

# Early Tomaž Šalamun and American Experimental Poetry

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*I discuss early Tomaž Šalamun's poetry with the focus on book Poker published in 1966 as a Cold War product realized within the geopolitical and geocultural context of socialist Yugoslavia. The study shows how transnational flows shape the work of this important Slovenian poet specially under the hegemonically influential poetry field of American poetry and its counterpoetic streams well known by the title of now iconic Donald Allen's anthology New American Poetry from 1960. At the beginning of this paper, I outline the different contexts in which Šalamun's poetry and American experimental poetry is written, contrasting the Cold War socialist and capitalist poetry cultures. This is a moment in which the fields of art and poetry went through dramatic transformations that involved questioning the traditional approach to art and poetry. I explain the importance of T. S. Eliot for poetry production at that time. Then I focus on Šalamun's early poetry of Poker. In my discussion I compare reism in Slovenian poetry and the objectivist impulse in American poetry. Finally, I compare Šalamun's writing procedures with the procedures engaged in by the Beat poets and the New York school, as well as by the early language poetry.*

Keywords: Slovenian poetry / Šalamun, Tomaž / American experimental poetry / literary influences / reism / Cold War

A national field of poetry does not develop in isolation but always in relation to other national poetry fields. Any national field of poetry is always influenced by global hegemonic poetry models. In the period between the mid-1960s and the beginning of 1970s, American poetry became globally the most influential, especially in the scope of the complex embraced by the notion of New American Poetry, well known thanks to Donald Allen's famous anthology published in 1960 by the same title, which included the Beats, the New York poetry school and the Black Mountain poets, among others. This is important to stress because at the basis of my approach is the belief taken from transnational literary studies which emphasizes that any local poetry scene establishes itself as a hybrid, by mixing influences from outside with

local traditions and poetical constellations (Ramazani). National literary studies with their approach of methodological nationalism (Đurić, *Globalizacijske* 27; Juvan 68–69) usually reduce these outside influences so that the development of national poetry is explained as a self-contained and self-managing autonomous system. For me in this paper these outside influences will be even more important. I am interested in pointing to the way that poetry written in one national language (Slovenian) is created as an open system which functions within the broader transnational system of poetry practices. This means that a field of national poetry is always already constituted by transnational flows. The new ways of communication conducted via the Internet and new media make us aware of this fact more than ever was the case earlier (Stein).

In this context, I will consider Tomaž Šalamun's early poetry as represented in the book *Poker* (published in 1966) as a Cold War literary production created within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia which was politically positioned between the capitalist West and socialist East. This period was characterized by two transnational moments:

1) formation of countercultural reactions to mainstream politics and culture in the USA, and elsewhere. The American counterculture was against the hegemony of corporate capitalism and its conservative worldview and lifestyles. In Slovenia as part of socialist Yugoslavia, the counterculture criticized the rigidity of the socialist regime.

2) In connection to what is described above, the formations of radical artistic and poetic practices appeared in the capitalist as well as in the socialist cultural context.

## **Cold War culture and the transnationalism of the counterculture**

The Cold War period was defined by separation and political opposition between western capitalist and eastern socialist countries, divided by the so-called Iron Curtain. In this narrative, socialist Yugoslavia occupied a politically, culturally and economically medial position between them. The Cold War politics, as well as post-Taylorist production in the West “altered family structures and housing patterns, religious beliefs and media technologies, the demographics of urbanization and developments in psychology” (Halton 11). The welfare state and society were formed, which was a result of and resulted in the consumerist revolution with its processes of democratization. At

the same time these processes of modernization resulted in the greater homogenization of society. The counterculture in USA tried to imagine an alternative modernity beyond democratized consumerist desires foregrounding different social margins as possible models of new ways of life (Belgrad 31–32). On the other side, Yugoslavia was geopolitically positioned between two political blocks, and from the end of the 1950s developed a hybrid economic system of market socialism. From the 1950s to the 1970s, American culture was at the peak of its imperialist global impact of the “American Age” as Henry Luce had described it in 1941 in the magazine *Life*. Luce predicted the spread of corporate liberalism which took place after the Second World War (Belgrad 30). In socialist Yugoslavia as an exotic other of the West, the 1960s was the period in which the Americanization of society gradually took place, governed, surveilled and managed by the Communist Party. Economically as well as in the domain of science and culture, the Yugoslav Socialist Republic of Slovenia was the most developed in socialist Yugoslavia. At that time consumer and popular culture (Duda; Vučetić), as well as radical artistic practices including radical poetry were penetrating society (Djurić and Šuvaković). The Cold War of the 1960s faced the transnational countercultural moment, which embraced both these two different cultures. In the USA countercultural communities developed from the 1950s based on “countercultural politics, daily forms of resistance against pervasive social norms,” and beliefs that “Cold War politics, racial segregation, heterosexuality, and the valorization of commodity consumerism, could be transgressed” (Starr 42). In literary production, counterpoetics experimented with open forms and nonlinear narratives.

