

ALEŠ HAMAN  
Praha

## SPECIFICITY OF ARTISTIC LITERARY COMMUNICATION AND ITS SIGN SYSTEM

The present paper does not aspire to providing a scientific analysis of the problem but rather is a theoretical deliberation based on empirical knowledge. It is an attempt to find space for knowledge on the borderlines of literary theory, esthetics, semiology, sociology and psychology of literature. It differs from the approaches taken by these sciences in so far as it does not understand a work of literature as a product and object that can be analyzed independently of the communication process. An artistic work of literature exists only in contact with the percipient — that means, in case of literature, through reading. Some deliberations which ensue from empirical knowledge of this contact are the theme of this paper.

In linguistics, esthetics and literary science<sup>1</sup>, a pronounced shift of interest from the creator, the produced work or the sign system to the percipient, the reader or user of language can be observed lately. In semiotic terminology this process could be expressed as a shift of attention to the pragmatic dimension of the sign. Questions concerning the real operation of the sign structures of natural language, arts or poetry in communicative acts are coming to the forefront.

New issues and problems connected with a search for approaches which would make it possible to grasp these pragmatic aspects are arising in this context. These new approaches can find specially emphatic application in fine-art history and esthetics, because this is where major transformations are taking place in the attitudes and approaches of the percipients in connection with the development of mass culture and new media. The present study owes its origins to the need for a theoretical foundation of empirical researches of the reading and readership of belles-lettres.

The starting point for the theoretical deliberation was the range of problems of the esthetic meaning of artistic communication, that means also of artistic literary communication.

Investigation of artistic communication and its esthetic meaning is not quite well possible without realizing what the notion of „esthetic”, so often used

today, actually refers to. In principle, there exist a wider and a narrower interpretations of this notion. In the wider interpretation, it refers to the sphere of human sensory perception in general (from the Greek *aisthanomai* = perceive by senses), including perception of the beautiful which is what „esthetic” refers to in the narrower interpretation of the concept.

It was precisely on the basis of the connection with the perception of outside world that “esthetic” was understood throughout the history of esthetic thinking mostly in a contemplative manner, i.e. passively, and as such was often confused with a hedonistic, sensualistically epicurean approach to life. The Danish philosopher Kierkegaard<sup>2</sup> for instance put “esthetic” *against* “ethical”, as an antithesis of amoral pleasure-seeking on the one hand, and morality seeking personal integrity and existence filled with moral sense on the other.

In psychological terms, “esthetic” becomes a function of the value and the need<sup>3</sup>. The need from which the esthetic function arises corresponds with the values of regularity, proportionateness, harmony etc. which evoke feelings of satisfaction, attractiveness, pleasure in the percipient. Concepts like proportionateness, regularity, harmony obviously relate to the *formative* aspect of the world in which man lives. That is also why the esthetic quality has been related since times immemorial to the formal aspect, while the form has been understood as something given, created, and presented for perception; while precisely the active, creative aspect of the form, of what has been shaped, created, and what therefore can have and indeed has a *poetic* value, has been neglected. The poetic value then is a phenomenon which is correlated to creative (and formative) need.

Hence the esthetic quality understood functionally is not at all a matter of passive, consumer approach to life, a matter of pleasure-seeking, as it used to be interpreted in the past, but something that presumes a poetic, active, creative approach to life. We are not concerned with satisfaction of the needs of sensual delight but with hedonism, a pleasure-seeker’s rapture and „collecting” of relish being overrun by a creative attitude, by poetic evaluation ensuing from poetic need. Esthetic function indeed cannot exist without a poetic approach to life<sup>4</sup>.

Thus although the esthetic quality is connected with the formative, formal aspect, what is meant is not the form arrested in its factuality, a form which is “dead” and has become a fetish, but on the contrary, one that is “living” because perceivable as a result or product of formative, creative energy, i.e. the form as a creative possibility which has been made use of.

The formalistic, fetishistic viewpoint, the conception of the esthetic as a form per se, is further connected with the conception of the form as the phenomenal state of the idea. The esthetic quality is consequently degraded to a mere phenomenal affair which serves for representation of “superior” contents — ideas (i.e. cognitive or moral values). The quality of being esthetic, beautiful, is then made subservient to these ideas.

To counter this, we offer a conception of the esthetic as a function which springs from poetic value, the source of which in turn is creative need. The esthetic quality understood as a function of a poetic, creative value in fact is a potential province of all the objects and phenomena which man encounters in the course of his life (including his fellow beings, the language in which they communicate, behaviour, ideas etc.) and in which the poetic value has become realized.

The creative value is characterized by *originality* (also in the sense of uniqueness), is *organic* (in the sense of flexible functional reactivity to topical stimuli as well as that of natural development continuity) and *inspiring* (in the sense of being stimulative motivating to be followed up as well that of animation, i.e. fulfilment of life's creative possibilities). The opposites of these features, i.e. stereotype (serial character), mechanical nature and reification (reality seen as given once and for all, lacking the dimension of possibility) operate dysfunctionally as far as the esthetic is concerned, bring about feelings of boredom, displeasure and repulsion.

The esthetic function and dysfunction constitute a dialectic unity without which it would not be possible to speak of esthetic value and esthetic function (the beautiful) at all. The notion of the beautiful is always formed in dialectical unity with that of ugliness, and vice versa — we cannot speak of ugliness without having a notion of what is beautiful.

But the esthetic starts operating only when the percipient takes a poetically evaluating approach to life; this is the first point to be made. The second is that this esthetic function of phenomena in which the poetic value has become realized is undeliberate, spontaneous, because it only accompanies the purposes for which the objects have been created, or the extraesthetic functions which they fulfil (this is particularly obvious in case of the so-called "natural" esthetic, e.g. crystallic forms in the anorganic realm or the distinguishing sex characteristics or mimesis in the realm of plants and animals; in all these cases man, upon whom these objects have an esthetic effect, attributes to nature poetic values which spring from his own creative need: it is not until he makes such poetic evaluation that the objects start having an esthetic function for him.

But there is a special kind of human activity in which the esthetic function does not merely accompany others which are outside the esthetic province — for which the esthetic is not a by-product but its very purpose and sense. This is the sphere of arts. Artistic creation is a creative activity of a specific nature; in the first place, it is cultural activity and as such has the nature of communication. As cultural communication it must have its own irreplaceable meaning which the arts could not become constituted as a special kind of communication<sup>4</sup>.

Of a specifically communicative nature is above all the so-called free art, art in the narrower sense. A transition from what is spontaneously extra-artistically esthetic to the deliberate, artistically esthetic is represented by the

applied arts in which the deliberate extra-esthetic function vies with the esthetic one. If in advertising the deliberate esthetic function is subordinated to a purpose outside the esthetic domain, then in decorative art the two functions are in a dialectical balance. As the object is losing its extra esthetic purposes it is increasingly accepted as an object of art, i.e. becomes regarded as a creation with an esthetic value present (ceramics, artistically ornamented weaponry etc.). The esthetic function, which was originally meant to accentuate the advanced form of the object, to make it special (or make special the relation of its user to it) finally becomes esthetic value (function which has become a purpose in itself) which documents the creative potentials of the which produced the decorative object. The decorative elements assume the nature of artistic communication about the creative potentials of the human subject.

The complexity and unclarity of the problems of the specific sense of the arts as a kind of cultural communication of the specific sense of the arts as a kind of cultural communication influenced approaches to the arts for whole epochs in history in so far as the (free) arts were seen (and still are often seen today) as a mere decoration serving to embellish and enhance the attractiveness of an extra-esthetic idea (value). Thus for instance, the closeness of the arts and religion resulted from the historical concept of the world as being the work of the Creator, which was common to both these forms of social consciousness. But what is involved in the arts is an actual experience of historical poetry with regard to the creative possibilities of man, while in religion this experience is connected with belief in an absolute creative principle which is independent of man and exceeds his potentials,

Ambiguities arise mainly because a work of art as a kind of cultural communication assumes the nature of a sign. If in routine life practice the esthetic function is a spontaneous, undeliberate expression of the poetic value which constitutes its source, in the arts this relation between the source and the function is changed. Instead of a spontaneous relationship between the source and its manifestation, there is a deliberate relationship between the designated and the designating.

