Fairyland-scape: Locus of Retelling and Remembering Ecocentric Tales

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Received 1 December 2023 | Accepted 1 February 2024 | Published online 9 August 2024

Abstract

This article explores how and why (re)constructions of Fairyland in Earthland can create fairyland-scapes that serve as sites of retelling and remembering ecocentric tales. To conceptualise and theorise the notion of fairyland-scape, the article employs folkloric memory as an approach, fairyland ecology as a method, and fairyland ecosystem as a model. To demonstrate and analyse the various forms and samples of fairyland-scape in practice, the article also examines the interplay between The Grimm Brothers’ Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children’s and Household Tales) and Die Deutsche Märchenstraße (The German Fairy Tale Route) as a case study.

Keywords

folklore – memory – ecology – fairy tale – Brothers Grimm – storytelling

Fairy tales are the connective tissue between a mythological past and the present realities

MARINA WARNER, Once Upon a Time, 2016
Introduction

A new materialist and posthumanist reinterpretation and reevaluation of Spinozian monism, termed “neo-Spinozist monistic ontology” (Braidotti, 2019) or “posthuman monism” (Braidotti, 2022), through concepts like “nature-culture” (Latour, 1993; Haraway, 2003) or the “nature-culture continuum” (Massumi, 2002) has laid the foundations for environmental humanities. The core assumption of this burgeoning field is that pressing environmental issues are cultural matters; metaphorically speaking, the wounds of the natural world are essentially cultural wounds (Oppermann & Iovino, 2017). This approach inevitably necessitates a holistic understanding of why culturals interact with naturals and how naturals act as a cause, catalyst, and backdrop for culturals (Gerhardt, 2016). Many scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, who view the relationship between nature and culture as a continuum, coevolution and dialectic, strive together to generate sustainable, comprehensive, and practical approaches and solutions for the cultural construction of environmental challenges of our age.

Over the past few decades, this collaborative endeavour has specifically resulted in a body of literature on the relevance, importance, and power of environmental and ecological narratives and storytelling. Robertson et al. (2000) reframe “environmental narratives” as a credible source of information in the realm of ecological restoration. Jenkins (2004) redefines the concept of “environmental storytelling” (Carson, 2000) as the act of telling immersive spatial stories that evoke pre-existing narrative associations through their crafted mise-en-scènes. By revisiting concept of “re-story-ation”, Kimmerer (2013) argues that our relationship with the Earth cannot heal until we hear its stories and ask who will tell them? Kerridge (2014) examines literary genres and forms to reveal which ones can more effectively inspire environmental engagement. Haraway (2016) explores the ethical imperative of forging a counter-narrative consisting of Gaia, Earthbound, or geo-stories which aims to decentre human dominance and promote a more ecologically responsible and inclusive worldview.

Quite responsively, folklore and memory scholarship have also begun to emphasise the importance of moving beyond the anthropocentric view by arguing that folklore is beyond the human rather than a human-only enterprise (Thompson, 2019) and memory is eco-logical as it follows a logic of relationships rather than being contained in individual human minds (Erll, 2024; in this Issue). This evolving trend in folkloristics and memory studies not only makes the undeniable interplay between these fields more visible but also imposes a responsibility on both sides to collectively contribute to
a multidisciplinary effort in creating comprehensive, effective, and practical approaches for ecological and environmental challenges. In response to this growing demand, I argue that folkloric memory – a bridging concept and cross-disciplinary approach I introduced elsewhere (Gülüm, 2023) for a “consilience” between folkloristics and memory studies – can also play a significant role in developing novel perspectives for ecocentric storytelling. In this article, I thus employ folkloric memory as an approach, fairyland ecosystem as a model, and fairyland ecology as a method to conceptualise, theorise, and analyse fairyland-scape as a locus of retelling and remembering ecocentric tales.

