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RHETORIC AND MUSICALITY OF SERMONS OF MONSIGNOR KAZIMIERAS VASILIAUSKAS

This article explores the musical principles of the form of Mons. Kazimieras Vasiliauskas's (1922-2001) sermons from his book «The Bright Star of Faith» and their interactions with the traditional rhetorical structure of sermons. The main problem tackled in this paper is the relationship of the principles of traditional sermon composition with the analogues of musical form to enhance the persuasiveness of the text. To discuss this issue, the sermon «The Star of Our Faith» is examined. The article is based on the works by Viktor Bobrovskiy, Viktorija Daujotytė, Algirdas Julius Greimas, Vladimir Karbusický, Werner Wolf, etc. and relies on the comparative methodology and method of functional analysis.

Key words: sermons, Mons. K. Vasiliauskas, intermediality, rhetoric, music, form.

Introduction. Interactions between rhetoric, music and literature are longevous with their origins dating back to the times of ancient Greece. One type of public speech is a sermon. Its semantics, composition, rhythms, and even recitation have been given considerable attention in scholarly works since the earliest centuries of Christianity. In Lithuania, it was not until the reestablishment of Independence in 1990 that it became possible to have old and modern sermons by Lithuanian preachers published. Yet only a few scholarly works (by Viktorija Daujotytė, Giedrė Čepaitienė, Kristina Mačiulytė, Aurelija Mykolaitytė, Jūratė Pajėdienė, Paulius Subačius, Eugenija Ulčinaitė, Viktorija Vaitkevičiūtė, etc.) make an attempt at analysing these texts. Many of these researchers explore semantic characteristics of sermons, their stylistics, peculiarities of poetics, and the characteristics of communication codes, but there are hardly any works dealing with theological aspects of these texts, as well as features of their composition, and especially the musicality of their form, which is very important for persuasion. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to look into the originality of sermons by one of the most prominent preachers from the post-Soviet period, Mons. K. Vasiliauskas¹, emphasising the musical code of

their delivery, which becomes one of the significant fundamentals for increasing their non-verbal persuasiveness. Although Mons. K. Vasiliauskas is one of the most prominent personalities among the clergy during the period of Independence of Lithuania, his works have not been yet extensively studied (here the works by Giedrė Čepaitienė, Viktorija Daujotytė can be mentioned). Daujotytė emphasises that after Lithuania regained its independence, Mons. K. Vasiliauskas definitely is the brightest person in Vilnius, and perhaps in the whole of Lithuania [4, p. 10]. She points out that he is not the most known or the most prominent, but he is the brightest one [ibid.].

Theoretical-methodological basis. Wolf's conception of intermediality can be applied to analyze the relationship between literature, music and rhetoric as the time-based arts [10]. It addresses a wide range of interactions between these arts, and the focus of his research methodologies lies essentially on hermeneutics and semiotics. Other musical theories and musicological schools (Asafiev-Bobrovsky's theory of intonation, the method of functional analysis [1, 2], systematics of Hermann Erpf's forms of music and theories of the modern forms [2]), semiotic, and various comparative theories can be applied to research in this field

1 After becoming a priest in 1946, Monsignor Kazimieras Vasiliauskas (1922-2001) was actively involved in the activities of the secret self-educational society—the College of Blessed Virgin Mary of the Gate of Dawn (Aušros Vartai). In 1949 he was arrested, accused of anti-Soviet propaganda and having relations with partisans, and as a particularly dangerous criminal sentenced to 10 years in Gulag camp in Inta, Siberia. K. Vasiliauskas worked in mines, however, secretly from guards he conducted Mass, listened to confessions, supported and strengthened the spirit of fellow prisoners. Being released from the camp in 1956, the priest returned to Lithuania, but in 1957 he was arrested and sent to the camp again, this time to Vorkuta. After the second release from the camp, the Soviet government banned

Vasiliauskas from living and working in Lithuania, so in 1958-1968 he resided in Daugavpils, Latvia. Not being able to be a pastor, he worked as a labourer-stevedore, electrician and even as an accountant in a collective farm (kolkhoz). Since his return to Lithuania in 1969, he served as a priest, maintained a relationship with the members of the anti-Soviet resistance, members of Lithuanian Helsinki Group, Andrei Sakharov and relatives of Sergey Kovalev. In 1989, after Vilnius Cathedral was returned to the Church and the faithful, he became its rector. In 1989, Pope John Paul II awarded priest K. Vasiliauskas the honorary title of the Monsignor-Chaplain of His Holiness. The state acknowledged preacher's achievements with multiple honours as well.

