

Janusz Krzywicki
THE EQUIVALENCE OF THE BABIRA (ZAIRE)
WORLDVIEW AND DIDACTIC STORY
STRUCTURE

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In semiotic dissertations an issue is often brought up about the relationships between the complex linguistic discourse — a literary text — and the contents which, included in the text, cannot be extracted from the text with the linguistic mechanisms we know. In the case of narrative prose, the issue is all the more (differently) complex than in, say, lyrical work, in that the elements of the piece neither overlap with the elements which are possible to separate by linguistic categories nor are in any obvious ways implied by their combinations. It has not seemed possible so far for any intersentential relationships analysis to be able to find a transition from a linguistic form of narration to the phenomena as complex as character, plot setting etc. Moreover, unlike in other kinds of discourse, in narration we do not only deal with a static structure of a text but also with a deeply-motivated "occurrence" of things; what matters here is not only some fixed relationships between the elements, but also what undergoes transformation as a result of such an "occurrence." The investigation into this sphere of meanings requires a reference to such elements of culture, whose ties with language are not yet clear to us, and which we will term "world outlook," "value system," etc.

Without trying to resolve the many theoretical difficulties that appear in the semiotic analysis of narrative pieces, I should like to share some observations concerning folk stories of an African tribe. These observations

shed new light on a type of relations between narrative prose and the totality of the culture in which it functions.

The present analysis of the structure of the story will include two of its aspects: 1. manners of the categorization of phenomena, proper to stories, 2. a set of rules determining the sequence of the phenomena reported in these stories. The method of investigating the structure will be in a way similar to the one which W. Propp proposed in the *Morphology of the Folktale* (Propp 1968). Like he did, so do we assume a possibility of investigating the structure [of a "folktale"]¹ conforming to the rules of the temporal sequence of the events reported in the text. The purposes of this analysis are different, though: if Propp set out to find such a method of investigating the structure of text that would allow a general classification of folktales and generate new prospects for the comparative study of "folktales" coming from different, culturally remote areas, our task has been to investigate the interdependencies between the culture of the society and the tales passed round in that society. So, although in both cases the basis for the investigation of the component parts of the text is the search for general categories that allow the treatment of the plot as a repetitive sequence of elements bound up by stable rules, the way these elements are singled out is different: in his analysis Propp sought to establish the tiniest repetitive elements; we will identify various levels of analysis that allow for the decoding of various mechanisms that are proper to the worldview of the Babira community.

The relations of the time sequence that bind the elements of the plot will be treated as an implication relation in the intentions of the Babira, whereas the same categories of events will be reported in an undistorted order in stories of the same type. The nature of the implication relation will remain indefinite for us, as its analysis goes beyond the possibilities that the material gathered — literary fiction above all — provides us with. Therefore, it will not be subject of inquiry whether the relation is one of cause and effect or of action-reaction, etc., but it will suffice to state that what we are dealing with is possibly a partly unconscious intention of causing a conviction on the part of the reader that some categories of phenomena entail others. Since in an analysis of a story I will rely on repetitive phenomena only and eliminate whatever is random and singular, it ought to be supposed that I will be able to treat the mechanisms thus arising that govern the sequence of categories

¹Any folk narratives based on literary fiction will be called "stories" here. W. Propp uses the term "skazka" in a very similar meaning, but I prefer to avoid the corresponding word "bajka" for the association with literary fables this word evokes in Polish.

occurring in folk tales as the equivalents of selected mechanisms perceived by the Babira in reality as properties of their culture.

Among the texts collected from the informants who were older than 40 years of age, there is a large selection that enable the recognition of two parts of the structure: the first one represents behaviour contrary to traditional norms; the other — the negative consequences of these actions. In all cases, the consequences of this are borne above all by the person who breaks social rules, with the source of the consequences being supernatural. These could then be interpreted as tokens of the existence of an order other than human, which a human community is subjected to and which the system of behavior norms, passed from one generation to the next, is connected with. These types of stories will be called didactic stories.

