

RELIGIOUS MOTIFS IN THE FAIRY TALES OF HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

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Abstract

The purpose of the article is to present to the Slovenian professional public the important characteristics of the fairy tales of the Danish storyteller H. C. Andersen (1805–1875). In his lifetime, Andersen wrote seventy books (autobiographies, operas, librettos, romances, etc.) and one book of fairy tales which has been reprinted several times and for which he actually became famous in the 19th century – the golden age of fairy tales, as Jack Zipes (*Golden Age of Fairy Tales*) calls it. To celebrate the 200th anniversary of Andersen's birth in 2005, Danish researchers set up a scientific website and, with renewed interest, researched his life and work, translations and his influence on other authors, fairy tales and culture.

Keywords: fairy tales, Andersen, faith, religious motifs, Kierkegaard, etc.

Introduction

Andersen's life

Hans Christian Andersen was born on 2 April 1805 in Odessa, Denmark, and in 1819, at the age of fourteen, he moved to Copenhagen. He was born into a poor family and lived with his mother and father and half-sister Karen, who is also one of the literary characters in his fairy tales (*The Red Shoes*). He wrote three autobiographies in his lifetime and actually romanticized his life. The first biography is entitled *The Fairy Tale of My Life* (1835). If we compare what Danish newspapers and his contemporaries wrote about him, his life was anything but a fairy tale. He wanted to succeed as a singer, dancer in ballet, theater and opera (1819–22). He was supported by three patrons in his life and was one of the first so-called freelance artists. He loved to visit palaces, castles, salons, and all his life he wrote diaries, travelogues and enthusiastically drew. In some fairy tales he euphemized religion, especially in cases where the main literary characters are women (e.g., *The Little Match Girl*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Girl Who Trod on the Loaf*, etc.), in others he was skeptical (e.g., *The Shadow*, *The Fir Tree*, etc.).

<https://doi.org/10.62792/ut.albanologjia.v11.i21-22.p2607>

Literary characters

The difference between female and male literary characters in Andersen's fairy tales is essential. If we place his central characters in the context of female characters, it becomes apparent that they are victimized, e.g., that they are missing body parts (*The Little Mermaid*), which also includes the characters of a ballerina (*The Steadfast Tin Soldier*) and Karen who had her legs cut off (*The Red Shoes*); that they are incompetent (the character of the mother in *The Ugly Duckling*); that they are subjected to severe trials (the girl Gerda in *The Snow Queen*); that they are ridiculed (*The Princess and the Pea*, *The Swineherd*), or that they are dying and die (*The Little Match Girl*, *The Little Mermaid*); that they are old, ugly and witches, so they can be killed (e.g., the character of the witch in *The Tinderbox*), etc.

In his most famous fairy tale, entitled *The Ugly Duckling*, he thematizes his autobiography through the world of personified animals. He was convinced that he was the illegitimate son of King Christian VIII of Denmark. and the court lady Elise Ahlefeldt Laurvig, saying that they had gave him up for adoption to the countryside (duck's nest), even though he is in fact a royal bird, made from a "swan's egg". Also, the quote from *The Ugly Duckling*, "It doesn't matter if you're born in a duck yard, so long as you are hatched from a swan's egg!", is an allusion used to romanticize his origins as he sought approval and support from aristocracy. (Andersen 1998: 161).

"It says nothing if you are born in a duckling that you just hatch from a swan egg!" (Andersen 1998: 161).

"I will fly to those royal birds," he exclaimed [...] Then he flew to the water, and swam towards the beautiful swans. [...] The great swans swam round the new-comer, and stroked his neck with their beaks, as a welcome." (Andersen 1998: 161).

"It doesn't matter if you're born in a duck yard, so long as you are hatched from a swan's egg!" (Andersen 1998: 161).

Andersen and faith

H. C. Andersen wrote about 210 fairy tales in his life and his Christian beliefs are present in the undertone in all fairy tales, although some new Andersen fairy tales can still be found in the manuscript. Andersen invented his own model of a classic (authorial) fairy tale for children and adults in the period 1835–1874. Zipes says it was for ideological purposes (Zipes 2006: 81) because his fairy tales are imbued with the general teachings of Protestant ethics and with the idea of a natural biological order. Although of humble social origins, he advocated bourgeois worldviews that were accepted as the rule for Western culture.

Andersen identified himself with the character of Aladdin from the collection of Arab fairy tales *One Thousand and One Nights*. He wanted to prove that he was a genius, such as Homer, Dante, Goethe and Shakespeare, despite his modest background and appearance (he was semi-literate until he was 21). The central motif of all his fairy tales is the Orpheus motif, which illustrates that death can be overcome with the help of art.

Andersen and Kierkegaard

The relationship between two famous Danish personalities, the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard and the storyteller H. C. Andersen is the subject of much debate²⁵⁸ and goes beyond the purpose of the present article. It should be noted that the influence of philosophy on fairy tales, which at the time of its creation were not intended for children, is extremely interesting.

²⁵⁸Bøggild, Jacob (2006). Reflections of Kierkegaard in the Tales of Hans Christian Andersen. *Kierkegaard Studies. Yearbook*, pp. 68–82.

For example, Goethe's tale *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily* (1795), an application of Hegel's dialectic of master and servant to Andersen's tales,²⁵⁹ and especially Hegel and O. Wilde's tales,²⁶⁰ will be the subject of further articles, so we only mention them here. Even today, Danes have an ambiguous attitude towards Andersen, as they appreciate his work, and discussions of his personality are also the subject of scientific study. In 1838, S. Kierkegaard wrote an article *From the Papers of One Still Living (Af en endnu Levendes Papirer)*,²⁶¹ in which he criticized Andersen's works.

Kierkegaard believed that Andersen was without ideas, that he did not differentiate between himself and his heroes because they all shared dissatisfaction with the world. He accused him of not fighting, so he uses an analogy and states that true geniuses are like fire to whom the wind is a challenge and not candles that are extinguished by every wind. Kierkegaard accuses Andersen that his omniscient narrator is manipulative, that he does not have a philosophy of life (higher ideal) that would connect the life and work of the hero into a meaningful whole.

Andersen and the slovenes

The first Andersen's fairy tale was translated into Slovene for the magazine *Vedež* (1850), under the title *Nova oblačila (New Clothes)*. Janko Kos wrote about Andersen's influences on Levstik, drawing special attention to the second part of *Krpan z Vrha (Krpan from Vrh)*, which is similar to Andersen's *The Tinderbox*. Levstik also translated Andersen, e.g., the fairy tale *The Swineherd*. Kosovel mentioned Andersen in his article *O kriteriju in kritiki (On Criteria and Criticism, 1924)*. In Kosovel's *Zbrana dela (Collected Works 1–4, 1964–2011)*, Andersen is mentioned only in connection with translations of *Andersenove pripovedke: Za slovensko mladino (Andersen's Tales: For Slovene Youth)*. Ljudmila Prunk translated or adapted from German ten of Andersen's fairy tales.²⁶² Pavel Karlin and France Koblar were quite critical of the translations of Andersen's works contributed by Ljudmila Prunk.

