
TIMELESS MESSAGE OF DOMINIK TATARKA IN HIS WORK ‘THE DEMON OF CONFORMISM’

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Abstract

This paper deals with the timeless social message of the work ‘The demon of conformism’ written by Dominik Tatarka. By analytical interpretation and pointing to intertextual relations, we try to present/name constantly valid phenomena - invariants in our variations (versions). A question of timelessness and ethical and social topicality of the work is underlined by this paper not only in terms of its content, but the paper also analyses formal aspect of the topic being processed.

Keywords: manufacturing consent, Dominik Tatarka, pamphlet

1. Introduction

Current efforts to characterize changes in democratic societies are in some cases accompanied by a criticism condemning direction of development of the society. Phenomena that limit individual freedom are mostly perceived negatively, even though the democratic system is based particularly on the principle of freedom. This criticism of democratic society is for example expressed by the American linguist and philosopher N. Chomsky, who “*is also an incisive critic of the ideological role of the mainstream corporate mass media, which, he maintains, ‘manufactures consent’ toward the desirability of capitalism and the political powers supportive of it*” [1]. It is exactly the problem of ‘manufactured consent’, which was mentioned by W. Lippman in his work in 1921, which was used by Chomsky as a characteristic issue of current democratic societies [M. Achbar and P. Wintonick (directors), *Manufacturing consent – Noam Chomsky and the Media*, [film] Necessary Illusions – The National Film Board of Canada, Canada, 1992, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHa6NflkW3Y>, retrieved 21.11.2016]. Chomsky points out the fact that it is a technique of controlling the society, even though this technique is basically incompatible with our perception of democracy. Nevertheless, it is at the same time rather typical for this (i.e. democratic) society and it is used to achieve an on-going subordination of citizens to social functioning. According to

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Chomsky, it is a modern way of manipulation of the public opinion, or a propaganda, which helps to control what people think in a democratic society. The contemporary sophisticated mechanisms of manipulation often use emotionalism and understatement, e.g. of complicated political decisions by media [2]. This phenomenon is compared with a propaganda in totalitarian states, where, however, an opinion of an individual person (Chomsky here refers to the theory of the ethicist and theologian, R. Niebuhr), is not important, because these types of states directly control their citizens.

Although the theory of a democratic form of propaganda called 'manufacturing consent' comes from the USA, criticisms of its application can also be found in other countries, whose democratic traditions are far shorter when compared with the tradition of democracy in the USA. One of these countries is also the Slovak Republic, where democracy has been applied for 23 years. Despite this short period of having a democratic system applied in the Slovak society, when compared with the USA, the way of forming the public opinion in Slovakia is also affected by negative reactions that portray this system as propagandistic.

Chomsky's term 'manufacturing consent' is not the only one used to name this phenomenon. There is also an 'up-dated' Slovak phrase 'the Demon of Conformism' used in the Slovak public context (for example, this designation was used by a former member of the Slovak parliament and current analyst of the National Policy Institute, Rafael Rafaj, in his criticism of the Slovak society [R. Rafaj, *Orwelovský newspeak, alebo mýtus o slobode médií*, in *Hlavné spravy.sk*, 03.05.2016, <http://blog.hlavnespravy.sk/397/orwelovsky-newspeak-alebo-mytus-o-slobode-medii>, retrieved 20.11.2016]). Apparently, the phrase 'Demon of Conformism' first originated as the title of a book, namely the work of the Slovak writer D. Tatarka, which was published in parts in 1956 as an annex of the magazine *Kultúrny život* (Cultural Life) and then in the form of a book in 1963 [A. Halvoník, *Ako nový svet vymení starý*, in *Litcentrum.sk*, 2006, <http://www.litcentrum.sk/recenzie/nad-vodou-a-chytit-dych-george-orwell-ako-novy-svet-vyмени-stary>, retrieved 22.11.2016]. Tatarka's work *The Demon of Conformism* responds to the totalitarian social structure of Czechoslovakia, criticizing the way of using political power to obstruct any expressions of disapproval with publicly presented opinions [3].

Even though the work cannot be considered as a visionary work, its content (the so-called declaration of totality mechanism) communicates with the world-class texts published translations, such as the works of George Orwell – *1984* or *Animal Farm*, which was available in Slovakia only thanks to Samizdat [A. Halvoník, *Ako nový svet vymení starý*]. And exactly for these reasons, we focus our attention on the pamphlet *The Demon of Conformism* (which was prohibited during socialism). We concentrate on the text from both, the formal and semantic point of views, and our aim is to 'discover' and name/declare the timeless phenomena on the basis of inter-textual connections and interpretation, as well as an analytical immersion in the 'content' of the text.

