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IDYLL AND FISSURE – IVO KALINSKI'S POETOLOGICAL TEXTS ABOUT CHILDREN'S POETRY 1992-2003

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Summary

The topic of this paper is the analysis of a series of nine texts by Ivo Kalinski dedicated to the "Dragutin Domjanić" Festivity of Kajkavian Children's Poetry, which is held in Sveti Ivan Zelina. The articles were written each year from 1992 to 2003 and published in the book "Anatomija kmice ili Umjetnina teksta – zanos i tjeskoba" (2004). These are poetological articles in which Kalinski makes various observations about children's poetic texts, from which his starting points will be extracted in order to gain insight into his description and prescription of elementary school children's poetry. As the academic papers predicts, most of the poems thematize the closest environment of children, from family, house and yard, through the landscape, flora and fauna of the homeland, to the opening of themes of work and transience. In this way, nativeness is manifested as the core topos of children's poetry, significant because of the constitution of their identity, and excessively present because of their short and narrow life experience. But while the academic papers do not question children's thematization of the homeland from an aesthetic point of view, Kalinski writes about about the inevitable clichédness and recycling of established poetic forms in part of the children's corpus. Furthermore, although other researchers of children's poetry do not see that there could be any steps beyond the horizon of nativeness, either in terms of content or form, Kalinski challenges the traditional approach here as well. Namely, in a series of examples, he points to the innovation of themes (social, emotional, spiritual) and to original poetic procedures, both in composition and in the lexic that deviates from the traditional props. Kalinski thus argues that in the more successful poems there is a split in both the poetic subject and the art, which leads the poetic creativity of young people in the direction of reflection, and points to a postmodern sensibility. In conclusion, in his texts, Kalinski provides a coherent and consistent poetics of Kajkavian children's poetry, which is based on nativeness, but conscious authors manage to establish an emotional connection between expression and content, which creates authentic texts that move off the beaten and uninteresting paths and affirm the authentic children's voice as a poetic and conceptual novelty.

Key words: nativeness; Kajkavian; children; poetry, postmodernism

1. Ivo Kalinski and the Festivity of Kajkavian Children's Poetry

The topic of this paper is the analysis of a series of nine texts by Ivo Kalinski dedicated to the *Dragutin Domjanić* Festivity of Kajkavian Children's Poetry, which is held in Sveti Ivan Zelina, and the articles were written every year from 1992 to 2003 and published in the book *Anatomija kmice ili Umjetnina teksta – zanos i tjeskoba*.¹ These are poetological texts in which Kalinski makes various observations about children's poems, from which his starting points will be extracted in order to gain insight into his description and prescription of elementary school children's poetry.

Ivo Kalinski is a researcher in Kajkavian lexicography and dialectology, editor of numerous books and anthologies, and he also edited the magazine *Kaj* from 1983 to 1990, to which should be added his significant literary work.² It is, therefore, about an linguistic expert, but also about an author who creatively writes on it, who "systematically deals with the poetics and language of contemporary Kajkavian literature", to which the book analyzed here is a significant contribution.³ Božica Pažur considers it a "starting point, fundamental and instructive" study for "considering the oral performance of Kajkavian postmodernism", as "poetry in a fissure" which is particularly characterized by "desemanticalized code, re-semanticization of history and language experience and self-termination of traces – of the text."⁴ Since the significant part of the book is devoted specifically to children's creativity, here it will be shown how Kalinski sees and evaluates it.

¹ *Anatomy of Darkness or The Art of the Text – Rapture and Anxiety*, Ivo Kalinski, 2004, Pučko otvoreno učilište. Sveti Ivan Zelina, pp. 9-37.