Srečko Kosovel wrote for a dual addressee: for children and adults. Based on the knowledge of his life and work and insight into his *Collected Works*, it is evident that he was quite fond of fairy tales. Firstly because two of Andersen's fairy tales from the *Picturebook Without Pictures* collection were found in his manuscript legacy. Secondly, because Kosovel's oeuvre often mentions R. Tagore, O. Wilde (Kosovel 1977: 1312 and Vrečko 2011: 555) and Andersen. He chose the storytellers of the so-called classic authorial fairy tales for translation – Andersen and Wilde. He was also interested in fairy tales theoretically, as he wrote two articles about them. It is not superfluous to know that both Kosovel and Andersen created collages.

²⁵⁹Andersen mentions in his autobiography (1847) that he read Hegel's *History of Philosophy (The True story of my life, 1847, p. 50)*.

²⁶⁰O'Keefe K. (2017). Oscar Wilde and G. F. Hegel: The Wildean Fairy Tale as Postcolonial Dialectic. In: BENNETT, M. (ed.). *Philosophy and Oscar Wilde*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

²⁶¹Cf. <http://www.bjornetjenesten.dk/teksterdk/Af%20en%20endnu%20Levendes%20Papirer.htm> (Accessed 2 May 2020).

²⁶²*The Fool, Ingrida, The Queen of Pea, The Firefly, The Flying Suitcase, Mark and His Companion, Nicholas and Little Nicholas, The New Emperor's Clothes, Paradise, The Swineherd* (Andersen 1923: 107).

Translations of andersen in slovene language

The first translation of Andersen's fairy tales from the Danish original into Slovene was made by Silvana Orel Kos, in 1998 (25 fairy tales)²⁶³ and in 2005 (25 fairy tales),²⁶⁴ translating a total of 50 of Andersen's 212 fairy tales. All previous translations were from German. The first book of Andersen's fairy tales was published in 1863, entitled *Kitica Andersenovih pravljic* (*A Stanza of Andersen's Fairy Tales*)²⁶⁵, translated by Fran Erjavec from a German source.²⁶⁶ The collection *Andersenove pravljice za mladino* (*Andersen's Fairy Tales for Youth*, 1896), translated by Fran Nedeljko, includes sixteen fairy tales (*The Buckwheat, The Angels, The Little Match Girl, The Wild Swans, The Fir Tree, The Queen and the Pea, The Tinderbox, Daisy, The Kindest Flower in the World, Thumbelina, Rooster on the Roof and Rooster on the Dump, Snowman, The Steadfast Tin Soldier, The Sandman, The Storks, The Last Pearl*).

The collection *Sedem Andersenovih pravljic za šegave modrijane in modrijanke* (*Seven Andersen's Fairy Tales for Facetious Wise Boys and Wise Girls*)²⁶⁷ from 1940 was illustrated by Hinko Smrekar and translated by Mirko Košir (*Ink and pen, Twelve of Them Arrived by Mail, The Little Match Girl, The Evil Prince, St. Nicholas and Little Nicholas, The Girl Who Trod on the Loaf, The Fiancé*). Besides that, the collection *Šopek Andersenovih pravljic* (*Bouquets of Andersen's Fairy Tales*) was published in 1944, with illustrations by Marija Vogelnik and translated by Miklavž Kuret.

Between 1945 and 1998, Andersen's fairy tales were printed and translated, and because they were intended for children, they were often illustrated, either in a collection or in picture book form, entitled *Andersenove pravljice* (*Andersen's fairy tales*, 1950, 1957, 1967, 1975, 1980, 1984, 1987), translated by Rudolf Kresal, or as individual fairy tales (hereinafter picture books), e.g. *Fool Jurček, The Emperor's Nightingale, The Emperor's New Clothes, The Little Match Girl, The Wild Swans, The Ugly Duckling, The Fir Tree, The Old Man is Always Right, The Butterfly, Thumbelina, The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep, The Snow Queen, The Swineherd, St. Nicholas and Little Nicholas, and The Tinderbox*, etc.

Andersen in Ljubljana

Andersen (1805–1875) traveled extensively, living abroad thirty times – if we add up all his travels, he spent ten years of his life outside Denmark. He wrote and drew in his diary in autobiographies, diaries, letters and travelogues. On the way from Vienna to Trieste, he stopped twice in Ljubljana. The first time he came by carriage (19–20 March 1846), and the second time by train (30–31 May 1854). Both times he spent the night in Ljubljana at the Stadt Wien Hotel, which was located near today's Ljubljana department store Nama or the Komuna cinema. He saw the entrance to the Postojna Cave, which he also drew, he was fascinated by the Karst landscape and Italy, which he described in his second autobiography entitled *The Fairy Tale of My Life* (1855).

²⁶³ *Ajda, Bedak Jurček, Dvanajsterica s pošto, Gizdavi skakuni, Hranilnik, Igla za krpanje, Jelka, Juha s špil, Kakor naredi stari, je vselej prav, Metulj, Miklavž in Miklavžek, Najhitrejši tekač, O dekllici, ki je stopila na kruh, O vrtnarju in njegovi gospodi, Ole Lahkonoček, Ovratnik, Peterica iz grahovega stroka, Polž in vrtnica, Rajski vrt, Sneženi mož, Sopotnik, Stara cestna svetilka, Stara hiša, Vilinja gora.*

²⁶⁴ *Bezgovna mamka, Cesarjeva nova oblačila, Cvetlice male Ide, Deklica z vžigalicami, Divji labodi, Grdi raček, Krastača, Lan, Leteči kovček, Mala morska deklica, Palčica, Pastirica in dimnikar, Pero in črnilnik, Poslednje sanje starega hrasta, Princeza na zrnu graha, Rdeči čevlji, Senca, Škrat in trgovec, Slavec, Snežna kraljica, Srečine galoše, Srečna družina, Stanovitni kositrni vojak, Svinjski pastir, Vžigalnik, Zaročenca.*

²⁶⁵ Andersen, Hans Christian, Erjavec, Fran (1863). *Kitica Andersenovih pravljic*. (Access at <http://www.dlib.si>).

²⁶⁶ *Angelj, Dete v grobu, Divji labudi, Marjetica, Mati, Najljubeznivejša roža na svetu, Od ajde, Pravljica o letu, Srečna rodovina and Zadnji biser.*

²⁶⁷ Andersen, Hans Christian, Smrekar, Hinko, Košir, Mirko (1940). *Sedem Andersenovih pravljic za šegave modrijane in modrijanke*. (Access at <http://www.dlib.si>).

“Thursday, 19 March [1846]. By half past four I had already had all my coffee. Then I drove all day through the hilly landscape. Spring had already arrived in some places in the wheat field, on the willows and on the fruit trees that were already in bloom. I had lunch in Celje. I arrived in Ljubljana late in the evening. They took our passports again. That made me angry. There was a very obnoxious waiter at the Hotel Stadt Wien.” (Blažić 2005: 233).

“Tuesday, 30 May [1854]. Overnight across the Semmering through heavy rain. At Mürzzuschlag, on arrival in the coach, we were unable to confirm our tickets for further travel. The conductor helped us do it in Bruck. Now Einer was sick, vomiting through the window of the coach. I was very worried about him. He was also annoying. In the evening we arrived in Ljubljana; bad reception and bad food at the Hotel Stadt Wien there. I forgot the hat.” (Blažić 2005: 233). “Wednesday, 31 May [1854]. I had to get up at four in the morning. I had to carry my luggage to the station myself. I got into a small, ugly coach with a very kind man from Trieste. Einer slept great and didn’t see much. I couldn’t get him out of the coach when most had already left. Then he was very annoying and unpleasant. It made me feel bad. Beautiful landscape. Lunch in Adelsberg [Postojna]. Saw the entrance to the famous cave. At 9½ we arrived in Trieste.” (Blažić 2005: 233).

