

JERZY CIEŚLIKOWSKI

CHILDREN'S FOLKLORE

(Part 2)

The “voices of birds and animals” and their graphic replicas recorded by folklorists belong to children's, not adult, folklore. It is a natural language, where a sign seems to adhere to meaning in a maximum way. Animals have this natural language, in which anger, tenderness, joy, longing, pain, despair speak a poor yet at the same time expressive language, when the whole richness of emotions is contained by a tone pitch, in a duration of a sound, in situations of “speaking”. A dog's bow-wow, a cat's miaow miaow, a cow's moo, or a rooster's cock-a-doodle-doo have been graphically coded and, as a matter of fact, they are an agreed-upon and much conventionalised cipher, representing not only a scale and colour of language, but also its suitability on the simplest and universal level. These are conventional phrases, but natural enough to be identically understood and recorded in all transcriptions into human languages. This looks similar when we consider babbling in a baby's language called pre-speech, that is language on the level of naturalness. “Animals' languages” originated from that and hence their (animals') namings. A dog, for a shorter or longer period of time, is named after itself (after its “language”) – bow-wow – and is tried and tamed in the flexion of the human language (“There is now bow-wow”), before it finally becomes a “dog”. A horse and the whole “horseness” will be named after the sound made by the hooves of a running horse, and not by an articulated word, but by clicking.

The “language” of animals appears on three levels: as a “language” which animals “speak” with one another, “overheard” by people and sometimes being the first natural naming, the christening of animals; as a “language” that animals “speak” among themselves, and, finally, as a “language” which humans speak to animals. On the first level, the “language” of animals is poor, that of birds – rich, especially that of song birds. Here is, for example, a folk transcription of a nightingale's “language”, a good singer:

pu-we, pu-we, to-witta-woo, to-witta-woo, pu-we, pu-we, to-witta-woo, tweet
tweet...

That those words, their clusters and phrases, which “say nothing”, can signify secret, important, and very old things was not only a folk-simpleton conviction, but also a conviction of poets. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this became a clarification of many poetics. Birds “talk” and sing this first language which is a common root of the language of animals and humans. Tetrapods have forgotten much of it, and, by the way, they are less verbose than birds and people, but a bird’s “tweet, tweet”; “pu-we” are closest to these proto-words. In his *The Morning in the Forest*, Velimir Khlebnikov (the translation of J. Śpiewak) has written:

Lesser whitethroat: To-witta-woo-to-witta-woo
 Finch: Pu-we-pu-we-pu-we
 Lapland bunting: Tweet-tweet-tweet-tweet
 Bunting: Twee-wee-wee-twee
 Woodpecker: Tock-tock-tock-tock

The poet has named the language of birds a zaum one, a language situated beyond reason. Yet the zaumness is polyvalent, open to multiple and secret meanings.

In the language of animals, one sought either those oldest, secret meanings or – this was in the language of song birds – musicality or pure songness based on rich sound instrumentation. The latter functioned in a very remote and rich topos called a bird concert, once productive in literature, nowadays present only in some works for children. (Tuwim, Buczkówna) as well as in an animated TV film for children and on the radio.

On the second level, there is a language which animals speak among themselves. This is a translation of a natural language into the articulated language of people with the preservation of the elements of the former out of concern for keeping up its structure. In rustic folklore, we find many examples of such articulated phrases of birds to people, fragments of bird dialogues. In a yard, geese, turkeys, hens, ducks as well as sparrows and pigeons are the most talkative birds. Their interjections, swear words, mutual attacks, quarrels, aspersions – this is an invariable repertoire of behaviours bird “languages” in folklores of all nations. Perhaps an expressive side to their “language”, a sharpness of tones, and then their appearance (a wattle in a turkey), a behaviour in a flock (fighting cocks or cocks mating with hens) suggested such a way of interpreting the bird “language”. In children’s literature, this characterological, folk translation has undergone an attenuation which takes place, for example, between the understanding of the terms “cat fight” and “rumour”. Nonetheless, in children’s literature, the whole specific current has accepted, adapted, and developed according to inspirations contained in them this “language” in its typical “sound” and “social” valorisation of individual birds and animals.

Beyond a yard, the second place of overhearing birds were occasional songs. Here, lullabies and Christmas carols were most distinctive. “Talking” animals and birds fill up childish spacetime:

Birds are flying into a shed,
They are singing for Jesus,
A nightingale begins...

And in another carol:

A hare sitting with rabbits
Was tapping with its feet.
Sparrows were just chatting, when they drank a little.
Out of meadow dialogues, the frog one is the richest.

On the third level of the “language”, there is one which people speak to animals, but which is a further step in a direction of anthropomorphic taming of an animal. This is excellently seen in a horse, for example. One said to it: “giddyup”. These were the words already not from the natural circle for a horse, approving of its freedom, but they were phrases of power language, of commanding, not losing hope though of some naturalness of communication, of getting one’s message across. These words in the human language “do not mean anything”, they are in a way invented for a horse, much as whistling is for a dog, “puss, puss” for a cat, “chuck chuck” for a hen, “come on duck, duck” for a duck. Not partaking of their (animals’) language, they try to be similar to it. Their richness results from multiple contacts with an animal and involving it in situations of serving man. Hence there are so many words to a horse, and, on the other hand, a complete lack of words to a dog was dictated by its such advanced taming that one talked to a dog and talks to it in the pure human language. And a dog understands it. When children’s literature was filled with domestic animals, and then with exotic ones, all animals learned the human language and spoke this language among themselves.

Animals in children’s folklore are not only through “language”, but also through their way of being, through their behaviour. Most often, we find them on the occasions of: singing – playing, dancing, eating – feasting and working. This takes place in a carol, thus in a Christmas play, in a song, for example, in a funny song about a bird wedding, in a song about who married whom, who danced with whom and how they danced, who did what, and who helped whom. Both occasions: a Christmas one and that of a bird wedding come into contact with each other. Carol motifs are probably older, the occasion of a wedding – later. But also here a fictionally coherent and logically thought-out 18th-century song of a “wedding” breaks into loose fragments, into an enumeration of animal protagonists in various activities and connecting them in ever different pairs: those that get married and those that dance together. The catalogue of animals itself extends, there are more and more of them, there appear more and more exotic ones.

Here also the organising element is an activity: singing and playing. Birds are singing. Some, in their natural way, do it beautifully (a nightingale, a skylark, a blackbird), others do it in an artificial way, and so wrongly (a goose) or

parodically (an owl) Mammals are similar, when they join in singing: a donkey, an elephant. This is also the case of dancing, which is also natural for birds, although not for all of them, and is against the nature of tetrapods. The activity: “to sing, to dance” is a constant element of a rhyming song. So: who sang, who played, how he did it (descant, alt, “his nose”, pipes, a drum, a violin), who married whom (an eagle married a falcon, a hawk married a hare), who danced or who went dancing with whom (an owl with a sparrow, a fly with a mosquito, a goat with a wolf). These activities, and we can add such ones as threshing, mowing, raking, tending, bread baking, brewing, cooking millet, trading and so on – evoked protagonists. Yet animal protagonists were defined in their appearance by their skills of behaving in a particular activity. A rooster never dances, yet it brews (beer, for example), sells alcohol, drinks beer, vodka; a bear in turn dances, an elephant plays its trumpet, a nightingale sings alto, a sparrow couples with an owl for a dance, a fly with a mosquito, a hoopoe rakes hay, a duck bakes flat-cakes.

