

TOWARDS THE STUDY OF
MACEDONIAN EROTIC FOLK TALES

In the earliest epochs in the history of mankind, the sexual act of our most distant ancestors was not burdened by any restrictions or prejudices. The history of sex begins with the separation of people according to gender. Science has examined and explained its developing phases.¹ Through the course of time, in various countries and among various tribes and peoples, depending upon the degree of culture, people began to cloak their sexual relations with various conventions.

In the intricate mythic systems of various peoples, even the sexual relations of their gods and divinities, and the relations between them and ordinary people, were put on the most natural basis, understandable in the thinking of primitive people. In the distant past, they evaluated nature and its life processes according to their own individual lives. For them even the gods lived according to the standards of man's life.² Moreover, they personified plants as men and women. It is only one step from there to an attempt, on the principle of homeopathic or imitative magic, to influence the growth of trees and plants by means of represen-

tations of marriage between the forest gods, which people performed with prescribed festivities at an established time. In his celebrated book The Golden Bough, James John Frazer, examining the important question of magic and myth, concluded that these representations were not simply symbolic or allegoric dramas, pastorales for the diversion and instruction of the village audience, but that they were magic whose function was to cause the forests to become green, new grass to sprout, the crops to grow, and flowers to blossom. And this was entirely natural--continued Frazer--if one assumes that, just as the acting of masquerading people dressed in leaves and adorned with flowers surely brought about the wedding of the forest spirits, so would the magic be successful. Therefore it is very probable that the widely known debauchery of these rituals was not a casual unbridling of passions, but was part of a ritual, and that in the thought of the participants in the ritual the marriage of tree and shrub could not be productive without the actual sexual union of the people.³ Thus Frazer concludes that "primitive people consciously used sexual relations as a means for assuring the fertility of the earth"⁴.

If we agree that primitive people looked thus upon the life of nature, on the process of its rebirth, attempting to influence it with various charms, and that such a belief found expression in various creeds and

and religious systems, beginning with animism and via mythology onward, it is no wonder that sexual relations entered into the framework of these beliefs, which were not originally limited by any artificial structure. Sexual relations between a man and woman were considered above all as relations which would ensure offspring, and the only norms for those relations were limited to those which could ultimately influence the life of nature upon which the lives of our distant, primitive, uncivilized ancestors entirely depended.

The phallus, therefore, as a symbol of fertility for numerous tribes and peoples in the world, generated a cult (so-called cult of Priapus). Among the Ancient Greeks it led to the introduction of temple prostitution, which Solon legalized. India is the classic country for deification of the phallus.⁵ The numerous temples which are preserved to this day in India (for example, those in Khajuraho), as well as the Hindu and Buddhist temples in China, Burma, in Ceylon are the best illustration of the primary role of the phallus in their religion, but whose roots are surely older. The great holidays in March which are accompanied by sexual orgies and songs are connected with the Indian god Shiva, whose major cult is phallic. In ancient Egypt this cult was connected with Osiris, the god of plants. The noted Alexander-relief in the temple at Luzor presents the god with a large phallus, and even today a great

phallic monument stands before the temple in Hierapolis (in Syria). Among the Greeks and Romans this cult was connected with Dionysos and Bacchus, respectively. We also encounter the cult among various African tribes (Dahomey), and among the Indian tribes of America (Kaya and Kobeya) known for their phallus-dances.

The belief in goddesses of fertility is similar to this. In Roman mythology, for example, Diana (identical with the Greek goddess Artemis) is considered the goddess of nature in general, particularly of fertility and birth. In temples she was portrayed with many breasts and with other signs of exuberant fertility.

Priapus, the son of Dionysos and Aphrodite, was considered the god of fertility in Greek mythology, and therefore the cult of fertility of fields and vineyards was connected with him. This cult was spread throughout the entire ancient world. Priapus was portrayed as a bearded man with a large phallus. The donkey, symbol of fertility, was sacrificed to him.

From ancient myth the cult of Priapus spread into Gaul, Spain, and then among the Slavic nations. Later, with the appearance of Christianity, that religion also adopted it and associated it with Jesus Christ, Mary, and various saints.⁶ For example, St. Leonard is considered the patron and protector of fertility in the Alpine lands. Iron Leonard-posts, which resemble phalli, are erected next to his chapels in

the fields. The believers embrace them and kiss them, believing that he will free them from infertility. Among Slavic peoples, this cult is connected with Saints Kuzman and Damjan, who appear also as healers. Until the Second World War, Moslem and Christian believers in Skopje would come every Friday and especially on Saints' days to the fountain outside the old Yigit-Bey Mosque (Meda Mosque), where they would light candles, leave markers, and bathe in the water for health and fertility. Yigit-Bey, conqueror of Skopje, built the mosque on the foundations of the former church dedicated to Kuzman and Damjan.

The views and attitudes of the people towards erotic matters constantly changed, with changes in belief and understanding, and with changes in the marital institution (from polyandry to polygyny and monogamy), depending on the degree of cultural development of each particular group.⁷ It is natural that these various beliefs and understandings entered long ago into customs and folklore, and that some of them were preserved to this day, frequently in the form of diverse adventure-tales. They are reflected, for example, in numerous stories wherein the phallus is presented in the most hyperbolic dimensions. So, in several of our stories, one can cross a river with it, or it must be carried on twelve carts.

In the folklore of every nation in the world, stories with erotic content have always occupied a central position. These works certainly form the better half in Macedonian folk prose. This is not surprising, since it is precisely the erotic questions in man's life which stand above all other problems of life due to their biological importance and their proportions. It is not necessary to emphasize the common knowledge that today countless erotic popular compositions, from the most vulgar to the most subtle versions, circulate freely from one person to another, undergoing thereby all possible alterations according to the taste and sensibilities of those who pass them on. Time is always found for the telling of erotic tales, anecdotes, or jokes. Since these virtually never have any sort of ideologic aim, they belong equally to all social levels; they are encountered among illiterate people and among great intellectuals, almost uniformly in villages and cities.