1 Folkloric Memory: A Multiscalar Approach to Retelling and Remembering Tales

The approach of folkloric memory refers to a distinct construct/framework for selective and reconstructive recollections of the lore of folk narratives at individual, collective, and cultural levels for relevant purposes in particular contexts (Gülüm, 2023). From a morphological perspective, the compound word “folk-loric”, comprising the term “folk” and the adjective form of “lore”, specifies the object, content, and type of the memory under investigation. The term “folk” signifies the ordinary, informal, and unofficial nature of the lore of folk narratives. The derivation of “loric” from the term lore through an application of suffix “-ic”, indicating a connection, relatedness, and resemblance to the base word (lore), suggests that folkloric memory merely involves reconstructions, representations, or resemblances of the lore of folk narratives rather than authentic, exact, or verbatim records, replicas, or reproductions of it.

The “lore” of folk narratives encompasses a diverse array of traditional themes, forms, structures, plots, stories, settings, characters, events, and motifs that are intricately woven together in folk stories expressed particularly through “prose (folk) narratives” (Bascom, 1965) including myth, legend, and folk tale. In a narratological sense, the traditional, transcultural, and open-ended corpus of the lore is combined, structured, and expressed through various genres of folk narratives to tell stories about events – whether regarded as factual or fictional – involving human and nonhuman characters, occurring in real or imagined places in the recent or remote past. It is important to note that the lore of folk narratives is originated, remediated and circulated not only in oral societies and cultures. As Thompson (1946) underscores, the term “traditional prose tale” encompasses all folk stories transmitted from generation to generation not solely through oral tradition but also through
(re)writings. What defines a folktale thus is not its orality or literality, but rather the traditionality of its material (Thompson, 1946), shaped by intergenerational transmissions and frequent repetitions through various remediations over time. This is why Thompson utilises folk stories without distinguishing them in terms of their oral or literary origin in preparing his groundbreaking reference work, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* (1885–1976). By providing a comprehensive classification of the motifs comprising traditional narrative literature, *Motif-Index* can be regarded as a catalogue of transcultural lore of folk narratives and thereby a primary resource for folkloric memory research.

The acts, processes, and functions of folkloric memory at multiple levels in various contexts constitute a distinct, complex, and rich human phenomenon and a productive research area worthy of study in its own right. The rationale, relevance, and importance of this sort of memory becomes more evident when realising that remembering the past is not just a matter of recollecting lived events, experiences, and real persons, but often also a matter of recollecting, retelling, and rewriting earlier stories, narratives, and texts (Erll & Rigney, 2006). An organising principle of this form of recollection, as Rigney (2019) points out, is cultural longevity or durability, which not only bridges the distance between past and present but also enables new contexts and groups to reactivate and appropriate certain accounts of the past. When considering the relationship between cultural longevity and remembrance, folk narratives stand out as a particularly distinctive case. Da Silva and Tehrani (2016) show that variants of some well-known fairy tales such as *Hansel and Gretel*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Cinderella*, are much older than previously thought, with roots dating back 6,000 years or more, long before (written) literary tradition. Here, why and how we still remember such old tales from distant pasts and places, and what makes them memorable and reusable in new forms, functions, and contexts are key concerns of folkloric memory research. In doing so, this approach primarily focusses on the meaning-making capacities of durable folk narratives in their artificial and synthetic contexts of recollection and reception from the longue durée perspective (Braudel, 2009) rather than analysing them in their natural and authentic contexts of production and performance, which are primarily subject matters of oralist, anthropological and folkloristic enquiries.

Due to the diverse subgenres of traditional “fictional” narratives encapsulated within the umbrella term “folk tale” – which is interchangeably used with terms like fairy tale or wonder tale – folkloric memory approach also closely examines the relationship between fictionality and memorability. In exploring the role of fictionality in recalling the autobiographical past under the concept of “event memory”, Rubin and Umanath (2015) also regard the recollection
of fictional events occurring in certain forms of folk narrative as instances of (fictional) event memory. In response, Marsh and Yang (2020) introduce the concept of “memories of fiction”, which refers to recollections of events from works of fiction including novels, short stories, movies, and television shows as part of the autobiographical record. Yang et al. (2022) further theorise “memories of fiction” as an important category of event memory within an autobiographical memory framework and demonstrate that memories for fictional events can be just as vivid and personally important as memories of autobiographical events. Gander et al. (2023) present a more comprehensive and inclusive theoretical framework under the concept of “memory of fictional information” which is formed as a result of a creative act of imagining some states of affairs, events, places, characters, or objects believed by the person remembering to be decoupled from the real world.

