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IMAGE OF THE PARTISAN

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This article attempts to analyze a body of written Lithuanian literature that has, as a theme, Lithuanian guerilla operations against Soviet administration between 1944 and 1952. To the extent of available material, it considers the image-cluster of the partisan, as it is perceived by Lithuanians who have undergone differing cultural experiences; the partisans themselves in their songs, older emigrant authors in the West, a younger emigrant author in the United States, a representative of the official communist Lithuanian literature, and exiles in Siberia in their published prayers. At the same time the relationship of the partisan to his world — his friends and enemies — is discussed, and some of the regularities of theme and imagery apparent in these productions are considered in their cultural context.

The cross-cultural comparison that is seen as indispensable in the analysis of works of art for the purpose of cultural studies ¹ is implicit in the range of the material but is modified by the initially similar cultural experience of the authors of these productions.

Sources

Since 1945, when news of underground Lithuanian resistance reached the West, several literary works have appeared on the subject; plays, by Grinius ² and Landsbergis, ³ and novels by Alantas ⁴ and Rūta. ⁵ A source of great importance to these works was the publication of the memoirs of the partisan leader Daumantas in 1950. ⁶ Though primarily an autobiography, it includes a number of anonymous songs and poems composed by the partisans. A more extensive collection of partisan songs, containing 207 entries, was published in 1962. ⁷ A collection of prayers, written by Lithuanian exiles in Siberia in 1953, contains an important reference to the partisans. ⁸

Resistance activities were not officially recognised by the Soviets until 1957 and an extensive treatment of this subject by a Lithuanian communist author appears only in 1959 in a novel by Bielauskas. ⁹

Historical Context

Organized, extensive, armed and underground resistance against the Soviets dates from their second occupation of Lithuania in 1944, although individuals and smaller units were active since 1940 during the first Russian and succeeding German occupations. ¹⁰ A number of reasons have been offered as having led to the full formation of the movement: experience of extreme Soviet repression during the 1940-41 occupation; strength and vitality of the existing resistance groups, in armaments and supplies, towards the end of the German occupation; attempts to avoid conscription into the Red Army; and the need to defend the countryside from looting by the Red Army and local criminal groups. Part of their activity was directed against their own countrymen, local defense groups known as „istribiteliai“, led by Russian officers, who assisted in the implementation of Soviet policies.

The partisans were recruited from every class in Lithuania, primarily from small farmers and workers. There were a large number of students, priests, and Lithuanian Army officers, who provided the leadership. Their composition and numbers fluctuated, an estimate for 1945 indicating approximately 30,000 men, with the life expectancy of an average partisan estimated at two years.

The aim of the resistance seems to have been variously understood at the beginning of the movement, but every attempt was made to undermine the Soviet regime as much as possible; preserve a nucleus for a Lithuanian national movement; and maintain liaison with the West, until the eventual liberation of the country.

They established themselves in the forests in a variety of pillboxes and camps. Open clashes with the Red Army were avoided, and most of the partisan activity, in the form of surprise raids, was directed against the NKVD, keeping it in a state of continuous insecurity. Measures were also directed against enforced elections and conscriptions, mass deportations, arrests, destruction of the property of the deported, against Russian colonialization, and moral loosening among the Lithuanian people as expressed in moonshining and alcoholism. A part of the partisan activity was the maintenance of an underground press to inform the population, issue warnings, and provide international news.

The partisans maintained themselves largely because of the sympathy of the people of the countryside, and their voluntary food donations. But collectivisation in 1948 made food shortage severe, and frequent raids on **sovkhozes** became necessary.

The statutes and the oath of the partisans demand absolute dedication and severe moral standards; once enlisted, the partisan could not disband until complete liberation of the country.

An emigrant source indicates that during 1945 the country was a battlefield between partisan groups and Soviet forces, night and day, with a ratio of one to seven between the partisans and the Soviet forces. The country was maintained under martial law till about 1946, after it had been abandoned in most of the rest of the Soviet Union.

Soviet measures to eradicate resistance included three Red Army divisions in 1945, massive combing of the forests, NKVD infiltration into the underground, and an amnesty in 1945. At the same time, prior to 1948, captured partisans were executed, and their bodies displayed in market places of nearby towns. Recognized relatives received similar sentences, or were deported to Siberia. At the same time, by 1952, when collectivization was complete, contact with the West became more difficult and disillusionment with Western policies more evident. Although reports of individual activity have continued, organized and centralized resistance came to a close in 1952.

