

The Mythic Cyborgs of Croatian Oral Legends and the Fantasy Genre

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Within the above topic, our intention is to examine the links between animal and supernatural female (mora – fairy – witch) phenomena in Croatian oral legends. Namely, certain characteristics of the mora and witches can be defined by the term zoopsychonavigation (navigation of the soul in an animal form), and we can differentiate three types of zoopsychonavigation – zoometempsychosis, zoometamorphosis as well as witches' riding, or flying on astral animal vehicles. Further, we will also consider within this topic the zoomorphic characteristics of fairies as mythic cyborgs, who often have feet (hoofs/ungulae) like donkeys, horses, goats and oxen within the Croatian folklore imaginary, thereby creating the iconographic paradox of the fairy's body – the upper half of the body is ornithomorphic (with wings) and the lower half of the body is tellurian (with hooved feet).

*In brief, we shall endeavour to research the transfer of the animal characteristics of mythic beings as mythic cyborgs (cf. Donna J. Haraway, *Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*, 1985) from classic myths and oral legends into fantasy films.*

In considering the topic encompassing the mythic cyborgs of Croatian oral legends and the *fantasy* genre, we can set out from Donna Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century* (1985) in which she underscored that the cyborg in myths, the mythic cyborg, appears exactly where the boundary between Humankind and animals has been crossed. It is in just such crossings between *the animal and the human being* where we can begin, in this case, to contemplate female mythic creatures – in the well-known triad made up of *the mora, fairy* and *witch*. Apart from that, Claude Lévi-Strauss pointed out, as did Donna Haraway for that matter, that the world of myths is a world in which the difference between human beings and animals is not clearly defined (cf. Lévi-Strauss 1966). Consequently, we are moving across very familiar terrain.

Following along the path of Donna Haraway, the premises from her 1985 essay *The Cyborg Manifesto* comprehend the definition of the *mythic cyborg* as comprising all those fantastic, hybrid bodies in myths, religion and folklore, as well as in the contemporary *fantasy* genre, who cross over the boundary between *human* and *animal* bodies. In that process, it is quite obvious that the anthropology of the science fantasy genre shows very clearly that only contemporary cyborgs – which are the outcome of hybrids between the human body and a machine – are not sufficient for the science fantasy genre. Rather one finds that the contemporary science fantasy genre also expresses increasing fascination with mythic cyborgs, that is to say, with mythic crossings or transgression of the bound-

ary between the human and the animal, which then additionally brings the science fantasy genre closer to the *fantasy* genre. For example, we can recall that the blue-haired Na'vi in James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009) were confronted with that boundary crossing between the human and the animal; namely, with their long blue tails they were closer to Nature than the humans-colonisers, who were much closer to machines and/or contemporary cyborgs. We could say that Cameron depicts the conflict between Nature and Culture in *Avatar* on the basis of two types of cyborg – between the mechanical cyborg and the mythic cyborg, where, in addition to the contrast between Nature and Culture, one can also locate the ethical dichotomy between Good and Evil. James Cameron – and it seems to me that this makes his film *Avatar* specific – introduces a third cyborg type; in other words, Cameron transformed the mythic cyborg (an Avatar in Hinduism)¹ into a mechanical cyborg, a mechanical *avatar*, thus increasing the threat of danger from the mechanical cyborg.² Namely, only that particular avatar – a mechanical avatar enables full entry into the world of Nature, the world of the Na'vi.³

Here, one could possibly make a rough division of science fiction according to the type of cyborg.⁴ It would seem that the mechanical cyborg dominated 1940s and 1950s science fiction, whose main characteristic was the underscoring of the absolute domination of *Homo sapiens* over all other types of life. It was just that type of science fantasy work that extolled high technology and elevated human heroes in adventures through Space, the role of such hero being intended, of course, for a male of the Caucasian race of Anglo-American origins. During the 1950s and at the beginning of the 1960s, that anthropocentric and racist discourse was gradually abandoned when a new generation of writers stepped onto the scene; they were closer to the fantasy genre and harboured more doubts about the technical development of such a destructive civilisation and, unlike the case with the previous cyborg-machines, more was seen of mythic cyborgs who introduced a dimension of Nature. That change in the paradigm in science fantasy in favour of Nature came about because of awareness of the nuclear threat of the Cold War, the Cuban missile crisis, the war in Vietnam as well as other moral declines after World War II. We could mention here the novels by Ursula Le Guinn (for example, *The Left Hand of Darkness* [1969], *The Word for World is Forest* [1976]), which speak of the possible apocalyptic effects of that technology (cf. Đorđević 2006: 110).⁵

¹ In connection with the ten avatars of the god Vishnu, it is worth noting that the first four avatars are, in fact, animals: the first avatar – Matsya or the fish-avatar, the second avatar – Kurma or the tortoise-avatar, the third avatar – Varaha or the boar-avatar, and the fourth avatar – Narasimha, or the half man and half lion avatar.

² In a 2007 interview with *Time* magazine, Cameron was asked about the meaning of the term *avatar*, not in the Hindu meaning but in the context of his film, to which he replied, "It's an incarnation of one of the Hindu gods taking a flesh form. In this film what that means is that the human technology in the future is capable of injecting a human's intelligence into a remotely located body, a biological body" ("Themes in *Avatar*", [http](http://www.time.com/time/entertainment/article/0,9179,1881112,00.html)).

³ I shall be referring at the end of this article to the criticism of this film that identified there an alleged racist subtext, that can be roughly recounted as follows: "(...) the ethnic Na'vi, the film suggests, need the white man to save them because, as a less developed race, they lack the intelligence and fortitude to overcome their adversaries by themselves" (Heaven 2009).

⁴ I have, of course, compiled the very abstract division of science fantasy literature according to the cyborg type in keeping with the categorisation of American science fantasy literature into two thematic blocks: that of the 1940s and 1950s, on the one hand, and that of the 1950s and 1960s on the other, as proposed by Ivan Đorđević (Đorđević 2006: 109–110).

⁵ Briefly, since the theme of this article is not the theory of the genre, unlike the science fantasy genre, that genre is usually defined as a fiction genre that uses magic and the supernatural as essential elements of the plot, as shown, for example, by Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Naturally enough, those two genres sometimes per-

Fairies as mythic cyborgs

In the framework of the stated topic, we shall be observing the female mythic creatures (*moras, fairies and witches*) as mythic cyborgs and shall try to establish the extent to which the *fantasy* literary and cinema genres drew upon the visual material of just those mythic cyborgs from the folklore of various peoples. For instance, it is known that one of the inspirations for the look of the Na'vi came from a dream that Cameron's mother had told him about ("Avatar, 2009 film", http). Jungians would say that the appearance of those blue mythic cyborgs came to Cameron's mother in a dream from the collective subconscious whose archetypes, in Jung's interpretation, are the foundations of all religions and beliefs. For that very reason, and because the mythic creatures I have mentioned (*moras, fairies and witches*) from Croatian oral legends are more familiar to me than similar mythic creatures in other cultures, and since the mythic creatures in all cultures largely comply with universal mythic patterns, we will seek out certain similarities between mythic creatures and mythic cyborgs in the *fantasy* genre.

