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MEMOIRS OF THE
AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY

VOLUME 42

1947

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Printed in the United States of America

RAUSEN BROTHERS
417 Lafayette Street
New York 3, N. Y.

RUSSIAN EPIC STUDIES

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PHILADELPHIA
AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY
1949

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The publication of *RUSSIAN EPIC STUDIES* has been generously supported by the Humanities Fund and by the Committee for the Promotion of Advanced Slavic Cultural Studies.

EDITORS

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INTRODUCTION

By

Ernest J. Simmons

The several studies in the present volume, dealing with Russian epic tradition, are devoted primarily to that greatest of all Old Russian monuments — the *Slovo o polku Igoreve*, which belongs to the best creations of supremely refined literary art characterizing the cultural world of the twelfth century, and at the same time is deeply rooted in Russian and international folklore. It is little wonder that the *Slovo* presents so many fascinating and pertinent problems for students of both oral and written epic tradition in the Middle Ages.

Among Western scholars the conviction has long existed that medieval Russia produced little in literary art and culture comparable to the early achievements in epic poetry, verse tales, and in prose in the vernaculars of Western Europe. To a certain extent, early nineteenth-century Russian apologists of native medieval culture helped to promote this false notion.

Subsequent collectors, scholars, and literary historians, however, have conclusively established that Russian literature during the first two centuries of its existence (eleventh and twelfth) not only assimilated important genres of medieval Byzantine literature, but on the basis of them produced many original works of distinction in those genres which were also typical of medieval Western European literature. As in the medieval West, no doubt a great deal of what was written in Kievan Rus' has been lost to us, but that which has survived is considerable in bulk, and much of it testifies to the fact that early Russian literary culture reached a high point of genuine creative growth until it was checked by barbarian incursions from the steppes and then retarded for some time by the severity of the Tatar yoke.

The consensus of opinion of all the experts in the field is that the *Slovo o polku Igoreve* is the finest extant literary

achievement of medieval Russia and a first-rate adornment to Russian literature in general. For this reason and many others the work has been the object of ceaseless scholarly study ever since its discovery about 1795. No doubt a number of copies of the *Slovo* were made during the 300 years that separated the original from the extant manuscript, one of the sixteenth century, and it was inevitable that much corruption and mutilation should take place in the repeated copying of a manuscript so unusual in style and so rich in factual content. Some obscure passages testify to this fact. These obscurities, as well as problems of dating, language, form, historical background, literary antecedents, and the influences of oral tradition have been investigated by many distinguished Russian and foreign scholars throughout the nineteenth century right down to the present day.

Though the *Slovo* received its initial inspiration from an actual historical event recounted in the *Hypatian and Laurentian Chronicles*, the author is in no sense concerned merely with the chronicler's task of expository narrative. He enriches the historical texture of his account with a wealth of poetic allusions, images, and details drawn from both sophisticated and oral literature. It has been said that the *Slovo* contains more elements of pagan mythology than any other Russian monument, and the work is also deeply saturated in the animistic concepts and language of oral poetry. The particular value of the extensive and learned study of Professors Jakobson and Szeftel — "The Vseslav Epos" — is its threefold exhaustive investigation, carefully integrated, of the historical, literary, and folkloristic evidence bearing on the subject. Though the core of the study is the werewolf theme of the Volx *bylina*, in the course of this investigation some new light is also thrown upon the *Slovo*.

In the wake of the theory of borrowing that became popular in *Slovo* scholarship in the 1870's, it was virtually inevitable that sources should be sought for in Greek literature. P. Vjazemskij, in 1875, found reflections of classical Greek poetry in the *Slovo*, and in the same year the much more scholarly Vs. Miller looked for sources in Byzantine Greek poetry. Subsequent investigators have mined this ore pretty thoroughly, but in the present volume Professor Manning's article, "Classical Influence on the *Slovo*," brings out some additional and

interesting comparisons with Homer, the Greek tragedies, and with Greek oral tradition.

The trouble with the theory of borrowing, however, is that it is epidemic by nature, and if we may credit the numerous sources and comparisons ferreted out, then the unknown *author of the Slovo* was the most erudite student of world literature in the twelfth century. For numerous scholars, such as Polevoj, Buslaev, Ždanov, Vladimirov, Abicht, Kallaš, and Daškevič, have made comparisons between the *Slovo* and the Scandinavian sagas, the *Song of Roland*, the *Nibelungen*, the Germanic poem *Waltharius*, and French romances of the twelfth century. Because of the close connection between Kievan Rus' and Scandinavia, it is natural that source-hunting in the Scandinavian sagas should have predominated in this theory of borrowing. Professor Margaret Schlauch's discriminating study, "Scandinavian Influence on the *Slovo o polku Igoreve*," reviews the scholarly literature on this theme and comes to the judicious conclusion that, though Old Norse traditions certainly existed among the Kievan Russians at the time, it is extremely difficult to prove a case of close kinship between the *Slovo* and the Scandinavian sagas. In truth, the only safe conclusion that can be drawn is that the general resemblances which have been pointed out so often arise from the fact that both the *Slovo* and these Western European monuments are dealing with a literary heroic epos in a feudal period and of necessity contain common motifs and common stylistic factors.

The unusual poetic style of the *Slovo* shows the influence both of written and oral literature and it has been the subject of much scholarly investigation and speculation. One of the most complicated aspects of the poetic style is the question of its rhythmic structure and stylistic devices, such as simile, metaphor, parallelisms, antithesis, repetition, and alliteration. It is very probable that the *Slovo*, like the Scandinavian sagas, was written in alternating prose and verse, and the clearly discernible rhythmic phases are sustained by abundant alliteration. Professor Čiževsky, in his brief study "On Alliteration in Ancient Russian Epic Literature," brings a fresh point of view to his comparison of the use of this device in the *Slovo* with that employed in other Old Russian literary remains connected with oral epic tradition.

Another important monument of Old Russian epic literature, "Dejanie i žitie Devgeniévo Akrita," found together with the *Slovo* in the lost Musin-Puškin manuscript and preserved in a couple of later fragmentary copies, is carefully analyzed in Professor Grégoire's study, "Le Digénis russe." This Slavic echo of the great Byzantine epos, as the eminent Belgian investigator of Greek oral and written literature and of medieval European epic tradition definitively shows, contributes equally to the elucidation of the Slavic and Greek epic heritage.

All these studies are concerned with the *Slovo* itself and with its Russian and foreign poetic background, but the last three papers of this volume deal with the reception of the *Slovo* after its discovery. Professor Kridl's article evokes the memory of the Polish poet, Cyprian Godebski. His *Wyprawa Igora*, published in 1806, was the first Slavic translation of the *Slovo*, and as a translation it was preceded only by two German attempts. This Polish rendering escaped even Šambinago's comprehensive bibliography of the *Slovo* (Moscow, 1940), although Godebski was not only the first foreigner to versify it, but he also composed the earliest variation on the Jaroslavna theme which later became quite a popular motif in Russian poetry.

Among the artistic renderings of the *Slovo* into foreign languages, the attempt of the great German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, is one of the most remarkable, and we are indebted to Professor von Gronicka for the first edition of this Rilke manuscript, as well as for a detailed commentary on it.

Though one does not expect to find in English an interest in Old Russian literature in any respect comparable to that in adjacent countries, Dr. Yarmolinsky's comprehensive and valuable bibliographical article, "The *Slovo* in English," reviews what interest there has been, and it has not been inconsiderable. From the first notice of the work in the *Westminster Review* in 1824, there has been a slow trickle of observations and studies in England and America. There have been some six complete translations and one adaptation of the *Slovo* into English, and in 1915 Leonard A. Magnus published in London the first extensive scholarly study of the work in English.

Serious American scholarly interest in this field can hardly be said to have begun before the studies in Old Russian literature of the late Professor Samuel H. Cross in the 1930's. How-

ever, the first extensive and highly significant contribution to the study of the *Slovo* to be published in America appeared in 1947, *La Geste du Prince Igor*, edited by Henri Grégoire, Roman Jakobson, and Marc Szeftel. This collective work has already called forth a series of reviews and articles both here and abroad. Further, there will soon appear here in print two fresh translations of the *Slovo*, that of Maria-Rosa Lida Malkiel (University of California) into Spanish, and that of Vladimir Nabokov (Cornell University) into English, as well as an extensive monograph by Karl Menges (Columbia University) entitled: *Oriental Elements in the Vocabulary of the Slovo and the Zadonščina*. There is every reason to hope that this new, thriving interest and profound research in the Old Russian epos among American scholars will continue and grow.

THE VSESLAV EPOS

By

Roman Jakobson and Marc Szeftel

I — THE *BYLINA* ABOUT THE PRINCE-WEREWOLF — SURVEY OF VARIANTS

The *bylina* about the victorious prince-werewolf is one of the rarest subjects in Russian oral epic tradition. Only eight variants of the whole *bylina* have been published up to the present time; and of these, two are by the same narrator. Besides these eight texts, two records of the beginning of this *bylina*, setting forth the infancy of the miraculous prince, have appeared in print.

During the past century three narrators of the Olonec province have provided variants of this *bylina*: the first was an old blind man, Kuz'ma Romanov, from the village of Longasy on the southern end of the Zaonežskij peninsula, who recited his narrative twice, first in 1860 to Rybnikov (= R I)¹ and then in 1871 to Hilferding — this version differs slightly from the earlier one and is somewhat longer (= H II);² the second was a boatman on the river Šala (or Vodla) whose narration was taken down in 1860 by Rybnikov (= R II)³; and the third was Aksin'ja Fomina, "a skillful singer of *byliny*," a peasant woman from the village of Rim on the hill Pudožskaja Gora — recorded in 1871 by Hilferding (= H I).⁴

Two additional variants of the *bylina* are noted in the family of the famous narrators Krjukovy from the village of Nižnjaja Zolótica on the shore of the White Sea: one was recorded by Markov from Agrafena Krjukova who, as she stated, learned this *bylina* from the fishermen of the Mezen' bank

¹ *Pesni sobrannye P. N. Rybnikovym* (2nd ed., Moscow, 1909), I, No. 38.

² *Onežskie byliny, zapisannye A. F. Hilferdingom* (2nd ed., St. Petersburg, 1896), II, No. 91.

³ *Pesni...* (Moscow, 1910), II, No. 146.

⁴ *Onežskie byliny...* (St. Petersburg, 1894), I, No. 15.

(= M);⁵ the other was taken down in 1938 by Borodina and Lipeč from Marfa Krjukova, Agrafena's daughter, who had learned the *bylina* not from her mother, but from her grand-uncle, Gavril Krjukov (= B L).⁶ Ončukov recorded only the beginning of the *bylina* from the aged Pavel Markov, an Old-Believer of the village Bedovaja of the Pustozerskaja volost' on the Lower Pečora (= O).⁷

But the oldest record of the *bylina* in complete form has come down to us in Kirša Danilov's collection of *byliny* and songs, compiled in the '80s of the 18th century in West Siberia (= D).⁸ The beginning of this latter version has a close variant in a fragment about the birth and infancy of our hero which, however, omits his name. It was recorded in the middle of the last century in the Altai Mountain district of the Tomsk Government by an amateur folklorist, S. Guljaev, and was published first in 1854 under the title, "Bylina pro Zmeja Goryniča," without any indication of the place or date of the record. Later it was republished more fully and accurately by V. Miller on the basis of Guljaev's manuscript (= G).⁹

Finally, there is one more record of the *bylina* made in 1928 by the expedition of B. Sokolov in the region of Pudoga in the Olonec Government, but as far as we know it is still unpublished.¹⁰

The number of verses in the *bylina* varies: BL — 468 lines, M — 211, HII — 206, D — 204, RI — 187, RII — 158, fragment O — 49, HI — 45, and fragment G — 29.

II — PERSONALIA OF THE BYLINA'S HERO

1. Volx Vseslav'evič and the magician Vseslav.

The hero of the *bylina* about the prince-werewolf is called in the oldest record (D) Volx (or Vol'x) Vseslav'evič, and in its title, Seslav'evič. The form volx originates in the common

⁵ A. Markov, *Belomorskie byliny* (Moscow, 1901), No. 51.

⁶ *Byliny M. S. Krjukovoj, I = Letopisi Gos. literaturnogo muzeja* (Moscow, 1939), VI, No. 39.

⁷ N. Ončukov, *Pečorskie byliny* (St. Petersburg, 1904), No. 84.

⁸ *Sbornik Kirši Daniłova, pod redakcieju P. N. Šeffera* (St. Petersburg, 1901), 18-22.

⁹ V. Miller, "Dve sibirskie byliny iz zapisej S. I. Guljaeva," *Živaja Starina*, XX (1911), 452.

¹⁰ *Revue des Etudes Slaves*, XII (1932), 214.

noun volxv meaning magician. In popular Russian the cluster lxx (or lxx) usually loses the final labial spirant. This loss took place first at the end of a word, and then was generalized for those grammatical cases which followed the consonant cluster by a suffixal vowel; cf. Kirša Danilov's song about Terent'išče (p. 6): volxita sprašivati — "to ask for magicians," and in Hilferding's records (No. 79, 221): Ešče vsi volxi by vse volšebniki! Sometimes the loss of the final labial in the root of the common noun volxv occurs only if no vowel follows. Traces of such an alternation appear also in the name of the *bylina*-hero: in BL the nominative is Volx, but in the genitive, besides the form Volxa (426), we find as well the older form Volxva (416).¹ The final labial of this epic name appears likewise in the song of Ščelkan's death (H, No. 254) which becomes coupled with the birth of Vol'vušen'ka. The song apostrophizes our hero as Vol'vu syna Ščeslav'eviča (the initial šče- is due to the association with Ščelkan).

The name Vseslav is rare in Russian tradition. The combination of the nouns Volx and Vseslav to make the full name Volx Vseslav'evič clearly reveals its origin. We find both these nouns linked in the *Primary Chronicle (Povest' Vremennyyx Let)* in the biography of Vseslav of Polock who ruled there from 6552/1044 and died in 6609/1101. This Chronicle mentions Vseslav for the first time under 6552² and states on that occasion that his mother had born him by enchantment, and that the magicians bade her bind the caul, in which Vseslav was born, upon him for his whole life.³ The paronomasia here is worthy of note: v'lsvi — V'seslav'. Throughout the biography of the Polock prince the nouns V'seslav and v'lxv' are per-

¹ A Pogodin in *Izvestiya Otdeleniya Rus. Jaz. i Slov. Akademii Nauk*, XVI, No 4, 37, supposes an Old Russian form v'lx' (besides v'lx-v'), attested by the Finnish loan-word velho 'magician', by the derivatives v'lsiti, v'ls'ba and by the river name V'lxov' which he interprets as a possessive form.

² When quoting the *Primary Chronicle* in English, we use (and at times amend) the translation by S. H. Cross in *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, XII (1930), 75 ff. In quoting the original text, we follow, with few deviations, A. Šaxmatov, *Povest' vremennyyx let* (Petrograd, 1916).

³ Сего же роди мати отъ вѣлхования, матери бо родивъши его, бысть ему язвѣно на главѣ его, рекоша же вѣлсви матери его: «се язвѣно навязи на нь, да носить е до живота своего, еже носить Вѣсеславъ и до сего дѣне на собѣ...»

sistently associated. Thus under 6579/1071 the news of the defeat of Vseslav is followed by a long discourse on magicians:

Въ сеже лѣто побѣди Яропълкъ Вьсеслава у Голотичьска. Въ сиче времена приде вълхвъ . . .

A hypothesis concerning the link of the epic Volx Vseslav'-evič with the historical reminiscences cited has already been set forth by S. Ševyrev: "His first name is an allusion to his eminence in magic; the patronymic indicates Vseslav the Polock prince who is presented as a sorcerer in the *Slovo*."⁴ The great Russian historian S. Solov'ev connected the *bylina*'s story about Volx's miraculous coming into the world with the legend in the *Chronicle* about Vseslav's magical birth.⁵ The similarity in name and image of the *bylina* hero and of Vseslav of Polock was also noticed in passing by several other specialists of the Russian epos: e.g., by Orest Miller,⁶ E. Barsov,⁷ M. Xalanskij,⁸ I. Ždanov,⁹ A. Veselovskij.¹⁰ "In our *bylina* about Volx there is preserved an obscure reminiscence, however, of the miraculous Vseslav of the *letopis'* and of the *Slovo*," they state. But as early as in the first edition of the songs collected by Rybnikov, the commentator Bessonov, masking "the scientific groundlessness" of his explanations by the raw character of his polemic attacks,¹¹ bluntly stated that "it is a bit shameful for a philologist" to identify the name of Volx with the common noun "volxv," and that there are no reasons for relating the Vseslavič of the *bylina* with Vseslav of Polock;

⁴ *Istoriija russkoj slovesnosti* (St. Petersburg, 1846), I, 229.

⁵ *Istoriija Rossii s drevnejšix vremen* (4th ed., Moscow, 1866), I, 297.

⁶ *Il'ja Muromec i bogatyrstvo kievskoe* (St. Petersburg, 1869), p. 194.

⁷ *Slovo o polku Igoreve kak xudožestvennyj pamjatnik Kievskoj družinnoj Rusi* (Moscow, 1887), I, 425.

⁸ "Južno-slavyjanskije skazanija o kraleviče Marke v svjazi s proizvedenijami russkogo bylevogo eposa," *Russkij Filologičeskij Vestnik*, XXVII (1892), 138-142.

⁹ "Vasilij Buslaevič i Volx Vseslav'evič," *Žurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveščeniija* (1893-1894).

¹⁰ "Russkie i vil'tiny v sage o Tidreke Bernskom," *Izvestija Otd. Rus. Jaz. i Slov. Ross. Akad. Nauk*, XI, No. 3 (1906), 65.

¹¹ A. Gruzinskij, "Predislovie redaktora," *Pesni sobrannye P. N. Rybnikovym* (2nd ed., Moscow, 1909), I, p. IV.

any further "dreamings" of such a nature he categorically declared "*a priori* and absurd."¹²

The question of the kinship of the epic Volx Vseslav'evič with the historic Vseslav was raised with particular insistency by D. Leonardov, the author of the most detailed but unfortunately unfinished survey of sources about Vseslav of Polock.¹³ Nevertheless, strange as it may seem, the solution of this problem remained in the stage of sundry marginal remarks. A detailed comparison of the *bylina* plot with the biographical evidence of the written sources about Prince Vseslav, St. Vladimir's great-grandson, has not been made — as if Bessonov's haughty prohibition, though unwarranted, continued to frighten off all investigators. The evasive attitude taken in this question by Vsevolod Miller — again without foundation — was a contributory factor in ignoring this problem.¹⁴ "I will not," this scholar declared, "examine the *bylina* from the point of view of its subject matter, because for the time being I consider such a task rather hopeless . . . The supposed correlation between the personality of the epic Vol'ga [Volx] and Vseslav of Polock might appear unconvincing" (*Očerki*, I, 166 f.). In his last unfinished work as well, a stimulating attempt to synthesize and outline the history of the Russian oral epos, Miller again evades this interpretation of our *bylina* because its "epic history" remained unclear for him. However, he finally did recognize the probability of a tie between the patronymic Seslavič in the *bylina* and the historical Vseslav, subject of many legends.¹⁵

In spite of the fact that the link between the Volx of the *bylina* and the Polock prince — who appears from days of old surrounded by a haze of sorcery — is much more tangible and evident than many of the correspondences between the Russian epos and history which have been pointed out by Miller and his disciples, once the head of this historical school of scholar-

¹² *Pesni sobrannye P. N. Rybnikovym* (1st ed., Moscow, 1861), I, 17-18.

¹³ "Polockij knjaz' Vseslav i ego vremja," *Polocko-Vitebskaja starina*, II (Vitebsk, 1912), 121-216.

¹⁴ "K bylinam o Vol'ge i Mikule," *Očerki russkoj narodnoj slovesnosti* (Moscow, 1897), I, 166-186; "Vol'ga Vseslav'evič," *Novyj ènciklopedičeskij slovar'*, XI (1913), 529-530.

¹⁵ *Očerki russkoj narodnoj slovesnosti* (Moscow, 1924), III, 56 f, and 170.

ship had expressed his doubt, a whole generation of Russian researchers dropped the question from consideration.

2. *Volx and Vol'ga.*

In the *bylina* about the plowman Mikula, the partner of Mikula is called Vol'ga — and mostly in the Olonec variants of the *bylina* about the prince-werewolf the same name is also used for the hero. This identity of the name has induced the temptation to look for one common hero in both these *byliny*. But as a matter of fact, the two *byliny* should not be confused with each other. In this connection Veselovskij emphasized that the unification of two plots under one personal name may be accidental.¹ V. Miller, as well, expressed the belief that the *bylina* about the hunting expedition and campaign of the prince-werewolf is more ancient, and that the *bylina* about the miraculous plowman Mikula and his meeting with Vol'ga (or more exactly some of the variants of this *bylina*) accidentally borrowed from the preceding *bylina* the motifs of the birth, childhood, and youth of the valiant hero (*Očerki*, I, 186). Later studies of the *bylina* about Mikula, which have been summed up by André Mazon,² definitely revealed its late origin (presumably the sixteenth century), although the question of an archaic nucleus in this *bylina*, as sketched by A. Šaxmatov,³ still remains an open one.

An essential step forward in the study of the *bylina* about Volx Vseslav'evič was made by S. Šambinago, who showed that the hero of the story of the victorious prince-werewolf may be called Vol'ga, but that the partner of the plowman Mikula never appears under the name of Volx.⁴ Hence the heroes of both *byliny* are genetically different, and only later, uniquely in the Olonec epic tradition, did one impose his name on the other. In the Arxangel'sk tradition, however, the two names are clearly distinguished from one another. Marfa Krjukova,

¹ "Južno-russkie byliny," *Sbornik Otd. Rus. Jaz. i Slov. Ak. Nauk*, XXXVI, No. 3 (1884), 250. Cf. F. Korš, "O russkom narodnom stixosloženii," *ibidem*, LXVII, No. 8 (1901), 37.

² "Mikula, le prodigieux laboureur," *Revue des Etudes Slaves*, XI (1931), 149-170.

³ "Mstislav Ljutyj v russkoj poëzii," *Sbornik Xar'kovskogo Istoriko-Filologičeskogo Obščestva*, XVIII (1909), 82 ff. especially 90 f.

⁴ "K literaturnoj istorii bylin o Vol'ge-Volxe Vseslav'eviče," *Žurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosvěščenija* (1905), No. 11.

on one hand, tells the *bylina* about the victorious campaign of Volx, full of werewolf adventures (No. 39); and on the other, she tells the *bylina* about Volga's meeting with Mikula (Nos. 40, 41).

Both epic names — Volx (Old Russian v'lxv-) and Vol'ga (Old Russian Ol'g-)* — telescoped and thus compromised forms arose, such as Vol'x (D) and conversely Volga (BL. Nos. 40, 41).

3. The patronymics of the hero.

The patronymic of the prince-werewolf is Vseslav'evič in D and RII. In HI the patronymic is missing. In the other variants the prince takes on the patronymics of other epic heroes whose father-names are similarly compounded, ending with -slav: the bogatyr Vasilij, son of Boguslav;¹ and Prince Vladimir, son of Svjatoslav.² Thus in the narrative of Kuz'ma Romanov, our hero is called Vol'ga Buslavlevič (HII) or Buslaevič (RI) — and *vice versa*, Vasilij becomes a grandson of Seslav (Rybnikov No. 169). In the Arxangel'sk record of our *bylina* we meet Volx Svjatoslav'evič (M) or Svetoslaevič (BL), while Prince Vladimir in his turn, in Russian epic tradition, began to attract from earliest times the patronymic Vseslavič, Vseslav'evič: "Zadonščina" in the Undol'skij copy,³ "Skazanie o kievskix bogatyrex",⁴ the *bylina* about Mixail Danilovič in a manuscript of the eighteenth century,⁵ and the *bylina* about the marriage of Prince Vladimir in Kirša Danilov's collection (p. 41). In general, the confusion of the names Vseslav and Svjatoslav is usual in Old Russian literary tradition; for example, in some variants of the "Skazanie o Mamaevom po-boišče," Ivan Vseslav figures and in other variants Ivan Svja-

* There is no doubt about the connection between the epic name Vol'ga and the Old Russian Ol'g' (gen. Ol'ga), which from earliest times appears with a prothetic *v*, but it is still questionable to which one of the historic princes of this name oral epic tradition is linked.

¹ A. Sobolevskij, *Materialy i issledovaniya v oblasti slavyanskoj filologii i arxeologii* (St. Petersburg, 1910), 244.

² According to A. Grigor'ev, *Arxangel'skie byliny i istoričeskie pesni* (Prague, 1939), II, 25 and 33, in the Mezen' River area our hero is known as Volga Vjačeslavič.

³ J Frček, *Zadonščina* (Prague, 1948), 185, 187.

⁴ *Sbornik Otd. Rus. Jaz. i Slov. Ak. Nauk*, C, No. 1 (1922).

⁵ A. Veselovskij, "Južno-russkie byliny," *Sbornik Otd. Rus. Jaz. i Slov. Ak. Nauk*, XXII, No. 2 (1881), 20.

toslav;⁶ and in the "Skazanie o knjazex vladimirskix" the historic Svjatoslav is called Vseslav Igorevič.⁷ Among all these variants the basic name of the epic prince-werewolf is Volx Vseslav'evič. It is, as a matter of fact, volx(v) Vseslav, "the magician Vseslav," because in Russian epic tradition the patronymic of the bogatyr often reflects the name of his historic prototype: for example, Suxan Domant'evič seems to be derived from the Pskovian prince of the thirteenth century — Domant or Dovmont⁸; and the bogatyr Djuk Stepanovič from the son of the Hungarian king in the twelfth century, *dux Stephanus*.⁹ The name of the hero Vseslav could easily have changed to a patronymic under the influence of such other current epic patronymics as Buslaevič and Svjatoslav'evič, and the apposition volx changed to a first name without difficulty by analogy with the resemblant epic name Vol'ga.

4. Rank and birthplace of the hero.

As V. Miller observes (*Očerki*, I, 184), Volx does not at all resemble a true bogatyr of the *byliny*, and this title is rarely applied to him; — it is almost exclusively used to depict the supernatural power of the new-born Volx: "a powerful bogatyr is born" (D, 12). In the variant of the narrator Romanov, which Miller considers the best, the hero is consistently called Vol'ga sudar' Buslaevič — "Vol'ga Sire, son of Buslaj" (RI and HII). The princely origin of Volx is distinctly recalled in the *bylina*: his mother is a "young princess" (D, 2) and her husband is a bogatyr' knjaz' (BL, 4). Princes as central heroes of *byliny* are very few in number — Volx is one of them.

The *bylina* defines his home country simply as Rus' without specification: Sire Vol'ga, the son of Buslaj, was born in holy mother Rus' (RI, 5). A generalized process of ascribing the origin of all heroes to Kiev took place in D, 12. In M. Krjukova's *byliny*, Cernigor (Černigov) occupies a significant place, and as a result she placed the birth of Volx in Černigov (BL, 2).

⁶ A. Saxmatov, "Šambinago, S. K.: Povesti o Mamaevom poboišče," *Otčet o dvenadcatom prisuždenii I. Akademije Nauk premij mltropolita Makarija* (St. Petersburg, 1910), 201.

⁷ I. Zdanov, *op. cit.*, 598.

⁸ V. Miller, *Očerki* . . . , III, 170 ff.

⁹ A. Ljaščenko, "Bylina o Djuke Stepanoviče," *Izvestija Otd. Rus. Jaz. i Slov Ak Nauk*, XXX (1925), 45-142.

III — THE PLOT OF THE *BYLINA* AS COMPARED WITH THE WRITTEN SOURCES ON VSESLAV

1. *The miraculous birth of the hero.*

- Through the garden, garden green,
Walked-meandered the young princess,
The young princess, Marfa Vseslav'evna,
She leaped off a stone on a serpent fierce,
5. On the fierce serpent *Gorynič*.
The fierce serpent now winds himself
Round the boot — Morocco green,
Round the stocking made of silk,
With his tail he strikes her white thigh,
10. Thereupon the princess conceived
She conceived and bore a child.

(D)¹

Only in the oldest record of our *bylina* and in the fragment G, where the infant is not named, do we find this story of his birth from a serpent. In the *bylina* about Dobrynja as Serpent Killer, however, the serpent's victim, liberated by this bogatyr, is named "Young Marfida (from Mal'frid' or Mal'fréd') Vseslav'evna."² The patronymic shows that there is a traditional association between the name of Vseslav and the motif of the serpent-violator. This birth-from-a-serpent motif of the Vseslav *bylina* penetrated into one variant of the *bylina* about Saul Levanidovič.³

The fact of Volx's miraculous birth had often been compared to the *Primary Chronicle's* laconic allusion to Prince Vseslav's birth by enchantment. This obscure phrase is the only one of its kind: nowhere else do the chroniclers link the birth or the deeds of Russian Christian princes with sorcery. And even in the history of the pre-Christian period, the princes are never linked with sorcery. Oleg alone was called a "wizard" (vēšču), but with the eloquent reservation that the people surnamed him so because they were ignorant pagans (*Primary Chronicle* under 6415/907).

¹ The Russian text of D is reproduced in the appendix; Y. Joffe's translation, used here, is to appear in the Anthology on the Russian National Character edited by K. Strelsky (we have amended our quotations somewhat to make this translation more literal).

² A. Markov, "K istorii bylennogo èposa," *Ètnografičeskoe Obozrenie*, No. 4 (1905), 12.

³ P. Kireevskij, *Pesni* (Moscow, 1868), III, 113.

2. *The reaction of nature.*

The traditional preamble, which frames the epic action with historic or cosmic motifs related to this action through resemblance or contiguity, is present as well in the *bylina* about the prince-werewolf:

- In the sky shone forth the radiant moon,
 And in Kiev there was born a mighty bogatyr,
 And he was the youthful Volx Vseslav'evič.
 16. The moist *mother* earth trembled,
 The glorious Indian realm shook,
 And the blue sea billowed,
 Because of the birth of the bogatyr,
 Of the youthful Volx Vseslav'evič;
 20. Fishes went into the depth of the sea,
 Birds flew high heavenward,
 The aurochs and deer went o'er the mountains,
 Hares and foxes to the dense forests,
 And wolves and bears to the thickets of fir,
 25. Sables and martins to the groves.

Thus the preamble is compounded of three parts, each more or less autonomous; of these, the last, treating the behavior of the animals, is the most stable. The second part speaks either of the reaction of earth and water, as in D; or only about earthquakes, as in HII; or about the water element only, as in BL¹, where, contrarily, the sea and the rivers came to standstill — or this part is completely omitted, as in HI for example. The first part dealing with the heavenly phenomena demands some clarification. The appearance of the prince-werewolf is connected in the *bylina* with the disappearance of the sun and with the triumph of the nocturnal element:

When the radiant moon was born in the sky,
 Then in Russia there was born a powerful bogatyr,
 The youthful Vol'ga Vseslav'evič.
 (O, I-3²; cf. HI, I-2)

¹ Marfa Krjukova omits the whole preamble in her *bylina* about Volx (No. 39) and transposes it to the *bylina* about Vol'ga and Mikula (No. 40).

² Когда на небе родился светлѣй мѣсяц,
 тогда на Руси родился могуч богатырь,
 молодой Вольга Всеславьевичъ.

The beautiful sun set
 Beyond the high mountains,
 Beyond the vast seas;
 Beadlike stars scattered on the clear sky,
 Sire Vol'ga Buslaevič was born in holy mother Rus'.

(RI, 1-5; cf. HII, 1-5)³

The crepuscular aura obviously embarrassed one of the narrators by its unusualness, so he replaced it by a more customary preamble:

When the beautiful sun shone
 Upon our holy Russian earth,
 Then the youthful bogatyr was born,
 The youthful Vol'ga Vseslav'evič.

(RII, 1-4)⁴

And we meet the same preamble in the few cases where the opening of the *bylina* about the prince-werewolf appears in the Olonec variants of the *bylina* about Vol'ga and Mikula, with which it is not ~~ti~~ organically and remains foreign, as Mazon correctly observed (*op. cit.*, 152):

When the beautiful sun shone
 On that clear sky,
 Then the youthful Vol'ga was born,
 The youthful Vol'ga Sfantoslav'evič.

(H No. 156, 1-4)

The same is the case in the *bylina* about Vol'ga and Mikula recorded by Rybnikov from Rjabinin (No. 3, 1-4), but in Hilferding's record from the same teller (No. 73) this preamble, so weakly attached to the *bylina*, is discarded. The disappearance of the sun and the images of the moon and of the many stars can be either a description of an evening sky, or, as the preamble (already mentioned) of Marfa Krjukova to the *bylina* about Vol'ga and Mikula suggests, a picture of the sun's eclipse:

³ Закатилось красное солнышко
 за горушки за высокие, за моря за широкие,
 рассаждались звезды частые по светлу небу,
 порождался Вольга сударь Буслаевич
 на матушке на святой Руси

⁴ Когда воссияло солнце красное
 на нашу на землю святорусскую,
 тогда родился младый богатырь,
 младый богатырь Вольга Всеславъевич.

Красно солнышко у нас да светло светело,
как луна гу нас небесна остояласе,
часты светлы-ти ведь звездочки показались . . .

(BL No. 40, 13-15)

In the second line, to make it syntactically and semantically understandable, we have to restore the neuter of the verbal form (*ostojalose*) which was replaced by the feminine under the influence of the preceding "luna." The passage undoubtedly means "Our beautiful sun brightly bright became like our celestial moon, and there appeared bright and numerous stars."

The eclipse of the sun is a logical background for the picture of the fright of animals and birds. Moreover, these lines find a strikingly close parallel in the story of the *Primary Chronicle* about the heavenly omens accompanying Vseslav's preparations for war in 6573/1065:

Somewhat before this moment, the sun also suffered alterations, and instead of being bright, was like the moon . . .⁵

It is noteworthy that in the *Primary Chronicle* chronologically the first mention of an eclipse is made in connection with the appearance of the militant Vseslav. It is true that in the *bylina*, astrological omens accompany the birth of Volx Vseslav'evič, but in the variant M (59-61), with the rise of the bogatyr's military glory, an association between his appearance and the signs in the heavens is also drawn:

There thundered and spread the great glory
About that Volx Svjatoslav'evič,
That when he was born there arose, 'tis said, the radiant moon.⁶

At the dawn of the seventh millenium's seventh century, in 6599/1091, the same picture of the eclipse is repeated in the *Chronicle*:

In this year there was a portent in the sun which seemed about to disappear and only a bit of it remained and it was like the moon . . .

⁵ Предѣ симѣже временемъ и сѣлныце премѣни ся и не бысть свѣтло, нѣ акы мѣсяць бысть.

⁶ Прогремела-то, прошла слава великая
про того ли шьчо про Волха Святославевича,
шьчо родялсѣ-то когда, то ведь взошол, скажут, светѣл мѣсѣць

At this time the earth uttered a groan audible to many. In the same year a magician appeared . . .⁷

This is the chronicler's introduction to the subsequent narrative (6600/1092) about vampiric miracles in Polock, Vseslav's capital:

Krjukova's images repeat the traditional picture of the sun's eclipse as the Old Russian Chronicles used to portray it.⁸ The partial eclipse of the sun which gives it the shape of a crescent moon can be perceived as the destruction of the sun with the appearance of the moon in its place. Thus the First Novgorod Chronicle states under 6632/1124:

The 11th of August before the vespers, the sun began to shrink and perished completely . . . and there were stars and the moon.

It is characteristic that for the year of Vseslav's mobilization, given as 6573, the *Primary Chronicle* adapts "the gigantic star which had rays as if they were bloody and which rose in the evening after the sun set." As D. Svjatskij showed,⁹ the reference was probably to Halley's Comet which in reality appeared only two years later. Here we see again the same tendency to link particularly alarming nocturnal and tenebrous phenomena with Vseslav. Likewise the *Slovo*, in verses 155-159, connects Vseslav with nocturnal motifs.

The *Chronicle* also links the five-day reverse flowing of the Volxov in Novgorod in 6571 with the imminent campaign of Vseslav:

This was not a favorable portent, since Vseslav burned the city four years later.

And, as we have quoted from M. Krjukova's preamble, "the rapid rivers didn't move" (17), is it not an echo of the same

⁷ Въ сеже лѣто бысть знамение въ сѣльни, яко погыбнути ему, и мало ся его оста: акы мѣсяць бысть . Въ' сеже время земля стукну, яко мнози слышаша Въ сеже лѣто вѣлхвъ яви ся .

⁸ 6621/1113 оста ся сѣльнца мало акы мѣсяць .

6623/1115 погыбе сѣльнце и бысть яко мѣсяць .

Laur. 6694/1186 бысть знаменье въ солнци, морочно бысть велми, яко и звѣзды видѣти Cf. also *Novg. I* 6648, 6695, *Hyp.* 6695, *Laur* 6714, and especially 6738: солнце нача погыбати, . мало остася его и бысть акы мѣсяць . . и мнози мняхуть мѣсяць идуще чресъ небо бывшую соэницю мѣсяцемъ .

⁹ "Astronomičeskie javlenija v russkix letopisjax s naučno-kritičeskoj točki zrenija," *Izvestija Otd Rus. Jaz. i Slcv Ak. Nauk*, XX, No. 2 (1915), 203 ff.

omen? The prophecy of a magician to the Kievan people that in the 5th year the Dnepr will reverse its stream, a prophecy recorded in the *Primary Chronicle* under 6579, is also probably linked with Vseslav's adventures (see below).

3. The prophetic talk of the hero with his mother.

And when Volx is an hour and a half old,
Volx speaks as the thunder roars:
"And hail thou mistress, mother dear,
Youthful Marfa Vseslav'evna!

30. Do not swathe me in a cloth of crimson hue,
Do not gird me with sashes of silk,
Do enswathe me, *mistress mother mine*,
In tough armor plates of oriental steel,
On my stormy head lay a golden helm,
35. On my right-hand side a mace,
A massive mace, a leaden one,
And in weight three hundred poods."

(D)

Arxangel'sk variants of the *bylina* finish this speech of the new-born hero with the demand for a "sharp spear" (M, 22) or for a bogatyr's spear (BL, 29). It will be remembered that "leaning on his spear, Vseslav," according to the *Slovo*, "leaped to the citadel of Kiev" and that "with the spear shaft" he touched "the golden Kievan throne" (154).

Volx's mother is terrified by this militant speech of her infant son, and her trepidation parallels the cosmic motif of the preamble — the trembling of "moist mother earth."

And here his own mother was terrified.
She was terrified and afraid
"What miraculous miracle is this?
What strange wonder is this?
In my whole life I have not heard
That a little child could speak so!
What kind of monster will it be?
Will it be a condemned wizard?
Will he destroy people and devour them?

(BL, 30-38)¹

¹ Тут ведь и матушка родима ужаснуласе,
ужаснуласе и была да й испугаласе
«Ето шьто тако за чудо чудное?»
Ето шьто тако за диво дивное?
На веку да я да не слыхала же,
шьто малое дитя так говорило-то!

Here the *bylina* is clearly in accord with the Chronicle's story: the mother of the new-born Vseslav listens to the speech of the magicians bidding her to bind his caul upon him, and the conclusion of the talk corresponds to that of the *bylina* — "Therefore he is merciless in bloodshed" (year 6552).

4. *Teaching the young hero to read and write.*

And when Volx was seven years old,
He was sent by mother to learn to read,
40. And he mastered the reading to good use;
Then she set him writing with a pen,
And he mastered the writing to good use.

(D)

These lines take us out of the fairy world for a moment into the pattern of real life. There are no reasons to suspect a late interpolation, for the learning of Volx reflects a genuine Russian historical situation of the pre-Mongolian epoch. Let us remember that Vseslav's granduncle Jaroslav "was very fond of books, often reading day and night," and that Jaroslav's sister, Predislava, corresponded with her brothers. A sample of the writing of Jaroslav's daughter, Anna, has been preserved. His son Svjatoslav, Vseslav's grim adversary, "crammed all his rooms full with books." In the *Izbornik* compiled for him in 1076, a special motto is inscribed: "The reading of books is good, brethren."¹ Vladimir Monomax, Jaroslav's nephew and Vseslav's second cousin was not only an assiduous reader, but also an outstanding writer. Vseslav's granddaughter, Evfrosin'ja, herself copied books. The addition preserved by records RI and HII possibly originates in the ancient text of the *bylina*:

He learned clevernesses and wisdoms,
Various different languages

(RI, 17-18)²

Ето како будёт да чудовишно-то,
чародей ли будёт да окоянной-от,
погублять народ будет он, пожирать его?»

¹ *Sbornik Svjatoslava* 1076, edited by V Šimanovskij (Warsaw, 1894), 11.

² Обучался хитростям-мудростям,
всяким языкам разным

the young prince puts his learning in the art of transformations to the proof, "he first changed into a gray wolf": serym volkom (M, 37). Undoubtedly ancient is the paronomasia, volx (*v'lxv') — volk (*v'lk'). It is particularly distinct in the oldest record: družina spit, tak Vol'x ne spit: on obvernetsa serym' volkom' (D, 69-70).

The wolf and the "fierce beast" are synonymous,⁶ and in the variant of Aksin'ja Fomina the corresponding passage states:

Vol'ga changed into the fierce beast.

(HI, 32-33)⁷

In another Onega variant, recorded from Kuz'ma Romanov, the archaic term ljutyj zver' became incomprehensible and was replaced by l'jovyj zver' (RI, 37-38; cf. HII, 40-42). Precisely as a fierce beast (155), or what is practically the same thing, as a wolf (157, 159), the Vseslav of the *Slovo* also races about nightly.

6. The military preparations of the hero.

And when Volx was twelve years old,
He started to pick a retinue for himself;
He picked the retinue for three years,
55. He picked a retinue of seven thousand;
Volx himself is fifteen years old,
And all his retinue is fifteen each.

(D)

The recruiting of the retinue is an essential motif of the *bylina* about Volx, only the number of the recruited warriors differs widely. Vseslav's preparation for the campaign is a significant fact which finds its expression in the Chronicle as well. Under 6573/1065, the year of the ominous comet and the sun's eclipse, the First Novgorod Chronicle, according to the copy of the Archeographic Commission, states: "Vseslav' poča rat' kopiti (in the Academy copy, stroiti)." In the Moscow Academy copy of the Laurentian redaction of the *Chronicle*,

⁶ D. Zelenin, "Tabu slov u narodov vost. Evropy i sev. Azii," *Sbornik Muzeja Antropologii i Etnografii Ak Nauk*, IX (1930), 37; V. Miller, "O ljutom zvere narodnyx pesen," *Drevnosti — Trudy Mosk Arxeologičeskogo Obščestva*, VII (1877), 1-18.

⁷ Овернулся Вольга да лютым зверем

we find here the same verb, *rat' kopil'*. On the basis of this informative coincidence we can accept the given reading of the First Novgorod Chronicle in the Archeographic Commission copy and interpret the substitution of *d'ržati* in the Synodical copy of the First Novgorod Chronicle for the verb *kopiti* and the omission of the infinitive in the Laurentian and Hypatian copies as innovations. In 6573 Vseslav began to gather up his forces — *rat' kopiti*¹. It is impossible to suppose that at that time he really began military action — *rat' počal'*, for we read in the *Primary Chronicle* that only two years later Vseslav started his campaign: *zarati sja*. Apparently the unusual fact that the recruiting of an army by one of the regional princes was noticed in the Old Russian *Chronicle* puzzled its later compilers. Hence some of them substituted the beginning of military action for the beginning of military preparations.

This passage in the Kiev Chronicle can serve as the best proof that the glory of the Polock Vseslav's mobilization reached Kiev. The confrontation of the word *slava* and of the prince's name is characteristic both of the *Slovo* (144, 149-150, 156) and of the *bylina*:

Прогремела, прошла славушка по всей земли
про того-ли про славного могучего богатыря,
про того прошла слава про Волха Святославъевича

(M, 84-86)

7. The threat of the enemy and Volx's hunting expedition

- That great rumor traveled on
As far as the capital city Kiev
60 The Indian tsar starts outfitting,
And boasting loud, keeps bragging:
Wants to take Kiev-City as booty,
And let God's churches go up in smoke,
And to lay waste the venerated monasteries.
65. And at that time Volx was resourceful:
With all his valiant retinue
To the far-famed Indian realm
Went forth with them to war.
The retinue sleeps, but Volx sleeps not:
70. He turned into a grey-haired wolf,
Hurried-scurried through the dark forests,
The dark forests and their outskirts.

¹ I Sreznevskij, *Materialy dlja slovarja drevne-russkogo jazyka* (St. Petersburg, 1893), I, 1280.

- And he strikes out at the antlered beasts,
 And the wolf, the bear, he does not let escape,
 75. And the sables, panthers — a favorite morsel,
 Hares and foxes he did not disdain.
 Volx regaled his valiant retinue,
 He shod and clothed his goodly braves:
 They wore fur coats of sable pelts,
 80. And for a change — coats of panther fur.
 The retinue sleeps, but Volx sleeps not:
 He turns into a bright falcon,
 He flew afar to the blue sea,
 And he strikes the geese, the white swans,
 85. And he does not let the small grey ducks escape.
 And he regaled his valiant retinue,
 And all the fare he had was varied,
 Varied fare, all with sugar made.

(D)

The narrative of this *bylina* about the successful hunting expedition of the prince-werewolf was compared by V. Miller with the data of Nikitskij's monograph, "Outline of the Economic Life of Great Novgorod."¹ He came to the conclusion that "in the *bylina* under discussion there is sung the unusual richness of Novgorod domains where the miraculous hunter with his retinue catches animals and fish." First we learn how "he sets the traps in the dark forests, on their outskirts, and in the fir groves which are plentiful in the northern region, chases in the valuable furbearing animals which made up the most lucrative item in the Novgorod trade with the West: martins, foxes, black sables, and small ermines . . . The nature of the North and familiarity with the habits of its animals are reflected in the *bylina* . . . and we find there quite a complete list of furbearing and other animals of the Novgorod domains" (*Očerki*, I, 181 f.).

After hunting for animals and birds, the prince, according to some variants, goes over to the catching of fish.

Sire Vol'ga Buslaevič said:
 "My goodly valiant retinue,
 Listen to your older brother, the Ataman,
 Do your ordered task:
 Take wood-axes,
 Build a boat of oak,
 Bind silk nets,
 Sail out upon the blue sea,

¹ *Istoriia èkonomičeskogo byta Velikogo Novgoroda* (Moscow, 1893).

Catch fish — salmon and white sturgeon,
Pike and dace,
And the valuable fish sturgeon."

(RI, 66-76)

However, the retinue returns without a catch and then the prince himself changes into a pike and snags a rich game. "Being an ideal catcher of animals and birds," Miller comments, "Vol'ga (Volx) turns to the exploitation of another natural wealth of the Northern region. He undertakes fishing again on a grand scale of the Novgorod fishmerchants" (l. c. 182). Miller's reference to the Novgorod character of Volx's hunting remains valid, even though doubt was later expressed as to how far some of these features are typical for the Novgorod region.²

This skillful observer did not overlook two additional items linked with the "great catcher": first he grasped that in one of the variants of the *bylina* about the Forty-One Pilgrims (see Kirša Danilov's collection), there is included a picture of Northern hunting, and that "Prince Vladimir here assumes the unusual role of a hunter and is similar in this case" to Volx Vseslav'evič:³

And they came out of the forest fringe,
And Vladimir the prince met them.
He goes hunting,
Shoots geese and white swan,
Migratory little ducks,
And he chases all the fox and hare.

(D, p. 94)

This whole episode was adapted, it must be supposed, by one variant of the *bylina* about the Forty-One Pilgrims from the *bylina* about Volx. The second of Miller's observations is particularly suggestive: preserved in their *bylina* is the name of the hunting place which seemingly had been forgotten in the records we possess of the *bylina* about the prince-werewolf. The prince goes to hunt "sverx toe reki Čeregi" (D, p. 94). "The river Čerega, although placed by the narrator in the vicinity of Kiev, is," as Miller point out, "the well-known Nov-

² N. Korobka, "Skazanija ob uročiščax Ovruchskogo uezda i byliny o Vol'ge Svjatoslaviče," *Izvestija Otd. Rus. Jaz. i Slov. Ak. Nauk*, XIII, No. 1 (1908), 315 f.

³ V. Miller, *Očerki russkoj narodnoj slovesnosti* (Moscow, 1910), II, 241 f.

gorod river. It flows not far from Novgorod and has become famous because of the historic fight which took place on its banks between Mstislav Izjaslavič and the renowned Vseslav from Polock. After the battle Vseslav seized Novgorod and plundered it" (l. c. 221). The investigator has in mind the testimonies of the First Novgorod Chronicle which mentions in the list of Novgorod princes Vseslav's victory which was followed by the sacking of the town:⁴

Izjaslav enthroned his son Mstislav; and the latter was defeated on the Čerexa; he fled to Kiev, and after the seizure of the city (Novgorod) the war was over⁵

Neither before nor after did this stream appear in the pages of history, and the connection of the epic Čerega with Vseslav's victory is undoubted. This connection had already been noticed by Kvašnin-Samarin, the author of one of the first really sound inquiries into the historical background of the Russian *byliny*.⁶ But Miller, having rejected any consideration of historical roots in the *bylina* about Volx Vseslav'evič, was unable to draw the obvious conclusion suggested by his keen observation. The *bylina* about the prince-werewolf, in its images of hunting after Novgorod game on the Čerega, sang of Vseslav's victory over the Novgorodians on this river and of the subsequent seizure of Novgorod, rich in booty. The picture of war in terms of the hunt, especially of falcon hunting, is unmistakingly delineated in the poetic imagery of the *Slovo* (e. g. 16, 79, 190, 208) and in the similar symbols of lines 81-84 in our *bylina* (see above). It is curious that just in connection with the seizure of Novgorod by Vseslav there appears in the *Slovo* the formula, "he snatched a streak (kus') of good luck (vazn')." The metaphorical expression kus' finds an echo in the *bylina*'s description of the lucky princely hunt: a i soboli, barsy — ljubimoi kus (75); and the terms vazn', vazniv' in Old Russian, used to be linked specifically with the hunt.⁷

⁴ A. Šaxmatov, *Razyskanija o drevnejšix russkix letopisnyx svodax* (St Petersburg, 1908), 253

⁵ Изяславъ посади сына своего Мьстислава, и побѣдиша и на Черехи, бѣжа къ Киеву, и по взятѣи города преста рать.

⁶ *Beseda*, No. 4 (1871), 83

⁷ Бѣ же Василко .. на ловехъ вазнивъ (Новгородск IV летопись, 6746); Артемиѣ гл(агол)ють Елени на ловѣхъ стрѣлбою быти вазнивъ (16 слов Григория Назианзина по списку XIV в.); Бяшетъ бо и самъ ловець добръ, хороборъ . . . тѣмже и прослылъ бяшетъ во всей землѣ, понеже

The *bylina* glorifies the solicitous attitude of the sovereign towards his retinue whom he supplied with rich and varied provisions. This praise for the prince-družinnik may be compared to the flattering characterization which the *Eymundr-Saga* gives to Vseslav's father, Brjačislav (Wartilaf), who is generous to his Varangian retinue in contrast to his uncle and adversary, Jaroslav.⁸ The Novgorod operations of the prince are interpreted in the *bylina* as preparatory measures, feeding and outfitting the retinue for the real campaign of the hero. They constitute, according to the *bylina*, the first stage of his main expedition — ko slavnomu carstvu Indejskomu (D, 67).

But who is this enemy who menaced Kiev and whose aggressiveness our hero decided to meet by aggression in return? Before answering this question, let us turn again to V. Miller's observations which are especially significant, since he is unbiased in the consideration of our *bylina*'s historical background. In his article, "K bylinam o Vol'ge i Mikule," Miller states that "in all accounts of the campaign of Vol'ga (Volx), Prince Vladimir is absent and only the city Kiev is mentioned as belonging to someone unknown — not to the irreplaceable epic sovereign."⁹ On the other hand, Volx's adversary ("soprotivničik") who threatened Kiev is depicted within his metropolis where, according to Miller, "we would look in vain for actual features, features reflecting any historical reality, — it is a conventionally painted background." If Kiev is presented as being without a sovereign, and the sovereign inimical to Volx as being without a concrete metropolis, then, in reality, was not this sovereign who terrorized Kiev and whom Vseslav attacked simply an unpopular ruler of Kiev? In other words, this could be none other than the Grand Duke Izjaslav Jaroslavič with his particularly unpopular allies, the Latins — the Catholic Poles (latinjane-ljazi), the Izjaslav who provoked a rebellion of Kiev's people against himself in 1068 and who was obliged to give his throne up to Vseslav. If we accept this working hypothesis, the whole development of the *bylina*'s action, which to Miller seemed devoid of any historical actuality, instantly takes on meaning through a series

даль бѣшеть ему Богъ вазнь не токмо и на однихъ ловехъ (Ипат. летоп. 6795).

⁸ S. H. Cross, "Yaroslav the Wise in Norse Tradition," *Speculum*, IV (1929), 177-197.

⁹ Vladimir appears only in the newest variant of this *bylina* (BL).

of convincing correspondences in the accounts of the dethronement of Izjaslav by Vseslav.

What, according to the *Primary Chronicle*, were the historic circumstances of Vseslav's *coup d'état*? In the year 6576/1068, "foreigners invaded the Russian land, a multitude of Polovcians." Izjaslav went forth with his brothers against them. "But since God had let loose the pagans upon us because of our transgressions, the Russian princes fled and the Polovcians were victorious." (Concluding his annual survey, the chronicler attributes the invasion and the victory of the pagans directly to Izjaslav's transgressions). "When Izjaslav accompanied by Vsevolod fled to Kiev, while Svjatoslav took refuge in Černigov, the men of Kiev escaped to their native city, where they held an assembly (věče) in the market place and said to the Prince through delegates: 'The Polovcians have spread over the country; O Prince, give us arms and horses that we may offer them combat once more.' Izjaslav, however, paid no heed to this."

In similar lines Marfa Krjukova's variant of the *bylina* depicts the danger which menaced the Russian land and which provoked the decisive action of Volx:

"These are not two dark clouds which rise,
Rise hang over —"

One dark cloud approaches the famous Kiev-city; it is the warring Turkish Tsar, and toward Cernigor goes the warring Zadonskij Tsar. Both armies march on Kiev-city and on Cernigor.

"And there came many numberless forces."

And now Volx, very wise, very quick-witted in learning, and resourceful in all matters, has to find a way out of the precarious situation (BL, 293-335).

"The Tsar from beyond the Don," who is the Polovcian aggressor menacing Russia, and the Kievan prince, who is incapable and unwilling to meet this menace — who, moreover, in the opinion of the contemporary chronicler brought on this danger, — both fused easily into one image of a foe against whom Volx Vseslav'evič started his epic struggle in order to save the Kievan people. According to the *Chronicle*, Izjaslav did not wish to arm the city folk of Kiev because he feared that weapons would be raised not only against the

Polovcians, but also against himself, since the remnants of his retinue had been weakened by the defeat on the Al'ta.

His relations with the city people were very strained. The Kievans, preparing rebellion against him, knew what they could expect in the event of failure; and as a matter of fact, the following year Prince Izjaslav brought in the Polish army against the Kievans. His intention "to march with the Poles to destroy" the Kievans raised a storm of protest even from his brothers who were allied to him. They decisively warned him that "if he intended to nurse his wrath and destroy the city, they would be properly concerned for the ancestral capital." Nevertheless, Mstislav, the son and deputy of Izjaslav, terrorized the Kievans — he slew some of them, blinded others, and without any investigations caused many others who were entirely innocent to perish (*Primary Chronicle*, 6577/1069). And some eighty years later the Kievan people, according to the Hypatian Chronicle (6655/1147), still remembered how dearly the city had paid for this revolt.

Hence arises the menace of the despot in the *bylina* to take the whole city Kiev "beyond the shield" — *za ščitom* (D, 62). This formula is a distorted reflection of the Old Russian idiom, "to take on the shield" (*v'zjati na ščit'*), meaning to take as booty. It is curious that this is the only example of the preservation of that archaic formula in Russian epic tradition. Not less instructive is the fact that in all of the *Primary Chronicle* this formula is quoted only once, and this one instance is in connection with Izjaslav and his brothers who, before the Kievan events mentioned above, fought with Vseslav, "captured Minsk, put the men to the sword and took the women and children on the shield (*v'zjaša na ščit'*)" (6575/1067).

