

**Maria-Gabriele Wosien**

# **The Russian Folk-Tale**

**Some structural and thematic aspects**

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MARIA-GABRIELE WOSIEN

THE RUSSIAN FOLK-TALE  
SOME STRUCTURAL AND THEMATIC ASPECTS

VERLAG OTTO SAGNER · MÜNCHEN  
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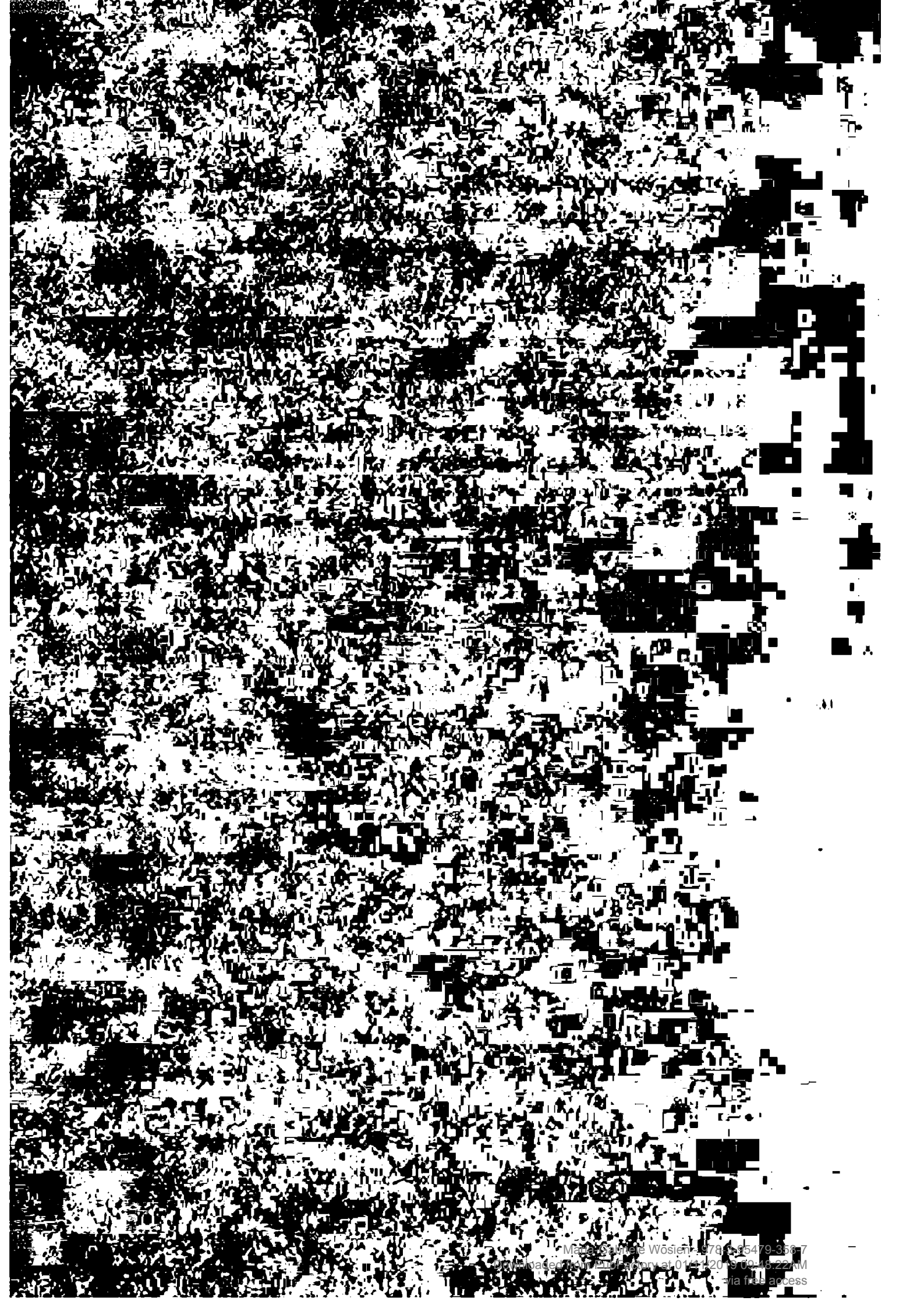
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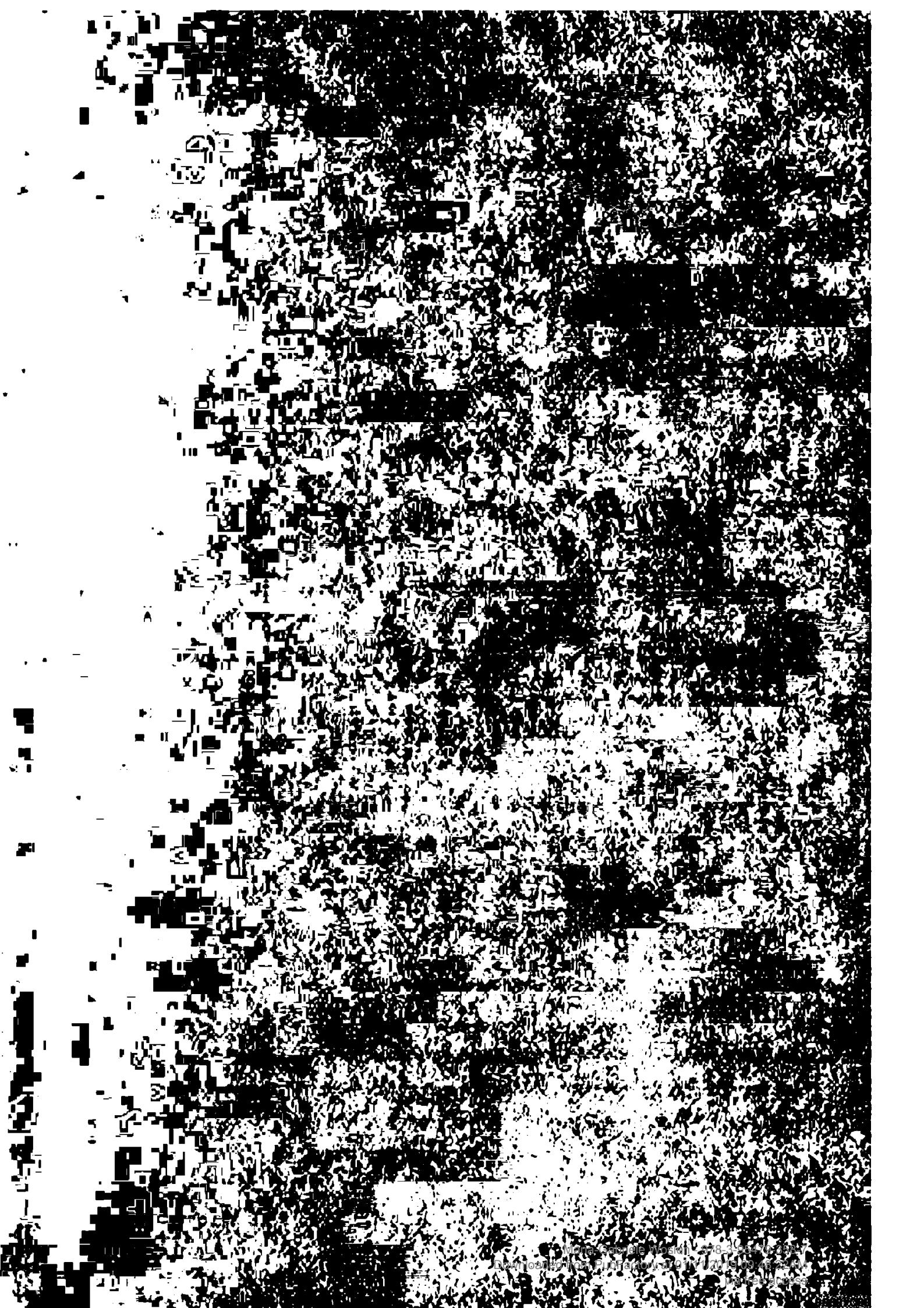
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Maria-Gabriele Wosien,  
London, 1969.



T O M Y T E A C H E R S







Sun disc. Embellishment on the mast of a ship,  
18th century, State Museum of History,  
Moscow.

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## ABSTRACT

The thesis inquires into the nature and form of those tales in the Russian oral tradition that have as their main theme the journey of the central hero. The tales which have been chosen for analysis are exclusively 'tales of the miraculous' (Aarne-Andreyev 300-749).

All important aspects of the hero's journey are studied, especially those that reflect his permanent and changing relationships with other folk-tale figures.

The laws which determine the stability and liability to change of the folk-tale traditions are examined; and the reasons for their degeneration are discussed (Chap. I).

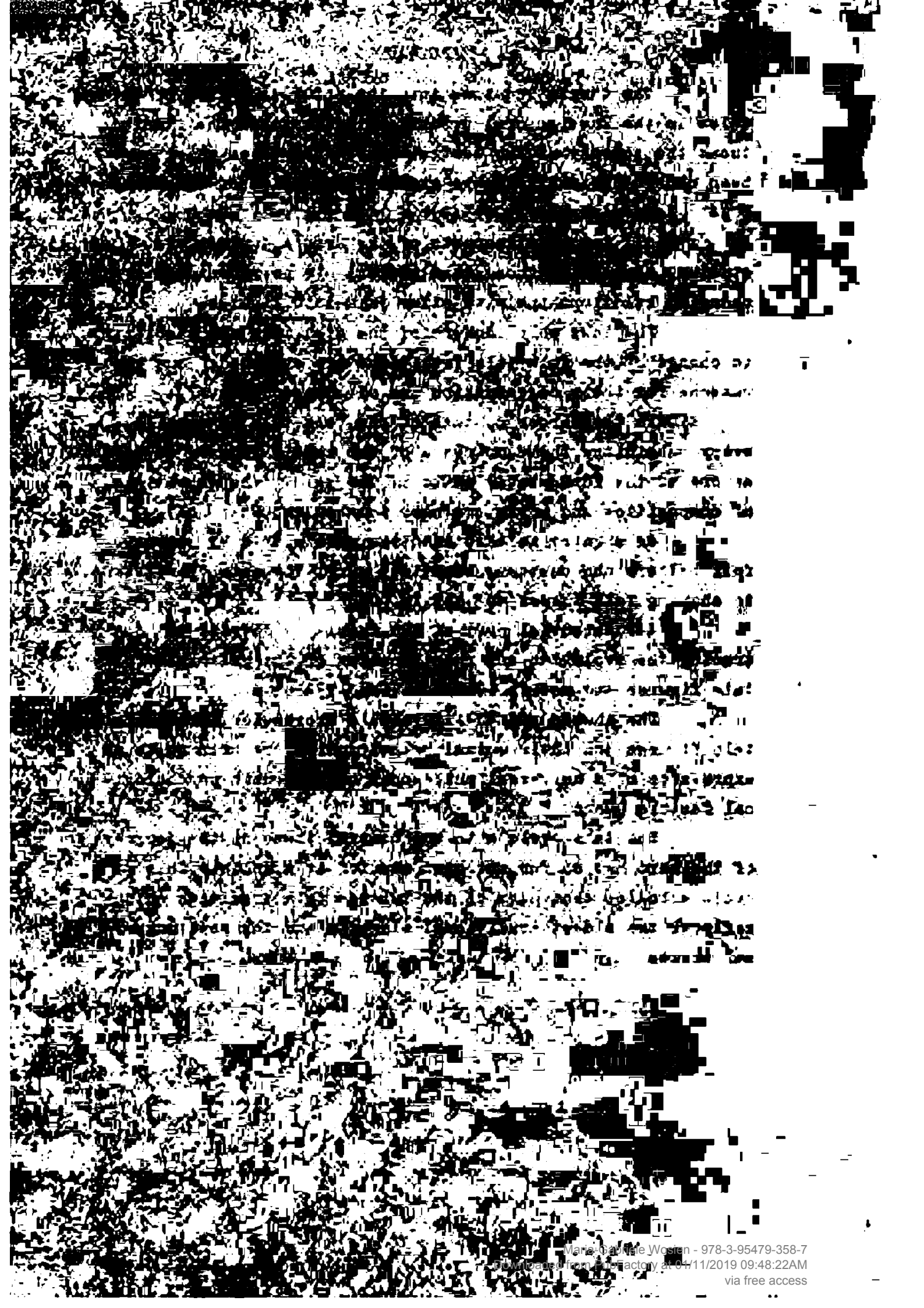
In the larger context of the folk-tale as a whole, every subsidiary theme or phase of the hero's journey is seen as one of the fundamental units of the tale. The essentials of composition and style are also touched on (Chap. II).

An enquiry is made into the part played by historical folk beliefs and customs, sometimes surviving into the present, in shaping folk themes and motifs (Chap. III).

A substantial part of the thesis is devoted to tracing the evolution and relationships of the principal folk-tale figures and motifs (Chaps. IV and V).

The themes and their symbolic expression through folk-tale figures and their mutual relationships are seen to be an expression of a universal philosophy and of basic psychological factors (Chap. VI).

The tale-cycle with the central theme of the journey of the hero has so far not been studied as a whole. This cycle embodies that part of the Russian folk tradition which reflects the oldest traditional elements and the most universal themes.



## INTRODUCTION

Research into the Russian folk-tale has come a long way since the time when a few enthusiasts began their sporadic and rather amateurish research into folklore. In accordance with the taste of the time, the editors of the first small collections of folk-tales did not publish these in their entirety, nor in the original folk idiom, but adapted them instead. Indeed, public reaction to such attempts at popularising the folk heritage, or making it acceptable reading for the sophisticated, was often, especially in the beginning, not very favourable: '...for the simplest peasant could, without any trouble, invent some ten such tales, and were they all put into print, it would be a waste of paper, quills, ink, printers' type, not to mention the labour of the gentlemen of letters.'<sup>1</sup>

Bringing the folk tradition to the attention of a wider reading public was greatly facilitated by the then popular lubochnyye kartinki.<sup>2</sup> These were cheap leaflets, partly text and partly illustration, mostly of coloured woodcuts or etchings. Their subject-matter varied greatly. They included almost anything, from summaries of Biblical and Apocryphal writings, heroic byliny, extracts from classical and contemporary literature, social satire and caricature, to rewritings and abstracts of folk-tales. Some of the more well known representations of these lubochnyye kartinki, with only a few lines of text, are Baba-yaga yedet drat'sya s krokodilom, Koshchey Besmertnyy, Klad pod Kupalov den' and O sloy ved'me Nepogod'ye. These mostly anonymous prints appeared in a great number of copies over a period of approximately more than seventy years, beginning with the later part of the eighteenth century.

1. A comment in the Sankt-Peterburgskiy Vestnik, April 1781, p. 295, on V. Levshin's Russkiye skazki sodержashchiye drevneyshiyе povestovaniya o slavnykh bogatyrakh. Skazki narodnyye i prochiye, ostavshiyesya cheres pereskazyvaniye v pamyati. Prikl'yucheniya, pt. I, Moscow, 1780-83.
2. E. P. Ivanov, Russkiy narodnyy lubok, Moscow, 1937; Yu. Ovayannikov, Russkiy lubok, Moscow, 1962; D. Rovinsky, Russkiye narodnyye kartinki, 5 vole., St. Petersburg, 1881.

In the eighteenth century the original folk-tales, which hitherto had been only related orally and had been handed down for centuries from one generation to the next, entered literature. In their memoirs many writers have testified to the richness of the folk-tale tradition still remaining at the beginning of the nineteenth century at all social levels.<sup>1</sup> Folk-tale themes began to be used extensively by writers of the early decades of the nineteenth century, notably by Pushkin,<sup>2</sup> Zhukovsky and Gogol. Influenced by their writings, there began the movement for the reappraisal of the national folk tradition which reached its climax during the Soviet period. Yet, as an artistic creation in its own right, the folk-tale began to be appreciated only later in the nineteenth century, when it started to attract not only the general public but became of interest to scholars as well.<sup>3</sup>

The basis for serious research was created with the publication of A. N. Afanas'yev's collection of over six hundred Russian folk-tales.<sup>4</sup> This was an event as important for Russia as had been the appearance of the Kinder- und Hausmaerchen of the brothers Grimm. Afanas'yev had collected the tales from a variety of sources. Only ten he had recorded himself: the remainder came from private collections, especially from that of V. I. Dal' and from the archives of the Russian Imperial Geographical Society. This society, which sponsored Afanas'yev's work, had been organised in 1846 and soon had many branches in various parts of the country. Their publication of the first major collection initiated a new phase in the study of folklore. Not only did it stimulate interest in the folk tradition, but it also marked the beginning of extensive collecting, careful editing and gathering of information about folk art and byt in general.

1. Especially S. T. Aksakov, Semeynaya khronika, Moscow, 1912.
2. 'Chto za preleet' eti skazki! Kazhdaya yet' poema!' from a letter by Pushkin to L. S. Pushkin, November 1824, quoted in Russkoye narodnoye poeticheskoye tvorchestvo, ed. E. V. Pomerantseva and S. I. Mints, Moscow, 1963, p. 48.
3. Cf. E. V. Pomerantseva, Sud'by russkoy skazki, Moscow, 1965.
4. A. N. Afanas'yev, Russkiye narodnyye skazki, Moscow, 1861-63, 8 vols.

But although most collectors of the later part of the nineteenth century still witnessed a folk tradition that was alive and met many story-tellers who were masters of their craft, commentators on the contemporary scene were also aware of a gradual disappearance of the tradition, a decline hastened by the abolition of serfdom in 1861. 'With every year the old traditions and skilled story-tellers disappear more and more.'<sup>1</sup> 'The edict of the 19th of February dispersed the household servants of the gentry and with them the kindly old story-tellers who, having brought up and reared to sleep two, and often three generations of the children of the gentry, have also never failed to educate them through the Russian folk-tales.'<sup>2</sup>

The intensive collecting resulted in the appearance of several schools of thought in Russia. They were for the most part influenced by scholarship abroad, which, having begun earlier, had had time to develop. An independent or, rather, a national school of folklore, disassociated from schools outside its territory, was to arise in Russia only during the Soviet period.

Pseudo-classicism, in which folk art was regarded with contempt, came to be replaced by an enthusiastic approach to the national heritage. The representatives of this movement were those who discovered the wealth of Russia's tradition which had been nurtured for centuries by the illiterate peasants and artisans. Now, these enthusiasts proclaimed it as a new source of inspiration for Russian culture. The Slavophiles, who formed the core of the movement which looked to the narod in this way, were greatly preoccupied with the idea of a 'national spirit' and that of a 'popular soul'. This school of thought, although symptomatic of a general idealisation of national antiquity and its traditions, nevertheless made valuable contributions to research in the field of folklore studies.

1. F. I. Buslayev in his review of Afanas'yev's edition of Russian folk-tales, Russkiy Vestnik, book 2, 1856.
2. S. V. Maksimov, 'Zametki po povodu izdaniya narodnykh skazok', Zhivaya Starina, No. 1, 1897, p. 49.

In an attempt to survey and classify the material in his collection, Afanas'yev was aware of the need for a system of thought which would provide a synthesis of the heterogeneous content of the tales, as they incorporated many important aspects of Russian folk tradition since pagan times. Such a system he expounded in his Poeticheskiye vozzreniya Slavyan na prirodu.<sup>1</sup> In the formulation of his concepts Afanas'yev was greatly influenced by the so-called German mythological school, of which Afanas'yev was the main exponent in Russia. Rather artificially, he attempted to reconstruct the pagan Slavonic mythology and its pantheon of personifications of natural forces, by haphazardly citing evidence from the tales of the miraculous, from legends and folk poetry. Folk-tales and folk poetry were seen to reflect meteorological phenomena: he saw the whole natural world projected into a celestial sphere. In his view, folk-tale figures represented thunder and lightning and were generally symbols of the heavenly bodies.

Abroad, scholarship made very great contributions to folklore research. Theodor Benfey expounded his theory of mutual borrowing of themes in an attempt to determine the place of origin of all folk-tales. He maintained that India was their homeland and from there all tales migrated westwards shortly after the death of Buddha, reaching Western Europe by way of Byzantium and Eastern Europe through the invasion of the Mongols.

The British school of anthropology, represented mainly by Tylor, Lang and Frazer, investigated the traditions of primitive tribes of several continents. They discovered that there existed an amazing similarity between them all. They discarded the possibility of mutual influence and stated that all primitive peoples, wherever they may be found, display a level of culture, customs and beliefs which has almost identical manifestations. In this way they offered an explanation for the similarity of folk-tale themes and of the heritage of peoples separated by vast geographical distances and great stretches of time. Frazer, in particular, examined the nature of magic, a basic concept in all folk-tales and which plays such a central

1. 3 vols., Moscow, 1865-69.



part in the beliefs of primitive people. He placed the consciousness that is dominated by magic at one end of the human evolutionary scale and that dominated by science at the other. Some of the conclusions reached by the British school, notably that the primitive level lives on in man in his superstitions, in certain customs and patterns of behaviour, were later taken up by Jung and incorporated into his theory of archetypes. These Jung saw as the basic components of man's psyche, passed on through successive generations like the physical structure of the body. The archetypes are seen to reflect the unconscious, that is the level of the mind common to all men, which manifests itself in recurring stereotype patterns of thought, emotions and dreams. Myths and folk-tales, which feature a central hero and his quest, are, according to this theory, examples of the outward projection of universal archetypes.<sup>1</sup>

To reconstruct the original folk-tale, the ancestor of all the extant variants, by a comparative method was the aim of the Finnish school. Antti Aarne<sup>2</sup> with his collaborators, for the first time, compiled a catalogue which was to include all folk-tale variants from every part of the world. He hoped in this way to be able to show how and why groups of variants are related, how tales have migrated, and how and why they have changed. His final aim was to find the prototype that gave rise to all others. The tales were arranged according to the main features of their content which were called 'motifs'.

1. C. G. Jung, Introduction to a Science of Mythology, London, 1951; idem, Symbolik des Geistes, Psychologische Abhandlungen, 6, Zuerich, 1948. An exhaustive interpretation of Grimm's tales according to the Jungian school has been made by H. von Beit, Symbolik des Maerchens Versuch einer Deutung, 2 vols. and Index, Bern, 1952.
2. A. Aarne and St. Thompson, The Types of the folk-tale. A classification and bibliography, Helsinki, 1961; St. Thompson, Motif Index of folk literature, 6 vols., Bloomington, Indiana, 1955-58; idem, 'Fifty years of folk-tale indexing', Humaniora, New York, 1960, pp. 49-57. N. P. Andreyev has adapted Aarne's original classification to the Russian material in his Ukazatel' skazochnykh syuzhetov po sisteme Aarne, Leningrad, 1929. His index has been brought up to date to include Soviet collections by V. Ya. Propp, 'Ukazateli syuzhetov', Narodnyye russkiye skazki, vol. 3, Moscow, 1958, pp. 454-502. The tales studied in this thesis come within the category of volehebnyye skazki, or tales of the miraculous, Aarne catalogue nos. 300-749, and hereafter are referred to by these numbers.

Stith Thompson, however, who greatly enlarged the catalogue, believes it no longer possible by this method to find the one original type, if ever there was one.

The merits of the folk-tale as a genre have been studied both by the Soviet formalist school which emerged in the 1920's and by a number of Western European literary critics, notably by German and Scandinavian scholars. Moreover, numerous monographs have been published which either are concerned with one particular aspect of the folk-tale or study it in relation to other folk genres.<sup>1</sup>

The main contribution of the Soviet school is that it has closely examined the social factors which influence the life of folk traditions; it has also devoted much attention to the lives of individual story-tellers and their importance as bearers of the tradition. Numerous collections have been compiled and the findings have been published in a great number of monographs, articles and collections. A large amount of material, however, housed in the Moscow, Leningrad and local archives, still awaits publication.

Although international scholarship has made valuable contributions to folk-tale research, as far as a theory of the folk-tale is concerned, there can be no final answer. Most interpretative schools tend to read an ideology into the tales which is quite alien to their content, instead of trying to extract their meaning. Much has been written about the inherent philosophy and underlying symbolism of the folk-tale, but any attempt to unravel its meaning and the question of its relation to reality<sup>2</sup> will always be conditioned by the scholar's viewpoint.

The main part of this thesis is devoted to an elucidation of the theme of the folk-tale's hero and his journey. The Russian material, much more than that of Western Europe, lends itself especially to such an investigation, as examples of well-preserved tales have been found as late as the twentieth century. Since, for the purposes of this thesis, the interest lies chiefly in their structural completeness, and in the richness of

1. cf. the selected bibliography for this thesis.

2. L. Roehrich, Maerchen und Wirklichkeit, Wiesbaden, 1964.

their themes and imagery, the tales chosen for analysis have mostly been taken from pre-revolutionary collections. These have been supplemented by a selection from contemporary tales, mainly in order to illustrate their structural decline, the disappearance of the traditional themes and the appearance of a new, political ideology.<sup>1</sup>

For millennia, until the late Middle Ages in Europe, artistic communication has been through translating ideas into precisely corresponding symbols. Folk-tales are examples in which language is used to evoke images in the mind. In terms of Jungian psychology one might say that these correspond to the archetypes, or man's basic psychological structural components.

In the tales of the miraculous the themes and symbols are grouped together in such a way as to form a great variety of combinations from which the various different 'motifs' arise. In this sense the folk-tale themes can first be taken at their face value and secondly as symbols of whatever they represent. The viewpoint taken in this thesis is one of seeing the basic situations relating to the hero's journey as portrayals of fundamental psychological relationships and of a perennial philosophy, expressed in this artistic form.

Man's imagination, as shown by the universality of folk-tale themes, works according to observable patterns. Images which fall within such patterns are part of everyday experience. They are evoked by sounds, smell, touch: man's mind positively swarms with them. Often they group themselves together into one favourite composite and in this way may express an individual's particular nostalgic dream, a visual projection onto the screen of his consciousness of something that is not part of his life. Among them are chiefly those dreams of the attainment of a better reality, like the echo of a memory of a paradise lost: for in the realm of the mind no limits are set to wish fulfilment.

It is this craving for paradise on earth that the folk-tale, with its portrayal of the ideal state, appeals to. Obstacles and difficulties on the way are seen to be temporary

1. For a list of the collections used and referred to see the bibliography of primary sources.

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## PAST AND PRESENT OF THE FOLK-TALE TRADITION IN RUSSIA

'Maerchen sind ein einheimischer Niederschlag aeltester Kulturreste; sie beruhen auf allgemeinen moralischen Grundsätzen und auf allgemeinem Glauben an das Wunderbare und allgemein menschlicher Phantasie.' 1

In the history of folklore one is able to give only a very general outline of earlier periods, before it began to be more or less systematically recorded. In Russia this was the case from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards. For earlier epochs, boundaries can only be fixed by conjecture and hypothesis. What is more, the necessity to study folktales in their living context was overlooked during the earliest phase of research into this field. Serious interest in the story-tellers and in the background of the tradition arose only towards the end of the nineteenth century, by which time the tradition itself had begun to decline.

Soon after Russia's Christianisation at the end of the tenth century, what could broadly be termed Russian culture began to divide into secular and profane, the differences between the two categories becoming more and more distinct to the point of rigidity in subsequent centuries.

As the influence of the Church spread, so its deeply hostile attitude to the folklore tradition, which had preceded its establishment, developed into an overt antagonism, which found its climax in the issue of the Gramota of Aleksey Mikhaylovich in 1648. This document demands the prohibition of the activities of the Vesyolyye lyudi and their severe punishment; these had been the professional custodians of the folklore tradition in Russia since the early Middle Ages.

The popular entertainers divided roughly into three groups:

1. the skomorokhi, who are the oldest representatives of the Russian folk epos, the folk theatre and folk music. They

1. A. Thimme, Das Maerchen, Leipzig, 1909, p. 25.

are known to history from the eleventh century and survived until the middle of the seventeenth century, a time which coincided with the beginnings of the Russian theatre, modelled on the Western European theatrical tradition of that period. The period in Russian secular art prior to this event might be called the period of the skomorokhi.

2. the bakhary, known to history from the thirteenth century. Kirill, Bishop of Turov, writes of them as 'they who dance and tell tales' and that they 'play the gusli and tell tales.' Their art later merged with that of

3. the domrachei or folk-singers, who would accompany their songs on the domra, a stringed instrument which was strummed.<sup>1</sup> A few of the instruments used in folk art are known. The oldest of them is the gusli, frequently mentioned in folk-tales; it was a stringed instrument which was plucked. It was first mentioned in the bylina cycle of Prince Vladimir. Other instruments of the skomorokhi and their descendants were notably the truby, sopeli, dudki, and bubny. The domrachei are first mentioned in the seventeenth century.

The origin of the skomorokhi is uncertain. It is generally assumed that they came to Russia from the South, from Byzantium, bringing with them some of its heritage, which gradually became assimilated into the existing native Russian folk tradition. For approximately seven centuries the skomorokhi, bakhary and domrachei provided entertainment of very varied genres and quality, both to Russian court circles as well as to the peasantry. They have left no written records of their activities.

Apart from those of the entertainers or vesyolyye lyudi who settled at the tsar's court or in boyars' houses, there were others who travelled around together. They formed a kind of wayfaring confraternity that made itself indispensable at popular festivals, at wedding celebrations, and at masquerades as well as at informal gatherings. It seems, however, that although they journeyed together, each of them was proficient in a particular genre or aspect of the traditional crafts. The tales they told

1. A. S. Famyntsin, Skomorokhi na Rusi, St. Petersburg, 1889, p. 52.

were of varied subject-matter, suited to different occasions and adapted to local traditions and tastes. The themes were those of miraculous journeys into distant lands, of legendary events in old times, of fictitious encounters with victorious bogatyri, and, in later days, there were stories about the valour of tsars in battle.

At this time the Church was struggling to gain a firm hold on the Eastern Slavs in all spheres of life; and these entertainers were attacked in its writings as being the manifestation of the destructive forces which were working against its teaching. From the earliest days of the Church's establishment references can be found which speak of the harmfulness of these entertainers to those following the Christian doctrine.

Russia had taken over from Byzantium not only its form of the Christian dogma, but also the attitudes and opinions of its protagonists. Of these the early poucheniya and pamyati, and later notably the Domostroy and the Stoglav, give an eloquent testimony. In the Domostroy we read: 'and the skomorokhi with their dancing and piping, always loving to sing devilish songs ...all of them will go to hell, and there they shall be accursed.'<sup>1</sup> The Stoglav, similarly, condemns their activities: 'and the Lord said: Woe unto those who are laughing now, for they shall wail and lament bitterly thereafter.'<sup>2</sup> References have been discovered which describe the skomorokhi as '...turning themselves into beings, quite unlike those created by God, changing their human form. These devilish, idol-worshipping, dishevelled creatures run about untidily, and have hanging from them all kinds of devices in the image of the devil, and with dancing and with other cunning means they tempt Orthodox Christians.'<sup>3</sup> The art of the skomorokhi and bakhary was frequently described as devilish (besovskiy), as a sluzhba idol'skaya, and as lest' d'yavol'skaya.<sup>4</sup>

1. The sixteenth century Domostroy, ed. A. S. Orlov, Moscow, 1908, chap. 26.
2. The sixteenth century Stoglav, ed. N. I. Subbotin, Moscow, 1890, chap. 92.
3. I. M. Snegiryov, Russkiye prstonarodnyye prazdniki i obryady, Moscow, 1837, vol. I.
4. A. S. Famyntsin, op. cit., p. 79; for the folk-tale in mediaeval Russia see also S. V. Savchenko, Russkaya narodnaya skazka, Kiev, 1914, pp. 34-63.

From these and similar documents, it is apparent that the Church felt that unless it could bring under control what were seen to be heathen survivals, it could not hope to obtain the support needed for the spreading of its teaching. This was a formidable task, which for centuries to come met with opposition, since the broad mass of the Russian people, as well as the tsar and the ruling class, gave their active support to all genres of folk tradition. In this way they continued to foster the growth of forms of art which had their roots in pre-Christian traditions and beliefs. For this reason, the Church's invective was directed chiefly against the exponents of the popular traditions. Gradually, as a result of constant pressure from above, a wide rift was created between everything that Orthodoxy stood for, and the various genres of folk art. All that was connected with the official teachings of the Church thus came to be connected with the devil: '...the clergy condemned and persecuted everything that bore the mark of paganism, whether these were real beliefs and convictions, or only formal rites, toys and harmless pastimes which had long lost the original idea behind them, or any serious significance they might have had.'<sup>1</sup>

It is evident that such an attitude on the part of the Church spelt the doom of folk tradition sooner or later, especially as the skomorokhi during the Middle Ages - a period obsessed with the devil - had become associated with the exponents of popular magic, the volkhvy, kudesniki and znakhari.<sup>2</sup> This link between poetry, popular beliefs and magic has its oldest literary example in the Slovo o Polku Igoreve<sup>3</sup> where the bard Boyan is described as veshchi and is portrayed as having the power to transform himself into various animals, which was primarily the reputation of the shamans and later of their descendants, the magicians.

1. N. I. Kostomarov, Ocherk domashney zhizni i nravov velikorusskogo naroda v XVI-XVII vv, St. Petersburg, 1860, chap. 'O narodnykh verovaniyakh'.
2. According to V. I. Dal', popular magic was still rife in rural Russia as late as the middle of the nineteenth century, see O poveriyakh, suyeveriyakh i predraesudkakh russkogo naroda, St. Petersburg, 1880.
3. The passage referred to is the opening of the Slovo, ed. N. V. Vodovozov, Moscow, 1954.



However, the dangers of corruption through folk art for believing Christians would seem to have been exaggerated, if it is considered that the religious significance and degree of belief in rituals and customs are very much weakened as soon as they are taken out of context and become incorporated into an art form. 'At certain festivals, especially at the time of the winter solstice, which corresponds to Christmas-tide (rozhdstvenskiye svyatki), they would lead horses about, a stallion or a mare, a he-goat or a she-goat, a bear, etc., which would have symbolic significance. In the hands of the skomorokhi these turned into playful masquerades'.<sup>1</sup> The same applies to the folk-tale. Its elements, of which many go back to remote antiquity, its underlying beliefs, came to be looked at from a different viewpoint and were used merely as building bricks for an art form, their significance being at most symbolic.

For centuries, story-telling had been a favourite pastime. Most occasions could be times for story-telling: long autumn and winter evenings, before going to sleep, on social occasions like weddings, or at work. In a Slovo of the twelfth century we are told of a rich man who, being unable to go to sleep, had some of his servants '...stroke his feet, some hold his hands, some scratch his back; others piped tunes or would tell tales and say all manner of blasphemous things!'<sup>2</sup> Ivan the Terrible employed three blind men who would take turns in telling stories at his bedside until the tsar would fall asleep. Tsar Vasily Shuyeky too had a personal story-teller, Ivan, and during the first years of his reign Mikhail Fyodorovich, according to the records, owned the bakhary 'Klim, Frefin, Pyotr Sapogov and Bogdan Putyata'.<sup>3</sup>

The bakhary who handed down the heritage of their predecessors told, or possibly recited or chanted, their stories already without the accompaniment of an instrument. The assump-

1. A. S. Famyntsin, op. cit., p. 86.
2. Quoted from A. I. Nikiforov, 'Skazka, yeyo bytovaniye i nositeli', Russkiye narodnyye skazki, ed. O. Kapitsa, Leningrad, 1928, p. 23.
3. I. E. Zabelin, 'Zametki, kasatel'no durakov, yurodivykh i pr.', Domashnyy byt russkikh tsarey v XVI-XVII vv., part II, Materialy V, Moscow, 1915.

tion that the skomorokhi may have chanted the stories is based on the great wealth of recurrent rhythmic formulas which occur at precise points in the tales. These formulas occur primarily in the tales of the miraculous and are one of their distinctive features.<sup>1</sup> There are ample references to the bakhary as being members of well-to-do households. Aksakov relates that almost all landowners in the eighteenth century had several storytellers on their estate.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, it was customary to keep shuty and duraki. An episode told by an Italian eyewitness in Moscow in 1570 mentions the presence of jesters in the suite of the tsar: 'The tsar rode into Moscow in our presence...in front rode three hundred marksmen; after them came his jester on an ox, then another one in a golden outfit, after them came His Majesty himself.'<sup>3</sup> But private persons had their own jesters as well: 'According to a very ancient Russian custom, every private person with a good income keeps at least one jester...'<sup>4</sup> In the folk-tale the figure of Ivan the fool occurs frequently.

Later, especially before their wholesale persecution, the vesolye lyudi became very unruly, and in many cases were a menace to civil and ecclesiastical authorities. It appears that high patronage and their widespread popularity had made them unmanageable and unruly. They would frequently demand food and drink by force and rob people in the streets. Their behaviour, on the whole, indicates that they had degenerated and had become irresponsible, unlike their very respected forbears. There was little regard for them any more. Occasionally the conclusion of the folk-tales illustrate how they were treated, but they also sometimes show their stoic reaction to ill treatment:

Я тут на свадьбе был, мёд и пиво пил. Всем гостям подавали ковшом, а мне подали чёрным; взяли меня за нос и бросили за нос; я катился да катился, да здесь очутился. 5

1. Cf. chap. II.
2. S. T. Aksakov, Semeynaya khronika, Moscow, 1912; cf. also A. S. Famyntsin, op. cit., pp. 51-52.
3. Ibid., p. 111.
4. I. E. Zabelin, op. cit., p. 419.
5. D. K. Zelenin (ed.), Velikorusskiye skazki Vyatskoy gubernii, St. Petersburg, 1915, No. 4.

At other times these story endings are a mixture of the fanciful and the burlesque and show that the narrator is drawing attention to his poverty and hinting at a well earned reward:

Я нарочно за тысячу вёрст туда прилила, пиво-мёд пила, по усам текло /!/, а в рот не попало! там дали мне ледяную лошадку, репеное седельце, гороховую уздечку, на плечики - синь кафтан, на голову - шит колпак. Поехала я оттуда во всём наряде, остановилась отдохнуть; седельце, уздечку снимала, лошадку к деревцу привязала, сама легла на травке. Откуда ни возмись - набегали свиньи, съели репеное седельце; налетели куры, склевали гороховую уздечку; взошло солнышко, растопило ледяную лошадку. Пошла я с горем пешёчком; иду - по дорожке прыгает сорока и кричит: "Синь кафтан! Синь кафтан!" А мне послышалось: "Скинь кафтан!" Я скинула да бросила. К чему же, подумала я, остался на мне шит колпак? Схватила его да оземь, как видите теперь, я осталась ни с чем. I

Every unwritten tradition which is essentially in the hands of a few masters who make it their responsibility to care for it and keep it alive, tends to disappear when they themselves disappear. If it does not disappear, it begins to change, to become distorted, until eventually it loses its specific character and merges with other genres. Thus, some part of a tradition may come to be used as material for the creation of something quite different. This process can be observed particularly clearly in the great changes which have occurred in the folk-tale tradition since the Revolution of 1917.

After the disappearance of the skomorokhi and bakhary by the end of the seventeenth century, a new story-telling community emerged: Russia's peasants, wood-cutters, fishermen, wandering

1. A. N. Afanas'yev (ed.), Narodnyye russkiye skazki, vol. I, No. 147, which also includes some purely mechanical usage of traditional renderings.

artisans, travelling merchants, soldiers, and later too the town-workers, as a result of Peter the Great's reforms and the appearance of a town culture.

Towards the second half of the nineteenth century, the extensive collecting of folk-tales began as part of a general trend in which the 'folk' was studied as well; it was especially those gifted peasants whom the collectors sought out in their travels throughout the country. The folk-tale had by this time become one of the favourite forms of entertainment of the peasants and, finally, came to be cultivated exclusively by them. One of the outstanding collectors of folk-tales has remarked (about the story-tellers in Russia's northern villages) that although they were mostly 'illiterate, they still were the intelligentsia of the village.'<sup>1</sup> In prosperous Russian households the place of the bakhary came to be taken by children's nurses and domestic servants.

The evolution of a folk-tale tradition can be given in general outline. Fixed in its internal thematic structure and brought to perfection by a professional class who lived by their craft, the folk-tale later came to be preserved by non-professionals. These were men endowed with a special narrative gift, possessed of an exceptional memory and who had a great love for the tradition they had inherited. In the early stages they regarded this heritage with feelings of awe and respect; they would not attempt an interpretation of the philosophical or psychological aspects of the tales, even if they were aware of them. Their attitude was one of devotion to a tradition which was part of their national heritage. All they did was to preserve the external form and structure of the tales, which they were anxious to pass on in the way they had inherited them. The question of their original creation and composition was, as far as they were concerned, something that belonged to the distant past, and they had no ambition to alter anything; at least changes were not deliberately attempted. At this stage in the tradition, the heritage was sacred and as such was revered and not questioned. 'The contemporary story-teller, who is calmly and happily walking about the magnificently built folk-tale-

1. N. Ye. Onohukov, op. cit., Introduction, p. XLVIII.

house, with its solid foundations, and finding in it without any difficulties those rich treasures which had at one time been collected, has forgotten about the builders of this edifice and about the treasures that were painstakingly accumulated.<sup>1</sup>

Soviet scholarship has paid much attention to the figure of the story-teller. It has been very emphatic that the quality of a tale is determined chiefly by the personality of the narrator whose influence can be seen in the many individual features which appear in folk-tales. However, this preoccupation with influences external and incidental to the tale, such as local geography, the story-teller's background and his opinions, and the fact that these features are more apparent in versions of tales of more recent times, shows that the traditional fixed patterns and their inherent themes are now not considered to be the fundamental aspect of the tales and are therefore not worth studying. What is investigated instead is the way the tales change, how they are manipulated by the story-teller, and how, more and more, individual story-tellers emerge to be creators of new tales. This is something that is pointed out in almost every preface to folk-tale editions of the Soviet period.

As a rule, stories are listened to with pleasure by adults, even today. But the fact that they still enjoy widespread popularity does not mean that the tales are believed in as universally as they were at one time. At the beginning of the twentieth century the attitudes, as reported by collectors, were divided: 'As regards the tales with miraculous content...the story-tellers' and their listeners' attitude to them is the same as that regarding the byliny: partially they believe in them and partially they do not.'<sup>2</sup> A. N. Nikiforov<sup>3</sup> sums up his research into the life of the folk-tale in North Russia with a similar statement: 'The North and the East of the USSR is still rich in people who believe in the folk-tale...but still, the majority of the population there regard the tale as a creation of fancy.'

1. N. L. Brodsky, 'Sledy professional'nykh skazochnikov v ruskikh skazkakh', Etnograficheskoye obozreniye, Moscow, 1904, No. 2, p. 18.
2. N. Ye. Onchukov, op. cit., p. XXXI.
3. Op. cit., p. 32.

The popularity of a story-teller depended on different criteria in different parts of the country. In the North of Russia long tales were preferred, and a good story-teller was one who possessed a large repertoire. He was judged by the quality of his stories, whether he could be amusing, and whether he could speak on a number of varied subjects. The best story-tellers have been illiterate, often blind old men, who possessed a prodigious memory and a repertoire that was rich in themes and imagery. They have handed down tales in which the traditional structure is still remarkably well preserved.

On the whole, story-tellers are still taken for granted by the community in which they live, and do not therefore enjoy any particular protection. But as the tradition gradually disappears, and as there are fewer skilled story-tellers to be found, their value to the community and indeed their interest to the scholar increase all the time. Today, if a village has its own story-teller, and especially if he is thought to be a good one, the villagers boast about him to their neighbours, their attitude being one of pride in owning a rare talent.

Although the study of the narrator of the traditional tale can shed much light on many aspects of the tradition itself, in all branches of folk art the question of authorship, as the term is understood today, does not really arise. The original inventors, if they can be called that, are unknown, and those reproducing the pattern with, maybe, some of their own embellishments, do not, if they are honest, claim any credit for it.

One representative of the old school of story-telling, Aleksey Chuprov, from the river Pechora, continues the best of the tradition of the skomorokhi and bakhary. 'He was the only story-teller who related the tales as they, perhaps, had been told...in the old days...', says the editor of Severnyye skazki of him. 'In the whole of the collection you will not find another such narrator.'<sup>1</sup> '...He repeats everything word for word, usually he repeats the description of separate episodes and scenes and especially the successfully used expressions...three times... He knows the tales extremely well and relates them

1. N. Ye. Onchukov, op. cit., p. XXIII.

beautifully and with the knowledge that he is not altogether doing a useless job. This old man renarrates what he himself heard from the old folk formerly, and it is not his fault if the tale was constructed in the old days in this way.<sup>1</sup>

Within the tales there is ample evidence of a once widespread professionalism. The story-teller is often directly referred to, especially at the end when he demands a reward for his efforts.

Тут моя сказка, тут моя повесть,  
дайте хлеба помсть.<sup>2</sup>

Тут сказке конец, сказал её молодец,  
и нам, молодцам по стаканчику пивца,  
за окончанье сказки по рюмочке винца.<sup>3</sup>

There are further the numerous stylistic patterns and in particular the structure of the story, which show that it is no haphazard creation.

The folk-tale continued its existence on country estates, in inns by the roadside, at folk festivals, at village evenings or during working hours. The short extract below reflects how much Russia's country population still appreciated the stories at the turn of the century and how closely they were linked with their daily lives. The fishermen and wood-cutters would 'hire a master story-teller for the night to fill their leisure time in the artel'. For such a story-teller to entertain them during the long periods when they were floating the wood along the river, they would collect some money to pay him, and they would offer him vodka. Sometimes they would go as far as freeing the story-teller from his work altogether, as long as he entertained his listeners.<sup>4</sup>

The factors that guarantee the survival of an oral story tradition with remarkably few changes of its essential characteristics over long periods of time, are the existence of talented, responsible story-tellers, an eager and responsive audience,

1. N. Ye. Onchukov, op. cit., p. 1.
2. Ibid., No. 120.
3. N. D. Sadovnikov, Skazki i predaniya Samarskogo Kraja, St. Petersburg, 1884, No. 4.
4. N. I. Nikiforov, op. cit., pp. 26-27; cf. also E. Kalinnikov, Skazochniki i ikh skazki, Petersburg, 1916.

steeped in the tradition, and, in a broad sense, stability of the social scene. Such conditions had prevailed in Russia for many centuries. This accounts for the fact that some of the best of Russia's folk tradition has survived until as late as the twentieth century. Even at present, there is a demand for folk art in Russia, especially in the remote parts of the country where some communities have not yet been greatly influenced by the changes brought about by the industrialisation. Where this is the case, that is in the densely populated urban areas, an entirely new genre, the folklore of the workers, has developed.<sup>1</sup> In general, since the Soviet period, folk art has received much official support and encouragement and has even been brought to the town as theatrical entertainment. The tendency, however, is for more sophisticated forms of leisure slowly to take its place. But the folk-tale is still alive in places where oral entertainment has not been entirely superseded by written literature, the cinema or television.

As a work of folk art, such as a tale, that has once become part of a community's heritage is taboo, the creativeness of the story-teller may express itself in the choice of subject-matter and in the skill with which he combines motifs found in a particular local tradition. Knowing ten subjects, the story-teller may easily multiply them ten times by joining several tales together. Equally, he may shorten them by omitting any episode he wishes. But although the traditional form was not meant to be changed, form always becomes modified by time: it changes and merges with other forms to create new ones.

Within this established framework, in order to preserve the structure and the sequence of themes, the laws of the composition have to be understood and kept intact. This holds good for all art forms, for religious ritual, even for games that are played solely for entertainment. In later times, the exhibition of personal skills and attitudes greatly influenced and changed these traditional patterns. The improvisational element, which

1. P. M. Sobolev (ed.), Fol'klor fabrichno-zavodskikh raboohikh. Stat'i i teksty, Smolensk, 1934; and 'Novyye zapisi rabocheho fol'klora na Yuzhnom Urale'. Uchonyye zapisi Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, 1941, no. 81, Seriya filologicheskikh nauk, vypusk 12, pp. 143-154.



has always been part of the narrative skill, interfered with the laws of composition to the extent that finally the form changed altogether. Good story-tellers stand out from the common run of story-tellers. The standard of story-telling today in the Soviet Union can best be assessed by the material in A. I. Nikiforov's collection of contemporary tales.

During the Soviet period, in which extensive collecting and studying of folk material was initiated, interest in the tale of the miraculous diminished noticeably: in the peasants' repertoire the realistic tale is much more frequent. The disappearance of this genre of folk-tale from the story tradition is frequently commented on: 'The old classical tale is no longer really alive, few still take an interest in it, and it long ago ceased to be requested by listeners.'<sup>1</sup> The same is affirmed by many scholars: 'In a few years those of the generation who still know and love the traditional tale will disappear altogether. The tale will die out, just as the bylina has.'<sup>2</sup> After the Second World War the tales disappeared from entire districts. Now they are told mainly to children, but in a form which no longer does justice to the artistic standards of the traditional tale, as found in the best pre-revolutionary collections. The folk-tale in its fullness lives on only in a very few regions, such as near the town of Archangel, and in Karelia and Bashkiria.<sup>3</sup>

In the course of the twentieth century especially, the attitude of awe and respect for the tradition has slowly given way to an attitude which reveals that the story-teller is proud of inventing, adding or elaborating some features and omitting others. A new type, the literary story-teller, is more frequently met with. He tends to be influenced by bookish style and subject-matter, often using literary terminology which is quite foreign to the folk style. Urban culture and, until the Revolution of 1917, the proximity of a religious centre, or a stranger in the

1. N. P. Grinkova, 'O zapisi skazok v Voronezhskoy gubernii v 1926 g.', Skazochnaya komissiya v 1926g., Leningrad, p. 42.
2. M. K. Azadovsky, Besedy sobiratelya, Irkutsk, 1924.
3. E. V. Pomeranteeva, Sud'by russkoy skazki, Moscow, 1965, chap. 5.

audience, or someone belonging to a different class, are all factors that can be seen to affect the manner and style of narration. One of the collectors at the turn of the century complained that 'almost all story-tellers tell their tales to other peasants simply and naturally in local dialect. But as soon as they tell it to a gentleman who has come from Petersburg, they at once try to tell the same tale in such a way as to make it more like a literary tale.'<sup>1</sup> This is an indication that with time an attitude has developed that betrays an uncertainty, almost an embarrassment, about the value of the folk tradition and its customary manner of narration. This has resulted in giving the tale a form and content which bring it closer to more accepted and sophisticated standards of taste.