Andersen’s illustrators

Unlike the tales of J. and W. Grimm, which represent a folk tale model, because the Brothers Grimm mainly wrote and changed them from the first manuscript edition in 1810 to the last, seventh edition in 1859, Andersen’s tales are characterized by being distinctly authorial and represent a new model called the classic fairy tale model. Although H. C. Andersen has written about 70 books, mostly for adults, he is best known for his collection of fairy tales. Andersen was also involved in drawing and picture books, and he recreated 16 picture books.

After 1945, interest in fairy tales and picture books increased in Slovenia. In 1945, the Academy of Fine Arts was established, where the first Slovenian illustrators specialized in children’s illustrations and fairy tales studied. That is why they – Marlenka Stupica, Marjanca Jemec Božič, Ančka Gošnik Godec and Jelka Reichman – are mostly known under the popular name *pravljicarke* (*women storytellers*). Marlenka Stupica is also known for illustrating Andersen’s fairy tales, e.g., *The Ugly Duckling*, *Thumbelina*.²⁶⁸

“Large colored surfaces, where the once clear outline of space, figures and objects in it in soft transitions increasingly merges with color, become even more pronounced in *The Ugly Duckling* (1993). With the exception of two scenes, the motif world is dedicated to animals and beautiful nature, which the artist traces throughout the four seasons: in the sun-spoiled summer, when a strange swanling hatches from eggs together with yellow ducks, and in the melancholic autumn, when flocks of birds move south in the bright late sun, with the leaves blown away by the wind from the trees, in the white winter, experienced in a simple room full of lovely children, and in a crucial scene of true triumph of spring. Marlenka Stupica emphasized the transformation of an ugly duckling into an elegant white swan in a superb, Biedermeier-like image of a green city park with blossoming lilac, creamy swans looking at the calm surface of the pond, and festively dressed children reminiscent of bourgeois portraits from the Romantic period. When walking through charming scenes where, of course, there is no lack of small specialties, it is not difficult to realize that the former medieval miniature as a metaphorical starting point was imperceptibly replaced by a romantic Biedermeier painting.” (Krivec Dragan in Stupica 2010: 15).

²⁶⁸Avguštin, Maruša (2005). Slovenski ilustratorji Andersenovih pravljic. *Otrok in knjiga*, year 32, no. 63, pp. 84–92.

Exceptional illustrations of Andersen's fairy tales were contributed by Marija Lucija Stupica (1950–2002) for the fairy tales *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Princess and the Pea*, *The Flying Trunk*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Little Shepherdess*, *The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep*, *The Snow Queen*, *The Swineherd*, and *The Tinderbox*. The illustrations to four of Andersen's fairy tales (*The Flying Trunk*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep*, *The Swineherd*) were by Marija Lucija Stupica (2010).

The flying trunk

In his book illustrations, especially in the fairy tale *The Flying Trunk* which takes place in Turkey: "However, he got safely in his trunk to the land of Turkey. [...] for the Turks always go about dressed in dressing-gowns and slippers, as he was himself." (Andersen 2010: 28), Marija Lucija Stupica emphasized oriental religious motifs, mosques, the typical dress of a Turkish wet nurse, furniture (sofa). In the fairy tale, the young man introduced himself to the sleeping Turkish royal daughter, "but he told her he was a Turkish angel, who had come down through the air to see her [...] And then he related to her about the stork who brings the beautiful children from the rivers." (Andersen 2010: 32).

The phrase "Turkish angel", which is in fact the son of a merchant, appears several times in the text. He convinces them that he is a Turkish angel by making fireworks, firecrackers and rockets out of a flying trunk. After the end of the fireworks, and when he hides the flying trunk in the woods, the young man asks the people in the city about the experience: "I saw the Turkish angel myself," said one; "he had eyes like glittering stars, and a head like foaming water." "He flew in a mantle of fire," cried another, "and lovely little cherubs peeped out from the folds." (Andersen 2010: 46).

The young man comes into the woods to fetch his flying trunk that burned while telling a tale about a box of matches. In the visual image of religious motifs, mosques, clothing, furniture, wall paintings (patterns), the drawing of the mosque stands out, a building dedicated to Islamic religious ceremonies. Among other things, art historian Judita Krivec Dragan states this in her preface. *The Flying Trunk* (1983) is the first in a series of picture books which the author of the illustrations also decorated in its entirety. Although even in this, probably the most serene fairy tale, we cannot talk about the blinding sun, its palette is the brightest of all, quite inspired by the Orient and a different color than in the North (Andersen 2010: 122).

In the illustrations of the fairy tale *The Swineherd*, the illustrator portrayed a princess who rejected a poor prince. The impoverished princess is illustrated as an allegory of death (black clothes, hood, travel bundle, walking stick, etc.). The motif of "holy heavens" is mentioned several times, in interjectional use, which expresses astonishment: "Holy heavens!" said the courtier." (Andersen 2010: 58), and "Holy heavens, was he in a hurry!" (Andersen 2010: 64).

Method

The descriptive method and the method of literary analysis of fifty Andersen fairy tales in Slovene (translated from Danish) were used for the present article. Other fairy tales were analyzed in English. Religious motifs are strongly represented in Andersen's fairy tales, they are placed in the context of authorial or classical fairy tales and intertwine with fairy tale creatures, e.g., witches, sea creatures, dwarves, leprechauns, fairies, trolls, etc. Religious motifs are understood as overarching terms for various motifs that appear in individual religions, e.g. Buddhism (Dali Lama), Hinduism (Brahma), Islam (Allah, Koran, Mosque), Judaism (Jew Ahasuerus), Catholicism, paganism (pagans), polytheism (Cupid), Protestantism. Andersen also uses different religious motifs, especially Christian ones, which have a different role in fairy tales alongside fairytale creatures and are used in a different – fairytale context.

A Danish researcher, Lars Bo Jansen, listed 123²⁶⁹ motifs when studying religious motifs in H. C. Andersen.²⁷⁰ Andersen was a Protestant, but sources show that he was very superstitious, although all these motifs have a different role and function in a fairy-tale context. It is certainly interesting to look for coexistence on the basis of quotations and concordance (appearance of religious motifs in fairy tales), as Andersen used religious motifs and highly emphasized pagan motifs of nature, aquatic beings, revival of natural phenomena, natural beings (buckwheat, elderberry, flowers (little Ida), shard, inkwell, oak, needle (for patching), eggshell, butterfly, thumb, feather, duck, nightingale, carousel, ball), as well as medieval allegories: Delight, Joy and Sadness in a fairy tale set in Italy. Not only does Andersen personify nature, beings in nature, but he also personifies things, e.g., porcelain dolls (Chimney Sweep, Chinaman, Shepherdess), toys (Ballerina, Tin Soldier).

Results and discussion

The Little Match Girl

In Andersen's famous fairy tale, which could be called an antifairy tale based on Max Luthie's literary fairy tale theory, because it has an unhappy ending, fairy tale space and time represent New Year's Eve (beautiful Christmas tree, Christmas candles, roast goose, beautiful big Christmas tree...). It is contradictory that religious motifs (God, Christmas, praise, prayer, New Year's Eve) are opposed by people for whom false mercy on religious holidays is just an excuse for inaction, as they do not help a child who is dying and eventually dies on the street.