Historically founded also is the second half of the foe's threat in the *bylina* — "to let God's churches go up in smoke and to lay waste the venerated monasteries" (D, 63-64). When in 6577/1069, as mentioned, Izjaslav led the Poles against Kiev, the Kievan people's assembly (*věče*) declared that if Izjaslav is not definitely stopped by his brothers, then the people "have no alternative but to burn their city and depart to Greece." In these terms the *Primary Chronicle* formulates the danger to the Greek faith in Kiev from Izjaslav and his Poles. These allies of Izjaslav's had little regard for Kievan churches, as is shown by the carrying off of the pallium from the St. Demet-

rius Monastery, founded by Izjaslav, into Gniezno.¹⁰ The church conflict between the West and the East became sharply crystallized after the Schism (1054), concerning which the Pope did not delay to inform the *Civitatem Russorum*.¹¹ As a result, the Caves Monastery in Kiev became the ideological center of reaction to Rome; and on the other hand, Izjaslav's court adopted a distinctly Western orientation. The close connection of this prince with the Poles played an essential role in the development.¹² Izjaslav's ties with Rome a few years after these events fostered an attempt at an agreement for feudal allegiance by Kievan Russia to the Holy See,¹³ whereupon St. Theodosius denounced the prince apostate and mourned that "our country too has been filled with this false faith."¹⁴ Naturally the relations between Izjaslav and the Caves Monastery became more strained, especially when he founded the St. Demetrius Monastery and gave it preference. The Caves Patericon quotes Izjaslav's threats to the Monastery: "I will uproot your cave."¹⁵ One of the leading men of the Monastery, Nikon, was forced to flee from the prince's wrath to far Tmutarakan'. The monks, led by St. Anthony, were getting ready to leave their caves and the Kievan land. Only the intervention of Izjaslav's wife saved the Monastery. Then when Izjaslav was forced out of Kiev by Vseslav, the sympathies of the Monastery were openly on the side of the latter. Just at that time Nikon returned from Tmutarakan' to Kiev, and the investigators suspected him of direct participation in the coup.¹⁶ The *Primary Chronicle*, connected with the Caves Monastery, regards Vseslav's victory over Izjaslav as a triumph of Christian justice (6576/1068). This same *Chronicle* tells of Izjaslav's anger against St. Anthony for his sympathy towards Vseslav

¹⁰ A. Sobolevskij, *op. cit.*, 159 f.

¹¹ A. Popov, *Istoriko-literaturnyj obzor drevne-russkix polemičeskix sočinenij protiv Latinjan* (Moscow, 1875), pp. 40 f.

¹² N. Nikol'skij, "K voprosu o sledax moravo-češskogo vlijanija na literaturnyx pamjatnikax domongol'skoj èpoxi," *Vestnik Ak. Nauk SSSR*, No 8-9 (1933), 5-18.

¹³ M. Hruševs'kyj *Istorija Ukraïny-Rusy*, II (Lwow, 1905), pp. 63 ff

¹⁴ I. Eremin, "Literaturnoe nasledie Feodosija Pečerskogo," *Trudy Otdela drevne-russkoj literatury Ak Nauk*, V (1947), 171.

¹⁵ *Paterik Kievo-Pečerskogo monastyrja* (St Petersburg, 1911), 24, 149.

¹⁶ M. Priselkov, *Očerki po cerkovno-političeskoj istorii Kievskoj Rusi* (SPB, 1913), 178, 207; Geste, 141.

(6582/1074), and the Patericon sharply condemns the cruel wrath of Izjaslav who had been inspired by the devil against Anthony and accused him of having loved and advised Vseslav, "as if he were guilty in the whole mutiny." Thus rumors circulated about the leading role of the Monastery's high clergy in the Kiev rebellion.

Intimate relations with the Caves Monastery were continued by Vseslav's sons. Gleb Vseslavič, who remained inimical to the Jaroslaviči, was a charitable donor to this monastery and was buried there with his wife "near the head of St. Theodosius."¹⁷ If the *bylina* then conceives Vseslav as a defender of the city Kiev and of its churches and monasteries against menacing dangers, this conception is fully corroborated by various historical sources.

8. *The quick and sly wizard Volx in the enemy's camp: a talk at the palace window.*

Then Volx started to do witchery:

90. "Now hail ye goodly braves,
Not many nor a few, ye're seven thousand strong;
And among you fellows, is there such a one
Who could turn into a bay aurochs,
And make a run to the Indian realm,
95. And find out about the Indian realm,
About the Tsar Saltyk Stavrul'evič,
About his stormy head of Batyj's brood?"
As leaf and grass flatten out,
So all his retinue is bowing down —
100. The goodly braves reply to him:
"There is among us no such brave,
You excepting, Volx Vseslav'evič!"
And lo! the very same Vseslav'evič,
He has turned into a bay aurochs,
105. A bay aurochs — the horns of gold,
He scampered to the Indian realm:
The initial leap — a whole mile he hopped,
On second leap — he could not be found
Then he turned into a bright falcon,
110. He flew to the Indian realm.
And lo, he is in the Indian realm.
He alit on the whitestone palace,
On the royal palace
Of that Indian Tsar,

¹⁷ Hypatian Chronicle, 6666/1185

115. On the small window in wooden frame.
The stormy winds blow o'er the crusty snow,
Tsar and his Tsarina are chatting.
Up spoke Tsarina Azdjakovna,
The young Elena Aleksandrovna:
120. "And hail thee, glorious Indian Tsar,
You are pleased to outfit war on Rus',
You know not, and you suspect not:
In the sky shone forth the radiant moon,
And in Kiev there was born a mighty bogatyr,
125. An adversary to you the Tsar."
And at that time Volx, he was resourceful:
While perching on the small window in wooden frame,
He listened to these very speeches.

(D)

The *bylina* points out the cardinal features of the hero: his magic powers, the startling suddenness of his appearances and deeds, his speed in flight and in military operations, his cleverness and wisdom. Before undertaking his actions against the enemy, Volx started "to practice witchery" (D, 87). And similarly begins the story of Vseslav's Kievan adventures in the *Slovo*: "Vseslav cast lots" (153). Witchery (*vorozhba*) is the basic device of the magician (*volx*). Words of both these roots are closely associated in Old Russian literature (cf. the examples in Sreznevskij, I, 302 and 311).¹ In witchery is manifested Vseslav's "wizardly soul," of which the *Slovo* speaks (161). With his wizardry also is connected the miraculous speed of the werewolf. Distances do not exist for him (D, 102-109). There is a striking similarity between the repeated leap (*skok*) of the werewolf in the *bylina* and the triple repetition of the aorist *skoči*, encircled by various images, in the *Slovo* (154, 155, 157). Then, the lightning-like speed of Vseslav's flights is indicated by the picturesque narratives of nocturnal journeys from Kiev to Tmutarakan' (159)² and by the dizzy

¹ волхование и ворожю; въ волховы и въ ворожу; къ волхвомъ ходити ворожи ради, волхва или бабу ворожею, вълхвуяи вълхвыи или вракаи

² It is probable that after Izjaslav's revenge in 1069 Vseslav made his escape to Tmutarakan' before reappearing in Polock in 1071 (V. Mavrodin, "Slavjanorusskoe naselenie nižnego Dona i sev. Kavkaza v X-XIV vekax," *Učenyje Zapiski Leningr. Pedagog. Instituta im. A. I. Herzena*, XI, 1938, 28; about Vseslav's previous connections with Tmutarakan' see *Geste* 141, and G. Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia*, New Haven, 1948, 85). The amplitude of his peregrinations is unusual indeed. Anna Comnena notes Vseslav's appearance near the Danube (M. Hruševskij, *Istoriija Ukraïny-Rusy*, II, Lwow, 1905, 521).

flight from Polock to Kiev within the time of one matin (160). The elusiveness of Vseslav finds expression in the *Chronicle*, too, and especially in the admonition of Vladimir Monomax included into the Laurentian manuscript under 6604/1096: "Then we went to Perejaslavl' and remained in Obrov. Vseslav at that juncture fired Smolensk. I set forth with men from Černigov and with two horses, but we did not catch Vseslav at Smolensk."³

The *bylina* constantly emphasizes the superhuman cleverness of Volx. If his undertaking succeeds, it is first of all because "he was resourceful" — such is the invariable representation in D (64, 126, 159).

You Volx are yourself very sage,
And in the sciences and learning you have been very apt,
And in all matters you were resourceful.

(BL, 293-295)⁴

And Vol'ga excelled in wisdom,
In wisdom Vol'ga and in clever cleverness.

(HI, 11-12)⁵

He happened to be the most clever in the world,
More clever than all and wiser than all.

(M, 3-35)⁶

Likewise, in the *bylina* about Svjatogor and Il'ja, recorded by Rybnikov from the old Onega narrator, Leontij Bogdanov, — the pilgrims tell Il'ja: "... and do not march against Vol'ga Sslav'ič: if he does not take by force, then by cleverness and wisdom" (RI, No. 51). Correspondingly in the *Slovo*, Vseslav "craftily ... leaped to the city of Kiev (154)." With Vseslav also is associated the parable about the clever man in the concluding ditty of Bojan (163). Yet the *Primary Chronicle* tells us that Vseslav came into Kiev not by his own but by Izjaslav's craftiness. The Jaroslaviči summoned him to their quarters promising him inviolability. Then they shut

³ S. H. Cross, "The Testament of Vladimir Monomakh," *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, XII, (1930), 306.

⁴ Ты же, Волх-от, сам очунь мудрой есь,
а и как в науках, в ученьях да очунь-то понятной был,
а во делах во всех догадлив был.

⁵ А й задался он Вольга да во мудрости,
а й во мудрости Вольга да он в хитры хитрости.

⁶ Он ведь пал-то на свети-то как всех хитрей,
он-то всех ведь пал хитре да изо всех мудрей.

him up in a Kiev dungeon. Thus Vseslav entered the enemy's camp as a prisoner, and suddenly from a prisoner he became Kiev's sovereign. The suddenness and speed of this metamorphosis must have baffled and astounded his contemporaries. Such a puzzling combination of fortuitous happenings could have appeared to them cunningly premeditated. This is the attitude that is reflected in the *Slovo* and in the *bylina*. However, do we know that all was really accidental, or was there some secret underground contact between the prison of Vseslav and the Kievan conspirators who organized the September overthrow?

As mentioned, the *Primary Chronicle* takes a negative attitude towards Izjaslav during his lifetime. But in the necrology of the Kiev prince under 6586/1078, the *Chronicle* radically changes its evaluation. Under 6576 the *Primary Chronicle* writes in connection with Izjaslav's perjury: "If anyone sins against the Cross, he shall suffer not only punishment in this world, but also everlasting chastisement in the next." In an entry ten years later, the *Chronicle* declares that Izjaslav was non-malicious in temper, a hater of injustice and a lover of rectitude, and that in him there was no craft or guile, for he was a simple, good-natured man who did not render evil for evil. In defiance of its own narrative under 6577 about Izjaslav's terror after Vseslav's flight, the *Chronicle* writes "how much hardship the people of Kiev had visited upon him. They had expelled him and plundered his house, yet he did not requite these misdeeds with evil; and if any man tells you 'he slew the fighters who had extricated Vseslav from the dungeon,' it was not Izjaslav who did it but his son." The words of the internal quote have the pronounced flavor of an epic fragment permeated, as they are, with alliterative sound clusters: sěč'cě (sěč) isěče (isěč), iže (i) vysěkli (v sě) V'seslava (v.se) is (is) poruba. Perhaps also the sentence about Izjaslav's artlessness — kljuk' že v' nem' ne bě — was an argument aimed against the inchoate Vseslav epos because, judging by the *Slovo* (154) and the *bylina*, it is the wiles (kljuky) in Vseslav that were prized.

When the uprising against Izjaslav started and the prince was looking out of a small window (k'njazju že iz' ok'n'ca z'rjaščju), a state conference took place between him and his retinue, according to the *Primary Chronicle*. The retinue warned him of the danger threatening him from Vseslav and

insisted on the seriousness of the situation: "se z'lo est'." But Izjaslav remained deaf to all these warnings and the *Chronicle* repeats twice epically: "Izjaslav' že sego ne posluša . . . I ne posluša sego k'njaz'." The same "small window" and a similar dispute figure in the *bylina*. In the *Chronicle* the dispute is heard by Vseslav's partisans who arrived before the prince's palace as Izjaslav was sitting in his hall with his retinue. In this connection the diminutive ok'n'ce is mentioned twice. In the *bylina* Vseslav himself changed into a bright falcon, alighted on the royal palace "on the small window" (115), and a few lines later (127) the small window (okošečko) is mentioned for a second time. Likewise in the variant recorded from the Šala boatman, the prince-scout "perched on the royal small window and listened to the royal speeches" (RI, 99-100). And in Kuz'ma Romanov's variant the hero appeared "by that whitestone palace just opposite the small window and he listened to the secret talks" (HII, 118-120).

In the *Chronicle* Izjaslav's retinue, and particularly Tuky, Čjudin's brother, warn the sovereign by an epic formula woven through with peculiar alliterations which build a kind of paronomasia and are so typical both of the *Slovo* and of the epos fragments in the ancient Russian chronicles: vidiši (v), k'njaže, ljudie (ljud) v'zvysili sja (v.zv.s.l.s),⁷ pos'li (s.l), at' V'seslava (v.s.sl.v) bljudut' (ljud) = "Look, prince, the people are aroused, send men to guard Vseslav," or in other words, to keep on guard against Vseslav. And in the *bylina* "the Tsar takes counsel with his Tsarina" (RII, 79-80). She chides her husband who "does not know and suspects not" that he has an adversary in Kiev (D, 121-124), Prince Vseslav, who at that moment "is sitting on our small windows and listens to our royal talk" (RII, 137-138). However, the Tsarina's warning glides leaving no trace, as "the stormy winds blow o'er the crusty snow" (D, 116).

If in the *Chronicle* Izjaslav does not fear the incarcerated Vseslav, so too in the *bylina* the Tsar tries to reassure the Tsarina that "in Russia the grass grows not as in the old days and the flowers blossom not as before . . . and apparently Vol'ga is no longer alive" (HII, 124-127). According to this variant the Tsarina objects by referring to her portentous dream: "a

⁷ Or v'zvyli sja (v.zv.l.s) — cf. Šaxmatov, *Povest' vremennyx let*, 386.

nočes' spalos', vo snjax videlos' " (138); a little bird and a black raven "fought each other, the little bird pecked away and plucked out all his feathers and let them fly away in the wind: this is Sire Vol'ga Buslav'evič and the black raven is Turec-Santal (144-150)." But the Tsar (Turec-Santal) remains self-confident. Miller supposed that the ominous dream of the Tsarina penetrated into later variants of our *bylina* under the influence of the historical song about the capture of Kazan which contains the ominous dream of the Tatar Tsarina Elena (*Očerki*, III, 215). However, the dream motifs of this *bylina* are entirely different: thus there is insufficient reason to suppose such a borrowing.

An interesting variant of the Tsarina's dream is preserved in the version of Aksinja Fomina, a version extremely shortened but rich in archaic features: "The Tsarina saw a bad dream: a falcon fights with a black raven, the falcon triumphed over the black raven; that bright falcon is the bogatyr Vol'ga, that black raven is Santal himself" (HI, 41-45).⁸ Comparing the prince-werewolf with the falcon is understandable: "the first wisdom Volx studied — to turn into a bright falcon," and precisely as a bright falcon he eavesdropped at the little window on the talks of the Tsar with the Tsarina. And after all, the falcon is the traditional designation for a Russian warrior, as has already been attested many times by the *Slovo*. But why is his foe called the raven?

The black raven is a traditional image for the infidel foe; cf. *Slovo*, 41: "black raven, infidel Polovcian!" Latin bishops, priests and monks fell on St. Constantine as ravens on a falcon (jako vrani na sokol'), as it is written in the Old Church Slavonic Life of the Saint.⁹ This symbol perfectly fitted Izjaslav whom the Orthodox clergy and Kievan folk considered a betrayer of his people and church in plotting with the Poles and with the Latin bishops, priests and monks. As a Russian ruler, Izjaslav should be likened to a falcon, but since his Russian faith and zeal were thought to be feigned, he was a

⁸ Видла царица нехороший сон
бьется сокол да с черным вороном,
перебил сокол да черна ворона
ясный тот сокол — Вольга богатырь,
черный тот ворон — то сам Сантал!

⁹ P. Lavrov, *Materialy po istorii vozniknovenija drevnejšej slavjanskoj pis'mennosti* (Leningrad, 1930), 29.

raven got up as a falcon. And perhaps this is precisely the meaning of the name which the oldest record of our *bylina* gives to Volx's adversary — Saltyk Stavrul'evič (D, 96, 190). Tavrul or Tovrul occurs several times in Old Russian texts as a name of Tatar warriors: for instance, the first Russian prisoner from Batyj's forces in 1240, or the Batyj's legendary brother-in-law, and according to the "Skazanie o Mamaevom poboišče," the Tatar fighter defeated by Peresvet at Kulikovo: tovrul is a dialectal form of northwestern Turkish languages arising from togrul and meaning "falcon." This appellative appears in the Old Russian Tale about Volot Volotovič: a ptica pticam mat' tavrul — ptica nevelička, s skudnuju galku.¹⁰ The form sał-t-yq is a Turkish perfect passive participle of the verb sał ("to take for") and means "taken for."¹¹ It entered Russian dialects as a substantive, saltyk, meaning "accommodation, adaptation."¹² The sobriquet, saltyq tovrul ("fancied falcon"), strikingly expressed the attitude held by the adherents of the "bright falcon" from Polock toward Izjaslav. Old Russian rhapsodes were bilingual enough for a bantering use of Turkish epithets as fictitious names for the enemies depicted.¹³ The change of (S)tavrul into (S)tavrul'evič is parallel to the forming of the epic patronymic Vseslav'evič (see above).¹⁴ The initial s is obviously due to the name Stavr, popular in Russian epic tradition.

The warning role of the Tsar's judicious wife in the *bylina* may be compared with the role attributed, by the "Life of St. Theodosius," to Izjaslav's wife, Gertrude, the daughter of Boleslav of Poland. According to this hagiographic work, when Prince Izjaslav threatened the monks of the Caves Monastery

¹⁰ F. Buslaev, *Russkaja xrestomatija* (7th ed., Moscow, 1898), p. 354.

¹¹ See W. Radloff, WB, IV, 344 ff.

¹² V. Dahl, *Tolkovyj slovar' živogo velikorusskogo jazyka* (4th ed.), IV, 14: У всякого шлык на свой салтык; переделать одежду на свой салтык, с дурацкого ладу да на свой салтык

¹³ See R. Jakobson (O. Jansen), "Sobaka Kalin car," *Slavia*, XVII, No. 1-2 (1939), 82-89.

¹⁴ The Olonec variants use simply the Turkish title 'sultan' (hence Saltan and Santal) to name Volx's foe. His wife is called in HII 'carica Pantalovna'. The rhymed words sultan-pultan in Turkish mean derisively: the sultan and his surrounding, e. g. his wives; hence pultan is understood as encircling wives and suggests the patronymic Pantalovna. Prof. K. Menges gave us his competent help in the interpretation of Turkish names in the *bylina* about Volx

with destruction, "his wife told him: "Listen, my lord, and be not angry with me, but a similar thing happened also in our country." She reminds him how the monastic brothers were expelled from Poland and how, as a consequence, "much evil happened in that country. Be wary, my lord, lest the same happen in your land!"¹⁵ Sobolevskij has supposed that this expulsion of the monastic brothers from Poland, simultaneous with the first expulsion from the Czech Sázava Cloister of monks with Church Slavonic leanings, was also linked with the Schism and the subsequent fight against the infiltration of the Eastern Church.¹⁶ If this hypothesis is correct, then the legendary warning attributed to Gertrude by the bookman of the Caves Monastery finds its natural place in the apologetic literature of the clergy which defended its rights and tradition against Izjaslav's encroachments.

In the *Primary Chronicle* Izjaslav, aggressive towards the Kievan people, is located in Kiev itself, whereas the *bylina* sets the Tsar terrorizing Kiev beyond the city's limits, in an out-lying fantastic realm; thereupon his situation becomes paradoxical indeed. The traditional epic features of an aggressor are ascribed to the Tsar who is preparing an invasion of Russia, and at the same time in his own capital he takes, according to Miller's expression, "a merely defensive position." (*Očerki*, III, 204):

Then the Indian Tsar said:
We must make ready arms for war,
We must prepare tempered arrows,
So that the mightiest bogatyr cannot approach us,
The mighty and strong Svjatoslav'evič

(M, 89-95)¹⁷

9. The cellar expedition up to the appearance of Volx's retinue.

He turned into an ermine,
130. Ran through basements and cellars,
Through the lofty upper chambers,
He chewed into the strings of the taut bows,

¹⁵ *Paterik Kievo-Pečerskogo monastyra*, 24, 150.

¹⁶ A Sobolevskij, *op cit.*, 108

¹⁷ Говорил-то, ведь, тут да царь Индейския
«Нам, ведь, надоть находить оружья-ти все военныя,,
приготовить надоть, ведь, нам все стрелы каленыя,
аи не подошел шьтоб под нас богатырь-от пресильныя,
ище сильней-от, могуцей Святославьевич».

- He removed the iron tips from the tempered arrows,
 And from the fire-spitting rifles,
 135. He jerked out the flints and ramrods,
 And he buried all that in the deep earth.
 Volx now turned into a bright falcon,
 Soared high up beneath the heaven's vault,
 He flew far away into open plains,
 140. To his valiant retinue.
 The retinue sleeps, Volx sleeps not.
 He awakened his bold and goodly braves:
 "Hail to you, my valiant retinue!
 No time to sleep, 'tis time to rise,
 145. Let's march to the Indian realm."

(D)

From Izjaslav's dispute at the small window the *Primary Chronicle* turns to a narrative about Vseslav Brjačislavič's partisans who, after deliberating in front of the enigmatic "house of Brjačislav," decided to liberate "the retinue from the prison cellar" (vysadim' družinu is pogreba), and then "came from the prison which they had thrown open" (prišli ot' pogreba, ot'tvorivše pogreb') in order to use the liberated retinue for the planned overthrow.

"What retinue is meant here?" asks the historian N. Arcybašev.¹ Investigators were side-tracked by the variant "vysadim' družinu svoju," but such a reading is given only by the Laurentian manuscript, while the other variants of the "Laurentian redaction" (the Radziwiłł and the Academy's manuscripts) on one hand, and all the manuscripts of the "Hypatian redaction" on the other, do not have the possessive pronoun *svoju*, and this coincidence evidently goes back to the original text of the *Primary Chronicle*. By "retinue" (*družina*) can be understood only those of Vseslav's men who were taken prisoner at the rout of the Polock prince on the Nemiga River and thrown into the Kiev cellar — the latter was a less honorable prison than Vseslav's dungeon which was situated closer to the Prince's palace and under stricter watch. Thus did the events occur according to the *Chronicle*, while in the *bylina*, resourceful Volx, after having heard the false talks at the small window, changed at once into an ermine and "ran through basements and cellars" (po pogrebam), "he chewed into the taut bows and strings, he removed the iron tips from the tempered arrows" and afterwards he flew as a falcon "to

¹ *Povestvovanie o Rossii* (Moscow, 1838), I, Book 2, 26.

his valiant retinue" (ko družine) to prompt it into decisive action. Where did he find his retinue? "Far in the open plain," according to one variant (D, 139); "in the city Kiev" (vo grade vo Kieve), according to another (HII, 188). The *Chronicle's* story about one of the stages of the Vseslav struggle, that of the liberation of his retinue imprisoned in the cellar by Izjaslav, happens to be divided into two parts in the *bylina*: first, the expedition to the cellar is reinterpreted by the fairy tale motif of the hero's metamorphosis into a rodent to spoil the foe's arms;² and secondly, the retinue is brought from outside, e.g. from Kiev, because the home of the enemy is transferred in the *bylina* from Kiev to some fabulous realm.

At any rate, there is here the extremely characteristic combination of the same three salient elements (the small window, the cellar, and the retinue) occurring both in the concise narrative of the *Chronicle* and in the corresponding passages of the *bylina*.

10. The passing of Volx through the wall.

The next stage in the Kievan events concerning Izjaslav and Vseslav is presented by the *Primary Chronicle* in the following way: The mob gave a shout and went off to the dungeon where for months Vseslav had been imprisoned by Izjaslav. "And on September 15 the people thus extricated Vseslav from his dungeon." In the *bylina*, upon Vseslav's appeal to the retinue, "No time to sleep, 'tis time to rise," the goodly braves arose and started off.

- And they reached the white-stone wall —
 That white-stone wall was strong,
 The city had gates of iron made,
 The hinges, bars all of copper,
 150. Sentinels stand on watch by day and night,
 The gate has an undersill — costly walrus bone,
 Ingenious slots cut out,
 And through the slot only an ant could pass.
 All the braves became worried,
 155. Became worried and sorrowed.
 They say this sort of speech:
 "All the heads in vain will be lost,
 And how could we pass through that wall?"
 Youthful Volx, he was resourceful:

² V. Miller, *Očerki*, I, 184 f.

160. Lo! he turned himself into an ant,
And all his goodly braves into tiny ants.
They crawled through the white-stone wall,
And the braves stood now on its other side,
In the far-famed Indian realm:
165. He turned them all into goodly braves,
And they stand with their military outfit.

(D)

We discern here poetically reshaped the picture of the apparently inaccessible dungeon wherein Vseslav languished; and his liberation is rendered in metaphoric terms adapted to the legend of the were-animal activities of the Prince of Polock. On the whole, "he went through the wall and he led all the others" (M, 180).*

11. *The smashing of the foe.*

- And to all the braves he gives the command:
"Hail to you, my valliant retinue!
Go marching through the Indian realm,
170. Keep hacking old ones, little ones,
Leave none in the realm for breeding.
Leave only by selection —
Not many nor a few, seven thousand —
Darling beautiful maidens."
175. They go marching through the Indian realm,
And they hack the old ones, little ones,
And they leave only by selection —
Darling beautiful maidens.
Volx himself went into the palace,
180. Into the royal palace,
To that Indian Tsar.
The palace had doors of iron,
Hasps and hinges made of gilded steel.
Thereupon Volx Vseslav'evič says:
185. "Though break a leg, but push in the door!"
With his leg he kicked at the iron door,
Broke all the hasps of steel to pieces.
And he seized the Tsar by his white hands,
The renowned Indian Tsar,
190. The Tsar Saltyk Stavru'evič.
Thereupon Volx makes this kind of speech:
"And you, Tsars, one may not slay nor execute."
Having seized, he banged him on the floor of bricks,
He dashed him into crumbs of dung.

(D)

* Он во сътену-ту зашол да сам ведь всих провел.

The *Primary Chronicle* in its story about the *coup d'état* of Sept. 15th clearly sympathizes with Vseslav and tells nothing of the losses suffered by Izjaslav's clique. An indirect testimony of the upheaval can be seen perhaps in the legislation of the sons of Jaroslav: M. Tixomirov supposes that the *Pravda* of Jaroslav's sons (Izjaslav and his brothers) was established presumably in 1068-71 after the tempestuous Kievan events, when many of the prince's men were killed and it was thus necessary to increase the bloodwite (*vira*) to be paid for the murder of a prince's man.¹

"Volx himself went into the palace, into that royal palace" (D, 178-179). He set himself on this spot (*na mesto to nastal*) and started to rule as Tsar (M, 207), as the *bylina* narrates, which corresponds to the *Chronicle* story: "And he was set up (*postaviša i*)² in the midst of the prince's palace." Or, as the *Slovo* (154) formulates it: "He touched with spear shaft the golden Kievan throne"

The fate of the sovereign vanquished by Volx without a struggle is represented differently in the variants of the *bylina*. Kirša Danilov's version simply repeats the punishment administered to Kalin Tsar by Il'ja Muromec³ but in an abbreviated and confused form; while in the version of the Šala boatman; "said Volx Vseslav'evič: 'The city Kiev is not to be ruled by you! Be gone, off to your own land!'" And actually the humiliated Tsar "following Vol'ga's order quickly cleared off to his own country" (R II, 143, 146-7, 152-3), but the phrase "own country" (*svoju zemlju*) remains a puzzle since it was precisely in his country and in his own royal palace that this order was given. The concise text of Aksin'ja Fomina contains an interesting indication. Picturing the flight of all Vol'ga's prospective victims at the news of his appearance in the world, the narrator says: "From his heroic fame (*ot slavy bogatyr-skoju*) . . . the beasts went off to the dark forests, and Tsar Santal fled into Vol'ga (*v Vol'gu sbežal*) with his Tsarina Davyd'-evna" (HI, 3, 7-9). In a footnote Hilferding observes: "Fomina repeated this line several times, and to our question, 'What

¹ *Istočnikovedenie istorii SSSR* (Moscow, 1940), I, 62; cf G. Vernadsky, *Medieval Russian Laws* (New York, 1947), 14 f.

² This reading is corroborated both by the Hypatian redaction and by the Fourth Novgorod Chronicle, while the Laurentian redaction says: *proslaviša i* — "he was glorified."

³ See R. Jakobson, *op. cit.*, 95 f.

does it mean — v Vol'gu sbežal?' she only answered, 'That's the way it's sung (tak poetsja).'” This place-name agrees in sound with the hero's name, Vol'ga. However, we know that the latter is substituted for the original, Volx. And it may be supposed that the place-name, homophonous with the hero's name, originally sounded otherwise, closer to the form Volx. In the *Primary Chronicle*, after the reference to the setting up of Vseslav and to the pillage of the palace, there is noted: “and Izjaslav made his escape to Poland (běžal' v' Ljaxy).” It seems probable that in this passage of our *bylina* it was formerly sung that from the heroic fame — “ot slavy” (slav) — of Volx (v.lx) Vseslav'evič (slav) his adversary “v Ljaxi⁴ (vl.x) sbežal” — “made his escape to Poland.”

12. The happy ending.

- 195 And now Volx enthroned himself as Tsar,
Wedding the Tsarina Azvjakovna,
The youthful Elena Aleksandrovna;
And the braves of the retinue
All took unto them those maidens as wives.
200. And now young Volx enthroned himself as Tsar,
And his braves became townfolk:
He rolled out many kegs of gold and silver for them,
And he apportioned horses and cows by the herd,
And a hundred thousand in money for each.
- (D)

Twice the *bylina* repeats that Volx enthroned himself as Tsar (carem nasel) (D, 195, 200), as does also the variant of M. Krjukova: “and the young prince Volx, the bright son of Svetoslavič, started to sit as prince” (Volx že svet da Svetoslaevič stal side't on knjazjom-to) . . . “well did he sit and reign” (xorošo-to on knežil sidel (BL, 447-448, 451); and twice the *Primary Chronicle* repeats: and Vseslav sat in Kiev (V'seslav' že sědě Kyevě).

His comilitants “became townfolk” (stali ljudi posackija — D, 201): in fact, it was rather the Kievan townfolk who became his comilitants, for we know that the reaction against Vseslav meant first and foremost a struggle against the town (posad). Under 6577/1069 the *Primary Chronicle* notes that Izjaslav, after being reinstated on the Kievan throne, “transferred the

⁴ Or rather “vo Ljaxi” cf. the examples of the formula “vo Ljaxove” pointed out in the *byliny* by V. Miller, *Očerki*, II, 355, and by A. Florovskij, *Čerz i vostočnye Slavjane*, I (Prague, 1935), 95.

market place to the hills." He put the commercial and political center of the townfolk under the direct control of the great prince's court which was located on the Kievan hill, and thus he deprived this center of its former autonomy.

When the townfolk "set" or "glorified" Vseslav in the midst of the prince's palace, they, according to the *Chronicle*, pillaged that palace, seizing a huge amount of gold and silver, furs and martin skins. The *bylina* accurately reproduces this information (see above: D, 202-4). A more detailed account of Volx's booty is given in the variant of Marfa Krjukova:

And all the property and possessions of the Zadonskij Tsar
He divided among his valiant retinue.
Forty thousand in money for every bogatyr,
He divided among them much bright gold,
He gave them bright gold and pure silver,
He gave much pure silver and precious pearls,
He gave them many precious stones,
And he gave them many sable coats,
He gave them many downy hats,
He gave them many Moroccan shoes,
And of course horned cattle
Were driven in droves . . .

(BL, 397-408) *

In Kuz'ma Romanov's variant Vol'ga calls to the retinue: "Let us now divide the spoils!" HII, 194). And his story finishes with verses on how cheaply the female prisoners were valued: *Krasnye devuški po denežke* "the beautiful girls a farthing apiece" (204). This motto closely repeats the equivalent formula of the *Slovo* (125) — *byla by čaga po nogatě*, "a girl would go for a pittance" — and in both cases there occurs the same pun based on the homophony of the stressed syllables (*dé-dé*, in the *bylina*; *gá-gá*, in the *Slovo*).

* А и все ымушшесъво-именьицо царя Задоньского
все делил на свою дружиноньку хоробрую, —
и как на каждого богатыря денег по сороку тысецей,
делил ведь много на них да красна золота,
дарил красна он золота да чиста серебра,
дарил много чиста серебра да драга жемчугу,
дарил на них же много драгих камешков,
дарил ведь много шуб да соболиных-то,
дарил много да шляпочок пуховых-то,
дарил много сапожок сафьянных-то,
а скота-та ведь рогатого
табунами гнали . . .

VI—THE ARCHETYPE OF THE VSESLAV EPOS

1. *The genetic connection of the Vseslav stories in the bylina, in the Chronicle and in the Slovo.*

We noted many striking concordances in the three narratives about Vseslav of Polock: the story of the *Primary Chronicle*, the digression of the Igor' Tale, and the *bylina* about the prince-werewolf. What sort of genetic relation links these three sources? There are correspondences between the *bylina* and the *Slovo* which are lacking in the *Chronicle*. On the other hand, there are coincidences between the *bylina* and the *Chronicle* which remain foreign to the *Slovo*. Finally, some motifs tie the Vseslav story of the *Slovo* with the *Chronicle* without being reflected in the *bylina*. The most plausible supposition would be that all three narratives go back directly to one common source, presumably to an oral Vseslav epos which arose from the immediate impression his adventurous deeds obviously made on the imagination of his contemporaries.

It is worthy of note that the *bylina* about Volx Vseslav'evič in comparison with all other examples of the Russian oral epos is much more markedly related to the imagery of the *Slovo*. (We mean the *Slovo* as a whole, and not only in its Vseslav passage). For instance, V. Peretc, who had no inkling of the thematic ties between the Vseslav reminiscence in the *Slovo* and the *bylina* about Volx, nevertheless repeatedly brings the latter into comparison with various passages of the *Slovo*, particularly with verses 3, 23, 157, 159, 188, 190.¹ We mentioned the striking similarity of such poetic devices of both the *Slovo* and our *bylina* as, for example, the punlike expression for the cheapness of female prisoners. The *bylina* about Volx is "remarkable for the archaic character of its form and the depth of its poetic sense," remarked N. Kostomarov, an historian of rare intuition.² This *bylina* preserves the poetic tradition of pre-Mongolian Russia with exceptional accuracy.

Besides the special position of the Volx *bylina* in the Russian heroic epos, we have to deal with the peculiar presence of the Vseslav digression in the *Slovo*. And again it was V. Miller who distinctly sensed that "here the historical reminiscences and allusions to various events in the tempestuous career of

¹ *Slovo o polku Ihorevim* (Kiev, 1926), pp 137, 156, 294, 297, 315, 316.

² *Sobranie sočinenij* (St Petersburg, 1881), XIII 329.

the turbulent Prince Vseslav are whimsically interlaced with fantastic features. It may be that at this point the author of the *Slovo* merely interpolates some of the content of the old Vseslav song, even reproducing certain of its expressions. And perhaps this fragment of the *Slovo*... enables us to judge about the character of the epic historical songs of the 11th century" (*Očerki*, III, 29). Just this passage of the *Slovo* finds particularly many correspondences in Russian oral tradition. Thus, for instance, the rapid flight of Vseslav from Polock to Kiev (160) and the picturesque description of the Nemiga battle (157) were repeatedly compared with similar folklore imagery.

Moreover, not only the *bylina* and the *Slovo*, but also the *Primary Chronicle* in its references to Vseslav, are all obviously influenced by legendary epic stories. It is by no means the only case where the oral epos penetrates into the *Primary Chronicle*: its investigators have pointed out many examples of such infiltration.³ A touch of lore in the *Chronicle's* tale about Vseslav is revealed by the presence of typical epic formulas which have been mentioned and quoted above, and also by the fact, unusual for the *Chronicle*, that Vseslav and his Polock are enveloped in an aura of magical acts and astrological portents.

In the *bylina* Volx Vseslav'evič, a professional sorcerer and werewolf, conceived from a serpent, saves "God's churches" and the "venerated monasteries" from the enemy's encroachment. In the *Slovo* the wizardly Vseslav, nightly coursing as a wolf over the Russian land, listens to the matin bells of St. Sophia's both in Polock and in Kiev (159, 160). And finally in the *Chronicle*, Vseslav, born by enchantment, bearer of a talisman for life, and "merciless in bloodshed," declares after his liberation from the dungeon and his victory over Izjaslav: "O, true Cross, because I have believed in Thee, Thou hast delivered me from this abyss." And the chronicler adds that by Vseslav's victory "God demonstrated the power of the Cross as an admonition to the Russian land" (6576).

If Vseslav's triumph is connected with the elevation of the Life-Giving Cross, then his death also seems to have evoked in the chronicler a Christological association. The communica-

³ Cf. e.g., D. Lixačev, *Russkie letopisi i ix kul'turno-istoričeskoe značenie* (Leningrad, 1947), Chap. 7; I. Eremin, *Povest' vremennyx let* (Leningrad, 1947), 58 ff.

tion under 6609/1101 begins with the following item: "Vseslav, the Prince of Polock, passed away on Wednesday, April 14, at the ninth hour of the day." The comparison of the Laurentian version of the *Chronicle* text "v' 9 čas'" and of the Hypatian "u 9 den'" clearly favors the reconstruction "v' 9 čas' d'ne," or without change in meaning, "v' 9 d'ne." The careful investigator of calendary data in Old Russian chronicles, N. Stepanov, points out that the counting of hours in pre-Mongolian Russia was unusual and referred only to particularly important events, and furthermore even in such cases it was rather prompted by association with the Gospel and church books. If, for instance, the Hypatian redaction links the earthquake of 6703/1195 with the ninth hour, Stepanov indicates that it is an unquestionable association with the Evangelical tale about the earthquake which lasted until nine o'clock when Christ gave up the ghost, and especially with the prayers "of the ninth hour," which refer tragically to the last moments of the Savior's earthly life.⁴ It is very probable that the ninth hour in the communication about Vseslav's death was also suggested by these same Evangelical events. As Šaxmatov rightly points out, "they couldn't know in Kiev at what hour Vseslav died in Polock, and furthermore it wouldn't interest a Kievan"⁵ In the whole *Primary Chronicle* no other reference to the death of a Russian prince indicates the hour. The ninth hour itself is mentioned one other time, under 6494/986: "and darkness was o'er all the earth from the sixth hour until the ninth and at the ninth hour Jesus gave up the ghost." This association is so much more likely because an error must be supposed in the dating of Vseslav's death. April 14th of the year 1101 was a Sunday, not a Wednesday. However, April 24th was a Wednesday; probably the chronicler by mistake substituted a 1 for a 2 in the dates. The night of April 24, 1101 was the eve of Holy Thursday and the beginning of the Passion of Christ.

The wizardly nature of Vseslav does not meet the least condemnation in either the *bylina*, the *Slovo*, or even the *Primary Chronicle* which is inclined to denounce sorcery. And likewise Vseslav's active and initiatory participation in the

⁴ "Kalendarno-xronologičeskie faktory Ipat'evskoj letopisi do XIII v.," *Izvestija Otd. Rus. Jaz. i Slov. Ak. Nauk*, XX, No 2 (1915), 22 f.

⁵ *Povest' vremennyx let*, 309

internecine wars is not censured. The *Primary Chronicle*, on the contrary, conceals any evidence of violence or brigandage in Vseslav's campaigns, whereas the Novgorod Chronicle of the late eleventh century narrates under 6574/1066 how he burned all of Great Novgorod and plundered even the Cathedral of St. Sophia, removing its bells and chandeliers: "Oh, great was the misery at that time!"⁶ The *Slovo* goes so far as to contrast the glorious and gallant Vseslav to the princes "forging discord against themselves" (cf. 149-151).

2. The werewolf myth.

Under 6552/1044 the *Primary Chronicle* says about Vseslav:

For when his mother bore him, there was a caul over his head, thus the magician bade his mother "bind this caul upon him, that he might carry it for his whole life"; and Vseslav bears it on him to this day. For this reason he is merciless in bloodshed.

The ancient Russian name for the caul (a little membrane sometimes encompassing the head of a child when born, forming part of the amnion)¹ was jaz'no or jazno, Old Church Slavonic az'no or azno, which properly meant 'skin'; cf. jaz'něn' 'leathern', jaz'nar' 'currier'. The form corresponding to az'no in Old-Indic is ajinam 'skin' derived from ajáh 'he-goat', ajá 'she-goat'; cf. also the Lithuanian ožinis 'goatish', ožys 'goat'. The same Indo-European root occurs in Slavic koza 'she-goat', and koža 'skin' with a supplementary initial k of unclear, perhaps taboo, origin.² The Russian term still existed as late as the eighteenth century in the form jajnó meaning 'caul'³ with the change of z to a palatal semivowel either by progressive assimilation or rather by folk etymology (cf. Church Slavonic jain', adj. from jaice, 'egg'), if not by taboo substitution. For the most part, though, this name for the

⁶ A. Šaxmatov, *Razyskanija*, 627 f (cf. 235). — And more than a century later the Novgorod Prince still wants to avenge this robbery (Hypatian Chronicle 6686/1178).

¹ Webster's *New International Dictionary*, sub voce Caul.

² Cf. A. Meillet, "Les origines du vocabulaire slave," *Revue des Etudes Slaves*, V (1925), 8 f.

³ V Dahl, *Tolkovyj slovar' živogo velikorusskogo jazyka* (4th ed.), IV, 1569.

caul was replaced in Russian by soročka, Ukrainian soročica, literally 'shirt'; synonymous terms are used in other Slavic languages: Slovenian srajčica, Bulgarian riza, Serbocroatian košuljica or košulja, Czech košilka; cf. Polish czepek, literally 'cap'. In ancient Russian the word jaz'no appears also as jazv'-no or jazveno, folk etymology having identified it with jazv'n' or jazven', adj. from jazva 'ulcer, wound': this form appears in both the Laurentian and Hypatian redactions of the *Primary Chronicle* (and seems to date back to it): se jazveno navjaži na n'. The manuscripts of the Laurentian redaction and Xlebnikov's variant of the Hypatian use the same word in the preceding sentence also (byst' emu jazveno na glave ego), whereas in this instance the other manuscript of the Hypatian redaction, the Hypatian Codex proper, rashly substitutes jazva for jazveno. In the more recent chronicle redactions we find drastic alterations due to the incomprehension of the vocable jazveno. For example, the sixteenth-century manuscript of the so-called Perejaslavl' Chronicle probably identifies jazveno with jazvina 'hole, ravine' and states: "there was a pit (jama) on his head, and the magicians said to his mother, 'bind the scab of this wound (korosty jazvy toja) upon his head for his whole life so that he should be merciless in shedding blood.'"⁴

Tatiščev accurately understood this passage of the *Primary Chronicle* (bylo jajno na glave ego),⁵ but Karamzin surmised "some magic headband worn by that prince to cover a congenital ulcer."⁶ And essentially following this renowned historian, some later interpreters⁷ speak of Vseslav's ulcer, tetter, or birthmark hidden by a headband. Even Šaxmatov accepts the erroneous version of the Hypatian Codex: byst' emu jazva;⁸ and R. Trautmann translates it as: eine Wunde⁹, while

⁴ *Letopiseć Perejaslavlja-Suzdal'skogo*, edited by M. Obolenskij (Moscow, 1851), 44.

⁵ *Istorija rossiskaja*, II (1773), 109.

⁶ *Istorija Gosudarstva rossijskogo*, II (2nd ed., SPB, 1818), 74.

⁷ Eg., M. Kojalovič, *Lekci po istorii Zap. Rossii* (Moscow, 1864), 75; M. Dovnar-Zapol'skij, *Očerki istorii krivičskoj i dregovičskoj zentel' do konca XII stoletija* (Kiev, 1891), 76; JA. Taranovskij, "Soobraženija o sufixax, vxodjaščix v sostav zap. rus. familij i nazvanij sel i dereven' v Belorussii," *Filologičeskie Zapiski* (1892), 2.

⁸ *Povest' vremennyx let*, 196.

⁹ *Die Nestorchronik* (Leipzig, 1931), III.

S. H. Cross restores the correct reading: a caul.¹⁰

The belief in the magic power of the caul is widespread in the world and is especially strong in Slavic countries. As the *Stoglav* testifies, in the sixteenth century the high Russian clergy felt obliged to fight against the cult of the caul ingrained in the common folk¹¹. Records from different extremes of the Slavic domain indicate that the caul serves as an amulet, usually rolled up into a small bundle and then suspended from the neck¹² or sewed into the clothes, in the belief that a charm tied to the bearer will protect him forever. The admonition of the magicians to bind the caul upon Vseslav is a striking sample of amulet sorcery, ardently practiced in Old Russian magic art (*v'lxvovanie nauzy*, according to the terminology of Cyril from Turov).¹³

What does the caul betoken and what is intended by its use as phylactery? The most simplified form of this belief takes the caul for a pledge of good fortune. M. Čul'kov, the eighteenth-century collector of Russian folklore, writes in his "ABC of Russian Superstitions": "A baby which came from its mother's womb with a caul is considered very lucky by the common people; hence arose the byword: born with a caul (*v soročke rodilsja*). This caul is taken off, put into a small purse or pouch and attached to the cord on which the baby wears the cross, . . . in belief that in the presence of the caul luck will never forsake the child."¹⁴ Arnaudov notes the same belief in Bulgaria;¹⁵ it seems to be common to all Slavic peoples and is widespread elsewhere. Conforming to this concept, a late chronicle (*Gustynskaja letopis'*) adds an explanation to the magicians' precept: Vseslav should wear the caul for his whole life, "and he will be fortunate in everything."¹⁶ However, the *Primary Chronicle*, without mentioning the good luck, in-

¹⁰ *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, 288. Cf. also Xalanskij, *op cit.*; Ždanov, *Russkij bylevoj épos*, 284; Leonardov, *op cit.*; M. Hruševskij, *Istorija ukrajin'skoj literatury* (Lwow, 1923), II, 161.

¹¹ Chapter XLI, Question 2; cf. E. Duchesne, *Le Stoglav* (Paris, 1920), 107 f.

¹² Cf., e.g., A. Afanas'ev, *Poëtičeskie vozzenenija slavjan na prirodu* (Moscow, 1869), III, 360.

¹³ Kalajdovič, *Pamjatniki rossijskoj slovesnosti XII veka* (Moscow, 1821), 95.

¹⁴ *Abevega russkix sueverij* (Moscow, 1786), 295.

¹⁵ *Očerki po b'lgarskija folklor* (Sophia, 1934), 605.

¹⁶ *Polnoe Sobranie Russkix Letopisej*, II (1843), 268.

icates a quite different implication for Vseslav's birth with a caul: "for this reason he is merciless in bloodshed." This connection puzzled Ždanov: "the circumstance that Vseslav was born with a caul does not explain his bloodthirstiness" (*op. cit.*, 284). As a matter of fact, in Slavic popular tradition, good luck is only a part of the lot that befalls anyone born with a caul.

In two extremities of the Slavic world — in Serbocroatian and Slovenian lore on one hand, and in Polish and especially Kashubian on the other — such a child is predestined to become a supernatural being. He is a successful and glorious wizard gifted with miraculous power, second sight, and supreme magical ability: he can change his bodily shape at will, transform himself into an animal, course at night as a wolf — v'lk'm' riskati (*Slovo*, 159), lōpa varg, lōp verg, lōypa varg, gā ulv (as the corresponding formula of Swedish and Norwegian folk tradition puts it)¹⁷ — acquiring a wolfish bloodthirsty disposition. In brief, he becomes, like Vseslav, "merciless in bloodshed," for bloodthirstiness is the salient feature of the wolf and of the werewolf¹⁸ — the latter in Slavic tradition tends to merge with the vampire (*qpir'),¹⁹ either during the lifetime of the werewolf (*v'lkodlak') or after its death. As E. Schneeweis states in his summary of Serbian beliefs, one who comes into the world with a caul grows up a vukodlak "werewolf" (Church Slavonic vl'kodlak', literally "wolf-haired"),²⁰ his spirit can abandon the sleeping body and

¹⁷ E. Odstedt, *Varulven i Svensk Folktradition* (Upsala, 1943), 43; Reichborn-Kjennerud, "Vår gamle trolldomsmedisin", V = *Skrifter av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo, Hist. Fil. Kl.* (1947), No. 1, 120.

¹⁸ Cf. W. H. Roscher, "Das von der 'Kynanthropie' handelnde Fragment des Marcellus von Side," *Abhandlungen der Philol.-Hist. Klasse der K. Sachs. Ges. d. Wissenschaften* (Leipzig, 1897), XVII, 51 f.; K. Müller, *Die Werwolvesage* (Karlsruhe, 1937).

¹⁹ Cf. particularly F. Wollman, "Vampyrické pověsti v oblasti stře-doevropské," *Národopisný Věstník Československý*, XIV-XVIII (1921-1925); J. Hasting, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, IV, 624.

²⁰ ... bil na videž človeške podobe in lepega obraza, ali rastla mu je po vsem truplu volčja dlaka (J. Trdina, "Bajke in povesti o Gorjan-cih: 9. Volkodlak," *Ljubljanski Zvon*, II (1882), 411. — Cf. in Norse tradition such names for the werewolf as ulfhamr or ulfheðinn, 'wolfskin'.

accomplish deeds demanding superhuman strength.²¹ Among the demonic beings born with a caul and appearing in the shape of beasts, certain are benevolent to mankind and fight against evil spirits.²² Besides the gifts of clairvoyance and transformation, the Kashubs and the folk of the surrounding Germanized area ascribe to caul-born boys a vampiric existence after their death.²³ Connections between an amulet on a necklace (nauz) and lycanthropy are also believed among Western and Eastern Slavs.²⁴ In the Kievan Poles'e a magician is believed to be able to change into a wolf with the help of such a "nauz".²⁵ And the Old Russian "Azbukovnik" from Buslaev's collection chides people who go to magicians, accept from them and wear devilish charms-nauzy, thus unwisely bringing upon themselves "wolfish names."²⁶

The werewolf theme in Russian folklore is so intimately linked with the similar range of beliefs in other Slavic countries that a common Slavic werewolf tradition may be supposed and, in general outline, even reconstructed in as much as a common Slavic patrimony in demonology emerges ever more distinctly. However, this does not exclude the possibility of close interrelations between ancient Russian and Scandinavian beliefs²⁷ or the influence of the Turkic wolf cult on the

²¹ *Grundriss des Volksglaubens und Volksbrauches der Serbokroaten* (Celje, 1935), 29

²² Schneeweis, *op cit.*, 21 f.; *Zbornik za Narodni Život i Običaje Južnih Slavena*, I, 225

²³ Baechtold-Staubli, *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, III, 891 f.; Wollman, *... Národopisný Věstník Československý*, XVI, 91; O Knopp, *Volkssagen, Erzählungen, Aberglauben, Gebrauche und Märchen aus dem ostlicheninterpommern* (Posen, 1885), 85

²⁴ F. Gawronski, *Wilkołaki i wilkołactwo* (Warsaw, 1914), 17 f

²⁵ A Marcinkowski (A Nowosielski), *Lud Ukraiński*, II (Wilno, 1857), 96

²⁶ F. Buslaev, "Dopolnenija i pribavlenija ko II-omu tomu Skazaniu Russkogo Naroda, sobrannyx I Saxarovym," *Arxiv istoriko-juridičeskix svedenij, odnosjaščixsja do Rossi*, izdan N Kalačevym, I (1850), part 4, p. 2.

²⁷ Also the special question of possible interrelations between the Vseslav epos and Norse sagas deserves attentive inquiry as a partial problem of the still controversial Scandinavian-Russian epic interchange. cf. particularly A Stender-Petersen, *La théorie de l'origine varègue de la byline russe*, *Classica et Mediaevalia* VII (1945), 201-214, and VIII (1946), 121-138. According to F. R. Schroder, the beginning of

Eastern and Southern Slavic tradition, as Gordlevskij maintains.²⁸ Without intending to deal here with questions of genetic filiation, we would like to point out the internal relation between birth with a caul and the gift of transformation (oborotničestvo) in the way it was expressed both in Slavic and in Norse tradition. As J. G. Fraser sums it up,²⁹ the Icelanders "hold that a child born with a caul will afterwards possess the gift of second sight, that he will never be harmed by sorcery, and will be victorious in every contest he undertakes, provided he has the caul dried and carries it on him . . . Further, it is an ancient belief in Iceland that the child's guardian spirit or a part of its soul has its seat in the chorion of fetal membrane, which usually forms part of the afterbirth, but is known as the caul when the child happens to be born in it. Hence the chorion was itself known as the fylgja or guardian spirit."

A person who comes into the world with a second shape beside his natural skin³⁰ is consequently endowed with the

the Volx *bylna* seems to recall the birth of the hero in *Helgakvða Hundingsbana I*, who, let us add, also happens to be "a friend of wolves" — "Skandinavien und der Orient in Mittelalter" (II), *Germanisch-Rumanische Monatsschrift*, VIII (1920), 287 f.

²⁸ "Čto takoe 'bosyj volk'?", *Izvestija Ak Nauk SSSR*, Otd. Lit. i Jaz, VI, No. 4 (1947), 317 ff.

²⁹ *The Golden Bough*, I, 187, 199 f; cf. M. Bartels, "Islandischer Brauch und Volksglaube in Bezug auf die Nachkommenschaft," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, XXXII (1900), 70 f.

³⁰ Cf. Old Russian jaz'no 'skin' and 'caul', and the Germanic stem ham having both of these meanings (H. S. Falk and A. Torp, *Norwegisch-Dänisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg, 1910, 376). An amulet from some kind of second human skin is an important device for the change into a werewolf: if it is not a caul, there are for this purpose belts from human skin or from the skin of an unborn child, as attested in German folk tradition (K. Müller, *Die Werwolf-sage*, Karlsruhe 1937, 71). Finally, the caul is not the only form of amniomancy: if some animals' afterbirth is applied to the head of a newborn boy, then — according to Scandinavian beliefs — he will "lǫypa varg" (I. Reichhorn-Kjennerud, *op cit*, 121). And a pregnant woman, if she creeps through a foal placenta (foalhann, literally 'foal-skin'), avoids the labor pangs, but becoming enveloped in two skins she bears a werewolf (C. W. von Sydow, "Overnaturliga vaser," *Folketræ*, edited by N. Lid = *Nordisk Kultur*, XIX, 1935, 120; N. Lid, "Til varulvens historia," *Saga och Sed*, 1937; E. Odsted, *op cit*, 115 ff.; I. Reichhorn-Kjennerud, *op cit*, 119). Thus the experience of a mother about to give birth is fused with that of a child about to be born. The werewolf is said to be relieved of this enchantment and to regain a thoroughly human life, if he succeeds in drinking the heart blood of an

magic power of varying his corporeal frame at will, and thus of dominating space and time. In brief, he is second-sighted and "not single-shaped": *eigi ein-hamr*, according to the scaldic designation of the werewolf.³¹ The concise definition of the prince-werewolf in the *Slovo* (161) neatly states: věšča duša v' družě tělě, "a weird (second-sighted) soul in a second (or more than one) body" (cf. *Geste*, 381). Wieszczy in Polish (vješčy in Kashubian) designates a male child born in a caul, and the caul itself is called wiezba, vješčba.³² Among Serbs such a child is said to be a wizard (vidovito).³³ In Slovenien, vampires and werewolves fuse under various names of the same root — vedomci, vedunci, vedarci, when males; vešče, when females.³⁴ In West-Ukrainian folklore the noun viščun is recorded with the connotation "werewolf."³⁵ Thus the use of the adjective věšč' in the *Slovo*, for a werewolf born with a caul is far from an isolated instance in Slavic demonological vocabulary. The same epithet is applied in the *Slovo* to Bojan (3, 17, 162) whom the Tale characterizes by were-animal images (3) and whose name is connected with magic transformations in Bulgarian and Turkic tradition (*Geste*, 340).

When we compare the Vseslav legend as reflected in the *Primary Chronicle*, in the *Slovo*, and in the *bylina*, it appears that each of these three sources presents only fragments of the entire legend and — this is particularly instructive — each source presents a different and distinct selection of these fragments. Only the *Primary Chronicle* offers the caul story,

unborn child (C. W. Sydow, *loc. cit.*) Dr. Valentina P. Wasson brought to our attention the use of pre-natal hartblood in the "elixir of life" recently attempted by the late Bogomolec. An astonishing association of fetus and delivery with the "werewolf fantasy" appears not only in traditional beliefs but likewise in mental disorders and in lycanthropic dreams (cf. Nandor Fodor, "Lycanthropy as a Psychic Mechanism," *Journal of American Folklore*, LVIII, 1945, 310 ff.).

