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**J.K. Toole, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. and Ken  
Kesey: Authority and Grotesque in the U.S.  
Literature of the 1960s**

Disertační práce

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„Prohlašuji, že jsem dizertační/disertační práci napsala samostatně s využitím pouze uvedených a řádně citovaných pramenů a literatury a že práce nebyla využita v rámci jiného vysokoškolského studia či k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.“

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Abstract:

The dissertation focuses on the impact of authority and grotesque in the U.S. literature of the 1960s. The key theoretical approaches used for the analysis were: Bakhtinian theory concerning popular carnival culture and Vizenor's theory concerning tricksters, Deleuzian notion of repetition and schizoanalysis and the theory of Foucault concerning power and anti-authority struggles.

The main task of the analysis was to trace the common and differentiating features which were demonstrated in the novels in the form of anti-authority struggles and forms of madness, which is viewed as a deliberating force. The authors were chosen for their challenging attitudes toward the forms of power exercised over the American society and for the usage of the grotesque as a tool to convey a subversive message. The analysed authors were John Kennedy Toole and his *A Confederacy of Dunces*, Kurt Vonnegut Jr. and his *Slaughterhouse 5* and Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

## Abstrakt:

Práce se zaměřuje na roli groteska a autority v dílech amerických autorů, která vznikla v USA v šedesátých letech. Teoretickými východisky, která byla použita k rozboru konkrétních děl vybraných autorů, je bachtinovské pojetí lidové karnevalové kultury, dále teorie Vizenora, opět vycházející z Bachtina a týkající se “šibalů” (tricksters). Dizertační práce používá teoretická východiska, která se týkají působení autority nad jednotlivcem dle Foucaulta, a dále vychází z Deleuzeovy repetice a schizoanalýzy.

Hlavním úkolem této dizertační práce je poukázat na prvky, které mají analyzovaná díla společné a také na rozdíly, které se projevují rozlišným pojetím boje proto autoritě. Dalším jednotícím prvkem je pohled na šílenství, které je v těchto dílech osvobozující silou. Autoři byli vybráni pro svůj provokativní postoj k moci, která je uplatňována nad jednotlivcem. Groteska slouží jako prostředek zesměšnění a zdiskreditování autority, jejíž nehumánní projevy jsou zdůrazněny v dílech analyzovaných autorů.

Analyzovanými autory jsou: John Kennedy Toole (*Společení hlupců*), Kurt Vonnegut Jr. (*Jatka č.5*) a Ken Kesey (*Vyhod'me ho z kola ven*).

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Abbreviations:

Slaughterhouse 5 – SLHN5

Body Without Organs – BWO

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 New Ideas Which Appeared in the 1960s and Their Connection to the Analysed Works

The analysed works of Kesey – *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse 5* and Toole's *Confederacy of Dunces*, were all written in the 1960s, and the authors use grotesque to evaluate, describe and mock the American reality of that decade. To fully understand the works in their context, it is essential to define two basic forms: authority and power. The basic ideological concepts used for the introduction of the analysis will be the works of Foucault and Deleuze.

According to Foucault, in the era which preceded the 1960s a certain style of political discourse and ethics of the intellectuals were strongly influenced by the ideas of Marx, Freud and Saussure. Foucault even states that their concepts became a measure of truth in speaking and writing. Then a difference occurred in the second half of the 1960s. The years following 1965 are marked as “brief, impassionate, jubilant and enigmatic” because they saw revolutionary movements, struggles against social, psychic and political repression. In Foucault's *Preface to Anti-Oedipus* it is assumed that in the 1960s there was a certain kind of dualistic interpretation which oscillated between “the utopian project of the 1930s” e. g. surrealism, and on the contrary, a movement toward political struggle that no longer conformed to the Marxist model. The new thoughts concerning technology and desire did not conform to Freudianism either. (Foucault p. 106) The new thoughts concerning desire, reality and capitalism were formulated in Deleuze – *Anti – Oedipus*.

Foucault recommends reading *Anti-Oedipus* as “art” because the basic ideas of the work do not provide the reader with answers to *why* this or that but they try to find answers to *how* to proceed.

According to Foucault, Deleuze offers new ways of analyzing the abstract notions of “capitalist” machine and the relationship of desire to reality. The work attempts to find answers to the following questions: “How does one introduce desire into thought, into

discourse, into action? How can and must desire deploy its forces within the political domain and grow more intense in the process of overturning the established order?” (Foucault p. 107)

There are the three following adversaries confronted by *Anti-Oedipus*:

1. The political ascetics, the terrorists of theory, those who would preserve the pure order of politics and political discourse.
2. The poor technicians of desire – psychoanalysts and semiologists of every sign – who would reduce the multiplicity of desire to the binary law of structure and lack.
3. The fascism, but not the fascism in Hitler’s sense, but fascism which forces us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us.

The main protagonists of the analysed works – Toole’s Ignatius, Vonnegut’s Billy and Kesey’s McMurphy and Chief Bromden all have to face the above mentioned adversaries.

The political ascetics are represented by Myrna Mynkoff in Toole, because all her efforts are aimed to “change” Ignatius and make him participate in revolutionary processes. The fascism which forces us to love power is embodied by a manipulative nurse – Ms. Ratched in Kesey and “the poor technicians of desire” are represented by doctors in Kesey’s and Vonnegut’s novels.

Foucault even summarizes the thoughts presented in Deleuzian *Anti-Oedipus* and expresses some fundamental points on how to “live counter all forms of fascism” (Foucault p. 108)

The ideas expressed in the analysed works are in harmony with the following points:

- a) Free political action from all unitary and totalizing paranoia.

The heroes who behave in concordance with this point are Toole’s Ignatius and Vonnegut’s Billy. They both want to convey a message which is extraordinary and “free” in comparison to the ideological concepts which surround them. Ignatius organizes demonstrations of workers and Billy wants to take part in a radio program to speak about his Trafaladorians and their view of history and time. Ignatius’ and Billy’s actions can be described as “free political actions” because they do not generate any material profit instead, the proponents of the ideas are punished.

- b) Develop action, thought, and desires by proliferation, juxtaposition and disjunction, and not by subdivision and pyramidal hierarchization.

The activities of the heroes of the analysed novels are basically aimed against all kinds of subdivision and hierarchy. Kesey's *McMurphy* is a trickster figure who fights the totalitarian elements in the mental asylum and sacrifices his life to pursue collective will of revenge and necessary revolt.

- c) Withdraw allegiance from the old categories of the Negative (law, limit, castration, lack, lacuna), which Western thought has so long held sacred as a form of power and an access to reality. Prefer what is positive and multiple, difference over uniformity, mobile arrangements over systems. Believe that what is productive is not sedentary but nomadic.

A mobile disruption which is very positive and nomadic is the idea of carnivalization. Toole's hero, Ignatius is an embodiment of a walking carnival which brings in positive chaos and liberates the others. The idea of eternal rebirth and the highlighting of carnal principles are mentioned by Bakhtin, and the analysis of Toole's work is based on principles which are in harmony with Foucault's c) point.

- d) Do not think that one has to be sad in order to be militant, even though the thing one is fighting is abominable. It is the connection of desire to reality (and not its retreat into the forms of representation) that possesses revolutionary form.

All the analysed authors use the grotesque to convey their message of revolt against totalitarian powers. Their heroes have to face harsh life situations (war, involuntary detention, "dunces" who surround them) but they are still willing to enforce their worldview against the hostile environment and to "connect" their desire to reality.

- e) Do not use thought to ground a political practice in Truth, nor political action to discredit, as mere speculation, a line of thought. Use political practice as an intensifier of thought, and analysis as a multiplier of the forms and domains for the intervention of political action.
- f) Do not demand of politics that it restore the "rights" of the individual, as philosophy has defined them. The individual is the product of power. What is needed is to "de-individualize" by means of multiplication and displacement, diverse combinations.

The group must not be the organic bond uniting hierarchized individuals, but a constant generator of de-individuation.

g) A good example of a group, which is a subject of de-individuation is the group of patients in the mental asylum, which serves as setting for Kesey's novel. The trickster, McMurphy, "passes" his individual strength and ideas of revolt to the rest of the patients and thus liberates them. The influence is reciprocal, the group of patients influenced by McMurphy's activities which is described in Kesey's novel, becomes a generator of the final liberation of its members.

h) Do not become enamored of power.

The negative heroine of Kesey's novel, the "Big Nurse" is in love with her power over the patients. At the end of the novel, her power gets spoiled and reduced by the legacy of the main trickster.

The heroes of the novel are in constant conflict with authorities of various kinds. It is important to define the term power and its relation to the subjects of power.

## **1.2 Power as a Kind of Relationship Exercised on "the Other"**

Foucault defines power as a way in which some act on others. It exists only as a kind of relationship exercised by some on others, only when it is put into action. It is a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others, but instead it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on possible or actual future or present actions. (Foucault p. 340)

Foucault also draws connection between power and violence, because it breaks, it bends, it destroys or it closes off all possibilities. In his view, the opposite pole of power and violence is passivity.

Its opposite pole can only be passivity, and if it comes up against any resistance it has no other option but to try to break it down. A power relationship, on the other hand, can only be articulated on the basis of two elements that are indispensable if it is reality to be a power relationship: that "the other" (the one over whom power is exercised) is recognized and maintained to the very end as a subject who acts: and

that, faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results and possible inventions may open up. (Foucault p. 340)

The heroes of the novels are subjected to power and they take different actions to face it. Their reactions and the results of their actions open up new possible inventions. The new ways of acting and unusual thinking are brought up by the main protagonists of the novels. Toole's Ignatius applies his "medieval" morals on the sub-world of New Orleans. Vonnegut's Billy gets tired of all the actions against his evil destiny and he succumbs to total passivity. Kesey's main trickster figure is very active in fighting the totalitarian regime of the mental asylum, and power is violently "exercised" on his body and mind and finally he gets "broken, destroyed and without any future". These attributes adjectives are directly quoted from Foucault's definition of power relationship.

### **1.3 The Relationship of Power and Freedom**

Foucault defines the exercise of power as a mode of action upon the action of others and he clearly states that there is one element which must not be excluded – freedom. One must have some possible mobility or even a chance of escape. Consequently, there is no face to face confrontation of power and freedom as mutually exclusive concepts, but a complicated interplay. The main protagonists of the analysed works fight, cheat on, and finally escape the consequences which were created by authorities to "correct" their disruptive behavior. Foucault places in the very heart of the power relationship recalcitrance of the will and intransigence of freedom. (Foucault p. 342) The relationship of power and freedom is described more as "agonism" than essential antagonism. The neologism "Agonism" in Foucault's sense means a contest in which the opponents develop a strategy of reaction and mutual taunting. The lives of the main protagonists are driven by their ideas which provoke the interplay of power and freedom and which end in their agony or escape.

According to Foucault, power relationships are rooted deep in social nexus, they are not "supplementary" structures over and above society. A society without power relations can only be an abstraction. (Foucault p. 343) Power constitutes an inescapable fatality at the heart of societies. "Agonism" between power relations and the intransitivity of freedom is a political task inherent in all social existence.

Foucault defines five points, which must be established in order to analyse power:

- a) The system of differentiation that permits one to act upon the other. Differences are based on juridical or traditional differences of status or privilege or they are linguistic differences, cultural or economic. These differences are conditions and results of power put into operation.

The heroes of the analysed novels come from essentially the same social stratus, they come from the middle class or the lower middle-class. Their destinies are formed by historical events and the “result” of differentiation depends on the condition they are brought to by actions of power which is exercised on them. Vonnegut’s Billy changes his social status while marrying a wealthy heiress and thus Billy is allowed to leave the mental asylum, while Kesey’s protagonists have to escape the asylum. Kesey’s Chief Bromden is quite sure that he would not be pursued after the homicide and the escape from the asylum. “Nobody bothers coming after an AWOL, I knew..” (Kesey p. 310)

- b) The types of objectives pursued by those who act upon the action of the others: maintenance of privileges, accumulation of profits, the exercise of statutory authority, the exercise of a function or a trade.
- c) Instrumental modes: whether power is exercised by threat of arms, by the effect of speech, through economic disparities, with or without the material means of enforcement.
- d) Forms of institutionalization: these may mix traditional conditions or legal structures e. g. family or complex systems endowed with multiple apparatuses.
- e) The degrees of rationalization: the bringing into play of power relations as action in a field of possibilities which may be more or less elaborate in the terms of effectiveness of its reinforcement.

- f) In this study of power Foucault further says that it is obvious that power relations can not be reduced to the study of a series of institutions. Power relations are rooted in the whole network of the society. The state is not simply one of the forms of specific situations of the exercise of power, but in a certain way, all other forms of power must refer to it. Kesey's novel takes place in a mental asylum, and the question of unlimited power, which is exercised over the others, is one of the leading thoughts running through the whole novel. The idea expressed by Foucault, namely that power relations have come more and more under state control and that the power relations have been progressively governmentalized, elaborated, rationalized and centralized in the form of, or under the auspice of, state institutions (Foucault p. 345), may have been reflected in Kesey's novel. His main protagonists are "victims" of the institutions which function, in their respective cases, as negative catalysts, break their personalities, impair their health and prevent them from recovery. Freedom of the main protagonist of *Flying Over the Cuckoo's Nest* is finally enforced by acts of violence and by breaking all the rules established by the institutions in question. Bromden marks himself as an AWOL, which is an acronym used for used for soldiers who escaped from their duty.

#### **1.4 Anti-authority Struggles**

Foucault states that a productive method in power analysis is one which concentrates on analysing power relations through the antagonism of strategies. "For example, to find what our society means by "sanity", perhaps we should investigate what is happening in the field of insanity." (Foucault p. 329)

The motif of mental insanity and its possible consequence reappears in all of the analysed works. Toole's Ignatius has to escape at the end of the novel to prevent his detention, which was organized by his mother to get rid of a problematic son, who was not willing to leave home. Vonnegut's Billy has to spend at least two periods of his life in a mental ward, and Kesey's novel actually takes place in a mental asylum. It is very easy to observe a degree of psychiatric power exercised over the protagonists, and the role of a mental asylum as a "healing" institution is never seen as positive.

Another motif reappearing in the novels, though not the central one is the motif of mental illness – schizophrenia. Kesey’s and Vonnegut’s heroes hide in their delusion, which makes their lives at least bearable. However the notion of a mental disorder is not wholly positive: For example, Kesey’s Chief Bromden suffers from terrifying dreams where omnipotent society and crushing power is embodied by a death producing factory, where people are melted down when “broken”, in the same way as rusty iron.

According to Foucault, there is a series of oppositions to power, e.g, oppositions to the power of man over women, of parents over children, of psychiatry over the mentally ill, of medicine over population. According to the common features, the struggles against power may demonstrate, he divides them into the following groups: (Foucault p. 329):

- a) They are transversal struggles, they are not limited to one country and they are not confined to a particular political or economic form of government.
- b) The target of these struggles is power effect as such. For example the criticism of medical profession which exercises uncontrolled power over people’s health and bodies.
- c) Struggles that question the status of the individual. There are two dominant and contradictory tendencies which are typical for this type of struggles. The first tendency is to assert the right to be different and to underline everything that makes individuals truly individual. The second tendency is to attack everything that separates the individual, breaks his link with others, forces the individual back on himself, and ties him to his own identity in a constraining way. They are struggles against the “government of individualization”.
- d) Struggles against the regimen of knowledge. They are in opposition to the effects of power linked to knowledge, competence and qualification – struggles against privileges of knowledge. They are also an opposition against secrecy, deformation and mystifying representations imposed upon people. The points in question are the way in which knowledge circulates and functions, and its relation to power.

- e) “Immediate” struggles for two basic reasons. People criticize instances of power that are closest to them and which exercise their action on individuals. The task of the struggles of this type is not to find the “chief enemy” but the immediate enemy. They are anarchistic struggles.
  
- f) The struggles which revolve around the question “Who are we?”. They are refusal of these abstractions, of economic, and ideological state violence, which ignore who we are individually, and also a refusal of a scientific or administrative inquisition that determines who one is. (Foucault p. 331)

The last point is the most important for the analysed works. The heroes of the analysed novels struggle against:

- **scientific and ideological inquisition** (Toole’s Ignatius and his worldview)
- **ignorance towards individuality and institutional violence** ( Kesey’s Chief Broom, McMurphy)
- **ideological state violence** (Vonnegut’s Billy as an eye witness of the bombing of Dresden)

Foucault sums up the aim of the previously mentioned struggles, which is not to attack the institution of power, but rather to destabilize the technique, the form of power. This form of power can be described as an element which applies itself to immediate everyday life of an individual and which imposes a law of truth on an individual that he must recognize and others have to recognize in him. This form of power makes individuals subjects which are subjugated to an authority. (Foucault p. 330)

To sum up the nature of the above mentioned types of struggle see the following quote:

Generally, it can be said that there are three types of struggles: against forms of domination (ethnic, social and religious), against forms of exploitation that separate individuals from what they produce, or against that which ties the individual to himself and submits him to others in this way (struggles against subjection, against forms of subjectivity and submission). (Foucault p. 331)

The last type of struggle above - the struggle against subjection – is the struggle which can be understood as the central theme of the novels under analysis.

### **1.5 Clashes with Authorities and Their Consequence for the Heroes of the Analysed Novels, Authorities Governing Bodies to Pursue its Greatest Tool – Discipline**

All the main protagonists of the analysed novels have to encounter a certain kind of authority. The authority which somehow “endangers” the main protagonists is embodied by a mental asylum, which appears in all the analysed novels. Toole’s Ignatius runs away in order to avoid his possible involuntary detention in a mental asylum. Vonnegut’s Billy is a soldier who has to fight in Europe, then he is a prisoner of war, and later on he has to spend a certain period of his life as a patient in a mental asylum. A mental asylum is the setting of Kesey’s novel, and it is the place where the basic trickster’s sacrifice and metamorphosis take place. Repressive power of society is a very strong element in the novels. Kesey describes the strongest means which are used to repress the activities of his protagonists, for instance EST and lobotomy.

Vonnegut’s hero Billy Pilgrim in *Slaughterhouse Five* changes his role throughout the story, but he is mainly the subject of an authority which makes him become a subordinate human being. Billy pays his duty to society as a soldier and consequently his role gets changed and he ends up as an exhibit in a Trafalmodorian Zoo.

According to Foucault, the human body as a subject of various types of discipline has become a kind of dough to be formed or a machine. Soldiers bear visible marks of their status, which was described even at the beginnings of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The soldier’s body was described in terms of superlative physical qualities. It was a sign or a paradigm of bravery, honor and gallantry. The second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century brought a revolutionary change to this concept. A soldier became a machine or a piece of a crude material which it was necessary to train, change, form and ultimately transform into something automatic, obedient and fully usable by the authority. This idea of a “man machine” was not valid only for the army but also for the holistic concept of the human being in medicine and philosophy. New medical, army and school institutions were created to follow, develop and strictly establish this kind of discipline. (Foucault p. 200) The central idea of this concept was to create a body which was fully obedient, transformable and governable. Foucault even compares the transformed body to a

political puppet or to a miniaturized model of an executive power. The idea of a body as a subject of power was not new in the 18<sup>th</sup> century but the major difference stemmed from the concentration on details. The details were pursued in various ways. The task of all penal mechanisms was not the goal of the desirable activity but the mechanism itself. Endless exercise had the important aim of controlling the power, time and every movement of the subject. The subjects had to be under constant control and discipline became the major tool of control.

Kesey's main protagonist – half Indian Bromden – studied at a school of electronic engineering and then served in the Second World War. His mental disorder – schizophrenia – might have been started by his war experience. His schizophrenic delusion stems from his idea of the overwhelming and omnipresent technology, which governs everything around him. He believes that the staff of the asylum are not human beings. Their bodies were converted into machines, Bromden's included. Thus his deluded ideas confirm Foucault's notion of the goal of authority, which is to create a self containing complex. The result of the power exercised over people, pursued the way Bromden thinks, is to create human beings, that are obedient and whose souls are "tamed". The only disruptive element, which is able to break the power of technology, is a trickster. Trickster's weapons are laughter and grotesque, which slowly corrode the "limbs" of the authority.

Vonnegut's Billy is described as a "funny looking" child and later a "funny looking" adult. His appearance is a parody of what can be considered to be an ideal soldier. His body looks like a broken machine since the beginning (body shape of a coca cola bottle), and later on in Europe – his spine is compared to a "tube which had so many of his important wires in it" (Vonnegut p. 65). Comparisons and metaphors, concerning the relation body – machine are not scarce in Kesey and Vonnegut.

It can be emphasized that all the protagonists of the novels have "grotesque" bodies and their minds are somehow twisted. It is almost impossible for an authority of any kind to pursue discipline over the creatures described in the novels. Ignatius is a cunning and ignorant creature, who finally escapes. Billy is a passive "time clown", who travels in time as a piece of luggage and Bromden is an Indian trickster, who is transformed into a powerful and healthy being by the sacrifice and metamorphosis.

## 1.6 Social Medicine and Birth of Anti-psychiatry

As the heroes of the novels have to spend some time in a mental asylum, thus it is possible to say that power is exercised on them through certain means of medical treatment. The notion and the effects on the heroes of a psychiatric hospital are mainly viewed negatively. The core idea about the harmful or purposeless effect of psychiatry on the heroes may have been influenced by the birth of Anti-psychiatry. A description of the birth of this phenomenon is therefore important to map the relationship between state (power) and medicine as its subordinated areas.

According to Foucault, the model which Western medicine has followed since the eighteenth century onward is based on the three basic points:

- Biohistory – is the effect of medical intervention at the biological level and the imprint which is left on human history e.g. disappearance of plague and tuberculosis, thanks to development of medical technology and knowledge.
- Medicalization - when human body and behavior were brought into an increasingly dense network of medicalization and the development of health institutions and medical research.
- The last point is the economy of health and the integration of health and health services into economic development of privileged societies.

According to Foucault, modern medicine is a social medicine and social practice, and only one of its aspects is individualistic and valorizes the relation between the doctor and the patient. With the birth of capitalism, the body is viewed as a factor of productive force and labor power. Social control over individuals was accomplished through the consciousness or ideology and also in the body and with the body. The body is a biopolitical reality and medicine is a biopolitical strategy. (Foucault p. 137)

The stages in which the formation of social medicine occurred were three – state medicine, urban medicine and labor force medicine.

The connection between state and social medicine is obvious. The state is specified as an instrument and locus of acquisition of specific body of knowledge. According to Foucault, the

eighteenth's century Prussia was the first modern state, and state medicine appeared there with the birth of the first "medical policy". The system involved observation of sickness and the information about epidemic phenomena were gathered at the state level. The medical practice was standardized and administrated. To follow the newly introduced practice, "medical officers" were appointed, who would take responsibility for a region. Thus the system of state medicine was born when the medical profession was standardized and subordinated to general administration. Individual doctors were incorporated into a state-controlled medical organization. Thus medicine was obliged to perfect and develop the state's strength.

The concept of "a dangerous individual" was born in the nineteenth's century psychiatry. The need for this process was rooted in the penal machine, which could no longer function without "supplementary material". The magistrates and the jurors had to be provided with another type of discourse which involved confessions, explanations of oneself and revelation of what one is. The basic question asked was this: "Can one condemn to death a person one does not know?" Crime signals the existence of a dangerous element that is in the social body. Foucault states that "psychiatrization" of criminal danger started with the question: "Whom do you think you are punishing?" (Foucault p. 179) Psychiatry and psychiatrists started to play an important role in the penal mechanism. The beginnings of intervention of psychiatry to the penal machine can be traced to the nineteenth century with crimes, mainly homicides, which seemed to have no motive. These included homicides which occurred in family environment and sometimes were accompanied by strange cruelties. There was always a considerable area where insanity overlapped into criminality, but was with major crimes that eventually brought psychiatry into the domain of executive state power.

The individuals in whom insanity and criminality met in such a way as to cause specialists to raise the question of their relationship was not the man of the little everyday disorder, the pale silhouette moving about on the edges of law and normality but, rather, the great monster. Criminal psychiatry first proclaimed itself a pathology of the monstrous. (Foucault p. 182)

Nineteenth century psychiatry invented an entirely fictitious entity, a crime that is insanity, insanity that is nothing but crime. This entity was called "homicidal monomania". (Foucault p. 182)

Foucault explains that criminalization of insanity occurred because psychiatry was seeking a new domain for itself and the social “body” ceased to be a simple juridico-political metaphor and became a biological reality and a field of medical intervention. The doctor must therefore be the technician of this social body.

The main trickster hero of Kesey’s novel, McMurphy, becomes a victim of the system which has developed the way it was described. McMurphy is not an entirely innocent individual, he was arrested repeatedly for fighting, gambling and finally for rape of an under-aged girl. He wants to avoid his detention in a working farm and thus he pretends to be mentally ill. He believes he can have a nice time in a mental asylum, without work and tight discipline. The problematic hero, who is constantly playing tricks gets involved into the lives of the other patients and in the fight with the main, totalitarian matron, which eventually costs him his life. The original purpose of the system is to “observe” whether his aberrant behavior is caused by mental disorder, however owing to a violent crash with the totalitarian nurse, he gets lobotomized. The plot of the novel suggests that insanity was not McMurphy’s problem. All his protests and tricks were aimed against one particular personality (The Big nurse), who was making the lives of the patients unbearable.

The topic of “misguided” diagnose made by psychiatrists runs through the plot of Vonnegut’s novel. His main hero Billy is “healed” by psychoanalysis, and all the problems he developed in the war are mistakenly assigned to his negative childish experience.

According to Foucault, it was very important for psychiatry of the nineteenth century to prove the existence of something called “homicidal mania”. The ultimate boundary of insanity was crime, and only a specialist could spot it. Monomania was defined as an illness that manifests itself in crime, while the specialists reserved the right to know how to determinate its premonitory stages. Psychiatry thus desired to justify the function of crime – to take control of the dangers hidden in human behavior.

Foucault sums up the reasons why psychiatry entered the domain of punishing power as follows:

Medicine became a strong means of public hygiene and it started functioning as a form of legal punishment and as a technique for transformation of the individual. (Foucault p. 189)

The technique for transformation of the individual became primarily the contest of wills, which included isolation, private or public interrogations, strict discipline and relations of vassalage

and servitude. The cure involved a process of opposition, struggle and domination, and its task was to start and complete a process when illness is brought to daylight, analysed and thus the victory of sound will of the physician comes. The aim of the techniques employed was to establish a medical personage, the "master of madness".

The invasive medical strategies, which started flourishing at the end of the eighteenth century and continued with slight changes till the first half of the twentieth century, produced numerous campaigns and societies which challenged the system and insisted on certain reforms.

For example *The Alleged Lunatic's Friend Society* was established in England in the 1850s and was indirectly preceded by Daniel Defoe, who argued that mental asylums served as a "disposal site" of disobedient housewives.

The 1920s in America saw the rise of truly controversial methods of biological cure of insanity, e.g. psychiatrist Henry Cotton in New Jersey was convinced that insanity was fundamentally a toxic disorder and he surgically removed body parts to improve mental health. (Cooper p.25)

The methods using psychoanalysis as the basic means of treatment were used in the 1940s and 1950s.

The key period for my literary analysis is the American 1960s, when philosophers, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts and writers became interested in the repressive forces and methods of psychiatry. The key authors whose philosophical and sociological concepts initiated an antagonist movement called "anti-psychiatry" were Foucault, Laing, Lidz, Arieti and Cooper. The psychiatrist David Cooper coined the term and emphasized the political repressive context of psychiatry. Cooper also drew a parallel between apartheid and psychiatry. Kesey's novel *Flying Over the Cuckoo's Nest* directly reflects the key points formulated by Anti-psychiatric movement:

- Abuse or misuse of power over patients who are too often treated against their will
- Relation of power between patients and psychiatrists is too often experienced by patients as demeaning and controlling

- Inappropriate and excessive use of medical concepts and tools to understand the mind and society, including the miscategorization of normal reactions to extreme situations as psychiatric disorders
- Too many psychiatric diagnoses are vague and arbitrary and they leave too much room for opinions and interpretations to meet basic scientific standards
- Prevailing psychiatric treatments are ultimately far more damaging than helpful to patients

Deleuze, Guattari and Goffman criticized the power and role of psychiatry in society and marked the psychiatric institutions as “total institutions” which used model and terms that were seen as stigmatizing.

The mental disorder which reappears in the novels (Kesey’s, Toole’s and Vonnegut’s) is schizophrenia. This mental disorder has manifold manifestations and a puzzling nature, which made for example T. Szasz discredit its existence, and he openly declared that it was not a mental disorder but “myth”. (Vacek p. 227)

Schizophrenia was praised as a productive force in the works of Cooper. (Vacek p. 228) The connection between schizophrenia and capitalism was drawn by Deleuze and Guattari.

## **1.7 Truth, Power and Desiring Machines**

According to Foucault, truth is not outside power or lacking in power, it is not reward of free spirits, it is a thing of this world and it is produced by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. Truth induces a regular effect of power and each society has its regimen of truth called “general politics” of truth – that is, the types of discourse it accepts and makes function as true. The general politics has its mechanisms and means by which each is sanctioned, the techniques and procedures accorded to value in the acquisition of truth, and marks the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault p. 131)

“Truth” is centered on the form of scientific discourse and the institutions that produce it. Truth is the object produced and transmitted by institutions and economic apparatuses, e. g. university, army, writing, media. Truth is also marked as the issue of a whole political debate and social confrontation – that is “ideological” struggles.

The basic aim of the authors of the novels is to challenge the “truths” emitted by diverse institutions. They use grotesque to challenge “the official truths” emitted by the authoritative surroundings of the heroes. Toole’s hero Ignatius struggles against all the ideas which surround him. Vonnegut’s Billy reflects the author’s experience of the Second World War in connection to the Vietnam War. Billy is subject to diverse authorities, for example the army and the psychiatric asylum. Vonnegut uses an opportunity of a writer to arrange a meeting of the eyewitness of the bombing of Dresden – Billy and an army historian, who “celebrates” and justifies this controversial historical event. The army historian builds his career on elaborating on “the official truth” about the bombing of Dresden and an actual and “burnt out” witness is someone who “spoils” his truth. Billy constantly escapes to his own world, which might have been created by his schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a positive element in his case, because it provides him with necessary explanations of the war atrocities and creates a place of refuge for him, which is the planet Trafalador.

The heroes of the novels are motivated by one phenomenon, which can be seen as the unifying element - desire. No other explanation can be found for their activities: Billy wants to calm his soul and tell the world the truth about time, space and Trafaladorians, Kesey’s McMurphy enters the fight with the “Big Nurse”, which he cannot win, and Ignatius is a chaotic element who brings deliberating chaos into everything and thus functions as a liberator. The heroes of the novels behave in a way which is in sharp contrast to “the official truth” and their failure seems to be inevitable.

Deleuze and Guattari formulated an interesting theory about desiring-machines, which can be an explanation of the anti-authority struggles of the heroes of the novels under analysis.

According to Deleuze and Guattari, there are machines everywhere. Everything is a machine and these machines produce constant whirr. There are celestial machines, the stars, the rainbow and the chlorophyll, and breathing machines which are plugged into other machines. Nature is seen a constant process where man and nature are the same – the desiring machine.

There is no such thing as either man or nature now, only a process that produces the one within the other and couples the machines together. Producing-machines, desiring machines everywhere, schizophrenic machines, all of species life: the self and the non-self, outside and inside, no longer have any meaning whatsoever. (Deleuze, Guattari p. 2)

Deleuze and Guattari state that schizophrenic ideas are productive because they embody a better model illustrating a relationship with the outside world.

