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Edited by
Züleyha Çetiner -Öktem
Gülden Hatipoğlu

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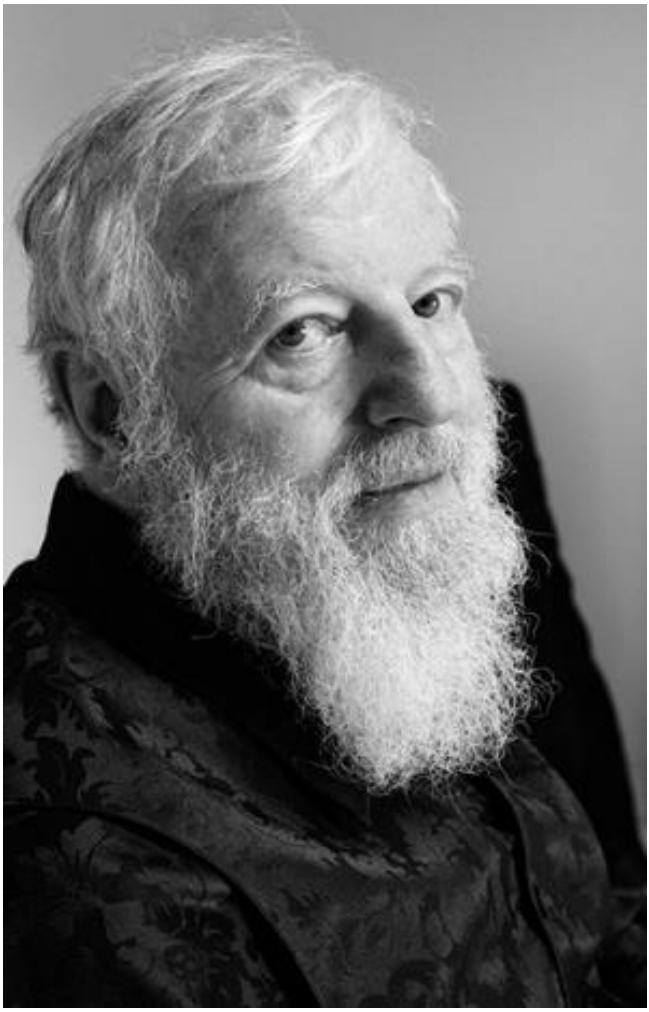

In loving memory of our old wise storyteller
Slobodan Dede
(1945-2022)

Introduction
Travelling Stories: Traces in Text and Image

Züleyha Çetiner-Öktem & Gülden Hatipoğlu

The title of this volume, *Eurasian Folk & Fairy Tales: Bridging Continents*, metaphorises tales as travelling bodies across time and space, summoning numerous other concepts such as exploration, divergence, adventure, mobility, transition, convergence, change, repetitions with difference, and encounters, among other correlates of physical and cultural interconnectedness. Travelling stories, nevertheless, do not always embrace the potential for connection in favourable terms. From the time *homo narrans* set the stage of culture, stories as immersive forms of narrative have also been deployed as means of dictating distinctions or as manipulative tools of disconnection and discrimination. With this in mind, there is even more reason to call further attention to the bridging aspect of storytelling.

Every story leaves a trace, and every trace embodies certain knowledge. One of the earliest physical expressions of this fact is the iconic *Cueva de la Manos* (Cave of Hands) in Argentina, dating from the archaic period of South America. It is a fascinating complex of rock art which includes hundreds of hand-prints created between 11,000 and 7,500 BC. As documented by art historians, these prints were produced by a variety of methods, such as "dipping the hand in paint and pressing against the rock."[1] There is a long way in history from these images to the famous hands of Escher, Steinberg and Michelangelo, which all attest to a rich network of traces that connects humans, the image-producing and storytelling animals, regardless of temporal and spatial distances. It is an exciting experience attempting to visualise and recreate the scenes when each of those individuals in the cave performed the ritual of "leaving a trace," probably with urges to mark their transient presence on stable surfaces of nature. Looking at the images of these handprints through the spectacles of time, peering into the past of thousands of years ago, it almost seems as if these hands are waving to us across time, bridging the gap between then and now.[2]

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[1] Cooke, "Handprints in Southern Rhodesian Rock Art," 46-47. See also Figure 0-1.

[2] A similar depiction of this universal human urge can be seen in the rock art performances of our Asian ancestors in Latmos Mountains in Western Anatolia (Fig. 0-2).

Fig. 0-1 Cueva de la Manos (Cave of Hands), South America, Rock Art

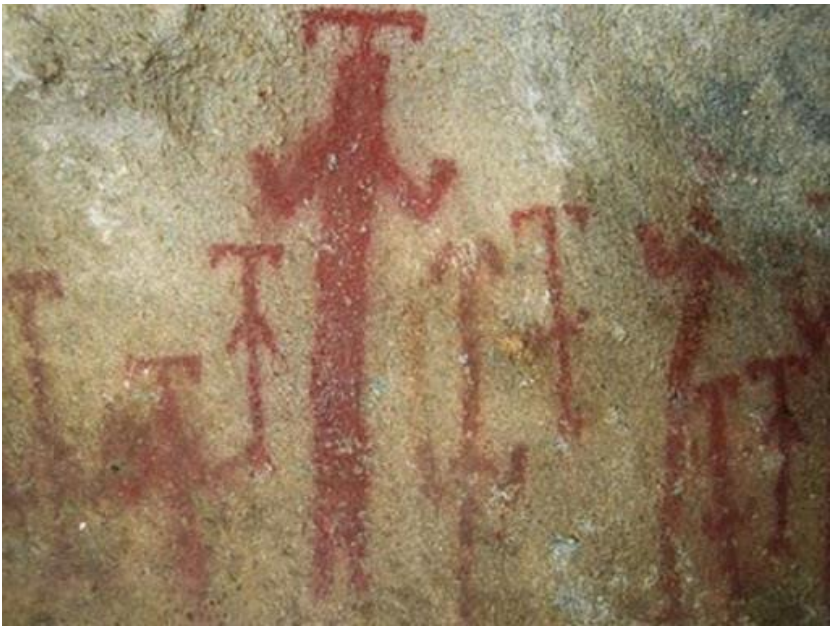

Fig. 0-2 Latmos Mountains, 5,000-6000 B.C (Aegean Region, Western Anatolia), Rock Art

Creation of art (visual/oral/written) has always been humans' most powerful means of production and spreading of knowledge. Fairy and folk tales as narrative art forms are no exceptions, as they "stem from historically conditioned lived experience that fosters a reaction in our brains, and this experience is articulated through symbols that endow [them] with significance. Fairy [and folk] tales are relevant because they pass on information vital for the adaptation of human to changing environments."[3] Jack Zipes voices these ideas in the context of fairy tale picture postcards, which are cultural artifacts that once served as popular means of written communication accompanied by visual reproductions of tales. Perfect representations of the coexistence of the personal (written messages on postcards) and the collective (illustrations of tales that belong to the shared cultural archive), these fairy tale picture postcards enabled words and images to literally travel beyond borders, within a network of senders and receivers.

Zipes's observations on fairy tale picture postcards are telling proofs that fairy and folk tales always find their way of carrying their storyworlds across, and they derive their power from a time-old imperative that connects storytelling to forms of travelling: "(e)xperience which is passed on from mouth to mouth is the source from which all storytellers have drawn. (…) 'When someone goes on a trip, he has something to tell about,' goes the German saying, and people imagine the storyteller as someone who has come from afar."[4] This is how stories migrate from one cultural ecosystem to another, playing a vital role in the preservation and transmission of cultural memory across natural and artificial borders. Flourishing from the intrinsic relationship between lived experiences and the tradition of storytelling, as Benjamin underlines, stories serve as vehicles for cultural values, historical events, and communal knowledge, all of which collectively contribute to the formation and expansion of humanity's local and global mnemonic archive. Rooted in oral tradition, fairy and folk tales encapsulate archetypes and universal symbols that resonate across cultures, and become ingrained in cultural memory through repetitions as well as through their ability to adapt to contemporary context or specific audience.

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[3] See Zipes's Lecture on "Myths, Legends, and Fairy Tales," delivered at Weisman Art Museum, University of Minnesota, on 16 January 2019. Video recording available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khX9pmvPkxU&t

[4] Benjamin, "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov," 362-63.

When Walter R. Fisher described humans as *homo narrans* and narration as "a human communication paradigm" as early as 1984,[5] he sought to conceptualise a universal human act based on "symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them."[6] Fairy and folk tales, as deeply rooted symbolic actions within the rhizomatic network of narratives, are one of the most enduring forms of storytelling due to their adaptive nature and elasticity, enabling them to travel on winged words, sometimes in fascinating disguises. As they adapt themselves to changing "narrative paradigms,"[7] they undoubtedly contribute to this change by putting old wines into new bottles and vice versa. Their potential for moving freely within the adaptive networks of storytelling is underscored also by Linda Hutcheon: "all stories are in flux at all times: adapted in many different ways, but also cited, translated, referenced, recontextualised, updated, backdated, extended, abbreviated […]. They travel—across genres, media, and contexts (temporal, spatial, cultural, linguistic)."[8] There is obviously a good reason why we refer to these tales as autonomous agents, bracketing the role(s) of authorship in this adaptive change. Following Mieke Bal's definition of narrative as a "mode, not a genre" which is "alive and active as a *cultural force*, not just as a kind of literature,"[9] we see fairy and folk tales as powerful embodiments of this trait. Essays in this volume flesh out Bal's emphasis on narrative's operative dynamic as being a "cultural force."

The opening chapter is devoted to Slobodan Dan Paich's generous panoramic display of diverse storytelling models which deploy processes that involve affect, mirroring and emphatic recognition. Paich's lengthy essay, entitled "Metaphor, Mirroring, and Sharing: Story as Sapient Instrument," explores a selected set of *story sharing* models, underlining the pivotal role imitation plays in the formation, accumulation and transfer of cultural heritage. He provides detailed observations on seven different exemplary categories of story sharing, each of which proves to be invaluable testimonies for the power of storytelling in "bridging disciplines, beliefs, geographies and people into a sharable reflective context" (30). His repertoire of case studies includes the Nag Hammadi Gnostic Library, a short story by the Danish writer Karen Blixen (a.k.a. Isak Dinesen), subtexts in

[5] See Fisher, "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm," 1-22.
[6] Fischer, "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm," 2.
[7] Fischer, "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm," 1.
[8] Hutcheon, "Moving Forward: The Next Stage in Adaptation Studies," 217.
[9] Bal, Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide, 10. Emphasis ours.

theatrical convention that are read as stories of the unspoken, "teaching stories" that form a part of training traditions, women's rites and rituals from Uzbekistan and Central Asia to Anatolia and Europe, migration stories, and storytelling workshops as examples of contemporary approaches to oral memory that showcase the complex dynamic between narrative and mnemonic reconstruction.

In Chapter 2, "Lives of Tales: Comparing Ancient, Contemporary, and Re-emerging Stories," Mete Özel expands Slobodan Dan Paich's frame of discussion with his particular focus on the significance of oral storytelling as a vital means of passing cultural heritage on to next generations. He underlines the fact that in the absence of written material, especially in minor/ity cultures or communities, oral literature relies on memory for its very survival, and points at a number of factors that threaten or hinder this mnemonic process. Alongside visual and digital media such as television, cinema, smart phones, and internet, he highlights migration as another factor which had an adverse effect on the carrier-function of memory-based storytelling, specifically in the context of forced or involuntary migrations from rural areas to big cities in Turkey after the 1960s. Yet he does not fail to present a wider perspective on the role migration plays on the continuity of storytelling traditions, noting that stories pass from continent to continent in the mouths of immigrants and find themselves new ecosystems to survive and flourish. Özel's list of storytelling examples include several different forms ranging from family stories to the Dengbêjs (Kurdish singing storytellers), local recipes, and gossiping. But the most inspiring example is saved for the Appendix where the author introduces an original addition to this set of storytelling practices. The author presents the written record of a contemporary fairy rale, *Fairytale of Marmimet*, which he himself composed and orally narrated in response to a series of watercolours as part of the *Artship Art Practice*. Özel thus showcases how visual materials, like all objects of perception surrounding us in life, are adapted or transmitted to oral storytelling by means of a process of filtered through individual memory shaped by cultural heritage.

Chapter 3 illustrates another example of the fascinating power of storytelling traditions to adapt to new cultural contexts while retaining their historical roots and maintaining common themes despite variations. Ahmet Tolga Ayıklar's essay on "Central Asian Legend Tellers' Circumstances" tracks the evolution of legend-telling among Altaic people in Central Asia, using visual material that almost speaks for itself, and offering etymological data to back up his inferences. Ayıklar's exploration focuses on the

performative tools of legend-telling, including the human body (throat-singing technique) and hunting bow (which transformed into instruments like mouthbow or mouth harp). Interestingly, he also looks at landscape as an important element in the creation of cultural objects in this region. He shows that in the absence of natural landforms, human-made landmarks for navigation have evolved into installations over time, bearing accumulated traces of local culture. This evolution from practical necessity to cultural tradition is almost a microcosmic representation of the deep connection between humans and their environment in shaping their practices and artistic expressions.

In Chapter 4, Raffaele Furno's comparative essay delves into the realm of spectral symbolisms on stage. "Folklore, Performance, and Ghosts: A Comparative Analysis of Japanese and Italian Experimental Theatre" presents insightful analyses of Satoh Makoto's and Leo de Berardinis's theatrical texts, which reimagine Sophocles' *Antigone* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, respectively, by integrating them with local folk tales to raise questions about the haunting presence of tradition. Furno explores the parallels Satoh Makoto draws between Antigone, Ismene (his female protagonist) and Yamanba (a Japanese folk figure), interpreting their politically charged potentials as figures "waiting" at the threshold. Furno extends the hermeneutical potential of the "threshold" concept to a broader context in his reading of Leo de Berardinis' work, which incorporates elements of both tragedy and comedic farce. The ghostly presences in de Berardinis's text are shown to be equally political manifestations. Furno's reinterpretation of *Hamlet* includes aspects of Neopolitan local folklore within a metatheatrical, parodic performance.

In Chapter 5, Adesanya M. Alabi elaborates on the often-overlooked significance of fairy tales as timeless narratives, focusing on their generic and cultural dimensions. Alabi's essay projects detailed commentary on the profundity and complexity of fairy tales, their historical background as a distinctive narrative form, and the role women have played in this historical progression. This historical survey is followed by Meltem Uzunoğlu Erten's stimulating essay titled "Goddess Umai and the Weeping Woman: Rotating Faces of the Same Moon" in Chapter 6, where she compares the historical transformations of two goddess figures: Umai from Central Asian Turkic mythology and the Weeping Woman from Latin American folklore. She explores the cultural forces behind the similar evolution phases these two figures underwent, particularly with the ascendency of patriarchal male domination in belief systems. Their dual natures, embodying nourishing as

well as destructive aspects, were polarised as divided halves, and their wholeness remained mostly forgotten in the long run of patriarchal ruling systems. The author traces the forking paths of this evolution, and shows how these goddess figures re-emerged as powerful popular representations in both the East and the West. In the final section of her essay, Erten offers a detailed reading of the 2013 film *Mama* where La Llorona (the Weeping Woman) is depicted more holistically compared to other cinematic portrayals that mostly underline her dark, scary and malevolent traits.

In Chapter 7, Hollie McDonnell's observations in "No Pain, No Gain: The Violence of Change in *Ashputtle* and *The Birth of a Beauty*" raises several questions about the consistent and ideologically informed value placed on female beauty and its manipulative impact on women's lives and societal expectations. In two texts that share a similar rhetorical fabric despite their historical and cultural distance, McDonnell explores how female characters pursue beauty based on ideals imposed by the male gaze. Her comparison between a classical European fairy tale narrative and a modern South Korean TV series reveals a striking connection between notions of beauty and pain. The painful and often violent transformations women are willing to undergo to meet patriarchal beauty standards are mirrored in modern cosmetic surgery practices, highlighting a persistent cultural narrative across cultures and geographies. By analysing the Grimm's version of the Cinderella tale and a popular example from the twenty-first century broadcast convention, the chapter draws parallels between magical transformations in fairy tales and modern cosmetic surgery, questioning the moral codes attached to the dichotomy of good and evil based on physical appearance.

In chapter 8, titled "Healer and Destroyer: Morgan's Eternal Ambiguity," Carlos A. Sanz Mingo introduces an extensive reading of Fay Sampson's fourth book, *Taliesin's Telling* (1991), in her pentalogy that retells the life of Morgan in the Arthurian Legend. As the title suggests, Mingo highlights the dual nature of Morgan, rather than anchoring her portrayal to one isolated aspect. He reads Sampson's text through the recurring motifs about the "sibling bond" between Arthur and his half-sister Morgan, in comparison with both earliest accounts and other contemporary adaptations. Sampson's retellings are taken as exemplary cases reflecting the fact that modern literature "include[s] the motifs of the relation between Morgan and Arthur, totally ignored in the medieval texts." According to Mingo, the strong hold of feminist tradition in contemporary retellings of Arthurian literature stands out as a major factor in Morgan's depictions as a

powerful agent in the Arthurian plot, including Sampson's texts. His vibrant analysis unravels yet again the power of stories, especially those that offer radical retellings of canonical female figures.

The last two chapters are reserved to the different manifestations of the mythic/folkloric Piper figure. Gülden Hatipoğlu in Chapter 9 focuses on one of the popular texts of the Irish Revival of the early twentieth century. In "Revival in the Cave of Pan: Heterotopias of James Stephens's *The Crock of Gold*," she looks at the symbolisations of the arrival of Pan, a foreign deity, to Ireland at a time marked by the spirit of revolution. In the novel, the image of Pan travelling to a foreign cultural landscape is contrasted to the image of Celtic deity Angus Og, in the context of their rivalry to win the love of a local maiden who is interpreted as the embodiment of Ireland. Hatipoğlu illustrates how the central motif of journey and mobility—not only of people, fairies and gods, but also of possessions—is juxtaposed with heterotopic spaces. In the closing chapter of the volume, Züleyha Çetiner-Öktem examines the reinterpretation of the Pied Piper legend in China Miéville's *King Rat* and Terry Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents*, focusing on the role of music as a motif for control, rebellion, and ethical inquiry. Using a theoretical framework rooted in folklore and fairytale studies, she explores how these novels subvert traditional narratives. *King Rat* employs a gritty urban fantasy lens, reimagining music as a weapon of oppression and resistance within an industrialised London, while *The Amazing Maurice* adopts a satirical approach, blending humour and moral reflection to critique manipulation and exploitation. Through a comparative analysis, the essay highlights shared themes of marginalisation and rebellion, as well as the divergent tonal and stylistic approaches of the two authors, underscoring the enduring cultural significance of folklore in contemporary speculative fiction.

The volume *Eurasian Folk & Fairy Tales: Bridging Continents* encapsulates the multifaceted dynamics of storytelling as a means of cultural transmission, adaptation, and survival. The metaphor of tales as "travelling bodies" aptly frames the essays within, emphasising the interconnectedness of stories across time and space. This framing situates storytelling as a dual force—both bridging cultures and, at times, reinforcing distinctions. The essays collectively highlight storytelling's pivotal role in preserving and transmitting cultural memory, adapting to diverse contexts, and embodying universal symbols through oral, visual, and written media. From *Cueva de la Manos* to the evolution of legend-telling in Central Asia, and from feminist retellings of Arthurian legends to subversive Pied Piper adaptations, the

essays explore a shared theme of narrative adaptability. Figures such as Morgan le Fay and the Weeping Woman are reimagined to reflect contemporary socio-cultural currents, while narratives such as *Ashputtle* and *The Birth of a Beauty* interrogate enduring ideological constructs. These analyses underscore storytelling as a "cultural force," alive and continually reshaped by its creators and audiences. In conclusion, *Eurasian Folk & Fairy Tales* illustrates the inexhaustible vitality of storytelling as an agent of cultural dialogue and continuity. By bridging temporal, spatial, and cultural divides, fairy and folk tales affirm their relevance as dynamic carriers of knowledge and values. The volume invites readers to reflect on storytelling's ability to weave connections while simultaneously prompting critical engagement with the societal structures it mirrors and shapes.

Chapter 1
Metaphor, Mirroring, and Sharing: Story as Sapient Instrument

Slobodan Dan Paich

Figure 1-1 "Metaphor, Mirroring, and Sharing." Artist Slobodan Dan Paich.

Introduction

The writing here is based on the Artship Foundation's scholarly research that feeds the contemporary cultural/educational practice and Artship's cultural/educational practice that offers context for inquiry-based expression. In this process the oral traditions, apprentice education, intercultural myth, legends, and stories are of central interest on one hand and related to cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and curriculum development on the other. For that reason, two examples that appeared in a number of earlier papers are cited and paraphrased in this introduction to give a general context for this chapter: the first of these are the singers of tales, and the second is the convergence of neuroscience, cognition, and transformative learning.

The singers of tales were essential and central carriers of cultural values and reassuring, edifying expression of communal sharing. The narrated epics were the focus of events celebrated outside places of worship. This cultural form flourished in pre-industrial eras and was in evidence in more

remote regions well into the beginning of the 20th century, before being replaced by radio, film, television, and other mediums. The singers of tales performing vast repertoires entirely from memory can be found in ethnographic and musicological research documents from Central Asia, Caucasus, Black Sea regions, Anatolia, and the Balkans. They exist in all cultures across the world in regional languages and mores.

In the seminal book on oral tradition and epic poetry by Albert Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, there is a translation of a live interview with one of the last oral epic singing practitioners surviving among the mountain regions of Bosnia, recorded in the 1930s by Milman Parry:

> When I was a shepherd boy, they used to come [the singers of tales] for an evening to my house, or sometimes we would go to someone else's for the evening, somewhere in the village. Then a singer would pick up the gusle, [bowed string instrument typical of the Balkans used specifically to accompany epic poetry] and I would listen to the song. The next day when I was with the flock, I would put the song together, word for word, without the gusle, but I would sing it from memory, word for word, just as the singer had sung it… Then I learned gradually to finger the instrument, and to fit the fingering to the words, and my fingers obeyed better and better… I didn't sing among the men until I had perfected the song, but only among the young fellows in my circle [druzina] not in front of my elders.[1]

Now imagine any contemporary teenager first listening to an epic for several hours and then repeating it the next day from memory. How many graduate students or doctoral candidates can do that with their thesis? By contrast, the non-literate shepherd boy was equipped with the necessary plasticity and capacity of brain independent from written record and entirely confident in the ability of comprehension, retention, and reproduction through oral means alone.

The example from Lord's book may help us understand the dynamics of the oral narrative traditions. The recitation is approached from the general thematic *over-sense* to the particulars of the *events of the story*. The epic is held as a whole and also as parts simultaneously, as a spatial and temporal continuum in the narrator's internal space. In a similar way traditional music was thought, practiced and performed within the oral tradition of skill training and memorising vast amount of music elements from a variety of sources. Diverse trades, all manner of crafts, varieties of music traditions and

[1] Lord, The Singer of Tales, 21.

Sufi training are part of apprentice learning, cultural sharing and retention of knowledge.[2] The other part, which obscures that tradition's intellectual discipline and rigor, is the fact that most *singers of tales* were "illiterate" in the sense of not using reading and writing as a mnemonic tool and means of communication. The emphasis on literacy is a product of western, state or imperial control of knowledge and the values imparted in that worldview that stigmatises *illiteracy* by denying a person any intellectual worth.

In line with neuroscience, cognition, and transformative learning, and relevant to story as a sapient, social instrument, this research corroborates some dynamics understood and present in ancient and inter-cultural traditions and subsequent written records. Meltzoff and Decety from the University of Washington's Centre for Mind, Brain and Learning wrote in their paper titled "What Imitation Tells Us About Social Cognition: A Rapprochement Between Developmental Psychology and Cognitive Neuroscience" that:

> Our ability to imitate others' actions holds the key to our understanding what it is for others to be like us and for us to be like them. The past two decades of research have significantly expanded our knowledge about imitation at the cognitive and neurological levels. One goal of this article is to discuss striking convergences between the cognitive and neuro-scientific findings.[3]

These scholars make a three-point theoretical proposal: i) imitation is innate in humans; ii) imitation precedes mentalizing and theory of mind (in development and personal evolution); and iii) behavioural imitation and its neural substrate provide the mechanism by which theory of mind and empathy develop in humans.

Meltzoff and Decety tell us that the use of the terms "theory of mind" and "mentalising" is interchangeable in their paper. Their view of Developmental Science presents the concept that infant imitation is the seed and the adult mentalising or theory-making capacity is the fruit. They are proposing a "linking argument:" through imitating others, the human young comes to understand that others not only share behavioural states, but are "like me" in deeper ways as well. This propels the human young on the developmental trajectory of developing an understanding of others' minds. Thus, the study by Meltzoff and Decety brings the articulations of human imitative function to the root of empathy and mutual understanding and helps us appreciate

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[2] See Lord, The Singer of Tales, 39.
[3] Meltzoff and Decety, "What Imitation Tells Us About Social Cognition," 491.

portrayals of human condition either as *cultural expression* or *scientific exposition*. Thus, this paper explores the *story sharing* modellers of the pre-scientific cognition preparedness that facilitates acquiring knowledge in an experiential way. Understanding the processes and perceptions that involves affect, mirroring and emphatic recognition will be looked at through the seven examples explored below.

1. Thoughts and Feeling Sharing as Sapient Instrument

Protennoia: The First Thought - Ancient Gnostic Text

The dramatic, accidental unearthing in Egypt in 1945 of the Nag Hammadi Gnostic Library,[4] concealed in an earthenware jar, for approximately two thousand years, provides one of the starting points for this paper. Unlike the inclusion of ancient scriptures in the discourse of folk and fairy tales this is a broader view of scriptural or remembered transmissions and continuity flow associated with folk, fairy tales, myths, legends, epics and songs as well as wisdom and belief contents.

In the case of the *Nag Hammadi Gnostic Library* the striking and existentially important fact is that somebody made a selection and buried the documents that otherwise would have been burnt or destroyed. This act of selecting and preserving essential cultural elements that were written down is a testament to the tenacity of the human spirit and dissident positions to continue against all odds. Like in anything there is controversy whether the buried manuscripts were from the monastery library or part of the funerary tributes of a private person. This debate obscures the non-verbal magnitude of the *preservation gesture.* The practitioner's courage and foresight, individual or collective is more important here than the dramatic story of the 1945 discovery of pedantic discourse of who did it. It happened. Just like in the greater cultural contexts, where, after considerable effort, monuments like the Pyramids, Cappadocian underground cities or statute of the Willendorf "Venus" were created. Each significant piece of preserved tangible or intangible heritage is a testament of the continuity instinct as part of human presence. Folk and fairy tales are part of it.

There were aspects of Gnostic Culture that are integrated into mores, folklore and everyday life. Moreover, the surrounding culture gives breadth to the depths of any cultural practices and aspirations. This almost invisible inter-dependence is present in ordinary things. Even in a monastic setting the relationship to time, place and the people present happens as daily

[4] Meyers, ed., The Nag Hammadi Scriptures, 279-284.

nourishments are prepared and shared. The *Nag Hammadi* discovery is an example of these confluences. The Library comes from a culture that creates codex, as a book form instead of scrolls. Also the preserved manuscripts come from the culture that had an abundance of earthenware suitable for storing water and preserving wine, olive oil and food supplies. The documents also retained folkloric memory that has assimilated aspects of Ancient Egyptian balms and preservation practices that make a storage-jar resist sand, earth, wind and even water.

When it comes to the texts of the *Nag Hammadi Library*, there are several important points to consider as we look into the nature of story assimilation and communication in a broader cultural context. In the academic methodologies which admit only written evidence, it must be hard to value examples where the writing is not central but serves as a contextualising help at the time of writing, a kind of a footnote that belongs to the community that generated the text. Folk and fairy tales like the *Nag Hammadi Library* are cultural manifestations of verbal and non-verbal direct communication and daily practices where real transmission, understanding and sharing skills are developed. The Greek philosopher Socrates (c.470-399 BC), the Andalusian mystic Abu Madyan (c.1126-1198 CE), and Georgios Gemistos, the fifteenth century Byzantine scholar who inspired the re-establishment of the Platonic Academy in Florence, are among the known examples where no writing or veiled discourse were part of their school and community.

Nag Hammadi Protennoia Text Extract

Within the unearthed documents the *Trimorphic Protennoia* text represents a specific small subtheme within over fifty different texts in the entire *Nag Hammadi Library.* This paper's framework *Metaphor, Mirroring and Sharing: Story as Sapient Instrument* comes from Comparative Cultural Studies research that includes cultural examples related to religious diversity but are not engaging in a theological discourse. This paper approaches *Trimorphic Protennoia* as one of the central issues of non-canonical more archaic subgroup of texts most relevant and imbedded in a number of storytelling traditions.

The concepts of *Gnostic Trimorphic Protennoia* were communicated in rhythmic and poetic form beyond the written word and to come anywhere near these intentions and modalities in *The Nag Hammadi Texts* we rely on translations. John D. Turner's *Gnostic Protennoia Text*[5] translation is subtly

[5] Turner, Trimorphic Protennoia, 50.

edited here to give it a reconstructed sense, however feeble, of a meaning communicated with strophic cadence and a poetic mode of evoking rather than describing. J.D. Turner in his magnificent translation followed that poetic form by capitalising on the main concept that may have been signalled in that way in the original. J.D. Turner as a responsible translator of antiquity included turns of phases, repetitions and linguistic shapes of the original as much as possible. Thanks to his hard work and lifetime commitment, we have access to the Coptic texts. In our abbreviated edition of the central poem we italicised key concepts signalled by the capital letters in the translation and added a few in our attempt at clarity and put in bold the central concept:

> I am *Protennoia*, the *Thought* that dwells in the *Light*.
>
> I am the movement that dwells in the *All*,
>
> ***She*** in whom the *All* takes its stand,
>
> The first-born among those who came to be,
>
> ***She*** who exists before the *All*
>
> I move in every creature
>
> I fertilise myself and I breed and mate, with those who love me
>
> I am the fulfillment of the *All*,
>
> *Meirothea*, the glory of the *Mother*
>
> I cast voiced *Speech* into the ears of ***those who know*** me.
>
> I am a Voice speaking softly.
>
> I dwell within the *Silence* that surrounds *every one*.
>
> It is the hidden Voice that dwells within me:
>
> Within the incomprehensible *Thought*
>
> Within the immeasurable *Silence*

The theme of *Primordial Feminine* is present in many traditions and is reflected in stories, songs and myth particularly in Turkic cultures of Central Asia. The similarity of the Protennoia concept and the Ancient Egyptian Isis myth is striking. Socrates' revelation in the *Republic* about Diotima his teacher of wisdom and her centrality in the discourse have some resonances to traditions: "She is the Forethought (Pronoia) of the All." *The Republic*'s discourse about social paradigms needing nurturing by wisdom holders and methodologies of experienced generative becoming (*Meirothea*, the glory of the *Mother*) may be a proponent or even an embodiment of concepts similar to the Protennoia Cosmogony that Platonists shared.

Addressing comparative similarities however serves only as textual references and are more concrete than approaching understanding the use of music, rhythm, intentionally of the repeatable chanting and inner evocative utterances. To honour the difficulties, ambiguities and extremely hypothetical nature of these similarities and to contextualise the concepts, not only as ancient history but also as a field of considerable academic research and discussion of today, we may need a methodological shift. Introducing storytelling discourse to the ancient cross-referencing field broadens the discussion towards possible redefining and more interdisciplinary, intercultural paradigms.

2. A Written Contemporary Short Story that Understands Oral Traditions

For the sake of discourse on *Eurasian Folk and Fairy Tales: Bridging Continents*, we bring in the short story named "The Blank Page"[6] by Danish writer Karen Blixen (1885–1962) also know under her pen name as Isak Dinesen. We describe as briefly as possible the unexpected context and life circumstances in which this Danish European woman became exposed to Persian, Arabic and possibly Qadiriyya oral traditions present in Somali culture on the Indian Ocean coast of Africa.

Karen Blixen came from upper-class landowner families on both sides where easy mingling and inter-marrying with an aristocratic social group was part of everyday life. She married Swedish Baron Bror Fredrik von Blixen-Finecke and went with him to Kenya to start a coffee plantation. Both of them, in different ways, looked for life that would allow space away from being severely scrutinised by upper-class rules and expectations, he for his more promiscuous life and she for learning about diverse African cultures, mores and responses to nature.

Karen Blixen and her husband were not social "drop outs" but at home in international, cosmopolitan ex-patriot circles. Karen Blixen was renowned as a cultured, sophisticated and inclusive hostess. The Prince of Wales was one of the guests who enjoyed his time at Karen Blixen's home. She was known for her impeccable, discreetly individual and deeply elegant sense of clothing and couture. Also she was among the international settlers referred to by colonial authorities as "pro-native," a term used as a derogative appellation.

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[6] Dinesen, *Last Tales*, 10.

Karen Blixen in her daily life in Africa had deep, existential connection, concern and practical involvement with two distinct and different cultural groups. The first was Kikuyu, Kenya's largest ethnic group that identifies linguistically in Swahili and culturally as the *Children of the Huge Sycamore Tree.* Kikuyu lived on the Blixen land. These were indigenous settlements whose inhabitants were faintly aware of real estate deals and laws and in that language were described as "squatting on the land." Karen Blixen embraced their presence and advocated for their legal protection and engaged with the Kikuyu People on a daily basis. Unafraid, she helped with cases of smallpox, meningitis, typhus and a variety of fevers and body imageries. She also initiated and supported a school on the land and when invited to, mediated tribal disputes.

The reasons for including these details in the discourse on storytelling and oral transmissions is to give an example of certain community awareness and gifts that are needed to understand and carry forward an orally transmitted heritage and its inner psychological reassurance and assimilation. With these community gifts, engagements, understanding and participation in the Kikuyu People's daily life and rituals, Karen Blixen also embraced the second cultural group where transmissions of story plays a specific and significant role.

The second was the cultural presence of Somalians in Kenya as specialist management experts. The British colonists hired Somalis as plantation managers, manufacturing supervisors, import/export logistic executives, big hunt safari organisers and major-domos. These are just a few examples. Farah Aden was not only Karen Blixen's major-domo, operations supervisor but she was also a cultural companion, a listener who shared and deeply introduced her into Somalian values and ways of life.