Folkloric memory operates interactively and transitively at multiple levels within specific socio-cultural contexts. The operations of folkloric memory at individual level involves selective, reconstructive and mostly fragmentary recollections of various elements of folk narratives. For instance, an individual can remember the entire story (Grimms’ version) of Cinderella or merely its theme (reward of good over evil), plot (magical transformation of Cinderella’s life), settings (stepmother’s house, royal ballroom), characters (Cinderella, cruel stepmother, stepsisters), events (Cinderella’s midnight escape from the royal ball, disappearance of the carriage and horses at midnight), scenes (Cinderella’s dance with the prince), episodes (the prince’s search for the owner of the golden slipper), or motifs (objects, talking and helper animals, magical assistance). Putting it into the longue durée perspective, even such an ordinary remembrance of an old tale can be viewed as a complex performance that relies on interconnected acts and processes of individual, collective, and cultural memory. In other words, an individual recollection of a tale from the distant past is an “outcome of a whole series of other acts of remembrance” (Rigney, 2005) of the relevant tale in the “longue durée-memory process” (Erll, 2011).

The operation of folkloric memory at the collective level is a manifestation of mediated collective remembering performed through “textual resources”, especially narratives (Wertsch, 2004). Although Wertsch (2004) focuses on empirical narratives – records of events assumed to have actually occurred – he also points out that fictional narratives can also function as cultural tools and textual resources in this sort of collective remembering. Accordingly, individual members (agents) of a group who access various forms of textual resources, including oral, written, audio-visual, digital, or multimediatic
representations, receptions, or remediations of European folk and fairy tales, can collaboratively and collectively remember *Cinderella* in the group through their shared lore (distributed representations) of the story elements (themes, plots, settings, characters, or motifs) in various manners (homogeneous, complementary, or contested) within a particular socio-cultural context.

Folkloric memory at cultural level is performed through cultural activities, institutions and industries which provide infrastructures, agents, technologies, mediums and receivers for diachronic (across time) and lateral (across territories, cultures, mediums) objectivations, remediations and receptions of lore of the folk narratives. In her detailed exploration of the afterlives of Walter Scott’s novels, Rigney (2012) demonstrates how factual and fictional elements of literary works are selectively, procreatively, convergently, and recursively recollected through various forms of cultural production. In a similar fashion, *Cinderella* is remembered across centuries through various cultural forms, products, and services such as Grimms’ tales collection (1812); Disney’s animated movie “Cinderella” (1952); Rodgers and Hammerstein’s musical adaptation of “Cinderella” (1957); Marissa Meyer’s book “Cinder” (2012) as a retelling of the story; the artistic installation of “Cinderella's red slipper” at the sightseeing of Castle Marburg as a tourist destination; Cinderella’s ball dress featured in various exhibitions and museums; special events like Cinderella-themed birthdays, wedding parties, and much more. As indicated by these interconnected examples, folkloric memory; operates at individual, social, and cultural levels in a loop; remediates not only diachronically and laterally but also transculturally and intermedially; converts old and obsolete lore of the tales into available, useful, and meaningful experiences; and performs through various cultural activities, institutions, and industries.

2 Ecosystem and Ecology of Fairyland: Model and Method for Ecocentric Storytelling

Folk narratives encapsulate traditional ecological knowledge, wisdom and expressions which are emerged as byproducts of source communities’ reactive, responsive, and adaptive interactions and engagements with local surroundings. This is partly why folk narratives are considered as mediums for both traditional ecological knowledge and intangible cultural heritage concerning the relationships of living beings with their environments, nature, and universe. Folk and fairy tales particularly stand out as a durable medium in the aestheticisation, preservation, circulation, and transmission of ecocentric lore of past generations across various times and spaces from...
archaic oral traditions to modern literary traditions. Oral and literary folk and fairy tales figuratively, metaphorically, allegorically, and symbolically spatialise traditional ecological knowledge, wisdom, and expressions in Fairyland – an imagined, enchanted, and entangled realm of geographies, topographies, and environments inhabited by fairy beings, phenomena, and events.

