

Reception of César Vallejo's Poetics in the Literary Works of Sigitas Parulskis and Vytautas Stankus

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—— The article presents a comparative analysis of the poems “La violencia de las horas” (“Violence of the Hours”) by the Peruvian poet César Vallejo, “Subjektyvi kronika” (“A Subjective Chronicle”) by the Lithuanian poet Sigitas Parulskis and “Devynios gyvybės” (“Nine Lives”) by his compatriot poet Vytautas Stankus. The aim of this research is to trace and highlight relations between the texts, explore how the meaning in a highly intertextual artwork is created, and to establish the common poetic features of the works discussed.

Keywords: intertextuality, César Vallejo, Vytautas Stankus, Sigitas Parulskis.

Introduction

Despite the fact that the literary works of such South American authors as Jorge Luis Borges, César Vallejo, Gabriel García Márquez or Julio Cortázar have had an important impact on several Lithuanian writers, the contacts between Lithuanian and Latin American literatures have not yet been properly researched: there are very few panoramic overviews of the intercultural relations and we also lack studies looking into intertextual relations between particular literary works. An attentive intercultural analysis of Lithuanian literature would open new perspectives: it will facilitate its international acceptance and, furthermore, provide different approaches to well-known Lithuanian works, helping in this way to uncover yet undetected meanings. A critical approach such as this would be logical considering the tendencies of contemporary Lithuanian literature: in the last decades it has become almost a trend to reflect on one's personal literary canon, to base a piece of literature on the works of other writers (even more so in poetry), the meanings in both prose and poetry are amplified and enriched by the use of epigraphs, paraphrases and free stylistic interpretations.

Roland Barthes refers to a text as a tissue of quotations¹ or a quotation without quotation marks² – an integrity in which various elements inevitably interfere with each other. Even if an author does not make a conscious effort to express relations between his or her texts and other texts, there are still various cultural influences in an artwork, making it impossible for it to exist in a completely hermetic way. This investigation looks into the explicitly intertextual relations that arise in Sigitas Parulskis' (born in 1965) and Vytautas Stankus' (born in 1984) interpretations and rewritings of César Vallejo's (1892–1938) poem “La violencia de las horas”³.

In the poems comprising the corpus of this research intertextual relations are revealed both on the superficial and in-depth levels of the text.

1 Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, edited and translated from French by Stephen Heath, London: Fontana Press, 1977, p. 146.

2 Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of Text*, translated from French by Richard Miller, New York: Hill and Wang, 1975, p. 31.

3 The English title is “Violence of the Hours” (here and further on in the article the English translations of the poems are by the author of the article). In order to avoid confusion, the poems will be quoted in the original, while their literal translations will be provided in the footnotes (except the very small segments of text, in which case the translation will follow the original). The same applies to the quotations from Lithuanian literary criticism (except the footnote No. 64 due to the syntactic peculiarities).

To begin with, both Lithuanian poets establish a relationship with the original poem that has inspired them by quoting its first line in the epigraph. The second degree of the interaction is more subtle: both “Subjektyvi kronika” and “Devynios gyvybės” imitate the structure of Vallejo’s poem. By doing so, a hypertextual relation is established and a certain emphasis is put on the idea that the structure and form of an artwork are among the most important elements creating meaning⁴. It is worth mentioning that when, due to pragmatic reasons, one text (in this particular case – Vallejo’s text) is considered the primary one, a threat emerges that the intertextual relations can be misunderstood and perceived as always linear and one-directional. Jesús Camarero proposes to reflect on intertextuality as an interaction between texts and to avoid the implications of cause/consequence⁵. Therefore, even though it is obvious that the genesis of the poems is based on linearity, we should discuss not only the development of the poems but also the links between the authors’ poetic techniques. From this perspective, literature could be understood as a complicated network of memory/knowledge, learning/creating, reading/writing, tradition/innovation, history/fracture, and cannot be separated from literary memory⁶: it is these tensions that enable intertextual relations.

The texts engaging in an open dialogue with other literary works are frequently based on principles of adaptation, recreation and interpretation. These creative strategies allow us to understand a text as an artefact and to emphasise the processual nature of literature, once again coming close to Barthes’ concept of text as a tissue composed of various elements⁷. According to Algirdas Julius Greimas, “the language can be described as a *process*, as an intentional algorithmic program that has a final *a posteriori* recognizable aim (cf. the development of foetus in genetics) [...]”⁸. Keeping this in mind, we could also understand a text and literature as a

4 Yuri Lotman, *Estructura del texto artístico*, translated from Russian by Victoriano Imbert, Madrid: Akal, 2011, p. 21.

