

EMOTIONAL RECEPTIVITY THROUGH POEM-(CINEMATIC) IMAGE AND POEM-DRAWING ENTWINEMENT. DISCOVERY OF EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE THROUGH TARKOVSKY'S "MIRROR"

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to contribute to a cultivation of receptivity and responsiveness towards the emotional dimension of an environment. This article was developed around artistic reflections on oneiric childhood places, dense with vulnerable shared memories, and feelings layered through time. Poem-cinematic image entwinement in Tarkovsky's Mirror was the cinematographic autobiography that offered a conceptual and methodological guideline for the author's own excavations and re-creations of embodied memories and emotional experiences. This was achieved through a cycle of poem-drawings. The article also discusses how poetic profusion between verbal and visual representations of the built surrounding can develop into a personal language that allows the communication and integration of emotional experiences in spatial interpretations.

Keywords: Tarkovsky, poem-(cinematic)image, poem-drawing, parental home, embodied memory of emotional experience

RICETTIVITÀ EMOTIVA ATTRAVERSO L'INTRECCIO DELL'IMMAGINE POETICA (CINEMATICA) E DEL DISEGNO DI POESIA. SCOPERTA DELLA CONOSCENZA INCARNATA ATTRAVERSO "LO SPECCHIO" DI TARKOVSKY

SINTESI

Lo scopo di questo articolo è di contribuire alla coltivazione della ricettività e della reattività verso la dimensione emotiva di un ambiente. Questo articolo è stato sviluppato intorno a riflessioni artistiche su luoghi di infanzia onirici, densi di ricordi condivisi vulnerabili e sentimenti stratificati nel tempo. L'intreccio di immagini poetico-cinematiche nello Specchio di Tarkovsky era l'autobiografia cinematografica che offriva una linea guida concettuale e metodologica dell'autore per le escavazioni e ricreazioni di memorie incarnate ed esperienze emozionali. Ciò è stato ottenuto attraverso un ciclo di disegni di poesie. L'articolo discute anche di come la profusione poetica tra le rappresentazioni verbali e visive dell'ambiente circostante possa svilupparsi in un linguaggio personale che consente la comunicazione e l'integrazione di esperienze emotive nelle interpretazioni spaziali.

Parole chiave: Tarkovsky, immagine poetica (cinematica), disegno della poesia, casa dei genitori, memoria incarnata dell'esperienza emotiva

INTRODUCTION: UNFOLDING OF THE PERSON-SPACE INTIMACY BY EVOKING SPATIAL FEELINGS

If you live in a house – the house will not fall
(Arseny Tarkovsky, cited in *Mirror*, 1975).

Nowadays, cinema and architecture are often perceived as fields for immersion into something that distracts our thoughts away from and out of ourselves. The overwhelming understanding of cinema as a fun alternative that enables a relaxation break from the everyday life, is similar to the touristic understanding of architecture and urbanism: people often travel to other places to forget about themselves, avoiding any kind of self-discovery or searches for truths within themselves. But travelling, through landscapes or through human artworks and artifacts, would only be a transitional activity if it were not integrated as an interpretation of a first-person experience in the knowledge of the inner self.

Anthologist Tim Ingold compares “*navigating (a transitional activity)*” as opposed to “*wayfaring (a way of being)*” (Ingold, 2016, 78). It can be said that the first is a way of moving through space and time, a search for knowledge separated from personal feelings and memories, and ignorant towards the personal responsiveness of the surroundings. The second defines “who the traveler is”, i.e. his research upon an external object, guides the growth of his understanding; “the traveler and his line are one and the same” in “an active engagement with the country that opens along his path” (Ingold, 2016, 78). The degree of intimacy between the wayfarer and his surrounding defines the intensity of the “progressional ordering of reality” (Jarvis, qtd. in Ingold, 2016, 91). Wayfarers dare to interpret reality: they never perceive maps, writings or drawings as complete recipes for their movement, but they ground abstract concepts into their personal and shared experience. But wayfaring asks for a cultivation of *receptivity* and *responsiveness*: two activities dependent from the spiritual strength of the observer. Most of us grow insensitive towards the silent presence of our living environment, in particular to the places framing most of our time of shared experience with loved ones. It is much easier to notice the technical ingenuity of framing the cinematic image, or to discuss the visible features of an architectural masterpiece, than to ask oneself *what is the innermost feeling it awakens inside?* What is its relation to one’s personality, to one’s inner spatial biography? To ask this kind of questions, one needs to have a willingness to dive into one’s own emotional experiential encyclopedia. It takes courage and preparedness to face and re-think the most vulnerable ties and places that frame our lifetime, to observe with fresh eyes what we’ve considered known and familiar. But we become more

and more ignorant towards the relevance of our own feelings, as if we are afraid to discover what their discernment may deliver to our knowledge.

This condition of mass audiences preferring “*exotic stories on the screen that have nothing to do with their lives*” Tarkovsky names “*a degeneration of the audience*” (Tarkovsky, 1989, 177). The passivity of the observer’s co-creative imagination prevents them from awakening their sensory awareness, and from building a personal interpretation of what they see. Therefore, cinematic approaches that underestimate the co-creative capacity of the observer are single-minded, knocking their head in ‘the ceiling of director’s so-called thought’. “*Lots of audiences enjoy such knocks, which make them feel safe; not only is it exciting, but the idea is clear and there’s no need to strain the brain or eyes, there’s no need to see anything specific in what is happening*” (Tarkovsky, 1989, 73). The whole work and philosophy of Tarkovsky is a reaction against this absence of dialogue between his artworks and his audience. He challenges the fundamentally of the safety zone and the idle consummation of the movie by emotional and intuitive defamiliarization. By implementing principles such as *poetics of memory* and *logic of dreams*, he is communicating with the audience on levels far beyond the rational by “*another kind of language*”: “*Will, feeling, emotion – these remove obstacles from between people who otherwise stand on opposite sides of a mirror, on opposite sides of a door [...]*” (Tarkovsky, 1989, 12).

Tarkovsky’s *Mirror*¹ is one of the greatest autobiographical artworks, unfolding a deeply personal experience of joys, wounds and sorrow, while at the same time, exhibiting a truth perceivable through an emotional co-creation with the observer. One recognizes emotional fragments of oneself and of their beloved ones in the characters, dialogues, and spaces on the screen. In *Mirror*, space-time sections of his Home were developed in an unchronological order. The events shifted from childhood dreams and memories of the House to more recent discussions with beloved ones. Unlike his other artworks, *Mirror* translates a deeply personal view on his own lived experience with his closest family, exhibited through the spaces framing their life; not as a historical notation, but as a poetic opening of “*the future, transcending the first order of reference to reality*” (Pérez-Gómez, 2006, 192). While long takes, poetry and reflective discussions resemble the rest of his oeuvre, *Mirror* radiates an emphasized emotional density due to: 1) the degree of intimacy of the exposed inner experience; 2) the trans-temporal exhibition of oneiric spaces; 3) the intertwining of four poems (read and written by Tarkovsky’s father) with the environment framed by the cinematic image. The narrator (Aleksy) is visually absent during the entire movie. Instead, the camera frames his beloved ones (and

1 *Mirror / Зеркало*. 1975. Directed by Andrey Tarkovsky, Soviet Union.

the memory of himself as a child) and the space that (both) connects and separates them from him. The level of sincerity in exposing the inner storyline requires a high degree of emotional alertness from the observer, in order to be able to receive and reflect appropriately to the experience communicated by the director. The observer is challenged to awaken their own vulnerable memories and spiritual questions, far beyond any rational or unequivocal interpretation.