"Songs of Battles for Freedom"

This collection of anonymous partisan songs and poems, comes from seven separate sources and reflects a variety of style and quality. Most of the songs were probably composed in 1946. During the first years general Lithuanian songs were sung, and only later the characteristic partisan songs appear appropriate to the specific environment. When the struggle became too intense, and camp life was abandoned about 1948, all composition seems to have ceased. Included in the collection are a number of semi-satirical poems that treat exclusively of the enemy.

There is no consistent stream of identical images that pertain to the partisan, such as is found, for example, in Nelly Hoyt's analysis of leader images in Soviet folklore, but there are clusters of images that, given longer periods of composition time, would probably have achieved greater clarity.¹¹ One characteristic of these clusters is that they assume a polar conformation: strength and weakness, hope and despair, continuity and death. In this sense there is a resemblance to Hoyt's analysis of the "double aspect of the leader".¹²

No marked differentiation between the leaders and the led is evident, the term "brother" being most common for all members of the group. There may be individual distinction in the field, but the word "vadas", leader, is very rare. There is a reference to this question in one song:

Some — ploughmen of the earth,
With worked and blistered hands,
Others — students, and high-school students,
But the uniform is the same. (221)¹³

There is obvious identification with the traditional heroes of Lithuanian folklore and history, especially with those who fought, and successfully defeated, the Teutonic Knights. The heroes are seen as rising and helping the partisans in battle:

From the graves are rising the great men,
Are rising the great heroes,
Vytautas himself led them to battle,
They are not afraid of the thunderbolts of the enemy (69)

The spirit of Šarūnas was reborn,
It urged all to battle,
Consider, before it is too late brothers,
The red dragon is terrible!

And band after band is gathering,
Where the holy oaks whisper,
They are gallant, like lions, the Lithuanians,
Called into battle by Šarūnas. (148)

They fight and die like "milžinai" (24, 185, 201, 241), literally, like the "great giants". This word is reserved, however, for the great heroes of the past, and evokes not only size, but supernatural ability.

A similar identification is made with the heroes of the Catholic Church, the martyrs (196). A dead partisan is often referred to as a "kankinys", a martyr, religious, national, or both. A dead leader will intercede with God (147), another partisan will become a martyr (149):

We have lost a leader that we loved so much,
Relentless death has pulled him away,
But he will ask for our protection from the Highest,
And become our radiant hope. (147)

Tyrants covered his eyes
With the holy earth of Lithuania,
You have earned the crown of a martyr,
On your blood-covered head. (149)

God, usually in an all-inclusive sense of the term "Apvaizda" (the One who sees after all things) is with the partisans (149) and may blind the eyes of the enemy, permitting escape (242). In a song on Christmas Eve, a mutual relationship is expressed:

This night Christ shall come,
He will come to the battlefield to forgive sins of the dying ones...

The soldiers shall cross the snowdrifts.
The machine guns will laugh wildly.
And blood shall pour out of the stabbed heart
Of the soldier as out of the heart of Christ. (293)

At this point, a reference to the partisans in a prayerbook of deported Lithuanians in Siberia should be included. It indicates, that to one segment of the population, the image of the partisan as a martyr-saint, has achieved completion:

Martyrs of our nation,
Find wisdom, strength and unity for the labourers of our nation
Find an endless, bright repose, for those who lay down
Their lives for their native land.¹⁴

But the relationship with God is not an unqualified one, and doubt often precedes faith (191, 261, 279):

Good God, why do you let
Your great warriors be so tortured? (191)

O God, why in my country,
Holy, like a child's prayer,
Have the wayside crosses
Started shedding bitter tears at dusk? (261)

Similarly, the image of the great hero, "milžinas", is sometimes modified by images of helplessness (77, 269, 277):

Little cuckoo, this year
Return to us a little sooner,
Mourn over our suffering,
Help us little orphans. (57)

It would be so good now to run
Through the field, and play as a little child! (32)

A third series of images in the songs clusters about the identification of the partisan with nature. While he may see himself as a part of nature, or an extension of nature, he is also dependent upon nature for help and protection.

The great concern with continuity is best expressed in the image of the partisan as an extension of nature, especially his transformation upon death into a variety of growing forms. Speaking to spring a dead partisan says:

When the earth shall be covered with blossoms,
I shall bloom as a blossom of lad's love (a tree). (133)

Again:

Where a partisan fell, a peony will bloom, (62)
"and the flower's red colours will come from the partisan's blood". (149)

Similarly the "green forest" is used as a synonym for the partisans (53), and the partisans' "dust" is seen as rising and continuing the fight (263).