5 Jesús Camarero, *Intertextualidad: Redes de textos y literaturas transversales en dinámica intercultural*, Barcelona: Anthropos Editorial, 2008, p. 54.

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 56–57.

7 Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of Text*, p. 64.

8 “kalba gali būti aprašoma kaip *procesas*, t. y. kaip algoritmo pobūdžio kryptingą programą, turinti a posteriori atpažįstamą galutinį tikslą (plg. gemalo raidą genetikoje) [...]” Algirdas Julius Greimas, *Semiotika. Darbų rinktinė*, edited and translated into Lithuanian by Rolandas Pavilionis, Vilnius: Mintis, 1989, p. 109. Translated by Dovilė Kuzminskaitė.

process – they participate in the dynamics of culture with an implied aim to be recognised and interpreted.

While discussing the intertextual (dynamic) aspect of text interpretation, the role of the reader emerges inevitably. A reader can always choose to consider or ignore intertextual references⁹, to follow the author's hints and take part in the literary game or remain stubbornly on one level. The decision made by the reader will determine if the relations between different literary works will be activated and a wider scale of meanings created. The rejection of active participation could imply a certain danger to the integrity of a literary work: a passive interpreter does not respond to the mission assigned to him or her by Barthes who indicates that namely the reader is that "field" where different components of the text meet in order to be linked¹⁰.

It is worth noticing that the emphasis on the importance of the reader does not imply that the meaning of the literary work depends only on the *Other*, the subjective one who is interpreting it at a particular moment:

The complicated question of meaning can be temporarily avoided by changing the problematic itself. A painting, a poem are only pretexts, they only have the meaning or meanings that we assign to them. And so this we, transformed into the highest instance of meaning, regulates the cultural filter through which we understand the world, it selects and arranges the epistemes, hidden in separate objects – paintings, poems, stories – the results of the interweaving of the significant. The operation has been successful, the meaningful objects devoid of meaning, relativism has won: there is no meaning left, all meanings are possible. Yet nothing has really changed [...].¹¹

9 Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, London: Routledge, 2000, p. 114.

10 Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, p. 148.

11 "To keblaus prasmės klausimo galima laikinai išvengti pakeitus pačią problematiką. Paveikslas, poema tėra pretekstai, jie turi tik tą prasmę ar prasmes, kurias *mes* jiems suteikiame. Ir štai tasai *mes*, paverstas aukščiausia prasmės instancija, reguliuoja kultūrinį filtrą, per kurį mes suvokiame pasaulį, jis atrenka ir tvarko epistemas, slypinčias atskiruose objektuose – paveiksluose, eilėraščiuose, pasakojimuose – signifikanto suraizgymų rezultatuose. Operacija pavyko, prasmė pašalinta iš reiškiančiųjų objektu, nugalėjo reliatyvizmas: prasmės čia nebėra, galimos visokios prasmės. O iš tikrųjų niekas nepasikeitė [...]." Algirdas Julius Greimas, *op. cit.*, p. 76. Translated by Dovilė Kuzminskaitė.

While recognising, interpreting and considering intertextual relations the reader does not create the meaning “ex nihilo”, it is being actualised: the reader recreates the text as, to quote Kęstutis Nastopka, a totality of elements that comprise the meaning¹². In reading the text based on a dialogue with other cultural objects, the principles of construction are of the same importance as those of deconstruction – that is how intertextuality becomes a process highly linked with reception¹³. Such point of view is important because it retracts attention from the author and rests it on the reader: the literary work based on an intertext is open by nature, heterogeneous, fragmental and multifunctional¹⁴, and that is why its author cannot be understood as the only one determining its meaning.

The reader determines the limits¹⁵ of the text and relates a particular poem to its surroundings – the texts it points to. From this perspective, a text should be understood as a totality of texts¹⁶; the conflictive and, at the same time, creative nature of the text becomes especially obvious¹⁷. The poem, the structure of which is copied from another text, is complex: the inside of the text is full of tensions established by the elements that compose it and draws different schemes of meaning. At the same time, such text is part of a bigger construct due to the fact that it interacts with its “materia prima” – the primary poem. Meaning is a possibility of recoding¹⁸: by re-writing the poem by Vallejo, Parulskis and Stankus rearticulate it in their own particular poetic language and accentuate specific significant elements. Ignoring the laws of originality, the poem creates its meaning by extending itself into the sphere of other text or texts – according to the classification proposed by Camarero, an attempt to recreate the other and oneself is one of the reasons why the intertextual relations appear¹⁹.

