

MARVELS



& TALES

Volume

14

Number

2

2000

JOURNAL OF FAIRY-TALE STUDIES



PUBLISHED BY
WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CONTENTS

Editorial Policy 215

Guidelines for Submissions 216

ARTICLES

219 Complex Entities in the Universe of Fairy Tales*Francisco Vaz da Silva*

This paper considers fairy tales as conveyers of symbolic patterns pertaining to the aural traditions of Europe, endeavors to disclose aspects of such symbolism that are often veiled by typological assumptions, and submits the idea that a complex ontology is conveyed in the workings of European oral traditions. By treating a number of fairy-tale themes as parts of the global “picture of transformations” delineated by Propp, and by moreover considering those themes against their ethnographic background, this paper brings to light some basic features of an underlying metaphysical worldview.

244 “History’s Bearer”: The Afterlife of “Bluebeard”*Stephen Benson*

Starting out from the idea of the past as a pervasive presence in Charles Perrault’s “Bluebeard,” this essay seeks to explore the interrelation of two sets of retellings of “Bluebeard,” one operatic, one literary. The first set—Dukas/Maeterlinck’s *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* and Bartók/Balázs’s *Duke Bluebeard’s Castle*—can be read as situating the tale within fin-de-siècle discourses of gender and history, and it is to this particular contextualization that the second set of narratives—John Updike’s “George and Vivian” and Angela Carter’s “The Bloody Chamber”—returns. What emerges from the various historical and textual toings and froings, is a reading of “Bluebeard” which aligns the two central protagonists with particular attitudes to history, thus offering a representation of gender difference as a difference of historical perspective.

268 Disney’s *Mulan*—the “True” Deconstructed Heroine?*Lisa Brocklebank*

This article examines Disney’s *Mulan* in light of cross-dressing within fairy tales, the articulation of gender paradigms, and the role of Disney as purveyor of “canonical”

meaning within popular culture. It first looks at *Mulan* in terms of the cross-dressing motif, situating the film within the larger discussion of cross-dressing in the fairy tale and briefly exploring similar tales of transgendered warriors by looking at common themes, motifs, narrative strategies, and disruptions. Secondly, it discusses the film itself by analyzing the performance of gender. It then evaluates the extent to which *Mulan* offers a depiction of a deconstructed heroine—one able to incorporate both traditionally “male” and “female” gender characteristics. Next, the essay examines *Mulan* in terms of a paradigm shift within the Disney production of gender and it debates the possible effects of the “Disneyfication” of a marginal and subversive form such as the folktale. The essay concludes by looking at the relation of the Internet to the reception of the tale/film.

SCHOLARSHIP IN TRANSLATION

287 A New Debate about “Old Marie”? Critical Observations on the Attempt to Remythologize Grimms’ Fairy Tales from a Sociohistorical Perspective

Lothar Bluhm / Translated by Deborah Lokai Bischof

This essay by German scholar Lothar Bluhm critiques sociohistorical interpretations of Grimms’ fairy tales that ignore basic textual facts and philological perspectives. In addition to demonstrating the persistence of scholarly myths—especially that of the alleged Grimm informant “old Marie”—and the interpretive pitfalls that enable their longevity, Bluhm articulates the fundamental principles that must guide any credible sociohistorical reading of the tales in Grimms’ collection.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

315 One More Step

Roland Kübler / Translated by M. G. Hesse

This translation offers an example of the work of one of Germany’s most successful contemporary fairy-tale writers, Roland Kübler. The story, from the collection *Traumsegel* (1994), is a literary fairy tale exploring the themes of anguish and hope.

REVIEWS 321

CRITICAL EXCHANGES 336

PROFESSIONAL NOTICES 337

CONTRIBUTORS 339

INDEX TO VOLUME 14 (2000) 341