

## Realization of Sound and Image Ethnoarchetypes in M. K. Čiurlionis' Compositions

Musical archetypes as well as those of the formation of ornamentation adornment in Lithuanian ethnoculture come to life in M. K. Čiurlionis' musical and art works in new visual and sounding shapes. Archaic formation or composing types are proper to be called binary due to their oppositional character.

Whereas the latter – a typical feature of an archaic consciousness – to see the twopole world in contradiction with powers, energies and bodies (light and darkness, good and evil, male and female, etc.). Appropriate parities are typical of all the mentioned powers and phenomena. Oppositions constantly contend, variably fight among themselves, however, never succeed in overcoming each other. Thus binary opposite parities – a constant rule of a mythical world's structure. However, binary shapes acquire specific forms on a cultural plane. A binary oppositional formation principle, as an instrument discovered and formed by a mythical thinking to get to know (to perceive) and influence oneself and the medium, pierces all the creation by the man of the period.

The mentioned principle is irreplaceable in an attempt to explore and perceive both Lithuanian ethnomusic and the structures of archaic visual creation.

Incidentally, it should be added here that both ethnic art and music are principally the combinations of a primary syncretic culture. Therefore, it goes without saying that it is always productive to look for common analogies, similarities and parallels among the mentioned visual and sound structures.

Archaic art formation principles can return to life in the centuries of later epochs. In new historic contexts, the principles of binary oppositions usually become as a certain archetypal formation model. It is impossible to identically repeat this formation, however, at the level of a common trait, it is possible to notice a certain inflow of the structuring idea and its influence on a new variety of sounding and a visual material. In the artist's creative work, the influence of an archetype, as a rule, shows itself intuitively and subconsciously.

Binary formation archetypes intervene in musical and art works of the Lithuanian genius M. K. Čiurlionis. Having in mind that the artist and composer would realize his works most often caught by a certain spiritual radiance and visionary state, it is natural for such archetypes to show their voice subconsciously. It was a spontaneous and true creative work. The archetypes inherited from the ethnoculture environment would first of all disclose themselves in the process of a creative work as a certain structural power and vision followed by materialization.

In the article an attempt will be made to demonstrate the phenomenon of a binary archetype through the Lithuanian ethnomusic and visual ornamentation also the composer's art and musical pieces.

Let's familiarize ourselves with one of the numerous examples of Lithuanian ethnomusic, i. e. a typical Lithuanian two-voice *sutartinė* (Example 1). Here each voice distinguishes itself by the sounds moving at a third and forming the strings of thirds. One of them B flat-D-F and the other A-C-E. These combinations are proper to be called binary blocks (the higher block is marked by + and the lower –) because both sound complexes are apposed at a second (Ex. 1a). The opposition of sounds is based on the peculiarities of intervals. The sounds at thirds are kindred and distinguish themselves in respect of their real and secret acoustic relationship, therefore, harmoniously form a unanimous complex of sounds – a block of sounding. In their turn, the blocks proper correlate at a second, the sounds of which sounding simultaneously (a vertical at a second) give rise to the impression of opposition, intersection or an acoustic friction. Therefore, it is natural that an interval at a second is particularly favourable for the formation of a polarity. A binary oppositional formation of the sounding of *sutartinė* is often accompanied by the polarized figures of rhythm. The figures of opposition rhythm are particularly noticeable among voices I, II (ones with a syncope and their variants, m. 14, 15) and the others with rhythm inversion, m. 10, 12; slightly weaker m. 16 (when a single voice moves by greater rhythmic values). Measures 1, 3, 7 (var. 5) and 13 are void of rhythm oppositions due to the coincidence of the rhythm figures of both voices. It is at this time when the intersections at a second of the *sutartinė* can be most distinctly heard.

Due to similar intersections at a second, *sutartinės* are referred to by various names – *sudaužtinė*, *kapotinė*, *tryninė*, etc. The constantly heard intersections at a second due to a certain moving of the *sutartinė* sounds change their position. They can sound higher or lower. The variable heights of the seconds form a unique original

line which is proper to be called an ornament (Ex. 1b). Here the nuances of the intensity of intersections at a second, inspired by subtle changes in rhythmic, are not reflected by far.

