Theological Discourse in the Formation of the Literary Tale: How Worldview came to Dominate Narrative

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Abstract. This study is motivated by new perspectives that help to expend the boundaries of multidisciplinary research. The article examines the discourse on the literary tale with regard to its theological specificity of narrative and how worldview came to dominate it. The most significant examples of German, Russian, Polish, Romanian and Ukrainian tales are analysed, taking into consideration national ethos. The specifics of the genre are explored in their historical and cultural contexts, with an emphasis on the difference between the literary tale and the folktale. Previous research indicates that the poetics of literary tales of this type has not been studied sufficiently. The paper aims to examine the literary tale within an ethno-national historical context, considering the main aspects of the Christian religious ethos of the 19th century. Our methodology includes an integrative multidisciplinary approach that combines the principles of historical poetics, hermeneutics, receptive poetics and classical methods of folkloristics in the light of transitivity theory.

The findings support the idea that reception peculiarities of Christian tale poetics predominantly focus on plot development, personosphere, chronotope, Christian tokens, divine symbols and paradigms. The focused was both on the encoded religious intentions of literary tales (requiring receptive decoding of allusions) and the transparently expressed appeals to God with an emphasis on Christian hermeneutic instruction. Accordingly, fabulous archetypes related to religious morality were analysed using the example of Pushkin's literary tales.

Overall, distinction between the genres of Christian fairy tale, Christmas tale and Christian fantasy appeared to be the most productive. We conclude that the genre matrix of the fairy tale remains open to various modifications, and consequently, fairy tale narrative structures when combined with Christian motifs actuate other genre forms. We emphasise that reception of theological discourse on a literary tale depends on the readers' psycholinguistic competencies and the peculiarities of their religious identity.

Keywords: theological discourse, literary tale, Christian motifs, religious ethos code, reception, narrative

Introduction: Theoretical insight into the origin of the genre

Whereas the emergence of the literary tale can be traced back to the era of Classicism, its principally origin was in trends within Romanticism, with its interest in the historical past, spirituality and folk art. The extensive oral tradition of folktales found a response in researchers and writers who collected folktales and created original stories coloured by national traits and specific worldviews. In contrast to the folktale, the new genre differed in the way these original authors presented the traditional plot in a modern frame.

Firstly, we should clarify that the first split between the folktale, and the tale as a literary genre, occurred after the debate between Scotsman James MacPherson and Oxford scholar Samuel Johnson, who denounced MacPherson for the hoax of translating *The Works of Ossian* from Gaelic. In 1765 MacPherson published two large supposedly original Ossian epic poems, "Fingal" and "Temora". Prior to this intellectual battle, the issue of fairy tale authorship had not arisen. Eighteenth century folklore studies took the first steps in this through the efforts of bibliophiles rather than real scholars. Only in the next century did interest in folklore take shape as an independent study.

Despite questioning the merits of McPherson's poems and despite his pre-Romantic stylisation, the Ossian poems had a profound effect on European and, in particular, Russian literature. Derzhavin, Karamzin, Batiushkov, Dmitriev, Gnedich, Zhukovsky, Baratynsky, and many other poets translated and imitated them. It should be noted that "Colna-Dona" (one of Ossian's poems) was translated in verse by Pushkin at a young age.

The names of 17th-18th century tale-tellers were already known to literary history, although the fairy tale plots of their stories often echoed each other, having a common folklore basis. None of these authors thought to make claims to other tale-tellers. Thus, Giambattista Bazile, the Italian collector of fairy tales, is known as the author of a collection entitled *The Tale of Tales* (1634), the first in European literary book of folk fairy tales. Carlo Gozzi, Charles Perrault, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm popularised this book and borrowed some plots from it. Some of these tales later became classics by Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm ("Sleeping Beauty", "Cinderella", "Puss in Boots"). However, if the first collectors of fairy tales and authors of classical French fairy tales Charles Perrault and Madame d'Aulnoy stuck to folk tradition and archaic language, researchers of German folk culture Johann Karl Musäus ("Folktales of the Germans", 1811–1812) and the Brothers Grimm ("Children's and Household Tales", 1812), preserving the composition and figurative, ideological content of the folktale, retold it in literary language, subjecting it to the author's processing and bringing it closer to the literary tale.

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National specificity and the syncretism of the genre

The era of Romanticism favoured a bold mixing of genre forms, in particular in relation to such syncretic fairy tale forms as fabulous narrative, fairy novella and especially poetic fairy tale, all of which were quite popular. Authors' original tales were increasingly transformed into detailed stories; their essential attributes were features inherent in other genres and parallel storylines abundant in characters.

The founding example of the German literary tale is "The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily" (1795) by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Most German romantics experimented with the genre of literary fairy tale: Christoph Martin Wieland, Benedikte Naubert, Friedrich de la Motte Fouque, Justinus Kerner, Friedrich Hebbel, Theodor Strom, Novalis, Johann Ludwig Tieck, Eduard Mörike, Clemens Brentano, Achim von Arnim, Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, Wilhelm Hauff, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Adelbert von Chamisso and Ernst Moritz Arntd.

