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## The *collection* as a text-forming mechanism: A case study of a playful bachelor song<sup>1</sup>

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Based on the example of the Old Polish song “*Pannom świat, / A mężatkom niebo, / A wdowusiom raj, raj, raj, / A babkom piekło*” (En. lit. ‘For maidens the world / For married women heaven, / And for widows paradise, paradise, paradise / And for crones hell’) and its many variants in Polish song folklore, the author discusses the text-forming mechanism of the basic *collection*: maiden — married woman — widow — crone, which is the starting point to introduce some coupled, or mirrored collections of the type: heaven — paradise — purgatory — hell. The concepts of *collection* and *complex* are applied here as useful analytical tools which allow for identification of culturally stable stereotypical sets, and for labelling them with the use of superordinate lexemes, e.g. VEHICLES: coach-in-four — royal coach — stagecoach — wheelbarrow; DRINKS: wine — beer — weak, home-brewed beer — water, etc. The analysis of a multi-variant song, performed in the present study, leads to the conclusion that Albert Lord’s oral-formulaic theory of a text of folklore needs to be extended by introducing a more general idea of the “textual pattern” active on the level of individual text elements, as well as on the level of an entire text. In the case discussed in the present paper, the factor that integrates the whole message is constituted by a mocking intention assigned to the male (“bachelor’s”) point of view.

**Keywords:** Polish song folklore, *collection*, textual pattern, text-forming mechanism, male (bachelor’s) point of view.

For a basis, the texts to be examined will be quoted and then an analysis will be conducted on the text-forming role of a collection.

\* \* \*

Among Old Polish love songs published in Czesław Hernas’ anthology *W kalinowym lesie* (En. In the Guelder rose forest), the group of frivolous “*pieśni mazowieckie*” (En. Mazovian songs/ songs from the region of Mazovia) contains the following short text (no. 87):

- (1) *Pannom świat,  
A mężatkom niebo,  
A wdowusiom raj, raj, raj,  
A babkom piekło* [Hernas 1965: 67].

<sup>1</sup> The article and all quotations from Polish and Russian translated by Dr. Agnieszka Gicala.

For maidens the world,  
For married women heaven,  
And for widows, paradise, paradise, paradise,  
And for crones, hell.

In the above song, two different sets of concepts are superimposed on each other and confronted: the stages of a woman's life: *panna* — *mężatka* — *wdowa* — *babka* 'maiden — married woman — widow — crone' and a cosmic set: *świat* — *niebo* — *raj* — *piekło* 'the world — heaven — paradise — hell'. In this mocking text, the confrontation is made from the "bachelor's" point of view. What is important here is whether a woman is unmarried, married, widowed or a crone (in Polish, the latter is *babka* 'old woman, crone', also 'grandmother'); respectively, the woman is placed in the world, in heaven, in paradise, or symbolically condemned to hell. The valuation of women in this text is characterised by male chauvinism: the woman is depicted mainly as an object of man's sexual interest. On the axiological axis, the maiden is glorified whereas the crone is degraded to an inferior position.<sup>2</sup>

Relations of the type: *dziewczyna* — *panna* — *żona* — *wdowa* 'young girl — maiden — wife — widow' or *niebo* — *piekło* — *raj* "heaven — hell — paradise" may be the subject of lexical-semantic description (in the framework of semantic fields); they can also be described using the apparatus of syntagmatically oriented phraseology. However, neither of these two description models seem to be sufficient to capture the specificity of this message in social communication unless it is formulated in terms of textology, taking into account its intention. Although each of these lexeme collections can be subsumed under the common hyperonyms of, respectively, *kobieta* 'woman' and *kosmos* (*sfery kosmosu*) 'the cosmos (spheres of the cosmos)', this does not allow for ascribing to these collections any additional "meaning as a whole" in the sense adopted by W. Mokijenko,<sup>3</sup> or in the sense of "irregularities" according to Lewicki and Pajdzińska.<sup>4</sup> Neither the collection *panna* — *mężatka* — *wdowa* — *babka* 'maiden — married woman — widow — crone' nor the *świat* — *niebo* — *raj* — *piekło* 'world — heaven — paradise — hell' is treated as a phraseological unit in Polish phraseological dictionaries.<sup>5</sup>

The concepts "collection" and "complex" are part of research into the linguistic worldview.<sup>6</sup> These concepts are regarded as important ways of constructing worldviews. At the

<sup>2</sup> European and Polish culture also knows another valuation of old age, namely the figure of a "Bacchic crone", a promiscuous "drunken old woman" (*unus ebria*). It is described in a study [Borowicz, Hobot, Przybylska 2010].