The narrator of Kesey's novel is a schizophrenic Indian who believes that machines are everywhere. He even believes that people around him, the staff of the hospital, he himself, the pills he has to eat - all are full of small electronic gadgets and he can hear their buzzing all day long. The frightening machines appear even in his dreams and they are plugged into another machines, everything is a process of consumption of energy and its subsequent machine-made metamorphosis into something other.

According to Deleuze and Guattari, a schizophrenic experience is not at all any one specific aspect of nature, but nature as a process of production. At a certain level, nature and industry are two separate and distinct things, from one point of view, industry is the opposite of nature, but from another, industry extracts its raw materials from nature and then it returns its refuse back to nature.

Everything is production: production of productions, of actions and of passions, production of recording processes, of distributions and of co-ordinates that serve as points of reference, productions of consumptions, of sensual pleasures, of anxieties, of pain. (Deleuze, Guattari p. 4)

The Deleuzian idea of ceaseless chain of productions coincides with the idea expressed in Vonnegut. Vonnegut's extraterrestrials may be interested in Darwin because his principles of evolution are in harmony with their thoughts concerning production. Trafalmadorians say: "Corpses are improvements." We may ask a question: Improvements of what? The answer could be: Something new is created from the waste and new machines are created.

Schizophrenic heroes of the analysed novels find their answers thanks to their disorder. Schizophrenia means a process of liberation from the Deleuzian notion of "the empty time".

The empty time is created when the hero encounters something, which is too big for him, something tragic and crucial. Both the heroes, Vonnegut's Billy and Kesey's Bromden's have fought in the war, which provides them with this experience of empty time.

The heroes of the novels are forced to encounter the authorities of any kind because they are desiring machines. Their schizophrenia is not an illness, from the point of view of the authors, it is not a phenomenon or entity, schizophrenia is the universe of productive and reproductive desiring machines, universal primary production as "the essential reality of man and nature". (Deleuze, Guattari p.5)

## **2. The Basic Criteria for the Selection of the Authors Studied and the Essential Methodology Adopted:**

### **2.1 The Challenging Attitude**

The authors were chosen for their challenging attitude towards the cultural authorities in 1960s and for the specific use of form they apply in their novels. All of them used the grotesque to criticize, mock and challenge their contemporary society. According to Kayser, there are basically two types of the grotesque: fantastic (Vonnegut) and satiric (Toole).

The key theoretical authors for the analysis of the novels of Vonnegut and Kesey are Deleuze and Vizenor. The analysis of Toole's novel is based on Bakhtin's dialogical approach.

### **2.2 The Basic Methodology of the Analysis – Bakhtin's Dialogical Approach.**

According to Kantian philosophy thoughts or products of mind are closely related to the world of the outside. An author or an individual subject is someone who transforms a thing which is not an act – for instance: a subjective experience, an historical event, the atmosphere in a society - into something that is a kind of conceptual whole – a text (Holquist p. 7). Bakhtinian dialogism emphasizes the process by which manifold experience enters the domain of the author's self with openness and energy and thus influences the process of the creation of a work of art. Even the "self" of an author is seen as a kind of relation. The task of this work is to analyse how assymetric dualisms such as text/context, or system/history work in the chosen texts, which share one criterion – the times in which they were written.

All the dualisms are dialogues between the self and the other. Dialogism is a version of relativity because separateness and simultaneity are the basic conditions of existence (Holquist p. 20). According to this theory the position of an observer (for instance the starting point of this work) is fundamental because the Bakhtinian observer is an active participant in the relation of simultaneity. The self of a reader or an author is defined as an event with a particular structure. This structure is formed by what is called "law of placement" which says

that everything is perceived from a unique position in existence: the consequence of this law is that the meaning of whatever is observed is shaped by the place from which it is observed (Holquist p. 21).

The unifying element for this analysis is the era of the 60s in America and its basic task is to describe how the chosen authors coped with the “same”, given reality. In Vonnegut’s work it was an immediate reflection of his subjective experience of The Second World War and Toole’s *Confederacy of Dunces* can be seen as a reflection of the particular atmosphere of the American South: New Orleans with all its racial and social tensions. The analysis of the latter work will use the Bakhtinian text on Carnival culture, because the texts share many features. In particular the position and the nature of the main hero of the novel (the central figure is a grotesque philosopher) can be analysed from this point of view.

### **3. The Novel and its Special Position Among Literary Genres and a View of Literature as a Record of Human History**

#### **3.1 The Specific Position of the Novel as a Mirror of Harmony or Disharmony between Literature and Authorities**

The relationship and understanding of the particular oppositions and harmonies among culture, literature, representation and literary criticism have undergone a series of dramatic changes in the last two centuries, as has the idea of the novel as a literary genre. The literary scholar Morris Dickstein discusses this in his essay *Popular Fiction and Critical Values: The Novel as a Challenge to Literary History*. The central point of Dickstein's essay explains the close relationship between the novel and popular culture. His essay concentrates on the special position of the novel from its emergence up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is described as a special literary genre which possesses the unique set of characteristics of being contemporaneous, transcending itself and achieving a hold on popular imagination. Morris gives numerous examples of how literary criticism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was strongly influenced by biographies and how the biographies, originally branches of narrative history, passed from authors to verbose academic literary scholars who lacked the ability to create dramatic scenes. These academics created literary biographies full of a mass of chronological details about the writer's day-by-day lives or they used psychological theory to discuss the writers' development. Thus the biographies turned static or broke down under the pressure of so much analytical argument and raveling evidence. Hierarchical literary canons were created which gave priority to a certain group of literary "geniuses" and the others stayed only as remarks or footnotes. (Dickstein p. 30) Those cannons were typical products of their time.

Another important example of Dickstein's view of literary history and its connection or disconnection with the changing cultural evaluation of the literary works, is his own experience as a student at high school in the 1950s. The major authors mentioned in his school textbooks (Bryant, Longfellow, Frost) are now no longer considered to be as influential as Whitman and Dickinson, who were then mentioned only marginally as literary eccentric individualists outside the mainstream.

The general inability of individual critics to develop an intrinsic cultural perspective is obvious and Dickstein tries to clear up a little the past relationship between literature and history :

“The view of literature as the aesthetic expression of the general culture of people in a given time and place was from the start, an axiom in the thinking of the editors and their associates. Rejecting the theory that history of any kind is merely a chronological record of objective facts, they adopted an organic view of literature as the record of human experience.” (Dickstein p. 33)

Unfortunately, “culture” and “organic history” have acquired slightly or essentially alternative meanings. Organic history that descends from Hegel stands in sharp opposition to the historical approach of the New Critics. According to Hegel, culture and history are parts of the foreground which manifests itself in the work of art. The New Critics would oppose this view and state that a work of art occupies its own imaginative space and pursues its own rhetorical strategies. (Dickstein p. 33) This contradiction can be reduced by the recognition that evaluation is as inevitable as breathing and that interpretive insight and critical discrimination are things to be valued in any consideration of the arts.(Dickstein p.33).

According to James a novel is in its broadest definition a personal impression of life (James p. 56). Bakhtin seems to be sharing the same viewpoint when he emphasizes the openness of the novel towards life. Bakhtin characterizes the novel as a mixed and indeterminate genre which constantly undergoes the process of formation. Bakhtin’s theories are very important for this analysis because he sees the novel not as a genre such as epic or tragedy, but as a parodic destabilizing force which renovates older genres. The spirit of a novel is contemporaneous and embodies the spirit of modernity that resists the closure of the genre. (Dickstein p.45)

According to James: “art is essentially selection, but it is a selection whose main care is to be inclusive” (Dickstein p. 45). The aim of this analysis is to trace the selection of sociocultural elements which entered the works of Kennedy Toole, Kurt Vonnegut Jr. and Ken Kesey. The task will be to specify which particular elements were present and how they influenced the process of formation of the chosen works.

## 4. The Connection between Literature and Representation

### 4.1 The Definition of the Term Representation in General

The term “representation“ has always played a crucial role in the understanding of literature. Plato and Aristotle, the founders of literary theory, regarded literature as one form of representation.<sup>1</sup> Representation (from the point of view of aesthetics<sup>2</sup>) has a triangular structure or relationship between the: representation of something, the means used to express it and someone who is perceiving the sign. Representational signs never occur in isolation from the whole network of other signs. The network of other signs, and the means decoding (understanding) them – create the system (tonality in music, language in literature) which is commonly accepted, so that we do not need to repeat its rules on every occasion we use it. Semioticians generally differentiate three types of representational signs: icon<sup>3</sup>, index<sup>4</sup> and symbol. Symbolic representation is based on our agreement about how to decode, or interpret each sign. Representation in language is symbolic, but there is no restriction on using all these three types of representational signs simultaneously. For example: a written text is a symbolical representation of some action and it may indexically represent or – indicate the presence of – its author. Literature itself has been defined as “the representation of life“and the following discussion illustrates the connection between literature and representation:

It should be clear that representation, even purely “aesthetic“ representation of fictional persons and events, can never be completely divorced from political and ideological questions, one might argue, in fact, that representation is precisely the point where these questions are most likely to enter the literary work. If literature is a “representation of life“, then representation is exactly the place where “life“, in all its social and subjective complexity, gets into the literary work. (Lentricchia, McLaughlin p.15)

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Lentricchia, Thomas McLaughlin : *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, The University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 11

<sup>2</sup> aesthetics is the general theory of arts

<sup>3</sup> iconic representation uses the resemblance between the object which is being represented and its representation,( Lentricchia, McLaughlin, p. 14)

<sup>4</sup> indexical representation uses part of the object as the representation of the whole object, or it can use physical proximity or connectedness of the object and its representation (Lentricchia, McLaughlin, p.14)

The connection between literature and life is representation, and representation in literature has been understood in many ways. Expressionism, modernism and formalism for example have taken only one part of representation and made it the focus of their attention – for example: formalism emphasizes the means and manner, the materiality and organization of the representational object. Postmodern culture is really different in handling this term. Postmodern culture, which can be named: an era of “hyper-representation“<sup>5</sup> handles this term differently and reality itself is experienced as an endless network of representation.

Another connection between the world and literature is mentioned in Angebot’s work on social discourse. The literature effect can only be judged and measured in relation to the global sociodiscursive system in which it is engendered. Literature is directly connected to social discourse and refracts it. Literature does not reflect reality but it reflects social discourse. This means that literature has the role of the jester, in that it challenges established relations of power-knowledge, and brings doubts to everything that has been established as fixed ideas about something. It often manages to say: “There are more things in Heaven and Earth” or “It ain’t necessarily so”.

The main difference between literature and social discourse is that they have different discursive functions. The function of social discourse is to establish ideological constructs, and the function of literature is to question them. Thus every utterance, every word is directed towards the responsive understanding of another, and words are brimming over with other people’s intentions and struggles. A word in the mouth of a particular individual is a product of the living interaction of social forces. The production of meaning is therefore an on-going transformational process, made possible by historicity of discourses and their subjects. Words bear the marks of their use in past struggles: they exceed any meaning that the subject attempts to ascribe to them, and an area of “play“ is opened up by the fact that the past meanings of the words always outreach the needs of any present use. Conversely, a word is also influenced by its anticipated future reception. Because of these processes, there are many alternative meanings produced in discourse, for example : hybrid constructions, parody and stylization and carnivalization.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand an individual can not be completely incarnated into the flesh of existing sociohistorical categories. There is no form that would be able to incarnate all the human needs

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<sup>5</sup> Lentricchia, McLaughlin p. 16

<sup>6</sup> Bachtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p.279

and possibilities once and forever. The production of “responsive understanding”<sup>7</sup> implies strategic manoeuvres (described, for example in Vonnegut’s works through war metaphor) in relation to the other. Speakers who engage in dialogical relations are altered by entering these strategic manoeuvres and their ideological horizons are changed.<sup>8</sup> Dialogical relations do not simply happen in some Utopian space, free of exchange, but rather they occur within the environment (rich in ideas) of the speakers, which works to incorporate the sayable in a social formation and which is influenced by the requirements of socioeconomic reality.

Speech is organized into a limited number of genres – historical forms that select certain traits of reality. The historicity of these forms is what ties them (and the utterances they produce) to social values and practical, economic and political exigencies. Forms and values produce ideology as a material. We imagine ideological creation as some inner process of understanding, comprehension, and perception and we do not notice that this process unfolds externally, and that is why we can place this process not within us, but between us.

According to Bakhtin the emergence of the novel must be related to a very specific change in the history of European civilization: it emerges from a socially isolated and culturally deaf society, and afterwards enters into international and interlingual relationships.<sup>9</sup> The main difference between the old epic and the new novel is a new, relative understanding of time. The old epic is set firmly in the past, but the new novel introduces us into a possible reality, which is neither inevitable nor arbitrary. There is no statement that does not presuppose the others, every statement is surrounded by a field of coexisting elements (the effects of succession and distribution of roles and functions). That is the reason why literary criticism can no longer be practiced in the search for formal structures with universal value, but rather as an historical investigation into the event, that has led us to constitute ourselves and to recognize ourselves as subjects of what we are doing, thinking, and saying<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Responsive understanding means that this dialogical encounter operates within single utterances as well as within the whole novel and it transforms subjects and displaces problematics which produce culture over time. Comprehension is an ongoing, transformational process between subjects. (Bakhtin p. 83)

<sup>8</sup> Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, p. 83

<sup>9</sup> Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 11, 5, 37

<sup>10</sup> Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?“, p. 45, 46

## **4.2 Discourse: its General Definitions and Sociocultural Meaning in American Post-war Literature**

There have been many discussions about what discourse means and its basic and simplifying definition is that it is the use of language in speech and writing in order to see how the different parts of the text are connected. For the New Critics, it has an identity to be discovered, defined and understood and it sets the limits of a particular genre. This categorization of genre was essentially ahistorical and resulted in the consideration of literature apart from the specifics of history and culture. Conservative views of the New Critics concerning culture and history set the notion of genre into the stable community of class relations, where the present means capitalistic excess and dominance of culture by science and opposes the memory or myth of an agrarian past. The Civil War and World War I destroyed stable community relations and the New Critics believed that modern literature and criticism would fruitfully replace, modify and restore this benevolent form of tradition. (Lentricchia, Bove 51)

Many contemporary critics have since tried to reverse this idea. According to Foucault and Deleuze the New Critics' idea of genre ignored a specific link to power and desire. However the New Critics created the general disciplinary project of producing and regulating the movement of knowledge, and the forms of language, and thus a professionalized literary criticism came into being.

Yet, modern poststructuralist critics oppose simple questions and answers about the basic nature of discourse: for example – “What is discourse? Or “What does discourse mean?”, stating that their “normalcy” gives them a troubling power to shape thought and to hinder the posing of other questions. These questions imply a norm of judgment, but meaning and essence are better and more important than a discussion of how things work. (Lentricchia, Bove 53)

To understand the new sense of discourse; as a set of hierarchically related events or a flow of linguistic and institutional transformations, we have to describe its place within a network of other analytical and theoretical contemporary concepts which are tools for us to place it within the context of contemporary society and its history. Discourse is regulated and organized and on the other hand it is regulating and organizing and thus it allows us to describe the linkage between power, institutions, intellectuals and their function and relations in the contemporary state of thought.

The importance of discourse for this analysis can be expressed thus :

Discourses produce knowledge about humans and their society. But since the “truths” of these discourses are relative to the disciplinary structures, the logical framework in which they are institutionalized, they can have no claim upon us except that derived from the authority and legitimacy, the power, granted to or acquired by the institutionalized discourses in question. This large fact turns us to an analysis of the history of discourses, or more precisely to their genealogies. (Lentricchia, Bove 56)

The central idea for all theories concerning discourse is “the institutional nature of discourse” and its relatedness to the social. (Mills, p.11) Dialogue is the most important condition of discourse, and the social context is also crucial for its formation. It is not a chaotic grouping of utterances and sentences but is determined by social context and institutions which play an important role in development, maintenance and circulation of discourses. (Mills p.11) Truth and value about the human condition are both present in literary texts though their form is fictional or “untrue”. (Mills p.23)

### **4.3 The Sociocultural Context of the American 1960s as a Challenging Element to the Previous Cultural Authorities**

To trace the history of the particular sociocultural elements which influenced or “entered” into the works of Kennedy Toole, Kurt Vonnegut Jr. and Ken Kesey means to specify the sociocultural foreground which preceded even the 1960s in America. The years after the great Depression (1930s) were marked by a stern and exacerbated social consciousness between the haves and the have-nots. The rich were attacked and mocked by social satire, left-wing polemics and comedies. This situation of abysmal social antagonism was overridden only by the pressure of the Second World War. For the duration of the war, groups divided socially and in their opinions – factory workers and businessmen, farmers and city dwellers, communists and capitalists, accepted certain restrictions and forgot about their contradictory interests in order to win the war. After the war this artificial unity turned into a malaise caused by anger at the bureaucracy and new fears of nuclear annihilation. American authors (for example: James Jones in his *Thin Red Line*) reflected post-war ideas about contemporary American life in their realistic novels about The Second World War. The novels of Joseph Heller, Norman Mailer,

James Jones and Kurt Vonnegut expressed a feeling of abysmal sadness and an existential view of war as tragic, comic, violent and absurd.

According to Bercowitch post war novels about war partly reflected the period in which they were written – the late fifties and early sixties during which knowledge of The Holocaust and the new technology of mass destruction produced an immediate reaction. The joyful relief of the early post-war period disappeared and its place was taken by “the deeper horror of the war’s aftermath” (Bercowitch p. 121) which began at the swift beginning of the Cold War and was later maintained by the onset of the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Kurt Vonnegut used his own terrifying experience of the bombing of Dresden to challenge the absurdity of war and its atrocities, and while writing about The Second World War, he also alluded to the then current war in Vietnam. Writers like Vonnegut and Pynchon transferred the naturalism of Jones’s novel into magic realism interrelated with the mocking spirit of the 1960s. Bercowitch considers the appearance in the early sixties of the war novels e.g. Heller’s *Catch 22*, Berger’s *Crazy in Berlin*, Vonnegut’s *Mother Night* and later *Slaughterhouse 5* to be a consequence and reaction to that “peculiar mixture of social intolerance, boosterish optimism, and metaphysical angst” (Bercowitch p. 121). The time period (two decades approximately) which had passed since the end of The Second World War gave rise to new moral questions about the behaviour of human beings in general.

Bradbury even calls the 1960s in America, the era of the disagreement with and destabilization of the general perception of official authorities. Literature started to express growing doubts about the position of an individual in the world. A new view of history was set. History started to be perceived like as an absurd, conspiratorial and destabilizing force which causes individuals to be hopelessly lost in reality. According to Bradbury literature took the role of an antagonist against disruptive, damaging, historical forces, and its main task was to evaluate the ability of an individual to defy these negative forces. The means of expressing this ambition was satire, which concentrated on the fight between an individual’s inner space and the omnipotent political governing systems. (Bradbury p. 351) Heller’s *Catch 22* and Vonnegut’s *Mother Night* unified grotesque form with an historical vision. Metafiction and self reflexivity substituted realistic fiction and it created a new space for fantasy. Parodies and works of “black humour” resist all kinds of classification of genre. The ties of intertextuality are separated from the conscious bonds to reality and they start to exist independently.

The new reappearance of an antihero was inevitable.<sup>11</sup> The protagonists of the novels of Toole and Vonnegut are outcasts not because they have fallen or because they would like to but simply because they were born that way. The quote which introduces Toole's novel is: "When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him." (J. Swift) The specification and placement of the heroes of Toole and Vonnegut will follow in the chapters 5, 7 and 8..

The era of the 1960s in America can be characterized as vital but portentously confusing, an era of culture transformation when the flaws of the American dream became most obvious. (Lora p.1) The importance of the 1960s lies in their increased sensitivity to the qualitative aspect of life and the enlargement of democratic ideas. People lived their lives in relative affluence and this sociocultural climate gave rise to a certain number of very difficult questions about the ambiguities of competing forces, reform, war and privilege.

The period can be marked by a division into two most remarkable phases. The beginning of the decade was marked by optimism, energy, hope and idealism. The optimism was rooted in Kennedy's inaugural speech in which he addressed "the new generation" and emphasized that national progress and greatness depended on active commitment to ideals. Newly released moral energy was expressed by the efflorescence of the civil-rights movement. According to Lora, there was no substantive basis for this optimism and later the first idealistic period ended with the defeats of Kennedy's legislation on civil rights, tax reform, and the onset of the Vietnam War. The assassination of Kennedy gave rise to a number of conspiracy theories which emphasized the dormant suspicions of the darker undercurrents of American society.

The second half of the period was marked by a floodtide of social explosions over race, violence, youth, drugs, differing life styles and protests against the war in Indochina. The style of the times demanded new cultural heroes and reform of the universities. Active participants in the conflicts wanted to pursue fuller democracy through revolt against traditional cultural authorities. The most straightforward expression of the ideas of the revolt was – the right to live private lives outside the legitimate demands of the institutions. According to Lora, dissent often adopts the form of a constant denial of any authority without any reasonable distinction being made between dogmatic and responsible authority. The dissenters did not acknowledge the fact that men do not live outside authority whether public or private (Lora p.3)

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<sup>11</sup> The tradition of an antihero goes back to Shakespeare's Falstaff or Hašek's Schweik

The revolt against cultural authorities had many different forms which were meant to impact many sociocultural targets. The first of these was a revival of Nietzsche's idea of the "Death of God" and the consequence of this ideological revival was that the form of traditional theism effectively disappeared among the educated middle classes. This stream of thought implied that man must bear the responsibility for history and this idea is unique to the 1960s. (Lora p.3)

According to Fiedler, the idea about modern war had struck the American novelists as a phenomenon more irrational and terrifying than such gothic prompts as ghosts and castles. The most puzzling and terrifying elements moved from the past to the future. The tale of terror started to unify the past which was The Second World War, and the current Vietnam War, and the future which seemed frightful and marked by an era of universal war, alienation from nature, failed revolutions, genocides and ideological self-deception. The portrait of modern war conveys a message of incomprehensible violence, and incoherent anguish, and aspires to be a new gothic form. (Fiedler p. 501)

Fiedler divides American gothic fiction into three basic groups. Poe is considered to be the founder of the detective story and he was the author who precedes and includes all the features of gothic fiction, which will be mentioned here. The first group of gothic fiction belongs to the past, and it evokes fear of the former counter-revolutionary authorities embodied by ghosts and graveyards. The old authorities were presumed dead and buried. The second group is connected with the fear of the present and is represented by detective stories. The authors of the second group – such as Hammet and Chandler – evoked a fear of present violence which can be surpassed only by the use of new scientific methods or reason. The third basic element which is necessary to fight off evil is luck, which is to say grace. (Fiedler p. 500) The third group of gothic fiction evokes fear of the future and it is based on a fundamental ambivalence toward science, which shapes the future. The politics of the science fiction genre is reasonably liberal and it favours strong social control for unselfish purposes. Its world-view is secular – it believes that God is dead, but that there is no reason to be hysterical about it. (Fiedler p. 501) Most authors of the third group are at the least suspicious about utopias and capitalistic commitment to planning. Fiedler mentions the process of authors transferring the most important old gothic prompts – haunted castles, ghosts, prophecies etc., into modern terms. For instance: magicians are turned into physicists or doctors, the passage of objects through unbroken barriers is teleportation, the calling-up of the dead is time travel, and demonic

possession is control of thought by interplanetary travelers. The terror of gothic tales escalates when we approach this third group of gothic fiction. The risk in the first group is hidden in the destruction of an individual, the second group threatens the whole community and the terror of the third, science fiction group, stems from the fear of the destruction of the Earth or the total universe.

According to Fiedler, the authors of science fiction propagate non-Aristotelian logic, interracial tolerance, insight and morality. Fiedler emphasizes that science fiction is at risk of becoming horror-pornography – the extortion of a shudder for its own sake. This point may explain the strong rejection by Vonnegut of his being placed among science fiction writers. Vonnegut uses particular science fiction prompts, for instance extraterrestrials and time travel. Vonnegut's life experience forces him to create a metafictional figure of the science fiction writer Kilgore Trout, who is a "bitter man". Nobody reads an author, who invents stories about trees where money grows and the roots of which are well nurtured by the dead bodies of the humans who were killed for the tree's fruits – money. Nobody wants to read about greed which is real and brutal and contemporary. In the novel *Slaughterhouse Five*, Vonnegut incorporates his own experiences from The Second World War into a story which follows a pattern, not fundamentally different from the life Americans live. According to Fiedler this pattern is characterized by surface hope and terror beneath. (Fiedler p. 502) A loss of faith in the potentialities of humanity and a prevision of its destruction are universal themes shared by science fiction writers and Vonnegut. His vision of the end of the universe is tragic, comic and unwitting. The end of the universe is caused by his Trafalmadorians and is random and unintentional. The failure of extraterrestrial science is a destructive element – it is not human science and its impact is universal. The most terrifying element in the book is the reality of the apocalypse of Dresden. The terror stems from the historical event which was unprecedented.

Fiedler sums up the tendency of American "classic" novels and concludes that they are not openly nihilistic despite their obsession with terror. According to Fiedler American authors incorporate the theme of gothic duplicity and self-conscious farce into their books. Their gothicism is a part of their profound duplicity, for the gothic has always been a popular mode in a world where fewer and fewer men believe in the Devil. The dialectical discrepancies which life brings for example: between what man dreams and what he achieves, or what life is imagined at any moment and what it is are incorporated into stories full of terror where the diabolic stance is passed off as an amusing sham. The self conscious farce is an elementary

constituent which is expressed explicitly in Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse 5* when the main protagonist Billy, a time traveler, meets the author of the book only once in Dresden's prison camp in a most undignified moment, when the author is emptying his guts and wailing. This is the only moment when they meet: despite the fact that the author could have placed the random meeting at any moment in the story, he consciously uses this unworthy, but very human moment in the "lives" of the heroes. Vonnegut shares the view of Nathanael West that human life is tragic, but such misery is a more proper occasion for laughter than tears. (Fiedler p. 488) West is considered to be a "child of his time", that is, he envisions an apocalypse which is a defeat for everyone. We can draw a direct connection from West to Vonnegut, who has the same view. According to Fiedler the Westian neo-gothic novel has opened up possibilities for capturing the quality of experience in a mass society. Westian greatness lies in his original connection with American fiction, the European tradition of avant-garde, anti-bourgeois art, and native symbolism. The same notions are expressed in Vonnegut's works. The reaction of a reader after finishing Vonnegut's book can be expressed by Fiedler's view on West:

Putting down a book by West, a reader is not sure whether he has been presented a nightmare endowed with the conviction of actuality or with actuality distorted into the semblance of a nightmare, but in either case, he has the sense that he has been presented with a view of a world in which, incredibly, he lives. (Fiedler p. 489)

According to Fiedler, West is still more admired than directly emulated. In Vonnegut's case there is no question of emulation, but the connection between the two authors lies in the deeper level of "gallows humour"<sup>12</sup> and the grotesque. Fiedler even states that in the 1960s West's devices and attitudes were assimilated into a new convention, and one writer who followed this convention might have been Vonnegut. Vonnegut incorporates in his works the Deleuzian notion of repetition which involves at once both tragic and comic elements. The notion of repetition is worked up more profoundly in chapter 8 of this analysis.

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<sup>12</sup> Vonnegut's humour is called „gallows humour“ in Marvin p. 68

## **5. Features of Grotesque Realism, Carnival Culture and Trickster Figures in Toole's Confederacy of Dunces and Kesey's Flying Over the Cuckoo's Nest**

### **5.1 Toole's Hero Ignatius as an Incarnation of a Walking Carnival**

Ignatius J. Reilly lives in a relatively modern world ( the 1960s in America) and his whole life is a constant denial of all contemporary values, and everything he does finishes in a lunatic endless farce where all the people surrounding him and himself also, end up in unexpected positions.

Toole's world is not linear, nor logical and the book is not dogmatic about anything. In the center of Ignatius' bizzare activities stands a medieval or renaissance opinion about the rottenness of the contemporary world and his endeavour to put things into the right order, this ends up in a greater chaos or in carnival farce. The world of Toole's hero (the New Orleans of the 60s) strongly resembles the world of Rabelais. Both authors describe worlds which are somehow unfinished, and unofficial, and strongly oppose ideologies and authorities.

In medieval times there were some opportunities for the official destruction of hierarchical organization. It was the time of carnival, when people celebrated equality and contemporary freedom, when all social restraints such as social hierarchy, duties, religious restrictions, rules of ethics and good taste were reversed and deliberately infringed.(Bakhtin p.17) Carnival and its mirth stood against the official feast and saints' days. Official feasts and saints' days celebrated the dominant truth, stable social hierarchy and official ideology. Carnivals, which took place on the streets and public places, embodied the reversed and opposing side of the feasts. People broke their social isolation and enjoyed living in a utopian world although it was only for the limited time of carnival. Carnivals had their own form of a street language and all the forms and symbols of carnival language and activities embodied and epistomized perpetual change of life: transitions from birth to death, from youth to old age. Carnivals had their own reversed logic: what was up had to come down and vice versa. (Bakhtin p.17).

The main hero of Toole's book – Ignatius – lives a life of carnival changes. He organizes his own feasts – not carnivals but demonstrations – in which he involves marginal groups of people (workers in the Levy's factory, and the sodomites' party) and thus the whole scene confirms the idea of a carnival form of world perception when all social groups meet in a universal turbulent activity. The center of this activity is Ignatius.

A very interesting aspect of Ignatius' personality is his concern about his pyloric valve which opens and closes as a consequence of his life experiences. His pyloric valve is a very serious, almost philosophical point from which he starts his disputes and it seems to have the same importance as his world opinion. Putting together contrasting ideas and matters like philosophy and body needs is typical for the popular carnival culture of medieval and renaissance times. The unifying principle of naturalistic, biological body processes and cosmic and social events is presented in grotesque realism as a jaunty unity. This unity is pleasant and calming (Bakhtin, p25). The material and bodily element is a deeply positive force and it exists as a phenomenon tantamount to all the abstract ideas of withdrawn sublime ideality. The essential and unique feature of grotesque realism is the use of a hyperbolic diminishing of everything serious, abstract and spiritual. Even the body shape of Ignatius is grotesquely fat, puffed and abundant. His activities (writing letters for Myrna, organizing demonstrations, selling hot dogs, going to the cinema, applying for a position at university) have a lot in common with the typical activities of a medieval fool who mimed serious rituals in a grotesque way using their transposition into a body language. The diminishment of "serious" events was effected by using the paradox of what is "above" (heaven, head, ideals) and "below" (earth, womb, grave, hell). Ignatius is all the time fully interested and concerned about his bodily functions (hunger, eructation etc.) and thus he diminishes and reverses all his activities: for example, instead of selling hot dogs, he repels all potential customers and eats them all himself.

Ignatius' body strongly resembles the body of Sancho Panza. They are both fat and puffed. Sancho with all his materialistic concerns (his full belly, incessant thirst, abundant excrements) opposes dead, sterile idealism of Don Quijote. Sancho's bodily needs embody "the low" against Quijote's idealism, which finishes and "dies" in Sancho's grave (earth, material), but it is not buried, it is resurrected and born again in a new and better form. (Bakhtin 27). Ignatius unifies Don Quijote's and Sancho Panza's features in one personality. His body and his pyloric valve create Ignatius' specific needs, and they are mixed with his idealistic and self confident concept of himself and with his critical and destructive thinking about the modern age. Ignatius

is a unique mixture of “the low” and “the high” and there is no disharmony between the two contrasts. His body and soul coexist in perfect harmony. His body bears the typical features of grotesque realism, which portrays body in the liminal state of development and thus opposes the classical or renaissance ideal of a body which is in the mature stage of its existence – there are no signs of birth or death on it.(Bakhtin 30) There is nothing finished about Ignatius. His fat figure can be taken as a cocoon from which a beautiful (or ugly) butterfly will emerge, he can be the beginning or the at the end of development, and he is in fact in a constant stage throughout the whole novel. His body looks like something unfinished and it is full of disproportions, stumps and folds. According to Bakhtin, a grotesque body looks somehow unfinished and it is not clearly separated off the surrounding world. This body can be observed as an element in the process of perpetual change and it is cosmic and embodies all the phases of time at once. Ignatius’ body never changes nor does he change his world opinion. It is possible to understand his appearance and behavior as a kind of a mask, which he never puts off.

