
NAGROBNI NAPISI NA SLOVENSKIH POKOPALIŠČIH

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Ključne besede: Slovenija, smrt, pokopališča, nagrobni napisi, slovenska literatura

Uvod

Senca smrti spremlja človeka, odkar se zaveda svojega življenja. Na diahroni osi je dokaz za to najstarejša znana pesnitev človeške civilizacije - sumerski ep o Gilgamešu, ki je nastal predvidoma okoli leta 2000 pred Kristusovim rojstvom v Mezopotamiji in katerega glavna téma je smrt: Vladar Gilgameš izgubi zvestega prijatelja Engiduja, ki je bil v najboljših letih, in tega ne more sprejeti. Beži v daljnje kraje in celo na oni svet gre povpraševat po skrivnosti življenja in smrti. Zve pa le to: ...*Neizbežna je bridka smrt.*¹ Toda napis - ali ga smemo šteti za najzgodnejši nagrobni napis? - na eni od egiptovskih piramid iz 3. tisočletja pred Kristusom zagotavlja: *Spiš, / da se zopet zbudiš, / umrješ, / da živiš.*² Enako pomenljive besede, ki jih lahko obrne vsak tudi nase, je dal že za življenja napisati na svoj nagrobnik koroški duhovnik v Meiseldingenu:

* 1906 incipit mori z rojstvom je (sem) začel umirati

† ? incipit vivere s smrtjo je (sem) začel živeti³.

Ta latinski napis iz sodobnosti je lepa iztočnica za opozorilo na rimske nagrobne napiske z latinskimi napisi, ki tudi na slovenskih tleh dokazujejo, če drugega ne, da so lahko pomemben vir za preučevanje nekdanjih prebivalcev in njihovih kultur v tem prostoru.⁴ Nagrobni napis škofu Gaudenciju v tedanjem Poetoviu (Ptuj) prča, da "so tudi naši kraji poznali krče mladega krščanstva... Pesnik Gaudencijevega nagrobnega napisa namreč prosi pokojnega škofa, naj ne pozabi moliti, da bi obvaroval svojo čredo

¹ Anton Feinig, *Neizbežna je bridka smrt, Nagrobni napisi, Celovec-Dunaj-Ljubljana 1997*, 9. Ep o Gilgamešu (Sivi kondor V), Ljubljana 1963.

² Anton Trstenjak, *Umrješ, da živiš*, Celje 1993, 101-107. M.R., *Umrješ, da živiš*. Knjiga '93/6, Ljubljana 1993, 131.

³ A. Trstenjak, n. d., 154.

⁴ Iva Curk, *Rimljani na Slovenskem*, Ljubljana 1976, 11, 42.

vernih pred grabežljivim levom, odpadom od vere, kot to razlagajo poznavalci”.⁵ To je že obdobje, blizu papežu Damazu, ki med papeži iz 4. stoletja še posebej izstopa zaradi odločilnega prispevka k čiščenju krščanskih mučencev, saj je zanje med drugim pisal nagrobne napise (epitafe). Čeprav so nekateri verzi okorni, mu ne gre odrekati pesniške nadarjenosti. “Njegov prijatelj Filokal je prav za klesanje teh napisov oblikoval novo pisavo, ki ohranja monumentalnost stare kvadratne kapitale in dodaja nevsiljivo ornamentiko”.⁶

I. Nagrobni napisi v slovenski publicistiki

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V slovenskem kulturnem prostoru so, po dosedanjem védenju, prvo pozornost slovenskim nagrobnim napisom začeli namenjati sredi 19. stoletja, z nastankom možnosti njihovega objavljanja. Kmetijske in rokodelske novice imajo časovno prednost,⁷ vendar pa kmalu težišče njihovih objav prevzame *Zgodnja Danica*. Ni težko razumeti, zakaj. Ta prvi verski slovenski časopis je od leta 1849 dalje v ne zmeraj enakomernih presledkih v rubriki *Nagrobní napisi* popolnoma anonimno priobčeval za to specifično pesniško vrsto ustrezne verze. Vendar se zdi, da ne gre za zapise s terena, to je za prepise z nagrobnikov, ampak za koncept uredništva, ki je tudi po tej poti skušalo približati bralcem neizbežno resnico prepletenosti življenja in smrti. Kljub določenim razločkom v sporočilu in obliki posameznih epitafov ni mogoče reči, ali je v rubriki sodelovalo več avtorjev ali imajo zasluge zanjo posamezniki.⁸ Cenjen avtor tovrstnih napisov je moral biti Matevž Frelih (Lozice na Vipavskem 1828, umrl kot dekan v Trebnjem 1892), saj so izšli skupaj z drugimi njegovimi prigodnimi pesmimi tudi v posebni knjižici leta 1854 in še tretjič v popravljenem ponatisu leta 1886.⁹ Zanesljivo je v letu svoje smrti, morda v slutnji njenega bližanja in deloma tudi v duhu svojega časa, zlagal nagrobnice Matevž Lotrič (Železniki, 1840-1864), ki je umrl še istega leta, kot je bil posvečen v duhovnika.¹⁰

⁵ Iva Curk, n. d., 89. V bogatem arheološkem gradivu ptujskih najdišč pa se lahko seznanimo tudi z grškim napisom, za katerega sklepajo, da je pripadal grobu krščanskega mučenca, verjetno iz časa vladanja Diokleciana in Maksimijana. I. Curk, n. d. 61, 89.

⁶ Zgodnjekrščanska latinska poezija. Prevedel in komentarje napisal Miran Špelič, Ljubljana 1997, 85. Iz istega obdobja, leta 344, se je ohranil nagrobni napis, ki je kakor molitev za pokojnega: *Bog vseh duhov in vsake stvari, / ki si premagal smrt, / ki si dal življenje svetu, / nakloni pokoj duši mojega očeta Sinesa. / Naj bo blizu Abrahama, Izaka in Jakoba / v deželi luči in počitka, / kjer ni več trpljenja, bolečine in solza. / Odpusti mu vsak greh, / ki ga je storil v besedah, dejanjih ali mislih, / ker si dober in prijatelj ljudi. / Ti edini si Bog, na tebi ni nobenega greha, tvoja pravičnost je večna. / Gospod, tvoja beseda je resnica. / Nakloni pokoj duši mojega očeta Sinesa, / ti, ki si pokoj, življenje in vstajenje. / Slava tebi, Oče, Sin in Sveti Duh. / Amen.* Miran Špelič, *Nagrobní napisi*, Družina 47, 1. november 1998, št. 43, 7.

⁷ Prim. *Nagrobní napisi*, Kmetijske in rokodelske novice V/1847, 181; IX/1851, 185.

⁸ Prim. *Zgodnja Danica* II/1849, 352; III/1850, 25; VIII/1855, 144 152, 164, 192, 202; IX/1856, 20, 198. XXXVIII/1885, 182, 236.

⁹ Josip Marn, *Jezičnik* XXX, 1892, 12.

¹⁰ Karel Glaser, *Zgodovina slovenskega slovstva* III, 1896, 183.

Primeri iz Zgodnje Danice s podnaslovom *Na vsaki grob.*

*Kmalo bodeš tud med nami,
Morde ravno v moji jami;
Zdaj cveteče truplo tvoje
Namestilo bode moje.¹¹
Ti, ki tukaj se sprehajaš
In po grobih tu postajaš,
Truplo moje tû počiva,
Duša tam plačilo vživa;
Kličem milo s temne jame:
Moli, o prijatelj, za-me!¹²*

*Preden moje vse košice
Bodo zopet prekopali,
Bo obledelo tvoje lice,
In mem mene
Bodo tebe
Znabit tukaj pokopali.¹³*

*Človek, glej gomilo mojo!
Kar sim jest, boš skorej ti,
In za vso ošabnost svojo
Boš zadobil pest persti.¹⁴*

*Gledaš semterje krog sebe,
Išješ kdo de tu alj tam leži;
Sliši, kaj iz groba kličem ti:
"Danes mene, juter tebe".*

*Če želiš, de truplo tvoje
Vstane v časti sodnji dan,
Ne pozabi duše svoje,
Delaj za-njo neugnan.¹⁵*

*Človek, glej! rebrovje moje,
Skorej, skorej bo strohnelo,
Namestilo ga bo tvoje,
Zdaj cveteče, kmal pa velo.¹⁶*

¹¹ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj VIII, list 32, 9. véliciga serpana 1855, 136.

¹² Zgodnja Danica, tečaj VIII, list 36, 6. kimovca 1855, 152.

¹³ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj VIII, list 39, 27. kimovca 1855, 164.

¹⁴ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj VIII, list 45, V Ljubljani 8. listopada 1855, 192.

¹⁵ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj VIII, list 47, V Ljubljani, 22. listopada 1855, 202.

¹⁶ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj IX, list 6, Ljubljana 20. sušca 1856, 56.

Kaj pomeni pojasnilo *Za vsak grob*, se poučimo iz primerov, kjer je podnaslov zamujen z drugim, npr. *Na grob mladenča*.

