



CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course title:	Interpretation of Czech Fairytales
Course code:	LITT 3002 PRAG / ANTH 3002 PRAG
Programs offering course:	Business, Arts and Sciences, Central European Studies, Communication, New Media, and Journalism
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3.00
Contact hours:	45.00
Term:	Fall 2023

Course Description

Fairytales are a significant part of human culture and contain a lot of information about the world around us as well as about ourselves. This information may be distorted, masked, deformed or hidden, which is why fairytales have been attracting attention of various fields of knowledge. There are various theories searching for the disguised meanings of fairytales and the significance which they contain and refer to. This course seeks to introduce the area of Czech fairytales as a genre within its broader historical, geographical, and cultural context. Furthermore, it describes and surveys the changes in the approach to fairytales within the development of scholarship about them. The course presents historical, psychoanalytical, and philosophical interpretations, as well as anthropological and religious types of theories, and biological and gender or feminist methods of their interpretation. The course respects the connection of the fairytale to other folklore narrative forms like legends, fables and myths, however it defines the fairytale as a specific genre. It includes topics such as ethical or moral principles in fairytales, gender and social roles, or historical and political influences on fairytale adaptations.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Identify and explain the fairytale as a literary genre, referring to the context of the European folklore tradition and to articulate its main features and characteristics;
- Describe, critique, and compare the main schools and theories concerning fairytales and utilize their different strategies of interpretation;
- Apply the main concepts and definitions of particular schools when analyzing and interpreting the most common European or Czech fairytale motifs and topics;
- Produce a complex interpretation of one fairytale story using one or more of the theoretical frameworks introduced within the course;
- Improve their ability to lead critical discourse both in oral and written form.

Course Prerequisites

There is no prerequisite required for this course. But students enrolling into this course should be aware of the fact that the course is not only on fairy tales but especially on the particular ways of analysis and interpretation. Thus, they should be ready to read not only many fairy tales but also quite a large amount of specific studies based on various fields (like folklore studies or psychology).

Methods of Instruction

Methods of instruction include lecturing (using PowerPoint presentations), interactive teaching methods such as pair and group work, students presentations (using PowerPoint), class discussion based on readings and homework questions, film screenings, and a field trip.

Assessment and Final Grade

1.	Class Presentation	10%
2.	Midterm Presentation	15%
3.	Midterm Test	15%
4.	Final Presentation + Paper	20%
5.	Final Test	20%

6. Homework / Preparation / Class participation

20%

TOTAL

100%

Course Requirements

Class Presentation

Every student is obliged to do one class presentation per semester. It is a short (5-10 min) presentation on a topic assigned by the lecturer, the purpose of which is to make a brief introduction to the theme of the lesson or to introduce some aspect of the theme more closely. Sometimes two students can cooperate on one presentation. The presentation consists of presentation slides and a brief handout for students.

Midterm Presentation

The midterm presentation is a team work effort of two or three students who share a topic. The form of the midterm presentation consists of an oral performance (15-20 minutes) supported by slides and a short handout distributed to students. The presentation or its brief outline must also be sent to the lecturer the day before the day of the class. The students should demonstrate their abilities of analysis and application of theory; they must be also able to present the topic to the audience convincingly enough, to pose relevant questions, and defend their opinion.

Midterm Test

The midterm test is a written test that examines students' knowledge and comprehension of the first part of the course (the test will include multiple choice, matching of right answers, and essay questions).

Final Presentation + Paper

The final exam consists of two parts:

1. **In the oral part** (presentation) students will briefly introduce their final paper. The purpose is to share the ideas with other students and get feedback. Students should prove their ability to interpret a topic of their choice and lead a short debate.
2. **In the final paper** (an essay of 1,800-3,000 words), students should demonstrate mastery of the topics covered in the course. They must prove good organization, structure, and competence in writing. It must be well researched and referenced and must include a bibliography. In order to get the full credit, students must demonstrate evidence of independent research at an academic level, good ability in finding and selecting the texts most relevant to the topic, great organization, relevant arguments, and an independent, original point of view.

Final Test

The final test is a written test examining students' knowledge and comprehension of the whole course (the test will include multiple choice, matching of right answers, and essay questions). More detailed instruction will be provided by the lecturer.