Ex. 1a

Ex. 1b

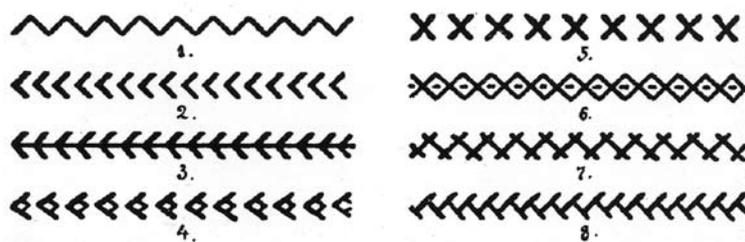
Example 1 (1a, 1b). Lithuanian two-voice *sutartinė*, C3C 86

Something similar to the ornament of intersections at a second can be found in Lithuanian ethnomonody. However different than in *sutartinė*, the vertical seconds become melin, and the intersection is changed for the ousting of sounds at seconds (Example 2). In the presented ethnomonody an ornament of oustings at a second (B flat-A, D-E and E-F, C sharp-D, etc., see Ex. 2b) is woven from polar blocks (+ / -) (Ex. 2a: F-D-B flat and E-C-A).

Example 2 (2a, 2b). Lithuanian ethnomonody, ČLFM 235

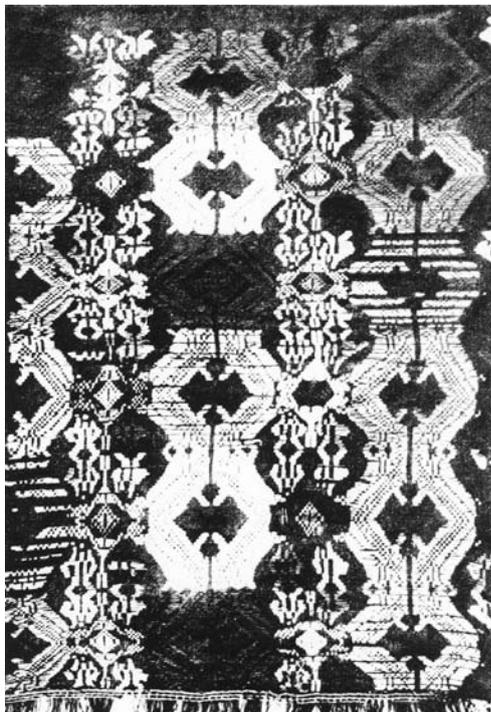
The examples witness that both the *sutartinė* and the *monody* distinguish themselves by a close to both of them binary formation principle under the influence of which the ornaments of vertical and melin sounds at a second are placed or in other words – patterned. Here we would like to compare them with analogical phenomena found in Lithuanian folk art.

A prominent researcher of Lithuanian folk art Paulius Galaunė wrote: “The most primitive ornament both of other nations as well as that of our manifested itself as purely geometric and woven. The first consists of very simple geometric elements taken by the schemes of a straight line (PG, p. 23)”, for example (Example 3) (PG, XXIX, a table), mini trees (1), a mini fir-tree (2, 3, 4), mini crosses (5) and mini windows (6).



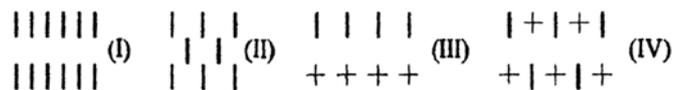
Example 3

The researcher notices that the woven ornament is of a later origin than a geometric one, and it is more seldom used. Thus having in mind an archaic character of Lithuanian *sutartinės* and some of *monodies*, it is logical to compare their ornaments at a second with geometric ones. The latter most vividly demonstrate the



Example 4

intersection of the straight geometric lines. Geometric patterns are most often seen in cloths, the sashes and aprons woven, according to P. Galaunė, in the idiom of a profound ancient aesthetics. Example 4 (PG, p. 169, a drawing) illustrates how rather primitive ornaments of geometric (binary) intersections are developed into rich cloth patterns. The example also presents one of the most beautiful aprons in a *kaišytinis* pattern. The method of the apron weaving is of great interest. The “one-colour background of the apron” – writes P. Galaunė, – “has lengthwise, cross piece or multicolour bands, and the patterns in their spaces were array in the following order” (PG, p. 267):



The binary archetype unfolds itself in M. K. Čiurlionis musical pieces.

Of interest is one of the composer’s works – Prelude D minor (VL 239). Its introductory pre-measure figure of thirty seconds (D-F-A-E-C sharp) is a kind of a litmus of this combination (Example 5). The binary structure of this work can be traced on the basis of a binary work-formation. Interpreting this intonation as a primary higher block (+), it follows that its antipode distanced at a second lower is its lower block (–), the sounds C-E-G-D-B (m. 6). Both blocks can be easily identified on the basis of the principal sounds, i. e. D and C. In the composition, operating by these polar blocks, the cycle of binary oustings is structured.

