše Monfort: »Ta tekst [*Zasebno življenje* Ulrike Syha, op. a.] je tipičen primer neodramskega gledališča, pri katerem dejanje kljub vsemu ostaja, pa čeprav samo fragmentarno, prek oseb ali likov, ali celo če se igra z ambivalentnostjo med osebo in igralcem« (151).

Kot vidimo, tudi Anne Monfort ugotavlja, da gre pri sodobnem gledališču za prevpraševanje razmerja med realnostjo in fikcijo, ki ima svoje korenine v performansu in postdramskem gledališču. Ob tem pa velja poudariti, da obe avtorici odkrivata v teh tekstih in uprizoritvah ponovno vzpostavitev dramskih elementov, kakršni so dramske osebe in dramsko dejanje, čeprav je to večinoma skrajno fragmentarno. Poleg tega Monfort poudarja še eno poglobljeno lastnost, ki smo jo opisali že ob estetiki performativnega. To je vključenost gledalca in njegova aktivna vloga. Kot zapiše v zaključku svojega članka: »Kot odgovor svetu, ki je vse bolj prežet s fikcijo in dramatičnostjo, sodobne gledališke oblike kakor znova pretresajo vprašanje resničnega in izmišljenega, obenem pa gledalcu puščajo prosto pot, da si zamisli dramo, ki je na odru ni« (158).

Gledališko besedilo torej ni le material, ki ga poljubno spreminja ustvarjalna ekipa ob uprizoritvi, ampak je tudi v celoti odprta struktura, ki gledalca/bralca vabi k razmišljanju in ustvarjanju lastne interpretacije oz. celo zgodbe.

Pomudimo se sedaj še ob dokaj radikalni tezi Blaža Lukana, ki jo je formuliral ob najmlajši generaciji slovenskih dramskih piscev, konkretno ob Varji Hrvatin, ki nas bo v nadaljevanju posebej zanimala. Kot zapiše, tak tekst »ne vsebuje nobene didaskalije, pri čemer izkazuje tudi povsem nerazvidno dialoško linijo, hkrati pa z nobenim namigom v svoji pisavi ne napotuje na uprizoritev« (115). Kljub temu ta

besedila proizvajajo močne dramatične učinke, zahtevajo aktivno participacijo bralca oz. gledalca in jih zato nedvomno čutimo kot dramske, morda bolje uprizoritvene ali gledališke tekste. Takšno je tudi besedilo *Vse se je začelo z golažem iz zajčkov*, ki ga bomo analizirali v nadaljevanju in predvideva več različnih branj. Avtorica bralca/gledalca usmerja, da si glede na svoje poglede in razpoloženje ustvari svojo zgodbo iz predlaganih delov ali pa prebere besedilo od začetka do konca. A vse skupaj ni le igra v postmodernističnem smislu, ampak avtorica prek teh prizorov izpoveduje svojo zgodbo iskanja identitete, spopadanja z anoreksijo, strahovi itd. Lukan na koncu članka vendarle tvega z napotkom, kako brati in uprizoriti to dramatiko: »[O] svobojena kreativna evforija sodobnega dramskega pisca pričakuje tudi adekvaten odziv sodobnega režiserja in njegove ekipe« (118).

Iz predstavljenih teoretičnih izhodišč lahko zaključimo, da je modernizem šestdesetih in sedemdesetih let pomenil predvsem dekonstrukcijo dramske forme, vdor realnosti v gledališko uprizoritev in vključevanje gledalcev/bralcev oz. kreiranje skupnosti. Ta dediščina je močno opazna tudi v obdobju po postdramskem, ko pa sicer fragmentarna struktura ponovno proizvaja dramatične učinke in izkazuje nekatere elemente drame (npr. dramske like in dejanje). V nadaljevanju bomo s pomočjo primerjave konkretnih besedil skušali dognati paralele med eksperimentalnimi teksti iz obdobja modernizma in sodobno dramatiko na Slovenskem.

Sinopsis za happening Hlapci in mi, evropski mrlič

Prvi tekst, s katerim se bomo podrobno ukvarjali, je *Sinopsis za happening Hlapci*, ki je bil objavljen v reviji *Problemi Katalog* kot del repertoarnega načrta Male Drame SNG v Ljubljani v sezoni 1968/69. Izvedba je bila načrtovana v sklopu *Slovenska izvirna besedila*, kot avtorji pa so bili navedeni Žarko Petan (režiser), Dušan Jovanović (avtor) in Andrej Inkret (dramaturg). Do izvedbe ni nikoli prišlo, je pa Dušan Jovanović režiral Cankarjeve *Hlapce* v Mestnem gledališču ljubljanskem v sezoni 1980/81 (prim. *Generator* 356).

Gre za hepening, ki poveže gledalce in igralce v skupnost, obenem pa je usmerjen v zburjanje močnih, večinoma negativnih čustev, kot so strah, nelagodje, tesnoba. Začne se z vstopom v dogodek, ki spominja na ritual. Naslov tega dela je »Dvigalo groze«, preko katerega gledalci na koncu tudi zapustijo dogodek. V dvigalu med potovanjem ugasne luč in iz »teme se zaslišijo razni kriki, elektronski zvoki, molk, pospešeno dihanje in konkretna glasba. Dvigalo za nekaj časa obtiči, medtem zvočniki opozarjajo potnike, naj zadržijo mirno kri in ohranijo živce, ker jih bodo še potrebovali« (Jovanović 76). V foajeju in kadilnici se mešata na eni strani zabava – razstava slik, kipov, fotografij, prodaja pečenic in hrenovk ter čevljarске usluge in frizer – in ponovno glasna glasba

in hrup. Občutek nelagodja se stopnjuje v dvorani, kamor gledalce zaklenejo, luč ugasnejo, od zunaj pa se slišijo trkanje in pozivi, naj spustijo igralce noter.

Sledi Jermanov govor v gostilni iz četrtega dejanja Cankarjevih *Hlapcev*, ki pa ga komentirajo sočasne projekcije: »mladinske delovne brigade/ ceste/ podjetja/ delovni uspehi« (78). Sledi župnikova replika o tem, da so se časi spremenili in da je ljudstvo izbralo, kakor je izbralo, ki pa jo spremljajo projekcije hipijevskega življenja ter policijske represije. Besedilo je tako ves čas relativizirano, obenem pa pripeljana v neposredno sodobnost.

Dogajanje se sprosti s prihodom recitatorja in plesalke, ki ju spremljajo projekcije sončne pokrajine in abstraktnih kompozicij. Temu intermezzu sledita prihod Jermana in scena v gostilni iz četrtega dejanja Cankarjevih *Hlapcev*. Vendar je v tej sceni vse pretirano in groteskno. »Kostumi so mešanica pižam, spalnih srajc, poklicnih oblačil in golote [...]Možje so v čudnih pozah. [...] Nekdo med prisotnimi sedi na ogromni nočni posodi, ki v prizorišču dominira z megafonom v rokah in se napenja. To naj bi bila govorniška tribuna« (79).

Zbrani imajo nekakšen samoupravljavski sestanek, vmes igrajo družabne igre, Jermani pa se množijo do številke šest. Vsak novi Jerman interpretira iste odlomke iz Cankarjeve drame na drugačen način in s tem ustvarja nekakšno polemiko. »Polemika med petimi Jermani se začne živo in na moč razgibano. Govore se vse replike. Velik hrup, v katerem se polagoma besede več ne razločijo« (81).

Sledi vnovič bolj sproščeno dogajanje, ko se iz zvočnikov predvajajo reklame in napoved barskega programa, spremljajo pa jih projekcije cirkuških atrakcij. Na koncu igralec skozi megafon govori pesem o Robespieru, iz zvočnikov pa slišimo šest Jermanov, ki pojejo pesem o *Hlapcih*.

Ko zvočniki naznanijo konec hepeninga, ponovno sledi prehod skozi dvigalo groze.

Jovanovičev hepening je emblematičen primer gledališkega dogodka po performativnem obratu. Temelji na samonanašalni feedback zanki med izvajalci in udeleženci, vzbuja pri gledalcih močna čustva, ki so večinoma neprijetna, ob tem pa ustvarja občutek skupnosti že z ritualnim vstopom in izstopom, celo s fizično ujetostjo v dvorani (zaklenjena vrata), sestankom, na katerem so obravnavani »vsi problemi, ki zadevajo prisotne v gostilni in vse druge občane in državljanke« (79). Pomen je ves čas relativiziran – tako Jermanove in Župnikove replike spremljajo nasprotujoče si projekcije – pogosto se govora sploh ne sliši ipd. Pomen besed je tako izvotljen in interpretacija je prepuščena vsakemu gledalcu, pri čemer le-ta nima občutka, da se njegova sklada z doživljanjem in interpretacijo ostalih, še manj pa mu je jasno, kaj mu skuša povedati ustvarjalna ekipa.

