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Expressionistic Eidology: Paradigm of the Archetype

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Expressionistic Eidology: Paradigm of the Archetype

The history of any literature is primarily a history of styles (in the broad and narrow sense of this concept). As has been rightly observed, “research of literary styles and trends is primarily that of typological study, as stylistic categories enable one to systematize the historical and literary material; it also places the criterion of the development of art on the high level of theoretical assimilation”¹.

Expressionism is one of those styles that is particularly worthy of notice, first of all because it “outgrows” proper literature and becomes the basis of the world-view which is aimed at intensive activity in humanity’s return to the fundamental spiritual principle. The expressionist knows that the truth is not what external reality shows; for him “the moment is of little value: he strives for the eternal..., he is rising to the inspirations, which brings closer to God what is achieved only in the incomparable ecstasy of spirit”².

The ecstatic nature of the work needs some adequate ways of expression. Each poetics is based on its own eidology, defined by L. Ushkalov, the Ukrainian Baroque researcher, as “a system of universals that create the original producing model; the result of its emanation appears as a certain set of forms “of establishment of Being in a Word”³.

Among the expressionistic universals, the archetype occupies a prominent place. The paradigm of the archetype in the structure of Ex-

¹ Будний В., Ільницький М., *Порівняльне літературознавство: підручник*, Видавничий дім «Кисво-Могилянська академія», Київ 2008, с 213 [V. Budny, M. Ilnytsky. *Comparative Literary*, Kyiv 2008, p. 213].

² Вальцель О., *Импрессионизм и экспрессионизм в современной Германии (1890-1920)*, Academia, Петербург 1922, с 88-89 [O. Valtzel, *Impressionism and Expressionism in Modern Germany*, Petersburg 1922, p. 88-89].

³ Ушкалов Л., *Світ українського бароко. Філологічні етюди*, Око, Харків 1994, с 3 [L. Ushkalov, *World of the Ukrainian Baroque*, Kharkiv 1994, p. 3].

pressionism is defined by the semantics of crisis, pain, intensity, ecstasy, initiations, insight, mysticism and “world instinct” (Worringer).

Activation of the archetype is a sign of a conversion to another dimension and of the ability and willingness to undergo high-quality changes.

This means not only the artistic objectification of the creative object, but also the creative subjectification of the artistic object. Archetype in the expressionistic context leads a human being to that measure where something blessed is being found, revealing its mystical source.

Definitions of archetype are numerous: it is called a prototype, or *eidos* by Plato, *praideya* by Philo of Alexandria, higher principle by St. Thomas Aquinas, primary phenomenon in Goethe’s view, or utter spirit in Hegel’s. A modern definition calls it “a model upon which a work reflecting universal meanings is formed”⁴. Those meanings lie in the depth of the collective unconscious.

Archetype manifests itself through dreams, sights, and other ecstatic conditions that lead to important changes of consciousness. “That place of the soul, where dreams, fairy tales, poetry and art are the mystical abode of instinctive wildlife. In modern dreams and poetry (Expressionism is always poetry, despite the genre and gender peculiarities – G. Y.), as in ancient folk tales and works of the mystics, this whole centre is seen as a creature living its own life”, - writes Clarissa Pinkola Estes, a psychoanalyst (practitioner and theorist) of the Jungian school, a researcher of myths of different cultures, and the keeper of narrations in the Latin American tradition (*cantadora*)⁵.

One can assert that, in practice, I. Franko identifies the same concepts, which he confirms in his article “Poetry and its condition in our times: an aesthetic study”. He writes: “I guess that every person has an independent and innate world in his heart. And this world is ideal. Certainly, this inner world cannot consist of material objects only. It consists of logical conceptions too. And there are differences between these logical conceptions. And when they arise consciously, which is reasonable, they do not require consciousness but they remain dreaming in deep feelings”⁶.

⁴ Ковалів Ю., *Літературознавча енциклопедія: у 2 т., т. 1*, ВЦ «Академія», Київ 2007, с 96 [U. Kovaliv, *Literary Encyclopedia*, Kyiv 2007, p. 96].

⁵ Эстес Кл. П., *Бегущая с волками: женский архетип в мифах и сказаниях*, ИД «София», Москва 2003, с. 460 [C. P. Estes, *Running with Wolves*, Moscow 2003, p. 460].

