

The reader might be interested to learn how the story of The Beautiful Dunja came to the Saiga Conservation Alliance.

I came upon this fairy tale while translating from German into English a book by Marie-Louise von Franz and Hedwig von Beit about symbols in fairy tales, *Symbolik des Märchens* (Francke Verlag, Tübingen and Basel, 1952). To expand the authors' short summary of The Beautiful Dunja, I tracked down their source. Naturally I had hoped to find an English translation to save myself the effort of this extra translation. Finding no English version, I set out to translate this tale myself from the collection of Jungbauer, 1923 in the series *Märchen der Weltliteratur*.

In working through the fairy tale, I came across a word I had never seen before, saiga, and did not know how to translate it into English. In searching the Internet for an English translation, I learned that the saiga was an animal that was tragically nearing extinction and discovered the Saiga Conservation Alliance. Taken by the description and photographs of this wonderful animal, I read further on the work of the Alliance. I was impressed by the collaboration with the local people in their efforts to save the saiga from extinction. I decided to donate what I could and to my happy surprise, my idea was taken up by Anthony Dancer and Carlyn Samuel at the SCA. This English translation is my small contribution to this cause with hopes that adults and children alike can take this tale with its ancestral traditions and create their own work, theater, or telling, or perhaps even a modern version, of this wonderful tale!

From the story, the reader (or listener) can see that the saiga is an avatar, or animal image of the heroine of the tale, the beautiful Dunja. Marie-Louise von Franz interprets the beginning as showing how a man can be attracted to his own inner woman, the anima (saiga-Dunja) who leads him into a deeper relationship to his own soul. Interestingly, the second half of the tale concentrates on the powerful figure of Dunja, a striking blend of feminine resoluteness, courage, and almost superhuman fighting powers with ultimate female characteristics of bringing culture to society and the value of love to human relationships. Whichever way one takes this tale, it exudes a wonderful mixture, a paradoxical wholeness, combining masculinity and femininity, hero and heroine, good and evil, fate and will. Perhaps a renewed appreciation of the saiga can lead all of us into a better world with more respect for different cultures, the integration of our male and female parts, development of personal and cultural values, and a deeper respect for our human and natural heritage.

Roy Freeman