Simona Semenič je besedilo *mi, evropski mrlji* napisala leta 2015, leta 2016 je bilo uprizorjeno v Slovenskem mladinskem gledališču (režija Sebastijan Horvat, premiera 5. 6. 2016). Gre za besedilo z močno prepoznavnimi postdramskimi značilnostmi – dogajanje je skrajno fragmentarno, besedilo pogosto ni izpisano in je prepuščeno uprizoritveni ekipi, avtorica ves čas pripoveduje s stališča gledalca/bralca, dramske osebe so bolj funkcije v celoti kot psihološko izdelani liki. Kljub temu je celota skrajno napeta in dramatična ter politično angažirana.

Na eni strani so konferansje, ki je nekakšen politični agitator in nam ves čas dopoveduje, da smo v dreku in da moramo nekaj ukreniti. Njegovo, javno, pozicijo dopolnjujejo vodovodarji, ki skušajo rešiti realno iztekanje dreka, v katerem se duši gledališka dvorana, Jolanda, ki kot nekakšen ovaduh beleži dogajanje na odru, in Milena, ki se lepa sprehaja sem in tja ter nas skuša očarati. Na drugi strani imamo intimne zgodbe, ki služijo kot kontrast družbenemu stanju in kot relativizacija javnega delovanja. Večinoma so statične. Takšna je Lojzka (Alojzija Bizjak), ki je prva na odru in ves čas le čaka. Na koncu se izkaže, da čaka na Smrt. Podobno pasivna je partizanka Milica, ki je v hospicu in ne more več govoriti, nam pa njeno tragično zgodbo družinskega nasilja pripoveduje avtorica. Sledi par »jakob in andreja / ali / jakob in silvo / ali / nina in andreja / ali / silvo in nina« (369, 370), ki kot podoba zaljubljenecv počasi hodi proti rampi in se drži za roke. Nasprotje tema predstavljata »jožica, 88 let, in milan, 91 let«. Ravno tako ljubimca, ki pa sta podoba mesenosti in užitka. »mi gledamo in se ne moremo prav odločiti, ali nam / je to prijetno / lepo je, če se dva poljubljata / ampak gledati jožico, 88 let, in milana, 91 let, kako / se žvalita, v nas prebuja mešana občutja« (371).

Celotno dogajanje se stopnjuje proti koncu, ko dvorano ogrožajo ogromne količine dreka, ki mezi iz kanalizacije. Skupina vodovodarjev ga skuša zaustaviti, a brez uspeha. Kriv je kurba židovska škrtka, ki ni hotel odobriti popravila, tako da so sedaj igralci in gledalci ne le v metaforičnem dreku, o katerem govori konferansje na začetku, ampak tudi v dejanskem dreku.

Konec se izteče v dvojno poanto. »politika je kurva iz kažina, bi čisto na koncu rekla / partizanka milica [...] ampak partizanka milica nikoli več / nikoli več ne bo prišla do besede« in »sonce, vetrc, morje / svoboda« (429). Politika je torej nered in kurba, temu nasprotna pa je podoba narave, ki morda pomeni svobodo.

Simona Semenič radikalizira nastavke, ki smo jih srečali že pri Jovanoviću. Besedilo je popolnoma naravnano na sprejemnika in na njegovo izkustvo. Besedilo pripoveduje pripovedovalka, ki jo bralec enači z avtorico in je obenem ena od bralk/gledalk: »četrtta replika je res dolga / mi se že presedamo na stolih / ker nam preseda / jebemumater, kako nam preseda ta agitka / raje pogledujemo proti mileni / milena je res lepa / res lepa« (367).

Hrup ni več glasna glasba in različni posneti zvoki, ampak je realiziran na ravni teksta kot hitro menjavanje diskurzov, ki mu mora bralec določiti točke izjavljanja oz. dramske osebe.

to je res, je res, da smo v dreku, ampak vsaj plavamo / tako moraš na to gledat / vsaj plavamo

zadostikrat povedal, da na ta način stvari ne peljejo / nikamor

katere stvari

stvari / stvari pač / družba / družbena ureditev / državna ureditev / ureditev vrtov / vrtovi / nisem še / nisem še

za vstop v združene države amerike ne rabim vizuma / rabim esta obrazec, karkoli naj bi že to bilo

onkraj česa, jebemumater?

milena odide (374, 375)

Zgornji citat je le odlomek, ki naj ponazori strukturiranost celotnega besedila. Na prvi pogled gre morda za nizanje različnih govorov, ki med seboj niso povezani po kavzalni logiki, ampak po absurdnem naključju, vendar ta zmes replik, didaskalij in refleksij dogajanja vendarle proizvede občutek dramskih oseb, o katerih smo že govorili. Skratka, ta kakofonija glasov se zvede na nekaj prepoznavnih nosilcev diskurza, ki se umeščajo v večjo, konfliktno strukturo, v kateri dogajanje poteka simultano. Slednje bega sprejemnikovo recepcijo, saj mora posameznemu dogajanju pripisati določen pomen v celoti.

Še več, samo besedilo se zaveda, da je le eden od elementov uprizoritve in da ga bo ustvarjalna ekipa temeljito predelala, dopisala, brisala ... Ves čas ostaja odprto in razpoložljivo. Tako npr. replike konferansjeja, ki je osrednji lik, saj ima največ prostora na odru, večinoma sploh niso izpisane.

režijska domislica

in potem je šele začel

prva replika

premolk, v katerem se začne vmes, vmes med prvo in zadnjo repliko

druga replika

druga replika je

izraz naklonjenosti / drža pozdravila / nekaj vsebinsko zelo pomembnega pravzaprav. ampak v civilizirani družbi v komunikaciji med odraslimi ljudmi bistvenega pomena / za vzdrževanje nivoja kultiviranosti / formalna reč, nepogrešljiva v prenosu zahtev in želja / izraz naklonjenosti / drža pozdravila (361)

Sam konferansje je lahko kdorkoli: »morda konferansje / ali mobilizator / moški lik, ki ga lahko igra tudi ženska [...] morda je bolje, da ga igra ženska / materinska figura / mehka, zaobljena, topla / z mirom v glasu / mirom / in strastjo« (363).

Govorjene replike na odru niso več ključnega pomena. Replike partizanke Milice, ki so pravzaprav najbolj pretresljiva zgodba o nasilju v družini in nasilju nad ženskami, ne morejo biti izgovorjene, saj Milica ne govori več. Avtorica pa izvede še eno izvotlitev besede. Besede, ki jih tekst slovarsko definira, da postanejo prazne. Npr. drkati, ki se veže na konferansjejevo agitacijo in na ljubezenski par:

drkati / prvič / samozadovoljevati se, masturbirati / france si ga drka štirikrat dnevno / drugič / drsati, starinsko / fantje so se drkali po ledu / tretjič / s stalnim rahlim premikanjem ali zgolj dotikanjem česa delati hrup ali motiti prisotne / nehaj že drkati stol! / četrtrič / nekoga mučiti, nesorazmerno obremenjevati, zafrkavati / 20 eur za parkiranje? ne me drkat! (369)

Drug postopek je pregibanje besede, ki sicer spada v kontekst: »je kot tofu napram / biftek / bifteka / bifteku / biftek / bifteku / biftekom / je kot tofu napram bifteku / drkanje napram seksu je kot tofu napram bifteku« (376).

Simona Semenič tako združuje številne postopke neoavantgardnega gledališča in postdramske pisave, kot so fragmentarizacija, simultanost dogajanja, izvotljenje besed, razpoložljivost besedila in s tem njegova detronizacija, obenem pa v *mi, evropski mrlič* lahko ponovno zaznamo obrise dramskih oseb, ki so med seboj v konfliktnih razmerjih. Slednja gradijo prepoznavno dogajanje ali vsaj nasprotje ter se iztečejo v zaključno poanto, ki ni povsem eksplicitna, a jo lahko kljub temu jasno prepoznamo kot poziv k svobodi, intimi in obrat stran od političnih projektov.

V formalnem smislu jo zaznamuje fragmentarnost besedila in simultanost dogajanja, kar je nedvomno dediščina postdramske pisave, obenem pa močan vdor lirizacije (glavna pripovedovalka celotno besedilo govori iz sebe in tudi komentira svoje intimno doživljanje dogajanja na odru) in epizacije (besedilo je močno prežeto s pripovedovanjem, kar pravzaprav omogoča njegovo simultanost in fragmentarnost). Tako je pri Simoni Semenič vidna močna dediščina uprizoritvenih tekstov iz obdobja modernizma, obenem pa že tudi njihovo preseganje in razvoj, ki ponovno vzpostavlja prav elemente drame, ki jih je dekonstruirala.