In the fairy tale *The Emperor's New Clothes*, the image of a child is used whom adults believe and hide behind his opinion, who they later also support because it benefits them. On the other hand, the image of the child in *The Little Match Girl*, who is also "right", who is the archetype of a divine but wounded child, does not interfere in political events by stating that the emperor has no clothes, so the match girl is left to die, with the false consolation that she has gone to a more beautiful and better world, even with a smile on her lips. Both images of the child in these two fairy tales point not only to Andersen's double standards, but also to double social standards toward children.

A child who declares that the emperor has no clothes is supported by adults because it is a matter of hiding behind the image of the child and acknowledging their own helplessness. "Now someone is dying," thought the little girl, for her old grandmother, the only person who had loved her, and who was now dead, had told her that when a star fell down a soul went up to God." (Andersen 1998: 174).

²⁶⁹Allah, Cupid, angels, astrology, marsh woman, Pentecost, confirmation, blessing, blessed water, neighbour, god, gods (spirits and demons), Christmas (Christmas tree), divine light, kingdom of God (heaven), brahma, church, church bell, witch, magic, miracle, miracle cures, Dalai Lama, Virgin Mary, spirit, horse spirit, pig spirit, priest, twelfth night (epiphany) Garden of Eden (tree of knowledge, Adam and Eve), Book of Esther, Eucharist, phoenix, lord's day, sin, sinner, grave, devil, Satan, praise, psalm, ibis, Jacob's ladder, Jesus Christ, incense, cherub, book of praise, religious songbook, posthumous settlement of good and evil, end of the world, Koran, cross, baptism, baptism, love and tears liberate the soul, lotus flower, mass, monks, minaret, prayer, sea spirits, sea man, mermaid, mosque, afterlife, unleavened bread, nix, New Year (New Year's Eve), nuns, obelisk, rite, purification with water, altar, altar candles, hell, piety, humility, gratitude, pagans, funeral, cemetery, wedding, consecration, initiation, seeing a god or approaching him, prophet, prophecy, sermon, oath, plant spirits, river Leta, monastery, sphinx, death, Sleeping Beauty (Sandman), confession, confessional, transformation, old man from the creek, candlestick, holy spirit, swamp spirits, saints, bible, dwarf, dwarves, Ahasuerus, theological, trolls, go to heaven, die, mercy, goddess of fate, goddess of night, Walpurgis night, eternal life, immortality, big snake, easter, great autumn, faith, faith in reunion with the dead, belief, dive, Noah's ark, fairy, elves, dwarves, heights, intermediate state, resurrection, trust in God's providence, stories of the resurrection of the soul, sign, sacrifice, pastor, etc.

²⁷⁰Cf. http://andersen.sdu.dk/forskning/motifr/motiv_e.html.

“She took the little girl in her arms, and both of them flew in brightness and joy above the earth, very, very high, and up there was neither cold, nor hunger, nor fear – they were with God.” “But in the corner, leaning against the wall, sat the little girl with red cheeks and smiling mouth, frozen to death on the last evening of the old year. The New Year’s sun rose upon a little pathetic figure. The child sat there, stiff and cold, holding the matches, of which one bundle was almost burned.” “She wanted to warm herself,” the people said. No one imagined what beautiful things she had seen, and how happily she had gone with her old grandmother into the bright New Year.” (Andersen 1998: 174).

The Ugly Duckling

The fairy tale *The Ugly Duckling* is Andersen’s fairytale autobiography. Andersen is at odds with himself in this fairy tale. On the surface, he thematizes the motif of modesty – “So the last shall be first” – but at the end of the text he gives preference to aristocratic origins, white birds, royal birds, beautiful white swans that fly high. The religious motif often appears as an interjection “Thank heavens”, meaning “luckily”. The tale *The Ugly Duckling* emphasizes the religious motifs of light, water (symbolic baptism in water), which is at the same time contradictory because it contains elements of narcissism (the motif of Narcissus looking at himself in water).

In this tale, Andersen thematizes the motif of misery and suffering, introducing a literary character, who is supposed to be “so young and so good-looking” that it is adored by everyone, and brought to a higher social and economic class. Andersen concludes the tale with the thought “a good heart never grows proud” (Andersen 2010: 162), because the swan was persecuted and ridiculed for his appearance (black and gray duck), and in the end there is a contradiction – children worship him for his beautiful white appearance of a royal bird. In the fairy tales *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Little Mermaid* and *The Nightingale*, Andersen thematizes the Buddhist motif or a religious motif of spiritual beauty supposed to be born out of suffering.

The Steadfast Tin Soldier

“And now the paper boat broke beneath him, and the soldier sank right through. And just at that moment he was swallowed by a most enormous fish.” “My! how dark it was inside that fish. It was darker than under the gutter-plank and it was so cramped, but the tin soldier still was staunch. He lay there full length, soldier fashion, with musket to shoulder.” (Andersen 1998: 109). Jonah 2:1: “Now the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.”

The Little Mermaid

The fairy tale entitled *The Little Mermaid* features various and numerous religious motifs, especially Christian ones (e.g., kingdom of God, church, heaven, suffering, die, to go to heaven, eternity, hell), while at the same time the fairy tale also focuses on other religious motifs: the sea, Sea King, intertextually referring to ancient polytheism and the Roman sea god Neptune. Odd and even numbers appear, the latter typical of oriental tales (six children, twelve oysters), as well as a marble statue (intertextuality with ancient statues), the sea world acts as the lower world, the earthly world as the upper world, followed by the change into sea foam which represents a Buddhist motif.

In many fairy tales, especially in *The Little Mermaid*, Andersen thematizes the motif of (female) sacrifice for higher (male) goals, similarly as in *The Snow Queen*. Andersen presents female literary characters with the religious attributes of (self)sacrifice – in order to save a sea or snow kingdom, and to gain “eternal name” or “immortal souls” (Andersen 1998: 45), but only in fairy tales.

Here we can find parallels with the classic ancient tragedy, where the heroines, like Antigone, die physically and live on morally. Andersen also uses religious motifs to justify the fairy-tale sacrifice of a woman, but there are no reverse examples in his fairy tales – that a (male) literary character would sacrifice himself for a woman, at most he mocks her, e.g. *The Princess and the Pea* and *The Swineherd*. Right next to Andersen's gallery of female fairytale characters, when some characters are without a lower body (*The Little Mermaid*), a ballerina without a leg (*The Steadfast Tin Soldier*), Karen with cut-off legs (*The Red Shoes*), the question of psychoanalytic treatment and the unconscious verbalized in the text arises, which will be the subject of one of the following articles.

Despite the fact that Christian religious motifs predominate, Andersen also intertextualizes them with the ancient (lower world, upper world, heavenly world) and Dante's medieval *Divine Comedy* (Hell, Purgatory and Heaven). In *The Little Mermaid*, an allegory emerges (sea – earth – air) when she changes from a sea creature (hell, where she exchanges her immortal soul for an earth soul) to an earthly creature (purgatory due to earthly love) and eventually dies or transforms into a new form of life ("air daughter") who no longer has an eternal soul, but can create it with good deeds (Andersen 1998: 55). The little mermaid, who represents a Buddhist religious motif, experiences enlightenment, and through Christian sacrifice she may gain her eternal soul back, but only with good deeds. This is a typical topos of mixing different religious motifs, possible relativization of Christian motifs and simultaneous euphemisms.

