NOTES ON THE TEXT

Most of the material for these notes comes from sources that Kotsiubynsky himself consulted while writing *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, although I have also availed myself, more distantly, of some supplementary texts. Since the material consists of many variants, I have organized it into larger entries rather than attempting to annotate each passing reference to Hutsul beliefs that appears in *Shadows*. Thus, I hope to have avoided repetition and confusion. So when the *aridnyk*, for example, is first mentioned in the novel, I group in that note all the information on the *aridnyk* that the reader will need in order to follow both the text and the relevant passages in my essay.

Forced to amalgamate information from various sources into close sequences, I have not credited individual sentences, let alone phrases, by reference to their sources. Instead, the sources are listed in a section of the bibliography (pp. 123-24). There is no evidence that Kotsiubynsky used Hnatiuk's collection, listed there, but he certainly saw much of the material in other works by Hnatiuk that the ethnographer sent him over the years.

Although I have cast the notes in the present tense, the Hutsul customs that I describe have been all but uprooted. They began to die out in the 1920s, when much of the Hutsuls' territory fell to Poland, and in the postwar years they have been methodically destroyed, for ideological reasons, by the Soviet government. The collective farm system, more than any other factor, has been instrumental in eradicating Hutsul customs.

[1]The Hutsuls, who speak a dialect of the Ukrainian language with negligible admixtures of Romanian and Hungarian, are probably the most picturesque and artistic of the Ukrainian "tribes" inhabiting the Carpathian Mountains. Chornohora, the mountain range where the Hutsuls live, is often mentioned in *Shadows*; it extends about twelve-and-a-half miles. The highest peak in this range is Hoverlia (6,760 feet). Most of the major rivers in the Hutsul region flow into the Danube. The largest of these is the Cheremosh, mentioned in the very beginning of *Shadows*; its mysterious flow accompanies Ivan's grief throughout the work.

The Hutsuls have preserved many ancient customs that had been practiced throughout Ukraine but died out long ago. Cultural exchange and progress were for centuries blocked by the mountains, and the Hutsuls have always been stubbornly resistant to any kind of innovation, considering the

present moment as much more dependent on the mythical past than on the reformist future. Hence, as both Kotsiubynsky and ethnographic studies show, Christianity, for the Hutsuls, is but a thin veneer on their deeply rooted paganism. This is doubtless the reason for their rather startling moral standards.

Artistic activity of one sort or another—and the Hutsuls excel in many—is a constant companion in their daily lives. Here I mean not only songs, instrumental music, and dance, which play such an important part in *Shadows*, but also the production of magnificent wooden architectural structures and highly developed artifacts: woven rugs with intricate designs, pottery, wood carvings, wooden objects inlaid with mother-of-pearl, coral, or beads, and leather work. Even the humblest objects of daily use—a wooden pail, a wooden spoon, a rake, an ax—are brightly decorated. The Hutsuls are fond of colorful dress, which is a matter not only of their inner need to create striking effects, but also of social status. The Hutsul is generous to a fault (capable of giving away all his cattle, for example, on the spur of the moment), very sentimental and lyrical, but also quite vindictive and prone to sudden violence.

Among the chief occupations of the Hutsuls are breeding cattle and sheep and preparing timber.

[2]There is a myriad of minor devils in Hutsul legends. Although they mate with, and sometimes even marry, human beings, usually their wives or husbands come from the demonic world. The *niavka*, the *lisna*, and even the "born" witch are all considered to be female devils, but the most common names for the female devil are *bohynia* ("goddess") and *bisytsia* ("she-devil"). A *bohynia* or *bisytsia* can be quite beautiful; her distinguishing features are an extraordinarily pale face, lustreless eyes that are devoid of the glow that the human soul provides, and pendulous breasts, sometimes reaching down to her waist. When she flings her breasts backward over her shoulders, she acquires tremendous magical powers, including the ability to fly. In some regions of Western Ukraine, the *bohynia* is known as *diva-baba* ("virgin-midwife," or in a more ancient etymological sense, "goddess-ancestor"). She is an ugly old woman who shares with the *bohynia* the physical feature of the magical pendulous breasts and the nasty habit of stealing children.

The child of the *bohynia*, no matter if conceived with a male devil or with a mortal, is usually a devil. It has an abnormally small head, long ears, thin legs, and a protruding belly. Weak, sickly, and obviously ugly, the child learns to walk only at seven years of age and to talk even later. It appears to be stupid, but at the same time seems to possess secret wisdom not available to human beings. It is extremely greedy and eats everything in sight. Regardless of her unusual origins, a *bohynia* is, after all, a Hutsul, and therefore abhors ugliness in any form. When a human baby is born in a Hutsul family, she secretly attempts to exchange her ugly offspring for the pretty human child, sometimes recruiting her husband, a male devil, to make the exchange. She hopes that the superior qualities of the human child, especially its beauty, will make it a leader among the devils.

It is, therefore, of utmost importance that certain complex rituals be performed by the Hutsuls at the birth of a baby in order to protect it from the *bohynia*. Immediately after turning the newborn child over to the mother, the midwife lights a candle, which may not be extinguished until the priest comes to bless the baby and thus immunizes it from the devil. She then places a clove

of garlic between the mother's breasts and a bunch of keys near the mother's body. (Garlic is by far the most potent magical and medicinal plant in primitive Slavic societies; metal is obviously a somewhat more recent addition to the Hutsuls' magical arsenal.) Next, the midwife burns some incense, mixed with dried trefoil or clover, and "fumigates" first the inside of the room and then the outside of the house, while pronouncing appropriate incantations.

If the midwife performs her ritualistic obligations incorrectly and an exchange does occur, the mother immediately recognizes the changeling by the way the baby sucks her breast or that of the nursemaid. The changeling pulls on the nipple so greedily that blood begins to flow. This belief, incidentally, is connected with the Hutsul versions of the vampire legends in which the vampire (including the *niavka*) receives his or her nourishment through the male or female victim's nipple. It is believed that if the woman continues to breast-feed the changeling, she will soon lose her strength and die.

There is only one way to get rid of the changeling (attempts to abandon or kill it are futile since it returns to the household in either case): the mother must take the baby out onto a dungheap in the yard and beat it, hoping that the *bohynia* will take pity on her own child and return the stolen human baby in exchange for it. Since this is not likely to happen, the ill-favored child eventually dies as a result of such abuse. This folk myth is devised to ensure "natural selection." When, in the opening paragraphs of *Shadows*, Ivan's mother becomes angry with the child, she curses him with an abbreviated and modified version of the spell that the Hutsuls cast against the devil, sending him into the sea, into a dead forest, or into the marshes and rocks. As we shall see in note 6 on the *aridnyk*, this wasteland is the domain of the devil. Versions of such a spell against the devil have been recorded throughout Ukraine.

[3]Valerian (*odalen*) grows in the marshy regions of the Carpathian Mountains. A kind of tranquilizer, the herb is used by the Hutsuls against possession by the *aridnyk* and his agents. Several medicinal herbs are subsumed under the name *matrygan*, particularly deadly nightshade (belladonna) and mandrake (mandragora). The root of the mandrake was considered to be a highly potent aphrodisiac during the Middle Ages, not only in countries of Western Europe (especially in England), but also by many folk cultures, including that of the Hutsuls. Before digging out the mandrake root, the Hutsuls dance around the plant, kiss it, toast it with whiskey, sing ribald songs for it, and talk to it, using amorous language and even well-meant obscenities. They soak the root in whiskey for nine days, then wash themselves with the solution to be sexually attractive, and mix a few drops of it into the drink of the person whom they want to seduce. Sanicle (*pidoima*) is an herb that is used to sooth pain, especially from cut or split skin. It is mixed with heavy cream and rubbed over the affected areas of the body.

[4]There are several Hutsul legends about the weeping of the kite (*Kania*). One has it that the kite is the black soul of a witch that had been burned in a bonfire by the Hutsuls; now it flies about and weeps for its body. Another, belonging to the Genesis cycle, relates how God dug a well from which all the rivers of the world would henceforth be fed. In time, the well became contaminated, and God called upon the birds to clean it out. All of them obeyed except the kite, which did not want to get its golden boots dirty (the claws of

the kite are bright yellow). To punish the kite, God forbade it to drink anything but rain water, so during the dry season, the kite suffers from thirst and weeps, begging God to send down rain.

[5]Throughout Ukraine, the cuckoo (*zozulia, zazulia*) is considered to be the most magically potent bird of all. It contains the soul of an ancestor and therefore is capable of prophecy in the crucial matters of death and love. One reads the prophecies of the cuckoo by counting its distinctive calls. (There is an interesting etymological connection in the Ukrainian language between the cuckoo and the ladybug [*zozulka*], which also contains the soul of an ancestor; the number and position of its black dots are used to foretell the future.) The Hutsuls have countless legends about the cuckoo. They believe, for example, that if one has money in his pocket when he hears the call of the cuckoo for the first time in the spring, he will be guaranteed a good income for the rest of the year. It is also very propitious to have some lima beans in one's pocket when the cuckoo calls for the first time, for anyone who incites the elusive bird to eat a bean or two will have phenomenal luck throughout the year. If, on the other hand, one hears the cuckoo call near his house, he can expect death to occur in the family within the next few months. Because the cuckoos reside all winter in the land of the dead, they possess secret knowledge about the fate of individuals and the destiny of the world. Once the cuckoos stop calling to each other, the end of the world will be close at hand: the *aridnyk* will have broken his chains in order to destroy the earth and all the people on it.

The various Hutsul legends about the origin of the cuckoo all have to do with the loss of love. One is about a woman who employed the help of a *bisytsia* to kill her husband because she wanted to live with her lover. Her husband's name was Kukul (a word for a male cuckoo in several Ukrainian dialects). God punished her by turning her into a cuckoo so that she would fly around and call her husband by name until the end of the world, and her lover became a wren, with whom she now continues her illicit relationship.

Another legend deals with a young shepherdess who stayed alone with her sheep in the uplands. The *aridnyk*, introducing himself to her as Kukuk, fell in love with her, turned himself into a handsome youth, and began to court her. Soon the girl became so attached to him that when he could not come to her on Sundays and holidays (the *aridnyk* is forced to spend all holy days in his wasteland—on the rocks or in marches), she would go about all day calling him. When she returned to the village, her mother, who could not bear to hear her daughter calling her mysterious lover, cursed her with the words: "May you call your Kukuk until the end of the world!" The daughter suddenly grew wings and flew away. She will continue to cuckoo (this is, to call her husband by name) until the *aridnyk* is ready to break his chains.

[6]There is little room for Christ and His merciful love in the world of the Hutsuls; their legends, in fact, very rarely mention Him. Their God and their devils, who are derived directly from ancient pagan deities, their Saint Nicholas and their dragons, their magicians and their spirits of nature are all locked in mortal battle, using every weapon available—robbery, lies, deceit—to conquer one another. The world of the Hutsuls, moreover, is ruled by the perpetual victor in that battle, who certainly is not God.

Besides *aridnyk* (this word, probably driving from Irod or Herod and

meaning "the son of Herod," is fairly new and somewhat influenced by Romanian) and *shcheznyk* ("the Vanisher," probably derived from *shchez by*, "may he vanish," the taboo formula to curse the devil), the Hutsuls call the devil by countless other names. *Osynavets* and *osyna* are the most popular names after *aridnyk* and probably derive from the word *osyka*, or "aspen," which is considered the devil's tree. These terms are much older than *aridnyk*, harking back to a pagan god, perhaps Veles. Taboo euphemisms naming the devil are also very old: *toi shcho v buzyni sydyt* ("he who lives in the elder tree") with a variant, *buznychyi* ("he of the elder tree"); *toi shcho v skali sydyt* ("he who lives in a rock," referring to the devil's wasteland), with a variant, *skameniushnyk* ("the petrified one"); *toi shcho v boloti sydyt* ("he who lives in a marsh"); *neumytyi* ("the unwashed one," referring to the devil's impurity and relating to the all-Ukrainian taboo name *nechystyi*, meaning "unclean" or "impure").