Generator, ki iz določenih enot in po preprostih pravilih proizvaja poljubno število dramskih kompleksov in Vse se je začelo z golažem iz zajčkov

Rastko Močnik je leta 1970 v 85. številki revije *Problemi* objavil dva teksta, ki pa tvorita celoto. Gre za *Generator*, serijo kombinacij prostorov, ljudi, drž, glasov in gibov, ki sledijo določenim pravilom. Ta pravila so bila objavljena na drugem mestu v številki pod naslovom *Drama*. Slednja je programska utemeljitev *Generatorja*, ki izhaja iz analize dramskega teksta. Zanj je značilno, da zelo natančno določa govorno razsežnost uprizoritve, veliko ohlapnejše pa so določeni drugi elementi (fonične vrednosti izvedbe, položaji in premiki aktantov ter gibi). Močnikova *Drama* prav nasprotno zelo togo definira fonično in kinetično razsežnost, ohranja pa svobodo oz. naključnost vsakokratne izvedbe, saj izhodiščne situacije določi žreb, razvoj pa je izbira med možnimi kombinacijami različnih elementov (prim. Močnik 101). Avtor v nadaljevanju definira enote in pravila dramskega teksta, pri čemer je zanimivo, da med enotami (prostori, ljudje, drž, glasovi in gibi) ni besedila, ampak gre za drugačna izvajalčeva izrazna sredstva oz. elemente uprizoritve. Ti se združujejo po določenih pravilih, predvsem pa se izmenjujejo v vnaprej določenih serijah. Tako je »zaporedje drž: a-b-c-d-e-a... [...] smeri gibanja skoz prostore: a) smer urinega kazalca: I-II-III-IV-I-..., b) smer, nasprotna od gibanja urinega kazalca« (102). Gre torej za nekakšno kompleksno igro, ki proizvaja poljubno število kombinacij osnovnih elementov, s tem pa tudi poljubno število dramskih kompleksov, kot jih imenuje avtor. Slednje so omejene z »nemožnimi kombinacijami«, ko bi bila ena od serij prekinjena oz. je ne bi bilo mogoče pravilno nadaljevati. V tem primeru se prekine gibanje skozi prostor in se kombinacija ponovi v istem prostoru ter nadaljuje z naslednjo kombinacijo v istem prostoru. Na koncu *Drame* Močnik zapiše navodilo: »Začetek: izhodiščne kombinacije in smer gibanja iz vsakega prostora določi žreb; konec: igre je konec, ko se hkrati zgodijo 4 nemožne kombinacije in zato vsi štirje ljudje hkrati obstanejo« (102).

Besedilo je izrazito usmerjeno v uprizoritev in stran od besedila. Slednjega ni, saj so dramski kompleksi sestavljeni iz drugih elementov uprizoritve. Še najbližje diskurzu je šest glasov, ki pa so predjezikovni elementi. Dogajanje je simultano, izvajajo ga štirje ljudje v štirih prostorih. Posamezni gledalec gradi pomen glede na lastno sprejemanje in doživljanje predstave, ki v njem lahko vzbuja le določene vtise, nikakor pa ne sugerira možnih pomenov. Tekst tako na prvi pogled spada v postdramsko tradicijo, pri čemer pa je manj poudarka na kreiranju skupnosti. Še več, zdi se, da je za to strukturo ključno naključje, žreb, kar izključuje racionalni subjekt. S tem je ta tekst močno zasidran v modernizmu z idejami o toku zavesti, avtomatski pisavi ipd.

Vse se je začelo z golažem iz zajčkov je dramski tekst, ki je nastal leta 2019 in bil istega leta tudi uprizorjen na Novi pošti Slovenskega mladinskega gledališča (režija Eva

Kokalj, produkcija KUD Krik in JSKD v sodelovanju z Novo pošto), Varja pa je leta 2020 za to besedilo dobila tudi Grumovo nagrado za mladega dramatika v okviru 50. Tedna slovenske drame. Tudi to besedilo se začne z navodili za uporabo oz. s »Prologom, ki je zelo dolga opomba«. V njej med drugim beremo:

1. Če se imaš za bolj razumsko osebo, ki daje prednost racionalnemu, si nagnjen k analiziranju ter sprejemaš odločitve na podlagi tega, kaj se ti najbolj splača, potem je zate najprimernejša *MOŽNOST A* [...]
2. Če se imaš za bolj emocionalno osebo, ki se hitro prepusti čustvom, si nagnjen k sanjarjenju ter sprejemaš odločitve na podlagi trenutnega razpoloženja, je zate najprimernejša *MOŽNOST B* [...]
3. Če pa si eden od bolj impulzivnih ljudi, se rad znajdeš v nenavadnih, naključnih situacijah, ravnaš spontano in se zanašaš na sprejemanje odločitev v trenutku, brez kakršnih koli pričakovanj, ti priporočam *MOŽNOST C*. (947)

Kar je skupnega *Generatorju* in *Vse se je začelo*, je uporabnost besedila. Bralec/gledalec ga odkriva glede na določene izbire. Celota predstavlja igro, skozi katero se ustvarja pomen. Vendar pri Varji ta igra ni več stvar naključja in ni ločena od sprejemnika. Prav nasprotno, glavna igralca sta, kot zapiše avtorica: »dramski avtor in bralec + ostali soigralci, ki v tišini pridno čakajo na stranski klopi« (945). Tu ne gre več za naključje in avtomatsko pisavo, pač pa za sprejemnikovo izbiro. Še več, ta izbira ga v temelju določa. Avtorica uporablja diskurz iz revij za življenjski slog ali knjig za samopomoč, ki dajejo nasvete glede na psihološki ustroj posameznika. Če smo racionalni, je za nas možnost A itd. Sprejemnik se torej z izbiro tudi psihološko definira oz. bo izbral glede na to, kako se želi ali se vidi. Te izbire se skozi celoten tekst ponavljajo, le da sedaj niso več vezane zgolj na psihološki profil sprejemnika, pač pa tudi na njegovo željo po smeri nadaljevanja: »ČE ŽELIŠ, DA GREM ŠTUDIRAT NEKAJ UPORABNEGA, obrni na stran 971« (969), ali življenjske izkušnje: »ČE SI TUDI TI KDAJ PREVARAL/-A SVOJEGA FANTA ALI PUNCO, obrni na stran 970« (968).

Celota so izseki iz avtoričine avtobiografije, na kar kažejo številne podrobnosti, kot so preimenovanje njenega očeta Emila Hrvatina v Janeza Janšo, njena izbira študija dramaturgije na AGRFT ... Ob teh zunanjih podrobnostih, ki sugerirajo branje drame na ključ, pa Varja ves čas razkriva svoje notranje doživljanje in psihološki razvoj, ki je potekal prek občutkov krivde in drugačnosti v otroštvu, prek kasnejšega spopadanja z anoreksijo, iskanja partnerja itd.

Kako se torej ta struktura in vsebina umeščata v postdramsko ali celo neodramsko paradigmo? Besedilo ostaja nekaj povsem razpoložljivega. Lahko ga beremo na več načinov in s tem sami kreiramo zgodbo avtorice. Slednja se tako kaže kot nekaj fikcijskega, kot pripoved, ki pa kljub temu temelji na resničnih dejstvih, kar ji daje veliko mero avtentičnosti. Sprejemnik je aktivni soustvarjalec lastne izkušnje in ta

je pravzaprav povsem osebna in neponovljiva. Izbor je narejen glede na trenutno razpoloženje, videnje samega sebe, iz tega izhajajočih odločitev, ki jih mora sprejeti, in občutka, da bo v vsakem primeru nekaj izpustil, zamudil. Vsaka izbira namreč prinaša tudi izgubo vseh ostalih možnosti. Prav to drugačno dožemanje, pogled pa je že za Lehmana eno temeljnih določil postdramskega. Tudi povezava med izvajalko/avtorico in sprejemnikom, ki se ves čas vzpostavlja preko nagovorov in izbir, je nekaj, kar bistveno definira gledališki dogodek, kot ga razume Erika Fischer-Lichte. Vendar pa gre v *Vse se je začelo* tudi za vdor pripovedi v dramsko besedilo. Čeprav je bilo besedilo nagrajeno kot najboljša drama mlade dramatičarke v letu 2020 in je bilo leto prej tudi uspešno uprizorjeno, Blaž Lukan že na začetku svoje analize opozori na več dilem: 1. Kako analizirati novo dramo zunaj vseh okvirov, definicij? 2. Kako to dramo brati? in 3. Kdo sploh bere? (prim. »Tega« 99, 100). Izhaja torej iz občutka, da gre za novo pisavo, ki »se včasih zdi resnično nova, nato pa spet nekaj že zdavnaj – še posebej v modernistični dramatik in postdramatiki – videne in reflektirane« (prav tam 97).