Homework / Preparation / Class participation

All students need to read the text assigned prior to each class to actively participate in class discussions. For every topic, questions on the reading will be posed by the lecturer to all students in advance so students must think through and write down their answers. Their written answers must be submitted one day prior to the class. By answering the questions in advance, students should develop and organize their thoughts, ideas, and opinions so that they can easily participate in class debate. Students are expected not only to write the answers in advance but they should be ready to answer the questions again in class, discuss the topic, pose relevant questions, make relevant comments, and defend their views. Preparation and active participation in class discussions will be assessed every class and will form the most important part of students final grade.

CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Participation is valued as **meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom**, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class.

Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and

outside-of- classroom activities.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor's or other students' line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.

Class participation also includes students' active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

Attendance

To encourage engaged learning, regular class attendance is required throughout the program. This includes any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as internship, service-learning, or other required field placement.

An excused absence in a CIEE course will only be considered if approved by a CIEE Center Director/Academic Director (not the Instructor), and:

- it is a self-certified absence for illness (only once per course, requires formal request before or within 24 hours, cannot miss assessment worth more than 5% of final course grade)
- a doctor's note from a local medical professional is provided
- evidence of a family emergency is provided
- it is a pre-approved observance of religious holiday

Unexcused absences include personal travel and/or travel delays, as well as missing more than 25% of a single class period (including tardiness and early departure). Assessments missed due to unexcused absences will be marked as zero. Students with over 10% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff. Students with over 20% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff, receive a formal warning letter (shared with their home institution) and lose 10% of the final course point total (e.g., a final A grade of 93% will be lowered to a B grade of 83%).

For more detail, please consult your CIEE Academic Manual.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to a positive and inclusive teaching and learning environment. All students are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness, respect, and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in grade penalties or disciplinary action. See the CIEE Student Academic Manual for further information on academic integrity.

N.B. Course schedule and co-curriculars are subject to change. The final duration and distribution of content and assignments will be determined and presented to students at the onset of the course.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Class: 1.1 What is a fairy tale? Introduction to the Topic

Features and borders of the genre. Folk tradition, folklore genres: Terms, concepts, definitions.

Class 1 Intro to the course, intro to each other, class discussion.

Class: 1.2 .

Discussion on the film and on the reading. A field trip to Vyšehrad.

Required reading for Class 2:

Selected folk narratives. See Reader.

Film to see:

Till the Leaves Will Fall from the Oaks (DVD Fimfárum Jana Wericha, 2002).

Week 2

Class: 2.1 Czech Fairytales in European Context

Sameness vs. diversity. Diffusion and expansion or parallel evolution? (First collections, first classification, hypotheses, theories.)

Ancient roots of European fairytales. First national collections of fairytales and their specifics (lecture and debate). Discussion on readings (Russian and German fairytales and their specifics).

Class: 2.2 .

Review activity. Most famous Czech fairytales collection (lecture and debate). Discussion on readings (Czech fairytales and their specifics). Historical, political, social and other influences on fairytale forms (conclusion).

Required readings for Class 1:

Selected European fairytales (The Juniper Tree, Frau Trude, Baba Yaga, Father Frost, The Three Golden Hairs, Long, Wide and Sharpeyes, Clever Manka, Prince Bayaya, Clever Princess, The Gypsy and the Priest). See Reader.

Week 3

Class: 3.1 Fairytale and Society, Fairytale and World around Us

Prologue:

Diffusion and expansion or parallel evolution? First classification of fairytales, first theories of origin.

Beliefs, habits, rituals. Social order, rules and breaking the rules. (Historical and anthropological view of fairytales.)

Students' summary of the sociohistorical studies, reflection and comparison.

The Fire Bird and the Red Fox. See Reader.

Rohrich 1991, p. 57-73 or 73-92 or 92-111 (according to the lecturer's instruction). See Canvas and Reader.

Class: 3.2 .

Students' application of the sociohistorical terms and concepts to further texts. The lecturer's explication and conclusion.

Required readings to Class 2:

Basic terms and concepts of the topic (Class material – see Canvas)

Recommended reading:

Propp 1984, p. 100-115. See Canvas and Reader.

Week 4

Class: 4.1 Dreams, Drives and Desires.

Jealousy, rivalry, repression, regression...

