

Alexandra Gruian

Self-Discovery through Otherness as Depicted in Folk Tales

Abstract: The entire world of folk tales is an interrogation, a regeneration of reality. The cosmos becomes, through these tales, an inverted image, an upside-down perspective on our existence. Everything that surrounds us can be and will be brought into question. Our attempt is to emphasize the role of folk tales in asking questions, in leading to the knowledge of the world, of the Others, and of the Self. To see how that is achieved for the heroes of folk tales, we will discuss *The Twelve Daughters of the Emperor and the Enchanted Palace*, from Petre Ispirescu's collection.

Keywords: Folk Tales; Alterity; Initiatory Path; Identity; Petre Ispirescu.

ALEXANDRA GRUIAN

The Center for Studies on the Imaginary
SPECULUM, Alba Iulia
ASTRA National Museum Complex, Sibiu
alexandra.gruian@muzeulastra.com

DOI: 10.24193/cechinox.2021.41.24

In Romanian mythology the voyage to the Other world begins with a submersion in the pre-cosmogonical gap, followed by integration into a paradisiacal dimension. Descents through a precipice, floor, fountain or tomb precede ascents on trees, mountains or ladders to the kingdom beyond the clouds. This is how the knowledge of the world appears and how the youth are prepared to take over the task of ruling the realm “between good and evil”. Reaching perfection has to be preceded by an immersion in the original disorder. The built universe, taken away from Chaos, is just a small fragment, always tending to regain its initial formlessness. Therefore, in Romanian folk tales we can explore an *imaginary of horizontality*, an *imaginary of ascent* and an *imaginary of descent*. All of them are means by which the heroes of folk tales are willing to discover themselves and the world.

The existence of folk tale heroes is an evolution, a shaping of their personality, a breaking from the known universe and an adaptation to a new *monde morcelé* (“fragmented world”). They live simultaneously *in illo tempore*, which they remake through their actions and in their own lives, *in illo loco* and in the narrative universe; they are always changing, depending on the events they live.

Robert Caillois defined the imaginary as a “strange faculty, impervious to analysis”, going beyond immediate reality and creating phantasms, illusions, myths, and utopias. The dichotomies nature/culture, *extra muros/intra muros*, feminine/masculine, evil/good, beautiful/ugly do not frighten contemporary people, whose schizoid existence “can be defined as a pulverization of personality, and more, as a deliberate assumption of multiple identity”¹.

In Romanian folk tales, the characters must conquer their fear, which is natural and necessary, in order to be able to go beyond the *oecumene*, to enter an unknown territory located at the periphery of this world, a territory governed by fabulous beings whose structure is both human and inhuman. Heroes project their own phantasms and desires over such otherness. They are drafted with distinctive biological and psychological features, characteristics related to morals or to social structures². Since the journeys of tale characters to other worlds actually occur in “mind universes” (in the words of Ioan Petru Culianu), their inner and outer worlds are interdependent.

Every world is built on limits and limitations. Through their extraordinary voyages, heroes organize their unconscious inner life. To see how that is achieved in a tale, we will discuss *The Twelve Daughters of the Emperor and the Enchanted Palace*, from Petre Ispirescu’s collection, type AT 306 (*The Twelve Dancing Princesses*) in the international classification.

The story describes a world enclosed between the walls of a palace, an ordered space turned into a cosmic one, which proves to be a first enclosure, as well as a point allowing the passage between worlds.

The character opening the tale is “a lad who had neither father nor mother”, belonging to the category of orphans, people without a past. An enigmatic character in the life of the village where he lives, a farm boy whom the masters “fought among themselves to employ”, because “wherever he went, he made a difference, and even the plants grew happier”, and “the work he did was better than that of the other servants”³. But because he did not want to integrate into the life of the village lads’ brotherhood (“he didn’t look around him”), they nicknamed him “the stargazer of the village”. However, the girls, even if ignored by him when they tried to chat up, “nicknamed him the village Prince Charming. And they were right!” The description that the author provides for him includes a reference to horses and ravens, psychopomp animals (“his raven hair waved like a mane against his snow-white neck”), a reference that finds its explanation later on as the story unfolds. Extremely well-structured, the narrative offers clues that will eventually lead to the denouement and to a profound understanding of the tale’s significances. Drawing a conclusion, the author says: “He must have been born under a lucky star and was destined to achieve great things”⁴.