The spatial dynamics, dimensions and patterns of Fairyland can be explored through literary cartography. This approach posits that a literary space is inherently mappable, and each literary work functions as a voyage through either genuine or fictional locales (Turchi, 2004), where the writer acts as a mapmaker, while the reader assumes the role of a map-reader (Acharya & Panda, 2022). Relatedly, Jason (1977) defines a “fairy-tale country” as a symbolic representation of a distant and undefined place situated as an island in the “in-between space” between the human world and the afterworld. Messerli (2005) shows that the aesthetic space of European fairy tales is erratic, contractive, and expansive as it is intricately shaped by the actions and perspectives of the characters. Järv (2008) draws parallels between the movement of a fairy tale hero and the progress of a train, connecting not only isolated characters but also nameless places in the Estonian fairy tales corpus. Bacchilega (2013) further metaphorises the interconnectedness of fairy spaces through the “fairy-tale web”, which reaches back in history and across spaces to intersect with multiple storytelling traditions. Warner (2016) suggests imagining the history of folk and fairy tales as a map or a fictive atlas of Fairyland spanning from the west, depicted by Perrault and the Grimm Brothers, to the east described in the Tales of the One Thousand and One Nights, to the north portrayed by Hans Christian Andersen’s glowing Danish homeland, and to the steppes and forests of Russia and Central Asia. Williams (2021) examines maps embedded in fairy tales and explores how the connections of fictional geographies in Fairyland as a single storyworld are reimagined in contemporary pop culture texts on diegetic level.

So, if Fairyland consists of entangled environments in an “imagined geography” (Stadler et al., 2016), what are the essential features and characteristics of the fairyland ecosystem(s)? By this term I refer to organisations, structures and patterns of biotic and abiotic relationships among organisms (human/nonhuman), things (nonlivings) and their environments (fictive places) within Fairyland. Fairyland constitutes a vast ecosystem of its own; however, the various entangled environments within it also have their diverse and interconnected (sub)ecosystems. These multiple ecosystems of Fairyland are primarily shaped by terrestrial, aquatic, and man-made environments. The terrestrial ecosystems of Fairyland consist of enchanted forests, mountains, caves, grasslands, deserts and the underworld. The aquatic
ecosystems of Fairyland include oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and underwater kingdoms. Fairyland also has man-made ecosystems of various environments in villages, towns, cities, gardens, agriculture, and so on. In the preface of the first volume of Kinder- und Hausmärchen, Jacob Grimm provides a glimpse into the (Grimmian) Fairyland ecosystems as follows: “All of nature in these tales is vibrant; sun, moon, and stars are approachable; they give gifts and let themselves be woven into gowns. Dwarfs work in the mountains and search for metals. Mermaids sleep in the water. Birds, plants, and stones, speak and know how to express their sympathy” (2014, p. 5).

The types, components and functions of fairyland ecosystems can be explored through fairyland ecology, aligned with “literary ecology” introduced by Meeker (1974) as a method for studying biological themes and relationships that appear in literary works. Literary ecology focuses on textual representations of relationships between characters and places within the realm of historically, culturally, and geographically bound yet diverse literature (Waldron, 2013). In a similar vein, Propp (1984) reveals multifaceted manifestations of complexities, interdependencies, fluid identities, and the coexistence of diverse entities in the fairyland ecosystem by delving into the themes and functions of “transformation” and “reversal” within Russian fairy tales. Propp (1984) argues that the causes of transformations and reversal often originate outside the fairy tale, and one cannot fully understand the evolution of the tale without considering the environmental circumstances surrounding it.