The Girl Who Trod on the Loaf

"Many years have passed since the little girl cried inconsolably for 'poor Inger' and that child became the old woman whom the Lord is now calling to himself, and just at the moment when the thoughts of a lifetime arose, she also recalled how, as a small child, she could not help but cry bitterly while listening to the story of Inger" (Andersen 2005, 57). "The overflowing thought spilled over into the voice, the faint chirping was a veritable ode to joy, the thought of a good deed awoke, and the little bird took off from its shelter; in the kingdom of heaven, they already knew what it meant for a bird!" (Andersen 2005, 59).

"The Lord, who also hears the inaudible praise of the worm, perceived this praise ascended in chords of thought, as the psalm sounded in David's chest even before it was poured into words and music." (Andersen 2005, 59). "A tern is flying across the lake!' The children exclaimed when they saw the white bird; now it has descended into the lake, now it has ascended towards the clear sunny sky, which shone so brightly." (Andersen 2005, 60). This Andersen fairy tale contains religious Christian (David, praise, kingdom of heaven) and pagan motifs (e.g., the literary character of a water sprite, a water creature living in a swamp).

Thumbelina

Through the personified literary characters, the fairy tale *Thumbelina* thematizes the Indo-European motif of arranged marriages – a rich mole and Thumbelina ("But you will get a wonderful husband! Not even the queen has such black velvet fur as he does! His kitchen and basement are full. You better thank God for him!" [Andersen 1998: 22]), and castes (closed social groups) or motif of oriental weddings ("The mole has already come to take Thumbelina; she is supposed to live deep underground with him, she would never step into the warm sun again because he did not like it. The poor girl was very sad, she wanted to say goodbye to the beautiful sun, which she was at least allowed to observe from the threshold when she lived with the mouse." [Andersen 1998: 23]).

The passage suggests the motif of Indo-European marriages and, firstly, “observing the world at least from the threshold”, secondly, living with a (black) mole “deep underground” and thirdly, a European marriage into a higher socio-economic class “with a golden crown” and identity change which is shown with the new name “Maja” because the previous name Thumbelina is “ugly”. However, she is given a new name and the promotion into a higher class by a flower angel, a euphemism for patriarchy.

The fairy tale combines religious characters (angel) and fairy tale characters (flower) and Andersen creates new literary characters that are ‘at a higher level’ in the fairy tale or have their own fairy tale function, despite intertextual links to the Bible and fairy tales. A typical example is the character of a flower angel who maintains the power of an imaginative and at the same time fairytale character. Many of Andersen’s fairy tales end with a change in socioeconomic status, shifting to a higher social position. “‘You won’t be called Thumbelina anymore!’ a flower angel told her. ‘That name is ugly, and you’re beautiful. We will call you Maja!’” (Andersen 1998: 25).

The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep

“Right next to her stood a small chimney sweep, black as charcoal, also of porcelain; he was as clean and tidy as anyone else, he just represented the chimney sweep. The master could also make a prince out of him, there wouldn’t be much difference! He stood really cute with his ladder, and his face was girlishly white and pink. This was actually a mistake, as it could very well have been a bit sooty. He stood right next to the shepherdess. They were both set up there, and since they were already set up that way, they got engaged; they were created for each other, both young, of the same porcelain and equally fragile.” (Andersen 2005: 163). “‘You will have a husband,’ said the old Chinese man, ‘one who I dare say is made of mahogany wood, and then you will be a Capricorn lady and a sub-general sergeant. The closet is full of silverware and something else in the secret drawers!’”

“‘I don’t want to go to the dark closet!’ said the little shepherdess. ‘I heard he already has eleven porcelain wives in it!’”

“‘So you will be the twelfth!’ replied the Chinese.” (Andersen 2005: 164).

“The chimney sweep and the shepherdess looked at the old Chinese man so movingly, they were afraid he would nod, but he couldn’t, and he was embarrassed to tell a stranger that he would have a rivet in his neck forever. And so the porcelain statues stayed together, blessed their great-grandfather’s rivet and loved each other until they broke.” (Andersen 2005: 169).

In various fairy tales, Andersen thematizes the Indo-European motif of arranged marriages and the caste system. “‘This is a woman for me!’, he thought to himself. ‘She is a little taller than me because she lives in a castle, and I only have a box, and there are twenty-five of us in it, this is definitely not a suitable home for her! I still have to get to know her!’”

Many of Andersen’s fairy tales take place in China (*The Shepherdess and the Chimney Sweep*, *The Nightingale*) and the Orient (*The Flying Trunk*). At the end of the fairy tale *The Shepherdess and the Chimney Sweep*, where the porcelain figure of the “ancient Chinese” is presented in the context of China, the Chimney Sweep and the Shepherdess have the blessing to live together “until they break”.

The Red Shoes

The fairy tale Red Shoes is also an anti-fairy tale (Max Luthi), as it has an unhappy ending from the point of view of children. The main literary character is the girl Karen, who wants to have red shoes, which according to Andersen are a symbol of sin and sinfulness, and according to C. P. Estés, of creativity.

In Andersen's fairy tale, red shoes are basically fatal for the girl because they dance all the time and don't ever stop. Religious motifs are common in the fairy tale, the following appear: angel, God, kingdom of God, heaven, sin, sinner, prayer, eternity. The motif of sin, sinfulness and (horrible) punishment prevails – the girl's legs are cut off.

“She danced, danced and danced into the dark night. Shoes carried her over thorns and stumps, and she scratched herself to blood; she danced naked to a lonely house. She knew that a rebel lived in her, and she tapped her finger on the windowpane and called out: ‘Get out! Get out! I can't go in because I'm dancing!’

And the hangman said: ‘Don't you know who I am? I cut off the heads of evil people and see that my ax is already shaking!’ ‘Don't cut off my head,’ begged Karen, ‘for then I will not be able to repent of my sin! But cut off my legs with red shoes!’

He carved a pair of wooden legs and crutches for her, taught her a church song, one that is always sung by sinners, and she kissed his hand which swung the ax, and set off across the gorge.

‘I've suffered enough from red shoes!’ she said. ‘I'm going to church now to be seen!’

Her heart was so overflowing with light, peace, and joy that it burst; her soul was taken to God by the rays of the sun, and there was no one to ask for red shoes.” (Andersen 2005: 226).

The Shadow

One of Andersen's most complex fairy tales is titled *The Shadow*. It is dominated by two religious motifs, namely the hymn and the psalm. For this fairy tale, Hegel's dialectic of master and servant is most appropriate in a euphemized fairy tale context and presumably for children. The context of the fairy tale focuses on the “young and smart scholar from cold places” and his shadow, with which he exchanges his identity. So the shadow becomes the master (scholar) and the scholar becomes the slave of the shadow, and the shadow even marries the scholar's fiancée. Andersen, who read Hegel in German, also thematized shadow and a man without a shadow.

This part is characterized by a pluralism of interpretations, the shadow can be a symbol of the master and Hegel's dialectic, it can be a symbol of the soul (“The shadow is the body of the soul”, as O. Wilde writes), a symbol of faith, superstition, pedigree, fate (fama), it can be a Freudian id, ego and alter ego, it can be an angel as the shadow visits it before death, it can be a motif of a Mephistopheles or a sale of the soul to the devil. “Both moments are essential, because they are at first unequal and opposite and their reflection has not yet been given into one, they are like two opposite images of consciousness; one independent, whose essence is privacy, the other non-independent, whose essence is life or being for someone else; the first is the *master*, the second is the *slave*.” (Hegel 1998:106).

