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La coscienza di zeno riassunto pdf

La coscienza di Zeno pubblicato nel 1923 è il terzo e più importante romanzo di Italo Svevo (dopo Una vita e Senilità). Svevo iniziò la stesura del romanzo subito dopo la prima guerra mondiale, ottenendo subito pareri favorevoli da intellettuali come James Joyce ed Eugenio Montale. Seguirono molti riconoscimenti internazionali. Si tratta del primo romanzo psicoanalitico della nostra letteratura e uno dei capolavori della letteratura italiana contemporanea. La coscienza di Zeno riassume Zeno's protagonist e voice narrante del romanzo, è un benestante e maturo signore triestino, afflitto fin dalla giovinezza da molti malesi e disturbi nervosi. Per liberarsene si rivolge al dottor S. (sotto cui è adombrato Sigmund Freud), studioso delle recenti teorie psicoanalitiche. Questi gli consiglia di annotare in un diario ricordi, immagini e sogni al fine di risalire alle remote origini della propria nevrosi. La nevrosi si manifesta in improvvisi deliri al fianco, in una fastidiosa zoppia nei momenti di emozione e di disagio. Zeno esegue il compito assegnato dal medico, ma dopo qualche tempo decide di interrompere la cura, perché ritiene di non averne più bisogno; ciò spinge il dottor S. a pubblicare per vendetta il diario del paziente, premettendo una nota scritta di suo pugno, in cui dichiara apertamente di volerlo danneggiare, smascherandone bugie e virtù. Lo scrittore nella Prefazione che apre il libro, finge dunque che il manoscritto inviato da Zeno venga pubblicato dal dottor S stesso, per vendicarsi del paziente, che si è sottratto alla cura, frodando al medico il frutto dell'analisi. Al termine del libro, invece, Svevo inserisce una sorta di diario di Zeno, in cui Zeno spiega il suo abbandono della terapia perché dichiara di essere guarito da ogni malattia, in coincidenza con i successi commerciali ottenuti durante la guerra grazie a fortunate e lucrose speculazioni. Il romanzo è dunque narrato dal protagonista, con la finzione della biografia e del diario. Il romanzo, dopo la Prefazione del dottor S e un Preambolo in cui Zeno racconta i propri tentativi di risalire alla prima infanzia, si articola in sei capitoli. La coscienza di Zeno riassume capitoli Primo capitolo Nel primo capitolo, intitolato "Il fumo", Zeno racconta di aver iniziato a fumare accantamente in giovanissima età e di aver maturato quasi altrettanto presto il proposito, mai tradotto in pratica, di smettere. Secondo capitolo Il secondo capitolo del romanzo si intitola "La morte di mio padre". In esso Zeno traccia un ritratto del padre, un agiato commerciante che rimprovera al figlio l'indisciplina e l'incapacità negli affari. Per queste ragioni il vecchio Cosini, al momento di ritirarsi dall'attività, affida all'amministratore Olivi il compito di gestire le proprietà di famiglia al posto di Zeno, a quale spetterà solo una rendita. Con l'atteggiamento ambiguo che gli è caratteristico, Zeno rimprovera il padre di non aver fiducià in lui, ma al contempo è lieto di essere esentato da obblighi e attività concrete. Quando il padre si ammalà gravemente, Zeno gli si ravvicina; ma le incomprensioni e i conflitti che hanno caratterizzato il loro rapporto non cessano e lo schiaffo dato al figlio, poco prima di morire, lascerà in Zeno un perenne disagio e un vago senso di colpa. Terzo capitolo Il terzo capitolo si intitola "La storia del mio matrimonio". Grazie all'amicizia con Giovanni Malfenti, un intraprendente uomo d'affari, Zeno è stato introdotto a casa di questi e ne conosce le quattro figlie, due delle quali, Ada e Augusta, in età da marito. Zeno, che ritiene sia giunto per lui il momento di sposarsi, corteggia con le sue solite ambiguità Ada, la bellissima sorella maggiore. Ada però lo rifiuta perché innamorata di Guido Speier. Umiliato da questo rifiuto, Zeno si dichiara nella stessa serata dapprima alla sorella Alberta, che è poco più di una scolaretta, e infine ad Augusta, la sorella brutta, che il protagonista non aveva mai preso in considerazione. Augusta, che si rivela dotata di spirito e buon senso, accetta l'offerta di matrimonio. Quarto capitolo Il quarto capitolo "La moglie e l'amante" inizia con Zeno che registra, con stupore e ironia, la buona riuscita del suo matrimonio. Il mondo di sua moglie si regge su principi saldi e indiscutibili: si mangia a orari fissi; si indossano abiti di un certo tipo; per la salvezza dell'anima si va in chiesa e per quella del corpo si ci affida al governo e ai medici. Questi sani principi, fondamento della società borghese, appaiono assurdi al protagonista-narratore, che sperimenta su se stesso, quanto essi siano svuotati di significato e ridotti a semplici riti. Zeno, pertanto, si ritiene l'unico "sano" in un mondo di malati di conformismo, al quale però anche lui si conforma, assumendo il ruolo di capofamiglia, esattamente come il padre che aveva tanto odiato. Alla moglie Zeno affianca la giovane amante Carla, una ragazza povera che egli ostenta