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1. Illustrations for children and reception studies : preliminary remarks

- 1 The astonishing wealth and diversity of fairy-tale illustrations accumulated through the centuries invite several possible angles of analysis, such as the interaction between text and image, the way illustrations reflect a particular period's general style and aesthetic preferences, pedagogical intentions, political and ideological message, cultural assimilation, and approaches to issues such as gender, violence, and sexuality, among many others. One very important question, which is hardly ever taken into consideration by scholars, is that of the lasting impact of illustrations on the general perception of some tales and their influence on the collective imaginary. The reasons for this omission are easy to understand. While the composition of illustrations, their ideological, pedagogical and aesthetic aspects, interpretative approaches to the texts they refer to and the dialogue with the iconographic tradition are all part of the images themselves and therefore are accessible to analysis, the perception of images – that is, the “ actual ” perception and not the “ intended ” one – is bound to be subjective and elusive. It is impossible to evaluate the impact of illustrations or their real influence on the audience in a direct and measurable way. We have to rely on data such as the number of editions, repetition of certain visual patterns and motifs, and occasional readers' testimonies to outline a history of the reception of fairy-tale illustration. All this is what we could call circumstantial evidence, to be treated with caution and usually not conclusive enough to be fully trustworthy. Yet it is undeniable that some visual representations have indeed played a fundamental role in the dissemination of fairy tales and their cultural impact, beginning with the famous frontispiece of Charles

Perrault's *Contes de ma mère l'Oye*, which depicts the eponymous Mother Goose as an old woman speaking to a group of aristocratic children around a fireplace. Reprinted again and again in French and foreign editions of the tales, in the original or modified, "updated" versions, with time the illustration acquired a canonical iconographic status and undoubtedly influenced the perception of the fairy tale as an oral folk narrative, widely accepted both by the general audience and by many scholars¹. Similarly, in nineteenth-century Britain the visual element contributed to shape the reception of the Grimms' tales, beginning with their first English translation by Edgar Taylor and David Jardine in 1823, illustrated by George Cruikshank : " It is probably not excessive to state that Cruikshank's version once and for all fixed the way that English-spoken peoples think of fairyland "².

- 2 The "Golden Age" of illustration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw an exponential growth of fairy tale images, often engaged in an active dialogue with the text of the tale, going far beyond the mainly ornamental function of the early illustrations. At the same time, however, the variety of artistic interpretations on the rapidly expanding national book markets made it more difficult for illustrators to equal the universal visual impact of, say, Gustave Doré's images for Perrault's tales on the international audiences in the second half of the nineteenth century³. What is more, they found themselves in competition with a flood of mass-market editions, a competition impossible to win. In fact, while numerous original and innovative illustrations offer exciting material for scholarly research, even the most acclaimed contemporary illustrators such as the Italian Roberto Innocenti, whose books have been published in several countries, can reach only a fraction of the total readership. In the time of cultural globalization⁴, the incessant multimedia presence of Disney's appropriated versions of fairy tales presents far more than "a considerable threat to more sophisticated endeavours "⁵; in fact, they are the only visual representations with a real hold on the collective imaginary worldwide.

2. Illustrations for children in post-war Poland : general considerations

2.1. Polish children's book market in the aftermath of World War II

- 3 It is even more interesting, therefore, to look into the exceptions to this general trend, such as the communist Poland of 1945-1989, where a combination of several factors created a situation in which fairy-tale illustrations were to become part of the general, shared experience for more than one generation of readers. Since the heterogeneous nature of these determinants and their interdependency makes it difficult to assess the exact importance of each of them separately, I will proceed by considering the main categories of impact : general political-historical circumstances and the strategies of the publishing industry, general situation of graphic art in children's books in Poland, and the position of the classic fairy tales within the context of Polish literature for children.
- 4 In the immediate post-war period, the depleted technological base, scarcity of paper reserves, lack of funds and the priority given to the mass production of schoolbooks, made illustrations in the publications for children, especially colour ones, a rare luxury. At the same time, the communist government from the very beginning

considered children's books an integral part of the process of education, seeing them as a tool for forming the new citizen of the socialist society, and therefore aimed to seize full control of the publishing process. After a short period of relatively liberal policy in 1944-1948, when small private publishers were still allowed to operate, the state nationalized all publishing houses and imposed its own editorial rules and norms. In addition, every single book was to be approved by the censors before print. At the beginning of the 1950s almost all publications for young readers were concentrated in one publishing house, Nasza Księgarnia, which for many decades held a near monopoly on the Polish market of children's books⁶.