At this junction, referring to the geographical and cultural heritage would aid us in fleshing out the interrelations previously mentioned. With Kenya on its southwest border, Somalia is an African country on the coast of the Indian Ocean. Its territory is known as the Horn of Africa, the longest coastline of Africa inhabited by a single state. The Indian Ocean's six month cycles of monsoon winds changing continental direction has had trading, survival, and cultural ramifications since ancient times. The significant cultural event related to extending the dissemination of Eurasian stories from Persian and Arab worlds to Africa, was the arrival of the Arabian scholar Sheikh Ishaaq Bin Ahmed in the early 13th century CE to the Horn of Africa from the Persian Gulf.

It may be coincidental but Sheikh Ishaaq Bin Ahmed's arrival to Africa is at loosely similar in timing as Baha al-Din Muhammad-i Walad, Rumi's eldest son. Mevlana Jalaladdin Rumi (1207-1273) had settled in Anatolia after the persecution of scholars in the Persian Empire and the Bagdad Political turmoil during those times. Also after the arrival of Sheikh Ishaaq Bin Ahmed, the Qadiri Tariqa initiated by Abdul Qadir (1077-1166) from Gilani city in Persia is present in the culture of Somalia. These brief summarised facts help contextualise specific Somali traditions, training, and also the survival of stories as communal conveners, personal learning and deepening. These were the background values of Farah Aden. What is important to understand here is that Farah Aden represented the integration of African cultural depth with the values brought in the 13th century by Sheikh Ishaaq Bin Ahmed, who immediately married and had African offspring. In both the African cultural context and the Islamic and Qadiri expressions, ubiquitous presence of stories played a significant communal and individual catalyst function. These values around storytelling may not be the cause today but were definitely present at the time Karen Blixen was in Africa in the first half of the 20th century.

Judith Thurman in her book *Isak Dinesen: The Life of a Storyteller*[7] describes and quotes how Karen Blixen (Isak Dinesen) articulates her working relationship with Farah Aden as a "creative unity." If Farah Aden was a superficial, ambitious, and dogmatically practical management expert then the "creative unity" description would have been out of place. It is known that Karen Blixen, in the years before she wrote them down, told her stories to her guests and close friends. Some exchange, brainstorming, cultural insight, and storytelling coaching from Farah Aden must have taken place.

Karen Blixen's story "The Blank Page" opens with the scene set in one sentence: "By the ancient city gate sat an old coffee-brown, black-veiled woman who made her living by telling stories."[8] After that sentence the depth of words uttered by the storyteller to the listeners about her storytelling training immediately dispels the seeming orientalism of the scene:

> "With my grandmother," she said, "I went through a hard school. 'Be loyal to the story,' the old hag would say to me. 'Be eternally and unswervingly loyal

[7] Thurman, *Isak Dinesen: The Life of a Storyteller*, 115.
[8] Dinesen, "The Blank Page," np.

> to the story.' 'Why must I be that, Grandmother?' I asked her. 'Am I to furnish you with reasons, baggage?' she cried. 'And you mean to be a storyteller! Why, you are to become a story-teller, and I shall give you my reasons! Hear then: Where the story-teller is loyal, eternally and unswervingly loyal to the story, there, in the end, silence will speak. Where the story has been betrayed, silence is but emptiness. But we, the faithful, when we have spoken our last word, will hear the voice of silence. Whether a small snotty lass understands it or not.'[9]

Karen Blixen chose a dialogue form to portray not only the profound intention of storytelling but also a glimpse of the training methods of Wisdom Holders as an existential push to liberate and open facilities latent in the future Holder of Tradition. Somewhere Karen Blixen must have witnessed or experienced that dynamic, based only on imagination one would tend to idealise the exchange.

The story in itself reverses orientalism and humanises the other faraway people as real. It is set in Portugal at some undetermined post-medieval time in a monastery specialising in producing Royal Bridal linen. The presence of the narrator is palpable; the writing is fluid and hints and reveals gradually, almost secretly the main theme of "The Blank Page." The experience of oral narration is palpable also in the text. For our general discourse on Folk and Fairy Tales we end this section with one of the introductory paragraphs where the old women describe the storytellers process:

> It was my mother's mother, the black-eyed dancer, the often-embraced, who in the end -- wrinkled like a winter apple and crouching beneath the mercy of the veil—took upon herself to teach me the art of story-telling. Her own mother's mother had taught it to her, and both were better storytellers than I am. But that, by now, is of no consequence, since to the people they and I have become one, and I am most highly honored because I have told stories for two hundred years.[10]

This statement emphasises that the essence of Tradition Holders is the living, internalised presence and inner, intimate sense of their teachers, mentors, ancestors as "creative unity," a living connection present long after the teacher (he or she) has left this world. This unspoken secret is often overlooked in folkloric research.

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[9] Dinesen, "The Blank Page," np.
[10] Dinesen, "The Blank Page," np.

3. Subtext as Internal Generator for Manifest Expressions

Before we focus on the central example of an internally sensed story, while non-verbally dancing to music, we turn to a few quotes to contextualise issues of subtext. This subject is mostly discussed in the literature of theatre preparations but also present in daily communication and other cultural and societal expressions across time and cultures.

One of the helpful statements in approaching subtext is the procedural summary of a theatre workshop for the publication *Prototyping Service Processes and Experiences*. Chapter seven is titled "Subtext" and opens with this statement: "Subtext is a theatrical method that can reveal deeper motivations and needs by focusing on unspoken thoughts in a rehearsal session."[11] Also the workshop's position statement refers to Sonia Moore's (1984) essential book *The Stanislavski System: The Professional Training of an Actor*, the workshop's opening page paraphrases More's thoughts about subtext: "The term has several interlocking meanings in theatre, but we can think of subtext as the unspoken thoughts of a character, which might be implied by her actions. Put another way, subtext is what we mean, but don't say."[12] Charles Baxter's (2007) book *The Art of Subtext: Beyond Plot* in the closing pages quotes James Alan McPherson (1998) who in his memoir *Crabcakes* makes this remark inspired by a conversation of two young people courting each other: "The forgotten thing is about the nuances of sound that only employ words as ballast for the flight of pitch and intonation. It is the pitch, and the intonation, that carries *meaning*."[13] The central example of the story spinning part of Artship Ensemble's 2009 performance titled *Little Text as Invisible Structure for Dance,* opens with this statement: "This came after witnessing a beginning of someone's process at our rehearsal. It is a story, which is a secret structure of a dance. It gives the dancer motivation and meaning for her movement. The others or the audience may never know it." The story is presented in a manner of a fairy tale, so it evokes and engages metaphorical and symbolising abilities of cognition. The story is constellated around a little girl who discovered that she could spin invisible gold out of her heart. As readers we discover that this ability surprised her, and even frightened her. Whenever there was trouble with her family, a neighbour, or people from her city, she would

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[11] *Prototyping Methods*, "Subtext," 161.
[12] Moore, The Stanislavski System, 5.
[13] McPherson, *Crabcakes*, 85 quoted in Baxter, 112.

begin to spin, and her helpers would appear. Over years she realised that she had invisible helpers and they were always five:

1) **Aruniel** had a heart of silver as shiny as a mirror, so the little girl could always see what was bothering her. She sang like a bird.
2) **Sveteniele** had a heart of copper, warmly transmitting the finest electricity, which she did not resist but let flow into her. Her song was silent.
3) **Armela** had a heart of purest dew. She nourished the gold with softness and goodness. Her song was like a talkative brook.
4) **Orelion** was all of a circle, dark and cozy. His voice was like a gong.
5) **Dandilion** had a diamond in her being, but her heart was of pure soft charcoal, ever ready to burn so the spinning could take place.

The dancer did not mime or illustrate the story but carried the qualities, atmospheres, and shapes evoked. The statement describing qualities "voice like a gong" or "singing like a talkative brook" elicit different inner impulses for the movement.

If the narrative segment summarised above the subtext is read as a story, then we may sense, imagine what a dancer may do from and with it. When viewed as a dance, its generative motivational impulse is sensed through the dancer's connection to content and not only the dancer's body movements that by themselves have kinaesthetic and evocative qualities and value. With the internal unspoken tale, an extra sharing of human depth is offered, implied.

In the book *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson consider metaphors to be a matter of concepts, not of words.[14] Furthermore,

> Metaphor is one of our most important tools for trying to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally: our feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral practices, and spiritual awareness. These endeavors of the imagination are not devoid of rationality; since they use metaphor, they employ imaginative rationality. [15]

Navaneedhan and Kamalanabhan's article "Metaphorical Thinking and Information Processing Ability" from the Behavioural and Brain Sciences publication of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras states:

> Practice of Metaphorical thinking in understanding given information promotes the communication of the two hemispheres [of the Brain]. (…)

[14] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 244.
[15] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 193.

> Hence, metaphorical thinking helps learners to make connections and develop patterns and relationships in parallel to the language as well as symbols relevant to the given information. [16]

Myth and stories delivered with the appropriate vocal cadence and based on felt experience when narrated or sung are full of metaphors. This triggers an inter-communal sharing, a sense of wellbeing and bonding on a deeper level than through mundane conversations and proliferation of decontextualised information.

Subtext inclusion and understanding as integral, although implied part of narratives, helps broaden the view of stories as significant sapient instruments. It contributes to the reflections on allegorical and metaphorical thinking and the possible biologically seeded human imagination. Subtext as one of the catalysts for metaphorical thinking, nonverbal mirroring and sharing has a place in the context of this bridging discourse on Eurasian folk and fairy tales.

4. The Enactment Function of the Traditional Teaching Story

Sayed Ali Shah: The Time, the Place, the People (Gurdaspur, India)

Stories of any kind teach and help understanding, celebrating, or coping with the human condition. In traditional, indigenous and ancient cultures across the world one can find examples of stories as a part of specific training traditions. This is also the case in the geographies embraced more closely by this paper like the Balkans, Danube, and Black Sea regions as well as Anatolia, Near East, Caucasus, Central Asia, Far East, and Africa. In more contemporary times, some writers from the regions just mentioned, brought traditional stories from their cultures to the west. One such example is Idries Shah, a proponent of bringing teaching stories from Central Asian and Indian Subcontinent's cultural contexts to the English-speaking world. With great sincerity and life commitment he organised them into thematic units and published them as books often with teaching stories. One such story is Sayed Ali Shah's "The Time, the Place, and the People."[17] Often the *Wisdom Holder* of the fairy tale or a folk story is the narrator that has absorbed the tradition if the sharing is live or invisible, an impaled presence in the text.

To reflect on the story in the context of Eurasian folk and fairy tales we shall articulate the main participants' characteristics as setting for the

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[16] Navaneedhan and Kamalanabhan, "Metaphorical Thinking and Information Processing Ability," 1.

[17] "The Time, the Place, and the People" in Idries Shah, *Tales of the Dervishes*, 121-124.

learning experience that the story offers. This dramaturgical setup can help open a point of view for the reflections on the narrative's development and goal. This could be one of the methodologies for observing and understanding the nature of such diverse genres of tales.

"The Time, the Place, and the People" as a teaching story consists of four different clusters of identity (appearing also in **bold** in the story's transcription as signifiers of relationships nodes):

- **The King**, the ultimate "Feeding Hand, tested by identification with power
- **Courtiers**, adjusting, envying and complying to the "Feeding Hand"
- **Singer**, respected community presence consoling function in the midst of daily contradictions
- **Wisdom Holder** embodying flow of experienced knowledge responding to daily needs

The story opens with **the King** who summoned a renowned dervish (**Wisdom Holder**) and commanded him to teach him some wisdom. The Dervish after moments of thoughtfulness replied: "You must await the 'moment of transmission.'"[18] The king was confused as he hoped it would happen immediately. He was even more confused as the Wisdom Holder came every day after the request and took part in court discussions and attended upon the king. After some time passed a courtier announced "Daud of Sahil is the greatest singer in the world."[19] The king immediately wanted to hear the singer and asked for Daud (the **Singer**) to be brought to him. The singer's reply was:

> This king of yours knows little of the requirements of singing. If he wants me just to look at my face, I will come. But if he wants to hear me sing, he will have to wait, like everyone else, until I am in the right mood to do so. It is knowing when to perform and when not which has made me, as it would make any ass which knew the secret, into a great singer.[20]

In anger the king asked if anybody in the courtroom could make the singer perform. The **Courtiers** were uneasy and kept low profiles so as not to be asked to act and risk their positions at court. At that moment the dervish invited the king to come dressed in ordinary clothes with him to the singer's house. When they knocked the singer replied: "I am not singing today, so go

[18] "The Time, the Place, and the People," 121.
[19] "The Time, the Place, and the People," 122.
[20] "The Time, the Place, and the People," 122.

away and leave me in peace."[21] At the singer's response, the dervish sat on the ground and the king followed. The dervish began to sing the singer's favourite song. The king loved the song and asked the dervish to sing it again. At that moment, the singer himself started to sing with a profound and deep reaching interpretation. The king was deeply, deeply moved. He did not know that the dervish sang the song off key deliberately to awaken the desire in the mastersinger to correct it. The king sent a handsome reward to the mastersinger and offered the dervish a permanent post at the court but the dervish simply said:

> Majesty, you can hear the song you wish only if there is a singer, if you are present, and there is someone to form the channel for the performance of the song. As it is with mastersingers and kings, so it is with dervishes and their students: The time, the place, the people and the skills.[22]

The full version has certain simple words which gave significance to the time played in incubating the king's preparedness to learn something beyond what he knows. Idries Shah tirelessly and carefully arranged his books and the stories inner structures to hopefully give experience beyond the words to the readers in the west and people without personal contact to a Wisdom Holder. He and the circle around him advised strongly that the books should be read in the sequence they were written. For our discourse on folk and fairy tales we chose this story as a poignant example of a catalyst function of the Wisdom Holder's presence. Articulated as a "creative unity" by Karen Blixen we discussed earlier, the significance in the traditional societies of the neurological and psychological *living presence* of a trained storyteller, being that he or she, has to be deeply understood in relation to interpreting and reflecting on the storytelling and sharing lore across time, geographies, and cultures.

5. Acknowledged and Covert Women's Roles as Wisdom Holders

There are women's gatherings and festivals where food, music, rituals and stories play a significant part together. The broader cultural origins and circumstances are explored in this section that form the setting for understanding the phenomenon of stories and telling particularly in orally transmitted cultures and subcultures.

The central example is based on the research by Razia Sultanova published in her paper: "Female Celebrations in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan:

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[21] "The Time, the Place, and the People," 122.
[22] "The Time, the Place, and the People," 123.

The Power of Cosmology in Musical Rites."[23] This example is chosen as it offers meaningful cultural context for understanding the role of women Wisdom Holders and their presence and engagement in community. To open the broader cultural context, support and comparisons, there will be one example before a closer look at the central study and three other parallels at the closing part of this section.

The parallel that confirms and shares with the example by Razia Sultanova's "Female Celebrations" discourse, also explores the integration of ancient and Islamic festival's notions, and is found in an article by Musa Dağdeviren. He is a renowned chef and founder/editor of Çiya Publishing's *Yemek ve Kültür Dergisi* (*Food and Culture Magazine*), which deals with anthropology, folklore and cultural studies of food and reconstruction of historic recipes. In 2013 Musa Dağdeviren wrote "A Gazel Remedy for my Problems: Gazel Walking on Autumn Leaves in the Antep-Nizip Tradition."[24] The article explores the traditional Anatolian autumn leaf gazel ritual for women; and is based on photographs and testimonies of the author's wife and her intergenerational female relatives who practiced the ritual every year for generations.

In the introductory paragraphs Musa Dağdeviren states the motivation for the *Autumn Gazel Ritual*:

> This destruction and creation in nature has a profound effect on the lives of humans who, with their experiences, questions and answers, beliefs, traditions and knowledge gained from mutual interaction, are trying to continue their existence in nature. In fact, rituals such as Nowruz, Hıdırellez and Easter are beliefs created as a result of humanity's struggle to exist.

Dağdeviren describes the initial stages of the *Autumn Gazel Ritual* process where a minimum of seven women are required to gather and call each other in a form of ritual affirmation of being ready for the *gazel aşı* (protective, preventive food and process; the intangible vaccine). The women celebrants also check the presence of the right food ingredients before leaving, the *Gazel Ritual* food preparations are very specific. The collection of bulgur and lentils is performed according to the spirit of the *Gazel Aşı*'s protective process. When the participants are fully equipped they leave together and walk to an

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[23] Sultanova, "Female Celebrations in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan," 8-20.

[24] Dağdeviren, "Gazel aşı, derdimin dermanı Antep-Nizip geleneğinde gazel depelemek," 98-105.

orchard nearby or a forest in the mountains. Dağdeviren describes the care aspect of the collecting process:

> The ingredients are collected not by dividing them equally between households, but by paying special attention to the financial situation of each family or household. Some give a handful, others one kilogram... Nobody asks or says how much bulgur or how many lentils are given by any individual.

When the women involved walk on autumn leaves, they chant and express hope in their prayers, supported by deep togetherness generated by focused, intentional visits to nature in this case, or to someone's home for different rituals. The shared sense of hope for a constructive future, the non-everyday environment, the leaves on the ground, the trees, the rhythm of circular walking and the time it takes to share delicate conversations about women's troubles are described: "By talking about their troubles while taking at least seven laps around the trees and walking on gazels for hours, they believed that all their troubles and the evil spirits within would be transferred to the dried leaves beneath their feet." Being together in a ritual space, stamping on the fallen leaves and releasing the accumulated grief through devotional prayers and simple shared narrations of troubles opens the inner sense of a more optimistic future: "After the walk on gazels, each individual picks up the dried leaves they stepped on and the hearth is prepared. A pot is placed above it, beneath which the collected gazel leaves are set on fire. Lentils and bulgur are used to make pilaf." This pilaf symbolises a protective vaccine. The burning of gazel leaves represents the burning of troubles accumulated over the years, which were transferred to the leaves through the act of walking on them. Each woman saved one gazel leaf from beneath her feet and after the fire of the other leaves were gone, she takes a bit of ash containing the burned troubles and puts it on the cherished leaf with the wishes for a constructive future. With those wishes the women place the leaves with ashes on a nearby river or stream to take them away.

At this point we will circle back to Razia Sultanova's article "Female Celebrations in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan: The Power of Cosmology in Musical Rites." The discipline and precision of Sultanova's concept of Cosmology helps us to understand and appreciate the importance of her research that helps broaden the inclusion of gender and those populations who have been living and exploring the connection to the sense of totality and origins since prehistory. For this reason, we turn to the *Stanford*

Encyclopedia of Philosophy to approximate the context and the depth of Sultanova's research:

> Cosmology deals with the physical situation that is the context in the large for human existence: the universe has such a nature that our life is possible. This means that although it is a physical science, [or religious point of view] it is of particular importance in terms of its implications for human life.[25]

Razia Sultanova's paper has a section on women known as Otin-Oys. In Uzbekistan they are deeply respected Wisdom Holders and they are cherished in the local community as leaders. Their profound lived experience leading to skills of convening, reconciling and problem solving—being it a physical health issue, psychological trouble or social disturbance—and their mediation is welcome and hoped for. Razia Sultanova contextualises historic and symbolic roots of the representative role of Otin-Oys:

> Scholars believe that at the very beginning of human history the sky was mythologically associated with the "mother goddess," the giver of life, representing all time and space. Myths accounted for planetary cycles, marking days, nights, months, and years of unending time. So, in general, female cosmology was based on local beliefs that god is a woman.[26]

Razia Sultanova points to the Ancient Mother Umay, a Turkic goddess as being at the roots of this tradition. The Islamic Mother Aysha, the wife of the Prophet Mohammed, and Mother Fatima, his daughter continued to carry female cosmology. Both of them were and are protectors of women and fertility in the Islamic worldview. Sultanova articulates narrative forms celebrating primeval presence of the maternity archetype: "worship, prayers, devotional Sufi poetry, lamentations, and *epic stories* [emphasis ours] are considered sung when the words are recited in a way similar to singing, using the technique of elongating vowels."[27] Sultanova also cites from *Islam: The Encyclopedic Dictionary* integrating pre-Islamic worldview with current practices:

> The Sufi origins of some female ceremonies are obvious: the custom of the Qubraviya Sufi order is still maintained in female performances of traditional *rites of passage* [emphasis ours]. For example, Qubraviya colours proceed in the following order: white–yellow–light blue–green–dark blue–red–black.

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[25] Smeenk and Ellis, "Philosophy of Cosmology," np.
[26] Sultanova, "Female Celebrations," 8.
[27] Sultanova, "Female Celebrations," 11.

> Here, the seven colours are associated with the seven states of the spirit of the Murid (master of the Sufi order): white–Islam (submission); yellow–*iman* (faith); light blue–*ihsan* (grace); green–*it'minan* (calmness); dark blue–*ikan* (confidence); red–*irfan* (enlightenment); and black–*hayajan* (admiration). All these reflect a different cosmological order.[28]

Razia Sultanova reflects on the bereavement rituals as patterns of *transmission time*, bridging the tangible and intangible:

> Certainly this versatile multifaceted awareness of time, meaning, numbers, colours, and so on has prehistoric cultural origins. Some of these traditions stem from Sufism, some are from Zoroastrianism or Tengri cults. However, self-sacrificing spiritual devotion such as that manifested in the religious activities of the Otin-Oys is highly significant for the area [cultural geography beyond national boarders].[29]

The strands of the related cultural ideas across time to Razia Sultanova's "Female Celebrations" analysis are included here to give a sense of the historic rootedness of her observations as we approach an informed understanding of ritual dynamics of the Ancient world.

The nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, for example, considered as personified *Wisdom Holders* and an inspirational cluster of intangible values and expressive practices that have antecedents in the pre-classical assemblies of women. Disciplinary *Humanities* focus has roots in sophisticated organised oral traditions designed for passing on the knowledge as community container. In this context, Kristen Marie Gentile's 2009 dissertation titled *Reclaiming the Role of the Old Priestess*, is indicative. In her subchapter titled "The Sixteen Women as Counselor and Reservoir of Wisdom," Gentile writes: "In essence, the Sixteen Women of Elis [Southern Greece on the Peloponnese] embodied the positive stereotype of the old woman as counselor, guide, and reservoir of wisdom. In antiquity, this stereotype is most clearly demonstrated in literary representations of old women as nurses."[30] This Ancient Greek institution is a possible way for the continuation of prehistoric assemblies of Women Wisdom Holders.

In the Cucuteni culture of the Danube Delta and the Black Sea, approximately 5000B CA, there is a cluster of the miniature figurines of the Women Council. Fifteen mature figures contain the younger ones. Across

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[28] Negria, *Islam: The Encyclopedic Dictionary*,140.
[29] Sultanova, "Female Celebrations," 14.
[30] Gentile, Reclaiming the Role of the Old Priestess, 160.

cultures systematically trained individuals, often women, were the inspirers, educators and containers of tribal/cultural knowledge.

To continue a comparative pairing for Razia Sultanova's Otin-Oys Women Rites for a sense of thematic nearness and with distinct identity difference, we may consider Herodotus's writings about the Ancient Egyptian Goddess *Pasht* festival. Herodotus is a non-Egyptian outsider reporting on the festival unlike Razia Sultanova's discourse on Uzbekistan and Central Asia Female Celebrations, where the impaled and stated understanding of the festivals are present in the cultural reflections.

Herodotus in his second book of nine part Histories titled and dedicated to Euterpe, muse of *music*, *sharing* and *well-being*, writes about the public festivals of Ancient Egypt. Herodotus describes how the Egyptians hold their religious public assemblies often, "with the greatest zeal" and devotion. So the festival at the city of Bubastis for Pasht, in the Nile delta is not an exception. Herodotus describes the festival where men and women sail together in great numbers and multiple boats. Herodotus describes the processional ritual: "some of the women have rattles and rattle with them, while some of the men play the flute during the whole time of the voyage, and the rest, both women and men, sing and clap their hands."[31]

Figure 1-2 Women's Council: The Cucuteni culture, Danube Delta, approx: 5000 BCA[32]

[31] Herodotus, *The History*, book 2.
[32] Baily, *The Lost World of Old Europe*, 39.

Herodotus continues by describing how the ritual boats' procession interrupts sailing when they are passing by a city and the boats are moors temporarily. The women coming ashore continue to sing, clap their hands, some cry aloud, others dance and call and gesture at the women in that city. This is repeated at every city along the banks of the Nile. Herodotus concludes with a description of the public festival with the words: "when they come to Bubastis they hold festivals celebrating great sacrifices."[33] This description points to a deeply established tradition of public festivals with definite music and choreographic elements and also individual free expression of women within the *Pasht* festival's framework. This division of roles between the *supportive music and the rhythmic section* as a container to a traditionally structured *acting-out group*, points to practices that bring trained and informed people to the *Pasht* festivals. Although they are not all professional musicians or dancers, everyone knows what to do just like women participating in rituals performed by Otin-Oys or people entering a Mosque or singing hymns in a Church.

Figure 1-3 Photograph and caption by R. Sultanova of Otin-Oy Saboqad conducting a ritual in her village of Gusht Emas, Uzbekistan

[33] Herodotus, *The History*, book 2.

Razia Sultanova's exposition on Otin-Oys women's music rites has a number of parallel roots in prehistory that continue to almost the last century. One of them is the tradition of the healing dance, Tarantella Pizzica where music, song and rhythm play a central role. The Tarantella Pizzica is the tradition carried out in intimate and protected places often temporally adopted within a home or communal spaces. These activities, gatherings and festivals are led and performed for and by women. Since these events were only carried out among the women, written documentary evidence is barely existent. Similar oral traditions, but on one to one basis or small scale group have some characteristics of the Pasht festival behaviour described by Herodotus. These are practiced today or up to the mid twentieth century in some parts of North Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean including Southern Italy, Balkans, Thrace (land shared between Bulgaria, Greece and Turkiye) and Asia Minor—Eastern Anatolia and territories at the borders of Iraq and Iran. There are two forms from this family of traditions that have had more ethno-musicological and anthropological research than the others, they are extremely similar traditions, the healing dances and music of Egyptian Zar[34] and the Southern Italian Tarantella Pizzica.[35]

Athanasius Kircher asked a question in 1641 in his encyclopedic work, *Magnes, sive De Arte Magnetica*: "Why cannot those poisoned by Tarantulas [inner psychological obstacles] be cured otherwise than by Music?"[36] The example demonstrates the relationship of music and ancient knowledge not apparent to non-practitioners of the specifically orally transmitted cultural forms. Razia Sultanova's Otin-Oys women's music rites with cosmological and historical underpinning summarises them with this description:

> In a wide range of rituals performed by Otin-Oys, features from different religions—Islam, several pre-Islamic faiths, and pagan cults—are combined. So, very often at the beginning of a ceremony, Allah is mentioned first, and then prayers and songs are offered to the female goddess Bibi-Seshanba (Lady Tuesday), when seven symbols of Zoroastrianism (water, fire, mirror, flour, bread, oil, and honey,) are displayed on the tablecloth.[37]

Razia Sultanova's "Female Celebrations" offered a broader context to the subject of *telling and sharing* by giving account of living traditions continuity

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[34] See Harding, *The Zar Revisited*, 9-10.
[35] See Paich, Magna Graecia/Tarantella, 15.
[36] See Kirsher, *Magnes sive de Arte Magnetica: Opus Tripartium* (Rome: Hermann Schuss 1641).
[37] Sultanova, "Female Celebrations," 13.

across time often as oral traditions. Sultanova's paper helps us understand the close and interchangeable relationship of music and verbal traditions. Razia Sultanova discusses the hypothesis about Tengrianism of the Turkic-speaking world as being considered the base for religions like Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. But most importantly she gives an experienced sense of the practices: "The ritual proceeds slowly, featuring praying aloud and singing devotional poetry at the beginning, which is the first and main part of the ceremony. This is followed by confessions when every participant joins the conversation and discussion across the table."[38] Significant for our discourse on *metaphor, mirroring and sharing* as aspects of storytelling, Razia Sultanova's paper gives a sense of cultural milieu and mores surrounding the participants' personal testimonials. From her paper also emerge observed conversations and inclusive, helpful "discussions across the ritual table." These discussions are like roots of potential stories. In the music rites of Otin-Oys women, the simple narrative moments happen together with greetings, blessings, singing, drumming and clapping. As shared by Sultanova, they help this academic forum in bridging disciplines, beliefs, geographies and people into a sharable reflective context.

6. Unexpected Performance Space as container for Migration Stories[39]

Inspired by the emigrant's oral histories, the *Stories of Our People* was performed at the Sirkeci Railway Station in Istanbul in 2013 with the collaboration of Artship Initiatives and the Halka Sanat Project. The *Stories of Our People* performance was based on oral histories and imagined conditions of Turkish and Balkan emigrants who migrated to Western Europe in the middle of the twentieth century after WWII. Performing at the Sirkeci Station was symbolic as this location was considered to be Istanbul's traditional gateway to Europe. The *Stories of Our People* project sought to articulate cultural needs and dynamics of possible community support and safety for global migrants and refugees of the present moment. To that end, the project engaged in collecting and expressing the stories, trials and victories of the migrants of the last century.

The *Stories from Our People* project while in its preparatory stages was also presented as a cultural history paper entitled "Sirkeci Station" at the

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[38] Sultanova, "Female Celebrations," 9-10.

[39] Most of the text in this section is part of the paper presented at an international conference entitled *Cultural Heritage in Migration* convened by the Institute of Ethnology, Folklore Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, June 2017. See Paich, "Displacement," 21-41.

Memory and Culture conference in 2013 held by the Cultural Studies Association of Turkiye at Bilkent University in Ankara.[40] This cultural studies paper explored issues of memory and community history starting from how the architectural space of the Sirkeci Station was permeated with individual and collective recollections. The starting point of the study was the collection of stories and welcome/farewell photographs as a basis of enactment of that material as a performance in 2013. This joint Halka-Artship initiative was and is also an ongoing project engaged in the process of creating a *free access archive*. The archive even in its rudimentary stage is both a repository of factual documentary material and a platform for observing the interpretations of the past and mutable constructs of personal and collective memory narratives. Both as an academic paper and subsequent performative enactment by the Halka-Artship initiative was initiated by collecting stories about or from people who were on a train in the late nineteen forties, fifties and sixties of the 20th century travelling from Turkiye, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and Yugoslavia to work or study in western Europe.

The initial patchwork of collected or reconstructed reminiscences and reactions to the *new places* and the *homeland* offered insight into the diversity of cultural memory. The paper briefly explored the fragility and relationship of personal and family memories to the pool of *cultural scripts* and *ideological frameworks*. The paper also reflected on the validity and necessity of hearsay, oral histories, storytelling and performative reconstruction in community setting. Thus, the performance and the exhibition that grew out of this process engaged and brought together diverse groups of participants that were not usually associated with art making. Complimenting, supporting and collaborating with actors/dancers, visual artists, and architectural and cultural historians were multi-disciplinary students, citizens and children. The project's scope was enlarged to include younger generations that had possibly only heard about migration as a historic and cultural manifestation. These participants were:

(1) Instructors and students of Gastronomy from the Culinary School at Istanbul Arel University who carried out the food aspect of the project by reconstructing and creating foods immigrants carried with them in that

[40] Paich, "Sirkeci Station" paper presented at the 7th Biennial Conference of the Cultural Studies Association of Turkiye, entitled Memory and Culture, Ankara, Bilkent University, 2013.

historical period. The food, its preparation and recipes were photographed and exhibited on the walls of the Grand Hall of the Sirkeci Station.

(2) Also participating were Architecture students from İstanbul Bilgi University with drawings and reconstructed/imagined spaces of migration and railway construction of the period. This work complimented the food reconstructions and documentary material prepared by cultural and architectural historians.

Figure 1-4 Ariel University Istanbul, reconstruction of Emigrants' Food and Traveling Food Bag

(3) Primary school children from Mersin in southern Turkiye created drawings of what they imagined to have happened when their community or family members went far away by train to seek work in the past. These colourful drawings contributed to the diversity of the exhibited material. Most of the children had only heard about trains and about their grandparents and relatives travelling to Germany via a long train journey. This school was chosen as a project participant because of its distance in time and its geography far from Istanbul. The metropolis and unfamiliarity in general with train departure and return modality was also another factor. These nodes offered particular responses to the *migration theme*. The impressions of third and fourth generations of migrants' young descendants parallel to actual migrants' experiences were of interest to the project.


Figures 1-5 (left) and 1-6 (right) Children's drawing of imagined Migrants Journeys, Sirkeci Exhibition 2013

Diversity of input and participation made the project open ended and presented issues of many agendas. The culture of migration is full of contradictions and conflicting interests which are ultimately deeply human and understandable.



Figures 1-7 (left), 1-8 (centre), and 1-9 (right) Three different stories/phases of Migration performed by Su Güzey and Metehan Kayan

7. Narrative Moments—Contemporary Approach to Oral Memory

The interest of this section is the psychological and cultural relevance and emergence of thoughts about balancing *virtual and visceral experiences*. The section's two examples sketch possible methodologies for cultivating physical skills and educated discernment vis-a-vis virtual decontextualised information and designed overstimulation. The writing's reflections are possible seeds towards a more balanced and biologically respectful ecology of mind. The section's examples are citations from documented recent projects dealing with *narratives* and *reconstructions*.

(1) The first example is the Storytelling Workshop by the Artship Foundation at Convento Cultural Centre, Chamusca in Portugal 2019. The workshop's title was *Narrative Moments: Anything That Happens in Time*

Could Be a Story. The workshop was an invitation to approximate, imagine and sense, for oneself the primordial root of stories as a sharing process.

Figure 1-10 Announcement image Storytelling Performance Istanbul 2012 and Workshop Portugal 2019.

The four-day workshop incorporated and shared more than 40 years of multidisciplinary Comparative Cultural Studies, Group Storytelling Performances and Art Practices. The workshop was intended for practicing and emerging artists or scholars interested in crossing disciplines, acquiring new skills or deepening their current approach. The workshop was a combination of skills awareness and inspirational explorations punctuated by relevant thematic power-point presentations.

For the sake of simplicity and brevity only the workshop's outline and topics are presented here:

First day Introductions

Meeting of the participants and self-introduction

Sharing samples, photos, or actual work of the workshop participants

Storytellers describe their practice and thematic orientations

If actors, dancers, theatre/film directors, play or screenwriters participate, please bring few photograph from a performance or film that best represent your affinities

Bathing in Sound, Listening to Silence is part of the daily opening of the workshop: Responding to the deep need to express through sound that includes words even though the words are not used at that moment. This section of the workshop consists of simple tuning together internally [audibly it is permissible to be out of tune] and singing together at the edges, of feeding our bodies with sound that will emerge and non-verbally nourishing the inner need to express and express together. No previous experience of

singing or tuning is needed. In the warm-up moving part non-dancers can do this seated in a chair or on the floor.