<sup>3</sup> As defined by Prof. W. Mokijenko, a phraseologism is "a set phrase, an expressive combination of lexemes which has, in principle, meaning as a whole," [Mokijenko 1980: 4].

<sup>4</sup> Phraseologism: "a socially established combination of words showing irregularities in some respects," [Lewicki, Pajdzińska 2001: 315].

<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, individual words *świat* 'world', *niebo* 'heaven', *raj* 'paradise', and *piekło* 'hell' have a very rich phraseology. Phrases with the word *świat* 'world': *używać, zażywać świata*, En. lit. 'to use, enjoy the world', i.e. 'have fun'; *podbijać, zdobywać świat* 'to conquer the world'; *bywać, obracać się, zabłysnąć w świecie* 'to visit, move in, shine in the world'. Phrases with *niebo* 'heaven': *być w niebie* 'to be in heaven', i.e. 'to feel very happy'; *przychylić komu nieba* 'to move heaven close to someone', i.e. 'to make somebody happy'. Phrases with *raj* 'paradise': *czuć się jak w raj, rozkosze raj, raj na ziemi* 'to feel as if in paradise, the pleasures of paradise, paradise on earth', meaning 'something very good, beautiful'. Phrases with *piekło* 'hell': *przechodzić przez piekło, doświadczyć piekła bóleści, rozpacz, nędzy, zazdrości, swarów itp.; czuć (w duszy, w piersiach) piekło* 'to go through hell, to experience the hell of pain, despair, misery, jealousy, quarrel, etc.; to feel hell (in one's soul, chest)'. Such phrases are recorded in [Skorupka 1967].

<sup>6</sup> *Collection* [SSiSL: 16] is defined (after Wygotski and Piaget) as a "combination of a series of elements related by a 'triple unity', i.e. co-existing in the same place and the same time, and sharing the same

same time, they constitute one of the important text-creating mechanisms.<sup>7</sup> While being a certain type of cultural stereotypes with exceptionally rich connotations, *niebo* ‘heaven’, *piekło* ‘hell’, and *raj* ‘paradise’ (and in the Polish folk tradition *niebo* ‘heaven’, *piekło* ‘hell’, *czyściec* ‘purgatory’ and *raj* ‘paradise’ simultaneously form a coherent and stable, recognizable collection, which can be described by the more general lexeme *zaświaty* ‘afterlife’.<sup>8</sup>

\* \* \*

The compositional idea to juxtapose the four stages of a woman’s life in a series and to symmetrically assign to them four evaluative attributes, forming a collection, gained great popularity in Polish song folklore.

Let us take a look at its variants.

The following seven-stanza text version published by Oskar Kolberg, with its last stanza similar to the record by Hernas, comes from the Polish region of *Mazowsze* (En. Mazovia):

- (2) *Do nieba pannom, do raju mężatkom,  
a do czyścia wdowuleńkom, do piekła babkom* [Kolberg, Mazowsze 1887: 305].  
Maidens to heaven, married women to paradise,  
and widows to purgatory, crones to hell.

This last stanza is preceded by six others, constructed according to a similar pattern, as follows:

*Rozmaryn pannom, róza mężatkom,  
drobna rutka wdowuleńkom, pokrzywa babkom.  
Mazurek pannom, walczyk mężatkom,  
a polonez wdowuleńkm, a za pies babkom.  
Koczyki pannom, karety mężatkom,  
dyliżanse wdowuleńkom, a taczki babkom.  
Jesiotry pannom, czczupaki mężatkom,  
drobne rybki wdowuleńkom, a żabki babkom.  
Na wino z panną, na piwo z mężatką,  
na podpiwek z wdowuleńką, a na wodę z babką.  
Na łózko z panną, na ławę z mężatką,  
na przypiecek z wdowuleńką, pod komin z babką* [Mazowsze 1887: 305].  
Rosemary for maidens, a rose for married women,  
Tiny rue for widows, nettle for crones.  
The mazurka for maidens, the quick waltz for married women,  
and the polonaise for widows, and a dog for crones.<sup>9</sup>

function”. Close to *collection* is a less restrictive concept *complex* (also introduced by Wygotski), which [SSiSL: 16] describes “the co-occurrence of objects” (without fulfilling the condition of the triple unities). Cf. [Bartmiński 1990: 171].