For the analysis of the musicality of sermons, the following aspects of the theory of intermediality can be relevant: transmediality (the possibilities of narrative: the principle of variability, archetypal models of the forms of the time-based arts: two-part, ternary, variation, rondo, sonata form), [see 7] and some aspects of intermedial reference. They are as: 1) explicit reference (intermedial thematisation, i.e. musical discussion in a novel, musical images); 2) implicit reference: a) evocation, i. e. “graphic” description of a musical composition in a novel; b) formal imitation i.e. structural analogies of music in a novel, and literature in programme music; c) (partial) reproduction, i. e. representation of the song through the quotation of the song text. A subgroup of the formal imitation discusses the principles of the theme development, intonational syntactic derivatives, phonics, rhythmic and analogues of musical forms. This aspect causes the main challenge for research, but at the same time offers the greatest potential [10].

Compositional principles of K. Vasiliauskas’s sermons. One shorter sermon “Mūsų tikėjimo žvaigždė” [The Star of Our Faith] from Mons. K. Vasiliauskas’s book *Šviesi vilties žvaigždė* [The Bright Star of Hope] is chosen for analysis. It appears to be an essential sermon as well because of its meaningfulness. It contains sound biblical images, which are beautiful and poetic (Three Kings, the star in the sky after the birth of Jesus Christ, Moses pillar of fire), and expresses the theological symbolism. From the point of view of the emotional semantic development of passions, the sequences of light/darkness, positive/negative emotions, in other words, the sequence of euphoria/dysphoria (in music, it will correspond to major/minor) vary in the sermon. If the passions² of love/suffering [6, 8] (goodness/evil) are transferred into the divine dimension, it will become the battle between Love, the God of Goodness, and Death, the God of Evil. In Ancient Greece, these opposing emotions were expressed by the deities of Eros and Thanatos, which are in fact the imagery of the deepest archetypal emotions. In the Christian faith, this would be the struggle, expressed as a multidirectional metaphor with many paths, between the divine powers based on love, hope, and faith, and satanic powers grounded on disbelief, disappointment and hatred. The alteration of euphoria/dysphoria, based on variability and repetition, belongs to the subdivision of transmediality,

which manifests the most common features of narrative in time-based arts.

According to the traditional structure of the sermon, the title (or theme) should go first, then the gospel is read (it can be excluded from the sets of sermons), later the purpose – the intention is declared (it is often expressed by the heading of the text). Accordingly, the beginning of the text under discussion corresponds to the fourth section of the traditional structure of the sermons, i.e. an introduction, which presents the initial situation, history, personal experience or question. From the point of view of analogues of the musical form, it corresponds to the beginning (e.g. musical introduction, which consists from the first two sentences) of the first part (A) of the large ternary form with recapitulation (AB(a+b)A₁), the middle part of which consists of two partitions (a+b). From the musical point of view, a theme follows the introduction and consists of three motifs: a star, faith and path³:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today’s Evangel tells us about a rare phenomenon. About how three wise men from the East, after seeing the beautiful star, came to visit a newborn Child. If they had not seen that star and its beautiful sparkle, of course, they would not have travelled the distant road full of dangers. Following the star, they were convinced that they could find the King, who was prophesied and expected. Moreover, the star did not disappoint them. This star led them to Bethlehem, to a little stable where they found the Child and Virgin Mary; they fell on their knees in front of them and gave them their presents [9, p. 232; further, the reference will be only to the pages of the publication].

It is interesting that in six sentences the motif of a star (žvaigždė)⁴ is repeated five times and the motif of the «three wise men» sounds only once. Further, in the text next to the image of the star, pronoun synonyms are used. This way the importance of the motif is emphasised and the rhetorical variation of the declension of pronouns helps to strengthen the emotional dynamics of the text toward the expectation of the King and the great joy of seeing the Child and

3 In the sermon every quote, as cited by the article’s author, starts from a new line and is marked with a black dot.

4 The word žvaigždė [ʒvʌɪgʒdɛ–star] has an interesting etymology. For many scientists, it derives from the semantics of light: “Schein, light, glow”, or it is associated with silver [5]. It is noteworthy that the structure of the word is very specific in the Lithuanian language: words containing the letter ž [ʒ] are not very common, and having two of these letters in one word is even rarer (it is typical for pictorial verbs). On the other hand, some of the most important words, like žemė, žmogus, žmona, žolė [earth, man, wife, grass] begin with this letter.