The mask has its fixed place in the popular carnival culture and according to Bakhtin it embodies the very essence of the grotesque and parody. The mask embodies in this case the principle of the perpetual rebirth, growth and playful change. This notion changes in the romantic view of a mask. The romantic mask obtains new tragic and mystical meanings. It hides and pretends something and after revelation there is a terrifying void under it. Another very important motive besides the mask is a motif of a puppet in the romantic grotesque (Bakhtin p. 48). The greatest difference between the motive of the puppet and mask in the romantic notion and its notion in the popular carnival culture is the strengths which moves and stands behind the mask or embodies the puppeteer. There is a very powerful, bad (or good) inhumane and unknown force behind the mask in the romantic notion. This power manipulates people like puppets and this notion of the mask is in direct opposition to its meaning in the popular carnival culture. Ignatius stands in the middle of all activities and moves the others like a puppeteer but there is no hidden, mysterious force standing behind his mask. His mask can be understood better from the point of view of the popular carnival culture because of its carnal roots and its incessant vivacity.

According to Bakhtin, the aesthetics of the grotesque lies in the connection of the ugly, monstrous and the sublime whose unity forms the real beauty which is inaccessible for pure classical art (Bakhtin p.50). Toole’s Ignatius embodies both sides of the real beauty of the

grotesque: his body is grotesquely fat and ugly from the classical point of view but his mind is really alert and sublime in his world-saving activities. He has a grotesque body and a very sophisticated mind which longs for a better world in harmony both with medieval philosophy and with his bodily needs. The combination of the sublime medieval philosophy pursued by a white, fat and sexually eccentric Ignatius forms a new, modern, subtype of the grotesque view of the world which stems from the popular carnival culture.

According to theories concerning the romantic and post romantic attitude to the grotesque of Heinrich Schlegels, the grotesque is the hyperbole of the condemnable and inappropriate which breaks the limits of probability. Its only purpose is to elicit negative laughter and to mock and attack a negative social phenomenon from the moral point of view.

This conception of the grotesque prevailed in literary theory till the first decades of the twentieth century and its most negative feature, according to Bakhtin, was the mutilation and omission of the liberating power of the grotesque. Toole's hero Ignatius is a wild and capricious element who liberates the others in his surroundings while pursuing his own cranky solutions. There are many examples to be quoted from the novel: for instance: the dummy strip artist Darlene gets media attention despite her lack of her dancing and intellectual skills, Ignatius' lonely mother meets new friends, and the vicious bar owner and pornography producer Lana Lee ends up in jail. Ignatius is not an example of a literary figure whose crazy and erratic behavior leads to moralizing and the didactic destruction of everybody around including himself, because his deeds end up in a new solution which is unexpected but reasonable. The author's intentions can not be simplified by naming them "moral and critical hyperboles". ( Bakhtin p. 55)

Bakhtin divided the development of the grotesque into two major streams: the first is the modernist and surrealistic grotesque (A. Jarry) which is connected to the romantic notion of the grotesque. It means that the world of the modernist grotesque is gloomy and negative. Its carnival principle of relativity, liberation and holistic, jaunty unity is forgotten. (Bakhtin p. 56) The second stream is the realistic grotesque which is connected with grotesque realism and it is strongly influenced by carnival culture. Toole's novel belongs to the second stream. His underworld of New Orleans is full of bizarre heroes and situations for example: Ignatius' mother gets drunk and has an accident and Burma Jones is planning to sabotage his cleaning works in Lana's bar. Yet none of these situations is mysterious or gloomy. Fear is not a

dominant force leading the lives of the heroes. The absence of this negative feeling allows heroes to act freely and to create and continue the string of comic accidents and events which end up in a farcical climax during the final scene in Lana's bar.

Fear is an expression of one sided and limited seriousness (Bakhtin p.56) and its absence in Toole's world gives his heroes unrestricted liberty which is typical and proper to the carnival culture.

According to Bakhtin the grotesque paradigm of the world order opens up a new view of the events happening in this world. All the borders and limitations of the existing world can be broken and traversed, and the existing world is destroyed again and again in order to be born anew and better. The relativity of everything in existence is deeply hilarious and the changes are joyful. (Bakhtin p. 56). Changes, from the carnival culture's point of view are not only abstract but they also absorb the whole body and soul of a human being. This grotesque approach to the world is holistic because it allows the sociocultural elements to enter this game of boundless transformations. According to Bakhtin, this grotesque concept of the world is deeply concerned with the contemporaneous events happening in human society, and contains awareness of the changes and crisis which can be social, environmental or cosmic. Toole's hero is thrown into this world of change after the accident his mother had caused while driving home drunk. Ignatius' state of being before the accident can be described as a stage of a passive larvae which is creating its body parts secretly in its cocoon (his mother's house) according to the laws of nature. This passive state of being is fulfilled by Ignatius' feverish writings of essays entitled, for instance : "In Defence of Hroswitha: To those Who say She Did not Exist, The Danger of Eight- Cylinder Automobiles, Abstinence, the Safest Method of Birth Control, New Orleans, City of Romance and Culture".

## **5.2 The Grotesque Principle of the Motif of Death and Madness in "A Confederacy of Dunces"**

The motif of madness is present in both conceptions of the grotesque. According to Kayser's theory the motive of madness is closely connected to the motive of a puppet which is controlled by a strange and inhuman puppeteer or by a puppeteer obsessed by an extraneous spirit. The manifestations of this obsession lead to mad, tragic and inexplicable deeds.

This motif of madness is understood to be worked out differently from the point of view of carnival culture. Madness is a deliberating force which draws a clear line between the world and lies which surround it. (Bakhtin p.57) Madness is a force which debunks the world full of lies and thus liberates it. Toole's Ignatius embodies an antihero who is thrown into the extraneous world involuntarily by the "cycles of goddess Fortune". His debunking activities involve a scene where a group of elderly ladies exhibit their paintings outdoors and the only criticism of their "artistic" works they are likely to accept is a positive one. Ignatius appears there unexpectedly and spoils the exhibition with his sharp but realistic remarks concerning the quality of the paintings. He gets there by chance and although he is dressed in his working costume ("a pirate" disguise) and he is supposed to sell weenies there, he brings the exhibition to an end and the ladies are forced to leave. (Toole p. 209)

There are various examples of the carnival concept of madness in the Toole's novel: Mrs. Trixie, an ancient secretary in Mr. Levy's factory, who suffers from senile dementia (a kind of senile madness) and who finally and unintentionally saves Mr. Levy from his competitor's accusations and from blackmailing of his wife. Trixie is Ignatius' counterpart and colleague in Levy's factory and she is both mad and an old but fighting figure who plays an important role in the story. Levy's spoiled and eccentric wife takes Trixie as a toy and experimental animal in her effort to accomplish her course in psychology. Trixie calls Ignatius "Gloria" (another secretary, who had already left the factory a long time before Ignatius started his activities in Levy's company) and her only concern is to retire. The effort of Levy's wife to restore Trixie's confidence and youth is a real nonsense and seemingly mad and senile Trixie finally bites Mrs. Levy's hand to demonstrate the only reasonable response.

According to Bakhtin the element of carnival grotesque has a very strong deliberating force which relieves the world from dark, serious and inhuman "necessity" which rules any human idea about world order. The grotesque shows the limits and relativity of this "necessity", which can be understood for instance as a "simple" and reasonable solution. The situation to be quoted from Toole's work which illustrates this idea is the final scene of the book when Ignatius is escaping with Myrna in her little Renault and an ambulance car which is coming to take Ignatius to a charity mental asylum is just passing. Ignatius is "saved" to spread his ideas in a very last moment. (Toole p. 338) He finally leaves his mother's house forced by the "necessity" of his involuntary imprisonment in a mental asylum. His saviour is his debater

“girlfriend” Myrna Minkoff, whose personality embodies all the current views of a fervent activist combining militant feminist thoughts and aggressive subversive ideas about sexual liberation. Her relationship to Ignatius is mainly held by exchanging fervent letters where Ignatius and Myrna oppose each other. Myrna is obsessed with revolutionary activities and she sees Ignatius as a unique opportunity to put in practice her modern thoughts. Her devotion in manipulating Ignatius into the right place and position can be compared to the effort of Mrs. Levy who wanted to “save” Trixie. Till the very end of the novel, Ignatius remains Myrna’s stubborn opponent who organizes all his activities to persuade her that his medieval thoughts and ideas about the cycle of Fortune are right. Every activity he describes in his letters is carried out and meant to extinguish her positive attitude to everything modern and revolutionary. According to all the characteristics of the principles of relativity of the carnival culture, at the end of the novel Ignatius succumbs and he is saved by his greatest opponent Myrna Minkoff.

The notion of death in Kayser’s conception of the grotesque is strongly opposed by Bakhtin. Kayser’s notion of death means that the grotesque contains a strong antinomy of life and death. (Bakhtin p.58) Bakhtin opposes this view-point by emphasizing the strong connection and unity of death and life in the grotesque. Death is always presented in connection with a birth of something new as a grave is connected with the fecund womb of the earth. (Bakhtin p. 58) Death is seen as a crisis of exchanging process while the old is replaced by the new.

Useful examples of this view-point can be found in Toole’s novel when death is mentioned. It is referred to rarely, and first appears in connection with Ignatius’ deceased father who is introduced only as the biological carrier of Ignatius’ genes. There is nothing sad about his death, and not even his widow mourns him.

The second example where death is mentioned only to support the main depiction is the case of Ignatius’ dog. Even though the dog died, it remained a living part of Ignatius’ perverse sexual fantasies. This connection between death and sex confirms the carnival character of Toole’s novel.

The rituals and scenes which normally follow death (funeral, burial place) are mocked and reversed in the novel. Ignatius rejects the official church – embodied by an elderly preacher who refused to say a mass for Ignatius’ deceased dog.

Policeman Mancuso is an example of a comic hero who is almost tortured to death by his superior but who is finally saved by Ignatius.

According to Bakhtin's carnival principle of the grotesque, death and life are inseparable parts of one complex and its purpose is not to evoke fear at all. Leonardo Da Vinci allegedly stated that a man who spends his life waiting for something very positive happening in his future is looking forward to his grave. (Bakhtin p. 58) Ignatius' world opinion and his abundant statements confirm Da Vinci's view of future optimism. The main hero of Toole's novel utters many pessimistic remarks, for instance, he hates optimism, because it is perverse, and the proper position of man, since his fall in the universe has been one of misery.

### **5.2.1 Trickster Figures in Toole**

To incorporate this subchapter into the body of the analysis it is essential to draw a connection between carnival culture and tricksters in general. The main protagonists of Toole's work are Ignatius and Burma Jones and both are marginal figures from the point of view of society, but they are important shifters of the plot. Ignatius and Burma Jones display features which are characteristic of the trickster. The connection between carnival culture and a trickster is obvious. The notion of a joke, mask, scheming and the activity of mocking society is omnipresent and clear in Toole's work. Toole's novel cannot be placed into the canon of black literature but the main shifter of the plot, Burma Jones is a black figure who displays the typical features of a trickster and whose activity can be described by the term "signifying".

According to Hansen a trickster is a god, goddess, animal or an anthropomorphic creature which plays tricks and disobeys the rules of the society. Despite the fact that the mythological connotations of a trickster are not so important for this particular part of the analysis, the notion of a literary point of view is more productive. Toole's literary figure Burma Jones can be analysed from the point of view of Henry Louis Gate's theory, concerning the black trickster figures.

According to R. Ellis a trickster is "a smart man playing dumb" or "the joke of American identity". Both the quotes can be used to characterize the literary figure of Burma Jones who is

a typical trickster figure in the novel and the following points make this classification clear. (Ellis p.5)

### **5.2.2 The Activity: “Signifying”**

According to Abrams the activity “signifying” means “stirring up things for their own sake”. The definition of this activity which is given by Henry Louis Gates Jr. is more profound and it gives the basic meaning of the word a more dimensional notion which is important for the analysis. The core activity which fulfills the meaning of signifying is the eloquence of a marginal creature who changes things radically. This activity does not involve speech only but also the other expressive means. To define this activity it is necessary to go back to mythology and to explain the notion of the activity from the “first signifiers”. Henry Louis Gates Jr. defines the original mythology’s archetypal figure as The Signifying Monkey. The Signifying Monkey is a trickster figure which has its roots in different mythologies, but the most important features come from the Yoruba religion. It is a figure which shares common traits with the other trickster figures from African religions for instance: Papa La Bas in The United States, Esu-Elegbara in Nigeria, Echu- Elegbara in Cuba.

The archetypal trickster figures speak “eloquently of the unbroken arch of metaphysical presumption and patterns of figuration shared through space and time among black cultures in West Africa, the Caribbean and the United States.” (H. L. Gates Jr. p. 237). This mythological figure is a messenger of the Gods, guardian of the crossroads, the divine linguist, the master of the mystical barrier that separates the divine from the profane words. The most important characteristic of the figure is its ability to speak and its vocation to become a mediator between the two contradictory elements. The important gods from the point of view of The Signifying Monkey are Ifa and Esu. Both are called divine tricksters by Gates Jr. According to his trickster’s classification Ifa is the god of determinate meaning and the meaning must be rendered by analogy. Esu is god of indeterminacy and he rules the interpretative process. Esu is understood as a metaphor for the text itself, for its open-endedness and uncertainties: he is even called “discourse upon a text” because he rules the process of interpretation. ( Gates Jr. p. 21)

The Signifying Monkey is a figure distinctly American which exists in narrations not primarily as a character but rather as a vehicle for narration itself. The same mechanism is used in

Toole's novel where Burma Jones is not important as a character of certain features, but what marks and justifies his appearance in the novel are his ¶raveli speeches. His family background, his past and future and even his appearance are not described at all. We learn from the text that Burma Jones is a very dark skinned African American, who never takes off his black sunglasses, which could embody the notion of a mask, and this idea will be explored in the following subchapter of the analysis. His position is one of a trickster who mediates between the world of Ignatius and the others. A good example of Burma's scheming is the climax, the final scene in the bar. Had it not been for Burma's scheming Ignatius would not have been dragged out of his den. It is instinctive and is mainly performed by chance. The plot of the novel is moved by Burma, who is a signifier who literally wreaks havoc upon the signified, who is Ignatius.

To define the term "signifying" we have to emphasize that it is not a simple passing of information but it refers to the trickster's ability to carp, cajole, needle, lie and scheme. (Gates Jr. p. 238) According to Abrams the monkey or the trickster is not a master of technique, he *is* technique. Burma is the Great Signifier – he is created only by his speeches. Burma can be compared to Esu because his comments stir up things for their own sake. According to A. Dundes the origins of signifying could lie in "African Rhetoric". Toole's novel proves this idea, Burma is a trickster figure who gives very long speeches which bear certain signs of African American Vernacular.

The activity of signifying can be defined from various contradictory points of views. The most productive aspect from the theoretical background is the strong link between this activity and the communication strategies of the black community. Black and witty speakers "empty" the signifier signification of its given or received concept and fill this with their own concept. During this process, the speakers (un)wittingly disrupt the nature of the sign. According to Gates Jr. the activity "signifyin (g)" rose from the black tradition which created a homonymic pun of the profoundest sort, marking its sense of difference from the rest of the English community of speakers. Gates Jr. draws the connection between its disruptive potential and its form:

Their complex act of language Signifies upon both formal language use and its conventions, conventions established at least officially, by middle-class white people. (Gates Jr. p. 47)

The protagonists of the sort mentioned in the quote are Toole's characters: Lana Lee, Ignatius, his mother, Santa etc. These characters can at least belong to the lower middle class. The only one who is "enslaved", oppressed and black is Jones, whose only strategy to oppose his corner situation is Signifyin(g). Jones is forced to work in Lana's bar for a minimal wage because he is afraid of being arrested for vagrancy. Lana Lee abuses his situation and frequently threatens him with the police.

Jones complains about his miserable situation to an old African American owner of a shabby inn – Mattie – who tries to calm down Jones' anger and signifies at once.

"Don't get yourself in no trouble."

"Hey! You soun just like the Lee mother. Too bad you two ain met. She love you. She say, Hey, you so sweet, how's about waxing my floor and paintin my wall? You so darling, how's about scrubin my tawlet and polishing my shoe? And you be sayin, Yes ma'm, yes ma'm. I'am well behave. And you be bustin your ass falling off a chandelier you been dustin and some other whore friend of her comin in so they can compare they price, and Lee star throwin some nickel at you feet and say, Hey boy, that sure a lousy show you putting on. Han us back them nickel before we call a po-lice. Oo-wee."

(Toole p. 113)

This dialogue is a good illustration of the theory concerning the "private thesaurus". This term is explained by Steiner as the uniqueness of each personality's use of signs, words, syntax, signals of value and inference. (Steiner in Gates p. 170) The private thesaurus of a person is formed by one's subconscious experience, the level of literacy, and memories so far as they can be verbalized. No speech act can escape this private residue. "The personal lexicon" in each of us inevitably qualifies the connotations and semantic moves in public discourse. (Gates Jr. p. 171) The language of a community is not uniform, it can be compared rather to a "multiple aggregate of irreducible personal meanings". Going back to the idea of one's level of literacy, Jones complains about his lack of education: "If I had me some trainin I wouldn be moppin no old whore flo." (Toole p. 113) or the quote:

"...I never go to school more than two years in my life. My momma out washing other people clothin, ain nobody □raveli about school. I spen all my time rollin tire around

the street. I am rollin, momma washin, nobody learnin nothing. Shit! Who lookin for a tire roller to give them a job? I end up gainfully employ workin with a bird, got a boss probly sellin Spanish fly to an orphan. Oo-wee. "(Toole p. 114)

Opposing ideas are often expressed by Ignatius' mother who spent all her money to provide her son with a suitable education. She expected her son to pursue a "nice" academic career. Ignatius refuses to work ferociously and his only goal is to live comfortably and to make his surroundings wiser. The idea of changing the world into a better place is pursued by his subversive activities e.g. writing provocative letters in the name of his employer, organizing demonstrations for workers' rights, eating goods instead of selling them. Ignatius does not signify the same way as Burma Jones, but the core reason for his detrimental activity shares the same features. His language is not African American vernacular English, but he uses a kind of "private thesaurus" too. His baroque and sharp style of writing is the sign which makes him visible to Mr. Levy. The writer lets him speak by his prolonged letters which stand in sharp contrast to Burma Jones' speeches. Ignatius signs his letters with various names but the "authors" of the letters share the same lofty approach to the others. Burma Jones in contrast speaks all the time for himself and his position is clearly given and reproached in his monologues. At the beginning Ignatius is not a trickster but later on he is forced to cover his laziness and gluttony by playing tricks. The most important target of his scheming is his mother and later on all the characters are fooled by his lies.

According to Gates the pícaro and the trickster share certain specific features. They become what they are thanks to the moment of enslavement. Both the pícaro and the trickster are outsiders and orphans. Ignatius and Jones are not orphans but they are definitely outsiders. Jones' life is ruled by his mean chief Lana Lee and Ignatius is forced to obey his mother who finally wants to get rid of him. The lives of Ignatius and Jones are commented, judged, and presented. Ignatius writes letters to Myrna to advertise his present situation and Jones leads his monologues. The points of view of Jones and Ignatius are critical and based on moral, social or religious grounds. The material level of existence is stressed in both. The emphasis on material level connects the plot of the novel to the carnival culture and to its roots in perpetual growth and rebirth.

Hunger, money and sordid facts are at the center of Jones' attention. The overstressed, material and subsistence level of being is expressed repeatedly and it links both the figures to the

carnival culture. Both, the pícaro and the trickster (Jones) comment and mock the social institutions. Ignatius and Jones both use irony and hyperbole to stir up the world which surrounds them. The world and the circumstances make them move horizontally through space and vertically through society. Ignatius starts his career as an office worker and ends up as a fleeing refugee and a seller of weenies.

Gates Jr. marks the areas of influence which are available for oppressed, subjugated and enslaved people to occupy. He divides the spheres of influence on the two basic axes *y* and *x*. The *y* axis represents the meaning and the position of a black man in white society and the *x* axis represents the subversive and opposing world of the blacks. The axes also represent the semantic and rhetorical dimensions of the sign. Signifying is even called “a colonization of a white sign”.

### **5.2.3 The Notion of a Mask in J. K. Toole**

The motif of a mask is used frequently in J. K. Toole’s novel. His protagonists wear masks for miscellaneous reasons. The notion of a mask coincides with the Bakhtinian theory concerning carnival culture. It must be emphasized that the romantic notion of a mask stands in sharp opposition to the notion expressed in Toole’s novel. The mask carries the meaning of growth and perpetual change which finally deliberates the heroes. According to Deleuze disguises are integral and constituent elements of repetition. (Deleuze p. 19) The masks do not hide anything but other masks. This idea is fully developed in Toole, his heroes wear their masks and when the original mask fades away, another one briskly appears.

The mask becomes a uniform for patrolman Mancuso and for Ignatius. Mancuso is forced to wear it to “cover” his police identity and to get closer to the “perverts”. Mancuso’s boss uses a mask as a humiliating tool against his unhappy subordinate. “The stage” of Mancuso’s degrading performance is a public toilet. The place is extremely wet and unhealthy and Mancuso gets cold which makes him speak and act even more subserviently. In this case the mask is a uniform and according to Foucault the uniform is one of the tools by which authority performs its power over the oppressed.

The gay community is well acquainted with all Mancuso's masks and they appreciate and cherish his hopeless efforts. The homosexual community enjoys wearing all kinds of masking prompts to entertain themselves. They seem to grasp fully the regenerative, carnival power of a mask which brings them contradictory benefits e.g. asylum, amusement and tell-tale sign. The task of the mask here is to amuse the others and to cover or uncover one's identity.

Ignatius wears a pirate disguise because it is the absurd uniform of a company he works for as a weenie seller. The absurd effect of a mask is even stronger in his case since he denies taking off his hunting cap. A pirate in a hunting cap is a unique creature and this disguise makes him attractive for the gay community which wants him to become the carnival center of their party. Ignatius in his funny costume fails to amuse them and wreaks havoc in their happy symbiosis with the lesbians during the scene at the party. His political zeal makes him unattractive for them and he gets thrown out of the party. His political plan fails but the pirate disguise plays a very important role during the climax scene in the bar.

Ignatius' extravagant outfit even makes the suspicious old Mr. Robichaux believe that Ignatius is a "communiss" in disguise.

The owner of the bar Lana Lee does not wear a mask but she covers her pornographic activities calling them "charity".

The protagonists of Toole's novel wear masks for different purposes. Lana Lee wants to make money and that is why she disguises as "a teacher" on the photos. Ms. Trixie wears her night gown for work, because she is senile, and Darlene – Lana's employee, wants to perform a strip show, dressed like a southern belle. All the masks serve for comic purposes, and disguises play an important role in the climax scene of the novel.

### **5.3 Trickster Figures and their Subversive Nature in General**

According to Owens a trickster figure mediates between oppositions and it embodies two authentic, nonrational experiences of man with the natural world, his society and his own soul. The dualism of a trickster figure must be emphasized because his subversive power is

disruptive, treacherous and unanticipated but all the tricks may lead to a benefit usually unintentional to mankind.

According to Radin a trickster figure possesses no moral or social values, but it is responsible for both. The trickster's responsibility stems from his natural purpose which is to balance the world's power of terminal creeds and humor with unusual manners and ecstatic strategies. The trickster figure is the shapeshifter who mediates between man and nature, man and deity and who constantly challenges us and everything around. He balances the world with laughter and forces us to think who we are and where we are.

The trickster's most effective and subversive weapon is laughter. Laughter is a mechanism which has a contradictory structure and, which embraces pride and misery and which rebels against the authority of any kind. Nobody and nothing is immune against laughter and it is an artistic category which indicates the dualism of our existence. The dualism of our existence means that there is a power which allows one to be oneself in one moment and it enables us to become someone else at the same time. (Kristeva in Jahner p. 172)

The authors analysed in this chapter employ the trickster figures in order to challenge the society. Owens points to the resemblances between Bakhtin and Rabelais who were both engaged in battles against the values and perceptions of the dominant culture of their time and who used the same weapons: hyperbole, violence and satire. The same strategies are used later on by Toole and Kesey. The setting of the trickster's stories is diverse e.g. Rabelais uses European folklore, Kesey uses an Indian protagonist and the setting of a mental asylum and Toole employs the sub-world of the New Orleans' French quarter with its bars and dark corners but the aim remains the same. The aim of these American authors is to start a battle against mainstream American culture and ideology.

### **5.3.1 The Position of a Trickster within the Context of Oral Discourse**

The trickster's position is fixed in oral discourse because its nature is dialogic. According to Vizenor a trickster's position and its dialogic nature must be understood as a part of a greater whole, the trickster himself is a collection of utterances, firmly set in oral tradition. The figure

of the trickster is created by the whole (a tribe or a specific social surrounding) it is not a product of an individual mind.

According to Vizenor trickster is a comic figure which is culturally centered, and communally created. It is impossible to understand outside the context of its discourse.

The trickster is even called the “agonistic liberator” (Owens in Vizenor, p. 131) who attacks the dominant bourgeois post-colonial view. To illustrate this idea, see the following quote:

The comic liberator is a healer in linguistic games, chance, and postmodern imagination, the trickster as a semiotic sign, “denies presence and completion, ”that romantic” vital essence” in tribal representations, and the instrumental language of social science”. (Owens in Vizenor, p. 131)

The dialogical nature of the novels analysed is affirmed by the usage of polyglossia. Polyglossia refers to different voices that appear in a text. (Bakhtin in Owens p. 125) The trickster figure can be a narrator, as it is in Toole, where Ignatius poses himself into certain positions or “skins” to pass a certain message to Myrna in his letters. Ignatius pretends to be someone else in his work letters and his voiced disguises are shifters of the plot. The narrator of a typical trickster novel, Kesey’s *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, is Chief Bromden, called “Broom”. Broom starts his narration, which is fragmented at the beginning by attacks of his schizophrenia. Broom’s schizophrenic delusion is metaphorically expressed by haze, which is emitted by the social machinery to cover, kill and confuse the victims. Later on Broom gains a voice (and body) which fits better to his gradually transformed trickster body and position.

The figure of a trickster serves the authors as a tool which expresses complicated relations and clashes between an individual and the system. The relations described in the novels are of a manifold kind including the tensions inside a specific group (here a “therapeutic” group in a mental asylum) and the tensions of the individual psychology. The individual psychology and its expression are forced to face the broader social context. Broader social context is embodied by e.g. institutional authorities, the police and the church.

### 5.3.2 Chronotope of Trickster Narratives

According to Bakhtin genre and chronotope are synonymous terms. Chronotope, a term coined by Bakhtin, expresses the inseparability of time and space.

In literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible, likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. (Bakhtin in Velie, Vizenor, p. 123)

Bakhtin used the chronotope to compare the worlds of different works and it becomes a key to understanding the essential nature of a work. The image of man in literature is intrinsically chronotopic, the chronotope is a formally constitutive category. (Bakhtin in Velie, Vizenor, p.123) In examining the chronotope of a particular work, it is essential to define whether time is distributed in terms of quotidian reality, or if it is an “adventure time”, where nobody ages. The next questions to ask while examining the chronotope are e.g.: Are the laws of nature observed or suspended? Or: Is man larger than life?

Vizenor explores the chronotope of Indian tribal tales, where tricksters play a very important role. Life in Anishinaabe tales was presented the same way as the life of Adam and Eve in Paradise before their expulsion from there.

The closest thing in Western tradition is the legend of prelapsarian life in Eden: time stood still, there was no death or illness and the lion lay down with the lamb. One Anishinaabe tale puts it. “Now you must know that in the time long ago, there was no sin or war nor suffering on earth, for everything was good, as the Great Spirit made it, and animal and man walked and talked together as brothers.” (Velie in Vizenor, p. 124)

The idea expressed by this quote emphasizes the notion of the chronotope which was described by Bakhtin as “adventure time”. Adventure time has no biological or maturational duration, characters do not mature or develop. The novels or narratives are full of events, which are connected by an “extemporal hiatus”, a term coined by Bakhtin which expresses a type of a novel or narrative where the body of a work is composed of short segments that correspond to

separate adventures. According to Velie, this type of chronotope is typical for tribal tales, which generally ignore the divisions of time: there are scattered references to seasons, but generally hour, day, month and year are ignored. (Velie in Vizenor. P. 125) The same structure is applied by Toole and Kesey. Kesey's main Indian protagonist is the narrator of the story but he is totally ignorant about the time and place markers. Broom's life is revealed by chaotic insights, which appear randomly from the haze which at the beginning darkens Broom's mind and as it starts to disappear slowly, and the reader gets an idea about the protagonist's past.

### **5.3.3 Trickster Figures, the Living Connections of the Past, Present and Future**

According to Ryan trickster figures very often stand in the center of Indian narratives. They are the plot-shifters and very powerful figures, which stand against certain powers. Fighting their opponents, tricksters can lose or win. Tricksters' power stems from their ambiguous nature and from their special position in time and space. They are mediators between the human and the divine and their death can be seen as a part of a circle of their eternal metamorphosis. The Christian counterpart of a trickster is the devil. The nature of the process of metamorphosis will be dealt with in following subchapter. The core attention of this part belongs to the relationship between a trickster figure and time. As was stated above, the trickster narratives are set in adventure time, which is not natural, or biological. Trickster figures appear in the earliest myths and they continue to reappear in Indian art till now e.g. the artistic works of Shelley Niro. Thus tricksters constitute a very important part of the past and the present of mainly native or non native narratives and works of art. The importance of the past for the present is expressed by the quote of Fuentes in Jahner p.160:

Parallels, analogies: history is never the same, but we do share a historical destiny, or at least the memory of experience and the resonance of fate. The art – the stone, the sculpture, the form, the poetry – have outlived death, power and religion, and are still with us, in the hushed respect of museums, in the clamorous throb of the marketplace, but also in the faces and the hearts of all of us in Latin America. If we cannot have a future without a past, how are we to integrate that past into our future? The answer is: by giving both of them the time of the present. (Fuentes in Jahner, Vizenor p. 160)

According to Fuentes, moral heritage and artistic creation have the staying power to persist and they are the living past's thresholds to a forbidden future. (Jahner in Vizenor p. 161) Trickster figures, which keep on returning in many incarnations, share certain common features and the importance of their role stems from their universal power to challenge authority of any kind. Jahner emphasizes the fact that Momaday and Fuentes, authors who employ the past in their works, are authors who address practical aspects of ancient cultures long kept in oblivion to gain their place in future cultural influence. Jahner even calls their works to be coded responses to the call of the past. The same strategy can be applied to the reappearance of the trickster figures. The strength of the trickster archetype forces itself into reappearance again and again. The important element of the mutual exchange of past and present is the element of emptiness and longing which goes even beyond death.