If the partisan does not find extension in nature, then nature is constantly participating in his struggle and death. The partisans determined "like the strong oaks of the forest" (26, 240), but now exhausted, speak to the forest:

Embrace us, o forest close to your heart,
Your tired children
Hold them in the meantime o forest,
In your dark, dark embrace. (26)

When the brother leaves his sister to join the fighters, the birch tree weeps (257), as does the rye to see the country suffer (204). On the battlefield of the partisan, the birch trees turn into crosses (175) and the green forest says sighing, "I grieve for you" (172). Over the grave of the dead, the fir tree (166), as does the birch tree (168):

Every morning, when the sun rises,
Weeps painfully with silver tears. (168)

The birds equally participate in the partisans' life. On death, the partisan may turn into a bird, and appear to his girl (213), or the bird may come and sing on the grave (101) at night (200, 212).

So far, the components of the heroic past, Christianity, and nature have been considered as entering the image cluster of the partisan. How he perceives his friends and his enemies and how these relate to his image will be considered next.

The great importance that the partisan attaches to his home, and his kinship network, is attested by a simple quantitative analysis of the songs. Mention is made of the mother 112 times in 104 songs. The brother is referred to 47 times, the sister 32 times, the father 17 times, the sweetheart 50 times, and the wife only once. Often a reference to one brings others in its train, as in the songs of separation (32, 98, 101):

The grim battle came to an end in sacrifices of blood,
The lips of the dying repeated: "Goodbye Lithuania,
Goodbye father and mother, brother, sister,
Goodbye my dear girl — I shall not return, ever". (172)

However, the mother has assumed a special importance in these songs, and her role in the partisan's life may be traced — in the composite reconstruction below — from his childhood, separation, and longing, to her death. To a much smaller extent, the sister or the sweetheart parallel the mother's relationship, although their characteristic role is the tending of the grave of the partisan, and planting flowers on it (182, 186, 210, 213, 233). The father has very little active relationship, appearing primarily in the goodbye-songs. Where one of the parents is dead, it is usually the father (89, 217). Brother and partisan are usually synonymous. The following sequence, from excerpts from thirteen different songs, indicates the extent of the relationship of the partisan and his mother:

Like an apple tree you are bowed, mother,
Your hair white like the jasmine,
Was it long ago you rocked my cradle,
Now I'm off to live in the forest. (32)

You suffered, mother, did not sleep at night
Until you raised your dear son. (121)

Goodbye, my dear mother,
Goodbye mother, forever,
Whether I will return to you ever
Neither I nor you know. (24)

Goodbye, old mother,

Thanks for raising me.
O, do not sigh, dear old one,
You also treasured your native land.

(Goodbye, O dear father,
You who taught me to plough my first furrows,
Your son is offering himself for his land,
You too should offer your suffering. (98)

The old mothers blessed
The roads of the dear sons.
(The young sisters let them out
To drive away heartless robbers). (63)

The mother spoke through tears
The words of blessing to her son. (207)
But wait, mother, I will return,
I will return to kiss you again and again.

(Daumantas, p. 39)

(A letter from an encampment, at night.)

Mother, do not cry and do not sorrow fearfully.
Mother, I am a happy soldier,
And if I am not with you at dusk, my dear,
Do not weep painfully, since I think only about you,
Only about you. (III)

Only the mother is weeping for the son,
She has covered her eyes with her hand.
A great pain was tearing her heart —
Will her little son never return? (21)

Don't cry so much
If I don't return to you...
Believe, your son has found happiness
In the grave of his free country. (209)

The son is waiting for his mother,
But she is there... in the Ural Mountains...
The evening began to weep,
The roses glistened with dew,
O return, most dear mother,
Why did you leave me? (203)

You are in the Urals, mother,
Father is in the cold grave...
Who will make my bed,
Who will comfort me when I am tired? (89)

I want to go home, I want to see

How the house I was born in kneels by the forest,
How the earth breathes, how the little rivers cry,
How the sun laughs happily in the little hills.
I want to fall on my mother's grave
And to feel her love with my living heart. (262)

The sister and the sweetheart more actively participate after the death of the partisan:

Come loved one, near my grave,
And plant over it many pretty flowers. (210)

And on my grave, (my sweetheart), plant

Some white jasmines, near my head,
Which will remind that here is resting
A young Lithuanian fighter. (186)

By the grave grow high spruce trees,
And only the trees mourn there,
In the green forest, by the white birch tree,
His beloved one is decking his grave. (233)

A consideration of the enemy can also begin within the context of burial imagery and continuity in the hearts of the people or in nature. Looking forward to the days when his country will be free, a partisan says:

I will be happy to lie in the grave,
When flowers will bloom on my grave,
And the girl that I loved,
Will water them with her tears every day. (38)

There is fear that the grave may be forsaken, and only the evening and the winds blowing from home fields will mourn over it (289). However, even if men forget, nature will not remain unmoved. But those men that are indifferent to the struggle going on:

They will go out slowly, without a mark. (264)

