Jūratė Landsbergytė-Becher
Lithuanian, Vilnius
Lithuanian Culture Research Institute

Folkloristic Archetype Versus Sovietism in Marcelijus Martinaitis The Ballads of Kukutis

As a consequence of the WWII, the occupation of Lithuania and other Baltic countries, especially its brutal barbarism, overturned the post-war layers of archetypal Lithuanian thinking and left strong marks of mental changes and a correspondingly formed response in Lithuanian literature.

Such metaphorically strong response to the Sovietism was the verses *The Ballads of Kukutis* by Marcelijus Martinaitis (1936–2013), first printed in 1977. They open up a field of special historical injustices and absurdity converted into satire, which is faced by the "village fool" Kukutis. He does not understand the situation but is forced to adapt to "normality" under the conditions of occupation. *The Ballads of Kukutis* can be compared to the works of the British writer George Orwell which show the totalitarian absurdity (*1984, Animal Farm*). The norms and ideological principles of the Soviet state are observed through folklorism and simplism of its transformations, like the theatre of absurd in "Mano sugalvota pasaka pakartam Kukučiui palinksminti" (The Story I came up with to cheer up hanged Kukutis). Through the prism of the metaphor of the "hanged" ones, the stories of the occupied acquire a special code of resistance and support for anti-Sovietism, destroying any mental barriers of the "iron walls". Kukutis being forced to renounce earth, sky and Lithuania "through the fire of Germany" names the archetypes of Lithuanian identity that help to understand the foundations of mental resistance in Marcelijus Martinaitis' poetry and which begin their journey back to so longed homeland in Lithuanian poetry. At that time (1974-1978), these archetypes start their comeback in music too in the works of Bronius Kutavičius "Prutena/Sand-covered Village" and "Last Pagan Rites".

So, the folkloristic metaphor and its bearer, Kukutis, invincible to the Soviet censors, the naive fool from Žuveliškės village, becomes the archetype of the resistance to Sovietism, exposing the absurdity of the system.

Key words: folklore, metaphor, archetype, Sovietism, absurdity.

Historical context. The seventh decade of the last century is called the "time of stagnation"; however, in the contemporary research of humanitarian sciences, this period is distinguished by the rise of self-awareness. A significant split appears in the Soviet system, particularly in music and poetry at its outset. Composers like Arvo Pärt, Krzysztof Penderecki, Bronius Kutavičius, and Peteris Vasks created *the music of the changes* or "the music that changed times" (Katinaitė, Povilionienė 2014). Folkloristic simplism in the form of the inverted metaphor of "craziness" impersonated by the village's outsider and joker delivered the most influential and crucial movement in Lithuanian poetry. Poet Marcelijus Martinaitis (1936–2013) created folkloristic archetypal character Kukutis, who was able to expose the absurdity of the Soviet regime and rules of its political system as a grotesque prison of nations – the Soviet Union. Linguistic power of interminably hidden archetypes enabled them to penetrate the world of thought to encounter the great ideas of the Lithuanian national fate. Kukutis's mind was open to visualise the bad experiences of the global wars, was able to "travel without borders" and stayed on like a conscious ghost of the "naive" past in the insane and overturned contemporaneity.

Folklore and Sovietism: the ideological "usefulness" Folklore was initially assigned to play an important role in occupied Lithuania. Flourishing of folklore, the formation of ensembles, competitions, song festivals were held immediately after the reinforcement of the Soviet occupation at the end of the World War II which had to show the world the support of the Lithuanian nation to the idea of the Soviet Union as a voluntary commonwealth. Despite the growing resistance of the nation, the first Song

Festival of the Lithuanian SSR was organised in the spring of 1946. It was a cunning ideological step to adopt the idea of nationalism from the resistance movement and to demonstrate the mass loyalty of the people to the regime. Soviet leaders did their best to make the celebration look very successful, focused and full of uplifting emotions. The resolution on the 1946 festival was drafted as early as in autumn of 1945. It had an aim to execute an event on an exceptional scale. It was seen that folk song could act as a strong factor mobilising society for life under Soviet ideologies (Putinaitė 2019:59). From that perspective, "the organisation of the Song Festival reminded the mobilisation of special forces. Exclusive political attention has been paid to the celebration. <...> The volume of registered artistic activities in Lithuania increased ten times during the year. <...> According to the resolution, the technical work was commissioned to the House of Folk Art, the administrative work to the Board of Art Affairs. Ideological control was exercised by the Propaganda and Agitation Division of the LCP Central Committee (Putinaitė 2019:59).