It is convenient to follow the formation of the work according to the proposed scheme (Ex. 5a). One can notice that the initial block is soon lowered at a third (sounding from D, now from B flat, m. 3). This is how a higher block is widened. This widening of the block is followed by its ousting in a polar direction (m. 3). The latter, repeated (m. 9–11) several times by intonation consolidates itself. Soon, the second block is widened, raising it at a third (sounding from C, now from E, m. 11). We can see that the widenings of both blocks took place in different directions. The first was lowered and the second raised at a third. Expanding the second block, the composer widens it once again, lowering it at a third (from A, m. 13), and some time later returns it to the previous position (i. e. C, m. 19). At last, the latter in its turns is ousted, returning and strengthening a higher

compositional block (i. e. D, m. 22–30). This is how a cycle of binary oustings is completed, distinguishing itself by the fetures of concentric symmetry:

a block + / a block –  
a block – / a block +

The cycle of the prelude’s binary oustigs reminds of binary ornaments characteristic of Lithuanian ethnomusic. In this specific case, a more evident are the common points with the oustings at a second, characteristic of Lithuanian monody.

**Preliudas d - moll      Prelude in D minor**

VL 239 (1903)

**Andante**

Ex. 5a

Example 5 (5a). Prelude in D minor

The binary ornament originally unfolds itself in M. K. Čiurlionis' visual works, both in graphics and fine arts.

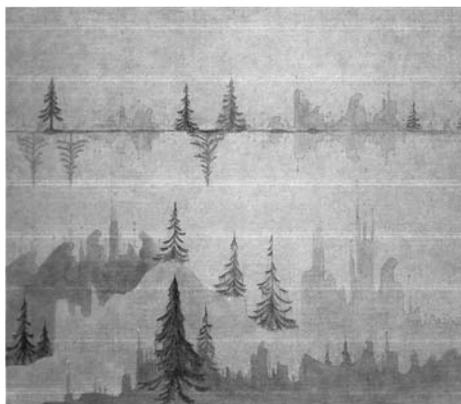
In graphic art, the mentioned ornament is more evident and more decorative. Of particular mention are his artistic book designs. For instance, the book *In Lithuania* by S. Kymantaitė-Čiurlionienė, 1910 (Example 6). The art historian Rasa Andriušytė-Žukienė wrote about the composition of the cover as follows: “composing



Example 6. M. K. Čiurlionis. The book cover design



Example 7. M. K. Čiurlionis. Vignette



Example 8. M. K. Čiurlionis. *Fugue*

the cover, the Lithuanian painter used the repetition of the motif, the division of the plain of the book cover into right-angled segments, the contrast between an open-worked ornament and an integral background, and, above all, quite unexpectedly rearranged the ornament, employing as if a mirror reflection of a single segment. The central axis of an impressive colour pattern (red and black) is distinctly framed, the ornament enlarged and a general view is greatly decorative and self-evident” (RA-Ž, p. 145).

The mirror ornament reflection seems to be the basic detail of an archetypal formation which enables one to establish associative ties between his music and visual art works as well as to trace the painter's absorbed ethnoartistic heritage.

An ethnic rudiment of a binary archetype is particularly artistically embodied in the cover projects of Lithuanian folk songs (1910). As R. Andriušytė-Žukienė notices, “M. K. Čiurlionis would choose the fragments of national woodcuts and create strictly rhythmic compositions” (RA-Ž, p. 146). Here is one of the examples – the vignette of the folk song *Oh, Wood, Wood, a Green Grove* (Example 7). An archetypal formation principal can be rather easily made out in a complex and complicated composition: the central part of the cover is surrounded by the structures of an inverse ornament both in the relationships of the top and the bottom and the left and the right.

The ornament of inverse binarics resourcefully and subtly emerges in his paintings. Here is one of the examples: *Fugue*, from the diptych *Prelude. Fugue*, 1908 (Example 8). Here the small lakeshore pine-trees are inversely reflected on the water surface. A general composition of the painting reminds by far of the discussed binary-type ornaments found in folk art.

The carried out analysis leads to the following principle conclusion: the binary formation archetypes found in Lithuanian ethno-culture come to life in new forms and shapes in M. K. Čiurlionis' musical, graphic and art compositions.

It would be proper to finish the present study with the following topical points for the present-day Lithuanian music and art:

1. The ideas expressed by M. K. Čiurlionis to Lithuanian composers no less than a century ago: “One should not loose hope, I repeat it again, recollecting our old songs. The time will come when our composers will open that bewitched kingdom and, deriving inspiration from those riches, will discover in their hearts long untouched strings; then all of us will better understand ourselves

because it will be Lithuanian genuine music. How soon? In a hundred, two or possibly three hundred years, if we don't get tired and manage to awaken a desire for better music in society” (MKČ, p. 296).