³¹ C. W. von Sydow, *op. cit.*, 121. The expression "var kallaðr eigi einhamr" means 'was thought to be a werewolf' (G. Wiggfusson, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*, Oxford, 1874, 121).

³² J. Karłowicz, *Słownik języka polskiego*, II, 593; F. Lorentz, *Slovinzisches Worterbuch*, II, 1303; S. Ramułt, *Słownik języka pomorskiego czyli kaszubskiego*, 254.

³³ Vuk Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik*, I, 307.

³⁴ F. Wiesthaler "Volkodlak in vampir s posebnim ozirom na slovansko bajeslovje," *Ljubljanski Zvon*, III (1883).

³⁵ J. Klawe, *Totemizm a pierwotne zjawiska religijne w Polsce* (Warsaw, 1920), 130.

yet omits its cardinal implication, the werewolf motif, and mentions merely a characteristic feature of the werewolf, his bloodthirstiness. A man is born with a caul (thus becoming a werewolf) and "for this reason he is merciless in bloodshed." The omission of the connective motif (in parentheses above) creates in this record of the *Chronicle* a brachylogy quite obscure for a modern reader (we call to mind Ždanov's quandary), but in Kievan Russia the allusion was perfectly clear for anyone acquainted with contemporary popular beliefs. On the other hand, the *Slovo*, as mentioned, characterizes Vseslav expressly as werewolf (161); both in the *Slovo* and in the *bylina*, particular attention is paid to his changes into a wolf (*Slovo* 155, 157, 159; D 48, 70), and in the *bylina* moreover, to the other animal-metamorphoses of this prince (D 46, 50, 82, 104, 109, 129, 137, 160). But the bloodthirstiness of the werewolf is tempered in most variants of the *bylina*, in order not to make the glorified hero repulsive; the *Slovo*, furthermore, merely hints at this trait in the bloody picture of the Nemiga battle (157 f.). In short, these two versions of the Vseslav legend render his ability "to change his shape" (the Old Norse *hamast*, in the primary meaning of this verb), while the *Chronicle* notes only his ferocious propensity (the same verb *hamast* in its figurative meaning). Both the *Slovo* and the *bylina* rather stress other werewolf properties — his marvelous luckiness (*vazn'*),³⁶ sorcery (*vražba*), craftiness (*kljuky*), swiftness: "travelling in the assumed shape of an animal . . . with magical speed" (the so-called "ham-farir" in the sagas' terminology)³⁷ inspires both the *Slovo* (155, 157, 159, 160) and the *bylina* (D 106-108, 138-139). Animal-like speed is conceived as a characteristic trait of a "magician and sorcerer" in Old Russian literature: *borz' že bě jako i zvēr'* ("he was swift as a beast"), the Hypatian Chronicle remarks (6756/1248).

The Vseslav digression of the *Slovo* is a condensed, allusive extract from the legend of the prince-werewolf, while in the *bylina* the whole account of the rise of the werewolf is told with a great many typical details conforming to Slavic mythological survivals. The fright of the mother at the sight of the new-born, superhuman Volx (see III, 3 above) agrees with folk narratives about a mother horrified at the birth of a

³⁶ *Slovo* 156 (see *Geste*, 242).

³⁷ Vigfusson, *op. cit.*, 236.

werewolf (see, e.g., Trdina, *loc. cit.*). The one-and-a-half-hour-old Volx asks his mother to place a weapon in his right hand (see III, 3 above): Serbian mothers put an ax in the hand of their infants as a magical means to assure their future valor. (Schneeweis, *op. cit.*, 61). The infant Volx asks not to be swaddled and rapidly grows up to be a cunning hunter and warrior: as the Slovenian Trdina records (*loc. cit.*), "there was no need to dandle and nurse the werewolf as other children; he grew rapidly as a wolf . . . And before his second year was over, he started to go hunting." Volx's ruses — listening at the window (see III, 8 above), shrewdly blunting his foe's weapons (III, 9), passing through slots — all this finds close parallels in Slavic folk beliefs: in the evenings, the werewolf, Trdina (412) records, goes listening under windows to what is being plotted and prepared against him; he is widely believed to charm or to blunt the weapon intended against him; he is able to shrink and to penetrate chinks and keyholes (Schneeweis, 20).

Contrary to the *Primary Chronicle*, our *bylina* does not relate what was peculiar at the birth of the prince but it does deal with his fabulous conception: the hero is alleged to issue from an encounter of a princess with a serpent. Although this motif occurs only in the archaic Siberian variants D and G, it is very probable that it belongs to the original framework, for we also detect an allusion to fabulous pre-conditions of the hero's birth in the *Primary Chronicle*: as Hruševs'kyj points out,³⁸ there are two epic themes interwoven — 1) the supernatural origin of Vseslav ("him his mother engendered from an enchantment") which is echoed by the *bylina*, and 2) the caul. Moreover, a serpent paternity entirely fits in with the caul and werewolf motifs: the serpent able to shed its skin brings into the world a son provided at his birth with a second skin, and afterwards enriched with a werewolf power to change his skin. It is worthy of note that in Serbian *košulja* 'shirt' means both 'caul' and 'serpent skin'.³⁹ And in Slavic popular tradition the human offspring of a serpent (*zmeeviči*), like boys born with a caul, enjoy singular strength.⁴⁰

The feral adventures of werewolves belong to the time of

³⁸ *Istorijska ukrajinskoj literatury* (Lwow, 1924), II, 161.

³⁹ Budmani, *Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika*, V, 391.

⁴⁰ Xalanskij, *op. cit.*, 121.

night, and this is distinctly expressed in the *Slovo*: Vseslav courses as a wolf at night, before cock-crow (159, cf. 155).⁴¹ "The retinue sleeps, but Volx sleeps not: He turned into a grey-haired wolf," the *bylina* echoes (D, 69 f.; cf. 81 f., 141) and associates the hero's birth with the appearance of the moon in the sky (D, 11-13). In Serbia the midwife asks the mother of a newborn babe, "Do you like the sun or the moon," and the answer is, "The sun," in order to protect the child from a demonic destiny (Schneeweis, 62). With the moon is associated the demonic werewolf, and moonlit nights are the favorite time for his raid. In the *Primary Chronicle* under 6573/1065, an ominous night aura frames Vseslav's preparation for war: an exceedingly large star "appeared as if it were made of blood, and therefore portended bloodshed," which the "merciless" prince actually hurried to start.

As we have noted before, there is, besides the moon and stars, another particularly startling celestial association with our hero — the daylight suddenly changed to darkness, the sun was transformed into the moon or was replaced by the moon and stars — in brief, the eclipse of the sun. The quoted report about ominous portents in the *Primary Chronicle* continues: "the sun also suffered alterations and instead of being bright was like the moon: the ignorant (nevěglasi) say it has been eaten up (s'nědaemu suščju)."

"Is not this chronicler's note about the eclipse," Svjatskij (*op. cit.*, 104) ingeniously conjectures, "merely an echo of peoples' rumors that this eclipse was caused by Vseslav, the prince-werewolf?" The *Primary Chronicle* does not name the devourer of the sun, just as in the tale of Vseslav's birth it prefers not to designate the werewolf; but the *Krmčaja Ilovička*, a Church Slavonic manuscript of Serbian recension written in 1262 and published in excerpt by Jagić, gives a revealing answer. A gloss on leaf 1566⁴² states, referring to the peasants: "when the moon or the sun perishes, they assert that werewolves have eaten up the moon or the sun, however this is nothing but fables and falsehood."⁴³ And in the later popular

⁴¹ "The cock-crowing before daybreak compels the werewolf to disappear at once" (A Afanas'ev, III, 557). Cf. I. Reichborn-Kjennerud, *op. cit.*, 125.

⁴² *Starine Jugosl. Akad.*, VI (1874), 83

⁴³ егда убо погнѣнѣть луна или сл(ь)н(ь)це, гл(агол)ють, влькодлаци луну изѣдоше или сл(ь)н(ь)це. Си же вса басни и лъжа суть.

tradition of the Southern Slavs, the eclipse of the sun and moon is usually attributed to the cosmic appetite of the werewolf. Menčetič, a Dubrovnik poet of the sixteenth century, mentions in one of his verses "the moon when eaten by a werewolf,"⁴⁴ as V. Jagič points out.⁴⁵ And Slovenians still use the expression "solnce jedeno" (the sun is eaten) for the eclipse which superstition imputes to some magic wolves.⁴⁶ According to the Czech Alexandreis of the early fourteenth century,⁴⁷ the old people (staří dědi) used to say at the eclipse of the moon that it was eaten up by the "vědi," the female partners of werewolves; and other reputed works of that time, the so-called Dalimil's Chronicle and the Easter play "Mastičkár", reflect the same belief.⁴⁸

To prevent the dead werewolf from assuming a vampiric existence (da se ne povampiri), his mouth must be stopped up with a coin or a stone, otherwise he would gore living people and even "devour the sun and the moon."⁴⁹ A v'lxv' in the Russia of Vseslav's time was supposed to be a virtual vampire; therefore precisely in the narrative of the *Primary Chronicle* under 6577/1071 about Vseslav and other "v'lsvi" the chronicler does not fail to mention the rubles put into magicians' mouths before their execution.⁵⁰

The Chronicle of Vseslav's years and particularly of Vseslav's Polock is permeated with vampiric images; and it enters the ominous seventh century of the seventh millenium with the story of the "miraculous miracle" happening in Polock where, during the day, as the *Slovo* says, Vseslav the Prince was judging and ruling (159):

At night there was heard a clatter and a groaning in the streets, and demons ran about like men. If anyone went forth from his house to look upon it, some invisible demon hurt him with the plague, and people perished from that, and nobody dared leave the house. Then during the day there began to appear riders, and they were not visible

⁴⁴ "Mjesec, kad ga ie vukodlak" (*Stari pisci hrvatski*, II, 336)

⁴⁵ *Archiv für Slavische Philologie*, V (1881), 91.

⁴⁶ F. Wiesthaller, *op. cit.*, 504.

⁴⁷ *Alexandreida* (Prague, 1947), 113, 95

⁴⁸ L. Niederle, *Život starých Slovanů*, Part II, Vol. I (Prague, 1924), 44.

⁴⁹ See Wollman, XV, 44 f; Wiesthaller, *op. cit.*, 638, 701; W. Mannhardt, "Über Vampirismus," *Zeitschrift für die Mythologie und Sittenkunde*, IV (1859), 266, O. Кнопп, *op. cit.*, 85

⁵⁰ И повелѣ Янь вѣложити рубля въ уста има . . .

themselves, but the hoofs of their horses could be seen. And they hurt the people of Polock and its country so that it was commonly said that ghosts (*navie*)⁵¹ were killing the people of Polock.

The *Primary Chronicle* mentions Vseslav's failures only in passing; our *bylina* says nothing of them and concludes the story in the year 6576/1068, with the happy ending of his glorious but short-lived accession to the Kievan throne. In the *Slovo*, on the contrary, the proper subject of its Vseslav digression is the constant fluctuation of Vseslav's "lots" (153) — brilliantly up and shatteringly down: the first "streak of good luck" was that "he opened the gates of Novgorod, and smashed the glory of Jaroslav" (156), only to be put to rout on the Nemiga (157 f.); then suddenly he "touched with spear-shaft the golden Kievan throne" (154), to leap thereupon "at midnight out of Belgorod" (155). In short, "though a wizardly soul in a double body, yet he often suffered sorely" (161), as had been wisely predicted by another artist of magic metamorphoses, the seer Bojan (162 f.; cf. 3).⁵²

This ambiguous fate of a double-shaped hero finds its expression also in popular Slavic beliefs. As Schneeweis (60 f.) noted, a child born with a caul is to have much luck and is to be protected against any thrust and shot if this *košuljica* is bound as a shred to the child's body; but especially Serbian people are frightened at the demonic prospects such a child faces. They would rather resort to preventive magic to circumvent the supposed consequences of the caul. Ukrainians of the Kievan area are said to be mistrustful of a happy future for a caul-child: it cannot escape chastisement (*bez nakazanija ne obijdet'sja*)⁵³ Or, as the *Slovo* implies, "neither a crafty man, nor a clever man . . . can escape God's doom" (163).

This reverse side, too, thoroughly belongs to the core of the

⁵¹ Cf. L. Niederle, *op. cit.*, I, 37.

⁵² Bojan's magic power "*ex homine subito fieri lupum*," a migratory motif of Altaic provenience, was first attached on Slavic soil to Benjamin, the son of the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon (cf. *Geste*, 340), obviously because the Biblical Benjamin is said to "ravin as a wolf" in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil," (Genesis 49 27). Accordingly, the Czech Jews in the Middle Ages were accustomed to translate the name Benjamin as *Vlk* see *Die Juden und Judengemeinden Mahrens in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Brno, 1929), 2.

⁵³ Z. Kuzelja, *Dytyna v zvyčajaz i vuvannjaz ukrajins'koho naroda* (Lwow, 1906), 169.

werewolf myth. In his penetrating study, "Dolon le loup," L. Gernet brings to light the pristine substance of the werewolf notion surviving in Indo-European folk traditions:⁵⁴ there prevails a perpetual dramatic tension between two opposite, but ever interchangeable, roles of the wolf; it is a kind of antinomy — "l'animal étant tour à tour poursuivant et poursuivi."⁵⁵ In the werewolf myth related by Euripides and elucidated by Gernet the hero bears the name Dolon, "the crafty," and the same epithet is applied to Vseslav in the *Slovo* and in the *bylina*. But in spite of all his craftiness and cleverness, fundamentally he appears as an outlaw, like the "izgoj" Vseslav, and appropriately for a wolf, for whom the Scandinavian taboo name is vargr "peaceless, outlaw".⁵⁶ And thus peaceless, precipitate flight is the distinguishing trait of the wolf, of Dolon, and likewise of the Polock prince-werewolf.

The existence of a wolf cult in the pre-Christian Slavic past is very probable.⁵⁷ The community and similarity of lycanthropic beliefs in the Slavic world and the expansion of the Slavic werewolf name among the adjacent peoples (Greek vrukólakas, Turkish vurkolak, Albanian vurvolak, Rumanian vârkolak) speak for the antiquity and tenacity of these beliefs. If the "Neuroi" in Herodotus' report are really ancestors of the Slaves, as many scholars believe,⁵⁸ the legends about their magic ability to change themselves into wolves and about their struggle with serpents give us a glimpse of the distant Slavic past and of its mythology.⁵⁹ Slavic, and more broadly, Indo-

⁵⁴ *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves*, IV (1936), 189 ff

⁵⁵ "The strangler and the strangled . . . the hunter and the hunted" in lycanthropic dreams (Nandor Fodor, *op cit*, 316).

⁵⁶ L. Gernet, *op. cit*, 200 According to the old Scandinavian customary law any wolf or werewolf was actually outlawed (I Reichborn-Kjennerud, *op. cit.*, 116).

⁵⁷ Cf J. Polívka, "Vlčí pastýř," *Mélanges V Tille* (Prague, 1927), 519 ff.; R. Čajkanović, "Sveti Sava i vuci," *Srpski Etnografski Zbornik*, XXXI (1924), 157 ff

⁵⁸ T. Lehr-Splawinski, *O pochodzeniu i praojczyźnie Słowian*, (Poznan, 1946), 13 f.

⁵⁹ L. Niederle, *Slovanské starožitnosti*, Section I. Part I. Vol. II (Prague, 1926), 270 f. A belief close to Herodotus' version was still alive in the vicinity of Polock in the early XVII century when the renowned English traveller, Richard James, noted that "people of Narva and Livonia become werewolves every year, as incredible as it may seem to me: however, they assert and swear, kissing the cross, that it is

European comparative mythology will have to deal here with a rewarding task. For the time being, we may collate our three versions of the Vseslav story with reference to the werewolf in Slavic popular tradition, and we can easily discern the ancient Russian myth in its most general outline:

The son of a princess and a serpent is born with a caul which he wears upon him at the insistence of magicians. His supernatural power and his eagerness to shed blood are predestined and make both his mother and Mother Earth tremble. He grows up and speedily acts as a beast; possessing the gift of second sight, he masters the art of magical transformations and leads the double life of a prince and of a werewolf. He is omnipresent, crafty, and wonder-working; the huntsman's fortune accompanies his predaceous, venturesome chase for power over the animal and human kingdoms. In vain his prospective victims strive to escape. Intimately tied with the forces of the night, he threatens the sun itself. Where he comes running in wolf-shape, there the earth becomes stained with blood, and vampiric ghosts hover over his abode. Glory and suffering are inseparably intermingled in the course of his life as a werewolf — hunter and beast, persecutor and persecuted at the same time.

Each of the three sources abridges and adapts the Vseslav legend in its own way, according to its own literary purposes — the *Primary Chronicle* reduces the lycanthropic element, the *Slovo* is not interested in the prince's infancy, and the *bylina* suppresses any tragic coloring. The caul occurs uniquely in the *Primary Chronicle* and the magic transformations only in the two other sources, but in this and similar cases, we are nevertheless in a position to consult folk beliefs and hence to ascertain the internal relation between these disconnected motifs and their mutual concomitance in the original Vseslav legend. Some components of this saga are assuredly better preserved in the modern, yet oral *bylina* than on parchment, and — as comparison with the *Primary Chronicle* indicates — certain passages are extraordinarily intact in the variant recently recorded from Marfa Krjukova, our contemporary (for

actually so." See F. Psalman, "Un Russisant anglais au XVI-e-XVII-e siècle, Richard James (1572-1638)," *Bulletin de Géographie Historique et Descriptive* (1911), 372

instance, the "eclipse" motif and the prediction of bloodthirstiness). In the history of the Greek Digenis epos H. Grégoire has uncovered similar examples concerning the relation between oral and written tradition and between older and newer song variants.

3. *Interrelations of the mythical, historical and literary elements in the Vseslav epos.*

The werewolf myth is obviously much older than the reign of Vseslav, but the ascribing of this myth to the Polock prince is easily understandable. The unusual, one would even say fantastic, life of the militant Vseslav, his unexpected appearances and vanishings, the lightning-like seizure of powerful Novgorod, the sudden change of the prisoner of the day before into the ruling prince of Kiev, and in general his miraculous good luck and supernatural transitions from utter ruin to glory, from nothingness to triumph, and *vice versa*, this all asked for an explanation, and in the eyes of his contemporaries the only explanation of his charmed career lay in his secret powers.

That this Vseslav legend was in the process of being created by his contemporaries follows from the story of the *Primary Chronicle* about the magical circumstances of his birth, related under 6552/1044: this story finishes with the remark that the talisman was put on Vseslav by his mother in accordance with instructions from magicians, he bears it (nosit') "to the present day" (1 do sego d'ne), and "hence he is (est') merciless in bloodshed."¹ This means that for the legend about Vseslav's magical birth the *terminus ante quem* was his death in 6609/1101 and the *terminus post quem* the first campaigns of the Polock prince — assaults on Pskov in 6573/1065² and on Novgorod in 6574/1066 — which gave him a bloody reputation. In other words, the legend about the magical origin of Vseslav and about the caul's having a demoniac influence on

¹ Only the Laurentian Codex preserves this passage intact, while the other variants tend to replace the present nosit' by the past nosi (Radziwiłł copy) or nosil' (Hypatian redaction), sego by smertnogo (*ibidem*) and similarly est' by byst' (Xlebnikov copy).

² Князь Всеславъ Полоцьскыи, събравъ силы своя многыя прииде ко Пскову и много тружався съ многыи замыслени и пороками шибавъ, отъиде ничтоже успѣвъ (Second Pskov Chronicle).

his life was already circulating in the last third of the eleventh century.

The ascribing of an ancient myth to the popular wonder-working warrior was no doubt made easier by the fact that the most glorified conqueror of medieval literature, Alexander of Macedonia, was also portrayed as a supernatural being. According to the Russian "Hellenic Chronograph,"³ very ancient in a great part of its content, Alexander, "manifesting a magically power, conquered all peoples in a magical way."⁴ It is characteristic that he, like some other illustrious heroes, is pictured here as "beast-like," and the words about a panther's speed, which the *Primary Chronicle* uses for Svjatoslav, are also applied to Alexander.⁵ The Chronograph states as well that Alexander "became like a lynx for he was sharp-witted, very tricky in his designs, and ferocious in his heart to drink human blood."⁶ In this presentation Alexander is very closely related to the epic Vseslav by his wizardly wisdom and slyness, superhuman swiftness, vampiric passion and beastlike habits. From this it is only one step to a lycanthropic image.

We know how eagerly Old Russian literature used the legendary traits of Alexander for portraying the most renowned Russian princes, as, for instance, Roman of Galič (see Hypatian Chronicle, 6709/1201). It is not surprising that the legendary image of this great hero of antiquity should serve as the link for the myth and the historical appearance of Vseslav, and that precisely the literary legend about Alexander should make its impress noticeable on the *bylina* about Volx. This element of our *bylina* was brought out by V. Miller in one of his earliest folklore studies⁷ and then, in more detail, by Rudolph Abicht.⁸ Of the motifs noted by these authors, the closest to the *bylina* are: the liaison of Alexander's mother with a magician in the guise of a dragon, the early training in

³ Cf V Istrin, *Očerki istorii drevnerusskoj literatury domoskovskogo perioda* (Petrograd, 1922), 91 f.

⁴ A Popov, *Obzor xronografov russkoj redakcii* (Moscow, 1866), I, 36.

⁵ *Op cit*, 41

⁶ *Izvestiya Otd Rus Jaz. i Slov Ak Nauk*, XXXI (1926), 104

⁷ "Otgosloski 'Aleksandru' v bolgaro-russkix bylinax," *Žurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveščeniya* (Oct., 1877), 115-132

⁸ "Ein Alexanderlied unter den russischen Bylnen," *Festschrift für Alfred Hillebrandt* (Halle, 1913), 1-11

esoteric and occult sciences, the youth of Alexander at the time of his first deeds, his formation of a retinue from coeval youths, the campaign against the Indian sovereign, and finally the matrimonial epilogue of the Persian campaign of Alexander and his warriors.

Without doubt, one should not ignore these literary deposits in our *bylina*, but it would be erroneous to try to reduce the whole Volx plot to a Russification of the Alexander story, as A. Brückner does.⁹ His efforts to prove that history "hat nie etwas zu tun gehabt" with either this *bylina* in particular or with the *bylina* in general (*loc. cit.*, 342) are likewise fruitless in their one-sided doctrinairism, as are the opposite attempts to find in the Russian oral epos nothing but mere reproductions of historic reality. In spite of Brückner's bias,¹⁰ the historical method enables the folklorist to elucidate not "only the insignificant names," but also the "matter" itself, or at least some striking features of this matter.

However, the recognition of the multiple ties between epos and history does not authorize the student to deny all mythological reminiscences in Russian epic tradition. On the contrary, "Slavic folklore has an inestimable value for the study of ancient pagan religion," as the great master of Slavic prehistory states.¹¹ If it was a dangerous fallacy for the romanticists to envisage everything in the Russian epos as a petrified myth, it is just as much a delusion for hypercritics of the romantic tradition to declare, for example, that "neither Volx in the *bylina* nor Vseslav in the *Slovo* have features of lycanthropy or sorcery."¹² According to Šambinago, in both of these instances there was originally a simple figure of comparison: Volx courses about not as a human being transformed into an animal, but in an animal-like manner; only later the literal misinterpretation of the comparison figure actually transformed the hero of the *bylina* into a werewolf. Šambinago's conception means an arbitrary and artificial separation of the image "vl'kom' ryskaše" (159) from all other constituent parts

⁹ "Michajlo Potyk und der wahre Sinn der Byliden," *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie*, IV (1927), 332

¹⁰ See *Archiv für Slavische Philologie*, XLI, 471 ff

¹¹ L. Niederle, *Manuel de l'antiquité slave*, II (Paris 1926), 128.

¹² Šambinago, *op cit.*, 142, cf *Slovo o polku Igoreve*, ed by V Ržiga and S. Šambinago (Moscow, 1934), 291, and V Miller, *Vzglyad na Slovo o polku Igoreve* (Moscow, 1877), 103

of the Vseslav (and the Volx) epos: the magical birth, the caul and the magicians, the "wizardly soul" (161), and the whole saga from beginning to end crumbles into unmotivated and senseless *membra disjecta*. As Potebnja pointed out, the distinction between the instrumental of metamorphosis and that of comparison is not grammatical, but material, and can be determined in any particular case only with reference to the ideological background.¹³ In the case of the prince's coursing "vl'kom'," the appeal is to the views of Vseslav's contemporaries and to those of the *Slovo's* author. Thus the whole context of the Vseslav epos plainly indicates that it is a werewolf story and that both the *Slovo* and the *bylina* share this conception. How early this tradition changes from a belief to a fiction is a special question.

The ancient Slavic myth, the international literary model and the domestic historical actuality are intimately fused in the Vseslav epos. And all three classical approaches to the study of the Russian epos — inquiry into the mythological substratum, into the literary borrowings, and into the reflections of history — happen to be equally justified in this case. They supplement each other fruitfully if we envisage these threefold ingredients not as totally disparate layers mechanically brought together, but as components of a poetic whole which are mutually co-ordinated and adapted to an artistic intent.

In his stimulating book about the poetic art and genesis of *byliny*, A. Skaftymov¹⁴ establishes that the *bylina* is usually concerned with only one hero and his foe: all other *dramatis personae* are merely a "resonant background." Hence, since the *bylina* about Volx, like other princely *byliny*, presents the prince as the only active person in contrast to his passive retinue, it would be incautious to follow A. Markov¹⁵ in ascribing this treatment to the ideology of court singers who were indifferent to the temper and interests of the retinue. Equally hazardous is the parallel attempt of Markov to interpret *byliny* with a hero from the retinue (*družinnik*) as having been created undoubtedly in the retinue milieu, and to conceive the

¹³ *Iz zapisok po russkoj grammatike* (Kharkov, 1874), II, 488 f.

¹⁴ *Poëtika i genezis bylin* (Saratov, 1924).

¹⁵ "Bytovye čerty russkix bylin," *Ètnografičeskoe Obozrenie*, LVIII-LIX (1904).

idleness and mediocrity of the prince in such *byliny* as the negative attitude of the court's democratic retainers. As a matter of fact, the poetic pattern of a *bylina* reduces the significance and importance of the hero's environment, and this device implies setting the retinue in the background, if the hero is a prince, and *vice versa*.

It is obvious that only the specific features of a given fable, and not the stereotyped constituents of any *bylina*, can serve as a key to the historic kernel sought for. If Volx's adversary is grim, haughty, opinionated, these are simply the usual traits of any foe in Russian epic tradition. We do not know whether the actual Izjaslav possessed them. Certainly we find here salient coincidences between the *bylina* and the chronicler's narrative; and in both of these sources, the enemy manifests the same obstinate will to underestimate our hero; but perhaps the *Chronicle* is in this case, as in so many others, already influenced by the epic pattern.

Surely epic poetry is attracted to such historic events which fit its conventional scheme, and the lightning speed of Vseslav's irresistible triumphs offered a most rewarding subject. But that which did not suit the usual pattern was retouched and adapted. Thus, since the foe in *byliny* is supposed to be a foreigner, the Grand Duke of Kiev becomes the Indian Tsar; and since there is no place in the plot of *byliny* for more than one victory, then Vseslav's Novgorod raid, preceding his Kievan fortune, is depicted in terms of a hunt.

V. — THE PLACE OF THE VSESLAV EPOS IN RUSSIAN EPIC TRADITION

1. *Old Russian princes in the byliny and traces of polemics against the Vseslav epos.*

In his unfinished "Outline of the Russian *Byliny* Epos," V. Miller points out the poverty of images of Russian princes in oral epic tradition. (*Očerki*, III, 56 f.). This is one of the striking differences from the Serbian epos where national rulers used to appear as heros. The colorless image of the Kievan Prince Vladimir figuring in most of the *byliny*¹ seems, as Mil-

¹ "If we visualize the epic Vladimir, we will find a complete colorlessness in all his cardinal traits" (V. Miller, "Èkskursy v oblast' russkogo èposa," *Russkaja Mysl'*, No. 1, 1891, 72).

ler hints, to have incorporated not only St. Vladimir but also Vladimir Monomax and Vladimir, son of Vasil'ko. However, neither Vladimir appears as a central hero, for princes assume such a role rarely and, surprisingly enough, Kievan rulers never. Among the princes of the pre-Mongolian epoch only two are immortalized as heroes of *byliny*: first, as we have tried to show, Vseslav; and secondly, Gleb, son of Svjatoslav, identified by A. Markov² and V. Miller (*op. cit.*, 57 f.) in the *bylina* about Gleb Volod'evič which is known only in a few White Sea variants.³ The most popular fact in the historic being of this prince was, as Miller reminds us, the glorious victory which he, together with Novgorod forces, won in October 6577/1069 against Vseslav. This victory, recorded in the Novgorod Chronicle, is omitted in the *Primary Chronicle*. The only detailed passage about Gleb in the latter savors of oral legend. Under 6579 the *Primary Chronicle*, among other stories about magicians, brings out the following without mentioning the date:

A similar magician (v'lxv') had appeared at Novgorod during Gleb's rule. He harangued the people by representing himself as a god, and he deceived many of them — almost the entire city — for he claimed to know all things and he blasphemed against the Christian faith announcing that he would walk across the Volxov (V'lxov') in the presence of all. And there was an uprising in the city and all believed in him and desired to murder the Bishop. However, the Bishop, after having taken the cross and clad himself in his vestments, stood forth saying: "Whosoever wants to place trust in a magician, let him follow him, but whoever believes in the Cross, let him come to it." So the people were divided into two factions: Prince Gleb and his retainers took their stand beside the Bishop, while the common people all followed the magician. Thus there was great strife between them. But Gleb hid an axe under his garments, approached the magician and told him: "Do you know what is to happen on the morrow, or may occur even before evening?" The latter said: "I know everything." The Gleb said, "Do you know what is about to occur this very day?" The other said: "I will perform great miracles." But Gleb drew forth the axe and smote him so that he fell dead and the people dispersed. Thus the man who had sold himself to the devil perished, body and soul.

We will not examine here the question of whether the Khersonese raid of Vladimir Monomax is really reflected in the *bylina* about Gleb Volod'evič, as Markov, and subsequent-

² *Iz istorii russkogo bylevogo èposa* (Moscow, 1905), I, 30-66.

³ M, No 50, 80; BL. II (Moscow, 1941), No 79; A. Astaxova, *Byliny severa* (Leningrad, 1938), I, No 15

ly Miller and Hruševs'kyj,⁴ supposed. In the opinion of these scholars Prince Gleb, too, participated in this raid. Be that as it may, the White Sea *bylina*, especially its motif of Gleb's struggle with the heretic Marinka, is related to the tale of the *Primary Chronicle* quoted above. Under the influence of the historic Marina, wife of the false Dmitrij, renowned among the Russian people as a heretic and sorceress, this name entered into the Russian folk epos as a symbol of evil witchery.⁵ In the *bylina*, as well as in the *Chronicle*, Gleb hacked the magician after a dialogue of riddles and answers (a motif quite typical of Russian oral tradition of the 10-11th centuries, as Lixačev, *op. cit.*, 132 ff., stressed). Only, in the *Chronicle*, Gleb asks the riddles, and in the *bylina*, he answers them. Both in this *Chronicle* and in the *bylina* Gleb triumphs over the enemy magician. Meanwhile, it is especially as the victor over the reputed magician Vseslav, that Gleb entered Novgorodian history. Does not the epic subject of Gleb's successful struggle against witchcraft reflect the salvation of Novgorod from the repeated pressure of Vseslav? If this is so, then the epic glorification of Gleb was a kind of polemic answer to the epos which exalted the magician Vseslav.

In Old Russian literary heritage it is perhaps possible to detect other traces of epic polemics against the eulogy of the prince-magician. In the Chronograph of the seventeenth century is preserved a story which scholars, beginning with F. Buslaev,⁶ collated with the *bylina* about Volx. It remains to be determined what the nature of this connection is. According to the Chronograph's story, Volxov, son of Prince Sloven (cf. Volx Vseslav'evič), "a fierce sorcerer, created by diabolical tricks many delusions;⁷ he changed himself into a wild beast-crocodile⁸ in the river Volxov; he blocked the path of the river, and those who did not submit he either devoured or snatched

⁴ *Istoriја ukrajins'koji literatury* (Lwow, 1925), IV, 168-171.

⁵ V. Miller, *Očerki*, I, 153 ff.

⁶ *Istoričeskie očerki russkoj narodnoj slovesnosti i iskusstva*, II (SPB, 1861) 8; *Narodnaja poëziја* (St. Petersburg, 1887), 34 f. and 268.

⁷ бѣсовскими ухищреніи мечты творя многа (cf. *Primary Chronicle* 6600/1092: Предивно бысть чудо Полотьсѣѣ, въ мѣчѣ: . . . рищюще бѣси).

⁸ преобразуяся во образ лютаго звѣря-коркодила (cf. *Slovo* 156. скожи . . . лютымъ звѣремъ, *Нурат. Chronicle* 6709/1201: губяще яко и коркодиль).

up and drowned⁹... and the fable of the ignorant about this magician (volxv) transformed this damned one into a god. But our true Christian word based on much verified and truthful information about this damned sorcerer-magician is that he was wrongly shattered and choked by devils in the Volxov, and by diabolical delusions his damned body was carried up this river Volxov..."¹⁰ This tale openly opposes itself to the fables exalting "volxv." It is curious that the motif of the Volxov's flowing backstream had already appeared in the *Primary Chronicle*, also in connection with Vseslav, under 6571/1063. There it is related that "the Volxov at Novgorod flowed backward for five days," and that this was not a favorable portent since Vseslav burned the city four years later. The backward flowing of a river as a theme of wizardry later occurs in the *Primary Chronicle* under 6579/1071 in the story about the prophecy of a "volxv" in Kiev, and again in direct contiguity with Vseslav's adventures. This "magician inspired by the devil declared: 'There appeared to me five gods saying — tell the people that in five years the Dnepr is to flow backward.'"

Coming back to the question of the pre-Mongolian epoch's princes as heroes in *byliny*, we must conclude that there are only two: the magician Vseslav and Gleb, the adversary of the magician. Thus there is merely one theme for princely *byliny* originating in pre-Mongolian Russia — the fortunes and misfortunes of Vseslav of Polock.

2. The Polock princes in epic tradition.

The struggle of Vseslav with Jaroslav's sons, which is reflected in the *bylina* about Volx and perhaps in the one about Gleb Volod'evič, should not be considered as an isolated subject in epic tradition. It may be supposed that there existed in the past a whole epic cycle dealing with the proud resistance of the Polock princes.

At least the *Primary Chronicle* under 6488/980, and es-

⁹ чародѣй лють... непокаряющихся ему овыхъ пожирая (cf BL 36-38: Это како будѣт да чудовишно-то, чародей ли будѣт да окоянной-от, погублять народ будѣт он, пожирать его?)

¹⁰ А. Попов, *Izbornik slavjanskix i russkix sočinenij i statej, vnesennyx v xronografu russkoj redakcii* (Moscow, 1869), 443 f.

pecially the Laurentian Chronicle under 6636/1128, preserved picturesque and distinctly epic fragments of a legend about Vladimir's marriage with the shrewish Rogneda (Ragneiðr)—Gorislava, the daughter of Rogvolod (Rognvaldr) who "had come from beyond the seas and ruled over Polock." Both in this tale and in the *bylina* about Dobrynja as matchmaker, V. Miller rightly perceives echoes of a saga which persisted among the kin of Vseslav (Očerki, III, 24). It is not by accident that the Laurentian Chronicle suddenly quotes this saga in detail shortly after the decisive rout of Vseslav's sons by Jaroslav's offspring. In summing up this legend the chronicler links the fight between Vseslav's and Jaroslav's descendants with the rebuff of Rogvolod, Rogneda and her heir Izjaslav against Vladimir: "and thenceforward the grandsons of Rogvolod draw the sword against the grandsons of Jaroslav." Although Jaroslav was Izjaslav's younger brother by the same Rogneda, only the descendants of the disgraced Izjaslav are presented as Rogvolod's progeny. So, too, in the *Slovo* the "izgoj" Oleg solely is surnamed Gorislavič — after his great grandmother Rogneda — the only one of all her posterity. Her cult persisted among the offspring of Vseslav, and her name Gorislava was given to his granddaughter.

The saga about Ragneiðr, the daughter of Rognvaldr from Palteskja, also penetrated to the Scandinavian North.¹ In general, Polock has an outstanding place among Russian motifs of Old Norse sagas. Chiefly, the Scandinavian heritage preserved epic tales about the second stage of the Polock princes' resistance: the fight of Brjačislav Izjaslavič with his uncle Jaroslav. The *Eymundar Saga* narrates the deeds of the konung Eymundarpátrr Hringssonar who helped Jaroslav (Jarisleifr) in his fight against Svjatopolk and then supported Brjačislav (Vartilaf) of Polock in his struggle with Jaroslav.² These events are also told by the Novgorod Chronicle of the late eleventh century which, under 6529/1021, mentions Jaroslav's attempt to finish the quarrel by conceding the towns of

¹ A Stender-Petersen, *Die Varagersage als Quelle der altrussischen Chronik* (Aarhus, 1934), 210 ff.

² "Saga Olafs Konungs hins Helga," *Fornmanna Sögur*, V (1830), 267-298; *Antiquités russes d'après les monuments historiques des Islandais et des anciens Scandinaves*, éd de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord, II (Copenhague, 1852).

Usvjač' (V'svjač') and Vitebsk (Vit'b'sk') to Brjačislav and asserts that this attempt was not successful. After Jaroslav's words of appeasement to Brjačislav, "thus be one with me," the Novgorodian chronicler unexpectedly adds: "and Brjačislav fought against Jaroslav all the days of his life."³ Meanwhile, according to the *Saga*, peace was settled and, as a result of this peace, Brjačislav ruled over Kiev three years until his death, after which Kiev reverted to Jaroslav. But Brjačislav's death occurred, according to the *Chronicle*, in 6552/1044, whereas the events depicted by the *Saga* refer to 1016-1021. This contradiction between the Russian and Norse sources supported S. H. Cross's denial of the historical value of this *Saga's* testimony.⁴ On the other hand, the *Chronicle's* narrative about the struggle between Jaroslav and Brjačislav is so fragmentary and confused that A. von Reutz suspected a gap or a suppression here.⁵

There is no possibility of checking the testimony of the *Saga*, but if the silence of the *Chronicle* cannot be considered a decisive argument against Brjačislav's being in Kiev, perhaps the mysterious court of Brjačislav (dvor' Brjačislavl') mentioned in the *Primary Chronicle* corroborates the data of the *Eymundr Saga*. The *Chronicle* mentions under 6576/1068 that the Kievan people, rising against Izjaslav, "halted before the court of Brjačislav" and decided there to go and liberate Vseslav's družina from the prison. "Brjačislav" is a rare princely name; we know of no Brjačislav connected with Kiev, yet the court of Brjačislav is considered by the *Chronicle* as something well known. And finally, the association between the court of Brjačislav and the impulse of the Kievan people to link their movement with Vseslav takes on meaning only if this Brjačislav is Vseslav's father. If this guess is right, dvor' Brjačislavl' would mean then Brjačislav's court at the time he ruled in Kiev, as the *Saga* quoted above asserts. In this case the Kievan uprising for Vseslav would simply be a further episode in the struggle of two ruling lines for the main city of Russia.

The Russian events of the second half of the eleventh

³ A. Šaxmatov, *Razyskanija*, p. 621.

⁴ S. H. Cross, *Yaroslav the Wise* . . . , 190.

⁵ "Eymundr Saga," *Dorpater Jahrbücher für Literatur, Statistik und Kunst* (1834), pp. 104-106.

century no longer found reflection in the Norse sagas,⁶ but for the Russian epic tradition just the third stage of the Polock princes' resistance — the stage linked with the wizardly appearance of Vseslav — was particularly fruitful. It would be difficult to explain such exceptional attention paid by epic tradition to the peripheral Polock, and it would not be easy to understand the popularity of this Polock upstart among the Kievan people if he were only a desperate usurper. The shrewd Karamzin was the very first to grasp the genuine essence of the historic litigation between the Izjaslaviči on the one hand, and Jaroslav with his progeny on the other: Vseslav "considered himself a legitimate inheritor of the Grand Duke's throne since his grandfather Izjaslav was the oldest son of St. Vladimir"⁷ (after the premature death of Vladimir's heir Vyšeslav). Besides the epic allusions in the Rogneda legend, we have no indications how and why Izjaslav happened to be driven out of the contest. The local chronicles kept at the Polock Cathedral of St. Sophia were taken in 1579 by the Poles, when Polock was seized by Batory, and have been lost.⁸ But the seriousness and stubbornness of the resistance of the Izjaslaviči, and likewise the vividness of its reflection in folk memory give an insight into the fight that was carried on for the rights of pretenders, who regarded themselves and were regarded by others as having been illegally deprived.

"The permanent struggle between the dynasties of Polock and Kiev" does not finish with Vseslav, and Hruševs'kyj⁹ attempts to catch epic echoes in the story of the Hypatian Chronicle 6648/1140 about the retribution sought by Mstislav of Kiev against the sons of Rogvolod Vseslavič.¹⁰

⁶ F. Braun, "Das historische Russland im nordischen Schrifttum des 10 bis 14 Jahrhunderts," *Eugen Mogk Festschrift* (Halle, 1924), 150-196.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, II, 74.

⁸ V. Ikonnikov, *Opyt russkoj istoriografii*, II, part I (Kiev, 1908), 535.

⁹ *Istorijska ukrajins'koji literatury*, II (Lwow, 1923), 230.

¹⁰ R. Jakobson's and G. Ružičić's study comparing the Vseslav epos with the cognate Serbian heroic songs about Zmaj Ognjeni Vuk is to appear.

APPENDIX

VOLX VSESLAV'EVICH

We reproduce here text D of the *bylina* with the following differences from Seffer's edition: 1) we divide the text into verses, number them and insert modern punctuation, 2) preserve the spelling of the original only in so far as it tends to render phonetic and grammatical features deviating from standard Russian; 3). transfer to the footnotes such words which obviously do not enter into the verse scheme and were evidently inserted by the scribe to complete the meaning; 4) place in brackets [] words which are required by the verse and are evidently omitted by the scribe, particularly the repeated hemistiches, missing partly or completely (the initial lines are completed with the help of variant G); 5) put in word accents when they are used as beats in the verse.

- По саду, са́ду по зе́леному,
 ходи́ла-гуля́ла мо́лода́ кня́жна,
 [мо́лода́ кня́жна] Ма́рфа Всесла́вьевна.
 Она́ с ка́меню ско́чила [на люта́ змея́],
 5. на лю́того на зме́я [на Го́рынича]:
 лю́той зме́й обвива́ется
 о́коло че́бота — зе́лен са́фьян,
 о́коло чуло́чика ше́лко́ва,
 хо́ботом бьёт по бе́лу́ стегну.
10. А вта́поры кня́гinya поно́с понесла́,
 а поно́с понесла́ и дитя́ родила́.
 А и на́ небе просветя́ светёл́ месяц,
 а в Ќиеве роди́лся мо́уч бога́тырь,
 как бы мо́лоды Во́лх Всесла́вьевич
15. Подрожа́ла [ма́ть] сыра́ земля́ —
 стра́слось сла́вно ца́рство Инде́йское,
 а и си́нее мо́ре сколыба́лось
 для ра́ди ро́жденья бога́ты́рского,
 мо́лода Во́лха́ Всесла́вьевича;
20. ры́ба пошла́ в морску́ю глубли́ну,
 пти́ца полете́ла вы́со́ко в небеса́,
 ту́ры да оле́ни за́ горы пошл́и,
 за́йцы, лиси́цы по ча́шицам,
 а во́лки, медве́ди по э́льникам,
25. со́боли, куні́цы по о́стро́вам.
 А и бу́дет Во́лх в полтора́ часа́,
 Во́лх говори́т, как гро́м греми́т:
 «А и го́й еси, суда́рыня ма́тушка,

- мóлода Мáрфа Всеслáвьевна!
30. А не пеленáй во пеленú черчáтую
а не поясы поéсья шелкóвыя,
пеленáй меня, [судáрыня мáтушка],
в крéпки лáты булáтныя
а на буйну гóлову клади злáт шелóm,
35. по прáву рúку пáлицу,
а и тяжку пáлицу свинцóвую,
а вéсом та пáлица в трíста пúд.»
А и бúдет Вóльх семí годóв,
отдавáла его мáтушка грáмоте учить,¹
- 40 а грáмота Волхú в наúk пошлá,
посадíла егó уж перóm писáть,
письмó емú в наúk пошлá.
А и бúдет Вóльх десяти́ годóв,
² поу́чился Вóльх ко премúдростям
45. а и пёрвой мúдрости учíлся [Вóльх] —
обвёртоваться я́сным со́колом,
ко друго́й-то мúдрости учíлся он, Вóльх —
обвёртоваться серýм волком;
ко трéтей-то мúдрости учíлся Вóльх —
50. обвёртоваться гнедýм туром,
[гнедýм туром] — золотýя рогá.
А и бúдет Вóльх во двенáдцать лёт,
стáл себе Вóльх он дру́жину прибирáть:
дру́жину прибирáл в три гóды он,
55. набрáл себе дру́жину³ — семь ты́сячей;
сáм он, Вóльх, в пятнáдцать лёт,
и вся́ его дру́жина по пятнáдцати лёт.
Прошлá та слáва вели́кая
ко стóльному гóроду Кíеву.
60. Индéйской цáрь наряжáется,
а хвáлится-похваля́ется:
хочет Кíев грáд за щитóm весь взя́ть,
а бóжьи цёркви на дýм спустíть
и почéстны мона́стыри рóзорить.
65. А втапóры Вóльх он дога́длив бы́л:
со всею дру́жиною хорáброю,

¹ D учиться

² D втапóры

³ D дру́жину себе

- ко славному царству Индѣйскому
тут же с ними во поход пошел.
Дружина спит, так Волх не спит:
70. он обернется серым волком,
бегал-скакал по темным по лесам,
[по темным по лесам] и по раменью.
А бьет он звери сохатыя,
а и волку, медведю спуску нет,
75. а и соболи, барсы — любимой кус,
он зайцам, лисицам не брезгивал.
Волх поил-кормил дружину хоробраю,
обувал-одевал добрых молодцов:
носили оне шубы соболиныя,
80. переменныя шубы-то барсовыя.
Дружина спит, так Волх не спит
он обернется ясным соколом,
полетел он далече на синее море,
а бьет он гусей, белых лебедей,
85. а и серым, малым уткам спуску нет.
А поил-кормил дружинушку хороброу:
а все у него были ества переменныя,
переменныя ества, сахарныя.
А стал он Волх вражду чинить.
90. «А и гой еси вы, удалы добры молодцы!
не много, не мало вас, семь тысячей, —
а и есть ли у вас, братцы, таков человек,
кто бы обернулся гнедым туром,
а сбегал бы ко царству Индѣйскому,
95. проведал бы про царство Индѣйское,
про царя Салтыка Ставрѹльевича,
про его буйну голову Бытыичеву?»⁴
Как бы лист со травю пристилается,
а вся его дружина приклоняется, —
100. отвечают ему удалы добры молодцы:
«Нету у нас такого молодца,
опричь тебя, Волха Всеславьевича».
А тут таковой Всеславьевич,
он обернулся гнедым туром,
105. [гнедым туром] — золотыя рога, —
побежал он ко царству Индѣйскому:

⁴ Д Батыевичу

- он пёрвую скóк за целú версту скочíл,
а дрúгой скóк — не могли найтí.
Он обернётся ясным sóколом, —
110. полетёл он ко царству Индéйскому.
И бúдет он во царстве Индéйско[е]м,⁵
и сёл он на палáты белока́менны,
на тé на палáты царския,
ко томú царю Индéйскому,
115. и на тó окóшечко кося́щатое.
А и буйные вéтры по настú тянут,
цáрь со царíцею в разгово́ры говорíт.
Говорíла царíца Аздяковна,
молода́ Елéна Алексáндровна:
120. «А и го́й еси ты, сла́вной Индéйской ца́ры!
Изво́лишь ты наряжа́ться на Рúсь воева́ть,
про тó не зна́ешь, не ве́даешь:
а и на́ небе просветя́ светёл месяц,
а в Кíеве родíлся могúч богаты́рь,
125. тебе́ царю́ сопроти́вничик.»
А вта́поры Во́лх, он дога́длив бы́л:
сидю́чи на окóшке кося́щатом,
он тé-то де рéчи повы́слушал,
он оберну́лся горно́стале́м,
130. бе́гал по подва́лам, по по́гребам,
по тём по вы́соким те́ремам,
у тугíх луков тетíвки наку́сывал,
у кале́ных стрел желе́зцы повы́нимал,
у тогó ружья́ ве́дь у о́гненного
135. кремё́нья и шо́мполы повы́дергал,
а всё он в зéмлю зака́пывал.
Обвернётся Во́лх ясным sóколом, —
звился́ он вы́соко по подне́бесью,
полетёл он далéче во чистó поле
140. ⁶ ко сво́ей ко дру́жине хоро́брыя.
Дру́жина спíт, так Во́лх не спíт,
разбудíл он уда́лых добрых мо́лодцов:
«Го́й еси́ вы, дру́жина хоро́брая.
Не вре́мя спáть, порá встава́ть, —

⁵ от Индейск[ие]м? (cf. 164)

⁶ Д полетел

145. пойдём мы ко царству Индѣйскому». И пришлѣ оне ко стѣнѣ белокаменной, — крепка стѣна белокаменна, ворѣты у гѣрода желѣзныя, крюкѣ, засѣвы все мѣдныя,
150. стоѣтъ караулы денны-нощны, стоѣтъ подворотня — дорог рыбеѣ зуб, мудрѣны вырѣзы вырѣзено, а и толькѣ в вырѣзу мурашѣ пройти. И все молодцы закручинилися,
155. закручинилися и запечалилися. Говорѣтъ [онѣ] таковѣ слово: «Потерѣтъ будет голѣвки напрасныя, а и как нам бѣдет стѣна пройти?» Молоды Вѣльх, он догадлив был:
160. сам обвернулсѣ мурашиком и всех добрых молодцов мурашками. Прошли оне стѣну белокаменну, и стали молодцы уж на другѣй сторонѣ, в славном царствѣ Индѣйским:
165. всех обернул добрыми молодцами, — со своѣю стали сбрѣю со ратною. А всем молодцам он приказ отдаѣтъ: «Гой есѣ вы, дружина хорѣбрая! Ходѣте по царству Индѣйскому,
170. рубѣте старѣго-малѣго, не оставѣте в царствѣ на сѣмена. Оставѣте толькѣ вы по выѣбору — не много, не мало, семь тысячей — дѣшечки красны дѣвицы.»
175. А и ходѣтъ⁷ по царству Индѣйскому, а и рубѣтъ старѣго-малѣго, а и толькѣ оставляют по выѣбору дѣшечки красны дѣвицы. А сам он Вѣльх во палаты пошѣл,
180. во тѣ во палаты царскѣя, ко томѣ царю ко Индѣйскому. Двери были у палат желѣзныя, крюки, пробѣи по булату злѣчены. Говорѣтъ тут Вѣльх Всеславѣвич:

⁷ D adds ero дружина

185. «Хотя ногá изломить, а двери вы́ставить!»
Пнет ного́й во двéри желéзные —
изломáл все пробóи булáтныя.
Он берёт царя́ за белы́ руки,
а слáвного царя́ Индéйского,
190. [царя́] Салты́кa Стaврúльевичa.
Говорíт тут Вóльх таковó слово:
«А и вáс-то царей не бьóт, не казнят.»
Ухватя́ его, удáрил о кирпíщатой пóл,
расшйб его в крóхи говénныя.
195. И тóт Вольх сáм царём насёл,
взявши царíцу Азвяковну,
а и мóлоду Елэну Алeксáндровну;
а и тá его дружина хорóбрыя
и на тéх на девйцах переженйлися.
200. А и мóлоды Вóльх тут царём насёл,
а то стáли — люди посáдскыя:
он злáта-сéребра вы́катил,
а и коней-корóв табунóм делйл,
а на всякого брáта по сту ты́сячей.

CLASSICAL INFLUENCE ON THE *SLOVO*

By

Clarence A. Manning

The *Slovo* is in many ways a puzzling work. As the only example of Kievan secular heroic poetry which has been preserved in its entirety, it offers many problems to scholars and it is not all surprising that some students have sought to prove that it was an eighteenth-century forgery and have tried to compare it with the works of Ossian and the Czech manuscripts now believed to be the work of Hanka. Yet no conclusive arguments have been found to maintain this position, and the latest attempts of Professor André Mazon¹ have been as futile as were the earlier arguments along this line, because sooner or later they must all rest upon the critic's personal opinions as to the actual lay culture of Kiev in the twelfth century, a subject on which the clerical writers of the lay were almost entirely silent.

Scholars of every school have been struck by the apparent classical influence on the text. Some, swayed by their belief that such classical influence was doubtful in the Kiev of the day, have sought to minimize it as much as possible. Others, in their enthusiasm for the subject, have sought to emphasize and broaden this influence. Yet any study of classical influence on the *Slovo* is hazardous and necessarily uncertain, for if it is rash to overemphasize verbal influence and borrowings in a contemporary work, it is even more daring to endeavor to adduce parallels for a piece which stands alone in its century and country.

In general early writers in Slavonic adapted and translated Byzantine religious writings, but they paid less attention to the poetic and secular Byzantine literature of the day. At the

¹ *Le Slovo d'Igor*, I-IV (Paris, 1940) ; V-VI, *Revue des Etudes Slaves*, XXI (1944), 5-45; "L'auteur probable du 'Poème d'Igor'," *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions* (1944), pp. 213-220.

same time the possibility cannot be excluded that some one trained in the secular literature of Byzantium did make his way to Kiev and, under the conditions that accompanied the writing of the *Slovo*, was able to use models and introduce mannerisms that were not natural to the more distinctly clerical authors.

It is also now accepted that at least some of the Russian writers were directly familiar with Greek works. Thus it seems likely that the very popular work of Digenis Akritas was translated directly into Russian from Greek without passing through a South Slavonic medium,² and the same was probably true of the Russian translation of Josephus. Both of these translations date from the pre-Tatar period, and a manuscript of the translation of Digenis was apparently found in the same volume that contained the *Slovo*. Both, however, show the same type of simplification that appears in the average Russian work of that time and the same avoidance of lyric and romantic elements. The author of the *Slovo* adopted an entirely different policy, and despite certain influences from the other translations, his work produces an entirely different effect.

It is certain that at least the name of Homer was known in Kiev in the twelfth century, for the Metropolitan Kliment wrote in an epistle:

Азъ писахъ отъ Омира и отъ Аристотеля и отъ Платона, иже въ елиньскихъ нырехъ славни бѣша.³

We cannot be sure how far we are dealing with the actual text of Homer or whether the knowledge was derived from one of the numerous abstracts and romances that were common in Byzantium.

On the other hand there are passages in the *Slovo* which seem to reflect certain passages in Homer. Thus we have the Iliad, III, I. 2-9:

Τρωες μὲν κλαγγῇ τ' ἐνοπῇ τ' ἴσαν ὄρνιθες ὥς,
 ἥύτε περ κλαγγῇ γεράνων πέλει οὐρανόθι πρό,
 αἱ τ' ἐπεὶ οὖν χειμῶνα φύγον καὶ ἀθέσφατον ὕμβρον,
 κλαγγῇ ταί γε πέτονται ἐπ' Ὀκεανοῦ ῥοάων,
 ἀνδράσι Πυγμαίοισι φόβον καὶ κῆρα φέρουσαι·

² Cf. M. Speranskij, "Devegenievo dejanie," *Sbornik Otd. rus. jaz. i slov. Ak. Nauk*, XCIC, No. 7, p. 56.

³ Cf. I. Novikov, *Slovo o polku Igoreve* (Moscow, 1938), p. 92; Geste, p. 293.

ἡέριαι δ' ἄρα ταί γε κακὴν ἔριδα προσφέρονται
οἱ δ' ἄρ' ἴσαν σιγῇ μένεα πνείοντες Ἀχαιοί,
ἐν θυμῷ μεμαῶτες ἀλεξέμεν ἀλλήλοισιν.

This is not too unlike —

Дѣти Бѣсови кликомъ
поля. прегородиша,
а храбрѣи Русици
преградиша чрълеными щиты (52).

There is a very good probability that we are dealing here with a literary parallel, for the behavior of the Russians is perhaps contrasted with that of the troops of Yaroslav:

Ти бо бес щитовъ, съ засапожники,
кликомъ плѣкы побѣждають,
звонячи въ прадѣдную славу (115).

Another case may be found in the words ascribed to Bojan:

Ни хытру, ни горазду,
Ни птицю гор[л]а[ст]у
суда Божіа не минути (163).