In Macedonian folklore, in addition to stories, anecdotes and jokes, the eternal erotic theme is widely represented in songs, proverbs, riddles and conundrums. However, in the collections of Macedonian folklore which have been published, there is only an occasional kernel, usually hidden by the blush of the collectors, from the great treasury of our erotic folklore which has constantly been filled and depleted over the ages.

Hence, the enforcing of the taboo against exposing shameful things contributed to a significant degree to such works' losing their erotic character. Usually everything which could be scandalous in them was totally or partially deleted or bowdlerized. This can easily be discovered by comparing the published works with the variants which still survive among the people. One example can demonstrate this treatment. Our great collector Kuzman A. Šapkarev left out almost entirely the one wholly erotic episode in the tale "The Priest and the Servant".^{9/10} A slave to his times, still feeling that it ~~was~~^{was} inadmissible, he tried to justify his tampering and explained it with the following words: "There follows a conversation between the servant, the woman and the priest, who is far off in the vineyard. In order to avoid any sort of indecency, I am omitting it." Actually, with this omission Šapkarev gutted the story: it remains unfinished, and leaves unclear the motive for the rape of the priest's wife and her daughter. Yet another example: in the printing of the noted Erlangen Manuscript¹¹ by the Serbian Academy of Sciences, several erotic folksongs were deleted from the scholarly publication. Gerhard Gezeman was compelled--for the sake of the integrity of the work--to publish them later, in Germany. Then we should note also that in Germany Friederich Kraus in his well-known works Kryptadia and Anthropophyteia¹²

published more than a thousand erotic folk works from Yugoslavia (stories, songs, proverbs, rituals, etc.). Evidently, that which was considered indecent by us, as Šapkarev writes, was not indecent in other countries. Even the great Vuk Karadžić collected erotic folklore, but he published only one small volume of these writings in the first edition of his "Rječnik" (Dictionary) (1818). Not long ago, a special collection of his erotic folk-songs was published for scholarly use only.¹³

— In the world erotic literature is as old as literature itself. In those ancient times when it began to be compiled, sexual relations were not limited by those bounds which later, in the course of time and civilization, narrowed their freedom more and more. In the beliefs and myths of the old civilizations, whether in Asia, Africa, Europe or America, their many gods and goddesses were portrayed as human beings, but with superhuman powers, strength and talents; it was believed that in their whole lives they managed like people, that they lived by all the rules of human life, they were born, had childhoods, fell in love, married, had progeny, and died. In love and marriage they were either faithful or unfaithful. In old Egyptian mythology Nut, the wife of the sun-god Re, cuckolded her husband with Seb, the god of the earth, but this did not prevent her from having an affair with the god Thoth also. Her son Osiris, god of plants, married

his sister Isis¹⁴, etc. Greek myth seethes with the most diverse love lives of the numerous gods and goddesses. The Metamorphoses of Ovid¹⁵ glowingly eulogized the amatory passions of the gods, the punishments, and consequences they caused. In order to get the desired man or woman, they performed acts of magic, Jupiter takes the form of Diana so he can have intercourse with her friend Callisto. He turns into a bull to ravish Europa, and carry her to Crete. In Greek myth, Aphrodite falls in love with Adonis, but Persephone, Queen of the Underworld, has also fallen ~~in love with him~~; Zeus then decided to give him to each of them for half a year, just as was decided for the god Tammuz in Babylonian myth. He was the lover of Ishtar--the great mother goddess who was considered the embodiment of the productive forces of nature. In fact, the god Tammuz was adopted by the Ancient Greeks under the name Adonis. Likewise the god of love Amor (Roman Cupid), portrayed as a child, even attended his own mother Venus in her amorous adventures. This motif is widely used in visual art. The goddess Juno cruelly punished the numerous lovers of her husband Jupiter, changing them into various plants or animals, sending the plague for punishment, etc.

The erotic literature of antiquity was created primarily on the basis of mythology, but it is also a reflection of real life. The renowned Indian Kama

Sutra is considered today the basic work of those times in the erotic genre. The ancient Greek poet Sotades¹⁶, again, is considered the founder of Priapic literature. His works contain various perversions which were everyday practices among the Ancient Greeks and then among the Romans. Ovid too is a classical poet of erotica; his collection of verses the Ars Amatoria is unsurpassed in this regard.

European erotic literature is more than abundant, especially if one takes into account those works which have no literary value. Such are the numerous pornographic works, especially those in the form of descriptions of amorous adventures, love memoirs and the like. Here one can include the various types of almanacs, calendars and anthologies with erotic contents; these were very popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Various bibliographies of erotica in French, German and English also date from that time.¹⁷

Eroticism appeared in Medieval European literature in the fifteenth century in connection with the so-called fabliaux or fables. These are poetic works in which three important elements are central: (1) the penetration of Eastern tales, with their views on the treatment of women, (2) ~~the~~ Church teaching regarding women (celibacy), and (3) the lower class of men. The still-popular Decameron of Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375), whose first edition was published in 1471, is considered

the greatest work of European erotic literature of the 15th century. For the 16th century this epithet certainly belongs to the Heptameron of Margarita of Navarre (1492-1549).¹⁸ The German, Heinrich Bebel, professor of theology in Tübingen, published his well-known work Facetiarum libri tres (in Latin) in Strassbourg from 1508 to 1512. In it he described the amorous adventures of monks and nuns, and various adulteries. This word had the same meaning for Germany in the age of Humanism that Boccaccio's Decameron had for the Renaissance. It was translated into German in 1589, and 1907 Veselski excerpted a portion of it.

Without any pretensions of entering deeper into the unusually broad field of European literary erotic work, I will mention in passing, only a few writers and works, who, even without their erotic works represent landmarks in world literature. Thus, François Rabelais (1494-1553) is the most brilliant humorist in French literature, current even today with his erotic Chronicles of Gargantua and its renowned hero Pantagruel. Nikola Horié also belongs to France (1622-1692). He is the author of one of the most renowned works in erotic world literature, in fact the first "organically composed Sotadic novel".¹⁹ This work had frequently been translated from the Latin into French, German, English, and Italian. In the 18th century there is Voltaire's La Pucelle. It is interesting to note that Mirabeau-

one of the spiritual leaders of the French revolution- was also the author of numerous erotic works.²⁰

Finding inspiration in Boccaccio's Decameron, Honoré de Balzac, who had a particular propensity for eroticism, wrote his Contes drolatiques.²¹ The genius Charles Baudelaire was an erotic poet par excellence; he is frequently called the "poète maudit". As is known, his erotic poetic works were banned from publication in France, and were published in Belgium. Only after his death were the banned songs republished in his "Post-humous Works". These are Les Fleurs du Mal. The no less famous Guillaume Apollinaire is one of the best known experts in French erotic literature- one of the most subtle in the world. Among others, his bibliographic work "Les maîtres de l'amour, Les coffrets du bibliophile" are famous. The great French naturalist Émile Zola also paid special attention to eroticism in his works.

