
Work Identity as a Core Principle for Understanding Traditional Masculinity

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Abstract

This paper seeks to identify different male types in the poetry by Aleksei Koltsov, Russian poet of the first half of the 19th century, from the point of view of their attitudes to work and family. The analysis of these cultural texts is necessary for tracing cultural roots of the contemporary economic consciousness in Russia as well as of gendered patterns of behaviour in regard to work and family. Culture is one of the factors which determine the way social institutions function. Art in general and poetry in particular do not only mirror but also construct reality, and as such they give impulses for directing people's behaviour in different fields including economics, even if their creators do not have such intentions and their poetic images do not correspond with reality or are not in line with actual social needs.

Hofstede's concept of masculinity and Heidegger's theory of the worldhood were used as a methodological basis for the research. This approach to poetic narratives permitted the singling out of several masculine types distinct in their attitudes to work and family.

Different discourses of masculinity give its different images and represent its specific facets. A single approach can identify only one side of such a complex, dynamic, highly contextual phenomenon as masculinity. Many-faceted and poly-functional characteristics of different historical masculine types led some researchers to the conclusion that there are no essential masculine (feminine) features, that gender division of labour is historically relative and based only on gender inequality, and that gender differences would disappear in the future (Kimmel 2000). That is why it is not correct to speak about dominating gender masculine/feminine types and compare countries in this dimension. Other researchers do not share this view and consider it possible to compare different countries according to their masculine and feminine dimensions (Hofstede 1980). They assert that a taboo about describing cultures in term of masculinity

and femininity exists primarily in high masculinity countries (Hofstede et al. 1998, 209). This view originates from PC campaigns in the USA and is readily explicable from a social and political point of view but it does not cancel cultural differences between countries including their views of the masculine and feminine. They did and do exist and need to be explained.

Given these circumstances, this paper tries to identify one specific type or types of masculinity, which existed in Russia in the middle of the 19th century mainly among the peasants (who constituted about 90 per cent of the entire population) and to detect whether and how they are related to the contemporary masculine types. This question is directly related to many economic and social problems because the core identity of the traditional peasant male type was its attitude to work and its definition could help to explain many modern attitudes and values which exist in today's Russian society or at least to show their evolution in history, which is also important for understanding current events and problems.

The concept of masculinity

The research is based on the methodological approach and theoretical concept of masculinity created by Hofstede (1980). In the 1970s under his leadership a major survey was conducted in 40 countries devoted to studying the influence of cultural specifics on companies' performance. Among other findings, his method permitted to show how definite gender characteristics worked in economics, to explicate their meaning in work settings, to measure their influence on company performance and to compare the economic consequences of different gender dimensions in these countries.

His theoretical approach to the notion of masculinity is based on the idea of the utmost importance of the duality of the sexes, which is one of the very first issues with which societies of all ages and levels of complexity had to cope with in their own specific way and which profoundly affected a multitude of societal institutions (Hofstede 1980, 262). He

shares the idea that strict biological differences between sexes refer only to the process of procreation (childbearing and child-begetting). All other differences in behaviour between the sexes including that at work are of cultural, social and historical origin and depend on time, region, social group, etc. Nevertheless, he argues that there is a common distribution of sex roles in all societies, traditional and modern: men are more concerned with economic and other achievements and women are more concerned with taking care of people in general and children in particular. Almost universally the characteristics of manhood are defined as the impregnation of women, the protection of dependents, and the providing for one's family (Lees 1994). Therefore, Hofstede's interpretation of masculinity, which was based mainly on Western experience, is valid for many contemporary traditional and modern societies. In these societies boys are socialised to perform 'instrumental tasks', toward achievement and self-reliance and girls to do 'expressive' tasks and to be helpful, careful, modest and tolerant. Sex-role socialisation takes place in families, peer groups, and schools. When people begin to work their gender roles have already been shaped.

In these societies the problem of the gender division of labour and gender relations at work appeared only when men and women began to work together in big industrial enterprises and in the offices of big companies—in the 19th century. This trend continued in the 20th century and permitted sociologists to clarify gender differences in their attitudes towards jobs. For example, it was noticed that in the USA advancement and earnings were of importance for men, while for women the social aspects of the job (type of supervision, working conditions and schedule, type of work) were of more significance. Similar results in work attitudes were obtained in Western European countries in the 1970s. Hofstede's results in 40 countries proved this tendency too: four goals (manager, cooperation, friendly atmosphere, physical conditions) were significantly more important for women and four goals for men (up-to-dateness, advancement, training, earnings) (Hofstede 1980, 275). Hofstede placed these goals on one line, which represented a scale of the so-called 'social-ego' factor, where manager scores were the highest and earnings were the lowest.

Figure 1. The scale of a 'social-ego' factor

| Manager | Cooperation | Employment area | Desirable security | | Challenge | Advancement | Recognition | Earnings |
|---------|-------------|-----------------|--------------------|---|-----------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| ++++ | +++ | ++ | + | 0 | - | -- | --- | ---- |
| ← | | | | | | | | → |

Reversing the sign of the scores, he called this dimension 'Masculinity' vs. 'Femininity'. He referred these terms to the dominant sex role pattern in the vast majority of both traditional and modern societies: that of male assertiveness and female nurturance (*ibid.* 277). In practice men can be more feminine than women, and vice versa, however, statistically men are more on the 'masculine' side and women are more on the 'feminine'.

One of the important findings of this research was that different countries score differently on this 'social-ego', or masculine-feminine scale. For Hofstede this meant a fundamental dilemma of mankind, i. e., the relative strength of nurturance interests (relations with the manager, cooperation, atmosphere) versus assertiveness interests (earnings, advancement): of interests which in nearly all traditional and modern societies are traditionally more 'feminine' versus those that are traditionally more 'masculine'. Hofstede's respondents were mainly men (that is why he called this dimension masculinity) from 40 countries, and they showed different traditional 'masculine' patterns. He concluded that the distribution of roles between sexes, a femininity-masculinity dimension, differed between nations and singled out several groups of countries with similar 'masculine' features (*ibid.* 278).

The data also allowed him to make conclusions about general value preferences in different countries. He pointed out that the value of work was correlated with such concepts as 'work centrality', 'central life interests', and 'job involvement'. The studies of work in the USA in the 1960s demonstrated that general satisfaction among men depended more on job satisfaction than among women. These findings of American sociologists supported, in his opinion, the idea about a positive association between work centrality and traditional masculinity (MAS). In his survey

in the high MAS countries the job takes a more central position in the respondents' total life space than in the lower MAS countries, where people's attempts to maximise 'life satisfaction' do not necessarily overlap with 'job satisfaction'. He postulates that people in more 'masculine' countries (like Japan, Germany, Great Britain), other factors being equal, 'live to work' while people in more feminine countries (like France and the Netherlands) 'work to live' (*ibid.* 285–286).