Kot smo ugotovili tudi sami, gre za preplet postdramske tradicije in močne epizacije in lirizacije. Po eni strani za vdor pripovedovalca, v konkretnem primeru dramatičarke same, ki pripoveduje o svojem življenju, ki pa nima več funkcije epizacije, preboja četrte stene v smislu Szondijevega koncepta, ampak skozi to pripoved prinaša lirski subjekt. Ta epizacija namesto potujitvenega učinka prinaša, prav nasprotno, učinek povezanosti med dramatičarko in gledalcem, ki sooblikujeta avtoričino intimno zgodbo oz. eno od njenih možnih interpretacij. Čeprav bi ob besedilu lahko govorili o prepoznavni dramski osebi (pripovedovalka/avtorica) in dramskem dejanju (prizorih iz njenega življenja, ki jih strukturira bralec s svojimi izbirami in imajo vnaprej določeno strukturo/-e), sta ta elementa drame uporabljena na izrazito postdramski način, ki temelji na dogodku, fragmentarnosti in aktivni vlogi sprejemnika. Tako izkazuje Varja Hrvatini močan vpliv postdramskega, ki pa ga cepi na enako močan vdor epizacije in lirizacije, s čimer ustvarja izrazito dramatične učinke.

Sklep

Sedaj lahko poskušamo odgovoriti na izhodiščni vprašanji. Kje so podobnosti in razlike med obravnavanimi teksti?

Podobnosti so očitne. Vsem gre za ustvarjanje gledališkega dogodka, ki je neponovljiv in zahteva aktivno udeležbo sprejemnika (bralca ali gledalca). V ta namen manipulirajo s sprejemnikovimi čustvi (npr. ustvarjanje nelagodja, tesnobe, zmedenosti), uporabljajo simultano dogajanje in fragmentarnost dejanja, s čimer od sprejemnika zahtevajo

odločitev za izbiro lastnega dogodka in seveda tudi lastne interpretacije. Z vsem tem spadajo ti teksti v domeno postdramskega in v tem smislu lahko potrdimo, da je vpliv eksperimentalnih besedil iz obdobja neoavantgard še vedno močno prisoten v sodobni slovenski dramatiki.

Vendar pa se med tema generacijama kažejo tudi nekatere pomembne razlike. Če gre pri Jovanoviću in Močniku v prvi vrsti za destrukcijo gledališke uprizoritve, za detronizacijo dramskega besedila z vsemi posledicami, je pozicija Simone Semenič in Varje Hrvatin bistveno drugačna. Gledališče se je v vmesnem obdobju že vrnilo k besedi in postalo družbeni forum v osemdesetih letih, se ponovno odvrnilo od besede in šlo v smer fizičnega gledališča, sodobnega plesa ... (devetdeseta leta) pa se spet vrnilo k besedilu (po letu 2000). Skratka, napetost med tekstom in odrom ni več osrednja točka dramske pisave, ampak postane to razmerje nekaj razpoložljivega. Podobno kot elementi tradicionalne drame (npr. dramska oseba, dejanje) in postopka epizacije in lirizacije. Semenič in Hrvatin uporabljata vse to na nove načine, da bi dosegla kar največjo vključenost sprejemnika. Predvsem izkušnja gledalca/bralca postane osrednja točka te pisave. Pri Semenič je nenehno reflektirana, saj se zdi, da avtorica/pripovedovalka pripoveduje prav s stališča gledalke. Varja jo izpostavlja z nenehnimi pozivi k izbiri, ki je vezana na gledalca, njegov psihološki profil in življenjske izkušnje. Tako smo priča močnemu vdoru pripovedi, ki se meša s prikazovanjem (diegezis in mimezis, kot ugotavlja Anne Monfort) in z močnim občutkom intimnosti ter avtentičnosti. Avtorici nas namreč potegneta v lastni svet oz. lastni pogled na svet, ki se zdi, da izhaja iz lirskega subjekta, ne nazadnje pa tudi iz sprejemnikovega, saj postanemo soustvarjalci predstave in njenih pomenov. Ravno ta preplet pa je tisto, kar ustvarja visoko stopnjo dramatičnosti in pritegne današnjega bralca/gledalca.

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To some extent, contemporary drama is the heir of the neo-avant-garde of the late 1960s and 1970s. This time was that of the so-called performative turn, which pulled theatre away from representation and towards presentation. The subsequent development can be designated by various labels, such as postdramatic theatre, the aesthetics of the performative and, in the case of dramatic texts, the no longer dramatic theatre text, "In-Yer-Face" theatre, etc.

In Slovenia, a decisive turn from text to event took place towards the end of the 1960s. During this time, the first happenings and performance art pieces were taking place. In reviewing the performance *Pupilija, papa Pupilo pa Pupilčki* (*Pupillja, Papa Pupilo and the Pupilceks*), Veno Taufer went as far as to declare the death of literary theatre. At first glance, it would thus appear that contemporary playwriting is merely repeating earlier patterns. While contemporary playwriting may more radically formulate linguistic and aesthetic games, it deconstructs the dramatic form and thus radicalises the premises of the neo-avant-gardes; in the last two decades, we have been talking about a return to dramatic, post-postdramatic and dramatic drama, etc.

Through a comparative analysis of two of the more radical texts from Blaž Lukan's anthology *Generator:: za proizvodnjo poljubnega števila dramskih kompleksov* (*The Generator:: for Manufacturing Any Number of Drama Complexes*), namely Dušan Jovanović's *Sinopsis za happening Hlapci* (*Synopsis for The Happening of Lackeys*) and Rastko Močnik's *Generator, ki iz določenih enot in po preprostih pravilih proizvaja poljubno število dramskih kompleksov* (*A Generator that Produces Any Number of Drama Complexes from Given Units and According to Simple Rules*) as well as Simona Semenič's *mi, evropski mrliči* (*we, the european corpses*) and Varja Hrvatín's *Vse se je začelo z golažem iz zajčkov* (*It All Started with the Bunny Rabbit Goulash*), the paper shows that the neo-avant-garde is more about the question of theatrical performances and the form of the dramatic text, while contemporary drama is more about the search for authenticity and dramatic effects.

Keywords: Dušan Jovanović, Rastko Močnik, Simona Semenič, Varja Hrvatín, Slovenian experimental theatre, Slovenian drama

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Contemporary Drama and the Question of the Neo-avant-garde Legacy of the 1960s and 1970s

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Introduction¹

To some extent, contemporary drama is the heir of the neo-avant-garde of the late 1960s and 1970s. This period saw the so-called performative turn, which pulled theatre away from representation and towards presentation. As Barbara Orel notes about the development of performance art: “The path to performance art in Slovenia also went through the aesthetics of the performative, in which ritual forms of theatre and ritual-related artistic and social practices that bind all participants into a community played a major role” (“K zgodovini” 278). The subsequent development can be designated by various labels, e.g., postdramatic theatre (Lehmann), the aesthetics of the performative (Fischer-Lichte) and, in the case of dramatic texts, the no longer dramatic theatrical text (Poschmann), “In-Yer-Face” theatre (Sierz), etc.

In Slovenia, a decisive turn from text to event took place towards the end of the 1960s. During this time, the first happenings and performance art pieces were taking place. In reviewing the performance *Pupilija, papa Pupilo pa Pupilčki* (*Pupilija, Papa Pupilo and the Pupilceks*), Veno Taufer went as far as to declare the death of literary theatre.

At first glance, it would thus appear that contemporary playwriting is merely repeating earlier patterns. While contemporary playwriting may more radically formulate linguistic and aesthetic games, it deconstructs the dramatic form and thus radicalises the premises of the neo-avant-gardes; in the last two decades, we have been talking about a return to dramatic (Toporišič “Dramska pisava”), post-postdramatic (Angel-Perez) and dramatic drama (Haas), etc.

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Thus, there are two questions that we have to ask here: What are the differences between the experimental texts of the second half of the 20th century and contemporary Slovenian drama? And what are their common features?

We will highlight these questions by analysing two of the more radical texts from Blaž Lukan's anthology *Generator:: za proizvodnjo poljubnega števila dramskih kompleksov* (*The Generator:: for Manufacturing Any Number of Drama Complexes*), namely Dušan Jovanović's *Sinopsis za happening Hlapci* (*Synopsis for The Happening of Lackeys*) and Rastko Močnik's *Generator, ki iz določenih enot in po preprostih pravilih proizvaja poljubno število dramskih kompleksov* (*A Generator that Produces Any Number of Drama Complexes from Given Units and According to Simple Rules*) and comparing them to Simona Semenič's *mi, evropski mrlič* (*we, the european corpses*) and Varja Hrvatin's *Vse se je začelo z golažem iz zajčkov* (*It All Started with the Bunny Rabbit Goulash*).

But before we analyse the selected texts, we need to consider the basic theoretical concepts that theatre studies and literary history use to describe the development of playwriting over the last 60 years.

