

I is Someone Else: The Subject of a Poem in Process, Subject in the Process of a Poem

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The article thematises the discursive power of poetic discourse by discussing some (historical) moments in theory which treat poetry as transformative. It focuses on the authorial lyric subject and on the poetic self becoming the other, while seeking to touch on some problematic points which can stimulate further debate on the concept of the lyric subject.

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This otherness, this “Not-Being-us” is all there is to look in the mirror, though no one can say how it came to be this way.

J. Ashbery, *Self-portrait in a convex mirror*

The title of the article recalls two manifestos which are widely considered landmarks of literary studies and the humanities and social sciences in general – the famous text by Barthes, *The Death of the Author* (1968), and Foucault’s lecture *What Is an Author?* (1969). It has been established that in these texts, and in general, both authors promote the complete erasure of the author and subject from literature and other discourses. Subsequent interpretations have included, more or less justifiably, Barthes’ theories on the death of the author within the paradigm of the death of the subject. Also, at the beginning of the lecture, Foucault, perhaps misleadingly announces, if not the death, then the evanescence of the subject, when he says, that the act of writing “creates a space into which the writing subject constantly disappears” (26). But both concepts re-emerge in Barthes and Foucault. After all, at the end of his life, Foucault returned to the issue of the subject.¹

It is true that in *The Death of the Author* Barthes dethrones the author as the Modern-Era institution of individualistic capitalist ideology and the

associated positivistic literary history, based on a search for the author's intentions and a prescribed single meaning, burdened with psychological biographism. At the same time, to Barthes, bringing down this institution signifies the beginning of the "era of the reader". Even from this point of view, the present reading (already distant enough) of such ideas, born in the spirit of "the linguistic turn", when language itself was spoken everywhere, preceding the subject, is not thought through if limited only to the disappearance of the subject. In addition, by enthroning the reader, Barthes establishes a new subject. Naturally, we should bear in mind that in the subsequent post-structuralist loosening of the (literary) text as a hermetic, self-contained structure into an infinite inter-text, the new subject remained for a long time only an implicit theoretical dispositif, because the "loosening" was limited primarily to the field of a language-system-code, and subjectless, anonymous and autonomous iterability, and did not become widespread in theories of discourse and utterance which focus on intersubjectivity in the radical historicity of discourse.² So in *The Pleasure of the Text* (1973) Barthes distanced himself from his radical position and even returned to the author as the reader's phantasm – the image of the author in the text – which the reader needs as much as the author needs the reader. However, this image is not a representation of the author, or its projection; it is the reader's construct (*Le Plaisir*, 38). This text tackles the issue of the articulation of the subject even more clearly, and highlights the problem of defining the literary subject in the spirit of a "materialistic" theory of the subject (82), essentially emphasising the problem of understanding the literary subject as substance and identity. As Barthes says, subject as identity does still emerge in the text, "not as an illusion", but as "fictive identity", because in the act of reading "a certain pleasure is derived from a way of imagining oneself as individual". However, this does not revolve around "the illusion of a unity", but around "the theater of society in which we stage our plural" (83). In *The Pleasure of the Text* there is also a metaphor about the text – not as a fabric, but interweaving, text as a process, where the subject–spider dissolves in its web. (86) Subject in the process of a text, subject of a text in process? This question does not open new horizons, as literary theory and criticism have examined the process of literary text at least since Ingarden. (see Juvan, *Literarna* 134)

In Foucault's lecture, the image put forward by Barthes is reflected in the examination of the concept. Foucault stresses the need to return to the question of the subject and appeals to both the academicism of the positivistic tradition and the growing conservatism of structuralistic modernity. A return to the subject is needed "not in order to reestablish the theme of an originating subject, but to grasp the subject's points of

insertion, modes of functioning and system of dependencies” (39). The author function, which he introduces, was seen by many interpreters as erasing the author and the subject within the order of discourse; however, it is only “one of the potential specifications of the subject functions” (40). Actually, Foucault endows the author with new power, calling the author the founder of discursivity at a time when there was general animosity toward the concepts of authorship and author. He maintains that all discourses with author functions possess a plurality of self, whereby the author function is provided not only by one of the selves, but by the very author function, as it enables a dispersion of simultaneous selves. Therefore, the author function is one of the subjective points in the discourse, having an “editing” role. Therefore, we should not seek the author in the real author or (fictitious) speaker. (34) With Foucault, the author function, which is understood as an intra-discourse function, is located on the boundary between the reality outside the discourse and the discourse, on the edge of the discourse, and always presents a split, distance, difference.

