Words tell the Tale: the Motivation behind A. N. Afanas’ev’s Editing of Sources From the Archives of the Russian Geographical Society for his Narodnye russkie skazki

Quand les mots racontent l’histoire : le travail éditorial d’A. N. Afanas’ev sur les sources tirées des archives de la Société russe de géographie pour son édition des Contes populaires russes

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This article is based upon a comparison of folktales from the Russian Geographical Society archive with Afanas’ev’s published versions of these stories. In comparing the records of the Russian Geographical Society and the collection *Narodnye russkie skazki*, it appears that Afanas’ev’s editorial work was not as faithful as might have been expected. Though Afanas’ev did not comment on this work in his diary or correspondence, A.V. Shepkinia wrote to Aleksei Gruzinskii, the “biographer” of Afanas’ev, that she remembered having heard Afanas’ev say that editing folktales required “comparing variations, deciding what to keep and what to discard, cleaning up the language, and eliminating anything that was rude.” In fact, Afanas’ev’s record of editing confirms this process of cuts and modifications in vocabulary.

Some of the alterations to the sources were necessary in regard to censorship. For example, in *Pravda i krivda*, Afanas’ev had to replace the episode of the encounter with a pope to that of a clerk. Other changes were necessary according to the rules of logic. For example, in the tale *Kozma skorobogatyi*, Afanas’ev replaced paper money with silver because it does not make sense to...

1. GARF (Gosudarstvennyj arxiv rossijskoj federacii), f. 279, d. 1059.
2. RGALI (Rossiiskij gosudarstvennyj arxiv literatury i iskusstva), f. 126, op. 1, ed. khr. 341, l. 2, 2. ob. Strangely, this sentence was crossed out by someone.
weigh paper money using a balance and *pudovki* (a weight measure from the past). Some other changes were arguably beneficial for tales told in uninteresting, banal language. In the written culture, because the narrative cannot be accompanied by gestures and cries, the narrator must use other methods to create the effect of surprise. Thus Afanas’ev’s style is usually more colorful than the source. These changes to the text insert a drama which is often lacking in the manuscript. Afanas’ev replaced formulas that were not particularly striking with others that were decidedly dramatic. For example, in the tale *Kozma Skorobogatyi*, Afanas’ev changed the phrase “tsar’ udivlial’sia tomu, chto ziat’ ego deistvitel’no velikoi bogach’” with “Nu, liubeznyi ziat’! Mnogo zhe u tebja ovest’.” But, the editorial work of Afanas’ev goes much further.

Afanas’ev replaced some words of foreign origin with words of Russian origin, thereby “nationalizing” the tales. He also eliminated Church Slavonic vocabulary, in order to popularize and “Russify” the terms, and added some regional words, again in the interests of making the tales seem more authentic. These particular changes were designed to make the published tales conform to fashionable 19th century theories about the mythological origins of folktales, theories grouped in the school of mythology which will be dealt with later in this article. At the same time, Afanas’ev replaced some regionalisms with their Muscovite forms. Finally, violent episodes were censored in order to make the tales more suitable reading for children. In their edition of the *Narodnye Russkie Skazki* (1936), Azadovskii *et al.* gave evidence of Afanas’ev’s editorial work by comparing the published tales with the records of the Russian Geographical Society. In 1984, Barag and Novikov, in their own edition of the collection, noted the tales in which Afanas’ev’s editorial work had been more intrusive. The general conclusion reached in both editions was that there was no reason to believe that Afanas’ev had significantly altered the “social motives” of the tales. This article challenges the traditional view, which asserts that Afanas’ev’s editorial work is not a matter of significance.

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4. ARGO (Arxiv Rossijskogo gosudarstvennogo obščestva), r. 30, op. 1, d. 7, l. 5. Cf. Народные русские сказки, 1855-1863, vol. 4, p. 38. In the footnote Afanas’ev gave the synonym четверика for пудовки.