The Russian invaders, and particularly the Lithuanian *istribiteliai*, however, meet a different end. In the semisatirical series we find:

The *stribiai* will sprawl dead on the hill,
Until the buzzards devour them...
And then the devil will lead them to hell, in a file. (300)

Eight of them sprawl dead on the hill,
Where are the others? They are not here...
Perhaps the devil has taken them
To his dear hell.. (310)

It seems he was such a slim *kacapelis* (a term for a Russian)
The boards and the nails are thin...
But the horses cannot draw it... (the coffin)
His sins are so heavy. (310)
The Lithuanians will be free anyway
And you (*stribis*) will die like a dog. (313)

There is also indication that their souls will remain restless and wander through the woods searching for the graves of their victims. (301)

In the song series the enemy may be seen as a "Siberian bear" (93, 257), a "wolf" (134), or a "heartless robber" (63), but is most consistently referred to by the word "*budelis*", the executioner (144, 149, 155, 187, 192, 196, 204). The word conveys the fatality of judgement passed, or, what one song speaks of, as the "sad song of a curse in the branches" (288). The enemy, it appears, thus verges on the category of natural calamities and, like the "nine headed dragon" (284) that he is, can be assailed only by physical force sustained by hope. The implications of this unitary perception of the enemy are important for later discussion. That hope may be a function of this perception is attested by the reassuring conclusions of most of the songs: (23, 28, 35, 47, 49, 51, 55, 56, etc.)

Be valiant throughout the ages Lithuanian,
Since your path is a bloody battle. ..
And years will go by, the fields will bloom by the road,
And your Lithuania shall rise again from blood... (289)

"The Rat-cell"

The entire three acts of this play by Grinius, an emigrant writer, are set in an M.G.B. office, where a priest, and two sisters are interrogated by one Lithuanian and three Russian M.G.B. prosecutors for the removal from the marketplace and their burial of three partisans (termed bandits in all Soviet literature).

Although no male partisans are involved, the older sister, Joana, is presented as the female prototype of Lithuanian resistance. Joana, her sister, and the priest Ginkus, have been taken in for removing from the marketplace (10) three (4) badly mauled partisan bodies (59), one of whom may be (24) and finally proves to be Joana's brother (59) and their proper burial with lilies on the grave (11, 41, 51), a cross inside (26), and tears of mourning (18).

The interrogation, covering the entire play, is an attempt of the M. G. B. to reveal the details of the crime, and to discover more about local partisan activity.

In the process, the exemplary courage of Joana converts the Lithuanian M. G. B. Morkus (79), and the Russian M. G. B. Kamniovas (107), both of whom are removed in the end as traitors to the Soviet cause. A remark by the converted Kamniovas best describes Joana: "you know, I envy you... you are so strong and pure, like... a dew drop on a blossom" (108). Again, a little earlier, he says to his fellow-prosecutor, "You see, Bobrov, this is one hell of a mixup: she's the bandit's woman but inside she's clean and pure, like gold." Her readiness to offer her death as a sacrifice so that Kamniovas would be "enlightened by the truth" (108), and that the souls of her brother or Simkovas, a Russian guard killed in the burial operations, would achieve redemption, completes her image of a Christian martyr. Her "saintliness" (37), according to the priest, and her charity (108) are all the more obvious beside the self-avowed promiscuity (7) and salacity (16) of one of the female M. G. B.'s, Vara.

A reference to her as the "bandit's Antigone" (82) and as "Joan of Arc" (67) would indicate that she is also a national martyr, but unlike the partisans in the songs, she has none of the symbols of the great deeds of Lithuanian past. She is, however, the sister or the girl of the songs, that looks after the grave of the dead fighter, is interrupted in her task by the enemy, tortured in a rat-cell (80), reviled by the prosecutors (24, 85, 102), but, to the very end, unbroken (108).

All attempts to elicit information about the resistance are of no avail, she is "unmovable, like a rock" (311). The priest Ginkus enforces this image, he is also "very hard... no word, no movement... like the earth" (48). She does not confess to save her younger sister, but persists, in the words of the latter, in her "blind heroism" (90). Faced with the prospect of a hard labour camp (67), she is still determined to "fight to the end", for the "decrees of conscience and love" (68).

While she is adamant, she is also resigned to the will of God, and does not ask Him, like some of the partisan songs, why He has forsaken Lithuania. To comfort her sister, Joana says, "if the Apvaizda (the One who sees after all things) wills it, let us suffer. If they deport us, even there we will find suffering brethren" (28). She later explains the supreme importance of "God's rock" (67) at "death's doorstep," and finally resigns to God's will (102).