The Performative Turn and Its Consequences in Theatre and Dramatic Writing

As pointed out at the beginning, radical changes in art and its relationship to society occurred towards the end of the 1960s in the USA, Europe and Yugoslavia. In her seminal book, *The Transformative Power of Performance*, Erika Fischer-Lichte later referred to these changes with the term the aesthetics of the performative. She based this term on the performance by the Yugoslav artist Marina Abramović entitled *Lips of Thomas*, which she performed on 24 October 1975 at the Krinzinger Gallery in Innsbruck. The author describes the crucial point of this change as follows:

Such a performance eludes the scope of traditional aesthetic theories. It vehemently resists the demands of hermeneutic aesthetics, which aims at understanding the work of art. In this case, understanding the artist's actions was less important than the experiences that she had while carrying them out and that were generated in the audience. In short, the transformation of the performance's participants was pivotal. (Fischer-Lichte 16)

In order to be able to describe such events and to attribute particular meanings to them, a different approach is needed, which Fischer-Lichte calls the aesthetics of the performative since traditional aesthetic theories of art are not able to consider the work of art after the performative turn. "However, they are unable to grasp its key aspect – the transformation from a work of art into an event" (Fischer-Lichte 23). These

conceptual pairings overlap and thus produce the effects of liminality, a threshold that transforms the participants or results in the emergence (contingent appearance) of effects or meanings.

Another author who has significantly conceptualised this development of theatre and theatre texts after the performative turn is Hans-Thies Lehmann with his book *Post-dramatic Theatre*. Lehmann also proceeds from the insight that theatre is, first and foremost, a matter of community. "Theatre means the collectively spent and used up lifetime in the collectively breathed air of that space in which the performing and the spectating take place [...] The theatre performance turns the behaviour onstage and in the auditorium into a joint text, a 'text' even if there is no spoken dialogue on stage or between actors and audience" (17). Thus, he emphasises the capacity of theatre to form a community. Then he puts into question the position of the text, which has traditionally been considered the source and measure of the success of a theatrical performance and the element that guaranteed the synthesis of theatrical signs.

In postdramatic theatre, this hierarchy shatters, and different performance elements become equal in status while their simultaneity and multiple meanings become emphasised. As Lehmann writes in the introduction to his book:

By alluding to the literary genre of the drama, the title "Postdramatic Theatre" signals the continuing association and exchange between theatre and text. Nevertheless, the discourse of theatre is at the centre of this book and the text therefore is considered only as one element, one layer, or as a "material" of the scenic creation, not as its master. (17)

Consequently, the postdramatic theatre produces different dramatic texts, which Gerda Poschmann designates as no longer dramatic theatre texts, "in which language appears not as the speech of characters – if there still are definable characters at all – but as an autonomous theatricality" (18). We can no longer speak about the elements of traditional drama theory, such as the dramatic person, the dramatic act, the creation of illusion ... (cf. Kralj), but rather about language which becomes autonomous and about language surfaces, as Elfriede Jelinek calls them, that create tension and reflect the contemporary world.

Another important aspect for us is Lehmann's view of the neo-avant-garde, which he considers to be the third stage in the development of postdramatic theatre, as this is the period to which the texts published in *The Generator* anthology belong as well. While Lehmann considers the neo-avant-garde primarily as the drama of the absurd and lyrical drama, he is aware that "the 1960s see the development of a new spirit of experimentation in all arts" (53), which culminates in the 1968 movement. He also mentions happenings and performance art and points out that "In 1969, Richard Schechner stages *Dionysius 69*, in which the spectators are invited to get into physical

contact with the players” (53). And this already takes us into the area of the postdramatic. For Lehmann, the defining characteristic of the postdramatic is precisely the position of the dramatic text. As he endeavours to discern the differences between epic theatre and the theatre of the absurd on the one hand and postdramatic theatre on the other, Lehmann writes:

Yet the step to postdramatic theatre is taken only when the theatrical means beyond language are positioned equally alongside the text and are systematically thinkable without it. Hence we cannot speak of a “continuation” of absurdist or epic theatre in the new theatre but must name the rupture: that epic, as much as absurdist theatre, though through different means, clings to the presentation of a fictive and simulated text-cosmos as a dominant, while postdramatic theatre no longer does so. (55)

Since the dramatic text becomes dethroned within the performance, this also puts into question the meaning of the whole, which is no longer coherent and is quite challenging to define. It becomes fluid and depends on the interpretation of the individual. Lehmann states, “The aim is no longer the wholeness of an aesthetic theatre composition of words, meaning, sound, gesture, etc., which as a holistic construct offers itself to perception. Instead, the theatre takes on a fragmentary and partial character” (57). And, as we shall see below, these are also the main characteristics of the dramatic texts under discussion. In them, the elements of drama are disappearing, and the text becomes disposable and directs the other aspects of theatrical performance. Meaning is lost or remains extremely open, which leads to fragmentation and arbitrariness of interpretation.

In the former Yugoslavia, this development of theatre and the arts in general, which emerged from the spirit of the 1968 student riots, aligned with the aspirations for complete freedom of creativity and the search for a new way of life. As Barbara Orel notes, this generation pursued “the imperative of a creative life, and maintained its radical stance in a free-thinking leftist spirit, resisting all forms of political, social, economic and cultural despotism” (“K zgodovini” 278, 279). The demand for freedom naturally pointed away from established modes of performance, away from hierarchical relations within performances and towards the formation of community.

This, however, was not exclusively a Slovenian phenomenon but a broader Yugoslav one. Branislav Jakovljević, for example, in his detailed study of the relationship between the development of performance art and Yugoslav socialism, also detects the spontaneous emergence of the student movement in 1968, which was, however, soon neutralised. Self-management was presented as a social form that allowed for extreme individual freedom, thus fulfilling the demands of students. Nonetheless, it was always a bit problematic. This is how Jakovljević analyses Raša Todosijević’s performance piece entitled *Decision as Art*, first performed in August 1973 at the Richard Demarc Gallery in Edinburgh. Mere months later, he performed it at the Student Cultural

Centre in Belgrade at the exhibition *Information II*, where the performance took on completely different connotations. As his partner, Marinela Koželj sits impassively on a chair placed upstage right, the artist, stripped to the waist, first applies white paint to four small ficus plants positioned along the front edge of the stage. He covers his naked torso with salt, picks a live carp from a tank and places it on the floor. As the fish wriggles about the stage, he begins swallowing large quantities of water. The artist and the fish suffer in unison: the carp slowly suffocates on dry land, and Todosijević gulps water until he throws up, then drinks again. This “game” goes on until the carp dies. The performer paints one of his ears white and then faces the audience, holding a small battery-operated flashlight in his extended right arm. He holds it until the battery dies or until he can no longer hold up his arm (cf. 142).

Although the British monarchy is far from the absolutism of the 18th century, its ideological, political and theological background imbued the first performance of Todosijević’s *Decision as Art* with a note of noble and emphatically anti-democratic *art of decision-making*. However, when reprised in the post-revolutionary society of Yugoslavia, the same performance brought a whole new set of questions to the foreground. “[...] whereas the former was commercial, the latter was not; and while the former was fully integrated within the network of art institutions, the latter was an expression and continuation of the communal spirit of Belgrade’s June ‘68” (Jakovljević 144).

In the United Kingdom, this functioned as a commentary on capitalist social relations in the monarchy. In Yugoslavia, it was seen as a government reckoning with the students after the 1968 movement. Therefore, such artistic explorations of artists were also a commentary on the freedom of expression and the individual’s right to choose their lifestyle, thus indirectly presenting social commentary.

At first glance, Marina Abramović’s performance appears to be more explicit. “When, in the early evening of 20 April 1974, Marina Abramović stepped into a burning five-pointed star, having first clipped her finger- and toenails and cut some of her hair and thrown them into the flames, she entered into an intersection of art and politics, conceptualism and ideology, that was unique to post- 1968 Yugoslavia” (Jakovljević 177).

Marina Abramović pointed out the connection between power and art much more explicitly. She would repeat this gesture on later occasions (e.g., using the five-pointed star in her piece *Lips of Thomas*). However, this act cannot be read as a symbol of government violence or the extinguishing of fiery revolutionary ideals. “The situation in Yugoslavia was much more complex, and it might be more appropriate to read the five points of this burning structure as a constellation of mutually opposed forces at work in Yugoslavia at that time” (Jakovljević 179). I make a similar point in my study of Slovenian drama and theatre between 1945 and 1990 when I demonstrate the delicate balance between the largely conflicting tendencies of artists, authorities and

audiences that allowed for the flourishing of Slovenian playwriting and theatre after 1960 (Cf. Troha, *Ujetniki*). A discussion on the relationship between art and power under socialism is beyond the scope of our present purpose, so let us here merely summarise the realisation that art, with its aesthetic breakthroughs and explorations in the former Yugoslavia, also achieved political impact.

Contemporary Dramatic Writing between Postdramatic and Dramatic

After 1990, precisely due to the abovementioned position of alternative culture, which in the 1980s transitioned from the margins to the centre, theatre in general, and experimental art in particular, faced a challenge. As Barbara Orel so aptly formulates it: “How to preserve and maintain the identity of the alternative when it no longer speaks from the structural place of the marginal since the distinction between the centre and the margin has been abolished in principle?” (“K zgodovini” 320).

The answer to this question was to search for new conceptual and aesthetic starting points that could provide an alternative to the independent state’s new cultural and political conditions. After 2000, we can see this alternative emerge in the radicalisation of postdramatic theatre and later in its coexistence with a return to the dramatic form.