5. ARGO, r. 30, op. 1, d. 7, l. 1.


9. Cf. Lise Gruel-Appert: ‘even if he [Afanas’ev] has redacted some texts, this activity was far from systematic, as it was until then among his counterparts.’ *Introduction*, in Aleksandr Nikolaevič Afanassiev, les Contes populaires russes, Paris, Maisonneuve-Larose, 2000, p. 5.
COLLECTING THE FOLKTALES

Many of the tales that Afanas’ev edited came from the collection of Vladimir Dal’. Because he was older and understood that he would not have time to process all of the material he had accumulated over the years, Dal’ gave his collection of tales to Afanas’ev. Noting concerns over comprehensibility, Dal’ believed it impossible to transcribe the tales he heard while respecting the dialectological particulars. This admission suggests that Dal’ may have already poetized these stories. In the 1830s, under the pseudonym of Kazak Luganskii, Dal’ had great success as a writer of the people. Alexander Pushkin and Vissarion Belinskii praised the literary talent of Dal’/Luganskii. Today, Dal’ is best remembered for his activities as a collector of proverbs and the publication of his *Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great Russian Language*. But it cannot be denied that with the learned Dal’ there was also a great deal of “popular writer” Luganskii. Dal’ made no secret of the fact that he stylistically reworked the language in his dictionary: “I never, in any place unconditionally approved, without distinction, all that I had to include in the dictionary: the choice is up to the writer.” For Dal’, it was important to ‘enrich the popular language, and make it, through work, a cultivated language.’ He further wrote, “we must not write in vulgar and uncultured language,” positioning himself decidedly in favor of a “purity of language.”

In fact, this conception of the language suggests that before being passed on to Afanas’ev, the transcripts of the stories made by Dal’ were already adaptations, and, therefore, Afanas’ev may have adapted the adaptations. It would have been valuable to compare the tales handed down by Dal’ with stories published by Afanas’ev, but the books and archives of Afanas’ev were lost in the last years of his life. This disappearance is reminiscent of the story of the originals used by the brothers Grimm, which were believed lost forever until being rediscovered. It also echoes the habit of Karadžić to systematically burn originals

12. « Напутное слово », ibid., p. xxii.
13. Ibid., p. xxii.
after transcription. Fortunately not all the sources used by Afanas’ev have been lost.

Afanas’ev borrowed sources from the Russian Geographical Society, which he returned after consultation and transcription. These originals were written by amateur ethnographers for the Russian Geographical Society in response to a pamphlet that had been reproduced into 7000 copies which were distributed to all the regions of the Russian Empire. These pamphlets contained instructions which enabled volunteers to collect ethnographic material. Respondents were district leaders, school teachers, chiefs of police, priests... the “scribes of the village” in the words of Zelenin. A section of the pamphlet was intended for use in the collection of folktales. It is clear that when these amateur ethnographers transcribed oral popular culture it was already a work of translation. When comparing the thirty-six folktales found in the Russian Geographical Society archive with Afanas’ev’s published versions of these stories, the issue is not to see how Afanas’ev was guilty of having departed from the source (as the authentic original sources were ultimately oral and have disappeared, replaced by Afanas’ev’s Narodnye russkie skazki which have since become widely used and perhaps erroneously thought to adequately represent the Russian folktale), the key issue is how this editorial work reflected the intellectual world of Afanas’ev’s time.

IDEALIZING THE FOLKTALES

Russian folklorists of the 19th century were very much indebted to the brothers Grimm in their conception of the folktales. The brothers’ works were regarded in Russia at the time of Afanas’ev as excellent examples of good scholarship. As Fëdor Buslaev wrote in his memoirs: “Of all the contemporary scholars I followed, Jacob Grimm was preferred [...] In this context, I was also comforted by the authority of the Academy of Sciences, which the Moscow Commission took as a model for the drafting of a Russian grammar, like that of Grimm.” In a


17. For the correspondence between Afanas’ev and the Russian Geographical Society, see GARF, f. 279, op. 1, d. 1116, l. 1-1 ob. (Lamanski to Afanas’ev, November I, 1855) and ARAN (Arxiv rossijskoj akademii nauk), f. 35, op. 1, d. 60 (Afanas’ev to Lamanski, 1861).


19. F. Buslaev, О преподавании отечественного языка, Moskva, 1844, p. 144. It is probable that the “cultural capital” originally built in Germany by the Grimms had a stimulant effect on
letter to Andrei Alexandrovich Kraevskii, editor of the *Otechestvennye zapiski*, Afanas’ev proposed to publish folktales “in the model of the collection of the brothers Grimm.” Jacob and Wilhelm’s theory, intended to explain the folktales (although later proven incorrect), was that of the mythological school. The romantic conception of the nation and its language, which is implicit in the theory of the mythological school, certainly, influenced Afanas’ev’s editorial work.