The triggering factor of his destiny is the entrance to a “valley adorned with all sorts of flowers, all in bloom, which seemed to tempt people to step among them”⁵. A true Garden of Eden, dominated by the image of a “large, leafy tree (...), which in its greatness seemed to struggle to reach the clouds. Among its widespread branches birds cooed and nested: only by listening to their chirps and one started to feel the fire of love burning within oneself. Its

treetop gave such shadow, that you didn't feel like leaving anymore"⁶. This is a typical description of the cosmic tree, *imago mundi*, a bond between the three worlds and the three layers of consciousness. This place also includes water, originating in the mineral realm, the untamed vegetation, but also a state of drowsiness given by the closeness to the other realm ("A little bit further a spring, coming from the side of a small hill, looped amidst the burdocks and other weeds, finding its way, and its murmur seemed to urge people to go to sleep"⁷).

Just like the Creator (Demiurge) in Romanian cosmogony, he falls asleep in the shade of the cosmic tree and has a revelation. "He dreamt that a fairy, more beautiful than all the fairies in Heavens and on Earth, had come to him and told him to go to the court of the emperor who reigned over that place, and find his luck there. (...) What he didn't know was that the lucky star he was born under had come to serve him"⁸. The dream keeps repeating during the following days, when he strays from his road and makes a detour to sleep under that tree; on the third day, "the fairy threatened him he would get sick and would have to deal with all the foulness humans are capable of if he didn't go"⁹. The fairy's threat and the boy's believing it would come true determine him to go to the emperor's court, where he becomes a gardener.

A change in status occurs, emphasized in the text by the changing of clothes. From a herdsman, the lad becomes a gardener, and not any gardener, but the one who has to bring the princesses their flowers every morning. He is the one appointed to create a microcosm, a miniature garden – the little

flower bouquets that the twelve princesses receive every day.

The Emperor's daughters are under a curse. "These ladies were destined not to marry before someone would find their tie to their fate and make one of them love somebody. Their fairy godmothers had given them a passion for dancing. They were crazy about dancing and each night they would dance until they ruined a pair of white silk shoes"¹⁰. Thus, the archetype of tying and of the magical tie is clearly outlined. The text clearly states that the princesses' destiny had been written by their "fairy godmothers", who had cursed them to live their entire lives like that. "It seemed this was how they were going to spend their entire lives. That was what had been given to them"¹¹. The spell can only be broken by a magician hero, who, in his turn, had to be preordained to do it. Each of the tale characters acts according to their fate, designated by their fairy godmothers. However, this makes them become complementary to one another. The orphan lad, who wasn't integrated in the life of the community he lived in, and who used to be perceived as an unusual character and was marginalized for that reason, is the one who can sever the ties somehow holding the twelve daughters of the emperor prisoners. From a certain point of view, the princesses are just like him. In their turn, they are marginalized, incapable of love: they live under the sign of a fate that was given to them "before their own choosing", in the words of Gabriel Liiceanu.

We believe the true fate of the twelve girls is to relive the same day over and over again – the day the world is restored. Let's not forget that the emperor, the absolute sovereign, the universal ruler, has

twelve daughters. The number of spatial and temporal divisions, of the months of a year, twelve “also symbolizes the universe in its inner complexity (...), a fulfilling of the earthly creation, by its absorption in the divine increate. Twelve is the sphere root, the number of perfection. (...) Therefore, twelve is the number of fulfilment, of a completed cycle”¹², necessarily followed by a new birth.

The emperor “had spread the word, both in his country and abroad, so that everyone knew that the man who would tell him what his girls were up to at night, breaking a pair of shoes each, could pick the one he liked most among them and have her as his wife”¹³. That actually means the emperor is thus choosing his successor. The man would have to be a magician hero, able to tie and untie things, including the heart of one of his daughters.

Every evening, the princesses are locked up by their father “together, in a room in his palace, behind nine iron doors and under nine big locks. However, no one knew what they were doing at night that they ended up breaking their shoes, since no one had ever seen them leave the house, which would have been impossible”¹⁴. The nocturnal escapades of the girls shroud them in a deeper mystery; they seem to be real escapees from the protected, cosmic space.