*Lej, o človek! tako truplo moje,
Še clo mlado, skorej bo strohnelo;
Spomni se, de tudi truplo tvoje,
Pred ko misliš, bode ocvetelo.*¹⁷

*Na grob device.
Si ponižna rožica cvetela
Tu na zemlji le za Jezusa,
Zdaj pa novo pesem bodeš pela
Kot devica v družbi Jagnjeta.*¹⁸

Občasno so jih objavljali tudi drugi časopisi (Slovanski svet¹⁹), revije (Dom in svet²⁰) in koledarji (Drobtinice,²¹ Mohorjev koledar²²). V ta okvir sodijo tudi številni zapisi iz časa druge svetovne vojne.²³

II. Nagrobni napisi v slovenski literarni kulturi

Ta problematika bi zaslužila samostojno poglavje, saj bi se ji bilo treba približati z več vidikov. Njihova funkcija je mnogostranska.

a) Izvrševalca Glavarjeve oporoke sta dala nad grobom Petra Pavla Glavarja iz Komende v kamen vklesati v latinščini besede, ki se v prevodu glasijo: “*Ubogi! / Pridite, pogledjte! / pa tudi žalujte! / Pod kamnitim pokrovom počiva v miru / Peter Pavel Glavar, / izredni stvariteljski smrtnik. / K žuljenju bo vstal ob glasu angelske trombe!*”²⁴ Še preden je Jakob Aljaž prišel na Dovje, je dal zapisati svoji materi na spomenik: *Véčna luč naj jim sveti, srčno ste nas vi ljubili, / dobra mati bili ste, / vam hvaležno smo točili / vročih solzic jagode. / Ko trobenta zabučí, / videli se bomo vsi.*²⁵ Že na prvi pogled opazimo, da oba zapisa vsebujeta motiv “angelskih tromb” / trobent iz svetopisemskega Razodetja. Naslednji napis se je že izločil iz te klasične tradicije in se trudi naštetí vse zasluge pokojnega v smislu realističnega pogleda na svet: *Tukaj počivajo / prečastiti gospod zlatomašnik / Dr / Jožef Muršec-Živkov, / bivši profesor v Gradcu, / konsistorijalni*

¹⁷ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj VIII, list 33, 16. véliciga serpana 1855, 140.

¹⁸ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj VIII, list 33, 16. véliciga serpana 1855, 140.

¹⁹ Slovanski svet VI/1893, 236.

²⁰ Dom in svet 25/1912, 195.

²¹ Drobtinice 1854, 127, 128; 1859-60, 173 sl.

²² Mohorjev koledar za leto 1953, 175.

²³ Prim. Marija Stanonik, Iz kaosa kozmos, Ljubljana 1995, 172-180.

²⁴ Ivan Sivec, In véčno bodo cvetele lipe. Celje 1991, 213.

²⁵ Navaja Ivan Sivec, Triglavski kralj, Družina 38, 13. marca 1994, št. 11, 13.

*svetovalec sekov. in lavant. škofije, / roj. 1. sušca 1807 v Bišu, / umrli 25. vinotoka 1895 v Gradcu. / Bili so pobožen in izgleden / duhovnik, odličen slovenski / rodoljub in pisatelj, ter / velikodušen dobrodelnik / svojim sorodnikom in / župniji sv. Bolfanka. / Ljubi Bog bodi jim povračnik / v nebesih!*²⁶

b) Da nagrobni napis nikakor ni zanemarljiva, ampak v slovenski zavesti stalno navzoča pesniška vrsta, dokazujejo France Prešeren (*Grobni napisi: Matiji Čopu, Antonu Linhartu, Francetu Julianiju, Ovsenekovima dečkoma, Juriju Kalanu;*²⁷ *Grabschrift für Emil Korytko*²⁸), Anton Medved (prve objavljene v Domu in svetu²⁹), Alojz Gradnik (Pojoča kri³⁰), Ciril Kosmač.³¹ Ta problematika je bila na robu zanimanja Josipa Vidmarja, ki se je sicer prvi soočil z "mrtvaškim plesom", to je motivom smrti sploh v slovenski poeziji,³² ker je nagrobni napis praviloma izrecno prigodno literarno dejanje.

c) Močan značaj in zrelo osebnost dokazujejo možje, ki si napišejo nagrobni napis zase kar sami. Od kod dobivajo nagib za tako odločitev, pove dejstvo, da gre, vsaj v doslej znanih primerih vedno za duhovnike. Za Matijo Kastelca (1620-1688) morda ne bi mogli trditi, da se je poleg nabožnega slovstva ukvarjal tudi s stavbarstvom, če si ne bi sam na nagrobnik napisal "sciens architecturam" (vešč arhitekture).³³ Mikloš Küzmič (1737-1804), prekmurski katoliški pisatelj³⁴, je ravnal enako. V slovenskem prevodu se v latinščini ohranjen nagrobni napis, ki si ga je sam sestavil, glasi: *Tu ležim kot prah zemljé, / žütek moj končan je že. / V Dolnjih Slavečih sem se rodil / in za Miklóša krščen bil. / So Küzmič mi priimek dali / in v Ivanovcih me pokopali. / Pravičnega Sodnika preiskavo / sem prestal, prejel razsodbo pravo, / Ti ki bereš črke, / vdolbene v kamen, / moli zame, da me Bog očisti. Amen.*³⁵ Franc Kogej (1884-1938), pokopan v grobnici šentviških (Šentvid nad Ljubljano) duhovnikov, je svojo duhovno oporoko želel imeti napisano na nagrobnem spomeniku: *"Kar sem učil vas, zvesto držite, / lepo živite / in za svojega kateheta molite!"*³⁶ Tudi Ksaver Meško (1874-1964) si je sam pripravil napis za svoj nagrobnik: *Na grob pa križ lesen mi zasadite, / naj vera vam v življenju bo, / le mnogokrat se vanj ozrite, / ker kaže pot vam v nebo. / Uvene roža, a sveti križ ostane, / življenje mine, a ostane duša! / Zato, otroci, le moli-te zame, / ko grob zelen mi že zaraste ruša.*³⁷

²⁶ Jože Pavlič, Vklešani spomin, Družina 39 (29. okt. 1995), št. 43, 16.

²⁷ France Prešeren, Pesnitve in pisma, Ljubljana 1962, 130-131.

²⁸ France Prešeren, Pesnitve in pisma, Ljubljana 1962, 171.

²⁹ Leksikon Slovenska književnost, Ljubljana 1996, 289.

³⁰ Alojz Gradnik, Pojoča kri, Ljubljana 1944, 37-38.

³¹ Silvo Fatur, Ljudje in kraji ob Pivki, Postojna 1975, 304-305.

³² Josip Vidmar, Mrtvaški ples, Ljubljana 1983.

³³ Ivo Pirkovič, O nastanku žitnega kozolca, Slovenski etnograf XVI-XVII, Ljubljana 1946, 303.

³⁴ Vsa leta svojega duhovniškega življenja je prebival v starem lesenem župnijskem hramu v samotnem Ivanovskem dolu pod bregom Sv. Benedikta v Kančevcih. Tam, v cerkvi sv. Benedikta, tudi počiva. Jožef Smej, Družina 38 (1994), št. 14, 12.

³⁵ Jožef Smej, Družina 38 (1994), št. 14, 12.

³⁶ Župnija Ljubljana-Šentvid, 900 let, Ljubljana 1991, 145.

³⁷ Viktor Levovnik, V Meškovih Selah, Rodna gruda 40, julij 1993, 14.

Tak napis bi utegnil sestaviti tudi pesnik Joža Lovrenčič, vendar o tem ni nikakršnih podatkov, razen besedila samega: *Moli zame / v upanju križa, / ki naju zbliža / onstran jame. / Moli zame!*³⁸ *In kadar spet bukve zagore / in kadar spet gabri zažare / bodo iz mene žareli. // Žar - šum in hlad - vse iz mene / pesem, cvet livad - vse iz mene / vse iz mene mrtvega...*³⁹ Ali je Stanko Majcen oblikoval napis na način vložnice svojemu sinu, ki je bil izginil leta 1945, ali je imel pred očmi sebe, iz vira ni razvidno. To bi lahko ugotovili na podlagi datuma nastanka besedila. Krščansko pojmovanje posmrtnosti je tu nadomestilo estetsko doživljanje panteističnega krogotoka.