In the theory of the mythological school, language reflects the representations of the past and as such is a hallmark of epic thought. In poetry it reflects the entire Weltanschauung of a people, and, through its analysis, the evolution of the national spirit can be discerned across the centuries—an idea that the Grimms had, themselves, borrowed from Johann Gottfried von Herder. The mythological school considered the peculiarities common to contemporary European languages, such as the feminine for “earth” and the masculine for “sky” (for example, French *le ciel*, *la terre*; German *der Himmel*, *die Erde*), and then attempted to explain these peculiarities by making a return to the (hypothetical) origin of humanity. As natural phenomena occurred before the eyes of our ancestors, they remained keen to provide an explanation for these phenomena. They gave the sky (which provides solar energy and rain) male attributes, and the earth, fertilized by the former, female attributes, thus projecting the sexuality of mammals onto the mystery of photosynthesis.

At a later time, men started to represent the sky in the guise of a god, and the earth in that of a goddess. Once the roles were cast, the curtain was lifted for staged stories and myths, with the number and variety relative to the poetic imagination of men. These poetic representations of nature were subsequently, with the progress of science, retracted from common use and confined to tales. But proponents of the mythological school maintained that some aspects of
these poetic representations of nature remained in the everyday language. In his extensive work of comparative scholarship entitled *The Poetic Outlook on Nature by the Slavs*, Afanas’ev understood language as a bearer of ancient myths. It is difficult to imagine that such a conception of language would not influence the editorial work on folktales by Afanas’ev and, in fact, it can be seen in the omission of foreign and Church Slavonic words, as well as in the addition of regionalisms.

**NATIONALIZING THE FOLKTALES**

These tales travel from one people to another through history. The tales are adapted to local tastes, and it is consequently difficult to tell to whom the tales belong and which culture they represent. In Russia, the success of tales of foreign origin had been phenomenal and these tales often overshadowed local stories. The *Tale of Ivan Tsarevich and the Firebird*, the *Tale of Ivan Tsarevich and the Princess*, the *Tale of the Seven Semënov Brothers*, the *Tale of the Peaceful Husband and his Bickering Wife* are all stories which are now recognized as Russian folktales, but were essentially borrowed from the cultures of Western Europe and adapted to the manners and customs of the Russians. When the Russian folklorists, inspired by the works of German romantics, began to travel the country to collect the jewels of the oral culture, they were puzzled by the resemblance of the tales they heard to the German tales, and wondered whether the resemblance should be assigned to a common “Indo-European” origin, or if it came from the dissemination of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*.

Furthermore, the language in which the tales were told was itself made up of loans from multiple foreign languages. If the tales were supposed to be reflections of the ancient nation, how could they be full of foreign words? The solution

23. Andrej Toporkov has pointed out the problems posed by Afanas’ev’s *Поэтические воз-зрения славян на природу* which references collections of stories and songs the authenticity of which has been questioned. Andrej Toporkov, «Об источниках используемых А. Н. Афанасьевым в Поэтических воззрениях славян на природу», А. Н. Афанасьев. Поэтические воз-зрения славян на природу: справочно-библиографические материалы, Т. А. Agapkina et al., ed., Moskva, Indrik, 2000, p. 24.

24. Vladimir Propp was as much interested in the structure of the folktale as the stages of its migration. See Исторические корни великой сказки, Moskva, Labirint, 2002.