This new type of story-teller is represented by the Soviet narrator, I. F. Kovalyov, who attempts to justify his faulty memory and lack of interest in the classical tradition and its hereditary patterns by saying 'Little by little I embellish everything with my own words...I have a gift for this... I have not been told the stories like this...'<sup>2</sup> His style exhibits a strong awareness of himself as creator. He introduces new subject-matter, literary terminology and detailed descriptions. His tales embody many of his own opinions and comments about the characters' psychological states. These features, which are new to the traditional tales, are partly the result of the degree of attention which Soviet scholars pay to the work and personality of the story-tellers, who become increasingly aware of their role as guardians of a tradition with which they are, however, no longer deeply involved. This development is given further impetus by the fact that they are encouraged to create new themes, often with political overtones. Consequently the story-tellers nowadays feel justified in an attitude of self-assertion. Gradually, elements of satire, moralising and preaching have found their ways into the tales of the miraculous. The supernatural element has been superseded by a wealth of realistic detail, and the style and formula patterns changed, until only

1. N. Ye. Onchukov, op. cit., Introduction.
2. E. Gofman and S. Mints, Skazki I. F. Kovalyova, Moscow, 1941.

the folk-tale figures have survived. Traditionally, the story-tellers' function, of which he was well aware, was wholly opposed to this: it was to preserve to the best of his ability the tales handed down to him by previous generations, and to renarrate them with the greatest possible accuracy. This was the attitude of the best story-tellers of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

In one sense, the story-teller might be called a sub-creator. He evokes a secondary world of reality into which the mind of the listener can enter. Inside this world, what he relates is valid in accordance with the laws of imagination. While the listener's imagination is engaged, he is carried along by the narrative. The moment, however, that he begins to rationalise or criticise, thus standing apart mentally from what is happening, the spell is broken, and he is again out in the primary world, looking on. This interplay between the world evoked by the story-teller in the imagination of his listeners, who are captivated by the events of the story, and their spontaneous response, guided by the skill of the experienced story-teller, is in part the secret of the success and the longevity of the narrative tradition. Nikiforov writes: 'If a story-teller is skilful, he quickly has command over his audience's attention, be it through telling a joke or a not always very proper priskazka or in some other way. During the narration of the tale he continually addresses his audience, in this way making sure that he keeps a constant psychological contact with it. For this reason he is often showered with remarks from his listeners, bursts of laughter come from the audience, jokes, etc., so that the whole of the performance acquires the form of a collective experience of the tale. Sometimes the story-teller even involves his listeners in the narration of the tale, making them all sing the songs that are part of the story. It is important to mention such an active participation in the execution of the story, as it explains why the tale is still alive.'<sup>2</sup> Such a complete and unquestioning surrender to the impact of a story may still be observed in chil-

1. E. V. Pomerantseva, 'K voprosu o sovremennykh sud'bach russkoy traditsionnoy skazki', Russkiy fol'klor, vol. 6, Moscow/Leningrad, 1961, pp. 110-124.

2. A. I. Nikiforov, op. cit., p. 33.

dren or in the response of the so-called primitives who have not yet broken with their tradition.

Historical surveys of the life and development of folk art indicate that some stages in civilisation are more favourable to its growth than others. When writing is unknown, or is the prerogative only of those in charge of a community's religious heritage, races or communities depend entirely on memory for records of their past. In pre-Christian times in many countries, including Russia, the task of looking after a people's tradition fell to their priests or shamans. As has been mentioned above, the figure of the story-teller has, until recent times, been associated with that of the magician, inasmuch as he has power over the minds of his listeners during the narration of the story. It is known that story-telling took place preferably after sunset or at night, when the reality of the outer world has receded and the world of the mind can take over.

The tenacity with which the illiterate story-teller adhered to a verbatim recounting of the tales, exactly as he had once been told them himself, even if the formulas were no longer understood - the tales often relying largely on rhythmical patterns for better structural preservation - suggests that the story-teller had a deeply rooted respect for the tradition. The original intention had been to create a direct link between a verbal concept and a mental image, which is also suggested by the close link between form and content. Traditionally, it was considered vital not to make the smallest change in any of the verbal or structural patterns, for the outer form corresponded exactly to an underlying symbolism.

It is fallacious to think, when attempting to preserve an oral tradition, that it will live if written down. The story at once becomes static and lifeless. Written, a story tends to be relegated to bookshelves and archives. The vitality of the folk-tale is closely bound up with the story-teller's personality, his gestures and intonation, often with his dramatic rendering of the events of the tale, silences, and even his personal mannerisms, it is bound up with the rapport between him and his audience, whose absorbed attention creates the link between the tradition and the world of the mind.

## CHAPTER II

## FORMAL ASPECTS

'Die Biologie des Maerchens ist eine Psychologie dieser Dichtung.'<sup>1</sup>

As an artistic creation the folk-tale dates back to remote antiquity; as a narrative genre it belongs to the most universal, both as regards its distribution and its subject-matter. Records show that European folk-tale motifs and their forms have been known since before 2000 B.C.<sup>2</sup> As has been shown earlier, in many districts of the USSR the folk-tale is part of a live tradition even today, although it is in marked decline.<sup>3</sup>

The parts which constitute the content of the folk-tale relate to very diverse fields of human creativity, every historic period having left its mark. In it mingle and exist side by side elements which are ancient and novel, profane and religious, serious and burlesque. This kaleidoscopic make-up of the folk-tale renders it impossible to study it according to periods, for its history is perhaps as complex as that of the human race or as that of language. Furthermore, the number of folk-tales that have been collected since the end of the eighteenth century in Russia is far too great, and their content too diverse, for any one scholar to examine the significance of them all, or assess fully their connection with other genres of folk art. Therefore, for his more detailed research, he is largely dependent on the work of others: in the first instance on the collectors, on those who catalogue folk themes and their variants, as well as on research into related fields of study, such as ethnography, anthropology and history.

An analysis of the method of their construction reveals that the great works of any art form have this in common, that they are created with the strictest economy of material and with a striking singleness of purpose. This can likewise be observed in the relation between the content and structure of the folk-tale,

1. W.-E. Peuckert und O. Lauffer, Volkskunde, Quellen und Forschungen seit 1930, Bern, 1951, p. 47.
2. J. Bolte, 'Zeugnisse zur Grundgeschichte des Maerchens', Folklore Fellows Communications (FFC) No. 39, Helsinki, 1920.
3. B. V. Pomerantseva, Sud'by russkoy skazki, pp. 202-219.

which is like a living organism: its images unfold in a sequence with the same obedience to law as the plant grows from a seed and develops leaves, blossoms, and bears fruit.

In the genres of oral heritage the power of tradition is much stronger than in written literature. Because these genres are not embodied in an outward form, there had to evolve in the course of many centuries of practice such stable mnemonic devices as would preserve in the memory subjects which were sometimes very complicated. Naturally in the course of time the external form of the folk-tales, their composition and their structure, have undergone modification and change. And, therefore, as the outer form has often been only imperfectly preserved, it is more towards the themes, and towards the internal structure that one should look; since these themes even if they again appear largely fragmented, may be reconstructed from mythological cycles of tales where they have often been much better preserved.

The separation of the religious from the profane is a comparatively late development. In mediaeval Russia this rift does not appear to have occurred in the consciousness of people in all sections of the community simultaneously. It took place earlier in educated circles, whose links with the official Church were much stronger, than with Russia's peasants, who, until the beginning of this century, were still deeply rooted in their traditional heritage.

The Russian folk-tale includes most of the great universal mythological cycles of themes:

1. Destiny, with its changes of fortune.
2. Man's fate as oscillating between the two poles of life and death.
3. The central theme of the quest as expressed by the journey of a principal hero.
4. The recovery of a paradise lost.

These themes have recurred throughout the millennia in various guises. They are found mostly in an elaborated form, which accounts for a great wealth of subsidiary themes, such as for instance:

1. The overcoming of obstacles in the face of extreme danger and the hero's subsequent transformation.

2. The acquisition of a remedy for some undesirable situation.
3. Man's relationship with supernatural powers, on whom he relies for help during his journey.
4. Man's neglect of his duties as prescribed by the moral and ethical code inherent in the tale, which invariably leads to disaster.

In this way the entire framework of life with its essential qualities is encompassed by the folk-tale themes, except that it has been simplified to the most fundamental relationships and through the medium of folk art style, has been clothed in the forms of poetry.

The Russian folk-tale has the merit of belonging to one of the best preserved folk-tale traditions of European folklore. Its variants are very numerous, and those folk-tales which clearly show later influences are copiously represented in Soviet collections. This facilitates an overall view and makes possible a general analysis of the entire material. The subsidiary themes appear in great variety and may be found combined into numerous episodes,<sup>1</sup> often overlapping with tales of another type.<sup>2</sup>

Any one type of folk-tale, consisting of a more or less definite number of episodes, may be recorded in many hundreds of variants. This applies especially to the more popular tales of Tri tsarstva, Ivan-tsarevich i sery volk and Sivko-Burko.<sup>3</sup> Each episode is an independent unit within the main structure of the tale. They are arranged consecutively, each contributing separately to the unfolding of the theme and each giving an indication of the episode that follows. Generally speaking, in most of the better known traditional Russian folk-tales, there exists a fixed number of combinations of episodes, usually with one of them predominating, thus creating a particular type of folk-

1. R. M. Volkov, Skazka, Rozyskaniya po syuzhetoslozheniyu narodnoy skazki, Odessa, 1924, vol. I.
2. A. Andreyev, Ukazatel' skazochnykh syuzhetov po sisteme Aarne, Leningrad, 1929; V. Ya. Propp, 'Ukazatel' syuzhetov', Narodnyye ruseskiye skazki (ed. A. N. Afanas'yev), Moscow, 1958, vol. III, pp. 454-502.
3. Af. vol. I, No. 168; vol. II, Nos. 179-81; vol. I, Nos. 128-130.

tale.<sup>1</sup> The false impression of a vast quantity of motifs arises only from their numerous different combinations. Some examples of possible combinations of motifs are the following:

- I. Три царства /301/ + Кошечья смерть в яйце /302/ + Чудесное бегство /313-314/ + Чудесные дары /563-564/.
- II. Царь-девица /400В/ + Незнайко /502/ + Молодильные яблоки /551/.

Among the most frequently encountered types of folk-tale are:

Победитель змея /300А/ - Бой на калиновом мосту /300В/ - Три царства /301/ - Два брата /303/ - Девушка встающая из гроба /307/ - Чудесное бегство /313/ - Звериное молоко /315А/ - Неверная жена /315В/ - Хитрая наука /325/ - Ивашка, Жихарка и пр. и ведьма /327С/ - Муж ищет исчезнувшую или похищенную жену /400А/ - Марко Богатый /461/ - Мачеха и падчерица /480В/ - Шесть чудесных товарищей /513А/ - Сивко-Бурко /530А/ - Конёк Горбунок /531/ - Волшебное кольцо /560/ - Чудесная птица /547/ - Правда и кривда /706/ - Чудесные дети /707/ - Мёртвая царица /709/ - Окаменелое царство /410/ - Вавилонское царство /499/.

From 192 folk-tale motifs typical of the European folk-tale of the miraculous I44 are known in Russia.

The most characteristic feature of the tales with a miraculous content is that they use both magical and everyday motifs side by side. Such mundane activities as working, eating and sleeping, getting married, and suffering misfortune, are interwoven with the hero's encounter with the realm of the miraculous and its protagonists, so that the action of the tales alternates between the level of a common and a special world which are closely linked.

Many ethnographical motifs are part of the folk-tale: there are those reflecting past historical customs, such as cruel punishment for offences, burial rites, and social relation-

1. A. Andreyev, op. cit., and V. Ya. Propp, op. cit.



ships; there are numerous motifs connected with pre-Christian religion, such as belief in magic, animism, and an anthropomorphic view of the world; and there are those indicating the survival of isolated cults. The tales embody concepts that throw light on ancient beliefs about the nature of this world and the world beyond. Dream motifs are frequent, and so are motifs reflecting man's relationship with animals, who at one time were vital to him as a means of securing a livelihood and as helpers at work. Lastly, on an everyday level, there are motifs which include the portrayal of human weaknesses and shortcomings which, in the classical folk-tale, contrast with and offset the image of the ideal hero. As the individual episodes within a tale may change considerably, and either be omitted, shortened or lengthened in the course of time, the only stable element, besides the traditional structure and style, is the theme of any given folk-tale variant.

The narrative pattern may be reduced to the following scheme:

The hero (or heroine) for some reason leaves his home and has to fulfil one or several difficult (superhuman) tasks. This involves him in encounters with supernatural helpers, who are beings from the other world, or with their exponents, magic animals or objects. All tasks are eventually accomplished, the hero having secured the never failing help of a supernatural agency. Subsequently, the hero may meet with more obstacles, which results in an elaboration of the basic pattern. He may have an encounter with the 'false hero', who endeavours to seize the hero's acquisitions, the liberated princess or the miraculous gifts. The ending is mostly a brief statement about the hero's marriage.

This narrative pattern may be recognised in different literary traditions throughout history, from Homer's mythical cycles to the filmscripts of the contemporary cinema, especially in stories about the American Wild West; it appears similarly in the recurrent plot of the humble secretary who marries her boss, as found in stories in women's magazines.

The essential concept underlying the traditional folk narrative is that man's fulfilment lies in attaining a state of the greatest possible happiness and enjoying it in this world;

this he is enabled to do through the help of supernatural agents, whose protection he has earned through his good conduct. Such a view of the world is, for example, diametrically opposed to the philosophy of Greek tragedy, which envisages only one ending for the hero: spiritual disintegration, dismemberment, death, and the passing away of all the hero has become attached to in the course of his life. The manifest organic unity between the folk-tale's subject-matter, its composition, style and imagery, recalls Pythagoras' claim that truth and rightness in a work of art is a matter of proportion, and Aristotle's doctrine that the basis of beauty is harmony.

The main emphasis in the tale is on action which, in terms of the plot, means the journeying of the hero. The action begins from the moment the hero envisages his task and sets off on his journey. It is not confined to one specific episode, but always points ahead to the distant goal; in this way all episodes are related to the final aim and are arranged progressively in relation to it. 'Right' action is the action which is enjoined by the code of behaviour of the tale. Every time the hero acts contrary to the instructions given to him for his guidance on the journey, he forfeits his chances of progress, if only temporarily. He is thrown back to his previous position or even back to his starting-point. Alternatively, he may simply have to wait or he may be obliged to perform additional tasks.<sup>1</sup>

The traditional structure of the folk-tale shows a straight development of the narrative with one line of action, which is the account of the hero's quest, his adventures on the way, and the final attainment of his aim. As the central figure on whom the narrative hinges is never lost sight of throughout, there is no need for sub-plot or parallel action. The scheme of the plot is laid out according to the threefold pattern A-B-C, which, if the hero's quest is prolonged, is repeated twice over or more. Many tales enlarge upon one or two of the typical elements of the full cycle, others combine a number of independent episodes into a single series. The decisive stages in the narrative may be represented diagrammatically to emphasise the extreme stylisation of this pattern (Diagram p. 43).

1. Cf. Af. No. 168.

## T H E H E R O ' S Q U E S T

THE HERO'S  
DEPARTURE  
FROM HOME

ENCOUNTER  
WITH  
MIRACULOUS  
HELP

ENCOUNTER  
AND  
BATTLE WITH  
THE ADVERSARY

HERO'S  
ATTAINMENT  
OF THE  
GOAL AND  
RETURN

---

A

B

C

Of course, this representation is subject to variation and applies chiefly to those tales which are the subject-matter of this thesis, that is those that enlarge on the hero's journey and feature the battle or encounter with an opponent as their crucial event. Variety and complexity are introduced by the repetition of the same kind of action; the heroine, in search of her bridegroom, turns first to one supernatural helper, who sends her to a second, who has more precise knowledge of the way; she in her turn sends her on to a third. Alternatively, the hero encounters an obstacle which involves him in a number of difficulties, battles or setbacks, which repeat:

"Ступай теперь к моей средней сестре, она тебе добру научит"... поутру даёт ей старушка серебряное блюдо и золотое яичко и посылает к своей старшей сестре "она-де знает, где найти Финиста ясна сокола!"

(Af. vol. II, No. 234)

This device of repetition and progression by stages, coupled with retardation through an increase of obstacles, raises interest and heightens the drama. The miraculous object, for instance, becomes more potent the nearer the hero comes to his goal; yet as he does so, his tasks become increasingly more difficult so that it actually seems to recede:

"Поезжай за тридцать земель, в тридцатое царство - там есть остров, на том острове ходит олень золотые рога; поймай его живого и привези сюда"... "достал оленя золотые рога; сослужи и другую: поиди туда - не знаю куда, принеси то - не знаю что! Да помни: коли не прине-сёшь, то мой меч - твоя голова с плеч!"

Numerical relationships, frequently three, seven and twelve, express this gradation: three battles must be fought to conquer the adversary, three princesses have to be liberated, the dragons have twelve heads to be cut off, seven brothers go out in search of adventures, etc.

Most tales open with a conflict, necessitating the departure of the hero. There may be various reasons for this:

1. A king is in need of a remedy for his illness, such as the

water of life or the apples of youth (Af. vol. I, No. 171):

Один царь устарел и глазами обнищал, а слышал он, что за девять девяти, в десятом царстве, есть сад с молодильными яблоками, а в нём колодец с живою водою: если съест старку это яблоко, то он помолодеет, а водою этой помазать глаза слепцу - он будет видеть.

2. The firebird visits the tsar's garden at night, creates great disorder in it, and disappears. (Af. vol. I, No. 168):

У того царя Выслава Андроновича был сад такой богатый, что ни в котором государстве лучше того не было; в том саду росли разные дорогие деревья с плодами и без плодов, и была у царя одна яблоня любимая, и на той яблоне росли яблочки все золотые. Повидалось к царю Выславу в сад летать жар-птица; на ней перья золотые, а глаза восточному хрусталью подобны. Летела она в тот сад каждую ночь и садилась на любимую Выслава-царя яблоню, срывала с неё золотые яблочки и опять улетела.

3. The tsar's sons are sent out in search of brides (Af. vol. II, No. 267):

В стары годы, в старопрежни, у одного царя было три сына - все они на возросте. Царь и говорит: "Дети! сделайте себе по самострелу и стреляйте: кака женщина принесёт стрелу, та и невеста; ежели никто не принесёт, тому, значит, не жениться."

4. The safety of a country is threatened by the appearance of a dragon, demanding human sacrifice to be pacified (Af. vol. II, No. 204):

"О-ох батюшка! Поселился на нашем озере двенадцатиглавный змей, каждую ночь прилетает да людей поедает...; да телерь выпал жребий на царскую дочь."

5. Parente can no longer afford to bring up their child (Af. vol. II, No. 191):

"Ступай же из дому вон, ищи себе хлеба  
по чужим людям."

6. The stepmother's treatment drives the heroine away from home (Af. vol. I, No. 104):

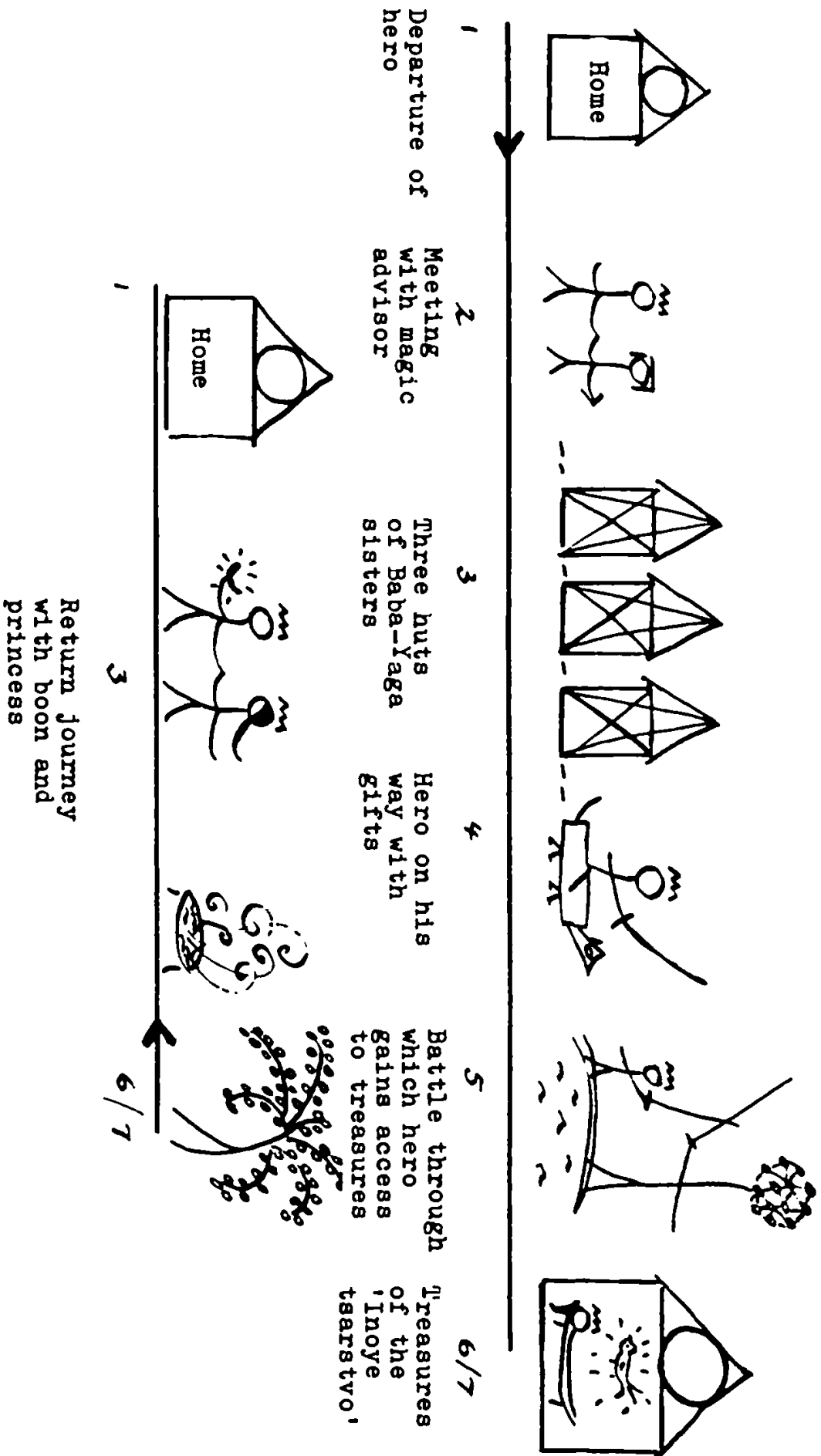
"Тебе за огнем иди, - закричали обе.  
Ступай к бабе-яге!" и вытолкали Василису  
из горницы.

The journey that follows forms the main part of the narrative. Events which occur after the initial situation relate to the hero's overcoming of his difficulties through his precise observation of the instructions and rules, given him by the helpers he meets on his way.

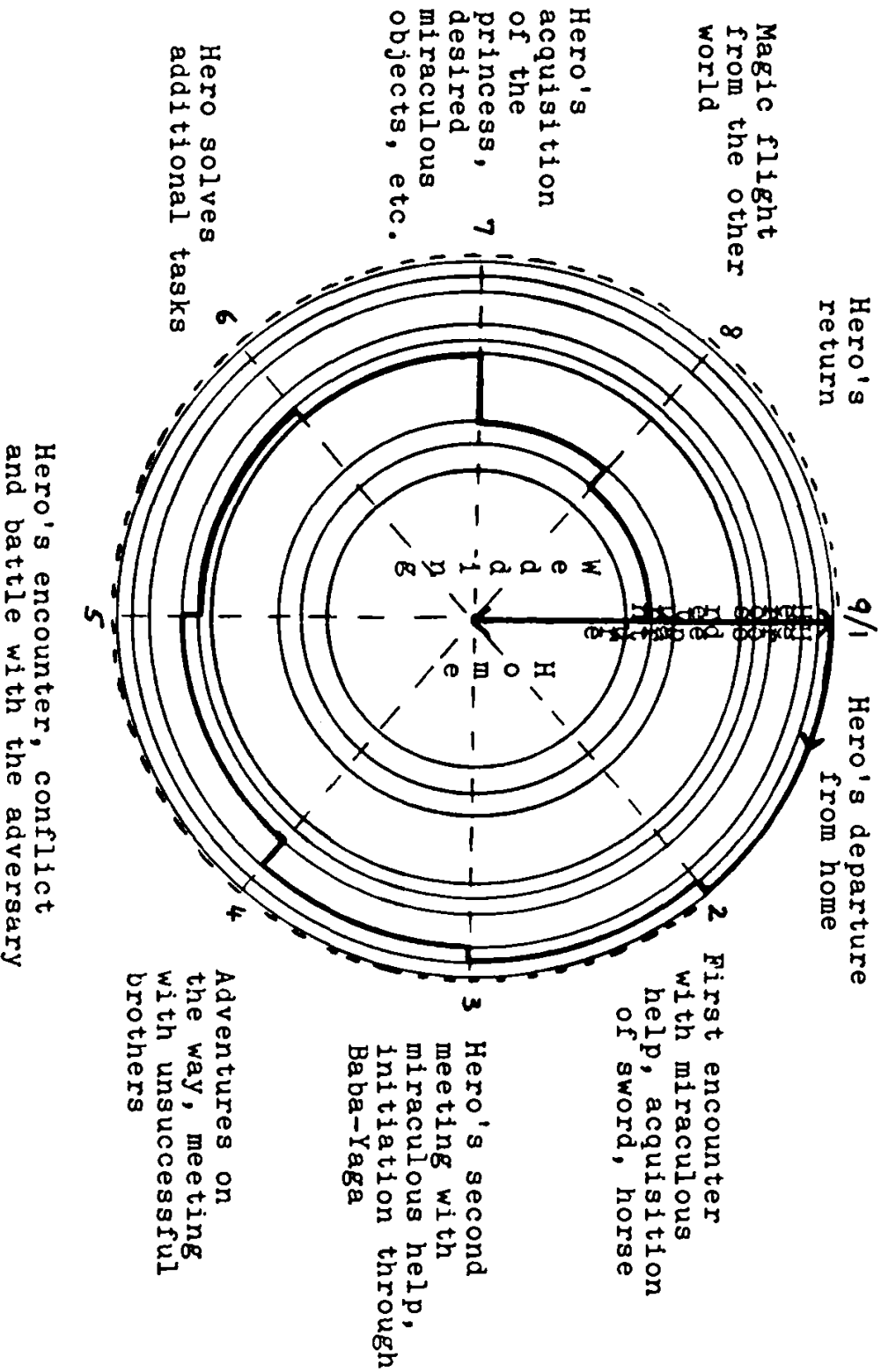
The main reason for action is essentially the intrusion of an external destructive force into a previously harmonious universe, thereby disturbing its balance. As action only arises from conflict, the narrative comes to an end as soon as the last obstacle has been removed. The actors retire from the scene, the story returns to the situation which existed at its beginning before the first conflict arose, and there it concludes. In this way a story's end coincides with its beginning, for at its close the narrative has come full circle (Diagram, pp. 47 and 48). Yet there is an important difference in the situation: something has been obtained in the course of the journey which was lacking in the beginning; for the hero has returned with a boon from the other world, and in his travels he has come into contact with the miraculous world or its agencies, which have initiated him into special, miraculous knowledge. This narrative pattern could, therefore, be represented as a full circle (Diagram, p. 48).

Progress along a cyclic path, which evolves into a spiral, necessarily involves the basic patterns of motion, cyclic, gradational and linear. The folk-tale tradition emphasises the aspect of scales and levels, lower, middle and higher, the hero's path being intrinsically an ascent towards greater perfection. This also suggests that the symbolism of the ladder is inherent in the concept of the hero's journey.<sup>1</sup> The four cardinal points on the horizontal and vertical axes of the diagram

1. Cf. Chap. IV.



THE STAGES OF THE HERO'S JOURNEY





on page 48 are the essential, permanent stages: the four points interposed between the cardinal points are an elaboration of the basic theme. This diagram may be compared with the ritual of the shaman's ascent, and with the Baba-Yaga's lying na devyatom kirpiche of her oven in her forest-hut.

The theme of the hero's journey dominates the content of the most popular of Russian folk-tales.<sup>1</sup> The journey takes the hero into the other world, and at its end he celebrates his wedding. This world of the dead is, at the same time, a paradisaical world after the manner of the 'island of the blessed' of Greek mythology. As the battle with the hero's adversary constitutes the climax of many narratives, it is usually dwelt upon at considerable length. This battle is necessitated as a rule by the hero's attempt to liberate either his mother, his sister or the princess

1. From the power of the dragon, the Koshchey or the Baba-Yaga (Af. vol. I, No. 129).
  2. From imprisonment by, or forced marriage to, an evil supernatural figure (Af. vol. I, No. 156).
  3. From being an enchanted animal (a frog, falcon, etc.) (Af. vol. II, No. 201).
  4. From a superior adversary of any kind (Af. vol. I, No. 131).
  5. From parental ties which are too strong (Af. vol. I, No. 140).
- None of the final achievements come easily to the hero, and the greater the gain, the greater the conflict.

There is a maximum of seven different active types in the folk-tale, each having a precise function to perform.<sup>2</sup> At least four of these have to be present in the traditional structural pattern: first, the hero; second and third, the person or object representing the dual forces of good and evil, as personified by the supernatural helpers and adversaries; and fourth and last, the person or object representing his goal (Diagrams p. 50).

The structure and style of the folk-tale are shaped by a basic ideological pattern, which represents all events as the

1. Notably the folk-tale-types A. Andreyev, op. cit. and V. Ya Propp, op. cit., Nos. 300, 301, 302, 303, 305, 312, 313, 314, 315, 400, 401, 402, 432, 465, 466, 502, 530, 531, 532, 550, 551, 552, 553, 650, 677.
2. V. Ya. Propp, Morfologiya skazki, Leningrad, 1929.

# THE FOLK-TALE

## 4. GOAL

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5. DONATOR OF  
MAGIC GIFT  
(BABA-YAGA) 7. GOAL (PRINCESS,
- 
6. FALSE HERO (VODOVOZ) LOST MOTHER,  
WATER OF LIFE)

BASIC PATTERNS OF RELATIONSHIPS IN

(POSITIVE FORCES)

1. HERO

2. MAGIC HELPER

A

---

3. MAGIC ADVERSARY  
(NEGATIVE FORCES)

(HERO) 2. PERSON  
SENDING  
HERO OUT

3. MAGIC HELPER  
(STARUSHKA)

B 1. IVAN

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4. MAGIC  
ADVERSARY  
(ZMEY)

results of the action of law. In its essence the journey is shown to be the development of man, who attains spiritual perfection by passing through a number of definite stages. The drama itself receives its impetus from the struggle between the forces of good and evil. Action takes place in either of two worlds, the common world or the other world (tot svet): the latter is to be found beyond the tridevyat' zemel' in the tridesyatoye gosudarstvo, which is identical with the land of the dead of mythology and legend.<sup>1</sup>

The tales tend to represent extreme situations: the hero is either a prince or a peasant's son; there are families with too many children or families with none; the hero or heroine is very young, helpers and advisors very old; the hero is either a giant in strength or helplessly at the mercy of some adverse fate; the figures representing the supernatural world are of grotesque, unearthly appearance, like the Baba-Yaga, or they are paragons of beauty, as is the princess. There are no mixed characters: every type stands for one quality only, being either poor or rich, just or unjust, good or evil. Each character knows only one way in which to act: the hero is successful by definition, the anti-hero invariably fails. Crimes are extreme; punishment ends in death. There are no changes of role, and no character ever acts in an ambiguous manner in relation to the standards prescribed by the tale. Each type or 'functional element'<sup>2</sup> is, as it were, obedient to, and acts according to, a predetermined pattern, rather as marionettes move on the ends of their strings, in obedience to the master of the show.

From the point of view of the morphology of the tale, people or animals, objects or supernatural figures, are all equally important as functional elements in that they are exponents of the laws they obey. Thus, for instance, a golden ball, the gift of the supernatural helper, rolling along before the hero and showing him the way to the other realm where he is to find the princess, is an extension and manifestation of the

1. Ye. Trubetskoy, Inoye tsarstvo i yego iskateli v russkoy narodnoy skazke, Prague, 1923.
2. V. Ya. Propp, Morfologiya skazki, Leningrad, 1928.

power as such of the supernatural being, and a symbol of goodness. Equally the dolls, put into the four corners of the room by the princess, act on her behalf while she is on her way from the lower world to the realm of her bridegroom. So also the firebird may act as a messenger from the other world. There is therefore a great flexibility in the choice of which character or object may fulfil a given function. Thus, the role of the donor of the magic gifts may be taken by:

1. The grey wolf (Af. vol. I, No. 168).
2. The Baba-Yaga (Onoh. No. 8).
3. The princess (Af. vol. I, Nos. 128-130).

The role of the adversary may be assumed by:

1. The dragon (Af. vol. I, No. 176).
2. The Koshchey (Af. vol. I, Nos. 156-158).
3. The sorceress (Af. vol. I, No. 141).

The person sending the hero on his journey can be:

1. The stepmother (Af. vol. I, No. 104).
2. A spiteful sister (Af. vol. II, Nos. 260-262).
3. A sick king (Af. vol. I, Nos. 171-180).

As may be seen, the folk-tale is not concerned with individuals but with types. It adheres to a structural pattern, flexible enough to allow the combination of very diverse themes and motifs.

This stable, uniform pattern also moulds the folk-tale style, which is characterised by a framework of formulas that are used to recount the basic events. Each folk-tale figure is described with a special set phraseology, each separate event related to a particular stylised terminology, just as every quality is presented through the use of stereotype epithets. Recurrent events are narrated in set rhythmical phrases. These formulae are like sign-posts around which the imagination of the story-teller can move freely, and at the same time are an aid to the memory, and so preserve the integrity of the narrative.

To such a degree is this particular style an intrinsic element of the folk-tale that, if it is not adhered to, the tale of the miraculous tends to acquire features of other narrative genres. This stylisation has been one of the factors in the longevity of the folk-tale, in keeping its content unchanged and in preserving its imagery.

The tale is begun and ended with a set of recurrent formulae, which are the same in most of the recorded variants. In several cases, the folk-tale opens with a kind of prologue, the priskazka, which is not connected with the main body of the story, and in itself has no particular meaning: its content is in many cases even quite absurd. Generally, the priskazka is a fanciful playing with words which follow a rhythmic sequence, e.g. Af. vol. I, No. 139:

Начина́ется сказа́нка от сивки от бу́рки от  
вещей кау́рки. На мо́ре, на океа́не, на  
о́строве на буя́не, стои́т бык пе́ченный,  
во́зле него́ лу́к то́лченный, и шлѝ́ три  
мо́лодца, зашлѝ́ да позѝ́втракали, да́льше,  
идут да похва́ляются, са́ми собо́й забавля́-  
ются: а бы́ли мы, бра́тцы, у тако́го-то  
ме́ста, наеда́лись пу́ще, чем дере́вѝнская  
баба те́ста! Это прѝсказа́нка, сказа́нка бу́дет  
впе́редѝ.

There is a theory that a priskazka containing the word buyan may be a corrupted version of a once meaningful invocation. The reason is that the word buyan resembles ruyan, and ruyan may be an adaptation of the Teutonic name of the island of Ruegen in the Baltic Sea, where the remains of a pagan Slav temple have been found. In early Russian the name Ruegen is called ruyan, so that it would seem possible to identify the fabulous island of buyan with the historic shrine of Ruegen.<sup>1</sup> Incidentally, the pagan shrines on Ruegen were destroyed by Valdemar I of Denmark in 1168. At one time, when the belief in the reality of the content of the folk-tale was still widespread in Russia, the priskazka may have been an invocation, intended to create the right atmosphere in which the story might be told. Later the priskazka became merely a device for rousing the attention of the story-teller's audience. 'Usually the story-teller relates the priskazka...quickly; his words come out as sharply as bullets out

1. J. Hastings, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, 12 vols., Edinburgh, 1904-26, s. v. Buyan; cf. also V. J. Mansikka, Ueber russische Zauberformeln, Helsinki, 1909, p. 183. Mansikka believes buyan to be identical with Golgotha.

of a machine-gun, and his listeners, bursting into laughter, at once give him their attention. This is what he needs, for now he quietly begins to tell the story.<sup>1</sup>

The opening of the folk-tale refers to a vague and distant time: zhili-byli, byvalo-zhivalo, or, more often, to an equally vague and distant locality: v nekotorom tsarstve, v nekotorom gosudarstve zhil korol'. This, of course, is neither a historical time nor a geographical locality, but a time that exists now and always, and a locality that exists here and everywhere. There is more variety in the formulae with which the tales end: i nachali zhit' da pozhiivat', dobra nazhiivat' likha isbavit'. This statement implies that all is well and the future provided for. Frequently the story-teller likes at this point to draw the attention back to himself by quoting a traditional phrase which is meant to enhance the plausibility of what has gone before; with it he is, as it were, bringing the tale down to earth again. Referring to the marriage feast of the hero, which at the same time marks the end of the story, the narrator adds:

"На том пиру и я был, мед-пиво пил, по  
усам текло, а в рот не попало."

These formulas which introduce and end the tale form a surrounding framework.

Formulae and set phrases, proverbs and riddles are used continuously throughout the narrative at precise points in its development, at intervals between episodes, or to introduce a new folk-tale figure. Riddles are sometimes the focal point of a tale, as in the tale of idi tuda, ne znayu kuda, prinesi to, ne znayu chto (Af. vol. II, Nos. 212-215), or in Tsarevna, razgadyvayushchaya zagadki (Af. vol. II, No. 239). Riddles occasionally appear in the form of a task, not meant to be an intelligence test for the hero, but to test his magic powers. Examples of these stylistic formulae are numerous. To quote only a few: the journey of the hero to the hut of the Baba-Yaga is briefly described thus: shol mnogo li malo li, prishol k izbushke; the result of the frequent motif of transformation is told in these

1. A. I. Nikiforov, 'Erotika v velikoruskoy narodnoy skazke', Khudozhestvennyy fol'klor, vols. IV-V, Moscow, 1929, pp. 120-27.

words: sdelaleya takim krasavtsem, chto ni v skazke skazat' ni perom opisat'; the hero's magic horse is summoned by the typical phrase: sivka-burka, veshchaya kaurka, stan' peredo mnoy, kak list pered travoy; a break between two episodes is bridged with a phrase like: skoro skazka skazyvayetsya, no ne skoro delo delayetsya. For typical situations whole stylised passages are used, including both description and dialogue. The more central a figure or a situation is to the story, the more colourful is the phraseology used to present it. Two of the fundamental encounters of the hero, the one with the zmey and the other with the Baba-Yaga, provide the best examples for this type of stylisation:

Приехали в дремучий лес; в том лесу стоит избушка на курьчих ножках, когда надо повертывается. "Избушка, избушка, повернись к нам передом, к лесу задом; нам в тебя лезть, хлеба-соли есть!" Избушка повернулась, добрые молодцы входят в избушку - на печке лежит баба-яга, из угла в угол нос в потолок. "Фу-фу-фу! Прежде русского духу слыхом не слыхано, видом не видано, нынче русский дух на ложки садится, сам в рот катится"...

Вот стоит Иван Быкович под калиновым мостом; пошло время за полночь, на реке воды взволновался, на дубах орлы раскричались. Выезжает Чудо-Юдо двенадцатиглавное; конь у него у двенадцати крылах, шерсть у коня серебряная, хвост и грива - золотые. Едет Чудо-Юдо; вдруг под ним конь споткнулся, чёрный ворон на плече встрепенулся, позади хорт ошестинился. Чудо-Юдо коня по бедрам, ворона по перьям, хорту по ушам: "Что ты, собачье мясо, спотыкаешься, ты, воронье перо терепещешься, ты, песья шерсть щетишься? Аль вы думаете, что Иван Быкович здесь? Так он ещё не родился. Я только дуну - его праху не останется!"

Then follows Ivan Bykovich's answer and the battle, which is in



three stages (Af. vol. I, No. 138).

In these recapitulations of the decisive stages of the hero's journey, an almost verbatim reiteration of the formulas in most of the recorded folk-tales may be observed. In these passages there is a particularly strong emphasis on rhythm. It would appear that such a conscientious transmission of the traditional formula goes back to an early belief in the power of words, especially in connection with a particular rhythm. In antiquity such formulas were probably used in religious customs and rituals, and, in this connection, played a meaningful part. They may become shortened or otherwise altered to a point where they cease to have any particular meaning. It is known, for instance, that in primitive communities the most sacred of all words is a person's name, which is considered to be no mere attribute but an integral part of the self. The repetition of a word greatly heightens its suggestive power and helps to exclude from the mind all concepts and associations other than its own: that is to say, words are the most effective means for mental suggestion, and are only rivalled by mime.

Formulas are frequently used in connection with time and space. Through them actions are transferred from one place to another, as from a hut to a palace, or from one world to the next, so that through their use the unity of time and place is preserved:

А молодец поехал дальше, ехал, ехал,  
подъехал к одному двору, вошёл в избу...  
Удалец наш приезжает в свою землю,  
видит, - братья его, бродяги в поле  
спят.

(Af. vol. I, No. 171).

Ехали по долам, по горам, по зелёным  
лугам, приехали в дремучий лес...

(Af. vol. I, No. 137).

Ивашко спустился и пошёл; шёл да шёл,  
и дошёл до медного царства...

(Af. vol. I, No. 128).

"По щучьему веленью, по божьему благо-  
словенью, стать здесь богатый дворец -  
чтобы лучше во всем свете не было, и с  
садами, и с прудами, и со всякими  
пристройками!" Только вымолвил -

явился богатый дворец.

(Af. vol. I, No. 167).

Often story-tellers liked to avail themselves of proverbs and fragments of texts of songs, which one may assume their listeners were familiar with, so that they could be used, judging by Nikiforov's account of story-telling,<sup>1</sup> to draw the audience into the events of the tale. The following verse is an illustration:

"Поиграй, поиграй, матушка!  
 Не ты меня душила,  
 Не ты меня губила:  
 Душили-губили  
 Сестрицы-жидовки  
 За серебряное блюдечко,  
 За красненькие ягодки."

(Khud. No. 17).

Proverbs may be found inserted between any two episodes or added to emphasise any one action or to stress its relevance.<sup>2</sup>

Thus:

"Умным дорога, а дуракам путь не  
 заказан."

"Говорят, в старину всё такие-то удалцы  
 рожались, а нам от них только сказочки  
 остались."

(Af. vol. I, No. 205).

Today, the power of words and formulas is exploited in the use of slogans of all kinds, for commercial and political purposes. Used in this way they are apparently meant to appeal directly to the belief in miracles, latent in everybody. The impact is made by evoking an image in the mind which has an emotional power of persuasion, and which at the same time is claimed, by implication, to be an absolute truth.

1. Cf. Chap. I.

2. I. Weber-Kellermann, 'Die Bedeutung des Formelhaften im volkstuemlichen Denken', Voelkerforschung, Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. 5, Berlin, 1954, pp. 187-199.

According to one of M. K. Asadovsky's best storytellers, the dialogue in the folk-tale is its most important aspect and, at the same time its most difficult constituent part. 'If a single word is wrong here, nothing will work out right; everything has to be done quickly here.'<sup>1</sup> All the characters of the folk-tale are made to speak in the same idiom; there is no differentiation in the speech of the various types which appear in the story; even animals adopt this stylised manner of speech:

Стал ему говорить добрый конь: "Гой еси, Васмлий-царевич! Не время спать, время вставать, с Иваном, русским богатырём, бой начинать."

(Af. vol. II, No. 233).

As the emphasis is on action, except for the passages of dialogue, each sentence describes a different phase:

Вот пошла Елена Прекрасная с золотого трона, села на свою колесницу и понеслась по воздуху к своему чудесному дворцу; следом за ней навстречу няньки и мамки подхватила её под руки, и увела в расписные палаты...

(Af. vol. II, No. 236).

These precise, often very elaborate, stylistic devices leave no doubt about the existence of a once very sound professionalism, in which there was a high standard of craftsmanship. To judge from historical records, the heyday of story-telling in Russia lasted until the mid-nineteenth century, which marked the end of an epoch of an age-old tradition. The renaissance of the Russian folk-tale appears to have occurred in the Middle Ages, the time of the vesyolye lyudi.

The factors which cause the traditional patterns to change are many, but they occur according to a number of observable laws. Changes in these patterns happen gradually, for instance, through the forgetting of a trait, a figure, an object or incidents; they are caused by enlarging the tale, i.e. by including material which originally did not belong to it, by

1. M. K. Asadovsky (ed.), Skazki Verkhnelenskogo kraja, Irkutsk, 1925, Introduction.

joining episodes together which belong to various other tale-types, through unnecessary repetition or simplification, and through the interchange of episodes, qualities, actions and figures. Change is also frequently effected by an anthropomorphic representation of animal adventures, in which people and animals are depicted as having the same characteristics, and therefore behaving according to the same pattern. Cases of zoomorphism are rarer, and only occasionally are animal actions performed by supernatural beings. It is very common to find that episodes have influenced one another, or that incidents have taken on the colouring of local customs and traditions.

Unfamiliar aspects are changed into familiar ones. Lastly, a decisive factor causing change is modernisation, that is, the adaptation of traditional imagery to present-day environment and current thought. The general tendency is for the tale of the miraculous to develop through a process of rationalisation into a moralistic tale or even into farce.<sup>1</sup> 'An image, which does not contribute to action is forgotten fairly quickly, or is given a different interpretation. A motif that contributes to action, but is poorly expressed, may disappear, but more likely is remodelled into a scene that has visual appeal; motifs that are an integral part of the composition and at the same time contribute to the action most probably remain part of the tradition.'<sup>2</sup>

A. N. Veselovsky is more emphatic about the inevitability of change: '...make any story-teller...repeat to you...at different times the same bylina or skazka. Each time he will introduce into his narrative something new, some detail or superfluous incident, sometimes even unnoticed by himself.'<sup>3</sup>

In the form in which the folk-tale is found in the best collections, where its structure and style are very often well preserved, it is greatly indebted to the mediaeval epoch. The social structure is that of the Middle Age: the actors are tsars, tsarevnas, bogatyri, merchants, artisans, soldiers. In

1. V. Ya. Propp, 'Transformatsiya volshebnykh skazok', Foetika IV, Leningrad, 1928; A. Aarne, 'Leitfaden der vergleichenden Maerchentypen', FFC, No. 13, Helsinki, 1913.
2. A. Aarne, 'Leitfaden der vergleichenden Maerhentypen', FFC, No. 13, Helsinki, 1913.
3. A. N. Veselovsky, Sobraniye sochineniy, vol. 16, Moscow, 1938, p. 110.

later variants the idea prevails that the king is a noble sluggard; he no longer fights battles himself, is often a tyrant, and in many cases is almost the villain of the story. Every historical period has left its mark, even if only slightly, and so has imparted its colouring to the tale. On the whole, however, the classical tale, because of its stable structure, has resisted the influences of the different periods or manifests them only superficially.

Without a marked alteration of its characteristic features, the traditional tale of the miraculous began to show changes in its style in the second half of the nineteenth century. Features of town life began to infiltrate, small details always being the means through which the influence of a given time is reflected. Slowly there began the gradual bytovizatsiya of the classical tale. Many of them show a growing tendency towards a psychological presentation of the figures and an increasing rationalisation in the description of action. Folk-tale figures begin to have thoughts, opinions and a will of their own, so that it is no longer appropriate to speak of their being manipulated or of their obeying an overall plan, but rather about how their decisions influence the course of the action: they are no longer types, but have become characters.