In particular, the German writer Christoph Martin Wieland created the poetic tale "Oberon" (1780), which expressed fabulous elements that, due to the richness of images and sophistication of its Baroque styling, became widespread throughout Europe. Another representative of the German Romantic Movement Ludwig Tieck, experimenting with different genres, created several tales in the form of plays as well as parody tales, for example "Bluebeard", "Puss in Boots", "The World Inside Out", "Prince Cerbino, or The Journey in Search of Good Taste", and his famous Romantic fairy tale "The Fair-Haired Eckbert".

A separate lacuna among the tale-tellers was filled by the works of E. T. A. Hoffmann, who was the author of a number of original literary tales. In particular, we should mention "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King", "The Stranger Child" and the fairy tale for adults "The King's Betrothed", dating to the 1820s. Satirical treatment of aesthetics and the worldview of Romanticism can be seen in his fairy tale fantasy "Little Zaches, Great Zinnober" (1819). L. Volkova notes that at that time fantasies and other various stories that arose within the realm of folklore were called literary tales (Volkova 2001: 301).

After all, fairy tales based on the fantastic elements were becoming more widespread and popular. Such tales were highly valued by Wilhelm Hauff, the author of "Little Longnose", "Caliph Stork", "The Cold Heart", "The Story of Little Muck". The German tale-teller clearly distinguished between the genres of fairy tale and novelette.

Apart from the Germans other nationalities worked actively with the fairy tale genre. Among French romantics Alexandre Dumas (1802–1870) should be mentioned for his well-known fairy tales "The Brave Little Tailor", "Snow White", "The Little Mermaid", "The Snow Queen". The work of Danish writer

Hans Christian Andersen also contains social satire and folklore; a considerable layer of his work is his more than two hundred fairy tales (1835–1872), full of an original combination of humour and sorrow, fiction and real life.

This leads us to ask, what is the fundamental difference between a folktale and a literary tale? Initially, the folktale was a fragment of folklore syncretism, one of the versions available to anyone, or a rather arbitrary form of interpretation of a certain maxim expressing the truth. This shows its genetic relationship with mythology and religious views on the world order, and, at the same time, its own function in the holistic system of folk culture. In contrast to the myth as a form of religious worldview, since man already believed in the authenticity of the myth, the tale-teller deliberately indulged in fantasy, embellishing a found, well-known plot, filling it with his own details, taken from real life. Over time folktales tended to lose any connection with reality, and acquired an almost magical meaning. The folktale as a literary phenomenon was considered in detail by Vladimir Propp (Propp 1968).

Folktales in each nation had their own thematic specificity, determined by nationality and focused on a certain group of listeners. Moreover, there is no doubt that both the common people and the aristocracy in the various European cultures relied on their own cultural practice and had their own cultural codes. Thus, speaking of a certain typology of folktales, emphasising the supposed multiplicity of plot and image material, we consider this tale to be focused on a specific receptive milieu.

A literary fairy tale is distinguished from a folktale by its exceptional singularity, a close link with its author, its unique, non-variable form, and its focus on a specific target audience. In relation to the folk genre, it is a quasi-fairy tale. It does not fit into the folklore system but into the genre system of literature corresponding to the time of its appearance.

In view of the fact that the literary tale, as one of the most dynamic literary genres, adapted to certain cultural, historical and socio-political conditions, at the same time it reflects the worldview of the epoch and the ideological and/or religious beliefs of its author. However, despite researchers' numerous attempts to unify the genre of the Christian literary tale in order to impose a literary framework, the issue of definition and receptive poetics remain open.

Therefore, the aim of the proposed study is to clarify the receptive features of Christian motifs of 19th century literary tales and to analyse the theological characteristics of the genre in ethno-national historical context, considering the Christian-religious ethos of the tale.

Scientific reception and research methodology

The study of the historical and cultural context of the literary tale has attracted the attention of a wide range of researchers, for example B. Hellman (2013), J. Salminen (2009), L. Braude (1977), N. Gorbach (2016), O. Gorbonos (2017), L. Dereza (2005), V. Kyzylova (2012), N. Kopystyanska (2002), M. Lypovetsky (1992), L. Mushketyk (2014), N. Tykholoz (2005), etc., who have touched upon a number of modern genre study problems, including style peculiarities, plot structure and aesthetic-functional typology as they relate to the fairy tale. In particular, some scholars, for example Max Lüthi (1986), consider the genre of literary tale to have appeared as a consequence of the direct use of the folktale genre matrix. Others point to the gradual separation of the literary tale as an autonomous genre from the folklore source, for example M. Lipovetsky (1992), N. Tykholoz (2005). While other scientists devote their research to identifying and highlighting the key features of the genre, for example J. Zipes (2001).

Notwithstanding, numerous investigations have studied the function of Christian motifs, although mainly using the example of the folktale rather than the literary tale. First of all, we should note that the interaction of religious and mythological motifs was analysed by anthropologist James George Fraser (Fraser 1998). J. R. Murphy's study (2002) clarifies the religious context of German folk and literary tales in which human feelings are activated through motifs of faith (Murphy 2002).