26. Letter from Ivan M. Snegirev to Jacob Grimm, Moscow, May 10, 1845 [no. Grimm 1654], cit. in Max Vasmer, *Abhandlung der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Jahrgang 1938, (Berlin, 1939), p. 61. See also I. Levin, «Das russische Grimmbild », *Brüder Grimm: Gedenken, Gedenkschrift zur Hundertsten Wiederkehr des Todestages von Jacob Grimm*, Ludwig Denecke, ed., Marburg, Elwert, 1963, p. 276 and 398, footnote 3. The question to what extent German and Russian folklore resembled each other is a question that has preoccupied Wilhelm Mannhardt and led him to correspond with Afanas’ev and address many issues to the Archaeological Society of Moscow on this issue. See GARF, f. 279, op. 1, d. 1120, l. 6 (Mannhardt to Afanas’ev, Danzig, September 15, 1866).
employed by folklorists of the 19th century was to remove the foreign words. In the tale *Kozma skorobogatyi*, Afanas’ev replaced the “foreign” word *bal* (see French *bal*, German *Ball*, Italian *ballo*, English *ball*, Spanish *baile*, Turkish *balo*, Persian *bal*, etc.) by the Slavic word *pir* (see Bulgarian *pir*, Serbo-Croatian *pir*, Slovenian *pir*).\(^{27}\) It is revealing that in his diary Afanas’ev noted that during his school years students would form groups and that in the “aristocratic group,” according to Afanas’ev, “*preobladal frantsuzkii iazyk, razgovory o balakh, belye perchatki, treugolye shpaly.*”\(^{28}\) Clearly, for Afanas’ev the word *bal* was too tightly intertwined with the French language and the mundane world to figure in a collection of Russian popular tales. From the tale *Kozma Skorobogatyi* Afanas’ev also removed the words *ekonomiia*, of Greek origin (*οἰκονομία*),\(^{29}\) *apetitno* (which comes from the French *appétit* and was not introduced in Russia until the early 18th century),\(^{30}\) and *kareta* (from the Italian *carretta* which came to Russia in the 17th century through the German *Karrete*).\(^{31}\) That our analysis of the tales with regard to nationalizing is confined to a list of three foreign words which were changed by Afanas’ev might seem unconvincing, but one has to remember that the thirty-six folktales analyzed here are all that remain from Afanasev’s original collection, and that, in the words of Barag and Novikov, “*my ne mozhem so vsej tochnosti ukazat* vse tekstsy, kotorye *podvergalis* sushchestvennoi redaktorskoi obrabotke.”\(^{32}\) In other words, since we cannot determine with exactitude which tales were or were not significantly altered by Afanas’ev, these pieces of evidence are extremely valuable and should remind us when reading the *Narodnye russkie skazky*, that this collection might originally have held more foreign words than it does now.\(^{33}\)

In the same way as the Grimms’ removal of all the French words from the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* was explained by the context in which they collected these tales, that is the Napoleonic occupation of German territories,\(^{34}\) it seems

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27. ARGO, r. 30, op. 1, d. 7, l. 1-8.
28. Cit. in *Народные русские сказки А. Н. Афанас’ева…*, vol. 1, p. xix.
30. Id., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 49.
33. Although his tales were awarded to posterity as authentic Russian folktales, Pushkin routinely used words of foreign origin (*supostat*, *flot*), or international words (*okian*) in his tales, rather than their Russian counterpart (*more*), for example in his *Tale of Tsar Saltan*. On the other hand, Pushkin turned Sultan into Saltan and eliminated the reference to ‘Turkish lord,’ thus transposing a story which might have had an Eastern origin in a specifically Russian one. N. V. Novikov, ed., *Русские сказки в записях и публикациях первой половины XIX века*, Moskva – Leningrad, AN SSSR, 1961, p. 117-188.
34. Robert Darnton summed up for the English reader the research on the editorial work of
likely that the “nationalization” of the Russian tales by Afanas’ev also had its historical background. But for this argument to be convincingly asserted, it must be coupled with research on Afanas’ev’s views. Although A.N. Pypin and Gruzinskii saw Afanas’ev as a public figure of the liberal trend, whose writings on folklore “did not make him either a conservative nor a national mystic,” Gruzinskii added that Afanas’ev “stood significantly away from the ideological and social mainstream” and that he “was not a fighter nor a preacher.”

In 1936, Iurii Sokolov set out two stages in the development of Afanas’ev’s ideas on politics: the first stage occurred when he was still a student in the late 1840s and was characterized by “moderate Westernization and restrained liberalism;” which grew during the second phase (1850s and 1860s) into “moderate liberalism.” However, according to V.A. Tonkov, Afanas’ev “was not fully captured by” the emancipation of the serfs in 1861.

One would be tempted to conclude that Afanas’ev was a very moderate liberal, but thanks to the work of Natan Eidelman on historical documents not previously used, we now know that Afanas’ev corresponded with Alexander Herzen, and that in the late 1850s-early 1860s, Afanas’ev was one of the main contributors to Herzen’s periodicals, writing on the history of the Russian liberation movement and on literary works prohibited by censorship. Obviously, Afanas’ev’s views were complex, consisting of many different yet connected opinions. The atmosphere of moral failure that bathed the Russia of Nicholas I, and did not improve after the Crimean War, may have led Afanas’ev to do what the Grimms had done for the Germans: to give the nation a sense of its historical greatness. It seems highly probable that Afanas’ev adhered to social and nationalistic principles inspired by the German romantics, as well as by the events of 1848, and driven by Russia’s mid-century military and political losses. Since Afanas’ev did not comment more explicitly on his point of view or attitude toward Russian nationalism in his diary or correspondence, we hope that new research and the uncovering of historical documents will help sustaining this argument in the future.


