

EMOTIONS OF LITERARY RESPONSE ON THE BASIS OF TOVE JANSSON'S THE SPRING TUNE²

Автор переконує, що казка справляє двозначне враження. У ній містяться освітній та емоційний аспекти. Okремо від освітньої «мапи» є ще одна, відображена у сюжеті та поетиці твору — «магія» емоцій. Це відображається не тільки у вже згаданих фрагментах, але і в особливих частинах тексту, які призводять до емоційної активності. Разом вони створюють систему асоціацій пов'язану на емоційній та інтелектуальній чутливості. Все це перенасичує історію неприхованими емоціями. Запропоноване у статті забарвлене емоційним сприйняттям історії та близьке до емоційного стилю, якому характерна емоційна реакція на елементи зображеного світу. Дуже важливо у цьому випадку ким являється реципієнт літературного твору так як він реагує на текст спонтанно, емоційно та навіть залежно від поведінки.

Ключові слова: дитяча література, «мапа» емоцій, інтелектуальна чутливість.

The author argues that the tale consists of two probably ways of response. There are educational and emotional aspects. Apart from the educational 'map', there is yet another, underlying, expressed in the plot and the poetics of the work — a 'map' of emotions. It is reflected not only in the fragments already quoted here, but also some special parts of the text which cause emotional stirring. Together they create one of its kind network of associations based on emotional and intellectual sensitivity. This makes the story overflows with undercover emotions. A proposed in the article tinged with emotion reception of the story is close to emotional style of response to a work, for which emotional reaction to the elements of the depicted world is characteristic. It is particularly important in the case when it is who is the recipient of a literary work as it reacts to a text in a spontaneous, emotional and even behavioural-way.

Keywords: children's literature, a 'map' of emotions, intellectual sensitivity.

Joanna Papuziriska in her work *Dziecko w swiecie emocji literackich* writes that children's literature is full of emotions. The problem of 'literary emotions' seems however still not thoroughly studied and very interesting. Papuziriska asks: What is a child like? Who is it? Whether, as a matter of fact, a child is *homo ludens*, a carefree creature living

² The article in a slightly changed version appeared in: *Kwartalnik Polonistyczny* 2009, no. 1-2.

solely in the republic of laughter and fictitious'space-time <make-believe>³ According to Bruno Bettelheim, a child should know that life also has dark sides⁴ are best shown in folk fairy-tale⁴, where under symbolic pictures painful human experience such as loneliness, loss, death and pain is hidden. Papuziriska comes to similar conclusions assuming that 'fear, suffering, anger, discovery of the dark sides of life (...) and dark sides of oneself — are intrinsic to both the human condition and the process of growing up'⁵. The study of 'literary emotions' provides not only pictures which get to reader's conscious sphere but it also provides symbols and signs which fall into the deep unconscious layers of the human psyche. They stimulate emotional sphere which sometimes shows itself in bodily response.

Tales from Moominvalley are a part of a series written by Jansson in the years 1948-1970 (Polish ed. 1964-1980)⁶. Reissue of the book (first Polish edition 1968) resulted from the thaw in the book trade of the nineties. Nine short stories comprising the volume touch upon the reader's emotions. They treat on the innermost feelings that are common to children and adults, which is why this work can be read on many levels. Jansson escaped in the series on Moomins the pessimism of grown up existence, just as she 'escaped' as a child to spend her holidays on an island in the Gulf of Finland. The need for alienation returned also later when she settled on a tiny isle far away from the hustle and bustle of city life⁷. This alienation is also seen among the inhabitants of the Valley. Although they all live in the same land, each character exists in their own, somewhat closed world. For that reason their meetings have special meaning.