⁶ Франко І., *Зібрання творів: у 50 т., т. 26, Літературно-критичні праці*, Наукова думка, Київ 1980, с. 398-399 [I. Franko, *Collected works*, V. 26, Kyiv 1980, p. 398-399].

It is generally known that when speaking about the formal features of Expressionism, we can name hyperbole, allegory, grotesque, synecdoche, antithesis, inversion, parataxis syntax and antinomy; their function is to introduce the reader to the world which is strained by pain and suffering; to emphasize a person in crisis, in a state of consciousness which has been changed by ecstasy (of a different nature).

This set of artistic methods is peculiar to expressionistic poetry, but following this inventory of stylistic features is obviously not enough to grasp the character and nature of expressionistic texts.

Expressionism aims to bring a person back to what “he/she is from the very outset” (The Gospel of Philip), namely to the person’s origins, to his/her primordial nature and to return his/her invalid soul, mutilated by the civilization, back to the person. That’s why in Expressionism anti-military motives sound so loudly, and in the context of space antagonists are defined so clearly (urban versus bucolic). Thus the object of expressionistic search is the deep sense, hidden beneath the outer surface and visible only to “the third eye”. Consequently, the task of Expressionism is to release and detach the instincts from sticking to the filth of civilization, the straightening of the soul misshapen under the burden of the technocratic world. One can only accomplish this task on the level of the work of art without tendentious and declarative introductions when the archetype as the image and structuring principle is used.

It is only in expressionistic poetry that the archetype is enclosed within such characteristic emotional and sensual atmosphere and reveals in full measure its nature, because only in archetypes are biology and psychology, mind and instinct, wisdom and childish naivety merged. Only here is the immune system of the organism rooted, so the aim of Expressionism is to strengthen or revive this immunity with the help of stress, feeling of horror or joy. Archetype as a structural and expressionistic unit enables one to remain in time and to feel time directly and, in reverse, simultaneously; following one direction, and adjusting the other one. Figuratively speaking, archetype is the light of darkness.

Archetype is the concentrated knowledge about the basis of the natural, whole life. So it logically follows that archetype is authentic, that it is the heart of Expressionism, even in its most socialized form – activism. Archetype appears through the gap between the real and unreal worlds, and this is its transcendental function.

The expressionistic text is the adobe of the archetypes such as Life, Death, Mother, Nature. There are also separate branches belonging to these central types which create the whole archetypal system and change depending on time. Life-Death is the most important couple, the arche-

typal unit of Expressionism, around which motives, plots, and concepts of characters are centred. The processes of initiation and individualization are connected with this unit; it is responsible for the intensity and power of color contrast and emotions; ensures the energetic force of the text and dynamic emanations.

Another sequence, related to that archetypal unit, which is conspicuous in the literary context of Expressionism is eschatology, tanatography, and ontologisation of death. Any expressionistic Ukrainian text testifies to this observation, so we can mention the whole list of titles: "Pohoron" by I. Franko, "Oderzhyma" by Lesya Ukrainka, novels of V. Stefanyk, "Beyond the Limits of Pain" by O. Turyansky, "Smert' Franka" by V. Bobynskyj, "Gulai Pole" by I. Bahrianyi, "Chervonyi Roman" by A. Holowko, "Slipci" by M. Bazhan, "Arsenal" by A. Dovzhenko, works of V. Pidmohylny, "Palimpsests" by V. Stus, "Lystia Zemli" by V. Drozd, collection "Bermudskii trykutnyk" by I. Rymaruk. The death of a human being is the most important fact in the world of that person; it concerns only him/her. Human beings can gain or repeat various kinds of experience, but the experience of death is the right of each individual. Something that is suffered and realized can be reliably named in the full meaning of this word.

Death and all its attributive characteristics and intensions are the conceptual factor in the aesthetic and moral search of V. Stefanyk: "The complaints arise from my soul. By their white lips they tell about coffins in which my old songs, past dreams and disappeared words are resting. I buried them without hope, I was crying over them at night, I planted weed on their graves. I water them with red blood and guard them... New complaints arise together with the last wind from those cemetery graves. And I kill them and go again to the grave with a sad funeral..."

