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EMANATION RELATIONS BETWEEN FORM AND MEANING IN A LITERARY TEXT

We assume that any contact with available book titles (fiction: *Damianova rieka*, 1993, a volume of poems: *Tehilim*, 1997) or with any magazine texts or authorial interviews and statements from a professional preacher of the Czech Brethren Church, Daniel Pastirčák (1959), shall induce "elementary" questions which create a background for reflections on ideas, forms, and of the symbiosis of universal cognitive values of the real and universal spiritual (social) reality.

Moreover, in this authorial project one may find concentrated into a single authorial style and manner not only reflection on central philosophical notions but also instructions how to embrace the form of *to be* and the meaning of *to create* in an imperative position of the condition of the state of *being*. Another reason for that is that a human individual has to *get into* "realistic" relations between form and meaning which imply a specific notion; that is why he or she has to *know and solve* them as semantic signs of reality.

The above indicated manifestations and obligations of the subject have remained an unchangeable groundwork for the author for his model-like emanation "games" with an enclosed philosophical knowledge of the selected phenomena of reality. Such "games" between a specific idea (philosophy) and a specific form (an artistic (non)verbal artifact) functionally move from explication through parables up to analogies and systems in both epic and lyric forms, where time - as "mediator of the universal social knowledge in Pastirčák's literary project - loses its decisive cognitive importance.

The need to repeat emanation between form and meaning as a process of reviving and passing on the knowledge from generation to

generation according to the pattern of "communication" between the old, verified ideas and the author's new frustrating experience keeps the author's attention focused on the necessity to update, in the changed social circumstances, the "elementary" questions of being and human life; this, however, "under the pressure" of his specific artistic text.

In this connection, it should be noted that Pastirčák's prosaic and poetic texts with their humanizing and Christianizing ambitions penetrated the practical culture of the ninth decade just "here and now"...

In his consistently systematic approach, D. Pastirčák works with a limited number, and a symbolic background, of notions, motives, and their semantic relations. As a result, the "message" of his artistic texts may be interpreted as if the author consciously missed the philosophical and aesthetic trends of (post)modernism. Nonetheless, it may be assumed that the stubborn return of the artistically oriented priest to the genesis of the idea of being, and the resulting knowledge of man and his life, announce, as it were, the "neoromantic", the relieving and opening catharsis of a (non)literary man. It is exactly the new and the romantic that is expected at the horizon of arts in the next millenium this and also applies to literature.

There are two reasons for taking interest in the emanation of form and meaning in Pastirčák's texts. They are derived from specific qualities of the author. The first one concerns the fact that D. Pastirčák "has been a preacher of the Czech Brethren Church in Bratislava. In addition to the spiritual mission he has been concentrating on art and sculpture as well as literature" (Bibiana, III, 1995, 3, p. 33). Another impetus for taking notice of philosophical connotations of his texts comes from the author himself: his first prosaic work acknowledged the ideas of J. R. R. Tolkien (*On Fairy Stories*). Pastirčák updates Tolkien's idea concerning the expected (projected) and intended recipient, because he, an author and priest, philosopher and artist assumes that: "If a fairy tale as such is worth reading then it deserves to be written for adults and to be read by adults (D. Pastirčák, 1993, unpagued).

When deciding to ask and answer a question our approach to the problem in question was natural. Tolkien himself starts his considerations on fairy tale (*Pohádka*, Tolkien, 1997, 91) as follows: What is a fairy-story? He aptly selected and convincingly reconstructed a rational analysis of the genesis of the lexis and semantics of the notion "fairy tale". As he stated at a different place of his reflection on fairy tale (*O pohádkach*), a little bit paradoxically with regard to his subsequent analytic step (the genesis of the notion of fairy tale), the world of the

fairy tale is far, deep, and high, and is filled with a number of different things, including various animals and birds, shoreless seas, an infinite number of stars, enchanting beauty. ... (Tolkien, 1997, p. 90). In the situation when D. Pastirčák gave himself to the imagination of childhood, to recollections of his experience with fairy tale reading, to the generalised tradition of fairy tale apprehension, and to the unique structure of the world of the fairy tale he did return to the gist of the phenomenon, and completed the original question: What in fact is fairy tale? by other questions and specifications: What is its origin? What is its purpose? (Tolkien, 1997, p. 90). Tolkien's treatise on fairy tales ends up with an Epilogue (Tolkien, 1997, *O pohádkach*, pp. 87-143), including another question: Is it true? (Tolkien, 1997, p. 141) completing his study and explication of the fairy tale and the "genuine" fairy story by acknowledging the Gospel's ideas of the spirit, love, freedom, and humility.