<sup>7</sup> Cf. [Bartmiński 1990; Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2007: 287–307].

<sup>8</sup> In Polish childrens’ folklore, there is a nursery rhyme *Piekło — niebo — czyściec — raj, swoją duszę tutaj daj* ‘Hell — heaven — purgatory — paradise, give your soul here’, which is accompanied by showing a four-part paper origami toy. Cf. *Niebo, światła niebieskie, ogień, kamienie* in [SSiSL: 87].

<sup>9</sup> The meaning of this phrase is unclear; it may be a reference to the Polish idiom *pies z kimś tańczył*, literally ‘a dog danced with someone’, which expresses the fact that the speaker does not care or no longer cares for someone.

Coaches-in-four for maidens, royal coaches for married women,  
Stagecoaches for widows, and wheelbarrows for crones.

Sturgeons for maidens, pikes for married women,  
small fish for widows, and frogs for crones.

With a maiden [go] for some wine, with a married woman for a beer,  
with a widow for a weak, home-brewed beer, and with a crone for some water.

A maiden [should sleep] in bed, a married woman on a bench,  
a widow at the stove, and a crone at the chimney.

The original *collection* becomes associated with collections of objects (let us give them the working label: “mirrored”), whose members are also clearly hierarchised: from the item listed as the first one, and bearing the highest value, to the last one with the lowest value. The first member is highly positive whereas the last one is negative (hence the valuation of the crone, who is actually excluded from the group of women “worthy of attention”): *rozmaryn* ‘rosemary’ — *róża* ‘rose’ — *rutka* ‘rue’ vs. *pokrzywa* ‘nettle’; *mazurek* ‘the mazurka’ — *walczek* ‘the quick waltz’ — *polonez* ‘the polonaise’ vs. *pies* ‘dog’ [?]; *koczyki* ‘coaches-and-four’ — *karety* ‘royal coaches’ — *dylizanse* ‘stagecoaches’ vs. *taczki* ‘wheelbarrows’; *jesiotry* ‘sturgeons’ — *szczupaki* ‘pikes’ — *drobne rybki* ‘small fish’ vs. *żaby* ‘frogs’; *wino* ‘wine’ — *piwo* ‘beer’ — *podpiwek* ‘weak, home-brewed beer’ vs. *woda* ‘water’; *łóżko* ‘bed’ — *ława* ‘bench’ — *przypiecek* ‘a place at the stove’ vs. *komin* ‘chimney’.

The region of Mazovia is also the source of a wedding song, in which the four stages of a woman’s life are mirrored by respective, hierarchised attributes:

- (3) *Pannom pałace, a dwory mężatkom,*  
*proste izby wdowuleńkom, świńskie chlewki babkom.*  
*Pannom salopy, ślafroki mężatkom,*  
*proste futra wdowuleńkom, świński kozuch babkom.*  
*Pannom karyty, kolas mężatkom,*  
*proste wozy wdowuleńkom, krzywe tacki babkom.*  
*Panno biały chleb, pytlowy mężatkom,*  
*a razowy wdowuleńkom, z czarnych otrąb babkom.*  
*Pannom jesiotra, szczupaka mężatkom,*  
*drobne rybki wdowuleńkom, drobne żabki babkom.*  
*Pannom różycki, lelije mężatkom,*  
*lichse kwiatki wdowulenkiom, a pokrzywki babkom* [Mazowsze 1888: 362].

Palaces for maidens, and mansions for married women,  
simple rooms for widows, pigsties for crones.

Mantles for maidens, dressing gowns for married women,  
simple fur coats for widows, pig leather coats for crones.

Royal coaches for maidens, open horse-drawn carriages for married women,  
Simple carts for widows, crooked wheelbarrows for crones.

White bread for maidens, rye bread for married women,  
and wholemeal bread for widows, black bran bread for crones.

A sturgeon for maidens, a pike for married women,  
small fish for widows, small frogs for crones.

