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Zygmunt Gloger's *Baśnie i powieści* (Fairy Tales and Stories) - Composition, Characters, Axiology

Summary: Zygmunt Gloger (1845–1910) is in Poland sometimes called “a preserver (*ocalacz*) of collective memory”, a collector of national heritage, a propagator of folk culture, a scholar-excursionist, and a writer-archaeologist. While reading his numerous works (over 800 publications in his bibliography), it is hard to ignore his patriotism and love for his homeland – Podlasie. His goal in life was to understand the problems of the people (understood as a Slavic community), their mentality and worldview, and to record their legacy in a way comprehensible to future generations. Gloger was aware that preserving the cultural heritage of a passing world, its textualization, was an effective method of maintaining Polish national unity in the period of Partitions. In this text I will attempt to present one of Gloger's works – *Baśnie i Powieści*, published in 1889 in Warsaw and containing 13 stories which, as suggested by the very title page, were drawn from folk tales and some earlier books (*“Baśnie i powieści z ust ludu i księżek zebrat*

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Zygmunt Gloger”). I will analyse the genesis of these stories, their literary genetics, composition, and character. I will pay attention to their axiology (e.g. the virtue of thrift, which is particularly stressed by Gloger) and the unique features of the collection (e.g. numerous proverbs, elements of traditional rituals of the Polish region of Podlasie,).

Key words: fairy tales, legends, value, folklore, folk culture

Zygmunta Glogera *Baśnie i powieści* – kompozycja, bohaterowie, aksjologia

Streszczenie: Zygmunt Gloger (1845–1910) nazywany bywa „ocalaczem pamięci zbiorowej”, kolekcjonerem dziedzictwa narodowego, propagatorem kultury ludowej, badaczem-ekskursjonistą i pisarzem-archeologiem. W jego licznych pracach (ponad 1000 pozycji w bibliografii) na pierwszy plan wychodzą zawsze patriotyzm, miłość do ojczyzny – Podlasia, a także problemy nurtujące „zwykłych” ludzi (społeczność słowiańska). Gloger zdawał sobie sprawę, że ochrona dziedzictwa kulturowego poprzez opis-zapis, a więc tekstualizacja, jest skuteczną metodą zachowania polskiej jedności narodowej w okresie zaborów. Artykuł niniejszy poddaje analizie *Baśnie i powieści*, pracę wydaną w 1889 roku w Warszawie i zawierającą 13 opowiadań, które, jak sugeruje strona tytułowa, zostały zaczerpnięte z opowieści ludowych i innych książek.

Słowa-klucze: bajki, legendy, wartość, folklor, kultura ludowa

Introduction¹

A folktale (also folk tale), including sub-genres such as a fairy tale or tale of magic (Pol. *bajka magiczna*, *baśń*, *bajka fantastyczna*, *bajka mityczna*, *klechda*, *bajka właściwa*), animal tale, etiologic tale, cumulative tale, comic

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tale, religious tale (also called a legend), and myth, is a culture-specific phenomenon². Passed on orally in a virtually unchanged form with but a few modifications related to a given people's culture³, it remains popular – mainly in a literary form, among both children and adults⁴. Folk tales can still be told to them⁵, as in the days of Old. This is shown by the recent creation of storytelling societies, which continue the oral tradition⁶. Nowadays it is still difficult to imagine a child's education without folktales, or fantasy literature that could not exist without drawing on the tales' well-known threads, themes and motifs.

Among the first collectors of folk tales in Poland were: Kazimierz Władysław Wójcicki (*Klechdy, starożytne podania i powieści ludu polskiego i Rusi*, 1837; Eng. *Tales, ancient legends and tales of the Polish and Rusyn people*), Antoni J. Gliński (*Bajarz polski. Baśnie, powieści i gawędy ludowe*, 1853; Eng. *Polish storyteller. Fairy tales, stories and folk tales*), Lucjan Maliński (*Bajki śląskie*, Eng. *Silesian fairy tales* 1884), Roman Zmorski (*Podania i baśnie ludu na Mazowszu*, 1852; Eng. *Folk tales and stories in Mazovia*), as well as Józef Lompa, Ryszard Berwiński and Oskar Kolberg.

² In modern Polish the terms “baśń” and “bajka” are used interchangeably, although in literary studies it is usually specified whether one is a folk tale or a literary fairy tale, see: J. Krzyżanowski, *Słownik folkloru polskiego*, Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 1965, pp. 34-35; V. Wróblewska, *Przemiany gatunkowe polskiej baśni literackiej XIX i XX wieku*, Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2003. In this text they are both referred to as “fairy tale”.

³ J. Krzyżanowski, *Słownik...*, op. cit., 1965, p. 28.

⁴ Over the ages the target audience of an orally transmitted fairy tale were adults. Nowadays, literary fairy tales are created mostly for children, see: J. Ługowska, *Ludowa bajka magiczna jako tworzywo literatury*, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1981, pp. 33, 50-58.

⁵ Alicja Baluch wrote that the need to listen to tales is one of children's basic needs. That is why they are so keen to listen to plots characteristic of simple literary forms. These simple forms are tales and legends; more complex fairy tales are also well liked and gladly accepted by “enthralled” child listeners (pol. “Potrzeba słuchania opowieści jest jedną z podstawowych potrzeb dzieci. Dlatego tak chętnie słuchają one fabuł, charakterystycznych dla prostych form literatury. Te proste formy to podania i legendy; także gatunki bardziej skomplikowane, baśnie, są lubiane i chętnie przyjmowane przez „zаслuchane” dzieci”, see: A. Baluch, *Archetypy literatury dziecięcej*, WSP, Kraków, 1992, p. 76.

