

Fairy tales are stories which, in the earliest mentions of their existence, include that circle of listeners, the audience; as they point to possible destinies, possible happy outcomes, they successfully involve their hearers or readers in identifying with the protagonists, their misfortunes, their triumphs. Schematic characterization leaves a gap into which the listener may step. Who has not tried on the glass slipper? Or offered it for trying? The relation between the authentic, artisan source and the tale recorded in book form for children and adults is not simple; we are not hearing the spinsters and the knitters in the sun whom Orsino remembers chanting in *Twelfth Night*, unmediated. But the quality of the mediation is of great interest. From the mid-seventeenth century, the nurses, governesses, family domestics, working women living in or near the great house or castle in town and country existed in a different relation to the elite men and women who may have once been in their charge, as children. The future Marquise de la Tour du Pin recalled in her memoirs how her nurse was her mainstay and that, when she turned eleven and a governess was appointed instead, 'I used to escape whenever I could and try to find her [the nurse], or to meet her about the house.' Another noblewoman, Victorine de Chastenay, also wrote that her own mother alarmed her and dominated her, and that she took refuge with her nurse and her nurse's family. The rapports created in *ancien régime* childhood shape the matter of the stories, and the cultural model which places the literati's texts on the one side of a divide, and popular tales on the other, can and should be redrawn: fairy tales act as an airy suspension bridge, swinging slightly under different breezes of opinion and economy, between the learned, literary and print culture in which famous fairy tales have come down to us, and the oral, illiterate, people's culture of the *veillée*; and on this bridge the traffic moves in both directions.

Women writers like Marie-Jeanne L'Héritier and Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy mediated anonymous narratives, the popular, vernacular culture they had inherited through fairy tale, in spite of the aristocratic frippery their stories make at a first impression. Indeed, they offer rare and rich testimony to a sophisticated chronicle of wrongs and ways to evade or right them, when they recall stories they had heard as children or picked up later and retell them in a spirit of protest, of polite or not so polite revolt. These tales are wrapped in fantasy and unreality, which no doubt helped them entertain their audiences—in the courtly salon as well as at the village hearth—but they also serve the stories' greater purpose, to reveal possibilities, to map out a different way and a new perception of love, marriage, women's skills, thus advocating a means of escaping imposed limits and prescribed destiny. The fairy tale looks at the ogre like Bluebeard or the Beast of 'Beauty and the Beast' in order to disenchant him; while romancing reality, it is a medium deeply concerned with undoing prejudice. Women of different social positions

have collaborated in storytelling to achieve true recognition for their subjects: the process is still going on.

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ZOHAR SHAVIT

The Concept of Childhood and Children's Folktales: Test Case—"Little Red Riding Hood"†

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Children's literature today enjoys centrality in cultural awareness and constitutes such a sizeable proportion of new educational materials that it is hard to imagine publishing activity without it. However, although children's literature is today a "natural" phenomenon taken for granted in any national literature, it is a relatively new development—less than two hundred years old. Books written especially for children were virtually unknown until the eighteenth century, and the children's book industry did not begin to flourish until the second half of the nineteenth century, when adult literature (in the modern sense) had already been established for at least one hundred years.

The reasons contributing to the late development of children's literature are diverse, but undoubtedly among the most important was the total absence of the concepts of "child" and "childhood" as we perceive them today. Before children's literature could be written, "childhood" itself had to come into existence and receive recognition and legitimation as a distinct time period in the life of the individual, or in the words of Townsend: "Before there could be children's books, there had to be children—children, that is, who were accepted as beings with their own particular needs and interests, not only as miniature men and women."¹

In this article I will analyze along general lines and only in their principal features the creation and crystallization of the prerequisites for the development of Western children's literature—the development of the concept of the "child" in culture—and I will examine the relationships between this concept and texts written for children. In other words, I will ask how the nature of the concept of the child in literature and the meaning that has been given to the nature have to a large extent determined the character and the structure of texts for children, and how the changes that occurred in this concept were largely responsible for the changes that came about in texts for children. In

† From *Little Red Riding Hood: A Casebook*, ed. Alan Dundes (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1989) 129–52, 156–58. Originally published in Hebrew in *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Folklore* 4 (1983): 93–124. Reprinted by permission.

1. J. R. Townsend, *Written for Children* (London: Penguin, 1977), 17.

from: The Classic Fairy Tales ed. by Maria Tatar

attempting to answer these questions, I will use as a test case different versions of the folktale "Red Riding Hood."

The twentieth century is characterized by the almost obsessive use of the concept of childhood: issues about psychological, physical, and sexual problems of the child do not cease to concern adults. The period of childhood is considered the most important period in one's life, and an adult's behavior is often explained by his childhood experiences. But such a perception of childhood is completely different from the cultural outlook that prevailed two hundred years ago—the concept of childhood as we know it today did not exist then.