Erotic literature has the same significant place not only in French literature²², but also in other Western literatures.²³ The well known Scottish poet Robert Burns (1759-96) is the author of the beautiful Little Erotic Songs, and the great Byron is the author of numerous obscene songs. In the legacy of the greatest German poet of all time, Wolfgang Goethe, one finds a number of erotic songs preserved in the Goethe museum in Weimar which "attest to his mastery

in this genre".

Russian erotic literature is also considerable; it includes the most well known Russian writers. Merežkovsky has noted "that all of Turgenev's work is a song of triumphant love." Leo Tolstoy also dealt with erotic matters in his works. In Pisemski, the erotic plays a major role. Artsibašev^c is considered an erotic nihilist. After the October revolution, Mayakovsky, the poet of the revolution, took up the battle for the erotic ("Cloud in Pants"). Russian erotic poetry has even been translated.

And, as is well known, many of the representatives of Yugoslav literature are also authors of erotic works, for example Bora Stanković with his Unclean Blood and many others. However, many erotic works could not be published: some are preserved in the author's estate while others circulate among the people, frequently as folklore. Such is the case, for example, with the erotic songs of Laza Kostić, Djura Jakšić, Medo Putčić, and others. In the more distant past, in Dubrovnik literature, eroticism found a place even in published works. The influence of Petrarchism and the Renaissance was also felt in this area.

Stories and anecdotes are most popular in erotic folklore. The reason is completely clear: they are the most easily transmitted, and because of the freedom

which the creative process gives to the teller, they allow all sorts of interpolations and interpretations on the part of the narrator. There are fewer erotic songs. Most frequently they are songs in the genre of love and marriage poetry. One characteristic is particularly noteworthy: the humorous side of eroticism frequently holds a key place in them. This comes from the fact that these songs are usually used at work gatherings or for certain ceremonies, most frequently wedding ceremonies, and the humour, at the same time, dulls the erotic edge. So, for example, in the Kriva Palanka region, according to an ancient folk custom which is a fixed event in the wedding ceremony, the bride is obligated to sing an erotic song in the groom's house in front of her in-laws (who are sitting at the table and celebrating).²⁴ The godfather, who leads the wedding, gives the order when the bride must fulfill her obligation, which has to be considered as the preparation for her passage from maidenhood to womanhood. In the Kumanovo region, in place of songs they tell erotic stories about the godfather and the best man, etc. The meaning of their use is clear; they conceal archaic symbolism: the bride is prepared for her main task in marriage - to be a faithful spouse and to give birth to healthy offspring. But the song in this instance is also a means of arousing the sexual instinct in the young couple before the wedding night,

and of ridding them of fear of the forthcoming sexual act. Erotic songs are sung by the women during the kneading of the wedding loaf (in Skopska Crna Gora and in the western regions of Macedonia, for example). The dough for the loaf is kneaded in the evening, but the loaf itself is kneaded on Sunday, early in the morning on the day of the wedding. Then the gathered women puncture the kneaded dough in the middle with a pestle (which is known to have the shape of phallus). The meaning of this act is clear, especially in view of the fact that they then sing erotic songs and tell anecdotes and jokes about the imminent deflowering of the bride. Conversely, at first glance it seems totally out of place and unsuitable to tell "dirty jokes" during the funeral of a spouse - before the setting of the table after the return from the cemetery. Here this is an expression of the primitive belief of "the returning to life" of the dead, that even after death his soul may act as a good or evil force, that he, too, is present at the table and that it gives him pleasure to hear "dirty jokes" in which life is - life!

• However, erotic songs are sung at other occasions. They are fixed parts of Christmas eve and Christmas rituals, before the ~~gam~~^vamalar dances, when those customs which portray abundance, good harvest and fertility are performed. The meaning of these rituals lies in the primitive belief that like produces like and that

with the portrayal of abundance the new year will surely bring a good harvest and fertility, since they are based on the striving to influence magically the renewal of nature after the winter.

Erotic art, and the relation of our people to the most diverse sexual questions of a general nature are formulated as proverbs, riddles and conundrums. There are many. The ten or so proverbs from my personal fund which I shall include will show that they do not differ from other proverbs in form, structure and style. Erotic proverbs, too, are concise, usually in two parts, frequently with internal rhyme:

Where you find it - put it

The first nail - a son

Some with luck, others with a prick

The cock can't read, and the cunt can't count

The cock trusts a drunken woman

Old people fucking - bulls ploughing

They never forget a beating and a fucking

Riddles, however, naturally don't have the same obviousness and directness of proverbs. As a particular type of folklore, the riddle consists of two parts: question and answer. Their metaphorical form and the possibility of various answers allow some riddles to have an erotic meaning and direction in the question, due to their obvious ambiguous character. As is known, riddles today are above all a means of diversion, but

especially as a game among children. That is why riddles such as the following are asked at various work gatherings, etc. in our villages in order to put everyone in a good mood:

The Arab woman spreads her legs - the Arab mounts her (cast-iron tripod and pot)

Uncle whistles - auntie raises her legs (key and latch)

It's short and fat - women need it (pestle)

Gran^dma's is wide open - Gran^dpa's dangles (well and bucket)

Hard and red and basted in women's meat (earring)

All day it hangs - at night it goes in (pruning hook)

It goes in black - comes out red (lobster) etc.²⁵

It is entirely natural that instead of the correct answer, answers which are associated with the question will be received. On the other hand, because riddles are constructed on comparisons, various objects, animals, plants, parts of the human body, and other concepts are formulated in them in reverse fashion. Thus the question part in some riddles uses the sexual organs or the sex act itself, but the correct answer has no connection with eroticism, of course. The riddles: a small boy with a little prick at his waist (jug with a spout), grandfather sits in the garden - his balls growing (root of a tomato), a red prick on a platter

(red pepper), illustrate this word game. The freedom of representation in these and similar riddles and the seemingly hidden eroticism which they nevertheless contain, shows the breadth of the erotic conceptualization and understanding of our people.