Hofstede related results of his survey to another celebrated research project – a content analysis of children's books by McClelland (1961), who tried to derive national measurements of need for achievement, which was treated also as a typical masculine feature. The latter discovered a sizeable indirect positive correlation between masculinity and need for achievement. High need for achievement according to McClelland's definition (as a national characteristic) is closely dependent on a willingness to take risk (low uncertainty avoidance) and on masculine assertiveness (high MAS).

Hofstede, however, recognised that the way human accomplishments were defined in McClelland's study depended on a specific cultural and economic environment, in this case that of early capitalism. In today's high MAS countries national and individual achievements are defined in terms of what he calls 'ego accomplishment', i. e. recognition and wealth. Low MAS cultures define their accomplishments more in terms of quality of human contacts and living environment; this is 'social accomplishment'. He found that high MAS also correlates positively with highly developed individuality and does not place a high value on communal spirit.

Thus, Hofstede derives a 'civic concept' of masculinity, which presupposes a sort of assertiveness realised in a piecemeal and peaceful work. It centres the value of work as its core principle and places a high value on its results (earning, advancement, etc.). He also relates masculinity to other human dimensions like sociability, family values, life satisfaction, etc. High MAS implies a dominating father's role in a family, ability to sustain and manage it well, to be a 'bread-winner' (*ibid.* 294–295). It also has connotations with the machismo (ostentatious manliness) ideal.

Hofstede's methodological approach and his theoretical concept of masculinity has become a model for many researchers. Russia was not covered by his extensive survey. Hofstede's model has only recently been

applied to Russian economics. One study shows the masculinity scores of Russian managers to be almost one third lower than those of Americans (45 to 62) (Naumov 1996), the other study produced a score of 50 as compared to 62 for American managers (on a 100 point scale) (Elenkov 1997). In practice this trait results in the average Russian feeling that he or she has little ability to influence their future. It has its implications for managers as well as for employees (Fey & Kusnarenko 2000).

Russian male employees also show a rather low degree of work centrality. Using Hofstede's model for studying organisational culture in four Russian-American enterprises, researchers obtained low scores on the value of work: only 46% of male respondents saw their job as the main element in their lives (compared to 33% of women) (Yegorov 1998). This correlates with the reverse hierarchy of work-related values among Russian employees: long holidays and a convenient working schedule score higher (5th place) than challenge, innovation and achievement (12th); a responsible job is on the 13th and advancement on the 15th place (Magun 1996a). Magun (1996b) identifies the work orientation of Russian labourers as passive-hedonistic because it places a high value on an interesting task (2nd position) without initiative and achievement. He concludes that compared to other countries the value of work among the Russian population is relatively low. It is far behind that of the family, which takes the first place in the value hierarchy in Russia, as in many other countries. Russia's specific is that the gap between the subjective significance of family and work is one of the widest in the world. But the high subjective value of the family is not in line with its real state, which is far from good. Sociologists note that after Perestroika the role of men in the family was reduced to simple reproductive functions, while economic activity and responsibility for the family increased for women, even compared to Soviet times (Sakulina 1998). Sakulina interprets Russian fathers' withdrawal from child-rearing and women's growing economic responsibility as a manifestation of the global tendency of traditional gender family role depolarisation and interpenetration. In the meantime, in other countries like Sweden, for example, this tendency has the opposite content: the 'family involvement' of fathers especially in the process of child-rearing is growing (Bergsten & Back-Wiklund 1996).

As a matter of fact, the way this tendency is developing in Russia is not new. Family sustaining motivation was never dominant for Russian men (Vasilchuk 2001). In the Soviet period the responsibility for the sustaining and managing of the family was frequently placed on the shoulders of women.

This state of affairs applies to the 'new Russians' too. Images of masculinity cultivated by and represented in a new Russian journal for men *Bear (Medved')* consist more of signs of male prestigious consumption than of their professional qualities, in spite of the fact that the journal had in mind and targeted mainly highly educated professionals (Oushakine 1999). But their professional qualities and other features which made them successful are not in the foreground (what a 'real man' engages in, how he obtained his possessions, etc.). The journal is more concerned with symbolic representations of masculinity, its form, than with its essence and content. Finally, professional aesthetics are a substitute for professional ethics and other qualities. It is not by chance that such masculinity is called 'visible' or 'seeming' because it is mostly reduced to symbolic forms. More disturbing is that this image of masculinity is shared by the Russian young generation too (Oushakine 2000).

When the journal introduces its heroes, 'true males', it does not identify their marital status and family position or their names. These dimensions are not mentioned, and this implies that for the concept of the 'true' masculinity developed by the journal such roles as husband or father are not essential masculine qualities.

Thus the Soviet and contemporary Russian concept of masculinity does not presuppose a high value of work and the family. This type of masculinity did not emerge all at once. Like other stereotypes, it has its roots in the national mentality shaped over centuries. Dominant mental patterns function as the collective programming (Hofstede 1980, 260) which influences the way not only how people act but also how institutions function (Marsh 2002, 141). The explanation of the dominating gender types thus requires their cultural and historical roots to be addressed.

This is especially true for Russia because it belongs to the high context societies (Hall 1976), where traditional cultural models are more influential than in low context societies and have a significant impact on

gender stereotypes. They are represented in different cultural texts, which portray characteristic features and typical masculine attitudes. Given the paramount importance Russian literature had and still has on the formation of national stereotypes in general and on gender ones in particular, it is indispensable to revise its male images from the viewpoint of their gender identity and its relevance to the new socio-economic environment. This task is fulfilled on the basis of the poetry of Aleksei Koltsov (1809–1842) who was one of the outstanding poets of 19th century Russia.

Koltsov's poetry as a text

The notion of text went through a deep and radical rethinking in the 20th century. Text as such text is subject to interpretation, and any interpretation is valid. The plurality of interpretations and even their conflict are an advantage for the understanding and explanation of texts (Ricoeur 1974). Texts as products of art are no longer objects of aesthetic interests alone but also the subject of sociological, cultural, anthropologic, philosophic and other social studies because the spirit beliefs, the classification systems, or the kinship structures of people, etc. exist not just in their immediate shapes but they are also promoted and exemplified in different objects of art (Geertz 1997). From this point of view, without losing its aesthetic qualities and meanings, art represents a cultural system, which materialises a way of experiencing: the world of objects of art bears a particular cast of mind. What is more important is that it is not an individual mind, but a collective one. Studying art for an anthropologist means studying a human sensibility, which is essentially a collective formation, and its foundations have deep and numerous roots in a social context. This refers not only to art but also to religion, morality, science, commerce, technology, politics, entertainment, law, even to the way people organise their everyday practical existence. Their objects like objects of art are also primary documents; not illustrations of conceptions already in force, but the conceptions themselves (Goldwater 1973). The signs or sign elements, which make up a semiotic system called art, are ideationally connected to the society in which they are found, not

mechanically. It means that they do not simply reflect or represent social experience or exercise some social functions, but they are social experience *per se*. All objects of art are performing ones in a sense that even after the process of their creation they continue to perform: by expressing one's feelings they ideate them in the others. This is true not only for so called 'primitive' societies but also for the modern ones.