The compositional principle signaled here is illustrated by the first part of scheme 1 and the second part of scheme 2. In the story presented in the former, we have to do with a double violation of traditional norms of comportment. First, it is a violation of norm to demand a compensation for something that one has donated to someone. Second, taking possession of an unburied dead human body is an obvious contradiction of the traditional custom which imposes a sequence of a long series of mourning ceremonies, lasting a month or longer in the Babira community. Failure to observe some of these puts the spirit of the dead person in jeopardy as it may wonder and do evil things to the living. The girl's burning is an initial manifestation of this activity. Further symptoms are illustrated by the second part of the scheme where the mushrooms collected at the burial site cannot be cooked as fire opposes the cooking. These mushrooms appear to make the mindless cursing by a woman come literally true and her whole family die (this is suggested by the family raising from the dead after these were thrown away and a magical procedure was performed by the daughter). The actions by the daughter restore the initial order in the second part of the text. As we see, in this story we are dealing with two heterogeneous text parts, only linked by the theme of mushroom. The context seems to imply that the latter is a carrier of the dangerous powers of *Bàgili* (spirits). The first of the two parts has a two-part structure (norm breaking and the consequences). There are two parts too in the structure of the second part, but these are different in that the manifestation of the activity of supernatural powers (*Bàgili*) destroys the existing order and this is opposed by man.

Scheme 1 *Dèmanâga shèyO*

1. A girl called <i>Dèmanâga shèyO</i> is weeding her grandmother's field.	the initial equilibrium
2. The girl kills a rat, and it is then abducted by a hawk. The hawk brings down an egg, which the woman breaks. A woman draws water for the girl, the girl gives water to the smiths and extorts an ax from them. She gives the ax to a woodpecker and she wheedles some honey from it. She gives the honey to fishermen and wheedles some fish from them. Then she gives the fish to the harvesters but wangles some goose-grass, which she then gives to shepherds. She manages to get a cow from them and gives it to the mourners but, in exchange, swingles a corpse from them.	a breach of order
3. The corpse makes it impossible for the girl to escape from a burning field. The girl gets burned down alongside the corpse.	the restoration of order
4. Mushrooms grow in the place of incineration.	the connector
5. A woman picks mushrooms, but when she tries to cook them, fire will not ignite. When the woman's sons and then the husband want to fuel the fire, the fire directs verbal abuse at them. The woman curses the husband and sons and they all die.	a breach of order
6. A daughter, living in a different village, throws the mushrooms away and performs a magical procedure. The whole family rise from the dead and the mushroom returns to the place where it once grew.	the restoration of order

The story presented in scheme 2 has a different composition. The starting point is a breach of order by supernatural powers unknown to man (represented by a bird), which is opposed by an individual. The second part is a breach of the norm and its consequences. Other than disobedience to the husband, which is a breach of traditional norms, we are dealing here with a breach of a traditional ban on women to eat meat and fatty foods until they get pregnant for the first time. It is claimed that failure to observe this injunction puts man in danger of eating human flesh and thus becoming indebted to the *Balèmba* — people who are in touch with the ghosts and "eat human flesh." The repayment of this debt means one has to kill someone from one's local tribal group, and thus it poses a danger to the community.

Scheme 2 *Mbôho nà mbòlo* (A man and a bird)

1. A man plows a field	initial equilibrium
2. A bird arrives whose chirping makes grass grow again. The field overgrows, man plows it anew, the bird comes and the field overgrows again.	breach of order
3. The man kills the bird.	restoration of order
4. He brings the bird to his wife, has it cooked but forbids her to taste the sauce.	establishment of a ban
5. The wife tastes the sauce.	breach of order
6. The bird is reborn and flies away.*	restoration of order

The greatest element of the structure of the story, useful for this analysis, is the sequence of the two parts that are about the breach of the order and its restoration (if not objective, then at least subjective: the guilty bearing the consequences of their actions, and either being physically annihilated or being taught a lesson that prevents the error recurring in the future). Such a two-part sequence can be an independent story or — as in the schemes presented — can be linked with a second part, also resting on the same principle. In a large number of cases, a regularity can be observed that is illustrated in Table 1:

	Breach of order	Restoration of order
A	By an individual or (exceptionally) by a group	By supernatural powers
B	By supernatural powers	By an individual or group