Erotic conundrums are very popular. Several examples will illustrate their theme and structure:

"Why does a rooster have no hands?"

"Because a chicken has no breasts!"

"Why does a rooster spread his wings when the chicken appears?"

"To hide the shame!"

However, some contemporary ideas have even penetrated these conundrums, naive and widespread among children as they are. Thus a variant of the last conundrum, with insignificant changes, gives an entirely different idea in the question and answer:

"Why does the rooster peck the chicken's head when she appears?"

"To pluck the thought of marriage from her head!"

Thematically, erotic folk stories belong among anecdotes, but individual stories, owing to their diverse forms and stylistic and compositional characteristics, belong to the group of realistic folk tales (novellas).²⁷ Therefore, these can be formulated as stories about real events and incidents, or about those which are possible, even if they seem improbable.

Namely, although they treat real themes of people's sexual life, erotic stories often describe them in utterly impossible dimensions. In addition, a large number of erotic stories approach fairy tales, not only because one encounters magical events and objects which perform fantastic functions in them but also frequently due to their motifs as well as their stylistic and compositional similarities, regardless of the fact that they have a tendency toward the comic-grotesque representation of all that is magical or fantastic.

The major motifs in erotic stories are taken from the every day romantic, marital, and sexual experiences of the people. These are, above all, the themes of faithful and unfaithful wives, lovers in a trap, startled lovers, dissatisfied spouses, sexual impotency, the exchange of wives or husbands, girls who don't want to marry, widows who supposedly don't want another husband, punishment for adultery, etc. However, if one seeks a basic idea in these stories, then the matter is most often reduced to finding some device to seduce a certain woman, deceive the husband, punish the adulterer, or adulteress, and the like. For solving this problem, they employ not only native skills, but international ones, if one may say so. Several of our stories are similar or identical to corresponding stories of other nations; in several one finds episodes which are similar or identical to foreign stories,

sometimes published more than one hundred years ago, which does not mean that it is always a matter of mere transferring or borrowing. This is the case in one adventure in the abovementioned book of the German Professor Heinrich Ebel, in which we encounter an almost identical solution to one which one of our peasants used in a story from Maleševo, viz. getting a woman by means of a ruse. A Franciscan spent the night in a convent. During the night he began to cry out: "No, I won't do it!" When the abbess, awakened by the cry, went to his cell and asked with whom he was speaking and what he cried out, he explained to her that a voice from heaven had commanded him to spend the night with the youngest nun, but he wouldn't agree to it. However, the abbess persuaded him. After nine months the young nun gave birth to a child. And our villager used the same device, but with a much more subtle and well thought out treatment, in order to seduce his sister-in-law. He too pretended to be speaking with God, giving proof of this to his sister-in-law, he too finally cried out: "No, I won't do it! It would be better for me to die than do it!" And when the naive but already convinced sister-in-law believed that he really was speaking with God, she asked him what it meant and he explained to her that the Lord told him to seduce her or die! And so the brother-in-law wouldn't die, the sister-in-law agreed,

"Hey now, brother, don't die!" Also, our story of a king who sent his advisors to find a man who would be sexually adequate for his daughter²⁹ (he sought a man with a large phallus) is similar to a German folk story.³⁰ In it, too, the king sends out his advisors to find a capable man for his daughter, who was "in erotic matters so insatiable that no one man could satisfy her." The motif of a man dressing in women's clothing to get to a woman, is encountered in numerous variants in world folklore. We will only mention one example from French literature: "The Adventures of the Abbot Choisi Dressed as a Woman"³¹ In one of our stories, too, a clever young man dresses in women's clothes and presents himself to the abbess as a woman who wishes to become a nun. After he was accepted, the youth slept with one nun after another, and impregnated them all. But, far more international are the stories about the three priests who fall into the trap set by a faithful wife, who informed her husband about their constant sexual propositions (AT 1730). The following are also common motifs: "The Husband Who Feigns Death" (AT 1350A), "The One Above" (AT 1355), "The Startled Lover" (AT 1358), "The Unfaithful Wife and Her Husband Who Pretends to Be Blind" (AT 1380) and others.

The most important preoccupation of the thematic treatment of the basic groups of motifs of erotic stories

comes from the manner in which erotic problems of the everyday lives of the people are solved, corrected, or judged. And it is not incorrect to say that there is not a strict schematic approach to their solutions. The only regularity present is: in every instance, without regard to the dénouement of individual stories, they communicate a definite life experience which need not always have a general, broader significance.

The motifs of unfaithful wives are among the most widespread in stories in general. These are used even in fairy tales. In our fairy tales, unfaithful wives even go so far as attempting to kill their own children, just to keep their lovers.³² Unfaithful wives are encountered in the stories of the oldest nations. The Indian Panchatantra³³ contains, for example, mostly this type of story. Among them, there is one about the unfaithful wife of a brahman, who from love gave his wife half of his own life just to bring her back to life. All the same, the ungrateful woman subsequently cuckolded him with the man she had fallen in love with. She then attempted to kill her own husband, but he was saved and in the end the unfaithful wife was punished. And in an old Egyptian story, a wife attempts to desert her husband and go off with his brother.³⁴ After he rejected her, she slandered him saying that he wanted to rape her. The separation of the brothers follows with numerous digressions.

In our erotic stories, the women are unfaithful for various reasons, as in life, but most often it is because they are dissatisfied with their marriage or, less frequently, because they are licentious. The fact that the stories deal almost exclusively with women's infidelity is evidently due to the basic concept in our society that men have less restricted rights in this respect. The basic reasons for this treatment of women are their social position in the family, and patriarchal subjugation by men. Actually, as soon as women in the distant past lost their equality, infidelity was attributed to them as being characteristic, and this very act began to be considered as damaging the husbands' honour. It is only one step from there to sanctions.