Nine “signifies the return of multiplicity to unity, symbolized by the snake biting his tail (*Ouroboros*), and the figure nine, in the writings of several languages, has the appearance of a circle, of a curve, a loop that is closing”¹⁵. All the elements of the tale that are related to the Emperor’s daughters suggest the symbolism of the circle. The girls themselves form a circle,

are an impenetrable whole. However, the circle means an absence of movement. The girls are condemned to stagnation, incapable to evolve until the circle is broken and turned into a spiral, which is a symbol of evolution. The very “prison” of the girls is a motionless circle. The only way the circle can be breached is from the outside in. That proves this wasn’t an apotropaic circle, drawn in the dirt by the travellers frightened by the evil spirits haunting crossroads or forests at night, because such a circle couldn’t be entered from the outside. The iron doors, with “big locks”, don’t have any magical attributes. The suitors who had come to try their luck and find out the secret of the girls are nowhere to be found after keeping watch at their door for one night: “Nobody knew what happened to them. They disappeared without a trace. That had happened to eleven lads thus far”¹⁶. For the circle to be complete, one suitor was missing, but all the other lads got scared. The one to close the circle will have to be the one breaking the ties. “*Twelve times twelve is the perfection multiplied by itself, the cubed perfection, the wholeness excluding anything outside itself, the geometric paradise...*” [author’s emphasis]¹⁷.

After a lot of thinking, caused first and foremost by the fact that the young gardener had fallen in love with the youngest princess and his banishment from the palace would have also meant that he would have never seen her again, the lad involuntarily asks for the help of the fairy. The fairy residing in the grove of the cosmic tree appears to him in a dream, while in a state of semi-consciousness. She advises him as follows: “Go to the eastern corner of the garden, where you will find

two laurel saplings, one cherry-red and the other rosy; next to them you will see a golden hoe, a golden watering can and a silk towel. Take these laurel saplings, put them in two fine pots, hoe their soil with the golden hoe, water them with the golden watering can, gently clean their leaves with the silk towel and care for them like the apple of your eye. When they grow tall like you, anything that you will ask from them will be accomplished to a hair¹⁸.

The laurel is associated with immortality, with the knowledge of mysteries, and, since “it was dedicated to Apollo, it had divinatory qualities¹⁹. However, the laurels can't be found in any part of this garden, but to the east, symbolizing the beginning of a road. The garden is a centre of the world; therefore, it leads to the world above and to the world below, an image of earthly Paradise. On the other hand, the garden is an ordered space, which escapes Chaos, the shapeless. It is “a symbol of culture as opposed to wild nature, of rational thinking as opposed to spontaneity, of order as opposed to chaos, of consciousness as opposed to unconsciousness²⁰. This resumes the previously mentioned idea of complementarity between the princesses and the gardener. He is a master of order, of contemplation; everything he does is pondered upon. Every decision he makes is well-thought, nothing is left to spontaneity. The girls' passion for orgiastic dancing places them in a completely opposite position. They are the *bacchants* dancing until they collapse from exhaustion, always together, forming a cohesive whole, like the months of a year or the zodiac signs. The circle formed by the twelve girls symbolizes the year and “stands for the perfect cycle, the exemplary image of

a spatial-temporal unity with no cracks²¹. The relationship that is established between the girls and the gardener is one of identical opposites, *coincidentia oppositorum*, which involves either “the ‘totalling’, in the concrete meaning of the term”, or “the paradoxical return of the World to a heavenly state²². “To a great extent, the collective holidays at the end of the year have ensured the survival of customs and mentalities specific to pre-Christian holidays, of the type of Roman *Saturnalia*. (...) during those holidays (including the Roman *Saturnalia*), when the only accepted law was the absence of all laws, social anarchy was also established” [author's emphasis]²³. The gardener, be it one with a special status, born under a lucky star, becomes the princesses' equal, abolishing social order.