A very interesting taboo name for the devil is *pekun*. Although we immediately associate with it the verb *pekty* ("to burn"), it may stem from the Balto-Slavic names of the god of thunder—Perun or Perkunas. Other interesting taboo names have to do with allegorical representations: *iavyda* (probably connected with the word *iabeda*, or calumny) and *bida* ("grief"). Some of the devil's newer names come from the Bible, notably *Irod* (Herod, which may be connected with *aridnyk*); *Iuda* ("Judas"); *Tryiuda* ("thrice-Judas"); and *iudnyk* ("Son of Judas"). Standard Ukrainian names for the devil—*chort, Satana* ("Satan"), with the Hutsul variations *Sotana, bis,* and *didko* (standard Ukrainian contamination of the word for ancestor, with which the forest demon is designated in some parts of Ukraine)—are rarely used by the Hutsuls, although *bis* yields the frequently used feminine form *bisytsia.*

The *aridnyk* has armies of helpers. Although the devil's helpers are rarely called by taboo names, they are referred to by all the other Hutsul names for devil (except *aridnyk*). This, as with much else in myth, makes things quite confusing. Although Kotsiubynsky obviously considers the *shcheznyk* and the *aridnyk* to be separate beings, many Hutsul informants use the two names interchangeably to designate the archdevil.

Several Hutsul Genesis myths relate that in the beginning, there was only the sky and the sea, and that nature, not God, was the origin of life. God was created out of the dew that fell from the sky into the water. When God was out walking one day above the waters, He noticed a billow of foam in the vague shape of a man. He was startled by the shape and did not know where it came from. (This implies that the origin of the *aridnyk* was similar to that of God and that his creation seems to have been veiled before God's eyes.) Since God was very lonely in the vast universe, He turned that half-formed shape into a companion for Himself, who henceforth became His double.

For millenia, God and the *aridnyk* called each other "sworn brother" or "blood brother" (*pobratym*). When they became enemies, they correspondingly began to call each other "un-brother" (*rozpobratym*). Their great friendship started to cool at the time the earth was created; this is the tale which Mykola, the fire-keeper, relates to Ivan. Here Kotsiubynsky uses one of the numerous variants of the Genesis story within the Hutsul canon, published in the Shukhevych collection. Variants of that legend in other Slavic mythologies are published in the work by Drahomanov. Ancient Ukrainian songs, called *koliadkas*, suggested that two birds created the world by diving into the sea.

In the prevalent model on which Kotsiubynsky's version is based, God asks the *aridnyk* to dive to the bottom of the sea and get some earth, while pronouncing the formula, "I take this earth in God's name." Being satanically proud, the *aridnyk* picks up a handful of earth, declaring that he does so in his own name. Upon that act of betrayal of God's faith in him, the soil sifts through his fingers and he comes to the surface empty-handed. God then instructs the *aridnyk* to dive to the bottom of the sea once more, and this time to do the job right. The *aridnyk* scoops up some earth in God's name but puts a few grains between his lower gum and lip, whispering to himself that he takes them in his own name. From the soil in the *aridnyk*'s fist, God creates the earth by ordering it to increase; the grains of sand in the *aridnyk*'s mouth begin to increase proportionately, swelling his face to an alarming size. God then asks the *aridnyk* to spit out the "illegally" obtained sand, from which grow mountains, rocks, swamps, deserts, and thickets. This becomes the *aridnyk*'s or the devil's land, the wasteland to which the *aridnyk* is eventually banished. It is important to keep in mind that the pagan Slavs believed that the dead spent the winters in such regions.

A significant element in the symbolic value of the mountains in *Shadows* is the Hutsuls' belief that the Carpathian Mountains belong to the *aridnyk*. This explains why the Hutsuls considered it important to pay as much tribute to the *aridnyk* as to God. (A variant of the origin of the mountains has it that God found some earth under his fingernail, made a tiny pancake out of it, and threw it upon the sea, where it grew until it became the earth. Alei [Saint Elias, or Perun; see note 24] became frightened of it, grasped it by the edge and shook it; the ensuing wrinkles in the smooth surface of the earth became the Carpathian Mountains.)

In his satanic pride, the *aridnyk* decided to kill God since he had grown fond of the earth, considered it his own, and wanted to rule it by himself. While God was taking a nap on the seashore, the *aridnyk* began to roll Him into the sea. As he did so, however, the earth under God's body kept expanding to prevent Him from falling into the water, which explains why the earth is so large today. Upon waking, God said slyly that He had dreamt that somebody wanted to throw Him into the sea. The *aridnyk* answered that he knew nothing about it, since he himself had been asleep. From this first lie by the *aridnyk* were born deceit, fantasy, dreams, dream reading, and even poetry, all of which are now the *aridnyk*'s property. To punish the *aridnyk* for attempted murder, God threw him into the water and put a sheet of ice over him. By punching a hole in the ice with his head, through which steam began to rise, the *aridnyk* created the first clouds. The *aridnyk* liked it under the ice and wanted to live there so that he could supervise the production of hail pellets (see note 27 on Iura's duel with the cloud), but when spring came and melted the ice, the *aridnyk* had no choice but to reappear on the face of the earth (in Slavic mythology, ancestors begin to walk among the living with the first signs of spring).

God chose the most beautiful corner of the earth for His farm (obviously a transformation of the biblical Eden) and banished the *aridnyk* to the wasteland that had been created from the grains of sand in the *aridnyk*'s mouth. Thus, most of the earth became empty and desolate, without the presence of either God or the *aridnyk*. To allay His loneliness without the *aridnyk*, God fashioned Adam out of clay. At first, Adam's lower body, like the *aridnyk*'s, was shaped like a goat, suggesting that God created man as a

substitute for the *aridnyk*, and that in all respects man is closer to the *aridnyk* than to God. Eve was made from a branch of ivy. The Hutsuls pronounce the words "Eve" and "ivy" in the same way (*iva*), which leads us to suspect that woman was created from a semantic misunderstanding. The Hutsuls regard ivy as the most useless and accursed plant of all since the ivy growing near the cross on Golgotha refused to help the crucified Christ. Similarly, the Hutsuls consider their women to be contaminated and dangerous; in the Hutsul dialect, the rough equivalent of the word "womenfolk" is *cheliad*, which in standard Ukrainian means "apprentices" or "domestic servants."

While God was busy with his new toy—man—the *aridnyk* became desperately lonely and bored and asked God what he should do about it. God told him to dip the index finger of his left hand into the sea and flick a drop of water over his left shoulder without looking behind him (a universal magical procedure, as witnessed in the familiar practice of throwing salt over one's left shoulder for good luck); and a companion would spring from the ground. The *aridnyk*, appreciating the possibilities of the situation, dipped his whole hand into the water several times, flicking numerous drops of water over his shoulder. Thus, an army of helpers—all sorts of minor devils and demons—was born. As these devils procreate but do not die (see note 1), their numbers increase steadily.

Just as the *aridnyk* was not created by God, so his immense powers do not come from God. As Mykola informs Ivan, the *aridnyk* created music and all musical instruments except the *trembita* and the *floiara* (see notes 13 and 14), which were God's inventions. In Hutsul tales the fiddle was the devil's favorite instrument. Household utensils, wagons, and most domestic animals (except the dog, which belongs to God) were invented by the *aridnyk*. God Himself seems to have invented very little, preferring to steal from the *aridnyk*. The *aridnyk*, therefore, herded his goats deep into the forest so that God would not find them. But God discovered his hiding place, caught him napping, and led the goats away to His farm. This upset the *aridnyk* more than God's robbing him of anything else, since the goats were his favorite animals. He went searching for his goats everywhere, weeping, "Where are my goats? Where are my goats?" The *aridnyk* finally found his goats in God's yard, crept into it at night when God was asleep, and hit the goats' legs with a switch, causing their legs to assume the shape of his own. This myth accounts for the vanisher's song that little Ivan hears in the forest.

One Hutsul legend concerns a hunter who came upon a herd of goats grazing at some distance in a forest clearing. As he approached, he heard someone playing the reed so beautifully that he could not resist coming closer to the clearing. As he neared, however, the sound died away and the goats vanished. The hunter then made magical hoops out of pliant branches, put them around his body, and crawled toward the clearing. The sound returned, and soon he saw not only the goats but also a tiny man, like a boy but with a beard and horns, who sat on a tall blade of grass and played his reed. Around him danced pairs of boys and girls; their faces were very beautiful, but their backs had gaping holes in them, through which one could see their inner organs. This was obviously the devil herding his goats, and around him danced the dangerous *niavkas*. The hunter cut a short straight twig and began to imitate the devil's fingering upon his reed. After stealing away, the hunter hollowed out the stick and made holes in it to serve as stops; thus the hunter invented the pipe reed, which he learned to play from the *aridnyk* himself. We see that this story, published in Onyshchuk, gave Kotsiubynsky the basis for his description of Ivan's meeting with the vanisher.

Another important invention of the *aridnyk* is fire. It is the role of the fire in the uplands (see notes 19 and 25) that gives us hints of the close relationship between the shepherds and the *aridnyk*. Spending a winter night in the uplands, the *aridnyk* became extremely cold and he proceeded to build a bonfire (*vatra*). God saw the bonfire, coveted it, and asked the *aridnyk* to share it with Him. The *aridnyk* protested vehemently, "You have taken everything from me, stolen everything, but I refuse to give up my bonfire." God split the end of His walking stick, put a dry, spongy mushroom into the split (this is the shepherds' method of starting the living fire; see note 19), and poked the walking stick into the *aridnyk*'s fire, thus igniting the spongy material so that it would slowly smolder. The *aridnyk*, noticing a bright, happy bonfire burning in God's yard, became enraged and stole into God's estate to spit into the bonfire; this is how fire acquired smoke.

The *aridnyk* also invented the mill, a rather sinister structure associated with the devil in many European myths and legends. It is the mill which caused the *aridnyk*'s final downfall in Hutsul mythology. The *aridnyk* uses his tremendous skills as engineer and designer to develop an elaborate plan to trap God. He built an iron chair beneath the mill with a complex system of rings and chains attached to it. God was meant to fall through a trapdoor in the floor of the mill, land in the chair, and be locked up by the intricate trapping device. Matching for once the *aridnyk*'s uncanny cleverness, God managed to trap the *aridnyk* in his own device, where he will remain until the end of the world. At that time, he will be released and ordered to battle Elias (see note 24), resulting in the destruction of the earth. Until that time, the *aridnyk* must govern the world through the agency of his helpers. Occasionally, the *aridnyk* temporarily breaks free of his chains and rides the skies on his white steed (this is possibly a residue of the ancient Slavic myths of the gods *Bielobog* and *Chernobog*). Fairly recently, about 1880, he went on such an excursion; when he rode above forests, trees fell like blades of grass under a scythe; when he flew above villages, roofs (including, the legend makes certain to point out, church roofs, together with their crosses) were torn off and flew after him. During his difficult night in the uplands, Ivan suspects that the *aridnyk* is riding in the sky again.

In another version of the myth, God punishes the *aridnyk* by banishing him to the rocks where the devil now lives. The Hutsuls believe that the earth is flat and circular like a plate; "our" side is green and sunny, while the other side, the *aridnyk*'s domain, is nothing but rock, where only the moon shines. Such an image of the wasteland was known throughout ancient Ukraine as the realm of Marena, the goddess of winter and of death.

The *aridnyk* has also been very active in the development of modern civilization; he designed the steam engine (it takes seventy devils to turn one of its wheels), invented the telephone (his devils sit on telephone wires and pass on the voices of the callers), and is in charge of running the railway. Needless to say, all factories and government offices are managed by the *aridnyk*.

[7]The forest demon, or *lisovyk*, is covered with pelt and has hooves instead of feet. He captures women who stray into the forest, takes them to his lair, and mates with them. He occasionally exchanges human babies for his own brood (see note 1), and steals children who have been cursed by their parents. On the eve of Saint John's holiday the forest demon sits in trees, laughs and shouts joyfully, his peals of laughter echoing through the mountains. His occupation is to herd wild forest animals, usually deer.

[8]The *chuhaistyr* (*chuhaister, chuhaistryn*) is a variation of the *lisovyk*, but unlike him the *chuhaistyr* is friendly to man. Originally a human being, he had been cursed by an offended neighbor, who banished him into the forest, where he is to remain until the end of the world. There are two versions of the *chuhaistyr* in Hutsul mythology. In one, he is as tall as a fir tree and dressed in white linen from head to foot (note that Kotsiubynsky, like Onyshchuk, attributes these characteristics to the forest demon). In the other version, he is covered with pelt.