The present also longs and seeks itself in its reply to the past that comes coded in works remaining from people who put their own pasts to the test and merited continuity. Emptiness is the fear, perhaps it is the overriding fear, because it presupposes a moral dimension to giving and receiving that demands worthiness on the part of giver and receiver. (Jahner in Vizenor, p. 161)

A trickster figure is an element which fulfills the emptiness with its ambiguity, playfulness and tricks. A good example can be observed in the typical trickster novel of K. Kesey, where only the presence of a "devilish" intruder, Mc Murphy, makes Broom think about his past and present, and thus under the trickster's influence, Broom's mind starts to recover. Human longing for liberation, which goes beyond death, is expressed at the end of the novel, when the patients and "friends" of the lobotomized trickster play tricks on themselves, saying that the hospital staff brought back a counterfeit figure instead of the real Mc Murphy.

### **5.3.4 The Trickster's Mediating Nature and Laughter as a Weapon, Trickster as a Sign**

One of the most powerful trickster's weapons is laughter. Laughter stands in sharp opposition against an authority of any kind. Its nature is dialectical and it puts any prohibition to movement. According to Baudelaire, laughter has the contradictory structure and it embraces an infinite "pride" and "misery" and rebels against theological authority. (Jahner in Vizenor.

P.172). The heroes of the novels analysed rebel against diverse authorities. In the case of Ignatius and Burma Jones, the authority is not unified, it keeps on changing, but the basic characteristics of an authority is comparable in the all the both novels. In Kesey, the authority is embodied by Miss. Ratched, who is a stone ice cold nurse, and her greatest pleasure stems from her unlimited power over the others.

Laughter is even classified as an artistic phenomenon, which indicates dualism of a human being – that is the power of being oneself and someone else at the same time. (Jahner in Vizenor, p. 172). The trickster operates with laughter, which is a means of becoming closer to the others, or which can destabilize the authority. Laughter is a connecting element, which makes the audience feel better and see themselves in the skin of a trickster, who “is just winning this time”.

According to Kristeva the writer is a mediator who allows personal instincts and desires to motivate creative play, which somehow changes and challenges the meanings given by the world or society. Kristeva based her theories on Bakhtin’s notion of a world full of polyvalent meanings. It is essential to examine the text as a kind of performance which involves the writing subject, an addressee and an exterior text. All of the named entities play important role in production of meaning. The comments Jahner makes on Mommaday are valid for any trickster discourse:

“The word as minimal textual unity thus turns out to occupy the status of mediator, linking structural models to cultural (historical) environment, as well as that of regulator, controlling mutations from diachrony to synchrony, i.e.,to literary structure. Laughter, duality, mediation, passage from the mythic to the historical to the personal.”  
(Jahner in Vizenor p. 175)

Vizenor marks a trickster as a “comic holotrope” or as a semiotic sign which stands in opposition to culture in general. Culture is defined as a study of culture which operates through our forms, borrows our words and concepts for its meanings and recreates us in our efforts. It is defined as a vast accumulation of material and spiritual achievements and resources stemming from the conquest of nature, and they are necessary to the continuance of this effort. (Wagner in Vizenor, p. 188)

The trickster is a figure, which brings chaos into social science models. He uses agonistic imagination in narratives and language games. Vizenor states that he is formed by a consonance of narrative voices in discourse. Kesey's novel proves this theory, because the patients after McMurphy's involuntary move to another section of the mental asylum, continue playing card games and they still copy his behaviour, even though he is absent. Wadlington even defines the trickster as "antithetical, nonrational experience of man with natural world, his society, and his own psyche:

...there is "a force of treacherous disorder that outrages and disrupts, and on the other hand, an unanticipated, usually unintentional benevolence in which trickery is at expense of inimical forces and for the benefit of mankind". (Wadlington in Vizenor, p. 189)

According to Olsen, the listeners and the readers become the trickster, a sign and the comic holotrope. The trickster is never isolated, his role is fulfilled while he is playing tricks and the audience gains the same importance as the trickster himself. The audience plays a very important role during the metamorphosis of a trickster and the secondary element in the mutual exchange of meanings is chance.

The narrative voices or comic holotrope, the signifier in a trickster narrative, is signified in chance. The trickster is a semiotic sign, closer in connotation to an iconic sign than to the arbitrary symbolic signification or causal representation in semiotic theories. The trickster sign wanders between narrative voices and comic chance in oral presentations. (Vizenor. P. 189)

Wagner states that the precise interpretation of a trickster as a sign would trammel comic holotropes and our imagination in trickster narratives. The trickster as a holotrope is a sign, which exists in itself and has no particular application. (Vizenor p. 191)

The trickster is a comic discourse, it is a collection of utterances which stands in sharp opposition to a monologue, which is an utterance in isolation and it is closer to the tragic mode in literature. The trickster figure belongs utterly to a comic tribal world view. Tricksters are created by utterances and oral exchange of thoughts and language games are extremely important for their existence. Bakhtin emphasizes the dialogic nature of utterance. Dialogism is expressed by the relations between the utterances and the intertextual dimension. Bakhtin

explains that no utterance can be attributed to one speaker exclusively, it is the product of the interaction of the interlocutors, which are influenced by the whole complex social situation. The interlocutors in the trickster narratives are: the author, narrator, characters and audience. The points of view of the interlocutors mentioned, and their mutual relations and the utterances, they exchange, move the plot forward. The changing points of view and dialogic nature of the narratives prove the Bakhtinian ideas. Discourse lives, beyond itself in a living impulse towards the object. The object is the trickster. If this impulse does not appear, the only thing which remains is the naked corpse of a word, which is empty and it bears no message or meaning. (Bakhtin in Vizenor, p. 191)

Kesey's hero's, McMurphy's, rebellion against Miss. Ratched and the nonsense and despotic rules, which have to be obeyed in the particular department of the mental asylum, is caused by the particular social context. The unbearable social situation in the Miss. Ratched's department is caused by her manipulative personality. Without this particular social context, McMurphy would not have played the tricks, which liberated the other patients and at the end castrated his rebelling mind. The short stay of McMurphy in other department of the same mental asylum, led by another nurse, brought no troubles and left no space and no need for playing tricks. Rebellion was not necessary because the authority was at least bearable. Thus it proves Bakhtinian thinking on the importance of the particular social context.

Kesey presents a closed social system of a particular ward of a mental asylum in the analysed novel. His heroes, the patients, are hopeless, empty and desperate before the appearance of McMurphy, who is the main trickster. The narrator of the plot, Chief Bromden, is strongly attacked by the presence of the trickster and Bromden is the figure which undergoes a process of a very dramatic change. At the beginning of the novel, it is possible to describe the state of Bromden's mind as an empty object. The impulse, which attacked and disrupted the initial passivity of his mind, was the appearance of a trickster. The appearance of the trickster in the ward can be compared to a spark which "set the ward on fire".

The incarnation of an empty object without the impulse was the state of Chief Bromden's mind before McMurphy appeared in the asylum.

### **5.3.5 Savage Tricksters and their Place in Society**

The trickster figure stands in opposition to the voice of public institutions and taxonomies. His being is created by a field of free play. According to Vizenor, a trickster is a comic holotrope and social antagonist, but he is not a ritual sign: he is not an invitation to the arcane. The trickster's position is firmly set in between the world of people and the transcendental place.

The trickster in modernist literature was invented to be an individual or a metaphor of individualism. According to Vizenor certain native individuals survived discoveries, relocations and lethal pathogens and they were assimilated as exceptional in modern aesthetic and political theories. "The stoic savages" were separated from their social experiences and reinvented as racial emblems, isolated, revised and used in literature as ideologies to oppose bourgeois materialism. Material cultures are possessed and manipulated in museums, tribal identities are revised with new theories and discoveries that never lead to liberation. (Vizenor p. 193)

Kesey's hero Chief Broom can serve as a vivid example of what happens to a sensitive, uprooted individual who happens to suffer a mental illness. His place in the asylum is that of a living piece of ancient furniture, which can be used for sweeping and cleaning. His huge body and Indian origin makes him a good target of jokes by the "black boys", hospital employees who have been selected by the Big Nurse (Miss. Ratched) for their exceptionally vicious and hateful characters. Black boys misuse Chief Broom for doing their work and Bromden's only protection against "this dirty life" is his ability to pretend that he is deaf and dumb. He can serve as a model of a problematic savage, who somehow "has found his place" in society. Society placed him in the asylum, doped him and made certain medical experiments using electro shock therapy. Bromden's mind seems to resist all the "civilizing" attempts to "get repaired" and so he is condemned to stay in the asylum, and thus his existence is reduced into a living and cleaning statue, a museum exhibit which obviously has no feelings and who ceased to be a human being a long time ago.

The relationship between the trickster, individual and society is expressed by the quote of by Russell in Vizenor:

Society is perceived as a fictive framework of ideological codes which, like all semiotic systems, are grounded in nothing more than human desire and fear but which appear to

have the authority of essential truth. As such, social values and systems of order are subject to critical demystification and deconstruction, through which the embattled individual may perceive his or her conceptual freedom. (Vizenor. P. 194)

The world is deconstructed in trickster narratives and the listeners and the readers imagine their liberation. The trickster himself is a tool, which serves to an individual as the final liberation from the fears caused by the authority of society.

Society gains its power from knowledge and science. Scientific statements must be clear and the criterion determining their acceptability is that they are formulated in language which strictly avoids games and ambiguities. The trickster narratives are classified according the former rules and thus they are assigned to a different mentality which is “savage, primitive, undeveloped, backward, alienated, composed of opinions, customs, authority, prejudice, ignorance, ideology.” (Lyotard in Vizenor p. 195) Western civilization has formulated clearly its underestimating idea about myths, legends and fables and they become a subject which has to be civilized, educated and developed.

Lyotard even calls this civilizing effort to educate and develop “cultural imperialism from the dawn of Western civilization”. Trickster narratives are described and understood in the way, which is pejorative and deforming. Its vitality is denied and the trickster figures are punished for their “foolish” behavior.

Feyerabend in Vizenor illustrates this idea with the quote:

Trickster narratives express the needs of the members of society, they function as a social glue, they reveal basic structures of thought, they may even lead to an increased awareness of the relations between man and man and man and nature but without accompanying knowledge of distant events, rain, mind, body. Such interpretations were hardly ever the result of critical thought – most of time they were only consequence of popular antimetaphysical tendencies combined with a firm belief in the excellence.....of science. (Feyerabend in Vizenor p. 196)

According to Foucault, power and knowledge are two sides of the same process and the knowledge can not be neutral. All knowledge is political because it “has its conditions of possibility in power relations”.(Foucault in Vizenor p. 196)

The “therapeutic meetings” described in Kesey’s novel illustrate this idea. The patients have to go through “therapy” in which their problems are being discussed in a circle, which includes the doctor, the nurse and the other patients. The patients’ most private “delusions” must be discussed openly and their intimate fears have to be listened to, analysed, judged and finally “cured” in public. Doctor Spivey, who has to lead the sessions feels uncomfortable, because he has his own vices, which he wants to keep secret. Miss. Ratched is the embodiment of the institutional power. She unifies the idea of a “healing institution” and the dominant tyrant, who is feared even by the doctors. Her manipulative behaviour and overwhelming power stems from the knowledge of human weakness and from her connections. The effect of a “healthy revelation” is never reached during the sessions, the only effect on the patients is a humiliating, dehumanizing stupor, which gets worse the longer they stay in the asylum. Miss. Ratched is even able to manipulate the other doctors. A good illustration of the idea is the situation when the young doctors discuss McMurphy’s diagnosis.

The doctors are afraid of the consequence of Miss. Ratched’s anger and that is why they observe her face and they are willing to agree to anything she would say. The doctors certainly are more skilled in science than Miss. Ratched, but their social intelligence and their self-preservation instinct advise them to succumb to anything she might say. The victory of power over the knowledge and science is obvious.

The doctors call Mc. Murphy “a Napoleon, a Genghis Khan, Attila the Hun”. (Kesey p. 146) and later on “Latent Homosexual with Reaction Formation” and “Negative Oedipal”. The doctors understand clearly McMurphy’s unique strength but they do not know how to label it and what to do with his rebelling personality. Miss. Ratched lets them formulate their opinions and at the end she pronounces her judgment, which denies the idea that there is something strong and archetypal in his behavior.

“No he isn’t extraordinary. He is simply a man and no more, and is subject to all the fears and all the cowardice and all the timidity that any other man is subject to. Given a few more days, I have a very strong feeling that he will prove this, to us as well as the

rest of the patients. If we keep him on the ward I am certain his brashness will subside, his self-made rebellion will dwindle to nothing, and "she smiles, knowing something nobody else does- "that our redheaded hero will cut himself down to something the patients will all recognize and lose respect for: a braggart and a blowhard of the type who may climb up on a soapbox and shout for a following, the way we we've all seen Mr. Cheswick do, then back down the moment there is any real danger to him personally." (Kesey, p. 149)

Miss. Ratched states clearly the idea, she has about the patient and the whole system of the asylum. The aim of the asylum is to break the personality of the patient, who "seems to be out of control". Treatment, help, understanding for human faults and willingness to listen are strictly left apart of her ideas. Her aim is to fight down anybody who resists the rules, who is different than the others and who seems to be strong.

The same idea about McMurphy, "who is free and out of control", is expressed by Chief Bromden. McMurphy embodies someone, who successfully resists the system, who is not afraid of expressing the revolt by playing tricks. Bromden hides himself in the haze, which he believes the system creates to cover, lie and carry out vicious acts of dominance over the victims. The haze's function is ambiguous. Its purpose is to cover the victims and to confuse them. Bromden is grateful for its protective abilities and he is fully aware that the only one who can break it and who stands outside the haze is McMurphy. At the beginning McMurphy's trickstery, which dissolves the haze, seems to be frightening for Bromden but later on is transformed into something which is a liberating and healing force.

The patients of Miss. Ratched's department must be mentioned because they form the audience for McMurphy's tricks and they are the objects of the final liberation after the climax scene of the novel. The victims of Miss. Ratched's "cure" must be mentioned. Kesey describes broken minds and personalities to emphasize the effect of the harmful environment on particular patients and he wants to make clear the fact of the trickster's otherness. The cases of the already "tamed" patients are numerous and the analysis will concentrate on those, who seem to be the most appealing ones.

The patients are divided basically into two groups. The first and older group are "the chronics", patients who have spent a long time in the asylum and who are physically and mentally

“unfixable” thanks to their illness, age or the medical treatment, they have already received without any sensible result. The most important of this “hopeless” group is Chief Bromden, who is the narrator, actor, witness, trickster and the most important object of the final liberation. The other chronics are Mr. Bancini, called simply “Pete”, Ellis, Ruckly and Colonel Matterson. Ellis, aged thirty five, was given too high dose during the electro shock therapy and thus he remains a total dummy, slobbering and self-urinating idiot, who retains the position of a crucified man. The patient Ruckly had behaved in an uncontrollable manner for the ward and was lobotomized. Colonel Matterson is a “petrified soldier” who survived both the World Wars and remained a lascivious old man, who puts together nonsense associations, whose meaning serves the author to express an alternative view of the world, produced by someone whose mind became confused and exhausted by a long acting in terrifying historical events. Colonel Matterson and his nonsense comments can be compared to the comments made by Vonnegut’s Billy Pilgrim in *Slaughterhouse Five*. Both the protagonists were war survivors, whose mind became irretrievably changed.

What the Chronics are – or most of us – are machines with flaws inside that can’t be repaired, flaws born in, or flaws beat in over years of the guy running head-on into solid things that by the time the hospital found him he was bleeding rust in some vacant lot. But there are some of us Chronics that the staff made a couple of mistakes on years back, some of us who were Acutes when we came in, and got changed over. (Kesey p. 14)

This quote expresses Bromden’s idea about Chronics. According to Chief Bromden, there are two sources of Chronics: The first is nature and, the second society and harmful medical treatment.

The Chronics are totally unable to participate in the activity called “the therapeutic community”, when the patients are forced to talk and reveal their inner feelings about the others and themselves. The goal of this process is to heal and reveal the patient’s problem and the community shows where the patient is “out of place”: The group is the measure which decides, who is sane and who is not. The sins of the patients should be brought into the open and washed by the sight of all. This process of purification is changed into something painful and disturbing on the ward of Miss. Ratched. She successfully turns the sessions into “pecking”.The healthy revelation does not emerge, only deeper humiliation of the human

beings occurs thanks to aggressive attacks on their privacy. The group of patients which is regularly subjected to this process are “the acutes”. The acutes, who are able to speak and communicate and are closer to the state of “getting repaired”.

The harmful effect of the therapeutic community sessions is attacked seriously and paradoxically by one of Chronics and later on by McMurphy, who clearly names the true nature of the activity.

Pete Bancini belongs to the Chronics because his brain was seriously damaged during birth. Chief Bromden makes ironic comments on Pete being born into a world, full of “machinery” and all this scared Pete so much that he denied all this by getting deliberately stuck in his mother. The doctor helped him to be born using tongs which irretrievably injured his soft newborn skull. Bromden thinks that Pete’s condition of “being simple” saved Pete from the “Combine”, e.g. the negative machine which embodies society.

But one good thing – being simple like that put him out of the clutch of the Combine. They weren’t able to mold him into a slot. So they let him get a simple job on the railroad, where all he had to do was to sit in a little clapboard house ..... And he did it, with main force and a gutpower they couldn’ mesh out of his head, out of himself on that switch. And he never had any control installed. (Kesey p.50)

The first one, who violently protested against the harmful nature of the “therapeutic sessions” was Pete Bancini. Despite the fact that he belonged to the group of Chronics, he got seriously and unexpectedly upset by the wild argument of the Acutes triggered by the particular way “the therapeutic session” was being led by Miss. Ratched. While Acutes were screaming and revealing their most private sins and Miss. Ratched was enjoying her triumph over the poor patients, who were losing their dignity, Pete Bancini stood up and “warned” them: “I am tired!”. Pete’s unusual condition is described by Chief Bromden like this: Pete’s voice got “strong, angry, copper”, Pete’s fist turned into “a big, rusty iron ball” and his eyes are “clear as blue noon”. The adjectives and metaphors which are used to describe Pete’s voice, Pete’s eyes and fists, serve to emphasize the uniqueness of the situation, when an old man with a damaged brain sees the situation, as it is and wants to stop it and help the other patients. The reader forms an idea about the situation from the unique and sharpened point of view of Chief

Bromden, who can “see” and feel more, thanks to his enhanced sensibility caused by his schizophrenia.

Pete’s protest was violently stopped by the staff, but his unexpected strength and performance was later evaluated by Bromden, who states that Pete belonged, at least for a short while to the tricksters’ clan. Pete never, ever tried doing anything similar again, he might have burned all his energy, fueled by his pain and frustration of this performance. Pete tried to make clear to the others that they still have a chance to live. “I was born dead...I’m give out trying. You got chances. You got it easy.” (Kesey p. 32) He wanted to tell them that there is a chance for them to get deliverance in case they delve into the unpleasant reality and fight it. Pete decided to rebel although he felt insulted, “dead”, frustrated and undermined and he wanted to show the others the way. The same idea about an act of a protest which can not be successful because it is aimed against something which is “too big” is later on performed by McMurphy, when he tried lifting up the control panel of the tub room. Since the very beginning, he knew he can not succeed, but he tried and showed Bromden a way, of getting out of the asylum. McMurphy came as a trickster who is totally out of control and although he never left the asylum, he passed his ideas to the others.

And maybe the reason the black boys don’t rush into that latrine and put a stop to his singing is because they know he’s out of control, and they can remember that time with old Pete and what a man out of control can do. And they can see that McMurphy’s a lot bigger than old Pete.... He has never gave the Combine a chance, just like he never gave the black boy a chance to get to him with the thermometer yesterday morning, because a moving target is hard to hit. (Kesey, p. 89)

Rebelling performance of Pete and McMurphy can be analysed from the point of view of Vizenor’s theory. According to Vizenor the trickster is a comic liberator and the sign with the most resistance to social science monologues. The trickster is disembodied in a narrative and the language game transmutes birds and animals with no corporeal and material representations. The same way the birds and animals are transmuted, the role of a trickster is presented in Kesey’s novel. The example of Pete’s rebellion preceded the idea that “something unexpected” is possible.

The trickster is a communal sign, a comic holotrope and a discourse, not a real person or a tragic metaphor in an isolated monologue. The trickster narrative situates the participant audience, the listeners and readers, in agonistic imagination, there, in comic discourse, the trickster is being, nothingness and liberation, a loose seam in consciousness, that wild space over and between sounds, words, sentences and narratives, and at last the trickster is comic shit. (Vizenor p. 196)

The unexpected process, which runs through the plot of the novel is Bromden's healing. The comparison of a trickster to something very "dirty" and carnal draws the link between Vizenor's definition of a trickster and Bakhtinian ideas of carnival culture, which draw the attention to very corporeal things which are the means of a ceaseless circle of life, including death and rebirth.

According to Norman Mailer the trickster and shit are comic signs in literature and they provide the material evidence of the processes of communication within us. When the communication within us is blocked, when the comic holotrope is ruined, the trickster becomes a tragic sign. (Mailer in Vizenor p. 204) This idea is expressed in Kesey's novel when lobotomized McMurphy is "travelling" by his best friend and admirer Bromden. The end of McMurphy's life is tragic but it precedes the final act of liberation for Bromden. The old, "ruined" trickster disappears and a new trickster is born and set free by this act of mercy killing.

### **5.3.6 The Trickster as Healer and Liberator**

Radin states that the trickster is "a theme or themes" which are told in various cultures. The trickster is a communal sign and when he becomes isolated from the others, his individuation brings the tragic mode into the narrative or discourse.

The universal characteristic of a trickster which clearly determines the plot of Kesey's novel was formulated by Radin.

Trickster is at the same time creator and destroyer, giver and negator, he who dupes the others and who is always duped himself. He wills nothing consciously. At all times he

is constrained to behave as he does from impulses over which he has no control. He knows neither good nor evil yet he is responsible for both. He possesses no values, moral or social, is at mercy of his passions and appetites (and yet), through his actions all values come into being....Laughter, humour and irony permeate everything Trickster does. The reaction of the audience in aboriginal societies to both him and his exploits is prevailingly one of laughter tempered by awe...Yet it is difficult to say whether the audience is laughing at him, at the tricks he plays on the others, or at the implications his behaviour and activities have for them. (Radin in Vizenor p. 205)

The analysis will follow the particular parts of the quote one by one to illustrate how closely it fits together.

*The trickster is creator and destroyer....who dupes the other and who is always duped himself.*

The main trickster protagonist of Kesey's novel is McMurphy. His stay in the ward of Ms. Ratched starts with his reluctance to serve his punishment in jail. It means that he is the shifter of the plot when he comes to the ward. He plays tricks from the very beginning, he pretends to be crazy to get away from the jail and dupes the doctors. At the beginning, McMurphy believes that his punishment will be at least bearable if he stays in the asylum for the rest of his sentence. He becomes the creator of the situation which follows. His rebellion against the major authority of the ward starts a merciless fight between him and Miss. Ratched. He dupes the others but later on he learns that it was himself who was duped. The problematic issue for McMurphy is the fact that his stay in the ward is not limited because he was sent there by court. He learnt this later on during his stay and his initial ignorance toward this basic fact got the battle between Miss. Ratched and the trickster (McMurphy) started.

*He wills nothing consciously....*

McMurphy recognized the fact that Chief Broom, Bromden is constantly playing tricks too. Bromden's trickstery stems from his simulation that he is deaf and dumb and he has been playing this game for doctors and patients for a very long time. Nobody believed that he could hear or speak. McMurphy was the only one who unconsciously recognized the real situation. The others behaved to Bromden as if he was not alive, they did not perceive him as a human being any more. It was a part of McMurphy's trickstery and rebellion that he started treating Bromden differently from the others. He spoke to Bromden in a normal way and ignored the fact that he obtained no replies for a long time. When McMurphy wanted to prove his idea

about Bromden he used a narration with sexual hints and then he kept on observing till the moment when Bromden's body gave a physical response to what McMurphy was depicting. The trick of the narrator was successful.

Another example of the non rational behavior of McMurphy was his failure to run away from the ward after the leaving party he organized. He must have known that the prolonged stay in the ward after all the troubles and spiteful actions against Miss. Ratched would bring him a cruel revenge. The situation after the party was the only chance for him to escape because his detention in the ward had been ordered by the court and Miss. Ratched had all the time in the world to break him. His drunkenness prevented him from escaping and moved the plot towards the climax scene of the novel.

Another unconscious behavior is McMurphy's return just for a while to the house in which he spent a significant part of his childhood. After the successful fishing trip and a party on the boat, McMurphy wanted to stop at the place where he lived as a child. Then he spoke about his family and about his first love and sexual experience. His voice was relaxed and the others thought everything was all right but Bromden with all his sensitivity and enormous empathy decoded McMurphy's face expression in the darkness. The vivid personality turned into something very tired and burned out, which had spent all the energy it had and feels *unconsciously* that the end is near. McMurphy might have felt the situation which was going to come, the climax of the novel, which finally ruined him and liberated the others. The circle of his life was about closing and he could feel it, the same way certain animals can feel an earthquake coming. There was nothing rational about his expression and feelings in that moment.

McMurphy wanted to see the place where everything started because he unconsciously felt that the end of his life was coming.

Then – as he was talking- a set of tail-lights going past lit up McMurphy's face, and the windshield reflected an expression that was allowed only because he figured it'd be too dark for anybody in the car to see, dreadfully tired and strained and frantic, like there wasn't enough time left for something had to do... While his relaxed, good-natured voice doled out his life for us to live, a rollicking past full of kid fun and drinking buddies and loving women and barroom battles over meager honors- for us to dream ourselves into. (Kesey p. 245)

*At all times he is constrained to behave as he does from impulses over which he has no control. He knows neither good nor evil yet he is responsible for both. He possesses no values, moral or social, is at mercy of his passions and appetites (and yet), through his actions all values come into being...*

This part of a quote can be used for an analysis of the major climax scene of the novel.

The major climax scene of the novel is the situation after the party in the ward. A party on the ward was planned during the fishing trip. Candy, the girl from outside, was invited and McMurphy asked her to bring another girl too. Revolt, sex, twisted family bonds, “collective anger” and their consequences became the most important powers bringing the battle between McMurphy and Miss Ratched to an end.

McMurphy prepared the situation and the party took place. The morning after the party Miss Ratched found Billy Bibbit with a girl in bed and she could feel her defeat for a while. Her kingdom of hospital severity, obedience, fear, depression, self denouncing and psychological torture was defeated by an act of free, human and natural disobedience. The act of disobedience was the party itself and the most important point was Billy’s night spent with a girl. Billy’s mother placed her son into the ward to keep him under control of her friend Miss Ratched. Billy was an unhappy boyish man, who stuttered and the person who he feared most was his dominant mother. The sources of his troubles were mainly two – Ms. Ratched and his own mother.

Billy having had his first and happy sexual experience stopped stuttering and the nurse could feel her failure for a while. Then she started to attack Billy emotionally threatening him to tell his mother about the girl. Billy broke down and committed suicide. The nurse used the strategy of emotional torture, she behaved to Billy like he was a small “kid that’s been promised a whipping just as soon as a willow is cut” and because Billy was not strong enough she succeeded and he succumbed to her dominant, “mother like”, false behaviour. His fear overwhelmed him and he could not stand the idea of speaking to his mother again.

After Billy’s suicide Miss Ratched blamed McMurphy for causing it. The fight started and McMurphy attacked Miss Ratched and almost strangled her to death. The moment which immediately preceded the volcanic and just eruption of McMurphy’s uncontrolled anger was

the moment which was described by Bromden as a situation when the collective and injured soul of the other patients of the ward “entered” McMurphy, and nobody could stop him from doing it.

We couldn't stop him because we were the ones making him do it. It wasn't the nurse that was forcing him, it was our need that was making him push himself slowly up from sitting, his big hands driving down on the leather chair arms, pushing him up, rising and standing like one of those moving-picture zombies, obeying orders beamed at him from forty masters. It was us that had been making him go on for weeks, keeping him standing long after his feet and legs had given out, weeks of making him wink and grin and go on with his act long after his humor had been parched dry between two electrodes. (Kesey p. 305)

McMurphy is compared to a machine or zombie which is “powered” by someone else's rage. The rebellion which originally sourced from his personality had dried out because of the hospital “treatment” and his existence is powered by something which stands outside of his will, he became a product of the community and he became the executor of their collective revenge. Immediately before the attack he lost his personality and he became “a sign of revenge”.

The fit of anger was stopped by the hospital staff and the nurse was saved. McMurphy succumbed and the moment of his defeat was the moment of his death as a trickster and as a personality. The rebelling soul was finally defeated and it died in a great sacrifice for the others who suffered under the vile terror of the nurse. McMurphy attacked the nurse quite violently, he smashed the glass door then he tore her cloth off and started strangling her. The narrator of the story Bromden describes McMurphy's murderous attempt in a very long sentence finished with a metaphor: “..only than a sane, willful, dogged man performing a hard duty that finally just had to be done, like it or not.” (Kesey p.305) It is clear that Bromden and the other patients agreed totally with the attack.

According to Bruss in Vizenor trickster metaphors and models initiate a process of trial and error, which lead to reorientation of our own approach and how we see the subject matter. (Vizenor p. 206)

The trickster is dead in models and mocks tragedies in the same manner that a comic sign or a metaphor is dead when overused, overrun and isolated in a monologue with science. (Vizenor p. 206)

The peak of McMurphy's isolation among the patients is expressed by the final fighting scene when nobody stopped him from attacking the evil embodied by the nurse although they knew what may follow.

The topic of "an unconscious revolt", archetypal structures and tricksters has been analysed by Jung. According to Jung tricksters may belong to the realm of mythical creatures because they correspond to inner psychic experiences. Jung states that trickster figures appear in picaresque tales, carnivals and revels, in sacred and magical rites and thus they haunt the mythology of all ages in different disguises. (Jung in Vizenor p. 205)

Jung asserts that the trickster as a collective figure gradually breaks up under the impact of civilization.

Trickster is a primitive "cosmic" being of divine-animal nature, on the one hand superior to man because of his superhuman qualities, and on the other hand inferior to him because of his unreason and unconsciousness. He is no match for the animal either, because of his extraordinary clumsiness and lack of instinct. These defects are marks of his human nature....

The trickster is a collective shadow figure, an epitome of all the inferior traits of character in individuals. And since the individual shadow is never absent as a component of personality, the collective figure can construct itself out of it continually...In the history of the collective as in the history of the individual, everything depends on the development of consciousness. This gradually brings the liberation from imprisonment in...consciousness, and therefore a bringer of light as well as healing. (Jung in Vizenor p. 205)

McMurphy with his unconscious final attempt to kill the nurse indirectly caused his death and liberated the other patients. Harding, the concealed homosexual, left the asylum, Bromden had to escape and face the world and the nurse's power was finally broken because she was not

able to rule the ward with her impaired voice. She got hurt during the fight with McMurphy, she lost her voice and thus her previous authority vanished.

She tried to get her ward back into shape, but it was difficult with McMurphy's presence still tromping up and down the halls and laughing out loud in the meetings and singing in the latrines. She couldn't rule with her old power any more, not by writing things on pieces of paper. She was losing her patients one after the other. (Kesey p. 307)

### **5.3.7 Trickster Models and Kesey's Tricksters**

Apte in Vizenor asserts that humour that heals is closer to oral tradition and bound to specific culture. Chief Bromden and McMurphy are the main trickster protagonists of Kesey's novel. McMurphy attracts everybody's attention in the ward with his laughter without reason, with his jokes, stories and invitations to gamble. The specific cultural background is created by the sociocultural atmosphere of the beginning of 1960s in America and the closed, small environment of the ward magnifies the hidden unconscious powers which moved the society of that decade. The normative authority which is defeated at the end is embodied by Miss Ratched. The system and the rules of the ward created specific conditions which gave rise to a revolt started by McMurphy and later on finished by the rest of the patients. The power which brought the significant change is bound to tricksters and trickstery in general.