Finding the laurels in the place indicated by the fairy, the lad takes them, cares for them and, when they grow “to be as tall as him”, reach their maturity, he uses an incantation to ask them for invisibility, an attribute of the gods: “Laurel, laurel, / I dug your earth with a golden hoe, / I watered you with a golden watering can, / I wiped your leaves with a silk towel, / Now give me the gift of becoming, whenever I please, / Invisible to anyone²⁴. Laurels are associated with immortality, due to the fact that they remain green even during winter. But the text includes another interesting detail. One of the laurels is cherry-red, and the other rosy. That detail establishes geographic and spiritual landmarks. The cherry is a reference to “the Country of the Rising Sun” and to the Orient, where cherry trees are symbols of purity and happiness, but also evokes the spring equinox, with all its significances as a threshold

between the years²⁵. On the other hand, the rose “is the flower most often used as a symbol of the Occident. (...) being very close to the symbol of the wheel. The most general aspect of that flower symbol is that of manifestation, sprung from the primordial waters, above which the rose rises and opens its petals”²⁶. The hero first speaks to the Eastern laurel, asking it for invisibility. This is the same journey of the Sun, from East to West, so often met with in Romanian tales, as a metaphor of initiation and of mystical regeneration.

In the evening, he creeps in the room where the princesses are held. “He saw that, instead of undressing and going to bed, they started to comb their hair, dress in expensive clothes and get ready to go out.” When the preparations are over, “the eldest sister tapped her foot and suddenly the floor of the house parted. They descended in the opening and kept going until they reached a garden enclosed with a copper fence. When they came at the entrance, the eldest daughter tapped her foot again, and the steel gates of the garden opened. Upon entering, the lad stepped on the dress of the youngest sister”²⁷. In the traditional Romanian culture, tapping one’s foot or staff on the ground is equivalent to opening up the earth. This is a magical practice related to the divinities of vegetation, the ones who are born, get old and die in the rhythm of the nature. The rituals of the New Agricultural Year begin on the first day of March with the days dedicated to Baba Dochia, an old woman who dies and then is reborn up on the mountain, in a ritual that lasts nine days, then they continue with the holiday of the Martyrs, the sacred ancients, closing with the Alexii, when the ground opens up so

that the creatures come back in the world. These are rites of passage, of crossing from one state to another, in connection with the New Year’s Eve celebration. The moment at the boundary representing the turn of the year has a special significance. This is the day when excess is allowed, even encouraged.

By opening up the floor, the ground actually, the eldest daughter does nothing but inaugurate the beginning of magical acts dedicated to the New Year. Being the eldest of the girls, she symbolizes the year grown old; she is an image of the old woman Baba Dochia, of the feminine ancestor who has to revive entire nature. Tendentious and full of herself, she doesn’t pay attention to the warning of the youngest daughter, who tells her sisters they are being followed. Like any act of world restoration, their descent into the belly of the earth has a secret character; the ones who learn of the mystery remain trapped in it, with no possibility to regain the world they left. Of the twelve daughters of the emperor, only the youngest and the eldest have an active role in the story. We are told almost nothing about the others, they form an undifferentiated whole. The circle is vulnerable and can be broken, just like the year, only in its point of interference between old and new, between the youngest and the eldest daughter of the sovereign.

The garden enclosed by a copper fence with steel gates is a “synthesis of the universe”²⁸; it contains, just like an alchemic vessel, the silver forest, the golden forest and the diamond forest – the mineral quintessence. The direction dictated by those details is from the ordered space, the garden, to the chaotic, non-cosmic space of the forest. At the centre of this space

there is a pond, symbol of primordial waters, from *illo tempore*. The girls' journey proves to be an *ab origine* road, a symbolic descent to the beginning of the world: "in the middle of that pond there was a mound, and on it a palace like he'd never seen before. The emperor's palace couldn't begin to compare with it; it shone so bright, that one could more easily look at the sun, then at it. And it was so artfully built, that when you climbed inside it you were under the impression that you were descending, and when you came down its steps, you felt like you were climbing up"²⁹. The island in the middle of the waters "can be a symbol of 'manifestation', of Creation; in that case, water is primordial Chaos before Creation"³⁰. At this centre of the world, far superior to the one of the worlds the tale characters come from, Cosmos is renewed, by the absolute inversion of all forms and laws of the current world: "what is now up will be down and so forth"³¹. This can explain the sensation of descent during ascension and of ascension during descent one has in the subterranean palace.