Lyricism and Scale of Storytelling

From Open Process to Thematic Kernels

"Chance Favours the Prepared:" Improvisations

Embodying Ideas — Visible and Invisible

Space and Visual Boundaries

Tangible and Implied Architecture of Performance Space

Energizing the Space for the sharing of stories

Group Dialogue and Non-verbal Edge

Storyteller's Body and Voice

Public and Private

Storyteller's Secret

I and Not I — Paradox of Sharing

Costume as Talisman

Personification Process — Individual Characters

Timing - Composition in Time: Modalities of organizing time, sequence as messenger. Timeless and contemporary technics

Collaborations and Co-Creation: issues and skills

Audience as Focus: Participation through Empathy

Presentational Anthology: Personal and Collective Works of the Workshop Participants.

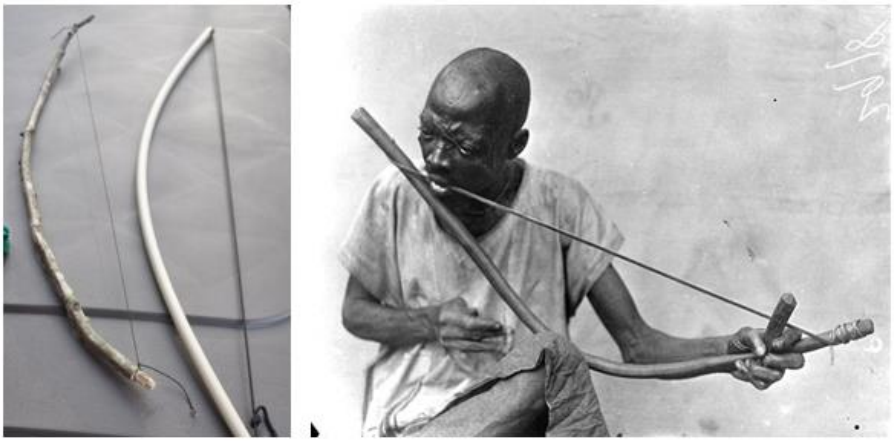
Rehearsal

Performance

Debriefing: Participants' ideas, needs and envision potential pieces for future work

Figures 1-11 (left), 1-12 (centre), 1-13 (right) Artship Workshop: Rehearsal for the non-verbal elements of the Tarantella, Tarantula 2006 storytelling performance, San Francisco and Prague

(2) The second example is from the symposium on *Archaeoacoustics and Neuroscience* organised by the Instituto Terra e Memória (ITM), June 2019, Chamusca, Portugal. The storytelling workshop (first example) was after this conference in the same Convento Cultural Center in Portugal. For the conference the Artship Foundation Comparative Cultural Studies research contributed a paper titled "Call and Response: Archeology as Witness: Human Perception, Imagination and Doing and Making Abilities"[41] and also offered a workshop named *Meaningful Reconstructions*.



Figures 1-14 (left), and 1-15 (right) Historic photograph of Musical Bow and Bow player from Obubra, Cross-River State, Nigeria early 20th Century

[41] Paich, "Call and Response," *Archaeoacoustics and Neuroscience Symposium* (Chamusca, Portugal: The Instituto Terra e Memória, 2019).

Tolga Ayıklar who is a Turcologist, researcher of Altaic Cultures, musician, throat singer and Mongolian Morin Khuur player and storyteller also contributed a conference paper.[42] Together with Slobodan Dan Paich, Tolga Ayıklar gave a workshop covering these topics: (1) Critical use of materials and tools; (2) Understanding environmental, cultural and existential motivation of specific problem solving by the ancients; (3) Researched ethnographic comparative oral histories samples and analysis; (4) Interest in music, intentional sound making and the performative aspect of social anthropology; (5) Informed training for desiring possible planned acoustic elements of built environments; (6) Rudimentary awareness of the Neuroscience and Psychological nexus of human experience.

The workshop's hands on activities consisted of simple rudimentary reconstruction of wooden bow and arrows as being possibly one of the first music instruments in prehistoric times. Also participants made simple sound experiments engaging speaking, narrating or singing voices alternated by or punctuated with the bow instrument's sounds. The visceral experience of doing, making, direct hearing and sharing in the container of the reconstruction workshop offered seeds for possible curriculum design to help ameliorate cognitive interference of induced over-stimulation and controlled simulated experiences. Simply told stories with or without music accompaniment may be reconciliation elements of visceral-virtual dichotomy.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the *story sharing* modes as social bonding, enjoyment, release from inner burdens and learning present in pre-scientific societies with possible relevance for the contemporary state of culture. Understanding the story processes and perceptions that involve affect, mirroring and emphatic recognition were examined through seven examples. The opening example was the Ancient Gnostic text *The First Thought - Protennoia* as Feminine, this archetype appears in many ancient cultures. Here the text was viewed as a seed of ubiquitous human exchanges where conversations, stories, myth and legends play a significant part. The example that followed was a reflection on the short story "Blank Page" written by Isak Dinesen (Karen Blixen) in1955. This was a contemporary

[42] Ayıklar, "Possible First Musical Instrument," *Archaeoacoustics and Neuroscience Symposium* (Chamusca, Portugal: The Instituto Terra e Memória, 2019).

work that understood ancient *Oral Traditions* and the role of women as guardians of its continuity.

Subtext as an internal generator for manifest expressions was explored through *Spinning*, 2009 inwardly remembered story as invisible structure for dance. The example acted as a catalyst for thinking about non-verbal aspects of narrations, performances, texts and songs. Then the existence and function of the traditional *Teaching Story* was approached. Through the story by 19th century teacher Sayed Ali Shah, from Gurdaspur, India, the tile and the concept of the story was *The Time, the Place and the People*, conditions and variables that hinder or help comprehension. Following this example, we considered how acknowledged or covert women's roles as Wisdom Holders were significantly researched and presented in the paper by Razia Sultanova's paper "Female Celebrations in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan: The Power of Cosmology in Musical Rites." Through comparative cultural pairing the paper presented parallel and confirming examples to Razia Sultanova's research findings.

We then discussed the narrative and community function of an *Unexpected Performance Space* as a container for *Migration Narratives* and the contemporary relevance of the issues involved. *Stories from Our People* inspired by emigrants' oral histories, performances took place at the Sirkeci Railway Station, Istanbul 2013. Then a contemporary approach to oral memory was presented and briefly annotated in this paper about two recent events that took place in2019: the first was the Storytelling Workshop named *Narrative Moments: Anything that happens in time could be a story*, and the second event was the *Meaningful Reconstructions Workshop.*

The issues approached in this chapter through chosen examples are summarised here in four considered sentences: (1) The general aim was to address cognitive enrichment Story Tellers, oral or written offered to their communities or readers; (2) Story, as *cultural entity* was also chosen to help address some issues that heritage discourse and contemporary sharing are facing; (3) Narrative processes' vitality and diversity may inform alternatives to the contemporary media intentional interference with *mirror neurons* as seat of empathy, *attention span* as seed of learning abilities and *memory faculty* as container for acquired knowledge digestion and containment; and lastly, (4) Considered are learner centred, non-invasive curriculum developments for *Inter-Virtual-Visceral Learning* possibilities. Overcoming the initial discomfort of slower durations and gaining ability of

self-pacing, freedom to choose and biologically owned personal cognitive maturity.

Figure 1-16 "Once upon a time there was…" Artist Slobodan Dan Paich.

Chapter 2
Lives of Tales: Comparing Ancient, Contemporary, and Re-emerging Stories

Mete Özel

Introduction

1. Reflections on Oral Traditions

A. Grandmother to Granddaughter: Generations of Oral History in a Dakota Family

Angela Cavender-Wilson in her paper called "Grandmother to Granddaughter: Generations of Oral History in a Dakota Family" says**:** "These stories in our oral tradition, then, must be appreciated by historians not simply for the illumination they bring to the broader historical picture but also as an essential component in the survival of culture."[1] This is another way of saying that history is not only about written things, not just information about the past, but it can also be oral history told by our elders through stories. Moreover, it is both our present and our future, and telling stories is essential for our survival. In all cultures, for those who cannot control or dominate the majority of the media, archives, formal education and all its materials, oral tradition has a vital importance to carry information to next generations. For this reason, the history of minorities is incompatible with formal practices.

From Cavender-Wilson's mentioned article, we read Charles Eastman's statement below:

> Almost every evening a myth, or a true story of some deed done in the past, was narrated by one of the parents or grandparents, while the boy listened with parted lips and glistening eyes. On the following evening, he was usually required to repeat it. If he was not an apt scholar, he struggled long with his task; but as a rule, the Indian boy is a good listener and has a good memory, so that his stories are tolerably well mastered. The household became his audience, by which he was alternately criticized and applauded.[2]

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[1] Cavender-Wilson, "Grandmother to Granddaughter," 41.
[2] Eastman, *Indian Boyhood,* 43, quoted in Cavender-Wilson, 8-9.

This passage quoted from Eastman's autobiography *Indian Boyhood* alludes to a common practice in most minority cultures; thus we can easily exchange the words Native American with Kurdish, Abkhaz, Laz or Aboriginal. This method is in the nature of transferring information to younger generations among societies who are minorities. Just like young Dakota people, for learning and remembering long stories, storyteller candidates should have a large memorial capacity in all other cultures too.

In her paper, Cavender-Wilson states that she is the seventh generation after the 1862 US-Dakota Conflict, and she has the responsibility to tell the stories her grandmother Elsie Cavender frequently told her before she died: "Especially in the last years of [Grandmother Elsie's] life, on every visit [Elsie] would tell stories about the Conflict of 1862, as if to reassure herself that she had fulfilled her obligations and that these stories would not be forgotten."[3]

The author of this paper, who was always interested in family stories, had similar experiences. Unfortunately, as a transporter and writer of family stories, I cannot count on some of the stories told by my own grandparents since they were too old when I met with them as a mature man and our oral communication was already wounded: first by black and white then colourful, seducing TV programs on short summer nights. All of my grandparents, my mother's mother Zehra and my father's mother Sakine lived more than 1000 kilometres away from us and I had the opportunity to see and listen to them only for a few weeks during the summers. If we were lucky, there would be a power outage and while waiting for the power to come back so we could continue watching TV, Zehra or Sakine; seldom my father's father Mirali or my father's uncle Kasim told their stories to me and other family members. These stories were about their youth, their houses in Erevan, Baku and their migration to Anatolia in early 1900s. Now, after almost 40 years later, I do understand the importance and the value of those happy hours, because as Cavender-Wilson writes:

> Because these stories are typically not told in the history texts, we also must recognize we are responsible for their repetition. The written archival records will not produce this information. These stories are not told by people who have been "conquered," but by people who have a great desire to survive as a nation, as Dakota people. Consequently, these are not merely interesting stories or even the simple dissemination of historical facts. They

[3] Cavender-Wilson, 9.

> are, more importantly, transmissions of culture upon which our survival as a people depends. When our stories die, so will we.[4]

We can easily replace the word Dakota with Azerbaijani, Armenian, Kurdish, or any absorbed nation who had difficulties writing and recording their own history. Individual family stories cannot represent the whole story of a nation or a local area but if we can hear more family stories, we can collect them and compare towards a better point of view to other events. These comparisons could lead us to a more general shareable history. We have to remember that official history is written down only by the winners. That does not mean that all books are full of lies of the majority but that means that we have to be careful about the possibility of orientation, diversion, distortion or at least we have to be aware of the possibility of ignoring, neglecting, marginalizing and even criminalizing.

Cavender-Wilson states "When our stories die, so will we." As with the death of the last speakers of a language, that language dies; and similarly, with the death of the last narrator of a story that story also dies. If that story is written down, that does not mean that the story will survive under better conditions; it may be frozen for a certain period of time. When a new storyteller begins to tell this story after reading it, the story may live again with some wounds. Yes, we are talking about wounds opened by writing, because dynamics and purpose of writing is different from telling. We are writing for the sake of remembering but we are telling to keep it alive, to keep its essential function.

B. Records of the Last Remaining Balkan Illiterate Minstrels: The Singer of Tales

The quotation below is taken from Slobodan Dan Paich's article named "Mythology as Need:"[5]

> In the seminal book on oral tradition and epic poetry by Albert Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, there is a translation of a live interview with one of the last oral epic singing practitioners surviving among the mountain regions of Bosnia, recorded in the 1930s by Milman Parry:
>
> When I was a shepherd boy, they used to come [the singers of tales] for an evening to my house, or sometimes we would go to someone else's for the evening, somewhere in the village. Then a singer would pick up the gusle, [bowed string instrument typical of the Balkans used specifically to

[4] Cavender-Wilson, 12-13.
[5] Paich, "Mythology as Need," 11. See also chapter 1 in this volume.

> accompany epic poetry] and I would listen to the song. The next day when I was with the flock, I would put the song together, word for word, without the gusle, but I would sing it from memory, word for word, just as the singer had sung it… Then I learned gradually to finger the instrument, and to fit the fingering to the words, and my fingers obeyed better and better… I didn't sing among the men until I had perfected the song, but only among the young fellows in my circle [druzina] not in front of my elders.[6]

C. Transmission of Individual and Collective Memories: The Cry of Tigris

Mehmet Uzun (1953-2007), one of the founding contemporary Kurdish literature novelist also talks about the Dengbêj tradition in South East Anatolia almost with the same words as Albert Lord. *Dengbêjs* are singing storytellers. Etymologically *deng* means sound and *bej* means to tell. Dengbêjs transmitted the traditions of their Kurdish ancestors to our time orally, because almost till the 1990s, the Kurdish language was forbidden in Turkiye. So it was impossible to publish books or articles in Kurdish. Singing and speaking in Kurdish were not only banned in major, common media but they were also forbidden even on the streets. However, the local people and dengbêjs sang and spoke at *Sevbuherks*. A sevbuherk is a place where people gather and listen to dengbêjs poetry and songs. Generally, this place is the largest house or largest yard of in the village which means the house of the richest family in the village or district. Dengbêjs sang about Kurdish history, geography, as well as lullabies and other songs. Sometimes, like ashiks, Dengbêjs carry the latest news about the neighbourhood families, villages, and government to the Kurdish people they visit from time to time. There are two main styles that Dengbêjs use to perform: the first one is *kilam*, which means words/poems of the Dengbêj to be sung without a musical instrument. The second performing style is *stran*. Strans are more melodic, rhythmic and popular folk songs. Dengbêjs sing with the stran style at weddings or similar events. Traditionally, Dengbêjs sing old Dengbêjs' kilams before performing their own kilams. One of the well-known Dengbêjs was Karapetê Xaço (1903 or 1908–2005), an Armanian singer who sang in the Kurnmanji (Anatolian Kurdish) language. Before Karapetê Xaço, Evdalê Zeynikî and Sakîro were well-known Dengbêjs who lived in 19th century. In 2003, the first Dengbêj House was established in the city of Van. In May 2007, the Municipality of Diyarbakır also supported the establishment of a Dengbêj

[6] Lord, The Singer of Tales, 21.

House (*Mala Dengbêjan*) in Diyarbakır and afterwards Dengbêj houses were founded in several other cities as well.

Mehmet Uzun's Kurdish novel *Hawara Dîcleyé* (*The Cry of Tigris*), starts with a short poetic dedication to his children:

> My daughter Zerya,
>
> my son Alan,
>
> when I was your age,
>
> there were dengbejs who nurtured our souls with their voices
>
> who look like Bro. Unfortunately, there aren't any now...
>
> For this reason, you cannot sit by them and listen to them.
>
> Leastways—in order to enable you to hear their voices among the pages of this book,
>
> I am presenting this novel, *The Cry of Tigris* to you.[7]

Mehmed Uzun wrote this novel through a dengbej's, a storyteller's voice. This dengbej was a family member and all events that he experienced (such as the history of his family) or learned from elder dengbejs (like the history of the region), was narrated by him. In the preface, Uzun discusses the identity of the narrator and he writes about one of his cousins whose nickname was Bro. Bro means brother just like in English and at the same time Bro is also the abbreviation of Ibrahim which refers to Prophet Abraham and also one of Uzun's granduncles' name, who was also a dengbej almost four generations ago. Therefore, we understand that Bro is telling stories that date back to 200 years and all these stories, spanning many generations, were transmitted orally from elder dengbejs to younger ones thorough traditional apprenticeship.

People in the villages in which oral traditions were still alive used the same methods in these places until the 1990s. After the 1990s, everything changed very quickly. The pressure of military movements and the ethno-political oppression were worse than what was shown on television. The population of rural areas melted quickly and almost all villagers migrated to the nearest cities. This internal migration in Turkiye began in the early 1960s and accelerated in the 1970s, gaining momentum in the 21st century. Here are the figures for the changes of rural population in Turkiye and its distribution in provinces.

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[7] Uzun, Dicle'nin Yakarışı, 5.

Table 2-1 Summary of the population movements from government records.[8]

Anatolia	**Net Migration (1975-1980)**	**Net Migration (2018-2019)**
South East	-346.707	-1.083.848
Central	-47.224	+250.033
North	-105.139	-75.210
West	+499.070	+909.025
Total Population	42.000.000	80.900.000

[8] Data obtained from public records made available by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT). https://www.tuik.gov.tr/

Population of province/district centers and towns/villages by years and sex. **1927-2000**
(Population Census)

Year				Province and district centers			Towns and villages		
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**
1927	13.648.270	6.563.879	7.084.391	3.305.879	1.710.482	1.595.397	10.342.391	4.853.397	5.488.994
1935	16.158.018	7.936.770	8.221.248	3.802.642	1.969.968	1.832.674	12.355.376	5.966.802	6.388.574
1940	17.820.950	8.898.912	8.922.038	4.346.249	2.332.558	2.013.691	13.474.701	6.566.354	6.908.347
1945	18.790.174	9.446.580	9.343.594	4.687.102	2.503.342	2.183.760	14.103.072	6.943.238	7.159.834
1950[1]	20.947.188	10.572.557	10.374.631	5.244.337	2.817.318	2.427.019	15.702.851	7.755.239	7.947.612
1955	24.064.763	12.233.421	11.831.342	6.927.343	3.743.059	3.184.284	17.137.420	8.490.362	8.647.058
1960	27.754.820	14.163.888	13.590.932	8.859.731	4.771.433	4.088.298	18.895.089	9.392.455	9.502.634
1965	31.391.421	15.996.964	15.394.457	10.805.817	5.783.813	5.022.004	20.585.604	10.213.151	10.372.453
1970	35.605.176	18.006.986	17.598.190	13.691.101	7.312.714	6.378.387	21.914.075	10.694.272	11.219.803
1975	40.347.719	20.744.730	19.602.989	16.869.068	9.004.842	7.864.226	23.478.651	11.739.888	11.738.763
1980	44.736.957	22.695.362	22.041.595	19.645.007	10.272.130	9.372.877	25.091.950	12.423.232	12.668.718
1985	50.664.458	25.671.975	24.992.483	26.865.757	14.010.662	12.855.095	23.798.701	11.661.313	12.137.388
1990	56.473.035	28.607.047	27.865.988	33.326.351	17.247.553	16.078.798	23.146.684	11.359.494	11.787.190
2000	67.803.927	34.346.735	33.457.192	44.006.274	22.427.603	21.578.671	23.797.653	11.919.132	11.878.521

Table 2-2 Detailed population movements from government records: 1927-2000.[9]

[9] Data obtained from public records made available by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT).

Population of province/district centers and towns/villages[2] by years and sex, **2007-2019**
(Address Based Population Registration System)

Year	Province and district centers			Towns and villages		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
2007	70.586.256	35.376.533	35.209.723	49.747.859	24.928.985	24.818.874	20.838.397	10.447.548	10.390.849
2008[3]	71.517.100	35.901.154	35.615.946	53.611.723	26.946.806	26.664.917	17.905.377	8.954.348	8.951.029
2009	72.561.312	36.462.470	36.098.842	54.807.219	27.589.487	27.217.732	17.754.093	8.872.983	8.881.110
2010	73.722.988	37.043.182	36.679.806	56.222.356	28.308.856	27.913.500	17.500.632	8.734.326	8.766.306
2011	74.724.269	37.532.954	37.191.315	57.385.706	28.853.575	28.532.131	17.338.563	8.679.379	8.659.184
2012	75.627.384	37.956.168	37.671.216	58.448.431	29.348.230	29.100.201	17.178.953	8.607.938	8.571.015
2013[4]	76.667.864	38.473.360	38.194.504	70.034.413	35.135.795	34.898.618	6.633.451	3.337.565	3.295.886
2014	77.695.904	38.984.302	38.711.602	71.286.182	35.755.990	35.530.192	6.409.722	3.228.312	3.181.410
2015	78.741.053	39.511.191	39.229.862	72.523.134	36.376.395	36.146.739	6.217.919	3.134.796	3.083.123
2016	79.814.871	40.043.650	39.771.221	73.671.748	36.936.010	36.735.738	6.143.123	3.107.640	3.035.483
2017	80.810.525	40.535.135	40.275.390	74.761.132	37.470.193	37.290.939	6.049.393	3.064.942	2.984.451
2018	82.003.882	41.139.980	40.863.902	75.666.497	37.912.323	37.754.174	6.337.385	3.227.657	3.109.728
2019	83.154.997	41.721.136	41.433.861	77.151.280	38.660.605	38.490.675	6.003.717	3.060.531	2.943.186

(1) Population by sex has been estimated by 1945 and 1955 sex ratios.
(2) Population of provinces, districts, municipalities and villages are determined according to the administrative attachment, legal entity and name changes recorded in the National Address Database (NAD) by the General Directorate of Civil Registration and Nationality (GDCRN) in accordance with the related regulations and administrative registers.
(3) The main reason of the major differences in the population of "province and district centers" and "towns and villages" compared to the previous year is the administrative division changes regulated by Law No. 5747.
(4) The main reason of the major differences in the population of "province and district centers" and "towns and villages" compared to the previous year is the administrative division changes regulated by Law No. 6360.

Table 2-3 Detailed population movements from government records: 2007-2019.[10]

[10] Data obtained from public records made available by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT).

From these figures, we can see that within a span of a hundred years, all South-eastern villagers migrated from their homelands to bigger cities in Western Anatolia, and great deal of them travelled to Istanbul.

We should mention here that there are mainly two types of migration: The first one occurs with the immigrants' will; for better economic and social conditions, people may move from one place to another. The second type of migration is against the immigrants' will; people often have to move in order to survive as they are escaping from war, from terror, or from starvation, etc. but in both cases leaving the motherland, or leaving family members behind is devastating in many aspects including the transmission of intangible heritage.

We lived in such a unique period that older generations stopped expressing and passing on their oral traditions, specifically their oral family stories, to the younger generations. Before the 1960s more than 68% of the population was living in rural areas with limited access to electricity and other basic technological instruments like the radio, television, cinema etc. Therefore, traditionally, people were living with their big families and the grandparents were in charge of transmitting moral, religious, and folkloric traditions to their grandchildren. Migrant ashiks, dengbejs, singer poets visited the villages and told neighbourhood stories mostly accompanied with music. Stories carried a great deal of tradition, history, moral values and informative things about their daily life including current politics, economics, and the like. This was considered to be informal information, which was generally in opposition with formal education.

Anatolia is a big land and it is not homogeneous regarding wealth, cultures, languages, architecture, beliefs, folklores, education levels, and so forth. East, West, North and South, all regions of Anatolia have their own characteristic societies, different ways of living even in the 21st century and even in spite of governmental efforts to pump the standardised culture through all major media including television, for the sake of *unifying* the nation. However, as result of disregarding, disrespecting, and even ignoring different colours of the nation served for the polarization of cultures.

Paich in his article "Mythology as Need," writes that:

> One overlooked aspect of Central Asian and neighboring territories is the upbringing and education of holders or intangible heritage of *Epic Singing*. For example, the Ashik tradition of the Caucasus region cultivated and gave voice to singers whose repertoires easily crossed regional cultures and could inspire audiences of many local believers, creeds and religions outside their

> own. Ashik performers are divided in to two types. The first type, often *itinerant* are the ones who earned their living exclusively through singing at communal gatherings. The second type is *householder,* men and women who had a working life parallel to music performance. Those highly skilled, trained performers of epic poetry were also carpenters, carpet weavers, potters and many other trades.[11]

Paich also emphasises that the householder type of ashiks are not amateurs. Telling stories, transmitting the intangible heritage, upbringing young apprentices was a part of a daily, social life and the people in the society cannot wait for *itinerant* ashiks all the time. Instead of waiting for new stories, songs, news from abroad, local ashiks and especially grandmothers reinforced their grandchildren almost every day.

However, migration from village to big cities in the 1960s created a new way of living and the transmission of oral heritage was almost totally terminated. Families became smaller and grandparents were rarely living with their grandchildren. Even ashiks disappeared one by one, causing the most important part of cultural bridges to collapse in the 1960s. Another example of deterioration in the fabric of the traditional oral transmission is the true story of Silva Özyerli.

D. Food and Folklore: Amida's Table

Silva Özyerli, author of the book *Amida's Table*: *A History of Diyarbakir with Food*, provides many local recipes together with her unique childhood memories related to her family and neighbours in Diyarbakir's ancient central district within the city walls named Sur which means the wall of a castle.

Amida's Table discusses how writing down freezes ancestral memories, as the flow no longer works properly today because nobody is able to assemble the community in their gathering places in the first decade of the 21st century. This new condition hinders the sharing of recipes and stories of a thousand years ago. It is very difficult or even impossible to find the regional, untampered seeds of fruits or vegetables to practice techniques and to find even a broom made of natural fibres to clean the cloth containing the meals served on the floor.

Silva Özyerli in her book *Amida's Table* describes *imece*, a traditional communal gathering of local people working together on a specific

[11] Paich, "Mythology as Need," 10.

production of nourishments and household needs. For example, in the Sur district of Diyarbakir, women collectively worked to produce *Şa'are*, a kind of vermicelli. This activity naturally created an environment of sharing; gossiping and advising young people, which is a strong theme in Özyerli's book based on her many childhood memories from the early 1980s. Here is an example of exchanges, a background of sharing recipes, traditional stories and use of natural materials and medical herbs:

> *Şa'are* imecesi [the places where women collectively cut vermicelli] were places where women gathered, received the latest news, talked, and unburdened themselves. When one said, "You didn't hear it from me, but Mama Hatun's newlywed son had a few words with his wife, the new bride got offended, and returned to her father's home," another hearing this would reply, "Kele oğıl, *ter denin mugeri çimtsen, pajnıvetsen*!" "The mice in the house haven't yet heard (the news that they got married), and they broke up!" Or when someone talked about their daughter-in-law out of jealousy, saying "She's lazy, she sleeps too much," someone else who suffered from the wrath of their mother-in-law would try to protect the young bride by saying "She's young, take pity, she's still small, let her sleep, make do," and the answer she would receive would be "*Şugan egire teze benir, dığat garke ki dısnes paner*" (Fresh cheese has come to the bazaar, marry off your son and then see everything!"). This meant, "Just wait, your children are still small, wait till they grow up, wait till you marry off your son, then speak."[12]

Gossip as a form of sharing is a seed of story making; as its subjective nature fosters spontaneous stylization of events, it plays a significant role in the social fabric of all cultures. Like storytellers and singers, dengbejs and ashiks, women in the community transmit culture to new generations; they teach them how to produce vermicelli and other essential things, such as

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[12] Özyerli, *Amida'nın Sofrası*, 18. Editor's translation, italics in the original. See original text below:

Şa'are imecesi kadınların bir araya geldiği, yeni havadisler edindiği, söyleşip dertleştiği yerlerdi. Biri, "Kele oğıl benden duymiş olmiyasız, Mama Hatun'un yeni evlenen oğlı karısına iki laf etmiş, yeni gelin küsmiş, baba evine dönmiş" dedi mi, bunu duyan bir diğeri, "Kele oğıl, *ter denin mugerı çimtsen, pajnıvetsen*!" "Daha evin fareleri (evlendiklerini) duymadı, ayrıldılar!" diye cevap verirdi. Ya da bir başkası, oğlunu gelininden kıskandığından, gelini için, "Tembeldir, çok uyuyor" dedi mi, kaynana gazabından çekmiş biri mutlaka çıkar, "Gençtir, yazıktır, daha küçüktür, bırak uyusun, idare et" gibi cümlelerle gelini kollamaya çalışır, aldığı cevap ise "*Şugan egire teze benir, dığat garke ki dısnes paner*" ("Çarşıya taze peynir gelmiş, oğlunu ever de gör her şeyi!") olurdu. Bu da mealen, "Hele dur, daha senin çocukların küçük, hele bir büyüsün, hele bir oğlunu evlendir, ondan sonra konuş," demekti.

how to behave in a communal setting. In this context, Silva Özyerli continues to relate her memories as a child in the 1980s:

> During the *Şa'are imece*, we children, would secretly snuggle up to the elders and ask for some dough. They wouldn't turn us down, and would hand us tiny pieces of dough, watching their finger movements, we would start cutting vermicelli. Of course, since the vermicelli we tried to cut with our tiny hands was short, plump and ill-shaped, our pleasure wouldn't last long, and we would get caught by my mom. Mom would get up and spread out a small cloth towards the door and move us all saying, "You'll cut the vermicelli here!" Without even realizing it, the handcraft of the children gathered around that small cloth would improve, and by helping our elders, we would feel as if we grew and became useful. (…) In the evening, the vermicelli we cut would be kept in a separate place, and would never be mixed up with the vermicelli cut by adults. Seeing our faces fall, seeing we were saddened, my mother would rouse us and make it up to us by saying, "These are for the birds, birds love vermicelli cut by small children. You'll see how they'll eat it tomorrow, you'll be surprised."[13]

2. Contemporary Media Replacing Oral Traditions

From a summarizing diagnostic approach are reflections on how in the mid-twentieth century the radio, television, and cinema, and recently how the internet and smart phones have accelerated the use and production of highly pre-programed content for public standardised agreement-compliancy, creating global values, norms, roles, and identities. The focus here is on how various media intentionally and inadvertently replaces oral traditions and the content of folk and fairy tales.

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[13] Silva Özyerli, *Amida'nın Sofrası*, 18-19. Editor's translation, italics in the original. See original text below:

Şa'are imecesi döneminde biz çocuklar çaktırmadan ihtiyarların yanına sokulur, onlardan birazcık hamur isterdik. Bizi kırmaz, elimize minicik hamur parçaları verir, biz de onların parmak hareketlerini gözlemleyerek şehriye kesmeye başlardık. Tabii bizim minicik ellerimizle kesmeye çalıştığımız şehriye kısa, tombul ve biçimsiz olduğundan keyfimiz uzun sürmez, anama yakalanırdık. Anam kalkar, odanın kapı tarafına doğru küçük bir yaygı açar, "Siz burada şehriye keseceksiniz!" der, hepimizi yerindfen ederdi. O küçük örtü etrafında toplanan çocukların el becerisi farkına varmadan gelişir, büyüklerimize yardım ederek büyüdüğümüzü, işe yaradığımızı hissederdik. (...) Akşam olunca bizim kestiğimiz şehriyeler ayrı bir yerde tutulur, büyüklerin kestiği şehriyelerle asla buluşturulmazdı. Çocuk yüzümüzün düştüğünü, üzüldüğümüzü gören anam, "Bunlar kuşların hakkı, kuşlar küçük çocukların kestiği şehriyeye bayılır. Bakın yarın nasıl yiyecekler, şaşıracaksınız" diye bizi heyecanlandırır, gönlümüzü alırdı.

In the past, stories, songs and all other oral cultural elements passed from continent to continent and spread out through the world by immigrants and sometimes by traders. In Slobodan Dan Paich's paper "Transmigration of Music" we find this question:

> If silk can travel from China, be spun or woven in Damascus as a brocade or damask, and then reach the courts of Languedoc, Galicia, Granada, or Fez, how difficult would it be for an idea, song, or musical instrument to go back and forth along the same routes?[14]

Modern media has recently replaced the carriers of oral cultural heritage, and has put all this vivid material into a frozen, mechanically repeatable form for standardised, uniform mass production. Starting from the 1950s, aggressive global culture dominators like Walt Disney dictated profitable ideas for consuming culture and entrainment as consumer goods through well-designed, charming and easy accessible techniques. In the second millennium, giant social media players in particular found psychological and neurological techniques to make billions of people addicted to their products by isolating them from their local culture and society.

[14] Paich, "Transmigration of Music," from the paper presented at the International Conference on Mediterranean Studies for the Athens Institute for Education and Research about *The Significance of Itinerant Musicians in Mediterranean Cultures*, 20-23 March 2008, Athens, Greece.

