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**A PARODIC RETHINKING OF ROMANTIC AND FOLKLORE GENRES AND
MOTIFS (MEDIEVAL BALLAD, GOTHIC STORY) IN THE SHORT STORY BY V.
IRVING**

Summary: V. Irving's novella "The Ghost Bridegroom," as it may seem, is not of serious interest to researchers of folklorism of his works, and indeed of his work in general, in comparison with other texts. This text could be regarded as nothing more than an elegant light trifle, ironically stylizing, parodying a folk ballad, legend, tradition, which in its very title carries an allusion to early romantic, epigone-romantic or pseudo-romantic poetry. At the same time, this is a very indicative phenomenon, reflecting an interesting process of transformation in the use of folklore material in literature in the first half of the 19th century. "In the artistic world of V. Irving's prose, the integration of folklore and "book" principles, the integration of folklore and literary (as well as journalistic, essay) aesthetics, poetics and stylistics occurs naturally and organically". Some researchers paid attention to V. Irving's rethinking of a very common plot in folklore and literature. Indeed, throughout the last few decades of the 18th and the first decades of the 19th century, there was a significant evolution in the attitude of public and individual consciousness to mythology, mysticism and similar things.

Özet: V. Irving'in "Hayalet Damat" adlı kısa romanı, diğer metinlerle karşılaştırıldığında, folklorizm araştırmacılarının eserlerinin ve genel olarak çalışmalarının ciddi ilgisini çekmiyor gibi görünüyor. Bu metin, başlığında erken dönem romantik, epigone-romantik veya sözde-romantik şiire gönderme yapan, ironik bir biçimde stilize eden, bir halk türküsünün, efsanesinin, geleneğinin parodisini yapan zarif, hafif bir önemsiz şeyden başka bir şey olarak değerlendirilemez. Aynı zamanda bu, 19. yüzyılın ilk yarısında folklor malzemesinin edebiyatta kullanımında yaşanan ilginç dönüşüm sürecini yansıtan oldukça gösterge niteliğinde bir olgudur. "V. Irving'in düzyazısının sanatsal dünyasında, folklor ve "kitap" ilkelerinin entegrasyonu, folklor ve edebi (aynı zamanda gazetecilik, deneme) estetiğin, şiirselliğin ve üslupbilimin entegrasyonu doğal ve organik olarak gerçekleşir. Bazı araştırmacılar, V. Irving'in folklor ve edebiyatta çok yaygın bir olay örgüsünü yeniden düşünmesine dikkat çekti. Aslında 18. yüzyılın son birkaç on yılı ve 19. yüzyılın ilk on yılı boyunca, toplumsal ve bireysel bilincin mitolojiye, mistisizme ve benzeri şeylere karşı tutumunda önemli bir evrim yaşandı.

Introduction. The aesthetics and poetics of pre-romanticism and romanticism as a reaction to the rationalism and materialism of the Enlightenment (and through it, deeper and further, the Renaissance and antiquity) is experiencing a vigorous interest in medieval patriarchal antiquity with its gloomy, harsh coloring and pessimistic mood. True, individual works of "Gothic" literature, idealizing this entire entourage, today look like a parody, and partly they are (The Castle of Otranto by H. Walpole, even Frankenstein by M. Shelley). But this is observed today, and at the time of their publication these works made a very serious impression on the public, slightly susceptible to medieval obscurantism. Fortunately, this general insanity is gradually giving way to a more sensible and sober realistic view. A healthy reaction to this branch of romanticism (and especially its epigones) is precisely manifested in the irony that we already encounter in the Jena romantics, E. T. A. Hoffmann, and then in almost all late non-

romantic and post-romantic literature. This is noted, in particular, by K. Brodey in his book “Focus on English and American literature”.

Main text. A precedent for such a parody is the short story “The Ghost Bridegroom”, which, as is often the case with V. Irving, has an emphatically simple subtitle “A Traveler's Tale”. Outwardly diligently following the romantic tradition, V. Irving prefaces this short story with a poetic epigraph that fully formulates the quintessence of the subsequent narrative.

The one for whom the table is full of food, He, I was told, lies motionless! Yesterday, with me, he lay down in the upper room, And today I laid out a gray blade for him [Autleva, 2014: 95].

