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The Depiction of a Woman in Irish and Scottish Folklore

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the whole of this diploma thesis is my original work and the sources used are properly cited and listed.

Olomouc, 20.4.2012 Signature:

I would like to thank my supervising diploma consultant Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D. for her time, help and expertise.

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TÉMA ČESKY:

Zobrazení ženy v irském a skotském folklóru

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The Depiction of a Woman in Irish and Scottish Folklore

VEDOUCÍ PRÁCE:

Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D. - KAA

ZÁSADY PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:

Diplomová práce se zabývá zobrazením ženy v irských a skotských lidových
písních a baladách. Práce je strukturovaná podle role ženy v milostném a rodinném životě, přičemž struktura je následující:
1. Žena jako objekt zájmu (nezávazný život, irská fascinace tuláky)
2. Žena jako milenka (milostný poměr překonávající protivenství, archetyp vojáka, milenka jako zkáza - nestálost a prodejnost)
3. Žena jako manželka (žena jako symbol útlaku v manželství, oddanosti a obdiv ženského boje s těžkým údělem)
4. Žena jako matka (žena jako symbol moudrosti)
5. Žena jako symbol smrti
Podklad pro jednotlivé body tvoří texty vybraných lidových písní a balad, dále je zobrazení ženy v každém bodě stručně srovnáváno i s odpovídající pozicí ženy v českém folklóru.

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Introduction

The aim of the thesis is to describe and discuss the role of women in Irish and Scottish folklore. However, the thesis focuses on a special part of folklore – folk songs and ballads. I decided to choose folk songs for several reasons. Folk songs have been originating for several centuries (some variants of the songs discussed or mentioned are dated between the 16th and the 19th century, but F. J. Child in his work *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* mentions songs originating even in the 13th century) and the scope of their themes and topics is vast. Unlike myths and folk tales that use more or less same female archetypes, songs provide countless roles of woman, be it a naive girl, an experienced young woman, a cunning wife or a respectable mother. Also in my opinion, songs depict social settings and roles of women more dynamically, for the time needed for their creation and distribution is shorter than for establishing or spreading myths and folk tales, and a slight change of the lyrics can completely change the meaning of the song (it is usual that one song has several versions of the lyrics, depending on the time or place the lyrics were written or created). Finally, popularity of Irish and Scottish folk songs is great and numerous musical groups like The Planxty, Chieftains or Dubliners contribute to worldwide spreading and popularity of Irish and Scottish folk songs.

To depict the evolution of woman's role, changes in the perception (like respect, acknowledgement, etc.) of a female character, I divided the thesis into five major groups according to a social position and age of the female protagonist or an antagonist. In every part, several songs depicting the most prominent characteristic traits and different types of a female actor belonging to the group are analyzed and discussed.[1] Every group is briefly compared to the corresponding topic or theme in Czech folklore and folk songs.

The first part describes woman as a girl. The woman in this earliest stage of her life (children in general, are almost never protagonists of Irish and Scottish folk songs; therefore this phase is omitted) is placed into a role of a mere object of male sexual interest. The second part is concerned with woman's transformation from an inexperienced girl into a mature woman by means of overcoming obstacles and pursuing own goals and happiness. The third

[1] While the choice of songs is not complete due to limited space and scope of the thesis, I aimed for the songs preoccupied with the most popular and most often depicted female archetypes.

part deals with woman as a wife, while the fourth part analyzes the most important role a woman could possibly have – maternity. The only exception is the fifth part of the thesis; woman as an embodiment of death. Folk songs do not discuss this topic; therefore I had to use themes found in folk tales to complete the list of the most common roles of a woman in Irish and Scottish folk songs and folklore.

1 Woman as a girl - an object of interest

In its first part, the thesis will focus on the role of young woman in love and non-binding romantic life, although striving for leaving the place of her upbringing. Young woman has only chance to do so by marrying someone and leaving with him. But in this very case men often seek only bodily sensations and they have no intentions to fulfil wishes of young women. Such behaviour usually leads to disenchantment and trickery, albeit not always. Said men are represented mainly by beggars and soldiers whose interactions with women will the thesis analyse in the following parts.

It is a character of a beggar or a tramp that is in scope of especially Irish folk songs. Beggars, be they honest or sly, are main protagonists of numerous ballads and songs (even Yeats uses the archetype of a beggar; others mention beggars or tramps in their works, for example Joyce or Synge). It is unclear why it is a beggar or 'a man of the open road' who plays a prominent role in Irish folklore. There are several possible explanations like a rebellion against the order and free and unbound life style, summarized in the following sentence: "The tramp in Ireland is little troubled by the laws, and lives in out-of-door conditions that keep him in good-humour and fine bodily health." (Askaboutireland.ie). It is wit and good-humour that is attributed to beggars and that plays an important role in songs preoccupied with beggars.

Interaction between a beggar and a young woman (or a girl) follows usually the same scheme; the girl is often a daughter of a farmer or living with her parents and therefore she is bound to one place she cannot leave easily. The beggar arrives and charms the girl (thanks to his wits or thanks to the girl's desire to leave her home and live without the old order represented by her parents). However, the outcome of such interaction is usually different from what the girl strives for. Thanks to the girl's naivety and of her lack of experience the beggar takes full advantage of her and uses her, gaining food, shelter and bodily sensations in

the process. After a short romance (lasting no more than one night) he leaves the girl forever, like in “Jolly Beggarman”. A similar theme, but with notable differences can be found in “As I Roved Out”, which will be analyzed as well.

Although beggars appear frequently in such songs, they are replaced by soldiers in some. While soldiers’ intentions are often the same, the plot of those songs is often complicated by another woman (a soldier’s wife, etc.). The character of a soldier appears more in differently themed songs that will be discussed in the next part of the thesis ‘A woman as a lover’. However, “The Rambling Síuler” dealing with the theme of a beggar and the soldier will be analyzed in this part.

The last theme the thesis will describe in this part is of a girl outwitting lustful soldiers that wanted to use her for their own sexual entertainment (“Martinmas Time”). Although this theme is not as common as the themes already mentioned, it’s in contrast with the usual depiction of a naïve girl falling for a beggar whose intentions are low.

1.1 “Jolly Beggarman”

The origin of the song that represents a prototypical Irish beggar (tramp) ballad is not easy to date. All that is know is it originated around 1730. The thesis will analyze two different variants of the ballad. Although the plot is nearly the same, the point and their endings are completely different.

The first verse describes a setting prototypical for an Irish beggar ballad. The beggar arrives to a farmer’s dwelling and meets a girl who immediately takes liking to him for no apparent reason apart from his looks:[2]

There was a jolly beggarman
Came tripping o'er the plain,
He came unto a farmer's door
A lodging for to gain.
The farmer's daughter she came down
And viewed him cheek and chin,

[2] The lyrics retrieved from: http://www.kinglaoghaire.com/site/lyrics/song_546.html on 12 November 2011.

She says, “He is a handsome man,
I pray you take him in.”[3]

The next verse describes the beggar’s accommodation. Unlike other tramps, he would not spend his night in a barn, but his bed is made in a kitchen. Then a farmer’s daughter appears again and the beggar makes use of the situation:

The farmer's daughter she got up
To bolt the kitchen door,
And there she saw the beggar
Standing naked on the floor.
He took the daughter in his arms
And to the bed he ran.
“Kind sir,” she says, “be easy now.
You'll waken our goodman.”

This peculiar treatment and the daughter’s docility are explained in the last verse:

“Now you are no beggar
You are some gentleman,
For you have stolen my maidenhead
And I am quite undone.”
“I am no lord, I am no squire
Of beggars I be one,
And beggars they be robbers all
So you're quite undone.”

[3] The chorus:

We'll go no more a roving
A roving in the night.
We'll go no more a roving
Let the moon shine so bright.
We'll go no more a roving.

inspired G. G. Byron’s poem “So, we’ll go no more a roving” (tspace.library.utoronto.ca).

The girl presumes the beggar is a disguised nobleman (see the Scottish variant lower), however she is wrong and the lost of her virginity is a punishment for her rather selfish behaviour, for an affair with a nobleman could lead to wealth. The beggar, on the other hand, is not ashamed and in the line "And beggars they be robbers all / So you're quite undone" he justifies and celebrates his victory over the girl's naivety and simplicity. Unlike in "Killieburn Brai" or "Whiskey in The Jar", the narrator does not judge the girl or the beggar and it is up to the audience to decide who the antagonist is.

The Scottish version (Child's variant A) replaces the farmer with a mother and her three daughters. Its plot is more complicated and deals with the beggar's quarrel with the mother and her daughters. In the end, the beggarman seduces the girl as well like in the Irish variant, but the end is different:[4]

She tuke him to her press, gave him a glass of wine;
He tuke her in his arms, says, "Honey, ye'ss be mine."
He tuke a horn fra his side an he blue loud an shill,
An four-an-tuenty belted knights came att the beager's will.
He tuke out a pean-kniff, lute a' his dudes faa,
An he was the braest gentelman that was among them a'.
He patt his hand in his poket an gaa her ginnes three,
An four-an-tuenty hunder mark, to pay the nires feea.
"Gin ye had ben a gued woman, as I thought ye had ben,
I wad haa made ye lady of castels eaght or nine."

The beggar indeed is a disguised noble. In this case it is James V., who according to legends visited his subjects in disguise as a "Gudeman of Ballengeich" (Royal.gov.uk). This "King of Commons" was also said to be seducing young girls and having short lived romantic affairs with them. The beggar proves his royal origin and the girl is rewarded.

1.2 "As I Roved Out"

The character of a beggar is replaced by a soldier in "As I Roved Out", and the interaction between the male protagonist and the girl is different from "Jolly Beggarman" as

[4] The lyrics retrieved from: http://www.contemplator.com/child/var279.html on 13 November 2011.

well, because soldiers were portrayed more positively than beggars (although there are exceptions like “Martinmas Time”). In the first verse, the narrator meeting a girl:[5]

“And who are you, me pretty fair maid, and who are you, me honey?”
She answered me quite modestly, “I am me mother's darling.”

The meeting seems to be not as volatile and sudden than the one described in “Jolly Beggarman”, but in the next verse, the girl’s behaviour follows the pattern already mentioned before:

“And will you come to me mother's house, when the sun is shining clearly?
I'll open the door and I'll let you in, and divil 'o one would hear us.”

The narrator accepts her invitation and consequently they spend the night together after she offered him wine, which he accepted.[6]

Then I got up and made the bed, and I made it nice and aisy.
Then I got up and laid her down, saying, “Lassie, are you able?”

And there we lay till the break of day and divil a one did hear us.
Then I arose and put on me clothes saying, “Lassie, I must leave you.”

So far, the plot follows the usual and expected course. In the last verse, the girl expects the soldier to marry her, which is a very common theme in Irish, Scottish and English folk songs. The soldier declines, albeit not directly:

“And when will you return again and when will we get married?”
“When broken shells make Christmas bells, we might well get married.”

What is the reason for this refusal? Although it would be easy to judge the narrator and label him as an opportunist and an antagonist, the girl is not innocent as well. Her efforts to establish a bond between her and the soldier and possibly strengthen it by marriage are useless for several reasons. One of those was already mentioned in analysis of “Jolly Beggarman”,

[5] The lyrics retrieved from: http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk/irish-folk-music/irish%20songs/As%20I%20Roved%20Out.htm on 28 March 2012.

[6] Three verses are omitted for they are not important for the plot or further analysis of the girl’s role.

while another is more complicated. I am convinced that the bond formed by such an action is too weak to last longer than one night. On the contrary, the bond between the man and the woman formed by overcoming obstacles is apparently more important and stronger. Moreover, such actions enable a girl to mature into a woman who is more experienced and desirable (this theme will be discussed in the following part of the essay). Finally, such behaviour could be interpreted as a sign of loose morals that would not be accepted by men (because of fear of adultery, the lack of trust etc.).

1.3 "Martinmas Time"

"Martinmas Time" depicts the female protagonist differently. Although she is still a girl, her manners and actions elevate her role. She is no longer a passive victim of her naive wishes and men's lust, but thanks to her wit and courage she outsmarts a group of soldiers who seek to derive bodily pleasures from a short lived romance with her. The group of soldiers arrives and meet the protagonist:[7]

It fell upon the Martinmas time,
When the snow lay on the border.
There came a troop of soldiers here
To take up their winter quarters.

They rode up and they rode down, and
They rode over the border.
There they met a fair pretty girl
And she was a farmer's daughter.

Note the recurring archetype of a farmer's daughter mentioned before. The soldiers force her to come to their garrison against her will. She is in no position to refuse; therefore she swears she would come:

They made her swear a solemn oath
and salt tear in her eye, oh,

[7] The lyrics retrieved from: http://sniff.numachi.com/pages/tiMARTINMA;ttMARTINMA.html on 29 March 2012.

That she would call at their quarter gates
When no-one did her spy, oh.

Despite her unfavourable situation, the girl decides to act and change her role from a passive victim to an active heroine. Her preparation and her plan are revealed in the next two verses:

So she goes to the barber shop
To the barber shop went soon, oh,
She's made them cut her fine yellow hair
As short as any dragoon, oh.

Then she goes to the tailor shop
And dresses in soldier's clothes, oh,
A pair of pistols down her side
And a nice little boy was she, oh.

The theme of cross-dressing or a disguise is fairly common not only in folklore, but can be found in classical literature, drama[8] and myths. The protagonist has to fulfil her oath, but at the same time she refuses to become an object of the soldiers' lust. Disguised, she arrives at the garrison:

When she comes to the quarter gates,
It's loud, loud she did call, oh,
"There comes a troop of soldiers here
And we must have lodgings all, oh!"

The quartermaster he comes out
He gives her half a crown, oh,
"Go and find lodgings for yourself,
For here there is no room, oh."

[8] One of works of the Irish drama, *The Recruiting Officer*: *a comedy* by George Farquhar is relevant to the topic of the thesis and will be mentioned in the next chapter. The theme of cross-dressing is used as well and almost in the same manner, although the cross-dressed female character does not try to outwit lustful soldiers, but to get closer to her lover and make him interested in her.

The girl's courage pays off. Not only she was able to honour her oath and avoid being confronted with the soldiers, but she was rewarded for her dauntless actions and for standing against the imminent danger. The similar scenario is used in the next two verses:

But she drew nearer to the gates
And louder did she call, oh,
"Room, room, you gentlemen,
We must have lodgings all, oh!"

The quartermaster he comes out
He gives her eighteen pence, oh,
"Go and find lodgings in the town
For tonight there comes a wench, oh."