Firstly, we can consider the zoomorphic characteristics of fairies, who often have feet (hoofs) like donkeys, horses, goats and oxen in the Croatian folklore imaginary, thereby creating the iconographic paradox of the fairy's body. So the upper part of the fairy's body is characterised by wings – while the lower part of the body is marked by tellurian symbols – hooved feet. In that way, the fairy's animal legs indicate their belonging to the World Beyond, to something demonic, if we use the word *demonic* in its primary meaning. Just as a reminder, it was only at the end of the Hellenistic period that the *demon* concept acquired the exclusive connotation of Evil (Russell 1982: 110).

Through the opposition between the upper half of the body (the fairy as a golden-haired and *winged* girl) and the lower, sexual half of the body (that is characterised by hooved feet), one can follow the folklore construct of the fairy as a bipolar, astral feminine phenomenon. Therefore, the fairy can be read off in that sense as a figure of the "internal woman" (that would be a positive aspect of the *anima* according to in-depth, analytical psychology), and the fairy as a "negative aspect" of "destructive illusion", which would denote the liberated eroticism of Nature. In any case, we recall that one of the significant meanings of the polysemantic word nymph also denotes "the small red labium (the pudenda) on the female sexual organ". Other meanings of the word nymph are as follows: 1. the companions of Artemis; 2. a beautiful girl; 3. larva, chrysalis, an insect's cocoon (Klaić 1985: 946). A *nymph* (The question is *which one?* The answer is: *It depends – on whom is involved.*) can cause nympholepsy, nympholeptic frenzy (a state of delight, exaltation, infatuation with *fairy* beauty) or nymphomania (a state of sexual insatiability).⁶

Therefore, let us pause at the interpretation of those fairy animal feet, which can be roughly categorised in three groups.

Firstly, the interpretations that derive from the Christian sphere regard those fairy hoofs as a sign of demonic infection.⁷ The *interpretatio christiana* took care of course, as al-

meate each other, so that some critics define *Star Wars* as belonging to the fantasy genre while other see it as science fiction.

⁶ On the frigidity of the nymph type cf. *Medicinska enciklopedija* [Encyclopaedia of Medicine] 8 (Pir-Shis), Zagreb: JLZ, 1963, p 676.

⁷ So in a case when fairies have only one hooved foot, the interpretation that emerges from the Christian ideosphere brings fairies nearer to the iconography of a *lame* devil, a sign of demonic physical monstrosity.

ways when the *reduced, pagan, pre-Christian Other* was in question, to demonise *exaltingly* the fairies' disappearance: namely, Croatian oral legends, obviously very much influenced by the Christian matrix, usually mention that at the moment when (Christian) *processions* were initiated was when the fairies left the scene, since they belonged to the pre-Christian substrate (MS IEF 171: 114).

Further, or a second interpretation, there are construals, that read off that ostensible foot deformity among fairies as a remnant of pre-Christian, pagan imaginary phenomena, and/or as traces of totemism. We recall, for example, Egyptian deities who have animal characteristics and who can be regarded, in that sense, as mythic cyborgs and/or as deities of teriomorphic origins. We can also cite as an example that the goddess Demeter of Arcadia was shown with the head of a horse.⁸ And Artemis and her nymph companions should also be mentioned, as they figured as a counterpart to the Southern Slavic fairies. In her mythic biography, Artemis, who is designated as the "mistress of the animals" in the *Iliad* (*potnia thērōn*, XXI. 470) (Ginzburg 1991: 128), descends from a female bear, the teriomorphic deity of fertility, the female founder of the original matriarchal clans from whom she inherited the role of the protecting goddess of fertility and motherhood (Živančević 1963: 42).⁹ Otherwise, the female bear's solicitous nurturing of her progeny is proverbial in Greece (Ginzburg 1991: 128). Artemis as an "untameable virgin" is the contrary of Aphrodite while, uniting in symbolical meaning with Aphrodite, she exhibits the overall image of Femaleness, the *wild* goddess, Nature (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1987: 22). Dwelling further on Artemis, she figures in oxymoronic fashion as both a virgin and as a goddess of Nature. A significant fact was mentioned by Desmond Morris, the culturologist and zoologist, in the BBC's documentary series *Human Sexuality*; he pointed out that the Virgin Mary lived eight or nine kilometres away from the temple of Artemis in Ephesus after the crucifixion of her Son, and that she was also defined by Artemis' oxymoronic attribute (virginal *motherhood*). Apart from this *point of contact* on the archetypical *map*, it was at Ephesus that the Virgin Mary was proclaimed as the Mother of God in 431 (cf. Campbell 1975: 63).¹⁰

In his study *Fuss- und Schuh-Symbolik und -Erotik [The Symbolics and Erotica of Feet and Shoes]* (1909), the culturologist Aigremont claimed that a deity and demon who have animal feet figured in their origins as a deity or demon of fertility. Aigremont noted particularly that the *goat-footed* women originally figured as goddesses of fertility, and mentions the goat-footed figuration of a *white woman – die weisse Frau* (cf. Aigremont 1909: 21-22), which conjures up the iconography of Croatian fairies.

Therefore, the individual interpretation of beliefs about fairies are identified as a remnant from the Thracian-Illyrian and Hellenic eras, as beliefs linked with the cult of Dionysus and the orgiasm of the Bacchae (Bassarides, Maenades), and with the cult of semi-

⁸ Cf. Pausanias's description (Pausanias VIII, 42; *Elej Mountain in the Province of Phigalia and the Black Demetre Cave*) of the wooden statue of Demeter in the Black Demetre cave in Phigalia, begins: "She was sitting on a rock and looked like a woman in every respect except for her head."

⁹ The idea of the she-bear as the protectress of "copulation and fertility" developed in the female bear mother cult (*ursa/cultus matronalis*) among the Mediterranean peoples of Antiquity (Živančević 1963: 62). Since she appears with her new-born cub from her lair in Spring after hibernation, the bear/she-bear symbolises resurrection/initiation (Cooper 1986: 103).