12 Kęstutis Nastopka, *Literatūros semiotika*, Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2010, p. 31.

13 Jesús Camarero, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 26, 44.

15 The importance of the concept ‘limit’ is emphasised by Jurij Lotman in *Kultūros semiotika*, Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 2004, edited by Arūnas Sverdiolas, translated from Russian by Donata Mitaitė, p. 9.

16 Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, edited by Leon S. Roudiez, translated from French by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and Leon S. Roudiez, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 36.

17 Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of Text*, p. 21.

18 Algirdas Julius Greimas, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

19 Jesús Camarero, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

Intertextual relations used for creative purposes point not to the erudition of the writer but to the complex nature of literature and to the infinity of the language²⁰. The linked texts form a literary network which rises above literary nationalisms and postulates the openness of the literary world.

César Vallejo. “La violencia de las horas”

Vallejo’s poetry has had a significant impact on one of the major contemporary Lithuanian poets, Sigitas Parulskis, especially via the selection of Vallejo’s poems translated by Vytautas Bložė and published under the title *Atitolink nuo manęs šią taurę*²¹ in 1980. Nevertheless, one of the most celebrated Latin American authors has received little attention from Lithuanian literary critique. In the introduction to *Atitolink nuo manęs šią taurę* Bložė reduces Vallejo’s personality and literary work to four features: explicit leftism, loneliness, nonconformism, and a complicated poetic language, which is mentioned briefly²².

The poem “La violencia de las horas”, together with all the prose poems by Vallejo (in comparison to his other poems), is overlooked by the Spanish-speaking literary criticism²³. This part of Vallejo’s creative work is special because all the poems are connected and tend to repeat each other’s themes and structures²⁴, thus creating inter- and metatextual relations²⁵. When imitating one of his poems, Lithuanian writers are embracing more than they probably could have imagined. The majority of Vallejo’s prose poems (and his poems in general) use the first person (“I”) to speak to the

20 *Ibid.*, p. 47.

21 Engl. *Remove This Glass From Me*.

22 Vytautas Bložė, “Maištingo liūdesio dainius”, in: *Atitolink nuo manęs šią taurę*, Vilnius: Vaga, 1980, pp. 5–9. While it may seem expected from Bložė to emphasise the leftism of the poet due to the politic circumstances surrounding the publishing of his translations, it seems quite disturbing when modern criticism centres on leftism as a main characteristic of Vallejo’s rebellion (for example: Virginija Cibaruskė, “Polilogas tarp gyvųjų ir mirusiųjų: Sigitas Parulskio ‘Oda kailiadirbiui’”, in: *Colloquia*, Vilnius, 2013, No. 30, p. 115).

23 Fanny Arango-Keeth, “Construcción de la identidad poética: La dimensión enunciativa en los poemas en prosa de César Vallejo”, in: *Cuadernos del CILHA*, Mendoza, 2008, No. 10, p. 1.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

25 Similar to “La violencia de las horas” in their themes and structure are the poems “Alféizar” (“Windowsill”), “Necesidad de morir” (“The Necessity of Dying”) and LXXV from the collection *Trilce*. María Ema Llorente points to the fact that due to synthetic creative principles it becomes difficult to classify the works of Vallejo and that is why they lack professional attention; María Ema Llorente, “Los poemas en prosa de César Vallejo. La transición de los narrativo a lo poético”, in: *Anales de Literatura Hispanoamericana*, Madrid, 2017, No. 46, pp. 222–223.

reader; yet this individuality is misleading²⁶, the main goal of the poems is to create an inclusive universal experience.

“La violencia de las horas” has a clear structure: the anaphoric repetition of “murió” (“died”) marks the rhythm of the text (the sonority of the poem is of huge importance in Vallejo’s poetics) and creates a visual form of the text²⁷. This easily recognisable structure of the poem allows Parulskis and Stankus to appropriate and actualise it. It is worth noticing that the first line of the poem “Todos han muerto”²⁸ (“Everyone is dead”) also reflects some features of Vallejo’s poetic style: it is not unusual to encounter declarative affirmations at the beginning or the end of the poem, in this way containing the meaning and emotional charge of the text in one segment and providing it to the reader at once. The rest of the poem serves as a sort of expansion on the chosen topic. In “La violencia de las horas” such affirmations are encountered both at the beginning and the end of the poem, thus creating a structural frame and emphasising the difference between “I” and “everyone”.