Since we have already described postdramatic theatre and the no longer dramatic theatre text, let us now look at the latest tendencies in dramatic writing, which become mixed with postdramatic or more traditionally dramatic elements, depending on individual authors.

Birgit Haas notes that, after a long postdramatic period, contemporary German drama has begun reintroducing some dramatic elements. She writes about the playwright Dea Loher:

Despite the defamiliarized *Verfremdungseffekt*, however, she neither subscribes to the postmodern decentering of the subject nor to the end of the metanarratives. Instead, Loher draws on Walter Benjamin’s revolutionary Marxist aesthetic that he established in order to retain a human element in the arts, a human element that would resist the technical innovations of his time (Haas 74, 75).

Loher is not, however, implying a return to realism but rather to the creation of radically fragmentary texts that bear the mark of the postdramatic, as she

deliberately causes a feeling of uncertainty, mainly due to the mixture of private and public political discourses. [...] her work is a creative and productive revival of the Brechtian theatre in the context of the post-postmodern age, an age in which human

beings have again reclaimed the theatrical space. [...] Loher's theatre is a theatre of empowerment, a politically engaged theatre that does not leave the bewildered spectator in front of a destroyed history. (Haas 85)

Tomaž Toporišič reaches similar insights when analysing dramatic writing after the postdramatic. In doing so, he notes that in different ways the authors Anja Hilling, Milena Marković and Simona Semenič reach beyond the no longer dramatic theatre writing. Thus, he detects the inability to communicate and the deconstruction of the body and voice in Anja Hilling's plays, the deconstruction and reconstruction of the representation of reality in Simona Semenič's plays, and the contamination with the lyrical and the epic in Milena Marković's works. Let us look at his description of the structure of Simona Semenič's dramatic works, which will be of particular interest to us later on:

She persistently reworks the dialogic form in conjunction with a variety of textual strategies: from stage directions to descriptions that are closer to novels and prose, to the narrative, essayistic, theoretical and other techniques, reminding the audience that what they are reading or watching is no longer a real dialogue. However, in doing so, she produces distinctly dramatic effects that Haas would probably call "dramatic drama". ("Dramska pisava" 114)

Élisabeth Angel-Perez reaches similar conclusions. Namely, that postdramatic theatre, through the deconstruction of drama, actually creates a new fiction, thus returning to the elements it was originally deconstructing. As Angel-Perez writes at the end of her article "Back to Verbal Theatre: Post-Post-Dramatic Theatres from Crimp to Crouch":

The author on the stage delineates a new sort of lyrical subject, half way between theatre and performance and, albeit on the mode of autobiography [author's note: here, she is referring to Tim Crouch's play *The Author*], relegitimizes fiction at the heart of post-dramatic theatre and therefore somehow recreates the drama. (30)

Interestingly, Angel-Perez establishes a link here between theatre and performance art, that is, between the experimental practices of the 1960s and 1970s and contemporary theatre, which re-creates the fictional world of drama, and thus external reference, precisely through the intrusion of reality.

In her article "Après le postdramatique: narration et fiction entre écriture de plateau et théâtre néo-dramatique", Anne Monfort approaches this problem from a different angle. To her, stage writing means the whole sign system of a performance, in which text is only one of the elements and does not precede the others. Thus, while performances may contain a text, it is constantly mixed with the reality of the stage performance itself. Examples of this can be seen in actors breaking the fourth wall or narrating about the depicted world, ellipsis, condensation, etc. All of this, of course, represents an intrusion of the narrative into the theatrical. On the other hand, there

is neo-dramatic theatre, where we can find dramatic characters and action. They are, however, highly fragmentary and constantly play with the duality of fiction and reality in the theatre. As Monfort writes: “This text [Author note: Ulrike Syha’s *Private Life*] is a typical example of neo-dramatic theatre in which there is still action, even if only fragmentary, through persons or characters, or even if playing with the ambiguity of the person and the actor” (151).

As we can see, Anne Monfort also notes that contemporary theatre is about questioning the relationship between reality and fiction, which draws its origins from performance art and postdramatic theatre. At the same time, it is worth pointing out that in these texts and performances, both authors discover the re-establishment of dramatic elements, such as dramatic characters and dramatic action, even if they are mostly highly fragmentary. In addition, Monfort emphasises another principal feature, which we have already described when discussing the aesthetics of the performative. This feature refers to the involvement of the spectator and their active role. As Monfort writes in the conclusion of her article, “As a response to an increasingly fictionalised and dramatised world, contemporary forms of theatre are rethinking the question of the real and the fictional, leaving the spectator free to imagine the drama that does not occur on the stage” (158).

A theatre text, therefore, is not only the material that the creative team arbitrarily changes in their performance. It is also a completely open structure that invites the spectator/reader to think and create their own interpretation or story.

Let us now turn to the rather radical thesis that Blaž Lukan formulated concerning the youngest generation of Slovenian playwrights, specifically Varja Hrvatin, who will be particularly interesting to us later. As Lukan writes, such a text “contains no stage directions, its line of dialogue is also completely indistinct, while at the same time, in such writing, there is no hint of direction whatsoever about its performance” (115). Nevertheless, such texts produce strong dramatic effects and require active participation on the part of the reader or spectator, and therefore undoubtedly feel like dramatic, or rather stage or theatre texts. This also goes for the play *It All Started with the Bunny Rabbit Goulash*, which we analyse below and which anticipates several different readings. The author directs the reader/spectator to either create their own story according to their own opinions and attitudes from the suggested sections or to read the text from beginning to end. But this is not merely a game in the postmodernist sense; through the scenes, the playwright tells her own story of searching for her identity, coping with anorexia, her fears, etc. At the end of his article, Lukan nevertheless takes a risk and suggests how to read and perform such drama: “The liberated creative euphoria of a contemporary playwright expects an appropriate response from the contemporary director and their crew” (118).

From the presented theoretical starting points, we can thus conclude that the modernism of the 1960s and 1970s meant, above all, the deconstruction of the dramatic form, the intrusion of reality into the theatrical performance, and the involvement of the spectators/readers, i.e., the creation of a community. This legacy can also be noted in the period following the postdramatic when the otherwise fragmentary structure once again produces dramatic effects and displays some elements of drama (e.g., dramatic characters and action). Below, we try to detect potential parallels between the experimental texts from the modernist period and contemporary Slovenian drama by comparing specific texts.

Synopsis for *The Happening of Lackeys and we, the european corpses*

The first two texts we will deal with in detail are *Synopsis for The Happening of Lackeys*, published in the journal *Problemi Katalog* as part of the repertoire plan for the 1968/69 season of the small stage of the Slovenian National Theatre Drama Ljubljana. The production was planned as part of the *Original Slovenian Texts* section, with Žarko Petan (director), Dušan Jovanović (author) and Andrej Inkret (dramaturg) listed as authors. The production was never carried out, but Dušan Jovanović directed Ivan Cankar's *Hlapci* (Lackeys) at the Ljubljana City Theatre in the 1980/81 season (cf. *The Generator* 356).

It is a happening that joins spectators and actors into a community while aiming to arouse strong, mostly negative emotions such as fear, discomfort and anxiety. It starts by entering an event that resembles a ritual. The title of this part is *The Elevator of Terror*, through which the audience eventually leaves the event. During the ride in the elevator, the lights go out and "various screams, electronic sounds, silence, rapid breathing and concrete music are heard in the dark. The elevator is stuck for a while, while loudspeakers warn passengers to keep calm and hold their nerves, as they will need them" (Jovanović 76). A party – an exhibition of paintings, sculptures, photographs – is going on in the foyer and smoking room. Somebody is selling sausages and hotdogs, a shoemaker and hairdresser are offering their services – and again, loud music and noise. A feeling of discomfort intensifies in the auditorium, where the spectators are locked inside, the lights are switched off, and they start hearing knocking from the outside and calls to let in the actors.

Next follows Jerman's speech in the tavern from Act Four of Cankar's *Lackeys*, which is commented on by simultaneous projections of "youth work brigades/ roads/ businesses/ labour successes [...]" (Jovanović 78). It is followed by the parish priest's reply that times have turned and the people have made their choice, accompanied by pro-

jections of hippie life and police repression. The text is thus constantly relativised. At the same time, it is also updated with the immediate present.

The action becomes a bit lighter with the appearance of a reciter and a dancer, accompanied by projections of a sunny landscape and abstract compositions. This intermezzo is followed by the arrival of Jerman and the tavern scene from Act Four of Cankar's *Lackeys*. Everything in this scene, however, is exaggerated to the grotesque. "The costumes are a mixture of pyjamas, nightgowns, professional clothes and nudity [...] The men appear in strange poses. [...] One of them is sitting on a huge bedpan, dominating the scene with a megaphone in hand and straining. This is supposed to be a speaker's podium" (79).

The assembled crowd holds a kind of self-management meeting, during which they play board games, and Jerman starts multiplying until there are six of them. Each new Jerman interprets the same passages from Cankar's play differently, thus creating a kind of polemic. "The polemic between the five Jermans begins in a lively and vigorous manner. They speak all the lines. A great noise, in which gradually the words are no longer distinguishable" (81).