¹⁰ Within the mythem framework of virginal motherhood, we can recall the Croatian oral legends that note fairy birth through parthenogenesis as in, for example, the birth of fairies from *particular* grasses (cf. Nodilo 1981: 468; Marjanić 1998: 45).

divine creatures, nymphs and sirens (cf. Tomičić, MS IEF 419; 1962-1963a: 15).¹¹ Further, Zlatko Tomičić is of the opinion that the origins of folk imagination in the Croatian Imotski region that fairies have one donkey leg should be “sought in equal fashion as an explanation of the myths” of the donkey ears of the Phrygian King Midas or the goat ears of the Roman Emperor Trajan (ibid.: 15–16).¹²

There are still more mythic female personages who have problems with their legs. So Onoskelis (English meaning: “she with the ass’s legs”) has one donkey legs according to Lucian of Samostata’s *True History* or *True Story* (2.46), while one of Empusa’s leg was of bronze and the other of cow dung (Aristophanes, *The Frogs*, 294) (Devereux 1990: 131). It should be added that, in comparison with Aristophanes, Gilbert Durand spoke of Empusa, the phantom of nocturnal anxiety (nightmares), as having only one leg, that being the leg of a *donkey* (Durand 1991: 70).

Nodilo’s mythological-meteorological interpretation of fairies’ feet

We can focus here on the interpretation of Natko Nodilo (*The Old Faith of Serbs and Croats*, 1885-1890), the first scholar in Croatian philology to try to interpret the fairy feet characteristics. In so doing, Nodilo very resolutely negated the Christianised interpretation of those legends, and endeavoured to attribute those fairy mythic-leg “shortcomings” into deeper Indo-European archetypology and/or into the world of the *Rigveda*: “These hooves [horse hooves; op. S. M.] belong to them from ancient times” (Nodilo 1981: 485). In his efforts to interpret the meaning of the fairy animal feet – horse hooves in this case – Nodilo started out from Adalbert Kuhn’s meteorological-mythological theory (*Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks*, 1859) due to the fact that Adalbert Kuhn adhered to the poetic concept of *the cloud* as a galloping horse in his interpretation of the *Rigveda*, leading Nodilo to the following conclusion:

What came and was left to our cloud-like fairy from that horse personage were the horse’s hooves. From that same mythic impression, the people still think that the fairy loves to ride on horseback, and that she loves to ride on a stag. And in many of the Kajkavian stories, the fairy likes best to transform into a horse, which is referred to as ‘the fairy horse’. (Nodilo 1981: 485; according to Valjavec 1858: the tale Deček imal vilinskoga konja [The Young Boy Had a Fairy Horse]).

While Nodilo interpreted the fairies’ legs with the help of the world of the *Rigveda*, he also interpreted the fairies’ goat legs by the mythological-meteorological theory of Adalbert Kuhn, but in the context of the Indo-European thunder deities, one of whose host of attributes was actually the he-goat.¹³ Nodilo then concludes:

¹¹ Slobodan Zečević (1963:609) drew attention to the fact that fairies were known among all the Slavs, not only to those who settled in the Graeco-Thracian region, although the fact is that the Slavs who did settle there did have descriptions of fairies with foot-wise “shortcomings”.

¹² Zlatko Tomičić (1930–2008), a Croatian journalist, writer, publicist, publisher, poet, travel-writer, playwright, short story writer, essayist, novelist, author of visual art depictions and writer of articles (cf. “Zlatko Tomičić”, [http](http://)).

¹³ Namely, Nodilo gives numerous examples that show that almost all the Indo-Europeans connect the goat or the he-goat with the Thunder God: for example, the Germanic Thor’s chariot is pulled by two he-goats; the Greek thunder god Zeus lined his shield with goat-skin, and he was wet-nursed by the goat Amaltea. Further, the Iranian Veretraghna is usually depicted with “the body of a fine belligerent he-goat with sharp hooves”. On the basis of numerous further Indo-European examples in the Southern Slavic context, Nodilo finds the rem-

According to that, goat legs among fairies merely show the force of lightning and thunder, when a black-clouded storm is whirling around. It follows that the fairy, even from her original genesis, receives stormy goat legs. The swift-footed celestial goat gives up part of its own lineament to the swift-footed fairy. (Nodilo 1981: 485).

And while Nodilo interprets the fairy's horse hooves and goat feet with the aid of Adalbert Kuhn's meteorological-mythological theory, he believes that the fairy donkey feet legends are linked solely with the Makarska coastal region (in Croatia), which would be Paganía as Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos (Porphyrogenitus) in his book *De administrando imperio* called this region, whose inhabitants Nodilo defines – again according to Porphyrogenetos – as the population that was the last to be baptised among the Croatians who had settled in these parts (cf. Nodilo 1981: 485, 476). He also adds that donkey's feet (probably because he had not managed to incorporate them into the *storm myth*) were a Christian infiltration *that, naturally enough, led people to recoil from the fairies* (Nodilo 1981: 476):

This latter concerning donkey legs provides us with a hint that the coastal legends about fairies, even if preserved in the territory that remained pagan the longest, is not original in every respect. (Nodilo 1981: 476).

Thus, incorporating the fairy's horse hooves into the Indo-European meteorological-stormy myth, Nodilo tries to prove that *our* Croatian fairies in comparison with (Greek) nymphs are inscribed in the *more profound* Indo-European matrix; so, while *our* fairies have goat legs, the Greek nymphs do not bear that animal attribute, rather they offer up the goat only as a sacrifice (Nodilo 1981: 488). To state it briefly – Nodilo identifies the Southern Slavic fairies as intermediates (*between*) the celestial Vedic Apsaras and the Greek nymphs, who (the nymphs) are not connected with celestial expanses but with mountain peaks (ibid.: 488).¹⁴ So, in comparison with the Greek meadow nymphs, the Southern Slavic fairies, as meteoric creatures linked with Perun, the Slavic God of Thunder, actually dwell *in and on* the clouds (*fairies of the clouds*).¹⁵

I am giving examples of a more recent instance of memory-imaginary about the fairy's donkey feet that I recorded in field research in Livno and Ljubunčić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) together with my colleagues Joško Čaleta and Aaron Tate.¹⁶

nant of those he-goats of the thunder god in the tale of the he-goat skinned alive from Karadžić's collection of tales, and concludes that the he-goat skinned alive relates to the Thunder God in the Southern Slavic context. Along with numerous Indo-European examples, Nodilo deduces that the Indo-Europeans "caught sight of the lively, defiant he-goat and sometimes a ram in the wild interplay of clouds, lightning and thunder" (Nodilo 1981: 399–402).

