

April 27th, 2009
RUSS 324

Written Assignment #5: Choose a tale that we have read to support or contradict Propp's theory. Make specific reference to Propp's "functions" in your analysis.

Vladimir Propp believes that all Russian folktales follow his theory of 31 functions in a specific sequence. Many of the tales we have read so far fit into Propp's theory. In particular, the tale of "Baba Yaga and The Brave Youth" follows the 31 functions Propp created. The first function of absention occurs in "Baba Yaga and The Brave Youth" when the sparrow and the cat leave the brave youth at home alone. Before they leave, the next function of interdiction appears. The sparrow and cat warn the brave youth about Baba Yaga, telling him that if Baba Yaga comes along to not say a word. In this function, there is always a warning given. Next is the violation of the interdiction. The villain enters the tale and the hero violates the previously given warning. Baba Yaga comes to the house and the brave youth goes against the warning, yelling at the villain for touching his spoon. The victim (the brave youth) is then taken advantage of by the villain (Baba Yaga) and the sparrow and cat are left to save the boy. As the tale goes on, the interdiction and violation repeat. In the case of "Baba Yaga and the Brave Youth", Propp's 31 functions are very present.

→ But very few are accounted for or numbered here, unfortunately

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