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**BACHELOR THESIS**

**Traditional Czech and British Fairy Tales – The Most  
Obvious Analogies**

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**Declaration:**

I hereby declare that I have elaborated this thesis on my own and that all the sources that were used are listed on the Works Cited page. No other sources were used.

Prague, November 2013

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Author's signature

## **Abstract**

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to demonstrate whether Czech and British fairy tales evince analogies in terms of motifs and narratological structure. The theoretical part explains the origin of fairy tales in both countries and presents definitions of a traditional fairy tale and its main functions. The practical part begins with an analysis of an individual style of writing of the authors Božena Němcová, Karel Jaromír Erben, Joseph Jacobs and Oscar Wilde who are considered to be the main representatives of traditional fairy tales and thus their works enable a more thorough comparison. Subsequently, the author has paid attention to the analysis of traditional fairy tales of both literatures. In addition to their identical features, the comparison has also shown a number of discrepancies.

## **Key Words**

Fairy tales, analysis, style of writing, children's literature, analogies, contrasts, Božena Němcová, Karel Jaromír Erben, Joseph Jacobs, Oscar Wilde, motifs, narration

## **Anotace**

Cílem této bakalářské práce je ukázat, jestli české a britské pohádky vykazují analogie z hlediska motivů a struktury vyprávění. Teoretická část objasňuje původ pohádek v obou zemích a předkládá definice tradiční pohádky a její funkce. Praktická část začíná analýzou jednotlivých stylů psaní autorů Boženy Němcové, Karla Jaromíra Erbena, Josepha Jacobse a Oscara Wilda, kteří jsou považováni za hlavní představitele tradiční pohádky, a tak jejich díla umožňují podrobné srovnání. Následně se autorka soustředila na rozbor tradičních pohádek obou literatur. Vedle shodných rysů srovnání ukázalo i řadu rozdílů.

## **Klíčová slova**

Pohádky, analýza, styl psaní, dětská literatura, analogie, odlišnosti, Božena Němcová, Karel Jaromír Erben, Joseph Jacobs, Oscar Wilde, motivy, vyprávění

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## **Introduction**

Childhood is widely understood as the most impressionable period of life, one that fairy tales are traditionally associated with. It is a highly difficult task to write books for children because they are different readers or listeners than adults. Children tend to be more tractable by what they read or listen and thus they need to be provided with high-quality literature from their early age. The biggest emphasis has to be put on what is presented to children, especially to the youngest ones. The impressionability of young readers is frequently invoked in the debates as to whether fairy tales are good or bad for children, particularly for their psyche; what impact do they have on our children; or which of them are appropriate or not; or how to explicate the unreality of fairy tales' world to our children? These are some of the questions a concerned parent may ask, thus inquiring about the relevance of the cautionary message generally attributed to fairy tales.

This bachelor thesis concerns with traditional fairy tales because they arguably reflect time-honoured values, social background of the period when they came to existence, interesting thoughts and principally they tend to highlight the archetypal victory of good over evil. Adults should read fairy tales to children in order to provide them with the most engrossing experience. Regrettably, the process of reading fairy tales to children tends to be substituted for the process of letting a child to watch TV for half a day. This has exactly been wrong recently because children then cannot have a proper upbringing and the tight relation with adults or parents that arises during reading may be endangered.

The theoretical part, which is essential for a succeeding detailed research, presents the importance of literature in the life of a child and subsequently explains the basis of a fairy tale. The intention is to let the reader know the possible reasons that made the referenced authors to begin to write stories particularly for children. In the Czech Lands, written fairy tales originated in the period of the National Revival when the Czech folklore was covertly used to support the plight for political recognition of the fledgling nation within the Austrian Empire. Though stories reflect the inconvenient social situation they offer a vision of better times. The main representatives of traditional fairy tales are Karel Jaromír Erben and Joseph Jacobs who collected orally transmitted stories and put them into written form because there were no such stories at the British Islands.

On the other hand, Božena Němcová and Oscar Wilde only found an inspiration in traditional tales. Nevertheless they needed to create something into what they could integrate their ideas, thus they belong to the authorial branch of fairy tales. These authors, whose work and contribution to the world of literature is more than remarkable, and their stories will perfectly serve the purpose of this thesis, namely to provide a deeper analysis of traditional fairy tales which came to existence as first of all.

The aim of the bachelor thesis is to outline the most discernible analogies between traditional and early modern British and Czech fairy tales. Despite their different national development, culture, history or social background fairy tales evince identical features. Therefore the practical part consists of the style of writing of each author because that leads to disclosure of first indications of analogies, then general analogies, discrepancies and a final case study. Considering the given extent of the bachelor thesis the author will thoroughly examine and compare a selected representative sample of one Czech and one British fairy tale with the aim of verifying the working hypothesis whether they display significant analogies in terms of (1) motifs and (2) narratological devices and structure.

# Part I

## 1. What is Children's Literature

Aidan Chambers, the noteworthy British author of literature for children, comes up with a compelling attempt in providing a reasonable and synthetic definition of the function of literature, presumably also including children's literature into the fold.

I belong to the democratic tradition; I believe literature belongs to all the people all the time, that it ought to be cheaply and easily available, that it ought to be fun to read as well as challenging, subversive, refreshing, comforting, and all the other qualities we claim for it. Finally, I hold that in literature we find the best expression of the human imagination, and the most useful means by which we come to grips with our ideas about ourselves and what we are.

(Chambers 16)

Such a statement expresses the idea whether or not children's books are seen as valuable in themselves, or as stepping-stones to higher things such as to 'adult' or 'great' literature (Hunt, *Understanding* 2). Children's books are different from adults' books; they are written for a different audience, with different skills, different needs and different ways of reading (Hunt, *Understanding* 3). Moreover, "children's books are a matter of private delight, which means that they are real literature – if "literature" consists of texts which engage, change and provoke an intense response in readers." Regarding private delight we can reflect on the direct and indirect influence that children's books have, and have had, socially, culturally and historically (Hunt, *Understanding* 1).

There have always been many theories how to precisely define the period of childhood. Many scholars and psychologists argued for centuries and always came up with some new idea or some additional information to what had been already said. The subsequent characterizations will serve perfectly the purpose of this thesis because there is a need to realize what childhood is and the position of a child in relation to literature. The most frequent generalization is that "childhood is the period of life which the immediate culture thinks of as being free of responsibility and susceptible to education."

Equally, the most useful definition would be Piagetian in pattern at least: “that children are people whose minds and bodies have not yet matured in various definable ways.” From the literary point of view we distinguish children as developing readers – “that is, in terms of experience of life and books they have not reached the theoretical plateau upon which mature readers can be said to operate in mutual understanding” (Hunt, *Introduction* 5). This implies that adults are given a difficult task in order to write such literature that children are able to understand and perceive, not literature that adults think children can understand and perceive; “and this applies to literariness as well as to vocabulary or content” (Hunt, *Introduction* 5).

