

# ANALYSIS OF FAIRY TALES – Czech students

## Preface

We use the comparative analysis according to specific features of the literary genre of European folk fairy tale. We are inspired with the methodology of Vladimir Propp (The morphology of fairy tales) and literary genology. It is typical for Czech scientists and students to work with Structuralism.

The main points of our analysis are: main characters and relations among them; magical creatures and their function; magical artefacts; imagines of setting (country, interiors); imagines of Good and Evil; composition of the narrative; main motives and symbols.

## 1 Structural analysis of fairy tales

### 1.1 Romanian fairy tale (The Red Emperor)

The topic are **heroic acts** of brave Greucean and his victory over evil Ogres.

The main characters are : the Red Emperor, **Ogres**, Faur, Greucean and his brother. Heroes are Faur, Greucean, who has one brother. Greucean is brave, smart, purposeful, but his (anonymous) brother is stupid, impulsive and lazy. Faur is wise, smart smith, and he can do miracles. The Orges are the evil beings, making chaos.

The magical creatures are **Faur** and the **Orges** (they stole the sun and the moon) and **Raven** who brought Water to Greucean. The magical objects used in narration are: the **iron statue** in the forge, **scarves with tears**, and **knife**.

The main settings are the **Green forest**, The tower, Pear tree, Magic garden, and Crossroads where heroes decide what to do.

The collision is typical – the contrast between Good and Evil - between: Smith, Greucean and his brother, Raven – and bad Ogres.

### 1.2 Croatian fairy tale (The Fisherman and his Wife)

The main characters is **Palunko** , a fisherman, who is not content with his monotonous life and wishes to be rich. His **wife**, who is never named in the story, is a poor, strong girl, that eventually makes Palunko happy by showing him what's truly important in life.

Magical characters are **King of the Seas** who lives there with beautiful **mermaids**, and **Zora**, who is an underwater goddess, also mentioned as The Virgin of Dawn. Palunko's wife **speaks with animals**. birds.

The first magical object is a **big mill-wheel** that helps Palunko get to the King of the Seas. Palunko's wife plays **pipes** that have the ability to summon animals which help on her way to find Palunko and their son, and **handkerchief** that transforms into a sail that helps them get to the seaside.

The story is mostly set at **sea**.

The good is shown in the **wife**. Because of her general graciousness, she is helped by the magical creatures. The **evil** is represented by Palunko's greed for material things that only leads him to sadness and loss.

The narration skips entire months and years to show that nothing vital to the story has been happening, that things didn't change.

### 1.3 Turkish fairy tale (Stone and Patience)

The aim of this story is that the good overcomes evil.

The main heroes are **Shahzadah** (prince of the land), and **beautiful girl** and the **ugly female slave**. The magical **bird** which refers the magical creature, and this one helps to beautiful girl to find her love. In the fairy tale there will come kind of **exchange** between beautiful girl and the female slave.

In the story the magical artefact is the **stone of patience** which the fake female slave (beautiful girl) wanted from Shahzadah to bring from Jemen.

The setting of fairy tale is rich in **Orient**. The good creature is beautiful girl and bad one is her female slave.

### 1.4 Greek (fable) The rabbit and the Turtle

It is not a fairy tale, but **fable** – the genre with different origin, composition, and function. We have to use **different methodology**. We cannot compare it with other texts in our Comenius project.

Characters in this fable are: the **Rabbit**, who is a bit cocky and pretentious, and the **Turtle**, who is a smart (wise) and self-confident.

What can we learn from this fable? The **moral advise** that we shouldn't judge others just for being what they are.

## 2 General analysis

<b>FAIRY TALE</b>	<b>Good x Evil</b>	<b>Heroes &amp; heroines</b>	<b>Magic al creatures</b>	<b>Magical artefacts</b>	<b>setting</b>	<b>Function, topic</b>
<b>ROMANIAN</b>	yes	Smith	Ogres, raven	Iron statue knife	Countryside, forest	Victory of brave and good ones
<b>CROATIAN</b>	No in the image as in others	Palonko (man) and his wife - HEROINE!	King of the Seas, mermaids, Zora, animals	Wheel Hankerchief sorrell	sea	Saving of bad one by good one
<b>TURKISH</b>	yes	Prince, fairy girl and her slave - HEROINE!		Stone of patience	Orient – palace, journey	Victory of good over evil
<b>GREEK</b>	---	Rabbit x Turtle	---	---	---	Moral (victory of patient and humble over proud)
<b>CZECH</b>	yes	Jiřík, bad king, Princess - HEROINE!	Helping animals	Living and dead water	Castle, journey (forest, lake), castle on the lake	Victory of brave and good over evil

## 3 Conclusion

Our humble analysis brings these results: The common features of the fairy tales are victory of good among evil. Except the Romanian one, there is the motif of LOVE between hero and heroine. It is typical that too good heroes love themselves and somebody evil tries to destroy their relation. In one case (Croatian story) the hero is bad, but he is saved with good characters of wife who loved him. The magical creatures (especially animals) and artefacts are used in all of them. The Czech and Turkish one is set to aristocratic setting; the Croatian (most original of our samples!) one to the element of the water (sea). The Croatian is similar to traditional Slavonic fairy tales from Bohemia, Slovakia, and Russia. All of heroes have to absolve some journey – Jiřík, Greucean, Shahzadah, and Palonko's wife as the act of initiation. Jiřík (Czech hero) and Palonko's Wife (Croatian hero) understand to animals because of the same reason: they help, they have good hearts, and so they are helped.

The specific features are the motif of stolen Sun and Moon by Ogres (Romanian), the symbol of stone of patience (Turkish), the fate of Palonko's wife who is anonymous (Croatian) and motif of living and dead water (Czech).

We think that it is possible to use the function of Greek ancient fable I fairy tales because many of them try to give some moral message: it is better to be patient and humble (Shahzadah, Palonko's Wife, Turtle) than proud.

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