The poem shifts from centring on macro (lives of a variety of different individuals) to micro (concentration on one individual and his pseudo-personal experience). This creative strategy should not be surprising: autobiographical motifs, almost obsessive attention to the figures of mother²⁹ and lover; recurrent theme of loss can relate to the life of the author: in 1915–1920 Vallejo lost several good friends, his mother and his love Otilia³⁰ – all together these experiences were converted into leitmotifs of Vallejian poetry. The inability to express the pain of loss and loneliness in the existing poetic language encourages the poet to fight the language³¹ by destroying its norms and in this way to search for his own poetic voice and to liberate himself from the pomposity of Latin American modernism. It is also important to notice that when it comes to the more personal experience, the style of the poem changes: the prosaic tone is replaced by more

26 Fanny Arango-Keeth, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

27 Special attention to this aspect of the poem in the works of Vallejo may be due to the influence of avant-garde poetics.

28 “La violencia de las horas”, in: César Vallejo, *Poemas Humanos*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 2002, p. 11.

29 Fanny Arango-Keeth, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

30 Jorge Cornejo Polar, “Vallejo y la vanguardia: una relación problemática”, in: *Apuntes: Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, Lima, 1991, No. 28, p. 3.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 79.

complex images: “murió en mi revolver mi madre, en mi puño mi hermana y mi hermano en mi víscera sangrienta”³². Surrealist-like images in Vallejo’s poetry are frequently used to reflect on existential anxiety. The subject of the poem looks back to the past and enumerates his losses, performing thus an archaeology of memory: “La violencia de las horas” could be interpreted as a modern formulation of “ubi sunt”³³. In the poetry of the Peruvian author the past works as a presumption of asylum³⁴ and the poem becomes a key to the paradise lost, yet by contemplating it the subject does not feel relieved, on the contrary, he perceives his temporality and loneliness even more profoundly.

Themes of suffering and violence, pseudo-subjective perspective, special attention to the structure of the text and poetic language are important in the literary works of both Parulskis and Stankus (and in Lithuanian literature in general). Due to this fact the encounter of these three poets does not seem so casual: similar poetic techniques attract each other and enable the emergence of intertextual relationships.

Sigitas Parulskis. “Subjektyvi kronika”

Parulskis’ interest in Vallejo’s poetry stems from his active following of Bložė’s literary work³⁵: there is a strong basis to assume that through Bložė’s translations, Parulskis became acquainted with the poetry of the Peruvian author. Yet a more attentive study of their poetics allows us to assert that there is more between Parulskis and Vallejo than the Lithuanian poet’s youthful admiration for the peculiar dark poems by the poet from a distant land and a certain cultural dependency on their translator: Vallejo’s poetry shows an attempt to invent a new, individual poetic language and to write differently from Latin American modernists who were emphasising the aesthetic aspect of the language by using complex metaphors and fanciful words and trying to create a sort of poetic “art deco”. A similar intent can be observed in Parulskis’ poetic agenda: according to Brigita Speičytė, the 20th century Lithuanian poetry was mainly lyrical, and it drove young poets

32 “my mother died in my revolver, my sister died in my fist and my brother died in my bloody viscus”, César Vallejo, “La violencia de las horas”, p. 11.

33 María Ema Llorente, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 232.

35 Virginija Cibarauskė claims that Bložė was Parulskis’s poetic “father” and mentor (Virginija Cibarauskė, *op. cit.*, p. 123).

to search for less poetic forms of art³⁶. It seems that Vallejo and Parulskis have a similar creative impulse: an ambition to seek poetic independence.

Post-Soviet Lithuanian poetry tends to use post-modern creative strategies³⁷. From this point of view, Parulskis' poem "Subjektyvi kronika" can be considered a perfect example of Lithuanian postmodernist poetry. Parulskis takes the structural carcass of Vallejo's poem and fills it with his own material, thus establishing a hypertextual connection: a hybrid poetic text in which the limits between authorship and originality are unclear and, virtually, unimportant.

