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1 Grim Variations

From Fairy Tales to Modern Anti-Fairy Tales

The appearance of the two volumes of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Children's and Houshold Tales) by the Brothers Grimm in 1812 and 1815 marked not only the publication of one of the true bestsellers of the world, approaching the international and multilingual dissemination of the Bible, but also the beginning of a large global scholarly field commonly referred to as folk narrative research. While scholars of the nineteenth century assembled significant national and regional fairy tale collections that paralleled those of the Grimms, serious investigations into the origin, dissemination, nature and function of these texts also began to appear in a steady flow that has not ebbed.[1] In fact, interest in fairy tales has increased considerably in the past three decades, and obviously the bicentennial celebration of the births of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm marked a high tide not only in scholarship on their fairy tale collection and their philological, folkloric, mythological, legal, and literary endeavors[2] but also in research concerning the fascinating question of what their work and in particular "their" fairy tales mean to people in modern technological societies.

At the present time, beautifully illustrated editions of Grimms' tales can be found in bookstores everywhere, attesting to the ongoing fascination of fairy tales even for children of the computer age. The modern child can still learn from these tales that certain problems,

dangers, and ordeals can be overcome, that transformations and changes must occur, and that everything will work out in the end. They will learn to solve their problems imaginatively, and if we can give credence to psychological interpretations of the tales, the children will become independent and socially responsible citizens whose naive search for personal pleasure is replaced by an analytical understanding of social reality. Above all, children will learn from fairy tales to have an optimistic and future-oriented world view, and they will realize and understand universal human problems, which in turn will be a key to coping with their own individuality and the world at large. Child psychologists, in particular Bruno Bettelheim,[3] have made a strong case for the didactic value of fairy tales for children as they go through various rites of passage in their maturation process to adulthood, and there appears to be no need to argue with the contention that these tales of times gone by seem to be appropriate literature for young and innocent children.

But what about the adult? What value and meaning do these children's stories, as they are commonly referred to, have for people who have long passed their childhood? Do fairy tales have some universal appeal to mankind of all age groups and social classes, or are they today only for children and scholars who study them for various reasons? Why is it that cultural and literary historians, folklorists, sociologists, psychologists, and others have studied and continue to investigate the deeper meaning of fairy tales? Surely not simply because they love children's literature and in a wave of nostalgia long to return to those cozy moments when a beloved family member read or perhaps even told them one of those old stand-by Grimm tales many years ago. The reason is that scholars have long realized that these tales were originally not children's stories but rather traditional narratives for adults, couching basic human problems and aspirations in symbolic and poetic language. Even though they present an unreal world with miraculous, magical, and numinous aspects, fairy tales nevertheless contain realistic problems and concerns that are universal to humanity. They are symbolic comments on basic aspects of social life and modes of human behavior. Presented are not only such rites of passage as birth, adolescence, courtship, marriage, old age, and death, but also typical experiences and feelings in people's lives. Emotions such as love, hate, joy, sorrow, happiness, and sadness are found again and again, and often the same tale deals with such phenomena in contrasting pairs, that is success versus failure, wealth versus poverty, luck versus misfortune, kindness versus meanness, compassion versus indifference, or, simply put, good versus evil.

Fairy tales present the world in black and white, but in the end this conflict is resolved, and happiness, joy, and contentment become the optimistic expression of hope for a world as it should be. This trust in ultimate justice and the belief in the good of humanity must be of significance to adults today if hope is to exist for mankind at all in an age that is anything but a fairy tale. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch talks so much about the utopian function of fairy tales in his monumental work *Das Prinzip der Hoffnung* (The Principle of Hope), which appeared from 1954 to 1959. For him, at least some fairy tales contain emancipatory potential for mankind, liberating people from oppression and leading to more just societies.[4] Read and interpreted in this way, fairy tales clearly contain elements of social history from a time far removed from the present. They often camouflage the trials of oppressed people facing malevolent rulers, the ever-present conflict between the haves and the have-nots, the desire for a fairer political system and social order, and so on.[5] The stories supposedly for children conceal in part the frustrations of adults who to this day long for a better and fairer world, where people can in fact finally live happily ever after.

This element of hope for social justice, fairness, and humanity is what enables these traditional fairy tales to survive today among children and adults. Their universality in dealing with human questions as well as their universal appeal as aesthetic expressions of the resolutions of these queries have occupied more psychologists and philosophers than Bruno Bettelheim and Ernst Bloch. The scholarship on the Grimm fairy tales alone is so vast by now that an individual researcher can hardly claim to know it all. There now exist superb critical editions with voluminous notes by such renowned scholars as Johannes Bolte, Georg Polívka,[6] and Heinz Rölleke,[7] several detailed studies concerning the aesthetics of fairy tales by Max Lüthi,[8] fascinating structural investigations by Vladimir Propp,[9] significant historical studies by Lutz Röhrich,[10] socio-political interpretations by Jack Zipes,[11] and many more.[12] Mention should also be made at least in passing of the inclusive tale-type studies that have been carried out using the Finnish geographic-historical method of analyzing the origin and dissemination of individual fairy tales. There are among others

Ernst Böklen's two volumes of *Schneewittchenstudien*, Anna Birgitta Rooth's *The Cinderella Cycle*, Marianne Rumpf's *Rotkäppchen: Eine vergleichende Untersuchung* and more recently Michael Belgrader's *Das Märchen von dem Machandelboom*.[13] But the basic problem with these otherwise excellent studies is that they document variants of these major tales only through the nineteenth century. While they present attempts at finding the archetype of each tale and discuss its historical dissemination more or less world-wide (or at least throughout the area of Indo-European tradition), they concern themselves not at all with what is happening to such well-known fairy tales in the present century. There is no immediate need for additional tale-type studies of such detail (although they obviously have their intrinsic and respected value). What is really needed is to bring the existing studies up-to-date, taking them from the Brothers Grimm to the present day.[14] Dozens of variants in the form of rewritten children's stories, literary reworkings, parodies, and satires exist, and there are also many uses of fairy tales in movies, caricatures, cartoons, comic strips, advertisements, and graffiti, which all need to be documented and interpreted in regard to their function and significance.

For the incredibly popular fairy tale of "Little Red Riding Hood" there have appeared a number of studies which in fact go far beyond Marianne Rumpf's earlier tale-type study. Hans Ritz (pseud. Ulrich Erckenbrecht) published his German *Die Geschichte vom Rotkäppchen. Ursprünge, Analysen, Parodien eines Märchens* in 1981 and one year later Jack Zipes followed in the United States with his *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood: Versions of the Tale in Socio-Cultural Context*. Both books deal with numerous new literary versions of the fairy tale. Zipes includes various illustrations of the fairy tale and adds insightful interpretataive comments regarding its socio-political and moralistic significance. In my independently formulated study "Survival Forms of 'Little Red Riding Hood' in Modern Society" I include not only many additional texts but also modern reinterpretations of certain motifs of the tale in cartoons, caricatures, comic strips, and advertisements. In 1982 Zipes's book appeared in German translation. There have even been three major popular magazine and newspaper reports on this modern scholarly preoccupation with "Little Red Riding Hood."[15] It will surprise no one, therefore, if in this study no further mention is made of this particular tale except to say that such detailed studies of newer variants and allusions are needed for other very popular Grimms' fairy tales.

Before presenting and commenting on modern variations and reminiscences of "The Frog Prince," "Snow White" and "Hansel and Gretel," a few general observations concerning the modern survival of fairy tales are necessary. Doubtlessly traditional fairy tales are still told, read, heard on the radio, or watched on the television or movie screen, and it appears that children for many generations to come will continue to be enchanted by them. But these children are bound to grow up and mature, carrying with them consciously or subconsciously some of the archetypical motifs and structures contained in the fairy tales. In a most enlightening essay concerning the possibility of fairy tales in the modern age Hermann Bausinger argues successfully that humanity is predestined toward a type of "Märchendenken" (fairy tale thinking), that is, that we long for and strive toward the happy end so vividly expressed in fairy tales. Even though there might be moments of regression or deviation from this path, people will always try to escape the status quo of social reality in their longing for happiness. He, too, refers to Ernst Bloch's view of the fairy tale as a future-oriented departure toward utopia and to the fact that the biographical plots of many fairy tales thus become reflections of people on their path to a better life.[16]

On this subject, Max Lüthi speaks of the fairy tale as presenting people with "opportunities" for "purposeful motion" toward a world as it ought to be.[17] Jack Zipes refers to this aspect as the "emancipatory potential" of fairy tales "chart[ing] ways for us to become makers of history and our own destinies."[18] Lutz Röhrich even talks of the "Modell-Charakter" (model character) of many fairy tales for human emancipation from certain role expectations.[19] In this regard, the traditional fairy tales are in fact therapeutic, didactic, and optimistic expressions couched in symbolic language. How fitting, therefore, for Max Lüthi to state rather poetically that "fairy tales present an encompassing image of humankind and the world."[20]

But it is also Max Lüthi who has repeatedly pointed out the "Freiheit" (freedom) with which each individual can react to any given tale.[21] It must, therefore, come as no surprise that adults often respond quite differently from the way these scholars predict when rereading or remembering the fairy tales with which they became so well acquainted as children. While they might appreciate a fairy tale from time to time for the reasons discussed above, adults tend to understand fairy tales critically rather than symbolically. Having relinquished their naive dreams of a perfect world of happiness, love, and

optimism, they often question the positive value system of the fairy tales. Many adults are unwilling to or incapable of accepting the positive value system of the old fairy tale as even a possibility to be hoped for, since they are too occupied with real-life problems. If suffering and oppressed people of earlier ages created these fairy tales to provide an escape from an unhappy and ugly reality, modern people, adhering to a pessimistic if not cynical world view, at the expense of the optimistic nature of the fairy tales, identify instead with the societal problems of former times, which appear to resemble their own. It has often been remarked that the fairy tale contains its antipode in its very essence. That is, while certain characters ultimately achieve happiness, others very drastically go to their doom. To many people of the present day the actual fairy tale is simply too far-fetched to accept, and it is the anti-fairy tale that appears to give a clearer symbolic view of what the human condition is really like.[22]

The moment one ceases to look at a fairy tale as a symbolic expression of the idea and belief that everything will work out in the end, the cathartic nature of the tale vanishes. Rather than enjoying the final happy state of the fairy tale heroes and heroines at the very end of the fairy tale, modern adults tend to concentrate on the specific problems of the fairy tales, since they reflect today's social reality in a striking fashion. Who, after all, would ever admit to being so naive and trusting as to believe in the optimism and hope of fairy tales? A good dose of negativism is present in this intellectual view of the world and also in its pragmatic reaction to the ills of modern society. Although at times we may wish and hope for a better or even fairy-tale existence, we are in fact preoccupied and burdened with real problems that prevent us even from longing for, let alone finding, that marvelous happy end. The positive and emancipatory vision of the fairy tales appears more often than not to be buried in a world where one tragedy or crime chases the next. Pessimism, skepticism, and cynicism are rampant and perhaps too much even for the traditional fairy tales to overcome.