⁶ One of the storytelling groups existing in Podlasie is called “Galeony Baśni”. [accessed 1 October 2018, available from <http://galeonybasni.com.pl>]. Every year they organise independent storytelling competitions, as well as presentations during folklore events, such as *Ogólnopolski Konkurs Gawędziarzy, Instrumentalistów, Śpiewaków, Drużbów i Starostów Weselnych „Sabałowe Bajania”* in Bukowina Tatrzańska; *Turniej Gawędziarzy Ludowych Kaszub i Kociewia* in Wiel; *Przegląd Kapel, Śpiewaków i Gawędziarzy Ludowych* in Zbójna.

Zygmunt Gloger (1845-1910) collected folk tales also for their value as an element of folk culture. A prolific writer (over 800 works in his bibliography) and a person of broad interests, he could be called a Renaissance man, determined to follow his goal of preserving Polish traditions, as if he wanted to awaken people from their civilizational inertia and preserve their cultural identity.

Grzegorz Kowalski referred to Gloger as a man of many interests, fields, and talents⁷. Named the “preserver of collective memory”⁸ by Jarosław Ławski Gloger should also be described as an explorer of natural and historical wonders, an excursionist of scholarly interests in socio-cultural issues, a writer-archaeologist, a treasure hunter. Henryk Markiewicz described the legacy of Gloger, in the context of his Positivist environment, as the achievements of an ethnographer, an excursionist, and a cultural historian, but also an organiser and first president of the Polish Excursionist Society (*Polskie Towarzystwo Krajoznawcze*), as well as an active contributor to periodicals published in Warsaw and Galicia⁹. There is no doubt that Gloger was also a journalist, a reporter, an excursionist, a tourist, and a correspondent¹⁰. He might also be called a disciple of Oskar Kolberg, an archaeologist, an encyclopaedist, an enterprising landlord, a regular correspondent of “*Gazeta Rolnicza*” and tens of other periodicals. Zygmunt Gloger liked to see himself as an archaeologist, an antiquarian, a historian, and a journalist.

While reading Gloger’s texts, it is difficult not to notice his love of his homeland of Podlasie and his great patriotism. This is confirmed by his passion for literally finding places where history is preserved that predates writing¹¹, as well as his willingness to understand the problems of the common folk, their mentality and worldview, and to record all this for future generations. As an ethnographer, he saw the meaning of life and the future in recording the past

⁷ G. Kowalski, *XIX-wieczna silva rerum. Pisma Zygmunta Glogera*, [in:] Zygmunt Gloger, *Pisma rozproszone*, ed. by J. Leńczuk, J. Ławski, Vol. 1, Wydawnictwo Książnicy Podlaskiej, Białystok 2014. [accessed 1 October 2018]. Available from <http://www.ksiaznica-podlaska.pl/images/20151029/Spis.pdf>

⁸ J. Ławski, *Zygmunt Gloger i wiek XIX*, [in:] *Zygmunt Gloger. Pisma rozproszone*, Vol. 1..., op. cit., p. 28.

⁹ H. Markiewicz, *Pozytywizm*, PWN, Warszawa 1999, p. 456.

¹⁰ J. Ławski, *Zygmunt Gloger i wiek XIX*..., op.cit., 2014, p. 27.

¹¹ Ibid.

that would otherwise be irrevocably lost. In her biography of Gloger, Teresa Komorowska described how he would venture out on methodically planned ethnographical and archaeological hunts; how during these hunts he would not only search for relics, but also carefully observe contemporary socio-economic reality, which he found both fascinating and worrisome¹². Gloger wanted to find solutions to social problems, so since 1871 he became a regular correspondent of newspapers such as „Gazeta Warszawska”, „Gazeta Rolnicza”, „Kurier Warszawski”, „Kurier Niedzielnny”. For example, in a letter to „Gazeta Rolnicza” he wrote that household archives disappeared quickly, the works of old craftsmen were discarded, old buildings were dismantled with no record being made, old songs were buried unwritten in the tombs of past generations (*“Archiwa domowe giną szybko, dawne wyroby rękodzielnicze idą na śmietniki, starych typowych budowli nikt przy rozebraniu nie przenosi na papier, staro-dawne pieśni, niezapisane, milną na zawsze w grobach pokoleń”*¹³).

Gloger was also aware that recording the cultural heritage of a passing world, its textualization, was an effective way of preserving Polish national unity in times of occupation and cultural indoctrination by the Germans and the Russians. Therefore, convincing illiterate, uneducated people to share with him the well known, old-timey stories, songs, legends, and traditions could, as Łukasz Zabielski had it, be beneficial - this would improve social integration, trigger awareness, but also indirectly support Polish scholars, who at that time were desperately in need of new sources of knowledge. With limited access to education and the resulting difficulties, this could also become the best cure for illiteracy (*“przynieść zbawienne skutki, przyczynić się z jednej strony do społecznej integracji, uwrażliwić, ale też pośrednio wspomóc polską naukę, tak wówczas rozpaczliwie potrzebującą nowych źródeł wiedzy. W dobie trudności związanych z ograniczeniami edukacyjnymi mogłoby się to też okazać najlepszym lekarstwem na analfabetyzm”*¹⁴).

¹² T. Komorowska, *Gloger. Opowieść biograficzna*, Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, Warszawa 1985, p. 81.

¹³ Z. Gloger, *List otwarty*, „Gazeta Rolnicza” 17 (1890), p. 202.

¹⁴ Ł. Zabielski, *Zygmunt Gloger. Między uniwersum Guthenberga a „literaturą w żywym słowie”*, [in]: Zygmunt Gloger, *Pisma rozproszone*, Vol. 3. Białystok: Wydawnictwo Książnicy Podlaskiej, 2016, p. 41 [accessed 1 October 2018]. Available from <http://www.ksiaznicapodlaska.pl/images/2017/201711/20171121/begin.pdf>

Gloger's *Baśnie i powieści* (eng. *Fairy tales and Stories*) was published in 1889 by the Gebethner and Wolff publishing house in Warsaw¹⁵. The 72-page volume contains 13 tales, which, as is suggested by the title page, were collected from the common folk and from other books (“*Baśnie i powieści z ust ludu i ksiązek zebrał Zygmunt Gloger*”). On the cover, below the title, there appears the book's motto – the words by Łukasz Górnicki: “*Fairy tales are made up so that the simple folk would grow fond of useful things; as by parents who would with honey sweeten a bitter but healthy drink for their children*” (“*Baśnie dlatego są zmyślane, iżby prostaczkom takim sposobem podawały się rzeczy potrzebne; jako owo dzieciom gorzki a zdrowy trunek miodem rodzice słodzą*”).