A similar notion of the author function in terms of the editing principle, but on a completely different philosophical and theoretical basis, can be found in Bakhtin’s concept of the exotopy (“outsideness”) of the author with regard to a depicted world. With Bakhtin, the author function translates into the so-called pure or primary author, which is the depicting-presenting principle, *natura creata creans*, and is in the work *as a whole*. Authorial outsideness- exotopy arises from the premise of dialogism and polyphony as prerequisites for the existence of literature. To Bakhtin, the author as a discursive function always, including in poetry, directs all words into others’ voices, including the image of the author and to other “authorial masks”. (Bakhtin, *The Problem of the Text* 110)

These introductory schematic theoretical notes are interesting for several reasons. Despite having in principle resolved the issue of the relationship between the literary subject and empirical author in elaborate systems of literary theory, the issue of the so-called lyric subject at the less theoretical level, i.e. at the level of the reader, reviews, essays and teaching, is still closely linked with the issue of the author and the autobiographical dimension of a poem. The concepts of subject in poetry promoted by literary criticism have usually been based on a selection of eternal “axioms” developed either by (simplistically) re-interpreting the Romantic paradigm, or the extreme anti-humanistic model, the “paradigm of the signifier”. If the issue of categorising the subject is always *work in progress* and is, as Sartre says, above all a project, which can always become something else (Klepec 13), modern literary theory has fixed the concept of the so-called lyric subject onto the position of the speaker whose speech is not com-

municated through any other speech authority. The unified, single-layer position, the *origo* of the text, is also at the core of the traditional belief in the monologism of poetry.³ The lyric subject understood in this respect, which has been linked to both basic paradigms, is in many cases essential for defining poetry as genre. (e.g. Wolf 27–28) However, this did not go beyond the scope of two paradigms.

On the one hand, some most recent theoretical texts, particularly under the influence of literary pragmatics, to a large extent affirmatively examine K. Hamburger's theory of the lyric subject, which supposedly equates the so-called lyric "I" with the real, existing subject – the poet.⁴ The lyric subject which Hamburger postulates as the subject of the statement is usually understood as real, as non-fictional, but his statements as fictional. All theories disregard the specifics of Hamburger's subject of the statement.⁵

Naturally, such an interpretation is problematic. Firstly, due to its psychologistic biographical and psychological references. Secondly, it rejects the fictitiousness of literary discourse. Thirdly, because, should it consider the fictitiousness of lyric utterances, it is limited to representational concepts of poetry (and language) and fails to grasp its performative and transformative power. It fails to capture the moment of processuality, eventness (of text-discourse and its subject), and the specifics of poetic utterance and reference.

However, the unsurpassed reception topos, based on the (trivialised) Romantic understanding of poetry as exclusively a confessional form of trans-textual individual inner self, does not present the only problem in contemporary discourse on poetry. In the spirit of "phenomenological reduction", systems of literary theory have most often limited the lyric subject to a uniform, monologic, solely elocutionary fictitious instance in a hermetic text, seen from the perspective of language as a system based on the sign, and not of discourse in its eventness. In this respect, the most radical are those views of the subject in poetry based on the misunderstood call by Mallarmé for the "*elocutionary* disappearance of the poet" in the text. They interpret the depersonalisation of the elocutionary position in modern poetry as its complete desubjectivisation. In their opinion, the subject disappears from the poem when the latter no longer has anthropomorphic form, which is most often realised through the first-person subject of the utterance, the lyric persona.

The reason the concept of the lyric subject in literary theory seemed increasingly problematic and useless should probably be attributed to the fact that it emerged in philosophical traditions which understood the subject in the sense of (unified) identity and substance. Relying on the exami-

nation of the configuration of text as discourse focusing on its dynamism, lack of fixity, and its processuality, and (non-egological) theories of the subject discussing the same concepts we should reconsider and seek to redefine the levels where a subjectivity configuring the poetic discourse is simultaneously created by and within this discourse, first in the very act of creation, and then in the chain of further actualisations of a text. This would provide some logical starting points for the reconceptualisation of the lyric subject.