These instruments of the Soviet regime seeking to subject the folklore to its ideology appear grotesque from the present standpoint, reminding of the parody of totalitarianism by Georg Orwell in *1984* or *Animal Farm*. Indeed, totalitarian methods of the Soviet rule, especially regarding culture, can easily be interpreted through the prism of the theatre of satire and absurd. In literature, Marcelijus Martinaitis was the first to take such a step launching the arrow of metaphorical folklore into Sovietism. His sources of inspiration were the archetypes of the Lithuanian rural past, the surviving relics of the poet's experience.

Landscapes and sources. Marcelijus Martinaitis was born in the village of Paserbenčiai, Samogitia, in the West of Lithuania, in 1936. The set of wars which he survived in his childhood in Lithuania became a special field dotted with archetypes, from which the artefacts of memory strongly influenced the poet's literary resistance to Sovietism. And the latter found its support in folklorism, in the layers of folklore, the same ones that Soviet ideologists tried to turn into evidence of the nation's prosperity, the ideological capital of the victorious ones. The folkloristic movement initially promoted and activated in various countries, seized or occupied as satellites, like Poland was (*Cold War,* directed by Pawel

Pawlikowski, 2018), has become a good cover for the resistance spirit to thrive and rise. And one of its invincible forms was a folkloristic metaphor – Kukutis created by Marcelijus Martinaitis and loaded with images of archetypes.

The horrifying grotesque of Sovietism. The Soviet *theatre* of *controlling everything* is a great scene for the grotesque metaphor of absolutism/totalitarianism. It became the overwhelming argument on which the book *1984* by George Orwell was based (Orwell 2015). The absurdity of control yielded particularly well to the Fluxus transformation: portraits of party leaders, central committees, mass demonstrations of May 1, October Revolution and Victory Day (film *The Trial* was written and directed by Sergei Loznitsa, 2018), and other "nationwide actions" were a grotesque but gruesome zone where almost everyone could feel like a joker being watched on stage. The real rhythm of the life of nations was sucked into the past, blocked by ideological "iron walls", *put to sleep under the ground*, became the realm of the archaeology of memory or psychology of the depth. Meanwhile, the reality covered with the mask of a lethally overturned absolutism acquired a grotesque image and the shape of installation of totalitarianism, dreary in its own threat. In a sense, it became a medium for the action of the theatre of absurd and a field of dreary emptiness encoded like a close-by observed grotesque but extremely accurate carnival of satire.

Entrenched image of the Soviets in the 1970s was appallingly grey and closely reminding the prison zone: "The Soviet Union... in 1970 was even more repressive, paranoid and dingy than...earlier. The communist orthodoxy of the Brezhnev era seemed to leech away all colour and imagination... the queues, the grime, the suffocating bureaucracy, fear and corruption stood in a grind contrast to the bright and beautiful world... The propaganda was ubiquitous, officials alternately servile and rude, everyone spied on everyone else. <...> Nothing worked properly. Nobody smiled. The most casual contact with foreigners provoked suspicion. <...> The patriotic march blasted out of loudspeakers on every street corner, written to communist formulas, bland, booming and inescapable, the soundscape of Stalin" (Macintyre 2019:36). Inevitably, the Soviet reality dictated a great script for the theatre of absurd, metaphors, and awakened folkloric

archetypes. And most of all in this performance, Trickster, the archetype of incorporation of the actions of real transformations and the false masks into the interactions of memory layers, reveals its power. According to Carl Gustav Jung's (1875–1968) theory, it is one of the essential inspirers in the dramaturgy of the transformation of humanity. In the light of its operation, all efforts of absolute Sovietism control acquire a grotesque nature of the absurd. So, the medium for Martinaitis's Kukutis performance was ideally prepared and expected on the real "stage" of totalitarianism in the Soviet regime.