In a fairy-tale context, the master-slave dialectic can also be interpreted as a fairy-tale motif of selling the soul to the devil (ATU 330)²⁷¹ or a Mephisto motif. The consciousness of the shadow (or Hegel's slavish consciousness) manifests itself as the truth of self-awareness: “‘Okay, I'll tell you,’ said the shadow and sat down, ‘but you have to promise me that anywhere in the city we meet, you won't tell anyone that I was your shadow! I would like to get engaged; I could support more than one family with her!’” (Andersen 1998: 128). The influence of Hegel's philosophy, especially the dialectic of master and servant, is extremely interesting, but will be the subject of one of the following articles because it is complex and presents a special challenge, precisely through the motif of transformation of the spirit motif (the Arab fairy tale

²⁷¹ATU is an international label or an acronym based on the surnames of the three folklorists (Antti Aarne, Stith Thompson, Hans-Jörg Uther) who published an internationally classified index of fairy tale types (Uther 2004, reprint 2011).

The Fisherman and His Wife; J. in W. Grimm, *The Fisherman and His Wife*; H. C. Andersen, *The Shadow*; O. Wilde, *The Fisherman and His Soul*. The Influence of Hegel's Philosophy on O. Wilde, especially on the motif of spirit, devil, shadow, is the subject of extensive research (*Oscar Wilde's Notebook on Philosophy*, 2010; M. Y. Bennett, *Philosophy and Oscar Wilde*, 2017; K. O'Keefe, *Oscar Wilde and GF Hegel: The Wildean Fairy Tale as Postcolonial Dialectic*, 2017). In a supposedly children's fairy tale, a reversal occurs, the shadow and the scholar change, the shadow becomes human.

"Otherwise, it was really weird how she became human; she wore all-black clothes made of the finest black goods, patent leather boots, and a hat that could be folded so that only the headband and shorts remained, not to mention what we already knew: pendants, gold necklaces, and diamond rings. Yes, the shadow was really nicely dressed and that's why she was so human." (Andersen 1998: 128).

Through the shadow, which is also the motif of the ancient donkey of the shadow (Aesop), but can also be a blind motif (Max Luthi), and Plato's discussions of imitating things, "imitating appearance or imitating reality" (Sovre 1963: 39) – Andersen thematizes in a children's tale that the goal and purpose of fairy tales is not to "praise reality".

The Nightingale

Andersen's tale *The Nightingale* takes place in China, so it is possible to find the so-called blind motifs (M. Luthi) of Buddhism, e.g., inner spiritual life, the difference between public and private, appearance and truth. It is the Chinese emperor lying on his deathbed who finds a balance between his inner and outer nature or genuine (nightingale) and false art (mechanical nightingale). The Chinese emperor moves away from the inner essence or true art, i.e., nightingale of ordinary appearance and genuine beauty, and replaces it with a mechanical nightingale or Japanese artificial bird, which can also be interpreted as artificial intelligence or glamorous appearance.

Here we can recognize Andersen's constant and Plato's theories: "Is there room in the State for poets?" Japanese artificial bird is decorated with diamonds, rubies, sapphires (Oriental motif), it needs to be wound regularly and it always sings the same song (i.e. artist on order, the advantage of appearance over truth). When the Chinese emperor bids farewell to life, his soul comes in the form of a nightingale, a genuine artist, as a symbol of inner life that may be understood as a Buddhist religious motif. The artificial bird sings thirty-three times, which is a Christian religious motif that intertextually relates to Plato's discussion of appearance and truth, imitation and imitation of imitation.

With the motif of nightingale and mechanical nightingale, Andersen thematizes Plato's portrait of a rhapsode, as the Japanese bird with diamonds, rubies and sapphires is similar to the rhapsode because it is not an original poet as the true nightingale, but only a reciter who sings to order. "He is always neatly dressed, always sleek and ornate: this is how he tries to cover up the inner emptiness with his dazzling appearance. When he recites on the high stage, his head is adorned with a golden wreath, and a crowd is gathered around him [...]" (Sovre 1963: 97). Andersen's artificial nightingale is also adorned with silver and gold.

At the end of the fairy tale *The Nightingale*, we can recognize Aristotle's definition of tragedy or art, which in the parable of the nightingale thematizes the work of art, stating: "A work of art that achieves the purification of these feelings by arousing compassion and fear." (Sovre 1963: 105). After all, even the Chinese emperor, with the help of authentic art, an internally rich spiritual life from which he has distanced himself, then returns to himself through the songs or art of the nightingale. While listening to the nightingale's singing, the Chinese emperor exclaims: "Dear God, how beautiful!" (Andersen 1998: 56).

Even in the character of a poor girl carrying leftovers from the (rich emperor's) table to her poor sick mother, we can find a blind motif of Buddhist karma – that good deeds affect destiny, so perhaps the nightingale can be interpreted as the embodiment of good deeds? Indo-European (blind) motifs appear: cow (sacred animal), water (swamps, [emperor's] tears at the inner beauty and power of art or the nightingale singing), good deeds (karma, when Andersen mentions “church bells, chaplain” in China). Andersen also writes “god” (with a small initial), which is a typical example of mixing different religious motifs in a fairy-tale context for children.

The Snow Queen

The most complex is *The Snow Queen* fairy tale: a fairy tale in seven stories, in which there are many religious motifs, e.g., angel, God, kingdom of God, heaven, praise, psalm, prayer, eternity, but there are also motifs from different religions. Already in the first story, a motif from Hafiz's poem based on fractal theory can be found:

Hafez
“Once my heart will
be crushed into thousand pieces,
You'll see, dear girl,
That every piece loves,
As a thousand hearts would love.”
(Kovačić 2014: 35).

One day he was in a particularly good mood because he had made a mirror that had the property that everything good and beautiful that was reflected in it shrank so much that there was almost nothing left, and that which is bad and worthless, became even more apparent and only got worse.” (Andersen 1998: 271).

“Then they wanted to fly to heaven itself to make fun of the angels and God; but then the snarling mirror trembled so terribly that it slipped from their hands and crashed to the ground, where hundreds, millions, trillions, and even more pieces were scattered. And it was precisely because of this that the disaster was only greater than before; for some of the fragments were not larger than the grains of wheat, and they flew around the wide world, and everyone with whom they came in contact also got stuck there.

And then such people saw everything wrong, or had their eyes only for faults, for every small fragment of the mirror had the same power as the whole mirror; to some people, such a small fragment of a mirror even stuck in their hearts, and that was a force to be reckoned with, as such a heart became like a lump of ice. The individual pieces of the mirror were so large that they were used for window panes, but it was not worth seeing one's friends through such windows; some pieces were found in spectacles, and nothing good came of it when people put on such spectacles to see right and to be fair.”(Andersen 1998: 272).

This is a typical example of the intertextuality of various religious motifs, Christian: “Then they wanted to fly to heaven to make fun of angels and God; then the growling mirror trembled so terribly that it slipped out of their hands and crashed on earth where it scattered into hundreds, millions, trillions and even more pieces.” (Andersen 1998: 272), and the oriental motif from Hafiz's poem, when the heart shatters into a thousand pieces and each piece has a resemblance (property) of the whole or is a blind religious motif of eternity.

