

The Poetic World of Nadezhda Artymovich and Mira Luksha. Similarities and Dissimilarities*

Świat poetycki Nadziei Artymowicz i Miry Łukszy. Podobieństwa i różnice

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Abstract. The phenomenon of creativity of the members of the Belarusian Literary Association “Belavezha,” which was founded in 1958 in Białystok, has been attracting the attention of researchers of the literature for a long time. Recently, the multigenerational “female” poetry (Alena Anishevskaya, Maryla Bazyluk, Zhenya Martynyuk, Lidia Malinowska, Justyna Karolka, Viyaleta Nikityuk, Katsyaryna Senkevich) has been arousing considerable interest. The article analyses the works of Nadezhda Artymovich and Mira Luksha – the brightest representatives of “Belavezha” with their expressive poetic world. We analyse the problem of tradition and innovation, the directions of different development of topics and motifs in their poetry so that we can see the components that are common to them and those that are definitely unique for each of them. The comparative and descriptive-analytical methods were used in the process of investigation.

Keywords: Belarusian Literary Association “Belavezha,” tradition, innovation, Nadezhda Artymovich, Mira Luksha

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Abstrakt. Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie fenomenu twórczości członków Białoruskiego Stowarzyszenia Literackiego „Białowieża”, które powstało w 1958 roku w Białymstoku i od pewnego czasu znalazło się w kręgu zainteresowań badaczy literatury, a wpisuje się w nurt białoruskiej literatury Polski. W ostatnim czasie znaczne zainteresowanie wywołuje wielopokoleniowa poezja „kobieca” (Alena Aniszewska, Maryła Bazyluk, Żenia Martyniuk, Lidia Malinowska, Justyna Korolko, Wioleta Nikiciuk, Katarzyna Sienkiewicz). W artykule analizowana jest twórczość dwóch najbardziej wyrazistych a zarazem przeciwstawnych poetek oraz światów poetyckich – Nadziei Artymowicz oraz Miry Łukszy. Analizie poddano problem tradycji i nowatorstwa, kierunki odmiennego rozwoju tematyki i motywów w ich poezji, co pozwoliło wyodrębnić te elementy, które są dla obu poetek wspólne, a także te które charakteryzują ich warsztat literacki w sposób niepowtarzalny. W procesie badawczym wykorzystano metodę komparatywistyczną oraz opisowo-analityczną.

Słowa kluczowe: Białoruskie Stowarzyszenie Literackie „Białowieża”, tradycja, nowatorstwo, Nadzieja Artymowicz, Mira Łuksza

The phenomenon of more than sixty years of existence of the literary Association of Belarusians in Poland “Belavezha,” the only organization of its kind founded by a national minority, has been recognized for many years – from student theses to PhD and doctoral dissertations, academic interpretations. As Aksana Danilchyk notes in unison with the opinion of a number of colleagues-literary critics:

The works of Belarusian writers in the Białystok region are an integral part of modern Belarusian literature, its very existence contributes to the multipolarity and decentralization of the literary process necessary for the full development of our literature. (Danilczyk, 2018, p. 128)¹

Twenty years ago, in a thorough preface to the “Belavezhskaya” Anthology published in Minsk, Uladzimir Konan drew attention to the fact that Belarusian literature in Poland is represented by three trends: traditional national-revival, modernist and postmodernist (Konan, 2000, p. 10). The fact that the issue of traditions and innovation was relevant for “Belavezha” from the first years of its existence is clearly evidenced by the discussion *Якой павінна быць паэзія?* [What Should Poetry Be?], initiated by the then chairman of “Belavezha” Ales Barsky in January 1963 on the Literary page of the Belarusian Białystok weekly *Hiva* [Field]. By the way, in October 1962, Mikhas Streltsov began in the pages of the Minsk weekly *Літаратура і мастацтва* [Literature and Art] the discussion *Пісьменнік і час* [Writer and Time] (which lasted until May 1963) about the traditions and innovations in Belarusian literature. Undoubtedly, the synchronicity of these critical literary discussions points to a common direction of creative searches of Belarusians in Białystok and Belarus in the early 1960s.

¹ “Творчасць беларускіх пісьменнікаў Беласточчыны ёсць неад’емнай часткай сучаснай беларускай літаратуры, само яе існаванне спрыяе стварэнню шматпаляярнасці і дэцэнтралізацыі літаратурнага працэсу, неабходных для паўнаwartаснага развіцця нашай літаратуры.”

A couple of years ago, Jan Czykwin told in great detail about the trends and patterns of the development of the literary “Belavezha:”

The work of Belarusian writers in Poland developed in a distinctive environment, when the environment differed from the Soviet and the current Belarusian, and from the emigrant ones. At the same time, the literature of the members of “Belavezha” did not fall out of the Polish or Belarusian national and cultural context. The relatively small territory of our real existence and the complete commonality of destinies gave rise to two vectors of development of literary themes and motives of the members of “Belavezha.” On the one hand, the desire to poetize their small homeland based on our everyday unique empiricism, our reality, and on the other hand, the need for philosophical depth, generalization in the understanding of universal human values... (Čykwin, 2017, p. 1)²

This lapidary characteristic in no way contradicts the awareness of the fact that Belarusian poetry (literature), wherever it is created (in Belarus or Poland), retains its unity (Sidarevič, 2003, p. 27). Moreover, the appearance in 1958 in Białystok of the Belarusian Literary Association “Belavezha” under the weekly *Hiva*, which, according to its founder and long-term first editor, the initiator of a kind of Belarusian revival in Białystok in the middle of the last millennium, Georgy Valkavytsky, even inherited the name from the Vilnius *Haua Hiva* [*Our Field*], which can be considered as the realization of one of the main national impulses of the “*Наша Hiva*” revival process. At the time, the cultural space of *Haua Hiva* covered the entire eastern Białystok region, represented by the correspondents from Sakolshchyna, Belshchyna, and Gainaushchyna. So, the appearance of “Belavezha” clarified the local process of creating the text of Belarusian literature in the Białystok region, freeing it from a special, almost Nyamiga, socio-historical collector.

