

Existential, Spiritual and Eschatological Horizons of Viktor Vida

Poet, essayist, critic and translator Viktor Vida (1913-1960) was one of the best and most distinguished poets of Croatian emigration. He suffered an unenviable fate, his sensibilities marked with a tragic perception of life and his own life with hardships. His poetry is thematically diverse, multi-layered and complex. His chosen themes focused on the homeland, the events from the Bible, the hidden God, angels, existential angst and death. Vida's "homeland" and "immigrant" phases feature the following motifs: nostalgic memories of childhood and home city of Boka, identifying the lyrical subject with the native landscape as a cultural and ontological category; fate of a refugee, life's hardships, loneliness, suffering, restlessness and anxiety of the lyrical subject, maladjustment to the landscape of Argentina; feeling of disconnection, uprootedness, dissociation and melancholy of the lyrical subject; search for the identity which has become unmoored in a foreign land; life and death, longing to transcend transience; religious thoughts, experiences and allusions, biblical associations, suffering and Christian compassion, quiet confidences and doubts, objection to the Heaven's silence; mysterious and hidden God, God as the sole interlocutor of a troubled individual, thanksgiving and humility before God; transcendence and eschatological visions. One can detect influences of impressionism and hermeticism in Vida's poetry. With his existential themes, broad spiritual horizons, religious inspirations, Christian eschatological motifs and religiously quiet confidences, Viktor Vida greatly enriched not only the religious, but also the entire Croatian poetry.

Keywords: homeland, death, tragic perception of life, biblical motifs, hidden God