Assuming that the power of children’s imagination is unlimited, “children experience texts in ways which are often unknowable, but which many of us strongly suspect to be very rich and complex” (Hunt, *Understanding* 3). It follows that what should never be done is to underestimate children’s intelligence. What is more, the idea of producing simple literature because it is only for children is utterly wrong. Therefore children should be provided with high-quality literature since their early age owing to the impact that books and stories have on them. The biggest emphasis has to be put on what is presented to children, especially to the youngest ones.

As it has been experienced through decades, there is a high number of ideologies in fairy tales and other children’s literature which children in early age cannot perceive but such a kind of literature is not written for children only, it is also a device for parents and teachers. These books encompass the pieces of advice how to explain the world to young children. Furthermore, they mostly contain some secret message of the author. It is well known that books for children are produced mainly by adults so that they may differ throughout times as people develop. A form of the content depends on what message or social values adults want to pass to children during a concrete period of time, which means there is an obvious dissimilarity between books released in the age of Romanticism and today. Regarding the history, children used books long before books were produced specifically for children. Peter Hunt points out that “children’s books were always the scene of a battle between instruction and amusement, between restraint and freedom, between hesitant morality and spontaneous happiness” (*Introduction* 27). Thus we distinguish literature for children from the more broadly defined literature for young readers, which is more like an intermediary between

literature for children and for adults (Chaloupka and Nezkusil 25). The literature for young readers is a special kind because it might be read by older children as well as by adults, for instance the illustrative example of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Hunt, *Introduction* 28). Children's literature, especially for the youngest ones, is of value because it fosters personality and social development. ). In epitome, writers should cautiously consider the content of children's books because "children are very impressionable during the formative years, and children's literature can help them to develop into caring, intelligent and friendly people so as to become less egocentric" (Crippen). Whereas the youngest ones may be entirely focused on themselves, as they grow older they begin to take into account feelings and viewpoints of others, remarks Crippen. Moreover, adults must nurture in children the important skills such as being able to understand other people's viewpoints and not to be selfish or self-centred, as Norton says that "acceptable relationships require an understanding of feelings and viewpoints of others" (27).

### **1.1. Origin of Children's Literature, with Focus on Fairy Tales**

In the Middle Ages, children's literature as we define it now existed neither as a concept nor as a body of texts in any literature. Nevertheless, parents and grandparents have presumably told their children stories since prehistoric times. However, children's literature as a distinct and to a certain degree a separate branch of literature developed in England during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was firmly established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For a very long time the education was in the hands of Church which means that literature was mainly in Latin and later translated into other languages. According to Bohuslav Mánek's study, in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance both oral and written popular literature was shared by adults and children far more than it is today (49).

Books of instruction were the first category of literature intended for children. This style of writing remained in use for teaching Latin, religion and philosophy for more than a thousand years. As Bohuslav Mánek stated, "education was a serious matter largely in the hands of Church and it was thus unthinkable to produce texts which could be read only for pleasure or entertainment of children" (49). In the Czech Lands this attitude was changed by the educator Jan Amos Comenius who was one of the first authors who believed that "a children's book should entertain as well as teach" (Mánek 49). In *Orbis*

*Pictus*, an illustrated book for teaching foreign languages, he used a technique of images which makes learning easier for children (Mánek 49).

The British Islands are not considered as an exception concerning the primary usage of educational literature for children. The writing which perfectly fulfilled the educational requirement is widely known as *Aesop's Fables* produced probably by the slave and story-teller Aesop who is believed to have lived in ancient Greece. Furthermore we might find an educational aspect combined with entertainment in the Anglo-Saxon heroic epic *Beowulf* which, despite its battle scenes, can also be understood as a cautionary story and a sort of Bildungsroman in verse. Besides the Church, there were other ways of learning. Aristocratic children were sent to the royal court or the house of a great lord where they acquired courtesy and other knightly virtues – bravery, prowess, good manners etc. Additionally, literature of romance and chivalry, an embodiment of these ideals, were also satirised and parodied, thus provided a source of entertainment. Other very popular genres included myths about supernatural beings, parables and tales about pre-history and history, carols, songs, nursery rhymes and riddles (Mánek 50). All of what we can see above is slowly and gradually approaching the form of fairy tales, analysis of which will be presented in chapter three.

### **1.1.1. Rise of Children's Literature during the Czech National Revival Movement**

The rise of children's literature in the 18<sup>th</sup> century approximately coincides with the beginning of social and natural processes which are commonly known as the Czech National Revival Movement. After the Czech's defeat in the Thirty Years' War Czech culture and economy underwent a serious decline. German became the language of higher education and of cultural communication in the upper classes and intelligentsia in the country (Mánek 54). German substituted Czech at offices and at schools, mainly at secondary schools and universities. The Czech language was neglected as a means of intellectual discourse and seemed to be sliding towards extinction. Primarily people with a low social status or people living outside cities spoke Czech, yet strange Czech-German connections of words began to emerge almost all over the Czech Lands. It followed that Czech grammar and vocabulary was increasingly mispronounced and

had it not been for the Czech revivalists, the Czech language would have probably vanished or become one of the German dialects.

“Czech revivalists came from the emerging middle class and strove to develop the neglected Czech language and to restore the full range of its functions in society, so that it might be employed to express latest scientific knowledge and the finest contemporary and classic works of literature” (Mánek 55) which was of high necessity because the Czech language till that time lacked the support of a stable and cultivated literary language. This happened to be better achieved during the period of Romanticism and Biedermeier. Additionally, these two trends were strongly felt in children’s literature. “Biedermeier represented genial, god-fearing, and loyal writing for the lower middle class, which enjoyed good cheer, cosiness and peace at home in their family circles, and which people firmly bound to the social and religious values of the society they lived in.” This concept of an ideal life provided fairy tales with the best opportunity for their existence. Romantic stories, on the other hand, “helped people to escape from everyday routine and pressure”. Such conditions emphasized Czech folklore as a new source of strength for the reviving culture (Mánek 55). The work of František Ladislav Čelakovský, one of the significant revivalists who was essential for the origin of Czech fairy tales, inspired Karel Jaromír Erben to collect orally transmitted stories, put them into written form and to create first papers of traditional Czech fairy tales (Balajka 144). Božena Němcová (real name Barbora Panklová), the second author of the Czech traditional fairy tale, differed from Karel Jaromír Erben mainly by an idea she wanted to present. Unlike him she did not intend to capture only the original form of fairy tales but she converted the motifs to depict typical surroundings with typical characters of Czech people even with their personalities. The major idea of her fairy tales is a democratic rule of equality of all people and the victory of moral principles over the power of evil. These qualities were imprinted in folk’s minds in order to win over the royal arrogance, wealth and malice (Balajka 157).