The entire world hidden under the palace of the girls' father is a *topos* of light, resembling Heaven rather than Hades' realm. With the entrance through the floor, the forms and laws are abolished. This is not about a descent, but rather an ascent to the origin of the world. It is a quality leap, which helps restore the world. The journey to the island is continued in boats: "Twelve small boats with oarsmen dressed in gold-embroidered clothes waited at the edge of the pond. As soon as they got there, each of the girls took a seat in one and left. When they arrived on the island, you could hear a music that made you

dance whether you wanted to or not. The girls ran quickly as lightning to the palace, where they started to dance with the lads who were watching them arrive, and kept dancing until their shoes were torn"³². The music has a hypnotic effect. The orgiastic dancing, which only ends when they collapse from exhaustion, is a "symbolic restoration of 'Chaos', of the undifferentiated unity preceding Creation"³³. However, the regression to chaos is followed, like in all the rites involving the threshold between the years, by a supreme regeneration of the world. The twelve daughters of the emperor are, in fact, cursed to endlessly repeat the same day, namely the one indicating the turn of the year. The girls themselves are a metaphor of time, of the year at a moment when time seems to stop. Their fate, which has to be guessed, is of restoring the order of the universe, every night, through the regression to chaos and the regeneration that inevitably follows. Through their unstoppable dancing, which only ends when the white silk shoes break, a gesture synonymous with nudity, the virgins of Chaos become the virgins of Cosmos. They abolish Cosmos every night, in order to achieve "the transcending of any conditioned situation" and reach "non-duality and freedom"³⁴. By their continuous movement (the dance), they recreate Cosmos out of Chaos.

The gardener's helper, due to his invisibility, gains access to the Centre of the universe, and "the access to the 'Centre' is equivalent to a consecration, to an initiation; an existence that yesterday was profane and illusory is now replaced by a new existence, which is real, enduring, and efficient"³⁵. He takes part, for four nights in a row, in the recreation of the World, and

on each night, he takes a souvenir. After the first night, when the sign of his passage through the floor is his stepping on the dress of the youngest daughter, during the following nights, the gardener picks three sprigs: the first is silver, the second golden and the third is made of diamond. Each time, the entire forest reacts: “a strong murmur passed through the entire forest at that moment, like that caused by a storm rushing at the trees; nevertheless, not one leaf moved, not even tilted like when a soft wind blows”³⁶. This lack of movement is typical for the exit from Cosmos, or its non-manifestation.

The lad wants to reveal to the youngest daughter that he took part in their nocturnal adventures; this is why, each morning, he hides in her bouquet the sprig picked during that night. Another curse that placed upon the girls refers to their incapacity to restore the primordial unity, the primordial Human Being – their inability to love. The intervention of the gardener’s helper in the princesses’ lives annuls the contraries. The youngest daughter of the emperor, falling in love with the young gardener, suppresses any boundary (“she furtively looked at the servant and found him no different than the sons of lords and emperors. He seemed that lovable to her.”). However, she doesn’t forget that she’s an integral part of another circle, that’s why she tells her sisters that “the gardener’s helper knew everything they were doing at night. Then they gathered and held council, and planned to make him lose his heart and senses too, like they had done with the other young men. But the lad sneaked this time too into the girls’ room, to listen to their talk. The hedgehog must have whispered in his

ear that they intended to do something to him.”³⁷ The hedgehog’s appearance is not at all surprising, since “the hedgehog shows up like a demiurge and a civilising hero.” Together with God and the devil, it takes an active part in the creation of the world. A chthonian animal, symbol of the feminine matrix, the hedgehog formed the object of a totemic cult³⁸. It precedes the Creation and knows pre-cosmogonical secrets.

“Now, when he knew everything, all he had to know, he went to his laurels and said to the rosy one: Laurel, laurel, / I dug your earth with a golden hoe, / I watered you with a golden watering can, / I wiped your leaves with a silk towel, / Now give me the mind and knowledge of a lord and emperor’s son!”³⁹ The repetition in the text emphasizes the fact that now the lad knows “everything”, possesses all the knowledge he needs in order to break the curse. His apprenticeship is nearly over. He has arrived at the end of his journey, to the Western Laurel, of which he asks to give him the knowledge of a successor to the throne. But since any palace is a centre of the world and any sovereign is a cosmocrator whose coronation is synonymous with the regeneration of the world (according to Mircea Eliade), the lad is actually asking the laurel to help him establish a new order, by breaking the princesses’ curse. “Right then the sunburns fell from his face, which remained clean and shiny like it was when his mother had given him birth. He felt something happening in his mind that he couldn’t put his finger on, but he saw that he started to think differently than he used to think. His mind had become sharper. And suddenly, he found himself dressed in clothes like those of the