Moreover, Christian motifs in Andersen's fairy tales were analysed by N. Pavlenko (2005), O. Popkova (2015), O. Derkacheva (2013), E. O. Orlova (2017), N. A. Khudneva (2017); biblical images, symbols and motifs in George MacDonald's fairy tales were discovered by O. B. Lukmanova (2012); Christian motifs in the works of Charles Dickens were examined by T. Sheveleva (2004); M. Malikova (2016), R. Islamova (2018) and E. S. Kupriyanova (2007) outlined Christian theme and the metaphorical depiction of Jesus Christ in the tales of Oscar Wilde; Christian issues in the works of J. R. R. Tolkien were analysed by V. O. Markova (2007).

The genre of literary fairy tale is characterised by researchers as an artistic system in which the ratio of folklore and fiction poetics elements is determined by their harmonious combination. From the folktale as an original structure, the literary tale inherits its universal integrity, which includes both the primary mythological idea of the world and its philosophical and symbolic understanding. According to L. Braude, "A literary tale is the author's artistic prose or poetic work, either based on folklore sources or completely original; the work is mainly fantastic, magical…; in which an incredible miracle plays the role of a plot point or serves as the initial basis for characterisation" (Braude 1977: 234).

Furthermore, O. Gorbonos (2017) notes, "the history of the literary tale begins with the work of European romantics, including national romanticism, as a result of interest in the local, accordingly these tales appeal to folklore traditions and their rethinking. After all, the tale corresponded to such Romanticism concepts as the artist's creativity freedom, his right to free fancy, and at the same time to a sense of moral responsibility for this freedom" (Gorbonos 2017: 138). Thus, a new space was created for the study of universal, eternal values and vices common to all human beings, combined with the disclosure of national and local. "The genre of the fairy tale allowed authors to pose global questions, address the eternal and the otherworldly and reveal its interaction with purely earthly, temporary things" (Kopystyanska 2002: 77). On the whole, increased interest in the fairy tale genre was motivated by the fact that it was no longer seen as something frivolous, "ignoble", "common", but was revered as a manifestation of the genius of the people, the "spirit of the nation" that revealed the universal or even the divine (Gorbonos 2017: 138).

Considering the above-mentioned theoretical background, our methodology included principles of historical poetics, hermeneutics, receptive poetics and classical methods of folkloristics in light of transitivity theory.

Christian tokens and cross-cultural influences

In accordance with the general European tendency of the period, the German literary tale assumes the important function of Christianising the subject matter. Analysing it using the example of the Grimm Brothers' tales, contemporary researcher Mona Körte says the following: the difference between the German literary tale and the original folklore sources is that cruel episodes and brutal endings inherent in folktales are significantly toned down in the literary tale by rescaling the roles and the "Christianisation of various moral deductions" (Körte 2012).

Below, using a few examples, we focus on a set of symbolic tokens associated with the Christian tradition, for example the meaning of the church and prayer in conflict resolution, the symbolism of flowers in the interpretation of plot lines and characters, the paradigmatic meaning of stones, classical biblical storylines (the parable about fratricide, the parable of the prodigal son, the symbolism of the trinity).

The most striking examples of the classical tripling of events are observed in the tales by Theodor Strom and Justinus Kerner. The protagonist of Storm's fairy tale "The Little Havelman" (1849), written for and about his young son, is a naughty and restless boy who is admired by all (people, animals, stars) and makes three life-giving forces work for him: first his mother, then the moon,

then the sun, although the attempt to subdue the sun to his will ends in defeat. Then the boy "was thrown down from the sky" and "would have died" if he had not been picked up by the "author". In Kerner's tale, the sacred number of three is a clue in the fairy tale "Goldy" (1813), where a skilled hero tries his hand at three professions, always surpassing his mentors and thus causing their indignation. In an attempt to become a fisherman, he pulls a crown out of the sea and becomes king. This talented person is lucky in everything, leading to the conundrum in the tale's finale – whether talent alone is enough in such a responsible matter as governing a state, or whether he is the Anointed of God.

A peculiar version of the fratricide motif is found in Storm's tale "The Mirror of Cyprianus" (1865), which combines in its plot traditional fairy tale images (two friendly brothers, a mother and stepmother, a magician) and objects (a magic mirror). Although brothers Kuno and Wolf do not kill each other, the murder of the elder, planned and carried out in accordance with orders given by the younger brother's mother, causes the death of her own son. Just punishment comes because the murder took place before the magic mirror that gives life, and, apparently, observes compliance with Christian morality, meaning that the centuries-old tradition of using a mirror as a ritual object passed into Christian folklore from the pagan era.

The significance of church and prayer is accentuated in the fairy tale texts of many German romantics. This is particularly evident in the example of Storm's two other fairy tales "The Regentrude" (1863) and "Bulemann's House" (1864). In the former, the church topos is interpreted in a pantheistic way, with all of nature as a divine temple. In the latter everything positive happens in relation to the church, i.e., the church premises, the organist, the graves in the graveyard decorated with white roses as symbols of miraculous healing.

In German literary tales flowers have a particular significance, as viewed through Christian floristics, a theme has been thoroughly explored by researchers (Trümpler 1955; Karabegova 2001). The examples can be found in E. Mörike's fairy tales "The Hand of Jezerte" (1853) (violets help the protagonist learn the truth), and in Novalis's "Heinrich von Ofterdingen" (a mysterious blue flower), and in E. T. A. Hoffmann's "The Golden Pot" (1814/1819) (in which lilies appear, a generalised symbol of the Universe) and "Master Flea" (1822) (an allegorical transition from the lily as a symbol of death to the rose as a symbol of revival).