¹⁴ When writing about the figuration of *our* Croatian fairies in a *warrior and funereal* role (a fairy "in a belligerent form"), Nodilo interprets her in the context of the *Scandinavian Valkyrie* (cf. Nodilo 1981: 494–496).

¹⁵ Compared with Kukuljević's (1846/1851) categorisation of fairies according to their dwelling place (*fairies of the air, fairies of the earth and fairies of water*), Nodilo introduces a division according to the fairies' functions and activities (*cloud fairy, mountain fairy and warrior fairy*).

¹⁶ A legend about fairies' donkey legs was recounted by Mr Josip Gelo, the director of the Franciscan Museum and Gorica-Livno Gallery (cf. Čaleta 2000). It was interesting to note that Mr Gelo when first narrating the *memorata* of his grandfather and in awakening his own *memory* of the folk fairy imaginary spoke of fairies' goat feet, which he corrected after recounting his *memories*, emphasising that *donkey* hooves were in question. In that process, regarding the part of the legend that spoke of the fairy being on the *human's* back (the actual word from the narrative), we can speak symbolically of a fairy that had taken over the (masculine) role of *an incubus*.

I was 6 – 7 years old when my brother used to tell Grandfather that people had gone to the Moon and Grandfather would answer: 'Like hell they did, are you trying to make a fool of me?' But he did believe in the existence of fairies. The way he told it – fairies had donkey feet. He spoke of when a man met a fairy beside the road that he had to carry her. The fairy asked him: 'Is it hard for you?' He answered: 'Yes, it is', thinking that she would get down from his back. However, she became even heavier. The more he complained, the heavier she became. Another occurrence that Grandfather talked about: they threw some stones into a cave. And anyway someone answered. 'You'll break the pots! Don't throw stones!', the fairies from the cave called out. Their description was largely that they had donkey feet, but looked like girls. They lived in those caves.

And the third interpretation, this is an opportunity to emphasise the interpretation of that fairy foot shortcoming as shamanic phenomenology. Namely, Carlo Ginzburg showed that the origins of a series of myths and fairy-tales along the lines of impediments in walking, from Oedipus and his swollen feet to Cinderella's lost glass slipper, are located in the same mythic nucleus that gives rise to ecstatic phenomena; thus, this is a matter of journeys into the World of the Dead (Ginzburg 1991:248).¹⁷ In other words, any departure from the symmetry of the human form opens the door to a disposition to step over the boundary and to establish contact with other worlds (cf. Čiča 2002:45). So it is on that particular path that Carlo Ginzburg interprets *Cinderella* as a fairy-tale about a journey into the World of the Dead and/or as a fairy-tale that enters into shamanic phenomenology. In the context of shamanic phenomenology, we can add that the leg as the limb that enables walking is a symbol of social connection (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1987: 433). This underscores that, with the characteristics of animal walking, the fairy lives on the alternative edge, the border of *Humankind*.

In relation to *Cinderella* and her possible shamanic phenomenology as Ginzburg interprets it, we can add how Bruno Bettelheim pointed out that it was not by chance that the story of *Cinderella* was first written down in China during the 9th century (Bettelheim 1979: 259; cf. Ginzburg 1991: 247–248). In the context of the hindrance in walking referred to, and the method of objective amplification, the favoured method of the Jungians that can really be a blessing in this context, we can recall the Chinese custom of foot-binding that was practised in Mandarin society between the 6th and 8th year of a little girl's life. This practice was intended to lessen the length of the foot by one third of its normal size – producing the highly favoured 'Golden Lotus'; in that way "the aim was to make the Chinese women partly immobile so that they were fully dependent on men" (Morris 1988: 243–244). This was, in fact, a ritualisation of bodily disfigurement by which wives and concubines were tamed into the impossibility of sexual lapses from virtue. The culturologist Desmond Morris in the above-mentioned BBC documentary *Human Sexuality* informs us that such *hoofs* were erotically attractive to men, and that they "took the entire foot into their mouths and sucked on them lustfully. (...) In addition, they used to place the two feet together, while their curved form provided a pseudo-opening that could be used as a symbolic vagina" (ibid.: 244). Desmond Morris states literally that such *mis-*

¹⁷ Or, in the words of Ginzburg: "Cindarella's monosandalism is a distinguishing sign of those who have visited the realm of the dead (the prince's palace)" (Ginzburg 1991: 243).

shapen feet looked like *hoofs* since all the toes, with the exception of the big toe, were tied beneath the sole of the foot.¹⁸

According to some legends in certain parts of Croatia, fairies were naturally enough given quite ordinary, everyday, unsurprising women's legs and/or feet, and these were not, therefore, emphasised in the telling of tales as an interesting fairy (female) phenomena.

In brief and in conclusion about the animal legs of fairies: the replacement of legs with the legs of animals indicates the twofold nature (the mixture of the human and the animal) of the fairy phenomena, in which, of course, the ideosphere of interpretation depends on the religious backdrop from which the search for meaning is induced. The Christian interpretation would see them as a demonic attribute while culturologists would incline towards culturological traces of totemism or even the shamanic matrix.

Along this track, I would draw attention to Philippe Walter's interpretation and caution that Celtic mythology knows Bird goddesses, while the legendary Morgana, the (half)-sister of King Arthur was one of them. Philippe Walter further informs his readers that, of them, only female saints with goose-like feet among the Bird goddesses were preserved in the Middle Ages. Otherwise, the Church exiled them to cautious anonymity in that process and often underestimated the significance of those unusual saints with goose-like feet. Despite that, the Church introduced into its calendar one female saint with goose-like feet, who was called Neomaja or Neomoza, and was revered only from the 15th century. As a young woman she had been confronted with the problem of a forced marriage and had prayed for numinous energy to inflict her with an illness that would make her undesirable. So, as a sign of physical ugliness, God gave her a goose-like feet. What is paradoxical is the fact that those goose-like feet were a sign of her divine nature, by which she preserved the memory of the ancient Bird Goddess (cf. Gimbutas 1991), used again in that way in a specific manner (Walter 2006: 111–112).



Figure 1: Guillermo del Toro's film *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006): Ophelia and Pan

Due to the link between the fairies of Croatian oral legends and the mythic cyborgs of the fantasy genre, in further relation to the fairy hybrid body I would mention Guillermo del Toro's film *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), in which the goat-footed Faun reads off as a mythic cyborg. Naturally enough, since this is a Faun from the mythic repertoire of Antiquity, who announces himself to the little girl Ophelia in that *fantasy* film as a life-saving medium of entry into the world of fantasy, leaving behind the dark reality of Spain in the wartime year of 1944. In keeping with its connection with Nature, the hybrid monster, the Faun, presents itself to the little girl Ophelia in the following way: "I've had so many names. Old names that only the wind and the trees can pronounce. I am the mountain, the forest and the earth. I am... I am a faun. Your most humble servant, Your Highness."