She is rewarded even more and her supposed role of a wench is revealed. The soldiers' intentions are clear now, but the heroine still tries to prove she indeed was at the place the soldiers' set:

She's pulled the garters from her legs
The ribbons from her hair, oh,
She's tied them 'round the quarter gates
As a token she'd been there, oh.

She drew a whistle from her side,
And blew it loud and shrill, oh,
"You're all very free with your eighteen pence
But you're not for a girl at all, oh."

The girl reveals her true identity, confronting the soldiers directly. They realize she looked through their plan and outsmarted them while not breaking the oath. She further emphasizes her moral superiority, courage and victory by mocking the soldiers who unsuccessfully try to capture her:

And when they knew that it was her,
They tried to overtake her.

She's clapped her spurs to the horse's side
And she's galloped home a maiden.

The protagonist of the song steps out of the line of weak and passive girls whose naivety is often taken advantage of. Her courage, unusual for female protagonists, determination to fulfil the oath she was forced to swear without giving the soldiers chance to have their way with her, are in a strong contrast with submissive female characters mentioned before. Although the theme of a girl outwitting obviously stronger, yet less intelligent, men is not as common in the Irish and Scottish folk songs as the themes already described, "Martinmas Time" proves that a young girl was not portrayed only as a gullible person whose only role is to be taken advantage of. Another notable difference is that a woman protagonist is extremely rare in the songs on the theme of a woman as a girl; therefore "Martinmas Time" provides an unusual and completely different view on a girl's role.

1.4 "The Rambling Síuler"

The last song discussed in this part of the thesis offers a plot that utilizes motifs, characters and themes used in the most of the songs on the theme of a woman as a girl, and could be regarded as the richest in content of the songs the thesis mentioned. This is apparent in the first verse:[9]

The highland lads are come to town and landed in headquarters.
The colonel fell for a pretty little girl a farmer's only daughter.
The general bet five thousand pounds the colonel wouldn't dress up in a beggar's gown,
And she'll travel the world go round and round, will she go with the rambling siúler?

As mentioned before, the song combines characters of soldiers and beggars and a theme of cross-dressing besides the usual motifs described in the previous songs. The soldier is not driven by lust this time and moreover his rank is high; therefore it can be expected his actions, intentions and manners will not be low. The next verse describes the colonel's preparations:

[9] The lyrics retrieved from: http://www.china2galway.com/Songs%20The%20Rambling%20Siuler.htm on 29 March 2012.

The colonel started out next day dressed in a beggar's clothing.
It wasn't long till he found his way to the farmer's lowly dwelling.
"O farmer shelter me for the night, I'll sleep in your barn until daylight.
Take pity on a beggar's awful plight. God help all rambling siúlers."

The farmer welcomes the disguised colonel and offers him a shelter unaware of the bet or his true identity. The colonel's plan works even better when he is invited inside:

The farmer says: "The night is wet; you can come to the kitchen fire."
The colonel says to the serving maid, "It's you I do admire.
Will you leave them all and come with me, leave them all a gra mo chroi."
"What a lusty beggar you would be; away with the rambling siúler!"

It is unclear, however, why the colonel tries to seduce the maid. One of possible explanations is that he only pretends it, so the farmer would not guard his daughter or keep her away from the colonel. Another explanation could be that he, in the case of success, could provoke the daughter and make her compete with the maid for him. Anyway, the colonel follows the usual way of a beggar. The following verse describes arrival of the farmer's daughter. However, for the lack of interaction between the colonel and the girl, I decided to omit this verse and skip to the following one:

The farmer and his servants all they went out to the byre.
He put his arm around her waist as they sat by the kitchen fire.
He put his hand upon her knee unto her gave kisses three.
Says she, "How dare you make so free and it's you but a rambling siúler."

The song breaks the usual theme of a girl seduced by a beggar (like in the previously discussed verse). It is not clear whether this is a part of the colonel's plan or the girl is more experienced or more mature than the female character in "The Jolly Beggarman". The night comes and the colonel is taken to the barn where he would sleep:

When supper it was over-o, they made his bed in the barn
Between two sacks and a winnow cloth for fear that he'd do harm.
But at 12 o'clock that very night, she came to the barn she was dressed in white.
The beggar rose in great delight, "She's mine!" says the rambling siúler.

The farmer's daughter falls for him eventually, despite her previous behaviour. Her white gown could symbolize her purity, which could be taken away any moment. It is up to the colonel now if he would take advantage and act like soldiers and beggars mentioned before, or he will prove his moral standards and honesty and reveals his true identity. This is the point of the song described in the two last verses:

> And he threw off his beggar's clothes; he threw them against the wall-o.
> He stood the bravest gentleman that was amongst them all-o.
> "Will you look at my locks of golden hair under the sooty old hat I wear?
> I'm a colonel bold I do declare and it's not but a rambling siúler.
>
> And I wouldn't for one hundred pounds that you and I would be found here.
> Will you travel around the whole night long and go with the rambling siúler?"
> Oh it's off to the General's house they've gone, great is the wager he has won.
> Salute them both with the fife and the drum; she's away with the rambling siúler.

The colonel's revelation is, in my opinion, the girl's reward for she resisted the first time and even then she approached the colonel with no foolish intentions. On the other hand, she still fell for him without knowing his true identity and plans. However, she did not make the same mistake like in "The Jolly Beggarman" and she left herself at the mercy of the colonel, which is emphasized by her white dress as well.[10] Of course, it is disputable whether her virtue was worth of rewarding or not, but as mentioned above, the colonel is apparently a person of high moral standards and his goal is to win the bet and not using the girl for his pleasure. The song ends with their departure, but it is not clear if they stay together and if there is any bond between them.

1.5 Brief comparison with Czech folklore and folk songs

The immensely popular theme of beggars, soldiers and girls in Irish and Scottish folk songs is almost completely missing in Czech, Moravian or Silesian folk songs. I suppose this is caused by negative images of beggars and tramps and sometimes even soldiers; the archetype of a beggar is replaced with a vague male character that is not defined and is hard to

[10] This theme of a reward could be found in classical folk tales, for example *The Frog Prince* collected by brothers Grimm.

describe for the lack of traits and recurrence in songs. Another cause could be the lyrical tone of Czech and Moravian folk songs, which is in a sharp contrast with narratives of Irish and Scottish folk songs. Most of Czech folk songs on this theme are in a form of a dialogue between the female protagonist and her parents or a dialogue between a man (usually a suitor) and a girl. For example in "Teče voda, teče"[11] the girl ask her mother how to deal with a dragoon who courts her. Although the song ends in the daughter's resolution to leave with the dragoon, it is not clear if she really left. The interaction between soldiers and women is not mentioned or depicted at this stage and the audience witnesses just the outcome of the short lived romance. The dialogue between a man and a girl usually describes the end of their relationship for various reasons, saying goodnight or goodbye or a simple message about their relationship.[12]

Conclusion

Although the theme of woman as a girl interacting with males represented by soldiers and beggars is widespread and popular, the variety of characters is not great. The most typical female role is of a passive object of men's lust. Inexperienced girls are attracted to beggars and soldiers by the outlook of a change (leaving their parents and the place they are bound to). Such a girl tries to establish a bond between her and a beggar or a soldier by a short lived affair and sex; however, the bond formed this way is weak and breaks easily, for the girl voluntarily degraded herself to a gullible, weak minded character worth of no respect, especially when her behaviour is motivated by her personal profit ("The Jolly Beggarman"). Of course, there are exceptions, but they are somewhat rare ("Martinmas Time" and "The Rambling Síuler") for unknown reasons; I can only presume the songs were intended for a male audience that prefers male protagonists who are able to take advantage of a naive female.

2 Woman as a lover – transformation from girl to woman

This rather common theme appearing in Irish and Scottish folk songs deals with another role of a woman, emphasizing love and interaction within the couple instead of bodily

[11] "The Water Flows"

[12] Czech and Moravian folk songs are mostly first person narratives. The narrator addresses his or her counterpart directly or indirectly and there is little room for a proper plot or a plot twist.

love and sexual interest like most of songs already mentioned. However, there is a very thin line between those themes, as one leads (albeit not necessarily) to another, especially thanks to higher moral standards and better intentions of protagonists that often differ from those depicted in the previous part of the thesis.

Protagonists, as said before, change, grow older and are more experienced. However, they are even more treacherous and ready to betray their lovers for whatever reason (like in "Whiskey in the Jar"), be it money another man or woman. This change for worse is especially apparent in female characters. Variety of characters used is wider as well as variety of their intentions, plots and endings of songs that tend to be more serious. Questions of loyalty, real love and devotion are discussed; lovers often face obstacles that must be overcome (danger, distance, parents, etc…). However, sometimes such obstacles, though overcome at first, appear later and cause a disaster, as described in "Bonny Light Horseman"

Beggars are replaced by soldiers, another common archetype especially in Irish folk songs. Most of the soldiers mentioned are ready to enter a relationship and possibly marry their counterparts. When the obstacles - in this case represented by war or parents - are overcome, they do so (like in "Mary and the Soldier" or in "The Jolly Soldier"). Note that it's not only men who fight unfavourable circumstances; in many songs it's the woman who has to cope with such conditions, or it's the entire couple whose strength, overcoming all dangers and threats, symbolizes their unity and loyalty more than being pronounced a husband and a wife. Therefore a female protagonist has no longer a role of a mere love interest. Women are depicted as strong willed and determined characters following their happiness and striving for love. This change represents a transformation from a girl to a woman in many songs, because a girl leaves her parents, fights obstacles and finally achieves her goal, becoming a woman no matter her age.

Despite this change, the motif of short lived affairs and bodily love still appears as said before. A man (especially a soldier), refuses to marry a girl he seduced before, stating his loyalty to his wife or another lover (as in "The Gentleman Soldier"). This motif appears even in classical literature.

Another theme is a young man leaving his lover and finding himself a new one. Unlike others, songs on this theme are generally slower, full of melancholy and sadness. The thesis

will analyze “The Blacksmith” and “As I Roved Out (2)”.[13] These songs deal with the same theme, but each song does so in a different way thanks to the gender of the narrator and the social background and circumstances.

It would be nearly impossible to discuss every motif appearing in the songs on this theme, for the variety of plots, motifs and characters is great, and I reckon it’s the greatest of the themes discussed in the thesis. Therefore I chose those I deem the most important and the most common.

2.1 “The Gentleman Soldier”

“The Gentleman Soldier”[14] is one of many songs that represent the transition from the previously discussed theme of a woman as a love interest to the theme discussed now. In the first verse, the soldier’s romance with a girl named Polly is revealed:

> Well, he was a gentleman soldier, as a sentry he did stand,
> He saluted a fair maid by a waving of his hand -
> So boldly then he kissed her and he passed it off as a joke -
> He drilled her up in the sentry box, wrapped up in a soldier's cloak!

It’s apparent the soldier didn’t take the romance seriously. In addition, the song follows a pattern similar to the one found in many of songs discussed in the previous part, although now a sexual act is openly mentioned. The soldier’s further intentions are shown in the last line of a following chorus:

> Fare thee well Polly me dear, I must be going away.

His plans are confirmed by a following verse:

> All night they tossed and tumbled til daylight did appear.
> The soldier rose, put on his clothes, saying, “Fare thee well my dear!

[13] The name of the song is “As I Roved Out”, but “(2)” is often added because of a possible confusion with the song of the same name, although on a completely different subject, discussed in the previous chapter.

[14] Lyrics retrieved from http://goireland.about.com/od/irishtradandfolkmusic/qt/irishfolkgentle.htm on 29 March 2012

For the drums they are a-sounding and the fifes do sweetly play -
If it weren't for that, Polly, my dear, then at home with you I'd stay!"

Now the theme of an obstacle appears and it's up to the girl whether she will try to fight the obstacle (and therefore become a woman), or she'll act like a girl discussed in the previous part of the thesis:

"Oh, come you gentleman soldier, won't you marry me?"
"Oh no, me dearest Polly, such thing can never be -
For I've a wife already and children I have three!
Two wives are allowed in the army but one's too much for me!"

The soldier, instead of helping the girl with the obstacle, adds one more thus making already mentioned difference between the theme of a woman as a lover and a woman as only a love interest. He states that he won't leave his wife for the girl, although he could do that. Note that the army has never promoted polygamy; by "Two wives are allowed in the army" camp followers are meant. However, a camp follower "follows a military unit to attend or exploit military personnel" (Merriam-Webster.com) and usually has a role of a prostitute.

The soldier's selfish behaviour is even more apparent in the next verse:

"If anyone comes a courting you, you can treat them to a glass.
If anyone comes a courting you, you can say you're a country lass.
You don't have to tell them that ever you played this joke -
That you were drilled in a sentry box wrapped up in a soldier's cloak!"

He leaves her in almost a high-minded manner, implying there is no bond between them (and never actually was). His loathsome approach only confirms the girl was merely used (compare to the previous chapter).

The girl reproaches him for his actions, supposedly trying to win his sympathy[15]:

"Oh, come you gentleman soldier, why didn't you tell me so?
My parents will be angry when this they come to know!"

[15] Or to scare him and make him leave his wife and marry her instead, depends on a reader's approach.

And when nine long months had come and gone the poor girl she brought shame -
She had a little militia boy and she didn't know his name!

Despite the fact the soldier's behaviour was low and dishonest the girl is described not as a victim. She willingly had an affair with him and only after it she wanted the soldier to marry her. This foolish and short-sighted behaviour led to the situation already discussed. The transformation to a woman didn't happen and the girl was left punished. Strangely enough, she's pitied by the narrator, but the soldier is not judged at all, even though he committed adultery[16].

It seems such a motif was popular enough to be used in classical literature as well. George Farquhar's drama *The recruiting officer: a comedy* makes use of archetypes and themes concerning a soldier and a girl (or a woman) common in songs like "The Gentleman Soldier". Sergeant Kite, being asked by his superior about how many wives does he have, replies: "Let me see – Imprimis, Mrs Shely Snikereyes; she sells potatoes upon Ormond key in Dublin; - Peggy Guzzle, the brandy woman at the horse Guards at, Whitehall; - Dolly Waggon, the carrier's daughter at Hull; Madamoiselle Van Bottomflat, at the Buss; - then Jenny Oakum, the ship carpenter's widow at Portsmouth but I don't reckon upon her, for she was married at the same time to two lieutenants of marines, and a man of war's boatswain." (Farquhar 15-16). I presume, however, the marriages discussed are similar to the flirt and romance in "The Gentleman Soldier", for the marriage is, according to Captain Plume, a reason to be ailed (Farquhar 17). Another motif, found in for example "The Martinmas Time", of a woman disguised as a soldier in order to outwit lustful soldiers (or to follow and accompany her husband or a lover), is mentioned as well; Sylvia disguises herself as a man and wants to be recruited, making her lover Captain Plume compete with another recruiter for her (Farquhar 60-61).