sons of lords and emperors”⁴⁰. The moment of his spiritual rebirth, when the maturing ritual is completed, is revealed in a very interesting manner. His passing from one state to the other is very sudden. His sunburnt cheeks, the sign of a commoner, who spends most of their time in the open, but also a sign of people who have lived in the world, are turned into the cheeks of a new-born, but in a spiritual way – this is the time for enlightenment. The mind sharpness, the maturing, is perceived like “something happening in his mind that he couldn’t put his finger on”⁴¹. The essence was completely changed. What follows is a change in form, our hero finding himself dressed like the sons of emperors. At this point he is asking the emperor’s permission to guard the girls. His transfiguration is complete, and so he is not recognized by the sovereign.

At night, he is also taken to the dance and, toward the morning, “he was also brought the drink that had been tasted by all those who had come there before him, a drink that should have made him lose his minds and senses, and therefore lose his way like the others had.”⁴² The miraculous potion made all the young men prisoners of this world, which is a border between Chaos and Cosmos, being both Chaos and Cosmos. In contact with the pre-cosmogonical world, they have entered a sort of realm of “youth everlasting”, which is atemporal. But the tribute they have to pay is self-abandonment, amnesia. To them, life spans one day, between the departure of the virgins and their return.

The gardener seems to be ready to lose his mind while being aware of it, if the youngest sister allows it; he offers her a false choice, resorting to the girl’s

sensitivity: “You see? I will lose my way for your love, if your heart is cold as ice.’ ‘No, my heart is not cold as ice, the fire of your love has warmed it,’ she answered. ‘Don’t drink. I’d rather be a gardener by your side than an emperor’s daughter.”⁴³ When one of the girls breaks free from the circle, the circle breaks, along with the spell. The restoration of world order no longer needs to be done every night, and all the twenty-four young people miraculously arrive to the palace of the girls’ father.

Each girl marries her suitor, and “before they were wedded, the youngest sister asked her fiancé about the power that had helped him discover their secret and the tie of the charm that had kept them in its chains. He revealed his secret to her, and she, not wanting her husband to be above her, but only a mere human like everyone else, went and cut the laurels and threw them on fire. Then they got married and lived a happy life, like we people live in this imperfect world of ours, until their final days, when they were all old and gray.”⁴⁴ When the princesses are “unchained” from the spell, all charms have to disappear, like the laurels, which are burnt. But their burning could be considered a ritual fumigation, since laurels are plants dedicated to the god Apollo and related to immortality, and the knowledge of mysteries. It was believed that qualities of the god who representing their patron were transferred to the people touching them. Thus, the former gardener is denied eternal youth and prophetic attributes. The princesses, freed from their curse, have become mortals; they no longer know the mysteries of Creation or have the power to regenerate the world. The ending of the tale differs from those of other tales by its

formula. The couple doesn't live "happily (denoting an absolute happiness) ever after", but "like we people live in this imperfect world of ours, until their final days, when they were all old and gray."⁴⁵

By means of deeds and actions, i.e., by "manifestation", by "the tension between the contraries", we exist in Cosmos and arrive to the knowledge of the world and