Without accounting for all possible combinations, this table rather generally delineates the sphere of the Babira culture which the stories thus composed pertain to: their main point is to tie human actions to the supernatural world order. The symmetry of this scheme, and actually the regularity it expresses, suggest there being an opposition in the Babira world outlook between man (or group) on the one hand, and what has here been termed "supernatural powers," on the other. The activity of the two poles is bidirectional, with the ideal state, as perceived by the community, being some sort of equilibrium, expressed in a normal unshaken course of life. The Babira beliefs imply that this equilibrium does not come about by itself. Its

attainment requires, on the one hand, the performance of a series of ritual procedures seeking the favors of the supernatural powers or those that would counteract these powers, and on the other, refraining from any activities that might weaken the group or be a pretext for activities to surface that would be disadvantageous for the group. One of the very important elements of equilibrium is a social order, that is, in the first place the observance of the rules of behavior. A breach of an injunction is a factor that destroys the order — anyway it is a potential breach of the state that is beneficial for people and thus a dangerous factor. A perturbation of the equilibrium can also be a manifestation of the activity of "supernatural powers," though, rather than just some mistakes in human comportment. The group then tries to counteract the breach of equilibrium by all available means. In the stories, the group always comes out victorious from such situations.

The vague term "supernatural powers" is used here on purpose as these are rather indefinite in the Babira stories. In the text demonstrated in Scheme 1, the word *ngili* does not appear. Still, as far as I know, the word for the mushroom, *sèngèlèbe*, has no particular meaning in the Bira culture and, taken out of context, the word simply means a small mushroom with a thin stem, occurring in groups and often eaten; it brings no associations with any supernatural powers. It is only the presence of the corpse that has not been buried along with the accepted ritual that justifies the role which this mushroom plays in the story, and then only very general knowledge of the Babira beliefs enables one to understand it. Also, in the many versions of the story of the bird and the farmer, the bird is called by the very general term *mbòlo* (bird) or, in one instance, the name of the species (*makètiki*), and its special meaning in the text does not have any clear cultural rationale. The supernatural powers may thus be represented in stories in an allegorical manner by various unusual phenomena, most commonly destructive. It is possible, though, to roughly establish a domain in the Bira culture that would generally correspond to "supernatural powers." Mbali (*mbàlè*), the transcendental Creator, is a power of the sort for sure; in ways only he understands, he intervenes in the life of the group. Others include *Bàgili* (spirits), *leha calò* (dusk), being the moment these become active, as well as *lèmbà*, which can directly be interpreted as a manifestation of their activity.

The *Bàgili* appear in numerous stories, and they take a special place in these. Their attributes are the same as the interviewed Babira ascribe to *Balèmbà*. In the first place, they devour people; they might be killed, through which we tend to attribute a material nature to them.² It is possible to

²The nature of both these characters and any other spirits is indefinite and it is

distinguish between two separate categories. The first of these comprises the figures called *nka gili* (wolverine);³ werewolves are not humans, but they can take human shapes. The other category refers to human characters that "eat people;" they are usually akin or related to their victims, and although the word *lèmbà* never appears in these stories, apparently it is *lèmbà* that seems to be the right domain for their activity. Different interpretations of the two categories of *Bàgili* are clearly reflected in the structure of the stories. An intervention of a werewolf is always preceded by the future victim violating the laws that govern the human and supernatural world. In the fight against werewolves, human beings are helpless unless assisted by animals and other non-human forces. It is not so with the characters that practice *lèmbà*: their intervention does not imply any guilt on the part of the victim, and once their activity is detected, they are punished with death by the family that has been harmed.

As we can see, in the Babira stories one can see a reflection of the belief in indefinite supernatural powers, which in some cases we can relate to the known categories of the supernatural powers occurring in the Babira culture (*Bàgili*, *lèmbà* and black magic). However, we do not find a reflection of a special place that the spirits of the deceased occupy in the beliefs of the Babira, and we find no rituals meant to enlist their favors. For obvious reasons, the belief in the Sakana is not reflected in those stories either: his cult only brought together adult males in some secret societies.

As noted above, the table falls short of mentioning all possible combinations that occur in the stories discussed here. Moreover, four categories have been introduced into it: two kinds of actions and two kinds of active subjects seem — in the context of the deliberations on the *Bàgili* — insufficient to fully describe the structure of the story. We have noticed the mechanisms which, in a more detailed way, regulate the sequence of events

rather likely that the death of *nka gili* is just a symbolic representation of the total victory over an evil spirit (werewolf) and cannot be treated as a token of their materiality. At any rate, there are no grounds for a belief that the Babira make a distinction between the material and the spiritual in the same ways as is done in the European culture.