Nevertheless, one thing is certain; fairy tales belong to our cultural heritage and common knowledge. They are familiar to almost everybody in our society as only the Bible and a few other written works are. According to a recent survey of two thousand representative West Germans by the Sample Institute (Mölln), 94 percent knew "Hansel and Gretel" very well, 93 percent "Snow White," 91 percent "Little Red Riding Hood," 90 percent "Sleeping Beauty," 89 percent "Cinderella," and 86 percent "The Frog Prince."[23] The picture is most likely similar in the United States, where "Snow White," "Cinderella," and "Sleeping Beauty" might rank higher due to the effect that the Walt Disney movies have had on large segments of the population.[24] Nonetheless, Linda Dégh is correct in assuming that in general we can talk of "superficial familiarity with not more than about a dozen [Grimm] tales"[25] in America. Obviously "Rapunzel" and "Rumpelstiltskin" would belong to this list in addition to the ones mentioned above.

Small as the number may be, these fairy tales represent part of our common heritage, making it possible to communicate with them and through them. We constantly reinterpret this handful of tales, not necessarily by recalling them in their entirety, but rather by looking critically at particular problems in the individual tales. When the final positive resolution of all problems at the end of the tales is neglected, certain of their episodes come to be seen as reflections of a troubled society, as a critical view of the belief in perfect love, or as a concern with social matters. Such modern reinterpretations of fairy tales gain in poignancy when contrasted with the traditional tale, that is when reality is juxtaposed with the world of wishful thinking. The resulting interplay of tradition and innovation takes place not only in the reinterpretation, sometimes poetically, of these fairy tales or segments of them by individuals, but also in the many modern allusions to fairy tale elements in movies, advertisements, comic strips, caricatures, cartoons, greeting cards, and graffiti. The popularity in the mass media and elsewhere in written and oral communication of playing with the motifs of no more than a dozen Grimm fairy tales is ever more obvious, as a questioning reaction to the positive and optimistic world view expressed in the fairy tales increases. The tendency to confront the fairy-tale world through humor, irony, or satire with a more realistic analysis had already begun by the turn of the century. Questions of guilt, deception, fairness, and so on began to be asked, and by today most of the realistic reinterpretations of entire fairy tales or certain motifs have become the general rule except when the fairy tales are intended for the pleasure of children.

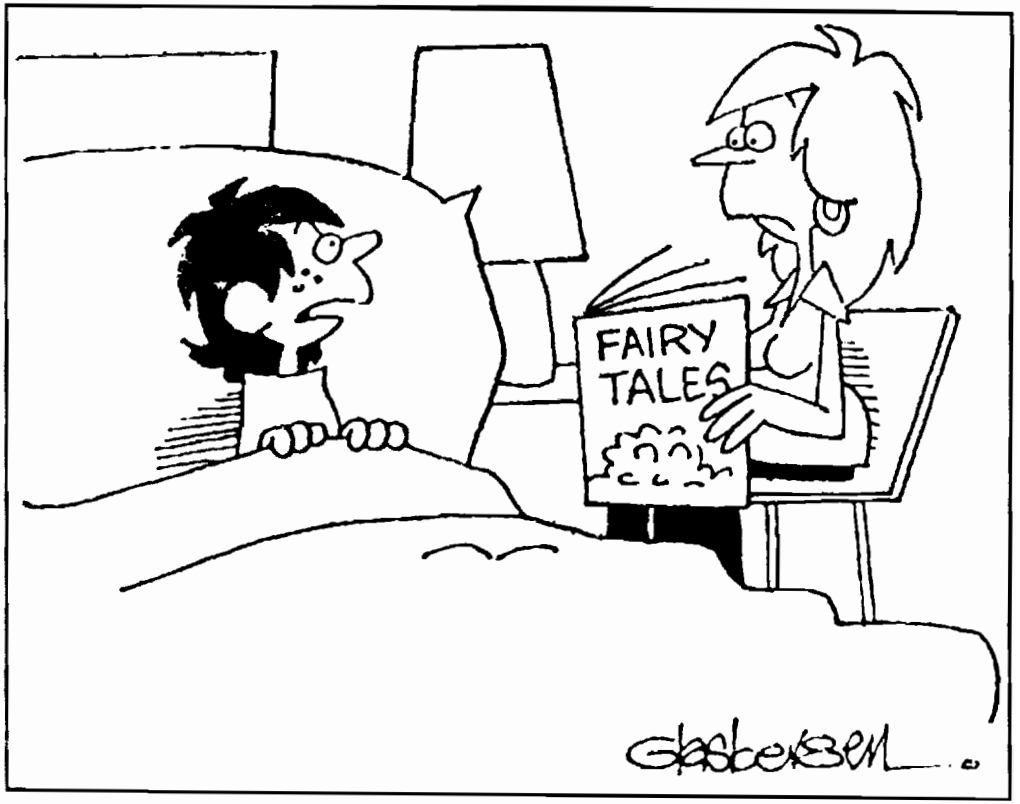
Such modern reinterpretations often deal with sexual matters, which should be of no surprise considering the many psychological interpretations of fairy tales. But many of them also deal with such serious problems as greed, insensitivity, deception, cruelty, vanity,

selfishness, hate, power, irresponsibility, and inhumanity. The adult world is filled with frustrations and disappointments, and often it appears absolutely void of the hope for happy endings. But by couching these disappointments in reinterpretations or allusions to positive fairy tales, are we not actually concealing behind these negative statements the glimmer of hope for a better world in which anti-fairy tales will once again become fairy tales? As Randall Jarrell states in "The Märchen: Grimms' Tales," written in 1945:

> Had you not learned—have we not learned, from tales
> Neither of beasts nor kingdoms nor their Lord,
> But of our own hearts, the realm of death—
> Neither to rule nor die? to change, to change![26]

Changes are necessary, and by concentrating on the anti-fairy tale side of the coin mankind might awaken to the fairy tale's emancipatory potential. Fairy tales show us the progress of their heroes toward a happier life by overcoming obstacles of all kinds. Perhaps the modern transformations of these fairy tales will teach humanity meaningful solutions to its difficult and complex problems. An adult who deals with any aspect of fairy tales today, be it in a joke, a cartoon, a literary text, an advertisement, or whatever, must obviously also recall the actual fairy tale and its happy end. By showing the ills of society using fairy tale motifs and by not giving up hope of creating the state of bliss expressed in them, we are in fact acknowledging the steady influence that these old tales have on us.

But let us now turn to a short analysis of three well-known fairy tales to show how these traditional stories survive today in the form of questioning anti-fairy tales. A *New Yorker* cartoon can serve as a starting point for some of the grim variations which are to follow. In it a car is approaching a large road sign with the inscription "You are now entering Enchantment—'Gateway to Disenchantment.'"[27] One can well image a somewhat archaic town-crier walking through the streets of the town lying ahead calling out the following news stories of the day: "'Snow White kidnapped. Prince released from spell. Tailor kills seven. These are the headlines. I'll be back in a moment with the details.'"[28] Fairy tale violence appears to be making the big news, and even the children seem to react negatively to the more gruesome aspects of some fairy-tale episodes, as is made clear by another cartoon, in which a small boy comments to his mother who is reading him Grimms' tales for the umpteenth time: "'Witches poisoning princesses, giants falling off beanstalks, wolves terrorizing pigs . . . and you complain about violence on TV!?'"[29]



"Witches poisoning princesses, giants falling off beanstalks, wolves terrorizing pigs . . . and you complain about violence on TV!?"

Other such smart-aleck responses to the old stories by children deny the special magic of the tale by putting into question the formulaic beginning of many of them. A little boy simply interrupts his father's fairy tale reading by stating "'Once upon a time. . .' You read that one before, Daddy!"[30] Another bright kid exclaims: "You read me that one before, so now it's 'TWICE upon a time,' right?"[31] And a third lad working with a construction kit even goes so far as to say to his well-intentioned dad with a fairy tale book in hand; "Les' [sic] deine

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14. Feminist Approaches to the Interpretation of Fairy Tales

KAY F. STONE

The *Märchen* has lent itself to a variety of literary, psychological, and sociological interpretations based primarily on the examination of printed texts. Feminist writers have been attracted to the *Märchen* by its popularity as a genre of children's literature. Initially it was viewed, in its form as the well-known fairy tale (primarily from selected tales from the Grimms, Charles Perrault, Hans Christian Andersen, and Andrew Lang[1]), as an unfortunate source of negative female stereotypes. The passive and pretty heroines who dominate popular fairy tales offer narrow and damaging role-models for young readers, feminists argue. Thus much writing has been a sharp critique of the genre.

In early feminist writing (1950s and 1960s) the *Märchen* was uncritically considered as one of the many socializing forces that discouraged females from realizing their full human potential. Few writers from this period focused exclusively on the *Märchen* since it was only one of many sources of stereotyping. Thus critical descriptions tended to be vague and generalized. Both Betty Friedan and Simone de Beauvoir, for example, refer to generalized "Cinderellas"

Since recent feminist writings consider both *Märchen* and feminism together, it is inappropriate to entitle this "Approaches to *Märchen*," as it was called when it was presented at the 1984 Princeton conference "Fairy Tales and Society." Carol Mitchell and Marta Weigle have contributed considerably to my survey of feminist scholarship here.

and "Sleeping Beauties" who were urged to wake up and take charge of their own lives rather than wait for "Prince Charming" to act for them.[2] A more recent book boldly titled *Fairy Tales and Female Consciousness* takes the generalized approach to its logical extremes in its overly vague images of "the fairy tale princess."[3] The author, Barbara Waelti-Walters, insists that future generations must be protected from the negative effects of fairy tale stereotyping but seems unaware that feminist scholarship has been examining the problem for three decades now.