In the anthology of Belarusian women’s poetry of the interwar period “*Бліскавіца*” [*Lightning*], published by Aksana Danilchyk and Victor Zhibul, among the poets of Western Belarus, Vera Murashka (1896–1981), born in Suprasl and raised in her parents’ house in the village of Agarodnichki Białystok district Grodno region is mentioned. She made her debut with the poem *Малітва* [*Prayer*] in the Vilnius newspaper *Homani* in October 1918. *Забытая ліра Веры Мурашкі* [*Vera Murashka’s Forgotten Lyre*] that was the title of the article on the *Hiva* Literary Page by Yuri Turonak, also presenting five poems by “an interesting

² “Творчасць беларускіх пісьменнікаў у Польшчы развілася ў адметным асяродзі, калі асяроддзе рознілася і ад савецкага, і ад цяперашняга беларускага, і эмігранцкага. А адначасова літаратура «белавежцаў» не выпадала ні з польскага, ні з беларускага нацыянальна-культурнага кантэксту. Параўнальна невялікая тэрыторыя нашага рэальнага існавання і поўная агульнасць лёсаў спарадзілі два вектары развіцця літаратурных тэм і матываў «белавежцаў». З аднаго боку, памкненне да паэтызацыі сваёй малой айчыны, заземленасць у штодзённай і непаўторнай нашай эмпірыі, нашай рэчыўнасці, а з другога, патрэба філасофскай заглыбленасці, абагуленасці ў асэнсаванні ўніверсальных чалавечых каштоўнасцей...”

representative of the Belarusian poetry of the Białystok region of the interwar time” [“цікавага прадстаўніка беларускай паэзіі Беласточчыны міжваеннай пары”] (Turonak, 1978, p. 3). Only the poetess’ poems of the twenties were published in *Ніва*, as well as in *Бліскавіца*. The lyrical heroine reveals in them her clear human, civic, patriotic position, the fidelity of which was confirmed by a severe six-year imprisonment.

It so happened that Vera Murashka (Maslovskaya) was not directly involved in the “Belavezha” movement, apparently, her most creative time was during the interwar period. However, the poet’s work undoubtedly explains and enriches the “Belavezha” context in its own way, as an organic part of the all-Belarusian one.

We have already had to write about the creative successors of Vera Murashka, the representatives of “Belavezha,” about women’s problems in the “women’s” poetry of “Belavezha” (Tvaranovič, 2012, pp. 291–305), paying attention in the article to the poems of Maria Alifer, Maryla Bazylyuk, Iryna Baravik, Alena Anishevskaya, Zhenya Martyniuk – some of the sixteen poets (among 54 authors) presented in the book *Букет Белавежжа Анталогія краялюбнай паэзіі “Белавежцаў”* [*Bouquet of Belavezha region. Anthology of patriotic poetry of the members of “Belavezha”*], compiled by Georgy Valkavytsky (2001). At the same time, the article deliberately ignored the poetic works of Nadezhda Artymovich and Mira Luksha, about whom, at least about the first one, much has already been said. But there is a need for a typological comparison of the poetic world of these bright individuals, representatives of Belarusian literature of Poland.

Artymovich (1946) made her debut on the April *Ніва* Literary Page in 1970 with the poem *Ой ляцелі гусі* [*Oh, Geese Flew*]. The first collection of her poetry, paradoxically, in Polish, *We śnie, w bólu słowa* [*In a Dream, in a Pain of Word*] (translated by Jan Leanchuk), was published in 1979. The first Belarusian-language book *Роздумы* [*Reflections*] was published two years later under the editorial care and with a foreword by Yuri Turonak, published by the Main Board of the Belarusian Socio-cultural Society in Białystok. The next collection of poems *Сезон у белых пейзажах* [*Season in White Landscapes*] in 1990 started the long life of the newly founded series Бібліятэчка Беларускага літаратурнага аб’яднання “Белавежа” [Library of the Belarusian Literary Association (BLA) “Belavezha”]. And three years later, finally, the readership of Belarus was able to get more closely acquainted with Artymovich’s poetry with the collection *3 неспакойных дарог* [*Of Troubled Roads*] (1993) which was published in the Minsk “Mastatskaya Literatura.” Soon, in 1994, in the Бібліятэцы БЛІА “Белавежа” [Library of the BLA “Belavezha”] (the eleventh position), a publication, which intensified the interest in the work of “Belavezhanka” [*member of “Belavezha”*] appeared. This refers to the collection *Дзверы* [*Doors*], notable primarily for the fact that in parallel with the poems

by Artymovich it contains their interpretation – “the marginalia of the poet Ales Razanov: by clarifying the topography of the poems and activating the meanings hidden in their rather hermetic space, they introduce poems into the context of dialogue” [“маргіналіі паэта Алеся Разанава: удакладняючы тапаграфію вершаў і актывізуючы сэнсы, што тояцца ў іхняй, даволі герметычнай, прасторы, яны ўводзяць вершы ў кантэкст дыялогу] (Artymovič and Razanaŭ, 1994, p. 5). The book contains twenty-eight works by Artymovich and the same number of interpretations by Razanov. In 1998, a bilingual collection of poems by Artymovich *Łagodny czas* [*Mild Time*] was published in Lublin. The following books of the poetess were published by the Program Board of the weekly *Hiva: Adplyvae spakojnae neba* [*The Calm Sky Sails Away*] (1999) – for the thirtieth anniversary of the *Hiva* debut, as emphasized in the word from the editor Yaugen Miranovich, *Жоўтая музыка* [*Yellow Music*] (2005) and the bilingual collection *Краевід з невідочнай памылкай* [*The Landscape with an Invisible Mistake*] (2018).

