



Deepness  
of

# Fairy Tales

for Alpine Environmentalism  
in Anthropocene

**Once**

**upon a time ...**

might be in Neolithic, written in ancient scriptures of China and India, mysterious nights of the Arabic world, in flourishing Florence, or later, towards the Romanticism of Perrault and Grimm

Brothers ... all times, the **fairy tales animate humans life.**

Exciting topics and **profound motives** attract people of all generations.

It is believed that long before emerging of the era, now named Anthropocene, humans live in a better interrelation with their natural surroundings as it is the case today.

This **cohabitation**, either be competitive or synergistic, was actually an imperative needed for the **survival of the Homo** species.

However, in Anthropocene, the final fair(y) resolution **"and they lived happily ever after"** is turning into a **question:**



**Will we  
'humans'  
live  
ever after  
?**

# INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND



# Genre

## creators

social background  
natural environment  
creativity  
purpose

**TALE**

## interprets

languages / translations  
attitude of the performer  
social circumstances  
purpose

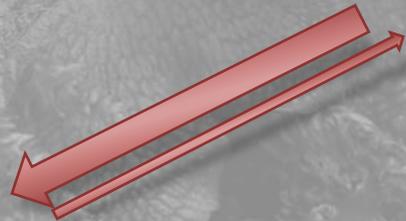
age / acceptability  
social circumstances

## audience

researchers

**what - how - why**

origin - meaning - dissemination - variation - relations



# Genre - types & taxonomy

**ANONIMOUS**

**ORAL  
TRADITION**

**TIMELESS**

**PLACELESS**

**FOUND IN ALL  
CULTURES**

**INSTRUCTIVE**

## ATU index

ANIMAL TALES 1-299

**TALES OF MAGIC 300-749**

RELIGIOUS TALES 750-849

REALISTIC TALES 850-999

TALES OF THE GIANT 1000-1199

ANECDOTES AND JOKES 1200-1999

FORMULA TALES 2000-2399

## Folktales

**FAIRY TALES**

FABLES

MYTHS

LEGENDS

TALL TALES

# Thesis

Nature appears in many fairy tales. It is mostly explained as the anthropomorphism, primitive knowledge, symbolism or myth. However, if one recognized that:

**1.** ... by folkloristic teaching, there are many elements known as a **reflection of the real life** like customs, myths, society ...

**2.** ... the interhuman **relations and ethical teaching** of Western society is written in the stories.

**3.** ... deeper levels were discovered that **influence** on human person and society **intellectually, emotionally and subconsciously.**

# Thesis

Nature appears in many fairy tales. It is mostly explained as the anthropomorphism, primitive knowledge, symbolism or myth. However, if one recognized that:

**1.** ... by folkloristic teaching, there are many elements known as a **reflection of the real life** like customs, myths, society ...

Was **nature** then as well part of **reality**?

**2.** ... the interhuman **relations and ethical teaching** of Western society is written in the stories.

Could tales reflect human-nature relations and **reverence for life**?

**3.** ... deeper levels were discovered that **influence** on human person and society **intellectually, emotionally and subconsciously.**

Would it be possible to use their **profound wisdom** as/for

a "revival magic" in today's **environmental efforts**?

# EXAMPLES



<http://jurij.dobravec.si/ny2017>

**ZLATOROG**



<http://jurij.dobravec.si/ny2017>

# ZLATOROG

Once upon a time, there was a paradise in the Julian Alps, the domain of the Bele Žene, the White Ladies. They were helping women in childbirth, taught men about crops and use of medicinal herbs. The great buck chamois named Zlatorog (Goldhorn) was in charge of protecting the area. His golden horns were the key to the treasure in Bogatin Mountain.

White Ladies protected Zlatorog: if he to be wounded, from every drop of his blood grew up a flower, the Triglav Rose. And no sooner had Zlatorog eaten of the leaves, he was sound as before.

There stood an inn beside the road in the Soča valley. The innkeeper's daughter had given her heart to a young Hunter. He was the best tracker around and stood under a protection of the White Ladies.

