

THE INFLUENCE OF POPULAR RELIGIOUS TEXTS, FAITH AND BELIEFS ON STORY- TELLING ABOUT EVENTS FROM EVERYDAY AND PERSONAL LIFE

On examples of storytelling recorded in Cernik near
Nova Gradiška, 1987

SUMMARY

The totality of human experience contains, as an inseparable part, its literary experience. In various educational layers of readers and listeners of literature, an everyday and personal life goes on in the sphere of the current literary taste and dominant literary forms. An attachment to a certain sphere of literature is reflected from innocent questions to narration on personal life and everyday experiences and events.

In the research on this theme, I started from the conviction of the inseparability of life and literary experience, and with the thought that literary experience dictates life experience. In conversations, the literary experience becomes, again, productive in terms of literature as part and parcel of a man's view of the world.

It is not that related experiences and events are formed in the course of a narrative under the influence of the read and heard popular religious-didactic texts, but that the experiences and events are noted at all thanks to these texts. By the definition of "faith", unlike "belief" with which we designate the realm of superstition (Aberglaube), I imply the Christian, Catholic faith; faith is explored in this study from the aspect of popular religiousness.

While literature is reflected in criticism and literary scholarship, popular literature is reflected, both secular and religious, in everyday life, in conversations in which one discovers the degree to which these texts have become an inseparable part of man's life experience.

The retrospective view an elderly and religious woman has on her past life, is told according to the literary model of the life of a saint; the same source recounted her personal religious experience from Medugorje in the form of an example.

Everyday religious context and metaphysical experience are covered by the analysis, as is narrative for which the archetype model is the biblical stories of David and Goliath, as well as the example of the Mother of God told as a true event from the place where the story-teller lives.

On the one hand there is analysis of the stories of miracles, stories of unresolvable situations arising in everyday life which are resolved and recounted in a way typical of popular religious stories, while on the other, the oral tradition on contact with beings from the nether world. While the nether world inevitably excites fear and apprehension in people, a narrative on the breakthrough and superiority of the holy over the profane in everyday life stirs a person's faith and develops the moral of the narrative. Faith and beliefs are mixed in story-telling as they are in everyday life.

(Translated by E. Elias-Bursać)