In *The Snow Queen*, in addition to religious (angel, god, child of God, kingdom of God, heaven, praise, psalm, prayer, eternity, etc.) and Indo-European (silk), mathematical motifs also appear (arithmetic, two, thousand, million, trillion, hundred, twenty, kilometer, snowflakes): “Gerda still remembered how big [snowflakes] and artificial they looked when she watched them under a magnifying glass, but these were, of course, quite differently big and scary – they were alive, they were the outpost of the Snow Queen and of the most unusual shapes.

Some were like disgusting huge hedgehogs, others like intertwined snakes that stretch their heads, still others like little fat bears with horny hair, and all were gleaming white, all the snowflakes were alive” (Andersen 1998: 299). The girl Gerda in the Snow Kingdom, which is a combination of an oriental motif of a particle that has the property of the whole (the snowflake has the property of the Snow Queen), prays to the father, the air from her mouth freezes and turns into bright angels with helmets piercing scary snowflakes. It is a typical topos of the interweaving of different religious motifs and a redefinition of the Christian motifs of angels, who in this tale become soldiers piercing horrifying snowflakes.

These are again blown up into hundreds of pieces, like the heart in a Hafiz poem, a mirror at the beginning of a fairy tale. Angels “caress the feet and hands” of the girl Gerda. The caress of angels or child is also a typical example of Andersen’s eroticization of the image of child and angel. The boy Kay is located in the kingdom of the Snow Queen, who is presented a person without emotions. The boy Kay makes up words from patterns – eternity. In the motif of the Ice Kingdom, we can recognize the ancient Hades which is adapted to the cultural conditions in Denmark, Lapland and Finland, and the Northern Lights which are explicitly mentioned in the fairy tale.

Andersen often attributes women with the inability to love, including the Snow Queen. In the fairy tale entitled *The Butterfly* we can recognize in the text for children the context for adults and the characteristic Andersen’s coding: a male literary character (butterfly) in a brothel choosing between flowers (daisy or Marguerite, cute, little confirmands, apple blossom, pea blossom, dahlia, hornbeam, curly mint, blackthorn, anemones, violets, white daffodils, potted plants, linden flowers, tulips).

“Butterfly wanted to have a family: of course, he wanted one of the tiny, cute flowers. He began to look around: all but one of them sat quietly and seriously on their stalks, as befits girls who are not yet engaged.” (Andersen 1998: 92).

“Like all young men, he looked after older girls.” (Andersen 1998: 92).

“It’s probably like being married; you get caught. He consoled himself with these words.” (Andersen 1998: 96).

In *The Snow Queen*, Andersen also discusses the good deeds of the girl Gerda, who with a Christian Buddhist motif (karma) “redeems” the boy Kay from the evil Snow Queen. Andersen’s passivity of boys’ literary characters is noticeable. Similarly, the boy Kay in *The Snow Queen* was “not guilty” that he was fatally hit by pieces of the devil’s mirror (in the eye and heart), so Andersen relieves him of responsibility, however, the girl Gerda, whom he also marks with red shoes symbolizing sin, is more burdened, and “liberates” the boy Kay from the Ice Kingdom of the Snow Queen with the piety, humility, and gratitude attributed to her by Andersen. Andersen attributes the girl with trust in God, God’s providence – interestingly, he does not attribute this to the boy or the character of the soldier in *The Tinderbox* or the emperor in *The Emperor’s New Clothes*, etc.

Most common religious motifs in Andersen’s fairy tales

God (*The Wild Swans*: “Then it seemed to her that the branches above her parted and that God looked at her with his gentle eyes, and above his head and from under his hands the angels looked.” [Andersen, 1998: 72]); The Kingdom of God (*The Little Mermaid*: “In three hundred years we will fly to the Kingdom of God like this!” [Andersen 1998: 55]).

Sin (*The Red Shoes*: “Don’t cut off my head,” Karen begged, “because then I won’t be able to repent for my sin! But cut off my legs with red shoes!” [Andersen 1998: 224]); Sinner (*The Tinderbox*: “The soldier was already standing on the stage, but when they wanted to put a rope around his neck, he said that they still allowed the sinner to fulfill his innocent wish before he was executed.” [Andersen 1998: 183]).

Gratitude (*The Snow Queen*: “If you ever ascend to high honors, I hope you will remember me with gratitude in your heart!” [Andersen 1998: 289]); Prayer (*The Travelling Companion*: “Then he sat down, clasped his hands and prayed the evening prayer.” [Andersen 2005:72]); Heaven (*Ole, the Tower Keeper*: “May God bless you, angel, sent by the heavens.” [Andersen 2005: 211]); Humility (*The Buckwheat*: “The grain thrived just fine, and the heavier the ears, the deeper it bent in pious humility.” [Andersen 2005: 113]); Death (*The Garden of Paradise*: “‘She will be, too!’ Said Death; she was a strong old woman with a scythe in her hand and large black wings. [...] he sank the coffin deeper than paradise.” [Andersen 2005: 112]); Eternity (*The Little Mermaid*: “But people have a soul that lives forever, it lives even after the body turns to dust; it rises into the fresh air, to all those shining stars!” [Andersen 1998: 44]); Grave (*The Travelling Companion*: “But first he carved a large wooden cross for his father’s grave, and when he took it there, the grave was already decorated with sand and flowers; he was taken care of by unknown people, because everyone loved the dear deceased very much.” [Andersen 2005: 70]); Sacrifice (*The Little Mermaid*: “He said that the girl had written herself to the sanctuary, she would never step out of it, they would never see each other again, but I am with him, I see him every day, I will take care of him, love him for sacrificed her life for him!” [Andersen 1998: 51]).

In addition to Christian motifs in a fairy-tale context, which acquire a new contextual meaning, Andersen also uses pagan motifs, e.g., buckwheat, barberry, phoenix, mead, etc. He also uses metallization (silver, gold), mineralization (pearls, diamonds...), which is of oriental and pagan (amber) origin.

Conclusion

Religious motifs appear in the form of motifs, motif fragments or blind motifs (Max Luthi) in many of Andersen’s fairy tales, not only in the ones discussed which represent a model of a classic authorial fairy tale, so some of his fairy tales are also anti-fairy tales (Max Luthi). They often feature female literary characters, e.g. *The Little Match Girl*, where the agony of dying and death is portrayed as a “happy event”, which actually represents indulgences for literary characters who celebrate New Year’s Eve at richly lined tables, Christmas trees, etc., and walk past a dying child for whom they feel sorry, but they do nothing for her.

In the end, the euphemized consolation follows as an excuse for inaction, saying that she “died with a smile on her face” and that she “went to a more beautiful and better world”, which is a Christian notion even though Andersen’s tale is read beyond different religions. *The Little Mermaid* is also one of Andersen’s Christian fairy tales, which contains the sacrifice of women for men (from the higher socio-economic class), with the conclusion in the direction of Buddhism: that her good deeds or the good deeds of the reading children will help her not to die in the next three hundred years. The cruelest is the fairy tale *The Red Shoes*, in which the executioner cuts off both legs of the girl named Karen, after which she goes to church as a penance.