¹⁸ It is interesting to note that ballerinas in their "winged" ballet shoes evoke soft walking *upon the Earth*, the easiness (but not an "easy" woman) of the Chinese woman's body with her disfigured "hoofs".

Moras and witches as mythic cyborgs

After having briefly looked at the zoomorphic attributes of fairies in Croatian oral legends and compared those facts from the category of oral literature with the *fantasy* genre – or, more precisely, with Guillermo del Toro's film *Pan's Labyrinth*, which depicts the zoomorphic characteristics of the mythic cyborg, the Pan – we can turn to *moras* and witches in order to be able to form the triangle of female mythic creatures, made up of the *mora*, fairy and witch. It is interesting to note that the sacrament of marriage in Croatian oral legends is placed as the bordering determinant between the *mora* and witches; in other words, the *mora* is defined as a young girl; only when she marries does she as a *mora* transform into a witch, according to folklore beliefs (cf. Marjanić 2006).¹⁹

Certain characteristics of the *mora* and the witch can be defined within the concept of *zoopsychonavigation*, that is, navigation of the soul in animal form. In that process, we can differentiate three phenomena within the framework of zoopsychonavigation – *zoometempsychosis*, *zoometamorphosis* as well as *witches' flights* or *flying on astral animal vehicles*.²⁰ Namely, by the term *zoopsychonavigation* (psychonavigation in animal form) I am denoting the separation of the soul from the body during the *temporary death* of supernatural individuals and mythic creatures, which can be referred to as *catalepsy*, or *cataleptic trance*.

To begin with – *zoometempsychoses* – or the *shape-shifting* of the soul into an animal form, let's say an ordinary household fly, takes place in the lethargy experiences of supernatural individuals and mythic creatures, due to the fact that metempsychosis demands a transgression *through death* – a *temporary death* (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1987: 401). Metempsychosis of *moras* and witches is usually marked by the emergence of a fly from the mouth of the sleeping person; it is in that form that the soul departs to undertake demonic action and after such actions, usually at night, the soul returns in the form of a fly back through the mouth of the sleeping person into the body where it dwells. The belief is that if those persons are turned around on the bed, that is, if the head is placed in the usual position of the feet, then the soul in its animal form, either as a fly or a moth, cannot find the point of entry into the body in which it dwells (cf. Marjanić 2006).

Furthermore, as far as *zoometamorphosis* is concerned, the dominant classic belief about the witches' capability of transformation – largely into a toad – takes place so that she can steal her neighbour's milk, cause discord between a married couple, and the like (cf. Mencej 2006).²¹ Mirjam Mencej (2006) points to the study "Folk Medicine as Part of a Larg-

¹⁹ Éva Pócs mentions that many scholars consider that the *mora* is one of the most important predecessors of the European witch in the belief system (Pócs 1999: 46).

²⁰ In a 2006 article, I interpreted zoopsychonavigation by witches in Croatian legends as a possible aspect of shamanic techniques of ecstasy and trance, in the framework of which I named the term *zoopsychonavigation* as the border of permeation between shamanic ecstatic experience and the witches' experience of lethargy. Besides the concept (1) of zoopsychonavigation, there are also possible points of contact between witchcraft and shamanism established on the basis of (2) the mythem of shamanic and/or witches' mutual *agon* as well as on the basis of (3) the light-hypostasis of the witch's body which, in the context of Eliade's attribution of the shaman as "the Lord of Fire", can be linked with shamanism. As I pointed out in the introduction, in addition to those concepts I also established in that article possible points of contact between witchcraft and shamanism on the basis of (4) the distinctive birth (birth in a cowl), (5) the *axis mundi* concept – the mythic geography of a mountain and a tree (parallelism between the shamanic tree and the witch's fairy tree) and (6) the use of hallucinatory plants. It is in that sense that this article continues on from that article in 2006.

²¹ For the linguistic connections between toads and witches, cf. Pizza 2006: 1123. Namely, Giovanni Pizza finds this information in an article by Hugh Plomteux "Le crapaud, magie et maleficie: A propos de quelques

er Concept Complex” (*Arc*, 43, 1987) by Bente Gullveig Alver and Torunn Selberg, who set the difference between metamorphosis (when a human being metamorphoses into an animal, for example, in the case of, for example, werewolf) and the phenomenon that is characteristic of witches, the separation of the soul from the body which, after demonic activity, returns to the body. In such zoopsychonavigations – we would say that these are a matter of metempsychosis – it is possible to see such persons in two places at once (bilocation); in her normal appearance also in the form of the soul that she obtained during demonic activities, for example, some other person or even an animal (largely as a cat, rabbit, toad, or as a large black bird), but also in abstract forms (as mist, light, or steam). Mirjam Mencej (2006) compares those psychonavigational abilities with shamanic elements just as Zmago Šmitek (1998) recognised such elements in *kresnik* or *krsnik* constructs. In other words, while I denote the concept of *zoometempsychosis* as a transgression of the soul into animal form, I denote the *zoometamorphosis* notion as transgression of the physical appearance into animal form. True enough, in shamanism, the transformation is largely understood in the spiritual, soul-like mode; however, as well as belief in such transformation of the soul, there is equal belief in the physical transformation (cf. Tuczy 2006: 40). Regarding witches’ zoometamorphosis in Croatian oral legends, these are legends about *sorcerers* up in the clouds in bird-like guise – eagles and ravens that bring severe weather and hail (Bošković-Stulli 1991: 148).²² Thus, the mythem about mutual battles between shamans can be compared with the battles between witches and warlocks in which the witches and the warlocks battle among themselves, largely in the clouds, and usually fly in the guise of a raven, with some defending their village, while the other group attacks it (cf. Marjanić 2006).

I am signifying riding or flight on animals, animal vehicles – as the third type of zoopsychonavigation²³ – this being mainly on the back of a he-goat, she-goat or horse. This involves witches floating on animals, and is related to the anatomy or iconography of the *Woman-Animal*. An incubus riding on males is also included here, this being common to both fairies and witches, since fairies and witches choose the best mounts, that is, men (Marjanić 2004, 2006).²⁴ That magical riding on animals in which witches and fairies take over the role of an incubus in their iconography is similar to witches riding on brooms because, in the original versions of those magical flights, it was usually mentioned that the brush of the broom was in front of the demo-flyer while in contemporary versions, for ex-

zoonymes italiens” [Toads, magic and spells: about some Italian zoonyms], published in the journal *Revue de linguistique romane* (No. 29, 1965). Or, as noted by Giovanni Pizza: “In German dialects, for example, *Hexe* signifies both ‘toad’ and ‘witch’; and in many Italian dialects, the toad is defined as *strega*, ‘witch’, or *fata*, ‘fairy’. The Spanish *bruja*, ‘witch’, the old French *brusche*, and the Sardinian *bruscia* all derive from the Vulgar Latin *bruscu*” (Pizza 2006: 1123). Among others, Pizza shows that the toad figures as the animal most frequently linked with the zoometamorphosis of witches.