² Among other books, he published collections of Kajkavian poetry *Pha kaj* (1979) and *Valctakt i lajno* (1984), academic study *Poetika i jezik kajkavskih pjesama Dragutina Domjanića* (1988), then books of poetry in the standard Croatian language *Kristalni aed* (2005), *Lollo* (2008), *Nemir podvornika Szerbe* (2009), *Četverolisni četveropreg* (2010), *Apidiktorka* (2017), and a collection of short stories *Ono drugo more* (2006) and *Gle, kako lijep dan!* (2011), as well as novels *Leti, frizbi, leti!* (2013) i *Agnes, Dock Duck i ostali* (2015). Further texts on children poetry may be found (14 of them) in essay collections *Kiborg kao emotivni alien* (2009) and *Kiborg kao emotivni alien II* (2017)

³ Kalinski, Ivan. *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje*. Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža. <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=29948>. (9/11/2022)

⁴ Pažur, Božica. 2005. „Anatomija kmice Ive Kalinskoga – jednadžba kajkavske postmoderne“. *Gazophylacium*, X, 3-4, p. 52

2. Children's literature and creativity of children

Children's literary creativity is closely related to children's literature, which represents "literary creativity adapted to younger people, intended for home, preschool and school education",⁵ i.e. "consists of written works and accompanying illustrations made for the entertainment or instruction of young people."⁶ Children's literature appears relatively recently if we take into account the antiquity of the art of words, and it is connected with the changes in the perception of childhood, which evolved from something unimportant in the eyes of adults, to being crucial for the formation of every person, as we consider it today. Majhut writes that "socio-historical changes led to the recognition of the child as an independent phenomenon," which in turn "led to a change in the implicit reader and the creation of children's literature."⁷ The study *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* by the French historian of mentality and everyday life Philippe Aries, published in 1962 and extensively presented in Marijana Hameršak's book, drew attention to this process.⁸

Kajkavian children's literature has a long tradition, dating back to Juraj Dijanić and Anton Vranić,⁹ and it is important to highlight the pioneering work and central role in the valorization of children's literature by Joža Skok, a professor at the Department of Modern Croatian Literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb from 1978 to 1999, co-founder of the magazine *Umjetnost i dijete*,¹⁰ editor-in-chief of the magazine *Radost*,¹¹ anthologist of older and newer Croatian Kajkavian and children's literature, for example *Izvori i izbori iz hrvatske dječje književnosti* (2007).¹² Skok's criteria for including poems in anthologies are,

⁵ Dječja književnost. *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje*. Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža. <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=15567>. (9/11/2022)

⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/art/childrens-literature>. (9/11/2022)

⁷ Majhut, Berislav. 2005. *Pustolov, siročić i dječja družba: hrvatski dječji roman do 1945*. Zagreb. FF press, p. 76.

⁸ Hameršak, Marijana. 2022. *Pričalice: o povijesti djetinjstva i bajke*. Algoritam. Zagreb. In the book, the author quotes Hugh Cunningham who claims that Aries "managed to convince readers that childhood has a history; that ideas of childhood and the experience of being a child also change over time and in different cultures", p. 10.

⁹ Jembrih, Alojz. 2001. „Djelo Jurja Dijanića i Antona Vranića kao odraz prosvjetiteljstva u kajkavskoj dječjoj književnosti“. *Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa 200 godina kajkavske dječje književnosti*. Zagreb, 10. studenoga 1999. (ed) Alojz Jembrih. Varaždin – Donja Stubica, pp. 17-81.

¹⁰ *Art and Child*

¹¹ *Joy*

¹² *Sources and Choices from Croatian Children's Literature*, Joža Skok. *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje*. Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža. <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=56464>. (11/11/2022)

among others, the desire that poetry should be viewed from the poet's "artistic aspirations and achievements, not from external aesthetic positions", that it is important to have "the possibility of direct aesthetic communication with contemporary readers", that besides "traditional (descriptive-narrative and emotional didactic) children's songs" as equals must be included "contemporary texts that are characterized by 'rhythmic-lexical freedom, playful fantasy and modern metaphors'" and that it was not important to him only "the thematic-motive range of children's songs," but also "a child's spontaneous, open and immediate experience of the world" which "speaks exclusively in a language close to the child", whereby he considers dialect verses as "motive refreshment" and "an artistic opportunity for new rhythmic and lexical variations."¹³