The trajectory of archetypes. The Trickster. In *Concerning Rebirth*, Jung highlights the fundamental inevitability of change-revival in the established process of the collapse of society. "Natural transformation ... forms the foundations of images of rebirth. Nature herself demands death and rebirth. As the alchemist, Democritus says: <...> nature rules over nature. There are natural transformation processes which simply happen to us, whether we like it or not, and whether we know it or not. These processes develop considerable psychic effects, which would be sufficient in themselves to make any thoughtful person ask himself what really happened to him. <...> Natural transformation processes announce themselves mainly in dreams. Elsewhere I have presented a series of dream-symbols of the process of individuation. They were dreams which without exception exhibited rebirth symbolism. In this particular case, there was a long-drawn-out process of inner transformation and rebirth into another being." (Jung (a) 2004, Jung (b) 2015:154–155). Martinaitis's literary character Kukutis emerges in this process of rebirth as the provocative agent of dreamy transformations, some kind of folkloric Trickster – a rural man injured in the global wars and thrown into the apocalypse of the Soviet grotesque. Travelling both in time, in the other world beyond the Soviet Empire and the real world "without borders" Martinaitis's Kukutis collects artefacts scattered in wars – the "normal" symbols of the world's existence and reflects them in the "daydreams" of his time. So, the "dream" turns into a landmark of reality and allows the "bridges of time" to reveal themselves (Stonys 2020), the historicism dimensions of the transcendental landscape to emerge. Here, historicism,

in the grotesque and "innocent" folkloric form of Trickster, overcomes the Sovietism. The levels of exchange places – a transformation happens. Speaking of which, it is worth taking a more in-depth look at the "nooks" of Martinaitis's poetry – Kukutis's *village of eternity*.

The village world. The village becomes a field of symbolic actions for authenticity and social status and fatalistic historic coincidences. For poet Martinaitis, it is the metaphor of his homeland – a global village. As a child, he experienced the village phenomenon and three occupations: The Soviets in 1940, Nazi Germany in 1941, and again the return of the Soviets in 1944, and then the Lithuanian partisan resistance which lasted for more than a decade. Martinaitis's Kukutis *lives* precisely in this period of occupations when Stalinist repressions especially strengthened. Being a "village fool" (this image allows him to feel free to express his thoughts), Kukutis confronted the rules of the Soviet regime, being unable to understand them, wandering in time and space and thus violating the control of the system. By constructing the understanding of the Soviet system, Kukutis comes nearer to the demonstration of the mental form of the absurdity of the system and the transformation of the revival of marginalised fragmented archetypes. In the experiences of Martinaitis's village world, Kukutis's prototypes also included living people who lived as if being untouched by the Soviet regime – the village freaks, considered insane and outside the law. The poet remembers listening to their stories in his childhood and especially their visions, spiritual meditations, journeys in the unknown of the time and the world (*Introduction: Kukutis as a Trickster Character* by Laima Vincė in Martinaitis 2011:9).

This character of a village fool – an outcast from society, was a great inspiration for the ideological deconstruction of Sovietism to show the grotesque futility and incapacity of the absurd regime. All it took was the performance of a folkloristic character on the "stage" of the absurd theatre, and its grotesque, like in genius play *Diary of a Madman* by Nikolai Gogol, becomes a powerful eclipse of the mental collapse of the system. *Kukučio baladės* [The Ballads of Kukutis] carried out this role in Lithuanian literature.

Kukutis and the world. Martinaitis's discovery lies in his hero's experience of self-doubling and self-multiplication. He becomes thrown into space, in this case to Samogitia, without the boundaries of time and place, in a confused post-war world. And he begins to wonder constantly. "Awakened" Kukutis sees the strangeness of the duplication of the world's signs, the constant participation of war fires and violence in the sequence of human visions. The very first and most important experience of Kukutis's existence is the lost amputated leg in the Russian-Japanese war and the village outcast's meeting with infinity. Here Martinaitis uses folkloristic simplism to open the gates of post-war globalisation – Lithuanian existentialism in the world.

