

Summary

ANTIQUITY IN THE WORK OF IVAN JELÍNEK

Many Czech exile authors turn to ancient inspiration after 1948. The antiquity often serves as a projection of exile situation (Odysseus) or as *pars pro toto* of traditional European culture, perceived by the exile writers as their defense wall. Ivan Jelínek (1909–2002) moreover originally transformed ancient inspirations at motivic level. He sings praises of ancient goddesses and heroines as archetypes of Virgin Mary. Sacred womb represents the central topos of Jelínek's comparison between Greek mythology, Catholicism and poetically transformed personal experience. Also, Jelínek calls his poems "odes", referring to the ancient genre celebrating sacred subjects. He applies this principle of ancient-Catholic comparison and this genre in numerous volumes, following his travels across the Mediterranean. Gradually, his poetry becomes a sort of "travelogue" in the tradition of Grand Tour. In the final phase of his literary work, the Catholic motifs recede. The antiquity, instead, continues to be used as poet's basic cultural matrix.

Keywords: Czech literature; Exile authors; Ivan Jelínek; antiquity as inspiration

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