The creation of a child reader consequently caused the creation of a child author, and as prerequisites for children's literary creativity, Hranjec cites "openness towards the world", "looking for one's own answers (and not the parent's, teacher's) to one's vital questions", "criticality, sensitivity to problems in immediate environment" and "free game of imagination."¹⁴ As for the choice of Kajkavian language itself, Težak says that "the strongest experiences of the youngest ones are always closely related to the native word and can best be expressed in it."¹⁵ Hranjec¹⁶ lists twelve motivic circles of Kajkavian children's poetry: home, as the space closest to the child; yard and fields with domestic animals; homeland with local topo-hydronyms; nature with local flora and natural phenomena; animal world; family and relatives as a close social circle; customs as a source of ethnographic themes; work that introduces social topics; the passing of the old that is replaced by the new as a source of nostalgia; school and play as an expression of infantilism; love among peers; country; at the end of that list, the author tentatively mentions reflexive poems as a possible segment of children's poetry, but expresses doubt that children may contribute something relevant in that area.

Beyond these clusters of motifs, the academics have already noticed a certain directness of lives of children, who, due to their youth, are not so exposed to literary and historical influences, which is why their poetic texts contain a "personal experience of reality"¹⁷ and one can speak of a "special associative-expre-

¹³ Hranjec, Stjepan. 2016. „Joža Skok, antologičar dječje književnosti“. In: *Joža Skok / Prilozi povijesti hrvatske kajkavske i dječje književnosti. Zbornik radova u povodu 85. obljetnice autorova rođenja.* (ed) Ernest Fišer. Tonimir. Varaždinske Toplice, p. 341

¹⁴ Hranjec, Stjepan. 1995. *Hrvatska kajkavska dječja književnost.* Zrinski. Čakovec, p. 58.

¹⁵ Težak, Stjepko. 1974. „Zavičajna riječ, poezija i djeca“. In: *Zbor malih pjesnika. Dani kajkavske riječi Zlatar 74,* Zlatar. nepaginirano.

¹⁶ Hranjec, *Hrvatska kajkavska dječja književnost,* pp. 68-80.

¹⁷ Fišer, Ernest (ed). 1976. *Antologija hrvatskog dječjeg kajkavskog pjesništva. Kaj 3-5,* p. 7.

ssive field of children's Kajkavian poetry,"¹⁸ even sometimes ludistic "in the mode of Kerempuh."¹⁹ Children's poetic creativity, therefore, although a relatively new phenomenon, on one hand is based on children's literature, which moves between the poles of entertainment and instruction, but it also has its own characteristics because it is within the children's world, limited by space and cognition, but with the possibility of fresh insights, and incorporated into postmodernist tendencies.

3. Homeland and cleavage

Nativeness in poetry is manifested "in the sign of linguistic and stylistic diversity and specific subject matter" because the poetic subject always has a "native, national and cultural identity based on language, space, history and culture."²⁰ In his depictions of children's poetry, Kalinski always begins with the presented homeland, but repeatedly points to the uncreative representation, whereby the works "move along the paths of well-worn prop emblematics and recognizable general clichés"²¹ because there is "repetition and variation of the same, worn-out motif-thematic templates and the most banal rhymes."²² Usual motif circles as listed previously may be detected even from random listed typical words - home (cottage, lantern...), family circle (mommy, grandfather, grandmother...), yard (sand, turkey, rooster...), local landscape (hills, vineyard, road, forest, grove...), flora and fauna (bird, flower, butterfly...), natural phenomena (wind, winter, autumn, rain, sun...), and to these may be added "verse arrangement of ethnographic/ethnological heritage."²³

The area of nativeness is a "key category"²⁴ in Croatian literature, and within it the notion of a *native subject*²⁵ is created, but in the majority of children's poetry presented at the Festivity of Children's Kajkavian Poetry in the analyzed period,

¹⁸ Fišer, Ernest. 1981. Hrvatsko dječje kajkavsko pjesništvo. U: *Dekantacija kajkaviana. Revija*. Osijek, pp. 62-63

¹⁹ Kalinski, Ivo. 1972. „Nekoliko naznaka o dječjoj kajkavskoj dijalektalnoj lirici“. *Kaj*, 2, p. 24.