Leonid Galubovich in his reflections on the work of Artymovich notes:

Well, frankly speaking, the poetess has written no more than one book of original poems, though she has published them in five collections, composing the content depending on the plan, adding several new texts to the already known ones. Not a “Wreath”, of course, but – the crown of her modest collection of poetic fruits. (Halubovič, 2016, p. 291)³

In the preface to the *Роздумы* [*Reflections*], Turonak drew attention to the fact that Artymovich writes little, noting: “However, the range of problems that the poetess deals with is more important than quantitative indicators” [“Аднак больш істотным, чым колькасныя паказчыкі, з’яўляецца дыяпазон праблемаў, якімі займаецца паэтэса”] (Turonak, 1981, p. 3). In the afterword to the Lublin edition of her poetry, Florian Nieuważny said that Artymovich undoubtedly took her own place on the map of Belarusian poetry of the 1980s and 1990s, both by impression and by the way of expressing this impression.

Her poetry is the most frequent musical and graphic impressions, echoes of the experience, presented in the form of the white and free verse, which only disciplines thoughts, images, and tropes. Artymovich’s work is the process of transforming the environment into the crystals of experiences, feelings, moods, or reflections and... insinuations. (Nieuważny, 1998, pp. 106–107)⁴

³ “І што ж, калі быць абсалютна шчырым, то паэтка напісала не больш адной кніжкі арыгінальных вершаў, хоць выдала іх у пяці зборніках, кампануючы змест залежна ад задумы, дадаючы некалькі новых тэкстаў да ўжо вядомых. Не »Вянок«, вядома, але – вянец свайго сціплага па аб’ёму паэтычнага плёну.”

⁴ “Jej poezja to najczęściej muzyczno-graficzne impresje, odgłosy przeżyć, ujęte w kształt wiersza białego i wolnego, który dyscyplinuje jedynie myśli, obrazy i tropy. Twórczość Artymowicz to proces przetwarzania żywiołu w kryształiki przeżyć, uczuć, nastroju czy refleksji i... niedomówień.”

Artymovich's collection *Роздуми* [*Reflections*] consisted of three cycles of poems (*Грудка зямлі* [*The Lump of Earth*], *Мы так блізка сябе* [*We Are So Close to Ourselves*]) and *Варшаўскія пейзажы* [*Warsaw Landscapes*], written in 1970–1977, during Artymovich's stay in Warsaw. Apparently, her debut *Ніва* poem appeared in the capital. In the article “*І дзверы зрабіліся сцяной*” (*Катастрафізм у лірыцы Надзеі Артымовіч*) [“*And the Door Became a Wall*” (*Catastrophism in the Lyrics of Nadezhda Artymovich*)], Czykwin notes that Artymovich's move from Bielsk to Warsaw – she entered the Faculty of Philology of the University of Warsaw – was an unexpected leap for her.

from an “external” biography as a consistent “uncontrolled” consequence of events to the development of a deeply reflected internal, emotional biography. That's when the future poetess passes from a simple experience of her life to the perception of it as a constructive element of the aesthetic and artistic world. It was in Warsaw that Nadezhda Artymovich began her literary career; she trusted her thoughts to paper [...]. (Čykvin, 1997, pp. 146–147)⁵

Within a few decades the poetess herself, in her characteristic lapidary manner, would recall and appreciate her former condition, writing: “To Warsaw / flew in unconsciousness / with a wet unrecorded card / there was looking for a shadow / for defenseless premonitions / now I see / asymmetry of the heart / and the first smell” [“у Варшаву / ляцелася ў голай непрытомнасці / з мокрай незапісанай карткай / там шукалася ценю / для безабаронных прадчуванняў / цяпер бачу/ асіметрычнасць сэрца / і першага запаху”] ((Artymovič, 2005, p. 12).

The collection *Роздуми* [*Reflections*] begins with a significant verse, which gave the name to their first cycle: “You gave me / a lump of earth, / which fed me, / drank / and I, / well, / forgot it. / I forgot, / as some forget / the sources / that helped us generously, with a big hand, / brought us to life. / It's a pity / that so often / our memory / is so stingy” [“Ты падарыў мне / грудку зямлі, / якая мяне карміла, / пайла/ а я, / што ж, / яе забыла. / Забыла, / як і некаторыя забываюць / крыніцы, / якія нам шчодрай, вялікай рукой/ памагалі, / няслі нас у жыццё. / Шкада, / што так часта/ наша памяць / такая скупая.”] (Artymovič, 1981, p. 8).

Within the walls of the capital, the land, enclosed by asphalt, indifferent strangers, there comes a moment when the lyrical heroine suddenly recognises herself to be a traitor and does not justify herself by the fact that, unfortunately, not only her memory is “stingy” in relation to the sources of life. There is no answer

⁵ “ад «знешняй» біяграфіі як паслядоўнага »некантраляванага« наступства здарэнняў да разгортвання глыбока рэфлексаванай унутранай, душэўнай біяграфіі. Вось тады і адбываецца ў будучай паэтэсы пераключэнне з усяго толькі простага перажывання свайго жыцця на ўспрыманне яго як канструктыўнага элементу эстэтычна-мастацкага свету. Менавіта ў Варшаве Надзея Артымовіч і пачынае сваю літаратурную дзейнасць; яна давярае свае думкі паперы [...]”

in the verse to whom the lyrical heroine addresses – to the Almighty, to Destiny, to whom she regretfully complains of her ingratitude to the native. However, it is obvious that the **lump of earth** and **springs** in this laconic poem traditionally serve as symbols of the small Motherland, for which the lyrical heroine is nostalgic with a sense of guilt.

