

MYTHOLOGEMES OF THE RUSSIAN FAIRY TALES: LAYERING OF THE WORLD

The article, based on the Russian and partly Belorussian fairy tales, examines a question of vertical structuring of the Universe and its division into three mythological layers (tiers) — the universal idea widespread in traditional societies and reflected in the mentioned fairy tales. The article represents a brief review of scholar's opinions on this idea and demonstrates the ambiguity of the topic. The Russian fairy tales show the traces of such worldview system; however, its relatively early stages have been preserved in tales to a greater extent due to their special traditionalism and the specificity of this genre. This is indicated by predominant opposition of two worlds, terrestrial and underground, by the greatest elaboration of their imagery and by its partial transfer to the “sky layer (tier)” or to the top of the mountain. The author analyses the details of the motif of the hero's ascent along the tree/stalk. By analyzing the portrays of the heavenly bodies the author highlights the motifs representing the traces of the universal mythologemes of world creation. The article raises the question about the semantics of gold and golden objects in Russian fairy tales and considers the motifs reflecting the ideas of the three layers of the world through the respective animal characters.

Keywords: *Russian fairy tales, cosmogony, three layers (tiers) of the world, the “near sky”, the heavenly bodies in the fairy tales, ascent along the tree/stalk, semantics of gold*

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For citation: Denisova, I. M. 2022. Mythologemes of the Russian Fairy Tales: Layering of the World. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)*. 4: 182–202.

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