Barthes' concept of the dissolution of the subject in the text, Foucault's theory on the author function as one of the subject functions which enables and manages the plurality of self in (literary) discourse, and particularly Bakhtin's principle of exotopy and polyphony applied to poetry, (which with the help of Beveniste's theory of enunciation and Ducrot's theory⁶ of polyphony could be developed so as to make it possible to establish two configurative, most often overlapping fields of the subject of uttering and utterance), are only three relevant ways to begin thinking about the articulation of lyric subjectivity. Here, these theoretical views have been used as a background for the consideration of the lyric configuration which takes the position of, at least apparent, centralisation in Baudelaire's binary poetics of *vaporisation and centralisation of the self*. Rimbaud's "*I is someone else*" sheds light on the issue in several ways. Even if we focus only on those examples in the history of poetry where it is possible to discuss the overlap of different articulation fields of poetic subjectivity in a way which creates an authorial subject–persona,⁷ we can distinguish a clear enough historical evolution of autopoetic poetic texts, meta-poetic contributions by authors, and some theories of poetry which more or less explicitly thematise the becoming of the *other* of the poem in the performative and transformative dynamics of *poiesis* based on the oscillation between identity and otherness, in each case in a given historical context. This tendency has been in opposition to the identificatory author thesis which flourished with the expressive aesthetics of Romanticism. By presenting some historical moments which thematise the transformative dispositif of poetry, "*I is someone else*", some problematic points will be introduced which can serve as a starting point for re-examining the configuration of the subject in poetry.

With the creation of a genre triad according to the dialectical principle, the understanding of lyric poetry as a subjective form of poetry was finally established. The final synthesis of romantic conceptions was given by Hegel in *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art* (1835–1838). According to Hegel, it is the individual subject that represents the content of a lyric work of art, while the lyric poem is a singular way in which, through this content, the mind comes to consciousness of itself. (Hegel 518) Lyric poetry cre-

ates a closed, self-reflexive subjective world, external circumstances being only an excuse for the expression of the mind. The proper source of lyric poetry is inner subjective life (527) and, sometimes, the lyric poem can be merely a “tra-la-la, singing” (ibid.), since the role of “external” musicality is to emphasize the inner musicality of the soul (543) and to satisfy it through the music of words. (527) Although a lyric poem is a representation of subjectivity, in Hegel’s text there is no explicit discussion of the connection between the person of the lyric subject/persona and the author. There is discussion of the expression of subjectivity in the sense of it permeating the whole text. (525) We can, of course, presuppose this connection in Hegel. In his introduction to his discussion of lyric poetry, we can notice certain elements that do not exactly speak in favor of the identificatory author thesis. According to Hegel, the creating subject of epic poetry disappears in the presented objective world it depicts. The subject of lyric poetry can avoid this alienation of himself by absorbing into himself the entire world of objects and stamping them with his own inner consciousness. (516)⁸ The self-alienation of the subject, which has been the topos of lyric poetry since antique theories, is at first completely rejected by Hegel. In lyric poetry, the spirit descends into itself out of the objectivity of the subject-matter, looks into its own consciousness and, instead of the external reality of the matter, displays this consciousness in the spirit’s subjective disposition (ibid). But immediately after this, self-alienation is implied, namely the self-alienation presupposed by *mimesis* itself - as *poiesis*. Poetic expression must not remain merely “the casual expression of an individual’s own immediate feelings and ideas”, but has to become the “language of the poetic inner life”, which does belong to the poet as an individual, but has to acquire a clear universal validity. (ibid.) Hegel sees this validity in the authenticity of feelings and correctness of observations. But the confessional nature of poetry, in as much as we read this thought in view of this, is here not meant as direct, but indirect: poetic discourse communicates *poetic inner life*, lyric poetry *presents* – “it vividly invents and finds the appropriate term”. (517) It objectifies and purifies: “poetry makes our heart a subject of its transformation, but it does not stop at ejecting content from the subject, separating it from its direct connection with the subject, but makes it into an object purified of all incidental moods in which the liberated inner life, at the same time, returns to itself in a calm self-consciousness and is with itself.” (ibid.) Here, it is the lyric *mimesis* that is thematised as the *agent*; what is thematised is its active nature bestowed on it by the *poiesis* itself. (cf. Ricoeur, *Krog* 67–78) Hegel, therefore, implicitly dismisses the identity between inner life and its representation; inner life can only be identical with itself, but such inner