“RUSSIFYING” THE FOLKTALES

The most extensive and systematic aspect of Afanas’ev’s editorial work is his removal of all Church Slavonicisms from the tales, which appeared frequently in the sources, including the participles -vshii, -vshiisia. These participles are Church Slavonic constructs, as the Russian language lost the active participle and replaced it with the gerund. Afanas’ev abided by a literary tradition imported from Germany by Mikhail Lomonosov, who had studied at Marburg and Freiburg, starting in 1736, and read Johann Gottsched’s Grundriss zu einer vernunftmässigen Redekunst (1729, revised and expanded under the title Ausführliche Redekunst in 1730) and Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst vor die Deutschen (1730). In these works, Gottsched, following Nicolas Boileau (L’Art poétique, 1674), restored the old distinction between the three styles: “high” (heroic poems, odes), “medium” (drama, letters, satires, eulogies, elegies) and “low” (comedy, epigrams, songs). On his return to Russia, Lomonosov undertook to reform Russian language and literature in the spirit of these neo-classical aesthetic principles.39

In accordance with the theory of the three styles, the use of Church Slavonicisms was defined and managed for writing in high style. In Afanas’ev’s time, high style still required using many Church Slavonic words, while low style relied on popular Russian words.40 As the folktale was popular, it was expected to be composed in the principles of low style. This is partly why Afanas’ev purged the sources of Church Slavonicisms. Another reason for this is that these folktales were meant to testify to a time prior to the Christianization of Russia. It is important to remember that Church Slavonic was forged by the brothers Cyril and Methodius, on the basis of the dialects of south-eastern Europe in order to facilitate the evangelization of the Slavonic tribes. By this work of purging Church Slavonicisms, Afanas’ev joined the Slavophile Konstantin Aksakov, who conceived the relationship of the Russian to the Church Slavonic in dialectical terms, according to a Hegelian conception of history, as a process of Aufhebung of the Church Slavonic by the Russian.41

40. Lomonosov, Предисловие о пользе книг церковных в российском языке, Moskva, 1758.
41. A. Ševelov, « Die kirchenslavischen Elemente in der modernen russischen Literatur-sprache und die Rolle A. Šaxmatovs bei ihrer Erforschung » in A. Šaxmatov, Die kirchenslavischen Elemente in der modernen russischen Literatursprache, Wiesbaden, Otto Harrasowitz Verlag, 1960, pp. 49-51. This reading was similar to that of the Grimms, inspired in their view of the relationship of the high German to the low German by the Hegelian philosophy of history if not through the reading of Hegel, certainly through the teaching of Savigny, a former student of Hegel. On the Hegelian ideas taught by Afanas’ev’s professors at university, see Azadovskij, Andreev, Sokolov, ed, Народные русские сказки А. Н. Афанасьева, Leningrad, 1936, vol. 1, p. xxi-xxii.
Aleksander Shishkov wrote that the split between the Russian and Slavonic Church was a case of “dreams and enigmas.” With the archaists Katemin, Wilhelm Küchelbecker, Aleksandr Griboevod and perhaps Ivan Krylov, there was an attempt to think of this split theoretically. But the transition from theory to practice was not easy. Even though they are sometimes masked by the borrowed structures of the French language, Church Slavonicisms (zlato, obzhavshi, podniavshi etc.) were commonly used by Pushkin in his tales. Afanas’ev for his part chose to eliminate them, especially the active participle. For example, in the tale Ivanushko-Durachok, Afanas’ev replaced uvidevshi with uvidali. In his version of Pravda i Krivda, Afanas’ev eliminated otrubivshi. There are further examples that follow this same pattern. In fact, Afanas’ev omitted Church Slavonicisms in all of the thirty-six folktales in the Russian Geographical Society archive.

“AUTHENTICATING” THE FOLKTALES

The major problem posed to 19th century folklorists was that some of their sources were already too far from popular speech to be published in a collection of folktales. If some of the tales transmitted to the Grimms by Jeannette Hasenflug sounded too “French,” the ethnographic reports used by Afanas’ev, which were written by local scribes, were often too formal to be regarded as “popular.” Thus Afanas’ev, at times, replaced literary words or expressions with more popular ones, for example in Kupecheskaia doch’ i sluzhanka, Afanas’ev replaced otvetstvoval with skazal. Afanas’ev also introduced regional and popular elements to the folktales, without which these stories could easily have been placed at the fringes of literature. The phenomenon has also been observed with the Grimms: a large part of the “wisdom” that seems imbued in their tales is, in fact, the addition of folklorists. Afanas’ev exercised control over the use of certain popular forms, sometimes adding and sometimes removing them. In their edition of Afanas’ev’s Russkie narodnye skazki, Barag and Novikov