Later feminist work has examined *Märchen* in more detail. An article written in 1972, for example, reaches its conclusions on the damaging passivity of heroines only after an examination of all the heroines in Andrew Lang's multivolume fairy books. Marcia Lieberman insists here, with ample literary evidence, that the fairy tale romance, the "happily ever after" endings, have "been made the repositories of the dreams, hopes, and fantasies of generations of girls."[4] Similarly, Karen Rowe refers to specific tales (though not such a wide sampling) in attempting to demonstrate connections between fairy tales and popular romantic stories in books and magazines.[5] Once again "Prince Charming" appears as the villain for whom girls foolishly await in both fairy tales and romantic stories. Rowe views such tales as problem-creating rather than problem-solving. She thus challenges writers like Bruno Bettelheim who see fairy tales as gender-free stories that help children of both sexes to solve their problems and define themselves as human beings.[6]

In addition to challenging gender-stereotyping through critiques, feminist writers have also responded by offering more aggressive heroines. In "The Practical Princess" and "Petronella," original stories by Jay Williams, we meet princesses who slay their own dragons and rescue spoiled princes from magicians.[7] Other writers offer traditional tales culled from lesser-known international collections in which heroines assume more active roles. Among these are Rosemary Minard's *Womenfolk and Fairy Tales* and Ethel Phelps' *The Maid of the North: Feminist Folktales from Around the World*.[8] Such writers felt that the availability of strong and enterprising women would counterbalance stereotypic passive princesses and offer a new paradigm for female consciousness.

Feminist writings discussed thus far have been concerned with the effects of gender-stereotyping and have justifiably aimed their criticisms at popularly known tales. In so doing they tend to attack the same heroines—notably Cinderella, Snow White, and Sleeping Beauty—again and again, until the feminist view of such heroines has itself become a stereotype. Even Rosemary Minard and Ethel Phelps, despite their attempts to introduce more challenging figures, fail to discover active heroines much closer to home. Several twentieth-century gatherings of Anglo-American tales feature heroines who take responsibility for their own destiny.[9] While these collections are not obscure and inaccessible, they are little known outside of folklore circles. And because feminist folklorists have concentrated on other forms of verbal expression,[10] the potential connections between these little-known tales and their popular counterparts have not developed in feminist scholarship.

When I began examining *Märchen* heroines in the early 1970s, I attempted to expand the sample of tales to include lesser-known Anglo-American collections and to contrast their heroines with those of popular collections. I accepted the feminist stereotype of popular princesses and challenged it with more aggressive heroines, further supporting my views with interviews in which contemporary readers discussed the degree to which they felt themselves negatively affected by narrow female images.[11]

My approach along with that of other feminists came under attack by critics who pointed out that only the surface story was being considered and deeper levels of meaning ignored.[12] Even as these critiques were being formulated a new feminist view of *Märchen* heroines was beginning to emerge. Feminists agreed that earlier studies ignored the subtle inner strength of heroines. Cinderella, for example, emerged as resourceful rather than remorseful, but not aggressively opportunistic like her sisters. Leah Kavablum insisted that Cinderella really gains freedom from kitchen and fireside, and that her "prince" is symbolic for inner strength. She reminds readers that Cinderella's slipper in Freudian symbolism is her own vagina, and thus her regaining of it establishes her as an independent woman.[13]

Other feminist writers have reworked old stories in new ways, to emphasize unrecognized aspects of feminine strength. Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber*, for example, reinterprets ten versions of beauty/beast tales beginning with "Bluebeard."[14] Similarly, the poems of Anne Sexton and the stories of Tanith Lee attempt to re-view *Märchen* women both negatively and positively.[15]

In the critiques and the rewritten stories, *Märchen* women, both as heroines and as secondary characters, were set in irreconcilable opposition to male characters. Thus the *Märchen* was regarded as no longer a romantic tale about living happily ever after but instead a tale about the inner development of the unique female persona. Men could only be a hindrance in this development—or at best (as in Kavablum's Cinderella) symbolic of its attainment.

A third view of women and of heroines has emerged in feminis

writings of the late 1970s. Here women are seen as necessarily separate from but not inherently antagonistic to men. Feminist critiques have expanded to include *Märchen* heroines and mythic figures together, since the separation of myth and tale was now regarded as artificial and misleading; both myth and tale interweave the separate realities of the liminal and numinous worlds. Many such works attempt to offer the missing voices of female deities and challenging witch/wisewoman figures in *Märchen*. In *The Book of Goddesses and Heroines*, for example, Patricia Monaghan lists and describes hundreds of major and minor female deities and folktale personages from around the world. She notes in her introduction that some of these had previously been described only as "votive figures."[16] In another A-to-Z collection, *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*, Barbara Walker agrees that female figures have often been presented too negatively. In describing Pandora and her box, for example, she notes that it "was not a box but a honey-vase, *pithos*, from which she poured out blessings."[17] Ignoring the limited erotic imagery of the honey-box, Walker shows Pandora, like Eve, as a bringer of knowledge to the world rather than a trouble-maker.[18]

Similarly, Sylvia Brinton Perera in *Descent of the Goddess* interprets the renewed interest in goddesses and heroines as essential for redeeming "our own full feminine instinct and energy patterns," which have been regarded by patriarchal religions "as a dangerous threat and called terrible mother, dragon or witch."[19] Her study includes *Märchen* protagonists like Cinderella and secondary figures like Baba Yaga as descendants of supernatural figures.

An even more detailed examination of myth and *Märchen* as paradigms for inner growth is found in Marie-Louise von Franz's *Problems of the Feminine in Fairytales*,[20] published a decade earlier than the Monaghan and Perera works. As a Jungian analyst, von Franz is able to present concrete connections between the feminine in traditional literature and in the real world of women. Using Jung's concepts of anima and animus she insists that women come to terms with their masculine force as well as with the dark side of their feminine force. It is precisely this dark side that women have been taught to ignore and repress, according to many feminist writers. Von Franz also suggests that men develop familiarity with their feminine forces, but she does not comment on the fact that the dark sides of their masculine forces already have full expression. In the opinion of von Franz and other Jungians, full individuation for both females and males is encouraged by understanding myth and *Märchen* and other forms of archetypal expression such as dreams. As a Jungian rather than a feminist, von Franz is too moderate. She does not fully acknowledge

the additional difficulty women face in attaining individuation in a male world.[21]

In a more radically challenging examination of femininity and fairy tales, *Kiss Sleeping Beauty Good-Bye*, Madonna Kolbenschlag demonstrates clearly and concisely how the feminine mystique exists negatively and positively.[22] She too sees the need for both women and men to understand their conflicting feminine and masculine forces and to open themselves to transformation and transcendence. Kolbenschlag agrees with other feminist mythologists that a new language must be learned fully by women and men if human culture is to continue growing. In her concluding chapter, "Exit the Frog Prince," she warns that if the feminine voice continues to be silent, or unheard when spoken, then women will have to separate themselves from men in order to develop fully. In her imaginary letter to the frog prince she writes:

> My own anger and depression finally forced me to transform my life. What will it take to transform yours? Is rejection the only way to open your eyes? Do I have to leave you, abandon you to your self-serving universe? If we go our separate ways, there will be pain and loss. The tapestry of relationships that we have woven with our lives will be rent.[23]

Feminists have favored the weaving and spinning image for its connection with traditional female occupations and its optimistic images of connecting and creating positive patterns. A recent book by folklorist/anthropologist Marta Weigle, *Spiders and Spinsters*, interweaves an impressive amount of material on women and folklore.[24] Weigle's underlying assumption is that women are naturally separate because they perceive and react to the world differently from men, and consequently express their perceptions and reactions differently. Her book is an attempt to do the same. As she says, simply, "for the most part, the voices assembled here spin and weave their own story."[25] She arranges these voices with connecting comments that interweave but do not bind material to restrictive strands of narrow interpretation or theory.

Weigle and others express the challenging realization that the feminine voice is indeed different from the masculine but suggest that this voice is not absolutely limited to women. We make a serious error in equating "female" with "feminine" and "male" with "masculine." The most recent feminist writers insist that new perceptions of female and male are needed by all human beings if we are to break the magic spell of gender stereotyping.[26]

Three differing assumptions have underlain the development of feminist writing in general, and in their approaches to *Märchen* and

myth. The earliest feminists saw women as artificially separated from and wrongly considered unequal to men; the next generation of writers insisted that women were naturally separate from men and rightly superior; and many recent writers consider both women and men as naturally separate but potentially equal—if men shape up. The *Märchen* has been examined from all three approaches, and feminist reactions have ranged from sharp criticism to firm support of the images of women presented in them. Early writers, unhappy with the images they perceived as reflected in the *Märchen* insisted that the mirror was at fault, while later writers pointed out that other images could be perceived in the same mirror. If we care to look again at both *Märchen* and myth we might see that they offer flexible paradigms for positive transformations—female *and* male. Eve was the first consumer of the fruit of knowledge, and she shared this dangerous delight with Adam.

Notes

1. These are the collections most often cited by both casual readers and scholarly researchers. The Grimm tales are more often read in books selecting 30–60 tales rather than all 210, and in these selections heroines in general, and passive heroines in particular, account for a much higher ratio than in the collection as a whole. The courtly French tales of Charles Perrault, also featuring passive heroines ("Cendrillon" being the most famous), have remained popular since they were published in 1697. Hans Christian Andersen's literary tales create even more downtrodden heroines, including "good" girls like "The Little Mermaid" and "The Little Matchgirl" who are destroyed. Andrew Lang's several volumes of tales mostly gleaned from other collections also favor helpless heroines, particularly in his earliest volumes in which tales from Grimms, Andersen, and Perrault and his imitators (Madame D'Aulnoy and Madame de Beaumont) are featured.

2. Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1963), particularly pp. 118 and 292; and Simone De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), particularly pp. 126, 128, 158 for "The Cinderella Myth," pp. 163, 178 for "Snow White," and p. 171 for "Sleeping Beauty." She does not list "Prince Charming" in her index, but references to this imaginary character are found on pp. 126, 171, and 178.

3. Barbara Waelti-Walters, *Fairy Tales and Female Consciousness* (Montreal and Quebec: Eden Press, 1982). Despite the broad title this is a narrow literary study of a handful of French and French-Canadian women writers. It has little beyond vague observations that relate to the topics promised by the title.

4. Marcia Lieberman, "Some Day My Prince Will Come," *College English*, December 1972, particularly pp. 383–95; quotation from p. 385.

5. Karen E. Rowe, "Feminism and Fairy Tales," *Women's Studies* 6 (1979), particularly pp. 237–57.

6. Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977).