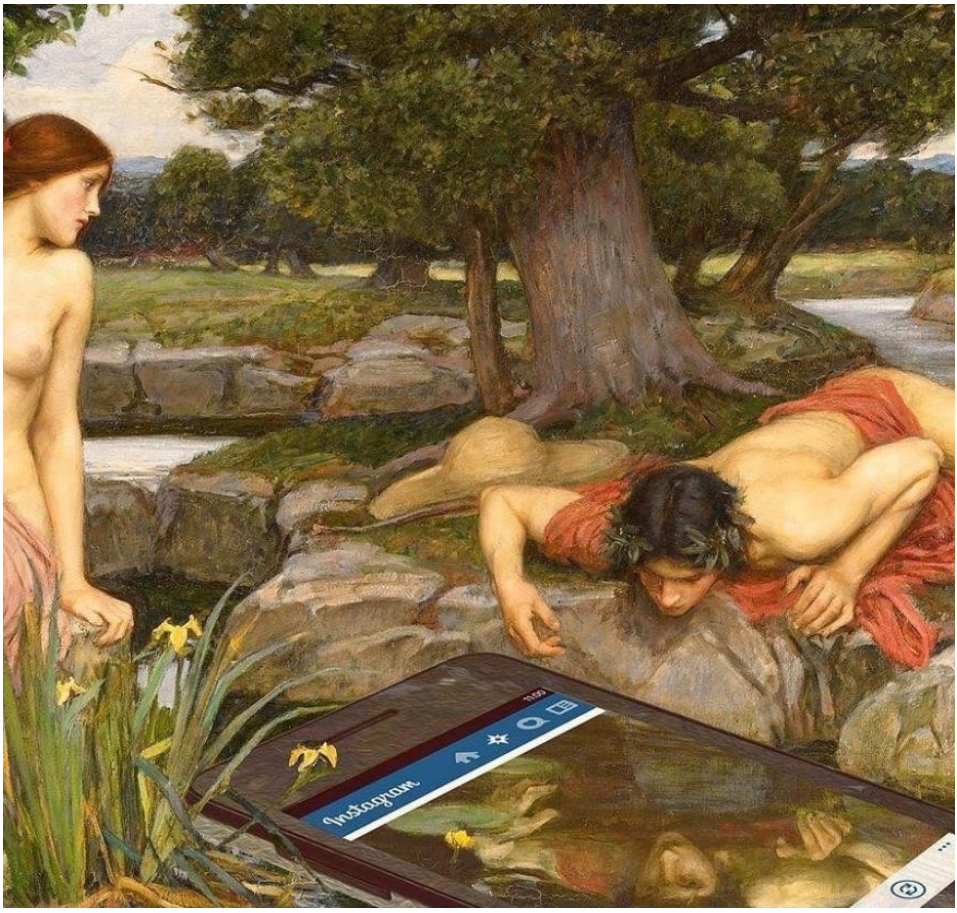

Figure 2-1 Original painting by John William Waterhouse in 1903, adaptation by Dan Cretu with addition of a smartphone. Image as a contemporary comment and criticism on addictiveness of digital social media and technology [15]

Local authorities execute the directive of shaping the national culture. If the authority of the majority plans to execute an intentional replacement of oral traditions and content of folk and fairy tales, what would be the purpose for this decision? The answer from the majority's point of view might be to gain a homogenised and unified culture. Then what would be the benefit for the majority after imposing such a homogenised and unified culture to minorities? The answer from the majority's point of view might be being a

[15] Contemporary adaptation of John William Waterhouse's *Echo and Narcissus* by Dan Cretu, 2015, https://www.instagram.com/dan_cretu/p/83n3gguiLH/

strong nation without marginal societal conflicts. Is this possible? The answer from our point of view would be "no." If people cannot transmit their cultural heritage to their young generations and if they are coerced into the majority's culture, then this would be reason enough for polarizing and creating an immense conflict between minorities and the dominant culture.

Figure 2-2 Silk Road caravan bringing goods to Istanbul. (Artship archive)

3. Contemporary Initiatives Recreating the Oral Sharing, Transmission and Content

In spite of authority's cultural replacement and homogenizing politics, minorities have to find their own ways to recreate, to share, and to transmit their oral history and art. Here we use the term minority not only for the ethnic or religious groups but also for all different social, ideological, and cultural layers.

This section updates the diagnostic approach with examples of some new ways, methods, and non-traditionalist matrixes based on folk and fairy tales of oral transmissions. The examples offer re-imagining and re-creating the oral cultural heritage as a form of communal sharing. The examples in this section come from over 40 years of *Artship's Scholarly research* feeding the contemporary art practice and *Artship Art practice* offers context for inquiry-based expression.

At Artship, a concerned and emerging matrix has been used for almost all performative pieces. In the abstract of Slobodan Dan Paich's article "Giving Birth to a Performance: Some Thoughts on Dynamics of Creating a Theater Piece," Paich says:

> […] we use the term *matrix* for all the repeatable elements of a live performance. This matrix is born through **improvising, incubating, remembering, cherishing and sharing**. […] For Artship Ensemble, a theater matrix is *unified field*, a holder of all the written and orally transmitted and remembered elements of the expressions. [16]

For more than six years, I myself experienced this matrix every year with different group members and I wrote some details of this matrix in an art magazine called *Virus*[17] published in Istanbul under the title "Stories with or without Words."[18]

Improvising: Group members can share some *clues* and *seed ideas* of a story or share some materials like drawings, photographs, playing a musical instrument, singing, sounds, anything they would like to share with each other and they start incubating, voicing and may be moving with this *seed*. There is no pressure or limitation at any stage. Members can stay silent or express their feelings and thoughts with words or with gestures.

Incubating: Group members can research and nourish their seed ideas individually and also with other group members.

Remembering: In the abstract of the paper, "Giving Birth to a Performance," Slobodan Dan Paich wrote: "For Artship Ensemble, a theater matrix is unified field, a holder of all the written and orally transmitted and **remembered** elements of the expressions."[19] Remembering is important, because it is one of the essential actions in the oral cultural heritage. Remembering is needed for transmitting oral content. Individual and collective memories carry micro-particles of informal history, which is important for the people whose voice is not a part of the official history. In the same paper we read: "The moment when a player spontaneously acts out

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[16] Paich, "Giving Birth to a Performance," International University Global Theatre Experience (IUGTE) in collaboration with Art Universe and Ostrenko Centre, *International Conference Performing Arts Training Today*, 21-24 April 2009, Bovec, Slovenia, 1. Bold emphasis mine.

[17] This strange name of the culture, art, and literature journal was given almost a year before the pandemic of Covid-19 appeared in the world and intended to recall the strong image of spreading literature and fine art among people.

[18] See Özel, "Stories with and without Words," *Virus: Culture, Art, and Literature Journal*, Issue 1 (October 2019), Issue 2 (January 2020), and Issue 3 (April 2020).

[19] Paich, "Giving Birth to a Performance," 1. Bold emphasis mine.

a poetic expression significant to the future performance is ephemeral and passing. In this remembering, the role of both the director and the ensemble as the keepers of the emerging matrix begins."[20]

Cherishing: Not only the ideas and memories of other ensemble members but also all costumes, art craft, decor, props even the building that rehearsals took place itself are going to be cherished during all rehearsals. Indeed, the whole process of matrix is going to be cherished through rehearsals for creating the unity of the performances and ensemble members.

Sharing: This is the last step of the matrix; some of the stories with or without words (movements, dances, etc.) improvised, incubated, remembered, nourished, cherished, and finally matured for sharing first with ensemble members and with other interested people. Paich says in his paper "Giving a Birth to a Performance" that "The subtle conceptual difference in the Artship process is in the cultivation of a sense of *sharing* the matrix at hand. It is not something only to present, display, and exhibit—but also to share [which could be without words]."[21]

Figure 2-3 Way of storytelling with Martiros. Saryan's watercolor painting [22]

[20] Paich, "Giving Birth to a Performance," 4.
[21] Paich, "Giving Birth to a Performance," 14.
[22] The author of this paper, Mete Ozel, is telling a fairy tale he created as a response to the visual material using reproductions of watercolour paintings of Martiros Saryan printed on silk fabric. Photo Credit: Neşe Şahin, 2014.

Starting from 2014, I participated in the Artship ensembles with Slobodan Dan Paich's collaborative listening and responded to this contemporary open approach in recreating, sharing and transmitting the spontaneous emergence of oral traditions where the texts are rarely written down but rather remembered for their performance. We call Slobodan Dan Paich "Dede" in our rehearsals and performances where he never directs and dominates the process; he listens and acts like a guide. In Paich's paper, we have below a clear definition of Artship's approach to this matter:

> In the Artship process, the theater director is more of an eyewitness, an observer and holder of the space. The subtle relationship between the ensemble—the doers—and the director—the witness—is the container for all of the ensemble's potential. The director's role implies patient, careful watching. Through this witnessing, potential breakthroughs and further ideas for the performance are revealed and shared. Also, through witnessing, the personal development of ensemble members and the collective qualities of the ensemble are revealed.[23]

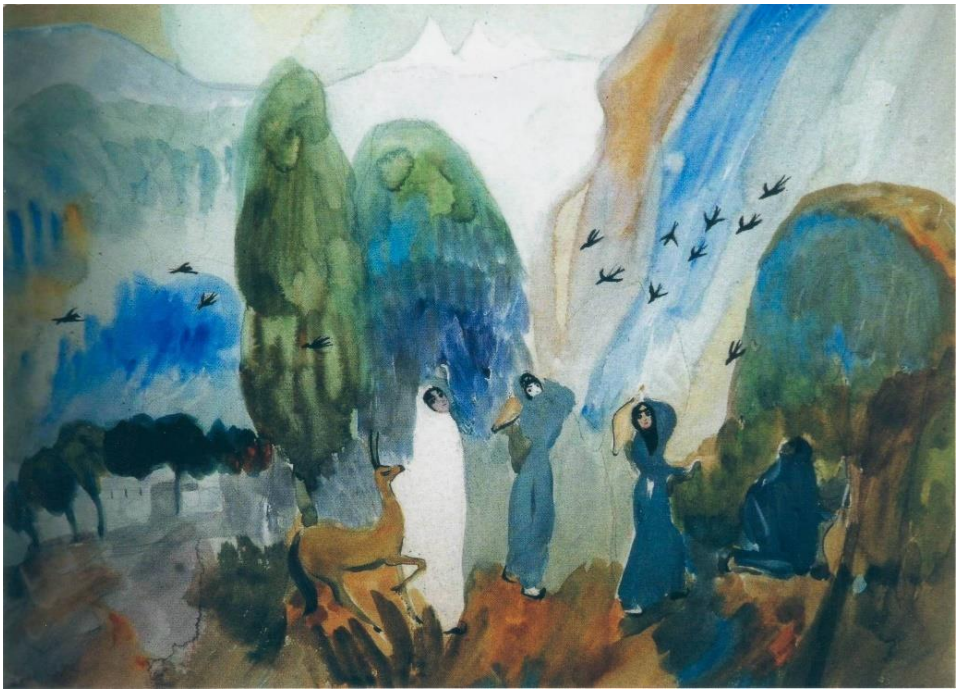

Figure 2-4 Martiros Saryan's watercolour painting (1904-1905), Nahchivan

[23] Paich, "Giving Birth to a Performance," 3.

An Example Applying Artship Matrix to a Performance: Fairytale of Martimet[24]

Slobodan Dan Paich invited me to their group settled at Halka Art Project's residence in Istanbul; and after talking about Artship's activities briefly, he gave me seven photographs of Martiros Saryan's water colour paintings and said "think about these paintings and maybe you would tell a story about them, using them, through them, for them; any story or fairy tale or even a poem is welcome." Paich gave me those materials because he estimated that the fairy atmosphere and history of these paintings would evoke my recollections, ancestral memories, and deep connections to the recent history of Anatolia. I accepted the task and set up the framework of the fairy tale derived from these paintings within few hours. Two days later, when I shared my ideas with the other members of our small group, some of them encouraged me to print the paintings on silk fabrics and show them while telling the fairy tale. In addition, some other brilliant and functional proposals came from other colleagues during the improvised sessions in our rehearsals.

The framework of the fairy tale changed slightly in every rehearsal, leading me towards a specific research field about Anatolia and Caucasian folklore. While building up my contemporary fairy tale, I also shared my ideas about other works of the group members to encourage and support them without any pressure or dictation. All members improvised their work (story, dance, personal paintings used for future narrations, etc.). Artship rehearsals incubated the presentation, content and form individually and with ensemble members. The rehearsal process helped us to remember all possible elements of orally transmitted narratives, as well as the psychological and cultural connections towards cherishing the ancient and contemporary content of the work. The performance at the end of the incubating process was first shared with the ensemble members and later with other interested people, usually the audience.

In the Appendix, at the end of this paper, there is an example of a contemporary fairy tale created and narrated by the author of this paper, responding to the early watercolours by Martiros Saryan, this orally presented piece was born from the process described here.

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[24] This fairy tale and many others were performed at different stages in San Francisco and at Halka Art Project's residence in Istanbul with the sponsorship of the Artship Initiative.

Conclusion

Offered here is a brief summary of the role of folk and fairy tales in traditional society, contemporary media, and the re-emergence of storytelling as social function and individual cognitive development.

Even in the 21st century, people are looking for new ways to ensure that their social existence survives by transmitting their oral culture to future generations. Consciously, or unconsciously, people telling stories to one another is a need of communication coded in our genes. Telling stories is an attempt to make a connection with family or group members of society. It may be a way of catching one's attention and care. Starting from early childhood, humans narrate things that happened in their lives to others, and as they do so, they may embellish their stories with exaggerated truths by adding some untrue things or eliminating some facts or events.

Sometimes exaggerating the events, characters, geographic locations, and anything related with family stories or eyewitness accounts adds another dimension to the stories. This just may be the case for the production of fairy tales; even mythology itself may have nourished from this dimension which we categorise as the *psychological dimension*.

There may be many reasons to exaggerate:

- to remember the story easily
- to make the story more interesting
- to disseminate, spread the story easily
- to hide or mask political concerns and ethnic identity
- to avoid direct violence from the majority

Despite forceful, standardised and manipulated *consumer economics* and societal demands, some people find a variety of ways to live in peace with their own selves.

Articulating traditional and contemporary life is possible with the production of free and independent thinking and acting. Commenting on the past and interpreting the present simply and perceptibly may give an opportunity to live with ourselves. We would like to end this chapter with an example of an interpretation attempt by a contemporary artist. With the image below, someone may tell new stories about the portrait of a well-known Renaissance woman hanging on a washing line between the traditional and contemporary.

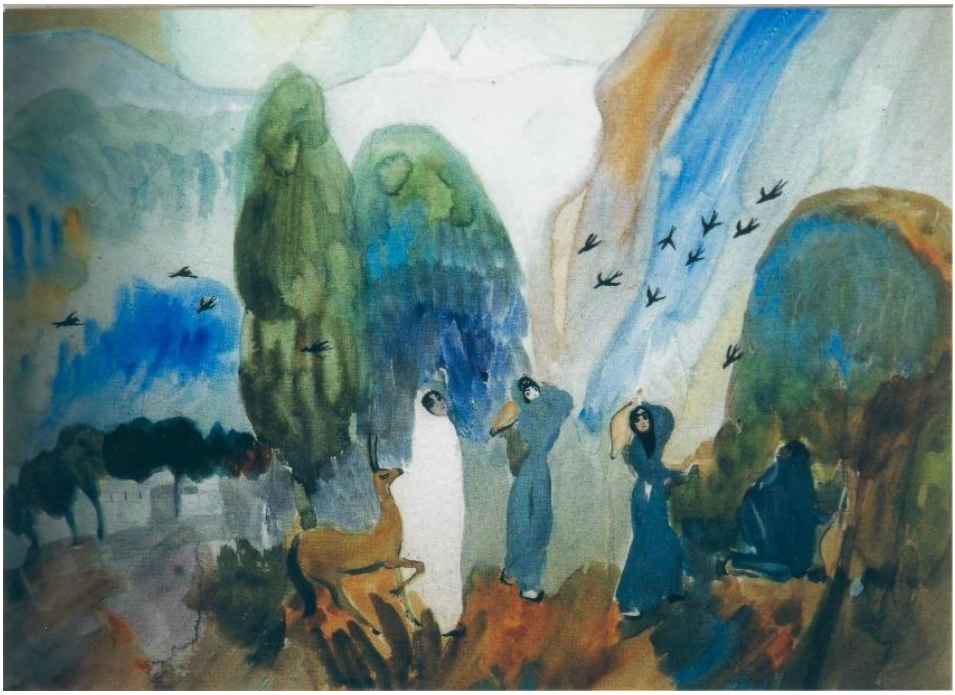
Figure 2-5 "Once there was Art History," 2016, tea and ink drawing on paper. From the Artship archive. Artist Slobodan Dan Paich

Appendix

Included here is a written framework of the above-mentioned *Fairytale of Martimet*. Readers should know that this fairy tale was created for *telling* not *writing*; so, in each telling, some elements in the fairy tale continuously change.

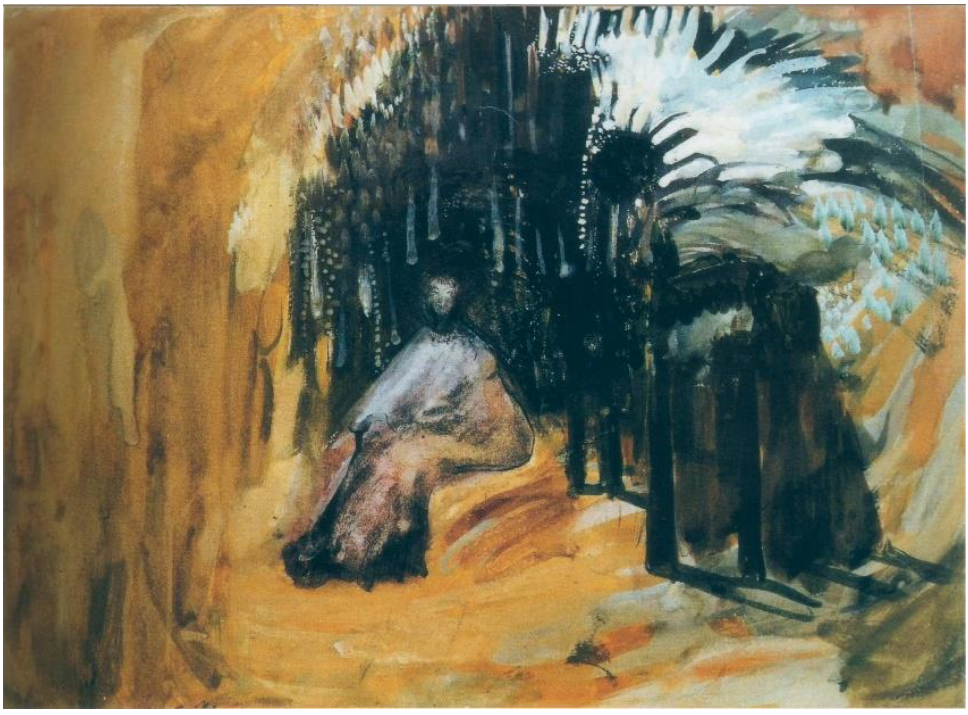
A time that exists and a time no more; a time where camels were criers, a time where fleas were hairdressers; a gazelle told a fairy tale to my grannie, and she told it to me…[25]

[25] This is the translation of one of the patterns that initiate Turkish fairy tales. The narration here is an opening sequence which is equal to "once upon a time" in the western fairy tale tradition.

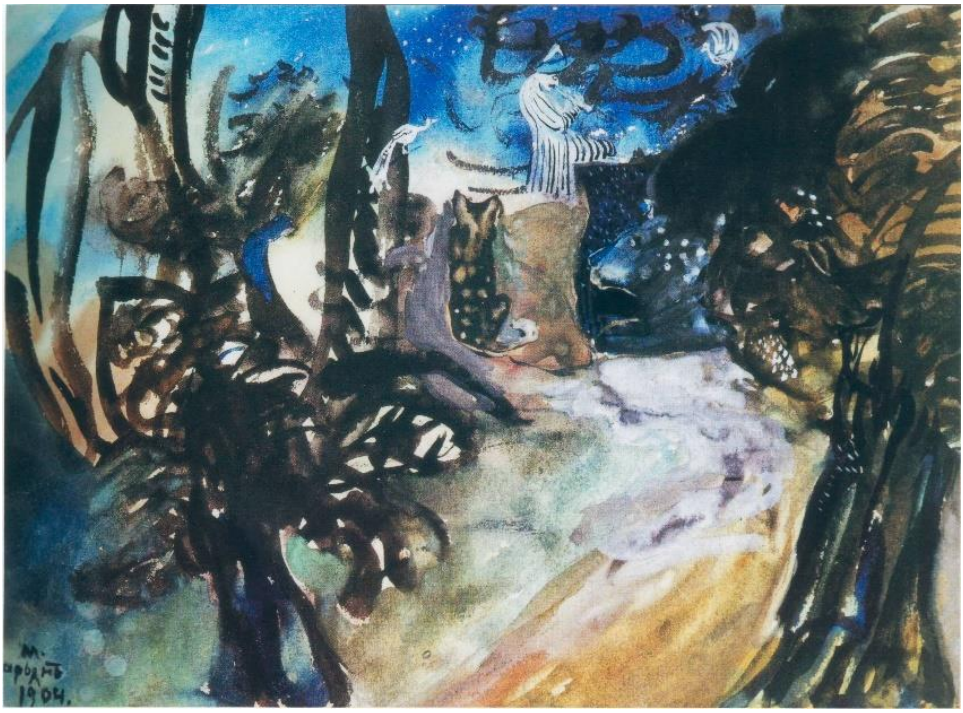


There was a village called Martimet behind Mount Kaf. It was such a beautiful village that whoever heard about it died of jealousy, those who lived there never wanted to leave. It had white houses, opulent vineyards and gardens, martins flying in its blue sky, and crystal creeks running right beside it.

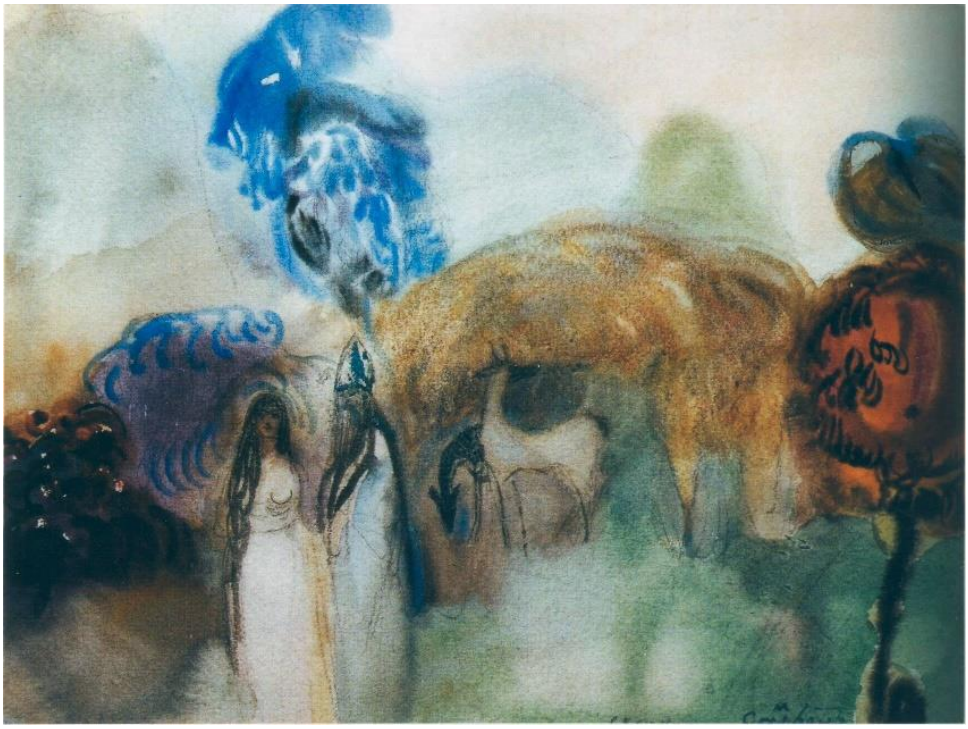
Four ancient and culturally different tribes lived together in the village, in freedom, peace, and equality and this was what was most envied.



The leaders of neighbouring villages who had a tight control of the citizens and kept them in fear were threatened by the example of the four tribes of the village of Martimet. “We should separate them” decided the neighbouring village leaders. They engaged the Dark Forest Sorcerer to begin the process, so they should be separated or killed, and not set a threatening example for their villagers.



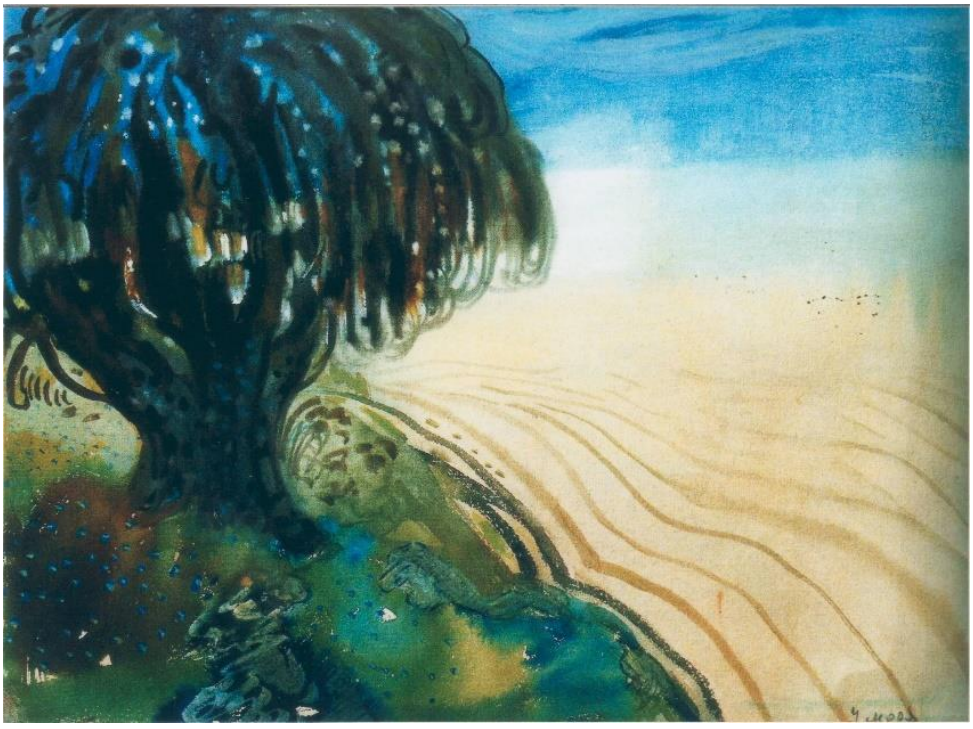
The sorcerer arrived at Martimet, and said to the four old men of the four tribes: “Four innocent girls should each pick a pot of wine harvested from four vineyards and pour it into the creek. If the creek is fermented and turns into wine, all these neighbouring villages will be your irreversible slaves. Yet, if not, and water continues to run instead of wine, you shall be separated, and I shall shed innocent blood using the sharp teeth of this monster.”



"We don't need any slaves but we should try for solidarity and for saving innocent lives," said the four old men of Martimet. Four innocent souls were picked from four tribes. Three of them were wearing large blue scarfs and one was wearing white scarf that almost covered their entire bodies.

The innocent walked many long miles to reach the creek, and started slowly pouring the wine they carried in their pots. Then suddenly, the innocent white was distracted, and she dropped and broke her pot. The girls helped her gather the wine, yet in vain. Water didn't turn into wine.

The sorcerer called the monster at once, and it first sunk its teeth into the innocent blood of the blue. When it is the white's turn, the sorcerer stopped the monster and said, "You also have a share in this, it shall not take your life and you shall live in shame forever!"



Since then, people stopped going to the creek thinking that the pink water contained the blood of their brothers. The four tribes ran away from the shore, and were separated just as their neighbours desired.

Rumours have it that it was not the three pots of wine but the innocent blood that fermented the creek, and turned it into pink spring that extended the life of whoever drank from it. Now people understand the truth, and try together to protect their shores, their creeks.

Three apples fell from the sky, one onto the head of Martiros Saryan who painted those, one on mine who told you this tale, and one on yours who listened.

Chapter 3
Central Asian Legend Tellers' Circumstances

Ahmet Tolga Ayıklar

The central motive of this chapter is to explore the Altaic people's indigenous practices of legend-telling[1] in the light of the abundance of data we have obtained at the root of this tradition. This evaluation will also provide an opportunity to show how the tradition of legend-telling bridged itself across Anatolia through linguistic and cultural practices. Altaic people preserved the fundamental aspects of their culture and language to an observable degree while they spread across different regions and formed different dialects. Despite the differences that emerged as a result of their interactions with other cultures and religions, folkloric memory ensured the preservation of the common themes of tales and legends, even though actual persons and events changed in time. The principles proposed by Raoul Rosiére about legends attest to this ability of cultures to preserve their identity in the course of their interactions with different cultures in different regions. According to these principles, ways of imagining are similar among peoples with similar levels of cultural advancement. As the memory of a hero wanes, the legend created in his name leaves him and is passed on to a more recent hero, and every legend which moves across environments adopts the social and ethnographic codes of its new cultural ecosystem.[2]

As we try to explain the origins of these legends, we will stay loyal to the definition given by Brothers Grimm. According to Brothers Grimm, legends are "historical" in the sense that they "adhere always to that which we are conscious of and know well, such as a locale or a name that has been secured through history." Legends thus "demand certain conditions without which it either cannot exist at all, or can only exist in less perfect form."[3] Legends are specific to their time and they draw inspiration from real or fictional events and characters of that period. As they depend on their environment, they make sense primarily within the context familiar to the teller. Despite the

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[1] *Encyclopædia Britannica,* "Altaic languages," https://www.britannica.com/topic/Altaic-languages (accessed January 5, 2021). In historical times the Altaic peoples were concentrated on the steppe lands of Central Asia, and it is believed that the Altaic protolanguage originated on the steppes in or near the region of the Altai Mountains.

[2] Sakaoğlu, *Efsane Araştırmaları*, 21.

[3] Ward, ed. and trans., *The German Legends of the Brothers Grimm*, 1.

presence of supernatural elements, both the teller and the audience believe them to be true.[4]

Kay and Kaycı

Turkic people in the Altai region named their epic legends as *kay-çörök* and legend tellers as *kaycı* which derives from the word *kay.*[5] *Kay* is defined as a sound coming from the throat[6] or the chest. There are also shaman legend tellers called *kam-kaycı,* whose perceived spiritual power intimidated some people.[7] As Altaic people believe that women's throats are not as strong as men's, there are very few *kaycı* women. In this context, strength of throat refers to throat singing techniques that are deployed to imitate nature and animal sounds. These tellers use mimics, gestures, and change their voices to perform different characters for their audience.

N.A. Baskakov tells us how a *kaycı* produces sounds as he performs his telling practice: "When he is telling a legend, the sound coming from his throat does not change, but he adds new sounds to this sound by moving his lips."[8] Baskakov then lists three types of sounds—*küülep-kayla, kargırkap-kayla, sıgırtıp-kayla*—which are clearly related to the names of throat singing techniques *hömey* (khoomei)*, kargıra* (kargyraa)*, sıgıt* (sygyt).[9] Zoia Krygysovna deploys the term *hörekteer* which is used in place of "khoomei" specifically in Tuva, meaning "from the chest" or "from the heart."[10] Additionally, Z.K. Kırgıs addresses some key points about Tuvan throat singing which is connected to the practice of throat singing in the Altaic tradition: "Tuvan throat singing is the spiritual key of Tuva, and reflects the people and lands of Tuva. Tuvan people have been using those techniques since early ages of music making to reflect different emotions and in khoomei it is possible to hear Tuvan horses, camel steps and the winds of mountains."[11]

In Tuva, in a workshop by Andrei Mongush that I attended, I was told that the techniques of *kargıra* and *üzengiler* were related to the sounds of animals and horse-riding, respectively. While in Mongolia I also witnessed shepherds

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[4] Sakaoğlu, Efsane Araştırmaları, 19.
[5] Dilek, "Altay-Türk Kaycılık Geleneği ile Türkiye'deki Âşık Tarzı Şiir Geleneği," 195.
[6] Ergun, "Hakas Haycıları," 121.
[7] Dilek, "Altay-Türk Kaycılık Geleneği ile Türkiye'deki Âşık Tarzı Şiir Geleneği," 196.
[8] Quoted in Dilek, "Altay Türk Kaycılık Geleneği ve Kayçı N.U.Ulagaşev," 310. Translation mine.
[9] Quoted in Dilek, "Altay Türk Kaycılık Geleneği ve Kayçı N.U. Ulagaşev," 310.
[10] See Kyrgys, "Tuvinskoe Gorlovoe Penie: Ethnomuzykovedcheskoe Issledovanie." 2002.
[11] Quoted in Göher Vural, *Orta Asya ve Sibirya Türk Müziğinde Hayvan Üslubu*, 373. Translation mine.

using a *kargıra* to help them herd yaks. When a *kaycı* tells legends, he uses musical instruments like *koomıs*,[12] *yatagan*[13] (chadagan) and *topşur*[14] (topshur).[15] He uses these instruments mostly between episodes of singing, but occasionally uses them to create animal sounds like the whickering of horses or the howling of wolves. When telling legends, in addition to singing songs of the protagonists, these tellers might also add filler songs about spirits (*iye, ee*), depending on the audience's mood and interest.[16]

Figure 3-1 Boris Kindikov plays dopshur [17]

[12] Göher Vural, *Orta Asya ve Sibirya Türk Müziğinde Hayvan Üslubu,* 127. In Kahasia, khoomis means also a string instrument similar to dopshur. Also, *dopşur, doşpulur, demir kopuz, khomus, jaw harp*.

[13] Göher Vural, *Orta Asya ve Sibirya Türk Müziğinde Hayvan Üslubu,* 162. A 7-14 stringed instrument used by almost all related Central Asian Turks. Variations of this instrument are the Japanese koto and the Chinese guzheng. This instrument is named *çetigen* in Kyrgyz, *jetigen* in Kazakh, *yatugan* in Bashkir, *yooçin* or *yatga* in Mongolian, *çagaan* in Sakha, *çathan* in Khakasia and *çadagan* in Tuva.

[14] Göher Vural, *Orta Asya ve Sibirya Türk Müziğinde Hayvan Üslubu,* 133. Two stringed, finger plucked instrument found in Turkic cultures, especially common in Altai region.

[15] Dilek, "Altay-Türk Kaycılık Geleneği ile Türkiye'deki Âşık Tarzı Şiir Geleneği," 196.

[16] Dilek, "Altay Türk Kaycılık Geleneği ve Kayçı N.U. Ulagaşev," 311.

[17] Musique Du Monde, Altai, Sibérie 10, *Le Chant des Montagnes D'or* (Buda Musique, 2009).

Becoming a *kaycı* is not easy as it takes years of study as an apprentice of a master *kaycı.* Holders and carriers of societies' collective wisdom are created only after long years of practicing the tradition of singing, playing musical instruments and acting. On the other hand, thousands of years ago, these societies had different priorities.

Evolution of Campfire Stories

For their very survival hunter-gatherers relied on their ability of landscape learning, remembering and communicating their knowledge and experience.[18] They shared their knowledge by means of petroglyphs (rock art) and storytelling. They told each other their hunting techniques around campfires, using early forms of theatrical acting to illustrate their narrations. They started imitating the voices and movements of animals and used their pelts as costumes.[19] These were the baby steps of music, ritual and theatre. Their survival knowledge took the form of stories and gave birth to different cultures in different geographies. In the evenings of *hunting days,* hunter-gatherer people crafted and exchanged stories based on their experiences as well as stories from the figments of their imagination. They were probably not only conveying knowledge of survival, but were also using stories to brag about their skills. They exaggerated their heroics of fame and glory to make the long nights of keeping watch more enjoyable.