The sign structure of a work of art is characterized by two dimensions: the outer and the inner. The inner dimension is represented by the composition of the sign structure as a communicative one, the outer dimension is constituted by the semantico-referential, sign-reflective dimension, whose essence is the relation of the sign structure to the objective world, on the one hand; and the dimension of pragmatic relevance, i.e. the sign-expressive relation of the communication to the subject — the originator (and recipient) of the communication, on the other. The internal composition of the sign communication is formed in the frame of these outer dimensions.

A communication seen in this way displays three basic dimensions in the sense of Morris's theory of signs<sup>5</sup>: the semantic, pragmatic and syntactic ones. Projected in the inner dimension of a sign formation and its composition

in a specific manner are the dialectics of the semantic and pragmatic dimensions. The communication itself is a compositional (syntactic) sign structure. The manner of its composition may be determined either by the semantic dimension (the theme of the communication), i.e. the object about which something is being communicated (e.g. “The square on the hypotenuse of a rightangled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides”), or by the pragmatic dimension, i.e. the subject-the user of the sign system (“I feel great”, “I am fine”, “I am well” etc.).

In the first case, what is determining for the composition of sign structure are the grammatical rules of sign distinction and combination. In the second case, the sign structure of the communication is determined by stylistic, value-functional identification and selection of alternative signs and patterns of the sign system. In the so-called natural languages, used for communication inside a particular community, the two aspects form a dialectic unity of *grammatical formal articulation* of objective meaning, which reflects the relation of reference to the object, and *stylistic functional actuality* of subjective sense, i.e. value-related importance for the subject<sup>6</sup>.

Provided the object of the communication merges with the subject — as the content of the communication is a (humanly) subjective experience of general life beauty/ugliness, it is the pragmatic dimension and stylistic aspect that come to the forefront when producing the sign structure, while the semantic dimension and the grammatical aspect are pushed to the background (this is well obvious in poetry, where the grammatical structure of sentences is “overrun” by the rhythmical and sound structure of the communication).

The reflective, semantico-formal aspect of the sign structure of course is not lost totally, because if this happened the communication would be deprived of its communicative purpose — it would become a mere meaningless phantasmagoric play and amorphous prattle of the sign system user (though we do know examples in literature of poets resorting to these excesses in an effort to break through the barriers of the language system and find new openings for expression — cf. e.g. poems of Ch. Morgenstern or, in Czech poetry, the poem of Vladimír Holan *Modlitba kamene* (*The Stone's Prayer*):

Paleostom bezjazy,  
 madžnún at kraun at tatháu at saũ n  
 luharam amu-amu dahr!  
 Ma yana zinsizi?  
 Gamohabatmy! Darsk ādōn darsk bameuz.  
 Voskresajet at maimo sargiz-duz,  
 chisoh ver gend ver sabur-sabur  
 Theglathfalasar  
 bezjazy munay! Dana! Gamchatbatmy!<sup>7</sup>

Weakening of the semantic dimension and the grammatically formal aspect of the communication means that the concrete objects to which the

semantic forms of the sign structure refer do not operate here in their real objectivity but precisely as expressively functional forms only which carry a subjective sense where esthetic value is concerned. This sense does not ensue from the objects themselves but from the subject's relation to them. The objectively semantic forms assume a connotative nature — connote a sense of an esthetic value for the subject in the given situation. A manifestation of this subjective sense is the formative function imparted to the semantic form by the subject of the communication in the frame of its composition modifying its grammatical form as well as semantic reference: cf. the poetic expression "... snow descending on the monstrances of wine-bars" (Nezval: Edison), with the unusual combination of "monstrance" and "wine-bar" modifying the objective meanings of the words and creating — in the form of genitive attribute — a new meaning which has an esthetic value for the subject of the speaker.

A scientific communication, on the other hand, has an opposite character: what is essential in it is the reflective, semantic dimension of the communication which determines the grammatical regularity of the formally semantic composition of the communication. In scientific communication, emphasis is laid on the semantic forms of the communication reflecting (modelling) the real objectivity. The grammar of scientific languages therefore is more "rigorous" than in natural language (not to speak of poetic language which is even more liberal — which is what "poetic licence" is all about). The language of science does not allow for formal alternatives (equivalence) of signs and patterns, it seeks unambiguity. Semantic forms are maximally simplified in it to abstract symbols (letters, figures) and their combinations (cf. mathematic or chemical formulae). Semantic forms thus become abstract models (sets) of real objects which delegate them, and their strictly systematic composition then models real objective forms and relations ( $c^2 = a^2 + b^2$ ). The connotative aspect which expresses the evaluating relation of the subject is excluded from the formally semantic construction of the sign structure, the subject of communication is "engulfed" by the object which is being spoken about, i.e. the theme denoted by the semantic form.

To put it in an illustrative way — art as a communication of the general beauty/ugliness of life experienced by the artist presenting a vivid picture (*relating to* history, life) of creative human subjectivity in a given situation, speaks always about something else than what is denoted by the semantic forms of the sign system used by the artist. Thus what is involved in painting is not an exact copy of objects (things, persons) which might have served the artist as a model. For the artist the images of objects are a mere "pretext" for expressing an intention related to esthetic value.

Let us put it the other way round: objects which "enter" an artistic image as semantic forms lose their objective reality and become bearers of connotative esthetic value qualities (their esthetic value is determined by the formative function in the sign structure given to them by creator of the communication

— the artist). The decisive agent that makes them the bearers of esthetic qualities is their “placement” in the general composition of the sign structure: in painting, for instance, it is the situation of the object in the “space” of the picture, its size, lighting, perspectival incorporation in the foreground or the background, the framing etc.

The is also why an artistic image does not copy objective reality but creates a world of its own in which objects may assume a deliberately distorted form differing from reality, or may be put in places where they are not found in reality (cf. the paintings of M. Chagall in which human figures and objects float in space, etc.). We shall call this formative arrangement of the sign structure, with respect to the formative function of semantic forms, artistic stylization. Stylization lends the semantic forms a formative function as regards the importance they have for the subject of communication as esthetic values.

The nature of the function and value changes in this context. If in case of the undeliberately esthetic its operation was an expression of a poetic value, where the deliberately esthetic is concerned the opposite is true: there the source (the meaning of what is being designated) is an esthetic value (function which has become a goal in itself, a correlate of esthetic need); while its manifestation (the function of what designates, the designator) is a formative function (a work of art).

The esthetic value which gives sense to artistic communication (the tragic, the comic, the noble etc.) is a synthesis of all (esthetically functional) creative life values which lie outside the sphere of esthetics<sup>8</sup>, empirical as well as theoretical, personal as well as social (that means cognitive, moral, emotional, political, hedonic values — as well as economic=vital usefulness)<sup>9</sup>. Proceeding from such conception of esthetic value, it cannot be said that all which is truthful or moral, loving, free etc. is beautiful; but that beauty communicated by art contains truth just as it does morality, love, freedom, delight and vital benefit.

The synthesis of extra-esthetic values is structured in the esthetic value in such a way that a certain value assumes a dominant position (thus the Romanticists put love above all other values, while the Realists valued truth most of all). The structure of extra-esthetic values is of course constantly dynamized in connection with changes of the existential parameters of the historically social situation (and thus also with changes of human needs); a tension occurs between the conservative tendency toward homeostasis, i.e. to making this structure normative on the one hand, and the radical tendency toward its restructuring, updating (i.e. to a change of the dominant on some of the structural axes: empirico-theoretical, personal-social) on the other. Tension also forms between the experienced and the socially accepted values (norms),<sup>10</sup> between life experience and knowledge of the normative system.

In the course of this process, views emerge about the existence of “false”, “sinful” and other “kinds” of beauty. Essentially they are based on the

hedonistic conception which regards beauty as the phenomenal, sensory form of the idea — one that is supra-sensory, spiritual (what is mostly meant is the good and the truth). The sensory, hedonic beauty as the external, formal aspect is put against the one that is related to the content, the idea. Seen in this way the “formal” beauty can come into discord with the “content”, can become a disguise for deception or evil (and vice versa — ugliness can conceal the spiritual values of good and truth).

In case of a poetic approach to artistic beauty as a structure of esthetically functional extra-esthetic values (always updated anew) this conflict is not present because here beauty is not a matter of the sensory form revealing a spiritual idea but constitutes synthetic structure of extra-esthetic values themselves. As such it forms the “content” of an amorphous living “matter” whose creative potential is heterogenous in its spontaneity. The attribute of “false”, “deceitful” can then be applied only to beauty which is divorced from life, deprived of vital creativity, derived, mechanical and reified. That means beauty which has become a fetish, which is ugly from the viewpoint of the poetry of life.