> "While civilisations grew over with forest,
> while Polish Lords died out,
> we drank half our lives away in one night – bottoms up.
> I winked across the table at his sad and dispirited
> only daughter –
> the lovely hunchback.
> As I flirted with his daughter,
> until he gave me her hand,
> Berlin was destroyed,
> and the children came home one-legged...
>
> And I went grey
> as we considered
> what it was lighting up the sky:
> maybe Skuodas burning?
> or maybe they were bombing Paris?
>
> And until we understood
> that our boundary was eternity
> his one daughter prayed in the corner
> like an aged owl.
> As the hunchback crossed herself
> nations and governments collapsed
> and the Swedes lay down on the ground
> with their toes pointing north.

559

And while he made his talk
sound like German
or Russian
or Polish...
the departing train bellowed
like a moose with its mouth wide open.
<...>
As the politics were ending
Munich played jazz.
Saxophones whinnied
like tethered Prussian horses...
We hung our heads,
seated at the table, half our lives gone –
no thanks for Warsaw,
no danke for Prussia.

In the time it took for Kukutis to attach his right leg,
in the time it took to light the lamp –
the rooster rowed an entire century away
in one single solitary night".
     (Martinaitis 2011:15, 17. Translated by Laima Vincė)

     The historical infinity of Lithuania is collected like this and put into images reminiscent of folklore: drinking and listening to the radio at the table in a rural homestead and observing the glow of the fires of war. The constant participation of European cities and nations in the field of Kukutis's *global consciousness i*s very significant and meaningfully impressive; however, it tramps all over the regulations of higher literature and falls into the folkloric unornamented Lithuanian reality of "grey overcoats". Samogitian village, as an unimaginable backwater of the real world of action, is like a global centre that absorbs reality, a paradigmatic artefact of the historical flow incomprehensible to other nations. Kukutis's "centre of the world" always confronts with Prussia and the Prussians, the extinct Baltic tribe, Germany and "taken Berlin", Paris, Warsaw and the Swedes, referred to here by the ancient Lithuanian word Žuvėdai – fish-eating people... Prussians are mentioned especially often – "Prussians were extinct from the face of the earth" (Martinaitis 2011:15), as well as Prussian horses. Prussia itself unfolds as a multiple meaning metaphor

560

for the name of the extinct state and the nation both as the prehistoric image of the Baltic people and the current image of the military power of Germany, which took over the name of the extinct Balts and possibly their destiny... Everything gets so mixed up between life and death in Kukutis's geopolitics that it becomes unclear who takes over whose fate… and where finally "Munich played jazz" (Martinaitis 2011:17), and we find ourselves in post-war Europe, where Lithuania also exists among other conquered states, whatever their situation is... From Kukutis point of view, there is not a single "victorious" or "majestic" country in the World War. Everything is mixed up. His dimension and pain become metaphorically global in Kukutis's lost amputated leg:

> "Inside there is something
> I cannot understand,
> something bigger than the leg itself.
> It reaches Australia, Japan,
> the Antarctic.
> Having travelled the globe
> from the other side of the earth,
> the leg's pain returns.
>
> From its wooden core
> something spreads, speaking Japanese,
> English,
> German...
> That cold horrible deadness
> penetrates food,
> clothing,
> water,
> bores straight through the core of the earth –
> as though spreading poison.
> <...>
> That horrible
> incomprehensible thing in my leg
> carries pain to far away lands –
> as though it were world war".
> <...>
> (Martinaitis 2011: 19)

Kukutis's post-war artefact – a wooden leg, unites the world wars into one present from the Russian-Japanese War, the Great War, up to the World War II and the War after War and weaves them into an infinite curve, impossible to understand or make sense, bending over the prism of Lithuanian history... Here, the collision of Lithuania and the motions of the global wars are important to Martinaitis like a geopolitical axis, which can pierce like an arrow the ideological armour of the "iron walls".