The only characters in the short story titled *The Spring Tune* are Snufkin and a little creep. Snufkin represents a strong personality being the archetypal Wanderer⁸. He is independent and self-reliant; he goes his own way and exists for himself. The creep is a creature without look or name, actually 'nobody'. In Carol S. Pearson's typology he could correspond to the archetype of the Orphan, that is somebody who needs a spiritual advisor, is seeking help, care and believes in authorities. The meeting of these two characters is the background of the story. It changes both the self-confident Snufkin and the shy creep. Although Snufkin is alone he is happy. His life is simple. As every loner he cooks by himself and eats alone, he does without unnecessary items, equipment, and articles of 'bourgeois' existence. Solitude gives him the feeling of freedom and contentment. Thanks to it, he feels strong and free, he can wander — he sets off when he wants and rests when he feels like it. And above all, he composes:

*It's the right evening for a tune, Snufkin thought. A new tune, one part expectation, two parts spring sadness, and for the rest, just the great delight of walking alone and liking it.*⁹

When Snufkin thinks so, his heart is filled with joy and delight with the world. This is a moment of affirmation which is felt by a man at moments of complete contentment with

³ J. Papuziriska, *Dziecko w świecie emocji i interakcji*, Wydawnictwo SBP, Warszawa 1996, p. 9.

⁴ B. Bettelheim, *Cudowne i pozytywne. O znaczeniach i wartościach baśni*. Transl. D. Danek, PIW, Warszawa 1985.

⁵ J. Papuziriska, op. cit, p. 10.

⁶ Dates are given after: Słownik literatury dziecięcej i młodzieżowej. Eds. B. Tylicka and G. Leszczyńska, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich — Wydawnictwo, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 2002, p. 255 (term: Muminki by J. Papuziriska). Some sources name the first book *Mate trolle i duza powbndz* as the first book in the series, published in 1945. Cf. B. Wozniak, «Na podboj świata!», *Guliwer* 1999, no. 6, p. 10.

⁷ After: «*Nie tylko o Muminkach z Teresa Chtapowska o Tove Jansson rozmawia Barbara Tylicka*», *Guliwer* 1994, no. 2.

⁸ Archetype types are given after: C.S. Pearson. Cf. C.S. Pearson, *Nasz wewnętrzny bohater, czyli szereg archetypów według Kłdych i jemy*. Transl. G. Brelik and W. Grabarczyk, Dom Wydawniczy Rebis, Poznań 1995, pp. 56-57.

⁹ T. Jansson, *The Spring Tune*. In: T. Jansson, *Opowiadania z Doliny Muminków*. Transl. I. Szuch-Wyszomirska, Nasza Księgarnia, Warszawa 1997, p. 5.

his fate. The reading of this work shows the reader that joyful elation is connected with the feeling of inner harmony. However, Snufkin is not an ideal. Just to the contrary, in his relations with others he is sometimes even egoistic.

At the moment most inconvenient for Snufkin an alien creature appears. There his tune *was quite near at hand, easy to catch by the tail*¹⁰, and just then he noticed a creep looking at him. Feelings accompanying this meeting come always in a situation when a man feels he is not doing things he should be doing. They are like pricks of conscience when it is not yet fully known what type of sin has been committed.

Two shy eyes under a mop of hair. Just the look people have who are never noticed.

Snufkin pretended that he hadn't seen the creep. He raked up his fire and cut himself some fir twigs to sit on. He took out his pipe and lit it. He puffed a few clouds of smoke towards the night sky and waited for the spring tune.

*It didn't come. Instead he felt the creep's eyes upon him. They watched everything he did, admiringly, and he began to feel uneasy once more*¹¹.

Snufkin's egoistic nature shows itself when he simply is trying to chase the intruder away (*He clapped his paws together and shouted: 'Shoo! Be off!'*). But the creep was as bothersome as obsessive thought, and to some degree, despite his shyness, bold. Crossing the ice-cold brook can cost him life. However, he gets to Snufkin and this is the next important moment in the story in which the reader's emotions reach their climax. This is because he feels something incomprehensible and at the same time very real in the situation when the creep wades across the cold brook, and Snufkin feeling uneasy, does not think at all of helping him.

Further reading provides a whole range of emotionally charged impressions, provoked by behaviour of characters. Snufkin's unyielding attitude is juxtaposed with the creep's joyful discoveries, with his fascination with the wanderer's figure and the legend connected with him. For the inconspicuous inhabitants of the forest he is like a mythical hero, his life is known to them from stories spread by word of mouth, and he is seen as the one who 'knows' (*I know you have seen everything. Everything you say is right, and I will always do my best to be as free as you are*¹², the creep says to Snufkin).