Roses for maidens, lilies for married women,  
plain flowers for widows, and nettles for crones.

“Mirrored” collections are created here on the same principle of valuation according to decreasing values up to their total loss, i. e. their explicit opposite: *palace* ‘palaces’ — *dwo-ry* ‘mansions’ — *proste izby* ‘simple rooms’ vs. *świńskie chlewki* ‘pigsties’; *salopy* ‘mantles’ — *szlafroki* ‘dressing gowns’ — *proste futra* ‘simple fur coats’ vs. *świński kozuch* ‘pig leather coat’; *biały chleb* ‘white bread’ — *pytłowy chleb* ‘rye bread’ — *razowy chleb* ‘wholemeal bread’ vs. *chleb z czarnych otrąb* ‘black bran bread’, etc. In his commentary, Kolberg adds that “groomsmen and bridesmaids sing this song at the wedding, in defiance of the women who, after putting the cap on the bride’s head, take her to dance” [Mazowsze 1888: 363].

The stanza known from the 18<sup>th</sup>-century record, quoted here as text (1), appears enriched with other stanzas in Kolberg’s *Krakowskie* (1873), in the section of love songs as an epigram:

- (4) *Kyryje pannom, elejson mężatkom,  
odpuść Boże wdowuleńkom, a Requiem babkom.  
Za stół panienki, przed stołem mężatki,  
a przed piecem wdowuleńki, a za piecem babki.  
Wina panienkom, a miodu mężatkom,  
dobre piwko wdowuleńkom, a tatzbirek babkom.  
A w karetach panny, na bryczkach mężatki,  
na wozach wdowuleńki, na taczkach babki.  
Do nieba panny, do raju mężatki,  
a do czyszcza wdowuleńki, a do piekła babki* [Kolberg 1873: 304].
- Kyrie for maidens, eleison for married women,  
“forgive us our trespasses” for widows and Requiem for crones.  
Maidens at table, married women before the table,  
Widows at the stove, and crones in the chimney corner.  
Wine for ladies and mead for married women,  
a good beer for widows and thin beer for grandmothers.  
And maidens in royal coaches, married women in britzkas,  
Widows on wooden carts, crones in wheelbarrows.  
Maidens to heaven, married women to paradise,  
and widows to purgatory, and crones to hell.

The association of this text with the wedding rite, which in the peasant tradition always allowed for jokes and taunts, is confirmed in records from the regions of Poznań and the Upper Silesia. In the collection of Greater Poland songs sung at weddings, Kolberg included a short (by the way, not very well-turned) record from Kobylin:

- (5) *Rozmaryniek dla panienek, dla mężatków kwiatki,  
a dla wdowów pindyrynda (belladonna), dla babek żabki* [Poznańskie 1879: 55].
- Rosemary for maidens, flowers for married women,  
and *pindyrynda* (belladonna) for widows, frogs for crones.

A neater, more elaborate and orderly variant is quoted by Józef Gallus in his popular collection entitled *Starosta weselny* ‘Wedding Master of Ceremony.’ The “mirrored” collections include the following categories: “places”, “drinks”, “fish”, “vehicles”, “flowers”, and “buildings”; and there is also the basic “cosmic” collection: *niebo* — *raj* — *czyściec* — *piekło* ‘heaven — paradise — purgatory — hell’:

- (6) *Za stołem panienki, przed stołem mężatki,  
u komina wdowulinki, a za piecem babki.  
Pannom wina, pannom, a miodu mężatkom,  
kwaśne piwo wdowulinkom, a co zlewki babkom.  
Szczupaka panienkom, karaski mężatkom,  
drobne ryby wdowulinkom, a żabeczki babkom.  
Karetą panienki, powozem mężatki,  
drabnym wozem wdowulinki, a taczkami babki.  
Do nieba panienki, do raję mężatki,  
do czysca zaś wdowulinki, a do piekła babki.  
Białe różę pannom, tulipan mężatkom,  
drobne różę wdowulinkom, a pokrzywy babkom.  
Pałace panienko, kamienice mężatkom,  
skromne domki wdowulinkom, a chałupy babkom [Gallus 1900: no.118, 328–329].*
- Maidens at table, married women before the table,  
Widows at the stove, and crones in the chimney corner.  
Wine for maidens, ladies and mead for married women,  
sour beer for widows, and slops for crones.  
A pike for maidens, crucians for married women,  
small fish for widows, and little frogs for grandmothers.  
And maidens in a royal coach, married women in an equipage,  
Widows on wooden carts, crones in wheelbarrows.  
Maidens to heaven, married women to paradise,  
While widows to purgatory, and crones to hell.  
A white rose for maidens, a tulip for married women,  
small roses for widows, and nettles for crones.  
Palaces for maidens, town houses for married women,  
modest houses for widows, and cottages for crones.