Kukutis meets Sovietism. The high power of metaphor lies in the incredible political turn of Martinaitis's metaphorical poetics. The most striking image in naming the Soviet occupation is the image of hanged Kukutis. By the way, the political pointer of hanged brothers can also be picked up in the poetry of Sigitas Geda (1943–2008): "silently silently two small innocent people are hanged" (Geda 1988:23). Martinaitis varies this metaphor more than once, as well as metaphors of Kukutis's death, his doubling, his geopolitical transformations, his presence in this and the other world, which allows us to marvel the sequence of events. So, the relationship of the *hanged Kukutis* with Sovietism becomes the most powerful political image in the ballads:

> "When I worked the land for heaven
> and laid out the sea's floor
> and laid out the sea's floor
> as Germany burned
> they came to take me away
> they put a noose on my neck
> they put a noose on my neck
> as Germany burned
> under Blinstrubiškes oak
> they hanged me.
>
> And when they hanged me
> I quickly come to my senses:
> I gave up my land
> the heavens and Lithuania
> the heavens and Lithuania".
> (Martinaitis 2011: 33, 35)

562

So, Kukutis gives up and executes the instructions of the occupants. However, naming what he betrays ("I gave up my land, heavens and Lithuania") brings to the daylight the pyramid of valuable paradigms. It shows the relationship between infinity and absurdity. Or that betrayal is impossible – the transcendental action takes place from a value point of view. Kukutis "participates" in it already being hanged, thus sharply mocking the absurdity of reality.

> "Over there, in the beyond, in that other world,
> in heaven, they gave me an apartment
> under Blinstrubiškės oak,
> they gave me seven feet of meadow
> and what more do I need?
> <...>
> And over in that other world
> I drive fish into the waters
> and I understand what
> I could never understand".
>   (Martinaitis 2011: 35)

From the point of view of Sovietism, Kukutis "regained his mind" just like that. However, several poetical, metaphorical twists in reality only wake up the mind like the words "I gave up my land, heavens and Lithuania", "...in that other world, in heaven, they gave me an apartment" (a symbol of Soviet prosperity) and "I understand what I could never understand" – it is an absurdity named and showed as a deconstruction of the lost meaning of words, manipulation, twisting it into the opposite. Here, Martinaitis playfully and precisely demonstrates this in the worldview of *already hanged* Kukutis and his admiration for the *realness of reality*. This breakthrough in the power of metaphor is used in the method of meaning reversal and hits the target directly, the control of the meanings of Sovietism, flipping it "upside-down" and liberating the obvious truth. The poem "How Kukutis regained his senses" also appeals to the post-war "Germany burned" (Martinaitis 2011:33). The latter meaning in Martinaitis's verses is also repeated continuously.

This poetry feature is strengthened further in the next ballad "A story I come up with to cheer up hanged Kukutis". Here, Martinaitis's

563

image becomes extremely crushing on the doctrine of greatness and triumph of Sovietism. It is also worth mentioning the cinematic reflections of Sovietism that are currently being created – the documentary "State Funeral" by the Ukrainian director Sergei Loznitsa, who lives in Germany, and was first presented at the Vilnius *Scanorama* Festival in November 2019. There is a large amount of documentary on the "shock of the world" on the global scale – Stalin's funeral. The incredible theatrics of reality and the horrible, fear-laden grotesque, watching millions, mourning, crying, attracting crowds to see the commander. The absurdity of this state theatricalism is observed precisely and adequately by the hanged Kukutis of the eight-decade Martinaitis's poetry:

> "In a wheelbarrow on feathers
> they push the fools' king
> so that he may look around him and see
> if the kingdom is big.
> Along the way, lined up,
> they ring bells for him,
> thanking him
> that they may thank him by ringing bells...
> He rides around the earth
> ten, twenty times
> and cannot find
> where the kingdom ends.
> <...>
> "How many times", the king asks,
> does the kingdom go around the earth?"
> "As many times", they answer,
> "as there are times around the earth..."
>
> "And the king is amassed
> at how the same ones
> keep thanking the king for what
> they have done for themselves –
> they thank him
> that they may thank him
> by ringing bells..."

"Only a few hanged ones
chase after the wheelbarrow asking
that they be granted the permission to die".