On his way to the north, a handsome and wealthy merchant of Venice stopped at the inn. Blinded by his gifts and seductive words, the beauty reproached to her boyfriend saying that he, "who knew the way to all the treasure of the mountains, had not given her even a paltry Triglav Rose so far, let alone anything more valuable as Venetian did."

In his envy and anger, the offended young Hunter left the place going up to the Alps and stalk Zlatorog for his golden horns and the magic Triglav Rose. At dawn, he sighted the great buck, and shot him. But wounded only, the animal was remediated immediately by Triglav Rose grown from his own blood. The young wanted to fire again, but the golden horns flashed before him, dazzling him down to the precipice.

Early next spring, the Soča river washed the body of the young hunter ashore beside the inn. One hand of the dead still clasped a sodden bunch of withered Triglav roses. In place of former paradise, shepherds found a stony wilderness. The White Ladies and Zlatorog had left the land for ever.

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# ZLATOROG

## reality

Once upon a time, there was a paradise in the **Julian Alps**, the domain of the Bele Žene, the White Ladies. They were helping women in **childbirth**, taught men about **crops** and use of **medicinal herbs**. The great buck **chamois** named Zlatorog (Goldhorn) was in charge of protecting the area. His golden horns were the key to the treasure in **Bogatin Mountain**.

White Ladies protected Zlatorog: if he to be wounded, from every drop of his blood grew up a flower, the **Triglav Rose**. And no sooner had Zlatorog eaten of the leaves, he was sound as before.

There stood an **inn** beside the **road** in the **Soča valley**. The innkeeper's **daughter** had given her heart to a **young Hunter**. He was the **best tracker around** and stood under a protection of the White Ladies.

On his way to the north, a handsome and **wealthy merchant of Venice** **stopped** at the inn. Blinded by his **gifts** and seductive words, the beauty reproached to her boyfriend saying that he, "who knew the way to all the treasure of the mountains, had not given her even a paltry Triglav Rose so far, let alone anything more valuable as Venetian did."

In his envy and anger, the offended young Hunter left the place going up to the **Alps** and stalk Zlatorog for his golden horns and the magic **Triglav Rose**. At dawn, he sighted the great buck, and shot him. But wounded only, the animal was remediated immediately by **Triglav Rose** grown from his own **blood**. The young wanted to fire again, but the golden horns flashed before him, dazzling him down to the **precipice**.

Early next spring, the **Soča river** washed the body of the young hunter **ashore beside the inn**. One hand of the dead still clasped a sodden bunch of **withered Triglav roses**. In place of former paradise, shepherds found a **stony wilderness**. The White Ladies and Zlatorog had left the land for ever.

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## reality myth

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On his way to the north, a handsome and **wealthy merchant of Venice** stopped at the inn. **Blinded** by his **gifts** and **seductive words**, the **beauty** reproached to her boyfriend saying that he, "who **knew the way to all the treasure of the mountains**, had not given her even a paltry Triglav Rose so far, let alone anything **more valuable** as Venetian did."

In his envy and anger, the offended young Hunter left the place going up to the **Alps** and stalk **Zlatorog** for his **golden horns** and the magic **Triglav Rose**. At dawn, he **sighted** the great buck, and **shot him**. But **wounded only**, the animal was **remediated** immediately by **Triglav Rose** grown from his own blood. The young **wanted to fire again**, but the golden horns **flashed** before him, **dazzling him** down to the **precipice**.

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# ZLATOROG

Do not be  
GREEDY!

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Otherwise ...  
you'll fall into  
precipice!

# ZLATOROG relations

## human-nature

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**TWELVE MONTHS**



<http://jurij.dobravec.si/ny2017>

# TWELVE MONTHS

Once upon a time, there was a widow who had two daughters, her own Helen, by her dead husband, and Maruška, by his first wife.

No matter what she does or how hard she tries, Maruška can never please her cruel stepmother and stepsister. Determined to get rid of her, in the dead time of winter, she must bring them violets.