Despite the soldiers and recruiters are depicted as lustful creatures using every possible pretext for having a love affair, for example changing money (Farquhar 46), they can

[16] It is another of peculiar motifs. While a woman is punished for committing adultery, a man is not. I suppose this motif has several possible explanations – for example authors of such songs were mainly men, or male adultery was accepted more than female adultery. Also in the following chapter, female adultery (or a love triangle) is described as a motive for murder in "Tipping It Up to Nancy", a victim being surprisingly a husband.

be changed by women's intervention and, unlike in the songs analyzed, a woman has the power to change ways of her lover and make him a better person; this being apparent in Plume's leaving the army, letting go of his unrestrained romances and sexual life, and staying with Sylvia (Farquhar 99).

2.2 "Mary and the Soldier"

While the change of a soldier's behaviour is not described in the folk songs, a motif of a young woman eloping with a soldier is quite frequent. Unlike the characters from *The Recruiting Officer,* soldiers willing to marry the girl are depicted as nearly flawless, honest, and loyal beings, ready to fight the circumstances and in the end achieving their goal (often with a help of a young girl). Therefore the discussed transformation afflicts not only the girl, but even the man who willingly abandons or refuses further possible sexual affairs and romances. The best example of forming a couple and overcoming all possible obstacles is a song "Mary and the Soldier"[17].

In the first verse[18], the girl is charmed by soldiers:

Come all you lads of high renown that will hear of a fair young maiden,
And she roved out on a summer's day for to view the soldier's parading.

They march so bold and they look so gay,
The colours flyin'[19] and the bands did play,
And it caused young Mary for to say,
"I'll wed you me gallant soldier."

The girl's motive to wed the soldier is, in my opinion, childish and immature. She acts so in the next verse as well. However, her childish behaviour mentioned in the second verse as well is used to stress her immatureness and the fact she is only a girl, which will be needed for the theme of the transformation into a woman:

[17] The date of origin is once again unclear.

[18] The lyrics retrieved from http://www.mudcat.org/@displaysong.cfm?SongID=3877 on 1 April 2012.

[19] In the retrieved version ‚fine' is used instead of ‚flyin''. Because other sources use ‚flyin'', I decided to use it instead of the original word.

She viewed the soldiers on parade and as they stood at their leisure.
And Mary to herself did say, “At last I find my treasure,

But oh how cruel my parents must be
To banish my true love away from me!
Well I'll leave them all and I'll go with thee,
Me bold and undaunted soldier.”

The obstacles – parents and distance - are finally mentioned, but the girl decides to disobey her parents, follow her lover and possibly marry him. It is upon the soldier whether he takes an advantage of her naivety like in “The Gentleman Soldier”, or accepts her as his true lover:

“Oh Mary dear, your parents' love I pray don't be unruly.
For when you're in a foreign land, believe you rue it surely.

Perhaps in battle I might fall
From a shot from an angry cannonball.
And you're so far from your daddy's hall -
Be advised by a gallant soldier.”

The soldier discourages her from staying with him and warns her, which is a notable change in the character of the archetypal character of a soldier. The soldier is no more interested in short lived flirts, and acts like a responsible man instead, transcending into an honest and mature person.[20] The girl decides to follow the soldier anyway:

“Oh I have fifty guineas in right gold, likewise a hearth that's burning
And I'd leave them all and I'd go with you me bold undaunted soldier.

So don't say no but let me go
And I will face the daring foe,
And we'll march together to and fro,
And I'll wed you, my gallant soldier.”

[20] Note the similarity to the process of the transformation from a girl to a woman mentioned earlier.

By deciding to leave her parents and assumedly the place she has been bound to since her birth, the girl acts in order to achieve her goal, making her character different to those analyzed in the previous chapter. Her role becomes active, and this decisiveness symbolizes her maturing from a passive object of men's lust to a responsible and determined woman. The soldier, impressed by her loyalty and courage, accepts her:

And when he saw her loyalty and Mary so true-hearted,
He said, "Me darling, married we'll be and nothing but death will part us,

And when we're in a foreign land
I'll guard you, darling, with my right hand
And hopes that God might stand a friend
With Mary and her gallant soldier."

The woman is rewarded for her decisive (although abrupt) action, but this, along with the change of her character, is not the only notable difference. It is apparent that the plot is unlike the one of "The Gentleman Soldier", "Jolly Beggarman" and other similar songs. The female protagonist does not have a sexual affair with the male protagonist in the first place. In my opinion the act itself symbolizes a premature union of the couple, which inevitably leads to disillusionment and disappointment. Therefore, if an inexperienced girl tries to win favour of a man by means of a sexual act, and thus strives to bind him to her, her efforts have rather bitter conclusion. Although it would be easy to claim the girl's behaviour is the cause of her woe, her male counterpart bears a part of the blame as well, for he, as an older and experienced character, shouldn't take an advantage of the girl's naive plans and assumptions.

2.3 "The Jolly Soldier"

"The Jolly Soldier" could be easily compared to the previous song analysed, but despite using similar initial settings, the characters of the soldier and his love are different. While the soldier strives to surmount all opposition, the woman is more a static character who passively supports the soldier, albeit she's decisive at first. Another notable difference is physical and violent dealing with the obstacle embodied by the father of the woman.

Oh it's of a jolly soldier that lately came from war,
He loved a fair young damsel, a damsel so fair

And her fortune was so great that it could scarcely be told
And she loved a jolly soldier boy because he was so bold.[21]

The first verse states that a hindrance common in songs on this topic – the army and distance – is nonexistent. It seems there is no reason why they couldn't marry apart from the woman's father. She warns the soldier and he decides to cope with anything that would follow next:

Oh then cried the lady, "I fain would be your wife,
But me father he is cruel and he'd surely take me life."
He drew out his sword and pistol and he hung them by his side,
And he swore that he would marry her and let what would betide.

Notice the soldier's honest intentions and mature behaviour that is rather essential for the further development of the plot (compare to "Mary and the Soldier"). Despite not knowing what happens next, they marry each other and the plot receives the twist foreshadowed in the previous verse:

So they went and they got married and as they were coming home,
They met with her old father and seven armed men.
"Let us flee," cried the lady, "for we surely will be slain."
"Fear nothing, my dear charmer," the soldier cried again.

Then up came the old man and unto her did say,
"It's for your disobedience to me this very day.
Since you have been so mean as to be a soldier's wife,
Down in this lonesome valley I will surely take your life."

Although disobedience of one's parents usually leads to a disaster or death in folklore and myths of many different cultures[22], the father is portrayed as an antagonist ready to kill his daughter, which therefore does not condemn the woman's behaviour. The soldier decides to defend his wife and prove his loyalty to her:

[21] The lyrics retrieved from http://www.paulbrady.com/?page_id=48#02 on 5 April 2012.

[22] For example Daedalus and Icarus, or the fourth commandment (the Augustinian division), etc.

"Oh now," cried the soldier, "I do not like your prattle,
For although I am a bridegroom I am well prepared for battle."
He drew out his sword and pistol and he caused them for to roar
And the lady held the bridle while the soldier battled sore.

The first one he came to he ran him through 'a main',
And the second one he came to, he served him just the same.
"Let us flee," cried the others, "for we surely will be slain!"
"Fight on, my dear charmer!" the lady cried again.

The soldier eventually defeats the ambush set up by his wife's father, thus liberating her from her previous (presumably unhappy) life and forming a bond between them by overcoming the first great obstacle in their life as a married couple. The woman's father finally surrenders:

"Stay your hand," cried the old man, "you make my blood run cold
And you shall have me daughter and five thousand pounds in gold."
"Fight on!" cried the lady, "for his offer is too small."
"Stay your hand!" cried the old man, "and you shall have it all."

Terrified by the soldier's bravery and strength, the father tries to haggle, but his daughter uses this moment for revenge and successfully forces her father not only to consent, but even to provide the couple with money.

This part differs in older versions of the song. For example in "Earl Brand" the protagonist kills the father (while his daughter insists on killing him) and his companions, but dies of wounds received in the battle. In "Lord Douglas"[23] the daughter begs for mercy for her father who is spared in the end, but her lover dies like in "Earl Brand" (Child 99-102).

So he's taken them both home and he's made them both his heirs,
and it wasn't out of love but it was from dread and fear,
For there never was a soldier ever carried a gun
Who would ever flinch or budge an inch till the battle he had won.

[23] Both of these are from Child Ballad's, listed as variants of #7 – variants A and C respectively.

So don't despise a soldier just because he poor,
He's as happy on the battlefield as at the barrack door
For they are the lads to be jovial, brisk, and free
And they'll fight for the pretty girls, for rights and liberty.

The soldier's bravery is rewarded; the couple is finally united through the battle. Note the woman's fate is again conditioned by her actions; a short lived romance or a sexual affair is not mentioned, and even the father is forced to accept her decision. However, the song focuses mainly on the soldier and his determination; I suppose it was probably used as a recruiting song (like "Twa Recruitin' Sergeants").

2.4 "The Bonny Light Horseman"

As mentioned earlier, the obstacles described earlier are seemingly overcome at first, but later they lead to a tragic end. Such a motif is found in a lament from the Napoleonic wars named "The Bonny Light Horseman". Another difference from the previously discussed songs is a female narrator instead of a male:[24]

Oh, Napoleon Bonaparte, you're the cause of my woe
Since my bonny light horseman to the wars he did go.
Broken hearted I'll wander, broken hearted I'll remain
Since my bonny light horseman in the wars he was slain.[25]

The theme and the conclusion of the song are already mentioned in the first verse (which is the chorus as well), yet the interaction of the couple is and will not be described; we have to only presume whether the woman and the soldier were married or just courting when

[24] The lyrics retrieved from: http://www.kinglaoghaire.com/site/lyrics/song_518.html on 3 April 2012. Although Sam Henry included the song in *Songs of the People*, I will use a longer variant sung by Planxty.

[25] This verse is the second in Sam Henry's version; the first verse:

Ye wise maids and widows, pray listen to me,
Unto this sad tale I rehearse unto thee:
A maid in distress who will now be a rover,
She relies upon George for the loss of her lover. (Henry 88)

is only a style of introduction that can be found in many more songs. Moreover it makes unclear whether the narrator is a man or a woman, for the song then switches in the first person. Although the male narrator is highly improbable, there is not enough evidence to tell the gender if this verse is used first.

he left her (again, we do not know if he was forced or not, although the cause of his death is mentioned in the first line. In Sam Henry's version it is not only Napoleon Bonaparte, but even George III). The narrator states her loyalty to her lover in the two last lines; although devastated by the event described, she decides to wander and remain broken hearted instead of courting anyone else.

The following verse depicts the demise of the narrator's lover:

When Boney[26] commanded his armies to stand
And proud lift his banners all gayly and grand.
He levelled his cannons right over the plain
And my bonny light horseman in the wars he was slain.

This verse is the only that is not lyrical; the rest of the song focuses on the narrator's feelings and consequences of her lover's death, or her wishes:

And if I was some small bird and had wings and could fly,
I would fly over the salt sea where my true love does lie
Three years and six months now, since he left this bright shore.
Oh, my bonny light horseman, will I never see you more?

Her loyalty to her deceased lover is again mentioned, but the last two lines are somewhat confusing. The narrator states her lover is already dead – she described his demise, yet she is unsure if they meet again. Therefore it could appear she still hopes the horseman is alive. These two lines, however, are common in other versions of the song, so I do not assume it is just a mistake. A likely explanation would be that certain songs contain verses that do not fit in the context or the plot at all (see the last verse of "As I Roved Out (2)"). In my opinion, the narrator hopes for a reunion either in the afterlife, dreams or her imagination.

And the dove she laments for her mate as she flies.
"Oh, where, tell me where is my true love?" she sighs,
"And where in this wide world is there one to compare
With my bonny light horseman who was killed in the war?"

[26] Napoleon Bonaparte

The transformation into a bird she wished for happens but symbolically, putting the symbol of a dove in contrast with death and the war. Although she is set free and able to search for her lover and possibly reunite with him, she is not successful thus the question raised in the last two lines of the previous verse is answered. The narrator's lament ends in a hopeless rhetoric question and she accepts the sad fate mentioned in the first verse.

A woman's faithfulness to her lover who is dead or far away is a sign of the motif of the transformation from a girl to a mature woman. The narrator of "The Bonny Light Horseman" embraces her grim destiny instead of forgetting her lover. Even though their marriage was not mentioned and she is not obliged to mourn for the rest of her life (and the obstacles separated the couple in the end), their union, similar to the union established by overcoming the said obstacles, is strengthened by the death of the soldier.

2.5 "The Blacksmith"

Another theme the thesis describes is disloyalty of male characters that previously courted a girl, but then left her and married a woman of better social position, wealth or a woman who was closer. However, not all the males that behave so are pure antagonists and opportunists. Some of them are forced to marry a woman against their will; this theme will be discussed later in "As I Roved Out (2)".

"The Blacksmith" deals with the first option. Although there are many versions of the song, they do not differ greatly.[27] The female narrator introduces her past and her courtship in the first verse:[28]

"A blacksmith courted me
Nine months and better.
He fairly won my heart
Wrote me a letter.
With his hammer in his hand
He looked so clever

[27] Only notable differences will be mentioned.

[28] The lyrics retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blacksmith_(song) on 3 April 2012.

And if I was with my love
I would live forever.

The blacksmith's intentions appear to be honest and fair as stated above, and the narrator was probably swayed by his behaviour, for her notion mentioned in the last two lines is rather elevated and naive at the same time. In the next verse the obstacle of distance arises:

But where is my love gone
With his cheeks like roses
And his good black Billycock on
Decked around with primroses?
I fear the shining sun
May burn and scorch his beauty
And if I was with my love
I would do my duty.

It is apparent the woman cares for the blacksmith and she does not question his loyalty, for she is only afraid he could lose his beauty, omitting the idea he could leave her for someone else. Also the said obstacle is not shared. He left saying nothing preventing the woman from coping with the obstacle actively, so that is the moment when their union (no matter how short-lived) ended. Strangely enough, she is not surprised when he marries another woman:

Strange news is come to town,
Strange news is carried.
Strange news flies up and down
That my love is married.
I wish them both much joy,
Though they can't hear me
And may God reward him well
For the slighting of me.

As said above, the marriage is not the main reason for the end of the link between the narrator and the blacksmith. That is probably the reason why the narrator's feelings are rather

mixed. She wishes them joy, but on the other hand she prays that God would punish her lover for abandoning her. It could appear the blacksmith did not promise to marry the narrator and therefore is not obliged to stay with her, but the next verse reveals his true nature:

Don't you remember when
You lay beside me
And you said you'd marry me
And not deny me?"
"If I said I'd marry you,
It was only for to try you,
So bring your witness, love,
And I'll not deny you."