 "The story I came up with to cheer up hanged Kukutis".
(Martinaitis 2011: 35, 37)

The latter ballad fully exposes the grotesque greatness of Sovietism. It also draws the analogy with Hans Christian Andersen's tale "The Emperor's New Clothes", cleverly woven into the "scenography" of the Soviet era, where each role is recognised – "the king of fools", the crowd running behind and thanking for everything, similar to "the nation" and a few hanged ones, asking for permission to die – a clear analogy with the desecration of the bodies of murdered partisans, exposing them in market squares. It is a metaphor for the brutality and absurdity of Stalinism, catching us suddenly, like a bullet of a word – incredibly straight and accurate, piercing the very core of barbaric Sovietism from the post-war to the present-day ideological hybridity. And Kukutis has been already hung here, i.e. found guilty to the system. The grotesque political, theatrical absurdity is poetically smothered with the folklore by Martinaitis, simplicity and clarity of the familiar tale. The most unveiling moment of Sovietism is the "king's" concern about the size of his kingdom: "how many times does the kingdom go around the earth?" This reflects the Soviet pride of Great Russian imperialism as if it echoed here from the poem "The Path of the Bolshevik" by Salomėja Nėris: "We will stop when the whole earth blooms brightly red!" (Nėris 1957:475) Martinaitis masterfully reverses this "sign of greatness" into a naked misery, which projects towards nothing. So, after this "Fairy Tale", it becomes clear who Kukutis does not belong to – he *does not belong* to the Soviet system, he was "hanged" by the system. In this manner, he moves to the other time and space, sees both his several deaths and several lives, the "recovery of mind" and "alienation of consciousness" a constant dilemma of the *opposite of existence.* The ability to turn everything "upside-down", influence to do the opposite, makes him similar to Trickster. But it is not just a Trickster of psychological depth, but an unimpeachable outsider who was put under an obligation to review history and politics. Kukutis's geography, politics and history are inextricably linked. Therefore, Paris, Warsaw, Berlin, Skuodas, Japan, Germany

565

"burned", extinct Prussia, Sweden, the global war, the nice pictures of Niagara Falls and America are all paradoxically involved in these scenes of the Lithuanian history. The poem, permeated with the semantic codes of a very political "geography", reflects the scale of the crucifixion of the post-war damaging world:

As a part of a shattered existence, geography plays a significant role in Kukutis's imagery – it rejects the system of "iron curtain". Such role of these ballads is indeed political and becomes another resistance point of leading poetic thought.

The motifs of Kukutis's ballads are well-coded political slogans of Lithuania's resistance: the existence of the state between states, "erasure from the map", the everlasting picture of the global war, the absurdity of the rules of occupation opened at the historic crossroads and the "loss of consciousness" of the self. Kukutis's character personally identifies the Soviet theatre of absurd. It is the opposite of the Soviet desire to subject folklore to establish its goals and demonstrate the "authenticity of Sovietism." Here Kukutis comes in with his existential transformation between the occupations, lives and deaths, between the Siberia and Niagara Falls, between the "regaining of senses" and "being hanged", and "giving up Lithuania" and the yearning to see the homeland in the end, i.e. with the naming of archetypes banned by the occupation. In this metaphoric way, the character, turning over the image of folklorism, draws the paranormal of Sovietism as a piece of the cartoon into the limelight, shows its inadequacy and ideological kitsch. This required to create a character of Kukutis, who opened a new page of politics in the literature.

Martinaitis exhibits the inadequacy of the self and reality many times, varying the impossibility of being somebody, the inability to conform with oneself. The ballad "An Experiment" paints this situation, which essentially shows the place of Sovietism in Lithuanian consciousness and Kukutis's attempt to be a Homo Sovieticus:

> How ridiculous
> he thought
> how ridiculous
> this whole thing is
> it would seem that someone

is trying to mislead me
so I'd become even more confused
<...>
because it just may be
that a highest force is watching.
<...>
And he runs
with feathers from his pillow
clinging to him
with eyes that don't see
he runs to be first
and is chased
by the bodiless forces
of several worlds".

(Martinaitis 2011:71, 73)

Here, the abstract hunt of running turns against the mechanism of creating *Homo Sovieticus.* Non-subordinate to the system and control Kukutis's "endeavour to adapt" acquires a grotesque dimension and becomes an absurdity of own efforts – a show of the new socialist madness. This process demonstrates the anti-civilisational stupidity of Sovietism through the village "fool's" attempt to adapt to its system. In a certain way, here "Kukutis's Sermon to the Pigs" (Martinaitis 2011:47) resonates with the literary consciousness of George Orwell in *1984* and *Animal Farm* where pigs declare their policy 'Comrades!' he cried. 'You do not imagine, I hope, that we pigs are doing this in a spirit of selfishness and privilege?' (Orwell 2018:3 6).

