

nej. Każda z tych prac wymagałaby osobnego zainteresowania, tak ze względu na analizowany materiał, jak i precyzyjny warsztat analityczny i niebłahe ustalenia teoretyczne. Zagadnienia gatunku, zasadnicze dla nowoczesnej folklorystyki, są tutaj przedstawione wyczerpująco i wieloaspektowo.

Bardzo dobra jest praca węgierskiego folklorysty M. Hoppála pt. *Gatunek i kontekst w anegdocie*, w klarowny sposób pokazująca zasadniczą optykę dzisiejszego badacza kultury ludowej. Analiza wybranej anegdoty rozcięta została na cztery warstwy, z których tylko pierwsza jest analizą „treści” tekstu. Warstwa druga, to analiza „socjalnych okoliczności”, w których anegdota funkcjonuje. Warstwa trzecia jest analizą komparatystyczną — przeglądem typów anegdoty i możliwych kontekstów kulturowych. Warstwa ostatnia to analiza samego tekstu, tym razem wykorzystująca ustalenia trzech poprzednich.

Peniti Leino, folklorysta z Finlandii, analizuje legendy karelskie, by postawić sobie pytanie, jakie są *Funkcje komunikatywne i strukturujące epiki ludowej*. Satu Apo pyta o *Cechy strukturalne repertuaru bajkowego*. Anikó N.-Balogh publikuje pracę pt. *Niektóre pytania o gatunkowe cechy sagi*.

Książkę zamyka krótki artykuł Vilmosa Voigta zatytułowany *O systemie komunikacyjnym gatunków folkloru*. Jest to próba precyzyjnej schematyzacji gatunków folkloru ze względu na funkcje komunikacyjne. Praca nie jest właściwie artykułem, ale swego rodzaju tabelą folklorystycznych pierwiastków, folklorystyczną tablicą Mendelejewa. Na kilku stronach druku Voigt zebrał i usystematyzował całą współczesną wiedzę o literaturze ustnej. Praca ma olbrzymią wartość poznawczą — i metodologiczną — powinna być szybko spolszczona i wprowadzona do obowiązkowego spisu lektur studentów etnografii, kulturoznawstwa i filologii.

I tyle krótkich uwag o wspólnej inicjatywie wydawniczej Finów i Węgrów. Książka nowoczesna, „uczona”, podchodząca do literatury ludowej z precyzją

doświadczonych badaczy i dużą innowacyjnością teoretyczną. Warto zapoznać się z efektami takiego podejścia.

Andrzej Zawada

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The Editor in Chief of "The Problems of the Literary Genres"
(„Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich”)

I would like to ask you to publish this text in one of the numbers of „Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich”. It is a reply to the review of my book (*Angielska baśń literacka epoki wiktoriańskiej — The English Fairy-Story of the Victorian Epoch*) written by Jadwiga Węgrodzka and published in volume XXV, number 3(50) of your periodical. I would like to back up my request by a wish to exercise my right to reply to the criticisms and to defend my argument since, in my opinion, the reviewer presents my book in the distorted mirror of clearly biased critical judgements. I claim that most or nearly all of the criticisms directed against my book by the reviewer are due either to the malicious critical prejudice, or to a superficial and inadequate reading of my book.

If the reviewer had read, or even had skimmed through the second chapter of the second part of my book (discussing the Victorian didactic fairy-story) she would have surely noticed the analytical support for the distinction made between the didactic fairy-story for adults and that for children. The sections 2 and 3 of this chapter give plenty of examples of fairy-story/parable morals and of allegories clearly suited to the power of perception of an adult person; and, on the other hand, sections 4 and 5 give numerous examples of morals and allegories making use of the imagery and system of values clearly adjusted to the apprehensive faculties of a child addressee. I am unable to understand how it is possible to read this chapter and

not to notice the substantial documentation proving the validity of the distinction between these two types of addressee. I think that one can do it only when one's aim is to censure a book at all-costs—even at the cost of making statements which are evidently not true.