(Freudian look at fairytales.)

Intro to the topic (main Freudian concepts). Class analysis of the studies.

Required readings to Class 1:

A short introductory material – see Canvas.

Grimm, J. and W.: *Hansel and Gretel*, Little Red-Cap See:

http://www.worldoftales.com/fairy_tales/Grimm_fairy_tales.html

Bettelheim 1991, p. 3-22, 159-166. See Canvas and Reader.

Class: 4.2 .

Class review and the lecturer's summary of the basic concepts. Students' application of the covered concepts to other fairytales (class activity).

Required readings to Class 2:

Grimm, J. and W.: *Little Snow-white, Briar Rose, Cinderella*. See:

http://www.worldoftales.com/fairy_tales/Grimm_fairy_tales.html

Week 5

Class: 5.1 Archetypal Experience.

Archetypes and collective unconscious, individuation, amplification. (Jungian approach to fairytales.)

Intro to the topic (main Jungian concepts). Group work with the studies.

Required readings to Class 1:

A short introductory material – see Canvas.

Grimm, J. and W.: *The Dummeling and the Three Feathers*. See

<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm063.html>

Von Franz 1996, p. 46-69, 70-90, 91-113; one specified chapter from these three – according to the lecturer's instruction. See Canvas and Reader.

Class: 5.2 .

Students Group **Presentation**. Summary and conclusion.

Week 6

Class: 6.1 Midterm Test Week

Midterm Exam Period

Review workshop, instruction to Midterm Test and Midterm Presentations. Film screening.

Class: 6.2 .

Thursday **March 21: Midterm Test**. Discussion about midterm presentations. Film screening.

No required readings.

Films to see:

Reason and Luck, The Hat and the Little Jay Feather (DVD Fimfárum 3, 2011).

Crossing of Perspectives – Analysis, synthesis, application.

Week 7

Class: 7.1 Midterm Presentations Week

Midterm Exam Period

Midterm Presentations (see Canvas for the presentation schedule).

Class: 7.2 Midterm Presentations Week

Midterm Presentations (see Canvas for the presentation schedule).

Required readings:

One Czech fairytale according to each student's choice (= the topic of presentation). For more instruction see Canvas.

Week 8

Class: 8.1 Fairytale, Myth and Universal Human Topics

Temptation of the material world, the three epochs of human evolution, religious and mythological motifs in fairytales.

(Anthroposophical interpretation of fairytales; existential, religious, mythological and spiritual relevance of fairytales.)

Students review of the studies, the lecturer's explication of the anthroposophical concept.

Required readings to Class 1:

Heuscher 1974, p. 138-147, 195-204. See Canvas and Reader.

Erben, K.J.: *Zlatovláska the Golden-haired*. See Reader.

Class: 8.2 .

Context and connection (intro to Week 9 topic – watching film and reflection).

Film to see in Class 2: *Krabat, the Sorcerer's Apprentice* by Karel Zeman, 1978

Week 9

Class: 9.1 Fairytales and the Other Side

Realm of Death. Borders and approaching the borders. Rites of passage, a shamanic aspect of fairytales.

(Ritualistic theory on fairytales.)

Discussion on the film. Discussion on the readings. Intro to basic ritualistic concepts. The lecturer's synthesis.

Erben, K.J.: *The Twins*. See Canvas and Reader.

Propp 1984, p.124-146. See Canvas and Reader.

Optional material – see Canvas.

Film to see: *The Seven Ravens* by Alice Nellis, 2015

Class: 9.2 .

Students application of the covered concepts.

(film fairytale *The Seven Ravens*)

Week 10

Class: 10.1 Nature or Culture?

Are fairytales reflecting or creating our gender and sexual roles? (Neo-Darwinian vs. feminist approach to fairytales.)

Fairytales around us. Modern renderings of fairytales, historical and social aspects of their perception.

Students' reflection of the feminist studies. Class debate on their historical and social context.

Discussion on feminist issues in contemporary fairytale renditions.

Class: 10.2 .

Intro to basic Darwinian concepts. Reflection of the neo-Darwinian literary study, class debate on its relevance. Conclusion of the whole week topic.

(neo-Darwinian approach to fairytales)

Required readings:

Barash and Barash 2005, p. 153-182. See Reader.