Kesey's tricksters can be specified by several definitions concerning tricksters. According to Apte no definition of a trickster is more important than any other.

The first definition of tricksters was formulated by Voegelin who describes the tricksters in prose narratives as creatures who are typically greedy, erotic, enterprising, stupid, pretentious, deceitful and whose thievery and deceitfulness benefit people. (Voegelin in Vizenor p. 206)

Kesey's McMurphy fulfills almost every characteristic feature named in the previous definition. He marks himself as a "gambling fool,... they tell me a psychopath's a guy fights too much and fucks too much.." (Kesey p. 13) He is definitely an initiator: he organizes card games, a fishing trip and a party.

McMurphy's behaviour and a revolt against Miss Ratched finally benefits the other patients. Ricketts adds to the previous definition the following characteristics: "Trickster is a restless wanderer and does not distinguish between friend and foe in carrying his pranks." (Ricketts in Vizenor p. 207) Kesey's McMurphy is a wanderer who got unexpectedly caught in the ward. He treats the other patients from the beginning as if they were his friends no matter how bad their condition is. A good example is the Chronic Ellis who retains the position of a crucified man and McMurphy approaches him, pulls his hand from the wall and speaks to him, introducing himself and making jokes. Bromden is a native American who is an uprooted schizophrenic hiding in the asylum at the beginning and later on after his healing and liberation he sets on a journey which is a symbol of his new freedom and sanity. Chief Bromden gains his personality and soul back thanks to McMurphy and thus he becomes a wanderer again.

Abrams believes that "the trickster is the most paradoxical of all characters in traditional narratives and his outstanding characteristic is his lack of morals." Abrams continues that the trickster is unable to recognize things as they are which leads him into trouble. (Abrams in Vizenor p. 207)

Apte sums up the definitions thus :

Tricksters appear to be disorderly, chaotic personalities. They also manifest extremely inappropriate and socially deviant behavior and actions. Their acts are aberrant by any cultural standards, making the tricksters misfits in human societies because of their refusal to abide by the established sociocultural norms....The incongruities associated with tricksters, in other words, are biological, psychological, and sociocultural. (Apte in Vizenor p. 207)

Kesey's narrator Bromden expresses his discontent with the sociocultural norms and thus McMurphy is a positive hero although his behaviour breaks all the rules. The micro-cosmos of the asylum is governed by the rules which are inhuman and humiliating. The trickster is a wild personality who breaks the rules, plays the tricks and loses the fight.

### **5.3.8 Trickster as a Scapegoat**

The native American myth concerning tricksters is one of the oldest. According to Radin trickster's divinity is always secondary. There is a possibility that the trickster's divinity was created as a construction of priest thinkers. The figure of a trickster has been connected to the oldest American Indian mythologies and it is not accidental that he belongs to the oldest of all natural phenomena, rock and sun. (Radin p. 164)

According to Oglala theology, the trickster is punished by the supreme deity for having brought shame and ridicule upon the other gods. The trickster has to go into the world and remain without friends and he is condemned to the fate that all mankind will hate him. The trickster's response to this is a great laugh and he answers back to the supreme deity that the deity had forgotten about the birds and other animals which can become trickster's new friends. The trickster proclaims his intention to enjoy himself on earth and to make fools of mankind.

The trickster seems to be ageless, his identity fluctuates and he is often given an animal name, which represents only one of his aspects and he is able to transform himself into any form, although there are certain significant features which are inseparable from him. The features he retains in the majority of native American myths are his hunger, enhanced sexuality, enormous penis and large intestines. Thanks to the last named physical traits there can be drawn a direct link between a trickster figure and Bakhtinian ideas about carnival culture.

Radin proclaims a trickster to be a cultural hero and he names two types of tricksters: the first undergoes a painful process of his progress from immaturity to maturity, from insecurity to security. The second type wants to make earth habitable for man and his task is to grow up and to see human beings grow up with him.

Without being too dogmatic, it can be claimed that to the culture hero cycle belong such well known episodes as those narrating the security of fire, of flint, of tobacco, of food in general and of the main cultivated plants, the regulation of the seasons and of the weather, the assignment of their proper and non-destructive functions to the forces of nature, the freeing of the world from monsters, ogres and giants. (Radin p. 166)

The trickster protagonist is simply condemned to ceaseless wandering from place to place and to gratifying his voracious hunger and his uninhibited sexuality. It may seem that all this has no purpose but the opposite is true. At the end of his activities a new figure is revealed and a new psychological reorientation and environment have come into being. The amorphous figure of a trickster is transformed at the end and something new is created. The metamorphosis of a trickster is a part of a natural trickster cycle. (Radin p. 168)

Radin states that the meaning of this original plot belongs to the realm of vague memories of an archaic past where there existed no clear-cut differentiation between the divine and non-divine. Tricksters belong to another realm, materially and spiritually, and neither the gods nor the man know precisely what to do with them. (Radin p. 168)

According to Radin the symbol which the trickster embodies is not static and no generation can do without it. Kesey's novel confirms this.

The trickster figure has to be included into all cosmologies despite the fact that he does not fit properly into any of them. Radin states that the symbol of the trickster contains the promise of differentiation and every generation occupies itself with a new interpretation of this ambivalent, challenging figure.

And so he became and remained everything to every man – god, animal, human being, hero, buffoon, he who was before good and evil, denier, affirmer, destroyer and creator. If we laugh at him, he grins at us. What happens to him happens to us. (Radin p. 169)

The spirit of a trickster is so powerful and challenging that it is very difficult to accommodate the figure into any order, religious or social. The Indian manifestations of this spirit had its fixed place in archaic social order. After the destruction of this specific archaic order the spirit was set free and it was violently arranged on a new place or places. The ways how it has been done are several. The first, was the process of reducing his original function to a harmless entertaining thing by stressing trickster's ridiculous traits. The second way was to assimilate him to the cultural heroes and the third way was his transformation into a devil, who had once been a deity but had lost his fight with the supreme deity.

Highway in Ryan places the trickster figure in the center of native American mythological universe:

In the same sense that Jesus Christ stands at the very, very centre of Christian mythology, we have a character in our mythological universe, in our dreamlife as a people, who stands at the very centre of that universe, and that character is the Trickster. That little guy, man or woman – it doesn't matter because the Cree language doesn't have any gender – who essentially straddles the consciousness of man and God, translates reality from the Supreme Being, the Great Spirit, to the people and back and forth. Without the spiritual health of that figure I think Indian people are completely screwed. (Highway in Ryan p. 3)

Kesey's hero Chief Bromden is a half Indian who has lost his identity because of his schizophrenia, war experience and uprootedness. Despite the fact that he is still a tall and enormously strong man he thinks that he is small and weak. All his feelings are overwhelmed and driven by fear. His transformation or metamorphosis into a trickster figure takes place during the whole novel. After the arrival of McMurphy on the ward, Bromden feels that something has changed and the slow process of his transformation begins. The only sign of Bromden's trickstery is his simulation of being deaf and dumb. This activity is the first sign of Bromden's trickstery but it is a strongly defensive tactic which is a result of his fear.

Chief Bromden starts to observe all McMurphy's activities very closely but it takes a long time before he is willing to be included in any of them. Bromden sees in McMurphy the figure of his father and he is attracted to the "redheaded guy" by the sound of his laughter. McMurphy's laughter is "free and it comes out of his wide grinning mouth and spreads in rings bigger and bigger till it's lapping against all over the ward." (Kesey p. 11) The metaphor of the specific laughter is very powerful, because it is endowed with a physical and bodily presence which starts breaking the old and established order of the ward since the very first moment. It is an announcement that Bromden's metamorphosis and healing started.

Another sign of Bromden's defensive tactics is his escape into a world covered in thick fog. The fog is produced by the "Combine" and it has a double effect. Its purpose is to cover the bad and humiliating deeds performed by the ward staff on patients and the secondary effect of the fog is positive because it creates a place to hide for the victims – the patients. Bromden sees

and observes the things which are going on and when the current reality becomes unbearable, the fog machine turns on and a hiding place is to be found. McMurphy's activities and fights against the biggest representative of the combine Miss Ratched start a slow process of awakening in Bromden. The process is long and painful and at the beginning Bromden denies being dragged out of the fog very vigorously because he does not believe in the success of the rebellion.

Nobody can help. And the more I think about how nothing can be helped, the faster the fog rolls in. And I'm glad when it gets thick enough you're lost in it and can let go, and be safe again. (Kesey p. 110) Nobody complains about all the fog. I know why, now: as bad as it is, you can slip back in it and feel safe. That's what McMurphy can't understand, us wanting to be safe. He keeps trying to drag us out of the fog, out in the open where we'd be easy to get at. (Kesey p. 123)

Despite Bromden's pessimistic views McMurphy's subversive activities continue and slowly achieves minor and later on important victories over the nurse's tyranny. Bromden starts to participate in the activities and thus his healing takes place. McMurphy shows him the way from despair and hopelessness. McMurphy's pranks against the tyrant rules of the ward and against the ruling nurse start to influence Bromden's view of the situation.

The plot of the novel is shifted by the main trickster McMurphy who slowly frees the patients from the overwhelming power of the "monster" representative of the Combine, Ms Ratched. After finishing his most important trickster's task the final metamorphosis takes place.

The second climax scene of the novel is the moment when Bromden kills McMurphy's body and escapes from the ward. The main trickster had unconsciously sacrificed his life in his final fight with the nurse and all the power, which was subsequently torn out of McMurphy by lobotomy entered Bromden and the other patients. McMurphy's wanderer's and adventurer's souls is dead and this is the moment when a new trickster is born out of the end of the first one. After the metamorphosis Bromden gets the integrity of his mind again and he is finally able to act in a very decisive way. The killing of his best friend and liberator is described in a very simple and unemotional way, because McMurphy's power and soul had already died in the final fight with the nurse.

The highlight of the metamorphosis comes when Chief Bromden uses his re-acquired strength. He follows the advice of Scanlon and thus he tears up the control panel from the bathroom floor and smashes the window to set himself free.

This violent way to escape was invented by McMurphy when he was boasting and betting with the other patients during the first week of his stay in the ward. The panel was made of marblelike material which was incredibly heavy and it was really daring to think that anybody could tear it up of the floor, lift it up and throw it through the window. The idea contradicted all the laws of the physics and the same impression was given by the rule of Miss Ratched over the ward. Her rule was torn down by McMurphy who won the fight but lost his life and the tearing of the panel was the sign of birth of a new Hercules trickster – Bromden.

“The glass splashed out in the moon, like bright cold water baptizing the sleeping earth.” (Kesey p. 311) The metaphor of “baptizing the earth” is a symbol of a new creature which was “baptized” by the escape and starts his wandering. Water is normally used to baptize new members of the Christian community. The new trickster “baptizes” the earth and he uses glass instead of water. This act may embody a painful experience which precedes the final act of initiation and liberation.

At the beginning of Bromden’s wandering stand two symbolic deeds. The first is the sacrifice of the mindless body of the old trickster and the second is his glorious escape performed by an act of enormous strength. The motive of a sacrifice and a courageous deed is present in pagan initiation rituals.

According to Spinks the trickster is often identified with the incarnation of sacred violence, collective violence and the dualities of good and evil.

The laughter aimed at trickster may not be the individuating activity Jung expects, rather, it may be preparatory to expulsion/sacrifice of a scapegoat to purge (and celebrate) a particular evil within a cultural map. (Spinks p. 188)

Spinks states that violence may be symbolic but it is endemic to our species. Kesey’s tricksters are violent because the world taught them to behave this way.

Spinks continues that our signs of evil and violence, our signs of sexual roles and appropriate social behavior, or our signs of the spiritual, the beautiful and the ugly carry much cultural import.

There are no ugly or beautiful creatures in Kesey's novel. The people and creatures featuring in the story can be divided into three basic groups. The point of view is modified by the narrator, whose perception of reality may seem rather twisted but the basic division is following: the first group is formed by the hostile and dominating society embodied by "the Combine", which has numerous servants e.g. Miss Ratched, the staff of the ward which is evil in general only with a few exceptions. The second group is created by the victims of the society (the patients) and the part of the staff who evince a bit of human understanding for the poor patients and who are weak too. The second and the third groups are marginal because they somehow does not fit and function in the society. The third group is formed by the tricksters. The trickster is McMurphy and later on he passes his characteristics on certain patients. The trickster brings into the basic and starting division a gust of instability and change. The problem of change and stability are not small issues, they are systemic issues with which all systems of growth have to contend. (Spinks p. 189)

The ambivalence of trickster and his flirtations with marginality are ideal functions for portraying such systemic activity. So it is natural to associate trickster with these various models of psycho-cultural activities. It is logical that trickster would be a hero/protagonist who challenges the "enemies" and discovers the "friends" at cultural margins. It is logical that he would demonstrate the activities of the sacred – be they the paths of spiritual truth or sacred violence, and it is logical that as a creator, he would enact the capacity of human beings to create abductive signs at the margins of their experience. (Spinks p. 189)

This quote explains why the both climax scenes of the novel are violent. The first climax scene is McMurphy's attack towards Ms. Ratched and the second one is the murder of McMurphy and the following Bromden's escape from the asylum.

### 5.3.9 Animal and Machine Metaphors in Kesey

The title of Kesey's novel is *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* and thus the animal metaphor precedes the plot of the novel. It is possible to deduce two contradictory explanations of the title. The first one may start with a question: "Is there any place, like a cuckoo's nest?" The answer is obvious: Cuckoos are birds which never build nests for their eggs, they "parasite" and invasively colonize the nests of other birds. So at the beginning, there is nothing like a cuckoo's nest. The stay of the protagonists in the asylum (The Cuckoo's nest) is a period of time spent nowhere because a place like this does not exist.

The second possible explanation of the title is based on the central figure – the dominant bird, a small parasite cuckoo, which throws out and thus kills the other newly hatched birds in the nest. The cuckoo's fledgling finally converts itself into the only and the biggest inhabitant of the nest. The aim of the small cuckoo's activity is simulation of being of the same bird species as the foster bird parents are. The subsequent activity of killing the other fledglings is a necessary and instinctive mean how to obtain the best care. The cuckoo metaphor serves to emphasize the role of Miss Ratched who pretends to be maternal, sensitive and helpful creature who does her best "to help" the patients. Her true nature is totally different from the previous definition. She is a creature who lacks human understanding and who is obsessed with her power over the patients. The author puts in contrast her innocent looks and dignified behavior and her personality which is stubborn, strong, dominating and bossy. Miss Ratched is a symbolic guard and prolonged hand of the society's executive power. Her task is to exercise power over the "weakest" and "broken" members of society – the patients. Her appearance and behavior is described by the following quote:

She walks around with that same doll smile crimped between her chin and her nose and that same calm whirl coming from her eyes, but down inside of her she's as tense as steel. I know, I can feel it. And she don't relax a hair till she gets the nuisance attended to – what she calls "adjusted to surroundings". Under her rule the ward Inside is almost completely adjusted to surroundings. But the thing is she can't be on the ward all the time. She' got to spend some time Outside. So she works with an eye to adjusting the Outside world too. Working alongside the others like her who I call the "Combine," which is a huge organization that aims to adjust the Outside as well as she has the Inside, has made her a real veteran at adjusting things. (Kesey p. 26)

The narrator of the story, Bromden is fully aware of her true nature despite the fact that his mind is deformed by the illness and he believes that Miss Ratched is not a human being. Bromden thinks she is a “watchful robot” and an integral part of the repressive machine which governs the society. Her abilities are compared to a mechanical insect which controls the hospital staff using her invisible, psychoactive power. Her orders are fulfilled even before she utters them. The most effective of her weapons is fear. Bromden believes that the task of the hospital staff is “to install one of their machines” into his body to gain full control of it. The goal of the “Combine’s” effort is to create “a world of precision and efficiency” where all the parts of the functional chain are truly obedient. Bromden’s magnified and enhanced perception of reality converts an innocent, morning activity of shaving into a hunt and torture. The hospital staff wants to shave him and this activity arouses Bromden’s memories of war (Air Raid) and hunting. As a child, he used to go hunting birds with his father and once they borrowed a dog to help them. The hunting memories are integrated into the present situation in the asylum but the main difference is his position which has changed since his childhood. Now in the asylum he is not the hunter but the bird. The staff is compared to hounds which are “smelling him” during the hunt because of his fear. Bromden’s feelings are full of panic, fear and despair. The reaction of his tortured mind follows and he “hides” himself in fog.

Another animal which is used to emphasize the hopeless situation of the patients is a rabbit. The theory about “rabbits” is uttered by a desperate patient, called Harding, after the session of a therapeutic community. Harding’s problems stem from his latent homosexuality and it gets even worse after the activity, when the others are making offensive comments about him. The whole session is usually organized by Ms. Ratched and the worse the patients attack their weak points, the better she feels. The patients get weaker and it is very easy to exercise power over the desperate human beings.

McMurphy reveals the true nature of therapeutic community even after the first opportunity he witnesses it. He points out that the state of patients gets worse and compares the whole activity to “a pecking party”.

The flock gets sight of a spot of blood on some chicken and they all go to peckin’ at it, see, till they rip the chicken to shreds, blood and bones and feathers. But usually a couple of the flock gets spotted in the fracas, then it’s their turn. Oh, a pecking party can wipe out the whole flock in a matter of a few hours, buddy, I seen it. A mighty

awesome sight. The only way to prevent it- with chickens- is to clip blinders on them. So they can't see. (Kesey p. 55)

At first Harding rejects McMurphy's metaphor but later on he realizes that it reveals the true nature of the situation. Harding even adds a metaphor concerning rabbits.

The author uses the animal metaphors to describe the situation of the patients. Rabbits and chickens are weak animals which are usually kept in cages (the asylum) and which usually serve as prey and food for stronger animal species.

Harding goes even further in his description of despair of the situation. He compares the patients of the ward to "the rabbits of the rabbit world". "Rabbit world" is the world of the outside, where people are manipulated by the society. "The sane people of the Outside" are victims of the society, they are weak and defenseless and the patients of the asylum are even weaker. The situation during the dialogue gets reversed and McMurphy fiercely denies being compared to an animal and even more to a feeble animal. Harding changes his opinion and labels McMurphy as a "wolf". This metaphor describes the abysmal initial difference between the newly appeared trickster and the other patients.

Harding goes even further in his metaphoric expression of the patients' situation. Ms. Ratched is called a wolf too, which is needed to teach "rabbits" to know their place.

Metaphoric expressions concerning animals serve the author to express the problem which most patients encounter thanks to the nurse's behavior. They are all man and the cold authority of the nurse humiliates and denies their manhood. The nurse is an asexual creature who is able to make them feel guilty only for being what they are. McMurphy states that Miss Ratched virtually "castrates" them. McMurphy develops his metaphor concerning poultry: "She ain't peckin' at your eyes." (Kesey p.57) and then Harding adds that her asexuality provides her with a special power over them.

Harding warns McMurphy against visible protests which may infuriate Ms. Ratched. He is an experienced "patient" and he informs the trickster properly about all the possible means, she can use, to defeat the one who dissents. Despite the fact of getting all the information, the trickster "starts the fight" and he bets daringly on his victory over the nurse.

Trickster's role is one of a gambler and McMurphy believes since the beginning that he is able to win the fight.

#### **5.4.1 Bromden's Imaginary World**

The narrator of the Kesey's novel is a half Indian Chief Bromden. All the metaphors and depictions are influenced by his diagnose, which is never mentioned in the book, but which is obvious. Bromden suffers from schizophrenia and thanks to his enhanced sensitivity a reader gets a unique insight into a world viewed by someone, who is labeled as a "mentally insane". His stay in the mental asylum is a result of his illness, which might have started due to his negative life experiences. He hides himself in the asylum because he feels weak, small and a victim of what he calls the "Combine". Momaday in Ryan says: "We are what we imagine. Our very existence consists in our imagination of ourselves." Bromden's identity was formed in his childhood. His mother was white and his father Indian, and Bromden's mixed origin made him think in terms, which stand somewhere in the middle between the two world views. Bromden's father was an alcoholic Indian Chief, who was forced to sell the land, which belonged to his tribe. The Bromden's tribe used to live in a place by the river where a new damn was planned and finally it was built. (Kesey p. 122)

Bromden's half Indian identity confirms the view of an Indian identity described by Ryan:

The sign of "Indian" resonates down through the years in □raveling' journals, dime-store novels, and Hollywood movies, in countless images of feathered braves and savage warriors, solemn chiefs and mystical shamans, lusty maidens and somber matrons, alternately imagined as primitive, noble, fearsome, honoured, captured, conquered, vanquished, and finally vanished. (Ryan p. 13)

At the beginning of the novel, Bromden's feelings about his position in the world can be described using the last part of the quote. The loss of his identity is strengthened by his fog hallucinations. After his metamorphosis and healing, he becomes somebody, who can be called a brave or a warrior. The initial persistence of Bromden's disorder can be understood as a type of an unconscious escape from the world, which is harmful and hostile. He does not have to

drink to produce what we call HSC – higher state of conscious. According to Gray in Vizenor, Indians drink and use hallucinogenics to protect their spiritual sphere against harmful influences of society.

If you are dealing with spiritual powers, if someone is trying to enter your spiritual sphere and harm it, if you are aware of that then you have a hard time protecting it, but if you're camouflaged or if your senses are dulled by alcohol then you are not as aware of what is going on, and therefore that person cannot harm you. He also said that's why a lot of Indians used hallucinogenics. It was really as a protection so that you distorted your senses, so that you couldn't be attacked from the other side. (Gray in Ryan p. 101)

Bromden thinks that the decay of his family and his tribe was caused by ignorant and greedy society, which used alcohol as a destabilizing element and as a tool to move away the uncomfortable group of Indians, living in a strategic place.

Bromden's father used alcohol as a mean to darken his aching mind and Bromden himself succumbed to an easy escape to his imaginary world created by his mental disorder. In case, we take on account the Gray's theory, we gain an idea about the strategies of the Kesey's protagonists, used as protective means. Ryan even continues that the stereotype of "the noble warrior" and "hopeless drunk" embody protection against society and technology. Technology plays an important role in Kesey's novel. The core ideas of Bromden's delusion are hallucinations and dreams about the "Combine", which can be described as a facility "processing" people, who are not human beings. The central idea of Bromden's delusion is his belief that people are not human beings, but they are robots, which are melted by the "Combine" when they are broken and useless.

The life story of Bromden and his tribe, displaced native individuals, confirms and follows the idea about the already vanished Indian society.

Most of these societies no longer exist. Somehow they were changed forever. Somehow the laws, the outlawing of the religion, effectively meant that these societies would forever be only in our memories. (Ryan p. 34)

Despite the fact that Indian society was changed and disappeared, there is one figure which keeps on appearing – a trickster. In Bromden’s case, the trickster is a healer and savior. The activity of playing tricks remains the last weapon against the dominant culture. This idea can be supported by a short comment made by Ryan on a film with an Indian protagonist:

“To me, the strongest thing that Philbert says is that we have to trick them”. (Philbert Bono in the film *Powwow Highway*, Ryan p. 94)

According to Ryan, Native authors use ironic strategies to contest oppressive hegemonic ideologies and trickster tactics are employed to undermine institutional practice, expectations and stereotypes. (Ryan p. 92) So does Kesey in the analysed novel. All the jokes, gambling and parties, organized by the tricksters, serve to describe a way of rebellion against the tough rule of the ward pursued by Miss Ratched.

McMurphy and later on Bromden play tricks and narrate stories in the ward which challenge the whole apparatus of the asylum. The metanarrative techniques are used by Kesey to provide an alternative view of society and alternative form of social relations.

Like successful jokes and sacred clowns, little dissident narratives imagine alternative ways of perceiving and of living in the world. (Carroll in Ryan p. 92)

The alternative ways of perceiving and of living in the world and its consequences, which emerge for the protagonists, are demonstrated in Kesey’s novel. The major consequence of “being alternative” is a possible, subsequent voluntary or involuntary detention in a mental asylum.

A mental asylum is a social institution which has protective and repressive function. According to Vacek, psychiatry has always fulfilled repressive tasks given by particular society. The members of the particular society who break the rules, set by the society, and who cannot be “punished” or dealt with by the direct repressive organs are “passed” to the competence of psychiatrists. The repressive role of psychiatry has been misused by totalitarian regimes. The examples of particular cases are not scarce in the history of the twentieth century: e.g. the Nazis, who tested their mass killing methods on psychiatric patients, or Communists who used to imprison their opponents in psychiatric wards. The reaction against psychiatry as an

alternative, political, repressive tool emerged in the 1960s and later on it culminated in “anti-psychiatry constructs” and movements led by T. S. Szasz, D. Cooper and R. D. Laing.

Psychiatrist David Cooper published a book *Psychiatry and Anti-psychiatry* in England in 1967, where he clearly expressed his ideas about schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is not labeled as a mental disorder, it is newly presented as a specific and creative lifestyle. According to Cooper, schizophrenics are artistic geniuses, whose creativity is limited and anesthetized by psychiatrists. Psychiatry serves as a tool for dictators and authorities to pursue obedience and discipline. Schizophrenics are not insane and malevolent because they are not the source of negative processes, which run in society e.g.: wars, social discrimination and racism. A Scottish psychiatrist Ronald David Laing published a book about the self of a schizophrenic. Its name is *The Divided Self* and it formulated thoughts about the ambivalence and vulnerability of a schizophrenic self.

The ideas of anti-psychiatry are indirectly presented in Kesey’s book. His hero, McMurphy, while discussing the situation in the asylum with another patient Harding says: “Damn it, Harding, I didn’t mean it like that. You ain’t crazy that way. I mean - hell, I been surprised how sane you guys all are. As near as I can tell you’re not any crazier than the average asshole on the street. “(Kesey p. 63)

The most extreme member of Anti-psychiatric movement was Thomas S. Szasz, who denied organic causes of schizophrenia. According to Szasz, schizophrenia is a behavioral strategy, which is developed in individuals who suffer under the negative and oppressive power of society.

The radical thoughts of anti- psychiatric movement were supported by unsuccessful results of biological attempts to heal schizophrenia, which started in the 1920s and 1930s. Erwin Stransky, an Austrian psychiatrist, noticed the connection between hypoglycemia, subsequent coma and improvement of mental state of a schizophrenic. Stransky used insulin shocks to treat schizophrenics. The method was painful and it was only partially successful. Later on, a Hungarian doctor Laslo von Meduna noticed a discharging relationship between epilepsy and schizophrenia. He mistakenly believed that epilepsy discharges schizophrenia. Meduna artificially produced epileptic seizures in schizophrenics using cardiasol and camphor. The method was painful, dangerous and it was not fully successful. In the 1930s, Italian

psychiatrists Bini and Cerletti decided to use electricity to provoke seizures and thus they invented a method, which is now known as EST – electro shock (convulsive) therapy. The effects of the method have been discussed a lot but it is not the task of this analysis to prove its positive or negative impacts. This method was used frequently in the USA in the 1950s . The method is not fully successful and there are possible side effects of mental deterioration and subsequent mind confusion. The last biological method, which is necessary to mention is frontal lobotomy. The method was invented by a Portuguese neurologist Moniz. Lobotomy is a neurosurgical invasive interruption of the connection to and from the prefrontal cortex. The method has serious and frequent side effects but it was used for more than two decades in the USA. (Vacek p. 215)

The protagonists of Kesey's novel are "cured" by the staff of the asylum by the mentioned methods. The EST is used as a kind of punishment after a fight in the asylum, which was provoked by a black male attendant. After the last climax scene, McMurphy, receives frontal lobotomy and he is turned into a breathing body without will and personality.

The conclusion which is important to mention in this particular part of the analysis follows: Biological methods of healing schizophrenia invented during the first half of the twentieth century are not effective and the negative side effects prevail the positives of the mentioned treatments. The negatives effects of the biological healing of mental disorders provoked many controversial reactions among which we can include anti-psychiatric movement.

The main protagonist of Kesey's novel, Chief Bromden, suffers from schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a complex and multilateral mental disorder which has its biological and social roots. The only form of living creatures on the Earth, which can develop this kind of disorder, are human beings. It most commonly manifests itself as paranoid or bizarre delusions, disorganized speech and thinking and auditory hallucinations. One of the most typical schizophrenic delusions is an idea about a forcible transfer of thoughts straight into the head of the affected. A schizophrenic believes that his thoughts belong to somebody else. The feeling of the estrangement is very strong and the affected mind is suffering. The perception of a schizophrenic is normal but the internal interpretation of the perceived is erratic.

The starting point of the disorder is not easy to find. It can be a detail or a minor problem which starts growing and ends up in a fully developed disorder. Schizophrenic thinking is full

of abstract symbols and metaphors. There is no place for chance, nothing happens without any purpose. The meaning of everyday events gets deeply changed.

Jaspers states that schizophrenic thinking can not be understood and analysed rationally, and he adds that the key point to full understanding of the process of this specific thinking is always hidden. The nuclear element, which converts the perceived into the erratic schizophrenic context, is something what we call “mad”.

Vacek compares the onset of schizophrenia to cancerous growth. At the beginning of the onset of cancerous growth stands the failure of the immune system. The onset of schizophrenia is compared to failure of dialectical thinking. The normal process of “healthy detached view” is disrupted and its place is taken by schizophrenic thinking, which absolutely ignores the role of chance. Everything has its specific purpose. Another aspect which can be useful for the analysis Bromden’s disorder is the schizophrenic regression to magic thinking. French sociologist Lévy-Bruhl formulated a theory concerning magic thinking on native societies. (Vacek p. 182)

The core idea of this theory is the fact that the rational chain of the cause and consequence is broken because there are too many unknown causes. The place of the unknown is fulfilled with magic powers. In Bromden’s case magic is replaced by overwhelming, dominating and evil technology, which governs all the aspects of our lives. Bromden’s family lost their working and living place thanks to the damn construction. Later on, he was forced to study electronics and fight in war in Europe. His fear and respect to technology is embodied by the “Combine”. The reader gets the precise idea what the “Combine” means in the chapter concerning Bromden’s prophetic dream. (Kesey from p. 82 to 87)

Bateson formulated a theory that the reason of the onset of schizophrenia is hidden in disorderly family relations. (Bateson in Vacek p. 186) The theory works with “double bind” which means that something is said but the real meaning of the utterance is different because of confusing social atmosphere in the core family. Bromden’s family is mentioned scarcely in the novel but it is clear that the marriage of a white woman and an Indian Chief must have provided the boy with two different and contradictory cultural standards.

Kesey's intention in the novel is not to clear up the onset of the schizophrenic disorder in Bromden, but Kesey uses the enhanced sensibility and perception of a deluded mind of his narrator to describe the particular totalitarian atmosphere in the mental asylum. Bromden's symbolic thinking enables the author to criticize the atmosphere in the society.

The initial state of Bromden's mind at the beginning of the novel is passive and autistic. According to Kisker a schizophrenic is someone who is not able to deal with problems brought by everyday life. The only way for a schizophrenic how to get socially accepted is to find asylum in his disorder. The only place which is safe is his world of delusion. At the end of the novel, Bromden is healed and he leaves the asylum. The process of spontaneous "healing" of schizophrenia is not unknown. It happens that a schizophrenic personality experiences a sudden and unexpected change, which is not caused by medical treatment. After this spontaneous and unexpected change the individual is able to "function" in society in a normal way.