These may be compared with the remark of Hector to Andromache on parting (Iliad VI, 487-489):

οὐ γάρ τίς μ' ὑπὲρ αἶσαν ἀνὴρ Ἴδι προιάψει·
μοῖραν δ' οὐ τίνα φημι πεφυγμένον ἔμμεναι ἀνδρῶν,
οὐ κακόν, οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλόν, ἐπὶ τὰ πρῶτα γένηται.

Or again (Iliad II, 858-859):

Μυσῶν δὲ Χρόμις ἦρχε καὶ Ἐννομος οἰωνιστής.
ἀλλ' οὐκ οἰωνοῖσιν ἐρύσσατο κῆρα μέλαιναν.

We might also compare (Iliad, I, 4-5):

αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
οἰωνοῖσί τε δαῖτα

with another "Bojan ditty":

Дружину твою, княже,
птиць крылы приодѣ,
а звѣри кровь полизаша (146).

There is a Homeric feeling about such passages as

единъ же изрони
 жемчюжну душу
 изъ храбра тѣла
 чресъ злато ожереліе (147),

but perhaps we are dealing with a general commonplace of the epic tradition derived from Homer and the passage should not be stressed.

Further parallels may be pointed out. Many of the adjectival epithets used in the *Slovo* are similar to those employed by Homer. Thus we can equate *sěrym' v'ikom'* (3) with *polioio lykoio* (Iliad X, 334) and *sizym' orlom'* (3) with *aietou melanos* (Iliad XXI, 252), where *melas* is used in its usual Homeric sense of "all dark objects, though not absolutely black."

It may seem too obvious to mention such ordinary epithets, but in his study of the *Slovo*, V. Peretc point out that *sěryj* is used with wolves in no work contemporary to the *Slovo* and is later used only in those works which were apparently influenced by it and that *sizyj* does not appear in the distinctively literary tradition of Kievan Russia.⁴ A further study of these epithets also shows that the usage of the author of the *Slovo* is very different from that of his contemporaries. The *Slovo* seems to have been the first of the Kievan literary works to employ extensively adjectival epithets in the epic manner. This may be due to the fact that it is the only example of its kind that has been preserved, but it is highly probable that we are dealing with a definite Byzantine tradition.

There are several epithets clearly modelled on Byzantine and Greek patterns. Such are *zlatovr'sěm'* (97), the equivalent of the Greek *khrysokeramos* (given by Liddell and Scott as a Byzantine word),⁵ and also *zlatokovanněm'* (130), the equivalent of the Greek *khrosoteuktos*, which was used by Aeschylus and Euripides and continued down into Byzantine times. It is also evident, from an examination of the words given in I. Sreznevskij's *Materialy dlya slovarja drevne-russkogo jazyka*, that most of these words in *zlato-* are definitely translations of Greek originals and only a very few, usually referring to St. Chrysostom, antedate the *Slovo*. Whether or not we con-

⁴ *K izučeniju "Slova o polku Igoreve"* (Leningrad, 1926), p. 133

⁵ Liddell and Scott, *Greek Lexicon* (8th ed.), p. 934

clude that the author was acquainted with the complete text of Homer, it is certain that he was a man who was introducing new elements from Greek tradition into the Kievan language and that he had a more than passing acquaintance with the Byzantine use of language.

It is against this background that we must discuss the word Trojan', one of the most controversial words in the poem. Critics are divided as to whether or not it is possible to see in this an allusion to ancient Troy or to the Emperor Trajan. Other suggestions have been made to connect it with the root for "three", to identify it with Russia through some course of reasoning, or to amend the word.⁶ The most attractive solution of the problem is the identification of Trojan' and Troy, but even the acknowledgement of Homeric influence in the *Slovo* will hardly be decisive in the matter.⁷

The question of the influence of the Greek tragedians is far more complex. Many of the Greek choral odes contain reflections and meditations that are similar to the interludes, if we may so call them, in the *Slovo* where the poet pauses in his story for moral judgments and for lamentations. Some of them such as

Бориса же Вячеславлича
Слава на Судъ приведе
и на ка[выл]у зелену
паполому постла
за обиду Олгову,
храбра и млада князя (62).

sound like the grim warnings of Aeschylus (Cf. *Eumenides*, 273 ff) but there is little reason for emphasizing such influence, for the ideas incorporated in the *Slovo* could easily be derived from Christian sources which had passed into the intellectual atmosphere of the times, even though they appear rarely in this poem.

We could perhaps go further in the passages where Bojan is compared to the nightingale. Thus there is a distant comparison in (14):

⁶ Cf the summary of the discussion in L. A. Magnus, *The Tale of the Armament of Igor* (London, 1915), pp XLIX ff.; Novikov, *op. cit.*, pp 91 ff.; and Prince, "Trojan and Boyan in Old Russian," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, LVI (1919), 52 ff

⁷ Cf. *Geste*, pp. 101 f., 294.

О Бояне, соловію старого времени!
 абы ты сіа плѣкы ущекоталъ,
 скача, славію, по мыслену древу,
 летая умомъ подѣ облакы,
 свивая славы оба полы сего времени,
 рища въ тропу Трояню
 чресъ поля на горы.

and Euripides, *Helena* (1107 ff) :

σὲ τὰν ἐναύλοισ ὑπὸ δενδροκόμοις
 μουσεῖα καὶ θάκουσ ἐνί-
 ζουσας ἀναβοάσω,
 σὲ τὰν αἰοιδοτάταν ὄρνιθα μελωδὸν
 ἀηδόνα δακρυόεσσαν,
 ἔλθ' ὦ διὰ ξουθᾶν
 γενύων ἐλελιζομένα
 θρήνων ἐμοὶ ξυνεργός,
 Ἑλένας μελέας πόνους
 τὸν Ἰλιάδων τ' ἀει-
 δούσα δακρυόεντα πόνον
 Ἀχαιῶν ὑπὸ λόγχαις.

It is striking that in the appeal to Bojan to sing of the adventures of Igor, the poet is asked to sing of an episode which is filled with a mournful message for the whole of the Russian land. The nightingale in classical Greek was pre-eminently a bird of woe, because of its plaintive note (Cf. Euripides, *Helena*, ed. C. S. Jerram, Part II, 47). This sense was undoubtedly more strongly felt in the classical period than in later times when the nightingale, because of its beautiful song, was simply identified with poetry and music. It is striking that the simile of the nightingale is only applied to Bojan in this passage, but in the others where he is mentioned he seems to be a bard of Russian victory and greatness.

Another passage where the critics have endeavored to see classical influence is the much disputed section (76) :

Въстала обидѣ
 въ силахъ Дажьбожа внука:
 вступил[а] дѣвою
 на землю Трояню;
 въсплескала лебедиными крылы
 на синѣмъ морѣ, у Дону, --
 плещучи убуди
 жирня времена усобица.

The tone certainly suggests the dark forebodings of Fate, of Moira, Hybris, Atê, Eris or some similar figure invoked by the Greek tragedians. This is the obvious interpretation of the passage, but the fact that *Obida* is used elsewhere in an objective and impersonalized sense may speak against it. Professor Gudzij⁸ tries to avoid this explanation and he feels that there is no need to evoke the memories of the winged maidens of Russian tradition. Instead he seeks a sociological explanation which sharply separates the selfish and heartless princes from the long-suffering Russian people. He is hardly successful in this, and his attempts to see the swan as victim and to relate this conception to the passage (4) where Bojan sets falcons on a flock of swans and sings the first song which a captured swan produces, are not at all satisfying. It spoils the dignity of the introduction to see in the whole simile of the poet an emphasized notion of sacrifice. This interpretation, invoking a picture of suffering Russia, when considered purely realistically leads to still further emendations in the next lines. There can be no doubt that there is some confusion in the text at this point, but it may well be doubted whether or not this sociological solution is correct.

In fact the two references to swans are of a totally different character and undoubtedly are drawn from different sources. The simile in which Bojan draws out his notes from the strings like the song of a dying swan reflects the Greek belief that the swan sings most sweetly before its death. This exists at least as early as Aeschylus (Cf. *Agamemnon*, l. 144 f.), where it is said of the last prophecy of Cassandra. We can compare this in its poetic imagery to the prosaic and realistic picture of the harsh cry of the swan (30):

Крычатъ тѣлѣгы полунощы,
рци — лебеди роспущени...

On the other hand, it is interesting to note that of the examples of the use of the word *lebed'* given by Sreznevskij (II, 13-14), no passage is cited that offers clearly a laudatory reference to a swan. The bird had a bad name because it was included in the list of unclean fowl in the Old Testament (Cf. Leviticus 11, 18). In Russian oral tradition, we think constantly of *Mar'ja Belaja Lebed'* or the enemy of Russian heroes and incidentally of the Russian land. However we are to judge this being, she

⁸ See Novikov, *op. cit.*, pp. 112 ff.

can be separated very sharply from the tradition of the Val-kyrie, even as the choosers of the slain, who are to take the successful heroes to Valhalla.⁹

Can we identify this figure, this swan maiden, with Helen? It is a tempting hypothesis, especially in view of the classical tradition in the *Slovo*, but it is perhaps too tempting. In Greek legend, although Helen is the daughter of the swan, she appears with regular human characteristics. The Greek tradition with all of its syncretizing tendencies did not enjoy monsters and strange beings, and the cult of Helen and of Iphigenia slur over any non-Greek features. Yet it is easy to see that the localization of these myths in the Crimea and along the coast of the Black Sea, as in the *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Euripides, was probably helped by the existence of a swan cult in those localities.¹⁰ We are still too much in the dark to know the relation of these stories of a hostile swan deity to the Russians and to explain how this came about, but if Obida in the *Slovo* is really a maiden with swan wings (cf. *Geste*, 305) and if this maiden represents Helen, it was almost certainly not the Helen of the Greek tragedy but the figure which the Greeks adopted in their contact with the native tribes. When the audience heard of the maiden Obida, it undoubtedly gave them a picture of a hostile or malevolent deity and not a suffering spirit presented as a sacrificial and suffering friend. In this passage the swan produced rather than reflected suffering. If this is so, then the entire picture must be taken in the more or less traditional sense with Obida as a hostile figure and not merely as a reflection of the sad times produced by the defeat of Igor and the later invasion of the Polovcians.

It is easy to assume that the *děva* (or *Diva*?) stands in some relation to the male spirit *Div* (cf. 29, 108) who appears as a hostile or malevolent spirit. Scholars are undecided as to the exact origin of this being. Some have sought in it an Iranian origin and others have looked elsewhere but the *Div* does not seem to have any marked classical connections. This is not true, however, of the three gods that are mentioned in the poem, *Dažbog*, *Stribog* and *Veles*. In one sense the three may be grouped together, in that they can be well identified

⁹ Cf. *Geste*, pp. 305 f., 332 f.

¹⁰ Cf. C. A. Manning, "The Tauric Maiden and Allied Cults," *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, LI (1920), 40 ff.

as pagan gods of the Russians. Dažbog and Stribog are mentioned in the list of the gods, idols of whom were set up by Vladimir before his acceptance of Christianity, and Veles (or Volos) is similarly well attested. We can be less sure as to their actual range of interest and of power. And the use of these three names in the *Slovo* has been one of the main arguments advanced by Leger and Mazon against the authenticity of the *Slovo*. It is unusual to find preserved in a literary work the names of the great gods of the abandoned religion. There was a marked tendency in medieval practice to turn these deities into devils or to deny their existence, but the author of the *Slovo* writes throughout in an attitude of *droevërie* which is quite extraordinary.

More than that, he uses these names in a distinctly classical manner with the startling exception that he employs the word *vnuk* "grandson," instead of *syn* "son" to denote their mortal descendants. It is hard to see the reason for this. It is certainly far more unusual even in classical mythology to speak of a man as a grandson of a god rather than as his son. The classical tradition was familiar with the latter usage and it was imbedded in Greek and Roman mythology, as well as in the orientalizing tendencies that appeared at the time of Alexander the Great and continued to live in the eastern world, as a direct result of Greek contact with the Persians. No satisfactory explanation can be given of this, for *vnuk* seems to have the steady context of grandson or of a descendant in the broad sense of the word. Yet this very fact may be cited as a proof of the authenticity of the poem, for it is still more unlikely that a falsifier would have thought of introducing a term that was in contradiction to the entire literary tradition of later periods. We can be less sure of the actual role which these deities played in the Russian pagan religion. After a gap of two centuries during which paganism had been steadily disappearing, it was perhaps possible that the author more or less arbitrarily gave certain values to the gods, whose names he had remembered, in order to fit them into the classical tradition.

Of the three, Stribog as the god of the winds has the least independent identification. It is very probable that he was the god of the winds, and here the winds are called the grandsons of Stribog (48). It requires no imagination to see in them the children of Aiolos, mentioned in the *Odyssey* (X, 1-75), and

perhaps even the references to the sea may include an allusion to the floating island of the father of the winds (cf. *Geste*, pp. 354 f.).

Veles, of whom Bojan is the grandson (17), can be clearly associated with the god of cattle.¹¹ There can be no doubt that the Greek Apollo was the god of music and of poetry. Minstrels were sacred to him and, at least in the case of Linos, he was reputed to be the father of a great musician who was later to teach both Orpheus and Herakles (Cf. Hesiod, Fr. 192). He was also the god of flocks and herds. As Veles was often in later days confused with St. Blaise, there is nothing unusual in making him the parent of Bojan (cf. *Geste*, pp. 293 f.).

Dažbog can be identified with the sun. Throughout as the god of light, he is the grandfather of the Russian people.¹² In the curious language of the poem, he must be opposed to Bës, the devil (cf. 52), and the expression Daž'boža vnuka (64, 76) may be only a poetic rendering of the conception of the "children of light" (cf. *Geste*, pp. 295 f.).

Thus classical references can be found for each of the three main pagan deities introduced. They have a marked literary appearance and they probably indicate little more of the actual religious faith of the day than do the pagan gods and goddesses introduced later in the period of the Renaissance. This, however, is peculiar in view of the marked religious character of Kievan, but it loses much of its importance when we consider the whole nature of the classical expressions of the *Slovo*.

It is very hard to define this with accuracy. It is fairly certain that the author was familiar with all the writings of the Byzantine period that had been translated into Russian or Church Slavonic, and he was evidently familiar with much of the classical literature as it was preserved and distributed in the capital city. As a result he was possessed of a broader knowledge and sympathy than we usually associate with the clerical writers of the day. This makes it extremely difficult to state with any degree of certainty the total extent of his knowledge. Those scholars who have sought to discount it and to explain the *Slovo* only by the writings of Kiev are as likely to err as are those enthusiastic persons who have endeavored to

¹¹ Cf. L. Leger, *La mythologie slave* (Paris, 1901), pp. 111 ff.

¹² Cf. Leger, *op cit.*, pp. 118 ff.

find classical references in almost every sentence. As we have no clue to the personality of the author, we are unable to decide on the details of his education and his familiarity with classical literature, save by the hints that he has left us. Yet the nature of these hints is hardly consonant with theories that he was a modern pretender. His manner of work is hardly that of the Renaissance and still less that of the eighteenth century, and we are left with the uneasy feeling that he was far more familiar with the classical tradition than we dare to believe, but that he was at the same time a master poet who was constantly in control of his material and not inclined to use his knowledge merely for purposes of display.

The *Slovo* is a unique work and a careful solution of the problems which it offers can only come if through some hitherto unknown source we can obtain definite information on those aspects of Kievan society that have as yet escaped us. Comparison and analysis can do much, verbal comparisons can help, but there are many points that we cannot decide. Byzantine culture was deeper and more lively than we often think and it stands to reason that twelfth-century Kiev had a far larger share in it and in its classical heritage than we often assume. That is the salient fact of the *Slovo*, and the classical heritage of its author was certainly broader and more intelligent than was that of most of the non-Byzantine authors of the twelfth century.

SCANDINAVIAN INFLUENCE ON THE *SLOVO*?

By

Margaret Schlauch

A single artistic monument, the work of a creator lacking extant precursors or epigones, invites speculation concerning foreign models and influences. This is the more to be expected when the monument is a literary text manifesting the intricate patterns of conscious artistry. Such is surely the *Slovo*. Casting about for analogous developments in foreign literary schools of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, critics have more than once proposed apprenticeship of the epic writer in a tradition stemming from Old Norse literary art; and naturally so. The close relations of Scandinavian and Slav throughout the tenth century are known to us from many sources; and Old Norse literature was nothing if not conscious, even in this period of the earlier skalds. Their verses followed markedly intricate patterns. The problem of persuasion resolves itself into two issues, if one would establish the fact of Scandinavian influence: first, to marshall evidence of continued cultural influence by Scandinavians upon Slavs during the centuries between the death of Rjurik's grandson Svjatoslav († 972), let us say, and the *Slovo* poet or his immediate predecessor; second, to establish a close kinship between the *Slovo* and presumed Scandinavian models, in structure, style, literary devices, content, and the like.

The attempts to survey such evidence have been, it appears to me, incomplete and lacking in system; so, too, have been the refutations of indebtedness to Old Norse literature. Early essays on the subject by Polevoj¹ and Buslaev² were

¹ *Opyt sravnitel'nogo obozrenija drevnejšix pamjatnikov narodnoj poëzu germanskoj i slavjanskoj* (St. Petersburg, 1864), especially part 2. There are general comparisons between the epic style of the *Slovo* and that of the *Poetic Edda*: epithets, phrases, conventional figures.

² *Istoričeskie očerki russkoj narodnoj slovesnosti i iskusstva* (St.

limited by lack of materials then available in Icelandic. M. Pogodin suggested that there was a whole school of *slova* of the type of *Igor'*, derived immediately from Scandinavian models deliberately imitated. He assumed that such historical narratives could well have been preserved for centuries, as the Icelandic sagas are said to have been; very often the *slova* and the sagas appear to have had the same source, he said, since a number of the more fictional episodes in the *Russian Primary Chronicle* have close analogues in the sagas.³

Somewhat later, D. Abicht also called attention to certain parallels which he found indicative of ultimate derivation of the Slavic from the Scandinavian literary school: parallels of style as well as incident.⁴ He conceded that the conspicuous alliteration in the *Slovo* is a casual adornment, by no means an essential and orderly verse pattern as in Old Norse, where it is used to link half-lines together. This device would be alien to Russian, with its movable accent; hence half-lines (he argued) became independent in a language lacking this binding factor, and the resulting short lines were used in the *Slovo* to diversify the rhythmical pattern. The variety in length of rhythmical units resulted, he thought, from Old Norse models.⁵ Abicht regarded the text as a poem and divided it into 86 strophes of varying lengths. He offers no evidence, however, for the earlier existence of verse composed in lines made up of hemistich units. On the content of the poem, Abicht finds its historical accuracy similar to that of the skaldic verses which Snorri Sturluson so often quotes in the *Heimskringla*.

Petersburg, 1861), I, 257-68, "Drevne-severnaja žizn'." This compares the functions of skalds with those of medieval court poets at Kiev and notes certain stylistic similarities. In "Drevne-russkaja narodnaja literatura i iskusstvo," *ibid.*, II, 1-63, there are parallels drawn between Old Norse and Slavic social institutions involving the arts

³ Zamečanie o našix bylinax," *Žurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosvěščenija*, CLII (1870), 155-71.

⁴ "Das südrussische Igorjlied und sein Zusammenhang mit der nord-germanischen Dichtung," *Jahresbericht der Schlesischen Gesellschaft für vaterländische Kultur*, Section für Philologie, LXXXIV (1906), 1 ff.; summary and favorable comment by Rezanov, "Slovo o Polku Igoreve i poëzija Skaldov," *Žurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosvěščenija*, Novaja Serija, XV (1908), 438-55.

⁵ "Es scheint mir nicht unwahrscheinlich, dass diese Einrichtung

Hence, argues Abicht, court singers comparable to the skalds must have existed among the Russians. In support of this likelihood, he, like Polevoj, pointed to a number of parallels between stories in Russian chronicles and Scandinavian sources (Saxo Grammaticus, *Qrvar-Odds* saga), and referred to two famous poets who visited the court of Jaroslav of Kiev: **Sighvat the Skald**⁶ and Harald Harðráði Sigurðarson. The references are of a general nature, without specific details showing close kinship of literary techniques.

E. Hoffmann, writing on various aspects of the style of *Igor'*, suggested an Old Norse model for one device which he called "die verschleierte Darstellungsart."⁷ His main thesis was a demonstration of the author's originality in stylistic matters, and, at the same time, his close kinship with the *byliny*-tradition. He used the *bylina* about Mixail Potytk to exemplify the latter; but for the one characteristic trait of veiled or allusive presentation he found that the Old Norse *Edda* offers the closest parallels. Just as the *Slovo* passes over main events — the details of Igor's capture, the fate of his fellow princes, the circumstances of his escape — and refers to them indirectly, so the tale of Völund the Smith moves with abrupt transitions, omitting major events except for retrospective allusions. In view of known cultural relationships, Hoffmann found it conceivable ("denkbar") that Eddic techniques, especially as exemplified in the "Völundarkviða," directly influenced the author of the *Slovo*.⁸ The suggestion remains tentative.

Approaching the text from the point of view of metrics, and applying the methods of his own *Schallanalyse*, Eduard Sievers found patterns corresponding to Germanic popular epic style, specifically that of the *Edda*. He concluded

durch den im Nordischen üblichen Wechsel von 2 und 3 Stäben veranlasst ist" (*loc. cit.*, p. 4).

⁶ Sighvat actually visited Jarl Rognvald in "Garð" (Novogorod), according to his own poem. See note 28.

⁷ "Beobachtungen zum Stil des Igorliedes." *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, XXXVIII (1922-23), 87-107 and 228-244.

⁸ "Dann hätten also auf den Stil des Igorliedes nicht nur slavische Volkslieder und byzantinische Poesie, sondern vielleicht auch nordische Dichtung eingewirkt," *ibid.*, p. 244.

dass der Text stimmlich dasselbe mosaikartige Gepräge trägt, das z. b. auch für die alte germanische volksmässige Epik charakteristisch ist (Zur Veranschaulichung kann man etwa meine Ausgabe der Eddalieder, Leipzig 1923, vergleichen). Der Text ist eben, wie bei fast aller solcher Volkepiik, allmählich und stufenweise 'gewachsen' und zu dem geworden, was er ist. Das wird schon deutlich durch die zahllosen Brüche, die auch unser Lied durchsetzen, und von denen ich im Text durchgezogen habe, was mir bei einer ersten raschen Durchprüfung auffiel.⁹

No other type of evidence was given by Sievers.

Recent Russian scholarship has tended for various reasons to reject the hypothesis of Scandinavian influence. V. Peretc opposed Hoffmann's hypothesis (especially his claims in behalf of suppositious twelfth-century *byliny*).¹⁰ The attempt of Sievers to apply Germanic scansion to the *Slovo* was most recently refuted by M. Štokmar,¹¹ who pointed to the absence of restricted formal patterns of rhythm (as contrasted with conventional strophic verse in any language), and also the absence of systematic alliteration typical of Germanic verse. This, he repeated, can not be imitated in Russian: for this reason nineteenth-century translators encountered such difficulty in rendering Scandinavian epic poetry. Štokmar also rejected Abicht's division of the *Slovo* into strophes. For more general reasons Valentina Dynnik has expressed skepticism concerning kinship of the *Slovo* with Scandinavian monuments, whether prose or verse. Her comments on the subject are incidental to a comparison of the *Slovo* with the *Chanson de Roland*;¹² but even so, one feels that she has dismissed the

⁹ Eduard Sievers, "Das Igorlied metrisch und sprachlich bearbeitet," *Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig: Phil.-hist. Klasse*, LXXVIII (1926), Heft 1, 24. A dissenting analysis is given by Olaf Broch in "Eduard Sievers' Untersuchungen auf slavischem Gebiet," *Norsk Tidsskrift for Sprogvidenskap*, IV (1930), 51-70.

¹⁰ *K izučeniju "Slova o polku Igoreve"* (Leningrad, 1926), pp. 53 f.

¹¹ "Ritmika 'Slova o polku Igoreve' v svete issledovanij XIX-XX vv.," *Starinnaja russkaja povest'*, ed. N. K. Gudzij (Leningrad-Moscow, 1941), pp. 65-82. See also note 77.

¹² "'Slovo o polku Igoreve' i 'Pesn' o Rolande,'" *ibid.*, pp. 48-64, especially pp. 49 and 60 f.

Scandinavian case without fair trial. The unconvincing parallels produced by her are episodes from the more fabulous mythic-heroic cycle (she appears to have in mind the *Volsunga saga* when she refers unspecifically to the greater distortion of history in Old Norse sagas; certainly not the *Heimskringla*!); she ignores the whole body of skaldic poems celebrating princes' deeds in intricate conventional style but still with factual accuracy. These, it would seem, offer the most appropriate material for comparison with the eulogies and even the reproaches directed towards the medieval Russian princes of the *Slovo*. Yet they have not been examined adequately for the purpose.

I propose, therefore, to survey the problem afresh and restate the case for Scandinavian influence on the *Slovo*. I may say in advance that I find it unconvincing even in the light of additional evidence. Though I may be able to offer a series of new parallels, a scrutiny of their character shows that they are either vaguely generic (and therefore not persuasive), or essentially different, in the poetic use made of them. To approach the problem fairly it will be necessary to summarize once more the objective historical conditions which bring the existence of Scandinavian influence within the range of possibility.

I

It is generally conceded that the author of the *Slovo*, writing in the late twelfth century, was not himself surrounded by a flourishing poetic school in the Old Norse tongue. But perhaps his references to and citations from the poet Bojan, his admired master, provide us with a transition to an older age. The three passages about Bojan tell us that he celebrated the deeds of the following princes: Jaroslav the Old; Mstislav the Bold, victor over Rededja; Roman the Fair, son of Svjatoslav (all these mentioned in the prelude: 5); likewise Jaroslav and Oleg "of olden time" (these names included in the epilogue: 209). Although there may be disagreement as to the identity of some of these persons, it appears fairly certain that the careers in question form a span from the middle of the eleventh century — Jaroslav the Old being identified with

him called the Wise († 1054) — to its end, or even into the twelfth century. Bojan's own life and creative activity need not have coincided with the period of the careers he celebrated. Like the Old English *Widsið*, he may have commemorated princes of an earlier time known to him by report.¹³ It would appear that his work was done about 1100, with the treatment of Jaroslav the Wise, who had flourished more than half a century earlier, relegated to the category of reminiscent praise of one long dead. Such reminiscent praise is certainly well known in Germanic. The text of *Bēowulf* alone contains several such passages.

Nevertheless we may inquire whether Scandinavian poetic tradition was strong enough in 1050, and showed demonstrable Like the Old English *Widsið*, he may have commemorated way of Bojan to the *Slovo* poet. For the fragments of Bojan's compositions, or at least explicit imitations of his style by the later writer as incorporated in the text, show no great differences of technique from the rest of the *Slovo*. Parallel sentence structure, sound effects, figures of speech appear to have been very similarly used, as has been pointed out more than once.

Now the existence of strong cultural relations between Kiev and Scandinavia is beyond question for the mid-eleventh century. The famous visit of St. Olaf to Jaroslav's court during his exile need not be rehearsed here, nor the equally famous visits of Harald Harðráði, his half-brother, to the same court, before and after his viking adventures in Greece, Sicily and Byzantium. St. Olaf was a patron of skalds, whom he regarded as important witnesses to history's future account of him. Snorri Sturluson tells us that he ordered his poets to go into battle with the shield of defense: "‘Ye shall,’ says he [the King], ‘remain here, and see the event which may here befall, and you will not then have to tell [others]’ reports of it when

¹³ Abicht's suggestion (*op. cit.*, p. 15), that Bojan's work reached its high point about 1050 does not seem plausible in view of the late date for the Oleg, last on his list, according to most authorities Leonard Magnus, in his *Tale of the Armament of Igor* (Oxford, 1915), p. 23, identifies Oleg with Jaroslav's grandson who died in 1115. He was the brother of Roman the Fair, prince of Tmutarakan, who died in 1096. (See the tables given by Magnus, p. LVII) But cf. also the genealogical table in S. Šambinago's edition of text and translations (Moscow-Leningrad, Academia, 1934), pp. 298 f

you afterwards say and compose concerning it.'"¹⁴ And in truth the verses of these men are quoted frequently by Snorri as *dicta probantia*. Some of them refer to Olaf's sojourn in Russia just before the battle of Stiklestad. Since the King was attended by many followers at the time, we may assume that skaldic verse was recited in Kiev for his pleasure, and was understood by bilingual Slavs about the year 1030. Olaf's son, Magnús the Good, was himself in Novgorod at this time. As for Harald, he was not only celebrated by skalds but himself composed skaldic verses, one poem of sixteen verses, with refrain throughout, being addressed to King Jaroslav's daughter Elizabeth, whom he later married.¹⁵ This was done about 1045, fifteen years after St. Olaf's visit.¹⁶ Somewhere about 1040 occurred the visit of Yngvar *Viðfjörli* to Russian territory on an expedition which took him as far as the Caspian Sea. The journey was famous in saga literature. The fantastic *Yngvars saga Viðfjörla* contains some distorted reminiscences of the situation in Russia: Yngvar's father visits the court of Jaroslav (Jarisleif), who is represented as an uncle by marriage, and he helps Jaroslav in a feud against a fictitious brother named Burisleif.¹⁷ Jaroslav actually fought with a brother Mstislav.

In the generations after Jaroslav, Scandinavian connections were still closely maintained. His grandson Vladimir Monomax was married to Gyða, a daughter of the Saxon Harald who fell at Hastings in 1066. She had fled to Denmark after her father's death. Snorri Sturluson reports the intermarriages of the Monomax and Scandinavian royal families. The scheme

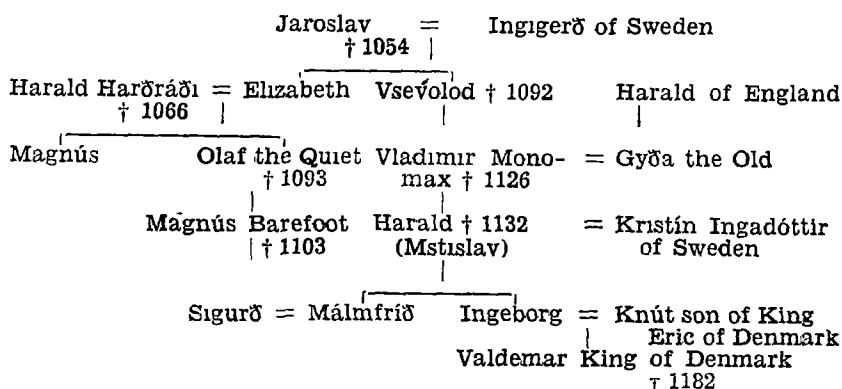
¹⁴ *Óláfs saga Helga*, ch 218, in *Heimskringla*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (Copenhagen, 1911), p. 388.

¹⁵ *Haralds saga Harðráða*, ch 15, *ibid.*, p. 456. The refrain is: "þó lætr Gerðr í Gørðum gollhrings við mér skolla," which means "And yet the goddess of gold rings [i. e., woman] in Russia still turns a deaf ear to me."

¹⁶ For an account of Scandinavian sources treating of Jaroslav's court, see Samuel H. Cross, "Jaroslav the Wise in Norse Tradition," *Speculum*, IV (1929), 177-197; also his *Russian Primary Chronicle* (Harvard University Press, 1930), Introduction, pp. 126 f.

¹⁷ *Yngvars saga Viðfjörla*, ed. Emil Olson (Copenhagen, 1912). — For a general survey of this material, see Friedrich Braun, "Das historische Russland im nordischen Schrifttum des 10. bis 14. Jahrhunderts," *Festschrift für Eugen Mogk* (Halle, 1924), pp. 150-96.

he indicates is as follows, except that he mistakenly calls Vladimir the son instead of the grandson of Jaroslav.¹⁸



The dynastic connections were close, then, until nearly the middle of the twelfth century. We may assume that skalds were present in any considerable entourage of parties to a royal marriage. In addition we have the more elusive but nevertheless impressive evidence of a number of stories which can be proved to have migrated to Scandinavian sources — the *Gesta* of Saxo Grammaticus, and various Icelandic sagas — by way of Russia from ultimate Byzantine originals. Stender-Petersen has made a study of a number of these stories.¹⁹ He has examined narratives recounted in the Russian *Primary Chronicle* about dynastic heroes still partly Scandinavian by inheritance and alliance, together with their Scandinavian analogues, and he has proved that the tales must have been derived from Byzantium, not migrated thither. Byzantine

¹⁸ *Magnússona saga*, ch. 20 in *Heimskringla*, p. 542: "Sigurðr konungr fekk Málmfriðar, dóttur Haraldz konungs Valdamarssonar austan ór Hólmgarði. Móðir Haraldz konungs var Gyða gamla drótning, dóttir Haraldz Engla-konungs Guðinasonar; móðir Málmfriðar var Kristín, dóttir Inga Sviakonungs Steinkeisssonar. Systir Málmfriðar var Ingeborg, er átti Knútr lávarðr, sonr Eiriks góða Dana-konungs, sonar Sveins Ulfssonar. Börn þeira Knúts ok Ingeborgar var Valdamarr, er konungdóm tók í Danmörk eptir Svein Eiríksson, Margrét, Kristín ok Katrín. Margrétu átti Stígr hvítaleðr; þeira dóttir Kristín, er átti Karl Sörkvisson Sviakonungr; þeira sonr var Sörkvir konungr."

¹⁹ Ad. Stender-Petersen, *Die Varagersage als Quelle der altrussischen Chronik*, Aarhus Universitet: *Acta Jutlandica*, Aarskrift, VI (1934), No. 1. Some of the stories in question had been cited briefly by Abicht and others, but not exhaustively studied.

learned literature, notably tracts on the art of war, studded with anecdotes to illustrate strategems, offers frequently the one clear and logical version which explains the distorted Russian and Scandinavian variants. The nature of the distortions and misunderstandings indicates the course of migration. That the Varangians were the transmitters, as they journeyed homeward via Kiev, Novgorod and the north, he has established by strong circumstantial evidence.

One of the Icelandic sources quoted by Stender-Petersen is of especial interest here. Bjarni, hero of the *Bjarna saga Hitdælakappa*, is an historical personage of the first half of the eleventh century. During his adventures in Russia he fights a *holmgang* for King Valdimar (i. e., Vladimir) against a rival claimant for the realm called Kaldimar.²⁰ The similarity of names, identical but for the initial consonants, may point to kinship (though it must be noted that rhyming names were often manufactured in pairs for rival characters in the fictitious *lygisogur*). In any event, the situation is surely typical of feudal quarrels in medieval Russia. Boer, editor of the saga, suggested that this anecdote reflected the struggles of Vladimir († 1015) and his brother Jaropolk († 980), great-grandsons of Rjurik (Hrærek). Stender-Petersen suggests a later struggle, namely that between Jaroslav the Wise himself and his brother Mstislav, which occurred in 1024, the approximate time of Bjarni's visit. This Mstislav, he points out, was the hero of some sort of narrative song composed by Bojan, as the *Slovo* tells us. Bojan's source may have been contemporaneous with the Varangian visitors and narrators here discussed.

The connections are present, then, and we may assume that Bojan himself, as late as 1110, may have heard Scandinavian song and conversation from visitors; even later, at the court of that Mstislav who was also called Harald, the opportunity must have presented itself often. But this is quite different from supposing that Old Norse was habitually spoken in twelfth-century court circles, or even among traders, except in the presence of visitors. Were these latter numerous enough to affect the linguistic situation in relation to literary traditions? That we can not know. Neither sagas nor chronicles offer statistics. Although we have established a channel of communication, we are left without certitude. The literary

²⁰ *Bjarna saga Hitdælakappa*, ed. R. C. Boer (Halle a/S., 1893).

monuments themselves must be examined for additional evidence.

II

It will be convenient to discuss details of style first (sound effects, word order, sentence structure, figures of speech, epithets, and so on), and then take up the larger units of structure in the poem: descriptions, eulogies, warnings, reproaches, laments.

One of the most conspicuous items under sound effect is, of course, alliteration. Multiple examples of it appear on every page of the *Slovo*. It is regarded by some as an important argument in favor of Scandinavian influence, which might well be expected to have included this conspicuous Germanic trait.

We have seen, however, that the uses of alliteration in Slavic, with its movable accent, can not be the same as in the rigid schemes of Germanic poetry, conditioned by a fixed accent. In addition, some scholars have pointed to instances of alliteration in the *byliny* in order to argue that the device could arise within a native school; and in fact there is no difficulty in finding some examples of it in the popular epic.²¹ But in the latter, the incidence of alliteration is in no way comparable to what we find in the *Slovo*. We may grant, I think, that there it is conspicuous and unexplained, and that some sort of Scandinavian effects may be operating at long range. But if so, they are indirect and greatly modified.

Similar to alliteration is the special use of tautological phrases, such as

трубы трубятъ (18); мосты мостити (38); грозный . . . грозою (88); высьдѣ изъ сѣдла злата а въ сѣдло кощиево (91); ни мыслию смыслити, ни думою сдумати (83)²².

The use of parallel structure in short sentence units, so frequent in the *Slovo*, is very typical of Scandinavian verse. Comparable examples follow:

²¹ Cf. Boris Sokolov, *Russkij fol'klor*, I (1929), 24; Jurij Sokolov, " 'Slovo o polku Igoreve' i narodnoe tvorčestvo," *Literaturnyj Kritik* (1938), No. 5, pp. 91 f.

²² Text cited by line from the *Geste*

Свѣтъ запала,
 мыгла поля покрыла.
 щекотъ славій успе,
 говоръ галичъ убуди. (34-35)

brøkuðu broddar,
 brotnuðu skildir,
 glumruðu gylfringar
 í gotna hausum.

Съ зараніа до вечера,
 съ вечера до свѣта
 летять стрѣлы каленыя,
 гримлють сабли о шеломахъ,
 трещать копія харалужныя.

(66)

Trøddusk torgur
 fyr Týs ok bauga
 hjalta harðfótum
 hausar Norðmanna;
 róma vard í eyju,
 ruðu konungar
 skírar skjaldborgir
 í skatna blóði.

Brunnu beneldar
 í blóðgum undum,
 lutu langbarðar
 at lýða fjörvi...²³

The Old Norse passage is by Eyvind Finnsson Skáldaspillir, who died about 990. The style was conventional and was maintained with but little change for two hundred years. Þórmóð Kolbrúnarskáld and Þorfinn Munn, in composing songs for St. Olaf before the battle of Stiklestad (1030), used much the same stereotyped forms in parallel construction, though they introduced parenthetical interruptions.

Røk[k]r at regni miklu randar garðs ens harða;
 vill við vísa snjallan Verðœla lið berjask;
 verjum allvald orvan þlum teitan mǫ-sveita,
 fellum þrœndr í þundar (þess eggjumk vér) hreggi.²⁴

²³ Finnur Jónsson, *Den norsk-islandske Skjaldedigtning*, B I (normalized text; Copenhagen, 1908), 57. The translation is: "Spearpoints clashed, shields were broken, axes resounded on the warriors' heads. Targets and skulls were trodden under the hard heels of the hilts [i. e., swords] of the Northmen's king. There was battle on the island; the kings reddened the bright rows of shields in the blood of men. The wound-fires [i. e., swords] burnt in bloody gashes; the halberds bent down to take the life of men." See also Vigfusson and Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale* (Oxford, 1883), I, 265 f. My thanks for aid in translation are due to Professor Halldór Hermannsson, who has slightly emended Jónsson's text.

²⁴ *Oláfs saga Helga*, ch. 206, *Heimskringla*, p. 389. Cf. also Jónsson's edition of *Heimskringla* for the Samfund til Udgivelse af gammel nordisk Litteratur, XXIII (Copenhagen, 1893-1901), Part IV, which presents

On the same occasion þórmóð aroused warriors to battle by quoting stanzas of the old "Bjarka mál," which used short parallel sentence units, involving one instance of verbal repetition.

Dagr es upp kominn, dynja hana fjaðrar,
mál es vílmögum át vinna erfiði;
vaki ok vaki vina höfuð,
allir enir cætu Aðils of sinnar.²⁵

Sighvat, one of the Saint-King's favorite skalds, who composed many verses in the traditional style to celebrate his battles,²⁶ informs us that merchants from Russia reported praise of Olaf's son Magnus,²⁷ which may well have taken the form of skaldic verses current in the Scandinavian circles in Kiev and Novgorod.²⁸ As late as the mid-twelfth century skalds

skaldic verse in prose order with notes and Danish translations. þorfinn's verse means: "Rainstorm against the hard row of shields [i. e., battle] is brewing; the band of Verdale men will fight against the bold [king]; let us protect our generous prince, let us feed the raven and gladden him, let us fell Thrandmen in Óðin's storm [i. e., battle]: this is my cry!" I have italicized the verbs in parallel construction.

²⁵ *Óláfs saga Helga*, ch. 208; *Heimskringla*, p. 390 "Day has appeared, the cock's feathers resound; time has come for thralls to work; awake now, friends, awake all the foremost followers of Aðils."

²⁶ E. g., *ibid.*, ch. 15: "Vann ungr konungr Englum ótrauðr skarar rauðar,/(endr kom brúnt á branda blód í Nýjamóðu);/nú hefk orrustur, austan, ógnvalds níu taldar,/herr fell danskr, þars dörum dreif mest at Aleifi" Translation. "The eager young king gave the English bloody pates; dark came again on swords at Nýjamóða; now have I numbered nine battles of the warrior in the East. Down fell the Danish host where most the darts flew at Olaf."

²⁷ *Magnús saga Góða*, ch. 8, last verse, *Heimskringla*, p. 427 "Enn lystir mik austan (erut ó spörð) ór Gørðum/ frá oðlingi ungum opt byrjuð lof) spyrja;/ fréttik smás, þótt smæstir smoglr ástar foglar,/ þínig ljúgumk fər, fljúgi, fylkis niðs, á miðh." Translation: "Still I desire to ask the news of Russia to the east, of the young prince there is no lack of praise spoken; too little I learn of the prince's son (hither his journey is lacking), though smallest and finest of birds bearing love fly between us."

²⁸ Sighvat is supposed to have made a journey to Russia himself (probably to Novgorod) and to have reported it to Olaf in skaldic verse. The poem mentions Garð specifically; for text see *Corp. Poet. Bor.*, II, 129 ff.; discussion, pp. 118 ff. But the prose account in the *Heimskringla* indicates that Rognvald, whom Sighvat visited, was then at Upsala.

were composing the same conventional lines commemorating princes' battles.²⁹ However, the word order had become more tortuous by this time. This development obscured original parallelism; in the later period, closest to Bojan's time, the separation of words syntactically close, and the interruption by parenthetical phrases, had become characteristic of skaldic style.

In the Russian text, the frequent use of parallel sentence construction in short units fairly often results in rhyme. This may be an unplanned effect due merely to the patterns of a highly inflected language. On the other hand it seems unlikely that the author was unaware of the resultant concords in phrases like these:

луци у нихъ напряжени, тули отворени, сабли изъостре-
ни (24); мечемъ крамолу коваше и стрѣлы по земли сѣяше
(58); на хвалу. . . на волю. . . на землю (106-108); ни
хытру, ни горазду, ни птицю гор[л]а[с]т[у] (163).

For rhyme effects we likewise have some precedent in skaldic verse, though this ornament was not frequently used. The poet Skallagrím Kveldulfsson († 934) used it:

Nú 's hersis hefnð	vid hilmi efnð,
gengr ulfr ok qrn	of ynglings bqrn;
flugu hoggvín hræ	Hallvards á sæ;
grár slítr undir	ari Snarfara. ³⁰

The very famous son of this poet, Egil Skallagrímsson († 983), used rhyme extensively in his "Höfuðlausn" or "Head-Ransom" poem, composed to placate King Eric Blood-Axe, whom he had offended:

²⁹ For instance, these by Kolli the Brave, composed in 1137: "Unnuð austr fyr Mynni oddhríð, en brátt síðan, / hilmir, fekk, und hjalmi, hrafns verðar lið sverðum." Translation: "O king, you had, with a helmet on your head, a battle (arrow-storm) eastward of Mynn, and the army provided raven-food by [its] swords." See *Haralds sona saga* (*Inga saga konungs*), ch 2, *Heimskringla*, p 571.

³⁰ Jónsson, *Skjaldedigtning*, B No. I, 26. Translation: "Now the chieftain's revenge is taken on the prince; the wolf and the eagle bestride the king's sons; Hallvard's corpse is smitten apart and floats on the sea; the grey eagle tears at Snarfari's wounds."

Stanza 10

Rauð hilmir hjör þar vas hrafna gǫr,
 fleinn sótti fjör; flugu dreyrug spjör;
 ól flagðs gota fárbjóðr Skota;
 trað nipt Nara náttverð ara.

Stanza 11

Flugu hjaldrs tranar of hræs lanar,
 órut blóðs vanar benmós granar;
 sleit und freki, en oddbreki
 gnúði hrafni á höfuðstafni.

Refrain

Kóm gríðar læ á gjalpar skæ;
 bauð úlfum hræ Eiríkr of sæ.³¹

This poem exemplifies use of parallel construction lengthily employed, as well as rhyme. But the rhyme does not result from like inflectional endings, as in Russian. The rhyme adornment in the *Slovo*, I must confess, reminds me rather of tendencies in classical verse as early as Horace,³² where similar effects occasionally arose, inadvertently perhaps in the beginning, but later by choice.

Another feature of short units in parallel construction in the *Slovo* is that these often involve repetitions of two, three even four or five (most often three) elements. These repetitions of units have been studied by Hoffmann,³³ who has as-

³¹ *Egils saga Skallagrimssonar*, ed. Finnur Jónsson, *Altnordische Saga-Bibliothek*, III (Halle a/S., 1894), ch. 60, see pp. 296-302; Jónsson, *Skjaldedigtning*, B No. I, 32; *Corp. Poet. Bor.*, I, 269. Translation: "The prince reddened the sword, there was ravens' food, the darts sought men's lives and bloody spears flew; the Scots' destroyer gave food to the wolves ('witches' steeds'); Nari's sister [i. e., Hell] trod on the bodies of men; ('night-feast of eagles'). The birds of prey flew over the pile of corpses; the raven's lips lacked not for blood; the wolf slit wounds open; blood resounded against the raven's head. The hunger of the wolf was destroyed; Eric gave carrion food to wolves by the sea."

³² Cf., for instance, *Odes*, I, 1. There are six cases of internal rhyme in the first ten lines.

³³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 91-95: "Gliederung von Sätzen."

sembled examples. He has not noted, however, that in the most numerous group, namely those repeating three units, there is a tendency to amplify the third unit:

Были съчи Трояни, минула лѣта Ярославля; были плъци Олговы, Олга Святъславлича (57); бишася день, бишася другый, — третьяго дни къ полуднию падоша стязи Игоревы (70); Инъгварь и Всеволодъ! и вси три Мстиславичи (140). This too can be set beside the use of triads with weighted third element — Axel Olrik applied to it the term *Eftertryk* or *Bagvægt* — in Old Norse, less conspicuously in the skaldic verse than elsewhere. The epic triads in the sagas have been exhaustively surveyed by L. Alfred Bock, who devotes special attention to those with final weight.³⁵ A typical example is to be found in the earlier text of the *Íslendinga Bók* of Ari the Wise († 1148), which stands close to oral tradition. Note the dependent clause with the third name:

pá barþisc hann víþ Svein Harallz son. Dana conung, oc Ólaf enn sǫnsca Eirísson at Upsǫlom Svía connungs, oc Eiríc es síþan vas iarl at Norvegi Hǫconarson.³⁶

Eddic verse also furnishes miniature examples: “vasa sanda ne sær/ —ne sǵalar unnir” and “skeggǵold, skalmǵold, skildir klofnir”³⁷ from the “Vǵluspá”. But not only is this common to other Germanic verse as well — compare *Bēowulf*, line 61: “Heorogār ond Hroðgār ond Hālgā til”; *Nibelungen Nôt*, 4, 2: “Gunther unde Gernôt und Giselher der junge” — but it has been suggested by Hermann Hirt³⁸ and others that the peculiarity was characteristic of Indo-European primitive poetics, since it is found in ancient Greek and in Sanscrit as well. It is insufficient, therefore, to prove a peculiarly close relationship between Old Slavic and Old Norse poetic style.

³⁴ “Episke Love i Folkedigtningen,” *Danske Studier*, 1908, pp. 69 ff; in German it is called “Dreizahl mit Achtergewicht.”

³⁵ “Die epische Dreizahl in den Íslendinga sögur,” *Arkiv for nordisk Filologi*, XXXVII (1921), 263-313, and XXXVIII (1922), 54-83.

³⁶ *Íslendinga Bók*, ed Finnur Jónsson (Copenhagen, 1930), ch 7, p. 29: “Then he fought with Svein Harald’s son King of the Danes, and Olaf the Swede son of Eric in Upsala, and Eric Haakon’s son who later was jarl in Norway.”

³⁷ “No sand nor sea nor cooling waves” and “Axe-time, sword-time, shields are riven.” Cf. also “Gunnar ok Hogni, Gjúka arfar/ ok et sama Goðrún, systir þeira” from the “Hyndluljóð”: “Gunnar and Hogni, Gjúki’s heirs, and Guðrún likewise, [who was] their sister.”

³⁸ *Indogermanische Grammatik*, I (Heidelberg, 1927), 126.

Nor are the intricate patterns of word order in the two a valid argument. The *Slovo* has artful arrangements of simple inversions (ba, ba) and sequent (ab, ab) and complementary orders (ab, ba). For the first we have съ Дону великаго... у Дону великаго (45-46); for the second отъ великаго Дону до Малаго Донца (185); for the third по Русской земли... средѣ земли Рускыи (85). Intricate word order is also unescapably noticeable in skaldic style, but it is different. It does not yield balanced patterns such as these: its purpose is merely to present words in a sequence bafflingly remote from the normal prose order, with modifiers and modified substantives kept apart, interrupted by parentheses, divorced from verbs, so that modern students must do jig-saw puzzles with these phrases in order to obtain the intended meaning. Ancient listeners were impressed, the skaldic poets won glory, and we moderns are confounded by this tortuous form of discourse. The verses of Egil Skallagrímsson quoted above are comparatively easy; one could quote others more complicated. But none shows the patterns of the *Slovo*.

The repetition of entire phrases as refrain appears in both. These occur in the *Slovo*:

за землю Рускую, за раны Игоревы, буюго Святъславлича (129, 132, 142); Ярославна рано плачеть (172, 177, 181); О, Руская земле! Уже за шоломянемъ еси! (32, 47); ищучи себѣ чти, а князю славы (25, 36); а Игорева храброго плѣку не крѣсити (80, 137).

In Old Norse there are examples from the earliest skaldic verse to the latest: the refrain in Egil's "Höfuðlausn," cited above; Harald Harðráði's refrain about Elizabeth, Jaroslav's daughter, which appeared at the end of each of sixteen verses,³⁹ the repeated phrase in the late "Kraku mál" of the latter twelfth century.⁴⁰ But the use of refrain is a general device which need not necessarily point to literary indebtedness on one side or the other.

Another stylistic detail suggesting kinship with Old Norse is the metaphoric comparison of warriors with wolves, falcons, eagles, etc. Bojan is called a nightingale of ancient time (14);

³⁹ See note 15

⁴⁰ I. e., "hioggo ver með hiorvi," meaning "we smote with the sword," see *Corp. Poet. Bor.*, II, 339 ff.

his thought speeds like a wolf on the plain, and soars like an eagle above the clouds (3). Vsevolod is called a bull (19, 53, 55, 216); heroes are referred to as "grey wolves" (25); the heathen enemy are called black ravens and also wolves. Now it is true that the Old Norse abounds in figures employing these representatives of bird and animal life; but the manner is entirely different. A hero is called a feeder of the eagles and ravens in kennings repeated by the score, but he is not himself identified with these birds. This can easily be verified by referring to dictionaries of skaldic verse,⁴¹ under such headings as warrior, hero, man, poet, etc. The descriptive phrases and compound nouns and mythological allusions which are listed by the score do not *identify*; they paraphrase. Poetry is called by mythological names such as Kvasir's blood, dwarfs' drink of Sutting's mead,⁴² because of stories of the gods, — but it is not *compared* to the flight of birds, as is Bojan's poetic thought. Only in one special situation is a hero actually called a wolf, and that is when he is an exile, especially a hostile one. The term was a synonym generally understood; for instance Hildr Hrólfsdóttir (ca. 900) says

ilt 's við ulf at ylfask, Yggr valbríkar, slíkan,⁴³

referring to someone who has been driven out of the land. In

⁴¹ Rudolf Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden (Rheinische Beiträge zur germanischen Philologie und Volkskunde, I, 1921)*; Finnur Jónsson, *Lexicon Poeticum Antiquae Linguae Septentrionalis* (Copenhagen, 1931), based on Sveinbjorn Egilsson's earlier work of the same name (Copenhagen, 1860). One significant parallel, and one only, is quoted by Buslaev from the Old Norse kennings: the use of "hauk-strond" or "falcon-strand" for the hand recalls the ten fingers of Bojan, chanting a song with a stringed instrument, where it is implied that the fingers were like falcons sent against a flock of swans. But the Old Norse kenning means merely that falcons are perched on the hands of men.

⁴² Ernest Wilken, *Die prosaische Edda* (Paderborn, 1912), ch. 47, p. 98, — V. F. Ržiga has compared the disputed phrase about Bojan's art, with the expression "mæðar timbr" in Egil Skallagrimsson's "Sonatorrek," but the parallel is doubtful, general at best. See the *Festschrift* for A. S. Orlov (Leningrad, Akademija Nauk, 1934), pp. 103-12.

⁴³ Jónsson, *Skjaldedigtning*, B No I, p. 27. "It is an ill thing to be angry (show wolf's temper; enmity) with such a wolf, O warrior." Cf. also "Sigurðar kvíða en Skamma" in the *Poetic Edda*, stanza 12: "skal at úlf ala ungan lengi" — "let not the young wolf [Siguard's son] be kept long alive."

two special cases I have found similes of animals applied directly to heroes in a manner suggestive of the Old Russian. Both occur in the *Edda*, and both are spoken by women lamenting dead heroes. Sigrún, speaking of the fallen Helgi, says:

Svá bar Helgi af hildingom
sem ítrskapaðr áskr af þyrni,
eða sá dýrkálfr, döggo slunginn,
er øfri ferr øllom dyrom
ok horn glóa við himinn siálfan!⁴⁴

Guðrún, lamenting dead Sigurð, says:

Svá var Sigurðr of sonom Giúka,
sem væri grœnn laukr ór grasi vaxinn,
eða hiqrtr hábeinn af høsom dyrom
eða gull glóðrautt af grá silfri.⁴⁵

Verbal correspondences in details of style exist, then, but they are either of a very general character, it seems to me, or upon closer examination they turn out to be different in essentials of treatment or conception.

III

The larger units of the *Slovo* which suggest comparison are: warnings and premonitions before battle, descriptions of battle, eulogies, the prophetic dream, the lamentation, the quasi-political reproaches directed to unwise chieftains.

The indications of catastrophe about to occur to Igor offer some of the most significant parallels to Old Norse poetry. Before the expedition against the Polovcians, "Div" cries out from an ancient tree, birds of ill omen croak and beasts yelp; the sun is darkened; the bird of prey is already vocal in the oak:

⁴⁴ *Edda*, ed. Gustav Neckel (Heidelberg, 1914-27), I, 154. "Helgakviða Hundingsbana ii," stanza 38: "Helgi rose above other heroes like the lofty-shaped ash above the thorn, or the noble stag, besprinkled with dew, who rises above all other beasts, and its horns glow to the heavens themselves."

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 218, "Guðrúnarkviða ii," stanza 18: "So Sigurð stood forth among Gjúki's sons as if he were a green leek grown high from the grass, or the tall-legged hart among dusky beasts, or the glowing red gold above grey silver." Nickel reads hvøssom, 1. 3.

нощъ стонуши ему грозою птичь убуди; свистъ звѣринъ въ ста зби (28), Дивъ кличетъ врѣху древа (29); уже бо [ся] бѣды его пасеть птицъ по д[у]бію (31); солнце ему тьмою путь заступаше (27).

These premonitions are reminiscent of many situations in Old Norse verse and prose. In the *Edda*, at Sigurð's death a raven calls out from the branch of a tree, warning the killers of approaching doom:

Soltinn varð Sigurðr sunnan Rínar
hrafn at meiði hátt kallaði:
'Ykkir mun Atli eggjar rióða!
muno vígskáa of víða eiðar!'⁴⁶

The skald Hornklofi, contemporary of Harald Hárfagri, represents a woman addressing ravens at break of day to inquire what tidings of battle they bring:

Hvat es yör hrafnar? hvaðan eruð ér komnir
með dreyrgu nefi at degi ǫndverðum?⁴⁷

Hrómund Halti († 955) tells how he heard ravens as harbingers of death:

Út heyrik svan sveita sára þorns, es mornar
bróð vegr borginmóða bláfjallaðan gjalla;
svá gól fyrr, þás feigir folknórungar vǫru,
gunnar haukr, es gaukar Gauts bragð spǫ sǫgðu.⁴⁸

And a similar verse by Þorbjörn Hrómundarson († 955) ends

svá gól endr, þás unda eiðs, af fornum meiði
hræva gaukr, es haukar hildinga mjǫð vildu.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Edda*, I, 194, "Brot," stanza 5: "Slain was Sigurð south of the Rhine; from a tree-branch a raven called aloud: Atli shall redden the blades on you [with your blood], and [broken] oaths shall bring you, warriors, to destruction."