di proteggere in modo "paterno", finché ella non lo abbandona per un uomo più giovane. E Zeno ritorna, senza scandali né scene, alla tradizionale e monotona vita di coppia con la moglie. Quinto capitolo Il quinto capitolo s'intitola "Storia di un'associazione commerciale". Con il cognato Guido, che ha sposato Ada (la sorella della moglie un tempo desiderata), fonda un'associazione commerciale. Nei confronti di Guido – bello, disinvolto, sicuro di sé (insomma l'antitesi di Zeno, come Macario, Una vita e Balli in Senilità) Zeno nutre incontestabile odio. L'associazione commerciale si conclude tragicamente con il dissesto economico di Guido e il suo suicidio. Il suicidio doveva essere solo simulato e invece avviene realmente per il tardivo intervento del medico. L'odio verso Guido si tradisce clamorosamente al funerale: Zeno sbaglia corteo funebre. Si tratta di uno di quegli "atti mancati" che Freud nella Psicopatologia della vita quotidiana ha dimostrato essere estremamente rivelatori dei nostri impulsi inconsci, come l'"apussis" e le "dimenticanze". Sesto capitolo Il diario di Zeno si conclude con il sesto capitolo, "Psicanalisi", che, a differenza degli altri, è datato dal maggio 1915 al marzo 1916. In queste pagine Zeno racconta di aver perso fiducia nel dottore e nella terapia psicanalitica. Abbandonata la cura, comincia a sentirsi guarito e si inserisce nel mondo concreto e attivo degli affari. Infatti, in seguito allo scoppio della Prima Guerra Mondiale, inizia a gestire l'azienda di famiglia ricavandone soddisfazioni e lauti guadagni. Zeno, nelle pagine finali, arriva a sottolineare il confine incerto tra malattia e salute nelle condizioni attuali, in cui la vita è «inquinata alle radici» affermando invece che tutti sono ammalati, che la malattia è la condizione normale dell'umanità e che, più degli altri, lo è chi è convinto di essere sano. Il romanzo chiude in chiave apocalittica, con la profezia di «una catastrofe inaudita prodotta dagli ordigni», attraverso la quale l'umanità, forse, guarirà dai germi di cui si nutre e troverà la salute in un mondo asettico. La coscienza di Zeno analisi e commento La coscienza di Zeno affronta, per la prima volta in Italia, il tema della psicanalisi, la scienza fondata alla fine del XIX secolo dal medico austriaco Sigmund Freud allo scopo di indagare le parti più nascoste e profonde della personalità umana. La particolare struttura del romanzo lo rende straordinariamente innovativo nell'ambito della narrativa italiana dei primi anni del Novecento. Il punto di vista è sempre quello del narratore interno (Zeno), che è anche il protagonista, presentato come inattendibile sin dall'inizio del romanzo; i ricordi fluiscono sulla base delle libere associazioni mentali di Zeno. Episodi della vita passata spesso si confondono con il presente, determinando il cosiddetto tempo misto: il presente, in cui Zeno ormai, vecchio, scrive e giudica il passato attraverso fatti e persone. Il racconto prende così la forma di un lungo monologo interiore, ovvero un discorso che il narratore rivolge a se stesso. Leggendo il diario, Zeno appare al lettore come un uomo debole e indeciso, sempre alla ricerca di giustificazioni per i suoi fallimenti, i suoi imbrogli, le sue bugie. E' un anti-eroe, attraverso il quale Svevo smaschera le contraddizioni interiori e la fragilità dell'uomo contemporaneo, senza però esprimere giudizi morali, bensì mantenendo un atteggiamento di ironica comprensione per la fragilità e le paure umane, determinate da una vita sempre più precaria, instabile e, in definitiva, ingovernabile dalla volontà individuale. La visione catastrofica con cui si conclude il romanzo è il significativo emblema del lucido pessimismo di Italo Svevo. by Italo SvevoTHE LITERARY WORKAn ironic novel set in Trieste c. 1900-1915; published in Italian (as La coscienza di Zeno) in 1923, in English m 1930.SYNOPSISIn the form of a personal diary, the novel narrates the adventures and comic misadventures of a Triesteine businessman, Zeno Cosini: his failed attempt to quit smoking, the death of his father, his marriage, his unsuccessful business endeavors, and his problematic interaction with psychoanalysis.Events in History at the Time of the NovelThe novel in FocusFor More InformationItalo Svevo, whose real name was Ettore Aron Schmitz, was born in 1861 in Trieste to Jewish parents of mixed backgrounds. His mother, Allegra Moravia, belonged to an Italian Jewish family's. His father, Francesco Schmitz, a German Jew also born in Trieste, had by then managed to establish himself as a successful businessman. Schmitz had a comfortable childhood. At the age of 11 he was sent to an academy near Würzburg, Germany, where, for the next five years he studied business and commerce and improved his command of the German and French languages. Upon returning to Trieste, he enrolled at the Istituto Revoltella, the local business school for higher education, and during his tenure there read French, German, and Italian literary works in their