Theories concerning healing of schizophrenia also appear in Binswanger's works. According to Binswanger, schizophrenia is a deluded lifestyle and it is possible to "heal" schizophrenia using daseinanalysis. Schizophrenic personality is not anomalous. A personality which suffers from schizophrenia is a being, whose life movement is not balanced from the point of view, formulated by Binswanger concerning the two life axis – horizontal and vertical. Eccentric ideas and thoughts, produced by schizophrenic mind are present in every soul. "To heal" a schizophrenic means to find harmony with his soul. (Binswanger in Vacek p. 192)

Healing of Bromden's soul is caused by McMurphy's activities. It is not caused by medical treatment and thus it can be summed up, that McMurphy helped Bromden to acquire harmony with his soul.

## 5.4.2 Conclusion

Both analysed authors – Kesey and Toole used trickster figures to convey a message of revolt against particular contemporaneous social values.

Trickster figures are archetypal and subversive figures which stem from oral tradition and keep on reappearing in literature by now. Their nature is ambiguous and they can be analysed as figures of transgression. Trickster's position is somewhere in between the world of people, animals and the realm of Gods. Their animal features are obvious in Native tales. Animal metaphors are very important for Kesey, they appear in the name of the novel and animal comparisons frequently reappear in the text. The aim of the animal metaphors in Kesey is to emphasize the contrast between nature and technology. Society and its repressive means is embodied by the "combine". The idea about the "combine" is a product of deluded mind of one of the main Kesey's tricksters.

Tricksters are creatures, which are mainly driven by their bodily needs and pleasures. Their devotion for carnal pleasures creates direct link to Bakhtinian ideas about popular carnival culture.

Tricksters have been thrown into the world of people because of their revolt against Gods. Their forms are manifold but they share features of unconscious revolt and their place is firmly set in oral discourse. Tricksters are called "agonistic liberators" because their pranks lead to liberation of the others and to the possible destruction or metamorphosis of a trickster.

Trickster's extraordinary status stems from his eccentric and provoking character. He is always a marginal figure which changes and challenges actively his surrounding. Trickster's fight against authorities of any kind is deeply positive because it has strong liberating power.

The most effective weapon of a trickster is laughter. He carries on his pranks and forces unconsciously his surrounding to behave in a revolting way. Trickster's counterparts are forced to face different view of the world and the different perspective changes them.

As was mentioned above, tricksters stand in sharp opposition against values of any society, which makes them renegades. Society uses its repressive means "to correct" them but mainly this effort backfires.

Toole's tricksters – Ignatius and Burma Jones – play their disruptive games to challenge contemporaneous revolutionary thoughts of the 1960s in America. The setting of Toole's novel is New Orleans and the climax scene take place in a bar in French Quarter.

## **6. The Motive of Madness in J. K. Toole**

### **6.1 The Motive of Madness as a Deliberating Force**

The motive of madness is present in both the conceptions of the grotesque. According to Kayser's theory the motive of madness is closely connected to the motive of a puppet which is controlled by a strange and inhuman puppeteer or by a puppeteer obsessed by an extraneous spirit. The manifestations of this obsession lead to mad, tragic and inexplicable deeds.

This motive of madness is understood to be worked out differently from the point of view of carnival culture. Madness is a deliberating force which draws a clear line between the world and the lies which surround it. (Bakhtin p.57) Madness is a force which debunks the world full of lies and thus liberates it. Toole's Ignatius embodies an antihero who is thrown into the extraneous world involuntarily by the "cycles of goddess Fortune". His debunking activities involve a scene where a group of elderly ladies exhibit their paintings outdoor and the only criticism of their "artistic" works they are likely to expect is a positive one. Ignatius appears there unexpectedly and spoils the exhibition with his sharp but realistic remarks concerning the quality of the paintings. He gets there by chance and although he is dressed in his working costume ("a pirate" disguise) and he is supposed to sell weenies there, he brings the exhibition to an end and the ladies are forced to flee away.

There are various examples of the carnival concept of madness in the Toole's novel: Mrs. Trixie, an antique secretary in Mr. Levy's factory, who suffers from senile dementia (a kind of senile madness) and who finally and unintentionally saves Mr. Levy from his competitor's accusations and from blackmailing of his wife. Trixie is Ignatius' counterpart and colleague in Levy's factory and she is both mad and old but combative figure who plays an important role in the story. Levy's spoiled and eccentric wife takes Trixie as a toy and an experimental animal in her effort to accomplish her course in psychology. Trixie calls Ignatius "Gloria" (another secretary, who had already left the factory a long time before Ignatius started his activities in Levy's company) and her only concern is to retire. The effort of Levy's wife to restore Trixie's confidence and youth is a real nonsense and seemingly mad and senile Trixie finally bites Mrs. Levy's hand to demonstrate the only reasonable attitude.

According to Bakhtin the element of carnival grotesque has a very strong deliberating force which relieves world from dark, serious and inhuman “necessity” which rules human’s idea about the world’s order. The grotesque shows limits and relativity of this “necessity”. “Necessity” can be understood for instance as a “simple” and reasonable solution. The situation to be quoted from the Toole’s work which illustrates this idea is the final scene of the book when Ignatius is escaping with Myrna in her little Renault and an ambulance car which is coming to take Ignatius to a charity mental asylum is just passing. Ignatius is “saved” to spread his ideas in the very last moment. He finally leaves his mother’s house forced by the “necessity” of his involuntary imprisonment in a mental asylum. His savior is his debater “girlfriend” Myrna Minkoff. Her relationship to Ignatius is mainly pursued by exchanging fervent letters where Ignatius and Myrna oppose each other. Myrna is obsessed with revolutionary activities and she sees Ignatius as a unique possibility to put in practice her revolutionary thoughts. Her devotion to manipulate Ignatius into the right place and position can be compared to the effort of Mrs. Levy who wanted to “save” Trixie. Till the very end of the novel, Ignatius remains Myrna’s stubborn opponent who organizes all his activities to persuade her that his medieval thoughts and ideas about the cycle of Fortune are right. Every activity he describes in his letters is carried out and meant to extinguish her positive attitude to everything modern and revolutionary. According to all the characteristics of the principles of relativity of the carnival culture, at the end of the novel Ignatius succumbs and he is saved by his greatest opponent Myrna Minkoff.

## **6.2 The Motive of Madness in History and Its Connotations for Toole’s Ignatius**

According to Foucault, madness in history manifested itself in four basic forms, from which the following three are relevant for Toole’s hero Ignatius:

- a) The first form is the madness of someone who has identified himself with a hero of a novel
- b) The second form is “the madness of vanity”
- c) The third form is “the madness of the right- minded”

Ignatius bears some specifics of a person who is mentally distorted, deteriorated or at least eccentric. His inability to find a job, his constant refusal of current culture and his activities (organizing demonstrations in Levy’ factory, writing

essays only for himself, eating sausages instead of selling them), which finally lead to the efforts of his mother to commit him to a mental asylum, are proofs of his individual oddity.

According to Foucault's *History of Madness*, madmen were shipped away and excluded from society and later, from The Age of Reason, they were imprisoned in asylums. All kinds of personalities who refused to work or who somehow did not fit into society were concentrated and isolated from society.

Ignatius was labeled as a madman by at least two figures in Toole's work. It is obvious from the discussion of Miss Annie (Reilly's neighbour ) and Mr. Lévy:

"I'm Gus Levy. He used to work for me." "Yeah? You don't say. That crazy Idnatius was sure proud of that job he had at that place. I useta hear him telling his momma how he was really making good. A few weeks and he was fired. Well, if he worked for you, you really know him good." Had that poor Reilly kook really been proud of Levy's Pants? He had always said that he was. That was one good sign of his insanity. (Toole p. 308)

According to Foucault, the position of a madman is isolated, a madman is labeled as an individual imprisoned between two worlds. His position is one of transition, he is not allowed to stay inside, in case the others are inside, nor is he allowed to leave when the others stay outside. The world of civilization expels him over a particular border. This border can be the place between the town and its official walls or madmen were shipped "somewhere" to find their place or recovery. The shipment of madmen in medieval times used to have a ritual function connected with water. Water and passage were believed to clear body and mind and there was no escape from a ship. A medieval madman is at mercy of the river or the sea and its vast insecurity. (Foucault p.15).

The setting of Toole's work is New Orleans and its coastal position is important. The preface to *A Confederacy of Dunces* contains an allusion to A. J. Liebling, The Earl of Louisiana, who emphasizes the alliance between the Mediterranean ports e.g. Marseilles, Genova and New Orleans. He even places New Orleans "within the orbit" of the Hellenistic world.

The sea climate was considered to be harmful to human mental sanity not only in medieval times but also in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. According to Heinroth, human madness is partially caused by a dark, chaotic and aquatic element which is a bud of death and which embodies the opposite of a mature stability of soul. (Foucault p.16).

At the end of the Middle Ages the figure of a madman was frequently used as the main protagonist of “fables” and short stories. Originally, madness was understood as a kind of punishment for sin. In late medieval plays, an interesting shift in the point of view started to appear. Madness was no longer punishment for a sin but it became an oddity which served to highlight and pinpoint human vices. The origin of madness became unclear, but it was omnipresent and everybody could succumb to its temptation. (Foucault p.17)

The figure of a madman became a fascinating phenomenon because his reason was blinded by his insanity although he obtained a special power to debunk all lies. His outsider’s position allowed him to become the bearer of universal truth.

Toole’s Ignatius is the bearer of a truth which turns into a mockery of the sociocultural elements which were moving the society of the 1960s.

The perception of madness shifted during the period between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. At the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, madness is connected with death, which meant the end of human misery. Death was connected to war and disease and it was symbolically presented as the figure of a skeleton. It was the winning element. It overcame everything and it was the last inevitable necessity. At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century the dominant place of death was replaced by mockery of all the values embodied by madness. Madness overcame death because it was a stronger element which literally laughed at all human misery and it was stronger than death. Madness was symbolized by an empty skull which is not terrifying any more because when death came it was already empty. (Foucault p. 19)

Madness says: Death is already here. (Foucault p.19)

The triumph of death is a minor deed because it takes a trophy which is not worth taking. A madman gains victory over death because he forecasts it.

Madness directly attacks a holistic, closely tied form of gothic symbolism. The gothic world is full of clear symbols which are closely tied together and it starts to break down due to madness. The symbols are mixed together and its mixture releases more meanings and more unexpected connections between the meanings. The world of madness and dream creates unusual, irrational dreamlike connections. (Foucault p.22) This process can be illustrated by the creation of an entity called “Gryll”, which had its fixed position in Old English psalmbooks. It symbolized a soul of a craving man corrupted by earthly desires and sins. Gryll had no head and its face had its place in the middle of a grotesque belly. Gryll embodied the madness of someone who had succumbed to sin, dream and temptation. Its strange and unnatural body reveals the dark, strange and mysterious inclinations of human nature.

Despite the fact that Toole’s Ignatius does not have his face on his big and grotesque belly, his mind is very often driven by his pyloric valve, which reacts according to his body processes and to his thoughts. A good illustration of this idea can be the situation when Ignatius comes for the first time to the office of Lévy’s Pants. The office is an old room and its dinginess, chaos, dusty windows, weak yellow light bulbs, stained yellow ceiling make Ignatius immediately happy. “The atmosphere of the place reminded Ignatius of his own room, and his valve agreed by opening joyfully” (Toole p.58).

According to Foucault in *History of Madness*, madness belonged among human vices - it ruled over everything good and bad and it was also connected with science. Madness was a punishment for bad and feeble science. Madness was necessary for gnosis and the joy of discovering new facts but it could lead to the proliferation of false sciences. The oddity of Toole’s hero fits into the Foucault definition because Ignatius’ personality is somehow set in the Middle Ages. Ignatius states that he is ”forced to function in a century which he loathes”. (Toole p. 44) His main source of inspiration and world view is the philosophy of Boethius, a medieval scholar.

Ignatius is depicted as a kind of a scholar who was excluded from academic environs thanks to his scandalous behavior at university. The university students formed a committee to demand that Ignatius grade and return their accumulated essays. Their essays were dumped out of the window and onto their heads by Ignatius, and the only comment he made to explain his behavior was that: “the college was too small to accept this act of defiance against the abyss of contemporary academia.” (Toole p.45) According to Ignatius, there is nobody in the world of

the sixties who is able to comprehend the “singularity of his worldview” (Toole p. 330) and people surrounding him are called “mongoloids” (Mr. Abelman, who complained about waste product pants, produced by Levy’s factory), “cretins” (a psychoanalyst in a mental asylum)”deluded fool, total ass” (his former professor Dr. Talc.).

From the point of view of popular satire, the pride and arrogance of ignorant science is punished by madness. This punishment is rather grotesque and comic. Science ceases to be wise, it becomes a false cognition. Universal truths are dispersed and lost in a vast amount of fruitless discussions. The ignorant arrogance of false scientists leads to inevitable madness. This madness is isolated, it thrives in individuals and it stems from individual pride, phantasms and egoism. The first and undeniable feature of madness is exaggerated egoism and an afflicted individual easily considers lies to be universal truths. Ugliness is seen as perfect beauty. A good example of this kind of madness is Toole’s Ignatius or Cervantes’ Don Quijote. Ignatius embodies someone who is utterly devoured by his egoism and self- esteem. He never impugns his worldview, which is based on Boethian medieval philosophy.

The symbol of madness is a mirror.(Foucault p. 27). The mirror of madness is not a real mirror, but it is a mirror which reflects the twisted reality of someone’s dream. Madness is not perceived as something utterly evil because it has its moral dimension. Evil ceases to be the end of time but it is transformed into a defect or aberrance. The aim of showing madness in its various forms, for instance in Brandt’s *The Ship of Fools*, is to denounce human rottenness. The literature and philosophy of the 15<sup>th</sup> century approached madness as a tool of satirical moralities or as a kind of phantasm which can be passed over by laughter. Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam approaches madness from the previously mentioned point of view. This 15<sup>th</sup> century scholar even sets himself as the author in his works into a divine, outside position which enables him to mock all human swarming. People are compared to insects which are buzzing around the divine, great Mount Olympus. (Foucault p. 28) Toole’s Ignatius wants to follow the same principle. His position is one of divine, supernatural isolation. His personality lounges in its haughty position, he feels exceptional and infallible. There are many quotes to demonstrate Ignatius’ secluded attitude. He feels very special when he states:

“Negroes are nonetheless a rather pleasant folk for the most part. I really have had little to do with them, for I mingle with my peers or no one, and since I have no peers, I mingle with no one.” (Toole p. 105)

While he was working in Lévy's Pants, Ignatius wrote letters to Myrna where he depicted his activities in the factory. Once he tried turning off the music in the working hall and the workers reacted rather negatively :“a rather loud, boorish roar of protest from the collective workers, who began to regard me with sullen eyes.” (Toole p.105) In order to calm down the situation, Ignatius turned the music on again and he even started dancing. His performance ended with his falling on the floor, but his comments on this were rather proud and presumptuous:

“Having spent countless hours of my life watching those blighted children on television dancing to this sort of music, I knew the physical spasm which it was supposed to elicit, and I attempted my own conservative version of the same on the spot to pacify the workers. I must admit that my body moved with surprising agility, I am not without an innate sense of rhythm, my ancestors must have been rather outstanding at jigging on the heath “ (Toole p. 105)

Ignatius even bears signs of another kind of madness mentioned by Foucault. It is the madness of vanity because he thinks that his dancing is irresistible, although he is overweight. In reaction to other worker's laughter at his dancing performance, Ignatius merely commented that the workers “smiled in a friendliest fashion” (Toole p.105).

Ignatius' personality even bears signs of the third kind of madness mentioned by Foucault. This kind of madness is called “The madness of the right-minded”. During Ignatius' short working period in the office, he reacts towards the black workers at the Lévy's factory with a remark that he feels an “almost psychotic dedication to helping them” (Toole p. 105).

### **6.3 Madness as a Personal Identification with a Hero of a Novel – Ignatius and Boethius**

According to Foucault, one of the most persistent and the most important forms of madness, which remained present even to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is a personal identification of a hero with a hero of a novel. One of the most important examples is Don Quijote. The author's fantasy or mockery is embraced by a reader as reality. Fantasy and creativity is labeled as a kind of madness itself. (Foucault p. 29) The relationship between art and reality and its mutual

effects enter into the nexus which allows sociocultural elements to enter. Madness, in its power and isolation, allows the entry of elements which belong to a different sociocultural era. Sociocultural era in this case can be explained as a set of different cultural, social values, norms and thoughts. The time setting of Toole's novel is the 1960s in America which are strongly challenged by the personality of Ignatius – whose values and thoughts are identical with those expressed in Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*. Boethius is a very strong paradigm for all of Ignatius' activities.

Ignatius' actions and his statements stand in direct opposition to everything which surrounds him. His personality is a constant denial of optimism and conformity. The 1960s in America are characterized as an era of vigorous civil rights movements, antiwar, and pro-racial and sexual equality. A typical representative of this activism is Myrna Mynkoff who concentrates all her activities on pursuing her "alertness" in the previously mentioned streams of current ideas. Ignatius ferociously denies his activity in this field and refuses and mocks the current culture. No matter how strongly he expresses his disdain in his letters, his deeds are controversial. When he has an opportunity, he goes to the cinema where he watches movies, only to have a chance to utter his shrewd criticism. Ignatius even becomes frightening in the cinema thanks to his comments and behavior during the screening. He "pops" an empty popcorn bag to fright the children watching the movie and utters: "What degenerate produced this abortion?" (Toole p. 49)

His working activities never concentrate on the work itself, but they are constantly aimed on pursuing his contradictory ideas and his unique worldview. There is a sharp contradiction in his deeds and the ideas he claims. Ignatius can be presented as a central point of comic convergence of the faiths of the protagonists. His figure of an odd, mad white trash is the hub of a seemingly loose chaos of madness which enters the lives of his counterparts. His position can be characterized from the Foucaultian point of view as a vertex which influences his surroundings in a very positive way, although he seems to be the bearer of total mess and chaos. He might be the only place of balance which is masked as a place of chaos. His madness creates a world of illusions which goes so far until it reaches the truth. (Foucault, p.33)

Boethian thoughts, which formed Ignatius' philosophical stance, strongly influenced western, medieval and early renaissance Christianity and philosophy. According to Foucault, the ideas

about madness stayed more or less the same from the early Renaissance till the Age of Reason. Madness was considered to be a kind of a great optical delusion. (Foucault p. 33).

## **7. Forms of Time and the Chronotope of Vonnegut's and Toole's Novels**

### **7.1 The Definition of the Chronotope**

According to Bakhtin the chronotope is understood as a formally constitutive category of literature. The category of the chronotope (literally time space) is based on the connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are expressed in literature. The meaning of the chronotope in literature is metaphorical and its task is to express the inseparability of time and space.

### **7.2 The Crucial Role of Chance in Greek Romances and in Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse 5.**

The process of assimilating an actual historical chronotope in literature has been a complicated and erratic process, because it has reflected only certain aspects of historical conditions and has omitted many others. The historical conditions for the novels examined are the 1960s in America which, in the case of Vonnegut's novel, are connected to the Second World War. His hero, who "is spastic in time", offers a chance for the reader to draw a visible line of consequence and connections between the scattered parts in which occurs Billy's life. The main themes of the novel such as: vain death, chance, human suffering caused by "earthlings", war, social injustice and inconceivable cruelty are omnipresent in the novel and the motifs dealing with these topics are repeated many times. The way Vonnegut works with the chronotope of this novel is quite unique and experimental and the comparison with the Bakhtinian view of the chronotope of "Greek romance" could cast an interesting light onto an examination of Vonnegut's work.

According to Bakhtin, infinite adventure- time is totally different from real biological time because the series of adventures can be extended as long as one likes (Bakhtin, p. 94). All the moments of adventure-time are controlled by one crucial force – chance. This time is composed of contingency and in the case of Greek romances it means chance meetings,

failures to meet, interventions of Fate and villains who “bide their time”. The crucial moments for the story occur when the normal course of events gets interrupted by an intrusion of non-human forces. The heroes of Greek romances are active actors of their lives, they escape or defend themselves and they seem to act as physical persons. However the most important moments of their lives are controlled by the forces they never have control over. In Greek romances the forces which lead human lives are mainly Gods and Fate.

The life of Vonnegut’s hero Billy is completely controlled by chance, he never knows which moment of his life is coming next. Random meetings and failures to meet are replaced by failures to die in Billy’s case. Chance is one form of the principle of necessity and it has a fixed place in real life as well as in any kind of novel. Billy’s life is controlled by chance and he seems to be very passive. It is as if he is a passenger on a running train whose destination is death, which is surprisingly not the end of Billy Pilgrim’s life, it is just one moment which fulfills the mosaic of his life. The sequence of Billy’s life is not linear but spastic, random and momentous thanks to his time traveling. The causes of this time delusion will be discussed later.

Returning to the Bakhtinian notion of adventure-time, there are interesting points to discuss and compare. The notion of the unpredictability of Greek romances which is expressed by fortune telling, omens, wise foresight and experience is replaced in Vonnegut by a unique perception of human time and space by Trafalmadorians. Human time perception is scattered into an infinite mosaic of static moments. The ruling role of Gods and Fate is replaced by the omnipresent observation and ignorance of Trafalmadorians.

The most important and constituent motifs concerning adventure-time in Greek romances and other novels, such as meeting/parting, search/discovery, loss/acquisition are mainly chronotopic of their very nature. (Bakhtin p. 97). The most important motif is the motif of meeting, which nature is almost mathematical. Mathematical character of this motif is given by a time and space unity which is essential. The breaking point of the novel is the scene, when Billy is almost dying in a German forest, and it is precisely the moment, when his spastic time traveling starts. His time traveling is a very important constituent of the structure of the whole novel.

The motif of meeting can be explained as a breaking moment of meeting something definite, which is death. The leading force in Billy's chains of unexpected survivals is chance. The role of chance as a plot-shifter is extreme in Vonnegut's work. The other constituent motif is for example the motif of search/discovery. One of the most important discoveries, which Billy makes, are the answers to the questions: "What is important : past, present or future? Do we have any influence on our future? When will I die?" All the mentioned questions are answered in the novel, and they are answered by Trafalmadorians. The notion of time, will be analysed in the following chapter and the key theoretical knowledge is based on Deleuzian theory on time and repetition.

Vonnegut's antihero Billy travels in time as a passive piece of luggage.

Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse 5* is not traditional Science Fiction because the travel in time is not based on formal inversions of significant and salient aspects of the author's world. The paradigm of proportion (one mirror image is constructed according to another mirror image) (Suvin in Procházka p. 96) is not used in its simple form but it is still the basic approach and epistemological tool of Science Fiction.

Billy travels in time and his memory in a shimmering way which excludes any structuralist pattern to describe it.

## **8. Deleuzian Notion of Time, Space, Difference and Repetition in Vonnegut and Toole**

### **8.1 The Immobilisation of the Text as a Form of Double Existence**

In his Preface to *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze poses an interesting question of utilization of the history of philosophy. The same body of meaningful interrogation can be put into the relationship between a work of art and its analysis.

According to Deleuze, commentaries in the history of philosophy have a form of a collage and the history of philosophy, together with its comments is a reproduction of philosophy itself. The connection between the original work of art and its analysis can be understood analogically. The original text gains a double existence while being analysed because the ideas expressed in the text should be corresponding and the analysis represents a “slow motion” or “a kind of congelation or immobilization of the text” (Deleuze, p. XX). The comments on, or analysis of, the original text allow us to create a double existence of the original text and approach its ideas from a slightly different point of view.

### **8.2 Deleuzian Definitions of Difference and Repetition and Application of the Principle on Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse 5***

#### **8.2.1 The Replacement of Representation by Repetition and Definition of Repetition**

According to Deleuze the contemporary novelist’s art revolves around difference and repetition in its abstract reflections and effective techniques. (Deleuze p.XVII.). The place of the identical and the negative has been taken by difference and repetition. The failure of representation, loss of identity and discovery of the forces which work under the representation of the identical gave rise to the birth of an idea about the world which is created by a profound game of difference and repetition. All identities in this world are simulated and their nature is one of an optical “effect” which stems from the above mentioned game of difference and repetition. Thus

it is essential for this analysis to present a definition of the previously mentioned terms. Prior to the definitions, the point from which Deleuze states his definitions should be defined by this quote:

“I make, remake and unmake my concepts along a moving horizon, from an always decentred centre, from an always displaced periphery which repeats and differentiates them. The task of modern philosophy is to overcome the alternatives temporal/non temporal, historical/eternal and particular/universal. Following Nietzsche we discover, as more profound than time and eternity, the untimely: philosophy is neither a philosophy of history, nor a philosophy of the eternal, but untimely, always and only untimely- that is to say, “acting counter to our time and thereby acting on our time and, let us hope, for the benefit of a time to come”. (Deleuze, preface XIX.)

Deleuze starts his definition of repetition highlighting the difference between repetition and generality. Generality expresses the point of view from which one term can be substituted by another. Repetition concerns non-exchangeable and non-substitutable singularities. To repeat means to behave in a certain manner, but in relation to something unique and singular. (Deleuze p.1)

The unique and singular points and ideas, which are expressed on every page of Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*, are manifold repetitions of various thoughts which penetrate, protrude and constitute the nature of the text. The basic thought is the inevitability of the game of death and chance which is omnipresent and random. Billy's failures to die are interwoven within the deaths of the others who surround him. An example of this idea can be Weary's death in war because of gangrene, or the accidental death of all the optometrists in a plane. The destruction of Dresden repeats itself in Billy's mind and it never fades. The poor witness of this apocalyptic catastrophe never manages to escape thoughts about Dresden. A good example can be taken from Billy's stay in Trafaladorian Zoo, where he thinks of Montana's body and its resemblance to Dresden's Baroque architecture.

The unique and singular point in Toole can be embodied by the omnipresent Ignatius' laments on the “cycles of fortune”.

## 8.2.2 Repetition in Vonnegut and His hero Billy as an Element of Transgression

The main protagonist of Vonnegut's *SLHN5* named Billy repeatedly fails to die and keeps on traveling to the various moments of his life. This hero is an element of transgression which is important for the application of Deleuzian theory of repetition on the analysis. The explanation of this connection starts with the description of peculiarities of Billy's character. One of the most dominant personal feature of Vonnegut's hero is passivity.

Billy's passivity in life and his willingness to die even at the beginning of his life, when he is being taught swimming by a harsh method "sink-or-swim", can be explained by Billy's knowledge about his position as a powerless subject of the law of death. (Deleuze p.2) The notion of the inevitability of repetition of this natural phenomenon is even emphasized by the view of life expressed by Trafalmadorians.

Deleuze specifies certain situation when repetition is possible:

If repetition can be found, even in nature, it is in the name of a power which affirms itself against the law which works underneath laws, perhaps superior to laws. If repetition exists, it expresses at once a singularity opposed to the ordinary, an instantaneity opposed to the variation and an eternity opposed to permanence. In every respect, repetition is a transgression. It puts law into question, it denounces its nominal or general character in favour of a more profound and more artistic reality. (Deleuze p.3)

Vonnegut creates in his *Slaughterhouse 5* an artistic reality which is experimental. It means that the author chooses the ordinary, almost anti-heroic personality of Billy who is, thanks to his time traveling, a transgressive element. The setting of Vonnegut's novel can be compared to the closed environment of an experimental space of physics or mathematics because the phenomena are defined in terms of a small number of chosen factors. The chosen factors in physics or mathematics can be for example time and space. The motifs which seem to be crucial for the novel are limited too. It is for instance: ceaseless repetition of the motif of death, the destruction of Dresden and the antagonistic tendency of the human race to produce new human beings who are constantly and inevitably killed in wars.

According to the Deleuze's definition of repetition, there are basic and essential criteria to be fulfilled. The importance of passage or transgression for repetition (mentioned above) is illustrated by the quote:

In its essence, repetition refers to a singular power which differs in kind from generality, even when, in order to appear, it takes advantage of the artificial passage from one order of generality to another. (Deleuze p.4)

The singular power in the case of this novel could be the law of nature about the limitedness of human existence under the condition that human beings live on Earth. Our "existence" must start somewhere at the time axis and it must finish after a certain period of time has passed. Thus human existence in time on Earth has only one direction in its development towards the end. The artificial passage from one generality to another is embodied in the novel as a view of human life as a set of instantaneous moments presented by Trafalmadorians. The contradictory notions of time are connected by Billy's traveling in time which is considered to be a kind of insanity by other earthlings who are not spastic in time. The general motif of madness is dealt with above (Chapter The Motif of Madness).

### **8.2.3 The Connection among Repetition, Humor, Irony and Sociocultural Reality**

According to Deleuze, repetition belongs to humour and irony. The connection between repetition, humor and irony is their common nature of transgression or exception because it reveals a singularity, - for instance, - Billy's extraordinary position in time or Ignatius' medieval thinking. The singularity opposes the particulars: - for instance: the destruction of Dresden in 1945 or the sociocultural reality of the 1960s in New Orleans.

Repetition contains:

The whole mystical game of loss and salvation is therefore contained in repetition. Along with the whole theatrical game of life and death and the whole positive game of illness and health. (Deleuze p. 7)

The theatrical game of life, loss and salvation is expressed literally in Vonnegut's novel by the amateur theatrical performance of British war prisoners, played to honour American prisoners of war in the prison camp immediately after their arrival. The British prisoners of war are well fed and the war for them means biding their time till the end of war under relatively luxurious conditions. Their food supplies are multiplied by an administrative mistake, which brings exceptional food abundance to the camp. The antagonistic point of view is shared by all the poor, ill and exhausted Americans who suffer from food poisoning after having been fed normal portions of food in the camp. The poor health of the Americans prevents them from expressing full appreciation of the British effort to amuse and honor them. The American prisoners and their state of body and mind evoke distaste on both sides. The British prisoners disdain the Americans the same way as the German guards do.

There is another parallel with the story of Billy and his fellow escapee soldier Weary. Weary expected Billy to act somehow differently and blames him for being left by the three scouts – older and respectable soldiers. The situation is repeated, Billy is not guilty of being dead tired and exhausted and nor are the American prisoners of war guilty of their condition in the camp.

#### **8.2.4 Repetition goes beyond the Moral Law**

Deleuze names repetition as “the logos of the private thinker” (Deleuze p.7) because it opposes moral law and it is defined as a thought beyond good and evil. Both authors, Vonnegut and Toole, use this point of view and there are no pure villains in their novels. Even Vonnegut's Weary, a repulsive and perverse personality, is portrayed as a product of his father's deluded educational ideas and his rejection by his contemporaries. The only official Nazi collaborationist Howard W. Campbell Jr. in the novel is described as a grotesque figure, thanks to his outfit. The image of Campbell, who is introduced as a buffoon figure, does not prevent Vonnegut from inserting a grain of a stern social criticism into Campbell's writing. For instance: where Campbell describes the Americans as a nation whose inhabitants are mainly poor and where the poor suffer from self hatred for being poor. (Vonnegut p. 165) The rich Americans willingly infect this idea into the poor and subsequently the poor are sent to fight and die for the cause of someone else's money.

Deleuze poses repetition itself in a position of the only moral law beyond morality.

In reality, however things are even more complicated. The form of repetition in the eternal return is the brutal form of the immediate, that of the universal and the singular reunited, which dethrones every general law, dissolves the mediations and annihilates the particulars subjected to the law. (Deleuze p.8)

The particulars subjected to the law of war and their subsequent annihilation is the story of Edgar Derby's execution, the senseless death of the only "war hero" in the novel. Derby thwarts the possibility of his escape from war by faking his birth date. The old and kind hearted man fails to die in the battles he participates in and later he avoids death by infectious diseases although he takes care of the infected. His ideals about good fighting evil bring him to Dresden and he dies an absurd death at the very end of the war. The brutal form of the immediate is an absurd accusation of plundering of the "moon surface" of the recently bombed Dresden and his subsequent execution. Vonnegut's only hero is annihilated for a tea pot.