life is dumb and without representations. (517) Poetry as an act creates and changes, transforms. (532–533) Here, difference is connected to feeling; for, as Hegel says, the heart that before *poiesis* merely felt, now also apprehends this feeling. What is implied, then, is also the cathartic role of lyric poetry. In this passage of *Aesthetics*, we can discern all the elements that took various places in the subsequent theories of the lyric subject and lyric poetry, forming two paradigms we could name confessional-authentic and autonomous-autotelic: subjectivity, affectivity, confession – which seem to be reflected by considering the transformative nature of *poiesis* – self-reflectivity, emphasis on the sensorial and graphic configuration level. When discussing types of lyric proper, in particular dithyrambic poetry, Hegel says also that a subject “in his ecstasy, is directly absorbed into the Absolute” (544). Such elevation, says Hegel, does not mean that a subject delves into concrete content, but that “an undefined enthusiasm fills the poet in his tendency to enable us to feel and directly observe that which is unsayable for our consciousness” (545). Here, Hegel interprets poetic enthusiasm not only as the subject’s ecstasy, as a (transcendental) tendency to immerse himself in infinity (544) and the Absolute, but also as a (immanent) tendency to make the unsayable felt. Hegel relates the element of enthusiasm and the unsayable to rhythm. It seems that, in this, he calls attention to the double role of rhythm – its mediating and expressive function – saying that rhythm serves the subjective imagination in the enthusiasm of representation. This element can be related to Schleiermacher’s theory of style and Novalis’ theory of poetic presentation, *Darstellung*, to which I shall shortly return.

Hegel thus weaves the unsayable, which has been the topos of poetic modernity since Romanticism, into the historical thread of theories of (divine) poetic inspiration, from Democritus, Plato, Horace, Quintilian, and Cicero, to Renaissance reinterpretations, among which the most famous and influential was Ficino’s theory of *furor divinus*. Here, the transformative dispositif of poetry is interpreted as transcendent and even depersonifying. Some Renaissance theories introduced the first theoretical examination of the writer’s individuality, which was, however, until the late Renaissance linked to the Neo-Platonist doctrine of poetic enthusiasm and divine inspiration, when the inter-textual and reception topos of the individualised and idealised figure of the Poet-Author, based on the ideal of Dante and Petrarca and their lives, was finalised.⁹ With *furor poeticus*, the individualised person of the poet rises above the others. On the basis of the supernatural origin of poetic inspiration in a poetic act, the persona should then coalesce with the higher order of the impersonal or suprapersonal, to be, at least in an ideal theoretical model, absorbed in the Neoplatonist One

in mystical ecstasy. The individualisation of the poetic genius, which establishes the difference between the image of the poet and other images, results in or should in theory result in another difference that should lead to depersonification. If the self does not disintegrate, then at least the I=I identity principle does. The dialectic between the individualisation (that resulted in the formation of the authorial lyric persona, while giving rise to the inter-textual topos of the figure of the inspired Poet), and the transformation in the ecstasy of the poetic act – which arises from the assumed divine source of inspiration – is often dialogically reflected in the vivacious polyphony of Renaissance poetry, in Ronsard, for example, where in the elocutionary position, the identity of the authorial subject often slips. Most often, the lyric persona is divided into the authorial persona and its metamorphosis into mythological subjects. This divides the diegetic frame on several levels, while shedding light on the split between the subject of the utterance/enounced and subject of the enunciation. (cf. Dauvois 46–58 and 90–03)

The theory of divine poetic inspiration on the Dionysian basis also resonates with Nietzsche and his discussion about poetry in *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (1872). He clearly outlines several significant presuppositions: firstly, poetry cannot be a subjective form of art; subjectivity as understood by contemporary aesthetics is a deception, as every art in order to become art requires redemption from the “I”, complete objectification. (66) And secondly: poetry is essentially tied to the spirit of music, while the poetic creative process arises from the musical, which is in essence Dionysian. Thus the lyric poet in the creative act first becomes entirely one with “the primordial oneness of his painful contradictory nature and produces the reflection of this oneness as music” (68) in a Dionysian process. This “mystical state of self-alienation” is the reason that “the images of the lyric genius are nothing but himself”, while he continues to act as a “moving central point”. (71) In the lyric poem there is no epic protection against “unifying with its own figures”; the world created by the lyric genius is thus the objectification of himself, according to Nietzsche. Following Nietzsche’s logic, objectification in the transformative Dionysian process is of an already objectified creative subject. Therefore, the “I” depicted in this way is not the same as the identity of the empirical “I”, but is “the single ‘I’ of true and eternal being in general, the ‘I’ resting on the foundation of things”. (71) This should not be understood only through the prism of the transformation and alienation of the subject in the poetic and mystical experience – as the poetic act is interpreted by Nietzsche – but also with regard to the specific structuring of the lyric discourse. The presenting subject is objectified by being dispersed