Snufkin's egoistic behaviour shows a lot of worldly truth, particularly when he expresses a sentence of the type: *You are never completely free when you admire somebody*TM or makes theories that in each of his stories a part of himself is given away, as if life consisted of a number of stories known to one who went through them. All reflections hidden in *The Spring Tune* are true and a child-reader coming across them gains knowledge on what the world it lives in really looks like. The reading of this story helps the young reader to reach self-awareness. It speaks 'for it' the words of the story allowing the child to come to its own system of values and understanding of its environment and itself. In the world created here the reader has a chance to discover meanings that it has not yet noticed¹⁴.

The culminating point of the story is the moment when Snufkin as if casually thinks up a name for the creep he has got to know. This means that in fact he is not as thick-skinned as it might have seemed. Especially when the creep squealed his name turning his face to the

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ The Moomin series as a means of conveying important values for children has been discussed by O. Tokarczuk. Cf. O. Tokarczuk, «Literatura dzieci^ca w pracy wychowawcy. Muminki — droga do dojrzalosci», *Problemy Opiekunczo-Wychowawcze* 1993, no. 10.

sky Snufkin felt a shiver down his spine¹⁵. The moment of giving the name is here a key one¹⁶. Snufkin thinks that he got rid of the intruder but this is only an illusion because the real story is only beginning. When he sets off the next day he is in bad temper:

*He couldn't think about anything else but the creep he met yesterday. He remembered his every word and everything he said himself, and the memory came again and again. Finally he felt sick and was so exhausted that he had to sit down!*¹⁷

The feeling of exhaustion is intensified by the fact that Snufkin is perceived as a legendary wanderer. It is difficult to believe that someone like him could be bothered with somebody *miserable and thin as a thread*¹⁸. And yet...Giving the name is a turning point. Since it turns out that the one who gives a name needs the one whom he named. In the plot of the story it is shown in the moment when Snufkin stops his wander and returns to look for Ti-ti-uu, as he wants to know what is happening to him. The creep is thus Snufkin's 'creation', bound with him with strong emotions. The emotions are so strong that the wanderer 'must' see Ti-ti-uu once more, to assure himself what he is 'really' like. Now, when the creep has a name, he is important also to Snufkin. The change the inconspicuous and weak creature has undergone is astonishing. Ti-ti-uu becomes more self-confident, realizes the purpose of his life and makes plans. He has prepared a plate with his name to hang on the door when he would have a house, and he has his own philosophy.

*When I didn't have a name, you see, I was just running around and only had a feeling on this or that on some or other subject, and events would flatter around me; sometimes they were dangerous, sometimes not, but nothing was real(...).now I am a person who belongs to myself, and everything that happens has meaning. Because it doesn't 'generally' happen, but it happens to me, Ti-ti-uu. And Ti-ti-uu looks at things in one way or another (...).*¹⁹

Ti-ti-uu no longer wants to listen to Snufkin's story, he does not care about Moomin's fate. He is thrill seeking: *7 must hurry up and live — so much time has been wasted!*²⁰

Snufkin's decision to come back from the earlier path shows that a creation would not be worth much if the creator would not put 'heart' to his work. Snufkin who creates a creature with the name Ti-ti-uu does not initially know what he in fact begins. He is astonished with the change: *So it is!* — he is finally surprised. However, his return certifies that not only the creep has undergone change but also he himself. This means that the creator's work reflects on himself.

This short story of a meeting reveals the child reader important meaning of pedagogical value, such as:

- you can be happy even when being alone,
- you should respect your freedom,
- you are never completely free when you admire somebody,
- before you tell somebody your story, you need to think it over if this is what you need,

¹⁵ T. Jansson, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁶ Giving the name has here a power of a ritual connected with anthropology of a child. In the context of anthropology of culture a name means acceptance into society, a moment of transfer, initiation (e.g. baptism). This aspect of Jansson's work has been noted in: A. Kamieriska, «Traktat o historii Mumink6w», Tworczość 1971, no. 3; O. Tokarczuk, op. cit.; A. Ungeheuer-Gota.b, *Wzorce ruchowe utworow Ala dzieci. O literaturze dziecięcej jako wedrowce, wake, tajemnicy, bezpiecznym miejscu i zabawie*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszow 2009.