³Making a terminological distinction between various kinds of *Bàgili*, introduced to achieve a better clarity of discourse, might be misleading as it markedly separates what in the Babira language is either vaguely distinct or not distinct at all. The term *ngili* (plural: *Bàgili*) can mean a spirit of an ancestor as well as any evil spirit, but also someone practising *lèmbà*. It can also refer to other non-natural phenomena: in one story a gluttonous woman has a tail growing: thus she becomes *ngili*, but then becomes human again after her tail is cut.

that are reported in the texts and thus determine the necessary relations in the stories' represented world. Considering the issue of the compatibility of mechanisms noticed in the stories with the world outlook proper to the Babira culture, no general thought was devoted as to what the texts investigated mean within the culture where they are passed on and how the transfer of meanings is possible within them; it is the (even approximate) answer to these questions, though, that ought to give us a key to a fuller elucidation of the issues discussed here.

In the texts investigated, like in any literary texts, the original code is the natural code of the language in which the texts are written, i.e. Kibira. From the standpoint that is of interest to us, we can assume, though thus simplifying the interpretative mechanism, that the original meaning of the text is some plot — a sequence of interrelated events concerning a group of characters. A number of functions that the story performs seem to correspond to this original interpretative level: making the evenings spent around bonfires more pleasant, calming down children before sleep, etc. These functions imply one of the most basic requirements put before stories: above all, they need to be entertaining and grasp the attention of the listeners. The storyteller tries to satisfy this requirement by means of some stylistic procedures, dramatizing the text, voice modulation, gestures, etc. Depending on the resourcefulness of the speaker, these procedures, which can alter each time the story is told, are to a large extent improvised, but some of them can be permanently pegged to some plots. In the transmission of the story, their role is *ad hoc* and they are usually forgotten in the course of the story's development. What very seldom changes is the essential scheme of the plot, and this is the main addressee of the requirement of compliance with tradition. It perpetuates in the memory of the listeners by the very fact of its immutability in the many variants of the story man encounters in their lifetime. It also contains the essential didactic message, which the listener may generalize to a larger or smaller extent, depending on how sophisticated they are, and treat as a specific occurrence, typical occurrence or a message concerning the unchanging and necessary mechanisms that govern the world. The way the text is received may then be about the perception of single facts, unrelated to one another or perceiving (through individual facts) the whole categories of phenomena, associated with one another by some lasting rules. In the case of the story presented in scheme 2, the events making up the second part of the plot may be comprehended at four levels:

1. behavioral (tasting the sauce — the flight of the bird),

2. axiological-particular (disobedience to husband — negative impact of supernatural powers),
3. axiological-generalized (breach of norm — negative consequences),
4. cosmological (breaking-restoring the equilibrium).

The four levels of comprehension correspond to four detectable ways of generalizing the mechanism governing the phenomena presented in the text. In reality, there can be more because (disregarding the possibility of bequeathing a completely different sense on the events) there are intermediate levels between the levels 1 and 2, 2 and 3, etc. It is also extremely difficult to determine the part of consciousness in the perception of the relationships between the events reported in the text. Probably, conscious reception rarely goes above level 2, with level 4 attainable only intuitively. Along level 2, in each case the sense of the story is explained by the narrators, who were asked to do so. Importantly, the story performs a didactic function only when level 2 or higher is achieved by the listener at least intuitively. However, it is not level 2 but levels 3 and 4 that add up to form the rules to which the way of associating the events in all the stories presented here as didactic is subjected.

So far I have used the level 4 of generalization, the highest one perceptible to us. This enabled me to demonstrate the compatibility of the mechanisms that govern the story with the mechanisms we find in the worldview characteristic of the traditional Babira culture. One could expect that other, more detailed mechanisms will also be subordinated to the laws pertinent not only to the very story but also to the worldview that the Babira represented or sought to transmit to the addressees: women, children, youths. The following deliberations will focus on the level 3 of generalization as it seems useful for the establishment of the storys' structure elements of interest to us.

When we state that the comprehension of the text does not end with the *signifié* of the natural linguistic code, but that a given set of *signifiés* means something more than a simple sum total of the meanings of words and sentences would indicate (refers to some categories of phenomena), and when we also seek permanent relationships between those "second order" meanings, we assume the existence of a secondary code in didactic stories, where interesting contents are inscribed that have a vital cultural significance. The following then sets out to analyze this code, treating it as a peculiar "language" of the didactic stories.