In a last effort to break the prisoners, the M.G.B's offer Joana and the priest release and reinstatement on condition of marriage (99, 102-104). This "temptation to live", at the price of, in the words of the priest, "no longer... being that what I am" (104), is briefly considered, but discarded. (In a different form, this offer may represent the partisan dilemma in the face of the amnesty of 1945. This struggle with alternatives provides the major theme for **The Five Posts in the Market Place**.)

Perhaps as a reflection of the communist and Christian ideological conflicts interspersed throughout the play, the enemy is most consistently associated with images of uncleanness, corruption, and decay. But these qualities are seen as alterable, as in the case of Kamnio-vas' conversion (107).

Kamniovas' self-assessment as a "drunken mole" (108) is equally applicable to his M. G. B. friends, with the addition of force and malignity. Other metaphors, invariably in the vocabulary of the prosecution, widen the range of the corruption imagery given them without changing its tone: "animal dung" (70, 84, 91, 96, 106, 115, 116), "ordure" (114, 92), "putrefaction" (79, 96, 114, 118), "reeking carrion" (89, 114), "pigs" (22, 29, 30), "garbage" (46, 47), "leprosy" (79, 99, 118), "mud" (92, 98).

The enemy is not the "executioner" of the partisan songs, and has none of the unremitting force of natural events; as a species of moral corruption and decay, it is presented as vulnerable in a confrontation with patriotism and Christianity. Nevertheless, with the exceptions of Kamniovas and Morkus, who are uncommitted to begin with, the real enemy, Babrov and Vara, undergo no apparent alteration.

The conclusion recalls the final images of many of the partisan songs: after the final curtain, and music expressive of struggle, suffering and mourning, and a peace hymn of a procession "marching proudly across Lithuania", is heard a "mighty fugue according to the motifs of the psalm 'God is our refuge and our strength'." (119).

"The Brothers"

The events described in the novel by Ruta, also an emigrant writer, take place in a small village at the time of the second occupation of Lithuania by the Soviets. It depicts the last months in the life of Kazys, a farmer's son: his usual work on the farm, entry into resistance with the coming of the Red Army, fighting and death. It describes a period of transition from a normal into an artificial type of existence. Thus, after ploughing, sowing, and reaping, with the approach of the Red Army, the retreat of the Germans, and the appearance of Soviet paratroopers in the forests, the local school teacher organises

the village men into a loose home guard to protect person and property. The men leave the fields and take up arms. In the case of Kazys there is a complication; his cousins who had turned communist in 1941, now return home as officers in the Red Army. Also, one of the cousins, Tomas, loves the same girl that Kazys loves. Personal considerations thus intensify the struggle, but when Tomas first encounters the partisan Kazys, at a complete disadvantage, he allows him to escape with a warning to quit the woods. But Kazys' brother is shot, the teacher has been hanged, his mother is dying, so he joins another partisan group and there he meets his end. Tomas, meanwhile, suspected of soft-heartedness is punished with a shot from his brother. Wounded, he finally realizes how far astray he had gone.

As in the songs, so in the image of Kazys, there is a closeness to nature, both as an intimate backdrop of a rural environment, and a personal experience. At harvest time, sadness for the cut grass is expressed: "The clover fell to death quietly, giving up their last breath, and the colour of their blossoms" (159); "The harvesters made great noise. The rye whispered quietly. That same field was brimming with life and sighing with death" (179). Later on, when a partisan, Kazys, passes a rye field, with no one to harvest it, he strokes the "sadly quivering" ears "gently, like a father his beloved child" (235). After a setback in love, in the evening, Kazys is disquieted by the interest the farmyard objects take in his affairs: "It seemed the storehouse was about to sigh, the jasmines would whisper and break into laughter, the gates open and say something" (166). Later, when in trouble, he lies down in the grass and senses an exhalation in his face: "Kazys quieted down. He seemed no longer alone. The earth embraced him to itself, caressed him. It seemed to understand him and comfort him" (246). In another instance, the forest speaks to him as his conscience (282). As Kazys dies in the night in the forest, he has a vision of his home fields where the "clover is tall, and the meadows are blooming, blooming, blooming..." (319). At dawn, a little bird on a birch tree sees a dead man under a spruce, looks at him, chirps and flies away (319). This final image suggests Kazys' continuance as a reincarnated soul.¹¹ The conversion of Tomas, in a "sea of tall grass" (306), is accompanied by a similar set of nature images.