2 The general passion scheme (by Greimas, Fontanille, Bertrand) is as follows: constitution–sensitisation [fr. Sensibilisation], which means mood, empathising, emotion–moralisation [8, p. 263].

Virgin Mary in the barn. The sentence composition is wavy, its linking is catenary, and structure repeats, extends or alternates with one or the other motif.

The following paragraph – section of the same part (A) starts again with the address, but this time it sounds warmer without official status. The theme of the Star of Faith is varied three times through the anti-thesis until the most beautiful humanistic attitude is achieved: Brothers and sisters! God lit up the star of life on the horizon not just for the three wise men. He gave such present not just to them. God lights up bright stars for every person, which have to lead us through the farthest darkness of life [p. 232]. Further on, the main theme of the Star of faith is developed in variations, establishing its necessity and archetypal origin. The motif of the star is repeated four times. Here the rhetorical question is used, which strengthens the dynamics: What are these stars, which were lit up in our early childhood? One of the dearest stars, which we saw being little children, is the star of our dear faith. This star has to take us away from the wrong byroads of life [p. 232-233].

Therefore, the first part (A) of the sermon consists of three sections, where the theme of the Star of faith varies in different aspects: from the heavenly miracle to the wonder of the sight of a childhood.

In the second, middle part (B) of the text (regarding the analogue of the musical form) these signs of God are brought closer to the path of everyday human life. This part consists of two sections (a+b). As compared to the traditional structure of the sermon, it corresponds to the fifth part, in which the theme is developed in two or three sections. Each of them should be supported by two arguments, examples or stories. Here various arguments are presented to refute counterarguments, but they are not based on logic as in the traditional rhetoric, but presented as a more gentle persuasion, a variation of contrasting examples.

The first section (a) of the middle part is the development of road motifs (life's byroads, modern travel advisers, false signage): Looking at our lives, we see many roads heading to different directions and intertwined in various ways. We know that these people's roads can be very vague and misleading. Sometimes, living in the twentieth century and walking these roads, we feel like in a jungle [p. 233]. It is noticeable that often the three-sentence structure is retained in separate paragraphs, where the elements of life, path, errors and confusion are repeated. It is rather common for Vasiliasuskas's sermons. The other peculiarity of his sermons is that they are always enriched with

poetry and examples from the lives of great people. This brings them closer to the style of public speaking, to the addressee, but also to everyday life. Monsignor refers to the dimension of high culture:

One poet wrote in his poem: «God, tell me, which way? / Whose way? / How everything becomes / Unclear for me...» // Sometimes, when we travel our life paths, we only see the signs of particular direction. Sometimes we have no pointing signs at all. Often various trip advisers introduce themselves and offer to show the most beautiful, the newest and the most modern roads. However, we often feel that we can not always trust these modern travel advisers [p. 233].

Further, the intonation, which again starts with rhetorical question/exclamation, moves in variations up to the culminating paragraph of the first section (a), in which the Star of the faith is compared to Moses' pillar of fire. In the last sentence, the extreme opposition sounds between the faith and goodness, as the loving heart of eternal Father waiting for us to return, and disbelief, destruction and evil, the catastrophe:

How many life's byroads can we see next to us?! And close to our dearest ones. It is because it is much easier to find one's bearings searching for a real and sincere person, a true road. In the very morning of our lives, God lit up the precious star of faith for us. The same star, which leads us on to the true road like Moses' pillar of fire. When we have the light of faith, there is no need of asking the fellow travelers for the right direction. We do not need to read the pointing signs written by the hand of a human, who is not always right. We, the people of faith, are convinced that the direction, which is shown by our religion, is always right. We believe that faith leads us not to destruction and catastrophe but to our eternal Father, who waits for our return with his loving heart [p. 233].