¹⁷ T. Jansson, op. cit., p. 15.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

- name means value,
- giving a name changes not only the name giver but also the name bearer,
- change is always possible,
- you should make the most out of life and believe in yourself,
- even the one who seems to be nobody has value.

Apart from this educational 'map', there is yet another, underlying, expressed in the plot and the poetics of the work – a 'map' of emotions. It is reflected not only in the fragments already quoted here, but also some special parts of the text which cause emotional stirring. These are presented in the compilation of important moments which provoke a climax of feelings during reading:

| <i>Quotations</i> | <i>Emotions of literary response</i> |
|---|--|
| Walking had been easy, because his knapsack was nearly empty and he had no worries on his mind. He felt happy about the wood and the weather, and himself. Tomorrow and yesterday were both at a distance, and just at present the sun was shining brightly red between the birches, and the air was cool and soft. (p. 5) | affirmation of the world and existence |
| He had kept this tune under his hat for several days, but hadn't quite dared to take it out yet. It had to grow into a kind of happy conviction. Then, he would simply have to put his lips to the mouth organ, and all the notes would jump instantly into their places, (pp. 5-6) | willingness and joy of creation |
| A little distractedly Snufkin ate his meagre soup while he rested his eyes on the green moss by the birches, (p. 8) | peace, harmony with the world and oneself shame, embarrassment |
| Two shy eyes under a mop of hair. Just the look people have who are never noticed. Snufkin pretended that he hadn't seen the creep. (p. 9) | regret, feeling of unfairness |
| Arid then the creep stepped straight into the water and started to wade across. The brook was rather too broad for it, and the water was ice-cold. A couple of times the creep lost its foothold and tumbled over, but Snufkin was feeling so uneasy that he simply didn't think of giving it a hand. (p. 10) | surprise, uncertainty |
| 'May I warm myself by your fire?' the creep continued, its wet little face shining with happiness. 'Just think of it, then I'll be the creep who has sat by Snufkin's camp-fire. I'll never forget that.' (p. 10) | anger, distress |
| 'I will come when I feel like it,' Snufkin stopped abruptly. 'I might not come at all. I might go in a completely different way.' He was thinking his name over, repeating it, and finally he turned his face to the sky and squealed his name with such sadness and admiration that Snufkin felt a shiver down his spine. (p. 14) | stirring, sentiment |

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| After a while he felt better. He went faster and faster, and finally started to run. Little tunes were going round his ears but he had no time to catch them. (p. 15) | joyful impatience |
| Look! My own new name! (p. 16) | joy embarrassment |
| 'So if you feel like it I could play you a tune,' Snufkin went on. 'Or say some story' The creep put his head from behind the bushes. 'A story?,' he asked. 'Oh yes, sure. Perhaps in the evening.' (p. 17) | joyful astonishment |
| 'I must hurry up and live — so much time has been wasted!' He disappeared in a moment. Snufkin scratched his head. 'So it is,' he said. 'Yes.' He stretched on the moss and looked into the spring sky ahead and green as the sea over tree tops. (pp. 17-18) | awareness relief, release |

As can be noted, emotional moments of response do not always correspond to educational situations. They often precede or come just after them. Together they create one of its kind network of associations based on emotional and intellectual sensitivity. This makes the story overflows with undercover emotions. Jansson's stories have been described by Anna Kamińska as wise philosophical tales¹; however, it is worth noting that their philosophy originates straight from man's emotional life. Philosophical references of the series would not have such power if not for the range of emotions they are tinged with. It is not about statements on emotionality of characters like: *There are so many feelings in this Moomin* or descriptions of affective behaviour which refer to characters' feelings, although they also matter. The most important emotions which show themselves in response are connected with reception of special fragments of the text exemplified here, typical for the poetics of this work. In this case awareness is possible here thanks to going through it all². Although Snufkin learns a lesson from meeting the creep, and the creep totally changes himself, actually the former and the latter give in to the power of emotions, which come real in the moments of reception. These tales hide poetry inside, which is 'the only way to feel the mystery of the world' through a simple heart³. To receive and understand these works an efficient mind is necessary, and a 'simple heart', where simple means honest, sincere, and fair perception of the world, all of which are possessed by a child.