Obstaja izročilo, da si je tudi France Prešeren (1800-1849) zase v kranjskem obdobju ob neki priložnosti improviziral navihane verze za napis na svojem grobu: *Tukaj počiva Franc Prešeren, / nejeveren in vendar veren.*⁴⁰ Drobna besedna igra svetovnonazorsko meri na agnosticizem, a kot šegavi domisljci ji lahko postavimo ob bok Partljičev "žalostno komedijo" iz naših dni *Na svidenje nad zvezdami*: "Humorno bridke so scene pri Tozdu Pogrebnik; prizadevanje, da bi iz njega naredili 'najmodernejše samoupravno podjetje, družbenopolitično široko odprto vsem občanom'. Odpraviti napise, ki 'izražajo religiozno naravnost našega naroda', napis 'na svidenje nad zvezdami', je 'mistika, vera v posmrtno življenje', zahteva pa napis v slogu: 'Tu počiva Valerija, spreminja se v materija!'"⁴¹

III. Nagrobni napisi kot vir za različne zgodovinske panoge

Najprej so zbudili pozornost slovenski nagrobni napisi na koroških pokopališčih. Od Strojne in Št. Danijela nad Prevaljami do Pečnice pri Baškem jezeru jih je iz obdobja med 1853 do 1909 zbral in v treh presledkih objavil Ksaver Meško.⁴² To je spodbudilo Ivana Grafenauerja, da se je naklonjeno pomudil ob njih: "Ob vodilnih umetnikih iz Koroške Slovenije tudi preproste umetnosti koroških ljudskih pesnikov in bukovnikov ne smemo pozabiti... Priče naravnega pesemskega daru, nežnih in slikovito izraženih misli, so mnogi izmed napisov na grobnih spomenikih, kamnitih in lesenih."⁴³ Najlepši rezultat te prizadevnosti je prva samostojna knjiga slovenskih nagrobni napisov, ki jo je pripravil Anton Feinig.⁴⁴ V njej je otetih pozabe tristo (296) koroških nagrobni napisov, ki jih je začel zbirati že v začetku šestdesetih let.⁴⁵

³⁸ Miran Mihelič, 'Jaz bi rad rož rudečih' Ob 50-letnici obsodbe dr. Jože Lovrenčiča iz Kreda, Dom 31 (1996), št. 12, 3.

³⁹ Jože Zdravec, 'Tje bomo našli pot', Ljubljana 1988, 105-106.

⁴⁰ Boris Paternu, France Prešeren in njegovo pesniško delo, Ljubljana 1976, 34. Francè Stelè, Donesek k spominu na Prešerna, Dom in svet 1930, 309.

⁴¹ Tone Partljič, 'In kadar spet bukve zagore in kadar spet gabri zažare', Delo, Književni listi, 9. 12. 1993, 7.

⁴² Ksaver Meško, Koledar Mohorjeve družbe 1910, 72; 1911, 26-29; 1921, 52.

⁴³ Ivan Grafenauer, Slovensko slovstvo na Koroškem, živ člen vseslovenskega slovstva, Literarnozgodovinski spisi, Ljubljana 1980, 517.

⁴⁴ Anton Feinig, Nagrobni napisi od Šentlenarta do Golšova, Celovec 1997.

⁴⁵ A. Feinig, n. d., 7.

Prav je, da avtor ob tem na zamolči pešanja in sramovanja slovenske narodne prepoznavnosti: "Na žalost je na naših koroških pokopališčih vedno manj slovenskih napisov, še bolj redki pa postajajo verzi. Stari napisi so že obledeli in se slabo vidijo, nekateri so že nečitljivi, ker jih nihče ne obnovi več. Na novih nagrobnih kamnih pa so napisana največkrat le še imena umrlih in letnice rojstva in smrti, slovenskih rajmov pa je zelo zelo malo. Opažam velik strah pred vsako slovensko besedo, celo pred črko!, da ne bi izdala *prikrito narodnost*. To je za nas seveda velika škoda. Polagoma bodo izbrisane še vse zadnje sledi, celo na kraju našega zadnjega počitka. Ti zbrani nagrobni napisi - verzi naj bi odprli koroškimi Slovincem oči, da bi spoznali, kakšna pomembna kulturna dragocenost so bili in so ti rajmi."⁴⁶

V smislu koncentričnih krogov začenjamo njihovo predstavitev na zunanjem oboju, v slovenskem zamejstvu. Poleg pietetne funkcije, ki jo nagrobni napisi v prvi vrsti opravljajo, imajo v tem prostoru še veliko veljavnejšo, družbeno razsežnost, ki se jo dá lepo razbrati iz kritične Feinigove tožbe nad njihovim izginjanjem. Nagrobni napis duhovniku v Ukvah govori sam zase, da je bila v 19. stoletju slovenščina v Kanalski dolini običajni jezik sporazumevanja: *Gospod Jožef Škarbina / rojeni v Ločah 10. nov. 1821. Umerli 29. sept. 1879. Fajmošter v Ukvah 13 let, / Bili so svoji čedi zvest pastir, / mladini skrbljiv učenik, za božjo / čast ves unet, zatorej nam nepozabljen.*⁴⁷ Na nagrobniku koroškega župnika Vinka Poljanca, ki je mučeniške smrti umrl leta 1938, napis na spomeniku kratko pove, kdo je bil pokojni in kaj je pomenil koroškimi Slovincem:

*Bil je skrben dušni pastir!
- Značaj kakor čisto zlato!
- Božje ljubezni nositelj!
Narodu modri voditelj!*⁴⁸

Morda se bo v tujem svetu, kjer niti ni (bilo) pogojev za rezko tekmovalnost, njihova pričevalnost lažje upirala zobu časa kakor v našem zamejstvu, kjer konkurenčnost dveh ali treh subjektov za življenjski prostor neizprosno briše kulturo šibkejšega, čemur smo neposredne priče. Na krajih, kamor so se v takšni ali drugačni stiski zatekli naši ljudje, bodo morda ostali nemi pomniki vztrajnosti in žilavosti, upa in obupa. Nekoč bodo na njihovi podlagi odkrivali, kje vse so (bile) po starem ali novem svetu raztresene naselbine slovenskih izseljencev: "Pokrajina, suha in posuta s skalami, sredi nje pokopališče. Zrak je čist, obrisi zarje natančno ločijo zemljo od nebes... In v daljavi mogočna Aconcagua z večnim belim snegom. Na tem koščku ameriške zemlje, pod najvišjo goro Novega sveta, počiva prvi izseljenski duhovnik med rojaki v Argentini, Jože Kastelic. Sin slovenske zemlje ter ljubitelj gora, neumorni dušni pastir svojih rojakov, razpršenih po širjavah Novega sveta. Ljubezen do gorskih višin ga je gnala na Aconcaguo, kjer je za vedno zaspal sredi viharja v letu 1940. Verzi na kamnitem stebru, ki so mu ga 'hvaležni rojaki' postavili na grob, ga predstavijo:

⁴⁶ Anton Feinig, Uvodna beseda, Nagrobni napisi od Šentlenarta do Golšova, Celovec 1997, 7-8.

⁴⁷ Dorica Makuc, Ukljanski župniki, Rodna gruda 37, št. 1, 1990, 20.

⁴⁸ I. M. Spominska prireditel, Pred 50 leti je mučeniške smrti umrl na Koroškem župnik Vinko Poljanec. Družina 37 (1988), št. 35, 2.

*V miru počivaj slovenske zemlje sin,
vneti ljubitelj visokih planin.
Narodu bil si vodnik do večnih višin.⁴⁹*

V kamen vklesani napisi (ni nujno, da so ravno v verzih) so toliko bolj neprecenljiv vir za različne zgodovinske panoge, kolikor starejši so. Lepo priložnost za dokaz te trditve daje naslednji primer. "Med potjo s pokopališča se mi oko ustavi še na lepem starinskem spomeniku, kjer piše: Tu počiva naš dobri oče Peter Zadravec - Amerikanec, častni član pariške Akademije znanosti, posestnik in mlinar v Loperšicah.

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*Roj. 1. VII. 1850, umrl 29. VII. 1936.
,Na božje poti rad si romal,
ni ti težka bila pot,
končno k Bogu si priromal
svojo zadnjo božjo pot.'⁵⁰*

Pa smo tam, sem dejal. Na majhnem skritem, humskem pokopališču počivajo posmrtni ostanki velikega moža, ki ga nihče več ne omenja, človeka, ki je mnogo prispeval k naši prehrani, ki je izumil posebno moko, hrano dojenčkov in starčkov. Zaslužil si je spomenik v Ormožu, ne samo tistega, ki so mu ga postavili hvaležni otroci na humskem pokopališču..."⁵¹

IV. Zamisel o zbiranju slovenskih nagrobnih napisov

Prva misel o zbiranju nagrobnih napisov se je porodila še za časa študija ob nekem potovanju iz Kranjske gore čez Vršič v Soško dolino. Ustavili smo se v Logu pod Mangrtom in tedaj sem postala pozorna na številne imenitne nagrobne napise na pokopališču zraven avtobusne postaje. Leta in leta sem čutila dolžnost, da bi jih morala iti zapisat, toda ko sem se ob priložnosti, spet na vožnji z avtobusom, tam pomudila, sem razočarano ugotovila, da sem prepozna. Večino nagrobnikov so zamenjali in na novih

⁴⁹ Irene Mislej, Ob 60-letnici Duhovnega življenja, Mohorjevo koledar 1994, Celje 1993, 124.