Communication of an experience of esthetic value as the inherent and irreplaceable sense of the artistic manner of cultural communication thus is a live, experienced creative value synthesis in which the topical creative possibilities and needs of life are projected. As such the esthetic value always is a test of the validity of esthetic as well as extra-esthetic values which have become stabilized by tradition and normative. The main symptom of viability, topical validity of these norms is their motivating function which invites a following. As soon as this function starts weakening, the moment the norm stops being an appeal to be followed and becomes a regulation, a rule defining procedures to be observed (thus compelling imitation), it loses viability and becomes gradually extinct. That is when the need arises of an artistically deliberate “anti-esthetic” breach of these “dead” norms, exposure of their outdated character (anti-esthetic elements in naturalism, expressionism, in the arts of the 1960’s).

Due to its synthetic nature the esthetic value permits an overall value orientation of the percipient who, in the act of esthetic evaluation taking place during the perception of a work of art, experiences and adopts extra-esthetic creative life values. Since we are concerned here with actual value synthesis, the percipient’s experience may be individually differentiated depending on which value is personally the most important for the individual percipient (or groups of percipients) — i.e. which represents the dominant of his/their scale of values. The synthetic nature of the esthetic value is what makes it ambiguous for the recipients of artistic communication, both in the synchronous aspect (different percipients at the same moment) and the diachronous aspect (one and the same percipient in different phases of his personal ontogenesis).

Here we get an outline of the relation of a work of art as a cultural communicator to the percipient. The art work does not operate automatically;

it comes before the percipient as an artificial product, an artefact whose material form (text) and the sign structure carried by it (esthetic object) imply a specific meaning of the artistic communication — the experience of an esthetic value.

The percipient must foreground and concretize this sense himself, through his own (esthetically) evaluating activity (which is of course motivated by his esthetic need). In the act of evaluation (differentiating the formatively functional — esthetically attractive/repulsive qualities of the sign elements — semantic forms), the sense is communicated and the esthetic value is acquired. Without this a work of art remains “dumb” — a mere product void of a value-related sense for the percipient, a mere thing.<sup>11</sup>

By defining the relation of the work of art to the subject of the percipient we do not yet say anything about the context of artistic communication. This context is constituted, on the one hand, by the situation of the artistic system and its developmental dynamism (also its definition in relation to the extra-artistic existence). The development of particular families of arts is not even, nor is their importance for the human subject, conditioned by the existential parameters of the particular historically social situation, always the same. Certain kinds may come to the forefront and influence the nature of their relatives (music at the time of Romanticism). The extent and content of the semantic field of art, the boundaries between what is and what is not recognized as art in the sense of specific cultural communication develop as well<sup>12</sup>.

On the other hand, the context of artistic communication is also formed by the parameters of the life situation (i.e. those related to human existence) in which the work was created, and the situation in which it is perceived and adopted. Contrary to deterministic conceptions and those of the humanities, we regard the historically social situation with its existential parameters as a product in which the poetic values, empirical and theoretical, given as possible forms of life, are applied in a given socio-cultural time and space. The poetic values of life become manifested in the general esthetic effect of life which resounds in the spontaneous esthetic experience of both the artist and (in a limited and less intensive measure) the percipient. The general resonance in the artist is a consequence of his global creative approach to life, to the existential parameters of the historically social situation as a living creation.

The spontaneous esthetic experience need not be the privilege of the artist — nevertheless it is a prerequisite for the artist to “have something (worthwhile) to say”. Not until he feels a need to communicate is the artist motivated to give his general esthetic experience the form of a work of art, making it a sign structure through which he communicates his experience to others. A work of art as a cultural communicator thus represents a transformation of the artist’s spontaneous esthetic experience of humanly creative possibilities of the historically social situation (including the situational context of an artistic system) into a deliberate communication.

What is however involved here is not a simple mechanism of the artist's temporal determination; one and the same situation can resound in a number of individuals who are not able to communicate their experience, and can also resonate in different individuals in different ways depending on the conditions which have a constituent importance for their personalities, or on the positions they occupy in the given historically social and cultural situation (official/unofficial etc.). Esthetic resonance is not the results of a mechanical reflection but presupposes creative need without which a creative value of an esthetic effect cannot originate.

The more intensive and synthetic the artist's esthetic experience of the poetic values of life, the richer his esthetic intention in terms of content. His communication thus can also be more durable, since the value-related wealth of its sense permits different concretizations. In this sense the arts — and only they — offer an intensified because synthetic (integral) value-related experience which cannot be matched by any isolated experience of an individual, isolated esthetic function. It is precisely this intensity and synthetic character of the value-based experience offered by artistic communication which makes it irreplaceable by any other manner of communication.

This of course does not mean that the artist's experience and synthesis of the actual creative values of life are a matter of subjective arbitrariness. The artist's experience is conditioned (but not determined) by the existential parameters of the life situation of which he is a part. In times when the creative potentials of human existence are fulfilled by a variety of realized creative values, in which features of man's positive historical creativity prevail, the artist is motivated by esthetic experience to project in a synthetic way the fulfilled, realized creative wealth of human life in his work. A work of art motivated in this way offers the percipient a possibility of acquiring the general creative sense (essence) of the historically social life situation which fulfils the creative potentials of human existence (cf. the arts of the Ancients, Renaissance).

But there are situations when the fulfilment of man's creative potentials is limited, when his life is pared down, gripped in a strait-jacket of life stereotypes, automatism and uniformity which produce a false because non-creative (mechanical) image of the sense (essence) of life as being given once and for all (establishment); or when he is tossed about in a chaos of overt and latent variances which obfuscate the concrete humanly creative historical sense of the life situation ("Inter arma silent Musae"). Then it is again this very situation which provokes the artist to overstep the reproduction of the realized life values which have become arrested in the normatively regulative system of life forms or, on the contrary, chaotically fragmented in the effort of isolated existences, by his own positive anticipative vision of the possible fulfilment of the humanly creative historical sense (essence) of life, whether he makes it present in his work directly or indirectly. The very reproduction of an esthetically repulsive (because noncreative, fossilized and reified) reality

which is senseless, unsubstantiated, fragmented to bits of everyday existences (cf. the arts of the Romanticism, naturalism, expressionism), is impossible without a value-oriented intention of the creative historical sense or the essence of human existence. Without it the artist could not even experience its absence in life (cf. e.g. the revival of communist ideology among Czechoslovak avant-garde artists after World War I, representing an esthetized vision of a future paradise of mankind). This vision may not be clear and definite, it may be just a vague notion which forms an implicit, latent part of the overall experience of actual life misery. This alone lends such experience a purifying, re-vitalizing feature.

On the other hand, the artist may — and we dare say that he indeed must (if he wants to live up to his mission) be oppressed, when reproducing the fulness of life, by anxiety and fear of a deformation, annihilation and destruction of what he experiences as a fulfilment of the humanly creative historical sense (essence). Without this dialectics of enthusiasm and anxiety, projected in the dialectics of beauty/ugliness, a truly great art cannot exist.

Thus it also appears that the esthetic experience of a synthetic value-related intention of the creative sense (essence) of human life in a given situation is very closely linked with the basic existential parameters of man. His approach to life is again dialectically connected with his approach to death. When man experiences his situation as a fulfilment of creative potentials, this experience helps him to overcome his anguish about his own mortality, the transiency of his life (which he will of course never overcome); on the other hand — in situations when he loses sight of the creative historical sense (essence) of life, when he experiences the unsubstantiation and absurdity of everyday isolated existence, when the creative sense (essence) escapes him, then the mortal anguish bursts forth with all its might; the vital creative value which could be put against this existential fear is absent.

It follows from what has been said above that the intention of esthetic value, in which the artist synthetically structures the creative values of life (i.e. the extra-esthetic values) based on spontaneous esthetic experience, has a dialectical nature in a double sense: apart from the dialectics of beauty/ugliness, there is also the polarity of the reproductive and the anticipatory components; their relation determines the character of the esthetic value of a work of art with respect to the realized and the potential creative values of life.

We have explained the dialectics of what is spontaneously, extra-artistically esthetic, and the communicatively deliberate, artistic esthetic quality, as well as the transformation of the artist's general spontaneous esthetic experience into an intended esthetic value which synthetically structures extra-artistic vital creative values. At the same time, the transformation of a spontaneous esthetic function into a communicatively deliberate poetic formative function, i.e. work of art, has become evident. The sense of a work of art is to communicate the experience of esthetic value.