These 13 stories are an example of joy found by discovering the phenomena of traditional folk culture. However, although the author collected them in Podlasie¹⁶, the tales hardly exhibit any region-specific features. There are no place or river names and the ritual elements are not specific to Podlasie; some traditions can just as well be found in other regions of Poland (e.g. summer solstice celebrations, spinning of linen, hosting guests coming from far away). We do not know who told these stories to Gloger, when that happened and in what circumstances, or which village the teller lived in. Grzegorz Kowalski notes that the writer may sometimes fail to provide sources and read the text critically¹⁷. However, for Gloger the ethnographer the satisfaction from col-

¹⁵ This edition is the third extended (“enlarged”) edition (Pol. “wydanie trzecie pomnożone”). It is available on-line from the website of Książnica Podlaska. [accessed 1 October 2018]. Available from <http://pbc.biaman.pl/dlibra>.

¹⁶ Podlasie – presently also known as Podlasie Province, is a geographical and historical region of northeastern Poland. IPodlasie is a part of the so-called “eastern wall”, which is the Polish national border with Russia, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine. The name of Podlasie appeared in the chronicles in the 13th century and it means “under a forest”. In the past, this area was inhabited by Slavic tribes fighting against one another. One of the more numerous tribes were the Yotvingians, but at the end of the 13th century they were driven out by the Teutonic Order. Later, Podlasie was settled by Masovians, Lithuanians, Jews and the Old Believers. This kind of ethnic “melting pot” translated into the enrichment of the traditions and culture of theregion. This can be observed, for example, in the names of villages, in local cuisine and in diversified traditions. Today, Podlasie is referred to as a frontier of nations and cultures. Unlike the rest of Poland that is mostly characterized by ethnic and religious homogeneity, Podlasie is multi-cultural. There co-exist several minorities such as the Belarussians, the Ukrainians, the Lithuanians, or the Tartars, representing different religions and churches (i.e. Roman-Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish or Muslim).

¹⁷ G. Kowalski, *XIX-wieczna silva rerum...*, op.cit., p. 55.

lecting these stories was more important than their critical analysis. His editor stated that Gloger wrote everything down with no comments, as he usually did (“*Gloger wszystko zapisał, nie komentując, jak zwykle czynił...*”¹⁸).

It is important to specify that Gloger transcribed fairy tales, in which he followed many of his contemporary collectors of such stories (e.g. Wójcicki, Gliński, Lompe, Siemieński, Zmorski, Berwiński, or the Grimm brothers). He gave his versions a literary character by transforming the language of the original tale (e.g. the local dialects used in oral storytelling) so that it was formally closer to the literary genre of short story that freely combines the motifs of a folk tale¹⁹.

Before the release of the book under discussion, Zygmunt Gloger published folk tales in the journal “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” (e.g.: 1893, No. 182).

Generic Questions

Scholars divide folk tales into different types according to their plots, characters, and structure. The best known study of the types of folk tales is a taxonomy proposed by Aarne-Thompson, who organized them into four groups, with a list of basic themes and plotlines numbered 1-2700. These include are: 1) Tales about animals (1-299), 2) Fairy tales, legends, and novellas (more precisely: tales of magic – 300-749, legends and religious tales – 750-849, novellas and tales of adventure – 850-1199), 3) Jokes and anecdotes (1200-2440), and 4) Etiologic tales (2441-2700)²⁰.

In his classification of Polish folk tales based on the Aarne-Thompson system, Julian Krzyżanowski speaks of four groups of tales: 1). Tales about animals (T1-T299), 2) Fairy tales, legends, and novellas (more precisely: tales of magic – T300-T749, legends and religious tales – T750-T849, novellas and tales of adventure – T850-T1199), 3) Jokes and anecdotes – T1200-T2440, and 4) Etiologic tales – 2441-2700. Since the A-T system does not include

¹⁸ J. Ławski, *Inna tragiczność: „Z życia dworu wiejskiego” Zygmunta Glogera*, „Bibliotekarz Podlaski” 1 (2017), p. 64.

¹⁹ J. Ługowska, *Ludowa bajka magiczna jako tworzywo literatury*, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Warszawa 1981, pp. 33- 45.

²⁰ Cf. the definition in the on-line dictionary (no page count): S. Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska, Julian Krzyżanowski, [in]: *Polska bajka ludowa. Słownik*, ed. by. W. Wróblewska [accessed 1 October 2018]. Available from: <http://bajka.umk.pl/slownik/lista-hasel/haslo/?id=13>.

the themes²¹ widely known in Slavic (and non-Slavic) folklore, Krzyżanowski added an extra (fifth) section including tales of belief and lore, with numbers T 3000 – T 8025. Whilst folk tale is a folk narrative genre, lore has to do more with knowledge, belief, and rituals rather than focuses on narrative only; however Krzyżanowski believed that folk tale and lore are indistinguishable²².

With these divisions in mind, one has to note that the stories contained in Gloger's collection *Baśnie i Powieści*, previously circulating by word of mouth among the common folk in Podlasie, should be classified as the latter type.

