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Adapting Skazki: How American Authors Reinvent Russian Fairy Tales

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**ADAPTING SKAZKI: HOW AMERICAN AUTHORS
REINVENT RUSSIAN FAIRY TALES**

by

SARAH KRASNER

**SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS**

PROFESSOR RUDOVA

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A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

Most transliteration of terms from Russian into English in this thesis are the transliterations found in either the main novels or the sources of the work. This may have resulted in slight differences in transliteration of words, as authors might have used different systems. That being said, the following general rules should apply to transliterations in this work.

А	A
Б	B
В	V
Г	G
Д	D
Е	E
Ё	Yo
Ж	Zh
З	Z
И	I
Й	I
	Y (when proceeding vowel is и or ы)
К	K
Л	L
М	M
Н	N
О	O
П	P
Р	R
С	S
Т	T
У	U
Ф	F
Х	Kh
Ц	Ts
Ч	Ch
Ш	Sh
Щ	Sch
Ъ	‘
Ы	Y
Ь	‘
Э	E
Ю	Yu
Я	Ya

A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Baba Yaga (Баба Яга)- A common character in Russian fairy tales whose role varies from story to story.

Bogatyr' (богатырь)- A stock character in bylini, similar to the Western European knight-errant.

Bylina (былина)- The oral narrative tradition of historical-based early heroes of Rus. The plural is byliny (былины). These tales are later in origin than folk tales, and while they may have fantastic elements to them, they generally have more concrete locations and historical material. Their subject matter is also more focused, as they are stories of battle and hunting, often against fantastic opponents, such as zmei.

Koschei the Deathless (Кощей Бессмертный)- Typically cast as a sorcerer, Koschei is an undead figure whose death is hidden in an egg. He often kidnaps the wife of the hero.

Matryoshka (матрёшка)- A Russian nesting doll, a set of wooden dolls of decreasing size placed within one another. They are sometimes painted to match, so that all look alike, and at other times are painted as a set, so that they tell a story or are all characters from a story.

Roditeli (родители)- The Russian word for parents, it can more generally refer to honored ancestral spirits.

Rusalka (русалка)- a Russian mermaid who died a tragic death. They live in water, but in folklore often have legs—or the ability to have legs—and can go on to land. The plural is rusalki (русалки).

Skazka (сказка)- A Russian word which literally means story, but which is used to mean fairy tale. The plural is skazki (сказки).

Zalozhnye (заложные)- Spirits who died a premature death, either violently or from unnatural causes. They were considered tainted, and therefore were denied proper burial rites.

Zmei (змеи)- A creature much like a dragon, who is often fought by the hero and who has captured a princess.

Introduction

Andre Lefevere once argued that most people are aware of canonical literature, not because they have read the original texts, but because they have encountered them in rewritten form, as adaptations.¹ The scholarly study of these adaptations is relatively new, with the International Association of Adaptation Studies having formed only in 2008.² The ideas of the field, however, have existed for many years under many different headings, including literary studies, film studies, and translation studies.

One area of study that has long existed under other headings, but benefits greatly from adaptation studies, is the study of fairy tales. There is a breadth of scholarly literature—from scholars such as Maria Tatar, Christina Bacchilega, Jack Zipes, Sandra M. Gilbert, and Susan Gubar—both on the origin of folklore and on the different shapes that writers, directors, artists, and songwriters have bent folklore into. Most of this work, however, has concentrated on Western fairytales, such as those from Jacob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786-1859) or Charles Perrault (1628-1703).

A few scholars have extensively studied Russian fairy tales—skazki—and investigated both the fairy tales themselves and the underlying folklore. Among the most important of these scholars are Vladimir Propp and Maria Kravchenko. Vladimir Propp (1895-1970) is a famous name in the world of Russian fairy tale studies, having written several influential books on the subject, including *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928). Propp broke down a selection of Alexander Afanasyev's folktale collection (the Russian equivalent of the Brothers Grimm or

¹ Shannon K. Farley, "Translation, Interpretation, Fan Fiction: A Continuum of Meaning Production," *Transformative Works and Cultures*, no. 14 (2013), doi:10.3983/twc.2013.0517.

² Imelda Whelehan, "What Is Adaptation Studies?," .edu, *Adapt*, (April 18, 2012), <https://blogs.utas.edu.au/adapt/2012/04/18/what-is-adaptation-studies/>.

Perrault) into their base components, saying that there were only a certain selection of functions from which all tales were created: 31 in total.³ All functions did not need to exist in the tale, but functions are set in which order they may come in. Furthermore, there are only seven *Dramatis Personae* that may exist, although he combines two characters into one character: villain, donor/provider, helper, princess and her father, dispatcher, hero, and false hero. Most folklorists who study skazki utilize Propp's work, and Maria Kravchenko is no exception. Kravchenko's work *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale* (1987) belongs to a historic trend in folkloristics and provides a detailed explanation of the origins of skazki, especially as they follow from ancient rituals and beliefs. As English-language scholarship on skazki is sparse, many citations in this paper regarding the history of skazki and other cultural details are drawn from Kravchenko.

As far as studies of adaptations of skazki go, this is a realm that has been little explored. While adaptations of fairy tales are widely discussed, Russian tales are largely absent from the discussion. English-language scholars tend to concentrate on Western tales. This thesis will attempt to apply the theories used by some of these scholars to a new area—literary adaptations of Russian fairy tales by American authors—in order to examine what meanings arise from the adapted works.

In this paper, I explore several areas by looking at *Enchantment* by Orson Scott Card and the *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy by Joy Preble. For one, how does changing the form from a short fairy tale to a novel, reflect on the narrative of the original tale? Focusing these materials also brings up the critical question of how cultural norms of another region are conveyed in another language to an audience of another culture. I argue that as a result, in these books fairy tales are

³ Maria Tatar, ed., *The Classic Fairy Tales*, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 382–87.

blended with history in order to enrich the narrative and better convey the tale. I also examine how the folkloric figure Baba Yaga is treated by these authors, in order to see how they interpret a complex character for an American audience. Baba Yaga is a core character in both authors' works, and her common appearance in skazki makes her an essential part of both the traditional and adapted stories. This makes these two books well-suited to examining her adaptation.

Translation and Adaptation

One of the forms adaptation takes is translation—interlingual, intralingual and intersemiotic translation—to use the terms developed by Roman Jakobson.⁴ Interlingual translation is translation from one language to another, such as when *Hamlet* was translated into Russian, both in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union.⁵ In comparison, intralingual translation takes place within the same language, such as when *Hamlet* has its language and setting contemporized into *Let the Devil Wear Black* (1999). Intersemiotic translation pays more attention to conveying the meaning of a piece, rather than to the language itself, and takes place between sign systems, such as when a book is converted into a movie or web-series.⁶ In this case, the interpreter does not necessarily want to keep the exact dialogue found in a novel, but still want the general meaning of the work to show through, even if they are transposing it to a new setting or time period. All three forms can be considered adaptations.

In “Literary Translation and the Construction of a Soviet Intelligentsia,” Brian James Baer discusses how the art of translation is political, an idea which can be applied to all three forms of translation. The aforementioned translations of *Hamlet*, for example, became critiques

⁴ Farley, “Translation, Interpretation, Fan Fiction: A Continuum of Meaning Production.”

⁵ Brian James Baer, “Literary Translation and the Construction of a Soviet Intelligentsia,” *The Massachusetts Review* 47, no. 3 (2006): 545–49; Farley, “Translation, Interpretation, Fan Fiction: A Continuum of Meaning Production.”

⁶ Farley, “Translation, Interpretation, Fan Fiction: A Continuum of Meaning Production.”

on contemporary Russia in the hands of translators such as Boris Pasternak.⁷ These forms of translation are also relevant to discussing fairy tales, as most have been translated one way or another throughout the centuries. For example, the Brothers Grimm borrowed tales that had been translated from French, often from Perrault's tales, and put them into a Germanic context, not only translating the tale, but the culture as well. When we read these tales in English today, the adaptations they have undergone in translation cannot be overlooked by scholars, as not only have they gone through interlingual translation, but many go through some level of intralingual translation as well. Just as interlingual translation cannot be ignored as a political act, neither can adaptation. Each time a work is modified from one form to another, the person doing the modifying has their own intentions, motivations that alter the final outcome.

When a creator adapts a work, regardless of the format of the original piece or the adaptation, they are changing the original in order to make their own point, enacting their own vision. Sometimes, such as with Margaret Atwood in the tale "Bluebeard's Egg" (1983), this is an attempt to display how perspective can influence a reader's interpretation of a piece. In other stories, the adapter wants to give the tale a feminist or satiric bent. Some adaptations, especially Disney's takes on fairy tales, sanitize the original stories, adapting tales meant to educate, assuage fears, or entertain workers into child-appropriate moneymakers.⁸ All adaptation is done with a purpose.

With all of this in mind, it is therefore important to recognize that all of the books that will be analyzed are written in English but not based on tales that were originally in English. It is possible that they, therefore, are the result of authors basing their own work on translations to

⁷ Baer, "Literary Translation and the Construction of a Soviet Intelligentsia," 545–49.

⁸ Jack Zipes, "Breaking the Disney Spell," in *The Classic Fairy Tales*, ed. Maria Tatar, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 332–52.

begin with, and that what we are then reading, may be an interlingual and intersemiotic translation of a story which has already undergone interlingual translation. The analysis which then occurs here may err in attributing some changes, if these changes are based on an interlingual translation that made alterations of its own. This is a significant issue facing those analyzing adaptations of fairy tales: unless an author were to cite their specific sources and inspirations, someone interpreting their adaptation may not know precisely which text they are drawing from. What may look like a major adaptation from one tale, may be a smaller adaptation from a variant of that tale.

Intertextuality

Much of adaptation studies draws on intertextuality and other terms of transtextuality, and as this thesis will draw on them periodically, laying out their definitions for the purposes of this text is necessary. Intertextuality is, as Gerard Genette defines it, the relationship of copresence between two or more texts: that one text is actually found in another.⁹ This expresses itself in three ways; quoting, plagiarism¹⁰, or their less literal and explicit cousin, allusion. This third form is key to fairy tale adaptations as allusion is an utterance “whose full meaning presupposes the perception of a relationship between it and another text, to which it necessarily refers by some inflections that would otherwise remain unintelligible.”¹¹ Fairy tale adaptations, especially those which do not explicitly reference a tale through the title of the work, rely strongly on allusion. The film *Pretty Woman* (1990), for example, heavily alludes to the Cinderella tale type, with Julia Roberts’ character experiencing a rags-to-riches transformation

⁹ Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 1–2, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.09358.0001.001>.

¹⁰ Plagiarism is when you take text from a source without attributing it.

¹¹ Genette, *Palimpsests*, 2.

and getting her ‘Prince Charming’ in the end. Her character is not named Cinderella, or even Ella, but we see as the story progresses that it is this kind of story. The explicit reference in dialogue near the end of the film is unnecessary, but serves to emphasize the connection.¹²

For Genette, transtextuality—everything that sets two texts in a relationship—has many subtypes of which intertextuality is only one.¹³ This not only includes the allusions and quotes of intertextuality, but also the cover material, notes, and even early drafts. Another type of transtextuality which is key to analyzing adaptation is hypertextuality: any relationship uniting text B (the hypertext) with the earlier text A (the hypotext), in which B is related to A and B is not commentary on A.¹⁴ Hypertexts are unable to exist without the hypotext, even if they do not speak of the hypotext explicitly. For example, *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* (2012-2013) is a hypertext of the Jane Austen (1775-1817) work, *Pride and Prejudice*. *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* does not offer commentary on the original, but as a resetting of the tale in modern times, it would not exist without Austen’s work.