Many examples can be found of this growing bytovizatsiya of the tales: Mar'ya-tsarevna puts on a watch: 'Ivan-tsarevich na Mar'yu-tsarevnu glyadit, a Mar'ya-tsarevna v chasy.' This introduces a comic note which is quite out of keeping with the serene, often even grave, tone of the folk-tale. On the magic tree grow biletiki, which come to life. In tales written down at the beginning of the twentieth century, senators, ministers and members of the duma begin to figure; the heroes play guitars and send telegrams,<sup>1</sup> or pass examinations.<sup>2</sup> Technical innovations acquire the flavour of the miraculous: 'Nazhimayet pugovku - na vos'mom etazhe zazveneli zvonki.'<sup>3</sup> Anachronisms are numerous, such as the hero saying: 'Skoro o mne budet otpechatat'sya afishki';<sup>4</sup> bogatyri are appointed governors, the Baba-Yaga is

1. B. i Yu. Sokolovy, Skazki i pesni Belozerskogo kraya, Moscow, 1915, p. 50 f.
2. D. K. Zelenin, Velikorusskiye skazki Vyatskoy gubernii, Petersburg, 1915, p. 320.
3. Ibid., p. 324.
4. Ibid., p. 330.

shot by a rifle. Comparisons are made with the old days; mythical time becomes identified with a somewhat glorified Russian historical past, that is, the time before 1917. 'Ran'she, v starinu', 'v prezhneye vremya' are formulae frequently used by contemporary story-tellers. A tragicomic observation is made by the hero of a contemporary tale: 'To byl ya tsaryom, a teper' sdelalsya samym nizkim spekulyantom.'<sup>1</sup> The end formulas change: 'Pirovali tak dolgo, do samoy Cktyabr'skoy Revolyutsii,'<sup>2</sup> the implication being that this event put an end to all merry-making. The folk idiom loses its characteristic quality and often assumes a pompous, literary tone: one hero turns to his friend, asking him: 'Chego izvolite?'; a king says to his wife:

"Дражайшая моя супруга, хотя знания у  
меня очень велики, я знаю, но твой  
умный совет всегда меня воодушевляет,  
и даёт ещё больше энергии."

The last two examples show that the story-tellers have lost confidence in the validity and acceptability of their idiom and feel that a bookish phraseology, which they often do not fully understand, is more appropriate. This feature is indicative of a move towards an individualisation of the speech of the various folk-tale figures. Many more such examples may be found in the collection called Skazki I. F. Kovalyova.<sup>4</sup> Frequently folk-tales begin to show a tendency to moralize, a feature quite alien to the traditional tale. For example, a tale from the Tambov district ends: 'Smysl etoy skazki znachit takoy: pod brat'yami razumejetsya klassy bogatykh i bednykh.'<sup>5</sup> The story-tellers' interpretations of the implicit meaning or underlying symbolism of the tale or their understanding of it as an allegory, superimpose a number of secondary meanings of only partial validity.

1. M. K. Azadovsky, Skazki iz raznykh mest Sibiri, Irkutsk, 1928, p. 9.
2. T. Akimov i P. Stepanov, Skazki Saratovskoy oblasti, Saratov, 1937, p. 6.
3. Arkhiv Karel'ekogo filiala ANSSSR, kol. XXXII, No. 59.
4. E. Gofman i S. Mints, Skazki I. F. Kovalyova, Moscow, 1941.
5. Yu. M. Sokolov i Ye. Gofman, Tambovskiy fol'klor, Tambov, 1941, p. 157.

In this way the folk-tale has acquired a new function as an instrument for propagating a point of view, as in the tale by the Soviet story-teller Bashkova, where the waters of life and death are represented as symbolising the unique powers of the proletariat.<sup>1</sup> Russia's invaders are portrayed as many-headed dragons and as other traditional folk-tale monsters. 'Zmeya desyatigolovogo...vse golovy otsekli, tak i Gitleru otsekli.'<sup>2</sup> Lenin, whose image in Soviet lore has assumed mythical proportions, is thus idealised in a tale by Kovalyov: 'Krasnyy tsvetochek padayet na grud' Lenina, lezhashchego v grobu, i on tsvetyot i tsvesti budet vечно.'<sup>3</sup> Similarly:

Ленин помер, Советскую власть взял, а двенадцать молодцев оставил, и они все ведут, и Советскую власть держат. И их никогда никому не взять, потому что молодцы эти не помрут: один помирает, а другие научаются. А все они идут за нас, за Советскую власть. То эти богатые собьют врага.

The traditional feast, celebrating the hero's marriage, takes place in the metro station, which figures in popular imagination as a present-day underground palace: 'Ya v bufete byl, limonad-etroya pil, vetchinoy zakusil.'

The tales 'created' by individual story-tellers, reflecting a political ideology or their private attitudes and opinions, overstep the boundaries of folklore. More and more the folk-tale becomes part of literature, or else is the individual creation of a narrator who claims for it a universal significance on the ground that it embodies the values and ideas of a current ideology. What is more, now that so much printed material is available, the incentive to narrate tales has diminished, for potential listeners can just as well read the stories for themselves in their own time. More and more the folk-

1. Tvorchestvo narodov SSSR, Moscow, 1937, pp. 280-81, quoted by E. V. Pomerantseva, op. cit., p. 177.
2. N. V. Novikov, Russky fol'klor velikoy otechestvennoy voyny, Moscow/Leningrad, 1960, p. 328.
3. Skazki Kovalyova, p. 242.
4. From the folk-tale 'Chudesnyy syn' in N. V. Novikov (ed.), Skazki Gospodaryova, Petrozavodsk, 1941.

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## CHAPTER III

## HISTORICAL ASPECTS

'Das Maerchen ist nicht von Haus aus Wundergeechichte, wenn es auch vielfach dazu geworden ist; vielmehr ist es eine altertuemliche sakrale Dichtform, die eine praehistorische Kulturperiode widerpiegelt.'<sup>1</sup>

This thesis sets out to discover the abstract principles which have been given visual form in the imagery of the folk-tales, and which in the folk-tale have been formulated into a precise system of relationships. In order to investigate the ways of thinking, which expressed themselves in the ceremonies and beliefs of people of remote antiquity, and which created the imagery of the folk-tale, one may turn to tribes at a similar cultural level today. '...Primitive man experiences chiefly through his senses...He trusts his eyes more than he does his reason...Imagination is the medium by which he probably works most. His eyes recognise images where the civilised man can see nothing...When primitive man speaks in images, these are of a concrete type; they go back to those which he has seen in nature: he would never draw abstract comparisons.'<sup>2</sup> The ancient myths gave authority to their symbols by attributing them to gods, culture heroes or to some such high impersonal force as the order of the universe. Society itself, linked to the greater order of nature, became an object of religious awe. In archaic culture the way was to subordinate absolutely all individual judgement, will and capacities, to the social order as a reflection of a greater impersonal order. The archetypes or ideal roles were impressed upon all.

All ancient civilisations and cultures have produced their own mythologies, which reflect an ideological pattern that is very similar everywhere in its basic traits. The ceremonies and rituals, which at one time appear to have accompanied them, are more easily lost to posterity. It is a plausible theory that

1. O. Huth, 'Maerchen und Megalithreligion', Paideuma, IV, 1950, pp. 12-22.
2. E. Ehnmark, 'Anthropomorphism and miracle', Uppsala Universitets arskrift, No. 12, Uppsala/Leipzig, 1939, pp. 3-211.

myth was taken from ritual, being its verbal commentary or explanation.

Given their form, these patterns have survived millennia, and were handed down by word of mouth from one generation to the next. The fundamental identity of myths, cults and tales of peoples separated by great geographic distances and long stretches of time, may perhaps find its best explanation in the laws of human thought, which render its products so alike that individual, social and national divisions become insignificant: the same objective ideas are dealt with in the same subjective manner everywhere.

The knowledge gathered by peoples in the past, their institutions, and the rules they formulated in connection with them, has, to a large extent, become incorporated in their folklore.<sup>1</sup> In this sense folklore is the science of tradition, of the way of life of the world at large and all that is in it, natural and supernatural. The function of a people's mythology or the folk tradition which embodied it not only was to ensure longevity for a community's cultural heritage, but it also had a definite social significance; it both reflected the world-view of a given community, and satisfied its social needs: the repetition of folk-tales with their stereotyped incidents according to a variety of verbal and rhythmic patterns, which are reputed to be primordial by virtue of their connection with time-honoured tradition, justified the present by confirming the past, and, in a sense, acted as a safeguard against the future by making it predictable. This attitude is confirmed, for example, in an account of a meeting of Rasmussen with an Eskimo. The latter told the explorer: 'We Eskimos do not concern ourselves with solving all riddles, we repeat the old stories in the way they were told to us and with the words we ourselves remember.'<sup>2</sup> It is a well-known fact that in traditional folk art nothing new is invented deliberately. On the contrary, traditional concepts find expression in precise structural verbal or musical patterns. The

1. Ye. N. Teleonskaya, 'Nekotoryye zamechaniya o pereshitkakh pervobytnoy kul'tury v russkikh skazkakh', Etnograficheskoye obozreniye, Nos. 1-2, 1906, pp. 63-72.
2. K. Rasmussen, Intellectual Culture of the Hudson Bay Eskimos, Copenhagen, 1938, p. 67.

folk artist only copies or stylises, he does no more than combines already existing patterns.

The traditional society is unanimous, conforming to recognised patterns which govern the lives of its members, and the validity of the laws which have been laid down once and for all is questioned by no one. The constant reference of a people or a community to their tradition, and the repetition ad infinitum of symbolic ritualistic action raises the tradition to the level of a creed. Ceremonies and tales bring individuals together and create situations in which they feel connected with something larger than themselves, with something that demands their attention and co-operation. In this way a situation is created, which develops a sense of belonging and a feeling of mutual dependency.

The most prominent universal mythological cycles have found their way into folk tradition, where they often appear as a combination of a few fragmentary motifs. In the main they are representations of the 'drama of the universe', seen as an everlasting battle between the dual worlds of good and evil. The opposition of these forces is expressed in the folk-tale by presenting a twofold pattern of extremes, by portraying the world as divided sharply into black and white. The concept of a dualistic world most likely has its origin in the East and may well have been influenced by Zoroastrianism.<sup>1</sup> Hostile forces are seen to intrude from outside into an essentially peaceful universe.

In the course of its long life the folk-tale has assimilated very varied influences, and in its present form it incorporates beliefs and customs which in many instances date back to prehistoric times. When these beliefs came to be part of the make-up of the folk-tale, they had already, to a considerable degree, lost their significance as articles of faith, and in this way they could become structural elements and stylistic devices, either partially or wholly emptied of their former religious or semi-religious content, and have a new secondary,

1. Cf. also V. V. Ivanov and V. N. Toporov, Slavyanskiye yazykovyye modeliruyushchiye semioticheskiye sistemy, Moscow, 1965, for early Slavonic dualistic concepts.

symbolic significance. 'The ancient world-view disappeared, leaving only remnants of the subject-matter and the images at one time created by it.'<sup>1</sup> The most frequent of these ideological patterns, although still betraying their link with former beliefs, acquired a veneer of feudal culture in the Middle Ages. This was a time in which the Russian folk-tale is known to have been particularly active as a medium of entertainment.

The clan was the basic unit of ancient society. It was founded on the principle of blood kinship, which was often supplemented by a fraternal or symbolic kinship of sworn brothers. An echo of such a relationship is found in Af. vol. I, No. 156:

Он оставил коня, наточил из мизинца в  
 стакан крови, подаёт братьям и говорит:  
 "Ежели в стакане кровь почернеет, не  
 ждите меня: значит, - я умру."

The latter was a special bond which existed primarily among young adventurous warriors. In the Alanic world, at the time before the Slavonic tribes organised themselves into groups, there is also evidence of the existence of sororities. Herodotus confirms that according to the marriage laws of the Scythian amazons no girl was to wed until she had killed a man in battle. The figure of the female warrior is very frequently met with in the Russian folk-tales in the tsar-devitsa (Onch. No. 3; Smirn. No. 1; Af. vol. II, Nos. 232-233). She is portrayed as ruling over her own realm. Before she submits to the hero, the latter has to undergo a severe trial of strength. A parallel figure is the Germanic Bruenhilde.<sup>2</sup>

Symbolic kinship could be either of the individual or of the group, that is between two individuals, between two groups or between an individual and a group. There are, for example, frequent references to a relationship between the hero's mother and the Baba-Yaga, when cast as the benevolent

1. Ye. A. Tudorovskaya, 'Nekotoryye cherty doklassovogo mirovozzreniya v russkoy narodnoy volshebnoy skazke', Russkiy fol'klor vol. 5, Moscow/Leningrad, 1960, p. 103.
2. A. Loewis of Menar, 'Die Bruenhildsage in Russland', Palaestra, No. 142, Leipzig, 1923.

helper (Af. vol. II, No. 172). In this context it is also of interest that the adversary knows in advance that the hero will do battle with him and acknowledge him to be his only real enemy (Af. vol. I, No. 138). The hero often finds himself related to the inner clan of magicians through his supernatural wife or through his mother, and so obtains help and advice for his enterprises (Af. vol. II, No. 212); compare in this context also the hero's invocation as he enters the Baba-Yaga's hut: 'Izbushka, izbushka! Stan' po-staromu, kak mat' postavila, - k lesu zadom, a ko mne peredom.' (Af. vol. II, No. 267).

The main religious beliefs that prevailed among the Eurasian nomads of the steppe were shamanism, totemism or ancestor worship, and nature worship, which included worship of the sky.<sup>1</sup> All of these so-called primitive religions have left a profound mark on the ideological concepts implicit in the folk-tale. Their cosmic orientation was based on the cardinal points, their cosmological system showing symmetrical features. The macrocosm was divided into three main parts, upper, middle and lower, with a centre running through them. In this way all three regions were connected by an axis, symbolised by the tree of life. This tree of life is found in mythology and folklore and it is also an essential part of shamanism. In the Russian folk-tale, the upper and lower regions of the world merge in most cases in the concept of tot svet, which is the goal of the hero's journey. In a few instances the upper world occurs as a distinct level of its own, as in the tale of Ved'ma i eolntseva sestra (Af. vol. I, No. 93).

The ancestors of a given clan or community were believed to dwell below the earth and in prehistoric times and in the ancient world, the cracks and holes in its surface were held to be the gates into the underworld. In the Russian folk-tale this world is called inoye tsarstvo, drugoye tsarstvo, or inyye zemli. It is described as having the same geographical

1. D. K. Zelenin, Russische (Oetslavische) Volkskunde, Berlin/Leipzig, 1927, p. 385; idem, 'Istolkovaniye perezhitochnykh obryadov', Sovetskaya Etnografiya, No. 5, 1934, pp. 3-16; M. Eliade, Shamanism. Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy, New York, 1964.

features as the middle world, which it mirrors exactly; the only important difference is that the one who knows the way may find its treasure. This is the prerogative of the hero or the shaman. The former is often guided on his way by a ball rolling before him (Af. vol. I, No. 129). On the psychological level the journey might be regarded as a *myetic* journey into the microcosm:<sup>1</sup> 'the shaman is the great specialist in the human soul; he alone sees it, for he knows its 'form' and its destiny.'<sup>2</sup>

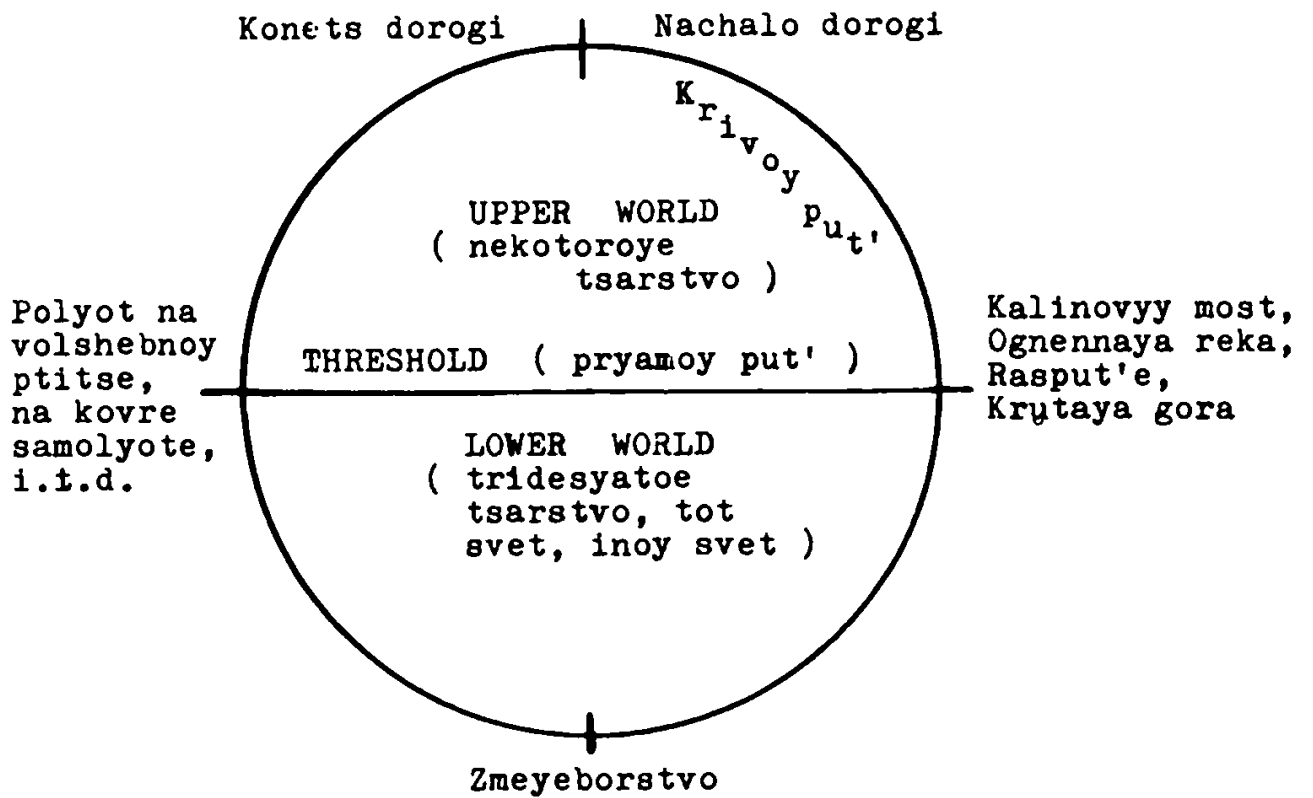
The gates into the underworld may appear as a hole in the earth, through which the hero lowers himself on a rope (Af. vol. I, No. 140):

Зорька пошёл в лес, надрал лыков, свил  
верёвку и велел спустить себя под землю.  
Вечорка и Полуночка спустила его под  
землю. Очутился он на том свете, отвяза-  
лись от цепи и пошёл куда глаза глядят.

They may take the form of the open mouth of the Baba-Yaga, stretching from heaven to earth. Alternatively, they are a space which the hero has to cross, a difficult, razor-edged passage like the kalinovyu most. This bridge may lead across the ognennaya reka. Or again they may be the space behind the hut of the Baba-Yaga, which the hero crosses on a flying horse or on an eagle.

The hero is the exclusive mediator between the two worlds, the natural and the supernatural (Diagram p. 71) and he communicates the insight he has acquired on his journey to the beyond to his clan, or, in the terms of the folk-tale, the hero returns with the water of life, the apples of youth and superior knowledge. The hero's brothers, who attempt the same journey, either stop at the first obstacle or choose the wrong turning on the way, the one that leads nowhere. The difficulty of finding the way is very often mentioned. This recalls the idea of the Cretan labyrinth, as found in Greek mythology. Only when the way through it has been found does the hero arrive at

1. M. Eliade, op. cit.; E. Schnapper, The Inward Odyssey. The Concept of the Way in the great Religions of the World, London, 1965.
2. M. Eliade, op. cit., p. 8.





the threshold of the treasure. This idea is found expressed in Af. vol. I, No. 156:

Долгъ ездил, наконецъ доехал до горы, пре-  
 большущая гора, взъехать на неё никак  
 нельзя. Тут и братья его ездят возле горы;  
 поздоровались, поехали вместе; доезжают  
 до чугунного камня, пудов полтора, на  
 камне надпись: кто этот камень бросит на  
 гору, тому и ход будет. Старшие братья  
 не могли поднять камень, а Иван-царевич  
 с одного маху забросил на гору - и тотчас  
 в горе показалась лестница.

The Labyrinth and the underworld belong to one and the same concept, which includes also the magic forest and the path leading through it. Daedalus, like the hero of the folk-tale, knew two means of escape from this maze or enchanted landscape, by the thread or by flight.

The tree<sup>1</sup> occupies a significant place in the folk-tale cosmology in that it marks a sacred zone. The tree may figure as dub na ostrove (Af. vol. I, Nos. 156-158), marking the place of the enemy's death. It may also feature as stolb - the transition from a highly conventionalised tree to a pillar being an easy one (Af. vol. I, Nos. 145-147) - or as the world-mountain, from which the way is shown branching off into several false paths:

Приезжают к столбу, от которого идут три  
 дороги, и на том столбе написано: вправо  
 идти - молодец будет сыт, а конь голоден;  
 налево идти - молодец будет голоден, а  
 конь сыт; прямо идти - живому не быть.  
 Старший царевич поехал направо, средний  
 - налево, а младший - прямой дорогой.

(Af. vol. II, No. 172)

The tree, which has to be understood as a symbol for the Tree of Life, occupies a special place in Russian folk belief until as late as the nineteenth century. 'At one time (the Russians) considered it a sin to cut down any tree which was

1. V. Holmberg-Harva, 'Der Baum des Lebens', Suomalaisen Tiedeakademian toimituksia, Sarja B, nro. 16, No. 3, Helsingfors, 1922, pp. 3-153.

old; according to former folk beliefs one who cut down a tree would either go out of his mind, break his hands or legs, or might even die.<sup>1</sup> This concept of a tree as a living organism puts it on a level with human beings, inasmuch as it has an equally significant place in creation: 'The growth of a tree and its quickening process during spring, its fading away in autumn and winter, were signs which gave primitive man reason to believe that the tree was a living being, which felt pain at being cut down.'<sup>2</sup> In antiquity trees were believed to be the residence of the souls of the departed.<sup>3</sup> Later the spirit of the souls living in a tree was thought to be capable of removing to another tree, which gave rise to the notion of various wood spirits (lesnyye) or demons.<sup>4</sup>

In the Russian folk-tale it is not always clear with which region of the earth the tree is connected, but it often marks the centre of the earth and joins the upper and lower regions together. It is known that a holy tree played an important place in the lore of many Siberian peoples.<sup>5</sup> An illustration of such a tree portrays it growing with its roots upwards, i.e. towards heaven.<sup>6</sup> Such trees were erected by the shamans as a means of ascending to heaven. The illustration shows traces of carved faces, representing guardian spirits which assist the shaman in his magic acts. The hero's horses were tied to this tree and on its top perched an eagle, representing man's ancestor. Notches in its wooden trunk suggested its function as a ladder. The Zhar-ptitsa of the folk-tale is also intimately connected with a tree.

1. G. Popov, Russkaya narodno-bytovaya meditsina, St. Petersburg, 1903, p. 202.
2. D. K. Zelenin, 'Totemisticheskiy kul't derev'yev u Russkikh i Belorussov', Izvestiya Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1933, No. 8, p. 593.
3. E. Emsheimer, 'Schamanentrommel und Trommelbaum', Ethnos IV, p. 166-181. O. Lauffer, 'Geister im Baum', Volkskundliche Gaben, Festschrift fuer John Meier, Berlin/Leipzig, 1934, pp. 104-120.
4. For examples of the demons of Slavonic mythology of. Larousse, Encyclopaedia of Mythology, London, 1965, pp. 293-310.
5. U. Holmberg-Harva, op. cit.
6. Cf. A. J. Wensinok, 'Tree and bird as cosmological symbols in Western Asia', Verhandelingen der koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam, Amsterdam, 1921.

The concept of the Tree of Life is found in other symbols, such as the pillar, the mountain and the staircase, all of which mark a decisive stage of the hero's journey to the centre, to heaven, to the other world. These symbols also appear in a number of subsidiary forms as images of immortality. One of these may be the princess: 'Yedu v tridesyatoye gosudaretvo: tam, govoryat, yest' krasnaya devitsa - s ruk i e nog voda taelyushchaya tochitsya.' (Af. vol. II, no. 173). Others may be: the spring with the waters of life and death, which, according to the beliefs of antiquity, wells up from the underworld (Af. vol. II, Nos. 171-178); animal milk (zverinoe moloko) (Af. vol. II, Nos. 205-206); fruits (Af. vol. II, Nos. 171-178); the life force may also be contained in an egg (Af. vol. I, Nos. 156-158). All of these symbols are simply an extension of the concept of eternal life. Occasionally too, a miraculous, life-giving tree is shown to grow above the place where the bones of a supernatural animal are buried. It yields special fruit, bringing fortune to the hero or heroine and protecting them from harm.

All manifestations of nature were regarded merely as vehicles through which life and strength entered the world; they had their origin in an inexhaustible source in an impersonal world. Compare Af. vol. I, Nos. 141 and 142, where children are born to an old couple from a turnip and from a log of wood.

The symbol of the tree in connection with ritual and cult is not the only totemistic survival in the folk-tale tradition. There are other numerous examples of the hero giving away his three sisters in marriage to an eagle, a falcon and a raven, of a peasant marrying his three daughters to the sun, the moon and a raven, of children being abducted by a bear, and of women giving birth to beings half-human, half-animal.

In prehistoric times and in antiquity man's well-being was thought to be totally dependent on the degree of his integration and harmony with the cosmic order and its manifestations in the world around him. Life was not felt to be different or separate in the various phenomena of the natural world, nor were these judged according to the stage of their development in relation to man: rather, life was felt to have an underlying all-pervading unity, embracing all phenomena, natural and super-

natural. This outlook has come to be known as animism. Wherever prehistoric man saw an object in motion, even if unconnected with a living being, he assumed the presence of a conscious agent, one only imperceptible to his senses. In his eyes therefore all inanimate objects came to be endowed with intelligence. Each individual phenomenon was believed to possess its own vital principle, but through it was still none the less connected with all other phenomena. The worship of life was the central positive concept in primitive belief.

Trees and animals, which, according to the beliefs of totemism, were considered to be man's ancestors, were worshipped as being older and wiser than man, and the animals moreover were often thought to possess superior powers. 'The notion of nature being something alive, which not only has a special, independent existence, but is also a being filled with and animated by various spirits, is a notion that is fairly well preserved even today: stones grow, trees talk, stars listen... These personifications are not simply poetic images, but are rooted in a profound conviction of their reality.'<sup>1</sup> Personifications of various natural powers are the Morskoy tsar, the Vodyanoy tsar, Morozko, the Baba-Yaga, and the classic personifications of evil, Zmey and Koshchey Bessmertnyy. Children's attitudes to their toys reflect a similar relationship with the world around them, for they treat all objects as living beings. Adults also show a similar attitude when they kick a chair over which they have carelessly tumbled.

Totemistic animals were not thought of as the ordinary animals we know today, but as mythical ancient beings with supernatural attributes, who had assumed their animal forms for their own purposes. Every clan had its own totemistic ancestor. The animal which was worshipped on the ground that it was sacred was never killed; its meat was not touched. In the Russian folk-tale such protective animals were notably the eagle, the falcon and the bear:

Вот один раз пошёл царь на охоту и увидел:  
сидит на дубу молодой орёл; только хотел  
его застрелять, орёл и просит: "Не ореляй

1. D. K. Zelenin, Russische (Ostslavische) Volkskunde, Berlin/Leipzig, 1927, p. 384.

меня, царь-государь! Возьми лучше к себе, в некое время я тебе пригожусь."

(Af. vol. II, No. 219).

The man who was fortunate enough to learn their language was considered superior and one favoured by the ancestral spirits.

This idea is associated with the views that the soul of man has an animal form, that at death man changes into a bird, and that all birds and most animals are enchanted humans (Af. vol. II, Nos. 234-235), who under special circumstances may change back into human form. These views later gave rise to the notion that the soul itself was equipped with wings or that it could fly. In the Christian tradition the wings of the soul-bird are attributed to angels at all levels in the heavenly hierarchy. The ride on the winged horse (Af. vol. II, No. 172) and the flight on a bird to the other realm and back are equivalent to the soul's ecstatic flight to other regions. This mythical solidarity between animals and man is a predominant feature of the religion of the palaeo-hunters;<sup>1</sup> it survives in the many folk-tales in which the hero fulfils his supernatural tasks mostly in animal form as in Ivashko Medvezh'ye ukho, as Ivan-Bykovich or Ivan Koroviy syn.

The Eurasian hunters could not comprehend the disappearance of life from the body. They attributed full life to the skin of animals, and by putting it on and taking it off during their ritualistic practices they believed that they could actually share in the death and rebirth of the particular animal. The possibility of a return to life was considered a real one.<sup>2</sup>

A distinctive feature of folk-tale ideology is that death as a natural occurrence is ruled out except for the hero's enemies. All things live and live forever, for they are connected to the same impersonal force that links them to each other. In the development of cyclical concepts the phases of the moon, its appearance, increase, waning, and disappearance, followed by her reappearance after three nights of darkness, have played an immense part. The observation of the behaviour of the planets of the solar system and of the moon in particular has,

1. K. Lindner, Die Jagd der Vorzeit, 2 vols., Berlin, 1937.
2. A. Afoeldi, 'Die theriomorphe Weltbetrachtung in den hochasiatischen Kulturen', Jahrbuch des deutschen archaologischen Instituts, vol. 46, Berlin, 1931, pp. 393-418.

no doubt, helped to create the traditional motif of extreme decadence and of the triumph of evil and darkness, which precede the change of the aeon and the renewal of the cosmos or existing order. Death, according to folk-tale ideology, is only for the exponent of evil. Each bird, stone or animal has its own vital principle. All matter is seen as being alive, and may be brought into direct relationship with the hero through the help of supernatural agencies. Magic permits the satisfaction of some very basic human desires. One of these is to survey the depths of space and time and another is to communicate with other living things. In the context of the folk-tale magic is the power that effects relationships and influences the development of action, progressive or regressive.

In ancient Russia the art of metamorphosis was part of an occult and sophisticated science, of which the Vseslav Epos gives eloquent testimony.<sup>1</sup> The body was felt to be merely the accidental and changeable clothing of the soul, which could adopt any form it pleased. It could exist outside its body, as in the case of the figure Koshchey. The soul's covering had only to be burnt, as in the tale of Tsarevna Lyagushka, or removed, and the person would appear in his or her true form, which is always the human form, for essentially the folk-tale sees the world as an anthropomorphic one.

The methods of transformation are many, but it takes place mostly through contact with the earth:

Иван Быкович...ударился оземь, и сделался  
воробышком...ударился оземь и стал по-  
прежнему добрым молодцем.

(Af., vol. I, No. 137).

Transformation on the part of the hero is a condition of progress and is synonymous with his initiation. It takes place during every phase of the hero's journey and in many different forms. The main points at which transformation may take place are in battles, in flights to and from the other world, in pursuits, and at initiations:

Сивка-бурка бежит, изо рту полямя пьет,

1. Roman Jakobson (ed.), Russian Epic Studies, Philadelphia, 1949.

из ушей дым столбом валит; стал конь перед ним, как лист перед травой. Дурак в левое ушко влез - напился-наелся, в правое влез - в цветное платье нарядился, и сделался такой молодец - ни вздумать, ни взгадать, ни пером написать. Сел верхом, рукой махнул, ногой толкнул, через все три этажа перескакал, царскую дочь в уста поцеловал, а она его золотым перстнем ударила в лоб.

(Af. vol. II, No. 182).

Царевна сказала: "Я оборотилась булавкой, да в твой воротник воткнулась." В ту же минуту оборотилась она опять булавкой; Иван крестьянский сын воткнул её в воротник и поехал дальше.

(Af. vol. I, No. 138).

"Ступай, добрый конь, пока не прошу тебя."  
Сам оборотился мушкой, полетел в избушку,  
и сел на печку.

(Af. vol. I, No. 136).

Fugitives and pursuers always change their forms into those of complementary animals so that the victim and aggressor faithfully reproduce the situations in nature.

Sleep, death, and awakening are related to transformation and, on a historical plane, are seen to be survivals of ancient religious ritual.<sup>1</sup> As far as the hero is concerned any one state is an impermanent condition, for he is presented as being both immortal and invincible. For him death is but a renewal of contact with the source of life; this state may also be seen as a change of modality, a passing into another mode of existence:

Нечаянно наехали на своего сонного брата  
Ивана-царевича...и вздумали брата своего  
...убить до смерти. Дмитрий-царевич  
вынул из ножен меч свой, заколол Ивана-  
царевича и изрубил его на мелкие части.

Серый волк спрыснул Ивана-царевича мерт-

1. V. Ya. Propp, Istoricheskiye korni volebnoy skazki, Leningrad, 1946. L. Roehrich, Maerchen und Wirklichkeit, Wiesbaden, 1964.

вою водою - его тело срослося, спрыснул живую водою - Иван-царевич встал.

Встал и промолвил: "Ах, куды как я долго спал!" На то сказал ему серый волк: "Да, Иван-царевич, спать бы тебе вечно, как бы не я."

(Af. vol. I, No. 168).

Both music and incantations can affect transformation and are used for this purpose:

Как только замграет он в гусли-самогуды, сейчас всё стадо запляшет.

(Af. vol. II, No. 238).

In order to influence the behaviour of natural forces and make them favourable to man, men of primitive religion placed faith in magic practices.<sup>1</sup> These practices were based on the belief that the universe contained forces which could be directed to a desired end through the performance of certain acts which would alter the natural balance of energies. This view of the world did not aim at an intellectual understanding of the phenomena surrounding man, but at compelling them to function according to a pattern which corresponded to his subjective notions.

The reason for the need of magic actions in the folk-tale is that they assist the hero to realise his aim. Magic as presented in the folk-tale is instrumental in all actions. Folk-tale incidents relate very simply sometimes very complicated happenings; only those instances are given which are immediately relevant to a particular situation. They are taken out of their context of cause and effect, treated in isolation

1. Ye. Anichkov, 'Narodnaya poeziya i drevniye verovaniya slavjan', Istoriya russkoy literatury, Moscow, 1908-11, pp. 48-80; A. F. Anisimov, 'Priroda i obshchestvo v otrazhenii skazki i mifa'. K voprosu ob istoricheskikh istokakh sootnosheni skazki i mifa, Yezhegodnik muzeya istorii, religii i ateizma, No. 1, Moscow/Leningrad, 1957, pp. 144-171; Ye. A. Tudorovskaya, op. cit.; D. N. Ushakov, 'Materialy po Narodnym verovaniyam Velikorusscov', Etnograficheskoye Obozreniye, 1896, Nos. 2-3, pp. 146-204; M. Zabylin, Russkiy narod, yego obychai, obryady, predaniya, suyeveriya i poeziya, Moscow, 1880.



and brought into a new set of relationships. In this way each action is made relevant to the hero's progress. Things, animals, and persons are grouped together in unusual ways: otkuda ni vzylis' there appear helpers, gifts and enemies.

The dominating principle of primitive thinking is expressed in the concept of 'pars pro toto'. It is widely accepted that man, in changing from one state of existence to another, has taken on different forms, that is, he has passed through many forms of life. The transition period between successive states of existence is always potentially a time of crisis; in the folk-tale this is expressed in the form of difficult tasks, taboos, battles, imprisonment, etc.

Many elements of magic found in the tales go back to tribal magic practices. These practices were part of rites which were performed at particular stages of a man's or woman's life, as at birth, puberty, marriage or death. A number of taboos such as protective magic were connected with these practices to safeguard against possible harmful influences. The initiate had to be specially vigilant at these times. (Compare the motif of watchfulness and attention or the lack of it on the part of the hero in critical situations.) These ancient 'rites of passage' and the beliefs connected with them disappeared as their efficacy ceased to be universally believed in by the members of a given community. However, many fragments of them are preserved in the tales and have become incorporated into their structure and ideology.<sup>1</sup> The puberty hut for girls (Cf. Af. vol. I, No. 140) has survived in the form of keeping girls in a tower. Initiation ceremonies are relived in the hero's passage through the Baba-Yaga's hut in the forest. (Onch. No. 8). The apprenticeship of a pupil to a master magician is the basic theme of the tale-cycle Khitraya nauka (Af. vol. II, Nos. 249-253). The climbing up the world tree as it used to be practised in shamanistic ritual is part of the skill which the Syem Simeonoy possess (Af. vol. I, Nos. 145-147). The growing tendency towards a rationalisation of miracles in the

1. A. M. Zolotaryov, Rodovoy stroy i pervobytnaya mifologiya, Moscow, 1964; D. K. Zelenin, 'Religiozno-magicheskaya funktsiya fol'klornykh skazok', S. F. Oldenburg: sbornik statey, Leningrad, 1934, pp. 215-240.

tales alone indicates that these had a foundation in real practices at one time.<sup>1</sup>

The frequent use of the miraculous in folk-tales suggests that, when folk-tales were still generally believed in, there was no conscious differentiation between actual experience and belief or dream.

Instances of magic actions in the Russian folk-tale are numerous and may be summarised as follows:

1. Healing or cathartic magic: relief from illness is brought through magic herbs (Af. vol. I, No. 117); bathing in the essence of magic herbs makes the hero invulnerable (Af. vol. I, Nos. 121 and 170).
2. Magic through eating or drinking, which on occasions may bring harm (Af. vol. II, No. 211). Love magic works mostly through eating: a magic duck's egg makes the princess fall in love with the hero (Af. vol. II, No. 232); a drop of blood brings back the memory of love (Af. vol. II, No. 225).
3. Birth magic (Af. vol. I, No. 136): the tsaritsa gives birth to a son by eating a piece of fish.
4. Imitative magic, especially in the motif of the magic flight, during which the hero or heroine throws a comb from which grows a forest, or a towel which forms a lake, both being obstacles to keep the pursuer at a distance. This is magic which initiates an action and then develops without further human participation.
5. Magic through physical contact, or sympathetic magic. A ribbon around the heroine's neck causes a death-like sleep. The life of a person may be linked with that of a plant. A similar bond may exist also between a human and an animal, so that the welfare of the one depends on that of the other.
6. Verbal magic (Af. vol. I, No. 136, vol. III, No. 345): the required action is brought about by an incantation.

The knowledge of the right name magically opens doors, makes the hut of the Baba-Yaga accessible, shows the way to hidden treasures and gives the hero power over a supernatural being. The name has a direct connection with a person, as

1. J. de Vries, 'Betrachtungen zum Maerchen, besondere in seinem Verhaeltnis zu Heldensage und Mythos', FFC No. 150, vol. 63, No. 2, Helsinki, 1954.

though it were a part of him. It does not merely denote but actually is the essence of its object; the potency of the real thing is contained in its name. It may be assumed that few, if any, ceremonies consisted of spoken formulas only. Music, like verbal magic, has the power to transform, to put to sleep, and to awaken. It can liberate, or cast a spell. But in either form the use of tone in the recitation is important as is also rhythm and the number of repetitions. The sites for the ceremonies were often prescribed, and so were the times for their performances. In the folk-tales the former are usually the wood, the cross-roads, and the grave; the latter were after sunset or at midnight.

7. Lastly, magic may work through an image of a person. The hero sees a portrait of the princess and is compelled to search for her until he finds her. The motif of the magic mirror belongs here (Af. vol. II, Nos. 210-211). The mirror's power is to contain the world and to reveal things hidden:

Была эта купчиха красоты неописанной  
и имела у себя волшебное зеркальце;  
загляни в зеркальце - тотчас узнаешь,  
где что делается.  
(Af. vol. II, No. 211).

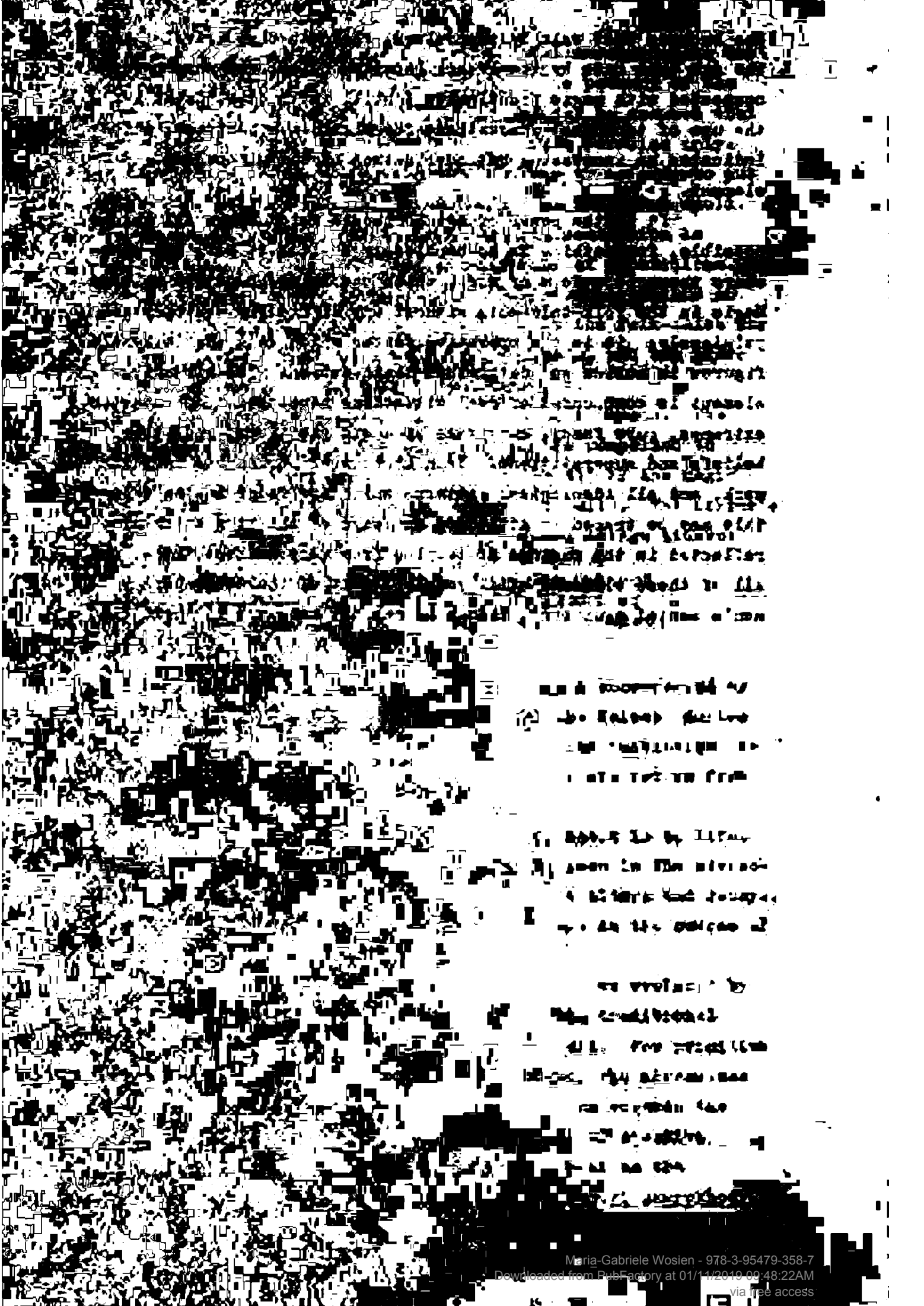
The chief phases of the journey are all accompanied by magic rites, fragments of which are found in the tales: during preparation, after the hero has left home, during initiation, as for example in the hut of the Baba-Yaga, and on his return from the other realm (Cf. Diagram p. 48).

Ritual in religious practice is what habit is to life. It displays an extraordinary stability, as is seen in the stereotypical folk-tale incidents; but none the less it alters and decays, as imitation is never exact and small variations in the course of time amount to considerable changes.

The types of magic listed above were later replaced by the products of an artistic fancy which uses the traditional imagery but embroiders it with a wealth of detail. For primitive man, who is still at one with the natural world, the miraculous and the real are identical, whereas civilised man regards the fantastic world of the folk-tale as the product of creative imaginative thinking. Thus folk-tale symbols such as the ekatert' samobranka, the kovyor samolyot, the sapogi skorokhody,

the buckets that walk by themselves, the oven that travels, and the axe that cuts by itself are later additions and were never connected with magic practices. A still later development is the use of technical innovations for miraculous purposes, which indicates an increasing rationalisation of the miraculous element.

It is the power of metamorphosis which makes all things possible, for nothing is so hopelessly bewitched, but that somewhere there is a form of magic which can bring about its release. Magic in the folk-tale acts without any difficulty, quickly and painlessly; it is the operative factor which sets the folk-tale figures in motion and determines their action. The miraculous element is compounded of real situations stretched to phantastic extremes, pure fancy, survivals of magic practices, and other beliefs and superstitions. Each historical period has left its mark, and all ideological patterns which are found in the folk-tale may be traced to attitudes and ways of thinking which are reflected in the customs of peoples from very ancient times, and all of these elements still remain a part of the contemporary man's mental equipment, though he may not be aware of them.



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## CHAPTER IV

THE HERO OF THE FOLK-TALE<sup>1</sup>

'I will give you the end of a golden  
string,  
Only wind it into a ball,  
It will lead you in at Heaven's gate  
Built in Jerusalem's wall.' 2

The heroes of myth and folk-tale live in an intellectually indefinable, but emotionally acceptable time, 'once upon a time', and in an unknown locality, 'in a certain kingdom', 'beyond thrice nine lands'. In the tale of the miraculous the hero's journey is not undertaken for the sake of the acquisition of wealth, nor is it an escape. The purely material pile of gold which may be found in the end represents a late and degenerate form of the original motif (Af. vol. II, No. 243), and so too is the mere joy of adventure, which does not necessarily imply the pursuit of an aim.

The hero-myth, as part of a universal cycle of themes, is not merely concerned with the private history of an individual, since the events of the journey have a trans-personal and collective significance. As he sets out, the hero finds himself at the beginning of a venture, whose outcome he often cannot predict, nor does he know the road leading to his goal. The road, as portrayed in myths and tales, is an intrinsic part of the earliest rituals known to history. It is always connected with ideas of death and rebirth and is related to initiation ceremonies. It almost always starts from a sacred place in nature or leads on from a dwelling place. The entrances into the other world in the Russian folk-tale are through the hut of the Baba-Yaga, through a hole in the ground, up a ladder that appears in a mountain, across a bridge over a precipice, or over the walls of a town, etc.

1. J. Campbell, The hero with a thousand faces, New York, 1949; A. von Loewis of Menar, Der Held im deutschen und russischen Maerchen, Jena, 1912; E. M. Meletinsky, Geroy volshebnoy skazki, Moscow, 1958; A. I. Nikiforov, 'Pobeditel' zmeya. Iz severnorueskikh skazok', Sovetskiy fol'klor, vypusk 4-5, Moscow/Leningrad, 1936, pp. 143-242; O. Rank, 'The Myth of the Birth of the Hero', Nervous and Mental Disease Monograph Series, No. 18, New York, 1941; A. Smirnov-Kutachevsky, 'Ivanushka durachok', Voprosy zhizni, No. 12, St. Petersburg, 1905, pp. 5-13; Ye. Trubetskoy, Inoye tearstvo i yego iskateli v russkoy narodnoy skazke, Prague, 1923, pp. 3-48.
2. W. Blake, 'Jerusalem', The poems and Prophecies of William Blake, New York, 1954.

According to ancient cosmology, heaven, earth and the underworld are separate and have to be held apart by a support. This function is fulfilled by the world mountain or the world tree, which is situated at the centre or the end of the world.<sup>1</sup> But these cosmic regions must also be joined by some subtle path of communication, or by some bridge over the dangerous interval between them. Here lies the whole sense and purpose of the hero's travels. Further, somewhere, if he can only find it, there is the path which will take him home. In a variant of this pattern the hero's way is seen as a labyrinth, at the centre of which is the most dangerous zone; this is the domain of the dragon, who is the guardian of the treasure. He has to be conquered, if the hero is to obtain the treasure and return to the upper world. This labyrinthine way, or, in the words of the folk-tale, the put krivoy, invariably leads to the centre of danger, where, at the hour of midnight, in the land of the dead, singly, without the knowledge or help of anyone, the hero comes face to face with his enemy in combat (Af. vol. I, No. 137).

The traveller's aim is to choose the path which leads through the labyrinth and not one which ends in a cul-de-sac at its centre. For, although the first half of the undertaking is a period of trial and struggle, which is always the condition of progress, its second half is the safe return home. This return journey starts after the encounter with the representative of the other world. The hero has been forewarned that the road would offer the experience of death (Af. vol. II, No. 175), but nevertheless he chooses the most arduous path; krivoy dorogoy tri goda yekhat', a pryamo tri chasa, tol'ko pryamo-to proyezdu net. Yet it is this voluntary risking of his life which leads him to the point from which he may proceed further (Af. No. 175).

The meeting with the gate-keeper or guardian of the threshold is the point at which the journey proper begins. The path from there is again circuitous, just as is the whole journey, for the point of departure is also the point of return, (of. Diagram, p. 48). In some instances the hero returns a second time to the other realm to live there with his bride (tsar'-devitsa motif, No. 400B; Af. vol. II, Nos. 232-233).

1. E. Kenton, The Book of Earths, New York, 1928.

It is frequently emphasised that the road is only to be found with great difficulty. To travel in search of something suggests going along an hitherto unknown path, yet once it is found, it eventually leads to the reversal of the binding law of old age, illness and want. Quite often, especially in the case of the youngest son, who is always the true hero, he leaves home against the will of his parents: yezhehli vy menya ne otpustite, to ya i tak ot vas uydu...khochu itti tuda - sam ne znayu kuda.