The second section (b) of the middle part is about the drama of the loss of faith and the grace of preserving the faith; the motifs of the star of faith, childhood, path and byroads of life are reiterated. It is like a varying recurrence of the theme:

The star of our faith. It is a happy person, who saw the star in his childhood. The one, who did not lose it through his life, who walks in life on the road signposted by his star. Moreover, it seems to us the believers that a person, who can not see this light, is very unhappy. So many byroads of life await humans who do not follow the star of faith anymore [p. 234].

This section is enriched with texts by writers and poets, as well as examples from their lives, too: In England, there is an inscription on one headstone: «I

have lived in doubt, I die in uncertainty, I do not know where I go» [p. 234]. Further in the sermon, the motifs of sadness, darkness, fear and uncertainty are developed: How unhappy had to be this man to order to inscribe such words on his grave! All life he was troubled by doubt. Sadness and fear were in his eyes at the moment of death. His heart was trembling before plunging into darkness and the unknown [p. 234]. The sensation of darkness, hopelessness and chasm of life after losing faith is summarised by Friedrich Schiller's thoughts: The famous German poet Schiller states that everything starts swinging under a person's feet when he loses his faith [p. 234]. Later this thought is contrasted by turning the sequence of motifs: unfaith – rocking the earth is converted into faith – the words of Christ, which are more eternal than earth and even heaven: We can confirm this truth in Schiller's words in our lives too, watching people without any faith at all. The ground under the feet of the believer does not move. Seeing the star of faith, he feels what Christ has guaranteed for him: «Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away» [p. 234].

It is the final fragment of the second section (b) of the middle part, which prepares the third part of text – reprise (A_1). Hence, in the middle part of the sermon, motifs of hard life of the misguided ones, the non-believers, and the believers, who are led by the greatest childhood gift – «the star of a precious faith», are developed with contrast and variation. Sentences in this part sound like a «soft» wavy variation, where the motifs of human faith, knowledge and light are reiterated and consolidated. There is obvious catenary linking of sentences and rhetorical repetition with an increasing intonational line.

This third part (A_1) (in terms of analogy with musical forms) would correspond to the sixth section of the traditional composition of the sermon. There Christ's words are developed to the culminating statement – the promise of the Lord. Here the new semantics, the euphoric aspect of the text, is emphasised with the promise of Christ:

Christ promised to the believer: «I am the resurrection and life. Everyone, who lives and believes in me, will never be lost». The believer knows where he comes from, where he lives, where he goes and what the purpose of his life is. He knows how to live and what to do to deserve the eternity of bright life. Seeing the light of life, he finds his lifestyle, which has enduring value [p. 234].

On the other hand, this paragraph can be considered as the end of the fifth traditional structural part of

the sermon, which is a transition to the last one – the short culmination of the sixth part. In this case, the end of the sermon (it is the sixth part of the traditional structure) becomes concise and effective as usual. Here comes the culminating apotheosis of faith—the balance of life and the serenity of death – an hour of the encounter with God. All the words in this segment have special connotations to Light and shine in a special sacred Light, which is expressed by the number of softly pronounced syllables of 32, and only 18 (they are in bold) are pronounced hard:

Todėl mes, prisimindami, kaip trys išminčiai, žvelgdami į žvaigždę, eina į Betliejų, žinodami, kokia brangia šviesa šviečia mūsų tikėjimo žvaigždė, pasakytume: / So, when we remember how three wise men looking at the star, travelled to Bethlehem, and knowing, how dear the light of our star of faith is, we can say:

Be greeted our star of faith! It is only you, who leads us along the true road towards God. We are grateful for the balance we found in life and the clarity in the hour of our death. Let your light protect us from mistakes and cheats. Amen. [p. 234].

The third part (A_1) is redeveloped based on the number three as well, using the principle of retrograde (retrograde means theme arrangement in reverse) and expanding the motifs of the theme of the first part (the roads of life – three wise men – the Star of faith). In this last part all the layers of time and existence harmoniously merge, all levels of rhetoric: ethos, pathos and logos, which, according to Aristotle, help to achieve the persuasion, and bring the catharsis of purification towards divine enlightenment closer in the Christian texts.

The international rhetoric of sermons is warm and homely, has a more liberal form but with contrastive development and abounds in high philosophy. Vasiliauskas's texts sounded more like persuasion when speaking to a person, trying to be heard, and at the same time to listen to another person, understand and feel, be empathic and uplift with one's warm look. The preacher does not try to shock with apocalyptic images, the fear of God or death. Therefore, the intonation of sermons resembles a waving dynamic profile [1]. Parts are developed with contrasting variations, often from three segments. It is close to the compositional structure of traditional sermons.