²² Maja Bošković-Stulli differentiates three types of witch transformation into animals: when she flies in the clouds (the motif is similar to that in the legend “They Shot Into the Tempest”, which states that the army, shooting at a *sudden storm*, killed an old woman who – as she said in her *dying* agony – was supposed to destroy vineyards with hailstorms [cf. Marjanić 2006: 175]); when they fight among themselves (e.g. in the form of ravens) or with *krsniks*; or when their souls depart the body, assuming animal form (Bošković-Stulli 1991:151). I have noted this latter mode of transformation as zoometempsychosis and separated it from earlier differentiations of zoometamorphosis.

²³ For more details on zoometempsychoses among witches, for example, transformation into a fly, a cat or a moth, as well as zoometamorphoses and riding (flight) on animals (teriomorphic vehicles – such as he-goats, goats and horses), cf. Marjanić 2006.

²⁴ For instance, Christa Tuczy and Éva Pócs point out that riding on a human being in animal form is one of the most typical motifs of witch legends (Tuczy 2006: 41; Pócs 1999: 79).

ample, in the Hollywood cinematic imaginings about Harry Potter, the broom's brush was behind the rider. Of course, strictly speaking, the *Harry Potter* films are not the product of Hollywood imaginings, although they were distributed by Warner Brothers. For example, Kevin Carlyon, high-priest of the *British White Witches* coven, strongly criticised the Hollywood film imagining of the broom in the 2002 documentary, *Discovering the Real World of Harry Potter* (Atlantic Productions). He saw their presentation as inauthentic, since wood engravings from the 16th century show the broom's brush in front of its levitating rider, either male or female (Davis 2001).

So in Goya's visual art imagining of witches' flight, *The Fine Teacher!*, one finds two naked and fluttering long-haired witches on one broom, with the brush triangle facing forward, while an aged witch is there in the role of the leader of astral navigation. True enough, the information is not identical in the visual history of witchcraft, so that we see in the key encyclopaedia on witchcraft that it is the so-called "Hollywood" type of illustration of flight on a broom that is the earliest preserved illustration of witches' astral flight, in the Parisian manuscript of the poem *Defender of Ladies* (*Le Champion de Dames*, 1440–1442) by Martin Le Franc. It was published in 1485 and is one of the earliest works to take a position on the defence side of accused and processed witches (Zika 2006: 1087).²⁵ This manuscript depicts two witches: and while one is in carefree flight on a cane, the other is implementing astral flight on a broom, with the brush triangle behind her. It is obvious that two iconographic depictions of flight on a witch's broom (with respect to the position of the *unclean* brush in front of or behind the demo-flyer) varied in iconographic depictions. In other words, although some will definitely see the broom as a remnant of the shamanic *hobby horse* (in cases in which the astral brush is iconographically shown in front of the demo-flyer), others for their part will transpose the broom into an aerodynamic phallic applicator. In other words, in that erotic reading off of the broom's symbolisation, they unify the broom by its structure with the male principle – the phallic symbol of the handle upon which the *witch rides*-flies – and the female principle of the triangular (delta-shaped) top, thus presenting the opposition between the clean (phallic handle in her hand) and the *unclean* and dangerous (female *triangle* of the broom that sweeps) (Radenković 1996: 150–151).²⁶

²⁵ Martin Le Franc (1410-1461), one of the most influential poets of the 15th century French language. The Paris manuscript of his poem contains two illustrations on the margin about women-witches, which is the first such illustration in the visual history of witchcraft (Kors, Peters 2001: 167).

²⁶ In a 2006 article, I interpreted the witches' astral broom as an iconographic instrument of witch demo-technique, through its three isomorphs: (1) the witch's broom as a isomorphism of the shamanic horse cane with a handle in the form of a horse's head, which the Buryat shaman uses in ecstatic dances, and which, in any case, he calls his *horse*; (2) the isomorphism of the phallic applicator that was lubricated with salves containing atropine; (3) the revolutionary corrective – in material and spiritual symbolism of the apotropaic averting of the activity of the *mora*, with the instruction that the broom should be turned upside down behind the door in that process. Furthermore, I also showed in that article that besides the fact that Croatian witches – or perhaps one should say, witches from Croatia – rode on brooms, they could also achieve psychonavigations on other psychonavigational vehicles. So a shaft and, for instance, a spindle that are included in the technique of spinning and weaving, connect the witches with the gods of fate (weaving); agricultural tools such as bramble forks and billhooks place the witches in the context of the vegetation cycle cult; a mortar, a churn give her the role of provider; while the iron hearth poker connects the role of the witch with the cult of the hearth as the spiritual centre of the house where the witch/old woman, as the guardian of the holy fire practises pagan (peasant, village) religion/magic, because traditional witchcraft related to the cult of vegetation and fertility of livestock.



Figure 2: Martin Le Franc: *Defender of Ladies* (1440–1442, MS) (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)

Zoopsychnavigation – in any mode whatsoever, such as zoometempsichosis, zoometamorphosis or even as astral flights/riding on animal vehicles (which also comprehend witches as fairy incubi riding on men) – are experiences that have been noted everywhere geographically. As far as riding on astral animal vehicles is concerned, we have the example of Kama (Kāmadeva), the Vedic deity of love, who is often shown iconographically as a young man riding on a parrot as his astral vehicle, and then there is Tlazolteotl, the agrarian deity of pre-Colombian Mexico, who is shown with a cone-shaped hat, sitting on a broom (Hughes 1975: 50). Apart from that, ancient Indian texts also describe *flying vehicles*. In the *Rigveda* descriptions are given of propellants for astral navigation; however, it is awkward that individual words for fluid mixtures can no longer be translated today (Däniken 2000: 129).

The strength of these beliefs in animal souls possessed by human beings is shown by the fact that Mexican Nagualism – belief in the animal soul possessed by humans – has outlived the Christian missions in those regions, as well as the colonial period and several revolutions. The Roman Catholic Church there went so far as to remove evangelical symbols (the bull, eagle, lion) from the façades of their churches in order to prevent the adoration of those ostensibly animal souls (*nagual* – an animal soul, an *alter ego*), which the Mexicans believed were more powerful representatives of those saints, the evangelists, than their human appearance (Behringer 2004: 19).