The first link with the Peruvian author's text is a direct one: the opening epigraph quotes the first line of Vallejo's poem "La violencia de las horas" and names the author, so the connection with Vallejo's poem is established directly. The epigraph performs several functions identified by Gérard Genette: it justifies the text, indicates a certain direction to the reader, emphasises indirectly the meaning of the text and creates a dialogue with the literary field³⁸. Yet it has to be mentioned that the exact connection between the poems will reveal itself only if the reader actually knows Vallejo's text: otherwise the intertextual relations will be interpreted only on the thematic level. The reader has two options: to trust Parulskis and assume that Vallejo's impact on the poem is limited to what Parulskis indicates, or to be a "suspicious"³⁹ reader and dive into a detective literary game.

While rewriting Vallejo's poem Parulskis leaves out the first statement (or rather shifts it to the epigraph thus connecting his poem to the original one) but keeps the anaphora so the basic structure and rhythm is preserved. Nonetheless, it would be wrong to claim that this poem is a "copy/paste", a perfect plagiarism. To begin with, the perspective has changed: Vallejo moves from impersonal to personal while Parulskis does the opposite: following Vallejo, he prosaically enumerates the circumstances of certain people's lives and deaths, yet the poem is driven to a more open and abstract perspective: "mirė Dievo sūnus, jis irgi mirė negyvas"⁴⁰, "mirė namai

36 Brigita Speičytė, "Nepoetinis eilėraščio menas. Posovietinės lietuvių poezijos linkmės", in: *Metai*, [online], 2009, No. 01, [cited on 15-06-2020], <http://www.tekstai.lt/zurnalas-metai/507-2009-m-01-sausis/4221-brigita-speicyte-nepoetinis-eilerascio-menas-posovietines-lietuviu-poezijos-linkmes>.

37 *Ibid.*

38 Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, translated from French by Jane E. Lewin, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 145-160.

39 Virginija Cibarauskė, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

40 "the son of God died, he also died lifeless", "Subjektyvi kronika", in: Sigitas Parulskis, *Be teisės sugrižti*, Vilnius: Alma littera, 2015, p. 24.

ir šventyklos, mirė sėklos ir vaisiai”⁴¹. Paradoxically, despite the absence of personal perspective in Parulskis’ poem, it produces a similar effect as the one by Vallejo: it speaks about existential anxiety and the fragility of life.

Vallejo usually concentrates the gist of meaning at the end of the text thus toying with the reader’s expectations⁴²: the same strategy is used by Parulskis when he sums up: “mirė – viskas svarbu / mirė – nieko nėra reikšmingo”⁴³. The last lines of the poem, the statement at its beginning “girtas gyvulys nemėgsta iš gardo pabėgusių žmonių”⁴⁴ together with the quoted line “the son of God died, he also died lifeless” reveal stylistic similarities between Parulskis and Vallejo: in rarefying and transforming the images both poets try to balance between the prosaic and the poetic language and to find their own style: not too ordinary, yet not sentimental either.

Comparing the two poems we also notice a difference in the plane of meaning: Parulskis’ poem articulates the presence of death more emphatically than Vallejo’s. The Peruvian poet enumerates the deceased, stressing an important aspect of their lives, as if inventorying his own memory: “Murió doña Antoña, la ronca, que hacía pan barato en el burgo”⁴⁵, “Murió un viejo tuerto, su nombre no recuerdo, pero dormía al sol de la mañana, sentado ante la puerta del hojalatero de la esquina”⁴⁶. The actual reason of death is mentioned only once: “Murió Rayo, el pero de mi altura, herido de un balazo de no se sabe quién”⁴⁷. The subject of Sigitas Parulskis’ poem remembers not only the features of the deceased but also how they died or were buried: “Mirė galvijų šėrikas Julius, jaučiai užbadė”⁴⁸, “Mirė pusbrolis Vidas, mėgo žvejot, kai jį laidojo per bulviasodį ežeru plaukė dvi gulbės”⁴⁹. In this way death becomes the central theme of the poem: the subject of “Subjektyvi kronika” does not try to find a way to the paradise

41 “houses and temples died, seeds and fruit died”, *Ibid.*

42 María Ema Llorente, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

43 “died – everything is important / died – there is nothing significant”, “Subjektyvi kronika”, in: Sigitas Parulskis, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

44 “a drunk animal doesn’t like people who escaped from the stall”, *Ibid.*

45 “Doña Antoña died, the husky one, she used to bake cheap bread in the burg”, César Vallejo, “La violencia de las horas”, p. 11.