The author's poem-drawing cycles emerged as a personalized response to her perpetual immersion in Tarkovsky's *Mirror*. The wonderment after each experience of watching always different for the author, according to the inner condition of the author's moment of perception, however it was always strongly revelational and cathartic. Each time, the author discerned a detail she hadn't noticed before, or discerned different layers of what she had already considered as 'understood'. The imprint of *Mirror* on the author's (cycles of) individuation, encouraged her to immerse herself into re-visiting her own spatial memories, and to try to understand and express them as an environment housing the bond between herself and her closest beloved prototypes. This immersion was stimulated by the crisis condition she entered into after the death of her grandmother – the same period of her eighth re-interpretation of *Mirror*. It was in this moment when *The Mirror* became the author's conceptual and methodological guideline for her own creative work. Instead of cinematic language, the author interweaved poems and drawings as a poetic processual tool in investigating and re-creating her own spatial biography. While working as modes of cultivating sensitivity in re-reading places in different layers and different time-frames, poem-drawings *disclosed* the fertility of the emotional dimension of space and transmitted immeasurable spatial information. The poem-drawings became a resistance towards the usually over-simplified division between the person and the environment in educational practice: *feeling, intuiting, epiphany* are processes often considered as too personal, dangerous and untrustworthy.

This article discusses how poem-image entwinement can lead to a semantic replenishment, by intensifying the author's synesthetic expression and observer's emotional and intuitive responsiveness. The research through the self examines how the meaning of architectural space can be *re-created* through its relation to the beloved prototype, how "*trivial things*" can evolve into a "*water, solid, stratified*", both flowing through and building on our most personal spatial memories (Tarkovsky, 1975). The discussion on both cases, poem-cinematic and poem-drawing, aims to speak about how spaces can be observed as both changeable and transient fields that house the ties between living characters: knots where

environmental meaning unfolds only along interweaving storylines. The understanding of these ties demands an emotional receptivity, and a vigilant co-creation of meaning through the self by the observer. Despite the *absence*, the *lack*, or the *changeability* of a person or a surrounding, recalling and re-creating these ties is what keeps the inner Home from falling.

EVOKING CHILDHOOD MEMORIES: EMOTIVE RE-INHABITING OF ONEIRIC SPACES

Through the senses of a child, the perception and interpretation of the external reality are an imaginative process. Through them, deeper (personal) connotations of the perceived objects are being developed into an authentic narrative: an appropriated explanation of what is being observed. Free from preconceptions, the child acknowledges the environment through curiosity and the desire for 'conquering' (embodied re-reading) surrounding spaces. Living in a psychophysical scale different to an adult, children settle thoroughly through the micro-spaces of the home. Through the child's movement and attitude towards the places of growth, their innerness² becomes readable to some extent.

Furthermore, childhood memories dwell on a misty border between real and imagined, between what's heard and what's personally acknowledged, between the dream and the true experience. Solovyova elaborates "*a memory of emotional experience*" as a "*distant kind of memory different from the memory of events or knowledge*" that allows the formation of 'the belief and the value system' of the architect (Solovyova, 2018, 1). Besides their misty manifestation, memories of emotional experience encourage conjuncture³ development: a re-creation of subjective judgements and recombination of elements considered familiar in the light of a new context. Two investigations (Solovyova, 2018; Lee & Lee, 2017) and anonymous interviews of renowned architects, exemplify how recalling emotionally poignant memories can be a main source of inspiration in the creative process of stepping out-of-the-box, by revisiting one's own first-person experience.

Tarkovsky states that "*a poet has the imagination and the psychology of child, for his impressions of the world are immediate, however profound his ideas may be*" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 41). This immediacy and intimacy with the world allows the memories of emotional and embodied experiences to re-appear in the poet's work as an echo in a different time period. Tarkovsky tries to exemplify how a day imprints itself into memory:

As something amorphous, vague, with no skeleton or schema. Like a cloud. And only the central event of that day has become concentrated,

2 the 'irreducible', 'hidden and uncognizable character', whose manifestation can be revealed 'only when the dynamism of the human subject is performed' (Mara, 2007, 87).

3 inference formed without proof or sufficient evidence.

like a detailed report, lucid in meaning and clearly defined. [...] Against the background of the rest of the day, that event stands out like a tree in the mist [...] Isolated impressions of the day have set off impulses within us, evoked associations; objects and circumstances have stayed in our memory, but with no sharply defined contours, incomplete, apparently fortuitous (Tarkovsky, 1989, 23).

'The central event' works as a knot where the ties between "isolated impressions" are re-ordered after each evocation. As phenomena difficult to be understood, memories emerge in the consciousness in unpredictable moments during a person's life, especially in moments of fragility (illness or death of a close person, psychological crisis, disappointment, unbearable joy). Such recalling is often emotionally poignant because: 1) it is deeply personal and related to a beloved-(shared)-place and beloved-personality-prototype; 2) it's mysterious and unforeseeable appearance stimulates revisiting the past, re-imagining the future, and re-thinking their relation through the personal present. Always contextualized in a certain environmental setting, embodied memories can lead to an emotive re-inhabiting of spaces lived, ruined, transformed, or desired/imagined: their *reflection* flows through our present environment, as well as through our constructed vision of ideal dwelling.

Whether it is awakened by a crisis condition or is consciously evoked by writing, drawing, or storytelling, a revived memory of the paternal home is an *interruption* of the everyday flow of lived experience; an intrusion of an event coming from a different place, time, or reality than the present. If we understand memory as "a spiritual concept" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 57) able to mold a reflective re-inhabitation of another space-time, we can say that the emotional burden it brings can be translated into an authentic expression that is aimed to provoke an analogous "spiritual jolt" in the observer (Tarkovsky, 1975). This emotional burden, present in the greatest artworks, stems from the feeling of a latent lack or absence, the longing for a lost presence, a lost space and time. Tarkovsky elaborates such yearning in the condition of Gorchakov in his *Nostalgia* (1983):

[...] thoroughly disorientated by the impressions crowding in upon him his tragic inability to share these impressions with the people closest to him [...] **the impossibility of grafting his new experience onto the past** which has bound him from his very birth [...] an outsider who can only watch other people's lives from a distance, **crushed by the recollections of his past**, by the faces of those dear to him, which assail his memory together with the sounds and smells of home' (Tarkovsky, 1989, 202–203, my emphasis).