### **8.2.5 Ambiguous Nature of History and Repetition as a Positive Force**

According to Deleuze theatre is a real movement and this movement is repetition.

We have in mind the theatrical space, the emptiness of this space, and the manner in which it is filled and determined by the signs and masks through which the actor plays a role which plays other roles, we think of how repetition is woven from one distinctive point to another, including the difference within itself. (Deleuze p.11)

Vonnegut's main protagonist Billy plays different roles in his life. The theatre space is our planet, in particular Europe and America. Billy wears different masks in his life, he is a comically shaped boy and unhappy child, then he becomes a clown soldier and later on in his life he gains a good social position as the husband of a wealthy optometrist's daughter. The state of his mind is changed dramatically thanks to his experiences during The Second World War which later culminates during his frequent stays in a mental asylum into "something" which could be diagnosed as a kind of a post traumatic disorder or schizophrenia. The nature of Billy's illusions and psychological peculiarities will be analysed later.

Billy undergoes a theater play full of repetition, he experiences pure forces which can be defined by the quote:

In the theater of repetition, we experience pure forces, dynamic lines in space which act without intermediary upon the spirit, and link it directly with nature and history, with a language which speaks before words, with gestures which develop before organized bodies, with masks before faces, with specters and phantoms before characters-the whole apparatus of repetition a “terrible power”. (Deleuze p. 12)

The moments when Billy feels the proximity of terrible power are manifold but the strongest are only two. The first one can be considered the moment when Billy starts his “travelling in time”. It occurs in a wood in Germany, during the end of a very cruel war winter, when he experiences a state of body and mind which is very close to death. Death speaks without words, its mask is violet and the whole apparatus of repetition sounds like “a hum”.

This was when Billy first came unstuck in time. His attention began to swim grandly through the full arc of his life, passing into death, which was violet light. There wasn't anybody else, or anything. There was just violet light – and a hum. (Vonnegut p. 54)

Deleuze describes repetition as the unconscious of the free concept, of knowledge or of memory, the unconscious of representation. The concept of freedom, from the standpoint of Freudianism, is the principle of an inverse relation between repetition and consciousness, repetition and remembering one's past. Self-consciousness in recognition seems to be the faculty of the future.(Deleuze p.16). Thus can be explained the vision of Billy, during the moments of his immediate closeness to death, when he “can see” or swims through the whole arc of his life.

### **8.2.6 Tragic and Comic Repetition and “the Outer View” of Human Beings**

Deleuze divides repetition into two basic types which always appear together. The first is a tragic repetition, which is the tragic destiny and a comic repetition which is the comic aspect of the tragic destiny. The resolution between the tragic and the comic repetition contains two elements. The first is the nature of repressed knowledge given by simple common sense and

the second is terrible esoteric knowledge. Deleuze gives an example of a hero “who does not know that he knows” because he is excluded from this knowledge until the moment called by Aristotle “recognition”. (Deleuze p.17)

Vonnegut’s Billy is special because from the very first line “he knows that he knows”. What does this knowledge mean for him? Billy knows precisely the moment of his real death and he knows that we are not alone in the Universe. He is even aware of the end of the Universe and he is aware of the “outer” idea about human beings which is uttered by Trafalmadorians. Trafalmadorians are small, green creatures who observe and kidnap human beings. They bear all the signs of extraterrestrials. Their color is different, they fly saucers and their time perception is not humanlike. They are described by an unsuccessful science fiction writer Kilgore Trout, who can be a kind of self projection of the author’s self. There are two possible ways of apprehending the existence of Trafalmadorians. The first can be a simple reception of their existence and thus we can place Vonnegut among science fiction writers although the author strongly denies this classification.

The second possible way of the existence or non-existence of Trafalmadorians is that they only exist in Billy’s head and they are products of his fully developed schizophrenia. Deleuze defines an uncovered or bare repetition (repetition of the Same) as an obsessive ceremony or as a schizophrenic stereotype when the mechanical element of the repetition, the element of action, serves as a cover for more profound repetition, which is played in another dimension. (Deleuze p. 20) Another dimension is the place where Trafalmadorians dwell and where Billy occasionally appears e.g. his stay in the Trafalmadorian’s zoo. According to Binswanger, schizophrenia is a theater of terror, where “never seen” is not the contrary of the “already seen”, but both signify the same thing. (Deleuze p.20) Thus Trafalmador can be a place of relief from unbearable reality, it is not a theater of terror for Billy. The real theater of terror is Billy’s experience in Europe during the war, which culminates in the fiery hell of Dresden. The only way for Billy’s mind to overcome the unbearable experience is a psychological strategy of repression. The relationship between repression and repetition can be described:

I do not repeat because I repress. I repress because I repeat, I forget because I repeat. I repress, because I can live certain things or certain experiences only in the mode of repetition. I am determined to repress whatsoever would prevent me from living them thus: in particular, the representation which mediates the lived by relating it to the form

of a similar or identical object. Eros and Thanatos are distinguished in that Eros must be repeated, can be lived only through repetition, whereas Thanatos (as transcendental principle) is that which gives repetition to Eros, that which submits Eros to repetition. (Deleuze p. 20)

As was mentioned above, certain things can be lived only in this particular mode of repetition. The unbearable and unacceptable period in Billy's life is his war experience. He has to repress his war experience in order to continue living. His mind has to absorb the absurd idea of gratuitous killing of innocent people in Dresden. He has to accept that he and the other survivors were being bombarded by Americans, immediately after leaving their bomb shelter under Slaughterhouse 5. The answer or the strategy which Billy learns to use to cope with the reality is the Trafalmandorian view of reality.

There isn't anything we can do about them (wars), so we don't simply look at them. We ignore them. We spend eternity on looking at pleasant moments – like today at the zoo. Isn't this a nice moment? (Vonnegut p. 150)

This view of reality is described by Marvin as a simplistic consumer view of life pursued by Americans after The Second World War. The strategy of total and absolute repression stems from total indifference towards the terrible. The structure of every moment is fixed, so there is no point in asking questions like: Why me? Or Why anything? The answer is: "Well, here we are, Mr. Pilgrim, trapped in the amber of this moment. There is no *why*." (Vonnegut p. 97)

### **8.2.7 Repetition, Death and Transference**

Going back to the positive principle of repetition, it must be explained that the transcendental instinct for death appears together with the relation between repetition and disguise. The death instinct, according to Freud, is an original principle which is not connected with aggression or destructive tendencies. It is a result of a direct consideration of repetition phenomena. Dreams, displacement, dramatization are disguises. The disguises do not come "over and above" they are internal, integral, constituent genetic elements of repetition itself. (Deleuze p.19) According to Freud's explanation of the death principle, the bare repetition persists in a tendency to return

to the state of inanimate matter which upholds the model of a wholly physical and material repetition.

Billy has a very strong tendency to become an inanimate object again. He feels almost happy when his father throws him into a swimming pool and he can hear beautiful music playing while he is drowning. In this moment, he resented his rescue. Later on, after spending some post war time in a mental asylum Billy feels strongly upset by his mother for going to “so much trouble to give him life and to keep that life going, and Billy didn’t really like life at all.” (Vonnegut p.130). Death has nothing to do with a material model, on the contrary the death instinct can be understood in relation to masks and costumes. Repetition is truly that which disguises itself in constituting itself. (Deleuze p.19) The masks do not hide anything except other masks.

During Billy’s stays in hospital, he undergoes psychoanalysis and the doctors find that his post traumatic disorder stems from his childhood experience when he almost drowned while his father was teaching him swimming. The war experience is ignored by the doctors and the childhood experience gains an absurd and anomalous importance for his illness. Deleuze highlights a decisive moment in psychoanalysis which comes when Freud gave up, in certain respects, the hypothesis of real childhood events, which would have played the part of ultimate disguised terms, in order to substitute the power of fantasy which is connected to the death instinct, where everything is masked and disguised. (Deleuze p. 19) Repetition is, in essence, symbolic.

The reciprocal connection between Eros and Thanatos, drawn by Deleuze and Freud, is more than obvious in Vonnegut’s novel. The scene of the wedding night of Billy and his fat and rich wife Valencia connects the motives of death, creation of a new individual (Billy’s son) and a shallow discussion about war. The author takes again the position of an extraterrestrial, who makes a comment: “It was a simple-minded thing for a female Earthling to do, to associate sex and glamour with war.” (Vonnegut p. 154) Valencia gets pregnant and Vonnegut describes the moment without glorification and the only things he mentions is her body which was assembling the materials for a Green Beret. The creation of a new instrument of war, a new soldier, who is going to kill, is important for the author. The whole life and all the sentiments about a newly created personality is omitted in order to emphasize the connection of the

ceaseless and repeating circle of the repetition of the Same. Eros must be repeated and Thanatos is the transcendental principle which submits Eros to repetition.

To continue explaining the crucial role of repetition in the Deleuzian sense for the Vonnegut's novel, it is important to define transference. According to the psychoanalytical definition of Freud, transference is the reproduction of emotions relating to repressed experiences, possibly of childhood, and the substitution of another person for the original object of the repressed impulses. Deleuze restates the thoughts of Freud concerning transference. Freud noted that to stop repeating it was necessary to seek out where the memory was and to install oneself directly in the past in order to accomplish a living connection between the representation and the blockage. (Deleuze p. 21) Transference means healing and it is a very theatrical and dramatic operation. Deleuze states that transference is repetition and if repetition makes us ill or destroys us, it also frees us. All cure means a voyage to the bottom of repetition. (Deleuze p. 21) Repetition and transference are both tied closely to the death instinct. The link between the elements mentioned stems from a possibility of giving repetition an original, positive, autonomous and disguising power in which terror is closely mingled with the movement of selection and freedom.

To apply the Deleuzian theory concerning transference and repetition to Vonnegut's story we have to draw some essential and logical connections between the plot and its meaning. The most terrifying experience for Billy is his stay in Europe during the Second World War. The most frightening experiences come from the days which follow after his survival of Dresden bombing. This experience is something which he had to repress to survive or which he had to live, or come back to again and again and that is why he starts his time traveling. It is important to say that Billy "travels" to any moment of his life, but the most important and the strongest moments take place in Germany during the war. Transference or repetition takes the role of his time spasm which heals him. There are other means which support his "healing". After marrying Valencia, his fat wife, he calms himself by seeing what the marriage will be like that is - at least bearable. Another mean of healing is his "stay" on Trafalmdore and the dialogues with the Trafalmdorians about time, space, life, death and the end of the world. The notion of time and the end of the world will be analysed later.

Billy's time travelling can be explained as a ceaseless repetition or ceaseless transference which never stops and partially fails in its healing potential, because it keeps on going endlessly.

Another aspect of a positive relationship between repetition for example - transference and the death instinct is Billy's attitude to life. We cannot say that his attitude to life is positive. It is at least passive, ignorant and indifferent. To explain his passivity using the crucial point of his life during the war is not satisfactory, because he was passive even as a child, even before he started his time travelling. Death was not what he wanted to avoid. The only thing he wanted to exclude himself from was physical pain and misery. His ignorance of the terror of death may be explained by the Deleuzian notion of the death instinct which must be understood in terms of three paradoxical and complementary requirements. The first requirement is to give repetition an original positive principle, the second is to pass an autonomous disguising power to repetition and the third is to give repetition an immanent meaning in which terror is closely mingled with the movement of selection and freedom. The only element which has to be emphasized here is the third requirement. (Deleuze p. 22)

The selective principle concerning survival and the development of the species is a Darwinian idea. Darwin is mentioned in Vonnegut's novel through the evaluation made by Trafalmadorians:

“On Trafalmore, says Billy Pilgrim, there isn't much interest in Jesus Christ. The Earthling figure who is most engaging to the Trafalmadorian mind, he says, is Charles Darwin – who taught that those who die are meant to die, that corpses are improvements. So it goes.” (Vonnegut p. 269)

### **8.2.8 The Application of the Deleuzian Principle of Repetition and Passive Synthesis on Vonnegut's Notion of Time in *Slaughterhouse 5*.**

According to Deleuze, repetition changes nothing in the object or state of affairs but change is produced in the mind which contemplates. Whenever A appears, I expect the appearance of B.

We are made from contracted water, earth and the other elements. In case we ignore this material point of view, the contractile power is imagination. Our imagination contracts cases, elements, agitations grounds them in an internal qualitative impression and endows them with a certain weight. The contraction is not a matter of memory or reflection. This contraction forms a synthesis of time. Time is constituted only in the originary synthesis which operates on the repetition of the instants. (Deleuze p. 91) Deleuze assigns an enormous importance to the present because it contracts the successive independent instants into one another and thus it is constituting the lived, or living present. It is in this present that time is deployed. The past and the future do not demarcate instants distinct from a supposed present instant, but rather the dimensions of the present itself in so far as it is a contraction of the instants. The mechanism, when the living present goes from the past to the future which it constitutes in time and which goes from the particulars to the general using contraction, is called passive synthesis. Passive synthesis is constitutive but is not active and occurs in the mind which contemplates. Time is subjective, but in relation to the subjectivity of a passive subject. (Deleuze p.91)

In Vonnegut's novel, this view of time is embodied by the Trafalmadorians. Time is the same for all creatures, but the point of view which a creature takes is what makes the difference. It is Deleuzian subjectivity which plays the important role in the mechanism of the passive synthesis. Trafalmadorians' time perception can be taken as an illustrative metaphor of Deleuzian thoughts. The greatest importance is gained by the present, which is a freezing moment of eternity and "we" are caught in the present like "bugs in amber" (Vonnegut p. 97). Time is seen as a physical object and it can be contemplated as a stretch of the Rocky Mountains. The mechanism where the subjective perception of time differs is not quantitative but qualitative. Trafalmadorians are even aware of the end of the Universe. When Billy learns about the fact of the crucial knowledge, which seems to be supernatural to all humankind, he wonders why Trafalmadorians would not stop the expected catastrophe. The explanation, they give, can be supported by the Deleuzian definition of the transcendental passive synthesis. This kind of synthesis is rooted in the former present and present present which are represented. This mechanism enables Trafalmadorians to gain a triple point of view when contemporaneity, coexistence and preexistence are one. This point of view allows Trafalmadorians to say about the pilot who presses the fatal button, while testing a new type of fuel for flying saucers and thus he destroys the Universe:

“If you know this,” said Billy, “isn’t there some way you can prevent it? Can’t you keep the pilot from pressing the button?”

“He has always pressed it, and he always will, We always let him and we always will let him. The moment is structured that way.” (Vonnegut p. 149)

The adverb “always” is connected to indefinite time and is emphasized and repeated in the text to convey the idea of different time perception and thus of different perception of the meaning of the particular events. Contemporaneity, coexistence and preexistence are expressed in the adverb “always” which is here connected to the present, because we are all caught in present. The adverb “always” expresses the past, the present and the future and thus it forms the type of present which is described by Deleuze and which is a product of transcendental passive synthesis. The present acts for Trafalmadorians as a form of totality which stems from their point of view.

### **8.2.9 Trafalmadorians’ Unique Ability to Perform Passive and Active Syntheses, the Meaning of Contraction**

Deleuze states that every organism, in its receptive and perceptual elements is a sum of contractions, retentions and expectations. The lived present constitutes a past and a future in time. Need is the manner in which this future appears, as the organic form of expectation. The retained past appears in the form of cellular heredity. (Deleuze p.93). It is essential to define briefly another process which is called the active synthesis. It is described as a result of an activity of the organic synthesis performed by memory and intelligence e.g. instinct and learning. According to Deleuze all these forms e.g. the forms of repetition in relation to passive synthesis and combinations with the active synthesis, constitute together a rich domain of signs which animate or form behavior. (Deleuze p. 94)

The former definitions were included because the heroes of Vonnegut’s novel behave in accordance to them or break them to convey a certain message. The entities who keeps on breaking the definitions stated above are the Vonnegut’s extraterrestrials. They behave according to their nature of being which is completely diverse from the humanlike perception of time. Their ability to see all the “presents” or moments of time at once in a unique image can be described from the Deleuzian point of view because their mode of time perception

strongly highlights the Deleuzian notion of the present. When we apply Deleuzian definitions of active and passive synthesis to their mode of perception of time, we can state that Vonnegut's Trafalmadorians are able to perform active and passive synthesis extremely fast and their perception of time is extremely contracted. Their future lacks the element of expectation and retention. There is no organic form of expectation and no need for the future. This idea is processed in the part concerning the end of the world.

Another concept which should be defined is the concept of habit, which draws something new from repetition, namely, difference. (Deleuze p. 94) Habit is contraction in essence. Deleuze compares the mechanism of habit to the heart's contractions, to a tick-tock type of series or to our habit of living, our expectation that "it" will continue. (Deleuze p.94) If we consider habit to be contraction we have to emphasize its meaning as a fusion of repetition in the contemplating mind. Deleuze ascribes this connection to the inseparable joint among the heart, muscles, cells, nerves and soul. Habit is connected to the thousands of passive syntheses of which we are composed:

"We are contemplations, we are imaginations, we are generalities, claims and satisfactions. The phenomenon of claiming is nothing but the contracting contemplations through which we affirm our right and our expectation in regard to that which we contract, along with our self-satisfaction in so far as we contemplate."  
(Deleuze p. 95)

Deleuze continues with the statement that we do not contemplate ourselves, we exist only in contemplating, in contracting that from which we come. Billy's existence is contemplated by Trafalmadorians and by the author, who appears in the book as a personality who contemplates unintentionally. The author seldom sneaks into the plot and he is not the direct protagonist, although he appears in the same places.

### **8.3.1 The Principle of Contraction as the Basic Condition of Time Spasm**

The notion of contraction can refer to the spasm Billy undergoes while he is time traveling. Habit is contraction and it is the fusion of the repetition in the contemplating mind. Billy's mind contemplated the war killing in Germany and later in Dresden and thus his mind got lost

in this contraction. Billy's war experience can be defined as a symbolic and deep scar on his soul. Deleuze defines a scar as something which is not the sign of a past wound but of "the present fact of having been wounded" that is a contemplation of the wound which contracts all the instants which separate us from it into a living present. Billy's scar still retains the same form throughout his life, because he unnaturally continues returning to Germany or Dresden. The mechanism of contraction has been interrupted in his case and he can never be isolated from the past. This aberration can be explained by the Deleuzian notion of "empty time".

### **8.3.2 The Concept of the "Empty Form of Time" as an Explanation of Vonnegut's Hero's Time Spasm, Dresden's Destruction as a Point Creating the "Empty Form of Time"**

According to Deleuze, repetition includes three types of syntheses. The passive synthesis, the active synthesis and the third type of synthesis, which is the most important for the analysis: "The empty form of time". The definition of this third synthesis lies in the process when time "goes out of joint". The empty time demonstrates itself out of natural succession and it appears in its pure form of ceaseless present. The events which make up the content of time are freed and the time demonstrates itself in its pure form. This type of synthesis is static, because time is liberated from movement and from the events which naturally constitute it. This time is called demented time or time outside the curve. The process when the empty time obtains its extraordinary quality must start with an event which is unique and tremendous. Various examples of those unique events are: to throw someone into a volcano, to kill God or a father and in Vonnegut's *SLHN5*, it is destruction of Dresden. Past, present and future are not distributed according to the empirical criteria thanks to this event. The mind of a hero is "smashed" into pieces and a "man without name, family and qualities" is created. This hero becomes "a plebeian guardian of a secret and the already- Overman whose scattered members gravitate around the sublime image". (Deleuze p.112) Repetition is never a historical fact, but it becomes a historical condition, under which something new is effectively produced. The historical facts of the Second World War and the destruction of Dresden serve the author for a creation of a time spasm which forces the main hero come back to the moments after the Dresden's apocalypse. The new thing, which is created is a hero, who got lost in "the empty form of time". According to Marx in Deleuze repetition is comic when it falls short, it means when instead of leading to metamorphosis and the production of something new, it creates a

circle which is the opposite of an authentic creation. What is the first time a tragedy, the second time is farce. (Deleuze p. 115)

The hero must confront this repetition so long as “the act is too big for him” and the moment of tragic non-metamorphosis follows. The tragic non-metamorphosis of an originally passive Billy is his time spasm and it leads to even bigger passivity concerning his life and his worldview. The tragic non-metamorphosis created nothing new and it emphasized the passive features of a mind, which oscillates in time and passively receives all the tragedies of his life. The totality of tragic destiny is emphasized by all the repeating signs, signals and metaphors, which reappear in the same form through the whole story. The metaphor of this type is for example: p. 5 “..a breath like mustard and roses” which drives the author’s wife away and the smell of decomposing dead bodies in bomb shelters in Dresden, which had to be burned down by the prisoners of war after the bombing. Another metaphor of this kind is the position of the newly weds, Billy and his rich wife, who “nested like spoons” during their honeymoon and the prisoners of war, Billy included, who did the same but during their stressful transport in prison coach. The first situation is supposed to be very pleasant and the second tragic and stressful but for both exactly the same metaphor is used. The aim of this repetition can be the idea that human beings can sometimes choose “the lyrics” but “the tune is the same” (Deleuze p. 105). The tune is the tragic destiny and the lyrics are repeated elements and the actors who change to sing the same melody.

The concept of empty time is closely connected to Thanatos. Thanatos is defined as a desexualized energy which supersedes particularities of an individual psychic system. Thanatos does not produce a destructive impulse or “death instinct” in an individual subject but it is indifferent and thus it can create individuals who are strongly influenced by this quality. Vonnegut’s hero Billy had been indifferent and passive even before he had to face the situation after Dresden’s destruction. The passivity of Billy stands in sharp contrast to a process which is called “Individuation”. This process is defined by Deleuze as a coalescence of individuals out of the cosmic flow of matter. Individuation is mobile, supple and fortuitous process. This process has its margins and it is a result of a mutual communication among the “intensities”. Examples of intensities or forces could be: an individual will, natural process, a historical fact or movement. Deleuze states, that when individuation takes place, the world does not become passive background. Individuals are strongly bound to all the underlying forces which constitute them. The forces interact, develop and form the individual without his or her

approval. Individuation makes possible a confrontation of a subject and “the Other”. “The other” in Vonnegut’s SLHN5 are Trafaladorians and war atrocities. “The other” leave on Billy’s mind “a scar” which makes him passive and deluded.

### **8.3.3 “A Disabled Mind” Incapable of Active Synthesis**

Using a metaphor of a scar Deleuze defines the difference between artificial and natural signs. The natural signs are signs founded upon a passive synthesis, they are signs of the present, referring to the present in which they signify. Artificial signs are those which refer to the past or the future as distinct dimensions of the present and they imply active synthesis. Active synthesis is defined here as a passage from the spontaneous imagination to the active faculties of reflective representation, memory and intelligence. (Deleuze p. 99) The process of active synthesis is inactive in Billy’s mind. The examples of this disruption are “nonsense” comments, made by Billy which refers to another situation from the past. Billy repeats the comments, made by someone else in the most incredible situations and thus demonstrates his inability to cope with the past. A good example is his interview on the radio, when he calms his aroused nerves telling himself: “If you’re ever in Cody, Wyoming...just ask for Wild Bob.” (Vonnegut p. 263) Wild Bob was killed in war and Billy has never been to Wyoming. Billy’s inability to perform active synthesis may be attributed to fatigue. Fatigue is defined by Deleuze as a point when the soul can no longer contract what it contemplates, it is the moment at which contemplation and contraction come apart.

The duration of an organism’s present, or its various presents, will vary according to the natural contractile range of its contemplative soul. (Deleuze p. 98)

Fatigue is a real component of contemplation and in Billy’s case it has the character of a stigma.

According to Deleuze, one is only what one has: being is formed by having. He gives examples of “larval subjects” which draw a weak generality from repetition of elements. The larval subjects are Becket’s Molloy’s “series of stones” or Murphy’s “biscuits.” In the case of Vonnegut’s Billy, the larval subjects can be certain moments of his life, the key moments

which he lived or “collected” during war. The moments of war are omnipresent and he never escapes them.

#### **8.4 The basic Intention of “the New Novel” is to Make the Extremes Resonate**

Deleuze defines the intention of “the new novel”:

It is undoubtedly one of the most profound intentions of the “new novel” to rediscover, below the level of active syntheses, the domain of passive syntheses which constitute us, the domain of modifications, tropisms and little peculiarities. In all its components fatigues, in all its mediocre autosatisfactions, in all its derisory presumptions, in its misery and its poverty, the dissolved self still sings the glory of God - that is of which it contemplates, contracts and possesses. (Deleuze p. 100)

Vonnegut’s novel is full of derisory moments which show human misery and poverty. We do not have to take into account only the period of war, but the repetition of the killing and dying still continues with Vonnegut’s comments which are repeated many times in different situations. The literal repetition of the elements is intentional. A short sentence “So it goes” is repeated many times and the comparisons e.g. “people nested like spoons”, “breath like mustard gas and roses” too. The situations in which the author uses the same comparisons are various and thus he confirms the Deleuzian idea that “what we say of a life may be said of several lives”. (Deleuze p. 105) The Deleuzian notion of a special position of present is emphasized again and one life may replay another at a different level, as if the philosopher and the pig, or the criminal and the saint, played out the same past at different levels of a gigantic cone.(Deleuze p. 105) This mechanism is called metempsychosis. Deleuze describes the mechanism in musical terms, when he says that each chooses his pitch and lyrics, but the tune remains the same and underneath all the lyrics there is the same tra-la-la. Vonnegut mentions in his book people dying and then lice dying in poisonous gas (Vonnegut p. 183) and water without gas he describes as dead water. The Deleuzian notion of a “gigantic cone”, where the same tunes, but different lyrics are played is reflected in Vonnegut’s work. His heroes can “nest like spoons” during their honeymoon or in a prisoners’ transport wagon.

The element which is very hard to find in Vonnegut is the Deleuzian notion of “the dissolved self which sings the glory of God”. God appears in the novel only in a new Gospel which was given to Earth by a visitor from outer space. God is angry after the crucifixion of Jesus, whom he adopts after his death, God promises “to punish horribly anybody who torments a bum who has no connections!” (Vonnegut p. 140) We have to point again to the Deleuzian “derisory presumptions”. The ideas about Christianity are expressed by the visitor from outer space, who wants to learn why Christians found it so easy to be cruel. The extraterrestrial’s explanation of absurd killing is expressed by “a slipshod storytelling” in the New Testament. The truth which should be taught by the Gospels is: “Before you kill somebody, make absolutely sure he isn’t well connected.” (Vonnegut p. 138) Vonnegut draws a humorous connection between the notion of chance, death and punishment. His Earthlings “amused themselves one day” (Vonnegut p. 139) and they killed somebody who was “well connected” and the problem arose. There is no guilt on either side. People killed “to amuse themselves” and because they misunderstood the message of mercy of the Gospels. Death is something which comes by chance and which is omnipresent. “To have connections” means to sing a tune, which can be understood easily by the others.

According to Deleuze, there are two ways to appeal to “necessary destructions”. The first way is the way of a poet (an author) who speaks in the name of a creative power and who is capable of overturning all orders and all representations in order to affirm difference by the state of a permanent revolution, which means and embodies eternal return. The second way is the way of a politician who is interested in conserving an established political order. Vonnegut created a protagonist who keeps on appearing in his novels and who can be understood as an author’s mirror image. The name of a fictional author is Kilgore Trout and this fictional character constantly challenges the society with his science fiction books. Kilgore Trout remains a marginal author and the only one who accepts his writing with pleasure is a war veteran Billy Pilgrim, who has become the subject of the “necessary destruction”.

Deleuze states that there are two terrifying extremes we have to face in our lives. The first extreme is standardized, stereotyped, accelerated and habitual consumption and the second is the instinctual series of destruction and death. The only power which is able to make the extremes resonate is an artistic power which produces a small difference. This difference plays simultaneously between the other levels of repetition and it can make the extremes resonate. Vonnegut in his SLHN5 targets both the Deleuzian extremes. The stereotyped consumption is

expressed by Billy's life after his money-wise marriage and instinctual killing reaches its peak in Dresden. The war experience made Billy travel in time and deepened his passivity. The only impulse which is capable of waking up Billy's suffering soul is Kilgore Trout's writing. The fantastic world of science fiction serves as a shelter and ultimate reality for Billy.

Vonnegut wrote *SLHN5* to face his war experience and his experience with consumption orientated society of American 1960s. At the beginning of the novel he writes: "People are not supposed to look back." (Vonnegut p. 28) and he states that the experience which forced him to write the novel was petrifying: "This one (book) is a failure, since it was written by a pillar of salt." His experience in Dresden made him petrified inside and the same thing happened to Lot's wife after God's destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The author mentions Lot's wife who gazed back and died and he expresses warm sympathy to the women who broke the rule in order to see what happened to the others in the burning town.

## **9. Conclusion**

### **9.1 Revolting Authors and Philosophers**

To analyse the aspects of authority and grotesque reflected in the American literature of the 1960s, philosophical and sociological concepts of Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari were used. The above mentioned philosophical concepts were chosen for their recalcitrant attitude to the historically and philosophically accepted “truths” and ideas which dominated the scientific discourse in humanities. According to Foucault, the authors whose thoughts were dominant in the discourse of humanities were Marx and Freud. Deleuze’s *Anti-Oedipus* can be presented as a collection of thoughts which challenge the “totalitarian” concepts of psychoanalysis, capitalism and schizophrenia. To illustrate the encounter between a particular authority and the main heroes of the literary works, novels written in the 1960s by Ken Kesey, Kurt Vonnegut and John Kennedy Toole were chosen. The idea of a protest against something which was officially declared as “truth” connects the primary sources with the philosophical concepts used for the analysis, since both can be marked as “rebellious”. The third major source of secondary literature is represented by the ideas expressed in the works of Bakhtin concerning dialogism and grotesque.

The selected authors use the grotesque to challenge the “truth” accepted by the authorities of their time. The heroes of the novels revolt against authority, which is mainly embodied by psychiatry and military institutions, their struggle is individual and subjective and is mainly turned against institutional and ideological violence.

The struggle against institutions which are “governmentalized”, like a psychiatric asylum, were reflected in the works of philosophers, e. g. Foucault and Deleuze, and the basic critical thoughts were formulated by the Anti-psychiatry movement. The source of subversive thoughts and deeds of the main heroes of the novels can be attributed to desire. According to Deleuze, everything and everybody is a desiring machine. According to Deleuze, if society is identical with its structure, desire threatens its very being. (Deleuze p. 116). It is very important for society to repress desire, and it uses means to strengthen the effect of this oppression, namely hierarchy, exploitation and servitude. Desire is something revolutionary, it dreams of wide-open spaces and causes strange flows to circulate that do not let themselves

be stocked within an established order. According to Deleuzian criticism of psychoanalysis, desire can not be reduced only to sexual desire, which stems from Oedipal complex.

## 9.2 Urstaat and Capitalist Machine

Power is defined as a way of action in which one acts upon the other. The structure by which power is exercised is the state. According to Deleuze the State was formed in progressive stages and its primordial model was Urstaat, which embodies the eternal model of everything the State wants to be. Deleuze continues that this primordial State expresses an objective movement on the horizon of history. Its existence can be traced back to the discovery of imperial machines that preceded the traditional historical forms, machines characterized by State ownership of property, with communal possession bricked into it, and collective dependence. The feudal and imperial state demanded great territories and during its development “the breakdown of codes” occurred. (Deleuze p.218)

The breakdown of codes occurs when the State can no longer be content to overcode territorial elements that are already coded, it must invent specific codes for flows that are increasingly deterritorialized, which means putting despotism in the service of the new class relations, integrating the relations of wealth and poverty, of commodity and labor, reconciling market money and money from revenues.