In comparison with faithfulness of the woman from "Bonny Light Horseman", the blacksmith's behaviour is revolting. Not only he did not stay loyal to the narrator, but he even claims that he had no intention of fulfilling his vow. Although character of the man is similar to those discussed in the first part of the thesis, I attribute the fate of the couple to the pattern already mentioned in "The Gentleman Soldier" and "Marry and the Soldier" – if the girl has sexual affair with the man first and only then wants him to marry her, the obstacles that would unite the couple are missing, so the outcome is clear. The narrator realizes she cannot do anything and she hopes for the divine justice:

"No, witness have I none
Save God Almighty
And may he reward you well
For the slighting of me."
Her lips grew pale and wan
It made a poor heart tremble
To think she loved a one
And he proved deceitful.

The woman is described as a victim in the last four lines, but I would not say it is easy to tell whose fault it is. Indeed, the woman's behaviour was not as naive as in "The Gentleman Soldier" or "Jolly Beggarman", the blacksmith only provoked her asking for

witnesses he knew she had none, and the woman cannot be blamed for not being able to cope with the obstacle. Yet her actions before the man left her could be considered as one of causes of her unhappy fate as well.

Some of versions of the song omit the marriage of the blacksmith and another woman or even his departure (the narrator convinces him to stay with her), yet they all end in the similar way: the narrator is abandoned, though it is not always expressed explicitly. However, such endings often change the entire meaning of the song, or they alter the character of the narrator. For example:[29]

> For it's once I had gold in store, they all seemed to like me
> But now I'm low and poor, they all seem to slight me.
> For there ain't no belief in a man, nor your own brother.
> So it's: girls, whenever you love, love one each other.

This verse (found for example in Phoebe Smith's version recorded in 1963) completely changes the meaning of the song. It is no longer the blacksmith who is more or less responsible for the narrator's strife, but now every single man is accused, while only women are worthy of pure love. Another different ending is found in the version sung by Shirley Collins in 1974:

> Still I wish you all both joy, oh, but you're not here for to hear me
> I shall never die for love, now men don't fear me.[30]

Compared with the original ending, this very ending lacks sadness and hopelessness. The narrator rises above her disillusion and disappointment and is rendered stronger and better than her lover who left her. Also in comparison with the narrator of the first version discussed, she acts maturely and the last line could be interpreted as an act of forgiveness.

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[29] The Lyrics retrieved from: http://www.informatik.uni-hamburg.de/~zierke/shirley.collins/songs/theblacksmith.html on 7 April 2012.

[30] Another version with the same meaning, sung by the same artist:

> I wish him well to do, he does not hear me,
> I shall not die for love, he need not fear me.

2.6 "As I Roved Out (2)"

"As I roved out (2)" describes another conflict between a girl and her lover who, despite his love and affection, is forced to leave his original lover and marry a different woman for existential or social reasons. In the first two verses, the male narrator describes the meeting with his true love, but she, despite his courteous manners, reproaches him bitterly for his deceptive behaviour:[31]

"As I roved out on a bright May morning
To view the meadows and flowers gay.
Whom should I spy but my own true lover
As she sat under yon willow tree."

I took off my hat and I did salute her.
I did salute her most courageously.
When she turned around well the tears fell from her
Sayin', "False young man, you have deluded me

Judging from the narrator's actions, he is still loyal to his lover, despite his marriage to a woman of wealth:

A diamond ring I owned I gave you;
A diamond ring to wear on your right hand.
But the vows you made, love, you went and broke them
And married the lassie that had the land."

His lover reprimands him, yet the true reason why he married someone else is not mentioned yet. The reason is revealed in the next verse. The narrator was forced into marriage by desperate conditions and he regrets it:

"If I'd married the lassie that had the land, my love
It's that I'll rue till the day I die.

[31] The lyrics retrieved from http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk/folk-song-lyrics/As_I_Roved_Out(2).htm on 4 April 2012.

When misfortune falls sure no man can shun it.
I was blindfolded I'll ne'er deny."

It is apparent now he still loves the woman he couldn't marry. Therefore, we cannot say his character is the same as characters of beggars and soldiers seeking only bodily sensations, although the motive for his desperate behaviour was selfish. The theme of the obstacle is also present, but this time the obstacle is not overcome, yet the love and the bond between the narrator and his lover still exist as confirmed in the next verse:

Now at nights when I go to my bed of slumber,
The thoughts of my true love run in my mind.
When I turned around to embrace my darling,
Instead of gold sure it's brass I find.

It seems harsh to say the narrator is punished for not marrying his true lover, but now the obstacle was too great to be either ignored or defeated. The Planxty member Andy Irvine explains that the song originated during the famine, when "any bit of property at all was enough to tempt a man to jilt his true love in favour of the 'lassie with the land'" (Traditionalmusic.co.uk). So the narrator's choice was indeed difficult. He could either marry his lover, but then he wouldn't be possibly able to sustain her (or their family), or he could marry a woman of wealth he does not love and survive, still preserving his feelings and affections for his lover. No matter his choice, the narrator would not be happy in the end.[32]

There are two women portrayed in the song. The narrator's lover's passive character is rather similar to ones already discussed, but the narrator's wife is somewhat unusually depicted as a way to riches and wealth. Although her role is similar to the role of a girl depicted in the songs in the first part of the thesis, the difference between them is obvious. She is a 'donor'[33] as well but the man is bound to her against his will and breaking this bond would not solve his situation. That is why the obstacle prevailed, for the narrator valued material wealth over true love, which does not mean he left her completely because the bond – although weak - was not completely broken.

[32] There is one extra verse, but it seems misplaced and out of context of the song, therefore I will not analyze it.

[33] She provides the man with money or bodily sensations – that is the case of a girl in the first part of the thesis.

2.7 "Whiskey In The Jar"

One of the best known Irish folk songs "Whiskey In The Jar" partially describes a conflict between a man and his lover (or a wife, her role is not clear) who is the cause of his downfall. The origin of the song is unclear, but its history is rather well documented. The thesis will focus only on the parts the narrator's wife appears in.

In the first verse, the narrator robs Captain Farrel and in the second he takes the loot home:[34]

"I counted out his money and it made a pretty penny.
I put it in me pocket and I took it home to Jenny.
She sighed and she swore that she never would decieve me,
But the devil take the women for they never can be easy.

Unlike the previous songs discussed, "Whiskey In The Jar" deals with dishonest and low behaviour of a female character. Jenny acts the same way beggars and soldiers in the first part of the thesis. She beguiles her lover and betrays him later. In the last line of the verse the narrator comments on his bitter experience and, unlike in "Jolly Beggarman" or "The Gentleman Soldier", the traitorous character is explicitly accused by the narrator, like her behaviour would be even worse than a beggars' habit of one night love affair and abandoning the girl. In the next verse, the narrator is betrayed:

I went up to my chamber all for to take a slumber.
I dreamt of golden jewels and for sure it was no wonder.
But Jenny drew me charges and she filled them up with water
Then sent for captain Farrell to be ready for the slaughter."

Thanks to Jenny's traitorous action, the narrator is captured and imprisoned. Jenny's fate is not mentioned in the song as well as her possible relationship with the captain. Her motive is unclear as well, because the narrator gave her his loot[35].

[34] The lyrics retrieved from http://www.kinglaoghaire.com/site/lyrics/song_450.html on 2 April 2012. It is the most popular version sung by the Dubliners.

[35] Some versions replace "took it home to Jenny" with "gave it all to Jenny" or "gave 'em all to Molly".

Although the narrator's lover behaviour is similar to beggars and soldiers who only take an advantage of a girl, and probably even worse, she is left unpunished. The lack of punishment is even stranger, for her betrayal was preceded by lies and false oaths, which the aforementioned beggars and soldiers do not use.

The woman's role in the song is unambiguous in my opinion. While "The folk of seventeenth century Britain liked and admired their local highwaymen; and in Ireland (or Scotland) where the gentlemen of the roads robbed English landlords, they were regarded as national patriots." (Lomax 9), the highwaymen were criminals. Therefore I would say Jenny's treachery was the narrator's punishment as well, although he is depicted as a protagonist whose actions are rightful and fair. Her behaviour was right but, as mentioned above, she is still portrayed as an antagonist, which is the first time a female character has such a role (again, I suppose this is caused by the transformation into a woman, which contributes to the variety of female characters; note the lack of female antagonists in the previous part of the thesis).

2.8 Brief comparison with Czech folklore and folk songs

The difference between Czech and Irish/Scottish folklore and folk songs is, at least in this field, too great to describe within the limited scope of the thesis. The nature of Czech and especially Moravian folk songs is more lyrical and cover more motifs and themes, while Irish and Scottish folk songs are narrative in general and are preoccupied with a smaller range of themes. Despite this fact, I listed three themes that are easy to find in Irish and Scottish and Czech folklore and folk songs and therefore can be compared.

The theme of a man and his lover is quite common in Czech folk songs as well, but the interaction of the couple is different. For example, Czech folk songs are preoccupied with a soldier going to war and leaving his lover behind. The theme of the obstacles is completely missing and a female character is passive, yet loyal and honest (for example in "Keď vojačik narukoval"[36] the soldier's lover waits for him even though the time he said he would be gone is already up).

[36] "When the Soldier Enlisted"

Another common theme is unfulfilled love yet the difference is once again glaring. The male narrator usually laments over the circumstances (mostly the mother of his lover) that prevented him from forming the bond with his lover. The motif of adultery is common as well. In many songs adultery is the reason why the couple's bond ceased to exist and it's mostly a male narrator who has to deal with his lover treachery.

Finally, the last notable difference is the theme of breaking up. Male narrators usually cope with it by sad laments or remarks that they will find themselves a better partner.[37] Female narrators only reproach their former lovers in a bitter and sad tone.

Conclusion

The theme of woman as a lover is probably the most common theme in Irish and Scottish folk songs. As such, it introduces new types of both male and female characters and develops them at the same time. Male characters are no longer beggars, but they are now experienced, responsible, and determined characters as well (especially soldiers, yet some with behaviour of beggars discussed in the first part can be found still). Another important and obvious change is the transformation of a passive girl into an active woman by means described above (leaving their parents, overcoming obstacles, pursuing her goals and happiness etc.). The couple is formed not by a formal agreement, but by overcoming said obstacles that strengthen the bond between a man and a woman, therefore in the end no marriage is needed to confirm the union. The question of loyalty and treason is raised as well in "Bonny Light Horseman" and "Whiskey in the Jar" respectively. Alas, the range of motives and themes is indeed wide, so the thesis focused just on the most prominent ones.

Growing respect for a woman is apparent as well, for some of female protagonists are stronger and decisive (unlike the passive character of an inexperienced naive girl), and their qualities and actions (like loyalty or striving for goals sometimes shared with their lover) are acknowledged by the narrator. However, negative traits are mentioned as well and it is treacherous and dishonest behaviour that is emphasized in the next role of a woman as a wife, which will be described in the following part of the thesis.

[37] Moravian songs use laments and gloomy mood unlike Czech that employ more optimistic tones and preoccupation with the future.

3 Woman as a wife

In original Irish legends and myths (before Christianity was introduced), the role of matrimony (or raising offspring and cohabitation) is great. This role then appeared in subsequent folk songs along with characters of some of female characters, similar to the women from the Ulster Cycle. One of the most prominent archetypes is the one embodied in the Queen of Connacht Medb, who was portrayed as a decisive woman in almost a protofeminist manner. She rose to power through her marriage (later on, she appears in a role of a wife of several Irish kings, mostly of Conchobar Mac Nessa and Ailill Mac Mata), she did not hesitate to kill her own sister after a ruined marriage, and she demanded her husband to be free from jealousy, fear and greed. In the epic *Táin Bó Cúailnge* she started war between Ulster and Connacht only because she demanded the same wealth as her husband Ailill who owned one more bull than her.

Many songs depict cunning and a fighting spirit of women that lead to the oppression of a man. Reason of said oppression is either the man's actions or behaviour ("Seven Drunken Nights") or the wife's obscure motive ("Killieburn Brae"). The man usually suffers his wife's behaviour and he does not punish her (although there are exceptions, like "Tipping It Up to Nancy"). Therefore the question is if the songs on this theme are intended as mockery of incompetent husbands, accusation of women and their cunning and unfaithfulness or a lament of a husband whose hard life is constantly complicated by his wife's actions and who is depicted as a victim suffering the consequences of marriage.

On the other hand, the lyrics of such songs (depicting suffering men, but not suffering women) could be regarded as homage to women that are able to outwit not only their husbands but even the Devil himself ("Killieburn Brae"). This claim is supported by the nature of drinking songs and their purpose to amuse the audience. However, not every song about a married couple is preoccupied with a conflict between a husband and a wife. In some of those, the wife is a character of little importance (for example in "Finnegan's Wake" where Finnegan's wife only brings tobacco, punch and food and she does not join the cries for her seemingly dead husband).

3.1 "Killieburn Brae"

Probably the most typical song about matrimony and wife is "Killieburn Brae"[38]. It is supposed the song is originally Irish, but Killieburn (Killyburn, Killieburne, Kelly burn) can be found even in Scotland (near the border between Ayrshire and Renfrewshire). In the English version "The Devil and the Ploughman" is Killieburn replaced by Sussex. I chose Irish version named "Killieburn Brae"[39] sung and popularized by Dubliners, Scottish "Kellyburn Braes"[40] and English "The Devil and The Ploughman"[41]. It is also appropriate to mention the Christian motives in the song, for then the wife's role is of deeper meaning and importance.

In the first verse, a husband suffering in matrimony is depicted[42]:

There was an ould man down by Killiburn Brae,
Had a curse of a wife for most of his days.

Thair wis an auld carle on Kellyburn Braes,
He mairriet a wife an he rued the day.

Unlike in "Seven Drunken Nights", the cause of the husband's suffering is not mentioned. The wife's motive for oppression is not mentioned (I suppose it's not important for the further development of the plot). The husband is visited by the Devil in the next part. Note the difference between Irish and English version:

The devil he says, "I have come for your wife
For I hear she`s the curse and the bane of your life."

Says the Deil tae the fairmer, "A've come for yer wife
"For A hear she's the bane an the curse o yer life."

[38] Other variations of this song are: "The Devil and The Farmer's Wife", "Killyburnbraes", "The Devil and The Ploughman"

[39] The lyrics retrieved from: http://www.kinglaoghaire.com/site/lyrics/song_234.html on 5 April 2012.

[40] The lyrics retrieved from: http://mudcat.org/thread.cfm?threadid=19182 on 5 April 2012.