The *chuhaistyr* is the genetic enemy of the wood nymph (*niavka*) and hunts her day and night. Upon capturing her, he tears her body in two, roasts her flesh on a bonfire, and devours it. He often approaches the bonfires of shepherds with his ghastly booty, roasts a leg or an arm of a wood nymph, and politely asks the shepherds to join him in his repast. If they refuse, he does not get angry (as most demons do when crossed by man) but proceeds to dine alone. After his meal, he invites one of the shepherds to join him in a dance; like the Satyr, he enjoys dancing above all else. Although there is really no need to harm a *chuhaistyr*, one can do so by placing an ax with the blade upward on the ground in his vicinity. He will be drawn to it and will eventually sit on it. Holding the ax in a horizontal position with the blade upward is a potent magical gesture used against many demons, as well as natural disasters (note that a *hradivnyk* does this to divert a hailcloud; see note 27). In his notes for *Shadows*, Kotsiubynsky has the *chuhaistyr* bring a dead *niavka* to Ivan's bonfire, break off a leg, roast it, and proceed to devour it. The author, however, omits this gory detail in the work, presumably because the *chuhaistyr*, thus sated, would not have so eagerly pursued the *niavka* that appeared in Marichka's form.

[9]Very little has been written about "the sound of the ax," although Kotsiubynsky refers to this belief twice in his novel. An old Hutsul related to Onyshchuk that in his youth, when he had been a shepherd, he had heard someone felling trees and groaning and breathing heavily. Although the noises were quite near, nothing was visible. The mysterious hewer was felling trees all night and floating them down a stream, but in the morning, when the shepherds went to see how many trees the invisible woodsman had felled, they saw to their amazement that the surrounding forest was intact. (The sound of the ax, I suspect, belongs to the myriad of preternatural phenomena collectively called *blud*, which leads men and women astray in the forest.)

[10]The etymology of the Ukrainian term for wood nymph—*niavka* (substituted by the newer version, *mavka*, in other parts of Ukraine)—has to do with the old Ukrainian word *navyi*, which pertains to "dead" or "deceased," thus connecting the *niavka* with the cult of the ancestors. The Hutsuls themselves believe that the word comes from an onomatopoeic imitation of a cat's mewing (*niav-niav*). Hence, they claim that the *niavka* makes a mewing sound as she wanders through the mountains. Broadly speaking, we meet two kinds of *niavka* in the demonology of the Hutsuls. The older belief has the *niavka* develop from the soul of a child who was buried without christening. This creature has very short legs, a disproportionately large head, and the body of a small child; its origin and appearance is similar to that of the central Ukrainian demon called *potercha*. Its most startling feature (absent in the *potercha*) is a large, gaping hole in the back where the upper spine and the shoulder blades should be. The newer

varity of *niavka*, described by Kotsiubynsky, looks like a very attractive young person—male or female, although females predominate—whose only distinguishing characteristic is the obligatory hole in the back and dull, lustreless eyes, singularly devoid of human warmth. This variety of *niavka* is quite similar to the east Galician and central Ukrainian *mavka*.

The *niavka* spends the winter in the wasteland (usually high in the mountains in regions devoid of vegetation, which are called *kycheras* or *nedeii*), sleeping in a deep cave. She wakes up around Whitsunday (*Zeleni sviata*) and leaves her mountain peak, but does not descend into the valleys, keeping to the high forest regions. In bygone times, *niavkas* used to visit human settlements and fraternize with human beings; when women began going to the uplands with their men, however, *niavkas* became offended at such sacrilege and withdrew into the mountains forever. It is also for this reason that they became unfriendly to mankind, either injuring women directly or, more frequently, hurting them by taking away their lovers.

The *niavka* spends most of her time dancing and avoiding the *chuhaistyr*. She likes to dance in a circle with her female friends or, more rarely, to spin furiously with her male counterpart while they face each other, stretch out their arms, and firmly hold hands. The *niavkas* dance so rapidly that they become invisible, creating the effect of a strong wind. The spot on which *niavkas* like to dance is called *ihrovyshche* or *ihravytsia* (the latter word is mentioned in *Shadows*) and is easily recognizable because grass will not grow there. The dancing of the central Ukrainian *mavka* and the *rusalka*, on the other hand, causes the grass on the *ihrovyshche* to become lusher and more verdant. We note that Kotsiubynsky makes a slight error in this matter when he writes that the grass seems to grow visibly under the feet of the *niavka*. The dances and the accompanying games of the *niavkas* are called collectively *rozyhra*; the Hutsuls imitate the *rozyhra* on Saint John's Eve not so much to honor the *niavkas* as to pacify them.

The need to pacify the *niavkas* is urgent indeed, as they are extremely dangerous to man, especially to young males. A *niavka* leads a young wanderer astray into the mountain wilderness by promises of blissful sexual experiences and by a spell that is very difficult to break. Her main attraction is her irresistibly seductive laughter. After seducing her victim, she usually kills him by either tickling him to death (the same method used by the east Galician and central Ukrainian *rusalka*) or by sucking his blood through his nipple (since she is by nature a vampire). If she decides to spare her victim's life after enjoying sex with him, the young man never rejoins human society. He refuses to wash or pray, fails to speak coherently, and soon dies of exhaustion. Upon his death, his soul is claimed by the *aridnyk*. The best protection against the *niavka* is a clove of garlic (by far the most powerful magical talisman in the Hutsulian cult) worn about the body. If the young wanderer has neglected to protect himself thus and falls under the hypnotic spell of a *niavka*, he should collect himself enough to take off all his clothes as quickly as possible and put them on again inside out. Any gesture that is opposite to its normal counterpart has tremendous magical powers throughout the world (witness the position of the ax with the blade *up*, mentioned in note 8).

The *bohynia, bisytsia* (see note 2), *lisna* (see note 22), *rusalka* (see note 11), *mamuna* and *nichnytsia* are some of the many female (or predominantly female) demons who share attributes and functions with the *niavka*. They are all, basically, the *aridnyk*'s servants. Kotsiubynsky's *niavka* has a number of features borrowed from these related types. It is the *rusalka*, rather than the *niavka*, who is born (like Marichka-*niavka*) from the soul of a drowned young woman

Marichka, tempting her lover after her death, acts more like a *nichnytsia* than a *niavka*; a *niavka* will tempt anyone, but a *nichnytsia* appears to her lover (whom she blames wholly or in part for her death as a human) and exhausts him to death with imaginary lovemaking.

[11]The water nymph, or *rusalka*, does not play an important role in the folklore of the Hutsuls. References to her are much more frequent in the mythology of eastern and northern Galicia and in the central territories of Ukraine. Her name is connected with *rusalii*, the ancient Ukrainian rites of spring that were celebrated in the beginning of May (these rites probably anteceded the more contemporary rites of Saint Iurii [see note 30]).

On May 10 (about the time that the *niavkas* wake up in their caves), the *rusalkas* leave the riverbeds, where they spent the winter months in nests, and begin their mischievous activities; they are tricksters *par excellence*. They comb the water out of their hair with magic combs made of human bone in order to flood a field or a village. They also confound fishermen's nets, float millstones and navigate them, swing from swings that they have built in birch trees, and dance their wild, orgiastic dances. Their wild laughter, more boisterous and arrogant than the seductive laughter of the *niavkas*, resounds all over the countryside. Like the *niavkas*, the *rusalkas* can be extremely dangerous to young men and girls. They kill young men by tickling or dancing them to death. When a *rusalka* meets a young girl, she poses a riddle for her. Depending on the girl's answer to the riddle, the *rusalka* either lets her go or forces her into the water and turns her into an "adopted" *rusalka*, known as *rusalka-semylitka* (a seven-year old *rusalka*).

The Hutsuls believe that the original "genetic" shape of the *rusalka* is that of a small child. Upon seeing a potential victim, she quickly turns into a beautiful woman, naked, but almost completely covered with her long hair which she wears loose about her body. A *rusalka* does not have a hole in her back; the only subtle difference between her and a human being is her slightly protruding green eyes, which lack the inner light of the soul. Her maidenly appearance, however, is only one of her many disguises; she can change into a squirrel, a frog, a rat, or any other small animal as the situation demands.

As in the case of any trickster deity, there is a serious, even a grave, side to the *rusalka*. She is uncommonly wise, having access to mysteries that no human inquiry can penetrate. She tells profound legends about life and death, and sings strange songs. In Ukrainian folklore, there is a body of haunting songs (*rusalski pisni*) that are attributed to the *rusalkas*, but probably stem from the pagan celebrations of the *rusalii*. Many of the difficult riddles that the *rusalka* poses are included in the songs of the *rusalii*. The metaphysical implications of these riddles are embodied in magnificent, almost surrealistic imagery. Her ability to pose such mysterious riddles is a part of her profile as a guardian and custodian of the springs of the water of life, making her similar in this respect to the riddle-spouting sphinx and the poetically inclined guardians of the Castalian springs in orphic myths.

[12]Whether suicidal or accidental, the victims of drowning (*potopelnyks, topilnyks*) come out when the moon is full, lie on rocks quite near the place where they drowned, and attempt to dry themselves in the moonlight. They have to do this until a new victim drowns in the same place. Needless to say, they are quite

dangerous, since they do not hesitate to encourage and promote the cause of their liberation. The Hutsuls place crosses along the shore where those spirits tend to congregate to warn boatsmen and ferriers. They also place bowls of milk in such places for the souls of the drowned. The *topilnyks* usually have chalk-white bodies but are sometimes covered with fish scales, or else they appear to their victims as tiny men with very long hair and beards.

[13]The *floiara* is a wind instrument, a kind of shepherd's flute, approximately two feet long, which is formed by a cylindrical tube of hazel or similar soft-core wood. The inner layers of wood are taken out by a special drill made of harder wood. The mouthpiece is carved at one end, and the opposite end is cut flat. In the upper part of the tube, at set intervals, six or seven stops are cut or burned out. The surface of the instrument is sumptuously decorated with carved or burned designs.

The *dentsivka* is a variation of the *floiara*, with an added vibrating element at the bottom of the mouthpiece, with the help of which the player is able to create a polyphonic effect. Most commentators regard the *sopilka* (a word which appears in standard Ukrainian) as a generic term, subsuming the *floiara*, the *dentsivka*, and several other "species" of that instrument. Other experts define the *sopilka* as a simple reed, shorter and narrower than the others, with a basic mouthpiece and six holes for stops. Still others, like Kotsiubynsky in *Shadows*, use the words *dentsivka* and *sopilka* synonymously.

[14]The *trembita* is a wooden tube six to nine feet in length. The mouthpiece end is about one inch in diameter, and the opposite end, the bell, is approximately two to three times wider. The instrument is made of a young, perfectly shaped spruce or fir tree; a tree that has been lightly grazed by lightning will imbue the instrument with a touch of magic. The trunk is whittled to the necessary shape and diameter, rubbed smooth, and neatly cut through in the middle to form two equal parts. The inner layers of the wood are taken out with a special drill or a knife with an extraordinarily long blade. After the wood has been hollowed out, the two pieces are glued together to form the original length of the column. The pipe is then tightly wrapped in soft, pliable bark. The complicated wooden mouthpiece is made separately and fitted into the narrower end of the pipe.

The player (*trembitannyk* or *trembitar*) always makes his *trembita* himself and would not touch anyone else's instrument for fear of having bad luck the rest of his life. When playing the *trembita*, the *trembitannyk* tilts his head upward, holding the *trembita* aloft to form an acute angle with the ground. He modulates the tones by the position of his lips and the pressure of the air. Since there are no stops in the *trembita*, the range of the instrument is limited. Its harsh, loud sounds, rather haunting in their animal-like despair, are mostly ritualistic signals. In the village, the *trembita* is played most frequently to announce a death and during the funeral procession itself (see note 33). In the uplands, it is played by the chief shepherd to make ritualistic announcements to his far-flung shepherds (see note 19).

[15]The parish fair, or *khram* (which means either "cathedral" or "parish-church holiday" in standard Ukrainian), is usually celebrated on the name day of the patron saint of the church. On that day, the Hutsuls, with great pomp

and circumstance, travel to their parish church (several villages belong to the same parish), taking with them great quantities of food and liquor. After the Requiem Mass in the church, families go behind the church to share a meal at the graves of deceased family members. Then the clans begin visiting each other at the graves, sharing the food with friends, neighbors, and guests from other parishes, and raising a glass in honor of the dead. A parish fair can last several days, with the celebrants camping near the cemetery.