In his classic work, Philippe Ariès² proposes the argument, supported by later research as well,³ that from the Middle Ages until the seventeenth century a different view of childhood dominated social consciousness, a view which began to develop and to change along lines familiar to us today beginning in the seventeenth century, passing through several transformations as one of the basic concepts of Western civilization.

The Concept of Childhood up to the Seventeenth Century

Up to the seventeenth century the child was not perceived as an entity distinct from the adult, and consequently he was not recognized as having special needs. One of the results of this outlook was the lack of an established educational system for children, and of books written specifically for them.

In the Middle Ages and the ensuing period neither the living conditions nor the prevailing theological standpoint allowed for the concept of childhood. In the conceptual outlook of the day there was no room for the concept of childhood because of the identification between man and nature, as a result of which the life cycle was described as analogous to that of nature, including only the periods of birth, life, and death. In such a system there was no place for the period of childhood, the lack of which in the conceptual framework was no doubt strengthened by the poor chances of survival of children and their high mortality rate, which rendered their continued existence utterly uncertain. In addition, the basic living conditions were a contributing factor: people were wed at a relatively young age, and therefore "left childhood"—in the modern sense of the term—at a very tender age. Upper-class children took an active part in society from an extremely young age (10–13), whereas children of the lower classes were needed in the work force, and began working at a tender age. Consequently, children who successfully survived the first dangerous years of life could not remain

2. P. Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood* (New York: Vintage, 1962).

3. I. Weber-Kellermann, *Die Kindheit: Eine Kulturgeschichte* (Frankfurt a/M.: Insel Verlag, 1979); M.-L. Plessen and P. von Zahn, *Zwei Jahrtausende Kindheit* (Köln: VSC, 1979).

children for long, and were quickly forced to enter the adult world and to become part of it.

Relations between the Child's World and the Adult's World: From Unity to Polarization

Up to the seventeenth century children were an integral part of adult society, sharing clothing, lodging, games, and work. Unity prevailed between children and adults in regard to all physical and psychic needs. A process of polarization began to undermine this unity from the seventeenth century on, as can be seen, for instance, from a discussion about the nature of the dress of children and adults of the upper class.⁴ Up to the seventeenth century it was customary for children to wear a miniature version of the adults' clothing as soon as they stopped wearing swaddling clothes, which occurred at a relatively late age (3–5 years). With the development of the concept of childhood, the designing of special clothes for children also began. In general it can be said that the child's new wardrobe was characterized by items of attire which formerly belonged to the realm of adult wear and lost their function as such. Children's clothes became systematized through a process of reduction and at times also of simplification, and in the new system they also acquired a new function: they became a symbol of the separation of the world of children from that of the adult. Soon after certain items became children's clothing, they were used exclusively for children, such as breeches, which formerly had been a standard item of adult attire, but later became a trademark of children's dress. Moreover, various items of dress designated different stages of childhood, and permission to wear a certain item marked another stage in a child's maturation, until finally he entered the adult world and began to dress as a full-fledged adult.

The process of the transformation of childhood was expressed in other aspects of daily life, such as children's games, the educational system of the child, and even the fact that there was a special room in the house set aside for children, just as there were special rooms for the parents, for dining, and the like. As Ariès points out, an interesting example of this process of the transformation of elements from the adult's world to the world of the child and their consequent evolution into a trademark of the child's world is the case of the wooden rocking horse. The horse, which had been a primary medium of transportation, lost this function for the adult world at the end of the nineteenth century. It did not disappear from the culture, but rather evolved through a process of reduction and simplification into the wooden horse of the nursery, where it acquired a new function as a toy. Moreover, in ad-

4. For an exhaustive discussion about this aspect, see Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, 50–61; Plessen and von Zahn, *Zwei Jahrtausende Kindheit*.

dition to this function it became a symbol differentiating the children's room from the adults' room, and a *sine qua non* in nursery furnishings. (For a similar phenomenon, other dolls and miniature toys can be pointed to which originally had a ritual function for adults and children alike, but which later lost their ritual function, becoming not only part of the child's world, but his exclusive monopoly.)

Hence, in the process of the formation of the concept of "child," there occurred a polarization between the adult's and the child's world. The system of childhood began to be characterized by a series of elements which migrated from the adult system to the child's system, and took on the function of differentiating between the two systems.

