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"FURROW"

animation short by Nayden Nikolov

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The initial impetus for the birth of the "Furrow" project arose after reading of the Balkan folk tale "Silyan the Stork".

The surreal imagery of space and characters capture the imagination of the author. Not setting for himself the goal to put the story on screen, he abandons the folklore wisdom of the original thus allowing the images to organize by themselves and give birth to a new story. In "Furrow" the protagonist is a child - a symbol of the rising spirit. At first, he is completely immersed in an understandable on itself, workday interpretation of the world and is overwhelmed by the matters of daily care. This state of his - to be daily trustful and self-forgetful, is depicted in the furrowing tilling of the field(of the soil) At his first encounter with his own reflection as a stork, the hero does not leave the doxatic state of unreflexive convictions - he does not recognize his own other in the mirrored image, yet he must if he is to rise up to the self-reflexivity of the spirit. Instead, he throws his own reflection as a stork into the home-furnace(oven) fire in order to neutralize the threat for his existence in an one- dimensional workday mode and concurrently to feed further his own naked living.

The protagonist hides behind his back the humanlike kite which his mirrored image carries - this once again means that he remains unaware of one's own-Self of his Selfhood , that he does not venture into the dimension of the ecstatic that is the only possibility for him to be realized as Selfhood.

Still, the self-forgetful workday existence is not authentic and the hero feels a longing-nostalgia for his ecstatic essence, which can be repressed but not destroyed. On the repeated/next encounter with his double self-reflection, he manages to use the stork's body in order to leave the topos of the plowed field and "fly" towards the heights of the free spirits. In other words, he takes on an existential possibility that leads beyond the possibilities-recipes of the workday which reproduce the status quo.

It is in this perspective that the hero doesn't deprive the other of its otherness, or he would have remained in his overwhelmed and self-forgetful state. Entering a struggle for recognition, the two mirrored consciousness must pass through its peripeteia in order to realize themselves as a unitary self-consciousness.

The despot-old-man is an image representing the traditional (the folkloric) wisdom, which articulates and preserves the mutually shared and self-evident daily interpretation of the world. He is the typical everyday activist of a community, who with his head down, i.e. trustfully and self-forgetfully, yet in an authoritarian manner, i.e. without allowing the other and the ecstatic, tills the soil (the field), i.e. takes care for his bare livelihood. With his scourge the antagonist instantly divides (dualizes) the spirit, the free self-consciousness and in this way he deadens it. "Sinking" into the stork-body of the child, the old man is immediately transformed into a carnal food (frog), which the Child-Stork, who has put on the glasses of self-knowledge, i.e. has risen up to the spirit, doesn't need anymore.

The meaning of this transformation is that the spirit does not oppose nature (matter), which is in this respect destructive, but overcomes it, preserving it as a lower moment, as an environment. On the other hand, the physical crippledness of the Self-aware child-spirit implies that although not denying the absolute immediacy of the natural, the spirit, being transcendent to it, is still sovereignly independent of its laws.

The storks are a symbol of the primordial dimension of the possible, the ecstatic, the free, to which the daily mode of existence is derivative and parasitic. Seemingly, the numerous flock, which inhabits the heavens, feeds rapaciously from the field of linear (one-dimensional and enduring) wisdom, but it is in fact the opposite.

However, the authentic existential possibilities are never available in pure form, but only within the workday's prescription possibilities, which have always already repressed them. The former ones are revealed by retaining the latter ones namely as possibilities, i.e. not as the just-not-yet-reality of something already predestined, but as open perspectives of risk and adventure.

That is why the possibility the boy has taken on is a sacrifice given by the heavenly flock - the young, i.e. the potential spirit, non-dialectically divided by the rational logic of the self-forgetfully-despotic workday scourge. As the sky is the dimension of pure potentiality which doesn't exist by itself, the Child-Stork, the one realized as a spirit, does not fly away, but remains under the shadow of the tree that is its true home unreached by the workday. The plow-field metamorphoses into a world where the days are free for creative possibilities.

The dramaturgy of "Furrow" is nonlinear - space is conditional and time is only apparent. We have only one hero - the becoming spirit - in different statuses. We have only one "event" - the hero's becoming self-aware as a free spirit, which is a process that occurs outside of successive time (time as a continual sequence).

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