The following names are named by W. Irving as the authors of this poetic quatrain: Sir Ager, Sir Graham and Sir Gray-Steel. It seems that this “trio” (like Knickerbocker, like other pseudo-authors allegedly quoted by V. Irving) is another “pseudonym” of the author, who again comes into play with the reader, and with the literary and folklore tradition, and with yourself. Translator A. Bobovich perfectly and subtly conveys the subtle parody hidden in this quatrain. The anaphora in the first two lines sets up a pseudo-pompous mood, which, for parody purposes, harmonizes perfectly with the emphatically colloquial colloquial expressions and phrases: they told me, lay down, lay down. Although, it is possible that this translation also contains an allusion by its author to the phrase from Derzhavin's philosophical ode “God”: “Where there was a table of food, there is a coffin.” The short story “The Ghost Groom” is a seemingly typical “mysterious” story of that era with a hero appearing at a feast after the death of the true groom and taking the bride away from there. As we have already noted above, such stories about the alleged interference of otherworldly forces in the lives of people were then very keenly accepted as a reaction to the rationalism and positivism of the Enlightenment.

And with Irving, too, at first everything looks like in a traditional “scary” Gothic fairy tale: a knight, whose very appearance in the castle creates an atmosphere of something mysterious and creepy, and a “dull, deathly voice” with a “sepulchral overtone,” and a terrifying confession, and aunt's fainting at the sight of a ghost groom outside the window at midnight. For many romantics, it would be an occasion to once again say that a person's fate is determined by forces over which he has no control. And for Irving, everything is decided by the hero's ability to achieve his goal even in the most unfavorable circumstances, showing ingenuity and perseverance and being guided not by fear of shadows, but by common sense. And as a result, the most typical romantic plot is transformed into a short story full of comedy and mischief. Such a rethinking of “dark” mystical themes in the spirit of traditional carnival culture, folk burlesque, shapeshifting and anecdote was characteristic of Irving. It is no coincidence that the author includes the system of images and the plot of the short story in a conventional German context, using stylization techniques. The author outwardly seriously (in the spirit of folklore reversals and practical jokes) gives the first and main character of the novella the ridiculous generic name Katsenelenbogen, just as ostensibly seriously adding the following note in a footnote: “Katsenelenbogen, - that is, “cat's elbow.” Representatives of a once powerful family bore this name. We were told that originally it was a nickname given as a compliment to one incomparable beauty belonging to this family and famous for the beauty of her hands {Approx. author}” [Autleva, 2014: 74]. Here we observe a comic rethinking and ridicule of cliches and stereotypes of pseudo-medieval, pseudo-knightly poetry, characteristic of the traditions of folk laughter and carnival culture.

About his character, V. Irving reports that he “with all his soul was drawn to the miraculous and unconditionally believed the endless legends and sagas for which every mountain and valley is famous in Germany” [Autleva, 2014: 89]. The author is ironic about the philistine interest in all kinds of rumors, superstitions, about the extremely narrow and primitive nature of mass consciousness, the attitude towards which was brilliantly captured by E. T. A. Hoffmann in the

portrait gallery of his philistinism: “So Baron von Landshort lived , an oracle at his table, an absolute monarch within the small territory that belonged to him and, most importantly, a lucky man, deeply convinced that he is the wisest man of his age” [Kenneth Brodey, Fabio Margaretti, 2003: 94].

At the center of the plot is the key moment of any human existence: “At the moment from which, in fact, my story begins, another gathering of relatives was taking place in the castle, who had gathered this time for an extremely important reason: they were to meet the groom chosen by the baron for his daughter. An agreement was reached between the bride’s father and an elderly Bavarian nobleman, the goal of which was to unite their glory by marrying their children” [Kenneth Brodey, Fabio Margaretti, 2003: 83]. The alleged plot of the novella is stated clearly, simply, in a folk manner, clearly and traditionally, at the same time as a product of the collective unconscious: “Preliminary negotiations took place with all appropriate formalities. The young people were engaged without ever seeing each other; The wedding day had already been set. The young Count von Altenburg was called from the army for this purpose and was currently on the road, heading to the baron's castle so that he would hand over the bride to him. Having been delayed due to unforeseen circumstances in Würzburg, he sent a letter from there indicating the day and hour of his arrival” [Stepanova T. M., Zukhba S. L., 2012: 87]. Next, the portrait of the heroine is created using widespread templates and clichés, as well as everyday remarks about unmarried aunts. The next character introduced by the author is the groom’s longtime friend Hermann von Starkenfaust, “famous among the German chivalry for his extraordinary strength and noblest heart” [Autleva, 2014: 94], now returning from the army. V. Irving, most likely, deliberately “collects” in one work, in a small text space, several stray, rather “hackneyed” folklore and literary subjects and collisions.