A contrastive analysis of all texts of interest here allows for the determining of the following categories of phenomena, which are at the same time a set of elements of a hypothetical "language:"

A — human actions incompatible with norms (*kèzèrà*, *nginyo*, other behavior condemned by the community);

B — defensive actions undertaken, also with allies;⁴

C — the activities of *Bàgìli*, excluding *lèmbà* (in the stories, these are always directed against people);

D — *lèmbà* and black magic;

E — the activity of supernatural powers other than *Bàgìli* (in stories — always targeting people).

The rules governing the association of these elements of "language" into sentences may be understood as the aforementioned rules of temporal sequence (in this attempt at their formalization, the relation of temporal sequence is represented by the symbol 'n'):

1. $\Pi_A [A \ n \ (B \vee \ C \vee \ E)]$

2. $(\overline{A \ n \ E}) \rightarrow (E \ n \ B)$

3. $\Pi_C (C \ n \ B)$

4. $\Pi_D (D \ n \ B)$

To express the relationship of temporal sequence in full sentences, we can say that:

1. every breach of norm entails a counteraction of people or the activity of supernatural powers (but not *lèmbà*) targeting people;
2. unless the activity of supernatural powers against people is caused by these people breaking norms, the people oppose this activity;
3. people oppose every activity of *Bàgìli* that adversely targets people;
4. every activity that may be interpreted as *lèmbà* or black magic entails a human defensive reaction.

⁴In several cases, man's ally is a toad, in one case — an indefinite character living in a *ngìli's* cottage. A toad is the only personified animal that I have encountered in older-generation didactic stories. Its role is slightly puzzling in didactic stories as the way it acts is characteristic of humorous stories, structurally different. An ally appears in the sequence *A n B n C* only.

It needs to be stressed that the sentences by means of which these rules have been formulated are also statements that are fully in line with our knowledge of the Babira culture. The "language" of the stories, based on the five categories of phenomena and four rules of their association discussed here, is very limited and allows the formulation of just 5 sensible sentences (in terms of code). The "sentences" are also fully compatible with what is known about the mindset characteristic of the Babira culture:

1. $A n B$ (breaking a norm entails a defensive reaction by people);
2. $A n C n B$ (breaking a norm entails the intervention of the *Bàgìli*, which in turn causes a defensive reaction of the people and their allies);
3. $A n E$ (breaking a norm entails a reaction by unidentified supernatural powers);
4. $F n B$ (the intervention of unidentified supernatural powers entails a defensive reaction by people);
5. $D n B$ (symptoms of *lèmbà* entail a human defensive reaction).

All the five combinations of elements are indeed found in the material collected. So, these indeed make up the list of really occurring combinations, repeated in the didactic stories passed down to us by some Babira elderly, if we allow these combinations to merge into sentences consisting of "coordinate clauses." It then takes a connector ("conjunction") — an event that belongs to none of the categories that have been introduced here. In the story presented in Scheme 1, we have to make do with a combination ($A n E$) + ($E n B$), and in the story presented in Scheme 2 — ($E n B$) + ($A n E$). Moreover, at the beginning of each story, an initial equilibrium is presented before it is shaken by one of the factors A , C , D or E .

If we compare the five possible combinations of elements ("sentences" that are sensible from the perspective of the rules governing the secondary code investigated here) with table 1, we will see that it has been enriched by making the category of "supernatural powers" more detailed and that two combinations of elements have been introduced, which the table did not include: $A n B$ (breaking a norm entails a defensive reaction by people) and the three-part construct $A n C n B$ (breaking a norm entails the intervention of the *Bàgìli*, which in turn causes a defensive reaction of the people and their allies). The table thus supplemented looks like this:

Table 2

Breach of equilibrium	Restoration of equilibrium
Breach of norm by man ↓ →	Intervention by non-human powers
<i>Bàgìli</i> intervention →	Defensive action by humans and their allies
<i>Lèmbà</i> and black magic →	
Intervention by unidentified non-human powers →	

