

twelve roots standing." So I rode to the eastern shore of the sea, I rode up to that oak and a marten jumped out. Not the one who roams the forest, but the one that is a young woman sitting on the lattice chair in the tower chamber, weaving a towel for her bridegroom. I, the groom's best man, followed the marten's track and rode up to the tower chamber, to the tower chamber on the broad street, to the newly wed bride. The marten's tracks led to the gates and there they came to an end. "Show us the marten's tracks or open the door!"

Riddles by the gate:

"Who are you, a mosquito or a fly?"

"I am neither a mosquito nor a fly. I am a man of the Holy Spirit. Show us the marten's tracks or open the gate."

There follows an extremely important passage which I would like very much to insist on. A debate follows. From within they propose to the best man:

- a) Stand under a corner window.
- b) Climb over the gate.
- c) The gates are locked. The keys have been thrown into the sea.
- d) He went to the wrong porch.
- e) The gates are overgrown with forest and thicket.

To all these proposals the best man responds with: "Show us the marten's tracks or open the gate." Finally, they allow him into the peasant hut.

He answers (c) as follows:

Our bridegroom rode to the blue sea, where he hired some brave fishermen, men of good will. They cast a silken net into the waters and captured a white fish. In that white fish they found the golden keys to the tower chamber.

To (e) he answered:

Our bridegroom rode to the blacksmiths, to the young blacksmiths. They forged heroic axes and hired bold workers, who chopped down the forest and the thicket and battered down the gates.

We see the device of deceleration even more clearly in the extraordinarily curious custom recorded by Roman Jakobson in the village of Kostyushino, of the Rogachesky Volost, Demidovsky District, Moscow Province:

The parents of a young girl have gone into town for the night. The girl invites several of her girlfriends (usually two or three) to her home. She then informs a number of previously designated lads about this in advance or else she spreads a rumor (e.g., through a soldier's wife) that "there will be a house party at such and such a place and time." When everyone in the village goes to sleep, the boys (in the first case—invited, in the second case—on their own volition) approach the hut where the young girl lives. As the other boys move over to the side, one boy knocks on the window. At first no one responds. At the second knock, the hostess responds.

"Who is it?"

"Me" (so and so).

"What do you want?"

"Let me in."

"Of course."

She lets him in and says: "I am alone but there are *many* of you."

"I am alone too."

She exposes him as a liar. He tries to justify himself and says: "But you are not alone either. Nyushka Manyushka and others are with you."

This she denies, saying: "Well now, if I let you in, I won't be able to let you out. Papa is coming back in an hour."

The young fellows say that they came by for just half an hour. Finally she lets them in through the window. They all find a seat. They then demand that she light the lamp.

"I'm out of kerosene. The wick is ruined and Mama hid the glass lid."

All of these arguments are refuted, one by one, by the boys. The lamp is lit.

"Put on the samovar!" the boys cry out.

"We're out of coal and we're out of water," the girl says. "The samovar has been taken apart and Mama has hidden the tea."

All of these arguments are refuted by the boys. The samovar is heated. They drink tea and the boys propose: "Now why don't we all go to sleep."

The girls say no, under all sorts of pretexts. The fellows refute their arguments and, finally, they all go to bed, two at a time. Every attempt at disrobing or immodest advance provokes a motivated reply, but the boys do not give up. By morning, they all disperse. Returning home, the parents pretend they didn't notice a thing.

An analogous custom existed in Germany under the name of "trial nights."

Sumtsov had already commented on the affinity between these "young people's gatherings" and "trial nights."

Apart from elements which consist of borrowings, a work of art also contains an element of creativity, a force of will driving an artist to create his artifact piece by piece as an integral whole.

The laws underlying this creative will must be brought to light. Here is a letter by Tolstoi on the subject:

Dear Princess V:

I am very happy, my dear princess, at the occasion which has caused you to remember me. And, as proof of that, I am hastening to do for you the impossible, that is to answer your question. Andrei Bolkonsky is no more than a character created by a novelist. He does not represent the writer's personality or his memoirs. I would have been ashamed to be published if all of my work consisted of nothing more than copying a portrait from life, or discovering and remembering details about people. I shall endeavor to say who my Andrei is. In the battle of Austerlitz (which was described later) it was necessary for me to kill off a brilliant young man. Later in the same novel I found that I needed old man Bolkonsky and his daughter. Since it is rather awkward to describe a character who is in no way connected with the novel, I decided to make another brilliant young man the son of old Bolkonsky. I then became interested in him and gave him a role in the unfolding plot of the novel. And,

feeling charitable, I had him severely wounded instead of killed. And so, my dear princess, here is my totally honest though somewhat vague explanation as to who Bolkonsky is. (3 May 1865)

I would like to call the reader's attention to Tolstoi's motivation for the blood kinship between his protagonists. If we compared his motivation to the motivation underlying Hugo's novels (e.g., *Les Misérables*), then it would be clear how conventional indeed is the kinship and locality motivation that links the separate parts of Tolstoi's composition. We see a lot more daring in this respect, before Tolstoi.

If, for compositional reasons, an author decides to connect two fragments, then this need not necessarily imply a causal relationship. Such are, for example, the motivations for the connections between stories in Oriental tales. In one of these Oriental tales, a story is told by a hero carrying a spinning wheel on his head (Østrup). This thoroughly untrue-to-life situation did not in any way embarrass or confuse the compiler of the story because the parts of this work are not necessarily linked to each other, nor are they dependent upon each other in accordance with any non-compositional laws.

Framing as a Device of Deceleration

Note: The type of storytelling where the principal characters tell their stories in succession ad infinitum until the first story is completely forgotten may be considered to be specifically Indian in origin.

This method of framing the action is encountered everywhere in the *Panchatantra*, *Hitopadesa*, *Vetalpanchavimsati* and in all similar works. As far as the improbability of the situations in which the characters find themselves is concerned, the Hindus couldn't care less. Thus, amidst the most terrifying torments, at death's door, the characters relate or, in turn, hear out with utter calmness all sorts of fables (e.g., a man who tells of his past while a wheel is spinning on his head).

As in the story concerning *The Seven Viziers*—a work of undoubtedly Hindu origin, where we were dealing with a method of transmitting stories that is well known to us—so also in *A Thousand and One Nights* we encounter that same characteristic way of slowing down and prolonging the telling of the stories in order thereby to defer the carrying out of the death sentence.

Similarly, we encounter an absolutely analogous situation in the literature of India, where a whole series of fables is told with the purpose of dragging out the time and forestalling a hasty decision. *Śuka-saptati* (i.e., seventy stories by a parrot) is a story about a certain lady who wants to visit her lover in the absence of her husband. Before leaving on his voyage,

however, the husband left his wife a parrot. Every day this parrot recites a different story to its mistress, and each night it ends its story by saying: "You'll find out the rest tomorrow, if you stay home tonight."

I would suggest comparing this story with the song about Alvass (from the *Edda*), in which Tor, seeking to hold back the sunrise, when he would supposedly be turned into stone, keeps asking for the names of various objects among the gods of the elves, turs and carls.

It is worth noting that in this particular case the device is consciously perceived as a delaying tactic.

Let me offer another example:

A vizier disobeys the king's order to kill the queen. Instead, he hides her. The king, not knowing this, laments her death. The vizier, answering the king's query, plays with his impatience in a way analogous to a "framing device." For instance:

The king says: "You have upset my state of mind and increased my sorrow." So he executes the "upaxn."

The "upagh" responds: "There are two kinds of people who deserve sorrow: the one who commits sins every day of his life and the one who never does any good deeds. Why? Because their joy in the world and their bliss are insignificant, while their repentance, i.e., after a long period of punishment, is beyond measure."

The king says: "You are right. If the upaxn were alive, I wouldn't grieve for anything in the world."

The upagh answers: "There are two kinds of people who should not grieve. One of them is the man who exercises himself by doing good deeds," etc.

In one version of this story (*Kalilah and Dimnah*) the vizier's answers (along with the parables) occupy nine pages of the text.

This device of Hindu poetics plays a role similar to that of the rituals found in legends and the "impeding elements" in adventure novels.

Let us return, however, to the question of the artist's intention. Here is an excerpt from chapter 17 of Aristotle's *Poetics*. The reader may wish to compare it with Tolstoi's letter above.

And the argument of the play, whether previously made or in process of composition by oneself, should first be sketched out in abstract form and only then expanded and other scenes ("episodes") added. I mean, as a method for gaining a general view of the play, the following, for example, with the *Iphigenia*: A certain young woman is sacrificed but spirited away without the sacrificers perceiving it. She is established in another country, where the custom is to sacrifice all foreigners to their goddess, and wins this priesthood. A considerable while later the priestess's brother happens to come to the country (the fact that the god ordered him to do so, and for what purpose, is outside of the plot), and having come and been captured he is about to be sacrificed when he recognizes his sister . . . and thence comes his deliverance. At this stage, but not before, one may assign names to the characters and add other scenes; but be sure that these are appropriate, as for example the fit of madness through which he is captured and their escape by means of the purification ceremony are appropriate to Orestes. (Else translation)

From this it follows that the battle between father and son is a result of the artist's conscious choice and not because of matriarchal recollections (Ilya and Sokolnik, Rustem and Sokhrab and so on).

I would like to call the reader's attention to the fact that all of the versions of the story speak of the son's "recognition" by his father. That means that the writer who formed the plot is convinced that the father ought to know his own son.

Of interest to us are the different expositions constructed by the author to enable him to kill off the father and create a state of incest. For example, Yulian Milostivy slays his father and mother, whom he finds sleeping in the guest room, mistaking them for his wife and her lover.

Compare the analogous legend called "On the Poor and Needy": "After a period of absence, a merchant sees two young men lying in his wife's bed. He wants to kill them. They are his sons."

What is evident here is the will of the artist striving to motivate the crime that he needs for his work. Consider the following excerpt from chapter 14 of Aristotle's *Poetics*:

Since it is the pleasure derived from pity and fear by means of imitation that the poet should seek to produce, it is clear that these qualities must be built into the constituent events. Let us determine, then, which kinds of happening are felt by the spectator to be fearful and which pitiable. Now such acts are necessarily the work of persons who are near and dear (close blood kin) to one another, or enemies, or neither. But when an enemy attacks an enemy there is nothing pathetic about either the intention or the deed, except in the actual pain suffered by the victim; nor when the act is done by "neutrals"; but when the tragic acts come within the limits of close blood relationship, as when brother kills or intends to kill brother or do something else of that kind to him, or son to father or mother to son or son to mother—those are the situations one should look for.

Myths passed on by means of legend ought not to be mutilated. (It is very characteristic, indeed, how certain myths have been altered). In Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* Orestes alone informs Clytemnestra of her son's death. Sophocles, on the other hand, divides this role between Orestes and Talthybius. While the latter delivers the actual message, Orestes delivers the fictitious remains of the dead son. That is, we are dealing here with the usual device of expressing A through A(1), A(2).

The change, as I understand it, has Clytemnestra killed by Orestes and Eriphyle by Alcmaeon. The poet, however, must be his own inventor and make use of the legend as he sees fit.

Let us be even clearer and say what precisely we mean by "as he sees fit."

The action may be performed as in classical drama, where the characters carry out their deeds consciously. This is how Euripides depicts Medea murdering her children. Yet, one can perform such an action without being fully aware of its horror and discover only afterwards the underlying relationship of blood or friendship that binds one to one's victim, as in the case of Sophocles' *Oedipus*. In the case of the latter, moreover, the horrible deed

is accomplished within the play by Alcmaeon Astydamanta or by Telegonus in *Wounded Odysseus*.

There is a third possibility: A character who intends to commit a certain unforgivable crime comes to recognize his mistake before actually committing his deed. Other than this, there is no other possible alternative. One must either commit the crime or not commit it, whether consciously or unconsciously. Of these alternatives the worst is that where someone has consciously planned to commit the crime but does not go through with it, for this failure to commit the crime is repugnant but not tragic to us. This is so because suffering is absent from the situation. For that reason, no one has composed in that vein except perhaps for a few cases, as for example in *Antigone*. In this play, Haemon intends to kill Creon but does not kill him.

There is also the case where the crime (under similar circumstances) is performed. Best of all is a situation where someone commits a crime in ignorance and afterwards recognizes his deed, because such a situation inspires in us not disgust, but astonishment.

The most effective alternative is represented by the case above. As an example, consider the *Kresfont*. Meropa plans to kill his son but does not kill him. Instead, he recognizes his crime before committing it. Similarly in *Iphigenia* a sister intends to kill her brother and does not do so, while in *Helle* a son, who has planned to betray his mother, recognizes her. This is why, as it has been said, tragedies move within the circle of a few families. This method of working out their story line was discovered by poets through chance rather than art. For this reason, they reluctantly seize upon any families who had experienced these types of misfortunes.

Compare this with the descriptions of incest in Maupassant's "The Hermit": (a) father and daughter, in which a recognition takes place by means of a photograph; and (b) brother and sister ("Francoise"), where recognition takes place by means of a conversation.