of the Self. Tales are the expression of the effort to reach order, which heroes tend to impose on the world, isomorphous to the establishment of a centre and of boundaries. Beyond the created limits, there are *the others*, the strangers, perceived as a potential danger. And what entitles heroes to value judgements is knowledge, be it epistemological or gnoseological.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aarne, Antti, *The Types of the Folktale*, Helsinki, Academia Scientarium Fennica, 1964.
- Braga, Corin, *De la arbetip la anarhetip (From archetype to anarchetype)*, Iași, Polirom Publishing House, 2006.
- Boia, Lucian, *Pentru o istorie a imaginarului (For a history of the imaginary)*. Translated from the French by Tatiana, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2000.
- Chevalier, Jean, Gheerbrant, Alain, *Dicționar de simboluri. Mituri, vise, obiceiuri, gesturi, forme, figuri, culori, numere. (Dictionary of symbols. Myths, dreams, habits, gestures, shapes, figures, colors, numbers.)* Translated by Micaela Slăvescu, Laurențiu Zoicaș (eds.), Daniel Nicolescu, Doina Uricariu, Olga Zaicik, Irina Bojin, Victor-Dinu Vlădulescu, Ileana Cantuniari, Liana Repețeanu, Agnes Davidovici, Sanda Opreșcu, vol. I-III, Bucharest, Artemis Publishing House, 1995.
- Eliade, Mircea, *Mefistofel și androginul (The Two and the One)*. Translated by Alexandra Cuniță. Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1995, p.141.
- Eliade, Mircea, *Istoria credințelor și ideilor religioase (A History of Religious Ideas)*. Translated by Cezar Baltag, Bucharest, Univers Enciclopedic Publishing House and Editura Științifică, 1999.
- Evseev, Ivan, *Dicționar de magie, demonologie și mitologie românească (Dictionary of Romanian magic, demonology and mythology)*, Timișoara, Amarcord Publishing House, 1997.
- Ispirescu, Petre, *Legende și basmele românilor (Romanian legends and folk tales)*, Timișoara, Facla Publishing House, 1984.
- Oișteanu, Andrei, *Grădina de dincolo. Zoosophia (The garden beyond. Zoosophia)*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia Publishing House, 1980.
- Oișteanu, Andrei, *Ordine și Haos. Mit și magie în cultura tradițională românească (Cosmos vs. Chaos. Myth and magic in Romanian traditional culture)*. Iași, Polirom Publishing House, 2004.

NOTES

1. Corin Braga, *De la arbetip la anarhetip*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2006, p. 247.
2. Lucian Boia, *Pentru o istorie a imaginarului*. Translated from the French by Micaela Slăvescu, Laurențiu Zoicaș (eds.), Daniel Nicolescu, Doina Tatiana Mochi, București, Editura Humanitas, 2000, p. 136.
3. Petre Ispirescu, *Legende și basmele românilor*, Timișoara, Editura Facla, 1984, pp. 174-175.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 175.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, p.176.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *Dicționar de simboluri. Mituri, vise, obiceiuri, gesturi, forme, figuri, culori, numere*. Translated by Micaela Slăvescu, Laurențiu Zoicaș (eds.), Daniel Nicolescu, Doina Uricariu, Olga Zaicik, Irina Bojin, Victor-Dinu Vlădulescu, Ileana Cantuniari, Liana Repețeanu, Agnes Davidovici, Sanda Oprescu, vol. I-III, București, Editura Artemis, 1995, Volume 1, pp. 454-455.
13. Petre Ispirescu, *Legendele*, p. 177.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Ivan Evseev, *Dicționar de magie, demonologie și mitologie românească*, Timișoara, Editura Amarcord, 1997, p. 309.
16. Petre Ispirescu, *Legendele*, p. 177.
17. Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *Dicționar de simboluri*, Volume 1, p. 455.
18. Petre Ispirescu, *Legendele*, p. 179.
19. Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *Dicționar de simboluri*, Volume 2, p. 200.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 108
21. Mircea Eliade, *Mefistofel și androginul*. Translated by Alexandra Cuniță. București, Editura Humanitas, 1995, p.141.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
23. Andrei Oișteanu, *Ordine și Haos. Mit și magie în cultura tradițională românească*. Iași, Editura Polirom, 2004, p. 28.
24. Petre Ispirescu, *Legendele*, p. 179.
25. See Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *Dicționar de simboluri*, Volume 1, pp. 323-324.
26. *Ibid.*, Volume 3, p. 176.
27. Petre Ispirescu, *Legendele*, p. 180.
28. Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *Dicționar de simboluri*, Volume 1, p. 110.
29. Petre Ispirescu, *Legendele*, p. 180.
30. Andrei Oișteanu, *Grădina de dincolo. Zoosophia*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1980, p. 15.
31. Mircea Eliade, *Mefistofel*, p. 128.
32. Petre Ispirescu, *Legendele*, p. 181.
33. Mircea Eliade, *Mefistofel*, p. 106.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
35. Mircea Eliade, *Istoria credințelor și ideilor religioase*. Translated by Cezar Baltag, București, Editura Univers Enciclopedic și Editura Științifică, 1999, p. 24.
36. Petre Ispirescu, *Legendele*, pp. 181-182.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
38. See Ivan Evseev, *Dicționar de magie*, pp. 35-36.
39. Petre Ispirescu, *op.cit.*, p. 183.
40. Petre Ispirescu, *Legendele*, p. 184.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 185.