D. Pastirčák adheres to Tolkien's tenets, to the Gospel's echo in the real world. This is related, *inter alia*, to their common Platonic and Christian attitudes = the "knowledge": of the ideas of worlds, human pains accompanying the process of cognition, the ways of being, the need and the sense of search (of self, truth, love, spirit), of life, time and space, and of opportunities for actual recognition of the capacities of body and soul, of motion from darkness into to light (life, ideas, world(s), values), from below (cave) upwards (heaven, God), of the parables (of self and the spirit), of the good and the evil, and the beauty as a code for being, and also of values and truth as their targets. In other words, the "knowledge" of an individual's drama at a specific time filled with one's personal attempts to get out of the cave (self, mass, material things, world) into to light (ideas). The painful process of cognition (value: self, world) has become an indispensable part of the drama of search for self and self-recognition. The motion and cognition eventually enable Pastirčák's subject - in a complex way and without fixed certainty though (idea, belief, to believe) - to cope rationally with transitions between the "Real World" (Tolkien, 1997, p. 146), covered by the notion of cave (Plato) in the ancient philosophy, and the "Other World" ("secondary world") (Tolkien, pp. 146, 124), that is to say, between light (Plato) and "secondary belief" (Tolkien, p. 127).

Literary art and the fairy tale as one of its grateful and commonplace extraordinary and variable possibilities, which almost always, depending on the narrator's and/or author's strategies, offers a "comprehensive" report of human creative capacities. In other words, a report of man's response to challenges and imagination (Plato: ideas, Tolkien: human creator).

We should recall Pastirčák's requirement that his *Damianova rieka* should be read by an adult reader, although physiological adulthood is not a universal condition; rather, it is conceived as a model of reception. So he, a love-fairy-tale writer - who thinks that "the divine society is based on the principle of love, hence, freedom" (P. Cesnak, p. 12) and eternity, because "God is life and, in particular, the basis of eternal life" (P. Cesnak, p. 12) - responds, by telling fairy stories - to unknown readers, to challenges and imaginations created, brought, and renewed through phantasy, imagination, and various parables. They, however, carry a message: a fairy story (word and imagination) should function as a way of escape and flight from reality (for example, of shadows: material things, the empirical, pragmatism) to some other, desired, ideal reality as a reward for knowledge and deed (for example, of light: soul, idea, belief, ethics).

Let us return to the former, question, that is to say, a simple and total question firmly underlying Pastirčák's *Damianova rieka*: What is philosophy? Philosophers' answer is as follows: "We do not know it yet" (J. Michálek, 1994, p. 17); but they also modify this answer by means of its two external delimitations: philosophy belongs to man in a way different from those of other sciences; and by saying that what is dealt with by philosophy somehow "sleeps" in every man. Plato and Aristotle considered philosophy to be one of those human properties that were labelled as "disposition", which can be further developed as follows: "At the beginning of philosophy, there is wonder and amazement. Wonder and amazement, and awe underlie querying. Philosophy has always been primarily the matter of querying" (J. Michálek, 1994, p. 18).

As a corollary of *Damianova rieka*, D. Pastirčák, according to some of his interpreters, joined the tradition of, or even restored, the meditative fairy tale (L' Kepštová, 1995, p. 28). No doubt, his fairy tales are written for adults, and oscillate between the Platonic (darkness - light, down - up, idea) and the Christian philosophies (body - Spirit, salvation - gift, ancient carnality - Christian ethical deed). They, however, also express an ethical view, SELF-knowledge, and as such, they cultivate clearly defined moral principles of love, freedom, the gift of eternal life, and rejection of godless morality (P. Cesnak, 1997, p. 12). In our view, this is also a personality reaction of an artist and priest to the reality.

D. Pastirčák's acceptance of the challenge from SELF is an expression of affinity and interweaving of Plato's vision of "heaven, purgatory and hell" (Plato, Republic, Par. 614-616) with the Christian conception of

Spirit: "There was darkness over the deep and God's spirit hovered over the water" (Genesis: 1,2). Pastirčák's treatment of the Platonic vision (idea) and of the Christian conception (belief) means looking for and finding within the intellectual scope of the fairy tale "about" (...); appropriately presented examples of painful experience of the body, pride, eye, water, personified object in pursuit of (...); about successful passing the test of (...) guided by desire, dream, patience, hope, humility or self-sacrifice. This way of spirit with love, freedom, and expectations of light is undertaken in the *Damianova rieka* for the sake of the knowledge of power of a specific idea and the existence of "the other reality" formed as a consequence of (rational) cognition.