It is evident that the zoopsychnavigation that we have observed among *moras* and witches in Croatian oral legends is also to be seen in Chris Weitz's film *The Golden Compass* (2007), which is based on the novel *Northern Lights* (1995) by Philip Pullman, where the animal *dæmons* possess the ca-



Figure 3: Francisco de Goya: *The Fine Teacher!* (Capricho 68, 1797–1798)

pability of zoopsychonavigation – psychonavigation in animal form. In the novel *Northern Lights* (1995) by Philip Pullman, every person, every human being possesses a *dæmon*, a physical manifestation of the soul in animal form, which can change that shape, but only in the case of children – that is, up until puberty. Namely, that animal *dæmon* then becomes constant; it is then that the child's *dæmon* takes on the animal form that it will retain until the end of life. So the *dæmon* of little girl Lyre – Pantalaimon – can manifest itself as a threefold animal: as an ermine, a moth or as a mouse. In brief, children's *dæmons* are changeable, because such is the character of a child. Or, as the director of the film himself explained:

Once you become an adult your daemon settles. It's a physiological process by which the daemon becomes what you are inside. Someone really grand, and bold, and adventurous like Lord Asriel [played by Daniel Craig] has a snow leopard for a daemon. Someone more shy and retiring might have a mouse for a daemon, and someone who is used to obeying could have a cocker spaniel for a daemon. ("The Golden Compass", [http](http://))

Otherwise, the film *The Golden Compass* (2007) was accompanied by an interesting Internet campaign. A personality test of sorts can be solved on its official web-pages. After you have answered twenty questions, you will know who your *dæmon* is – the magical animal that accompanies you everywhere and represents your soul.²⁷ The film also made waves in the media since it was based on the novel *Northern Lights* by Philip Pullman, who is a declared atheist.²⁸ The director, Chris Weitz, admitted that he had softened the anti-religious and anti-Christian topic and changed the ending, because he did not want to offend believers in the audience ("Zlatni kompas", [http](http://)). Or perhaps this was merely a matter of compromise with the producers?

As we mentioned at the outset, Cameron's film *Avatar* and/or the official *Avatarize Yourself Generator* also allows you to upload your picture and get Avatarised for free. You can also choose between different Pandora-staged backgrounds, and even change your gender.²⁹

And to conclude:

Two features of the mythic cyborgs – that is, animal characteristics on the human body that we observed among fairies, and zoopsychonavigation, that is, navigation of



Figure 4: Harry Potter: aerodynamic iconography of the astral broom with the brush behind the "demosflyer"



Figure 5: Kama (Kāmadeva) in astral flight on his parrot (Storm 2003: 130)

²⁷ Cf. <http://newline.com/properties/goldencompass.html>

²⁸ The novel *Northern Lights* is the first story in Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy.

²⁹ Cf. <http://reface.me/profile-pictures/avatarize-yourself/>



Figure 6: *Golden Compass: Pan in ermine form*³⁰

the soul in animal form – are equally present in the *fantasy* genre. This could indicate that the *fantasy* genre perhaps serves one particular group of readers as contemporary mythology, by which those readers are able to flee from the ruling repression and depression, since the *fantasy* genre opens up space for mythic cyborgs, which incline to the Nature category rather than the machine category. Although there are predictions that a large part of the world will already be dominated by robots by the year 2040. This fear of the mechanical cyborg was evident, for example, in James Cameron's *Avatar*, where the human beings-colonisers almost succeed in destroying the planet Pandora unified with technology (e.g. Slash-Cutter, SA-2 Samson Tiltroto, AT-Gunship). In the process, *Avatar* introduces a third cyborg type – the *avatar* – who came about by the use of genetic engineering and highly advanced technology, while the creature in question has the form of the aborigines of the Na'vi tribe that inhabits the planet Pandora.³¹ The assignment of that mythic-mechanical cyborg, who is a hybrid between animal-human nature (as the members of the Na'vi tribe are) and highly developed technology (a case, as we pointed out at the beginning of this article, of transfer of a mythic cyborg from the Hindu religious system into a mechanical cyborg), to convince the natives of Pandora to abandon the Holy Tree that stands above the deposits of the priceless unobtainium, a highly valuable mineral found on Pandora, the mineral that the Man-Coloniser wants to get his hands on at any price. Namely, the human beings seek Pandora's unobtainium in order to solve an energy crisis on Earth; literally, they need it in order to survive.

Thus, *avatar* is the term for the genetically engineered body that looks like the bodies of the member of the Na'vi tribe on the planet Pandora, run by a human mind from a distance, from a laboratory (cf. Mucko 2010: 14-15). Briefly, the avatar, controlled by a former marine who is confined to a wheel-chair, at first carries out his assignment like an obedient individual in American colonialism, but then he falls in love with a native princess and understands that people (Americans, that is, white males of Anglo-American origin) are evil, according to the dualistic order, while the natives of Pandora are good. And then he makes the ethical choice: as an avatar he turns against his species, which is actually what Nikolaidis gives as the central ideological message of the film *Avatar* (cf. Nikolaidis 2010: 143). So, the white *coloniser* (Jake Sully – the paraplegic war veteran) becomes the native *Messiah* and revolutionary leader in the struggle against militant-corporative im-

³⁰ Photographs taken from the web-page: http://media.movies.ign.com/686/686290/img_5063697.html

³¹ The Na'vi term for avatar is *Uniltirantokx*, that is, a "Dreamwalkerbody" (Wilhelm, Mathison 2010:148).

perialism (Mucko 2010: 14–15). Nikolaidis, while reading off that New-Age-Eco-Activist film in its anti-capitalist and anti-colonial dimension (Nikolaidis 2010: 138–139), nonetheless concludes that Cameron's anti-colonial story contains a host of colonial clichés, and one of them is the cliché that shows that the coloniser who possesses capabilities that the native do not, imposes himself as their leader and heads up their battle for freedom. Furthermore, Nikolaidis draws the following conclusion about the colonial clichés in the film *Avatar*: “That becomes the standard of Hollywood films that take a ‘critical’ stance against America's colonial past – see *Dances with Wolves* and *The Last Samurai*” (Nikolaidis 2010: 139). It is interesting that Eisa Nefertari Ulen, from the perspective of her Afro-American identity, feels that *Avatar* profoundly represents the anti-Bush doctrine– or, as she writes emotionally after her own experience on viewing the film – “(...) every fibre in my African-American soul wanted to chant, shriek, I am Na'vi. But I couldn't. I know deep down (actually, I know this pretty close to the surface) I am not one of the super-cool, all-love, blue-black aliens.” The author underscores that *Avatar* definitely does not belong to the neo-Tarzan genre of films along the lines of *Dances With Wolves* to *The Last Samurai* (Ulen, [http](http://www.eisaulen.com/))³² – thus, just the opposite of Nikolaidis. Still, like Nikolaidis, Slavoj Žižek finds similarity with the film *Dance with Wolves*, or as he comments: “The Utopia imagined in *Avatar* follows the Hollywood formula for producing a couple – the long tradition of a resigned white hero who has to go among the savages to find a proper sexual partner (just recall *Dances With Wolves*)” (Žižek 2010).