These ideas of textuality are helpful for relating fairy tale texts and adaptations, however, the connections between hypertext adaptations and their hypotexts are far more complicated with fairy tales than with other genres. As Margo Blankier discusses, “Nearly all varieties of adaptation theory rely on the assumption that any single adaptation... a ‘hypertext,’ can ultimately be located in a single ‘hypotext.’”¹⁵ Fairy tales lack a single definite origin and are so widely adapted that finding a definitive hypotext can be difficult. Even the common ‘source’

¹² Susan Wloszczyna, “‘Pretty Woman’ at 25: 10 Reasons Why This R-Rated Cinderella Still Works Its Magic,” *IndieWire*, March 23, 2015, <http://www.indiewire.com/2015/03/pretty-woman-at-25-10-reasons-why-this-r-rated-cinderella-still-works-its-magic-204200/>.

¹³ Genette, *Palimpsests*, 1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁵ Margot Blankier, “Adapting and Transforming ‘Cinderella’: Fairy-Tale Adaptations and the Limits of Existing Adaptation Theory,” *Interdisciplinary Humanities* 31, no. 3 (Fall 2014): 109.

texts, the tales of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, are really hypertexts themselves. Both were collections of oral tales, which the men gathered from women, and through women, the tales of the Brothers Grimm can even be connected to Perrault's tales. Although they are the most common hypotexts for Western adaptations, they are not the only sources of many tales. When one then considers that adaptations often exist in dialogue with one another, so that a chain of hypertexts is created, all of them theoretically linked to a single source hypotext, one can see that the connections between hypotexts and hypertexts is rarely one-to-one in regards to fairy tales. With *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, and other Austen adaptations such as *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2009), *Pride and Prejudice* (2005), and *Bride and Prejudice* (2004), there is ultimately one hypotext. There might be links found among the adaptations to one another, but there is a singular starting point. Fairy tale adaptations lack this singular starting point. Even when the Grimm or Perrault versions serve as the origin, there are still indeterminate tales prior to them. In many ways, this is liberating for the adapters and even the audiences of hypertexts; fidelity is no longer an issue as there is no single source text to be loyal to; instead, a "seemingly infinite variety of interpretations and transmission vehicles" is possible.¹⁶

Without this need for fidelity, fairy tale adaptations often take an interpretation of fairy tale texture superimposed over a tale's general narrative.¹⁷ This texture is the network of characteristics that identify a work as some form of fairy tale, including abstraction, expectations for types of characters and narrative structure, pattern and symbol, and a distancing from reality.¹⁸ Adaptations of fairy tales, therefore, are usually recognizable as fairy tales, but the authors of the hypertexts have made deliberate choices about which sources they are preserving,

¹⁶ Ibid., 120–21.

¹⁷ Ibid., 110.

¹⁸ Ibid., 122.

integrating the innumerable forms of a fairy tale they themselves have encountered into a single work.¹⁹

The final form of transtextuality which will become important here is paratextuality. A work's paratext is its title, subtitles, prefaces, forewords, notes, illustrations, book covers and other kinds of secondary signals which provide the text with a variable setting and sometimes a commentary. Early editions of a work can also function as a paratext. To draw on one example, when the play, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, cast a black actress as Hermione, there was an outcry as fans tried to argue whether the casting was acceptable, and indeed, if Hermione had always been a character of color. Within the text itself, it was difficult to tell; the few descriptions of Hermione's skin were not deemed substantial enough to deem her as white. Instead, fans turned to paratextual evidence – book jackets, the illustrated series, and early illustrations from J.K. Rowling herself—to prove that, although the play was welcome to cast the best actress possible regardless of skin color, the brightest witch of her age was intended to be white. Although the controversy died down, the arguments still play out.

Baba Yaga

In order to better understand the following two chapters of this thesis, we must first lay out an in-depth back ground on Baba Yaga, who appears in both *Enchantment* and the *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy. I will discuss Koschei the Deathless and *rusalki*, who appear solely in the *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy, in the second chapter, as they do not have an impact on *Enchantment*.

¹⁹ Ibid., 113.

In skazki, no character is more important than Baba Yaga. At her core is ambiguity. Sometimes benign, sometimes benevolent, her role varies from tale to tale. In some, she helps the hero, in some she acts as the tester for a young woman, in others she attempts to eat young children, and in others still she is the mother of a *zmei*.²⁰ It is likely that she developed over time, beginning as a Slavic deity in a matriarchal society, and gaining negative traits as matriarchy conflicted with patriarchy.²¹ Several Soviet scholars (Propp, Nikolai Novikov, and Vladimir Anikin) proposed that Baba Yaga was a goddess of the dead, or of animals and the forest. Kravchenko goes farther and says that the fairy tale figure of Baba Yaga is connected to the Mother Earth deity, which contains all the attributes the other scholars proposed and many more besides.²² This explains Baba Yaga's many different roles, as she can be like the growing earth, giving help to heroes, or like the earth that swallows the dead, eating people. The wide range of possibilities makes her character ripe for adaptation, as there are many different tales with many different portrayals for an author to take into account when adapting. She can seem close to her original character because her original character is so varied across tales. There is no one portrayal to keep her to. However, it also puts her at risk of being pigeonholed into a single role, with a single aspect, in the minds of an audience unfamiliar with her.

In most of the traditional tales, Baba Yaga is hideous, with a bony leg, a large disfigured nose, and vicious teeth made of iron.²³ Additional characteristics that appear are “breasts, belly and buttocks [that] are so enormous that she can only squat or lie on the earthen floor of her hut,

²⁰ Maria Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, European University Studies, XVI/34 (Bern: Peter Lang, 1987), 184–88.

²¹ Ibid., 187–89; Andreas Johns, “Interpreting Baba Yaga,” in *Baba Yaga The Ambiguous Mother and Witch of the Russian Folktale*, vol. 3, International Folkloristics (New York: Peter Lang, 2004).

²² Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 192–93.

²³ Joanna Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 38, [http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=578&site=ehost-live&scope=site](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=578&site=ehost-live&scope=site;); Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 86.

or lie on the stove.”²⁴ These secondary characteristics can be toned down in adaptations, even Russian children’s book adaptations, in order to make her less scary and more like the grandmother the first part of her name implies.²⁵ She is also often occupied with tasks such as spinning, weaving, and stirring the coals of the fire.²⁶

In nearly every tale, Baba Yaga’s hut stands in a forest, supported by chicken legs. This allows it to turn itself around. A hero’s first task upon finding Baba Yaga’s hut is to command it to stand with its back to the forest and its front toward him. Only then may he enter and speak with the witch before crossing into the thrice-tenth kingdom; the other world, the kingdom of the dead. The object of the hero’s quest lies there, but to obtain it, he needs her help. Baba Yaga usually greets him by remarking that she ‘smells a Russian smell.’²⁷ This is likely because the hero is alive, uncommon in a forest that marks the boundary between the living and the dead.²⁸ The hero completes a set of ritual questions—usually demanding food, drink, and a bath—before he makes his request of Baba Yaga. The protocol completed, she gives him the information or magical help that he needs. Sometimes this process is repeated thrice, each with a different Baba Yaga, and the third sister will give the desired knowledge.²⁹

Tales involving Baba Yaga are different when there are female protagonists, perhaps because the rituals that young girls underwent in ancient times were less dramatic than those of the men. Many of them involved secluding girls away from others beginning at puberty, prohibiting them from sunlight, being seen, touching the ground, or even caging them above the

²⁴ Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 184.

²⁵ Andrei Usachyov, *Азбука Бабы Яги [The Alphabet of Baba Yaga]* (Azбука, 2012).

²⁶ Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture*, 38.

²⁷ Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 86.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 123–24.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 87.

ground.³⁰ This seclusion was frequently in the forest under the tutelage of an elderly woman as she was taught the crafts and lore she would need for adult life. This is reflected in many of the fairy tales about young women, with Baba Yaga serving as the elderly woman giving tutelage. Most female characters who encounter Baba Yaga do so without the same knowledge that males have upon meeting her: they do not know the incantation for the hut or how to conduct themselves with the witch. They are either taken to her or must seek advice on how to reach her hut. Rather than knowing what they need for their journey when they embark on it, they must learn. Baba Yaga then puts them through trials and if they fail, she will eat them. When they succeed, they are ready for marriage, just as young girls would have been. As their initiation rites were different, so are the tales about them.

Both authors use Baba Yaga to great effect in their novels, however their treatment of her, and which folkloric characteristics they use, vary. Part of this is because the novels differ in focus; *Enchantment* has a primary male lead and secondary female lead, while *Dreaming Anastasia* has a primary female lead and secondary male lead. As Baba Yaga plays different roles in tales often depending on the gender of the person she is dealing with, some of the differences are accounted for. The hypotext fairytales also provide for some of the differences between them; the “Sleeping Beauty” hypotext of *Enchantment* requires a different interpretation than the “Vasilisa the Brave” hypotext for *Dreaming Anastasia*. The usage of Baba Yaga in each of the tales and the differences between them will be explored more thoroughly in each chapter. Baba Yaga’s significance in both tales is one reason these two works were picked. As one of the largest folkloric figures in a culture that is underrepresented in Western adaptations, looking at

³⁰ Ibid., 167–69.

her portrayal in works by two very different authors for two different age groups gives a clear look at how authors can manipulate folkloric characters to their own ends.

Having described adaptation studies, the different types of translation, and Baba Yaga, it is now time to move on to the first chapter, on *Enchantment*.

Chapter One: *Enchantment*

Enchantment is a novel by Orson Scott Card (b.1951), a writer best known for his science fiction work, *Ender's Game* (1985). Published in 1999, *Enchantment* is a mixed adaptation which tells the story of Ivan and Princess Katerina. Ivan is a young man who was born in the Soviet Union, in Kiev, and moved with his family to America when he was a child—but not before stumbling across a sleeping princess in the wood behind the house of Cousin Marek, who lives in the Carpathian foothills. Katerina is the only daughter of the King of Taina, born a millennium earlier and placed in an enchanted sleep by Baba Yaga, who seeks to claim Taina for her own. When Ivan returns to Cousin Marek's house over a decade later, having returned to Ukraine for work on his dissertation, he finds her in the forest again, and in waking her, must promise to marry her if he is to survive the encounter with her 'guardian,' the Great Bear.

The Hypotext Fairy Tale: Sleeping Beauty

The "Sleeping Beauty" tale type (AT 410) serves as the initial hypotext(s) for *Enchantment*.³¹ Katerina is the princess, who pricked her finger on a spindle and fell into a dream that was not a dream where a bear chased her until she fell, exhausted, onto a stone.³² Baba Yaga plays the evil fairy, motivated by a desire to rule the kingdom of Katerina's father. Ivan, although with an untraditional background, is the prince meant to rescue her from her eternal slumber, bearing the name of traditional Russian fairy tale heroes. Katerina's aunts are alluded to as the good fairies who alter the curse in order to give her a chance at rescue. Metatext, from the inside front cover of the Del Rey mass market paperback edition, explicitly

³¹ An AT type refers to the Aarne-Thompson classification system is used to organize, classify and analyze folklore, and enables folklorists to identify narratives by motif. It groups closely related folktales within types.