- 5 How did this general context reflect on the policies concerning book illustrations for children? The first and most fundamental result was a nearly complete absence of foreign illustrations throughout the communist period. For both financial and ideological reasons, the Polish publishers would not import illustrations from abroad, with exceptions made for (rare) acquisitions from other socialist countries or old, classic out-of-copyright images⁷. Above all it meant a drastic reduction of Disney's presence in and influence on the Polish visual culture. This is not to say that Disney's products were completely unknown in Poland: in the 1930s Polish distributors imported some Silly Symphonies and Mickey Mouse shorts, while in 1938 Disney's first full-length animated feature film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (*Królowna Śnieżka i siedmiu krasnoludków*) arrived in Poland. In the post-war period some full-length animated films hit the theatres in the 1960s, once the cultural politics of the state became more liberal, and in the 1970s Disney programs would become an occasional television treat, especially at Christmas, but there were no Disney books, comics, gadgets or toys on the Polish market until 1989. Therefore, exposure to Disney design and aesthetics was very limited, and did not significantly influence the collective imaginary of the child audience.

2.2. Publishing strategies

- 6 Two factors that shaped the national market of children's books were the selection of titles for publication and their print run. In the 1950s the number of new books for children released annually was as low as about 250-280 titles⁸, and the numbers of copies of each edition were huge: the average print run was fifty thousand, but for the most popular books it was not unusual for a hundred or even three hundred thousand copies to be published⁹. This fact, combined with the depletion of pre-war library resources, which was aggravated even further by the library purges carried on in the early 1950s¹⁰, created a situation in which almost every child in Poland would read a given book in the same edition and with the same illustrations. Moreover, rather than prepare a new edition of a popular book, Nasza Księgarnia would continue to reprint the same version over years or even decades: to give just one example, Carlo Collodi's *Pinocchio* in Zofia Jachimecka's translation and with illustrations by Jan Marcin Szancer had 15 editions between 1950 and 1989, reaching a total of over 1.5 million copies sold¹¹. This meant that for nearly forty years succeeding generations of Polish children shared a visual image of the Italian *burattino* from the same source. The impact of book illustrations on children was even more important given the limited access to television outside the main urban centres. The development of the television network in Poland was in fact late compared to the United States and Western Europe: in the first half of the 1960s only about 4 million viewers (about 14% of the population) had

regular contact with television programs¹². Many adult Poles have childhood memories similar to those of Sebastian Frąckiewicz, the author of a recent book on Polish illustration :

I don't remember who told me that the images seen at a young age remain with us for our entire lives. Maybe it is commonplace, but I have to agree. Seated on the floor on old carpeting, between the primitive metal bookshelves of the library, I would pore over the tattered books with the illustrations by Wilkoń, Rechowicz, Butenko, or my then favourite Janusz Towpik. Just as for many other children from peasant or working-class families, contact with the high-quality book illustrations of the 1960s and 1970s was my only form of contact with good visual art¹³.

- 7 The lasting impact the illustrations for children had on the readers in that era finds its confirmation in numerous blogs focused on this topic: comments, posts and discussions there are an invaluable source of information about their reception and importance¹⁴.

2.3. The status of illustrators and illustrations

- 8 All of the above-mentioned external factors were of fundamental importance for creating a favourable context for children's illustrations to become part of the collective Polish imaginary, but just as crucial was the capacity of the artists to create memorable images. Several factors conspired to stimulate a veritable explosion of high-quality illustrations for children. First, Polish publishers did not have to worry about the commercial aspect of the publications, nor did they need to flatter the tastes of a mass audience, as the market was starved for books and in any case profits never constituted a priority for the communist authorities. On the contrary, illustrations for children were considered an important part of aesthetic education, which should help young readers to develop an artistic sensibility and appreciation of the visual arts. The publishers proudly underlined that :

The commercial attitude – which morbidly pervades the publishing industry for children in the West, and by feeding inferior tastes accumulates great but immoral profits – has not been indulged in our country, and has not influenced even in a minimal way the high expectations and criteria regarding illustrations¹⁵.