Landscape Learning

Landscape learning involves three types of environmental knowledge: locational, limitational, and social. According to Marcy Rockman:

> [l]ocational knowledge consists of information relating to the spatial and physical characteristics of particular resources, such as the geographic position of a particular lithic outcrop, spring, or animal migration route or feeding or watering spot. (…) Limitational knowledge includes information about the usefulness and reliability of various resources and the ranges of variation within the overall environment. For example, how many types of animals live in the area, and how stable are their populations and behavior and movement patterns? Are the lithic raw materials of good quality? How extreme are the temperatures in winter and summer? Limitational knowledge cannot be gathered instantly but requires a period of learning through experience, and the time can differ dramatically for various aspects

[18] Rockman, "Apprentice to the Environment, Hunter-Gatherers and Landscape Learning," 102.

[19] Kara, "Dramanın İlk Uygulayıcıları: Türk Şamanları," 1183.

> of the environment. (…) Social knowledge comes from the attribution of names, meanings, and patterns to natural features and the storage of locational and limitational knowledge in forms that are remembered and transmitted by the group to succeeding generations.[20]

Before pastoral nomadism,[21] hunter-gatherer societies migrated continually, selecting areas for hunting and occasionally settling in one place for a few seasons. Choosing the landscape determined where the hunter-gatherers lived, hunted and died. That part of nature became their microcosm, their home. They tried to learn everything about their environment, beginning with landforms like mountains, rivers, and forests. Where they could not find any natural landmarks, they began creating their own. During my field research in 2014, I took two photos on consecutive days in Terkhiin Tsagaan Nuur[22] (Figures 3-2 and 3-3). These two pictures demonstrate the significance of heights in nature and underscore the critical role of pathfinding for survival. After snowfall, all paths were covered, making orientation possible only by observing the landforms. Whenever they failed to locate significant natural landmarks for navigation, they began creating their own signs. In Central Asia and Siberia, I observed many *ovoos* that had been constructed over the years by passing travellers (Figure 3-4). Traditionally, travellers add a stone or a simple offering to the *ovoo* as they pass by.

Over time, as they settled in significant locations, landforms became increasingly important. Because of this importance, the hunter-gatherer society attributed them with greater meaning, characters and spirits. They began creating stories about mountains and rivers, coming to believe that everything possessed a guardian spirit. In Central Asia and Siberia, these spirits are called *iye* or *ee. Ovoo*s gradually transformed into sculptures, and nomads began constructing stone monuments in the shapes of sacred animals or in forms reflecting the way how they imagined *iye*s (Figure 3-5). Over centuries, what was once a necessity evolved into a tradition, and that tradition blossomed into art.

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[20] Rockman, "Apprentice," 102.
[21] Khazanov, Göçebe ve Dış Dünya, 96.
[22] White Lake is located in the Khangai Mountains in central Mongolia.

Figures 3-2 (top) and 3-3 (bottom) Two photos I took on consecutive days in Terkhiin Tsagaan Nuur showing the dramatic change in the environment by snowfall at night

Figure 3-4 An ovoo in central Mongolia

Figure 3-5 Bengütaş[23] in the south east of Kharkhorin

[23] Means monument (also immortal stone).

Possibly the Earliest Musical Instruments

Ancient humans began sharing stories around campfires in caves or in perilous nature, not only for transferring knowledge, but also as a means of combating fear and making the seamlessly endless dark nights more enjoyable. They did not have many tools for hunting. After the invention of the bow and arrow, their dominance over prey and other predators increased, enhancing their chances of survival. Since the bow and arrow enabled them to maintain a safe distance from danger, these articles became their most crucial tools. First, they found that striking the stretched bowstring with their arrows produced a louder sound than plucking it with their fingers. Over time, they discovered they could resonate that sound within their mouth cavity. They used their arrow to adjust the tension of the bowstring and created a broader range of tonalities. They began incorporating their bows and arrows as musical instruments into their campfire storytelling. Their tales thus became more interesting for their small audience, and gained a longevity surpassing that of other old-fashioned tales. Petroglyphs found in the Omaruru district, Erongo, Namibia (Figure 3-6) and in the Injasuti region, Natal, Drakensberg-Mountains (Figure 3-7) provide evidence of mouth bow playing, as well as the utilisation of accessories to enhance resonance and tonality.

Figures 3-6 (left) and 3-7 (right) Omaruru district, Erongo, Namibia (Scherz, 1986)[24]
Injasuti region, Natal, Drakensberg-Mountains (Lewis-Williams, 1990)[25]

During my field research in 2014, I met with many local musicians, one of whom demonstrated mouthbow playing to me in Tuva, which is tens of thousands of kilometres away from Africa (Figure 3-8, she did not want her face to be shown). She played with the same technique as depicted in African

[24] Vogels and Lenssen-Erz, "Beyond Individual Pleasure and Rituality," 4.
[25] Vogels and Lenssen-Erz, "Beyond," *Rock Art Research*, 5.

petroglyphs. The journey of the bow was fascinating, yet it was not the only journey across time and places.

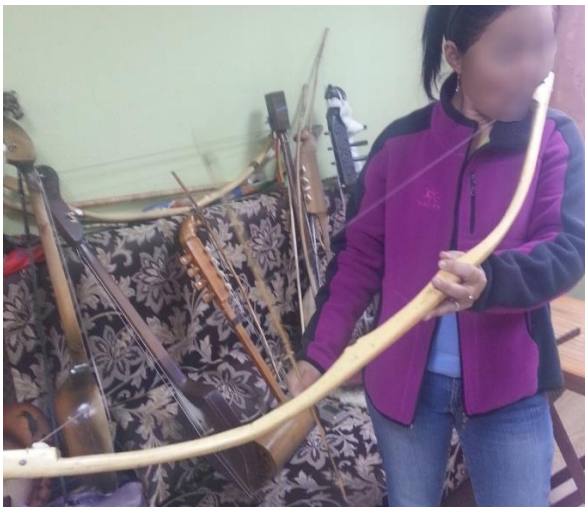

Figure 3-8 The demonstration of mouthbow playing

Khomus (Figure 3-9), also known as Jew's harp, jaw harp or mouth harp, is a common instrument all around the world, constructed in different styles and from different materials. *Khomus* players employ the same playing technique as mouthbow players from ancient times. *Khomus* is an advanced form of a mouthbow because it provides greater control over the sound produced. A *khomus* player can change the tonality of sound by adjusting the position of their tongue within the mouth cavity. It stands as evidence of the evolution of a simple hunting bow into a musical instrument that is widespread worldwide.

Figure 3-9 A khomus made in Khakassia

In the National Museum of Mongolia in Ulaanbaatar, I saw a reconstruction of a historical instrument (Figures 3-10 and 3-11). The connection between the form of the musical instrument and the hunting bow became evident to me when I viewed a reconstructed hunting bow in the next section (Figure 3-12). A road map of the bow's evolution began to take shape in my mind. The designs of the hunting bow and the instrument bore similarities, with the instrument featuring the addition of multiple strings. That could serve as evidence that an archaic harp evolved from a bow.

Figures 3-10 (left) and 3-11 (right) A historical instrument and its reconstruction.

Figure 3-12 A reconstructed hunting bow

I would like to point out another aspect of string instruments. Central Asian and Siberian bows utilised for local string instruments, unlike western instrument bows, are shaped like a hunting bow (Figure 3-13). Another compelling piece of evidence is that in all Turkic languages, the term for bow is *yay*, which is generally used to refer to any type of bow. In Anatolian Turkish, the word for violin is *keman,* which originates from Persian and means *bow*. In languages like English and French, the word for the instrument bow and the shooting bow is the same or derives from the same origin.

Figure 3-13 Aleksej Nikolaevic (left) and Alan Viktorovic Temeev (right)[26]

I started experimenting with simple bows that I crafted from branches and twisted thin strings. I discovered that I could use those bows as mouthbows and continued my experiments by trying to produce sound by rubbing the bowstrings against each other. Nothing happened until I applied

[26] Musique Du Monde, Altai, Sibérie 10, *Le Chant des Montagnes D'or* (Buda Musique, 2009).

resin to one of the strings. Then I successfully reproduced the sound of a string instrument, and I could even use my fingers to adjust the tension and tonality. In a sense, one could say that constructing a string instrument would have been easy and feasible for archaic humans. Advancements of materials and technologies enabled the creation of different instruments like stringed instruments with frets. Considering all this evidence, it is highly likely that the ancestor of all string instruments was a hunter bow. Similarly, the evolution of an *avcı* (hunter) into a *kaycı* (legend teller) can be envisioned within a similar time frame, given that ancient hunters were the first to use their hunting bows as aids in their practices of storytelling.

Wisdom Holders

Archaic humans created sound for various purposes such as hunting, safeguarding themselves, scaring their enemies or predators, telling stories, and engaging in rituals. In Altaic legends or stories, *kam*s (shamans) are credited with being the inventors of the earliest known instruments, as well as music, the art of blacksmithing and other essential skills for survival. They appear in almost every origin story, probably because they paid homage to their shaman ancestors who were the actual creators of these practices.

Tarbanakova's definition of *kam* challenges prejudiced stereotypes that often portray shamans as mere witch doctors: "Shaman's *kamlama* (ritual) is a tremendous spectacle composed of many well-prepared scenes. Shamans are artistic people. They can dance well, sing, and play instruments. They have a vivid imagination and an excellent memory."[27] Metin And notes in *Oyun ve Bügü* (*Play and Magic*) that the word *oyun* is used in Turkic and Mongolian languages to name shaman rituals, shamans themselves, as well as to name children's games. According to And's description, "during the ritual (*oyun*), while reciting poetry, the shaman engages in dance, makes music through vocalisation and instrument, performs imitation, growling and dramatisation by using their facial muscles."[28] Nadya Yuguşeva, however, offers a different perspective on the role of *kam*s: "*Kam* does not only communicate with spirits to heal people, but also uses a variety of herbs to cure simple illnesses."[29]

These definitions show that *kam*s use their knowledge to help people with the help of music, dance and acting. Yet, what prompted them to

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[27] Tarbanakova, "Altay Halklarının Folklorik Tiyatrosu," 327. Translation mine.
[28] And, Oyun ve Bügü: Türk Kültüründe Oyun Kavramı, 37. Translation mine.
[29] Yuguşeva, "Altaylarda Kamlık Şamanizm İnancı ve Anadolu'daki Yansımaları," 210. Translation mine.

develop other personas? I thought I could the answer during my field research in Mongolia. During my visit to Mongolia, I wanted to meet with a real shaman, one who was not scamming people for money. About 70 kilometres southeast of Ulaanbaatar, I found one, who did not ask for any payment. I entered a *ger*[30] in a village. Several people were already inside, waiting. Before the ritual began, I could not discern which one was the *kam*. Once he donned his *manyak/mancak* (shaman costume for rituals) and adorned his mask, the atmosphere inside the *ger* changed. As soon as he began drumming, he changed his voice and transformed into another person. He said that he was sharing his body with an ancient spirit. I noticed that he was using the technique of throat singing. At that instant, he told me that I did not believe him, perhaps because he noticed my widened eyes when he altered his voice. I reassured him that I believed him, but that I could not help analysing the persona he had created. During the ritual, as he was speaking with one of the patients inside, he stopped and turned to his apprentice, saying "offer this cup of milk." His apprentice got up and went out. When he returned, sunlight appeared through the clouds. Was this *kam* that powerful, or was his act of offering that significant to nature? He used the aperture at the top of the *ger* to monitor the movements of clouds so that he could ensure the timing of his spectacle and captivate the attention of skeptics like myself during the ritual. Later, he called me forward. I sat next to him and he laid my head on his knee. Examining my back, he discerned all the illnesses I had or might develop. It was fascinating and I can imagine how frightening that could be for many people. What I observed during that ritual was the remarkable extent of observational skills that *kams* possessed.

*Kam*s, who used ancient folk medicine and knowledge, were the doctors of their community. Today, some communities in Siberia and Central Asia still need their services, since they live in remote locations without access to modern medicine. *Kams* use the age-old examination and diagnosis methods that were passed down from their masters. For healing purposes, they use indigenous herbal remedies that have been meticulously selected through trial and error over thousands of years. They use costumes, music and throat singing to be more convincing. Having observed the rituals, shamanic costumes strike me as akin to a doctor's white coat. While adorned in their shamanic costume, people tend to trust their words until they take it off. Once they remove it, they integrate back into their everyday community.

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[30] The name given to the nomadic tents in Mongolian language. Its equivalent in Turkic languages is *yurt*.

In addition to their observational skills, *kams* rely on their excellent memory to retain the wisdom of their society. Grigory Ivanoviç Çoros Gurkin, a painter from Altai, mentions *kam*s as he describes his own purpose: "My duty as a painter is to research Altaic way of life, collecting legends and artworks, evaluating and enriching them. A museum should be established in Altai. Disappearing beliefs and traditions, which *kam*s endeavour to preserve and protect, should be studied."[31]

Over the centuries, *kams* assumed several responsibilities, beginning with using their observational skills for hunting. *Kam-kaycı*s undertook a very special mission before the hunt commenced. As shamans/*kam*s could communicate with *iye*s better than others, they told legends and stories to appease *taiga*[32] *iye*s (spirits), ensuring that nothing is left to chance during the hunt. Siberian people believe that hunting is not a simple act of killing. Game is taiga *iye*'s gift to the hunter in exchange for the *kam-kaycı*'s well-told legends and stories.[33] This ritualistic aspect of hunting underscores *kam-kaycı*'s significance, but their true value likely lies in their observational skills, as they can predict weather conditions and read signs of danger in nature better than others. Undoubtedly, the psychological benefit of having a shaman with them—providing a sense of protection against the unforeseen angry *iye*—is also an undeniable factor.

Connection Between Kam-Kaycı and Âşık

The evolution from a simple storyteller-hunter to a legend teller-shaman (*kam-kaycı*) continued even among tribes that migrated to Anatolia. The influence of new religions and territories contributed to the transformation of certain aspects of the *kam-kaycı* tradition into that of *âşık*.[34] İbrahim Dilek builds the connection between Siberia and Anatolia. Like Altai *kaycı*s, Anatolian *âşık*s learn their craft primarily from a master. Apprentices learn from their masters a variety of skills, including legends, vocal techniques, and how to play instruments like *chadagan*, *topshur*. Occasionally, when they do not have a master, they learn their skills in their sleep from a *pîr* or *Hızır*. In Anatolia *âşık*s are called *bâdeli âşık* if they acquire their artistic gift and

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31 Dilek, "Alyat Curokçı (Ressam) Grigory Ivanoviç Çoros Gurkin ve Han Altay Tablosu," 181. Translation mine.

32 A mountain covered with woodland, *tayga*.

33 Açа, "Güney Sibirya Türklerinde Ava Destancı ve Masalcı Götürme Geleneği," 7.

34 Şimşek, "Âşık Veysel'in Âşıklık Geleneği İçerisindeki Yeri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme," 118. *Ozan* (Turkic bard) in pre-islamic Turkic culture was known as *kam*, *baksı/bahşı* and *oyun*; after the adoption of Islam, they carried on as *âşık*. Âşık is a folk artist who recite legends and tales, and improvises poetry while playing an instrument.

skills in this manner. Similarly, the legend tellers in Altai who learn in their dream are called *eeli kayçı*.[35]

The shamanic gift typically manifests itself in individuals when they are young, usually during an illness. They are taken to a shaman for training if the family recognises their destiny. Sometimes when the family brings the sick child to a shaman for cure, the shaman recognises the child's future as a shaman and accepts him as an apprentice. Upon becoming an apprentice, they acquire the skills to treat their own ailments and develop the power to aid others. Some of them receive the gift and power simultaneously in their dreams from an *iye*, similar to *eeli kaycı*. In Dilek's words:

> During a hunt, a hunter falls asleep on a mountain. In his dream, the *iye* of the mountain comes and tells the *Kan-Bergen* legend while playing *topshur* for three days. The Hunter listens to the *iye* of the mountain for three days without waking up. After he wakes up, he finds a *topshur* next to him. He now possesses the knowledge of storytelling and playing *topshur,* skills he previously lacked. He begins reciting Kan-Bergen while simultaneously playing *topshur*.[36]

Conclusion

Legends, stories and timeless storytelling techniques allow us to trace the paths of cultures across centuries and continents. This tradition appears to have originated from a basic necessity, as I witnessed in Mongolia where shepherds used throat singing technique while herding yaks. The reflections of this pragmatic search for sounds to be used in everyday nomadic life can be observed in expressions and art, which deploy similar techniques to produce similar sounds. The survival skills of hunter-gatherers and their inclination towards storytelling for transferring knowledge, alongside a spirit of exploration, gave rise to the first singing techniques and musical instruments, as well as rituals, statues, medicine, numerous cultural phenomena, encompassing every facet of art. Over the centuries, certain hunters evolved into *kams* (shamans). *Kams* acquired various skills and used every method to enhance their persuasiveness, to heal the members of their community, and to help people understand their environment. They crafted stories and legends, and most importantly, they preserved all the accumulated wisdom across time and place, passing their knowledge on to community members who, in the modern world, might be recognised as musicians, doctors, and artists.

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[35] Dilek, "Altay," 312.
[36] Dilek, "Altay," 198. Translation mine.

Chapter 4
Folklore, Performance, and Ghosts: A Comparative Analysis of Japanese and Italian Experimental Theatre

Raffaele Furno

Ghosts are a paradox: an absence that becomes a presence; incorporeal entities that fool our senses through apparitions, sounds and smells; impalpable emotions that stimulate our physical reactions, goose bumps, accelerated heartbeat, and sweat. Ghosts are ambiguous literary and theatrical metaphors for desires, unspeakable dreams, and nostalgia. In his seminal work on the analysis of the fantastic as a literary genre, Tzvetan Todorov claims that:

> In a world which is indeed our world, the one we know, a world without devils, sylphids, or vampires, there occurs an event which cannot be explained by the laws of this same familiar world. The person who experiences the event must opt for one of two possible solutions: either he is the victim of an illusion of the senses, of a product of the imagination—and laws of the world then remain what they are; or else the event has indeed taken place, it is an integral part of the reality—but then this reality is controlled by laws unknown to us. The fantastic occupies the duration of this uncertainty.[1]

Hesitation about reality as we know is at the core of this comparative essay. My intention is to analyse how the real and the imaginary are inextricably intertwined in the theatre of Satoh Makoto and Leo de Berardinis. The former was a Japanese author and director who belonged to the *angura* movement, the Tokyo avant-garde artistic wave of the late 1960s. The latter was an Italian actor and director who, in the 1970s in Napoli, conceived what he called *teatro dell'ignoranza* (ignorance theatre). Both artists adapted Greek and Shakespearean tragedies, but hybridised them with local folk tales and forms of popular entertainment to investigate the ghostly nature of their national cultural identity. Satoh and de Berardinis shared a leftist political ideology upon which they theorised tradition as a

[1] Todorov, *The Fantastic*, 46.

haunting force of modernity. They believed that the unfathomable disappearance of traditional culture was opening up spaces for new identity formations, but was also leaving a vacuum occupied by a foreign and arrogant capitalism, at work to destroy the true spirit of their nations. Both directors employed the literary escamotage of ghosts, dreams, and apparitions borrowed from folk tales as a possible tactic of resistance against the loss of local culture and the transformation of artistic creativity into a business.

The anxiety of de Berardinis and Satoh's theatre embodied the intellectual approach described by Jean Paul Sartre as "unhappy consciousness," that is the inner struggle between the self and the goal to which intellectuals aim, namely the emancipation of humanity.[2] The most effective adaptation of such existentialist anguish in theatrical terms was Satoh Makoto's trilogy titled *Hello, Hero! Three Episodes in the Unending Ending*.[3] Satoh's plays start from the assumption that human freedom is a basic requirement for a dignified life. Freedom, however, is synonymous with change, as every act of freedom that is put into effect loses its free essence and has to be substituted with a new act. Therefore, the feeling of alienation always accompanies freedom. In existentialist terms, alienation is described as a process in which someone is constrained to become other than what one's essence is in its being. Satoh felt that post-war Japan had undergone a forced betrayal of her essence, which artists had the responsibility to recover from the debris of the past.

Writing about Satoh's trilogy, critic Tsuno Kaitarô argued: "Aiming at the idea that no matter how long we wait we will ultimately be disappointed, (…) Satoh [has] tried to provide us with that old, but somehow always new, truly theatrical experience—the terrifying instant when someone who is not

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[2] Sartre, "The Humanism of Existentialism," 20.

[3] The three plays are adapted from Sophocles' *Antigone*. *Ismene* retells the Greek tragedy from the point of view of Antigone's sister. It is a reinvention of the classic through a postmodernist combination of various influences taken from Japanese and American pop culture. *The Subway* represents human history as a subway train guided by a blind engineer. The destination is unknown, and it is not even certain that the train will ever emerge from the dark tunnel. The play moves beyond a temporally and spatially restricted dimension to create a universal allegory of the human condition in modern societies. *The Changing Room* is a monologue by an athlete, inspired by Haemon's tragic figure, who is preparing for a match while having a discussion with an unspecified entity, probably God. The self-questioning intellectual process allows him to come to terms with his human and finite condition. For the English translation of the plays, see Goodman, ed., *Japanese Drama and Culture in the 1960s: The Return of the Gods* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1988).

supposed to appear appears, and when we see someone who has been forbidden us."[4] This dynamic often takes the form of the *waiting woman*, a female figure whose subjectivity places her in between body and spirit, on the threshold between the world she lives in and the one she dreams of. I argue that the *waiting woman* is Satoh's adaptation of the Japanese folk figure of the *yamanba*. The *yamanba* appears in Japanese literature under multiple incarnations: as a god, a demon, sometimes an entertainer or a mother, some other times as a man-eating monster or a shapeshifter. Both a victimiser and a victim, she is the embodiment of ambiguity and chaos in a trickster's world.[5] As Julia Bullock notes,"[w]hile in early folkloric incarnations the *yamanba* was a fearsome and horrifying creature, modern Japanese writers exposed this trope as evidence of a male fear of feminine power, reinterpreting her as an archetype of feminine independence from the fetters of the family system and the regulations of civilised society."[6] Writers often portrayed the *yamanba* as a manipulative apparition exercising her power over men through speech, an art that was deviant and dangerous because of its overtly challenge to the traditional public male dominance. The performative nature of speech, containing prophetic warnings, occult forecasts, or curses, functioned as an archetype that perceived the agency of female voice as a threat to the male hegemonic order. The writer Ōba Minako argues that Japanese folk tales regularly depict women as creatures that men should be fearful of. Femininity is associated with ruin and destruction, which is the reason why women should exclusively care for the household, but should have nothing to do with any public matter. The domain allotted to women, the family, is the area of order without coercion, ruled by custom not by force. Men have reserved the structures of social power to themselves. The presence of a *yamanba* is an inherent danger that can be solved only by banishing the feared subject to the mountains, removed from society.[7] Drawing a parallel between the silenced *waiting woman* and Japan, between the *yamanba's* speech ability and the dismantling of the male-dominated political rhetoric, Satoh represented in this trope the embodiment of the resentment felt by the Japanese youth, at once deprived of its traditional roots and derailed by the excessive Americanization of its costumes and behaviours.

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[4] Tsuno, "Biwa and Beatles," 25.
[5] Viswanathan, "In Pursuit of the Yamamba," 143-44.
[6] Bullock, "Burning Down the House," 233.
[7] Ōba and Mizuta, *Taidan*, 141.

Ismene, the young protagonist of the homonymous play that opens Satoh's trilogy, is a perfect representation of the *waiting woman*. In a country where the household unit, the *ie*, is the foundational pillar upon which the patriarchal State has built its solidity, Ismene's speech has no validity whatsoever, since she is the youngest female in the royal family of Thebes. In fact, she hardly addresses her speech towards family members. She prefers to talk to natural elements, like the sun, or to ghostly characters that she may imagine, evoke and visualise. While Antigone pushes forward the tragic action of burying her deceased brother's body, breaching Creon's edict, Ismene acquires the *yamanba*'s quality of prophecy and speech. The dramatic condition forces her to turn into a mature, established, and self-aware subjectivity, and she eventually decides that her identity will not be set by others anymore, but only by her own free will. In fact, her daily talk with the sun, which opens the play, is a delicate confession of childish dreams to an old friend. However, when the family's tragedy has been completed, Ismene yells her final monologue against the sun as a strong invective, because she feels betrayed by her long lasting and loyal friend.

There is clearly a political undertone in Ismene's transformation. First, the sun is easily identifiable as Japan, whose flag represents a red sun in a white field. Ismene as a *yamanba* transitions from the role of the remissive daughter of the opening scene to the outspoken political subject of the finale, through her overt criticism against Japan's immobility against the tragic destiny of its people. A second political layer shines through Satoh's dramaturgy. All the characters in the play profusely drink coca cola from a vending machine placed centre stage, showing a real addiction to it. Since they are directly involved in the bloody war that has been distressing Thebes for years, Satoh seems to imply that the foreign drink has intoxicated and corrupted their spirit. Ismene refuses the soda and drinks green tea, respectful to the country's habit. Out of metaphor, when she finally steps up as a *yamanba* figure, speaking independently for herself and against the other members of her family, she showcases the true Japanese pride that, in Satoh's vision, should act against US imperialism.

One particular scene condenses the ghostly nature of *Ismene*. The young girl has maintained a façade year after year, acting like a good daughter, that is starting to take a toll on her health.[8] Instead of letting this destroy her, she

[8] There are two fundamental categories that explain Japanese social interactions in public: *tatemane hon'ne*. The former refers to behaviours and opinions expected and required by society according to one's position, gender, age, and circumstances. The latter expresses

finds refuge in a daily dream that reinforces her growth process and tells of the counterhegemonic nature of her femininity. She wants to escape once and for all from the war in Thebes and the dramatic obligations towards her family. In her daydreaming attitude, Ismene builds up a primitive and supernatural energy that defies containment within the role of the dutiful daughter of a good family of aristocratic lineage, and she takes great pleasure in challenging the very societal norms that would put her in her proper place. She achieves this through pure imagination and evocation: the green empty coca cola bottles scattered on stage turn into a sea, and her white robe becomes a sail that catches the refreshing wind of freedom. Ismene pretends to be sailing on that calm sea to reach the next city, when suddenly two unexpected characters, Nobody A and Nobody B, join her in this "let's pretend" game.

The presence of fantastic elements irrupting in the plot's development is a common feature in Satoh's plays, who blurs rational narrative discourses with imagination, similar to much of Japanese fantastic literature. Nobody A and Nobody B work as coca cola deliverymen, but pretend to be sailors at Ismene's orders. They are quite at ease with this game, which feels like a routine to them. However, Ismene's childish game gradually takes a dark turn when it becomes clear that Nobody A and Nobody B have arrived for two dreadful reasons. The first is to bring Polyneices' body home, wrapped in a sac too heavy for Antigone to move indoors. Carrying the body of the deceased brother onto the stage, they act as both the physical and metaphorical stimulus that compels Ismene to transition into adulthood and, therefore, to abandon her dream and acquire a deep awareness of her *yamanba* nature. Children lack consciousness of their limits and often think of themselves as invincible. Ismene's realization that she has to deal with powers greater than herself marks her passage into adulthood, fomenting her willingness to speak up and to embody her transcendental change.

The second reason for the arrival of Nobody A and Nobody B is that they have been tasked with removing the coca cola vending machine. Now that the war is over, Ismene's family will have to learn to live without this drink, for which they have developed an insane dependency. Nobody A and Nobody B must transport the vending machine to the next city, the very destination

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one's sincere and honest feelings, which can be shown only if they do not create embarrassment within one's own community, whether with his/her coworkers, family or friends. The ability to navigate the fine line that separates and connects *tatemae hon'ne* is at the core of one's ability to succeed in society. See Nakane, *Japanese Society*.

Ismene envisioned to reach in her sailing dream. This discovery shatters Ismene's hope of escape, as she realises that any attempt to run away from her home, family, and war will be thwarted by the encounter with the relentless, intoxicating, and evil force that has reached the next city. The haunting presence of Nobody A and Nobody B evokes alterity as they, like ghosts, confront Ismene with the impossibility of mastering her tragic past or future, whether through knowledge or action. Certain implications of the past for the future can only be perceived as phantasmatic traces. If imagination is confronted by the formidable force of reality, Ismene cannot sustain her dream and must instead embrace the status quo, thereby further cultivating her self-awareness as an independent woman. Considering the political nature of Satoh's dramaturgy, this call for independence stands as a metaphor for Japan's need to re-establish its own autonomous national identity. I find interesting that the author embeds this necessity within the adaptation of a Greek tragedy, as it contains a ghostly reference to the *polis*—a unified community constructed on fundamental shared values and a common political and spiritual goal.

Ismene's faith should not be mistaken for passivity. *Shikata ga nai* is a socially recognised behaviour for Japanese people. It means that some things are inevitable, indicating a sense of resignation and a measure of control. When confronted with a major threat, Japanese people consider it wiser to accept the situation as it is and resign themselves to it, rather than engage in a strenuous yet futile reaction. Acceptance is different from resignation. While the former leaves the door open for ongoing engagement with the outside world, the latter is a pessimistic attitude that sees no alternatives. Also, control can be exercised in two different ways: either by recognizing the continuities in one's existence and using them to adapt to inevitable changes, or by taking command of these transitions and giving them meaning through various religious, social, or cultural mechanisms. According to the anthropologist Susan Long, "*Shikata ga nai* identifies limits of personal or human control, around which one must work to maintain or reconstruct a meaningful sense of self. *Shikata ga nai* as a statement of desired control may be oriented towards others or be focused inward."[9] Ismene opts for a blend of these two options. Acceptance gives her the strength to face her condition and come to terms with it, which in return

[9] Long, "*Shikata ga nai*," 12.

allows her to finally embody her speech as a sign of self-empowerment like a *yamanba*.

Satoh's artistic world was inspired by the concept of *yami*, the dark. This represents an atemporal state of being, a shapeless and constantly changing form of existence. Things are not rationally ordered, and they are completely unpredictable. They resemble images on a mirror rather than fixed realities. Satoh's concept of y*ami* might be understood in connection with the Japanese notion of *yûgen*—an atmosphere of beauty, calm and elegance that accompanies the finite nature of life. Cherry blossoms are the archetype of the encounter between beauty and sadness, delicacy and transience. This duality has both an aesthetic and a moral aspect. Satoh's heroes are highly dramatic figures, because they embody elegance and honour alongside an acute awareness of their limitations. Such powerlessness reaches its climax when characters have to face their ineluctable fate, as they become conscious of the futility of fighting against higher divine powers. The darkness of *yami* and the finitude of *yûgen* stand in a dialectical relation with each other, and demonstrate the connection between Japanese classical culture and avant-garde theatre used as a performance technique that blended the real with the fantastic. Satoh invoked a ghostly and uncanny collectivity, akin to the sensation of strangers who come to visit us. Speaking of ghosts entails speaking of the social, because the incorporeal experience also acknowledges the foundational connection between fantasy and experience. It suggests that fantasy is the mode of our experiential existence, and that it mediates how we live our desires in the world.

Napoli, in Southern Italy, is one of the cities where the feeling of *yûgen* is probably most evident outside of Japan. Neapolitans live side by side with a decadent beauty which is at once ghostly and vivid. Habits and local culture speak of intimacy and gratefulness towards ghosts, serving as metaphors for the city's resounding incompleteness and enchantment. They also speak of forgetfulness and violence. Paradoxically the city's brutality reminds its people that they may be denied a future, and that their past could be erased in a few seconds. This menacing possibility shifts their attention toward the invisible, connecting their mundane experiences with out-of-the-ordinary meanings that, as a refuge, transcend time and space. This cultural atmosphere resounds in Leo de Berardinis's play *Totò, Principe di Danimarca* (1990).

The show unwraps itself as a double séance in which de Berardinis plays the role of a penniless actor who gets mistaken for a famous colleague of his,

and receives an invitation to perform *Hamlet* in London.[10] The acting technique of de Berardinis, his costuming, and his vocal and physical performances mimic the figure of Totò, the most famous Neapolitan comedian of all times.[11] The play is a layered metatheatrical construct in which de Berardinis (real actor on stage) acts the role of Antonio Esposito (fictional character, also an actor) who embodies the recognizable stylistic features of Totò (real actor, long deceased at the time of the show) and evokes the ghost of Hamlet (Shakespeare's character) so that he can succeed in representing his anxieties and torments for an imagined British audience. The overall tone of the play constantly moves between comedic farce and tragedy, but most importantly, it connects multiple cultural signifiers: Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Italian poet Gabriele D'Annunzio's aulic poems, slapstick comedy, Broadway songs, trivial jokes full of double entendre, and the popular theatre style of Neapolitan *sceneggiata*.[12]

Leo de Berardinis wrote and performed the show, tailoring it to the Neapolitans' known tendency to blur different levels of truth. I would call this trend a phenomenon of spectralization, which is a common narrative style in local folk tales. Neapolitans are, for instance, vivacious lotto players, as there is a long tradition in believing that your deceased relatives will appear in your dreams to reveal the winning numbers. Lotto experts can break down each dream into its constituent parts, and each part or event is associated to a specific number on the lottery wheel. For centuries, Neapolitans have adopted the skulls of unnamed dead, called *anime pezzentelle* (poor souls), buried in mass graves. They would bring them flowers, food or candles, and pray for personal miracles. When Leo de

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[10] The scholarship on the meaning of ghosts in *Hamlet* is ponderous. See Ackerman, "Visualizing Hamlet's Ghost," 119-44.

[11] Totò (1898-1967), born in Napoli from noble origins, was the most famous comic actor of the post-war period, both on stage and on screen. His career started in the small theatres of Napoli's city centre, where Totò played jokes in variety shows. He soon became a successful leading actor who worked in more than 90 movies and over 60 theatre productions, while also writing well-appreciated poems and songs.

[12] S*ceneggiata* was a musical theatre genre originated in 1915. The style mixed spoken drama and famous songs, and represented the lives, loves and everyday struggles of the poor in the streets of Napoli as they battled hunger, unemployment, and family issues. *Sceneggiata* reached the highest peak of success in the 1920s-1930s, and was widely appreciated also by Italian migrant communities in North and South America. *Sceneggiata* also worked as a form of educational theatre. Given its conservative nature, the plots showed people how to behave according to the appropriate gender, social and moral teachings, allowing them to be proper members of a disenfranchised community that obeyed primarily to customary uses and street laws. See Scialò, *La sceneggiata*.