Although much of the book deals with Kazys' courtship of Albina, his mother remains to him a consistent point of reference. The relationship between the son and his mother, as in the partisan songs, is one of continued mutual concern. Kazys finds his father a bore (156), always scolding and lecturing, and dissuading him from joining the partisans: "Don't provoke the bolsheviks, pretend you're friendly with them... so that they don't touch you... dance as the music is played to you (a pragmatic proverb)... then you'll go neither to Siberia nor the prison." (157) The father, in his turn, will not be outdone by Kazys on the harvest field. (160) His mother, who has a weak heart and may not live very long, Kazys perceives differently: "Her pale blue eyes are still beautiful. Kazys likes to look at them. He finds it good to be near his mother. He is attracted towards her." (154) Kazys is disturbed when he realizes that his mother suspects he is in love and is probably thinking: "He's exchanging me for a girl. He's rushing to her" (155, 247). In the forest Kazys remembers his mother: "Moving her head up and down and smiling. As if she knew everything, perceived all the sorrows of her children. Kazys felt a longing for his mother. He would give anything to lie down on the (great) oven, at his mother's feet and talk of everything to her." (282) Dying, after a vision of his girl he sees his mother: "She is caressing him and singing. She's singing but her tears fall on his head. They fall and they burn him, burn him. Mother's tears..." (318)

The enemies and their attributes are presented within a kinship context. Tomas, one of the cousins, like Kamniovas in the **Rat-Cell**, resembles the "good-bad" figure. Tomas is introduced to communism by his elder brother (17, 115), and is similarly coerced into marrying an enemy girl for his brother's advancement (229), but he retains his generosity, by bringing presents home from Russia (226), and his manners, by kissing his aunt's hand on return. However, Lionginas, the other cousin, is cold and abrupt to his aunt (201) and accuses her and his uncle of having let the Germans murder his parents (210). Lastly, having vowed to kill his competitor, Kazys, Tomas lets him escape, and, when punished with a bullet from his brother Lionginas, he senses suddenly, "for the first time", that he has "really returned home" (307).

The middle-road that Kazys' father advocates is more clearly presented by another farmer, Ragaisis, who has ordered his son to stick to his ploughshare (101). His "neither a fool nor a communist" (53) attitude is coupled with the belief that "in the hand of God is all our life" and that a storm never destroys all the trees (100). Kazys replies, however, that this way you "may never have your government. Everybody will be after your land. But with the enemies you have to fight" (101). This question is not further pursued by Ruta, but in the play by Landsbergis, a younger emigrant writer in New York, it becomes a central issue. This play is considered next.

"Five Posts in a Market Place"

After seven years of resistance, the leader of the last handful of partisans, Antanas, a one-time sculptor, is preparing to assassinate the local enemy Prosecutor who has been hanging the bodies of partisans on posts erected in the market place. The Prosecutor's secretary, Aldona, who has conceived of the plot, is in love with Antanas, but to her, this plan is her last chance to get Antanas "out of the forest" (2-8).¹⁶ She hopes that seeing "life beyond the pillboxes" will save him from "turning completely to stone" (2-8).

Like the father of Kazys in Ruta's novel, Aldona says that: "Armed resistance only provokes the enemy. We must try to stay alive, to sustain our culture, to get into official posts, to keep our children ours... slowly ... to improve things... were you (Antanas) blind not to see that they are keeping their word of amnesty for the guerillas?" (2-9).

At the same time, the Prosecutor wavers from his usual stands as the "sword of justice" (2-15) and tells his disturbed Minister Deputy: "There are crossroads in the lives of men and systems of government. At one of these crossroads there must be a flower bush or a lilac tree. There must be life." (2-16)

The plot involves a wedding party with Antanas disguised as Aldona's groom, attended by the Prosecutor and top officials of the enemy (1-2). Before the wedding, the Prosecutor brings Aldona a gift, a solitary copy of a book he once wrote, "Statuary of the Future" (2-27). In her apartment he finds Antanas, whom he suspects, but the latter, recognizing in the old man an author of his youth with his high dreams broken, lets the Prosecutor go.

At the wedding party in the Town Hall, hearing that his last men have been captured, Antanas finally concedes that: "One phase of the guerilla war is over. Right now it wouldn't help our country if we killed them all and died with them." (3-9) But the Prosecutor, now struck by the absurdity of his vacillation and disgust for the "faceless town" (3-14), knowingly provokes Antanas by proposing that the last guerillas be put on the posts as a historic memorial to their wedding day. In the shooting that follows, the Prosecutor and Antanas are killed (3-17). The partisans complete their mission in the market place with Antanas on the main post on an ant-hill (3-19).

Bearing in mind that Antanas, once a sculptor, is the last of the partisans, he, unlike the other figures so far discussed, is both a representative and a result of a way of life. He is presented as part hero and part statue, and the course of the imagery of onsetting hardness documents his transformation. At first, in a dream, Antanas sees his statues destroyed by a storm, but "their stone eyes were those of my own men, reproachful" (1-10). He later remarks that his own hands "have lost their special strength, and gentleness, and patience that could give life" (1-12). While dissuading Antanas from the plot, Aldona says to him: "Those terrible seven years have managed to turn a part of you to stone: what was once warm skin, blood, thought, feeling — now stone, as grey as the enemy". (2-8).

