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Annotated editions as a misappropriation of author's voice and of children's reading

Among many controversies related to fairy tales, their uncertain status as a text is one of the most fundamental, although rarely discussed. On the one hand, they are often perceived as authorless and timeless products of the folk spirit or the collective unconscious. On the other hand, however, they are often presented as literary artifacts, created by individuals in specific historical contexts. The tension between these two extremes is ever-present in Polish annotated "required school reading" editions of the fairy tales by Charles Perrault (1628–1703). Annotated editions have been a subject of controversy since their appearance on the Polish market in the 1990s: seen as useful, necessary or even unavoidable, they have also been criticised for their mediocre quality and anti-humanist influence (Dynak, 71–72; Lutomierski, 251). In the case of Perrault's tales, annotations present them confusedly both as timeless folk creations and as historic artifacts, as well as insist on their simplified, didactic interpretation, denying the reader's subjectivity and independence (Wasilewska, 130). The texts themselves are bowdlerized and rewritten to fit the mould of the fairy-tale ideal conceived by contemporary educators and publishers. The analysis of the annotated editions by Greg (*Baśnie*, 2017) and Ibis (*Kopciuszek i inne baśnie*, 2012; *Sinobrody*, 2018) allows to identify the ways in which tacit manipulations present therein falsify the original author's voice and subject the child readers to ready-made interpretations, fabricated by adult mediators in the interest of the goals set in the school curriculum.

Keywords: fairy tales, annotated editions, Charles Perrault, school reading, adaptation

References:

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Barbara Kaczyńska is a graduate of applied linguistics and history, translator, and PhD student at the Department of Applied Linguistics (University of Warsaw). She has written papers on metafiction in children's media (*Image of the (Adult) Narrator and (Child) Reader in the French Translation of A Series of Unfortunate Events*, in: *Translatio et Histoire des idées. Idées, langue, déterminants. Vol. 1*, Berlin 2018) and on fairy tales (*In Search of Lost Morals: The Translation of Moralités in Charles Perrault's Fairy Tales in Selected Polish Texts*, „Dzieciństwo. Literatura i Kultura” 2019, 2). Her current research focuses on Polish adaptations of French *contes de fées*.