³² Orson Scott Card, *Enchantment* (New York: Del Rey, 2000), 86.

describes the story as a “transformation” of the hypotext into “an original fantasy brimming with romance and adventure.”³³ Card himself, on his website, admits that his company bought the rights to the idea that “An American graduate student discovers Sleeping Beauty in contemporary Russia and wakes her up.”³⁴ He then set about writing a novel that could furnish a movie adaptation.³⁵ Such an adaptation was never made, and so the novel stands alone.

The use of “Sleeping Beauty” as the basis for the novel provides a touchstone for readers. Most readers of *Enchantment*, which is geared toward adults, will be familiar with this classic tale, either from the Disney film, Grimms’ story, or Tchaikovsky’s ballet. This provides them with a basic plot structure, which serves as grounding for the rest of the tale. Adapting a fairy tale into a novel requires expansion; very simply, there is more to write. Most fairy tales are relatively short on paper, and their primary audience has become children.³⁶ A four-hundred-page novel, written for an adult audience, must provide more detail, and therefore requires embellishment of the plot, especially as this is a “Sleeping Beauty” adaption. In the fairy tale story, the main character is asleep for most of the tale and it ends, in some cases, with the marriage of the princess to the prince who saves her. In *Enchantment*, the majority of the action takes place after the princess wakes up on page 60 of a 415-page novel. However, the versions that have an extended story line are much different in content than what happens in Card’s work, implying that his adaptation is based on one of the ones that cuts off when the prince and

³³ Card, *Enchantment*.

³⁴ Orson Scott Card, OSC Answers Questions: Where did you get the idea for the premise of *Enchantment* and for the Alvin Maker Series?, interview by Anonymous, Online Q&A, February 18, 2004, <http://www.hatrack.com/research/questions/q0119.shtml>.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Tatar, *The Classic Fairy Tales*, 297–332. This was not always the case, as fairy tales were originally either oral tales, shared to pass time while working, or literary tales, devised by the intellectual classes and read in salons for entertainment. The first edition of the Brothers Grimm’s collection, for example, was not geared toward children and contained tales many considered inappropriate for that audience. The second edition, which Wilhelm Grimm sanitized, was aimed at the younger audience.

princess are wed, such as in the Disney and Tchaikovsky versions. This allows him to fuse an original plot line onto the fairy tale, keeping the elements of a fairy story while integrating a variety of characters from Russian folklore, history, and even some Jewish folklore as well.

The Hero and the Princess

Ivan Smetski seems at first glance very little like the early heroes of *skazki*, or even the *byliny*, the oral narrative tradition of historically-based early heroes of Rus. He is Jewish, a track-and-field athlete rather than a swordsman or wrestler, he is academically inclined and he is an only child. Most fairy-tale heroes are the youngest of three brothers. While religion is not typically a key part of *skazki*, based on the dominant cultural influence, the latter protagonists are likely Orthodox Christians. The closest he comes to the descriptions of early heroes is his name—Ivan—the stock name for Russian heroes, who are usually separated out by some kind of title, such as “the cow’s son” versus “the tsar’s son.”³⁷ However, his lack of knowledge about the daily customs of the time period and his inability to wield a sword make him a fool in the eyes of Taina’s people, something that makes Ivan fit in well with heroes who came later, historically, and whose moral and ethical superiority is considered to be more important than their physical capabilities.³⁸ Based on this, Ivan does seem to have the aspects of a true hero. Maria Kravchenko says,

For the most part, the positive hero possesses all the ideal qualities which in the eyes of many peoples represent the highest values in mankind; he is handsome, clever, kind, and endowed with great strength, courage, and dedication in all his exploits.... In the minds of the listeners he is always an ideal figure, and his

³⁷ Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 83.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 89.

heroic nature is never doubted, no matter what his dress or puzzling behavior. For the other protagonists in the tale, however, especially the false heroes, his attitude and disguise are such that they are quite deceived and accept what he does as his true character and worth.³⁹

Ivan is extremely intelligent (he is in Ukraine to work on his Ph.D. dissertation) and his kindness is evident through his actions to Katerina. He shows courage multiple times throughout the novel and he is dedicated to helping Katerina, even if he has his qualms about the situation. He is described as being handsome enough, and Katerina, although unused to men like him, says that there was “a kind of beauty to him.”⁴⁰ As for strength, he has enough strength in his legs to jump a twenty-two-foot chasm, to hurl a stone like a shot-put, and to run in circles for hours.⁴¹ Readers can recognize these traits and see him as the true hero. Those in the tale, however, frequently doubt him, even Katerina. In the beginning, another character, Dmitri (one of her father’s knights), serves as a false hero, a man in the image of what she has been raised to expect a man to be.

Ivan is also interesting in that although he manages to pass the physical test for fairy tale heroes, albeit by being so different, he fails the common manners tests. As discussed earlier, when heroes would enter Baba Yaga’s hut to cross into the thrice-tenth Kingdom, they would have a set way they were supposed to act in order to pass forward. When Ivan arrives in Taina, he violates their customs, something that makes sense due to his upbringing some ten centuries

³⁹ Ibid., 82.

⁴⁰ Card, *Enchantment*, 83.

⁴¹ Ibid., 48–57.

later, but which hinders his ability to pass forward. Because he doesn't know what he needs to, Baba Yaga is able to work against him.

Katerina fits the pattern of a heroine much better. She is a princess, the only daughter of a tsar. She must be rescued from an evil villain who has captured her, and weds the hero upon return to her father's kingdom. She is intelligent, with her own ability to use magic. Although these last traits are different from those of many Western heroines, they fit those of the Russian heroine perfectly. Russian heroines may be held captive, but they often are instrumental in their own rescue, using magic and their intelligence to get information to stop pursuers. Katerina is capable of working to oppose Baba Yaga herself, accepting help from Ivan, but not depending entirely upon him. She may begin the tale as a more passive character, asleep on a slab of stone in the middle of a chasm, but once awoken, she is active, making decisions and instructing Ivan on what must be done. In the end of the novel, it is Katerina, rather than Ivan, who makes a final stand against Baba Yaga, entering the witch's home alone.

Katerina also, in the end, becomes queen, and rules her kingdom. Ivan does not take control, but rather sits back and gives advice when asked. This seems odd, perhaps, when looked at through Western eyes, that a man would marry a princess and not become King, but actually fits in very early Slavic culture, which was matriarchal. Skazki are rife with references to this time, and the dual nature of Baba Yaga is theorized to have emerged from the demonization of an original great mother figure when the culture switched to a patriarchal society.⁴² Taina is not a solely matriarchal society—Katerina's father rules in the beginning of the novel and had she married one of her father's knights, he might have attempted to rule more actively—but its

⁴² Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture*, 27; Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 188–89.

acceptance of Katerina's right to rule shows that for them, this matriarchal society is not so far in the past.

History, Time, and Fiction

One of the fundamental aspects of *Enchantment* is its duality of time periods. Ivan is from the contemporary world and his place in time and space is concrete. The first chapter takes place in 1975, in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. The concerns are real. Ivan Smetski's life has been turned upside down as his parents tell him they are now Jewish, despite not having lived as such, and they will be emigrating to Israel, and possibly beyond. This concrete time and place violate fairy tale norms. Fairy tales generally have no specific time or place; they take place "long, long ago, in ancient times," or "in a certain kingdom."⁴³ Even in Russian tales, the place is not named specifically as Russia; however, they will often, when Baba Yaga is involved, mention a "Russian smell."⁴⁴ The passage of time within the tale is also rarely specific, rather, many Russian tales say something along the lines of "after a short time or a long time."⁴⁵ The Smetski's home in New York is also given a concrete location, down to which airports are most suitable for traveling to it. Even the spot in the Carpathian foothills where Ivan's Cousin Marek lives is defined, if only by its place in modern history. This concreteness is an important contrast between his world and Katerina's, as Ivan's world is displayed as reality, while Katerina's world functions as the realm of fairy tales.

⁴³ Marina Balina, Helena Goscilo, and Mark Lipovetsky, eds., *Politicizing Magic* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2005), 23,32.

⁴⁴ Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 123–24.

Kravchenko puts forth here Propp's idea that she is not smelling him because he is a Russian, but rather, because he is alive.

⁴⁵ Balina, Goscilo, and Lipovetsky, *Politicizing Magic*, 64.

Taina, where Katerina is from is displayed as a historical place forgotten to time, while it functions as the world of magic and folklore. While there is some magic in the modern world, what there is of it is very little, and it continues to die out. In Taina, while the process of decline has started, magic is still very much in play. The very name of the country has implications; in many eastern European languages, including Russian and Ukrainian, *taina* means “secret” or “mystery.”⁴⁶ The country is located in the same Carpathian foothills where Cousin Marek lives, a region of Ukraine that had been a part of Poland between the wars and which escaped the ravages of Stalin’s collectivization, simply much earlier in time.⁴⁷ Ivan’s father describes it as the original homelands of the Russians, where Slavs hid from Goths and Huns alike, but Ivan’s thoughts are whimsical:

It wasn’t really wild country, but to Vanya, a city boy, an apartment dweller, it was a place of magic and dreams, like the paintings of Shishkin; Vanya half expected to see bear cubs in the trees. This was the place where all the fairy tales of his childhood must have taken place—the land of Prince Ivan, the grey wolf, the firebird; of Koschei the Deathless, of Mikola Mozhaiski, of Baba Yaga the witch.⁴⁸

The thoughts are prophetic, although he cannot know it as a young boy when he thinks it. When Card writes it, it sets up the contrast between the rest of the world, where magic does not seem to exist, and this space, where magic seems to live on. Seeing as Cousin Marek is revealed to be Mikola Mozhaiski—who will not further be discussed here due to his limited

⁴⁶ Тайна

⁴⁷ Card, *Enchantment*, 7.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

role and lack of broader significance—this further establishes this part of the world as a magical haven disconnected from reality, a land where fairy tales collide with life.

When Ivan crosses from his world to Taina, he finds it is completely and utterly foreign, as his own world is to Katerina. This designation of each other's worlds as Other allows for explanations of culture, history, language, and fairy tales that would otherwise feel unnecessary. They have to explain things to each other, or other characters have to explain things to them, because to do otherwise would leave readers wondering how these characters developed a knowledge they had no right to have. The need for explanations to the characters lets the author clarify necessary points of culture for the reader as well. This helps with the cultural translation needed to give American readers, the audience of this work, an explanation of the skazki and Eastern European cultures involved in the tale without relying on longwinded, seemingly unnecessary, internal monologues.

The transition between worlds takes place in a forest. This location is not simply convenient for the author as a hiding place for an out-of-time sleeping princess, but is actually very important in skazki. In most tales, the entrance into the forest by the hero is a crucial juncture of the story. It is when he enters the forest that he enters the borderlands between life and death, the realm of Baba Yaga. The forest is her fairy tale home, the location of her hut, and in *Enchantment*, where she traps Katerina. The forest is once more a borderland, with Taina serving as the thrice-tenth kingdom to which Ivan must travel. Interestingly, from this middle ground, Ivan and Katerina can each only journey to their own side. To cross to the others requires touching the other and trusting them, for Ivan cannot see the bridge to Katerina's world, and she cannot see the bridge to his. The use of bridges to cross into and out of the thrice-tenth

kingdom is not unknown to skazki.⁴⁹ Although they are not as common as other vehicles of travel, they most commonly appear on the hero's return journey, when he is fleeing an evil attempting to kill him. The bridges in *Enchantment* are used that way once, but are used more often than that in general, and unlike in Russian tales, are not destroyed to prevent the evil from following, as the evil cannot use them to follow in this case, as only Ivan and Katerina can see them.