⁵⁰ Slovenski biografski leksikon, 14. zvezek, 1986, 740 piše o njem: Zadravec Peter, mlinar in izumitelj, roj. 1. avg. 1850 v Loperšicah tesarju Jožefu in Margareti, r. Lukman, ter u. 29. jul. 1936 (pok. v Humu pri Ormožu). Po osnovni šoli v Humu se je izučil za mlinarja v Središču ob Dravi in delal po večjih mlinskih obratih na Štajerskem. Od mladosti se je zanimal za mehaniko, zlasti za mlinske naprave in stroje. V želji, da bi se seznanil z najnovejšo mlinsko tehniko, je 1885 odpotoval v ZDA, kjer je ostal do 1893. Najprej je delal na kmetiji, nato v San Antoniu (Teksas) v umetnem mlinu, kjer je bil zadnji dve leti obratovodja. V prostem času je študiral strok. literaturo. Skonstruiral je sito za moko (flour separator) in pogon za večji vetrni mlin (primeren za Holandijo). Še med bivanjem v Ameriki je kupil v bližini svojega doma v Loperšicah mlin z malim posestvom, kjer je po vrnitvi mlinaril do smrti (prijel se ga je vzdevek Amerikanec). Z nasveti je pomagal okoliškim mlinarjem in podpiral šolarje rodnega kraja. Za uspešne inovacije in praktične izboljšave v mlinski tehniki mu je Academie parisienne des inventeurs industrielles et exposants podelila diplomu z zlato medaljo in ga imenovala za častnega člana.

⁵¹ Rado Kukovec, S Huma po "štükeh" v Ormož, Mohorjevo koledar 1992, Celje 1991, 89-90.

je le tu in tam vklesan še kak zapis. Če so že mene opisane zamenjave trpko presenetile, kako lahko zadenejo šele neposredno prizadete. "...Namesto križa stoji na grobu razkošen spomenik, na katerem piše: Tu počiva Franc Lešničar. To je mož moje sestre Micike, ki je umrl pred kratkim. Sestra mu je postavila spomenik na dedkovem in babičinem grobu, na spomeniku pa ni našla prostora za njuno ime. Žalostno požrem slino, ki se mi je ustavila v grlu, in rečem: 'Ne razumem, ne razumem! Zakaj? Zakaj? Kako je mogla?' In potrj zapuščam materin grob, ki ga ni več. Z mislijo na dedeka in babico, ki nimata več spomenika in bosta zato ostala le v mojem srcu... se vračam..."⁵² Vedno več takih doživetij narekuje, da je treba pohiteti. Za tukajšnjo priložnost je mogoče podati le neke vrste medfazno poročilo. S pomočjo nekaterih sodelavk⁵³ je bilo doslej pregledanih dvainštirideset slovenskih pokopališč⁵⁴ in tako zbranih blizu 900 napisov. Če zraven prištejemo še že objavljene iz omenjene knjige, ki vsebuje slovenske napise s Koroške v Avstriji, je ta čas evidentiranih 1187 nagrobnih napisov. Tako število že omogoča nakazati prve obrise njihovih posebnosti.

a) Nagrobni napisi iz 19. stoletja

Prvo lepo presenečenje se navezuje na diahrono perspektivo. Kar nekaj napisov je še mogoče najti iz 19. stoletja. Zasluga za to gre praksi, da so nekdam nagrobnike ugleddnih mož po določenem obdobju vzdavali na zunanjo stran cerkvenih sten. Praviloma gre za nagrobne napise duhovnikom. Zato so še toliko bolj dragoceni primeri, kot je ta iz Šentlovenca na Dolenjskem: *Tukej počivata, in perčakujeta / gorustajine MATIJA SUPANČIČ / iz Korenitke, 73 let star, / vmerl v letu 1845 - in njegova / žena JRA, na gorenjskim / rojena PEGAM, stara 75 let, / vmerla v letu 1848 - / Bog bodi jima milaztu, / daj jima večin mir in pokoj / in večna ljuč jima sveti.*⁵⁵

b) Nagrobni napisi otrokom

Najbolj pretresljivi so napisi globoko žalujočih staršev za svojimi prezgodaj umrlimi otroki. Starejši napisi zanje se navezujejo na staro vero, da nedolžni otroci postanejo po smrti angelčki. Še France Prešeren se je oprl nanjo, a jo zvočno in vizualno in gestikulacijsko razgibal: *Jasni so in srečni b'li / njih' življenja kratki dni. / Glas zasliš'ta: 'Prid'te k meni, / majhni vi, nezadolženi!' / Duše njih'ne sta vesele / repetničice razpele. - / Oča, matere očesa / môkre gledajo v nebesa.*⁵⁶ Kaže, da je ta ljubka metaforika spodbujala dokaj močan pesniški navdih, kakor dokazujeta naslednja primera. Prvi za

⁵² R. Kukovec, S Huma, n. d., 89-90.

⁵³ Breda Karner (Hlevni Vrh, Ledine, Medvedje Brdo, Nova Oselica, Rovte, Stara Oselica, Vrh Svetih Treh kraljev, Zavratac, 128 nagrobnih napisov), Marta Koren (Škrile pri Danah, Špitalič, 2), Zdenka Primožič (Lipica pri Škofji Loki, Reteče, Stara Loka, Škofja Loka, 230 nagrobnih napisov), Ema in Andreja Sevšek (Dobrepolje, dvoje pokopališč, 98 napisov), nekaj študentk (Maribor, Gornja Radgona, 19 napisov).

⁵⁴ Po abecedi: Breznica na Gorenjskem, Češnjice nad Blagovico, Črna na Koroškem, Dravlje, Leskovicva na Poljanski dolini, Ljubno na Gorenjskem, Hrenovice, Jezersko, Komenda, Luče, Mekinje pri Kamniku, Mohliče na Koroškem, Nova vas v Istri, Postojna, Sela pri Kamniku, Sveta Gora (Skalnica), Solčava, Stranje pri Kamniku, Šentgotard pri Trojanah, Trčmun, Tunjice, Zaplana, Zasavska Sveta Gora.

⁵⁵ Jože Pavlič, *Vklesani spomin, Družina* 39 (29. okt. 1995), št. 43, 16.

⁵⁶ F. Prešeren, *Ovsenekovima dečkoma, Pesnitve in pisma, Ljubljana* 1962, 130.

dečka: *Bil sem angelček pri vas doma, / še lepši sem angel v naročju / večnega Boga.*⁵⁷ In drugi za deklico: *Še mala v cvetju mladih let / pustila si ta revni svet. // Zdaj v raju z angelci vesela / Bogu boš večno Hvalo pela.*⁵⁸ Pogosto je prebrati: *Sladko spančkaj, Sladko spavaj,* vendar sintagmi kljub temu ne delujeta klišejsko.

c) Nagrobni napisi mladim

Ti napisi so po svoje še bolj otožni kakor napisi otro(č)kom, saj se njihovi najbližji ne morejo več tolažiti z njihovo angelsko transformacijo, poleg tega pa so se tudi čustveno že bolj navezali nanje. Tu drži, kakor je dejala stara žena iz Solčave, ki je ostala sama: "Pravijo, da je najhujše svojo kri pokopavat",⁵⁹ namreč - svojega otroka. Vendar je tudi tu, kronološko gledano, zaznati precejšnje spremembe v težišču sporočila. Napis iz prve polovice 20. stoletja napeljuje, se zdi, na razočaranje zaradi izločitve mladeniča iz vaške skupnosti in rodovnega nasledstva: *Bil velik si očetov up - / in fantov pogreša te četa, / Prej družbe in društva vnet član, / uživaj nebesa zdaj sveta. / Postavil žalostni oče.*⁶⁰ Sredi stoletja je aktualna metafora "cvet mladosti", ki je znana tudi iz drugih lirskih vrst: *V cvetju mladosti / zapustil si svet, / v raju nebeškem / se vidimo spet.*⁶¹ Konec sedemdesetih let je resignacija položena v usta pokojnega: *Zbogom vam in mladosti, / ki sem jo preživel med vami.*⁶² Zamisel o posmrtnem življenju je ali zatajena ali pa je več ni.

č) Nagrobni napisi ponesrečenim

V tej skupini se ločita dve skupini ponesrečencev: planinci in žrtve prometnih nesreč. Na primer: *Tukaj počiva / žrtev Kamniških / planin / RUDI PEČAR / * 22. 4. 1912 † 2. 9. 1930 // Tebi RUDI sveti raj, / nam pa Bog tolažbo daj. // Prijatelj prijatelju.*⁶³ Naslednje besedilo je lep primer prepletanja metaforike "cveta", znanega iz razdelka o mladosti, in gora: *Ta gomila mlad pod sabo / skriva cvet omahnul v gorah / sredi si najlepših let.*⁶⁴ Iz standardnih okvirov izstopa napis, ki v primerjavi z drugimi deluje naravnost romaneskno: *V triglavskem pogorju izzvenel / tvoj korak, gore so zadušile / tvoj poslednji krik, a nam, / ki smo ljubili te, iz dneva / v dan raste v neskončnost / tvoj dragi lik.*⁶⁵ Naslednja dva napisa delujeta kot ubesedene risbe na tablah oz. znamenjih, ki so zaznamovala kraj nesreče. Gre za sorazmerno prozaični sporočili, ki ju obkroža čustvo le na robu. *Kolesa avtomobila / so me odtrgala od vas, / ne žalujte dragi za menoj, / saj sinko je še vedno vaš.*⁶⁶ *Kruti topol te je ubil - / ljubezen moja pogubil. / Irena.*⁶⁷

⁵⁷ A. Feinig, n. d., 7.

