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Representations of space in folk beliefs. The Otherworld Summary

The binary division of the Universe, divided between the visible and the unseen one, between the human world and that of the Others (spirits, dead people), between here and there dates back to ancient times, and is based on the binary oppositions, which were within the reach of people, but also on their extension, as well as on the contact places which changed once Man conquered the surrounding universe. At a macrocosmic level, there is a world in which people live, this world, focusing on the inhabited space, in other words, on the hearth of each house, around which one can notice the expansion, in successive circles, of the other microspaces owned by Man, which he has prepared through defense practices in order to be able to move freely within them. The main elements which have spatial, but especially ritual values in this first circle of the humanized world are the hearth, the stove, the oven, the chimney, the beam of the house, the table, the bed (cradle), the lintel, the window, the eaves of the house. As we move away from the house, there are other items which Man consecrated and used in its own interest, both magical and household ones, as the yard, the stable, the fence, the gate leading to the household entrance, and also the frontier of the village, its borders which separated peoples' plots of land, gradually reaching the most dangerous places, such as the crossroads, the bank of the river, the bridges, the forest, the mountains, etc. Beyond these transition places which could be reached by people too as they needed to gather construction materials, to travel, but also to earn their living, and, why not, dangerous entities, representing various embodiments of the sacred world which lived in another space, known as the Otherworld. This is not necessarily a world of the dead (which we are to describe below), but a place where the Others, the anti-humans, the non-humans, the super humans lead their existence.