Most of the stories (9 out of 13) can be classified as tales of magic, since each of them has a plot consisting of constant repetitive elements (functions of the protagonist)²³. Propp believed that the combination of the functions, which forms the structure of the tale is a key factor in the determination the sub-genre²⁴. Thus, these particular tales recorded by Gloger open with an ele-

²¹ Folk prose was catalogued by theme. In the integral approach, theme is the basis for tale indexes and systematics. Theme is the sum of motifs, formed from a number of connected parallel motifs. In his morphology, Vladimir Propp replaces “theme” with “sequence”. (*“Skatalogowaniu prozy ludowej służył wątek. W ujęciu integralnym stanowi on podstawę indeksów i systematyki tekstów folkloru. Wątek jest sumą motywów, tworzy kilka powiązanych równorzędnie motywów. W morfologii bajki Władimir Propp wątek zastąpi >sekwencją<”*). See: S. Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska, *Wzorce tekstów ustnych w perspektywie etnolingwistycznej*, UMCS, Lublin 2007, p. 56 and following.

²² Cf. the definition in the on-line dictionary (no page count): S. Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska, *Bajka ludowa*, [in]: *Polska bajka ludowa. Słownik*, ed. by. Wróblewska Violetta..., op. cit.

²³ According to Vladimir Propp, “Morphologically, a tale (skazka) may be termed any development proceeding from villainy (A) or a lack (a), through intermediary functions to marriage (W*), or to other functions employed as a denouement. Terminal functions are at times a reward (F), a gain or in general the liquidation of misfortune (K), an escape from pursuit (Rs), etc. This type of development is termed by us a move (xod). Each new act of villainy, each new lack creates a new move. One tale may have several moves, and when analyzing a text, one must first of all determine the number of moves of which it consists”. See: V. Propp, *Morphology of the folktale*, University of Texas Press, Austin 1968, p. 92. The functions listed by Propp for a tale of magic are: departure, taboo, breaking a taboo, scouting by the antagonist, informing the antagonist about the protagonist, subterfuge, support, harm (or lack of someone or something), mediation, start of counteraction, quest, first donor function, struggle, marking the protagonist, victory, amending the lack of someone or something, protagonist's return, persecution, rescue from pursuit, unrecognised arrival, demands from a false hero, difficult task, performing a difficult task, recognition, unmasking the false hero, transfiguration, punishment, wedding.

²⁴ V. Propp, *Nie tylko bajka*, PWN, Warszawa 2000, p. 92.

ment of harm or scarcity, which is followed by intermediary functions leading to a wedding or some other resolution. They start in a situation of crisis, such as the death of a close one or the loss of a parent (*Wianek Helenki; O macosze i jej Pasierbicy, co Plakała Perełkami* – theme T 480A), sickness, or poverty (although the tale *Bieda* is one of the tales about outwitted monsters – themes T 1000-1199, it also covers theme T 331A when the protagonist's poverty is contrasted with his brother's wealth and greed). The next stage involves the re-establishing of proper order of things by mythical characters resolving internal conflicts or by the appearance of a magical being requiring the protagonist to take a stance. The tales close with a happy ending, often preceded by a transformative journey. Only one of Gloger's stories includes the theme of a journey – *O Chorej Matce i Trzech jej Córkach*. This theme (T 551) is known all over Poland as „Wyprawa po żywą wodę” (The Quest for the Water of Life). It is much more common for mysterious wandering characters to arrive, often in the form of elderly men (including God in disguise) or helpers (theme T 513). In addition, in every tale in Gloger's collection there appears the theme of crime and punishment (T 750).

The classification of Gloger's stories as “tales of magic” is also licensed by the non-specificity of time, place, and names of the characters, which has a symbolic dimension, as they can be about anyone, in any historical space (the one exception is the named female protagonist in *Wianek Haliny*).

Furthermore, in all the stories magical elements are more pronounced than realistic ones²⁵. The real world is in harmony with the realm of magic²⁶ and the characters fulfil one of the seven roles distinguished by Propp (hero, false hero, dispatcher, villain, donor/provider, helper, princess – and/or her father)²⁷.

Taxonomic problems may arise with respect to three stories: *O chłopie w niebie*, *O dyable wódkorobie i kmiotku charłaku*, and *Jalmużna*. They are closest in kind to legend, as defined by Ewa Ferfecka, who claims that the core of legend is the belief in divine intervention. For example, the story *O dy-*

²⁵ J. Krzyżanowski, *Słownik folkloru polskiego*, Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 1965, p. 34; W. Propp, *Nie tylko bajka...*, op. cit., p. 123.

²⁶ D. Simonides, *Współczesna śląska proza ludowa*, Powiatowy Instytut Śląski, Opole 1969, pp. 55-56.

²⁷ V. Propp, *Morphology of the folktale...*, op. cit., p. 25-66.

able wódkorobie i kmiotku charłaku, is a variation on theme T 828 – the devil makes vodka and gives it to the peasant.

In these stories, God interferes frequently and the protagonists' actions invoke their faith in God²⁸. Woźniak writes that “the world of values of the folk tale is rooted in the Decalogue. They remind listeners of the duties one has towards one's neighbour, show the dangers of breaking God's commandments, and teach humility” („(...) świat wartości legendy ludowej jest mocno osadzony w Dekalogu. Przypominają one o obowiązkach wobec bliźniego, pokazują zgubne skutki łamania boskich przykazań, uczą pokory”²⁹). Julian Krzyżanowski considers religious fables to be legends. Jan Stanisław Bystróż also stressed the religious character of legends, but believed the magicelements in them to be equally important³⁰. Scholars claim that legends, similarly to tale or lore, have no fixed structural form, and therefore many types of stories can be legends. The essence of a legend is that it takes up a problem that is important for a given community at a particular time. For this reason legends can be windows for understanding the identity of the inhabitants of a given land, and a record of the micro-history of the storyteller's community³¹. This role is successfully performed by Gloger's *Baśnie i Powieści*. The titles themselves indicate what the rural communities of old focused on. The themes of poverty, back-breaking work in fields, giving charity or dowry are all situations inseparably connected with everyday lives of the common folk.