The origin, history and subsequent development of fairy tales is obviously more diverse, but the aim of this work is an analysis of traditional British and Czech fairy tales. This is why here is chosen only what directly precedes the issues of this topic and what first of all helps the reader to understand the purpose of the inception of traditional fairy

tales. It is sufficient for the reader to know about the National Revival as about the period of the strongest influence and inspiration for writers of fairy tales.

### **1.1.2. Rise of Children's Literature at the British Islands**

In comparison with the Czech Lands, where the existence of fairy tales was conditioned by a bad social situation, the birth of traditional British fairy tales as we know them today was rather complicated. Nevertheless the trouble appeared to be not in the difficult historical development but in one peculiar thing which was the term of "fairy tale" and its definition. As the literary theorist Elizabeth Wanning Harries has noted: "Nothing is more difficult than to try to define the fairy tale in twenty-five words or less" (Harries 6). The range of what might be classified as a fairy tale is highly diverse. One approach of understanding the sense and scope of "fairy tale" has been to define not the term itself but its equivalents in other languages. "It is commonplace to point out that "fairy tale" was originally a late-eighteenth-century English translation of "conte de fées," a term that appeared in France in 1697 to describe the literary tales of Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy", the remarkable author of French fairy tales, "meaning literary "tale of/about fairies"" (Haase 322). However not all fairy tales include fairies so using "conte de fees" to help to define the fairy tale is historically relevant but does little to clarify what the fairy tale has come to mean and how it should be defined.

Dissatisfaction of scholars caused by the literal translation of the French word persuaded them to do a more detailed research. They tried to get to the heart of "fairy tale" by avoiding the term and substituting it with the German word "Märchen", a representation of a superior alternative what a fairy tale should mean (Haase 322). In fact the word "Märchen" is superior to a wide range of genres – namely to all of those diverse narrative forms included in Jacob and Wilhelm Grimms' foundational fairy-tale collections. If not for the German compound forms, where "Märchen" offers us a designation of the words "Volksmärchen" (folktale) and "Kunstmärchen" (literary fairy tale), we would not have the key that helps to clarify terminology by making a useful distinction. Since then (the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) English language scholars began to frequently use "folktale" to refer to the tales from the oral tradition and "fairy tale" to designate the written form of tales (Haase 322). It follows that one branch of fairy tales includes orally transmitted stories that collectors simply write

down on paper whereas in the other branch occurs fully authorial fairy tales. The very first English collector and author is Joseph Jacobs, the man who collected folktales and mythology, found an inspiration in it and thus created many fairy-tale collections. On the other hand Oscar Wilde, the representative of authorial fairy tales, produced his own book of elegant and poetic fairy tales with the title *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* in 1888 (Haase 1028).

## **2. Definition of a Fairy Tale**

The genre of a fairy tale is one of the most widely known and recognizable because when you ask even a young child what the term means, he or she can immediately think of several ideas stretching from beautiful princesses and handsome knights living in the castle, evil witches or supernatural powers to the fact that good should always win over evil. An adult person would respond to this question more sophisticatedly and answers would be rather different considering for example the place of each respondent's growing up or power of imagination etc. What is mentioned suggests that almost every generation is aware of the meaning but when it comes to the definition the assignment requires more effort. This chapter seeks a clarification of the term "fairy tale" and a presentation of its features and functions.

As it is stated in chapter 1.1.2. fairy tales are written forms of tales transmitted orally. These folklore stories have its own features - they do not exist in one particular form owing to the oral transmission, yet every new variant or modification is as authentic as the previous one; when transmitted orally the teller uses grimaces, gestures, intonation and depicts the social context (Červenka 122). So it is easier for teller to capture the attention of listeners. The writer's task seems to be more complicated because he or she has to cover the aforementioned features in written form. These stories reflect thinking at a concrete time in history, customs, traditions and ethical principles and are not specifically aimed at children. Nowadays we may compare them to our lessons of history with adding a little of spice. Therefore the written form of fairy tales has to have at least these features and even more to capture reader's attention.

It is important to start from the point of definitions, though the term has as many various explanations as possible that providing an utter clarification of the term fairy tale is

inconceivable. The first definition derives from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary: “fairy tale: a) a story (as for children) involving fantastic forces and beings (as fairies, wizards, and goblins) – called also fairy story; b) a story in which improbable events lead to a happy ending” and to be as precise as possible, the second definition is from the Oxford Dictionary: “fairy tale (also fairy story) • n. a children's story about magical and imaginary beings and lands“. Both of them enables us to perform a more thorough elaboration.

According to the literary theory the fairy tale is originally an epic genre of oral tradition which absorbed “miscellaneous mythological ideas of humankind, timeless life-wisdom and particularly the eternal desire for good and faith in magical power of word” (Čeňková 107). The Dictionary of Literary Theory defines fairy tale as a prosaic genre of oral transmission; the naive narration presents the supernatural as the objective truth as if everything was real; despite its fiction fairy tale depicts some of the basic human desires, ethical norms and eternal truths; no historical events are considered. Thus the time, place, social surroundings and characters of the tale are determined only stereotypically, for example “once upon a time” etc.; the sequence of problems that affected the main hero and subsequent coping with the problems provides tension to the reader (Vlašín 281).

## **2.1. Viewpoints of S. Thompson, A. Antti and V. Propp**

What we have discovered so far is slowly getting to an overall impression we are supposed to have about the term fairy tale. It is necessary to precisely define the term fairy tale in order to acquaint readers with all features they might find during an analysis of any fairy tale. Nevertheless, not only the literary theory gives us different explanations but also each author has his or her own feelings and ideas about the form of the fairy tale. This paragraph concerns with viewpoints of scholars like Stith Thompson, Aarne Antti and Vladimir Propp.

Thompson found an inspiration for his ideas in the work of Brothers Grimm and had in mind another Märchen-compound which in translation means a “magic or wonder tale”. Thompson’s definition states that a magic tale “is a tale of some length involving a succession of motifs or episodes. It moves in an unreal world, without definite

locality or definite characters and is filled with the marvellous. In this never-never land humble heroes kill adversaries, succeed to kingdoms, and marry princesses” (Haase 323). The definition may seem rather loose and unscholarly but when it comes to the core of the matter it is quite telling. Nevertheless to transform the statement into a more formal language Thompson highlights several important elements: “(1) The structure is episodic and constructed primarily on motifs; (2) the genre is fictional, the setting indefinite, and the mode of reality in which the characters move is supernatural or fantastic”; and (3) the protagonists overcome obstacles for the purpose of “achieving wealth, power, marriage, or a social status” (Haase 323). After comparing Thompson’s definition with the literary one it is evident that they might be perceived as similar, just written in different words; furthermore they coincide with the definitions from both the Merriam-Webster and the Oxford Dictionary.