Baba Yaga

Card uses Baba Yaga impactfully within *Enchantment*, setting her up as the major villain of the piece, although his adaptation of her does not entirely fit with the folkloric versions. Card develops her as a human witch who bound the Great Bear god to her, subordinating his powers so that she might use them herself. Indeed, his version of the witch is much like the evil stepmother in *Snow White*. He provides her with a human backstory, one that causes readers to sympathize—almost—with her, but which shows her as a human evil. Clever she might be, but she is still human. Although the lack of a solitary hypertext for her makes her interpretation in this hypertext hard to concretely criticize, as there might be variations of Baba Yaga's background that more closely ascribe to what Card writes, it seems likely his variant of her is meant to make her more like Western fairy tale villains. Card's version brings bad luck wherever she goes, harming even those who help her. There is no hint of the Baba Yaga who also helps people. This pushes her toward the standard of a Western fairy tale villain, as the female villains in Western tales are usually older, human women deemed witches. In Western fairy tales, they are often the only women in the tale

⁴⁹ This occurs, for example, in *Marya Morevna*.

who can assert power, which they do through writing their own stories and crafting plots against the heroine.⁵⁰ However, this perpetually leads to their destruction; their agency is punished. In Russian fairy tales, princesses have significant agency and Baba Yaga serves in multiple roles; although her position in tales is generally determined by whether she is facing a young man or a young girl, she always has the agency to help or harm the hero.

Card's adherence to her villainous side may help Americans understand the role of Baba Yaga better; however, to portray her as this purely evil being sacrifices her ambiguity in Russian and Eastern European culture, which is a fundamental part of her folkloric being. This is one of the issues that can arise in cross-cultural adaptation and a consequence of fairy tales lacking a definitive hypotext. In attempting to make a character with no definite origin recognizable to a new audience, authors may take only the facsimile of the character, rather than the depth that has been built up in their folkloric selves. Yes, tales in which Baba Yaga is a villain rarely also have her as a benefactress, but considering the depth with which Card explores her character, devoting sections to her viewpoint and explaining her back story, one would expect that somewhere in there, her other habits would be included.

Baba Yaga's villainy is also interesting in this piece when one looks at her usual role based on the gender of the others in the tale. Baba Yaga, in tales with female leads, is often the villain rather than a donor. Yet the girls in those tales are generally younger than Katerina, usually between twelve and sixteen. *Enchantment* also does not reflect the plot of these female-centered stories; it looks far more like those which have male-leads. There is a quest to get—and then keep—a princess-bride away from a magical villain. Yet if Ivan is

⁵⁰ Susan Gubar and Sandra M. Gilbert, "Snow White and Her Wicked Stepmother," in *The Classic Fairy Tales*, ed. Maria Tatar, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 293.

the lead—and he is written as such, even if Katerina’s viewpoint is included—then having Baba Yaga as the main villain is uncommon, for in stories where a male is the lead, Baba Yaga is typically a donor-figure. She is the one (or one of three) who the hero visits for information or magical help as he crosses the forest. Card has meshed the plot of a male-dominated tale with the villainy of Baba Yaga from a female-oriented tale.

Although Baba Yaga’s role in the tale seems to be simplified, considering the wide range of roles she can play, and which the text would have room to show if it so chose, Card’s portrayal could be seen as complex if one recognizes that he has mixed up her usual roles based on the gender of the hero. The fact that she appears to conform to Western female villain types would then be the result of this blending. However, it cannot be ruled out that he was simply trying to make the villainess of the tale more like those of Western fairy tales in order to make her appeal to American audiences.

Enchantment’s Political Discourse

Card’s book also contains a rather surprising feminist discourse and commentary on cultural adaptation. A major point of the plot is that Katerina and Ivan must marry, and that their marriage needs to beget an heir posthaste. Her culture, that of the ninth century in a kingdom recently converted to Christianity, thinks nothing of marrying women to men they might not want to wed and demanding that they produce children. Katerina herself sees nothing wrong with it; it is her duty, and as a princess, she has been raised to know her duty to her land and people. Baba Yaga, although somewhat indirectly, is actually the only one of that period to express the dark side of such unions in relating her own backstory, in which she as an adolescent bride was raped by her

husband, King Brat, and made to bear his son (whom she then suffocates).⁵¹ Although her actions in killing her own child are reprehensible, so are those of her husband in forcing himself on her. Ivan shares her views. During the wedding ceremony, contemplating his wedding night, he wonders, “How is this going to be distinguishable from rape?”⁵² The book goes on to contain a strong endorsement of consent even between married people, which while common today (and obviously the right thing), seems extremely progressive for a 17-year-old book. Especially when one considers that it was published only 6 years after marital rape became a crime in all 50 states and in a country where there are *still* differences in the rape statutes regarding rape during marriage in certain states.⁵³ When Katerina tells Ivan that it is his right to touch her, he responds, “It’s my right... to touch a woman who loves me and trusts me and gives herself to me freely, and not just because of some ancient witch’s curse or her duty to her country.”⁵⁴ This does come off as “mansplaining” consent to a point, however it would have been difficult given the structure of the novel—and the language barriers that exist for Katerina in modern times—to have a modern woman give her a similar speech. Regardless of how it was explained, its inclusion is still noteworthy for the message that it sends.

This area is only one where Card shows the differences between cultures as ideas to be understood and considered, even when the initial reaction of most Americans would be to say that they are fundamentally wrong. Although most Americans would view rape, even if the two were married, as repugnant, there is still far too little discussion about the difference between having intercourse because it is desirable and having it because it is expected. Much of what Card writes

⁵¹ Brat (брат) is the Russian word for brother. Although the text does not seem to suggest this otherwise, the name choice makes the relationship seem as if it might be incestuous.

⁵² Card, *Enchantment*, 173.

⁵³ Samantha Allen, “Marital Rape Is Semi-Legal in 8 States,” *The Daily Beast*, June 9, 2015, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/06/09/marital-rape-is-semi-legal-in-8-states.html>.

⁵⁴ Card, *Enchantment*, 206.

regarding Katerina's views on her duty as a married woman holds true for much writing on the act in the twentieth century as well, and even, sadly, the twenty-first. *Enchantment's* contrast of time periods allows Ivan to be cast as a decent, modern man who believes in equality of pleasure, consent, and participating in activities because they are desired by both parties, not just expected that one of them go along with it. *Enchantment* functions as a vehicle for the ideological message, lending the novel a political flair. The contrast in time periods allows Katerina's traditional views to be ascribed to the time and culture she lives in, and since much of the novel is based around encouraging intercultural understanding, it encourages readers to see her views as such, rather than as an inherent failing of her understanding or person. Modern liberal views consider hers to be erroneous, which Card appears to agree with, but he still promotes understanding why she carries the views she does. A large part of Katerina and Ivan's growth is centered on learning to understand each other's cultures and how that influences their views on basic concepts, such as gender relations. Fairy tales are fundamentally about the growth of characters. Usually these characters are much younger than Ivan and Katerina, still at a stage in life where their personalities are forming. The trials they undergo in the fairy tale are reminiscent of coming of age rituals. Katerina and Ivan are beyond that age, but for their tale to work as a fairy tale, they must still grow. Card accomplishes this by making them learn to accept the differences of the worlds they each come from and compromise on solutions to their problems when these differences cause disagreement.

Enchantment's Meta Aspects

As was mentioned earlier, *Enchantment* has a concrete setting that fairy tales lack. In addition, characters in fairy tales traditionally have no knowledge of fairy tales. Although they know of their world's magic, there is no indication they know of the types of tales of which they are a part. When a fairy tale is set in a concrete world, characters are likely to know fairy tales;

after all, they are a universal cultural component. Different cultures may have different fairy tales (or they may structurally overlap, with different cultural dressings), but every culture has them. In *Enchantment*, this means that both Ivan and Katerina are aware of fairy tales; in fact, Ivan's doctoral dissertation is a matter of "trying to reconstruct the earliest version of the fairy tales described in the Afanasyev collection in order to determine whether Propp's theory that all fairy tales in Russian were, structurally, a single fairy tale was (1) true or false and, if true, (2) rooted in some inborn psychologically true ur-tale or in some exceptionally powerful story inherent in Russian culture."⁵⁵

This study of fairy tales is a sub-plot within the novel but an intriguing one, as Card uses it to draw Ivan close to a supporting character, make him The Ivan of the skazki, explain where Baba Yaga gets her house from, and make him famous in his own world in the end. When Ivan first arrives in Taina, he must learn enough to be baptized, so that he may marry Katerina. He is taught by Father Lukas and Brother Sergei, the latter of whom becomes his friend in Taina. It is Sergei whom Ivan asks to write down the folk tales he knows in his own hand on the backs of parchments with religious writings, so that they may be hidden away for Ivan to find in the 1990s, therefore providing him with not only early writings of the Christian faith in the hand of Saint Kyrill, but also with early folktales.⁵⁶ This makes him respected by his American colleagues and beloved by Ukrainians. He also solves his question, because he realizes that his story, the history he has influenced in Taina—from showing up to marry the princess, to the part where Baba Yaga's house on chicken legs is a 747 she stole from modern times and took back with her (leading to Baba Yaga deciding to make herself a smaller version after the plane has been sent back)—has

⁵⁵ Ibid., 24.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 411.

already made it into the fairy tales he knows.⁵⁷ He himself is therefore the prototypical Ivan of which he has studied.

This sub-plot is a bit grandiose on the author's part, but it does fit with a particular segment of fairy tale studies. Having Ivan study these Afanasyev's tales and Propp's theories seems tangential in many ways to the story, as this is the something the overall plot is not dependent upon, but it does provide another level of intertextuality, as the presence of Propp within the tale adds to the academic level. It also makes the story seem connected on greater levels, to the reality outside of the tale, and provides another link between Ivan's world and Katerina's. The stories Brother Sergei writes down on Kirill's papers make it through time and through the ages from Taina to modern Ukraine, which helps readers to see the land as a part of history, and not simply as a world of fairy tales.

The existence of meta aspects in *Enchantment* addresses what would otherwise be a glaring plot hole while also providing for the novel's sub-plots. Most people are aware of fairy tales; to write a novel so concretely set without addressing that a modern character would be familiar with fairy tales that he presumably grew up with would seem unusual; it would likely break the suspension of disbelief that readers grant authors. Although an American character might be unfamiliar with Baba Yaga or Koschei the Deathless, one born in the Soviet Union would not be; it would be as if an American ten-year-old did not know about Cinderella or Snow White. Furthermore, by making Ivan a scholar of skazki, it makes it seem obvious that he would be able to draw the connections that he does between the tales and his experiences. Over all, the inclusion of these aspects serves to deepen *Enchantment's* connection to folklore, connects many of the sub-

⁵⁷ Ibid., 379, 409–10.

plots into the main plot, and prevents a plot hole from forming based on the lack of knowledge of characters of folklore they would be expected by the reader to know.

