*[LAY OF THE EMIR: 17TH-C. REORDERING BY MUSCOVITE EPITOMIZER]*

(Pog 342v) *A Tale of Bygone Times and Brave Men, about the Boldness and about the Bravery and about the Might of the Glorious Devgenij*

α. There was a widow of royal family, and she devoted herself to salvation; she was never away from church. And she had three sons, splendid and handsome; with their mother's prayer they were brave in all that they did. The widow also had a daughter, splendid and beautiful in the beauty of her face.

And Amir the tsar of the Arab land heard of the maiden's beauty and assembled his force, full large, and went to attack the Greek land for the sake of this maiden's beauty. And Amir the tsar came to the house of the widow and carried off the fair (343) maiden by his cunning; he was invisible to everyone in the Greek land, save that one old woman of the house saw him. At the time her mother was in God's church; the sons were hunting in another country.

And the widow came from God's church and did not find her fair daughter and began to question her slaves in her house about her fair daughter. And all the slaves of her house said to her: "We do not know, Lady, about your fair daughter." Save that one old woman of the house had seen and told her mistress, the widow: "Lady, Amir the tsar of the Arab land came and stole away your daughter, our mistress, by his cunning, and he was invisible in our land."

And on hearing this from her slave the widow began to tear the hair from her head and [to tear] her face, and she began to weep over her fair (343v) daughter and said: "Woe is me, wretched widow. If my children had been at home, they would have gone and pursued Amir the tsar and taken away their sister."

After a little while her children came home, and seeing their mother weeping they began to question their mother: "Tell us, our mother, who has insulted you, whether a tsar or a prince of this city? If you have been insulted, we shall not live." /α

a. Their mother said to them: "My dear children, I have not been insulted by anyone of this city, rather you have had at home one sister, and she has now been stolen away by the hands of Amir the tsar of the Arabian land. And he has torn out my heart by the roots and pierced me like a lifeless reed. And now I adjure you, my beloved children, that youfail not to hearken to my command. Go and pursue Amir the tsar and take away your fair little sister; /a

b. if your sister (Tit 172) you do not recover, do you thus lay down your heads for your little sister, and I (shall lament) all of you since I shall have no children." /b

c. Her sons said: "Our mother, do not be distressed and do not worry about this; quickly give us your prayer and we shall cover our way." They girt themselves with their weapons and mounted their horses and went like gold-winged hawks; their horses seemed to fly beneath them. They reached the borders of the Saracen land; /c

dbis=11ter. they came upon a Saracen standing guard. And the brothers began to question him: "Tell us, Saracen, how far to the abode of your Amir the tsar?" But the Saracen drew his sword; he ran upon them boldly, thinking them deserters, not knowing their boldness.

And the youngest brother sprang, grasped the Saracen by the throat and dragged him to his brothers and wished to slay him. The eldest brother said to them: "My dear brothers! Why should we defile our swords upon a Saracen? Let us defile them upon Amir the tsar himself, — he is guilty!" This Saracen they tied (172v) to a tree on a mountain. /dbis=11ter

11. And they themselves went their way and came upon many guards of Amir the tsar /11

d. beyond a great river called Bagrjanica; /d

11bis. they were three thousand in number. The brothers saw the great guard of Amir the tsar and the eldest brother said: "My brothers, it were well to ride together against the guards of Amir the tsar." But the middle brother said: "My dear brothers, the guard of Amir the tsar is large; let us divide in three."

The eldest brother (went) on the right hand, the middle in the center, the youngest on the left hand; they sprang upon the men of Amir the tsar and began to strike them as good mowers mow grass: some they bound, some they slaughtered, and they drove them among them like good shepherds sheep. They chased them and killed them; only three men did they spare to lead them to Amir the tsar. /11bis

e=37bis+45-48bis. And they began to question them: "Tell us, Saracens, does Amir the tsar dwell in your city or not?"

The Saracens replied: "Dear brothers, Amir (173) our tsar dwells outside the city; he dwells seven leagues from the city. He has many tents; one tent contains many thousands, strong and brave; one will attack a hundred." And the brothers said to the Saracens: "If we feared not God, we should long ago have put you to death. But we ask you, that we may not be tempted. Tell us, what sort of tent has Amir the tsar?"