[16]The playful conversation between Ivan and Marichka, consisting of sounds which onomatopoeically imitate the croaking of frogs, is taken verbatim from Onyshchuk, where it appears as part of a legend. In this legend, a noble lady betrayed her husband with a gentleman friend, enlisting the aid of a girl friend in the clandestine affair, while at the same time quarreling with her husband, making his life miserable. God punished her and her two friends for the double injustice done to her husband by turning the trio into frogs, who must now live in the water and conduct eternal nonsensical conversations, imitating the lady's shrewishness. The lines used by Kotsiubynsky constitute a short fragment of a rather lengthy conversation between the three sinners, which is a witty imitation of the croaking of frogs.

[17]Pagan Slavs were sunworshippers, and numerous sky and sun gods—Div, Svarog, Dazhbog, Veles, Khors—were widely known in ancient Ukraine. The sky god Svarog was imagined as a face, which was the sky, with the right cheek being the sun and the left the moon. At sunrise, the Hutsuls say the following prayer: "Glory be to God for His divine face which has now revealed itself; glory be to that luminous face."

[18]*Kolomyika* is a brief self-enclosed song (its name is the diminutive form of the Hutsul town Kolomyia). The notation of its lyrics is usually arranged in a simple quatrain of trochaic tetrameter, followed by trochaic trimeter, with feminine endings and the rhyme scheme of ABCB (with an occasional variation of AABA). Sometimes notations of texts appear in couplet form. The *kolomyika* is sung to a variety of melodies, all with the same basic structure. The quatrains occasionally form cycles, sung alternately by men and women in the form of a dialogue or playful *agon*. Most often, however, they appear as independent miniature songs.

Within the simple framework of the *kolomyika*, the Hutsuls have created thousands upon thousands of songs, which are usually improvised for the given occasion. They reflect a wide range of moods, from delicately lyrical to grossly ribald (the latter kind usually sung at weddings), from hilarious to melancholy, from almost surrealistic in their wild inventiveness to mundanely topical. Although love and wit are basic to most *kolomyikas*, they also treat themes of injustice, fate, death, the spiritual world, and faith in God. As Kotsiubynsky illustrates, many *kolomyikas* are based on daily occurrences in the village, sometimes even using the actual first names of the persons involved; occasionally, they become vehicles of censure and hence of social control. Kotsiubynsky quotes the *kolomyikas* as independent textual units and runs several of them directly into the narrative of *Shadows*. He also employs a number of images that are usually found in *kolomyikas*.

[19]The upland pasture (*polonyna*) is a plain or a system of plains high in the Carpathian Mountains used as pastureland throughout the summer. From early autumn until approximately the end of April, no Hutsul would dare approach the *polonynas*, since during the winter months they are the domain of *máras* (etymologically connected with Marena, the Slavic goddess of winter and death). *Maras*, in the specifically Hutsulian definition, are those who died a violent death in the mountains. Although the upland pasture, more so than the valleys, is constantly ruled by the *aridnyk*, it is especially in the winter—when, according to some legends, he is banished there by God—that he takes it over completely, employing the services of the *máras* to eradicate all human traces from his kingdom.

The center of the organization of the upland pasture is the *stoishche*—a permanent complex of wooden structures enclosed by a fence—where the men and the livestock spend the night. The most important building is a small wooden hut (*staia*) without windows and floor. It consists of two rooms: one where the manufactured cheese and various staples and supplies are stored, and a larger bonfire room (*vatarnyk*), where the "eternal" *vatra* ("bonfire") burns all summer. In the *vatarnyk* sleep the *vatah*, or chief shepherd, and the *spuzar* (from the Western Ukrainian word *spuza*, derived from the Moldavian *spuze* or "hot ashes"), whose main job is to stoke the fire and never let it go out, but who also helps the chief shepherd in his chores. The night watchman, or *nichnyk*, is allowed to get warm near the "eternal fire" during the chilly nights in the mountains; he sleeps in the *vatarnyk* in the daytime. Besides overseeing the large number of the herdsmen and their intricate (often ritualistic) chores, the main task of the chief shepherd is to make cheese from the milk obtained daily from sheep and goats. Hence the bonfire room contains a number of large kegs and other utensils.

Around the *staia*, but at some distance from it, are the *koshàras*—sheepfolds, corrals, and other pens and enclosures where the livestock spend the night. Needless to say, the largest enclosures are the sheepfolds, for the sheep far outnumber the goats in the uplands; cows and horses are rare since farmers prefer to keep them in the village and use them throughout the summer. The sheepfold is divided by a wall-like structure, covered by a long and narrow roof, where the sheep are milked each morning according to a complicated but highly efficient plan of operation. Other kinds of livestock are milked in less structured ways. At the head of each enclosure stands a small shack with a leaning roof, covered with bark and resting on four poles, the front pair higher than the rear pair. The shack has no walls since the herder, who does not sleep in the hut but spends the night with the herds, must have a clear view of the livestock. Inside the shack, the herder builds his bed, a wooden platform on low posts. In front of the shack, a small fire must burn all night. Nearby is a salting area, where livestock are fed salt with much ceremony and ritual.

Each pasture is owned by a *deputat* (this political title of "state representative" is given to wealthy farmers as a token of respect). Early in the spring, the *deputat* hires his chief shepherd (*vatah*); although a *deputat* may want to keep his shepherd indefinitely, the ceremony of hiring must be repeated each year. The chief shepherd, a man of authority in the village, lives on his farm in the winter and behaves like any other villager. It is taken for granted by everyone, however, that he is hardly an ordinary man; he knows the ways of the spirits and is privy to mysteries of which the average villager has no idea. The chief shepherd, in short, is a secret sorcerer. After being formally hired,

the chief shepherd proceeds to select his crew, which he also must rehire every year. Each of the herdsmen is not only a "professional" but a "specialist." (It is doubtful that in real life Ivan would have been hired by merely wandering into the uplands, as he is in *Shadows*.) Not only is each kind of livestock herded by a special herdsman with his own title and a set of appropriate skills (I have found twelve such job descriptions, each with its appropriate title), but there is a separate group of "experts" who herd the lambs and take care of new births among the sheep population. In addition, a fire keeper (*spuzar*), a night watchman (*nichnyk*), and a drover (*honinnyk*) are hired; the drover keeps order among the sheep during the milking. The chief shepherd runs all the activities in the pasture with paramilitary discipline, commanding implicit obedience not only because of his superior technical skills but also because of his less comprehensible, but, nevertheless, quite evident powers.

The ritualistic expedition to the uplands takes place in the second part of May. The chief shepherd and two older herdsmen set out for the mountains two days ahead of the livestock. Entering the hut for the first time, the shepherd prays at length, mixing the words of liturgical incantations with pagan magical spells. After the prayer, the chief shepherd throws a horseshow into the center of the bonfire room where the "eternal bonfire" is to burn, an act that is to protect the pastures from lightning and hail. (Since the horseshoe should never be touched, one of the fire keeper's difficult skills is to stoke and stir the fire without disturbing the horseshoe underneath it.) The chief shepherd then proceeds to "create" the fire of life (*zhyvyi ohen*). He finds a dry, thick and straight stick (*skalka*), partially splits its two ends, and inserts a dried, spongelike mushroom into each split. He then holds the stick in a horizontal position at waist level, presses its one end against a door jamb of the hut and the other against a thick board which one of the herdsmen holds in a vertical position, firmly anchoring its lower end against his foot. (The method which Kotsiubynsky describes in *Shadows*—and the one he must have witnessed himself—is cumbersome since the stick must be carefully measured to fit very snugly between the two jambs of the doorframe.) The chief shepherd loops a thick leather belt around the stick twice, and he and the other herdsman rapidly pull the ends of the belt back and forth so that the stick spins between the door jamb and the board. The friction causes the dry mushroom to ignite at both ends, and in time the wood itself begins to smolder. The smoke coming out of the doorway of the hut announces to the world that the fire of life has been ignited and that the uplands are ready to welcome the livestock. When the wood at both ends of the stick begins to burn, the three men hold it aloft, turn eastward, and kneel to say another prayer to God and the *aridnyk* at the same time.

The chief shepherd breaks off a glowing ember from the burning stick, extinguishes it in a bucket of water (a common magical procedure, frequently used to cure the evil eye; see note 26), and sprinkles the ground with this "holy water." The burning stick, used as the foundation of the "eternal bonfire," is placed next to the horseshoe by the chief shepherd, who builds a prescribed structure of kindling around it. Any other means of igniting the bonfire would cause the livestock to perish in the course of the summer. If, God forbid, the chief shepherd were to use a match, he himself would die the following winter. The "eternal bonfire" burns continually throughout the summer, and under no circumstances is it allowed to go out.

In the meantime, the rest of the crew and numerous visitors (owners of herds, other villagers, womenfolk, and especially young people and children) and the livestock set out on the long trek toward the uplands, which can take several days. They are joined by similar groups from other villages, and music, singing, and jokes accompany the festive procession all the way to its destination. A short time before the livestock and the people arrive (they signal their approach with a *trembita* or horn), the chief shepherd places some embers from the eternal bonfire into a bucket, carries them to the gateway, and builds a small bonfire there, pronouncing a spell (this spell Kotsiubynsky quotes from Shukhevych, with some omissions and displacements [see note 21]). As the livestock enter the *stoishche*, they walk over the bonfire, which purifies them and brings them health and good pasture throughout the summer. This ritual is so important that if it happens to rain on the day of arrival, the people and the livestock camp outside the confines of the *stoishche* and wait for the rain to stop so that the chief shepherd can build his bonfire in the gateway.

Before setting out for the uplands, the farmer counts his sheep by standing naked in the doorway of the stable, each foot resting against the bottom of the jamb, and letting the sheep pass between his legs. This, presumably, is meant to make them as potent as he is. He then marks his sheep and other livestock; sheep and goats are marked with notches in the skin of the ear, or with dyed wool looped through the pierced ear, while cows and calves are branded. To avoid offending the farmers, the chief shepherd allows each farmer to report the number of livestock he has brought to the uplands. He then marks that number on a small flat wooden board with a hole bored at one end of it by an intricate set of notches and cuts across the width of the board; these marks comprise an efficient system of numerals, completely unlike the Roman and Arabic systems. The chief shepherd then splits the board lengthwise into two uneven parts, leaving the hole intact in the larger part. The narrower piece, called *ravas*, goes to the farmer, while the wider, called *koloda*, stays with the chief shepherd. The chief shepherd strings all the *kolodas* of a given season on a narrow leather thong and carries them on his body at all times. He does this not because he distrusts human beings (as we have seen, he trusts them on principle) but because he is afraid that prankster demons will "recalculate" his calculations.

In a complex and original series of measurements and computations, the chief shepherd, the *deputat*, and the owners of the livestock figure out how many heads of cheese (which the shepherds will manufacture throughout the summer) will be due each farmer at the end of the season. All the remaining heads of cheese, plus all the lambs and other livestock born in the uplands, will go to the *deputat* as payment for the use of his pastureland. The *deputat* will then pay the chief shepherd and the herdsmen in kind (cheese, lambs, plus the use of the pastureland for their own stock throughout the season). If a sheep dies in the uplands, the owner does not demand retribution but expects to receive only the number of heads of cheese initially agreed upon. Owners of cattle pay in cash for the use of the meadows, and cowherds are given their salaries in cash at the end of the season.

While the chief shepherd, the *deputat*, and the owners are engaged in their business meeting, the herdsmen fix their individual shacks, prepare their beds, and mend the fences around the enclosures. At suppertime, the chief shepherd sounds his *trembita* (every chief shepherd is also a *trembitannyk*; see note 14) to invite his herdsmen to the *staia*. They eat gruel made of cornflour which has

been cooked in a kettle hanging from a complex lift-and-arm that rises alongside the bonfire and extends over it. After supper, they have their first procedural conference (more ritualistic than businesslike, since everyone has been instructed by tradition and his own experience in the ways of life and work in the uplands), at which no outsiders may be present. The chief shepherd pronounces a series of formulaic instructions, which the herdsmen have heard year in year out, and blesses them. They then pass around the ritual bottle of whiskey, wish each other luck, and the herdsmen disperse to their shacks, each taking with him a torch from the "eternal fire" to ignite his own small bonfire outside his shack.