Let me make a comparison.

The action of a literary work takes place on a field of battle. The masks and types of modern drama correspond to the figures of chess. The plots correspond to the moves and gambits, that is, to the techniques of the game, as these are used and interpreted by the players. The tasks and the peripeties correspond to the moves made by the opponent.

The methods and devices of plot construction are similar to and in principle identical with the devices of, for instance, musical orchestration. Works of literature represent a *web of sounds, movements and ideas*.

In a literary work an idea may take a form analogous to the pronunciatory and sonar aspect of a morpheme or else the form of a heterogeneous element. Here is an excerpt from a letter from Tolstoi to N. N. Strakhov:

If I wanted to express in words all that which I sought to express in a novel, I'd have no choice but to write the very same novel I had written in the first place. And if the critics now understand me and are able to declare in their feuilletons what it was that I had really meant to say, then I congratulate them and assure them, if I may

be so bold, that they know a lot more about it than I do. And if these myopic critics think that I intended to describe only that which I found to my liking, for example, Oblonsky at dinner or Karenina's shoulders, then they are mistaken.

In everything, in almost everything that I have ever written, I have been guided by the need to collect my thoughts, to connect them in such a way that I may express myself. However, every thought that is expressed in words loses its meaning and degenerates horribly whenever it is taken by itself, that is, whenever it is ripped out of the integral structure of which it is a part. The structure of words consists not of ideas as such (I believe), but of something else, and it is impossible to express the basis of this structure directly through words. This basis can be expressed only through the mediation of words, that is through images, actions, situations. . . .

Now, however, when nine-tenths of what is published consists of criticism, we need people who would show us the absurdity of searching for [individual] thoughts in a work of art and who could guide the reader permanently in that endless labyrinth of interconnections which is the essence of art. And in accordance with those laws which inform these interconnections.

The tale or legend, the short story, the novel—are a combination of motifs. The song is a combination of stylistic motifs. For that reason the plot and the nature of plot constitute a form no less than rhyme. From the standpoint of plot, there is no need for the concept of "content" in our analysis of a work of art. We may consider form in this context to be the principle underlying the construction of an object.

APPENDIX A

[Trans. note: *Shklovsky* begins with abbreviated bibliographic citations to further examples of the kind of story referred to on p. 30 above. The terse citations demonstrate *Shklovsky's* wide acquaintance with folklore literature, but would mean little to the contemporary reader, and hence are omitted. The text resumes:]

These tales have close relatives in barter stories. For example, Afanasiev, first tale, variant: The she-fox exchanges a stick for a goose, the goose for a turkey, the turkey for a bride. Same device in the West European tale worked out by Andersen under the title of "Whatever the Little Man Does Is Fine." The barter is made vivid by a humorous interpretation of the ever *diminishing* value of the objects exchanged.

For purposes of comparison I would like to offer an excerpt from the work of S. K. Beilin, *Nomadic or Universal Tales and Legends in Ancient Rabbinical Literature* (1907). Here we encounter the type $a < b < c < d$, i.e., a kind of geometric progression.

In the twelfth tale of the third book of *Panchatantra*, "On the Mouse That Was Turned into a Maiden and Chose Its Betrothed"; also in chapter eight, tale no. seven, from the book of *Kalilah and Dimnah* on the hermit and the mouse, we read the following:

A certain pious and compassionate hermit kept a mouse. Through prayer, he had secretly transformed it into a beautiful woman so that it wouldn't be shunned by his

family. When the girl reached adulthood, the good hermit began searching for a worthy suitor for her.

Since she asked for the strongest man alive, the solicitous guardian turned to the sun, who was the most powerful being in the universe, and pleaded with him to marry his daughter. In doing this, he explained why he was turning to the sun and to no one else. But then the sun answered:

"I will show you someone who is stronger. It is the cloud, which covers and detains all of my rays and eclipses my rays."

Then the hermit went to see the cloud and said to him what he had earlier said to the sun. But the cloud answered:

"I too will show you someone who is stronger. Go see the wind, who moves me back and forth and drives me to the east and west."

So the hermit went to see the wind and said to him what he had already said to the cloud. The wind answered:

"I too will show you someone stronger. It's the mountain, which I cannot move."

So the hermit came to see the mountain and repeated his speech. And the mountain said to him:

"I will show you someone stronger. It's the rat, from which I am powerless to protect myself when he bores a hole within me and selects me for his dwelling."

So the hermit went to see the rat and asked it: "Won't you please marry my daughter?" And he answered:

"How can I marry her when my burrow is so narrow. On the contrary, a rat would rather marry a mouse."

So the hermit, with the consent of the young woman, began to pray to his Lord, imploring Him to turn his daughter back into the mouse she had once been. So God turned her back into a mouse and she and the rat lived happily ever after.

This tale was culled by me from the book of *Kalilah and Dimnah*, a collection of fairy tales under the name of *Bindnaya*, translated from the Arabic by M. O. Attaya and M. V. Ryabinina (Moscow, 1899).

The moral: Human nature does not change.

According to Rumanian legend—"a baby mouse always returns to its burrow"—the wind assures him that the oak is stronger than he, since the latter stands in the way of the mighty whirlwinds. But he informs him what the latter knows already, namely, that the oak will nevertheless soon fall to the ground, since mice have infiltrated its roots. For that reason, the wind advises the baby mouse to return to its own burrow, thinking that thereby the mouse will find there the strongest creature on earth.

We read the following story in the Midrash, *Bereshit* (Genesis), book 1, chapter 38 (edited between the third and fifth centuries A.D.):

When Terah found out about the heretical ideas and reckless actions of his son Abraham (i.e., that Abraham had intentionally and provocatively smashed the idols of the people, that he had spitefully and pointedly mocked the ancient faith, that he was preaching some new teaching of "the one God"), he handed him over to Nimrod.

"Bow down in worship before the fire!" Nimrod orders Abraham.

"Wouldn't it be more correct to bow down before the water that extinguishes the fire?" objects Abraham.

"Fine, then bow down before the water!" orders Nimrod.

"But wouldn't it be more correct, in that case, for me to bow down before rain clouds, who hold within them water?"

"Well, all right, then bow down before the rain clouds!"

"Of course, but wouldn't it be more correct for me to bow down before the wind, which scatters the rain clouds?" Abraham objects again.

"Fine, then go ahead and bow down before the wind!"

"If so, then wouldn't it make more sense to bow down before the being who contains the wind within himself?"

And the king, incensed, cries out:

"These are foolish ideas that you are uttering. Look here, I shall bow down before the fire, and it is into the fire that I shall cast you. Let your god, the god you believe in, come save you."

We read the following edifying passage in the Babylonian Talmud concerning the mighty and beneficial power of virtue (justice, peace of mind, etc.)*—in which a similar but more detailed parallelism (a kind of order) plays a role, a parallelism in which the physical and spiritual forces of nature dominate each other in turn.

Rabbi Yehuda says: "Justice (the administration of justice, mercy) is infinitely great, because it hastens the day of salvation (secures human happiness on earth), as it is said in the opening verse of Isaiah 56: 'Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.'" He also said: "Ten powerful objects—one stronger than another—have been created in the world: a hard (stone) mountain—which is pulverized by iron; hard iron—which is melted down by fire; a mighty fire—which is extinguished by water; mighty waters—which are carried to the earth by rain clouds; formidable clouds—which are scattered by the wind; violent winds—which are stopped by a body; (a powerful) body—which is undermined by sorrow; a great sorrow—which is conquered (assuaged) by wine; a strong wine—which loses its effect in sleep. And death overpowers them all. But virtue saves us even from death."

We find a similar step-by-step parallelism in the Midrash Kohelet (chap. 7, no. 46), but with a different interpretation or conclusion. There it is carried out as a satire on "shrewish women."

The idea of this satire lies in the following: one power overcomes another power. One is more mighty (or more fierce) than another. Yet, there is nothing worse than a spiteful shrew. She is more terrifying than anything on earth, even death itself.

This passage from the Midrash says the following:

Rabbi Yehuda said: "There are fourteen things, each of which is mightier than the other (overpowers the other). The abyss is mighty, but the land rises above it, since it encompasses it. The land is mighty, but the mountains are even mightier, since they rise above the plain. The mountain is mighty, but iron can cut into it. The iron, hard though it may be, can be melted by fire. Fire devours all, but it in turn is overpowered by water, which extinguishes it. Waters are mighty, but they are carried to the earth by clouds. The clouds are mighty, but they are scattered by the wind. The winds are mighty, but the wall can stop them. The wall is strong, but a man can destroy it. A man is powerful, but sorrow can lay him low. Sorrow is mighty, but wine can dull its pain and it is forgotten. The power of wine (intoxication) is great, but it is chased away by sleep. Sleep is mighty (salutary), but illness can chase it away. The power of illness is great, but the angel of death prevails and carries the soul into the upper regions. But a shrewish wife is worse than all of these."

*These parenthetical variants are Shklovsky's, not mine—Trans.

Similarly, there is a certain Ethiopian parable that runs: "Iron is strong, but fire is stronger than iron; water is stronger than fire, the sun is stronger than water, the cloud is stronger than the sun, the earth is stronger than the cloud, man is stronger than the earth, sorrow is stronger than man, wine is stronger than sorrow, sleep is stronger than wine, but stronger than all of them by far is a woman."

The same caustic or humorous opinion of the shrew, and in the same form (i.e., as in the Midrash), appears in the monuments of ancient Russian texts, and this opinion passed on into the oral folk literature in the form of folk riddles and jokes (see Khudyakov, "Russian Riddles," *Ethnographic Collections* [Russian Imperial Geographical Society, 1864]) and is expressed in the following form:

"The fire has hardly been lit, when it is extinguished by the water. What's stronger than water? Wind. What's stronger than wind? A mountain (because it withstands the wind). What's stronger than the mountain? Man (he cuts into the mountain). What's stronger than man? Wine (it deprives us of the use of legs and arms). What's more fierce than wine? Sleep. What's more fierce than sleep? A shrew." (See also Pypin's *History of Early Russian Literature*.)

Among Lithuanian Jews the song-tale "The Pears Refuse to Fall" is a favorite with the children.

The well-known tale "Khad Gadya" (i.e., An Only Kid) is even more popular—and remains so to this very day—among the Central and Eastern European Jews, the so-called Ashkenazim (or Jews of Germanic extraction). This animal tale has even made its way into the Passover Hagada (Passover legends read on the first two days of the Passover in commemoration of the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt).

In these folk tales we are dealing with animate and inanimate objects that wage war against each other and overpower each other.

The content of the first of them—save for certain insignificant alterations—identical to that which we find in the Germanic folk tale—is the following:

God created the pear tree so that it may bear fruit, but the tree refuses to bear fruit, and the pears refuse to fall from the tree.

It is then that the Lord sends the young boy Yankele to gather (to pick) the ripe pears from the tree, but Yankele, in his turn, refuses to go pick them just as they, in their turn, refuse to fall (refuse to let themselves be picked). The Lord then sends a dog to bite Yankele for his disobedience. The dog refuses to obey. In order to spur on the dog, the Lord sends a cudgel (*shtekele*), but the cudgel also refuses. Finally, the Lord sends fire after the club, and water after the fire, and a steer (*eksele*) to drink up the water, and a ritual slaughterer after him, and an angel of death after the ritual slaughterer (*shokhet*). But all of this is in vain. They all refuse to obey. But when the Lord raises His arm against the angel of death and acts in His own person, then the matter takes a different turn: Everyone suddenly obeys. The angel of death declares his willingness to cut down the ritual slaughterer for his disobedience, the ritual slaughterer cuts down the steer, the steer drinks the water, etc., etc. And in the end the young boy picks the pears from the tree and the pears fall willingly into his hands.

A similar song is found among the Slovenes, relatives of the Russian people, and consists of the following:

They send a dog after Yurik, in order to bring the young boy home, but the dog refuses to go bite him. They then send a cudgel after the dog, but the cudgel would not beat the dog. They then send fire after the cudgel, and water after the fire, and after the water bulls, and after the bulls the butchers, after the butchers the witch, but

all in vain. Finally, when they send the Devil himself after the witch to take her away, the witch goes off to put her spell on the butchers, the butchers slaughter the bulls, the bulls drink the water, water puts out the fire, the fire sets the cudgel afire, the cudgel beats the dog, the dog bites Yurik, and Yurik returns home. (Buslaev, "Nomadic Tales and Stories," *Russian Herald*, May 1874.)