⁵⁸ Krista Gabriel * 2. 6. 1960 † 15. 9. 1966, Št. Jakob v Rožu. Zapisala M. Stanonik, 2. 4. 1978.

⁵⁹ Terenski podatek, Solčava, 22. julija 1995.

⁶⁰ Sela nad Kamnikom, Francetu Resniku, *1903, † 1926. Umrl kot vojak v Skopju.

⁶¹ Leskovicca, *1926-1950.

⁶² Dravlje, *1960-1979.

⁶³ Jože Pavlič, Vklešani spomin, Družina 39 (29. okt. 1995), št. 43, 16.

⁶⁴ Dravlje, *1964, †1982.

⁶⁵ Breznica pri Vrbi na Gorenjskem, † 1968, † 1969.

⁶⁶ Dravlje, *1942, † 1986.

⁶⁷ Dravlje, Očka Janez Zajc, *1938 - † 1965.

d) Nagrobni napisi, ki omogočajo šalo

Za konec še dva napisa, ki dovoljmeta zdravilen na/smeh: *Tukaj je en hladen grobek, / kjer počiva Mici Bobek, / milo kliče iz temne jame: / O, prijatelj, moli zame!*⁶⁸ *Dragi mož / Počivaj v miru, / dokler se spet / ne snideva.*⁶⁹ Prvi primer povzroča vedrino zaradi prikupne rime prvega dvostišja: grobek - Bobek. Kakor da bi se kdo res hotel poigrati s pomanjševalničnim priimkom. Za drugi napis (mi) lokacija ni znana, zato tudi ni mogoče jamčiti za zanesljivost njegovega obstoja, vendar je dokaj verjeten. Prvi hip ni z napisom nič narobe, a pri skrbnejšem branju se zavemo dvoumnosti formulacije. Smeh, četudi skozi solze, je vedno dobrodošel.

Prva analiza zbranega gradiva narekuje nadaljnjo obravnavo na ravni njegove duhovne sporočilnosti, duševnega zdravljenja, kulturnega dokumenta, in celo vrsto oblikovnih vprašanj, kot so časovna pogojenost stilemov, žanrski problemi, problemi stereotipov in folklorizacije.

⁶⁸ Stožice, napis je obstajal še v letih po drugi svetovni vojni. Zapisal po spominu Mirko Ramovš, ISN, ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 10. 10. 1988.

⁶⁹ Sinja Zemljč, ISN, ZRC SAZU, in Ana Lavrič, Inštitut za umetnostno zgodovino Franceta Steleta, ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 28. 2. 1992.

EPITAPHS IN SLOVENE CEMETERIES

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Marija Stanonik

Key words: *Slovenia, death, cemetery, epitaphs, Slovene literature*

Introduction

Man has lived in the shadow of death since he became aware of himself and life. Diachronically, evidence is provided by the oldest known poem of human civilisation - the Sumerian epic about Gilgamesh which presumably dates to around 2000 BC in Mesopotamia and which central theme is death: King Gilgamesh, whose loyal friend Enkidu dies in the prime of his life, refuses to accept the loss. He flees to faraway places and even to the other world to inquire about the secret of life and death. The only answer he gets is: *There is no escape from bitter death.*¹ But the inscription on one of Egypt's pyramids from the 3rd millennium BC - we may well deem it to be the earliest epitaph in history! - assures us: *You live, to wake up again, / you die, to live again.*² A Carinthian priest from Meiseldingen had the following similarly meaningful words which everyone can apply to himself written on his tombstone while he was still alive:

* *1906 incipit mori - Upon birth he (I) started to die*

† *incipit vivere - Upon death he (I) started to live*³.

This Modern-Age Latin inscription is an adequate starting-point for drawing attention to the Latin inscriptions which, if nothing else, in Slovenia too prove that they can be an important source for the study of the inhabitants and their cultures in this area in the past.⁴ The epitaph dedicated to Bishop Gaudentius from the then Poetovio (present-day Ptuj) witnesses that "here too, early Christianity experienced convul-

¹ Anton Feinig, *Neizbežna je bridka smrt, Nagrobni napisi, Celovec-Dunaj-Ljubljana 1997*, 9. Ep o Gilgamešu (Sivi kondor V), Ljubljana 1963.

² Anton Trstenjak, *Umrješ, da živiš, Celje 1993*, 101-107. M. R., *Umrješ, da živiš. Volume '93/6*, Ljubljana 1993, 131.

³ A. Trstenjak, *op. cit.*, 154.

⁴ Iva Curk, *Rimljani na Slovenskem, Ljubljana 1976*, 11, 42.

sions... The author of Gaudentius' epitaph indeed begs the deceased Bishop not to forget to pray and to protect his flock of believers against the greedy lion, that is against apostasy as the metaphor is explained by experts".⁵ This is indeed a period close to that of Pope Damasus who stands out particularly among the popes of the 4th century because of his decisive contribution to the worship of Christian martyrs, among others by writing tombstone inscriptions or epitaphs for them. Though some of his verses are rather unpolished, they reveal a certain talent for poetry. "His friend Philocalus invented a new script for carving these inscriptions which preserves the monumental character of the old square capitals and adds an unobtrusive ornament to them."⁶

I. Epitaphs in Slovene journalism

Judging from our present knowledge attention was first given to Slovene epitaphs in the Slovene cultural area in the mid-19 century, that is when it became possible to publish them. *Kmetijske in rokodelske novice* (*Peasant and Crafts News*) are certainly the first,⁷ but the focus soon shifted to epitaphs published in *Zgodnja Danica*, and this is not hard to understand. This first religious newspaper in Slovene published from 1849 onwards printed in not always equal intervals and under the heading *Epitaphs* completely anonymously appropriate verses which were quite representative of this specific line of poetry. It appears, however, that they are not field notes, that is lines copied from tombstones, but an editorial concept which in this way too endeavoured to familiarise the readers with the inevitable truth that life and death are interconnected. In spite of certain minor differences contained in the messages and in the forms of individual epitaphs we cannot establish whether the section was written by several authors or the fruit of (subsequent) individuals.⁸ A distinguished author of these inscriptions must have been Matevž Frelih (Lozice, Vipava Valley, 1828, died as deacon in Trebnje in 1892) since they were published together with his other occasional poetry in a special booklet in 1854 and in a third revised reprint in 1886.⁹ What is known with certainty is that in the year of his death, perhaps as a premonition of his own death,

⁵ Iva Curk, op. cit., 89. The rich archaeological material from the Ptuj sites also yielded a Greek inscription which is thought to belong to the grave of a Christian martyr, presumably from the reign of Diocletian or Maximian. I. Curk, op. cit. 61, 89.

⁶ Zgodnjekrščanska latinska poezija. Prevedel in komentarje napisal Miran Špelič, Ljubljana 1997, 85. From the same period (344) an epitaph has survived that sounds like a prayer for the deceased: *God of all spirits and all things / You who defeated death/ who gave life to the world / bequeath peace to the soul of my father Sines. / Let him be close to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob /in the land of light and rest, / where there is no more suffering, nor pain nor tears. / Forgive him all the sins which he committed in words, deeds or thought, / for You are good and a friend of people. / You are the only God, there is no sin on You, Your justice is eternal. / Lord, Your word is the truth. / Give peace to the soul of my father Sines, / You, who are peace, life and the resurrection. / Blessed be the, Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. / Amen.* Miran Špelič, *Nagrobni napis, Družina* 47, 1. november 1998, no. 43, 7.

⁷ Cp. Epitaphs, *Kmetijske in rokodelske novice* V/1847, 181; IX/1851, 185.

⁸ Cp. *Zgodnja Danica* II/1849, 352; III/1850, 25; VIII/1855, 144, 152, 164, 192, 202; IX/1856, 20, 198. XXXVIII/1885, 182, 236.

⁹ Josip Marn, *Jezičnik* XXX, 1892, 12.

but also in the spirit of the time, he wrote the epitaph for Matevž Lotrič (Železniki, 1840-1864), who died in the year of his ordination to the priesthood.¹⁰

Some examples from *Zgodnja Danica* subtitled *for any grave*.