⁴⁷ Jónsson, *Skjaldedigtning*, B No. I, 22; *Corp. Poet. Bor.*, I, 256: "What news, O ravens? Whither come ye now with blood-dripping beaks at break of dawn?"

⁴⁸ Jónsson, *op. cit.*, p. 90: "Outside I hear the dark-feathered raven crying aloud; when day dawns its prey awakes it: thus once before the war-hawks cried before battle when they gave warning that heroes should die."

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*: "thus of yore cried eagles in the ancient tree, wishing to drink of the blood of warriors."

Sighvat, St Olaf's skald, carried on this convention, hailing the ravens as harbingers of battles in one of his verses (composed in 1031)⁵⁰. Wolves appear in the same rôle quite often, usually with witches mounted on them to warn of coming slaughter.⁵¹

The darkening of the sun before defeat seems to refer to an actual eclipse in the *Slovo*. Curiously enough, the same portent occurred before the battle of Stiklestad and was celebrated by Sighvat the skald. "It happened then, as was told before," says Snorri Sturluson, "that the sun disappeared although the heavens were clear, and it became dark." Sighvat composed a verse on this:

Undr láta þat ýtar eigi smátt, es máttit
skænþjörðungum skorðu skýlauss roðull hlýja;
drjúg varð á því dægri (dagr náðit lit fögurum),
orrostu frá austan atburð, konungs furða.⁵²

In the *Slovo* the darkening of the sun, described in terms of an eclipse, also presages defeat for the princes. Actual events and literary conventions appear to have been combined similarly in the Old Norse and the Old Russian. What is missing in the former, however, is the subjective tone several times perceptible in the *Slovo*, where nature's participation in tragedy is expressed by the pathetic fallacy: the skalds never go so far as to have cart-wheels groan in an anticipation of disaster, nor grass and trees bow in sorrow nor shed leaves when it has taken place. Such literary animism is of an alien school.

There are similarities, again, in the descriptions of battles actually in progress. The *Slovo* gives us flights of birds, continuing their premonitory appearance; wild beasts eager for prey; earth soaked with blood and sown with corpses. Arrows fall like showers of rain and lances sing aloud. Some of the

⁵⁰ *Magnús saga Góða*, ch. 8, *Heimskringla*, p. 426

⁵¹ E g., *Haralds saga Harðráða*, ch. 81, *Heimskringla*, p. 501 "en fyrir liði landzmanna reið trollkona mikil ok sat á vargi," *sub anno* 1066.

⁵² *Óláfs saga Helga*, ch. 227, *Heimskringla*, p. 402 "A wonder not small men declare that it was when the sun, though the day was without cloud, might not send down warmth for the warriors; a heavy portent it was of the king's [end] it was on that day (the day had not its bright color); I heard of this event during the battle in the east."

phrases have been cited already in connection with sentence units of style. Their content is to be found over and over again in skaldic verse. Scores of examples could be quoted. I shall place a selected few beside the appropriate Russian phrases.

Не буря соколы занесе
чрез поля широкая;
галици стады бѣжать
къ Дону Великому (16).

вльци грозу в[о]ржать
по яругамъ, орли клек-
томъ на кости звѣри
зовуть (31)

нъ часто врани граяхуть,
трупѣя себѣ дѣляче, а
галици свою рѣчь гово-
ряхуть: хотять полѣтъти
на уедіе (65).

Mildingr atraukt of mækis
mun, es lézt af gunni;
holds vant hrafn of fyldan
hrás; þaut vargr í ási;
en gramr (né frák fremra
fríðskerði þér verða)
austr vast ár et næsta
örðiglyndr í Gørðum.⁵³
hoss arnar rautt hvassar,
hróðigr konungr, blóði
(ímr gat krøs hvars kómuð)
klær, áðr hingat færir.⁵⁴
... hafa gáto þá ramnar
fyr Enderis-eyjom ærna bráð
at slíta;
fengom Fálo hestom fullan
verð at sinni...⁵⁵

Such details of battle description appear in earlier poems of the *Edda*, especially the "Helga kviða Hundingsbana ii," as Buslaev pointed out⁵⁶. Snorri Sturluson remarks that there are two birds which are regularly associated with battle, and paraphrased by calling blood and corpses their meat and

⁵³ *Haralds saga Harðráða*, ch 2, *Heimskringla*, p 447 "Thou, prince, didst wipe dry the sword's mouth when thou didst turn from battle; thou didst batten the raven with raw flesh; the wolf howled from the hill, but the next year, martial warrior, thou wast in Russia to the east (I heard of no fighter more renowned than thou)."

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p 454 "Thou, glorious king, before thy return, with blood didst redden the sharp claws of the eagle; the wolf received food wherever thou didst come."

⁵⁵ "Kraku mál," *Corp. Poet. Bor*, II, 342: "At Enderis Isle the ravens received flesh to tear; we gave to the witches' steeds [i. e., wolves] a full battenning then ."

⁵⁶ *Istoričeskie Očerki*, I, 219. Polevoj cited stanza 8 of "Guðrúnar-kviða ii," containing reference to the screaming of eagles and ravens and howling of wolves, *op. cit*, part 2, p. 46

drink: they are the raven and the eagle.⁵⁷ He also gives epithets and quotes staves to show the conventional use of the wolf as ravener of the battlefield. The falling of arrows he compares to a shower of rain and hail, and quotes a number of examples from the poets. There are many elsewhere to set beside the same figure in the *Slovo*.

итти дождю стрѣлами
съ Дону Великого (45)

Unnuð austr fyr Mynni
oddhrið . . .⁵⁸
í fastri fleindrifu . . .⁵⁹
fannk orva drif . . .⁶⁰
Ala þryngr at . . . éli . . .⁶¹
Røk[k]r at regni miklu randar
garðs . . .⁶¹
Hörð kom hrið á skjöldu . . .⁶²
. . . í odda éli . . .⁶³

In addition Snorri Sturluson tells us that battle may be paraphrased as storm of snow-shower of the Hjaðnings, or the storm of Óðin or of Viðrir; and weapons are called hail or rain of shields. The periphrasis was a familiar stereotype, indeed, and endlessly repeated.

It has been claimed by Buslaev and Pogodin⁶⁴ that a significant point of similarity in both types of battle description is the attribution of speech to weapons: swords or spears cry out with voices of their own. The comparison can indeed be made:

Стязи глаголють (50)
Копія поють (167)

sliðrtungur lét syngva
sverðleiks reginn . . .⁶⁵

⁵⁷ *Prose Edda*, "Skaldskaparmál," ch. 59 (translation by A. G. Brodeur, New York, 1923), p. 213.

⁵⁸ See note 29.

⁵⁹ *Óláfs saga Helga*, ch. 233, *Heimskringla*, p. 406. "in hard snow-storm of arrows."

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.: "I found snowstorm of arrows."

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, ch. 206, p. 389; see note 24.

⁶² "Kraku mál," stanza 14: "a fierce storm beat on the shields."

⁶³ *Ibid.*, stanza 22: "in the storm of spears."

⁶⁴ Pogodin, *Žurn. Min. Nar. Prosvešč.*, loc. cit., p. 167, quoting Buslaev. Cf. also Abicht, *op. cit.*, p. 23, and Polevoj, *op. cit.*, part 2, p. 46, citing *Bēowulf*, 1. 184.

⁶⁵ Jóhannsson, *Skjaldedigtning*, B No. I, 66: "the lord of the sword-play [i. e., warrior] let the scabbard-tongues [i. e., swords] sing out."

These pallid figures in Old Norse can scarcely be called pro-sopopoeia, however. I know of no cases of extended discourse by nonhuman beings, such as rivers or cities, to place beside the examples in the *Slovo*.

A single parallel may be cited for the blood-red dawn and black clouds of Igor's second day in battle:

Другаго дни велми рано	Nú es ógorligt um at litask
кровавыя зори свѣтъ	es dreyrog ský dregr með
повѣдають. Чръныя тучя	himni:
съ моря идутъ (43-44).	Mun lopt litað lýða blóði... ⁶⁶

The earth soaked in blood and sown with the dead is a conventional part of battle descriptions in Old Norse too, though it might be easier to collect examples of water dyed red and choked with bodies, since viking sea fights were more often described than land battles:

Ту кроваваго вина не	nár féll niðr til iarðar á Nord-
доста (72).	ymbra-landi... ⁶⁷
чръна земля подъ	Ira blóð í ægi ætir féll um
копыты костью была	skæro... ⁶⁸
посяна, а кровю	
поляна (67).	

The time of battle is often designated as early morning, as in the *Slovo*:

Свѣтъ запала (34)	Hund marga sá-ek falla
Съ зараня (37)	morginstund fyr 'meiði' menn
Другаго дни велми рано (43).	at odda-senno. ⁶⁹

Finally, the day of the week is designated in both types:

⁶⁶ "Darraðaljóð" or "Song of the Darts," a poem contained in *Njáls saga* and associated with the Battle of Clontarf in 1014. See *Corp. Poet. Bor.*, I, 283: "Now it is terrible to look about, for bloody clouds gather over the sky; the air shall be dyed with blood of men."

⁶⁷ "Kraku mál," stanza 14: "[Many a] corpse fell to the earth in Northumberland."

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, stanza 19. "Much blood of the Irish fell into the ocean during the battle."

⁶⁹ "Kraku mál," stanza 17: "Very many men I saw fall before the sword in the morning hour..." Cf. also stanza 19, quoted in the preceding note, and stanza 11, "áttom odda messo við upp-runu sólar," — "we had battle at sunrise"; also note 48.

⁷⁰ *Haralds saga Harðráða*, ch 60, *Heimskringla*, p 484

Съ заранія въ пят[о]къ (37). *Slyngr laugardag löngu*
*liðbaldr af sér tjaldi . . .*⁷⁰
Vasa sunnudag, svanni,
(seggr hné margr und eggjar)
morgin þann sem manni
*mær lauk ðea ql bæri.*⁷⁰

For other larger units in the *Slovo* I find more general analogies. They have pertinence, though they lack verbal parallels. The composing of eulogies addressed to kings was an important function of skalds, and the repertory of their surviving verse offers many examples; but they are unlike the apostrophe of our *Igor'*-poet to heroes of ages past in both style and purpose. The prophetic dream of Svjatoslav suggests very many Old Norse situations in verse and in prose saga accounts. The specific vision of the dreamer's own funeral bed being prepared recalls vaguely — but very vaguely — the visions of a bench being prepared for a doomed hero in Valhalla.⁷² Dreams of catastrophe precede important battles, such as Stiklestad or Stamford Bridge, but these usually involve a witch or an ancestor who appears to the dreamer to tell him he is fey. Lamentations after a tragedy are fairly frequent too; when a skald speaks, they assume the form of a celebration of past exploits by the lost kings; and when a woman speaks, like Guðrún in the *Edda*, they are more lyrical, but I know of none like Jaroslavna's containing an apostrophe to the elements of nature.

Again, skaldic verse contains a few instances of reproaches addressed directly to princes, admonitions about the need for generosity or the folly of stirring up civil strife, but even the latter theme is only vaguely similar to the Golden Discourse of Svjatoslav. The closest analogue I have found is the poem called "Bersöglisvísur" of Sighvat, addressed to King Magnús the Good about 1040 A. D. The poet here warns the King that his peasants have just grievances against him, "and it seemed to them that he had delayed too long to pacify them, when

⁷¹ *Óláfs saga Helga*, ch 249, *ibid*, p. 419 The battle of Clontarf is reported to have occurred on Good Friday, *Njáls saga*, ch 156. These last details are, to be sure, of minor importance.

⁷² "Baldrs Draumar," *Edda*, verse 6. "hveim ero bekkir baugom sánir?" Also "Eriks mál" or dirge for Eric Blood-Axe (ca 955): "Hvat es þat drauma?" etc., *Corp Poet. Bor*, I, 260. Cf *Geste*, 381

they were threatening to raise civil strife against him." To drive home his sermon, Sighvat cites examples of earlier kings who kept the laws and ancient customs. "The karls and jarls are justified," he concludes.⁷³

Stanza 7

Hætt 's þats allir ætlask (áðr skal við því ráða)
 hárir menn; es heyrik hót, skjöldungi at móti;
 greypt 's þat, 's hofðum hnepta heldr ok niðr í feldi
 (slegit hefr þogn á þegna) þingmenn nqsum stinga.⁷⁴

Stanza 8

Gjalt varhuga, veltir, viðr þeims nú ferr hiðra,
 þjófs (skal hqnd í hófi) hqlða kytt (of styttu);
 vinr 's sás, varmra benja vqrnuð byðr, en hlyðið,
 tármútaris teitir, til hvat búmenn vilja.

The preservation of pagan mythology in the *Slovo* by a Christian author has been compared to Snorri's antiquarian labors in behalf of the gods of Valhalla. It might as well be compared, however, with the literary use of classical myth by skeptical pagan, or even believing Christian, poets of the later Roman empire.

These are the chief correspondences in style and content between Old Norse poetic literature and the *Slovo o polku Igoreve*. Other literatures, I am aware, give closer parallels for some of the types surveyed above. For instance, balanced sentence structure, the pairing of phrases in identical grammatical construction,⁷⁵ remind me of Biblical balanced style more than skaldic. The studies of Peretc seem to me to go too far in claiming Biblical influence, since a number of his citations

⁷³ *Magnús saga Góða*, ch. 16, *Heimskringla*, p. 431.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, loc. cit.: "Beware, thief-punisher, of the people's report which goes about here; one should hold short the hand in moderation. He is a friend who warns: hear then, you who delight the hawk with warm blood, what it is the farmers desire. It is dangerous that all the hoar-headed men whose threats I hear are turned against the prince; that should be forestalled in time. It is a threatening sign when the thing-men let their heads hang and thrust their noses down into their hoods; — the *bonder* have fallen silent."

⁷⁵ For instance, *Аже бы ты былъ, то была бы чага по ногатъ, а кощей по резанъ* (125)

contain only one word (not always expressing the same idea) common to both texts; but where the verbal echo appears in similar balanced constructions, I find them convincing.⁷⁶ The Psalter furnishes many of these. Throughout, I am inclined to give great weight to the claims of indirect classical influence, though I am in no position to judge its extent or its transmission through medieval Greek. I find the recent statements of N. Gudzij⁷⁷ and A. Orlov⁷⁸ on the learned heritage of the poem rather more persuasive than Sokolov's emphasis on its popular affiliations (though there is a valid point here too on the comparative closeness of feudal court circles to popular traditions, in contrast to the alienation from the people in later centuries).⁷⁹ As for the persistence of Scandinavian literary tradition, I am inclined to think that if it survived at all, even to the time of Bojan, it was already attenuated in the extreme, and its effects were felt (as perhaps in the case of alliteration) only in the most indirect manner — not to be definitely identified either by singers then or scholars now.

⁷⁶ V. N. Peretc, *K izučeniju Slova o polku Igoreve* (Leningrad, 1926); "Slovo' i istoričeskie biblejskie knigi," *Sbornik v čest' A. I. Sobolevskogo* (1928); "Slovo' i drevneslavjanskij perevod biblejskix knig," *Izvestija po Russkomu Jazyku i Slovesnosti Akademii Nauk*, III (1930), 289-309.

⁷⁷ "'Slovo' i drevnerusskaja literaturnaja tradicija," *Literaturnyj kritik* (1938), No. 5, pp. 59-83. The oratorical and rhetorical traditions are stressed. Cf. also Gudzij's *Istorija drevnej russkoj literatury* (Moscow, 1945), pp. 147-77.

⁷⁸ *Drevnjaja russkaja literatura XI-XVI vv.* (Leningrad-Moscow: Akademija Nauk, 1939), p. 36. Orlov refers to the metaphor of arrows falling like rain as a classical figure.

⁷⁹ Sokolov, "'Slovo o polku Igoreve' i narodnoe tvorčestvo," *Literaturnyj kritik* (1938), No. 5, pp. 84-93.

ON ALLITERATION IN ANCIENT RUSSIAN EPIC LITERATURE

By

Dmitry Čiževsky

1. The vast number of alliterations (as well as other devices of euphony) in the *Slovo* has been pointed out more than once. V. Ržiga made an attempt to classify the different types of alliteration to be found in the *Slovo*.^{*} However, proper attention has not been paid to that alliteration which binds the final words of short syntactic units. For example:

45. Быти грому великому,
ити дождю стрѣлами
с Дону великого.

46. Ту ся копіемъ приламати,
ту ся саблямъ потручяти
о шелома Половецкыя,
на рѣцѣ на Каялѣ,
у Дону великого.

68. Что ми шумить,
что ми звенить?

69. Давеча рано предъ зорями
Игорь плѣкы заворочаетъ . . .

83. ни мыслю смыслити,
ни думою сдумати,
ни очима съглядати . .

103. два солнца помѣркости,
оба багряная стѣгна погасоста
и въ морѣ ся погрузиста,
и съ ним[а] молодая мѣсяца
тмою ся поволокоста.

^{*} "Harmonija movy Slova o polku Ihorevim," *Ukrajina*, No. 4 (1926), 24-34.

135. . . . и Половци —

суици своя повръгоша,
а главы своя поклониша . . .

143. Уже бо Сула не течетъ
сребреными струями
граду Переяславлю,
и Двина болотомъ течетъ
овымъ грознымъ Полочаномъ
подъ кликомъ поганыхъ.

154. Ты клюками подирь ся о ко[п]ни,
скочи къ граду Киеву
и дотчеса стружемъ
злата стола Киевскаго.

197. Не тако [т]и рече рѣка Стугна:
худу струю имѣя,
пожрьши чужи ручьи и стругы,
ростре на кусту
уношу княз[я] Ростислав[а],
затвори днѣ пр[и] темнѣ березѣ.

198. Плачется мати Ростиславля
по уноши князи Ростиславѣ . . .

The number of such examples could easily be increased. But I wish to point out something else: alliterations in ancient Russian literature are not exceptional phenomena. In particular we meet them in some of the oldest layers of secular literature. Especially characteristic in this respect are the chronicles. For examples of alliteration in the chronicles I want to draw attention, in particular, to the considerable number of alliterations of the type just examined.

2. There are a great number of alliterations in the *Primary Chronicle*. The fact that no one up to this time has considered them is characteristic of the attitude of inquirers into the works of Old Russian literature, in which they sought everything possible except poetic devices.

Let us offer two examples, first, from the tale of Oleg and his horse:

И приспѣ осень,
и помяну Ольгъ конь свои,
иже бѣ поставилъ кърмити
и не въсѣдати на нь.

и-п-о
и-п-о-к
и-п-к
и-н-в-н

Вѣ бо преже съпрашалъ сълхвѣ и кудесьникѣ;	В-В-И-К
«Отъ чего ми есть умрети?»	е-у
И рече ему един кудесьникѣ.	и-е-е-к
«Къняже! конь, егоже любиши	к-к-е
«и ѣздиши на немъ,	и
«отъ того ти умрети.»	о-т-т-у
Ольгѣ же примѣ въ умѣ си, рече:	о-у
«Николи же съсяду на нь,	н-в-н
«ни вижду его боле того.»	н-в-е
И повелѣ кърмити и,	и-к-и
и не водити его къ нему . . .	и-н-в-е-к
.....	
.....	
И повелѣ оседьлати си конь:	и-п-к
«Да ти вижду кости его.»	к-е
И приѣха на мѣсто,	и-п
идѣже бѣша лежаща кости его голы	и-л-к-г
и лобъ голъ,	и-л-г
и сълѣзъ съ коня	и-с-с-к
и посмѣяся, река:	и-п
«Отъ сего ли лѣба	с-л
«съмъртъ было възяти мѣнѣ?»	с

It may be argued that some of these alliterations are accidental consonances. But there can hardly be any doubt that the play of alliteration in the passage is quite conscious. The application of the device recalls that of medieval Latin with its predilection for the alliteration of words derived from the same root. The following is an example from the story of the siege of Belgorod:

И повелѣ женамъ сътворити цѣжь,	и-п
съ немъже варять кысель,	в-в-к
и повелѣ ископати колодязь	и-п-и-к
и съставити тамо кадъ	и-в-к
и налити цѣжа кадъ.	и-к
И повелѣ другиѣ колодязь ископати	и-п-к-и
и поставити тамо кадъ,	и-п-к
и повелѣ искати меду.	и-п-и-м
Они же, шѣдъше, съзяша меду лужно,	в-м
бѣ бо погребено въ княжи медуши.	и-к-м

И повелѣ росытити вельми	И-В-В-К
и вѣлияти въ кадѣ	И-П-В
въ друзѣмъ колодязи.	В-К

Or the following short excerpt from the story of Jaroslav's struggle with Svjatopolk preserved for us by the *First Novgorod Chronicle*:

что ты тому велиши творити?	Т-Т-В-Т
мало меду варено,	М-М-В
а дружины много . . .	М
.....	
даче меду мало,	Д-М-М
а дружины много,	Д-М
да к вечеру вдати . . .	Д-В-В

Worthy of special notice is that we meet alliterations almost exclusively in those passages of the Chronicle which hand down to us the old sagas. In the parts having religious content (as in almost all religious literature of the eleventh-thirteenth centuries), alliteration is not encountered. We find alliteration in the story of the Slavs' struggle with the Khazars (Introduction to the Chronicle); in the beginning of the story about the vocation of princes (862); in the story of Oleg's arrival in Kiev (882); in the story of Oleg's campaign against Constantinople (907); in the end of the story of Igor's campaign against the Greeks (944); in the narrative of Olga's revenge (945-6); in the characterization of Svjatoslav (964); in different parts of the story about the struggle with the Pečenegs (968); in the story of Svjatoslav's death (971); various passages in the story of Vladimir's struggle against Jaropolk (980); in the story of Vladimir's fight with the Pečenegs — single combat with the Pečeneg giant (992); in the story about the siege of Belgorod (997); in the beginning of the narrative about the murder of Boris and Gleb (1015); in the history of Jaroslav's war against Svjatopolk (1016 and ff.); in the tale of Mstislav's duel with Rededja (1022); some passages in the story of Jaroslav's war with Mstislav (1024); in the notification of the end of the Pečenegs (1036); in the story about the prince-magician Vseslav (1044); the poisoning of Rostislav (1066); Vladimir Monomax's campaign of 1093, and about the death of Rostislav (it is worth mention that this event is

noted, as are the deeds of Vseslav, in the *Slovo!*); in the announcement of the death of the Polovcian prince Itlar' (1095); in the narrative about Vladimir Monomax's struggle with Oleg of Černigov (1096, in the beginning and somewhat further on); in the short fantastic narration of Bonjak's nocturnal magic (1097); and, of course, in some distinct sentences of the proverb type so profusely spread throughout the Chronicle.

A survey of alliterations in other works of Old Russian literature may be found in my *Geschichte der altrussischen Literatur im 11., 12. und 13. Jahrhundert* published in 1948 by V. Klostermann, Frankfurt; there an attempt is made to record the significant number of alliterations in the *Izbornik* of 1076 and in the "Supplication of Daniel." Obviously in these two works, alliterations are conjoined with the aphoristic style.

3 Any study of even a part of the material mentioned above would be sufficient to indicate with complete certainty that alliteration belonged to the stock of stylistic devices of ancient Russian literature from the eleventh century on (the dating of the "Supplication," as is well known, is entirely controversial: I personally consider it a comparatively late work, probably belonging to the thirteenth century).

It follows then that particular attention should be paid to the epic character of the majority of those sections in the Chronicles in which we come upon alliteration. It is even more remarkable that there is almost a complete lack of alliteration in the ancient sermon literature which includes quite a few works with an extraordinarily developed literary style that employs the most refined literary devices and a somewhat rhythmic language which is also one of the stylistic peculiarities of the epic parts in the Chronicles.

The question arises as to the origin of this artistic device. Alliteration belongs, of course, to the favorite poetic devices of Indo-European literatures — but not to all. Besides the famous "Stabreim" of Germanic literatures, one should note still other examples of the use of alliteration. "Stabreim," incidentally, has almost no resemblance to Old Russian alliteration: the former is linked with a specific poetic rhythm and restricts the number of alliterated words. Numerous alliterations are found in Celtic poetry; in this respect, it seems that there the basic rule is: "the more alliteration, the better." We find alliteration in Osco-Umbrian inscriptions, in Old Frisian

laws, and especially, of course, in Latin poetry which preserved — and even developed with significant refinements — the use of this device in the later tradition, particularly in medieval Latin verse. Greek literature — secular and spiritual — has almost no alliteration. The only examples known to me belong to the neo-Greek folk poetry. Latvian folklore, too, is rich in alliteration.

The use of alliteration seems to be linked with the peculiarities of prosodic structure: it occurs prevailing in languages with accent on the initial syllable of words or roots. As the Old Russian language did not offer such a prosodic feature, the possibility of a borrowing of this device, probably from Germanic poetry, is not excluded.

However, we are here concerned only with the question of the tradition which frames the use of alliteration in the *Slovo*. We have been able to observe that this use in ancient Russian was not limited to the *Slovo* alone. The question of this device's later use (e. g. in contemporary *byliny*) demands a separate study.

LE DIGENIS Russe

Par

Henri Grégoire

Sans qualifier de faux le texte du *Digénis* russe, qui se trouvait dans le manuscrit perdu de Moscou, et dont d'autres copies anciennes furent découvertes ensuite par Pypin et Tixonravov, M. André Mazon semble avoir voulu frapper ce morceau épique d'une sorte de suspicion. S'il ne le considère pas, à l'égal du *Slovo* d'Igor', comme une forgerie moderne, il insinue qu'il s'agirait d'un *factum* vulgaire et de basse époque.¹ Je n'ai pas la compétence voulue pour me prononcer, en philologue ou en linguiste, sur la langue du *Devgenievo dějanie*. Dans les pages qui vont suivre, je n'ai eu qu'un but: examiner le contenu du *Dějanie*, et comparer ce contenu avec les diverses recensions grecques du *Digénis* que nous possédons aujourd'hui, de même qu'avec ces ballades épiques dont la forme et le fond sont si anciens, et qui ont certainement servi de sources à l'épopée byzantine. S'il m'est arrivé, au cours de cet examen, et de ces études comparatives, de discuter certains mots russes, c'est uniquement pour en rechercher les équivalents ou les originaux grecs; et je ne pense pas, en me livrant à ces rapprochements, être sorti de ma sphère de byzantiniste et de néo-helléniste. On m'a reproché parfois de commencer mes articles par où je devrais les finir, c'est-à-dire par une affirmation trop tranchante, prématurée, à priori, de mes conclusions. Je prie le lecteur de considérer que, si j'agis de la sorte, c'est uniquement par amour de la clarté. Il va de soi qu'il n'y a aucun à priorisme dans ma méthode. C'est tellement vrai que j'ai beaucoup varié et longtemps hésité en ce qui concerne le *Digénis* russe. J'ai cru pendant des années, faute de le bien connaître, il est vrai, qu'il représentait une forme abâtardie et vulgarisée de l'épopée byzantine. Ce qui me l'avait persuadé, c'est surtout l'absence, dans le texte russe, des précisions his-

¹ Revue des Etudes Slaves, XXI (1944), 18 sqq.

toriques et géographiques du grec. Je vois à présent que ce caractère dénote un état archaïque du roman. Une étude longue et minutieuse faite sur l'original russe pendant toute une année, avec la collaboration de mon ami Roman Jakobson et de tout son séminaire, de nouvelles collations avec les textes grecs, en vue de mes conférences du Collège de France sur l'épopée byzantine: toutes ces recherches ont multiplié et accumulé les preuves de l'antiquité, de l'originalité — par rapport aux recensions du roman grec — du *Digénis* russe. Il serait plus habile, sans doute, de dissimuler, jusqu'à la fin de ce mémoire, ce résultat de mes investigations. Mais je n'éprouve aucune gêne à le proclamer au contraire, pour la facilité du lecteur, avant de reprendre, dans un ordre qui, je l'espère, s'expliquera de lui-même, quelques-unes des analyses et des comparaisons qui m'ont ouvert les yeux sur la valeur du *Déjanie*.

Le Déjanie dans le manuscrit de Moscou.

M. Roman Jakobson s'est chargé de décrire le fameux manuscrit du comte Musin-Puškin et son contenu. Je n'ai pas à revenir sur son exposé magistral (*Geste*, 5 sqq.). Brièvement, mais définitivement, il a démontré que tout ce que ce manuscrit contenait, en dehors du *Slovo* (sur lequel la publication mentionnée fait une lumière complète), est non seulement *bonae notae*, mais porte la marque de l'âge d'or, de la période héroïque de la Russie de Kiev. Le *Digénis* russe est de la même valeur, ou plutôt pourrait se comparer, pour l'intérêt historique, au *Slovo* lui-même, infiniment supérieur comme oeuvre littéraire. Mais, tandis que le *Slovo* d'Igor' a été copié, et bien copié, le *Devgenievo déjanie*, senti comme une oeuvre étrangère, et par conséquent plus ou moins indifférent au patriotisme russe, a disparu dans l'incendie de Moscou, sans laisser d'autre trace que quatorze lignes de résumé et quarante lignes environ de citations textuelles.

Résumé et extraits de Karamzin.

Mais ce résumé est de l'historien Karamzin, ces extraits — sauf trois titres — sont de Karamzin aussi.² Le résumé surtout

² Dans l'édition princeps du *Slovo* (1800), p. III, note, on trouve trois des titres mis en tête de l'histoire de *Digénis* dans le manuscrit de Musin-Puškin. Karamzin, dans son *Histoire de l'Etat russe*, t. II, ch. 12, n. 333, et t. III, ch. 7, n. 272, donne des extraits textuels et un résumé de l'oeuvre, toujours d'après le manuscrit de Musin-Puškin.

vaut son pesant d'or. Il suffit pour identifier le texte. Il s'agit bien d'une version russe du roman épique que nous connaissons depuis soixante-douze ans par des recensions grecques. C'est le même roman en deux parties, la première consacrée au père du héros, un Emir arabe anonyme converti au christianisme par amour d'une jeune fille grecque, sa captive; de la seconde partie on trouvait dans le russe tout ce qui va de la naissance et des enfances de Digénis, fils de l'Emir, jusqu'à l'enlèvement, par l'héroïque jeune homme, de sa future épouse, la fille d'un stratège byzantin, enlèvement qui donne lieu à poursuite et à bataille acharnée, mais qui aboutit à de justes et somptueuses noces.

Le manuscrit (Pogodin) découvert par Pypin.

Jusqu'en 1858, personne n'avait soupçonné que le *Devgenij* russe pût être d'origine grecque. Mais cette année-là, A. N. Pypin découvrit un nouveau texte de Digénis dans le manuscrit Pogodin No. 1773 de la Bibliothèque publique de Moscou, un codex du XVII^e ou du XVIII^e siècle. Il publia ce texte dans son *Essai sur l'histoire littéraire des anciens contes et des vieilles légendes russes* (1859).³ On n'avait rien signalé d'analogue depuis 1800 dans la littérature byzantine. Pypin n'en eut que plus de mérite à écrire textuellement: "Cette histoire, comme celle du sage Akir, appartient aux productions romancées de la période ancienne de notre littérature, qui remontent à une source byzantine, mais se distinguent de l'*Alexandride* et des récits troyens parce qu'elles sortent du domaine historique et appartiennent souvent *entièrement* au domaine de la fantaisie." On va voir que ceci n'est pas tout à fait vrai du *Digénis* byzantin, mais n'importe. Ce qui suit est d'une intuition véritablement divinatoire, et cette divination suffirait à la gloire de Pypin: "Les principaux personnages et le lieu de l'action . . . démontrent une origine grecque. Tout cela vient d'un chapitre particulièrement obscur de la littérature byzantine, celui de la légende héroïque; cela pourrait facilement se comparer avec ces histoires à demi fantaisistes enfantées par les Croisades. Les monuments byzantins qui doivent leur nais-

³ A. Pypin, *Očerki literaturnoj istorii starinnyx povestej i skazok russkix* (Saint-Petersbourg, 1858), pp. 316-332. Ce texte fut reproduit ensuite dans les *Pamjatniki staroj russkoj literatury*, izd. Kušeleva-Bezborodica, II, 379 sqq.

sance au fait historique de la lutte (des chrétiens contre les envahisseurs venus de l'est), étaient fort peu connus. Or, c'est à cette catégorie de textes que se rattache le prototype grec du *Devgenij*."

Mais le travail de Pypin resta inconnu des byzantinistes et n'activa nullement la recherche, dans les bibliothèques grecques, de l'original perdu ou égaré.

Le manuscrit grec de Trébizonde et l'édition Sathas-Legrand.

C'est en 1870 seulement qu'un professeur grec de Trébizonde, Sabbas Joannidès, dans son *Histoire et Statistique de Trébizonde*, publiée en grec à Constantinople, mentionne l'existence d'un long poème en vers politiques, consacré à Digénis et à son père l'Emir, et conservé dans un manuscrit de sa ville natale, Trébizonde dans le Pont. Constantin Sathas et Emile Legrand, d'après ce manuscrit alors unique, donnèrent en 1875 l'édition princeps de l'oeuvre avec une riche introduction historique et une élégante mais infidèle traduction. Inutile de dire que les savants éditeurs, pourtant très bien informés de presque tout ce qui pouvait toucher à leur sujet, ne savaient rien du Digénis russe ⁴

Veselovskij.

La même année, le grand Alexandre Veselovskij combla cette lacune dans le *Vestnik Evropy* d'avril 1875. Il rapprocha des fragments de Karamzin et de Pypin le nouveau texte grec, et montra même l'importance des cantilènes acritiques pour l'histoire de la littérature grecque. Le texte de Pypin, qui s'arrête au beau milieu de la conquête, par Digénis, de la fille du stratège, et qui, par conséquent, est moins complet dans cette dernière partie, d'après le résumé de Karamzin, que la recension perdue de Musin-Puškin, comprend au contraire sans nulle lacune toute la première partie du roman: portrait de l'Emir, enlèvement par lui d'une jeune fille grecque, poursuite

⁴ Pour tout ce qui touche les manuscrits et les éditions du texte grec du roman épique, voyez notre livre, *Digenis Akritas, The Byzantine Epic in History and Poetry*, by Henri Grégoire, with the collaboration of Prof Panos Morphopoulos Forewords by Professors Richard Dawkins and Gustave Cohen. Three original geographical drawings by Prof. Ernest Honigsmann. The National Herald (New York, 1942), 38+336 pages. 19 illustrations.

de l'Arabe par les frères de la captive, baptême et mariage, naissance et premières années de Devgenij. Or, comme le manuscrit de Trébizonde était acéphale, mutilé au début, le texte russe pouvait immédiatement servir à combler cette grave lacune de près d'un livre et demi (sur dix). Le même Veselovskij jugea l'occasion favorable pour faire enfin connaître le *Digénis* russe à la science occidentale, dans un article admirable (le mot n'est pas trop fort) de la *Russische Revue*,⁵ plein de choses parfaitement justes, et qui paraissent toutes neuves aujourd'hui, tant Emile Faguet avait raison de dire: "Il n'y a d'inédit que l'imprimé." Malheureusement, sauf Alfred Rambaud dans sa *Russie épique*, les critiques d'Occident restèrent aveugles à la lumière du Nord, sourds à la voix de la raison érudite incarnée dans Veselovskij, dans lequel ils auraient dû reconnaître leur maître à tous.

Autres manuscrits grecs.

Mais le manuscrit grec de Trébizonde n'était pas unique. Outre la rédaction tardive et rimée (on sait que c'est la même chose en littérature post-byzantine) d'Ignace Petritzès, écrite en 1670, et que Lambros donna au public en 1880 d'après un manuscrit d'Oxford, Miliarakis révéla et publia un jumeau en parfait état (c'est-à-dire un manuscrit complet n'ayant perdu ni son début ni sa fin), un jumeau parfait, dis-je, du codex mutilé de Trébizonde. Ceci explique le sigle AT, c'est-à-dire Andros et Trébizonde, ces deux manuscrits représentant, avec peu de variantes sérieuses, une même forme du roman. Un autre manuscrit, celui de Grotta-Ferrata, donnant une autre recension, ne devait paraître qu'en 1892, par les soins d'Emile Legrand, *Bibliothèque grecque vulgaire*, tome VI. En 1904, Krumbacher annonçait, dans les *Sitzungsberichte* de Munich, un cinquième texte, fort intéressant à la fois par sa forme vulgaire et par ses traits archaïques, l'*Escorialensis*, que Hesseling ne publia complètement qu'en 1911-1912, au tome III de *Laographia*, ce qui, avec un texte en prose d'Andros, peu différent du texte versifié de la même île, fait six recensions grecques

⁵ "Bruchstücke des byzantinischen Epos in russischer Fassung," *Russische Revue*, IV, Heft 6. 539-570: I. *Das Lied von Digenis*, p. 539; II. *Deugenius-Digenis*, p. 544; III. *Digenis-Anika und die älteren Helden*, p. 555.

(sans compter des manuscrits signalés au XVIII^e siècle, et aujourd'hui disparus).

Aucun des éditeurs du *Digénis* grec, sauf le tout dernier, M. Kalonaros, ne s'est sérieusement occupé du *Digénis* russe. A leur tour, les éditeurs du *Digénis* russe, ou bien n'ont pu connaître le *Digénis* grec, ou n'ont connu qu'une partie de sa tradition manuscrite.

Le manuscrit de Tixonravov. La thèse de ce savant.

D'ailleurs, en 1890, la pièce essentielle de la tradition manuscrite russe était encore à révéler. Ce fut la nouvelle sensationnelle communiquée par N. Tixonravov au VIII^e Congrès archéologique tenu à Moscou. Tixonravov venait d'acheter à Yaroslavl un manuscrit de *Miscellanea* du XVIII^e siècle, contenant notamment deux fragments du *Devgenij*, écrits en 1744 par un certain Semjon Malkov. Premier fragment: Enfances de Digénis, c'est-à-dire éducation, chasse, portrait du jeune homme en grand costume, et de son coursier richement caparaçonné. Second fragment: Toute la fin du roman, depuis les préparatifs de l'enlèvement de la fille du stratège, jusqu'aux deux derniers épisodes: Comment Devgenij vainquit le roi Basile, et le règne de Devgenij et Amir, absent du résumé de Karamzin. Tixonravov vit immédiatement que cette version russe, infiniment supérieure à P dans toutes les parties où la comparaison est possible, était identique, sauf des variantes négligeables, au texte de Musin-Puškin. Il vit aussi, très justement je pense, que les divergences entre P et T M, c'est-à-dire entre Pypin et Tixonravov—Musin-Puškin, ne peuvent pas s'expliquer par des altérations dues aux copistes russes mais que ces deux recensions si divergentes remontent à deux manuscrits grecs, ou plutôt à deux rédactions grecques, aussi distinctes que Trébizonde et Grotta-Ferrata. Comme en 1890 Grotta-Ferrata n'était pas publié, il nous faut parler encore de divination, de la divination de Tixonravov, aussi clairvoyant que Pypin et que Veselovskij⁶. Sans connaître d'autres textes

⁶ Dès sa communication au Congrès, Tixonravov avait formulé ses cinq thèses, que je crois fermement établies: 1. Le nouveau texte est une copie tardive de la recension de Musin-Puškin. 2 Le texte de Pypin, au contraire, très aberrant, s'opposait en un sens à la recension Musin-Puškin — Malkov. 3 Ces deux rédactions russes remontaient à deux recensions grecques différentes, et l'auteur citait, *ex gr*, Trébizonde et Grotta-Ferrata. 4. L'original de Musin-Puškin et de Malkov

grecs que Trébizonde et le tardif Pétritzès, ignorant Andros et ne possédant qu'une courte analyse de Grotta-Ferrata, il avait, d'après nous, résolu presque tous les problèmes que pose la reconstruction de l'archétype commun.

Speranskij.

A certains égards, le travail si consciencieux, et qui passe pour définitif, à cause de sa date récente, de Speranskij,⁷ me paraît, en ce qui concerne les résultats de l'analyse des textes, en régression très nette sur Tixonravov. C'est qu'en fait, malgré la publication complète de Grotta-Ferrata en 1902, et de plusieurs fragments de l'Escorial en 1904, Speranskij n'a pas une connaissance complète de la tradition manuscrite grecque. Il n'a jamais lu, bien qu'elle fût antérieure de deux ans à la guerre, l'édition de l'*Escorialensis* par Hesseling. Ce qui est plus grave, quelques mots corrompus des textes russes, qui décèlent clairement des recensions grecques différentes, empêchent de croire à la thèse essentielle de Speranskij, qu'on peut formuler comme suit:

Les trois sources n'offrent pas trois versions divergentes, mais une seule, et reflètent assez bien, malgré les altérations postérieures, un même texte russe primitif.

L'original grec du russe est plus archaïque que l'archétype des recensions grecques.

Mais feu Speranskij n'avait pas tort sur tous les points,⁸

contenait des détails importants qui permettaient d'opposer cette rédaction aux textes grecs conservés; l'original ou le prototype du nouveau manuscrit était plus ancien, en tout cas, que l'archétype même de Trébizonde ou de Grotta-Ferrata. 5. Tixonravov attribuait, par une intuition géniale, l'apparition de Digénis dans la littérature russe, à la popularité du nom du héros, porté par un fils de Romain Diogène, qui essaya de reconquérir le trône de son père avec l'aide d'une armée russe et koumane.

⁷ M. Speranskij, *Devgenievo Dejanie, k istorii ego teksta v starinnoj russkoj pis'mennosti, Issledovanie i teksty*. Petrograd, 1922. (Sbornik Russkogo Jazyka i Slovesnosti Akademii Nauk, tome XCIX, No. 7. 165 pages). La préface est datée de 1918, et l'ouvrage était destiné à célébrer le 25^e anniversaire de la mort de Tixonravov.

⁸ Voici les sept points de Speranskij (pp. 129 et 130 de son mémoire):

1. La traduction russe de *Digénis* est une et non pas multiple.
2. Elle est faite sur le grec, un texte grec différent de ceux que

et sa quatrième thèse, qui se retrouve chez Tixonravov, et que je fais mienne entièrement, pourrait être l'épigraphe du présent mémoire. Je traduis: "L'original grec qui est à la base de la version russe présente des traits beaucoup plus archaïques que ceux qu'on trouve dans les recensions grecques qui nous sont parvenues, y compris les plus anciennes."

Evidence de cette thèse.

J'aurais voulu, dans mon propre travail, me dispenser d'établir longuement la vérité de cette thèse, tellement elle me paraît évidente. Mais puisqu'elle a été contestée, non seulement par des critiques peu compétents, comme Wartenberg, mais encore par certains de mes amis grecs, et notamment par le récent éditeur du *Digénis*, Kalonaros, il faudra bien que j'établisse, par une série de discussions critiques, la "précellence" par rapport aux recensions grecques, non seulement de T, le manuscrit de Tixonravov, qui est de tout premier ordre, mais même de P (Pogodin-Pypin). Quant à M, c'est-à-dire le manuscrit perdu de Moscou, le résumé de Karamzin et les quelques extraits que nous en possédons, suffisent pour que nous reconnaissons en lui une copie du même texte que T, mais supérieur à T.

Le début du poème, absent, mutilé ou remanié dans les textes grecs, a été conservé assez fidèlement par P: il figurait dans M d'une manière plus complète.

Commençons cette démonstration par une observation très simple, mais que nous avons été les premiers à faire.

Toutes les recensions grecques du roman de *Digénis*, sauf une, celle de Grotta-Ferrata, sont en fait acéphales. *L'Escoria-*

nous possédons. Elle a été faite directement en langue russe, et n'a donc pas passé par le bulgare.

3. Cette traduction est du XIIe ou du XIIIe siècle.

4. Pour le No. 4, voyez plus haut dans le texte.

5. L'original grec n'était pas divisé en livres, mais en histoires.

6. Il est impossible de dire si tout le *Digénis* grec a été traduit en russe.

7. La traduction ancienne a dû se conserver sous une forme non altérée pendant longtemps encore (Tixonravov est du milieu du XVIIIe siècle), mais elle a subi dans certains manuscrits des modifications dont témoigne le texte de Pypin, lequel abonde en interpolations russes, dont l'effet est de rapprocher le *Digénis* grec des bylines, des chants populaires et de la littérature proprement russe.

lensis a été copié sur un archétype dont les premières pages manquaient déjà. Il commence abruptement, au moment où les frères de la jeune fille, partis, aussitôt après l'enlèvement, à la recherche de celle-ci, se trouvent devant la tente de l'Emir, en train d'armer pour le combat leur cadet que le sort a désigné pour affronter en combat singulier le ravisseur arabe. Voici la traduction littérale des premiers vers de l'*Escorialensis*:

“Que le fracas des armes, les coups ni les menaces ne fassent trembler ton coeur. Ne crains pas la mort, mais seulement la malédiction de ta mère.

Garde-toi de la malédiction de ta mère, non des blessures et des souffrances; même s'il devait te tailler en pièces, évite avant tout la honte. De grand coeur va trouver l'audacieux Emir. Veille sur tes deux bras, et que Dieu nous aide. . .’

L'Emir était à cheval. Le héros s'avança vers lui. Il montait un cheval tacheté, au front étoilé de blanc. Au front, il avait une étoile d'or . . .”

On voit tout ce qui manque: présentation des personnages, invasion de la Romanie, enlèvement de la jouvencelle en l'absence de ses frères, retour de ceux-ci, objurgations de la mère, qui les menace de sa malédiction s'ils ne la ramènent au foyer, départ des jeunes gens pour la frontière, leur chevauchée jusqu'au camp de l'Emir, leurs sommations à celui-ci, la proposition et l'acceptation du combat singulier . . . Trébizonde, acéphale aussi, ne permet pas de combler la lacune. Mais ce manuscrit, à en juger par son jumeau d'Andros, avait remplacé le début authentique de l'histoire par des inventions de basse époque et tout un remplissage d'une insigne maladresse. Chez eux comme dans le manuscrit d'Oxford, les paroles que nous venons de citer, par une lourde méprise, sont attribuées à la mère des jeunes gens, de sorte que toute la chevauchée des frères vengeurs est purement et simplement supprimée.

Même Grotta-Ferrata, seul manuscrit grec complet au début, est inférieur à P.

Grotta-Ferrata, seul dans la tradition grecque, possède un début à peu près plausible. Mais cette recension, pour intéressante qu'elle est, est la plus savante, la plus raisonnable, la plus expurgée de tout merveilleux, de tout fantastique, et, il faut bien le dire, de presque tout ce qui est épique ou même

simplement poétique. L'auteur de Grotta-Ferrata, qui craint les exagérations tout autant que les fables, ne peut admettre que les frères de la jeune fille enlevée se soient présentés seuls en belligérants aux confins de la Païénie. Dans Grotta-Ferrata, correctement, les frères ont mis pied à terre dès leur arrivée aux avant-postes, et ont sollicité, suivant toutes les règles et toutes les formes, un sauf-conduit de l'Emir, auquel ils se présentent, en somme, complètement désarmés et impuissants, et à la merci de son sens de l'honneur et de sa magnanimité. Cette manière de présenter les choses convient certes au style du roman chevaleresque. L'Emir se comporte de la manière la plus noble, si même il essaie un moment de donner le change à ses futurs beaux-frères. Mais primitivement l'histoire n'a pas dû être présentée ainsi. Il y avait un véritable poncif épique pour le récit des incursions chrétiennes en terre sarrasine. On rencontrait d'abord à la frontière un Sarrasin de taille monstrueuse que l'on assommait après provocation; puis, en bataille rangée, on massacrait les trois parties de l'host ennemi, le centre et les ailes, en amont et en aval de l'Euphrate; puis on envoyait en ambassade à l'Emir un ou plusieurs survivants du carnage, et ainsi de suite. Il va de soi que le contact des preux byzantins avec le chef arabe ou le Commandeur des Croyants était un peu rude: le palais était secoué ou la tente enlevée d'un coup de lance. Mais souvent tout finissait par un mariage.

Chant d'Armouris, chant du fils d'Andronic, et Digénis russe.

Les traits que nous venons de grouper, s'ils manquent dans le roman grec, se trouvent tous dans des chansons épiques dont la plus ancienne, le chant d'Armouris, que nous avons traduit et commenté, nous a toujours paru une des principales sources de notre Digénis. En voici un résumé.

Ici, le jeune vengeur de son père, Armouropoulos, chevauche vers l'Euphrate, cherche un gué, ne le trouve pas, rencontre le Sarrasin de garde qui le défie de passer le fleuve, et, furieux, le jeune homme s'élance sur sa bête dans le fleuve débordé. Il manque de se noyer, une voix angélique l'invite à ficher sa lance dans la racine d'un palmier, ce qui l'aidera à passer. Il obéit à ce conseil d'en haut, passe le fleuve, et, d'un coup de poing, désarticule la mâchoire du Sarrasin de garde, qui alors consent à lui dire où est l'armée arabe, com-

posée, dit-il, de cent mille braves aux boucliers verts, parmi lesquels il y a des hommes qui ne craignent de combattre ni mille, ni dix mille adversaires. Le jeune homme aperçoit alors l'armée ennemie, qui est en effet innombrable; il l'attaque, taille en pièces les extrémités et le centre, les massacre en amont, les massacre en aval; il met pied à terre pour se rafraîchir; un Sarrasin lui vole son cheval et sa lance, Armouropoulos les poursuit jusqu'aux portes de Syrie, jusqu'au palais de l'Emir, où son propre père était prisonnier. L'Emir convoque ses troupes, mais personne ne vient, sauf un Sarrasin manchot qui raconte l'histoire de la déroute — avec répétition des vers-formules. Il résulte de ce récit que le manchot est précisément le Sarrasin qui avait dressé les embûches au jeune Armouropoulos. Celui-ci avait adressé à l'Emir un message, menaçant, si l'on ne remet pas son père en liberté, d'envahir la Syrie, de remplir ses étroits vallons de têtes d'infidèles et de faire couler à flots le sang dans le lit de ses ruisseaux à sec. L'Emir cède et offre sa fille en mariage au jeune Armouropoulos. Mariage avec réconciliation.

Le Sarrasin monstrueux, gardien de la frontière.

Tout ce scénario, on le reconnaîtra, ressemble beaucoup, dans l'ensemble et dans le détail, à la chevauchée des frères à la recherche de leur soeur au début de Pypin. Le russe est ici bien plus fidèle qu'aucune recension grecque du *Digénis* à la véritable tradition grecque, représentée par Armouris et d'autres chants populaires. Un mot d'abord sur le Sarrasin de garde à la frontière, un Sarrasin unique, sorte de sentinelle isolée, mais qu'à cause du danger de sa mission, on avait dû choisir parmi les hommes de taille gigantesque. Dans le russe, ce Sarrasin existe comme dans Armouris. Mais Armouris n'insiste pas sur sa taille monstrueuse, le russe non plus, dans ce passage de la version P, très abrégée, très altérée. Heureusement que ce Sarrasin reparaît ailleurs. P (p. 310 Pascal):

“Et à la frontière parla un Arabe, ayant sur les lèvres douze verrous, et il dit à forte voix au roi Amir: ‘Grand souverain, il est venu du pays grec en notre pays sarrasin trois jouvenceaux, et l'un d'eux a triomphé de ta vaillance. Si tous trois s'étaient réunis ensemble, notre pays aurait été par eux tout entier asservi; et maintenant tu veux aller en pays grec!’ ”

Avouons que ceci ressemble fort au rôle du gardien sarra-

sin de l'Euphrate d'Armouris et beaucoup d'autres cantilènes, qui fait à l'Emir des rapports "défaitistes" sur la puissance des envahisseurs grecs. Par une chance admirable, dans le cas présent, nous avons le contrôle très rare de Musin-Puškin; or, voici comment s'y lisait ce passage:

"Ameras⁹ s'arrêta sur la frontière du pays grec et dit: 'Ma grande baronie, fils de l'Arabie, avez-vous la prouesse de vous ranger en bataille contre le pays grec, contre cette force-là?' Et un Arabe, à forte voix, dit — sa bouche était d'un empan, au bout des lèvres pendaient moult anneaux, et au bout du nez treize verrous fermés."

Ce détail fantastique et grotesque rappelle les choses singulières que les vieilles chansons grecques rapportent du Sarrasin en sentinelle sur l'Euphrate. Ainsi, dans une chanson chypriote, on lit à propos du même Sarrasin:

"Dans ses narines, des cavales étaient à l'écurie, sous ses aisselles des perdrix caquetaient, sur son dos on labourait, et la semelle de son pied couvrait un champ de neuf arpents." (Legrand, 60-62; Kalonaros t. II, 244-246). Nous n'avons pas, dans les chansons grecques, conservé l'équivalent exact du détail beaucoup moins hyperbolique des anneaux et des serrures: mais ce sont des symboles qui ont dû se trouver dans quelque cantilène grecque. Le Sarrasin est préposé à la fermeture hermétique de la frontière, et d'autre part, pour ne pas informer l'ennemi, il a la bouche close. Je trouve du moins dans un *tragoudi* la confirmation de la conscience avec laquelle ledit gardien empêche jusqu'aux oiseaux de passer (Kalonaros, 246, vers 89):

"Voilà quarante ans que je surveillais l'Euphrate aux bords déserts. Pas un oiseau ne passait, et pas un homme."

Ce *tragoudi* peut d'ailleurs se rapprocher d'un passage du *Digénis* russe, texte de T: "Quelle audace as-tu, et quelle affaire as-tu dans cette maison? Un oiseau n'ose pas voler devant cet hôtel." Quoi qu'il en soit, nous avons relevé dans le *Digénis* russe une de ces peintures fantastiques que les Cantilènes affectionnent, mais que le roman assagit quand il ne les supprime pas tout à fait.

⁹ On notera que c'est seulement dans P que la transcription grecque d'Emir, Améras, est pris pour le nom propre d'un roi.

Autres analogies entre le Digénis russe et le Chant d'Armouris.