Pastirčák's early prosaic work usually presents a story of a child or a personified artistic picture of an object (e.g. boat). More frequently, however, he presents a graceful part of the world of Nature: the flora, birds, and also historically located painful tests of Man as a king, soldier, sailor, jester, etc.

As we have been accustomed in the context of European culture, his fairy tale usually wears its masks conditioned by the respective "space" outside the scope of its interest, but always making use of its intervention and influence. Philosophers have their fixed place in culture, which we have indicated from the beginning. In addition: "There are three different views in the contemporary philosophy of the possibility to settle the conflicts between various versions of the world, culture, and definite vocabularies: relativism, anti-relativism and pragmatism (E. Gál, *Romboid*, 32, 1997, 7. 13). It may be assumed that the approach preferred by D. Pastirčák in art and sculpture (line, basic colours: black and white, expression full of absurdities, details as semantic wholes, mystifying characters and scenes - we are referring to auto-illustrations from *Damianova rieka*), and the depth and even spirituality of his verbal parables of journey, search, selection, struggles with self, tension between I want and I must, all this harmonised, thus establishing an intellectual, axiological, and moral "programme". No wonder that the author tends towards rational relativist apprehension of both worlds and realities, and towards harmonization of life between man on his way out from the cave to light. All this taking place smoothly in historical space day by day as a law of human evolution and his material and spiritual world.

The subtleties concerning great losses of pride, and equally great victories of spirit over body, humility and will over desire, beauty over power take the direction from aesthetics of a fairy story to a prosaic instruc-

tion to trust the King whose kingdom is not obtained in this world (D. Pastirčák, *Bibiana*, 3, 1995, 3. 32). He takes for granted – and this is where the power of his verbal image stems from – that the stimulus to wait and to believe means to live to see and to be rewarded. This attitude is true of his philosophy and narrative strategy of the story in general. The instruction of this strategy is simple and obvious: to know one's value through the power of the higher spirit. While the human remains relative, unstable, noneternal, the spirit makes for eternity to which the way for man is open. Is he, however, strong enough? *Damianova rieka*, in all its parts, including those that cannot be labelled as fairy tale, presents variations of a single test to be passed by the protagonist (man, object). Pastirčák shows understanding and the sense of proportion in the test his protagonist is subjected to. His stories end well, which contradicts, no doubt without intention, the tradition of a large part of the international folk and authorial fairy tale fund.

The personality of Daniel Pastirčák makes him look for an intersection of philosophy and arts. He embodies, perhaps in tension, a philosophical spirit, an author of a literary story, and a shaper of the materials of Nature. His search is based on narrating about time, travel, and cognition. His prose – “fairy tales” – have become models of ideas and instruction of ideas. Apart from the philosophical sources, they are linked to the fairy tales of literary “guides” (as called by D. Pastirčák), including Andersen, Wilde, Hesse, Lewis, Tolkien (...). His deep experience is given life through the interplay between the narrator and the reader. What is of importance to him is that both the narrator and the reader should be aware of entering into the story “about” (...); the centre of gravity is not on the plot itself; rather it very quickly loses what can be “simply” narrated. At this point of his fairy tales Pastirčák presents his ideas: “Each story of the world is, therefore, a story of travelling, and a story of quest” (Pastirčák, 1993, p. 45). This is because a writer tells stories of powers that have formed man and have caused him to be as he is; the task of philosophers consists in indicating the bridges between “nations and cultures”; they should become a “mere” initiative, obviously effective in time (E. Gál, R. Rorty, *Romboid*, 32, 1997, 7. p. 15).

Pastirčák considers his prosaic collection *Damianava rieka* to fall within the genre of the fairy tale. On the other hand, his first collection of poems is called *Tehilim*, and is labelled as a song. This reflects an inspirational basis of internal emanation “tension” between form and meaning, resulting in a whole of interrelated connections of word and image, thought and form, stimulus and consequence.