And the Saracens said: "Amir the tsar has a dark-red tent, green at the base; the tent is plated with gold and silver and pearl, and adorned with precious stones. His brother has a dark-blue tent, green at the base; his tent is likewise adorned. Other tents there are, full many; in them reside warriors. They receive from the tsar each year a revenue of one thousand and of two, and are strong and brave; one will attack a hundred."

The brothers let them go to Amir the tsar and said to them: "Go, take word to Amir the tsar, lest Amir the tsar say, 'like robbers the brothers came and slew me'." The Saracens (were) glad to be let go, and went (173v) to take word to Amir the tsar.

And when Amir the tsar heard, he was afraid and said to his warriors: "My dear brothers, strong warriors, I had this night a dream that three hawks were beating me with their wings: they all but laid wounds on my body: it means that the brothers have come and will begin to quarrel with me."

At that moment the brothers reached the tent of Amir the tsar and began to shout, calling out Amir the tsar: /e=37bis+45-48bis

9. "Tell us, Amir the tsar, have you not guards posted on the way? We reached the tent without any resistance. But now tell us — may the bear wound you — you came and have stolen away our little sister like a thief. If we had chanced at home, you could not have escaped (with) our little sister, but would have died a wretched death and all your land would be in thrall to us. Now tell us, where have you put our little sister?" /9

12. And Amir the tsar answered them: "My dear brothers, you see that mountain, great and fair? There (were slain many honored) women and fair maidens. And there (174) was your sister slain because she had not done my will." The brothers said: "Dear brothers, let us go to that fair mountain and see the dead maiden: let us take her; then we shall deal with Amir the tsar." /12

13-17. They mounted their horses and went up and saw on the mountain many women and fair maidens slain. They began to seek their sister and found one maiden very fair and began to shed tears over her, believing she was their sister. But their youngest brother said: "She is not our sister and not our kin." /13-17

20. The brothers mounted their horses and were loudly singing the angelic hymn to the Lord: "Blessed be the Lord our God; teach our hands to battle, our fingers to struggle. Let us remember, brothers, the word of our mother: one day we were born, one day wetoo shall die; at the bidding of our mother let us lay down our heads for our little sister." /20

f-g. And they charged the tent of Amir the tsar and lifted the tent on their lances, calling out Amir the tsar.

But Amir the tsar said to them: "My dear (174v) brothers, get you gone from this tent and cast lots among you to see which one of you the lot calls to fight with me. If you overcome me, take your little sister. If I overcome you, it is my pleasure to slay all of you."

And the brothers rode off from the tent and began to cast lots; they cast the first time and the lot called the youngest to go to battle. And the brothers cast lots a second time, but it was for the youngest to go. Because he is not strong, they cast a third time out of pity for their brother, but it came out for the youngest brother to go to battle. And the brothers said to the youngest brother: "Since you came forth from our mother's womb together with your little sister, you and your sister cannot be separated." /f-g

2. And the brothers began to arm the youngest brother. And where the brothers were standing, that place shines like the sun, but where Amir the tsar is arming, that place is dark as darkness. The brothers raise the angelic hymn to God: "Sire, suffer not Thy (175) creature to be the sport of pagans, lest the pagans rejoice, having dishonored a Christian maiden." /2

5. And mounting their horses they came down, as did Amir the tsar. They began to hack with sabers and they smote one another with swords and with lances. /5

4. But when the Saracens and the many warriors saw this, the boldness of the youngest brother, they said to Amir the tsar: "Great Lord, give them back their sister and make peace with them, for lo! their youngest brother has conquered your strength. If they join together, all our land will be in thrall to them." /4

6. The youngest brother, grasping his mace, came up behind Amir the tsar and smote him between the shoulders with the mace and knocked him off his horse and grasped him by the hair and dragged him to his brothers. All the Saracens said loudly to Amir the tsar: "Give back, Lord and Tsar, their sister, lest they destroy you utterly." /6

7. And Amir the tsar said to them: "Have mercy (on me), dear brothers; /7

24-25. this day I shall receive holy baptism for love of that maiden, that I may be your (175v) brother-in-law." /24-25

22. The brothers said: "Brother, Amir the tsar, we have the power to slay you and we have the power to let you go. How can we give our sister to a slave? But now tell us, where is our sister?" /22

9bis. And Amir the tsar said to them tearfully: "Dear brothers! You see yon fair field? There stand many tents, and in them your sister resides. /9bis

26. And wherever your sister walks, that place is strewn with golden coverlets, and her face is covered with a precious veil, while these her guards stand ever far from her tent." /26

26bis. Hearing this the brothers were joyful and galloped to her tent. And they went to their sister and found her sitting on a golden chair, her face covered with a precious veil. /26bis

27-29=24-25bis+31bis. Her brothers began to ask tearfully: ''Tellus, our sister, of the boldness of Amir the tsar. If he has offended you with a single word, we shall cut off his head and carry it to the Greek land, that later he shall not boast, 'I defiled a Christian maiden.'"