Early the next morning, a normal day in the pasture begins. The chief shepherd goes to the milking wall and hits a beam three times with his ax, pronouncing an incantation to the effect that the sheep should be as strong, hardy and "keen" as the blade of his ax. He wakes the herdsmen with a blast from his *trembita*, and they bring their flocks to the milking wall to be milked. They sit on small stationary stools constructed along the wall, while the drover musters the sheep into an orderly line with a magical twig with bark on it (bark helps the sheep to yield more milk); he allows the sheep to enter, one by one, into the narrow space between the shepherds' knees and the wall, and each shepherd grasps one sheep firmly between his knees and milks it. During the day, when the livestock and the herdsmen are out seeking pasture, the chief shepherd makes the "first cheese" from the "first milk." At supper, the shepherds eat some heads of the first cheese, with appropriate incantations and ritualistic gestures. This is one of the two times during the entire summer when they are allowed to consume their own product. The chief shepherd (who is also the cook) will prepare their food from the staples brought along from the village, cheese by-products, and the meat of animals killed in accidents. The last is discouraged and even forbidden in some regions of the mountains, as eating the meat of animals that one herds is considered to be an unclean practice, almost as evil as cannibalism. As for fishing and hunting, there is no time for that.

At the end of the summer, there is a "parting" celebration (*rozluchennia*). The villagers come for their livestock and cheese, accompanied by music and song, and final transactions take place. The chief shepherd and two older and respected shepherds, who "created" the fire of life, must stay behind in the uplands until the "eternal bonfire" dies of itself. It should never be left burning without human supervision since a *mara* (which takes over the pasture the moment human beings leave it) will use the fire to burn the wooden structures. If, on the other hand, the chief shepherd extinguishes the "eternal bonfire," he may expect to die in the course of the following winter.

[20]The bear, whom the Hutsuls call "uncle" (*vuiko*) or "the big one," poses not only physical but also preternatural dangers for the shepherds. Several Hutsul legends about the origin of the bear have it that a miller, wanting to frighten God, turned his sheepskin coat inside out (turning clothing inside out is an extremely powerful magical act; see notes 10 and 27), hid under a bridge, and as God approached, jumped from his hiding place growling and walking on all fours. God hit him with a broom (a magically potent object; see note 26) and said, "Get away from me, you bear." At that moment, the miller indeed turned into a bear. It is believed that the bear builds himself a house with

windows and a roof, for the winter, and that he nourishes himself by sucking his front paw.

[21]Kotsiubynsky paraphrases two ritualistic texts that he found in Shukhevych (one thoroughly pagan and the other perceptibly Christian), combining them into a single prayer. The first part is a paraphrase of the words pronounced by the chief shepherd during the building of the bonfire, while the remainder of the text is a paraphrase of the set prayer that an older herdsman pronounces at the herdsmen's first supper in the upland.

[22]The *lisna* or *lisnytsia* (meaning "she of the forest") belongs to the "she-devil" group of demons. Like the older kind of *niavka* (see note 10), the *lisna* develops from an illegitimate baby who has been killed in the forest by its unwed mother. For seven years, the soul of the baby wanders about the forest, begging to be christened. If no one hears its cry and blesses it by the end of the seven years, it turns into a *lisna*. The *lisna* is obviously a sort of *niavka*, very attractive, and with a gaping hole in her back. She and her companions dance in open circles, unlike those of the *niavkas* and the *rusalkas*. Since the permanent occupation of the *lisna* is sowing grass upon meadows and in forest clearings, it is small wonder that she is often seen in the uplands. Her hobby is playing havoc with the emotions of young men in love. She appears in her victim's dreams for nine nights; if he does not relate his dreams to anyone, she proceeds to treat him as an accomplice, and comes to him in order to seduce him, earnestly persisting in her efforts night after night. Frequently, like the *nichnytsia* (see note 10), she assumes the form of his beloved woman who is temporarily or permanently absent.

The *lisna*, being an exceptionally tenacious young lady, is not easily discouraged; even a clove of garlic will not drive her away. The victim must steal the sash that the priest wears during mass and bind the *lisna* with it, holding her by force until the rooster crows, at which time she should vanish. The difficulty here is that while her captor holds her, she makes herself so seductive that the young man must mobilize all his spiritual resources, constantly keeping his hand, or at least a part of it, on the priest's sash, in order to resist her. During the next nine nights, moreover, he must avoid the bed in which he first encountered the *lisna*. The *lisna*, in her turn, may be seriously offended by such rejection of her affections, playing nasty tricks on the young man and confounding his work and his love life for a long time. If she should succeed in seducing him, the dire results of mating with a demon (see note 10) follow in short order—listlessness, drowsiness, general debilitation, alienation from society, depersonalization, and eventual death from exhaustion.

The *lisna* harbors a particular fondness for young shepherds since she spends most of her time in their vicinity, sowing grass in the pastures. She sweetly and seductively calls a lonely herdsman by name. If he makes the mistake of answering her, she will refuse to leave him alone, especially since a priest's sash does not readily come to hand in such circumstances. After the herdsman succumbs to her irresistible lure, he will soon suffer the usual weakness and listlessness of body and spirit. His sheep, on the other hand, will flourish as never before since now the *lisna* herself will help the feeble shepherd to herd them; they will find the best pasture, never scatter, and will yield the thickest and the creamiest milk in the entire pastureland.

The siren-like calls of the *lisna* are so alluring that when a herdsman first hears them, he is well advised to run to the next shack as quickly as he can, awaken the shepherd in it, and tell him of his trouble. His companion will immediately understand and sympathize. In order not to hear the call of the *lisna*, they will sit together, sing, tell each other stories, or even dance. If there are no companions in the vicinity, the lonely shepherd should clap his hands and talk, sing, or whistle to himself to drown out the irresistible voice.

[23]Ivan is visited by a *lisovyk* (described in note 7). It is unclear why Kotsiubynsky provides that demon with features of a *chuhaistyr* of the first variety—tall as a fir tree and dressed in white (see note 8).

[24]Saint Elias (*Iliia, Alei Bozhyi, Ylei*) is the Christian "sublimation" of Perun, the powerful pagan god of thunder and storms. In the Hutsul myths of the Genesis, he becomes a mystical power of God, some emanation and externalization of God's Spirit (perhaps like the Holy Ghost), who exists in the sky as God walks the earth. *Alei* has such incredible strength that God Himself is somewhat wary of his mysterious presence. (When we keep in mind that Elias is Perun, his relationship with God becomes a significant contribution to our comprehension of the pagan-Christian religion of the Hutsuls.)

When God and the *aridnyk* were at war, and a host of angels faced a formidable division of assorted devils on the hide of a gigantic bull (obviously a residue of the pagan bull god, identified with the sky god), Elias, in his great enthusiasm, hurled such powerful lightning bolts from the sky that he destroyed not only the forces of the adversary but most of the soldiers serving under his own supreme commander. God Himself was so overpowered by his air support that he fell on his right knee (homage before Perun?). At that point, God quite prudently decided to control His overanxious and overpowering aide by chaining Elias' right leg to a rock. Although Elias has lost half his strength, he still chases the *aridnyk* and his helpers up and down mountain slopes with lightning bolts (Elias' favorite sport). At the end of the world, when both the *aridnyk* and Elias will obtain their freedom, a decisive battle between them is scheduled to take place, which will be so fierce that it will destroy the earth and everything on it.

The passage in Kotsiubynsky to which this note refers is almost a word-for-word quotation from a story recorded by Shukhevych: "And Elias blasts the devil wherever he can find him, be it in a rock, under a rock, or under a tree." The image of the devil hiding under a tree suggests a primary structure in pagan East Slavic mythology, superbly presented and analyzed by Ivanov and Toporov. The god of storms (later specified as Perun) is always above the tripartite tree of the world, while the dragon that he hunts is always hiding in its roots. The dragon (equivalent to the Hutsuls' *zhertva*) steals livestock and hides them in a rock; the god of storms splinters the rock and releases the animals. Ivanov and Toporov point out that Perun's own abode is a tall white rock and that his very name may originate from the Hittite word *peruna*, meaning "rock." Ivanov and Toporov believe that later the dragon became the god Veles, the patron of cattle and Perun's antagonist.

[25]An old farmer told Hnatiuk, "We worship fire like a god. Fire is our precious guest." Fire, however, can be very vengeful, and when men do not

respect it, it becomes furious and destructive. Obviously, fire worship began when human consciousness itself began, and it figures prominently in all ancient mythologies.

[26]Khyma is a Hutsul witch (*vidma*). At night, the soul of a witch departs from her during sleep and flies out of the house through an open window or through the hearth and the chimney. The witch's soul appears as a large, translucent sphere or an inflated bladder, illuminated from the inside. It half-flies and half-rolls across forests, gardens, and fields until it arrives at a stable or a cow shed. The soul of the witch then sucks milk from a cow, fills itself with it like a sac, and rolls back home. There it pours out the milk into a container and returns to the witch's body. The milk that has been transported in the witch's soul is called *manna*. If the witch's soul bursts or is caught in transit, her body dies. A woman can capture the soul of a witch with the edge of her long skirt, and a man by removing his trousers and letting the fiery ball fly into them, where it will be stopped at the seat. The witch's soul can be preserved indefinitely in an earthen bowl used to mash poppy seed (a *makitra*). If the body of the witch is moved, let alone removed while her soul is abroad, she will never come to life again but her soul will wander over the earth eternally, searching for the misplaced body. A witch who specializes in stealing milk is also called a *cheredilnytsia* or *cheredinnytsia*.

Although this is the essential shape that the witch's soul takes, the witch herself, as Kotsiubynsky tells us, has the uncanny ability to change herself into numerous animals or even objects—a white dog (note that a Spanish curse evokes the devil by naming the *perro blanco*), a frog, an owl, or a bolt of linen which slowly unrolls itself in the moonlight and leads lonely wanderers into crevices and abysses. A large grey toad is almost certain to be a witch (see note 16); if you throw it into the fire, it will scream with the voice of a woman.

Like their sisters in other lands, Hutsul witches travel by saddling a broomstick or a long poker used to rake the hearth (*kotsiuba*). They use this means of locomotion when traveling to a witches' sabbath held high on Hoverlia Peak on the eve of Saint Iurii (Bald Mountain, near Kiev serves as the meeting place for Central Ukrainian witches). Hutsul witches use a special cream that facilitates flying when rubbed over the body; if it is rubbed over an object, the object also flies.

We are told that Khyma is a "born"; or "native" witch. There are "native" (*rodymi*) and "adopted" (*khovani*) witches, the latter acquiring their powers with the help of the *aridnyk* himself. "Native" witches sport a tiny, hard tail, but "adopted" witches have no distinguishing marks on their bodies. Surprisingly enough, "adopted" witches are much more dangerous than "native" witches; the former always present a threat to human beings, exercising complex magical practices against their enemies, while the latter are interested predominantly in acquisitions, especially milk and livestock. "Native" witches are inordinately fond of milk; if a "native" witch has no access to a cow, she affixes four short wooden pegs to the bottom of a stool or a bench and proceeds to milk the piece of furniture. "Adopted" witches have no such powers.

As in other primitive societies, the evil eye is one of the most atavistic fears among the Hutsuls. A person is born with the power of the evil eye; many do not want it and consider it a curse rather than a gift. Although the owner of the evil eye is not necessarily a witch, all "native" witches wield that power. A person with the evil eye should look at his or her fingernails, which draw

power into themselves, before encountering the gaze of another for the first time. When meeting a person with the evil eye, one should whisper the following "wasteland" incantation: "In your eye are owls, snakes, rocks, not I." We recall from the novel that when Iura looks at Ivan with his hypnotic eyes, Ivan pronounces a similar spell: "Salt in your eye!" A victim of the evil eye becomes gravely ill and must be cured by a medicine man (*prymivnyk*). The medicine man extinguishes live embers in water, gives some of the water to the patient to drink (touched by sacred fire, the water becomes the water of life), and sprinkles the rest over the patient's body with the back of his left hand in a gesture of "magical reversal." He does so while pronouncing a series of complex, almost surrealistic, incantations in which he sends the effects of the evil eye into the swamps, mountains, and dead forests of the wasteland.

The most potent evil eye is that of a "native" witch. If the witch praises anyone or anything (as when Khyma compliments Ivan on his sheep), that person or animal will soon wilt and die. Even an object acclaimed by a witch is certain to be destroyed soon afterward. If the witch does not want to harm anyone or anything by her evil eye, she should whisper to herself the following formula: "I am cutting, I am cutting, but I do not cut through" (*Tnu, tnu, ne utnu*). (Ivan probably refers to the evil eye when he says that the witches are "cutting" the cattle.)

