

Oral Tradition, 13/1 (1998): 58-91

Tracking “Yuwaan Gagéets”: A Russian Fairy Tale in Tlingit Oral Tradition

Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard L. Dauenhauer

*Dedicated to the Memory of
Anny Marks / Shkaxwul.aat (1898-1963)
Willie Marks / Keet Yaanaayí (1902-1981)
Susie James / Kaasgéiy (1890-1980)
Robert Zuboff / Shaadaax' (1893-1974)*

Tracking “Yuwaan Gagéets” has involved many levels of the collaborative process in folklore transmission and research. The borrowing and development of “Gagéets” as a story in Tlingit oral tradition, as well as its discovery and documentation by folklorists, offer complex examples of collaboration. Neither the process of borrowing nor of documentation would have been possible without the dynamics of collaboration.

In general, comparatists and folklorists today seem less concerned with problems of direct influence, borrowing, and migration than they were in earlier periods of scholarship. But now and then a classic migratory situation affords itself, and a story comes to light, the uniqueness of which is best illuminated by a traditional historical-geographical approach. Such a story is the tale of “Yuwaan Gagéets,” which we analyze here to study the process of borrowing in Tlingit oral tradition and to contrast the minimal European influence in the repertoire of Tlingit oral literature with the widespread exchange of songs, stories, and motifs among the Indians of the Northwest Coast. Our study also presents an example of collaborative research. This paper, revised in 1994-95, subsumes research activities that go back as far as sixty years. Although the story of “Gagéets” is older, our story here begins with the childhood of Nora Marks Dauenhauer, who grew up hearing oral versions in Tlingit, and with the academic training of Richard Dauenhauer, who read the Russian version as a student of that language.

Before continuing, we would like to describe the principles and working procedures that have guided our collaboration for over twenty-five

years. It has been our goal to produce high quality transcriptions and translations of texts from the moribund Tlingit oral tradition and to do so in a manner culturally acceptable to the Tlingit people, technically acceptable to the scholarly community, and stylistically accessible to the general public. To do this, both partners are involved in all phases of the conception and execution of each project. Ideas and first written drafts can originate with either partner, but are ultimately discussed and approved by both.

Who actually does what is determined by many factors, including inclination and comfort related to personal and professional background. Nora Marks Dauenhauer has an academic degree in anthropology; Tlingit is her first language, and she grew up hearing the stories in a traditional family and culture. A published poet in English, she is grounded in oral literature but also enjoys books and literacy. Richard Dauenhauer has academic degrees in Russian and comparative literature; he is grounded in books and the literate tradition but also enjoys the style and dynamics of oral literature; he comes to this particular project from the point of view of folklore and comparative literature. Although Nora Dauenhauer has drafted essay material and Richard has done fieldwork and has drafted transcriptions and translations, it is our general practice that Richard work more with archival aspects of the project and with drafts of the introduction and essays (usually after much discussion and compilation of notes). Nora, for whom Tlingit is a first language, does most of the fieldwork, first draft transcriptions in Tlingit, and draft translations into English. All written drafts of essay, text, and translation have been read, reviewed, discussed, revised, and finally approved by both partners.

As co-editors, Nora has final say and makes all decisions related to the content of a given project, especially those regarding inclusion or omission of a given text for reasons of cultural context, and Richard makes decisions related to the academic context of the project, fitting the new collaborative work meaningfully into the academic scholarly tradition. The history of this essay is a good example. The present topic is our third choice. Our original idea was to work on texts related to oral accounts of the Battles of Sitka of 1802 and 1804, in which the Tlingits initially defeated the Russians but were subsequently overpowered. The events are far more complex than suggested by the popular stereotype of a group of disgruntled Sitka Tlingit revolting against the nasty Russians. Several Tlingit clans may have been involved; the Tlingits attacked Russian positions simultaneously on at least three fronts (Yakutat, Sitka, Kake); white American sailors fought on both sides; a British captain appears to have been free-lancing, supporting, and double-crossing both sides. The

problem with this topic was that the collaboration required too broad a community base, and consensus was not possible at the time. Central to the topic are questions and concepts regarding who owns history and who has the right to talk about it. Tlingit and Western points of view do not agree on these issues. Also, significant differences of opinion remain to be resolved within the Tlingit community and among the clans involved. It would be easy to do such a paper exclusively within an academic context, ignoring the Tlingit point of view regarding the research, but a truly collaborative project was not workable.

Our second choice was a spirit acquisition story by Nora's father dealing with a category of spirit power called "yéik" and its representation in visual art. This is a very important genre and concept in Tlingit and other Northwest Coast oral literatures. A given story typically explains how the progenitors of a particular clan acquired certain spirits and therefore have the exclusive right not only to tell the story and perform the related songs and dances, but also to depict and use them as clan crests in the form of visual art (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987, 1990, 1994). We had the "right" and "permission" to work with this story. Richard had been attracted to the story for a long time and remains excited about it because of the style of the storyteller. Willie Marks was one of the finest carvers of his generation. His skill and training in visual art are also evident in his verbal art through his treatment of color, perspective, and point of view. However, spirit stories are especially sensitive in Tlingit tradition, since it is not appropriate to work with them in times of mourning or during other periods of spiritual vulnerability. Because of two deaths in the immediate family, it became culturally inappropriate for us to pursue the project.

The present topic is less spiritually complex; at the same time, it fulfills many requirements for being collaboratively complex. It is important to note that in the case of both abandoned projects, the problems were not with the literary text but with the cultural context. This is probably the most distinctive feature of our partnership. In the short term, collaboration makes a project more difficult and time consuming, but in the long run, we feel that it makes the results more meaningful. The cross-cultural dimension is crucial. Many community projects (with no external dialogue) often fail to meet the professional standards to which they aspire and generally overlook important questions. Likewise, many exclusively scholarly or academic projects fail to meet local cultural standards and are not acceptable to the communities from which they are derived; they, too, often overlook important questions. It has been our experience that the two sets of standards are not mutually exclusive. Rather, the collaborative dialogue that shapes the method and outcome of a given project increases

our understanding of the text and context of the folklore being studied, while enhancing our ability to communicate this deeper meaning to a wider, multiethnic audience.

Marks Family Tradition

The current project began when Nora Marks Dauenhauer (Keixwnéi) at one point in the early 1970s recalled and described the story of “Yuwaan Gagéets,” reputed by all Tlingit storytellers to be a Russian story, and asked Richard Dauenhauer if he knew any Russian stories like it. He recognized it instantly as one of the best-known Russian fairy tales (*skazki*). Coincidentally, it was the first Russian fairy tale he had ever read in the original as part of his undergraduate education in Russian.

In the Marks family, the story is associated with Anny Marks, (Shkaxwul.aat), who until her death in 1963 was one of the main tradition bearers, especially for the children, in the household of the descendants of Jim Nagatáak'w of Juneau. “Aunty Anny” was the principal baby-sitter, especially for the little girls. The story was remembered by Nora, a niece of Shkaxwul.aat, and research on the story was conducted primarily with Willie Marks (Keet Yaanaayí; Nora’s father, the brother of Shkaxwul.aat), now deceased, and with Emma Marks (Seigeigei; Nora’s mother). To date, only two tradition bearers outside the Marks family have been located who know the story, although others may exist with whom we are not acquainted. These are the late Susie James (Kaasgéiy) of Sitka, and the late Robert Zuboff (Shaadaax') of Angoon. We are greatly indebted to these tradition bearers for their help.¹

Because part of this paper describes a retrieval process, data from the various research sessions have been kept distinct and not blended into a reconstructed text, although a prototype is posited. We begin with the plot outline of Keet Yaanaayí’s version. It was recorded October 5, 1974, in Haines, Alaska, under adverse conditions. Keet Yaanaayí was tired, and he had not had an opportunity to reflect on the story before telling it. When asked if he knew the story, he replied “yes,” and agreed to tell it. We emphasize the retrieval and reconstructive nature of the interviews and research sessions on this particular story, in contrast to the “performance” of polished material in the active repertoire of a tradition bearer. In a real sense, the elders are part of this collaboration, not as performers, but as fellow researchers.

¹ See Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987 for texts, 1987 and 1994 for biographies.