A similar song-tale has been a source of amusement among kids all over Russia. Its content is as follows: A goat went looking for nuts, but did not return home. First, they sent the wolves after her, but the wolves refused to eat the goat. They then sent people after the wolves, etc., but all was in vain. No one obeyed. No one would do as he was told. Finally, geese are sent after the worms:

The geese peck at the worms,
The worms gnaw at the butt of the ax.
The butt of the ax strikes down the bulls,
The bulls drink the water,
The water puts out the fire,
The fire consumes the stone,
The stone sharpens the ax,
The ax chops down the oak,
The oak knocks down the bear,
The bear rips people apart,
People chase after the wolves,
The wolves eat the goat—
There's the goat with the nuts,
There is the goat with the shelled nuts. (Buslaev, *ibid.*)

In the above-mentioned Jewish Passover song, "Khad Gadya," as in the other folk tales (Jewish, Russian, German, etc.), we find a whole procession of beings (characters) and objects, who overpower each other in battle.

Victory is always to the last one, i.e., to God.

The difference between this liturgical song and other tales for children similar to it lies only in the relationship inhering between the characters and their actions: in the Passover song they act on their own accord, voluntarily—some of them are motivated by an evil will, others, on the contrary, by a sense of duty and justice, rather than by command, as in the others.

The content of the song "An Only Kid" (Khad Gadya) is as follows: The beloved kid, the one and only kid, purchased by the father for two zuzes (zuz = a monetary unit), is torn to pieces by a wild, ferocious cat. In punishment, the dog bites the cat, the cudgel beats the dog, the fire consumes the cudgel, the water puts out the fire, the bullock drinks up the water, the bullock is cut down by the ritual slaughterer, the ritual slaughterer is struck down by the angel of death.

In the work just cited, the relationship between the author and the object of his investigation is incorrect, since he calls our particular attention to the inessential, namely, to the way a distinct semantic content is applied to the given device. It may well be the case that this moral, attached to the end of the work, bears the same relationship to it that the tears of music lovers have to the music. As is well known, composers at times adapted their chorales for burlesque to the delight of the public that applauded it for its wit and gaiety. Yet, on Sunday morning, the music seemed to them to be religious to its core (Hanslick).

The chief thing here is that the device is constructed on the basis of deceleration.

The purpose of this device is to construct a sensuously experienced work. If we look at this device from the standpoint of prose, then we, the audience, become impatient and wish to cut it short. Such an attitude is often shared by the gentlemen who, in collecting these tales, delete the retardations and repetitions on their own initiative. The creators of these tales were aware of such a possible perception and even played with it. This is the basis for the so-called "Tedious Tales." An analogous tale of the "ferrying of the goats" is told by Sancho Panza to his knight in *Don Quixote*, part 1, chapter 20.

APPENDIX B (p. 44)

"I have not scorned other influences or themes, which are customarily advanced in these cases, such as the influences of race or environment. However, I believe that of all the influences at work in the history of literature, *the chief influence is exercised by one literary work on another literary work, and it is this influence that I have chiefly sought to trace. I would like to follow a line of investigation that is different from that pursued by my predecessors. It is this influence of artifact upon artifact that is the origin and acting principle responsible for changes of taste and for revolutions in art, including those in literature. There is no question whatsoever here of metaphysics.*"* The Pléiade of the sixteenth century wanted to create something different from the work produced by the school of Clément Marot. Racine, in his *Andromaque*, wanted to create something different from Corneille's *Pertharite*, while Diderot in his *Father of the Family* wanted to create something quite different from Molière's *Tartuffe*. Finally, Romantics of our time want to create something different from the works of classical writers. . . . † There is no point in multiplying the causes needlessly or under the pretext that literature is an expression of society. There is no point in confusing the history of literature with the history of mores. These are two completely different things." —F. Brunetiere, preface to *Manuel de l'histoire de la littérature française* (1898).

*My reading of "metaphysics" is strictly conjectural. Shklovsky's enigmatic *m'e'r'a'z'ki* (*sic!*) is both tantalizing and characteristically frustrating. It looks and sounds like a teasing slant rhyme on the Russian word *ya-zyk* (language) with an obvious play on the word *metafizika*. Or then again, it could all be a weird case of a typo (but how to explain the five apostrophes in the original?). [Trans. note]

† There were also those who wanted "to create something quite similar" to their predecessors. I know them very well, indeed! But it is precisely these who can be excluded from the history of literature and art. [Shklovsky's note]

Chapter 3

The Structure of Fiction

I

Before I set out to examine the structure of fiction, I feel duty-bound to confess to the reader that I do not have a definition for "story" as such. That is, I do not claim to know what characteristics define a motif or how motifs are actually formed and shaped into a plot. Images alone or parallel structures alone or even mere descriptions of the events do not produce the feeling of a work of fiction in and of themselves.

In chapter 2 I attempted to show the relationship between the devices of plot formation and the general devices of style. In particular, I pointed out the progressive accumulation of motifs. Such accumulations are by their very nature limitless, as are also the adventure novels built on them. This is the source for all those innumerable volumes of *Rocambole* and also for Alexandre Dumas's *Ten Years Later* and *Twenty Years After*. This explains the need for an epilogue in these novels, where an ending is possible only by changing the time dimension, that is, by "crumpling it."

Yet, it is common practice to enclose this accumulation of stories and tales within the structure of a "framing story." For example, in addition to the devices of abduction and recognition, the writer of an adventure novel may quite frequently adopt a climactic wedding ceremony as a framing story for this work. This is why Mark Twain declares at the end of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* that he is at a loss as to how to end his story, since, after all, the boy is obviously too young for the obligatory wedding that ends adult novels. For that reason, Twain ends his book at an opportune point in the narrative. As is well known, the story of Tom Sawyer had a kind of sequel in the story of Huck Finn (who, having played a minor role in his friend's novel, now takes center stage). This theme was later continued in the form of a detective novel. Finally, another "sequel" was produced by Jules Verne in his novel *Five Weeks in a Balloon*.

But what precisely does a story need in order to be understood as something truly complete?

It is easy to see that, in addition to a progressive development, there exists in a story also a structure analogous to a ring or, rather, a loop. The description of happy lovers does not in and of itself create a story. What a story needs is love hindered by obstacles (i.e., it needs happy lovers

perceived against the traditional background of love hindered by obstacles). For example, A loves B, but B doesn't love A. By the time B falls in love with A, A has ceased to love B. This is the schema that underlies the relationship between Eugene Onegin and Tatiana. The causes of their ill-timed passion are presented in terms of a complex, psychological motivation. This same device in Boiardo is motivated by a witch's spell. In his *Orlando Innamorato*, Rinaldo is in love with Angelica, but after accidentally drinking water from an enchanted spring, he suddenly forgets his love for her. Meanwhile, after drinking water from another spring, Angelica conceives an ardent love for Rinaldo, whom she had previously hated. As a result, Rinaldo runs away from Angelica's advances, while she, in turn, pursues him from country to country. After wandering all over the globe, Rinaldo, still pursued by Angelica, lands again in the enchanted forest. As they both drink of the water, their roles are reversed once more: Angelica conceives a hatred for Rinaldo, while he falls in love with her again. Here the motivation is nearly laid bare.

Thus, to be a true "story," it must have not only action but counteraction as well (i.e., some kind of incongruity). This reveals a certain affinity between a "motif" and a trope (e.g., a pun). As I have already said in the chapter on erotic enstrangement, the plot lines of erotic tales represent extended metaphors (e.g., the male and female sexual organs are compared in Boccaccio with the pestle and mortar). This comparison is motivated by the entire story, giving rise thereby to a "motif." We see a similar situation in the story about "The Devil and the Nether Regions." Only here the development is more clearly shown, since the author points out frankly at the story's end that such an expression does in fact exist in the vernacular. Obviously, the story is a development of this expression.

Countless stories are, at bottom, really extended puns. As an example, we may cite stories dealing with the origin of names. I myself had occasion to hear from the lips of a certain old resident of Okhtyaska that the name *Okhta* has its source allegedly in Peter the Great's exclamation: "Okh! Ta!" When a name does not admit of such a paronomastic interpretation, then it is broken up into nonexistent proper names. For instance, *Moskva* becomes *Mos* and *Kva*, and *Yausa* becomes *Ya* and *Usa* (as found in the legend of the founding of Moscow).

A motif is not always an extension of linguistic material. For example, the inconsistencies of mores and customs may serve as a basis for the development of a motif. It is worth noting the following detail from the folklore of soldiers (though the influence of linguistic elements is also evident here): the opening of a bayonet is called a "little mule" and it is said about young soldiers that they complain of having lost their little mule.

A similar motif, based on its association with a smokeless fire (electricity), may be found in the story about a warrant officer who was convinced by his compatriots that the electric bulb hanging in the smoke-filled barracks was really a lamp covered in soot.

A conflict also serves as a basis for the motif of a "false impossibility." The device of "prophecy" brings about a clash of purposes on the part of the protagonists, who seek to avoid the fate "predicted" for them by asserting that this prediction has already been fulfilled (the Oedipus motif). Though seemingly unrealizable, this prophecy is, in fact, fulfilled in the form of an apparent pun.

As another example, I may point to the Witch's promise to Macbeth that he shall not be defeated till Birnam wood "remove" to Macbeth and that he cannot be conquered by any man "of woman born." During their assault on Macbeth's castle, the soldiers pick up branches in order to conceal the size of their army. Macbeth's killer, we find out later, was not born of a woman but ripped from the womb.

The same is true of the Alexander legend: Alexander is told that he will die in an iron land under a sky made of bone. In fact, he dies on a shield under a ceiling made of ivory. The same holds for Shakespeare. The king who is told in a prophecy that he will die in Jerusalem dies instead in a monastery cell bearing the name "Jerusalem."

The sense of contrast is the basis for the following motifs: "father vs. son," "brother vs. brother-in-law" (in Pushkin's adaptation of a folk song, this motif is quite complicated), and the motif of "the husband at his wife's wedding" ("husband vs. wife's new husband"). This device serves as the basis also for the motif of the "elusive criminal" introduced into history by Herodotus. We meet this character first in a state of despair and then in his clever resolution. Under this rubric fall also tales based on riddles and riddle solving or, in more advanced forms, tales based on the solving of tasks and on heroic exploits.

In literature of a later time, the motif of the "innocent criminal" came to the fore. In this type of motif we see first the establishment of the very possibility of such an indictment, then the indictment itself, and, finally, the innocent man's acquittal. This acquittal is often attained by juxtaposing the perjured testimony of witnesses (as a Susanna type, this is found also in the Kamoansky tales of Minaev), or by the intervention of a conscience-stricken witness.

This case may lack a denouement, but then we do not feel the presence of a plot either.

Consider, if you will, *Le Sage's Asmodeus or the Devil on Two Sticks*, where there are scenes that exhibit no plot structure at all. For example:

You observe that new building, which is divided into two wings. One is occupied by the proprietor, the old gentleman whom you see, now pacing the apartment, now throwing himself into an easy chair. He is evidently immersed in some grand project, said Zambullo: who is he: If one may judge by the splendour which is displayed in his mansion, he is a grandee of the first order. Nevertheless, said Asmodeus, he is but an ancient clerk of the treasury, who has grown old in such lucrative employment as to enable him to amass four millions of reals. As he has some compunctions of conscience for the means by which all this wealth has been acquired, and as he

expects shortly to be called upon to render his account in another world, where bribery is impracticable, he is about to compound for his sins in this, by building a monastery; which done, he flatters himself that peace will revisit his heart. He has already obtained the necessary permission; but, as he has resolved that the establishment shall consist of monks who are extremely chaste, sober, and of the most Christian humility, he is much embarrassed in the selection. He need not build a very extensive convent.

The other wing is inhabited by a fair lady, who has just retired to rest after the luxury of a milk bath. This voluptuary is widow of a knight of the order of Saint James, who left her at his death her title only; but fortunately her charms have secured for her valuable friends in the persons of two members of the council of Castile, who generously divide her favours and the expenses of her household.

Hark! cried the Student; surely I hear the cries of distress. What dreadful misfortune has occurred? A very common one, said the Demon: two young cavaliers have been gambling in a hell (the name is a scandal on the infernal regions), which you perceive so brilliantly illuminated. They quarrelled upon an interesting point of the game, and naturally drew their swords to settle it: unluckily they were equally skillful with their weapons, and are both mortally wounded. The elder is married, which is unfortunate; and the younger an only son. The wife and father have come just in time to receive their last sighs; and it is their lamentations that you hear. Unhappy boy, cries the fond parent over the still breathing body of his son, how often have I conjured thee to renounce this dreadful vice!—how often have I warned thee it would one day cost thee thy life. Heaven is my witness, that the fault is none of mine! Men, added the Demon, are always selfish, even in their griefs. Meanwhile the wife is in despair. Although her husband has dissipated the fortune she brought him on their marriage; although he has sold, to maintain his shameful excesses, her jewels, and even her clothes, not a word of reproach escapes her lips. She is inconsolable for her loss. Her grief is vented in frantic exclamations, mixed with curses on the cards, and the devil who invented them; on the place in which her husband fell, and on the people who surround her, and to whom she fondly attributes his ruin. (Thomas translation)

Obviously, such a passage (or a fragment of it) doesn't qualify as a story, and this is not because of its brevity. On the other hand, the sense of completion is conveyed by the short scene that interrupts the story told by Asmodeus:

Asmodeus was at this moment interrupted in his recital by the Student, who thus addressed him: — My dear Devil, interesting as is the history you are relating to me, my eyes have wandered to an object which prevents my listening to you as attentively as I could wish. I see a lady, who is rather good-looking, seated between a young man and a gentleman old enough to be his grandfather. They seem to enjoy the liqueurs which are on the table near them, but what amuses me, is, that as from time to time the amorous old dotard embraces his mistress, the deceiver conveys her hand to the lips of the other, who covers it with silent kisses. He is doubtless her gallant. On the contrary, replied the cripple, he is her husband, and the old fool is her lover. He is a man of consequence,—no less than a commandant of the military order of Calatrava; and is ruining himself for the lady, whose complaisant husband holds some inferior place at court. She bestows her caresses on the sighing knight,

for the sake of his gold; and is unfaithful to him in favour of her husband, from inclination.