*Soon among us you will be,
Right here in my grave maybe;
Your body now so fine,
Will then replace mine.*¹¹

*You who walk around
From grave to grave bound,
My body rests in this yard,
While my soul enjoys its reward;
I beg you from the dark grave
Let your prayers help me save!*¹²

*Before they will rebury
These little bones of mine,
Your face will turn pale,
And next to me
A grave will be,
that will be all thine.*¹³

*Look, in this mound I hide,
What I am now, soon you will be,
And for all your pride,
Dust is all there shall be for thee.*¹⁴

*You look around to see,
Who lies here, who there, you seek;
Listen to what from the grave I speak:
“Today me, tomorrow thee.”*

*If you want your body to rise
And honour Judgement Day,
Do not forget you soul, be wise,
Work for it and pray.*¹⁵

¹⁰ Karel Glaser, *Zgodovina Slovenskega slovstva* III, 1896, 183.

¹¹ *Zgodnja Danica*, tečaj VIII, list 32, 9. veliciga serpana 1855, 136.

¹² *Zgodnja Danica*, tečaj VIII, list 36, 6. kimovca 1855, 152.

¹³ *Zgodnja Danica*, tečaj VIII, list 39, 27. kimovca 1855, 164.

¹⁴ *Zgodnja Danica*, tečaj VIII, list 45, V Ljubljani 8. listopada 1855, 192.

¹⁵ *Zgodnja Danica*, tečaj VIII, list 47, V Ljubljani 22. listopada 1855, 202.

*Look here, this carcass of mine,
Soon, so soon will decline,
And yours, still in the prime,
Will take its place in no time*¹⁶.

What is meant by “for any grave” is explained by the examples in which the subtitle reads “for the graves of the young”.

*Look here, this body of mine,
so young, will soon decline.
Remember, that your body’s song
Will fade out ere long.*¹⁷

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For a virgin’s grave

*As a humble flower you were blooming,
Here on Earth as Jesus’ pride.
Now a new song you will be singing,
As a virgin at the Lamb’s side.*¹⁸

Epitaphs were published occasionally also by other newspapers (*Slovanski svet*¹⁹, the magazine *Dom in svet*²⁰) and in calendars (*Drobtinice*,²¹ *Mohorjev koledar*²²). To this group also belong the numerous records from the Second World War.²³

II. Epitaphs in Slovene literary culture

The issue would merit a chapter of its own as it would have to be approached from several angles. The epitaphs have indeed many different functions.

a) The executors of the will of Peter Pavel Glavar from Komenda had a Latin inscription carved in his tombstone which reads translated: “*Poor people! / Come and watch! / and mourn too! / Under this stone cover rests in peace / Peter Pavel Glavar, / an exceptional, creative mortal. / He will rise to live again when the angels’ trombones will resound!*”²⁴ Before he moved to Dovje Jakob Aljaž had the following inscription made

¹⁶ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj IX, list 6, Ljubljana 20. sušca 1856, 56.

¹⁷ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj IX, list 33, 16. véliciga serpana 1855, 140.

¹⁸ Zgodnja Danica, tečaj IX, list 33, 16. véliciga serpana 1855, 140.

¹⁹ Slovanski svet VI/1893, 236.

²⁰ Dom in svet 25/1912, 195.

²¹ Drobtinice 1854, 127, 128; 1859-60, 173 pp.

²² Mohorjev koledar za leto 1953, 175.

²³ Cp. Marija Stanonik, Iz kaosa kozmos, Ljubljana 1995, 172-180.

²⁴ Ivan Sivec, In večno bodo cvetele lipe. Celje 1991, 213.

on his mother's tombstone: *May the eternal light your path, you who loved us all so dearly, / a good mother you have been, / and in gratitude we shed / hot tears. / When the trumpet resounds, / we shall all meet again.*²⁵ It is, of course, obvious right away that both inscriptions contains the same motif from the Book of Revelation - the angels' trombones/trumpet. The next inscription we turn to already diverges from this classical tradition and strives to enumerate all the deceased's merits in the manner of a realistic view of the world: Here rests / *Dr. Jožef Muršec-Živkov, / 50 years a priest/ former professor in Graz, / consistory counsellor of the Seckau and Lavant Deaconry, / born March 1 1807 in Biš, / died October 25, 1895 in Graz. // He was a pious and exemplary / priest, an eminent Slovene / patriot and writer and / a generous benefactor / to his relatives and / to the parish of St Bolfank.// Dear Lord, reward him in heaven.*²⁶

b) That epitaphs are far from being a insignificant line of poetry, but instead something that is continuously present in Slovene consciousness, is more than substantiated by the great poets France Prešeren (epitaphs dedicated to Matija Čop, Anton Linhart, France Juliani, the Ovsenek boys, Jurij Kalan;²⁷ and *Grabschrift für Emil Korytko*²⁸), Anton Medved (the first ones to be published in the magazine *Dom in svet*²⁹), Alojz Gradnik (*Pojčča kri*³⁰), and by writer Ciril Kosmač.³¹ The topic was also of marginal interest to Josip Vidmar, who was actually the first to tackle the "Dance of death" that is the motif of death in general in Slovene poetry.³² Epitaphs are indeed as a rule explicitly literary products.

c) People who write their own epitaph must be endowed with a strong character and a mature personality. What drives them to it is evident from the fact that at least all cases known to date concern priests. We would hardly have known that Matija Kastelec (1620-1688) occupied himself beside with devout literature also with architecture, if it wasn't for his tombstone with the inscription "sciens architecturam" ("*knowledgeable on architecture*").³³ Mikloš Küzmič (1737-1804), a Catholic writer from Prekmurje,³⁴ acted in the same way. The Slovene translation of the Latin epitaph he composed for himself reads: *As the dust of the earth here I lie, / my life has gone by. / In Dolnji Slaveči I was born / Miklôš the name to be worn. / Küzmič was the surname I got, / and a grave in Ivanovci my ultimate lot. / A righteous Judge tried me / and a proper verdict issued He, / You who read these letters, / carved in stone, / pray that God may cleanse me of my sins.*

²⁵ Navaja Ivan Sivec, Triglavski kralj, Družina 38, 13. marca 1994, no. 11, 13.

²⁶ Jože Pavlič, Vklesani spomin, Družina 39 (29. okt. 1995), no. 43, 16.

²⁷ France Prešeren, Pesnitve in pisma, Ljubljana 1962, 130-131.

²⁸ France Prešeren, Pesnitve in pisma, Ljubljana 1962, 171.

²⁹ Leksikon Slovenske književnost, Ljubljana 1996, 289.

³⁰ Alojz Gradnik, Pojčča kri, Ljubljana 1944, 37-38.

³¹ Silvo Fatur, Ljudje in kraji ob Pivki, Postojna 1975, 304-305.

³² Josip Vidmar, Mrtvaški ples, Ljubljana 1983.

³³ Ivo Pirkovič, O nastanku žitnega kozolca, Slovenski etnograf XVI-XVII, Ljubljana 1946, 303.

³⁴ During his entire career as a priest he dwelled in the old wooden parish temple of solitary Ivanovski dol, Sv. Benedikt, Kančevci. It is there, in the church of St. Benedikt, that he rests. Jožef Smej, Družina 38 (1994), no. 14, 12.

*Amen.*³⁵ Franc Kogej (1884-1938), buried in the vault of the Šentvid priests specified in his last will that he wanted the following inscription on his tombstone: “*What I have taught you, adhere to faithfully, / live your life truthfully / and pray for your catechist carefully!*”³⁶ Ksaver Meško (1874-1964) too formulated the epitaph for his tombstone himself: “*Plant a wooden cross on my grave, / let faith lighten your every day, / turn to it when you need to be brave / to heaven it will show you the way. / A flower withers, but the holy cross stays, / life passes, but the soul never! / Therefore, children, pray for me always / for green sods will cover my grave forever.*”³⁷

Poet Joža Lovrenčič may have composed a similar inscription, but there is no actual evidence to prove this, except for the preserved text: “*Pray for me / in the hope of the cross / which brings together me and thee / beyond the grave’s loss. / Pray for me!*”³⁸ *And when the beeches will blossom once more / and their crowns radiate as never before / they will shine out of me . // Their shine, rustle and shade will all grow out of me / the song and flower of the mead - will come out of me, all out of my dead self...*³⁹ Whether Stanko Majcen composed the inscription in the form of a lyrical poem for his son who disappeared in 1945 or whether he had in mind his own person, is not evident from the source. This might, however, be established on the base of the date the text was written. The Christian conception of life after death is here replaced by an aesthetic experience of a pantheistic cycle.

The legend has it that during his stay in Kranj France Prešeren (1800-1849) improvised on a certain occasion the following roguish verses for the inscription on his grave: *France Prešeren rests here / in disbelief/as a believer / in grief.*⁴⁰ This miniature ideological pun points towards agnosticism, but as a pun we can compare it with *See you beyond the stars*, Partljič’s contemporary “sorrowful comedy”: “Humorous and bitter are the scenes in the state undertakers; the efforts of its staff to make it ‘the most modern self-governing company, socially and politically open to all citizens’. Replacing ‘inscriptions which reveal the religious nature of our people’, with ‘see you beyond the stars’; replacing ‘the mystic belief in life after death’ with an inscription in the manner of ‘Hear me John Natter, I’m changing into matter.’”⁴¹

³⁵ Jožef Smej, *Družina* 38 (1994), no. 14, 12.