Autumn wind is blowing to a song with my grave, to a language and a complaint"⁷.

"...I don't write to the public, I write to approach the death", – the novelist confessed to the critic Doroshenko. Not only V. Stefanyk, but the characters of his novels are often think of death feeling of its inevitability and need. Sometimes the burden of emotions is "so hard and the world is so hostile, that a wish to escape from all this in death is inevitable"⁸. One can't help but notice that for Stefanyk life in its authentic

⁷ Стефаник В., *Вибране*, Карпати, Ужгород 1979, с. 333 [V. Stefanyk, *Selected Stories*, 1979, p. 333].

⁸ Моклиця М., *Модернізм як структура: Філософія. Психологія. Поетика*, Редакційно-видавничий відділ Волинського держуніверситету імені Лесі

nature is very close to death: it is constantly accompanied by loss of relatives and the closeness is demonstrated either in an understanding of kinship, or in a spiritual sense (mother, sister, darling wife). Stefanyk's thoughts about death are the evidence of the tragic background of his world-view, his ability to identify "only the black abyss" (M. Yevshan) of suffering among the variety of the colors of the world. Stefanyk's "Verbum cordis" ("the word of the heart") which is a "true" word, "speaking about a thing, is not something for itself and doesn't want to be"⁹. This word "speaks" about death as something that will set one free from the burden of the creation and thus become one with the creation. "Death's time" is understood as "creative time", "creative time" as "death's time".

In V. Stefanyk's work death is a way to release its essence from the excessive influence of human sorrow. "The Blue Book" was - as the author said, - "such a tiny tragedy of all peasants in the world". The problem of creativity and death had a strong hold over everyone who was related to the writer. The sufferings of the people he loved were the source that supported it. "Near" were all men whose way of life aroused in the writer's soul unbearable pangs. "Nourishing death" was Stefanyk's life work (Montaigne).

In the works of that Galician novelist death has the same rights as any other character. One can say that he aimed at writing about death. R. Pihmanets has a slightly different view of the main subject of this writer's oeuvre, saying that "the archetype of destiny lies in the heart of the internal form of Stefanyk's works", which is confirmed by "externally visible indicators"¹⁰. This opinion, however, should be modified as it is evident that death to some extent impacts upon Stefanyk's works. Death is represented as the key prototype and is the integral part of the writer's consciousness.

Stefanyk's first published novel "Vyvodyly z sela" illustrates this immanent feature of his creative nature in his writing style: "Over the

Українки, Луцьк, 1998, с. 97 [M. Moklytsia, *Modernism as a Structure*, Lutsk 1998, p. 97].

⁹ Гадамер Г.-Г., *Истина і метод: основа філософської герменевтики, т. 1*, Юніверс, Київ 2000, с. 389 [H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method: The Basis of Philosophical Hermeneutics*, Kyiv 2000, p. 389].

¹⁰ Піхманець Р., *Засади художнього мислення В. Стефаніка*, [в:] *Літературознавство: матеріали II конгресу Міжнародної асоціації українців (Львів, 22-28 серпня 1993)*, б/в, Львів 1993, с.147 [R. Pihmanets, *Principles of Creative Thinking of V. Stefanyk*, [in:] *Literary Criticism: Materials of the II Congress of the International Association of Ukrainists*, Lviv 1993, p. 147].

sunset a red cloud turned to stone. Around it a star covered its fair tufts, and put a a cloud on the bloody head of some Saint”¹¹. In this case death is like fate, inexorable and cruel, invisibly existing in a mother’s sorrow, in the strong and stable (dead) light of the sundown, presented as if it were the red stone in autumn’s heavenly “vault”. In the novel “Sama-samisinka” death appears in the image of a devil with a long tail, in the image of small imps “that ‘were hanging over’ the (peasant) woman as locusts over the sun or as flock of ravens over the wood”¹². Finally, the phantasmagoric picture is transformed into the quite real, anti-aesthetic image of blood and flies that “had bloody little wings”¹³.

Tanatogramme of consciousness of “old Les” in the novel “Skin” shows death as a white plakhta. “It is bright from plakhta like from sun. Plakhta wrapped round him like a little baby, his feet forward and then go arms and shoulders. It wrapped it round tightly. He feels easy, easy. Then it climbs into his head and brains, penetrates into every perarticulation and lays down gently...”¹⁴.