46 “The one-eyed old man died, his name I can’t remember, he used to doze in the morning sun in front of the tinsmith’s door, on the corner”, *Ibid.*

47 “Rayas died, the dog almost as tall as me, shot by someone”, *Ibid.*

48 “Julius, the animal feeder, died, he was stabbed by bulls”, “Subjektyvi kronika”, in: Sigitas Parulskis, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

49 “Cousin Vidas died, he liked fishing, when he was buried during potato planting season two swans were crossing the lake”. *Ibid.*

lost, he declares openly that death is the principle uniting and governing the world⁵⁰.

While manipulating Vallejo's poem Parulskis adapts it to his own communicational needs, writes himself into the Peruvian author's text, extends it, and in this way his poetry becomes a part of Peruvian literature. In spite of the chronological linearity implied by the circumstances of the composition of these poems, their existence in the literary domain is simultaneous and suggests relations of poetic brotherhood rather than the ones of father/son, teacher/pupil. Both poets postulate in their own individual manner an intent to create what Brigita Speičytė describes as non-poetic and non-embellished poetic language and the aesthetics of ugliness⁵¹.

Vytautas Stankus. "Devynios gyvybės"

Stankus' poetry engages in an open dialogue with various cultural elements: in the three poetry collections published so far he uses references to his personal canon of literature, music and visual arts as a constructing material for a poem. The texts of one of the most prominent voices of contemporary Lithuanian poetry are born on the verge of the objective reality and personal experiences.

Without doubt, Parulskis exerted an important influence on most poets of Stankus' generation. Their poetry is characterised by search of identity and a dense poetic language filled with bodily images, in which the canon is unquestioned and used as repetition and a given fact. We can presume that it was Parulskis' poetry that encouraged Stankus to get acquainted with Vallejo's texts. In this case, the "secondary" text has actualised the original one. The genesis of "Devynios gyvybės" could be schematically shown as follows⁵²:

"Devynios gyvybės" ← "Subjektyvi kronika" ← "Valandų smurtas" ← "La violencia de las horas"
 Vytautas Stankus Sigitas Parulskis Vytautas Bložė César Vallejo

⁵⁰ Brigita Speičytė, *op. cit.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Some contemporary literary critics claim that intertextual relations should not be discussed referring to texts as 'precursors' and 'followers' (Irina Melnikova, *Intertekstualumas: teorija ir praktika*, Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2003, pp. 20–21), yet while commenting on the development of intercultural relations the genesis of the text is of great importance.

It becomes obvious that for the reception of foreign literature and its integration into a different culture the figure of translator as a mediator and cultural authority is indispensable: without the cultural role-modelling of Bložė (one of the most active translators of his generation) and Parulskis the last variation of “La violencia de las horas” would have been impossible.

In terms of structure, Stankus too remains true to Vallejo’s poem: “Devynios gyvybės” is based on anaphoric repetition, although there is one essential difference. Stankus’ poem is antithetical to the previous versions of “La violencia de las horas”. Both Stankus and Parulskis use the same epigraph, yet Stankus establishes a dialogue with the other texts by stating in the first line “visi jie gyvi”⁵³. Also, the leitmotif of the poem has changed: instead of “mirė” (“died”) the word “gyva(s)” (“alive”) is repeated.

Contrary to Parulskis, Stankus uses the strategy of framing but applies it to a smaller segment of the text: all the strophes, with the exception of the last two, end with “kvėpuoja” (“breathes”). Judging only by the structure of the text, one could consider a complete shift of meaning: instead of non-existence the text talks about being. However, ‘being alive’ in “Devynios gyvybės” is deceptive: the majority of the described individuals are dying, ill or suffering:

gyvas yra pusbrolis Tadas, anksčiau labai
 mėgo silkę ir virtas bulves su lupenom,
 lankė sporto klubą, kilnodavo svarmenis, demonstruodavo
 kietą kaip akmuo bicepsą, mynė kiek įkabindamas,
 iki dugno spaudė pedalą, BMW,
 viską turbūt patys suprantat, dabar
 nevaldo kairės rankos ir šypsos puse lūpų,
 šypsos, kvėpuoja.⁵⁴

Others, on the other hand, try by all means to prove their vitality:

⁵³ “They are all alive”, “Devynios gyvybės”, in: Vytautas Stankus, *Skrudžių skandinavimas*, Vilnius: Versus Aureus, 2016, p. 30.