If we focus our attention now on poetry in the context of socialist Yugoslavia, the impact of American poetry was crucial for its transformation. After the short period of socialist realism, the translations of T. S. Eliot’s work in the 1950s marked the effort to establish a modernist poetry paradigm in Yugoslav poetry cultures. The first anthology of American poetry titled *American Lyrics (Američka lirika)* appeared in 1952, published in Zagreb, edited by Ivan Slamnig and Antun Šoljan, two important Croatian poets and translators. The anthology had a beautiful social realist cover, and included Eliot’s and Pound’s poetry, among others.

In this constellation of relations, radical Slovenian artistic and poetry practice appeared. Many interpreters, among them Tine Hribar, pointed to the importance of the anthology *Pesmi štirih (Poems of Four, 1953)* in which the poets Ciril Zlobec, Kajetan Kovič, Janez Mentart

and Tone Pavček reintroduced the “lyrical subject and with it relatively emancipated poetry” (Hribar 175). But Denis Poniž emphasized that this anthology was not revolutionary but rather symptomatic of the time of dramatic social changes and its search for a new poetic structure that would question the old one (Poniž, *Slovenska* 72). The next generation that appeared in the mid-1960s, according to Poniž, would be revolutionary in its radical anti-humanistic stance, i.e., its decentralization of the Men [*sic*] from the symbolic textural order of poetry production. Poniž stressed that the “hot spring of 1964,” when experimental poetry in Slovenia captured the interest of socialist socio-political structures, was the time when young writers and artists severely questioned the aesthetic norms advocated by the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Slovenia (ZKS) (Poniž, “Šalamunova” 80). In doing this, they were appropriating the international languages and ideologies of transnational flows. Along with Šalamun, other important actors of that poetry scene were Iztok Geister Plamen, Franci Zagoričnik, Ivo Svetina, Milan Jesih, Aleš Kermauner, and others. In other words, poetry was under the influence from then “contemporary European and American artistic streams, under which it broadened its content and formal ranges” (Poniž, *Slovenska* 144).

I will discuss Šalamun’s first book *Poker* published in 1966 as a hybrid work for which three influences are important in its construction:

- 1) T. S. Eliot,
- 2) The New American Poetry,
- 3) The Slovenian artistic and poetry scene; for example, reism was important for artists as well as for poets of the time.

First, Eliotian modernist ideology became mainstream after the Second World War in the Anglophone poetry world and beyond. As already stressed, this influence is obvious in Šalamun’s *Poker*, but the poet also went beyond it, as I will explain later. Second, the New American poetry, which was acknowledged by Donald Allen’s *New American Poetry* anthology from 1960, was important for Šalamun in presenting the counterpoetic developed within the American poetry scene, defined by Marjorie Perloff as *the other tradition* in American poetry and embracing the work of Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, the New York poets, etc. (Perloff 17). And third, radical practices were actualized within the context in which the borders between different art-fields dissolve, which meant that poets and visual artists co-worked within the same field of artistic exchange. During the 1950s, such exchanges were important for New American poetry and its schools, especially the New York School and Black Mountain