*The Spread of the Concept of Childhood into Society:
Two Concepts*

The polarization between the adult's and the child's world and the spread of the concept of childhood were the result of many processes which occurred in Western society, especially the changes in social and material processes. The Industrial Revolution, the decrease in infant mortality, and the increase in life expectancy undoubtedly all played an important part in the development of the child concept, but changes in man's perception of the world during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment contributed considerably to the fact that the concept of "child" began to rise to consciousness before the physical conditions justified it, that is, before any change occurred in living conditions, and the change in these conditions later aided in the dissemination of the child concept among the middle class as well.

The first signs of the formation of this child concept, and the recognition that the child is a creature distinct from the adult, were already apparent at the end of the sixteenth century in the realm of painting. Here the child served a religious purpose—the infant Jesus, Jesus and the Angels, and the like—being depicted for the first time as sweet, angelic, and innocent, qualities which were also to characterize the image of the child at a later date. In time this iconography acquired a decorative character (*viz.* the paintings of Putti) beyond its original religious nature, and images of children gradually began to undergo a process of secularization and to hold a dominant position in the realms of painting and iconography. These pictures were the expression of a perception of the child as different from the adult by virtue of the former's innocence, sweetness, and angelic appearance. Gradually depictions of children began to acquire their own legitimacy, and painting children's portraits became more and more common. Thus the depiction of children aided in the spread of the new concept of the child as possessing the qualities portrayed in the paintings, qualities which from

the seventeenth century onward made children a source of amusement for adults.

Regarding the child as a source of entertainment began to develop within the family circle. People no longer hesitated to acknowledge the diversion which children provided, and delighting in children, as well as in their sweetness, beauty, and witticisms, became fashionable among the upper classes. Children were invited to the parlor so that adults might be amused by them: the attitude towards children greatly resembled that assumed for cherished pet animals. Fleury described this attitude as follows: "It is as if the poor children had been made only to amuse the adults, like little dogs or little monkeys."⁵

This attitude began to arouse resistance among extrafamilial groups, such as moralists and pedagogues, who were opposed to the fashion which prevailed in relation to children. Nevertheless, they accepted the principal concept of considering the innocent child who is closer to God as distinct from the adult. They used this very concept to justify their demand for separating children from the corrupt adult society.

In contrast to the perception that was developing within the extended family circle, which saw the child as a source of amusement, a second perception of the child arose among groups which stood in opposition to the family: the church, the moralists, and the pedagogues, who, because of their awareness of his different nature, felt responsible for the spiritual development of the child. They believed that children need education and discipline, and simultaneous with the new interest in the psychology of the child, they drafted a demand for an educational system that would satisfy these needs. Henceforth the child was perceived as a delicate creature who must be protected, educated, and molded in accordance with the current educational beliefs and goals.

The way to shape children along these lines was first and foremost by means of books, which were considered the primary tool in achieving these "pedagogical" goals. This new "educational" perception of society, unlike the "amusement" perception which preceded it, created for the first time the need for children's books, and became the frame of reference in which the first books were written whose intended audience was specifically children. From then on official children's books were written, based on an understanding of the child as the audience and of his needs, which were different from those of adults. When a change in this understanding came about, texts written for children changed as well.

In order to investigate the relationship between the cultural concept of the child and the norms governing literature for children, I shall analyze as a test-case different versions of "Little Red Riding Hood."

5. Quoted in Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, 131.

The text of "Little Red Riding Hood" has been chosen not only because it is a "classic" of children's literature, but also for reasons of methodological convenience, as there is an extraordinary correspondence between the periods in which the different versions of the text were produced and the parallel developments in the child concept and the changes which occurred in it. Examining this text may therefore shed light on the link between the changes that took place in the child concept in Western civilization at different periods and the changes that occurred in the versions of the text in at least two ways: (1) understanding the child's needs and his comprehension capacity, and (2) seeing the manner in which the child and his world are presented in the texts themselves.

The examination of versions of "Little Red Riding Hood" will deal therefore with these questions and the way in which the "amusement" perception served as a basis for Perrault's version, its transformation into the "educational" version of the Brothers Grimm, and the further transformation of this version to the "protective" version of the twentieth century.

"Little Red Riding Hood": A Test Case of Attitudes towards Folktales from the Seventeenth Century On

We have seen how, in the process of the creation of the child concept, elements from the adult world have passed over to the child's world, becoming the exclusive property of the child, after previously being shared by adults and children alike. This process characterized modes of dress, games children played, and folktales, which gradually entered the child's world, until in the twentieth century they were considered an essential component in his development (unlike the first half of the nineteenth century, when they were considered too dangerous for children and were removed from the canon of juvenile literature).