That is why the task of anthropologists' consideration of art as Geertz understands it, is similar to what was done for Italian painting by Baxandall (1988), who takes precisely the approach Geertz advocates. Baxandall argues that in order to be accepted and understood by people a picture has to be interactive, i. e., to be visually stimulant. It has to take everyday life into account; what an audience would like to see and what it would be able to see. He is concerned with defining what he calls 'the period eye', i. e., 'the equipment that a fifteenth-century painter's public [i. e., other painters and 'the patronising classes'] brought to complex visual stimulations like pictures.' (*ibid.* 38). Expanding this metaphor, we could say that every historic period not only has its specific eye, but also its own specific voice, ear, hand, body and so on. Therefore, from this point of view, in any object of art we can find not only the author's subject—his/her eye, voice, etc., but also other subjects, whether they are patrons or buyers, performers or spectators, colleagues or critics, and their voices. The quantity of voices, their lucidity and soundness as well as their validity and influence can be different and depend on various factors (the talent and the intelligence of an author, the availability and timeliness of his/her work). Identifying the different subjects' input in the object of art is the task of social scholars.

A case in point now is the poetry of Aleksei Koltsov, which belongs to a classic period. According to Barthes (1970), its specificity consists mainly in its vocabulary, which is determined by a common use of words. Here tradition (ritual) rules, not invention and creativity. A classic author does not invent new meanings of words. It is an art of expression, not of creation, such as modern poetry, where peculiar geological layers of existentiality can be found in the meaning of each word. The language of classic poetry is largely colloquial and systemic, while that of modern poetry is disintegrated, purely aesthetic, individual, autonomous. It

implies that classic poetry serves anthropologic aims better than modern poetry because it expresses meanings which are customary and usual rather than exceptional and are shared by most of the public rather than express the author's subjectivity.

This is especially true for the poetry of Koltsov, who, as the electronic Columbia Encyclopedia states, 'became well known for his fresh, unsophisticated lyrics on themes of peasant life'.

Koltsov's most famous verses are songs, which he called Russian in view of their closeness to folk songs in form and content. The main idea behind this name is that the author pretends to render voices of the people, not his own. Sometimes he succeeds but at others he does not bear out his intentions and turns to the direct speech of the author instead. Male voices are the most frequently heard, the soundest and clearest voices in his poetry. This makes it an especially valuable sociological and anthropological source for identifying masculine folk types in 19th century Russia.

His poetry is relevant not only for reconstructing folk masculinity but also Russian national identity in general. It belongs to a sort of narrative, which is among basic elements constituting national identity (Hall 1992). The attitudes toward the main existential problems (work, life, love), which these songs render are typical and significant according to many Russian pre-revolutionary and Soviet critics and writers. They can be found in other personages of Russian literature of the 19th century, in heroes of the Soviet period and in real people. This makes Koltsov's folk heroes models for understanding and explaining the Russian national character and mentality in general, regardless of the social group and the time, or the means of their formation.

The systemic character of classic poetry is also of significance for identification purposes. It means that the different meanings it brings exist not isolated and disintegrated from each other but form a holistic and coherent system. Closer analysis of this system reveals their hierarchy and identifies a system or systems of values existing in the society.

The poet's personality suits these goals perfectly. Aleksei Koltsov knew the life of the simple people better than anyone else among the Russian literate community because he lived this life himself for a long time. That is why he was able to express the Russian soul better than any

of his predecessors or successors. The fact that his verses have become folk songs which are popular till today, proves that the poet really touched deep and important folk feelings and thoughts. Moreover, Koltsov never flattered simple people or idealised them as the *slavophiles* or *narodniks* did after him in the 19th century and the Soviet ideologists in the 20th century, and his poetry always reflects both their positive and negative traits. It can help to disavow many assertions about the traditional Russian society, which, as its advocates argue, did not value wealth and profits and was built on mutual help and collectivism, apart from Western society, which rejected these values after the Reformation (Maslov 2000); or that Russian labour was built on spiritual foundations (Platonov 1993).

His poetry deserves special attention for other reasons too. His 'fresh, simple, unsophisticated lyrics' have not attracted much attention from modern critics and researchers. Nevertheless, he is one of the first authors whose verses are studied in primary and secondary schools, his heroes are always being taught as a positive example in school curricula. His songs continue to be heard.¹ So his poetry takes an active part in contemporary Russian culture and makes its impact on the world view, system of values and gender stereotypes of people.

Soviet interpreters of Koltsov's poetry (researchers and especially teachers at schools) basically treated all his heroes equally—as the best and typical representatives of Russian people—and mostly did not differentiate them. Such a generalising approach to masculine types can be found in contemporary works too, when authors speak about traditional bourgeois masculinity, which had existed in Russia in the 19th century and had such features as bravery, entrepreneurship, mobility, ability to suppress weakness and sensitivity (Sakulina 1998). It is very questionable, first, to what extent such type of masculinity was common to the Russian bourgeoisie, which is known for its passivity, dependence on tsarism and lack of developed self-confidence. Second, such an approach simplifies reality for it was never homogenous. It always consisted of a variety of social types with different attitudes and values, behavioural patterns and ethical norms, and the poetry of Aleksei Koltsov is the best evidence of this. That is why this paper strives

to define different folk masculine types as they were represented in his poems in their attitudes to work and family and in different everyday practices.

Certainly, the relations between poetry and reality are very complex and contradictory: the former both reflects and constructs reality. The truth of what a teller (a poet) says is a thorny problem (Riessman 1993, 21). Narratives do not provide direct access to other times, places, or cultures (Personal Narrative Group 1989, 264). In the case of Koltsov, there is an additional medium between reality and the author's narratives—folklore which the poet pretends to render and which he really drew on heavily. The interpretation of folklore and of its relations with reality is a separate scholarly task which has a long tradition in social sciences. The task of this paper is not to interpret poetic narratives or to trace their connotations with reality, folklore or the socio-cultural context in which it was created and existed but to deal with the poet's texts solely as an autonomous phenomenon. They represent 'documents of life' and the information they contain is in a very close relationship with reality as well as with their creator. To ask questions of the author and to answer them is possible only after detailed analysis of artefacts: after identifying poetic reality and comprising its elements. This is the objective of this article.