in lyric diegesis, while remaining the *moving central point*. Within this figural framework, which presents “a world of images and metaphors” with a “colour, causality, and speed entirely different from that world of the plastic artist and the writer of epic” (70), the lyric genius can also present his image of “non-genius”, his “subject” as Nietzsche puts it. (71) It is here that we encounter the following meaningful note: “If it now seems as if the lyrical genius and the non-genius bound up together with him were one and the same, and as if the first spoke that little word ‘I’ about himself, then this illusion could no longer deceive us, not at least in the way it deceived those who have defined the lyricist as the subjective poet.” (72)

With Nietzsche, the transformative dispositif of poetry, which is conveyed in the phrase “*I is someone else*”, is thematised in two ways: as a dispositif of depersonalisation, and self-alienation and, (although implicit) a dispositif of a dialogisation. The former results in the dispersal of the subject, which Nietzsche refers to as lyric genius, in discourse. One of the positions of articulation is also the *lyric ‘I’* which can be authorial. In this respect it is important that the *lyric genius* act as an integrating instance, a moving central point, of the entire configuration. Therefore, it can be understood in terms of Foucault’s author function as one of the subject functions, and in terms of Bakhtin’s pure author. The integrating instance: 1) is an instance of speech; 2) is dispersed in elements of the fictitious diegetic world; and 3), which is particularly significant, as its foundation in the spirit of music is emphasised, we may suppose that it seeps into other places of the *energeia* of the text, into layers which are examined within the framework of literary form in traditional theories.

The transformative dispositif thematised by the theories that I have noted can also be interpreted differently, in the light of examinations of the subject advanced by F. Schleiermacher, Novalis, F. Hölderlin, J. P. Sartre, M. Frank and to some extent, D. Henrich, in the 20th century – in terms of the dialectics of pre-reflexive (immediate) and reflexive consciousness. According to these considerations, poetic discourse represents the central site of the dynamics between the so-called immediate and reflexive consciousness, above all, in the first three thinkers, but also in Frank, who proceeds from them.

All these authors, each in their own way, but with similar conclusions, review the reflexive model of consciousness. The identity of a rationalistic or idealistic subject cannot be founded on empirical consciousness; the subject in a reflexive model can never be identical to itself, since, in such theoretical “self-positioning”, there is, on the one hand, a reflecting I-subject and, on the other, a reflected I-object. In-between, there is always a gap, delay, lack, that creates non-identity, which is why this

model cannot encompass the immediacy of the self-presence of being-me (familiarity, homeliness with oneself) in a pre- or non-reflexive state, in which the split between the subject and object has not yet taken place. (cf. Novalis, *Fichte* 3–7, Hölderlin 26–27, Bowie 196–200, Frank, *L'Ultime* 87, Jovanovski 106). For Schleiermacher, this non-reflexive modus is immediate self-consciousness; for Hölderlin it is being; for Novalis feeling or self-feeling; for Sartre pre-reflexive consciousness; and for Henrich, familiarity with oneself. The origins of such understanding lie in Fichte's insights into the problematic nature of reflexive consciousness and "I-ness", even though he was not able to transcend this model. (cf. Frank, *L'Ultime* 30–35) On the basis of these examinations of early Romanticism and German Idealism, Manfred Frank derived his theory of the subject or individual, which he based precisely on the dialectics between reflexive consciousness which is positional,thetic, established by ocular logic of realisation of its own mirror reflection and pointing to the subject and the object; and pre-reflexive consciousness, which is undivided, in the sense of an undifferentiated unity of subject and object. (Frank, *L'Ultime* 49) Here, it is also of the essence that Frank shows how Schleiermacher's understanding of an individual as unrepeatable, unsharable, irreducibly singular and eventful (Frank, *L'Ultime* 12, 89–90, 93) and the conceptualisation of immediate self-consciousness, which represent one of the theories in the historical line of non-egological theories of the subject, are related to Schleiermacher's hermeneutic theory of language, text and style. In the latter, one can discern an anticipation of philosophical and linguistic theories of discourse. Schleiermacher's theory of text, similar to Bakhtin's and Benveniste's later theories of discourse, realises that any text has two levels (*Estetika* 289, *Problemes* II 59–65): the level of language as a code, a system of signs, and the level of individuality, the unrepeatable nature of an utterance. The immediate consciousness of an individual as irreducibly singular and temporally and eventfully structured is, in the text, articulated by style. It is evident that style can be manifested only at the level of text as discourse-utterance-enunciation and not language as code. Regarding Schleiermacher's conception of style, Frank finds that if the level of signs and even types of utterance is what is "sayable" then style is the "unsayable", the *energeia* of the subject of the text. (*The Subject* 80, 92).