Separately, we refer to J. L. Tieck's tale "The Runenberg" (1802), in which an unknown, but cherished, flower mystically contributes to the long-awaited meeting of father and son. This tale also contains a whole range of Christian symbols, with the author also using the parable of the prodigal son. First, at the beginning of his Christian journey, a charitable parishioner (Christian

by name) returns to his father, but then, after leaving the church, he loses his human qualities. This tale also triggers an important detail in the form of "stones", which by the way can be found in many other fairy tales, for example, in F. Hebbel's fairy tale "The Ruby" (1837, published 1843).

Christian exegesis interprets glimpses of gems as glimpses of divine truth (Blessed Augustine), and when in a fairy tale the gems turn out to be ordinary stones, the fallacy of the path taken by the character after leaving the church is emphasised. In Tieck's fairy tale the plot completely fits into church time–space. The author gives a detailed image of the protagonist's reverence for the church:

> … he went into its crowded church. The psalm was just over, and the preacher had begun his sermon. It was on the kindness of God in regard to Harvest; how His goodness feeds and satisfies all things that live; how marvellously He has, in the fruits of the Earth, provided support for men; how the love of God incessantly displays itself in the bread He sends us; and how the humble Christian may therefore, with a thankful spirit, perpetually celebrate a Holy Supper. The congregation were affected; the eyes of the hunter rested on the pious priest… The stranger youth had never been as he now was; so full of charity, so calm, so abandoned to the stillest, most refreshing feelings. He bowed himself in tears, when the clergyman pronounced his blessing; he felt these holy words thrill through him like an unseen power; and the vision of the night drew back before them to the deepest distance, as a spectre at the dawn. He issued from the church; stopped beneath a large lime-tree; and thanked God, in a heartfelt prayer, that He had saved him, sinful and undeserving, from the nets of the Wicked Spirit (Tieck, 2021).

The moral of the fairy tale is transparent: as long as a person remains in the teachings of Jesus Christ and leads a righteous life, he is safe; if, on the contrary, he is on a sinful path, he will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction. Thus, the German literary tale in most examples demonstrates the mental rationalism of the Lutheran faith, which gives specificity to the Christian theme.

The concept of "a dual world", a coexistence of fiction and real life, was also typical of Eastern European literary tales (Hellman 2013). Thus, in Russia the foundations of the genre were laid during the Romantic movement with prose fairy tales by Anthony Pogorelsky ("The Black Hen or the Underground People", 1829) and Vladimir Odoevsky ("The Little City in a Snuffbox", 1834), and poetic tales by romantic poets Alexander Pushkin ("The Tale of the Priest and His Workman Balda", "The Tale of Tsar Saltan and His Glorious and Mighty Son Prince Gvidon Saltanovich and the Beautiful Swan Princess", 1831; "The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish", "The Tale of the Dead Princess and the Seven Knights", 1833; "The Tale of the Golden Cockerel", 1834; Vasily

Zhukovsky ("The Sleeping Princess", 1832; "The Tale of Tsar Berendey", 1833; Peter Ershov ("The Little Humpbacked Horse", 1834). In particular, "The Scarlet Flower" (1858) by Sergei Aksakov was created according to the model of "Beauty and the Beast", first written by tale-teller Gabriel-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve, who is considered the first author of the original tale. Similarly, "The Tale of Tom Thumb", first published in 1621 by the Englishman Richard Johnson, has a lot of echoes of similar stories in other nations, including the Bukovinian fairy tale "The Hazelnut Child", written by Polish-German researcher Heinrich von Wlislocki and included by Andrew Lang in "The Yellow Fairy Book" (1894).

The cross-cultural influence of folk tales can be traced in Andrew Lang's English collections of fairy tales (25 fairy tale collections from different cultures, 1889–1913) and Joseph Jacobs' *English Fairy Tales* (1890), *Celtic Fairy Tales* (1892), and *Indian Fairy Tales* (1892), as well as in collections by other folklorists from different countries, including Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe (Norway); Alexander Afanasyev (Russia); Ivan Franko, Yevhen Hrebinka, Petro Hulak-Artemovsky, Levko Borovykovsky, Mykola Kostomarov, Osip Bodyansky and Panteleimon Kulish (Ukraine); Ion Creangă, Vasile Alecsandri and Mihai Eminescu (Romania); and representatives of other nations who collected and researched fairy tales based on ethno-cultural traditions.

Among the reference points that influenced the development of the literary fairy tale as a genre, it is important to accentuate the Christian religious vector, generated both by the worldview and beliefs of some nations, and by universal biblical values.

In Western Europe an interpretation of the term 'fairy tale' first appears in the "Synonim slovenoroskiy" manuscript dictionary of the mid-fourteenth century, as well as in the dictionary of theologian, translator, philologist and church leader Lavrentiy Zyzany-Tustanovsky (1570–1634) *Leksys, syrich recheniya, vkrattsi sobrany i iz slovens'koho yazyka na prostyy ruskiy diyalekt istolkovany* (1596, Vil'no), and later in *Lexicon slovenoroskyy i imen tolkovaniye* (1627) by Pamva Berinda.