In our stories the husbands always discover infidelity, often with the help of their friends. In Cепенков's story of "The Pious Woman is the First Whore"³⁵ the husband, after he had been warned by a friend, was convinced that his wife "was the most dishonourable woman in the world; she whom he had thought was a saint. In great anguish, he went to his friend to thank him and to discuss what he should do with his wife..." The results of infidelity are various. In one category of these stories, the wife manages, through various devices, frequently with outside help (the advice is usually given by old women, that is women with experience),

to prove their "innocence" to their husbands. The naive husband, who is usually about to punish or kill his unfaithful wife, is led into a situation where he must beg her for forgiveness. They continue to live together, and she doesn't correct her ways. In other stories, the husband admits his own fault for his wife's infidelity, since it was he himself who, in various manners, prepared or compelled her to commit a "sin". When a husband learns from his foolish wife that she gave herself to a craftsman who offered to gild her sexual organ because she had taken an earlier remark of her husband's literally, the husband concludes ironically: "You've done beautifully, wife!"

Most numerous, however, are the stories in which the husband punishes his unfaithful wife. It is noteworthy that the infidelity usually concludes with physical punishment of the adultress, rather than her murder. The punishments are various and are often reflections of centuries-old traditions. In the above-mentioned story³⁷, for example, the husband didn't carry out the punishment immediately, even though he caught his wife in the act. His first desire is to consult with his friend regarding what steps he should take. Most often the married couple continues to live together after the wife's punishment as if nothing had happened. One explanation for this outcome may be that, until recently, our villager usually bought his

wives, and if he were to drive her away or kill her, he would again face the economic problem of buying a new wife!

In our erotic stories we frequently encounter a more liberal understanding of marital and extra-marital relations which do not have a corresponding basis in the customary norms for these relations among our people. If the husband is understanding towards his wife, after the punishment and the forgiveness, he tells her, as in several of our stories: "The next time you do this a still greater punishment awaits you."³⁸ The liberality of one woman in our story "The Clever Woman and the Bey" is unlikely. She instructs her own husband how to seduce the bey's daughter, who gave him signs that she desired him, and then, when the bey caught him in the act and wanted to hang him, the wife, with her cleverness, freed him. However, I ask myself: is this only a matter of free-thinking? Are we not encountering, perhaps, the concept that it is inadmissible to refuse a woman who offers herself? And therefore, I mention this story in connection with another of our stories, in which only the second concept is central. In the story "The Greatest Sin"⁴⁰ a young servant rejects his mistress when she offers him sexual relations. Later, when he enters church, all the candles in it goes out. The priest sensed that the cause of the extinguishing of the candles was someone's great sin, and he asked the

youth what he had done that day. He told him of his mistress's offer. Then the priest said to him: "What greater sin is there?" The candles again lit up!...

On the other hand we have the husband's attitude toward his wife's lover. The latter is frequently left unpunished; he is not considered guilty, due to the thought that predominates in our people that it is natural for men to desire other women, but that women don't have this right. However, in the greater portion of erotic stories, the lovers suffer equally with the wives. And they are beaten, scorned, sometimes castrated, and even killed.

Those stories about the infidelity of wives towards jealous husbands who take away their personal freedom and constantly suspect them of immorality, or say that they know women's cleverness and they can't be lied to, are a special group of stories. In order to show their husbands that "a wife can't be guarded", if they want to go about with other men, they succeed in accomplishing the act of infidelity right in front of their husbands, often with their direct assistance, and then they tell their husbands in order to cure them. It is understood, in all these stories, the wife remains unpunished, since the fault is on the other side.

In our stories of infidelity in marriage, the fundamental idea is that, in the end, the fidelity of the wife always depends exclusively on her. The best illustrations of this concept are the stories about "The

Youth Who Writes Women's Deceits in a Ledger"⁴¹. Before he marries, a young man travels for years from place to place writing down women's deceits and hoping to learn them all so that after he marries his wife will not be able to cuckold him. "The youth wrote down all the deceits they told him and all the tricks with which they lied to their husbands."⁴² However, in one situation, in a foreign house, in order to teach him, the woman of the house places him in a very delicate situation: as if he attacked her, the men of the house came at her cry, then she said she was frightened. Later she said to the youth, "As long as you live to walk the earth to write down women's tricks, you will never get them all down..."⁴³ Thus it is precisely these "deceits and tricks" which are woven into our stories with erotic content, especially those dealing with the fidelity and infidelity of women.

Our variations on the tale of the three priests who fall into the trap set by the husband of a faithful wife whom they desire are numerous. (AT 1730). The amorous adventures of priests in our erotic folklore are set on a grotesque-comic base, but very often they conclude tragically for the priests. Although other lovers are left unpunished and are acquitted, this never happens with clergymen. Evidently, the people had a different standard for them and did not like their numerous vices, especially their false modesty, hypocrisy,

and greed. The people display a similar attitude towards those in power and other exploiters. For example, our story "The Woman, the Hodja, the Kmet, and the Muxtija"⁴⁴ is similar to those about the three priests and is almost identical with regard to the consequences for the three ill-fated lovers.

The majority of our erotic stories use realistic themes on the relations of man to woman, based on natural relations. The stories are seldom about abnormal sexual relations, these are evidently foreign to our people and totally unconnected with their ethical concepts. Sexual deviations, such as homosexuality, sodomy, bestiality, and incest almost never occur.⁴⁵ In addition, it is easily concluded from those rare stories, that these are not our own, Macedonian, but rather they are usually borrowed stories. Thus, almost as a rule, the rare homosexuality in the stories is connected with hodjas and priests, with Turks, and with migrant workers. Furthermore, it is interesting that zoophilia is always committed with donkeys. As we have already noted, the donkey is a symbol of fertility, and in this instance perhaps we have an archaism which has lost its significance in the course of time and has taken on a pathological meaning. In one of our stories, a husband punishes his wife, who had deserted him, by turning her into a donkey with the help of magic fruit which he gives her to eat.⁴⁶ Returning home, he rides

her, then when he desires her as a woman, he returns her human form with another type of fruit. The metamorphosis occurs several times. Also, since we are discussing archaisms, let us observe in passing that some apparently meaningless elements in stories which seem to have an immediate contemporary realistic basis, unequivocally attest to the truth about fairy tales which was already recognized long ago and which Gorky so accurately and beautifully defined, viz. that even the most fantastic things in these tales have their own realistic basis in the people's understanding. Thus in our stories about the unfaithful wife whose husband pretends to be blind in order to catch her in the act with her lover, or in the ones about the husband who causes his unfaithful and stupid wife to go to a cave in which the Lord is supposed to live, where she prays that he will die so she can take her lover for her husband, we meet identical episodes: the husband asks his wife to prepare for him or to bring to the cave in which he will be hidden to play the role of the Lord "a roasted chicken and a flask of wine". She does this with pleasure. This is not a question of epicureanism.