2. Form of the work 'The Demon of Conformism' as a tool for spreading the timeless message

Opinions regarding the designation of a formal 'anchoring' of the thought of non-reflexive acceptance and presentation of opinions of social/political elites in the 1950s in the work *The Demon of Conformism*, are non-uniform. This non-conformity is also reflected in genre classification of the book itself. One of the reasons for the non-conformity in the genre identification of the work is a question of perception in the literary-journalistic line. Some literary theorists consider the text to be a novel [P. Mráz, *Súhlas ako princíp*, in *Litcentrum.sk*, 2009 <http://www.litcentrum.sk/recenzie/demon-suhlasu-dominik-tatarka-suhlas-ako-princip>, retrieved 20.11.2016; 4], others to be a pamphlet [4], or a political pamphlet [3]. In some cases, the experts work with both terms at once (e.g. E. Gunišová [3]) in genre identification of the work. However, the library edition of *The Demon of Conformism* carries a subtitle that implies another possibility of its formal classification, namely the 'Fantastic Tractate' from the end of one era [5]. Based on the attribute 'Fantastic Tractate', this work can be perceived as a kind of fantastic philosophical debate. Gunišová also points to other differences in genre specification of the text: "*J. Goszczyńska understands it as a hybrid of autobiography and a political pamphlet; V. Havel partially designates it as 'an essay, and partially as a journalistic text'; according to M. Bátorová, 'this genre is between a political tractate and an absurd prose'*" [3, p. 7].

The problem of formal inclusion of *The Demon of Conformism* can be perceived exactly in terms of its social function. It is directly connected with the criticism of the political impact on formation of opinion of both the society and individual, which Dominik Tatarka expresses in his work and names as a demon of collective consent "*with everything that was currently on the agenda of the day*" [P. Mráz, *Súhlas ako princíp*]. According to Tkáčová, Tatarka thematically expresses a kind of disproportion "*between his private and public life, it means realization of his 'I' externally by objectification of his 'intimate I' towards the nearest persons or the whole society by using words*" [4, p. 2]. It is reflected at the end of the story, where Tatarka "*strengthens the thought and importance of an individual and his role in the society. Not a collective consonant opinion that strengthens the dogma of power, but the individually expressed truth becomes a reflection of preservation of a human spirit ...*" [4, p. 3] So it can be stated that in case of *The Demon of Conformism*, it is a thematic interconnection of the literary work with the question of political impact on the formation of public, or social, but also individual opinions. Peter Zajac considers this interconnection to be a symbol of the Slovak literature, which he labels using the term historicity or historicism. He uses this term to name a phenomenon which, "*in the Slovak literature (...), has the function of a legitimizing symbol of a modern political nation*" [6]. Zajac understands historicity in triple meanings, but in connection with the work *The Demon of Conformism*, the opinion of the so-called ontological strategy of the text is important. This is further interconnected with a type of existential literature in the Slovak literature, the representative of which

is also Dominik Tatarka [6]. According to Zajac, historicity primarily remains a symbol of novels, yet in the case of *The Demon of Conformism*, Zajac points to historicity as a certain social function in this work [6]. It is precisely the question of a social role of Tatarka's work that could engender different alternatives of its genre assignment [7]. On the other hand, historicity understood as an ontological strategy of a given text can be considered as a symbol that becomes a point of contact for the formal identification of this book.