For their part, some authors see Cameron's contribution to the *Hollywood* stereotypical representation as distinctive and/or identify a minor but significant detail in the constitution of *wildness*: in other words, the Na'vi have animal tails, and according to those interpretations, the tail is “a sign of ultimate exotisation, while it is simultaneously an act of animalisation of the *wild man*”, that is, of those colonised aliens (Mucko 2010: 14-15).³³ For my part, as I pointed out at the beginning, I have concentrated in this paper on the anti-capitalist and anti-colonial dimension of Cameron's film, in which the animalisation referred to can be read off as that very dimension of a return to Nature, an encounter between species, as a negation of speciesism and/or seeing those human-animal cyborgs as a cross-over of species of sorts – in fact, as trans-speciesism. And to remain further in the New-Age-Eco-Activist of the film *Avatar*: the Na'vi are a very intelligent race of humanoids living in a Neolithic social community (Wilhelm, Mathison 2010: 4), who have developed a complex culture based on the profound spiritual connectedness of all creatures and a deity they call Eywa (*ibid.*: 27). In keeping with that, the Na'vi are masters

³² Cf. her web-page <http://www.eisaulen.com/>

³³ In that sense, criticism goes on to observe that Cameron's Na'vi are *aliens* implemented “as an attempt towards universal representation of certain abstract, although very *Earthy*, tribal communities”, as an universalistic portrait of *Hollywood's* exotic Other, while the visual identity of the Na'vi prompts racial associations: “Slim and tall with long plaits like Kenyan and Tanzanian Maasai warriors, they ride on horses and fight with bows and arrows like Native Americans, their bodies are ornamented with white horizontal lines like the bodies of Australian Aborigines, their ear-rings are similar to the jewellery of North American, African, and Indian tribes...” Apart from that, individual critics note further how that “kitchy portrait” was contributed to by several anthropologists: namely, it is known that Nancy Lutkehaus from the University of Southern California collaborated with the film choreographer, who conceived individual ritual scenes in keeping with her knowledge of the culture of the people of Papua New Guinea, while the linguist Paul Frommer from the same university, who invented the language of the Na'vi, is otherwise an expert in Hebrew, Persian (Farsi), Malayan and Mandarin Chinese. Furthermore, the Na'vi characters themselves were also brought to life by “exotic” actors, Afro-Americans and a Native American female (Mucko 2010: 14–15).



Figure 7: A female member of the Na'vi tribe

of a series of skills that celebrate the connectedness of everything in Nature through story-telling, song, dance and handicrafts (ibid.: 27) Their long braided hair serves to connect them with animals who are important for protection of the clan; so, with that braided hair (a neuron plait or a neuron whip), they can connect with the Direhorse and the Mountain Banshee. All of this shows that the Na'vi experience themselves as an inseparable part of Nature (ibid.: 29, 72). It is in that sense that Eisa Nefertari Ulen identified perfectly the symbolics of the former marine paraplegic as a paralysed Earthling (Ulen, http). That is, of course, in relation to the paralysed ethics of the majority of us towards other creatures of Nature, where we show ourselves to be the ultimate speciesists.

So the *fantasy* genre, and here we have concentrated on only three films – *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Golden Compass* and *Avatar* – perhaps also manifests itself as a fictional subversion of sorts of all the programmes of the Holy Trinity of neo-liberal capitalism which is made of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (cf. Šimleša 2006; Marjanić 2008).³⁴

Translated by Nina H. Antoljak

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³⁴ In that sense, as far as the interpretation of the fantasy genre given above is concerned, as a specific subversion of neo-liberal capitalism, I incline more to the interpretations of Cameron's *Avatar* that stem from eco-criticism, eco-politics, eco-feminism, and eco-philosophy. It is true though that quite contrary interpretations which see colonial clichés in that film also identify certain problematic sore spots in the film. Among others, it is significant that Cameron first went to Brazil, to the Amazon jungle, only as the author of the *Avatar* blockbuster, although he had based the fictional planet in *Avatar* on Amazon rain forest (Barrionuevo 2010).

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Mitski kiborzi hrvatskih usmenih predaja i *fantasy* žanr

Suzana Marjanić

U okviru navedene teme istražujemo poveznice između animalnih i nadnaravnih ženskih (mora – vila – vještica) fenomena u hrvatskim usmenim predajama. Naime, određene se osobine mora i vještica mogu odrediti pojmom *zoopsihonavigacija*, dakle, navigacijom duše u životinjskom obličju, a pritom u okviru zoopsihonavigacije možemo razlikovati tri njezina fenomena – *zoometempsioze*, *zoometamorfoze* kao i *vještičja jahanja*, odnosno *letove na astralnim životinjskim vozilima*. Nadalje, u okviru navedene teme razmatramo i zoomorfne osobine vila koje u hrvatskom pučkom imaginariju često imaju magareće, konjske, kozje ili volovske noge (kopita/papke), čime se ostvaruje ikonografski paradoks vilinskoga tijela – gornja polovica tijela: ornitomorfno (krila i okrilje) i donja polovica tijela: telurno (kopita/papci).

Navedene se činjenice iz kategorije usmene književnosti uspoređuju s *fantasy* žanrom – npr. filmom *Panov labirint* (*Pan's Labyrinth*) (2006) Guillerma del Tora, gdje je riječ o zoomorfnim osobinama mitskoga kiborga – Pana/Fauna, kao i filmom *Zlatni kompas* (*The Golden Compass*) (2007) Chrisa Weitza, odnosno romanom *Polarno svjetlo* (*Northern Lights*) (1995) Philipa Pullmana, gdje animalni *dæmoni* (preslike) posjeduju osobinu zoopsihonavigacije – psihonavigaciju u animalnom obličju.

Ukratko, nastojimo istražiti transfer animalnih osobina mitskih bića i nadnaravnih osoba kao *mitskih kiborga* (Donna J. Haraway, *Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*, 1985) iz klasičnih mitova i usmenih predaja u *fantasy* žanr.