Conclusions

Martinaitis's "The Ballads of Kukutis" have opened a new page in Lithuanian literature, when a folkloric rural character carries out his alternative movement of the epoch from the Lithuanian village of Žuveliškės into the world. This destroys the inviolability of the "iron walls". Kukutis's identity is determined by the rising inability to accept Sovietism. And Kukutis illustrates this perfectly by various versions of collisions between him and the system. They shine with interesting aspects of anti-Sovietism but remain wrapped in the "innocent" metaphorical prism of a folkloristic

metaphor of a village fool. Such a "double-bottomed passenger" travels all over the world. So Kukutis's stories become a list of absurdities in global politics, full of unexpected openings and angles. He becomes capable of by being "incapacitated". Kukutis continually talks about this duality of consciousness, complains, expresses the longing to his authentic homeland and his needs. It is a constant and continuous cycle of grumbles about his existence. Several crucial and timely, historically mature new political factors emerge here like wandering leitmotifs. The first one is the global world in the war – a factor geopolitical closeness. The chain of all of them could be arranged as follows:

1) Map of Kukutis's place in the world's history:

"Spending the night at Kukutis's farm"

"While civilisations grew over with forest,
while Polish Lords died out...
<...>
Berlin was destroyed <...>
or maybe they were bombing Paris?"
(Martinaitis 2011:15)

2) The global war (permanent? which one?) and Kukutis in its meat mincer:

"The world's pain in Kukutis's lost amputated leg"

"That horrible
incomprehensible thing in my leg
carries pain to far away lands –
as though it were world war".
(Martinaitis 2011: 19)

3) Kukutis in the paranormality of the Soviet occupation:

"How Kukutis regained his senses"

"And when they hanged me,
I quickly came to my senses:

I gave up my land,
the heavens and Lithuania".
                    (Martinaitis 2011: 33)

4) Kukutis confronts the Soviet cult of personality and the imperialist mentality of the occupants:

"The story I came up with to cheer up hanged Kukutis"

"He rides around the earth ten, twenty, times
and cannot find
where the kingdom ends".
(Martinaitis 2011: 37)

5) Kukutis and his multiple deaths in the desolation of the Soviet system:

"Kukutis's application for temporary relief aid"

"Only I haven't worked in all these years,
<...>
Only my tongue is speaking here.
All these years I haven't eaten anything –
the mine hung my insides to dry on the branches,
and the soldier made a mouth harmonica out of my teeth".
                            (Martinaitis 2011: 45)

6) Kukutis confronts his consciousness:

"How Kukutis became estranged from his consciousness"

"I wake up on my left side
And on my right side
I'm still dreaming with the door ajar:
<...>
Turning from my right
to my left
I feel that, instead of me,

there was never anything there –
just a horrible pit
filled with cold".
<div style="text-align:right">(Martinaitis 2011: 63)</div>

7) Kukutis's non-Soviet dream of geography "without borders" (central leitmotif):

"Kukutis opens his eyes"

"Kukutis opens his eyes
At the same time
In Žuveliškės
In Warsaw
And in Paris.
<...>
And in general,
is a person
permitted
To wake up at the same time
in Žuveliškės, in Warsaw, and in Paris?"
<div style="text-align:right">(Martinaitis 2011: 59)</div>

8) Kukutis and censorship:

"Kukutis's Words"

"Kukutis, they're making words for you over there,
they are teaching your words
what you ought to say".

"You say they're very busy
and won't let anyone inside?"

"Kukutis, they're guarding your words over there,
from your own loose tongue".
<div style="text-align:right">(Martinaitis 2011: 31)</div>

This way, Kukutis's encounter with the system acquires the character of a holistic phenomenon: not only he has to renounce existential

things but is forced to think, speak, and perceive himself in the world in an impossible way. He finds himself in the theatre of obvious absurdity and personally continues to evolve into the bearer of alternative absurdity – the Trickster. Any appearance of him in the art of the Soviet system interpretation becomes an increasingly obvious statement that "the emperor is without clothes". The folkloric metaphor of the rural loser helps him to reincarnate into the Trickster in several ways and become "invisible", and transform into a political observer of history, and the naive person of the fairy tale, the anti-hero, and into the negation of his own self. Thus, in "The Ballads of Kukutis", the most important goal being playfully overturned is the identity of Lithuania, paradigmatic, unchanging, eternally hidden in the subconscious with its archetypes.