Finnish scholar, folklorist and representative of the Finnish geographical-historical school of folklore Antti Aarne, in his classification *An Index of Folktale Types* (1910) distinguished Wonderful Tales, characterised by such features as supernatural helpers, objects, supernatural power or knowledge; and Legendary Tales in which God, saints, or devils appear (Aarne 1910). Aarne's comparative analysis of fairy tales was extended by the American folklorist Stith Thompson (Thompson 1928), which in 1928 became the Aarne-Thompson classification system of folktales. In addition, German scientist Wilhelm Wundt (1926), author of *Cultural Psychology*, distinguished seven categories of fairy tale.

Shortcomings in the mythological (Brothers Grimm) and migratory (Theodor Benfey) interpretations of fairy tale analysis were exposed by M. Hrushevsky, who substantiated the evolution of the fairy tale as a verbal cultural form in the ethnic-historical context. In particular, taking into consideration Christian legends about those who fought serpents (Saints Yuriy, Dmitriy, Fedir), he analysed the motif of fighting serpents in demonological tales, where the main importance is how travelling stories are processed and assimilated along ethnic lines (Hrushevsky 1993). Morphological analysis of the fairy tale was carried out by the Russian scientist Vladimir Propp (of the Formalist school), who theoretically substantiated a systemic relationship between motif units and proposed a study of the fairy tale by character function (Propp 1968).

Christian motifs and the theological details of the genre

Ivan Franko was the first in Ukrainian folklore studies to explore the problem of the poetics of Ukrainian folk prose, in particular fairy tales. Analysing the issue of motif, he defined the tale as a story in which reality is mixed with a miraculous element, so that the whole is a free product of fantasy without any collateral goal of church moralising. Instead, he described legend as a story in which reality is mixed with the miraculous, taken from the within the scope of ecclesiastic images and beliefs. Integrity usually has a deeper ethical, moralising or philosophical–religious basis (Franko 1895).

Similarly, in *Fairy Tales* (1882), a collection by Polish writer Józef Ignatius Kraszewski (1812–1887), we can trace not only a significant number of Christian motifs, but also outright appeals to God, Jesus Christ, angels and Saints. In terms of reception, for readers this creates clear horizons of expectation of Christian themes. In particular, "Boże dary" ("God's Gifts" 1879) emphasizes that "No soul comes out without these heavenly gifts, which the Lord Himself bestows, but then all souls, returning, must share the treasure entrusted to them" (Kraszewski 1879). S. Baidatska argues that Kraszewski's fairy tales "God's Gifts", "The Humpbacked Girl", "Matsius, the Simpleton", "The Gawk" and "The Fern Blossom" show numerous Polish literary innovations with regard to the narration style and personosphere. The merit of the writer was a combination of bizarre, folk and Christian figurative means. Each tale, according to the researcher, concerns a specific ethical problem, for example condemnation of pride and ruthlessness ("The Humpbacked Girl"), laziness ("The Gawk"), obsession with enrichment ("The Fern Blossom"), wasting God-given talent ("God's Gifts") (Baidatska 2016: 38).

Therefore, some researchers distinguish the Christian literary tale as a separate genre. In particular, Natalia Trauberg argues that a Christian fairy tale "should provide readers or listeners with the topos of the Lord's Heavenly Kingdom, where lame people begin to walk, the blind see the light, where there is a sacrifice" (Trauberg 2016). Thus, analysing literary tales by Russian romantic poet V. Zhukovsky (1783–1852), A. Voloshko (2013) accentuated the special Orthodox ethos, as the characters of his fairy tales pray, baptise, light candles, get married in church, sing prayers, give parental blessings, ask God to give offspring (Voloshko 2013: 55). The same can be said of Pushkin's tales.

In general, because they are not reducible to a single structural model, Pushkin's tales have a very specific, supertemporal style. Initially it seems that they depart from any spatial and temporal relationship to real life, and in this sense, they not only follow the pattern of the folktale, but can also be regarded as an analogue of Orthodox icon painting. The archetype leading us to the pre-image, the icon formula, once deduced by John Damascene (8th century), is suitable for a modern reading of any of Pushkin's fairy tale texts. Having taken such a receptive position, we can discover new and quite unexpected horizons. So, behind each fairy tale, as an archetype there is a deeply experienced moral, a specific lesson based on some completely one-dimensional virtue recognised by all people.

The following five fairy tales can be labelled original images, i.e. the ideas hidden behind the text:

– Retribution for greed, the sin of avarice ("The Tale of the Priest and of his Workman Balda");
– Life is full of worries, but love overcomes all obstacles ("The Tale of Tsar Saltan");
– 'Adam's' obedience to his wife ("The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish"),
– Providence safeguarding an orphan ("The Tale of the Dead Princess");
– A woman as an objective evil, as a dangerous destructive temptation ("The Tale of the Golden Cockerel").