In Stefanyk’s consciousness, folkloric and mythological concepts play a prominent role in forming the tanatographical experience of humanity. These concepts present improved symbols – graves, trunva, crying, ravens, blood. Death in Stefanyk’s conception is, mainly, a release from suffering. For Stefanyk individuality is introduced in the concept “I am-for-death”. Death is a watershed, in front of which there is an abyss of hard thoughts, behind which there is their absence in its “mortal” variant.

The problem of death also had a great impact on the structure of the works of another author, V. Pidmohylny, a prose writer who began his literary activity when V. Stefanyk was on the “road of sorrows”. Pidmohylny’s oeuvre and later on his own destiny includes a peculiar continuation of Stefanyk’s tanatography. Both authors were also influence by the Freudian theory of psychoanalysis and, as A. Muzyczka observes in his article “The Creative Method of Valerian Pidmohylny”, it was “under the influence of the familiarity with the Freudian theory of single complex” that the novel “Ostap Shaptala” was written”¹⁵. Critics also paid

¹¹ Стефаник В., *Вибране*, Карпати, Ужгород 1979, с. 333 [V. Stefanyk, *Selected Stories*, 1979, p. 333].

¹² Ibidem, p. 56.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 57.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 102-103.

¹⁵ Музичка А., *Творча метода Валеріана Підмогильного*, «Червоний шлях», літературний часопис, головн. ред. О. Шумський, р.: 1930, № 10, с. 111 [A. Muzy-

attention to the fact that the “Oedipus complex” is presented in the image of Ostap Shaptala.

The problem of the consciousness of “I am-for-death” expressed in the works of both V. Stefanyk and V. Pidmohylny is obviously psychophysically complex. It also provides the occasion for introducing a priori essential contents, which moves us, however, into the phenomenological field of study. V. Stefanyk and his characters are the ideal objects for phenomenological research, but the case of V. Pidmohylny’s work is slightly different in this respect. As one of the critics notices, the writer commits “some artistic vivisection over his grim characters” (M. Dolenho) and as the result of this “dissection” not only the “nudity” of instinct, eternal as nature itself, but also transcendence as the result of a search for “some sense, some distant, mysterious, idealistic idea is open to the reader’s eye. That’s why V. Pidmohylny’s characters feel from time to time deep disorder with the environment, their own psyche, sometimes they want to sink deeply in romantic spaces (as Sergiy Danchenko does), at times they are involved in “the problem of bread”. But both are alien and die hopelessly”¹⁶.

Death as an aesthetic and philosophical category is a structural core of V. Pidmohylny’s cycle of works. Death in its naturalistic form, in all the ugliness of its physiological manifestations appears on the pages of the novel “Vania”. Death is an explanation of Ole’s actions (novel “Haidamaka”). In the novel “Istoria pani Yivhy” death comes to take away from this unfair world Mrs. Yivhu, exhausted by the pangs of conscience. In the story “Ivan Bosyi” death highlights spiritual asceticism; joy in the soul, opposite to “that mud” which the “lifeless” body changed into. The list of works where death is a protagonist can be continued. The sketch “Death” and the novel “Ostap Shaptala” complete V. Pidmohylny’s tanatocentrist group. They “transfer” tanatograms of the character’s consciousness to the transcendental dimension, treating death as a possibility to be released from the burdensome chains of corporality. “Pidmohylny was a worthy disciple [...] of Schopenhauer and Hart-

chka, *Creative Method of Valerian Pidmohylny*, “Chervonyj shljakh”, Literary Journal, Editor-in-Chief O. Shumskii, 1930, № 10, p. 111].

¹⁶ Дорошкевич О., *Літературний рух на Україні в 1924 році*, «Життя і революція», Літературний часопис, головн. ред. О. Дорошкевич, р.: 1925, Кн. 3, с. 61-68 [A. Doroshkevych, *Literary Movement in Ukraine in 1924*, “Zhyttia i Revoliutsiia”, Literary Journal, Editor-in-Chief A. Doroshkevych, 1925, Volume 3, pp. 61-68].

mann...”¹⁷. His Ostap Shaptala “felt” [...] the presence of death that was in the air. This “vibration” as delusive waves of invisible water left him lifeless, and he felt free as never before. He felt connected with the air and death “hugged” him [...]”¹⁸.