7. Jay Williams, "The Practical Princess," *Ms.*, August 1972, pp. 61–64; *Petronella* (New York: Parents, 1973).

8. Rosemary Minard, *Womenfolk and Fairy Tales* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975); Ethel Phelps, *The Maid of the North: Feminist Folktales from Around the World* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981).

9. See references to Campbell, Fauset, Gardner, Randolph, Roberts, and Spray in bibliography.

10. See, for example, Claire Farrer, ed., *Women and Folklore* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975); and Rosan Jordan and Susan Kalcik, eds., *Women's Folklore, Women's Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985).

11. Kay Stone, "Things Walt Disney Never Told Us," *Women and Folklore*, ed. Claire Farrer (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975), pp. 42–50; "Romantic Heroines in Anglo-American Folk and Popular Literature" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1975); "Fairy Tales for Adults: Disney's Americanization of the *Märchen*," *Folklore on Two Continents*, ed. Burlakoff and Lindahl (Bloomington, IN: Trickster Press, 1980), pp. 40–48; and "Aschenputtel als Weiblichkeitsideal in Nordamerika," in *Über Märchen für Kinder von Heute*, ed. Klaus Doderer (Weinheim and Basel, 1983): 78–93.

12. See N. J. Girardot, "Initiation and Meaning in 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,'" *Journal of American Folklore* 90 (1977): 274–300; Polly Stewart Deemer, "A Response to the Symposium," *Journal of American Folklore* 88 (1975): 101–14.

13. Leah Kavablum, *Cinderella; Radical Feminist, Alchemist* (Guttenberg, NJ, 1973).

14. Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979).

15. Anne Sexton, *Transformations* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971); Tanith Lee, *Red as Blood* (New York: Daw Books, 1983).

16. Patricia Monaghan, *The Book of Goddesses and Heroines* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1981), p. xiii.

17. Barbara Walker, *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (San Francisco, 1983), p. 12. This is an uneven work with some entries ("Cinderella," for example) that are extreme.

18. For other examinations of Pandora, see Dora Panofsky and Erwin Panofsky, *Pandora's Box: The Changing Aspects of a Mythical Symbol* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962); and Sarah Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves* (New York: Schocken Books, 1975). For further examinations of Eve, see Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973); Raphael Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess* (New York: Avon Books, 1978); J. A. Phillips, *Eve: The History of an Idea* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984); and Phyllis Trible, "Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretations," in *The Jewish Woman: New Perspectives*, ed. Elizabeth Koltun (New York: Schocken Books, 1976).

19. Sylvia Brinton Perera, *Descent of the Goddess* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1981), p. 7.

20. Marie-Louise von Franz, *Problems of the Feminine in Fairytales* (New York: Spring Publications, 1972).

21. For further comments, see Naomi Goldenberg, "A Feminist Critique of Jung," *Signs* 2 (1976): 443–49.

22. Madonna Kolbenschlag, *Kiss Sleeping Beauty Good-Bye* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981).

23. Ibid., pp. 199–200.

24. Marta Weigle, *Spiders and Spinsters: Women and Mythology* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982).

25. Ibid., p. ix.

26. Of interest are recent and as yet unpublished papers presented at annual meetings of the American Folklore Society. For example: Marta Weigle, "A Mythology of One's Own: Mundus vs. Mythos" (1981); Carol Mitchell, "The Garden of Eden Revisited" (1982); and Carol Edwards, "Feminism and Fairytales Revisited" (1983).

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Rowe, Karen E. "Feminism and Fairy Tales." *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 6 (1979): 237–57. Examines selected popular folktales from the perspective of modern feminism.

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Von Franz, Marie-Luise. *Problems of the Feminine in Fairy Tales.* New York: Spring Publications, 1972. A Jungian interpretation of fairy tale heroines from such tales as "Sleeping Beauty," "Snow White and Rose Red," "The Handless Maiden," "The Six Swans," and the Russian "The Beautiful Wassilissa."

Weigle, Marta. *Spiders and Spinsters.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982. An extensive gathering of comments on women in mythology, including *Märchen* heroines. Excellent bibliography.

15. Marxists and the Illumination of Folk and Fairy Tales

JACK ZIPES

Before I discuss the relationship of Marxists to folk and fairy tales, I want to quote three German Marxists whose ideas were heavily influenced by the social and political changes of the Weimar period, and who became interested in and concerned with the meaning and power of fairy tales.

The proletariat will create the new fairy tales in which workers' struggles, their lives, and their ideas are reflected and correspond to the degree which they demonstrate how they can continually become human, and how they can build up new educational societies in place of the old decrepit ones. [Edwin Hoernle, *Die Arbeit in den kommunistischen Kindergruppen* (1923)]'

Of course, the fairy-tale world, especially as a magical one, no longer belongs to the present. How can it mirror our wish-projections against a background that has long since disappeared? Or, to put it a better way: How can the fairy tale mirror our wish-projections other than in a totally atavistic obsolete way? Real kings no longer even exist. The atavistic and simultaneously feudal-transcendental world from which the fairy tale stems and to which it seems tied has most certainly vanished. However, the mirror of the fairy tale has not become opaque, and the manner of wish-fulfillment which peers forth from it is not entirely without a home. It all adds up to this: the fairy tale narrates a wish-fulfillment which

is not bound by its own time and the apparel of its contents. [Ernst Bloch, *Das Märchen geht selber in Zeit* (1930)][2]

"And they lived happily ever after," says the fairy tale. The fairy tale which to this day is the first tutor of children because it was once the first tutor of mankind, secretly lives on in the story. The first true storyteller is, and will continue to be, the teller of fairy tales. Whenever good counsel was at a premium, the fairy tale had it, and where the need was greatest, its aid was nearest. The need was the need created by the myth. The fairy tale tells us of the earliest arrangements that mankind made to shake off the nightmare which the myth had placed upon its chest. [Walter Benjamin, *Der Erzähler* (1936)][3]

Hoernle, Bloch, Benjamin. Three different Marxists who shared different fates at the hands of fascism. Hoernle, a member of the Communist party, fled to the Soviet Union and returned to East Germany after World War II to become a minister of forestry. He did not continue his work with youth groups, and his ideas for a new proletarian fairy tale were never realized. He died in 1952. Bloch spent the major portion of the fascist period in America (1938–48) working on his most significant book, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*. In 1949 he returned to East Germany, where he became a professor of philosophy in Leipzig until 1961. At that time, because of his disagreement with the cultural policies of the East German bureaucracy, he moved to Tübingen, where he spent the rest of his life, espousing utopian notions of philosophy and society while criticizing the depraved social and political conditions in both Germanys. He died in 1977. Benjamin sought exile in Paris during the 1930s and worked in association with the famous Institute of Social Research, otherwise known as the Frankfurt School. Like many of its members, he wrote scintillating essays against fascism during this time while endeavoring to make new contributions to Marxist thought and methodology. Forced to flee Paris in 1940 because of the Nazi invasion, he was overtaken by fear and committed suicide on the Spanish border.

Hoernle, the dedicated party member; Bloch, the eclectic Marxist philosopher of hope; Benjamin, the eccentric *flaneur* of the Frankfurt School: their lives were anything but fairy tales. Yet, their concern for the meaning and power of fairy tales had great ramifications in West Germany during the late 1960s. It was then that the leftist student movement rediscovered, so to speak, the formidable Marxist tradition of the Weimar period, a tradition that had been obfuscated at school and in the university. Among the "treasures" rediscovered were the writings of Hoernle, Bloch, and Benjamin on folk and fairy tales.

This rediscovery is important for the Marxist approach to folk and fairy tales because German critics and scholars have been at th forefront of critical endeavors to reexamine folk and fairy tales from Marxist point of view.[4] In fact, to discuss the development of Marxi criticism and its relationship to folklore and fairy tale research, it necessary to focus primarily on West Germany, at least when one a dresses post-World War II developments in this field. With few e ceptions, Western Marxists outside Germany have not delved into th meaning of folk and fairy tales.[5]

Beginning with Bernd Wollenweber's essay, "Märchen und Spric wort" (1974),[6] and Dieter Richter and Johannes Merkel's book, *Mä chen, Phantasie und soziales Lernen* (1974),[7] there has been a virtu flood in West Germany of Marxist studies dealing with folk and fai tales. Since it would be too difficult to discuss all the works that ha been produced during the last ten years, I will concentrate on thr areas of folk and fairy tale research opened up by Hoernle, Bloc and Benjamin to demonstrate where and why contemporary Germa Marxists have sought to go beyond them. Despite their difference Hoernle, Bloch, and Benjamin shared much common ground on s cialization, utopianism, and ideology. From their work in these thr areas, contemporary Marxists have drawn the stimulus to develo their own ideas. In examining these three areas I shall synthesize th notions of the three authors into three general theses and discu their elaboration by contemporary Marxists.

1. Fairy tales are closely tied to the real situation of children an have both a positive and a negative impact in the socialization pr cess. Here the work of Manfred Klein and Werner Psaar, Ulrike Ba tian, Bernd Dolle, and Christa Bürger[8] has complemented the studi of Wollenweber, Richter, and Merkel. In general, they have examine the changing role of the fairy tale in history and the uses to which th fairy tale has been put in order to influence the behavior and thinkin of children and adults alike. In contrast to Hoernle, Bloch, and Be jamin, they are historically more specific and thorough in their anal ses and demonstrate how the transformation of the tales and the employment have been ideologically determined to legitimate the i terests of capitalist societies.

2. The original fairy tales, that is, the oral folk tales in their *U form*, contain elements of political protest and wish-fulfillment th demonstrate the ways through which oppressed peoples can wit stand and overcome the power of rich and exploitative rulers. It almost as if they had a messianic mission and illuminated the way to golden age. Here Wollenweber, Richter, Merkel, and Heide Göttne Abendroth have qualified those elements of wish-fulfillment an

rotest by analyzing their anachronistic and feudal features.[9] In par-
icular, Göttner-Abendroth focuses on the patriarchalization of the
ales from a historical feminist viewpoint. Despite sexist and feudal
omponents, most contemporary Marxist critics believe that both the
ral and the literary fairy tale can be modernized and reshaped to
ncorporate a critique of present-day society along utopian lines.