Up until the nineteenth century, folktales were told and read, as were romances, by adults (even among the upper classes). Children, who constituted part of adult society, were acquainted with them in the same way, although the tales were not considered meant for them. However, starting from the second half of the seventeenth century a change occurred in the attitude of the upper class vis-à-vis folktales. This was part of a general change in the prevailing literary fashions. Members of the literary elite, whose tastes were becoming more "sophisticated," regarded folktales as too "simple" and "childish," suitable, in their estimation, only for children and members of the lower classes (who were seen as social equals by the class-conscious of the time).⁶ Despite this, it became fashionable to be interested in folktales and to write tales modeled after oral tales, at times pretending to be setting down an oral

6. Ibid., 95-98.

tale in written form (which was in some cases true). Yet in spite of the fact that folktales were in vogue, the writing and acceptance of them were based on the assumption that they were meant for children and the lower classes. Thus members of high society could enjoy them only vicariously through children, but since the child was perceived in any case as a source of amusement, adults could enjoy elements of the child's world while openly or covertly considering them part of the world of children, part of a culture different from that of the upper classes.

Perrault's Version

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MANIPULATING THE MODEL: THE AMBIGUITY OF
"LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD"

* * * Perrault was the first person to set down "Little Red Riding Hood" in writing. Scholars are still undecided on the question of whether or not Perrault's text is based on an existing folktale, mainly because of the atypical tragic ending of his text, a phenomenon unheard of in folktales. At any rate, even those scholars who believe that his text is based on an original folktale agree that Perrault doctored the text, altering part of its formal structure in order to make it more sophisticated.

For instance, Perrault changed the formulaic structure of the dialogue, which is generally characterized by completely symmetrical repetitions. Perrault violated this semi-sacred symmetry in the following manner:

The *better* to embrace you,—
The *better* to run with,—
The *better* to hear with,—
The *better* to see with,—
To eat you with.⁷

Nevertheless, Perrault took pains to create the illusion of a folktale, mainly by means of stylistic devices, as Soriano asserts: "An attentive study of vocabulary shows that many of the turns of phrase utilized by the tale-teller were already considered old at that time—it is in sum a reconstitution, a sort of 'in the manner of.'"⁸

The function of the stylizing of the text was not only to lend it the qualities of "authenticity" and "antiquity," but also, and perhaps primarily, to emphasize who its official audience was. The desire to stress the intended audience, that is, the child, would explain why Perrault

7. Gilbert Rouger, ed., *Contes de Perrault* (Paris: Garnier, 1967-1972), 115. Italics are mine.

8. Marc Soriano, *Les Contes de Perrault* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), pp. 154-55.

used in the text words which were at that time considered to belong exclusively to the language of children, words such as *la bobinette* and *la chevillette*, which were not part of the accepted written language.⁹ The very act of inserting such vocabulary items into the texts was a striking departure from the norm, thus serving an important stylistic function.

However, together with the attempt to characterize the work as "authentic" and as intended for children through the use of elements whose stylistic identity was clear, Perrault did not hesitate to deviate from the formulas of the folktale even at key points, such as the addition of a tragic ending, or in typical structures, such as the repetitions. In this manner he created a text which cannot be considered unequivocally either a folktale or a literary tale, possessing instead an ambiguous nature.

THE BASIS FOR THE AMBIGUOUS NATURE OF THE TEXT

It seems that the ambiguous nature of the text can be explained by its official and unofficial audience. This ambiguity enabled Perrault to address two different audiences at one and the same time. On the one hand, he was able to take advantage of the current perception regarding the appropriateness of folktales for children in order to direct the text officially to them, while at the same time availing himself of the common conception of the child as a source of amusement in order to orient the text to the literary elite. However, in order to ensure that the upper classes would read his work, he felt obliged to "equip" it with signs that would indicate who the true audience was, while also making possible the duplicity of the text. While the folktale formulas designated the official audience, the breaking of such formulas—in addition to lending an ironic and satirical aspect to the text—marked the unofficial audience, the literary elite. Numerous accounts from the period testify to Perrault's success in attracting his unofficial audience to reading these texts—perhaps even more so than their officially intended audience—as Muir states:

A feature of these salons, male and female alike, was the reading aloud of pasquinades, vaudevilles, sonnets à bouts-rimés, and similar short pieces: and the Comtesse d'Aulnoy seems to have introduced the telling of fairy-stories in the female salons. The idea caught on and became the rage. The fashion eventually extended to the male writers—The curious point to be taken is that the stories were devised or adapted from ancient originals, for the amusement not of children but of adults. The consequence is that,

9. *La bobinette*: (wooden) latch; *la chevillette*: page [Editor].

although the characters and the background belong superficially to fairy-tales, most of them are too sophisticated for children.¹

It is therefore evident that Perrault, like many of his contemporaries, did not write his famous tales for children alone, but also, or perhaps mainly, for the pleasure of his friends. It seems that the following quotation about his contemporary Mlle l'Héritier also applies to Perrault himself: "Mademoiselle l'Héritier wrote for the amusement of her friends and all of her writings bear the imprint of her 'salon wit.'"²