Then it is back to more simple action, with commercials and bar announcements playing over the loudspeakers, accompanied by projections of circus acts. In the end, an actor recites a poem about Robespierre through a megaphone, and the six Jermans can be heard singing a song about the lackeys over the loudspeakers.

After the loudspeakers announce the end of the happening, the audience leaves in the elevator of terror again.

Jovanović's happening is an emblematic example of a theatrical event following the performative turn. Based on a self-referential feedback loop between performers and participants, it evokes strong, mostly unpleasant emotions in the audience while creating a sense of community already with the ritual entrance and exit, and even through physical confinement to the auditorium (with locked doors), a meeting at which "all the problems that concern the people present in the tavern, as well as all the other citizens, are confronted" (Jovanović 79). All meaning is constantly relativised – contradictory projections accompany both Jerman's and the Priest's lines – often, their speeches cannot be heard at all, etc. The meaning of the words is thus hollow, and their interpretation is left to each spectator without any reassurance that their interpretation is in line with the experience and interpretation of the others. And it is even less clear what message the creative team is trying to convey.

Simona Semenič wrote her play *we, the european corpses* in 2015, and it was first staged at the Mladinsko Theatre in 2016 (directed by Sebastijan Horvat, première 5 June 2016). It is a text full of readily recognisable postdramatic features – the action

is highly fragmented, the text is often not entirely written out, and it is up to the performance team to supplement it. The author is all the time narrating from the point of view of the spectator/reader. The characters appear more like wholesome functions than fully psychologically articulated persons. Nevertheless, the whole is extremely tense and dramatic as well as politically engaged.

On one side, there is the character of the master of ceremony (emcee), a kind of political agitator who keeps telling us that we are swimming in shit and that we need to do something about it. His public position is complemented by a group of plumbers who are trying to resolve the issue of the actual leakage of faeces that is drowning the theatre auditorium, as well as Jolanda, who is keeping track of the action on stage as a kind of a snitch, and Milena, who is wandering around looking all pretty and trying to charm us. On the other side, there are intimate stories that serve as a contrast to the social situation and a relativisation of public action. They mostly appear very static. This is the case with Lojzka (Alojzija Bizjak), who is the first one to come on stage and is just waiting for the whole duration of the performance. In the end, it turns out that she is actually waiting for the character death. The partisan Milica, who is in hospice care, is similarly passive, unable even to speak, while her tragic story of domestic violence is related to us by the author. Next comes the couple “jakob and andreja/ or/ jakob and silvo/ or/ nina and andreja/ or silvo and nina” (Semenič 8). They represent the image of a couple of lovers slowly strolling towards the ramp, holding hands. Their opposites can be seen in “jožica, 88, and milan, 91”, who are also a couple of lovers. They, however, represent the image of carnality and pleasure. “we’re watching and can’t really decide whether we’re comfortable with this/it’s nice when two people are kissing/ but to watch jožica, 88, and milan, 91, make out evokes mixed emotions in us” (Semenič 9).

The action intensifies towards the end when the auditorium is threatened by vast amounts of shit pouring out of the sewers. The group of plumbers is trying to stop it but to no avail. The one to blame for this is a motherfucking stingy Jewish git who refused to authorise replacing the pipes, so now the actors and the audience find themselves not merely in metaphorical shit the emcee talks about at the beginning but also in actual shit.

The ending ends in a double punchline: “politics is a whore from a brothel, milica the partisan would say in the end [...] but milica the partisan will never again/never again get her words in edgeways” and “sun, breeze, sea/ freedom” (Semenič 39, 40). Thus, politics turns out to be a mess and a whore, while its opposite is represented by the image of nature, which perhaps stands for freedom.

Simona Semenič radicalises the starting points we have encountered in Jovanović’s text. Her text is wholly oriented towards its receiver and their experience. The text is

narrated by a narrator whom the readers identify as the author herself but who, at the same time, appears to be one of the readers/spectators:

the fourth line is truly long /we're fidgeting in our chairs already/because we're tired/
bloody hell how we're tired of this agit-prop/we prefer to glance towards milena/mile-
na is truly beautiful/ truly beautiful. (Semenič 6, 7)

The noise here is no longer produced by the loud music and various recorded sounds; rather, it is actualised at the level of the text as the rapid exchange of discourses, for which the reader has to identify their points of enunciation, i.e., their *dramatis personae*.

it is true that we're in shit, but at least we're swimming/this is how you should be
looking at it/at least we're swimming
often told enough that this way, things will lead us nowhere
what things
things/ things, like/society/social structure/state structure/garden structure/gar-
dens/i haven't yet/i haven't yet
to enter the united states of america, i don't need a visa/ i need the esta form, what-
ever that's supposed to be
beyond what, dammit?
milena leaves. (Semenič 11)

The above quotation is just an excerpt to illustrate the structure of the whole text. At first glance, it may appear to be a series of diverse speeches, not related by any causal logic but rather by absurd coincidence. However, this pell-mell of lines, stage directions and reflections on the action nevertheless produce the sense of *dramatis personae* we have already discussed. In short, it is possible to reduce this cacophony of voices to some identifiable representatives of the discourse, situated within a more extensive, conflicting structure in which the action is happening simultaneously. The latter interferes with the receiver's reception since they have to attribute to individual events specific meanings in the grand scheme of what is happening.

The text is aware that it is merely one element of the performance and will be extensively reworked, rewritten, crossed out, etc., by the creative team. Thus it remains open and disposable at all times. For example, the lines of the emcee, who appears to be the play's central character, are mostly not written out at all since he is given the most time and space on stage.

a theatrical effect
and only then he started
the opening line
a pause, in which the in-between begins, the in-between between the opening and clos-

ing lines

the second line

the second line is

an expression of affection/a stance of a greeting/something trifling in content, in fact, but in a civilised society of utmost importance in communication among adults/to maintain a level of sophistication/a formal thing, indispensable in the transfer of demands and wishes/an expression of affection/a stance of a greeting (Semenič 3).

The emcee himself can be anyone: “perhaps the emcee /or the mobilizer/ a male character that can also be played by a woman [...] perhaps it’s better that he’s played by a woman/a maternal figure/ soft, rounded, warm/ with peace in her voice/ peace/ and passion” (4).

The lines spoken on stage are no longer essential. The lines of the partisan Milica, which tell a shocking story of domestic violence and violence against women, cannot be spoken since Milica can no longer speak. The author here performs another hollowing out of the word. In a dictionary-like manner the text defines words to make them empty, e.g., to jerk off, which refers to the emcee’s agitation and the loving couple:

to jerk/ one/ to jerk off: to masturbate./ france jerks off four times a day/two/to make spasmodic motions:/my legs jerked from fatigue/ three/to make and serve (ice-cream sodas, for example) at a soda fountain./why don’t you go outside and jerk yourself a soda?/four/to jerk around: to take unfair advantage of, deceive, or manipulate/ 20 euros for parking? don’t try to jerk around with me! (Semenič 7, 8)

A different approach is to play around with a word which otherwise fits the context: “is like tofu compared to/beefsteak/rump steak/skirt steak/sirloin/ top loin/flank/ is like tofu compared to beefsteak/jerking off compared to sex is like tofu compared to beefsteak” (Semenič 11, 12).

Simona Semenič thus combines many procedures of neo-avant-garde theatre and postdramatic writing, such as fragmentation, simultaneous action, hollowing out of words, the disponibility of the text and thus its dethronement, while at the same time, it is possible to detect in *we, the european corpses* the outlines of the dramatis personae who are in conflicting relationships with each other. These make up recognisable actions or at least contrasts and culminate in a conclusion that is not entirely explicit but can nevertheless be identified as a call for freedom, intimacy and turning away from political projects.

The formal structure is characterised by the fragmentary nature of the text and simultaneous lines of action, which undoubtedly represents the legacy of postdramatic writing, but also a decisive irruption of lyricisation (the narrator tells us the entire text from her own personal position, commenting on her intimate perception of what

is going on on stage) and episation (the text is heavily infused with narration, which allows for its fragmentary nature and simultaneous action). Thus we can discern a strong legacy of performance texts of the modernist period in Simona Semenič's work. At the same time, she also reaches beyond them and develops them in a way that re-establishes the very elements of drama that she has deconstructed.