Chapter Two: *Dreaming Anastasia*

The *Dreaming Anastasia Series*⁵⁸ by Joy Preble follows Anne Michaelson, a teenager in Chicago living a mostly normal life—except for the dreams that she is Anastasia Romanov, the last grand duchess of Russia. In fact, Anastasia is trapped in the hut of Baba Yaga and Anne is the one prophesized to save her. Men from the Brotherhood—a vaguely religious group that existed to protect the Romanovs—cast a spell to compel Baba Yaga to take Anastasia from the basement room her family was being slaughtered in and protect her. The men then dispersed, ostensibly to find the girl prophesied to rescue Anastasia, immortal until Anastasia is brought back from Yaga’s forest. Ethan, once Etanovich, is a member of the Brotherhood who has been eighteen for almost a century. It was he who was in the basement that night and he who, ninety years later, finds Anne in present day Chicago. Yet his boss, Viktor, the leader of the Brotherhood, does not respond with the joy and exhilaration Ethan expects, because Viktor has no desire to bring Anastasia back.

Book one follows Ethan and Anne in their quest to rescue Anastasia while avoiding Viktor, who attempts to stop them. The story is told primarily from Anne and Ethan’s points of view, but also includes additional sections from Anastasia’s point of view. These sections detail how she came to trust Viktor, who is her half-brother from a pre-marital affair of Tsar Nicholas II. Finally, Ethan and Anne discover the key to entering Baba Yaga’s forest is dripping three drops on Anne’s blood on a Russian lacquer box. They, and Viktor, who has tagged along, end up in her forest and follow Baba Yaga’s cat, her *koshka*, to the hut, where Anne enters and retrieves Anastasia. They bring her back to the modern world, fulfilling the Brotherhood’s

⁵⁸ *Dreaming Anastasia* (2009), *Haunted* (2011), *Anastasia Forever* (2012)

original goal, and causing Ethan and Viktor's mortality to return. Due to an error, however, Baba Yaga is still bound to protect a Romanov and she follows them back to Chicago. A final confrontation occurs and Baba Yaga takes Viktor back with her in Anastasia's place. Anastasia then elects to go back to the basement in 1917 that she historically died in.

In *Haunted*, which skips forward nine months, Anne must discover why a *rusalka*, a Russian mermaid, is following her around. The *rusalka* is Anne's grandmother, who threw herself into the Chicago river not long after giving her daughter, Laura (Anne's mother), up for adoption. Lily wants revenge on Viktor for murdering her husband-to-be, and until she can do so, will remain a *rusalka*. Therefore she needs Anne to retrieve Viktor from Baba Yaga's hut so that he can be killed. Anne goes once circumstances no longer allow her to say no to her grandmother or Baba Yaga, who has her own reasons for desiring Anne's return. While there, Anne frees Viktor, who has (unbeknownst to them) made himself immortal a la Koschei the Deathless while a prisoner of the witch. Rather than having Anastasia as the third point of view, here Baba Yaga gives her thoughts and shows what is happening in her hut.

The final book in the trilogy, *Anastasia Forever*, ties up many of the loose ends of the earlier books. The source of Anne's magic, how Baba Yaga could have been compelled to take Anastasia, how Viktor manipulated Ethan for a century, and how Viktor came to be immortal, are all answered. Viktor is the third point of view in this novel. The main plot of the novel is centered on finding out how Viktor became immortal and then where he might have hidden his soul. In the end, Viktor's soul is returned, Baba Yaga kills him and throws the body to the *rusalki*, and Lily is freed. Healing begins on all fronts, and Ethan and Anne presumably begin to live happily ever after.

The Hypotext Fairy Tale: “Vasilisa the Brave”

Dreaming Anastasia rests upon the fairy tale of “Vasilisa the Brave.” It provides themes and a structure for book one, while the later books rest more heavily on folkloric characters, who will be discussed in detail later.

In “Vasilisa the Brave” (also known as “Vasilisa the Beautiful”), Vasilisa is a young woman of marriageable age, whose mother died while she was young.⁵⁹ Her father remarried, giving Vasilisa a mother and two stepsisters. The step mother promptly treats Vasilisa worse than her own daughters, giving her the worst of the work, and Vasilisa copes with the help of a *matryoshka*, a nesting doll, given to her by her mother before she died. Vasilisa gives the doll bread and in return, the doll gives her advice and does the work for her. One day, while the merchant is away on a long business trip, the stepmother plans to have the stepdaughters put out the candle while they are working. Vasilisa is then sent into the forest where Baba Yaga dwells, in order to bring back light for the home. She sets out with the doll, afraid but with little choice.

On her way, a white horse and man pass, bringing the day, and as she reaches the hut, a black horse and river pass, bringing the night. The eyes of the skulls on the fence surrounding the fence light up. Baba Yaga arrives, and when Vasilisa tells her that she has been sent for light, the old woman replies that if the girl works for a bit, she’ll get the light. If not, she’ll be eaten. The next morning, she sees a red horse and rider bring the sunrise. For two days, Baba Yaga gives Vasilisa impossible tasks to do, and the doll does them for her. After two days, Yaga lets Vasilisa question her. The girl asks about the riders she has seen. The white is bright day, the red is the red sun, and the black is the dark night; they are the faithful servants of Baba Yaga. Yaga also

⁵⁹ Balina, Goscilo, and Lipovetsky, *Politicizing Magic*, 34–41.

asks Vasilisa how she gets the work assigned to her done, to which Vasilisa replies, “My mother’s blessing helps me.”⁶⁰ Baba Yaga wants no blessed ones in her house and throws Vasilisa out, but she does get the light- in the form of one of Baba Yaga’s skulls with the burning eyes. Vasilisa runs home, and reaches it the next night. When she shines the light of the skull on the stepmother and stepsisters, it burns them. By morning, they are ashes.⁶¹

In *Dreaming Anastasia*, the role of Vasilisa is split between Anne and Anastasia. Anne is tasked with going to Baba Yaga’s hut, and with getting Anastasia from it, but Anastasia is the one who has to spend time with Baba Yaga, keeping her company, listening to her stories, and making her tea. She does not have the same tasks that Vasilisa has, but she also spends much longer in Baba Yaga’s hut: Vasilisa is there for only a few days, Anastasia spends close to a century in real time. Anastasia is also the one with the matryoshka doll, which acts like the one in the tale, giving her advice (such as to feed Baba Yaga’s koshka with tidbits from meals) and providing her a place to store secrets.

The three horsemen – or rather their horses—from the tale become Anne, Anastasia, Ethan, and Viktor’s escape route from Baba Yaga’s forest. They are not bound by the same spell as Baba Yaga, which makes her keep Anastasia a prisoner, and so can take them to the river that marks the boundary. This element of the adaptation allows the author to give an expanded role to characters who say nothing in the original story, which reduces the need to add extra elements to the hypertext that are not found in the hypotext. By utilizing hypotext characters, Preble provides

⁶⁰ Ibid., 39.

⁶¹ The story continues as follows, although this section is not relevant to the *Dreaming Anastasia* plot: Vasilisa goes to live with a childless old woman until her father returns. While she waits, she makes linen, which the woman she lives with gives to the Tsar. No one else is capable of making shirts of it, so it is returned to Vasilisa for sewing. After she completes the work, the Tsar summons her. Upon seeing how beautiful she is, he marries her and when her father returns, he lives with them. Vasilisa carries the doll with her until she dies.

a deeper connection to the original tale, but puts her own spin on them, adding originality without substantially altering them. This ability to utilize folkloric characters in original ways without altering their base nature too dramatically is shown throughout the three books, from Baba Yaga to the rusalki.

Obviously, *Dreaming Anastasia* follows some parts of the skazka better than others. Although “*Vasilisa the Brave*” is the hypotext, which is made clear throughout the story as characters make direct references to the tale, the story is not followed exactly. Vasilisa’s backstory is not shared by either Anastasia or Anne. The former is a princess, raised by her mother and father, with many siblings (and even a half sibling) but no stepmother or stepsisters. The latter is from a rather normal middle class family, which has its own secrets and history, but which still has a mother, father, and daughter. Additionally, Anastasia does not enter the forest under her own power, as Vasilisa does. *Anne* enters the forest under her own power, but Anastasia does not. Further, Baba Yaga does not let Anastasia go because of a blessed doll.

The Heroine and the Hero

Anne Michaelson is the heroine of the trilogy, a teenage girl from a Chicago suburban family. She lives with her mother and father and is still working to get over the death of her older brother, David, who died of cancer. She is a ballerina, concerned with passing World History and the intensifiers her best friend, Tess, uses. At first glance, she looks little like a fairy tale heroine. Yet as is discovered in the first book, Anne is indeed a princess, albeit an illegitimate one. She is approximately the right age, sixteen in book one, seventeen in books two and three. Agency in the books is hers; although she is given much help by her friends, Ethan, and others, most of the decisions and important realizations are hers. Anne also has her own powers, which grow as the story progresses, even as Ethan’s disappear. Anne is slightly more dependent on others than

other heroines might be –because she lacks a background in Russia, Russian folklore, and magic, which other characters have—but with their help and Google’s, she is capable of learning what is necessary. She is also courageous and rather impulsive, but determined. It is she who saves everyone in the end, including Ethan multiple times. She also has power, more than she knows what to do with, a sliver of that which is held by Baba Yaga, power that has been passed from mother to daughter over a century. This ties her to the witch in ways that she does not understand and forces her not only to learn how to control her power, but to learn the rules governing it.

Ethan Kozninsky fulfills the role of hero, or at least, of romantic interest. Like many Russian heroes, he is a peasant devoted to a princess, or two in his case. Yet, unusually, he is a magic-wielding member of a religious organization. There are not many fairy tale heroes who are monks. The closest may be the prototype for Ilya Muromets, a *bogatyř*’ in tales that are a mix of the *byliny* and *skazki*. He is strongly connected to Ilya Pechersky, a warrior and monk of the Kiev-Pechersk Monastery.⁶² So while monks are connected to Russian fairy tale heroes, they are uncommon as heroes. Ethan is eighteen and an orphan. He is not the youngest of three; he actually was the oldest when his parents and siblings died.

Yet, as Ivan did, Ethan does have the ideal qualities of the positive hero according to Kravchenko. Tess and Anne identify Ethan as “wicked hot” even as they wonder why he is staring at Anne, the first time they encounter him.⁶³ Ethan is clever enough to have tracked Anne down over the centuries, striving to find the girl of prophecy in order to save Anastasia. This is an example of his dedication and his kindness as much as it is of his intelligence. As Joy Preble

⁶² Yuri Maksimov, “Il’ya Muromets: Scyatoj Bogatyř’,” *Pravoslavie*, December 29, 2001, <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/put/sv/muromec.htm>; “Prepodobnij Iliya Muromets, Pecherskij,” *Патриархия.ру*, 2017, <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/908844.html>.

⁶³ Preble, *Dreaming Anastasia*, 3.

describes him, “Ethan... is an all-in kind of guy.”⁶⁴ Furthermore, he is magically powerful, even if his physical strength is not superhuman. Seeing as information from his point of view is given throughout the novels, Ethan’s heroic nature is never in doubt by the readers, even when he is doubted by Anne and Tess.

The romance between Ethan and Anne is not an unusual aspect of either a fairy tale or a young adult novel; a large section of both commonly focus on romantic relationships. For one another, they are the princess and hero of Propp’s *Dramatis Personae*.⁶⁵ A false hero named Ben briefly creates a bit of a love triangle, but he quickly falls back into position as a helper when Anne and Ethan get together.