THE FUNCTION OF THE DUALITY OF THE INTENDED AUDIENCE

Perrault had to emphasize the fact that children were the official audience of his work because this was a condition for its acceptance by high society. Even scholars who see the text as meant primarily for children agree that at least part of it is aimed at adults, as Soriano, for example, says: "It is always addressed to an audience of children, no doubt, but at the same time allowing a wink in the direction of the adult."³

Whether the text was intended entirely for adults or only partially so, there is no disagreement that the ironic and satirical tone of the text, particularly as it is expressed in the tragic ending of the tale, is meant for adults, and not for children. By means of the tragic ending, Perrault created a satire about the city gentleman who does not hesitate to take advantage of the poor village girl. The text's satirical nature depends primarily on the moral, which comes at the end. From this ending it is made clear that the wolf is not a real wolf, but rather represents all sorts of people whom an innocent village girl must beware of:

Who does not know that these gentle wolves
Are of all such creatures the most dangerous.⁴

The depiction of the gentleman abusing the innocent village girl is further strengthened in the text by the erotic elements that accompany her description: her beauty, the color red which is her symbol, and of course the erotic bed scene, in which she is surprised to discover what "grandmother" looks like in bed, after the latter asks her to undress and to come lie with her: "Little Red Riding Hood took off her cloak, but when she climbed up on the bed she was astonished to see how her grandmother looked in her nightgown."⁵ It is clear that the erotic aspect encourages the reading of the text as the story of a gentleman exploiting the innocence of a village girl and enjoying her charms, rather than simply as the story of a little girl who is devoured by a wolf.

1. P. Muir, *English Children's Books* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), 36.

2. Soriano, 65.

3. *Ibid.*, 155.

4. Rouget, *Contes de Perrault*, 115.

5. *Ibid.*, 114–115.

The child concept of Perrault's day provided the background for *Les Contes* and the mask necessary for their acceptance by the literary elite. However, in addition to the changes that later took place in the conception of the child, the nature of the texts meant for him also changed, as well as in the way the child himself was depicted in different texts. These changes were among the factors causing the transformation of "Little Red Riding Hood" from Perrault's version to the later one that the Brothers Grimm collected and committed to writing—along with their own revisions and alterations—a century later.

*Differences between Versions of "Little Red Riding Hood":
Perrault vs. the Brothers Grimm*

Folklore research has dealt at length with the differences between the tales of Perrault and different versions of tales similar to his published by the Brothers Grimm. Scholars are divided regarding the origins of the texts and their degree of "originality," accounting for the similarities and differences in them by various methods. Some explain them using the historic-geographic method,⁶ while others prefer to look at cross-cultural relationships⁷ or the crossover from one national culture to another.⁸ Other researchers deny the possibility of a direct connection between Perrault's tales and those of the Brothers Grimm, attributing the similarities and differences to the intermediary influences of Tieck, whom the Brothers Grimm refer to in their commentary on "Little Red Riding Hood": "Perrault's 'Little Red Riding Hood' which Tieck elegantly reworked in his romantic drama . . ."⁹

Rather than getting involved in this complex argument, or refuting the conclusions of this or that researcher, I would like to propose an alternative way of accounting for the differences between Perrault's version and that of the Brothers Grimm: One could also regard the differences between the two as the result of the different perceptions of the concept of childhood which prevailed in each of the two periods in question, thereby yielding differing assumptions concerning the intended audience and the manner in which the child is presented in the texts.

In the hundred years that had passed since Perrault's days, a revolutionary change had taken place in the child concept. The "amusement" perception of the child was replaced in the Grimm Brothers' day by an "educational" perception which gave primary importance to

a new and heretofore unheard of concept: that of educating the child. Consequently, an educational system evolved, the needs of which largely dictated both the nature of works written for children, and above all the literary models then dominating the literary scene.

The Brothers Grimm, like other writers of the mid-nineteenth century, adopted the new image of the child, stressing his straightforwardness and the ability, uniquely his, to look at the world in a special way. They expressed this view in the introduction to *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, claiming to transmit the text from the child's point of view: "There runs throughout these narratives that quality of purity which makes children appear to us so wonderful and happy. The tales have, so to speak, the selfsame shining eyes open as far as they can possibly be while the rest of the body is still fragile, weak and unskilled for earthly labor."¹

However, in contradistinction to Perrault, whose official audience was the child, the Brothers Grimm did not intend their text for children at first, although the book's title indicates the origin of the texts: they were collected from household members—maidservants—and children. The tales were first intended for adult members of the literary elite, for the accepted literary tastes—a return to the primary sources and to nature were in vogue—enabled them to enjoy such texts. The Brothers Grimm did not have the option of directing their works to adults and children at one and the same time, for according to the current child concept, the child was seen as an entity distinct from the adult, with different needs and capabilities of understanding. In order nevertheless to enable children to read their tales, the Brothers Grimm thought it necessary to revise them, gearing them to a child's level of understanding, particularly from a stylistic point of view. This they did starting with the second edition, in the introduction to which they outlined the principles that guided them in their endeavor to render the texts suitable for children.