The reviewer is right to claim that the glorification of death does not do full justice to the complexity of the metaphysical problems contained in MacDonald's novels. However, she should have noticed the footnote 170 on page 127 of my book in which I admit that "The discussion of these (MacDonald's) novels merely touches upon the metaphysical ideas contained in G. MacDonald's works, and does not aim at revealing the great complexity and wealth of this layer of meaning; but rather at characterising the nature of the relationship between this realm of ideas and fairy-story conventions" (translations from Polish here and afterwards—mine). The reviewer is a young and inexperienced literary critic, and probably this is the reason for her not being aware as yet that a literary historical study does not have to treat in detail the problems which are marginal to the basic aims of the investigation contained in it; that it is enough merely to touch upon these inessential issues.

I am also amazed by the reviewer's claim that my book was intended as an illustration of the evolutionary (dynamic) theory of the literary genre, whereas, in reality, it presented the image of a literary genre which was typological rather than dynamic. It seems to me that my book, being based on the dynamic and evolutionary understanding of a literary genre, characterises the process of evolutionary transformation of the fairy—tale of folklore into the literary fairy—story, which takes place in the Victorian epoch. If the reviewer had read carefully the introduction and the conclusions of my book, she would surely have found there that the book was based not only on the evolutionary (dynamic) concept of a literary genre, but, also, on the typological understanding

of the phenomenon (c.f. the argument on pages 9—10 and especially 12—13 of the introduction and on pages 135—136 of the conclusions). And, again, I think this kind of statement is possible only when one wants to censure a book at all costs, even at the cost of making statements which are clearly untrue.

I am also unable to understand why the reviewer claims that my book fails to render the dynamism of generic oppositions inherent in individual texts. Nearly all the Victorian fairy—stories were characterised (or at least mentioned) in part I of the book in terms of generic tradition, and in part II — in terms of generic innovation, which clearly indicated the opposition of the elements of generic tradition and of innovation inherent in them and the discussion of many of these fairy—stories in more than one chapter of part I and/or part II pointed to the co-existence (dynamic opposition) of several traditional and/or innovatory variants of this genre. This censure is grounded on the reviewer's theory that "Dynamism (of literary genres) seems to be connected with the appearance of new functions rather than with mere presence of new and old elements". Does it mean that the reviewer does not acknowledge the theory (obvious and fundamental for modern literary criticism) that the opposition of traditional and innovatory elements offers crucial evidence for the dynamism of a literary genre?

The reviewer is also wrong when claiming that my considerations are limited merely to characterising the laws of the development of the genre which are inherent in it, ignoring completely cultural and literary mechanisms and contexts determining the described genological phenomena. But is it really so? Would it really be possible to characterise the Märchen, the fairy—tale about cheating a stupid ogre and the fairy—tale records of the beliefs of the English people, as well as the fairy—story fantasy, the didactic fairy—story (manifesting the didactic tendency characteristic of all the literature of this epoch), the roman-

tic fairy-story, the metaphysical fairy-story and the fairy-story of parody and humour without reference to some cultural and literary mechanisms? Each of these variants of the genre presupposes some definite literary and cultural mechanisms and contexts, which are either discussed in detail or at least hinted at in my book.

However, the most important criticism levelled against my book by the reviewer concerns its lack of a functional approach (the words "function" and "functional" constantly occur in this review, acting as a refrain to the critical argument). It seems that the reviewer commits here the mistake which is so frequent with young literary critics — the mistake of treating methodology of literary criticism in doctrinaire terms, and rejecting methodological approaches different from her own; the mistake of evaluating methodological stand-points according to the extent to which they fit in with her own theoretical assumptions, and not according to any concrete results brought about by their application to definite literary historical material. And this is the reason why she points to my not representing the functional approach as the major deficiency of my study. It is even more surprising that the reviewer does not specify at all what she means by this "functional approach"; an approach strongly advocated by her. The terms "function" and "functional" have many meanings in literary criticism (e.g. the function of a device in the structure of a literary work, the function of a literary work in the literary historical process, the social function of literature, etc.) and still more meanings in the humanities. However, even remaining on the ground of the reviewer's chosen methodology and admitting that the approach to literary historical material should always be "functional", a careful reading of the book might show that it indicates directly, or, at least implies many functions of the analysed literary historical material.