The following poem, born of love for the native land, is imbued with a completely different mood: *Присвячаю Бельску* [*I Dedicate to Bielsk*]. The poetess notes that from noisy, wide avenues and the streets of Warsaw, her hometown seems small to her “like a raindrop,” you could add, a city on a **lump of earth**. But, in contrast to the short life of a raindrop, the hometown, as if at first peremptorily similar to it, will never be blurred, will not be destroyed by a storm and will not be burned by fire – it belongs to living eternity. And then the lyrical heroine addresses Bielsk directly: “My city / Your narrow streets / Full of people / Old people / And children / How good / To Join / the river of old people and children / Breathe / Air. / Tree without root / Dries up / Man without air / Dies” [“Горад мой / Твае вузкія вуліцы / Поўны людзей / Людзей старых / І дзяцей/ Як добра/ Уліцца / у раку старых людзей і дзяцей / Удыхаць/ Паветра. / Дрэва без караня/ Усыхае / Чалавек без паветра / Умірае”] (Artymovič, 1981, p. 8). Apparently, here the old people embody the past from which the future, which belongs to the children and is determined by the development of their destinies, grows, and in which is rooted. It is obvious that the life-giving **root** and **air** of both the lyrical heroine and the poetess belong to Bielsk. Even, as Beata Siwek shrewdly noted in the monograph *Ojczyzna duża i mała* [*Motherland Big and Small*]: “Reading the works by Nadezhda Artymovich, we sometimes get the impression that the poetess is imprisoned in this small Motherland, in Bielsk. This sense of imprisonment corresponds to the feeling of being trapped in the circle of her own experiences as the only material for creativity” [“Czytając utwory Nadziei Artymowicz, mamy czasem wrażenie, że poetka jest jakby uwięziona w tej małej ojczyźnie, w Bielsku. Temu poczuciu uwięzienia odpowiada poczucie uwięzienia w kręgu własnych przeżyć jako jedynym materiale twórczości”] (Siwek, 2004, p. 116).

Turonak believes that one of the essential differences between Artymovich’s poetry and the majority of the older generation of “Belavezha” is that the poetess “skillfully” comprehends the “issues of adaptation” of a person in a big city, “happily avoids superficial sentimentalism and nostalgia for the outgoing village” (Turonak, 1981, p. 3). This observation, however, clearly contradicts her first book of poems, for example:

When a dream dies
and night ceases to be night [...]
You think

There is my place
 Where the shadows of my ancestors walk
 There is my place
 Where my native house dreamed over the river
 There is my place
 Where my relatives share flavorful bread. (Artymoviĉ, 1981, p. 14)⁶

It is in the invariably close dear **there** that the soul seeks, by contrast, from the present bustling **here**, burdened with bad forebodings: “And here / You throw away / Scatter like sand / Your thoughts / Aspirations / You build a skeleton of the house / Which will lose you” [“А тут/ Ты адкідаеш / Рассыпаеш як пясок / Свае думкі/ Імкненні / Ты будуеш шкілет хаты / Якая згубіць цябе”] (Artymoviĉ, 1981, p. 8). It should be noted that the word “Fatherland” is only once used by Artymoviĉ, just in the first book in the title of the namesake poem: “There is that / And in my daily first word / And in the distant streets. / There is that / And in the night buses / And in the spring rains. / There is that / And in the sunrises and sunsets / And in the wet silence / There is that / In everything / This is the road to you” [“Ёсць тое / І ў штодзённым першым маім слове / І ў далёкіх вуліцах. / Ёсць тое / І ў начных аўтобусах / І ў вясенніх дажджах. / Ёсць тое / І ва ўсходах і захадах сонца / І ў мокрай цішыні / Ёсць тое / Ва ўсім / Гэта – дарога да цябе”] (Artymoviĉ, 1981, p. 12). It is obvious that in the mind of the poetess, the Fatherland, the Little Motherland is identified first of all with Bielsk, the parting from which contributed to the poetic development of the “spiritual biography” in Warsaw. After Artymoviĉ returned to Bielsk, the problem of “adaptation,” longing, and nostalgia for her family disappeared. Bielsk, which for the lyrical heroine of Artymoviĉ and Artymoviĉ herself, as it was noted, is the “root and air,” the image of her native town, would forever become one of the main stimuli of inspiration and the centre of the artistic and aesthetic world of the poetess.