- 9 Unlike the texts, the illustrations of children's books were not subject to close ideological control and very rarely, if ever, would get into trouble with the censors. It was also fortunate that a distinct trait of the experimental artistic illustration for children developed in Poland in the period between the wars was inspired by folk art, and it could thus be easily incorporated into the new political contexts. Some artists of the older generation, many of whom taught at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, were also employed at key positions in the publishing industry for children and could inspire and encourage many talented students to find their vocation as illustrators, as well as to help them get commissions. The most important role in the development of what would be later called the “ Polish Illustration School ” was played by Jan Marcin Szancer (1902-1973), himself the illustrator of over 200 books, mostly fairy tales. The achievements of Polish illustrators soon became noticed abroad, receiving several prestigious prizes at international events and book fairs (at Biennale Milano in 1960 as many as 10 Polish illustrators were awarded gold medals for their art). Many of them saw their illustrations published outside Poland.

3. Fairy tales in communist Poland

- 10 The publishing history of fairy tales in post-war Poland had several ups and downs. In the first years after the war a few small publishers that had survived into the new political regime, printed several cheap editions of both collections and single-tale editions, opting for the type of texts that were certain to sell well, especially given the starved book market. Printed on low-quality paper, the books contained old translations or hastily concocted adaptations of the most famous tales. The illustrations were few, usually black and white, and certainly not aiming at high artistic quality. Since the print run of these editions was low and the presence of private publishers in communist Poland was very short-lived, they did not have any significant impact on the visual reception of fairy tales. When the state nationalized the publishing industry, however, Nasza Księgarnia was initially not very keen on releasing classic tales which in the meantime had become an object of heated ideological debate. Many radically orientated educators considered them a problematic literary genre, which should be adjusted to the new formative purposes of the socialist state :

The attitude of the authors towards the new fairy tale should undergo a revision. There are many topics and motifs, such as hatred, cunning, and deceit that should be eliminated. Several “ attributes ” of the tales have also become antiquated¹⁶.

- 11 One has also to bear in mind that at the beginning of the 1950s, of the three most famous classic fairy tale authors, only the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen were relatively well-known to Polish readers. Charles Perrault's tales had first penetrated Poland in the nineteenth century almost exclusively in the form of free adaptations, often transformed into “ national tales ”, and the situation did not change in the first half of the twentieth century. The Grimms' tales arrived in Poland relatively late, at the end of the nineteenth century¹⁷, but they became quite popular in the following decades and there were numerous editions of more or less (usually less) faithful translations, with the authors' names listed on the cover. After World War II their German identity (and the appropriation of their *Märchen* by Nazi propaganda), however, made the Brothers Grimm initially *personae non gratae* in communist Poland. Several critics and educators attacked the “ sadism and cruelty ” of their tales, suggesting that they had given the first impulse to the inhuman and ferocious behaviour displayed by the Nazis during the war. As a result, at the beginning of the 1950s libraries were purged of several editions of the tales and of some of their free adaptations¹⁸.
- 12 The Grimms' tales were the only evident casualty of the new political and educational context in communist Poland. On the whole, the heated theoretical debate about the fairy tale in the late 1940s had but a limited impact on the diffusion and the status of fairy tales (and none on their illustrations). Few Polish authors offered mildly “ progressive ” versions of classic tales : in Ewa Szelburg-Zarembina's *Kopciuszek [Cinderella]* (1949) the protagonist chooses to marry a shoemaker over the prince “ who has no useful profession ”, in Jan Brzechwa's *Jaś i Małgosia [Hansel and Gretel]* (1960) the witch turns out to be a janitor in a candy factory who just wants to teach the children a lesson for having eaten candies fallen from the lorry belonging to the plant. Some older versions of the classic tales, such as Janina Porazińska's *Kopciuszek [Cinderella]* (1929) were modified slightly to eliminate religious connotations and Nasza Księgarnia was encouraged to increase publications of traditional tales from other communist

countries. As a genre, traditional and classic fairy tales remained firmly present on the Polish market of children's books through the whole communist era, with only a relative drop in the peak years of the Stalinist period in 1949-1954.