The weeping girl made her way to snowy winter. While freezing, suddenly she saw a fire, surrounded by twelve strange men.

"Men of God, may I warm myself at your fire?"

The great Svečan (January) said: "What brings you here, my daughter"

"I am looking for violets," replied the maiden.

"This is not the season for violets; don't you see the snow everywhere?" said Svečan.

"I know, but my stepmother have ordered me to bring them violets otherwise they'll kill me."

The great Svečan arose and asked Sušec (March) to help the girl with spring flowers.

Joyfully she thanked them and ran home.

Helen and the stepmother were amazed.

A few days later they sent her to to mountains to bring strawberries. Successfully again, with a help of June. And later on, for delicious apples

Then said Helen in her envy: "Listen, mother, give me my coat. I will fetch some more fruits myself, or else that wretch will eat them all on the way."

On her way to mountains, Helen came as well across the twelve men and approached to the fire.

"What has brought you here? What do you seek?" asked the great Svečan severely.

"I am not obliged to tell you; what business is it of yours?" she replied, turning her back on the fire and going towards the forest.

Instantly the sky became cloudy, the fire went down, an icy wind howled round the mountain.

After a week or so, her mother went to find her. For long she wandered, the icy wind whistled in the mountain, but no voice answered her cries. They both froze in deadly winter.

The inheritance of a small house, a field, and a cow fell to Maruška. In course of time, an honest farmer came to share them with her, and live happily and in peace ever after.

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# CINDERELLA



<http://jurij.dobravec.si/ny2017>

# CINDERELLA

"Father, break off for me the first branch which knocks against your hat on your way home."

...

Cinderella thanked him, went to her mother's grave and planted the branch on it, and wept so much that the tears fell down on it and watered it. And it grew and became a handsome tree. Thrice a day Cinderella went and sat beneath it, and wept and prayed, and a little white bird always came on the tree, and if Cinderella expressed a wish, the bird threw down to her what she had wished for.

...

As they passed by the tree, the two white doves cried,

"Turn and peep, turn and peep,  
no blood is in the shoe,  
the shoe is not too small for her,  
the true bride rides with you."

And when they had cried that, the two came flying down and placed themselves on Cinderella's shoulders.

## INITIATIVE

Cinderella didn't ask her father for jewels or gold, but for the unusual gift, a tree branch.

## IN-ADVANCE RELATION

By planting the tree, she started an interrelation with nature.

By doing so on her mother's grave, she earned an intergenerational relation.

Tree do not represent natural helper/adviser, but a birds' nesting habitat.

## RESOLUTION AND SUCCESS IN LIFE

After successful trying of the slipper, very birds gave the signal at the right time that she was the right bride for the prince.

## INTERRELATION

Winning formula for the girl was in-advance established and permanent maintenance of interrelation with birds and their habitat.

# SUMMARY



# Common teaching about tales

By common social scientific teaching,

**fairy tales reflect human life:**

- **Customs** and **habits**
- **Social** events and **relations**
- Ancient religion and **myths**
- Personal or **family** drama
- **Subconscious**

Here, they are speaking about **social reality.**

# Research

By social scientists **nature is** traditionally **considered as:**

- **Anthropomorphism** (in fable, as helpers/advisers ...)
- Mythological, **symbolic** or **magical** (uncommon creatures, magical and symbolic plants, holly trees, processes like revival ...)
- Physical **background** (undefined landscape, adaptable during interpretation to local circumstances)
- Time as a **fiction** (undefined and paradoxical course of time ...)

# Neglected 1

- Many **animal** helpers/advisers serve to hero/heroine in concordance with their **natural role in the ecosystem** (fish will resolve a trouble in water; rodents or mice would winnow chaff from grain; birds will sing to Cinderella and the prince exactly in time, best for coupling; tree will serve as their nesting place, strawberries fruit in June ...)
- Some of the animals might be a **remembrance to** already **extinct species** (dragons as dinosaurs, extinct subspecies like alpine ibex...) or individual wanderer with some unusual characteristics (albinos ...)
- Plants are known **by traditional medicine**; however, this knowledge was perhaps suppressed by development of pharmaceuticals.