Out of the enumerated activities – dancing is most productive. It is not limited only to birds, tetrapods, but encompasses everything what is on earth, in the sky, in water and in the air.

A fish was dancing with a crayfish,
and parsley with parsnip,
a broom dances, a poker dances and a barn dances,
Kuba, Jurek
and a fusilli, and Eastern pastry,
winds dance and the “sun is dancing”.

Let us revoke here dancing as a structure of many children’s games, and add dancing as an activity most efficiently evoking and organising a “fables” plot on its two vectors: a lyric, melodic, rhythmic, jocular and parodical one and dancing as an autotelic fable.

Keep on dancing, on dancing,
my dancing thing,
and if you can’t,
you’d better sit down –

a personification of a clumsy dance by evoking a neologism a “dancing thing”, analogous with a “singing thing”, by creating an existence “without a face”, without an appearance, which exists only in the very activity itself.

The being of “animals” is in verbal folklore, through their voices, nature and behaviour, an artificial being. Its general rule is animalisation, and, consequently, anthropomorphisation of “animals”. Yet their taming is not oriented onto adulthood (which is the case in an animal fairy tale, in Aesop’s fable), but onto childishness. In a fairy tale, animals are like children. Because a “fairy tale” is here still open to expression: singing, dancing, jumping – recipients,

that is, children, become performers of the form. They assume animal behaviour, appearance, and nature. Children are like animals. The song "a little bird is flying in the street" is a pantomime of flying, dancing and "being a bird". "We shall go with our little son to a market" is not the acting-out of a market, buying, selling, but it is another being animals, trying animals, birds, by means of their "language", movements, ways of moving. And this trying is natural for a child – an attempt at entering feathers, hair, fluttering, walking on four paws.

We have used the term a folklore situation¹ a few times, understanding by it a practical use of a folklore form along with circumstances that accompany the use. A folklore situation is external to a form, it is what happens between a sender – a form – and a recipient. However, this does not mean that there is not two-way interpenetration between a form itself and a situation. The externality of a plot of a lexical form, for instance, is not only "life material" ("reality"), but also mythological, literary, cultural, social material and so on. A form itself, however, (a "poem", a "game") in its own and specific, natural, folklore way of being does not have a form of a record, but is lodged in memory in an unready form. It materialises itself only through a verbal evocation (uttering) or a kinaesthetic one (a manual activity or "acting out"). This materialisation, that is, a connotation, a translation from one system of signs into another, can take place in various ways. Ways not given in advance, but conditioned by circumstances of their expression. The circumstances comprise the role of a sender (a subject's role) demonstrating a form, and so his (a sender's) age, a place in a specific children's community, his mental features (imagination) and a relationship with a form itself. The circumstances are also a reason for which a form is demonstrated, and this includes to a considerable degree a nature of an interpretation: from a serious, ritual-magical or playful one to a parodising one, parodising both immanent elements contained in a form as well as a folklore situation itself. And because a demonstration of a form is often a collective activity, the situation is enriched with additional elements.

Lexical and manual folklore forms as well as other-non-folklore ones are oriented onto their dramatisation. Their being is their becoming in the process of production. When we look at names of children's folklore, their naming convention popularised in everyday speech, one is struck by their distinctive word-forming structure: a "counting-out rhyme, a rhyming song, a song, a paper-cut". They are all verbal nouns showing distinctly that a final

¹ The term "folklore form" used by us as well as the circumstances of its use called a folklore situation can be replaced by the term, "text" used contemporarily by semioticians – in its broad, not only verbal, sense. Precisely, a child's activity, organising or controlling a specific group of things and activities, its reading skills – is a textual activity. And in the case of children's forms, we deal with both verbal and behavioural or pictorial, and most often with simultaneous multilingualism. When they are considered in terms of intentional categories, they would be ludic texts.

object is a result of an activity, which has just taken place. Even in extreme cases – a “name” (a thing), for example, a “song”, a “jumping song”, does not actually exist as a final, finished product. There is not a “jumping song” as such (there is only a rope with handles at both ends). The form exists during its being performed, so it is the activity itself. But also those forms which have their objective being, when an activity is finished (a paper-cut, a colouring page), reveal their activity source. Their finished existence of qualities of timeless endurance (a paper-cut, for instance) is already without “practical” meaning in children’s folklore. Those things (forms) are most frequently given up. A paper-cut or a folk paper-cut, out of colour paper, can be considered individually, stuck in a hut’s interior, on display at an ethnographic museum or copied by machine. But its actual, one would like to say – immanent being is when it was cut out with heavy shears for shearing sheep, and maybe then still, when it was evened with fingers after it was cut out as it was being matched to something. A child’s paper-cut finished – as a folklore situation – shortly afterwards, when it was cut out.

However, a folklore form is a finished thing, and not an activity alone, having its being independent of a subject (we are talking about manual forms) or is a thing existing intentionally, in memory, and realised as a thing during an activity, during its performance (a song).

If we wish to consider a form of children’s folklore genologically, sort them out according to genres, it seems that a principal and structurally invariant rule of this distinction and classification will be an activity. [...]

Let us consider them one by one, in groups. First, those which materialise themselves only in a word. Already on the occasion of presenting the features of children’s folklore, which we have called “rememberedness”, we talked about the function that a rhyme play in it. A rhyme, that is an concord of words. One called “rhymes” also short descriptive or narrative sentences. It would be more adequate though to call them rhyming songs. We then emphasise unambiguously a genetic feature of this form, in which attention and creativity are oriented towards rhyming. Yet if we reason in this way, every rhyming form will be a rhyming song, therefore we wish to use the term a “rhyming song” to describe only some rhyming forms, those which are created or repeated out of an sheer intention of rhyming, out of a game at rhyming taking place in a rhyme-forming euphoria. Not senses and meanings are here in the foreground of acting, but sounds, not a semantic, but a phonic side of an utterance. Nonetheless, the very sense, however moved to the secondary plan of an utterance and subjected to a rhyme, shines through this veil. It is a similar case to naïve understanding of writing poems, when a thought and sense yield to a rhyme, and when an unexpected rhyme shines (that is, a word which “has been rymed”), showing the way for a new sense. These children’s rhyming songs are engendered out of sheer joy of rhyming, out of matching words that rhyme with each other:

beaten sweeten dad
 to a kitten sad
 mad
 clad
 bad
 fad
 red and so on.

Yet rhymes, even if they are most tautological, are generated in some order. After “dad – sad” the generated “mad – clad” waited for its word: “bad”. The rhyming could finish at this point, but every next word in this “even” order requires its completion. The order can show a tendency for rhythm and then a rhyming song passes to a role of accompanying something: jumping, beating, clapping, but it can also have a tendency for sense-making and then non-rhyming words enter in between rhymes: “dad sad, striking mad, poorly clad, spanking bad”. A rhyme leads an event here. From the “picture” of the sentence there results an unclear situation: whose dad and why “striking mad”? This is on the plane of denotation, yet the connotation of the sentence reveals deeper sense: dad spans children, he may be striking mad, and if he is mad, he is bad.

Doodle, doodle doo,
 The princess lost her shoe;

The absurdity of the beginning of the line engenders a completely unexpected sense of the second line. And the second line logically connotes with the third and fourth ones:

Her highness hopped
 The fiddler stopped,
 Not knowing what to do.