Among the ancient Spartans and the Germans (and among other Indo-European peoples) "the roasted chicken and jug of wine" were symbols of adultery.⁴⁸ Furthermore, in several of our regions, according to old folk custom⁴⁹, the unfaithful wife rides backwards on a

donkey, holding its tail in her hand. Plutarch mentioned this custom. According to Jacob Grimm, it was also practiced by the Germans.⁵⁰ So if the donkey is a symbol of fertility as an animal with a concupiscent, phallic role in myths and consequently also in folk tales, then on some kind of reverse sense it also became a symbol of infidelity, and even in speech it is a symbol with symbolic sexual meaning.

In our erotic folklore there are also tales with totally fantastic motifs, most often identical with or borrowed from those of fairy tales (metamorphoses and personifications, miraculous objects and acts, etc.). The basis of such tales need not be sought only in the abovementioned distant beliefs with regard to the influence of sex on nature, which have long since become out of date. They are often the result of the simple contamination of realistic motifs with motifs from fairy tales. For example, it is clear that the motif of the sprouting of phalli in a field or of their enormous dimensions represent something ancient. However, it is also absolutely certain that our erotic tale "The Oxherd and the Snake"⁵¹ merely represents a clever reworking of the motif of the gift of language in fairy tales. In this story, when the snake asks him what kind of reward he wants as a reward for saving its life, the oxherd doesn't seek to understand the language of animals and

and birds, as is usual in all our known variants of this motif; rather, he asks the snake to give his word the ability to produce a miraculous, magic effect. Namely, the oxherd asked that when he said the word "stick" those present would copulate, but when he said the word "separate" the copulation would stop. Subsequently misusing his ability, the oxherd puts a number of people into insoluble humorous positions and gets what he wants simply for separating the copulating people. This tale is undoubtedly the work of someone who knows folk tales well, a nameless person of the people with a great sense of humour. Erotic folk tales about metamorphosis have an identical origin, for example, the abovementioned tale of the man who turned his wife into a donkey. Here is yet another example. In fairy tales we often encounter apple trees, whose apples have some miraculous qualities: they help some childless woman (usually a queen) bear a child, etc. And if children can be born from the apple (let us remember the role of the apple in the original sin of Adam and Eve) why, then, shouldn't some other apple, of course miraculous, when eaten, cause a man who doesn't have a phallus to grow one. In one of our folk tales⁵³, constructed exactly like a fairy tale, three brothers were born without phalli. When they came of marriageable age, each one of them individually, one after another, sets off to seek some way of growing a phallus. An

old woman first told the oldest that in such and such a place there stands an apple tree which bears golden apples; he must go there and eat one apple, and he'll grow a phallus. He did just that. He returned home and got married. After him the middle brother set off but instead of one apple he ate two and, wonder of wonders, he grew two phalli, and for the third brother, because he was greedy and ate three apples, grew three. The two disobedient brothers returned to the old woman to ask what they should do with two or three phalli. The story now returns to reality, and has a humorous solution. Namely, the one who has two was given the answer that he must use one for weekdays and the other for holidays, and the one who had three received an identical answer as did the first with two phalli. Naturally, he asked the woman what he should do with the third, and he received the jocular answer "Shove it up your ass!"

Erotic stories which have already been published, as well as tales from the unpublished archives of the Institute of Folklore in Skopje and tales from my own personal archives are included in our collection.

The tales published by our collectors Marko K. Cepenkov, Kuzman A. Shapkarev, the brothers Molerov, and others are taken over with no changes. However, it is necessary to note that they themselves expurgated their own texts, if their expressions might have offended

public morals, according to the understandings of that time. Among them are stories with extraordinarily beautiful motifs; they reveal many truths about the attitude of our people toward various ethnic problems, but also with a tendency toward didacticism. Let us recall that these stories were collected in the second half of the 19th century. A comparison of these tales with the corresponding stories of our day, regardless of the fact that we have not subjected the latter to change and expurgation as did our abovementioned worthy collectors, unequivocally shows that there is no great difference between them, especially with regard to their composition and style, which to this day are entirely in accordance with the norms of folk tales, novellas and anecdotes. The appearance of new motifs keeps pace with the changes in the social life of our people; these changes, of course, also influence changes in the old motifs.

Everything said above is especially true of the erotic tales of Marko Cepenkov. Individual erotic motifs were frequently transformed in such a way that he shifted their emphasis to the didactic side of the erotic problem being treated, thus avoiding great eroticism. Thus, the treatment of a wife who would not accept her husband's suggestion that he take himself another wife, but who accepts when he proposes another husband, thus testing her honour, is taken as a moral

truth. The tale "The Man Who Had No Worry in His Life" is typical in this regard.⁵⁵ He castrated himself to prove to his deathly ill wife that he would not remarry after her death. By some kind of miracle she recovered. Now, naturally, the wife did not want to be deprived of her sexual life. She proposes to her husband that either she brings in other men when she wants or they get divorced. The unlucky husband takes the first proposal, and whenever his wife brought in some man, to mitigate his tragic position and his pain, he invited his friends in for a feast, creating an illusion that he was happy. Again in Cepenkov, there occurs a tale which fits in very nicely with our times with its frequent occurrences of having many women and vice-versa.⁵⁶ A wife had two husbands who were robbers, "she had one for the night and the other for the day". And when they understood that they had a wife in common, they did not fight, they teamed up in robbery and plundered the king's treasury to enrich the wife. Let us remember that in individual regions of the world such practices as polyandry are institutionalized even to this day.⁵⁷