The sense of completeness, of a finished state, derives from the fact that the narrative moves from a false recognition to a revelation of the true state of affairs (i.e., the formula is realized).

On the other hand, even in more substantial short stories and tales, we often sense a certain incompleteness, as if they were never quite truly finished. Such a story is to be found at the end of the tenth chapter. It begins with a description of a serenade, interspersed here and there with lines of verse.

... but enough of these couplets, continued he, you will hear music of another kind.

Follow with your eyes those four men who have suddenly appeared in the street. See! they pounce upon the serenaders: the latter raise their instruments to defend their heads, but their frail bucklers yield to the blows which fall on them, and are shattered into a thousand pieces. And now see, coming to their assistance, two cavaliers; one of whom is the gallant donor of the serenade. With what fury they charge on the four aggressors! Again, with what skill and valour do these latter receive them. What fire sparkles from their swords! See! one of the defenders of the serenade has fallen.—it is he who gave it,—he is mortally wounded. His companion, perceiving his fall, flies to preserve his own life; the aggressors, having effected their object, fly also; the musicians have disappeared during the combat; and there remains upon the spot the unfortunate cavalier alone, who has paid for his gallantry with his life. In the meanwhile, observe the alcade's daughter: she is at her window, whence she has observed all that has passed. This lady is so vain of her beauty,—although that is nothing extraordinary either,—that instead of deploring its fatal effect, she rejoices in the force of her attractions, of which she now thinks more than ever.

This will not be the end of it. You see another cavalier, who has this moment stopped in the street to assist, were it possible, the unfortunate being who is swimming in his blood. While occupied in this charitable office, see! he is surprised by the watch. They are taking him to prison, where he will remain many months; and he will almost pay as dearly for this transaction as though he were the murderer himself.

This is, indeed, a night of misfortunes! said Zambullo.

The story is felt to be incomplete. At times, such "story pictures" are supplemented by what I shall call a "false ending." This false ending is usually fashioned from a description of nature or the weather, like the ending of a certain Christmas story ("the frost turned fierce and violent") that became so famous thanks to the *Satyricon*. You might wish, dear reader, to try your hand at composing something along similar lines. I'd suggest a description of Seville at night or a description of an "indifferent sky" and append it to the excerpt from *Le Sage*.

Very typical of a false ending is a description of autumn accompanied by the exclamation: "How boring is life, gentleman!" found in Gogol's "Tale of How Ivan Ivanovich Quarreled with Ivan Nikiforovich."

This new motif corresponds to the preceding material and the story then appears to be complete.

There is an entirely special type of story that involves what may be called a "negative ending." Let me first explain the term by analogy. In words like *chairs*, *skies*, or *oxen*, the letters *s*, *-ies*, and *-en* represent inflectional endings that are attached to their respective stems (*chair*, *sky*, *ox*). Normally, these words, when used in the singular, are perceived as "positive form." However, against the background of plural inflectional endings, a word in the singular (i.e., a word without an ending) may be perceived in this instance as "negative form." (Fortunatov's term. This has also been termed a "0 ending" by Baudouin de Courtenay.) Such negative forms are frequently encountered in short stories, particularly in the stories of Maupassant.

For example, a mother travels to see her illegitimate son, who has been sent to the country for his education. It turns out that he has become a coarse peasant. In grief, his mother runs away and ends up plunging into the river. The son, knowing nothing about her, scours the bottom of the river with a pole and finally drags her out by her dress. This is where the story ends. This story is perceived against the background of traditional stories with an "ending." Incidentally (insofar as I can tell), the French novel of everyday life of the epoch of Flaubert made wide use of this device of the unconsummated story (*Sentimental Education*).

The story usually represents a combination of circular and step-by-step construction, complicated by development.

In Chekhov's complete works it is the volume containing his short stories that shows the most wear and tear. The public at large favors, above all, his youthful stories, those which Chekhov himself considered to be most uneven. When we examine the plots of these stories, we come to the realization that Chekhov's themes are of the most ordinary type. Chekhov tells stories mostly about petty bureaucrats and merchants, a sphere of life already conquered for literature a long time before (see the works of Leikin and Gorbunov). In fact, contemporary audiences find this theme rather old hat by now.

The explanation for Chekhov's success in these stories is in their plot structures. Russian literature had paid scant attention to the short story genre. For years Gogol waited for an anecdote that could be developed into a story or tale.

Goncharov's structure, from the point of view of the plot, was quite hopeless. In *Oblomov* the nineteenth-century writer Goncharov has people of the most diverse types troop in and out in the course of one day. From this incompetent exposition, the reader is forced to conclude that Oblomov lives a life of turmoil and disorder.

Turgenev's *Rudin* consists of one story, one episode, and Rudin's confession.

In the world of the short story proper, Pushkin's stories exhibit special

energy when it comes to plot structure. Other short story writers include Kalashnikov, Vonlyarlyarsky, Sologub, Lermontov and Marlinsky, author of monotonous society tales.

Chekhov's stories constitute a sharp break with that tradition. Mundane in content, they're distinguished nevertheless from the innumerable "physiological" sketches—which in their time competed with the society tale—by distinct plot lines with unexpected resolutions.

The fundamental structural device used by Chekhov is the "error." The first story, "In the Bathhouse," is based on the historical fact that in pre-Revolutionary Russia long hair was worn by both nihilists and the clergy. In order to make this "error" work, it was necessary for Chekhov to eliminate all secondary elements from his story. That is why the action takes place in a bathhouse. In order to heighten the impact of this conflict, Chekhov selects the season of Lent for the time of the action (i.e., when issues concerning the clergy are most in vogue). The replies by the priest, who is mistaken for a nihilist, are structured in such a way that, when we discover that the priest is indeed a deacon and not a nihilist, we feel an unexpected sense of recognition. Yet this recognition is legitimate, since it reveals the meaning of the priest's obscure muttering. To make the denouement work, Chekhov had to involve the protagonist in the denouement. He had to bring out the recognition scene in bold relief: The barber is distressed to discover that he has insulted a member of the clergy during Lent, before confession, by thinking that he was harboring some strange ideas in his head.

We have before us here a correctly formed equation, both parts of which function in mutual harmony.

The short story entitled "Fat and Thin" occupies only a few pages. It is built on a social inequality between two former schoolmates. This is a thoroughly elementary situation, but it is developed with an unexpected and precise inventiveness. At first, the old comrades greet each other with a big bear hug as they look joyously into each other's tear-soaked eyes. The thin man hastens to tell his comrade about his family. His words pour out uncontrollably, as one might expect of an old friend. In the middle of the story, that is, in the middle of the first page, the thin man realizes that the fat one is a State Councillor, and, suddenly, a chasm of inequality opens up between them. This is quite clear, because, prior to this recognition, the friends were represented as if in their former state of poverty. The thin man, stammering, repeats to the fat man almost word for word everything he had said earlier about his family, but now he speaks without emotion, perfunctorily, as if he were reciting an official report. In spite of this symmetry, the repetition carries a different nuance the second time around, thereby revealing the full meaning of the story's structure.

The parallel structure is continued to the very end of the story. It has a double denouement based on a difference in the feeling of the two comrades who have met. The State Councillor is almost nauseated by the courtesies bestowed upon him by his former friend. Finally, he turns away from the

thin one and shakes his hand in farewell. The thin one shakes three of his fingers, bows with his whole body, and begins to giggle like a Chinese, hee-hee-hee! His wife smiles. Nafanail shuffles his feet and drops his peak-cap. All three are pleasantly dumbfounded.

Quite frequently, Chekhov bases his work on a violation of some traditional plot convention.

There's a story by him entitled "A Terrifying Night" concerning a man who finds coffins at night in every apartment that he visits, including his own. The story begins in a primitive-mystical manner. The storyteller's surname is Requiem. He lives at the corner of Death and Grave Streets in the home of a government clerk by the name of Corpse. To soften the impact of a device laid bare, Chekhov adds the phrase: "And so it happened in one of the most obscure localities of Arbat."

By this accumulation of inert horrors, Chekhov achieves a thoroughly unexpected ending. The ending is based on a clash between the coffin as a mystical object in a terrifying story and the coffin as the property of a coffin-maker. To elude his creditors, the coffin-maker hides his coffins clandestinely with his friends, who discover their surprise with horror when they get home.

"An Enigmatic Nature" is filled with an irony played on the epigones of the high society tale. By telling her story directly to the writer, the heroine lays bare the device. The action takes place in a first-class coupé against a background that has become traditional for the high society heroine: "Next to her in the coupé sits a provincial official, a young writer, who has been publishing short stories ('novellas,' he calls them) about high society life in the provincial press."

The beginning of this story, told by a woman, is completely traditional: She was a poor woman, who "endured the ugly upbringing of a boarding-school girl, read lots of stupid novels, committed the usual indiscretions of youth, and experienced her first timid love."

She has fallen in love with a certain young man and wants to be happy. This is followed by another parody on the epigones of the psychological novel: " 'How splendid,' the writer prattles, as he kisses her bracelet. 'I am not kissing you, my divine creature. Rather, I am kissing suffering humanity.' "

The woman marries an old man. This is followed by a parodic description of her life in a few lines. The old man dies and leaves her a fortune. Happiness knocks on her door, but on the way she encounters another obstacle: " 'What stood in your way?' 'Another rich old man.' "

The doubling of this same motif completely deprives it of its original motivation and incorporates the high society story within the framework of an ordinary business transaction.

Parody also serves as a foundation for the story called "It Was She," a work of lesser quality. This story, once again, is built on the inertia of a Christmas story, on an encounter with an unknown woman, whose mystery

is not asserted but implied. When she turns out to be the wife of the storyteller, the listeners protest and the storyteller is forced to adopt a traditional ending.

An ambiguous stance towards one and the same thing, carried out without the static quality of another genre, informs Chekhov's remarkable story "A Familiar Face." A prostitute is released from a hospital without her former professional costume (i.e., without her fashionable short blouse, tall hat and bronze-colored shoes). Looking at her internal passport, she discovers that she is now Natasha Kanavkina and not Wanda, the professional hooker, and this makes her feel naked. Since she is in need of money on this day, Wanda/Natasha, the dual woman, pawns her last ring for a ruble and goes to see her friend Finkel, the dentist. She had originally intended to surprise him, and to ask him, face beaming with laughter, for twenty-five rubles. She knocks on his door. Dressed in ordinary clothes, she walks in and timidly asks, "Is the doctor home?" The staircase seems to her luxurious, and above the staircase is a mirror. Wanda again sees herself without a hat, without the fashionable blouse, without the bronze-colored shoes. She enters the doctor's office and from sheer bashfulness says she has a toothache. Finkel soils her lips and gums with his tobacco-stained fingers and pulls out her tooth, whereupon Wanda gives him her last ruble.

The structure of this short story is based on the ambiguous nature of a person's station in life. Here we are dealing with two people of very different professions—a prostitute and a dentist. Besides, she approaches him now as an amateur vis-à-vis a professional. Wanda's changed state of affairs is constantly counterpointed by the author's reminder of her change of attire. At bottom, we are dealing here with shame. The shame of saying who you are; the shame that leads to pain. This is the crux of the entire story:

Going outside, she felt an even greater shame than before. But now she was no longer ashamed of her poverty. She no longer noticed that she was lacking a tall hat and a fashionable blouse. She was walking along the street spitting blood and every red spittle told her of her life, of her bad and hard life, of those insults which she had borne and which she shall continue to bear tomorrow, a week later and a year after that till her death.

Chekhov rarely makes use of purely legendary material. Yet he has an unsurpassed story called "Polyenka" where legendary material is utilized for a compositional purpose.

A salesman, talking to a dressmaker about his love for her, suggests that the student she is in love with will someday deceive her. This conversation is taking place even as the protagonists are negotiating over trimmings for sale. The intonations of their voices seem to contrast sharply with the drama in progress. The sale is intentionally drawn out, because the man is in love while the woman feels guilty.

"The most fashionable trimmings nowadays are from bird feathers, the most fashionable color, if you will, is heliotrope or else the color of *kanak*, that is, bordeaux

with a tinge of yellow. We have a huge selection. And where is this story heading? I really don't know . . ."