Korney Chukovsky writes about children's rhyming songs, being forms completely devoid of meaning” “Kunda, munda, karamunda. Dunda, bunda, paramunda”². It is not difficult to see an order in this singingly performed rhyming song, which – as Chukovsky writes – lasts even an hour. Moreover, this dadaist rhyming song, only seemingly freed from control, moves an activity towards a conscious absurd action. A rhyming song proper, being a genre conveying expressive states, has its close sub-genres which we have already touched upon: a jumping song, a song, a shout-out song. Each of them is a “rhyming song” when it rhymes, and each of them, independently of that is a sign of expression, an emotional state, which expresses itself in jumping, leaping up, singing, humming, lipping, shouting out, screaming. Each of them, besides the kinesthetic and articulative-phonetic ones, expresses itself in verbal matter.

² K. Czukowski, *Od dwóch do pięciu*, tłum. i oprac. W. Woroszyński, Warszawa 1962 [From *Two to Five*, translation and editing by W. Woroszyński, Warsaw 1962].

Almost every verbal text can be sung. First of all, there are songs for singing. But songs have their melodies; and we talk about those texts which are not songs by nature, so about every verbal form which is uttered by singing, humming, singing out. So one does something below and technically worse than singing, but more in one's own way. The very fact of a choice and decision what to sing is an act of creation. This is connected most often with a choice of a melody. A choice, that is, singing to a tune of some of well-known songs or creating one's own melody. A sung text though does need to be ready before, it can be engendered during vocal expression. A melody as well as a rhyme can be prominent for words and senses. Every poem, every rhyming song are ready to be coupled with a melody as well as with a gesture. A song, which is accompanied by some choreographic gestures: going round "in circles", leaping up, can become a jumping song. What is a given type of behavior and a way of interpreting a verbal text is decided by its primary features. In a classic song, a text, verbal quality will dominate, in a jumping song a text falls apart and gets "lost" during expression. A shout-out song is similar; here, a text is subject to a sung function, it becomes a vocal (not a kinaesthetic one) sign of joy or some incantatory, aping, passion, evoking someone or something.

In children's folklore, one should look for imitation and borrowings from the animal world. Being an "animal" is possible – as we remember the case of "horseseness" was – in two ways: in the sense of a sign, by that I understand different kinds of symbolised animals and animal interactions and in the sense of a substitute when one is an animal. In a song, a jumping song or a shout-out, if their expressions are animalising, "animalness" is substitutionary. A song is most often considered to be worse, unskilled, awkward singing. Żeromski mentions an occasion when in the Vistula riparian forests he heard the voice of a shrike hammering out "a simple song, cryptically remembered secrets of young human years"³ – we are not so much interested in an evocative function as in a simple, song-like wording attributed to birds not considered as fluent singers. For example, a nightingale sings or hums its song, does not "hammer it out". Nonetheless, a song itself as a genre of children's folklore is birdlike and besides "flying" belongs to the repertoire of children's behaviour. A jumping song in turn is hare-like. One of the kinaesthetic games of girls had this song:

A hare is sitting on a hill,
swinging its feet,
And I would like to swing like that,
if I had the feet like
a hare.

Łukasz Gołębiowski wrote that "little girls are keen to jump into a hare". One wrote about this game, an "acrobatic" dance known in the Kurpie region

³ Quoted after: S. Adamczewski, *Sztuka pisarska Stefana Żeromskiego*, Kraków 1949, s. 127 [*The Writerly Art of Stefan Żeromski*, Cracow 1949, p. 127].

and in Mazovia, that a crossed circle is drawn on the ground or floor in which there stands a girl, singing: "One needs faster and faster, ever choosing a different way, always going round on the beat, land on every portion of the circle"⁴. A hare was the best jumper. Being a "hare" meant jumping and escaping well: "Häschen hüpf, Häschen hüpf!" – German children called. There are jumping songs which are chanted during skipping on a skipping rope, during jumping on one leg, during the game of hopscotch, during playing ball.

To shout out like an adult rooster: "Cock-a-doodle-doo!", like a small one "cocky-doodly-dooey", waving one's hands in addition and hitting one's thighs meant being a "rooster". Similarly, one was a raven by shouting out cawing. A shout-out, even more than a song – expresses itself most completely in a collective form. Social shout-outs are cheering-on calls at football matches: "Goal for Poland!" Calls devoid of so an immediately and apodictically formulated appeal or order are of even purer, more shout-out-like character. During the Olympic Games in Mexico, several thousand fans in a stadium chanted: "Mechiko, Mechiko, ra, ra, ra!" In his book⁵, Chukovsky gives a rich survey of those "childish delights". He correctly claims that "shout-outs" – most often meaningless, unarticulated – are engendered out of ecstasy over nature: over the sun, wind, grass. As for shout-outs, Chukovsky is most interested in freeing them from senses, from articulatively difficult places for shouting out. And children, he claims, "are always ready to sacrifice the correctness of every word for the sake of rhythm – when needed, they lengthen words, shorten them, change accents..." For us, a shout-out is every verbal text subject to rapid, dramatic vocal expression: a sign of an authentic experience or a convention of such an emotion or conveying every message in a shouting-out way. Thus, for example, one cannot sing out or hum every poem or every rhyming song, but one can shout it out. To shout out, that is, to impose on it one's own, true or fake sovereignty, most often a barbarising one – "wild" on purpose, destructive or aping its conventionalised aestheticity. Shouting out – a very situation of talking on high, sometimes grating tones – is a warlike provocation (warlike shouts), a sacrilegious provocation or an invective. Children best use "ugly" words when they shout them out. If they can of course do it unpunished, and when they can even do it in front of passive and shocked listeners. "Ugly" or "bad" words live only, and live properly and distinctly, when they are shouted out.

A form, being a silenced and unarticulated song, can be called a humming song. It is close to the language of animals: of cats and bears. It has become really famous as a song of Winni-the Pooh created by Alan Milne. A humming song, even more than a song, materialises itself in an activity which is difficult to be given a graphic sign, it is a metalanguage of children and animals. It is

⁴ Gołębiowski, *op. cit.*

⁵ K. Czukowski, *op. cit.*

a final phrase of lullabies when everything becomes sleeping and one needs to silence not only semantics, but also choruses “a...a...a” and “lull”, start singing a melody which belongs to the essence of sleep.

Let us sum up one more time: rhyming songs, songs, jumping songs, shout-outs and humming songs do not have an ethos other than being materialised in an activity. The existence of other genres is: a being of a subject in a dramatic situation of an object (of a verbal text or *quasi*-verbal text).

The texts in whose reproduction or creation, attention is first of all focused on senses, semantics will constitute another class of folklore genres. These will be counting-out rhymes, enchanting rhymes, toppling-over rhymes, chiding rhymes, riddles... We name them and enumerate them, but, as before, being convinced that these are not all possible genres, and that the “-ing” ending and an infinite number of situations are constantly ready to bring forth new forms, situated potentially next to each other.

The form most popular and productive among children is a counting-out rhyme.