Plot Outline of the Version by Willie Marks (Keet Yaanaayí)

Yuwaan Gagéets is a young Russian nobleman. While his two brothers are getting ready for their weddings, they ridicule Yuwaan for being the only one without a fiancée. A shooting contest ensues, Yuwaan to find his bride where the arrow falls. He finds his arrow in the mouth of a frog. He knocks the frog off his arrow and speaks derisively toward it, saying, “Why are you biting my arrow, you four-legged little creature?” When he returns home, he finds the frog sitting on his pillow. The wedding hour arrives, Yuwaan still without a bride. The frog disappears, and in place of it is a woman, who says, “I am here for you to marry.” He goes to the wedding with her, and all approve. At the wedding ball, Yuwaan’s bride performs magic, pouring duck soup into one sleeve and a bone into another. She shakes a lake from one sleeve and ducks from her other sleeve (the one with the bone). In the meantime, Gagéets goes home, finds the frog skin, and burns it to keep her from changing back. The bride returns and asks for her coat. She looks in the stove and finds the ashes that still look like a frog. She says, “I’ll leave you forever. No matter how long you search for me, you’ll never find me, even if you make a pair of metal shoes.” Yuwaan sets out to find her, not knowing where he’s going. He finds an elderly woman and explains the situation. The woman tells him his wife comes at a certain time on a boat. He waits for her. The elderly woman announces the arrival of the wife, who sees Yuwaan and runs off when the woman opens the door. She runs to the lake, and he follows. She makes a boat out of a bubble and sails away. Finally, Yuwaan Gagéets retrieves his bride, but Keet Yaanaayí is uncertain how, because he has not heard the story in at least ten years.

Some Russian Versions

The Tlingit story of “Yuwaan Gagéets” is unmistakably the Russian fairy tale (*volshbnaya skazka*) of the Frog Princess (Aarne-Thompson type 402). The plot outline for this tale type is as follows (Aarne 1928:63):

The Mouse (Cat, Frog, etc.) as Bride.

The youngest of three brothers (H1242) succeeds best in the quests set by his father (H1210.1). He brings the best cloth (H1306), the most beautiful bride (H1301), etc. (H1300 ff.). The mouse (cat) who has helped him (D 142, B 567.1) changes herself into a beautiful maiden (D711, D735).

Stith Thompson comments that the tale is popular in all parts of Europe, that the nature of the bride varies, and that the tale has been told at least since the Middle Ages (Thompson 1968:436). We have located several versions of the story, and three are discussed here: a version in Russian by N. V. Kolokol'tsev (1960), and English versions published by H. C. Stevens (1967) and by Stith Thompson (1968). Norbert Guterman is the English translator of the standard Russian collection by Afanas'ev (1945:119-23) from which Thompson's version derives. Kolokol'tsev's publication is a sixth-grade anthology for "non-Russian schools," that is, the linguistic ethnic minorities in the former Soviet Union learning Russian as a second language in school. Stevens' is also a children's book, yet it offers the best version of the tale in comparison to the Russian version in Kolokol'tsev, the folklore source of which is not identified. In fact, the story in Stevens' collection corresponds closely enough to the Kolokol'tsev's Russian version to be considered a translation. Stevens does not cite his source, but the plot outlines are the same, except where noted. The plot outline of the Russian fairy tale is as follows. Readers familiar with Russian fairy tales will recognize the stock characters: Ivan Tsarevich, Vasilisa Most Wise, Baba Yaga, and Koshchey Bessmertny.

A tsar has three sons. The sons are to find their wives by shooting arrows; where the arrow falls, each will find his wife. The arrow of the eldest lands in a noble's courtyard (in Russian, *boyar*), the second son's in a merchant's, and the third son's in a marsh. The youngest son, Ivan Tsarevich, retrieves his arrow and is compelled to marry the frog near whom it landed. Then follow the three tasks. The Russian and English versions differ with regard to the sequence of the tasks and the items involved:

Russian (Kolokol'tsev 1960): bread task, rug task, banquet task

English (Stevens 1967): shirt task, bread task, banquet task

Regardless of detail, the structure of the first two tasks is the same in both English and Russian: the tsar commands a task to be done. Ivan is dejected because a frog can't do the task. On the advice of his frog wife, Ivan goes to bed. The frog sheds her skin, turns into Princess Vasilisa, and calls her attendants to perform the task. In the morning, Ivan finds the completed product and takes it to the tsar, who prefers it over the products of the other two brides. In Stevens' version, the other wives send a spy during the baking task, but the frog outwits them. This element is also present in the translation by Guterman anthologized by Thompson, but not in Kolokol'tsev's Russian version.

Next, the tsar orders his sons to bring their wives to a banquet and ball. Ivan is dejected again at the thought of showing up with a frog, but the frog tells him to go alone, saying she will follow. Ivan is taunted by his brothers and their wives. Finally, Princess Vasilisa (Vasilisa the Most Wise, Vasilisa Premudraya) arrives in splendor in a gold coach driven by six (in Stevens' version, white) horses, accompanied by thunder. The guests eat and drink. Vasilisa pours wine into her left sleeve and swan bones into her right. The other wives see this and imitate her. The ball commences, and as Vasilisa dances, she waves her left hand and creates a lake in the hall. She waves her right hand and swans appear on the lake. The other wives try to do the same, but spill wine on the guests. The bones fly out of their sleeves, one into the eye of the tsar. Angry, the tsar then chases the two wives out.

In the meantime, Ivan returns home and burns the frog skin. In the Russian version his wife says, "If only you had waited a little (in Stevens, three days more) I'd have been yours forever. But now, farewell. Search for me beyond the three times nine lands, in the thirtieth kingdom, with Koshchey Bessmertny [Koshchey the Deathless]."² The numbers in Russian are not in everyday language, but in fairy-tale style. Stevens' and Guterman's versions are essentially the same, but Guterman has "thrice ninth land, in the thrice tenth kingdom." Details at the end of the scene also differ slightly: in Russian the wife changes into a swan and flies off; in Stevens' English version she changes into a cuckoo and flies away, and in Guterman's English translation she simply vanishes.

Ivan looks for her and meets an old man who explains the curse. Vasilisa was turned into a frog (in Stevens, for three years) by her father who was jealous of her cleverness. The old man gives Ivan a ball with instructions to follow it wherever it rolls. While following the ball, Ivan comes upon and nearly kills the following: a bear, a drake, a hare, and a pike, each of whom says, "spare me, and I will be of help to you." The ball leads Ivan to Baba Yaga, who helps him by explaining how to track and defeat Koshchey Bessmertny. The death of Koshchey Bessmertny is located on the point of a needle, the needle is in an egg, the egg is in a duck, the duck is in a hare, the hare is in a chest, the chest is in an oak tree, and Koshchey carefully guards the tree. Baba Yaga gives Ivan directions to the tree.

Ivan finds the tree. Suddenly, a bear uproots the tree, and a chest falls from it and breaks open. A hare runs from the chest, and a second hare overtakes and tears up the first. A duck flies out of the shredded

² All translations from Russian texts are by the authors.

rabbit. A drake hits the duck, who lays an egg, which drops into the sea. A pike swims up with an egg in its mouth. Ivan breaks the egg, takes the needle out, and breaks off the point. Koshchey Bessmertny then dies. Ivan goes to Koshchey Bessmertny's palace, retrieves Vasilisa, and takes her home.

Further Research with the Marks Family

Approximately one month after the first recording session with Keet Yaanaayí, Nora Dauenhauer held a second session with her mother, Seigeigei, Emma Marks, who recalled the following additional details, but who did not retell the story:

- People ridiculed Yuwaan Gagéets for marrying the frog.
- The girl stirred ashes into her cake mix.
- Her parting words are, “You won't see my little tracks again.”

On the basis of these details, we can possibly reinstate the baking and sewing tasks in the Tlingit prototype. Because of the mention of ashes, we might also posit the existence of a spy motif. Because people ridiculed Yuwaan, we can safely assume that the wedding and the ball were separated in time, and that the sewing and baking tasks likely intervene. The sewing task probably came first, and the frog-bride's success motivated the other wives to send spies to watch her bake. Seigeigei's mention of Yuwaan's being ridiculed suggests that his bride may still have been in frog form. This would further align the Tlingit prototype with the Russian version. It is still unclear how the parting words in the second session relate to the enigmatic metal shoes in the first. The metal shoes may be a clue of some sort or a challenge of the impossible task.

Keet Yaanaayí's version shares with the Russian language version the following components: the arrow sequence, the frog bride, the magic at the ball, Ivan's burning the frog skin, the bride's resulting departure, and Baba Yaga. We should note that in the Tlingit story Baba Yaga is not mentioned by name, but her function is filled by the elderly woman who helps Ivan. Also, some details of the frog-bride differ; for example, Keet Yaanaayí collapses the wedding and the ball and has the frog turn into a maiden before the wedding rather than after. But again, we must remember that Keet Yaanaayí had not heard the story in at least ten or fifteen years, and he had not been given sufficient time to refresh his memory.