A proposed here tinged with emotion reception of the story is close to emotional style of response to a work, for which emotional reaction to the elements of the depicted world is characteristic⁴.

¹ A. Kamińska, op. cit., p. 90.

² I wrote on the subject of *awareness* in: *Wzorce ruchowe...* Cf. also: A. Baluch, *Wtasciwe rozpoznanie jest wazm w praktyce lektury*. In: A. Baluch, *Od ludu do agora*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej w Krakowie, Krakow 2003, pp. 46-52; K. Krasori, *Dzieci odkrywanie tekstu literackiego. Kinesetyczne interpretacje liryki*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Slaskiego, Katowice 2005, p. 28; J. Papuzińska, op. cit., p. 84.

³ A. Kamińska, op. cit., p. 90.

⁴ Cf. A. Matuszewska, *Radosne gry. O grach/zabawach literackich*, Słowo/Obraz Terytoria, Gdansk 2007, p. |

The whole Moomin series treats on problems that are important in child emotional development. It shows values which have basic meaning in life and which are often lost overwhelmed by the prosaic aspects of everyday life such as the feeling of identity joy of existence, possibility and willingness to shape the world, or the need for change. When reading Jansson's works, the reader involuntarily answers the question: Who am I? What is my name? If during reading he experiences the 'trembling of the soul', it brings him self-awareness.

Bibliography

1. Baluch, A. *Samodzielna lektura — w fascynującym świecie*. In: A. Baluch, *Dziecko i świat przedstawiony, czyli tajemnice dziecięcej lektury*. Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy Nasza Książka, 1987.
2. Baluch, A. *Właściwe rozpoznanie jest ważne w praktyce lektury*. In: A. Baluch, *Od ludus do agora*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej w Krakowie, 2003.
3. Bettelheim, B. *Cudowne i pozytywne. Oznaczeniach i wartościach basni*. Transl. D. Danek, Warszawa: PIW, 1985.
4. Jansson, T. *Wiosenna piosenka*. In: T. Jansson, *Opowiadania z Doliny Muminków*. Transl. I. Szuch-Wyszomirska. Warszawa: Nasza Księgarnia, 1997.
5. Kamieriska, A. «Traktat o historii Muminków», *Twórczość* 1971, no. 3.
6. Krasori, K. *Dzieci — odkrywanie tekstu literackiego. Kinestetyczne interpretacje liryki*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2005.
7. Martuszevska, A. *Radosne gry. O grach/zabawach literackich*. Gdansk: Stowo/Obraz Terytoria, 2007.
8. «Nie tylko o Muminkach z Teresa. Chtapowska. o Tove Jansson rozmawia Barbara Tylicka», *Guliwer* 1994, no. 2.
9. Papuziriska, J. *Dziecko w świecie emocji literackich*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo SBP, 1996.
10. Pearson, C.S. *Nasz wewnętrzny bohater, czyli sześć archetypów według których żyjemy*. Transl. G. Brelik and W. Grabarczyk. Poznań: Dom Wydawniczy Rebis, 1995.
11. *Słownik literatury dziecięcej i młodzieżowej*. Eds. B. Tylicka and G. Leszczyński. Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich — Wydawnictwo, 2002.
12. Tokarczuk, O. «Literatura dziecięca w pracy wychowawcy. Muminki — droga do dojrzałości», *Problemy Opiekunów-Wychowawców* 1993, no. 10.
13. Ungeheuer-Gotab, A. *Wzorce ruchowe utworów dla dzieci. O literaturze dziecięcej jako wędrowce, walce, tajemnicy, bezpiecznym miejscu i zabawie*, Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, 2009.
14. Wozniak, B. «Na podboj świata!», *Guliwer* 1999, no. 6.