The way met the dusk
The wheel got stuck
in the rib-cage of a horse ...
(*Fossils*, l. p. 38)

The song-related objectives of the author-priest do not require any comments. As a matter of fact, the link between fairy tale and song is obvious. In our view, Pastirčák's first collection of poems is programmatically connected to, or even "develops" *Damianova rieka*. Here, the prose-writer interrelated an emanation game of notions, specified their philosophical groundwork, expressed and illustrated their humanizing "role". While *Damianova rieka* provided, as it were, horizontal expression on "behalf of all" in order to help them understand the long-established ideas of being, the book of poems *Tehilim* operates, supposedly, vertically: from the horizon to the ultimate point of capacity of a single man: distance - prayer.

Personification of the problem of all (a cave with light through a slot, a sailing ship) into an individual fate (SELF) enables Pastirčák to vary his meditations and mystifications in the "space" of a song-poem, including the motif of distance (desire), death (solution), pilgrims (quest), and prayers (humility, request after loss). The motion along the amplitude of hope and hopelessness, goal and its loss, deed and intention is interrupted by a single intersection of THEIR - HIS; for Pastirčák it is a nonsentimental vision and erotic view of marriage:

"The bed is a boat sailing through time
A marriage cradle, a coffin bed"
(+++ p. 107).

In the motion of idea (*Tehilim*), Pastirčák's fairy tale and song-poem merge in a single whole Being = SELF where - in contrast with the fairy tale of the journey from darkness to light, from unbelief to belief - it is Time for actual life that assumes the role of a dominant representative of being (life) as a phenomenon (process). The Orphic motif of a ferryman does not lead anywhere because:

"Everything will be before us
Nothing behind us
Just broken river rings"
(+++ p. 107).

The Orphic motif in Pastirčák's emanation projection of form and meaning is adapted by setting in motion virtual "satellites" from in-

definiteness ("river rings") of the flow of SELF through Time, although he does wait for somebody, anybody, him, her (...). It may be the reason for choosing a gesture for SELF from the change - constancy when he states that emotions are "broken chains of slavery" (+++) p. 107). The preference of the idea of SELF in variations of the (ir)rational in his emanation touches of form and meaning is conditioned by the existence of "sole", that is to say, a step in motion=touch. Pastirčák's fairy-tale parables and poems-songs adopted a literary form, selected by the author, probably also to enable the author to seek a compromise for the ideas and meanings of SELF, HE, Being, Time, Motion, Step, Eye (...). They brought him to the notion of freedom. Pastirčák looks for a compromise of the ideas so that he may help a subject to specify the notion of life, because: "The present Western societies have a threefold ideal: civic citizenship, technological efficiency, and the right of everyone to select their way to well-being. None of these ideals should be sacrificed. Do not let us be so naive and believe that all of them can be easily accomplished" (R. Aron, 1992, 53). No doubt, this is not a simple and single-act decision. Hence, D. Pastirčák looks for the way to "free choice of one's way to well-being", with all the possible consequences. Let us add: from the springs and into the trough of spiritual, philosophical appreciation of the phenomena: spirit, man, life.

By paraphrasing D. Pastirčák and his emanation game between the idea and the meaning of journeys and quest, search on the way and the way out of search, all through his fairy tales and poems one enters the space of instruction of how to live with an ideal of spirit "about" (...). It is there, in our view, that the light of final cognition at the horizon of individual cognition, that is, quest is given.

Translated by *Pavol Štekauer*

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EMANACYJNE ZWIĄZKI FORMY I ZNACZENIA W TEKŚCIE ARTYSTYCZNYM

Streszczenie

Daniel Pastirčák (ur. 1959) w książce prozatorskiej *Damianova rieka* (1993, *Rzeka Damiana*) oraz w zbiorze wierszy *Tehilim* (1997) prezentuje koncepcję twórczości duchowej fundowanej na chrześcijańskim procesie poznawania świata i zarazem samopoznania. Mamy tu do czynienia z twórczością, która wykorzystuje wszystkie dostępne środki poetologiczne oraz estetyczne w celu eksplorowania określonych aspektów światopoglądowych. Idea drogi, poszukiwania, doświadczenia, bólu, zmagania się z materialnością świata jest głównym motywem twórczym tego pisarza – księdza i kaznodziei. Wzajemne emanacyjne sprzężenie formy i sensów w twórczości Pastirčáka ma wyraźne korzenie filozoficzne. W tekst literacki „wdziera się” zamierzony, celowo konstruowany mozaikowy obraz poszukiwania samego siebie poczynając od sfery ciała po wartości duchowe. Pastirčák nie jest demagogiem. Jest chrześcijańskim filozofem wiary i życia, zatem podziwia wszystko, co jest we władzy twórczej człowieka oraz w granicach jego poznania.