Every work of art as a sign structure communicating this experience refers to the subject as the source of the intended esthetic value; if we have said that the esthetic value synthesizes extra-esthetic humanly creative values, and if it constitutes the sense of artistic communication, then the theme of the artistic communication is a model of the subject's humanly creative potentials conditioned by the existential parameters of the historically social situation in which the work of art is created. This theme assumes the form of a *formative* idea, i.e. the idea of artistic form in which the artist wants to communicate his intended esthetic value. The nature of this *formative* idea conditions the manner of representation and materialization of the artist's intention.

The starting point for qualitative characteristics of artistic communications thus is the viewpoint of esthetic value. As a correlate of esthetic need, the esthetic value has two aspects that of gratification (differing in the manner of satisfying the percipient), and that of estimation (differing according to the level of esthetic need).

The gratification effectiveness of esthetic value is given by two basic modifications or types of beauty. One is beauty which can be characterized as being of the "teleological" type, springing from an experience of the poetry of the general course of life and practical activity; this is the beauty of perfection seen as the fulfilled sense of action.

The other type of beauty is represented by esthetic value understood "ontologically", which results from creative experience and creative view. This is the beauty of accord, harmony, totality, integrity, the beauty of the essential state of creatively substantiated existence. There is no absolute dividing line between these two modifications or types — they intertwine in the dialectics of practice and theory, action and contemplation, poetics and esthetics.

Esthetic value in the teleological conception brings a cathartic experience; fulfilment of the sense of action, attainment of a goal, is the source of a purgative and revitalizing experience of the meaningfulness of action. The ontological intention of beauty as a substantial harmonic unity, fulness, offers an ecstatic experience; it permits an extrication from life particularity, incompleteness and isolated nature of existence, overcoming of the existential experience of loneliness.

The estimation aspect of esthetic value is characterized by polarity between the level of sublimity and lowliness resulting from the level of esthetic needs. A spiritually sublimated (intellectualized), ideologically generalized esthetic need corresponds with a synthesis of theoretically ideal and socially feasible values (truth, the good, freedom); a sensually suggestive, spontaneously individual need of beauty corresponds with a synthesis of empirically real, personally significant values (delight, benefit, love). These categories and levels, again, do not exist as divorced from each other — they intertwine: the socially feasible becomes personally significant and vice versa; the theoretically ideologized is unthinkable without the spontaneously empirical. While

the art of “*popular laugh culture*” (Baktin) is characterized by a prevalence of the “low”, sensually suggestive value synthesis representing the opposition to unviable ideals<sup>13</sup>, then e.g. the medieval knightly epics were characterized by a prevalence of noble ideals, spiritual sublimity as the opposite of brutal, rough, “despicable” reality (in accordance with the medieval conception of two worlds: the earthly and the unearthly).

The dialectical opposites of the types and levels of esthetic value in principle correspond with the social modification and stratification of the esthetic needs of the audiences. Lofty, theoretically supra-personal, ideologically generalized and socially *feasible* value syntheses correspond with the intellectual needs of the learned strata; sensually suggestive, personally significant and empirically individualized value syntheses correspond with the rudimentary esthetic needs of strata with only the elementary level of education. At present this is clearly manifested e.g. in the preferences of pretentious sensually suggestive value syntheses — such as those offered by television shows addressed to the broadest public.

The teleological conception of beauty springs from the needs of the historically and practically active components of society, while the ontological type is closer to the vitally “impractical” or historically “passive” ones. But we are not concerned here with determination: even the “mass” man may have a desire of sublime beauty, just as a cultivated esthete may long to return to nature. Esthetic needs are not given once and for all, but their satisfaction takes place in a frame delimited by the dialectical opposites of perfection and harmony, intellectual sublimation and sensual suggestiveness.

As has been said, esthetic value first has to be materialized, artistically thematized if it is to be represented. Thematization transforms into a formative idea<sup>14</sup> which becomes represented in an esthetic object (sign structure) and is materialized in an artefact (text).

Esthetic value synthesis of the teleological type is oriented, at the level of phenomenal imagination, toward the practically ethical value dominant. The ethos of practical action is the governing component of value synthesis constituting the esthetic value of practice as an activity aimed at the fulfilment of right, justice, discipline, duty etc., and at the overcoming of iniquity, injustice, passion, spontaneity etc. The *formatively*-ideological theme of this “ethical” beauty is the plot. By this we understand a conflict or problem emerging during the realization of the ethical value principle; the solution of the problem or conflict requires either a tragic sacrifice which has to be made if the validity of the moral principle in life is to be confirmed, or comical derision which exposes the principle as not viable. The solution then results either in a triumph of the principle (law) over an exception which breaks it (and thus also puts it in doubt), or on the contrary, exposure of the moral principle as deceptive, hypocritical, concealing the truth. The esthetic value whose dominant is the idea of the moral meaningfulness of human practice becomes thematized in the tragic or the comical solution.

In the sphere of intentional imagination, we are concerned with a synthesis of the creative values of action which exceeds the limits of everyday practice, and has universal nature. It is the value of historical certainty, which constitutes the sense of action as an effort for establishing or restoring universal life order, which becomes the dominant of the value structure. Let us call this beauty "mythical".<sup>15</sup> This beauty then becomes thematized in a heroic plot.

The difference between an ethical and a mythical plot lies in the presence or absence of the volitive component in action. A mythical hero is a mere factor of general action predetermined by fate to a heroic performance irrespective of his personal will (Achilleus). The protagonist of an ethical plot is the actor in action who strives activity to assert his personal will (Don Juan).

In a mythical plot, there is an opposition of "positive" heroism (demiurge) which is pre-determined either to establish or to restore a life order (this is where plots with a "happy-end" have their roots); and problematic heroism (demonically destructive — Lucifer, or scurrilously anti-heroic — the clown, the fool). But problematic heroism also has a positive sense: it exposes the existing order of life as accidental and senseless, and calls for emancipation from its rules. The demonic or antiheroic plot has a creatively liberating sense.

In the sphere of "ontological", harmonious beauty, the dominant of the value synthesis on the phenomenal level of imagination is erotic value (of course not only in the sense of lust; as it springs from the need and desire to overcome the incompleteness and isolation of existence, it can also assume a spiritual, mystical nature). The thematization of erotic beauty is the mood of the subject which may be euphoric (enthusiastic) or dysphoric (sceptical). Here dysphoria, sceptis exposes deceptive sentiments, "sobering up", "seeing through things", which liberate from illusions — painfully but truthfully. At the intentional level of "ontological" value synthesis the value dominant is intellectualized: it is an eidetic value<sup>16</sup> toward which the general life philosophy is oriented. The subject and the object becomes distanced. The object of the life philosophy is the world as a living whole. The eidetic integrity or fragmentation of the subjectively viewed living world (in which the concentration or divergence of the perspective of the viewing subject is projected) constitutes the formative idea of life atmosphere, the general climate of life. An opposition emerges between the idyllic and the grotesque views (while the latter may involve the sensory as well as the spiritual planes). Here again the grotesque position has a liberating sense, disrupting the false idyll, the "good cheer" which has become arrested in mechanical stationariness.

The generative principles of artistic genres are shaped in the formative ideas, the thematic sphere of artistic communication. The tragic or comical plot thematizing the moral dominant of the value synthesis of life practice constitutes the formative idea of the dramatic kind. The heroic or scurrilous plot thematizing the mythical beauty of a universal order of life action

constitutes the epic type. The modal attitude of the subject thematizing the erotic dominant of an immediate value synthesis of lite sentiment is the point of departure for lyricism. The formative idea of a general life atmosphere thematizing the eidetic value dominant of life philosophy represents the generative principle of the poetic kind, which we shall call poetical rhetoric, for lack of a better name; by this we understand e.g. an artistic book of travels, causerie, feuilleton, but also reflective forms in which the atmosphere of the spiritual world is manifested (aphorism, essay, gnome).