⁵⁴ “Cousin Tadas is alive, he used to / like herring and boiled unpeeled potatoes, / he went to the gym, used to lift weights, demonstrate / his biceps hard as a rock, push with all his might, / press the pedal to the floorboard, BMW, / you probably understand everything by now, now / he can’t control his left arm and smiles with half the lips / smiles and breathes”, *Ibid.*

gyvas dėdė Aloyzas, būdamas jaunas rašė
eilėraščius, paskui, ačiū dievui, suaugo,
užsiėmė rimtais reikalais, dirba iešmininku,
siuntinėja traukinius iš vienos trasos į kitą,
jaučiasi kuo puikiausiai, rūko, geria,
stebi pravažiuojančius traukinius,
dulkinasi į kairę ir dešinę,
pridusęs, kvėpuoja.⁵⁵

Such implications of vitality, together with the title “Nine lives”, seem to contradict the above-mentioned motifs of lifelessness. The collision of different elements creates tensions necessary for kick-starting the activation of meaning. In order to fully reveal the power of death, the contrary pole is introduced: to understand the difference we have to perceive relations between the elements⁵⁶ and be able to connect them. By introducing the classical dichotomy of life and death into his poetic microcosm Stankus (like Parulskis and Vallejo) accentuates the misery of life.

Stankus’ poem is related stylistically to both of its texts-companions: his and Vallejo’s poems use surrealist images (“esu gyvas kaip visad, kaip niekad pilnas jėgų, / guliu dantimis į sieną ir graužiu, / graužiu skylę į kitą pusę”⁵⁷) that give depth to the texts. From Parulskis his inheritor takes the roughness of language and emphasis on non-aesthetic elements (probably as a hint to Parulskis, Stankus begins his poem with an image of pig slaughtering – a signature image of Parulskis who, in his rebel impulse, destroys the implications of security and tranquillity of the rural environment predominant in classical Lithuanian literature).

Like Vallejo’s poem, the one by Stankus moves from the bigger picture to a more personal perspective: in the last strophes of the text the poetic ‘I’ appears. The poem has an open ending: “guliu ir kvėpuoju, kvėpuoju ir laukiu”⁵⁸. The poem is projected to the reader in terms of both

55 “Uncle Aloyzas is alive, in his youth he wrote / poems, later, thank God, he grew up, / engaged in serious business, now he works as a switchman, / sends trains from one track to another, / feels great, smokes, drinks, / watches passing trains, / fucks to right and left, / short of breath, breathes”, *Ibid.*, p. 31.

56 Algirdas Julius Greimas, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

57 “I’m alive as always, fuller of energy than ever, / I lie, my teeth to the wall, and am gnawing / am gnawing a hole to the other side”, Vytautas Stankus, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

58 “I lie and breathe, breath and wait”, *Ibid.*

syntax (only the last two strophes do not end in a full stop) and meaning (a thought is interrupted, the last verb has no complement). For the text to be finished and the riddle of its structure solved, the reader should actively participate in the creation of its meaning and help enable all its semantic layers. How the poem will be completed depends not only on the subjectivity of the reader but also on the meanings surrounding the text: published in the collection *Skrudžiu skandinimas*⁵⁹, the poem “Devynios gyvybės” continues the dark apologetics of death so typical of Vallejo and Parulskis’ poetry, is full of death-related images and actively contradicts the positive connotations of the title.

Conclusions

Participating in the language an individual loses his/her subjectivity⁶⁰ – the themes and components of his/her texts are mere repetitions. Both Parulskis and Stankus demonstrate the subjectivity of their poems by repeating in their own way the formulations and tendencies of Vallejo’s poetic language. “La violencia de las horas” by the Peruvian poet, Bložė’s translation “Valandų smurtas”, “Subjektyvi kronika” by Parulskis and “Devynios gyvybės” by Stankus form a consistent textual chain, a poetic bridge between Lithuania and Peru, overcoming cultural and linguistic discrepancies and forming one dense literary tissue.

Lotman proposes that every shift to a different cultural field implies the actualisation of the hidden aspects of the codification system⁶¹, so Vallejo’s text is not superficially rewritten by the Lithuanian poets⁶²: in spite of historical and socio-political differences the authors are linked by similar stylistics and themes. The major themes of Vallejo’s poetry – the chaos and absurdity of existence⁶³ – are echoed in the works of Parulskis and Stankus, making, as Vida Tamoliūnaitė puts it, “the painful oscillations between essential life categories” the basis of the texts⁶⁴. The meaning of

59 *Drowning the ants*.