In addition to Schleiermacher's theory, Novalis's differentiation between two modes of self-consciousness, reflection and feeling, and his insight into the structure of the individual is fundamental to Frank's synthesis of the theory of the subject. As with Schleiermacher, who links the articulation of immediate consciousness to artistic creation, Novalis's thought on the subject ties in with his understanding of poetry and theory

of poetic presentation, *Darstellung*. (cf. Jovanovski) Novalis sees the individual as an essentially split identity (Fichte 25), which cannot be fundamental, but is manifested as a process of oscillation between identity and non-identity, between the I and non-I (Fichte 164): “The I signifies that negatively known absolute – what is left over after all abstraction – what can only be known through action and what only realizes itself through eternal lack [...] The I becomes effective and determinate in itself only in its *opposite*.” (Fichte 168) This oscillation, which signifies the eventful and processual implementation of the absolute I as a synthesis of two modes of consciousness – reflection and feeling – in poetry, is connected to the process of romanticisation, which Novalis examines and realises in his so-called transcendental poetry. (cf. Jovanovski) Romanticisation is “qualitative potentiation”, where “the lower I is identified with the better I.” (*Svet so* 202) In this respect, it can be linked to the above-mentioned theories of inspiration from another historically philosophical context, insofar as it is a transformative dispositif. If the subject takes form in the authorial lyric persona, such a subject is “qualitatively increased” through poetic transformation. Similarly to Hegel, Novalis argues, “poetry is the presentation of the soul, the inner world in its entirety”. (*Svet so* 196) But Novalis also says that poetry “abandons the identical to present it”. (Fichte 3) It perhaps presents it within the scope of what Schleiermacher calls style, and Frank in the unsayable *energeia* of the text. Moreover, Novalis’ theory of *Darstellung*, particularly in relation to the issue of the subject in terms of the dialectics of reflection, does not only stimulate the examination of examples where there is obviously an authorial lyric persona, but a consideration of the configuration of subjectivity in lyric discourse in general.

What are the implications of the group of theories of immediate consciousness or dialectics between the reflexive and non-reflexive subject mode, which, within the framework of poetic theory, can be understood as a new landmark in the interpretation of the transformative dispositif of poetry, on the examination of the lyric subject from the point of view which is the focus of this article? How is the authorial lyric subject configured in terms of the subject of the utterance-lyric persona in the light of these theories? Can we claim that this articulation of a field of lyric subjectivity reflects the mirror image of personal identity as a temporary (illusory) moment in reflexive consciousness? Or is the authorial lyric persona already configured through the transformational sieve of the dynamic process of the poem where, according to Novalis and Frank, the dialectic process of reflexive and pre-reflexive consciousness takes place in the most fundamental way? If the latter is manifested as a constituent

element of the entire lyric discourse, other “subject points” should and must be found, where the dynamics of this subject in process is articulated. Schleiermacher’s theory of style and Novalis’s *Darstellung* point to some sensible directions.

If we focus only on the authorial lyric persona, the issue can be partly clarified with Ricoeur’s theory of the constitution of personal identity on the basis of the configuration of narrative identity, where temporality is key. This process is one of the stages of constituting the subject in Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of the subject or selfhood.¹⁰ Following the principle of disharmonious harmony, narrative operation configures the narrative identity of the person in discontinued dialectics between the *idem*- permanent, fixed identity of sameness, based on the principle of sedimentation, and the *ipse*- emerging identity of ipseity based on the principle of innovation. It is only the latter, as identity-non-identity that, in addition to its dialectics with sameness, can finally presuppose the dialectics of selfhood and otherness. Thus, otherness is manifested as constitutive of ipseity, and enters it. The ipseity of selfhood implicitly includes otherness, so that the one cannot be thought without the other. Selfhood, the subject, can only establish a relationship to otherness through ipseity. (*Soi-meme* 13–14, 167–197) The essence of narrative identity through which Ricoeur metaphorically and literally approaches the problem of the constitution of personal identity – and which is not to be understood merely in the sense of the identity of narrative texts, but literary texts in general (*Krog* 8–9) – is therefore precisely the dialectics of ipseity and sameness which is actually already the dialectics of otherness and sameness.

