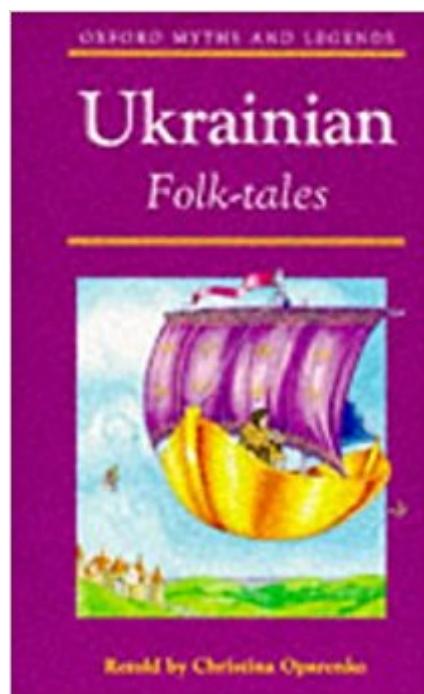


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Ukrainian Folk-tales (Oxford Myths And Legends)



Synopsis

This book celebrates the heritage of the Ukraine, as that country regains its identity as an individual nation. Here you will find tales of the cat who saved the rooster from the clutches of the vixen, the runaway bun who wouldn't be eaten, Mr Kotsky, the fiercest animal in the forest, and many more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A charming collection of traditional folk and fairy tales."--Come-All-Ye

I love Ukrainian Folk-tales. I really enjoyed reading this book. I learned a lot about Ukrainian culture and customs. Thank you very much.

A folk tale has been described as a short story that comes from oral tradition. Folk tales often deal with everyday life and characters are animals with human characteristics. The first publication of Ukrainian oral folklore was at the beginning of the 19th century; by the 20th century, an impressive number of folkloric collections and studies were produced in Western Ukraine. Ivan Franko wrote numerous articles on folk oral traditions and a six-volume edition of Ukrainian proverbs. During this period, Volodymyr Hnatiuk was the most productive ethnographer and folklorist. Visit the website of the Encyclopedia of Ukraine for an in-depth explanation of Ukrainian folklore. Ukrainian Folk-tales was published in 1996 by Oxford University Press (the largest university press in the world) as part

of the Oxford Myths and Legends series, which includes the following paperback editions: African, Armenian, Chinese, English, French, German, Hungarian, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Norse, Persian, Russian, Scandinavian, Scottish, Turkish, Ukrainian, West African, West Indian, The Iliad, The Odyssey, and Gods and Men. Cover illustrations by Miranda Gray depict on the front a colorful illustration from the folktale, The Ship That Flew, and on the back a colorful illustration from the folktale, The Glass Mountain. One caveat/point of correction regarding the back cover which states, in part: "This collection celebrates the great story-telling (sic) tradition of the (sic) Ukraine." This book is copyrighted 1996; Ukraine gained independence on August 24, 1991. Reference to Ukraine should correctly have been made to "Ukraine" (one word) and not to "the Ukraine" (two words). The phrase "the Ukraine" should read as one word "Ukraine." This error may take decades to correct, but a public platform such as this (with its vast audience) is ideal for the edification of people, which is why I point it out here. An explanation appeared in Arnold Berke's article "Ukrainian Dawn," *Historic Preservation*, March/April, 1993, pp. 31-32: "Ukraine is a new country but an old nation--a fact often lost on foreigners, who remain largely ignorant of this land of fifty-two million people, Europe's second largest in area after Russia. Ukraine to them has always been "the" Ukraine--no more than a region of its powerful northern neighbor, Russia--and Ukrainian culture a mere variation on the Russian national theme. Russians used to call Ukraine "Little Russia," a sobriquet that Tchaikovsky's Second Symphony earned for its use of Ukrainian folk themes. Even the Ukrainian language was downgraded as a dialect of Russian, although Ukrainian differs from Russian as much as does Polish." The nineteen Ukrainian folk tales within the 160 pages of *Ukrainian Folk-tales* are retold in an engaging/enthralling manner by Christina Oparenko, who originally heard them from her Ukrainian grandmother. Oparenko relates that in ancient times, since people often could neither read nor afford to buy books, the learning process often took place by means of repetition--and, it was thus that folktales developed. Folktales weren't only used to amuse children, they were used to help people remember bits of history, to explain why people behaved in certain ways, to give rules for living in a community, or to include other information that the storyteller thought should be passed on. Following the engaging, educational Ukrainian folktales, is a Notes section. Since the first folktale is entitled, The Wise Tsarina, the first note aptly references the word "Tsarina"--it states, rightly so, that there were no Tsars in Ukraine. Oparenko further states: "Originally it (Ukraine) was ruled by princes and although there were a couple of kings in the Ukrainian provinces of Halych and Volhyn (Galicia and Volhynia [Volhynia]) this was not a form of government that the Ukrainian people liked. The idea of a Tsar only came to Ukraine once it had been taken over by Russia in the eighteenth century. However, I have kept the name of Tsar in some of these stories partly because

that is how the stories came to me and partly because it adds a rather more exotic feel to them."A second note in the book explains the word Rushnik (in Ukrainian rushnyk). A rushnyk (Ukrainian plural is rushnyky) is a ritual cloth. As The Ukrainian Museum in NYC states on its website: "rushnyky (ritual cloths). The ritual cloths have a long history in the Ukrainian folk art tradition, dating back to pagan times. These textiles, as well as their designs are deeply symbolic. While most of the symbolism and magic surrounding their meaning has been lost with time, nevertheless enough information has been passed down through the centuries for people to still utilize rushnyky even today in various religious ceremonies and passage of life rituals."The final explanation in the Notes section describes stoves since several of the stories mention them. In addition to the explanation given in the book, please note that a large clay oven is called in Ukrainian a pich; and, above an indoor clay oven was a sleeping area, an oven-bed.Following the Notes section, the last entry in the book is entitled Recipes, and here we find several recipes for foods mentioned in Ukrainian Folk-tales; a nice touch is that each of the recipes includes the title of a folktale so that the reader may refer to it. These recipes are written to an audience of young people, and rightly so, since the reading level recommended for this book is ages 9-12. Recipes include: pancakes ("called nalyshnyky in Ukrainian

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