# Neglected 2

- **real natural events** (slides, storms, stars joined into constellations, comets ...)
- Interconnections are the core **reality of ecosystems** (seed – tree – bird nesting – singing in spring as a most suitable time for coupling, mating ...)
- **Time**, as otherwise abstract phenomena should be considered as in-time, **synchronization**, simultaneousness ... act in respective to natural seasons

# Environmental ethics (?)

**anthropocentric**

nature serves humans  
following seasons

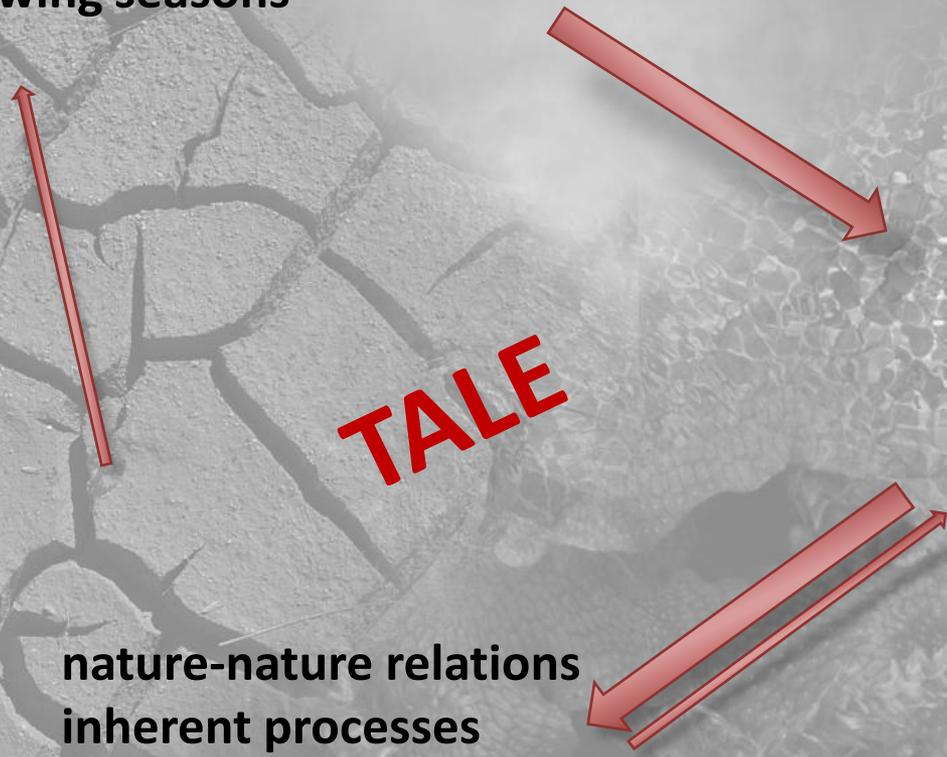
**biocentric**

in-time relation  
in-place relation  
nature response is not  
revenge

**TALE**

nature-nature relations  
inherent processes  
remediaton, revival

**? ecocentric**



Does

**Nature**

preserve

**humans**

better

as we preserve

**Nature**

**?**



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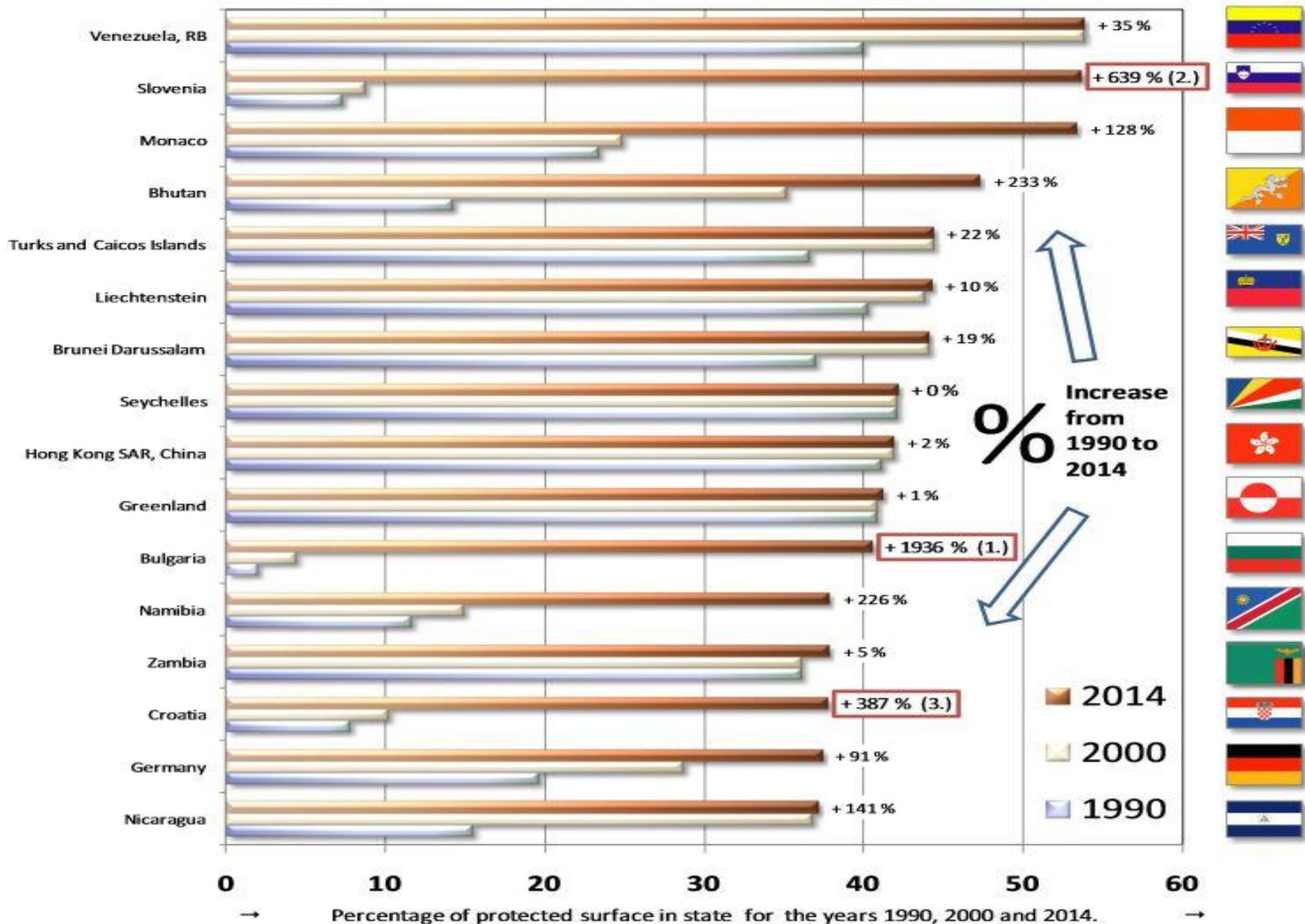
# FUTURE



# Challenges for the future

- How do we make interpretive judgments on the basis of published version of what was once an unfixed oral narrative existing in many versions?
- To what extent is the Grimms' variant of a tale type such as "Cinderella" culture bound and to what extent a fantasy?
- How to distinguish which motive represents deepness of the source culture, and which one is romanticism or later adaptation?
- How to precisely distinct between symbolism and reflections of reality?
- How to deal with later adaptation of sources in a sense of European Christian tradition?
- What is the meaning of nature features in noneuropean tales, radically different by the use of motives, their construction, and purpose?
- If, and How to adapt tales for today use in environmental education, to avoid culture specific morality and normative ethics?





**Successfulness of nature preservation legal efforts. Top 16 list by states.**

Datasource: The World Bank (API\_ER.LND.PTLD.ZS\_DS2.) Prepared by: Jurij Dobravec, 2017.03-17 © noemis.jarina.org