The composition of the sermon analyzed from the musical point of view is close to the analogue of the large ternary form with recapitulation (AB (a+b) A_1) where the middle part consists of a two-part form. The three-part form is a fundamental structure of rhetorical texts; it is also an archetypal musical model.

Variational theme development is characteristic of the sermon when the motifs of the main theme are developed in its versions by enriching with other contrasting elements. The rhythm of repetition and the archetypal three-part model of the composition have a deep impact on the listener. Such nature and style of the

persuasion resemble the cleaning of the layers of dust from human consciousness with beautiful examples, warm words, together with high ideals of existence, which are not polished by requirements of a strict ascetic form, but where the presence sounds in soft opening up with warmth and love intonation.

GENERALISATION

1. Connections in time-based arts are studied in the framework of the conception of intermediality. The musicality of rhetorical texts can be analysed according to the principles of transmediality, as well as aspects of thematisation, formal imitation, evocation, (partial) reproduction.

2. The composition of sermons can be described by the requirements of the traditional structure of sermons, peculiarities of the usage of rhetorical devices and the nature of musicality. The musicality of the text, as the dimension of the non-verbal language, is very significant for its persuasion.

3. The study of Mons. K. Vasiliauskas's sermon «Mūsų tikėjimo žvaigždė» [The Star of Our Faith] shows that its stylistic completeness combined with numerous rhetorical repetitions and variational development of thematic motifs is close to the analogue of the large ternary with recapitulation musical form (AB (a+b)A₁).

4. The ternary form is an archetypal musical model coordinated with the principle of repetition and variation based on the number three, which creates the impression of «soft and enshrouding» speech. It helps to open the heart of a person to the rhythm of eternity, to hear the voice of God and to strengthen hope and faith.

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АНОТАЦІЯ

Р. БРУЗГІЄНЕ

РИТОРИЧНІ ТА МУЗИЧНІ ПРИЙОМИ У ПРОПОВІДЯХ МОНСЕНЬОРА КАЗИМІРАСА ВАСИЛЯУСКАСА

У статті досліджуються музичні формальні принципи проповідей Мон. Казиміраса Василяускаса (1922-2001) зі збірки «Яскрава зірка віри» та їхні стосунки із традиційною риторичною структурою проповіді. Головна проблема, що ставиться у статті, – стосунки принципів традиційної композиції проповіді з аналогами музичних форм, вжитих з метою підвищення переконливості тексту. Ця проблема обговорюється на матеріалі

проповіді «Зірка нашої віри». Стаття ґрунтується на працях Віктора Бобровського, Вікторії Дауїотите, Альгїрдаса Юліуса Греймаса, Володимира Карбусицького, Вернера Вольфа та ін. і використовує методологію компаративістики і метод функціонального аналізу.

Аналіз тексту дозволяє зробити такі висновки:

1. Зв'язки між мистецтвами, які розгортаються у часі, досліджуються у рамках концепції інтермедіальності. Музичність риторичних текстів можна проаналізувати згідно з принципами інтермедіальності, а також в аспектах тематизації, формального наслідування, евокації, (часткового) відтворення.

2. Композицію проповіді можна описати згідно з вимогами традиційної структури проповіді, особливостями використання риторичних прийомів та природою музичальності. Музичальність тексту як вимір невербальної мови вельми важлива в аспекті його переконливості.

3. Вивчення проповіді Монс. К. Василяускаса «Зірка нашої віри» демонструє, що її стилістична довершеність у сполученні з численними риторичними повторами та варіаційним розвитком тематичних мотивів близька до великої трьохчастинної музичної форми з підсумуванням ($AB (a+b) A$).

4. Трьохчастинна форма є архетипною музичною моделлю, співвідносною з принципом повторення з варіаціями на підставі числа три, що створює ефект «м'якого та обгортаючого» мовлення. Вона сприяє відкриттю людського серця ритмам вічності, голосу Бога, підсилює надію і віру.

Ключові слова: проповідь, Монс. Казимірас Василяускас, інтермедіальність, риторика, музика, форма.