In spite of this, the Brothers Grimm still recognized the possibility that there would be parents who would deem the book inappropriate for their children, forbidding them to read it: "Therefore we have taken care to leave out of this new edition expressions which were not suitable for children. Yet there may be objections. One or another parent may find material embarrassing or offensive, so that they would not be comfortable putting the book into the hands of children. In such well-founded individual cases, the parents have an easy choice to make."² In this introduction, two new ideas are evident which apparently were a major part of the changes that occurred in the text since Perrault's time. As stated above, one idea expressed the supposition that the child

6. Reference to the Finnish School of folklore, which studies the origins and dissemination of tales.

7. J. Bolte and G. Polivka, *Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm*, vol. 4 (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1965 reprint of 1913 edition), 261–277.

8. H. V. Velten, "The Influence of Charles Perrault's *Contes de ma Mère l'Oie* on German Folklore," *Germanic Review* 5 (1930), 4–18.

9. Brüder Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, vol. 3 (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1890), 59.

1. Ibid., 16.

2. Ibid., 17.

is an entity distinct from the adult. The other expressed the belief that the adult is responsible for satisfying the child's needs, and that the latter must be under his direct and constant supervision.

The differences between the versions of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm thus consist of more than just different assumptions about the audience and the fact that in the Grimm text there is no trace of the protracted game which Perrault played with his audience. Another striking difference between the texts is the distinctive way the child and everything connected with him is presented in each. In the Grimm version of "Little Red Riding Hood" the two beliefs that were combined in the child concept of the time are evident, particularly in the portrayal of intrafamilial relations, the simple honesty of the child, and the need to guide and instruct him. These viewpoints will be treated here through an examination of the differing tones of the two texts, and their divergent endings, as well as less salient differences.

DIFFERENCES IN TONE AND ENDING

As many scholars have asserted, the most salient differences between Perrault and the Brothers Grimm lie in the tone of the texts, ironic versus naive, and in the ending, happy versus tragic.

It seems that the difference in tone is due to the differing intentions of the authors. Whereas Perrault used satire and irony to address the literary elite, the Brothers Grimm made a noticeable effort to preserve the illusion of the naive narrator, considered crucial to the "authenticity" of the text. Although they freely admitted reworking the oral text—the written version is probably very different from it and closer to Tieck's³—they still took pains to keep intact the naive character of the narrator, mainly by preserving the naive tone.

The other striking difference is, as noted earlier, the ending. In Perrault's version, the story ends when the wolf devours the girl, followed by a moral in rhyming verse. The Grimm version, on the other hand, offers two alternative endings, the common denominator between them being that the girl is not harmed in the end. In the first alternative, she is punished—the grandmother and the girl are at first devoured by the wolf, but are later rescued by the hunter, who also kills the wolf; however in the second alternative the wolf is drowned before it has a chance to harm the girl or her grandmother.

The drastic change in the nature of the tale's ending, completely changing its significance, raises the question why there was the need to insert such an ending at all, apart from the question of whether or

not it was organic to the text.⁴ In other words, what function did the addition of this ending to the text serve?

It is clear that turning the tragic ending into a happy one was first and foremost the result of the need to fit the story into the pattern of the folktale. The happy ending is considered an indispensable component of the folktale; it can be said to be a distinctive feature which differentiates folktales from literary tales. Hence the Brothers Grimm, or the anonymous narrator who added the happy ending (from the point of view of the function of the ending it is immaterial who was responsible for the addition, rather it is important to understand why it was necessary) could not deviate from the pattern, unlike Perrault, who intentionally departed from it at decisive points in the story. However, the selection of this specific ending has implications above and beyond the folktale pattern, reflecting also the educational views of the day. According to these views, the child must derive a moral lesson from every event, experience, or story to which he is exposed. Punishment was itself perceived as an integral part of the educational process—and in this respect the "Red Riding Hood" of the Brothers Grimm was no different. It is interesting to note that the Brothers Grimm themselves were pleased with the "educational" nature of the tales, seeing it as further proof that the text was suitable for children.⁵

Bolte and Polívka⁶ suggest that this specific ending was chosen because it already existed in the folktale inventory in the tale "The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids." Because the wolf's role as protagonist is common to both tales, its choice presented a "natural" and ready-made solution. Even if we accept this explanation, it does not contradict the one offered above. Moreover, we must not ignore the fact that in the tale "The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids" the element of learning a lesson is absent. This is a feature which exists only in the text of "Red Riding Hood," which strengthens the assumptions made about the text regarding the education of the child and the process of reward and punishment.