3. The utopian "aura" of the authentic folk tradition must be pre-
erved and developed in modern society. Hoernle, Bloch, and Ben-
amin are insistent about this notion of preservation but vague in their
nalyses of folk and fairy tales. Contemporary Marxists are more
areful in the distinctions that have to be made about the folk and
airy tale. For instance, Jens Tismar has written two books that ex-
mine the literary fairy tale as a type of commodity which results
rom the "bourgeoisification" of the oral folk tale.[10] Friedmar Apel
races the evolution of the literary fairy tale (*Kunstmärchen*) to the
rench court of Louis XIV and discusses the aesthetics of the tale in
elation to bourgeois standards that were emerging at this time.[11]
Other critics, such as Otto Gmelin and Bernd Dolle, analyze the dimi-
ution of the utopian element in folk and fairy tales as they are passed
lown through history while emphasizing the utopian efforts of par-
icular groups to reformulate the concerns and needs of oppressed
groups.[12]

Perhaps the most important conclusion to be drawn from the
deas of Hoernle, Bloch, Benjamin, and their followers is that the
airy tale, whether it be oral or literary, is a social product stamped by
ts times, and its power resides in its utopian potential to illuminate
ways by which we can come to terms with injustice and pursue our
dreams of a golden age. Implicit in their ideas is the notion that the
most *authentic* folk and fairy tales speak in the name of the common
people and justice. Here the idealistic side of the German Marxists
reveals itself and is in need of a corrective, for it is extremely difficult
to discern what is or what is not an authentic tale. For instance, many
of the so-called folk tales that bespeak the interests of peasants are
sexist and racist. In other words, it is important not to set oral or
literary tales on a pedestal just because they originate from the com-
mon people or because the author purports to speak in the name of
the people. More Marxist research must be conducted in the area of
socio-historical origins of the tales and the transformations that they
undergo as a result of changes in general taste, cultural standards,
and their social function.

This need for more Marxist research is emphasized by Vladimir
Propp, not the structuralist Propp of the *Morphology of the Folktale,* but
the Marxist Propp, whose later writings have just become available in

English.[13] He justifies his earlier work by maintaining that one cannot grasp historical transformations within a genre without knowing its poetics and mode of composition: "The comparative study of plots opens up wide historical perspectives. What needs historical explanation is not individual plots but the compositional system to which they belong. This approach will bring out the historical connections among them and pave the way for the study of individual plots."[14] Since Propp always focuses on the oral tradition of folk tales, he outlines a Marxist approach to tales produced in what he calls precapitalist societies. Even if the mode of production played a very limited role in those societies, he argues, we must then look at social institutions such as marriage, death, initiation into a tribe or community, and the succession of power. In particular, he remarks that "the wondertale preserves traces of vanished forms of social life,"[15] and we must return to rituals and customs to understand motifs in the tale. Although he tends to idealize the folk and to examine precapitalist ritual uncritically, Propp's Marxist writings are significant because they link ethnography and folklore ideologically. He establishes this link by stressing that the people have cultivated folk art in resistance to the oppression of the ruling classes. Since ethnography focuses on the study of material culture and social organizations, historical folklore research must rest upon ethnography.[16] As a historical discipline, folklore research tries to demonstrate what happens to old folklore under new historical conditions and to trace the appearance of new formations. Propp argues that folklore must be studied by stages that can be characterized by the economic development of the society. Research must deal with hybrid formations and contradictions by using the comparative method. By studying various peoples at various stages of their development, one can comprehend the specific significance of an individual tale.

In some respects, the German Marxists anticipated Propp's theses without knowing them and have actually gone beyond him. In other respects, particularly with regard to the ideological tradition within Western folklore research, Propp's position needs further evaluation and elaboration. Here Claude Lévi-Strauss's debate with Propp[17] is helpful as is the remarkable book, *Traumzeit,* by Hans Peter Duerr,[18] who questions the colonialist attitude of ethnologists and provides a new perspective on the links between ritual, art, and ideology. Certainly, the recent appearance of Propp's Marxist writings will prompt more discussion about the relationship of Marxism to the study of folk and fairy tales.

If Marxists have been fascinated by the illumination of folk and fairy tales, it is because they are interested in real social contradic-

tions that they hope to resolve. By critically historicizing the study of folk and fairy tales, they have challenged other approaches and have shed light on areas that need further exploration.

Notes

1. In *Das politische Kinderbuch*, ed. Dieter Richter (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1973), p. 220.

2. In Jack Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), p. 133.

3. In *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), p. 102.

4. Ironically, East German Marxists have not continued the tradition of Hoernle, Bloch, and Benjamin because of the orthodox limits set by the state's cultural policies. Nevertheless, there have been some interesting studies such as Waltraut Woeller's *Der soziale Gehalt und die soziale Funktion der deutschen Volksmärchen* (Habilitations-Schrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 1955).

5. See José Limon, "Western Marxism and Folklore," *Journal of American Folklore* 96 (1983): 34–53; then my reply entitled "Folklore Research and Western Marxism: A Critical Replay," *Journal of American Folklore* 97 (1984): 330–37; then Limon's reply to my reply, "Western Marxism and Folklore: A Critical Reintroduction," *Journal of American Folklore* 97 (1984): 337–45.

6. In *Projektunterricht*, vol. 6, ed. Heinz Ide (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1974), pp. 12–92.

7. Berlin: Basis, 1974.

8. Klein and Psaar, *Wer hat Angst vor der bösen Geiß? Zur Märchendidaktik und Märchenrezeption* (Braunschweig: Westermann, 1976); Bastian, *Die Kinder und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm in der literatur-pädagogischen Diskussion des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Giessen: Haag und Herchen, 1981); Dolle, "Märchen und Erziehung: Versuch einer historischen Skizze zur didaktischen Verwendung Grimmscher Märchen," in *Und wenn sie nicht gestorben sind . . . Perspektiven auf das Märchen*, ed. Helmut Brackert (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1980), pp. 165–92; Bürger, "Die soziale Funktion volkstümlicher Erzählformen: Sage und Märchen," in *Projekt Deutschunterricht 1*, ed. Heinz Ide (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1971), pp. 26–56.

9. Göttner-Abendroth, *Die Göttin und ihr Heros* (Munich: Frauenoffensive, 1980).

10. Tismar, *Kunstmärchen* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1977) and *Das deutsche Kunstmärchen des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1981).

11. Apel, *Die Zaubergärten der Phantasie. Zur Theorie und Geschichte des Kunstmärchens* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1978).

12. Gmelin, *Märchen für tapfere Mädchen* (Giessen: Schlot, 1978); Dolle, "Märchen und Erziehung," pp. 165–92. See also the afterword essays by Dolle and Zipes in *Es wird einmal . . . Soziale Märchen der Zwanziger Jahre*, ed. Dolle, Richter, and Zipes (Munich: Weismann, 1983): Zipes, "Der Märchen im Prozeß der Erziehung," pp. 153–60; Zipes and Dolle, "Aus alten Mären da klingt es: . . . Die etablierte Märchenszene der Weimarer Republik," pp. 161–64; and Dolle, "Märchen der Wirklichkeit," pp. 165–75.

13. Propp, *Theory and History of folklore*, ed. Anatoly Liberman, trans. Ariadna Martin and Richard Martin (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

14. Ibid., p. 72.

15. Ibid., p. 105.

16. Ibid., pp. 3–15.

17. Cf. Lévi-Strauss's essay "Structure and Form: Reflections on a Work by Vladimir Propp," in Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, pp. 167–88, and Propp's "The Structural and Historical Study of the Wondertale" (1976), in *Theory and History of Folklore*, pp. 67–81.

18. The subtitle of Duerr's book is *Über die Grenze zwischen Wildnis und Zivilisation* (Frankfurt: Syndikat, 1978).

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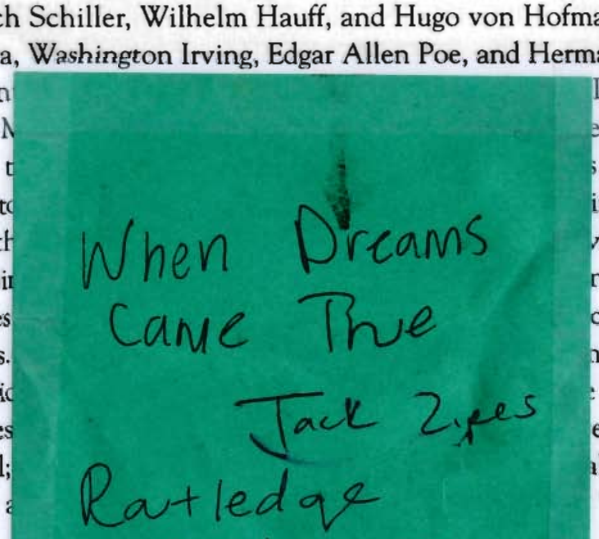
Storrer, Mary Elizabeth. *La Mode des contes de fées (1685–1700)*. Paris: Champion, 1928. A study of the rise of the literary fairy tale during the reign of Louis XIV.

the nights" in his critical study and shows how numerous authors were clearly influenced by *The Thousand and One Nights*: in France, Anthony Hamilton, Thomas Simon Guellette, Crébilon fils, Denis Diderot, Jacques Cazotte Voltaire; in England, Joseph Addison, Samuel Johnson, William Beckford, Horace Walpole, Robert Southey, Samuel Coleridge, Thomas De Quincey, George Meredith, and Robert Louis Stevenson; in Germany, Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, Friedrich Schiller, Wilhelm Hauff, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal; in America, Washington Irving, Edgar Allen Poe, and Herman Melville. In recen Luis Borges, Steven M ence of their debt to t s essay, "The Translat ironic signif- icance th ve for the lit- erary fai no Littmann observes collection of marvels. narvelous on all Occi no doubt of that. Les egard for the original; lismans, the deserts,



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Once There Were Two Brothers Named Grimm

Many are the fairy tales and myths that have been spread about the Brothers Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. For a long time it was believed that they had wandered about Germany and gathered their tales from the lips of doughty peasants and that all their tales were genuinely German. Although much of what had been believed has been disproved by recent scholarship, new rumors and debates about the Grimms keep arising. For instance, one literary scholar has recently charged them with manufacturing the folk spirit of the tales in order to dupe the general public in the name of nationalism. Other critics have found racist and sexist components in the tales that they allege need expurgation, while psychologists and educators battle over the possible harmful or therapeutic effects of the tales. Curiously, most of the critics and most of the introductions to the English translations of the Grimms' tales say very little about the brothers themselves or their methods for collecting the tales — as though the Grimms were incidental to their tales. Obviously, this is not the case, and there is a story here worth telling.

Just who were the Brothers Grimm and how did they discover those tales, which may be the most popular in the world today? Why and how did the brothers change the tales? And what is the significance of the magic of those tales today?