43. Compare Народные русские сказки, Moskva, 1861, vol. 6, p. 82-85 with ARGO, r. 2, op. 1, n. 93, l. 5.
44. Compare Народные русские сказки, Moskva, 1873, vol. 1, 224-226 with ARGO, r. 2, op. 1, n. 93, l. 2.
45. Azadovskij et al., vol. 1, p. 601.
47. ARGO, r. 2, op. 1, d. 21, l. 3-5. Compare with Народные русские сказки, Moskva, 1873, vol. 1, p. 424.
noted that the tale *Skazka o molodtse-udal’tse, molodil’nykh iablokakh i zhivoi vode* had originated in the Tambov region, and that Afanas’ev brought improper changes to the source from the archives of the Russian Geographical Society.  

The aesthetic behind Afanas’ev’s choice of words reveals a “popular” rhythm in accordance with the ideas expressed by Wilhelm von Humboldt.

For example, in the published version of the tale *The Fellow Worker*, the expression “*svoy grabyezh delit’*” (sharing his booty) was replaced by “*duvan duvanit’*”. This new expression was accompanied by a footnote that explained the meaning. Comically, this explanation was just a paraphrasing of the original text in the source: *delit’ grabyezh*. The explanation was accompanied by a reference in the notes to the *Academic Dictionary of Russia* (part 2, p. 270). Dal’ reported in his own dictionary, this ancient expression of the “Volga bandits.”

Aware that this tale had originated from the government of Astrakhan, where the Cossacks had once protected the borders of Russia against nomads, Afanas’ev wanted to introduce a Cossack expression – although Dal’ already considered it old-fashioned by the time Afanas’ev employed it – in order to give it a regional and ancestral stamp.

Grimm specialists have shown that the introductory and concluding forms such as “Once upon a time…” and “They lived happily ever after,” etc., were often added by the Grimms. Our own study of Afanas’ev’s editorial work shows that he also added typical Russian popular formulas. For example, Afanas’ev added the words “*zhil-prozhival*” at the beginning of *Kozma skorobogatyi*.

The idea here was to make the text match the widely held view that a tale starts and ends with such “folkloric” forms, as all Pushkin’s tales did. The other thing worthy of notice about the words “*zhil-prozhival*” is that these folkloric repetitions were apparently appreciated by Afanas’ev, who added two of them to the tale *Pravda i krivda* (“gliadiatsia-ne nagliadiatsia, liubuiutsia-ne naliubuiutsia”).

These additions were almost certainly intended to

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49. Русские народные сказки, Moskva, Academia, 1984, vol. 1, p. 500; compare with ARGO, r. 40, op. 1, d. 36, l. 23-27.
51. ARGO, r. 2, op. 1, d. 21, l. 3 ob.
52. Толковый словарь..., vol. 1, p. lxxxvi and p. 499.
53. ARGO, f. 30, op. 1, d. 7, l. 1.
55. Compare Afanas’ev, Народные русские легенды, Moskva, 1859, p. 6-77 with ARGO, r. 2, op. 1, d. 93, l.
56. ARGO, r. 29, op. 1, d. 61, l. 6, ob. 7. Compare with Afanas’ev, Народные русские легенды..., p. 76-77.
“authenticate” in the sense of producing an “authentic effect.” Faced with a source tale written in uninteresting, banal bureaucratic language (“s kantseliarskim stilem” according to Azadovskii et al.), Afanas’ev applied the ruling standards for the folklore of his time to make the texts seem more folkloric. In doing so, Afanas’ev may well have thought he was returning the text to its source, the oral tale told by a peasant (rather than the written version by a bureaucratic scribe).

These examples should not be regarded as a blueprint for how Afanas’ev behaved toward regionalisms. If he sometimes added regional words to his texts, in other cases he removed words or expressions deemed too regional. This trend was already seen in Herder whose research into national spirit was at the expense of regionalisms for which he harboured an unapologetic hatred, even though his own language was itself full of regionalisms from his native East Prussia. The Grimms adapted into high German what originally had been heard in different dialects. Some words and expressions were removed by Afanas’ev, such as pokul’ or naskvoz’.” Afanas’ev replaced certain regional words with more literary ones: for example, lutcha became lucha, kasstriuli became kosstriuli, parshivoy became porshivyi, vzapravdu became a pravdu, kycheta became kychatka, ne pushchat’ became ne puskat’, schast’e became schast’e, kotytsia became katyt’tsia; bagats’ko became bogats’s’ko; niska became nizko. Clearly, Afanas’ev eliminated regionalisms in favor of Muscovite forms. If the Muscovite dialect has over time become compulsory, it was due to the opinion of Lomonosov, shared by many other scholars of his time, that the language of Moscow should be taught in the schools of the empire, not only because it was important for the capital, but also because of its “great beauty.”

