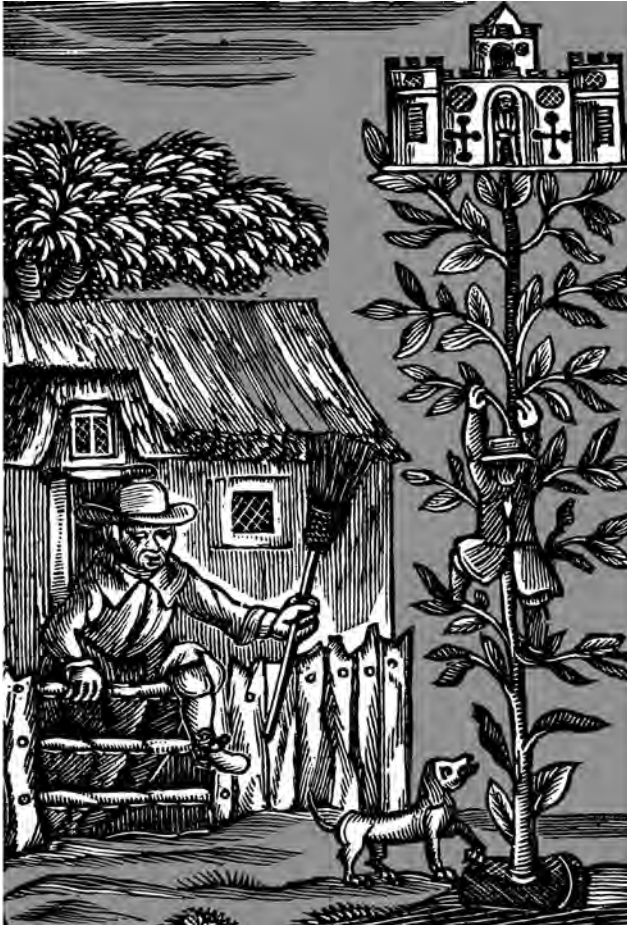


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CONTENTS

Editorial Policy 162

Guidelines for Submissions 163

ARTICLES

**167 Foils and Fakes: The Hydra in Giambattista Basile's
Dragon-Slayer Tale, "Lo mercante"***Suzanne Magnanini*

Through a sociohistorical analysis of the hydra in Giambattista Basile's dragon-slayer tale "Lo mercante," this essay challenges the universalizing interpretation of the dragon as a worthy foil for the hero. In depicting the hero's struggle with the beast, Basile employs tropes that purposefully recall a creature that was crafted by charlatans and widely discussed in scientific texts. Basile transforms the epic battle between dragon and slayer into a comic encounter in which the hero confronts a manufactured monster while playfully blurring the boundary between two seemingly disparate genres, the scientific treatise and the literary fairy tale.

**197 Beauty's Chambers: Mixed Styles and Mixed Messages in
Villeneuve's *Beauty and the Beast****Virginia E. Swain*

Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve's original novel *La Belle et la Bête*, published in 1740 and radically abridged by Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont sixteen years later, has been criticized for its excessive length and its odd mixture of realism and fantasy. This essay argues that the novel's hybrid form and inner tensions reflect the early emergence of a new role for women in the bourgeois private sphere, which parallels a shift within the grotesque aesthetic. These changes may also be seen in the wall panels of the Grande and Petite Singeries at Chantilly painted in the mid-1730s.

224 Whose Talk Is It? Almodóvar and the Fairy Tale in *Talk to Her**Adriana Novoa*

Given the traumatic character of some of its scenes, it is surprising that the most recent film by Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar, far from provoking indignation, has met with almost universal critical and popular acclaim, including an Academy Award for best screenplay. In this essay, the author shows how *Talk to Her* both exploits and reinvents traditional fairy-tale narratives and how it employs fairy-tale strategies in critiquing a contemporary society beset by dehumanization and alienation. But in the very act of subverting relationships between men by reinventing the fairy tale, Almodóvar perpetuates a surprisingly traditional misogyny that demands careful analysis.

249 The Bluebeard Syndrome in Atwood's *Lady Oracle*: Fear and Femininity*Shuli Barzilai*

The multiple identities of Joan Foster in *Lady Oracle* are the by-products of many literary and social models. Joan exists partly as a central narrative agent and partly as a nexus or repository of language and culture. At stake, however, is something more than an authorial display of postmodernist temperament and virtuosity. The intricate weave of the Bluebeard syndrome into the heterogeneous narratives that constitute *Lady Oracle* dramatizes the complex exchanges between popular culture and the reality of women's lives. Margaret Atwood explores the unsettling transpositions between literary and literal romance, on the one hand, and between imagined and experienced aggression against women, on the other.

274 Spatial Representation in European Popular Fairy Tales*Alfred Messerli*

The European fairy tale handles the linguistic construction of space with extreme thriftiness, giving only those visual and acoustic indicators of space that are absolutely necessary for the comprehension of the story. Furthermore, the space in the fairy tale is by no means a homogeneous space, but one of places (points) and channels (lines) that are formed by the hero's path. Space is simultaneously contractible and extendable. Its profile is formed by the plot and the narrative perspective from which the story is related.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

287 Juan Soldado*Cecilia Böhl de Faber / Translated by Robert M. Fedorchek*

This story by the nineteenth-century Spanish novelist and folklorist Cecilia Böhl de Faber appears in her *Cuentos andaluces* (*Andalusian Tales*, 1859). In the prologue she tells us that these tales come from the oral tradition of southern Spain (Andalusia), and as Christianity is rooted in that tradition, "Juan Soldado" exemplifies it through his encounters with Christ and Saint Peter on the one hand and a young Satan and Lucifer on the other.

295 Juan Bobo and the Riddling Princess: A Puerto Rican Folktale*William Bernard McCarthy*

J. Alden Mason's 1914–15 field trip to Puerto Rico resulted in a vast collection of songs, riddles, and folktales, published regularly over the next fourteen years in the *Journal of American Folklore*. The rich harvest of tales included some seventy Juan Bobo stories. "Juan Bobo and the Riddling Princess," like many other Puerto Rican *märchen*, is a composite. Translating the story presented interesting challenges. I had to try for a storyteller's voice in English that would match the inspired silliness of the narrative voice in Spanish. The key word in the story, *adivinar*, defied translation. Puerto Rican idioms and the riddles themselves presented further challenges.

Reviews 303**Critical Exchanges 331**Buried Treasure or Fairy-Tale *Verismo*? Framing Sicilian Women's Stories*Dorothy Noyes*

The Idealization of Laura Gonzenbach's Sicilian Tales and the Misrepresentation of a Project: A Response to Dorothy Noyes

*Jack Zipes***Professional Notices 350****Contributors 355****Index to Volume 19 (2005) 358**