3.1. Andersen's tales

- 13 Hans Christian Andersen, whose popularity in Poland surpassed that of the Grimms at that time, was also far less problematic ideologically. His tales could be presented as stories "which bring to light the writer's social attitude towards injustice and oppression, towards the prepotency of malice; tales based predominantly on realistic and folk motives which still today have not lost their moral and humanitarian values"¹⁹. Therefore, Andersen's tales never experienced the period of publishing hiatus undergone by the Grimms' *Märchen*. They were among the first books published in Poland after the war (between 1944-1948 there were 21 editions of Andersen's tales). In 1951, at the peak of Stalinist repressions, when any fantastic element in children's literature was frowned upon, Nasza Księgarnia published a selection of 27 tales with illustrations by Jan Marcin Szancer. This version, reprinted almost twenty times by 1989 and thus reaching by then almost 2 million copies, was to become the most recognizable visual interpretation of Andersen's tales in post-war Poland (fig. 1). Even after the end of the communist era this version of Andersen's tales has continued to be reprinted up to the present day almost every year, and is still very popular despite the presence of numerous alternative and more modern editions on the market. In 1958 Nasza Księgarnia released another selection of tales, illustrated by Zbigniew Rychlicki, later awarded the Hans Christian Andersen Prize by the IBBY. The book had four editions, the last one in 1982, but its impact on the readership was not even close to that of Szancer's images. Unusually for the Polish publishing context, it was not Nasza Księgarnia but Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, a publisher oriented mainly towards the adult reader, which in 1956 printed a three-volume edition of *Baśnie*, containing 153 tales written by the Danish author. This version, too, had 10 editions up to 1989. Since the 1970s it was enriched by illustrations, with each volume illustrated by a different artist: the first by Janusz Stanny, the second by Andrzej Strumiłło and the last by Jerzy Jaworowski. While all of them proposed fascinating and unusual interpretations of the tales²⁰, their oneiric vein and intense emotional content was not really child-friendly, producing more often than not feelings of morbid fascination and fear²¹ (fig. 2).

<Image en attente de droits>

Fig. 1 — Jan Marcin Szancer, Andersen's "Thumbelina" (1951).

<Image en attente de droits>

Fig. 2 — Janusz Stanny, Andersen's "The Princess and the Pea" (1977).

- 14 In addition to the collections there were also editions of single tales, especially in the 1970s and 1980s. These small books had print runs ranging from 20 to 200 thousand copies, but rarely more than one or two editions. Printed on cheap paper, often in paperback, they were not made to last and did not reach as large a readership as the full-length volumes. Probably the most memorable of these single editions was *The Snow Queen*, illustrated by Jerzy Srokowski, which by 1989 reached its 5th edition. The artist's recognizable drawing style, characterized by simple forms and flat, rounded heads and almond eyes of the human figures, very successfully conveyed the psychological truth of the protagonists and created a deep emotional impact²².

3.2. The Grimms' tales

- 15 Compared to the relative abundance of Andersen's books in communist Poland, the tales of the Brothers Grimm were a rarity on the market even after the end of the Stalinist period, which marked a less restrictive publishing policy regarding literature for children. In 1956, Nasza Księgarnia published *Baśnie*, a modest selection of 22 of the Grimms' tales, based on a purged DDR edition from 1954, and illustrated by the wife and husband team Bożena Truchanowska and Wiesław Majchrzak. The book, released initially in a standard run of a hundred thousand copies, was a huge success, reaching 9 editions by 1989 – almost a million copies. Moreover, until the 1980s it remained the only volume of Grimm's tales present in Poland, making its visual influence even more exclusive than in the case of Andersen. Only in 1982 did Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza finally publish the collection of all 200 tales in two volumes. Interestingly, this first encounter of Polish readers with the entire Grimm legacy stirred a heated debate in the press and many protests from parents, shocked by the violence and cruelty in some tales²³. Elżbieta Murawska's rather disturbing images offered an interesting take on the tales (in fact they won awards at the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava in 1983 and in Poznań in 1984), but they were not particularly endearing to children and indeed did not leave a lasting visual impression, even though the book had 4 more editions in the 1980s²⁴. Unlike the Danish storyteller's, until the 1980s there were hardly any Polish editions of the Grimms' single tales, the only two being *Jagódka* (*Rapunzel*) in 1960, with uninspiring illustrations by Eugenia Różańska, and *Złota gąska* (*Golden goose*) first published in 1967 (second edition 1982, third 1990) with illustrations by the ever-present Jan Marcin Szancer, which are still remembered fondly by many readers²⁵.