Berardinis, mimicking Totò's voice, rehearses Hamlet's famous "to be or not to be" soliloquy holding a skull in his hand, he is at once speaking as the Danish Prince to Yorick's head, and invoking the protection of *anime pezzentelle* upon his life. The doubling technique of the show's phantasmatic perception builds up throughout the play until de Berardinis himself, who often addresses the audience directly, admits that his voice is changing because Hamlet's soul is taking control of his flesh and bones. The actor, who's already representing a sort of ghostly possession with the embodiment of Totò's recognizable voice and gestures, is being increasingly possessed by Hamlet's ghost.[13] His wife, Donna Genoveffa, also confirms this transformation when she says to her lover: "Antonio's not here. He is doing Zen medication. He thinks he is Hamlet and speaks just like him."[14] De Berardinis blends local folklore and classical corpus into his own persona, as both traditions have acquired a fantastic aura. They belong to the past and contradict modernity as we know it. Therefore, Totò and Hamlet, through de Berardinis's performance, become metaphors of past cultures that are ghostly memories shared by the actor and his spectators.

Neapolitan local folklore is also full of entities, both malevolent and good, who can possess a person for a short time, and are considered responsible for minor accidents or little fortunate events. '*O munaciello*, for example, is the ghost of a monk who likes to play silly tricks, hides personal objects when you need them, makes you slip on a wet floor, or even bothers young girls when they are alone at home. So are *a bella 'mbriana* and the more threatening *janara*: the former is a good soul who appears in the form of a gecko or a butterfly and can be invoked as a help in critical situations, while the latter is a witch with thaumaturgic powers who can save you or kill you, depending on how respectful you are towards her.[15]

Absorbing this rich relationship between the city and her ghosts, de Berardinis engaged the audience in a plot that made explicit use of ambiguity as the most useful language to describe the coexistence of alternative

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[13] The debate on acting as a form of possession is as old as theatre itself. The ancient Greeks used the expression "Dionysus's technicians" to describe the double nature of actors: rational experts in control of the vocal and physical tools of their art, and feverish demons inhabited by the God's extreme passions. See Bates, "Performance and Possession," 11-18.

[14] She actually says "medication" and not "meditation." Donna Genoveffa is a comedic character, played by a man in drag, who is poorly educated and often says one thing for another. The play's script is not published. Translation mine. A full recording of the show is available online: "Leo De Berardinis—Totò, Principe di Danimarca," YouTube Video, 2:13:46, "VisionariTV." March 7, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKEsteD5_CE

[15] See Matassa, *Leggende e racconti*.

realities, ranging from natural to supernatural, traditional to modern. *Totò, Principe di Danimarca* featured a double séance where Hamlet's ghost hunts the Neapolitan comedian Totò, leading to a confrontation while both inhabit the character played by Leo de Beardinis. With reference to séances, I would argue that this particular experience can be very similar to theatrical spectatorship. People sit in darkness or semi-darkness. Participants engage with the event primarily through their vision and hearing rather than through touch, taste or smell. The sensorial participation and the emphasis on hearing allows for a transition from somatic processes, where the medium's (or the actor's) body plays a central role in séance, to telepathic processes that engage the spectator's imagination. This transition separates rational knowledge from the physical world, emphasizing the supernatural or emotional level of communication. Theatre like séances work as bridges between two worlds, as they require a suspension of disbelief, the most powerful and versatile form of witnessing the unseen. In Act Two of *Totò, Principe di Danimarca*, despite one of the minor characters loudly claiming, "we don't believe in ghosts. These are superstitions from the past," spectators have actually seen, heard, and experienced the apparition of layered ghostly identities throughout the play.

Leo de Berardinis applied specific techniques in his dramaturgy that integrated mechanical sound reproductions and pre-recorded vocals with live acting and music, in order to enhance the sense of an out-of-this-world experience and of a stage discourse between the living and the dead. While these applied technological devices contributed to the ghostliness of the event, they also affirmed the materiality, manipulability, and technicality of the unseen. There was a reification process that both exorcised the afterworld and made it reproduceable and representable. If performance exists only in its disappearance, as Performance Studies scholar Peggy Phelam argues, it makes sense that much of its essence would relate to death and outwardly experiences.[16]

There is a deeply entwined relationship between the technical development of sound and visual devices, the use of such tools in spectacular exhibitions and the attitude of the audience towards the supernatural.[17] The

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[16] Phelam, *Unmarked*.

[17] For example, in the late eighteenth century the term phantasmagoria was created to indicate a specific category of public entertainment in which ghosts and spectral figures were projected by a magic lantern. Darkness and other expedients gave the impression that these images were floating in the air, changing shapes and sizes. As time went by, these shows became more and more articulated in response to the increasing demand of the

process of spectralization, namely the internalization of ghosts in the realm of thoughts, functioned proficiently in de Berardinis's poetics, as ghosts dwell within us as living memories. Doesn't this make them real enough? Doesn't the impact of ancestral fears, resulting from this internalization process, provide sufficient proof that the afterlife seamlessly exists alongside our experienced reality? Paradox and ambiguity are central categories to understand the phenomenon of spectralization. The dualism formed by the internalization of ghosts in the collective and individual imagination, and the externalization of this imagination through performance paralleled the birth of psychoanalysis. Based on the increasing interest in the human brain and psyche, and its romanticization, ghosts came to represent the projection of one's thoughts, and hence thoughts assumed the same ethereal, unsubstantial, and hunting power of a ghostly entity. Apparitions of supernatural beings break the rules of space and time, connecting past and present, and disrupting the linear succession of before and after. Ghosts also allow us to mourn; they are, indeed, a sign of trauma and the mourning process.

De Berardinis's metatheatrical performance, playing both Hamlet and Totò, embodied this psychoanalytic short-circuit that makes it difficult to separate events in space and time, and to distinguish between the real and the imagined. His theatrical apparitions were appropriations of an "other," a foreign body into his personal memory, which required a redefinition of the self. When the self confronts an external, inexplicable, supernatural force, it essentially confronts itself. As manifested in de Berardinis's work, memory is a continuous present that ensures our existence, rather than merely serving as an archive. The notion of memory as an archive is based on the contrast between a past that has elapsed and an ongoing present. Human beings can recover past things only because they are present in the here and now. This hypothesis on memory is accompanied by an anxiety about ghosts returning from the past to hunt our thoughts. Moreover, it is based on the presupposition that the material stored in one's memory is unchangeable

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audience. Through complex machines and a process of spectacularization, the images became more surrealistic and grotesque, one figure turning into another by superimposition, and provoking stronger emotional reactions in the audience. The intent was to demonstrate that ghosts did not exist, but the striking realism of the projections opened a whole set of new problems. How were the spectators of ghosts in performance to define reality? Hence, the effect was often the opposite of what was intended, with people becoming more convinced of the existence of supernatural beings. See Castle, "Phantasmagoria," 26-61.

and stable. *Totò, principe di Danimarca* proves otherwise, as it destabilises all the memories we may have of Totò and Hamlet by layering them up in a seemingly fragmented relationship. Viewing ghosts as entities that return is a way of exorcizing death, with the hope that not everything is lost once we reach the end of our lives. Even if the returning pattern is characterised by evil intentions and acts of vengeance against the living, it may be comforting to think that some aspect of intelligence or personality endure beyond our bodily death. On the other hand, viewing memory as a continuous present evokes the anarchic relationship that ghosts have with space and time, but it mostly signifies that the past does not fade into oblivion and is not annihilated by the present. By establishing continuity across time, this perspective reduces the anxiety about what has passed and contextualises supernatural occurrences as expressions of one's memory. The stability of the archive is thus substituted by the free interpretation of a recalled experience, object or person.[18]

Conclusion

As Emily Dickinson gracefully expressed in her poem "We Grow Accustomed to the Dark:"

> We grow accustomed to the Dark –
> When Light is put away –
> As when the Neighbor holds the Lamp
> To witness her Goodbye –
>
> A Moment – We uncertain step
> For newness of the night –
> Then – fit our Vision to the Dark –
> And meet the Road – erect –[19]

What a gentle description of the dreadful panic that impedes our actions when we face the unknown. What a marvellous empowerment she derives from that fear. We may not encounter an easy path, we may stumble on the way, but we pretend to be in control and proudly proceed in the direction of our destiny. There is no sadness in Dickinson's poem, but a resigned acknowledgment of human destiny, very much like Ismene's transition into

[18] See Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*.
[19] Johnson, *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, 175.

adulthood through the attitude of *shikata ga nai*. In their theatrical explorations, Satoh Makoto and Leo de Berardinis displayed a tormented yet resolute desire to reconcile memory and participation, engagement and respect for things past, folklore and intellectualism, the living and the dead. They worked along parallel paths that delved into both the distant past, encompassing ancient Greek tragedy and Shakespearean dramaturgy, and the more recent realm of local folk tales still narrated by people in Tokyo and Napoli. They were regarded by committed artists as precious values, framing the "unhappy consciousness" of intellectuals in a dark and ghostly manner in their ongoing endeavour to liberate humanity from the risk of forgetting, reifying, or disregarding the past.

Chapter 5
Annotating the Evolution of Fairy Tales and Their Literary Transposition

Adesanya M. Alabi

Introduction

Fairy tales have long served as a vital pedagogical tool in shaping and reshaping humans, their minds, orientations and their societies. As timeless narratives, the finest fairy tales have inspired humans to explore history, their immediate society, recent past and the essence of life. As a matter of fact, they are regarded as fundamental components of humanity's journey of civilization. Fairy tales cannot be overlooked or disregarded, as we apparently have an inherent tendency to model our lives according to the codes and principles of fairy tales. As maintained by Vučković, "a fairy tale is extremely inspirational in various arts, it is transposed from media to media, recorded as a subtext in composite structure, and sometimes several classic fairy tales interfere with the unified narrative."[1] In Ziolkowski's words, "[fairy tales] have been held conventionally to have originated in oral popular culture, but their 'classic' expression has been first in printed books and later in commercial art forms, such as feature-length animated films, associated with mass culture."[2]

Many aspects of fairy tales have been neglected by researchers and scholars, leading to only a handful of them documenting the history of these narratives. Fairy tales reflect the historical circumstances that prompt our cognitive processes to begin asking critical questions. These distinct situations are driven by allegory which mirrors the essence of humanity. In this regard, fairy tales are essential stories, well-suited to the human condition and social development. In Vučković's words, "[m]any fairy tale characters' actions can be critically interpreted and questioned in the light of more refined ethical principles (which many critics do), but this does not have a major impact on the reading audience."[3]

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[1] Vučković, "A Fairy tale (R)evolution," 310.
[2] Ziolkowski, "Straparola and the Fairy Tale," 394.
[3] Vučković, "A Fairy tale (R)evolution," 311.

Sometimes, this can be achieved through imagery and allegory. Yet, humans are often inclined towards metaphor that provide them with regular insights about life and the society they inhabit. This illustrates how we can discover a perceptible reflection through our experience, showing how the scope of life connects us to others in our environment. Although people do not live their lives by fairy tales, these narratives, over many ages, have established certain sematic labels that help us comprehend our environment and find our place in it. Also, as Scott notes, "[f]or some, fairy tales are intricately linked with folklore and myth, while for others they conjure up memories of literary tales read as a child."[4]

Fairy tales reach us through various categories, genres and storytelling mediums that highlight the distinctive characteristics of communities and their cultural values. Individuals across the globe utilise different genres, narrative styles and mediums to communicate their identities and values to others in their society. Yet, these means of conveying meaning of significance to the world around them might hinder people's understanding of their real-life experiences. Fairy tales convey meanings and enlighten us to perceive the imaginative elements that are pleasing to our ears and resonate with the reality of our imagination. In this sense, interesting images are presented to offer insights into how to contemplate fairy tales and how fairy tales reflect upon individuals. This chapter aims to examine some of the available sources that concentrate on the influence of fairy tales in society and consider fairy tales not merely as stories for children but also as instruments for enlightening adults. In this context, the discussion will also introduce a chronicle of this generic term and its function across particular historical periods.

The Profundity and Complexity of Fairy Tales

In its generic history, fairy tale has been subject to numerous misconceptions regarding its definition and interpretation. Scholars and literary icons have offered varied descriptions according to their own preferences and perspectives. Despite the widespread perception of fairy tales as primarily intended for younger audiences and readers, they also hold appeal for adults. Its magical content captivates the imagination of listeners, whether they be children or adults. That fairy tale is a literary category designed exclusively for children during the Renaissance period in Europe is a misconception, and therefore disregarded in this discussion. It is

[4] Scott, "Once Upon a Time," np.

crucial to understand that fairy tales have deep roots in oral traditions across diverse cultures worldwide, and the narratives shared are traditional tales that have endured for centuries. In this respect, "[w]hen we talk about the original concept of fairy tales, never can we deny the significant role they play in the passing down of shared aspects of human experience from generation to generation."[5] These stories, which were transmitted from one generation to the next, initially lacked titles and were not conveyed in the formats of written literature, stage performances, or cinematic adaptations as we observe today.

Folklorists have notably distinguished the mystery of folktales, which emerged from oral traditions and have since been disseminated globally through print and other modern means of circulation. The myriad cultural influences present in both oral and literary traditions make it challenging to precisely define folk and fairy tales, and one may say that elucidating the connection between the two is virtually impossible. We have some useful frameworks for the corpus of fairy tales, including sources like encyclopaedias of fairy tales. Antti Aarne and Stith's *The Types of the Folktale* (1928) which was revised by Hans-Jorg Uther (2004), Jack Zipes's *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (2015), William F. Hansen's Ariadne's *Thread: A Guide to International Tales Found in Classical Literature* (2002), and Haase's *The Greenwood of Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales* (2007) may be listed as notable examples. Nevertheless, despite such grand contributions, comprehending the internal connections and evolution of folk and fairy tales can be challenging, and defining them may prove elusive. Also, it is a Herculean task to explicate how fairy tales came to be established as a distinct genre for children in various cultures in the West in the nineteenth century. Most importantly, oral and written tales are vehemently intertwined with each other, making generic characterizations difficult. Based on this background, Violetta-Eirini underlines the fact that "there have been given general information concerning the role and importance of fairy tales in both pedagogical and psychological dimensions," which may explain the gradually increasing deployment of fairy tale narratives also for pedagogical purposes besides entertainment.[6]

Therefore, I intend to use the modern term *fairy tale* to enunciate the significance of oral tradition as a pivotal element and to explore certain aspects of fairy tales that may be incomprehensible, with a particular

[5] Xiaoyi, "How Fairy Tales Educate and Civilize Us," 275.
[6] Violetta-Eirini, "The Child and the Fairy Tale," 213.

emphasis on the note that fairy tales are not exclusively for children but also cater to adult readers and audience. The use of the term *fairy tale* in this manner refers to the interconnectedness between oral and literary traditions, the dynamic between stories meant for children and for adults, and the historical discrepancies that arise in the conciliation and acceptance of different types of tales.

By placing more emphasis on the connection between different definitions, unnecessary differences will be discarded. For example, some contemporary scholars have predominantly emphasised the distinction between printed and oral forms, most likely to create a new form of fairy tale account, rather than prioritizing innovative research and concepts of storytelling, cultural evolution, emetics and human expression. This can provide further insight into why scholars engage with fairy tales and the ways in which their contributions have influenced progress across various fields.

Hence, the attempt of scholars to classify fairy tales as a generic form intended for children has been unsuccessful, as they have neglected to explore its historical roots across the Western world, Slavic nations of Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Fairy tales have diverse historical origins shaped by how each country around the world has projected it. As Schnibben maintains, "[f]airy-tales and myth have long been held as ways of communicating what is happening in society and within a culture."[7] It can therefore be stated that fairy tales are culture-bound stories, and each culture has its own unique understanding and interpretation of these tales.

These scholars, however, have failed to assess the significant role adults play in preserving the essence of fairy tales. This oversight is particularly evident because fairy tales are fluid, passing down through generations. According to Donald Haase, despite the diligent efforts of scholars to categorise fairy tales, these stories have strongly resisted against a universal definition that scholars have tried to impose on them.[8] For some, these tales denote a particular set of simple attributes, while for others, they do not represent a distinct genre but rather a category that encompasses various other groups. The common definition of fairy tales suggests that the genre has been broadened to embrace diverse categories of stories.

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[7] Schnibben, *Enchanted*, iv.
[8] Haase, "Introduction."

Historical Background of Literary Fairy Tales

The challenge in defining fairy tales within Western culture is revealed also in the fact that tale tellers and authors did not employ the term *fairy tale* until Madame d'Aulnoy coined it in 1697, with the publication of her collection of tales directed at readers of the highest social status. She, however, did not provide an explanation for her choice of the term *fairy tale.* In exploring the foundational features and historical context of literary fairy tales in the Western tradition, specifically between 1690-1710, it becomes apparent that fairy tales held significant prominence in French literary texts. Until this period, the literary fairy tale had not been recognised as a distinct generic category, and no specific label had been assigned to it. Also, it was never conceived as a genre intended specifically for children; it was simply referred to as a *story*, *skazka*, *Marchen*, *cunto*, etc. No author called their printed story a fairy tale until d'Aulnoy coined the term. Giovan Francesco Straprola's collection of tales, which included a limited number of fairy tales, was entitled *Le Piacevoli Notti* or *Pleasant Night* (1550/53), and the title of Giambattista Basile's book was *Lo cunto de li cunti* or *The Tale of Tales* (1634).

The Italians were apparently among the first authors to use their native language in writing and publishing fairy tales. Although fairies or *fate* were present in Italian stories, they were not particularly identified to play an important role that was attributed to them by the female authors of seventeenth-century France, known as *conteuses salonnieres.* It is also important to acknowledge that some prominent authors like Charles Perrault and Philippe de Caylus incorporated fairy tales into their stories. Fairy tales, riddle telling, and gamification were very popular in England, Spain, France and Italy right from the sixteenth century.

In 1690, when Madame d'Aulnoy incorporated fairy tales into her novel titled *Histoire d'Hippolyte Comte de Duglas*, she most likely did not realise that she was initiating a literary movement in France that would later become widely popular among her contemporaries. In these fairy tales, she introduced a princess character who governed her imaginary kingdom. When the prince of Russia, Adolph, learns about it, he stays there for many years. He eternally loses his happiness when Father Time kills him. Madame d'Aulnoy's tales later reveal the shortcomings of the secular world and demonstrate how fairy tales can help in rectifying human flaws, reshaping people's perspectives, and fostering positive societal development. Six years after the publication of *The Island of Happiness*, fairy tales began to gain

significant popularity in the literary realm. As one of the results of this development, the oral tradition—as elucidated by several French scholars—became inseparable from the printed fairy tales, leading to the emergence of various definitions. Drawing from her familiarity with oral tales told by common people, Madame d'Aulnoy developed the generic category of fairy tales. Her stories were regarded as innovative contributions, influencing readers and writers alike in a highly creative manner.

In 1697, when Madame d'Aulnoy developed *contes des fees*, other authors began to adopt the term *fairy tale* and many of their works began to reflect the features of these storyworlds. However, the application of this label also sparked debates and met with resistance in some circles. One could argue that there has never been an era in Western literary history where a significant number of fairies, such as supernatural female figures, determined the central theme of stories by female writers, and even male writers rarely used such figures as central characters of their tales. These stories depicted sequences of events that portrayed moral conflicts in various terms. For example, pointing at a particular trait in the stories by female writers, Al-Barazenji notes that "[w]omen writers strongly assert that women's images and voices challenged the male-dominated authority when they devoted their effort to expose their femininity whether through passive-beauty characterization or through their kindness and charity."[9]

Historical Progression of Literary Fairy Tales and the Roles of Women

There are numerous factors that elevate these tales to extraordinary status, prompting many authors to label their stories as *contes de fees*, a term that still continues to hold significant influence in French and English literary production. On these grounds, one may comprehend the importance of this label, as some scholars attempt to define the fairy tale genre according to their own perspectives. These grounds may also be a pertinent reason that has made fairy tales a popular genre that still captivates the attention of both children and adult readers and audiences. It is imperative to understand that fairy tales, being an oral tradition, have often been overlooked in many societies, much like the way social order marginalised children until they could integrate themselves into the social system of their communities. The evolution of fairy tales into a literary genre and their reception as such, as

[9] Al-Barazenji, "Women's Voice and Images in Folk Tales and Fairy Tale," 48.

Megan Hill notes, is not independent from "the historical context from which they sprang."[10]

In this historical context, upper-class women also experienced marginalization, leading them to establish salons in seventeenth century where they could read and tell their stories before publication. These salons provided them with the opportunity to display their talent and intellect. Considering the portrayal of fairies in their tales, one would notice certain differences compared to portrayals in the works of their male counterparts. Portrayals by female tellers reflected a kind of defiance and rebellion against certain social norms, particularly against the subjection imposed by French civilising standards and codes of social conduct. It was within the symbolic realm of their fairy tales that they could express sentiments and ideas that neither the Church nor King Louis XIV could control or coordinate.

In these salons, women expressed themselves through their tales, fostering a sense of harmony as they shared their ideologies, beliefs, whims, and thoughts. They offered suggestions and advice to one another, viewing themselves through the lens of fairy tales. At times, they embraced the companionship of fairy tales without the need of any covert sign. Their tales accentuated new modes of interaction between males and females, particularly among the aristocracy. Female French writers tried to mirror their tales in real life as talented and creative writers did, invoking the spirits of fairies to intervene on their behalf. However, the controversy surrounding the fairies was that they were seen as biased and unfair. They seemed to embody a witch-like figure with magical powers that they utilised to challenge or test humans. Moreover, their portrayal of beautiful fairies often depicted them as malicious characters, antagonistic to the Catholic Church and the Court of Louis XIV. They consistently clashed with Louis's wife, Madame de Maintenon, who preached against worldliness, secularity, and placed more emphasis on spirituality. Al-Barazenji comments on this issue, saying that "[t]he role of women in folktale and fairy tale has a pioneering consideration. It presents their effective voices and presence through being queen, princess, maid, stepmother, and witches. Topics like evil and good are discussed prolifically through different female images."[11]

The tales of Madame d'Aulnoy and those of her associates gained popularity in the oral tradition, and upon publication, they were regarded as

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[10] Hill, *A Comparative Analysis of Character Depiction in the Grimms' Kinder-und Hausmärchen and Modern Fairytale Adaptations*, 4.

[11] Al-Barazenjii, "Women's Voice and Images in Folk Tales and Fairy Tale," 47.

notable literary creations. They were infused with Greco-Roman components, with possible traces of idolatrous elements. It is crucial to realise that the fairy figure may have existed in the collective consciousness of people for many centuries, and rituals may have been performed to identify or commune with supernatural forces. Madame d'Aulnoy's fairy tales underscored the importance of the genre, prompted the creation of tales beyond the borders of her country. In the eighteenth century, both Western and Oriental fairy tales were reviewed, published at more affordable prices, and distributed to a broader reading public. They were also incorporated into books to make them suitable for young female readers. *Le Magasin des enfas* (1757) by Madame Leprince de Beaumont and *The Governess* (1749) by Sarah Fielding may be listed as examples of this practice. Hence, the eighteenth century may be regarded as the most captivating period for fairy tales, as it was a time when anthologies of fairy tales began to flourish.

Some scholars have proposed that fairy tale books intended for both children and adults gained widespread popularity in the West and the United States from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Despite their popularity, fairy tale books remained somewhat controversial in terms of public acceptance because they often contained fanciful stories with magical elements, raising concerns among certain religious organizations. Certain radical religious organizations, for example, perceived fairy tales as containing harmful and morally unacceptable elements of paganism and sinful sexuality, which they believed could lead people away from moral conduct and piety. Yet, these stories were not entirely rejected and discarded, as the theme often centred around promoting good behaviour, which could be used to shape children's characters and conduct.

Conclusion

Despite conflicting opinions about fairy tales and the tendency to trivialise them, there is an increasing interest in these stories, particularly as they are being sanitised and adapted for younger audiences and readers in many countries worldwide. Edgar Taylor's *German Popular Stories* (1823), especially the second volume (1826), for example, have gained popularity in many English-speaking countries. In elucidating the influence of fairy tales and their positive impact on children and society at large, Taylor appealed to the intellectual curiosity of the populace and stimulated the minds of younger readers. He tried to enhance the creativity of the tales and eliminated any scenarios that could be deemed offensive and obscene.

Additionally, he removed religious references and depictions that honoured a divine figure. His tales were published in both England and the United States, and continue to be published and well received today. He is regarded as the author who contributed immensely to the reception of fairy tales, which now offer us a higher literary quality and interpretation. As a final note, it is important to remember that fairy tales are not meant only for children, but adults also benefit from these tales as they contribute to their intellectual development. In critical response to many scholars who have tried to define the genre of fairy tales exclusively as part of children's literature, we need to keep scrutinizing these narratives from a broader perspective by incorporating diverse intellectual approaches. Scholarship should delve deeper into how fairy tales shape the intellectual development of adult readers, rather than focusing solely on the context of their reception by children.

Chapter 6
Goddess Umai and the Weeping Woman: Rotating Faces of the Same Moon

Meltem Uzunoğlu Erten

As the world becomes more interconnected, people are often surprised, confused, and ultimately fascinated to discover that even geographically distant cultures have produced similar stories through their mythologies and folklores. Even more so when a careful observation reveals similar tendencies in the development of particular characters and patterns. These similarities both in the original stories and their later variations demonstrate the core aspects of shared human experience and recurring nature of historical events even in times when means of communication and travel were limited. An interesting example is the goddess Umai from Central Asian Turkic mythology and the Weeping Woman from Latin American folklore. Despite originating from distant cultures, these figures share a similar evolution through time and across continents, with the Weeping Woman eventually finding herself a place within popular culture.

The goddess Umai is the *mother* in Turkic mythologies, associated with fertility, mothers and children—not only of humans but also animals. She is linked to the earth, reflecting common aspects of mother-earth goddesses in various cultures. Her name appears in a variety of forms across different sources, typically depicting her as a protector, guide, and wise woman. Physically, she embodies the womb from which life is produced, often depicted in a magical manner, akin to the earth where death is replaced by rebirth in the annual cycle of nature. Additionally, she is the placenta through which the mother's blood carries life into the baby's forming body. Her name is etymologically related to the moon and the vagina through word formations such as *ama, eme, imi, emeci, emecek* and *imçek*.[1] She is also the life source whose presence promises women the gift of children, protecting them both inside and outside the womb, and ensuring a universe for mothers and children abundant with food, shelter, and good luck.

Umai shares the dual nature of similar mother goddesses in other mythologies. She is not only life-giver but also a life-taker. In societies where

[1] See İnayet and Öger, "Uygur Türklerinin Mitolojik, Dini ve Tarihi Kadın Kahramanları Üzerine," 1184.

Umai is revered, it is widespread tradition to draw certain images and hang certain objects on or around the cradles of babies to ward off "Black" or "Dark" Umai—a malevolent spirit believed to visit houses in search of pregnant women or newborn babies. This sinister entity represents the dual nature of the goddess and is believed to kill mothers and steal their babies.[2] As the negative form of the goddess, occasionally referred to as *Alkarısı* or *Albastı*, she is believed to dwell in a dark forest called *Al yış*.[3]

The goddess Umai most likely emerged from cultures that upheld a dominant matriarchal social order. She was once the primary deity of a religious system known as the Umai-Goddess religion, which was prevalent in the region stretching from the Southern Siberian forests to the Altai Mountains. Women held a more dominant and unique position in this religious system due to their crucial role in reproduction.[4] Özkul Çobanoğlu explores how this religious system evolved into another called the Red Religion where men and women attained nearly equal status. This was later succeeded by another belief system known as Kök/Sky God Religion. As indicated by its name, the religious landscape of the Turkic people underwent a transformation, resulting in the ascendency of patriarchy, which certainly undermined previous beliefs in several ways. Çobanoğlu provides examples of this undermining, including the terms *Alkarısı* and *Albastı*, names given to Umai due to her dual nature, but were later reduced to a single and negative representation.[5] Previously, in the Umai-Goddess religion, the positive and desired aspects of the goddess were balanced with negative ones that represented fear and potential harm towards the young. However, as a result of various historical circumstances that led to a more patriarchal organization—such as the recognition of the male role in reproduction, wars, invasions, population growth, large-scale agriculture, and the increased demand for more muscle power—the negative aspects of Umai became more emphasised than ever before.[6] The negative connotations were gradually extended beyond matters of motherhood and childbirth, eventually infiltrating the broader realm of family life, transforming it into a source of horror. Originally, the names *Alkarısı*/*Albastı* or Umai, alongside other variations, collectively contribute to what Onur Alp

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[2] Bayat, *Kadim Türklerin Mitolojik Hikayeleri*, 54.
[3] Ergun, "Türk Kültüründe Ruhlar ve Orman Kültü," 119-20.
[4] Çobanoğlu, "Türk Mitolojisinde Al Dini ve Okra İlişkisi," 981-82.
[5] Çobanoğlu, "Türk Mitolojisinde Al Dini ve Okra İlişkisi," 985.
[6] İbrayev, *Destanın Yapısı*, 73.

Kayabaşı refers to as the Mythological Mother Complex.[7] The shifting circumstances led to a heightened emphasis on the negativity associated with the creature known as *Alkarısı*/*Albastı*—once a part of the aforementioned complex structure—transformed into the evil embodiment of sacred womanhood. Formerly a guardian of the house and family, she was now excluded from her realm in an age of male dominancy. She was no longer a protector but the enemy of pregnant women and mothers.[8] *Od Ana*, the female spirit associated with fire, serves as another example to illustrate this transformation more vividly. Much like the diverse manifestations of Umai, she constitutes one aspect of the goddess within this complex belief system, playing a significant role in safeguarding the hearth which symbolises the entire household and the family as a whole. Nevertheless, as Turkic societies began to adopt more patriarchal structures, these guardian spirits inhabiting the house were redefined with a new role as menacing entities that hide potential dangers. In a similar manner, the reverence once bestowed upon nature as sacred sites of the goddess faded as people lost their belief in her. As their belief waned, people also abandoned their practice maintaining cleanness at these sacred sites. Consequently, these places became desolate and eerie regions, fostering frightening notions within the collective unconscious of societies.

The examples may be multiplied, but in order to understand the consequences of the worry, fear and hatred rooted in the collective unconscious of the people who have experienced the transformations and their effects mentioned so far, it is crucial to focus on Umai whose name encompasses all her other manifestations. Over time, the positive aspects of Umai were neglected and her name was changed to *Umacı*, associated with the goddess's evil tendencies and her abduction of children. She has now become a figure encountered in fairy and folk tales or in stories made up to scare children. In Anatolia, for example, *Umacı* is a familiar horror figure believed to visit houses, collecting children who are still awake during late hours. She often appears vividly in lullabies from various regions of Türkiye as a scary figure used by mothers to threaten their children to make them behave and go to sleep. The transformation chain, beginning with the goddess Umai and progressing through the concept of Dark-Umai and *Umacı*, led to the creation of the monster figure known as *Öcü* in Anatolia. This

[7] See Kayabaşı, "Türk Mitolojisinin Kutsal Dişisi: Umay," 222.
[8] Bayat, *Kadim Türklerin Mitolojik Hikayeleri*, 54.

evolution can be observed more clearly when analysing these pieces of folk literature in relation to each other.[9]

Interestingly, this is not the only way Umai persisted in Anatolia. Some Turkic people who maintained their belief in the goddess migrated to Anatolia, and over time, these groups gradually converted to Islam which reinforced the patriarchal structure by discouraging and prohibiting any belief or worship of goddesses.[10] Yet, despite the waxing pressure, practices related to Umai still found expression in Anatolia. As also noted by Yıldırım, "some changes have occurred in the belief of Umai together with Islam, yet its traces are still visible in the belief system which is common among people."[11] Today, there are people in Anatolia who "take some measures in order to protect themselves against Al-wife attack" and these measures are characterised as being "linked to Islamic life, [while some are linked] to ancient Turkish beliefs."[12] These practices may include reciting certain prayers or keeping the holy book in the mother's or child's bedroom together with items made of iron or of red colour. Rooted in the Islamic tradition as well as pre-Islamic beliefs, these practices coexist today, having long been intertwined. The most notable example of this fusion is the replacement of Umai with *Fatma Ana* (Mother Fatma), the daughter of the Islamic prophet Mohammed, who inherited Umai's association with fertility. The famous saying, "menin kolum emes, umay enemdin kolu," cited in the Kirghiz Dictionary,[13] means "it is not my hand but the hand of mother Umai" and is often uttered at the beginning of activities such as cooking to wish for good luck and fertility. It is striking to observe the Islamic impact on the saying in Anatolia, as it has transformed into the common expression, "it is not my hand but the hand of Mother Fatma." The image of Fatma's hand is widely used also on pieces of jewellery or on popular culture items or clothes. The reason behind this transformation is explained as follows:

> Fatma is the daughter of Islamic prophet Mohammed and is a member of his house according to Islamic teaching. Since it was impossible for Umai of the Shaman belief to exist within Islam, ordinary people replaced her with Fatma

[9] Torun and Yıldız, "Bir Eğitim Metodu Olarak Tehdir ve Korkutma İçeren Ninniler," 1322-24.
[10] See *Quran* 4:117.
[11] Yıldırım, "Kazak Türklerinin Toponomik Efsaneleri", 2107. Translation mine.
[12] Şimşek, "Türk Kültüründe 'Alkarısı' İnancı ve Bu İnanca Bağlı Olarak Anlatılan Efsaneler," 100. Translation mine.
[13] Taymas, *Yudahin Kırgız Sözlüğü*, 783.

> in time and by doing so both beliefs of different time periods found the chance of co-existing.[14]

This transformation allows Fatma, as the daughter of the Islamic prophet, to transcend her historical and religious identity, gaining a broader and more legendary role as the guide for Anatolian women in their daily chores.[15] Despite her gradual transformation from a multi-faceted, ancient Turkic goddess into a dark and scary figure of folklore with the rise of patriarchy, Umai eventually regains her primary protective role associated with fertility in Anatolia. This revival is the result of enduring ancient beliefs resurfacing from the subconscious of the Turkic people who still inhabit the region. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that her divided halves remain separate, represented by two distinct figures, and the goddess has lost her unified character.