The cycle *Грудка зямлі* [*The Lump of Earth*] includes poems that are more consistent with the content of the next part, which presents love lyrics. There is no shortage of love poems in the final *Варшаўскія пейзажы* [*Warsaw Landscapes*]. It is safe to say that Artymoviĉ’s first poetic book reveals the history of relationships, the evolution of the young person’s feelings – from touching trust, hope for a happy future, and reciprocity – to doubts and even tragic disappointment. “Call me / Call / We will get lost / In heady herbs / We will sow / Wild poppies / Red poppies / Which for a long time / Have not been seen / Call me / Call / We will find / A fern

⁶ “Калі загіне сон/ і ноч перастане быць ноччу / [...] Ты думаеш / Там маё месца / Дзе ходзяць цені маіх продкаў / Там маё месца / Дзе родная хата прыснула над ракой / Там маё месца / Дзе блізкія дзеляцца духмяным хлебам.”

flower / Which / We want to believe in” [“Пазаві мяне / Пазаві / Мы заблудзімся / У хмельных травах / Мы пасеем / Дзікія макі / Макі чырвоныя / Якіх даўно / Не бачылі / Пазаві мяне / Пазаві / Мы знойдзем / Кветку папараці / У якую / Мы хочам паверыць”] (Artymovič, 1981, p. 15) – the lyrical heroine is open to the world and happiness, although the last line with its unexpected modality signals that there is also an echo of doubt in the heroine’s soul. And this doubt gains strength from verse to verse, to eventually flow into the dramatic lines: “Heart / You cried / And you laughed / You lived / With great hope / And sometimes / By dream-drop / You bloomed / Like the first May lilac / And you bathed / In the autumn rains / Anxiety, joy, pain / Great sadness / Everything grew in to you / Now / You are dead [...]” [“Сэрца / Ты плакала / І ты смяялася / Ты жыло / Вялікай надзеяй / І часам / Марай-кропляй / Цвіло ты / Як першы майскі бэз / І ты купалася / У восеньскіх дажджах / Трывога, радасць, боль / Вялікі смутак / Усё расло ў табе / Цяпер / Ты мёртвае [...]”] (Artymovič, 1981, p. 25).

From the point of view of the editor of the *Роздумы [Reflections]*, the most clearly creative manner of the poetess was manifested in the cycle of poems – reflections *Варшаўскія пейзажы [Warsaw Landscapes]*. And it was the works of this cycle that gave some critics a reason to see in Artymovich’s poems “first of all fatalism, tragedy, and catastrophism to the measure of the Polish poet Wojacek” [“перш за ўсё фаталізм, трагізм, катастрафізм на меру польскага паэта Ваячэка”] (Turonak, 1981, p. 4). Indeed, the complexity of reasons and, above all, the experienced love drama that resulted in lines full of hopelessness and tragedy with the appropriate lexical expression when:

The night turns black
My soul
Is getting blacker (Artymovič, 1981, p. 32)

In the heart,
You will not feel
Not a cold drop of rain
Not skeletons
Strangers and your own
Words [...]
Here you can sometimes
Even slowly whirling
Falling out... [...]
City by city
In the black field
The winds sway, sway
The last mask

The broken mask
The mask with big eyes... (p. 34, 36)⁷

Turonak, however, strongly denies that Artymovich was included in the ranks of “cursed poets,” arguing that the final verses of the collection, cautiously express faith and hope, “to finally erupt a strong chord of confidence in the victory of good over evil, to lead to an optimistic vision of the future” *Не гавары [Do Not Speak]* [“каб урэшце ўспыхнуць моцным акордам упэўненасці перамогі дабра над злом, выліцца ў аптымістычную візію будучыні” (*Не гавары*)] (Turonok, 1981, p. 5).

One of the most talented “Belavezhanka” [*member of “Belavezha”*] Mira Luksha (1958), a first-year student of the Lyceum, debuted in 1973 in the September Literary Page of *Hіва* with a poem *Сэрца [Heart]*, kindly supported by the editor Georgy Valkavytsky. It should be remembered that only three years later Artymovich immediately began working in both prose and poetry, and in 1985, after graduating from the Białystok branch of the Faculty of Philology of the University of Warsaw, was hired by *Hіва*.

Luksha’s creative assets include collections of prose, all published in Białystok, *Дзікі нмак верабей [The Wild Bird Sparrow]* (1992) *Высна [Island]* (1994), *Бабскія гісторыі [Women’s Stories]* (2001), *Дзяўчынка і хмарка [The Girl and the Cloud]* (2006), *Гісторыі з беллага свету [Stories from All over the World]* (2008), *Жыццё позагробове і інне [Afterlife and Others]* (2013), *Гражынка і Грак [Grazhynka and Rook]* (2016), in which, as Ala Petrushkevich noted, Luksha “leads the reader into the world of life in her native Białystok region, which is constantly changing its face, disappearing, giving way to a new order” [“вядзе чытача ў свет жыцця роднай Беласточчыны, што няспынна змяняе свой воблік, знікае, саступаючы новым парадкам”] (Pietruškievič, 2018, p. 88). The artistic potential of Luksha’s prose is clearly evidenced by the 10th issue of the yearbook *Bialorutenistyka Bialostocka [Bialorutenistics of Białystok]* (2018), dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the BLA “Belavezha,” in three articles of which the writer’s prose is discussed. Almost simultaneously with the books of prose, the collections of Luksha’s poetry began to be published in Białystok: *Замова [The Spell]* (1993), *Ёсць [Exist]* (1994), *Wiersze tutejsze [Local Poems]* (2003), *Пад знакам скарпіёна [Under the Sign of Scorpio]* (2011), *Бялы сток [White Slope]* (2012), *Снеў дрэў [Singing of Trees]* (2017), the book *Радаслаў [The Genealogy]* (2017), published by the Warsaw publishing house IBiS, for which Luksha was awarded the Wiesław

⁷ “Чарнее ноч / Мая душа / Усё чарнее”, “У сэрцы, / Не пачуеш ты/ Ні халоднай кроплі дажджу/ Ні шкілетаў / Чужых і сваіх/ Слоў / [...] Тут можна часам / Нават паволі віруючы / Выпасці... [...] За горадам за горадам / У чорным полі / Ветры калышуць, калышуць / Апошняю маску / Маску разбітую / Маску з вялікімі вачамі...”