Aarne created a system for classifying folktales where he identifies plot patterns (which he calls “types”) that tend to recur in narrations and he distinguishes among three subgenres of animal tales, ordinary folktales and jokes and anecdotes moreover he identifies three subcategories of religious tales, romantic tales or novellas and tales of a stupid ogre (Haase 1). It follows that we can define fairy tales as stories that contain something supernatural but not necessarily fairies. This may be read as a slightly contradictory towards the part of the Oxford definition concerning magical lands and beings.

Thompson refers to the hero who kills his adversaries, gains a kingdom and marries a princess. His definition also includes the proverbial happy ending and the task full of obstacles that the protagonist has successfully completed. Both of them are also important staples in general definition of fairy tales. These staples are also evident in Vladimir Propp’s notion that fairy tales are narratives of initiation. This view suggests “that the fairy tale models for its recipients a journey in which obstacles are overcome and problems are solved – a journey ending in integration, success, and happiness” (Haase 324). Besides he identifies a clear relation of causality and logical consequence in concrete characters and their activity which he named functions; in other words the same activity is ascribed to the same characters thus we can examine fairy tales according to the function of characters and the narrative function. It implies that Propp emphasizes the functions over the characters – characters (even fairies) are not that

important because they more likely represent the pattern of behaviour than types of the person (Propp 19). Thus we distinguish seven broad character functions: the villain (opposes the hero), the dispatcher (sends the hero on his way), the (magical) helper (gives support to the hero); the hero (seeks something), the donor (provides the hero with a magical object), the false hero (falsely assumes the role of the hero), the princess (needs to be protected from the villain but at the end of the journey the hero marries the princess, thereby beating the villain) (Propp 80). Additionally, when doing a comparison of the Oxford definition with the Propp's perception of fairy tales we can immediately see the difference. The Oxford definition does not even mention functions of fairy tales; moreover it emphasizes the role of fairies and characters which Propp sees as irrelevant.

## **2.2. Authorial and Traditional Fairy Tales**

As Jana Čeňková states the literary theory enables us to divide fairy tales according to the origin into two main groups of authorial fairy tales and traditional fairy tales. Nowadays a literary adaptation of folk fairy tales reproduces the oral heritage and maintains features of folklore poetics (108). Authors like Karel Jaromír Erben or Brothers Grimm collected what they heard and released it with minimal modifications. On the other hand the authorial fairy tale, called modern or artificial, is based on folklore tradition but authors altered it and integrated their thoughts in it. They used orally transmitted stories only as a basis for their own production so the individuality of each author dominates in newly created stories. The authorial fairy tale is mainly influenced by the period of Romanticism which means that it contains features of Romanticism like exotic scenery, illusions or tragic death of the main character. What is more fairy tales released in this period reflect a social situation and problems in countries (Čeňková 129).

### **2.2.1. Theories of the Origin of Traditional Fairy Tales**

Fairy tales of the whole world seem to feature similar motifs in terms of characters, objects, items, supernatural beings (fairies) etc.; these motifs connected into a comprehensive narration create a specific structure. Fairy tales that evince similarities

in the storyline but differ in some motifs constitute variants of the basic structure. Therefore we have four theories of the origin that help us to categorize folk fairy tales:

- a) The main representatives of the **Mythological Theory** who lay foundations of this theory are Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. The Mythological Theory, called the Romantic Theory, proclaims that fairy tales are remains of the old myths that every nation brought from the original homeland. This theory was popular in the period of the National Revival and its main Czech representative is Karel Jaromír Erben (Čeňková 108).
- b) According to the **Anthropological Theory**, traditional fairy tales “derived the storyline and main ideas about characters and situations from primitive religious and annual rituals and from animistic cults”. The theory negotiates that there exists one original place from which the fairy tales spread (Čeňková 109).
- c) As Jana Čeňková states, the **Migration’s Theory** emphasizes India as the original place from which fairy tales spread, then every nation took it as its own and under the influence of new surroundings fairy tales modified (109).
- d) The subsequent **Historic-Geographic Theory** extends this original land to areas of Celts and Arabic nations or to Egypt. Every fairy tale has its own origin and direction of spreading (Čeňková 109).

### 2.3. The Function of Fairy Tales

There is no substitute for a personal narration or reading fairy tales. A fairy tale is first of all the formation of an artistic presentation of a word and it is composed to evoke hidden images dozing in children’s minds. Adult people, especially parents, should realize that the role of a fairy tale is irreplaceable in life of a young child. Parents should definitely find some time and experience fairy tales with their children because right at this time a tight relation or contact of an adult with a child is created. In this very moment the feeling of confidence and mutuality also comes into being. Černoušek emphasizes that the main function of fairy tales is to bring a meaning and system into such a chaotic world that children cannot understand; thus fairy tales structure the reality (7).

Definitions of the fairy tale also invoke its purpose. Another definition of the Finish folklorist Satu Apo, which perfectly serves the purpose of this thesis, notes that a fairy-tale narrative “includes fantasy and is told as a means of passing the time, as entertainment”. While some definitions point to the genre’s entertainment value as a defining feature, others single out the fairy tale’s role in moral instruction and socialization. The genre seems clearly to have a variety of possible functions nevertheless the original and traditional fairy tale should have at least a moral message (Haase 365).

To summarize what have been written so far, traditional fairy tales should contain some supernatural elements and a journey of the main character who has to overcome obstacles in order to defeat evil. Moreover what matters is the plotline and individual motifs carrying a message or a hidden meaning while the characters and the place are less important and serve to the primary purpose – to show models of human behaviour. The fairies or the mysterious lands are used as a device to help people carry the message and the meaning universally through time and place freed from the reality. What makes possible to compare fairy tales from different parts of the world is the comprehensive structure which every nation borrowed and where they imprinted their own traditions, national values, cultural heritage or social situation. Additionally, fairy tales perform an important role in the children’s growth because they strengthen their imagination when children try to visualize the storyline and fairies, they structure the surrounding chaos, they depict the social situation and the culture of each nation, moreover, they create a tight relation between a child and parents during reading.

## **Part II**

### **3. Analysis of Fairy Tales**

This practical part consists of several sections. Firstly the style of writing of each author is to be highlighted because it enables us to disclose either first indications of analogies or contrasts between Czech and British fairy tales. Secondly the thesis demonstrates a comparison of a selected representative sample of Czech and British fairy tales with the aim of verifying the working hypothesis that they display significant analogies in terms of (1) motifs and (2) narratological devices and structure. A case study of two fairy tales is also included in the thesis in order to support the working hypothesis.

#### **3.1. Style of Writing of Božena Němcová**

Božena Němcová as a storyteller is not only a collector of orally transmitted stories but she is above all a creator of fairy tales. She fills her stories with her own visions of ideal world. Thus she imprints her subjective thoughts in her work. Nevertheless to be more accurate her ideas are only seemingly subjective because they correspond with thinking of the people (Němcová 314). It was a difficult period of the National Revival when people felt a lack of certainty and that certainty provided Božena Němcová in her fairy tales. She expands on a social motif, primarily on her social feeling and sympathy with suffering and poor people. She blames the unjust social system for a hard life situation of people with a low social status; therefore the main feature of her tales is an establishment of a fair ideal life and society, almost a utopia. In most of her stories she encompasses the contradiction between the poor and the wealthy and denotes a moral conflict between good and evil (Němcová 316).