But I would have been inclined to

agree with the reviewer and humbly admit that my book lacks the more advanced level of functionalization of the described phenomena if it had helped me to overcome this defect, had prompted me as to some possible functions, and had indicated the right (i.e. functional) ways of treating the described phenomena. However, I become disappointed about the indicated by the reviewer right (i.e. functional) perspectives from which to view the investigated material. My disappointment concerns especially the following suggestions of hers:

1. The statement that the motifs of music, dance and poetry epitomize the artistic principles of construction of the fictional world, and appear in autothematic narrative situations thereby increasing the creative consciousness of writers, is simply wrong. If the reviewer had read carefully the three pages to which she refers when making this statement (pp. 76, 121, 122) she would have noticed that the motifs of music appearing in the stories discussed on these pages do not appear in their narrative situations and have nothing to do with increasing the writer's creative awareness; but that rather they constitute original realizations of the fairy-tale magic element (in the stories discussed on pages 121—122 they function as the magic way of expressing the most subtle human feelings) evoking clearly the conventions of romantic literature.

2. And again if the reviewer had read my book carefully she would have found there her own suggestion that the elements of humour, caricature and parody on the one hand signal the canonical status of the hitherto fairy-tale conventions, and, on the other hand, constitute an attempt to revivify the petrified generic structures. On page 127 of my book (just before the discussion of the fairy-story of humour and parody). I wrote that the fictional world of *The Rose* and *the Ring* and of *The Light Princess* is to a great extent shaped according to the Märchen conventions and referred to part I of the book (the statement which is identical with the

first part of the reviewer's suggestion), and the last sentence of chapter 3 of the second part of the book conveys the thought expressed in the second half of the reviewer's assertion: "the humorous parodistic fairy-story of Thackeray and Mac-Donald, as a delicate parody of the hitherto fairy-tale patterns, is the most bold attempt at breaking with the hitherto tradition of this genre" (c.f. p. 134). For these reasons the reviewer's suggestion does not add anything new to the treatment of this problem presented in my book.

3. No new perspectives and solutions are introduced by the reviewer's suggestion of some possible ways of functionalizing the motifs of journey and dream. The functions of these motifs in creating complex worlds of fairy-story fantasy (journey as a compositional axis for the presentation of these worlds and dream as a means of giving original and unconventional shape to them) are clearly specified in section 3 chapter 1 of the second part of the book. However, the reviewer's comment about the function of these motifs in strengthening verisimilitude of the fictional world is a truism.

4. The reviewer's suggestion about treating the evolution of the genre of the fairy-story as a development from the unified model of the fictional world in the fairy-tale of folklore through the heterogeneous model of the fictional world in the Victorian fairy-stories to the renewed establishing of the unified model of the fictional world in the 20th century fairy-story looks fascinating but is not based on fact, since not all the Victorian fairy-stories possess a heterogeneous model of the fictional world and

since the 20th century fairy-story, or at least, one of its most important trends, does not create a unified model of the fictional world. For example, the presented world of J.R.R. Tolkien's trilogy, the best-known English fairy-story of the 20th century, consists of a great number of lands inhabited by various tribes of fairy creatures similar, in a way, to *Mopsa, the Fairy* by J. Ingelow or other Victorian fairy-stories discussed in section 3 chapter 1 of the second part of the book—revealing a by no means unified model of the fictional world.

The great ardour of the reviewer's "functional" polemics makes her review inconsistent towards the end. At first she states that my criteria for distinguishing genre variants are not always clear, and that I do not suggest any functions of the distinguished genre variants; and then she contradicts these statements of hers by saying that the new genre variants dealt with in my study (fairy fantasy, didactic fairy-story, humorous fairy-story) are distinguished correctly and that their very names suggest the functions they performed in the Victorian epoch.

In concluding these comments I would like to express my hope that the reviewer will develop her brilliant ideas as revealed in this review by writing her own synthesis of the Victorian fairy-story—a synthesis which will be better than mine by being functional. I think that this should be done in the interest of science.

Wiesław Krajka

Lublin, November 15, 1983