By defining folktale as a world-encompassing (welthaltig) literary form and asserting that the folktale tries to perceive the world’s true nature, Lüthi (1986) also provides invaluable insights into the roles and capacities of tales in encapsulating the environmental and ecological realities of the human world. Lüthi’s (1986) analysis of multiplicity, unity, possibility, and inclusivity in European folk tales also underscores the diverse, interconnective, and transformative nature of the fairyland ecosystem. Porselvi (2023) once again shows how folk and fairy tales can be used as a tool for challenging ecological issues by analysing various motifs and patterns of space-time, nature-culture, and spirit-matter in Indian tales. Nic Craith (2023) also outlines some principles and processes of fairyland ecosystem under the categories of networks, shapeshifting, parallelism, and mirroring by examining Gaelic folktales through the Celtic ontological concept of dùthchas (interconnectedness of species).

The fairyland ecosystem and ecology are also intricately intertwined with posthumanism. This connection is deeply rooted in the essence of “post”-humanism, aiming to decentre the human experience by “relegating” it to a lower yet equal position with other species (Wolfe, 2010), echoing a
characteristic found in fairy tales. In other words, fairy tales destabilised and transformed notions of the human long before posthumanism (Greenhill & Allen, 2018). Through an analysis of Calvino’s tales, Iovino (2014) describes fairy tales as “hybridtales”, referring to stories in which reality itself is a continuous flow of crossing the boundaries between species, matters, and other cultural agents. In a similar vein, Greenhill and Allen (2018) argue that fairy tales are inherently species-queer, posthuman, and transbiological because their stories and characters de-stabilise and de-link hierarchical biological categories, implicating gender, sex, and sexuality. In exploration of many variants, the shift of sex as a folktales type indexed in ATU, Ready (2021) also shows how heroes defy sexual and gender categorisations and that they manifest various aspects of transsexual and transgender imagination in fairy tales. Even such a brief review indicates that the fairyland ecosystem shaped and organised by patterns of biotic and abiotic relationships involving transformations, reversals, multiplicities, hybrid relationalities, trans-biological/sexual/gender metamorphosis, animism, anthropomorphism, cross-species entanglements, intra-active constructions, and transversal subjectivities.

3 Fairyland-scapes: Mnemonic Sites of Ecocentric Tale-Telling

Eco-spatial aspects, features, and fragments of Fairyland can be re-presented across physical environments in Earthland through (folkloric) memory work. Nora (1989) explains why and how forms of memory crystallise and secrete themselves in physical spaces, places, and objects. In a similar vein, Ricoeur (2006) argues that memory is fundamentally a topographical activity. Casey (2000) further redefines remembering as an activity of re-emplacing or re-experiencing past places rather than re-experiencing the past per se. In short, memory is always emplaced as experience is emplaced (Donohoe, 2014). The forms of social memory are particularly spatialised in and around local landscapes of source communities (Lowenthal, 1985). By compounding the concept of memory and landscape, Edensor (1997) defines such places as “memoriescape”, wherein iconographic elements and specific objects are assembled and organised to materialise memory. In a similar fashion, folkloric memory is emplaced through selective and reconstructive spatialisation of various elements of Fairyland in rural and urban landscapes either imitatively and replicatively or reinterpretatively and reimaginatively.

Building on this framework and compounding the concept of *Fairyland* with the suffix *-scape*, which refers to both a view or (literal or figurative) landscape specified by the first element (Oxford English Dictionary, 2023) and a particular...
area offering sensory experiences (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024), I introduce the notion of “fairyland-scape” for conceptualising, theorising, and analysing selective reconstructions of fragments, vistas and views of Fairyland across physical environments in Earthland. Before delving further, it is important to note that the scapes of Fairyland can be re-spatialised not only within physical environments but also in various environments of literary texts, visual arts, movies, museums, entertainment sites and digital spheres through various technologies and forms of (re)mediation. Moreover, while some instances of fairylandscape serve as a locus for retelling and remembering “ecocentric” tales, others may not necessarily do so. In fact, there is also anthropocentric fairyland-scape portraying, retelling and reminding tales that centralise human agency and emphasise human dominance over other species. In this study, however, I merely focus on the forms of fairyland-scapes embedded in physical environments, which serve as sites for retelling and remembering ecocentric tales.