Even if, in the spirit of the folklorists, their editorial work was to “improve” upon the source the, result was not always for the better. In the source of the tale Kozma skorobogatyi the fox addresses the tsar respectfully, in the formal manner.

58. Azadovskij et al., vol. 1, p. 529.
60. ARGO, r. 30, op. 1, d. 7, l. 1-8.
61. Правда и кривда, Azadovskij et al., vol. 1, p. 208, n. 1.
62. Королевич и его дядька, ibid., p. 225, n. 2.
63. Иван-крестьянский сын и мужичок, ibid., p. 317, n. 1.
64. Овца, лиса и волк, ibid., p. 530.
65. Кот, петух и лиса, ibid., p. 534.
66. Волк и коза, ibid., p. 539.
67. ARGO, r. 30, op. 1, d. 7, l. 1-8 and r. 31, op. 1, d. 16, l. 9-17.
In Afanas’ev’s *Narodnye russkie skazki* the fox addresses the Tsar in familiar terms, using the personal form *ty* instead of *Vy* or Your Excellency. Why the fox dares to speak so informally to the Tsar is not explained by the narrator. If Afanas’ev changed the fox’s address to the Tsar perhaps it is because he presumed the peasant teller to be naïve enough to make this linguistic mistake. The lapse may have sounded charming to him and to his audience who had preconceived notions about the childlike nature of the peasant. Another possible explanation is that the familiar term “ty” to address the Tsar was widespread and the standard form before the mid-18th century; so, restoring the familiar address could have been a means to negate the formalizing effect of recent foreign influence.

CENSORING THE FOLKTALES

By its mass distribution, a product of industrialization, urbanization and literacy in modern society, the folktale acted as an agent for the civilization in childhood, it disciplined the child and instilled contemporary values, including providing national heroes and other models of conduct. Within the general “process of civilization,” the oral tale seemed irrelevant as it embodied values that often tended to be outdated, replaced with more current ideas in an environment of unbridled modernity, without regard to the fact that folktales were not designed for children in the first place. A standardization of the folktale that tackled violent conduct, regulating and standardizing the heroes’ actions in order to stimulate the child to appropriate social behaviour became necessary. Violence, pervasive in popular culture, was to be censored or channelled to the benefit of the social discipline of the child.

In an article dedicated to the history of the tale “Little Red Riding Hood,” folklorist Paul Delarue compared various popular versions collected in Europe and noted that the version of Perrault was relatively tame. Other popular versions were generally much more bloody, such as in a Tyrolean version, in which the wolf has hung the intestines of the grandmother on the door, in place of the latch, and put the teeth and jaw of his victim in the buffet. The editorial work of the Grimms saw a similar moralization of the tale which was not always compatible

68. ARGO, r. 30, op. 1, d. 7, l. 5.

69. According to Catriona Kelly, Russia has gone through several different processes of civilization (p. xxx), rather than a single, unified one. Kelly shows how social discipline in Russia has accompanied the rise of the bourgeoisie. Catriona Kelly, *Refining Russia: Advice, Literature, Polite Culture, and Gender from Catherine to Yeltsin*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2001. Compare this view with that of Laura Engelstein, for whom the disciplinary mechanisms in Russia differed from those in Western societies, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-siècle Russia*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1994.


with good scholarship. In the published tales violence was buried,\textsuperscript{72} language was polished, and allusions which were too sexually explicit were omitted.\textsuperscript{73} In response to the \textit{Kinder- und Hausmärchen} Büsching rightly pointed out the difficulty of reconciling a children’s book and a collection of old German texts.\textsuperscript{74} Professor Izmail Sreznevskii addressed the same remark to Afanas’ev on the release of the first volume of the \textit{Narodnye russkie skazki}, pointing to how challenging it was to publish for both scholars and children.\textsuperscript{75} Afanas’ev wanted his tales to be widely read. In his correspondence with children’s books editor M. O. Vol’er, Afanas’ev expressed concern about sales volume asking how much each copy sold would bring him and requesting that the \textit{Narodnye russkie skazki} have the largest possible printing.\textsuperscript{76} To be widely read meant to be read by children; and to be read by children demanded editorial work.