[41] The lyrics retrieved from: http://history.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getfolk.php?id=982 on 5 April 2012.

[42] The discussed variants are Irish, Scottish and English (where mentioned) in this order.

Then Satan came to the old man at the plough,
“It's one of your family I must have now.
It is not your eldest son that I crave,
But it is your old wife, and her I will have.”

The devil is depicted as a pure antagonist and the primeval evil in the English version, whereas in the Scottish and Irish one he acts as a liberator of the husband, although the reason is not the Devil’s mercy, but the wife’s behaviour, which is in clash with the Christian morality.

The greatest difference between the variants discussed is found in the next verse. It is the husband’s reaction. In the Irish version is his reaction omitted, while in the Scottish and the English one the farmer acts almost the same:

At this the auld fairmer he dances a reel
Cryin, "Tak her, O, tak her, O, tak her tae Hell!"

“Oh welcome, good Satan, with all of my heart,
I hope you and she will never part.”

This is, in my opinion, the most important difference. In the Irish version the farmer does not celebrate or does not praise the Devil (which would be once again in contradiction with the Christianity) and is portrayed as almost a passive martyr, in the Scottish version the farmer does not defend his wife and in “The Devil and The Ploughman” he commits heresy (“Oh welcome, good Satan, with all of my heart“). This could be the reason why is he ‘punished’ in the end.

The versions do not vary in the following verses significantly. The Devil takes the woman to Hell, where she starts acting completely differently than expected. She does not die in a sin, as it is described in the New Testament and by Catholic approach, and her soul does not perish in Hell. She opposes the Devil and his minions:

And when at last they came to hell`s gates,
Well she lifted her stick and she battered his pate.

There were two little divils there tied up in chains,
Well she lifted her stick and she scattered their brains.

The Deil he humphs her up oan his back
Whan thae landit in Hell, lat her doun wi a crack.
Thair wis seiven wee devils were hingin in chains;
She picked up a stick an she scattert thair brains.

He trudged along till he came to his front gate,
Said he, “Here, take in and old Sussex chap's mate.”
Oh then she did kick the young imps about,
Says one to the other, “Let's try and turn her out.”

The woman starts killing the Devil’s servants and attacks the Devil himself, so the Devil is forced to return her back to her husband, and celebrates liberation from his burden (the English version does not differ from Scottish, so it will not be quoted):

So the divil he hoisted her up on his back,
They were seven years coming and days going back.
And when they came back to Killiburn Brae,
Well the divil he cried and he shouted, “Hooray!”

The ither wee devils aa stertit tae bawl,
“O, tak her back, daddie, she'll murder us aa!”
Sae the Devil he humphs her again oan his back
Whan he got tae the top, flung her doun wi a crack.

This depicts a victory over the Devil and Hell. However, this victory is, unlike the description of such victory in the Bible, not mental. It is literally a physical confrontation between the Devil and the woman. The woman wins her soul back not by atoning her sins and accepting the God, but by committing evil acts and violence and Hell does not change her behaviour at all. She does not become a passive victim of her sinful life and she does not suffer for it, which could be taken as a revolt against biblical order in almost a Prometheus-like way. The woman’s soul is saved by the woman herself and not by God or by accepting Christianity. However, in my opinion, this could be the result of a derisive depiction of Hell

typical for folklore and fusion of two themes. The first one is the theme of rescuing a person from Hell or the Underworld (for example Orpheus and Eurydice or Theseus and Heracles) and the second is the theme of a woman triumphant over demons (for example Durga from old Indian myths).

In the last part of the song, the wife is returned to her husband (this act could be interpreted as the aforementioned punishment for his heresy). Scottish and English versions are very similar.

Says he, "Me good man, here`s your wife safe and well
For the likes of herself we would not have in hell."

He says, "A've been a Devil for maist o ma life
But a ne'er wis in Hell tae A met wi yer wife"

The point of the song is summarized in the last two lines that are quite ambiguous:

Which proves that the women are worse than the men;
When they go down to hell they are thrown out again.

The song depicts a woman as an evil greater than Hell, but as a vanquisher of the Devil as well, who saved her life and is admired (and not cursed) by the song. The plot could be interpreted as a counterpart (or a parody) of a masculine Christian tradition of fighting the Devil, be the fight physical (Saint George and the dragon) or psychical (Job). The religious male protagonists are replaced by a sinful woman who surprisingly achieves the same goal.

3.2 "Seven Drunken Nights"

"Seven Drunken Nights" depicts a woman somewhat differently. This rather popular song, based on "Our Goodman"[43] and popularized by The Dubliners, still works with the archetype of a cunning and clever wife. However, this time she 'battles' her jealous husband who tries proving her adultery.

[43] Although "Seven Drunken Nights" is the most widely known title, there are variations of the song (mostly the song being abbreviated, or the settings changed) preserving the original meaning.

The first verse[44], being a model verse for the rest of the song, describes the husband's return and his discovery:

As I went home on Monday night as drunk as drunk could be,
I saw a horse outside the door, where my old horse should be.
Well, I called me wife and I said to her, "Will you kindly tell to me:
Who owns that horse outside the door where my old horse should be?"

The wife's retort, once again a model version for the rest of her replies, is an obvious lie, however it's unclear if her husband believes it or not, despite noticing the flaw in every explanation and the trace of doubt in the last sentence of each chorus:

"Ah, you're drunk, you're drunk, you silly old fool,
Still you cannot see?
That's a lovely sow that me mother sent to me."
Well, it's many a day I've travelled a hundred miles or more
But a saddle on a sow sure I never saw before.

The rest of the song copies this schema, with proofs of the wife's adultery becoming more and more obvious every day (an old coat, a pipe, a boots) and finally the husband finds his wife's lover in the bed on Friday's night. The wife, however, keeps lying and the husband apparently believes her so. The song is open ended and therefore we don't know if the wife's lies paid off or she was proven guilty.

Although being called "Seven Drunken Nights", the song usually consists of only five verses and five choruses. The last two verses (often deemed too vulgar due to their nature and scenes depicted) describe the husband witnessing the sexual scene between his wife and her lover, yet the wife still lies and the husband is left puzzled and pondering like in the previous verses.

We only can presume if the wife's adultery is merely a sin and a proof that women are unstable, lying and mischievous, or some sort of the husband's punishment (probably because

[44] The Irish variant of the lyrics retrieved from http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Seven_Drunken_Nights_(Irish) on 5 April 2012.

of his drinking habit). This leaves us with at least two possible interpretations of the song, like in "Killieburn Brae". One of the meanings could be interpreted as a mockery of the husband, who is probably too weak and not able to satisfy his wife (or to handle her well enough). Instead of taking care of his wife, his drinking habit is his main occupation and therefore the neglected wife is led indirectly by her husband's actions to adultery to punish him. Another meaning is based on a popular theme of a mischievous and evil wife who finds great joy and - I would say even self-pleasure – in cheating her husband and lying to him. However, if we take into account the husband's lack of wits and common sense, the first meaning seems to be more likely than the other.

3.3 "Tipping It Up to Nancy"

It would be incorrect to assume that men in Irish and Scottish folk songs are mere victims of their wives and that they deserve such treatment from their wives whatever the reason. However, it could seem that adultery or treating husbands bad is generally overlooked and used as a plot device, leading to a humorous twist and a punch line, instead of being described as a sin the wife should pay for. "Tipping It Up to Nancy" uses the theme of adultery (or a love triangle) leading to an attempted murder. This motive is fairly common over the British Isles, like in "The Ould Woman From Wexford" and "Toon O' Kelso"[45]. All three variants start the same:[46]

> Oh, there's been a woman in our town[47], a woman you ought know well.
> She dearly loved her husband and another man twice as well.

The plot, as usual, is set in the first verse. The husband apparently doesn't know anything about his wife's love affair. Unlike in "The Seven Drunken Nights", the wife doesn't cheat on her husband; she decides to get rid of him.

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[45] The origin of the song is unclear. I presume it's dated in the 19th century due to the terms mentioned it the lyrics. "The Ould Woman From Wexford" is with little doubt an Irish variant and "Toon O' Kelso" is Scottish judging from the geographical position of the cities mentioned.

[46] The lyrics retrieved from http://www.kinglaoghaire.com/site/lyrics/song_600.html ("Tipping It Up to Nancy") on 6 April 2012.

[47] The lyrics of "The Ould Woman From Wexford" and "Toon O' Kelso" differ just in the name of the place, be it Wexford or the town of Kelso.

She went down to the chemist shop some remedies for to buy,
"Have you anything in your chemist shop to make me old man blind?"

This verse in "Toon O' Kelso"[48] is slightly different; the woman's intentions are much clearer:

She went doon tae the chemist's shop some medicine for tae buy,
For she had resolved in her ain mind that her auld man should die.

In the next verse, which is the same for "Tipping It Up to Nancy" and "The Ould Woman From Wexford", the chemist gives her advice.

"Give him eggs and marrowbones and make him suck them all,
Before he has the last one sucked, he won't see you at all."

Her scheme is to make her husband blind (or straightaway dead in "Toon O' Kelso"), but not because he won't be able to see her with the other man. Her idea is even worse, as we figure out later. But her plan lies in ruins, for the chemist/doctor probably saw through her intentions and tricked her. Unaware of the fact, she proceeds:

She gave him eggs and marrowbones and made him suck them all,
Before he had the last one sucked, he couldn't see her at all.[49]

"Toon O' Kelso" variant lacks the previous verse where the chemist gives her advice. It proceeds right to:

She bought a dozen marrow bones and she's ground them up right sma'
And before he'd eaten the half o' them he couldnae see ony at a'.

There is one extra verse in "The Ould Woman From Wexford"[50] confirming the doctor tricked her and moreover he warned her husband:

[48] The lyrics retrieved from http://www.kinglaoghaire.com/site/lyrics/song_427.html on 6 April 2012.

[49] I haven't been able to find any superstitions concerning consuming marrow bones or eggs. On the contrary, bone marrow has been consumed throughout history and is regarded as a delicacy. Therefore, I assume the woman was gullible and too trusting.

[50] The Lyrics retrieved from http://www.kinglaoghaire.com/site/lyrics/song_322.html on 6 April 2012.

Well the doctor wrote a letter and he signed it with his hand,
He sent it to the old man just to let him understand.

The verse is followed by:

So she fed him the eggs and marrow bones and she made him sup 'em all
And it wasn't so very long after that he couldn't see the wall.

Husband, probably guessing her intentions, acts like blind and decides to commit a suicide to prove her wife's murderous intentions knowing his 'blindness' is no accident. In the next verse,[51] he's ready to drown himself:

If in this world I cannot see here I cannot stay,
I'd drown myself; "Come on," says she, "and I'll show you the way."

Says th'ol man, "I think I'll drown meself but that might be a sin."
Says she, "I'll come along with you and I'll help to shove you in."

"Im tired o' my life," he cried, "I'm tired o' my life!
I think I'll awa' and drown myself and that will end this strife."

The Scottish version further depicts their journey to a river, depicting joy and happiness of the wife, further demonstrating wickedness of the woman:

So down the street together they went she whistled and she sang,
"Oh my husband's going to drown himself and I'm sure he's free from sin."

Finally, they arrive to the river and the wife is ready to help her husband drown. But the husband is aware of her plan and acts accordingly. The following verse in "Tipping It Up to Nancy" is similar to the one in "The Ould Woman From Wexford":

She led him to the river she led him to the brim
But sly enough of Martin it was him that shoved her in.

[51] The order is "Tipping It Up to Nancy", "The Ould Woman From Wexford" and "Toon O' Kelso" variants respectively.

Well the ould woman she stood back a bit for to rush an' push him in
But the old man gently stepped aside and she went tumblin' in.

The Scottish variant describes the event more in detail, but the outcome is the same:

Well doon the street together they went til they came to the waters brim.
Said he, “You'll take a great long race to help to ding me in.”
So she went back a great lang race tae help tae ding him in
But the cunning old bugger he jumped aside and she gaed tumblin' in.

Finally, her plan backfires as she falls into the river and cries for help. The husband refuses, stating that he is blind, punishing his treacherous wife by refusing to help her as described in the following verse:

She swam through the river she swam through the brine.
“Oh Martin, dear Martin don't leave me behind!”
“Oh Martin, dear Martin don't leave me behind!”
“Yerra shut up outa that, ye silly aul fool, Ye know poor Martin is blind!”

Oh, how loudly she did yell and how loudly she did bawl.
“Arra, hold yer whist, y'ould woman, sure I can't see you at all.”

“Oh save ma life, oh save ma life oh save me when I call!”
“Oh how can I save your life when I canna see ony at a'?”

With the wife being punished, “Tipping It Up to Nancy” ends by a humorous complaint concerning illegitimate children; however it is unclear if it is uttered by the husband to point out another sin of his wife, or by the narrator to further emphasize women’s treacherous nature:

There's nine in me family and none of them is my own.
I wish that each and every man would come and claim his own.

“The Woman From Wexford” ends as well. Unlike the previous variant, the husband mocks his wife, and leaves her be:

"Ah, sure eggs and eggs and marrow bones will make yer old man blind
But if you want to drown him you must creep up close behind."

Finally, the Scottish version continues with not only mockery, but the husband decides to tease his treacherous wife even more, turning into an active figure, unlike in the previous versions where his role was more or less passive:

Well she swam up and she swam doon til she cam tae the waters brim
But the cunning old man he got a long stick and he poked her further in.
"Ye jaud, ye jaud, ye silly auld jaud, Ye thought ye had me blind
But I'll gae whistlin' hame again and another wife I'll find"

The fate of the woman is unclear, but due to the light-hearted nature of the most of Irish and Scottish folk songs, we can presume the wife didn't die. What's peculiar, however, is the husband's calmness when he figures out the wife wants him dead. Apart from the Scottish version, the husband just mocks the wife, not punishing her anymore, despite the fact a murder is a serious crime and he'd be right to punish her or have her punished severely. This could be regarded as a sign of his superiority over a murderous wife, who is too dull to be of any danger. However, this superiority shouldn't be confused with a chauvinist depiction of a woman as a lower or inferior being. It originates from contempt for criminals and traitors and the wife's lowly behaviour. It is not the woman who needs to be defeated by wit, but it's the criminal (no matter the gender) and evil intentions.

Not all versions of the song share a similar ending. In "The Auld Man and the Churnstaff" Sam Henry presents us with an ending where "the intended victim eventually relents and saves the partner from drowning." (Henry 507). The husband acts the same like in the Scottish version, but finally "when he thought she'd enough, he pulled her to dry lan'," (Henry 507) thus saving her. This act of mercy could be interpreted not only as an act of surprising indulgence originating from said superiority, but even as a Christian act of grace.