(176) But the maiden said to her brothers: "By no means, brothers, have any such thought in your mind. When I was stolen away by the hands of Amir the tsar (I) had twelve nurses. I told Amir the tsar of your boldness. And Amir the tsar always came to me once a month and looked upon me from afar. And he ordered his servants to cover my face and he would never enter the tent. Now I fear insult from the people and my kin because (I am) a captive.

"I wish to speak to you, my brothers, and first I wish to adjure you by the prayer of our mother that you fail not to hearken to my command. If only Amir the tsar will truly renounce his faith and this day receive holy baptism, you will call no other brother-in-law, since he is in glory glorious, in strength strong, and in riches rich." The brothers said to their sister: "Our mother's prayer has joined you to Amir the tsar."

At that time Amir the tsar collected three hundred camels and loaded them with precious Arab gold and gave them to the brothers (176v) as gifts for love of the maiden. Amir the tsar said to the brothers: "Have mercy on me, my dear brothers. I shall renounce my faith and this day receive holy baptism, that I may be your brother-in-law."

And the brothers said to Amir the tsar: "If you would be our brother-in-law, truly renounce your faith for love of this maiden, receive holy baptism, and go with us to the Greek land with your beloved maiden." /27-29=24-25bis+31bis

64-65. But Amir the tsar said: "Dear brothers, I shall not surrender shamefully, lest the Greeks say, 'they bring their brother-in-law like a captive.' I shall be called your brother-in-law; in great honor shall I come. I wish first to go and collect camels from all the land and load riches upon them. And I wish to assemble strong warriors, and whoever wishes to accept holy baptism with me, /64-65

30. and I shall come to you in the Greek land and I shall be called your brother-in-law and I shall be glorious and rich. Do not weary your horses; wait for me on the road." And the brothers, taking their sister, went their way. /30

64-65bis[=75]. Amir the tsar, going to his mother (177) and to his brothers, began to speak to them with guile, that they might not restrain him. And he said to his mother: "My dear mother, I went to the Greek land and captured for myself a beloved maiden. And her brothers came after me and began to fight with me. And one of them conquered mystrength. If all three should join together, all our land would be in thrall to them." /64-65bis[=75]

35bis. But his mother spoke to Amir the tsar angrily: (she began) to tear the hair from her head and (to tear) (her) face, /35bis

37. (and she said to him): "Why are you called tsar and have strong warriors serving you; they receive a revenue of the thousand and of two thousand. Go, assemble a great force and go to the Greek land and conquer the brothers and bring the beloved maiden here." /37

64-65ter[=75]. And Amir the tsar said with guile to his mother: "Mother, I wish to do the same: to assemble warriors and go to attack the Greek land." A brother of Amir the tsar said: "Let us go, Amir the tsar, after we have quickly assembled a force, that we may keep the brothers from the city with the beloved maiden."

But Amir the tsar said to his brother: "Sit on my throne; I wish to go alone to attack the Greek land." At that moment Amir the tsar sat (177v) his brother on his throne, while he himself assembled a great force and collected riches and camels from all that land, heaping precious Arab gold and costly stones upon them. The Saracens knew that men go not thus to battle but said nothing to him. /64-65ter[=75]

68. When Amir the tsar reached (the border of the Greek land, Amir the tsar said) to the Arabs: /68

69. "My dear brothers, strong Arab warriors, who will go with me to attack the Greek land?" There spoke from among them (one) Arab with twelve locks on his lips, and he said loudly to Amir the tsar: "Great Lord, Amir Tsar, there came from the Greek land to our Saracen land three youths. One of them conquered your strength; if all three should join together, all our land would be in thrall. Now you wish to attack the Greek land: they will destroy all utterly." But Amir the tsar sent on ahead the camels loaded with riches, took with him a few of his warriors, and went to the Greek land. /69

30bis-31. The brothers came within fifty leagues of the Greek city (178) and halted. And their sister began to entreat them: "My dear brothers, do not bring me into great shame before men and before my kindred because I was stolen away by Amir the tsar. Wait for your brother-in-law."