9) Kukutis and the homeland – the archetype of psychological depth:

"Kukutis's Trip on the Samogitian Highway"

"What makes Lithuania so Lithuanian?
Where does it come from?
No one has ever been able to find it and destroy it –
whatever wars may have passed through,
however, the land may have been trampled –
Lithuania skies just go on looking Lithuanian".
(Martinaitis 2011: 131)

In the context, in which Martinaitis's "The Ballads of Kukutis" appeared presenting the hero folklorically as a "village fool" and in various ways spreading the message about the absurdity of Sovietism in Lithuania. The absurdity is shown as the incapacity of the system and recorded in:

the language ("Kukutis, they're making words for you"),

thinking ("How Kukutis became estranged from his consciousness"),

the world war and the devastated world ("...maybe they were bombing Paris?"),

the oppression of occupation (to live being "hanged"),

the post-war geographical chaos – the redrawing of state borders ("no danke for Prussia"),

571

the grotesque eclipse of totalitarianism – the cult of the "king of fools" ("...thanking him that they may thank ringing the bells..."),

the desecration of life and death ("Only a few hanged ones chase after the wheelbarrow asking that they be granted for permission to die").

The transcendence of the archetype of Lithuanian-self distinguishes Sovietism as an absurd performance in the face of the old folkloric village.

Bibliography

Geda 1988: Geda Sigitas. *Žalio gintaro vėriniai* [Beads of Green Amber]. Vilnius: Vaga, 1988.

Jung 2003 (a): Jung, Carl Gustav. *Four Archetypes. Part 2.* New York: Routledge, 2003. Book on-line. Accessed 23 August 2020; available from https://www.the16types.info/vbulletin/showthread.php/41304-Concerning-Rebirth-by-Carl-Gustav-Jung; Internet.

Jung 2015 (b): Jung, Carl Gustav. *Archetipai ir kolektyvinė pasąmonė [Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious].* Translation by Austėja Merkevičiūtė. Vilnius: Margi raštai, 2015.

Macintyre 2019: Macintyre, Ben. *The Spy and the Traitor.* London: Penguin Books, 2019.

Martinaitis 1981 (a): Martinaitis, Marcelijus. *Vainikas [The Wreath].* Vilnius: Vaga, 1981.

Martinaitis 2011 (b): Martinaitis, Marcelijus. *The Ballads of Kukutis.* Translation and introduction by Laima Vincė: London: Arc, 2011.

Nėris 1957: Nėris, Salomėja. *Raštai [The Works],* vol 1 Vilnius: Valstybinė grožinės literatūros leidykla, 1956.

Orwell 2015: Orwell, Georg. *1984.* Kaunas: Jotema, 2015.

Orwell 2018: Orwell, Georg. *Gyvulių ūkis.* [Animal Farm]. Kaunas: Jotema, 2018.

Pacepa and Rychlak 2019: Ion Pacepa and Julius Rychlak. *Dezinformacija [Disinformation].* Vilnius: Briedis, 2019.

Povilionienė and Katinaitė (eds) 2014: *Music, that Changed Time.* The Lithuanian Composer Bronius Kutavičius and the Outburst of Creativity after 1970. A collection of articles. Edited and compiled by Rima Povilionienė and Jūratė Katinaitė. Vilnius: Lithuanian Composers' Union, Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, 2014.

Putinaitė 2019: Putinaitė Nerija. *Skambantis molis. Dainų šventės ir Justino Marcinkevičiaus trilogija kaip sovietinio lietuviškumo ramsčiai [Ringing Clay: Song Festivals and Justinas Marcinkevičius' Trilogy of Plays as Pillars of Soviet Lithuanian Identity].* Vilnius: Lietuvos katalikų mokslo akademijoje, Naujasis židinys – Aidai, 2019.

Stonys 2020: Stonys, Audrius. Peizažas dokumentikoje [Landscape in a Documentary]. Art. D. research work. Lietuvos muzikos ir teatro akademija, 2020.