³⁶ Župnija Ljubljana-Šentvid, 900 let, Ljubljana 1991, 145.

³⁷ Viktor Levovnik, *V Meškovich Selah*, Rodna gruda 40, julij 1993, 14.

³⁸ Miran Mihelič, ‘Jaz bi rad rož rudečih’ Ob 50-letnici obsodbe dr. Jože Lovrenčiča iz Kreda, *Dom* 31 (1996), no. 12, 3.

³⁹ Jože Zadavec, ‘Tje bomo našli pot’, Ljubljana 1988, 105-106.

⁴⁰ Boris Paternu, *France Prešeren in njegovo pesniško delo*, Ljubljana 1976, 34. Francè Stelè, *Donesek k spominu na Prešerna*, *Dom in svet* 1930, 309.

⁴¹ Tone Partljič, ‘In kadar spet bukke zagore in kadar spet gabri zažare’, *Delo*, *Književni listi*, 9. 12. 1993, 7.

III. Epitaphs as a source for various historical disciplines

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The first to attract attention were the Slovene epitaphs in Carinthian cemeteries. Ksaver Meško collected them from Strojna and St. Danijel near Prevalje to Pečnica on Faaker See between 1853 and 1909 and published them in three sequels.⁴² This stimulated Ivan Grafenauer to reflect on these epitaphs with some affection: "Beside the leading artists from Slovene Carinthia we should not forget about the simple artistic endeavours of Carinthian folk poets and writers... Many inscriptions on tombs in wood or stone bear witness to their natural gift for poetry, for reflections expressed gently and charmingly."⁴³ The ripest fruit of these endeavours is the first independent book of Slovene epitaphs edited by Anton Feinig.⁴⁴ Nearly 300 (to be exact: 296) Carinthian epitaphs gathered from the early 1860s onwards were saved from oblivion.⁴⁵

The author has the courage not to ignore the weakening of an overt Slovene national identity and the shame accompanying it: "Unfortunately, there are increasingly less Slovene epitaphs to be found in cemeteries, and verses are even rarer. Old inscriptions are fading and hardly visible, some are quite illegible because nobody takes care of them. On new tombstones most often only the names of the deceased are written and their years of birth and death, but there are very few Slovene rhymes. In my eyes this is caused by a great fear of any Slovene word or even Slovene letter, fear to betray one's concealed nationality. This is of course very detrimental to our cause. Gradually, the last traces will be erased, even at the place of our ultimate rest. These collected epitaphs and verses should open the eyes of the Carinthian Slovenes and tell them how important and culturally precious these rhymes were and continue to be."⁴⁶

In a sense of concentric circles we shall start the presentation of these epitaphs on the outer fringe or perimeter, that is with the autochthonous Slovenes across the borders. Beside their primary pious function they harbour a much more significant, social dimension in this area which is quite obvious from Feinig's critical complaint about their gradual disappearing. The epitaph for of a priest in Ukve tells us quite clearly that Slovene was the lingua franca of Val Canale in the 19th century: Reverend *Jožef Škarbina / born in Loče, Nov. 10, 1821. Died Sept, 29, 1879. Priest in Ukve for 13 years, / He was a faithful shepherd to his flock, / a caring teacher to the young / full of zeal in God's honour, and we shall never forget him.*⁴⁷ On the tombstone of Carinthian parish priest Vinko Poljanec, who died as a martyr in 1938, the inscription tells us succinctly who the deceased was and what he meant to the Carinthian Slovenes:

⁴² Ksaver Meško, *Koledar Mohorjeve družbe* 1910, 72; 1911, 26-29; 1921, 52.

⁴³ Ivan Grafenauer, *Slovensko slovstvo na Koroškem, živ člen vseslovenskega slovstva, Literarnozgodovinski spisi*, Ljubljana 1980, 517.

⁴⁴ Anton Feinig, *Nagrobni napisi od Šentlenarta do Golšova, Celovec* 1997.

⁴⁵ A. Feinig, op. cit., 7.

⁴⁶ Anton Feinig, *Uvodna beseda, Nagrobni napisi od Šentlenarta do Golšova, Celovec* 1997, 7-8.

⁴⁷ Dorica Makuc, *Ukljanski župniki, Rodna gruda* 37, no. 1, 1990, 20.

*He was a concerned pastor!
 - A nature as pure a gold!
 - A messenger of God's love!
 A wise leader of the people!⁴⁸*

In distant countries where conditions to compete with other nations are (and were) non-existent, the message of these words will withstand the test of time better as with our fellow Slovenes across the borders, where the struggle of two or three nations for lebensraum ruthlessly erases the culturally weaker nation - a development we continue to witness. In faraway places where Slovenes found refuge from various ordeals these epitaphs remain tacit reminders of our perseverance and tenacity, of hope and despair. Some time in the future they will provide the basis for a study where in the Old and in the New World scattered settlements of Slovene emigrants existed: "A arid landscape dotted with rocks, in the middle of it a cemetery. The air is pure, the contours of red dawn sharply separate earth and sky. In the distance looms the mighty Aconcagua, covered by eternal white snow. In this little piece of American land, at the foot of the highest mountain of the New World, rests the first emigrant priest among our fellow Slovenes in Argentine, Jože Kastelic. He was born on Slovene soil and a fervent lover of the mountains, tireless pastor of his fellow Slovenes, scattered across the expanses of the New World. His love for the high mountains drove him up the Aconcagua, where he passed away in the middle of a storm in 1940. The verses on the stone pillar which his "grateful compatriots" erected for him, present him with these words:

*Rest in peace, you who on Slovene soil were born,
 of the high mountains you were lovelorn.
 You have led your people to eternal morn.⁴⁹*

Inscriptions carved in stone do not necessarily have to be verses: the older they are, the more precious as sources for several historical disciplines. An excellent example upholding this claim is the following: "On my way to the exit of the cemetery I beheld a beautiful old tombstone with the inscription: "Here rests our good father Peter Zadavec - an American, honorary member of the Paris Academy of Sciences, landlord and miller in Loperšice.

*Born 1. VII. 1850, died 29. VII. 1936.
 ,You loved to go on a pilgrimage,
 no road was too hard for you, ,
 and now you have made the final pilgrimage
 to be with the Lord all through.⁵⁰*

⁴⁸ I. M. Spominska prireditelj, Družina 37 (1988), no. 35, 2.

⁴⁹ Irene Mislej, Ob 60-letnici Duhovnega življenja, Mohorjevo koledar 1994, Celje 1993, 124.

⁵⁰ Slovenski biografski leksikon, volume 14, 1986, 740 (Slovene Biographic Lexicon): Zadavec Peter, miller and inventor, born August 1, 1850 in Loperšice, son of carpenter Jožef and Margareta, née Lukman, died on July 29,

This is what's it all about, I thought. In this small, hidden cemetery in the village of Hum rest the mortal remains of a great man, who nobody ever mentions any more, someone who contributed to the improvement of our nutrition because he invented a special kind of flour for baby food and for the elderly. He really deserves a monument in Ormož, not just the one grateful children erected for him in the Hum cemetery...⁵¹

IV. The idea about collecting Slovene epitaphs

82 The idea of collecting epitaphs came to my mind for the first time while I was still a student and on a journey which took me from Kranjska gora across the Vrščič mountain pass into the Soča Valley. We stopped in Log pod Mangrt and my attention was drawn by the numerous splendid epitaphs in the cemetery beside the bus station. For many years afterwards I felt the urge to go back there and write them down, but when on another occasion, travelling by bus once more, I revisited the village, I was very disappointed to see that it was already too late. Most of the tombstones had been replaced and of the new ones only a handful carry inscriptions. If it was hard for me to accept these changes, how could they not have affected those immediately involved?. "...Instead of a cross there is luxurious tombstone on the grave now with the inscription: Here rests Franc Lešničar. The husband of my sister Micika who died recently. My sister had a tombstone for him put on the grave of grandmother and grandfather but there was no room for their names on them. I felt a tightening of my throat that did not go away and heard myself say: 'I don't understand, I don't understand! Why? Why was this necessary? How could she?' Struck with grief I leave the grave of my mother, that is not there any more. I think of granny and grandfather who are without a tombstone now and will therefore live on only in my heart ... while I'm on my way home ..."⁵² There are increasingly more similar experiences which urge us to hurry. In the context of this article only an intermediate report can be provided. With the assistance of several collaborators⁵³ forty-two Slovene cemeteries have been visited⁵⁴, yielding a total of approximately 900 inscriptions. If we add these to those

1936 (buried in Hum near Ormož). After finishing primary school Zdravec learned the trade of a miller in Središče ob Dravi and worked in several mills in Štajerska. As a youth he was already attracted by mechanics, especially by milling devices and machines. Driven by the wish to learn about the latest milling techniques he left for the USA in 1885 and stayed there until 1893. He first worked on a farm, then in San Antonio (Texas) in a mill which ran the last two years of his stay in America. In his free time he studied the relevant specialist literature. Zdravec constructed a flour separator and an engine for big windmills (suitable for Holland). While still in America he bought close to his home in Loperšice a mill and a small property, and worked as a miller after his return and until his death (his nickname was "the American"). He helped many local millers with advice and supported students of his native village. His successful innovations and practical improvements of milling techniques earned him the diploma with gold medal of the Academie parisienne des inventeurs industrielles et exposants, whose honorary member he also became.