D'ailleurs, une foule d'autres détails de P évoquent le texte d'Armouris. Dans P, les frères massacrent les trente mille hommes de la grande garde sarrasine: "Mes frères chéris, allons-nous ensemble marcher contre la garde?" Et le frère puîné dit: "Mes frères chéris, c'est la grande garde du roi Amir. Divisons-nous en trois." Le frère aîné alla à main droite, le puîné contre le gros, et le cadet à main gauche. Et ils bondirent sur les gardes d'Amir et commencèrent à les battre, comme de bons faucheurs à faucher l'herbe. Les uns, ils les occirent; les autres, ils les lièrent, les amenant sur une montagne haute, et, les chassant comme un bon pasteur de brebis, ils les poussèrent sur la montagne et les abattirent, sauf qu'à trois ils donnèrent la vie pour les conduire au roi Amir. Et ils commencèrent à les interroger..." Or, on lit dans Armouris, v. 85: "Il engagea l'action bellement, comme un brave. Il massacrait leurs ailes, il entamait leur centre. Par Messire Soleil le doux, sa douce mère, tout le jour en amont il les taillait en pièces, toute la nuit il les massacrait en aval." Avant l'attaque, dans Armouris l'enfant, v. 55, "éperonne sa bête, et sus aux Sarrasins! Brigand de Sarrasin, dis-moi où est l'armée." C'est la question que posent les trois frères aux trois Sarrasins qu'ils épargnent pour en tirer des renseignements. Leur discours ressemble d'assez près ce que l'unique Sarrasin épargné dit dans Armouris: "Nous nous sommes comptés hier: on était cent mille, tous des braves choisis, tous des boucliers verts, et tous de ces vaillants ne craignant pas le nombre—ni mille, ni dix mille, ni s'ils sont plus encore." Ecoutez maintenant le russe: "Dites-nous, Sarrasins, est-ce dans la ville que votre roi Amir se tient, ou hors la ville? Les Sarrasins lui répondirent: "Seigneurs, les trois frères, Amir se tient hors la ville, à sept étapes de la ville. Et sous cette ville, il a moult tentes dressées, et dans une de ces tentes trouvent place bien des chevaliers forts et braves: un seul en attaquerait cent." Et plus loin, par une répétition évidente: "Et moult autres tentes sont dressées, où demeurent moult chevaliers, et ils prennent du roi chaque année des mille et des deux mille de revenu. Ils sont forts et braves. Un seul contre cent hommes chevaucherait." Voici un des rares passages où le russe s'est mépris sur le sens du grec. Le texte

original voulait dire qu'un seul de ces chevaliers pouvait *prendre* (c'est-à-dire contenir et vaincre) mille ou deux mille adversaires, et non pas mille ou deux mille sous d'or de revenu. Le verbe russe "prendre", comme l'anglais *to take*, peut avoir les deux sens. Le traducteur de P a dédoublé son original et a commis dans un passage un contre-sens, tout en gardant, dans l'autre, le vrai sens. Il a bien rendu quand il s'agissait de cent adversaires, mais les chiffres de mille et de deux mille lui ont paru hyperboliques s'ils s'appliquaient à des ennemis, très acceptables s'il s'agissait d'une solde . . . Autre trait épique: s'il ne se retrouve pas dans *Armouris*, il est dans une foule de chansons populaires d'ancienne époque. Les Sarrasins épargnés finissent par décrire le quartier de l'Emir. "Du roi Amir la tente est écarlate et verte dans le bas, et aussi tout ornée d'or et d'argent." Or, voyez la cantilène des fils d'Andronic: "Toutes les tentes sont rouges et celle de ton père est noire." Ici encore, comme dirait Krumbacher, l'or de la poésie populaire luit à travers cette recension russe, si abîmée et si abrégée qu'elle soit, mais qui, quel que soit son état actuel, vaut mieux que les recensions grecques. Un dernier rapprochement, pour finir. La brusquerie des trois frères (p. 306): "Dans ce même temps arrivèrent les frères à la tente d'Amir, et de héler le roi Amir: "Roi, viens hors de la tente. Tu ne sais donc pas poser des gardes sur la route? Nous voilà arrivés à la tente sans aucune défense." Et quand ils s'aperçoivent qu'ils sont trompés par l'Emir, qui leur a menti en leur disant que la jeune fille avait été tuée: "Ils bondirent sur la tente du roi Amir, et leur tente, ils la soulevèrent sur la pointe de leurs lances." Cette brusquerie, je le répète, est tout à fait dans la manière des cantilènes. Les *tragoudia* ne manquent jamais de caractériser de la même manière la bousculade de la tente de l'Emir ou, en général, du palais ou de la prison où un jeune héros vient réclamer un captif. Chant du fils d'Armouris (vv. 44-45): "Et il fit trois fois le tour de la tente et ne trouva pas d'entrée, et, d'une formidable ruade, il se trouva tout à coup en plein dans la tente" ou, suivant la traduction Legrand: "De dehors il donne un grand coup de pied et pénètre dedans." Ce thème de l'entrée brutale, caractéristique des cantilènes, est absent de l'épopée courtoise. Lorsqu'on songe que tous ces traits d'archaïsme ont été glanés dans le texte de P, incontestablement la plus médiocre et la plus déformée des versions russes, on ne peut qu'ad-

mirer la haute valeur de l'archétype grec auquel remontent les versions russes.¹⁰

Avant de me servir de cet archétype pour la reconstruction du roman dans sa forme sinon primitive, tout au moins ancienne — la plus ancienne, que nous puissions atteindre — il faut que je dise un mot du rapport de P et de T, en comparant ces deux versions par où elles sont comparables, c'est-à-dire, pour les *Enfances de Digénis*, jusqu'à son premier "portrait équestre," et pour les deux pages sur l'enlèvement de la fille du stratège qui sont communes aux deux recensions. Je ferai intervenir dans la comparaison les diverses recensions grecques, et l'on verra que souvent le slave se comporte non comme une adaptation plus ou moins aberrante, mais comme un témoin de premier ordre ayant la valeur du meilleur manuscrit.

Comparaison de P avec T et les recensions grecques dans une scène "vestimentaire".

Examinons d'abord un passage caractéristique du roman dans T, dans P et dans les diverses recensions grecques. Il s'agit du triomphe de l'enfant Digénis qui vient de tuer ses premiers fauves et de trancher les trois têtes du serpent de la source. On entoure "l'enfant du prodige", son père l'embrasse et le lave; on lui fait revêtir des vêtements somptueux et monter un cheval magnifique. Ces scènes d'habillage sont chères aux Byzantins; on sait la place immense qu'elles prennent dans le *Livre des Cérémonies* du Porphyrogénète. Les Russes de Kiev, très byzantins en cela, appréciaient particulièrement ces détails vestimentaires.

Nos textes grecs et russes, se complétant mutuellement, contiennent un inventaire de *neuf* effets d'habillement. On va voir immédiatement l'importance du russe pour la reconstitution de cet inventaire. Voici, en traduction, le début du texte de T, d'après M. Pascal:¹¹ "Ils lui changèrent ses vête-

¹⁰ Cf. encore le russe dans le récit de l'enlèvement devant le palais du stratège: "Devgenij heurta la porte de sa lance, et la porte s'effondra. Il entra dans la cour et se mit à voix forte à héler par appels répétés: "Stratège, dehors!" Et un peu plus loin, toujours p. 326: "Il entra dans la cour de Stratège et frappa le vestibule de sa lance et le vestibule s'effondra."

¹¹ P. Pascal, "Le 'Digénis' slave ou la 'Geste de Devgenij'," *Byzantion* X (1935), 301-334. V. p. 317. Cf. Speranskij, loc. cit., p. 137. Je copie tout ce texte:

ments: (1) ceux de dessous étaient xladari (ici, M. Pascal note: xladari est un hapax auquel il est bien difficile d'assigner un sens); (2) et ceux de dessus étaient noirs, tissus d'or massif; (3) et les predrukavie (autre hapax), semés (ou incrustés) de perles précieuses." Arrêtons-nous ici, et rapprochons T d'abord de Grotta-Ferrata, puis d'Andros-Trébizonde.

Grotta-Ferrata IV, v. 219:

Ἀλλάξε δὲ καὶ τὸ παιδὶν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐσθῆτα,
βάλλει πενὰ μαχλάμια διὰ τὸ καταψυχῆσαι,
τὸ μὲν ἐπάνω κόκκινον μὲ τὰς χρυσᾶς τὰς ῥίζας,
αἱ δὲ ῥίζαι του χυμευταὶ μετὰ μαργαριτάρων.

Andros-Trébizonde, 1533 sqq.:

Ἀλλάξε δὲ καὶ τὸ παιδί τὴν ἀκριβὴ στολὴν του
βάζει χλαμύδιν ἐλαφρόν διὰ τὸ καταψυχίτζιν (=καταψυχίζειν).
καὶ ἐπάνω εἰς τοῦτο κόκκινον μετὰ χρυσῶν λουρίων
(ou encore: μὲ τὰ χρυσᾶ τζαπράτζια)
εἶχε τὲς ῥίζες ἀκριβὲς μὲ τὸ μαργαριτάρι.

Que voyons-nous 1) D'abord, que le mot makhlamion désigne bien, comme le russe le dit expressément, un vêtement de dessous: i rzyz s' nego sovlekoša (léger contre-sens du russe, qui parle d' "enlever", alors qu'il s'agit de "revêtir": faute pardonnable, à cause du double sens d'allasô, "changer" puis "mettre", "revêtir"), ispodni ž byša xladari. Ensuite, que l'énigmatique xladari, comme l'a suggéré, un peu avant la guerre, A. Stender-Petersen, n'est autre que xlada radi "pour la fraîcheur", équivalent exact de dia to katapsykhizein.¹² 2) Le vêtement de dessus est noir dans le russe, mais on sait, que, dans les textes russes, noir et rouge se confondent constamment (černyj, červonyj, červlenyj). D'ailleurs, voici le texte: a verxni bjaxu černy suxim' zlatom' tkany: "et les vêtements de dessus étaient noirs et tissés d'or pur." 3) Ici, par une sorte de miracle philologique, et par antiphrase de la formule *obscurum per obscurius*, un mot grec de sens inconnu, riza va

1 Начаша юношу прилежно целовати: 1) и ризы с' него совлекоша исподні жъ быша хладари; 2) а верхни бяху черны сухимъ златомъ ткани; 3) а предрукавие драгимъ жемчюгомъ сажены; 7) а наколенники его бяху драгая паволока; 8) а сапоги его вси златы сажены драгимъ жемчюгомъ і каменіємъ алигпаретомъ; 9) острожи его виты златомъ со измарагдомъ каменіємъ.

¹² "Der slavische Digenis," *Slavische Rundschau*, X (1938).

être précisé par un hapax russe légèrement plus clair: predrukavie. Que predrukavie = rizas, cela résulte de dragim' žemčugom' saženy "incrustés de pierres précieuses", ce qui équivaut à peu près exactement au texte d'Andros. Dans ces conditions, nous pouvons admettre que riza serait traduit exactement par predrukavie, littéralement "avant-main" ou "avant-bras." M. Pascal a voulu rendre par "gants", mais dans les textes grecs, ici comme ailleurs, les rizai tiennent au vêtement et n'en sont pas détachées. Comparez d'ailleurs Grotta-Ferrata VI, 556,¹³ où il s'agit des manches ou épaulières d'une cuirasse. On me dit, que riza, par une figure toute naturelle, signifierait dans certains dialectes grecs "manche", mais *le* manche d'un outil ou d'une arme, plutôt que la manche d'un habit: car, dans le sens de "la manche", on lui a substitué maniki. Mais il est certain que *la* manche est le sens byzantin, et qu'il ne s'agit pas ici de galons ou de brandebourgs. Le traducteur russe comprend admirablement son texte byzantin, surtout dans de tels passages vestimentaires.¹⁴

Mais continuons notre fructueuse comparaison. Je saute 4, 5 et 6, qui sont dans le grec, mais non dans le russe: il y est question d'une collerette pleine de musc et d'ambre, de grosses perles en guise de boutons, de boutonnières en filigrane d'or pur. (Je soupçonne que le russe a raison d'ignorer les boutons et les boutonnières, vu leur invention relativement tardive, mais je passe sur cette importante question technologique). En revanche, le russe permet de rétablir le texte grec primitif de 7, 8 et 9.¹⁵

¹³ Τὸ λουρίκιν ἀπήστραπτε χρυσέας ῥίζας ἔχον.

¹⁴ Nous n'hésitons pas à affirmer qu'en établissant pour riza ce sens: "manche d'une tunique" puis "tunique à manches" peut-être, nous avons du même coup trouvé l'étymologie d'un des mots slaves les plus curieux, riza, "chasuble, ornement d'icône", qui vient certainement de notre mot grec. Il est curieux que le traducteur du *Digénis* se sert du russe riza pour traduire "vêtement" et de predrukavie pour traduire "manche".

¹⁵ Grotta-Ferrata IV, 225 sqq.:

(7) τουβία ἐφόρει ἐξάκουστα, γούφους ὠραισμένους.

(9) τὰ πτερνιστήρια πλεκτὰ μετὰ λίθων τιμίων,

(8) ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων τῶν χρυσοῦν εἶχε λυχνίτας λίθους.

Andros, 1540 sqq.:

τὰ ὑποδήματα αὐτοῦ χρυσοῦ ὠραισμένα,

τὰ δέ γε πτερνιστήρια μετὰ λιθομαργάρων

ἀντὶ δὲ ἔργου τοῦ χρυσοῦ εἶχε μαγνήτας λίθους.

7) Digénis porte des genouillères ou jambières de brocart :

а наколенники бяхоу драгая паволока.

τουβία ἐφόρει ἐξάκουστα, γρύψους ὠραισμένα

c'est-à-dire "il portait de magnifiques toubia enjolivés de griffons." La traduction nakolenniki pour toubia, du latin *tibia*, est excellente. Sur le sens du mot grec, voyez Kougéas, *Laographia*, t. IV, p. 252. Le mot signifiait non pas "pantalon" mais "guêtres" plutôt, *periskelis*. Aréthas note que Dion Chrysostome (36, 7), emploie anaxyrides non pas comme d'ordinaire au sens de "pantalon" mais au sens de "guêtres":

νῦν μέντοι ἀνοξυρίδας τὰ ἐν τῇ συνηθείᾳ φησὶ τουβία

(p. 118, éd. A. Sonny).

Mais, dira-t-on, quel rapport y a-t-il entre pavoloka, "brocart", et grypsos "griffons"? Or, grâce à V. Ržiga (*Byzantinoslavica*, IV, 1932-33, p. 55), nous savons que pavoloka est précisément une étoffe de brocart ornée de griffons. Mais reprenons nos textes grecs.

8) Andros-Trébizonde, v. 1540, n'ont pas toubia. Ils ont

τὰ ὑποδήματα αὐτοῦ χρυσοῦ ὠραισμένα.

khrysou au lieu de grypsous est-il inexact? Pas tout à fait. A et T ont confondu ici les guêtres et les bottines, et les bottines effectivement étaient décorées d'or. C'est ce que dit le russe: "ses chaussures étaient tout en or." Une description complète devait énumérer, après les toubia, les hypodēmata, après les guêtres, les bottes. Et c'est ici que nous servira l'Escorialensis, dans un tout autre passage, celui qui décrit l'armure de Maximô:

τουβία ὀξυκάστορα¹⁶ μετὰ μαργαριτάρων

καὶ τὰ ποδιματίτζια τῆς χρυσοῦ διακεντισμένα.¹⁷

Mais, dans le russe, les bottes ne sont pas seulement en or, elles sont encore incrustées de pierres précieuses et de pierres, plus un mot mystérieux, au cas instrumental: alogparetom', que nous expliquerons, et dans le russe la description se termine par les éperons tressés, de pierres d'émeraude (9).

Recherchons l'équivalent grec de ce 9. Nous le trouvons

¹⁶ "En peau de castor couleur rouge vif".

¹⁷ "Brodés d'or".

(déplacé) dans A: meta lythomargarôn, ou dans C ou Grotta-Ferrata, plekta meta lithôn timiôn.

Le russe a dû lire meta lithôn smaragdôn, leçon voisine de celle de A; mais s'il distingue les bottes des guêtres, il s'est embrouillé dans la description des bottes et des éperons, ce qui n'est pas étonnant, les éperons comme les bottes étant incrustés de pierreries. Il y a là des répétitions textuelles, qui ont fait disparaître, par "haplographie", mais non sans trace, le No 8 (les bottes) dans nos recensions grecques. L'énigmatique aligparetom' ou alignaretom' du russe est sans doute, non le produit d'une contamination (lithôn margarôn?), mais plutôt la transcription approximative d'un nom de pierre précieuse (kamenem' indique qu'il s'agit bien d'une pierre). J'ai pensé aux fameuses *pierres-lampes* (pierres lumineuses, rubis, escarboucles) dont il est si souvent question dans les textes — occidentaux et orientaux — du Moyen Age. Voyez Grotta-Ferrata (IV, 228):

Ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων τῶν χρυσῶν εἶχε λυχνίτας λίθους.

Mais dans le passage correspondant d'Andros, on lit:

ἀντὶ δὲ ἔργου τοῦ χρυσοῦ εἶχε¹⁸ μαγνήτας λίθους,

ce qui est une faute pure et simple, les "aimants" n'étant pas ici à leur place, tandis que les lykhnitai se trouvent encore plus d'une fois dans l'épopée, notamment Andros 2267, et Escorial 1078. (Voyez Kalonaros note 1079 sur Escorial). Je crois donc avoir, par la collation de six vers grecs avec leur équivalent dans T (ixonravov), rétabli à peu près exactement le texte de l'archétype, expliqué plusieurs mots énigmatiques du grec et du slave, et montré qu'il est impossible de discriminer ici, pour l'établissement du texte, entre original et versions. Mais l'intervention de P dans un instant sera peut-être encore plus instructive. Voici donc le passage, qui décevra le lecteur, tant il est contracté. Le costume de Digénis dans T comportait six articles, et huit dans le grec, trois de plus, un de moins. Voici le texte de P: "Le père se mit à le laver lui-même de ses mains, et on mit sur lui de riches habits avec de l'or précieux d'Arabie et des prerukavia s magnitom' (Pascal note: traduction dou-

¹⁸ Il faut corriger, je pense: ἐπὶ τζαγγίων τῶν χρυσῶν. ("sur les bottes dorées").

teuse: en russe *magniton*). L'abréviateur de P s'est fatigué ici de cet inventaire de costumier. Il s'est borné aux choses les plus frappantes, du moins à celles qui le frappaient le plus. Son texte grec peut encore se déterminer assez précisément. Il était de ceux qui, au v. 1535, avaient le mot *tzaprazia* ("d'Arabie" du russe en est une corruption). Mais ce qui est surtout frappant, c'est qu'il a accroché au passage le dernier mot de la description dans A, *magnitas*, faute évidente pour *lykhnitas*. P avec *magnit*, *magnitas*, T avec *alignarem* qui vient de *lykhnitas*, remontent très certainement, la preuve est faite, croyons-nous, à deux manuscrits grecs différents, et par conséquent à deux traductions slaves divergentes du poème. L'accord des témoins russes sur des points essentiels n'en a que plus de prix lorsque l'un et l'autre, et Musin-Puškin par surcroît, s'opposent à la tradition grecque. Enfin, nous croyons avoir prouvé la valeur éminente de T.¹⁹

Autres supériorités des versions russes.

Quels sont à présent, en faisant abstraction de tous les détails, les traits caractéristiques des versions russes? En quoi s'opposent-elles au roman que nous content les deux manuscrits d'Andros, le manuscrit de Trébizonde, ceux de Grotta-Ferrata, de l'Escorial et d'Oxford? D'abord, la version russe, dans sa forme la plus complète, se termine un peu comme les contes de fées, qui ne parlent pas de la mort du héros, ou du

¹⁹ Je ne veux pas abandonner le mot *magnit* sans observer que P a pour ce mot mystérieux, que M. Pascal traduit "ambre", une singulière prédilection. Au début, l'Emir, vaincu en combat singulier, envoie les frères vers la tente où se trouve leur soeur. "Et ils la trouvèrent assise sur un siège d'or, et son visage couvert de *magnit*. "Ici, le traducteur russe a été trompé par un mot grec qu'il ne connaissait pas, et qui d'ailleurs est assez rare. Nous l'avons à un autre endroit, 2987 A, où la femme d'Akritis, dans un moment d'effroi, se couvre le visage de son *magnadi*:

καὶ μὲ τὸ μαγνάδι τῆς τὴν σκέψην τῆς σκεπάζει.

(Trébizonde et Grotta-Ferrata expliquent:

καὶ τῇ ὁδῶνι τὰς αὐτῆς καλυψαμένη ὄψεις.

Voyez note de Kalonaros sur ce passage, et le mot *magnia* dans l'Eroto-critos). Le sens paraît "mouchoir, fichu". Il n'y a aucun doute que P a rencontré ce mot dans un passage où aucune rédaction grecque conservée ne le possède, et qu'il l'a confondu avec *magnêtês* "aimant".

moins qui ne *content* pas la mort du héros. Mais je suis sûr que leur archétype la connaissait, car voici la fin de T.: "Or j'ai encore douze ans de vie, et maintenant je veux me reposer." Cette différence, on le voit, n'est qu'apparente. Les Russes ont dû connaître, sinon traduire, un texte plus complet que T—P. Secundo, nous l'avons dit longuement, toute l'introduction à la première partie, l'enlèvement et la chevauchée des beaux-frères, diffère par son ton épique, évoquant les meilleures ballades grecques, du début, trop "historisant" peut-être, de C, et de la plate rhapsodie de A-T.

La composition de l'archétype du russe. Place de l'épisode du serpent à trois têtes.

Mais les vraies divergences, radicales celles-là, concernent les luttes de Digénis contre Philopappos et Maxima (c'est-à-dire Maximô ou Maximienne), luttes que nous trouvons dans P, seul témoin, sous une forme très abrégée, et qui sont placées ici avant l'enlèvement de la fille du stratège et le mariage de Digénis, et non pas, comme dans toutes les recensions grecques, après. J'ajoute que la même observation vaut pour le bref épisode du dragon à trois têtes.

Commençons par celui-ci. C'est à la fin de la chasse. On se rappelle, tout à l'heure, le lavement des pieds et des mains de Digénis et son "habillage" par son père. Dans aucune recension grecque, cet habillage n'est troublé par aucune aventure, et la source fraîche où l'on se rend à cet effet ne sert qu'à rafraîchir le jeune héros, qu'à être le témoin ou le théâtre de son triomphe. Le russe est absolument seul, dans toute la tradition manuscrite, à placer ici l'épisode du serpent à plusieurs têtes. Dans Grotta-Ferrata, le serpent apparaît au VI^e Chant, dans Trébizonde et Andros, au VII^e, dans l'Escorialensis, au v. 1090, et ce serpent, pendant le sommeil d'Akritis, se change en un beau jeune homme qui essaye de séduire la femme de celui-ci: motif des Mille et une Nuits, disait déjà Léon Gautier, emprunté aux contes orientaux par la Chanson française de Garin de Montglane. Donnons tout de suite raison au russe dans cette affaire du serpent. C'est le russe qui certainement a gardé la disposition, ou la composition primitive. La longue description de la source glacée et mystérieuse ne se justifie que s'il doit s'y passer quelque chose. Le passage suivant de T paraît bien primitif, car il contient une transition toute natu-

relle à l'apparition du serpent. "Le père de Digénis lui dit: Je te laverai moi-même les pieds, car, dans cette source, l'eau brille comme un cierge. Et nul d'entre les braves n'osait venir à cette eau, car il y avait là moult merveilles: dans cette eau un serpent immense habitait." Dans l'original grec comme dans le russe, le bain et l'habillement devaient être au contraire dramatiquement interrompus. Mais un remanieur, d'ailleurs assez habile, préféra retarder l'épisode jusqu'après le mariage; l'intention et l'exécution trahissent la main de l'habile auteur de ce remaniement d'un effet romanesque assuré, qui a changé de place une partie des aventures du héros afin d'animer, pour ainsi dire, par des périls sans cesse renaissants, la vie au désert de Digénis et de sa belle. La forme primitive de la Digénide, qui mettait surtout en oeuvre les chansons populaires, n'avait pas encore l'allure de romans grecs classiques, où l'on voit un couple d'amants ou de jeunes mariés séparés par toute une série d'ennemis ou d'aventures effrayantes.

En résumé, nous considérons que le russe — et là-dessus, chose capitale, P et T sont absolument d'accord — est original en plaçant l'épisode de l'hydre — car il s'agit bien de l'hydre herculéenne — avant la première chasse des Enfances et avant le mariage et le commencement de la vie au désert du jeune couple.

Philopappos et Maximô.

Un remaniement beaucoup plus important a déplacé de la même manière un énorme bloc du texte: dans toutes les recensions grecques Philopappos est un chef d'Apélates ou de brigands de la frontière, qui a autour de lui d'autres brigands, Johannakis, Kinnamos, Liandros, Mélémentzis. Il a pour alliée ou pour suzeraine une Amazone nommée Maximô. Les Apélates attaquent Digénis, installé avec son épouse sous la tente, dans une prairie de l'Euphrate. D'interminables combats s'engagent, les brigands sont battus mais non tués, sauf Liandros, dont on laisse croire qu'il périt dans le fleuve Euphrate; ils disparaissent sans autre explication.²⁰ Maximô vaincue, désarmée, déshono-

²⁰ Le fait que rien n'est dit dans les textes grecs au sujet du sort final de Philopappos, de Maximô, de Kinnamos, de Johannakis, est une preuve supplémentaire du remaniement, car, dans le russe, si abrégée que soit cette partie, nous apprenons, p. 330, que Digénis pro-

rée par Digénis, perd sa force avec sa pudeur, et est chassée honteusement par les siens. Sans exception, je le répète, tous les textes grecs, sans craindre la conséquence de ce transfert, qui est l'adultère du héros, mettent ces aventures après le mariage de Digénis, et littérairement, l'idée est probablement très heureuse. Mais elle n'est pas primitive, et je vais le démontrer. Philopappos, à la différence de Maximô, qui paraît d'origine savante, épigraphique même, Philopappos est un très ancien héros de la Commagène; il porte le nom d'un roi ou même de plusieurs rois de la dynastie des Antiochus. Plusieurs cantilènes très anciennes lui sont consacrées. Son rôle y est celui d'un esclave ou serviteur de Digénis, d'un auxiliaire très précieux, parce que, grâce aux secrets plus ou moins magiques qu'il possède, ses conseils sont excellents et décisifs dans toutes les aventures périlleuses. Digénis s'en sert d'ailleurs à toutes fins, d'abord comme ambassadeur ou courtier, pour aller négocier le mariage qu'il ambitionne. Mais Philopappos est éconduit par les beaux-parents avec mépris, et c'est alors que Digénis lui-même se met en campagne. Philopappos apparaît alors dans son rôle d'instructeur ou de conseiller. Il enseigne au jeune homme la route à suivre, et lui recommande de se faire un luth magique avec l'écorce d'un certain arbre. C'est grâce à ce luth magique que le jeune homme réussira dans sa difficile entreprise. Sans Philopappos donc, point d'enlèvement et point de mariage. Je cite les vers d'une des plus intéressantes cantilènes, 115 sqq. : "Philopappos avait oublié de lui faire ses recommandations (à Digénis). Il lui donna un coup de sifflet et il revint aussitôt en arrière. Et Philopappos répond à Digénis et lui dit :

'Attends à présent, Digénis, que je te conseille
Si tu écoutes mes instructions, tu enlèveras la promise.
Prends donc ce chemin et prends donc ce sentier.

cède à une sorte d'amnistie après son mariage: "enfin Devgenij retourna chez lui après avoir accompagné Stratège, et donna aux captifs la liberté. A Philopappos l'oncle, il imposa une marque sur le visage et le renvoya chez lui. A Maximô il donna la liberté par ses députés". Une seconde amnistie a lieu, p 334, après la victoire finale et le règne de Digénis. "Puis il entra dans la ville et commença à régner. Et il manda ses prisonniers et leur donna la liberté. Quant à Kanam et Joachim, il leur imposa une marque sur le visage et les renvoya dans leur famille. Et il réunit sa famille à lui et fit grande fête et vécut de longs jours."

Le sentier te conduira dans une prairie à l'herbe touffue.
 Cherche un olivier touffu à l'ombre duquel tu mettras pied à terre.
 Coupe un morceau de l'écorce de cet olivier et fais-en un luth.
 Tue des couleuvres et des vipères, et de leur peau fais des cordes,
 Et de leurs dents fais des clés . . .
 Et ton luth chantera toutes les douceurs du monde.'''

Et en effet, Digénis, ayant suivi à la lettre toutes ses instructions, charme les oiseaux du ciel, et les bêtes dans leurs tanières; il arrive à la noce, car on se préparait à marier sa belle à un certain Yannakos; grâce au luth magique il enjôle la promise, il l'enjôle et l'enlève.²¹ Nous retrouverons ce beau poème, mais on voit pourquoi je l'ai cité. Le Philopappos des cantilènes est l'indispensable instrument de l'enlèvement de la fille du stratège. Pour cette raison seule, et sans connaître le russe, nous devrions postuler l'existence d'une légende de Digénis, où la victoire sur Philopappos et la réduction de celui-ci en esclavage précéderait l'enlèvement de la fille du stratège. De cet état de la légende et du poème, nous avons des traces dans nos recensions grecques elles-mêmes. Ainsi, par exemple, l'archaïque Escorialensis, de même qu'Andros-Trébizonde et Oxford, en somme toute la tradition sauf Grotta-Ferrata, sait qu'après ses premiers exploits enfantins déjà, Digénis se risque dans le désert, désireux de faire son apprentissage chez les fameux Apélates. Il va même trouver Philopappos, dont il bat les hommes, leur enlevant leur massue, qu'il rapporte à leur maître. Le vieux se fâche, Digénis le menace et le frappe, mais chose stupéfiante, l'affaire en reste là. La suite de l'histoire, qui devait être une bataille, peut-être même une longue bataille, a été coupée par un remanieur, et nous n'entendons plus parler de Philopappos et de sa bande jusqu'au long épisode du VI^e ou du VII^e chant. Or ici, lorsque Philopappos découvre Digénis et commence à causer avec lui, il affirme qu'il ne l'a jamais vu auparavant, et Digénis lui-même ne reconnaît pas

²¹ Ce luth est dans l'Escorial 828: "Il fendit des peaux de serpents et il en fit des cordes, et avec leurs dents il fit de merveilleuses clés (striphitaria)." A ce sujet, grande discussion, Trébizonde ayant *oïôn* pour *ophiôn*, ce qui est une confusion savante, imitation de l'hymne homérique à Hermès:

ὄτων κλώσας ἔντερα ἐποίησε τὰς κόρδας.

son ancien maître et adversaire. Conclusion: Le premier épisode, mutilé, et le second épisode de *Digénis* ne peuvent avoir été inventés par le même auteur. Et le *Digénis* original ne devait avoir qu'un de ces épisodes — avant ou après le mariage. Or nous venons de voir, grâce aux cantilènes, que c'est la première place qui est la bonne. Presque miraculeusement, le russe nous présente l'état de choses que nous avons postulé, car, texte de P, quand *Digénis* a battu et fait prisonnier *Philopappos* et *Maximô* (ici sa fille), il croit pouvoir regagner sa liberté en donnant à son vainqueur, pour ainsi dire, l'adresse de la fille du stratège. Et c'est là-dessus que le héros se met en campagne. Les byzantinistes ont dû attendre qu'on leur expliquât le texte russe pour s'expliquer la captivité de *Philopappos* dans les cantilènes. Ces détails suffiront dans doute pour emporter définitivement la conviction du lecteur.

L'épisode impérial.

Et certes, il importe assez peu que les épisodes du roman épique soient disposés dans tel ou tel ordre. Mais il importe beaucoup, au contraire, pour la connaissance du milieu où naquit l'épopée byzantine, de savoir si le dernier épisode du russe, c'est-à-dire l'épisode impérial, est original par rapport au même épisode dans les recensions grecques, ou si, comme voudraient continuer à le croire nos confrères grecs, la version slave est ici secondaire et tardive.²²

Il était clair depuis longtemps que l'épisode impérial avait été l'objet de remaniements successifs. A différentes époques, en effet, les rédacteurs de nos manuscrits avaient songé à mettre cet épisode au point de l'actualité. Au livre IV de *Grotta-Ferrata*, (v. 971), nous lisons: "Apprenant ces exploits, l'empereur qui alors tenait les rênes de l'Empire romain, l'heureux Basile, le grand triomphateur, celui qui a enterré avec lui toute la gloire de l'Empire, car il dirigeait précisément une expédition contre les Perses dans les lieux mêmes où vivait le jeune homme, et apprenant ce qui le concernait, il fut fort étonné" Suit un échange de lettres. L'empereur invite le héros à se présenter à lui. L'autre répond avec humilité et prie le souverain de se déranger lui-même et de venir avec une petite es-

²² L'épisode impérial, du moins le premier et le plus important, se lit dans *Andros-Trébizonde* à la fin du Ve chant, p. 129 de *Kalonnaros*, paragraphe 315

corte, car dit-il, "quelqu'un de tes hommes pourrait m'irriter par ses propos inconvenants et les conséquences en seraient funestes." L'empereur arrive, et tout se passe admirablement. Digénis donne à son souverain d'excellents conseils et recommande notamment une politique démocratique de justice sociale, de protection aux opprimés. Il n'accepte aucun présent de l'empereur, lui promettant au contraire des contributions imposées à l'ennemi commun. Dans Grotta-Ferrata toujours, l'empereur nomme Digénis patrice, lui confie le gouvernement de la frontière, lui restitue les biens confisqués de son grand-père, par chrysobulle, ainsi que des vêtements impériaux. L'épisode reparait avec des variantes sans grande importance dans A-T: mais l'empereur n'est plus Basile, c'est Romanos. De quels empereurs s'agit-il?

Nous avons démontré que Basile est Basile Ier, dont on a pu dire, à tort ou à raison, qu'il avait enseveli avec lui la gloire impériale. Et il est certain que Basile Ier, et non point Basile II, a longuement fait campagne dans les régions euphratésiennes où Digénis vécut. Quant à Romanos, c'est certainement le gendre du petit-fils de Basile Ier, Constantin Porphyrogénète: c'est le fameux Romain Lécapène, déposé en 944. Mais tout le monde n'avait pas admis nos conclusions. M. Kyriakidès, par exemple, persistait à croire que la mention la plus ancienne était celle de Romanos. C'est pourquoi le témoignage du russe, d'autant plus qu'il s'agit de la version de Tixonravov, a ici la plus grande valeur. Dans le russe, les rapports de Digénis et de l'empereur commencent à peu près comme dans le grec. Mais les choses se gâtent assez vite. Au lieu de suivre les conseils de Digénis et de ne se faire accompagner que d'une centaine d'hommes, l'empereur demeure six jours au bord de l'Euphrate (comme l'avait fait d'ailleurs l'empereur Basile). Finalement le conflit éclate, après un échange d'ambassades. Comme Basile à la tête de sa nombreuse armée s'apprête à franchir l'Euphrate, Digénis, s'appuyant sur sa lance, comme Armouris dans la byline déjà citée, saute à travers le fleuve, réclame le César Basile, et — ici reparaissent les clichés épiques que nous avons déjà vus plus d'une fois — "bondit, comme un bon moissonneur fauche l'herbe. Au premier bond il en vainquit mille; il revint sur ses pas et bondit et en vainquit mille." Bref, il fait prisonnier Basile lui-même, s'empare de sa ville, installe son propre père sur le trône de César, "fit grande fête et vécut de longs jours."

Même le Digénis loyaliste, on l'a vu, laisse entendre que le héros de la frontière ne doit rien à son souverain. Il est institué maître absolu de la frontière, Andros et Trébizonde disent même de toute la Romanie, comme s' il y avait eu partage entre l'Acrîte et l'empereur. Or il est impossible d'oublier qu'il fut question, en effet, vers 870, d'un partage de l'Empire entre le maître des provinces de l'Euphrate, le Paulicien Chrysochir, et l'empereur Basile Ier. Faut-il rappeler la généalogie de Digénis? D'après tous les textes grecs, son père l'Emir est fils en effet du Paulicien Chrysochir, et petit-fils de l'Emir Amr de Mélitène, ennemi acharné de l'empereur Basile et de son prédécesseur Michel III. Faut-il rappeler encore que Basile détruisit les forteresses des Pauliciens, ces hérétiques et ces révolutionnaires de langue grecque qui haïssaient les Romains bien plus que les Musulmans? Disons-nous que le Digénis primitif fut rédigé dans la région de l'Euphrate, pour des milieux grecs de langue et chrétiens de religion, qui n'avaient pas des sentiments très amicaux ni très respectueux envers l'empereur Basile, c'est-à-dire pour les Pauliciens? Nous n'irons pas jusque là, mais nous dirons que des chants épiques sur le héros Digénis, le héros des marches de l'Est (et incontestablement ce dernier chapitre de la version russe est une cantilène), sont nés dans un milieu paulicien ou ci-devant paulicien, où les convertis et les ralliés gardaient leurs rancunes. Mais cette forme du Digénis avait peu de chances de se transmettre par écrit. Les éditions grecques que nous en avons sont des éditions corrigées et expurgées. On a supprimé la scène scandaleuse où Digénis vainquait et humiliait l'empereur. On a donné au vassal le nom même du maître. Comment la version paulicienne et scandaleuse s'est-elle conservée? Peut-être grâce aux adhérents que la secte possédait en Bulgarie. L'idée est de M. Dvorník, et elle nous paraît fort séduisante. (Cf. H. Grégoire, "Note sur le Digénis slave", *Byzantion* X (1935), p. 337).

Avant de quitter le slave, je voudrais faire deux remarques encore.

Toutes les versions grecques que nous connaissons abondent en indications et même en digressions historiques et en précisions géographiques très précieuses et dont nous avons tiré parti. Il y a toute une géographie acritique. M. Honigmann a pu dresser des cartes de l'épopée byzantine qu'on trouvera dans mon livre grec. Un long passage énumère très exactement les conquêtes de Amr, de Chrysochir et de Karbéas dans l'Asie

Mineure occidentale (plus de quinze noms de lieux). Il y a douze vers sur la grande victoire de Mélégeb remportée en 863 par Michel III contre Amr et Karbéas. Mais le russe est très pauvre à cet égard. On y parle de l'Euphrate et de la Cappadoce, et c'est à peu près tout. On a supposé que tous ces détails avaient disparu par un remaniement en quelque sorte anti-historique, dû au manque d'intérêt des Russes pour l'histoire byzantine. Nous nous permettons de trouver cette hypothèse tout à fait invraisemblable, vu la fidélité presque servile de certaines versions, notamment de la version T. La vérité est différente.

Le *Digénis* primitif, qui était déjà en deux parties, et dont la composition générale ressemblait à celle du nôtre, le *Digénis* primitif était certainement historique, en ce sens qu'il faisait une place très large à des ballades ou cantilènes pleines de souffle, écho de grands événements de la frontière euphratésienne, passage de l'Euphrate par les armées byzantines, guerre paulicienne; mais, pas plus que dans les beaux *tragoudia* authentiques que nous possédons, on n'y prend jamais le ton du chroniqueur. L'histoire y reste épique, les nomenclatures géographiques en sont exclues.

Signalons une dernière ressemblance, et la plus frappante peut-être, entre le russe et les cantilènes. Le détail se trouve dans l'épisode de l'enlèvement.

L'enlèvement.

Ici encore il est clair que l'archétype grec du russe — surtout celui qu'on est forcé de postuler à l'origine de T — est infiniment plus complet et incontestablement plus "primitif" qu'aucun texte conservé. *Digénis*, au cours de ce qu'on est tenté d'appeler les *rites* de l'enlèvement, est préoccupé d'observer les lois d'une sorte de code chevaleresque, les règles de l'honneur viril, bien plus que celles de l'amour courtois. Les différentes visites de *Digénis* à sa belle montrent cette constante préoccupation. L'enlèvement est une opération guerrière plutôt qu'amoureuse. Un personnage important manque dans toutes les recensions grecques: c'est un jeune homme "de la cour du Stratège" qui fournit au vainqueur toutes les informations désirables sur le stratège et sa fille, les forces de l'adversaire, la force personnelle et virile de la jeune fille, véritable Amazone. Puis *Digénis* ayant reconnu les lieux et notamment l'hôtel du

Stratège, retourne à son camp avec le jouvenceau, donne des instructions précises à ses hommes, festoie en musique, puis, avec trois compagnons, dont le jouvenceau, il retourne devant l'hôtel. La nourrice de la jeune fille envoyée par sa maîtresse, le met en garde devant le péril de l'entreprise; à la fenêtre, la jouvencelle elle-même fait de même. Digénis, assez brutalement, la menace de mort, et lui donne le choix entre le sort d'une épouse volontaire et celui d'une esclave. La belle se hâte de se déclarer consentante. Non seulement elle cède, mais demande des habits d'homme pour se battre s'il le faut. Mais l'honneur interdit à Digénis d'enlever la jeune personne en l'absence de son père. Il fait un simulacre d'enlèvement et se retire, après lui avoir commandé d'attendre le retour de son père. Le jouvenceau est envoyé pour l'avertir de ce retour.

Dès que Digénis est prévenu de la présence de son futur beau-père, il revient, enforce la porte extérieure d'un coup de lance, pénètre dans la cour, et hèle le Stratège. Celui-ci se refuse à croire à tant d'audace et quitte son palais. Alors Digénis "opère" l'enlèvement mais il ne va pas loin. Parvenu sur une certaine hauteur il s'y arrête: car il constate, ô déshonneur, qu'il n'est pas poursuivi.

Laissant la belle à la garde de ses troupes, il retourne une fois encore à l'hôtel du Stratège pour lui faire honte de son inertie et le provoquer. Enfin, le commandant byzantin s'émeut. Il mobilise toutes ses troupes. La poursuite commence. Mais Digénis n'est pas pressé de fuir. Il dit à sa belle: "Assieds-toi et cherche-moi dans la tête (c'est-à-dire: "Epouille-moi") jusqu'à ce que ton père et tes frères arrivent avec leurs guerriers. Si je m'endors ne m'éveille pas avec effroi, mais réveille-moi doucement." La demoiselle s'assit et commença à lui chercher dans la tête, et Devgenij s'endormit, ayant la jeune fille comme garde.

Cependant Stratège réunit une multitude de ses guerriers. Il sortit de la ville avec son armée, et la demoiselle le vit et fut effrayée. Et d'éveiller Devgenij doucement en disant avec larmes: "Lève-toi, le soleil a lui et la lune va paraître. Car Stratège est déjà survenu contre toi avec ses nombreux guerriers et tu n'as pas encore réuni les tiens."

L'importance du russe, ici, s'accroît du fait que, ni dans l'épopée, ni dans aucune cantilène, nous n'avons l'équivalent de toute cette scène. Seul un fragment infiniment précieux d'un chant pontique est comparable, et prouve, une fois de plus,

l'authenticité et l'antiquité du russe. Voyez Kalonaros No. 15, pp. 237-238, t. II:

"Il prit la fille et il s'enfuit neuf nuits et neuf journées. Il alla et il bivaqua au bord de la rivière. Et il sortit de son sein vivres de toute sorte. "Mange, ma fille, mange, va, et surveille la route. Akritas s'appuya sur elle, Akritas fit un somme. Comme elle regarde en face d'elle, une armée descend. Or elle n'ose pas lui dire qu'il descend une armée. Et ses larmes coulaient, descendaient jusqu'au coeur de l'Akrite. Et Akrite se réveille de son si doux sommeil" (v. 60-68).

Vous avez reconnu le motif du réveil par les larmes, et, si vous n'avez pas reconnu le motif réaliste de l'épouillement, vous le trouverez dans des ballades consacrées à Saint Georges, Saint Georges qui, attendant l'arrivée du dragon, repose sa tête sur les genoux de la princesse qu'il vient de sauver, et la princesse épouille le Saint: car ce Saint est chevelu et c'est un Saint militaire, comme les héros d'Eschyle; ils ont donc le droit d'avoir *enthéron trikha*.

Mais ce n'est pas tout encore. Le russe a ce passage:

"Et lui de l'interroger: "Dis-moi, ton père et tes frères, quels sont-ils?" Et la demoiselle de lui dire: "Mon père porte cuirasse d'or et casque d'or semé de pierres précieuses et de perles, et son cheval est couvert d'une housse verte. Mes frères sont en cuirasses d'argent; seuls leurs casques sont d'or et leurs chevaux sont couverts de housses écarlates" (Pascal, p. 327).

Ici encore, c'est le chant pontique qui nous donnera l'analogie la plus proche:

— "Ma fille, ceux-là qui viennent, les connais-tu, dis-moi?

— En tête, celui qui chevauche sur un étalon gris, il ressemble à mon père, et ceux-là, sur leurs coursiers noirs, ils ressemblent à mes frères. Et celle-là, sur la jument grisbleu, elle ressemble à ma mère" (v. 69-72).

Chose singulière, les savants grecs eux-mêmes, et précisément ceux-là qui auraient dû depuis longtemps nous donner une édition complète des *tragoudia*, n'ont pas l'air de s'aviser de l'importance du critère de l'épicité, si j'ose forger ce mot, dans leur classement des différentes recensions grecques. Je vais vous en donner un exemple qui est d'hier, car c'est hier ou avant-hier que j'ai reçu trente deux pages d'*Akritikai Meletai* de Stilpôn Kyriakidis. Notre savant collègue a très soigneusement étudié, pour l'enlèvement précisément, les trois versions

de Grotta-Ferrata, d'Andros-Trébizonde et de l'Escorial. ("Akritikai Meletai," *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, vol. III, Città del Vaticano, 1946).

Andros-Trébizonde et l'Escorial ignorent complètement l'épisode du somme de Digénis sur les genoux de sa bien-aimée, comme le motif du réveil causé par les larmes de la belle, et celui de l'apparition de l'ennemi aperçu d'abord par la jeune fille. Ces deux recensions ignorent aussi la présence de la mère lors de la bataille, la mère étant restée chez elle. Et quant aux frères, il n'y est pas dit comment leur soeur les reconnaît. Mais ces motifs charmants ont tout de même laissé une trace fugitive dans la rédaction de Grotta-Ferrata, dans quelques vers que M. Kyriakidis déclare adventices, maladroits, interpolés. Les voici :

"Les ayant aperçus de loin (les ennemis) la belle jeune fille (car, dans les bras de son amant chéri elle regardait à la ronde d'un oeil perçant) disait à Digénis: Ceux qui nous poursuivent vont nous atteindre."

Quant à la mère, elle est présente :

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἡ στρατήγισσα κατελείφθη ἐν οἴκῳ.

Et enfin voici comment la jeune enlevée a reconnu ses frères, et aussi son père :

"O mon âme, ne fais pas violence à mes frères. En effet, ceux que tu vois venir vers nous, c'est à leur chevaux que je reconnais que ce sont mes frères. Et le troisième, celui qui les accompagne, se trouve être mon père. Je t'en prie, fais-leur merci et laisse-les en vie."

Tout cela est plat, sec, prosaïque. Tout cela aurait été bien incapable d'inspirer aux poètes des cantilènes les passages si frappants que nous venons de traduire. La version russe, qui les a conservés à peu près fidèlement, mérite donc incontestablement, dans l'énumération des témoins de la tradition manuscrite, le No 1, devant Grotta-Ferrata, qui, de ces trois épisodes, n'a pas effacé complètement le souvenir, devant A et T, qui les ont biffés sans en laisser la moindre trace. Qu'il s'agisse, notamment dans le cas du bref sommeil avant la bataille sur les genoux de la bien-aimée et du réveil à la dernière minute, d'une scène dont l'effet était certain sur les auditeurs d'alors comme il est certain sur les lecteurs d'aujourd'hui, qu'il s'agisse, dis-je d'un motif épique et romanesque à grand effet, cela résulte de sa présence exactement à l'époque de la rédac-

tion de notre Digénis (Xe siècle), dans le poème latin de Waltharius, écrit en langue savante, mais qui, lui aussi, sort de cantilènes vulgaires. Waltharius s'est enfui de chez les Huns, enlevant sa chère Hildgund (ou Hildegonde). Poursuivi, il s'endort en priant sa bien-aimée de veiller tout en lui caressant la tête et de le réveiller doucement lorsqu'elle apercevra l'ennemi. Je traduis:

"Deux montagnes isolées se dressent; elles forment, entre leurs sommets rapprochés, une grotte étroite mais charmante, bien qu'elle soit aussi un repaire rêvé pour de sanguinaires brigands. En cette retraite verdoyaient des herbes hautes. A peine le jeune homme l'a-t-il aperçue, qu'il dit:

'Allons, je veux en cette aimable retraite détendre mon corps fatigué.' Car, depuis qu'il avait échappé aux Huns, il n'avait plus goûté le repos qu'appuyé sur son bouclier. C'est à peine s'il avait fermé l'oeil. Il peut enfin se décharger des fardeaux de la guerre, et, s'abandonnant aux bras de la jeune fille, il lui dit: 'Regarde bien, Hildegonde, et si tu vois s'élever un nuage noir, éveille-moi en me touchant doucement, et même si tu voyais une immense armée, ne m'éveille pas en sursaut, ma chérie, prends bien garde. D'ici, ton clair regard peut embrasser l'horizon tout entier...' Mais Hildegonde qui veillait à la cime du mont voit s'élever la poussière, comprend qu'ils arrivent, et touche en silence Waltharius pour l'éveiller. Waltharius lève la tête et demande si l'ennemi approche."

NOTES COMPLEMENTAIRES

I. Les divergences entre *P* et *T* et la valeur de *M*.

Notre article est d'un bout à l'autre une démonstration de la précellence et de l'antiquité relative du prototype grec des versions russes. Il est acquis que ce prototype (perdu) était préférable à beaucoup d'égards, sinon toujours et sur tous les points, aux recensions grecques conservées. Quant aux versions russes, notre thèse, opposée à celle de Speranskij, et conforme à celle de Tixonravov, est que le Digénis grec a été traduit en russe non point une fois, mais au moins deux fois: *P* et *T-M* présentent des divergences qui ne peuvent s'expliquer que par les divergences de leurs originaux respectifs, divergences qui rappellent les variantes des manuscrits grecs conservés. Nous avons donné dans notre article plus d'un argument en faveur de cette thèse. En voici d'autres.

Prenons par exemple la scène de la chasse, dans les *Enfances*, scène traitée dans *P* comme dans *T*. La succession des faits est la même (je numérote):

1. Croissance rapide et développement précoce de Digénis.
2. L'enfant importune son père et ses oncles pour qu'ils lui permettent d'aller à la chasse.
3. Digénis dédaigne la chasse au lièvre.
4. La chasse aux fauves commence, notamment la chasse aux ours ou à l'ours, la chasse à l'élan (ou à la biche), la chasse au lion.
5. On se rend à la source où l'enfant sera lavé du sang des bêtes. Mais un serpent à trois ou quatre têtes apparaît, Digénis tranche ces têtes: tous de rendre grâce à Dieu et de le revêtir de riches habits.²³ Description du jeune cavalier et de son cheval.

Si tous ces sujets sont traités dans ces deux textes, *P* se comporte plutôt comme un résumé, parfois très incomplet. Ainsi, pour n'indiquer que quelques détails, la chasse à l'ours fait l'objet de quatre lignes dans *P*, de douze dans *T*. *P* ne connaît qu'un ours; *T* parle d'un ours, d'une ourse tués tous les deux par Digénis, et de leurs petits. Le serpent de la source a trois têtes dans *T* et quatre dans *P*. Dans *T* un grand serpent vola vers la source, semblable à un homme. Dans *P* il s'agit d'un serpent immense ayant quatre têtes quasi-humaines.

²³ Pour la description du costume de Digénis, voyez ci-dessus.

Dans T le harnachement du cheval est décrit: housse précieuse pour protéger la croupe de la poussière, et mors forgés d'or, sans parler de la crinière pleine de pierres précieuses et de grelots. P ne connaît que les grelots, mais en parle deux fois.

Avant de discuter ces variantes, notons les parties communes et les points sur lesquels T P s'accordent avec les textes grecs, les points sur lesquels ils s'en écartent. Pour la chasse, tout se passe comme dans les textes grecs que nous avons, et dans le même ordre en général, avec une différence considérable vers la fin. Bien que, dans nos textes grecs, le père lave effectivement son fils à la fontaine, cette fontaine n'est la scène d'aucun nouvel exploit. Le lavement des pieds et des mains n'est interrompu par aucune aventure, non plus que l'habillement du héros. Le russe est absolument seul, dans toute la tradition manuscrite, à placer ici l'épisode du serpent à plusieurs têtes. Or, cet épisode figure dans toutes les rédactions grecques, mais à une tout autre place. Nous avons prouvé que l'ordre du russe est ici primitif, c'est-à-dire qu'il remonte à une tradition grecque plus archaïque et meilleure que la nôtre. Mais poursuivons notre comparaison, et revenons à la chasse. Nous l'avons dit déjà: il y a deux ours, mâle et femelle, plus les petits, dans T, et il n'y a qu'un ours dans P. Comment se comportent à cet égard nos textes grecs?

Grotta-Ferrata (IV, 108), parle d'un ours mâle et d'une ourse et de deux petits. Escorialensis dit la même chose et donne aux oursons leur nom, pour ainsi dire technique, de kouloukia (vers 757). Andros parle au vers 1431 d'une ourse avec un petit: cf. Trébizonde (IV, 904), où il est question d'un ours et d'une ourse, mais point de leurs petits. Le récit ici est contracté: déjà dans l'archétype peut-être, il avait souffert de l'ambiguïté causée par le mot grec pour ours, qui est en principe du féminin. D'un titre qui figure dans le manuscrit de Trébizonde et qui est confirmé par Andros, ici beaucoup plus complet, ainsi que Grotta-Ferrata, il résulte que le jeune héros étrangle d'abord l'ourse en faisant sortir ses entrailles, puis, comme le mâle voulait l'attaquer, averti par son oncle, Digénis le saisit par la tête et désarticule celle-ci. L'épisode complet des ours dans Grotta-Ferrata compte une trentaine de vers (107 à 138). Dans Andros l'épisode va de 1412 à 1445. Dans l'Escorialensis la chasse à l'ours va de 756 à 784; le russe a en commun avec l'Escorialensis la protestation du jeune héros contre les chasses sans danger (lièvre et perdrix dans l'Esco-

rialensis, lièvre et renard dans T, lièvre dans P). Enfin Trébizonde réduit tout cela à sept vers, moins d'un tiers.

Cette comparaison est instructive pour l'appréciation des rapports de P et T. Si P ne connaît qu'un ours, cela peut être évidemment parce que son rédacteur ou traducteur a voulu simplifier le récit qui montre Digénis aux prises successivement avec la femelle et avec le mâle. Mais il se peut aussi que le traducteur de P ou de son archétype ait eu à faire à un texte grec lacuneux dans le genre de Trébizonde, dont le copiste, tout en distinguant le sexe des deux ours, a oublié tout ce qui concernait l'ourse, et laisse croire au lecteur que Digénis n'a chassé qu'une de ces bêtes. Evidemment ce qui s'est produit dans le domaine grec a pu se produire aussi dans le domaine russe. Mais un cas comme celui-ci a l'air d'indiquer que le prototype grec de P était déjà altéré et contracté, et par conséquent différent du prototype de T.

Plus intéressant encore peut-être, pour l'étude des relations entre textes grecs et textes russes, plus instructif que la scène de la chasse, est l'épisode de la première partie, où l'Emir, voulant faire croire à ses futurs beaux-frères que leur soeur n'est plus, les envoie à l'endroit où beaucoup de captives grecques ont été taillées en pièces, et leur dit²⁴: "Mes chers frères, voyez cette montagne grande et belle; là beaucoup de femmes et de belles jeunes filles ont été tuées, etc." Les mots "grande et belle", le second surtout, sont étrangement suspects. On devine tout de suite qu'il y a ici quelque corruption. Or, si nous nous reportons au texte d'Andros, deuxième chant, vers 424, nous lisons qu'un Sarrasin, et pas l'Emir, dit aux jeunes gens: "Allez vers ce très beau ruisseau; hier nous y avons massacré deux très belles jeunes filles, etc." L'adjectif que nous avons traduit par "très beau" est écrit dans l'édition Miliarakis *pam-morphon* (mais dans l'Index de la même édition, ce mot est écrit *mpamorphon*). En 1939 déjà, dans l'article intitulé *Trente-cinq corrections au texte de Digénis*, nous l'avions rapproché du vers 71 de l'Escorialensis (*epánmorphon*) et du chant Ier de Grotta-Ferrata, vers 223, qui permet de rétablir le texte, car il y est dit: "Traversez cette croupe et de l'autre côté vous

²⁴ Ce passage ne nous a été conservé que dans P (Speranskiĭ, p. 151; cf. trad. Pascal p. 306):

«братия моя милая, видите гору оную велику и прекрасну тамо бо посячены многія жены и прекрасныя дѣвицы, тамо же и сестра ваша посячена . . . »

trouverez un ruisseau, etc.”²⁵ Le mot correct est donc *epanephoron*, qui veut dire “montée”, et qui s’est corrompu, dans quelques manuscrits, dans l’adjectif qui signifie “beau”. Quant au mot “montagne”, il vient probablement de la corruption du mot vulgaire signifiant “ruisseau”, *to ryákin*, qui aura été lu *to óros ekeino*. En effet, le russe a, nous l’avons vu, *goru onuju*. Une corruption dont nous apercevons les progrès, d’une recension grecque à l’autre a fini par s’épanouir dans P. Encore une fois, il n’est pas étonnant que P ait à la fois des éléments très archaïques et des passages tout à fait corrompus. Il n’en va pas autrement des manuscrits grecs et notamment de l’Escorialensis qui présente exactement le même contraste. D’ailleurs P est excusable d’avoir parlé ici d’une belle montagne: dans un autre passage, plus tard, l’Emir dira — et cette fois-ci ses paroles ne sont pas corrompues: “Frère, voyez là-bas dans la plaine ce bel endroit. Il y a quantité de tentes et dans l’une d’elles se trouve votre soeur,²⁶ et là où est votre soeur le sol est tapissé de brocart d’or et son visage est couvert d’aimants précieux...” A propos de ce dernier passage, j’ai noté déjà que le mot *magnit* provient ici d’une confusion avec *magnadi*, “mouchoir”, qu’on lit dans Andros au vers 2987 (où Trébizonde et Grotta-Ferrata ont le mot *hothonê*, “toile”). Ainsi le russe P nous a conservé, avec une très légère altération, un mot grec rare et précieux, attesté par un seul manuscrit de l’épopée dans un passage du VIIe chant, qui explique d’ailleurs admirablement le russe.

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C’est ici le lieu de dire toute notre pensée sur M. D’après le résumé de Karamzin, M commençait comme P, puisqu’il décrivait les prouesses des trois fils d’une veuve pieuse. Indication précieuse, vu les nombreuses divergences de détail que nous avons relevées entre la version T, ailleurs presque complètement identique à M, et la version P, de beaucoup inférieure. L’histoire de Digénis dans M se terminait par les noces du jeune héros avec la fille du Stratège: le dernier chapitre de

²⁶ P. Рече же имъ Амиръ царъ слезно: «братія, видите оно въ полѣ прекрасно. тамо стоятъ многія шатры а въ нихъ сидитъ сестра ваша . . . Ici encore le démonstratif *ono* vient d’une méprise de traducteur ou plutôt de lecteur: *klinên* (lit; cf Esc. 179) a été lu *keinên*.