Fairyland-scape in physical environments are manifestations of “thirdspace”, a concept introduced by Soja (1996) to define hybrid places that emerge through the integration and synthesis of first spaces (real and material) and second spaces (imagined or mental). By not entirely belonging to either Fairyland or Earthland, a fairyland-scape is an intermediary and liminal place, presenting snapshots from Fairyland that unfold in the “once-upon-a-time” of the here and now. More importantly, fairylandscapes serve as sites of folkloric memory or folkloric memoryscapes, not only remediating and retelling but also evoking and reminding relevant tales to “implied” visitors/readers. In this context, a mediated remembrance takes place at the interaction between visitors (remembering subjects) and tales (remembered objects) through and within fairylandscapes (medium and environment of remembrance). Fairylandscapes thus prompt visitors to remember and imagine the relevant tales in their “absence”.

The acts and processes of this form of remembrance can be further explained through Bartlett’s (1995) schema theory as follows: Visitors initially perceive and sense visual/spatial representations of particular tales in fairylandscapes. These stimuli, in turn, reactivate folkloric mentifacts referring to forms, structures, patterns, and templates of folk narratives deeply embedded in the human unconscious, psyche, mind, and memory. Visitors thus recall the relevant information about the target tales and/or related ones from their memories and accordingly shape their responses to the fairylandscapes. In accordance with Wertsch’s (2004) theory, a fairylandscape-mediated remembrance can be carried out collectively and collaboratively through the intersections, interactions, and exchanges of shared lore (distributed
representations) of relevant tales in visitors’ minds (agents), reactivated and mediated through fairylandscapes (cultural tools).

Visitors (un)consciously, (in)voluntarily and (un)collectively can recollect imaginary, fictional and fantastic places, characters and events depicted in folk and fairy tales through and in fairylandscapes. More importantly, such a form of mediated remembering can also be experienced as an act of storytelling. This is partly why Edensor (1997) defines storytelling as the most contingent process of remembering. Indeed, when we remember a tale, we essentially delve into an act of storytelling, whether internally to ourselves or potentially externally to others. This happens because while we engage in a complex act of narrative reconstruction, we selectively arrange, reinterpret, and modify the tales into a cohesive and meaningful structure. In return, storytelling activities within fairylandscapes unfold through the retellings of tales, inherently engaging the acts of remembering on multiple levels. Storytelling activities through fairylandscapes thus epitomises a form of “landscape storytelling” in which landscape is utilised as a type of media for storytelling (Ryan, Foote, & Azaryahu, 2016). Consequently, as Ingold (1993) suggests, perceptually engaging with a past-laden landscape essentially is an act of remembrance, and in doing so the landscape tells the story of what or who forms it.

4 German Fairylandscapes: Grimmian Fairyland in Deutschland

Fairylandscapes are sites of remembering and retelling mostly “ecocentric” tales as they predominantly portray settings, scenes, characters, and motifs through clear associations, references, and symbols of ecosystem(s) of Fairyland. By representing Grimmian fairyland in both rural and urban settings across Germany, the German Fairy Tale Route (Die Deutsche Märchenstraße) offers a suitable case study for exploring and examining various forms, features, and functions of ecocentric fairylandscapes in practice. The Fairy Tale Route is a cultural and tourist route spanning approximately 600 kilometers across Germany, starting in the city of Hanau, the birthplace of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, and ending in Bremen. The construction of the route started in the early 1970s, aiming to integrate the German landscape with literary, historical, and biographical elements related to the Brothers Grimm (Bendix & Hemme, 2004). Over time, many other thematic routes started weaving through the same landscape, including the Half-Timbered Housing Route, the Wiser Renaissance Route, and Lower Saxony’s Asparagus Route (Hemme, 2005).