⁵¹ Rado Kukovec, *S Huma po "štükeh"* v Ormož, Mohorjevo koledar 1992, Celje 1991, 89-90.

⁵² R. Kukovec, *S Huma*, op. cit., 89-90.

⁵³ Breda Karner (Hlevni Vrh, Ledine, Medvedje Brdo, Nova Oselica, Rovte, Stara Oselica, Vrh Svetih Treh kraljev, Zavratec, 128 epitaphs), Marta Koren (Škrile pri Danah, Špitalič, 2), Zdenka Primožič (Lipica pri Škofji Loki, Reteče, Stara Loka, Škofja Loka, 230 epitaphs), Ema and Andreja Sevsšek (Dobrepolje, two cemeteries, 98 inscriptions), students (Maribor, Gornja Radgona, 19 inscriptions).

⁵⁴ In alphabetic order: Breznica na Gorenjskem, Češnjice nad Blagovico, Črna na Koroškem, Dravljce, Leskoviča v Poljanski dolini, Ljubno na Gorenjskem, Hrenovice, Jezersko, Komenda, Luče, Mekinje pri Kamniku, Mohlič

already published in the above mentioned book which contains Slovene inscriptions from Carinthia in Austria, we get a total of 1187 recorded epitaphs. A quantity which already allows us to indicate some first particularities.

a) 19th century epitaphs

The first encouraging surprise is connected with the diachronic perspective. Quite some epitaphs from the 19th century have survived as a result of the practice that after a certain period the tombstones of eminent people were built into the outer church walls. They usually involve epitaphs for priests. Even more precious are examples like those from Šentlovrenc in Dolenjsko: *Here rests, waiting for the resurrection MATIJA SUPANČIČ / from Korenška, 73 years old, / who died in 1845 - and his wife / JERA born in Gorenjsko / rojena PEGAM, 75 years old / died in 1948 - / May God have mercy upon them, / give them eternal peace and quiet / and let the eternal light shine on them.*⁵⁵

b) Epitaphs for children

The most heart-rendering are the epitaphs of mourning parents for children who died prematurely. Older epitaphs still refer to the ancient belief that after their death innocent children become angels. Even France Prešeren referred to it but in a vivid, sonorous and dynamic way: *Bright it was and gay / their life's brief stay. / They heard a voice: Come to me / you little ones, of sin free!*⁵⁶ / *Their souls celebrated, and their wings spread elated. - / Their father and mother's eyes, now in tears see them in paradise.*⁵⁶ It appears that this lovely metaphors instigated a quite effective poetic inspiration of the kind we find in the following two examples. The first one is for a boy: *I was a little angle while at home / now a greater angel I am under the Lord's dome.*⁵⁷ The second one is for a girl: *In the prime of your life / you left this world full of strife. // Now with the angels in paradise your voice you raise / to sing the Lord's eternal praise.*⁵⁸ A recurrent verse is: *Sleep gently, sleep gently*, but the syntagm never has the effect of a cliché

c) Epitaphs to youths

These inscriptions are even more melancholic as those to little children since their parents cannot console themselves with the idea that their children became little angels, and also because emotionally they had become much more attached to them. There are no better words to illustrate this than those of an elderly woman from Solčava who was left behind alone: "They say the worst that can happen to you is to bury your own blood and flesh"⁵⁹ - your own child. But here, too, and viewed chronologically, substantial differences show as to where the emphasis of the message lies. An in-

na Koroškem, Nova vas v Istri, Postojna, Sela pri Kamniku, Sveta Gora (Skalnica), Solčava, Stranje pri Kamniku, Šentgotard pri Trojanah, Trčmun, Tunjice, Zaplana, Zasavska Sveta Gora.

⁵⁵ Jože Pavlič, *Vklesani spomin, Družina* 39 (29. okt. 1995), no. 43, 16.

⁵⁶ F. Prešeren, *Ovsenekovima dečkoma, Pesnitve in pisma*, Ljubljana 1962, 130.

⁵⁷ A. Feinig, *op. cit.*, 7.

⁵⁸ Krista Gabriel * 2. 6. 1960 † 15. 9. 1966, Št. Jakob v Rožu. Zapisala M. Stanonik, 2. 4. 1978.

⁵⁹ Field note, Solčava, July 22, 1995.

scription from the 20th century's first half suggests frustration because a youth was torn out of the village community and the family succession: *Your father had placed his hopes on you and we, your friends, will all miss you, / Before, you were an eager member of the community and our society, / now enjoy the heavens of the world. / Your mourning father.*⁶⁰ In the mid-20th century the metaphor "in the prime of youth", that is also known from other lyrical verses is quite common: *In the prime of youth / you left this world, / in heavenly paradise we shall meet in truth.*⁶¹ In the late 1970s resignation is voiced by the deceased: *Farewell to you and to my youth, / which I spent among you.*⁶² The idea of life after death is either suppressed or it is not present any more.

84 ĉ) Epitaphs to victims of accidents

This group is divided into two subgroups of victims: mountain climbers and victims of traffic accidents. For instance: *Here rests / a victim of the Kamnik mountains / RUDI PEČAR / * 22. 4. 1912 † 2. 9. 1930 // For you, RUDI, holy paradise, / to us may God give consolation. // Your friends.*⁶³ The following text is an excellent example of blending the metaphor of the "prime of youth" as we know it from the section on youths and that of mountains: *This mound a young / flower hides, fallen in the mountains / in the prime of his tides.*⁶⁴ Far from the standard clichés is an inscription which compared with the others is frankly Gothic: *In the Triglav mountain range / your steps faded for ever, / the mountains suffocated your last scream, / and to us who loved you as ever / from day to day your sweet face / turns into an eternal dream.*⁶⁵ The following two inscriptions have the effect of putting into words the drawings on the signs which mark the place of an accident. They are rather prosaic messages with some marginal emotion. *The wheels of a car / have taken me away from you, / do not mourn for me, I shall be your son all through.*⁶⁶ *Killed by a poplar so cruelly, my love for you is dead truly. / Irena.*⁶⁷

d) Epitaphs which allow for a joke

To end this section here are two inscriptions which may produce a hearty smile or laughter. *Here in this chilly little grave, rests Mici the Brave, / and from the darkness she calls: / Dear friends, pray for me until the Lord recalls!*⁶⁸ *Dear husband, rest in peace until we meet again.*⁶⁹ The first one causes merriment because of the charming rhyme

⁶⁰ Sela nad Kamnikom, Francetu Resniku, *1903, † 1926. Died as a soldier in Skopje.

⁶¹ Leskovicca, *1926-1950.

⁶² Dravlje, *1960-1979.

⁶³ Jože Pavlič, Vklešani spomin, Družina 39 (October 29, 1995), no. 43, 16.

⁶⁴ Dravlje, *1964, †1982.

⁶⁵ Breznica pri Vrbi na Gorenjskem, † 1968, † 1969.

⁶⁶ Dravlje, *1942, † 1986.

⁶⁷ Dravlje, Očka Janez Zajc, *1938 - † 1965.

⁶⁸ Stožice, the inscription was still there in the years after the Second World War. Recorded as remembered by Mirko Ramovš, ISN, ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 10. 10. 1988.

⁶⁹ Sinja Zemljič, ISN, ZRC SAZU, and Ana Lavrič, France Stele Institute of Art History, ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 28. 2. 1992.

(in Slovene: grobek (little grave) - Bobek). As if someone really wanted to make a pun with the diminutive surname. The location of the second inscription is not known (to me), and I cannot guarantee that it really exists, though it is quite likely genuine. At first sight there is nothing particular about the inscription, but on second thought we become aware of the formulation's ambiguity. Laughter, even when mixed with tears, is always welcome.

A first analysis of the collected material suggests further treatment on the level of several aspects: their spiritual messages, mental healing, as cultural documents and, further, a whole range of issues regarding form: period-determined styles, genre issues, stereotype issues and folklorisation.

BESEDA O AVTORICI

Marija Stanonik, dr., docentka, višja znanstvena sodelavka na Inštitutu za slovensko narodopisje pri ZRC Slovenske akademije znanosti in umetnosti. Osrednji področji njenega delovanja sta teorija in zgodovina slovenske slovstvene folklore in nekatere teme iz slovenske etnologije in literarne zgodovine. Je urednica zbirke *Glasovi*, v okviru katere je doslej izšlo čez 4000 slovenskih folklornih pripovedi. Objavila je več monografij in nekaj sto člankov.

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