Here the writer develops a path motif characteristic of folklore, which serves as the basis for creating new storylines, adventures and events. The author, as he often does in his works, refers as reminiscences to folk legends and traditions, folklore stories about werewolves and evil spirits: “It is known that the forests of Germany have always been as swarming with robbers as its castles with evil spirits” [Kenneth Brodey, Fabio Margaretti, 2003: 76]. This is followed by a very remarkable addition from the author: “at the time described here, the number of the former increased even more due to fugitive soldiers wandering around the country” [Stepanova T. M., Zukhba S. L., 2012: 88]. It is noteworthy in several respects: firstly, because the author reports not on some mystical, but on very real reasons for this phenomenon, and secondly, because he uses quite ordinary, even somewhat official, clerical figures of speech: in At the time that is being narrated here, the number of the first increased even more due to.

It is curious that V. Irving fundamentally highlights his own author’s position, which is absolutely opposite to the Gothic and early romantic trends, which focused the attention of readers on everything exceptional and incredible. His position is the opposite of this tradition of intensifying everything terrible, incredible and supernatural: “No one will therefore see anything unusual in the fact that our horsemen were unexpectedly attacked in the wilderness by a gang of these vagabonds... the robbers fled, having managed to inflict a mortal wound on the count” [Stepanova T. M., Zukhba S. L., 2012: 83]. Before his death, Count Altenburg asks his friend to tell everyone the “fatal reason” because of which he could not come to the bride on time. From this moment, the plot action moves into the phase of legends and tales about doubles, ghosts and werewolves, which are very widespread in the European oral tradition, or more precisely, into the phase of their ironic tragicomic rethinking: “The drawbridge was lowered, the traveler drove up to the gate. He was a tall, handsome horseman. His face was covered with pallor, his eyes glowed with a romantic sparkle, and his whole appearance was stamped with noble sadness” [Kenneth Brodey, Fabio Margaretti, 2003: 73]. Although the portrait of the hero is given in the usual

traditions and, as in the folklore text, is a set of ready-made formulas, at the same time it is not accompanied by irony.

At the same time, the everyday, everyday plan is always in the author's field of vision: "The Baron was slightly offended that the guest arrived alone, without the pomp appropriate for the occasion. For some (though very short) time, he felt insulted and was ready to consider this fact as a lack of respect for such a significant event in the life of such a significant family (a characteristic ironic repetition) with which the guest was supposed to become related. However, he... decided that the reason for everything was the impatience of youth, which prompted the groom to get ahead of his retinue" [Stepanova T. M., Zukhba S. L., 2012: 94].

The tragic nature of the situation is based on the acute convergence of life events that are opposite in existential, ontological semantics - marriage and the death of one of the subjects of this action. It is characteristic that the baron does not even listen to the interlocutor, does not perceive the mournful intonation of his speech, does not allow him to utter words of explanation, grief and regret, addresses him with words that are appropriate for the situation of a wedding, but completely inappropriate for the mournful situation of the death of the groom.

A very common substitution occurred in folk fairy tales and non-fairy tale epics and in archaic forms of literature, when one character is mistaken for another person of the opposite role. At the same time, the author continues to artistically develop the archetype of the talker and braggart, the exponent of which is the baron. The next archetype, briefly but accurately outlined in the short story, is the aunties, who initially play in folklore and literary fairy tales a rather auxiliary, but extremely necessary for the completeness of the character system, role of a stupid, annoying, sometimes unwittingly (or voluntarily) crowd that harms the main characters of the work. The further fragment of the text lies in the vein of "ladies' prose," which originated in the middle of the 18th century from S. Richardson and received great development over the following decades in the literature of sentimentalism, pre-romanticism, and romanticism.