3.3. Perrault's tales

- 16 Charles Perrault's tales have been present in Poland since the late nineteenth century in various adaptations, usually published under the adaptor's name. For a long time, publishers in communist Poland followed the same practice. Among the retellings the most popular were several nationalized versions of "Cinderella", followed at quite a distance by adaptations of "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Puss in Boots". The first translation of Perrault's tales appeared as late as 1961, and, by the standards of communist publishing for children, it was a very low-key publication, with a print run of only twenty thousand copies. Even more tellingly, it was not launched by Nasza Księgarnia, but by Czytelnik, a publisher which only occasionally ventured into the field of children's literature. The book, enriched with (few) colour and black and white illustrations created yet again by Jan Marcin Szancer, was the first Polish translation, and not an adaptation of the French tales. For many readers it was also the first opportunity to encounter tales such as "Donkey Skin" or "Bluebeard", almost completely unknown in Poland. However, despite the very good literary quality of the translation, rendered by the eminent writer for children Hanna Januszewska, and Szancer's charming illustrations, the volume did not meet with the readers' favour and was never republished.
- 17 Some years later, Hanna Januszewska published her own rewriting of "Cinderella" and "Puss in Boots" based on her previous translation of Perrault's text. These versions,

published by Nasza Księgarnia in 1968 in sixty thousand copies, with numerous endearing watercolour illustrations by Bożena Truchanowska (Cinderella) and Janusz Grabiański (Puss in Boots), were received with great enthusiasm by readers and soon were introduced into elementary schools. Subsequent editions of “Cinderella” – five in all until 1985 – had an average print run of two hundred thousand copies. With time, Januszewska’s retelling replaced previous Polish adaptations of the tale and Truchanowska’s images became the best-known visualisation of the story (fig. 3). Encouraged by the success of these first retellings, Januszewska also adapted other Perrault tales. She eliminated scabrous parts from “Sleeping Beauty” and “Little Thumb”²⁶ and dropped “Bluebeard” altogether. Thus rearranged, the tales were published in 1971 by Nasza Księgarnia as *Bajki*, with the annotation “edited by Hanna Januszewska”, but still mentioning the name of Charles Perrault on the cover. This version, illustrated by Janusz Grabiański, was received enthusiastically and would be reprinted five times until 1989.

<Image en attente de droits>

Fig. 3 – Bożena Truchanowska, Perrault’s “Cinderella” (1968, Hanna Januszewska’s adaptation).

3.4. Old illustrations in a new context : after 1989

- 18 The political shift of 1989 and the subsequent explosion of free private publishing of children’s books shuffled the cards in play. Today, after the crisis of the 1990s, when Polish bookshops were flooded with cheap and trivial mass-market illustrated books, often in bad taste, there is a strong demand for high-quality children’s publications, and new, creative illustrators have emerged. Although their talents have been noticed and appreciated, even winning them some prestigious international awards, in the new historical and cultural context no artist can dream about even coming close to the immense impact the illustrators once had on the collective imaginary in the context of publishing practices of the post-war Poland. The shared nostalgic memory of these once-upon-a-time books is still vivid in the minds of adult readers, and is capable of evoking strong emotional reactions, judging by several blogs dedicated to the old illustrations and numerous comments from their followers: “For my generation Andersen will remain forever a Siamese twin of Szancer” confessed recently a well-known Polish writer for children, Joanna Olech, born in 1953²⁷. Many of these nostalgic readers would be glad to transmit these treasured emotions to their children and this wish – obviously unrealistic in the new cultural context – probably accounts for the recent boom of reprinted children’s books from the communist era in the Polish book market.

4. The influence of illustrations on the perception of fairy tales

4.1. The Szancer effect

- 19 The lasting, strong emotional impact that Polish illustrations have had on the readers leads to a logical assumption that they must have in some way shaped the perception of fairy tales themselves. However, so far this question has been barely touched in

scholarly research²⁸ and at this point it is possible to suggest only some preliminary hypotheses that should be investigated by further studies.

- 20 First, one should consider the phenomenon that could be called the “Szancer effect”. Jan Marcin Szancer was neither the most experimental nor the most awarded Polish illustrator, but he was undoubtedly the most influential. After World War II he gave up on the avant-garde graphic inspirations present in his previous works, developing an essentially realistic style of representation, characterized by delicate colours, soft lines, graceful, slender human figures and anthropomorphic animals and objects. He apparently possessed an uncanny capacity to understand children’s visual tastes and his images cast a spell on many generations of young readers. Even today, many adult Poles, not remembering the plot of a fairy tale, let alone its author, still have a clear image of Szancer’s accompanying illustrations impressed in their memory. Curiously, the artist created multiple images for different adaptations and translations of the best-known fairy tales, such as “Cinderella” or “Puss in Boots”. Due to the immediate recognizability of his style the identity of the tales has been further confused; they were transformed into “Szancer’s tales” rather than Perrault’s, Grimm’s, Szelburg-Zarembina’s, Krüger’s etc.