The woman is pale and tears roll down her cheeks as she selects the buttons.

"We'll be making it for the merchant's wife," she says, "so give me something outstanding, out of the ordinary."

"Indeed! If it's for the merchant's wife," he says, "then, by all means, we must have a little more color. Here are some buttons. A combination of blue, red and fashionable gold. They're as big as eyes. More refined people prefer the dull black buttons with a brilliant fringe. It's just that I don't understand! Can't you see all this for yourself?! Well, what's the point of all these . . . 'strolls' of yours?"

"I really don't know . . ." Polyenka whispers as she bends down to look at the buttons. "I really don't know what's happening to me, Nikolai Timofeich."

The story ends with an almost meaningless series of deliberately gallant words and tears.

Nikolai Timofeich shields Polyenka with his arm, as he tries desperately to conceal her agitation from the other customers in the shop. He forces a smile and says with a loud voice:

"There are two kinds of lace, madam. Cotton and silk. Oriental, British, Valenciennes, crochet, torchon—these are cotton. On the other hand, rococo, soutache and cambric are silk. . . . For God's sake, wipe away your tears. People are coming."

Seeing that she is still sobbing, the salesman continues, louder than ever: "Spanish lace, rococo, soutache, cambric . . . Fildecosovian stockings, cotton, silk stockings."

Chekhov's short stories made their appearance originally in the humor magazines favored by the young. Chekhov's literary reputation was first made in the theater and in the genre of the tale. It is high time for Chekhov not only to be republished but reexamined as well. Everyone who does so will surely admit that his most popular stories are also the most formally perfect.

2

Let us now look closely at parallelism as a device of special importance in the formation of a short story. We'll do so with a particular emphasis on Tolstoi.

In order to transform an object into a fact of art, it is necessary first to withdraw it from the domain of life. To do this, we must first and foremost "shake up the object," as Ivan the Terrible sorted out his henchmen. We must extricate a thing from the cluster of associations in which it is bound. It is necessary to turn over the object as one would turn a log over the fire.

The following example appears in Chekhov's *Notebooks*. Someone walks

along a certain alley for fifteen or maybe thirty years. Each day he reads the sign that hangs above a certain shop: LARGE SELECTION OF BEARS, and each day he asks himself: "So who needs a large selection of 'bears'?" Well, one fine day, for reasons unknown, the sign is taken down and laid against the wall. It is then that he reads for the first time: LARGE SELECTION OF PEARS.

A poet removes all signs from their places. An artist always incites insurrections among things.

Things are always in a state of revolt with poets, casting off their old names and adopting new names and new faces. A poet employs images as figures of speech by comparing them with each other. For instance, he may call fire a red flower or he may attach a new epithet to an old word, or else, like Baudelaire, he may say that a carcass lifts its legs like a woman with lascivious intent. In this way he brings about a semantic shift. He wrests the concept from the semantic cluster in which it is embedded and reassigns it with the help of the word (figure of speech) to another semantic cluster. We, the readers, sense the presence of something new, the presence of an object in a new cluster. The new word envelops the object, as new clothes envelop a man. The sign has been taken down. This is one of the ways in which an object can be transformed into something sensuous, into something capable of becoming an artifact. Another way is represented by a progressive, stepped structure. The object divides into two or three segments that reflect or confront each other.

Oh my apple, who are you courting?
Oh Mama, do you want to marry?

sings a vagabond from Rostov, perpetuating, in all probability, the tradition represented by:

An apple rolled down from the bridge.
Katichka asked to be excused from the table.

We see here two thoroughly incongruous concepts. Yet, each displaces the other from its respective cluster of conventional associations.

At times the object is reduplicated or dismembered. In Aleksandr Blok, for example, the adjective *railroad* is broken up in "rail road melancholy." Or again Leo Tolstoi, in his most formally musical pieces, creates structures informed by the principles of enstrangement and step-by-step development.

I have already spoken of Tolstoi's enstrangement elsewhere. One of the variety of ways in which this device is used involves focusing on a certain detail in the "picture" and emphasizing it in such a way that its conventional proportions are altered. For example, in his depiction of a battle scene, Tolstoi develops the detail of the moist, masticating mouth. Singling out such a detail creates a peculiar displacement. (Konstanin Leontiev showed little understanding of this device in his book on Leo Tolstoi.)

The most common device in Tolstoi, however, may be characterized as

the author's refusal to recognize things by their names (i.e., he insists on describing things as if they were seen for the first time [enstrangement]). For example, he calls theatrical scenery in *War and Peace* pieces of painted cardboard, or he calls the communion bread a bun and assures us that Christians eat their God. I believe that this Tolstoian device has its source in French literature, perhaps in Voltaire's *Huron*, nicknamed "L'ingénu," or perhaps in the description of the French court made by Chateaubriand's "Savage." In any case, Tolstoi enstranges Wagnerian things, describing them precisely from the point of view of an intelligent peasant (i.e., from the point of view of someone unencumbered with the customary associations of things, in the manner of the French primitives). Besides, the technique of describing a city from the standpoint of a peasant had already been used in the ancient Greek novel (Veselovsky).

The second device, that of step-by-step construction, was carried out by Tolstoi in a most original way.

I shall not attempt even a cursory essay on the process by which Tolstoi created his original poetics. Instead I shall confine myself here to several examples.

The young Tolstoi was rather naive in the way he constructed his parallel structures. In order to work out the theme of "dying," that is, in order to illustrate it, Tolstoi felt it necessary in "The Three Deaths" to carry out three subthemes: the death of the mistress of the house, the death of the peasant, and the death of the tree. The three parts of the story are connected by a specific motivation: the peasant is the lady's coachman, and the tree is chopped down to serve as a cross on the peasant's grave.

In later folk lyrics, parallelism is also occasionally motivated. For example, the conventional parallel "to love is to trample upon the grass" is motivated by the fact that the lovers trample upon the grass as they go for a stroll.

In "Kholstomer" Tolstoi supports the parallelism horse/man with the following phrase: "Much later, they dumped into the ground the body of Serpykhovskiy that had eaten and drunk of the earth and had walked on it. They found no use for either his skin or bones."

These parts of the parallelism are linked together motivationally by the fact that Serpykhovskiy had once been Kholstomer's master.

In "The Two Hussars," the parallel structure, quite evident from the title itself, is carried out also in the details of love, cards, and friends. The relationship among the parts is motivated by the kinship ties that bind the protagonists.

If we compare Tolstoi's devices with the devices of Maupassant, then we may wish to make the following observation:

In making use of parallelism, Maupassant omits, as it were, the second part of the parallel structure. Instead he seems to imply it. Such an implicit, tacitly understood second part is usually represented by the traditional framework of the short story, which he violates (i.e., his stories seem to lack

an ending), or else it is represented by the ordinary, conventional French bourgeois attitude towards life. So, for example, in many of his stories, Maupassant depicts the death of a peasant. He describes it simply but with astonishing enstrangement by "comparing" it with the literary description of the death of a townsman. However, this literary description is never introduced into the story proper. Rather, it is implied. Sometimes, this second part of the parallelism is brought into the story in the form of the narrator's personal assessment.

In this respect, Tolstoi is more primitive than Maupassant, since he feels the need to expose the parallel structure, as, for example, in his "Fruits of Enlightenment," where he juxtaposes the kitchen and the living room. I believe that this phenomenon is to be explained by the greater clarity found in the French literary tradition vis-à-vis ours. The French reader feels the violation of norms with greater force or else he finds it easier to search for the appropriate parallel implied in the text. Our Russian reader, on the other hand, operates with a much more nebulous conception of literary norms.

I would like to mention in passing that, when I speak of a literary tradition, I do not have in mind a literal borrowing by one writer from another. I conceive of it as a common fund of literary norms from which each writer draws and on which he is dependent. If I were to use the analogy of an inventor and his tradition, I would say that such a literary tradition consists of the sum total of the technical possibilities of his age.

More complex cases of parallelism in Tolstoi may be found in his novels, where one group of protagonists is pitted against another group. For example, the following antithetical relationships are clearly discernible in *War and Peace*:

1) Napoleon – Kutuzov.

2) Pierre Bezukhov – Andrei Bolkonsky. We may also include here Nikolai Rostov, who serves as a coordinate (standard of measurement) for both Bezukhov and Bolkonsky.

In *Anna Karenina* we observe the following composition:

Anna – Vronsky group vs. Levin – Kitty group.

The relationships among these characters are motivated by bonds of kinship. This is a common motivation in Tolstoi and in novelists in general, perhaps. Tolstoi himself writes that he "has made the elder Bolkonsky the father of the brilliant young Andrei because it is awkward to describe a character who bears no relationship whatsoever to the rest of the novel."

Tolstoi made little use of the device of involving a protagonist in several different groupings (a favorite device of English novelists). The one exception perhaps is the Petrushka–Napoleon episode, where he employed it for purposes of enstrangement. In any case, the two parallel lines in *Anna Karenina* are so loosely connected from the standpoint of motivation that one may consider this motivation to serve a strictly artistic need.

Tolstoi exploits the kinship motif in an intriguing way when he resorts to it not for the purpose of motivating a relationship but as part of a progressive

construction. We see the two Rostov brothers and their only sister. They are presented as a development of a single type. At times Tolstoi compares them, as for example before Peti's death. Nikolai Rostov is a "radical oversimplification," a "cruder version" of Natasha.

Stiva Oblonsky expresses one side of Anna Karenina's soul. This relationship is presented by means of the phrase "a little bit" uttered by Anna in Stiva's voice. Stiva serves as a stepping stone to his sister. Here the relationship among the characters is not explained by kinship bonds as such. Tolstoi is not too timid here to establish an affinity in his novel between two separately conceived protagonists. Here a kinship bond was necessary for a step-by-step construction.

The depiction of family members is in no way linked in literary tradition with the author's obligation to show the distortions undergone by one and the same character. That this is so is demonstrated by the traditional device of pitting a noble brother against a criminal brother, both offspring of the same parents. Still on occasion, a motivation is introduced such as illegitimacy (Fielding).

Here as always in art, we are dealing with the motivation of a master.

3

The modern novel was preceded by the short story collection. I am stating this as a chronological fact, without necessarily implying a causal relationship between these genres.

Collections of short stories were ordinarily put together in such a way that the individual stories bore some relationship, however formal, to each other. This was achieved by enclosing the individual stories within one framing story that held them together as its parts. This explains the composition of *Panchatantra*, *Kalilah and Dimnah*, *Hitopadesa*, *Tales of a Parrot*, *The Seven Viziers*, *A Thousand and One Nights*, and *The Book of Wisdom and Lies* (the eighteenth-century Georgian collection of short stories), and many others.

We may distinguish several types of framing stories, that is, techniques of enclosing one story within another. The technique most popular with writers introduces the *telling* of legends and tales into the body of the main story in order to retard its action. So, for example, in *The Seven Viziers*, the viziers restrain the king from executing his own son, while in *A Thousand and One Nights* Scheherazade succeeds in postponing her own execution by telling her tales. In the Mongol short story collection of Buddhist origin entitled *Arzhi Barzhi*, the wooden statues that serve as steps keep the king from ascending the throne by telling stories. As a matter of fact, much as the first story encloses the second story, so does the second story enclose the third and fourth stories. Similarly, the parrot of *Tales of a Parrot* restrains the wife from betraying her husband by telling its stories until her husband

comes home. This principle of *deceleration* also underlies the cycles of stories making up *A Thousand and One Nights*. Their very objective is to ward off the executioner.

A second mode of enclosure may be called a "debate of stories," where tales are introduced to demonstrate some idea. In this case, one story is called upon to refute another story. This technique is of interest to us because it extends also to other materials susceptible of development such as poems or maxims.

It is very important to point out that these devices are confined to the domain of written literature. The cumbersome nature of this material does not permit such an interrelationship of parts in the oral tradition. The relationship among the parts is so formal that it can be discerned, perhaps, only by a reader but certainly not by a listener. The working out of a unifying technique for short stories in the so-called *folk* or anonymous (as opposed to consciously personal) literature was possible only in embryonic form.

From the day of its birth and even before, the novel gravitated towards a literary rather than an oral form.

Quite early in European literature emerged collections of short stories whose unity was achieved by having one story serve as a framing device.

Anthologies of Oriental origin, transmitted into Europe by Jews and Arabs, introduced into the lives of Europeans many tales from abroad, many of which had analogues in the indigenous literature of Europe.

At the same time, a European type of framing device was born, motivated by the desire to *tell the story for the sake of the storytelling itself*.

I am speaking of the *Decameron*.

The *Decameron*, along with its descendants, differs very strongly from the European novel of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in that the individual episodes comprising it are not linked to each other by the unity of their characters.

I would go a step further and assert that we are not dealing here with a protagonist at all. The focus is entirely on the unfolding action, while the bearer of the action serves merely as a pretext for the realization of the plot.