Dual criteria are observed for female (victimization) and male literary characters, e.g., in the fairy tale *The Tinderbox*, where a soldier according to the principle of “goal justifies the means” kills (kills a witch, saying she is evil, ugly, old), steals (steals magic props), lies (to the king, the king’s daughter), intimidates (with dogs), etc. and eventually advances to the highest social and economic class. Andersen thematizes religious motifs, e.g., in the fairy tale *The Garden of Eden*: “But why did Eve pluck the fruit from the tree of knowledge? Why did Adam eat the forbidden fruit? If I were in his place, this would not have happened! Sin would never come into the world!” (Andersen 2005: 97). Andersen’s fairy tale *The Flying Trunk* is related in the motif and themes to the cultural and religious motifs of the Orient, in contrast to the cultural and religious motifs in *The Snow Queen*.

Andersen uses religious motifs from Egypt (pyramid, sphinx), pagan motifs (buckwheat, amber, mead), and intertwines oriental (blind) motifs (pearl, diamonds, silver, silk, gold, sofa, etc.) and ancient allegories (Joy, Happiness, Sadness), space and time (Italy). Cultural and religious motifs are common: tea (*The Elder-Tree Mother*, *The Snow Queen*, Turkey), phoenix (Egypt), coffee (*The Elder-Tree Mother*, *The Nightingale*, *The Snow Queen*), flying trunk, colorful/grass carpets (Orient), pyramid, desert (Egypt), the sphinx (Egypt, *The Galoshes of Fortune*: “Every corpse is a sphinx of immortality.”) (Andersen 2005: 216). The fascination with the Orient is also visible in the structure of storytelling, where Scheherazade’s motif is obvious (*The Buckwheat*, *The Elder-Tree Mother*, *The Fir Tree*, *The Flying Trunk*, *The Snow Queen*, etc.).

It is also interesting that Andersen used lesser-known characters from Scandinavian folk tradition. The first example is the *Marsh Woman* – the literary character of the *Marsh Woman* appears in the fairy tale *The Girl Who Trod on the Loaf*. She is described as the one who “brews beer” and is the “aunt of the little dwarves”: “People only know so much about the *Marsh Woman* that when it blows from the meadows in summer, it is because of the *Marsh Woman* that brews beer.” (Andersen 2005: 50). Another example is the character of the black raven, a nocturnal bird known for its unusual sounds and quiet flight, which makes it very close to people. According to popular belief, a spirit that had just been banished settled in a black raven (Andersen 2005: 227).

Religious motifs are intertwined with motifs from superstition, customs and divination, e.g., ghost, house dwarf, marsh moth, hippopotamus, sea king, mermaid, three-legged horse,²⁷² troll, “pig from the grave”,²⁷³ dwarves, witches, fairies, elves, the elven king, white fairies – *The Elf Mound*. “First we have to invite the Merman and his daughters, who don’t care much for visits on dry land, but we will prepare wet rocks or something better for them, so I don’t think they will be able to refuse the invitation this time. First-class trolls with tails, the river Merman and house dwarfs must also come. Then I think we shouldn’t forget the grave pig, the three-legged horse, and the church dwarf; indeed, they belong to a clergy that is not of our lineage, but such is their ministry. They are our close relatives and often visit us!” (Andersen 2005: 183).

There is also a critique of Christianity in Andersen’s fairy tales: “For dessert, they chose rusty nails and glass from church windows” (Andersen 2005: 183); “I will go up to the church bell towers and check whether the church dwarves are polishing the bells so that they will sound nice.” (Andersen 2005: 219). “They heard the priest singing and saw the savages dancing to the sounds of drums and whistles made of bone. Egyptian pyramids floated past, reaching into the clouds, overturned pillars and sphinxes, half-buried in song. The aurora borealis shone over the northern glaciers, these are the fireworks like no other.” (Andersen 2005: 109).

Andersen often articulates the unconscious in language, including the hypocrisy of religious citizens who go to brothels and the church at the same time, just as he himself did. In the fairy tale entitled *The Butterfly*, written in the language of symbols and the third person singular, he describes the literary character *Butterfly*, which is always written in italics, looking for a “bridesmaid” and choosing a “fiancée” among the flowers. The fairy tale is double-coded, the text is intended for children, the context is for adults, and the scene *Butterfly’s Selection* is significant (all seventeen²⁷⁴ female literary characters are written with a small initial, except for “Madame” Marguerite).

²⁷²Silvana Orel Kos: “Three-legged horse – according to popular belief, a three-legged (headless) horse that foretells death” (Andersen 2005: 227).

²⁷³Silvana Orel Kos: “A pig from the grave – the spirit of a pig that was buried alive and foretells death” (Andersen 2005: 227).

²⁷⁴White daffodils, dahlias, pea flowers, apple blossoms, curly mint, blackthorn, linden flowers, cute little Burmese, potted plants, marguerite, daisy, rose hips, anemones, violets, bluebells, sage and saffron.

Based on the knowledge of Andersen's life and work, it is evident that the fairy tale is a parallel with Andersen's life or documented visits to brothels, e.g., in the chapter *At a Brothel in Paris* he writes in his diary that "Parisian brothels are less dangerous than Neapolitan brothels" (Andersen 2005: 291, 292, 488). Eve from the Bible is replaced by a fairy, and Adam by a prince, which is typical of Andersen, who replaces religious characters with fairy-tale ones, so there is an intertextual intertwining of religious and fairy-tale creatures: "'It's all up to you!' replied the fairy. 'If you do not, like Adam, succumb to temptation and do the forbidden, will you always stay here?' 'I won't even touch the apples from the tree of knowledge!' replied the prince." (Andersen 2005: 109).

In the fairy tale *The Elf Mound* we find many religious motifs from folk tradition, which are a mixture of pagan motifs, fairy tale motifs, superstition and Scandinavian mythology (e.g., goblins).²⁷⁵ Andersen created a new fairy-tale model from already known religious and fairy-tale motifs, called authorial and/or classical fairy-tale model. In some fairy tales, religious motifs (*The Red Shoes*) predominate, in others the Oriental ones (*The Flying Trunk*), in some folk beliefs and superstitions (*The Elf Mound*), in others ideology (*The Emperor's New Clothes*). Andersen has written seventy books for adults, but he is best known for his book of fairy tales, in which his biography, imagination and various beliefs are intertwined in an original mosaic.

"Now the marshal drew his sword and threatened her with death if she did not obey him, thus forcing her to promise him everything" (Grimm 1993, 322).

"Once upon a time there lived a little girl who was very headstrong and clingy and never obeyed when her parents told her something" (Grimm 1993, 224).

"Now her parents could no longer hide the secret from her, but they only told her that it was God's will and that her birth was just an innocent occasion. But the girl was gnawed by guilt day by day and she thought she had to save her brothers" (Grimm 1993, 147).

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm were brought up in the spirit of Protestant ethics and used religious motifs, motif fragments and blind motifs and values (e.g., purity, diligence, duty, honesty, order, and diligence). In their fairy tales we can also find criticism of the papacy (*The Fisherman and His Wife*), in which, among other things, the topic of the male or female pope is discussed, which is an interesting connection with fairy tales and at the same time exceeds the purpose of the present article on religious motifs in the Grimm Brothers' fairy tales.

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²⁷⁵ "Ležetrudnik is a nocturnal bird known for its unusual sounds and quiet flight, which is why he can come very close to people. According to popular belief, the spirit that had just been banished was supposed to settle in a ležetrudnik" (Andersen 2005: 227).

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