

Abstract

The collections *Vanutí* (1932) and *Na postupu* (poems written in 1943–1948, published in 1964) are both of particular importance within the development of the poetry written by Vladimír Holan (1905–1980). The collection *Vanutí*, full of strongly bound, hermetic verses put together into intimate, lyrical compositions is a direct counterpoint to the collection *Na postupu*, written in free verse and accompanied by clearer expression of epic nature, orientated towards historical and everyday topics of the society. With respect to the relation between poetry and reality and as far as the way of creating meaning goes, the key notion is the metaphor. However, theoretical foundations of classical metaphor are unsatisfactory in this case – they cannot describe the originality of Holan’s poetry sufficiently. By applying the theory of “live” metaphor, formulated by Paul Ricœur in his essays *La Métaphore vive* (1975) and *Interpretation theory: discourse and the surplus of meaning* (1976), we can achieve the most detailed description of typical metaphors in both collections. Thanks to Ricœur’s pattern *X is/is not Y*, which expresses ambivalent predication present in live metaphor schematically, a peculiar dynamics of emerging sense (typical for each collection) is established. Metaphors that can be found in the collection *Vanutí* all maximise ambivalence, whereas those that appear in the second collection (*Na postupu*) have the common denominator of minimising it. In each collection, this peculiar dynamics is typical not only of metaphors, but also of other elements of writing.