Male types in the poetry of Aleksei Koltsov

It is possible to analyse poetic texts from different angles of vision. In this case, having Hofstede's notion of masculinity as a starting point, Koltsov's poems are analysed from the point of view of how they represent and express work- and family-related values, the economic consciousness of representatives of different social types. This is done by identifying behavioural patterns of actors (personages of poems), semantic connotations between objects, actors and their activities and expressed or implied attitudes of actors toward these objects and activities. Work-related values are characterised not only through explicitly expressed attitudes toward certain working processes or toward work in general

but also indirectly—through attitudes to other types of activity (e.g., to courtship or leisure behaviour), which can have positive or negative connotations to labour. They also are manifested in attitudes to different elements of the system of work (means of work and its results). The final aim of analysing texts is to reconstruct the worldhood of actors (Heidegger 1962) which determines their gender and work identity.

Patterns of work

Gleb Uspenskii, another famous Russian writer of the second half of the 19th century, described Koltsov as predominantly a poet of agricultural labour. As the examples of such poetry three poems by Koltsov are usually cited—*The Song of a Ploughman* [*Pesnja Pakharja*] (1831) *Crop* [*Urozhai*] (1835) and *A Scythe* [*Kosar'*] (1836), which are included in almost all anthologies of Russian literature (Koltsov 1984). The first is devoted to the joy of rural work and is full of positive attitudes toward work and its results, to 'thingness' (*veshchestvennost'*) (Dobroliubov 1950). Peasants accompany all their agricultural working processes with prayer and hope in God's help. These hopes inspire them, but their main objective is to reach well-being, to gather an abundant crop, a lot of bread—a *peasant's wealth*.

The second poem describes the year-long working cycle of peasants and their main strivings and thoughts. All of them are focused on growing a good crop: initially to pick up all corn, to load it on carts and to go into a field in time; then, after praying, to sow the corn and to wait for the results of their labour. When the crop is ripened, it is reaped by the whole family and loaded on wagons. Then the people enjoy listening to the music of the moving wheels. After the harvest, peasants pray before icons at home. This is the end of their working cycle, which determines their life cycle, too. The poet's discourse on peasant labour presents it as a very spiritual activity, full of ethical, aesthetic and religious meanings. Nevertheless, its primary aim is clearly and undoubtedly material and tangible—to gather a good and rich harvest.

The third poem is devoted to a young peasant man, a *Scythe*, who both likes his work and is an expert at it. That is why everything he does

comes out well. But in this verse he has an additional important stimulus for work: he loves a girl, wants to marry her and needs money to get permission from her parents (earlier he had been refused because of his poverty). This clear and noble aim inspires him, makes his work meaningful and thereby strengthens him and makes his work more productive. The readers are sure that such a person will reach everything he wants, because his efforts are in the right direction and well organised.

The leisure of such hard-working peasants corresponds to the way they work. The industrious peasants have abundant feasts when all rural work is done, usually late in autumn (*A Rural Feast* [*Sel'skaia Pirushka*] 1830), which are very orderly and follow certain traditional customs. During these feasts guests and hosts speak mainly about their households and perspectives for the future crop. Poor and diligent peasants could permit to have some religious holidays also after harvest time and only if they have some resources left (*Reflection of the Peasant* [*Razmysblenie Poselianina*] 1832). Thus, patterns of their leisure time spending are submitted to their working activity and follow its patterns too.

But Koltsov showed different attitudes to work among peasants—from really positive, solemn and emotionally uplifted as in the poems already mentioned—to totally negative and passive as in *Why Do You Sleep, Peasant Man?* [*Chto Ty Spish', Muzbichok?*] (1839). Here the poet renders a typical picture of a peasant's household decline. Initially the hero was a very good and active master. He worked hard in the fields, was engaged in trade and highly esteemed by everyone (his place was always in the honourable corner of a house). But now he has become lazy and only sleeps when the others are working. Gradually he loses everything. Moreover, this fact does not bother him at all—he is absolutely indifferent to the overall decline in his household. Featuring a picture of total passivity and inaction, the poet cannot remain indifferent and even changes his genre. If the positive pictures of a peasant's work were written in the epic genre and the author's voice had not been heard, now the poet chooses direct speech and his voice sounds clear and gets very upset and even angry. He blames the peasant man for laziness, sleepiness, and passivity and tries to persuade him to restart his activity.

A daring young man at work and in life

Between the poles of very effective activity and full passivity another masculine type exists, a daring young man (*udaloi molodets* or *udalets*), a *falcon*, which is the main hero of Koltsov's songs as well as the most popular male image in Russian folklore in general.

In spite of his central position in folk life, he exists on the margins of a local peasant community. He is a peasant's son and is poor rather than rich. Usually his orientation is not on improving his household and on hard work but in some uncertain outward direction. Ploughing, mowing, threshing and doing other rural and domestic jobs are not suitable for a *Daring Young Man* [*Udalets*] (1837). He likes more to enjoy life rather than to work. Fields are not his friends, a scythe is a stepmother and good people are not neighbours for him. His friends are a dark night, a good horse, a knife of damask steel and thick forests. In *Military Song* [*Voennaia Pesnia*] (1840) his favourite instrument is a sharp knife, his comrade is an iron bayonet and his sister is a sharp sabre.

To live at home means for such a *Falcon* to waste his youth for nothing. It is not surprising because he sees being at home not as active work but as spending day and night looking out of the window (*Meditation of a Falcon* [*Duma Sokola*] 1840). To refuse a chance of leaving his home is treated like faint-heartedness or cowardice by him (*Way* [*Put'*] 1839) in spite of the fact that he has no certain idea where to go and is going to follow either a road or God's will or to go without any direction at all. He wants to experience difficulties, to try his fortune and to resist its strikes anywhere but in his own place of birth, living and working. He is ready to fight different misfortunes till his own death and even to die with joy. Only such a life is considered by him worthy of a real man.

Courage and dignity for him is a life without any duties. Such heroes do not have any cares and thoughts and have only one desire—to go around the world and to live open-heartedly, to try their daring force (*udal' silku*) on other people. In some cases Koltsov points out that such 'feats' can be equal to very risky deals (*Daring Young Man* [*Udalets*] 1837; *Rural Song* [*Selskaia Pesnia*] 1841). Plundering merchants or killing lords and stupid peasants for money could be among such deeds. But sometimes such heroes could be

big-hearted and let a priest or a landlord go untouched, or they could agree to leave such a life and to use their dashing energy for military service after a sermon by a rural priest. Such a life is full of joy and happiness, and it is not a shame for any man to do and to recollect these adventures.

Almost all daring fellows dream of such a life, the young people—in the future, the old—in the past. Some of them dare to leave their homes and experience different adventures. Those who did not are suffering the boredom of everyday existence entrapped by their common problems and feel a sort of insufficiency because they lack the will and courage to leave everything behind them and to expose themselves to the slings and arrows of fortune.