Němcová alludes to a certain moralizing function, which implies that the evil is presented as negative qualities of anger, cupidity, envy, laziness, pride or desire for power whereas the good as positive qualities of obedience, kindness, graciousness, devotion, bravery, willingness, honesty and above all love. Němcová's fairy tales mostly end happily but under the condition of good behaviour. On the other hand

negative endings are caused by bad qualities of characters and their disobedience to pieces of advice given by supernatural beings most of the time.

It is not surprising that one of the main features is also faith, in this case believing in God. When the main character feels desperate God always helps and gives everybody what they deserve. Following that, God, Apostle or Angel are characters of some tales.

### **3.2. Style of Writing of Karel Jaromír Erben**

Karel Jaromír Erben is a true collector. His fairy tales sound exactly the same as he collected them because they are written mostly in informal and colloquial language which means in the way people told them to him. Thus we classify him as a supporter of the Mythological Theory about the origin of traditional tales. His fondness of folk people and folklore led him to provide a more extensive research; therefore he is considered to be a pioneer of the serious scholarly research into the Czech folklore (Čeňková 115). Moreover he strongly supported B. Němcová in her work because he appreciated her authorial contribution to oral tradition (Němcová 312).

It is quite unexpected that fairy tales of both Czech authors written almost in the same period of time and coming from the same basis are almost totally dissimilar. The under tone is completely different due to Němcová's ideas of depicting death and bad events whereas no such pattern is recognized while reading Erben.

### **3.3. Style of Writing of Joseph Jacobs**

Joseph Jacobs was really passionate about collecting tales. His register is more than impressive. He released *English Fairy Tales* (1890), *Indian Fairy Tales* (1892), *Celtic Fairy Tales* (1892), *More English Fairy Tales* (1894), *More Celtic Fairy Tales* (1894), and *Europa's Fairy Tales* (1916) (Haase 510). There has been a lamentable gap between the governing and recording classes and the working classes at British Islands; therefore he decided to bring to light a volume of such quality and to give a common fund of nursery literature to all classes of English people. He followed the idea that “something “fairy”, something extraordinary as fairies, giants, dwarfs or talking animals” has to occur in fairy tales (Jacobs 11).

He first and foremost concentrated on collecting. His work *English Fairy Tales* exhausted the scanty remains of the traditional folk-tales of England. He rewrote the tales for children and did it in a different way than other folklorists. He slightly changed the form – from artificialities of pseudo-Elizabethan to the ordinary English, in other words he eliminated noble phrases and expressions but he preserved the true essential core (Jacobs 191). Which means that by making fairy tales simple in their language but preserving the message, main characters, plot lines, and meaning (he for example maintained even vulgarisms), he moved those tales originally intended for adults closer to children. He said: ““Why desert that form for one which the children cannot so easily follow with “thous” and “werts” and all the artificialities? Children are not likely to say “darter” for “daughter. They recognise the unusual forms while enjoying the fun of them.”” (191) He accordingly retained the archaisms and old-world formulae. This is what is felt from the stories; the desire to entertain children. The moralizing function occurs sporadically in Jacobs’ stories but is replaced with a surfeit of fantastic elements.

### **3.4. Style of Writing of Oscar Wilde**

In the volume “*The Happy Prince and Other Stories*” the folklore tradition vanishes. Moreover his fairy tales written in a poetic language are full of symbols, allegories, impressionistic images and scepticism. Čeňková states that his fairy tales encompass features of Romanticism which alternate with irony and satire. Andersen and Wilde were the first ones who depicted civil facts and problems of nowadays world in their stories (131). This may be considered as an efficient contribution to the world of children’s literature because some fairy tales of Joseph Jacobs evoke an impression of being too much fanciful. However, regarding Oscar Wilde’s fairy tales his target audience might have been adults or older children. Nevertheless, some features of his work support exactly the aim of this thesis; moreover he could be compared with the Czech writer Božena Němcová because both of them really imprinted their thoughts in their fairy tales, which is strongly felt during reading. However, concerning the moralizing point of view, Wilde should be integrated into the children’s upbringing because his tales include a perfect illustration of positive and negative personal qualities.

What can be derived from the previously stated facts is that writing styles of the aforementioned authors appear to be predominantly contrasting. Each style is truly unique, they use different devices; moreover their purpose of writing is different as well as the message they want to pass to the reader. The foregoing exploration does not offer us propitious prospects of verifying the working hypothesis.

### **3.5. The Most Obvious Analogies**

This chapter continues to seek the most generic analogies of traditional Czech and British fairy tales such as (1) the presence of generically folkloric characters of fairies, witches, dragons, giants, talking animals etc. which may be found mainly in British fairy tales by Joseph Jacobs. As it was highlighted in chapter two (2) it is a custom to start a narration with “Once upon a time...” nevertheless it is not a rule to start with this linguistic determinant, although it needs to be said that an overwhelming majority stands the rule. Another linguistic determinant, namely an ending of a fairy tale, also occurs in many various forms. To be precise, the ending which everybody loves and expects sounds: “... and they all lived happily ever after”, an ending that appears in a majority of fairy tales.

What can be derived as the most obvious analogy is (3) the character of the animal. Each author mentioned in the thesis released at least one tale where animals play a leading role. Subsequent samples are highly eclectic but telling.

- a) In Oscar Wilde’s fairy tale “The Nightingale and the Rose” the character of the Nightingale demonstrates real bravery and faith in true love. The faith is so strong that the Nightingale sacrifices her life for it when trying to fulfil unrequited love of a young student (23-31). Similarly the Swallow in “The Happy Prince” feels so devoted to the statue which is giving its gold to poor or sick people so that he decides to help and stays with the statue which he knows is certain death because he cannot survive the winter (9-22).
- b) Through the character of the horse in “Prince Bajaja” Němcová wants to say that we should sometimes trust an animal’s instinct and that an animal might be a useful advisor and a friend (140-151).

- c) A high number of animal friends are also incorporated in Erben's work. The best samples are "Zlatovláska (The Golden-haired Princess)" where a kind-hearted protagonist saves lives of a fish, a fly, ants and birds who can talk and provide him with their help (55-60); or "Pták Ohnivák a Liška Ryška (The Firebird and the Bright Fox)" where a cunning fox helps the prince to fulfil a wish of his father (38-49).
- d) Finally we cannot omit Joseph Jacobs whose bull in "The Black Bull of Norway" tries to help a poor girl on her difficult path to happiness as long as it is possible, until she disobeys his advice (208-213).