If we consider the series of auto-reflective poetic texts and meta-poetic essays which have accompanied poetic creation throughout history and which, in various ways, implicitly or explicitly thematise the realisation that the “*I is someone else*”, but which we could not present in this text, it is perhaps reasonable to assume the following: even if we conceded to the thesis that an authorial lyric subject in the sense of narrative lyric identity, which is constituted in the process of a lyrical text, according to the minimised principle of narrative fragments-events, can be understood as an illusory moment of reflexive consciousness, we should understand it as an emerging identity of ipseity. The very nature of the structuring of poetic discourse presupposes the minimising of the harmony principle in the dynamics of harmony and disharmony, which, based on his reading of Aristotle’s *Poetics*, Ricoeur postulates as a configuration model of literature. Innovation, which is the principle of emerging ipse, ipseity, in the process of a poem, is often supported by metaphorical discourse, which represents the high-point of semantic innovation. This is done by abolish-

ing the descriptive referential function of poetic discourse, says Ricoeur, in a way that re-describes (redécrit) reality by articulating aspects of it that can be expressed only through evocation and not directly via descriptive language, emerging only in a tense, dynamic relation between the ruins of the literal semantic suitability of a metaphorical utterance and its new (illogical) unsuitability. (*La métaphore* 289–301) This theory of metaphor, which as Ricoeur himself says is actually a theory of poetic discourse (*La métaphore* 301), is, of course, not without reference to Novalis's *Darstellung* theory, which “abandons the identical to present it”. Analogously, we could perhaps transfer the principle of a metaphoric re-description (of the world) to the question of the authorial subject. In poetic discourse, the autobiographical lyric persona, too, implies an irresolvable tension between identity and difference in a way that always creates a “double reference”. (*La métaphore* 288)

We can say that the figurality of poetic discourse presents the poetic fabula (*mythos*), which is built by portraying operations, where disharmony prevails, and thereby the ipse principle. The disharmonious dispersion of the structure of poetic utterance accompanies or takes in the identity-ipse of narrative lyric identity-persona, the lyric subject, which emerges through various moments of presentation so that sedimentation into idem cannot take place. These moments are (non-identical) presentation of momentous selves/personae, which are established through the poem-process. The thesis on the emerging ipseity of authorial lyric persona-subject seems sensible also if the narrative structure of the fabula of poetic discourse prevails over the figurative-metaphorical. This is one of the main characteristics of a strong current in contemporary poetry, including Slovenian. It can be said that for poetry in general, the ipse principle applies. However, these narrativising tendencies in poetry urge us to re-consider the established views of the lyric subject, which often seem completely useless in these cases.

According to Ricoeur, a relationship to the otherness of the other is established only through the identity-ipse of the self. In it, the authorial *I-other* of a poem seeks and perhaps sees *the other of the other*, speaks to it. In his Bremen speech, Paul Celan describes the dialogic essence of a poem, which is always oriented toward the other, with a metaphor of a poem which is like a bottle thrown in the sea – it is en route to an “open place”, to the “you”.

Thus, let me end by mentioning the aspect of the title phrase “*subject of a poem in process, subject in the process of a poem*”, which also considers the re-constitution of the subject in respective events in the life of a text, if, according to Iser, the constitution of the subject occurs with the (read-

er's) constitution of the meaning of the text. (Iser 236–246) This thesis from *The Act of Reading* can be linked to Benveniste's postulate that the subject in language, in the speech act, is constituted each time. From this perspective, in the relation *I is someone else* the intersubjective and inter-discursive dimension of the I as a linguistic form – *shifter* – which is always an element of the pair *I-you* emerges. But in Benveniste's theory of enunciation, this does not name any lexical unit and refers only to the individual speech act in which it is spoken and where it marks the speaker. (Benveniste, *Problèmes* 283) In Benveniste's theory, this speaker, *l'énonciateur* (enunciator) should not be confused with *le sujet parlant* (speaking subject). In this sense *I-you* are not representational, but indicative, as the reality to which it directs is a reality of language and discourse. (*Problèmes* 283–284) However, in Benveniste's theory of discourse, this *I* is not only the subject of the utterance/enounced, but the subject of enunciation/uttering. If we transfer this theory to poetry, the subject understood in this way is not a lyric persona, Bakhtin's lyric hero, or one of Foucault's dispersed egos – but the *I-you* of enunciation, the subject-poem itself, the subject of the process-activity of the poem, which “makes an I from the whole text and transforms the reader's I in the process” (Meschonnic, *Politique* 192). Thus a “radically historical”, “trans-historical” and “trans-subjective”¹¹ po-etics of poetry takes place where in the event of a poem two subjects in process always meet.