Each of these formative ideas is representable in the artistic image (sign formation, esthetic object) through the mediation of imaginative motifs (sign elements, semantic forms). The symbolic material in poetry is represented by semantic forms reflecting phenomenal experience or intentional imagination. As regards their nature we can distinguish semantic forms reflecting the transformational dialectics of the historical process and everyday practice, and semantic forms which reflect the transcendental dialectics of the conscious existence in which the state of the world is projected and which is itself projected in the world. These distinctions correspond in poetic thinking with the opposition of event-based and experience-based motifs.<sup>17</sup>

The common reader sees as conspicuous the preference of the event-based themes. An explanation can perhaps be found in the fact that these themes provide the possibility of experiences irrespective of factuality or fictitiousness. Action imagination carries the reader away to such a degree that he "forgets" about his own, real temporal-spatial situation, transfers himself to the fictitious dimension of the action. These motifs expand the experiential capacity of the percipient, permit him to live through a life action other than his own (but as if it were his own), and forget about his real life. This is what e.g. Karel Čapek had in mind when he wrote about reading matter which we choose for times of illness.<sup>18</sup> Motifs of experiential nature, on the other hand, enter the work and demand from the reader interrupting his own stream of experiences, enable him a distraction without which an experience cannot be appreciated as a life "event" which leads the percipient to self-awareness (through someone else).

The field of motifs, in which we can distinguish the event-based motifs of everyday factuality and historical conceptuality and the experience-based motifs of personal experience and experienced generalization of views, is formed in the frame of the dialectical opposites of event-based and experience-based motif types at phenomenal or intentional levels.

Genre schemas of sign structures (esthetic objects) representing the thematized esthetic value are formed on the basis of thematic differentiation. In poetry we can speak of two types of sign structures: the fabular and the figurative. In the fabular type the ethical plot is represented in the action situation, and the mythical plot in the action story. The figurative type creates *genre* schemas of the esthetic object in the form of the character of the speaker (lyrical hero) of objective environment, scenery representing the life atmosphere of the subjectively viewed world on the other.

Motifs of everyday ordinariness or historicity, of personal experience or of generalized opinions, assume an esthetically qualitative sense ensuing from their formative function in the whole of the esthetic object (sign structure).

The formative function may assume a constructive nature (character typization, panoramization of scenery) or a destructive nature (hybridization = character caricature, panoptical scenery). An esthetically relevant, deliberate formative destruction of the sign structure (esthetic object) may lead even to a negation of the semantic reference of the motifs (semantic forms); this may result in the composition of an artificial imaginary world which is distant from the forms of extra-artistic reality (poetic constructs, "inner models"). A parallel situation may occur also in relation to other artistic images (where a polarity occurs between "quotations" which establish positive intertextual relations and parodies which produce intertextuality of a negative character).

Formatively functional sign elements (motifs) charged with a positive esthetic value sense aim at formative integrity and definiteness of the esthetic object. What escapes the formative integrity and definiteness of the esthetic object assumes an esthetically negative or provocative meaning. Here we must of course differentiate between intentional formative dysfunctionality of motifs — "monstrosity", hybridism (such as appear e.g. in modern arts but also before — cf. e.g. paintings of Hieronymus Bosch) by which the artist wanted to express ugliness, gruesomeness, and undeliberate dysfunctionality which is a result of the artist's failure formativel to realize an esthetic intention (e.g. dysfunctional descriptions without an esthetic sense by which the artist only manifests his knowledge of facts or his personal experience).

An illustrative example of such primary, naïve — i.e. natural poetic stylization is the differentiation of "positive" (creative) and "negative" (demonic) characters in fairy tales (the beautiful prince, the delicate princess — the terrible dragon, the ugly witch). This differentiation of course does not apply absolutely; in a "sophisticated" or cultivated stylization, ostentatious formal perfection or harmoniousness may disguise — by being derived, mechanical and factual — negative values; and vice versa: apparent monstrosity of form (calling for transformation) may conceal positive values (cf. the Beast in Beauty and the Beast).

For most readers the indicators of a work of art being interesting or attractive unfortunately are precisely the extra-artistic motifs which the artist uses to represent a formative idea, the theme of esthetic value. These thematic elements represent for the reader the actual "content" ("what it is about") according to which they choose what they read. Researches have shown that the lower the reader's level of education the greater the emphasis he puts on the phenomenal level of his imagination, on simulation of the forms of the real world; their attractiveness is usually enhanced in the so-called "lighter" or "readable" literature by spectacular sensationalism which is inaccessible to the experience of an ordinary reader (cf. spy stories, crime novels, detective stories which show the "averted" or concealed aspects of life, the underground,

or on the contrary, the spectacular and luxurious life of prominent sportsmen, film stars, pop-singers, the world of the "upper ten thousand" etc.).

Concentration on the semantic forms entering the esthetic object (sign structure) diverts the reader's attention from the formalively functional features which carry a sense of esthetic values, from artistic stylization. The reader then judges these elements of the sign structure of the work of art not according to the esthetic value given to them by the artistic intention but — in the best case — according to the spontaneous esthetic function which they have in real life (and which is accessible to the spontaneous esthetic experience of the percipient). Even the artist himself sometimes gives in to this deception when he chooses his motifs on the basis of extra-artistic "likeability". The outcome then mostly is pseudo-artistic trash which subordinates art to extra-artistic functions; this is how the art becomes degraded to a tool of political propaganda, popular education or simply sensual excitation.

Now we arrive at the plane of the artistic text. A work of art on the plane of its materialization represents a configuration of sign elements in a particular real frame of time and space. This material frame is the text which materializes the sign structure (esthetic object). We deliberately speak of time-space because our perception of the text takes place in time just as it does in space. That means that even works of the so-called plastic, "spatial" arts (painting, sculpture, architecture) have their temporal dimension because we do not perceive them "in one go" but in a particular sequence of time (even the perception of a work of architecture — whether its exterior or its interior — "needs its time"; some architectural premises are even defined by the time of the activities for which they are designed: premises for working time, for leisure time etc.). In the same way, works of the so-called "temporal" or rhythmical arts (music, dance, ornament) create a particular sign "space" in their course.

A work of literature is specific in one respect, comparing with other artistic genres. It does not offer an artistic representation of esthetic value in a direct form perceivable by senses (which is what a painting or a musical composition do), but in the form of verbal text, i.e. conventional linguistic symbols<sup>19</sup> (graphic or sound symbols) which carry intellectual (literally "understandable") meanings connected with the configurations of these symbols. Unlike the spectator or the listener, the reader must develop his own imaginative activity exceeding the sensory perception of the signs and intellectual understanding of the meanings, i.e. going beyond the text in which the artistic literary communication is materialized.

The text of a work of literature is a successive (linear) composition of segments containing compositional (syntactic) configurations of the elements of a particular sign system (semantic forms). The text segments are also *formatively* stylized from the viewpoint of textual cohesion. And again, the artist may deliberately disturb the textual cohesion of his expression (interrupted sequence, fragmentation).

The formative functionality of the text segments and configurations of sign elements represents the stylistic aspect. The sense of stylization is the designation of their esthetic value importance for the subject. Thus in a musical composition the compositional function of the individual tones and their configurations (accords) produced by particular instruments is the stylization of the esthetic value sense of the composition.

In a work of literature the situation is more complicated; there the formative motifs are not the elementary sensory objects but the configuration of sensory symbols (vowels and consonants, letters) designating the objects having intellectual character. At the level of the designated, a differentiation then takes place between the objective meaning and the subjective sense. The formatively functional features of the word enrich its objective meaning with an esthetic value sense — such as it assumes for the subject (cf. e.g. diminutives in a lyrical song). Thus in an artistic literary communication the linguistically semantic construction assumes an esthetic value sense if the linguistic expression is artistically formatively stylized. That is why poets are also regarded as artists who reveal the beauty of language. When reading an artistic literary text, it is not therefore enough to understand the meanings but one also has to acquire their (possible) esthetic value sense based on the formative stylization of the language expression.

The character of the text in an artistic literary communication is connected with the nature of its sign structure (esthetic object). If the esthetic object is of a fabular character, the textual cohesion is based on the semantico-syntactic bond of the text segments (this is where a functional-stylistic role is played by the word order respecting the theme-rhyme relations between that part of the sentence which says “what we speak about” and that which says “what we say about it”).

The greater the agreement between the articulation of the language text and that of the situation or story which the text evokes, the lower the awareness of the percipient of the linearity of the text dimension. The percipient imagines himself as sharing fictitious time of the story, and does not “perceive” the real process of the text reading. For him the text becomes the “space” for an imaginative play creating fiction. Disagreements between the articulation of the evoked text and the action (story) accentuate the time linearity of the text he reads.