A fairy-tale writer could not have created a more idyllic and propitious setting for the entrance of the Brothers Grimm into the world. Their father, Philipp Wilhelm Grimm, a lawyer, was ambitious, diligent, and prosperous, and their mother, Dorothea (née Zimmer), daughter of a city councilman in Kassel, was a devoted and caring housewife, even though she tended at times to be melancholy. Initially they settled in the quaint village of Hanau, and during the first twelve years of their marriage, there were nine births, out of which six children survived: Jacob Ludwig Grimm (1785–1863), Wilhelm Carl Grimm (1786–1859), Carl Friedrich Grimm (1787–1852), Ferdinand Philipp Grimm (1788–1844), Ludwig Emil Grimm (1790–1863), and Charlotte Amalie (Lotte) Grimm (1793–1833). By 1791 the family had moved to Steinau, near Kassel, where Philipp Grimm had obtained an excellent position as district judge (*Amtmann*) and soon became the leading figure of the town. He and his family lived in a large comfortable home there and had servants to help with the domestic chores. As soon as the children were of age, they were sent to a local school, where they received a classical education. They also received strict religious training in the Reform Calvinist Church. Both Jacob and Wilhelm were bright, hardworking pupils and were distinctly fond of country life. Their familiarity with farming, nature, and peasant customs and superstitions would later play a major role in their research and work in German folklore. At first, though, both boys appeared destined to lead comfortable lives, following in the footsteps of their father, whose seal was *Tute si recte vixeris* — "Honesty is the best policy in life." To be sure, this was the path that Jacob and Wilhelm took, but it had to be taken without the guidance of their father.

Philipp Grimm died suddenly in 1796 at the age of forty-four, and his death was traumatic for the entire family. Within weeks after his death, Dorothea Grimm had to move out of the large house and face managing the family of six children without servants or much financial support. From this point on, the family was totally dependent on outside help, particularly on Henriette Zimmer, Dorothea's sister, who was a lady-in-waiting for the princess of Hessia-Kassel. Henriette arranged for Jacob and Wilhelm to study at the prestigious Lyzeum (high school) in Kassel and obtained provisions and funds for the family.

Although the brothers were different in temperament — Jacob was more introverted, serious, and robust; Wilhelm was outgoing, gregarious, and asthmatic — they were inseparable and totally devoted to each other. They shared the same room and bed and developed the same work habits: in high school the Grimms studied more than twelve hours a day and were evidently bent on proving themselves to be the best students at the Lyzeum. That they were treated by some teachers as socially inferior to the other "high-born" students only served to spur their efforts. In fact, the Grimms had to struggle against social slights and financial deprivation during a good part of their lives, but they never forgot their father's motto, *Tute si recte vixeris*, and they became famous not only because of their remarkable scholarship but also because of their great moral integrity.

Although each one was graduated from the Lyzeum at the head of his class, Jacob in 1802 and Wilhelm in 1803, they both had to obtain special dispensations to study law at the University of Marburg because their social standing was not high enough to qualify them. Once at the university they had to confront yet another instance of injustice, for most of the students from wealthier families received stipends, while the Grimms had to pay for their own education and live on a small budget. This inequity made them feel even more compelled to prove themselves, and at Marburg they drew the attention of Professor Friedrich Karl von Savigny, the genial founder of the historical school of law. Savigny argued that the spirit of a law can be comprehended only by tracing its origins to the development of the customs and language of the people and by paying attention to the changing historical context in which laws developed. Ironically, it was Savigny's emphasis on the philological aspect of law that led Jacob and Wilhelm to dedicate themselves to the study of ancient German literature and folklore. This decision was made in 1805 after Savigny had taken Jacob to Paris to assist him in research on the history of Roman law. Upon returning to Germany in 1806, Jacob left the university and rejoined his mother, who had moved to Kassel. Given the pecuniary situation of the family, it was Jacob's duty, as head of the family now, to support his brothers and sister, and he found a position as secretary for the Kassel War Commission, which made decisions pertaining to the

war with France. Fortunately for Jacob, he was able to pursue his study of old German literature and customs on the side while Wilhelm remained in Marburg to complete his legal studies.

The correspondence between Jacob and Wilhelm during this time reflects their great concern for the welfare of their family. With the exception of Ludwig, who later became an accomplished painter and also illustrated the fairy tales, the other children had difficulty establishing careers for themselves. Neither Carl nor Ferdinand displayed the intellectual aptitude that the two oldest brothers did or the creative talents of Ludwig. Carl eventually tried his hand at business and ended up destitute as a language teacher, while Ferdinand tried many different jobs in publishing and later died in poverty. Lotte's major task was to assist her mother, who died in 1808. After that, Lotte managed the Grimm household until she married a close friend of the family, Ludwig Hassenpflug, in 1822. Hassenpflug became an important politician in Germany and eventually had a falling out with Jacob and Wilhelm because of his conservative and opportunistic actions as statesman.

While Ludwig, Carl, Ferdinand, and Lotte were young, they were chiefly the responsibility of Jacob, who looked after them like a stern father. Even Wilhelm regarded him as such and acknowledged his authority, not only in family matters, but also in scholarship. It was during the period from 1806 to 1810, when each of the siblings was endeavoring to make a decision about a future career and concerned about the stability of their home, that Jacob and Wilhelm began systematically gathering folk tales and other materials related to folklore. Clemens Brentano, a gifted romantic writer and friend, had requested that the Grimms help him collect tales for a volume that he intended to publish some time in the future. The Grimms responded by selecting tales from old books and recruiting the help of friends and acquaintances in Kassel. The Grimms were unable to devote all their energies to their research, though. Jacob lost his job on the War Commission in 1807, when Kassel was invaded by the French and became part of the Kingdom of Westphalia under the rule of Jerome Bonaparte. Soon thereafter, the Grimms' mother died, and it was imperative that Jacob find some new means of supporting the family. Although he had

a strong antipathy to the French, he applied for the position of King Jerome's private librarian in Kassel and was awarded the post in 1808. This job enabled him to pursue his studies and help his brothers and sister. Meanwhile, Wilhelm had to undergo a cure for a heart disease in Halle. Ludwig began studying art at the Art Academy in Munich, and Carl began working as a businessman in Hamburg. From 1809 to 1813 there was a period of relative stability and security for the Grimm family, and Jacob and Wilhelm began publishing the results of their research on old German literature: Jacob wrote *On the Old German Meistergesang*, and Wilhelm, *Old Danish Heroic Songs*, both in 1811. Together they published in 1812 a study of the *Song of Hildebrand* and the *Wessobrunner Prayer*. Of course, their major publication at this time was the first volume of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (*Children's and Household Tales*) with scholarly annotations, also in 1812.

The Napoleonic Wars and French rule had been upsetting to both Jacob and Wilhelm, who were dedicated to the notion of German unification. Neither wanted to see the restoration of oppressive German princes, but they did feel a deep longing to have the German people united in one nation through customs and laws of their own making. Thus, in 1813 they celebrated when the French withdrew from Kassel and the French armies were defeated throughout Central Europe. Jacob was appointed a member of the Hessian Peace Delegation and did diplomatic work in Paris and Vienna. During his absence Wilhelm was able to procure the position as secretary to the royal librarian in Kassel and to concentrate on bringing out the second volume of the *Children's and Household Tales* in 1815. When the peace treaty with the French was concluded in Vienna, Jacob returned home and was disappointed to find that the German princes were seeking to reestablish their narrow, vested interests in different German principalities and to discard the broader notion of German unification.

After securing the position of second librarian in the royal library of Kassel, Jacob joined Wilhelm in editing the first volume of *German Legends* in 1816. During the next thirteen years, the Grimms enjoyed a period of relative calm and prosperity. Their work as librarians was not demanding, and they could devote themselves to scholarly research and the publication of their findings. Together they published the sec-

ond volume of *German Legends* (1818) and *Irish Elf Tales* (1826), while Jacob wrote the first volume of *German Grammar* (1819) and *Ancient German Law* (1828) by himself, and Wilhelm produced *The German Heroic Legend* (1829).

In the meantime, there were changes in the domestic arrangement of the Grimms. Lotte moved out of the house to marry Ludwig Hassenpflug in 1822, and a few years later, in 1825, Wilhelm married Dortchen Wild, the daughter of a druggist in Kassel. She had known both brothers for over twenty years and had been part of a group of storytellers who had provided the Grimms with numerous tales. Now it became her task to look after the domestic affairs of the brothers, for Jacob did not leave the house. Indeed, he remained a bachelor for his entire life and had very little time for socializing. The Grimms insisted on a quiet atmosphere and a rigid schedule at home so that they could conduct their research without interruptions. Although Wilhelm continued to enjoy company and founded a family — he had three children with Dortchen — he was just as much married to his work as Jacob. Since Dortchen had been well acquainted with the brothers before her marriage, when she assumed her role in the family she fully supported their work and customary way of living.

In 1829, however, when the first librarian died and his position in Kassel became vacated, the Grimms' domestic tranquility was broken. Jacob, who had already become famous for his scholarly publications, had expected to be promoted to this position. But he did not have the right connections or the proper conservative politics and was overlooked. In response to this, he and Wilhelm resigned their posts and, one year later, traveled to Göttingen, where Jacob became professor of old German literature and head librarian, and Wilhelm, librarian and, eventually, professor in 1835. Both were considered gifted teachers and broke new ground in the study of German literature, which had only recently become an accepted field of study at the university. Aside from their teaching duties, they continued to write and publish important works: Jacob wrote the third volume of *German Grammar* (1831) and a major study entitled *German Mythology* (1835), while Wilhelm prepared the third edition of *Children's and Household Tales*. Though their positions were secure, there was a great deal of political

unrest in Germany due to the severely repressive political climate since 1819. By 1830 many revolts and peasant uprisings had erupted, and a group of intellectuals known as Young Germany (*Jungdeutschland*) pushed for more democratic reform in different German principalities. For the most part, however, their members were persecuted and silenced, just as the peasants too were vanquished. Some leading writers, such as Ludwig Börne, Heinrich Heine, and Georg Büchner, took refuge in exile. The Brothers Grimm were not staunch supporters of the Young Germany movement, but they had always supported the liberal cause throughout Germany and were greatly affected by the political conflicts.