Like in "Killieburn Brae", more of Christian motives, apart from mercy in "The Auld Man and the Churnstaff", are present. The husband in the Irish version is afraid that drowning himself could be a sin ("I think I'll drown meself but that might be a sin"), and therefore he accepts his wife 'help', literally passing the sin to her, so she'd become guilty of murder while

he'd die like a good Christian. In the Scottish version, the wife is portrayed as a hypocritical, false Christian who exclaims in public that she hopes her husband is free of sin; meanwhile she's planning the murder. In every version, the wife's fall into the river could be, from the Christian point of view, interpreted as descent into Hell and purification at the same time, because she realizes her sin and begs for help, which comes in certain versions of the song. Another possible interpretation is the ordeal of water. According to it, witches and criminals would float, because water, being a pure element, wouldn't accept the sinner and would receive the innocent (Britannica.com).

Although the husband and the wife are important characters, it's apparent that the chemist (or the doctor - depending on the version) plays a significant role in the story as well. Not only he fools the wife, he warns the husband in the Irish version, saving him from death and revealing his wife's intentions. Subsequently, the wife is beaten thanks to this alliance[52]. The reason for the chemist's behaviour (instead of accusing the woman directly, he lies to her) was already mentioned; vast majority of Irish and Scottish folk songs prefers practical jokes to grim plot twists for the sake of the mood and the light tone of theirs.

3.4 Brief comparison with Czech folklore and folk songs

Coverage of the theme of woman as a wife is not this wide and extensive in Czech (Moravian and Silesia) folk songs. Due to the prevailing lyrical tone, Czech, and especially Moravian, folk songs lack the humorous plot many of Irish, Scottish and British have[53]. It seems the topic of a wife and a husband is somewhat neglected in favour of the one of a mother, a step-mother or parents and children.

Although the topic is covered poorly, certain songs still deal with the theme of conflict between a husband and a wife. Unlike in Irish, Scottish and British songs, the conflict is in many cases only described and the plot doesn't advance like in "Eště som sa něoženil"[54] where the narrator accuses his soon-to-be wife of violence, and plans how to punish her (and

[52] However, the alliance could symbolize unity and togetherness between good people (or the nation) that can overcome even the greatest threats.

[53] With a notable exception of folk songs from the region of Podkrkonošsko and from old Prague

[54] "I Haven't Been Married Yet"

their future children) for this injustice. In "Chtěl jsem píct koláče"[55] the motive of an oppressed husband and a tyrannical wife is even more apparent. Although the husband tries his best to get yeast for baking, he ultimately fails and he's severely and unjustly punished by his wife who has little appreciation at least for his effort. At the end of the song, the narrator warns other men: "Do not anger women, for their anger is great". Apart from the theme of conflict and strife between a husband and a wife, several other songs describe concordance and peace like in "Nestarej se, ženo má"[56] where the couple deals with its poverty in a humorous manner, and the wife supports her husband and jokes alongside with him.

Conclusion

Limited scope of the thesis and choice of the source songs can't provide the entire and unabridged conclusion that could be completely applicable to all Irish and Scottish folk songs, let alone folklore, but it could be said that the theme of husband and wife in Irish and Scottish folk songs is not as common as the theme of a woman as a lover or a love interest. The plot usually focuses on the conflict caused in most cases by a wife's wickedness or treacherousness and the theme of adultery is fairly common. While a wife is an antagonist in many songs on this theme, a husband is either passive, like in "Killieburn Brae", or he suffers in almost a stoic manner and acts when the time is right, like in "Tipping It Up to Nancy". The reason for a wife's outrageous behaviour is either not mentioned, or it's rather selfish and originates from dissatisfaction with her current situation, husband or his habits, but we can almost always presume the wife is not evil for the sake of being evil.

Although a wife is portrayed as a villainous and treacherous character, sometimes ready even for killing her husband to achieve her goals, I do not think the image of a wife is purely negative. Despite her role in the songs, it is apparent wives were respected. Songs on this topic served mainly for amusement and I daresay they were used even as a humorous and pretend revolt. This claim is supported by change of the scope of plots from male protagonists to female protagonists and antagonists, which was not as common in previously discussed themes. Also the trend of growing respect and admiration increasing with the age and social status of a woman is apparent, because a woman is ready for another social role, which is

[55] "I Wanted to Bake Pies"

[56] "Don't You Worry, Wife of Mine"

regarded as the most important and most esteemed role, and that role is maternity. Therefore the next part of the thesis will deal with a woman as a mother and her role.

4 Woman as a mother

Probably the most respected and most honoured role a woman could achieve is one of a mother, and not only in the Irish and Scottish folklore. Worshipping of maternity and life giving is common to most of cultures. Although the role of a mother is significant, she is not often portrayed as a protagonist in the Irish and Scottish folk songs, being only mentioned or in the background as a supporting character like in "Johnny of Brady's Lea" (though some exceptions can be found, for example "Weile Weile Waile", "The Well Below The Valley", "The Cruel Mother" or other murder ballads discussed later). Her role is to give adviceto the protagonist or raise them; the act of giving birth is not mentioned. Interestingly enough, the songs on this topic are not as joyous and light-hearted as songs on the previously discussed topics, because a mother was too respected and too important to be ridiculed or to act in a song without a serious plot.

4.1 "Johnny of Brady's Lea"

As said before, a mother, if not a protagonist, is a character in the background, supporting the main protagonist who is usually her son parting with her. "Johnny of Brady's Lea"[57] represents one sub-group of such ballads and that is a mother warning her son who disobeys her. Unsurprisingly, this is the cause of his downfall or death.[58] The mother appears only in one verse. When she hears her son is going to hunt, she begs him not to:[59]

> When Johnny's mother she heard of this, she wrung her hands full sore,
> Says, "Johnny, for your venison to the green woods do not go.
>
> For there are seven foresters in Estlemont, and this you know full well,
> For one small drop of your heart's blood they would ride to the gates of Hell."

[57] Also known as "Johnie Cock" – Child ballad nr. 114.

[58] The theme of disobedience and a consequent punishment is common in many cultures. A mother represents almost omniscient authority that has to be obeyed because of her respected position, experience and wisdom.

[59] The lyrics retrieved from: http://mudcat.org/thread.cfm?threadid=62844 on 9 April 2012. It is the Planxty's version.

Johnny refuses to comply and replies:

"Oh, there's many men are my friends, Mother, though many more are my foe.
And betide me well or betide me ill, A-hunting I will go."

Unsurprisingly, he is mortally wounded and dies in the woods. The versions found in Child's collection describe his final moments thinking of his mother, especially the version 114c:[60]

"I often took to my mother
The dandoo and the roe,
But now I'll take to my mother
Much sorrow and much woe.
I often took to my mother
The dandoo and the hare,
But now I'll take to my mother
Much sorrow and much care."

Too late he realizes his mother was right and his recklessness is the cause of her woe. However, as discussed above, he was condemned to death because of his rebellion against his mother.

4.2 Murder ballads: "The Well Below The Valley", "Weile Weile Waile", "The Cruel Mother"

Arguably the most popular theme of the songs preoccupied with a figure of mother is the theme of murder ballads. Such songs depict murders and infanticide and omit the relationship or the bond between a mother and her child or children. The plot usually follows a simple pattern: the mother kills her children without her motives explained and then hides the bodies. However, her crime is revealed and she is either punished by other people or by God. Unlike the previously discussed folk songs, murder ballads were printed on broadsheets, sung and sold in the streets and most of them have known authors. Another difference is that 'often the ballad song would be a current one, newly written about a murder or execution.' (Educationscotland.gov.uk.).

[60] The lyrics retrieved from: http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/eng/child/ch114.htm on 8 April 2012.

Unlike in the previous parts of the thesis, I decided not to analyze every song separately, for they share similar plots and the character of the mother and her role, motives and actions are the same. My choice of the songs was influenced by the date and the background of their origin and their connections. Not all of murder ballads were based on a contemporary event and they preserved their popularity over the time; for example "Weile Weile Waile" used to be a nursery rhyme. "The Cruel Mother" and "The Well Below The Valley"[61] were collected by F. J. Child (under numbers 20 and 21 respectively) who notes that "The Cruel Mother" (and its variants) was written after 1800 (Child 218), and "The Well Below The Valley" can be found in the Percy manuscript, however the date of its origin is not clear (Child 228).

"Weile Weile Waile"[62] does not mention the woman's motive and only depicts the actual murder of a three months old baby:[63]

She had a penknife, long and sharp, weile weile waile.
She had a penknife, long and sharp, down by the river Saile.

She stuck the penknife in the baby's heart, weile weile waile.
She stuck the penknife in the baby's heart, down by the river Saile.

Her crime is revealed (although it is not mentioned how), she is subsequently hanged and justice is done. In comparison with "The Cruel Mother" and "The Well Below the Valley", the plot of the song is not complicated and its structure is simple because of its aforementioned origin.

"The Cruel Mother" is more complicated, although the plot is similar to other murder ballads. The woman falls in love, her lover leaves her and she consequently gives birth to one, two or three sons, depending on the version Child listed. Similarly to "Weile Weile Waile", the mother uses a penknife to kill her children (in some versions she buries them alive). After

[61] F. J. Child's version is called "The Maid and The Palmer".

[62] Some sources claim that "Weile Weile Waile" is only a version of "The Cruel Mother" and was written down by F. J. Child. However, I was unable to find any mentions of "Weile Weile Waile" (or "The River Saile") in Child's work; the only similarity is infanticide.

[63] The lyrics retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_River_Saile on 9 April 2012.

her sin, she sees two boys who are somehow aware of her crime. Child's version I (Scottish) depicts the scene thusly:[64]

Looking oer her castle wa,
She spied her bonny boys at the ba.

"O bonny babies, if ye were mine,
I woud feed you with the white bread and wine.

I woud feed you wi the ferra cow's milk,
And dress you in the finest silk."

The boys reply that none of this would happen, for they would be dead, although they do not clarify the origin of their knowledge about the murder. Depending on the version, the children reveal her future. For example in the version H:

"We were at our father's house,
Preparing a place for thee and us."

"Whaten a place hae ye prepar'd for me?"
"Heaven's for us, but hell's for thee."

The version I differs. Child notes that: "In I (...) the story is the same down to the termination where, instead of simple hell-fire, there are various seven-year penances, properly belonging to the ballad of 'The Maid and the Palmer,' which follows this." (Child 218). The penances are to be a fowl, a fish, a church bell and a porter in Hell. In every version, the mother is scared of Hell, begging Heaven to be spared, although her crime is obvious and her sin cannot be pardoned.

The role of the children is not clear. Considering their knowledge, they could symbolize the eternal or heavenly justice or God's omniscience. Their connection with Heaven is obvious for example in the version N2 ("We are three angels, as other angels be, /

[64] The lyrics retrieved from http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Child%27s_Ballads/20 on 9 April 2012. This version (I) is the most complex.

And the hottest place in hell is reserved for thee."). However, the fate of the woman is not mentioned, only in the version O and F she kills herself.

"The Well Below The Valley" or "The Maid and The Palmer"[65] deals with the same theme as "The Cruel Mother", but this time an incestuous relationship is mentioned as well. While Child uses a palmer returning from Rome, better known version sung by the Planxty avoids religious themes (apart from Hell), while Child does not mention incest. In both versions, the maid by the well is approached by either the palmer or a gentleman who begs for a cup for water. She refuses and they reply that she would give them water if they were her lovers. They reply that she had six (or nine, in Child's version) children. The Planxty's version clearly discusses the fathers of the children:[66]

He said, "Young maid, you swear in wrong
For six children you had born."

"If you be a man of noble fame,
You'll tell to me the father of them."

"There's two of them by your uncle Dan,
Another two by your brother John,
Another two by your father dear."

The male character then reveals that he knows she killed all the children and buried them at various places. She asks for penance, which is similar to the one in "The Cruel Mother". However, Child's version leaves some hope for her:[67]

"Penance I can giue thee none,
But 7 yeere to be a stepping-stone.
Other seaven a clapper in a bell,
Other 7 to lead an ape in hell.

[65] Child remarks that some non-English versions, for example Scandinavian, use characters from the Bible, like Mary Madgalen and Jesus (Child 228-229).

[66] The lyrics retrieved from http://sniff.numachi.com/pages/tiMAIDPAL2;ttWELLVALL;ttMAIDPAL2.html on 9 April 2012.

[67] The lyrics retrieved from http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Child%27s_Ballads/21 on 8 April 2012.

When thou hast thy penance done,
Then thoust come a mayden home."

The Planxty's version is different:

"You'll be seven years a-ringing the bell,
You'll be seven more a-porting in hell."
"I'll be seven years a-ringing the bell,
But the Lord above may save me soul from porting in hell."

It is indeed peculiar that the palmer in Child's version pardons the woman, while the gentleman does not. One of possible explanations could be that a palmer represents a character of a holy man who has the right to pardon one's sins after atonement.

4.3 Brief comparison with Czech folklore and folk songs

The role of mother in the Czech folklore was already mentioned before. She is, like in the Irish folk songs and ballads, a voice of reason and experience and disobeying her leads to a catastrophe. Probably the most typical work of the Czech folklore preoccupied with the relationship of a mother and her children is a collection of ballads *Kytice* by K. J. Erben. A mother is depicted either as an authority or a murderer who is eventually punished for her sin. It is also noteworthy that Child mentions a link and similarities between "The Maid and The Palmer", "The Cruel Mother" and Slavic, Scandinavian, German and French ballads on this theme (Child 230), therefore we can assume that the motive of infanticide was popular and widespread due to its shocking nature and, in my opinion, characteristics of tabloid journalism.

In light hearted folk songs, however, the role of mother is different. While the protagonists Irish, Scottish and English folk songs on this theme remember their mothers and their upbringing during their difficult situation (for example the narrator of "Pat Reilly" laments over being enlisted and forced to fight in foreign lands, blessing his mother who took care of him, but cursing his father who made him serve the Queen), Czech, Moravian and Silesian songs usually depict a dialogue between a mother and her child asking for advice concerning their courtship as mentioned in the section 1.5.

Conclusion

The role of mother was probably the most honoured and respected and could be interpreted as the final and most important stage of a woman's life. As such, a mother represents wisdom and experience. Despite the aforementioned respect and acknowledgement, the character of a mother is usually supporting the protagonist with the exception of murder ballads where the life-giving power turns into the life-taking force. This depiction seems to be more popular than the supporting role of a mother. Therefore the character of a mother has less notable varieties than the one of a girl, a wife or a lover.

5 Woman as Death

The last theme discussed in the thesis is one of woman as an embodiment of death. Although this theme was already mentioned in the previous part concerning murder ballads, it is not quite the same. While female protagonist of murder ballads was a mother and a living human being, females discussed in this part are more symbols of death or death bringers. Therefore they appear as ghost, supernatural beings and mythological creatures.