It was already noticed by adults and was relatively widely described and catalogued. At the same time, one contemporarily covers by the term almost all children “literary” forms, making out of a counting-out rhyme a universal term. Here, we wish to define structural-functional borders of the genre. Genetically, a counting-out rhyme derives from practical circumstances accompanying a kinaesthetic game. At the same time, it is a “rhyming song”, since its text most frequently rhymes and always preserves a distinctly marked rhythmic order. Yet rhymeness and rhythmicity are the features of many other genres. So here as well, as in the case of previous folklore genres, one needs to seek the essence of a counting-out rhyme in its name: a counting-out rhyme will be such a text which is counted out. To count out here means: count participants in a game, eliminating them one by one; it can also mean: to name them, assign roles to them, giving them something or making them do something. Yet, to count out – this also means to create immanently such structures of an utterance which increase by a distinctly marked, subsequent addition of objects, persons, words, attributes, activities. This multiplication can have a semantic-logical process as well as an asemantic one, combining syncretically sounds and neologisms. Most often though these are mixed processes:

Itty, bitty baby,
a little red table
whose turn it is
he is the ugly one
A samovar burst
a glass is broken
and Mr John
was burned on the nose.

Counting out, that is, eliminating one by one, can be done by means of every counting-out rhyme, by pronouncing final words with a distinct stress: "whose turn it is". It can sometimes be an imperative: "it is your turn!" Similarly, one can point out someone who is guilty. There were occasional texts for pointing out a guilty person: "there is one among us who farted potatoes, and this the one out of whose snout there goes smoke". Understanding widely the range of this genre, one should divide counting-out rhymes into those in whose subject matter and structure there appeared an orientation towards a practical, playful aim, when a counting-out rhyme was an overture (going through the motions scenographically) to a kinaesthetic game ("one, two, three! You come out! [You are chasing!]"; "ready or not, here I come!"), and into those which, not revealing their distinctly practical role, are rhymed, always rhythmised "fables" ("There sits a hoopoe on the church, it brews beer for a wedding, what it brews, it drinks, when it comes back home, it beats children. An old woman is crying, lamenting: how the hoopoe is frolicking! Here are some pennies, woman, go and buy a quart of groats for children, when the children eat it, they will go behind a stove and die there!"; "A lady walked out of a factory, she had golden shoes, a glistening dress, and walked hand in hand with Nicholas. And Nicholas, a great lord, bought himself a grand piano, but he could not play it, he turned off the light, and went to bed"). These "fables" are open to diverse contaminations, narration is free, autonomous, it can connect itself and become subject matter functionised in the counting-out-rhyme manner: "A lady went to a cellar to look for a piece of chalk and a blackboard, she will be writing and counting how much beer to prepare. One, two, three, elementary, you, hare, run into the wood!"

One reflected on the antiquity of counting-out rhymes as well as on a reflection in them of events, customs, rituals, on how, in a childish, playful, trivial formulary there is hidden a very important splinter: an old word, a relic of magic. We shall not revisit it here. Let us only add that counting-out rhymes, most often uttered aloud, both in the first group (a practical one) in connection with a gesture (a counting out, pointing a finger), and the second group (a narrative one) – were uttered in the form of recitation, a melody, and even a song. If Polish folklore knows practically little about those counting-out rhymes, then there are known, and they were once very popular among French children, counting-out rhymes- songs⁶.

Krystyna Pisarkowa calls the text: "I would tell you a sermon, but a dog ate my breakfast, I would tell you more, but this old woman pinkles behind a stove. I beat this woman against the stove, a painted boy will come out of her, and from the boy, a ram and a sheep, and from the ram..." and so on – "a blossoming story (this is an allusion to Peiper's "blossoming sentence") and includes it

⁶ J. Cieślowski, *Wielka zabawa. Folklor dziecięcy, wyobraźnia dziecka, wiersze dla dzieci*, Wrocław 1967 [*Great Fun. Children's Folklore, a Child's Imagination, Poems for Children*, Wrocław 1967].

among counting-out rhymes⁷. The same or similar text of a sermon, recorded by Żegota Pauli, is published by Ryszard Gansiniec who says that it was recited by students on March 12th, on the day of St. Gregory the Great, the patron of elementary schools⁸. The “Gregory” description was still known in the country at the end of the previous century. In my work *Great fun* I have included a “sermon” in “chain rhymes”. A sung variant of the “sermon” was heard, in the manner of a carol (this is what Żegota Pauli writes) or as a “song” – it is thus recorded by Oskar Kolberg. In the Great Poland text, a counting-out rhyme order is very distinctly marked: “... and from this ram, a wolf’s knees, and from the wolf’s knees, a carpenter with an axe...” and son on. And if it was sung, there is no obstacle for transferring the text to songs. The case is like the previous one: a way of performing decides about a genealogical belonging. And the genre borders are very pervasive here.

The French *comptines* have their different, though simple, childish melodies. Among Polish ones, we can still remember the melody:

Itty, bitty baby,
a little farmer,
his wife is hunchbacked (gap-toothed),
and his daughter snotty...

The melody is monotonous and obedient to other texts, half-sung, half-recited.

Still another sub-genre of a counting-out rhyme coexists with an activity, this time an “arithmetic” one: during counting out in the old times one drew lines with a stick in sand, and then on paper:

He was chopping – chopping – with – a lit-tle axe
he chopped six-teen ones
if you do not be-lieve
you can o-rder coun-ting.

Pisarkowa links the record with a practical activity: one counted them as one put potatotes in ashes. After baking them, their number had to be right. A mnemonic formula!

When we talk about an internal text order, and thus about counting out – this is a structure typical of infantile narration. Let us recall here its excellent use by Sienkiewicz when towards the end of *In Desert and Wildererness* he makes his heroine tell a story about an abduction and return, then Nel, “like a child”, creates a counting-out-rhyme structure of narration – connecting its

⁷ K. Pisarkowa: *Ele mele dudki*, “Przekrój” 1971, nr 1365 i n. *O losach wyliczanek*, “Biuletyn PTJ”, 1972, z. XXX [*Itty, Bitty Baby*, “Przekrój”, 1971, no. 1365 and the following numbers.; “PTJ’s Bulletin”, 1972, vol. XXX].

⁸ R. Gansiniec, *Gregorianki*, “Pamiętnik Literacki”, R. XLV, 1954, z. 2 [*Gregoriankas*, “Literary Diary”, R. XLV, 1954, vol. 2].

each short element with the conjunction “and”: “And daddy! And they abducted us, and carried on camels – and Gebhr hit me – and Staś defended me – and we arrived in Khartoum [...]”

To add things, concepts, activities to one another, to enumerate them on the same level of their importance, to enumerate them alongside one another without acknowledging a perspective and hierarchy is a syncretic activity. To add, to enumerate, to count out with a feeling for a sequence of narration, often marked with an ordinal number, to combine into quantitative groups: “one – two – three: one two (police) three four (officers)”, and assign to these orders the main significance – this is also a nature of a counting-out rhyme.

A counting-out rhyme in its two ways of counting out is a superstructure in literature and adult culture. For example, in the poem *Hand-made Prague*, Harasymowicz consciously has imposed a playful order. An anaphora opens each stanza:

Saints are hand-made	Kings are hand-made	A lilly is hand-made
Wings to the sky	With scpetrer in their hands	A goose on a portal
Bleeting tenderly	[.....]	[.....]
A ram on towers		and so on.

This is an order of pictures on a wall of a country room, a syncretic order of one plan.