original languages, and English and Russian texts in translation. Trieste had a very fine theater, which Schmitz attended regularly.He began to write short literary reviews for the local paper, L'Indipendente (The Independent), as well as some short stories and plays. His relatively carefree lifestyle ended in 1890, however, his father's business failed, and Schmitz felt compelled to take a job as a clerk at Union-bank, a Viennese bank with a branch in Trieste. Although very unhappy in it, he kept the job for the next 20 years while continuing to write. In 1892 Schmitz self-published his first novel, Una Vita (A Life), the tale of an inport bank clerk with literary aspirations. Here for the first time Ettore Schmitz used the pseudonym Italo Svevo, meaning "Italian Swabian (or German)," to underline his mixed heritage. In 1896, after a short but intense affair with a local working-class woman, Schmitz married Livia Veneziani, the daughter of his first cousin (a successful industrialist), with whom he had his only child, Letizia. His family's did not deter him from his literary pursuits, but a critical response did. In 1898, again at his own expense, Svevo published his second novel, Senilità, (Enrico's Carnival), and, embittered by the few unfavorable reviews, decided to abandon a literary career. His wife recalled him saying, "Write one must. What one needn't do is publish" (Svevo in Veneziani, p. 35). In 1899 Svevo began work at his in-laws' factory (manufacturing naval and submarine paint). Because his new job took him to England intermittently, he decided to take English lessons at the Berlitz school in Trieste. It was here that in 1906, he met Irish writer James Joyce, a teacher at the school. The two developed a friendship based on mutual admiration. Joyce read Senilità with pleasure and encouraged Schmitz to keep writing. In the next decade Svevo became interested in the recently published works of Sigmund Freud and continued to draft short stories and plays. He began his masterpiece, La coscienza di Zeno (Zeno's Conscience), in 1919 and yet again published it at his own expense in 1923. Schmitz died after a car accident just five years later, in September 1928.The masterpiece he left behind does for Trieste what Joyce's works do for Dublin, and Franz Kafka's do for Prague. Trieste becomes a virtual character, a symbolic city reflective of the complex cultural and political identity of its inhabitants at the turn of the twentieth century.Events in History at the Time of the NovelTrieste – historical backgroundA small, independent, vulnerable settlement after the fall of the Roman Empire, in 1382 Trieste placed itself under the protection of the Holy Roman Empire for fear of being conquered by the nearby rich and powerful Republic of Venice. Until the eighteenth century it remained an insignificant fishing town, even the imperialistic Habsburg dynasty of Europe had little interest in this small outpost. Things changed in the eighteenth century when, thanks to a 1749 decree by Archduchess Maria Teresa, the city of Trieste acquired the privileges and exemptions of a free port (one through which merchandise can be moved without paying duties) for goods entering and leaving the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The effect was monumental: Trieste grew from an economically insignificant border-town into the main port of the Empire. It became a productive, financially powerful city devoted principally to commerce: during the nineteenth century Trieste housed a very active stock exchange as well as insurance companies and shipping agencies. The Austro-Hungarian policy of religious tolerance and the possibility of economic mobility made the city appealing to a great many immigrants from Europe and the Middle East. By the mid-nineteenth century, the city population included not only Italians but also Slavs, Germans, Austrians, Eastern European Jews, Greeks, and Turks; Trieste attained a multiethnic, multicultural quality, which by century's end was one of its most distinct characteristics.Despite the privileged position that came from being part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, most Italian Triesteines subscribed to the Italian nationalist movement that saw Trieste and its surroundings as terre irredente, or "unredeemed lands," that ought to be annexed to Italy. Part of their motivation in so thinking was that the population's heterogeneity presented something of a threat; Trieste's rise in status brought with it a large proletarian class, composed mostly of Slovenes, who abandoned the surrounding countryside to try to improve their economic conditions in the city. The ever-increasing number of Slovenes who moved to Trieste to offer cheap labor (between 1864 and 1909 the city's population doubled, increasing from 12,000 to 224,000) threatened the Italian Triesteines, who feared becoming a minority in a city they considered Italian. Theirs was a complicated nationalism, though; they could not accept