4.2. Transforming fairy tales into stories for small children

- 21 Polish illustrators were well aware of their artistic status and of the importance of illustration in children’s books, in the belief that “the illustrator is a co-creator of the book”²⁹. Usually, however, they did not impose their individual interpretation on the text, rather trying to reinforce its message or enhance its emotional impact. This strategy is particularly evident in Grabiński’s illustrations for the adaptation of Perrault’s fairy tales made by Hanna Januszewska. Drawing a lesson from the relative failure of her 1961 translation, Januszewska transformed the tales into child-friendly stories, creating chatty, serene narratives, full of humour and comic banter, enriched with details of everyday life familiar to children. The retellings were greatly enhanced by warm, idyllic illustrations by Janusz Grabiński, whose watercolours with an impressionistic flair matched perfectly the cheerful atmosphere of the stories. Neither the wolf in “Little Red Riding Hood” nor the ogre in “Little Thumb” have a menacing air, and the protagonists seem to be children, rather than girls and boys of marriageable age (fig. 4). The figures move in a vague, barely hinted space which emphasises the fairy-tale quality of the stories. Grabiński illustrated over 100 books published in twenty languages, but his images for Perrault’s tales were one of his most successful works and indeed they have been reproduced in several countries³⁰. In Poland, the fortunate combination of Januszewska’s child-friendly narrative style and Grabiński’s magical images infused with a joyful mood contributed to making *Bajki* one of the most beloved children’s books in communist Poland and fixed the idea of Perrault’s tales as gentle stories for small children.

<Image en attente de droits>

Fig. 4 – Janusz Grabiński, Perrault’s “Sleeping Beauty” (1971, Hanna Januszewska’s adaptation of Perrault).

4.3. Polonizing the tales

- 22 The predilection towards presenting the protagonists as children rather than adults was very common in the illustrations of other Polish artists. It was combined with a strong tendency to resort to folkloristic and national motifs in visual representations, especially as regards the adaptations of the most famous fairy tales derived from Perrault and the Grimms. One has to bear in mind that Perrault's influential *Bajki* was published as late as 1971 and that the canonical *Nasza Księgarnia* compilation of 22 Grimms' texts (1956) did not contain several among the most popular tales, such as "The Fisherman and His Wife", "Seven Ravens", "Sleeping Beauty" and "Hansel and Gretel". Also, the images in the volume were scarce, one for every tale, and mostly black and white, with only five in colour. Therefore, even though they were very stylish, characterized by delicate lines intent on capturing the spirit or the symbolic meaning of the tales, there was just not enough of them to create a strong visual memory of a given tale. Such tales as "Cinderella", "The Little Red Riding Hood", "Sleeping Beauty", "Puss in Boots", "Hansel and Gretel", "Seven Ravens" were known in Poland mostly through retellings, often presented as "national fairy tales". Even in the case of less radical remakes, which in theory were based on the texts of the Brothers Grimm or Charles Perrault, the illustrations often "polonized" and "folklorized" the context. This attitude was particularly evident in the case of the Grimms' tales, inevitably "de-germanized". On the other hand, some Grimms' fairy tales arrived in Poland via Russia through Pushkin and Afanasyev. For example, "The Fisherman and His Wife" reached Poland through the mediation of Alexander Pushkin's retelling, and Polish illustrations have always put it in a Russian context, even in the retellings which did not mention Pushkin's name. Among retellings of the most popular tales, probably the most beloved and visually influential was *Królowna Śnieżka* (*Snow White*), written by Maria Krüger and illustrated – of course – by Jan Marcin Szancer. First published in 1970, the book had four editions until 1989 and established both the idea of six (sic!) dwarfs as agile, wiry little folks with pointed red hats and of the protagonist as a pale, slender blonde in a white dress (fig. 5). The "polonization" strategy in this case is discreet and indirect, due mainly to the fact that the dwarfs look very much like Polish *skrzaty* (little folk) from the famous Polish classic for children by Maria Konopnicka, *About the Dwarfs and Little Orphan Mary* (1896), also illustrated by Szancer.

<Image en attente de droits>

Fig. 5 – Jan Marcin Szancer, "Snow White" (1970, Maria Krüger's adaptation).