Of course, the entire plan was Aldona's attempt to prevent Antanas from "turning completely to stone" (2-8). Her failure to do so is clearly attested by the last line of the play, with Antanas already on the post: "How beautiful is my beloved, like a deer frozen in an eternal leap" (3-21). At that moment "Antanas' statues become visible behind the posts" (3-21).

The irony of the transformation recalls the progress of the enemy prosecutor, associated with "glacial" (2-19) imagery, and his book, "Statuary of the Future", in which he writes of a "more perfect world to be created from the stuff of humanity, as an artist makes it from marble" (2-27). Similarly, Antanas and the prosecutor both take a step back from their relentless task before their final impact.

But at the moment the prosecutor hopes to seal and end the seven years of "corrosion and devouring" by sparing the life of a young partisan, the Deputy accuses him of inability to "look into history's terrible eyes, and to feel her demands", of not being "a man of action" (2-20).

At the time Antanas is brooding over Aldona's suggestion of an alternative way to save the country, his conscience, in the guise of the Commentator, says: "But suppose Aldona is right? If all this civilization is nothing but a sunken city, isn't your fight then only a vain and hopeless gesture? If she is right... then you were born to be an artist and not a man of conspiracy, of action" (2-23).

At this level of analysis, the distinction between these two men — who have misused their talents, or perhaps, became the unwilling instruments of outside forces—is meager, and the simple alignment of friend and foe in all the other material is exchanged for a complexity of motivation on both sides: the struggle of individual against imposed obligation, desire against reality, freedom against bondage.

The perception of the enemy is therefore no longer unitary, even as the application of "grey" to it suggests (2-8). Nor is the image of the partisan undifferentiated; there is expressed animosity between the leader and the led (1-8), the student and the farmer (1-7), as well as hesitation and impatience. A young partisan, Leonas, "hates" the forest and the "seedlings that will grow big and fat, feeding on men who'll never plant trees or be fathers any more" (1-17). Thus, the image of the friendly forest of the songs, and **The Brothers**, is reversed here. Again, Aldona, the agent for the underground conceives of the plot in an effort to change Antanas, and in the end surrenders and confesses (3-20). Here is a similar contrast with Joana's determination to the end in the **Rat-Cell**. The web of kinship, so prominent in the other material, is of minimal importance in this play.

But similarities are also evident. The continuity of the partisan, in nature or in heaven, is certainly suggested by the statues of Antanas, remaining in a shed, which may someday become a "shrine" (1-30). The statues also become "visible" as the play ends, but the continuity they imply is a lifeless one, like that of a stone monument, as other images of "winter-wombs of manless brides" (3-21).

In sum, two important new elements are encountered in this play: emphasis on individualism, mostly clearly evident in the shading between friends and enemies; and a perception of alternatives in the struggle with the enemy: "The lion's time is past — now the fox must take to the field" (2-22). The fact that this realization is placed in a setting of a last stand, and to no good effect, also questions the wisdom of the virtual suicide of some 50,000 other men.

"The Roses Bloom Red"

This long novel by Bielauskas has a simple structure in plot, character, and ideology, all three of which reveal the promise of communism and the decadence of bourgeois intelligentsia and its misguided followers. A detailed analysis of the masterplan of the communist novel of postwar Lithuania has been done by Landsbergis, and this present work conforms to it in every detail.⁷ Therefore, only the image of the "bandit" Zigmas (the partisan in the other works) and his opposite, the Komsomol Vytas, will be considered here. Vytas is an ideal Komsomol whose Lithuanian character components are equally ideal, but the "bandit" Zigmas is not only an unthinkable communist but a bad Lithuanian.

In outline, the plot resembles that of **The Brothers**. Vytas returns to Lithuania with the Red Army in 1944 to find his home town in near ruins, and his cousin on his way to the forest. Vytas sets to rebuild the town and to retrain its youth. Kazys becomes a "bandit" and frustrates the administration. At one point Kazys stabs Vytas almost to death, but at the end of the book, the "bandits" are eliminated, and Vytas shoots Kazys in self-defense (388).