We should also explain the other part of the title: in this context, the term *powieści* means nothing more than *bajki* – fairy tales, fables, folk tales³².

²⁸ Woźniak, *Podanie i legenda. Z badań nad rosyjską prozą ludową*, Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Lublin 1987, p. 25.

²⁹ S. Ferfecka, *Święci i grzesznicy. Bohater jako jeden z wyznaczników gatunkowych legendy ludowej*, [w]: *Genologia literatury ludowej*, ed. by. A. Miancki, V. Wróblewska, Wydawnictwo UMK, Toruń 2003, p. 148.

³⁰ J. Bystróż *Tematy, które mi odradzano. Pisma etnograficzne rozproszone*, PIW, Warszawa 1980, pp. 385-388.

³¹ A. Woźniak, *Podanie i legenda...*, op.cit., p. 7.

³² The term *powieści* (“novels” in modern Polish) is also used in the meaning of tales, fairy tales, folk tales by other scholars and collectors of folklore, e.g. R. Berwiński, *Powieści wiekopolskie*, Drukarnia M. Frydlendera Wrocław 1840, pp. 231-284 [accessed 1 October 2018]. Available from: <http://www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/doccontent?id=74449>; A. Gliński, *Bajarz polski, czyli zbiór baśni, powieści i gawęd ludowych*, Drukarnia Gubernialna, Wilno 1862.

The Protagonists

Most of the titles in *Baśnie i Powieści* tell the reader who they are about, introducing the protagonists at the very beginning.. For example, “of the peasant” (*Of the peasant in heaven – O chłopie w niebie*), “of the mother/daughters” (*Of the sick mother and her three daughters – O chorej matce i trzech jej córkach*), “of the miller/sons” (*Of the miller and his three sons – O młynarzu i trzech jego synach*), “of two brothers” (*Of two brothers one poor and the other rich – O dwóch braciach – ubogim i bogatym*).

The stories feature both realistic and fantastic characters. They are adults, with children as supporting characters, such as family members. However, animal characters are excluded from the stories in question. The realistic characters most frequently include: orphaned young girls affected by the unkindness of others (*Wianek Haliny; Zwierciadło; O macosze i jej pasierbicy, co płakała perelkami*), the poor (*Bieda; O dwóch braciach ubogim i bogatym*), naïve and gullible fools led astray (*O dayble wódkorobie...; O dwóch braciach Biedzile i Oklipie*). These are sharply contrasted with the rich, who are dishonest, stingy, and greedy and try to abuse the kind-hearted (*Jałmużna; O dwóch braciach ubogim i bogatym; O macosze i jej pasierbicy, co płakała perelkami; Pielgrzym i skarb przez niego znaleziony; Zbrodnia; Zwierciadło; O staruszku i staruszce i złotej rybce*).

Contrasting the characters and their polar opposites (they are either good or bad) is typical of tales of magic³³. Showing their unambiguous actions is supposed to help listeners take the right side in the conflict and give them moral examples. The tales show morally impeccable protagonists and the reward of “happily ever after” for following the path of goodness, truth, beauty, and love. This is simple modelling, and an expression of longing for a world such as this, for fairness in real life.

The fantastic characters in fairy tales do not reveal their identity and embrace angels, saints, or even God in disguise (*O chłopie w Niebie; O dwóch braciach – Biedzile i Oklipie; O chorej matce...; Jałmużna*) and the devil (*O dyable wódkorobie i kmiotku charłaku*). They appear as old men, beggars, commonly known as *dziady* (the word originally meant “grandfathers” and was used to described elderly homeless beggars; it has acquired a derogatory

³³ B. Bettelheim, *Cudowne i pożyteczne*, WAB, Warszawa 1996, p. 31.

meaning over time). In legends they act as God's messengers (theme T 513). In traditional beliefs, on the other hand, fantastic characters are seen as mediatory characters, connected to the sacrum. Therefore, they would be invited in, hosted, and treated with respect as "divine travellers", but they were also feared, as it was believed that mistreating them could bring evil forces against the hosts³⁴.

Gloger's folk tales show also other mysterious characters, who provoke the protagonists with their requests and propositions, testing their character: the mysterious pilgrim, *leśny dziadek* (a woodland spirit in the form of an old man), or the golden fish (*Pielgrzym i skarb przez niego znaleziony; O staruszku i staruszce i złotej rybce; Zbrodnia*).

Hardship (death in the family, being orphaned, poverty, sickness), which is often present at the start of most fairy tales, is also a test of character for the protagonists. Therefore, the virtues that are clearly promoted are meeting a challenge, seeking an honest resolution to one's problems, being active rather than passive.

The role model turns out to be the honest peasant, kind-hearted and charitable, hard-working, caring for his family, devoted to God, and respectful of mother nature's laws (*Bieda; O dwóch braciach...; O chłopie w Niebie*). This is a set of qualities similar to the one presented by Mikołaj Rej in 1558 in *Wizerunek Własny Żywota Człowieka Poczciwego*. Both Gloger's *Baśnie...* and Rej's work present role models who value humility, a quiet family life, and respect for the laws of hospitality. However, Rej's hero is a yeoman farmer tending his own land, while the problem in the analysed folk tales is the crushing poverty of serfs, who have no property or land of their own. However, since fairy tales are about wish fulfillment, the protagonists' righteousness is rewarded in the end. It should also be clarified that the imagined riches, cladding the protagonist in gold, the image of a benefactor surrounded by a golden halo, as a golden fish, or a noble knight (*Wianek Haliny*) are a projection of the dreams of both the storyteller and the listeners.