From the second interview came suggestions of sewing and baking tasks, and through them the possibility of reconstructing a Tlingit prototype more similar to the Russian. The possibility remains that further incidents

might be recalled by other tradition bearers, but as of the present writing the Tlingit version lacks the two animal sequences in which Ivan first spares, then is helped by, the bear, drake, hare, and pike. The presence and death of Koshchey Bessmertny are also absent in Tlingit, as is the character of the tsar, although Yuwaan is identified in the opening line as a young Russian nobleman.

The Tlingit version adds two and possibly three motifs not found in the Russian. The metal shoes and bubble-boat are exclusively Tlingit, and at the end of his narration, Keet Yaanaayí suggests that Yuwaan may have gone to the land of the frog people to retrieve his bride.

We could note here that the version in Thompson's collection translated by Guterman also lacks Koshchey Bessmertny as a character, but his function is fulfilled by a rival suitor who pursues the couple as they flee, but who ultimately fails to overtake Ivan and his bride (Thompson 1968:93-97). This version, like Stevens', has spies in the bread task sequence but lacks the old man with the ball sequence, the animal sequence, and the animal helpers. There are three old women in three huts, the bride being with the third, who changes her into a spindle and her dress into gold thread upon the arrival of Ivan; Ivan then finds the key to the thread and spindle box and retrieves his bride by following the advice of the second old woman. The couple flees on a magic carpet pursued by the suitor.

Keet Yaanaayí's version is Tlingitized in some obvious ways. The wine and swans become duck soup and mallards, for example. At the structural level, the Tlingit version follows a common pattern in Tlingit oral literature: the protagonist insults another form of life and then must marry it, the marriage usually resulting in the acquisition of wisdom and spirit power though often at the cost of one's life (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987). A more rigorous analysis of the structures of the Tlingit and Russian stories may well disclose more subtle adaptations. Such a study is impossible at the present writing because a complete Tlingit prototype as told repeatedly by Shka_xwul.aat has not yet been reconstructed from the memories of those tradition bearers who in the 1970s had not heard the story in ten or twenty years (and now, in the 1990s, thirty or forty years). Such a comparison would, however, provide a "laboratory situation" for experimenting with folklore theory, such as testing Propp's theories on a story of Russian origin prior to running a Proppian analysis of indigenous Tlingit material, and of other Tlingit stories such as the story of the Cannibal Giant, Raven stories, and bear stories that are shared with neighboring groups (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987).

Further Research in the Tlingit Community

The position of “Yuwaan Gagéets” in the Tlingit repertoire remains enigmatic. The story was remembered by all who lived in the household with Shkaḵwul.aat (Annie Marks), who was one of the principal storytellers in the family for many years. The older generations were entertained by and the younger generations raised on her stories, and Gagéets is remembered as one of her personal favorites. Our next task was to explore how widespread the story was in Tlingit oral tradition beyond the Marks family. We soon learned that in the mid-1970s the story was virtually unknown outside the family. The name Yuwaan Gagéets was recognized by some older tradition bearers in Hoonah, for example, but none could remember the story. Most other elders had never heard the name. The remarkable exceptions are discussed below.

Regardless of minor details, the story is definitely of Russian origin and most likely entered the Tlingit repertoire either by direct contact with the Russians or possibly through intermediate contact with Aleuts or Creoles. There are two probable routes of migration to Shkaḵwul.aat in Juneau. One is through her brother-in-law, a native of Sitka, who moved to Juneau. He was himself Presbyterian, but could have been exposed to the story in Sitka. The second route is through the Orthodox Church in Juneau. Shkaḵwul.aat was a member of the Orthodox Church and active in church affairs, including choir. Orthodoxy was the first Christian religion introduced in Alaska; it became indigenized and remains strong in many communities. Many Tlingits, whether now still Orthodox or not, remain proud of this historical connection with Russian culture, just as many Russians feel a special attachment to Alaska.³

It can never be determined if the version learned by Shkaḵwul.aat came directly from oral tradition, or from printed sources in Russian or English. If printed, the source was almost certainly told to and not read by her, especially if in Russian. At any rate, the tale was transmitted by her orally in Tlingit.

We kept asking if others knew the story. In December 1975, further research was conducted with Kaasgéiy (Susie James), an eighty-six year old tradition bearer from Sitka. No new details of the plot were obtained, but the interview with Kaasgéiy verified a number of aspects of the tale. Kaasgéiy knew the story, but, like the other tradition bearers, could not remember the ending. But more than plot verification, the example of

³ For further information, see Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1994 and Kan forthcoming.

Kaasgéiy was revealing and provided more evidence with theoretical implications.

Like Willie and Anny Marks, Kaasgéiy was both Orthodox and Chookaneidí (a clan of the Eagle moiety). Significantly, she was the first person whom we had located outside the immediate family of Shkaḡwul.aat (Annie Marks) who knew the story. Of equal importance, she was of the same clan and religion as Shkaḡwul.aat. In part, this confirmed our suspicion that persons likely to know the story would be among the older generation Orthodox from Sitka. But Kaasgéiy's clan affiliation cast a whole new light on the problem, and a fascinating (though tentative) pattern of distribution began to emerge.

The story was known up to that point of our research only by members of the Chookaneidí clan who were also Orthodox or who were raised in the Orthodox Church. (Seigeigei is not Chookaneidí but was married to a Chookaneidí, and was the sister-in-law of Shkaḡwul.aat.) Traditional Tlingit marriage is based on exogamy and requires that a person marry into the "opposite" moiety and not within the same moiety. Emma Marks is of the Raven moiety and Lukaḡ.ádi clan. Children follow the maternal line; thus Nora Marks Dauenhauer and her siblings are all of the Raven moiety and Lukaḡ.ádi clan.⁴ Those older tradition bearers in Hoonah who recognized the name "Gagéets" but did not know the story also had a long affiliation with the Orthodox Church and the Chookaneidí clan. Hoonah is traditionally an Orthodox village, and the Chookaneidí, who retreated to Hoonah from Glacier Bay when the ice advanced, have been a predominant clan there for over 200 years. The Chookaneidí have also had a documented historical presence in Sitka since the beginning of the Russian period (c. 1800); but, even though they had a clan house there, they have never been a populous and politically predominant clan in Sitka.

This Orthodox-Chookaneidí distribution pattern was tentative, but we had reached the point of diminishing returns on our inquiries about the story. As part of our continuing search for further information on the Gagéets story, Richard Dauenhauer read earlier versions of this paper at three conferences in Alaska: first at the Alaska Humanities Forum Conference in Sitka (December 1975), then at the Third Alaskan Anthropology Conference (Anchorage, March 1976), and later in 1976 at the Northwest Coast Conference at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia. In the Anchorage audience, a teenage Tlingit girl commented that her grandmother from Yakutat used to tell a story of

⁴ For more on Tlingit social structure and its connection to Tlingit literature, see Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987, 1990, and 1994.

acknowledged Russian origin about a man named “Gaagee.” Yakutat had much Russian contact in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and intermittent Orthodox contact into the early twentieth century. We were not in a situation at the time to follow up on this new lead, and the grandmother is no longer alive. But as far as we could tell, the story was no longer in any tradition bearer’s active repertoire, and was in the memory of only three, all of whom were of Orthodox and Chookaneidí affiliation. The evidence of Kaasgéiy expanded the distribution pattern of the story from one immediate family to the clan level. We began to entertain the possibility that Gagéets was, or was perceived as, a Chookaneidí story. At the present writing, the precise roles and interaction of family, clan, and religion in the tale acquisition and distribution remain unclear.

Robert Zuboff

The next episode in the continuing research mystery of “Yuwaan Gagéets” was written (literally and figuratively) by yet another team of collaborators—the Tlingit elder Robert Zuboff of Angoon and the linguists Constance Naish and Gillian Story of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Wycliffe Bible Translators.⁵ Naish and Story had worked with Robert Zuboff and other Tlingit elders on linguistic research, designing a popular orthography for Tlingit, writing instructional materials for Tlingit literacy, and translating scripture into Tlingit. To aid in their linguistic analysis, they elicited traditional stories and ethnographic texts, especially from Robert Zuboff and George Betts. Richard Dauenhauer had sent Naish and Story an earlier working draft of the present paper, and we received the following reply on May 21, 1976:

Dear Dick and Nora,

Please excuse a hurried typing of what we have found that we have of the Yuwaan Gagéets story. . . . I’ve read your paper and very much enjoyed the reinforcement of what you were telling me. Maybe Bob’s telling of it will open up some other useful leads and even serve to locate some others who know it. . . . Greetings from us both,
Gill.