On the journey, which properly begins with the hero's entry into the other realm, he is often guided by a klubok or eharik, the gift of the Baba-Yaga, which rolls along in front of him. Many obstacles have to be overcome. For these tasks the hero has to possess not only the necessary equipment<sup>1</sup> but also specific knowledge. Before starting his journey, he has been given instructions on right conduct, and he relies completely on the help of the supernatural being, who always appears to him at the moment of need:

Иван-царевич пошёл выбирать себе коня:  
на которого руку положат, тот и падёт;  
не мог выбрать себе коня, идёт дорогой  
по городу, повесил голову. Неоткуда взя-  
лась старуха...привела его к горе, ука-  
зала место: "скапывай эту землю." Иван-  
царевич скопал, видит чугунную доску на  
двенадцати замках; замки он тотчас же  
сорвал, и двери отворил, вошёл под землю:  
тут прикован на двенадцати цепях бога-  
тырский конь.

(Af. vol. I, No. 156).

If at any time the hero intentionally goes against the instructions of the miraculous helper, either because he thinks he knows better, or out of curiosity to see what would happen if he did so, he promptly falls into difficulties. The helper's method of approach is always to put to the hero questions concerning his whereabouts, the goal of his journey and his purpose. These questions, which serve as a reminder to the hero of the aim of his enterprise, may be summarised as follows:

1. D. K. Zelenin, 'Magicheskaya funktsiya primitivnykh orudii', Izvestiya Akademii Nauk SSSR, Otdeleniye obshchestvennykh nauk, No. 6, Moscow/Leningrad, 1931.



1. Who are you?
2. Where are you going?
3. Why are you going?

This set of questions is repeated by all helpers or guardians of the threshold, who play key roles at various junctures in the journey.

The task assigned to the hero acts as his impetus to undertake the journey. This task may be one of several. He may have to fetch miraculous objects from the other world, such as the apples of youth (Af. vol. II, No. 176), animal milk (Af. vol. II, Nos. 202-5), the water of life (Af. vol. II, No. 178), or the firebird (Af. vol. II, No. 171); or he may have to safeguard the country against the threat of attack by the dragon (Af. vol. II, No. 204). Often, however, the journey is something that is inspired by the hero's own desire, for example his wish to find a bride or to see the world (Af. vol. I, No. 128, and vol. II, No. 183). Again, as has already been pointed out, its purpose may be to liberate those in bondage to a supernatural being, for example his mother (Af. vol. I, No. 129) or his future bride (Af. vol. II, No. 204).

The difficulties of the trials on the way are proportionate to the hero's final happiness. Pure adventure in the context of the journey is rare and is found only intermittently in brief episodes. The tales which diverge in this way most obviously from the traditional pattern, have come down to us either through less conscientious or less able story-tellers, or they show the influence of changes in popular taste on the folk-tale structure and theme. Generally this is a later feature in the folk-tale's development.<sup>1</sup>

The first encounter with the miraculous helper provides the hero with protective magic, the helper's function being to instruct the traveller on how to find the treasure. On his leaving home, the most important subsequent step is the choice of proper equipment. A weapon was not considered to be a lifeless object, which the hero merely used at the appropriate moment: it was endowed with its own vital principle. The hero often has a heavy iron staff made and with great difficulty selects a suitable horse. The search for equipment coincides with the

1. Cf. Chap. II.

first encounter with the supernatural helper.

This function of the advisor may in some tales be fulfilled by the hero's miraculous wife. She admonishes him to leave all care to her: 'Lozhis' spat', utro vechera mudreneye', while, in the quiet of the night and with the help of her miraculous assistants, she arranges for the execution of the difficult task which has been given to him:

Ночью встала Марья-царевна и вскричала громким голосом: "Батюшкины каменщики и плотники, матушкины работники! Явитесь сюда наскоро." На этот зов набежало многое множество всяких слуг. Она им приказывает: "Поставить палаты белокаменные, изготовить ей и жениху платья подвенечные и привезть золотую карету, а в карете были бы запряжены кони вороные, гривы у них золотые, хвосты серебряные." Отвечали слуги в один голос: "Ради стараться! К сьету всё будет исполнено."

(Af. vol. II, No. 213).

The frequent desperate situations are only apparently so: all that is required of the hero is implicit trust in his guide or helper. The hero need only act appropriately in any given situation, and help is instantaneous. Either he has to recall an injunction given him about the right conduct at a given moment, or he remembers to use the magic instrument given him for this specific purpose. He arrives at the threshold, armed with his magic sword, or sometimes with bow and arrow. In later redactions he also wears knightly armour, his most valuable guide and assistant always being his miraculous horse.

Once the contact with the supernatural helper has been established, the hero, on entering the underworld, is covertly aided by his magic knowledge, which manifests itself in his appropriate actions in all situations, in his observance of taboos, and in his understanding of the secret language of animals. The latter is equivalent to having insight into the workings of nature, since in the folk-tale animals have an intimate connection with the other world, whose agents they often are. The magic gifts, which the hero has received before his entry into the underworld, have the threefold task of granting

him access to the way, of facilitating his flight and transformation, and of being the means to safeguard his return.

The knowledge of the way determines the content of the tale. It is made clear that this knowledge is a secret, which requires the traveller to be without fear and which above all can be known only by one who is capable of facing death. In this the hero is contrasted with his elder brothers, who show themselves to be quite unqualified for such an undertaking (Af. vol. II, No. 175).

The exploration of the other world is the whole meaning of the hero's exploits. The journey has death and transformation in store for him, but also rebirth to a life of greater splendour and fulfilment; besides, through this journey, the hero becomes the cause of great good fortune for his fellow-men. The hero-son, who is in most tales only a child or an adolescent, is given the task of proving himself worthy of the demands imposed by his father, to help him regenerate the latter's powers, and to prove himself capable of taking over his kingship.

The king's failing strength is portrayed through his physical defects, either blindness or old age, for which the hero has to find the remedy in the other world. These shortcomings, which render the old king unfit for government, may be regarded as symbols of an upset inner equilibrium, (Af. vol. II, No. 171-178). Similarly, the hero's essential nature consists not of any one virtue, but has its roots in his magical strength, often even in his cunning, which normally might be considered unethical conduct (Af. vol. II, No. 215).

In trials which involve a struggle with the hero's opponent, any means can be used to vanquish him, including those involving betrayal and cruelty. Cruelty and injustice are only felt to be such when suffered by the hero or the heroine, not when they cause it. In order to reach the goal, much is permitted that seems contrary to the ordinary standards of morality. However, the hero's conduct in relation to the forces which bar his progress is not a valid criterion to assess the ethical standards of the folk-tale.<sup>1</sup>

When all ogres and barriers have been overcome, victory

1. Cf. Chap. VI.

is portrayed in the form of the marriage of the hero and the princess, who has long been expecting him, often waiting to be liberated. Their meeting takes place in the innermost recesses of the labyrinth, the central point of the other world, from which the return journey starts. When the elixir has been found in the form of the apples of youth or the water of life, the hero cannot remain in the other world, but he must return with his trophy for the benefit of those who can be helped by it.

One particular cycle of hero-tales is of interest, as it specialises entirely in the motif of transformation, which is depicted as a magical trial of strength between the master and the hero-adept, as in the folk-tale type Khitraya nauka (No. 325). The motif of transformation in the stories of the way and the hero's progress along it is related to that of the magic flight. Occasionally, in some redactions of this type of folk-tale, the hero is given the task of distinguishing the magician's daughter among a number of identical-looking animals or girls; that is, he has to be able to recognise the vital difference between things which outwardly look alike. The supernatural being or the magician, in whose power the hero temporarily finds himself, is here equivalent to the dragon or any other of the folk-tale's typical adversaries. Having learnt the art of transformation, the hero has to outwit the master, if he is to free himself from his power, often with the help of his father. After a series of trials the hero is eventually freed, and through his now special powers arrange a comfortable living for himself and his immediate family.

On his journey, the hero's main encounters are with the feminine figures of the beyond. Major themes of many tales are the meeting with the Baba-Yaga, the threshold guardian par excellence, and the search for his lost mother or his bride, enslaved by the powers of the beyond.<sup>1</sup> To win back his mother or his bride, the hero has to conquer the dragon in a decisive battle, to solve the riddle as a result of which they are bound or imprisoned, or to outwit the opposing forces through his

1. Other figures that have undertaken this journey into the other world, the journey into the past, the land of the dead, who have gone the 'way to the Mothers', are well known to religion, mythology and literature. The classic examples are Gilgamesh, Ulysses, Orpheus, Christ, Dante and Goethe's Faust.

cunning. In all cases the hero has to prove himself to be magically at least equal to his opponents.

The succession of trials within the labyrinth takes place within a dreamlike landscape of shifting and ambiguous forms and images. The hero entirely loses any sense of time and direction. It is then that his magic gift becomes a means of reorientation, for never on his journey is the hero without a guide or companion, even if only in the form of a talisman.

Throughout the journey the hero is in danger of falling into various forms of bondage at each stage and so of ceasing to advance. In order to move on to the next stage and eventually to return, the hero has to remain free from any influence that might persuade him to linger, and so prevent him from completing his task; for without passing through all the stages his journey will be incomplete:

Вот собрала девица стол, принесла всякого кушанья и напитков; тогда Ивашко попил, поел, сколько хотел, и начал рассказывать, что он пошёл искать невесты, и просил её замуж за себя. Она сказала ему: "Ступай вперёд, там есть ещё золотое царство, а в том царстве есть ещё прекраснее меня девица", - и подарила ему золотой перстень.

(Af. vol. I, No. 128).

Shortcuts are attempted by his brothers who endeavour to seize the hero's treasures at an unguarded moment (Af. vol. II, No. 177):

Василий-царевич приехал к морю; видит, что его братья корабли строят, и спрашивает: "Что вы, братцы, здесь делаете?" "Строим корабли, чтобы ехать за живой водой и мёртвой." "Воротитесь лучше домой! Я везу отцу и живой водой и мёртвой." Сказал это Василий-царевич, лег отдохнуть, да и заснул; братья взяли у него из кармана два пузырька, а его вспихнули в помойную яму. Прошло два-три часа, Василий-царевич проснулся и думает: "Господи! Где я нахожусь?" Увидел при себе свою палицу и сказал: "Ну, слава Богу, ещё не совсем пропал!" Взял поставил палицу, уперся на неё и вскочил вон из ямы. Пошёл добрый молодец путем-дорогою к своему царству;

между тем его братья домой приехали и  
принялись отца мёртвой водой восприс-  
кивать; сколько ни прыскали - нет толку  
и на копейку! Старшие царевичи не знали,  
что и делать. После того пришёл меньшой  
царевич, восприснул отца живой водой -  
и стал он видеть лучше прежнего.

As the hero is essentially a traveller, as soon as he ceases to be involved in a conflict while on his journey, the story comes to an end. The happy ending is always the natural outcome of the completion of the circle, which is only possible through the hero's contact with the miraculous powers. All the hero's successes are dependent on trials which the hero has faced bravely, always acting relevantly to the situation and in accordance with his ultimate goal.

Progress on the way is symbolised by transformation from one state of existence to another, that is, from man to animal or mineral and vice versa. Mostly transformation marks a transition between two stages of the journey, and constitutes the means of crossing a passage or overcoming some difficulty.

All transformations are directly related to experiences in the other world, their purpose being to prepare the hero for specific tasks in relation to his journey's goal. In the imagery of the folk-tale, this process is represented as a series of assimilations into the dominant mode of the existence which the hero is about to enter, and through which he has to pass unscathed. Thus he may be carried over boundaries on a winged horse or on the back of a bird; but before this can happen, he is tested to see whether he is ready for the experience. In the case of his flight on the eagle he has to wait three years, and during the journey on the eagle's back into the other world to the end of time, he has to undergo the experience of death three times. Basically, all motifs of flight signify the transcendence of all the hero's states, the nostalgia for flight being an essential feature of human imagination. Through the attribute of wings the hero is liberated from the laws of

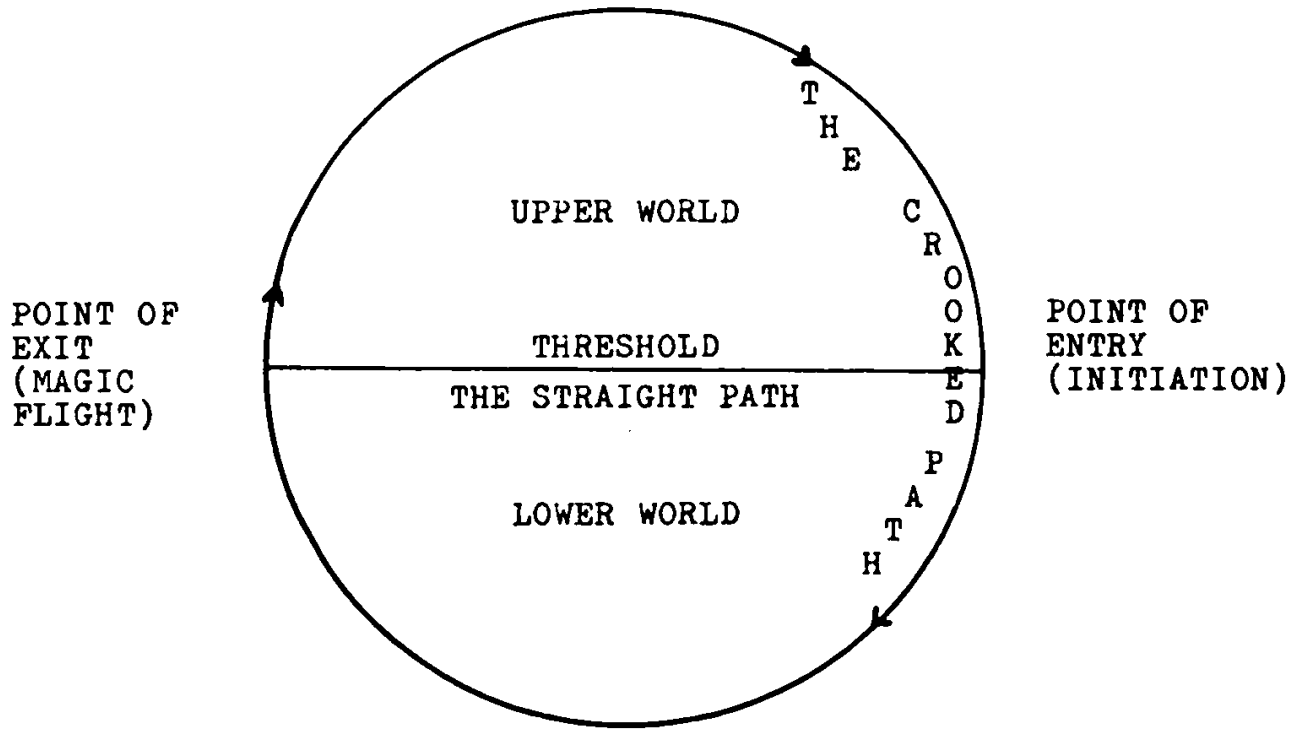
gravity and so is able to reach the other realm.<sup>1</sup> (Af. vol. II, Nos. 219-222). Similarly, the hero may vanish inside the Baba-Yaga's hut, which is another form of entry into tot svet. Another aspect of transformation is the dissolving of barriers by the utterance of a magic phrase which permits the hero to enter: 'Izbuehka, izbushka, povernis' ko mne litsom, k lesu zadom', or the changing of a situation by bringing to bear upon it the positive power of the gift of the miraculous helper (Af. vol. II, No. 219, and vol. III, No. 66).

One by one the resistances which the hero comes up against, either external to himself, such as geographical barriers, or internal in the form of self-will and disobedience, are broken. As he passes through his trials, each of which marks a new threshold, he is admitted further into the other world and comes nearer to his goal. Favourite obstacles in the folk-tale are: a dangerous bridge, the kalinovy most which has to be crossed, and on which the fight with the dragon often takes place; a gigantic stone which must be removed to gain access to the other world; a rough and stormy sea, which the hero must sail across; a slippery, inaccessible mountain, which he must scale; and huge distances to be covered in next to no time.

It is the hero's particular prerogative and one for which he is uniquely qualified to pass back and forth between the different worlds (Diagram p. 95). For this reason, once having gained access to a world, he must avoid the danger of becoming involved and bound by a particular phase of it. He may indeed forget his desire to return home, for example. That is why sometimes that world may have to come and recover him, so that in this way the hero is brought back to the upper world with assistance from without (Af. vol. II, Nos. 234 and 235). This implies that there is difficulty in crossing the threshold not only at the time of entry, but also, and particularly so, at the time of return.<sup>2</sup> An illustration of this motif is the

1. A. Aarne, 'Die magische Flucht. Eine Maerchenstudie', FFC, vol. 33, No. 92, Helsinki, 1930; M. His, 'Die magische Flucht des Wettverwandels', Schweizer Archiv fuer Volkskunde, No. 30, 1930, pp. 107-29.
2. V. I. Iokhel'eon, 'Magicheskoye begstvo kak obshcherasprostranyonnyy ekazochno-mifologicheskyy epizod', Sbornik v chest' 70-letiya A.D. Anichina, Moscow, 1913, pp. 155-166.

THE HERO AS MEDIATOR  
BETWEEN THE TWO WORLDS





story of Okameneloye tsarstvo (Af. vol. II, Nos. 273 and 274) and the motif of the hero being turned to stone (Af. vol. II, Nos. 216 and 289). This is the implication of the warning of the Baba-Yaga about the way of no return: 'Mnogo narodu tuda yekhal, a nazad yeshcho nikto ne vernulsya.' Conversely, there is the danger of a desire to return home: 'Akh, Vasilisa Premudraya, sgruetnulos' po ottsu, po materi, zakhotelos' na svyatuyu Rus'.' Further, there are examples, where the princess of the other world, having been freed by the hero from the power of the dragon, asks him to marry her, when this task was only one of those laid upon him, and he has yet many more to perform.

The danger of death is always present. To embark on the journey at all is to go along the road which leads into the realm of death. The failure to fulfil a set task, for instance, is punished by the hero's running the risk of forfeiting his head. Unguarded sleep is an invitation to envious opponents to do the hero harm, awareness being the prime factor of any progress along the way.

The anticipation of the dangers of returning home is often connected with a loss of memory of having undertaken the journey at all. The hero comes home, for instance, leaving his future bride at the gates of the town to await his return; but on kissing one of his relatives, he completely forgets his past and all that is connected with the journey, and he agrees to marry another princess. Only after several reminders in the form of concealed messages from his bride from the other world, and arrived at the festivities of his imminent wedding with the wrong bride does he at last understand the purport of the messages and instantly remembers all. As in this cycle of tales of the forgetful hero, birds frequently feature as messengers, as they do also as carriers of the 'soul' to and from across the threshold dividing the two worlds. These mythical birds, in whatever form they may appear, show themselves twice, at 'birth' and at 'death'.

In the traditional folk-tale, the hero returns with the power to bestow boons on his fellow-men. The achievement of the trophy necessitated the strict observation of taboos, often against the hero's better judgement, such as taking the magic horse without its bridle, obtaining the firebird, but leaving

behind its cage, and not waking the sleeping beauty prematurely, lest the powers which zealously guard their treasure should awaken and prevent the hero's safe return (Af. vol. II, Noe. 232 and 233). If, as is often the case, the hero acts against the wishes and without the knowledge of the possessors of the treasure, he has to have recourse to cunning and come like a thief in the night. Invariably he wakes the guardian figures through an act of negligence, with the result that he is pursued (magic flight motif), until he remembers to use protective magic to bar the pursuers' way. However, at the return threshold, the powers of the beyond have to remain behind. This return journey, which is often the more difficult part of the hero's enterprise, takes place between the first meeting of the hero and the princess, often culminating in the gift of a ring, a seal or a kiss on the forehead, and the celebration of the wedding feast, which is the open display of the hero's achievements.

On returning triumphantly from the other world, the hero becomes eligible to hold the throne of his father, or often that of the father of the bride. Through his deeds the positive equilibrium, which had been upset either at the beginning of the tale or at some later point, is restored. Now the tsarevich's heroic status is absolute, not a single enemy having proved himself his equal. In the terms of the folk-tale this status may only be achieved by securing the help of beings from the other world, who render the negative forces harmless, and reveal the way to the final goal. Once the way has been found, all that is required of the hero is not to slacken his efforts. To conquer the opposing forces, the hero has to learn the secret of their vulnerability. He has either to be able to defeat them in single combat or to discover how to escape from their influence. The latter theme occurs typically in those stories in which the solution of riddles is the given task, a kind of tug-of-war in magical knowledge between the hero who runs the risk of losing his life if he fails to find the one and only answer, and the figure who sets the riddle (Af. vol. II, No. 239).

Besides the classical hero, Ivan-tsarevich,<sup>1</sup> whose exploits are best illustrated by the themes of the search for the elixir of life and the coincident encounters with obstacles and help on the way, the folk-tale knows of several other variants of the heroic figure,<sup>2</sup> of which the disguised hero in his many different forms is the most common.<sup>3</sup> With this type of hero animal helpers or supernatural beings in other guises play an exceptionally important role, as he is not distinguished through birth by any of the qualities which mark the traditional hero. In Af. vol. II, No. 295, the hero, in accordance with the advice of his magic horse, and in order to escape from the persecution of his stepmother, assumes a mask, which he later discards:

1. He is found most frequently in the following types of folk-tale:

Царевна-лягушка /402/, Флинт ясный сокол /432/, Медный лоб /502/, Одноглазка /511/, Верный слуга /516/, Слепой и безногий /519/, Иван-царевич и серый волк /550/, Молодильные яблоки /551/, Чудесные дела /707/, Волшебное зеркальце /709/, Победитель змея /300/, Три царства /301/, Царь-девица /400B/, Животные зятя /552/.

2. Medvezh'ye ushko; Onch. No. 34; Smirn. No. 247; Af. No. 152; Nik. No. 109; Zel. Perm. No. 43; Korg. No. 14. Tri brata-bogatyrya: Af. Nos. 136, 137, 139, 140; Khud. No. 61; Korg. Nos. 12, 13; Karn. Nos. 43, 163; Sokol. No. 37; Nik. Nos. 14, 51, 66; Onch. No. 27; Smirn. No. 183. Of the three brothers one is always the strongest and becomes the leader. This theme is found almost exclusively in the types of folk-tale exemplified by the Pobeditel' zmeya (300 A and B) and Tri tearstva (301). Bogatyri: Af. Nos. 141, 142; Khud. No. 5; Zel. Perm. No. 22; Smirn. No. 361; Karn. No. 41.
3. Neznayko: Skazki XIX v. No. 23; Af. Nos. 295, 296, 571; Zel. Perm. No. 2; Smirn. Nos. 6, 38, 305, 356; Karn. No. 47; Nik. Nos. 10, 11, 97, 106; Korg. No. 32, 33; Sokol. Nos. 46, 129, 144; Khud. No. 90; Sad. No. 13. This is one variant of the theme of the unrecognised hero, in that Neznayko has to play a double role as part of the task given to him: that is, he has to answer all questions put to him with ne znayu although he is in his essential nature a wise man, i.e. he has been initiated into magical knowledge. There is a connection with the theme otday, chego doma ne znayesh', and with that of the disguised heroine in Svinoy chekhol (510B). Yemelya-durak: in the tale-type 657: Af. Nos. 165, 166, 167; Zel. Perm. 63; Zel. Vyat. No. 23; Nik. No. 10; Smirn. Nos. 113, 336. Ivan-durak: Af. Nos. 179, 180, 181, 183, 184, 564; Khud. No. 10; Onch. No. 68; Zel. Vyat. No. 114; Sokol. Nos. 63, 93; Smirn. Nos. 8, 38, 91, 222; Karn. Nos. 8, 45, 48; Nik. 125; Sad. 60.

Нарядился в бычью шкуру, на голову пугальник  
надел и пошёл в взморье...стал король его  
выспрашивать: "Что ты за человек?" "Не знаю."  
"Из каких земель?" "Не знаю." "Чего роду-  
племени?" "Не знаю."

(Af. vol. II, No. 295).

Only after final victory over the king's enemies as an unknown  
splendid knight does the hero reveal his identity:

Тут король узнал, что Незнайко не чудик,  
а сильнемогучий и прекрасный богатырь.

(ibid.).<sup>1</sup>

The classical image of the hero as a figure without  
blemish degenerates later into a figure of human weakness,  
curiosity, inattentiveness and forgetfulness, in short a carica-  
ture of the traditional hero. This type of hero is found in the  
stories of 'Yemelya the fool' (Af. vol. I, Nos. 165 and 166).  
Here the miraculous element has come to be used entirely as an  
artistic device. The theme of the journey has disappeared  
altogether. Instead, the hero encounters the miraculous world  
entirely by good luck, by catching the magic fish, and once  
having caught it, he exploits the power this gives him to the  
full and exclusively for his own ease and comfort. His visions  
of bliss are confined to labour-saving devices, such as buckets  
which walk home by themselves from the river, an axe which chops  
wood on its own, a stove which conveys him to the tsar's palace  
and on which he otherwise spends all his time sleeping, or such  
advantages as to be loved by the tsar's daughter, and to become  
wise and handsome without effort on his part. Within the frame-  
work of the structure of the tale, this hero is the perfect  
antithesis of the traditional hero. Popular fancy has here  
created its own type, into which it has projected its nostalgic  
dream of a rustic paradise and a perfect life, visualised as an  
idyllic state of idleness.

1. Cf. also the phenomenon of yurodstvo in Russia during the  
late Middle Ages: I. Kovalevsky, Yurodstvo o Khriste i  
Khrista radi yurodivyye vostochnoy i russkoy tserkvi,  
Moscow, 1895.

The figure of Ivan the fool<sup>1</sup> is met with in tales of varying subject-matter, but primarily he features in the tale-types:

Сивко-бурко /530А/, Свинка-золотая щетинка /530В/, Конёк-горбунок /531/.

Ivan is always the youngest of three brothers:

Жил в деревне мужик и было у него три сына, два умных, а третий - Иванушка-дурачок.

When their father dies, it is only he who performs the obligatory night-watch at his grave: his brothers, fearing for their lives, ask him to take their turns as well. Among the rewards given to the dutiful fool from beyond the grave is always the magic horse Sivko-Burko. The encounter of the son with the father's spirit by the grave is a variant on the theme of initiation by the Baba-Yaga. After this event the fool is ready to go off on his journey. The experience at his father's grave, which prepares him for his future exploits, the fool carefully keeps a secret from everybody. His brothers are convinced throughout that they are dealing with an idiot.

In this tale-cycle the hero's magic horse is the link between his deceased ancestor and the world of the living. It serves the hero as faithfully, as it had served his previous master, the hero's father. Just as Neznayko (Af. vol. II, Nos. 295-296), the hero remains unrecognised in his ensuing feats, for he is waiting for the right moment to reveal himself in his true nature. During this period of waiting he is quite unconcerned about the opinions of those around him, as he is confident of his final achievement. His disguise as a fool gives him greater freedom of action: 'umnym doroga, a durakam put' ne zakazan', and also ensures that his final transfiguration has the greater impact. This method of using a disguise is shown to be a necessary and useful device in an unsympathetic environment. On the part of the hero it presupposes the knowledge of the right time for action, and also patience and insight.<sup>2</sup>

1. A. M. Smirnov-Kutachevsky, 'Ivanushka-durachok', Voprosy zhisni, No. 12, St. Petersburg, 1905, pp. 5-73. The feminine fool does not figure in the Russian folk-tale.

2. Cf. the Hamlet 'madness' motif.

In these stories transformation is achieved by the hero's climbing into one side of the horse's head and out through the other:

Свистнул молодецким посвастом, гайкнул богатырским голосом: "Сивко-бурко, вещь воронко!" Сивко бежит, только земля дрожит, из очей пламя пышет, а из ноздрей дым столбом. Иван-дурак в одно ушко залез - напился-наелся, в другой вылез - оделся, молодец такой стал, что и братьям не узнать!

(Af. vol. II, No. 179).

Transformation here too is the prerequisite for carrying out a supernatural task. The meeting of the hero and the princess no longer takes place in the Tridesyatoye tsarstvo. Instead, the hero reaches her on his magic horse where she is awaiting him high up in a tower. Although the theme, of winning the princess after great struggles, is still the same, the image here is a different one. As a token of their meeting she places a ring on his finger or a mark on his forehead. These are the signs by which the hero is to be recognised later.

Ivan the fool came to be a popular ideal, as one who successfully concealed his identity from his environment in difficult times. This device of presenting a mask to the outside world is part of the equipment the hero needs to keep his contact with the world of the supernatural a secret. Sometimes Ivan the fool replaces the hero of the traditional tale, which foreshadows a mechanical use of the heroic figure later (Onoh. No. 241): for it would appear that the figure of the fool in the tales of the miraculous belongs to a comparatively late period of their existence and it is likely that novelistic tales and folk anecdotes had an influence on this development.<sup>1</sup>

Generally speaking, the fool is already more of a character in that he plans his own fate, deliberately using the tactic of disguise. The influence of the ideals of a given historical period may be discerned more readily in these tales than in those of the traditional hero, Ivan-tsarevich, who embodies the more

1. V. P. Anikin, Rusekaya narodnaya ekazka, Moscow, 1959, p. 191.

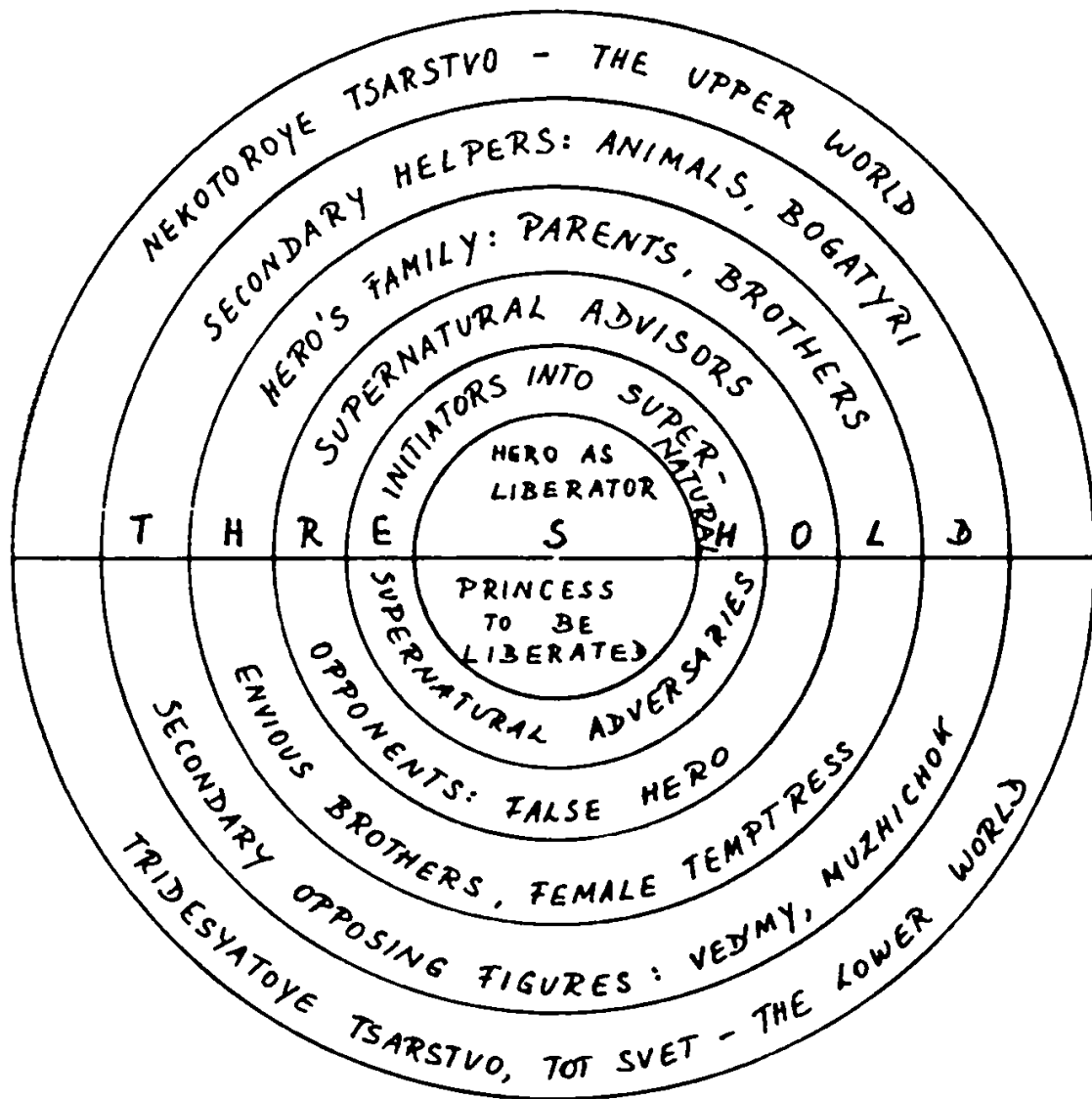
timeless qualities of mythological themes and fundamental philosophical principles and ideas.

Potentially, the hero has a relationship with everything that makes up the content of the tale, either because of his tasks, his goal, or simply because of the fact that he undertakes the journey at all (Diagram p. 103). He is dependent on the goodwill of the helping powers; because he goes on his way, he frees others without having intended to and helps others without thinking of himself. The hero provides the measuring-rod for the unfolding of events. He is a symbol for an ideal, a superman, and his qualities of magical strength and cunning are the distinctive marks of his heroic nature.

The hero as the central figure, and all the positive figures, have their precise negative counterparts, reflected in the lower order of beings; but the hero alone is the link between the upper and lower worlds. He determines the significance of all the other figures in the tale according to the measure of his own progress. All the secondary figures either help or harm the central figure. They appear only in certain episodes, whereas the hero is present throughout the narrative. The other figures are conquered or liberated by him, or they represent the forces through which his exploits are made possible, as in the case of the supernatural figures and their exponente.

At the beginning of the narrative the hero and heroine are always unmarried. Parents may be significant as helpers or opponents. Older brothers and sisters are often opponents, as being unskilled in the way. Brothers of the bride appear often as helpers. False heroes mostly do not even meet the helper or the adversary, and if they do, they react wrongly, that is, not in accord with the required code of behaviour. If there are two heroes in a story, one of them is always endowed with more magic power, as in the tale of the two brothers (Af. vol. I, No. 155), and one of them is inactive, while the other travels on his way. In such tales the role of the messenger is very important as a link between the two worlds, and they often appear at the point of transition between one stage of the journey and the next.

None of the figures of the folk-tale are represented with any degree of psychological differentiation: each of them





can only act in one way. The hero succeeds as unquestioningly as the false hero fails. The reason why they are presented without an inner world of their own is precisely because they themselves represent inner qualities or psychological states, projected into figures and stereotype actions. For this reason, the figures' qualities and appearance have always some bearing on their inner characteristics. Special signs of the heroic nature are, for example, golden hair, and marks on the forehead, the nape of the neck, or the hips, as in: 'Po kolena nogi v zolote, po lokot' ruki v serebre.' (Af. vol. II, Nos. 283-287). Quite often outstanding beauty is mentioned: 'Ona byla takaya krasavitsa, chto ni v skazke skazat', ni perom opisat'.'

The hero's secular character, especially the fool's, is all that is known to the world outside; yet his supernatural helpers, as also his supernatural adversaries, know his true nature, and the questions they put to test him are merely stereotypes of a fixed pattern of conduct.

In the main the hero is presented through the motif of action, which takes the form of all his exploits from the time he conceives the longing to go off on his journey until he slays the dragon and wins his bride.

The hero is the one who wants to know, who is fit to be the master. One sure sign of his superiority is his mastery of all the instruments given him by his magic helpers and being used by him they become an extension of his power.

The figure of the folk-tale hero has three aspects in one:

1. The liberator, whose deeds change the world.
2. The bringer of culture, who discovers hidden values and treasures, which confer knowledge and wisdom.
3. The hero whose aim includes self-transformation.

The hero therefore performs the threefold task of liberating those in bondage, transmitting treasures from the other world after his discovery of the elixir of life and of perfecting himself.

Hero-worship, in the last analysis, has its roots in the belief that the greatest of achievements, as discussed above, are not simply the result of human endeavour, but are a gift of superior powers which act through the chosen figure. This implies that the hero-myth is not concerned with the private

history of an individual, but that on the contrary the events of the journey have a non-personal significance and are of value to the whole community. Through the journey an impersonal objective reality is revealed behind the singular events of the hero's life.

...the hero's character, especially the fact that he  
 ...the world outside; the old structural  
 ...the questions they put to that life are merely  
 ...the hero's character, especially the fact that he  
 ...the world outside; the old structural  
 ...the questions they put to that life are merely  
 ...the hero's character, especially the fact that he  
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## CHAPTER V

THE SUPERNATURAL FIGURES IN THE FOLK-TALE  
AS HELPERS OR ADVERSARIES OF THE HERO

'The mythological figures...are... symptoms of the unconscious...(and are) controlled and intended statements of certain spiritual principles which have remained constant throughout the course of human history as the form and nervous structure of the human physique itself.'<sup>1</sup>

The core of the folk beliefs which at one time belonged to a collective tradition, embodied in the folk-tale of the miraculous, have at their root experiences with animals which later turned into narratives about supernatural beings.<sup>2</sup> Serious, semi-mythological narratives have sometimes, in the course of time, turned into humorous stories and games. The degree of their reality for the community, whose heritage they were, has gradually lessened. Yet without real experiences behind them, the narrative tradition preserved in these stories would soon have lost its validity, changed its nature or simply disappeared.<sup>3</sup>

Reversing the process, one can largely reconstruct the original experiences and beliefs in the supernatural which gave rise to the stories by analysing situations which occur in the tales. Only a few characteristic conceptions which derive from an old cosmology have been preserved in the tales. Many more in the course of time have been obscured by later accretions or have been refined by rationalising interpretations.

In examining these folk-tale figures and analysing their characteristic functions within the framework of the tales, it becomes evident that their outer form itself is merely a mask

1. J. Campbell, The hero with a thousand faces, New York, 1949, p. 257.
2. L. Honko, 'On the functional analysis of folk-beliefs and narratives about empirical supernatural beings', IVth International Congress for Folk-Narrative Research, Athens, 1965, pp. 168-73.
3. V. N. Vsevolodsky, Istoriya russkogo teatra, vol. I, Leningrad, 1929.

for a qualifying principle beneath. Such principles underly all folk-tale figures and for the purposes of mythology and the folk-tale are best expressed through impersonal types.

Myths and tales with a mythological content speak of contact with powers which man experiences and which have their existence in another superior world. These powers are described in terms derived from the visible world, with its tangible objects and forces. The other world is spoken of in the terms of this world, and so are the supernatural powers. The real purpose of these myths and tales is to speak of a transcendent power which controls the world of man. But in order to express an inward reality adequately, myths and tales of the miraculous have turned away from the exterior reality as a source of illustrations for a given principle or law, and have produced abstract, symbolic, often weird, grotesque or fantastic figures and situations; in this way folk-tale figures have become signs or symbols of the principles they personify.

Those figures which are, on the one hand, a combination of several natural elements and, on the other, embody animal as well as human characteristics, appear to belong essentially to an earlier mythology, which, when adopted later, became inverted in some of its aspects so that some of its original concepts turned into their contraries. In this way the same form sometimes embodies two contrary principles, positive and negative, that is, in relation to the central figure of the hero. This applies, for instance, to the figures of the Baba-Yaga and the dragon.

The animal world of the folk-tale is a world of real and fantastic beings, which exhibit features related to the elements of fire, water, air and earth. It is a world complete in itself. These supernatural animals are seen to be the exponents of, and the links between, the two or three levels of the ancient cosmos. They were felt to be superior to man, who sought to discover their secrets by acquiring some of their powers. Primitive thought does not clearly distinguish between gods and demons: both are broadly manifested in the supernatural, which acts through a number of figures which have their limitations. Similarly, it does not distinguish between 'heaven' and 'hell', but situates them roughly at the end of the world, at the end of time,

or below the surface of the earth, which is at the same time connected with the region of the sky.

Early man experienced great awe in the presence of animals. Hunters, when tracking them down, endeavoured to assimilate themselves to their nature. They imitated their movements, ate their flesh, drank their blood, wore their skins, antlers, feathers or claws, and named individuals after them. Through sympathetic magic animals were believed to be able to transmit their peculiar characteristics to human beings. Some partial survivals of these very ancient conceptions concerning man-animal relationships are found in all folk-traditions.

Mythical tales which feature animals are among the oldest artistic creations of man. Since probably the Palaeolithic Age man's attitude to animals has been based on the belief that an affinity exists between them and himself. These and similar ideas formed the basis of cults such as ancestor-worship or totemism, of the belief in the transmigration of souls and the notion of the existence of the external soul.<sup>1</sup>

The connection of mythical animals, especially birds, with several worlds and their capacity for crossing the space which divides them, suggests that, in relation to the hero's journey, they were conceived as symbols of the soul. Evidence for this can be found both in mythology and folklore. According to ancient cosmology, the soul was believed to be of material substance, and the dwelling-place of the deceased was thought to be in the West where the sun sets, behind a wide expanse of water. The hero's main task was to undertake this journey to the other realm, and on his way he had to undergo a number of transformations in order to reach his goal. Yet since the soul was seen to take on so many forms and to animate such varied phenomena, it was often thought of as being nothing definite: rather it was felt to be a mysterious substance which had the power to assume any shape it pleased, mineral, vegetable or animal.

The transformation of the human hero was always into an animal form; the hero had to transform his earthbound body into a substance and shape which could cross the space between the

1. L. Levy-Bruhl, The 'soul' of the primitive, London, 1928.

worlds, that is, he had to free his body from its human form. In the Russian folk-tale the souls, and often the external soul of a supernatural being, as in the tales with Koshchey Bessmertnyy,<sup>1</sup> are frequently portrayed as birds.<sup>2</sup> Remains of this ancient belief that the soul takes on the form of a bird are also found in Russian funeral laments, in which the mourners address the deceased in the following way:

Появись-приди, надежда голсвужка,  
 Хоть с чиста поля явись ясным соколом,  
 С тёмным лесом явись сизым голубем,  
 Хоть с глубоким озером серой уточкой,  
 Хоть с погоста прилети да чёрной галочкой. 3

Certain characteristics of birds have always impressed man: their swift motion, their sudden appearance and their equally quick disappearance, and their quasi-human calls. These features caused the ancients to see in them messengers of the higher powers or embodiments of souls. Male birdlike figures have been found in successive civilisations, and bird-maidens too are of very ancient lineage. By analogy with the birds all that was above the earth was imagined to have wings, so that the hero on turning into an animal of the air, a bird or an insect, was identical with the soul travelling to and from the other world.

In the folk-tale, the decisive points of entry into and exit from the other worlds necessitate the help of winged animals, a winged horse, a bird or a (winged) wolf to carry the hero across the dividing space:

"Жаль мне тебя, Иван-царевич, что ты пеш  
 изнурился; жаль мне и того, что я заел  
 твоего доброго коня. Добро! Садись на  
 меня, на серого волка, и скажи, куда  
 тебя везти и зачем."

(Af. vol. I, No. 168).

1. Af. vol. I, Nos. 156-8.
2. A. Sobolev, Zagrobnyy mir po drevne-russkim predstavleniyam, Sergiev posad, 1913.
3. Ye. G. Kagarov, 'Religiya drevnykh slavyan', Kulturnobytovyye ocherki po mirovoy istorii, Seriya A, Russkaya istoriya, No. 4, Moscow, 1918.

In shamanistic and folk ritual the wolf was initially identical with the animal form of the ancestor: 'They keep their bodies dead and fly as eagles, hawks, ravens, woodpeckers and owls; they soar about like the wind in the form of wolves, they fly as snakes...'<sup>1</sup> Later he figures as the hero's guide into the other world (Af. vol. I, No. 168). The eagle, the wolf and the winged horse are the most popular symbols of the carriers of the soul in the Russian folk-tale.<sup>2</sup>

An animal's capacity for flight, its acute sensory perception, its enormous or minute size in relation to man, were features which aroused man's greatest admiration. These capacities and qualities were regarded by him as superior to his own, and hence as worth acquiring. Primitive man also believed that through the aid of magic he could be transformed into animal shapes. This metamorphosis of man into animal was prompted by a desire to be concealed from a pursuing enemy (of. the motif of the magic flight).

To a large extent the Russian folk-tales, recorded during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, still reflect the primitive mentality which does not clearly distinguish between man and animals and regards shape-changing as normal. Animals were also particularly regarded as embodiments of the various moods of nature. Through them man encountered both its benevolent and destructive aspects, and when he changed into an animal, he became initiated into nature's secrets.

The pantheon of supernatural figures as portrayed in the folk-tale probably arose through a combination of man's impressions of external nature with his own emotions, especially those of hope and fear. It is evident that, according to primitive belief, supernatural beings were first conceived of as having no individuality or special distinctive features. They were simply embodiments or representations of natural forces, of the seasons or the elements, and as such they were portrayed as

1. A. N. Afanas'yev, Poeticheskiye vozzreniya slavyan na prirodu vol. III, Moscow, 1865-69, pp. 301-2.
2. M. Eliade, Shamanism. Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy, New York, 1964; L. Ya. Shternberg, 'Kul't orla u Sibirskikh narodov', (Pervobytnaya religiya v svete Etnografii), Nauchno-issledovatel'skaya assotsiatsiya Instituta narodov severa. Materialy po etnografii, vol. 4, Leningrad, 1936, pp. 111-126.



types. Only much later were the forces superior to man conceived of in terms of animal qualities, and later still did animals acquire anthropomorphic characteristics<sup>1</sup> and were given personal names. Gradually a clearly defined hierarchy of other-worldly beings was evolved, with powerful figures ruling over their subjects, who carried out their commands. If men, therefore, came to think of supernatural beings as magnified non-natural men, they were no doubt influenced in their formulation of these concepts by their earlier concepts of non-natural animals. Later the qualities of supernatural animals came to be transferred to human beings, a fact which is very apparent in the evolution of the folk-tale hero.<sup>2</sup>

Animals are the most frequently encountered helpers of the hero. They may be classified into:

1. Animals without magic qualities.
2. Mythical animals which combine human and animal characteristics. Often they are enchanted humans, either having transformed themselves temporarily for the execution of a particular task, or having been enchanted by a hostile supernatural power, into whose domain they have ventured.
3. Animals which always retain their animal form, but which have supernatural powers.

Compulsory transformation of humans into animals by a supernatural being is in the folk-tale felt to be a regression and a punishment, for by the time the folk-tale had developed into a distinctive genre, the human, not the animal, hero was considered superior (Af. vol. II, Nos. 267-9, and vol. II, Nos. 234-5). Disenchantment, that is, the regaining of the human form, was possible only through love and marriage.

Animals appear chiefly as messengers between the world of the dead and the living. They are beings who know the way. All the supernatural animals which are encountered in the folk-tale are connected with treasures (Af. vol. I, No. 157); they have prophetic gifts (Af. vol. II, No. 247); and they possess eternal life, or at least symbolise this attribute (Af. vol. I,

1. E. Shnmark, 'Anthropomorphism and miracle', Uppeala Universitets Arskrift, No. 12, 1939, pp. 3-21.
2. D. K. Zelenin, 'Istolkovaniye perezhitochnykh religioznykh obryadov', Sovetskaya Etnografiya, No. 5, Moscow/Leningrad, 1934, pp. 3-16.

No. 168). Those beings which possess superior powers can change into any of the manifestations of the natural world. Frequently the hero is initiated into the secrets of nature by his supernatural wife, as in the folk-tale cycle Chudesnaya supruga (400-459), or by the Baba-Yaga, the khozyayka lesa, of whom it is said in the tales: 'Shto ni yest' na belom svete, vsyo yey pokoryayetsya'; or by a figure which acts on the latter's instructions. The secrets which reveal the way to the hero are imparted to him one by one, after he has undergone a series of trials which have shown that he is ready for the experiences which lie ahead.

In the folk-tale animals have no existence independent of the hero, its central figure. They divide sharply into those which are his helpers and those which are his enemies. Their place and function in the tale are determined by the principles which they embody. For this reason they are, more or less, stereotype figures. Their characteristics are limited to certain recurring features, which make them immediately recognisable in all the folk-tale variants.

The basis of the human-animal relationship is that of mutual liberation through transformation. Animals, which at one time were human, need human intervention to be freed from the spells which bind them, and humans, particularly the hero, need the help of supernatural animals for the execution of the tasks set them by beings from the beyond. These latter figures, which in themselves are static, are excluded from this continuous process of transformation, a process which from the point of view of the hero is indispensable for his development. This means that these figures are incapable of progress as it is understood in the terms of the tale. They include all the hero's human enemies, his brothers, hostile kings and all claimants to his achievements.

The supernatural figures each occupy a place in the hierarchy of folk-tale beings. Magic animals and other agents of the supernatural, such as the chief miraculous figures and magic objects, are all mutually linked by virtue of their belonging to the same world. Their place in the mythical universe is determined by the degree of power they possess over the natural elements. As has been suggested earlier, all the super-

natural beings may be seen as ancestors or representatives of the zagrobnyy mir. On a psychological level they may be regarded as externalisations or symbols of the experiences of the hero on his way.