Kazanecki Literary Award; a significant place in the creative work of the poetess is occupied by her collections for children, such as *Жывіткі з глыбінкі* [*Zhyvinkas from the Countryside*] (2009), *Падарункі* [*Gifts*] (2014), or *Ўзбр на зебрзе* [*Bizon on the Zebra Crossing*] (2018).

And, paradoxically, the extremely interesting poetic work of Luksha has not yet been practically analysed. It is possible that she inadvertently found herself in the “shadow” of the recognized Artymovich poetry. Even an attentive researcher such as Siwek, in the mentioned above book *Ojczyzna duża i mała*, does not refer to Luksha’s work, despite the fact that many of her works with their ideological and thematic parameters fully correspond to the issues considered in the monograph. Luksha herself was in no hurry to publish her first book of poetry. It is noteworthy that she did not consider it necessary to include in her *Замова* [*The Spell*] neither the debut *Ніва* poem nor many others.

Unlike Artymovich, Luksha’s “inner psychic biography” seems to have developed more gently, without the terrible cataclysms that burn the soul, as at least her first book testified. From Bialystok with its Belarusian environment – not very far from the native village of the poetess Barawaya, to any Narva flowing, and the inevitable adaptation to the new social status, a place of residence in the voivodeship city, does not take the form of a violent “leap” into another’s reality, does not take too much effort to resist and assert herself in new conditions in order to preserve her personal, creative identity. In the first verse from the book *Замова*, it seems very personal and private. The expanse of the small Motherland is also outlined, and the openness of the poetess to national world outlook is shown:

Born in Hajnowka
 on a gray autumn morning
 born in Narva
 on a frisky summer night
 born in Sokolka
 in the arms of aunts Nadzya and Vera
 born in Bielsk [...]
 in white hospitals
 when the last trains
 went to sea
 to my mother at the age of 39
 taken from a live belly
 between Syamyonavka and Bialystok
 went out with a lamp to the garden
 our grandmother Lyuba
 wind wind
 grandmother Lyuba lights up for us

her hand protects the glass
 from the evil eye
 from the death
 from the knife
 from the stone. (Lukša, 1993, p. 3)⁸

Determining the coordinates of the small Motherland, the Bialystok region, appeals to the native Mora, Dubichy Tsarkovny, Polymya, Malinniki, Mokre, Zubaushchyna and Bielsk was especially lucky here, glorified not only by Artymovich, but also by the works of practically all the members of “Belavezha.”

The choice of the title of Luksha’s first book was not coincidental. The key poem of *Замова* emphasizes one of the most important, fundamental sources of her inspiration – the above-mentioned deep permeation of the poetess with traditional folk culture, folk customs:

Sow, sow...
 – What are you sowing?
 – Frights!...
 – Then sow, so that it doesn’t happen! [...]
 Do not be afraid... Sow – Sow...
 From the ashes of the wormwood,
 from the leaden water,
 from the hot tears
 from the sighted eyes,
 from the red blood,
 From the faithful heart sore.
 Do not fear!
 On the black forest,
 on the green meadows,
 on the blue sea,
 your fright, my dear. (Lukša, 1993, pp. 5–6)⁹

Luksha’s work clearly shows the worldview of a man who was besieged among his native Podlasie horizons. Moreover, some of her poetic lines are perceived as

⁸ “Народжаным у Гайнаўцы / ў золкі восеньскі ранак / народжаным у Нарве / ў гуллівую летнюю ноч / народжаным у Саколцы / на руках цёці Надзі і Веры / народжаным у Бельску... / у белых шпітальных / калі апошнія цягнікі / ад’ехалі ў морак / маёй маме ў 39 годзе / вынятай з жывога жывата / паміж Сямёнаўкай а Беластокам / выйшла з лямпай у агарод / наша баба Люба / вецер вецер / баба Люба нам свеціць / рукою шкло захіляе / ад злога вока / ад памору / ад нажа / ад каменя.”

⁹ “Сею, сею... / – Што ты сееш? / – Пярэпалахі!... / – То сей, каб не было! [...] Не бойся... Сею – сею... / З попелу бильнёжнага, / з вады свянцонай, / слёзкі калёнай / з відущых вачэй. / З крывінкі чырвонай, / З сэрца адданага, / збалелага. / Не байся! / На чорны лес, / на зялёныя лугі, / на сіне мора, / твай ляк, мой любы.”

a medicinal spell, the lyrical heroine's desire to cure not only a man but also time and society itself:

get away from us
 evil ghosts
 grandfathers of sick parents
 who died without time
 who fought with a sword
 broke a brother with a pike
 broke a neighbour's door
 drink the blood of black water
 don't eat bread
 don't share it with you
 during a new trouble [...]. (Lukša, 1993, p. 20)¹⁰

It should be mentioned here that the debut poem by Artymovich *Ой ляцелі зыці* [*Oh, Geese Flew*], which promises to continue the appeal to the elements of folk art, remained practically the only creative fact in her poetry.

The patriotic, national aspect plays an important role both in Luksha's first book and deepens in her subsequent poetry collections. The problem of the relationship between the works of the members of "Belavezha" of the "small" and the "big" Fatherland has long attracted the attention of researchers. And it is noticeable that Luksha, unlike some of her friends in the Association, feels like a citizen not only of the small Podlasie Motherland, but also of the common Belarusian cultural and historical space, which exists in spite of social changes caused by border posts. In her poem *Іду белым горадам* [*I Go Through the White City*]:

an angel walks down the street
 and sings
 a Belarusian song. (Lukša, 1993, p. 39)

on the white dresses of standards Aloise flames like a poppy. (p. 38)

a guest from my Homeland knocked on the door
 the broken threshold was crossed by the crippled barefoot
 and we stared at the fire in silence for a long time. (p. 24)¹¹

¹⁰ "адыдзіце ад нас / злосныя прывіды / дзяды хворых бацькоў / акалелых без часу / хто мячом ваяваў / брата пікай прабіў / ламаў дзверы суседа / піце кроў чорнай вады / не закусіце хлебам / не падзелімся з вамі / у час новай бяды [...]"