College. New American poetry was developed within the context of the crucial impact of Marcel Duchamp, John Cage with his aleatoric music, Fluxus happenings with Allan Kaprow and the experimental dance of Merce Cunningham and his students, as well as of abstract expressionist painters (Silverberg 12–13). The early work of Tomaž Šalamun was performed within the context of the early 1960s in the atmosphere of constituting the neo-avant-garde of “first of all Neo-Dada, Fluxus, critical Pop-Art, Happenings, and Concrete poetry” (Šuvaković 23). The poetry of the New Americans operated within the counterculture, responding to the globalization of intense transnational flows, intensified thanks to new ways of transportation and communication. The Beats became the most internationally recognized and influential. In 1961 in the magazine *Naša sodobnost*, Ljudmila Šemrl wrote an article titled “Beat-Generation: moralni anarhisti” (“The Beat-Generation: Moral Anarchists”), and in the magazine *Sodobnost* the poet Mart Ogen in 1965 wrote the article “Beat generation in njeno mesto v ameriški sedanjosti in literaturi” (“The Beat generation and its Place in American Contemporaneity and Literature”) (see Španić). And in the poem “Flor Ars Hippocratica” (Šalamun 11) Šalamun mentioned Ferlinghetti, pointing to the context of New American Poetry as an important frame of poetry production and interpretation. So, Šalamun’s *Poker* could be understood as a part of the processes of internalization or, we could say today of the transnationalization of the Slovenian socialist poetry field. This transnational influence is evident: as some interpreters have pointed out, the title of this book is an anagram for Koper, the little Adriatic multicultural coastal town close to the Italian border where Šalamun lived at the time (Bandelj 229). If we stress this aspect, we could also say the title hides an ideological performance of cosmopolitanism in the language of poetry by which the poet intervenes into the local, provincial, national, geo-cultural and geopolitical frame of Yugoslav Slovenian socialist poetry culture. Therefore, in the late 1980s Tomaž Brejc wrote that with this book “Šalamun creates the paradigm of the open polyglot life of Slovenians in this [twentieth] century, of a finely mobile subject, which changes languages, the way one changes airplanes and taxis, newspapers and encyclopedias, money and news” (Brejc 24). Brejc is talking about the belief that art could symbolically prefigure reality and construct the subjects liberated from the ideological and material constraints of the Yugoslav socialist state.

## The Eliotian model in Šalamun's *Poker* and beyond

As I have already stressed, in American and British poetry culture after the Second World War, the canonization of modernist poetry took place. The New Criticism, heavily influenced by T. S. Eliot's writing, established the interpretative model of close reading and the canon of great poets in which the central position was occupied by Eliot. Modernism in this version, as James E. B. Breslin explains, was domesticated (Breslin 10). Collage as the main poetry device was made weaker by post-war poets like Randall Jarrell and Robert Lowell, intervening with the techniques of framing by which disparate motives were harmonized in a coherent narrative (Đurić, *Jezik* 36). This model is connected with the social conservatism of the epoch (31–37). And the idea was that a poem operates through symbolically representing conflicting social forces arranged through the poem's "conflict structures," i.e., irony, paradox and wit, and which "could be ideologically resolved by the functional stasis of symbolic order" (Rasula 85). If we, on the other hand, look at the SFRY immediately after the Second World War, we see that socialist realism was established as the dominant model of making art and literary works. After Yugoslavia's break with the Soviet Union, this model was gradually rejected and translations of Eliot's poetry including the now iconic *Waste Land*, to which Ezra Pound, it is important to note, gave the final shape, was operative in going beyond socialist realism.

If we carefully read Šalamun's *Poker*, it becomes clear that the Eliotian model is the important axis in its constitution as a work of poetry. In the first part of the book, an Eliotian tone dominates. It is supported by the Eliotian-Poundian poetic ideology which places the Italian and French poetry cultures as the most important in the articulation of modern European poetry. The use of the French and Italian languages indicates this stance towards poetry, and it is explicated in the title: "Hommage kapi stricu Gvidu in Eliotu" ("Hommage to a Cap [and] Uncle Guido and Eliot"). At the same time, the very title also points to the fact that Šalamun established an ironic distance in relation to this great modernist model transnationally hegemonic at the time, a point to which I will return. Another aspect of Šalamun's poetic operations within the orbit of the Eliotian model is mixing the high and low language registers, which was also characteristic of many poets of the New American Poetry paradigm. Tine Hribar will point to this in regard to the poetry circle of poems titled "Stvari" ("Things") published in the magazine *Problemi* in 1965 and included in *Poker*.

Hribar nationalizes and personalizes this modernist device, writing that this cycle “[c]ontains an important Šalamunian mixing of the mundane and sublime” (Hribar 195). This device is performed in different poems in *Poker*, with recognizable Eliotian intonations, but it is important to note that in many of them we find an ironic slipperiness. I will connect this ironic slipperiness with the New American Poetry paradigm. Here I will point to the two characteristics of the New York School, that can be applicable in interpreting Šalamun’s poetic devices. In trying to question the fixity of the poem as a modernist icon, which meant that the poem is understood as a finished product with complex but clearly readable meanings, New York poets developed the strategy of non-hierarchical inclusiveness, referring to the tradition of Walt Whitman and William Carlos Williams. This inclusiveness operated on two levels, as is shown by Mark Silverberg, “they equally opened *form*, showing how any form of language can *become* poetic (depending on our attention to it)” (Silverberg 28). Mixing high and low, traditional and nontraditional in a second instance was realized thanks to parody, humor and self-parody (Silverberg 29). We also find these procedures in Šalamun’s *Poker*. For example, “Homage to a Cap [and] Uncle Guido and Eliot” begins with the verses:

Just like Clay became a world Champion  
 because there was something wrong with his leg  
 I’ll be a great poet  
 because they double/crossed me  
 with Frank’s blue cap  
 sent for Christmas 1964  
 and since then I’ve left him out of my prayers  
 songs of songs of panšalamunian religion...  
 (Šalamun in Cooper 289; translated by Henry R. Cooper, Jr.)

Silverberg stressed that the New York poetry belongs to the nonorganic production of literary work. The notion of the nonorganic, taken from Peter Burger, designates techniques of montage, collage, and assemblage which foregrounds a work of poetry as fragmented, unstable and indeterminate (Silverberg 31). We could say that Šalamun’s generation, appearing in the mid-1960s, foregrounds this counterpoetical non-organic approach to poetry production. Comparing Eliot’s *Waste Land* to what she called *the other tradition* of American poetry, Perloff states that while Eliot’s work, despite its collage form, has a coherent symbolic structure, and the work of poets like John Ashbury is not coherent discourse, which means that there are no “certain referen-

tial signposts” (Perloff 11). In the field of the new art, art historian Ješa Denegri coined the term *the other line* referring to the new art in socialist Yugoslavia at the time. In literature such a term was impossible for two reasons. First, poetry as a language art is more closely and directly connected to national identity, which divided Yugoslav poetry field according to national lines. Second, poetry in other parts of socialist Yugoslavia was conservative in comparison to Slovenia. But in Slovenia, thanks to the strong support of influential critics like Taras Kermauner and philosopher Tine Hribar, among others, this counter-poetics became mainstream in the 1970s.

### **Masculinity, femininity and the questioning of the lyrical “I” in the poetry experiment**

From a feminist perspective, the field of poetry is constructed as one in which a male subject could express his feelings and his experience of the world. The feelings generally are negatively connected to the social construction of femininity; therefore, modernists masculinized the field of poetry, at the same time rejecting the lyrical “I” as a fundamental principle of poetry as institution. Eliot, to whom Šalamun explicitly and implicitly refers, as do other modernists before the Second World War, primarily Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis, advocated the rejection of “I” in poetry. Pound thought that a rhetorically structured ego in poetry jeopardized the ‘objectivity’ of a poem (Đurić, *Poezija teorija* 131–132). Eliot proposed the *objective correlative*, as “a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked” (Eliot, internet). At that time modernists insisted on rejecting of authoritarian “I” in poetry along with the lyrical modes connected with the lyrical “I” (Đurić, *Poezija teorija* 202). Some formations of the New American Poetry inherited this modernist credo. On the one hand, experimental poetry, as Charles Olson proclaimed, gave up the “lyrical interference of the individual as ego” (Davidson 47). Olson called this imperative *objectivism*, while the same phenomenon was called *objectism* by Jack Spicer. Avoiding the ego was made possible “by regarding the poem as a form of materiality within the world” (Davidson 47). In his early poetry Šalamun approaches what we could questionably identify as a lyrical “I” in two ways. On the one hand in his poems it is the very language which speaks and not the lyrical “I.” On the other, we find