Thus, a memory generates nostalgia when there is a painful inability to 'graft' the newly accumulated experience upon the order of pleasant memories from the paternal Home. But in his statement, *Home* is not only a spatial material entity, but a concrete place framing the mutual *sharing* of impressions between his closest people in different time frames. According to Svetlana Boym, nostalgia (a portmanteau of *nostos*-return home and *algos*-longing) "appears to be a longing for a place but is actually a yearning for a different time-the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams [...] against the time of history and progress" (Boym, 2001, 8). However, contextualized in Tarkovsky's *Mirror* and in our creative research, this statement can be complete only if we understand the notion of "time" as a human "condition", a *deeply personally experienced truth* (Tarkovsky, 1989, 56). Since *deeply experienced truths* define one's own personality, nostalgia is a life-long feeling of a lost space-time that once framed loving dialogues. It can be re-created and re-interpreted through re-visiting the memories in our embodied knowledge by "*overcoming one's own boundaries*" (Man, cited in Tarkovsky, 1989, 102). Hence, *evocation* of memories in present life is meaningful because it stimulates a tireless re-creation of one's own *experienced truth*.

Mirror exhibits the longing for lost places through its displaced appearance: a dream sequence with the young abandoned mother in the middle of a room where rain ruins the ceiling and flames burn on the window; a dream sequence with the mother hovering above the bed while declaring love to her beloved; the colorful wayfaring childhood memories through the maternal house and its decomposed remnants scattered in the forest in the closing scene; the slow framing of the Alexey's apartment, filled with memories and emptied of people, during the phone call with his mother. The spaces are filmed as exterior manifestations of the character's psychological condition: they frame and express the longing through *contrasting* the condition of a place in different time-frames.

In her master thesis entitled *Tarkovsky-Inspiration in Architectural Design*, Perič introduces Foucault's concept of *heterotopia* as the closest metaphor to define the spatial layers of Tarkovsky's movies. Such spaces are "*part of the real space but are completely different than the space they reflect or refer upon: the point of break between these two kinds of spaces is a place of mixed experiences from the two and has a role similar to a mirror*" (Perič, 2017, 46). Memories, dreams, hallucinations – with all their architectural and environmental backgrounds – enter this point of experiential break. Two of Foucault's heterotopia types relate directly to memory:

- Crisis-deviation heterotopia; privileged places, planned only for persons that belong to a specific vulnerable condition, or – I would add – in a creative-process-condition. Crisis condition is also

immanent in the micro-heterotopian development of an artist; they have to continuously re-create their “*spiritual vision to bear on reality*” (Tarkovsky, 1989, 96). “*Spiritual crisis*” is a road towards self-healing, a way to yearn “*for harmony*” inside a life “*full of discordance*” (Tarkovsky, 1989, 193). In space-times that frame the artist’s critical condition, a *childhood memory* – a “*person’s healthiest and highest possession*” – is crucial in preventing the negative outcomes of a crisis (Dostoyevsky, 1968, 567). Present space-times become inhabited by emotional childhood memories. And this inhabitation occurs as an impossible profusion of what cannot be joined. Here, the artist’s personal time – the beloved places housing his memories and the ties with his beloved prototypes (Mother, Grandmother, Father) – represent a fragmented mirror of our innerness. The author’s poem-drawings work as instruments that excavate spatial memories of the paternal home, by interweaving them with their present spatial existence. Their aim is to overcome a crisis through reviving the past: “*When a man thinks of the past, he becomes kinder*” (Tarkovsky, 1979). Nostalgia and longing are activated, “*the future and the present*” become one (Tarkovsky, 1979).

- Heterotopia of time (heterochrony); according to Perič, *Mirror* is a movie created as “*an inner ceasing of (real) time and as a recognition of the personal time*” (Perič, 2017, 49). Himself a museum of his own memories, dreams and emotions, Tarkovsky succeeds to express himself using cinematic language through the “*personal archives of the main character*” (Perič, 2017, 49). This “*personal time*” is manifested through an empathic defamiliarization, by the evocation of memories, through revealing the unknown or forgotten of what is considered familiar. The linear conception of time can be abolished by recalling or re-visiting a person’s living experience. In *Mirror*, we see a *widening, enhancing, concentrating and elongating* of a person’s experience (Tarkovsky, 1989, 63). Analogously, the author’s poem-drawings work as heterotopias, where spatial memories are brought into life and appear into a newly written/drawn order. They *elongate* the experience by demanding a rhythm of emotive immersion in, and defamiliarization from, spatial memories.

Mirror exhibits the flow of Andrey’s memories, fears, and desires through his own trans-temporal reality. Understanding his suffering and joy was only possible through unconditional compassion for each character and responsiveness on a highly emotional level. An inner touch with the movie was forthright because his approach to directing brought you *vulnerably close* to life itself, to your own wounds and longings, and made you feel

intensely present in co-experiencing the places dense with emotive trails. This edge of subjective commiseration and identification with the character’s experience is the point where catharsis unfolded for the author: through a disturbed awareness in reading both his and our own most vulnerable spatial memories, we learn how to perceive thoroughly the rest of the spatial environment.

This article elaborates: 1) four examples of overlap between the poetry by Andrey’s father and the environmental background of the frame in *Mirror*, through the movements of his mother as a strongly present donor of connotations; 2) the author’s personal poem-drawings about the paternal home, decomposed on trans-temporal knots through the movements of the grandmother, as threads that bring together the other beloved prototypes.

CONCEPTS AND ‘METHODOLOGY’: TARKOVSKY’S REFLECTIONS IN AUTHOR’S ARCHITECTURAL APPROACH

Mirror is an inspirational way of filtering lived experiences through an artistic medium. In the poem-cinematic image, we communicate with the author through cinematic language, but the creational principles are spiritually congruent with the author’s concept of architectural poem-drawing. Therefore, it is necessary to clearly indicate the points of congruency. Below, we include an extremely compressed list of guiding principles.

Against the abstract notion of order: poetics of memory and logics of dream

Tarkovsky compares two methods of development in the plot: “*a linear, rigidly logical*” composition and a “*poetic reasoning*” (Tarkovsky, 1989, 18–20). *Mirror* is undoubtedly the clearest embodiment of the second. Instead of the usual chronological ordering of events as “*a sequence of obedience to some abstract notion of order*”, Tarkovsky’s movies exhibit and inspire poetic reasoning that: 1) requires an active association of meanings inside the spectator; 2) is closer to “*life itself*”, “*to the laws by which thought develops*”; 3) “*heightens feelings*” that encourage spectator’s responsiveness (Tarkovsky, 1989, 20). The advantage of poetic reasoning, in comparison to the abstract notion of order, is in its artistic fruitfulness: “*associative linking*” allows both “*affective and rational appraisal*”. The spectator is implemented in the co-creation of the artwork through reviving their own emotional experience: “*a participant in the process of discovering life*” (Tarkovsky, 1989, 20). Emotional memory, emotional receptivity and hermeneutic receptivity become pre-conditions for understanding such an artwork. Emotional awareness enables *concretization* of the spectator’s perception into their own memory of emotional experiences. Spectator’s *emotional responsiveness* is encouraged by the author’s *emotive convincibility*.