5. Conclusion

- 23 To sum up, it seems that one can talk about at least three kinds of influence of the Polish illustrations from 1945-1989 on the perception of fairy tales. In the first place, they undoubtedly reinforced the concept, already present in Poland, of the fairy tales as charming stories for small children. It is difficult to recreate the exact dynamics of interplay between images and texts, but it appears that they mutually corroborated this idea, which became so fixed in the minds of Polish readers that the first attempts to propose precise, philologically correct Polish translations of classic fairy tales were published only at the beginning of the new millennium. Closely related to this tendency

was also a frequent visual “glocalization” of the most popular tales, which was initially present especially in the nationalized adaptations, but subsequently penetrated also into more neutral retellings and translations. Finally, the memorable illustrations created the readers’ emotional bond with certain tales, based not on the narrative but on the pictorial aspect of the book: the peasant Cinderella, the good-natured wolf, the cheerful Hansel and Gretel are all images conjured from visual rather than verbal memory. Other suppositions would be worth investigating, as well. For example, there might be a correlation between the emotional attachment to the illustrations from the communist period and frequent negative reactions towards Disney fairy-tale aesthetics among the older generations of Polish audience. It also seems plausible that the impact produced by the illustrations is somehow related to the lasting preference for the classic fairy tales as the favourite reading for small children: unlike many countries, in Poland classic fairy tales still occupy a prominent place on the shelves of children’s departments in bookstores. However, to verify these and other suppositions extensive reception studies would be needed, and they should be started soon, while the link with the past is still vivid and present.

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NOTES

1. See L. Marin, " Manger, parler, aimer dans les contes de Perrault " and more recently S. Le Men, " Mother Goose illustrated " and C. Velay-Vallentin, " Charles Perrault, La conteuse et la fabuliste ".

2. E. D. H. Johnson, " The George Cruikshank collection at Princeton ", p. 9.

3. There were few exceptions to this general rule, in which the illustrations came to be perceived as an almost inseparable part of the text, e.g. John Tenniel's images to *Alice in Wonderland* or E. H. Shepard's illustrations to *Winnie the Pooh*.

4. Noticeable especially in English-speaking countries, the phenomenon of diversification of the book market promoting national, ethnic or culturally oriented retellings of fairy tales in the name of ' diversity ' can be perceived, paradoxically, as a reinforcement of the global market strategy, rather similar to video game " glocalization ".

5. M. Nikolajeva, " Illustration ", p. 473.

6. Small booklets for children were published also by Przedsiębiorstwo Upowszechniania Prasy i Książki "Ruch", while books for teenagers also came out at Dom Wydawniczy Iskry, founded in 1952, and later by Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza and Młodzieżowa Agencja Wydawnicza, created in the 1970s. Only very occasionally would books for young readers be released by other publishing houses.
7. For example, La Fontaine's Fables were published in 1955 (and in subsequent 6 editions up to 1989) with the illustrations of J. J. Grandville.
8. H. Boguszevska, *Ilustracja i ilustratorzy lektur dla uczniów w młodszym wieku szkolnym w Polsce w latach 1944-1989*, p. 160.
9. L. Biliński, *Zarys ruchu wydawniczego w Polsce Ludowej*, p. 106.
10. Poland's material losses during World War II included the destruction of nearly 70% of library collections and 22 million books (B. Bieńkowska (ed.), *Straty bibliotek polskich w czasie II wojny światowej*). Furthermore, with the introduction of censorship and state control over the market of children's literature, thousands of books for children were deemed "inappropriate" for the new socialist context of education, and they were consequently removed from the libraries and destroyed.
11. The only alternative edition of Pinocchio in the same period appeared as late as 1987, translated by Lucyna Krzemieniecka and with illustrations by Joanna Młodożeniec. Even with a print run of a hundred and fifty thousand copies it could not replace Szancer's long-established vision.
12. A. Kozieł, *"Polska telewizja w latach 1952-1989"*, p. 279.
13. S. Frąckiewicz, *Ten łokieć źle się zgina*, p. 4.
14. Some of the blogs focused on children's illustrations : <<https://jarmila09.wordpress.com/>> ; <<http://ilustracjadladieci.blogspot.com/>> ; <<http://www.book.hipopotamstudio.pl/>> ; <<http://mojeksiazeczki2.blox.pl/html>>.
15. S. Aleksandrak (ed.), *Nasza Księgarnia*, p. 168 sq.
16. M. Kann, *"Pierwsza konferencja poświęcona zagadnieniom związanym z literaturą dla dzieci i młodzieży, zorganizowana staraniem i z inicjatywy Wyd. 'Czytelnik' w październiku 1946 r.*, p. 245.
17. See M. Halub, "Die Märchen der Brüder Grimm in Polen"; M. Wozniak, "Polishing the Grimms' Tales for a Polish Audience".
18. K. Kowalczyk, "Czy wszyscy znają Jasia i Małgosię. Problem kanonu baśniowego na przykładzie baśni ze zbioru *Kinder und Hausmärchen* Wilhelma i Jakuba Grimmów", p. 48.
19. Z. Brzozowska, *Andersen w Polsce*, p. 65. However, the "politically correct" prefaces to the editions of Andersen's tales served just as a smokescreen: the collections published in the 1950s included such popular and by no means "realistic" tales as Thumbelina, The Snow Queen, The Swineherd, The Princess and the Pea or The Flying Trunk. (Detailed list of contents of all Andersen's Polish editions 1884-1964 in Brzozowska, *Andersen w Polsce*, p. 86-109).
20. Stanny's illustrations won the graphic competition organized by the Hans Christian Andersen Award on the bicentennial of the writer's birth.
21. As the comments in the blogs show, such as a.e. <<http://garazilustracji.blogspot.com/2011/02/trzy-tomy-andersena-tom-ii-strumio.html>>.
22. See for example <<https://jarmila09.wordpress.com/2010/01/11/krolowa-sniegu-j-ch-andersena/>> ; <<http://zaczytani.blox.pl/2012/11/Hans-Christian-Andersen-Vladyslav-Yerko.html>>.
23. See N. Kuc, "Bracia Grimm na ławie oskarżonych", p. 43 sq.
24. Murawska's illustrations for Grimms' tales are almost never mentioned in numerous internet discussions & blogs. Rare passing remarks that can be found are not encouraging ("rather scary", "I did not like them" etc.).