¹¹ "анёл ходзіць па вуліцы / і спявае / песню беларускую;" "на белых сукнях сцягоў макам гарыць Алаіза;" "застукаў у дзверы госьць з маёй Айчыны / пабіты парог перакрочыў пакалечаны босы / і маўчалі мы доўга глядзелі ў агонь."

Such a natural for a creative person cultural and historical citizenship evokes in the poetess, aware of the dramatic history of the Belarusian way, the fate of the native language, sad, heartbreaking reflections, as in the poem *Каласы* [*Ears*]:

Above the blackened stubble, over the trampled field,
Over a sharp stone, over a stone plain...
how hard it is for someone who knows a bit,
Trampled rye to collect the remains,

Without hope, though there was a Word,
Which since the beginning of the universe has sounded...
Oh, Father, you in our simple language
Said: "Let it be!" – and so it all came about.

Don't let the one who walks on the field,
His hands and feet were bleeding,
Don't let him, never let him,
That pain did not hear; let him cry from attrition [...]. (Lukša, 1993, p. 40)¹²

It is no coincidence that the voice of the lyrical heroine of "Belavyazhanka" at the end of the 20th century sounds in unison, both semantically and rhythmically, with what was said, exclaimed in the classic *Пагоня* [*Chase*] by Maksim Bagdanovich: "Beat in their hearts – beat with swords, / Do not let strangers be!" ["Бійце ў сэрцы іх – бійце мячамі, / Не давайце чужынцамі быць!"] (Bahdanovič, 1996, p. 176).

In Luksha's book *Пад знакам Скарпіёна* [*Under the Sign of Scorpio*] there are two verses practically under the same title: *Няміга I* [*Nyamiga I*] and *Няміга II* [*Nyamiga II*]. The first of them is a warm response to the tragic events, when more than twenty years ago during one of the city holidays, running away from the downpour, at the entrance to the metro station "Nyamiga" dozens of people, most of them young, became victims of human crowding. Modern events are perceived by the poetess in a cultural and historical context, when, according to the *Слова аб палку Ігаравым* [*The Word of Igor's Regiment*], during the princely strife "the Nyamiga bloody banks / were not sown with good / sown with the bones of the Russian sons" ["Нямігі крываваыя берагі/ не дабром былі засеяны / засеяны касцямі рускіх сыноў"] (*Slova ab palku Iharavum*, 2004, p. 170). The chronicle

¹² "Над пожняй счарнелай, над з'езджаным полем, / Над каменем гострым, над каменем гладкім... / Як цяжка таму, хто ведае болей, / Стаптанага жыга збіраці астаткі, / Не меўшы надзеі, хоць маючы Слова, / Якое з пачатку сусвета гучала... / О, Ойча, ты ж нашаю, простаю мовай / Сказаў жа: »Хай будзе!« – і ўсё так паўстала. // Не дай жа таму, што ходзіць па полі, / Скалоўшы да крові і рукі, і ногі, / Не дай жа яму, не дай жа ніколі, / Каб болю не чуў; хай крычыць ад знямогі [...]."

“Nyamiga,” the historical centre of the millennial capital Mensk, has long been a symbol of Belarus, a cultural archetype, and a source of inspiration. Luksha also wrote her lines in a kind of Nyamiga poetry anthology. The restless lyrical heroine of *Няміга II* lives in the past and present, and feels responsible for the future of her native land, for her compatriots:

Will I touch the Fatherland,
 When I ride with a warm heart,
 Running a race with fate,
 Through the ages, I lose my eyes,
 I send messengers in the morning
 Find out what source I can get drunk from,
 Where to plunge with my head [...]
 I felt good. Driven by the wind
 I felt Nyamiga under my foot [...]
 Ashes on the heart. Sprinkle
 I head and shoulders. Repent.
 I take the sins of all [...]. (Lukša, 2011, p. 50)¹³

In the works by Luksha, the prospect of seeing the presence of the great Motherland from her native paths, inherent in most poets – members of “Belavezha,” is deepened by the philosophical beginning. The poetess seeks to realize her place on earth, reflect on the connection of generations, and feel part of the human universe, besieged in the specifics of her time:

Oh, how prickly the wind blows from Belarus!
 I walk along the path near the cemetery and pray.
 Rye scatters, the sun swaying, falls into the pine.
 Behind me is the breath of those who have already died,

 And in front of my face are dreaming in the fog
 Figures of those who will be here after me.
 There is no boundary between yesterday, tomorrow, and today.
 And together with the rye, I wave in a bow. (Lukša, 2011, p. 21)¹⁴

¹³ “Ці да Айчыны дакрануся, / Калі з гарачым сэрцам еду, / Бягу навывперадкі з лёсавм, / Цераз стагоддзі губляю вочы, / Пасланцаў высылаю ранкам / Звездаць, з якой крыніцы мне напіцца, / Дзе акунуцца з галавою [...] / Было мне добра. Ветрам гнаная / Адчула пад стапой Нямігу [...] / На сэрцы попел. Пасыпаю / Я галаву і плечы. Каюсь. / Усіх грахі бяру [...]”

¹⁴ “О, як калюча вее вецер з Беларусі! / Паўз могількі іду сцяжынкай і малюся. / Расуе жыта, сонца хістка падае ў хваіну. / За мной – дыханне тых, хто ўжо загінуў, / А перад тварам мрояцца ў тумане / Постаці тых, хто пасля мяне тут стане. / Няма мяжы між учора, заўтра і сягоння. / І разам з жытам я хвалюся ў паклоне.”