²⁰ Vrcić-Mataija, Sanja i Troha, Jasminka. 2016. „Zavičajnost u hrvatskoj dječjoj književnosti“. *Magistra Iadertina*, 11(1), p. 134.

²¹ Kalinski, 2004, p. 9

²² *ibid*, p. 12

²³ *ibid*, p. 22

²⁴ Brešić, Vinko. 2004. *Slavonska književnost i novi regionalizam*. Osijek. Matica hrvatska, Ogranak Osijek, p. 31.

²⁵ Sablić Tomić, Helena i Rem, Goran. 2003. *Slavonski tekst hrvatske književnosti*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska.

the “standard motif repertoire”²⁶ was used, which indicates the “superficiality of the impression.”²⁷ In this regard, Kalinski repeatedly expresses his suspicion that it is a question of insufficient involvement of teachers or their excessive guidance, because teachers “tend to set thematic frameworks from the general realm of things and phenomena, from the elementary sources of life.”²⁸ He also states that the banality of the content and the banality of the form are connected because the “intensification of the rhythmic side, rhyming, sound and color” causes a “neglect of the content of the song” and children “enter the world of adults using their molds.”²⁹

However, Kalinski's assessment, although strict, is not negative because he persistently counts on the fact that there is a “personal, reflexive and experiential, therefore also creative world of our elementary school pupils,”³⁰ and it always finds its way to expression. Kalinski thus observes themes that cause a crack in the idyll of the homeland, as in the case of the theme of war, when “that former, but happy poetic world, moves into the bitterness of life experience”³¹ or when it comes to ecology, where children experience “disappointment with the relations people have to the environment.”³²

It is about an obvious split in children's consciousness that Kalinski explained in other places, which criticism has already noticed, that is, about a situation when “boundless emotional loyalty to the homeland is expressed as a kind of sincere idealization,”³³ but there is a collision of fantasy and life experiences, which is evident not only in the new themes but also in the texture of the poems, which deviates from traditional forms. It comes to the point that children's literature is no longer viewed as a “passive reflection of the changing values and conceptions of the child”, i.e. images of childhood, but becomes a means by which we “regulate our relationship to language and images as such.”³⁴ In Kalinski's words, “a young sensitized being begins to seriously face the problems of life characteristic

²⁶ Bošković, Ivan. 2012. „Splitska dječja književnost: nekoliko impresija kao poticaj za razgovor (na marginama knjige *More vedrine* i splitskih dječjih časopisa“. In: *1. i 2. okrugli stol: Zavičajnost u knjigama za djecu i mlade*. (ed) Grozdana Ribičić i Vesna Mihanović. Split. Gradska knjižnica Marka Marulića, p. 57.

²⁷ Kalinski, 2004, p. 20

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ Kalinski, 2004, p. 13

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 12

³¹ *ibid.*, p. 9

³² *ibid.*, p. 19

³³ *ibid.*, p. 17

³⁴ Rose, Jacqueline. 1984. *The Case of Peter Pan: Or the Impossibility of Children's Fiction*. London. Macmillan, p. 139.

of adults,” whereby “descriptiveness is reduced to the minimum.”³⁵ Although he pointed out the clichéd nature of most children's verses, Kalinski observes and welcomes children's “constant effort to come out of the ‘taken-over’ framing” because he points to the “creative concern over the perceived fissure between the past and the present.”³⁶ In addition to the aforementioned themes of war and pollution, which stem from the gap between the ideals of childhood and the reality of adults, in the poetry of elementary school children Kalinski observes also social themes such as the relationship between wealth and poverty and “sociological stratification between rural and urban,”³⁷ as well as the theme of love, admittedly “more with the acknowledgment of shame than intimacy,”³⁸ and then also thematizing “the inexorability of life's transience, its tragedy”³⁹ and even “the longing for something occult, towards the astral, actually towards the divine.”⁴⁰

