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Motifs of Czech legends in Božena Němcová's fairy tales

Abstract

The paper connects the motifs of Czech legends in some of Božena Němcová's fairy tales by examining the available sources to shed light on their role in the context of Czech national revival. Czech folk legends as a part of Czech folk literature had a great influence on Božena Němcová's literary work. The writer considered them extremely important, and they were an inspiration for fairy tales with which she wanted to awaken Czech national consciousness as an active member of the Czech national revival. The results of comparing the motifs of some Czech legends in the context of their connection with Božena Němcová's fairy tales show the frequent presence of the number three, characteristic family relationships – three children in the family, the youngest of whom represents the correct moral values accepted in society, then the use of pagan and Christian as well as motifs of Czech culture such as singing and dancing.

Key words: Božena Němcová, Czech national revival, Czech folk tales and legends.