The majority of the stories which appear for the first time in our book are from our villages. Men, women, boys and girls are all narrators. The telling of "dirty jokes" is considered by all of them to be something completely natural, and normally they do not

attempt to expurgate their erotic character, especially in the use of erotic words. On the contrary, among certain older narrators, one even senses the tendency to tell the stories in the "dirtiest" possible manner, with detailed descriptions, without understanding the expressions at all. With this they wish to distinguish their own skill in sexual affairs. However, the erotic vocabulary of our stories is poor, especially when compared with the corresponding lexicons of western European nations: one feels the lack of more refined and subtler expressions in the vocabulary. The richness of Western erotic vocabularies is due to artistic erotic literature, and we don't have this. Thus, in our tales we can count about ten words for the phallus (grain-gatherer, pinecone, latch, curry-comb, pestle, etc.) in addition to the usual ones.

When the story tellers were questioned about the origin of the stories, they most often responded by indicating a specific person from whom they heard the story and the time when this occurred. However in the case of certain stories with fantastic elements, the answer was that they are "very old". Many of the stories were said to have been heard during communal labor (e.g. while shucking corn, resting from field work, and the like). It is interesting to note that women always explain that they learned the stories from men, never from women. Surely there are contrary occurrences but

not one woman said this. The reason must again be sought in the social subjugation of women in our villages.

Our introduction represents only an attempt to touch upon the historical origin and the essence of erotic folklore and to explain its development and major thematic preoccupations, especially of the tales as the broadest genre. The insufficiency of corresponding literature, the limited number of notes from the past and from our own time, was a serious hindrance to a wider and more systematic treatment of these questions. However, as this contribution is the first step in this area of our study of folklore, its deficiencies can be fixed in later works. In fact, if it arouses interest and if it gives that stimulation, then its fragmentary quality will not be a weakness.

Footnotes

1. Increased scholarly interest has led to the establishment of special institutions for sexological investigations. The first such institute in the world was founded in Berlin (1919). A similar institute was formed at the University of Vienna (1928). Its bibliographic and biographic "Bilder Lexikon der Erotik: in six volumes is valuable. The two volumes which deal with erotic art and literature are especially important to us, viz. "Ein bibliographisches und biographisches Nachschlagwerk, eine Kunst--und Literatur--Geschichte für Gebiete der erotischen Belleteristik, der Galanten, skandalösen und satirischen Literaturen, der Facetten, folkloristischen und skatalogischen Kunst von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart. Ein Sammelwerk der Sexualität betonten Produktion aller Völker und Zeiten auf den Gebieten der bildenden Kunst".
2. James John Frazer, The Golden Bough (Zlatna grana) Belgrad, 1937, 407.
3. Ibid., 179.
4. Documenting his own conclusion, Frazer cites an example of sexual intercourse in the fields before sowing among several primitive tribes (In Central America, in Java, and others, p. 180). This ritually

significant act originates in the primitive belief based on the principle of imitative magic (like produces like) that the sex act will cause the fields to be more productive, because women with several children are chosen for the act. We will note further, that in our erotic work one encounters the motif of the sprouting of phalli in a field, according to God's command. They become miraculously active when a certain formula is spoken.

(Institute of folklore--Skopje, m.l. number 974; variant: my note from the village Kuceviste--Skopje region). This motif is also found in a lithograph by an anonymous artist (Bilder Lexikon, Wien, 1931, 657).

5. See Richard Schmidt, Beitrage zur indische Erotik, Leipsig, 1902.
6. Among other things, numerous ecclesiastical obscene pictures and sculptures in European Christian churches, especially in Catholic churches (XII to XVI centuries) are evidence of this.
7. These and similar beliefs and cults are associated with corresponding customs and holidays. Such, for example, were the saturnalia, and the European carnivals which arose from them. They originated in Egypt, in the processions dedicated to the goddess Isis. The meaning of these holidays, wherein the people, through dances, mime dramas and a corres-

ponding sexual freedom, glorify the divinities of fertility in the springtime, is in the endeavor to bring a good harvest from the earth.

8. Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, Belgrade 1967 (especially the theory of the dialectic evolution of the family [according to L.N. Morgan]).
9. Kuzman A. Šapkarev, "Sbornik ot Balgarski narodni umotvorenija", Book VIII, Sofia, 1892, Tale Number 95.
10. The episode goes: "Afterwards, in the morning, the priest and the servant went off with pickaxes on their shoulders, to cultivate the vineyard. But the vineyard couldn't be hoed with pickaxes, and the priest sent the servant home to get two hoes. (The vineyard wasn't very far from the priest's house; from the vineyard one could see into the house and hear.) The servant went to the house, but instead of taking the two hoes he dishonoured both women--the priest's wife and her daughter; then afterwards he got the hoes and carried them to the vineyard." The manner in which the clever servant gets the two women to give in to him is omitted from the story; in the loud conversation he had with the priest, the women wrongly understood his permission to give him two hoes as permission to give themselves to the servant. The priest thought that he had given the women permission to give the hoes to the servant.

11. Gerhardt Gezeman, Erlangen Manuscript, SANU, Sremski Karlovci, 1925.
12. Dr. Friedrich Kraus (born in Počega in 1859), a German Slavist, is one of the best-known collectors of erotic folklore. Thus folklore was published in his journals: Kryptadia. Recueil de documents pour servir à toile rouge, 9 vols., Heilbronn, 1883-1889, Paris, 1897-1905; Anthropophyteia. Jahrbücher für folkloristische Erhebungen und Forschungen zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der deschlechtischen Moral, Bd. I-X, Leipzig, 1904ff. His work "Die Zeugung und Sitte, Brauch und Glauben der Sudslaven" was also published in Kryptadia. The works which Dr. Valtazar Bogović, Dr. Alexander Mitrović and others collected and sent to him are also among the numerous published erotic works from Yugoslavia.
13. Serbian folk songs from the unpublished manuscripts of Vuk Stef. Karadic, book five. Special songs and dance songs, Belgrade, 1974. The collection is published by the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences. The editors are Živomir Mladenović and Vladen Nedić.
14. The motif of incest, either as a conscious or unconscious act, is widely represented in the folklore of all people's in numerous variants. This is also the case in Macedonian folklore.