Animal figures, or their later variants, humans with predominantly animal features, appear at critical moments in the development of the narrative, either as helping or guiding forces, or causing obstacles to the hero's progress. Hence they are either instrumental in effecting the hero's transformation, or they thwart or bar his progress, actions symbolised in the motif of petrification.<sup>1</sup> Except for the dragon, all animals in the folk-tales are either the hero's helpers or enchanted humans, awaiting liberation.

There are further those animal types, which constitute part of the prize to be attained by the hero. These are occasionally referred to as dikovinki, and appear in the folk-tale mostly in connection with miraculous objects. They are, for example:

Жар-птица: Аф.168-70; Свинка-золотая щетинка; Утка золотые перышки, золоторогий олень, золотогривый конь: Аф.182-84; Золотая рыбка: Аф.75.

These animals and objects have probably been connected with cult and ritual at some time. From there they found their way into the folk-tale, where they have come to be used as symbols of life and wealth, often marking the highest of the hero's attainments. They are always related to a sacred zone, often to the three underground tsardoms, or to stages on the hero's journey. They figure in the tales:

Волшебное кольцо: Аф.190-1; Три царства - медное, серебряное и золотое: Аф.125-30; Сказка о молодце-Удальце, о молодых яблоках и живой воде: Аф.171-78; Поющее дерево и птица-говорунья: Аф.288-39; Сказка о серебряном блюдочке и наливном яблочке: Аф.559.

The natural elements and objects of magic worshipped by

1. N. Ye. Onchukov, Severnyye ekazki, St. Petersburg, 1908, No. 4.

the eastern Slavs are abundantly represented in the tales. They included the earth, fire, water, the apple, the mirror, the ring, the scarf, bread, the egg, the stick and many others.<sup>1</sup>

All natural phenomena, animals and objects, are related to their domicile or respective spheres of origin, as well as to the beneficent or maleficent magic force which they carry. The folk-tale mentions rivers of fire and milk, wells from which spring the waters of life and death, islands, cities and mountains which house treasures, castles of gold, crystal bridges, the Baba-Yaga's revolving hut in the enchanted forest, and deserts at the world's end. All these localities are connected with the hero's transformation, as places representing the magic realm with which the hero comes into contact during his journey. Water especially contains the qualities which the hero seeks: it restores sight to the blind and youth to the aged, it cures illnesses, brings the dead back to life and imparts such strength to the hero that he can conquer his most powerful enemies.<sup>2</sup>

The connection of the hero, and animals and objects with the other realm, are mostly symbolised by their silver or golden attributes and colours, for example:

Василиса золотая коса: Аф.560; По колена ноги в золоте, по локоть руки в серебре: Аф.283-87; Серебряная блюдочка: Аф.569; Золотой башмачок: Аф.292; Золотой город: Аф.220.

In some tales there are even references to the hero's or heroine's connection with the planetary world and the elements:

Долго-долго ехал; приезжает наконец к Солнцевой сестрице. Она его приняла к себе, кормила-поила, как за родным сыном ходила...В то самое время подскочил Иван-царевич к теремам Солнцевой сестрицы и закричал: "Солнце! Солнце! Отвори оконце." Солнцева сестрица отворила окно и царевич вскочил в него вместе с конем.

(Af. vol. I, No. 93).

1. Af. Nos. 93, 165, 171-78, 195, 209, 210-11, 566; V. P. Anikin, Russkaya narodnaya skazka, Moscow, 1959.
2. P. Sartori, 'Das Wasser in Totengebräuchen', Zeitschrift des Vereins fuer Volkskunde, vol. XVIII, pp. 364-66; J. Goldziher, 'Wasser als daemonenabwehrendes Mittel', Archiv fuer Religionswissenschaft, vol. XIII, Leipzig, 1910, pp. 20-46.

Вот плывут они день и другой; вдруг /царице/  
 сделалось грустно, тяжело - ударила себя в  
 грудь, оборотилась звездой и летела на  
 небо...Старик ударился оземь, сделался сам  
 звездой, полетел на небо и стал считать  
 звёзды; одну нашёл лишнюю и ну толкать её!  
 Сорвалась звёздочка с своего места, быстро  
 покатила по небу, упала на корабль и  
 обернулась царицею золотые кудры.

(Af. vol. I, No. 137).

In one tale an old man gives his daughters away in marriage to  
 the Sun, the Moon and a raven (Af. vol. I, No. 92). In another  
 three princes are born with the marks of the Sun, the Moon and  
 the stars on their bodies:

Три родных братца...во лбу у них солнце,  
 на затылке месяц, по бокам часты звёзды...  
 / Аф.283/.

Alternatively, the hero goes out in search of his two sisters,  
 the Moon and a Star, who have been abducted by velikiy vikhor,  
 (Af. vol. III, No. 562). Besides these survivals of what was  
 probably once a cult of sky-worship the elements also play a  
 prominent part in some tales. Sometimes they are mentioned  
 directly, sometimes they are personified<sup>1</sup> as in the folk-tales:

Мороз, Солнце и Ветер: Аф.91; Морозко: Аф.  
 93-96; Морской царь и Василиса Премудрая:  
 Аф.219-26; Поди туда - не знаю куда, при-  
 неси то - не знаю что: Аф.212-15.

The elements could be conciliated by what was thought  
 to be the right conduct towards them, so that they might mani-  
 fest their benevolence in an abundance of gifts:

Девушка сидит да дрожит; озноб её пробрал.  
 Хотела она выть, да сил не было; одни зубы  
 только постукивают. Вдруг слышит: невдалеке  
 Морозко на елке потряскивает, с елки на  
 елку поскакивает да пощелкивает. Очутился  
 он на той сосне, под которой девица сидит,  
 и сверху ей говорит:... "Тепло ли те красная!

1. Cf. Af. Nos. 91, 93, 95, 96, 212-215, 219-226, 283-287;  
 A. N. Afanas'yev, op. cit., 3 vols., Moscow, 1865-69.

Тепло ли те, лапушка?" Девица окостенела и чуть слышно сказала: "Ой, тепло, голубчик Морозушко!" Тут Морозко сжалился, окутал девицу шубами и отогрел одеялами.

(Af. vol. I, No. 95).

От:

Как увидел это царь, взгоревался, зачал плакать и приговаривать: "Что мне теперь делать? Как опять соберу всё стадо в такой маленький сундучок?" И видит он - вышел из воды человек, подходит к нему и спрашивает: "Чего ты, царь-государь, так горько плачешь?"

(Af. 219).

As portrayed in the folk-tale, there are a great number of composite animals. Such animals have been abundantly represented in folk ornaments. These are composite animals of different types; often they are even mixtures of mythical animals. The Russian folk-tale knows of figures such as the bird-horse (Af. vol. II, No. 179), the bear-man, (Af. vol. I, No. 141), the eagle-man (Af. vol. II, No. 219), the bird-woman (Af. vol. II, No. 265), the dragon-man (Af. vol. II, No. 276), the woman-snake (Af. vol. II, No. 270), the horse-man (Af. vol. II, No. 249), and many others. These figures which have come down to us as part of an art form were believed by the ancients to have been invented by the inhabitants of the Iranian plateau. Though the animal style has existed for millennia, it is not possible to fix any chronological points in its development. All that can be done is to establish the sequence of the changes in its artistic execution.<sup>1</sup> In order to illustrate one specific quality, animals were shown with additional features, which did not normally belong to their species and which had been borrowed from elsewhere. Typical examples of this are the dragon, a hybrid figure, comprising the features of an alligator, an eagle and a lion, and the Baba-Yaga who as mistress of the beasts occasionally appears in a form combining human and animal

1. D. Carter, The symbol of the beast. The animal style art of Eurasia, New York, 1957.

features.

The ornamental style appears to be the oldest in the decorative arts of mankind, and once initiated, it has never died out. It is to be found in all aspects of religious and folk art.<sup>1</sup> The most common representations are groups of animals, animal and plant compositions, including figures of mythical birds and animals.<sup>2</sup> Pictures of fighting animals abound, particularly of the eagle and the serpent. These have been found in South Russia, west of the Urals and in Northern Siberia.<sup>3</sup> A theme analogous on a mythological level to the fighting eagle and serpent and introduced into the cycle of folk themes is the fight between the human hero and the dragon.

The eagle was a bird particularly revered among the Siberian tribes which practised shamanism.<sup>4</sup> The eagle's undisputed kingship over the birds, his size and majestic flight, his ability to fly into the sun's rays and his fights with serpents, appealed to the imagination of early man. The eagle was the totem animal of many tribes which practised shamanism, and figured frequently on the top of the shamanistic tree. These representations sometimes show a double-headed eagle.

The folk-tale sees the eagle as an enchanted human, who acts as the hero's guide into the other world, carrying him across the space dividing the worlds. He features exclusively in the motif of the magic flight, in the acquisition of treasures, to which he has access as a representative of the supernatural world, and in the motif of transformation and in the showing of the way:

"Садись ко мне на крылья; я понесу тебя

1. S. V. Ivanov, 'Narodnyy ornament kak istochnik', Sovetskaya Etnografiya, No. 2, Moscow/Leningrad, 1958, pp. 3-23.
2. M. I. Rostovtsev, Iranians and Greeks, Oxford, 1922; idem, 'The animal style in South Russia and China', Princeton Monographs in Art and Archaeology, No. 14, Paris, 1929.
3. R. Wittkower, 'Eagle and Serpent', Journal of the Warburg Institute No. 2, London, 1939, pp. 293-325.
4. U.N.O. Holmberg-Harva, 'Finno-Ugric and Siberian Mythology', vol. 4, in: The Mythology of all Races, Boston, 1927, pp. 299-523.

в свою сторону"...Сел купец орлу на крылья;  
понесся орёл на синее море и поднялся высоко-  
высоко..."Посмотри на синее море, велико ли?"  
"с колесо"... "С куриное яйцо"... "С маковое  
зернышко"... Полетел орёл с купцом за море,  
прямо к медному царству... Ударился /орёл/ о  
сырую землю и оборотился добрым молодцем.

(Af. vol. II, No. 224).

Мужик сел на орла, орёл взвился и полетели  
они на синее море... Подлетают они к друго-  
му берегу.

(Af. vol. II, No. 220).

Царь сел на птицу, вот и полетели они;  
ни много ни мало прошло времени... по-  
летели они за тридевять земель.

(Af. vol. II, No. 219).

Another frequently encountered magic bird, whose impor-  
tant function it is to help the hero with his return from the  
other world, is the Mogol' (Mogul), Magovey or Nogay-ptitsa, no  
doubt related to the colossal mythical bird, the Noga, venerated  
by the Chukchi and Nentsy in Siberia as the carrier of the dead.<sup>1</sup>

Взяла Иванз-царевича за руку и повела в  
избу; только вошли туда, налетела Моголь-  
птица, пала на землю - в окнах свету не  
стало... сел на Моголь-птицу - в ту же  
минуту она поднялась и полетела.

(Af. vol. I, No. 157).

Like the Nogay-ptitsa, the mythical bird Simurg in Iranian mytho-  
logy carries the hero from the underworld back to the earth's sur-  
face.<sup>2</sup> It is very probable that the Zhar-ptitsa of the Russian  
folk-tale is related to it. Simargl is a bird well known in  
Russian chronicles;<sup>3</sup> compare also the mythical bird of the folk-

1. A. N. Smirnov, Sbornik velikorusskikh skazok Archiva Russkogo Geograficheskogo obshchestva, Petersburg, 1917, vol. II, No. 321; E. A. Armstrong, The folklore of birds. An enquiry into the origin and distribution of some magico-religious traditions, London, 1958.
2. K. Trever, The dog-bird Senmurv-Faskudy, Leningrad, 1938; A. Kalmykov, 'Iranians and Slavs in South Russia', Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. 45, No. 1, pp. 68-71.
2. S. H. Cross (transl.), Russian Primary Chronicle, Laurentian Text, Cambridge, Mass., 1953, p. 93.



tale Serebryanaya ptichka zolotoy khokholok.

In other variants of the theme of the journey the hero may be guided into the underworld by the Vikhor-ptitsa (Khud. No. 67). The Vikhor or Veter is a violent spirit which snatches his victims away by force. There is a widespread folk belief about the association of supernatural beings with whirlwinds, the air being their element. They abduct feminine folk-tale figures suddenly and with violence, and only after a long and arduous journey does the hero find them and eventually conduct them back to their home.

Только успела вымолвить, как вдруг засыс-  
тали - зашумели верты, и в один миг под-  
хватило солдата буйным вихрем и унесло из  
глаз королевы.

(Af. vol. II, No. 272).

В один день царь прогуливался в саду с  
супругою своею. Вдруг поднялся вихорь и  
унес царицу из глаз его.

(Af. vol. III, No. 559).

Other folk-tale birds, the raven Voron and the falcon Sokol in the animal guise which conceals their human nature, take their human wives with them to their kingdoms in the same manner: compare also the cycle of motifs of the Zhivotnyye zvat'ya' (No. 552).

Только шли во дворец - как грянул гром,  
раздвоился потолок и влетел к ним в  
горницу ясный сокол, ударился сокол об  
пол, сделался добрым молодцом и говорит:  
"Здравствуй, Иван-царевич!"...

"Прежде я ходил гостем, а теперь пришёл  
сватом; хочу у тебя сестрицу Марью-царевну  
посватать." "Коли люб ты сестрице, я её не  
унимаю - пусть с Богом идёт!" Марья-царевна  
согласилась; сокол женился и унёс её в своё  
царство.

(Af. vol. I, No. 159).

In folk belief the raven, being a carrion-feeding bird, is mostly connected with death, as in a bylina:

Чёрные враны тела трынкают.

Or in a funeral lament:

Обзорные да горгы вороны разносили ихни  
косточки по тёмным по лесам дремучим.

But like other figures in the folk-tale, the raven has a dual nature and may represent both helpful and destructive forces.<sup>3</sup>

In the Slovo o polku Igoreve the concept of the raven as a personification of evil is taken further; in this epic poem the raven symbolises the enemy of the traditional Russian warrior-hero, in contrast to the bright falcon who symbolises the hero.

A poetically very striking example of the animal bridegroom in the form of the falcon occurs in the tale-cycle Fyoryshko Finista yasna sokola (Af. vol. II, Nos. 234 and 235). The falcon visits his future bride, transforming himself into a tsarevich for their meetings, but leaves her as a bird to fly back to his kingdom. Eventually he is liberated from his animal form by the heroine, who after a long search in the other world finds him at last and wakens him from a deep sleep.

The folk-tale also contains instances of the transformation of a bird-woman. Usually this motif involves the arrival of a flock of geese, swans, ducks or doves at a lake. There they shed their feather garments so that they can bathe in the water as maidens. The hero, who has been spying on them, often having found his way there through the help of a wise woman, a representative of the world beyond, steals a feather garment and in this way secures the maiden to whom it belonged as his wife (Af. Nos. 130, 215, 225). Having consented to marry him, the maiden receives back her feathers, but she then flies back to the realm beyond, where her father, the king, guards her jealously. The prince follows her there and at length marries her, having solved many difficult tasks with her help, and having outwitted her guardian. According to the tales, the human form which is concealed behind the animal exterior can only reveal itself fully

1. P. N. Rybnikov, Pesni, sobrannyye P. N. Rybnikovym, vol. III, Moscow, 1909, p. 200.
2. Ye. N. Barsov, Prichitaniya severnogo kraja, pt. I, Moscow, 1872, p. 269.
3. N. F. Sumtsov, 'Voron v narodnoy elovesnosti', Etnograficheskoye obozreniye, No. I, 1890, pp. 61-68; C. E. Hare, Bird Lore, London, 1952.

at the moment of liberation or at the time of union with the partner.

Occasionally the heroine is changed into a bird by the hero's opponent; in order to gain power over the hero he has first to remove the object of his desire, deceive him by blinding him to his task, or make him lose his memory. Transformation was conceived of as being something that concerned the exterior only: beneath it the figures remain what they really are. Therefore as long as the princess wears her dress in which her special qualities reside, she is protected, but as soon as she takes it off she is affected by her enemy's counter magic (Af. vol. II, Nos. 264 and 265):

Вот как выехали корабли посреди моря снего,  
нянька и говорит Марье-царевне: "Скинь с  
тебя драгоценное платье да ложись на перину  
- тебе покойней будет!" Царевна скинула  
платье и только легла на перину - нянька  
ударила её слегка по белому телу, и сдела-  
лась Марья-царевна серой утицей, взвилась -  
полетела с корабля на сне море.

Changing feathers, skin or dress is equal to acquiring another form, of turning into a being of another species.

Only in the hero and the heroine is transformation synonymous with progress and development. Transformation always takes place in secret, in a place which is hidden, at night when no one else is present, or when all those who are near are asleep:

Приходит время к полуночи, стала сера утица  
с моря подыматься, полетела к родимому брат-  
цу - всё царство собой осияла: крыльями  
мадет, а с них словно жар сыпется! Подлетела  
к темнице, да прямо в окошечко, крылышки на  
гвоздик повесила, а сама к братцу пошла.

To free the enchanted being from the spell which binds it, all that is needed is to burn the animal's skin or feathers.

The most frequently encountered helper of the hero is the magic horse. Before the hero is able to undertake anything that is related to his journey and its goal, he has to find such

a horse, who is to be his constant guide and adviser on his travels. Finding it often constitutes his first major trial. In most instances he comes across this horse after his first encounter with a supernatural being. Very typical is the chance encounter with an old woman, the babushka zadvorenka or a starukha, just as he is about to despair over his failure to find the horse:

Иван-царевич пошёл выбирать себе коня: на которого руку положит, тот и падёт; не мог выбрать себе коня, идёт дорогой по городу, повесил голову. Неоткуда взялась старуха, спрашивает: "Что, Иван-царевич, повесил голову?" "Уйди, старуха! На руку положу, другой приклепну, мокренько будет!" Старуха обежала другим переулком, идёт опять навстречу, говорит: "Здравствуй, Иван-царевич! Что повесил голову?" Он и думает: "Что же старуха меня спрашивает? Не поможет ли мне она?" И говорит ей: "Вот бабушка, не могу найти себе доброго коня." "Дурашка, мучишься, а старухе не кучишься!" отвечает старуха. "Пойдём со мной." Привела его к горе, указала место: "Скапывай эту землю." Иван-царевич скопал, видит чугунную доску, на двенадцати замках; замки он тотчас же сорвал и двери отворил, вошёл под землю: тут прикован на двенадцати цепях богатырский конь; он, видно, услышал езду по себе, заржал, забился, все двенадцати цепей порвал. Иван-царевич надел на себя богатырские доспехи, надел на коня узду, черкасское седло, дал старухе денег и сказал: "Благословляй и прощай, баушка! Сам сел и поехал.

(Af. vol. I, No. 156).

In the tale-cycle Sivko-Burko (530A) the hero receives his magic horse after spending three nights at his father's grave. The belief that no obligation is more binding to man than to pay proper respects to the dead has been preserved in numerous customs and rituals and is as old as civilisation itself. The father-ancestor here appears as the magician who has the power to bestow the boon his son needs for the performance of his tasks,

after the latter has shown himself faithful and obedient in fulfilling his filial duties. Unlike his brothers he does not shirk them:

"Ну, детки", говорил /отец/ им ,детям/,  
"умру я - приходите ко мне на могилку читать."

Contact with the world of the ancestors was at the centre of the cults and rituals of primitive man; if properly approached and understood, the ancestors had the power to promote and intensify life.

To go to the ancestor's grave, to communicate one's sorrow and desires to the spirits of the dead, was to secure such help as was needed; in the context of the folk-tale it meant to receive the help which the hero needed to fulfil his tasks:

Ванюшке очень хотелось поглядеть на Елену-царевну Прекрасную; заплакал он, больно заплакал и пошёл на могилку к отцу. Услышал его отец в домовине, вышел к нему, стряхнул с чела смру землю и говорит: "Не тужи, Ваня, я твоему горю пособлю."

(Af., Vol. II, No. 180).

The father here performs the same function as the Baba-Yaga, the chief supernatural figure representing the link with the other world. Ancestor worship is frequently mentioned in the Russian Chronicles as a major cult of the ancient Slavs.<sup>1</sup>

The supernatural figures are always met in solitude, at a place which is removed from the activities of the world, towards evening or at night; and the meeting with them is kept secret by the hero. The gift received from the ancestor provides the hero with a direct link between the two worlds. To summon his magic horse the hero uses a special incantation which his father has taught him:

Тотчас старик вытянулся, выпрямился, свистнул - гаркнул молодецким голосом, соловейским посвистом; откуда ни взялся - конь бежит, земля дрожит, из ноздрей, из ушей пламя пышет; порхонул и стал перед стариком как вкопанный, и спрашивает: "Что велишь?"

1. A. L. Mongait, Archaeology in the USSR, Harmondsworth, Mdx., 1961, p. 98.

(Af. vol. II, No. 180).

In this tale-cycle transformation takes place by the hero climbing through the horse's head, a process analogous to his entering the hut of the Baba-Yaga. Through this process he assimilates the qualities and magic powers which will help him on his journey:

Влез Ваня коню в одно ушко, вылез в  
другое и сделался таким молодцом, что ни в  
сказке сказать, ни пером написать!"

Having been transformed in this way, and with his new knowledge reflected in his splendid appearance, the hero is equipped to set off on his journey:

Сел на коня, подбоченился и полетел,  
что твой сокол, прямо к палатам Елены-  
царевны.

(Af. vol. II, No. 180).

In folk architecture the figure of the horse is still frequently found on the roof of peasant houses as a guardian and protective spirit.

The horse's superior qualities are not always apparent from its exterior: its powers may be disguised by a misleading lameness (Af. vol. II, Nos. 295 and 296). This disguising of the true nature of the hero's helper is a very common motif. Similarly to the folk-tale hero Neznayko, the horse assumes a protective mask to guard himself from an unsympathetic environment, and to test those figures who oppose the hero's progress. They show their disdain for the lame horse by ridiculing the hero's deeds and his affection for his disguised helper. The magic horse advises the hero thus:

"Ты, добрый молодец, ступай к пастухам,  
купи одного быка и зарежь его; нарядись  
в бычью шкуру, на голову пузырь надень,  
и где ни будешь, о чём бы тебя ни спра-  
шивали, на всё один ответ держи: Не знаю."

(Af. vol. II, No. 295).

Once the hero has acquired his horse, it remains his faithful helper and adviser until the journey is completed and the last task has been fulfilled. This applies particularly to the folk-tale cycles:

Победитель змея /300А/, Бой на калиновом мосту /300В/, Кошечья смерть в яйце /302/, Чудесное бегство /314/, Царь-девица /400В/.

In some tales the horse figures as the prize to be attained at the end of a perilous journey, as in the tale:

Иван-крестьянский сын и мальчик сам с перст,  
усы на семь верст.

in which the tsar dreams about obtaining a horse which would have

ни шерстанка, то серебрянка, а во лбу  
светел месяц.

(cf. also Af. vol. II, Nos. 182-84).

There is substantial evidence in the folk-tale of reflections of an at one time widespread bear cult. Traces of such a cult have been found as late as the end of the nineteenth century, in the north Olonets region in Russia. The inhabitants of this region believed that the bear is a human who has been transformed into an animal by magic. The bear cult was still partly alive at this time also among the Siberian tribes of the Voguls, Ostyaks, Ainy and Gilyaks.<sup>1</sup> The essence of the cult among these tribes is again the belief that the bear is man's ancestor. He was thought to have been human, but to have been changed into an animal through an act of magic. Beneath his skin, however, as with all supernatural folk-tale animals, a being is concealed who has an immortal soul. 'The agricultural rites are preserved only to a very small extent in White Russia. In the beginning there was the bear hunt followed by the totem cult of the bear... and finally we have the bear comedy.'<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the bear is represented with a human wife who gives birth to a heroic son. Such a union between a supernatural animal and a human is frequent in the case of the eagle, raven or falcon, the Koshchey and the dragon (compare also Af. vol. II, Nos. 141-42).

1. 'Kul't medvedya', Enteiklopedicheskiy slovar', vol. XVIII A, St. Petersburg, 1896; N. Yadrintsev i G. I. Kulikovskiy, 'O Kul'te medvedya, preimushchestvenno u suyeverynykh inorodtsev', Etnograficheskoye obozreniye, No. 1, 1890, pp. 101-115. N. N. Voronin, 'Medvezhiy kul't v verkhnem Povolzhye v XI v.', Materialy i issledovaniya po arkheologii SSSR, No. 6, 1941.
2. V. N. Vsevolodskiy, Istoriya russkogo teatra, vol. I, Moscow/Leningrad, 1929, p. 110.

В некотором селе жил-был богатый мужик с женою. Вот раз пошла она в лес за груздями, заплуталась и забрела в медвежью берлогу. Медведь взял её к себе, и долго ли, коротко ли - прижил с нею сына, до пояса человек, а от пояса медведь; мать назвала того сына Иванко Медведко.

(Af. vol. I, No. 152).

The tales describe the subjection of women or children to the power of the bear as a misfortune and a punishment which they seek to escape from. (Af. vol. II, No. 201).

As in the tales of the lesnoy uchitel' and the magician Okh, who seek humans to serve them, the latter attempt to free themselves from their masters by using the magic knowledge they have learnt from them, as for example in the motif-cycle Khitraya nauka (No. 325). Powerful natural forces, working through the magician or the animals who are trying to keep the hero prisoner, are shown opposing him, as he struggles to free himself and others by control of the natural universe and cooperation with its laws. Yet in their human forms the animals, however hostile they are to the hero in their animal forms, are mostly benevolent:

Скоро поднялся сильный вихрь...медведь вошёл в комнату...ударился о сырую землю и сделался такой молодец, что ни вздумать, ни взгадать, ни пером написать, ни в сказке сказать и молвал: "Иван-царевич! Не прячься от меня, я для тебя не злодей, ничто тебе худого не сделаю."

(Af. vol. III, No. 557).

One of the major aspects of the folk-tale is that it reflects man's changing relationship with the world around him. Increasingly, man feels himself to be a superior being in the natural universe; this is reflected particularly in his attitude to animals, who at one time were worshipped as his ancestors. It is equally evident in a growing anthropomorphism: superior powers come more and more to be personified as supernatural humans, giants or bogatyri. 'As the unlettered tribes



from the steppe regions gradually became influenced by Eurasia's settled civilisation and the new anthropomorphic religions, the symbolism of the beast appears to have yielded to the symbol of man...When the Mongol hordes came along in the thirteenth century, the symbolism of the beast had apparently disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

The giants among the hero's helpers are mostly the embodiment of one human ability or quality. This is magnified to the point where it manifests itself in every feature of the figure, which then becomes wholly identified with that quality. Usually it is strength, or one of the senses, such as hearing, or an activity, such as eating. The hero enlists them as helpers either as a result of a trial of strength, in which the hero proves his superiority, or by offering them gifts. These giants may be met at all points on the journey. They mediate for the hero in difficult situations, replacing the animals of the older variants, and serving him with the particular faculties which they possess. The hero's encounter with the bogatyri generally marks a preliminary phase of his journey. As with the supernatural animals, the relationship between the hero and the giants is one of mutual liberation. (Af. vol. I, No. 93). In other tales the hero simply chooses them as his companions for part of his journey:

Идёт путем-дорогою, пришёл к реке широкой  
в три версты; на берегу стоит человек,  
спер реку ртом, рыбу ловит усом, на языке  
варит да кушает...пошли двое и увидали  
богатря - захватил тот богатырь целую  
гору, понёс в лог и верстает дорогу...  
пошли трое и увидали чудо, богатырь дубье  
верстает: который дуб высок, тот в землю  
пыхает, а который низок, из земли тянет.

(Af. vol. I, No. 141). (cf. also vol. I, No. 144).

Strength also resides in the gnomes of the folk-tale. They are portrayed as tiny, malicious old men, dwelling below the earth, who strive to acquire the hero's treasures. Because they are so puny, the hero often ignores the danger they may present:

1. D. Carter, The Symbol of the beast. The animal-style art of Eurasia, New York, 1957, p. 92.

Приехал он к одной реке; у той реки стоит избенка. Тут попадается ему навстречу мужичок сам с перст, усы на семь верст и говорит ему: "Отдай мне коня, а коли не отдашь честию, то насилкой возьму!" Отвечает Иван: "Отойди от меня, проклятый гад, покуда тебя конем не раздавил!" Мужичок сам с перст, усы на семь верст сшиб его наземь, сел на коня и уехал.

(Af. vol. I, No. 138).

'The spirits (souls) in the form of gnomes, the Slavonic lyudki, were nothing else than the souls of the deceased; the belief that the souls of the dead have the same form as humans, only much smaller, is a concept that is still found in religious painting.'<sup>1</sup> These little people appear suddenly, often bringing a message from the other world. Sometimes, attempting to seize hold of them, the hero follows them into the 'hole in the ground', down which they have disappeared, and so gains entry to the other realm.

Extreme old age, as represented by the old men whom the hero comes across sitting all alone at the world's end or at cross-roads, is synonymous with wisdom. The hero's meeting with them indicates that he has reached a decisive phase in his travels, a point where he needs to be given advice:

Ехал он долгое-долгое время; приехал к какой-то дороге, а подле неё стоит огромный дуб, под тем дубом старик сидит, у того старика волоса, брови, борода заросли уже в землю. "Здорово, старичок!" "Добро пожаловать", отвечал он. "А что, можно ли достать живой и мертвой воды и говорящую птицу?" "Можно, да не легко, ходят то много, да возвращаются мало."

(Af. vol. II, No. 289).

1. S. M. Solovyov, 'Ocherk npravov, obychayev i religii Slavyan, preimushchestvenno vostochnykh vo vremena yazycheskiye', Arkhiv istoriko-yuridicheskikh svedniy, book I, Moscow, 1850, pp. 1-34.

At the earliest stage of mythical thought and experience and of its representation through artistic media, the life principles were felt to have a fundamental unity. This becomes evident in analysing the supernatural figures and tracing their development within the structure of the tales. Later these figures or archetypes appear in many forms, in many individual figures, representing various aspects of the same principles,<sup>1</sup> and grouping themselves into pairs of opposites. This development has to be seen against the background of the persisting belief in a 'participation mystique', that is the connection of all beings with the common source of life. In this view all phenomena, man included, are related, so that a continual change of form or transformation from one state of being into another was possible as well as desirable.

All supernatural figures have in common the characteristic that the creative and guiding or negative and destructive principles manifest themselves through them. These principles manifest themselves on all planes of existence, that is, in the upper and lower worlds. In the Russian folk-tale these principles are externalised and personified in the figures which appear to the hero at various stages on his journey.

Every magical process presupposes a ritual, and every ritual is intended to effect a transformation. Particular magical power was attributed to woman by the ancients. Woman in the picture language of the myth and the folk-tale represents the totality of what may be known by man. Hence the predominance of feminine initiators and helpers on the way. Quite apart from mythology and folklore, whole spheres of culture have come into being from this interplay of the masculine and feminine principles. Sometimes her virginal nature is strongly or wholly predominant, sometimes her chthonic nature is to the fore; at other times she is connected with the realm of death. In most folk-tales after the hero has approached her, he is expected to put to her a series of questions to discover her identity and nature, that is, she is portrayed as a giver of oracles. On every occasion she demands compliance with the laws she represents; then she bestows her blessings lavishly on the hero.

1. V. V. Ivanov i V. N. Toporov, Slavyanskiye yazykovyye modeliruyushchiye semioticheskiye sistemy, Moscow, 1965.

In the tales she may appear singly, or in a threefold form, or in an indeterminate plurality. Such a power is referred to, for instance, in the words of the goddess Isis to her initiate Apuleius.<sup>1</sup> She is here one of the prototypes of mother earth:

'I am she that is the natural mother of things,  
Mistress and governess of all elements.  
The initial progeny of worlds,  
Chief of the powers divine,  
Queen of all that are in hell,  
The principal of them that dwell in heaven,  
Manifested alone and under one form of all gods and  
goddesses.

At my will the planets of the sky,  
The wholesome winds of the sea,  
And the lamentable silences of hell are disposed;  
My name, my divinity is adored throughout the world,  
In divers manners, in variable customs, and by many  
names.'

The immediate cause of the journey itself is a feminine being from the beyond, and at all its decisive points the hero encounters a feminine figure. The reason for the predominance of the female in the realms of the mysteries, and in tales and legends, is the belief that whoever wants to ask about fate must go to the generic mater, to woman. Fate may appear as a maternal old woman, presiding over past and future, or as the young and fascinating alter ego of man, the hero. In either case woman constitutes the driving force, which he obeys; initially this force makes him set off on his journey; subsequently he is guided by its wisdom.

The hero is encouraged, driven or lured into adventure by a feminine figure in various guises. This encounter brings with it the possibility of transformation, for each meeting results in a change either for better or worse. In the folk-tale one can trace most of these stages of the self-revelation of the feminine aspect of creation and of its symbolic representations.<sup>2</sup>

Woman in the folk-tale appears either as a negative or

1. Lucius Apuleius, The Golden Ass, transl. by W. Aldington, Book XL, The Abbey Classics - VI, London, undated.
2. E. Neumann, The Great Mother. An analysis of the archetype, London, 1955; J. Campbell, The masks of God: Occidental mythology, London, 1965.

a positive type; and often both aspects are combined in one figure. Principally she is encountered in the following forms:

1. The hero's alter ego, for whom in the majority of cases he undertakes the journey. In this form she is the beautiful princess (Af. vol. I, Nos. 169-170).
2. The Amazon, whom the hero can win only through a trial of strength, in which he must prove himself superior (Af. vol. II, Nos. 232-233).
3. The woman-sphinx, whose riddles the hero has to solve at the risk of his life (Af. vol. II, No. 239).
4. Nesmeyana tsarevna, the princess who cannot laugh (Af. vol. II, No. 297). The numerous princesses who present riddles to be solved kill their unsuccessful suitors, but give themselves readily to the victor. The hero, having shown his superiority by solving the riddle, redeems the princess, who is identical with the riddle itself.<sup>1</sup>
5. The princess premudraya, or Sophia, a woman who symbolises a spiritual principle, for union with which the hero is striving. In this sense the woman who appears in the many figures of myth and folk-tale represents the totality of what may be known by man.
6. The benevolent mother in her many forms as mother nature or the mistress of the beasts khozyayka lesa, and as fate in its positive aspect, a form in which she is connected with the three Mairai (Af. Nos. 93, 234, 267). In this role the feminine figure governs the hero's growth, by spinning the thread of fate and weaving the web of life. In Af. No. 267 the princess exhibits her feminine skills of baking, weaving and dancing, which are part of the primeval mysteries of the feminine nature and modes of its self-revelation. Beginnings and ends, births and deaths, and also marriages, are the domain of the benevolent mother. As the mistress of the beasts she dominates the animals, but she rarely fights them; for between her and the animal world there is no antagonism. Often she appears as the mistress of a herd, typically

1. Ye. Yeleonskaya, 'Nekotoryye zamechaniya o roli zagadki v skazke', Etnograficheskoye obozreniye, No. 3, Moscow, 1907, pp. 78-80.

of horses, which in many cases are her enchanted daughters:

У ней есть такая кобылица, на которой  
она каждый день вокруг света облетает.  
Много у ней таких славных кобылиц.

(Af. vol. I, No. 159).

The earliest mother goddesses were associated and even identified with the cow, as it were, the foster-mother of mankind. In some folk-tales there is a close connection between the figure of the cow and the method of attaining rebirth (Af. vol. I, No. 101). Its horns, by analogy, became associated with the moon.<sup>1</sup> When the benevolent mother appears as an animal in the Russian folk-tale, which is rare, she does so as a goat (Zel. Vyat. No. 11) or as a cow (Af. vol. I, No. 101). She may also take the form of a tree, which showers riches upon the hero (Khud. No. 99), or she may act through a gift which she left behind before her death (Af. vol. I, No. 104).

7. The terrible, devouring mother, placed at the entrance of the underworld as a guardian spirit. This is the image of the mother who feeds on her own children. She lives in nocturnal darkness, in the depth of the forest, v dremuchem lesu, far from the world of men. As the fear of death is such an overwhelming experience, it can only be visualised as a phantom. The dark side of the great mother figure, therefore, appears in the form of monsters (compare the threatening Baba-Yaga in her solitary hut in the slumbering forest). In this form the terrible mother assumes a great number of different, highly personalised, expressions. It is thought that this negative aspect of the great mother developed as a result of the decline of the matriarchate.<sup>2</sup>

In North Russian embroidery a feminine goddess is portrayed surrounded by the personifications of the four elements. In each hand the goddess holds one or more birds; at her feet also there are birds as well as other animals and plants. Later

1. For the connection of the Baba-Yaga with lunar theories see E. Gasparini, Fiabe et danze. Baba-Yaga: la strega lunare, Venice, 1966.
2. J. J. Bachofen, Das Mutterrecht, Stuttgart, 1861.

this same goddess is pictured with horses on either side.<sup>1</sup> This motif occurs in the folk-tale in the figure of the benevolent Yaga who offers the hero the gift of a winged horse, as well as in the figure of the Khozyayka lesa. Another representation of a feminine goddess has been found in a stone sculpture in which the armed figure of a man stands by her side.

The attainment of the beautiful princess, the nenaglyadnaya krasota, is in most folk-tales the chief purpose of the hero's journey. In the tale-cycle of Tri tsarstva (Af. vol. I, Nos. 128-130), the beautiful princess has two sisters, who, like the benevolent Yaga show the hero the way. In this role the feminine figures are represented as guiding fate, their powers being symbolised by their activities of spinning and weaving:

Приходит Иван-царевич к золотому царству;  
там сидят тридцать три девы-колпичи, поло-  
тенца вышивают. Всех выше и всех лучше ца-  
ревна золотого царства - такая краса, что ни  
в сказке сказать, ни пером написать.

(Af. vol. I, No. 130).

Сидит в избе на стуле старая баба-яга и  
прядет тонкий шёлк.

(Af. vol. II, No. 178).

The gifts of these figures to the hero are intended to help him along his way and are either symbols of receptacles, such as a dish or a golden ball, or symbols of the passage of time, such as a spinning-wheel or a spindle. By these gifts he is recognised by the beings of the other world as a friend:

"Вот тебе мой подарок: серебряное донце,  
золотое веретенце; станешь кудель прясть -  
золотая нитка потянется..."

По утру даёт ей старушка серебряное блюдо  
и золотое яичко и посылает к своей старшей  
сестре...

1. V. A. Gorodtsov, 'Dako-sarmatskiye religioznye elementy v russkom narodnom tvorchestve', Trudy gosudarstvennogo istoricheskogo muzeya, vypusk 1, Moscow, 1926, pp. 90-106; B. A. Rybakov, 'Drevniye elementy v russkom narodnom tvorchestve (Zhenskoye bozhestvo i veadniki)', Sovetskaya Etnografiya, No. 1, Moscow/Leningrad, 1948; idem, Pervyye veka russkoy istorii, Moscow, 1964.

Наутро говорит старуха красной девице:  
 "Вот тебе подарок: золотое пялечко да  
 иглолочка; ты только пялечко держи, да  
 иглолочка сама вышивать будет."

(Af. vol. II, No. 234).

The difficulties of obtaining the princess or of liberating the enchanted prince frequently have their origin in the hero's or heroine's own nature. In the tales these characteristics are projected into their ways of behaviour, as in the tale-cycle of tsar'-devitsa (No. 400B). The hero is often obliged to outwit the princess, a variant on the theme of the trial of strength:

"Ведь эта королевна-Елена Премудрая, наша могучая повелительница. Если б при ней да была её волшебная книга, она тотчас бы тебя узнала - и тогда не миновать бы тебе злой смерти. Берегись, служивый! Не летай больше на зелёный луг, не дивись на Елену Премудрую; не то сложишь буйну голову!" Солдат не унывает, те речи мимо ушей пропускает.

(Af. vol. II, No. 236).

The hero successfully conceals himself from her three times, until the princess has to admit:

"Я", говорит, "хитра, а ты меня хитрей!"  
 Не стали они долго раздумывать, перевенчались и зажила себе припеваючи.

The mistress of the beasts or khozyayka lesa, as has been stated earlier, is in most cases not an animal. She appears in human form, although occasionally for her own purposes she may change into an animal for a short while. (Af. vol. I, No. 136). All beings of the natural world serve her:

Вышла старуха на крыльцо, кракнула громким голосом, и вдруг - откуда только взялись! - набежали всякие звери, налетели всякие птицы... Крикнула старуха громким голосом - приплыли к ней все гады и рыбы морские: так и кашат! Из-за них сняя моря не видно!



(Af. vol. II, No. 212).

The female domain as exemplified by the woman figures of the folk-tale comprises the house, the table, the hearth and the bed. The classic initiation of the hero into the realm of the feminine takes place during his encounter with the Baba-Yaga,<sup>1</sup> after he has begun his travels.

In the Russian folk-tale the Baba-Yaga is the prototype of the great mother figure. The hero's transformation, which prepares him for his entry to the other world, takes place during his passage through the Baba-Yaga's hut, which marks the border between the two worlds.

This is the chief initiatory phase, the one which prepares the hero for coping with his tasks on his journey. Having successfully passed this stage, from then on the hero has to rely on himself, since now he possesses all the necessary information on how to conduct himself, has the equipment needed to meet the adversary, and has also been warned of the dangers which lie ahead. The return journey is sometimes mentioned only for its possibility to be denied:

"Куда идёшь, добрый молодец, куда путь держишь? Туда много народу идёт, а назад ещё никто не воротился."

(Onch. No. 151).

It is often made on the back of a bird, who for the final stage of the flight has to maintain its strength by feeding on the hero's flesh. The notion of the dead feeding on the living is most commonly expressed through the image of dying: the hero is swallowed, as in the tales in which the Baba-Yaga wants to devour children, or in which the dragon demands the sacrifice of maidens. The return journey covers the same main stages as the outward journey, only in the reverse order.

1. A. N. Afanas'yev, Poeticheskiya vozzreniya Slavyan na prirodu, Moscow, 1865-69, vol. I, pp. 291-2; A. A. Potebnya, 'O mificheskom znachenii nekotorykh obryadov i poveriy, vol. II, Baba-Yaga'. Chteniya v Imperatorskom Moskovskom Obshchestve Istorii i Drevnostey Rossii, book 3, Moscow, 1865, pp. 85-232; V. Ya. Propp, Istoricheskiye Kornia volshebnoy skazki, Leningrad, 1946, chap. 3, pp. 40-96; I. I. Tolstoy, Stat'i o fol'klore, V. Ya. Propp (ed.), Moscow/Leningrad, 1966; V. P. Anikin, op. cit; E. Gasparini, op. cit.

The hero assimilates the knowledge and powers of the Baba-Yaga, the guardian of the threshold, by tasting her food, sleeping in her nocturnal abode, and by accepting her gifts. The hero's conduct at their meeting follows a strict stereotype pattern:

Идёт он дорогою, идёт широкою, идёт полями чистыми, степями раздольными и приходит в дремучий лес. Пусто кругом, не видать души человеческой; только стоит небольшая избушка одна-одинехонька, к лесу передом, к Ивану-гостиному сыну задом. "Избушка, избушка!" говорит он. "Повернись к лесу задом, а ко мне передом." Избушка послушалась и повернулась к лесу задом, к нему передом. Вошёл в избушку Иван-гостинный сын, а там лежит баба-яга, костяная нога, из угла в угол, титьки через грядку висят. Увидала его баба-яга и говорит: "Доселева русского духа слыхом было не слышать, видом не видать, а ныне русский дух вичью проявляется! Отколь идёшь, добрый молодец, и куда путь держишь?" "Ох ты, старая ведьма! Не накормила, не напоила прохожего человека, да уж вестей спрашиваешь." Баба-яга поставила на стол напитки и наедки разные, накормила его, напоила и спать положила, да поутру ранехонько будит и давай расспрашивать. Иван-гостинный сын рассказал ей всю подноготную и просит: "Научи, бабушка, как до царя Некрещеного Лба дойти." "Ну, хорошо..."

(Af. vol. II, No. 224).

As a result of this meeting the hero is equipped to pass on to the next stage of his journey. Once inside the Yaga's hut, having climbed through the crevice that leads to the underworld, or having crossed the expanse of water that marks the border between the two worlds, the hero is lost to time and to the outside world; it is as though he has died or has been swallowed up by an abyss. The theme of being swallowed is often given special emphasis. When treated in isolation from the journey

and its goal, it is presented as a potential danger, as something which the hero has to avoid or resist. In these instances the Baba-Yaga functions as the chief obstacle, and the transit through her domain, or as it is put more often, through her body, is seen as involving dangers to the travellers' lives. The entrance to the underworld may then be described as a mouth, bristling with teeth, belonging to the Baba-Yaga in the form of a pig. The Baba-Yaga, who has swallowed the hero's brothers, is later destroyed by the hero.

Взмолилась ему свинья: "Буря-богатырь, пусти мою душеньку на покаяние." Буря-богатырь говорит: "А зачем моих братьев проглотила?" "Я твоих братьев сейчас отдам!" Он схватил её за уши; свинья харкнула - и выскочили оба брата с лошадьми. Тогда Буря-богатырь приподнял её и со всю размаху ударил о сырую землю; свинья рассыпалась аредом.

(Af. vol. I, No. 136; cf. also Af. vol. I, No. 93 and vol. II, No. 232).

In another instance the Baba-Yaga, or her later variant the ved'ma, sharpens her teeth for this purpose:

"Фу-фу! Русского духу слыхом было не слышать, видом не видать, а нынче сам пришёл!" сказала ягая и побежала зуби точить, чтобы есть незваного гостя...

Here the passage to the other world is made possible by the magic bird, the Zhar-ptitsa, through whose help the hero comes to no harm and escapes the danger:

Вдруг налетела со всех сторон всякие птицы, прилетела и жар-птица. "Садись скорей на меня", сказала жар-птица, "и полетим, куда тебе надобно; а то баба-яга съест тебя!"

The supernatural figures are all part of the element they represent; they each belong to a specific sphere or locality, and are powerless outside its boundaries. This is exemplified in the motif of the magic flight:

Попутру встала баба-яга, глянула в окошечко - кругом стены торчат на спицах

дочерние головы; страшно она озлобилась, приказала подать свой огненный щит, поскакала в погоню и начала палить щитом на все четыре стороны. Куда молодцам спрятаться? Впереди сине море, позади баба-яга - и жжет и палит! Помирать бы всем, да Заморышек догадлив был: не забыл он захватить у бабы-яги платочек, махнул тем платочком перед собою - и вдруг перекинулся мост через всё сине море, переехали добрые молодцы на другую сторону. Заморышек махнул платочком в иную сторону - мост исчез, баба-яга воротилась назад, а братья домой поехали.

(Af. vol. I, No. 105).

The place of the Baba-Yaga as a negative figure is often taken by ved'my and machekhi, personifications of evil and as such opposed to the hero's or heroine's progress. It is very probable that these figures embodying the negative aspects of woman came into the folk-tale during the Middle Ages as a result of the widespread phenomenon of witchcraft and its persecution. In her negative aspects woman lures, ensnares, and petrifies. Many examples may be found in the tales:

Ирина мягкая перина, встречая, мурлычет:  
 "Поди-тко ты, Фёдор-царевич, и куды ты, родимый, поехал? Куды ты Бог понёс?" Накормила, напоила, на пуховик спать повалила: "Ложись к стене, а я лягу на край!" Подхватила его под середку и прошибла сквозь пол; он свалился в тот же демонский погреб.

(Af. vol. II, No. 175).

Птичка от Фёдора Водовича не летит, а Фёдор Водович поймать не может и гонитча за ей сзади. Переплыла птичка озеро и Фёдор Водович перебрёл озеро через. Побежали по земле, побежала птичка до избушки, забежала в избушку, выскочила из избушки Яга-баба со пестом и хлопнула Фёдора Водовича в голову: "Бить ты,

Фёдор Водович, сѣрым камнем, лежать от  
ныне до веки."

(Onch. No. 4).

Вдруг, откуда не возмись - является к  
нему красная девица - такая красавица,  
что ни в сказке сказать, ни пером написать,  
и говорит ему: "Хлеб-соль, Иван-царевич!"  
"Милости просим, красная девица! Садись со  
мною кушать." "Я бы села с тобой, да боюсь:  
у тебя конь волшебный." "Нет, красная  
девица, не узнала! Мой волшебный конь  
дома остался, я на простом приехал."  
Как услышала это красная девица, тотчас  
начала дуться и сделалась страшною  
львицею, разинула пасть и проглотила  
царевича целиком.

(Af. vol. I, No. 155).

The individual male can evade these dangers only if he  
is a hero, and although he may be temporarily held back, he  
eventually overcomes the obstacle. This is why these stories  
recount the heroic struggle against this terrible aspect of the  
great mother and present it as a major stage on the journey.  
'The underworld, the earth womb as the perilous land of the dead,  
through which the deceased must pass, either to be judged there  
and to arrive at a chthonic realm of salvation or doom, or to  
pass through this territory to a new and higher existence, is  
one of the archetypal symbols of the terrible mother.'<sup>1</sup>

The guardian spirit is either female or of indetermi-  
nate sex, often representing a combination of benevolent and  
destructive powers, the latter usually residing in a male monster  
from an underworld region, where he is the guardian of the  
central treasure.

