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Byliny of bogatyr Svyatogor:  
Structural and Comparative Analysis of Narrative  
(MA Thesis)

**Abstract**

This thesis is an analysis and interpretation of the thirty seven textual variants of the byliny of bogatyr Svyatogor. After the general introduction to the Russian folk epics and after the presentation of issues concerning the study of oral epic literature, author's own structural concept of myth and cultural representations is presented. In the central part the thesis attempts to apply these principles to the narrative of the byliny of Svyatogor and by means of a thorough analysis it indicates, which motives and their relations were fundamental for this narrative to make sense in the local context of bylinaic tradition. The thesis claims that these narratives primarily deal with the themes of the initiation of a young hero, the generation conflict and the transmission of a mentor's position to his apprentice (or, metaphorically, a father's position to his son). This hypothesis is subsequently tested via a two phased comparative analysis of the central motives and their clusters: Firstly, the comparison is made in the context of the bylinaic traditions per se and in the context of the ethnographic situation at the Russian North (internal comparison), and secondly, in the wider scope of the Eurasian mytho-epic traditions (external comparison). The thesis is supplemented by the collection of the 37 variants of the bylina in the Russian original and its Czech translation.

**Key words**

Byliny, Oral Epic Literature, Narrativity, Myth, Structural Analysis, Comparative Mythology, Initiation.