In 1837, when King Ernst August II succeeded to the throne of Hannover, he revoked the constitution of 1833 and dissolved parliament. In his attempt to restore absolutism to the Kingdom of Hannover, of which Göttingen was a part, he declared that all civil servants must pledge an oath to serve him personally. Since the king was nominally the rector of the University of Göttingen, the Grimms were obligated to take an oath of allegiance, but instead they, along with five other professors, led a protest against the king and were summarily dismissed. Jacob was compelled to leave Göttingen immediately and returned to Kassel, where Wilhelm joined him a few months later.

Once again, they were in desperate financial straits. Despite the fact that they received funds and support from hundreds of friends and admirers who supported their stand on academic freedom, the ruling monarchs of the different principalities prevented them from teaching at another university. It was during this time that Jacob and Wilhelm decided to embark on writing the *German Dictionary*, one of the most ambitious lexicographical undertakings of the nineteenth century. Though the income from this project would be meager, they hoped to support themselves through other publishing ventures as well. In the meantime, Bettina von Arnim, Friedrich Karl von Savigny, and other influential friends were trying to convince the new king of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, to bring the brothers to Berlin. Finally, in November 1840, Jacob and Wilhelm received offers to become professors at the University of Berlin and to do research at the Academy of Sciences. It was not until March 1841, however, that the Grimms took

up residence in Berlin and were able to continue their work on the *German Dictionary* and their scholarly research on other subjects. In addition to teaching, the Grimms played an active role in the institutionalization of German literature as a field of study at other universities and entered into political debates. When the Revolution of 1848 occurred in Germany, the Grimms were elected to the civil parliament, and Jacob was considered to be one of the most prominent men among the representatives at the National Assembly held in Frankfurt am Main. However, the brothers' hopes for democratic reform and the unification of the German principalities dwindled as one compromise after another was reached with the German monarchs. Both brothers retired from active politics after the demise of the revolutionary movement. In fact, Jacob resigned from his position as professor in 1848, the same year he published his significant study entitled *The History of the German Language*. Wilhelm retired from his post as professor in 1852. For the rest of their lives, the Grimms devoted most of their energy to completing the monumental *German Dictionary*, but they got only as far as the letter F. Though they did not finish the *Dictionary*, a task that had to be left to scholars in the twentieth century, they did produce an astonishing number of remarkable books during their lifetimes: Jacob published twenty-one, and Wilhelm, fourteen. Together they produced eight. In addition, there are another twelve volumes of their essays and notes and thousands of important letters. The Grimms made scholarly contributions to the areas of folklore, history, ethnology, religion, jurisprudence, lexicography, and literary criticism. Even when they did not work as a team, they shared their ideas and discussed all their projects together. When Wilhelm died in 1859, the loss affected Jacob deeply; he became even more solitary but did not abandon the projects he had held in common with his brother. In addition, the more he realized that his hopes for democratic reform were being dashed in Germany, the more he voiced his criticism of reactionary trends in Germany. Both Jacob and Wilhelm regarded their work as part of a social effort to foster a sense of justice among the German people and to create pride in the folk tradition. Jacob died in 1863 after completing the fourth volume of his book *German Precedents*. In German the title, *Deutsche Weistümer*, connotes a sense

of the wisdom of the ages that he felt should be passed on to the German people.

Though the Grimms made important discoveries in their research on ancient German literature and customs, they were neither the founders of folklore as a study in Germany, nor were they the first to begin collecting and publishing folk and fairy tales. In fact, from the beginning their principal concern was to uncover the etymological and linguistic truths that bound the German people together and were expressed in their laws and customs. The fame of the Brothers Grimm as collectors of folk and fairy tales must be understood in this context, and even here, chance played a role in their destiny.

In 1806, Clemens Brentano, who had already published an important collection of folk songs entitled *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (*The Boy's Magic Horn*, 1805) with Achim von Arnim, was advised to seek out the aid of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm because they were known to have a vast knowledge of old German literature and folklore. They were also considered to be conscientious and indefatigable workers. Brentano hoped to use whatever tales they might send him in a future publication of folk tales, and he was able to publish some of the songs they gathered in the second and third volumes of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* in 1808. The Grimms believed strongly in sharing their research and findings with friends and congenial scholars, and between 1807 and 1812 they began collecting tales with the express purpose of sending them to Brentano, as well as of using them as source material for gaining a greater historical understanding of the German language and customs.

Contrary to popular belief, the Grimms did not collect their tales by visiting peasants in the countryside and writing down the tales that they heard. Their primary method was to invite storytellers to their home and then have them tell the tales aloud, which the Grimms either noted down on first hearing or after a couple of hearings. Most of the storytellers during this period were educated young women from the middle class or aristocracy. For instance, in Kassel a group of young women from the Wild family (Dortchen, Gretchen, Lisette, and Marie Elisabeth), their mother (Dorothea), and the Hassenpflug family (Amalie, Jeanette, and Marie) used to meet regularly to relate tales

that they had heard from their nursemaids, governesses, and servants. In 1808, Jacob formed a friendship with Werner von Haxthausen, who came from Westphalia, and in 1811, Wilhelm visited the Haxthausen estate and became acquainted there with a circle of young men and women (Ludowine, Marianne, and August von Haxthausen, and Jenny and Annette von Droste-Hülfshoff), whose tales he noted down. Still, the majority of the storytellers came from Hessia: Dorothea Viehmann, a tailor's wife from nearby Zwehrn who used to sell fruit in Kassel, would visit the Grimms and told them a good many significant tales; and Johann Friedrich (Wachtmeister) Krause, an old retired soldier, gave the brothers tales in exchange for some of their old clothes. Many of the tales that the Grimms recorded had French origins because the Hassenpflugs were of Huguenot ancestry and spoke French at home. Most of the brothers' informants were familiar with both oral tradition and literary tradition and would combine motifs from both sources. In addition to the tales of these storytellers and others who came later, the Grimms took tales directly from books and journals and edited them according to their taste.

In 1810, when Brentano finally requested the Grimms' collection of tales, the brothers had copies made and sent forty-nine texts to him. They had copies made because they felt Brentano would take great poetic license and turn them into substantially different tales, whereas they were intent on using the tales to document basic truths about the customs and practices of the German people and on preserving their authentic ties to the oral tradition. Actually, the Grimms need not have worried about Brentano's use of their tales, for he never touched them but abandoned them in the Ölenberg Monastery in Alsace. Only in 1920 were the handwritten tales rediscovered and published in different editions in 1924, 1927, and 1974. The last publication by Heinz Rölleke is the most scholarly and useful, for he has carefully shown how the Grimms's original handwritten manuscripts can help us to document their sources and reveal the great changes the brothers made in shaping the tales.

As it happened, after the Grimms sent their collected texts to Brentano, who was unreliable and was going through great personal difficulties, they decided to publish the tales themselves and began

changing them and preparing them for publication. They also kept adding new tales to their collection. Jacob set the tone, but the brothers were very much in agreement about how they wanted to alter and stylize the tales. This last point is significant because some critics have wanted to see major differences between Jacob and Wilhelm. These critics have argued that there was a dispute between the brothers after Wilhelm assumed major responsibility for the editing of the tales in 1815 and that Wilhelm transformed them against Jacob's will. There is no doubt that Wilhelm was the primary editor after 1815, but Jacob established the framework for their editing practice between 1807 and 1812 and even edited the majority of the tales for the first volume. A comparison of the way Jacob and Wilhelm worked both before and after 1815 does not reveal major differences, except that Wilhelm did take more care to refine the style and make the contents of the tales more acceptable for a children's audience or, really, for adults who wanted the tales censored for children. Otherwise, the editing of Jacob and Wilhelm exhibits the same tendencies from the beginning to the end of their project: the endeavor to make the tales stylistically smoother; the concern for clear sequential structure; the desire to make the stories more lively and pictorial by adding adjectives, old proverbs, and direct dialogue; the reinforcement of motives for action in the plot; the infusion of psychological motifs; and the elimination of elements that might detract from a rustic tone. The model for a good many of their tales was the work of the gifted artist Philipp Otto Runge, whose two stories in dialect, "The Fisherman and His Wife" and "The Juniper Tree," represented in tone, structure, and content the ideal narrative that the Grimms wanted to create.

And create they did. The Grimms were not merely collectors. In fact, their major accomplishment in publishing their two volumes of 156 tales in 1812 and 1815 was to create an ideal type for the literary fairy tale, one that sought to be as close to the oral tradition as possible, while incorporating stylistic, formal, and substantial thematic changes to appeal to a growing middle-class audience. By 1819, when the second edition of the tales, now in one volume that included 170 texts, was published and Wilhelm assumed complete charge of the revisions, the brothers had established the form and manner through

which they wanted to preserve, contain, and present to the German public what they felt were profound truths about the origins of civilization. Indeed, they saw the "childhood of humankind" as embedded in customs that Germans had cultivated; the tales were to serve as reminders of such rich, natural culture.

After 1819 there were five more editions and sixty-nine new texts added to the collection and twenty-eight omitted. By the time the seventh edition appeared in 1857, there were 211 texts in all. Most of the additions after 1819 were from literary sources, and the rest were either sent to the brothers by informants or recorded from a primary source. Indeed, the chief task after 1819 was largely one of refinement: Wilhelm often changed the original texts by comparing them to different versions that he had acquired. While he evidently tried to retain what he and Jacob considered the essential message of the tale, he tended to make the tales more proper and prudent for bourgeois audiences. Thus it is crucial to be aware of the changes both brothers made between the original handwritten manuscript and the last edition of 1857. Compare the following, for example:

"Snow White" — Ölenberg Manuscript

When Snow White awoke the next morning, they asked her how she happened to get there. And she told them everything, how her mother, the queen, had left her alone in the woods and gone away. The dwarfs took pity on her and persuaded her to remain with them and do the cooking for them when they went to the mines. However, she was to beware of the queen and not to let anyone into the house.

"Snow White" — 1812 Edition

When Snow White awoke, they asked her who she was and how she happened to get into the house. Then she told them how her mother had wanted to have her put to death, but the hunter had spared her life, and how she had run the entire day and finally arrived at their house. So the dwarfs took pity on her and said, "If you keep house for us and cook, sew, make the beds, wash and knit, and keep everything tidy and clean, you may stay with us, and you will have everything you want. In the evening, when we come home, dinner must be ready. During the day we are in the mines and dig for gold, so you will be alone. Beware of the queen and let no one into the house."

"Rapunzel" — 1812 Edition

At first Rapunzel was afraid, but soon she took such a liking to the young king that she made an agreement with him: he was to come every day and be pulled up. Thus they lived merrily and joyfully for a certain time, and the fairy did not discover anything until one day when Rapunzel began talking to her and said, "Tell me, Mother Gothel, why do you think my clothes have become too tight for me and no longer fit?"