60 Graham Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

61 Jurij Lotman, *Kultūros semiotika*, p. 139.

62 The relations of the texts discussed can be described by applying the concept of “distorted reflection” proposed by Jurij Lotman (*Kultūros semiotika*, p. 226): a text does not reflect other texts exactly but rather pulls them into a common space.

63 Jorge Cornejo Polar, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

64 “skausmingi svyravimai tarp esminių gyvenimo kategorijų”; Vita Tamoliūnaitė, “Tarp cinizmo ir ilgesio: Sigito Parulskio paradokasai”, in: *Darbai ir dienos*, No. 42, 2005, p. 5.

“La violencia de las horas” is reinforced and actualised by the Lithuanian poets and, at the same time, special attention is paid to the structure of the poem thus stressing its importance as a creative component of the text.

The analysis of “La violencia de las horas”, “Subjektyvi kronika” and “Devynios gyvybės” allows us to consider literature as a process in which both the internal dynamic of the text and its coming into being in the literary field are essential. The role of the reader is highly important in this act: while participating actively in the meaning creation process (e.g. exploring the relation between the epigraph and the poem, analysing its structure, searching for connections and keywords) he or she actualises the intertextual relations and makes new meanings possible. In this case, reading becomes an active interpretative activity instead of a simple search for aesthetic pleasure or information. A poem-hypertext is nothing other than an active reading of other text or texts.

Coexisting in the literary field these poems form a tryptic, three variations on the same subject, and their meanings become connected. “La violencia de las horas”, “Subjektyvi kronika” and “Devynios gyvybės” are related on the principle “text in a text”⁶⁵, and each variation, looking chronologically, embraces even more: Parulskis actualises two texts, Vallejo’s and Bložė’s, while Stankus revives all the versions. On the other hand, Vallejo’s poem is no longer alone: it is being continued and inseparable from the works of the Lithuanian authors. Irina Melnikova argues that those texts that conserve cultural activity keep collecting information from various sources and acquiring new meanings⁶⁶. Knowledge about the genesis of the text is important, yet not essential when it comes to the meaning of the text: more important than the connection between cause / effect, authorship / copy is a solid textual fabric that allows us once again to reflect on the relationship between national and world literatures.

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⁶⁵ Jurij Lotman, *Kultūros semiotika*, p. 221.

⁶⁶ Irina Melnikova, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

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Santrauka

Césario Vallejo poetikos recepcija Sigito Parulskio ir Vytauto Stankaus kūryboje

Dovilė Kuzminskaitė

Reikšminiai žodžiai: intertekstualumas, Césaris Vallejo, Vytautas Stankus, Sigitas Parulskis.

Šiame straipsnyje pristatoma lyginamoji Peru poeto Césario Vallejo eilėraščio „La violencia de las horas“ ir Sigito Parulskio eilėraščio „Subjektyvi kronika“ bei Vytauto Stankaus eilėraščio „Devynios gyvybės“ analizė. Atsižvelgus į šių kūrinių specifiką (lietuvių eilėraščiuose adaptuojamas ir perrašomas Peru poeto tekstas), ypatingas dėmesys sutelkiamas į struktūrą, kuri, remiantis Jurijaus Lotmano teorija, yra vienas pagrindinių meninio teksto reikšmę kuriančių elementų. Įdėmus šių eilėraščių perskaitymas taikant intertekstinę prieigą (remiantis Roland'o Barthes'o ir Jesaus Camarero darbais) leidžia atskleisti bendrus Peru ir Lietuvos poetų kūrybos bruožus: poetinės kalbos rekonstrukciją taikant buitiskų elementų ir siurrealistinių vaizdinių simbiozę, dėmesį teksto ritmui, asmeninės patirties universalizaciją, retrospektyvaus žvilgsnio ir atminties archeologijos svarbą, tam tikrus tematinius leitmotyvus (mirtis, egzistencinis nerimas, būtis „nepatogumas“). Atlikus analizę, ryškėja intertekstu paremtų kūrinių prigimties dominantės: kurti teksto reikšmę rašytojas perleidžia skaitytojui, tokiu būdu pabrėždamas teksto reikšmę kaip vyksmą, o ne duotybę, nesiekia absoliutaus originalumo, traktuoja literatūrą kaip dinamišką tekstų tinklą, tiek pat kiek ir objektyvi tikrovė tinkama tapti medžiaga naujam kūriniui atsirasti. Intertekstu paremti kūriniai eliminuoja nacionalinių literatūrų nubrėžtas ribas, padeda kurti laisvą ir dinamišką universaliosios literatūros lauką.