The real time course of the text becomes the basis for its cohesion at the moment when the dominant or principle of construction of the designated component of the sign structure (esthetic object) changes. When the fabular features lose their prevalence in the esthetic object, and attention is shifted to some of the figurative sign structures (the speaker’s character, the scenery), the semantico-syntactic principle starts receding to the background (attention is shifted from the input and output segments, the developing and retarding ones, the known and the new segments of the action). Coming to the forefront are different qualities which bring about a different type of relations than those

of sequential semantico-syntactic continuity resulting from action motivation. These are associative relations emerging on the basis of positional equivalence of the text segments in the real time course of the text created by repetition, variation, inversion etc.<sup>20</sup> A manifestation of this principle are rhythmico-syntactic figures such as parallelism, anaphora, aiphora, ephanastrophe etc.

This manner of text composition based on the positional configuration of segments is usually accompanied with accentuation of the esthetically qualitative importance of the linguistic means through formative functionalization which reaches as far as the elementary plane of sublexical language elements (syllables, vowels and consonants, letters). A transition thus takes place from prose to poetry. Finding application in text stylization are such components as intonation, which divides the text into segments of utterances with different vocal modulation (marked graphically by means of punctuation), and metric patterns which create text bonds of long and short, accented and unaccented syllables (verse, poetry). Deepening of the sign dimension of the work of literature by adding the sublexical plane of language means produces functional polarity of "natural" (prosaic) and "artificial" (poetic) language. The very matter of language (in sound or graphic form) is poetically functionalized and esthetically accentuated in the language of poetry.

With this accentuation of the esthetic value importance of the elementary plane of linguistic means the poetic text at the same time assumes formative functionality which lends the esthetic value importance to the utterance itself. Prose, the "natural" language, is above all a means of communication facilitating an exchange of information; poetic language directs attention to the speaker and his approach to language. Prose as a poetic expression is closer to the evocative function of utterance, while poetry inclines to the expressive function. The evocative function subordinates the textual dimension of the work to the sign structure (the function of the text is to evoke the sign structure of the esthetic object, i.e. the structure of the semantic forms which express the esthetic values sense). The expressive function, on the contrary, accentuates the textual dimension against the sign structure.

Hence the manner of material fixation of an artistic communication in the text (poetic artefact). If an epic story is formatively materialized in a purely verbal form (a printed prosaic text), then a dramatic situation is materialized in the artefact which has the form of a theatre performance where the (spoken) word is a part of the work realization through its staging using also real stage means (requisites, wings, costumes, masks) as well as mimic ones (gestures, the actors' mimicry). This also determines the different nature of the reception of epic works and drama by the percipient. Epic works mainly carry the reader over to the fictitious time (and space) of the story, while drama counts with the illusorily real spatiality of the stage.

In a parallel manner, the way of material realization is connected with the possibilities of reception also in lyric works and artistic rhetoric. The esthetic

value sense of artistic rhetoric is based on a fictitious image of the world; it carries the percipient over to the fictitious, subjectively viewed and represented space (sensory or spiritual). Lyricism fills the sound or graphic elements of language expression with esthetic value importance (verse). Here emphasis is laid on the illusorily real (rhythmical, melodic) course of the utterance itself (poems, songs) whose real sound (graphic) line is an undivorceable part of the sign structure representing a model attitude.

The language form of artistic literary communication is constituted by four basic utterance types: narration, description, dialogue and monologue. Narration and description can be characterized as referential forms in which stress is put on evocation of the objectively semantic structure to which poetic stylization lends esthetic value importance. The dialogue and monologue, on the contrary, are such kinds of language expression in which the centre of attention is shifted from the object of utterance (communication) to the speaker's subject, too (where the subject becomes part of the theme). These forms do not so much evoke objectively semantic structures but rather have an expressive function; they express subjective attitudes of the speakers, their relation to the utterance (including "what is being spoken about"). Let us call them discursive forms.

The relations of the particular utterance forms and the semantic structures which are peculiar to them (story, scenery, situation, character) and which constitute the sign structure of a work of art (esthetic object) determine the generic nature of the work itself. All the forms can participate in its construction, but one usually dominates; this is also how the dominant generative principle of artistic literary communication is manifested. Works in which narration of a story prevails have epic character; prevalence of dialogue lends the work a dramatic nature. Monological character of expression testifies to prevalence of the lyric principle (e.g. the use of the first person in narration lends the narrated story a certain touch of lyricism). Static description prevails in artistic rhetoric (where the author uses verse the work assumes the character of objective lyricism).

In a particular work, the exact generic differentiation is obliterated, especially in periods when system definiteness and normative regulation of artistic creation are resented. This is documented e.g. by the deliberate romantic mixing of the epic and the lyric, modern lyricization of drama (Chekhov) etc. Representation of the theme in the esthetic object however does not completely determine the manner of language realization: a dramatical situation may be realized in a prosaic text, lyric mood may just as well be materialized in prosaic form (lyricized prose).

Perception of the text of a work of art results in the constitution of sign structure (esthetic object) representing a theme, *formative* idea. The constitution of the esthetic object is a pre-requisite of the overall qualitative purport of the work as a communication of experienced esthetic value.

From the communicative point of view, we can distinguish two aspects:

one is a concretization of the value sense of the communication by referring it to the subject of the situation in which it is perceived. Here we can speak of existential communicative relevance of the work with respect to the life situation of the perceiving subject. The other is the work qualification from the viewpoint of its communicative effectiveness. This effectiveness depends on the saturation of the sign structure with esthetic value sense in accordance with the artistic intention. The communicative effectiveness is thus connected with the artistic quality of the work.

As regards the existential relevance of the communication, what is involved is a concretization of the value sense communicated by the work in the situation in which it is perceived. If the value synthesis presented by the work can be applied to life and the percipient experiences it actively, a communicative interaction takes place between him and the work. The abstract (virtual) percipient that is "inscribed" in the work, in the formatively functional stylization of the esthetic value intention, is concretized by the real percipient in a particular historically social situation with particular existential parameters and creative possibilities.

A work concretized in this way assumes for the percipient a life-representing nature; during its reception the percipient experiences the esthetic value as a structure of extraesthetic creative values, presentation of values which are "worth living for". If the work creates around itself an audience connected by intersubjective togetherness, through its concretization, it becomes a living cultural value.

On the other hand — a work which is merely a recognized, conventional value (norm) but is not vividly received, receptively experienced, moves to the pole of life marginality, its communicative importance is minimized. A work of art can be the more representative the more synthetic is its esthetic value sense, the more comprehensive is the manner in which it presents creative life values which are relevant for the subject in a given historico-social situation.

Depending on the nature of the esthetic value synthesis which the work presents, the intensity of its life importance may change, too. Works which express the experience of limited or suppressed humanly creative possibilities do not easily assert themselves in situations when life itself is creatively rich. But the situation may also be opposite — works presenting an upsurge of creative life possibilities (and optimistic faith in their realization) are not usually experienced as existentially important in situations of creative decline and inertia (then they tend to be rejected as illusory and shoved off to the sphere of artistically marginal phenomena). These dialectics of life representativeness and marginality are moreover intertwined with the dialectics of artistic norm-generating and norm-destroying trends and directions (traditionalism and modernism), producing development transformations of approaches to artistic "languages", sign systems and their stylization possibilities (alternatives).

A distinction must of course be made between temporary and permanent life marginality. Apart from works of art which have become a fetish, a convention, which represent "dead" cultural values, artistically marginal phenomena emerge also when the work is not capable of presenting the creative potential of a historical situation in its synthetic wealth; when the value sense of the artistic communication is reduced. Thus works may be marginal because they do not "address" the percipient in a given situation, although they do have their value. This is relative marginality. Beside these there are works which are only marginal, which "die" with the time that produced the conditions of their origin.

The life importance of a work of art (communication) therefore varies in terms of intensity. But what does not change is the artistic quality of the elaboration of the theme, fulfilment of the *formative* possibilities offered by the *formative* idea as the generative principle, and the saturation of the sign elements (semantic forms) of the esthetic object with a value sense. The generically generative principles inherent in the formative ideas may also influence the percipient's approaches as regards the receptive possibilities which they establish, as well as in terms of the demands they place on the percipient's involvement.

From the reader's point of view, the most "rewarding" genre in this respect is the epic one, which can synthesize all utterance forms when evoking the story in which the reader becomes a "co-actor". In fiction produced by imaginative play, he finds not only action process but also situational plots, atmosphere of the setting, as well as mental attitudes of the characters.