This difference between the versions of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm changed not only the ending of the text, but also its meaning and moral. Unlike Perrault's Little Red Riding Hood, the Grimms' Little Red Riding Hood has the opportunity to learn a lesson, and indeed avails herself of the opportunity. Whereas Perrault's moral emphasizes the wolf, thereby pointing to the gentleman from the city, the moral of the Brothers Grimm's version stresses Little Red Riding Hood's learning a lesson. Thus the tale was transformed from a satire to a tale about reward and punishment and learning a lesson.

4. On this question see Velten, "The Influence of Charles Perrault's Contes de ma Mère l'Oie."

5. See their introduction to the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, 17.

6. Bolte and Polívka, *Anmerkungen*, vol. 1, 234–237.

3. R. Hagen, "Perraults Märchen und die Brüder Grimm," *Zeitschrift für Deutsche Philologie* 74 (1955), 392–410.

The difference in emphasis in the two versions and in their general significance explains the total omission of the erotic scene and the erotic elements from the Grimm version, and was probably also the reason for some less obvious changes. In Perrault's version there are only slight hints as to the relationship between family members, while in the Grimm version they are quite explicit. Examples include the grandmother's love for the girl, the mother's feeling of responsibility for the grandmother, and the girl's love for her grandmother.

While in Perrault's version the grandmother's love for the girl is not mentioned at all, in the Grimm version her love for Little Red Riding Hood is boundless, and she makes her the red hood as a symbol of her love. Hence the hood serves a different function in each of the two versions: for Perrault it symbolizes the girl's eroticism, whereas for the Brothers Grimm it is an expression of the grandmother's deep love.

Perrault

The good woman made her a little red hood, which became her so well that everywhere she went by the name of Little Red Riding Hood.⁷

In the Grimm version, the mother's feeling of responsibility for the grandmother is far greater than in Perrault's version. Whereas in Perrault's, the girl is sent to the grandmother's house because the mother has baked flat cakes and because she has heard that the grandmother is sick, in the Grimm version the mother has precise knowledge of the grandmother's condition, and consequently sends the girl to help her. In the Grimm version family ties are much stronger than in Perrault's.

Perrault

One day her mother, who had just made and baked some cakes, said to her: "Go and see how your grandmother is, for I have been told that she is ill. Take her a cake and this little pot of butter."⁸

The Brothers Grimm

But it was her grandmother who loved her most. She could never give the child enough. One time she made her a present, a small, red velvet cap, and since it was so becoming and the maiden insisted on always wearing it, she was called Little Red Cap.⁹

The Brothers Grimm

One day her mother said to her, "Come, Little Red Cap, take this piece of cake and bottle of wine and bring them to your grandmother. She's sick and weak, and this will strengthen her."¹

The bond between the girl and her grandmother is also less haphazard in the Grimm version. In Perrault's version, the girl picks flowers for her own enjoyment alone, while in the Grimm version she picks them to bring as a gift to her grandmother:

Perrault

... and the little girl continued on her way by the longer road. As she went she amused herself by gathering nuts, running after the butterflies, and making nosegays of the wild flowers which she found.²

The Brothers Grimm

Little Red Cap looked around and saw how the rays of the sun were dancing through the trees back and forth and how the woods were full of beautiful flowers. So she thought to herself, If I bring Grandmother a bunch of fresh flowers, she'd certainly like that.³

Family ties and the great amount of attention paid to children—a phenomenon which was nonexistent in Perrault's time⁴—took on a central importance in the century following Perrault, and were apparently also among the reasons for the discrepancy between the texts in the presentation of family ties. Similarly, different assumptions regarding the rearing of children are discernible in the two versions.

In Perrault's day there was no educational system in the modern sense of the term, nor was the need for the systematic education of the child recognized. In the time of the Brothers Grimm, on the other hand, not only was an educational system already established, but it was seen as an essential condition for the normal development of the child, and as part of the adult's responsibility toward him. Views about children's education are expressed in the Grimm version first and foremost in the directions which the mother gives the little girl about how she should conduct herself at her grandmother's house, direction which are totally absent from the Perrault version. The mother instructs the girl to behave nicely: "And when you enter her room, don't forget to say good morning, and don't go peeping in all the corners."⁵ She admonishes her not to turn off the path: "Get an early start, before it becomes hot, and when you're out in the woods, be nice and good and don't stray from the path, otherwise you'll fall and break the glass, and your grandmother will get nothing."⁶

The girl does not obey, and is therefore punished. However, she ultimately learns her lesson. What is even more important from an

2. Rouger, *Contes de Perrault*, 114.

3. Brüder Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, 158.

4. For a discussion of the development of the nuclear family, see Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, 339–407.