⁵ The Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Wycliffe Bible Translators are essentially the same group of linguists with two separate affiliations, each dedicated to different practical applications. The Summer Institute of Linguistics is the secular organization and works with training in linguistics, and Wycliffe Bible Translators is the religious organization, dedicated to Bible translating.

Enclosed were two more versions of the Gagéets story, one an English telling by Robert Zuboff, undated, but estimated by Gillian to be from around 1959 or 1960, the other a dictation in Tlingit dated January 22, 1963, in Angoon. The Tlingit text transcribed by Naish and Story along with an English translation by Nora Dauenhauer are included as an appendix to this paper. Zuboff's English version is presented below. The arrangement here into short lines and breath units is our own, and is based on our own reading of the text, but with a general sense of Robert Zuboff's style from having worked with other stories by him (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987). We generally listen to the tape recording and use a line turning to represent a pause in delivery. In this case, tapes were no longer extant and Robert Zuboff had died two years earlier, so we were forced to reconstruct hypothetical line turnings both in English and in Tlingit.

Married to a Frog
 told in English by Robert Zuboff
 around 1959-60
 transcribed by Constance Naish and Gillian Story

Yoowan Googeets
 is the youngest brother
 of all his brothers.
 They were Russian—very religious.
 He was always praying as a little boy—he wants a wife.
 One day he was playing in a field,
 shooting his arrow,
 and he shot way far out
 and found a little frog
 had got hold of it.
 The frog refused to give it back unless he married her.
 He didn't want to,
 but finally the little frog won
 and had Yoowan for her husband.

One day Yoowan's father was having a big party.
 Little Frog said, "You can go to the party.
 I'll stay behind
 and if I come I'll be on a young horse
 and with lots of bells.
 You'll hear me come.
 Where I sit I want mallard duck soup in my dish
 and I want a duck bone in there too."
 So when she came in,

she was the prettiest girl in the whole world.
 She came on a horse with bells.
 Yoowan looked all around
 and found her skin
 and he grabbed it and threw it in the stove
 and burned it up.
 She came home
 and found she had lost her frog skin.
 She said, "I'll leave you for good
 and I don't want ever to see you."
 She left
 and he was real sad
 and he began to cry.
 He went over to his wife's sister and said,
 "I want my wife."
 She said,
 "She doesn't want you—
 when you burned her skin up
 you hurt her pretty much.
 If I use you for a plate
 and let her eat out of you,
 she'll change her mind."
 That's what happened,
 and while she was eating,
 the older sister mentioned,
 "I just wish Yoowan was eating with us."
 The younger sister got to thinking about it
 and she changed her mind.
 Then she and Yoowan went way up on a lake
 and lived happily.
 Nobody heard any more about them.

The Zuboff version is unique in the plate motif, the horse with bells, and in the "happily ever after" ending. Finding the story in the repertoire of Robert Zuboff was exciting, but in retrospect not surprising, for many reasons. Robert Zuboff was among the most eclectic tradition bearers with whom we have worked: he was Orthodox, with Russian ancestry and cultural connections. On the other hand, he was of the Raven moiety, whereas all of our other storytellers to date had been Eagle and Chookaneidí. Clearly, our hypothesis about the clan connection was no longer valid, but the Orthodox and Russian thesis remains—though not at all certain. This may be the end of the search. We have found no other versions in twenty years of research, although we have by no means asked every living Tlingit elder.

Linguistic Borrowing: Gagéets and Muromets

The name Yuwaan Gagéets is not of Tlingit origin and raises interesting problems. Linguistic evidence would suggest that it derives from Muromets, the great Russian *bylina* (verse epic) hero, rather than from Tsarevich, the stock character of the (prose narrative) fairy tale or *volshebnaya skazka* genre. The investigation of the name is both linguistic and literary. We will first look at the linguistic considerations before exploring Ilya Muromets and the question of the epic hero in the prose narrative fairy tale tradition.

The Tlingit language has no bilabials or labio-dentals—no “p,” “b,” “f,” or “v.” “M” appears only as a dialect variation of “w.” Also, there is no “r,” and “l” appears only as a dialect variation of “n.” An “m” is normally transferred into Tlingit as a “w,” as evidenced in these borrowed words.

| | | |
|--------------|---|------------------|
| machine | = | <i>washéen</i> |
| watchman | = | <i>wáachwaan</i> |
| commissioner | = | <i>kawíshan</i> |

English and Russian “r” are usually transferred as “n:”

| | | |
|---------------|---|------------------------|
| rum | = | <i>naaw</i> |
| <i>krest'</i> | = | <i>kanéist</i> (cross) |

Some Russian bilabials have been transferred as Tlingit “w:”

| | | |
|------------------|---|----------------------------|
| <i>batyushka</i> | = | <i>wáadooshka</i> (priest) |
|------------------|---|----------------------------|

But it is also common for foreign bilabial sounds to be transferred as a Tlingit velar:

| | | |
|------------------|---|--------------------------|
| <i>pivo</i> | = | <i>géewaa</i> (beer) |
| peanuts | = | <i>gwéelats</i> |
| molasses | = | <i>ganáashish</i> |
| <i>la table</i> | = | <i>nadáakw</i> (table) |
| <i>le pretre</i> | = | <i>nakwnéit</i> (priest) |

Also, in English words spoken with a Tlingit accent, bilabials are commonly realized as velars. Thus “tip” becomes “tick,” and “helicopter” becomes “helicoockter” or “henicoockten.”

Tlingit does have initial and final “ts” and “ch.” Therefore, we could expect to find the following transfers:

| | | |
|-----------|---|------------|
| Tsarevich | = | Tsaneiwich |
|-----------|---|------------|

Muromets = Gunagets

The most convincing argument for deriving Gagéets from Muromets remains in the formula of a Russian series of two bilabials and a final “ts” paralleling a Tlingit series of two velars and a final “ts.” Because all consonants in the Russian except the final “ts” are foreign to Tlingit, it is conceivable that the “r” could have been dropped. Moreover, a series of three open syllables is unstable in Tlingit, so that the dropping of the middle syllable of the original Russian is consistent with patterns of Tlingit speech rhythm.

Underlying form: gu- na- geets
 Consonant drops: gu- a- geets
 Vowel lengthens: ga- a- geets (Marks)
 or go- o- geets (Zuboff).

To derive Yuwaan from Ilya is more difficult, as it would seem infinitely closer to Ivan. It seems almost certain that the names were switched in Tlingit. There does, however, exist the remote possibility that the Tlingit did indeed derive Yuwaan from Ilya by metathesis or by somehow changing the morpheme boundaries in the borrowing process. This adaptation is common. For example, the English word “study” is perceived in Tlingit grammar as consisting of a stem (“-tudy”) and an “s” classifier, so that the perfective becomes “wudzidádi.” The morphemes are:

| | | |
|------|---|--|
| wu | = | perfective marker |
| Ø | = | subject pronoun |
| dzi | = | appropriate form of the “s” classifier |
| dádi | = | the verb stem. |

It is therefore remotely possible, but highly unlikely and not linguistically convincing, that the final “n” of Yuwaan derives from the initial “m” of Muromets.

Also possible, but equally unconvincing if we seek a linguistic answer rather than a simple switching of names, is that the Russian “l” of Ilya was perceived as Tlingit “n.” “L” exists in some Tlingit dialects as a substitute for “n,” so the equation is normal. Consider the following loan words:

| | | |
|--------|---|---------------|
| dollar | = | <i>daanaa</i> |
| gold | = | <i>goon.</i> |

If this is the case, after “l” is replaced by “n,” the word contains three vowel sounds: “i,” “y,” and “a,” which may have somehow metathesized into

Yuwaan. This is highly unlikely, and linguistic explanation should not be produced like a rabbit out of a hat. It seems more likely that Yuwaan, a Tlingit version of Ivan, was simply substituted for and not derived from Ilya. The choice may have been influenced by the name Ivan Tsarevich, or more probably, the name Ivan is better known than and fits the Russian stereotype better than Ilya.

Folklore Borrowing: Gagéets and Muromets

If, indeed, Gagéets derives from Tsarevich, then there is no need to search further; but on the hypothesis that it may derive from Muromets, there are two possibilities: that the names were mixed in Tlingit tradition, or that the Russian oral source of the fairy tale has Muromets rather than Tsarevich as the main character. There is literary as well as linguistic evidence for Gagéets deriving from Muromets. On linguistic grounds, we posit that if the hero of the Russian fairy tale that passed into Tlingit oral tradition were named Tsarevich, the name would have been transferred as Tsanéiwich. The Tlingit name Gagéets, however, suggests a Russian source with Muromets as the main character. The logical literary evidence would be a *volshhebnyaya skazka* of the Frog Princess with Muromets as the hero.