A contemporary advertising slogan in the shape of a verbal or iconic sign very often uses the order of “adding”, especially in shopping centres where buying takes place from one stall to another, from floor to floor. Out of slogans on posters and banners, the numerical order – a mnemonic one – is remembered the best. It can be used subversively, and for most contestatory aims: “Two, four, six, eight – Gay is just as good as straight!” – this is how homosexuals chanted in the streets of American cities. [...]

A rhyming song and a counting-out rhyme – these are the most universal verbal forms. In them, the folklore constant of a verbal game is contained: a rhyme and rhythm. Anything which is a verbal and verbal-kinaesthetic text yields to this order. In a certain childish game still played nowadays

one, two, three
a besom is watching!

a counting-out person turned to a wall turns around quickly and those going to the finish line cannot be caught moving.

One “includes” into counting-out rhymes – broadly understood – texts that have a distinctly magical, enchanting function. We shall call some of them “magical rhyming songs”. These will be those verbal forms whose words are given entirely or individually a magical value. In spring, on a pasture, children made willow pipes and to be successful at it, they pronounced a spell during making a pipe:

O knock for me my little pipe,
 since if you don't I'll throw you by a fence,
 a hen will peck you,
 I'll throw you by the poles,
 turkeys will peck you... and so on.

Such a “rhyming song” and similar ones of a magical intent had a counting-out-rhyme rhythm consistent with the rhythm of work. Taking soft bark off the willow’s pith without damaging it required skillfulness and patience. For bark to come off lightly, it had to be beaten, best with a knife’s handle. The rhythmicity of these hits suggested a text, and such a text became a work song. In his *Arbeit und Rhythmus*, K. Bücher gives multiple texts of songs *recitativo* pronounced, with a marked rhythm. Every hit on the willow stick corresponds to a sung syllable. Genetically speaking, this form is a hitting-out song in a way – it is the activity that provides the rhythm, the rhythm evokes words, but words, thanks to their magical qualities, influence the activity’s goal, which is a material folklore form, a musical instrument – a toy.

Like the previous ones, a magical rhyming song is a polymorphic form, and I assume its magical quality to be the main one. Already freed from additional claims were magical formulas enchanting the weather: “Go away! ... Clouds!” or: “Shine – for me, my little sun!” Among enchanting rhyming songs we would also include calls still very popular among children of the whole world: to a snail to put out its horns or to a ladybird also called lady beetle. In this case, the repertoire of wishes and magical formulas was very rich. One could coin the term a “calling-out rhyming song” or “calling-names rhyming song” to describe the latter forms. But the first name is quite awkward, and the second one points to a rather abusive character.

One ordered things in a game by calling: “I am ordering it!... This pit is taken! (cancelled)”. One could order a temporary exclusion from the game; one could also order some special word for one’s own use only or some thing intended for sharing, for example: “And I am ordering pears!” One ordered, for instance, a spot to lie down, on the grass, on hay, and for sleeping: “I’m ordering inside.. on the edge.. to the left”. But each such order was ambivalent: an order had a riposte in a swearword, in ridiculing. And so orders of a consecratory type:

Who is inside – a pot of ohoney for him,
 who is on the left – an apple from the sky for him,
 who is on the right – a blood sausage for him,
 who is by the wall – a mug of cream for him,
 who is on the side – a crust for him -

were at the same time cursed:

inside – shit on a saucer,
 on the side – fleas on his balls,

on the left – go to a pigsty!
by the wall – his head is picked at (shitty).

In an ordering rhyming song, there mix magical elements (casting spells which in childish formulas is already a splinter of a deformed and aped, old, serious function) with a reference to a linguistic sense of this word: to order, that is, to announce one's participation in or right to what will still take place. But this second understanding and use are perceived magically in childish practice.

There are ordering rhyming songs in which magical "inaccessibility" of some words is hedged around by an articulatory difficulty of pronouncing them. A difficulty – as a taboo – is desacralised in children's games relatively early. The situation: "You won't say this word because you're afraid" – belongs to the magic of small groups of children or is an individual experience, a guarded secret, an initiation. Informing others about it would endanger not as much the one pronouncing the word as the word itself. And first of all, it would destroy the charm, the magical aura. The ordering rhyming song can be included in secret rituals, in "hiding ones" – those which Stanisław Czernik wrote about⁹ – whereas a difficult word in an utterance would be an "opener":

On a high mountain
there grew a big tree,
it was called:
apli-papli-blite-blau.
And who does not say it,
he won't play with us
(he won't sleep).

Thus formulated rhyming song is a counting-out rhyme. It counts out the one who cannot pronounce the word. Pisarkowa explains the onomastic strangeness of the tree: apli = *Apfel*, papli = *Pappel*, blite = *Blute*, and blau is simply blau – "blue". A blossoming apple-birch tree is a "German" tree. Everyone who has learned the formula of the counting-out rhyme by heart can say it. So the charm is not as much in the function as in the image. Perhaps we deal here with a banalised and infantilised relic of an archetype: of a cosmic tree growing in a high mountain, that is, in transcendental space¹⁰. Or maybe it is a tree and a mountain from a magical fairy tale, which protect different evil powers (dragons and monsters). To master this tree, that is, to name it means to conquer it and to become a hero in this epitome of a fairy-tale situation.

In an ordering rhyme song, the magical weight of individual words is not considerable. Things look different in a calling-names rhyming song, which is better to be named an abusing rhyming song. Children call one another names

⁹ S. Czernik, *Sny i widma*, Warszawa 1971 [*Dreams and Phantoms*, Warsaw 1971].

¹⁰ Eliade, *op. cit.*

and complain to adults: “He is calling me names!” The only effective way to counteract calling names is to call names even more strongly and emphatically the one who calls a person names. The following formula is little effective and shows a lack of invention:

who calls others names
is called these names.

Calling-names rhyming songs referring to first names use rhyme-forming qualities of these names: “Michael was croaking in the vicious cycle!”, and more widely: “...he woke up alive on the fourth day, and put shit in his say!” or “Jake is picking Jake’s nose. What he picks, he gives Jake to lick”. The calling-names rhyming song is excellent, it closes itself like a hoop. Although less frequent, there are “characterological” calling-names rhyming songs: “Light Wind” – since he is fat and foretold rain. In children’s folklore, a nickname is in constant use and never flatters. For a name is a substitute for a thing. To name means to tame, to own, to tame for oneself. Children call their toys (dolls) animals. They think up secret names for things closest to them and in this way they appropriate them for themselves. And to spoil, distort a name is to influence a named person, a named thing. A nickname kept its destructive force when it was uniquely used. Developed into a magic formula, it was more effective. “Hannah was tending a lamb, a wolf came along and bit her tit off!” This a whole “fairy tale”, and a calling-names rhyming song is derisive. “Peter – his mother’s fart!” is an insulting calling-names rhyming song. It neutralised the insult when abbreviated to “Peter – a fart”. However, when one said Fart instead of Peter, and for a longer time for that matter, a nickname replaced a name.

Nowadays, a nickname from a name is less frequent, a “pseudonym” is more often in use, engendered in the circumstances which hardly anyone remembers. It has lost its emotional function.