The route has been designed and crafted by repurposing The Grimm Brothers’ Children’s and Household Tales (Kinder-und Hausmärchen), which
is considered a marker of German identity (Zipes, 2015), a recollection of the German past (Haase, 1990), a site of German memory (Roots, 2020) as well as a green/ecological text (Stobbe, 2017). The ontical, geographical, ecological, and aesthetic aspects of Grimmian fairyland play a primary role in the construction, thematisation, and curation of the route. Particularly, the German forest motif, as an organising element and recurring theme in most of the Grimms' tales, has notably shaped the ecocentric features of Grimmian fairylandscapes along the route. The Brothers Grimm adeptly condensed the intricate concept of the German forest, along with its diverse ecosystems, into a captivating narrative motif, seamlessly integrating it into their folk and fairy tale collection (Zipes, 2002). Therefore, as Schama (1995) highlights, it is nearly impossible to separate the Grimm tales from the imagery of a forest, typically depicted as a northern Germanic woodland, serving as both a realm of terror and profound judgement.

From the 19th century onwards, various fragments of the Grimmian fairyland themed with forest aesthetics have been visualised by many illustrators including Arthur Rackham (1917) (Fig. 1), Andrea Dezsö (2014) (Fig. 2) and Hermann Vogel (1898) (Fig. 3). These illustrations not only offer a glimpse into various vistas of Grimm's fairyland but also depict forest ecosystem where humans and nonhumans are interconnected and interdependent. Especially Vogel's Märchen Zug (Fig. 3), which displays a carnivalesque parade of figures from Grimms' tales provides a holistic and panoramic view into blurred boundaries, entanglements, and metamorphoses among humans and nonhumans within Grimmian fairyland.

Such fragments of the Grimmian fairyland ecosystem are also reconstructively (re)spatialised in various rural and urban fairylandscapes along the Fairy Tale Route. Grimmian fairylandscapes in rural areas are mostly located in forested regions, idyllic countryside, and quaint villages along the route: The forest home of Frau Holle (also known as Mother Hulda) in the Geo-Nature Park Mother Hulda Land in Hessen (Fig. 4); and the sculptures of Snow White and the Seven Dwarves in the village of Bergfreiheit (Fig. 5) are representative samples of rural fairylandscapes along the route. Grimmian fairylandscapes in urban areas along the route are located in the central areas of various German towns and cities: The bronze statue of the Town Musicians of Bremen situated in the city centre of Bremen (Fig. 6), the Gänseliesel (Goose Girl) fountain (Fig. 7) located in front of the medieval town hall in Göttingen can be considered samples of urban fairylandscapes within the German context, where these locations are officially categorised as urban districts.

As can be seen, these fairylandscapes monumentalise the ecocentric fragments depicting interactions between humans, non-humans, and
their environments within the Grimmian fairyland. The monuments that memorialise and commemorate the ecocentric elements of Grimmian fairyland in these fairylandscapes can, as Rigney (2005) points out, retain their value as agents of working memory only as long as their significance is kept alive. By utilising the monuments as mnemonic anchors for the relevant stories, these fairylandscapes also vividly retell the ecocentric tales of Grimmian fairyland. For instance, Hulda Land (Fig. 4) reflects on the story of dynamic interplay regarding a fairy tale character, her natural environment, and its ecosystem. The sculptures of Snow White and the Seven Dwarves (Fig. 5) depict multiplicities, hybrid relationalities, and diverse communities with distinct characteristics. Town Musicians of Bremen (Fig. 6) retell an anthropomorphic tale that challenges the traditional dichotomy between the human and nonhuman, underscoring the interconnectedness of species. Similarly, the Gänseleisel fountain (Fig. 7) expresses cross-species entanglements, illustrating a harmonious relationship between humans and nonhumans.