Koltsov always emphasises such features of his heroes as bravery, courage, foolhardiness, recklessness, joyfulness, and their readiness to struggle with various difficulties. But the poet also shows that often it is the hero himself who creates the obstacles which he heroically overcomes later. As a rule, all problems of his second part of life are the results of his youthful misbehaviour.

These periods of a young man's life are detailed in the songs of *Likbach Kudriavich*.² *The First Song of Likbach Kudriavich* [*Pervaia Pesnia Likbacha Kudriavicha*] (1837) describes a happy time in his young years when everything appeared to move into his hands without effort, 'at a pike's will' [*po shchuchjemu velen'ju*], and the money kept rolling in. His life whirled around like the curls of his hair, and his curls [*kudri*] could take everything they wanted either by their charms or by force. He was loved by girls and was very eloquent with them, and he sang songs from morning till night. *The Second Song of Likbach Kudriavich* [*Vtoraia Pesnia Likbacha Kudriavicha*] (1837) depicts another stage of his life, when luck and fortune left him, he is lonely and poor, is attacked by different misfortunes and needs tolerance and readiness for everything. The hero recollects his former luck and happiness, which were spent to the full but in vain. Now he is poor, dressed in shabby clothes, ashamed of his bad position and does not even want to be seen by his neighbours.³ Comprehension that his life and youth were wasted usually comes into a hero's mind when he has become prematurely weak and old and has nothing left. He understands this but still blames his youth for his current troubles (*Crossroads* [*Pereput'e*], 1840). And he again asks his youth questions about how to live and where his profit waits for him.

Similar life patterns and complaints are repeated in a *Bitter Share* [*Gor'kaia Dolia*] (1837) and in *A Rural Trouble* [*Derevenskaia Beda*] (1838). The latter depicts in details an example of 'daring behaviour' of such a fellow and his life/love story. Initially *udalets* knew and cared for nothing. He only enjoyed life with his friends, with whom he sang, danced and drank and was very wasteful. Then he fell in love with a girl but was rejected by her parents. When she married another fellow, he decided to make a fire, which besides half of the village destroyed his own house too. He became a beggar and had to work for other people complaining about his unhappy destiny. The title of this story implies that it is a quite typical case in the Russian countryside of that time.

As a rule, a daring fellow is a very sociable and communicative person but he has special preferences in his communicative practices. He prefers to spend his time with friends, who are fellows of the same sort. They live and 'work' together in forests, on big roads, or enjoy life at night. The only collective mentioned in the songs consists of these freelance men. Peasants do not have any collective at all. They do work together in the fields with families, but this is a sort of mechanical solidarity (Durkheim 1983) when everybody does the same work on his plot. They usually have some feasts together, but this is not a productive activity. There is a sort of rural community (*sel'skii mir* or *obshchina*), which is twice mentioned in Koltsov's verses, but it acts only as a moral authority approving or judging one's behaviour. A daring young man is not one who participates actively in the life of a local community. He is more an object of censure than of praise by rural authorities because he is called to its meeting against his will (*Second Song of Likbach Kudriavich*).

Inside the community, peasants have to solve their problems independently. A sad story of the *Orphan* [*Sirota*] (1830) tells about morals in the countryside. Initially his family was rich and they had a very prosperous household. They were welcomed everywhere, and relatives smiled with annoyance [*rodnia s dosadoi ulybalas'*] at their prosperity and happiness. But then after two years of draught and crop failures their household came to nothing. Parents and members of his family died and he was left alone. Nobody offered help, neither during their sufferings when his

family was alive nor when he remained alone. Relatives and neighbours avoided the orphan and he had to work for other people.

These morals seem, on the one hand, disappointing to the poet. On the other hand when he depicts a peasant milieu it seems to him quite natural that if one is poor, nobody wants to know him, if he is rich, everybody wants to be a friend, even former enemies (*To a Comrade* [*Tovaritschu*] 1838).

The poet never gives examples of altruistic friendship among peasants or of their disinterested help to each other in his poems. The world of his peasants does not know such types of relationships. What they care for is the material life and the tangible means for it. When he persuades a lazy man to awake to work in *Why do you sleep, peasant man?* one thing he promises to a peasant as a reward for his awakening is he would again be a welcomed guest for other people.

Rural heroes cannot count even on simple sympathy from their countrymen. A hero, who was left by his beloved woman, perhaps his bride, was shaken by her act to the very depth of his soul and felt very bad. He appealed to his neighbours for help, but they only made fun of him, and no course was left to him but to leave the village in an unknown direction (*Unfaithfulness of a Bride Elect* [*Izmena Suzbenoi*] 1838). A daring young man experiences an analogous situation too. When he is young and strong, lucky and joyful, he has many friends. But when he becomes aged and weak, poor and lonely, he loses all his friends, who are near only when it is possible to make risky deals or to enjoy life but not to share its difficulties. These are not the friends for hard work or to help him endure hardships of life. When the joys of life are at an end these *mighty eagles fly away* (*Longing for Will* [*Toska po Vole*] 1839) too.

Thus, neither ordinary peasants nor daring young men can count on their neighbours' or friends' help in difficult situations. The former place their hopes mainly in the saints and the Lord. Their self-esteem, self-reliance and ability to build their life are rather low. Besides the Lord and the saints, the majority of personages, even if they try to work hard, hope more for fortune or a happy chance. Daring young men prefer to rely on luck, pike's will, curls. In their failures they also blame such abstract entities as misfortune, *Grief* [*Gore*] (1839), *Bitter Share*, their youth (*Crossroads*), or a wife (*To Everyone the Talent* [*Vsiakomu Svoi Talan*] 1840) but not themselves. It is worth mentioning that *Grief* appears when the persons it targets were

making or participating in a feast. The whole world stops being a feast at this moment and life ceases to be a life worth living. This view of life as a feast (or as a holiday) is shared by the old man too, who advise the young fellows not to miss their chances and to enjoy life in their young years and to carouse while they are young because this is the single joyful moment in their lives (*Advice of an Old Man* {*Sovet Startsa*} 1830).

This festive mentality does not bother the poet. He is concerned with the lack of well-developed self-fulfilling and self-regulating qualities in his countrymen, which forced him to write a poem where he can speak directly on his own behalf. Its aim is to persuade his comrade that everything is possible when one works hard and believes in one's own mental and physical forces (*To a Comrade*). Koltsov passionately tells him that instead of being a labourer for other people or begging their help, it is necessary to work independently from the early morning till late in the evening. Only then happy chance will find him and will live with him. This poem is a sort of address to any of the poet's heroes, whom he really perceived as his brothers and friends. The poet speaks against folk attitudes to happiness and success as independent of human efforts. He insists that fortune helps only those who work unceasingly and thereby are more ready to meet a happy chance than those who work from time to time or those who do not work at all.