Talking animals play an essential role in fairy tales but the above-mentioned definition of a fairy tale says that not only characters are important; therefore attention has to be paid to (4) personal qualities or a message which is expressed through them. Besides, these forthcoming qualities emerge in tales of every nation irrespectively of their place of origin. Throughout the next several lines a highly eclectic selection will be done in order to introduce analogical personal qualities that appear both in British and Czech fairy tales.

During the research there were discovered personal qualities such as **foolishness** in "The Three Sillies" – Joseph Jacobs. Regarding this fairy tale we can speak about pure stupidity of some characters. For a better illustration, the tale depicts several accidents that are experienced by stupid people. One of the mishaps happens to a woman who sees grass growing on her roof and instead of cutting it and giving it to her cow, she pulls the cow up to the roof with a string around its neck. Shortly afterwards the cow tumbles off the roof, and hangs by the string tied round its neck, which strangles it (24-27). Foolishness in a sense of stupidity is also detailed in "O Kocouru, Kohoutu a Kose (The Cat, the Cock and the Scythe)" by B. Němcová where people are so dull that they think that the sun needs to be welcomed or otherwise it will not rise; or that the scythe is working on its own and therefore people just lay it in the grass and wait till it does the work etc. (36-41).

**Bravery** mixed with **devotion** are depicted in the fairy tale "The Nightingale and the Rose" by Oscar Wilde where the character of the Nightingale sacrifices her life for happiness of a young student who is dying for unrequited love. He has to bring a red rose to a noble girl but there are no red roses at any garden. Though the Nightingale

finds a rose-tree which gives her the red rose, she has to pierce her heart with a thorn and her blood must flow into the veins of the tree. The Nightingale strongly believes in true love so she helps the student. Regrettably this courageous act is useless and the Nightingale dies in vain (23-31). These foregoing qualities are to be found in the tale “Sedmero Krkavců (The Seven Ravens)” written by Božena Němcová. The main heroine Bohdanka shows her courage while trying to break the curse imposed upon her brothers. Her task is to sew seven shirts but the trick is that she has to remain speechless throughout the production which almost costs Bohdanka her life (171-183).

As for the other quality, **envy** has to be highlighted because a person with such a bad quality cannot escape punishment. Moreover it is a good example for children in relation to morality to realize that envious people can be never happy or successful in their lives. Readers may recognize an emotion of envy in behaviour of two elder brothers in their relationship to the youngest one in “Živá Voda (The Water of Life)” by K. J. Erben. Apart from the youngest one they do not succeed on the path for the water of life for their father. Owing to jealousy they deceive their brother and appropriate his merits. Finally everything is revealed and the youngest brother gains appreciations, apologies and love whereas elder brothers are punished (30-37). Similarly as with envy caused by jealousy, in the tale “The Ass, the Table and the Stick” by Joseph Jacobs we encounter material or financial envy that ends with punishment as well. A naive young lad becomes a servant. After receiving his wage, an ass which gives money and a table which gives food, he accommodates himself in an inn where he exhibits these objects and is robbed of his wage twice because his host wants these extraordinary things. The envious thief is punished at last and the young lad obtains his things back (145-148). These cautionary tales’ endings may be seen as beneficial for the children’s upbringing because they realize that inappropriate behaviour is never left without penalization.

What should not be definitely missing in childhood and represents an inseparable part in life of a child are (5) nursery rhymes. Children should listen to them and learn them afterwards because they support their proper intellectual growth and improve their memory so we can find them in several fairy tales. The next analogy may be identified in work of K. J. Erben and Joseph Jacobs who both use nursery rhymes in their stories. Representative samples of such rhymes are illustrated in “Jabloňová panna (The Woman of Apple Tree)” and “The History of Tom Thumb”.

Coo! Coo!  
You do not have the right girl.  
The right one wet is lying,  
White waves over her are running.  
Coo! Coo!  
(Erben 77)

An oak-leaf hat he had for his crown;  
His shirt of web by spiders spun;  
With jacket wove of thistle's down;  
His trowsers were of feathers done.  
His stockings, of apple-rind, they tie  
With eyelash from his mother's eye:  
His shoes were made of mouse's skin,  
Tann'd with the downy hair within. (Jacobs 104)

### **3.6. The Most Obvious Contrasts**

When comparing fairy tales all around the world you will always find something they have in common because it is a simple fact that certain personal qualities appear and may be categorized as good or evil. What is more children should be able to distinguish immediately the parts where good occurs and the parts full of evil or injustice. This aforesaid is one of the main functions fairy tales should have. While doing the analysis, it was really interesting to find two fairy tales released in two different countries, written in different social backgrounds that evinced similarities in terms of shared motives or narratological structures. Nevertheless not only corresponding features may be recognized when comparing fairy tales from a different place of origin therefore the intention of this chapter is not to determine similarities but the exact opposite. The aim is to stress differences between British and Czech fairy tales and also differences regarding each author.

A statistically significant number of Czech fairy tales are decidedly (1) anti-elitist, while no such pattern can be observed in representative collections of traditional British fairy tales, the tales with minor authorial contribution. Owing to the occupation of the Czech Lands throughout the history we were under the everlasting influence as we were not fully independent until late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore authors of any kind of traditional tales, myths included, have always depicted images of the countryside, the poor or a social motif in comparison with the life of the royal family. In this respect traditional Czech tales lack the occurrence of too fanciful elements. On the other hand Britain went through the similar history much earlier than the Czech Lands so it can be assumed that they were not as affected as we were. However, the exception proves the rule because Oscar Wilde, writer of major authorial contribution, concerns himself with inequity between rich and poor. This theme waves through many of his tales as does an emphasis on suffering (Haase 1029).

Besides, the rich mythological history of the British Islands reflects in the content of British fairy tales. The volumes *The English Fairy Tales* and *More English Fairy Tales* written by Joseph Jacobs incorporate some kind of (2) a mixture of a fairy tale and a myth. This feature is to be found in a representative sample of the tale “Jack the Giant-Killer” which begins with the sentence: “When good King Arthur reigned, there lived near the Land’s End of England, in the country of Cornwall, a farmer who had one only son called Jack” (Jacobs 77). As you can see, this fairy tale, as it is written at the beginning of this thesis, should be a story that is happening at an indefinite time and at an unknown place, has not clearly defined preceding elements. Otherwise, the main character called Jack is still anonymous, because we do not know anything about him except for his name and this is why we can still classify the story as a fairy tale.