“an attempt of poetical self-divination” (Hribar 196). The lyrical “I” as one of the fundamental principles of poetry as an institution is always gendered – it is the male lyrical subject or the male lyrical voice which as an agent has a power to speak, and the male poet who has the power to produce high artistic value. On the other hand, experimental poetry researches linguistic codes and, in particular, poetry codes as a separate linguistic system within the broader system. In this process poetry became extremely polyvocal. Poetry juxtaposes linguistic fragments taken from different discursive fields. We can also identify Šalamun’s articulation of the phenomenon usually recognized as a lyrical “I” as a kind of *personism*, which Frank O’Hara advocated in a manifesto of the same title. As Silverberg explains, *personism* is “the social construction of personality, it shows that identity is never monadic nor predetermined but rather is socially constructed in a particular setting (spatial, temporal, textual) through language” (Silverberg 53). Questioning the coherence of the lyrical “I” as a construct of the lyrical genre, Šalamun demonstrates that this “I” is a rhetorical construct of the language – and this is a constructivist stance performed in the discourse of poetry. At the same time, we can speak of the self-mythologization or auto-erotization performed in poetry by Tomáš Šalamun who in his poems construes the male discursive position, which is usually a poetic dramatization of “hegemonic masculinity.” According to R. W. Connell, the notion of hegemonic masculinity refers to the “configuration of gender practice which embodies ... which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell 77). According to Michael Davidson, the poetry field is important for discussing “linkages between social and aesthetic formations of gender” (Davidson 4). Nancy M. Grace and Jennie Skerl explain the transnational importance of the Beats because these poets “responded to ... globalization and American hegemony, particularly by reacting against political/social conformity, class/ethnic barriers, sexual mores, consumerism and media dominance” (Grace and Skerl 4). But, although the Beats articulated gender politics in their poetry and in their counter-cultural lifestyle values, they remained within the gender regime of the mainstream conservative culture of the 1950s. Ginsberg writes that the Beats are a “boy gang” which may be said to have become the model of creativity (McNeil 178). Here I will point to Michael Davidson who wrote that the Beats generated a “‘homo-textual’ discourse of male bodying” (Davidson 14). Davidson took the Adrienne Rich term “compulsory heterosexuality” that refers to the obligatory social relations and power. Regarding this, he proposes the term “compulsory homosocial-

ity” to refer to the “ways same sex relationships were mandated during the 1950s and within which misogyny was often a component” (Davidson 16). He also uses Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s notion of “homosociality” referring to “a triangulated erotics between the men in which a woman serves as a shared object, a fulcrum of heterosexual legitimacy to mask repressed homosexual desire” (Davidson 16). This homosocial desire was important “in creating alternative subjectivities to the dominant ideologies of gender in the 1950s” (Davidson 16). Davidson’s notion of “homo-textual discourse of male bonding” refers to the discursive marginalization of women in the field of poetry at that time (Davidson 14). Showing that this is a transnational state of affairs, in the context of Slovenian poetry, Irena Novak Popov emphasized that in the construction of Slovenian literary tradition of women poets, we can separate them as “women’s voices within the male generation” of poets (Novak Popov 253). In his analysis of Šalamun’s poem “Duma 1964” Marjan Dolgan points out that the poet is critical toward the Slovenian sentimental poetry tradition: “Šalamun’s lyrical subject in his satire of Slovenian poets creates the flavor also by mentioning the female audience ... This mentioning is outwards antifeminist, because it is again in accordance with the ‘male’ logics of Šalamun’s poetry, but in fact he makes sharp his attitude against the mainstream effeminization of most Slovenian poetry written by male poets” (Dolgan 43). In this regard, the title *Poker* could be interpreted as a reference to a countercultural model of heroic liberated masculinity which inherited the liberation of the Wild West in the popular culture movie production of the 1950s. In that “pre-feminist era” (Holton 20) it is believed that rebellion in life as well as in art is exclusively a pursuit of male identity. As Holton states, regarding the Beats, it should be stressed that the conformism of the middle class which was on the rise in the USA from the 1950s, was racially and sexually restricted, in addition to restricting women, for this paradigm also excluded working class men, African-Americans, native people and other minority groups. This situation opened the space for searching for alternatives (Holton 21).

### **Šalamun, reism and the linguistic turn**

Tine Hribar described Šalamun’s poetry as reistic, in which “words are things and nothing else. Things are words and nothing else” (Hribar 195). In order to point to the fundamental anti-humanist orientation of Slovenian poetry at that moment, Taras Kermauner wrote:

The importance of reism also lies in this: in the center of the poem is not a man [sic] with his history, feelings, heart, but language, a system of symbols, which acts as something real. ... At the beginning reism was to a great extent a negation of humanism, therefore it foregrounded only men's reality, objectivity, carnality, physical structure, and soon – in addition to reism, in its other half – in ludism, which reveals the truth of reism, it is shown that with a bigger insistence on thingness the greater liberty of men could be found, because he is not bounded by moral and metaphysical schemes of recent beliefs, but he freely goes into the processes of inventing new systems, connections and shapes. (Kermauner 11)

Besides reistic doctrine, Hribar stresses linguism, and points to the establishment of the self-contained word. Hribar points out that Šalamun's ludistic "Play is not just playing, but the battle to live or die. First of all, the battle with oneself. And with poetry" (Hribar 196). Brejc will write that Šalamunian reism is not so much a

philosophical discipline or arbitrary playing with things, but primarily an active strategy of word design, because out of the murmur of the plentitude of words, elastic words, which then mirror in themselves, establishing the text, but never the spoil of the romantic, symbolic metaphorizing: a word is read, put beside other words, mingling into the metonymic sequence and the sharp rethinking of their acting replaces the empty and charming "self-searching," "expressing" of lyrical subject ... (Brejc 20)