Perhaps the most uncanny—indeed, cosmic—talent of the witch is to drink the sun and the moon. The drinking of the sun is much rarer and incomparably more difficult than the drinking of the moon. Witches and vampires fly as close to the sun as they can and drink most of its light, causing what we know as an eclipse. When Onyshchuk asked one of the old peasants why God permits such blasphemy (since the sun, as we recall, is holy), his informant answered that it is only out of God's kindness, that the witches beg God so earnestly and persistently that finally He breaks down and allows them to drink a little of the sun. After all, the face of the sun will soon return to its former glory, while the poor witches are doomed to eternal perdition. Since the witches are active at night, they prefer to drink the light of the moon so that total darkness will hide their evil deeds. Both the witches and the vampires eat and drink the moon until only a stain of blood remains in the night sky. Although the moon takes much longer to heal than the sun, it eventually renews itself in the form of the Nova; seeing it, the Hutsuls cross themselves and thank God for not having allowed the witches and vampires to completely destroy the moon.

[27]Iura possesses the two highest powers that the *aridnyk* can bestow on a mortal—that of a *hradivnyk* and that of a *molfar*. A *hradivnyk* (also called *khmarnyk* or *burivnyk*) is a Hutsul weatherman who has an advantage over a meteorologist in that he not only predicts bad weather but does something about it. As in the case of the witch and the *rusalka*, the *hradivnyk* ("hail diverter") may be either "native" or "adopted." The "native" *hradivnyk* is obviously born with his gift and does not have to earn it; all he does when hail clouds approach his village is climb a hill, speak to the clouds, threaten them, and show them the way to go around the fertile fields.

It is not so easy for the "adopted" *hradivnyk*, who may study and practice his difficult skills in several ways. During the traditional Christmas Eve supper, he collects spoonfuls of nine of the twelve courses in a bowl (the devil's

number, as opposed to that of Christ's apostles), places a broom and a hearth poker crosswise on the bowl, and carries the whole "structure" around his house whispering apropriate incantations. Returning to the house, he ties the contents of the bowl into a kerchief and hides the bundle in a secret place, where it stays until Easter. Before Easter, he travels to several towns in the vicinity of his village to buy incense in nine separate stores (before stores existed, the *hradivnyk* probably collected juniper berries from nine trees for that purpose). After retrieving the bundle from its hiding place, he mixes the incense with the Christmas food, or what is left of it, and at Easter hides the mixture in the basket of food that is traditionally taken to church to be blessed. Then he puts it back into its hiding place until the first hail storm arrives.

Besides the "holy supper" (as the *hradivnyk* calls the mixture), he also prepares a magic wand (in the way that is common to all Hutsul magicians) by cutting a straight branch from a tree and trimming it (leaving the bark intact), and then using it to separate a frog from a snake that is about to devour it. Separating two intertwined snakes may do in an emergency, but this produces a definitely inferior magic wand. When the *hradivnyk* feels the approach of a hail storm (and he can sense this much sooner than an ordinary person), he places his magic wand across the "holy supper," either strips naked or puts on his clothes inside out, climbs a hill, burns some straw, stands upon the soot, holds an ax with the blade up in his right hand and the "holy supper" with the magic wand across it in his left, and begins his difficult conversation with the hail cloud. He pronounces a set of complex, poetic incantations, telling the hail cloud to head for the wasteland. Iura's spell in the text of *Shadows* is a drastically abbreviated and simplified version of such a magic speech.

A much more sinister way of becoming a *hradivnyk* is to begin building a table from seventy-seven kinds of wood on Christmas morning, when doing any kind of work is considered a grave sin, and everyone is in church. The candidate works on his table slowly and carefully throughout the year, but especially on Sundays and holidays when the handling of tools is forbidden. He must finish it precisely on Christmas Eve of the following year, at which time he carries it into the main room of his house and sets it for the traditional Christmas Eve supper. He crosses a broom and a hearth poker and walks around his house three times, inviting the *aridnyk* to share his Christmas Eve supper with him. The *hradivnyk*'s powerful spells compel the *aridnyk* to show up in human form and to eat with him. After their "unholy" supper, the two strike a Faustian bargain; the *aridnyk* will obey all the orders of the *hradivnyk* pertaining to the unloading of hail in exchange for the latter's immortal soul. This pact guarantees the *hradivnyk* the power to divert hail clouds as easily as a "native" colleague.

An inferior *hradivnyk* uses a stick taken by force from a blind man and a *kalach* (a bread with a hole in the middle) that has been blessed in church at Easter. He observes the cloud through the hole in the bread, while pronouncing a simplified spell. Informants agree, however, that a village should stay away from such amateurs if it can afford to hire a professional to do the job. If it so happens that two powerful *hradivnyks* from separate villages are working their magic simultaneously on the same hail cloud, it will become confused and beg to be released. The words that the cloud speaks to Iura in *Shadows* are quoted almost word for word from a story in Shukhevych about a cloud

begging two *hradivnyks* to set it free by making up their minds where it should go to release its hail.

The *hradivnyk* is an extraordinarily powerful magician since hail, being one of the most destructive elemental forces in an agrarian community, is a direct product of the *aridnyk* and his helpers. We have seen in note 6 that when God imprisoned him under a sheet of ice, the *aridnyk* entertained himself by making hail pellets. Now hail is manufactured by *chornoknyzhnyks* (the *aridnyk*'s helpers) with the assistance of the souls of suicides. The hail factory is located in an eternally frozen lake somewhere under Chornohora. The job of the *chornoknyzhnyks* is to chop the ice of the lake into pellets, while the souls of suicides pack them in huge sacks. Whenever the *aridnyk* leaves the lake, the souls of suicides follow him, carrying the heavy sacks on their backs. The *aridnyk* and the souls fly across the sky in a hail cloud and spill the pellets out of their sacks upon the most fertile fields they can find. It is these souls that speak to Iura out of the hail cloud. (The fact that in some legends the *aridnyk* sits in his iron chair and in others flies around the world in hail clouds should not be disturbing since myth cannot be expected to be confined to logical progression and coordination of events. However, as Lévi-Strauss and others have illustrated, separate narratives seem to be linked into vast deep structures.)

Occasionally a hail cloud, or the *aridnyk* himself, descends upon the earth in the shape of a human being in order to bargain with a particularly powerful *hradivnyk*. Informants testify to having seen a hail cloud as a nobleman, a rich peasant, or as a shepherd with a flock of black sheep. The *burivnyk* ("storm diverter") seems to be a synonym for the *hradivnyk*. In the three stories recorded by Shukhevych that deal specifically with the *burivnyk*, we see that the ease and authority with which he handles storms would put him in the category of the "native" *hradivnyk*. The *khmarnyk* ("cloud diverter"), in charge of rain clouds, is much more limited in his capacities. Some *khmarnyks* merely take off all their clothes and put them on inside out, pronouncing simple incantations; others are equipped with a magic twig that has been blessed by a priest on Whitsunday (when greenery is traditionally blessed in the church). Still others run out to meet a rain cloud equipped with nothing more than a holy icon.

Judging from the preceding remarks, Iura is either a "native" *hradivnyk* (which would make him a sort of demon), or one who has struck a bargain with the *aridnyk*. Our conviction that Iura enjoys a close relationship with the "public profile" of the *aridnyk* is strengthened by our knowledge of his other uncanny skill, namely, that of a *molfar* (or "soothsayer"). The *molfar* is by far the most powerful magician among the Hutsuls. He is a devoted servant of the *aridnyk*, who is the source of his power. Shukhevych's quotation from a Hutsul informant suggests that the *molfars* "play god" (*bohuiut*) and can do literally anything they want.

The *molfar* operates somewhat like a voodoo priest. He makes a doll, or *molfa*, in the shape of the person or animal that he wants to hurt out of the soil in which his prospective victim has left a track. In the case of an animal, the tail is made out of the victim's real hair, and in the case of a person, some of the hair is attached to the head of the doll. After making the doll, the *molfar* proceeds to make his pins by whittling wooden strips into long and very thin spikes. He wraps the pins in a kerchief and buries them in a gateway in front of a stable door, near a threshold, or wherever his intended victim will be sure to step over them. The next day at dawn the *molfar* strips naked and digs out the pins, puts them in the chimney of his hearth for a short time so that they will

be "blessed" by the flame, and then begins to stick them into the areas of the doll that represent the parts of the victim's body he wants to be affected. If he inserts a pin into the heart or head of the doll, the victim dies instantly. While sticking pins into a human doll, the *molfar* pronounces the following spell: "You have caused me enough trouble [*Ty mini dosolyv*]; for this I peck you, I wilt you, I burn you; may you dry up like a scorched tree." If the *molfar* really wants his victim to "dry up"—to languish and die of weakness—he puts the doll in the chimney until the soil of which it is made is bone-dry.

When a *molfar* takes his vengeance upon someone (he usually attacks people of whom he is envious), the victim must hurry to a fortune teller and sorceress (*vorozhka*), who tells fortunes by the stars and cures illnesses with herbs, as soon as the effects of the enchantment are felt. The stars disclose to the fortune teller the identity of the *molfar*, and she makes a doll of the *molfar* himself, prepares the pins, and proceeds to stick them into the doll. Such charms cannot seriously harm the *molfar* because there is no power on earth that can hurt him or cure his victim; all he is expected to feel is a slight discomfort, which merely lets him know that the victim, with the help of the fortune teller, has discovered his identity and his machinations. This may present an inconvenience, however, since he has to work in secret and keep his identity as a *molfar* hidden from the village community. The *molfar* then decides whether to proceed to torment the victim or to desist. We see that in *Shadows*, Iura chooses to ignore the "signals" he has received from Ivan's fortune teller.

[28]Christmas Eve (January 6) is particularly rich in ancient rites. Kotsiubynsky describes them with such attention and accuracy that all that remains to be done here is to put his description into a wider framework.

Early in the morning the head of the family "creates" the fire of life either by rubbing two dry sticks together or by using the chief shepherd's more complex method (see note 19). He then builds a large bonfire in his yard. Only the fire of life may be used to cook the Christmas Eve supper (known as "holy supper" throughout Ukraine). The farmer carries live embers from it into the house and builds the fire in the hearth around them. Throughout the day it is forbidden to eat anything, to quarrel, to hit one's neighbor with an ax, to beat one's wife, to drink alcohol, to smoke, or to chop wood. Clothing, pots and pans, and all other suspended articles inside the house or in the yard are taken off their pegs, nails, or other hangers to prevent birds from "hanging around" in the garden or in a newly sown field. To ensure a good harvest, the farmer covers the table with straw and a handful of every kind of grain he intends to cultivate throughout the year; on each corner of the table he places a clove of garlic so that evil spirits will stay away from his supper. All this is covered with a linen table cloth. He scatters some hay under the table while imitating the sounds of his livestock so that it will stay healthy and fertile.

The farmer takes all pins and needles and other sharp instruments out of the house and plugs all the holes in the wooden benches around the table with hay, thus symbolically plugging up the mouths of gossips and maligners. Knots are tied in a short piece of thick rope to tie the tongues of enemies and landlords. The farmer then sits on the knots so that "the mouths of all my enemies be silent."

When darkness begins to fall, the farmer goes out into the yard and fires his pistol to announce to the world that supper at his house is about to begin.

He then puts some incense into a lamp and walks around the house three times, safeguarding it against lightning. His wife, who has been busy around the hearth all day, puts the food on the table in strict ritualistic order. There are twelve dishes, each of them prepared according to a traditional recipe. (While preparing them, she puts a spoonful of each of them in a pan, thinning the concoction with water, and bakes it into a sort of pancake, which she then hides in a secret place until the holiday of Saint Iurii [see note 30]). The farmer puts a spoonful of each dish into a bucket, mixes the food with a heavy dose of salt, and distributes this "holy supper" among the livestock on his farm. Returning to the house, he places poppy seeds on a flat tray and next to them a glowing ember that is sprinkled with incense. When the poppy seeds have been permeated with the odor of incense, they are strewed around the house and over the yard to protect the homestead against witches. In the meantime, the wife takes out a new bowl bought especially for this occasion and puts a spoonful of each dish into it. The bowl is covered with a *kalach*, and in its hole are placed a tiny clay vessel filled with honey and another filled with water (in some parts of Ukraine, two joined cups are made by potters especially for this ritual). (Bread, honey, and water, magical symbols of life and wealth in ancient Ukraine, are used in many Ukrainian rituals, especially in the fascinating wedding drama.) The rim of the *kalach* is covered with apples and nuts. When the farmer returns from his poppy-sowing ceremony, he takes the bowl in one hand and an ax in the other, steps out into the yard, carefully locking the main door behind him, holds the ax with its blade upward, and proceeds to invite the *hradivnyks, molfars, chornoknyzhnyks,* and witches, together with wolves, bears, foxes, kites, and other beasts and birds of prey, to his "holy supper." He repeats the formulaic text of the "invitation" three times and then casts a powerful negative spell: Just as they refuse to accept his invitation now, may they never trouble him with their presence in the future. Next, he invites storms and illnesses in the same way.