This is a rare case in Koltsov's songs where he clearly speaks out in favour of the individual work efforts of his heroes.⁴ A bigger part of his poetry is devoted to the daring young fellow who does not care much about work or prefers a night job with his friends. But eventually evil fate crops the wings of the falcon. He has to come down to earth usually lonely and poor and begins to think about a stable and calm life and to look for constant shelter and a happy marriage.

Fine fellows and fair girls

Various types of rural men have different attitudes to women and courtship models. Usually the fellows in the songs are in love with a girl. In such case a fine fellow wants to marry but his poverty is the main obstacle for getting permission from a girl's parents. Several behavioural patterns are then possible. The best and the most reasonable and reliable is represented in *Pavel's*

Marriage [*Zhenit'ba Pavla*] (1836). Here the hero knows in advance that he will need money for marriage and for a future family life. In spite of having many rivals, he stops his courtship and goes far away to look for a job to earn money. He succeeds, makes his proposal, and gets a positive answer and his beloved 'treasure'. The other fellow also falls in love with a fair girl but because of his poverty he gets her parents' refusal. Initially he complains traditionally about his poor lot, but then he challenges it and goes to another place to earn money to satisfy her parents' demands. The way he works and his definition as a *Scythian* make him and us sure that his dreams will come true.

But not all fellows are so successful and correct in their approaches to marriage and to girls. *Udalets* from *A Rural Trouble* chooses a more brutal way. He cannot reconcile himself to his defeat and decides to destroy everything he cannot possess. A daring lover of a young beautiful widow in *a Small Farmstead* [*Khutorok*] (1839) chooses a similar path. As a result of his jealousy, the widow's house and all her guests were lost (this story had a real precedent).

For some young men the questions surrounding marriage prove too difficult to solve. A fine fellow from the *Russian Song* (12/06/1840) falls in love with a girl and thinks hard about how to live together, to get a house of their own and to earn money to live on, but he cannot find a solution. The other fellows cheat their girls and prefer to marry wealthy widows (*Russian Song* 02/11/1839) or heiresses rather than to follow their feelings (*To Everyone the Talent*). But such marriages of convenience or following their friends' advice do not bring them luck. Unhappy marriage finally leads to household destruction in these cases too.

Only a 'true' *udalets*, or *falcon*, does not think about marriage, and girls are not among his priorities. Even to marry a beloved girl, to stay with her, to earn money for their own home and to devote himself to family and work means ruin for himself (*Russian Song* [*Russkaia Pesnia*] 1840) and brings about a lot of hesitations. To live in a father's home, to work, to lead a household together with his wife is not profitable for him and is the last possible way out when all others are closed and he has nowhere to go (*Crossroads*). He takes family as bondage, and stable relations with women are incompatible with his free will life. During his 'golden years' such a fellow had no problems with women: girls loved him but they existed somewhere at the margins of his world and did not compose

his intimate circle. His closest friends in the best period of his life were other males. When such a daring man decides to enter military service, he says goodbye to his parents, to a best male friend [*milyi drug*] and to the steppe and the forest, but not to his wife or to a girl (*Military Song*).

The 'classic' daring man has his recollections about women in winter (*Russian Song* 02/05/1841), when he looks for rest or shelter, or when his fortune betrayed him and his male friends, with whom he enjoyed life, have left him. A girl's love for him is a substitute for what he lacks in the moment: warmth, friends, luck, or it is a means of defence or consolation, when he experiences some difficulties (*Russian Song*, 1838). In any case love of a fair girl is never the supreme value of any typical daring fellow and this is always free will.

Traditional vs. marginal masculinity

A brief overview of Koltsov's male heroes' practices related to work and family given above can serve as an information basis to work with further. It demonstrates that in his poetry there is a whole gallery of male characters who differ in their attitudes to the main existential problems—work, marriage, and love and their modes of existence are also very different. According to Martin Heidegger (1962), the 'essence' of being there lies in its existence. A mode of existence is determined by different practices people busy themselves with in their everyday life. An average everyday worldhood has three basic characteristics, which determine its content. They are (1) a set of technical equipment, which presupposes (2) a set of certain skills necessary for handling these tools and for achieving (3) certain practical purposes. These basic elements shape a definite social space, and the whole of society can be viewed as an aggregate of the plurality of these spaces, which reveal their meanings only through practices (Heidegger 1962, 97–98). They determine the identities of those people involved in these practices. Heidegger argues that to define one's identity is, therefore possible only through one's activities. That is why in order to reconstruct the identities of Koltsov's heroes and heroines it is necessary to determine the practices which are the most typical for them and to classify them according to the set of activities they were engaged in represented in poems.

Table 1. The main types of Koltsov's heroes and their relations to different practices and to their elements mentioned in his songs

| Heroes | Practices and their elements | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Tools of their work and objects heroes deal with | Places where heroes act | Practices of heroes | Attitudes of heroes to work | Attitudes of heroes to family and love |
| Fine fellow [molodets] (<i>Scyther, Pavel's Marriage</i>) | scythe, sickle, harrow, plough, goods, money, women clothes as gifts | home, household, field, other people's house-hold | highly skilled in any rural job and in other activities, able to save money for the sake of marriage, spends money on his bride | loves to work and is good at it, works with joy, works to earn money to marry | loving courting, making gifts, asking to marry, marrying |
| Peasant (<i>The Song of a Ploughman, Crop, Scyther, A Rural Feast, Meditation of a Peasant</i>) | plough, scythe, sickle, harrow, haystack, sheaves, shocks, wagons, carts, barn, corn, ear, rye, threshing-floor, tableware, icon, candle | day and light, field, household, home | ploughing, sowing, mowing, threshing, reaping, etc. alone or with families, talking, thinking and dreaming about a future crop, praying, making feasts after gathering harvest, drinking, trading, paying duties | works with pleasure (joy) or with a sense of duty for others (relatives), or for the sake of the family, hopes for help of the Lord and of the saints | family is not accentuated but implied, except for the <i>Scyther</i> and <i>Pavel</i> who work to earn money for their marriages |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Daring young man [udalets] <i>(Daring young man, Way, Meditation of a Falcon, Rural Song, The Songs of Likbach Kudriavich, Crossroads, A Rural Trouble, A Small Farmstead, Longing for Will)</i> | horse, knife of damask steel, good horse, curls | night, dark forest, road, storm, wind, clouds, etc. | doing everything successfully, charming with curls, singing, dancing, speaking, enjoying life, drinking, loving passionately, wasting money, spending time joyfully with friends, carousing, burning houses, robbing people, using force, sitting and looking out of the window, thinking, dreaming, meditating, complaining, begging, working for other people, visiting church, fighting enemies | any rural job is not for him, hopes for fortune, curls, happy chance, pike's will, etc. | male company of friends, no family, lonely life, love-courtship-refusal, occasional passionate love out of wedlock, jealous |
| Soldier <i>(Military song)</i> | bayonet-comrade, sabre-sister, trumpet | foreign countries | fighting, war is like a feast, fighting is equal to carousing | is ready to die for the sake of his homeland or tsar | no family or girlfriend |
| Lazy peasant [muzhichok] <i>(Why do you sleep, peasant man?)</i> | nothing left except for many debts | entire house-hold is in deep decline | sleeping | | no family or girlfriend |