E. Gunišová also considers the social and political formation of the public through the work *The Demon of Conformism* as foundational for its genre assignment. In her theory, she also points out the fact that it is not only a literal, but also a journalistic communication text. For this reason, she considers the formal processing of the text to be a type of pamphlet. She designates this genre with the attribute literary - journalistic, while at the same time, according to her opinion, it is a text "with a satiric focus which contains political and social criticism of certain phenomena, persons or groups of people with the aim to uncover, lampoon or thwart their intentions (...)" [3, p. 7]. Even though certain deviations can be seen in other genre characteristics of the work *The Demon of Conformism*, Gunišová maintains that this is only a certain modification of the pamphlet form of this work [3]. In addition, renowned Slovak literary theorists point out the literary and journalistic character of the pamphlet. T. Žilka understands pamphlet to be "... a literary and journalistic genre of satiric, even sarcastic focus" [8]. The Czech expert on literature, Š. Vlašín, also understands pamphlet as a literary and journalistic genre. According to his opinion, it is also a genre of satiric focus: "mostly with socially actual ... content attacking certain phenomena, groups or persons with the aim to uncover, lampoon or thwart their intentions." [9] Another Czech literary theorist, J. Hrabák, assigns pamphlet to journalistic genres, but in his work *Poetika* (Poetics) he designates it as one of journalistic genres that contain elements "... by which they converge with imaginative literature or which are the subject of interest of the literary science" [10]. All three experts agree on the basic classification of the pamphlet, while they acknowledge the existence of two basic types of this genre - literary and political [8-10]. Žilka and Hrabák add a third type of pamphlets - cultural pamphlets [8, 10]. Žilka and Vlašín consider tendentiousness as one of the basic signs of pamphlet literature (also political one) [8, 9]. "P. (pamphlet - note M.A., V.C.) is always tendentious and besides one person it can be also slanted against a group or a certain phenomenon, which it tries to lampoon and uncover their deficiencies in a satiric tone." [8, p. 319] Tendentiousness is also reflected in its focus on the actual social situation - in the case of *The Demon of Conformism*, it was the collective consent with any public opinion of the ruling party in the former Czechoslovakia in the 1950s [9].

Regarding the above-mentioned, it is possible to grant this text a certain literary and journalistic interface. However, the indicated genre disproportion only complements the wide-ranging context of the work in a subtler way - whether it is an inclination to a novel or a pamphlet - the opinion diapason does

not doubt (but rather underlines) the social and political themes of a given text's origin and the importance of its semantic extent.

3. Social and political background of the work 'The Demon of Conformism'

As we have already mentioned above, *The Demon of Conformism* was published in 1956 for the first time in a magazine. The work was published as a book in 1963. The writer added a pamphlet *O Vládnucom Figurovi* (On Ruling Figura) to the first prose. As far as contemporary criticism is concerned (more information in [11]), we notice that the second text did not resonate in the readers' awareness as desperately as *The Demon of Conformism*. The magazine edition of the "fantastic tractate from the end of the era" (as the subtitle of the work says) was published in the 1950s, and if we speak about pamphlet as a social, cultural and political phenomenon, we must also add that in the case of Czecho-Slovak context, it was indeed a very complicated social and political era. In 1948, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia took care of the post-war 'hesitation', accompanied by social and value imbalances, in a clearly illegitimate way. It promised the people of that period, afflicted by the recent war destruction and affected by destabilization at all levels (psychological, mental, social, axiological, etc.), a balance, stable background, favourable social and value 'anchoring', along with the assurance that fascism and war are once and forever only the past. Paraphrasing J. Patoček, this fact was very authentically underlined by I. Jančovič: "(...) *the [war] front is absurdity par excellence; the most precious of a man is recklessly scratched into pieces and the only thing still making sense is a demonstration that a world causing such behavior must disappear. If someone promises to make it impossible in all seriousness, we will be with him in all acts, and the more radical, more distant his promise is to the realities of this day which caused something like this.*" [12]

Dominik Tatarka, too, joined in the effort to build this 'glorious future', this illusion of a fair and equitable society for a certain time. As an important representative of culture, he publicly supported the communist regime that built its policy on dictatorship and the negation of basic human rights and freedoms (for more information on this historical era, please see [13, 14]). He dedicated his works to 'building of socialism'; he publicly expressed his thoughts in the print media in favour of the established system, and he supported the dictatorship also in situations with fatal consequences (law suits from the beginning of the 1950s, including the infamous condemnation of Clementis to death; more information in [15]). It was only a question of time, however, before this meditative and ethically strong and conscious intellectual, who "*believed in a man, in humanity and mankind, in the omnipotence of desire and love, in the ability of a person to realize his/her desires and to awaken and develop not only his/her creative abilities, but also to inspire others and finally to change himself/herself and the world itself*" [16] – through all obstacles and errors – awakens and decides not to lie anymore. Not to lie to the world and, above all, to

himself. One of these radical moments, by which he publicly and bravely started to grow apart from the communistic system in former Czechoslovakia, was his work *The Demon of Conformism*. As M. Šimečka reminds us (quoted in E. Vitězová), Tatarka named it “the demon of conformism and had never come back to it” [17].