Kalinski especially praises children's authors who deviate not only from clichéd themes but also from the usual poetic forms, thus noticing a poem that speaks of the “darker side of life”, that is, about “scattered grains of experience of adults”, which is not in rhyme but addresses the reader “with a stripped-down verse form and the most necessary corresponding lexic of overpowering blackness.”⁴¹ About the other poem he expresses himself positively because of the “inversion of the events in the verse”, because “at the beginning of the poem already is said what would be expected by the end”, i.e. the poem “begins with a stressful statement, and brings it to an end – with conditioned thoughts and lived through sentiments.”⁴² Kalinski singles out a children's autothematic poem, in which the effort of writing itself is considered, and in it he finds “a child's amazement at the whiteness of paper, when the burden of the unspeakable is translated into letters that are heavier and harsher than a possible message.”⁴³

Despite the inertia of educational institutions, which Kalinski suspects “narrows the space of lyrical freedom,”⁴⁴ it is still possible, he believes, to realize a “children's poetic adventure;”⁴⁵ Kalinski believes that “rare, but conscious”⁴⁶

³⁵ Kalinski, 2004, p. 26

³⁶ *ibid*, p. 12-13

³⁷ *ibid*, p. 34

³⁸ *ibid*, p. 32

³⁹ *ibid*, p. 33

⁴⁰ *ibid*, p. 36

⁴¹ *ibid*, p. 23

⁴² *ibid*, p. 21

⁴³ *ibid*, p. 15

⁴⁴ *ibid*, p. 20

⁴⁵ *ibid*, p. 21

⁴⁶ *ibid*, p. 19

young artists manage to “touch the eternal theme of self-questioning about living and the transience of everything,”⁴⁷ that is, they achieve “spontaneous emotional connections of expression and content.”⁴⁸ In this way, he interprets children's poetic works “as a place of negotiation and intercession, and not just a reflection of values, ideas forged independently of children and vision of childhood,”⁴⁹ which is why they can be approached “not only as isolated aesthetic products, but also as cultural products that influence the social climate that surrounds them,”⁵⁰ which confirms the thesis about “the phenomenon of children's poetics outgrowing in childhood,”⁵¹ and confirms the inherent value of youth creativity, which is that “the world opens before us with problematic alternatives.”⁵²

4. Conclusion – polemic and affirmation

In nine texts dedicated to the Festivity of Kajkavian Children's Poetry *Dragutin Domjanić* in Sveti Ivan Zelina, written from 1992 to 2003, and published in the book *Anatomija kmice ili Umjetnina teksta – zanos i tjeskoba*, Ivo Kalinski presents the poetologics of Kajkavian poetry of elementary school students. As academic papers predicts, most of the poems thematize the closest environment of children, from family, house and yard, through the landscape, flora and fauna of the homeland, to the opening of themes of work and transience. In this way, nativeness is manifested as the core topos of children's poetry, significant because of the constitution of their identity, and excessively present because of their short and narrow life experience. But while the academic papers do not question children's thematization of the homeland from an aesthetic point of view, Kalinski speaks about the inevitability of the clichédness and the recycling of established poetic forms in a part of children texts.

Furthermore, although other researchers of children's poetry do not see that there could be any steps beyond the horizon of nativeness, either in terms of con-

⁴⁷ *ibid*, p. 13

⁴⁸ *ibid*, p. 20

⁴⁹ Hameršak, p. 35.