Each element of any of these fairy tales is subordinate to its original image and is explained precisely by Pushkin's text. Consequently, we have five fabulous archetypes, which in essence are somehow related to religious (not humanistic) morality. Characters in them win only when they follow the relevant commandment of Divine Providence, and not when they disregard it. Hence, the greedy priest taking tribute even from demons deserves punishment.

As a result, envy is punished, but Christian virtues such as humility, obedience, and trust in the will of God are rewarded. In this way, the natural male primacy is diminished by female arbitrariness. For that reason, the beautiful queen dies from her own malice (she is "arrogant, vain, wayward and jealous" – four vices, anti-virtues, in one character). And, finally, the demon

of lust, in the person of the Shamakhan Queen, subsequently leads first to fratricide, then to the breaking of the vow, and, finally, to the death of King Dodon from the beak of the Golden Cockerel.

As for the aesthetic parameters of Pushkin's fairy tales, each of them represents a special model, a non-repeating harmonic pattern. This is always an enchanting game of the metamorphic in the genre aesthetics, with an infinite number of options. Although Pushkin's tales can be studied not only at the level of mentality, they can also be regarded as educational 'injections' of the Russian mentality into children's consciousness, as moralising stories, and also as deep philosophical fables with hidden biblical connotations.

The basis of the receptive analysis here is chronotope as a fundamental 'coordinate axis'. The meaning of this allows us to see how the old tradition of the supertemporal folktale is rejuvenated in Pushkin's text.

We can also assume that the principle of spatial and temporal organisation was borrowed by Pushkin from the Christian canon, oriented to the parable nature of biblical gospel truth. In the Pushkin's tales, in some paradoxical way, sacred time goes with profane time (simplified, mundane), as well as generalised, symbolic space being combined with the space detailed by capacious geographical realities.

The Orthodox basis of Pushkin's worldview, for example, as in "The Tale of Tsar Saltan", is undeniable. This is a mental background resonating throughout the text, even more, across all his tales. Any of the tales is worthy of close analysis in this regard. In "The Tale of Tsar Satan" (Pushkin 1831), no matter how villainously the sisters acted towards the Tsaritsa, they did not dare to tar the baby unbaptised in a cask. It is the prince's baptismal cross that saves him and the Tsaritsa:

> From the oak, a branch he rent
> And a sturdy bow he bent.
> With cross the silken cord that hung
> Round his neck, the bow he strung.

In addition, as the main Orthodox virtue, obedience to one's parents is the Tsarevich's main characteristic. And, finally and significantly, the constructed world on Buyan Island reproduces the image of an Orthodox place:

> At a spacious city gazed,
> Girdled by a wide and tall,
> Strong-embattled snow-white wall.
> Churches golden-domed stood there,
> Holy cloisters, mansions fair.

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The trembling, colourful world of the Orthodox principality extends towards our virtuous characters:

> Cityward their steps they bent,
> Through the city gates they went.
> Belfries thundered overhead
> Loud enough to wake the dead.
> Round them poured a mighty throng,
> Choir boys praised the Lord in song;
> Nobles, splendidly arrayed,
> Came in coaches, gold inlaid. (Pushkin 1831; translated by Louis Zellikoff)

In this tale the Orthodox world coexists with paganism. Black Kite, Fair Swan, her uncle Chernomor, the metamorphoses of Guidon into a mosquito, a fly, a bumblebee and sorcery – all is from the pre-Christian era. But paganism is defeated and crowned with the complete victory of Orthodoxy. The Black Kite is killed, sorcery is destroyed, the Swan Princess casts off her pagan look. She turns to the Orthodox faith.

And, perhaps, it is no less important to emphasise here that the geography of Buyan Island indicates Kyiv with the description of the city on the mountain very accurately conveying the impression of Kyiv Pechersk Lavra Orthodox monastery. Even the name of the Swan Princess was borrowed from "The Tale of Bygone Years", which told of the origin of the city's name. Kyiv was named in honour of the eldest of three brothers Kiy, Schek, Khoriv, and their sister Lybid.

In this tale we trace the entire mental ethical catechism of the family: obedience to parents and parental blessing, relying on God's providence, Holy Matrimony, expectation of childbirth. Love and marriage are not emphasised by an erotic element; on the contrary, eroticism is absent here. In accordance with the style of the Orthodox icon, any fact is depicted here as a graphically realised idea, although it doesn't resemble real life.

Generally, each of Pushkin's tales contains a core of his unique worldview. Each original fairy tale does not contradict others, but is affirmed by the nature of the author's writing. In each of them we recognise the same author, changing only his creatively diverse image, subordinated specifically to the author's chronotope. As a rule, Time, contrary to its organic indestructible linearity, is organised here as a stylistic figure (ring, climax, hyperbole, accumulation). Space is reproduced as a specific element, for example a forest, an abyss, a sea–ocean, the sea of life, magic land, etc. The paradox is that in this way Pushkin manages to create the illusion of the opposite, the illusion of spatial and temporal infinity and the fundamental inexhaustibility of the reproduced world.

Significant examples of literary tale christianisation can be found in other cultures; hence, the greatest Romanian poet Mihai Eminescu in his first prose fairy tale "Făt-Frumos din lacrimă" ("Prince Charming of the Tear", 1870) combines Christian ideas and features of folk epics with the symbolism of Romanticism. The tale is a masterful reference to folktale motifs with the use of the vivid means of a romantic novella.