3.1. The demon of conformism - analytical and interpretative probe

Immediately after its publication, the text achieved significant reaction. However, critics reacted only to its library edition (1963). For example, M. Šútovec [18] declared this book to be a fully morally and artistically qualified work and P. Števček called it “a basic textbook of morality” [19]. In line with our above presented analysis of the genre reality of communication (novel versus pamphlet), it is necessary to state here that a reason why this book attracted attention was not its literary quality [12, p. 60-62], but rather its critical and political level and ethical proportions. Even though it was published in the form of a book at the time of ‘alleviation’ of the political pressures, marked by attempts to build ‘socialism with a human face’, the pamphlet *Demon of Conformism* describes very precisely the employed mechanism of manipulation and ‘manufacturing’ of a common conformism, i.e. a demon of conformism and (as pointed out by I. Jančovič [13, p. 44-50]) a demon of power (both of which are closely related) in a timeless and humorous-tragic satiric manner.

The story line situated in a difficult time of the first half of 1950s authentically outlines the atmosphere and mood of those years – even as it used the ‘guise’ of hyperbole, satiric playing and metaphoric ‘obscuring’. Aggressive political power attacking the freedom of thought, a ‘cult of personality’ and the accompanying assentation to dictatorship so typical for this historical period, are also evident in the text. The story focuses on a writer – Bartolomej Boleráz – the alter ego of the writer Dominik Tatarka. Like Tatarka, who was a member of the Association of Czechoslovak Writers (for more information see [20]), Boleráz, too, was a member of this organization at that time, the only task of which was to agree the official political propaganda: “*We are incredibly developed organizationally. our organizational apparatus had prepared the program so carefully that one could only inevitably agree with it. (...) Briefly, I could have to vote for them and agree, because I was a member of a body that voted for and agreed, an organization for agreement, a machine of conformism that must run smoothly; and it could run smoothly only on the rails of well-tested conformism.*” [21]

A key tension of the work is based on Boleráz’s ‘awakening’ or admitting the fact that everything around him, including that which he agrees with, is destruction not only at personal/personable level (subtle human), but also at the level of the society as a whole. This society suffers from acute alienation as its members do not live authentically/truly, in conformity with their thoughts, feelings and beliefs, but uncritically and servilely accept orders and instructions dictated from the outside: “*(...) I thought about the many times I had stupidly*

voted for, and the many times I had vainly tried to express my disagreement or concern, and I was suddenly overcome by terrible weariness and unspeakable sadness. I said to myself: I am not going to agree or disagree anymore." [21, p. 13]

Boleráz's crisis thus brings a wide-spectrum of formulated timeless facts and it names/declares (of course, under the guise of literary imagination) a system of manipulation and a phenomenon of power in relation to the individual in details – with writer's philosophizing nature, his sense for psychology of characters and ability of perceptive insight into the human psyche. I. Jančovič accurately called it an "exact diagnosis of power mechanism" [12].

3.2. *Phenomenon of power and manipulation, or about the timelessness of a 'demon'*

Tatarka describes a 'demon of power' through the 'image' of Figura who 'creates his own agreeing marionettes' by distributing lucrative functions to them. He allocates these marionettes to power structures enhancing his own power. *"To become even a bigger marionette, to achieve higher positions (...), Figura needed to have many subordinated marionettes. He created them step by step - at first, in the village, then in the district and finally in the region."* [21, p. 21-22]

The writer calls attention to a phenomenon of power also from a psychological perspective, and compares it to the biblical metaphor of Eve taking a bite from the forbidden 'apple': *"By knowing the power, something has awakened inside him; Matai was awakened like Eve by the apple"* [21, p. 39]. Tasting the 'apple of power', as pointed out by Tatarka, brings a feeling of omnipotence, majesty, comfort and material luxury, although, in reality, such omnipotence has clear and sharp boundaries represented by 'Figura' (in a broad sense, the system), who conquered the 'marionettes'. Also, Boleráz himself recognizes this subjugation, servility to the system at the expense of one's own free decisions and quasi-ethical principles: *"That is how I got to make the trip. The driver took me to the Palace of Culture, a colossal skyscraper on the banks of the river Danube. (...) Everything is in this place: nothing but the best for a creative artist. (...) underground bars, showers, coffee houses, swimming pools, play rooms. (...) After the artist drops in here, he must exert truly superhuman efforts should he want to leave this comfortable place again."* [21, p. 15] *"I am drunk with a feeling of power! I feel a reflection of power on me, and it lifts me up. (...) Flight of spirit? Why?"* [21, p. 17]