Returning to the house, the farmer locks the door behind him from the inside, "blesses" all present with incense, and puts the lamp with the smoking incense on a flat rock under the table so that the *aridnyk* and his helpers will leave the house. His wife ceremoniously places in his hands a special baked loaf with a burning candle stuck in the middle. He holds the loaf of bread aloft, and all present bow to the ground, inviting to supper first the souls of those who died a tragic and violent death, then the souls of all who died a natural death.

Gathering around the table in a rigorously prescribed order, each person blows out some air twice in rapid succession over each shoulder in order not to sit on a soul that may already be present at the table. The farmer sits down first, at the head of the table, then his wife, children, servants, more distant relatives, and the poor who have been invited. The farmer throws a spoonful of *kutia* (a magical food of cooked grains of wheat mixed with honey and poppy seeds, the food of the dead in ancient times; a variation of this food, called *kolyvo*, is used in funeral ceremonies [see note 33]) at the ceiling three times, once for the calves, once for the lambs, and once for the bees. If the *kutia* sticks to the ceiling, the farmer's calves, lambs, and bees will be healthy and hale throughout the year. His wife puts spoonfuls of some dishes in the corners of window sills for souls who might be present in the room or who will visit later. The meal proceeds in strict order, each dish served in its appointed turn. Restrained drinking, with ritualistic toasts, is permitted, but getting

drunk during "holy supper" is considered the height of ill breeding. This rule, however, is suspended after the supper itself is over. There should be no conversation at all during the meal, and only the housewife is allowed to rise from the table.

The Christmas Eve rites continue after the meal. If there is a pregnant cow in the farmer's stable, the housewife lies down in the middle of the room and moos so that the cow may have an easy delivery. An unmarried daughter puts a flat bread, which she baked in secret, under her arm and steals out to the yard "to listen." If she hears a *trembita*, she knows that she will be married that year; if, on the other hand, she hears the barking of a dog, she will have to stay single until the next "holy supper." Dirty dishes are not cleared from the table and washed until the next morning, in case the souls want to sit at the table during the night. The leftovers are given to the cattle since it is gravely forbidden to eat the food of the "holy supper" on Christmas day. Later in the evening the family either takes some food with them on their visits to neighbors or remains at home to receive guests. The whole village eats, drinks, sings Christmas carols, shoots pistols in the air, and dances until daybreak. The house that features a fiddler usually attracts the most guests and keeps them the longest.

[29]Ukrainians celebrate New Year's Eve (*Malanka*) on January 13 and 14, according to the Julian calendar. The holiday is rich in rites concerning fortunetelling, young and old gathering together to predict the future and to enjoy themselves. They do not shy away, however, from predictions of personal misfortune and even death, and some such predictions appear to be grim indeed. In fairly recent times (possibly because of changed attitudes toward death), many such predictions of death have been "restructured" to deal with love and marriage. (I suspect, for example, that in the "listening" ritual described in note 28, the voice of the *trembita* originally predicted not marriage but death.) Informants assured Shukhevych and Hnatiuk, however, that such amateur fortunetelling should not be trusted and that if one really wants to know his future he should employ the services of a professional fortuneteller.

One fortunetelling game is called "Little Garden" (*horodok*), in which glowing embers lined up in front of the hearth are each given the name of a vegetable or a fruit. When an ember called "apple," for example, burns to a white ash without going out, it means that the next season will be rich in apples. In another game, called "Spoons" (*lozhky*), wooden spoons lined up and standing on end on a shelf against a wall are each given the name of a person participating in the game. If a spoon topples and falls down, that person will die in the course of the year. If, while falling, it upsets other spoons, there will be a war or a plague in which many people will die. When it gets dark outside, a girl feels her way to the stable and puts her hand between the hind legs of the first animal she finds. If it is a bull or steer, she will be married that year; if it is a cow, she will stay single. These are only a few examples of hundreds of games played on New Year's Eve.

At midnight, all animals are given the gift of speech. Anyone who overhears their conversations will not live longer than twenty-four hours (it is doubtful, therefore, that in real life Ivan would have strained to hear his animals talking). At that time, God Himself visits the domestic animals and

asks them how their owner is treating them. If the animals express satisfaction, the farmer's livestock will increase during the year; if, however, they voice complaints, many misfortunes will strike the homestead. At the same time, the farmer goes to the well with a new bucket and a loaf of bread, making a wide detour of the stables to make certain he does not overhear the strange conversations going on there. He draws a bucket of water from the well, breaks the loaf of bread, dips a piece of it into the water, and says: "It is not bread bathing in the water; it is myself bathing in health and strength." This is an obvious example of the residue of ancient religions in the Hutsul customs, with the bread representing the body of the sacrificial victim and the water, the water of life (*zhyva voda*). Returning to the house, the farmer touches the forehead of each member of his family and each servant with the moist bread, wishing them a happy New Year.

[30]The holiday of Saint Iurii falls on May 6, the first day of spring in Ukraine. (Saint Iurii is so important in some parts of Ukraine that he is considered the son of God.) In the pagan calendar, this day was dedicated to the banishing of the goddess of winter and death, Marena or Mara, and the celebration of the fertility god Iarylo, a phallic deity who blessed the increase of people, livestock, and vegetation. The Hutsuls still call the spring *iar*, a word that also means life energy, sexual drive, and male power. The celebration of Iarylo was accompanied by orgiastic rites and is sometimes identified with *rusalii*. Because the church holiday of Saint Iurii has superseded the celebration of Iarylo, many of Iarylo's attributes have been transferred to Iurii. Some etymologists believe that it was the word "Iarylo" that caused the name of the saint to be changed from the Greek-derived "Georgii" (still used in many Slavic languages) to the purely Slavic "Iurii."

Although the orgiastic quality of the ritual has been minimized in modern times, there is still much magic practiced in Hutsulian villages on that day. On the eve of the holiday, farmers make a bonfire out of dung and straw taken from under their livestock, pronouncing the following incantation: "God, give us as many heads of livestock as there will be ashes from this bonfire." After the fire dies out, they drive their livestock over the embers so that it will be "as keen as fire" (the same ritual is repeated when the livestock arrives in the upland pastures). Then the bonfire is revived and burns until the cock crows. Its light gets rid of the witches, who are particularly active that night, celebrating their yearly witches' sabbath (which refers to the pagan celebrations of the god Iarylo). In order to drive the witches away even more effectively, young people wrap straw or hay around short slices of wood, set them on fire, and hurl them into the darkness, meanwhile emitting bloodcurdling, orgiastic cries. Early the next morning the ashes from the bonfire are strewn about the pastureland near the village to increase the fertility of the livestock. This is probably what Iura is doing when he sees Palahna.

Kotsiubynsky's reference to the exchange of keys between "cold Dmytro and warm Iurii" is based on the Hutsul belief that Saint Dmytro (whose holiday is celebrated in late fall) and Saint Iurii are the two gatekeepers of the sky. Saint Dmytro's task is to lock up the sky for the winter. In the spring, Saint Iurii challenges Dmytro, shouting, "Throw me the keys, brother Dmytro, or I will take them away by force." Dmytro throws the keys to Iurii, and they fly through the air in the form of lightning bolts and thunderclaps of the first

violent storm of the spring. Iurii opens the gates of the sky to release the dew and rain. (In some versions of the legend, Saint Mykola [Nicholas] is substituted for Dmytro in this *agon.*) The dew that falls at dawn on Saint Iurii's day has tremendous magical powers; farmers roll around in the bedewed spring wheat to make their fields fertile, and girls roll around in the bedewed grass to become beautiful.

It is most likely at Annunciation (*Blahovishchennia*), which falls on April 7, that the housewife buries a salt cone, a coral necklace, a pair of earrings, and a piece of white bread in an anthill. The objects are left there until the holiday of Saint Iurii, when, before sunrise, she strips naked and steals to the anthill to dig out the objects. She crumbles some of the white bread and puts a crumb of it into each dish that her family will consume on that day. She gives the salt cone and the rest of the bread, together with some magical herbs, to the livestock. Having extracted a bead from the necklace, she puts it under the stream of milk while milking her cows (she milks them "through the bead"), so that her cows will yield abundantly throughout the year. Then she adorns herself with the necklace and earrings to preserve her beauty and youth.

The anthill is one of the most potent objects in the magic of the Hutsuls, while the bat is perhaps the most magically potent animal, not only in Ukrainian mythology but throughout the world. The Hutsuls believe, therefore, that the most powerful talismans are certain bat bones, picked clean by ants. To prepare such a talisman, a magician gets up before sunrise and puts a live bat into a small clay jar with nine holes in it. After sealing the jar, the magician strips naked, carries it to a large anthill, and buries it there while casting appropriate spells. The moment the jar is completely covered, the magician runs home as fast as he can. For nine days, the magician does not work, pray, wash himself, or talk to anyone. On the tenth day, before sunrise, the magician goes naked to the anthill, takes out the jar, and runs home without looking back. When the sun rises, he takes out the skeleton of the bat and finds in it a bone shaped like a two-pronged fork and another shaped like a rake. When the magician carries the rake-shaped bone under his tongue, the talisman will attract anything or anyone that he covets; when the fork-shaped bone is carried under the tongue, it will repel all enemies, danger, and misfortune. The talisman is especially effective when it is secretly taken out of the mouth and made to touch the desired or hated person; if a male magician touches a woman with the rake-shaped bone, she cannot possibly resist his sexual advances, but if he touches his enemy with the fork-shaped bone, the enemy will immediately lose all power over him.

[31]Basically a pagan people, the Hutsuls play fast and loose with marriage bonds. Many married persons have love affairs and even openly meet their lovers while continuing to live with their families. As mentioned earlier, Kotsiubynsky left copious notes on this. He writes, for example, of a rich old widow keeping a young lover and allowing the young man's girlfriend to live in the house, too. The village tavern is the place where lovers meet openly in the face of the whole village, sometimes provoking scenes of violence and bloodshed. As Shukhevych reports, the parish fair is often the occasion for such illicit meetings and matings. During that celebration, ties between single people are also established; Ivan and Marichka begin their friendship at a parish fair.

[32]From the structured shouts of Ivan and the *chuhaistyr* during their dance, one can surmise that they are dancing the complex and difficult *haiduk*, in which the two dancers (always male) lift their right legs high into the air, twisting their feet in one direction and their bodies in another. The dancers squat on one leg, and raise themselves, very slowly, hop around, then bring the other leg down hard upon the ground. "Crooked" and "blind" are two of the many versions of the *haiduk*. The dance is usually a kind of *agon* between two men, one urging the other to respond to increasingly difficult feats, much like the jazz musicians' game of "jamming."

[33]When a Hutsul is about to die, a member of his family places a burning candle in his hands, which is meant to illuminate the passage of the soul from the body, where it lived either in the area between the neck and the chest or in the head. After the soul leaves the body, it waits at the head of the deceased until the funeral procession leaves for the cemetery, at which time the heavenly powers will pass judgment upon it. Moments after death has occurred, the candle in the hands of the deceased is extinguished and another is lit at his head, since the soul likes light and cannot abide darkness. A jug of fresh water is placed next to the candle so that the soul may drink while it is waiting. Doubtless, the water is a pagan symbol of the water of life, which in ancient times was meant to assert life in the face of death. The corpse is called "God's body" (*Bozhe tilo*), a term also used for the image of Christ that is painted on an unframed canvas or embroidered on a large square of linen and displayed in Hutsul churches before Easter. Immediately upon death, the corpse is dressed in finery that has been saved in a magnificently decorated coffer especially for the occasion.

To announce a death in the family, the Hutsuls hang strips of white linen on the windows facing the center of the village. Then they build a bonfire (called, in this case, the "great bonfire") in the front yard. The women of the house unbraid their tresses and wear their hair loose for wailing (compare this with the ancient Greek traditions), while the men remain bareheaded at all times, until the body of the deceased is in the ground. A *trembitannyk*, or *trembitar*, is hired to play in front of the house to announce the death to the whole world. At the first sounds of the *trembita*, church bells begin to ring, their purpose being to "block the soul" in order to prevent it from wandering all over the world before its verdict is handed down.