The theoretical part of this thesis also refers to the (3) function of fairy tales and points out the important role of a moralizing function as well as the importance of entertainment. The moralizing tone in fairy tales of Joseph Jacobs is missing so assuming from that their main function is to entertain. Moreover, endings lack the occurrence of a moral message; thus they sound mostly: “... and they lived happily ever after” or are uncertain. An example of an uncertain ending demonstrates the tale “Habetrot and Scantlie Mab” where is written: “She used to wander in the meadows by his side, or ride behind him over the hills, but all the flax grown on his land was sent to

old Habetrot to be converted into yarn.” (Jacobs 309). Apart from Joseph Jacobs, Oscar Wilde’s tales are more moralizing than entertaining. Furthermore “they contain moral messages against selfishness, greed, pomposity, and self-centeredness, and question social hypocrisy and double standards” (Haase 1028), therefore they are not intended specifically for children due to their difficult language, omnipresent scepticism and no traditional “happily ever after” ending (Čeňková 131).

As it was already written, Němcová highlights the social motif in her fairy tales. For that reason, she integrates religious elements so we can find there strong faith in God, praying or God intervention especially when injustice is happening to good and poor people. Religious elements cannot be seen as dogmatism but people should perceive them as a request for help heading towards something metaphysical. Religious elements symbolize the good aspect in Němcová’s stories which makes her special and different from other authors mentioned in this thesis.

#### **4. Case study: Comparison of “The Black Bull of Norrway” and “The White Snake”**

This case study plays a significant role in verifying the working hypothesis; therefore the reader is to be provided with an analysis of the traditional tale “O Bílém Hadu (The White Snake)” written by Božena Němcová, which contains every feature of Němcová’s style of writing except faith (61-69), and the originally orally transmitted fairy story “The Black Bull of Norrway” by Joseph Jacobs (208-213). These two culturally rather disparate fairy stories can be compared either in terms of shared motifs or in terms of narratological structure.

As it is stated in chapter 2.1., Vladimir Propp emphasizes the significance of functions. In his opinion, whatever fairy tale may be analysed according to 31 narrative functions (Propp 25-60). These functions are explained in the Appendix 1 and in subsequent lines are introduced functions directly associated with our case study. Undoubtedly, not every fairy tale consists of 31 functions, moreover, their positions are often interchanged for other positions. Our case study is not an exception and it offers a high number of analogical functions even though their positions differ.

These two stories demonstrate corresponding samples of:

II Interdiction: Běla in Němcová's tale is warned not to lose the snake skin of her husband whereas the unnamed girl of Joseph Jacobs is given an order to stay motionless and wait.

III Violation: The snake's skin is stolen and Běla's husband disappears. The unnamed girl disobeys the order and gets lost. Since then she is left alone without any help.

VIII Villainy: An evil queen steals the skin and thus she gains Běla's husband for herself. In Jacob's tale a selfish mother of another girl makes a knight believe that her daughter washed the clothes but our unnamed girl did it. So the knight and the daughter are to be married.

X Beginning counter-action: Běla decides to seek her husband. As well as Běla, our unnamed girl wants to find her love.

XI Departure: Both girls set out in the world.

XIV Receipt of a magical agent: Both girls are provided with a helper and three magical objects in order to gain their beloved men.

XVI Struggle: There is no direct combat but rather a conflict of interests because Běla tries to persuade the evil queen to allow her to spend some time with her husband as well as the unnamed girl tries to convince the dishonest one to put off the marriage to subsequently prove that it was her who washed the clothes. Metaphorically spoken, both girls have to fight hard for their happiness.

XIX Liquidation: Girls find their beloved men. The previous misfortune is overcome.

XXV Difficult task: Both girls have to make their lovers believe that they were tricked. Girls use magical agents in order to succeed.

XXVI Solution: Běla and the unnamed girl win over evil and injustice with a little help of the third person who informed both men that the girls have been crying in their chambers for two nights.

XXVIII Exposure: The evil queen and the dishonest mother with her daughter are exposed owing to help of the third person.

XXX Punishment: Villains are sentenced to death.

XXXI Wedding: Both heroines manage to gain their lovers, which is followed by weddings.

An important role plays the character of a talking animal of the white snake or the black bull. In Němcová's story a farmer's wife finds a white snake and together with her husband they take care of him as if he was their only son. As it is mentioned in the tale, a white snake means luck. Moreover white colour represents innocence, devotion, kindness and other positive qualities so the couple does not have to be afraid of any danger; it is more probable that they will be somehow awarded for their help. To the contrary in Jacob's tale we find the character of a black bull. Even though he is black which mostly signifies negative qualities like a black soul, danger etc., he is also an embodiment of enormous strength which is a useful help for a girl. Finally, the bull is not only an embodiment of strength but also a supernatural element.

In terms of motifs, fairy tales share the following analogies:

**(1) The motif of the number three** which is a stable feature of composition of traditional fairy tales. In the text itself, the author works with the number three while composing motifs thus we can mention a motif of three obstacles, tasks or visits in "The White Snake" where the main character Běla tries to make her husband remember her but she has only three attempts during three nights and eventually she succeeds for the third time. In "The Black Bull of Norway" we can also find three obstacles, tasks or visits till the female protagonist gains her lover. Both of the noble men are tricked into marriage with selfish, dishonest and proud as a peacock women. The poor girls use three things they received before from supernatural beings to win over the two evil women. What is more, in Jacobs' tale there are depicted three sisters and then three visits of three brothers of the bull.

**(2) The motif of a mistake** – The young lady Běla is for a while so fascinated by beauty of her husband that she forgets to be careful and loses her husband's skin. "Suddenly, Běla feels a kiss upon her left cheek, hears a grievous sigh and the groom is no longer there" (Němcová 64). Běla's suffering is caused by her own mistake whereas the unnamed girl gets overpowered with emotions and does not realize her mistake. "Ye must seat yourself on that stone, and move neither hand nor foot till I come back, else I'll never find ye again. Overcome with joy, she lifted one of her feet, and crossed it over the other, so glad was she that her companion was victorious. The Bull returned and sought for her, but never could find her" (Jacobs 210).

What cannot be forgotten is the omnipresent (3) **motif of love**. The prince really knows why he chooses Běla because when the disaster happens and the prince disappears, she loves him so much regardless of all the suffering she must undergo that she decides to save him. Like Běla, even the main heroine of Jacobs' tale overcomes intrigues and deception because the dishonest woman would do almost anything in order to manage to marry her daughter to the prince. But love, purity of a soul and thoughts, seems to be stronger than anything else. The motif of love is obvious in acts of both heroines who are dying for love and suffer.

It would not be a fairy tale without the (4) **motif of journey**. In "The Black Bull of Norway", all three daughters go to seek their fortune and happiness. The journey, when the main character must overcome several obstacles to become happy, is the most typical motif of fairy tales. On the other hand, in "The White Snake", Běla makes a mistake when losing her husband's skin. Despite the mistake her soul is still pure so that a supernatural being helps her, on her miserable path full of obstacles, to find her lover and bring him back. The power of love is the strongest so despite all intrigues the lovers are finally together. But were it not for the help of the supernatural being the story would not come to the happy end.