25. See for example <<http://poleczkazskiazkamibeel2.blox.pl/2009/08/Zlota-gaska-Wilhelm-i-Jakub-Grimm.html>>.
26. Januszewska ended *Sleeping Beauty* with the festive engagement dinner (even the mention of the wedding night has been cancelled). Little Thumb underwent even more radical rewriting: the protagonist and his brothers are not abandoned by their parents but simply lost in the woods, the macabre episode of the ogre's daughters, killed by him by mistake, disappears completely, and Little Thumb does not steal all the ogre's money, but only his seven-league boots.
27. J. Olech, "Myślisz".
28. H. Boguszewska, *Ilustracja i ilustratorzy lektur dla uczniów w młodszy wieku szkolnym w Polsce w latach 1944-1989*, M. Woźniak, "Imagining a Polish Cinderella".
29. Majchrzak, in H. Boguszewska, *Ilustracja i ilustratorzy lektur dla uczniów w młodszy wieku szkolnym w Polsce w latach 1944-1989*, p. 34.
30. The Polish edition does not contain all the watercolors created for Perrault's tales by Grabiański: some foreign books had many more illustrations and also included images for the texts omitted in the Polish editions (like *Bluebeard* and *Griselda*).

ABSTRACTS

The article examines the impact of fairy-tale illustrations on the collective imaginary and the reasons why "measuring" the effective influence of images on the reader's imagination is a difficult and complex task. From this point of view, the situation of communist Poland (1945-1989) analyzed here is a special case. The conditions and constraints to which the Polish illustrators of three great fairy-tale authors, Perrault, Grimm and Andersen, were subjected are studied in the context of a series of heterogeneous circumstances – historical and ideological context, editorial policy, iconographic tradition, development of the "School of Polish Illustration" and the ambiguous and fluctuating status of fairy tales in the literary and cultural system – which have given images a major role in the formation of a common Polish imagery.

L'article aborde la question de l'impact que les illustrations des contes de fées peuvent avoir sur l'imaginaire collectif et les raisons pour lesquelles «mesurer» l'influence effective des images sur l'imagination du lecteur est une tâche ardue et complexe. De ce point de vue, la situation de la Pologne communiste (1945-1989) analysée ici constitue un cas particulier. Les conditions et contraintes auxquelles ont été soumis les illustrateurs polonais de trois grands auteurs classiques de contes de fées (Perrault, Grimm et Andersen) sont examinées à partir d'une série de circonstances hétérogènes – contexte historique et idéologique, politique éditoriale, tradition iconographique, développement de «l'école de l'illustration polonaise», ainsi que le statut ambigu et fluctuant des contes de fées dans le système littéraire et culturel – qui ont permis aux images de jouer un rôle majeur dans la formation d'une imagerie polonaise commune.

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