After the principle of awakening the spectator's *thinking and feeling* by demanding "exertion" and "passionate commitment" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 103) in the name of successful communication, Tarkovsky develops an argument whose multi-facetedness and indefiniteness brings art closer to the reality of life itself. The lack of semantic clarity evokes an emotion inside of the spectator: they feel "disarmed and entranced but not by thought"; it is the spectator's emotions that an artwork affects. Its aim is to "turn and loosen the human soul" through its metamorphosis – to make it "receptive for the good" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 165). This evokes the memory of emotional experience back to life. The properties of memory ("amorphous, vague, no skeleton or schema") become Tarkovsky's "new working principle" in *Mirror*: the protagonist is physically absent, but the "revelation of his inner world" is exhibited through the "story of his thoughts, his memories and dreams" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 29).

This is relevant for poem-drawing as a mode of detecting and evaluating spatial characteristics that cannot be represented faithfully through usual means in the language of spatial design (technical drawings): emotions, events, dialogues that *live* framed by spatial elements. Its inherent emotional pregnancy allows one to understand and read places on levels different to the visual and evident. It: 1) cultivates an awareness towards the personal and shared experiencing of a place (personal and collective memory); 2) connects past and the present experiences by evaluating their relevance for the future (poetic approach in design thinking); 3) creates order out of accumulated information about a place through integration of: the "affective and rational appraisal" of spatial values, the work of subjective cognitive mechanisms and the objective existence of certain spatial appearance.

Anthropological mise-en-scène: inner life against symbol as content of cinematic image

The *mise-en-scène* defines the setting and the surrounding of the cinematic frame in a cinematic shot. Therefore, it defines the relation between the spatial configuration of immovable objects and the movement of the actors. Tarkovsky distinguishes two definitions of what the aim of a *mise-en-scène* is. The first limits its function to a sheer expression of the meaning of what is happening, which leads to "abstraction" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 73). When this is the case, the movie screen does not show anything beyond a definite trivial form and meaning; the semantic valency is so sterile that it turns a "unique event" into something "utterly banal" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 73). Tarkovsky believes that this sterility is a consequence of treating the *mise-en-scènes* as a "sign, a cliché, or a concept (however original it may be)" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 25). In such a way, the specificity of the characters and situations dissolves in the "schematic and false" repetition of the weak symbols. The second

definition, by contrast, resists the "obtrusive illustration of some idea" and follows "life-the personalities of the characters and their psychological state" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 25, my emphasis). This approach defines the *mise-en-scène* as an aid in clarifying the *inner life* of the characters. Instead of being a passive background, it behaves as a living protagonist reflecting the innerness of the characters, so it creates a "versality" and "indeterminacy" of the cinematic image (Tarkovsky, 1989, 163).

In *Mirror*, such presence of versality and indeterminacy of the cinematic experience is multiplied by the superposition of four poems (recited) over four *mise-en-scène* shots. The voice of Tarkovsky's father (Arseny) recites four poems that overlap with the events on the cinematic image, and are related to fragments of the living environment from Andrej's childhood. Thus, Arseny's poetry becomes a mirror of reality, a poetic extension of the visible. Poems represent specific columns that mysteriously connect all the pieces of the movie. Besides their appearance at only four scenes within the movie, their echo in each other (previous and following) scene is omnipresent.

Analogously, poem-drawing functions to overlap the verbal and visual languages, to strengthen the investigation and re-creation of the *inner life* as a filter for observing the outside environment. Verses give a poetic extension meaning of the immediate surrounding, while drawings interweave the verses as dream images: verses and drawings profuse each other in a manner that doesn't follow gravitational principles. External *mise-en-scène* is re-created through lenses of the inner life: memories, dreams, longings.

Art as meta-language of spiritual wandering: against manifestos, an 'antithesis of pragmatism'

Tarkovsky understands art as a communication between human beings on dimensions beyond the practical, as an "intensification" rather than "abbreviation" of reality (Cassirer, 1994, 184). He names art "a meta-language" that helps people "to impart information about themselves and assimilate the experience of others" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 40) beyond any practical or material sense. He speaks about spiritual bonding as an "antithesis of pragmatism" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 40). Alberto Perez-Gomez explains how only a "poet in love" is receptive and responsive to the deeper truth of Paris, thanks to his love for Nadja: "not the invisible but the utterly visible, in a state that is not reducible to either dreams or a banal reality" (Perez-Gomez, 2006, 27). Paris reveals itself through the movements of the beloved person. 'Love' and 'sacrifice' are keywords in reading Tarkovsky; his movies cannot be experienced or explained by an analytic or rational approach.

Therefore, Tarkovsky's artworks are not only limited to self-expression, but demand an emotional and intuitive responsiveness from the spectator. Intellectual

al preparedness has a secondary role in each cycle of experience – the cinematic image in *Mirror* speaks directly to the observer's emotions. His cultivated emotional sincerity awakens rationally unexplainable emotions of compassion with the characters on vague levels. Such exposition of one's innerness in an art-form requires the same intensity of chest-opening by the observer. This is how this communication may "*triumph over grim, 'base' truth*": through mutual wandering towards a higher level of reality (Tarkovsky, 1989, 168). Here, Tarkovsky emphasizes how the director is responsible for cultivating the sensitivity of the audience to perceive the movie as an artwork that demands emotional participation of the personal time. He criticizes Eisenstein as a creator who "*transforms thought into despot*", leaving no air for the 'unspoken elusiveness' that is necessary for the "*individual to relate to a film*" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 183). It therefore suffocates the hermeneutic void inherent in a poetic artwork. In *Mirror* we see a reaction towards such *intellectual suffocation*. In absence of intellectual patterns, the artwork concentrates on its *emotive* role: this makes possible for the audience to behave in the "light of individual experience" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 184).

Analogously, poem-drawing is a tool that develops a resistance towards the reduction of "*abundance*" in spatial observation and representation (Feyerabend, 1999). It embraces uncertainty and ambiguity as constitutive parts of the (memory of) emotional experience, and integrates them into a theoretical, spiritual and creational self of the artist. This leads to a deliberate authenticity in personal reflection, in a form of resistance to overgeneralized or abstract ways of knowledge. Hence, while acting as an (author's) tool for holistic expression, poem-drawing aims at *communicating* the emotional knowledge in a context beyond (observer's) sheer emotional displacement; it aims to behave as a meta-language that aims to discuss spatial values beyond the pragmatic and technical dimension (see poem-drawings of Kulper, Hejduk, Le Corbusier, Van Den Berghe, Ishigami).