In more recent records from the region of Cracow, this song undergoes gradual expansion by multiplying the “mirrored” collections. It was written down twice, first in 1964 by Piotr Płatek, as a playful song in which the original “cosmic” collection is already absent while “vehicles,” “clothes,” “parties,” “flowers,” and “military ranks” appear:

- (7) *Auto panience, a rower mężatce,  
wdowuleńce taczki, hulajnoga babce.  
Nylony panience, stylony mężatce,  
wdowuleńce zwykłe, a onucki babce.  
Do kina z panienką, na spacer z mężatką,  
z wdowuleńką do kościoła, a na pogrzeb z babką.  
Fijołka panience, a bratki mężatce,  
wdowuleńce stokrotke, a pokrzywę babce.  
Kaprala panience, sierżanta mężatce,  
wdowuleńce kapitana, a majora babce [Płatek 1976: 516].*
- A car for a maiden, and a bicycle for a married woman,  
A wheelbarrow for a widow, a kick scooter for a crone.  
Nylon stockings for a maiden, stylon stockings for a married woman,  
Plain stockings for a widow, and footwraps for crones.

With a maiden to the cinema, with a married woman for a walk,  
with a widow to church, and with a crone to a funeral.

A violet for a maiden, and pansies for a married woman,

A daisy for a widow, and a nettle for a crone.

A corporal for a maiden, a sergeant for a married woman,  
a captain for a widow, and a major for a crone.

The other record of this text, from 1971, represents a version even more elaborate, which could be described as “expanded” (which German folklorists refer to as *Zersingen*), extended on the principle of “a semantic loop”<sup>10</sup> by more and more modern and unusual collections:

- (8) *Na spacer z panienkom, do kina z mężatkom,  
do kościoła z wdowuleńkom, a na cmentarz z babką.  
Różyczka panience, tulipan mężatce,  
zwykły bratek wdowulince, a pokrzywa babce.  
Stylony panience, nylony mężatce,  
pończoszycka wdowuleńce, a onuce babce.  
Szpileczki panience, czótenka mężatce,  
stare buty wdowuleńce, a kalosze babce.  
Okrętem z panienką, stateczkiem z mężatka,  
zwykłą łódką z wdowuleńką, a w baliji z babką.  
General panience, oficer mężatce,  
szeregowy wdowuleńce, łysy rekrut babce.  
Skuterem z panienką, motorem z mężatką,  
na rowerze z wdowuleńką, a tragaczem z babką.  
Torebka panience, koszyczek mężatce,  
zwykła siatka wdowuleńce, a worcysko babce.  
Ciasteczko panience, cukierki mężatce,  
zwykły placek wdowuleńce, figa z makiem babce.  
Kanarek panience, papużka mężatce,  
stare koty wdowuleńce, a kozisko babce.  
Koniaczek panience, wódeczka mężatce,  
kwaśne wino wdowuleńce, denaturat babce.  
Do piekła za panienką, do czyśca z mężatką,  
a do nieba z wdowuleńką, a do rajy z babką [Płatek 1976: 755–758].*

With a maiden for a walk, with a married woman to the cinema,  
with a widow to church, and with a crone to a cemetery.

A rose for a maiden, a tulip for a married woman,

A plain pansy for a widow, and a nettle for a crone.

Stylon stockings for a maiden, nylon stockings for a married woman,

Plain stockings for a widow, and footwraps for crones.

High heels for a maiden, pumps for a married woman,

old shoes for a widow, and wellies for a crone.

On board of a liner with a maiden, in a small cruiser with a married woman,  
in an ordinary, small boat with a widow, and in a wash tub basin with a crone.

A general for a maiden, an officer for a married woman,

a private for a widow, a bald recruit for a crone.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. [Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2007: 372–388].