"Rapunzel" — 1857 Edition

When he entered the tower, Rapunzel was at first terribly afraid, for she had never laid eyes on a man before. However, the prince began to talk to her in a friendly way and told her that her song had touched his heart so deeply that he had not been able to rest until he had seen her. Rapunzel then lost her fear, and when he asked her whether she would have him for her husband, and she saw that he was young and handsome, she thought, He'll certainly love me better than old Mother Gothel. So she said yes and placed her hand in his.

"I want to go with you very much," she said, "but I don't know how I can get down. Every time you come, you must bring a skein of silk with you, and I'll weave it into a ladder. When it's finished, then I'll climb down, and you can take me away on your horse."

They agreed that until then he would come to her every evening, for the old woman came during the day. Meanwhile, the sorceress did not notice anything, until one day Rapunzel blurted out, "Mother Gothel, how is it that you're much heavier than the prince? When I pull him up, he's here in a second."

"The Three Spinners" — 1812 Edition

In olden times there lived a king who loved flax spinning more than anything in the world, and his queen and daughters had to spin the entire day. If he did not hear the wheels humming, he became angry. One day he had to take a trip, and before he departed, he gave the queen a large box with flax and said, "I want this flax spun by the time I return."

"The Three Spinners" — 1857 Edition

There once was a lazy maiden who did not want to spin, and no matter what her mother said, she refused to spin. Finally, her mother became

so angry and impatient that she beat her, and her daughter began to cry loudly. Just then the queen happened to be driving by, and when she heard the crying, she ordered the carriage to stop, went into the house, and asked the mother why she was beating her daughter, for her screams could be heard out on the street. The woman was too ashamed to tell the queen that her daughter was lazy and said, "I can't get her to stop spinning. She does nothing but spin and spin, and I'm so poor that I can't provide the flax."

"Well," the queen replied, "there's nothing I like to hear more than the sound of spinning, and I'm never happier than when I hear the constant humming of the wheels. Let me take your daughter with me to my castle. I've got plenty of flax, and she can spin as much as she likes."

As is evident from the above examples, the Grimms made major changes while editing the tales. They eliminated erotic and sexual elements that might be offensive to middle-class morality, added numerous Christian expressions and references, emphasized specific role models for male and female protagonists according to the dominant patriarchal code of that time, and endowed many of the tales with a "homey," or *biedermeier*, flavor by the use of diminutives, quaint expressions, and cute descriptions. Moreover, though the collection was not originally printed with children in mind as the primary audience the first two volumes had scholarly annotations, which were later published separately — Wilhelm made all the editions from 1819 on more appropriate for children, or rather, to what he thought would be proper for children to learn. Indeed, some of the tales, such as "Mother Trudy" and "The Stubborn Child," are intended to be harsh lessons for children. Such didacticism did not contradict what both the Grimms thought the collection should be, namely an *Erziehungsbuch*, an educational manual. The tendency toward attracting a virtuous middle-class audience is most evident in the so-called *Kleine Ausgabe* (*Small Edition*), a selection of fifty tales from the *Grosse Ausgabe* (*Large Edition*). This *Small Edition* was first published in 1825 in an effort to popularize the larger work and to create a best-seller. There were ten editions of this book, which contained the majority of the *Zaubermärchen* (the magic fairy tales), from 1825 to 1858. With such tales as "Cinderella," "Snow White," "Sleeping Beauty," "Little Red Riding Hood," and "The Frog King," all of which underline morals in keeping with the Protestant ethic and a patriarchal notion of sex roles, the book was bound to be a success.

The magic fairy tales were the ones that were the most popular and acceptable in Europe and America during the nineteenth century, but it is important to remember that the Grimms' collection also includes unusual fables, legends, anecdotes, jokes, and religious tales. The variety of their tales is often overlooked because only a handful have been selected by parents, teachers, publishers, and critics for special attention. This selective process is generally neglected when critics talk about the effects of the tales and the way they should be conveyed or not conveyed to children (fig. 5).

The Grimms' collection *Children's and Household Tales* was not an immediate success in Germany. In fact, Ludwig Bechstein's *Deutsches Märchenbuch* (*German Book of Fairy Tales*, 1845) was more popular for a time. However, by the 1870s the Grimms' tales had been incorporated into the teaching curriculum in Prussia and other German principalities, and they were also included in primers and anthologies for children throughout the Western world. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the *Children's and Household Tales* was second only to the Bible as a best-seller in Germany and has continued to hold this position. Furthermore, there is no doubt that the Grimms' tales, published either together in a single volume or individually as illustrated books, enjoy the same popularity in the English-speaking world.

Such popularity has always intrigued critics, and advocates of various schools of thought have sought to analyze and interpret the "magic" of the Grimms' tales. Foremost among the critics are the folklorists, educators, psychologists, and literary critics of different persuasions including structuralists, literary historians, semioticians, and Marxists. Each group has made interesting contributions to the scholarship on the Grimms' tales, although there are times when historical truths about the Grimms' work are discarded or squeezed to fit into a pet theory.

The efforts made by folklorists to categorize the Grimms' tales after the nineteenth century were complicated by the fact that numerous

Figure 5. "Rumpelstiltskin." From *Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*. Trans. Mrs. Edgar Lucas. Illustr. Arthur Rackham. London: Constable, 1910.

German folklorists used the tales to explain ancient German customs and rituals, under the assumption that the tales were authentic documents of the German people. This position, which overlooked the French and other European connections, led to an "Aryan" approach during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, which allowed many German folklorists to interpret the tales along racist and elitist lines. Such an approach had always been contested by folklorists outside Germany, who viewed the tales as part of the vast historical development of the oral tradition, wherein the Grimms' collection is given special attention because of the mixture of oral and literary motifs. These motifs have been related by folklorists to motifs in other folk tales in an effort to find the origin of a particular motif or tale type and its variants. By doing this kind of research, folklorists have been able to chart distinctions in the oral traditions and customs of different countries.

Educators have not been interested in motifs so much as in the morals and the types of role models in the tales. Depending on the country and the educational standards in a particular historical period, teachers and school boards have often dictated which Grimms' tales are to be used or abused. Generally speaking, such tales as "The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids," "Cinderella," "Little Red Cap," and "Snow White" have always been deemed acceptable because they instruct children through explicit warnings and lessons, even though some of the implicit messages may be harmful to children. Most of the great pedagogical debates center around the brutality and cruelty in some tales, and the tendency among publishers and adapters of the tales has been to eliminate the harsh scenes. Consequently, Cinderella's sisters will not have their eyes pecked out; Little Red Cap and her grandmother will not be gobbled up by the wolf; the witch in "Snow White" will not be forced to dance in red-hot shoes; and the witch in "Hansel and Gretel" will not be shoved into an oven.

Such changes have annoyed critics of various psychoanalytical orientations, because they believe that the violence and conflict in the tales derive from profound instinctual developments in the human psyche and hence represent symbolical modes by which children and adults deal with sexual problems. Most psychoanalytical critics take their cues from Freud, even if they have departed from his method and

have joined another school of analysis. One of the first important books about the psychological impact of the Grimms' tales was Josephine Belz's *Das Märchen und die Phantasie des Kindes* (*The Fairy Tale and the Imagination of the Child*, 1919) in which she tried to establish important connections between children's ways of fantasizing and the symbols in the tales. Later, Carl Jung, Erich Fromm, and Gerza Roheim wrote valuable studies of fairy tales that sought to go beyond Freud's theories. In the period following World War II, Aniela Jaffé, Joseph Campbell, and Maria von Franz charted the links between archetypes, the collective unconscious, and fairy tales, while Julius Heuscher and Bruno Bettelheim focused on Oedipal conflicts from neo-Freudian positions in their analyses of some Grimms' tales. Finally, André Favat published an important study, *Child and the Tale* (1977), which uses Piaget's notions of child development, interests, and stages of understanding to explore the tales and their impact. Although the various psychoanalytical approaches have shed light on the symbolical meanings of the tales from the point of view of particular schools of thought, the tales have often been taken out of context to demonstrate the value of a psychoanalytical theory rather than to render a cultural and aesthetic appreciation and evaluation of the text.

Literary critics have reacted to the psychoanalytical approach in different ways. Influenced by the theories of Vladimir Propp (*Morphology of the Folktale*, 1968) and Max Lüthi (*Once Upon a Time*, 1970), formalists, structuralists, and semioticians have analyzed individual texts to discuss the structure of the tale, its aesthetic components and functions, and the hidden meanings of the signs. Literary historians and philologists such as Ludwig Denecke and Heinz Rölleke have tried to place the Grimms' work in a greater historical context in order to show how the brothers helped develop a mixed genre, often referred to as the *Buchmärchen* (book tale), combining aspects of the oral and literary tradition. Sociological and Marxist critics such as Dieter Richter, Christa Bürger, and Bernd Wollenweber have discussed the tales in light of the social and political conditions in Germany during the nineteenth century and have drawn attention to the racist and sexist notions in the tales. In the process, they have added fuel to the debate among educators, and the use and abuse of the Grimms' tales remains

a key issue even today — among educators, psychologists, folklorists, and literary critics.

Though there were debates about the value of the tales during the Grimms' own lifetime, if they were alive today, they would probably be surprised to see how vigorous and violent some of the debates are and how different the interpretations tend to be. To a certain extent, the intense interest in their tales by so many different groups of critics throughout the world is a tribute to the Grimms' uncanny sense of how folk narratives inform cultures. They were convinced that their tales possessed essential truths about the origins of civilization, and they selected and revised those tales that would best express these truths. They did this in the name of humanity and *Kultur*: the Grimms were German idealists who believed that historical knowledge of customs, mores, and laws would increase self-understanding and social enlightenment. Their book is not so much a book of magic as it is a manual for education that seeks to go beyond the irrational. It is in their impulse to educate, to pass on the experiences of a variety of people who knew the lore of survival, that we may find the reasons why we are still drawn to the tales today. Though the Grimms imbued the tales with a heavy dose of Christian morality, the Protestant work ethic, and patriarchalism, they also wanted the tales to depict social injustices and possibilities for self-determination. Their tales reflect their concerns and the contradictions of their age. Today we have inherited their concerns and contradictions, and their tales still read like innovative strategies for survival. Most of all they provide hope that there is more to life than mastering the art of survival. Their "once upon a time" keeps alive our utopian longing for a better world that can be created out of our dreams and actions.