A Generator that Produces Any Number of Dramatic Complexes from Given Units and According to Simple Rules and It All Started with the Bunny Rabbit Goulash

In 1970, in issue 85 of the journal *Problemi*, Rastko Močnik published two texts that, however, form a unit. *A Generator* is a series of combinations of spaces, people, stances, voices and movements that follow specific rules. These rules were published in a different section of the journal entitled *Drama*. This was a conceptual explication of *A Generator*, which derived from an analysis of the dramatic text, which is characterised by an exact definition of the spoken dimension of the performance. In contrast, other elements (phonic values of the performance, the characters' stances and movements) are much more loosely defined. Contrary to that, Močnik's *Drama* defines the phonic and kinetic dimensions very precisely while retaining the freedom or rather the contingent nature of each performance, as the starting situations are determined by the luck of the draw, and the subsequent development depends on the possible combinations of various elements (Cf. Močnik 101). The author goes on to define the units and rules of the dramatic text, and it is interesting to note that the text does not feature among its units which instead consist of other means of expression by the performers or other elements of the performance (spaces, people, stances, voices and movements). These are combined according to specific rules, but above all, they alternate in predefined series. Thus, the "sequence of attitudes is: a-b-c-d-e-a... [...] the directions of movement through the spaces are: a) clockwise: I-II-III-IV-I-..., b) counterclockwise" (Močnik 102). Thus, what we are dealing with is a kind of complex game that can produce any number of combinations of its essential elements and, therefore, also any number of dramatic complexes, as the author calls them. The latter is limited by "impossible combinations", which we would get if any of the series got interrupted or could not be continued properly. In this case, the movement through space would be interrupted, and the combination would be repeated in the same space and continued with the following combination in the same space. At the end of *Drama*, Močnik writes down the instructions: "Start: the starting combinations and the direction of movement from each space are determined by draw; end: the game is over when four impossible combinations happen at the same time, and thus all four people stop at the same time" (102).

The text is explicitly performance-oriented and moves away from the text. There is no text, as the dramatic complexes are composed of other performance elements. The closest thing to discourse is the six voices which, however, represent pre-linguistic elements. The action is simultaneous, performed by four people in four spaces. The individual spectator constructs meaning according to their own reception and experience of the performance, which can only evoke certain impressions, but in no way suggest potential meanings. Thus, at first sight, the text could be said to belong to the postdramatic tradition, however, with not so much emphasis on the creation of community. Moreover, it would appear that chance, and the luck of the draw is crucial to its structure, which excludes the rational subject. In this sense, the text is firmly rooted in modernism with its ideas about the stream of consciousness, automatic writing, etc.

It All Started with the Bunny Rabbit Goulash is a play written in 2019 and first staged at the Nova pošta (The New Post Office) of the Mladinsko Theatre in the same year (directed by Eva Kokalj, produced by KUD Krik and JSKD in coproduction with The New Post Office). In 2020, Varja won the Young Playwright Award for this text at the 50th Week of Slovenian Drama. Her text also begins with some instructions for use, i.e., a “Prologue, which is a very long footnote”. Here one can read:

1. If you consider yourself to be more of a rational person, who prefers the rational, is prone to analysis and makes decisions based on what promises the biggest payoff, then go for *OPTION A*. [...]
2. If you consider yourself to be more of an emotional person, who is quick to be overwhelmed by emotion, is prone to daydreaming and makes decisions based on momentary disposition, go for *OPTION B*. [...]
3. If, however, you are one of the more impulsive people, who like to get involved in unusual, random situations, act spontaneously and rely on making decisions on the spur of the moment, without any expectations, I recommend *OPTION C*. (Hrvatín 947)

What *A Generator* and *It All Started* have in common is how the text can be used. The reader/spectator discovers it according to particular choices. The whole represents a game through which meaning is created. But in Varja’s case, this game is no longer a matter of chance and is not separated from the receiver. On the contrary, the main players are, as the author writes: “the playwright and the reader + the other players waiting in silence on the side bench” (Hrvatín 945). It is no longer a matter of chance and automatic writing but rather a consequence of the receiver’s choice. What is more, this choice fundamentally determines them. The author uses the discourse from lifestyle magazines or self-help books, which offer advice adapted to the individual’s psychological makeup. If we are more of a rational type, we should go for option A, etc. Thus, by making their choice, the receiver also psychologically defines themselves, i.e., they choose according to what they want to be like or how they want to perceive themselves. These choices are repeated throughout the text, except that now

they are no longer linked to the psychological profile of the receiver alone but also to their desire for which direction to follow: "IF YOU WANT ME TO STUDY SOMETHING USEFUL, turn to page 971" (Hrvatín 969), or to their life experience: "IF YOU EVER CHEATED ON YOUR BOYFRIEND OR GIRLFRIEND, turn to page 970" (Hrvatín 968).

The bulk of the play comprises excerpts from the author's autobiography, as indicated by many details, such as her father Emil Hrvatín changing his name to Janez Janša, her choice to study dramaturgy at the Academy for Theatre, Radio, Film and Television ... Besides these external details, which suggest a turnkey reading of the play, Varja continuously reveals her inner experience and psychological development that unfolded through feelings of guilt and alienation throughout her childhood, her later struggles with anorexia, her search for a partner, etc.

How do this structure and content fit the postdramatic or even neo-dramatic paradigm? The text remains perfectly disposable. We can read it in different ways and thus create the author's story by ourselves. The latter thus manifests itself as a fictional story. However, one that is nevertheless based on facts, which gives it imbues it with a great deal of authenticity. A recipient actively co-creates their own experience, which is, in fact, entirely personal and unrepeatable. The choice depends on their mood at the moment, the way they see themselves, the resulting decisions they have to make and the feeling that, in any case, they will miss something, for every choice entails the loss of all other possibilities. For Lehmann, it is precisely this different perception – this different view – that essentially defines the postdramatic. Also, the connection between the performer/author and the receiver constantly maintained through direct addressing and choices, fundamentally defines the theatrical event as understood by Erika Fischer-Lichte. However, *It All Started* is also about the intrusion of the narrative into the dramatic text. Even though the text was awarded the Best Young Playwright Award in 2020 and was successfully staged the year before, Blaž Lukan points out several dilemmas from the beginning of his analysis: 1) How to analyse a new drama that is outside all frameworks and definitions? 2) How to read this drama? And 3) Who is the one reading it at all? (cf. "Tega teksta" 99, 100). He proceeds from the intuition that this is a piece of new writing, which "sometimes appears to be genuinely new, but then again as something already seen and reflected long ago - especially in modernist drama and postdrama" ("Tega teksta" 97).

As we have determined, the play combines postdramatic tradition and strong episatation and lyricisation. On the one hand, the intrusion of the narrator, in this concrete case, this is the playwright herself, who narrates her life, no longer has the function of episatation, of breaking the fourth wall in the sense of Szondi's notion; instead, the narrative introduces the lyrical subject. Rather than producing an alienating effect, the episatation has the opposite effect of creating a connection between the playwright and

the spectator, both co-creating the author's intimate story or, rather, one of its possible interpretations. Although we could speak of an identifiable dramatic character (the narrator/author) and dramatic action (scenes from her life, which are structured by the reader's choices and have a predetermined structure or structures), these two elements of the play are used in a distinctly postdramatic way, based on the event, fragmentation and the active role of the receiver. Thus, Varja Hrvatin displays a strong influence of the postdramatic, which she combines with the equally strong intrusion of episation and lyricisation, thus creating distinctly dramatic effects.

Conclusion

At this point, we can try to answer our two starting questions. What are the similarities and differences between the analysed texts?

The similarities are apparent. All of the plays endeavour to create an unrepeatable theatrical event that requires the active participation of the receiver (be it the reader or spectator). To this end, they manipulate the receiver's emotions (e.g., creating discomfort, anxiety, confusion) and introduce simultaneous activities and fragmented action, thus requiring the receiver to choose their own event and, of course, their own interpretation. All of this places these texts clearly into the domain of the postdramatic. In this vein, we can confirm that the influence of experimental texts from the neo-avant-garde period is still strongly present in contemporary Slovenian drama.

However, there are also some crucial differences between the two generations. If Jovanović and Močnik are primarily concerned with the destruction of theatrical performance and the dethronement of the dramatic text with all consequences that this leads to, the position of Simona Semenič and Varja Hrvatin is fundamentally different. In the intervening period, theatre already returned to the spoken word and became a social forum in the 1980s, then turned away from the word again and moved in the direction of physical theatre and contemporary dance (the 1990s), and finally returned to the text once more (after 2000). In short, the tension between text and stage is no longer the focal point of playwriting; instead, this relationship becomes disposable, just like the elements of traditional drama (e.g., dramatic characters and action) and the process of episation and lyricisation. Semenič and Hrvatin use all of these in new ways to maximise the receiver's involvement. Above all, the experience of the spectator/reader becomes the focal point of this writing. In Semenič's work, this is constantly reflected upon, as the author/narrator appears to be telling the story from the spectator's point of view. Varja emphasises the spectator's experience by constantly calling upon them to make a choice bound to the spectator, their psychological profile and their life experiences. Thus, we are witnessing a forceful

intrusion of the narrative combined with spectacle (diegesis and mimesis, as Anne Monfort notes) and a strong sense of intimacy and authenticity. The authors draw us into their own world, their own worldview, which seems to emanate from the lyrical subject, and, ultimately, also from the receiver themselves, as we become co-creators of the performance and its meanings. And it is precisely this interplay that creates a high degree of drama and appeals to today's readers/spectators.

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