It is also interesting that folk songs do not cover this theme enough. While death is mentioned often, it is not carried out by a female death bringer or a supernatural character with the exception of ghosts that seem to be rather popular, although they do not bring death every time they appear. Ghosts are usually presented as messengers and they do not seek revenge or death in Irish and Scottish folk songs, although they can herald it as in "She Moved Through The Fair".

Unlike in the previous chapters, the thesis will discuss even folk and fairy tales as well, for folk songs do not offer satisfying coverage of the topic.

5.1 "She Moved Through The Fair"

As mentioned above, ghosts often appeared as messengers and not as life takers. However, "She Moved Through The Fair"[68] uses a motive of a ghost heralding death and deals with a relationship between a man and a woman. In the first verse the song introduces a couple ready to marry each other:[69]

[68] According to Henry, the song was collected around 1909 (Henry 454).

[69] The lyrics retrieved from *Sam Henry's "Songs of the People"* p. 454.

My young love said to me, “My mother won't min',
And my father won't slight you for your lack of kine.”
And she laid her hand on me and this she did say,
“It will not be long, Love, till our wedding day.”

Apparently the couple overcame the obstacles (see Chapter 2) and seemingly there is nothing that could separate them. The second verse depicts the couple’s parting as the girl makes her way homeward, but the third verse differs. While Henry omits it and skips directly to the last verse, but I think it is rather important:[70]

The people were saying,
No two e'er were wed
But one had a sorrow
That never was said.
And I smiled as she passed
With her goods and her gear,
And that was the last
That I saw of my dear.

Despite the optimistic tone of the first verse, the couple is separated and it seems they bond will never be whole. It is not mentioned what happened to the girl yet, but the last verse reveals her fate:

Last night she came to me, she came softly in,
So softly she came that her feet made no din.
As she laid her arms around me, and this she did say,
“It will not be long, love, till our wedding day.”

Although this version (listed by Henry) does not directly say the girl is a ghost and provides only hints, different versions replace the first line by:

Last night she came to me, my dead love came in

[70] The lyrics retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/She_Moved_Through_the_Fair on 12 April 2012.

Now it is obvious the girl is dead and her ghost brings the message. Though the lovers cannot be united at the moment, the recurring phrase 'It will not be long, love, till our wedding day.' clearly means the narrator's death is close. The ghost of the girl does not take his life, yet brings the message of his upcoming demise. I do not think the girl knew about the end of her life in the first verse for she discusses earthly matters with her lover.

Another popular theme appearing in the song is love against death. It is clear not even death of the girl separated the couple that is to be united soon. Death is depicted as a way of reunion but the song does not reveal what happens to the narrator, even though his death is most likely to follow.

5.2 Woman as death in folk tales - supernatural beings

Unlike songs, folk tales discuss and depict this theme more often and more deeply. However, the purpose of the thesis is not to provide a list of female life-taking supernatural creatures. Rather than that, the thesis will focus on their common traits and attributes and mention only the most prominent characters.

As mentioned before, ghosts are quite popular in folk songs and in folk tales. Their role is to bring the news about one's demise, or to predict it. Probably the best known ghastly figure of this role is Banshee. It can be a ghost of a brutally murdered girl who warns her family should it be in mortal danger, but she can be depicted as an old woman hating everything alive and torturing others with her scream. Some Banshees are told to be taking lives and stalking their victims, however Irish folklore prefers death foretelling Banshees (Yourirish.com). In the Scottish folklore Caointeach or the "washer at the ford" has the same role as Banshee, however she is not hostile (Monaghan 74).

Although the most popular and the best known, Banshees are scarcely mentioned in folk songs or ballads, for their place is usually taken by a ghost of a young woman (see "She Moved Through The Fair") that does not communicate her message through wailing.

Other life-taking characters are fairies, especially in Ireland. In *Conla and the Faery Maid* the protagonist is seduced by a beautiful fairy being and leaves with her for Tir na nOg

(Scott 142).[71] Fairies usually symbolize deceit and trickery, misleading people and often leading them to their death.

Probably the largest group of such creatures and characters is linked with the destructive or the killing power of Nature, for example with the sea or with carnivores, in this very case with wolves. I decided to pick two examples: Seal women and Wolf women.

Seal women, also called Merrows and in the area of Orkneys and Shetland Selkies (where the myth probably originated), are female counterparts of mermen, who are not usually mentioned in the Irish or Scottish folklore. In some parts of Ireland, they are known for their hatred for humans and they are regarded as messengers of death. In northern parts of Ireland and Scotland, they usually wear seal skins that allow them to traverse through the sea as seals. Should they want to go ashore, they have to leave their seal skin or a coat behind and whoever finds their garment has power and control over them (Irelandseye.com). However, their role differs in almost every story. The stories "The Seal Woman" and "The Sea Maid" collected by Michael Scott involve a male protagonist who capture the seal skin of a seal woman and binds her to him, for it is said such a bond can lead to wealth and prosperity of the male (who is usually a fisherman). However, the woman gets her garment back and her revenge is lethal. In "The Seal Woman" she kills her and her captor's two children while escaping back to the sea and in "The Sea Maid" the fisherman drowns. In other tales the seal woman makes her escape leaving her husband and her children behind, but she does not take revenge on anyone.

Another popular and already mentioned theme is a woman turning (or turned) into a wolf and bringing death to people around. In "The Wolf Maidens" collected by M. Scott, three women, daughters of Airitech, were turned into wolves for their crimes appear and terrorize their surroundings. They were killed by heroes Cascarach (Or Cas Corach) and Caoilte.

[71] Although Tir na nOg is not an afterlife place for deceased, Conla was taken and never returned. Therefore the similarity to death is obvious despite the fact his death was different from the usual concept of death.

5.3 Brief comparison with the Czech folklore and folk songs

Like in the Irish and Scottish folk songs, Czech folk songs do not discuss the theme of a woman - a life taker. If death is present, it is almost every time doing of other people. However, the Czech folklore works with the theme almost in the same extent. Probably the best example is the Death itself. It has a female gender, unlike the Death or the Grim Reaper (probably originated from Thanatos) in the Irish and Scottish folklore. The Slavic depiction of a death is usually the same across Slavic cultures: an old woman with a scythe.[72]

The Death is not only female embodiment of death. For example, Polednice (Lady Midday) and Klekánice kidnap and even kill disobedient children. The concept of Will-o'-the-wisp is changed too. In the Czech folklore, Will-o'-the-wisp is a female fairy misleading people from safe paths.

Conclusion

As mentioned before, the theme of a life taking woman is already used in murder ballads. However, the true embodiment of death is different than a mortal woman. The true life-taking female character is a supernatural being. Anthropomorphic personification was used across cultures to explain or at least to describe phenomena that could not be explained by means of science back then.

But what is the true reason for the death? In most of the cases, it's breaking the supernatural rules or laws, for example stealing the seal skin, eating forbidden fairy food or general involvement with supernatural beings – challenging them or trying to use them for personal profit.

Not all of the supernatural beings connected with death are life-takers, although their role could blend with the life-taking one as well. The example is ghosts (as discussed in "She Moved Through The Fair") and Banshees. Interestingly enough, Irish and Scottish folk songs use the theme of a ghost messenger while the theme of a life-taking supernatural character is used more in folk tales.

[72] The Death appears as a skeleton as well, but the female appearance is more typical for Czech fairy tales. In some she is addressed as a: Godmother Death or as Godmother (euphemism).

6 Conclusion

The thesis analyzes and discusses depiction of woman in Irish, Scottish and English folk songs. The role of woman was divided to five parts according to the age and social status of a woman and every part presents several different and most common views and motives found in the songs it analyzes.

The first major theme is one of girl as a love interest. The inexperienced and gullible girl is often a prey to lustful males, who seek bodily sensations and short lived love affairs. The most common plot is presented in “Jolly Beggarman”. The girl, bound to the place of her birth she cannot leave and still under rule of her parents, falls for a beggarman asking for a place to stay overnight. The girl, charmed by the beggar’s appearance, seeks to form a bond with him through the means of sexual romance. However, such a bond is not strong enough; moreover, the beggar wishes not to be bound to anyone else or does not want to enter a relationship with a naive girl of low moral standards and such simple minded behaviour. Consequently, the girl is left used and in many cases her virginity is gone as well. But why are beggars so admired? I suppose it is for their jovial and unbound life and ways and their symbolic value of fresh and almost exotic impulse and change. Another different motive for a girl’s behaviour is a night spent with a nobleman and a subsequent reward, which is mentioned in the Scottish version of “Jolly Beggarman”, albeit such a selfish motive can lead to disappointment and punishment.

Another archetype appearing in songs on this topic is a character of a soldier. Although often depicted as more experienced and morally superior to a beggar, one sub-type of a soldier seeks the same goals like a beggar, as apparent in “As I Roved Out” and “Martinmas Time”. However, in “Martinmas Time” the female protagonist is no longer a passive actor who willingly lets soldiers take advantage of her. Despite the fact she is forced to swear she would come to the soldiers’ garrison and probably serve as a wench, she decides to act. She dresses as a soldier and indeed fulfils her oath without being violated. Also it draws on a popular theme of cross-dressing used in another songs and literature.

Another type of soldier is a well mannered, clever and decisive young man ready to be united with a girl or a woman he loves or to fulfil his oaths and promises (this motive is apparent in the second part of the thesis). Such a character appears in “The Rambling Síuler”,

which contains most of the motives and traits common to the most of beggar songs, and many more (like cross-dressing, fascination with beggars and soldiers, one night romances, etc.).

The second part of the thesis describes probably one of the most popular and widest themes –girl as a lover and her transformation into woman. Female characters are no longer considered to be passive; they strive for their personal happiness and their goals (usually for the union with their lover). Through this striving and overcoming obstacles they mature into a desirable, experienced and determined woman. If the obstacles (be they distance, parents or time) are overcome by a couple and not only one part of it, a strong bond between a woman and a man is formed, which is even more important than the official bond of a marriage, as apparent in "Mary and The Soldier"; the female protagonist decides to leave her family to accompany her lover who promises he will defend her in foreign lands, although he warns her at first she could regret her decision, yet the true hearted girl is determined to follow him no matter what. Beggars are replaced by soldiers who are fit to face the obstacles and even fight for their love, as in "The Jolly Soldier" where the soldier defeats his lover's father who decided to punish her for eloping with the soldier.

However, not every time are said obstacles overcome, especially if one part of the couple decides not to fight them. This theme is apparent in "The Gentleman Soldier". The soldier seduces a girl and after having a short lived affair with her, he leaves her. The difference from the theme discussed in the first part of the thesis is that the soldier has a reason for leaving her. The reason is his wife whom he cheated yet whom does not want to leave.

The obstacles, although seemingly overcome, can reappear almost every time and despite all the efforts the couple is separated. In "The Bonny Light Horseman" is such an obstacle represented by war. Even though the female protagonist's lover is dead, the bond is still apparent (and it is probably even stronger than before) for she chooses to wander broken hearted knowing she will never find anyone who would be comparable to her deceased partner. In other cases, the couple breaks up for one of its part is way too weak or does not want to cope with the obstacles at all, as depicted in "The Blacksmith". Similar, but at the same time different motif is found in "As I Roved Out (2)"; the protagonist has to marry a

woman of wealth instead his true lover so he could survive during the great famine, yet he is still loyal to his true love and regrets his decision.

The woman's goal does not have to be the union with her lover. In "Whiskey in The Jar" the female lover betrays the narrator for no clear reason and hands him over. However, it is not clear if the female is the antagonist of the song, for her lover is a criminal.

The thesis describes woman as a wife in its third part. The character of a wife has mostly negative traits and role. A wife usually oppresses her husband, plagues his life, or commits adultery, yet she is respected and her sins and lowly manners are somewhat overlooked or made less serious. Such a wife can be found in "Killieburn Brae"; she torments her husband, but when taken to Hell, she defeats the Devil himself and is returned back, which could be a parody on a Christian theme of defeating the Devil both physically and psychically. It could be taken as a tribute to an evil woman who saves her soul by herself without help of God.

While the wife's reasons for oppression are not mentioned in "Killieburn Brae", "Seven Drunken Nights" is preoccupied with a wife committing adultery for her husband, apparently a drunkard, arrives home drunk every night. The song mocks the weak and gullible husband unable to take proper care of his wife, in my opinion, and pardons the adulterous wife, who is cunning enough to trick him.

The destructive and killing power is shown in songs about wives and husbands as well, however their tone is light hearted and show masculine superiority like in "Tipping It Up to Nancy". The plot of the song describes a wife trying to get rid of her husband, so she could find herself another man. Despite her murderous intentions, the wife is gullible and is easily tricked by another man who also warns her husband. Her plan is ruined and she is punished, although not severely, and mocked.

Probably the most respected role and social position a woman could achieve in Irish and Scottish folk songs is a role of mother. There are two major groups of songs dealing with this role. The first uses the character of mother as an authority and as a supporting character, which has to be obeyed by her children otherwise a disaster could happen, as depicted in "Johnny of Brady's Lea". However, the second group of songs, murder ballads, replace a life-

giving, experienced, and wise mother by a life-taking character. The usual plot describes infanticide of illegitimate offspring and the subsequent punishment, which means that a mother has no right to take the life she 'created'.

In the final part, the thesis focuses on a woman representing death. Although scarce in folk songs, the theme is often used in folk tales and myths. Women representing a life-taking force and principle are of supernatural origins that take life of people who either broke the supernatural rules and laws or challenged them. A special sort of such mythological creatures is ghosts and Banshees who often serve only as heralds of death and do not usually take lives with some exceptions (depending on the tale, for there is no fixed set of rules or characteristic traits those characters should have).

It is indeed hard to make only one universally acceptable and valid conclusion due to differences between female characters and their behaviour belonging to the same group, limited number of songs analyzed and limited scope of the thesis. However, the thesis provides a following conclusion that is in my opinion apparent and based on the discussed texts: the respect and admiration of woman grows with her age. While young and inexperienced girls are often depicted as simple beings only good for having short lived love affairs, young women struggling for their happiness or goals are respected more. The role of a wife is ambiguous, for there are two different approaches. The first is concerned with oppression of a husband who suffers in the hands of his evil wife, yet the second one respects and acknowledges women who have to face their hard lot and their drunk, abusive or stupid husbands. These two approaches are often mixed, while the second is not so apparent. Finally, the figure of a mother is the most respected woman character to be found, thanks to her wisdom, almost prophetic abilities and her life-giving power. Her role is in sharp contrast with the image of the immature girl, yet it is important to realize every mother mentioned has to experience all the stages mentioned, and that is why the figure of a mother is wisest, the most respected, and worshipped.