In "Făt-Frumos" the synthesis of biblical stylistics and the poetics of a folktale, with expressions of love for one's native land is remarkable. Thus, the Immaculate Conception of the protagonist is perceived as a contamination of pagan and Christian beliefs:

> Persuaded by the kneeling empress's prayer, the eyelids of the cold icon got wet and a tear ran down from the dark eye of God's Mother. The empress stood up in all her glory, touched the cold tear with her dry lips, and sucked it into the depths of her soul. That was the moment when she got pregnant. A month had passed, then two months, then nine, and the empress gave birth to a son as white as the milk froth, with moon-golden hair (Eminescu 1870).

As a hero endowed with divine powers, Făt-Frumos underwent many ordeals. He saved his beloved Ellen, and in the Christian manner forevermore became friends with his enemy the neighbouring King. But, when rescuing his sworn brother, Făt-Frumos was enchanted (transformed into a brook in the desert) and only God could restore his human form:

> In those times, God was still walking the Earth. So, one day two people were travelling across the desert. The face and clothes of the first one were shining brightly in the sunlight; the second one, seemed but the shadow of the first. They were God and Saint Peter. Their feet, hot from the dryness of the desert sand, walked into the coolness of the clear river […] Then both of them sat down in the shade, and God started thinking of His Father in the skies, while Saint Peter was listening to the slow melody of the lamenting spring. When they got up to continue their journey, Saint Peter said: "God, make this spring become again what it was before."
>
> "Amen!", God replied, and raised His holy hand, then they left towards the sea, without looking back.
>
> Magically the spring and the trees disappeared, and Prince Charming, as if awakening from a long dream, looked around. He saw God's lighted figure walking the waves of the sea, and the waves were bowing before Him, just like all the creatures on dry land, he saw Saint Peter following behind… (Eminescu 1870).

This tale demonstrates the characteristic dynamics of folk narration and a peculiar transformation of traditional beliefs and ideas about good and evil, which

represent the mentality and spirituality of the Romanian people. In particular, God and St Peter are similar to humans in Eminescu's tale: they travel, get tired, have human needs.

In another tale by Eminescu "The Godson", God becomes the godfather of a child from a poor family, endowing his godson with the ability to see the future. The folktale about the prophet (soothsayer) is also mentioned in the work of the Czech folklorist, professor of Slavic studies at Karl University in Prague, Jiří Polívka, who draws thematic parallels with Ukrainian fairy tales (Polivka 1895). Comparisons with Ukrainian tales from the collections of O. Kolberg, B. Hrinchenko, M. Drahomanov, I. Rudchenko, P. Chubynsky, M. Yastrebov are also mentioned in an article by Aarne, published in translation in the magazine "Zhivaya Starina" (Aarne 1898).

Similar Christian motifs are also the quintessence of the mystical worldview in Ukrainian literary tales of the outlined period, in particular the motif of the character gaining unusual strength or ability due to his miraculous or holy birth ("Ivan, Given by God" by Pavlo Chubynsky), or through the rite of christening (for example the Galician folk tale "Goddaughter" from the collection of Osip Rozdolsky), or by means of a helper. Angels, Saints or even God often act as helpers in Ukrainian fairy tales. The elements of the Christian worldview encoded in the narrative are similar to apocryphal stories about the travels of Christ and St Peter, or other Saints who change the destiny of the common man. In Ivan Manzhura's tale "Saint Nicholas, the Orphan's Helper", the boy redeemed the icon of St Nicholas from merchants who mocked it. He saved it and took it with him. On his way, the orphan met an old man, who turned out to be the Lord, and who helped the righteous orphan in all his good deeds.

The fabulous characters of Ukrainian literary fairy tales embody the ancient ideas of people around the World, which are mainly related to religious devotion and are the reflection of folk piety – the worship of God, interpretation of the ideas of Genesis, Paradise, the Trinity, the Last Judgement and Salvation.

In studying the personology of the 19th century Ukrainian literary tale, the Christian religious aspect also plays a significant role because the vast majority of Ukrainian ethnographers, folklorists, researchers and authors of literary tales were descendants of clergymen (Petro Hulak-Artemovsky, Pavlo Zhytetsky), their parents had ecclesiastic educations (Mykhailo Hrushevsky, Sidir Vorobkevych), they studied at the seminary (Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky), were theologians, theological seminary alumni (Osip Bodyansky, Yakiv Holovatsky, Pavlo Zhytetsky, Osip Rozdolsky, Sidir Vorobkevych), or were even ordained (Yakiv Holovatsky, Sidir Vorobkevych).

The first publications of Ukrainian fairy tales include Osip Bodyansky's collection "Ukrainian Tales of the Cossack Isko Materynka" (1835), in which

folktale plots are elaborated in poetic form, and which Ivan Franko called a characteristic phenomenon of Ukrainian Pre-Romanticism (Franko 1903).