Though I have no way of proving it, I would venture to say that this state of affairs lasted a rather long period of time. Even as late as Le Sage's *Gil Blas*, the hero is depicted as a thoroughly spineless character. This has provoked critics to claim that the author's objective in this novel was to depict the man on the street. This is not true. *Gil Blas* is not a human being at all. He is a *thread*, a tedious thread, by means of which all of the episodes of the novel are woven together.

A much stronger relationship between the action and its bearer exists in *The Canterbury Tales*.

A framing device was widely used in picaresque novels.

Of great interest to us is the fate of this device in the works of Cervantes, Le Sage, and Fielding and, through Sterne, its refraction in the European novel.

Very curious indeed is the composition of the "The Tale of Kamar al-Zamán and the Princess Budur." This story extends from the 170th to the 249th night of *A Thousand and One Nights*. It immediately breaks up into a number of separate tales:

1) The story of the son (Kamar al-Zamán, son of Shahrman) with his demon assistants. The structure of the story is very complex, culminating in the lovers' wedding and in Princess Budur's desertion of her father.

2) The story of the king's two sons (Amjad and As'ad). This story is connected with the first story only by the fact that these sons are the offspring of King Kamar's wives. The king wants to punish them, but they run off and undergo all sorts of adventures.

The king's daughter, Marjanah, falls in love with As'ad, who met her first as a mameluke slave. Landing in one adventure after another, he falls repeatedly into the clutches of Bahram the wizard. At long last As'ad and Marjanah are reunited. On this occasion, the wizard, after repenting and converting to Islam, tells them the story of "Ni'amah and Naomi." This story is very complex and is nowhere interrupted by the story of the two brothers. "Listening to the story intently, the king's sons are filled with astonishment."

It is around this time that Marjanah, the king's daughter, arrives on the scene at the head of her army. She demands the return of the beardless mameluke, who had been abducted from her earlier. This is followed by the arrival of the army of King Ghayúr, the father of Queen Budur, who is, in turn, the mother of Amjad. A third army headed by Kamar arrives soon thereafter. Kamar has been busy searching for his children, after learning of their innocence. Finally, the army of King Shahrman makes its entrance. This king, whom we have almost completely forgotten, has also arrived at this place looking for his son.

By means of this artificial device, several stories have been welded together.

It is worth noting how the plot of the folk drama *King Maximilian* has evolved over the years. The basic plot structure is very simple. The son of King Maximilian, who had married Venus, refuses to worship idols and suffers death at the hands of his father for it. The father, along with the entire court, is struck down by death. This text is later adopted as a kind of scenario.

Supported by the most diverse motivations, highly developed motifs are interpolated at different points into the narrative of the story. For example, consider the folk drama *The Boat* or *The Gang*. Sometimes they are attached to King Maximilian without any motivation, just as pastoral scenes are incorporated into *Don Quixote* or as poems are introduced into *A Thousand and One Nights*.

At other times, however, and I take this to be a later historical development, these motifs are interpolated with the following motivation: Adolf, refusing to submit to his father, runs away to join a gang. Just previous to

this we heard the story of "Anika and Death." Perhaps this had already taken place in the version of the text that was found first in the country (and which we may, for the sake of simplicity, consider, though wrongly, the original text).

The episode concerning the mock requiem mass, familiar to us from outside this comedy, was inserted into the text at a much later date.

In many places, new episodes and wordplay, particularly in the form of an accumulation of homonyms motivated by deafness, grew with such luxuriance that Maximilian himself was nearly smothered by them. In fact, he served as a pretext for many a new comedy. The road from the original *King Maximilian*, which has close affinities with the South Russian school of drama, to the later *Maximilian* disintegrating in a text rife with puns and opposed to it in principle, was no shorter than the path that leads from Derzhavin to Andrei Bely.

Incidentally, Derzhavin's poetry occasionally finds its way into these aforementioned plays. We have here, more or less, a history tracing the changes in the technique of plot development in the *King Maximilian* text. With the addition of local material, the text changed and developed.

4

If we consider any typical story-anecdote, we shall see that it represents something complete and finished. If, for example, we look at the successful answer by which a person extricates himself from a certain predicament, then we will discover a motivation for the predicament, the hero's answer, and a definite resolution. Such is the structure of stories based on "cunning" in general. For example, if, after the commission of a crime, a man finds himself marked by the clipping of a tuft of hair, he may impose the same tonsorial style on his comrades and thereby save himself. The same holds true for the analogous tale of the house marked by chalk (*A Thousand and One Nights* and Andersen's tales). We witness here a definite completed circle of plot structure, which at times deploys descriptions or characterizations, but which, in itself, represents something completely resolved. As I have said above, several such stories may form a more complex structure by being incorporated within one framework, that is, by being integrated into one plot structure.

Yet another device of plot composition, namely, the "threading" device, is even more widely disseminated. In this mode of composition one finished story motif succeeds another motif and is linked to it by the unity of the protagonist. The complicated tale of the conventional type with its tasks set before the hero already represents a composition of the threading type.

It is precisely this device of threading that makes it possible for the motifs of one story to be assimilated by the motifs of another. Some tales comprise two or even four such motifs.

Let us establish at the outset two types of threading:

1) In one type the hero is neutral. The adventures spring upon him, so to speak. He is not responsible for their appearance. Such a phenomenon is quite common in the adventure novel, where a young man or woman is abducted back and forth by different groups of pirates and where the ships of these pirates are incapable of reaching their appointed rendezvous. This situation gives rise to an endless series of adventures.

2) In other works, on the other hand, we see some attempts at linking the action and the bearer of the action (i.e., an attempt at motivating the adventure). The adventures of Odysseus are motivated, though only externally, by the anger of the gods, who do not give our hero any peace. Odysseus' Arabic cousin, Sinbad the Sailor, keeps the explanation for his numerous adventures (if, indeed, he has an explanation) to himself. Because Sinbad has such a passion for travel, the author succeeds in weaving into his hero's seven voyages the entire travel folklore of his age.

In Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, the threading motivation is woven around the curiosity of Lucius, who is always eavesdropping or spying. Incidentally, *The Golden Ass* represents a combination of the two devices of the framing story and threading. By means of the threading device, Apuleius has managed to interpolate into his text the episodes covering the battle with the wineskins, the stories concerning metamorphoses, the adventures of the robbers, the anecdote about the donkey in the attic, etc.

On the other hand, the device of the framing story has made possible the interpolation of stories about a sorceress, the famous story of "Cupid and Psyche" and many little stories to boot.

In the concluding parts of works composed along the threading principle, we very frequently have the feeling that these constituent parts once had an independent existence all their own. For example, in *The Golden Ass*, after the episode with the donkey, which had taken refuge in the attic and which was finally recognized by its shadow, we encounter the suggestion that this very situation had spawned a proverb (i.e., it is presupposed that the story is known to its audience either in its entirety or in its basic structure).

Still, the most popular motivation by far for the threading device has been (and from very early time, I might add) the journey, and in particular a journey in search of a certain place. Such a construction characterizes *Lazarillo of Tormes*, one of the oldest of the Spanish picaresque novels.

This novel depicts the variety of adventures experienced by a little boy in search of a certain place. It is customary to suggest that certain episodes and certain expressions from *Lazarillo* had entered into the (humorous) idiom of the Spanish bazaar. I, for one, am of the opinion that they were there even before their inclusion in the novel. The novel ends strangely with fantastic adventures that involve metamorphoses, again, a rather common phenomenon, since the organizing idea that informs the first part of such a novel nearly always exhausts itself by the second part. These second parts therefore are usually constructed on a whole new base. Such was the case with

Don Quixote and with Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

On occasion we find that the threading device is used with material that is not part of the plot. In Cervantes' "Man of Glass," a short story about a scholar who had broken away from his people and who had afterwards gone mad after drinking a love potion, we encounter his interpolated, or rather, threaded sayings for whole pages at a time:

He also had no end of fault to find with the puppet masters, saying that they were a lot of vagabonds who were guilty of indecency in the portrayal of sacred things: the puppets they employed in their shows made a mockery of devotion, and they sometimes stuffed into a bag all or nearly all the personages of the Old and New Testament, and then would sit down upon them to eat and drink in the alehouses and taverns. In short, it was a wonder that perpetual silence was not imposed upon them, or that they were not banished from the realm.

When an actor dressed like a prince went by, Glasscase looked at him and said, "I remember having seen that fellow in the theater: his face was smeared with flour and he was wearing a shepherd's coat turned inside out; but at every step he takes off the stage, you would swear upon your word of honor that he was a gentleman."

"That may very well be," someone reminded him, "for there are many actors who are well born and sons of somebody."

"That is true enough," replied Glasscase, "but what the stage stands least in need of is individuals of gentle birth. Leading men, yes, who are well mannered and know how to talk, that is another matter. For it might be said of actors that they earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, with an unbearable amount of labor, having constantly to memorize long passages, and having to wander from town to town and from one inn to another like gypsies, losing sleep in order to amuse others, since their own well-being lies in pleasing their public. Moreover, in their business, they deceive no one, inasmuch as their merchandise is displayed in the public square, where all may see and judge of it.

"Authors, too, have an incredible amount of work to perform and a heavy burden of care; they have to earn much in order that by the end of the year they may not be so far in debt that they will have to go into bankruptcy; yet for all of that, they are as necessary to the state as are shady groves, public walks and parks, and other things that provide decent recreation."

He went on to cite the opinion of a friend of his to the effect that a servant to an actress was a servant to many ladies at one and the same time: to a queen, a nymph, a goddess, a kitchen wench, a shepherd lass, and many times a page or a lackey as well, since the actress was used to impersonating all these and many other characters. (Putnam translation)

These sayings supplant the action in the story. When, at the end of the story, the scholar recovers, a phenomenon quite common in art intervenes: the motivation may have ceased to exist, but the device continues to function unaltered (i.e., the scholar continues to spout his mad sayings even after making a full recovery). His speech on the court is quite similar to his previous pronouncements.

So also in Tolstoi's "Kholstomer," where the peculiar description of life from the standpoint of a horse continues even after the horse's death. Only

now it issues directly from the lips of the author.

In Andrei Bely's *Kotik Letaev*, the paronomastic constructions, motivated by an infant's perception of the world, exploit material that the baby itself could never have known.

To return to my theme: we may say in general that both the framing device and the threading device, historically speaking, led in the course of the novel's history to a closer bond between the interpolated material and the main body of the novel. We can follow this process very clearly in a work known to everyone, that is, in *Don Quixote*.

Chapter 4

The Making of *Don Quixote*

1. The Speeches of Don Quixote

In classical drama, monologues often end with a pithy saying, a “gnome.” A gnome was a forceful figure of speech that was etched into the memory. The pithy sayings of Sophocles and Euripides had already achieved distinction among the ancients themselves. Sophocles’ sayings always bear the mark of a moral maxim independent of the character of the person speaking, while in Euripides the conclusion of a monologue may be either moral or immoral, depending upon the person who pronounces it.

The ancients explained this difference rather naively by asserting that Sophocles did not want anyone to associate a blasphemous saying with him. There is, however, another possible interpretation. The speeches of the principal characters constitute one of the means by which the writer develops his plot. The author, for instance, introduces new material through them. That is, the protagonists’ speeches originally served only to motivate the introduction of such new material. The relationship between the speech and the person making the speech, as between the action and the initiator of the action, has never been a constant one in the history of literary form. In Sophocles, the “speech” is nevertheless the speech of the author, who does not as yet wish to individualize the speeches of his masks.

Don Quixote was conceived by Cervantes to be a person of rather limited intelligence: “The sun would have melted the brains of this hidalgo, if only he had had any” (Motteux translation, rev. John Ozell [1719]). And yet already in the first pages of the novel, in fact, in the very preface, Cervantes laments—ironically, to be sure—the fact that

Now I want all these Embellishments and Graces: I have neither marginal Notes nor critical Remarks; I do not so much as know what Authors I follow, and consequently can have no formal Index, as ’tis the Fashion now, methodically strung on the Letters of the Alphabet, beginning with Aristotle, and ending with Xenophon, or Zoilus, or Zeuxis; which last two are commonly cramm’d into the same Piece, tho’ one of them was a famous Painter, and t’other a saucy Critick.

Elsewhere in the preface Cervantes says that

you have no need to go begging Sentences of Philosophers, Passages out of Holy Writ, Poetical Fables, Rhetorical Orations, or Miracles of Saints. Do but take care

to express your self in a plain, easy Manner, in well-chosen, significant, and decent Terms, and to give an harmonious and pleasing Turn to your Periods: Study to explain your Thoughts, and set them in the truest Light, labouring, as much as possible, not to leave ’em dark nor intricate, but clear and intelligible.

Notwithstanding this disclaimer, Cervantes went on to write a novel with the breadth and scope of an iconostasis or an encyclopedia.

We should, however, also take into consideration the fact that the dimensions of this novel, which was laid out like a dining table, evidently far surpass Cervantes’ original intentions.

Let us now return to Don Quixote.