Interestingly, the Weeping Woman, a famous Mexican folkloric character who was originally named *La Llorona*, goes through a similar existential process until she re-emerges as a powerful popular figure. La Llorona is known by many other names across different regions of Mexico and among other cultures where she has been integrated, particularly through migrations. Regardless of the name used, the narrative remains quite familiar: a young and beautiful woman, deceived by the promises of a stranger, is abandoned by him after bearing two children. In a fit of revenge against her husband, she tragically drowns her innocent children, a deed that haunts and torments her for the rest of her life, even beyond death. The similarity between Umai and the Weeping Woman lies in the direction the story takes in the course of history. Both figures initially emerge with a positive representation within their respective cultures, but they diminish in value when subjected to patriarchal norms to varying degrees. Finally, they both secure a more positive place in different ways, which could be termed as reinstatement. Yet, a comprehensive understanding requires a closer look at the origins and connections of the folkloric figure La Llorona with some mythological figures.

Looking deeper into the story of La Llorona reveals connections with the earth mother in Aztec mythology. Like many other earth goddesses worldwide, she embodies multiple personas. Among them is the warrior goddess *Coatlicue*, whose name in Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs, means

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[14] Yıldız Altın, "Türk ve Fin-Ugor Mitolojisinde Dişi Ruhlar Üzerine Bazı Tespitler," 104. Translation mine.

[15] Kumartaşlıoğlu, "Fatma Ana Üzerine Anlatılan Efsaneler," 106.

the goddess with a skirt of snakes. Her appearance is often described with scary details, including a necklace adorned with human hearts and skulls or hands and feet with huge claws. The stories surrounding her are filled with bloodshed and violence. Yet, there is more to her, as another aspect of the goddess manifests in *Quilaztli*, also known as *Cihuacoatl*. She shares many traits with Coatlicue, including her name meaning "the snake woman," and her warrior nature is evident in depictions featuring war items like spears and shields.

The third face of the goddess, *Toci*, is of a grandmother figure. When she is united with her other two aspects, the goddess emerges not primarily as a warrior, but with more positive attributes. She becomes closely associated with fertility, with a particular emphasis on her connection to corn. Besides, Coatlicue's symbolically sagging breasts resulting from pregnancy and breastfeeding, along with Toci's wisdom, portray the goddess as a protective and nurturing mother figure for an entire nation. She is often referred to as "our mother" or "our grandmother." In all her versions, she has a hand in childbirth, serving as the guardian and helper of midwives and women in labour.

When the negative and positive attributes of the goddess are combined, it becomes quite obvious that she is pictured in a manner analogous to the Turkic Umai and other mother goddesses, displaying a dual nature. She is the "mistress both of life and death," possessing opposing forces.[16] While her scary appearance and warrior character represent destructive power, her affectionate side becomes prominent in her fertile nature and motherhood. In other words, she is not only the mother of her own children but bearer of all life, symbolised by her physical connection to corn. Besides, her militaristic origins contribute to her destructive aspects. The three dimensions of her nature, signified by three faces, form a cohesive whole, mirroring a perfect cycle of birth, death, and rebirth encapsulated within the full moon circle representing the female deity.

The duality of good and evil in the character of the earth goddess mirrors the dual struggle of these forces in human nature. The tragic story of Cihuacoatl connects the goddess to La Llorona, who was once a mortal woman but transformed into a sorrowful soul. According to the tale, one day Cihuacoatl leaves her son Mixcoatl on a lonely path only to find him gone when she comes back. Seeing a sacrificial knife on the place, she starts crying

[16] Neumann, *The Great Mother*, 107.

and cries so much that her tears fill the waters of Lake Xochimilco. From then on she haunts the lake and its environs in regret and pain. She wanders around screaming and calling her lost son, and haunts the crossroads in search of him while she is trapped in a timeless torture. Many writers point at the connection between the goddess and La Llorona, underscoring the similarities in their stories and appearances:

> Recurring themes in the maternal legend of La Llorona include: her white dress; her wandering at night wailing at the loss of her children whom she has often killed herself; and her association with water-she either roams by bodies of water or drowns her victims. Similarly, Cihuacoatl covers herself in chalk, dresses in White, and wanders the streets at night weeping and wailing.[17]

However, Cihuacoatl is not the only figure to haunt the crossroads in Aztec culture. The spirits of women who perish in childbirth are referred to as "Cihuapipiltin." With Cihuacoatl playing a pivotal role in both contexts, a connection is drawn between the acts of fighting and childbirth, as both are regarded as equally arduous and heroic. Thus, mothers who die in childbirth are accorded an esteemed status akin to fallen warriors. Yet, similar to encounters with Cihuacoatl, people have often recorded unsettling encounters with the spirits of deceased mothers at crossroads.[18] Considering these correlations, both scenarios feature a loving mother experiencing the tragic loss of a child, either through her own faulty deed or by unpredictable misfortune, and this loss transforms her into a malevolent monster, harming innocent people and particularly babies. The underlying emotion fuelling this behaviour may be the desire for revenge, as these figures are depicted as self-serving characters. Or it could simply be jealousy that stems from the permanent loss of the opportunity for happiness and reunion with their children, much like La Llorona who "is searching constantly for her children, whose faces she sees in all children. She kills the children to be united with her own again."[19]

Despite this cruelty attributed to the aspects of the goddess, Aztec belief holds that she emerged from the waters of her haunted lake to warn her children/people just before the arrival of the Spanish invaders. This belief underscores her role as the mother of the nation. It is this belief that informs the interpretation of Cihuacoatl's story by the Aztecs as a tragic misfortune

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[17] Barakat, "Aztec Motifs in La Llorona," 290.
[18] https://nahuatl.uoregon.edu/content/cihuapipiltin
[19] Lomax Hawes, "La Llorona in Juvenile Hall," 159.

rather than a monstrous deed. Her haunting of people is seen as merely the result of her desperate search for a lost child, echoing the tragic experiences of numerous mothers. This perception carries over to the sad tale of La Llorona. As previously mentioned, La Llorona is a woman who kills her children by drowning them in a river, well or lake. The reason for this cruelty is usually attributed to a lover who abandons her for another woman. Sometimes the reason is related with "insanity, parental neglect or abuse."[20] Although her motivations may vary in different versions of the story, her remorse remains consistent, leading her to take her own life only to turn into a ghost stuck between life and death in a constant search for her children. Many consider the story of La Llorona to be fictional, akin to the *Alkarısı* of Turkic folklore, who is also said to dwell near water.[21] Both figures seem to have been invented to protect children from various dangers and to impart moral lessons to young girls through La Llorona's miseries. The instinct to protect young members of society is evident in the Mexican tale:

> This deeply-rooted concern is at the very heart of La Llorona in two ways: first the legend functions as a scare tactic to keep children away from dangerous places, and thus to protect them, and second, as a moral lesson of what happens to those mothers who fail in their societal charge, and who are thus doomed to a hellish life.[22]

Whatever the purpose, the story has been retold countless times since time immemorial, prompting a search for other sources that might have inspired this simple tale. La Llorona's story intersects with the historical figure La Malinche, who served as Hernán Cortés' interpreter and bore him a son during the colonialization of Mexico. La Malinche's story often merges with those of Cihuacoatl and La Llorona's due to its inherent duality. To clarify, La Malince is regarded as both the mother of modern Mexico and a notorious traitor. Her assistance to the Spanish people during the invasion is never forgiven by her people, leading to various versions of the tale, often depicting her betrayal by Cortés. The most common story involves Cortés' return to his wife in Spain. According to many versions, he wants to take his son with him, which drives La Malinche to commit murder. This aspect of the story reflects the way many Mexican women acted during the violent days of invasion to prevent their children becoming slaves to the Spanish:

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[20] Carbonell, "From Llorona to Gritona," 54.
[21] Şimşek, "Türk Kültüründe 'Alkarısı' İnancı," 113.
[22] Walraven, "Evidence for a Developing Variant of "La Llorona," 214-15.

> When the Spanish arrived in Mexico, they were impressed by the beauty of the Indian children. The Spanish took the children (the most beautiful) and gave them to their wives. Some of the Indian women killed their children in order to keep the Spaniards from taking them.[23]

Such accounts help one to understand the feelings of the Mexican people towards La Malinche. Cortés' betraying La Malinche was probably seen as a fitting punishment for her own betrayal, serving as a cautionary tale for young Aztecs and warning them against trusting or becoming involved with foreigners.

In addition to the historical context, religion had a role in the growing negative perception of these figures and stories. With the arrival of Christianity and the subsequent religious conversion of Mexicans following the invasion, "although originally a venerated goddess, Cihuacoatl was demonised after the Conquest, linked to sacrifice and abductions of children."[24] As the social structure took a more patriarchal turn in Mexico together with the religious shift, Cihuacoatl's character was divided and she became predominantly associated with her destructive traits rather than her nurturing qualities. Cihuacoatl (the disgraced goddess of old beliefs) and La Malinche (the betrayer) merged in the persona of La Llorona, who became the embodiment of evil for both the natives and the newcomers. In this perception, she is a native who collaborated with the enemy, mingled native blood, and ended her affair with the bloody act of murdering her own children as revenge for being abandoned by her lover. The division in the character of the goddess led to the transformation of her life-giving aspect into that of the Virgin Mary, who holds her innocent baby Christ in her arms. This change embodies "the well-known virgin-versus-whore paradigm, a dualistic structure that attempts to police female behaviour by extolling the Virgin's passivity and selflessness while denigrating figures who take action, such as La Malinche and La Llorona, as selfish, treacherous and destructive."[25] Thus, the historical changes in Mexico, including the invasion and the introduction of Christianity, reduced the role of the goddess and La Llorona to mere evil characters.

Everything presented so far proves the significant evolution of La Llorona over time. At the beginning, although she was not a deity figure like Umai, La Llorona's story is rooted into that of a goddess, symbolizing both maternal

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[23] Hawes, "La Llorona in Juvenile Hall," 159.
[24] Leal, "The Malinche-Llorona Dichotomy," 137.
[25] Carbonell, "From Llorona to Gritona," 56.

resistance and betrayal. At certain points in history, her story takes on a more negative tone influenced by the historical figure of La Malinche, likely reflecting a growing social tendency towards more patriarchal norms. Consequently, "La Llorona, like La Malinche, [has become] an iconic example of the bad woman and failed mother."[26] This intervention of a historical figure is similar to Fatma's influence on Umai, albeit with opposite effects. While La Malinche labels La Llorona as a traitor, Fatma emphasises Umai's productive, protective, and fertile character, becoming a mother figure for the Anatolian people. Still, the question remains: Is La Llorona really a monstrous figure killing her children in cold blood, or is she simply a tragic soul who was made a scapegoat for the betrayal of a traitor who herself might be the victim of history as well?

Regardless of the answer, it is clear that "[the goddess's] once great influence among the Aztec people was forgotten as she (Cihuacoatl) was reduced to La Llorona, ostensibly a bedtime story to frighten children which also warns of the danger of women."[27] Unfortunately, at this stage, again she shares a fate similar to Umai in her darker version, becoming only an object of horror. Both figures' natures are divided in two distinct halves; one to be forgotten and the other to be highlighted. Such an attempt creates an unbalance, resulting in La Llorona being limited, silenced, and cast into darkness. Nonetheless, she is as powerful as Umai. Like her, who lives in the memory and folklore of Anatolian people, La Llorona finds a place to persist in her existence, and that is in popular culture.

La Llorona has become a popular culture icon since her first appearance on the screen. She has been featured in a number of films, almost exclusively falling within the horror genre. Her negative reputation has been reproduced over and over again in the world of movies which has confined her to a one-dimensional representation. According to digital sources, the earliest film to include her was the 1933 Mexican production titled *La Llorona*. Subsequent Mexican films, such as the 1960 *La Llorona* and the 1963 *The Curse of the Crying Woman*, also fall under the horror genre.[28] Since then, various films have depicted La Llorona either as the main antagonist or as a source of inspiration. It is rare for her to be portrayed sympathetically, although exceptions exist, such as the 2013 film *Mama*. Despite its generic classification as a horror film, *Mama* portrays the

[26] Nelson, "Rewriting Myth," 7.
[27] Nelson, "Rewriting Myth," 7.
[28] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Llorona

legendary figure of La Llorona not only as a scary figure but also as a more holistic character. The separated halves of her nature converge in this story, giving new dimensions and a sense of realism to La Llorona's personification.

Mama is the story of two very young girls, Victoria and Lilly, whose father experiences a mental breakdown after the 2008 financial crisis, leading him to murder his colleagues and ex-wife. He flees with his daughters into the woods, where he crashes his car and takes shelter in a forest cabin. Desperate, he decides to kill the children and himself, but he is stopped and killed by a ghostly figure. This spectral entity feeds, cares for, and protects the girls for the next five years until they are found and returned to civilization. Although it initially appears that Mama loses connection with the girls after their rescue, she remains attached to them, ultimately replacing her long-deceased baby with Lilly.

As the name "Mama" indicates, La Llorona's name is never articulated throughout the movie. Yet, Mama's story is one of the versions of La Llorona's tale: she is separated from her baby when she is confined to an asylum. After escaping, she retrieves her baby from the nuns who had taken it. However, while being chased by the villagers in the woods, she jumps off a cliff into a lake. Her fall is interrupted by a branch, and Mama becomes trapped between worlds because she cannot find her baby's body. Victoria narrates her story in one of her therapy sessions:

> It was a long time ago. A lady ran away from a hospital for sad people. She took her baby. They jumped into the water. […] She fell into the water, but the baby didn't. […] She doesn't know what happened to her baby. She went walking in the woods, looking for it. She searched for a very long time. […] Then she found us.[29]

In this version of the story, there is no information about Mama's past. Nothing is mentioned about the baby's father or the reason behind Mama's sadness or insanity. It remains unclear whether Mama had a husband or was abused in some way. The primary focus is on her intense desire to keep her child in her arms, and she blames others for preventing this. Her final decision to jump off the cliff appears unplanned and is a result of her depression. When her baby is once again separated from her by a branch, she cannot reach the unity she desires, which is why she becomes a ghost. In the film, a ghost is described as "an emotion bent out of shape, condemned

[29] Muschietti, *Mama*, 1:14:56 to 1:15:44.

to repeat itself, time and time again, until it rights the wrong that was done".[30]

When Mama finds the girls in the forest cabin, it is an opportunity for her to rectify the long-standing wrong, potentially enabling her to become a whole figure again. Although Victoria describes her as a woman who is "not touching the floor"[31] and she also looks terrifying, Mama's silent and compassionate demeanour does not frighten the girls. Instead, they find in her the warm maternal presence they need. Mama feeds them cherries,[32] sings lullabies,[33] and keeps them safe, exhibiting the positive qualities of La Llorona as a protective mother. Instead of her milk, she offers the moths coming out of her dead body[34] to keep them alive. In this version, La Llorona reverts to her original portrayal as a victim whose soul is tormented due to a wrong done to her. Her so-called cruel deed of killing helpless infants is not seen as a destructive act but as an attempt at a perfect union in the safety of death, away from the world's dangers. This change in perspective fosters empathy for La Llorona, whose roots as an earth goddess are symbolised by Mama surrounded by flowers and moths.

However, Mama fully embodies her character when she reveals the negative qualities initially attributed to the goddess and later to La Llorona, such as her violent, destructive, and sometimes jealous nature. This negativity manifests in her murdering the father, the doctor, and Aunt Jean, who pose potential threats to both the girls and herself. Her jealousy emerges when she feels that her motherhood and her possession of the girls are threatened by Annabel, the girlfriend of their uncle Lucas, both of whom take responsibility for the children in their new life. At the beginning of the story Annabel is a woman who is thankful for not being pregnant. She makes it clear that she does not want to be called 'Mama' by the girls.[35] But Annabel's growing bond with the girls awakens something within her, possibly imbuing her with maternal instincts supernaturally after being attacked by Mama herself.[36] With her body bearing similar injuries to Mama's, Annabel feels motherhood in a strange way. It remains uncertain whether Mama orchestrates this consciously; but from that moment

[30] Muschietti, *Mama*, 47:14.
[31] Muschietti, *Mama*, 06:40.
[32] Muschietti, *Mama*, 09:09.
[33] Muschietti, *Mama*, 42:15.
[34] Muschietti, *Mama*, 51:17.
[35] Muschietti, *Mama*, 27:03.
[36] Muschietti, *Mama*, 1: 21:30.

forward, Annabel becomes more resolute in her determination not to lose *her children*. Besides, Mama never means to inflict harm upon her. Despite her jealousy over sharing the girls' affection, she keeps her promise to Victoria not to harm Anabel. The final part of the movie depicts a ritual that compensates what Mama has lost long ago. She is reunited not only with the remains of her deceased baby, thanks to Annabel, but also with Lilly who acknowledges Mama as her true mother. Under the shower of flowers and moths, the embrace between mother and child symbolises the rectification of past wrongs. Mama entrusts Victoria to Annabel, for she best knows the agony of losing a child and it seems like a fair deal.

Hence, opening with the phrase "once upon a time,"[37] the film connects itself to time old narrative patterns and sets the stage for a retelling of the tale of La Llorona, and undertakes to tell her tale from a more fair-minded perspective, unlocking this legendary figure out of her closet. La Llorona finds her authentic identity and regains her voice. With this voice, as she cradles the remains of her deceased infant, her face becomes that of a real woman, smiling and radiant.[38] No longer confined to the role of a judged and silenced figure, she emerges as a symbol of an unjustly wronged woman, empowered to articulate her pain freely. In Nelson's words, her wailing around may "signify not pain or rage, […] but a refusal to be silenced."[39] La Llorona's quest extends beyond the pursuit of her lost child, and becomes a search also of her lost half "that [has] been stripped from her by history's reduction of a complex goddess figure to a frightening bedtime story. La Llorona cries to be allowed to signify multiple meanings, and to be whole."[40] In affording La Llorona the opportunity to achieve this wholeness rather than presenting her as merely an object of horror, the movie *Mama* emerges as an exceptional narrative.

The stories of the goddesses and legendary folkloric figures discussed in this study exhibit transcontinental connections that intertwine with each other, showcasing remarkable parallels in their representations as well as their evolutionary trajectories over time. Once revered as the female deity in the pagan beliefs of the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, Umai's dual nature is split into two with the rising patriarchal tendencies within these societies. While her positive attributes as a fertile, nurturing and protective mother

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[37] Muschietti, *Mama*, 00:30.
[38] Muschietti, *Mama*, 1: 29:08.
[39] Nelson, "Rewriting Myth," 69.
[40] Nelson, "Rewriting Myth," 69.

are repressed, her negative aspects as a hostile and jealous adversary of mothers are accentuated, casting her as a fearsome figure invoked to ensure well behaviour in children. With the advent of Islam, her long-forgotten benevolent nature resurfaces in the persona of Fatma, and she is called "mother" one more time in history, yet without fully reconciling her divided halves into a whole. La Llorona of the American continent epitomises the final manifestation of the earth goddess, whose duality undergoes a similar split. As with Umai and the conversion of the Turkic societies into Islam, the societies adhering to the belief in this earth goddess convert to Christianity, attributing her positive traits of motherhood to the Virgin Mary. What remains is a destructive and jealous ghost personified by La Llorona. Yet, by finding a voice in popular culture, La Llorona appears to be gradually reconciling her two halves, particularly in her representation as Mama. After all, these various threads add one new dimension to the legend of La Llorona. As many studies indicate, this legend may be traced in similar stories from Philippino, German, Greek, and Jewish cultures.[41] This study introduces a new addition to the list, establishing a fresh connection between the Asian and American continents.

[41] Gloria Duarte, "La Llorona's Ancestry: Crossing Cultural Boundaries", 107.

Chapter 7
No Pain, No Gain: The Violence of Change in *Ashputtle* and *The Birth of a Beauty*

Hollie McDonnell

> *If suffering is beauty and beauty is love, she cannot be sure she will be loved if she does not suffer.*
>
> -Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*

The idea of the attainment and pursuit of beauty through any means necessary, often forcing women to feel pain, is not an entirely new concept. Even before more modern practices of cosmetic surgery, women were treated as if natural processes such as menstruation and childbirth were punishments for their own gender.[1] Beyond these abilities and functions of the female body is the concept of beauty and attraction. Women are a "species that realises itself in a society," a society in which "woman's fate is intimately bound to the fate of socialism."[2] The expectations of what women should be—how they should act and appear, and what roles they should govern—is, as de Beauvoir argued, linked with society. If the society in which woman exists is patriarchal then by applying de Beauvoir's theory, woman is defined by the expectations of man. If a woman can achieve these expectations, then she is successful. While this critique is made of real-world society, the same can be applied to any literature and, in this case, fairy tales. If a woman can achieve the beauty and performance expected and indicated as acceptable by man, then she is successful. This is where the later part of this chapter draws a comparison between the act of a character magically becoming beautiful in fairy tales, and the ability of cosmetic surgery to grant women beauty in modern television series. Women are expected to transform from "woman-made-women (…) into man-made women"[3] in order to succeed at being beautiful. Beyond the texts of fairy tales, magic, and princesses, popular culture texts also display "the extent of the rising demands of beauty and just how transformative such demands are of

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[1] See Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 19.
[2] de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 48, 65.
[3] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 220.

individual's life projects and plans, social expectations and structures, cultural values and assumptions."[4]

In the terms of the fairy tale structure, the results of these demands often conclude with the achievement of the "happily ever after." This normally consists of a beneficial marriage to a handsome prince and a profitable change of social circumstance. If, however, the woman in question is not successful in achieving the praise and recognition of the patriarchy, of becoming beautiful, she is dismissed as evil and, more horrifyingly, ugly. There are countless fairy tales that include ugly stepsisters, evil witches, horrid old mothers, and wicked crones who want nothing other than to thwart the "good" woman and ensure her own happily ever after and small allotment of power. While the binary of good and bad, kind and evil, is quite apparent in fairy tales, maybe due to their intended audience or didactic nature, there are a few structural instances that obscure the clear-cut line between the two categories of characters. This is especially of interest when attempts at becoming a woman who is acceptable for the expectations of man are considered. Since the examination of all fairy tales and their variations which contain this duality would take far more than a single paper, *Ashputtle*—also known as Cinderella and written by the Grimm brothers—was selected as the text to be initially investigated. In the Grimms' version of the tale, the attempt to become a woman who would suit the level of attraction needed to be successful in achieving a man is quite violent in nature, at least for the stepsisters. It is this idea of a permanent changing of a body that can be traced as an element of adaptation through fairy tales and their modern retellings as well as a point of contention in the binary opposition. This change is often through a violent and painful process if you are a woman unlucky enough to be deprived of the good graces of a magical being. The relation between the pain and violence committed to female bodies in the structure of this narrative is sharply linked with whether a character is "good" or "bad." If the character is "good" then they are granted this transformation through magic. With the case of the stepsisters in *Ashputtle*, their attempt to change their bodies in order to fit the ideal beauty is independent and violent.

For context, the story of *Ashputtle* in the Grimms variation narrates the mistreatment of a young woman at the hands of the woman her father has remarried, as well as her two stepsisters whose "faces were beautiful and

[4] Widdows and MacCallum, "The Demands of Beauty," 208.

lily-white, but their hearts were ugly, and black."[5] *Ashputtle,* whose real name is never revealed in the text, is, of course, beautiful, kind and good. Though this version of the tale omits the presence of the fairy godmother—more common in contemporary retellings—she is granted the magic to go to the ball as "she went on being good and saying her prayers"[6] after her mother's death. It is at the three-day celebration organised by the king where she meets and falls in love with the prince. Ashputtle would not be considered a suitable choice as a bride due to her role as "a puny little kitchen drudge"[7] and her lack of royal title. Although she flees from the celebrations after each night, the prince does manage to eventually locate Ashputtle. After she proves herself to be the woman he has fallen in love with—by trying on a golden slipper—the two ride off together, get married, and, expectedly, live "happily ever after." After descriptions of how the "sisters did everything they could to plague her,"[8] the clear indication of the stepsisters as the "bad" and Ashputtle as the "good" is created.

It is the role and ultimate punishment of the stepsisters within this narrative, however, that calls for closer examination. Ashputtle is presented the chance to become beautiful as a reward for her performance as the "stepchild."[9] Her dress magically appears as birds "tossed down a gold and silver dress and slippers"[10] while she cries beneath the hazel tree. She is magically and painlessly transformed into someone beautiful, "Whereupon the bird threw down a dress that was even more dazzling than the first one. And when she appeared at the wedding, everyone marvelled at her beauty."[11] Her beauty is granted to her through a magical means and reflects the beauty of her character. She has acted in a way deemed to be moral and right, positioning her on the "good" end of the binary. While the attainment of this magic is due to her "being good and saying her prayers"[12] and comes as a reward in the story, the beauty bestowed upon her in this and the majority of retellings of the tale is done so painlessly and without sacrifice on the part of Ashputtle/Cinderella. The ultimate aim with regards to providing her with these dresses and beauty is the opportunity to meet the

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[5] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 84.
[6] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 84.
[7] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 89.
[8] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 84.
[9] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 84.
[10] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 86.
[11] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 87.
[12] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 84.

prince and fall in love. It is this reward—the "happily ever after"—that is the eventual goal and reasoning for this magical transformation. The attentions of the prince, as well as the promise of marriage, is, as previously mentioned, the main goal of the young female characters in these fairy tale texts.

While Ashputtle was granted this opportunity through a painless transformation, in the desperate attempt to gain the love of the prince and present themselves as the woman that was his dance partner at the party, both stepsisters take quite violent, permanent measures to ensure their own beauty. They both remove parts of their feet with the encouragement of their mother who tells them that "once you're queen, you won't have to walk anymore."[13] Their ability to walk is less important than the chance of marrying the prince. It is so important for them to fit the ideal beauty that they are willing to violently alter their own bodies in order to fit this previously structured standard of physical beauty. They "gritted (their) teeth against the pain"[14] and physically altered their own body in order to fit the established patriarchal ideal, encouraged to do so by their own mother. These three women are so intent on obtaining the power of becoming Queen and the "happily ever after" that the voluntary change of body in order to become beautiful enough is done so without hesitation by either party. Ashputtle has defined herself as beautiful enough to gain the attention of the prince and secure her happily ever after. She is considered beautiful enough to be loved by the prince, while her stepsisters, though making an effort to obtain the beauty standard, were eventually discovered as fraudulent in their attempts to achieve this beauty standard by cutting off parts of their feet. Ashputtle's beauty was honest, and she was positioned in the "good" of the binary. The stepsisters were dishonest and positioned in the "bad" of the binary, a position they had already upheld due to acting immorally throughout the text in their treatment of Ashputtle.

Not only are the stepsisters willing to violently alter themselves in order be considered on the same level of beauty as Ashputtle, but the punishment for their attempts to trick the prince is also quite violent. Both sisters are blinded by birds on the day of Ashputtle's wedding as punishment for their attempt to make themselves more beautiful. Although the moral is clear in its didactic terms and the stepsisters were structured as having "ugly" hearts from the beginning of the narrative, their attempted transformation is jarringly contrasting to the painless, effortless becoming of Ashputtle. As

[13] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 88.
[14] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 88.

Ashputtle is the one who achieved her "happily ever after" and her stepsisters have failed, this text confirms the notion that "Male culture [in other words, patriarchy] seems happiest to imagine two women together when they are defined as being one winner and one loser in the beauty myth."[15] The stepsisters fail in their admittedly underhanded attempt to elevate themselves to the desired role of the love interest of the prince, a role that will reward them with their "happily ever after." Essentially, they are willing to change their own bodies permanently and violently in order to conform to the ideal which will allow them their "happily ever after," an ideal that has been set by the patriarchy—in this case, the prince. The condition that "the one this golden shoe fits"[16] will be the one to marry the prince, constructs a physical condition that the stepsisters must meet in order to obtain the prince. He only recognises "the beautiful girl"[17] once the shoe fits Ashputtle as without it she is "too dirty to be seen."[18]

Even though it is simply her clothes and position that has changed, and Ashputtle's beauty is eventually recognised by the prince, she too must meet the physical condition set out by the prince before her identity is revealed and she is presented with her "happily ever after." The woman, whom the condition is based upon, must still prove herself before she is declared beautiful. Failing to meet this requirement naturally, despite their attempt to alter their own physicality, the stepsisters are less than what is considered desirable and punished for their attempts of dishonesty. Their attitude towards Ashputtle has not changed, as they were initially structured as having "black hearts" at the beginning of the narrative, but it is their attempt to claim that they are entitled to the prince that prompts their punishment. It is only when the stepsisters act in a way which attempts to deceive the patriarchy that they are finally punished. Although the didactic value of this text lies in the insinuation that Ashputtle was rewarded for being "good," she is also continuously structured as a "beautiful girl" within the text because of her moral actions. While the stepsisters lacked the "good" of their character that was needed to obtain their "happily ever after," they were still beautiful. They were just not beautiful enough to become the bride of the prince and their attempt to do so was punished rather than dealt with sympathetically within the text. The extreme act of cutting off parts of their

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[15] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 60.
[16] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 88.
[17] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 89.
[18] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 89.

own feet in order to meet the standard of the ideal beauty was seen as a punishable act of dishonesty. They violently and permanently changed their bodies in an attempt to fit the ideal and failed due to the dishonesty associated with their choice as it directly related to the patriarchy.

Wolf writes that "it is her desire for sex for which a woman must pay with her pain"[19] and, although there is little erotic nature to the want to marry the prince, the stepsisters are still punished for their desires. In comparison to the magic of the hazel tree which gives Ashputtle the three dresses to attend the celebrations, why is the act of removing parts of their feet seen as punishable in terms of the stepsisters? The dresses that were given to Ashputtle by the tree and the birds do not belong to her and she is assumed to be "the daughter of some foreign king"[20] which is just as dishonest as the stepsisters attempting to alter the size of their feet. Even when Ashputtle is tasked with cleaning the lentils from the ashes, she enlists the help of two doves rather than completing the task on her own. Since the task was given to her by her stepmother as a condition for her to fulfil in order to attend the party, this too is dishonest as she was not the one to complete the undertaking. Why were neither of these dishonest moments punished? Is it because the stepsisters' act was directly dishonest to the patriarchy? Both incidents would have and did lead Ashputtle to the ball where she was introduced to the prince and her own beauty was exemplified by the gowns. In comparison, the stepsisters' attempt to fit the shoe were also with the intentions of securing the attention of the prince. Is it due to the moral character of Ashputtle and the placement of the stepsisters in the "bad" of the binary that led to the punishment of one act of dishonesty and not the other? Or was it due to the nature of the change—the magic of altering Ashputtle's appearance versus the violence of changing their physical bodies—that justified the sanction of the stepsisters? Is it because "without evil there cannot be a clear sense of good either"?[21]

This aspect of the tale can be juxtaposed with the more modern practise of cosmetic surgery. Just as the stepsisters permanently changed their physical body in order to achieve a certain perceived level of beauty—created by the expectations of the patriarchy—cosmetic surgery promises the permanent alteration of females' bodies in order to "fit" the ideal beauty standard. The examined deceit in both Ashputtle's transformation and the

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[19] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 220.
[20] Manheim, *Grimms' Tales for Young and Old*, 86.
[21] Bengtsson, "Sex and Violence in Fairy Tales for Children," 16.

actions of the stepsisters is also pertinent with the practises of cosmetic surgery. In modern society, there is a rising "belief that an individual wearing makeup is deceiving,"[22] which suggests that this thinking can be applied further to cosmetic surgery as something deceptive, unnatural, and unrealistic. As Compton writes, "[t]he purpose of makeup is not to deceive anyone; it's meant to highlight features one likes about themselves. As if anyone is born with gold glitter permanently attached to their eyelids, or dark red lips. Calling makeup deceptive is simply not realistic."[23]

Cosmetic surgery ensures that a woman can "buy an ultimate cure"[24] when a woman "is sick with female ugliness,"[25] though it is not as easy as being a good person and ensuring that a magic fairy deems you worthy enough of her spells. In a modern society, you are either born beautiful or undergo a violent change in order to become beautiful. Even outside of fairy tale texts, the concept of transforming a woman from something *less than beautiful* in the eyes of a society into someone considered physically attractive is a recognisable structure. While the subordinate position before the transformation has evolved from dirty kitchen worker and maid to *nerd* and overweight woman, the transformation itself has remained consistent as either a magical transformation or one which is brought about by more violent conventions. While the role of the magical godmother has recently been replaced by a knowledgeable best friend or *popular* female character who considers beauty and cosmetic accessible, the more violent measures have evolved from slicing off pieces of feet to a structured and commercialised cosmetic surgery.

This transformation is a recognisable format appearing in many young adult films, such as *Mean Girls*, *The Princess Diaries*, *Miss Congeniality*, *The Devil Wears Prada*, *Easy A*, the kind of movies which "revolve around the personal trials and tribulations of teenagers living mostly ordinary lives, with the occasional exceptional circumstance."[26] As with Ashputtle, these transformations are painless, temporary or can be undone, and achieved through the use of fashion and cosmetics. Each is presented through a pivotal reveal in the plot of the text and is often accompanied by the woman receiving the attention of male characters, often successfully engaging in a

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[22] Compton, "Take Her Swimming on the First Date," *Odyssey*, https://www.theodysseyonline.com/take-her-swimming-on-the-first-date
[23] Compton, "Take Her Swimming on the First Date."
[24] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 223.
[25] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 223.
[26] Nelson, "The New Old Face of a Genre," 125.

romantic relationship with their previously sought-after love interests. These texts all contain *the magical transformation* and are dominantly based within the Western hemisphere. There is, however, an interesting parallel to be drawn between the original fairy tale discussed in this chapter, and several television dramas originating from South Korea which deal with the concept of transformation from ugliness into beauty.

Both *Birth of a Beauty*[27] and *My ID is Gangnam Beauty*[28] originate in South Korea and are available on the popular streaming service Netflix. In these narratives, both of the female leads have undergone cosmetic surgery. Kang Mi-rae[29] in *My ID is Gangnam Beauty*, decides to undergo cosmetic facial surgery before she enters college as she had previously been self-conscious of her appearance. In *Birth of a Beauty* overweight Sa Geum-ran[30] who has been in a near-fatal car accident after the break-up of her marriage, undergoes a full body transformation through cosmetic surgery procedures. Both women endure violent and permanent body alterations, as well as the remedial recovery after the surgeries, in order to become beautiful. Both women also secure love interests by the end of the episodic television dramas. There are several cultural understandings to be considered when discussing these texts and using them as a comparison for the treatment of the stepsisters in *Ashputtle*.