2. The insights declared by the art historian P. Galaunė some 80 years ago: “...new attempts can be seen to find a way to an original culture and art. It is our folk art where the sources and rudiments for the creation of that original art rest. In spite of the conservatism of our nation, and the absence of interest in the changes of life forms in art, nevertheless, its art is abundant in new artistic searches, and new artistic formations. It is the rudiment of a depicted composition due to its richness in various inner groupings with a sober constructivism and ornamentalism. We always discover in it a great number of organic art traditions. They have been its custodian” (PG, p. 272–273).

### Abbreviations

ČLFM	Čiurlionytė J. <i>Lithuanian Folk Melodies</i> . Vilnius, 1999.
C3C	Славюнас З. <i>Сутартинес</i> . Ленинград, 1971.
VLKF	Čiurlionis M. K. <i>Works for Piano. The Whole</i> . Ed. by V. Landsbergis. 2004.
RA-Ž	Andriušytė-Žukienė R. M. K. <i>Čiurlionis between Symbolism and Modernism</i> . Vilnius, 2004.
MKČ	Čiurlionis Mikalojus Konstantinas. <i>On Music and Art: Letters, Notes and Articles</i> (prepared by V. Čiurlionytė-Karužienė). Vilnius, 1960.
RJ	Janeliauskas R. <i>Binarics as a Common Trait of composing</i> . Lithuanian Musicology II, 2001. Vilnius, p. 6–21.
PG	Galaunė P. <i>Lithuanian Folk Art. The Basis for the Expansion of its Artistic Forms</i> . Kaunas, 1930.

### Santrauka

#### Garsinių ir vaizdinių lietuvių etnoarchetipų realizacija M. K. Čiurlionio kūrinuose

Lietuvių etnokultūroje glūdintys muzikos ir puošybos ornamentų darybos archetipai M. K. Čiurlionio muzikos ir dailės kūrinuose atgyja naujais skambesio ir vaizdo pavidalais. Archajinius darybos, arba komponavimo, tipus tiktų vadinti binariniais dėl savo opoziciskumo. Tai tipinė archajinės sąmonės savybė – matyti pasaulį dvipolišką, susipriešinusį jėgomis, energijomis ir kūnais (šviesa–tamsa, gėris–blogis, vyriškas–moteriškas ir pan.). Visoms šioms jėgoms ir reiškiniams būdingi paritetai. Opozicijos nuolat rungtis, permainingai kovoja tarpusavyje, tačiau niekada taip ir neįveikia viena kitos. Taigi binariniai priešybių paritetai – nekintama pasaulio sąrangos taisyklė. Kultūrinėje plotmėje binariniai pavidalai įgyja konkrečias formas. Binarinis opozicinis darybos principas, kaip mitinės mąstysenos atrastas ir suformuotas instrumentas pažinti ir veikti save ir aplinką, persmelkia visą to meto žmogaus kūrybą. Šis principas nepamainomas siekiant iširti ir suvokti tiek lietuvių etnomuzikos, tiek ir archajinės vizualinės kūrybos struktūras. Beje, derėtų pridurti, kad tiek etninis menas, tiek muzika iš esmės yra pirmapradės sinkretinės kultūros dariniai. Tad savaime suprantama, kad tarp minėtų vizualinių ir garsinių struktūrų visuomet produktyvu ieškoti bendrųjų analogijų, panašumų ir paralelių.

Archajiniai meno darybos principai gali atgimti vėlesnėse epochose. Naujausiuose istoriniuose kontekstuose binarinių opozicijų principai paprastai tampa tam tikru archetipiniu darybos modeliu. Identiška šios darybos pakartoti neįmanoma, tačiau bendrybės lygmeniu (kaip tam tikras struktūrinimo idėjos įsiliejimas ir paveika naujoms skambesio bei vizualinės medžiagos atmainoms) galima pastebėti. Menininko kūryboje archetipo paveika paprastai pasireiškia intuityviai, pasąmoningai.

Binariniai darybos archetipai įsiterpia į lietuvių genijaus M. K. Čiurlionio muzikos ir dailės kūrinius. Turint galvoje tai, kad dailininkas ir kompozitorius savo kūrinius dažniausiai realizuodavo tam tikro dvasinio nušvitimo, vizijų būsenos pagautas, tad natūralu, kad šie archetipai prabildavo per sąmonę. Tai buvo savaiminga ir tikra kūryba. Iš etnokultūrinės aplinkos paveldėti archetipai kūrybos procese pirmiausia pasireiškėdavo kaip tam tikra struktūravimo jėga ir regėjimas, o tik paskui materializuodavosi.

Straipsnyje binarinio archetipo fenomenas iliustruojamas kompozitoriaus dailės ir muzikos kūriniais, išvedamos paralelės su lietuvių etnomuzikos ir vizualinio meno pavyzdžiais.