This monster in the Russian folk-tale is, in the  
majority of cases, the Koshchey Bessmertnyy<sup>2</sup> or the Zmey in its

1. E. Neumann, op. cit., p. 157.
2. A. N. Afanas'yev, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 594-604; B. A. Rybakov, Drevnyaya Rus', Skazaniya, Byliny, Letopisi, Moscow/Leningrad, 1963, pp. 44-47; S. Gorodetky, 'Skazochnyye chudovishcha', Istoriya russkoy literatury, Moscow, 1908-11, vol. I, Vypusk 2 and 3, pp. 159-172; N. V. Novikov, 'O spetsifike obraza v vostochnoslavianskoy skazke (Koshchey Bessmertnyy)', Russkiy fol'klor, Moscow/Leningrad, 1966, pp. 149-175.

many variants. It is the hero's task to rescue the princess from their power, which he is only able to do if he can find the secret of their mortality. This secret is hidden from all, but in the case of the Koshchey is elicited from him by the cunning of the woman whom he is keeping prisoner. As long as the Koshchey is kept chained and deprived of food and drink, he is powerless:

Он не вытерпел, как только Марья-Моревна уехала, тотчас бросился в чулан, отворил дверь, глянул - а там висит Кощей Бессмертный, на двенадцати цепях прикован. Просит Кощей у Ивана-царевича: "Сжался надо мной, дай мне напиться! Десять лет я здесь мучаюсь, не ел, не пил - совсем в горле пересохло."

(Af. vol. I, No. 159).

Once he is freed, however, the hero has to undertake the journey which takes him to the end of the world, to discover the secret of his mortality, and to learn how to conquer his strength, and so liberate the princess. Again the hero finds his way through the help of animals whose gratitude he has earned by sparing their lives when he needed to eat.

The innermost soul of the Koshchey, called his 'death', is always hidden beneath several layers,<sup>1</sup> each of which has to be uncovered and destroyed, before his vital source can be reached and killed:

"Моя смерть далече: на море на океане  
есть остров, на том острове дуб стоит,  
под дубом сундук зарыт, в сундуке -  
заяц, в зайце - утка, в утке - яйцо,  
а в яйце - моя смерть."

(Af. vol. I, No. 158).

In the hero's final face to face battle with him he runs the risk of being swallowed just as in his encounter with the hostile

1. J. G. Frazer, The Golden Bough, part VII, 'Balder the Beautiful, the fire festivals of Europe and the doctrine of the external soul', London, 1907-15.

Yaga (Karn. No. 141).

Both the Baba-Yaga and the Koshchey are typical Slavonic figures and are personifications of good and evil principles.<sup>1</sup> The dragon,<sup>2</sup> on the other hand, is found in all folk-tale traditions and represents the hero's chief obstacle on the way. This figure may have come to the Slavs from various sources, possibly via Byzantium or even from Western Europe. Originally, notably in China, the dragon was a symbol of the divine, life-giving powers, but with the development of monotheistic religious concepts, it was relegated to a baser role and eventually became the symbol of the power of evil. As with the Yaga, the evolution of the figure is from a positive to a negative function, the Yaga, however, being the only figure to remain functionally ambivalent.

The story of the fight with the dragon is intimately linked with the age-old motif of the search for the elixir of life, and the desire to recover one's lost youth and to obtain and confer the boon of immortality. This central motif of the mythology of many peoples, and one preserved also in popular tradition, comprises many of the themes of the classical Russian folk-tale of the miraculous. Where the dragon is an entirely negative figure, he constitutes the hero's supreme challenge. The dragon fight is the culminating event of the hero's journey from the point of view of his progress as well as from the point of view of the development of the drama; and it marks the turning-point in his fortunes. For this reason the episode itself is described with a wealth of circumstantial detail. The dragon is not only functionally related to the other negative folk-tale figures, but he has also many features in common with them. Among the contrasted qualities which the folk-tale presents the dragon stands for chaos and disorder. He is diametrically

1. V. V. Ivanov i V. N. Toporov, op. cit., Moscow, 1965.
2. A. N. Afanas'yev, op. cit., vol. II, chap. 20, pp. 509-535; V. Ya. Propp, op. cit., chap. VII; Sir G. E. Smith, The Evolution of the Dragon, Manchester, 1919; R. Wittkower, op. cit., pp. 293-325; D. K. Zelenin, 'Der Austritt der Wasserdaemonen ans feste Land', Internationales Archiv fuer Ethnographie, vol. XXXI, No. 5-6, Leiden, 1932, pp. 144-155; V. P. Anikin, op. cit., pp. 132-138.

opposed to the hero who personifies progress and liberation.

The dragon has no anthropomorphic features: he is in fact never directly described but only through his actions and the hero's responses to them; occasionally, in imitation of the hero, and no doubt under the influence of the tradition of mediaeval knightly combats, he also mounts a horse to do battle with the hero. (Af. vol. II, No. 237). As the earliest historically known personification of evil, the dragon was visualised as a serpent combining the features of an alligator, an eagle and a lion. He is connected with all the elements: he was thought to both control and be responsible for floods,<sup>1</sup> but he is just as closely linked with fire and earth:

Сделалась на море сальная буря, погода.  
Вышел из моря змей троиглавной.

(Onch. No. 4).

"А едешь ты прямо к Огненному царю: не доезжая до его царство верст тридцать - уж огнем жжёт."

(Af. vol. II, No. 206).

Приходит не в наше царство, не в наше государство, стоит изба; сахала туда по человеку Змею Горынычу на съедение ...царевна сидит и видит, что змей из горы выезжает.

(Khud. No. 68).

In many folk-tales the battle takes place above a precipice, above the ognennaya reka, beyond which the road lies open to the elixir of life. In this battle the chief prohibition laid upon the hero is not to succumb to sleep. The great temptation at any of the decisive points on the hero's journey is to fall asleep; for at these moments he is particularly vulnerable to attacks from his enemies:

Не доходя до войска шагов с траста, лёг он на морском берегу, подле раки-това куста, отдохнуть с дороги; палицу боевую и острый меч около себя положил. От великой усталости он скоро и крепко уснул; в это время случилось одному генералу приходить мимо рактова куста, увидел он гонца, тотчас столкнул его в море.

1. D. K. Zelenin, op. cit.



(Af. vol. II, No. 259).

In this battle the hero conquers the dragon by cutting off his numerous heads, which are symbols of his ubiquity and invincibility. Once the dragon has been conquered, the female figures whom he has kept under his power become free.

Through the influence of Christianity the devil came later to be identified with the dragon, fought by St. George,<sup>1</sup> and later still, with the rise of nationalism, he became the personification of the national enemy, as portrayed in legends and *povesti*,<sup>2</sup> and features as such in the folk-tale as late as the twentieth century.<sup>3</sup> In one tale the traditional figure of the dragon has become the embodiment of fascism, in another he is volk-zhivoyed. Ivan, the hero, is a representative of the Soviet people, and Stalin the benevolent tsar, entrusting him with the weapon mech-kladenets to defend the country in danger.

At one time rituals were connected with some of the supernatural figures found in the folk-tale. Such rituals could be traced up to very recent times, for instance that connected with Morozko (Af. vol. I, Nos. 95-96). With the principal figures of the folk-tale this is no longer possible for belief in their reality has almost altogether disappeared.<sup>4</sup>

In the achievement of the hero's goal both the positive and negative forces of guidance and temptation are instrumental. The hero succeeds by maintaining a careful balance between the opposite poles, compelled by a desire to move forward until his vision is realised.

1. A. V. Rystenka, Legenda o svyatom Georgii i drakone, Odessa, 1909.
2. M. O. Skripil' (ed.), 'Povest' o muromskom knyaze Petre i supruge yego Fevronii', Trudy otdela drevney russkoy literatury, vol. VII, Moscow/Leningrad, 1949; V. I. Malyshev (ed.), Povest' o prikhozhennii Stefana Batoriya na grad Pskov, Moscow/Leningrad, 1952.
3. V. E. Gusev (ed.), Russkiy fol'klor velikoy otechestvennoy voyny, Moscow/Leningrad, 1964.
4. D. K. Zelenin, 'Religiozno-magicheskaya funktsiya fol'klornykh ekazok'; S. F. Oldenburg, Sbornik statey, Leningrad, 1934, pp. 215-240.

## CHAPTER VI

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE FOLK-TALE

'Mythical images bring man together more genuinely than any analytical language.'

'All that essential and indescribable part of man that is called imagination dwells in realms of symbolism and still lives upon archaic myths and theologies.' 1

When inquiring into the philosophical content of the folk-tale it seems important to judge it in its own terms rather than from a preconceived ideological viewpoint.

It is apparent that folk-tale images or symbols do not only represent an idea: they are the idea. In this way it is possible to understand why, for many centuries, the content of folk-tales was accepted as real.<sup>2</sup> Only the rational mind, that looks at the folk-tale as a naive, fanciful product of the imagination, cannot accept a serious approach to its content. In the context of the folk-tale, what is real is that which is experienced deeply; that is, the experience which is recounted is emotional, not intellectual. The patterns of folk-tale themes and their structure and imagery, are directly related to the patterns of the recurrent visual images in man's mind.<sup>3</sup>

The folk-tale is a model which typifies the main existential situations and relationships. As such it is a product of what has come to be called 'mythical thinking'. The ancient wisdom is preserved through times of change and crisis under the cover of images of the natural world. The universe which is portrayed is conceived of as existing in different levels, in which all things occupy positions which are limited and typical. It further exemplifies the belief in a system of destinies, that is, fixed antecedents bring about fixed consequences. Nothing is arbitrary; everything follows strict laws, which can be

1. M. Eliade, Images and Symbols, London, 1961, pp. 18 and 19.
2. L. Roehrich, Maerchen und Wirklichkeit, Wiesbaden, 1964.
3. Cf. R. J. Smythies, 'Brain Mechanisms and Behaviour', Brain, vol. 90, pt. 3, 1967.

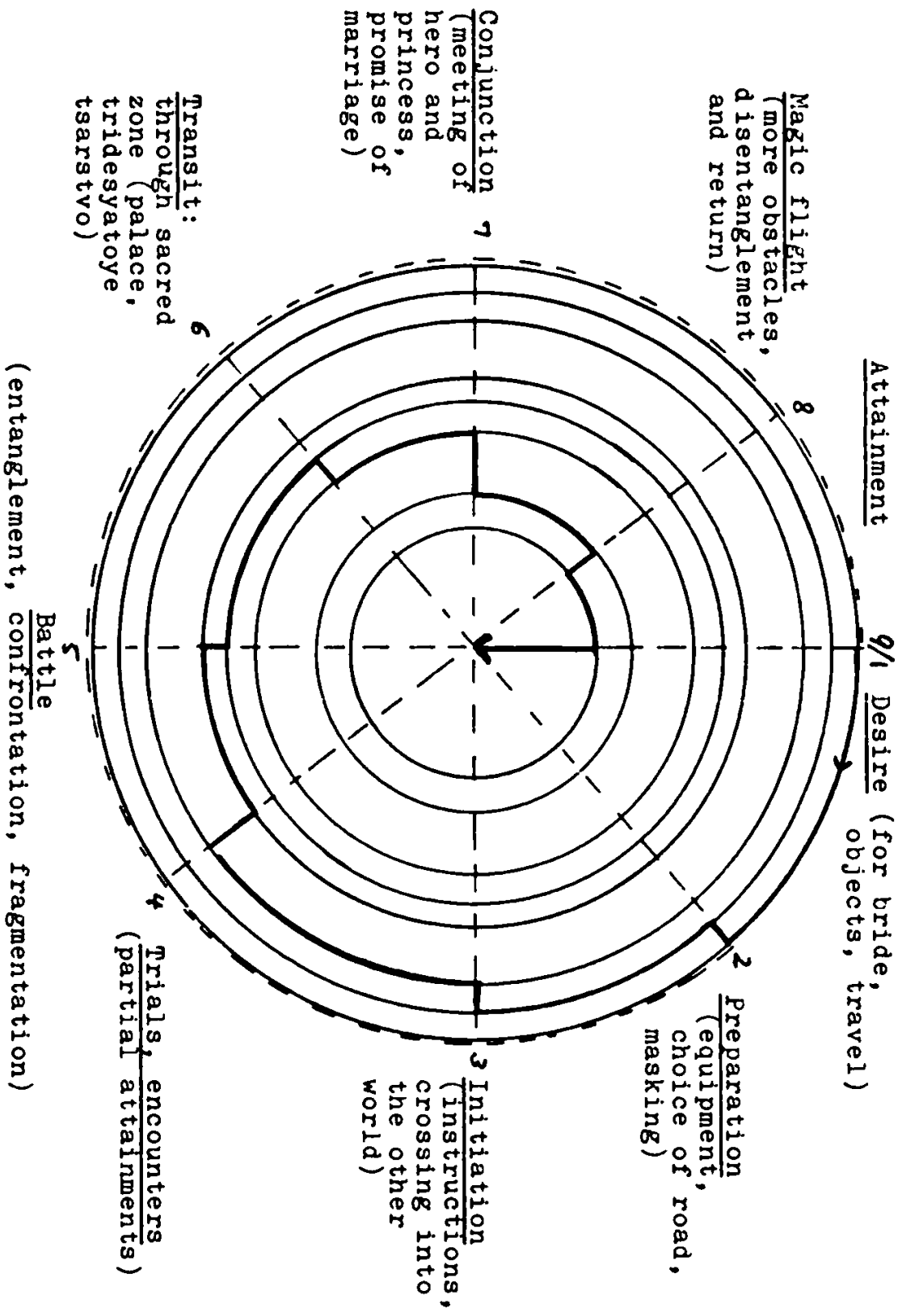
determined.

The function of the image is to create that security of mood, in which positive emotion can grow, by lulling the sceptical reason. As an art form the folk-tale, by presenting symbols in the form of visual images, has the power to portray everything, which resists expression in the terms of conceptual thinking. As regards presentation, there is an affinity between folk-tale imagery and its stylistic features and symbolism in abstract art - an affinity which might be made the subject of a separate study.

Through the folk-tale the listener or reader is presented with a set of symbols which contain lasting values. These are seen and experienced against the background of the muddled, fleeting and changeable personal experience of day to day life. The hero's feelings and motivations and what might be called his fate are projected and manifested in his actions (compare Diagram on p. 147). The tales are examples of the ancients' practice of personifying the great themes of life and death, good and evil, and the emotions of fear, hope, hatred, envy and love. This image-language was understood in the primitive, oriental, archaic and mediaeval societies; it was only after the Age of Enlightenment that it suddenly lost its meaning and has subsequently been described as infantile.

The myths and tales of the quest reveal an artistic and dramatic form which presents the world not as a piecemeal universe. It shows the existence of opposites, which the hero, impelled by his desire for attainment, unites, thereby 'recreating' the fundamental unity, which existed before duality. In this way the theme of the quest is related to the idea of identity in change.

The symbolic, imaginative view of the world is just as valid as the rational view, or that which is transmitted to the sense organs. By representing the general through the particular, symbols carry meaning across time in a form that is unassailable by reason and which often defies analysis. Symbolism, being more elusive than dogma with its tendency towards rationalisation, survives more easily. On the other hand, since it is used as a medium, it necessarily partially obscures what it seeks to reveal. However, it would seem that the significance and attrac-



tion of myths and folk-tales is not so much in what they reveal through the figures and their relationships, but in what they leave unexplained and mysterious.<sup>1</sup>

The symbolism used is so natural and so universally understood that it cannot be said to belong to any definite region or race. Yet although image formation is a fundamental attribute of the human organism, the art form that dramatises archetypal images is the product of a certain phase of the development of human consciousness. Peoples of the pre-modern type took for granted the operation of a transcendent energy in space and time, and for them the craft of story-telling had the function of conveying the quality of spirituality through its symbolism, as well as of meeting purely social needs.

In antiquity human activities were recognised as being parallel to natural events. Both were observed to repeat themselves at definite intervals, in uniform cycles, from day to day, and from month to month. For this reason folk-tale themes and motifs concentrate general human modes of life and behaviour into images which follow a perceptible pattern; they repeat themselves and in themselves are stereotypes. Each department of human activity was seen to have its 'gods' and 'demons'. Man's encounter with them came to be personified and dramatised, and finally given expression to in the tale-cycle of the quest. The figures of the folk-tale are not simply arbitrary creations of the ancients' minds, but personifications of experience which arose from their daily confrontation with their environment. 'The way', conducive to the wholeness of man, is understood as a little portion of the great Way which holds the cosmos together, as an everlasting reiteration of unchanging principles and events taking place in space and time both in the macrocosm and in the microcosm. It is characteristic of mythical thinking that it grasps the great fundamental qualitative contrasts between phenomena and gives them tangible form through the medium of its artistic creations. The precise types and their relationships which emerge as a result of this world-view are all the time presented from the point of view of man in his idealised form.

1. Cf. E. Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, 3 vols. vol. I, New Haven, 1953-57.

In the last analysis, the laws of human thought alone can explain its products. These thought processes are quite rigid and repetitive, especially as far as concerns associative thinking, which reflects man's desire to identify himself with his environment. In the face of this identical functioning of the human mind in all places and at all times, individual, national and racial divisions become insignificant; for the same objective facts are expressed in the same subjective manner everywhere.

In the folk-tale the physical and metaphysical worlds are linked through symbolism, and man's actions to, and his thoughts and feelings about, his environment are given external form. Primarily, however, the folk-tale is not form, but content determining form. It presents a summary of archetypal situations, experiences, actions, feelings and insights which have remained relevant throughout millennia. Because the folk-tale gives tangible form to emotional and suprasensual experiences and expresses them in anthropomorphic images, emotions and thought processes are not reflected in the tales: there is only action and counter-action.

It is usually accepted that modern ways of thinking differ from primitive thought processes only with regard to the consciousness that is reflected in the fore-brain, and that the unconscious level of the mind has hardly changed since the Upper Palaeolithic stage. The existence of a part of man's brain which is hereditary and stores the 'memories' of his life on earth as a species, accounts for the fact that elements of primitive beliefs, superstitions, scientific enlightenment and religious convictions may be found together in an individual's mental fabric. In our own time, for example, atavistic faith in magic is still prevalent, and may be noticed especially in times of danger and emotional stress. During the last two world wars soldiers have been known to cling to amulets or fetishes, which were similar to the magic emblems cherished by primitive man. Similarly, a person professing to be a practising Christian may carry a plastic lion as a mascot at the back of his car, or he may be observed anxiously tapping a piece of wood after having made a positive statement about some future event.

The whole body of folk-tale motifs forms a consistent

tissue of interrelated metaphysical concepts, which belong to a primordial wisdom. They are certainly not the result of a crude consciousness projected onto a traditional cultural pattern. Folk-tales are the product of an agglomeration of ideas, fancies, customs and beliefs, all of which have their own background and belong to diverse historical periods. While no listener today takes a folk-tale of the miraculous to be an illustration of everyday 'real' events, it can stimulate him, on the other hand, to question their exclusive validity. The folk-tale presents an ideal world, beside which the everyday world is shown to be imperfect and lacking in fulfilment.

Folk-tales, therefore, are not primarily concerned with what is probable but with what is desirable; and if they awaken and what desire, at the same time partially satisfying it, they are successful. The oldest and deepest of such desires is to escape from time, old age, illness and particularly death. Other desires are for invincibility and invulnerability, and for the achievement of continual happiness, the symbol for which is marriage. In this way the folk-tale sets out to show the possibility of overcoming the fear of living. Created as it is from a belief in perfection, it aims to convince that happiness is attainable, a result which depends, however, on a number of inner and outer conditions.

The hero's entire code of conduct on his journey is a projection in action of a number of very basic psychological attitudes to particular sets of circumstances. The manner in which the hero copes with these circumstances reveals the philosophy and the ethical values of the folk-tale. The attitudes which the hero must maintain and the corresponding actions in which they issue can be summarised as follows: The hero must be able to:

1. Turn unexpected circumstances to advantage.
2. Act instantaneously in a given situation, by being aware of its demands.
3. Remain watchful and avoid sleep throughout the journey.
4. Obey the instructions of those powers which assist him in his progress.
5. Discern and work with the laws that govern the realm in which he finds himself while on his journey.

6. Not to lose the desire for attainment despite difficulties.
7. Be without fear in face of danger, such as combats and other conflicts.
8. Choose the right way and not avoid the risk of death.
9. Be willing to undergo transformation, i.e. initiation in its various forms, and keep the insight gained a secret.

With these qualities the hero is able to complete his journey successfully. Occasionally he may partially fail through forgetfulness or self-will, which causes a temporary halt in his progress.

The cycle of folk-tales with the main theme of the journey of the hero is based on the belief that man cannot live without relationship with the other world, and although he is the sole mediator, animals and objects, as extensions of the helpful powers of the beyond, may assist him. On his journey the hero is partially impelled by his own desire to seek this contact and partially drawn by the 'magnetism' of all that the other world represents. These symbols of movement between the two worlds are manifold. They may be:

1. Geographical: a wide stretch of water spanned by a bridge, a tunnel, a rope or a ladder up a steep mountain.
2. Vehicular: objects and animals which convey the hero across the world divide such as the flying carpet, the eagle, the flying horse, and goblins.
3. Volitional: wishing oneself into another place, saying an incantation which opens doors.

Each stage of the journey is represented by figures, objects or animals which carry the quality and distinctive mark of their sphere of origin. Thus the symbols of the centre are of the greatest possible splendour. They may be a diamond palace, objects of gold, the firebird, the sleeping beauty, or a ring with supernatural powers. Equally, the mysteriousness, darkness and ambiguity of the unknown world is portrayed through such figures as the Baba-Yaga, giants, goblins, places which defy description, and miraculous objects and animals.

In the course of their long life these symbols, representing particular ideas and values, have been translated into more contemporary idioms. Thus, the Baba-Yaga in her negative aspect came to be identified with the witch, and in her positive



aspect with the wise woman. Similarly, the traditional hero changed from the tearevich to a merchant's son or a soldier so as to be more in keeping with the contemporary milieu. Examples of such an adaptation of concepts and their symbolic expression are frequent. It may also be observed that when two symbols express the same or approximately the same ideas, they tend to amalgamate. This facility of the folk-tale in adapting to, and absorbing, contemporary reality without altering its overall structure and continuing to express the traditional themes is an indication of its vitality and perennial relevance. Each item that is integrated into the folk-tale, such as objects, figures or even actions, does not have an individual value: it is only relevant in relation to the hero's journey and in this way fulfils its particular function only in relation to a larger framework.<sup>1</sup>

Yet this ability of the folk-tale to preserve its nature unchanged also reflects the consciousness which gave rise to it in the first place. This consciousness acknowledges no fixed boundaries between a wish and its fulfilment, or between imagination and reality. Everything is connected with everything else by the invisible threads of a universal sympathy.

The way of the hero is a search through all imperfect forms to perfection. The knowledge of the way is a secret which is imparted to the hero in stages in proportion to his 'sacrifice'. These involve the endurance and overcoming of hardships, efforts to regain the way after losing it, fighting battles, and solving superhuman tasks. Throughout the journey the emphasis is on orientation because of its significance in reaching the cross-roads from which the hero may advance further after successfully passing a test. For this reason many tales elaborate the techniques of orientation as fundamental for the performance of the hero's task and as symbolic of the primordial desire to transcend limitations, transmute negative into positive qualities, and conquer death.

The hero's progress is made possible mainly by 'gifts from above', that is, through the assistance of miraculous help

1. M. Luethi, Es war einmal...Vom Wesen des Volksmaerchens, Goettingen, 1964, pp. 42-53.

in whatever form it may manifest itself. In the hero's enterprise the representatives of a particular domain are genuine presences, who contain the power and efficacy of the whole. In this way folk-tale figures are an expression of the powers of a given locality, which the hero experiences through them.

In the classical tale the hero's achievement is portrayed not as his own, but as a gift bestowed upon him. But many tales also emphasise that the miraculous world gives up its secrets to the hero only as a result of his efforts to discover them. Indeed, it is the hero's aim to seek contact with those supernatural powers into whose realm he is about to venture. This contact with the miraculous world may be sought for various reasons:

1. Simply because it is rumoured to exist in some far distant locality.
2. Because the hero knows that the princess dwells there.
3. Because the hero is seeking to acquire the treasures which it contains.

The hero's establishment of contact with the supernatural is partly the result of his being attracted to it and partly the result of a call from a being of the beyond.

The theme of the tales which deal with the hero's journey is that of paradise lost and regained. The fact that a journey is undertaken at all testifies to a realisation that something is missing in this world, for which a remedy may be found in the other. From this arises the necessity to search for this more perfect world, which the hero passes eventually to return to his land of origin. To find the other realm requires the hero's perseverance. He is assisted in his undertaking by knowledge of the secrets of the miraculous realm, which secures him the protection of its agents.

To penetrate to the very centre of the other world is tantamount to revealing its secret. In the folk-tale this achievement is compared to liberating the everyday world, the world of the hero's origin. As he draws near this secret, the hero often has to enter 'prohibited territory', that is, to eliminate the dangers of a powerful enemy, whose secret is also the source of his own life. Once the secret has been discovered, the danger is over. This final trial may take the form of

finding the Koshchey's 'death', that is, his vital innermost essence, cutting off the fiery finger of a dragon, or having to equal in magical strength a master magician. He who fails to unravel the secrets of the other world is not the true hero.

The hero's orientation in space is based on the qualitative difference between light and darkness, in the same way as all situations in the folk-tale are related to the two opposed concepts of the sacred and the profane. From this inter-relation arise all folk-tale motifs. It provides the motivation for the journey, directs its course and influences its outcome. Both worlds exist side by side. Either the hero contacts the supernatural world, following his own impulse, or the supernatural world enters the profane. When the two worlds meet, as in the hero's encounters with supernatural beings, progress is made, immediately if the supernatural being is benevolent and gives help, or if it is hostile and offers opposition, after the battle with him has been won. It is the hero's achievement that he reconciles the two aspects of the other world, hostile and benevolent. He restores and maintains the equilibrium between these aspects by acting appropriately in any given situation.

The other world is separated from the everyday world both by the hero's non-awareness of it at times and also by thresholds, which have various forms. This other world is the one that cannot be seen with the eyes; but it is felt as being behind one. Hence to turn round is to come face to face with it. This is exemplified in the revolving hut of the Baba-Yaga v dremuchem lesu and the turning round to face the pursuer in the motif of the magic flight (Af. vol. I, No. 93). Similarly, changing direction is a possibility which presents itself at every cross-roads. Any such direct encounter with supernatural brings with it metamorphosis. In order not to be 'swallowed' by the other world, the hero has recourse to various subterfuges, for example, a temporary change in his exterior (compare the story of Neznayko, Af. vol. II, No. 295). In other folk-tales the hero assimilates himself to the nature of the miraculous being by tasting her food, carrying out her commands or by using her gifts (Af. vol. III, No. 563). The encounter with the supernatural attracts the hero but also repels him; its exponents

may transform him, petrify him or promise him great treasures.

Folk-tale time, which comes into force at the opening of the tale and ceases at its conclusion, is an important element in the tales. It is not measured in quantity by quality.<sup>1</sup> There is a right time for every single event in the tales, and correct timing is an indispensable component in the hero's deeds. Actions which are premature end in disaster, setbacks and entanglements, as do actions which are too late. There are only two categories of time: now and not now. The present is illuminated as the time for action: past and future do not exist for the tale. Time is never static, so that there are no physical descriptions of persons and places. The important events of the hero's life take place at night, which is the time when all miraculous tasks are initiated and they are completed by daybreak. Time and space, past, present and future, far and near, above and below are linked by the hero's movements and brought into relation by his deeds.

Internal psychological conflicts do not exist in the tales. Conflicts take place externally in action, in the confrontation of the hero with the exponents of the other world. More than two figures never appear simultaneously. If the princess, for example, is present at the fight with the dragon, she is so as a silent witness, for the folk-tale accepts only dialogue, just as it sees the world as manifesting only two opposing forces.

The tales of the miraculou combine supernatural with natural elements; the irrational with the rational. They are based on a belief in the miraculous, on the possibility of eternal life for the hero, whose deeds demonstrate that death is only a change of modality, a passing to a different level of existence.

The chief appeal of the folk-tale is that it eliminates and abolishes situations of conflict and that the hero never fails to realise his desiree. It covers the entire range of human aspirations. Away from the everyday world where many

1. D. S. Likhachov, Poetika drevnerusskoy literatury, Leningrad, 1967, pp. 224-253.

basic human desires are thwarted, a world is created, in which everything is divided sharply into right and wrong, where the wicked are punished and where the hero, with whom the storyteller and his audience identify themselves, unfailingly achieves his goal and often receives an additional, unexpected bonus into the bargain. The listener is lifted out of his customary surroundings into an ideal world. Life as ordinarily lived is transfigured and becomes part of an ideal order. Such a representation of an all embracing just system creates an immediate emotional impact. This world is an easy one to come to terms with, described, as it is, in categories of black and white; and judged by its own standards it is attractive and acceptable.

As the patterns of the folk-tale are much the same throughout the world, a long and learned discussion has developed to illustrate and elucidate this phenomenon since the early days of scholarship in this field. Although every story and motif has had its own variegated career, the reason for the continuity of the tradition and the frequent detailed correspondence of the folk-tales must be attributed to the psychological unity of the human species. Mythology and the content of the folk-tale, which is metaphysics, has been misread as cosmology, history and biography. 'It is a picture language, - the native speech of dream and the waking imagination. The lawgivers, founders of religion and metaphysical poets have used this language. They were not bad scientists making misstatements about the weather, or neurotics reading dreams into the stars, but masters of the human spirit teaching a wisdom of death and life. And the Thesaurus of the myth-motifs was their vocabulary.'<sup>1</sup>

1. J. Campbell, 'Folkloristic Commentary', Grimm's Fairy Tales, London, 1948, p. 860.

A P P E N D I X

Eight Russian Folk-Tales



## IVAN-BYKOVICH, THE COW'S SON

(Afanas'yev, vol. I, No. 137, pp.  
278-286)

In a certain tsardom, in a certain land, there once lived a tsar and a tsaritsa. They had no children and so they prayed to God to give them a child to bring them joy in their youth, and be of comfort to them in their old age. They prayed, lay down, and were soon fast asleep.

In their sleep they dreamed that not far from the palace there was a quiet pool, and in this pool there swam a perch with golden fins, and it seemed to them that if the tsaritsa were to eat it she would at once become pregnant. When the tsar and tsaritsa awoke they called for their attendants and servants and told them their dream. Their attendants explained it thus: what one sees in a dream can happen in reality.

And so the tsar called for his fishermen and gave them strict orders to catch the perch with the golden fins. At dawn the fishermen came to the quiet pond, cast out their nets and had good fortune indeed, for they caught the perch with the golden fins at the first throw of their nets.

They took it and brought it to the palace. When the tsaritsa saw it, she could restrain herself no longer. She ran up to the fishermen and grasped them by their hands with joy. She rewarded them each with a large sum of money. Afterwards she called her favourite cook and put the perch into her hands. 'Here, take this', she said, 'prepare it for dinner, but make sure that no one else comes near it.'

The cook cleaned the perch, washed it and cooked it, and threw the water in which she had washed it out into the yard. Now, a cow walked in and drank the water, the tsaritsa ate the fish, and the cook licked her plate; so that the tsaritsa, her favourite cook and the cow all became pregnant at one time, and at the same time each gave birth to a son: the tsaritsa gave birth to Ivan-tsarevich, the cook to Ivan-the-Cook's-son, and the cow to Ivan-Bykovich, the Cow's son.

The children grew not with the days but with the hours, and just as good dough rises with the yeast they grew very tall. All three young boys looked exactly alike, so that one could not distinguish between the child of the tsaritsa, the cook, and the



cow. Only in this way could you tell them apart: when they returned from a walk, Ivan-tsarevich would ask for his linen to be changed, the cook's son would ask for something to eat, and the cow's son would go straight off to have a rest.

When they were ten years old, they went to the tsar and said: 'Make us each an iron rod which weighs fifty puds.' The tsar gave orders that his blacksmith should forge these rods, and he began to work and had finished them in a week. No one could lift the rods, even at one end, except Ivan-tsarevich, Ivan-the-Cook's son and Ivan-Bykovich, who turned them between their fingers as though they were as light as a goose-feather.

Once they came out into the large courtyard of the tsar's palace and Ivan-tsarevich said: 'Well, brothers, let us test our strength so we can see who should be our leader.' 'All right,' answered Ivan-Bykovich, 'take your rod and with it hit us across our shoulders.' Ivan-tsarevich took up his iron rod and hit Ivan-the-Cook's son and Ivan-Bykovich across their shoulders, until they both sank into the ground up to their knees. Ivan-the-Cook's-son beat Ivan-tsarevich and Ivan-Bykovich into the ground up to their chests, but when came Ivan-Bykovich's turn to hit, he beat both brothers into the ground up to their necks. 'Well,' said the tsarevich, 'let us test our strength again. Let us throw up our rods, and he who throws his the highest shall be our leader and eldest.' 'All right, you throw yours.' Ivan-tsarevich threw his rod, and it came down after a quarter of an hour. Ivan-the-Cook's-son threw his, and it came down after half an hour, and when Ivan-Bykovich threw his, it only came down after an hour. 'Good,' they said, 'Ivan-Bykovich, you shall be our leader!'

After this they went for a walk in the garden and found a huge stone. 'What a stone! Could we perhaps shift it, I wonder,' said Ivan-tsarevich, and pushed it with both arms. He pushed and pushed, but could not gather enough strength. After him Ivan-the-Cook's-son tried, and the stone moved just a little. Then Ivan-Bykovich said to him: 'Really, you are not up to much! Wait, let me try.' He went up to the stone and when he pressed against it with his leg, the stone moved rapidly away and rolled to the other end of the garden, breaking many trees. Beneath the stone appeared an underground vault,

and in the vault there were three fine horses, and on the walls hung harnesses that any brave young man would have been proud of. And straightaway they ran to the tsar and asked: 'Dear father, our tsar, give us your blessing, we want to go to foreign lands, see people, and show ourselves to the world.' The tsar gave them his blessing and money for the way. They said good-bye to him, mounted their fine horses and rode on their way.

They rode through valleys, over mountains and across green meadows, until they came to a slumbering forest. In this forest was a hut that stood on chicken feet and on sheep's horns, and, if need be, could turn round. 'Little hut, little hut! turn your front to us and your back to the forest, we want to climb into you for food and drink.' The little hut turned round. The young men entered it and there, on the stove, lay the Baba-Yaga of the Bone Leg, stretching out from corner to corner, with her nose at the ceiling. 'Fi, fi, fi!' she said, 'there was a time when one could neither see nor hear a Russian, but now he comes by himself, sits on my spoon and so rolls straight into my mouth.' 'Eh, old woman, don't abuse us, come down from your stove and sit on the bench and ask us where we are going, - I am asking you politely,' said Ivan-Bykovich. The Baba-Yaga climbed down from her stove, walked up to Ivan-Bykovich and bowed down low before him. 'Welcome, Ivan-Bykovich, my son, where does your way lead you?' 'Grandmother, we are going to the river Smorodina, to the Kalinovyy Bridge. I have heard that more than one Chudo-Yudo monster lives there.' 'Ah, yes, Vanyushka! There you have indeed a task before you, for those scoundrels have taken everybody captive, they have destroyed everything, so that the neighbouring teardoms are quite deserted.'

The brothers stayed the night in the Baba-Yaga's hut, rose early the next morning and went on their way. They came to the river Smorodina. Along its banks human bones were lying piled up knee-deep. They saw a hut, entered it, and as it was quite empty, thought they would stay there. When evening came, Ivan-Bykovich said: 'Brothers, we have come to a strange country, we will have to live cautiously. Let us take turns in keeping watch,' and they cast lots. Ivan-tsarevich was to be on guard the first night, Ivan-the-Cook's-son the second, and Ivan-

Bykovich the third.

And so Ivan-tsarevich kept watch. He hid behind some shrubs and fell fast asleep. But Ivan-Bykovich did not rely on him. When midnight approached, he got ready, took his shield and sword and went onto the Kalinovyy Bridge. Suddenly the water in the river rose, the eagles in the oak-trees gave a shrill cry, and the six-headed monster Chudo-Yudo approached: the horse under him stumbled, the black raven on his shoulder gave a start, the pole-cat behind him bristled. The six-headed Chudo-Yudo monster said: 'Why are you stumbling, you cur; why are you trembling, you feather of a raven; and why are you bristling, you scraggy beast? Do you think Ivan-Bykovich is here? He has not been born a brave young man yet, and even if he has, he is not yet fit for battle. I shall just set him on one of my hands and crush him with the other, so that all that will be left of him will be a damp patch.'

Ivan-Bykovich jumped out. 'Do not vaunt yourself, you unclean thing! Not having caught the bright falcon, you cannot start plucking his feathers. Not having met the brave young man, how can you malign him? Let us rather match our strength. He who prevails over the other may boast.' And they rode towards each other, drew level and hit each other so fiercely that the earth around them groaned. The Chudo-Yudo monster was out of luck. Ivan-Bykovich cut off three of his heads with one blow. 'Stop, Ivan-Bykovich, give me a rest.' 'What rest! You unclean thing, you have three heads while I have only one. As soon as you have only one head left, we will both have a rest.' And again they came together and fought. Ivan-Bykovich cut off the remaining heads of the Chudo-Yudo monster, took the body, cut it into pieces and threw them into the river Smorodina; the six heads however he put under the Kalinovyy Bridge. Then he returned to the hut. In the morning Ivan-tsarevich came along. 'Well, did you not see anything.' 'No, brothers, not a fly flew past me.'

The next night Ivan-the-Cook's-son kept watch. He too climbed behind some shrubs and fell asleep. Ivan-Bykovich did not rely on him either, and when midnight approached he got ready, took his shield and sword, went out and stood waiting under the Kalinovyy Bridge. Suddenly the waves on the river rose high,

the eagles on the oak-trees gave a shrill cry, and the nine-headed Chudo-Yudo monster came out. The horse under him stumbled, the black raven on his shoulder gave a start, the polecat behind him bristled. The Chudo-Yudo monster kicked the horse's sides, pulled the raven's feathers and pinched the polecat's ears. 'Why are you stumbling, you cur; why are you trembling, you feather of a raven; and you, you scraggy beast, why are you bristling? Do you think Ivan-Bykovich is here? He has not been born yet, and if he has, he is not yet fit for battle. I shall kill him with one finger!' Ivan-Bykovich jumped out from under the bridge. 'Wait a little, do not vaunt yourself,' he said. 'You had better say your prayers, wash your hands and get down to work. It remains to be seen who will defeat the other.' And when the bogatyr had swung his sword once or twice, he had cut six heads off the unclean thing. But when the Chudo-Yudo monster struck him, he beat the hero into the ground up to his knees. Then Ivan-Bykovich took a handful of earth and threw it straight into the eyes of his enemy, and while the Chudo-Yudo monster was rubbing his eyes, the bogatyr cut off his remaining heads, took the body, cut it into pieces and threw them into the river Smorodina, but the nine heads he put under the Kalinovy Bridge.

In the morning Ivan-the-Cook's-son came along. 'Well, brother, did you not see anything?' 'No, not a fly flew past me, not a single mosquito bit me!' Ivan-Bykovich took his brothers under the Kalinovy Bridge, showed them the severed heads and began to put them to shame, saying: 'Oh, you sleepy sluggards, how can you be fit for battle! You should have stayed at home, lying on the stove.'

The third night Ivan-Bykovich got ready to keep watch. He took a white towel, hung it on the wall, and under it, on the floor, he put a dish and said to his brothers: 'I am going out to a terrible battle, do not sleep all night, brothere, but be watchful. When blood begins to flow from the towel and fills the dish half full, things are still not serious, but if it flows over the edge, unchain my brave horse at once and come to my rescue.'

And Ivan-Bykovich stood under the Kalinovy Bridge, waiting. When midnight approached, the waters of the river rose high, the eagles on the oak-trees gave a shrill cry, and there

came along a Chudo-Yudo monster with twelve heads. His horse had twelve wings, his coat was silver, the hair of his mane and tail was golden. The Chudo-Yudo monster came nearer, the horse under him stumbled, the black raven on his shoulder gave a start, the pole-cat behind him bristled. The Chudo-Yudo monster kicked his heels on the horse's sides, plucked the raven's feathers and pinched the pole-cat's ears. 'Why are you stumbling, you cur; and you, you feather of a raven, why are you trembling; and you, you scraggy beast, why are you bristling? Do you think Ivan-Bykovich is here? He has not been born yet, and even if he has, he is not yet fit for battle. All I have to do is blow, and nothing will be left of him but dust.'

At this moment Ivan-Bykovich jumped out from under the bridge. 'Stop boasting, you had better say your prayers first.' 'Ah, so you are here. What have you come for?' 'I have come for you, you unclean thing, to witness and test your strength.' 'How can you do that? Compared to me you are a fly.' But Ivan-Bykovich answered him: 'I have not come to tell you fairy stories but to fight a mortal battle with you.' Then he swung his sharp sword and cut off three of the Chudo-Yudo monster's heads. The Chudo-Yudo monster seized these three heads, passed his fiery finger over them, and at once all three heads attached themselves to his body again, as though they had never fallen from his shoulders. This boded ill for Ivan-Bykovich, for the Chudo-Yudo monster began to overcome him and pushed him up to his knees into the moist earth. 'Stop, unclean thing! Even when tsars and kings fight they have a truce; so surely we too can have a rest. Allow me to rest three times.'

The Chudo-Yudo monster agreed. Ivan-Bykovich took off his right glove and threw it at the hut. The glove broke all the windows, but his brothers were asleep and did not hear anything. In the next fight Ivan-Bykovich hit harder than before and cut off six of the Chudo-Yudo monster's heads, but again he seized them, passed his fiery finger over them, and again all his heads were back in place, and he beat Ivan-Bykovich up to his waist into the moist earth. Again the bogatyr' asked for a rest, took off his left glove and threw it at the hut. This time it broke the roof, but his brothers were still asleep and heard nothing. In the third fight he hit harder still and cut

off all nine heads of the Chudo-Yudo monster, but again he seized them, and when he had passed his fiery finger over them, all nine heads joined themselves to his body again, and he beat Ivan-Bykovich to his shoulders into the moist earth. Ivan-Bykovich asked for a rest, took off his hat and threw it at the hut. Under this blow the hut crumbled altogether, for all its beams had fallen in.

And only then did his brothers wake up. They looked - the blood had flowed over the edge of the dish and their brother's horse was neighing and pulling at its chain. They rushed into the stable, let the horse loose and ran after it to help. 'Ah,' said the Chudo-Yudo monster, 'so you have deceived me, you have help from some quarter.' The good horse came running up and began to trample the monster with its hooves. Meanwhile Ivan-Bykovich had drawn himself out of the ground, crept up to the Chudo-Yudo monster and cut off his fiery finger. After that it was easy for him to cut off all his heads. He tore the body into many pieces and threw them all into the river Smorodina. Then his brothers came running along. 'Oh you sleepy sluggards,' said Ivan-Bykovich, 'I nearly had to pay for your sleepiness with my life.'

In the morning Ivan-Bykovich went out into the open field, threw himself onto the ground, changed into a sparrow, flew to the white stone house and sat by the open window. The old witch saw him, threw out some grains and said: 'My little sparrow, so you have come to eat the grains and to listen to my sorrow. Ivan-Bykovich has mocked me, for he has destroyed all my sons-in-law.' 'Do not be sad, mother, we shall pay him back for everything,' said the wives of the Chudo-Yudo monsters.' The youngest of them said: 'I shall create a famine and shall go out and change myself into an apple-tree with golden and silver apples. He who plucks an apple will be torn to pieces.' 'And I,' said the middle one, 'shall make them very thirsty, and then I shall change into a well, and on the water two cups shall float, a silver and a golden one; but he who reaches out for a cup shall drown.' 'And I,' said the eldest, 'shall send them a heavy sleep. I shall then turn into a golden bed, but he who lies on it shall burst into flames.'

Ivan-Bykovich listened to all this, flew back, threw

himeelf onto the ground and changed back into a brave young man. The three brothers then got ready to ride home. They rode along, tormented by hunger, but there was nothing to eat. They looked, and saw an apple-tree with golden and silver apples. Ivan-tsarevich and Ivan-the-Cook's-son were about to tear off the apples, but Ivan-Bykovich galloped in front of them and hit the tree hard, so that blood poured from it. He did the same with the well and the golden bed. And this was how the wives of the Chudo-Yudo monsters perished. When the old witch learned about this, she dressed up as a beggar woman, went out into the road and stood there with a basket. When Ivan-Bykovich came along with his brothers she held out her hand, asking for alms.

The tsarevich said to Ivan-Bykovich: 'Brother, our father has so much gold in his treasure-house; give this beggar woman some alms.' Ivan-Bykovich took out a ten-rouble piece and gave it to the old woman, but she did not take the money, instead she grabbed him by the hand and immediately disappeared with him. The brothers looked round, and neither the old woman, nor Ivan-Bykovich were any longer to be seen, and they took such fright that they galloped home with their tails between their legs.

The witch dragged Ivan-Bykovich underground and brought him to her husband, an old, old man. 'Here we are,' she said, 'here he is, this is our enemy!' The old man lay on an iron bed and saw nothing; his long eyelashes and thick brows covered up his eyes. He called twelve strong bogatyrs and told them: 'Take those iron pitch-forks and lift my black brows and eyelashes, so that I may see what kind of creature this is who dared kill my sons.' The bogatyrs lifted his eyebrows and lashes with the pitch-forks. The old man looked: 'Ah, it's young Vanyushka! So it is you who was so bold as to rid me of my children! Well, what am I to do with you?' 'Your words shall judge me, you may do with me what you will, I am prepared for anything.' 'Well, what is the use of talking, it will not bring back my children. Do me one service; go into the invisible tsardom, into the land of unreality, and fetch me the tsaritsa of the golden curls, for I want to marry her.'

Ivan-Bykovich thought to himeelf: 'What has the old man to do with marriage? It would be more suitable for a young man

like me!' Now, the old woman grew so furious at this, that she tied a stone round her neck, and drowned herself, jumping head first.

'Here is a cudgel for you, Vanyushka,' said the old man, 'go with it to the oak-tree, knock on it three times with this cudgel and say: "Come out, ship, come out, ship, come out, ship!" While the ship is coming out, at the same time tell the oak-tree thrice to close again, and make sure you do not forget this, for if you do not do as I tell you, you will do me great injury.'

Ivan-Bykovich came to the oak-tree, knocked on it with the cudgel countless times and said: 'All that is in here, come out!' At first the ship came out. Ivan-Bykovich sat in it and shouted: 'Follow me, everybody!' And then he travelled on. Having gone forward a little, he looked round and saw a vast number of ships and boats, and everyone in them praised him and thanked him.

Then an old man came up to him in his boat and said: 'Our master, Ivan-Bykovich, may you live for many years to come! Do take me as your companion.' 'Well, what can you do?' 'I can eat a lot of bread.' Ivan-Bykovich said: 'Well, what of it? I can do that too. However, come into my ship, I am glad to have good company.' And another old man came up to him in his boat and said: 'Good day to you, Ivan-Bykovich, will you not take me with you?' 'Well, what can you do?' 'I can drink a lot of wine and beer.' 'Not much cunning is needed for that! However, climb in.' Then a third old man came up and said: 'Good day, Ivan-Bykovich, do take me with you.' 'Well, tell me what you can do?' 'I can steam in the bath.' 'Fi, the devil take you! If you come to think of it, what a fine lot they all are.' But he took this one too, and then another boat came up and in it was a fourth old man. 'I wish you long life, Ivan-Bykovich, do take me as your companion.' 'Well, who are you?' 'I am a star-counter.' 'This is indeed something I am not very clever at, be my companion.' He took the fourth, and then a fifth one came up. 'Away with you, all of you, what am I to do with you lot? Well, quick then, what can you do?' 'I can swim like a perch.' 'All right, welcome!'

And so they all sailed to the teardom of the tearitsa



of the golden curle. At last they came to the invisible teardom, the land of unreality, whose inhabitants had already known for a long time that Ivan-Bykovich would be coming, and already for three whole months they had been baking bread, making wine and brewing beer. When Ivan-Bykovich saw the enormous number of carts of bread and the great number of wine barrels, he was amazed and said: 'What does this mean?' 'All this has been prepared for you!' 'What a waste, I cannot eat and drink all this in a year!' At this moment Ivan-Bykovich remembered his companions and called to them. 'Hey you, my good old men! Which one of you can drink and eat?' The Eat-all and Drink-all came up. 'We can, master, this is child's-play for us.' 'Well then, get on with the job.'

One of the old men ran off and started to eat the bread, and he did not put single loaves into his mouth, but whole cart-loads at a time. He ate up everything and then began to complain, shouting that it was not enough: 'Give me more!' Then the other old man ran off and began to drink the wine and beer. He drank up everything and even swallowed the barrels. 'Not enough,' he shouted, 'give me more!' The servants bustled about and rushed to the tearitea to report that neither bread nor wine was left.

The tearitea of the golden curle ordered that Ivan-Bykovich be brought into the bath-house to steam. This bath-house had been heated up for three months and was so terribly hot, that you could not come any nearer to it than five versts. They called for Ivan-Bykovich to have his bath. But when he saw that the bath-house was almost ablaze he said: 'Have you gone out of your mind? I shall burn to death in that.' And again he remembered: 'But I have companions. Hey, you old men, my friends, which one of you can steam in a bath-house?' One of the old men came up and said: 'I can, this is child's-play for me.' He leapt into the bath, blew into one corner and spat in the other, so that the whole bath-house cooled down, and in the corners lay snow. 'Oh Lord, I am frozen! Heat the house for another three years!' the old man shouted as loudly as he could. The servants rushed to the tearitea, reporting that the bath-house was quite frozen.