Capitalism does not lead to the dissolution of feudalism, but rather to the contrary. Nevertheless there is a great difference in time between the despotic age and the capitalist age. Capitalism is said to be diachronic, the capitalists appear in succession in a series that institutes a kind of creativity in history, a strange menagerie, the schizoid time of the new creative break. (Deleuze p. 223)

## 9.3 Capitalism and Schizophrenia

The main heroes of the novels could all be labeled as **schizophrenic** by material psychiatry. The writers use this disorder, which enables their heroes to enter into new productive contexts.

Schizophrenia is not seen as something disruptive or harmful, its effects for example: Billy's stays on Trafalmadore, Bromden's enhanced sensitivity are seen as positive in that that they act as shifters of the plot.

An example of material psychiatrist is Feuerbach, who looks at things as a materialist and there is no history in his works. (Deleuze p. 22) Material psychiatry can be defined by the twofold task it sets itself: introducing desire into the mechanism, and introducing production into desire.

The theory of schizophrenia is formulated in terms of three concepts that constitute its ternary schema: **dissociation, autism and being-in-the-world**. All the concepts relate the problem of schizophrenia to the ego through the intermediary of "body image". According to psychoanalysis the ego is created by the triangle daddy-mommy-me. This idea is erratic according to Deleuze. A Schizophrenic is somewhere else, beyond or behind or below these problems. And wherever he is, there are problems – insurmountable sufferings, unbearable needs.

According to Deleuze, Freud hated schizophrenics. Why? Because they are apathetic (Vonnegut's Billy), narcissistic (Toole's Ignatius), cut-off from reality (Kesey's Bromden), and they resemble philosophers.

Deleuze states that schizophrenia is the process of the production of desire and **desiring-machines**. The concept of this process is a reaction formation or development of the personality which enters into the relationship with the "demoniacal" in nature. Deleuze criticizes the traditional logic of desire because it excludes production and acquisition.

The link between capitalism and schizophrenia is created by the very nature of capitalism, which is in fact born of the encounter of two sorts of flows, the decoded flows of production in the form of money-capital and the decoded flows of labor in the form of the "free worker". The capitalist machine is incapable of providing a code that will apply to the whole of the social field. By substituting money for the very notion of a code, it has created an axiom of abstract quantities that keeps moving further and further in direction of the deterritorialization of the socius. (Deleuze p. 33)

Thus it is possible to say that schizophrenia is the product of capitalist machine, as manic depression and paranoia are the product of the despotic machine.

#### **9.4 Body Without Organs – Dark Matter of Literary Analysis**

Deleuzian concepts of the **Body without organs** (BWO) uses methods and comparisons from other sciences, e. g. biology, physics, anthropology, and thus it can be evaluated as a productive and holistic attitude. These non-literary concepts are productive for a literary analysis because they move ideas further and connect them together to create a harmony which includes and holds the particular constituent elements together.

Dark matter is a term borrowed from astronomy and cosmology and it covers several notions of the Deleuzian concepts of BWO.

Dark matter is currently undetermined matter which is estimated to be responsible for more than 80 per cent of all matter in the Universe. It is invisible, it bends light and can be compared to a “scaffolding of the Universe”. (Trimble p. 426)

Dark matter can be compared to BWO, which is defined by Deleuze as the contrary of God. The energy which sweeps through it is divine, when it attracts to itself the entire process of production and serves as its miraculous, enchanted surface, inscribing it in each and every one of its disjunctions. (Deleuze p. 13)

To define the nature of body without organs is essential to include the two following quotes:

The body without organs is nonproductive, nonetheless it is produced, at a certain place and a certain time in the connective synthesis, as the identity of producing and the product: the schizophrenic table is a body without organs. The body without organs is not the proof of an original nothingness, nor is it what remains of a lost totality. Above all it is not a projection, it has nothing whatsoever to do with the body itself, or with an image of the body. It is the body without an image. (Deleuze p. 8)

The above mentioned quote inspired me to compare dark matter to BWO. Dark matter is not matter in the sense of traditional physics, it is composed of unknown subatomic particles and we learn about its qualities from “repulsions”, e.g. light bending, energy and mass consumption. This idea made me associate dark matter with Deleuzian BWO, which was

named as “body” but it lacks the qualities of a body and it has no image. Dark matter has no image either.

Deleuze even connects the processes which occur between desiring machines and body without organs to schizoid disorders. The clashes between BWO and paranoiac machines stem from the desiring machines which attempt to break into BWO and it repels them as an over-all persecution apparatus.

BWO is also compared to capital or a capitalist being because of the surplus value it creates. The closest and the most practical illustration of the BWO concept in the novels is expressed in Kesey, whose narrator of the story, Bromden, dreams, thanks to his schizophrenia, about the “Combine” (BWO) and the body of old Blastic, which is torn and wide open and there are no organs in his body – “just a shower of rust and ashes, and now and again a piece of wire or glass.” (Kesey p. 85)

The concept of something strange, hostile, mysterious and invisible but dreadfully substantial is firmly set in the mind of Bromden, who asks about the puzzling “Combine” in terror:

“But if they don’t exist, how can a man see them?” (Kesey p. 87)

To close this subchapter, it is essential to include a quote which compares BWO to an egg and which can be used to describe Bromden’s experience:

The body without organs **is an egg**: it is crisscrossed with axes and thresholds, with latitudes and longitudes and geodesic lines, traversed by gradients marking the transitions and the becomings, the destinations of the subject developing along these particular vectors.

A harrowing, emotionally overwhelming experience, which brings the schizo as close as possible to matter, to a **burning, living center of matter**: “This emotion, situated outside of particular point where the mind is searching for it...the one’s entire soul flows into this emotion, situated outside of the particular point where the mind is aware of the terribly disturbing sound of matter, and passes through its white-hot flame”. (Deleuze p. 19)

## **9.5 The Era of the American 1960s in Literature, Deleuzian Approaches Used for the Literary Analysis**

The era of the 1960s was marked by Foucault as “enigmatic years” and by Bradbury as an era of disagreement and revolt against the previous cultural authorities. The era of the 1960s in

America can be divided in two contradictory phases. The first part of the decade was marked by optimism and positive expectancy caused by relative material affluence and the promising ideas of liberation from social prejudice and racial and gender constraints while the second phase was marked by disappointment that the positive anticipations had failed.<sup>13</sup>

According to Bradbury, American literature of the 1960s started to express growing doubts about the position of an individual in the world and about the influence of the authorities over personal lives of the individuals. A good example of a hero who feels dislocated in the modern age and is violently forced by the society “to define” himself although he strongly rejects doing such a thing is the hero of Walker Percy’s novel *The Moviegoer*. Another example of a hero who gets deeply confused and later on disappointed by the ongoing events and failed expectations is Updike’s “Rabbit” – Harry Angstrom (*Rabbit Run*).

History started to be perceived as a destabilizing force and the number of conspiratorial theories grew. History was not a science which could answer all the questions about the position of a human being in this world and other sciences started to permeate into the scientific discourse of humanities. Thomas Pynchon published his postmodern novel *Crying of Lot 49*, into which he incorporated the mathematical, physical and informational theories. The basic questions about human existence were still open and the notion of human existence, which is inevitably tragic, gave rise to the revival of the gothic forms which included black humor and parody.

Fiedler states that the new gothic forms started to flourish, and the publishing of novels e.g. Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood* and John Hawkes’ *The Lime Twig* supports this claim.

The 1960s was an era of radical change for many anthropologists. According to Kane, the questions concerning the impact of colonization, the meaning of white privilege and power and the construction of social identity started to dominate the anthropological discourse. The reappearance of a trickster figure in the full strength of the real and metaphysical sense occurred in the early 1960s.

The thoughts which dominated in the 1960s and which appeared repeatedly in American literature can be divided into the following groups according to one particular and unifying element:

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<sup>13</sup>. The Irish author William Trevor wrote a story *Lovers of Their Time*, which uses an example of a spoiled love affair to describe the failed expectancies and a “dream” of the 1960s in general, which never came true.

- The notion of **tragic and chaotic meaning of human life**, which is portrayed via parody, deconstruction, black humor and criticism of the contemporary society. The authors who followed this idea were: Vonnegut (*Mother Night*, *Slaughterhouse 5*), Joseph Heller (*Catch 22*), Thomas Pynchon (*The Crying of Lot 49*)
- The reflection of The Second World War and the wars which immediately followed – the Korean War, the Vietnam War: Vonnegut (*Mother Night*, *Slaughterhouse 5*), James Jones (*Thin Red Line*), Norman Mailer (*Armies of the Night*)
- Reassessment of the attitudes towards **higher states of mind** and mental disorders namely schizophrenia in a sense of celebration of its liberating aspects: Richard Brautigan (*In Watermelon Sugar*), Ken Kesey (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*), Tom Wolfe (*The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*)
- The reappearance of **the trickster figure**, its metamorphosis and its connotations from its historical roots toward his resurrection in the modern society: Ken Kesey (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*), John Kennedy Toole (*A Confederacy of Dunces*)

The novels chosen for the analysis reflect the revolt of an individual against authority. The anti-authority struggle is mainly subjective and it is centered around the question: “Who are we ?

The struggles against the authorities are aimed against: Institutional violence

- Scientific and Ideological Inquisition
- Ignorance Towards Individuality
- Ideological and State Violence

The novels chosen for the analysis share the principal above mentioned features and thus may be placed among the typical representatives of the American Literature of the 1960s. The most important and unifying element is their anti-authority struggle and the usage of the grotesque.

The novels written by John Kennedy Toole: *Neon Bible*, *A Confederacy of Dunces*, constitute a special category because they are fundamentally different.<sup>14</sup>

The most productive approach to the analysis of the last and the second Toole's novel are Bakhtinian theories concerning the popular carnival culture. Bakhtinian theories concerning chronotope were used to analyse Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse 5*.

To sum up the scholarly approaches used in the analysis, it is essential to start with **Bakhtinian theories** concerning dialogism:

- Bakhtin's dialogical approach is productive for a literary analysis because it emphasizes the process by which manifold experience (the American 1960s) enters the domain of the author's self and thus influences the process of the creation of a work of art. The position of an observer (the author) is fundamental, because he is an active participant in the relation of simultaneity. The self of an author is defined as an event with a particular structure and this structure is formed by the law of placement, which says that everything is perceived from a unique position in existence.
- The notion that human life is tragic but that misery is an occasion more proper for laughter than for tears occurs in the novels. As a connecting element between them. The notion of the grotesque which is productive for the analysis is the notion of carnival culture. The aesthetics of the grotesque lies in the connection of the ugly, monstrous and the sublime, whose unity forms the real beauty which is inaccessible for pure classical art. The grotesque paradigm of the world opens up a new view of the happenings in this world. Everything in existence is relative and changing and this fact is profoundly hilarious. The changes which occur are not only abstract but they absorb the whole body and soul of a human being. The grotesque concept of the world is deeply concerned with the contemporaneous events happening in human society and contains the awareness of change and crisis – social, environmental or cosmic. The center of the Bakhtinian ideas concerning popular carnival culture lies in carnivalesque notion, when all social constraints were broken and reversed. The world became a place of a jaunty and happy unity where death meant the end and the rebirth of something new and possibly better.

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<sup>14</sup> *Neon Bible* is a story which aims to follow the tradition of southern gothic fiction represented by e. g. Flannery O'Connor. Toole deeply admired O'Connor's work and his first novel was strongly influenced southern gothic.

- The reappearance of a trickster figure. The trickster figure is a mythological figure connected to the carnival culture, because it can embody its center. The theoretical background used for the analysis was rooted in the theories of Gerald Vizenor, and Vizenor's theories stem from Bakhtinian principles of the carnivalesque. The trickster is a figure which mediates between oppositions and embodies authentic, nonrational experiences of man with the natural world, his society and his own soul. A trickster figure possesses no moral or social values, but is responsible for both. The trickster is the shapeshifter of a plot and he constantly challenges everything which surrounds him, e.g. society. His most effective and subversive weapon is laughter. His position is fixed in oral discourse and his nature is dialogic. He is created by dialogues and narratives of mainly native provenience. The laughter which is eluded by the trickster's pranks stands in sharp opposition to authority of any kind. Laughter is an artistic phenomenon and it indicates the dualism of a human being – that is the capacity of being oneself and someone else at the same time.<sup>15</sup> The trickster figure brings chaos into social models and he uses agonistic imagination in narratives and in language games. His special nature enables him to perform metamorphosis which is beneficial for mankind. The metamorphosis can also be connected to the carnivalesque principle, by which a beggar can become a king for a while.

The second philosophical basis of the analysis draws on the thoughts of Deleuze and Guattari, which were used to analyse Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse 5* and the notion of schizophrenia and madness in Kesey and Toole. Thus it can be suggested that the philosophical background of Deleuzian thoughts can be used to analyse the following works of Vonnegut (*Mother Night*, *God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater*, *Breakfast of Champions*) and the work of Thomas Pynchon (*The Crying of Lot*). The last mentioned novel can be analysed with respect to the Deleuzian aspects of schizophrenia. The criticism of psychoanalysis and further philosophical concepts expressed in Deleuze's *Anti-Oedipus*, concerning BWO and desiring machines, mentioned above, can be used to produce further literary analysis concerning productivity and contradictions of psychoanalysis in American Literature. The author who might open the analysis could be Philip Roth and his work *Portnoy's Complaint*.

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<sup>15</sup> The Christian counterpart of a trickster is devil. Kesey's McMurphy is the bringer of chaos and his subversive nature makes him comparable to a devilish intruder.

The most productive philosophical thoughts of Deleuze and Foucault which were used as the theoretical background of the analysis can be divided into two groups. The first A group deals with the thoughts concerning madness and schizoanalysis, and the second group (B) defines repetition as a positive and essential force:

A) A positive and revolutionary role of madness. The perception of madness and schizophrenia as a liberating force is expressed in the analysed novels, as well as in other novels which were not the object of this analysis, for example: Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*.

- Foucault divides the forms of madness into three basic groups:
  - A1) The madness of someone who has identified himself with a hero of a novel
  - A2) The madness of vanity
  - A3) The madness of the right minded
- Foucault states that the position of madman is isolated, a madman is labeled as an individual imprisoned between two worlds. His position is one of transition, he is not allowed to stay inside the society, he is always expelled and this seclusion enables him to "see" the world from point of view different from others.
- Foucault continues that madness was symbolized in history as an empty skull and it also embodied a victory over death. The world of madness is connected to the world of dreams, and the mixture of meanings releases more meanings and unexpected connections between the meanings. Madness was connected to sins which were committed by man who succumbed to earthly desires and dreams. The creature which symbolized the abovementioned madness was Gryll, who appeared even in Old English psalmbooks. Gryll had his face placed on his big grotesque belly and Gryll also embodied dark, strange and mysterious inclinations of human nature. The condemnation of human weakness for bodily pleasures such as food and sexuality connects the historical view of madness to a figure which saw its great rebirth in the 1960s – the trickster.

- Deleuze and Guattari define schizophrenia in new terms as a productive force, which can be used for a political analysis called “schizoanalysis”. It proposes a functional evaluation of the direct investments of desire in a social, biological, historical and geographical field. The main theses of schizoanalysis are four:
- Every unconscious libidinal investment is social
- Unconscious libidinal investments of group or desire are distinct from preconscious (memories and thoughts which have not been repressed) investment of class or interest
- Non-familial libidinal investments of the social field are primary in relation to familial investments. In other words Deleuze and Guattari negate the primary basis of psychoanalysis, which says that everything stems from the triangle daddy-mommy-me
- Social libidinal investments are distinguished according to two poles: a paranoiac, reactionary, fascisizing pole, and a schizoid revolutionary pole. (Deleuze p. 342)
- Deleuze and Guattari even redefine some basic terms of Freud, for example:
- The unconscious is not figurative, since its figural is abstract, the figure-schiz. It is not structural, nor is it symbolic, for its reality is that of the real in its very production, in its very inorganization. It is not representative, but solely machinic, and productive. (Deleuze p. 311)
- Schizoanalysis assumes that the libido does not need to be de-sexualized, sublimated, or to go by the way of metamorphoses in order to invest economic or political factors. According to Deleuze, desire and sexuality is everywhere and it is part of the economic infrastructural base of society, it is not an ideological subjective superstructure. (Deleuze p. 293)
- The figure which is embodiment of a “walking lust, sexuality and self-indulgency” is a trickster. The trickster figure is a visual demonstration of the Deleuzian thought, that sexuality is everywhere.

- Schizoanalysis wants to show how in the subject which desires, desire can be made to desire its own oppression – whence the role of the death instinct in the circuit connecting desire to the social sphere. Desire produces the most repressive and the most deadly form of social reproduction. Examples of desiring objects, who “desire” their own repression are the patients of the mental asylum described by Kesey in his novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, because they stay in the asylum voluntarily despite the fact that they hate the rules and the nurse. The only exception is the main trickster - McMurphy.
  - Deleuze, Guattari, R. D. Laing and W. Reich made a connection between psychological repression and social oppression. The universe is composed of desiring machines, all of which are connected to one another. The Freudian principle of sublimation is opposed and the dualism between desiring machines and social production created by sublimation is also neglected. (Deleuze p. 169)
- B) The idea of Deleuzian repetition is a productive attitude in literary analysis. The ideas concerning **repetition, difference, empty time and passive and active syntheses** were used to analyse Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse 5*. The following points will sum up the basis of this statement:
- The place of representation was taken by difference and repetition, because representation failed to explain loss of identity and discovery of the forces which work under it. All identities in this world are created by a profound game of difference and repetition. Repetition is defined in contrast to generality. Generality expresses the point when one term can be replaced by another, and repetition is defined as a relation to something unique and singular. The unique and singular point, which keeps on reappearing in Vonnegut’s novel is the idea of the destruction of Dresden and the inevitability of the game of death and chance.
  - Repetition is an element of transgression which expresses a singularity opposed to the ordinary. It puts law into question and creates more profound and artistic reality. Transgression in the novel is expressed by the hero’s passivity towards the game of

death he is forced to witness. The singular power is embodied by the law of nature and limitedness of human existence

- Repetition belongs to the realm of humor and irony and it goes beyond the Moral law. This idea is expressed by the notion that there are no pure villains in the analysed works. All the heroes are subjected to the law of war or the law of chance and their deaths are senseless. They are not punished for doing anything, they are simply in the wrong place at the wrong time and their lives end for no rational reason.
- Repetition is described as the unconscious of a free concept and its nature is tragic and comic. It should reflect the contrast between the tragic destiny and the comic repetition.
- The real theater of terror is reality and the only refuge for the heroes of the novels are their illusionary worlds created by their schizophrenia, for example: Vonnegut's hero's imaginary world of a planet called Trafalmador.
- Repetition is an ambiguous force which has potential to set free, to destroy and to heal.
- Passive synthesis is a process in which the living present goes from the past to the future which it constitutes in time and which goes from the particulars to the general using contraction. The most important notion of time is the present.
- The Deleuzian concept of the "Empty form of time" is essential in the analysis of Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse 5*

To define the contribution of the dissertation, it is essential to identify those aspects of the novels in question which are expressed only in the present analysis and those which this analysis shares with other analyses.

This analysis of the works of Kurt Vonnegut employs certain thoughts which were mentioned above but which are common viewpoints. The following thoughts are:

- Vonnegut's humanism (Friedman)
- Death and life as the center of the author's interest (Smith, Marvin)
- Science fiction character of his works (Friedman)
- Fatalism (Friedman)
- Utopian schemes which are dysfunctional (Veselá)
- Simplicity and sadness
- Irony

The point which is used for my dissertation is the Deleuzian notion of **repetition** in Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse 5*.

Kesey's novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* was labelled as "a trickster novel" and as a novel which expresses the ideas of counter culture. (Swirski, Owens) My analysis develops **the notion of a tricksters further** and concentrates on the Deleuzian notion of schizophrenia as a fruitful source of concepts which were used for the literary analysis. The contribution of my dissertation stems from the comparison of Kesey's tricksters to the tricksters of oral narratives, which were specified by Vizenor and Radin.

Toole's novel was analysed from the point of view of Bakhtinian carnival culture and the grotesque. My dissertation concentrates on the trickster figures in Toole. The biographical aspect and the aspect of southern grotesque emphasized by Nevils and Hardy are omitted in the dissertation.

The dissertation puts together the three authors and it explores the overlap of the following notions:

- The grotesque
- The positive notion of madness and schizophrenia
- Anti-authority struggles and tricksters

## Resumé

Tato disertační práce se zabývá rolí autority a grotesky ve vybraných dílech americké literatury. Díla vybraná k analýze jsou: Kurt Vonnegut Jr. (*Jatka č. 5*), John Kennedy Toole (*Společení hlupců*) a Ken Kesey (*Vyhod' me ho z kola ven*). Jednotícím prvkem je dekáda šedesátých let, tedy období vzniku děl, a zároveň motiv střetu hlavních hrdinů s autoritou, který je pro ně fatální.

Šedesátá léta dvacátého století jsou charakterizována dle Fiedlera, Bercowitche a Lory jako dekáda, kterou lze rozdělit do dvou částí. Pro první fázi, trvající zhruba do první poloviny šedesátých let, je dominujícím prvkem vlna nebyvalé občanské aktivity a optimismu. Druhá část této dekády je poznamenána zklamáním společnosti ze vstupu USA do války ve Vietnamu a zároveň pesimismem pramenícím z nenaplněných očekávání, která přinesla první polovina šedesátých let. Další faktor, který dle Fiedlera hraje důležitou roli v americké literatuře vznikající v šedesátých letech, je časový odstup a možné přehodnocení dějinných událostí, které přinesl konec 2. světové války. Vlnu nadšeného optimismu, který pocházel z vítězství ve 2. světové válce, pozastavila léta následné studené války a probíhajících válek lokálního charakteru – jako byla např. válka v Koreji. Bradbury definuje vlivy, které působily na literaturu vznikající v šedesátých letech, z hlediska nového nazírání na historii, která je považována za destabilizující a ničící sílu, proti které je jednotlivec bezmocný. Bradbury zároveň vyzdvihuje šedesátá léta jako období, ve kterém došlo k odlišnému vnímání pojmu autority jako takové a s nímž souvisela tvorba děl groteskních a parodických jako byla např. Hellerova *Hlava 22*. Fiedler dále upozorňuje na výskyt nových gotických forem, ve kterých se největší hrozbou stává prvek nukleární, vše zničující války.

Formativní sociokulturní vlivy, které se odrazily v dílech analyzovaných autorů, byly zkoumány s použitím hledisek Holquista a Bachtina. Ti definují dopad těchto vlivů na literaturu prostřednictvím tzv. „law of placement“ (pravidlo umístění perspektivy)<sup>16</sup>. Toto pravidlo vychází z verze relativity, protože bere v potaz aktivní účast pozorovatele, účastníka a zároveň následku tohoto pozorování skutečnosti, jejíž následný obraz je posléze promítnut do konkrétního díla.

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<sup>16</sup> Překlad vlastní

Pojem autority a druh boje proti autoritě je definován na základě teorií Foucaulta. Foucault definuje autoritu jako druh vztahu, jehož základem je působení jednotlivce na druhé. Moc je dle Foucaulta spojena s násilím, protože silou ovlivňuje (uzavírá) možné alternativy dějů současných a příštích. Hrdinové analyzovaných děl se dostávají do přímého střetu s autoritou, která je nejčastěji reprezentována psychiatrickou léčebnou, a tento motiv se objevuje ve všech analyzovaných románech.

Druhy bojů proti autoritě, které jsou definovány Foucaultem a které se objevují v analyzovaných románech, jsou především následující (vždy bude uveden hlavní protagonista díla, jehož osudy jsou těmito boji zásadně ovlivněny):

- boje proti „vědecké a ideologické inkvizici“<sup>17</sup> (Tooleův Ignácus a jeho neobvyklý světonázor)
- boje proti přehlížení individuality a násilí realizované formou institucí (Keseeho Náčelník a McMurphy)
- boje proti násilí, které je podporováno státem z ideologických důvodů (Vonnegutův Billy jako přeživší bombardování Drážďan)

Nejvýznamnější hnutí, ovlivněné Foucaultovými myšlenkami je Anti-psychiatrické hnutí, jehož představiteli jsou Laing, Cooper a Szasz. Základní myšlenky tohoto hnutí jsou přímo spojeny se zápletkou Keseeho románu, jehož hlavní hrdina svůj střet s autoritou zaplatí životem. Mezi hlavní myšlenky Anti-psychiatrie patří :

- Zneužití síly a převahy ze strany zaměstnanců těchto institucí („Velká sestra“ a její manipulativní chování v Kesyem)
- Přemíra užívání uklidňujících léků (Keseeho pacienti, kteří jsou nuceni brát léky, které odmítají)

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<sup>17</sup> Překlad vlastní

- Psychiatrické diagnózy jsou příliš neurčité a neodpovídají vědeckým standardům vzhledem k tomu, že umožňují příliš velkou možnost rozdílné interpretace. (Například Vonnegutův Billy je také umístěn v psychiatrické léčebně, kde je podroben psychoanalýze, a jeho posttraumatický stres je chybně diagnostikován jako Oidipovský komplex z dětství. Tooleův hrdina Ignácus utíká na závěr románu z domova před násilnou internací v psychiatrické léčebně)
- Velká většina léčebných postupů z oblasti psychiatrie je spíše ničivá než pomáhající (Elektrošoky a lobotomie u Keseyho)

Motiv šílenství je v analyzovaných dílech převážně nazírán z pozitivního hlediska jako odlišnost, která vede k osvobození hlavních hrdinů a jejich okolí z pout tíživě vnímané reality. Např. Keseyho Náčelník se skrývá ve světě „své“ schizofrenie před tíživými zážitky z války a před společností, která ho vždy odsouvala na svůj okraj vzhledem k jeho indiánskému původu. Vonnegutův Billy si stvořil svět na jiné planetě Trafalmador a jeho obyvatelé jsou schopni zodpovědět Billyho otázky ohledně zásadních událostí, které se odehrály v jeho životě.

Motiv šílenství je v této disertační práci nazírán ze dvou perspektiv. První teoretické východiště vychází z Foucaulta a je uplatněno na Tooleově hrdinovi Ignáciovi, jehož šílenství je klasifikováno jako ztotožnění se s hrdinou románu či historickou postavou tj. s Boethiem.

Druhá perspektiva, ze které je možno nahlížet na schizofrenii, je Deleuzeova schizoanalýza, jejíž základní pojmy jsou vysvětleny dle díla *Antioidipus, Kapitalismus a schizofrenie*. Zde je schizofrenie definována jako přímý produkt kapitalismu a jako jeden z řetězce produkcí, které jsou základním procesem probíhajícím mezi člověkem a jeho okolím. Člověk, příroda, pohoří, rostliny, stromy, zvířata - vše je zahrnuto do kategorie strojů - „stroje touhy“ (desiring machines), které se zapojují do nepřetržitého řetězce a koloběhu plynutí. V tomto ohledu se myšlenky hlavního Keseyho hrdiny doslova shodují s Deleuzem – Keseyho „Náčelník“ pociťuje přítomnost „strojů“ všude okolo sebe, i sama léčebna skrývá v dolním podlaží továrnu – stroj, kde jsou lidé přetavováni v jiné bytosti. Ti poté lépe poslouží systému, který je u Keseyho nazývám „Kombajn“.

Rozbor díla Spolčení hlupců od J. K. Toolea je založen na teoriích lidové karnevalové kultury formulované Bachtinem. Tooleův Ignácus může být přirovnán na základě této

teorie k „pohyblivému karnevalu“. Jeho tělo obsahuje groteskní prvek neukončenosti a vše „nízké“ a tělesné je v jeho osobě spojeno s filozofickými myšlenkami, jejichž prosazování věnuje Ignácius své veškeré síly. Spojení „nízkého“ a „vysokého“ je pro karnevalovou kulturu typické. Ignácius vnáší do svého okolí prvek chaosu, který je vnímán jako osvobozující síla. Takto převrácené hodnoty, kdy se „šásek stává králem“ a společenská hierarchie je tak porušena a převrácena, to je typický rys karnevalové kultury. Z karnevalové kultury také vychází pozitivní náplň bachtinovského pojmu groteskna, který je v přímém rozporu s Kayserovou teorií romantické grotesky. Ta je u Kaysera vnímána jako síla negativní, která neukrývá nic než prázdnotu.

Dalším z prvků, které mají díla Toolea a Keseyho společné, je výskyt „šibalů“ (tricksters). Tato figura je rozpracována a definována na základě teorií G. Vizenora (*Narrative Chance*)<sup>18</sup>, který v mnohém vychází z Bachtina.

Šibal je figura, která má své místo pevně stanovené v oblasti ústní tradice a slovesnosti (oral discourse) a která svým mnohdy hloupým rebelantstvím a žerty zachraňuje své okolí. Motiv šibala se hojně vyskytuje v lidové slovesnosti tzv. přírodních národů a nese v sobě silně pozitivní a osvobozující prvek, který lidstvo nutně potřebuje k přežití.

Pro šibala je typická vysoká tělesná požívačnost a zdánlivá oproštěnost od morálních zákonů dobra a zla. U šibalů, kteří se vyskytují v afrických lidových povídkách, je typické, že jsou bytostmi se zvířecími, božskými a lidskými rysy. Šibal je hrdinou, který typicky „prohrává“, umírá, ale jeho sebeobětování není příčinou jeho konání, není tedy záměrné. Dochází k němu náhodou a za okolností, ke kterým šibal přispívá podvědomě.

Šibalové jsou také hlavními hrdiny analyzovaných románů Keseyho a Toolea. U Toolea se jedná o Burmu Jonese, který je skrytým hybatelem děje. Keseyho hlavní hrdinové, tj. Náčelník a McMurphy, jsou rovněž typickými šibaly.

V Keseyho románu dochází k „metamorfóze“ - přeměně šibala. Vlastnosti revoltujícího McMurphyho přecházejí na Náčelníka, který je McMurphyho obětí vykoupen a osvobozen.

Nedílnou součástí práce je analýza Vonnegutových *Jatek č. 5*, která je založena na teoriích G. Deleuze týkající se repetice a difference<sup>19</sup> (*Difference and Repetition*)<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Dílo nebylo přeloženo, proto uvádím název v angličtině

<sup>20</sup> Nebylo přeloženo, proto uvádím název v angličtině

Repetice je definována jako pozitivní síla, která stojí v přímém protikladu k obecnosti (generality)<sup>21</sup> a která nahradila reprezentaci. Dle Deleuze se tak stalo, protože reprezentace již selhala při vysvětlování podstaty sil, které ovlivňují životy hrdinů a které jsou příčinou ztráty identity a temnými hybateli událostí. V případě Vonnegutova románu je repetice jedním z nejsilnějších prvků, které se neustále opakují. Např. Billy se při svém cestování časem neustále vrací do doby, kdy byl svědkem hrůz, které se odehrály za 2. světové války v Evropě.

Repetice je také definována Deleuzem jako vztah k něčemu jedinečnému. S touto myšlenkou je také spojen pojem „Empty Form of Time“ („prázdný čas“, nebo lze přeložit jako „čas, ze kterého nelze uniknout, protože přestal plynout“)<sup>22</sup>

Tento čas je Deleuzem definován jako událost, která svou výjimečností přesahuje schopnost hrdinů se od této události oprostít.

Autoři, kteří byli analyzováni v této disertační práci, sdílejí následující výčet prvků:

- použití grotesky v bachtinovském slova smyslu jako nástroje vzpoury proti autoritě
- pozitivní náhled na „bláznovství“ a schizofrenii
- vyjádření vzpoury proti autoritě a její zhmotnění v postavách „šibalů“

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<sup>21</sup> Překlad vlastní

<sup>22</sup> Překlad vlastní

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