15. Publija Ovidija Nasona, *Metamorphosis*. Translator T. Maretić. Zagreb, 1907. The *Metamorphosis* can be exploited not only in art, but also in folklore. A number of our stories and erotic tales and songs depend on various metamorphoses.
16. The word *Sotadic*=licentious, lewd comes from the name of this Greek poet: *Sotadic* verses, novels, anecdotes, jokes, etc.
17. Spencer Ashbee, *Index librorum prohibitorum*, London, 1887. The 12th erotic journal also appeared in England: *The Covent Garden Magazine, or Amoures Repository*, London, 1772-4.
18. *Heptameron des Nouvelles* (1559)--Among the 72 novellas in this collection, "*Servante justifié*" is one of the most frequently read.
19. *Elegantiae latini sermonis Aloisiae Sigaea Tolenatae Satira de Ananis Amoris et Veneris*. Aloisia Hispaniae scripsit, Latinitate denavit Joannes Mersius (pseudonym). V.C. Sine Nota, 2nd. (Lyon, 1658-1659), 245 pp.
20. *Erotica Biblion* (1783); *Le rideau Leve* (1797).
21. *Les cent contes drolatique*--3 vol. 1832-37.
22. Marcel Bealu's book, *La poésie erotique de langue française*, Paris, 1971, p. 345 pp. offers the newest anthology of French erotic poetry. Erotic works from Guiliom Kokiler (10th century) to contemporary French poets are included. Other than those already mentioned, there are many others (Malherbe, Pierre Ronsard, La Fontaine, Victor Hugo, T.Gautier, Paul Verlaine). An excellent translation of French erotic literature is the collection "*The Bordello of the Muse*" (published by "Liber", the Philosophical faculty in Zagreb). Danilo Kiš, translator.
23. One of the best Italian anthologies of erotica was already published in 1854 and has frequently appeared in foreign language editions since then: *L'Erotiade, fiori galanti di casti, Marini, Rillosi, Pananti, Aretino, Ariosto, Battachi, Fortigueri, Franco...*
24. Institute of Folklore (henceforth IF)-Skopje, m.l.number 974.
25. The riddles are mainly from the collection of Filip Kavaev: *Folk proverbs and riddles from Struga and Struško*. Institut za makedonski jazik, Skopje, 1961.
26. Notes from my collection.

- 27. Macedonian folk stories can be classified according to the Arne-Thompson index of motifs in the appropriate groups of short-stories and anecdotes. However, it is possible, for example, for one anecdotal motif to be so broad, to have such a complex plot and such a stylistic composition (detailed descriptions, developed dialogues, retardations, several episodes, etc.) that it is difficult to consider it an anecdote. These instances demonstrate how difficult it is to differentiate short stories from anecdotes.
- 28. *Facetiarum libri tres*. Strassburg, 1508-1512. The Maleševska Fable is my transcription.
- 29. IF, m.l. number 1024 and 1476.
- 30. *Die Königstochter*. Ein Volksmärchen wie es unter Männern erzählt wird. Bugu. Bilder Lexikon, Literatur and Kunst, H-2, 5.592.
- 31. *Aventures de l'abbe Choisy habillé en femme*, Paris, 1862. This motif also occurs in our folk songs. At present the song "Džandafila", in which a youth, disguised as a woman, manages to enter a harem and approach one hanama (lady) who had bragged that a "man's hand" had not touched her, is popular in Maleševija.
- 32. Marko K. Cepenkov, *Macedonian folklore in 10 volumes*, vol. 2, Skopje, 1972, stories 81 and 82.
- 33. Th. Benfey, *Pantschatantra*, 11: Übersetzung und Anmerkungen, Leipzig, 1859, p. 303.
- 34. Fr. v. der Leyen, *Das Märchen* (1911), p. 88, analysis of the story: Maspero, *Les contes populaires de l'Egypte ancienne*, Paris, 1882.
- 35. Cepenkov, op. cit., number 310.
- 36. IF m.l. number 1476.
- 37. Cepenkov, op. cit., number 310.
- 38. The story "The magic trees" in IF, m.l. number 1476.
- 39. My note.
- 40. The Story "The Greatest Sin" in IF, m.l. number 1360.
- 41. Cepenkov, number 394 and 399.

42. Cepenkov, number 394, p. 20.
43. Cepenkov, number 399, p. 31.
44. IF, m.l. number 974.
45. In one of our stories (SBNU, X 40) the sex act between a man and a dead woman is considered such a great sin, that the plague is born from the womb of the dead woman. For revenge, it kills people, beginning with the king who had committed this bestial act.
46. The same metamorphosis appears in our stories about Dunja Guzeli (probably from the Turks). The youth who was robbed and deceived by her turns her into a donkey with the aid of enchanted fruit for punishment (Cepenkov, III number 98, 127).
47. In his address to the I Congress of Soviet writers, stressing the significance of old stories, myths and legends as a source of literary creativity, Maxim Gorky, among others, gave this presentation: All ancient myths and tales are in a sense epitomized by the myth of Tantalus: Tantalus stands up to his neck in water, he is tormented by thirst but he can not slake it--this is ancient man amidst natural phenomena which he cannot understand.
48. Bilder-Lexikon. Kulturgeschichte, 312.
49. V. Kličkova and M. Georgieva, wedding customs of the Galičnik and Debarsko villages, "Bulletin of the Ethnological Museum" 3, Skopje.1965, 131; Jov. Vasiljević, Kumanovo region.
50. J. Grimm, Deutsche Rechtsaltertümer, 2 Ausg. Gottingen, 1854.
51. My note (Budinari, Berovsko).
52. Cepenkov, II, number 52, 53.
53. IF, m.l. number 974.
54. Cepenkov, VI, number 387.
55. Cepenkov, V, number 346.
56. Cepenkov, VI, number 422.
57. In Tibet and the Himalayan regions several poor brothers have only one wife (polyandry). And frequently in our stories, two brothers have one wife and then the third brother marries her.