Some of Gloger's fairy tales (*Jatmużna; Wianek Haliny; Zbrodnia*) also highlight the desirable behaviours and merits of women, which are, first and

³⁴ P. Grochowski, *Dziady. Rzecz o wędrownych żebrakach i ich pieśniach*, UMK, Toruń 2009, pp. 38-42.

foremost, resourcefulness and diligence, followed by humility and kind-heartedness, and finally (as with men), charity, hospitality, honesty. Anna Janicka, who analysed Gloger's journalism, noticed that the archaeologist wanted to see the ideal wife, or woman, as thrifty, resolute, resourceful, reasonable, and capable of sharing the fruits of her labour (in other words, being generous and charitable)³⁵. In the mid-war period, which Gloger sadly did not live to see, these virtues became a necessity in the state in need of rebuilding³⁶.

The vilest of flaws in *Baśnie...* are, for both genders, sloth and wastefulness, unbounded jealousy, and a rollicking lifestyle. An example can be found in the story *Zwierciadło* (eng. *The mirror*), which features a widow, who has a single daughter of incredible beauty, and is jealous of her own daughter's prettiness; she herself is fond of going to the tavern and to parties, where she would eat, drink, and dance („Była sobie wdowa i miała jedną córkę, córka ta była cud dziewica, a matka wyrodna zazdrośnica, bo własnej córce piękności zazdrościła. Sama rada po biesiadach gościła i do karczmy biegła, jadła, piła, tańcowała (...)”³⁷).

Following the fairy tale convention, the location of the story is undefined. Gloger does not use the conventional formula „*Za górami za lasami*” (which means “beyond the mountains and the woods” and is roughly equivalent to “Far, far away”), but uses other expressions, such as „*Gdzie błękitna struga płynie po mazowieckiej równinie (...)*” (where a blue stream flows through Masovia; *Wianek Haliny*), or „*Nad brzegiem morza stała chatka (...)*” (A cottage stood at the seashore; *O rybaku...*). Here, an important constituent is a character's travel. The story starts in the tamed space of the protagonist's home, which he or she leaves to go on a journey and returns to upon the journey's completion. We are thus presented with a semiotic opposition home

³⁵ A. Janicka, *Postępowy tradycjonalista. Zygmunta Glogera obraz kobiety*, [in]: *Tożsamość na styku kultur*, ed. by I. Masojć, H. Sokołowska, Vol. 3, Wydawnictwo Litewskiego Uniwersytetu Edukologicznego, Wilno 2016, pp. 78-84.

³⁶ The press (e.g. “Przodownica”, “Głos do Kobiet Wiejskich”, “Chłopskie Życie Gospodarcze”) wrote voluminously about the need for a so called “well-organised woman” in rural areas – i.e. one who is ready to join societies and values community, communal effort, mutual aid, and making improvements to a farm. See: A. Józefowicz, *Rola społeczna matki w rodzinie wiejskiej w II Rzeczypospolitej*, Trans Humana, Białystok 2011, pp. 156-202.

³⁷ Z. Gloger, *Baśnie i powieści*, Wydawnictwo Gebethner i Wolff, Warszawa 1898, p. 43 [accessed 1 October 2018]. Available from <http://pbc.biaman.pl/dlibra>

vs world, but also known vs stranger. The protagonist goes off into a far-away unknown world. They learn to overcome the demons of alien space (e.g. the forest), for example the ones that guard a treasure, like the water of life³⁸. This changing of location, the experience of travel, simply symbolises human life with its daily choices, changes, and obstacles.

Axiology

The image of the world in folk tales is simplified and schematic in its plot, language, and values. The repetitive inclusion of stereotypical values aims to construct an intentional reality, where fundamental values triumph over negative choices and behaviours. Folk tales of magic, similarly to folk tales, serve to this day as a guide to Christian morality. Over the ages they have become the folk understanding of moral truths rooted in Christianity („(...) funkcję pewnego rodzaju przewodnika po moralności chrześcijańskiej, przez wieki stały się ludową wykładnią prawd moralnych zakorzenionych w chrześcijaństwie”). It is true that moral problems are at the centre of Gloger’s folk tales, but their main function is educational³⁹.

Let us take a closer look at the values promoted in Gloger’s *Baśnie i Powieści*.

In *Wianek Helenki* (eng. *Helenka’s maidenhead*) it is humility, cheerfulness in the face of adversity, and forgiving others’ trespasses, as exemplified by the protagonist. Piety is also stressed, expressed through prayer, asking God for help, and remaining hopeful. What is condemned is vanity, conceit, putting wealth above other values.

The peasant worldview is organised around praise of poverty and condemnation of wealth, and thus the poor are the embodiment of virtue. The poor, as opposed to the wealthy, are hard-working, pious, honest, compassionate, and generous.

The tale *Bieda* (eng. *The poverty*) praises the peasant’s diligence, caring for his family, and guile, which he uses to oppose the eponymous *Bieda* (the personification of poverty). His brother is criticised for his avarice, pride,

³⁸ Fairy tale characters are also associated with specific places: a peasant is in a farmstead, while a mysterious helper or a witch appear in the woods.

³⁹ S. Ferfecka, *Święci i grzesznicy...*, op. cit., p. 148.

frigidity, lack of empathy, and ruthlessness towards his family. The story *O dwóch braciach...* (eng. *Of the two brothers...*) has a similar message. It also tells of two brothers: one is very poor yet willing to give up his own eyes to save his family from poverty, while the other would never have enough riches and would go to terrible lengths to obtain more. Instead of brotherly love these stories tell of jealousy and competition for wealth and social status.

Virtually all of Gloger's folk tales condemn avarice (*Pielgrzym i Skarb...*; *Jalmużna*; *Zbrodnia*; *O Macosze i Jej Pasierbicy...*; *O Staruszkach i Staruszcach...*). Committing murder to obtain riches always ends up with the perpetrator dying a horrible death. This is what happens in the story *Zbrodnia* (eng. *The Crime*), which has many scenes reminiscent of Juliusz Słowacki's *Balladyna*, opening with the initial raspberry picking scene (theme T 780). What is stressed in the story is the terrifying punishment inflicted on the murderous sister, who is torn apart by wild horses („*Morderczynie za ręce i nogi do czterech dzikich koni przywiązano i żywcem rozerwano*”)⁴⁰. The story *Zwierciadło* (eng. *The mirror*) is a variation on theme T 709 “the girl in a glass coffin”, which is best known from the story of Snow White.