Ivan-Bykovich then demanded that he be given the tear-

itsa of the golden curle. The tsaritsa came to him hereelf, gave him her white hand; they then boarded the ship and sailed back.

They had travelled for a day or two when suddenly the tearitsa felt sad and despondent, she beat herself on her breast, changed into a star and flew up into the sky. 'Oh,' said Ivan-Bykovich, 'now she has gone for good!' But suddenly he remembered: 'But I have companions! Hey, you old men, my friends, which of you is the star-counter?' 'I am, master, this is child's-play for me,' the old man answered, threw himself onto the ground, changed into a star, flew up into the sky and began to count the stare. He found one extra one and poked it hard. The little star tore itself from its place, quickly travelled across the sky, fell onto the ship and again changed into the tsaritsa of the golden curls.

And again, when they had sailed for a day or two, the tsaritsa felt sad and despondent. She beat herself on her breast, changed into a pike and swam in the sea. 'Oh, now we have lost her again,' thought Ivan-Bykovich, but then he remembered his last companion and asked him: 'Is it true that you can swim like a perch?' 'Yes, master, this is child's-play for me.' He threw himself onto the ground, changed into a perch, swam in the sea behind the pike and kept pricking her sides. The pike jumped out onto the ship and again changed into the tsaritsa of the golden curls. At this the old man said good-bye to Ivan-Bykovich and went their separate ways. But Ivan-Bykovich went on to the father of the Chudo-Yudo monsters.

He came to him with the tearitsa of the golden curls. The old man called the twelve strong bogatyre and ordered them to bring the iron pitch-forks to lift his black brows and eye-lashes. He looked at the tsaritsa and said: 'Oh, Vanyushka, that was clever of you! Now I forgive you and shall let you go to the world of day.' 'No, wait a moment,' answered Ivan-Bykovich, 'you have not quite thought to the end of the matter.' 'Well, what is it?' 'I have prepared a deep pit, and across this pit lies a rod. Only he who can go over it shall take the tsaritsa.' 'All right, Vanyuehka, you go first.' Ivan-Bykovich went over the rod, and the tearitsa of the golden curls meanwhile said to herself: 'Be you lighter than a swan's feather!' And Ivan-Bykovich went across without the rod even bending. But

as soon as the old man went and had reached the middle, it broke, and he fell into the pit.

Ivan-Bykovich took the tsaritsa of the golden curls and returned home. Soon they were married and a great feast was given for the whole world. Ivan-Bykovich eat at the table and boasted to his brothers: 'I may have battled for a long time, but at least I have obtained a young wife for myself! But you, brothers, all you do is sit on the stove and gnaw away at its bricks.'

I too was at this feast, where I drank mead and wine and it flowed down my beard missing my mouth. They poured me milk into a huge cattle-trough and gave me a loaf which I sopped in the milk. But I could neither eat nor drink, for when I tried to wipe my mouth they beat me about, and with a fool's cap on my head they threw me out by the scruff of the neck.

## THE THREE TSARDOMS, COPPER, SILVER AND GOLDEN

(Afanas'yev, vol. I, No. 129, pp.  
231-239).

Once upon a time in a certain tsardom, in a certain land, there lived the tsar Bel Belyanin. He had a wife, Nastas'ya of the golden plait, and three sons: the tearevich Pyotr, Vasilii and Ivan.

One day the tearitsa and her maidservants went for a walk in the garden, when suddenly a fierce wind arose and, Lord have mercy! seized hold of the tearitea and carried her off to no one knew where. The tsar grieved and was deeply distressed and did not know what to do.

Now, when his sons had grown up he said to them: 'My dear children, which of you will go and search for your mother?' The elder brothers got ready and left, and then the youngest son too asked his father if he could go. 'No, my son,' said the tsar, 'do not go, do not leave me, an old man and all alone.' 'Please, give me leave to go, father,' the tearevich begged, 'I do so want to travel about the wide world and find mother.' The tsar tried to persuade him to stay, but it was of no avail. 'Well,' he said eventually, 'there seems nothing I can do. Go, and the Lord be with you.'

Ivan-tsarevich saddled his valiant horse and rode away. He rode on and on, whether for a long or short time, I do not know, for a tale is quickly told, but to do a deed takes longer. Finally he came to a forest, and in this forest there stood a most magnificent palace. Ivan-tearevich entered the spacious court-yard, saw an old man there and said to him: 'I wish you long life, old man.' 'Thank you kindly, and who are you, my brave young man?' 'I am Ivan-tsarevich, the son of tsar Bel Belyanin and of Nastas'ya of the golden plait.' 'Ah, my dear nephew, where is it you are going?' 'Well, it is like this,' he said. 'I am going to search for my mother. Are you able to tell me where to find her, uncle?' 'No, my dear nephew, that I do not know. However, I do wish to help you as best as I can, so here, take this ball and throw it before you; it will roll along and lead you to steep and very high mountains. In these mountains there is a cave; enter it, and then you will find iron claws; put them on your hands and feet and climb up

the mountaine. Perhaps there you will find your mother, Naetae'ya of the golden plait.'

So then Ivan-tsarevich said good-bye to his uncle, let the ball roll before him and followed after as it rolled on and on. After a long or short time he saw this: in the open field his brothers Pyotr-tsarevich and Vasilii-tsarevich had pitched tent, and with them they had a huge army. His brothers came to meet him. 'Well, whatever next!' they said, 'where are you going, Ivan-tsarevich?' 'I felt bored at home, and I thought I would go too and search for our mother. Send your army home and let us go together.' This they did. They sent the army off, and all three followed the ball.

They saw the mountains already from afar. My God, how steep and high they were! Their peaks seemed to pierce the sky! The ball rolled straight up to the cave. Ivan-tsarevich got off his horse and said to his brothers: 'Here, take my valiant horse. Look after it, and I shall go up these mountains to search for our mother while you stay here. Wait for me three months exactly and if I have not returned by then, wait no longer.' The brothers thought: 'How can anyone climb these mountains? He is bound to break his neck.' 'All right,' they said, 'God speed, we shall wait for you here.'

Ivan-tsarevich went up to the cave and saw an iron door. He pushed against it with all his strength until it opened and he entered. The iron claws fitted themselves easily to his hands and feet, and he started to climb the mountains. He climbed and climbed for a whole month and tried hard to reach the top. At last he arrived. 'Well, thank God for that!' he said. After resting for a while he began to explore the mountains, and soon he came to a copper palace. Terrible snakes were tied to its gates with copper chains; the place was simply teeming with them! Next to them there was a well, and by it hung a copper dipper on a copper chain. Ivan-tsarevich took it, scooped up some water and gave it to the snakes to drink. This calmed them; they lay down, and he entered the palace.

There, there came running towards him the tsaritsa of the copper tsardom. 'Who are you, brave young man?' she asked. 'I am Ivan-tsarevich.' 'Have you come here of your own free will or not, Ivan-tsarevich?' she asked. 'I have come of my own free

will, and I am looking for my mother, Nastas'ya of the golden plait. A whirlwind has carried her off from out of our garden. Do you know where she might be?' 'No, I do not know. But not far from here lives my elder sister, the tsaritsa of the silver tsardom, and perhaps she can tell you.' She gave him a copper ball and a copper ring. 'This ball,' she said, 'will lead you to my elder sister, and in this ring is contained the whole of the copper teardom. When you have conquered the Whirlwind, which keeps me here and flies to me every three months, remember me and take me back with you to the free world.' 'I shall,' said the tsarevich. He threw the copper ball before him and followed it as it rolled along.

When he came to the silver tsardom, he saw a palace that was more magnificent than the first: it was all silver. Terrible snakes were tied to the gate on silver chains, and next to them was a well with a silver dipper. Ivan-tsarevich scooped up some water and gave it to the snakes to drink, whereupon they lay down and let him pass through into the palace. The tsaritsa of the silver tsardom came out to meet him. 'It is almost three years that the powerful Whirlwind has kept me here,' she said. 'All this time I have neither seen nor heard of a Russian, but now one has come. Who are you, brave young man?' 'I am Ivan-tsarevich.' 'But how have you come here, by your own free will or not?' 'I have come by my own free will and am looking for my mother. Once, she went for a walk in her garden, when a whirlwind arose, which took her to an unknown land. Do you perhaps know where to find her?' 'No, I do not know. But not far from here lives my elder sister, the tsaritsa of the golden teardom, Yelena the Beautiful, and perhaps she can tell you. Here, take this silver ball, let it roll before you and follow behind, for it will lead you to the golden tsardom. But when you have killed the Whirlwind, remember me and take me away from here to the free world. The Whirlwind keeps me captive here and flies to me every two months.' Then she gave him a silver ring and said: 'In this ring the whole of the silver tsardom is contained.' Ivan-tsarevich let the ball roll before him and followed it wherever it led him.

After a long or short time, he saw a golden palace which shone like fire. Terrible snakes on golden chains were teeming

at the gates. Near them was a well, and by it hung a golden dipper on a golden chain. Ivan-tsarevich scooped up some water, gave it to the snakes to drink, and at once they became calm and lay down. The tsarevich entered the palace. Yelena the Beautiful came to meet him. 'Who are you, brave young man?' she asked. 'I am Ivan-tsarevich.' 'How did you come here, have you come of your own free will or not.' I have come by my own free will and am looking for my mother Nastas'ya of the golden plait. Do you perhaps know where I can find her?' 'Yes, how could I not know! She lives not far from here; once a week the Whirlwind flies to her and once a month to me. Take this golden ball, let it roll before you and follow it for it will lead you to where you have to go. Take also this golden ring: in it is contained the whole of the golden tsardom. And please, Ivan-tsarevich, when you have conquered the Whirlwind, do not forget about me and take me back with you to the free land.' 'I shall,' he said.

Ivan-tsarevich let the ball roll before him and followed after. He went on and on till he came to, my God, what a palace! It was simply resplendent with diamonds and multi-coloured stones. Six-headed snakes swarmed around the gates. When Ivan-tsarevich gave them water to drink, the snakes calmed down and let him through into the palace. The tsarevich passed through its large rooms, and in the last one he found his mother. She was sitting on a high throne, dressed in her regal attire, and on her head she wore a precious crown. She looked at her guest and exclaimed. 'Oh, praise be to God! Is it you, my beloved son? How did you come here?' 'This is how,' and he told her..., adding finally: 'And I have come because of you.' 'My dear son, it will be difficult to take me away from here. For on these mountains reigns the evil and powerful Whirlwind and all beings are his subjects; it is he who has brought me here. You will have to fight him. Let us be quick and go to the vault below.'

And they went down to the vault, where stood two tubes of water, one on the right hand and one on the left. Nastas'ya of the golden plait said to her son: 'Drink the water that is on your right.' And Ivan-tsarevich did so. 'Well, how strong do you feel?' 'So strong that I could turn the whole palace round with one hand.' 'Well then, drink some more,' and the

tsarevich drank again. 'How strong do you feel now?' 'If I wished, I could turn the whole world around.' 'Ah, that is quite enough! Now change the tubs around. The one that stands on the right put to the left, and the one that is on the left put to the right.' Ivan took the tubs and changed them around. 'You see, my dear son, in one tub there is strengthening water and in the other weakening water; he who drinks from the former will become the most powerful bogatyr', but he who drinks from the latter will become weak. The Whirlwind always drinks from the strengthening water and places that tub on the right. If you do not deceive him in this way, you can never hope to conquer him.'

They returned to the palace. 'Soon the Whirlwind will come flying along,' said the tsaritsa to the tsarevich. 'Hide under my purple cloak so that he does not see you. As soon as he appears and rushes to kiss and embrace me, seize hold of his cudgel. He will then rise up on high and carry you with him over seas and abysses, but take care not to let go of his cudgel. The Whirlwind will grow tired and will want to drink of the strengthening water. He will return and rush to the tub which is on the right, but you must drink from the one on the left. Soon he will become utterly exhausted. Then seize his sword and with one stroke cut off his head. As soon as you have done this there will be shouts from behind you: "Cut again, cut again!" But, my son, do not do that: instead answer: "The hand of a bogatyr' does not strike twice, it hits well the first time!"'

Ivan-tsarevich had just time to hide under the purple cloak, when suddenly it grew dark outside and everything around began to tremble. The Whirlwind appeared, threw himself on the ground and changed into a brave young man. He then entered the palace and in his hands he held a cudgel. 'Fi, fi, fi,' he said, 'why does it smell of a Russian here? Did you have a visitor?' 'I do not know why you should think that,' the tsaritsa answered. The Whirlwind rushed to embrace and kiss her, but at that moment Ivan-tsarevich seized hold of his cudgel. 'I shall eat you!' the Whirlwind shouted at him. 'That we shall see,' the tsarevich answered.

The Whirlwind tore away through the window up into the



summit of the heavens carrying Ivan-tsarevich with him. And when he was over the mountains, he asked: 'Shall I smash you to pieces?' and when he was over the seas he threatened: 'I shall drown you.' But all this time Ivan-tsarevich did not let go of the cudgel.

The Whirlwind flew round the whole world and became exhausted. He gan to fly lower and lower, till he flew down into the vault. Rushing to the tub on the right, he drank the weakening water. Ivan-tsarevich rushed to the left and drank his fill of the strengthening water, and he became the strongest bogatyr' in the whole world. When he saw that the Whirlwind had become completely exhausted, he seized his sharp sword and with one blow cut off his head. Then the voices shouted behind him: 'Cut again, cut again! or else he will come back to life.' 'No,' answered the tsarevich, 'the hand of a bogatyr' does not hit twice, it hits well the first time!' And immediately he made a fire, burnt the body and head, and scattered the ashes into the wind. At this his mother was so filled with joy that it cannot be told in words. 'My beloved son,' she said, 'let us be merry, let us eat and then return home with haste, for it is sad here. No one remains, and we are quite alone.' 'But then who serves here?' the tsarevich asked. 'You shall see,' answered the tsaritsa.

As soon as they had thought about eating, a table laid itself: various kinds of food and wine appeared, and while the tsaritsa and the tsarevich dined, invisible musicians played wonderful tunes for them. They ate and drank their fill and rested. Then Ivan-tsarevich said: 'Let us go Mother, it is time, for my brothers are waiting for me at the foot of the mountains, and on the way back I have to free the three tsaritsas who were kept there by the Whirlwind.'

They collected all they required for the journey and set out on their way back. At first they went to the tsaritsa of the golden tsardom, then to the tsaritsa of the silver one, and from there to the tsaritsa of the copper tsardom. All three of them came with them. They took linen and other things and soon came to the place where they had to descend the mountain. Ivan-tsarevich first lowered down his mother with the help of the linen, then Yelena the Beautiful and her two sisters. His

brothers stood below, waiting. They thought to themselves: 'Let us keep Ivan-tsarevich up there. We shall take mother and the tsariteas to father and tell him that we have found them.' 'I shall take Yelena the Beautiful for myself,' said Pyotr-tsarevich. You, Vaeiliy-tearevich, take the tsaritsa of the silver tsardom, and the tsaritsa of the copper tsardom we shall give to a general.'

And so, when it was the turn of Ivan-tearevich to come down from the mountain, the elder brothers took hold of the linen, pulled at it and tore it away, and Ivan-tsarevich had to remain on the mountain top. What was he to do? He wept bitterly and wandered back. He walked about the copper, the silver and the golden teardome for a long while, but not a soul was to be seen. Then he came to the diamond tsardom, but there again there was no one. He was all alone; what unbearable boredom! He looked about him and saw a pipe lying on the window-sill. He took it into his hands. 'All right, then,' thought Ivan, 'I shall play a little to while away my sorrow.'

As soon as he blew into it, two goblins came jumping along, a lame one and a crooked one. 'What is your wish, Ivan-tsarevich?' they asked. 'I am hungry, and want to eat.' In an instant, from where I do not know, a table was laid, and on it there appeared the most exquisite wine and food. Ivan-tsarevich ate and thought: 'It would not be such a bad idea to have a rest now.' He blew the pipe and again the lame and crooked goblins appeared and asked: 'What is your wish, Ivan-tearevich?' 'That a bed be made ready.' He had hardly finished speaking when a bed appeared, and a better one there could not have been.

He lay down, slept beautifully and then again blew his pipe. 'What is your wish?' the lame and crooked goblin asked him. 'Can I wish for anything?' the tsarevich asked. 'For anything at all, Ivan-tearevich! For him who blows this pipe we do everything. As we served the Whirlwind before, so now we are glad to serve you; you only have to make sure that this pipe is always with you.' 'All right,' said Ivan-tearevich, 'I wish to be in my own country now!' And as soon as he had said this he found himself already there, in the middle of the bazaar.

As he walked around, a shoe-maker came towards him, and what a merry fellow he was! The tearevich asked him: 'Where are

you going, my good fellow?' 'I have come to sell slippers, I am a shoe-maker, you see.' 'Take me with you as your apprentice,' the tsarevich said to him. 'Well, do you know how to sew slippers?' 'Yes, I do, I can make anything you wish me to and not only slippers, I can also sew dresses.' 'Well then, let us go!'

They went home. There the shoe-maker said to him: 'Very well then; get down to work; here is some of the best leather. I would like to see how you work it.' Ivan-tsarevich went to his room, took out his pipe and blew it, and the lame and crooked goblins appeared. They asked 'What is your wish, Ivan-tsarevich?' 'That by tomorrow the slippers are ready.' 'Oh that is nothing!' 'Here is the leather.' 'What leather? Such rubbish, fit to be thrown out of the window!'

The next morning Ivan-tsarevich woke up, and on the table there stood a beautiful pair of shoes, they could not have been better made. Then the master got up. 'Well, young fellow,' he asked, 'have you sewn the shoes?' 'They are ready.' 'Good, show them to me.' He looked at the shoes and was speechless. Then he said: 'Well, I have found a master indeed! And not only a master but a miracle!' He took the shoes and went along to the bazaar to sell them.

At this time the tsar was making preparations for three weddings. Pyotr-tsarevich was to marry Yelena the Beautiful, Vasilii-tsarevich was to marry the tsaritsa from the silver tsardom, and the tsaritsa from the copper tsardom was to be given to a general. Now they bought all kinds of finery for three weddings, but for Yelena the Beautiful they needed slippers. Those of our shoe-maker turned out to be the best of all, and they took him along to the palace. Yelena the Beautiful just looked at them. 'How can this be?' she said, 'only on the mountains they make such shoes.' She paid the shoemaker well and then gave him this order: 'Make me another pair of slippers, but without taking my measurements. I want them to be beautifully embroidered and studded with precious stones and diamonds, and they must be ready by tomorrow. If they are not, you will be hanged.'

The shoe-maker took the money and the precious stones. As he walked home, he said to himself: 'I am in real trouble

now. What am I to do? How can I make shoes before tomorrow, and, what is more, without knowing the measurements? It is clear that tomorrow I shall be hanged! At least I shall make merry with my friends for the last time.'

He entered the tavern. He had many friends, and they all asked him: 'Why are you so gloomy, brother?' 'Well, you see, dear friends, tomorrow I shall be hanged.' 'Why? What for?' The shoe-maker poured out his heart: 'How can one even think about such work? Let us rather be merry together for the last time!' They drank and made merry until the shoe-maker was reeling. 'Well, brothers,' he said, 'I shall take a small barrel of wine home with me and go to bed. And tomorrow, when they come to get me, I shall knock back half the barrel, at least I will not be conscious by the time they hang me.' And he went home. 'There, curse you, you idiot!' he said to Ivan-tsarevich, 'that is what your slippers have brought on me.' And he told him what had happened. 'Tomorrow, when they come for me, wake me at once.'

That night Ivan-tsarevich took out his pipe, blew it, and the lame and crooked goblins appeared. 'What is your wish, Ivan-tsarevich?' they asked. 'I want these slippers to be ready by tomorrow.' 'We are at your service!' they said, and Ivan-tsarevich lay down to sleep. In the morning he woke up, and on the table there stood a pair of shoes, radiant like fire. He went to wake the master. 'Master, it is time to get up!' 'What, have they come already? Quick, where is the barrel of wine? Here is a cup, pour some out. I would rather be drunk and dead.' 'But the shoes are ready!' How do you mean, ready? Where are they?' The master ran and looked. 'But when did we make them?' 'Last night. Surely master, you remember how we cut them out and sewed them!' 'I still do not seem to be quite awake. I only remember very dimly.'

He took the shoes, wrapped them up and ran to the palace. When Yelena the Beautiful saw these shoes, she guessed what had happened. No doubt these shoes were made by the spirits of Ivan-tsarevich. 'How did you make them?' she asked the shoe-maker. 'Well, you see, I can make anything.' 'If this is so, then make me a wedding dress, embroidered with gold and covered with diamonds and precious stones. And mind it is ready by

tomorrow. If it is not, you will forfeit your head.'

And again the shoe-maker returned despondently. His friends had already been waiting for him a long time. 'Well then, what can I tell you,' he said, 'there is nothing but accursed trouble for me! This woman who has come here and is meant to be a Christian has ordered that I make a dress for her by tomorrow, all gold with precious stones. And what kind of dressmaker am I? It is clear that tomorrow they will cut off my head.' 'Ah, brother,' said his friends, 'the morrow is wiser than the even. Come on, let us make merry now!'

They entered the tavern, drank and made merry. And again the shoe-maker drank glass after glass. Finally he dragged home a whole barrel of wine and said to Ivan-tsarevich: 'Tomorrow, when you wake me, I shall consume the whole barrel. Let them cut off my head when I am drunk; for as for this dress, I could not make it for the life of me.' The master lay down to sleep and soon was snoring. Ivan-tsarevich, however, blew his pipe and the lame and crooked goblins appeared. 'What is your wish, Ivan-tsarevich?' they asked. 'I want the very dress which Yelena the Beautiful was wearing when she lived in the realm of the Whirlwind, to be ready by tomorrow. 'We are at your service, it shall be ready.' When it was light, Ivan-tsarevich awoke, and on the table lay the dress, radiant like fire and illuminating the whole room. He woke the master, but he only kept rubbing his eyes. 'Have they come to chop off my head? Quick, give me the wine!' 'But the dress is ready!' 'Oh, how is this? When did the two of us make it?' 'Last night, surely you remember? You cut it out yourself.' 'Ah yes, brother, I remember vaguely; it is as though I am seeing things in my dream.' The shoe-maker took the dress and ran with it to the palace.

Yelena the Beautiful rewarded him royally, but then she gave him a new order: 'See to it that by tomorrow a golden tsardom is built in the sea seven versts from here, and that a golden bridge stretches from our palace to it. This bridge shall be covered with costly velvet, and near the railings on both sides wonderful trees must grow, and on them birds shall sing beautiful tunes. But if you do not do this by tomorrow, I shall have you quartered.' The shoe-maker left Yelena the

Beautiful, his head hanging sadly. His friends met him, saying: 'What is it, brother?' 'Oh, nothing, just now my fate has been sealed. Tomorrow I shall be quartered. This time she has given me a task that not even the devil could master.' 'Never mind,' they said, 'the morrow is wiser than the even, so let us go to the tavern.' 'All right, let us go. On one's last day at least one ought to make merry.'

And so they drank. The shoe-maker kept drinking till he had to be carried home. 'Farewell, lad,' he said to Ivan-tsarevich, 'tomorrow I shall be punished.' 'So you have been given a new task?' 'Yes, this is what I am meant to do,' and he told him. Then he lay down and began to snore. Ivan-tsarevich went straight up to his room, blew his pipe, and the lams and crooked goblins appeared. 'What is your wish, Ivan-tsarevich?' 'Can you do this for me?' and he explained to them, what had to be done. 'Yes, Ivan-tsarevich,' they said, 'this is indeed a real task. We shall do our best. By tomorrow all shall be ready.'

The next day, when it had just begun to grow light, Ivan-tsarevich woke up, looked out of the window and, well, it was unbelievable! All had been done as it had been ordered: the golden palace was radiant like fire! The tsarevich woke the master, who jumped up saying: 'Oh! Have they come for me? Quick, give me the wine! Let them execute me when I am drunk.' 'But the palace is ready!' 'What do you mean?' The shoe-maker looked out of the window and gasped with amazement: 'How could this have been done?' 'But surely, you remember how we worked away at it?' 'Ah well, clearly I am still half asleep. I do seem to remember something.'

And they ran to the golden palace, where were riches untold. Ivan-tsarevich said: 'Here master, take this feather and dust the railings on the bridge; if someone comes and asks who lives in this palace, do not reply, just give them this note.' So, the shoe-maker went and began to dust the railings on the bridge.

In the morning Yelena the Beautiful awoke, saw the golden palace and ran to the tsar. 'Look, your Majesty, what has happened. In the sea a golden palace has been built, and from this palace a bridge stretches out over seven verete, and along

the bridge grow marvellous trees, and on them birds are singing beautiful tunes.'

And at once the tsar sent someone to ask what this meant: perhaps some bogatyr' had come to his country. The messengers came to the shoe-maker and asked him questions. He replied: 'I do not know, but here is a note for your tsar.' In this note Ivan-tsarevich told his father all that had happened; how he had freed his mother, found Yelena the Beautiful, and how his elder brothers had deceived him. Together with this note Ivan-tsarevich sent golden carriages and asked that the tsar and tsaritsa, Yelena the Beautiful and her sisters should come in them to the palace; his brothers, however, were to come in a simple peasant cart.

All made ready at once and came. Ivan-tsarevich met them with great joy. The tsar wanted to punish his elder sons for their unjust deeds, but Ivan-tsarevich begged him to forgive them.

And then a most magnificent feast began. Ivan-tsarevich married Yelena the Beautiful, gave the tsaritsa of the silver tsardom to Pyotr-tsarevich and the tsaritsa of the copper tsardom to Vasilii-tsarevich, and the shoe-maker he had made a general. I too was at this feast and drank mead and wine which flowed down my beard, missing my mouth.

## THE FIREBIRD AND VASILISA-TSAREVNA

(Afanas'yev, vol. I, No. 169, pp.  
424-426)

Once upon a time, beyond the thrice-nine land, in the thrice-tenth tsardom, there lived a strong and mighty tsar. This tsar had a marksman, a brave young man, who had a valiant horse.

One day, this marksman rode on his horse to the forest to hunt. He was riding along the wide road, when he found a golden feather of the Firebird, which was shining like a flame! But his valiant horse said to him: 'Do not take this feather, for if you do, it will bring you trouble.' The brave young man thought for a little about whether he should take it or not. He reasoned like this: if he were to take it to the tsar, he would surely be rewarded for it - and who does not like to find favour with the tsar?

Therefore he did not listen to his horse's advice, but took the feather and brought it to the tsar as a gift. 'Thank you,' said the tsar, 'but now that you have obtained the feather of the Firebird for me, go and find me the bird itself. If you do not do as I ask you, I shall cut off your head with this sword.'

The marksman wept bitter tears and went to his brave horse. 'Why are you crying, master?' 'The tsar has given orders that I should find the Firebird.' 'What did I tell you? Not to pick up the feather, if you did not want to get into trouble! But never mind, do not be afraid, this is not the worst thing that could happen, for worse is yet to come. Go to the tsar and ask him to have a hundredweight of wheat ready by tomorrow, and ask for it to be scattered over the whole of the wide field.' And this the tsar ordered to be done.

The next day at dawn, the marksman went out to this field and allowed his horse to walk freely around it. Then he hid behind a tree. Suddenly the trees in the forest began to rustle, the waves in the sea rose up high, and the Firebird came flying down, alighted on the ground and started to peck at the wheat. The valiant horse went up to it, and put his hoof firmly on it and held it down to the ground with great force. The marksman came running up from behind the tree, tied the Firebird



with ropes, mounted his horse and galloped back to the palace. When the tsar saw him carrying the Firebird, he rejoiced. He thanked the marksman for his services, and rewarded him with a high rank, but then gave him another task. He said: 'If you have been able to obtain the Firebird, you can also obtain a bride for me. Beyond the thrice-nine land, at the very end of the world where the sun rises, there lives Vasilisa-tsarevna, she it is whom I wish to marry. If you can bring her to me, I shall reward you with gold and silver, but if you do not, I shall cut off your head with my sword.'

When the marksman heard this, he wept bitter tears and went to the stables to see his valiant horse. 'Why are you crying, master,' his horse asked him. He replied: 'The tsar has given orders that I should obtain Vasilisa-tsarevna for him.' 'Do not cry, this is not the worst thing that could happen, worse is yet to come. Go to the tsar, ask him for a tent with a golden top and for food and drink for the journey.' The tsar gave him all he asked for.

The marksman mounted his valiant horse and rode off to the thrice-nine kingdom. After a long or a short time, he came to the end of the world, where the sun rises from the blue sea... He looked and beheld Vasilisa-tsarevna in a silver boat with a golden oar, floating on the blue sea. The marksman allowed his horse to walk in the green meadows and eat fresh grass. He put up his tent with the golden top, laid out various kinds of food and drink, sat down in the tent and served himself, while he was waiting for Vasilisa-tsarevna.

When Vasilisa-tsarevna saw the golden top of the tent, she came to the shore, climbed out of the boat and stood, admiring the tent. 'Good day to you, Vasilisa-tsarevna. Welcome! Come, be my guest and try some of the wine from beyond the sea.' Vasilisa-tsarevna entered the tent, and they ate, drank and made merry. But when Vasilisa-tsarevna had drained one glass of the wine, she became drunk and fell fast asleep. The marksman shouted for his horse. It came up quickly, and at once the marksman dismantled the tent with the golden top, mounted his valiant horse, taking the sleeping Vasilisa-tsarevna with him, and off he rode, back along the way he had come, as fast as the arrow flies.

At last he returned to the tsar, who was very happy to see Vasilisa-tsarevna. He thanked the marksman for his faithful service, rewarding him with great treasures, and had a high rank conferred on him. When Vasilisa-tsarevna woke up and found that she was far away from the blue sea, she grieved and wept so much that she became quite changed in looks, and however much the tsar tried to comfort her, it was all in vain. The tsar wanted to marry her, but she said: 'Let him who brought me here go to the blue sea. In the middle of the sea there lies a big stone, and under this stone my wedding dress is hidden. Without this dress I shall not get married.' And at once the tsar sent for the marksman and said to him: 'Go to the end of the world where the bright sun rises. There, in the blue sea, lies a stone, and under this stone the wedding dress of Vasilisa-tsarevna is hidden. Obtain this dress and bring it here, for the time of the wedding has come. If you bring me this dress you shall be rewarded with greater riches than ever before, but if you do not, I shall cut off your head with my sword.'

The marksman wept bitter tears and went off to his valiant horse. 'This time,' he thought, 'I shall not escape death.' 'Why are you crying, master?' asked the horse. He replied: 'The tsar has ordered that I should obtain Vasilisa's wedding dress from the bottom of the sea.' 'Well, what did I tell you? Not to take the feather, or else you would be in trouble. But do not be afraid, this is not the worst thing that could happen, worse is yet to come.'

After a long or a short time the marksman came to the end of the world and stopped by the sea. His valiant horse saw an enormous crab crawling in the sand, and he put his heavy hoof upon its neck. The crab said to him: 'Do not let me die, let me live; whatever you need, I shall do for you.' The horse answered: 'In the middle of the sea, there lies a big stone, and under this stone there is hidden the wedding dress of Vasilisa-tsarevna. Go and bring me this dress.'

The crab shouted in a loud voice across the whole of the blue sea, and at once the sea stirred and from all sides there came crawling up the shore big and little crabs; there were thousands of them! The old crab gave them the order and they all leapt back into the water, and within the hour they

had dragged up Vaeilisa-tsarevna's wedding dress from under the large stone at the bottom of the sea.

The marksman came to the tsar and brought him the dress of the tsarevna. But Vasilisa was still obstinate. 'I shall not marry you,' she said, 'until you have asked the marksman to bathe in boiling hot water.' The tsar ordered water to be poured into an iron cauldron that was as hot as hot could be, and ordered the marksman to be thrown into it. Everything was ready, the water was boiling and bubbling over the side, and they brought the poor marksman up. 'Now the worst has clearly come,' he thought. 'Oh, why did I pick up the feather of the Firebird? Why did I not listen to my horse?' And when he remembered his valiant horse, he said to the tsar: 'Mighty tsar, allow me to say good-bye to my horse before I die.' 'Very well, go and say good-bye to it.'

The marksman came to his valiant horse and wept bitterly. 'Why are you crying, master?' 'The tsar has ordered me to bathe in a boiling cauldron.' 'Do not be afraid, do not cry, you shall stay alive,' said his horse to him and quickly uttered a spell over the marksman, so that the cauldron should not harm his white body.

The marksman returned from the stables and at once he was seized by some servants and thrown straight into the cauldron. He dipped under once or twice, and then jumped out of the cauldron: he had become so handsome that you could not even tell of it in a tale or describe it in a book!

When the tsar saw that he had become so very handsome, he too wanted to have a bath, and, like the fool he was, he climbed into the water, but the same instant was scalded to death. They buried the tsar and in his place chose the marksman. He married Vaeilisa-tsarevna, and for many years they lived together in love and harmony.

## THE WITCH AND THE SUN'S SISTER

(Afanas'yev, vol. I, No. 93, pp.  
136-138)

In a certain tsardom, in a far-away country, there once lived a tsar and a tsaritsa. They had a son, Ivan-tsarevich, who had been dumb since birth. When he was twelve years old, he once went into the stables to see his favourite groom. This groom always told him stories, and this time too Ivan came to hear stories from him, but for once the groom did not tell him stories. Instead, he said: 'Ivan-tsarevich, your mother will soon give birth to a daughter, who will be your sister. She will be a terrible witch, and she will eat her own father and mother and all the subjects of the land. Therefore, go to your father and ask for his best horse as though you wished to go out riding and, if you want to escape from this disaster, go away from here wherever your eyes may lead you.'

Ivan-tsarevich ran to his father, and for the first time in his life he spoke to him. The tsar was so overjoyed that he did not ask him why he needed a good horse. At once he had his very best horse brought and saddled for the tsarevich, who mounted it and rode off where his eyes led him.

He rode for a long, long time, until he came to two old seamstresses. He asked them whether he could stay with them. But the old women said: 'We are breaking up this trunk with this knife, and we shall sew it up with a thread, and very soon we shall be dead.' Ivan-tsarevich wept and then rode on.

He rode for a long, long time till he came to the giant named Turn-tree and asked: 'Take me in!' The giant said: 'I would gladly have you stay with me, Ivan-tsarevich, but I have not much longer to live. For when I have pulled up all these oak-trees by their roots, death will come to me.' The tsarevich wept more than before, and then rode on and on, till he came to the giant Turn-mountain. He made the same request, but the answer again was: 'I would gladly have you stay, Ivan-tsarevich, but I have not much longer to live myself. You see, I have been appointed to overturn these mountains, and when I have finished with these last ones, death will come!' Ivan-tsarevich wept bitterly and rode on.

He rode for a long, long time till, eventually, he came

to the Sun's sister. She took him in, gave him something to eat and drink and looked after him like a son. He had a good life, yet he was sad all the same, for he wanted to know what was happening at home. He would go up a high mountain, and, looking afar, he would see that everything had been devoured by his sister, and that only the walls of the palace were left standing. Then he would sigh and weep.

Once he had been standing like this and weeping, and when he returned the Sun's sister asked him: 'Why is your face so stained with tears lately, Ivan-tsarevich?' He said: 'The wind blew into my eye.' And the next time it was the same, so the Sun's sister forbade the wind to blow. But Ivan-tsarevich returned in tears a third time. And now he could keep his secret no longer. He told the Sun's sister and begged her to let him, a brave young man, return home. At first she would not let him, but he entreated her so long, that, finally, she let him go. For his journey she gave him a brush, a comb and two apples of youth: however old a person might be, when he ate such an apple he would grow young again instantly.

When Ivan-tsarevich came to the giant Turn-mountain, there was only one mountain left for him to turn over. So he took his brush and threw it into the open field, and suddenly from out of the earth, as if from nowhere, appeared very high mountains, their tops reaching up to the sky. There were so many that one could not see the end of them! Giant Turn-mountain was overjoyed and set to work happily.

After a long or a short time Ivan-tsarevich came to the giant Turn-tree, who had only three oak-trees left to pull up. He took his comb and threw it into the open field, and suddenly from out of the earth appeared rustling, dense oak-woods, each tree bigger than the next. Giant Turn-tree was overjoyed, thanked the tsarevich and began to pull up the century-old oak-trees.

After a long or a short time Ivan-tsarevich came to the old women and gave them each an apple. They ate them, and that very instant became young again. As a present they gave him a scarf, which one had only to wave for a whole lake to appear.

Then Ivan-tsarevich came home. His sister ran out to meet him, saying coaxingly: 'Sit down, dear brother, and play

the gusli while I go and prepare a meal.' The tsarevich sat down and was strumming the gusli, when a little mouse came out of a hole and said to him in a human voice: 'Run away quickly and save your life! Your sister has gone to sharpen her teeth.' Ivan-tsarevich left the room, mounted his horse and galloped away, while the little mouse kept running across the gusli's strings, for as long as the gusli sounded the sister did not realise that her brother had gone away. After she had finished sharpening her teeth, she rushed into the room. She took one look, and saw that there was not a soul, only a little mouse which was slipping down a hole. She was furious and, gnashing her teeth, set out in her brother's pursuit.

Then Ivan-tsarevich heard a noise, looked round, and saw his sister nearly catching up with him! He waved his scarf, and a deep lake appeared. While the witch was swimming across, Ivan-tsarevich swiftly galloped on. But she caught up with him faster than before... and now she was quite close! Giant Turn-tree guessed that the tsarevich was trying to escape from his sister and began to pull up oak-trees and throw them onto the road. Soon he had heaped up a whole mountain of them, and the witch could go no further. So she began to clear a pathway through for herself, gnawing and gnashing, and making great efforts, but Ivan-tsarevich was by now a long way ahead. But again she rushed on in pursuit of him. She rushed on and on and now she was quite near and almost upon him... and there was no escape! But Giant Turn-mountain saw the witch, seized the highest mountain, and turned it and set it across her path, and on top of this mountain he put another. While the witch was clambering over them, Ivan-tsarevich rode on and on and was already a long way off.

Now the witch had climbed over the mountains and was again chasing after her brother ... Soon she caught sight of him again and cried: 'Now you will not escape from me!' And this time she was quite near and had almost caught him! But at this moment Ivan-tsarevich galloped up to the house of the Sun's sister and called out: 'Sun, Sun! Open your window,' and the Sun's sister opened her window and the tsarevich jumped through it on his horse. The witch begged to be given her brother's head, but the Sun's sister paid no attention to her and refused

her. Then the witch said: 'Let Ivan-tsarevich and me sit on scales to see who weighs the heavier. If I weigh more, then I shall eat him, but if he outweighs me he may kill me.' And this they did. Ivan-tsarevich was the first to sit on the scales, and then the witch climbed on; but no sooner had she stepped onto them than Ivan-tsarevich was thrown up with such force, that he soared straight up to heaven, to the house of the Sun's sister; but the witch, the snake, remained behind on earth.

## THE FROG-TSAREVNA

(Afanas'yev, vol. II, No. 267, pp.  
329-331)

In the old days, a long time ago, there once lived a tsar who had three sons, all of them young men. One day the tsar said to them: 'Children, make yourselves each an arrow and shoot it off. The woman who brings back your arrow shall be your wife.' The eldest son shot his off, and a prince's daughter brought back the arrow; the middle one shot his off, and a general's daughter brought it back, but the arrow of Ivan-tsarevich, the youngest son, was brought back by a frog from the swamp, who carried it in her teeth. The two elder brothers were happy and rejoiced, but Ivan-tsarevich became thoughtful and wept. 'How can I live with a frog?' he asked. 'To live one's life is not so easy as to cross a river or to walk through a field!' He wept and wept, but as there was nothing to be done, he took the frog for his wife. They were all married according to the custom of the land: the frog they bore on a dish. And so they lived together.

Once the tsar wanted to see which of his sons' wives was the most skilful, and he ordered that they should each bring gifts to show him. Ivan-tsarevich again became thoughtful and wept. 'What can my frog do?' he said. 'They will all laugh at me.' And when he looked at her, all the frog did was crawl on the floor and croak.

Now, when Ivan-tsarevich had fallen asleep, the frog went out into the road, shed her skin, and changed into a beautiful girl, who cried out: 'Servants and attendants, make this for me!' and she told them what she wanted. Her servants and attendants immediately brought her a most beautiful shirt. She took it, folded it up and placed it by Ivan-tsarevich. Then she changed back into a frog, as though nothing had happened.

When Ivan-tsarevich woke up, he was overjoyed. He took the shirt and went to the tsar. The tsar took it, gazed at it and said: 'This is a shirt that one would only wear on a feast day.' His middle son brought a shirt, and the tsar said: 'In this shirt one can only go to the bath-house,' and when he saw the shirt of his eldest son he said: 'This shirt you could wear



only in a dark hut.' As the tear's sone went away, the two eldest sons said to each other: 'Well, it seems that we were wrong to have laughed at the wife of Ivan-tearevich; she is certainly no frog, but ehe must be some sorceress.'

And again the tsar gave orders that hie daughters-in-law should show him their skill, and he bade them each bake a loaf of bread and bring it to him to be judged that he might see whose bread was the best. At first the wives of the elder brothers had laughed at the frog, but now they sent a maid-servant to her room to see how ehe would bake her bread. The frog, perceiving that she was being watched, took the dough, kneaded it and rolled it, took off the top of the stove, and threw the dough straight inside.

When the maid-servant saw this, she ran back to her mistresses and told them what she had seen; and the elder brothers' wives then did likewise. But the cunning frog had only tricked them. She removed the dough at once, cleaned it, put oil on it as though nothing had happened, and then went out onto the porch, and shedding her skin cried out: 'Servants and attendants, bake this dough for me, and from it make such bread as my father used to eat only on feast days.' And at once the servants and attendants brought her the bread. She took it, put it down by Ivan-tsarevich and then changed back into a frog. When Ivan-tsarevich woke up, he at once took the bread to his father, who was just receiving the bread of his elder sons. Their wives had both thrown their loaves into the stove, as the frog had been seen to do and they had come out pitch-black. The tear first took the bread of the eldest son, looked at it and had it sent back to the kitchen. Next he took the bread of the second son and also sent it back to the kitchen. Then it was the turn of Ivan-tsarevich's bread. Hie father took it, gazed at it and said: 'This is bread which one would only eat on a feast day, quite unlike the bread of my other daughters-in-law, which is so hard!'

After this the tear thought that he would give a ball in hie palace and see which of hie daughtere-in-law could dance beet. All the gueets made ready, and so did the sons' wives, but not that of Ivan-tsarevich. He thought to himself: 'How can I go to the ball with my frog?' And our tsarevich wept bitterly.

But the frog said to him: 'Do not cry, Ivan-tsarevich, go to the ball, and I shall be there in an hour.' Ivan-tsarevich was very pleased when he heard the frog could speak, and he went to the ball. Meanwhile the frog shed her skin and changed into such a lovely girl, that it was simply a miracle! Then she too went to the ball. Ivan-tsarevich was overjoyed when he saw her, and everybody clapped their hands in amazement at such beauty.

And then the guests sat down to eat. Now, whenever the tsarevna had finished with a bone, she would put it away in one sleeve, and whenever she had drunk a glass of wine, she would pour the dregs into her other sleeve. Her sisters-in-law, who saw this, did the same: they took the bones and put them into one of their sleeves and poured the rest of their drinks into their other sleeves. Now, when it was time to dance, the tsar sent for his two elder daughters-in-law, but they, in their turn, sent for the frog, who at once took hold of Ivan-tsarevich and went onto the dance floor with him. And there she was dancing and spinning like a wheel, and everybody simply marvelled at what they saw! When she waved her right arm, forests and lakes would appear, and when she waved her left arm, various little birds would fly up. Everybody was quite amazed! And when she had finished dancing, everything disappeared again.

Then the other daughters-in-law went onto the dance floor. They wanted to do the same, but when they waved their right arms the bones came flying out in all directions and flew at the guests, and when they waved their left arms, the liquid came splashing out also over the people. The tsar was displeased at what he saw and shouted: 'Enough, enough!' And his elder daughters-in-law stopped.

When the ball was nearly over, the tsarevich went home alone, and somewhere he found his wife's skin, and he took it and burnt it. And so, when the tsarevna came home and wished to put on her skin again, it was no longer there, for it had been burnt. Then the tsarevna lay down beside Ivan-tsarevich and before dawn she said to him: 'Ivan-tsarevich, had you been patient just a little longer, I would have been yours, but now, God only knows! Search for me beyond the thrice-nine lands in the thrice-tenth tsardom.' And when the tsarevna had said this, she disappeared.

A year passed, and Ivan-tsarevich longed to see his wife; and so, at the beginning of the second year, he asked for his father's and mother's blessing, and then went off to search for his wife. He had been walking for a long time, when suddenly he saw a hut which stood with its front to the forest and with its back towards him. He said to it: 'Little hut, little hut, stand as you did before, as mother placed you, with your back to the forest and with your front to me.' And the hut turned round, and he went inside. In it an old woman was sitting. She said: 'Fi, fi! I used not either to see or hear a Russian, but now one has come in person into my yard. Where are you going, Ivan-tsarevich?' 'Well, old woman, you had better first give me something to eat and drink; then you may ask me questions.' The old woman gave him something to eat and drink and put him to bed. Then Ivan-tsarevich said to her: 'Grandmother, I am travelling in search of Yelena the Beautiful.' 'Oh, my child,' she answered, 'why have you come so late? At first she remembered you often, but now she has already forgotten about you. She has not been to visit me for a long time. But go on to my elder sister: she knows more than I do, and perhaps she can tell you.'

The next morning Ivan-tsarevich went further, until he came to another hut. 'Little hut, little hut,' he said, 'stand as you did before, as mother had placed you, with your back to the forest and with your front to me.' The hut turned round, and he went inside and saw an old woman. She said: 'Fi, fi! I used not either to see or hear a Russian, but now one has come in person into my yard. Where are you going, Ivan-tsarevich?' 'I am travelling in search of Yelena the Beautiful, grandmother.' 'Oh, Ivan-tsarevich, you are late, she has already forgotten you, and soon she will marry another. Now she lives with my elder sister. Go to her. But mind: when you draw near, Yelena, whose dress will be golden, will notice you and change into a spinning wheel, and on it my sister will spin a golden thread. Then she will take the spinning-wheel, put it into a box and lock it. But you must be quick and find the key. Open the box, take the spinning-wheel and break it. One half throw behind you and the other in front of you; then Yelena will appear before you.'

Ivan-tsarevich thanked the old woman and then went on

till he came to her elder sister. He went into the hut and saw how she was spinning a golden thread. Then ehe took the spinning wheel, put it into a box, locked it and hid the key. Ivan-tsarevich found the key, opened the box, took out the spinning wheel and broke it as he had been told: one half he threw behind him and the other half in front of him and suddenly Yelena the Beautiful appeared before him saying: 'Oh, how long you have been, Ivan-tsarevich! I am about to marry another, and this bridegroom will come soon.' And Yelena the Beautiful took the flying carpet from the old woman, and they both sat on it and flew up and away like birds.

Suddenly her bridegroom arrived, and when he learned that they had gone, he set out in pureuit. He too knew how to use magic! And off he chased after them, and he nearly caught up with them, but when he was only seventy feet away from them they flew into the land of Rus', where he could not go, and so hs had to return.

They flew home. Everybody was glad to see them! They lived together happily, increasing their fortunes and bringing glory to their people.

## NEZNAYKO-I-KNOW-NOT

(Afanas'yev, vol. II, No. 295, pp.  
406-410)

Now begins the tale about Sivka-Burka, the magic chestnut horse. In the sea, in the ocean, on the island of Buyan there is a roast ox, and in a garden there grows powdered garlic. You cut off the meat from one side, but you eat it from the other.

There once lived a merchant, who had a son. While he was growing up and learning how to trade with other shops, the merchant's first wife died, and so the merchant married again. After some months, he made ready to travel to other lands. He loaded his ships with his goods and told his son to look after the house and the business. The son said to him: 'Father, before you go away, do me this favour: search for my happiness.' 'My dear son,' answered the old man, 'where am I to find it?' 'Oh, you will not have to look far for it. When you rise early tomorrow, go out beyond the town-gates, and whatever you meet with first, buy it and give it to me.' 'Very well, my son,' said the old man.

The next day the father rose early, went out of the town-gates and the first thing he met with was a peasant dragging along a mangy foal as fodder for the dogs. The merchant bargained for it with him and bought it for a silver rouble. He took the foal along to his yard and put it into the stable. His son asked him: 'Well father, did you find my happiness?' 'I did find something, but it does not look too good to me.' 'Never mind, it seems that this is how it should be, whatever happiness the Lord wills for me, I shall be content to accept.' The father set out to do trade in foreign lands while his son remained to work in the shop.