So Don Quixote was originally conceived as a “brainless” knight. But as the novel progressed, Cervantes found that he needed Don Quixote as a unifying thread of wise sayings. Cervantes valued the poor knight and ennobled him, much as he had earlier ennobled the madness of the “Man of Glass.”

The first of numerous discourses which reflect this changed perception in the course of the novel is delivered by Don Quixote in part 1, chapter 11. This is the speech on the Golden Age. Here is its opening:

O happy Age, cry’d he, which our first Parents call’d the Age of Gold! not because Gold, so much ador’d in this Iron-Age, was then easily purchas’d, but because those two fatal Words, Mine and Thine, were Distinctions unknown to the People of those fortunate Times; for all Things were in common in that holy Age: Men, for their Sustenance, needed only to lift their Hands, and take it from the sturdy Oak, whose spreading Arms liberally invited them to gather the wholesome savoury Fruit; while the clear Springs, and silver Rivulets, with luxuriant Plenty, offer’d them their pure refreshing Water. In hollow Trees, and in the Clefts of Rocks, the labouring and industrious Bees erected their little Commonwealths, that Men might reap with pleasure and with Ease the sweet and fertile Harvest of their Toils.

As you can see, this is an almost verbatim translation from Ovid’s Golden Age. The motivation for this speech is a curious one. This entire speech (which we could have most excellently done without) was delivered by our knight on the occasion of the presentation to him of acorns, which reminded him of the Golden Age. Cervantes himself comments on this speech:

All this long Oration, which might very well have been spar’d, was owing to the Acorns that recall’d the Golden Age to our Knight’s Remembrance, and made him thus hold forth to the Goat-herds, who devoutly listen’d, but edify’d little, the Discourse not being suited to their capacities. Sancho, as well as they, were silent all the while, eating Acorns, and frequently visiting the second Skin of Wine, which for Coolness-sake was hung upon a neighbouring Cork-Tree. As for Don Quixote, he was longer, and more intent upon his speech than upon his Supper.

That is, the author himself considers this speech to be out of place. I recall in passing Chichikov’s monologue on Plyushkin’s list of fugitive peasants. This speech by its material and form is undoubtedly not Chichikov’s but

Gogol's. Similarly, it is no less interesting to note Tolstoi's vacillation when adapting a specific set of ideas to his hero. For example, the ideas on war in *War and Peace* are first put in the mouth of Andrei Bolkonsky and only later does Tolstoi strip him of these thoughts and express them as his own.

I shall skip over Don Quixote's speech on procuring as well as over several of his discourses on knighthood and shall pass directly to the fourth book of part 1. Here Don Quixote, after a series of recognitions in the tavern, delivers his speech on the military and scholarly professions. It is interesting to observe that in the opening section Cervantes reminds us of his hero's speech to the shepherds: "Don Quixote, to raise the Diversion, never minded his Meat, but inspir'd with the same Spirit that mov'd him to preach so much to the Goat-herds, he began to hold forth in this Manner" (chap. 37).

This allusion by Cervantes to an earlier speech along similar lines is most curious. Likewise, in the critical passages incorporated into *Don Quixote* (the examination of Don Quixote's library, the conversation with the innkeeper, and so on) we hear mention of the housekeeper who had burned the knight's books—the first act of criticism.

In the complex novelistic schemata of our new age, the relationship between kindred episodes is achieved by the repetition of certain words, very much in the manner of Wagnerian leitmotifs (for example, in Andrei Bely's *The Silver Dove*; see also the work of Aleksandra Bekslar).

Again, Don Quixote's speech is essentially out of place. He was supposed to speak about the vagaries of fate. Instead, he praises the military profession. It is interesting to observe how Cervantes shifts to this new theme:

"Certainly, Gentlemen, if we rightly consider it, those who make Knight-Errantry their Profession, often meet with most surprising and stupendous Adventures. For what Mortal in the World, at this Time entering within this Castle, and seeing us sit together as we do, will imagine and believe us to be the same Persons which in reality we are? Who is there that can judge, that this Lady by my side is the great Queen we all know her to be, and that I am that Knight of the woeful Figure, so universally made known by Fame? It is then no longer to be doubted, but that this Exercise and Profession surpasses all others that have been invented by Man, and is so much the more honourable, as it is more expos'd to Dangers. Let none presume to tell me that the Pen is preferable to the Sword; for be they who they will, I shall tell them they know not what they say: For the Reason they give, and on which chiefly they rely, is that the Labour of the Mind exceeds that of the Body, and that the Exercise of Arms depends only upon the Body, as if the use of them were the Business of Porters, which requires nothing but much Strength. Or, as if This, which we who profess it call Chivalry, did not include the Acts of Fortitude, which depend very much upon the Understanding. Or else, as if that Warriour, who commands an Army or defends a City besieg'd, did not labour as much with the Mind as with the Body. If this be not so, let Experience teach us whether it be possible by bodily Strength to discover or guess the Intentions of an Enemy. The forming [of] Designs, laying of Stratagems, overcoming of Difficulties, and shunning of Dangers, are all

Works of the Understanding, wherein the Body has no Share. It being therefore evident, that the Exercise of Arms requires the Help of the Mind as well as Learning, let us see in the next place, whether the Scholar or the Soldier's Mind undergoes the greatest Labour."

This is followed by a lengthy and, in its own way, brilliant speech comparing the fate of the scholar and the soldier. This speech, of course, is incorporated into the text in much the same way that verse is incorporated into *A Thousand and One Nights* or, for that matter, as one tale is incorporated into another tale in the same work. At its conclusion, Cervantes remembers Don Quixote:

All this long Preamble Don Quixote made, whilst the Company supp'd, never minding to eat a Mouthful, though Sancho Panza had several times advis'd him to mind his Meat, telling him there would be time enough afterwards to talk as he thought fit. Those who heard him were afresh mov'd with Compassion, to see a Man, who seem'd in all other Respects, to have a sound Judgment and clear Understanding, so absolutely mad and distracted, when any mention was made of his curs'd Knight-Errantry.

By this point the wisdom of the "brainless knight" has been definitively established. In a similar way, the image and significance of Pickwick are decisively changed in the structure of Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*.

By now Cervantes has begun to exploit the contrast between the madness and wisdom of Don Quixote. So, for instance, during his conversation with his niece, Don Quixote's speech begins with the madness of the knight, then moves on to moral maxims, which move his niece to exclaim:

"Bless me! dear Uncle," cry'd the Niece, "that you should know so much, as to be able, if there was Occasion, to get up into a Pulpit, or preach in the Streets, and yet be so strangely mistaken, so grosly blind of Understanding, as to fancy a Man of your Years and Infirmity can be strong and valiant; that you can set every thing right, and force stubborn Malice to bend, when you yourself stoop beneath the Burden of Age; and what's yet more odd, that you are a Knight, when 'tis well known you are none? For tho' some Gentlemen may be Knights, a poor Gentleman can hardly be so, because he can't buy it." "You say well, Niece," answered Don Quixote; "and as to this last Observation, I could tell you things that you would admire at, concerning Families; but because I will not mix Sacred Things with Profane, I wave the Discourse. However, listen both of you, and for your Farther Instruction know, that all the Lineages and Descents of Mankind, are reduceable to these four Heads: First, Of those, who from a very small and obscure Beginning, have rais'd themselves to a spreading and prodigious Magnitude. Secondly, Of those, who deriving their Greatness from a noble Spring, still preserve the Dignity and Character of their original Splendor. Third, Are those who, though they had large Foundations, have ended in a Point like a Pyramid, which by little and little dwindle as it were into nothing, or next to nothing, in comparison of its Basis. Others there are (and those are the Bulk of Mankind) who have neither had a good Beginning, nor a rational Continuance, and whose ending shall therefore be obscure; such are the common People, the Plebean Race." (part 2, chap. 6)

Don Quixote concludes his speech with some lines of verse:

Thro' steep Ascents, thro' strait and rugged Ways,
 Our selves to Glory's lofty Seats we raise:
 In vain he hopes to reach the bless'd Abode,
 Who leaves the narrow Path, for the more easy Road.

"Alack a-day!" cry'd the Niece, "my Uncle is a Poet too! He knows every thing. I'll lay my Life he might turn Mason in case of Necessity. If he would but undertake it, he could build a House as easy as a Bird-cage."

This cage returns us to Alonzo the Brave, that is, to Don Quixote before his madness. It is worth noting here that Cervantes himself did not realize that Don Quixote, with all his cages and toothpicks, could not have been half so wise before his madness as afterwards, when he was dubbed the Knight of the Woeful Figure. Don Quixote's wisdom is not anticipated by the author either at the beginning or even in the middle of the novel. All we can say about Alonzo is that he is "brave" (good). Don Quixote's speech on glory constitutes a kind of collection of quotations and recollections, a kind of chrestomathy. This entire speech has evidently been interpolated into the text in much the same way that passages from a dictionary of synonyms have been incorporated into the text of Fonvizin's *The Minor* (Starodum's conversation with Mitrofanushka). Here is the excerpt:

"What thou say'st, Sancho," answer'd Don Quixote, "puts me in mind of a Story. A celebrated Poet of our Time wrote a very scurrilous and abusive Lamoon upon all the intriguing Ladies of the Court, forbearing to name one, as not being sure whether she deserv'd to be put into the Catalogue or not; but the Lady not finding herself there, was not a little affronted at the Omission, and made a great Complaint to the Poet, asking him what he had seen in her, that he shou'd leave her out of his List; desiring him at the same time to enlarge his Satire, and put her in, or expect to hear farther from her. The Author obeyed her Commands, and gave her a Character with a Vengeance, and, to her great Satisfaction, made her as famous for Infamy as any Woman about the Town. Such another Story is that of Diana's Temple, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, burnt by an obscure Fellow merely to eternize his Name; which, in spite of an Edict that enjoin'd all People never to mention it, either by Word of Mouth, or in Writing, yet is still known to have been Erostratus. The Story of the great Emperor Charles the Fifth, and a Roman Knight, upon a certain Occasion, is much the same. The Emperor had a great Desire to see the famous Temple once called the Pantheon, but now more happily, the Church of All Saints. 'Tis the only entire Edifice remaining of Heathen Rome, and that which best gives an Idea of the Glory and Magnificence of its great Founders. 'Tis built in the Shape of a half Orange, of a vast Extent and very lightsome, tho' it admits no Light, but at one Window, or to speak more properly, at a round Aperture on the Top of the Roof. The Emperor being got up thither, and looking down from the Brink upon the Fabrick, with a Roman Knight by him, who shew'd all the Beauties of that vast Edifice: after they were gone from the Place, says the Knight, addressing the Emperor, 'It came into my Head a thousand Times, Sacred Sir, to embrace your Majesty, and cast myself with you, from the Top of the Church to the Bottom, that I might thus purchase an immortal Name.' 'I thank you,' said the Emperor, 'for not doing it; and for the future, I will give you no Opportunity to put your Loyalty to such a Test. Therefore I banish you [from] my Presence for ever'; which

done, he bestow'd some considerable Favour on him. I tell thee, Sancho, this Desire of Honour is a strange bewitching Thing. What dost thou think made Horatius, arm'd at all Points, plunge headlong from the Bridge into the rapid Tyber? What prompted Curtius to leap into the profound flaming Gulph? What made Mutius burn his Hand? What forc'd Caesar over the Rubicon, spite of all the Omens that dissuaded his Passage? And to instance a more modern Example, what made the undaunted Spaniards sink their Ships, when under the most courteous Cortez, but that scorning the stale Honour of this so often conquer'd World, they sought a Maiden Glory in a new Scene of Victory? These and a Multiplicity of other great Actions, are owing to the immediate Thirst and Desire of Fame, which Mortals expect as the proper Price and immortal Recompence of their great Actions. But we that are Christian Catholick Knights-Errant must fix our Hopes upon a higher Reward, plac'd in the Eternal and Celestial Regions, where we may expect a permanent Honour and compleat Happiness; not like the Vanity of Fame, which at best is but the Shadow of great Actions, and must necessarily vanish, when destructive Time has eat away the Substance which it follow'd." (part 2, chap. 8)

It is worth noting that as Don Quixote becomes wiser and wiser, an analogous development takes place with Sancho Panza: "'Truly, Sancho,' said Don Quixote, 'thy Simplicity lessens, and thy Sense improves every Day'" (part 2, chap. 12).

The point is that Cervantes leaves the wisdom of folklore to Sancho while reserving the worldly-bookish wisdom for Don Quixote. Sancho's wisdom comes into its own in his judgments, which, as is well known, represent an appropriation by the novel of the legends of wise lawgivers.

