



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

DIPARTIMENTO DI STUDI EUROPEI
AMERICANI E INTERCULTURALI

International Conference

Fairy Tales in Slavic Countries: Reception – Production – Circulation

11-13 February 2026

Sapienza University of Rome

Call for Papers

The interest in Slavic fairy tales and fables remains relatively marginal in international Fairy Tale Studies. Influential essays by Vladimir Propp on the *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928, English translation 1958, Italian translation 1966) and the *Historical Roots of the Wondertale* (1946, Italian translation 1949) encouraged international interest in Russian folk tales. However, they also contributed to the tendency to perceive these tales primarily as a manifestation of the oral or folkloric tradition—a perspective that prevails up to this day. Moreover, the interest in Slavic tales is often limited almost exclusively to Russian folklore and tales. In international encyclopaedias and lexicons (e.g., Zipes 2000, Haase 2007, Greenhill 2018), Polish, Czech, and other Slavic traditions are reviewed hastily in just a few pages. Additionally, the “traditionalist” filter through which Slavic fairy tales are often viewed means that they are rarely considered from the perspective of contemporary tale transformations (retellings, transcreations, postmodern fairy tales, etc.; see, e.g., Bacchilega 1997, 2013; Joosen 2011).

On the other hand, research on fairy tales and fables within individual Slavic countries tends to focus on monocultural studies, with only a few exceptions (e.g., Wróblewska 2018). Most of this research is published in national languages, making it less accessible to the international scholarly community.

Our conference aims to promote an international and interdisciplinary scientific dialogue among scholars from different countries. It seeks to create opportunities to confront

methodologies, topics, and areas of cultural interest from a comparative perspective. We are particularly interested in exploring diachronic divergences in selective processes, types of transformation, ideological uses, appropriation, manipulation, and the cultural impact of fairy tales and folk tales within the Slavic world.

Confirmed keynote speakers:

Marina Balina (Illinois Wesleyan University)

Violetta Wróblewska (University of Toruń)

Key Topics

The conference will address various aspects of the reception, circulation, production, and literary significance of fairy tales and fables in Slavic countries. We are interested in both Slavic folk and fairy tales and the reception, assimilation, and cultural impact of classic fairy tales among Slavs.

Scholars are invited to submit proposals related—but not limited—to the following themes:

Historical Development of Interest in Fairy and Folk Tales in Slavic Countries:

Discussion on the evolution of scholarly engagement with Slavic fairy tales, from early ethnographic collections to contemporary academic research;

Literary Circulation of Fairy Tales in Slavic Countries:

How fairy tales have moved across Slavic countries through translation, adaptation, and publication, influencing literary traditions and cultural exchange;

Fairy and Folk Tales and the Development of Children's Literature in Slavic Countries:

The role of fairy tales in shaping children's literature, including pedagogical, moral, and entertainment dimensions;

Cultural Appropriation of Classic and Folk Tales Through Literary Versions:

How written forms of tales have reshaped traditional narratives and contributed to the construction of cultural memory;

Circulation of Fairy Tales, Their Versions, and Adaptations Between Slavic Countries:

Assessing cross-cultural exchanges and the evolution of tales as they are retold and adapted across borders within the Slavic world;

Ideological Manipulation of Tales:

How fairy tales have been censored, adapted, or repurposed for national, political, or ideological objectives, including didactic and exclusionary uses;

The Role of Tales in Promoting National Identity and Cultural Memory:

How fairy tales contribute to the construction of collective identity and the preservation or transformation of cultural heritage;

Folklorisation, Re-Folklorisation, Evolution, and Hybridisation of Fairy-Tale Motifs:

Processes that transform and recontextualize traditional motifs in response to cultural and societal changes;

Innovative Reinterpretations Challenging Genre and Gender Conventions:

Postmodern or subversive adaptations that challenge traditional conceptions of genre, gender roles, and narrative structure;

Fairy and Folk Tales in the Slavic Countries Today:

The contemporary relevance of fairy tales in Slavic cultures, including their presence in modern literature, film, and media;

Literary and Mediatic Reception of Slavic Fairy Tales in Foreign Countries:

How Slavic fairy tales are perceived, adapted, and integrated into non-Slavic cultural contexts.

The languages of the conference are English and Italian

Please send your proposals of 250-300 words and a short bio (100 words) to talesrome2026@gmail.com

For further inquiries, please contact Emilio Mari (emilio.mari@uniroma1.it) or Monika Woźniak (monika.wozniak@uniroma1.it)



Important Dates

- **Deadline for Submission of Paper Proposals:** 30 May 2025
- **Notification of Acceptance:** By 15 July 2025

Information updates: follow us on the conference website and social media for updated information!

<https://talesrome2026.wordpress.com>

Registration

Early bird registration (1-30 September): 100 euro (scholars) / 70 euro (PhD. candidates and independent scholars)

Registration: 140 euro (scholars) / 100 euro (PhD. candidates)

Concessions: PhD students and independent scholars can apply to the Organising Committee for a reduced fee

Fees include:

Coffee and refreshment during breaks

Lunches

Events and social activities as specified in the programme

Cocktail reception

Certificate of participation or attendance (if required)

Delegate's bag with materials

Fees do not include:

Travel and accommodation

Social Dinner



Scientific Committee

Marina Balina (Illinois Wesleyan University)

Milena Mileva Blažić (University of Ljubljana)

Dorena Caroli (University of Bologna)

Anna Czabanowska-Wróbel (Jagiellonian University Kraków)

David L. Cooper (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)

Barbara Ivančič Kutin (Institute for Slovenian Ethnography)

Laura Olson Osterman (University of Colorado)

Eliza Pieciul-Karmińska (University of Poznań)

Nemanja Radulović (University of Belgrade)

Evelina Rudan (University of Zagreb)

Violetta Wróblewska (University of Toruń)

Organising Committee

Emilio Mari, Monika Woźniak, Cristiano Diddi, Luigi Marinelli, Oxana Pachlovska, Luca Vaglio (Sapienza University of Rome)

Alessandro Achilli (University of Cagliari)

Maria Bidovec (University of Naples “L’Orientale”)