Now the son had made it a habit to go and see the foal every time he returned home from his work in the shop. His step-mother had taken a great dislike to her step-son and sought out a fortune-teller to get advice on how she could be rid of him. She found an old woman who gave her a potion and told her to put it under the threshold at the time when her step-son would return home. When he came back from the shop, the merchant's son went into the stable and saw his foal standing there in tears up to

his ankles. He patted its flanks and asked: 'What is wrong, my good horse? Why are you crying and not telling me why?' 'Your step-mother wants to put you to death. But you have a dog. When you go up to the house, send it in before you and see what happens.' The merchant's son did as he had been told, and as soon as the dog had crossed the threshold, it was torn into small pieces.

Ivan, the merchant's son, did not reveal to his step-mother that he knew about her wickedness. The next day he went to the shop, while the step-mother went off to the fortune-teller. The old woman prepared another potion for her and told her to mix it with a drink. Coming home in the evening, the merchant's son went to the stable and again his foal was standing up to his ankles in tears. He patted its flanks and asked: 'What is wrong, my dear horse? Why are you crying and not telling me why?' 'How can I not cry? I heard of a great misfortune. This time your stepmother really means to kill you. Watch out when you come into the room and sit down at the table: your step-mother will bring you a drink in a glass. Do not touch it, but pour it out of the window and you will see for yourself what happens.' And this Ivan did; and indeed, as soon as he had poured the drink out of the window, the earth in front of it was torn asunder. But this time too he said not a word to his step-mother.

The third day he again went to the shop, while the step-mother went off to the fortune-teller. This time the old woman gave her a magic shirt. Coming from the shop in the evening, he went straight to his foal, who again was standing up to his ankles in tears. He patted its flanks and asked: 'Why are you crying, my dear horse, and why are you not telling me why?' 'Your step-mother means to kill you, this time for certain. So listen to what I have to say to you. As soon as you enter, your step-mother will send you to the bath-house, and she will send a boy to you with a shirt. Do not put it on! Let the boy put it on, and you will see for yourself what happens.' And so the merchant's son went into the room. His step-mother came in and said to him: 'Would you not like to steam in the bath-house? Everything is ready.' 'Yes, I would,' said Ivan and went to the bath-house. After a little while a boy brought him a shirt. As

soon as the merchant's son put it on the boy, the boy closed his eyes and fell down dead on the floor-boards, but as soon as he took the shirt off him and threw it in the oven, the boy came to life again, but the oven burst into tiny fragments.

Now, when the step-mother saw that she had failed, she again rushed to the old fortune-teller and besought her to do something so that she would be rid of her step-son. The old woman answered her: 'While that horse is alive, there is nothing I can do. But pretend that you are ill, and when your husband comes back tell him this: "I learned in a dream that we should kill our foal, take out its gall, and with it rub my body and the illness will pass."' And when the time came for the merchant to return, his son went out to meet him. 'Greetings, dear son,' his father said. 'Is everything well at home?' 'All is well in our house, except that mother is ill.' The merchant unloaded his goods, and when he went into the house, he found his wife lying on her bed and groaning. She said to him: 'I shall get better as soon as you make my dream come true.' The merchant consented at once and called his son. 'My dear son,' he said, 'I want to kill your foal, for mother is ill and we must make her well.' Ivan the merchant's son wept bitterly. 'Oh, father, you want to take my only happiness away from me,' he said, and went into the stable.

When the foal saw him, it said: 'My dear master, I have saved you three times from death; now save me, if only once. Go and ask your father to let you ride in the open field on me for the last time together with your friends and companions.' His father consented, and Ivan the merchant's son sat on the horse, galloped into the open field and amused himself with his friends and companions. Then he wrote the following note to his father: 'Cure my step-mother with the twelve-thonged whip, for that is the only medicine which will cure her.' He sent this note through one of his good friends, while he himself rode off to far-away lands. When the merchant had read the letter, he took to curing his wife with the twelve-thonged whip, and she quickly recovered her health.

The merchant's son rode about the open fields and through wide valleys, and there he saw some cattle. His faithful horse said to him: 'Ivan, the merchant's son, let me free.

Pull three hairs from my tail, and when you need me, just burn one hair, and I shall appear before you at once, straight as a blade of grass. But you, my brave young man, go to those cowherds, buy an ox and cut him up. Clothe yourself in his hide and on your head put his bladder, and wherever you may go, whatever people may ask you, to everything give only one answer: "I know not."

Ivan the merchant's son let his horse go free, clothed himself in the ox's hide, put the ox's bladder upon his head and went to the seashore. On the sea there sailed a ship, and when the sailors saw this strange thing, which looked like an animal but was none, and which looked like a human being but was none either, with a bladder on its head and quite covered in hair, they came ashore in a little boat and asked him questions to know his mind. But to everything Ivan would give only this one answer: 'I know not.' 'Well, if that is what you say, then be I-know-not, for this is what we shall call you.'

And the sailors took him aboard with them and sailed away to their kingdom. And after a long or a short time they came to their capital city, and went to the king with their presents and told him about Neznayko, and the king ordered this strange thing to be brought to the palace and into his royal presence. So they brought Neznayko, and a huge crowd of people came and gathered to look at him. The king questioned him: 'What kind of person are you?' 'I know not.' 'From which country are you?' 'I know not.' 'Who are your next of kin?' 'I know not.' And the king spat, and had Neznayko brought to the garden so that he would frighten the birds away from the apple-trees in place of the scare-crow. But he ordered him to be fed from his royal kitchen.

This king had three daughters. The two eldest were beautiful, but the youngest was more beautiful still. And before long an Arabian prince asked for the hand of the youngest princess. He wrote to the king and threatened him: 'If you do not give her to me of your own free will, I shall take her by force.' This displeased the king, and he wrote to the Arabian prince: 'If you wish to start a war, we shall see what fate God has in store.' So the prince collected a gigantic army and with it he surrounded the whole country. Then Neznayushka threw off his



hide, removed the bladder, and went into the open field. There he lit one hair, and shouted in a loud voice, and gave a shrill whistle, and, as if from nowhere, his miraculous horse came running up so fast that the earth trembled. 'Ah, my brave young man, how is it that you need me so soon?' 'The time for war has come,' said Neznayushka, and mounted his brave horse. It asked him: 'How high shall I carry you? As high as half-way up the trees, or as high as the tree-tops in the forest?' 'Carry me so high that we shall ride above the tree-tops.' And the horse rose up from the ground and flew towards the enemy's army.

Neznayko came galloping towards the enemy, seized the sword of one and pulled off the golden helmet of another and put it on. He then hid behind a post and from there vanquished the Arabian army. In whatever direction he turned, heads were flying as though someone were mowing hay. The king and the princesses were watching from the city wall and marvelled at the knight, wondering where he might have come from. Perhaps it was Yegoryy the Brave who was helping them? But they did not suspect that it could be the same Neznayko, who used to scare off the crows in the garden. Neznayushka killed so many soldiers, that out of the whole army only the Arabian prince himself and ten men of his suite remained alive; and they returned home. After this great carnage he rode up to the town wall and said: 'Your Majesty, were you pleased with my service?' And the king thanked him and asked him to be his guest, but Neznayko did not listen to him. He galloped away into the open field, let his horse go free, and returned home. There he put on the bladder and the hide and went about the garden as before, scaring off the crows.

After neither a long nor a short time, the Arabian prince wrote again: 'If you are not willing to give me your youngest daughter, I shall burn down the whole of your country and shall take her captive.' This displeased the king, and he replied that he was awaiting the arrival of his army. And the Arabian prince collected an even larger army than before, surrounded the country from all sides and sent three powerful bogatyrs ahead. When Neznayushka learnt of this, he threw off his hide, removed the bladder, called his brave horse and galloped off into battle. One of the bogatyrs came towards him,

and they met, bowed to each other and then jousted with their lances. The bogatyr' hit Neznayko so hard, that he only just managed to keep hold of one stirrup. Then he righted himself, and rushed towards him, like a true knight, cut off his head, took it by the hairs, and threw it up into the air, saying: 'This is how all the heads will fly!' Then the second bogatyr' rode up and the same happened to him. With the third Neznayushka battled for a whole hour. The bogatyr' cut his hand so that it bled, but Neznayko in his turn cut off his head and threw it up into the air. At this the whole Arabian army trembled and ran off in all directions. All this time the king and the princesses had been standing on the city wall. The youngest of them seeing that blood was streaming from the hand of the brave knight took a scarf from her neck and, with her own hands, tied it round his wound. The king asked him to be his guest. 'I shall come,' answered Neznayko, 'but not yet.' He galloped into the open field, let his horse go free, donned the hide, and put the bladder on his head, and then went round the garden, scaring off the crows.

After neither a long nor a short time, the king married his two elder daughters to two splendid tsarevichs, and for this occasion he arranged a great feast. When the guests were walking in the garden and saw Neznayko they asked: 'What kind of monster is this?' The king answered them: 'That is I-know-not, he works here in place of a scare-crow, scaring the birds away from the apple-trees.' But the youngest daughter looked at Neznayko's hand and noticed her scarf. She blushed, but did not say a word. From this time on she often went to the garden to look at Neznayko; she forgot about feasts, about balls, she even forgot to think altogether. 'Where are you going to all the time, my daughter?' asked the king. 'Oh, dear father, so many years have I lived here, so many times have I walked in the garden, but never have I seen such lovely birds there as now!' Then she asked her father's blessing to marry Neznayko, and however much her father tried to dissuade her, she still insisted: 'If you do not let me marry him I shall stay unmarried as long as I live, for I want none other.' At last her father consented and married them.

After this the Arabian prince wrote to the king for the

third time, demanding that he be given the youngest daughter: 'And if you will not give her to me, I shall burn down the whole country and take her by force.' The king answered him: 'My daughter is married already, but if you wish, come, and see for yourself.' The Arabian prince came, and when he saw that such a beautiful princess had been married to such a monster, he thought he would challenge Neznayko to fight a battle with him to the death. Then Neznayko threw off his hide, removed the bladder from his head, called his brave horse and rode up, looking such a handsome knight that you could not tell of it in a tale nor describe it in a book. They met together in an open field in the wide valley. The fight was soon over, and Ivan the merchant's son killed the Arabian prince. And then the king saw that Neznayko was not a monster but a most powerful and handsome bogatyr', and he made him his heir. And Ivan the merchant's son lived with his princess in happiness, increasing their fortunes. And he brought his father to the palace and had his step-mother punished.

## KOSHCHEY THE IMMORTAL

(Afanas'yev, vol. I, No. 157, pp.  
362-369)

In a certain land there once lived a tsar and a tsaritsa, and a son was born to them, Ivan-tsarevich. His nurses, when trying to rock him to sleep, had to call his father to do it. 'Great tsar,' they said, 'you yourself will have to rock your son to sleep.' And the tsar rocked him, saying: 'Sleep, my son, sleep, my darling. When you grow up, I shall seek the maiden Radiant Beauty in marriage for you, the daughter of three nurses, grandchild of three midwives, and sister of nine brothers.' And the tsarevich fell asleep and did not wake for three days and three nights. But when he woke up again, he cried more than ever; and the nurses, trying to rock him to sleep, again had to call his father. 'Great tsar,' they said, 'come, you yourself will have to rock your son to sleep.' And the tsar rocked him, saying: 'Sleep, my son, sleep, my darling, when you grow up I shall seek the maiden Radiant Beauty in marriage for you, the daughter of three nurses, grandchild of three midwives, and sister of nine brothers.' And again the tsarevich fell asleep and did not wake up for three days and three nights, but when he awoke, he cried more than ever. And again the nurses tried to rock him to sleep, but could not, so they again asked the tsar: 'Great tsar, come and rock your son to sleep.' And the tsar rocked him to sleep, saying: 'Sleep, my son, sleep, my darling, when you grow up I shall seek the maiden Radiant Beauty in marriage for you, the daughter of three nurses, grandchild of three midwives, and sister of nine brothers.' And again the tsarevich fell asleep, and again slept for three days and three nights. But when he awoke this time he said: 'Father, give me your blessing, for I am going out into the world to get married.' 'But, my child,' said the tsar, 'how can you do this? You are only nine days and nine nights old.' 'I shall go, whether you give me your blessing or not.' 'Very well, go, and may the Lord be with you!'

Ivan-tsarevich dressed and then went to look for a horse. He had not gone a long way from the house, when he met

an old man. 'Where are you going, young man?' he asked. 'Are you going of your own free will or not?' 'I do not wish to talk to you,' said the tsarevich, and he went on for a space. But then he thought: 'Why did I not say anything to the old man? Old people are often wise.' So he turned back and soon caught up with the old man. 'Stop, grandfather,' he said, 'what was it you asked me?' 'I asked you where you were going and whether you were going of your own free will or not.' 'Both are true: I am going partly of my own free will, but twice as much not. You see, when I was little, my father, while rocking my cradle, promised to seek the maiden Radiant Beauty in marriage for me, the daughter of three nurses, grandchild of three midwives, and sister of nine brothers.' 'Good, my young man, well spoken. Only you cannot go there on foot, for this beauty lives far away.' 'How far?' 'In the golden tsardom, at the end of the wide world, where the Sun rises.' 'But how can I go there, since I have no valiant horse, nor a whip with which to beat it?' 'How is this? Your father has thirty horses, and they are all equally good. Go home and tell your grooms to let them drink in the blue sea, and that horse shall be yours which goes right in up to his neck and drinks while the waves rise high, tossing from shore to shore.' 'Thank you for your good advice, grandfather!' And the tsarevich did as the old man had told him. He chose a fine horse, slept the night, and rose early the next morning, but as he opened the gates ready to set off, the horse said to him in a human voice: 'Ivan-tsarevich, fall to the ground, and I shall push you three times.' It pushed him once and again, but not the third time, for it said: 'If I push you a third time, the earth will not carry us.' Ivan-tsarevich then took hold of the horse by the bridle, saddled it and was out of sight of the tsar in an instant.

He rode far, far away, and when the day had turned into night, he came up to a courtyard that was like a town, and a hut that was like a fortress. He rode into the courtyard, went straight up to the porch, and tied his horse to a copper ring; he then entered the hall, went into the hut, uttered a prayer, and asked if he could stay the night. 'You may stay, brave young man,' an old woman said to him. 'Where do you

come from?' 'Oh, you old hag, that is an untimely question. First give me something to eat and drink and put me to bed, then you may ask your questions.' She gave him something to eat and drink, put him to bed and then questioned him. The tearevich said: 'When I was little, my father rocked my cradle and promised to seek the maiden Radiant Beauty in marriage for me, the daughter of three nurses, grandchild of three midwives, and sister of nine brothers.' 'Well spoken, young man. But although I have lived now for seventy years, I have not once heard of this beauty. But further on along this road, there lives my elder sister; perhaps she knows. Go to her tomorrow, but now sleep, for the morrow is wiser than the even.' Ivan-tsarevich spent the night there, rose early in the morning, washed, took out his horse and as soon as his foot touched the stirrup, he was out of the old woman's sight.

He rode on and on, climbing higher and higher, and when the day had turned into night, he came up to a courtyard that was like a town and a hut that was like a fortress. He rode up to the porch, tied his horse to a silver ring, entered the hall, went into the hut, uttered a prayer and asked if he could stay the night. An old woman said: 'Fi, fi! Up till now I could not see or hear of a Russian anywhere, but now one has come along himself! Where have you come from, Ivan-tsarevich?' 'What are you doing "Fi-fiing" me and asking untimely questions? You had better give me something to eat and drink first and put me to bed, then you may ask me questions.' She sat him down at the table, gave him something to eat and drink, and sitting by his head asked: 'Where are you going?' And Ivan-tsarevich said: 'When I was little, my father rocked my cradle and promised to seek the maiden Radiant Beauty in marriage for me, the daughter of three nurses, grandchild of three midwives, and sister of nine brothers.' 'Well spoken, young man. But although I have lived for eighty years, never once have I heard of this beauty. Further on along this road lives my sister, perhaps she knows. She also has faithful servants who might help you. They are the animals of the forest, the birds of the air and the fish and reptiles of the sea; all that lives in this world serves

her. Go to her tomorrow, but now sleep, for the morrow is wiser than the even.' Ivan-tsarevich spent the night there, rose early, washed, mounted his horse, and off he rode.

He rode on and on, climbing higher and higher, and when the day had turned into night, he came to a courtyard that was like a town, and a hut that was like a fortress. He rode up to the porch and tied his horse to a golden ring, went through the hall into the hut, uttered a prayer and asked whether he could stay the night. But the old woman shouted at him: 'O you So-and-So! So the iron ring is not good enough for you, you had to tie your horse to the golden one.' 'All right, old woman, do not shout. I can untie my horse and tie it to another ring.' 'So I frightened you, my brave young man? But be not afraid, sit down on the bench, and I shall ask you whose son you are and from which town you come.' 'Ah, grandmother, but first give me something to eat and drink, and then you can ask me questions. You see, I am one who has been on the road and has not eaten all day.' And at once the old woman laid the table, brought bread and salt, poured out vodka and offered it to Ivan-tsarevich. He ate and drank and went to bed. The old woman did not have to ask him anything, for he told her everything himself: 'When I was little, my father rocked my cradle and promised to seek the maiden Radiant Beauty in marriage for me, the daughter of three nurses, grandchild of three midwives, and sister of nine brothers. Grandmother, be so kind as to tell me where the beauty lives and how to get to her.' 'I myself do not know, tsarevich. Although I have lived for ninety years, I have not yet once heard of this beauty. But sleep now, and may the Lord protect you. Tomorrow morning I shall summon my advisors; perhaps one of them knows.'

The next day the old woman rose early, washed, went out into the porch with Ivan-tsarevich and shouted in a thunderous voice and whistled a shrill cry. She called across the sea: 'You fish and reptiles of the sea, come here!' And at once the blue sea began to toss, and all the fish came swimming, big and small, and all manner of reptiles came and gathered by the shore, so that they covered the water as far as the eye could see. And the old woman asked them: 'Where

does the maiden Radiant Beauty live, the daughter of three nurses, grandchild of three midwives, and sister of nine brothers?' And all the fish and reptiles answered with one voice: 'Not once have we heard of her or seen her.' Then the old woman shouted across the earth: 'Come here, you animals of the forest!' In an instant the animals appeared, covering all the ground near her, and to her question they answered with one voice: 'Not once have we heard of her or seen her!' Then the old woman shouted up into the sky: 'Come and assemble, you birds of the air!' And the birds came flying, and the light of the day was dimmed by their numbers. To her question they answered with one voice: 'Not once have we heard of her or seen her!'

'There is no one else to ask,' said the old woman, and she took Ivan by the hand and led him back into the hut; but as soon as they had entered, the Mogol-ptitsa came flying and landed on the ground. It became dark in the room. 'Ah, it is you, ptitsa Mogol, where have you been, where have you flown to, why are you late?' 'I have been helping to dress the maiden Radiant Beauty for mass.' 'She is the one we wish to find! Do me this service, and do it as best as you can: take Ivan-tsarevich to her.' 'I shall gladly do you this service, but I shall need much food on the way.' 'How much?' 'Three times forty barrels of beef and a tub of water.'

Ivan-tsarevich filled a tub with water, bought oxen, killed them and packed them into three times forty barrels. He loaded them all on the bird and then ran to a smith, who forged a long, iron lance. When he returned, he bade farewell to the old woman: 'Good-bye, grandmother, look after my horse and feed it well. I shall pay you for it, when I return.' Then he sat on the Mogol-ptitsa, and the same instant it rose up and flew off.

Now while the bird flew, it kept looking round, and when it did, Ivan-tsarevich at once gave it a piece of beef on his lance. After they had flown a little space, the tsarevich found that he had fed the bird half the meat, and so he said: 'Hey, ptitea Mogol, come down to earth. Only a little of the food is left!' 'What are you saying, Ivan-tearevich? Here are slumbering forests and deep swamps; we shall not get out



till the end of time, if we land here.'

So Ivan-tsarevich fed it all the beef and jettisoned the empty barrels, but the Mogol-ptitsa went flying on. 'What am I to do?' thought Ivan-tsarevich. And he cut the calves of his legs and fed them to the bird. It swallowed them and then flew down towards a green meadow with silken grass and sky-blue flowers and landed on the ground. Ivan-tsarevich stood up, and walked about the meadow, limping on both legs. 'What is the matter, Ivan-tsarevich, why are you limping like this?' 'I am limping, Mogol-ptitsa, because I cut the calves off my legs and fed them to you.' When the Mogol-ptitsa heard this, it spat out the calves and replaced them on Ivan-tsarevich's legs. It then blew and spat on them, and the calves joined onto the legs again, so that Ivan-tsarevich could walk as firmly and boldly as before.

He walked on and came to a big town, where he went to have a rest at the Babushka-Zadvorenka's house. She said to him: 'Sleep, Ivan-tsarevich. Tomorrow, when they ring the bell for matins, I shall wake you.' The tsarevich lay down and at once he was fast asleep. He slept through the day and the night, and when they rang the bell for matins, the babushka came quickly to wake him. Yet however hard she tried, however much she shook him, she could not wake him.

The matins were over, and they rang for vespers and the maiden Radiant Beauty went to church. And again the babushka came quickly and tried to wake the tsarevich. She shook and hit him as hard as she could, and eventually she just managed to wake him. The tsarevich jumped up, quickly washed and dressed for vespers. He went to church, prayed before the icons, bowed to all four sides and to the maiden Radiant Beauty in particular. They stood praying together, and at the end of vespers she went first to kiss the cross, and he followed her.

Then he went off to the landing-stage and gazed across the sea: ships were approaching, and on them came six bogatyrs to seek the maiden Radiant Beauty in marriage. When they saw Ivan-tsarevich, they started laughing. 'Oh, you village idiot,' they said, 'do you really think that you are good enough for such a beauty? You are not worth her little finger.'

They said it once and they said it again, but when they said it for the third time, he became angry. He swung out his arm, and a path was cleared before him, and when he swung out the other, he swept them away completely. Then he went to the babushka. 'Well, Ivan-tsarevich,' she asked, 'did you see the maiden Radiant Beauty?' 'I did, and I shall not forget her as long as I live.' 'Well, go to sleep now, tomorrow she will again go to vespers, and when they ring the bell, I shall come to wake you.'

Ivan-tsarevich lay down to sleep. He again slept through the day and the night. When they rang the bell for matins, the Babushka came quickly to wake the tsarevich, but however hard she tried, however much she shook him, she could not wake him. When they rang for vespers, she tried again. Finally Ivan-tsarevich jumped up, washed and dressed for church. He came and prayed before the icons and bowed to all four sides and the maiden Radiant Beauty in particular. She looked at him and blushed. They stood next to each other praying, and at the end of vespers she went up first to kiss the cross, and the tsarevich followed her.

Then Ivan-tsarevich went off to the landing-stage and gazed across the blue sea. There came ships towards him, and in them were twenty-four bogatyrs, who sought the maiden Radiant Beauty in marriage. When these bogatyrs saw Ivan-tsarevich, they began to laugh at him, saying: 'Oh, you village idiot, do you think you are a match for such a beauty? You are not worth her little finger.' And they came towards him from all sides, trying to part his bride from him. But now Ivan-tsarevich could bear it no longer: he swung out one arm, and a path was cleared before him, and when he swung out the other, he swept them away completely, and not a single one of them was left.

Then the maiden Radiant Beauty took him by the hand and went to her house with him. She sat down by the oak table, which was covered with choice food, and entertained him regally, calling him her bridegroom. Soon they made ready to go back to the country of Ivan-tsarevich.

They travelled on and on, and one day they came to rest in an open field. The maiden Radiant Beauty lay down,

while Ivan-tearevich guarded her sleep. When she awoke, Ivan-tsarevich said to her: 'Radiant Beauty, watch over my white body, for now I shall lie down to sleep.' 'How long will you sleep?' 'I shall sleep without stirring once for nine days and nine nights; and even if you try to wake me, you will not be able to. I shall wake up by myself when the time comes.' 'It is a long time, Ivan-tsarevich, and I shall grow weary.' 'Whether you become weary or not, this is how it must be.' And he lay down and slept for nine days and nine nights. Now, during this time, Koshchey the Immortal came and took the maiden Radiant Beauty with him to his realm.

When Ivan-tsarevich woke from his sleep, he looked about him but the maiden Radiant Beauty was no longer there. He wept and wandered about sadly, taking neither a road nor a pathway. After a long or a short time he came to the realm of Koshchey the Immortal and asked to say at the house of an old woman. 'Why is it that you go about so sadly, Ivan-tsarevich?' It is like this, grandmother,' and he told her the whole story. 'I had gained all, but now I am left with nothing.' 'Yours is a sad story, Ivan-tsarevich, for the Koshchey will not spare you.' 'I want to have at least a glance at my bride.' 'Well, lie down and sleep until morning; tomorrow the Koshchey is going to do battle.' Ivan-tsarevich lay down to sleep, but this time sleep had no power over him.

In the morning, as soon as the Koshchey had left his house, Ivan-tsarevich went up to it and knocked at the gate. The maiden Radiant Beauty opened it, looked at him and wept. They went into her chamber, sat down at the table and began to talk. Ivan-tearevich said to the maiden Radiant Beauty: 'Ask Koshchey the Immortal where is his 'death', his mortal essence.' 'Very well, I shall ask him,' she replied. As soon as he had left the house, the Koshchey returned. 'Ah,' he said, 'there is a Russian smell about. I can sense that Ivan-tsarevich has been with you.' 'How could this be, Immortal Koshchey, how could I have seen Ivan-tsarevich? He has remained in the lumbering forests, where the deep swamps are, and surely by now wild animals have eaten him.' Then they had supper together, and afterwards the maiden Radiant Beauty asked him: 'Tell me, Immortal Koshchey, where is your 'death'?' 'Why do you want

to know that, stupid woman? My 'death' is tied up in the broom.'

Early in the morning the Koshchey went to do battle again. Ivan-tsarevich came to the maiden Radiant Beauty, took the broom and gilded it with bright, pure gold. As soon as he had left, the Koshchey returned and entered the house. 'Ah,' he said, 'there is a Russian smell about. I can sense that Ivan-tsarevich has been with you.' 'How can this be, Immortal Koshchey? It is you who have flown over the land of Rus', so that now you sense a Russian smell everywhere; it is you who has a Russian smell about you. How could I have seen Ivan-tsarevich? He has remained in the slumbering forests, where the deep swamps are and surely by now wild animals have eaten him.' And when the time came to have supper, the maiden Radiant Beauty sat on a chair, but the Koshchey she asked to sit on a bench. He looked towards the threshold, where lay the broom - gilded. 'What is this?' he asked. 'Well, you can see for yourself, Immortal Koshchey, how dear you are to me, how I guard your 'death' like a treasure.' 'You stupid woman! I was joking. My 'death' is over there, inside the oak fence.'

The next day, when the Koshchey had gone, Ivan-tsarevich came and gilded the whole fence. When towards evening the Immortal Koshchey returned home, he said: 'Aha, there is a Russian smell about. I can sense that Ivan-tsarevich has been with you.' 'How could this be, Immortal Koshchey? I have told you more than once: how could I have seen Ivan-tsarevich? He has remained in the slumbering forests, where the deep swamps are, and surely by now wild animals have torn him to pieces.' When the time came for supper the maiden Radiant Beauty herself sat on the bench, but the Koshchey she asked to sit on the chair. The Koshchey looked out of the window and saw that the whole fence had been gilded and was gleaming like fire. 'What is this?' he asked. 'Do you see now how I respect you, how dear you are to me, and how dear is your 'death' to me?' Koshchey the Immortal liked to hear these words and said to the maiden Radiant Beauty: 'Oh! You stupid woman, I was joking! My 'death' is in an egg, this egg is in a duck, this duck is in a tree-stump, and this tree-stump is floating in the sea.' As soon as the Koshchey had gone to do

battle, the maiden Radiant Beauty baked some pirozhki for Ivan-tsarevich as food on the way, and told him where to find the 'death' of the Koshchey.

Ivan-tsarevich went by neither road nor a path until finally he came to the wide sea. But he did not know where to go from there. He had already finished the pirozhki long ago and had nothing left to eat. Suddenly a hawk came flying past. Ivan-tsarevich aimed at it with his rifle. 'Well, hawk, I shall shoot you and eat you raw.' 'Do not eat me, Ivan-tsarevich. There will come a time when I can be of service to you.' Then a bear came running along. 'Ah, Mishka of the crooked leg, I shall kill you and eat you raw.' 'Do not eat me, Ivan-tsarevich. There will come a time when I can be of service to you.' Then he looked round and saw a pike wriggling on the shore. 'Ah, large-toothed pike, I have found you in good time. I shall eat you raw.' 'Do not eat me, Ivan-tsarevich. You had better throw me back into the sea, for there will come a time when I can be of service to you.' So Ivan-tsarevich stood still and thought: 'Perhaps I may need their help at some time in the future, but now I am hungry.'

Suddenly the blue sea began to toss and splash, and surged up the shore. Ivan-tsarevich rushed towards a mountain, running as fast as he could, while the water behind him nearly caught up with his heels. He ran to the highest place and there climbed up a tree. Soon after the water began to ebb, and the sea calmed down and all was quiet again. But there on the shore lay a big tree-stump. Suddenly the bear came running along, lifted up the stump and threw it on the ground with such force, that it split open. From it flew out a duck. It flew up higher and higher, until suddenly, as if from nowhere, the hawk appeared in the sky, caught the duck and in an instant tore her apart. From the duck fell an egg, and this egg fell down straight into the sea. At this very moment the pike caught it and swam to the shore and gave it to Ivan-tsarevich.

Ivan-tsarevich hid the egg in his breast and went to Koshchey the Immortal. As he approached the house, the maiden Radiant Beauty came out to meet him, kissed him on the lips and rested her head on his shoulder. Koshchey the Immortal

sat by the window, cursing. 'Ha, Ivan-tsarevich! So you want to take the maiden Radiant Beauty away from me? Well! You shall not escape alive.' 'It was you who took her away from me,' answered Ivan-tsarevich, and he took the egg from his breast and showed it to the Koshchey. 'Now, what have I here?' he asked. The Koshchey felt the light grow dark before his eyes, and he fell silent, and became submissive and humble. The tsarevich rolled the egg from one hand to the other, whereupon the Koshchey was thrown from one corner of the room to the other. The tsarevich was pleased by this spectacle and kept throwing the egg about in his hands and then he squashed it completely. Thereupon the Koshchey fell down and died. Ivan-tsarevich harnessed the horses to a golden carriage, took whole bags full of silver and gold and with his bride returned to his father.

After a long or a short time he came to the old woman who had sought advice for him from all the animals, the fish, the birds, and the beasts, and there he saw his horse again. 'Thank God, Voronko, my raven-black horse, is still alive,' he said, and rewarded the old woman generously for having fed him, wishing her at least another ninety years of life.

And straightaway he sent a messenger to the tsar with a letter. In it he wrote: 'Dear father, come to meet your son. I am returning with my bride, the maiden Radiant Beauty.' When his father received the letter and read it, he could not believe his eyes! How could this be? Ivan-tsarevich had left home when he was only nine days and nine nights old! But after the messenger Ivan-tsarevich came himself and when the tsar saw that it was indeed his son and realised that he had told the truth, he ran out onto the porch to meet him.

Then he ordered the drums to be beaten and music to be played. 'Dear father, give us your blessing for the wedding,' asked Ivan-tsarevich. There was no need to brew beer or prepare the wine for there was already plenty of everything. On that same day they had a gay wedding feast, and the maiden Radiant Beauty was married to Ivan-tsarevich. And large barrels of every kind of drink were put out in the streets, so that all you had to do was drink as much as you wanted. I too was there, and drank mead and wine, which flowed along my

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## THE FEATHER OF FINIST THE BRIGHT FALCON

(Afanas'yev, vol. II, No. 234, pp.  
236-240)

There once lived an old man who had three daughters. The eldest and the middle one were vain, but the youngest looked after the household with great care.

One day the father made ready to go to town and asked his daughters what he should buy them. The eldest said: 'Buy me some cloth for a dress.' And the middle one asked for the same. 'And what shall I buy for you, my dearest daughter?' he asked the youngest. 'Dear father, buy me the feather of Finist the bright falcon.'

Their father said good-bye and went to town. He bought some cloth for a dress for each of the eldest daughters, but the feather of Finist the bright falcon he could not find anywhere. He returned home and made his eldest and middle daughters happy with the new cloth. 'But for you,' he said to the youngest, 'I could not find the feather of Finist the bright falcon anywhere.' 'So be it,' she said, 'perhaps another time you will be fortunate and find it.' The elder sisters cut out the cloth and made themselves new dresses, laughing at their younger sister. But she took it all silently.

And once again the father made ready to go to town. 'Well, my daughters, what would you like me to buy for you?' The eldest and the middle one each asked for a kerchief, but the youngest said again: 'Dear father, buy me the feather of Finist the bright falcon.' The father went to town, bought two kerchiefs, but nowhere did he see the feather. When he came home he said: 'Well my daughter, again I could not find the feather of Finist the bright falcon.' 'It does not matter, dear father, perhaps another time you will be fortunate and find it.'

And for a third time the father made ready to go to town and asked: 'Tell me, my daughters, what would you like me to bring for you?' The elder ones said: 'Buy us earrings,' but the youngest still asked: 'Buy me the feather of Finist the bright falcon.' The father bought golden earrings, and then again sought for the feather, but no one knew anything about it. And so, sadly, he left the town. Yet,



hardly had he left the gates behind him, when an old man came towards him, who was carrying a little box. 'What is it you are carrying, old fellow?' 'The feather of Finist the bright falcon.' 'How much are you asking for it?' 'Give me a thousand roubles.' The father paid the money and galloped home with the little box. His daughters came out to meet him.

'Well, my dearest daughter,' he said to the youngest, 'at last I have bought you your present, here it is.' The youngest daughter almost jumped with joy. She took the little box, kissed it, caressed it, and pressed it tightly to her heart.

After supper they all went to their bedrooms to sleep; the youngest too went to her room and opened the little box. And straightaway the feather of Finist the bright falcon flew out, fell to the ground, and before the girl there appeared a handsome tsarevich. And they told each other sweet and lovely things.

Now, the sisters heard them talking and asked: 'Sister, with whom are you talking?' 'I am talking to myself,' the beautiful girl answered. 'Well then, open the door.' The tsarevich threw himself to the ground and changed back into the feather; she took it, put it into the little box and opened the door. The sisters looked around everywhere, but there was no one. As soon as they had gone, the beautiful girl opened the window, took the feather and said: 'Fly, my feather, fly into the open field and there walk for a while!' The feather changed into the bright falcon and flew into the open field.

The next night Finist the bright falcon again flew to his girl, and they talked happily together. The sisters heard it and straightaway came running to their father. 'Father, there is someone who spends the nights with our sister, he is there now, talking to her.' The father rose up and went to his youngest daughter. He entered her room, but the tsarevich had long since changed back into the feather and was lying in the box. 'Oh, you good-for-nothings,' the father said angrily to his elder daughters, 'why do you abuse her for no reason? You would do better to mind your own affairs!'

The next day they had recourse to cunning: in the evening, when it had turned completely dark outside, they put up a ladder against the window of the beautiful girl's room and there they planted sharp knives and a needle.

At night, when Finist the bright falcon came flying along, he hit against the window again and again, but however much he tried he could not get into her room, but only cut his wings. 'Farewell, my beautiful girl,' he said, 'if you want to find me, search for me beyond the thrice-nine lands, in the thrice-tenth tsardom. But before you can find me, a brave young man, you will have to wear out three pairs of iron shoes, break three iron staves and eat three stone loaves.' But the girl was asleep, and although she heard these sad words in her sleep, she could not wake up to let him in.

When she awoke the next morning, she saw that there were knives and a needle at the window and that blood dripped from them. She threw up her hands: 'Oh my God, my sisters have destroyed my love!' And that same hour she made ready and left the house. She ran to the smithy, forged three pairs of iron shoes and three iron staves and provided herself with three stone loaves, and then set out on the road to find Finist the bright falcon.

She went on and on; she wore out one pair of shoes, broke one iron staff and ate one stone loaf. And then she came to a hut and knocked. 'Master and mistress of the house, let me in from the dark night.' An old woman answered: 'Welcome, beautiful girl, where are you going my dear?' 'Oh, grandmother, I am looking for Finist the bright falcon.' 'Well, my beauty, you have to search far!' she said.

In the morning the old woman said: 'Go now to my elder sister, she will advise you well; but here is my present to you, a silver spinning-wheel and a golden spindle. When you spin the flax, a golden thread will come from it.' Then she took a ball, threw it on the road and told her to follow it, wherever it should go. The girl thanked the old woman and went after the ball.

After a long or a short time another pair of shoes was worn out, another staff broken and another stone loaf eaten. Finally the ball rolled to a hut. She knocked: 'Good people, open the door to the dark night for a beautiful girl!' 'Welcome,' answered an old woman, 'where are you going, my beauty?' 'Grandmother, I am looking for Finist the bright falcon.' 'You will have to search far indeed!' In the morning the old

woman gave her a silver dish and a little golden egg and sent her to her elder sister. 'She knows where to find Finist the bright falcon,' she said.

The beautiful girl said good-bye to the old woman and went on her way. She went on and on; she wore out the third pair of shoes, broke the third staff and ate the last loaf. And again the ball rolled up to a hut. She knocked and asked: 'Good people, please open the door to the dark night for a beautiful girl.' And again an old woman came out: 'Come in, my dear, welcome! Where do you come from and where are you going?' 'Grandmother, I am looking for Finist the bright falcon.' 'Oh, it is difficult to find him! He now lives in such and such a town, where he married the daughter of a pastry-cook.' In the morning the old woman said to the beautiful girl: 'Here is my present to you, a golden lace-frame and a needle. Just hold the frame, and the needle will embroider by itself. Well, God speed, and this is my advice to you: hire yourself out to work for the pastry-cook.'

And this she did. When the beautiful girl came to the pastry-cook's house, she hired herself out to work there. And the work almost did itself in her hands. She lit the oven, carried water and prepared the meal. The pastry-cook watched her and was very glad. 'Thank God,' she said to her daughter, 'we found a reliable and good worker, she does everything without having to be told.'

When she had finished her duties, the beautiful girl took the silver spinning-wheel and the golden spindle and began to spin. And from it there came out not an ordinary thread but a golden one. When the pastry-cook's daughter saw this, she said: 'Beautiful girl, will you sell me your plaything?' 'I shall.' 'For what price?' 'Allow me to stay one night with your husband.' The pastry-cook's daughter agreed. 'No harm will be done,' she thought, 'for I shall give my husband a sleeping potion, and with this spindle mother and I shall heap up gold for ourselves.'

Finist the bright falcon was not at home. The whole day he had spent high up under the vault of the sky and only returned towards evening. They sat down to eat. The beautiful girl served the food at table, and all the time she gazed at

him. But he, the brave young man, did not recognise her. The pastry-cook's daughter mixed a sleeping potion with the food of Finist the bright falcon, put him to bed and said to the servant-girl: 'Go to his room and keep the flies away.' And while she was doing this, the beautiful girl wept bitterly, saying: 'Wake up, Finist, bright falcon, it is I, the beautiful girl, who have come to you. I have broken three iron staves, worn out three pairs of iron shoes, have eaten three stone loaves, and all the time I have been searching for you, my love!' But Finist slept on, not hearing anything. And so the night passed.

The next day the servant girl took the silver dish and in it she let roll the golden egg. At this, many golden eggs appeared. When the pastry-cook's daughter saw this she said: 'Do sell me your plaything.' 'Please, you may buy it.' 'What is the price?' 'Allow me to stay yet another night with your husband.' 'Very well, I agree.' Again Finist, the bright falcon had spent all day high up under the vault of the sky and returned home only towards evening. They sat down to eat. The beautiful girl served the food at table and gazed at him all the time but it was as though he did not even notice her once. Again the pastry-cook's daughter gave him a sleeping potion, put him to bed and sent the servant-girl to keep the flies away. And this time also, however much she wept, however hard she tried to wake him, he slept through till morning and heard nothing.

The third day the beautiful girl sat down, and in her hand she held the lace-frame, while the needle embroidered by itself, and what beautiful patterns it traced! The pastry-cook's daughter looked at it and said: 'Will you sell me your plaything!' 'You may have it.' 'What is the price?' 'Allow me to stay a third night with your husband.' 'All right, I agree.' In the evening Finist the bright falcon came flying home, and again his wife gave him a sleeping potion, put him to bed and sent the servant-girl to keep the flies away. While she was doing this she lamented, saying with tears: 'Wake up, Finist, bright falcon! It is I, your beautiful girl, who have come to you. I have broken three iron staves, worn out three pairs of iron shoes and have eaten three stone loaves,

and all the time I have been looking for you, my love.' But Finist the bright falcon slept deeply and heard nothing.

And for a long time she wept and tried to wake him.

Suddenly a tear fell on his cheek, and that instant he awoke. 'Ah,' he said, 'something has burnt me!' 'Finist, my bright falcon,' answered the girl, 'I have come to you. I have broken three iron staves, worn out three pairs of iron shoes, have eaten three stone loaves, and all the time I have been looking for you. Three nights already I have been standing over you, but you have been asleep, and did not wake up and respond to my words.' And only now did Finist the bright falcon recognise her, and so happy was he that one could not express it in words!

They agreed to go away from the pastry-cook's house. In the morning the pastry-cook's daughter discovered that there was neither her husband nor the servant-girl. She began to lament to her mother, who ordered the horses to be harnessed, and chased after them in pursuit. She rode and rode until she came to the three old women, but did not catch up with Finist the bright falcon, and even his traces could no longer be seen.

When Finist the bright falcon came near the home of his bride, he threw himself onto the moist earth and changed into the feather. The beautiful girl took it, hid it in her bosom and went to her father. 'Ah, my beloved daughter! I already thought that you were no longer on this earth. Where have you been so long?' 'I have been praying to God,' she answered.

Now, it was nearly Holy Week, and her father with his elder daughters made ready to go to Matins. 'My dear daughter,' he said to the youngest, 'come, let us go, for it is such a joyous day.' 'But father, I have nothing to wear.' 'Put on our finery,' said the elder sisters. 'But none of it fits me,' she said, 'and so I would rather stay at home.'

And when the father with his two daughters had gone to matins, the beautiful girl took out her feather. It fell onto the ground and changed into the handsome tsarevich. He whistled out of the window, and at once dresses, finery and a golden carriage appeared. They harnessed the horses, took

their seats in the carriage and drove off. They entered the church and stood in front of the whole congregation. Everybody wondered who were this tsarevich and tsarevna that did them such honour. And at the end of matins, they left before everyone and drove home. The carriage disappeared, and it was as if the dresses and finery had never existed.

When the father returned with his daughters, the tsarevich changed back into the feather. 'Ah, sister,' they said to her, 'had you come with us to church, you would have seen such a handsome tsarevich and a most beautiful tsarevna.' 'It does not matter, sisters, you have told me now, and it is as though I had been there myself.'

The next day the same happened, and on the third day, as soon as the tsarevich and the beautiful girl had taken their seats in their carriage, the father left the church and saw with his own eyes how the carriage drove up to his house and then disappeared. When he returned, he questioned his youngest daughter about it. 'Ah, I shall have to confess everything to you,' she said, and she took out the feather; it fell onto the ground and changed into the tearevich.

And afterwards they were married, and what a splendid wedding it was! I too was there at the feast and drank wine; it flowed along my beard, missing my mouth. They put the fool's cap on me and began to push me about. Then they gave me a basket and said: 'Do not hang about here, fellow; quick, away with you, get out of this house!'

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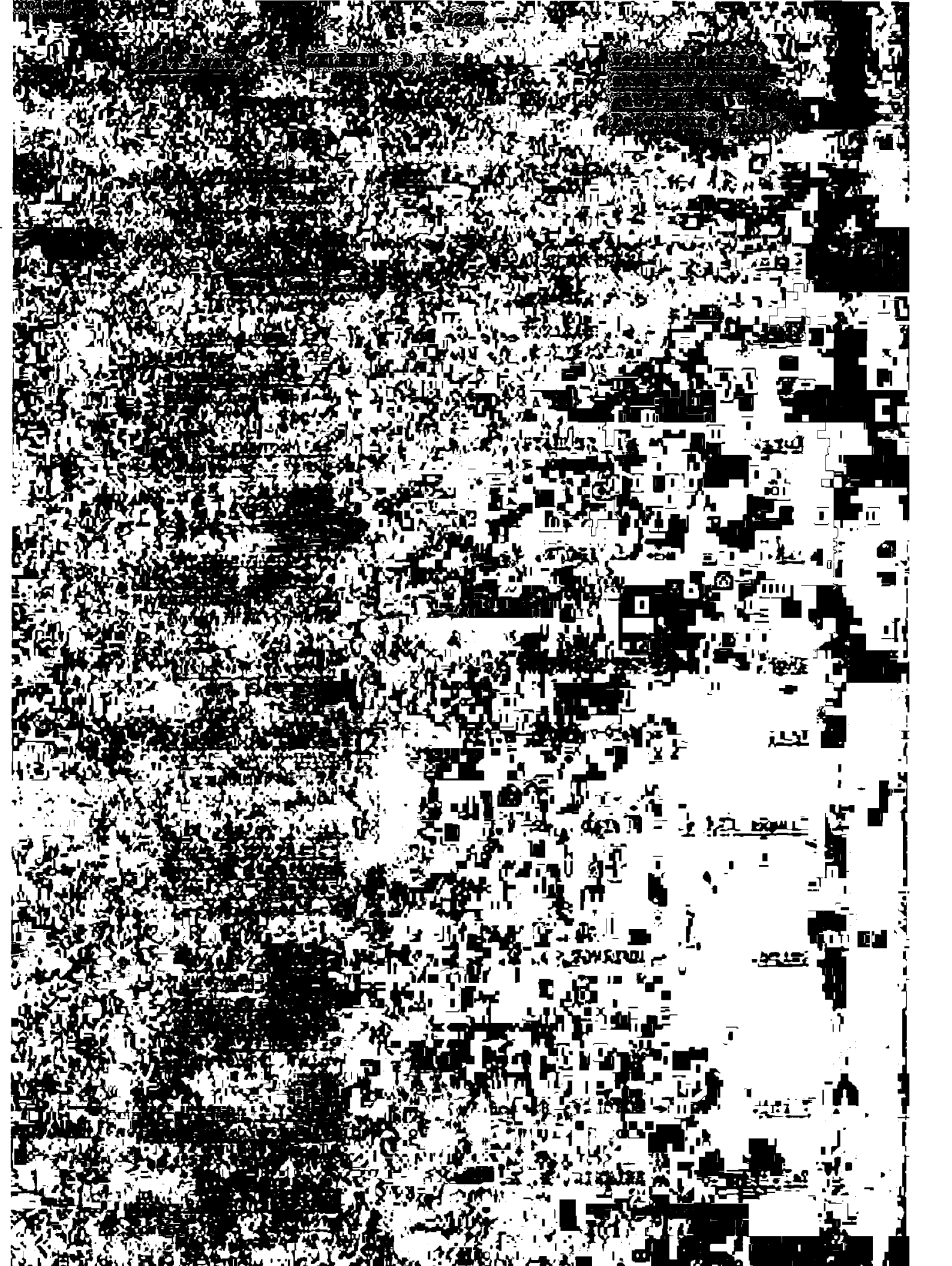
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following folk-tale collections have been referred to in an abbreviated form.

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|----------------------|--|--|
| <u>Af.</u>           | - AFANAS'YEV, A. N.                        | <u>'Narodnyye russkiye skazki</u> , ed. V. Ya. Propp, 3 vols., Moscow, 1958.                                   |
| <u>Karn.</u>         | - KARNAUKHOVA, I. V.                       | <u>Skazki I. F. Kovalyova</u> , Moscow, 1941.  |
| <u>Khud.</u>         | - ed. BAZANOV, V. G. and ALEKSEYEVA, O. B. | <u>Velikorusskiye skazki v zapisyakh I. A. Khudyakova</u> , Moscow/Leningrad, 1964.                            |
| <u>Korg.</u>         | - ed. NECHAYEV, A. N.                      | <u>Belomorskiye skazki, rasskazannyye M. M. Korguyevym</u> , Leningrad, 1938.                                  |
| <u>Nik.</u>          | - ed. PROPP, V. Ya.                        | <u>Severnorusskiye skazki v zapisyakh A. I. Nikiforova</u> , Moscow/Leningrad, 1961.                           |
| <u>Onch.</u>         | - ONCHUKOV, N. Ye.                         | <u>Severnyye skazki</u> , St. Petersburg, 1908.  |
| <u>Sad.</u>          | - SADOVNIKOV, D. N.                        | <u>Skazki i predaniya Samarskogo Kraya</u> , St. Petersburg, 1884.   |
| <u>Skazki XIX v.</u> | - NOVIKOV, N. V.                           | <u>Russkiye skazki v zapisyakh i publikatsiyakh pervoy poloviny XIX veka</u> , Moscow/Leningrad, 1961.         |
| <u>Smirn.</u>        | - SMIRNOV, A. N.                           | <u>Sbornik velikorusskikh skazok arkhiva ruskogo geograficheskogo obshchestva</u> , 2 vols., Petersburg, 1917. |
| <u>Sokol.</u>        | - SOKOLOV, B. and Yu.                      | <u>Skazki i pesni Belozerskogo kraja</u> , Moscow, 1915.   |
| <u>Zel. Perm.</u>    | - ZELENIN, D. K.                           | <u>Velikorusskiye skazki Permskoy gubernii</u> , St. Petersburg, 1914.   |





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