Preble says this of Anne and Ethan;

I made them inhabit a reverse fairy tale. It is Anne who ends up saving Ethan over and over. It is Anne who is the hero. And ultimately, it is Ethan (no spoilers for book 3 quite yet) who needs redemption and forgiveness before he and Anne can be together. A happily ever after, but hard won. And not without suffering and sacrifice. This is after all, a Russian fairy tale. No one knows endurance like the Russians.

Yet, as Preble says, this is a *Russian* fairy tale, which makes her characterization of the story odd. As was mentioned before, in skazki, princesses can be just as active as heroes. Marya Morevna, in her own tale, is a warrior queen who can slay armies and who captured Koschei the Deathless. In the tale “The Feather of Finist the Bright Falcon,” it is the female lead who sets out on an adventure in order to win back Finist’s love. Structurally, “Finist” matches other tales

⁶⁴ Susan Haugland and Joy Preble, “Guest Post and Giveaway for Dreaming Anastasia Series by Joy Preble,” Blog, *A Soul Unsung*, (August 15, 2012), <http://soulunsung.blogspot.com/2012/08/guest-post-and-giveaway-for-dreaming.html>.

⁶⁵ Tatar, *The Classic Fairy Tales*, 387.

where males set out to get females back after the treachery of their brothers or their own impatience causes her to go far away. In “Vasilisa the Wise and the Sea King,” Vasilisa (daughter to the Sea King, capable of shapeshifting into a bird and other forms of magic) performs all the tasks that the prince is assigned by the Sea King.⁶⁶ She helps him distinguish her from her sisters, and helps them escape to his kingdom by turning them into various objects and creatures on the route, so that they are not found. When the prince does what she tells him not to and forgets her, she makes him remember. Vasilisa the Wise is the one who does everything in the story. With these examples, it is clear that while Anne and Ethan may live in a fairy tale that is the inverse of most Western fairy tales, their story is not uncommon to the skazki.

History, Time, and Fiction

Like *Enchantment*, *Dreaming Anastasia* uses a dichotomy between present day and history to convey the story. Anne, in this case is the modern young woman, while Ethan, Viktor (the leader of the Brotherhood), and Anastasia are from a different era. Baba Yaga is from an even different era still, far in ancient times, but moves through all times without issue. The difference between the two main settings, however, is less drastic than in *Enchantment*: ninety years instead of over a millennia. In this case, cultural adaptation is not fundamental to the book, as two of the characters have moved through time and adapted as it happened, and the other has been kept preserved in a fairy tale world. Anastasia is not in the present long enough to need to adapt to modern Chicago. Instead, it is rather that the history of the time the others are from is key to the novel. Indeed, it is the history that grounds the novel, the lynchpin on which the fairy tale aspect grows. Unlike *Enchantment*, where the present is what grounds the tale and is needed

⁶⁶ Aleksander Nikolaevich Afanas'ev, *Russian Fairy Tales* (New York: Pantheon, 1945), 427–37.

to make the story work, here, the story does not work unless it is grounded in the Romanov family, as it was under Nicholas II. The story of the royal family, of the four daughters followed by one sickly son, of a mother who trusted a holy man more than she should have because he could help her family, is at the heart of the novel. That dedication of mothers to their children is a fundamental aspect of the entire series, in fact, and will be discussed later.

Of course, Preble takes her liberties with history as well. For one, Anastasia Romanov died in 1918. The circumstances of her death however, gave rise to a modern fairy tale of a grand duchess who had escaped her family's fate and made it out of Russia, which Preble uses to build the story as much as any traditional tale. The true story is that on July 17, 1918, Anastasia, her parents, and her siblings—along with four family retainers—were ordered to dress and ushered into the cellar of the house in which they were kept in Ekaterinburg.⁶⁷ They were shot, and those who lived, stabbed.⁶⁸ When that failed to work, the man in charge of the executions, Yakov Yurovsky, shot them individually. Their bodies were taken out of the city, into the woods, undressed, two were burned and buried, and the others were tossed in a pit and covered in sulfuric acid. The graves were filled in and the traces erased.⁶⁹

Yet with the mysterious circumstances of their deaths, with few knowing the truth and rumors abounding, many believed that one of the Romanovs may have survived. Over time, the rumors focused themselves on Anastasia, with at least ten women over the course of the twentieth century claiming to be the last grand duchess as the fairy tale of her escape from death grew. The most famous of them, Anna Anderson, was finally debunked after her death, when

⁶⁷ History.com Staff, "Anastasia Arrives in the United States," *History.com*, 2010, <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/anastasia-arrives-in-the-united-states>.

⁶⁸ "Yurovsky Note 1922 English," *Alexander Palace Time Machine*, accessed April 5, 2017, <http://www.alexanderpalace.org/palace/YurovskyNoteEnglish.html>.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

DNA testing was performed.⁷⁰ The pit in which most of them were buried was found in 1979 and opened in 1991, with DNA testing proving the identities of those within. Although it was at first believed that Alexei and Anastasia's bodies were those missing, skull comparisons by Russian scientists proved that Anastasia was one of those in the pit, and it was likely Marie, her next older sister, whose body was missing. Marie and Alexei were found in 2007 and further DNA testing proved that all the members of the imperial family died together.

Preble's use of Anastasia plays into the long-held belief that she did not die, but somehow escaped. This belief was immortalized in the Disney Renaissance-inspired Fox film, *Anastasia* (1997), which is well known to many younger Americans that form the audience of the trilogy. The story puts together a way that she could have escaped—magic—and at the end of book one, sends her back so that she can die with her family. A reprieve in time, but no change to it. The events of book three question whether or not time can be altered, if Anne could warn Anastasia and have that warning result in her survival, but the end is inconclusive.

The second historical change Preble makes is that she gives Tsar Nicholas II an illegitimate son by a lover from before his marriage to the Empress Alexandra, although, interestingly, this son is not by the known lover of Tsar Nicholas II, a ballet dancer named Mathilde Kschessinska, but rather by another woman, Marina. This historical alteration is essential for the novel, as Viktor plays a major role. Due to the notoriety of the tsar's affair with Mathilde—even with his love for Alexandra being well known—the historical alteration does not feel out of the realm of possibility.

⁷⁰ Liz Greene, "What Really Happened to the Grand Duchess Anastasia?," *History Buff*, accessed April 5, 2017, <http://historybuff.com/what-really-happened-to-grand-duchess-anastasia-1-rYRD6wvveqmp9>.

What is out of the realm of possibility, a fantastical device used by Preble in books two and three, is the ability to travel through time. Metatext on the back of *Anastasia Forever* asks, “Is it possible to change the past?” Throughout the book, Anne—sometimes accompanied by Ethan, sometimes by Tess—travels into the past, either to Anastasia’s life in the palace, or to times in Ethan’s life. These trips are necessary to unravel Viktor’s plots, discover his motivations, and discover where he secreted away his soul. Time travel allows Anne to experience bits of Ethan’s life, which brings them closer together, and to see the past. Where before she was disadvantaged by not knowing the past, by having only twenty-first century knowledge when almost everyone else in the game has a century’s worth of knowledge and motivations that began that long ago, by visiting the past Anne has the opportunity to at least get a sense of what was going on. It is a fantastical device yes, but one that works well, especially as it allows the Koschei plot to play out with a unique twist. Both *Dreaming Anastasia* and *Enchantment* deal with the idea of the ability to change the past and whether or not changes to the past that are enacted are predetermined, as they have already happened in the original timeline. This helps the authors tie together the modern world with that of the past, by forcing characters to confront if they can make alterations to their present while in the past.

Baba Yaga

Like *Enchantment*, Baba Yaga serves as a major character in the *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy; however, Preble portrays the witch as the ambiguous character she usually is in Russia fairy tales. Here, Baba Yaga is the Maiden, the Bone Mother, the Death Crone: one being with three aspects.⁷¹ Her story is one of love and loss, wishes and regrets, revenge and vengeance

⁷¹ Joy Preble, *Haunted*, *Dreaming Anastasia 2* (Illinois: Sourcebooks Fire, 2011), 1, 40, 47; Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture*, 38.

gone wrong. She is not a being of pure evil, but she is not one of pure good either. She demands a price for her help, and usually a steep one.

In *Dreaming Anastasia*, Baba Yaga is given a thorough backstory. Like *Enchantment* she was human once: young, beautiful, and in love, at a time when the Old Ones still walked the Earth.⁷² A man betrayed her, even as she carried his child, and so she made a bargain:

I would give up my youth, and I would give up my beauty. No longer would I be governed by how someone perceived my face. In return, I would have the power I craved. I did not ponder the choice for long. I knew the whims of the Old Ones, how swiftly they might cancel an offer such as this. “Are you sure?” they asked me, although later, I knew they had already made their choice. I answered, yes. Oh, yes. Beauty is power, but I wanted to be feared on my own terms—to help or hurt as it pleased me. No predictability, even if the cost was a heart of stone.⁷³

The cost she did not expect, however, was to lose the child she carried, the child she intended to raise with her ways, rather than his. This loss leaves her with a set of weak spots; one, for mothers who fathers have abandoned their children, and the other for certain young woman, such as Anne and Anastasia, who trigger her protective instincts. When Anastasia goes back to die, when she has left Baba Yaga’s hut, the witch misses her. Anastasia called her “Auntie Yaga,” and the girl awoke her Mother nature, causing her to feel grief when she is gone.⁷⁴ Yet she is not

⁷² Joy Preble, *Anastasia Forever*, *Dreaming Anastasia* 3 (Illinois: Sourcebooks Fire, 2012), 206–7; Preble, *Haunted*, 264.

⁷³ Preble, *Haunted*, 265.

⁷⁴ Preble, *Dreaming Anastasia*, vii.

soft; for Viktor she feels only rage, and she tosses him into the river, back cracked, to be devoured by rusalki once he is mortal and his death can hurt no one else.⁷⁵

By keeping Baba Yaga an ambiguous character, Preble not only stays closer to the folkloric figure, she also heightens suspense. Particularly in the first novel, the ambiguity of her character, the disconnects between her actions, cause both the characters and the reader to question what they know. Baba Yaga is protecting Anastasia, yes, so why is she going after Anne? The magic compelled her to keep Anastasia safe, but the magic was a consequence of her own actions; Baba Yaga gave Viktor power, manipulating him as he manipulated her, to fill the void in her life. She manipulated his mother, cursed her for her arrogance even as she gave him power, and in the end let herself be bound to protect a Romanov so that she could have an immortal companion, a daughter to share her hut and make her tea.⁷⁶ Although at first glance her actions look like the kind saving of a girl from certain death, upon another it looks like the sentencing of a girl to immortality when she did not desire it. Anastasia was innocent—foolish, perhaps, for trusting Viktor—but innocent when others were plotting her future. Viktor and Baba Yaga played with her life to get what they wanted. Kindness and cruelty woven together, because every action in Baba Yaga’s forest has a cost.⁷⁷

Preble incorporates more features from folklore into the stories than Card. For one, she gives Baba Yaga iron teeth, a common folkloric trait.⁷⁸ Secondly, she taps into her main source tale, “Vasilisa the Brave,” to add the three horsemen and the detachable hands, although she modifies the latter. In the tale, the hands are not a part of Baba Yaga, and there are three floating

⁷⁵ Preble, *Haunted*, 48; Preble, *Anastasia Forever*, 301.

⁷⁶ Preble, *Haunted*, 265, 266; Preble, *Anastasia Forever*, 212–14.

⁷⁷ Preble, *Anastasia Forever*, 215.

⁷⁸ Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture*, 38.

pairs. They do not detach from Baba Yaga's wrists and scurry around on their own, as they do in Preble's work, but they exist.