Ilya Muromets does in fact exist in the fairy tale tradition. A. M. Astakhova writes that “tales about Ilya Muromets are very diverse in content, character, and origin” (1958:502).⁶ Some of these tales are simply *bylinas* told in prose while others combine *bylina* plots and motifs with those characteristic of fairy tales. Finally, there are pure fairy tale plots with *bylina* heroes such as Muromets as the main character. In other words, fairy tales are told using the heroes, or names of heroes, of the epic genre. It is this category in which we are most interested. Discussing as an example the story of Ilya Muromets and the Dragon (or Snake), Astakhova writes that, “the text is an excellent example of the riveting to the name of Ilya Muromets a tale plot with the characteristic attributes of a fairy tale” (1958:507). Astakhova also provides a bibliography of collections of fairy tales about Ilya Muromets and notes that they have not yet been sufficiently researched in Russian folklore and in the folklore of the peoples of the Soviet Union (503).

⁶ Translations in this section of Astakhova 1958, Pomerantseva 1966, and Matveeva and Leonova 1993 are by Richard Dauenhauer.

Soviet essays on folklore support the possibility of a Muromets version of the Frog Princess. Pomerantseva, for example, writes (1966:157):

To the fairy tales it is also possible to relate the so-called heroic tales (*bogatyrskie skazki*), that is, tales about the *bylina* heroes—Ilya Muromets, Sadko, Dunaj Ivanovich. In all of these tales magic personages and magic situations are present. . . . All this brings tales about heroes together with fairy tales.

Recent Soviet and post-Soviet Russian scholarship on the genre reconfirms the findings of the 1950s and 1960s regarding the existence in Siberia of fairy tales with characters from the epic genre. The English edition of Afanas'ev's collection has a prose version of "Ilya Muromets and the Dragon" (1945:569-75). We do not have the original at hand, so we do not know if it is originally prose or epic verse. In their introduction to a recent Russian Academy of Sciences edition of Russian fairy tales from Siberia, collectors R. P. Matveeva and T. G. Leonova note that "Siberian fairy tales partially owe their epic style, subjects, and poetics to Siberian *bylinas*. The tales often use phraseology characteristic of *bylinas*" (1993:345).

Therefore, although as of this writing we have not located an actual Russian version of the Frog Princess story with Muromets as the main character, it seems reasonable on the basis of the evidence (Astakhova 1958, Nikiforov 1965, Pomerantseva 1966, Matveeva and Leonova 1993) to assume that such may exist somewhere in print and must have certainly existed in oral circulation. Moreover, from Tlingit evidence, it seems almost certain that the form of the Russian fairy tale that reached Sitka was not the standard version as commonly anthologized with Tsarevich as the hero, but was a variant with Muromets. If this theory is correct, it would extend the range of the Russian variant and tale to the New World.

Folklore Borrowing as a Collaborative Act

Traditionally, the Tlingit were relatively uninfluenced by non-Indian oral traditions, and "Yuwaan Gagéets" is the first tale clearly of European origin that we have found to date. The adaptation of Christianity has greatly influenced Tlingit thought and the accompanying worldview, as is reflected in Tlingit stories that attempt to synthesize Christian and traditional views. While we have found much syncretism, even to the

extent of paralleling the Tlingit social structure with the Pentateuch, the borrowing of a given, distinctly identifiable European folktale is rare.

There was, on the other hand, much trading of oral tradition among the Tlingit and adjacent Indian groups to the south and in the Interior. Such trading is reflected in the Tlingit repertoire. The Lukaax̄ádi clan, for example, sings a number of trade songs in Athabaskan and Tsimshian. In prose narrative, such similarities, in whole tales and in motifs, abound so that migration and influence are difficult if not impossible to trace. Stories of the Cannibal Giant, the Woman Who Married the Bear, and many episodes of the Raven cycle are shared by the Tlingit and their neighbors.

The story of “Yuwaan Gagéets,” however, is clearly of Russian origin, and remains one of the very few clearly non-Indian borrowings directly taken into Tlingit oral tradition and kept by storytellers as a Russian story. But its influence was marginal, and its position precarious at best. There are several explanations for this. One explanation is that Gagéets does not fit into the Tlingit social structure in terms of origin or content, even though some motifs are comparable. It is not a crest story about clan progenitors or spirit acquisition (with attendant clan ownership, prerogatives, and custodianship), and it is not didactic. It has no narrative frame, and the closest thing to a genealogy is the identification of Gagéets as Russian by Willie Marks and Robert Zuboff. Thus from the opening line, the story is marked as foreign.

The rarity of European stories in the Tlingit repertoire suggests a connection between ownership and lack of widespread borrowing from groups with whom the Tlingit had not established a meaningful pattern of exchange. Meaningful exchanges must be commercially advantageous or at least mutually beneficial. Such patterns of exchange allow for transfer of prerogatives to stories and songs. In the absence of such intellectual and cultural reciprocity with the Europeans, it is probable that few stories were transmitted, and those that were remained alien. We can assume that at its peak of influence, “Yuwaan Gagéets” was probably of limited geographic or demographic distribution.

A second possible explanation for the marginal influence and precarious position of the story is the Tlingit attitude toward fiction and fantasy. Catherine McClellan writes that in theory, at least, no deliberately fictitious stories were ever told, although she detects a difference between the “drive toward standardization” in the Coastal Tlingit oral literature and the Interior groups’ “delight in free variation” (1970:118, 123, 128). “Gagéets” appears to be an exception, but its limited distribution would seem to validate the theory of social constraints against deliberate fiction

and fantasy, in contrast to mythic and legendary accounts identified with specific places, clans, and genealogies.

To summarize thus far: it is difficult for a European folktale to be borrowed in the first place, possibly because of a lack of reciprocity in trade relations probably based in turn on the difference in social structures. (We are leaving economic, military, and colonial considerations out of the discussion for the present.) At any rate, the trade relationship that obtained with the adjacent Indians did not obtain with the Russians; therefore, folklore items could not be traded along with material goods. The difference in social structure and worldview may also explain the Tlingit lack of concern in general with foreign (i.e. non-Indian) material observed by McClellan and others.

Once borrowed, it would be difficult for a foreign tale to attain popularity and enter the mainstream of oral tradition because of the seeming constraints against fiction and fantasy. As far as we know, Gagéets thrived in a limited context only, among eclectic storytellers with Russian Orthodox connections. It is possible (but unlikely) that other storytellers perceived the Gagéets story as some kind of a clan story and refrained from telling it out of respect for clan ownership—in this case the story being viewed as a trade item. The constraint against fiction must ultimately derive from the social structure with its emphasis on clan identity. In Tlingit oral literature, most stories are clan-owned and record the accounts of one's progenitors and the clan's acquisition of spirit power. This would explain the preference for legend to the exclusion of folktale in Tlingit oral tradition (legend defined as true, and folktale as fiction).

The theoretical implications of the Gagéets study may also be observed in the visual arts. During the period of our earliest Gagéets research, Nathaniel Tarn raised the suggestion of "open" and "closed" artistic traditions in the visual arts, connecting this with heraldry and totemism (1975). We are oversimplifying here, but, for example, Eskimo art would be an "open" tradition, whereas Tlingit art would be "closed." That is, Tlingit visual art is open to experimentation and innovation only within a certain heraldic framework. This concept of the heraldic dimension of Tlingit art and oral tradition again returns us to social structure. All folk traditions seem to have an aesthetic expectation of new items, beyond which a given item is no longer recognizable or acceptable as folk art of the group (Toelken 1979). On a theoretical level, we might ask what connection—if any—exists worldwide between the social structure of a given group and its attitudes toward 1) legend vs. folktale (history vs. fantasy—non-fiction vs. fiction); 2) artistic experimentation and change ("open" vs. "closed"); and 3) folklore borrowing.