Based on the classification of “Belavezha” poetry by Konan, the considered poems of Luksha belong to the traditional national revival trend. However, an important place in the poetic heritage of the poetess is occupied by her subordinate modernist direction. Apparently, such a harmonious combination of tradition and innovation in the creative process was once thought by some newcomers to “Belavezha,” wondering in the early sixties about the ways of development of poetry. The poetic practise and expression of his creative position by the poet and artist Yash Bursh became a vivid embodiment of the innovative search of the young “Belavezha.” In the late 1990s, Czykwin noted in his article *Пад двума ветразямі* [*Under Two Sails*], perhaps one of the first to analyse Bursh’s work, that the echo of his associative “imagery and ideological and aesthetic aspirations still find a response in our young poets” (Čykvin, 1997, p. 128). It is obvious that he meant Artymovich with her unusual for Belarusian poetry form of verse and the content of poetic thought, which gives grounds for considering surrealistic trends in her work (Brusewicz, 2018, pp. 51–60). Luksha’s diverse aesthetic search and interest in the work of her colleagues, in particular Artymovich, is evidenced by her first book. It is noticeable that after agreeing with a senior colleague, using free verse, she enters into a polemic with the author of *Роздумы* [*Reflections*], which primarily concerns the internal content of the work. Thus, in the collection *Сезон у белых пейзажах* [*Season in White Landscapes*] by Artymovich there is a poem dedicated to the “departing,” which is probably important for the poetess, as it is repeated later in all her subsequent poetry books:

there is such a time before leaving
 when you come out of a long silence
 at rest
 the sky does not change
 go
 the voice of the street mixes with the red signal

tasteless coffee cigarette
 half a word to someone else – walking away from the table
 and it means nothing anymore
 you cross to the second street
 the concrete is clean
 feet like broken flowers
 want to catch only one trail

and walk on another road
stick to your shadow though you know
that your shadow is not you

you know well how to build a memory with white bricks
and read from the actor's eyes
know well how to close eyes
crossing another threshold

there is such a time before leaving. (Artymovič, 1990, pp. 16–17)¹⁵

Luksha takes the first line of Artymovich's quoted work as an epigraph to her poem. She contrasts the restrained but deep pessimism and loneliness of the lyrical heroine of Artymovich with the mobility of life in all its forms, as if emphasizing the unity of the human world in all its manifestations:

hold your profile
on the walls of the city –
they will stay here
and only we see
they are alive
and just waiting
to notice their movement
sly stars of windows
touching sometimes
reinforced concrete ribs
soft tilt
of the walls to air [...]
today

run away to your walls
leaning friendly over you
you say: my masonry is my choice

¹⁵ “ёсьць такая пара перад ад’ездам / калі выходзіш з доўгага маўчання /у спакой / неба не змяняецца / ідзеш / голас вуліцы мяшаецца з чырвоным сігналам // кава папяроса без смаку / паўслова чужым – адыходзячы ад стала / і гэта ўжо нічога не значыць / пераходзіш на другую вуліцу / бетон чысты / нагамі як надламанымі кветкамі / хочаш злавіць толькі адзін след / і ступіць на іншую дарогу / трымаешся свайго ценю хоць ведаеш / што твой цень гэта не ты / добра ведаеш як мураваць памяць белай цэглай / і чытаць з акторскіх вачэй / добра ведаеш як заплюшчыць вока / пераступаючы яшчэ адзін парог / ёсьць такая пара перад ад’ездам.”

the word is not a stone
 but like a living bone
 in the throat... [...]. (Lukša, 1993, pp. 10–11)¹⁶

The lyrical heroine of Luksha is characterized by an active life position, the desire, as has been already emphasized, to heal another person, at least at the cost of her own suffering, to find the saving medicine words of “the spell.” Her poetic world is open to the wide world of people and culture in which she lives and meets, unlike Artymovich, who often reduces an inevitable component of poetic works, namely emotional and lyrical experiences and emotions, to signs, signals, sometimes incomprehensible keywords. In the example of the introductory analysis of these two different stylistically and thematically poetic works, we can see how, in fact, two opposite poetic worldviews, two seemingly formal schools of poetry, coexist and enrich each other in a rather small Belarusian space of Poland. Artymovich clearly cultivates and draws samples from Polish traditions: almost all of her poems are written in Polish sentence poem – arrhythmic, astrophic. Luksha, in turn, continues to use syllabic verse, enriching it with the many possibilities of free verse. Thus, we can say that all “Belavezha” women’s poetry, in general, is located, relatively speaking, between these two poles of poetry, which, in turn, gives the poems of “Belavezhankas” a rhythmic diversity and dynamic freshness.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that, despite all the differences between the poetic world and the idea of this world, Artymovich and Luksha are united, firstly, by a great love for the Belarusian literary word, and secondly, by a great respect for their roots, small Motherland and the spiritual traditions of Eastern Slavonia.

Translated into English: Margarita Sviridova

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¹⁶ “затрымай свой профіль / на мурах горада – / яны тут застануцца / а толькі мы бачым / яны ж жывыя / і толькі чакаюць / каб заўважыць іх рух / хітрыя зіркі вокнаў / крананне часам / рэбраў жалезабетона / пяшчотнае нахіленне / сцен да паветра [...] / сёння / уцякаеш у свае сцены / нахіленыя дружна над табою / кажаш: мой мур мой выбар / слова не камень / а як косьць жывая / ў горле... [...]”

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