A certain nodal (critical) situation, which the percipient witnesses (during a theatre performance of the "*peep-show*" type), is typical of drama. The percipient encounters a situation which is isolated from the action context (what came before and what is going to follow remains outside his field of vision). The actor, too, is not shown in the totality of outward and inward action — which is possible in an epic work — but is presented as the speaker or the acting subject, with only outward expressions telling us something about the inward process and motivation. The percipient can no longer look into the "hearts and minds" of the characters but has to imagine what is going on inside them on the basis of outward expressions (which the author charges, as semantic forms, with esthetic value sense). The measure of the percipient's active participation in creating the sense of the communication is thus increased.

In artistic rhetoric the epic narrative element is further reduced; this genre does not even represent a situational whole any more but confines itself to evoking the atmosphere of the viewed world (at the given moment). Here the percipient — if he wants to arrive at an esthetic experience adequate to the intention of the communication — must determine the attitude perspective of the poetic subject which consolidates the image of the "world" (scenery) representing the life atmosphere. This is impossible without an active attitude

of the percipient, who has to adapt his angle of vision to the perspective of the poetic subject.

Maximum demands are placed on the percipient's involvement by lyric works which seek to represent a subjective mood (state of mind; in this sense it would be possible to differentiate between lyricism as representation of the "scene of the spirit" and artistic rhetoric representing the "spirit of the scene"). In a lyric work the percipient loses to some degree even the support of a descriptively evoked objective world; he must acquire the meaning of the artistic communication from the manner of the language expression of the lyric subject (proclamation, confession), the intonation and modulation of the subject's utterance. It is no coincidence that those who read intensively and lovers of poetry know their favourite poems by heart — because reproduction of an utterance (whether pronounced aloud or formulated in one's mind) is an indispensable part of the work perception. It is precisely during this reproduction of a lyric poem (song) when an intersubjective identification takes place — the percipient "enters the spirit" of the modal attitude of the speaker, the percipient's ego speaks through the voice of someone else (the poet), while someone else (the poet) speaks in the voice of the percipient's ego.

As regards the demands placed on the percipient, a work of art is the better accessible the more "transparent" is its text, i.e. the more it is subordinated to the sign structure of the work (esthetic object). The sequential type of text (which is based on the semantico-syntactic connection) becomes for the reader the "space" for imaginative play into which he can enter and from which he can depart, imagining himself again as living through the fictitious time of the story or situation: this is documented by the existence of serial reading (reading in "instalments") but also by intermissions between acts in a drama. An associative text on the contrary wants to be perceived "in one go", because there the emphasis is on the real time course of the text perception, while every interruption weakens its rhythmico-syntactic cohesion.

An artistic work of art therefore puts different demands on the percipient's competence, offers different possibilities of the percipient's approaches which make possible the acquisition of the esthetic value sense of the communication and its concertization in the actual historico-social situation. The lower this competence of the percipient to make use of the receptive possibilities of the work, the more formal is the artistic communication, the greater is the chance that the work become a cultural fetish or a mere thing for the percipient — one that "has nothing to tell him". Then he is all the more ready to shove to the sphere of life marginality such works with which he is not able to establish a communicative contact — and the stock of works that can "address" him becomes all the more limited.

The irreplaceability of artistic communication among the ways of cultural communication is constituted by the esthetic value. A work of art is not, for the percipient, a communication of knowledge of the objective world (in the best case it can be that only secondarily, and very unreliably, because — as has been

said — objective meanings become in a work of art the bearers of subjective values sense and a kind of a “mirror” reflecting the creative potential of the human historical subject). The inherent sense of artistic communication is in an experience of esthetic value — such as has existential importance for the percipient’s life. It has this importance because it evokes in the percipient awareness of his own inherently human historically creative possibilities (both those that have already been realized and those which are still ahead), and awareness of what is not human because not creative, what is monstrous and has to be overcome. Actual concretization of value experiences generated during the perception and evaluation of formative stylization of the sign structure (esthetic object) gives artistic communication its humanizing meaning, its effect of creative self-realization.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. G. Helbig: *Entwicklung der Sprachwissenschaft seit 1970*, Leipzig 1988; H. R. Jauss: *Ästhetische Erfahrung und literarische Hermeneutik*, Frankfurt a.M. 1982; W. Iser: *Akt des Lesens*, München 1976. The whole series works by Polish authors Lalewicz, Głowiński et al. should not be neglected either.

<sup>2</sup>S. Kierkegaard: *Ou bien ou bien*, Paris 1943, p. 463 n.

<sup>3</sup>S. Šabouk: *Jazyk umění*, (The Language of Arts) Prague 1969, p. 40: “To me function appears as value made actual, value as a potential function.” In this respect he differs from the conception of Mukařovský, who proceeded from function as the basis of value (cf. *Estetická funkcie, norma a hodnota jako sociální fakty* Esthetic function, norm and value as social facts), in: “Studie z estetiky” (Esthetic studies), Prague 1966, p. 27 n.).

<sup>4</sup>Cf. “Studie z estetiky”, Prague 1966, pp. 55–61, where Mukařovský differentiates between esthetic and magico-religious, practical and theoretical (cognitive) attitudes. He ranks esthetic attitude among those of the sign type, and sees its specificity in reference to the universe of things and actions (processes). Thus he includes this attitude as an aspect which imparts specialness and also is totalizing. The specialness, according to Mukařovský, consists in the preoccupation with the thing “in itself”. Thus the esthetic sign becomes for him a synecdoche of the universe (a part instead of the whole). This feature is however present only in some sign type, i.e. in a work of art. The esthetic effect of extra-artistic objects lacks the totalizing (universalizing) aspect; only the specialness-impacting effect, which emancipates the object from the value of an object with an esthetic effect, as an objectified creative force, is accentuated by this emancipation. As a consequence, the esthetic function activates the creative potential of the percipient (if he is open to the esthetic effect). The activating moment of esthetic function remained only indicated Mukařovský (cf. the above quoted article, p. 57).

<sup>5</sup>C. W. Morris: *Základy teorie znaku* (Foundations of the Theory of Sign), in: *Lingvistické čítanky* (Linguistic Readers) I, “Semiotika” (Semiotics) 2, Prague 1970, pp. 7–57.

<sup>6</sup>The difference between meaning and sense was the object of many deliberations of logicians (cf.: Frege and his example of Evening star and Morning Star) ensues from the different perspective of the subject. The problem of sense thus cannot be divorced from the importance (in terms of value) that an objective meaning assumes for the subject, or the importance attached to it by the subject. Meaning as a component of what is being designated has an objective nature, while sense tells us something about the subjective attitude. On differentiation between sense and meaning, cf. also G. Lerchner: *Sprachform von Dichtung*, Berlin u. Weimar 1984, pp. 165–166 and 252, 259.

<sup>7</sup>Vladimír Holan: *Na postupu*, Prague 1964, p. 12.

<sup>8</sup>Here we can point to the insufficient differentiation between life attitudes and the

needs and values connected with them in Mukařovský. His scheme covers some categories rather than representing system arrangement. Generalization of the difference between factual, i.e. practico-cognitive attitudes on the one hand and sign attitudes, i.e. the esthetic and the magic, resulted in the narrowing of the field of vision which failed to taken in e.g. attitudes and values of the emotional, political, hedonic, economic and other kinds (cf. the work quoted in Note 4, pp. 55–56).

<sup>9</sup>The Soviet esthetician L. M. Stolovich created in his article on Esthetic and Artistic Value an axiological system with two coordinates

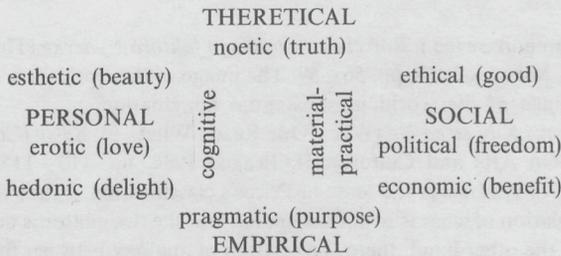
## SUBJECT

moral PERSONALITY

socio-political SOCIETY

## OBJECT

See: *Estetika socialistickej spoločnosti (The Esthetics of the Socialist Society)*, Bratislava 1982, p. 89. Against this conception based on combination of the sociological and the gnoseological aspects, we put a system which combines the personal-social aspect with the theoretico-empirical one:



<sup>10</sup>On difference between experienced and recognized values, cf. A. Kłoskowska: *Socjologia kultury*, Warsaw 1983, pp. 184–191.