For example, the European experience shows how easily folktales transcend political frontiers and language barriers. But how would they transcend barriers of social structure? Unless we are grossly oversimplifying, Europeans would seem to share a common concept of social structure that allowed for widespread tale migration. Despite social classes and varying concepts of household groups, kings and peasants alike would share a common concept of aunts, uncles, cousins, and so on. In this way tale migration situations would be more easily established, and the stories transmitted would not be alien to the social structure even if unfamiliar in plot. Such stories would not easily have been transmitted to the Tlingit, who differed radically in social structure from all immigrant groups—Russians, Americans, Norwegians, and Europeans in general, as well as Filipinos, Chinese, and Asians in general. There was no reciprocity in oral literature, and therefore no tale migration despite proximity and intermarriage. In sharp contrast, this lack of reciprocity is not the case with food. Tlingit has adopted from Russian and Asian cuisine, and many of the immigrant families adapted to indigenous Tlingit foods and their preparation. However, the oral traditions of each group remained alien to the other. In contrast Russian oral traditions influenced Pacific Gulf Yupik (Sugcestun or Chugach Eskimo) folklore. Another contrast to the Tlingit-Russian relationship is the similarity of Tlingit verbal and visual art to other Northwest Coast verbal and visual folk art, and the mutual borrowing that occurred. The social structures are similar, even though the languages are different.

This lack of understanding continues: non-Tlingit Alaskans (Whites, Filipinos, Eskimos) in general cannot appreciate Tlingit stories without some training. Whites for example, often treat Tlingit legends as fairy tales and do not understand the rules of ownership and transmission. Whites tend to view Native oral tradition as simple children's stories and treat the literature accordingly; such treatment is viewed by the Tlingit as racism and abuse. Conversely, Tlingit seem to have no place in their system for European folktales, but, interestingly enough, they do borrow extensively from European *legend*, especially religious legends of the Old Testament.

This paper is still very much a report of work in progress, although little progress has been made in twenty years, and we have probably reached the point of diminishing returns. We set the Gagéets story aside to work with major genres and classics of Tlingit oral literature (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987, 1990, 1994). As we resume the search for “Yuwaan Gagéets,” we find that we have little new to add. We are still searching for more versions of the story among the Tlingit and in Russian and Siberian folklore studies; likewise, the theoretical conclusions presented here are

tentative, and simply indicate the direction of our present thought. The dynamics of folklore borrowing on the Northwest Coast are oversimplified in the present paper. It is clear that there was much borrowing among the Tlingit and their neighbors. It should theoretically follow that this abundant interchange of folklore is accompanied by a great similarity in social structure. Thus, despite the differences in language, a folklore reciprocity would be possible and the Northwest Coast situation, when self-contained, would be analogous to such reciprocity in Europe. All of these theories need further research.

However it was learned, “Yuwaan Gagéets” remains in the final analysis an example of a personal story within two families, and a family story within a culture. It is a tiny and shaky monument to pure fantasy and irrelevance, a small vestige of a vast personal repertoire. Above all, it is a tribute to the memories of some of the most eclectic storytellers of Tlingit tradition, men and women who loved new stories, and who loved to tell them.

Juneau, Alaska

References

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Aarne 1928 | Antti Aarne. <i>The Types of the Folk-Tale: A Classification and Bibliography</i> . Trans. and expanded by Stith Thompson. New York: Burt Franklin. Rpt. 1971. |
| Afanas'ev 1945 | Aleksandr Afanas'ev. <i>Russian Fairy Tales</i> . Trans. by Norbert Guterman. New York: Pantheon Books, Random House. Rpt. 1973. |
| Astakhova 1958 | Anna Mikhailovna Astakhova. <i>Ilya Muromets</i> . Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR. |
| Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987 | Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard L. Dauenhauer. <i>Haa Shuká, Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narratives</i> . Seattle: University of Washington Press. |
| Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1990 | _____. <i>Haa Tuwunáagu Yís, for Healing Our Spirit: Tlingit Oratory</i> . Seattle: University of Washington Press. |
| Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1994 | _____. <i>Haa Kusteeyí, Our Culture: Tlingit Life Stories</i> . Seattle: University of Washington Press. |

- Kan forthcoming Sergei Kan. *Memory Eternal: Tlingit Culture and Russian Orthodox Christianity through Two Centuries*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Kolokol'tsev 1960 Nikolai Vladimirovich Kolokol'tsev. *Literaturnoe Chtenie na Russkom Yazyke: Khrestomatiya dlya VI Klassa Nerusskikh Shkol*. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Uchebno-Pedagogicheskoe Izdatel'stvo Ministerstva Prosveshcheniya RSFSR.
- Matveeva and Leonova 1993 R.P. Matveeva and T.G. Leonova. *Russkie Skazki Sibiri i Dal'nego Vostoka: Volshebnye, O Zhivotnykh*. Novosibirsk: Nauka.
- McClellan 1970 Catharine McClellan. "Indian Stories About the First Whites in Northwestern America." In *Ethnohistory in Southwestern Alaska and Southern Yukon: Method and Content*. Ed. by Margaret Lantis. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky. pp. 103-34.
- Nikiforov 1965 A.I. Nikiforov "Skazka, ee bytovanie i nositeli." In *Russkaya Fol'kloristika: Khrestomatiya dlya Vuzov*. Ed. by S.I. Mints and E.V. Pomerantseva. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Vysshaya Shkola.
- Pomerantseva 1966 Erna Vasil'evna Pomerantseva. "Skazki." In *Russkoe Narodne Tvorchestvo*. Ed. by P. Bogatyrev. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Vysshaya Shkola. pp. 137-73.
- Stevens 1967 H.C. Stevens. *Russian Folk Tales*. London: Hamlyn.
- Tarn 1975 Nathaniel Tarn. "The Heraldic Vision: A Cognitive Model for Ethnopoetics." Paper read at the Ethnopoetics Symposium, Center for Twentieth Century Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, April 1975.
- Thompson 1968 Stith Thompson, comp. *One Hundred Favorite Folktales*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Toelken 1979 Barre Toelken. *The Dynamics of Folklore*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Appendix 1A: Tlingit Text of Willie Marks
Yuwaan Gagéets
Told by Willie Marks
Haines, Alaska, October 5, 1974
Transcribed by Nora Marks Dauenhauer

Yuwaan Gagéets yóo duwasáakw wé káa.
 Du keek' hás
 du hunxw hás áwé akgwasháa.
 Yá Anóoshi aan yátx'í áwé
 wé ku.oo yu.a. 5
 Áwé yá hu kwá hél du shát sákw koostí.
 Áwé wé du húnxw hásch kwá kaawashóok.
 Aatlein at shookx wududliyéx,
 yoo l du shát sákw koosteeyí.
 Áwé sáks áwé át yei s anasneich, 10
 has at t'úkt.
 L dakát át has at'úkt.
 Waa nanéi sáwé wooch keekx' kéi has akawjit'úk.
 Át góot áwé du aayí,
 xích'ích áwé satáx'. 15
 Anáatx áwé yóox aklaxeet
 wé xích'.
 Yá du chooneidí astáx'.
 Hél yóo awudlákkw.
 Áwé yóodei kei akawlixít. 20
 Yóo kei wdzigít.
 "Daat sákw sáyá isatáx' chooneidí,
 ch'a daax'oon lax'óosk'í?"
 tláakw adaayaká.
 Tle akát seiwax'ákw. 25
 Neil góot áwé—gwáa!
 ch'ú shóogoo wé xích' gwáa wé gé
 du shayeidí kát áa.
 Tléel adaat tooshtí.
 Ch'a át áa, hél wáa sá ash daa uné hu tsú. 30
 Ách áwé tle at kuhaa áwé wé wedding
 du hunxw hás, has akgwasháa,
 hu ku.aa wes tlél du shát sákw koostí.
 Aagáa áwé tlél aax kuwustée wé xích'.
 Gwáa! 35
 Wáa sá kawahayi shaawát áyá du xánt hán?
 Daa sá oowayáa?
 "Xat geesháat áyá,"
 yéi gíyá ash yawsikáa.
 Ách áwé tle góok. 40
 Tléel tsu kúxdei yóo wdatee.