On a scooter with a maiden, on a motorbike with a married woman,  
on a bicycle with a widow, and in a *tragacz*<sup>11</sup> with a crone.

A handbag for a maiden, a basket for a married woman,

A plain shopping bag for a widow, and a burlap bag for a crone.

A cookie for a maiden, candy for a married woman,

a plain cake for a widow, *figa z makiem*<sup>12</sup> (nothing) for a crone.

A canary for a maiden, a small parrot for a married woman,

old cats for a widow, an old goat for a crone.

Cognac for a maiden, vodka for a married woman,

sour wine for a widow, methanol for a crone.

(Follow) a maiden (even) to hell, (go) to purgatory with a married woman,

and to heaven with a widow, and to paradise with a crone.

Song variants recorded several times in the region of Lublin are shorter. Below is a 1964 record, received from the folk singer Anna Monastyrska who was born in the village of Jacnia in the commune of Adamów and known for her rich repertoire:

- (9) *Karetami panny, wozami mężatki,  
powozami wdowuleńki, a taczkami babki.  
Przed stałem panienki, za stołem mężatki,  
przy kominku wdowuleńki, a na piecu babki.  
Białe róże pannom, tulipan mężatkom,  
drobny fijałek wdowuleńkom, a pokrzywy babkom.  
Młody pannie chłopca, a mężatkom wdowca,  
cyganería wdowuleńce, a dziadęge babce.  
Słodkie piwo pannom, a miodek mężatkom,  
kwaśne piwo wdowuleńkom, a rozliwki babkom.  
Do raju panienki, do nieba, mężatki,  
a do czysca wdowuleńki, a do piekła babki.*<sup>13</sup>

Royal coaches for maidens, wooden carts for married women,

Equipages for widows, wheelbarrows for crones.

Maidens in front of the table, married women at table,

Widows at the fireplace, and crones in the chimney corner.

White roses for maidens, a tulip for married women,

a small violet for widows, and nettles for crones.

A young man for a maiden, and a widower for married women,

A Gypsy man for a widow, and a greybeard for a crone.

Sweet beer for maidens, and mead for married women,

Sour beer for widows, and slops for crones.

Maidens to paradise, married women to heaven,

and widows to purgatory, and crones to hell.

<sup>11</sup> A type of wooden wheelbarrow to transport e.g. hay or firewood.

<sup>12</sup> *Figa z makiem* (En. lit. 'a fig with poppy seed') is a Polish idiom which means 'nothing'.

<sup>13</sup> Recorded in 1964, in Jacnia (the commune of Adamów); a shorter, four-stanza version, but with the same motifs was written down in the same year in Kawęczyn, the commune of Szczepreszyn [Bart PANLub, part V: 219], further variants can be found there, among them: *Tulipan panience, fijałek mężatce, biała lilia wdowuleńce, a pokrzywy babce* [A tulip for a maiden, a violet for a married woman, a white lily for a widow, and nettles for a crone] (as recorded in the village of Dobre in 1977), and similar versions.



In 1966, a unique (i.e. quite radically modified) variant as a feast song was recorded in the village of Lipsko, the commune of Zamość, from a man accidentally encountered:

- (10) *Spirytus panience, alkohol mężatce,  
dobra wódzia wdowuleńce, dynaturat babce.  
Do kina z panienką, na spacer z mężatką,  
a na wczasy z wdowuleńką, a na cmentarz z babką.  
Taksówka panience, furmanka mężatce,  
dobry rower wdowuleńce, a na taczce babce.  
Kanapa panience, łóżeczko mężatce,  
dobra sofa wdowuleńce, a na piecu babce.  
Trzy jajka panince, dwa jajka mężatce,  
jedno jajko wdowuleńce, a skorupa babce.  
Kyryje panienkom, elejson mężatkom,  
alleluja wdowuleńkom, a rykije [requiem] babkom [Burt PANLub III: 117].*

Spirit for a maiden, alcohol for a married woman,  
good vodka for a widow, methanol for a crone.

To the cinema with the young lady, for a walk with a married woman,  
and on vacation with a widow, and to the cemetery with a crone.

A taxi for a maiden, a wooden cart for a married woman,  
A good bicycle for a widow, and a wheelbarrow for a crone.