T: "Comment Devgenij vainquit le roi Basile," y manquait probablement. Si nous parcourons les extraits textuels de M que nous trouvons dans l'édition princeps du *Slovo*, et chez Karamzin (*Histoire de l'Etat russe*, tome II, chapitre XII, note 333, et tome III, chapitre VII, note 272), nous observerons ceci:

a) lorsque nous avons le contrôle du texte P, M nous apparaît plus complet, plus riche en traits primitifs ou folkloriques.²⁷ Ou M conserve des titres d'épisodes que P a perdus.²⁸ Ou encore, M présente la forme authentique d'un nom propre, déformé ailleurs dans les textes russes et conservé seulement en grec.²⁹

b) lorsque nous avons le contrôle de T, et du texte P, M suit T de très près, s'écartant avec lui de P, mais sans se confondre absolument avec cet excellent témoin.³⁰

Enfin, c) quand nous ne pouvons comparer que T et M, les variantes sont presque négligeables. M. Pascal avait donc raison de conclure (*Byzantion* X (1935), 301): "Ces fragments très courts ont cependant l'intérêt de présenter le texte le plus archaïque que nous possédions."

II. Comment les recherches récentes nous amènent à postuler pour le Roman de Digénis une forme très proche du russe.

Je tiens à résumer ici les résultats tout récents des recherches d'O. Schissel et d'A. Xyngopoulos, qui confirment tout à fait ma propre opinion sur les adjonctions "postérieures" et embellissements successifs du roman primitif de Digénis: le mémoire d'Otmar Schissel, *Der byzantinische Garten, seine Darstellungen im gleichzeitigen Romane* (Sitzungsberichte der Akad. der Wissenschaften in Wien, Philosophisch-Histo-

²⁷ Voyez par exemple la description de l'Arabe de l'Euphrate déjà discutée plus haut (Pascal, *loc. cit.*, p. 310, note 1).

²⁸ Cf. le titre traduit par Pascal: Geste des hommes braves des anciens temps en fait d'ardeur, force et bravoure, p. 312, et cet autre: Si l'on veut entendre du mariage de Devgenij et du rapt de Stratigovna, p. 321.

²⁹ Сказание о Филипатѣ, и о Максимѣ, и о храбрости ихъ.

Il est vrai que le premier de ces noms est légèrement corrompu (τ au lieu de π); mais pour le second, la graphie en est plus proche du grec (Maximô) que la forme Maksimiana de P. T. (Speranskij, p. 144), non dans le passage correspondant, mais à la fin du récit des noces, a aussi la forme Maksime.

³⁰ Cf. Pascal, p. 314 et note.

rische Klasse, 221 Bd., 2. Abhandlung, 1942), celui de M Andreas Xyngopoulos, "To anaktorou tou Digenê Akrita," dans *Laographia*, t. XII (1948) pp. 547-588. Il n'y a aucun doute que les longues descriptions de monuments, qui se trouvent dans toutes les recensions grecques, à l'exception du manuscrit de l'Escorial, qui se contente à ce sujet d'indications beaucoup plus brèves, il n'y a aucun doute, dis-je, que ces longues *ekphraseis* manquaient absolument dans la forme originale du roman. M. Xyngopoulos écrit, p. 581: "M. Henri Grégoire, dans son livre, était arrivé à la conclusion que la description de palais était une addition tardive; elle interrompt nettement le récit qui se trouve dans les chants acritiques originaux au sujet de Charos et de Digénis, c'est-à-dire de la mort du héros... J'estime pour ma part que la mention du parc et du palais, conservée dans l'épopée primitive, était encore plus brève que celle de la recension de l'Escorial, laquelle se borne à quelques vers à peine, sans aucune description." Et un peu plus loin, il dit: "Je pense que les interpolations relatives aux jardins, aux édifices et aux mosaïques sont constituées de couches successives, commençant avec les Comnène, mais datant en partie de l'époque des premiers Paléologues." Cette dernière question est en dehors de notre sujet, et j'estime pour ma part que l'ekphrasis est antérieure aux Comnène. Mais ce qui nous intéresse ici, c'est le fait universellement reconnu que les textes grecs ont presque tous subi des remaniements savants dont MM. Chatzis, Kalonaros, Schissel, Xyngopoulos, et moi-même, avons reconnu les sources. Du roman lui-même, je disais récemment: De recension en recension, son caractère épique et révolutionnaire, outrancier et merveilleux, fantastique et surnaturel, populaire, ou, si l'on veut, folklorique, ce caractère primitif, admirablement préservé par le russe, s'atténua. Le roman, où étaient entrés par blocs massifs d'admirables tragoudia respirait la haine des sectaires pauliciens pour le basileus des Romains. Il exprimait à sa façon, à la fois réaliste et idyllique, l'idée, qui est la moralité d'*Armouris*, que la symbiose entre chrétiens et Arabes est possible et souhaitable. Mais le "cadre historique" n'était même pas esquissé, précisément parce qu'il allait de soi. Il n'y avait pas de digressions éducatives, pas de symbole de la foi, pas de descriptions à perte de vue de palais et de jardins, pas d'extraits des historiens et des chroniqueurs, point de généalogies, point d'énumérations

de villes et de provinces razziées par les Arabes ou les Pauliciens, aucune citation d'auteurs sacrés ou profanes. Tel était, dans sa grâce et dans sa force et dans sa fraîcheur, ce premier roman dont le russe nous donne quelque idée" (H. Grégoire, "Le problème de la version originale de l'épopée byzantine de Digénis Akritas," *La revue des études byzantines*, VI (1948), 1er fascicule, pp. 27-35). Mais tous ces ornements furent bientôt ajoutés au schéma primitif, par des élèves qui s'essayaient au roman historique... Je reconnais avoir longtemps hésité à ce sujet. J'avais reconnu plus d'un emprunt textuel de Digénis aux chroniques, mais je préférais croire à l'existence d'une source, peut-être orale, qui eut été commune à l'épopée et à Genesius par exemple. Mais aujourd'hui qu'une foule d'influences littéraires sur le roman sont démontrées, en ce qui concerne les descriptions de monuments on ne voit pas ce qui empêche de croire que le romancier a tiré de la littérature contemporaine certains récits de bataille comme celle de 863." L'absence de ces passages historiques dans le russe est la principale raison qui a fait croire que le *Déjanie i žitie Devgenievo Akrita* était un remaniement tardif où l'on avait omis tout ce qui était authentiquement byzantin. On voit combien ce critère et ce raisonnement étaient erronés.³¹

³¹ Ce que nous avons appelé "la plus ancienne épopée byzantine," c'est-à-dire le chant d'Armouris, publié, traduit et commenté par nous, vient d'être l'objet d'une nouvelle édition de la part de M. St. P. Kyriakidis, "Hê dêmodês hellênikê poiêsis kai hê historia tou hellênikou ethnous," *Laographia*, XI (1948) pp. 465-502. Cette longue "byline" est une des sources du roman de Digénis Akritas auquel elle a fourni tout son premier épisode, ainsi qu'il ressort du témoignage du russe. Je montrerai prochainement que l'épopée arménienne dite de David de Sassoun, dans l'une de ses parties essentielles, et certainement authentiques, est imitée du chant d'Armouris (voyez les p. 277 et suiv. de l'adaptation russe, David Sasunskij, *Armjanskij narodnyj épos, četyre vetvi*, Erivan 1939, ainsi que A. Abeghian, "Das armenische Volksepos," *Mitteil. der Auslandshochschule an der Universität Berlin*, XLVI (1940) 225-238).

THE FIRST POLISH TRANSLATION OF THE SLOVO

By

Manfred Kridl

The first Polish translator of the famous Russian epic poem was Cyprian Godebski, an interesting and characteristic personage of Poland's post-partition epoch. Born at a time when Poland was still independent (1765), he was a child when the first dismemberment of the country took place (1772); but in 1794 after the second partition (1793) he took a vital and effective part in organizing the Kosciuszko uprising. From that time on he was almost constantly active as soldier and writer. When, after the defeat of the uprising, Polish Legions were being organized in Italy as a part of the French Republican Army, Godebski was one of the most ardent campaigners for their support in Poland. He distributed the manifestoes of General Dąbrowski, the Commander-in-Chief of the Legions, and founded several underground revolutionary societies. Forced to flee the country on this account, he set out to reach Italy and the Legions. This he succeeded doing in 1798, joined the Legions and became the aide-de-camp of one of the Polish commanding generals. During his stay in Mantua he was editor of *The Legions' Decade*, a very unusual periodical for soldiers in which, along with professional military articles and political news, literary works and essays were printed. He took part in the Italian campaign, was badly wounded during the Battle of Verona, then participated in the German campaign of Napoleon. Two years after the peace of Luneville (1801), which marked the painful end of Polish hopes as to the restoration of their country, Godebski went back to Poland and devoted himself to literary work. He edited the periodical, *Zabawy przyjemne i pożyteczne* (Pleasant and Useful Recreations), published an interesting, partly autobiographical novel, *The Grenadier-Philosopher*, and a number of poems including the "Poem to the Polish Legions" (1805), a kind of elegy expressing in a classic style the depression and disap-

pointment of the legionnaires. In spite of this he again took part in the Napoleonic campaign of 1807 and 1809 (against Austria). This was his last deed; he fell in the Battle of Raszyn, Poland, defending a lost position

It was in *Zabawy* that, in 1806, Godebski's translation of the *Slovo* appeared. It was reprinted in his *Dzieła wierszem i prozą*, II (Warsaw, 1921), 308 ff. As a matter of fact, it was not a translation of the whole poem, but a kind of summary illustrated by long excerpts translated either in prose or in verse. The translated parts of the poem greatly exceed in length the summary, which also contains some critical remarks. The author first pays tribute to Musin-Puškin, the editor of the *Slovo*, as a scholar and poet. Virtually he considers him not the editor but the author of the poem, an opinion which — according to him — was shared by many others.¹ The justification for this opinion is rather weak: that, in spite of an attempt at the simplicity of earlier times, the spirit of a later epoch shows through everywhere. This statement is not further elaborated. Many of his other remarks are of the same character. Some of them are partly right as, for example, that the scarcity of epic material (two battles, the seizure and escape of the hero) compelled the poet to introduce episodes occupying the greater part of the work (we should rather say that the material itself is not sparse, but that it is not efficiently utilized). Others are unessential, naive or confused, as when Godebski reproaches the poet with inconsistency in rejecting Bojan's poetical devices on the one hand but using analogous devices himself, or when he ironically rejects a comparison of the *Slovo* with the *Poems of Ossian*. A mistake caused by the distorted text of verse 6: počnem instead of pominem,² brings forth a just remark that, in spite of the poet's announcement, we do not hear anything about the deeds of Vladimir.

After having quoted Musin-Puškin's summary of the poem and expressed some of the aforementioned remarks, Godebski proceeds to the translation. Interesting and characteristic of his literary taste is the choice of excerpts. Thus we have:

- 1) the beginning (1-5 incomplete); 2) 6 containing the

¹ According to S. Šambinago, *Slovo o polku Igoreve, Bibliografičeskij ukazatel'* (Moscow, 1940), p. 96, A. L. Schlözer in *Nestor, Russische Annalen* ... (Gottingen, 1802), expressed doubt whether such a poem was possible in Russia of the twelfth century.

² See *Geste* p. 81.

already mentioned distorted passage, 3) the speech of Igor' (10-11 and 13); 4) apostrophe to Bojan, speech of Vsevolod, start of the expedition (14-29); 5) presage of the defeat, the Russians surrounded, Vsevolod's deeds (43-56); 6) fragments from 66; 7) strife among the princes (64 and 65); 8) Svjatoslav's laments (112-113, 116-125, 127-131, 133-136, 138-144); 9) the threnody of Jaroslavna (169-183); 10) the escape of Igor' (184-197, 200-208).

From the above account one can infer that Godebski tried to give as concise a rendering of the main plot of the poem as possible. Hence he omitted long digressions not directly connected with the plot, gave a short account of the princes' strifes, and abbreviated the whole part about Svjatoslav (his dream and the answer of the boyars is completely left out). Furthermore he preferred, in general, descriptions of events (action) to lyrico-emotional utterances, although he did not omit two apostrophes to Bojan and the long threnody of Jaroslavna. The latter passage must have impressed him especially (which is to the credit of his literary taste) because he composed a long, poetical amplification of the threnody (108 verses instead of about thirty as in the original) in which the actual text serves only as a basis for his own presentation of Jaroslavna's distress. This arrangement and selection were certainly influenced by the neoclassic spirit and taste of which Godebski was one of the representatives in Poland. Unity and uniformity of the work, a consistent and logical structure of the whole, simplicity, order and clarity — these classic axioms were certainly present in Godebski's mind when he chose excerpts from the poem. Occasionally he justifies omissions of some parts by saying that they do not belong to the epoch of the hero or contain frequent repetitions. Even more characteristic in this respect is his statement that he found in the poem sometimes rather the spirit of the old vulgarity (*prostactwo*) than of ancient simplicity.

All these critical objections do not hinder him in his appreciation of the poem as a whole both in respect to its literary and historico-social values (*Dzieła*, 309). He stresses the ability of the poet in representing characters and depicting images, quoting as examples the meeting of Igor' and Vsevolod and the description of the eclipse of the sun and of the first battle between Russians and Polovcians (*ibid.*, 316-17). The threnodies of Jaroslavna are called a "tender picture"; their episodic

character entitles the translator to treat them as a separate song.

Before approaching the translation itself we must touch on the problem of whether Godebski translated the poem from the Russian original. Some Polish literary historians, such as K. Wójcicki, A. Bielowski, A. Brückner, M. Smolarski,³ expressed the belief that Godebski translated not from the original but from a French translation. This was a pure supposition not backed by any proof. It was refuted by B. Vydra⁴ by the simple statement that before 1806 there existed no French translation of the *Slovo* at all. He quotes a later translation by F. Eckstein published in *Le Catholique* but gives no date, and that of M. Blanchard (Moscow, 1823) quoted as the earliest by Šambinago.⁵ Since, however, — continues Vydra — there did exist earlier German translations (see Šambinago, p. 96), it cannot in principle be excluded that Godebski could have used them in his work. On the other hand, it is certain that the Polish poet had before him the first Russian edition of 1800, because he not only quotes the date and the printing shop in Moscow, but also uses excerpts from its preface (in fact, he translates two and a half pages almost literally).

To these statements of Vydra we can add that the possibility of Godebski's using a German text is highly improbable in view of the fact that German was, in general, little known in Poland at that time even in literary circles. Godebski's education was along French lines. He, as the whole literary epoch, was under the influence of French classicism. Therefore, by adopting neoclassic devices in his translation, he was only following the style of the epoch and of his own work as well, and did not need to use a French text of the *Slovo* for this purpose. As to his knowledge of Russian, it was certainly not brilliant, as is shown by some of the mistakes and misunderstandings in his translation, but the supposition that he knew Russian fairly well and better than German is at any rate more justified.

³ K. Wł. Wójcicki, "Warszawa, jej życie umysłowe i ruch literacki w ciągu lat trzydziestu (od 1800-1830)," *Biblioteka Warszawska*, 1878, II, 64-65. M. Smolarski, "Poeta Wiersza do Legionów, Cyprian Godebski," *Przegląd polski*, 1910, v. 177, p. 46.

⁴ Bohumil Vydra, "'Slovo o Polku Igorevě', jeho ohlasy a vlivy v literatuře polské a české," *Bratislava*, IV (1930), 534.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 116.

Considering Godebski's literary taste, we cannot expect him to be able to reproduce the primitive strength and specific beauty of the original. Whether he translates in prose or in verse, he does not strive for simplicity or spontaneity of sentiment and expression, but tries to render the lines in a "beautiful" (in the classic sense) literary language, to refine and polish them. Since he is an able poet, he sometimes attains by these devices impressive effects, but they are conceived in a different spirit than that of the original. They are of a different artistic dimension. Some examples follow:

- (1) Не буря соколы занесе чрезъ поля широкая (16)
Żadna burzy gwałtowność, zgłodniałych iastrzębi,
Nie poniosła wśród stepów niezmiernych głębi.
(*Dzieła*, 315)
- (2) Комони ржуть за Сулою (18)
Wszystko zwiastuje trwogę: — Już nadsulskie konie,
Przeczuwając znak boju, rżą po tamtej stronie ...
(316)
- (3) звенить слава въ Кыевъ (18)
Już się sława w Kijowie wznosi pod niebiosy; (316)
- (4) трубы трубятъ в Новѣградѣ (18)
W Nowogrodzie grzmiały surmy chrapliwemi głosy;
(316)
- (5) стоятъ стязи въ Путивлѣ (18)
Szmer głuchy chorągwiemi w Putiwlu pomiata;

We see here simple, concrete and concise phrases rendered by expressions full of amplificatory adornments. The simple statements that "horses are neighing beyond the Sula" (2, above), "praises ring out in Kiev" (3), "trumpets blare in Novgorod" (4), "banners are raised in Putivl'" (5) grow in Godebski's hand into poetic images not adequate to the original and not necessarily increasing their expressiveness. Compare only the third example with its "glory rising to heaven" or the fourth with the "hoarse voices of trumpets." In the same way, polja širokaja becomes "the immeasurable depths of the step-pes" (*Słowo*, 16 — *Dzieła*, 315), and veščija pr'sty becomes "drogokunsztowne palce" (a rather artificially composed adjective (4 — 313). A typically classicist and very forced construction is presented by the verse:

Światło krwawe dniowego blask okrywa gońca (*Dzieła*, 317), which was to be the equivalent of the rather simple but much more expressive:

Другаго дни велми рано кровавыя зори свѣтъ повѣ-
даютъ. (43)

There are, however, a number of passages where the Polish poet succeeds in reproducing the original style with only some slight deviations due mostly to amplifications. This is so, for instance, with the part of Vsevolod's speech which begins with the words:

А мои ти Куряни свѣдоми кѣмети: подѣ трубами повити,
etc. (23)

Poczęli się i wzrosli wśród wojennej wrzawy;
Kolebką ich — przyłbica, domem — pole sławy;
Trafne włóczni rzucenie pierwszą wprawą dłoni;
Podawano im iadło końcem ostrej broni;
Saydaki nie zawarte, łuk zawsze napięty,
A miecze zaostrzone, oto są ich sprzęty.
Każdy wawóz i ścieżkę znaią doskonale . . . (316)

Other examples:

Чръныя туча съ моря идуть, хотяъ прикрыти [четыре]
солнца (44)

Chmury ciągną od morza na Rossyyskie słońca (317)
. . . луце жъ бы потяту быти, неже полонену быти (10)

Śmierć dla mężnych ze sławą nad hańbą znośnieysza. (314)

. . . забывъ чтии, живота и града Чрънигова, отня злата
стола, и своя милыя хоти, красныя Глѣбовны, свычая и
обычая (56)

Nie uważasz na blizny, ni na wiek twój młody,
Na świetne przeznaczenia, ni na blask urody;
Zapominasz o złotym po twym oycu tronie,
I o czułych pieściznach na Glebowny łonie. (318)

Changes and amplifications, not affecting, however, the general meaning of the original text, are due partly to the form of rhymed verse which dominates the language and the choice of words and expressions. But, unfortunately, there are also some passages where the meaning of the original is distorted in such a way that it can be ascribed only to poor comprehension of the text. For instance, Svjatoslav in his apostrophe to Igor' and Vsevolod quotes them as saying that they themselves wanted to seize the glory to come and divide that of the past between them (N' rekoste: mužaim' sja sami, etc., 116). In Godebski's translation these sentences are put in the mouth of Svjatoslav himself as a kind of moral sermon to his contemporaries:

Dzielmy przodków zaszczyty i sławę ich czynów;
Ale własnych dla siebie szukaymy wawrzynów.

An even worse mistake occurs in the prose translation of the fourth verse of the poem (*Pomnjašet' bo — reče — p'rvyx' vremen' usobicě...*) referring to Bojan's "loosing ten falcons on a flock of swans: whichever swan was overtaken was the first to sing a song" (S. H. Cross' translation, *Geste*, p. 151). Godebski, instead, refers not to Bojan, but to "ancient singers" in general and lets them loose ten *hawks* on *one* swan; besides, it is not the swan that has to sing a song but the singers themselves to honor the hawk which first grasped the swan.

The parts translated into prose (1-6 and 117-144) are in general, however, closer to the original — this does not mean that there are no changes or inaccuracies, as for instance:

Ты бо можешѣ Волгу веслы роскропити, а Донъ шеломы
выльяти (124)

Ty *kraiesz* Wołgę szerokiemi wiosły i *czerpasz* wodę twym
szyszakiem z Donu (321)

Начати же ся тѣи пѣсни по былинамъ сего времени, а не
по замышленію Бояню (2)

Lecz to proste i rzetelne pienie nie będzie ozdobione obra-
zami, iak są pieśmi mądrego Boiana (312)

сѣрымъ вѣлкомъ — podobny straszniemu wilkowi

шизымъ орломъ — nakształt górnołotnych orków (3-313).

*

Godebski's "Żal Eufrozyny Jarosławny po mężu swoim Igorze" is a typical adaptation and transformation of the main theme and of some motifs of the original threnody into a new poem. Godebski starts with a description of Jarosławna's state of mind expressed by herself. The simple, sensitive, unconsciously poetic soul of the woman of the twelfth century here becomes that of a sentimental lady who is conscious of herself and of her suffering and is able to analyze her very complicated feeling. This is evident especially in the last part of the poem when she complains in general about the situation of women who are bound to men devoted first of all to their country and not to their wives; they are worried about the fate of their husbands, unable to defend the country along with them and fearing lest they forget and betray them. These are psychological processes characteristic of a "précieuse" of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries rather than of a Russian woman of the Middle Ages. And indeed we have no trace

of these in the Russian poem. Also one of Godebski's inventions is the part of the poem describing the departure of Russian warriors to the battlefield and Jaroslavna's farewell to her husband.

The middle part of Godebski's poem contains several motifs taken from the original. These are the apostrophes to the wind, the Dnieper, and the sun. They are elaborated in the same way as some former translations; that is, they are much longer, enlarged by new motifs, adorned by classic poetic figures. They contain some impressive passages and a number of good verses with a marked tinge of sentimentalism and pathos.

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In general, the work of Godebski has a certain significance in the history of the reception of *Slovo* in Poland. It is the first translation of the poem into Polish and the first "study" devoted to it. It is a proof that Godebski appreciated it, although he did not believe in its authenticity, and wanted to acquaint the Polish literary public with it. He did his best to reproduce the poem and sometimes succeeded, as we have seen, in approaching the original. If the whole is conceived and executed in another style, the responsibility for this is with the literary epoch. On the other hand, the character and style of *Slovo* are of such a specifically Russian nature that it is difficult to conceive of its being translated in an adequate manner into any foreign language.

RAINER MARIA RILKE'S TRANSLATION
OF THE "IGOR' SONG" (*SLOVO*)*

With Introduction and Notes

By

André von Gronicka

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The *Slovo*, upon its rediscovery about the year 1795, aroused international interest and heated debate. *Slovo*-scholarship developed apace. From its earliest beginnings German experts took an active and constructive part in it. The first precise announcement of the discovery by the famous Russian historian N. Karamzin appeared in the Hamburg periodical *Spectateur du Nord* in October 1797. The German historian A. L. Schloetzer was the first to deny the authenticity of the discovery, but later became one of its most outspoken supporters. The Grimm brothers helped to initiate the "mythological" school of *Slovo*-interpretation.¹ The tradition of *Slovo*-scholarship was actively continued by such outstanding German investigators as August Boltz, Gustav Karpeles, Rudolf Abicht, E. Bernecker, E. Sievers, A. Luther, A. Brückner, M. Vasmer, K. H. Meyer, E. Hofmann and M. Woltner. The famous Slavic scholars Joseph and Hermann Jireček and V. Jagić published some of their most important findings on the *Slovo* in the German language in leading German periodicals; important German lexica and *Handbücher* devoted lib-

* This first complete publication of Rilke's translation has been made possible through the courtesy of Mrs. R. Fritzsche (Rilke-Archiv) and Dr. A. Kippenberg (Insel-Verlag).

¹ The French Germanist E. Tonnellat characterizes the attitude of the Grimm brothers toward the *Slovo* in his article, "Jacob Grimm et les Slaves du Sud," *Revue des études slaves*, XV, Nos. 3/4 (Paris, 1935), 189-209; see esp. pp. 191, 195, 199.

eral space to the problem of the *Slovo*.² It is interesting, moreover, to note that German scholars supported, almost without exception, the authenticity of the work and evaluated it as one of the outstanding early literary achievements not only of Russian literature, but of world literature, comparing it not unfavorably with Anglo-Saxon, German, and Scandinavian works in the epic tradition, with *Beowulf*, the *Nibelungenlied*, and the *Edda*.

German translations of the *Slovo* are numerous. The first to appear was by the prolific German writer August Kotzebue, who had an intimate knowledge of Russia and its culture.³ This early version was followed by Joseph Müller's *Heldengesang vom Zuge gegen die Polowzer, des Fürsten vom Seweryschen Nowgorod Igor Swatslawlitsch* . . .⁴ In 1854 August Boltz published his ambitious edition of the *Slovo* which comprised the original text, a commentary, a grammar, a glossary, and a metrical translation. This edition aroused considerable interest and was reviewed in leading German periodicals of the time.⁵ Friedrich Bodenstedt contributed a prose translation of highlights of the *Slovo* and in his flamboyant manner

² A very complete bibliography of *Slovo*-scholarship in Germany can be found in S. Šambinago, *Slovo o polku Igoreve, Bibliografičeskij ukazatel'* (Moscow, 1940), pp. 96-114.

³ His first Russian trip Kotzebue undertook in the year 1781, at the age of twenty, as secretary to general von Bauer; subsequently he was appointed by Tsar Paul to the directorship of the German Theater in St. Petersburg. When Paul was murdered in 1801, Kotzebue went to Weimar, but in 1813 he returned to Russia and soon rose to the office of counselor of state in the department of foreign affairs. His *Slovo* translation was published in the periodical, *Der Freymuthige* which he edited together with G. Merkel.

⁴ Joseph Müller, *Heldengesang vom Zuge gegen die Polowzer, des Fürsten vom Seweryschen Nowgorod Igor Swatslawlitsch, geschrieben in altrussischer Sprache gegen das Ende des zwölften Jahrhunderts. In die deutsche Sprache treu übertragen mit einer Vorrede und kurzen philologischen und historischen Noten begleitet von Joseph Müller* (Prague, 1811), 83 pp.

⁵ August Boltz, *Slovo o polku Igoreve* [orig. in Cyrillics], *Lied vom Heereszuge Igors gegen die Polowzer. Altestes russisches Sprachdenkmal aus dem XII Jahrhundert im Urtexte mit Commentar, Grammatik, Glossar und einer metrischen Übersetzung herausgegeben von August Boltz* (Berlin, 1854), 40 pp. Reviewed in: *Vossische Zeitung*, 1854, No. 258; *Europa*, 1855, No. 14; *Litteratur Centralblatt*, 1855, No. 13, among some others.

praised the "overwhelming" beauties of the work.⁶ Among the more recent translations, Arthur Luther's version should be singled out for its faithful rendering of the original, its ample notes and fine illustrations.⁷ A comparison and evaluation of the various versions, including Rilke's translation, should prove an interesting and worthwhile task.

Rainer Maria Rilke's earliest contact with the *Slovo* cannot be definitely established, though it may well have been in February 1900, for we know that at that time he received a copy of the work his friend S. Schill. On February twenty-third he writes:

Von den ubrigen Buchern hat mich das 'Slovo' [original in Cyrillics] ungemein interessiert; das Schonste darin ist die Klage der Jaroslavna und gleich im Anfang der stolze, unubertreffliche Vergleich mit den zehn Falken uber den Schwanen. . . das hat nicht seinesgleichen.⁸

According to a letter of July 13, 1903, Rilke must have begun work on the translation in 1902, in Paris.⁹ On the twenty-first of January 1904, he writes from Rome to Lou Andreas-Salomé that it is making "slow progress";¹⁰ but on the seventeenth of March of the same year he reports the translation as "finished": "Das *Slovo* [original in Cyrillics] ist fertig übersetzt."¹¹

⁶ Fr. Bodenstedt, *Aus Ost und West, Sechs Vorlesungen*, (Berlin, 1861)

⁷ Arthur Luther, *Die Mar von der Heerfahrt Igors. Die alteste russische Heldendichtung. Deutsch nachgedichtet von Arthur Luther* (Munich, 1923), 53 pp.

⁸ Cf. R. M. Rilke, *Briefe und Tagebücher aus der Frühzeit 1899 bis 1902* (Leipzig, 1931), p. 26. S. Brutzer in her dissertation, *Rilkes russische Reisen* (Königsberg, 1934) points out that Rilke must have had his attention drawn to the song much before this time, "denn in seinen Geschichtsaufzeichnungen, die zum Teil noch aus der Bibersberger Zeit stammen müssen, sind wiederholt Hinweise auf den Schauplatz und historische Persönlichkeiten des Igorliedes unter ausdrücklicher Zitierung desselben gegeben" (p. 73).

⁹ To E. Key; the extant editions of Rilke's letters do not seem to contain this letter (at least not the relevant portion). I rely here on the work of S. Brutzer, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

¹⁰ "Am Vormittag schreitet . . . langsam die Übersetzung des *Slovo o polku Igoreve* [orig. in Cyrillics] vor, zu der ich nach langer Pause wieder zurückgekehrt bin . . ." R. M. Rilke, *Briefe aus den Jahren 1902 bis 1906*, (Leipzig, 1922), p. 140.

¹¹ Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 143.

Rilke did not publish the translation, and even its existence remained unnoticed for a considerable time. The first specific critical reference to the work that we have been able to establish is by the Prague Slavist A. S. Mágr in the literary supplement "Dichtung und Welt" of the *Prager Presse*, No. 7. Mágr also offers here an excerpt (units 8—36 incl.¹²) of Rilke's translation, juxtaposing to it Peret's Russian version. Only about one-eighth of Mágr's article deals specifically with the translation. A rather lengthy introduction treats of the rôle of Russia in Western culture and of Friedrich Wolter's, C. Hoffmann's and Joseph Nadler's views of Rilke and Russia. Much of the space is devoted to interesting but somewhat irrelevant quotations from Rilke's letters, dealing with his attitude toward Russia. With reference to Rilke's translation of the *Slovo*, Mágr makes the general observations that Rilke strives to keep faithfully to the original and that he succeeds in recapturing its archaic spirit. Furthermore, Mágr suggests a possible influence of the *Slovo* upon Rilke's *Cornet*, but fails to substantiate this theory. Mágr's article is important as a first sign of awareness of and interest in Rilke's major effort in translation from Russian.

In 1931 the *Inselalmanach* printed another limited excerpt from Rilke's *Slovo*-translation (units 168-209)^{12a}. Then, in 1934, appeared what must be regarded as the major contribution to the theme of Rilke and Russia: Sophie Brutzer's dissertation, *Rilkes russische Reisen*.¹³ Brutzer's conscientious and informative work devotes seven pages to our topic (pp. 73, 74, 84-89). She confutes, on grounds of chronology and internal evidence (style), Mágr's story of the influence of the *Slovo* on Rilke's *Cornet*; she furthermore points out as Rilke's main source (*Vorlage*) the *Russkaja klassnaja biblioteka* edition of the *Slovo*, which contains the Old-Russian text along with modern Russian versions by Majkov, Mej, Kozlov and Gerbel'.

We have it on so trustworthy an authority as that of Rilke's Russian friend Leonid Pasternak, that Rilke was able to read the original Old Russian text. "Erstaunlich," Pasternak

¹² "Units" quoted according to R. Jakobson's system established in his modern Russian version of the *Slovo*. (cf. *Geste*, pp. 181-200).

^{12a} *Der 25ste Inselalmanach auf das Jahr 1931* (Leipzig, 1931), pp. 143-146.

¹³ Sophie Brutzer, *Rilkes russische Reisen* (Königsberg, 1934), p. 113.

writes," mit welcher Kenntniss er (Rilke) . . . über die besonderen Schönheiten der altrussischen Volksdichtung '*Slovo o polku Igoreve*' sprach, die er im Original, in der altslavischen Sprache zu lesen vermochte."¹⁴ Surely, there is no reason to doubt Pasternak's testimony. Nevertheless, a detailed analysis of Rilke's translation makes it evident that he drew upon the modern Russian versions as well.¹⁵ Nor did Rilke attempt to conceal this fact. Rather, his very choice of the title for his translation, *Aus den Übersetzungen des Igor-Liedes*, indicates that he wished to acknowledge his indebtedness to various modern sources. It would prove of little value to develop at any length his exact indebtedness, but a comparison seems to indicate, that contextually Mej and Gerbel' gave him most assistance. His subdivision of the translation is evidently borrowed from Gerbel', for it corresponds in every detail to Gerbel's system and it is not found in any of the other sources now known to have been used by him.¹⁶

But to return to Brutzer's analysis of Rilke's translation. She concentrates on the poet's deviations from his Russian texts and cites striking examples, classifying them as follows:

1 *Kontrahierung der Variationen*

e.g. Original Der Wege sind sie kundig, die Hohlwege sind ihnen bekannt.

e.g. Rilke: Wege und Hohlwege wissen sie.

(Two examples)

¹⁴ Cf. Brutzer, *op. cit.*, p. 73; also M. Osborn, *L. Pasternak*, (Warsaw, 1932).

¹⁵ The following analysis is based chiefly on the anthology of modern Russian *Slovo*-versions, *Slovo o polku Igoreve, Sovetskij pisatel'* (1938), containing the complete versions of Mej, Gerbel' and Majkov (among other more recent ones postdating the Rilke version and not relevant to our investigation), as well as on Barsov's famous compilation of modern Russian translations and interpretations of difficult passages of the *Slovo*; cf. E. Barsov, *Slovo o polku Igoreve kak rudožestvennyj pamjatnik kievskoj družinnoj Rusi* (Moscow, 1887); esp. II, 120-298 (Paleografičeskaja kritika teksta 'Slova'). *Geste* was drawn upon as the latest definitive translation and interpretation of the *Slovo*.

¹⁶ Another possible aid to Rilke may have been Alfred Rambaud's French translation of parts of the Igor'-song in his book *La Russie épique* (Paris, 1876), pp. 195-223 which we know was used by Rilke as a source of some material for his *Geschichten vom lieben Gott* (cf. E. C. Wunderlich, "Slavonic Traces in Rilke's *Geschichten vom lieben Gott*," *Germanic Review*, XX (1947), 287-297).

and would seem to need no special emphasis, that Rilke injected at moments a personal note or, forced by his medium, did deviate from the original. What does require emphasis is the truly startling length to which so pronounced a personality could practice self-abnegation, could enter into the spirit of a work, could mould the German language to render a version which makes us virtually oblivious of the intermediary and permits us to enjoy an experience most closely akin to that provided by the Russian original. Surely an impressive testimony to Rilke's art as translator!

Rilke's achievement becomes even more noteworthy once it is realized that the modern Russian versions available to and used by him were far from perfect in their interpretation of the Old Russian prototext and often mislead rather than assisted the poet. Finally, as for the style of the *Slovo*, it is far from being clearly understood and defined even to-day. An expert on this question, V. Ržiga, surveyed the various theories on the style of this lay, its form and derivation, and concluded that the question is one of "the most difficult problems of the science of literature" (Vopros o tom, kakim stixotvornym razmerom ono [*Slovo*] složeno prinadležit k čislu trudnejshikh problem literaturnoj nauki p. 353) and that "this problem remains to this day — unsolved." (Takim obrazom i do six por vopros o stixotvornom razmere *Slova* — ostaetsja otkrytym.)¹⁸ Thus, in this most complex phase of his work, Rilke was without benefit of any clearly defined rules; moreover, his modern Russian sources with their utterly haphazard metrical schemes were, in the matter of style, far more of a distraction

¹⁸ Cf. V. Ržiga, "Problema stixosloženiya Slova o polku Igoreve," *Slavia*, 1927, No. 2-3, pp 352-379. For quotes above, consult pp 353 and 376, respectively.

It seems appropriate to set forth in brief the main theories held on the form and provenience of the *Slovo*-style.

R. Abicht traces a kinship to South-German and/or Scandinavian alliterative tradition; E. Sievers conceives its meter as 4/4 time verses, of approximately the same accentual character as those of Old Germanic literature; V. Birčak derives it from the Byzantine church songs; F. Korš holds that the rhythmic scheme of the *Slovo* is closely akin to that of the Russian *byliny*, F. Kolessa sees considerable proximity to Ukrainian recitative forms (the epic *dumy* and the funeral laments); H. Grégoire correlates the *Slovo* in its form with "les monodies contemporaines de la rhétorique byzantine, qui sont des oraisons funèbres en prose pompeuse et poétique"

than a guide. It may truthfully be said that Rilke achieved striking approximation to the general form and style, to the intonation, rhythm and euphony of the original solely with the help of the highly sensitive ear and the intuitive skill of a true poet, imitating such typical features of the song as the leitmotif and reproducing its optional alliteration¹⁹ with great artistic tact.

AUS DEN ÜBERSETZUNGEN DES IGOR-LIEDES

I.

Wie wäre es, Brüder, wenn wir anfangen nach den alten Ueberlieferungen¹ die schwere Geschichte vom Zuge Igors zu erzählen, vom Zuge des Igor Svjätoslawitsch. Anfangen aber wollen wir das Lied nach den Bylinen² unserer Zeit, nicht nach der Erfindung Bojan's. Wenn der Seher Bojan einem ersinnen wollte ein Lied, breitete er sich aus und war in den Bäumen, war auf der Erde als grauer Wolf und als Adler, blaugrau, unter den Wolken. Und sooft er dessen gedachte was man erzählt aus vergangenen Zeiten von Zwietracht, liesz er zehn Falken los auf eine Heerde von Schwänen: der Schwan, den der erste Falke berührt, hob zu singen an,³ sang den greisen Jaroslaw, sang Mstislaw den Tapferen, der den Rededa zerhieb vor dem Kassogerheer oder er sang Roman den Schönen Swjätoslawitsch [!]. Doch nein, Brüder, Bojan liesz nicht zehn Falken los auf eine Schaar Schwäne; er warf seine erlauchten Finger in lebendige Saiten: die rauschten zum Ruhme der Fürsten.

Und nun, Bruder, geht unsere Geschichte von dem alten Wladimir zu dem Gegenwärtigen über, zu Igor, der seinen

¹⁹ It is important to realize in this context that in Russian the alliteration does not coincide with the accent pattern of the language as closely as it does in the Germanic tongues; it is, in the words of R. Abicht, "a chance ornament of poetic language." This optional nature of Russian alliteration may well have led S. Brutzer to assume its absence in the *Slovo* as she seems to imply in her statement characterizing Rilke's alliteration as a "substitute for the more rigid parallelism of the original (see p. 7 above), while as a matter of fact Rilke's alliteration is a *bona fide* attempt at imitation of the alliterative device of the Russian original.

starken Verstand scharfschliff an seinem mannhaften Herzen und voll kriegerischen Geistes seinen muthigen Völkern voran in das Land der Polowtzer zog durch die russische Erde.⁴

II.

Da blickte Igor suchend zur klaren Sonne auf und sah: sein ganzes Heer war durch ein Dunkel verdeckt vor der Sonne.⁵ Und es sagte Igor zu seinem Gefolge: "Brüder und liebe Gefolgschaft! lieber zerhauen werden denn gefangen. Auf unsere muthigen Pferde hinauf, dasz wir den dunkelblauen Don zu sehen bekommen." Denn die Lust fiel den Fürsten an, zu versuchen den groszen Don und die Sehnsucht war stärker in ihm als das Zeichen des Himmels.⁶ "Ich will" — ruft er "einen Speer brechen mit euch, Russen, auf fernem polowtzi-schem Feld. Meinen Kopf will ich hinlegen oder aus meinem Helme trinken vom Don." — O Bojan, Nachtigall uralter Zeit! sängest du diese Völker, hinhüpfend, du Nachtigall, durch walddichte Gedanken, auffliegend im Geiste unter die Wolken und herabsinkend, Nachtigall, auf beide Hälften dieser Zeit,⁷ — auf trojanischer Fährte hinrasend durch Felder und Berge hinan, — so sängest du also das Lied des Igor, des Enkels von Oleg:⁸ "Der Sturm hat nicht Falken getragen weit über die Felder hin: Dohlen jagen in Zugen zum groszen Don." Oder du sängest,⁹ Bojan, wahrsagender Enkel des Weless: "Pferde wiehern die Sula entlang; Kiew erklingt vom Ruf und Horner hallen in Nowgorod."

Die Feldzeichen stehn in Putiwl. Igor erwartet Wsewolod, seinen lieben Bruder. Und der lichte Stier Wsewolod spricht zu ihm also: "Einziger Bruder mein, du mein einzig liebes Licht, Igor. Wir sind Beide Swjätoslawitschi. "Lasz also satteln, Bruder, deine tüchtigen Pferde; meine aber sind dir bereit und stehen noch unter Sattel bei Kursk. Meine Männer kennst du als Helden: Unter Trompeten entbunden, unter Helmen erzogen, mit dem Speerende genährt —: so sind sie. Wege und Hohlwege wissen sie; ihre Bogen sind gespannt, ihre Köcher aufgedeckt, ihre Säbel geschliffen; sie selbst aber jagen, grauen Wölfen gleich, in den Feldern, — Ehre sich selber suchend und dem Fürsten den Ruhm."

Da stieg der Fürst Igor in den goldenen Steigbügel und ritt über das freie Feld. Die Sonne vertrat ihm mit Dunkel den Weg; die Nacht aber, aufstöhnend in Unwettern, macht ihm

die Vögel wach, der Thiere pfeifendes Schreien scheuchte sie in Schaaren auf.¹⁰ Heulend erhob der Drache sich über die Bäume hin¹¹ und zwang fremde Länder in seinen Schrey:¹² Die Wolga, die Landstriche am Meer und die Sula entlang, Sudak und Korsun und dich, Götzen von Tmutarakan. Und die Polowtzer zogen auf unfahrbaren Wegen an den groszen Don. Ihre Wagen kreischten in der halben Nacht wie Schwäne, die sich verfliegen haben.

Igor hält mit dem Heere am Don. Und schon ist sein Untergang bereitet als Frasz den Vögeln des Waldes; aus den Schluchten drängen sich drohend die Wolfe;¹³ die Adler mit ihrem Schrey locken die Thiere auf Knochen und die Füchse bellen die blutrothen Schilde an. Und du, russische Erde, du bist schon hinter den Hügeln.

Lange lagert die Nacht.¹⁴ Zogernd erhebt sich die Morgenröthe; das Feld ist von Nebeln verhüllt. Schon schallen die Nachtigallen nicht mehr, und gesprächig erwachen die Krähen. Die russischen Tapferen haben die Felder weithin mit purpurnen Schilden bedeckt,¹⁵ da sie Ehre suchten sich selbst und Ruhm für den Fürsten.

III.

Am Freitag, seit Morgen schon, traten sie unter sich die polowtzischen heidnischen Haufen, und als sie sich dann, wie Pfeile, im Felde zerstreuten, rissen sie an sich die schönen polowtzischen Mädchen und mit ihnen Gold und Brokat und köstliche Sammte. Aus Mänteln, Umwürfen, Pelzen von Schaffell und tausend bunten bemalten polowtzischen Stoffen begannen sie Brücken zu thürmen über Sümpfe und Unrath. Aber die purpurne Fahne, das weisse Banner, die rothen Feldzeichen und den Speer von gediegenem Silber nahm Swjätoslawitsch, der tapfere, für sich. Doch schläft auf dem Felde des Oleg mannhafte Nestbrut. Weit ist sie hergeflogen. Und ist doch nicht zu Unrecht geboren gewesen, nicht für Gierfalken und Raubvögel und für dich[!]* nicht, Nachtrabe, polowtzischer Heidenhund! — Gsa macht sich wie ein grauer Wolf davon und Kontschak ihm nach auf den groszen Don zu¹⁶

Am anderen Tage, ganz früh, ruft ein blutiges Morgenroth

* Inconsistency in capitalization of the familiar personal pronoun is in keeping with the manuscript.

das Licht aus. Schwarze Wolken steigen vom Meer; vier Sonnen gilts zu verhüllen; und in den Wolken hängen zitternd die bläulichen Blitze, ungeduldig ein groszes Gewitter zu sein mit Regen und Pfeilen vom Don her.¹⁷ Dort irgendwo werden polowtzische Helme mit Speeren zerbrochen und mit Säbeln zerhauen, dort, wo der Kajal-Flusz eingeht in den Don.¹⁸ O russische Erde, und du bist schon hinter den Hügeln!

Aber sieh da! die Winde, die Enkel des Stribog, kommen mit Pfeilen vom Meer auf die Völker Igors. Die Erde steht auf und blind gehen die Flüsse. Rauch fällt herab und die Fahnen stammeln.¹⁹ — Polowtzer ziehen heran vom Don und vom Meer, und schon haben sie die russischen Schaaren umgeben von allen Seiten. Mit Geschrey erfüllen die Sohne des Teufels das Feld, die russischen aber decken es zu²⁰ mit blutrothen Schilden. Wsewolod, weiser Stier, da stehst du im Streit, Pfeile spritzend weit in die Feinde. Du klirrst in den Helmen mit deiner damascenischen Klinge und, wo vorbeisprang der Stier, aufleuchtend an goldener Haube, da liegen Heidenköpfe; und es gehen Helme entzwei unter stählernem Hieb, unter Deinem Hieb, Wsewolod, du weiser Stier! Und wie kann Der einer Wunde gedenken, Brüder, der alles vergessen hat:²¹ Rang und Leben und die Stadt Tschernigoff und den goldenen väterlichen Thron und seiner viellieben schönen Gljebowna heimatliches Herzblut?

IV.

Es waren die trojanischen Zeiten, und die Jahre Jaroslaws sind vorübergegangen; es waren die olegischen Kriege, die Kriege des Oleg Swjätoslawitsch. Dieser Oleg schmiedete ein Aufruhrschwert und ging als ein Sämann von Pfeilen über das russische Land. Er stieg in seinen goldenen Bugel zu Tmutarakan und das Klirren davon klang, fernher, zu dem Sohne des Jaroslaw, dem groszen Wsewolod; zwar hielt in Tschernigoff Wladimir (Monomach) sich die Ohren zu, aber Boris,²² des Wjätcheslaw Sohn, risz dieser Ruf vor das Todesgericht; legte ihn hin auf die traurige grüne Uferwiese, den jungen muthigen Prinzen, als einen Vorwurf für Oleg.²³ Und von demselben verhängnisvollen Rasen liesz Jaropolk seinen Vater aufheben und brachte ihn auf seinen schweren Pferden²⁴ nach Kiew zur heiligen Sofia. Damals unter Oleg, aus dem Geschlechte des Grames, damals ward Zwietracht gesäet und

gedieh. Das Leben der Enkel des Daschbog sank hin, und in den Kämpfen der Fürsten lebten die Menschen nur eine kleine Zeit. Selten sangen damals Pflüger sich an auf russischer Erde, um so öfter riefen die Raben zum Theilen der Leichen, und die Krähen kamen ins Gespräch an ihrem Versammlungsort, von wo sie ausflogen zum Frasz. Das war in dieser Schlacht und in diesem Kriege war das, und man hat niemals von einer solchen Schlacht gehört.²⁵

V.

Vom Morgen zum Abend und vom Abend zum Morgen fliegen die stählernen Pfeile, die Säbel dröhnen unter [!]* den Helmen und die harten Speere zerkrachen auf fremdem Feld, tief im polowtzischen Land. Die schwarze Erde unter den Hufen war mit Gebein besäet und begossen mit Blut: was konnte da anderes wachsen als Leid für das russische Land.

Was braust dort, was brüllt dort so früh vor Tag?.. Igor wälzt seine Heere dahin: ihm thut der liebe Bruder wohl leid — Wsewolod. Einen Tag schlugen sie sich und einen zweiten Tag, und am dritten Mittag sanken die Fahnen Igor's. Dort am Ufer des schnellen Kajal nahmen zwei Brüder Abschied; dort reichte der Blut-Wein nicht mehr, dort hoben die tapferen Russen das Mahl auf: die Werber²⁶ waren unter den Tisch getrunken, und sie selber legten sich hin für das russische Land. In Mitleid bog sich das Steppengras und die Bäume hingen vor Trauer.

VI.

Und da, Brüder, da begann eine ungute Zeit; in der Einöde lag begraben die russische Macht und das Unrecht stand auf in den Kräften der Enkel des Daschbog. Als eine Jungfrau betrat es trojanisches Land, mit Schwingen gleich denen des Schwans²⁷ schlug es das blauende Meer und erregte den Don und störte auf das Gedächtnis reicherer Zeiten. Aber die Zwie- tracht der Fürsten war ihr Untergang unter den Heiden. Da sprach zum Bruder der Bruder: dieses ist mein und das auch,²⁸ — und es begannen die Fürsten von Geringem zu sagen, dasz

* Original Russian source as well as context call for "auf" instead of "unter".

es groß sei und sie reizten gegeneinander den Aufruhr. Und die Heiden stürzten von allen Seiten herbei mit Siegen ins russische Land. O weit verflog unser Falke sich, die Vögel vor sich herjagend ans Meer.

Aber des mannhaften Igor Heere stehn nicht mehr auf. Karina heult über sie, die große Klagefrau, und (die den Toten vorangeht) Jelja jagt durch das russische Land und streut Leichenasche weithin aus ihrem glühenden Horn. Und die russischen Frauen brachen in Thränen aus und in die Klage:²⁹ Nun erreicht unsere lieben Männer kein Erinnern mehr, kein langes Nachdenken hilft uns zu ihnen hin und unsere Augen werden sie nicht mehr sehn. Und dieses Gold und Silber, das wird erst recht nicht wieder zusammenkommen.

Kiew stöhnte vor Trauer, Bruder, und Tschernigoff vor Unheil. Kummernis gosz sich aus über das russische Land; ein tiefer Gramflusz ging mitten durch russische Erde. Aber die Fürsten reizten den Aufruhr gegen einander. Und die polowtzischen Unchristen stürzten von allen Seiten mit Siegen ins russische Land und erzwangen sich Zins, ein Eichhörnchen von jedem Hof. Diese beiden kühnen Swjätoslawitschi, Igor und Wsewolod weckten wieder die Lüge auf, die eben erst zuschlafe gebracht hatte ihr Vater, Swjätoslaw, der furchtbare, der große kiewer Fürst. Wie ein Gewitter war er, wenn er niederging mit seinen starken Schaaren und Stahlschwertern; er brach ein über das polowtzische Land und zerstampfte Hügel und Hänge; Flüsse und Seen rührte er auf und trocknete Bäche und Sümpfe. Und von der Meerbucht, mitten aus der Polowtzer ehernstem Kernheer wie ein Sturmwind risz er sich den verfluchten Kobjak-Khan . . . Und es fiel der Kobjak in der Stadt Kiew, in Swjätoslaw's Thronsaal

Und Deutsche und Venezianer, Griechen und Slaven singen Swjätoslaw's Ruhm; aber sie tadeln den Fürsten Igor, weil er Reichthümer einstampfte [!] in das polowtzische Flussbett und den Kajal vollgosz mit russischem Gold. Dort siedelte Fürst Igor aus dem goldenen Sattel in die Pritsche des Knechts. Muthlosigkeit schlug sich in die Städte und alle Frohheit ging ein.

VII.

Swjätoslaw aber sah diese Nacht ein trübes Traumbild auf den Bergen zu Kiew. "Gegen Abend" erzählte er den Boja-

ren, "lag ich auf bloßen Brettern und man deckte eine schwarze Decke über mich; bläulichen Wein schöpfte man mir, darin Gift war. Und aus den leeren Köchern heidnischer Polowtzer schüttete jemand schwere Zahlperlen mir auf die Brust und that zärtlich mit mir. Aber oben auf meiner goldgedeckten Halle fehlte das Firstholz. Und die ganze Nacht seit Abend krächzten rauchgraue Raben; und zwischen den Wällen von Pleskow war eine Waldschlucht; die aus Kiew aber waren schon ans Meer gegangen . . .".³⁰ Und die Bojaren sprachen zum Fürsten "Fürst, der Sinn davon ist die Trauer. Da sind diese zwei Falken fortgeflogen von des Vaters goldenem Thron, um die Stadt Tmutarakan zu suchen oder aus dem Helme zu trinken vom Don. Aber schon haben unchristliche Säbel den Falken die Flügel zerschlagen und sie selbst liegen in eisernen Lagern. Dunkel war es am dritten Tag: zwei Sonnen verfinsterten sich, es erloschen die beiden rothen Planeten³¹ und mit ihnen vergingen zwei Monde im Dunkel: Oleg und Swjätoslaw; sie sind ertrunken im Meer, große Dreistheit einflöszend dem Khane³². — Dunkel hat das Licht abgelöst am Kajal-Flusz, und die Polowtzer haben sich ausgebreitet über das russische Land gleich einer Pantherbrut^[32]. Tadel hat sich erhoben über das Loblied, über den Willen ist die Gewalt gekommen und der Drache hat sich herab auf die Erde gestürzt. Da fangen die schönen Mädchen der Goten am Gestade des blauen Meeres zu singen an, klirrend von russischem Gold; sie singen die Tage des Bus und hätscheln den Rächer des Scharokhan . . . doch wir, Dein Gefolge, sind fremd allem Frohsinn!

Da entfiel dem großen Swjätoslaw goldene Rede, von Thränen erschimmernd; er redete also: "O meine Söhne Igor und Wsewolod! Früh seid ihr aufgebrochen das polowtzische Land mit euren Schwertern zu schlagen und Ruhm zu suchen euch selber; aber nicht ehrenvoll habt ihr gesiegt, nicht in Ehren habt ihr das heidnische³³ Blut verschüttet. Euere mannhaften Herzen freilich sind eingeschiedet in Rüststahl und von Verwegenheit hart; aber was habt ihr mit meinem grauen Haupte gemacht! Ich sehe nicht mehr Jaroslaw's meines starken, glänzenden, heerreichen Bruders mächtige Völker: die Streiter von Tschernigoff, die Moguten, die Tatranen, die Schelbiren, die Toptschaken, und Rewuger und Olberer . . . ohne Schilde, mit Waidmessern nur und Geschrey überwandten sie Heere, dröhnend vom Ruhme der Väter. Ihr aber sprachet bei euch: Wir sind uns Männer genug. Wir wollen allein

tragen den Ruhm, der jetzt kommt und den alten Ruhm theilen zwischen uns beiden.

“O ist es ein Wunder, Brüder, wenn da ein Alter selbst jung wird! Wenn der Falke gemausert hat, zaust er hoch oben die Vögel und läßt kein Unrecht ans Nest. Nun aber stehen mir keine Fürsten mehr bei und das ist das Arge. Die Zeiten sind anders geworden. Da schrein sie in Rimow unter polowtzi-schen Säbeln und in Wladimir der Fürst schreit unter Wunden; Trubsal und Trauer dem Sohn des Gļeb!”

VIII.

Groszer Fürst Wsewolod (Grosz-Nest), fliegt Dir nicht von fern der Gedanke zu, Deines Vaters goldenen Thron zu beschützen: denn du kannst mit deinen Rudern Muster in die Wolga weben³⁴ und mit deinen Helmen ausschöpfen den Don. Wärest du hier, so wäre einẽs Weibes Gefangenschaft eine Scheidemünze wert und ein Gefangener ein Marderfell; aber du hast auch zu trockener Schlacht lebendige Bogen: des Gļeb waghalsige Söhne.

Und du David und muthiger Rurik, seid ihr nicht gewohnt, im Blute zu treiben mit euren goldenen Helmen? Brüllen euere Reiter nicht auf wie Stiere wenn stählerne Säbel sie wundschlagen, verloren im Felde? — Steigt in die goldenen Bügel, ihr Herren, für diese gekränkte Zeit, für das russische Land und für den verwegensten Sohn Swjätoslaw's, für die Wunden Igor's.

Osmomysl Jaroslaw, Fürst von Galitz, hoch herrschest du auf deinem goldgetriebenen Thronsitze. Deine eisernen Völker stützen die karpatischen Berge und wehren dem König den Weg; du schlieszest die Thore des Dunaj, und deine Riesenheerhaufen ziehn in den Wolken dahin.³⁵ Dein ist bis an den Dunaj alles Gericht. An deines Zornes Strom liegen die Länder, und Kiew's Thor ist wie deine eigene Thür. Von deiner Väter goldenem Thron aus triffst du die Sultane über die Länder hin. So triffst du, Herr, den Kontschak, den heidnischen Hund, triffst für das russische Land und für den verwegensten Sohn Swjätoslaw's, für die Wunden Igor's.