| | |
|---|----|
| Aan woo.aat, tlé yú weddingdéi aan woo.aat. Tle <u>kaa waakgáa</u> wootee, hu tsú tle. Áwé yóo l' <u>éix</u> yaa yagaxéex, | 45 |
| aagáa áwé <u>kaa waksheeyix'</u> yéi adaané. Wé du jin tóodei ayawsixaa wé gáaxw héeni, a s'aagí tsú <u>héináx</u> á. Aagáa áwé yóo awsinei | 50 |
| wé a héeni áa yéi yateeyi aa á áwés át déin, wé t'áa digiygé. Wé <u>héináx</u> <u>aanáx</u> du jin <u>tóonáx</u> <u>ku</u> .aa wés wé kindachoonait yóot akawlináash, aa <u>wsikee</u> . | 55 |
| Du at gógoo áwé. Tle ch'a a <u>güwanáax</u> yaa nastéeni teen áwé yéi tuwdisháat <u>ka</u> awsikoo xíxch' <u>ix</u> sateeyí wé <u>káach</u> . | 60 |
| Ách áwé néildei <u>wjixeex</u> wé a kinak.ádi <u>káx</u> . Aagáa <u>kujéil</u> . Ch'ú aagáa <u>kujeilí</u> áwé <u>akáx</u> <u>kuwajeil</u> wé shayeit tayeex'. | 65 |
| Áwé tlé sdoox tóot aawaxích. Yan shushxéen wé weddingáx neil góot wé shaawát, ash <u>x'eiwawóos'</u> , "Goosú <u>ax</u> kinak.ádi?" "Tlé <u>xwasakú</u> ," yóo áwé yawa <u>kaa</u> . | 70 |
| Aagáa <u>kushée</u> . Awsiteen wé sdoox tóodei. Ch'ú shógoo gwáa wé géi aadei kaaxadí yé, ch'ú shúgú xíxch' áwé wé kél't'. | 75 |
| Ch'a yei sú áwú, awsiteen. Ách áwé yéi yaawa <u>kaa</u> , "I <u>nák</u> <u>kkwagoot</u> . Tle wáa yei kuwáat' dei sá, wáa yei kuwáat' dei sá <u>ax</u> eegáa <u>keesheeyí</u> , | 80 |
| tlél <u>xat</u> yakgeedlaak, tsu <u>gayéis'</u> téel <u>yilayeixí</u> i <u>x'oos</u> yís." Wudulyeixí ch'a aan tlél du <u>x'oos</u> yís wududliyéx. Aan áwé <u>gunéi</u> uwagút. Tlé <u>awuskú</u> goodéi sá yaa nagúdi, koogéiyi. | 85 |
| Waa nanéi sáwé <u>akáx</u> <u>koowashee</u> . Shawat shaanák'w áwé, hít aya.óo. Hít' <u>akáx</u> <u>koowashee</u> . | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| “Wáa sá <u>keeyanóok</u> ?” aan akanéek. “ <u>Ax</u> shát áyá <u>ax</u> nák kei wjixíx.” | 90 |
| Gwál a saayí shákdéi awsikóo. Ash een akaawaneek, “Yáadu hú.” Tle yóo ash yawsikaa tle. “Yóot gaawx’ ásí yáax <u>koox</u> , yáax <u>kuteen</u> .” | 95 |
| “Yak’éi!” “Áx’ yax kaawagaa wé shawat shaanákw xán. Ash een akaawaneek, “Haadéi yaa <u>kunatín</u> .” | 100 |
| A yayeet áwé hán. Héidei ashunataán áwé x’awool wé shaawát. Ash yát awdligén. Tlé <u>kux</u> wujixíx tle. | 105 |
| Tle tsu góot aa aandéi kei wjixíx wé shaawát. Tle a ítx woogoot. Kúkdlaa, áwé yaakwx awliyéx. Héen <u>xuká</u> át kawlis’ees. Akáx <u>koowashee</u> tsu, ayaanadlaak dé. Ayaawadlaak. | 110 |

**Appendix 1B: English Translation of Willie Marks
Yuwaan Gagéets
Told by Willie Marks
Haines, Alaska, October 5, 1974
Translated by Nora Marks Dauenhauer**

| | |
|--|----|
| Yuwaan Gagéets was the name of that man. His younger brothers, his older brothers were going to be married. They were Russian nobility so they say. | 5 |
| As for him, there was no woman for him to marry. His older brothers laughed at him. They made him the laughingstock, that he didn’t have someone for a wife. They carried bows, they shot their arrows. | 10 |
| They shot at everything. At one point, they competed shooting their arrows up and away. When he went to get his arrow, a frog had it in its jaws. | 15 |

He tried to shove
 the frog off.
 It was biting on his arrow.
 He couldn't retrieve it.
 Then he shoved it aside. 20
 It fell off the arrow.
 "Why are you biting on my arrow,
 you four-legged creature?"
 he scolded it.
 Then he forgot about it. 25
 When he got home—hey!
 it was the very same frog, wasn't it,
 squatting on his pillow.
 He didn't pay attention to it.
 It just sat there, he didn't do anything to it either. 30
 This was why, when time came for the wedding,
 when his older brothers were getting married,
 he didn't have anyone for a wife.
 About that time the frog disappeared from here.
 Hey! 35
 Who was this woman standing next to him?
 How did she look?
 "I'm here for you to marry,"
 perhaps is what she said.
 That's why he went ahead. 40
 He didn't hesitate.
 He went with her,
 he went with her to the wedding.
 Then everyone approved of her too.
 As the dance was taking place 45
 is when she performed for the party.
 She poured some duck soup
 down her sleeve,
 the bone she dropped into the other sleeve.
 This is when she swept her arm wide, 50
 the one with the soup in it,
 and a pond formed there,
 in the middle of the table.
 And from the other sleeve
 she shook out several mallards that landed in the pond. 55
 This was her talent.
 As soon as he separated from her
 the man
 thought about it and he knew she was a frog.
 This is why he ran home 60
 for her coat.
 He searched for it.

While he was searching for it he found it
under a pillow.

Then he threw it into the stove. 65

After the wedding party ended,
when the woman had come home,
she asked him, "Where is my coat?"
"I don't know," he said.

She started searching for it. 70

She saw it in the stove.
It was still the same coat.
The ashes were in a form of a frog.
It was still there; she saw it.

This was why 75

she said,
"I'm leaving you forever.
No matter how long,
no matter how long you search for me,
you won't find me, 80

even if you make metal shoes."
When they made them, they weren't made for his feet.
He set out with them.
He didn't know where he was going,
he went without direction. 85

At one point he found someone.
It was a little old woman, she owned a house.
he found the little house.
"What are you doing?" she asked him.
"My wife ran off on me." 90

Perhaps he knew her name.
"She's here," she told him.
This is what she said to him.
"She comes along here at a certain time,
she travels along here." 95

"Good!"
He waited for a little while by the little old woman.
She told him,
"She's coming in."
He stood there in her path. 100

The woman
was opening the door.
She saw his face.
She ran back.

Then the woman 105

ran off to another village.
Then he followed her.
She went into a boat that was a bubble.
It blew along on the surface of the water.

He searched again,
until at long last he got her,
he got her.

110

**Appendix 2A: Tlingit Text of Robert Zuboff
Yuwaan Gagéets⁷
dictated by Robert Zuboff
Angoon, Alaska, January 22, 1963
transcribed by Constance Naish and Gillian Story
(line turnings reconstructed by Nora and Richard Dauenhauer)**

Anóoshi sh kalneegí áyá.
Yá du hunxw hás yax ayawlisháa.
A áyá, hú ku.aa, a káa x'eidagáx'ch awushaayí.
Ch'a tlákw gaaw áyá sh káa x'eidagáx'ch agashaayít.
Át ku.aa áyá nagútch; 5
at t'úkt yéi adaané.
A áyá, wáa nanées áyá, naalee yéidei áyá kei awshit'úk yá du chooneidí.
Át góot áyá xích'ích áyá satáx' yá du chooneidí.
Tlei át x'eiwatán,
“Haa, yá ax chooneidí, ax jeet satán ax chooneidí.” 10
“Tléil aadéi.”
Ch'u tlei, “Xat yeeshaa yí tsáa i jeedéi kkwasaatáan yá chooneit.”
Yuwaan yéi x'ayaaká, “Tléil aadéi i kashaayi yé.”
“Haa, daat yís sáwé a káax' x'eidagáx'x ageeshaayít?”
“Haa, yak'ei dei. 15
I kkwasháa; ax shátx i guxsatéé.”
Á áwé aan neil áat áwé wé xích'ík',
du húnxw hásch áwé yáa kanashóok Yuwaan.
Yuwaan ku.aa xích' aawashaa.
Tayeedéi has na.áat áwé, 20
wé xích'ík' Yuwaan leedéx't áwé áa ganúkch.
X'oon ooxí sáyá a ítdáx,
yá du wóo áyá yei kukgwa.éex'.
Aagáa áwé sakwnéin gwéil áwé yaa ndool.át
yá du yitshátxi yán jeex. 25
Cake áyá gaxdoos.ée.
Hú tsú du jeet aa wdudzitée yá sakwnéin gwéil,
yá xích'i jeet.