A couch for a maiden, a soft bed for a married woman,  
a good sofa for a widow, and a place at the stove for a crone.

Three eggs for a maiden, two eggs for a married woman,  
one egg for a widow, and an eggshell for a crone.

Kyrie for maidens, eleison for married women,  
hallelujah for widows, and requiem for crones.

\* \* \*

- (11) *Kiryje pannom, elejson mężatkom,  
alleluja wdowulinkom, rekwije babkom.  
Pieczonki pannom, mięso to mężatkom,  
poléweczka wdowulinkom, kościska babkom.  
Cytryny pannom, gruszki to mężatkom,  
czerstwe jabłka wdowulinkom, płończyska babkom.  
W karetach panny, w bryczkach to mężatki,  
a na wozach wdowulinki, na taczkach babki.  
Do nieba panny, do rajy mężatki,  
do oczyścia wdowulinki, do piekła babki [Roger 1880: song no. 14, pp. 252–253].*

Kyrie for maidens, eleison for married women,  
hallelujah for widows, requiem for crones.

Cauldron dishes for maidens, meat for married women,  
Pottage for widows, bones for crones.

Lemons for maidens, pears for married women,  
stale apples for widows, sour wild apples for crones.

Maidens in royal coaches, married women in britzkas,  
and widows on carts, crones in wheelbarrows.

Maidens to heaven, married women to paradise,  
Widows to purgatory, crones to hell.

\* \* \*

Until recently in folklore studies, a significant position was occupied by oral-formulaic theory, which is associated primarily with the names Milman Parry and Albert Lord, according to which the cornerstone of the oral style was constituted by a “formula” (a broader term than “phraseologism” and “phraseme.”<sup>14</sup> A formula was defined by the American researchers as “a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea” [Parry 1987: 272]. According to Lord, the use of established formulas facilitates a singer’s production or, rather, reproduction of a text as it prompts ready syntactic and metrical schemas [Lord 1960]<sup>15</sup>. More recent studies of oral texts have helped to develop this theory considerably and introduce a more general term — “text pattern.” The author of a study of oral texts defines a pattern as “a conceptual text schema, which helps the “orientation” of both the ‘sender’ of the text in the process of speaking and the listener in the process of oral-memory reception” [Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2007: 104–105]<sup>16</sup>. According to the author, “The pattern is created by texts with a similar logical arrangement and/or similar composition, and/or similar thematic relations, and/or a similar intention and idea.” Moreover, “[a]ll planes are permeated by a superordinate intention and idea, which organises the text as a macrosign.” [Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2007: 86]<sup>17</sup>.

The above comparison of the numerous song variants, recorded by folklorists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (2–10), reveals that we are dealing here with the active use of the so-conceived textual pattern and we can trace its functioning in the living matter of language. The pattern operates at the level of individual segments, i. e. autonomous, small two-line motifs, as well as at the level of the entire text.

At the level of segments, motifs are constructed according to the same logical and compositional schema: the fixed, original set of persons: *maiden* — *married woman* — *widow* — *crone* is successively accompanied by new sets of items that make up a “mirrored” collection, associated with those persons in specific “complexes.” Individual members of the fixed collection of women (*maiden* — *married woman* — *widow* — *crone*) appear together with relevant members of the collections of items: parts of the cosmos (as in variant 1), flowers (which appear often, as in variants 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9), drinks (variants 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10), vehicles (3, 4, 6, 9, 10, in a way also 7 and 8), places (2, 4, 6, 9, 10), fish (2, 3, 6), buildings (3, 6) — to name the most common ones. This gives rise to complexes of the type: “person + object”, which are systematically incorporated into the metrical pattern of a line; and the compositional schema adopted for individual segments, i.e. the four stages of a woman’s life, results in a similar content division into four segments in each of the “mirrored” collections of items. What operates in addition to that

<sup>14</sup> It is worth noting that German scholars had similar views (e. g. [Daur 1909; Peuckert 1961]).

<sup>15</sup> A critical analysis also can be found in [Bartmiński 1975].

<sup>16</sup> The study includes an extensive bibliography on the subject.

<sup>17</sup> The schematic and formulaic structure of folk songs is also described in [Daur 1909; Peuckert 1961].

is the principle of internal ordering of elements according to value gradation (from top to bottom: axiological degradation). Two elements are axiologically marked: the first as the best: for the *maiden*; and the last as the worst: for the *crone*.