Und Roman und Du Mstislaw, ihr Wagemuthigen! Kühne Denkart wahrlich trägt euren Sinn. Hoch fürwahr schwebt ihr im Wagnis dahin, dem Falken gleich, der den Flug aufspannt über den Winden und sich voll Grimm auf den Vogel

wirft und ihn bewältigt. Eiserne Brustpanzer sieht man unter eueren lateinischen Helmen. Von ihnen hat schon die Erde gedröhnt und sehr viele Länder: khanische³⁶ Länder, Litwer, Jatwager und Deremelen, und die Polowtzer selbst warfen die Speere von sich und hielten die Köpfe unter diese stahlharten Schwerter.

Aber dem Fürsten Igor vergeht schon das liebe Licht, und nicht zum Guten fallen die Blätter ab von den Bäumen. An der Russa³⁷ und an der Sula haben sie sich schon in die Städte getheilt, und des mannhaften Igor Heer steht nicht wieder auf. . . Der Don schreit nach Dir, Fürst, und ruft alle Fürsten zum Sieg auf.

Die tapferen Olgowitschi sind gerüstet zum Kampf! . . O Ingwar und Wsewolod und aus dem Hause Mstislaws die drei: wie ein sechsflügeliger Vogel aus schönem Geschlecht. Nicht mit Siegen habt ihr gewürfelt um die Gewalt. Wo sind euere goldenen Helme, euere polnischen Lanzen und Schilde von Purpur? Schlieszt die Ebene zu mit dem Gitterthor eurer geschliffenen Speere, dem russischen Lande zulieb und für den verwegesten Sohn Swjätoslaw's, für die Wunden Igor's.

IX.

Schon nicht mehr als silberner Flusz kommt die Sula nach Perejaslaw und die Dwina rinnt grausig wie ein polowtzischer Morast durch der Heiden Geheul.³⁸ Und gerade erst spielte Isjaslaw Wassilkowitsch mit seinen geschliffenen Schwertern auf litauischen Helmen; er erschlug des Wseslaw, seines Ahnherrn, Ruhm, und er selber ward unter den rothen Schilden von litauischen Schwertern erschlagen im blutigen Gras; da lagen sie beide, Sterbende, er und der Ruhm, welcher sprach:³⁹ Deine Gefolgschaft, Fürst, decken mit ihren Flügeln die Vögel zu und die Thiere trinken ihr Blut. Und da war sonst kein Bruder des Brjätchislaw und kein Anderer aus dem Hause Wsewolod.⁴⁰ Er allein verlor die Seele seines mannhaften Leibes; wie eine Perle fiel sie heraus durch die Ringe der goldenen Halsberge. — Die Stimmen schlugen nieder wie Rauch, die Frohheit sank hin; in Gorodno nur hob man die Hörner hoch.

O Jaroslaw und alle ihr Enkel des Wseslaw, laszt euere Fahnen fallen, gürtet ab euere geschlagenen Schwerter. Schon seid ihr zu weit fortgetrieben vom Ruhme des Ahnherrn. Ihr zuerst habt Heiden gelockt auf russische Erde und in das

Gebiet des Wseslaw mit euerer Zwietracht. Aus den Zänken der Fürsten kam schliesslich die Zuchtigung auch vom polowtzischen Lande.

Im siebenten Jahrhunderte trojanischen Alters looste um seine Geliebte⁴¹ Wseslaw. In seine Schenkel nahm er das Pferd und raste⁴² vor Kiew und rührte mit seinem Speer an den goldenen kiewer Thron. Und zur halben Nacht verliesz er die in Bjelgrad und warf sich hinaus als ein grimmiges Thier, sich im dämmernden Blau verwandelnd. Und wieder am Morgen stiesz er die Sporen in sein Pferd,⁴³ stand vor Grosz-Novgorod und risz seine Thore auf; er zerbrach den Ruhm Jaroslaw's und jagte — wieder ein Wolf — von Dudotok her an die Nemiga⁴⁴

An der Nemiga breiten sie Köpfe wie Garben aus; sie dreschen mit Dreschflegeln aus Stahl. Leben legen sie auf die Tenne und, wie die Kornschwinger thun — worfeln sie aus den Leibern die Seelen. Nicht mit Körnern waren der Nemiga blutige Ufer besäet; ihre Saat waren die Gebeine russischer Söhne.

Fürst Wseslaw war den Leuten ein Richter und ein Verweser den Fürsten; aber bei Nacht war er ein Wolf und trieb sich umher. Von Kiew erreichte er noch vor den Hähnen Tmutorakan und überholte als Wolf den gewaltigen Chors. Ihm läuteten sie am Morgen die Glocken zur Frühmesse in der heiligen Sofia von Polotzk und er hörte in Kiew den Klang. Eine wahrsagende Seele war er in einem heldischen Leib, aber oft auch ein Dulder von Unglück. Für ihn hat viel früher schon der Seher Bojan gesprochen den sinnvollen Spruch: Sei gewandt, sei schnell, — schneller denn alle Vögel im Flug, Du überholest doch nicht Gottes Gerichte.⁴⁵

O weinen musz über dich, russische Erde, wer deiner ersten Zeiten gedenkt und der früheren Fürsten. Jenen alten Wladimir hätte man nicht anschmieden dürfen im Innern der kiewer Berge. Nun sind seine Fahnen vertheilt und gehören David und Rurik; aber bei ihnen zerflattern sie, jede für sich.⁴⁶

X.

Da hört man die Stimme der Jaroslawna. Einem einsamen Kukuk gleich klagt sie seit Morgengraun. Fliegen will ich — sagt sie — wie ein Kukuk den Dunaj entlang! meinen Ärmel von Biberpelz will ich hineinhalten in den Kajal-Flusz; aus-

waschen will ich dem Fürsten die blutigen Wunden seines grausamen Leibes.

Jaroslavna weint seit Morgengraun in Putiwl auf den Mauern und spricht: "Ö Wind, Wind, — Herr, warum wehst du so sehr? Warum mit deinen leichten Flügeln treibst du die Pfeile des Khans⁴⁷ zu meines Geliebten Kriegsheer? Wär es Dir nicht genug, hoch unter den Wolken zu wehn und Schiffe zu schaukeln auf blauem Meer? Warum, Herr, hast du mein Frohsein verweht über das Grasland hin?"

Jaroslavna weint seit Morgengraun in Putiwl der Stadt, auf den Mauern und spricht: "Dnjepr, du Held, du durchschlugst dir die steinernen Berge im polowtzischen Land. Du trugst liebkosend auf dir Swjätoslaws Kähne hinein in das Heer des Kobjak; nun trage zärtlich, Herr, auch den Gatten mir zu, daz ich ihm nicht ans Meer musz Thränen schicken im Morgengraun."

Jaroslavna weint seit Morgengraun in Putiwl auf den Mauern und spricht: "Helle Du, überhelle Sonne! Du bist allen warm und gut. Herrin, warum legst du glühend dein Licht auf die Mannen meines Gemahls? .. Durst hat ihnen im wasserlosen Land die Bogen gedörret und Niedergeschlagenheit schlieszt ihnen die Köcher zu..."

XI.

Zur halben Nacht erhob sich das Meer. Wassersäulen wanderten wolkg darüber hin ⁴⁸ Gott zeigt dem Fürsten Igor den Weg aus polowtzischem Land nach der russischen Erde, zu seines Vaters goldenem Thron. Es war nach dem Abendroth. Igor schläft ... Igor wacht trotzdem; Igor miszt in Gedanken das Feld vom groszen Don bis an den kleinen Donetz. Olwur pfeift über dem Flusz, als rief er ein Pferd, dem Fürsten zum Zeichen ... Und schon ist Fürst Igor nicht mehr da! In Freude rief er laut auf; ⁴⁹ dumpf hallte die Erde nach und es rauschte das Gras. Unruhe entstand in den polowtzischen Zelten ... aber der Fürst Igor entlief als Wiesel ins Schilfrohr und schwamm, weisz, als Reiherente über das Wasser. Er warf sich auf sein flüchtiges Pferd, sprang nackt, als grauer Wolf, ⁵⁰ ab von ihm, jagte zu den Fluren des Donetz und flog als Falke durch den Nebel dahin, sich Schwäne erlegend und Enten zum Frühstück, Mittagbrot und Nachtmahl. Während Igor Falke war und flog und Olwur unten als Wolf dahinraste, von sich

abschüttelnd den eisigen Thau: jagten die anderen⁵¹ ihre raschen Pferde zu Schanden.

Und es sprach Donetz, der Flusz: O Fürst Igor! Grosz ist deine Herrlichkeit, grosz der Hasz des Kontschak und grosz die Freude der russischen Erde. Und Igor sprach: O Donetz, grosz ist deine Herrlichkeit, weil du zärtlich auf den Wogen den Fürsten getragen hast, weil du ihm grünendes Gras hingebreitet hast auf deinen silbernen Rändern und ihn bekleidet hast mit warmen Nebeln im Schatten deiner grünen Uferbäume; weil du ihn in Schutz genommen hast: als Wildente auf dem Wasser, als Möve über den Wellen und auf den Winden als Falken... Man erzählt von dem Stugna-Flusz, dasz er anders sey.⁵² Seine mageren Wellen verschlangen die fremden Bäche und er grub sich Kanäle unter dem Buschwerk und schlosz in ihnen den fürstlichen Knaben Rostislaw ein, nah bei des Dnjeprs traurigen Ufern. Und es weinte Rostislaws Mutter über den jugendlichen Prinzen Rostislaw; alle Blumen waren kleimüthig vor Mitleid und die Bäume hingen aus Trauer zur Erde.

Das ist nicht Elsterngeschwätz: Gsa und Kontschak verfolgen Igor. Da krächzten die Raben nicht, verstummt waren die Krähen und das Schwatzen der Elstern; nur die Klettervögel kletterten und klopfend wiesen die Spechte den Weg an den Flusz; Nachtigallen sangen selig den Morgen.

Da flüsterte Gsa dem Kontschak: "Fliegt der alte Falke zu Nest, so schlieszen [!]* wir den jungen mit unseren goldenen Pfeilen."

Und es antworte Kontschak dem Gsa: "Fliegt der alte Falke zu Nest, so fangen wir den jungen mit einem schönen Mädchen."

Und es flüsterte Gsa dem Kontschak: "Wenn wir ihn fangen mit einem schönen Mädchen, dann bleibt uns weder der junge Falke noch die junge Schöne und wir können Vögeln nachjagen⁵³ auf polowtzischem Felde."

XII.

Es sang Bojan auch von den Tagen Swjätoslaws, der Sänger der uralten Zeiten Jaroslaw's und Oleg's: "Fürstenge-

* Original Russian source as well as context call for "schlieszen", yet Rilke's manuscript clearly indicates "schlieszen".

schlecht,⁵⁴ schwer mag es dir sein, Haupt ohne Schulter, aber auch dir ist es schwer, Leib ohne Haupt." So war es dem russischen Lande schwer ohne Igor. Nun steht die Sonne hell in den Himmeln; Fürst Igor ist wieder auf russischer Erde. Am Dunaj singen die Mädchen, und es wehn ihre Stimmen über das Meer hin nach Kiew. Igor reitet über Boritschew zum heiligen Bilde der pirogoschtschischen Mutter-Gottes. Und die Gegenden freuen sich, und die Städte sind froh.

Gesungen ist den alten Fürsten ihr Lob; nun singet die jungen: Heil Igor Swjätoslawitsch, heil Wsewolod, weiszer Stier, Wladimir, des Igor Sohn, Heil! Gegrüßt seien die Fürsten und ihre Gefolgschaften, die für die Christenheit streiten gegen ungläubige Horden. Heil den Fürsten und ihren Gefolgschaften, Heil!

A m e n

N O T E S

[Explanation of method: passages are quoted directly following the numbers given them in Rilke's text; they are briefly characterized and followed by the literal translation (abbr.: L. t.) of corresponding portions of the Old-Russian text. Numbers in parentheses refer to text-units as established in R. Jakobson's critical edition of the *Slovo*. (*Geste*, pp. 38-78). In the case of debatable passages R. Jakobson's definitive modern Russian version (*Geste*, pp. 181-200) as well as the latest commentaries, interpretations and reconstructions (*Geste*, *passim*) have been drawn upon.]

1. ...nach den alten Überlieferungen... Inaccurate rendering. L. t.: ...in der alten Art und Weise (in hergebrachter Form) (1)
2. ...nach den Bylinen... Here the Russian word *bylina* still carries its original meaning of "Das Gewesene". The modern terminus technicus *bylina* (Russian epic oral song) is an invention of the folklorist I. Saxarov (1841) due to his misinterpretation of this word in the *Slovo*. Therefore the passage should read: nach den Ereignissen unserer Zeit... (2)
3. ...den der erste Falke berührt, hob zu singen an... Inaccurate. L. t.: den der Falke einholt, hob als Erster zu singen an... (4)
4. ...durch die russische Erde. Inaccurate rendering L. t.: ...zur Verteidigung der russischen Erde. (7)
5. ...vor der Sonne... Inaccurate. L. t.: ...von der Sonne... l. c. The sun has grown dark and thus has cast Igor's army into darkness. (8)
6. Denn die Lust fiel den Fürsten an, zu versuchen den grossen Don und die Sehnsucht war stärker in ihm als das Zeichen des Himmels. Rather pale rendering. L. t.: Des Fürsten Vernunft ver-

brannte im flammenden Wunsche und das Zeichen des Himmels ward ihm verdeckt durch die Begierde zu versuchen den groszen Don. (12)

7. ...und herabsinkend, Nachtigall, auf beide Halften dieser Zeit... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. A much debated and misinterpreted passage. L. t. ...die Nachtigall webend den Ruhm um diese Zeit(en). (14)
8. .. so sangest du also das Lied des Igor, des Enkels von Oleg... Rilke's modern sources misleading. L. t.: ...so sollte sein Enkel singen das Lied des Igor. (15)
9. ...du sangest... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: Oder so sollte man singen... (17)
10. ..der Thiere pfeifendes Schreien scheuchte sie in Schaaren auf. An independent rendering of the Old-Russian text greatly improving on the modern Russian translation extant at Rilke's time. L. t. of Jakobson's modern Russian version: ...und das Geheul der Tiere jagte sie (die Vogel) in hunderten (Schaaren) fort. (28)
11. Heulend erhob der Drache sich über die Baume hin... None of modern Russian versions has this paraphrase of the daemon's (dragon's) name, *Div*. This is indicative of Rilke's acquaintance not only with the poetic versions of the *Slovo*, but also with some of the scholarly interpretations extant at his time.
12. ...und zwang fremde Länder in seinen Schrey. A free translation characteristic of Rilke's poetic language. L. t.: ...zwingt (befiehlt) die fremde Erde zuzuhören. (29)
13. Igor hält mit dem Heere am Don. Und schon ist sein Untergang bereitet als Frasz den Vögeln des Waldes; aus den Schluchten drängen sich drohend die Wölfe; ... A very free rendering. L. t.: Igor fuhr seine Krieger (Kämpfer) zum Don. Und schon verstecken sich die Vogel im Gehölz vor seinem Untergang und die Wolfe in den Grabern heulen Unheil (Gewitter.) (30/31)
14. Lange lagert die Nacht. Inaccurate. L. t.: Langsam erlosch das Abendrot in der Nacht (33)
15. ...mit purpurnen Schilden bedeckt. Inaccurate. L. t.: ...mit purpurnen Schilden verschanzt (eingezaunt) (36)
16. ...Kontschak ihm nach auf den groszen Don zu. Inaccurate. L. t.: Kontschak ihm voraus (bereitet ihm den Weg) zum Don, dem mächtigen. (42)
17. ...ungeduldig ein groszes Gewitter zu sein mit Regen und Pfeilen vom Don her. Free, characteristic of Rilke's poetic language. L. t.: Mächtiger Donner wird sein! Ein Regen von Pfeilen wird fallen vom Don her! (45)
18. ...eingeht in den Don. Inaccurate. L. t.: ...in der Nähe des mächtigen Don. (N. B. The river Kajaly approaches but does not flow into the Don.) (46)
19. Rauch fällt herab und die Fahnen stammeln. Free; characteristic of Rilke's poetic language. L. t.: ...Staub fällt herab und die Fahnen rufen: . . . (49/50)
20. Cf. note 15.
21. Und wie kann Der einer Wunde gedenken, Bruder, der alles ver-

- gessen hat. Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: ...und er teilte Wunden (Schläge) aus, oh Bruder, vergessend Rang und Leben... (56)
22. ...und das Klirren davon klang, fernher, zu dem Sohn des Jaroslav, dem groszen Wsewolod; zwar hielt in Tschernigoff Wladimir (Monomach) sich die Ohren zu, aber Boris.. Inaccurate. L. t.: .. und dieses Klirren hatte in vergangenen Zeiten der grosze Jaroslav gehört; aber Wsewolod, der Sohn Wladimirs hält sich des Morgens in Tschernigoff die Ohren zu' Doch den Boris.. (61)
23. ...legte ihn ihn auf die traurig grüne Uferwiese, den jungen muthigen Prinzen, als einen Vorwurf für Oleg. Inaccurate L. t.: ... und breitete (legte) ihm das Leichentuch auf das Gras wegen einer Beleidigung, angetan dem jungen und mutigen Oleg. (62)
24. ...auf seinen schweren Pferden.. Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading, L. t.: ...zwischen ungarischen schweren Pferden... (63). This is a Slav burial custom. The body is placed on a litter slung between two slowpacing horses and is thus carried to the burial place: *feretro eam locantes, duobus equis superposuerunt et eadem nocte usque ad urbem Pragam constanter properant* (Translation s. Ludmille).
25. Das war in dieser Schlacht und in diesem Kriege war das, und man hat niemals von einer solchen Schlacht gehört. Inaccurate. L. t.: So war es in jener Schlacht und in jenen Heerzügen; aber von einer solchen Schlacht [wie dieser] hat man noch nie gehört. A standard epic formula. (66)
26. ...die Werber... should be .. die Schwager... (73)
27. ..mit Schwingen gleich denen des Schwans... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: .. mit den Schwingen der Schwäne (i. e. of the swans whom she disturbed by her coming). (76)
28. ...storte auf das Gedachtnis reicherer Zeiten Aber die Zwietracht der Fürsten war ihr Untergang unter den Heiden. Da sprach zum Bruder der Bruder. dieses ist mein und das auch Inaccurate L. t.: ..und erweckte Zeiten reich an Streit Der Sieg der Fürsten über die Heiden ward verloren, weil zu Bruder der Bruder sagte: dies ist mein und auch das.. (76/77)
29. ... (die den Toten vorangeht) Jelja jagt durch das russische Land und streut Leichenasche weithin aus ihrem gluhenden Horn Und die russischen Frauen brachen in Thränen aus und in die Klage: ...Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t. of Jakobson's modern Russian version' ..und ein Klageschrei erscholl über die russische Erde. Die Flamme schwingend im gluhenden Horn, brachen in Klage aus die russischen Frauen... (81/82)
30. ...und zwischen den Wällen von Pleskow war eine Waldschlucht; die aus Kiew aber waren schon ans Meer gegangen .. Rilke's sources misleading. A much misunderstood passage Definitive interpretation by Jakobson. L. t.: Im Vorgebirge zu Plesensk erschien ein Schlitten und wurde zum blauen Meere getragen 99) This is a description of a well-documented Slav burial custom

which has also been attested to among the Scandinavians (cf. *Geste*, pp. 191 and 381).

31. ...es erloschen die beiden rothen Planeten... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: ...und die beiden blutroten Strahlenbündel erloschen. (103)
32. ...grosze Dreistheit einfloszend dem Khane... should read... grosze Dreistheit einfloszend dem Hunnen... and should follow "einer Pantherbrut" (105)
33. ...heidnische Blut... Rilke's sources mislead him Jakobson considers this a conjectural error of one of the scribes (for the reading is that of the oldest available texts) and suggests that "...il faut lire *krov' pravednuju*", i. e. "christian or holy or orthodox blood" instead of "*krov' poganuju*", i. e. "heathen blood". Context would indicate Jakobson's reading. (112)
34. ...denn du kannst mit deinen Rudern Muster in die Wolga weben . Free; characteristic of Rilke's poetic language. L. t.: Doch du kannst mit den Rudern die Wolga aufstoren . (124)
35. ...deine Riesenheerhaufen ziehn in den Wolken dahin. Inaccurate. L. t.: ...Riesenfelsen (-massen) werfend über die Wolken. (130)
36. ...khanische ... should be ... hunnische ... (135)
37. ...Russa... should be ... Ros'.. (137)
38. ...die Dwina rinnt grausig wie ein polowtzischer Morast durch der Heiden Geheul. Inaccurate L. t.: ...und die Dwina rinnt bei den beruchigt schrecklichen Polotzk Leuten dickflüssig wie ein Morast unter dem Geheul der Heiden. (143)
39. ...da lagen sie beide, Sterbende, er und der Ruhm, welcher sprach ... Inaccurate. L. t.: ...er fiel als wie mit der Gehebten aufs Lager. Boyan aber hatte prophezeit: Deine Gefolgschaft... (144/146)
40. Und da war sonst kein Bruder des Brjaschislaw und kein Anderer aus dem Hause Wsewolod. A rather free rendering. L. t.: Da war weder sein Bruder Brjaschislaw noch der Andere, der Wsewolod. (147)
41. Aus den Zänken der Fürsten kam schliesslich die Züchtigung auch vom polowtzischen Lande. — Im siebenten Jahrhundert trojanischen Alters looste um seine Geliebte... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: Denn aus den Zänken (wegen den Zanken) der Fürsten kam Gewalt vom polowtzischen Lande dem trojanischen im siebenten Jahrtausend. Es looste um seine Geliebte... (152/153)
42. In seine Schenkel nahm er das Pferd und raste... Rilke is here partly misled by his modern sources. L. t.: Gewandt sich auf den Speer stützend, sprang er... (154)
43. ...und wieder am Morgen stiesz er die Sporen in sein Pferd... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: Dreimal gelang es ihm das Glück beim Gebisz zu halten (zu zügeln, zwingen). (156)
44. ...von Dudotok her an die Nemiga. Rilke's modern sources misleading. L. t.: Und jagte an die Nemiga und trat fest die Tenne.

- I. e. er festigte, glattete (stampfend), bereitete die Tenne vor zum blutigen Streite. (167)
45. Sei gewandt, sei schnell, — schneller denn alle Vogel im Flug, Du überholest doch nicht Gottes Gerichte. A very free rendering. L. t.: Kein Durchtriebener und kein Listiger, kein gesprachiges Kuchlein kann dem Gerichte Gottes entgehen. (168)
46. Supply after "sich": Bis zur Donau singen die Speere. (167)
47. ...die Pfeile des Khans... should be... die hunnischen Pfeile... (174)
48. Wassersaulen wanderten wolking darüber hin. In this passage Rilke improves on his modern Russian sources. L. t.: Wassersaulen wandern. (184)
49. Olwur (Owlur) pfeift über dem Flusz, als rief er ein Pferd, dem Fürsten zum Zeichen... Und schon ist Fürst Igor nicht mehr da! In Freude rief er laut auf... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: Owlur, da er ein Pferd erjagt, pfeift um Mitternacht über dem Flusz (jenseits des Fluszes), — gibt dem Fürsten ein Zeichen, dasz er der Folter nicht erliegen soll! (186/187)
50. ...sprang nackt, als grauer Wolf... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: sprang herab als weiszfüsziger Wolf (der mit übernatürlichen Kräften ausgestattete Leitwolf). (189)
51. ...jagten die anderen .. Inaccurate. L. t. ..und beide jagten sie (ihre raschen Pferde zu Schanden). (191)
52. Man erzählte von dem Stugna-Flusz, dasz er anders sey. Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: Nein, solcherlei Rede fuhrte der Stugna Flusz nicht. (197)
53. ...und wir können Vögeln nachjagen... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: ...und man wird (er)schlagen unsre Vögel (Krieger) ... (203)
54. Es sang Bojan auch von den Tagen Swjatoslaw's, der Sanger der uralten Zeiten Jaroslaw's und Oleg's: "Fürstengeschlecht... Rilke's modern Russian sources misleading. L. t.: Boyan, der alte Sanger der Zeiten Jaroslaw's und Oleg's, des ersten Fürstengeschlechts hatte schon dem Sohne Swjatoslaw's vorausgesagt (gesungen): Schwer mag es dir sein... (209/210)

THE SLOVO IN ENGLISH

By

Avrahm Yarmolinsky

In the articles on Russian literature which found their way into London magazines during the twenties of the last century there is occasional mention of the poem. Thus, in the volume with which the *Westminster Review* made its bow before the public in 1824 one comes upon this: "Among the poetic names which have been preserved out of the ruins of old times, there is one which though but a name, is religiously venerated in Russia. *Boyan*, the nightingale (*Solovei*), whom tradition has cherished as the bard who led the old Russian warriors to battle, and enabled them to work miracles of valour by the magic excitement of his strains, still lives in the universal mind, though not a single breath of his lyre has found its way to the existing generation. In a warlike and anonymous fragment, the hymn used in the campaign of Igor in the twelfth century, written in the dialect of southern Russia, in measured prose, a fine spirit of heroism is mingled with the obscurity of a forgotten mythology."¹ There seems to be no earlier English reference to the *Slovo*.

A paragraph on the *Expedition of Igor against the Polovtzi* occurs in the initial volume of *The Foreign Quarterly Review*, which appeared in 1827. Here "the poem" is described as one that "merits particular attention for its originality, its bold imagery, and that richness of imagination which characterizes the poetry of all young nations." The reader is told further that "the name of the author has not survived, but he has transmitted to us that of Bojane, a still earlier poet, whose works have also unfortunately perished."² The reader of *The Foreign Review and Continental Miscellany* for 1828 learned that the *Slovo* recorded "the military exploits of Igor against

¹ Bibl., No. 1, p. 94.

² Bibl., No. 2, p. 605.

the Poles (!)" and that a fragment of it was discovered in 1796 and published in 1800.³

These remarks in the London magazines are mere second-hand reports, embroidering confusely on passages from Emile Dupré de Saint-Maure's *Anthologie russe, Vzgljad na staruju i novuju slovesnost v Rossii* by Alexander Bestužev, with which the St. Petersburg miscellany, *Poljarnaja zvezda* for 1823 opens, and *Opyt kratkoj istorii russkoj literatury*, by Nikolaj Greč.

To the United States belongs the distinction of having produced the first English comment on our text by one who actually perused it. This comment came from the pen of a German-American lady, at once a remarkable linguist and an erudite student of literature. This Thérèse Albertine Louise von Jacob Robinson, who wrote under the pseudonym of Talvj, learned Russian at an early age and eventually became proficient in all the Slavic vernaculars, as well as in many other tongues. Goethe, with whom she had personal contacts, admired her German translation of the Serbian folk ballads. Having married an American, the Biblical scholar, Edward Robinson, she settled in the United States. In 1834 she contributed to the review, *Biblical Repository*, founded by her husband, an extensive essay, written in English, on the Slavic languages and literatures. Here she had this to say about the *Slovo*:

"That . . . the genuine old Russian had its poets, was, until the close of the last century, only known by historical tradition, no monument of them seemed to be left. But at that time, A.D. 1794, a Russian nobleman, Count Mussin-Pushkin, discovered the manuscript of an epic poem, 'Igor's Expedition against the Polovtzi', apparently not older than the twelfth century. It is a piece of national poetry of the highest beauty, united with an equal share of power and gracefulness. But what strikes us even more than this, is, that we find in it no trace of that rudeness, which would naturally be expected in the production of a period when darkness still covered all eastern Europe, and of a poet belonging to a nation, which we have hardly longer than a century ceased to consider as barbarians. There hovers a spirit of meekness over the whole, which sometimes seems to endanger the energy of the representation. The truth is that the Russians enjoyed at this early

³ Bibl., No. 3, p. 281.

period a higher degree of mental cultivation than almost any other part of Europe.”⁴

When the essay was expanded into a book, which was published in 1850, the author deleted the sweeping final sentence, and added the following paragraph:

“The genuineness of this poem, has, as far as we know, never been questioned, but it is indeed a very surprising feature, that during the recent diligent search through all the libraries in the country after old manuscripts, not a single production has been discovered, which could in any way be compared with it. This remarkable poem stands in the history of ancient Russian literature perfectly isolated; and hence exhibits one of the most inexplicable riddles in literary history.”⁵

Mrs. Robinson was unaware of the controversy over the authenticity of the poem, which broke out in the Russian press during the eighteen-thirties. Sooner or later, however, the “skeptical” point of view was bound to become known abroad. A commentator on several French histories of Russian literature in the *Westminster Review* for 1877, in referring to “the Song on the Expedition of Igor,” observes: “Some consider it to date as early as the twelfth century, others that it is a modern forgery... With many Russian scholars it seems a point of national honour to believe in this composition, but to a foreigner the whole piece appears bombastic, and not without signs of modern falsification.”⁶

It was not until the publication, under the auspices of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, of another survey of Slav literatures, by an English scholar, William R. Morfill, nearly half a century after the first appearance of Mrs. Robinson’s monograph, that a few extracts from the *Slovo* became available. The quality of the translation leaves much to be desired. Thus Jaroslavna — her lament is the longest passage cited — is made to dip in the river Kajala her “gloves of beaver-skin.”⁷ The author characterizes the epic as “a kind of prose bilina” and notes its resemblance to “the Irish prose-poems, such as the description of the Battle of Clontarf in

⁴ Bibl., No. 4, p. 363.

⁵ Bibl., No. 5, p. 54.

⁶ Bibl., No. 6, p. 218.

⁷ Bibl., No. 7, p. 78.

The War of the Gaedhill with the Gaill, and the Battle of Magh Rath."⁸

Several extracts from the *Slovo*, including the lament of Jaroslavna, in a fairly commendable translation, illustrate the rather ample discussion of the tale in Georg Brandes's *Impressions of Russia*, which was first published in English in 1889.⁸ A rendering of that part of the text which precedes the Dream of Svjatoslav was contributed to *Stories from the Classic Literature of Many Nations* (New York, 1898),⁹ by J. A. Joffe, who had a hand in the preparation of the volume, *La Geste du Prince Igor*, brought out fifty years later under the auspices of Ecole Libre des Hautes Etudes à New York as vol. VIII of *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves*. Even that fragment is not given in its entirety, several passages and not a few phrases having been omitted. Nor can it be said that the wording, for which Bertha Palmer, the editor of the volume, is partly responsible, is impeccable.

Prince Sergei Volkonski in his Lowell Lecture on Russian history and literature¹⁰ touches upon the *Slovo* and so does an English author, Hector H. Munro. While narrating "the feuds of the House of Rurik" in his history of Russia, he mentions as one of the Russian sources, "an epic poem of great beauty," namely, *The Song of the Expedition of Igor*.¹¹ This work, he writes, "one of the earliest Slavonic folk-songs that has been handed down from the dead past, has been translated into many languages, but never before into English, so that it is well worth reproducing in part in a history of Russian development."¹² There follows a brief summary of the poem, based on H. von Paucker's German rendering and on "a modernized Russian reproduction of the Slavonic text" (the author seems to have had some Russian).¹³

Munro's book was published both in England and the United States in 1900. Two years later there appeared the first English translation of the poem, complete except for the more

⁸ Bibl., No. 8.

⁹ Bibl., No. 10.

¹⁰ Bibl., No. 9.

¹¹ Bibl., No. 11, p. 66.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 69, fn.

obscure passages. It was an American contribution. The rendering was included in an anthology of Russian literature compiled by Leo Wiener, a native of Russia who was then a professor of Slavic languages and literatures at Harvard University.¹⁴ The text is preceded by a translation of the narrative of Igor's campaign of 1185, taken from the Hypatian Chronicle, and by a general introductory note, detailing the circumstances under which the manuscript of the poem was discovered and containing a word of appreciation. To Wiener, as to Munro, the poem was a piece of folklore. "The superior value of the *Word* [of *Igor's Armament*] lies in its being a precious relic of popular poetry of the twelfth century, such as no other nation can boast of. The *Nibelungenlied* and the *Chanson de Roland* are chiefly productions of a literary character, while the *Word* bears every evidence of representing the untutored labour of a popular bard."¹⁵ The translator does not indicate the editions which he followed. It may be assumed that they were among the best available at the time and that he was competent to interpret them. If he failed dismally to do justice to the *Slovo*, it was because of his insufficient mastery of the English language, and because too, like most of the other translators who were to try their hands at the task, he had a deficient sense of poetic values.

The studious reader could gain some shreds of information about our poem from the several English histories of Russian literature which soon began to appear on the market. There are two or three pages on *The Ballad of the Band of Igor* in Waliszewski's volume,¹⁶ and a page in *A Survey of Russian Literature* by Isabel Hapgood,¹⁷ who emphasizes "a curious mingling of heathen beliefs and Christian views" in *The Word (or Lay) Concerning Igor's Raid* and quotes the opening of the poem in a free translation. Peter Kropotkin's book, made up of lectures he delivered at the Lowell Institute in 1901, offers a garbled and helpless version of Jaroslavna's lament and a few lines of comment."¹⁸ *A Literary History of Russia*, by Alexander Brückner, contains little besides a rapid, com-

¹⁴ Bibl., No. 13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁶ Bibl., No. 12.

¹⁷ Bibl., No. 14.

¹⁸ Bibl., No. 15.

petent summary of the "peculiar little work,"¹⁹ as he describes the poem.

The Lament reappears in Maurice Baring's *Outline*, but in a readable, somewhat free rendering. Unlike Brückner, this author is warmly appreciative of the *Slovo*. It is, we are told, "not only one of the most remarkable memorials of the ancient written language of Russia, but by virtue of its originality, its historical truth, its vividness, it holds a unique place in the literary history of Europe, and offers an interesting contrast to the *Chanson de Roland*."²⁰ A stimulating and rather ample discussion of the poem may be found in Mirsky's history.²¹ "The style of the poem," this author tells us, "is the reverse of the primitive and barbaric. It is curiously, disconcertingly modern, all suggestion and allusion, full of splendid imagery, subtly symbolic and complex." The work, he writes, is couched in a highly organized rhythmical prose of "infinitely varied flexibility." The *Slovo's* other claim to uniqueness lies, according to him, in the fact that "it is neither a lyric, nor an epic, nor a piece of political oratory, and it is all these blended into one." It might have been the better part of valor for him not to have succumbed to the temptation of giving some excerpts in translation.

Some echoes of the poem reached the public in England and America, at least the opera-going section of it, via Borodin's *Prince Igor*, the libretto of which is, of course, based on the *Slovo*. The opera was performed in New York in 1915-17 and quite recently (1944) in San Francisco. When it was given in London in 1919 it was sung in English, in a version by Edward Agate. Another English translation of the libretto, by H. Proctor-Gregg, was used at Leicester in 1933.²² A third English version of the libretto has also been published.²³

A word may be said here about the treatment of the *Slovo* in the English and American encyclopedias. There is a paragraph on "The Story of Igor" in the Britannica, Ninth Edition (1886), s. v. *Russia*. Part V: Russian Literature. The article is from the pen of W. R. Morfill and indeed the com-

¹⁹ Bibl., No. 16, p. 13.

²⁰ Bibl., No. 17, p. 15.

²¹ Bibl., No. 25.

²² *Annals of Opera: 1597-1940*, by Alfred Loewenberg, Cambridge, 1943, p. 592. The opera was also performed in London in 1937.

²³ Bibl., No. 18.

ment on the poem is a paraphrase of the passage in that writer's book mentioned above. The text is reprinted in the Eleventh Edition (1911), practically unchanged. The current Fouteenth Edition (1929) includes a new, and anonymous, article on Russian literature, s. v. *Russian language and literature*, in which the *Slovo* gets half a dozen lines. It is no longer described in Morfill's words, as "a kind of bylina in prose," but, in keeping with the modern view, as a "political prose-poem." Brief mention of the poem is to be found in the Anglo-American Chamber's encyclopedia and in the current American encyclopedias: the National (s. v. *Russian literature*), Nelson's, Doubleday's (s. v. *Russia*). A separate article on the subject is contained in *The New International Encyclopedia*, published in New York (1926), s. v. *Igor's Band, Song of*, and in the *Americana*, s. v. *Igor's March, Song of*. This last manages to crowd a surprising amount of misinformation into a dozen lines. The *Slovo* is described as "an antique battle-song, associated with the name of Igor, Prince of Novgorod." This Prince, it appears, "in his fifty-first year is recorded to have engaged in an unsuccessful war with his neighbors (1202)²⁴ and from that time has been looked upon as the national poet of old Russia on account of a lyrical epic poem, or ballad, called in Russian *Slovo o polku Igoreve*." In the next breath, however, we are told that the poem, which "has come down to modern times somewhat like the songs of Ossian," was "probably produced by one of the followers of Igor..." This article appears both in the 1932 and in the 1941 edition of the work.

II

The student of literature, his curiosity pricked by scattered enthusiastic references to the poem and especially by Baring's and Mirsky's encomia, could turn to a learned English edition of the *Slovo*, prepared by Leonard A. Magnus. It came out in 1915 under the auspices of the Philological Society of England.²⁵ In a paper by this editor, "The Literary Remains of Old Russia," composed two years earlier, he wrote that "amongst medieval epics it (the *Slovo*) stands unique for be-

²⁴ This is, of course, the date of Igor's death.

²⁵ Bibl., No. 19.

ing chronologically and historically accurate" and called attention to "its immense value" as "a record of medieval Russia."²⁶ Accordingly, in his edition the emphasis is chiefly on the poem as an historical record, rather than as a work of literary significance. The extensive introduction to the book deals with the historical background of the *Slovo*, and, to a lesser extent, with the other phases of the subject. Unfortunately, the author's scholarship leaves much to be desired and his remarks on the composition and style of the *Slovo* are rather perfunctory.

The original text reproduced is based on the copy made for Empress Catherine. Sometimes the editor follows Pekar-skij's edition, sometimes Simoni's, occasionally he prefers readings from the *editio princeps*. Variants are indicated in footnotes, and at the close there are notes on separate words and phrases, arranged alphabetically. The text is broken up into verses in accordance with Korš's metrical reconstruction of it. But while our editor holds that one must "gratefully follow" Korš's "accentual lore," he believes that it would be "premature" to agree with that scholar's "bold interpolations and omissions."²⁷ As a result, he has 770 lines, as against Korš's 647.

Magnus incorporates into his text emendations suggested by previous exegetes. Unfortunately, he often follows early commentators whose work was of unsound scholarship even for their own day and has since been superseded, while many admirable studies of more recent date remained unknown to him. This has been established by a competent Russian scholar, A. P. Kadlubovskij, who has subjected the English work to a painstaking examination.²⁸ "Out of the rich literature about the "Slovo," writes V. N. Peretc, "he (Magnus) makes use mainly of those studies least meriting attention and abounding in philologically unsound readings and explanations of the obscure words and phrases of the text."²⁹ Furthermore, not content with citing other scholars' readings, the English editor offers a number of his own. A weakness for far-fetched, arbitrary conjectures, coupled with insufficient knowledge of the

²⁶ Bibl., No. 20, p. 106.

²⁷ Bibl., No. 19, p. xxxix.

²⁸ Bibl., No. 19a.

²⁹ Bibl., No. 19b, p. 161.

Old Russian language and paleography, occasionally results in suggestions that are apt to add to the gaiety of nations. A few samples of the proposed readings follow.

Karnaižlja (81, A), which is described as "one of the great conundrums of the *Slovo*", is identified with the Cumanian word kargizlu, translated in Codex Cumanicus *maledictus*; hence the word in the poem means "the Accursed One" and applies to Končak.

Šestokrilci (140) is interpreted as a corruption of šerstokryly, which figures in Dahl's dictionary; it is explained by Magnus as "a term applied to tropical flying-fish" and is translated: "ye heavy-winged ones". Pri Olžě Gorislavliči (64) is replaced by pri Olžě Boris' zla vleči, which is translated: "In the time of Oleg, Boris wrought for evil" Galičky Osmomyslě Jaroslave (130) is revised to Galičky oslomi o Vislě, Jaroslave, which is translated thus: "Thou didst shatter the Galicians on the Vistula, Yaroslav."

In the text Magnus prints the lines vr'že Vseslav' žrebij o děvicju sebě ljubu (153). In a note, however, he suggests the following new reading of the passage, since "it is obvious no satisfactory sense can be got out of děvicju": "vr'že Vseslav' žrebij. Otide k' Issě, snja bělu jupu." And here is the translation: "Vseslav cast lots—perhaps a pagan ceremony. He set out to the river *Issa* (on the way to Pskov), forded it, taking off his thick white sheepskin cloak (jupa)."³⁰ One can only marvel at the liveliness of our author's imagination.

The gem of the collection is perhaps the emendation of the passage: У Плѣсньска на болони бѣша дебръ кисаню, и несошлю къ синему морю. Instead of this, Magnus offers the lines:

Dvu plěnnika na boloni,
bez' ščady, dvu, reki isadi
nesoša ja k' sinemu morju.

This is translated: "Two captives (stand) by the fen: mercilessly (the foe) have carried the two to the landing-stage of the river, down to the blue sea." One is hard put to it to read any sense into this.

Magnus devotes a separate excursus to the problem of the meaning of Bojan and Trojan. Following Vel'tman, he identifies the former with the Jan' Vyšatič of the *Chronicle*. As

³⁰ Bibl., No. 19, p. 75.

for Trojan, he derives the word from the numeral *tri* and takes it to be "a poetical name" for Russia,, the land of Rurik, the third of the Scandinavian brothers who arrived in Kiev.³¹ He seeks to bolster his hypothesis by interpreting the first letter in the reading *zojani* as the digit 3.

The excursus elicited a retort from John Dyneley Prince, Professor of Slavic Languages at Columbia University, in the form of a paper which he read on April 14, 1917, before the American Philosophical Society.³² He prefers Vjazemskij's derivation of Boyan from *bajati* and does not altogether reject that commentator's identification of the bard with Homer, conceding that "in a sense our Bojan is really an echo of Homer himself, although perhaps not consciously Homer in the mind of the author of the *Slovo*."³³ As for Trojan, our author believes that the way in which the word is used in the poem points to its designating not a person, but rather a country. Magnus' derivation he considers "far-fetched". Without any supporting citations he asserts that the word is "often used as a nickname for the third son," like the Latin Tertius. "But," he argues, "there is no historical evidence that Rurik was the third brother of the triad. In fact, in the legend, he always occupies the first place."³⁴ It is more likely, he believes, that the term represents "a mixed tradition . . . a combination-reproduction of the Roman 'Trajan' and the Greek 'Trojan'." He cites Rambaud, *La Russie épique* (p. 408), in support of his assertion that "Literate Russians of the period were evidently familiar with the tale of the Trojan war through the works of Tryphiodore, Kolouthos, etc."³⁵ and he lists a number of Greek parallels with the *Slovo*, collected by Clarence A. Manning, also of Columbia University, which "shows a very decided Hellenic influence on the formation of the poem."³⁶ But why, then, our author asks, did the early Russians apply the term Trojan "to their own country and people?" The explanation he suggests is an odd one. The secret apparently lies in the similarity between the sound of Trojan and Bojan. "The ancient Slavonic world abounded in singers similar to the Celtic bards and the

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. LII.

³² Bibl., No. 21.

³³ Bibl., No. 21, p. 160.

³⁴ Bibl., No. 21, p. 154-55.

³⁵ Bibl., No. 21, p. 155.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Scandinavian skalds, and, granted a word Bojan-Bajan equal 'singer, poet, sayer', already existing in the popular language, the author of the *Slovo* probably introduced the Trojan-epithet, to indicate Russia by assonance with Bojan. Bojan was for the author of the *Slovo* the poet *par excellence* who had given the ancient norm of Russian song, the traditions regarding whom are unknown to the modern world. It is highly likely, therefore, that Trojan, having in itself a basis of Trojan with a possible superimposition of the later 'Trajan' influence — was used for the country, of which the then known Bojan sang, i. e. of Russia."³⁷

J. Dyneley Prince is also the author of a paper listing the lexical material in the *Slovo* which is of "Tatar", i. e. Cumanian, or, more generally, Altaic derivation, the author using "Tatar" as "a name applied to all Turkic, Mongolian and Hunnic tribes."³⁸

III

Magnus states in the prefatory note to his work that it was intended "as a handbook to the increasing number of students of the Russian language and to reveal to the general public one of the treasures of Russian medieval literature." The book can hardly be said to meet the needs of the student. As Kadlubovskij temperately puts it in summing up the results of his examination of the book, it "will leave certain aspects of the *Slovo* entirely in the dark for the English reader and present to him certain details of the text in the wrong light."³⁹ The general public is even less happily served by the book. The English translation it contains aims at being a literal rendering and as a result is so infelicitous, to speak mildly, as to transmit hardly anything of the power and beauty of the original.

The general reader is not likely to find any more satisfaction in *The Tale of Igor, adapted from the Old Russian Legend* by Helen De Vere Beauclerk and published in London in 1918. What results from a free and easy attitude toward the original, coupled with a limited comprehension of it, is exemplified by

³⁷ Bibl., No. 21, p. 160.

³⁸ Bibl., No. 22, p. 75, fn.

³⁹ Bibl., No. 19a, p. 361.

this description of Svjatoslav's dream: "A band of heathen wanderers stood around me, seeking to comfort me with pearls which they poured from their quivers upon me. But I was without hope, for the gold had been reft from the walls of my castle and the birds of Boos cawed in the darkness. And lo! I saw two men standing on the river bank, and the pagans took them and brought them to the ships and sailed with them away to the deep sea!"⁴⁰

A further idea of the author's style and method may be gained from an excerpt corresponding to the passage beginning with 69 down to 73: "*At the end of the second night Igor ordered his host to retire, for he saw that his dear brother Vsevolod was weakening and he was filled with pity. The call of the trumpets, bidding the armies to retire, was heard at dawn, but only at noon of the third day was the banner of Igor lowered. The prince was taken prisoner. From a king's saddle he fell to that of a slave, and thus on the shores of the Kayala were the brothers parted. Great had been the feast and deep the drinking of the wine of blood! The Russians had in truth glutted their guests with wine. Nevertheless, many were dead in defense of Russia.*"⁴¹ The words in italics are either supplied by the author or taken from another sequence in the original.

Of course, it is the prerogative of the adapter to select, to alter, to recombine, but it can scarcely be said that Helen de Vere Beauclerk has used her freedom to advantage. It would take a close knowledge of the language in which it is written, a keener feeling for its poetry, as well as a more sensitive and skilful pen than hers, to produce an adaptation which would revivify the old text, freeing it from obscurities and awkwardnesses, removing the corruptions of age, and preserving its emotion and vigor.

In 1919 a new rendering of the *Slovo* appeared in a Boston review. It was the work of the late Wanda Petrunkevitch, collaborating with her husband, the distinguished Yale zoologist, Alexander Petrunkevitch. The text is preceded by "Introductory Remarks" and followed by a limited number of notes, chiefly about persons and localities mentioned in the poem. "The student will find in the following presentation," the

⁴⁰ Bibl., No. 23, p. 15.

⁴¹ Bibl., No. 23, p. 12.

translators state, "every sentence of the original in its proper sequence and with the meaning which we are inclined to give after a study of various commentators."⁴² The sentences are indeed in their proper places, but one is inclined to impugn the couple's judgment in choosing interpretations such as the following: "impassioned fingers" for věščia pr'sty (5); "pilgrims" for inoxod'cy (63); "roofless stood the walls of my bower with golden doors" for uže d'sky bez' kněsa v moem' teremě zlatovr'sem' (97). However, such misinterpretations mar the rendering less than does the translators' awkwardness in using the English language.

Another translation of the *Slovo*, entitled: *The Lay of the Host of Igor, Son of Svjatoslav, Grandson of Oleg*, is included in a recent anthology of Russian literature and is the work of its editor, Bernard G. Guerney.⁴³ On the factual side, the introductory note, in which Igor is described as "Prince of Novgorod", is wanting, to say the least. The translator's palpitating admiration of the poem leads him into dazzling overstatements, and indeed prompts him to throw out the startling suggestion that the unknown author of the poem "seems in many ways to have been a Slavic parallel of Lord Bacon." Unfortunately, his enthusiasm far exceeds his respect for the text or his ability to acquit himself of the difficult task he had undertaken.

It appears from the note that in addition to "two very modern redactions of the *editio princeps*," the translator followed "a modern recension of the Catherine II transcript." Faithfulness to the letter of the original, however, is Guerney's least concern. His rendering is sometimes so free as to verge on adaptation. He alters, amplifies, interpolates explanations, transposes some passages, omits others. He describes his work as "an abridged version . . . intended primarily for supposititious enjoyment." Some of the phrases and paragraphs have been omitted, presumably because they are either corrupt or form digressions interrupting the smooth flow of the narrative. It is difficult, however, to see why the translator chose to leave out the dream of Svjatoslav and its interpretation by his boyars.

Where the meaning of the original is uncertain, a trans-

⁴² Bibl., No. 24, p. 291.

⁴³ Bibl., No. 26.

lator may justifiably give free rein to his imagination. Of what flights of fancy our translator is capable is clear from the following lines, which correspond to 81 f.

Throughout the Russian land
Voplenitza, the Keener, bewailed
His defeat,
And Zhalnitza, the Sorrowing,
Writhed in agony,
The burning grief within her
Like over-replenished labdanum
Within a funeral torch
Fashioned from a horn.

He has his feet a little more firmly on the ground when he renders 77 f. as:

Among the princes there is
Dissension,
But for us common folk the pagans are
Sheer ruination!

But there is no excuse for translating *jarugy* (24) as "well-springs in the ravines" or rendering *kotoryi dotečaše, ta predi pěsn' pojaše staromu Jaroslavu* (4 f. *P*):

As each falcon-hero swooped
Down upon a swan,
That hero's song would be sung:
Boyan sang thereon
To Yaroslav of old...

A simple bold image taken from venery is here distorted to the point of unintelligibility.

A serious flaw in the work is the translator's tendency to pad his text. Epithets, often trite, are tacked on where the original is innocent of them. Thus, *knjazem'* becomes "brave, doughty knights", *borzyj* is "wind-swift", *pole* — "gory field", *šelom'* — "deep helmet". O, *Russkaja zemle, uže za šolomjanem' esi* (32) is rendered thus:

O my land,
My land of Russia,
Thou art left behind now,
Beyond the Great Grave-Mound art thou!

And here, gaudy with the translator's inventions, is his cluttered equivalent of the finely severe line: *Po Ruskoj zemli prostrošasja Polovci aky parduže gnězdo* (105):

And all over the land of Russia
The outlanders scattered and roamed
Like a pack of hunting leopards;
And they inundated it like to a tidal wave;
And the violence of those paynims
Still more unbridled grew.

It should be said that, whether satisfactory as a translation or not, certain passages in Guerneý's version, for instance, the opening of Jaroslavna's lament, are not ineffective and indeed make agreeable reading.

From the excerpts cited above, it is clear that Guerneý's is a verse rendering. He uses chiefly unrhymed short lines, made up of iambs and anapaests, reserving for certain passages more prosy cadences, and not attempting to reproduce the alliterative effects of the poem. The predominantly rising lilt helps to create the atmosphere of warlike balladry. Unfortunately, the effort to sustain this metrical scheme has betrayed the translator into resorting to frequent inversions. These are one of the faults of a style which is at variance with the forthright, vigorous manner of the original.

Before turning to the two latest translations of our text, mention should be made of the discerning and instructive pages devoted to it in George P. Fedotov's work on early Russian Christianity, published in 1946.⁴⁴ They offer an admirable discussion of the *Slovo*, with special emphasis on its ethical and religious elements. A detailed examination of the poem is to be found in a Soviet history of early Russian literature which has recently been translated into English.⁴⁵

Prince Igor's Raid Against the Polovtsi is the title of a thin pamphlet published in 1947 by The P. Mohyla Ukrainian Institute in Canada.⁴⁶ It is the text of the *Slovo*, "translated by Rev. Paul C. Crath, B. A." and "versified by Watson Kirkconnell, M. A., Ph. D., LL. D." According to the anonymous Foreword, *Prince Ihor's Raid* is "the oldest known written ballad in the Ukrainian language" — a statement common enough with the nationalist school of Ukrainian scholarship.⁴⁷ More remarkable contentions follow. The poem, it seems, was probably composed by one of Igor's warriors, "a native of Naddnestrian-

⁴⁴ Bibl., No. 27.

⁴⁵ Bibl., No 31.

⁴⁶ Bibl., No. 28.

⁴⁷ Cf. Bibl., No 30.

shchina", by the name of Ovlur. He "apparently (!) survived" his master's defeat, was taken prisoner with him, but escaped and, after failing to rouse the princes against the Polovcy, rejoined Igor and helped him flee from captivity. As for the language of the poem, "except for the first seven verses, which are in pure Church Slavonic, the original ballad seems to have been written in the old spoken dialect of the Western Ukraine . . ." Musin-Puškin, its discoverer, labored, we are told, under the mistaken impression that it was written in "ancient Russian," and so in editing the text continued the work of mutilating it begun by "earlier Muscovite scribes." These, in fact, so impaired "the ballad" that "it is impossible to know in what metre it was written . . ." In view of the translators' firm conviction that the *Slovo* was originally a metrical composition, it is not astonishing to find that their version is couched in the measure of Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha*.

The fruit of the joint efforts of Rev. Crath and Professor Kirkconnell is not a complete rendering. Quite a few passages have been excised and, following some "Ukrainian scholars," several verses have been transposed and some words "corrected." The authority of these scholars is probably responsible for the fact that all proper names have been Ukrainianized, so that we have "the fair Hlibivna," Hzak (from K'za!!), Chernihiv, and Dažbog becomes Day-boh. One wonders if this authority also accounts for such interpretations as "Striboh, the god of leaping," and "Tuha, the Dawn," or for the identification of Rim (121) with the biblical Ramah, or again for this translation of the refrain, *O russkaja zemle, uže za šolomjanem' esi* (32 etc.):

Be abased, O mightly Russ-land,
Thou no more art now a Summit.

Elsewhere we read:

Fed for war were they on spear-heads

— too austere a diet even for Vsevolod's sturdy fighters. There are also explanatory footnotes, from which we learn, among other things, that Trojan was "a great but legendary Ukrainian bard," that *Russici* were "sons of Russia, mythical ancestors of the Ukrainians," and that the Ovars were "a small tribe of Goths in the Crimea." In sum, this singularly helpless performance is an instance of what incompetence coupled with special pleading is capable of producing.

The last item to be touched upon in this survey is the translation of the *Slovo* contributed by the late Professor Samuel H. Cross to *La Geste du Prince Igor* mentioned above.⁴⁸ The translator's scholarly concern for accuracy is evident in the very title of his rendering, which reads: *The Tale of the Raid of Igor* — *Igor Son of Svyatoslav, Grandson of Oleg*. Unfortunately this version is marred by a literalness that not infrequently results in awkward locutions and in a few instances leads to a mishandling of the English language. Nor is the text entirely free from questionable interpretations. Thus, it is doubtful if the phrase "did draw amid (sic) two bushes" is a satisfactory equivalent of "rostre na kustu" (197). It should be noted, however, that Professor Cross's translation is scrupulously complete, and innocent of transpositions and interpolations; in that respect it is superior to all others. Furthermore, it has the merit of being based on the latest and probably most reliable recension of the original, established by Professor Roman Jakobson and his associates and printed in *La Geste*.

* * *

It is clear that thus far the *Slovo* has scarcely made any impression on the English-reading public, and moreover that Anglo-American pre-war scholarship has contributed practically nothing to its elucidation, a fact natural enough in view of the recent state of Slavic studies in Britain and in this country. The poem is, however, now accessible to the English reader, and can be known not only by reputation. For all its faults, the translation by Bernard G. Guerney is fairly readable, and Professor Cross's version is in the main faithful to the letter of the poem, even if it fails to do it justice as a work of literature, a task of which perforce only a poet is capable.

⁴⁸ Bibl., No. 29

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TRANSLITERATION TABLE

а	б	в	г	д	е	е	ж	з	и	й	к	л	м	н	о	п	р
a	b	v	g	d	e	ë	ž	z	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	r
с	т	у	ф	х	ц	ч	ш	щ	ъ	ы	ь	ѣ	э	ю	я	ё	
s	t	u	f	x	c	č	š	šč	'	y	'	ě	è	ju	ja	f	

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Slovo — *Slovo o polku Igorevě*.

A — Copy of the *Slovo* made for Catherine II in 1795-96 and found among the papers of the Empress in the State Archives.

P — *Editio princeps* of the *Slovo* published in Moscow in 1800 by Musin-Puškin, Bantyš-Kamenskij, and Malinovskij.

Geste — *La Geste du Prince Igor*. Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves, VIII, New York, 1948 (Distributed by Columbia University Press). All the quotations from the *Slovo*, when the source is not specifically given, are taken from its critical edition by R. Jakobson, *Geste*, pp. 38-78, and the numbers in italics refer to the text units (*versets*) as established there.