without reservations the Italian nationalist movement, being perfectly aware that their economic power depended upon belonging to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Pulled by conflicting national, ethnic, and economic interests, the city became, for turn-of-the-twentieth-century Trieste authors, an emblem of the crisis of the modern man and woman. They had to learn to live in a world that was becoming more and more fragmented, in which no single set of beliefs was enough to deal with the complexities of life.The cultural and political ambivalence came to an abrupt end at the onset of World War I, when Italy joined France, Russia, and Britain against Germany and Austro-Hungary. Many Italian Triesteines, although they were Austrian citizens, escaped to Italy to join the Italian army and fight as Italian soldiers against the Empire. With the defeat of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, Trieste and the surrounding Adriatic coast became part of Italy, and the unique cosmopolitan atmosphere that had characterized the city soon disappeared. There was an intensely nationalistic atmosphere in the immediate aftermath of the war that swept the city into its fold (and would lead Italy in a few years to embrace the Fascist regime).Literary Trieste and its philosophical influencesBecause of its unique cosmopolitan environment, early-twentieth-century Trieste produced what Claudio Magris later called "the great Trieste generation" (Magris, p. 293). To this generation belonged, among others, the writers Scipio Slataper, Umberto Saba, and Carlo Michelstaedter, all of whom were interested in the irresolvable conflicts of modern civilization that were so visible in their city (e.g., nationalism versus internationalism, urban versus rural life). In his critical essays for the famous literary and cultural journal La Voce (The Voice; based in Florence), Slataper analyzes Trieste's cultural and political heterogeneity, and in his fragmentary autobiography il mio Carso (My Karst) portrays the city's complex urban environment. The poetry of Umberto Saba (1883-1957) is inspired by the lively, tormented atmosphere of his port town. In 1910 Carlo Michelstaedter (1887-1910), a young philosopher from the nearby town of Gorizia, wrote the treatise Le persuasione e la rettorica (Persuasion and Rhetoric), and then killed himself. The text exhorts the impossibility of an authentic life in a world whose relationships are dictated by pure appearance and rhetorical concerns. Although he quotes Weininger in his novel, and his concerns about modern genius are present in his text, he presents them with amused irony. In Zeno's Conscience, Svevo refuses content every philosophical concern as well as the political concerns with which he was so by another. This is readily apparent from Slataper's articles for La Voce, in which he dismisses Trieste's cultural and literary assets; he strongly criticizes Saba's poems while ignoring the existence of Svevo's first two novels. Yet, while not a homogenous group, all three were reacting to the same literary practice, aestheticism, promoted by Gabriele D'Annunzio, one of the most evuluated writers in Italy at the time. The movement celebrated art for art's sake, divorcing it from any ethical aim, seeing it as existing only for the purpose of its own beauty. The Triesteine authors took issue with this artistic detachment, and the difference showed in their writing. In opposition to the refined language, elegant imageries, and aristocratic settings that characterized D'Annunzio's novels Il Piacere (1889; Child of Pleasure, also in WLAIIT 7: Italian Literature and Its Times) and L'Innoceito (1892; The Intruder), the Trieste authors offered a prosaic style that originated from the bourgeois setting in which they lived. Their reading and assimilation of the theories of German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) is particularly telling. 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It was this unveiling of the relativity of any system of values that preoccupied the writers of Trieste.IMPORTANT DATES IN TRIESTE'S HISTORY: 60 b.c.e. Trieste is the Roman colony of Tergeste1000c.Trieste becomes independent community1100s-1200sTrieste becomes a Venetian colonyIn Zeno's Conscience, Svevo refuses content every philosophical concern as well as the political concerns with which he was so by another. This is readily apparent from Slataper's articles for La Voce, in which he dismisses Trieste's cultural and literary assets; he strongly criticizes Saba's poems while ignoring the existence of Svevo's first two novels. Yet, while not a homogenous group, all three were reacting to the same literary practice, aestheticism, promoted by Gabriele D'Annunzio, one of the most evuluated writers in Italy at the time. The movement celebrated art for art's sake, divorcing it from any ethical aim, seeing it as existing only for the purpose of its own beauty. 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