This precise arrangement is not easy to apply on a larger scale because not all members of a given collection have, in their common understanding, a fixed place on the scale of values. What reveals itself as well is the entire rich and diverse valuation system of objects present in the immediate surroundings. Singers tend to have enough ingenuity to find between three and seven sensible combinations (most often there are six) that have a relatively strong consolidation in the linguistic-cultural worldview. It is fairly easy to find the “best examples” in the case of flowers (a *rose* undeniably occupies the first place among flowers while the most inferior one is a *nettle*, placed as the last item in the sequence), as well as buildings (*palace, manor house/cottage* — vs. *cottage/pigsty*), vehicles (*royal coach, britzka, wooden cart; taxi, cart, bicycle* vs. *wheelbarrow*), beverages (*wine, (good) beer, weak home-brewed beer; cognac, vodka, wine* vs. *water, slops, methanol*), fish (*pike, crucian, small fish* vs. *frogs*), bread (*white bread, rye bread, wholemeal bread* vs. *bran*), places to sleep (*in bed, on a bench, at the stove* vs. *at the chimney*), “honorary” places (*at table, in front of the table, at the chimney* vs. *at the stove*), also the largest social attractions (*cinema, walk, holiday/church* vs. *cemetery*) and, of course, military ranks (*general, officer, private* vs. *bald recruit*). Valuation is more difficult in the case of dances, clothes, sweets, birds, footwear, etc. The most ingenious singer, the performer of variant 8, invents elements of as many as 12 two-line segments himself by which, while confirming the creative power of the pattern, he exceeds the boundary of the common linguistic standard.

The pattern also operates at the level of the whole text as the segments are combined in a given series in accordance with a certain superordinate idea. That idea is constituted by a humorous, mocking intention, obviously corresponding to the male perspective of valuation of the female world, undoubtedly from a bachelor's point of view: the most attractive is a *maiden*, followed by a *married woman* and, next, a *widow*, while an *old woman/crone* (having lost her sexual attractiveness?) is excluded and treated with contempt. This intention integrates all seemingly autonomous segments at the level of fixed text. It is this intention as the superordinate component of the pattern that by itself imposes on individual text segments the structure of form and content as well as valuation.

## Abbreviations

En. — English

lit. — Literal translation of all components of a proverb

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## Текстовые паттерны как механизм формирования текста (на примере шуточной песни холостяка)

**Для цитирования:** Bartmiński J. The collection as a text-forming mechanism: A case study of a playful bachelor song. *Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Язык и литература*. 2020, 17 (3): 474–486. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu09.2020.308>

На примере старинной польской народной песни *Pannom świat, / A mężatkom niebo, / A wdowusiom raj, raj, raj, / A babkom piekło* (букв. «Девушкам — мир / а замужним женщинам — небо, / вдовам — рай, рай, рай / а старухам — ад») и ее многочисленных ва-

риантов в статье анализируется текстообразующий потенциал базовой коллекции «девушка — замужняя женщина — вдова — старуха», которая служит отправной точкой для таких сопряженных или «зеркальных» текстовых паттернов, как «небеса — рай — чистилище — ад». Концепты «коллекция» и «комплекс» применяются здесь в качестве инструментов анализа, которые позволяют выявить наборы устойчивых культурных стереотипов и закрепить за ними лексемы-гиперонимы, например, транспортное средство: карета, запряженная четверкой лошадей — королевская карета — дилижанс — тачка; напитки: вино — пиво — квас — вода и т. д. (число «зеркальных» коллекций в разных вариантах песни варьируется от 3 до 12). Анализ вариантов песни, представленный в настоящем исследовании, приводит к выводу, что теорию фольклорного текста Альберта Лорда необходимо дополнить более широким понятием «текстового паттерна», который выявляется как на уровне отдельных текстовых элементов, так и на уровне всего текста в целом. В случае, рассмотренном в данной статье, интегрирующим фактором песенного повествования выступает насмешливая мужская точка зрения (точка зрения «холостяка»).

*Ключевые слова:* польский песенный фольклор, коллекция, текстовый паттерн, механизм формирования текста, мужская (холостяцкая) точка зрения.

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