Preble also makes use of Baba Yaga's forest as its own space, outside of time and reality. Time there passes differently; eternity can stretch on without aging a person, or age them rapidly. The forest is her own, with the hut inside, propped up on chicken legs and surrounded by skulls. Unlike Card, who chooses to have Baba Yaga invent her hut *after* the tale ends, Preble has her invent her hut long before the tale begins, when she first is granted her power by the Old Ones. The border to the forest is a river, as discussed earlier. The choice of water as the edge of Baba Yaga's realm is interesting, as Preble says that water is not Baba Yaga's true element. "I am of the earth and the sky. I am of the fire. But in the seas and oceans, the rivers and streams, I am not at ease," Baba Yaga says of herself. Her edge, then, is what she is not.

Baba Yaga in the *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy is a complex, multifaceted character, capable of both evil and good. The length of the series, 912 pages in total, gives Preble room to draw out her development, showing her many sides. She is given an origin, complex motivations, and is made into a character that the reader sways back and forth upon, despising her one moment and sympathizing with her the next, in a portrayal that feels authentic to the folkloric version.

Rusalki

Zalozhnye are spirits who died a premature death, either violently or from unnatural causes.⁷⁹ They were considered tainted by evil spirits and often were not given burials or funerals. Without funeral rights, they were believed to be unable to enter the land of the *roditeli*,

⁷⁹ Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 42–43.

the honored ancestral spirits. The Zalozhnye therefore had no reason to look kindly upon the living, who had doomed them to a life after death on this earth. Although Zalozhnye is a catch-all term, distinctions can be made between different types, based on age, sex, and temperament.

Women and maidens who died tragically, particularly those who had drowned, were considered a special group of water spirits, the rusalki (singular, *rusalka*). Rusalki live in or near deep waters and might have fish tails, but many have legs and remove themselves from the water at night to dance in the fields or sit in trees, combing their hair and singing. Occasionally, they are the souls of children either killed by their mothers or who died before they were baptized, but primarily they are adult women.

Although women would engage in ceremonies to honor the rusalki, to men they were considered deadly. In Ukrainian and Southern Russian folklore, they are portrayed as beautiful women who use their singing to lure men to the river and then drown them by tickling so they cannot stay afloat.⁸⁰ Northern Russian folklore says rusalki are old and ugly, sometimes with green hair and breasts of iron that can be used to beat their male victims. Although rusalki are often designated part of lower mythology, evidence points to rusalki having developed out of ancient goddesses.⁸¹ Although different scholars discuss their origin in slightly different ways, they seem to agree that rusalki are connected to either an ancient Earth goddess or an ancient

⁸⁰ Lena Dobivko and Jose Alaniz, "Reclaiming the Rusalka : Towards Multiplicities of Gender in Russian Literary and Visual Culture" (University of Washington, 2013), 47, <http://hdl.handle.net/1773/25051>.

⁸¹ Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture*, 27.

mother goddess, which is why celebration of them occurs at times integral to planting or the harvest.⁸² Rusalki are also capable of transformation, frequently into water-birds.⁸³

In the *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy, rusalki are introduced in book two, *Haunted*, when Lily begins appearing to Anne. She is described as pale, with bone-thin arms, white teeth that are just a little too sharp, long, snaky, black hair, grey eyes, and legs that are sometimes human legs and sometimes a fish tail.⁸⁴ Later, when a brigade of rusalki attack Anne, they appear as a rainbow of hair, skin, and eye colors, tall and short, all smelling of seaweed and the ocean.⁸⁵ In northern Russia, which makes sense, as the northern image is much less common.⁸⁶ They also have loose hair, long and tangled, which in traditional folk lore is a symbol of their intense sexuality, and of fertility.⁸⁷ It is not uncommon in tales of rusalki for them to be combing their hair when unsuspecting men come upon them.⁸⁸

Preble uses the sexuality of rusalki and their ability to seduce men on both Ethan and Ben. The latter falls for the sexuality of rusalki when the brigade of them attack Anne, her mother, Ben, and Mrs. Benson, her mother's boss. Ben finds the rusalki pretty, and they croon at him, putting him in a dazed, almost drunken state.⁸⁹ Ben is extremely susceptible to rusalki, Lily almost drowns him early in the book, and here, when the rusalki attempt to separate him from Anne. Lily also manages to enchant Ethan, in order to lure Anne to the water and make Anne do

⁸² Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 46; Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture*, 15; Dobivko and Alaniz, "Reclaiming the Rusalka : Towards Multiplicities of Gender in Russian Literary and Visual Culture," 37.

⁸³ Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 46.

⁸⁴ Preble, *Haunted*, 10, 26–29.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 204.

⁸⁶ Dobivko and Alaniz, "Reclaiming the Rusalka : Towards Multiplicities of Gender in Russian Literary and Visual Culture," 48.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 49–50.

⁸⁸ Hubbs, *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture*, 28.

⁸⁹ Preble, *Haunted*, 203–5.

what she wants. Interestingly, Preble extends their ability to work on women as well. Anne's mother, Laura, is lured to the water by Lily, not by sexuality, but by the promise of seeing her dead son again. Preble also gives her rusalki the ability to transform, not into animals, but into other people. Lily is able to shift into Anne's mother, as well as her brother. Another rusalka shifts into an old girlfriend of Ethan's, Tasha. This makes it easier for them to lure their victims and it works especially well on those without magic. Ethan, who has some, is at least able to tell that he is looking at a glamor.

Preble's use of rusalki adds another force to the story. Anne has one side, Baba Yaga is her own force, aligning with her own interests and with others only when it suits her. Viktor has his own agenda: immortality and a life worthy of a tsar. Lily and her rusalki sisters form their own side, bound to being rusalki—and therefore to seducing men into the water—but also struggling to influence Anne so that Lily's death can be avenged. Lily's goals meet with Anne's sometimes, but they oppose hers at others, often making Anne's attempts to deal with larger issues harder. Lily, for instance, shoots Ethan, prompting Anne to save him, but not without having to agree to do something that Baba Yaga wants her to. Yet she also saves Ethan in the end by destroying that which bound him to Viktor. Lily makes everything more complicated for Anne, but her existence serves to bring up some of the larger issues of family and grief that are inherent in the tale.

Koschei the Deathless

Koschei the Deathless is another important figure in skazki. He is connected to Baba Yaga; in one tale, she is his wife and they use the same weapon to fight the hero, an iron pestle.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Kravchenko, *The World of the Russian Fairy Tale*, 217.

He usually stands on his own, however, a wandering skeletal figure whose image makes him “the very essence of death.”⁹¹ In general, he is described as an evil sorcerer, who is responsible for kidnapping the central female figure. In most stories, the hero must venture to find the egg that Koschei’s death is hidden in. The egg is typically located on a far-off island, hidden within other objects, much like a matryoshka doll. Once the egg is found, Koschei’s death is returned to him and he is defeated.

Despite being immortal without his death, Koschei is not all-powerful while it is hidden. Even with his death separated from him, Koschei can be trapped. In some tales, the hero’s bride, a warrior princess, has trapped Koschei in her castle, deprived of water and secured in chains.⁹² The hero is convinced to give him water, and once the requisite amount is drunk, Koschei escapes, stealing the warrior princess away. Yet women are always Koschei’s downfall, and through a princess’s ability to get the truth from him and pass it to the hero, he is defeated. He may be kind to women, but he is never a donor to the hero. He is typically in the role of villain, without the flexibility that Baba Yaga has.

It fits then, that Koschei’s tale is the one that Viktor cleaves to, the one that he internalizes and seeks to make his own. Koschei has immortality, as long as his soul is safe, he cannot die. He lives, on and on, collecting the knowledge and power that come with infinite lives. It is this that Viktor desires, this that his mother raised him to take, “if [he] could not be [his] father’s son, could not have the legacy of a tsar, immortality would have to suffice.”⁹³

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Balina, Goscilo, and Lipovetsky, *Politicizing Magic*, 42–50. “Marya Morevna”

⁹³ Preble, *Anastasia Forever*, 2.

Trapped in Baba Yaga's hut, Viktor is able to plan how to hide his soul where it could not be easily reached. He sticks it in the smallest of the matryoshka dolls that Anastasia carried, then hides that doll within an egg—a Fabergé egg, to be specific, one that the master made for Tsar Nicholas II, which depicts the seven members of the royal family. An egg he altered to show eight portraits, inserting himself among the family he felt should be his, located in the early 1910s. And so, Viktor's soul became a being of light and energy, hidden in a doll, kept in an egg, stored in a palace in the last years of the Romanovs.

Anne's duty is to retrieve the doll, return to her own time, and return the soul to Viktor, enabling him to die. With his death, Lily will have her vengeance and cease interfering with Anne's family. Anne might be able to live a normal, fairy-tale influence-free life. This she does, although not without complications, breaking the doll with her foot and letting out Viktor's soul. Once released and returned to its owner, the man is mortal, killable. Baba Yaga does the honors, before turning his body over to the rusalki.

Including Koschei the Deathless within the *Dreaming Anastasia* universe enabled Preble to ground Viktor and his continuing quest for immortality within the framework of skazki. Each of the books requires Anne to learn about a new tale or folkloric creature; for book three, Koschei is it. Viktor fits with Koschei; a sorcerer, obsessed with staying alive, who tries to capture young women and discovers that is his downfall. He is trapped in Baba Yaga's hut rather than a closet, and Anne is the one to set him free, rather than an Ivan, but even his escape has ties to Koschei's.

Immortality is one of the fundamental themes of the *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy. Viktor is so obsessed with it that he betrays a younger sister who looks up to him to get it, is willing to rip his soul from his body and “do a Lord Voldemort, Russian fairy tale style” to try and ensure

it, is willing to kill his own descendants to prevent them from accomplishing their mission.⁹⁴ His story is one of warning, of the dangers of obsession. He gets what he wants for a time, but not without a heavy cost.

Ethan too is immortal until Anastasia is freed. Like the Grand Duchess, but unlike Viktor, he sees immortality as a curse. Never aging, never dying: that is as much torture to him as the thought of death is to Viktor. Ethan knows his mistake almost as soon as he makes it. To Anne he says, “I thought I was saving that girl. I wasn’t. I was dooming her to something worse than death.”⁹⁵ Although his words seem almost hyperbolic, death is what Anastasia chooses in the end. A death with those she loves, rather than a life in a foreign land, a century out of place. Ethan, at least, has had the chance to grow with the times, to learn of cars and airplanes, cell phones and skyscrapers. For him, when Anastasia is freed and he is made mortal, it is a fresh start, a new lease on life for which he is grateful. That which is a fearful moment for Viktor is a moment of jubilee for Ethan, a moment of stark contrast between the two characters.

Three

In skazki, the number three is significant, part of a larger incidence of the number three in Russian culture.⁹⁶ Preble uses the number throughout the books and in their structure: there are three books and three points of view in each book. Three years before the start of the story Anne’s dreams of Anastasia began. Three drops of Anne’s blood are needed to send them to Baba Yaga’s forest. Two of them were supposed to enter Baba Yaga’s forest, but three were meant to come out, and only three. By messing that up and having four (Anastasia, Ethan, Anne,

⁹⁴ Ibid., 187.

⁹⁵ Preble, *Dreaming Anastasia*, 154.