The results of this classifying and systematising approach are summarised in the table below. In the first column are names of heroes and verses. The second column enumerates objects and tools personages are usually mentioned with. The third one lists places and environments where these people acted or which were mentioned in their thoughts, dreams, etc. The fourth gives examples of practices the heroes were engaged in or were telling about as very probable or desirable for them. The fifth column renders attitudes to work and to other practices fulfilled by heroes. This is done by determining temporal parameters of jobs (e. g., always or seldom), their modalities as desirable, dutiable or avoidable activities, etc. The last column represents practices and attitudes of heroes to the opposite sex and to marriage, love and family.

Such an approach permits the singling out of several types of males, who are clearly distinct from each other in their life strategies and tactics as also in their masculine qualities. As is clear from the table, each male type exists within a definite space which is filled with particular objects. These types, their spaces, practices and tools never overlap each other. Work-loving and hard-working peasants are represented only with various agricultural tools (plough, harrow, scythe, sickle, haystack, sheaves, shocks, wagons, carts, barn, threshing-floor, etc.). The only objects from other spaces are tableware they use during feasts and an icon and a candle they use in their rare free time. Their actions are limited to the fields where they work and to the household where they live and work. All their behavioural practices (ploughing, sowing, mowing, threshing, reaping, trading, feasting, etc.) deal with productive activities or are submitted to and/or determined by them. The same refers to their spiritual activities (thinking, dreaming, praying, etc.), which are focused only on work, its results, methods, etc.

It is worth noting that heroes identify more with their horse than with their hand-made tools. A poor peasant (*Meditation of the Peasant* [Razdumie Selianina] 1837) calls his horse *horse-ploughman* (*kon'-pakhar'*), and a ploughman also sides more with his horse than with his instruments, viewing the animal as an equal partner in his labour, and he refers to himself together with the horse as 'we' (*Song of a Ploughman*). Unlike the ploughman the horse has a name, *Sivka*, making it more individualised than its human

partner. This equalising of humans and animals as subjects of labour expresses a peasant view of their agricultural activity as a largely natural process, which depends more on natural forces and conditions than on human ones (tools, skills, organisation, knowledge, etc.).

But even among these heroes the degree of devotion to work and their stimuli to it are different. *Pavel*, who can do any work for the sake of his future wife and family, represents the best and the most achieving male type. He knows what he wants, and he succeeds for he does everything in time and properly. His masculinity can be estimated as the highest in Hofstede's term. But this is the only case in Koltsov's songs that a hero has a name, and this gives to his story a unique and individualised character. The *Scythe* represents a more generalised peasant type, whose main vocation is rural labour.⁵ He is not as over-confident, determined and purposeful as *Pavel*, sometimes he is subject to hesitation, doubts and to traditional hopes with regard to fate, but he can work and loves to work and is able to challenge external circumstances, and his perspectives for success in his private and working life seem highly probable. His level of masculinity is lower than that of *Pavel*, who has a clear and effective life strategy and tactics. Both heroes have positive attitudes toward work, which correlate with their respect for and love of their girls and responsibility for their family. The *Ploughman* is represented only through his working qualities, which are of a rather high standard. His inspiration with all working processes reveals the central position the job assumes in his life, while his other activities are not mentioned. The peasants in *Crop* are very orderly and well and timely self-organised. They have families and work together in the fields. They represent the traditional type of masculinity and suit it completely.

Their opposite pole is a sleeping peasant man who is depicted in isolation and apathy. His family is mentioned neither in his best nor in his worst years, whether because of its absence or because of the hero's full indifference to its presence. Such a type is mentioned only once, but this poem was published under such titles as '*To a Russian Fellow-Countryman*' (*Rusachku-Zemljachku*), '*To a Sleepyhead Corp-Grower*' (*K Sone-Zemledel'tsu*), '*To a Lazy Fellow*' (*Lenivtsu*) (Anikin 1984, 443) implying that the poet viewed this case as quite a typical one.

But the majority of poems is devoted to the daring young man. He is represented in different periods of his life—the brilliance of youth, a hesitating maturity and the sadness of age and approaching senility, in life and in love. Belinskii (1958) and Dobroliubov (1950) considered his image to be very typical for the Russian folk and national character. The feelings rendered in these poems, in their opinion, constitute the basis of Russian character, especially in the moments when a person lets himself go.

It is clear from the table and from the previous overview that the objects *the daring fellow* deals with and his life space and surroundings during the best period of his life have little in common with that of working peasants. The set of practices he busies himself with is very varied but he is never mentioned doing some rural job. His attitude to such jobs and to 'stupid peasants' sounds very negative. The rural community, in its turn, does not greet his behaviour with favour either. In *The First Song of Likhach Kudriavich* the poet remarks that the hero did everything he put his hand to successfully, such as playing jokes, but it is not clear what these successful activities really were with the exception of singing and chatting with girls. The poet does not articulate his productive activities nor does he judge his other feats. Soviet researchers, as a rule, also ignored his attitudes toward work and misbehaviour, or interpreted them as a sign of protest against social injustice, or explained them by the hero's poverty (Skatov 1983). But positive heroes were also poor and acted differently. Moreover, *udaloi molodets from Rural Trouble* was not poor from the beginning: he could lead a very wasteful way of life ('*po vsemy selu roskoshnichal'*) that presupposed enough means of livelihood. He became a pauper only after the fire. It means that the real reasons for his tragic story are not economic or social but psychological ones. The hero did not try to do something to change the situation either before or after receiving the refusal. The jealous hero of *A Small Farmstead* also does nothing to change the situation in his favour except for burning the house of his mistress with her guests—his rivals. Like other daring men they are not capable of methodical, rational and organised activity, depend on their affective mode and are not able to control their emotions and as a consequence, the other aspects of their lives too. Having failed, a man of such a type directs his anger at other people but not at himself. He is certainly not a man of character. For him the universal

way out of all difficulties is escape: to look for money, to forget his girl's unfaithfulness and to avoid the boredom of existence, to try his fortune and to prove his strength, etc.

