

Title: Russian variants of “The Eastern Version” of Folk Tale 707, Three Golden Children
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Abstract:

This paper will discuss the two variants joined by the common name “Singing Tree and Speaking bird” in A. Afanasiev’s “Russian Fairy Tales.” The fairy plot 707, “Three Golden Children,” (which is also known as “the eastern version”) was spread all over Europe after the translation of Gallon’s “1001 Nights” and Straparola’s “Pleasant Nights.” That version was picked up by European people because of its folk nature and took a significant place in many world peoples traditions. “The eastern version” was less popular among East Slavonic people, and only several variants were found in Tver’s region and Orenburg’s region. The conceptual non-decomposition of the well known plot is not an obstacle to its development. From one hand, people try to save the fairy plot. On the other hand, they make changes, bring the elements of their everyday life. The Russian variants of “the eastern version” were influenced by the novelization process at the end of 19th and the beginning of 20th century. The traditional motifs were transformed and filled by a new content. Those processes are common for many countries. Compared with the popular East Slavonic novelized version, “Wonderful Children,” where all magic objects disappeared, the magic objects (singing tree, dancing water, speaking bird) were saved even in the Russian novelized variants of “the eastern version.” At the same time, instead of the “frozen beauty formula” of the wonderful children, the epithets “beautiful” and “wonderful” appeared in the fairytale.