5. Brüder Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, 157.

6. Ibid.

7. Rouger, *Contes de Perrault*, 113.

8. Brüder Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, 156–157.

9. Rouger, *Contes de Perrault*, 113.

1. Brüder Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, 157.

educational standpoint is the alternative ending of the text, which furnishes proof that the lesson has indeed been learned: "Meanwhile, Little Red Cap thought to herself, Never again will you stray from the path by yourself and go into the forest when your mother has forbidden it."⁷

Although the notion that adults are duty-bound to guide their children and that they are responsible for the behavior of the latter did not yet exist in Perrault's time, it became the basis for the mother-daughter relationship in the Grimm version. Moreover, the school, an institution lacking in Perrault's day, became not just a recognized institution, but a hated one. In the version of the Grimm Brothers, when the wolf encounters Little Red Riding Hood in the woods, he says something that could not have appeared in Perrault's version: she looks as sad as if she were going to school: "You march along as if you were going straight to school."⁸

In the century following Perrault's lifetime, the concept of children's education took definite shape. This new concept, which struck deep roots in the educational system developed during the same period, lent a great deal of importance to children's reading material, thus creating an intellectual climate suitable for the composition of an official children's literature. * * *

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JACK ZIPES

Breaking the Disney Spell†

It was not once upon a time, but at a certain time in history, before anyone knew what was happening, that Walt Disney cast a spell on the fairy tale, and he has held it captive ever since. He did not use a magic wand or demonic powers. On the contrary, Disney employed the most up-to-date technological means and used his own "American" grit and ingenuity to appropriate European fairy tales. His technical skills and ideological proclivities were so consummate that his signature has [obscured] the names of Charles Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen, and Carlo Collodi. If children or adults think of the great classical fairy tales today, be it *Snow White*, *Sleeping Beauty*, or *Cinderella*, they will think Walt Disney. Their first and perhaps lasting impressions of these tales and others will have emanated from a

7. *Ibid.*, 159.

8. *Ibid.*, 157-158.

† From *From Mouse to Mermaid: The Politics of Film, Gender, and Culture*, ed. Elizabeth Bell, Lynda Haas, and Laura Sells (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1995) 21-42. Reprinted by permission.

Disney film, book, or artifact. Though other filmmakers and animators produced remarkable fairy-tale films, Disney managed to gain a cultural stranglehold on the fairy tale, and this stranglehold has even tightened with the recent productions of *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) and *Aladdin* (1992). The man's spell over the fairy tale seems to live on even after his death.

But what does the Disney spell mean? Did Disney achieve a complete monopoly on the fairy tale during his lifetime? Did he imprint a particular *American* vision on the fairy tale through his animated films that dominates our perspective today? And, if he did manage to cast his mass-mediated spell on the fairy tale so that we see and read the classical tales through his lens, is that so terrible? Was Disney a nefarious wizard of some kind whose domination of the fairy tale should be lamented? Wasn't he just more inventive, more skillful, more in touch with the American spirit of the times than his competitors, who also sought to animate the classical fairy tale for the screen?

Of course, it would be a great exaggeration to maintain that Disney's spell totally divested the classical fairy tales of their meaning and invested them with his own. But it would not be an exaggeration to assert that Disney was a radical filmmaker who changed our way of viewing fairy tales, and that his revolutionary technical means capitalized on American innocence and utopianism to reinforce the social and political status quo. His radicalism was of the right and the righteous. The great "magic" of the Disney spell is that he animated the fairy tale only to transfix audiences and divert their potential utopian dreams and hopes through the false promises of the images he cast upon the screen. But before we come to a full understanding of this magical spell, we must try to understand what he did to the fairy tale that was so revolutionary and why he did it.

The Oral and Literary Fairy Tales

The evolution of the fairy tale as a literary genre is marked by dialectical appropriation that set the cultural conditions for its institutionalization and its expansion as a mass-mediated form through radio, film, and television. Fairy tales were first *told* by gifted tellers and were based on rituals intended to endow with meaning the daily lives of members of a tribe. As *oral folk tales*, they were intended to explain natural occurrences such as the change of the seasons and shifts in the weather or to celebrate the rites of harvesting, hunting, marriage, and conquest. The emphasis in most folk tales was on communal harmony. A narrator or narrators told tales to bring members of a group or tribe closer together and to provide them with a sense of mission, a *telos*. The tales themselves assumed a generic quality based on the function that they were to fulfill for the community or the incidents that they were to