Here is a sample of one of Sancho's strings of proverbs. These strings are especially characteristic of part 2 of *Don Quixote*:

"Heav'n forbid; Marry and Amen," cry'd Sancho! "Who can tell what may happen? He that gives a broken Head can give a Plaister. This is one Day, but to Morrow is another, and strange things may fall out in the roasting of an Egg. After a Storm comes a Calm. Many a Man that went to Bed well, has found himself dead in the Morning when he awak'd. Who can put a Spoke in Fortune's Wheel? No body here I am sure. Between a Woman's Yea and Nay, I would not engage to put a Pin's-point, so close they be one to another. If Mrs. Quiteria love Master Basil, she'll give Camacho the Bag to hold; for this same Love, they say, looks through Spectacles, that makes Copper look like Gold, a Cart like a Coach, and a Shrimp like a Lobster."

At the end of chapter 3 of part 2, Sancho takes center stage, overshadowing Don Quixote himself. This phenomenon is quite common in the history of the novel. So, for example, in Rabelais, Panurge moves to center stage at the end of the novel. This means, in essence, that the old novel has come to an end, and a new novel based often on new devices has taken its place.

It would be very instructive to follow the device, already used by Cervantes before, of alternating wisdom and madness by eavesdropping, as it were, on the knight's meeting with Don Diego. This conversation, which begins with Don Quixote's "chivalrous" speech and quickly moves on to literary themes, is astonishing for its professional knowledge of literary

history. This speech is motivated by the fact that Don Diego has a son who is a poet. At first, the mad knight speaks of the duty of parents before their children. He then moves on to criticism. Unfortunately, shortage of space prevents me from quoting this speech (occupying about half of chapter 16 of part 2). Delivering his wise speeches, Don Quixote remains nonetheless faithful to his own madness, as he dons the barber's basin on his head. The mad knight mistakes this basin for a helmet at precisely the moment when Sanchez has mislaid a piece of unfinished cottage cheese in it.

However, Don Quixote's subsequent adventure with the lions, whom he challenges to battle, stands out from the usual, tedious gory finales which crown the conventional adventure novel. There is little parody in Don Quixote's speech, which serves, as always, as a yardstick by which to gauge the discrepancy between the knight's real action and its imagined form:

"But a much nobler Figure is the Knight-Errant, who fir'd with the Thirst of a glorious Fame, wanders through Deserts, through solitary Wildernesses, through Woods, through Cross-ways, over Mountains and Valleys, in Quest of perilous Adventures, resolv'd to bring them to a happy Conclusion. Yes, I say, a nobler Figure is a Knight-Errant succouring a Widow in some depopulated Place, than the Court-Knight making his Addresses to the City Dames. Every Knight has his particular Employment. Let the Courtier wait on the Ladies; let him with splendid Equipage adorn his Prince's Court, and with a magnificent Table support poor Gentlemen. Let him give birth to Feasts and Tournaments, and shew his Grandeur, Liberality, and Munificence, and especially his Piety; in all these things he fulfils the Duties of his Station. But as for the Knight-Errant, let him search into all the Corners of the World, enter into the most intricate Labyrinths, and every Hour be ready to attempt Impossibility itself. Let him in desolate Wilds baffle the Rigor of the Weather, the scorching Heat of the Sun's fiercest Beams, and the Inclemency of Winds and Snow: Let Lions never fright him, Dragons daunt him, nor evil Spirits deter him. To go in Quest of these, to meet, to dare, to conflict, and to overcome 'em all, is his principal and proper Office. Since then my Stars have decreed me to be one of those Adventurous Knights, I think my self obliged to attempt every thing that seems to come within the Verge of my Profession. This, Sir, engag'd me to encounter those Lions just now, judging it to be my immediate business, tho' I was sensible of the extreme Rashness of the Undertaking. For well I know, that Valour is a Virtue situate between the two vicious Extremes of Cowardice and Temerity." (part 2, chap. 17)

In the following chapter we see the literary learning of one Don Quixote, a poor provincial nobleman, Alonzo the Brave, known as a master in the art of coop-making, grow ever more professional. Here are several examples from his speeches:

"If the Composition be design'd for a Poetical Prize, I would advise you only to put in for the second; for the first always goes by Favour, and is rather granted to the great Quality of the Author than to his Merit, but as to the next, 'tis adjudged to the most deserving; so that the third may in a manner be esteem'd the second, and the first no more than the third, according to the Methods us'd in our Universities of giving Degrees. And yet, after all, 'tis no small matter to gain the Honour of being

call'd the first." Hitherto all's well, thought Don Lorenzo to himself, I can't think thee mad yet; let's go on —

Or take, for instance, this passage:

"I remember," said Don Quixote, "a Friend of mine, a Man of Sense, once told me, he wou'd not advise any one to break his brains about that sort of Composition; and he gave me this Reason for't, That the Gloss or Comment cou'd never come up to the Theme; so far from it, that most commonly it left it altogether, and run contrary to the Thought of the Author. Besides he said, that the Rules to which Custom ties up the Composers of those elaborate Amusements are too strict, allowing no Interrogations, no such Interjections as 'said he' or 'shall I say'; no changing of Nouns into Verbs; nor any altering of the Sense: Besides several other Confinements that cramp up those who puzzle their Brains with such a crabbed way of Glossing, as you yourself, Sir, without doubt must know."

Don Quixote's speeches later demonstrate even more specialized learning. Cervantes equips him with knowledge in linguistics and the theory of translation, such as in this disquisition on Spanish words beginning with *A-*, *Al-*, etc.

"What are the *Albogues*?" quoth Sancho: "For I don't remember I've ever seen or heard of 'em in my Life." "They are," said Don Quixote, "a Sort of Instruments made of Brass-Plates, rounded like Candlesticks: The one shutting into the other, there arises through the Holes or Stops, and the Trunk or Hollow, an odd Sound, which if not very graceful, or harmonious, is however not altogether disagreeable, but does well enough with the rusticity of the Bag-Pipe and Tabor. You must know the Word is Moorish, as indeed are all those in our Spanish, which begin with an *Al-*, as *Almoaza*, *Almorsar*, *Alhombra*, *Alguasil*, *Alucema*, *Almacen*, *Alcanzia*, and the like, which are not very many. And we have also but three Moorish Words in our Tongue that end in *-i*; and they are *Borcequi*, *Zaquicami* and *Maravedi*; for as to *Alheli* and *Alfaqui*, they are as well known to be Arabick by their beginning with *Al-*, as their ending in *-i*. I cou'd not forbear telling thee so much by the Bye, thy *Quere* about *Albogue* having brought it into my Head." (part 2, chap. 67)

And here is an even more specialized report:

"What is the Name of it pray?" said Don Quixote. "Sir," answer'd the Author, "the Title of it in Italian is *Le Bagatele*." "And pray, Sir," ask'd Don Quixote, "what's the Meaning of that Word in Spanish?" "Sir," answer'd the Gentleman, "*Le Bagatele* is as much to say 'Trifles'; but though the Title promises so little, yet the Contents are Matters of Importance." "I am a little conversant in the Italian," said the Knight, "and value my self upon singing some Stanzas of Ariosto; therefore, Sir, without any Offence, and not doubting of your Skill, but meerly to satisfy my Curiosity, pray tell me, have you ever met with such a Word as *Pignata* in Italian?" "Yes, very often, Sir," answer'd the Author. "And how do you render it pray?" said Don Quixote. "How should I render it, Sir," reply'd the Translator, "but by the Word 'Porridge-Pot'?" "Body of me," cried Don Quixote, "you are Master of the Italian Idiom? I dare hold a good Wager, that where the Italian says *Piace*, you translate it 'Please'; where it says *Piu* you render it 'More'; *Su*, 'Above,' and *Giu*, 'Beneath.'" "Most certainly, Sir," answer'd t'other, "for such are their proper Significations." (part 2, chap. 62)

We may assert in general that the speeches of part 2 are more fragmentary and episodic than those of part 1. The second part, as I have already observed, exhibits more of a mosaic structure than the first, and if there are no great inset tales or stories in it, such as those that on occasion push Don Quixote from the stage in part 1, yet, nonetheless, we meet with many small episodic anecdotes, delivered extemporaneously by our hero.

Let me, with the reader's indulgence, draw the following conclusions (although it is really for the reader to draw conclusions for himself):

1. The Don Quixote type made famous by Heine and gushed over by Turgenev was not the author's original plan. This type appeared as a result of the novel's structure, just as a change in the mode of execution often created new forms in poetry.

2. Towards the middle of the novel Cervantes realized that in loading Don Quixote with his own wisdom, he was creating a duality in him. At that point he began to take advantage of this duality for his own artistic ends.

2. Inset Stories in *Don Quixote*

Most fortunate and happy was the Age that usher'd into the World that most daring Knight Don Quixote de la Mancha! For from his generous Resolution to revive and restore the ancient Order of Knight-Errantry, that was not only wholly neglected, but almost lost and abolish'd, our Age, barren in itself of pleasant Recreations, derives the Pleasure it reaps from his true History, and the various Tales and Episodes thereof, in some respects, no less pleasing, artful and authentic, than the History itself.

So begins the fourth book of *Don Quixote* (part 1, chap. 28).

In reality, the thread of action in Cervantes' work is fragile and tattered. The inset stories of *Don Quixote* may be divided into several categories in accordance with the way they are introduced into the novel. Before I proceed to classify these stories, though, I would like to describe them.

If we classify the stories by their "reality," then, above all, we meet with a whole array of pastoral ones. These tales begin with the Marcella episode in chapters 12, 13, and 14 of part 1. More correctly, the episode begins with Don Quixote's speech on the Golden Age (see my analysis above) and then continues under the guise of a poem, naively interpolated into the text: " 'Sir Knight,' said he, 'that you may be sure you are heartily welcome, we'll get one of our Fellows to give us a Song; he is just a coming' " (part 1, chap. 11).

This is followed by lines of verse. As you can see, the introduction of verse into the text is motivated in much the same way that racy, topical doggerel is interspersed in vaudeville acts or the way that poems are recited by the heroes of *A Thousand and One Nights* before evil spirits as well as beautiful ladies.

A little later, we encounter the Marcella episode itself. The story is introduced in the following way:

A Young Fellow, who us'd to bring 'em Provisions from the next Village, happen'd to come while this was doing, and addressing himself to the Goat-herds, "Hark ye, Friends," said he, "d'ye hear the News?" "What News," cry'd one of the Company? "That fine Shepherd and Scholar Chrysostome dy'd this Morning," answer'd the other; "and they say 'twas for Love of that devilish untoward Lass Marcella, rich William's Daughter, that goes up and down the Country in the Habit of a Shepherdess." (chap. 12)

In order to introduce this episode into the text, Cervantes makes use of a "courier-storyteller" that recalls, apparently, the "herald" of classical tragedy. Yet, his role is essentially different. The herald informs his audience about crucial events not depicted on stage. He thereby helps it to make sense of the basic plot of the tragedy. This courier, on the other hand, is used to motivate the interpolation of an inset story into the main plot.

The courier's story begins at the point in the narrative where everyone has left for the site of the murder.

In order to connect the inset story with the main plot of the novel, Cervantes involves Don Quixote himself in its plot. This boils down to the device of having the Knight of Woeful Figure emend the story as it unfolds: " 'We call it an Eclipse,' cry'd Don Quixote, 'and not a Clip, when either of those two great Luminaries are darken'd.' "

Yet Peter, not dwelling on such petty details, continues his story:

"He wou'd also" (continu'd Peter, who did not stand upon such nice Distinctions) "foretel when the Year wou'd be plentiful or 'estil.'" "You wou'd say 'steril,'" cry'd Don Quixote. "Steril or Estil," reply'd the Fellow, "that's all one to me: But this I say, that his Parents and Friends, being rul'd by him, grew woundy rich in a short Time; for he would tell 'em, 'This Year sow Barley, and no Wheat: In this you may sow Pease, and no Barley: Next Year will be a good Year for Oil: The three after that, you shan't gather a Drop': and whatsoever he said wou'd certainly come to pass." "That Science," said Don Quixote, "is call'd Astrology." "I don't know what you call it," answer'd Peter, "but I know he knew all this, and a deal more. But, in short, within some few Months after he had left the Versity, on a certain Morning we saw him come dress'd for all the World like a Shepherd, and driving his Flock, having laid down the long Gown, which he us'd to wear as a Scholar. At the same time one Ambrose, a great Friend of his, who had been his Fellow-Scholar also, took upon him to go like a Shepherd, and keep him Company, which we all did not a little marvel at. I had almost forgot to tell you how he that's dead was a mighty Man for making of Verses, insomuch that he commonly made the Carols which we sung on Christmas-Eve; and the plays which the young Lads in our Neighbourhood enacted on Corpus Christi Day, and every one wou'd say, that no body cou'd mend 'em. Somewhat before that time Chrysostome's Father died, and left him a deal of Wealth, both in Land, Money, Cattle, and other Goods, whereof the young Man remain'd dissolute Master; and in troth he deserv'd it all, for he was as good-natur'd a Soul as e'er trod on Shoe of Leather; mighty good to the Poor, a main Friend to all honest people, and had a Face like a Blessing. At last it came to be known, that the Reason of his altering his Garb in that Fashion, was only that he might go up and down after that Shepherdess Marcella, whom our comrade told you of before, for he