Aesthetics of death in the artistic concepts of both authors illustrates their resemblance to the aesthetics of death in expressionistic stylistic schemes. In the tanatography of V. Stefanyk and V. Pidmohylny creative consciousness refers to the choice of themes, the “design” of artistic models of the world, forming humanity’s views according to expressionistic concepts about death as a way “to destroy a human being” (A. Biletskyi), about the day of death as “a supreme day” (M. Montaigne), that sets free the spirit from the delusive chains of the material world – “the worst of the worlds” (Schopenhauer).

Expressionistic universals, especially a mystical category, archetype and aesthetics are figurative indicators, artistic codes on the way of achieving a true, sound basis of in the life of a human being. That’s why there are reasons to look upon Expressionism as constantly “active” aesthetics until the changes that are mentioned in the novel “The Elementary Particles” by M. Houellebecq happen in the world; in other words - when human nature and biosphere undergo essential and profound changes.

Abstract (Summary)

The article “Expressionistic Eidology: Paradigm of the Archetype” is part of the research project - “Expressionism in Ukrainian Literature”. The aim of the study is to highlight the archetype as an expressionistic and stylistic universal. Expressionism has been treated here primarily as poetics, with the focus on the aesthetic nature of the word and on the author’s spiritual intentions. The objective of the article has been to broaden and complement the scope of representations about theoretical fundamentals of expressionism in literature. It enhances the chance of a deeper understanding of the nature and character of this artistic phenomenon. First of all, it has been brought about by the shift of literary vectors in the axiological expressionistic paradigm from the universal,

¹⁷ Колесник П., *Валеріан Підмогильний: критичний нарис*, Література і мистецтво, Харків 1931, с. 21 [P. Kolesnyk, *Valerian Pidmohylny: Critical Essay*, Kharkiv 1931, p. 21].

¹⁸ Підмогильний В., *Історія пані Ївги: Оповідання, повість*, Веселка, Київ, 1991 с. 167 [V. Pidmohylny, *Istoria pani Iivgi: Stories, Novel*, Kyiv 1991, p. 167].

ontological basis and of the role of the phenomenon to social and historical grounds; consequently, it results in the of narrowing the semantic and chronological scope of expressionism. The methodological background of the research draws upon the studies by Ukrainian and European scholars such as V.Budny, O.Valtsel, H.G.Gadamer, C.P.Estes, M.Ilnytsky, U.Kovaliv, M.Moklytsia, R.Pihmanets, L.Ushkalov, I.Franko. The structural-typological method is used for writing this article.

The key findings of the research comprise emphasis on expressionism as poetics with focus on the aesthetic nature of the word and the author's spiritual intensions. The article highlights the idea of literary expressionism as a certain primal essence established in the profundity of human spirit, independent of conscious activity, and of social and historical conditions, but it is objectified via a human being (an artist) due to intensive inner work that is reflected in the fundamental changes of the structure of consciousness. The article underlines the paramount importance of the archetype for expressionism as a unique opportunity to reach the ultimate expression of feelings, emotions and experience concentrated in one entity as evidence that a person is receptive to mystical powers which create the universe and it proves that the celestial idea as a regulatory standard is hidden in expressionism. The Life-Death antinomy is represented as one of the dominant units in the archetypal system of expressionism; since it creates the most emotional intensity and increases the dynamics of the text. To support these ideas the phenomenological data from the works of Ukrainian prose writers such as Vasyl Stefanyk (1871-1936) and Valerian Pidmohylny (1901-1937) have been used.

The results of the research focus on emphasizing one of the expressionistic universals such as the archetype, and on finding the motivational statement of this idea through analysis of V.Stefanyk and V. Pidmohylny's conceptual foundations. The results of the research may be employed in the study of literary theory and history of literature as well as might be of use for further development of literary studies (for scholars and students).

The novelty of the article includes recognition and evaluation of the archetype as one of the fundamental categories in literary expressionism.

Key words:

Expressionism, stylistic universal, eidology, archetype, tanatography, V.Stefanyk, V.Pidmohylny.

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