Pielgrzym... (eng. *The pilgrim...*) portrays the descent into madness of a villain wracked by guilt, failure to deal with riches obtained through evil deeds, and the inability to sleep soundly after perpetrating a crime. Another idiom comes up here: „*Na złodzieju czapka gore*” (“A guilty person never behaves naturally”)⁴¹. Another moral teaching that can be drawn from it, is that one cannot build happiness on other people's misery („*Na cudzej krzywdzie szczęścia nie zbudujesz*” – “Don't seek your fortune in someone else's misfortune”). These legends might have drawn Gloger's attention because of their message about the value of honest and diligent work, as opposed to quick gain through the misery of others. The theme of girls competing in raspberry picking („*która z dziewczyn więcej malin zbierze*”) is a test of diligence and, as Teresa Komorowska noted, Gloger had always believed that work is the measure of all values – especially the value of a person („*(...) pracę uważał zawsze za miernik wszelkiej wartości – przede wszystkim wartości człowieka*”⁴²...).

⁴⁰ Z. Gloger, *Baśnie i Powieści...*, op. cit., p. 36.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 41.

⁴² T. Komorowska, *Gloger. Opowieść biograficzna...*, op. cit., p. 53.

The story *Zwierzciadło*, which is plot-wise very similar to the much better known story of Snow White (apart from a different ending), emphasises the value of charity and forgiveness. These are typically Christian values and this is the attitude, from start to finish, of the orphan victimised by her step-mother. The girl forgives the witch for her deceitfulness.

In the story of a sick mother (*O chorej matce...*; eng. *Of the sick mother...*) the central value is love, altruism, sacrifice for a loved one, in this case a mother. Keeping one's promises is also a virtue. The youngest daughter, in order to obtain the life-giving water for her mother promises to marry a monster. However, the monster turns out to be an enchanted prince and the girl's righteousness lifts the curse from him. There are no clear-cut villains in this story, but what is important is the other sisters' carelessness, which leads them to break the pitcher with the water of life, them giving up in view of this, and neglecting to set out on a new quest to save their mother. This helplessness, inaptitude, maybe even indifference of the older sisters is not to be condoned.

The story *O chłopie w Niebie* (eng. *Of the peasant in Heaven*) praises hospitality, i.e. providing food and shelter to a stranger, despite one's meagre means. This theme comes up in many folk tales, which show nobles, saints, angels, and even God himself travelling in disguise among people to find out how they are really living⁴³. Gloger even directly quotes a saying that has become a part of the Polish language as a proverb „*Czem chata bogata, tem będzie podróżnemu rada*” (“whatever the house has to offer it will gladly share with a traveller”⁴⁴).

Similarly, in the story *Jalmużna* (eng. *The alms*), the protagonist receives a reward from the afterlife for her kind and charitable heart, and for sharing what she has, though she has very little. At the same time, falsehood and double-dealing, when one shares to gain a profit, are severely punished. Therefore the humble wife of Jan sees her wealth increase tenfold, while the greedy wife of Błażej, jealous of anyone better off than herself, loses everything. The theme

⁴³ A. Józefowicz, *Portrety mieszkańców wsi pogranicza północno-wschodniej Polski „malowane” w opowieści ludowej*, [in]: *Pogranicza, Kresy, Wschód a idee Europy*, ed. by A. Janicka, G. Kowalski, Ł. Zabielski, 2nd Series: Viktor Choryev in memoriam, Wydawnictwo Książnicy Podlaskiej, Białystok 2013, pp. 491-502.

⁴⁴ Z. Gloger, *Baśnie i powieści...* op. cit., p. 28.

of the multiplication of food and drink can also be found in the legend of Piast (*O Piaście Kołodzieju*)⁴⁵, where the miracle is performed by mysterious travellers, who turn out to be angels. Thus, it seems to be established in common perception that travellers should be received like gods, as one may never know if they are actually gods since gods tend to descend in the form of strangers, of foreigners („(...) istnieje zawsze podejrzenie, że mogą być bogami, gdyż bogowie przyjmują postać obcych, cudzoziemców”⁴⁶...).

The theme of ingratitude for miraculously received gifts, of increasing avarice leading to the ultimate loss of the received wealth, appears in the story *O staruszku i staruszcze i złotej rybce, czyli daj kurze grzędę jeszcze wyżej będę*. This fairy tale draws upon one of Grimm’s storylines and is a variant of Alexander Pushkin’s *Skazka o rybaku i rybce* (1835). Adding a proverb to the title is a unique feature, which speaks for the literary character of Gloger’s collection.

In tales of magic, nature often displays traits of human behaviour and anthropomorphic motifs are common, giving the stories a more miraculous quality. One can speak here of a romanticised understanding of nature and social space as a connected whole and as one big organism (pol. „(...) romantycznym z ducha pojmowaniu natury oraz przestrzeni społecznej jako całości, jako wielkiego organizmu”⁴⁷). As is traditionally the case in tales of magic and in legends, the animated world of nature in Gloger’s *Baśnie*... always favours protagonists who

⁴⁵ This legend first appeared in *Gesta principum Polonorum* written probably in 1112–1116 by an anonymous author only known as Gallus. The text is still of significant importance, as it exemplifies the idea of a national community, gathered around an honest and generous king, whose prayers are heard and answered by God in Heaven as the reward for the monarch’s goodness. In the Romantic period such interpretations of the legend supported the emerging idea of the Polish nation as a chosen one. Adam Mickiewicz wrote that according to age-old traditions, Heaven had heard out the Slavs and sent angels down to Earth to show them their rightful king. This king was Piast, a farmer and wheelwright, who hosted angels in his home. Piast’s person and deeds epitomize the whole history of truthful, noble and admired kings. (“(...) podług dawnych tradycji niebo wysłuchało Sławian, zesłało aniołów, którzy im pokazali króla żądanego. A ten król Piast, rolnik i kołodziej ugaszczający aniołów, (...) ten Piast w osobie i dziejach swoich zawiera w krótkości całą historię pocziwych, hojnych, popularnych królów”, in: A. Mickiewicz, *Pierwsze wieki historii polskiej*, as quoted in: A. Mickiewicz, *Pisma historyczne. Wykłady lozańskie*, [in]: *Dzieła*, Vol. 7, Czytelnik Warszawa 1997, p. 37.