⁵⁰ Levander, Caroline F. i Carol J. Singley. 2003. “Introduction”. In: *American Child: Cultural Studies Reader*. New Brunswick, New Jersey and London. Rutgers University Press, p. 6

⁵¹ Pažur, Božica. 2001. „Dječje kajkavsko pjesništvo u časopisu *Kaj* – književni korpusi i metodološke naznake“. *Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa 200 godina kajkavske dječje književnosti*. Zagreb, 10. studenoga 1999. (ed) Alojz Jembrih. Varaždin – Donja Stubica, p. 94.

⁵² Kalinski, 1972, p. 24

tent or form, Kalinski challenges the traditional approach here as well. Namely, in a series of examples, he points to the innovation of themes (social, emotional, spiritual) and to original poetic procedures, both in composition and in the lexic that deviates from the traditional props. Kalinski thus argues that in the more successful poems, a fissure is evident both in the poetic subject and in the works of art, which leads the poetic creation of young people in the direction of reflection, and points to a postmodern sensibility. In conclusion, Kalinski gives in his texts a coherent and consistent poetics of Kajkavian children's poetry, which is based on nativeness, but conscious authors manage to establish an emotional connection between expression and content, which creates authentic texts that leave the beaten and uninteresting paths and affirm the authentic children's voice as a poetic and conceptual innovation.

*IDILA I RASCJEP – POETOLOŠKI TEKSTOVI IVE KALINSKOGA O
DJEČJEM PJSNIŠTVU 1992. - 2003.*

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Sažetak

Tema ovog rada je analiza niza od devet tekstova Ive Kalinskog posvećena Smotri dječjega kajkavskoga pjesništva „Dragutin Domjanić“ koja se održava u Svetom Ivanu Zelini, a članci su pisani susljedno iz godine u godinu od 1992. do 2003. te objavljeni u knjizi „Anatomija kmice ili Umjetnina teksta – zanos i tjeskoba“ (2004). Riječ je o poetološkim zapisima u kojima Kalinski iznosi razna zapažanja o dječjim pjesničkim tekstovima iz kojih će se izlučiti njegova polazišta kako bi se dobio uvid u njegovu deskripciju i preskripciju poezije osnovnoškolaca. Kao što znanstvena literatura i predviđa, većina pjesama tematizira najužu okolinu djece, od obitelji, kuće i dvorišta, preko krajolika, flore i faune zavičaja, do otvaranja tema rada i prolaznosti. Na taj se način zavičajnost očituje kao sržni topos dječje poezije, značajna zbog konstituiranja njihova identiteta, a pretjerano prisutna zbog njihova kratkog i suženog životnog iskustva. No dok znanstvena literatura dječje tematiziranje zavičaja ne propituje s estetskih stajališta, Kalinski progovara o tome te takve radove ocjenjuje. Iako drugi istraživači dječje poezije ne vide da bi izvan obzora zavičajnosti, bilo u sadržajnom, bilo u formalnom pogledu, moglo biti nekih iskoraka, Kalinski i tu izaziva uvriježeni pristup. Naime, na nizu primjera ukazuje na inovativnost tema (socijalnih, emocionalnih, duhovnih) te na originalne pjesničke postupke, kako u kompoziciji, tako i u leksiku koji odstupa od tradicionalnog rekvizitarija. Kalinski tako argumentira da se u uspješnijim pjesmama očituje raskol i u pjesničkom subjektu i u umjetninama, koji odvodi

pjesničko stvaralaštvo mladih u smjeru misaonosti, a ukazuje na postmoderne senzibilitet. Zaključno, Kalinski daje u svojim tekstovima koherentnu i dosljednu poetiku kajkavskog dječjeg pjesništva koje je utemeljeno u zavičajnosti, ali se kod osviještenih autora uspijeva uspostaviti emocionalna veza između izraza i sadržaja, čime nastaju autentični tekstovi koji silaze s utabanih i nezanimljivih putova te afirmiraju autentični dječji glas kao pjesnički i idejni novum.

Ključne riječi: zavičajnost; kajkavski; djeca; poezija, postmodernizam

Prijevod na engleski: autor