But in this case we will not encounter irony; the author can be serious, calm, objective and condescending. We see a simple, but quite convincing psychological portrait of the heroine, inscribed in the same "ladies'" context, however, accompanied by a cold-blooded commentary from the author. The subsequent episode is emphatically parodic. In relation to a situation that is very exciting in several respects, the use of clerical clichés looks quite travesty, which is very characteristic of folklore stylistics: "The late hour excluded the possibility of immediately opening negotiations. The baron was still inexorably kind and, postponing a conversation of a business nature until the morning, led the guest to the still untouched table" [Kenneth Brodey, Fabio Malgaretti, 2003: 84]. As is known, travesty is observed where "a plot of serious or sublime content is presented in a comic form by the fact that its content is clothed in a form that does not correspond to its character" [Stepanova T. M., Zukhba S. L., 2012: 94]. The interior details in the text also carry an active semantic load. Firstly, here we see a typical "set" of pseudo-knightly, pseudo-medieval paraphernalia, and secondly, it carries a clear, specific semantic load associated with genealogy, with zoomorphic symbolism, symbolism of war and hunting: "The table was set in the large hall. On the walls hung portraits of stern, with rough and sharp features, heroes of the Katsenelenbo-gen family, as well as trophies obtained by them on the battlefields and on the hunt. Breastplates with deflections from blows, broken tournament spears, banners torn to shreds, and right next to them - the spoils of forest battles: wolf mouths and boar tusks, grinning menacingly among crossbows and reeds, dark antlers of a seasoned deer, branching right above the head of the young groom" [Kenneth Brodey, Fabio Malgaretti, 2003: 95]. The deer's antlers above the groom's head carry an appropriate meaning. It is obvious that the situation is pseudo-dramatic, that the author is not parodying tragic events at all, but quasi-

romantic stories created on this topic. The author, meanwhile, is still attracted to the baron as an object of irony.

In sharp contrast to this life-affirming picture is the state and behavior of the “groom,” who retained “some very special and inappropriate seriousness, an expression of deep depression” when the baron’s witticisms brought “deep melancholy” to him. Gradually, under the influence of this, the mood of the entire audience changes, which prompts the baron to tell a story about “a ghost horseman who kidnapped the beautiful Lenore, later translated into magnificent poetry that went around the whole world” [Kasson J. Artistic Voyagers, 1982: 63]. Bound by a “sacred, inviolable obligation,” the knight leaves society. Subject, as he believes, to the action of supernatural, otherworldly forces, and in fact to suggestion and self-hypnosis, the young hero imagines himself in the place of his dead friend: “I am a dead man... I was killed by robbers... my body rests in Wurzburg... at midnight I will be buried... a grave awaits me... I am obliged to appear at the place appointed for me. With these words, he jumped onto his horse, rushed like a whirlwind across the drawbridge, and the clatter of horse hooves died down in the howling gusts of the night wind” [Fedulova, 2004: 70]. The baron's story about everything that happened evokes the expected reaction of the public, brought up on such folklore and pseudo-folklore stories. The author considers it necessary to clarify this issue and entrusts his point of view to “one of the poor relatives, who “dared to hint that this was simply a funny trick of the young gentleman and that the very gloom of his quirk was quite consistent with the deeply melancholic appearance of the young man” [Kenneth Brodey, Fabio Malgaretti, 2003: 71]. It is clear that this sensible assumption brought upon the daredevil the indignation of the entire society, especially the baron.

Next, the author’s attention switches to the main character of the work, the aunts surrounding her, with precise characteristics of both girl’s psychology and the psychology of mass consciousness in a peak situation. The imaginary shock is characterized by the words: a terrible scene, kidnapped by a ghost, who carried the bride to the grave. The style becomes ostensibly significant: “Those present had no choice but to admit the possibility of this terrible guess, for cases of this kind do not represent anything unusual in Germany, which is confirmed by a great many completely reliable stories” [Autleva, 2014: 73]. The subsequent “deplorable situation of the poor baron” seems even more internally ironic. The author's light, humorous style, appropriate vocabulary and phraseology coincide with the new active inclusion of folklore images in the text. The approaching ending fully fits into the traditional formula of fairy tales and biblical parables: “A lady and a gentleman accompanying her on horseback rode up to the castle on a richly decorated pacer. Having galloped to the gate, she dismounted, threw herself at the baron’s feet and clung to his knees. It was his missing daughter, and with her a ghost groom” [Kasson J. Artistic Voyagers, 1982: 73]. At the same time, portrait details have psychological brightness and authenticity.

Conclusion. The ending of the novella, and all its collisions, are absolutely archetypal. The legend-parable of the prodigal son has been embodied in literature in various versions for thousands of years. In contemporary literature by V. Irving, we find typological similarities and parallels with his plot in both “The Snowstorm” and “The Station Agent” by A. S. Pushkin. Of the works mentioned, “The Station Agent” is distinguished by the greatest seriousness, drama and depth in the embodiment of the traditional plot. In “Blizzard” we see signs of an adventurous and romantic understanding of it. In “The Ghost Bridegroom” one can observe an example of a light, elegant, mischievous and at the same time subtle and insightful parody of Gothic and pseudo-folklore works of the late 18th - early 19th centuries, of numerous folklore mystifications and stylizations, the best of which were the works of J. Macpherson and Etc. Merimee, which, however, in turn gave rise to a mass of epigones.

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