In the tale \textit{Ivanushko-Durachok},\textsuperscript{77} Afanas’ev normalized the behaviour of Ivan in response to the moral standards of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. In the ethnographic source used by Afanas’ev to write the published version, Ivan asked his two brothers (who are themselves of sound mind) to look in the barn and see what he caught with his bear trap. The two brothers go and discover their mother dead in the trap. Afanas’ev substituted an “old woman” for the mother probably to spare the sensitivities of young readers in the same way that the Grimms had adapted their source so that it is the stepmother and not the mother of “Snow White” who lost her in the woods.\textsuperscript{78}

Afanas’ev also removed a complete episode related to the corpse of the dead mother. In the source Ivan, having realized his error and probably trying to make amends, places the body of the mother on the side of the road as if she was weaving. After a while someone comes by riding a horse and bumps into the corpse of the mother. Ivan gets compensation for the “accidental killing” of his mother. Afanas’ev removed this episode probably because he did not want the

\textsuperscript{72} The Grimms did not always remove the violence. In fact, in some instances, they added violence to reinforce the didactic effect of their tales. See Maria Tatar, \textit{The Hard Facts of the Grimms’ Fairy Tales}, Princeton, University Press, 2003, p. 5-7.


\textsuperscript{74} Bolte and Polivka, vol. IV, pp. 448-449.

\textsuperscript{75} GARF, f. 279, op. 1, d. 1137, l. 1 (Sreznevskij to Afanas’ev, September 7, 1855).

\textsuperscript{76} GARF, f. 279, op. 1, d. 1095, l. 2-3 (M. O. Vol’er to Afanas’ev, Moskva, February 24 and March 10, 1860). For more information on Afanas’ev and his preoccupation with remuneration, see \textit{Народные русские сказки...}, Leningrad, 1936, vol. 1, p. XI-II.

\textsuperscript{77} ARGO, r. 2, op. 1, n. 93, l. 5-7 ob. See \textit{Народные русские сказки...}, Moskva, 1861, vol. 6, 82-85 and Moskva, 1873, vol. 3, pp. 375-376.

children to identify with a hero capable of killing his own mother in a bear trap and using her body for financial gain. Although Afanas’ev kept the motif of the “old woman” dead in the bear trap, he added precision that was not in the source, namely that the brothers of Ivan scolded him as necessary and ordered him to stay home. Obviously, Afanas’ev was influenced by the ruling standards of morality, particularly with regard to children, and in this area his editorial work was comparable with that of other 19th century folklorists.

There is one last point to be made about children and these tales: books of folktales did become a popular product with children, especially when illustrated by artists as talented as Ivan Bilibin. Karoline Herder, wife of Johann Herder, wrote in a letter to the editor of a collection of stories that was being prepared by her husband, that it was necessary to add illustrations so that children (the target audience) “may train their taste [to the sight] of beautiful and appropriate forms.” Sreznevskii offered Afanas’ev similar advice after reading the children’s tales he had produced, suggesting that they should be illustrated like the Kinder- und Hausmärchen. Later, as an adult, the child will remember these images and make an association to the glorious past of the nation, even though those memories are in fact derived only from readings in childhood. Was Afanas’ev conscious of this powerful manipulation of memory? Was he looking to do the same thing that the Grimms did for young Germans, that is to infuse a sense of Russia’s historical grandeur in young Russians? Neither Afanas’ev’s diary nor correspondence confirm this argument.

CONCLUSION

This paper has argued that Afanas’ev deliberately edited the tales in his Narodnye russkie skazki by omitting foreign words and Church Slavonicisms, by omitting or adding regionalisms, and by adapting the stories to the morals of his time. The research has been based upon a comparison of thirty-six sources submitted by local scribes of the regions of Russia to the Russian Geographical Society with their final versions in Afanas’ev’s famous collection. The issue here is not whether Afanas’ev carried out editorial work (all 19th century folklorists did so, to a greater or lesser extent), neither to measure how extensive and significant the editorial work was (thirty-six sources is not enough to be conclusive about this), but to show how this editorial work reflected Afanas’ev’s ideals of Russian language and culture, which were not conceived in a vacuum but were very much indebted to the intellectual values of his time.

80. GARF, f. 279, op. 1, d. 1137, l. 1 (Sreznevskij to Afanas’ev, September 7, 1855).