As noted above, some elements of the worldview never appear in folktales. The relationship of the world represented in the stories, to the world outlook characteristic of the Babira culture cannot be reduced to the former being fragmentary in relation to the latter. The model of the world, hidden behind the mechanisms ruling the stories is not only a simplified model of the real world, but it constitutes a kind of its transformation, apparently resulting from the basic didactic function these stories serve. The transformation is visible if we reckon with the second rather than the third level of text comprehension introduced here. In most general terms, it consists in expanding the scope of operation of the mechanisms that are really present in the Babira cosmology. The Babira commonly believe in a supernatural sanction regarding some of the norms only (prohibition to kill or even touch some animals). This sanction, however, is absent from the ban on girls and young women eating meat. The Babira asked about the consequences of breaking the ban, were mainly mentioning the negative social effects (a depreciation of the girl, problems getting her a husband, sending her back to the family and a demand for the marital payment to be refunded if the girl was already in her husband's home). A rational justification for the ban was that the woman who cannot resist the temptation to eat meat not meant for her, is more at risk of accidentally eating human flesh than others, which always entails her being involved with *Balèmbà* and the group being put at risk. Only one of the texts I know of reflects this justification, but only in very general terms: a woman eats meat that was not meant for her; so a tail grows from her and, as a consequence of that according to the narrator, she becomes *ngìli* (again, to the Babira *lèmbà* supposedly is associated with *Bàgìli* even though it is not treated as a direct consequence of their activity). In all remaining texts where eating meat in contradiction to accepted norms is reported, we have to make do with a number of supernatural sanctions, unrelated to *lèmbà*.

Indeed, what is relevant in the stories is not some particular punishment for some particular offense, but the very association of a norm (whatever it is) with any — but always severe — punishment. The norm is an absolute value here. There are texts that report highly deplorable consequences of breaking norms that are unknown in the present Babira culture, such as a ban on addressing a man by his first name which, moreover,

would apply to wives rather than mothers or sisters.

Evidently, the first two of the story comprehension levels identified here need not — even if they may — lead to conclusions compatible with the worldview characteristic for the Babira culture, but the second comprehension level usually conforms to the intention of the storyteller and makes it possible for the story to perform the basic didactic function at least in those cases where the norm, broken in the story, is true in the community where the text is circulated. The basic didactic function is about the perpetuation in the psyche of the listener of the attitude of conforming to norms by way of these being linked to dangerous sanctions, even if those are not recognized by the narrators themselves. In the semantic layer, the stories are mainly addressed to children and youths, i.e. to this part of the community which has not been initiated into the arcana that only adult males are familiar with.

Behind this universally accessible layer of meaning, there is another one, though, which perhaps even the narrators can hardly be aware of. It is formed by the code of the didactic stories which has been discovered to contain within itself a model of the world; more than that, it constitutes such a model, coherent within itself, simplified but corroborated by ethnographers' attempts to systematize the Babira beliefs and by the information gathered by myself.⁵ It contains a general outline of the relations in which a human individual and a social group are implicated.

The manner of interpretation of Babira didactic stories does not account for the totality of the meanings found in the texts of interest to us. The paper focused on an attempt to detect the meanings contained in a narrowly understood structure of the text, whose definition was provided at the beginning of the paper. Investigation of the symbols included in the texts and the analysis of other possible secondary codes they contain, not necessarily based on the temporal sequence relation, would require separate studies.

The above analysis concerned the texts of didactic stories only — those whose connection with the official worldview is the strongest. However, it is possible to perform such an operation on humorous texts, as well. The categories subjected to constant rules of temporal sequence will be different then, and so will be the secondary code and interpretations. The ties that

⁵The literature on the Babira is rather scarce. Constance Marie (1947) in *Babira: Essai d'Adaptation* and H. van Geluwe (1956) in *Les Bira et les peuples limitrophes* touch upon the issues of their beliefs. I have also used the unpublished typescript of Sister Carmela, titled *La vie su Bira*.

bring together humorous stories with the totality of the culture will be more complex and ambiguous then, but even in that case, the description of the secondary code of the story can be made by means of a set of sentences taken from the Babira culture.

It needs to be realized, though, that the reconstruction of the code reflecting the elements of the worldview is relatively easy in the case of a closed landlocked tribal culture, betraying a high degree of integration (this analysis has been based on accounts coming from people aged 40 or above, that is, still deeply involved in traditional culture). This task would be very difficult, and maybe unfeasible, when it comes to cultures that are open and dynamic, where literary tradition is far more complex and reflects a number of totally different, highly individualized worldviews.

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