The metaphoric picture of 'Figura' and his marionettes is supported by other metaphoric 'plays' of Dominik Tatarka, namely an image of a bunch of flowers which does not smell, but all people unanimously declare that it smells, because the main body/'Figura' said it [21, p. 45]. This information is accepted by uncritical 'marionettes' (indebted to 'Figura') as a fact, and despite the fact that it is subsequently objectively confirmed that 'the bunch of flowers' does not smell, they remain saying that it is fragrant in order to maintain power, prestige

and indefectibility [21, p. 44-45]. ‘Figura’ promoted it to a matter of principle, so no one can doubt it: “*The bunch of flowers is a matter of personal prestige. Nobody wants to be ashamed. And so, the bunch of flowers is promoted to a holy subject; it becomes a matter of principle, a symbol. In the name of consistency, the members of the body state that the bunch of flowers, which, in reality, does not smell, smells, and even if it does not smell, it always smells, because it must smell for fundamental reasons.*” [21, p. 45]

In a narrow sense of the word, this bunch of flowers (a flower, violet) represents power orders. In this particular case (again with autobiographical cover), it is a cultural and literary space - members of a public authority should declare poor-quality literary works as high-quality, because they were loyal to the system and written in terms of required methods of socialistic realism [21, p. 12-19]; and in a wider sense, it can apply to the whole communist regime. But Tatarka’s almost exact (as named by I. Jančovič) description of manipulation from a position of power, description of promoting lie to a principle and its subsequent general acceptance and living without authentic re-evaluation by each individual person (human being) accepting it, constitutes a wide-spectrum, thus gaining general, timeless dimensions: “*The Head of our ideological organization puts a question to the members of the elective body: It smells, does it? (...) In the name of consistency, members of the body insist on the fact that the bunch of flowers, which, in reality, does not smell, smells, and even if it does not smell, it smells, because it must smell for fundamental reasons. (...) Comrade Matai starts to speak in all conscience, and with full strength of the power and his position he proclaims this poor bunch of flowers to be fragrant, for sure fragrant. Influenced by the authority of Matai’s personality, eight million copies of newspapers proclaim, the radio stations declare, the armies of edifying, library, propaganda, scientific and popularizing workers debate, explain, apply and declare: the bunch of flowers smells. (...) Teachers, academicians (...) encourage: ‘Children, (...) smell these bunches of flowers. And simple, mainly ambitious youth smells, revels the scent of the bunch of flowers which does not smell. They learn hypocrisy from their dear teachers and parents (...).’*” [21, p. 45-46]

The image in its semantic diaspora is both really (as it is demonstrated by the present and the past) and also literary (insofar as literature is a picture of life and it arises from “*experience and creative vision of objective reality*” [22]) still active and constantly valid – in its semantic layers slightly resembling either exhausted and tired Lamplighter from the *Little Prince* (A. de Saint-Exupéry), who mechanically fulfils meaningless order, or even a more compatible follow-up example of general consonant assentation from *Emperor’s New Clothes* (H.C. Andersen).

As we have mentioned above, Boleráz decides to be, metaphorically said, a child from *The Emperor’s New Clothes* who shouted that “the king is naked” or, in this case, that “this bunch of flowers does not smell” [21, p. 49]. However, while in privacy, this fact is confirmed not only by all ‘marionettes’ of the authority, but also by ‘Figura’ himself, but of course in public, this truth

becomes “relapse, disclosed, proved, autoclaved relapse of enemy way of thinking” [21, p. 45].

Tatarka brilliantly culminates the semantic thread of the text with an epochal brake point. The text is directly connected with the confessing of a ‘cult of personality’, typical of those days, and with its fall. And the work depicts exactly this interface, by which (though on the basis of specific events) he depicts the problems of replacing one era by another in a very general and timeless manner. Of course, everything that was good before, is, within the mood of the new era, bad. Boleráz, the former recidivist and enemy of the system, now states: “*And so they took me. Directly to the Palace of Culture. (...) they are applauding (...). To the fact that I am a character.*” [21, p. 63] Even though the fall of the ‘cult of personality’ finally brings a true statement that “*deaf violet does not smell*” [21, p. 67], Tatarka keeps a danger of consent ‘hung’ in the semantic diaspora of the text: “*We **unanimously** recalled all our resolutions we agreed on yesterday with relief* (before the falling of the ‘cult of personality’ - note M.A., V.C.)” [21, p. 64].