Placing these two men within the context of the already established characteristics of the partisan and his enemies, we find that Vytas, like Kazys in *The Brothers* on the farm and in the resistance, is a ceaselessly hard worker. He works on the destroyed bridge (46, 59), he works for the Komsomol (98), he studies each night till midnight (324), he helps in rescue work (345), and policing operations (369). Part of this zeal is a characteristic of the fiction Komsomol, but in all this Vytas exhibits a selfless concern for public matters, such as is described of Kazys: "He was one of those serious ones, who are concerned with work, newspapers, all sorts of public matters, and not women's skirts". (Ruta: 33) The "bandit" Zigmas, like the irresponsible cousins in **The Brothers**, comes and goes, does not live at home "like a man" and does not help his father earn their bread (367). His main preoccupation is to "think about himself" (366). Zigmas is consistently crude to his parents and even strikes his father (63, 195, 367). It is Vytas who helps the abandoned old man and reinstates him (423). Vytas himself is an orphan, but as a thirteen year old boy he worked desperately to keep his dying mother alive (379).

Other constellations of traits, such as drinking, heavy smoking, and swearing are all characteristic of Zigmas, as they were of the M.G.B's in **The Rat-Cell**. On the other hand, the heroine of that play is recalled, by a reference to the self-renouncing Vytas as the "Assisian Francis" (150). Funeral imagery is almost identical with that in the partisan songs, but with reverse associations. A dead Komsomol, shot by the "bandit" Zigmas (244) receives what seems like a state funeral, with "seas" of people behind the hearse, although it is a rainy day (249). But the dead "bandit" Zigmas is left "sprawling" on the ground (389), as were the dead "istribiteliai".

Thus the presentation of the hero and his enemy is principally within the framework of the imagery considered, excepting that of Landsbergis. The associations are reversed, of course, and a new ideological master-plan has been introduced, as well as such elements as industrialization. Also, the tendency noted in the material considered earlier, for polarized and unitary images, is here evident in a more extreme form.

Conclusion

The analysis of the images clustering about the figure of the Lithuanian resistance fighter, as he is presented by various Lithuanian writers, has revealed a number of regularities of pattern, emphasized in varying degrees in the individual works. These regularities are: identification with traditional heroes of folklore and history, identification with martyrs of the Christian church, much concern with continuity and proper burial, great attachment to land and nature, importance of the family and kinship network with particular stress on the mother. The communist novel retains much of the traditional context, with reversed associations, but has definite ideological additions and a much more marked categorization of images.

Landsbergis, on the other hand, by introducing "grey" into his enemies, has relinquished the standard enemy image of other resistance literature. He has also remodelled the hero by diversifying him, and made his fighters struggle as much with the question of alternative modes of resistance as with the New Order.

Notes:

- 1 The study by M. Mead and R. Metraux, *The Study of Culture at a Distance* (Chicago, 1953), is used as a guide in this analysis of materials on the Lithuanian nationalist fighters.
- 2 J. Grinius, *Žiurkių Kamera* (The Rat-Cell) (New York, 1954).
- 3 A. Landsbergis, *Five Posts in a Market Place* (1958, MS).
- 4 V. Alantas, *Tarp Dviejų Gyvenimų* (Between Two Worlds) (Chicago, 1959).
- 5 A. Rūta, *Broliai* (The Brothers) (London, 1961).
- 6 J. Daumantas (pseudonym), *Partizanai už Geležinės Uždangos* (Partisans Behind the Iron Curtain) (Chicago, 1950).
- 7 J. Aistis, ed., *Laisvės Kovų Dainos* (Songs of Battles for Freedom) (New York, 1962).
- 8 *Marija, Gelbėki Mus* (Mary Save Us) (Putnam, 1963).
- 9 A. Bieliauskas, *Rožės Žydi Raudonai* (Roses Bloom Red) (Vilnius, 1959).
- 10 This brief account of the nationalist resistance movement is based on materials found in the following sources: B. Mačiuka, ed., *Lithuania in the Last 30 Years* (University of Chicago, Human Relations Area Files, 1955); *Lietuvių*

Enciklopedija (Lithuanian Encyclopedia) (Boston, 1960), vol. 22, pp. 44-52; K. V. Tauras, *Guerilla Warfare on the Amber Coast* (New York, 1962).

11 Mead and Metraux, *op. cit.*, pp. 234-242.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 237.

13 Numbers in parentheses refer to pages from which citations are taken or from which specific information is derived.

14 *Marija, Gelbėki Mus*, p. 12.

15 Cf. M. Gimbutas, *Ancient Symbolism in Lithuanian Folk Art, Memoirs of the American Folklore Society* (Philadelphia, 1958), vol. 49, p. 36.

16 The numbers within the parentheses refer to the act and page number within the act, respectively, of the manuscript of Landsbergis' play cited earlier.

17 See A. Landsbergis, "Communist Novels of the Postwar Struggle in Lithuania", *The Baltic Review* (New York), 1957, No. 12.