Shrnutí

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá rolí a zobrazením ženy v irském a skotském folklóru, konkrétně v lidových písních a baladách. Důvod, proč jsem se rozhodl zvolit právě tuto oblast folklóru, je relativní flexibilita písní (mnoho z nich má několik variant textu v závislosti na

času a místě vzniku. Tyto varianty často mění celkové vyznění písně), časové aspekty jejich tvorby a distribuce a zejména období, kdy vznikaly (jedná se o období zejména mezi 13. a 19. stoletím). Můžeme předpokládat, že písně a balady jsou, narozdíl od pohádek, pověstí, mýtů a legend, schopny mnohem lépe a rychleji reagovat na měnící se sociální a časové podmínky. Dalším důvodem je velice široká škála motivů a témat užitých v těchto písních.

Práce je rozdělena do pěti částí podle věku a sociálního postavení ženy, přičemž se každá část, s výjimkou poslední, zabývá několika písněmi, které zachycují nejpodstatnější a nejčastější archetypy a role žen do těchto částí věkem či postavením patřících, názory na tyto role a vnímání těchto rolí vypravěčem či společností. Každá část je zběžně srovnána i s českým folklórem a písněmi, kde je zmíněna odlišnost či příbuznost motivů a témat v písních zachycených.

První část práce se zabývá ženou jako mladou, nezkušenou dívkou, která je většinou objektem zájmu mužů. Jedná se ovšem o zájem čistě tělesný. Jakmile muž dosáhne svého cíle, což je většinou společně strávená noc, pak dívku opouští. Jako mužský protějšek je většinou použit archetyp tuláka, který se obecně v irském folklóru těší oblibě, zejména pro jeho nespoutanost, dobrou náladu a vtip. Tento tulák přináší jakousi změnu do života dívky, která je zatím spjata s místem, kde se narodila, popřípadě je stále pod vládou rodičů. Není tedy divu, že se dívka do tuláka zamiluje a pokusí se jej získat (vytvořit pouto mezi sebou a ním) krátkou romancí. Tulák se však nemíní nikde vázat a dívku opouští, jako například v písni Jolly Beggarman. Bylo by však jednoduché označit muže jako čistého antagonistu, neboť jednání dívek je často motivováno touhou po odměně, která by následovala po noci s přestrojeným šlechticem. Právě za tuláka se dle legend převlékal král Jakub V., který se tak vydával mezi poddané. Trestem za sobecké a zištné chování je právě ztráta počestnosti, avšak někdy se právě takovéto chování vyplatí, jako například ve skotské verzi písně The Jolly Beggarman. Občas je tulák nahrazen vojákem, který má stejné úmysly, avšak jeho role je podstatnější v druhé části práce. Ne vždy je ale dívka jen pasivní obětí. V písni Martinmas Time je sice donucena vojáky přísahat, aby je navštívila v kasárnách a pravděpodobně byla zneuctěna, ovšem díky svému důmyslu a odvaze vojáky přelstí. Převlékne se jako voják, do kasáren přijde, přísahu tak neporuší, a poté, co ji vojáci nepoznají, vysměje se jim a vrátí se domů. Aktivní dívka tedy může být zobrazena i jako mravně a morálně silnější než muži hledající tělesné potěšení. Právě motivy tuláka, vojáka, převleků a mladé dívky jsou patrné i

v písni Rambling Síluer. Zde ovšem hlavní hrdina – voják, jen plní sázku, podlé které se měl převléci za žebráka a získat srdce farmářovy dcery, do které se zamiloval. I když se mu naskytne možnost, pak situace nezneužije, sázku vyhraje a dcera si zachová počestnost.

V českých a moravských písních, které jsou mnohdy pro svůj lyrický ráz nesrovnatelné s irskými, místo tuláků či vojáků vystupují blíže neurčené mužské postavy (zjeména nápadníci), které prostřednictvím dialogu komunikují s dívkou, popřípadě jsou jen zmíněni v rozhovoru matky a dcery, která matku žádá o radu ohledně milostného života.

Druhá, nejrozsáhlejší a pravděpodobně nejdůležitější část, popisuje přerod naivní dívky v ženu prostřednictvím překonávání překážek a následováním svých cílů. Tuláci jsou nahrazeni vojáky, kteří představují již zkušené, odhodlané a čestné muže, kteří jsou ochotni pro svou lásku riskovat i život (ovšem jsou tu i výjimky, jak již bylo řečeno). Symbolický svazek mezi mužem a ženou se vytváří právě prostřednictvím překonávání překážek, ať jsou již jakékoliv (například odloučení, nepřejícnost rodičů a podobně). Toto pouto je důležitější a silnější nežli formální svazek. Překážky většinou překonává pár společně, jako například v Mary and The Soldier, kde se protagonistka rozhodne navzdory opuštění domova následovat vojáka, který ji ovšem odrazuje, leč pak, unešen její rozhodností a odhodláním, přísahá, že ji bude chránit kdekoliv, kam je osud zavede. Překážky, pokud je žena pasivní, popřípadě bezmocná, jako například v The Jolly Soldier, překonává muž, v tomto případě voják poráží otce, který chce svou dceru ztrestat smrtí za to, že si vzala za muže právě tohoto vojáka. Někdy jsou však ony překážky překonány jen zdánlivě a po určité době se vrací a mohou zničit budovaný vztah. Například v písni The Blacksmith je touto překážkou odloučení a dálka – muž dává přednost ženě, která je jemu blíž a není ochoten, navzdory počátečnímu jednání, se s překážkou vzdálenosti vyrovnat. Podobnou překážkou je válka a smrt, která ale může pouto paradoxně posílit, kupříkladu v The Bonny Light Horseman se hrdinka po smrti svého milence rohodne raději žít ve smutku, než aby se pokoušela najít jiného nápadníka. Překážky mohou být i existenciální, kdy muž musí dát přednost zachování svého života před láskou a vzít si ženu, kterou nemiluje, avšak která má majetek. Ženy mohou být ovšem vylíčeny i jako zrádné nástroje ďáblovy, když sledují vlastní prospěch a jsou schopné zradit svého milence.

České a moravské písně se významně liší. Ženy jsou pasivní a motiv překážek zcela chybí. Pokud jsou milenci odloučeni nebo není jejich pouto naplněno, pak se písně zabývají nářkem jednoho z milenců, zejména muže, jehož láska není naplněna.

Ve třetí části práce zachycuje roli ženy jako manželky. Pohled a názor na tuto roli je dvojznačný. Jedná se zejména o vykreslení tyranské ženy, která utlačuje svého muže, ať již k tomuto útlaku zavdá důvod on sám či nikoliv. Současně je ale vzáván hold ženám, které se musí nutně vypořádat s nelehkým údělem manželky. V písni Killieburn Brae, kterou je možno chápat i jako satiru na křesťanské téma boje muže s ďáblem, si žena zachrání duši tak, že i v pekle, kam ji za její hříchy odnese ďábel, nepřestává hřešit a páchat zlo. Nakonec je vrácena zpátky svému muži, neboť ďábel přiznává, že on sám zažil pravé peklo až s touto ženou. Ta se paradoxně zachrání sama bez boží pomoci. Ne vždy je ale žena viníkem a záporným hrdinou. V písni Seven Drunken Nights se musí vyrovnávat se svým mužem, který domů dochází opilý a pravděpodobně neschopný se věnovat své ženě. Ta jej podvádí, ovšem vždy dokáže muže přelstít a vymluvit se. Mám dojem, že právě tento text se vysmívá hloupému muži, který přistoupí i na zcela zřejmé a nesmyslné výmluvy. Žena však může také zosobňovat destruktivní sílu, a to když se rozhodne zbavit se svého manžela, aby si mohla najít jiného, což je náplní zápletky písně Tipping It Up to Nancy, která zobrazuje narozdíl od předchozích převahu muže nad ženou a shovívavost pramenící z morální nadřazenosti. Její plány na vraždu zhatí její vlastní hloupost a lékař, po kterém žádá lék, který by oslepil jejího muže. Žena je pak symbolicky potrestána a padá do vlastní pasti, neboť její muž, který o jejím plánu ví, jí odmítne pomoci z nesnází, neboť je „slepý“.

V českých a moravských písních je konflikt mezi manžely popisován jen okrajově jako například v písni Ještě som sa něoženil, popřípadě písně popisují shodu mezi manžely (Nestarej se, ženo má). Pokud bychom chtěli najít téma utiskující ženy, pak je pravděpodobně nejlepším příkladem píseň z podkrkonošska Chtěl jsem píct koláče, kde je mužský vypravěč utlačován svou manželkou i přesto, že se snaží ze všech sil vykonat její vůli.

Předposlední část práce se zabývá nejrespektovanější a nejuznávanější rolí ženy, a tou je mateřství. Podobně jako v jiných kulturách je matka zosobněním moudré a životadárné síly, jejíž rady a přání je nutno respektovat, jinak může dojít k tragédii. Ovšem v protikladu stojí i smrtící síla matky. V irských a skotských baladách, tzv. murder ballads, vystupuje matka jako

vražedkyně svých nemanželských potomků. Po dokonané vraždě je však odhalena, ať již nadpřirozenem či jinými lidmi a potrestána smrtí či peklem. To stvrzuje pravidlo, že ani matka, která dítě porodí, nemá právo na ukončení života takového, byť nemanželského, dítěte. Toto téma bylo na přelomu 18. a 19. století velice populární (a to nejen v Irsku, Anglii a Skotsku) a jeho forma a šíření by se daly přirovnat k českým kramářským písním, neboť tyto balady většinou popisovaly nejnovější události poněkud bulvárním stylem.

V českém folkloru je role matky stejná. Neuposlechnutí matky vede hrdinu či hrdinku do záhuby popřípadě do neštěstí. Nejzřejmějším příkladem budiž Kytice Karla Jaromíra Erbena, která se zabývá právě vztahem matky a dítěte.

V poslední části zabývající se ženou jako smrtí se práce odklání od písní a balad a soustřeďuje se na pověsti a nadpřirozené bytosti, neboť toto téma je v písních obsaženo jen minimálně. I když už byl motiv ženy jako zosobnění smrti zmíněn v předchozí kapitole, je třeba poukázat na zásadní rozdíl mezí těmito dvěma koncepty. Zatímco v předchozím případě je vražedkyní matka, v případech popisovaných v poslední části se jedná o nadpřirozené bytosti. Tyto bytosti se mohou dělit do dvou skupin. První jsou primárně poslové smrti, kteří ovšem život většinou neberou (což ovšem neznamená, že tak nečiní. Závisí však na oblasti, kde pověst vznikla, neboť koncept například Banshee je v různých oblastech Skotska a Irska rozdílný). Zde patří například duchové, jako v písni She Moved Through The Fair, Banshee popřípadě víly, které dokážou svést a zničit muže. Další skupinou jsou takzvané tulení ženy, které cestují mořem v přestrojení za tuleně, ovšem pro toto magické přestrojení potřebují kouzelnou tulení kůži. Bez ní se promění v ženy. Traduje se, že pokud rybář získá lstí tuto kůži a kontrolu nad tulení ženou, pak se může dočkat velkého bohatství (Irelandseye.com). V pověstech však tulení žena tuto kůži získá zpátky a často se například mstí zavražděním dětí, které ma se svým věznitelem, popřípadě vraždou jeho samotného. Mezi podobné nadpřirozené bytosti patří i vlčí ženy, které se mění ve vlky a terorizují své okolí. Co je ovšem důvodem, proč mytologické bytosti berou lidem život? Nejčastěji se jedná o nerespektování nadpřirozených pravidel a příkazů (kupříkladu konzumace vílího jídla), snaha o zneužití nadpřirozena k vlastnímu prospěchu (tulení ženy) či jen zápolení s nadpřirozenem.

Český (a v podstatě obecně slovanský) folklór zachází v tomto tématu ještě dále. Zatímco je smrt v anglofonním světě většinou znázorňována jako „Grim Reaper“, čili

pochmurný žnec odvozený od řeckého boha Thanata, slovanský folklór vychází z ženského ztvárnění smrti jako stařeny s kosou. Přestože je sama postava smrti již zřejmým příkladem, v českém folkóru se dále můžeme setkat s polednicemi, klekánicemi, bludičkami a podobně. Ve všech případech se jedná o ženské bytosti trestající smrtí neuposlechnutí pravidel či příkazů (sejítí z cesty, děti vycházející ven po klekání a podobně).

Zůstává faktem, že není snadné udat jeden všeobecně platný závěr kvůli různým přístupům, různým archetypům ženských postav a jejich různorodému chování, a zejména kvůli omezenému rozsahu práce a počtu analyzovaných písní. Výsledkem práce je přesto zjištění, že respekt k ženě a uznání její role roste přímo úměrně s jejím věkem. Zatímco jsou mladé a naivní dívky zobrazeny víceméně jako objekty mužského chtíče, dívky následující své cíle a překonávající překážky (a tak dospívající v ženy) jsou uznávány mnohem více. Další životní rolí ženy je role manželky, která je, jak již bylo řečeno zobrazena dvojím způsobem. Nejrespektovanější je ovšem role matky – rodičky, která je krom životadárné síly obdařena i moudrostí, zkušeností a téměř prorockými schopnostmi. Tato role je v ostrém kontrastu s první rolí, kterou žena v irských a skotských lidových písních má. Je ale nutné si uvědomit, že žena – matka si těmito všemi rolemi musela projít, a právě to ji činí moudrou a uctívanou.

Annotation

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The thesis discusses the depiction of woman in Irish and Scottish folk songs, ballads and folklore according to her age and social status. The thesis is divided into five major parts: Woman as an object of interest, woman as a lover, woman as a wife, woman as a mother and finally woman as an embodiment of death; each part analyzes several folk songs (with the exception of the last part using mainly folk tales) providing a different view on a woman and briefly compares the motives and themes to the according depiction of woman in Czech folklore. The songs discussed are preoccupied with a different female archetype belonging to the corresponding group.

Práce se zabývá zobrazením ženy v irských a skotských lidových písních, baladách a folklóru dle věku a sociálního postavení ženy. Práce je rozdělena do pěti částí: žena jako object zájmu, žena jako milenka, žena jako manželka, žena jako manželka a žena jako zosobnění smrti. Každá část analyzuje několik lidových písní (kromě části páté, která užívá zejména pověsti) poskytujících různý pohled na roli ženy a zběžně porovnává motivy a témata s odpovídajícím zobrazením ženy v českém folklóru. Analyzované písně se zabývají každá rozdílným ženským archetypem náležejícím do příslušné části práce.

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