Close to a calling-names rhyming song is a challenge rhyming song. A challenge rhyming song might have been a part of a game ritual, when a battle of tongues preceded a melee. A construction of such a dialogue is a bragging exchange– who will do what to whom. Kornel Makuszyński presents the following challenge rhyming song:

– I will tear your heart out
– and I will tear out your heart and liver!
– and I will tear out your liver, your spleen, your stomach!
and I will tear out your heart, your liver, your spleen, your
stomach and your kidneys! (*Brave Johnny and his dog*)

Similar puerile structures were known to adult warriors, but today they are a non-banal element of discussions and polemics. The issue could have ended with a challenge rhyming song itself, as is often the case with an adults’ cat fight. A challenge rhyming song is also a duel not of insulting each other, but

of contending as for one's capabilities: who thinks up more different names or words; who will say it faster and will not falter: "a king had coral colour beads..." and so on. So it is the contest of intelligence, of memory and imagination. Here, as in the case of a calling-names rhyming song, a technique, a way of delivery decide about the genre classification. The tautogram about the king and coral beads mentioned above belongs to a type that the English call a *tongue twister* ("something that twists the tongue") and only for the sake of its contest functionalisation will we include it in challenge rhyming songs. In its articulatory structure, with the *c* repeated a few times and the *r* – a "dog letter" (*canina littera* – as the Romans called it), it already belongs to a different genre.

Folk absurd statements, called *adynata* in Greek, and *impossibile* in Latin, belong to still another group of children's forms in which an action is aimed at the subject matter of formulas. Absurd statements turned the order of the world and the laws of nature upside down: they had a mare lay eggs, and had baked spikes escape to the wood. They made up fat arcadias of gluttons and guzzlers, in which fences were made of sausages, and rivers flowed with honey, beer and vodka. Baron Münchhausen rode a horse to a church tower, and Maciej from Chodawka, the Kurpet son, fought off a dead wolf.

Children eagerly picked up those heresies against common sense and human experience, they did that slightly out of contrariness, but mostly because it was funny and amusing. But they have just learned that fire is hot, and snow is cold, that a dog barks, and a cow gives milk – and they themselves broke up these "true" and natural links and talked about hot snow, about a barking dog. Chukovsky ascribes to such activities of a child educational qualities: one needs – he says – to master already some knowledge of the world in order to be able to find funniness in its deformation and distortion. He finds names for those activities, then: toppling-over rhyming songs, taking-off rhyming songs. Both terms correspond to our intentions: in a toppling-over rhyming song, in its distorting activity, there is an act of creations mimicking an appearance and customs of things. A child enjoys this made-up world, perceiving its funniness and contrariness, but it is conscious though of a proper and true order.

In the terminology of children's forms, the most popular statements about these toppling-over rhyming songs are: "to fib" or "to talk rubbish". Porazińska and Kownacka, the authors of poems for children and excellent experts on children's folklore, called them "ridiculing" or "laughing" rhyming songs. This genre of of autotelic forms is a game of meanings and looks. It gives a great autonomy to any semantic activities, but under one condition though – that one has to know how things truly stand:

He climbed a pear tree,
pulled out parsley,
he shot at an elephant,
he killed a fly!

Literature for children, but not the one oriented towards thinginess and truth, but towards absurdity, took on this genre typical of a naïve sense of humour and copied it in a great number of ways.

When children give it an open course of a guessing game, a riddle presents the same attitude of distorting the world, of misguiding the one who hear the riddle. Yet at the same time, this is a game of disguise, of looking for a metonymy. What is every poetic metaphor – if not a made-up rhyming song in an image, and in its ready, thought-up form, a riddle to be solved? Poetrywriting (poeticising) is a game of metaphors and metonymies which should be decoded, or a game of a reversed direction, of scrambling ordinariness into whimsicality. Guessing games are not so much a collection of riddles mastered mnemonically as the very activities of thinking up and scrambling questions and answering them.

Julian Krzyżanowski gives a Kashubian riddle:

There hangs a hangman, the hangman hangs him,
the hangman would be glad if the hangman fell off

and explains that it is an allusion to a Polish version of the fairy tale about the fox and grapes: “a cat wretchedly looks up the chimney in which sausages are smoked, and walks away, daunted, saying that these are not sausages but ropes”¹¹. Whoever does not know the anecdote, that is, does not know the answer, will not guess it. The riddle is too detailed and too general. It is at the same time expressive. This distich, slightly changed, was addressed to children. An adult lifted up a toddler and said:

there, hangs, there hangs a necklet.

and then, having squatted:

a squatting thing is squatting, is squatting,
If the necklet fell down,
a squatting thing would eat it up.

There is not a riddle here, there is instead a theatricalisation of a “fairy tale” by means of a demonic, “necklet” and a “squatting thing” whose names and existences have been contained in those laconic activities. The game will stick in one’s memory. We have heard this riddle asked by children among themselves in the Kielce region: “what is a necklet?... what is a squatting thing?” An answer could be correct only when a person answering the question knew the game. And he responded not with words, but with a gesture, first raising his hand, and then squatting:

Tiddly widdly at the ceiling,
a trunk full of velvet.

¹¹ J. Krzyżanowski, *Zagadka i jej problematyka*, “Zagadnienia Rodzajów Literackich”, t.V: 1962, z. 2(9) [*A Riddle and Its Problematics*. “Issues of Literary Genres”, v. V: 1962, b. 2 (9)].

Two generations ago this distich was a puzzle. This meant: soot in the chimney. A chimney, if someone has seen it from inside, padded with soft soot, resembled an open case, this trunk full of velvet. A beautiful metaphor, but how encoded it is, how hidden in the nooks of the world which is gone today – we cannot see it, nor can we verify it. And yet the main sense of the saying does not reside in this anachronic metonymy, but in the “tiddly widdly” “not meaning anything”, but having a suggestive expression of delicate lace and frills whose unsubstantiality may be expressed by moving delicately one’s fingertips of a raised hand. This riddle was asked in this way in the past and told with words and a gesture.

Such sphinx puzzles and similar ones were in fairy tales: a monster asked questions which one had to answer. So it was the contest of “brains”, of intelligence.

Let us recall those simplest games with babies, when one metonymically called the nose, the tongue and other parts of a baby’s body. Here, the topography of the body adhered to the topography of the country yard and the country world. The puzzle:

a little cowshed full
of white calves,
and among them,
a red bullock

found an encoded picture in the youngest memory of a lively, red tongue. Anna Kamińska refers her poem to a landscape of the face:

A thick wood at the top,
A clearing below it,
On a meadow a herder piggybacked
Two suns on his back.
There stood a house at the bottom.
It had a ceiling made of wind,
And inside there live a lord,
His name was Prattler.

The specific details of rusticity have been combined in the space of the fairy tale whose puzzling recognition gives a lot of satisfaction, not only to the poetess herself.