<sup>11</sup>In Mukařovský's conception (*Záměrnost a nezaměrnost v umění Intentionality and Unintentionality in Arts*), in: *Studie z estetiky (Esthetic Studies)*, Prague 1966, pp. 89–108), intentionality is connected with the communicative and unintentionality with the esthetic function. But if we understand arts as a specific manner of cultural communication, this conception cannot satisfy us. Unintentionality connected with materiality would exclude the work of art from the sphere of cultural communication and would include it in the sphere of material manipulation (work of art as a commodity, decoration etc.). Therefore, contrary to Mukařovský, we must insist on the intentionality of a work of art which makes it a sign carrying a specific sense — experience of esthetic value. If the esthetic value is an artistically elaborated experience of the synthetic structure of esthetically functional creative values, then the sense of artistic communication is to convey this experience (the conveyance of course has a paradoxical nature because what is involved here is a "mediated immediateness") which cannot be acquired in any other way than by actively sharing it or living through it again. Thus artistic communication is not confined to a mechanical perception and semantic interpretation of the sign; what is decisive is the active participation of the percipient, his evaluating activity which co-creates or creates again the implicit esthetic value sense of the semantic forms, elements of the sign structure (esthetic object). The reception of a work of art has there phases in principle: the phase of perception and experiencing of the values which are implicitly communicated by the work; the phase of interpretation, in which a reflexion of the overall experience takes place; and the phase of concretization, i.e. that of relating the conscious experience to the historical life situation of the percipient.

<sup>12</sup>The influence of esthetic norms and formative canons of stylization on artistic crea-

tion should be pointed out in this context. While popular art contents itself with passive illustration of contemporary norms and formative canons, prestigious art "tests" these norms and canons in terms of their viability in a given situation.

<sup>13</sup>M. M. Bakhtin: *François Rabelais a lidová kultura středověku a renesance* (François Rabelais and Popular Culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance), Prague 1975, p. 21: "The main specificity of grotesque realism is reduction, i.e. transfer of all that is lofty, spiritual, ideal to the material-physical plane, the sphere of the earth and the body in their indivisible unity."

<sup>14</sup>The conception of schematic aspects in the classical work of R. Ingarden: *Das literarische Kunstwerk*, Halle 1930, could be related to this thematic sphere.

<sup>15</sup>The myth is viewed from different position by different authors. Cassirer (*Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, Darmstadt 1973) understands it as a form of consciousness, that means an intentional affair. Eliade (*Images et symboles*, Paris 1952) sees the myth as a matter of psychological transfer to a sacred time outside history. R. Barthes (*Mythologies*, in: *Semiotika i potika*, Moscow 1989, pp. 48–130) is interested in the myth as a secondary semiotic system, or an ideological form transposing historical reality (which is relative) to the dimension of absolute natural structures. From our point of view the essential fact is that all the three authors regard the myth as an intentional affair, a form of universal consciousness. This form has an inherent value sense of life certainty (cf. also E. Grassi: *Kunst und Mythos*, Hamburg 1966, p. 77n) resulting from a life order which is universal and is given and determined beforehand. In this sense life certainty results from fatal consciousness of a predetermined order.

<sup>16</sup>"Eidetic" is used here in the sense of "imaginative thinking", such as we find in psychological theories (Jaensch).

<sup>17</sup>Cf. B. A. Serebrennikov (ed.): *Rol' chelovecheskogo faktora vazyke* (The Role of the Human Factor in Language), Moscow 1988, pp. 56–59: The image of the world in processually dynamical imagination; The image of the world in substantial imagination.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. Karel Čapek: *Kdy se co čte* (When One Reads What), in: *Spisy* (Collected Works) XIX, *O umění a kultuře* (On Arts and Culture) III, Prague 1986, pp. 113–115.

<sup>19</sup>Here we speak of symbols in the sense of Peirce's classification; Peirce understood symbol as a sign in which the relation of what is being designated and the designator is defined by convention. In an iconic sign, on the other hand, there is a relation of analogy between the designated and the designating, or (according to Morris), the designating reproduces certain features (elements, qualities) of the designated. Morris's definition is disputed by U. Eco (cf. *Kritik der Ikonizität* in: *Im Labyrinth der Vernunft*, Leipzig 1989, pp. 54–88). Eco of course does not sufficiently differentiate an iconic symbol (diagram, schema) from symbolic icon (allegory, metaphore, emblem). If the iconic symbol preserve the arbitrariness of the relation between the designated and the designating, in symbolic icon, on the contrary, the motivation of the representation (reproduction or stylization of certain elements, features, qualities) assumes greater intensity because it expresses the value sense of the designated. From this viewpoint it can be said that art in its generality aims at iconicity (of course understood not only visually) while science aims at symbolicity.

<sup>20</sup>Ju. M. Lotman: *Struktura khudozhestvennogo texta* (The Structure of Artistic Text), Moscow 1970, p. 20. n.

## SPECYFICZNOŚĆ ARTYSTYCZNEJ KOMUNIKACJI LITERACKIEJ I JEJ SYSTEM ZNAKOWY

### STRESZCZENIE

Rozważania niniejsze poświęcone są sposobowi istnienia i funkcji sztuki jako szczególnej formy komunikacji społecznej. Komunikacja artystyczna, klasyfikowana na podstawie systematyki Morrisa, pojmowana tu jest jako sposób porozumiewania się kładący nacisk na pragmatyczną pojemność znaku. Wskutek tego sztuka staje w opozycji do komunikacji naukowej, opiera-

rającej się na znaczeniu semantycznej pojemności znaku. Rzutuje to na składniową pojemność znaku. Istota sztuki polega na aktualizacyjnej stylizacji sensu komunikatu, jakiego nabiera on dla podmiotu; w przeciwieństwie do tego w komunikacji naukowej podmiot „wchłaniany” jest przez przedmiot, którym się zajmuje. Komunikacja naukowa zmierza do modelowania tego przedmiotu (objektu) przez gramatyczne ukształtowanie form znaku.

W pracy omówiono dalej zjawiska funkcji estetycznej i wartości estetycznej, przy czym to, co jest estetycznie spontaniczne, pojmowane jest jako „sprężenie zwrotne” poetyckiego, twórczego (przetwórczego) stosunku do świata. W następstwie tego za wartość estetyczną uznaje się syntezę pozaestetycznych, twórczych wartości życiowych.

Sensem komunikacji artystycznej jest przekazanie przeżycia wartości estetycznej. Wartość estetyczna najpierw tematyzuje się w idei formy dzieła. Do niej projektowane są generatywne gatunkowe reguły formalne (epika, dramat, liryka, retoryka artystyczna).

Unaocznieniem idei poetyckiej jest kreacja znakowej struktury form znaczeniowych (obiekt estetyczny), które tak są stylizowane i tak w sensie formalnym sfunkcjonalizowane, by w odbiorcy stymulować estetycznie wartościującą aktywność.

Obiekt estetyczny zmaterializowany jest w tekście literackim w postaci linearnego łańcucha językowego symboli. Materializacja struktur znakowych wyznacza też sposoby pojmowania dzieła sztuki literackiej. Tekst ma bowiem postać czysto werbalną, acz może ona być wzbogacana przez środki pomocnicze (przedstawienie teatralne: kostiumy, rekwizyty, kulisy, mimika; liryczna pieśń bądź liryczny wiersz: dźwiękowa postać wypowiedzi nie oddzielona od wyrazu uczuciowej postawy podmiotu lirycznego).

Generatywne zasady, mające wpływ na możliwość realizacji dzieła stwarzają warunki dla podejścia odbiorczego: epika przenosi pojmującego ją odbiorcę do fikcyjnego czasu akcji, tekst staje się realną „przestrzenią”, do której można wkraczać i z której można wychodzić (oddzielona w czasie lektura kolejnych fragmentów tekstu). W przeciwieństwie do tego teksty liryczne wymuszają lekturę jednorazową, każde bowiem jej przerwanie osłabia zwartość tekstu.

W końcowej części pracy omówiono żywotne (egzystencjalne) właściwości dzieła sztuki (oraz przemiany intensywności jego oddziaływania), jak również jego komunikacyjną skuteczność widzianą w perspektywie oczekiwań odbiorcy.

Z języka czeskiego przełożył *Jacek Kolbuszewski*