Empathy against judgement (suspension of judgement)

One of the first feelings you may have while watching *Mirror*, or any other movie by Tarkovsky, is that the "*good*" and "*bad*" characters are indistinguishable. In each character, there is something that reflects a part of our own innerness. The feeling is similar to when observing a Dostoyevsky character: you feel an intense presence of truth so close to reality, yet so complex due to the deep elaboration of the psychological profile. Sensing one's own reflections evokes an empathy and allows an emotional understanding of the individuals and the ties between them. This inner displacement weakens our border of stereotypes

and prejudices: it creates a "*suspension of judgement*" (Koolhaas & Mau, 1995, 826).

As if Tarkovsky unconsciously and artistically re-creates Husserl's phenomenological method of "*bracketing*": "*peeling away the symbolic meanings*" of a phenomenon until only the *experience* of the phenomenon remains, as a subject of further analysis (2018). Tarkovsky himself stresses how important it is for the audience to be unaware of the methods the director is using: it is the only approach where the audience starts to "*empathize*" and believe in the life and the "*reality of what is happening on the screen*" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 111). If, on the other hand, the audience starts to judge the "*purpose and the execution*", they become defocused from the personal emotional responsiveness on the screen. This is why *Mirror* resists any rational criticism: critics do not allow themselves to start from the "*direct, living, emotional*" impact of the work on their innerness (Tarkovsky, 1989, 46). Thus, if one wants to reach an "*unclouded perception*" and receptivity, the only judgement one can allow themselves is an "*innocent*" one – relieved from pre-conceived evaluative formulas and built upon an analysis of the personal experience (Tarkovsky, 1989, 46).

Related to poem-drawing, *Mirror* worked as a lesson on cultivating empathy and controlling judgement in the process of spatial reading, through the subtle intertwining of Arseny's poems and Andrey's spaces framed by cinematic sequences. While observing the poem-drawings of renowned architects, we can understand their design decisions and spatial philosophies in a depth that goes beyond any methodology or principle. They exhibit the architect's discipline of everyday spiritual growth; therefore, they postpone our judgement and activate a degree of empathy and identification with the struggles of their own creative process. Analogously, the author's poem-drawings presented in this article are not design-oriented notions of space, but nevertheless they intend to reveal visible features not easily seen in the shared spaces of the paternal Home through metaphors. Judgement on their purpose and meaning is postponed due to a demand from the reader to enter the author's embodied knowledge through emotional participation. Emotional displacement is a type of defamiliarization, while its stimulation of meta-thinking postpones the judgement – temporarily or permanently.

EMOTIVES: POEM-CINEMATIC IMAGE AND POEM-DRAWING ENTWINEMENT AS TRANS-TEMPORAL REMINISCENCE OF SPACES DENSE WITH EMOTIONAL COMPLEXITY

The entwinement of the poem-cinematic images in *Mirror* and in the poem-drawings of the author's spatial stories, besides their disciplinary differences, have two main common characteristics: 1) they follow the logic

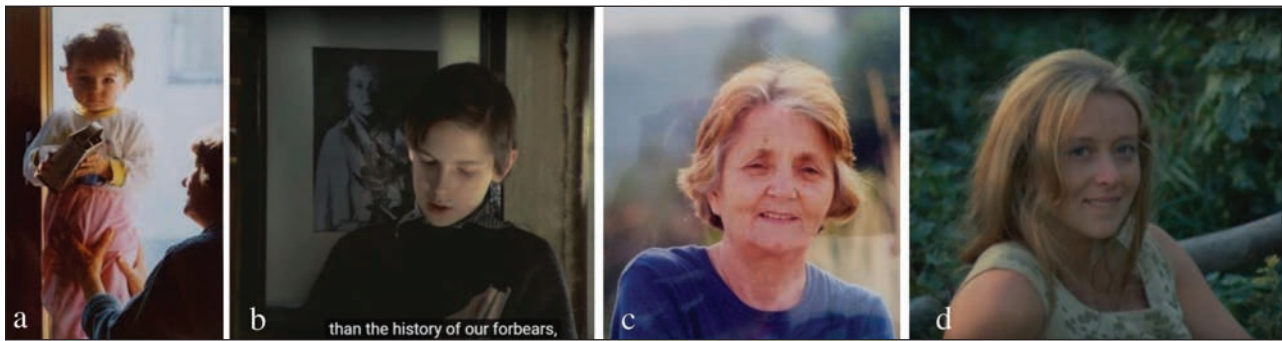


Figure 1: Resemblance between the inner archives of the observer and the character; a) The author and her grandmother: integration through mutual dwelling on window in 1992 (photograph: Nikola Bogdanov); b) Vishnyakova's portrait and Aleksey, integration through Pushkin's letter (excerpt from *Mirror*, 1975); c) Smile after playing a game, author's grandmother in 1999 (photograph: Nikola Bogdanov); d) The cry with a smile from the final scene, Terehkova acting Aleksey's mother (excerpt from *Mirror*, 1975).

of dreams and deform linear time, so they integrate different time-frames on a single image (or sequence of images); 2) they are emotional expressions through a personal language that aims to communicate and encourage responsiveness and emotional interpretation in the observer. This language not only expresses and transfers emotions and thoughts, but it constructs the *manner* of transferring it, it defines one's own attitude towards a specific Otherness to which the 'information' is being shared. Since it deals with the memory of emotional knowledge, it is deeply personal: its misty grammatic (methodology) is subordinated to the "emotional persuasiveness" and the "poetic consciousness" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 59). For the author, this personal language was a way to "seek one's own truth" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 85) and to formulate one's own "postulate of faith", whereas for the spectator it is a way to experience "sudden flashes of illumination" on intuitive level, to allow to be "governed by dynamics of revelation" beyond the conscious thought (Tarkovsky, 1989, 41).

In *Mirror*, the four poems recited by Arseny Tarkovsky profuse with the *mise-en-scène* on the screen. The first poem begins from the yard, then flows inside the maternal house and closes with a sequence with the Mother's portrait. The second poem occurs in a hall in the factory-the Mother's workplace, shown as contrast to the nature of the Home. The third poem begins during a military march over the river and ends with an individualized perception of war – the stagnant and disoriented movement of an orphan child in a snowy landscape. The fourth poem begins on a road towards the Home and ends as a sequence of childhood memory/dream. All four environments are mutually defined. Both recognition of, and comparison with, the embodied memory of the first home occurs: it is a way to protect the inner home from falling. As Venice of Kublai Khan: "To distinguish other cities' qualities, I must speak of the first city that remains implicit" (Calvino,

1972, 86). The Home built into our body is like a water – structured through the childhood places.