In the volume *Lublin Province’s II*, Kolberg writes that people in the countryside talk about snakes, that they slither into dishes from which people eat, and they are especially greedy for milk. Not only snakes, but also frogs jump into children’s bowl with milk and dumplings. Hence they say thus in the countryside: “Mummy, does a dumpling have eyes?” And the mother replies: “Go ahead, hit it on the head with the spoon until it jumps out for you!” Gloger confirms the existence of this rhyming song in Mazovia, and we heard its

slightly changed version from older people in the 1930s: “Mummy, a dumpling has eyes! I spoon it, and it jumps on me!” But nobody knew then any longer the connection between a dumpling and a frog. Even if this “jumps” was close to a frog’s ways. My grandmother told this rhyming song, but in an aping way, when I was fussy over a bowl of dumplings. The sense of the rhyming song has distinctly shifted from the function of instruction about proper behaviour to the educational function, with irony as a factor persuasion acting in a make-shift way. But the image has also changed: now, it was a dumpling which had eyes and was scary. The animalisation of things, especially animal-like ones, is a popular phenomenon in children’s folklore. And a noodle itself – a dumpling – does it not belong to the family of figures still from the 16th-century puppet theatres?... to the German *Hanswurst*, *Stockfish*, *Picklehaering*? They all took their lineage from the culinary world. Their funniness had its source – as Henryk Jurkowski¹² writes – in the comism of gluttony which sometimes appeared in morality plays in the whole Europe in the figure of fools of such names as Jean Potage (Johnny Soup), Macaroni, Jack Pudding. And did Hanna Januszewska develop her *Dumpling on Polish Roads* in connection with the fools from puppet theatres or maybe quite independently of them, and just by reaching out to a folk rhyming song? A dumpling career develops in a model, children’s folklore, way: from animisation and animalisation to anthropomorphisation, because Januszewska’s dumpling resembles a little, fat girl. We perceive her appearance, roundness and chubbiness, yet smallness in the human world, and bigness in the dumpling world as a parallelism with the world of puppets, especially hand puppets living from the direct presence of an actor’s palm. And the dumpling was born from under fingers, and through its roundness it resembles a spherical hand puppet put on a finger.

Let us consider once again the transformations which have taken place within the scope of this metonymy. This type of transformations is a structural principle of puzzles. And our puzzle about a frog-dumpling has not only its synchronic order, but also a diachronic one. In the first situation, let us call it *A*, the centre of crystallisation is food, and there are two components in it: a frog and a dumpling, situated antagonistically in “eating”, and analogously in the likeness of appearance. This analogy will become primary in the situation *B*, because the frog will disappear, and the dumpling will assume its features. This an example of a frequent metonymy (*m*). *In nuce*, there were already interchangeable qualities in a frog and a dumpling: both are big, slippery, with “bulging eyes”. The frog in a bowl (*A*) was in a way a component of dumplings. In the situation *B*, a complete metonymy is confirmed by a change of the rhyming song (*r1* – *r2*), and this in turn involved a change of the function (from a defensive one against the frog to the function recommending eating). An

¹² H. Jurkowski, *Dzieje teatru lalek*, Warszawa 1970. [*The History of the Puppet Theatre*, Warsaw 1970].

antynomy in the situation A: the dumpling – the frog, is now replaced by the antynomy B: eating – not eating. Eating itself (gluttony) becomes a new plot-forming element and produces the above mentioned chain of associations with puppet figures. A transformation of the folklore type ends here. What follows next is only a literary continuation of fictitious holders of folklore:

$$(A \ m1 \ r1 \rightarrow B \ m2 \ r2) \rightarrow C$$

where C denotes all possible literary situations.

Let us deal in turn with drawing games of magical action features, analogous to verbal mimicking rhyming songs. For instance, drawing with a stick in sand, drawing with chalk, a pencil and saying during it: “a dot, a dot, a line, a line, thiiii is... a portrait of your snout”. A drawing is an intended “caricature” (aping), its magical intent resides in the space from a funny ridiculing rhyming song to an insult, in the space of a magical activity in which there is hidden partial consciousness of a want to destroy. To draw meant to control – to name. A drawing of a “portrait” is then an analogue of a verbal nickname.

Also, a form of a battle – of conquering an opponent is the hangman game: whoever puts his three signs first on 9 consecutive squares of the “gallows” along the horizontal, vertical or diagonal line, he will “hang” the opponent.

10. Paul Klee's picture *A playing child* is in the poetics of children's paintings and seems to be open to its entering from outside. A configuration of signs loosely composing themselves in the painting encourages one to mark one's presence, to participate in painting.

This also involves drawing of a fragment of the whole, for example, of a head, then the folding of a page so that the drawing is invisible, and the next participant in the game draws a neck, the next one – a torso, and the last one – legs.

A hand put-me-together of different subject matter and techniques, that is, a childish *collage* is a building of a form without paying attention to logical coherence or the oneness of materials. A put-me-together grows according to two orders: a mechanical one, that is, putting together everything which is actually to hand without choosing and reflection and an organic order in which combining is an activity of associating things “close” to one another, and the very activity is a rhythm of coexistence of different expressions. A child draws: it has finished a little house, and now it is drawing smoke from the chimney, it is developing its melody, it is writing smoke, making gentle circles with its hand, it is whistling while doing so. Or it draws and the movement of the hand is repeated by the tongue slightly front-end.

Children cover a metal coin with a piece of white paper and rub it with a blunt end of a pencil. There forms a dark print of the coin. Surrealists called it *frottage*.

A naïve cut-out or paper-cut or, as Słowacki named it, a cut-outty is made in a such way that one takes a square sheet of paper, a colour one is the best, folds it into four, and even better, into eight, and cuts out a random pattern.

The unfolded sheet repeats the pattern a number of times in the shape of a regular star.

A torn paper collage is made by tearing out of a bigger piece of paper a smaller, “needed” one as a fragment of the intended whole. Yet the activity of tearing out actually depends on a coincidence. And the place of tearing out – a natural place of separation from the rest, not cut off mechanically and hard as in a cut-out – reveals the activity’s structure itself. This manual activity has been adapted by kindergartens; children combine different elements from different materials, separated, torn apart with fingers, their own or suggested wholes. The randomness of forms and a randomness of colours greater than in a cut-out or a colouring book, and a richness of possibilities of choosing what to do in the case of a collage in turn, shift this childish activity to the sphere of most aesthetically “refined” manual expressions.

Quite early on and with the success of being discovered, the manifestations of the 20th-century art have been absorbed in the aesthetic education of children. Quite rightly so, because out of this stem of games, noted among children still in the 19th century, there grew the manifestations of dadaists, futurists, and first of all, of surrealists. And they themselves, by the way, admitted to having a connection with a child’s activity and its imagination.

Writing about the functions of surrealists’ paintings, it is Breton who claims that they had a quality of resurrecting childhood states which are closest to the “real life”.

So in the situations of plastic expressions, similarly as in the lexical ones, it is difficult to say where folklore ends and where learned literature or learned art begins. Acting in manual folklore is spontaneous: a child emulates adults, but only from the technical side, the side of how to use a pencil, a colour pencil, a child imitates the fact that using them one can draw a “house”, a “car”, a “man” on paper, on every smooth surface. But by drawing, it does not represent, but names or “talks about” its emotions and thinking or tells a “fairy tale”.

A colouring book is expression: magical, lyrical and epic one. We understand a colouring book – as the previous folklore genres – as an activity, and not as a picture-colouring book meaning conventional or kitschy “gentleness”.

Using so far the term children’s folklore, we have understood it as rustic folklore or rustic-city folklore. All genres of children’s folklore derived from a country yard, from bird and animal sounds, from games on a pasture. This was the case of kinaesthetic games, this was the case of counting-out rhyming songs, the genre most open to what childish observation and experience added to it. Urbanity entered counting-out rhyming songs not from the front (through the front door), but from the kitchen, from a factory:

A girl with a boy
at number four.

The girl got drunk,
and beat the boy.