Dworkin 1974. See Reader or <http://radicalprofeminist.blogspot.cz/2010/08/andrea-dworkin-fairy-tales-from-her.html>)

Pandolfo 2007. See Reader.

Week 11

Class: 11.1 Fairytale and Film

Czech fairytale film tradition. Political and ideological impact on film adaptations. (Introduction to Czech film fairytale history, a discussion on the shown passages.)

Watching a selection of excerpts. Collective reflection, comparison, conclusion.

Required readings:

Erben, K. J.: Otesánek (Little Otik). See Reader.

Film to see: *Three Nuts for Cinderella* by V. Vorlíček, 1973 or another according to class vote

Week 12

Class: 12.1 Final Review Workshop

Class: 12.2 Final Test

Week 13

Class: 13.1 Final Presentations

Final Exam Week

Due date for final paper.

Class: 13.2 End-of-course discussion

Course Materials

Readings

Secondary Sources:

- Ashliman, D.L.: Folk and Fairy Tales. A Handbook. Greenwood Press 2004.
- Barash, Danielle P. and Barash, Nanelle R.: Madame Bovary`s Ovaries. A Darwinian Look at Literature, Delacorte 2005.
- Bettelheim, Bruno: The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales. Penguin Group, 1991.
- Davidson, H. E., Chaudhri, A.: A Companion to the Fairy Tale. D.S. Brewer, Cambridge, 2003
- Dworkin, Andrea: Woman Hating. Dutton 1974 (chapter "The Fairy Tales", available at: <http://radicalprofeminist.blogspot.cz/2010/08/andrea-dworkin-fairy-tales-from-her.html>)
- Edgar, A., Sedgwick, P. (eds.): Cultural Theory. The Key Concept. Routledge 2008.
- Franz, M. von: Archetypal Pattern in Fairy Tales. University of Toronto Press 1997
- Franz, M. von: The Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales. Shambhala Publications, Inc.1974
- Heuscher, Julius: A Psychiatric Study of Myths and Fairy Tales. Thomas, Springfield 1974.
- Luthi, M.: The European Folktale: Form and Nature. Indiana University Press 1982
- Propp, Vladimir J: Theory and History of Folklore. University of Minnesota 1984.

- Segal, R.A.: Jung on Mythology. Taylor and Francis Group 1998-
- Tatar, M.: The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales. Princeton University Press 1987
- Von Franz, Marie-Louise: Interpretation of Fairy Tales. Shambhala Publications, Inc. 1996.
- Walker, S.F.: Jung and Jungians on Myth. Routledge 2002
- Zipes, J.: The Irresistible Fairy Tale. The Cultural and Social History of a Genre. University Press 2012

Primary Sources – Books:

- Erben, K. J., Němcová, B., Třebízský, V.B.: The Best of Czech Fairy Tales. Baset, Prague 2003.
- Erben, K. J., Němcová, B.: Czech Fairy Tales. Vitalis 2012.
- Grimms' Tales for Young and Old: The Complete Stories. Anchor 1983.
- Lomová, L.: The Greatest Czech Fairy Tales. Práh 2008.
- Werich, J.: Fimfarum. Baset Prague, 2001

Online Resources

- http://www.worldoftales.com/Czechoslovak_fairy_tales.html
- http://www.worldoftales.com/Czechoslovak_folktales.html
- www.worldoftales.com
- <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2591/2591-h/2591-h.htm>

Media Resources

Films

- Fimfárum 2 by Vlasta Pospíšilová and Břetislav Pojar, 2006
- Fimfárum 3 by Vlasta Pospíšilová and Kristina Dufková, 2011
- Fimfárum Jana Wericha by Vlasta Pospíšilová and Aurel Klimt, 2002
- Krabat, the Sorcerer's Apprentice by Karel Zeman, 1978
- Little Otik by Jan Švankmajer, 2000
- Proud Princess by Bořivoj Zeman, 1952 or Once There Was a King by Bořivoj Zeman, 1954 or Dařbuján a Pandrholá by Martin Frič, 1959
- The Third Prince by Antonín Moskalyk, 1982
- Three Nuts for Cinderella by Václav Vorlíček, 1973 or Three Veterans by Oldřich Lipský, 1983 or Lotrando and Zubejda by Karel Smyczek, 1996