Poem-drawings are another form of language to express and evoke spatial environments as mental maps of emotional density. Unlike the author's previous poem-drawings that detect and re-think design-oriented spatial values, this cycle of poem-drawings is intended to reflect the memory of emotional experiences of the paternal home. It begun as a personal answer to the eight re-watching of *Mirror* after the death of the author's grandmother. That moment brought together experiences, ties and similarities whose existence were previously unknown to the author (Figure 1). Memories of an embodied shared experience spring through words, lines and color surfaces. They represent certain perspectives, plans, sections and axonometries of places through time and through change. The painful longing and loss exhibited inside is the absence of the dialogue between the grandmother and the spaces radiating the memory of her; the silently present invisible dialogue before and after her death (Figure 2). Poem-drawings evolved as strip narratives, fragmented emotive storytelling, small constellations of objects related to the authors omnipresent inner voice, and contemplations on the city and the House expressed through her physical and spiritual movements. Through re-writing and re-drawing the memory of feelings, the constant re-creation of the home becomes a mediator between the author's innerness and the expression of the most vulnerable ties; it stores/exposes emotions – "memories, dreams, conscience, nostalgia, self-reflection, freedom, family, faith", (Perič, 2017, 53) and becomes an emotive encyclopedia of the wider family. The home, house, and city evolves into a common language that archives the inhabitant's unspoken feelings: an intimate diary whose attentive re-reading by the observer can bring inner distortions, leading to an intensified individuation as a result of the hermeneutic openness.



Figure 2: Author's poem-drawing "Entering", a room filled with childhood scenarios (personal archives).

Entering [a game – 1994]

(...)
 Only you and grandfather
 have registered traces of our fragile bodies:
 you've covered the cupboards
 and the stairs with blankets,
 pillows, trays of breakfast,
 or orange juice.
 [...]
 Each stair has grown
 into a drawing pad,
 each wardrobe
 -into a secret room for peeking views,
 -into a climbing rock.
 Until the last breath,
 You observed each particle
 as a silent beast able to hurt us,
 change us,
 or bring illness inside.

Deeply embedded inside us
 is each tree pattern,
 and each sound of the staircase
 overpopulated by our
 research aspirations.
 Everyday, Brother and I
 have measured corners with our bodies
 through stars, leaps and falls,
 and you – you remained invisible
 until you hear a cry
 – dissolved by childish joy.
 [...]
 It hurts that I cannot succeed
 to imagine myself alone,
 not even in the salon, already degraded.
 It is always here
 -your smile, your caress, your coverage,
 -brother's awakening, encouraging, dreaming.

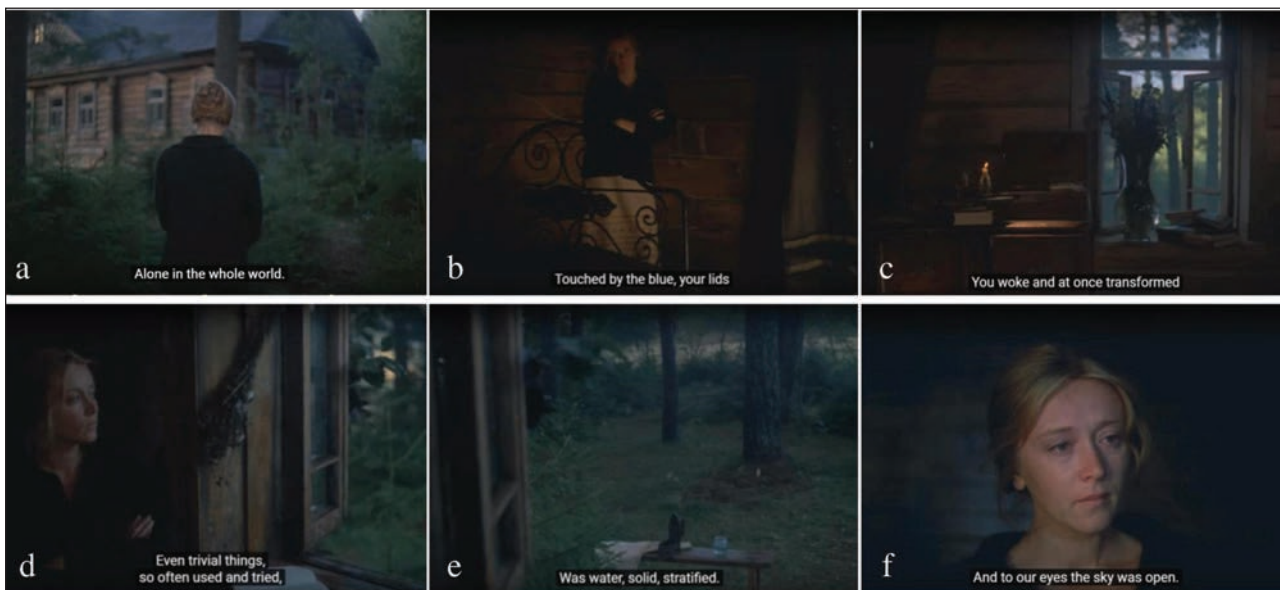


Figure 3: Scenes during the recitation of the first poem, around and through the maternal house (excerpts from *Mirror*, 1975); a) view from the yard; b) the corner in the bedroom; c) a window framing the forest above the reading corner; d) the Mother gazing through the window; e) the iron, the bench, the cloth, the forest seen from the inside; f) the eyes of the abandoned Mother.

“First Dates”, fragment

*Belonging only to me,
You woke and at once transformed
The language humans speak and think.
Speech rushed up sonorously formed,
With the word “you” so much reformed
As to evolve a new sense meaning king.
[...] And suddenly all changed, like in a trance,
Even trivial things, so often used and tried,
When standing ‘tween us, guarding us,
Was water, solid, stratified.
(Arseny Tarkovsky, cited in *Mirror*, 1975).*

The poem echoes the period of blooming love between the two parents (*visible* most intensively in the ending scene of the movie), whereas the cinematic sequence (Figure 3) unfolded through the House with the absent father, the year after his departure. It started with a frame showing the exterior and the yard, flowed through the house framing the movements of the characters, flowed through the window framing the forest/bench/iron again, and closed with the portrait of the Mother in tears. The poem spoke about the transformation of the human language, about “trivial things” gaining new meaning “when standing between us, guarding us”. The scene elaborated another connotation of the room, five years after the writing of the poem – both a bedroom, dinning and reading room – through the moods of an abandoned Mother with two children. That is, following the difference of the

event (different space-appropriation), the semantic valency changed. The vulnerability of her condition was exposed in the preceding scene on the wooden fence in the yard, when a disoriented man (a doctor) approached her for a discussion, while the children rested in a cradle in the forest background. In the scene after the poem recitation, the camera moved to the shed in fire in the yard, first shown in the mirror-image of the two children gazing outside, and later – with the Mother sitting on the well helplessly, observing the fire without being able to do anything. There is no linear time-space narrative in *Mirror*, and yet, a holistic experience of the scenes came to us as an organically exhibited truth, giving a silent resistance to a logical/usual flow of events. The contrast of moods in the cinematic image and the poem enabled us to grasp transtemporal fragments of Tarkovsky’s truth, not as bare objective facts, but as a “unison of imagination and experience” (Ingold, 2018).