Translated by Tina Škoberne

NOTES

¹ Cf. M. Foucault. *L'hérméneutique du sujet. Cours du collège de France 1982–1981*. Paris: Seuil, 2001.

² Barthes' citation of Nietzsche in the *Pleasure of the Text*, which repudiates the rule of the reader, is meaningful: “We have no right to ask who it is who interprets. It is interpretation itself, a form of the will to power, which exists (not as ‘being’, but as process, a becoming) as passion.” (Le plaisir 83) English translation: *The Pleasure of the Text*. (trans. by Richard Miller) New York: Hill&Wang, 2000.

³ Poetry is considered essentially monologic e.g. with J. Petersen, (*Wissenschaft von der Dichtung*, 1939), partly with M. Bakhtin, D. Lamping (*Das lyrische Gedicht: Definitionen zu Theorie und Geschichte der Gattung*, 1989).

⁴ K. Hamburger. *Die Logik der Dichtung*. Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1957 (1968). Hamburger is more or less affirmatively examined or referenced by several authors, including L. Jenny: “Fictions du moi et figuration du moi.” In: *Figures du sujet lyrique*. Paris: PUF, 1996. 99–111; D. Combe: “La référence dédoublée.” In: *Figures du sujet lyrique*. Paris: PUF, 1996. 39–63; A. L. Lujan Atienza: *Pragmática del discurso lírico*. Madrid: Arco Libros, S. A., 2005. 143–152.

⁵ Hamburger tries to postulate the subject of the statement (her own English translation on which she insists) as a linguistic and structural element. (Hamburger 58) By doing so Hamburger draws a general difference between the subject of the statement in her sense and the subject of the utterance put forward by theories of information, or discourse pragmatics as we would say today. Her theory of statement seeks to establish it as a theory of the hidden structure of language (56), while communication and information theory examine the speech situation. So the transmitter in information theory should not be equated with her subject, as the former is faced with a receiver, while the latter is faced with an object. So, in Hamburger's statement system of language, the statement is formed on the relation subject-object.

⁶ Oswald Ducrot. *Le Dire et le dit*. Paris: Minuit, 1989.

⁷ In this article, I use the expression the lyric subject in its standard meaning – in the sense of the lyric speaker, meaning the same as the expression “lyric persona”. I understand all these concepts or expressions in the sense of the subject of the utterance, i.e. an instance within the diegetic frame – the presented world of the text. Cf. Balžalorsky 68

⁸ This point is actually thematised by numerous modern theories of poetry which attempt to distance themselves from the conception of “lyric” as a subjective genre by considering lyric discourse as a transfer to the subject end, with subject and object being intra-discourse structural functions e.g. with K. Hamburger, by theorising the statement based on the subject-object relation, where the lyric statement is transferred to the subject end; in J. Kos with a claim that “lyric reality turns back to the subject as its mirror image.” (Kos, *Lirika* 54)

⁹ As J. Lecoq argues in his extensive monograph on the emergence of literary personality in the Renaissance, the medieval literary subject was foremost the product of the text, while in the Renaissance, Boccaccio in his theoretic-critical text *Genealogie deorum gentilium libri XV* (1360–1374), establishes a new model of literary personality, which does not predominantly emerge from the elements of the literary text, but actual biographical data about the author. This meant a significant shift, which influence the entire development of meta-literary as well as intertextual perception. From the Renaissance on the person of the author is not only literary, but has become existential. Dante and Petrarch are not only Dante in Petrarch from *The New Life* and *Canzoniere*, but inspired geniuses with idealised, unique, extra-textual existence. Cf. Lecoq 236–270.

¹⁰ Frank criticises Ricoeur's model of self-consciousness, because it is based on reflexive logic. (*The Subject* 5)

¹¹ Expressions of Henri Meschonnic, who uses them in most of his works (e.g. *Pour la poétique I, II, III, IV, Critique du rythme, Politique du rythme, La rime et la vie, Poétique du traduire*, etc.), where he develops a poetics of discourse, theory of rhythm and the poetics of translation.

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