At the summons of the *trembita*, mourners begin to arrive. Everyone who knew the deceased (from his own and the neighboring villages) considers it his duty to pay a visit to his house. The guest lights a candle in his own home and carries it to the house of the deceased, as he would carry a lit candle home from church after the Easter mass. Entering the house and ignoring everyone present, he attaches his candle either to the window sill or to a low bench placed especially for that purpose in front of the bier. He also places some coins on the chest of the deceased, which will be his fare across the River of Life (compare this to the dead being transported across the River Styx in Greek mythology; in some parts of Western Ukraine, the river dividing the living from the dead is called Stys). The guest prays at the bier, says a few words of farewell to his dead friend, and only then acknowledges the presence of the living, greeting them ceremoniously and expressing words of sympathy to the members of the family. The older guests sit near the corpse, while the younger

stand in the spacious hall or in the main room near the entrance door opposite the bier.

When enough mourners have gathered, the first round of wailing begins. The laments will resume during the funeral procession and at the grave site. As in many other village societies, the Hutsul laments are set texts; there are several texts for each female member of the immediate family (only women lament, reflecting the function of women as priestesses of the chthonic goddesses in charge of death and procreation). There are texts for a daughter mourning her mother, a daughter mourning her father, a wife mourning her husband, etc. Palahna's lament is a radically abbreviated and somewhat poeticized version of one of the many recorded laments for a wife mourning her husband. As we gather from the reaction of the guests to Palahna's wailing ("she wails well"), a lament is judged as an artistic performance. Rich peasants in various parts of Ukraine hire professional mourners (*plachkas*) to do the lamenting for them.

Generally speaking, there are three constant elements in a lament: an apology to the deceased for his death ("What have I done to you that you have become so angry and left me?"); an accusation, directly contradicting the first element, that the deceased has selfishly left the living to shift for themselves ("Who will feed our children now? Who will help me with the farm work?"); and questions about the direction from which the deceased will come when he or she returns to the community of the living. As mentioned earlier, pagan Slavs believed that their ancestors returned to their homes each spring in the shape of certain magical birds, insects, or even humans ("Where will I find you? In the forest? On the bridge? Or in the field, sitting on an ear of wheat?").

After the initial round of laments, carpenters come to make the coffin. They place their brand new tools (only one coffin may be made with a set of tools) and the boards in front of the bier and make a simple wooden coffin in the presence of the corpse. Having finished their work, the carpenters put the tools into the coffin, cover it provisionally with its lid, wash their hands over it, with a member of the family pouring fresh water from a jug, and profusely apologize to the family for having had to do their odious job. Members of the family grant them ritualistic forgiveness and put a loaf of bread, a burning candle, and a red kerchief upon the lid of the coffin. After sitting with the corpse for a while, the carpenters pick up the bread and the kerchief, accept payment in coin for the tools, the materials, and the work of "having built a house for the deceased," and leave. The empty coffin is placed against the wall behind the bier.

The young people begin to stir, getting ready for the elaborate funeral games (*hrushka*, from the word *hraty*, "to play"). These wild games, many of them blatantly erotic, will be played throughout the night, until the early morning hours. The Hutsuls say that the reason for them is to distract the family from their grief and, more important, to keep all the guests in the house so that the family will not be forced to remain alone with the soul of the deceased. It is quite obvious, however, that such games are a residue of the pagan funeral games, often orgiastic and openly sexual, that were meant to assert life in the face of death and thus to express the cyclical course of temporality.

The first game the young people play is called "The Rabbit" (*Zaiets*). A young man asks his neighbor to "buy a rabbit." "I will not buy your rabbit

a friend who indeed is snub-nosed and says, "You are snub-nosed, buy my rabbit." "I will not buy your rabbit because it is hunchbacked," the prospective buyer answers. The "salesman" turns to someone whose posture leaves much to be desired, and the game goes on. The point is that if a person repeats the "epithet" already used, then he must try to sell the rabbit himself. If the players follow the game carefully and no "epithet" is repeated for some time, somebody shouts: "I will not buy your rabbit because he spins." Upon hearing these words, the seller of the rabbit turns himself around very quickly until he falls to the floor. While falling, he tries to bring down anyone standing close to him, and that person in turn attempts to make someone else fall, until there is a pile of happily writhing, laughing, and screaming young people on the floor. There is obvious symbolism in the parallel between this mock "mass death" (*pomir*) and sexuality. What is subtler and more interesting is that the young players, brought up on the kind of unique tact that peasants have for each other throughout Ukraine, suddenly draw attention to each others' physical defects and cruelly laugh at them in the face of death.

The next game that Kotsiubynsky mentions is "The Hanged Man" (*Povishenyi*), in which death and eroticism are combined quite openly. A young man stretches his hand upward and takes hold of a peg, a number of which are fixed high on the wall to serve as hangers for outer clothing. While he does so, he shouts, "I am hanging." Someone from the crowd asks him, "On whom?" The boy gives the name of a girl, who must immediately come up to the "hanging" boy and "resurrect" him by giving him a kiss full upon the lips. While she thus frees the young man from the clutches of death, she "hangs herself," and calls upon her favorite young man to save her from death with a kiss. Whoever refuses to "save" the "hanged person" promptly has his or her face smudged with soot.

"The Mill" (*Mlyn*) requires a boy to lie face down on a bench. In his hands he holds two sticks, with which he beats a rapid tatoo on the legs and the underside of the bench, imitating the rattling of a mill at work. On his behind is placed a kerchief, in which an odious substance is wrapped. Another young man takes the role of the miller, and the rest of the participants act as farmers who have come to mill their grain. "What do you have to mill?" the "miller" asks one of the "customers." "Corn," he replies. "And what am I milling right now?" The "customer" is required to guess the substance in the kerchief. If he does not guess correctly, the "miller" dips his fingers into the substance and smears the "customer's" face with it. A simpler and more athletic version of the game, which Kotsiubynsky uses, requires two "Jews" (boys with strips of flax attached to their chins) to protect the "mill," who is lying face down on the bench and drumming wildly, while several "customers" attempt to push him off the bench and onto the floor.

In another game, mentioned by Kotsiubynsky in passing, the participants sit in a tight circle, with their knees raised to their chests. They imperceptibly pass a wet and knotted towel under their knees, while a player stands in the middle of the circle and tries to establish where the towel is at a given moment. If he guesses incorrectly, he is whacked with the towel. If he guesses correctly, the person holding the towel must go to the middle of the circle.

Some funeral games mock death openly. A game which ridicules the corpse and the idea of death in a downright eerie way has two young people disguise themselves as an old couple, go up to the real corpse, kneel at his bier, and parody a set text of a lament. The more outrageous and vulgar the parody,

the funnier the spectacle. Some of the funeral games, among the great number described by ethnographers, are quite obscene; others are surprisingly dangerous, what with tricky knife play or hot cinders blown into people's faces. The orgiastic nature of these games—by which death is denied and celebrated at the same time, and by which the very value of life is often put in question—cannot be missed.

While the young people are at their games, the older mourners begin their repast (*komáshnia*), the first of three sumptuous meals to be served during the period of mourning the deceased. It is well known that the taking of food during or immediately after funeral ceremonies is the most obvious and widespread form of sacrifice that would assert life over death. Together with various dishes, many small clay pots are placed on the table, on which the *komáshnia* is served. Each is filled with water and covered with a hard, flat cracknel bread with a hole in the middle; a very thin waxen candle is attached to the rim of the pot. Each guest takes home one of these small pots in memory of the deceased: sometimes hundreds are given away. Here again we may suspect traces of ancient death rites.

Early in the morning, after the all-night wake, preparations for the actual funeral begin. Four loaves of bread, with a candle stuck into the middle of each, are placed in the four corners of the room. The candles are lighted when the priest enters the main room, and extinguished when the corpse is carried out of the house. The corpse is undressed, ritualistically washed with the water in the jug from which the soul drank, and dressed again. On the chest of the corpse is placed a small loaf of bread which he or she will carry to the land of the dead as a gift for the other deceased members of the family. When the priest enters the room, he ritualistically asks forgiveness of the family for the work that he must do, and the family ritualistically grants it. After the service, the body is put into the coffin, together with a little sugar, wool, and medicinal herbs. The coffin lid is put into place and the four loaves of bread are placed upon it. As four male relatives carry the coffin out of the house, they lower it three times at the main entrance, so that its bottom touches the threshold: in this way the dead person asks forgiveness for abandoning his house.

The jug in which the water stood at the head of the corpse, and out of which the corpse was washed, is broken against a stone or a tree trunk in the front yard by an older woman. She then carefully gathers the shards, and ties them into a kerchief. She will drop the bundle into the first body of water that the funeral procession crosses: the utensil which was touched by the lips of the dead person's soul should not remain in the world but should travel by the River of Life to the land of the dead. The coffin is put down on the ground in the front yard, while the house, which was not cleaned since the death occurred, is now thoroughly swept by the women. The sweepings are burned in the stove and the ashes are carefully removed, to be dropped into the first river or stream that the funeral procession crosses. The priest reenters the house by a side door, and sits down to a *komáshnia* which he consumes alone in the main room, while the mourners have their meal in the hall or in the yard. The coffin is then wrapped in a sumptuous Hutsul rug (if the deceased was an older person) or in pure white linen (for a child or a young person) and is put on a sleigh, drawn by a pair of horses, no matter what time of year it is. (This mode of transporting the dead had been practiced throughout the Ukrainian territory in prehistoric times and was widely known in medieval Kiev.)

The priest heads the procession on horseback. He is followed by a village

elder who carries a large bowl of *kolyvo* (a variation of *kutia*; see note 28) with twelve burning candles in it. As he carries the bowl, the old man slowly and rhythmically raises and lowers it. Then comes the coffin, followed by members of the family, the women taking turns to "perform" appropriate laments. The whole population of the village, together with friends and distant relatives from neighboring places, walk behind the family. If the deceased is the head of a household, his cattle follow the people; each animal has burning candles attached to its horns. In earlier times, when the Hutsuls were wealthier, all the cattle were sacrificed by slaughter at the grave site.

Usually two *trembitannyks* (*trembitars*) accompany the procession, sounding their instruments at each turn of the road. Before crossing a river the procession stops and a prayer is said. With pomp and circumstance the procession enters the parish church for the Requiem Mass. After the service, the coffin is opened for the last time, and a *trembitannyk* (*trembitar*) plays for the deceased. At the grave site behind the church the lid of the coffin is nailed down with 24 nails, the coffin is lowered into the ground, and members of the family throw lumps of earth and coins upon it, to supplement the fare of the deceased across the River of Life. It is interesting that if the dead person was just, he will have a much rougher passage than if he was evil or selfish: the just man has to travel across the River of Life wrapped in a net and dragged through the water by the Virgin Mary, while an unjust man, traveling at the invitation of the *aridnyk*, walks across it on a wide bridge covered with soft rugs. (As Ivanov and Toporov inform us, the Virgin Mary—*Mariia*—is substituted in a number of Slavic myths [possibly because of alliterative similarity] for Marena or Mara, the goddess of death and winter.)

A small cross is placed on the coffin, at the head of the deceased. The grave is filled and topped by a low earthen mound. A large wooden cross is mounted at the head of the grave, and the bowl of *kolyvo* is ceremoniously placed in front of it. The gravediggers hold out their hands over the grave, and a member of the family pours water over them, whereupon the workers ask and receive forgiveness for their labor. The family gives the four loaves of bread to the gravediggers, in addition to their fee. The funeral party returns by the same road that the procession took to the churchyard. The mourners enter the house of the deceased by the side doors and sit down to a feast (the third since the death occurred), which can go on well into the night. For the next twenty-four hours, nobody may sit on the bench on which the corpse lay, in order not to crush the soul of the deceased, which may still be in the house, sitting on the bench and waiting for the verdict. A new jug of water, a candle, and a cross are left for the soul until the next morning, when normal life resumes in the house.

It is obvious that the soul of the deceased is somehow separated from the person of the deceased in the minds of the Hutsuls. The person is not necessarily identified with the body now resting in the ground. Surely the soul, waiting for its judgment and verdict, does not need the money for the passage across the River of Life, nor does it need the sugar, the medicinal herbs, and the wool that were placed in the coffin. It will certainly not carry the bread that was baked for the other deceased members of the family to the Land of the Dead. It is quite doubtful, in fact, that the soul and the person of the deceased are going to the same place, and that both of them will share the same fate. Needless to say, the ritual does not bother to solve this pagan-Christian dilemma.