In a similar way, objects in the author’s paternal home gained importance according to the development of a loving dialogue of a different kind: the one between a granddaughter and grandmother. Architectural and urban fragments gain meaning according to the *ever-changing modification of ties* between beloved ones. For example, the wall between the living room and grandmother’s bedroom had different connotations across the two periods of lived experience. In 1996, it was a vertical surface serving to keep grandfather from falling during his first moments of vertigo attacks, giving us time to react and help his approach

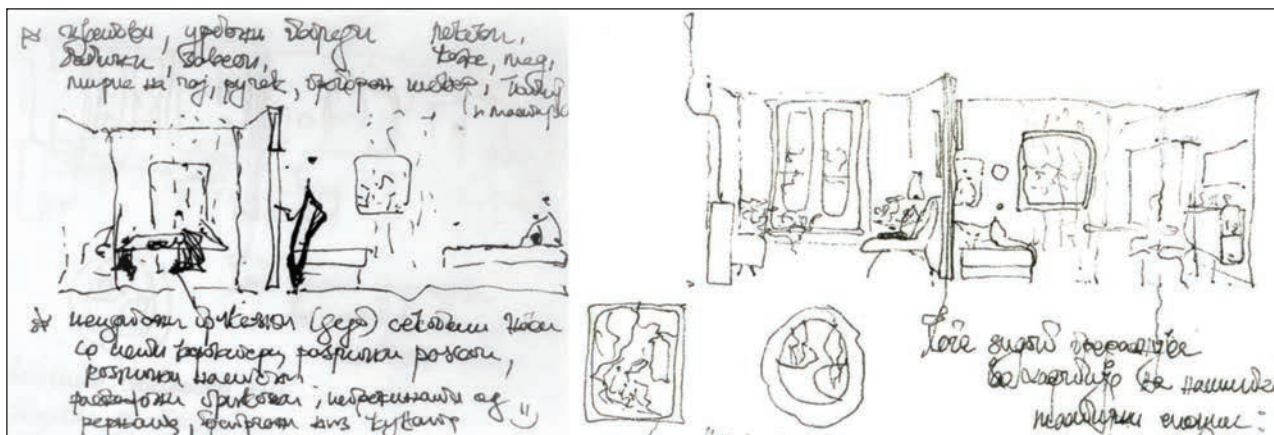


Figure 4: Author's poem-drawing, modification of ties during time, 1996 and 2017 (personal archives).

to the bed. From 2010 to 2017 it became a field of communication between the two beds (author's and her grandmother's), a transmitter of signals-different types of knocking as signalization of a cheerful play, or as an emergent call for help due to her pains (Figure 4).

(1996)

A dinning table as a dialogue surface.
Grandfather: stories drawn,
always with different plots.
Grandmother: stories told,
always interrupted by the oven,
twisted/elongated through the House.

Flowers, urban glimpses,
whirled curtains, a smell of tea, medicines,
burnt sugar, coffee,
papyrus, and ink.

(2017)

The wall transformed
into a paper
absorbing the ink
of our blueish feelings.

[...]

Paintings: windows above its shell
– unfeasible bridges,
above-human-feelings,
sorrowful infatuations.
A secret archive behind
the door wing.

**“I waited for you yesterday since morning”,
fragment**

They guessed you wouldn't come,
Do you remember the weather? Like a holiday!
I went out without a coat.
Today came, and they fixed for us

A somehow specially dismal day,
It was very late, and it was raining,
The drops cascading down the chilly branches.
No word of comfort, tears undried...
(Arseny Tarkovsky, cited in *Mirror*, 1975).

The poet speaks in the name of the Mother. Here, we can read the condition of waiting as time in which the pain and fear of the absence of the beloved person are being formed. A crucial change in just one day can be noticed. Here we can feel an echo of the previous poem-cinematic image entwinement: a memory of an experience and its comparison to a present day condition. The architectural configuration of the printing factory is shown as an opposition to the Home (Figure 5): instead of icons or family portraits we see Stalin's and Trotsky's posters; instead of windows opened towards the forest, we see parapets inhabited by interior plants, instead of “the walls made of logs and the dark entrance” we see sterile halls of white concrete (Tarkovsky, 1975). The poem is being read in the hall while the Mother returns to her office after a panic attack caused by her fear of making a mistake in proofreading in the printing factory. Tarkovsky develops a preceding scene where the Mother chooses the parapet as a place to perform her professional duty, in contrast to the atmosphere around her: repeatability of typing machines and typists, turning their backs to the window light. Her posture is set in the foreground: before the branches of the room plant. The coat on her body seems to behave as a protection of her innerness, in contrast to the open-hearted coatless waiting from the first stanza.

Tarkovsky exhibits his empathy with the Mother, while at the same time he exhibits his own apprehension of the spaces framing her presence, in comparison to the Home. In a similar manner, the author's poem-drawings express jealousy towards each place



Figure 5: Scenes before and during the recitation of the second poem in the printing house (excerpts from *Mirror*, 1975); a) the parapet as an alternative working place; b) the workers in the printing house – turning their back to the windows; c) the Mother walking in the Hall.



Figure 6: Protagonists / antagonists – objects and architectural / urban elements as places framing and radiating the loving dialogue (personal archives).



Figure 7: Scenes during the recitation of the third poem (excerpts from *Mirror*, 1975); a) and b) documentary sequences, the war, crossing the river; c) the orphan, wayfaring without orientation.



Figure 8: Scenes during the recitation of the fourth poem; a) walking towards *The Home*; b) dream sequence, wind around the table and the grass in the yard; c) dream sequence, entering the house through layers of embroidered curtains.

that kept the grandmother away from her. They even radiate an incomprehensible fear from her own Home during her absence. City's bridges, market, stores, sidewalks, gained the mark of a protagonist or antagonist according to how close or how far they kept her from her presence (Figure 6).

“Life, Life!”, fragment

Neither death, nor darkness, exists.
We're all already on the seashore;
I'm one of those who'll be hauling in the nets
When a shoal of immortality swims by.
If you live in a house - the house will not fall.
[...] I measured time with geodetic chains
And marched across it,
as though it were the Urals.

Yet for a corner whose warmth I could rely on
I'd willingly have given all my life,
Whenever her flying needle
Tugged me, like a thread, around the globe.
(Arseny Tarkovsky, cited in *Mirror*, 1975).

In this poem-cinematic image entwining, Tarkovsky is trying to elevate the significance of *Mirror* above his personal biography: to touch questions addressing the collective wounds of the Russian people he felt during the war. Here, we can read the nostalgia as a

“relationship between personal and collective memory” (Boym, 2001, 9). The poem speaks about immortality, while the recitation itself integrates two events: crossing the river by soldiers, and a sorrowful movement of a child (who lost his parents during the war) through the snow (Figure 7).