Bodyansky's fairytale entitled "About the Tsar's Garden and a Living Flute" (Bodyansky 1835) clearly alludes to the biblical concepts of the Garden of Eden and fratricide (the story of Cain and Abel from the Book of Genesis 4:2–12). This tale traditionally starts when, by God's will, three sons are born to the childless Tsar and Tsaritsa, two elder smart ones and the youngest, a simpleton. According to the canons of the tale genre, only the youngest son, in contrast to his intelligent elder brothers, is lucky enough to defeat a wild boar that devastates the garden. In the Christian tradition, the wild boar symbolises cruelty, destruction, unbridled savagery and the power of demonic forces.

The fall of man in Bodyansky's tale is associated with the motif of the Garden of Eden. The marvellous garden in this tale is full of flowers and fruits and birdsong. This blessed place is the embodiment of the popular idea of Paradise, the Lord's Heavenly Kingdom, which is essentially the shelter of the soul. Apart from Osip Bodyansky the violent sin of fratricide is a popular plot, reinterpreted by Yevhen Hrebinka in "The Scary Beast". In both Bodyansky's and Hrebinka's tales, the archetype of fratricide is personified by the elder brother. The temptation of enrichment and envy prompts the elder brother to sin. But thanks to a magic flute his sin is known to all. The flute was made by a shepherd from a reed that grew on his brother's grave.

The magic flute motif, which by singing accuses the murderer of committing a crime, is mentioned by M. Hrushevsky (1896) using the example of Ukrainian folktales from the collections of P. Kulish, I. Rudchenko and I. Manzhura. A flute made of viburnum or other plant that grows on the grave of a murdered girl or boy has endless filiation in the world of folklore (Hrushevsky 1993).

In the world of literature the most notable interpretative patterns relating to the killing of siblings as reflections of the biblical drama are found in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, *Much Ado about Nothing* and *King Lear*; Byron's *Cain, A Mystery*; Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*; John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*, etc. Ukrainian writers also referenced the fraternal violence of the Bible in Olga Kobylyanska's novel *The Earth*, Mykola Kostomarov's poem "The Moon", and Ivan Franko's poem "The Death of Cain".

In the tradition of Christian fiction, the New Year and Christmas fairy tale became extremely popular in the second half of the 19th century. The tradition of Christmas storytelling was becoming so widespread that during this period various Christmas almanacs with fiction stories on relevant topics were published.

In European literature the most striking examples of the Christmas fairy tale are Hoffman's *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King* (1816), *A Christmas Carol*

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(1843) by Charles Dickens; "The Christmas Tale" (1843) by Friedrich Wilhelm von Hacklender; "The Fir Tree" (1844) and "The Little Match Girl" (1889) by H. C. Andersen. M. V. Gogol's "The Night Before Christmas" (1832) was written in the tradition of the calendar ritual story. In Russian literature, the Christmas theme was echoed in Dostoevsky's story "The Boy and Christ by the Christmas Tree" (1876); in Tolstoy's parable "Where there is love, there is God" (1885); in Saltykov-Shchedrin's "The Christmas Tale" (1886); and in Christmas stories by Leskov and Chekhov, etc.

Among Ukrainian writers who wrote tales on the subject of Christmas and New Year were Ivan Franko ("The Christmas Eve Tale", 1883); "St. Nicholas's Judgement", 1895); Marko Cheremshyna ("The Tear"); Olena Pchilka ("The Little Pine", "In the Crèche"); Mykhailo Kotsyubynsky ("The Fir Tree"); Sidir Vorobkevych ("Old and Young Fir") and others.

Within the paradigm of calendar ritual prose the Christmas tale is characterised by traditional moral imperatives from Christian doctrine. Using characters who are in a state of spiritual or material crisis, this type of prose uses a miracle to strengthen their faith and give hope for a better life. The miracle is perceived not only as divine intervention, but also as a happy coincidence. This is due to the fact that biblical (evangelical) motifs and genre-specific characteristics are combined with social themes. The Christmas tale generally has a happy ending, in which the good invariably defeats the evil. However, in contrast to the parts of the tradition that have a moral lesson and a happy ending, for example as in Dickens's tale, in the Ukrainian Christmas tale sad endings are quite common.

Conclusion

Finally, the following conclusion was drawn: in the receptive aspect, the literary tale as a genre demonstrates powerful multi-vector possibilities. For example, the literary tale can be morally didactic, scientific, cognitive, religious, ideological, philosophical, aesthetic, etc. Predominantly Christian motifs are encoded in the literary tale, which require receptive decoding, although they are often clearly exposed through the prominent Christianity dogma and hermeneutics of the authors. Reception of Christian motifs in a literary tale depends on the receptive competencies of readers, and the peculiarities of their religious identity.

The spiritual transformations of the characters motivate readers to extrapolate plot situations to their own life experience. This is facilitated by the dual fairy tale world, within which a fairy tale personosphere is organised and where characters of different kinds coexist – fairies, sorcerers, God, Jesus Christ,

angels, saints, people and, in modern literature, even machines and robots. As a result, we observe a layering of mystical, allegorical and metaphorical images that requires some receptive effort from the reader.

The genre matrix of the fairy tale appears open to various modifications, so that the fairy tale narrative structures with Christian motifs actuate other genre forms. In particular, we can talk about the genres of Christian fiction and Christian fantasy (C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, George MacDonald and other writers of fantasy fiction) as promising vectors for further receptive and genre studies.

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