After a little time the tsar Amir came up to them with all his riches and with the camels loaded with gold and silver. And Amir the tsar said to them: "Glory to Thee, God, who hast been my benefactor. God hath found me worthy to look in the eyes of my brothers." And the brothers said to Amir the tsar: "Slave of Christ, this very day be our brother-in-law."

Two of the brothers, the eldest and the middle, (with) their little sister went to the city at night because of the people and reached the house of their mother. When their mother saw her two sons and her daughter, she said to them tearfully: "you have won your little sister but you have lost your brother." But her sons said: "Rejoice, Mother, our youngest is together with our brother-in-law, with Amir the tsar. Now prepare a great wedding, since we have won a brother-in-law in glory glorious, and in strength strong and in riches rich; now we shall lead him to godly baptism."

And taking the patriarch of the city with all the clergy they went to the river Euphrates and built (178v) a font (and) a host of people came forth from the city. At that time Amir the tsar came to the river Euphrates, and when the brothers saw Amir the tsar harassed (by the people), taking Amir the tsar they quickly plunged him in godly baptism. And the patriarch himself baptized him: his godfather is the patriarch himself of the city. And they led him to the house of their mother and held a great wedding, very glorious, for three months. And then Amir the tsar built his own court and chambers and began to live with his wife. /30bis-31

34. After a little time, when the mother of Amir the tsar heard that Amir the tsar had been baptized and had renounced his faith for love of the maiden, /34

35. she began to tear the hair from her head /35

40. and assembled the forces of the Saracen land and said to them: "Who has the boldness to go to the Greek land (to your Lord, Amir the tsar, and bring him back from the Greek land with his beloved maiden?" And three Saracens said to her: "We shall go, Lady, to the Greek land) and bear (a letter) to Amir the tsar." She gave them much gold and silver, /40

39. and gave them three horses: (a horse) called Windflower, a second, Thunder, a third, Lightning, and (said): "If you are in the Greek land and see your lord, Amir the tsar, bring him forth from the Greek land and seat him on Windflower (179) and he will not be (harmed) by anyone. If you enter the Saracen land with your lord, Amir the tsar, and with the maiden, seat them on Thunder, and then all the Arabs of the Saracen land will hear. If you sit on Lightning, you will be in invisible in the Greek land." /39

43. The Saracens took the three horses and the letter to Amir the tsar and went (their) way. And they reached the Greek city and halted outside the city in a secret place and mounted Lightning and were invisible in the Greek land. /43

45. That night the queen, the fair wife (of Amir the tsar), had a dream and was afraid; /45

46. she told her brothers: "My dear brothers, I had this night a dream; at a certain moment a gold-winged falcon flew into my chamber and took (me by the hand and) carried me out of my chamber. Then three ravens flew up and attacked (the falcon) and the falcon let me go." /46

47-48. The brothers assembled in the city all the seers and scribes and Pharisees and told of their sister's dream. And they said to them: "Your brother-in-law, newly-baptized Amir the tsar, at his mother's bidding wishes to steal our fair lady from her chamber and flee to the Saracen land with your beloved little sister. And the three ravens are Saracens, and they are in the city (179v) in a secret place; they have been sent after Amir the tsar with a letter from his mother." /47-48

50. The brothers went to Amir the tsar and began to accuse him. /50

52. But he swore by the Living God, /52

48ter. so they took Amir the tsar and (went with him outside the city with) the scribes and Pharisees and found the three Saracens outside the city: they seized (them) and began to question them. And they swore to them that Amir the tsar knew not of it. /48ter

75. And they baptized them with godly baptism and they began to live at the abode of Amir the tsar. And taking their horses Amir the tsar bestowed them upon his brothers-in-law. /75

32. And then the scribes and Pharisees began to foretell the birth of Devgenij.

And then the queen of Amir the tsar. took fruit of male sex in her womb, /32

33. and bore a son and they gave him the name of Akrit and baptized him with godly baptism and at the baptism they gave him the name of Devgenij. And the patriarch himself baptized him with godly baptism; his godmother is the queen. /33

ω. And Amir the tsar raised his son until he was ten years old. /ω