Bringing together these two versions of war relativizes what was then considered to be progress. The two scenes precede the scene of reunion between the father with the two children – one of the most touching moments of the movie. Here we can read a personal experience of war through the absence of the father, through the painful compassion of the abandoned mother. Tarkovsky labels the documentary-scene as the “center, the very essence, heart and nerve” of the movie, which started as notations of his “intimate lyrical memories” (Tarkovsky, 1989, 130). He explains that the scene is a brutal story about tragic suffering as “a price of what is known as historical progress, and of the innumerable victims whom, from time immemorial, it has claimed. It was impossible to believe for a moment that such suffering was senseless” (Tarkovsky, 1989, 130). In the previous entwining of the poem and cinematic image, we can feel the director's pain caused by his mother's absence; in the second-the pain caused by father's absence. The three scenes occur in a natural environment (the sea, the snowy shore, the forest before the Home); the absence of architectural marker reflects a feeling of discenteredness and disorientation of the inner state of the characters, and in the observer.



Figure 10: Author's poem-drawing 'First Skies', modification of ties during time, 1995 and 2017 (personal archives).

Euridyce (fragment), Arseny Tarkovsky, cited in *Mirror* (1975)

Without body a soul's nude,
as a body's nude without a shirt:
no thought's forthcoming, no good,
no idea's born and no word.

A question that has no answer:
whoever can come back
from the floor where no dancer
was ever to leave track?
(Arseny Tarkovsky, cited in *Mirror*, 1975).

In the fourth poem, we read the tracks of the dancer as metaphor of memories we imprint inside our embodied 'floor'. In this scene, the whole spatial configuration of the house becomes clear. The entwinement between the poem and the image seems to be a continuation (and intuitive re-

solution) of *First Dates* entwinement. The dream sequence in black and white (Figure 8), when little Andrey (Aleksey) enters the house, is emphasized through the words: "run on my child, do not lament the fate of poor Euridyce". These lines are *Mirror* of Arseny's farewell poem, dedicated to Andrey (he was at the age of three) before leaving his family: "Enter your night dreams in yourself / and reflect in your own mirror" (cited in Zelenskaya, 2016). Digging in his most vulnerable memories, Andrey succeeds to fulfill this covenant: the opening scene of the movie (séance when the young man overcomes speech impediments) can be understood as the preface that *Mirror* is the language through which he can express most of his intimate heavy emotions "without speech impairments" (Abraham, 2013). As Tarkovsky writes, identifying what is true with what is expressed, "to seek one's own truth (and there can be no other, no "common" truth) is to search for one's own language, the system of expression destined to give form to one's own ideas" (Tarkovsky, 1989, 85).

The Author's poem-drawings are another language of overcoming emotional "speech impediments". They are a kind of emotional convalescence, a mode of re-thinking the ties with the closest persons and closest places as mirrors of the self. The immersion into re-writing and re-drawing the childhood places withdraws re-visiting traces in layers of four generations. The author's Home grows vertically with each birth; while the rooms/levels of current living exhibit the archives of the living family, the lower levels both exhibit and hide silent stories about the life of the deceased, and memories of the places told by the living persons. In this sense, the Home is a spatial family map pregnant with unspoken narratives (Figure 9). Poem-drawings are emotive tools encouraging the author's wayfaring through collective space-time, by re-imagining their relevance in the living spatial present.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

This article aims to emphasize the role of emotional receptivity and responsiveness in spatial observation through two types of heterogenous artistic languages. First, in *Mirror*, the four entwinements between Arseny Tarkovsky's poetry and Andrey Tarkovsky's cinematic image frame the embodied memory of the emotional experience of the paternal Home as a psychosomatic diary. Second, the author's poem-drawing entwinement began as a personalized response to her aesthetic experience with *Mirror*, but developed into a language that succeeded in excavating the author's memories and experiences placed in the inner spatial biography; to re-think her semantic relevance and to communicate them on an emotional level. In both cases, the

enhanced sensitivity towards memory and experience allowed an intimacy between the author and the observed spatial phenomenon, and therefore it integrated subjective and objective types of knowledge through an inner wayfaring and vigilant interpretation.

The conceptual and methodological lessons that *Mirror* instilled on the environmental receptivity of the author's poem-drawings can be explained in four principles: poetics of memory and logics of dream (against the abstract notion of order), anthropological mise-en-scène (*inner life* against *symbol* as content of cinematic image), art as meta-language of spiritual wandering (against manifestos, *an antithesis of pragmatism*), and empathy against judgement (suspension of judgement). Elaborating memories and dreams (spiritual phenomena), both case studies exhibited *experiential break* and *personal time* as elongations of an experienced reality. This article resulted in a discussion on how the poem-cinematic image and poem-drawing entwinement can work as emotives that offer an alternative way of bonding to, perceiving, and the recreation of built reality.

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ČUSTVENA DOVZETNOST SKOZI PREPLET PESMI-(FILMSKE) PODOBE IN PESMI-RISBE. ODKRITJE UTELEŠENEGA SPOMINA V "OGLEDALU" TARKOVskega

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POVZETEK

Članek predstavi pomembnost vloge čustvene dovzetnosti in odzivnosti pri dojetju prostora preko dveh heterogenih umetnostnih jezikov. Prvič, v *Ogledalu*, štirje prepleti med poezijo Arsenija Tarkovskega in filmsko podobo Andreja Tarkovskega ponazarjajo utelešeni spomin čustvenih izkustev rojstne hiše kot psihosomatični dnevnik. Drugič se avtoričin preplet pesmi-risbe prične kot osebni odziv na estetski doživljaj *Ogledala* in razvije v jezik, ki uspe priklicati avtoričine spomine in izkustva, ki jih deli z drugimi in so locirani v njeni notranji prostorski biografiji, na novo osmisli njihov semantični pomen, in jih izrazi na čustven način. V obeh primerih izboljšano razumevanje spomina in izkustva omogoča intimnost med avtorjem in opazovanim prostorskim fenomenom in tako povezuje subjektivna spoznanja in objektivna znanja s pomočjo notranjega popotovanja in natančne interpretacije.

Konceptualni in metodološki napotki, ki jih *Ogledalo* vsebuje kot poduk o okoljski dovzetnosti za avtoričine pesmi-risbe, so razloženi v obliki štirih načel: poetika spomina in logika sanj (kot nasprotje abstraktni predstavi reda), antropološka mizanscena (notranje življenje nasproti simbolu kot vsebini filmske podobe), umetnost kot meta-jezik duhovnega pohajanja (napram manifestom, je antiteza pragmatizma) in empatija (ni obsojanja). Pri razlaganju spominov in sanj (duhovnih pojavov) oba primera prikazujeta izkustveni prelom in subjektivno izkustvo časa kot podaljšek doživljene resničnosti. Ta članek razpravlja o tem, kako lahko prepletanje pesmi-filmske podobe in pesmi-risbe nudi alternativen način dojetja in poustvarjanja grajenega okolja.

Ključne besede: Tarkovski, pesem-(filmska) podoba, pesem-risba, rojstna hiša, utelešeni spomin čustvenega izkustva

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