Rustic “rhyming” songs, in their forms and subject matter were a theatre of a gesture, a word, and a simple prop – a stick, a stone. There was not even a colour glass, nor a button among them. Country boys did not have buttons on their pants, but those dressed in an urban way, wearing off-the-peg underpants and vests, played buttons, small coins stacked in a pile with the “heads” up at which one threw a “slog”. Girls played with a colour glass from broken “beer” or “perfume” bottles. They played hopscotch, they played at the “peasant”, at the “sky” and bounced a ball, repeating:

groats is boiling over,	groats is better	since peas make the stomache ache,
peas are boiling over,	than peas,	and one is healthy, eating groats.

That what was boiling over was from a country pot put on a stove, but the ball was factory-made. Also, factory-made was the full, hard ball called “lanka” that boys played at a dodgeball game with. Games with a prop such as a doll, a ball, military equipment (swords, bows, especially the latter ones), appeared parallelly on a school duct. “Giving cheese” is also of school provenance; it consists in sitting a student between two others and squeezing him so that he will squeal until “he is dripping with cheese”. The youngest children at Fröbel-Kindegartens, creches and kindergartens met with the new material such as a plate, a colour pencil, a pencil, white and colour paper, colour crepe paper, model clay, paints and brushes.

In Poland, playing with a kite never belonged to popular games, and especially little attention was paid to making kites, to their shapes and colour. One made paper pigeons. Sometimes colourful ones. In the suburbs, paper pigeons imitated the real ones, their different species. In shops, one could buy sheets of painted soldiers. One backed them with cardboard, cut them out, and attached stands. They were half-ready, prefabricated toys. If one had a penknife, one could make a boat out of bark or a bow or a sabre.

Rustic games, such as, for instance, a maypole, of dressing up on the occasion of Shrovetide, walking with the Easter rooster, did not reach the suburbs. At the most, only their reflexes reached them, as, for example, simplified in a text, a costume and theatricalisation – herods. Still at the beginning of the 1960s, and even in big cities, there walked herods only to disappear suddenly. And the reason for this disappearance should perhaps be sought in the very fast massification of television. Jan Dorman, the director of The Puppet Theatre in Będzin, cultivated the theatre of herods. But the herods from the south of Poland participating in contests already have ambitions of professional teams.

Contemporary great warehouses in toy stands offer more and more ready-made, mechanical or DIY toys that can be put together according to the instruction of “little engineers”. And children’s folklore has become institutionalised into big games organised by adults: painting contests, drawing contests, chalk-drawing-on-city-asphalt-street contests. The creativity of drawing “in chalk on the wall” was still not rationed, childish obscenities and the prover-

bial “Yolanda is stupid”. For the last few years, in my half-rustic housing estate, I have not seen girls playing hopscotch, children playing hide-and-seek, playing tag, playing at policemen and robbers, at “Teutonic knights” or “Zorro”.

GAME FORMS CREATED BY CHILDREN

- ▶ verbal taking-off rhyming song order rhyming song calling-names rhyming song twisting rhyming song
- ▶ “literary” put-me-together
- ▶ puzzle counting-out rhyming song
- ▶ melic rhyming song humming rhyming song
- ▶ choreographic song tapping rhyming song
- ▶ jumping song
- ▶ shout-out
- ▶ manual taking-off rhyming song cut-out
- ▶ “plastic” colouring book
- ▶ tearing-out
- ▶ calling-names rhyming song collage put-me-together

The division into genres: the verbal ones, the melic ones, the manual ones defines what is the main subject matter of those forms. The principal subject matter, but not the only one. A form created in the semantic value of a word can be at the same time checked phonically... It can be danced, sung. Similarly, a drawn taking-off can be accompanied by a verbal, magical text. In the boxes, there are included those forms whose dominant feature is a constructive activity, a wavy line underlines those forms which have a magical-incantatory intent.

To conclude, let us make a wider digression concerning a book that cannot be omitted. We mean Roger Caillois’s *Les Jeux des hommes* which, translated into Polish, has been included in the volume *An element and order* (1973). Caillois makes here, among other things, an original proposition to classify playschemes. In the horizontal combination, he begins the systematisation from simplest games – *paidia*, not conventionalised by rules and regulations, *paidia* being improvised activities, “free play and capering about” – and passes on to *ludus* which are an “educated type of *paidia*”. Independently of the horizontal order, Caillois proposes a vertical division, classifying games according to a way of playing them and according to pschyo-physical expectations and hopes of those who play. *Paidia* end the moment a convention, techniques and instruments appear. Caillois names those types defined by rules: *agon* (competitive games, fights), *alea* (games of chance, gambling games), *mimicry* (game of imitation, of dressing up, masques), *ilinx* (games of stunning oneself). Below, a table presenting the division.

Caillois's treatise concerns as a matter of fact games and the behaviour of adults, and, consequently, places that games and playschemes have in culture. Children appear here rather on the margin. Accepting such a universalising proposition, let us propose inside it a commentary supplementing it with a childish formula. And thus the horizontal line in the table is our demarcatory proposal, separating children's games and playschemes from adult ones, the figures 1, 2, 3 are as well

PAIDIA	AGON	ALEA	MIMICRY	ILINX
Noise movement 1. laughing out loud kite solitaire crosswords	races, wrestling and so on – not included in the rules	"itty, bitty, baby" heads or tails bets	children's games at imitating 3. illusionism playing with a doll different disguises masque	childish "turning round and round" merry-go-round swing
LUDUS	Athletics boxing fencing football pool checkers chess in general, any sports competitions	roulette different kinds of lottery	costume theatre in general, performing arts	waltz voladores fair attractions skis alpinism exercises on trapeze

Attention: In each vertical column, games and playschemes are ordered approximately in such a way that the paidia element decreases, the ludus element, in turn – increases.

our inclusion body, and signify:

1. Between "movement" and "laughing out loud", we introduce any capering about, frolicking as well as all ways of being typical of a child when it is amused by adults.
2. A majority of children's games with devices would be placed here: walking on stilts, seroso, a kite, such games as tag, hide-and-seek, the blind-man's bluff. All of them contain a more or less exposed element of a fight with someone or with oneself (for instance, overcoming one's awk-

wardens in walking on stilts), competing and more or less strictly defined rules of acting.

3. “Childish games at imitating” would comprise any manual-theatrical-narrative constructions, such as: painting, stickers, glueing, cutting out (even pictures in books, being sometimes a leading things out of fixed contexts into situations of an arranged game).

Everywhere, where chance decides about an effect, most often not an intended one, we would deal with *paidia*; wherever we meet constructing things, for instance, making a ship model from the previous cut-out paper, we would deal with *ludus*. *Alea* would also comprise those forms of game participants’ using a secret language as a means of playful communication, and at the same time, a magic sign promising something or forcing or goading fate to be kind. It is best to understand that children’s games and playschemes have a mixed nature. Caillois combines and crosses *agon* – *alea* – *mimicry* – *illinx* with one another with a various mode, but this refers to adult games. We think that actually almost every children’s game is such a combination. For example, a cat and mouse game contains *agon*, because there is a chase and a catch, *mimicry*, since there is a “cat” and a “mouse”, *alea*, because there is a steady disposition and expectation of “wonderfulness”, and there is also the magic of a circle and a sung song, and, finally, there is *illinx*, which is a foundation for games of the youngest ones, for instance, a square circle, in which one needs to turn around and around until one is out of breath, until one is completely intoxicated.

Translated by
Rafał Dubaniowski