⁹⁶ Lee B. Croft, “People in Threes Going up in Smoke and Other Triplicities in Russian Literature and Culture,” *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 59, no. 2 (2005): 29, doi:10.2307/3655046.

and Viktor), the interfere with the spell. Beginning in *Haunted*, Baba Yaga is portrayed as being a tripartite figure. Near the end of the book, the three horsemen of Baba Yaga thrice demand the answers to three questions from Anne's three companions; for what would they die, what could they not live without, and what lies in their hearts.⁹⁷ Finally, in *Anastasia Forever*, after the third time that Anne saves Ethan, a price is demanded by nature. Throughout the trilogy, three is a fundamental number, just as it is in fairy tales.

Family and Grief

Fairy tales are built upon families—often upon dysfunctional ones. “Cinderella” and “Vasilisa the Brave” have wicked step-mothers. “The Tale of Finist the Bright Falcon” has wicked sisters, while “The Tale of Prince Ivan, The Firebird, and the Gray Wolf” has treacherous brothers. In *Dreaming Anastasia*, it is not different. Family is the root of the trilogy; the connections between family members drive the plot from beginning to end.

It is precisely because he is unacknowledged family that Viktor's ambitions arise. His father denies him the birthright a legitimate first son would have, denies that he exists, and so drives Viktor and his mother to seek Baba Yaga. Anastasia trusts him because he is family, and because he is an older brother and although her family has its own problems, they are true to one another. Her letters in book one are heartfelt, full of love even, as she attempts to explain the connections of blood and secrets that led to her imprisonment in Baba Yaga's hut. The love of the last Empress imbues Anastasia's matryoshka, and like Vasilisa's doll, it protects and cares for her while she lives with Baba Yaga. The ‘little mother’ doll stands in for Alexandra when the Empress is gone and keeps Anastasia's letters to her family safe. In their lifetimes she may not

⁹⁷ Preble, *Haunted*, 252–53.

have shared all her secrets with them, but she does so after death, calling them all out, including herself, for their roles in what happened. Although it is clear she loves each of them, the time in Baba Yaga's hut gives her more than enough clarity to reflect back on the events of the 1910s.

Anne's family is also dysfunctional, if not in the way that Anastasia's is. Instead, she has Viktor for a great-great-grandfather. The same Viktor who killed her grandfather, caused her grandmother Lily to kill herself, and who then tried to kill Anne. Lily, as a rusalka, tries to drown Anne's boyfriends and lure her own daughter, Anne's mother, into the water with promises that she can see her son again.

This last bit is due to a deeper hurt in Anne's family, caused by the death of her older brother, David. David died of cancer two years before the novel, causing a rift in Anne's family. Her parents lost themselves in their grief, her mother especially. While her father threw himself back into work and being a health nut, her mother, Laura, began to quietly fall apart, losing herself in her grief rather than working to overcome it. This gives Lily power over her.

Much of the theme of family that runs through *Dreaming Anastasia* is bound with its theme of grief, and what mothers will do for their children. Marina took Viktor to Baba Yaga so that he could have the legacy of his bloodline. The Empress Alexandra trusted a man she shouldn't have because he said he could help her son. Lily killed herself to protect Laura, who she had just given up for adoption. Laura is willing to do anything if it means being able to see her son one last time. Baba Yaga planned to use power gained from the Old Ones to raise her child as she saw fit, and she protected Anastasia, grieving when she lost a surrogate daughter. The depth of their emotions makes them vulnerable and leads them to make unwise decisions. Laura comes close to falling to the spell of the rusalki because of how much she wants to see David again, she screams at Anne when she thinks that Anne can help her to see him one last

time but won't. Laura's struggles with David's illness and loss echo what could have happened with Alexandra, had Alexei died of his disease.

Their trials are all too human. This plot line—of family and grief, of the love between mothers and their children—is a grounding element in *Dreaming Anastasia*. Loss is something most people know and connect with and it is not absent from fairy tales, although they do not explore its effects as deeply as one can in a novel. In fairy tales, death is moved past, skipped over, something that happens to either parental figures or those deserving of punishment. If a main character dies, the death is overturned quickly; someone heals them or retrieves them from the world of the dead. In the real world, death is something that takes time to deal with. The process is not something that happens overnight and not everyone deals with their grief in the same way. Preble displays this to great effect within the trilogy, giving each character their own coping mechanisms and reactions. By centering an aspect of fairy tales that is never deeply dealt with within them, she provides a connection to the genre while also making the story more meaningful.

Dreaming Anastasia's Meta Aspects

The relationship of the hypotext fairy tale to the hypertext novel contains surprisingly little intertextuality. Direct quoting of the skazka doesn't happen, rather, characters give summaries of it to one another. Partially, this may be because of the freedom given by the various existing versions of a tale; the tale that the author relates, however brief, can suffice for the establishment of the story's canon, without the need to quote. It also means that the author can mix tales if they desire, to create a fairy tale that combines different elements of different versions. They do not need to—they may choose to stick to a particular pre-established tale—but they can. By giving brief summaries rather than long recounts, the author can focus their energy

on parallels or the integration of the hypotext into the plot. Allusion is also rare within *Dreaming Anastasia*, predominately because allusion is intended to be less literal, a less explicit cousin to quoting or plagiarism. That is not to say that the references between the hypo- and hypertexts are uncommon, but rather that they are generally made explicit. The phenomenon is similar to the meta aspects in *Enchantment*.

Characters in the *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy are well aware of the existence of fairy tales, and if there are folkloric figures or tales they do not know about, the internet is at their fingertips to help them figure it out. Much of Anne's knowledge comes from Google searches, while Ethan's comes from stories he was told as a child. Characters are aware that they are playing out a fairy tale and actively search out how to fulfil their roles, or use the knowledge of the roles played by others to predict actions and motivations. They are defining their actions by those of a tale, especially in books one and three. This awareness of the fairy tales that they are facing, and drawing these direct comparisons is an important part of the plot. Because Preble uses the tales in this way, explicitly establishing the presence of the hypotext within the hypertext, although the general definition of intertextuality exists due to the presence of the hypotext in the hypertext, the three tools of intertextuality are seldom used.

Dreaming Anastasia lacks, however, the commentary on fairy tales that *Enchantment* has. There is no discussion of Propp, or ur-tales. Here, there is no scholarly analysis of how the tales came to be and if the characters are affecting them. The closest that the trilogy comes is by talking about if they could have influenced Anastasia's story—therefore, history—by their trips through time. Fairy tales are guides, rather than something to be influenced. This lack makes sense, particularly as *Dreaming Anastasia* has a lower target age for its audience, and the characters within are younger. Anne is a high school student, not a Ph.D. candidate, and her

knowledge is commensurate. Ethan might know more, and probably has studied some of the same theories, but they fail to arise during the novels.

Conclusion

Both the *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy and *Enchantment* focus on blending past and present, fairy tales and reality. History is fundamental to them, as both draw on Russian history to enrich the narratives of their work. Blending history with fairy tales, however, is something contrary to the latter's very being. Fairy tales are ahistorical, set in no specific time or place; rather, they embody a time long past and serve as a general representation of a culture. This makes them ripe for adaptation, within and between cultures. Although they will reflect the periods and cultures in which they were created, they lack specific time and place markers. Giving them concreteness alters them. For *Enchantment*, it draws into question the origins of fairy tales themselves. For *Dreaming Anastasia*, it allows for the integration of multiple tales into a single narrative with two time centers. This integration of history and fairy tale also helps with the transformation of the fairy tale hypotexts into larger novels. By weaving in history with the plot, it provides opportunities for expansion, something imperative if a short tale is to be adapted into a novel.

Preble and Card also show that in translating a tale from one culture to another, American authors must choose whether or not to keep a character in a form akin to the one they have in the original culture, or to mold them into the form of a Western villain. The former is possibly more difficult, as it requires more time spent in developing the character and explaining the differences between them and a normal villain. If one takes the character and westernizes them, molding them to conventions American readers would be familiar with, readers will require less explanation, as the stock character will be familiar to them, even when clothed in the garb of another culture. The former will provide a greater learning opportunity for the reader, as the character will be portrayed differently from how they are used to seeing villains, and they

will see as the story progresses why this is. The latter may not teach as much about the character's differences, but it provides a touchstone of familiarity if the author is trying to alter other dynamics and reduces the amount of time needed to explain or describe the character if that space in the work is needed for a different purpose. Unfortunately, it can also lead to Western readers forming a one-sided idea of a character whose role in their original culture is more complex. If a writer is to do an adaptation involving folkloric figures from another culture—particularly when the culture is underrepresented in the West—they should try to display them in a way that fully captures them, even if it is only a nod to a secondary perception.

This is because, regardless of whether they adhere precisely to the cultural portrayal of the character, all cross-cultural adaptations share one thing in common: they promote interest in new areas for their readers, regardless of any larger message intended in their writing.⁹⁸

“Adaptation studies facilitates an understanding of social change, narrative form, cultural difference, commercial imperatives, power relationships and so much more,” writes Imelda Whelehan, an expert in adaptation studies.⁹⁹ Cross-cultural adaptation, like translation, opens up a new world to a new audience, encouraging them to find out more about the source text and the world it describes. Authors who engage in this act, therefore, are given enormous power in shaping perceptions of the other culture. If books and media portray a culture in a specific way, then Americans will gain a biased perception of that culture.¹⁰⁰ With an underrepresented culture, there are less chances to encounter it in an accessible form, which makes it even more

⁹⁸ Farley, “Translation, Interpretation, Fan Fiction: A Continuum of Meaning Production.”

⁹⁹ Whelehan, “What Is Adaptation Studies?”

¹⁰⁰ Dave Schilling, “Bloodthirsty Terrorists and Duplicitous Spies: Does TV Have a Muslim Problem?,” *The Guardian*, February 4, 2016, sec. Television & radio, <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/tvandradioblog/2016/feb/04/muslim-television-characters-us-tv-shows-terrorist-spy-24-homeland-obama>; Fatima Tobing Rony, “Taxidermy and Romantic Ethnography,” in *The Third Eye: Race Cinema and Ethnographic Spectacle* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 100, <http://artsites.ucsc.edu/faculty/gustafson/FILM%20161.F08/readings/RonyTaxidermy.pdf>.

important that these few adaptations do the culture justice in their representation. Adaptation may be an area where authors are given great freedom, but that power comes with the responsibility to think about the impacts of portraying a particular culture in the ways that they do.

Both *Enchantment* and *Dreaming Anastasia* promote a greater interest in Russian history and fairy tales though their subject matter, even if they take liberties with the source material. *Enchantment* produces a larger look at Russian history by combining sections on the middle ages with sections from the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Union, all the while exploring differences in religion, language, and culture. The fairy tale analysis built in to the novel works to pull readers back a step and show them wider trends in skazki—not simply the one tale that Card built much of the plot on. Preble’s *Dreaming Anastasia* trilogy similarly displays Russian history to readers, but is narrower in scope as it focuses on the family of Tsar Nicholas II. More than history, Preble focuses on incorporating a variety of folkloric figures with complex backstories. The novels have slightly different audiences—*Enchantment* is geared toward a slightly older audience—but both are designed in such a way that they promote interest in their subject matter.

It is this which is the beauty and power of adaptations and revisions. They encourage readers to learn more, to seek out the source texts and in the case of cross-cultural adaptations, the source culture. They can link together two cultures, using that which is familiar to teach about what is different, increasing understanding. In an increasingly polarized world, one can only hope that any method of promoting understanding of other cultures succeeds in its goals, as all can benefit from it.

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