Ecocritical perspectives, interpretations, and explorations concerning the ecocentric aspects and functions of fairylandscapes can be further enhanced by taking a “folklore-centric gaze” – the way that mostly implied visitors see and gaze upon folkloric landscapes as dwellings of non-human agencies of folklore (Ironside & Massie, 2020). By adopting such viewpoints, Grimmian fairylandscapes can even be regarded as representational sites of “becoming-with” (Haraway, 2016) in multispecies entanglements through embedded and implicit forms of contemporary animism (Harvey, 2005), anthropomorphism (Epley et al., 2007) and nomadic performativity (Žukauskaitė, 2015). The representations of nonhuman agencies in Grimmian fairylandscapes provide as an experiential and imaginative gateway for engaging in and becoming-with animistic and anthropomorphic multispecies entanglements. Such ecocentric representations and experiences are augmented by nomadic thought and attitude – “movement at the heart of thought by actualizing a nonunitary vision of the thinking subject” (Braidotti, 2011, p. 7), who constantly stretches outward in search of assemblages, kinship, and affinities with zoe (non-human life) over bios (human life) (Braidotti, 2011). Nomadic thought and attitude particularly are embodied and embedded in various performances in Grimmian fairylandscapes. This aspect is exemplified even in two promotional images of the German Fairy Tale Route below, displaying scenes from open-air fairy-tale performances during the festivals. The former image depicts seven children disguised as goats, joyfully playing around statues of a wolf and a mother goat at the Fairy Tale Fountain in Wolfhagen (Fig. 8), while the latter image...
captures the Pied Piper playing for humans disguised as mice in an open-air performance (Fig. 9).

Drawing on Žukauskaitė’s (2015) elaboration on the main principles of “nomadic performativity”, it can be argued that by employing animal costumes and masks, and mirroring animal behaviours as depicted in these samples, the participants not only transcend bodily categories but also metaphorically wear the skins of other species, thus erasing significant distinctions and shifting the focus from “bios” to “zoe” in their performances. Such performances also offer a space for exploring the fluid and interconnected nature of identity and subjectivity, emphasising the multiplicity and shared experience of being. Participants and audience are encouraged to explore the possibilities of becoming minor by pretending to become-animal, -other, or -imperceptible of the Grimmian fairyland. Grimmian fairylandscapes thus can deterritorialise and decenter the human while reterritorialising and recentering the nonhuman as an agent of an interconnected world. Moreover, such playful and performative engagements with various forms of anthropomorphic and animistic representations in fairylandscapes can encourage a different sense of active companion and multispecies kinship (Haraway, 2016), which refers to meaningful and ethical connections and relationships with nonhuman species. Consequently, fairylandscapes also have the potential to inspire visitors to embrace a holistic perspective that extends beyond anthropocentrism and promote a “deep ecological attitude”, referring to an egalitarian mindset towards all identifiable entities or forms in the ecosystem (Sessions, 1995).

Conclusion

Framing the fairyland ecosystem as a model, fairyland ecology as a method, and fairy landscape as a locus of ecocentric recollection and storytelling, this article demonstrates the potential of integrating folklore and memory scholarship to challenge the discontents of anthropocentrism. The case of The German Fairy Tale Route exemplifies both how Grimmian fairylandscapes can serve as sites for retelling, remembering, and reimagining ecocentric tales of the distant past, and thus how they explicitly or implicitly recentre the nonhuman, leading to pro-environmental behaviours and ultimately promoting ecocentrism. Further and future research on manifestations of Fairyland in various mediums and environments can enhance our understanding of how the boundaries between fantasy and reality, past and present, memory and imagination and ecocentrism and anthropocentrism intersect and
thus integrate folklore-memory nexus into current ecological discussions, discourses and agendas.

**Funding**

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This article is part of the project “Folkloric Memory: From Oral Traditions to Creative Industries,” which is funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation through a Humboldt Research Fellowship for Experienced Researchers.

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Figure 1  The Old Woman in the Wood, Rackham (1917)

Figure 2  The Frog King or Iron Henry, Dezső (2014)
FIGURE 3  Märchen Zug, Vogel (1898)

FIGURE 4  Geo-Naturpark Frau-Holle-Land, Marco Lenarduzzi, Deutsche Märchenstraße e.V. (DMS)
**Figure 5**  Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, Deutsche Märchenstraße e.V. (DMS)

**Figure 6**  Town Musicians of Bremen, Deutsche Märchenstraße e.V. (DMS)
Figure 7  Gänseleisel fountain, Deutsche Märchenstraße e.V. (DMS)

Figure 8  Fairy Tale Fountain in Wolfhagen, Deutsche Märchenstraße e.V. (DMS)
Figure 9  The Pied Piper of Hamelin, Deutsche Märchenstraße e.V. (DMS)
Works Cited