⁷ We have edited the Tlingit text of Robert Zuboff's dictation slightly to reflect current orthographic conventions. Most noticeably, many of his vowels are phonetically long, but we have standardized them as (phonemically) short, other than in verb stems. Thus, Yoowaan becomes Yuwaan. His character's last name is Yoowaan Googets, and we have standardized to Gagéets.

| | |
|---|----|
| As.ée yá xíxch'íich ch'a yá du wóoch aadéi daa yáka yé yáx. | 30 |
| Yan as.ée áyá yá cake, góon héenich áyá akawsheexít yá ayanáak. Ch'a ldakát yá du yitshátx'i yán aayée yáanáx áyá wook'úi yá góonch akawooshxeedí. | |
| Át koo _h aa áyá, kugáa yaa anagút ya ku.éex' yís. Yéi x'aya _k á yá xíxch', “Áa yéi kkwanoók yé x'wán, kindachooneit áa x _d us.ee a héeni teen.” | 35 |
| Du xúx yéi adaaya _k á, “Ch'u tlei kgeegóot. | 40 |
| Dei wáa xat yaa kxagútni sáwé, gaaw yátx'i ga _x du.áxch. Ch'a ldakát gaaw _x gu _x satée yá a kát yaa nxagút gaawdáan yádi.” | |
| Aa neil góot áwé, ch'u tlei áyú tóonáx akdeegán, kúnáx áyá góos' toodáx wudzigeet. Ch'a ldakát shaklagéiyi át tlei du ée x'awduwanák. Yá áa yei kgwaanuk yé ch'a chooch x'ayáx kindachooneit áa wududzi.ée a héeni teen, aax yoo x'atánk. Sh tóogaa datée yoo x'atánk yéi adaanei nóok áwé, shee yéináx aanáx du jín yóo anasnée, ch'u tlei wé nadáakw káx' áwé woaxeex wé áak'w. Héináx aanáx du jín yá s'át' yeenaanax á aanáx yóo anasnée, yá aawa _x ayi kindachooneit ch'u tlei yá áak'w kát wusihoo. | 45 |
| Á áyá tla _x kúnák áyá áyá shakli _g éi yá du shát. Du tuwáx' áyá sigóo ch'a tlei _x yéi teeyí. | 50 |
| Ách áyá du shát shookát áyá gáant wujixíx neildéi. Aagáa áyá awsiteen yá du shát doogú. A tóodax yóot uwagút. Ch'a tlei _x yéi ngatéet áyá, yá du shát doogú aax aawasháat. Ganaltáat aawa _g íx'. Du ítnáx áyá neil uwagút yá du shát. Aagáa kushée yá du doogú, a x'anawóos' áwé du xúx, | 55 |
| | 60 |
| | 65 |
| | 70 |
| | 75 |

“A_x doogú gé tléil yisateen?”

“Aaá,

wéidá_x xwaatee,

ganaltáat xwaagíx’.”

Ch'u tlei áwé kawdi_gaa_x.

80

“I xsa_xánin.

Ch'u tlei yáa yeedát_x' yándeí shuk_kwatáan.

Tléil áyá a_x tuwáa i wushgóo.

I góot.”

Yáat ya_káan áyá,

85

gáant wujixíx du shat_xi há_s xoodéi.

Cha ayá_x sh kalneek du shat_xi há_s téen.

Tléil tsu du tuwáa ushgóo a xáni kux wudagoodí.

Yuwaan ku.aa áyá tléil yan tuwooja_kw.

Kú_xdei áyá asayahéi yá du shát.

90

Ách áyá woogoot Yuwaan ku.aa

tlei yá du shát shát_xi xánt áyá,

xánt áyá uwagút.

“Kú_xdei áyá saxaahéi

yá a_x shát.”

95

“Tléik’.

I wlitl'éet xá;

tléil áwé du tuwáx' eeshgú.

I eedéi áwé sh tóon wudítee.”

“Haa, ch'a aan xasixán wé a_x shát.”

100

“Daat_x sgi s'e gé ixwliyé_x?

S'íx' k'áat_x

gwáa i kalayei_x.

Gwál i kaax at_xa núkni,

ch'a góot yéidei ngwaatee du tundatáani.”

105

Ayá_x áwé s'íx' k'áat_x wududliyé_x.

Du shát_xi há_sch áwé woo.éex' at_xá yís.

Nadáakw yaax_x' wududzinoók.

Ayá_x áwé ch'u tlei a káa wduwaxwéin

yá s'íx' kúná_x yak'éiyi at_xá.

110

Kúná_x yándeí yaa at na_xéini,

a yeenéé kawoohaayí,

aagáa áwé yéi yaawa_kaa wé shát_xi aa,

“Yeedát s'é ch'as Yuwaan tsú haa x'éit_x at_xá.

A xáawé du ée_x tuxdataan.

115

Yeedát s'é ch'as héit.”

Aagáa áwé sh daat_x naná akawdzixee_x wé s'íx';

Yuwaan_x woositee.

Ch'u tlei ch'a tlei_x xíxch'i kwáani xoox' yéi wootee

yá Yuwaan.

120

**Appendix 2B: English Translation of Robert Zuboff
Yuwaan Gagéets
dictated (in Tlingit) by Robert Zuboff
Angoon, January 22, 1963
transcribed in Tlingit by Constance Naish and Gillian Story
translated into English by Nora Dauenhauer**

This is a Russian story.
 Each of his older brothers were married.
 He would pray to be married.
 He prayed all of the time to be married.
 He would go around 5
 hunting with his bow and arrow.
 At one point he shot his arrow far.
 When he got there, a frog had his arrow in its mouth.
 And he asked it,
 “Give me my arrow, hand over my arrow.” 10
 “No way.”
 It added, “Only if you marry me I will give you your arrow.”
 Yuwaan said, “I can’t marry you.”
 “Well, why do you pray to marry?”
 “Well, it’s okay then, 15
 I’ll marry you; you’ll be my wife.”
 When he took that little frog home,
 his older brothers kept on laughing at Yuwaan.
 But Yuwaan married the frog.
 When they went to bed, 20
 the frog would sit at Yuwaan’s neck.
 How many nights following,
 her father-in-law was going to invite people.
 This is when flour sacks were being distributed
 among his daughters-in-law. 25
 They were to bake cakes.
 They also gave a sack of flour
 to the frog.
 The frog baked
 the way her father-in-law was saying to her. 30
 When she finished baking this cake,
 she wrote in liquid gold on the top of it.
 Better than all of his daughters-in-laws’
 was the one inscribed with liquid gold.
 When time came, someone was going along inviting guests. 35
 The frog said,
 “Set a place for me.
 Cook some mallard with soup.”
 The frog said to her husband,
 “You will go ahead of me. 40

When I'm coming down,
 you will hear little bells.
 There will be little bells all over the pony
 when I set out on it."

When she came in 45
 she was translucent,
 she surely fell from the clouds.
 She was more beautiful than anything.
 At the place where she was going to sit,
 mallards had been cooked 50
 in a soup,
 just like she wanted.

When she was beginning to make
 her thank-you speeches,
 when she waved her right arm, 55
 a lake fell on the table.

When she waved her other arm,
 the left side,
 the mallard she had eaten
 was swimming on the lake. 60
 And you know,
 this wife of his was very cute.
 He wanted her to remain
 the way she was for always.

This was why 65
 he ran home ahead of his wife.
 This was when he saw his wife's skin.
 She had taken it off.
 So that she would remain the same for always,
 he grabbed his wife's skin. 70
 He threw it in the fire.

This wife of his
 got home after him.
 Then, when she was searching for her skin
 she asked him, this husband of hers, 75
 "Did you see my skin?"
 "Yes,
 I took it from there.
 I threw it in the fire."
 Then she began to cry. 80
 "I loved you
 But now it's over.
 I don't want you.
 Get lost."

As she said this, 85
 she ran out to her older sisters.
 She told this to her older sisters.

She didn't want to go back to him.
 But Yuwaan couldn't settle his thoughts.
 He wanted this wife of his back. 90
 That's why Yuwaan left,
 and went straight
 to his wife's older sisters,
 "I want her back again,
 this wife of mine." 95
 "No!
 she left you, you see,
 she doesn't want you.
 She was hurt by you."
 "Well, even then I love her." 100
 "What can I make you into?
 Shall I make you
 into a plate?
 Then maybe when she eats off of you,
 her feelings will change." 105
 Accordingly, he was made into a plate.
 Her older sisters invited her to eat.
 They sat her at a table.
 Very nice food was spooned out
 onto this plate. 110
 As she was finishing her food,
 when she was halfway through,
 is when the older sister said,
 "If only Yuwaan were eating with us too.
 I keep thinking of him. 115
 If only he were here."
 That's when the plate became real.
 It became Yuwaan.
 Yuwaan remained
 with the Frog people forever.