⁴⁶ Z. Benedyktowicz, *Portrety „obcego”*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2000, p. 159.

⁴⁷ G. Kowalski, *Czego szukał Gloger w dolinach rzek?*, „Bibliotekarz Podlaski” 1 (2017), p. 93.

listen to their hearts, set out on noble quests, guided by pure intentions. After all, it was typical of folk philosophy to accept that if you desire something very strongly, fate and circumstances would conspire to help you get it. The collection also mentions birds or animals who act as guides or advisors and often appear in other fairy tales (*O Dwóch Braciach Ubogim i Bogatym*).

Human protagonists who are on the right path are favoured by natural phenomena and the forest gives them shelter. A mysterious helper emerges from the woods that hide the well of life (*O chorej matce...; Zbrodnia...*). The symbiosis between man and nature is also revealed in the ability to read nature's signs.. For example, girls would count how many times the cuckoo calls to find out how long they are to wait for a husband. Reading between the lines one can notice how vast an impenetrable the woods and forests were (*Zwierciadło*). A wise protagonist knows their place in the universe, understands the primacy of nature over human history, and is humble. This, in the end, always works to their advantage.

Instead of a Conclusion – Unique Features of the Collection

Fairy tales are an important, if not currently the most popular, aspect of traditional folklore. It must be emphasized that the stories collected by Gloger in *Baśnie i Powieści* are deeply engrained in folk tradition, and originated from the Polish folk culture and the influence of distant cultures. Comparing Gloger's collection to the better known Grimm Brothers' fairy tales one may notice that the former exhibits certain distinguishing qualities, of which I have found a few.

Firstly, Gloger's collections contains many phrasemes functioning as vessels in which folk wisdom was passed down through generations: “*Żyli jak Bóg przykazał*”, “*Na złodzieju czapka gore*”, “*Czem chata bogata tem rada*”, “*Aby Cię Bóg w dziesięcioro obdarzył*”, “*Poczekawszy, będzie Pan Bóg łaskawszy*”, “*Mądryś po szkodzie, ale głupi przed*”, “*Śmierć i żona od Boga przeznaczona*”.

Secondly, the stories portray many elements of traditional ritualism, such as Summer Solstice celebrations, counting cuckoo's calls, mealtime prayers, linen spinning, taking a poor traveller in, singing songs, tavern feasts etc..

Another thing is connected with the fact that some of the stories begin at the bank of a river, which symbolises inevitable transformation (*Bieda; Wianek*

Haliny). For Gloger the banks of great rivers were first and foremost the space where cultures were born, societies formed, and the relationship of man and nature was stronger than ever. (“(…) dla ludzi zamieszkujących jej wybrzeża jest rzeka najważniejszym składnikiem krajobrazu, nieodłączną przestrzenią ich codziennej aktywności (...). Dla Glogera wybrzeża wielkich rzek stanowiły przede wszystkim przestrzeń, w której rodziły się kultury, formowały społeczności, a związki natury i człowieka były szczególnie, mocniejsze niż gdzie indziej”⁴⁸...). Therefore, This explains why river banks and valleys were so important in his fairy tales. Gloger himself, travelling down the Vistula or Neman rivers, collected everything that was “attracted” by the river valley, all the texts that flow downriver carried by its waters (“(…) wszystko to, co >lepi się< do dolin rzek, wszystkie teksty, które płyną wraz z nią, trzymane przy niej siłą jej nurtów”⁴⁹...).

Furthermore, the experiences of Gloger’s protagonists stress in particular the value of hard work, resourcefulness, and frugality – the virtues that were important for the proper functioning of peasant farmsteads and households (Gloger discussed this question in his encyclopaedic publication *Encyklopedia staropolska ilustrowana*).

Another characteristic feature of *Baśnie...* is the characters’ trust in God. The need for God’s intervention appears in 11 out of 13 stories, which expressed folk concept of divine justice.

To conclude, nothing in the fairy tale world under analysis is as unique and precious as an honest life, fair social bonds, caring for one’s family, giving thanks to God, and respecting nature. Reading Gloger’s *Baśnie i powieści* today, we reach for timeless values of truth, goodness, and beauty in people’s actions. It is through these three great values of mankind that, according to Marta Wójcicka,, a fairy tale judges people and events, and communicates true virtue: that what really matters is the human spirit (“(...) bajkowa opowieść przynosi ocenę postaci i zdarzeń, komunikuje świat wartości – to, że o prawdziwe znaczenie mają przymioty duchowe człowieka”)⁵⁰. Folk sto-

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 102.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 97.

⁵⁰ Cf. the definition in the referenced on-line dictionary (no page count): M. Wójcicka, *Bajka magiczna*, [in]: *Polska bajka ludowa. Słownik*, ed. by. V. Wróblewska..., op. cit.

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ries give hope and comfort, and for this reason they were told by our ancestors. Fairy tales have archetypal character for they , envisage the deepest human needs and dreams. Bruno Bettelheim argues that the identification with archetypal figures of good and evil represented by fairy tale characters leads to a deep positive reaction⁵¹. Zygmunt Gloger seems to have known that far earlier.

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⁵¹ B. Bettelheim, *Cudowne i pożyteczne...*, op. cit., p. 31.

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