As an economic type he is obviously not a toiler or an entrepreneur. He is more a consuming than producing personality and is always looking for a treasure, happiness, etc., which is waiting for him somewhere at the sea bottom or under lock and key. He hopes mainly for the intervention of some external forces rather than depending on himself. He never plans his acts in advance, whether he is experiencing happiness or grief, and he does not care about himself nor about others either. The highest values for him are free will and joy of life, which are impossible without money, and he often thinks about the gold cashbox (*zolotaia kazna*). He tries to get it but the method of hard everyday work with moderate profits is not for him. He wants to get everything at once and his impatience is fraught with serious complications. As far as he is concerned, it is impossible to say that he works to live because he tries to live without working. His orientations are hedonistic but the means of their achievement are rather passive or marginal (illegal).

As a male he feels much better without a family. A woman as a mistress and especially as a wife has a low place in his hierarchy of values. A father role model is hardly mentioned and is imagined by him only as a storyteller to his children (*Crossroads*).

In spite of his externally attractive male appearance he turns out to have the lowest masculine qualities. In fact, he is the least achieving person among the male types represented (except for the *Lazy Peasant*) and appears to have the lowest ability to influence his own future. He knows how to stand and can endure the different and severe difficulties caused by his Fate (*The Last Fight*) [*Posledniaia Bor'ba*] 1833) but he has no idea about how to solve common everyday tasks and other worldly problems in his life and in his household. By the end of his life he is usually poorer than at its beginning.

Summing up the image of this male folk hero, it is necessary to notice that he has many marginal features (economic, social, spatial, psychological): he has no property, definite position, stable duties or at least he does not like them. In spite of being a peasant by origin and sometimes (supposedly)

doing rural work, he spends the most active part of his young life somewhere outside of his rural world (*sel'skii mir*) or dreams about this. His dreams are directed to the world opposite to his home, household, and family. He is more a constant stranger than a permanent inhabitant of a certain village, a temporal worker than a persistent and economic master of his household, a passionate but remote and temporal lover rather than a devoted and faithful husband and a careful father. When he returns after his wandering years, his place is also on the margins of the rural community. In the *Second Song of Likbach Kudriavich* Koltsov places the hero literally in the rear of a peasant world: at one of the communal gatherings he stands quietly in a remote corner hidden behind the backs of other peasants because of shame for his poor position.

Among Russian interpreters of this hero, only M. Saltykov-Shchedrin (1966) paid special attention to his economic consciousness. In 1856 he wrote, in agreement with Dobroliubov, that the main folk interest was achieving material well-being. Saltykov-Shchedrin stresses as well that Koltsov expressed the other deep instincts of the Russian folk in his poems, first of all, carelessness, fatalistic faith in external forces and happy occasions, the easiness of rural labour, habits to explain everything with fortune. In the image of *Likbach Kudriavich* the writer highlights his passive sufferings, complaints and absence of any active agency. Another negative feature marked by the great satirist is the inability of the Russian man to set limits for himself, ending in debauch, unbridled gaiety, or in despair. But Saltykov-Shchedrin equates *Likbach Kudriavich* with the peasant from *Reflection of the Peasant* who works very hard during all his life. He does not go deeper into the social and political context which conditioned such negative features of the folk character and speaks about the generalised folk type which combines both positive and negative features. In this relation Koltsov is more accurate in his images than Saltykov-Shchedrin and other interpreters of his poetry because he singles out different types in their relations to work and never mixes their features in one personage. But apart from Saltykov-Shchedrin, he obviously sympathises with the type of the *daring young man*, never judges him for his actions. The poet depicts his longing for a free will and his desire to cut all bonds which hold him at home as a positive life program really worth following.

Conclusion

The textual approach to Koltsov's poems, the use of Hofstede's concept of masculinity and of Heidegger's theory of practices allow different social types of male heroes to be distinguished. These types have special sets of tools and are engaged in different practices. Their attributes never overlap each other in the poems, and this is not by chance because they differ first of all, in their attitudes toward work and this feature determines all their other characteristics and their gender identity on the whole. There are many work-centred male personages with achieving orientations, whose endeavours produce successful results. But the dominant place in Koltsov's poetry belongs to a *Daring Young Man* who does not value hard everyday rural labour, a stable life at home nor family cares. His economic consciousness is passive and consuming, on the one hand, while it is also hedonistic and fatalistic on the other. But he is obviously an object of the author's sympathy. At least the poet is indifferent to his 'economic' and moral shortcomings.

The centrality of this image in Koltsov's poetry does not necessarily mean that this type of man also dominated among the Russian peasantry. It is necessary to underline that these heroes are fictional poetic images and as such are inhabitants of the poetic world. Nevertheless, according to many authors, they represent essential features of Russian folk mentality. To what degree these assertions are true and how, why and in which direction the poet modified authentic human types will be the subject for further research. In order to explain these role personages it is necessary to use narrative, contextual, historical and other approaches because the gallery of Koltsov's heroes has its roots not only in his imagination and in folklore but also in the poet's biography, milieu and in the broader social and political context. Koltsov as a poet articulated the practices of these daring men (their thoughts and patterns of behaviour), and by doing so, he made possible their normative expression and dissemination in literate society. Moreover, he also reconfigured them: in his poetic world he gave them a central significance instead of the marginal position they had occupied at the time in the Russian countryside.

Having been articulated and reconfigured, these images acquired an autonomous existence, made their entry into Russian cultural and social life and began to influence it in their turn, and we can trace their features in the attitudes of revolutionaries, the intelligentsia and even in some contemporary Russian labourers. The new configuration of practices promotes the appearance of a new hierarchy of the system of values (Spinosa et al. 1997), which was later developed in the course of historical events in Russia and is partly responsible for the contemporary state of the work-related values in it.

Notes

- ¹ About 300 composers addressed Koltsov's poetry and more than 700 songs were written on his poems (Anikin 1988, 10).
- ² The name *Likbakh Kudriavich* has a symbolic character and does not exist in reality. *Likbakh* means a person with certain traits of a character—who is predominantly daring or dashing [*likhoi*]. *Kudriavich* points to the curly hair as the characteristic feature of his appearance. This name bears elements of the general folk character (Skatov 1983, 61).
- ³ Soviet researchers characterised this image as a typical picture of a poor peasant in general (Vronskaja 1960).
- ⁴ However, it was enough for Soviet researchers to blame Koltsov for weakness and inconsistency of his ideology. For Soviet interpreters it was impossible to rely only on one's own individual labour efforts as a means for building a rational and happy life because such orientation meant ignoring social struggle and social reconstruction (Mikhailovskaja 1960).
- ⁵ It is not by chance that these positive heroes are called by their names or by their professions. This fact highlights either their special social status or their individuality. *Udaloi molodets*, or *udalets*, or *falcon* has no certain social group to be identified with and he also has no name just like other personages. It means that they are either common for all social groups or represent a very typical social type. It refers to the other personages, who usually have no names and are not individualised. They are not *this or that* man, peasant or girl, but *a man in general, a peasant in general, a girl in general* (Skatov 1983, 60).

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