Delicate irony in these phases of the text again develops the timeless message of the work, namely the need and courage to use our own brain and to admit responsibility for our own decisions under full consciousness and awareness. Since the acceptance of statements dictated from outside (even if they are valid at that time) only reflects a ‘formula’ of apocryphal living, an absence of *ratio* and one’s own critical reflection, of conscience and responsibility for our own behaviour and activities (as pointed out also by [23, 24]). And this approach not only implies a risk that such an easy way (ordered from outside) will also cause our adoption of untruths, but also a fact that a statement (which was true before) turns into a stone, thus becoming merely a functionless or counter-productive principle. However, there will be no one who will reassess it in the atmosphere of manipulation, absence of reason and critical way of thinking. Thus, it will be declared as true also at the time, when it is invalid - from both principle and consistency, exactly as Tatarka presents this situation in his work in the era before the fall of the ‘cult of personality’.

The rare message of the work (present predominantly in an allusive way and more implicitly than through explicit demonstrations) can be derived from its syuzhet sequence which touches the above-mentioned changing of two eras. Tatarka also describes the process of this change: searching for and condemnation of culprits, passionate demonstrations against the ‘old’, while the tribunes are full of clever ‘demons’ proclaiming new truths. However, the appeal of the writer is present in the entire work and with reference to using one’s own reason he implicitly remarks that the ability to defeat ‘demons’ of the old era does not consist in their aggressive and affective condemnation by new ‘demons’, but in a carefully perceived understanding of what really happened.

4. Conclusions

As we have presented, despite its specific historical placement and autobiographical overlapping of D. Tatarka with Boleráz, the book opens its mental framework towards capturing and identifying general, timeless facts – the invariably repeating variations. The uncovering of how the system works, accompanied by an analysis of power phenomenon with a clear pointing out its destructive consequences are constant. Equally relevant, (in a related fashion) is Tatarka's urgent appeal to use one's own brain, to live in an authentic conscious/knowing present - in terms of using one's own *ratio*, conscience and courage to bear responsibility for our own acts. However, a serious message can be implicitly anticipated/finished in the work in terms of the above-mentioned change of historical eras, the meaningful solution and shift of which is not a new appeal on affections. This would plunge humanity into lower instinctive positions of human existence, as exemplified by the passionate, gregarious, uncritical condemnations of the past, and hateful aggression against its protagonists. On the contrary, Tatarka elevates the higher/advanced principles of human personality – namely the free *ratio* guided by discretion, understanding and Kantian Moral Law. Human responses arising from the bondage of lowness only multiply the lowness (as was picturesquely pointed out by Tatarka's text and confirmed by history), while sensitive comprehension and understanding of what happened prevents one from repeating the same mistakes. Tatarka's camp-follower, J. Špitzer, was allegedly a prototype of the character Valizlost' Matai [25], thus representing exactly such 'friend – enemy' for Dominik Tatarka as the pamphlet character Valizlost' Matai did for Bartolomej Boleráz. Due to these close relations, from 'breathing' the same atmosphere, we would like to quote him here. Our additional reason is that Špitzer as the real 'Figura' experienced the 'magic' of power in one era, so he will experience aggression and conviction in the next/new era. And, perhaps, there is no one who can name things better than the one who guarantees them by authentic empiricism: *"And Gothic did not lose its values when it was replaced by the Renaissance; and nobody will condemn Baroque, when a cult of reason brings forth the Enlightenment. The Old Testament did not lose its importance by the creation of the New Testament (also because it was an initial point for a new beginning - note M.A., V.C.), although there always were and are reformers and exegetes declaring that after the creation of the New Testament, it is legitimate to behave to the followers of the Old Testament as to pagans. This thought archetype has its origin in a binary pattern 'us and them' and it carries a germ of defence complex or aggression, a theory of eligible and ineligible, ours and strangers, legalization of practice, when a part of the society or the whole nation is banished from the centre to the edge, even though the biological extinction of the 'ineligible' is only a matter of time."* [26]

The Demon of Conformism is a work that has a lot to say by its explicit and implicit diapason. As stated by M. Šútovec, it was written with a delay, but still not too late [18], because as Schulz says: *"Hissing devils, embittered*

demons, creeping ghosts of rocky apathy are still reoccurring, and even demons of conformism have still not vanished completely" [27]. Therefore, it is absolutely fitting that this work is brought back to the present through the famous statement of 'demon of conformism'. Similarly, it is also useful to take into consideration the fact that this work is a part of school literature [17, p. 61; 28].

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