In both fairy tales there always occurs a kind of fight between two women, one of which is good and the other evil. The evil one wants all the treasure for herself - (5) **the motif of rapacity** - thus she is easily corruptible. The poor girls offer presents, which were given to them by supernatural beings, to the greedy women in order to spend some time with their lovers.

Supernatural beings belong in every fairy tale. Their function is to help or to harm. In both of the tales such beings help to the main heroines - (6) **the motif of help** - Běla receives help from her husband's mother and the other girl from the bull.

But for the coincidence these two couples would not be together - (7) **the motif of coincidence**. After two nights full of girls' moaning to which their lovers do not respond, both noble men are asked whether they know who cries in their chambers. So the men realize they were tricked and do not drink their sleeping drinks anymore.

What is perceived as completely different in terms of narratological structure is the beginning of fairy tales. Typically for Němcová's style of writing her tale begins with:

“A poor farmer’s wife went to the forest ...” (Němcová 61) and thus presents the social motif. By contrast, the fairy story written by Joseph Jacobs begins: “In Norrøway, long time ago, there lived a certain lady, and she had three daughters” (Jacobs 208), which is a typical beginning of a fairy tale almost corresponding with the general “once upon a time”.

In terms of motifs, the **motif of enchantment** occurs only in “The White Snake”. The man who is transformed into the shape of a snake chooses Běla for his wife. His choice is not coincidental, he knows that she is a kind-hearted, devoted girl with a pure soul and when it comes to difficulties to be solved she is not about to fail. In this passage the motif of enchantment is depicted because the snake is completely sure about positive qualities and love of Běla so he persuades her to kiss him which breaks the curse and he regains his human shape. As we know from fairy tales a curse might be broken only by true love or an innocent soul.

The case study offers us an analysis of two almost identical fairy tales. Fortunately it is not a frequent phenomenon to find fairy tales with so many similar motifs and narrative functions. Apart from the generic analogies, “The Black Bull of Norrøway” and “The White Snake” give us a negligible indication of supporting the working hypothesis.

## Conclusion

It had not been until late 18<sup>th</sup> or early the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries that children's literature was defined as a distinct and to a certain degree a separate branch of literature. Till this time children used books of instruction with a didactic purpose because scholars argued about what childhood is and how it should be defined and always came up with a new viewpoint. Fortunately, they finally reached an agreement about the purpose of children's literature which sounds that it should entertain as well as teach; thus they established a stepping stone for the existence of fairy tales.

Fairy tales used to be stories transmitted orally, then they were collected and written down. The writers Karel Jaromír Erben and Joseph Jacobs, who acted this way, belong to the branch of fairy tales with minor authorial contribution. Those of major authorial contribution, Božena Němcová and Oscar Wilde, only draw inspiration from orally transmitted stories, modified them and created tales filled with their thoughts and visions. The period of Romanticism and the period of the National Revival Movement were the most suitable and ideologically conducive periods for the establishment of Czech fairy tales because such conditions emphasized Czech folklore, its cultural heritage, values and a vision of social equality. At the British Islands scholars needed to designate the term fairy tale. Afterwards, the process of collecting oral transmitted stories was initiated.

A term fairy tale may be explained in many various forms. None of them is worse or better than the other because they differ in viewpoints. The indeed different viewpoints of Stith Thompson, Aarne Antti, Vladimir Propp and the definitions from the Merriam-Webster and the Oxford Dictionary are stated in the thesis. However, the most important features lie inside fairy tales. Writers imprinted in them a bit of history, social backgrounds, visions, opinions, beliefs, values, pleasure, moral messages and many other features. Moreover, fairy tales help children to understand the surrounding chaotic world, they structure it for them, they strengthen their imagination, provide them with the proper mental growth and finally they establish a tight relation between a child and an adult while reading aloud.

During the detailed research we identify mostly general analogies concerning the linguistic determinants “once upon a time” and “they lived happily ever after”; fairies,

magical lands and agents; several characters, especially the character of an talking animal; recurrent personal qualities or nursery rhymes. Owing to the Propp's division into 31 functions we can exceptionally find certain similarities in narratological structures which have been briefly exemplified in the case study. Broadly speaking, the likely occurrence of analogical motifs appears to be more common than the occurrence of narratological structures. Thus the working hypothesis that fairy tales display significant analogies in terms of motifs and narratological structure does not verify. The fact is that they are rooted in discrepant social backgrounds. Therefore Czech tales evince a strong social motif and a highly anti-elitist attitude, while no such pattern can be perceived in English stories.

## Appendix 1

Vladimir Propp's 31 narrative functions (Propp 25-60):

- I Absentation: One of the members of a family absents himself from home.
- II Interdiction: An interdiction is addressed to the hero (do not do this, etc.)
- III Violation: The interdiction is violated. The villain enters the tale in order to disturb peace or cause misfortune, damage, or harm.
- IV Reconnaissance: The villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance.
- V Delivery: The villain receives information about his victim.
- VI Trickery: The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him or of his belongings.
- VII Complicity: The victim submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy.
- VIII Villainy/Lack: The villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family or one member of a family either lacks something or desires to have something. In the first option, the villain for example carries away a victim or the desired magical object. In the second option a sense of lack is identified, for example in the hero's family or within a community, whereby something is lost or becomes desirable.
- IX Mediation: Misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command, he is allowed to go or is dispatched. This function brings the hero into the tale. There might be distinguished two types of hero, the seeker (who wants to save the victim) or victimized heroes (young girl or boy is banished and the narrative is linked to his or her fortune).
- X Beginning counteraction: The seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction.
- XI Departure: The hero leaves home. The new character of donor appears on the scene. Usually he is encountered accidentally and provides hero with magical agents.
- XII The first function of the donor: The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc., which prepares the way for his receiving either a magical agent or helper.
- XIII The hero's reaction: The hero reacts to the actions of the future donor.
- XIV Provision or receipt of a magical agent: The hero acquires the use of a magical agent.

- XV Guidance: The hero is transferred, delivered or led to the whereabouts of an object of search.
- XVI Struggle: The hero and the villain join in direct combat.
- XVII Branding/Marking: The hero is branded.
- XVIII Victory: The villain is defeated.
- XIX Liquidation: The initial lack or misfortune is liquidated.
- XX Return: The hero returns.
- XXI Pursuit/Chase: The hero is pursued.
- XXII Rescue: Rescue of the hero from pursuit.
- XXIII Unrecognised revival: The hero, unrecognised, arrives home or in another country.
- XXIV Unfounded claims: A false hero presents unfounded claims.
- XXV Difficult task: A difficult task is proposed to the hero.
- XXVI Solution: The task is resolved.
- XXVII Recognition: The hero is recognised.
- XXVIII Exposure: The false hero or villain is exposed.
- XXIX Transfiguration: The hero is given a new appearance.
- XXX Punishment: The villain is punished.
- XXXI Wedding: The hero is married and ascends the throne.

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