Poniž will state that Šalamun's early poetry, especially the poem "Zakaj sem fašist" ("Why I am a Fascist"), published in *Katalog 2*, rejects all poetic models developed in Slovenian poetry up to that time. He intervened at two levels. First, in the neo-avant-garde manner, Šalamun rejected poetic language in which metaphors are crucial as a device in generating poems. He went beyond poetic discourse which questions a structure in which the lyrical subject functions as an agent that gains power over the world by which "he" is surrounded. But Šalamun created a "radical rejection of an ideological reading and understanding of a literary text. In doing this, the poet also paraphrases other, nationally constitutive poetry and with irony points to its baselessness" (Poniž, "Šalamunova" 89).

Darja Pavlič places *Poker* within the frame of the transnational linguistic turn (Pavlič 192, 195–196). She characterizes *Poker* as a book of poetry partly based in reism's ideology, and the next book *Namen pelerine* (1968) is even more explicitly reistic. According to Pavlič, one of the themes is to demonstrate the productive power of language: "Signifiers without (easily) recognized referents in *Poker* are extremely rare: 'pagaje pagajrbum mezaluna,' it is also unusual that signifiers fol-

low each other organized by a principle of sound associations” (Pavlič 196). Paternu also stressed this poetic device describing it as “undoing the words or dissemination of words regarding their sounds or semantic playing with the ‘material aspect of words” (Paternu; see in Poniž “Šalamunova” 87). Pavlič also stresses the usage of parataxis, which will be the main device in language poetry, and this procedure could also be found in the work of most radical modernist Gertrude Stein.

## Conclusion

Tomaž Šalamun is considered to be the most important Slovenian poet after the Second World War. I place his early work, the book *Poker* published in 1966, within the Cold War era. I considered it a transnational piece of work, symptomatic of that era. Šalamun’s work is shown as part of the internationalization/transnationalization of the socialist Yugoslav Slovenian field of poetry. In this field, the transformation of Yugoslav socialist society permitted the transformation of poetry, and in Slovenia this transformation was the most radical within the Yugoslav national poetry fields. The transformation was initiated by translations of T. S. Eliot’s poetry – the process that shows how the translation became an agent within the national field. But at the time when Šalamun’s generation appeared, American counterpoetics shaped within the complex of New American Poetry, especially the Beat poets and the New York School, became internationally influential. I have shown how the poetry field and the work of one protagonist – Tomaž Šalamun – is shaped by transnational poetry ideologies and devices. We could say that global tendencies in the field of poetry particularly impacted the national poetry scene of Slovenia in the context of Yugoslav socialism.

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## Zgodnja poezija Tomaža Šalamuna in ameriška eksperimentalna poezija

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Šalamun, Tomaž / ameriška eksperimentalna poezija / literarni vplivi / reizem / hladna vojna

Razpravljam o zgodnji poeziji Tomaža Šalamuna s poudarkom na knjigi *Poker* (1966) kot izdelku hladne vojne, ki je nastal v geopolitičnem in geokulturnem kontekstu socialistične Jugoslavije. Študija prikazuje, kako nadnacionalni tokovi oblikujejo delo tega pomembnega slovenskega pesnika posebej pod hegemonsko vplivnim pesniškim poljem ameriške poezije in njenimi kontra-poetičnimi tokovi, ki so dobro znani po zdaj že ikoničnem naslovu antologije Donalda Allena *Nova ameriška poezija* (1960). Na začetku tega prispevka predstavim različne kontekste, v katerih sta napisani Šalamunova in ameriška eksperimentalna poezija, pri čemer primerjam socialistično in kapitalistično pesniško kulturo iz obdobja hladne vojne. V tem obdobju sta polji umetnosti in poezije doživeli dramatične spremembe, ki so vključevale prevpraševanje tradicionalnega pristopa k umetnosti in poeziji. Razložim pomen T. S. Eliota za tedanje pesniško produkcijo. Potem se osredotočim na Šalamunovo zgodno poezijo iz *Pokra* (1966). Primerjam reizem v slovenski poeziji in objektivistični impulz v ameriški poeziji. Nato primerjam Šalamunove pesniške postopke s postopki, ki so jih uporabljali beatniki in newyorška šola, pa tudi zgodnja *language poetry*.

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

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