Lee Young Ju, based on the data acquired from her study, writes that the children involved were able to "[point] out the attributes of princesses: wealth and beauty"[31] and they were also able to determine the difference between reality and fantasy, understanding the fantastical nature of the texts of fairy tales. One of the children participating in the study drew "attention to body size, a current cultural trend regarding female attractiveness, [which] seemed to reveal her reflection on the importance of beauty, grounded in today's reality."[32] This indicates the level of awareness, even in children, of the important link between the social trends of what is considered attractive and why it is necessary to obtain this ideal beauty.

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[27] See Lee Chang-min and Park Sun-ho, dirs. *Birth of a Beauty*. SBS Television, 2014. https://www.netflix.com/title/80999059.

[28] See Choi Sung-bum, dir. *My ID is Gangnam Beauty*. JTBC, 2018. https://www.netflix.com/title/81030026.

[29] Korean names, as in most Asian cultures, are written with the family name first, followed by the given name. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_name.

[30] See footnote above.

[31] Lee, "What today's children read from 'happily ever after' Cinderella stories," 8.

[32] Lee, "What today's children read from 'happily ever after' Cinderella stories," 8.

Although the children involved in the study could separate their own reality from the fairy tales, they still focused on the importance of beauty for a princess, linking it to her success in the story. The children were aware of how beauty benefitted the princess.

This awareness is imitated in both television dramas as both Geum-ran and Mi-rae are aware of the importance that beauty plays in their reality and the means through which they will be able to obtain it. Geum-ran wishes to become beautiful and attractive for her husband, so that she can regain his love and attraction. Mi-rae idolises beauty so that she can avoid any of the previous tormenting she had endured because of her physical appearance. Both women had been previously indicated as less than beautiful in society and in the eyes of men. They did not suit the ideals of the patriarchal society, and so were ostracised due to this. Although their reasoning for wanting to transform themselves and become beautiful differ slightly, both understand the *importance of beauty* and what they must undergo in order to obtain it. While the characters may understand their need to obtain beauty, Neal suggests that "even young children can tell a face is distorted or ugly, but it takes a special eye to know why, connected to hands that can alter it to become beautiful' [33].Just as the stepmother encouraged the stepsisters to remove parts of their feet, recent studies have revealed "the popularity of eyelid and nose procedures that Korean parents frequently present to their children as high school graduation gifts."[34] This trend of cosmetic surgery "becomes an 'adventure' of self-improvement that marks a person's rise in social standing,"[35] normalising the procedures as a 'rite of passage', introducing the topic of cosmetic surgery into society as a normal and expected step towards obtaining an idealised version of oneself.[36] This acceptance of cosmetic surgery "both constructs the need for such a practice as well as legitimizes it."[37]

Both the stepmother and the mother characters in *Birth of a Beauty* and *My ID is Gangnam Beauty* agree to, and approve of, the act of their daughters permanently changing their physical appearance in the pursuit of a set standard of beauty. As cosmetic surgery has become "socially necessary

[33] Neal, "The Art of Plastic Surgery," 2073.
[34] Davies and Han, "Korean Cosmetic Surgery and Digital Publicity," 149.
[35] Davies and Han, "Korean Cosmetic Surgery and Digital Publicity," 149.
[36] See Davies and Han, "Korean Cosmetic Surgery and Digital Publicity," 149.
[37] Lirola and Chovanec, "The Dream of a Perfect Body Come True," 488.

work"[38] and, as such, "the media is tolerant and supportive,"[39] there is no apparent, lasting punishment for either Mi-rae or Geum-ran for their decision to alter and change their appearance. Although "cosmetically reshaping the healthy/undamaged female body for beauty purposes often incurs a different and somewhat negative understanding"[40] they are not blinded by birds nor ultimately claimed to be deceptive characters. Though both women face suggestions of dishonesty because of their choice for cosmetic surgery, neither character experiences this as a lasting reaction to their transformation, often willing people to understand their point of view and gaining sympathy for themselves. So why are these women presented as sympathetic characters whose only choice to achieve beauty was to have their bodies violently and surgically altered? And why was this sympathy not extended to either of the stepsisters in *Ashputtle*?

While there is an argument for the case that the stepsisters treated Ashputtle poorly and the change of their bodies was a direct attempt to deceive the prince, they were still encouraged to perform this act in the name of beauty. Though they did admittedly treat Ashputtle in a way which revealed their *wicked* character, both Mi-rae and Geum-ran have deceptive motives for their undergoing of the surgery. Mi-rae is not initially open about undergoing a surgery, instead pretending that she has always had this level of beauty. Geum-ran undergoes her change for the singular motive of regaining the love of her husband because he has chosen a woman slimmer and more beautiful than her. Both women decided to have cosmetic surgery in order to be accepted by a society and to be considered as the ideal beauty by a male figure and their initial love interest. Why does this differ from the reasoning behind the act performed by the stepsisters? They were presented with an example of what ideal beauty was in the eyes of the patriarchy—Ashputtle—and were attempting to change their bodies in order to fit this standard. The sisters are being "asked to feel like a monster now though [they are] whole and fully physically functional."[41] The stepsisters hinder their own ability to walk in order to gain this level of beauty, as if they do become Queen they would have no need to walk, but a need to look beautiful and fit the requirements of the prince.

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[38] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 224.
[39] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 224.
[40] Heggenstaller, et al., "Reflecting on Female Beauty," 49.
[41] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 228.

Rhee, An, and Hwang have observed that "the general public in South Korea has traditional and unique beauty preferences" claiming their study would "provide aesthetic plastic surgeons with detailed information about contemporary Korean people's attitudes, perceptions, and trends with regard to plastic surgery and the peculiar characteristics of female Korean faces that are currently considered to be attractive."[42] Is the difference between the stepsisters cutting off parts of their feet, and Mae-ri and Geum-ran undergoing cosmetic surgery to be found in the fact that the permanent changes of women's bodies is now commercialised? As Wolf writes:

> A woman is being asked to feel like a monster now though she is whole and fully physically functional. The surgeons are playing on the [beauty] myth's double standard for the function of the body. A man's thigh is for walking, but a woman's is for walking and looking "beautiful."[43]

Though the stepsisters attend the King's party, they are not considered beautiful enough to be love interests because they do not meet the standard of beauty set out by the prince. Mae-ri and Geum-ran have fully functioning bodies but because they are not beautiful, they are somehow less valuable or less attractive than other women in society. They have somehow become *deformed* and *disabled* because they are not the ideal of what is considered attractive in Korea. Their experience of being bullied—in the case of Mae-ri, and the loss of their romantic partner—in the case of Geum-ran, is blamed on their lack of beauty rather than on the people who treated them in such a way. Although there is sympathy given to Geum-ran and Mae-ri, there is no consideration given to the stepsisters. What has made their hearts become so "ugly" and "black"? Would they have even considered deforming themselves and affecting their physical capabilities if not for the pressure of their mother? Is it because their mother is more aware of the expectations of women and of ideal beauty that she is so insistent on them eradicating their "experience of [their] wellness"?[44]

There are several aspects of the modern, televised texts of *Birth of a Beauty* and *My ID is Gangnam Beauty* which can be analysed as adaptations of *Ashputtle*: the hiding of true identity due to social pressure, the role of an *evil* mother-in-law and sisters-in-law in the place of a stepfamily. However, it is this thread of violently altering the body of woman in order to fit a social ideal which proves most worthy of examination. It mirrors the ambiguous

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[42] Rhee, et al, "Contemporary Koreans' Perceptions of Facial Beauty," 398.
[43] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 228.
[44] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, 228.

treatment of those considered to be *evil* characters in the *Ashputtle* text, by comparing the similarity of their actions to those of the *good* characters in the modern Korean television dramas.

As beauty and the ideal woman changes alongside attitudes and preferences of the dominating, patriarchal society that is present in these texts, does the treatment and standard for *evil* characters also change? Is the treatment of Ashputtle as a kitchen maid comparable with the knowledge of a family member cheating on their spouse but deciding not to inform your sister-in-law? Does the concept of evil and bad and good also change with the perception of beauty? Although there seems to be more questions posed than answered in this paper, it does begin a discussion regarding how the effects of an *ideal beauty* can impact a society and the perception of the *good* versus *evil* binary opposition that seems to be so transparent and clear in fairy tale contexts. When a text becomes based in a reality rather than in a fantasy, the implications of seeking the ideal beauty, as well as the treatment of characters that do so, undeniably change. Even if the transformation is magical, subtle, temporary, it is still a transformation given to those considered worthy of obtaining beauty and thus succeeding as a woman in society. If the process of change is violent, surgical and a permanent way of altering the body of woman, then is it looked at in the same manner? Is beauty still beauty, whether it be natural, magical, or cosmetically created?

Chapter 8
Healer and Destroyer: Morgan's Eternal Ambiguity

Carlos A. Sanz Mingo

Fairy tales, legends and myths have always helped human beings to comprehend things that go beyond the limits of our understanding, but also to explain different behaviours. Some of the myths and legends have had an enduring influence and an appeal to readers and people in general, such as the Arthurian legend. Born in the western margins of the British Isles, it has enjoyed enormous popularity throughout the centuries, partly because of the elusiveness of the characters, who can be reshaped in different narratives. However, the basics of the legend, as Lupack explains, have remained a constant: "Making Arthur into a medieval king and conqueror, the marvels surrounding whose birth marked him as special and who brought together the best of the chivalry of the world; the depiction of Merlin as a prophet and adviser to kings; the treachery of Modred and the infidelity of Guinevere- these are elements that now seem essential to the Arthurian tradition."[1] Most of these elements were taken again by contemporary author Fay Sampson in the composition of the "Daughter of Tintagel" series, formed with five books that retell the life of Morgan: *Wise Woman's Telling* (1989)*, White Nun's Telling* (1989)*, Black Smith's Telling* (1990)*, Taliesin's Telling* (1991) and *Herself* (1992). This chapter focuses on the fourth title whose main character is the famous bard Taliesin, invited by King Urien of Rheged and his wife Morgan, Arthur's half-sister, to become the official king´s bard. The pentalogy deals with Morgan's life focusing from the moment her father is killed by king Uther Pendragon to the moment shortly after she disappears forever with her mortally wounded half-brother. The motif of the relation between Arthur and his sister has always been of interest for Arthurian aficionados. They firstly became related in *Draco Normannicus*, (1168), by Étienne de Rouen, and shortly after that, Chrétien de Troyes certified their sibling status in *Erec and Enide* (c.1170, ll. 4193-4197). Their relationship has been studied by several authors, but it is Raymond Thompson, in his article "The First and the Last Love: Morgan Le

[1] Lupack, *The Oxford Guide to Arthurian Literature and Legend*, 27-8.

Fay and Arthur," who has provided information on some recurring motifs in the development of their relationship. This chapter analyses those motifs with the fourth book of "The Daughter of Tintagel" series, as well as localising some possible sources Sampson used for the composition of her characters and the plot. Attention will also be paid to some narrative constructions and to the roles of female characters in contemporary Arthurian texts.

Taliesin´s Telling starts with a prologue supposedly written by Morgan herself, where she describes to the reader the two sides of her character: "I am the half-sister of good King Arthur, and his arch-enemy, am I not? The wicked witch, the embodiment of evil. And yet… Others call me Morgan the Goddess."[2] With this short introduction, Sampson encapsulates the difficult relation that the two siblings have. The character of Morgan has undergone a change in the twentieth century, by which she is described usually in better terms. This is the aim of Sampson's Morgan, namely, to explain her real self: "Some editing of the story will clearly be necessary."[3] The relation between Arthur and Morgan stems from what Raymond Thompson terms "Childhood Bond": whilst in the romance tradition Arthur, isolated from his parents, is fostered by Sir Ector, in contemporary texts, the future king and his sister are brought up together, and this is the focus of the first book of the pentalogy, *Wise Woman's Telling*. The motif where both siblings sleep together and, unbeknownst to them, beget a son (or the "Incest Motif" in Thompson's words) is not here attached to Morgan but to her sister Margawse, who beds Arthur and bears him a child, Modred. It is also important to point out that Margawse, unlike other texts, is perfectly aware of who her brother is when they sleep together. Nonetheless, the character of Woman, a former blacksmith called Teilo, and the focus of the third book of the pentalogy, *Black Smith's Telling*, hints at an incestuous relation between Morgan and her half-brother, based on the acquisition of power. At this mention, Taliesin winces, and Woman adds: "What's that, among kings and queens like them? But it's more than bedding what she wants. We're talking about his kind of power now."[4] That share of power here is represented in Excalibur, Arthur's sword, and its sheath, which Morgan has destroyed: it is the "Excalibur" motif as per Thompson´s terminology. Since Arthur does not want to share his authority, Morgan must destroy the

[2] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 7.
[3] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 7.
[4] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 51.

second element in the combination of power, the sheath, without which Arthur is more vulnerable since the sheath prevents him from being killed. Morgan disposes of the scabbard as an act of revenge: "When you sent my woman Luned back to me dead, wrapped in the cloak I made for you, my hope was finished. I know the sword would never come to meet the scabbard. I saw that you and I would never be reconciled. I drowned the scabbard. (….) It came from the waters. To the waters it was returned."[5] This is an adaptation on the medieval chapter of the theft of the scabbard by Morgan whilst Arthur is recovering in an abbey: when he wakes up and pursues his sister, she throws the scabbard into a lake, where it was forged. Another of Thompson´s motifs present in Sampson's pentalogy is that of the "separation," which is needed to split both siblings so that Arthur marries Guinevere. At the end of the first book, *Wise Woman's Telling*, Morgan is taken to a nunnery and, from there, at the end of the second book, *White Nun's Telling*, she moves to Rheged where she marries king Urien. Another motif usually ascribed to Morgan is that of "healing." Morgan in the pentalogy is also called "the Healer," as Nimue reminds: "You! You call yourself the Healer. Can you do nothing for him?"[6] In an interview with Raymond Thompson, Sampson remarked that she was not interested in the topic of the Grail, which explains the absence of characters such as Bors, Lancelot, Galahad or Perceval. Instead, Sampson is more interested in the motif of "healing," to which Morgan is usually linked at the beginning. Precisely, "healing" is another of the motifs in the relation between the siblings, namely represented by the final journey of Arthur to Avalon, usually with his own sister: "Morgan and Arthur. We will not see them ever again. I do not wish to remember this day,"[7] which is linked to the last of the motifs, the "Journey to Avalon."

Before that journey, however, Arthur finds it difficult to see Morgan positively. Taliesin is sent to the continent to inform the king, who is fighting, of the treachery of his wife with Modred. As the bard is bringing the news on behalf of Morgan, Arthur's first reaction is to refuse believing in any word the bard says. He continues his answer by using possessives and verbs with negative meaning when referring back to Morgan: "She slanders my queen. She blackens my son. She dishonours the very crown of Britain. Morgan was

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5 Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 89.
6 Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 79.
7 Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 193.

always the destroyer."[8] This reaction bears similarities to the way Arthur reacts to the news of the treachery in Layamon's *Brut* (c.1225), to which Arthur replies: "As long as time shall last, I will never believe that, that my kinsman Modred would ever betray me, not for all my kingdom, or that Guinevere my queen would weaken in resolve."[9] For the journey to Avalon motif to happen, another motif must happen first: "Mordred's revenge." Born from one of Arthur's half-sisters and raised by another, Mordred falls in love with Guinevere in several texts, following the medieval episode originated in Geoffrey of Monmouth. In Sampson's text all these conditions apply: Margawse is his mother, but he is nurtured by Morgan, just the opposite to Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon* (1983). Maureen Fries understands Guinevere's liaison with Modred has analogies with the Original Sin; there is incest, bigamy, and treason in this relationship. In Sampson's text, Modred marries Guinevere once the queen publicly renounces her vows to Arthur, which precipitates the Civil War between father and son, finishing with Arthur mortally wounded and taken to Avalon, a topic that "has persisted from earliest accounts."[10] In fact, since the 13th century, and regardless of their relationship, Morgan has always been a key figure in Arthur's final destination. When Taliesin laments the fact that he will not see the king and his sister ever again, this immediately recalls the prophecy that Elaine, the eldest sister, pronounced: "Morgan will take our brother's hand once more. You will hold Arthur in your arms again, Margawse. Finally, he shall rest in my lap (….). There is an island, where red apples drop from the trees, and the ninth wave breaks upon the shore, and Avallach's daughters follow the path of the stars."[11] This prophecy immediately alerts the Arthurian connoisseur that the end of the story will be similar to that of previous texts: the only question is how the characters will get to that point. The reference that Taliesin makes of Morgan as the Crone before the battle of Camlann takes place links it with the idea of the White Goddess that Robert Graves had postulated in the homonymous book published in 1948. "The Triple Moon-Goddess manifests herself as Maiden, Mother and Crone, figured in the waxing, full and waning moon; her consort is her brother or son, a seasonal god who (….) might be ritually sacrificed at the end of the yearly cycle, or replaced by a successor."[12] It can be argued that Arthur is the figure of the

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[8] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 156.
[9] Barron and Weinberg, *Layamon's Arthur*, 243.
[10] Thompson, "The First and the Last Love," 339.
[11] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 169.
[12] Larrington, *King Arthur´s Enchantresses*, 194.

god who has been deposed in favour of his own son. In the cult of the goddess, Morgan's "attributes are frequently sombre, and linked to the Goddess in her Crone aspect, driven by her appearance as psychopomp to Arthur."[13] Graves identified Morgan with the Irish goddess, the Morrigan, a Death goddess with the form of a crow or raven, which echoes the description Taliesin makes of Morgan on the eve of the Battle of Camlann. Age is also key in Sampson´s book. Arthur is here an old king, a motif Sampson must have derived from Frazer 's *The Golden Bough* (1890). In this book, the author explained that in some places the king was not thought to be able "to remain in full bodily and mental vigour for more than a year; hence, at the end of a year's reign, he was put to death."[14] In Sampson's text, Morgan hints that Arthur is too old to reign and, hence, this somehow prepares for what is to come: Modred, as a new king, can have vigour and strength and he begets two children on Gwenhyvar: "What is it that he wants so much? (…) I have what he lacks, haven't I? Youth."[15] Morgan first hints at Arthur's age when they part ways after a meeting: "A safe journey, and the peace of your years be on you when you reach home."[16] Arthur replies that there is more life still in him, to which Morgan retorts: "I would have given you more life than you imagine. But you yourself will not let go and trust (….). Cling to your man's power then, like your father before you. See if that can restore your waning life."[17] The reinterpretation of Frazier's motif that the old king must die is applied to Arthur who, unlike Modred and Gwenhyvar, is not able to create a new life.

Why has modern literature then included the motifs of the relation between Morgan and Arthur, totally ignored in the medieval texts? Thompson mentions two possible reasons: the first is that little is said and known about their childhood in the medieval texts, so "modern authors can more readily introduce new materials without violating firmly established tradition."[18] Furthermore, this relation can help explain, in psychological terms, "the failure of Arthur's marriage to Guinevere, and for the curious combination of love and hate that makes the relationship between brother and sister."[19] However, whilst this second reason may be applicable to some

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[13] Larrington, *King Arthur´s Enchantresses*, 195.
[14] Frazier, *The Golden Bough*, 193.
[15] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 70.
[16] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 53.
[17] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 53.
[18] Thompson, "First," 339.
[19] Thompson, "First," 339.

contemporary novels, it is not relevant to all. In Bernard Cornwell trilogy "The Warlord Chronicles" (1996-1998), for instance, it is Guinevere's ambition to become queen that breaks up the marriage and triggers her wedding to Lancelot, although she clearly does not love him and only uses him to obtain what she most wishes. In Sampson's text, the failure of the marriage is also due to Gwenhyvar's ambition to legitimise her power to the throne and probably her motherhood, after the death of Anir, Arthur and Gwenhyvar´s son. She recalls past powerful Celtic queens, such as Boudicca or Cartimandua, what immediately resonates, not only in the audience listening to her, but also in the reader. It is with Modred with whom she has twins at the end of the novel thus highlighting her youth, and consequently her strength, as opposed to Arthur's old age.

Still within the topic of sibling bonds, older sisters tend to be more motherlike figures and this is clearly reflected in Sampson's first book, as posited by Sanz Mingo (2011). This motherlike relation develops when brothers get older as they are the protectors of their sister's honour. Then the problem arises with the advent of the nephew/son, although, at the beginning, the king's sisters "successfully redirect their son's loyalties towards their uncle and away from filial obligation to support their fathers against Arthur."[20] There are three clear exceptions to this rule: the Mordred character in *The Mists of Avalon*, Mordred in Mary Stewart´s *The Wicked Day* (1983), and his counterpart in Sampson's pentalogy: in all three, Mordred is a pawn in the hands of Margawase in order to get revenge on Arthur. This act of presenting the nephew to the uncle is probably the only female action in the political sphere in the medieval texts, but they also mirror the importance of the male relatives to the king in his household, as the 10th century laws of Hywel Dda confirm; the king's household members are "his sons and his nephews and his male first-cousins."[21] Conversely, in Sampson's text even if Morgan seems to have a subordinate role in Rheged, subjected to her husband, she openly opposes Arthur in politics at national level and without having to resort to any man's support. This change in the conception of the sibling relation happens because of several factors, such as the trend of feminism in Arthurian literature, following the success of Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon*. Female characters are portrayed as the strong ones, opposing the male force when and if needed. In fact, in the medieval tales, if a female character wants to become an agent, she must "extricate herself

[20] Larrington, *King Arthur´s Enchantresses*, 31.
[21] Jenkins, *Hywel Dda*, 7.

from the family, from the authority exercised by male relatives, in order to make (…) new kinds of bonds, with lovers, other enchantresses, or with knights who are themselves alienated from the courtly world."[22] The negative depiction of Morgan in medieval texts can only reflect, as Fries says, "the inability of male Arthurian authors to cope with the image of a women of power in positive terms."[23] Nonetheless, in Sampson's text, although Morgan is not alienated from court, as she is the queen, she is private in her affairs, whether it is plotting with the help of her sisters, or finding lovers, such as Taliesin.

The fact that she does not have to leave court in order to become an agent in the plot is a clear manifestation of the feminist tradition in contemporary Arthurian literature. In fact, as Jan Shaw explains, the revision of "this myth from the point of view of woman, at this time, reflects the emergence of women as significant cultural voices who had gone unheard, mostly unspoken, from at least the legendary time of Arthur himself."[24] One clear feminist strategy, according to Spivack "is the assumption of a female point of view on conventionally masculine subjects."[25] Sampson´s narrative has a lineal story, but the discourse does not align with the story: in the first four books, Morgan is examined through four characters, whilst the fifth, *Herself*, retells the story from Morgan´s own perspective in a sort of vindication of her actions. This technique produces not only a multiple voice, but also a multiplicity in the narrative. The first four titles in the series have the word "telling" included as a warning to the readers of the multiple perspective of the plot. This multiplicity of narrators and viewpoints also influences the "trustworthiness and objectivity of the figure who is narrating."[26] As Morgan has a different effect on the first four narrators, so our impression of Arthur's sister changes. This is also a common device in contemporary Arthurian literature, whose authors have played with the idea of focusing on a narrator external to the usual Arthurian core, with Bernard Cornwell´s trilogy as a prime example. Although it is true that many authors have put the feminine characters under a positive light, such as Bradley's Morgaine in *The Mists of Avalon*, this is not totally the case of Sampson's Morgan in the first four books: there are four different tellers who construe the narrative trough memories, and this is mainly clear in Taliesin's closing remarks in the fourth

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[22] Larrington, *King Arthur´s Enchantresses*, 50.
[23] Fries, "Female Heroes," 70.
[24] Shaw, "Feminism and Fantasy Tradition," 463.
[25] Spivack, *Merlin´s Daughters*," 9.
[26] Bennett and Royle, *Literature, Criticism and Theory*, 57.

book: "Let me try to recall her as queen in Urien's hall. Lovely she was. Her hair like the raven's wing and her skin soft as honeysuckle."[27] Memories can be constructed like narratives as well, and in Taliesin's case this final memory takes him back to one of his earliest meetings with Morgan, where he says: "the skin of her neck is softly furrowed (…), her dark hair loose upon the pillow."[28] The movement of narratives begins with a stasis which is disturbed. The end of the narrative brings the equilibrium back. The stasis in Sampson's series is Gorlois's murder by Uther in the first book and the restore of that equilibrium must be Arthur's death. However, the reader's desire to know is not fully fulfilled in this case, because not only must the reader read the final volume of the series, where Morgan explains her previous actions, but also because it also deals with one of the attractions of Arthurian literature: it is an open-ended story, which prompts questions such as is Arthur dead? Has he been taken to the Isle of Avalon for his wounds to be tended? Will he ever return? In the case of Arthurian literature, a total epistemophilia is rarely met. Thus, the idea of immortality is closely connected with the Arthurian legend with the hope that Arthur will return in the hour of need. In Sampson's text, the idea of immortality, however, can be observed in different ways: first, in the constant idea of the aging king, as mentioned above; second, with Taliesin's ambition to become immortal through his legacy: "But I am a powerful bard: I have the power of mockery. I can chant satires that will blister the enemy's face. I shall call curses that would make a dragon quake. I'll launch an assault of poetry like any Druid! You need me!"[29] he protests when King Urien forbids him to go to Camlann. This is not to surprise the reader, as the aim of any artist is for their legacy to be remembered forever, but it is also at odds with his proud remarks, in that these never involve his patron, as he did in his poetry. A good example of this is the eulogy of "The Men of Catreath," one of his lines reads: "It's Urien himself, the far-famed chieftain,/ who holds kings in check and cuts them down."[30] Third, there is also the motif of Arthur's immortality. Geoffrey of Monmouth was the first to mention his being taken to Avalon: "Arthur himself, our renowned king, was mortally wounded and was carried off to the Isle of Avalon, so that his wounds might be attended to."[31] It was Wace in *Roman de Brut* (c. 1155) who added the possibility of a return from

[27] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 193.
[28] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 14.
[29] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 165.
[30] Lewis and Williams, *The Book of Taliesin*, 6.
[31] Thorpe, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 261.

Avalon: "He is still there, awaited by the Britons, as they say and believe, and will return and may live again."[32] However, and in line with many contemporary retellings (Bradley, Cornwell, Stewart), Sampson is clear on the fact that there will be no return: "Morgan and Arthur. We shall not see them ever again."[33]

The change in the perception of female characters in the twentieth century has already been mentioned. Nonetheless, in medieval times, although secondary to the storyline, some of the feminine characters were key for the development of the hero or the story. Fries categorised those medieval feminine characters in three groups. A heroine is the female character that fulfils the feminine duties: "she is an instrument, not an agent [….]. Her virtues are those universally recommended to medieval women in real life: chastity, obedience, silence."[34] By way of contrast, Fries categorises female heroes in "two sub-types: the wife-hero, and the virgin,"[35] whilst "the female counter-hero holds values which are not necessarily those of the male culture in which she must exist."[36] This counter-hero plays roles usually attributed to men. According to Fries, the roles of the counter-hero and the virgin are rooted in mythology: the Magna Dea and Artemis or Diana would exemplify these two roles respectively. The counter-hero is a sexually initiated woman and, even when married, she does not abide by monogamy: "Her double nature as nurturer and destroyer illustrates even more aptly [….] the ambiguity and ambivalence of male authors, and Arthurian writers particularly, towards women."[37] Sampson's Morgan fits the role of the counter-hero, as a woman who can also be both beautiful and a hag: Sampson's Morgan is depicted as beautiful by all the narrators. But Taliesin is the only one who also sees her as a hag or crone, before the fateful battle of Camlann: "she is old, she is ugly, beyond bearing."[38] Arthurian cinema connoisseurs will remember John Boorman's film *Excalibur* (1981), when, just before the Battle of Camlann, Merlin visits Morgan's tent and fools her into repeating the Charm of Making, which will ruin her beauty (the Maiden and Mother) and make her a crone, whom not even her own son recognises. In the Middle Ages some authors described Morgan as "ugly, hot (the bodily

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[32] Weiss, *Wace's Roman de Brut*, 333.
[33] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 193.
[34] Fries, "Female Heroes," 64.
[35] Fries, "Female Heroes," 65.
[36] Fries, "Female Heroes," 68.
[37] Fries, "Female Heroes," 68.
[38] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 187.

quality medieval associated with sexuality) and lecherous."[39] The latest adjective can be easily applied to Sampson's Morgan, but not necessarily in a negative way in this text. Her husband seems to be aware of this trait and he forewarns Taliesin: "Have a care, boy […]. She can break you as she has broken the others."[40]

Closely related to feminism in the Arthurian literature is the topic of "the Other." Whilst Arthurian chronicles and romances usually punished outcasts, such as female characters who do not abide by the code (Guinevere for her infidelity or Morgan for being independent), contemporary narratives are more favourably disposed towards what is different. Since female characters occupy the central stage here, they cannot be marginal or marginalised and, even when they are, as it is the case of Morgan, they eschew apologising. When Arthur accuses Morgan of deceiving him after Gwenhyvar's kidnapping, she replies: "I will not waste my breath to excuse myself, though I am falsely accused. You would never believe me."[41] Consequently, Morgan exercises the power of asserting herself and not apologising because she is not a marginal character. Her answer is directed to rehabilitating those female characters "falsely accused" in the Arthurian legend, which the reader can immediately relate to Tennyson's version of the legend and how he dealt with the female characters. Woman tells Taliesin that Morgan once wanted the power that Arthur had: "She thought the two of the could join hands. Brother to sister. His sword, her sheath [….]. He wouldn't have it, though. He's a man, isn't he? He wants to keep the whole of it to himself."[42] However, when Anir dies and he asks Morgan for the healing scabbard, she replies: "When I, the Healer, destroyed the scabbard, I sacrificed the only power I ever held. I waited for you with empty hands. Since you would not accept equality of strength with me, I offered you sharing of my powerlessness. And still you keep the sword."[43] Morgan, unlike Gwenhyvar, does not want to dominate the other or seize the power. She wants to be an equal and, by refusing to share his power, Arthur has to bear the consequences: the sharing of powerlessness and the loss of his son. Indeed, Gwenhyvar sticks to power after publicly renouncing her husband by claiming that Merlyn chose her to be Arthur's wife, not only for her beauty or to have an heir. Arthur's counsellor chose her "for my royal blood, for that

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[39] Fries, "Female Heroes," 69.
[40] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 16.
[41] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 129.
[42] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 51.
[43] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 80.

most ancient line of the kings of the West,"[44] only to add later: "Then, and only then, was Arthur cried High King. It was my betrothal that legitimised him."[45] To lay her claims to the throne, however, she resorts to patriarchal and Christian reasons that delegitimise Arthur: "I have neither used nor abused the power placed in my hand with his sceptre. Yet, it is sovereignty, and it is rightly mine. My dignity is Britain's. Arthur has shamed my honour, and so yours. The royal seed that should have fertilised your High Queen has been wasted on other wombs."[46] Thus, Sampson bases her Gwenhyvar on Geoffrey's Gunhamara, who descends from a noble Roman family.[47]

The role of Christianity within the Arthurian legend has also suffered a revision in the contemporary retellings of the myth. It was Bradley and *The Mists of Avalon* who first posited Christianity "as intolerant and controlling, and the Goddess religion as tolerant and accepting."[48] This has been developed in other modern renderings such as Bernard Cornwell's trilogy "The Warlord Chronicles" where the Christians, and namely Bishop Sansum, are severely prejudiced against other religions (Sanz Mingo, 2009a and 2009b). Although Sampson's Morgan, Taliesin and Urien are Christians, they are also sympathetic towards other faiths, especially Morgan who still worships the Goddess. However, it is again a bishop who shows an intransigent and stubborn defence of Christianity against the old religion and, of course, against women. When Elaine and Nimue are preparing to reveal "the villain," the man who has kidnapped Gwenhyvar, Bishop Bytwini exclaims: "Sir! You swore to leave that way behind you at your baptism. How often must I warn you? Have no dealings with these witches."[49] The same applies when Bishop Cynderyn insists that Arthur should stop relying on Nimue as his counsellor. He uses similar epithets and, interestingly, the same verb "to swear:" "Why is that witch here? You swore, my lord, you would cleanse our court of all such fiendish persons. Will you imperil your immortal soul to entertain that kind of counsellor again?"[50] Nonetheless, the religion of the Goddess or, "the Mothers" as it is called in Sampson's text, is never as accepting as in Bradley's novel, although it is still less antagonistic

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[44] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 146.
[45] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 146.
[46] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 147.
[47] As in Geoffrey, Sampson mentions two banquets (one for men and one for women) on Arthur and Gwenhyvar's wedding.
[48] Shaw, "Feminism," 469.
[49] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 127.
[50] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 70.

than Christianity. Interesting in this aspect is the secondary character, Nimue, who presents herself here as a bridge between the patriarchal Christianity party and the matriarchal religion of the Mother: "It was I who brought you up to know both Christ and the Mothers. I put power in your right hand and your left. Bytwini's own hands have given me the holy sacrament, when he was nothing but your household chaplain,"[51] she explains to Arthur. Similar to the religion of the Goddess in Bradley, the faith of the Mothers "represents access to an extensive education, most particularly to privileged knowledge, and it inculcates independence of mind and body."[52] However, Morgan, who is, along with her sisters, the maximum representative of the religion in the pentalogy, has also been brought up as a Christian in a nunnery (*White Nun's Telling,* 1989) and it is there where she also develops her knowledge, even though she still practises pagan acts (Sanz Mingo, 2017). It is thanks to Morgan's obvious knowledge and intellectual capacity that she becomes an ambiguous character in Sampson´s story, symbolised in the conspicuous binary metaphors of dark and light, healer and destroyer. She attaches to her the positive sides of this binary division, although she knows she can perform dark deeds. One of the most striking examples of this ambiguity is when she confesses to Arthur that Modred is his son. Arthur decides to make peace with his sister, but she bluntly tells him: "Do not trust Modred!"[53] This double aspect of healer and destroyer breaks the polarization of values, a typical characteristic in fantasy fiction written by women. She plots against her brother, but she also shows a maternal side to him, probably more obvious in the first of Sampson's novel *Wise Woman's Telling* (Sanz Mingo, 2011). Another example of depolarization is "in connection with sexuality […] regarded as natural and blameless."[54] The first time Morgan and Taliesin meet, she invites him to her bedroom: "Follow me to my chamber and let me test how soft the charms you have to soothe [my head]".[55] Urien is not taken aback by this proposal as "he nods assent."[56] Likewise, Margawse does not consider her incestuous act with her brother a sin, as this is a Christian concept. In the religion of the Mother, fertility is a gift, so when Margawse informs Taliesin that she is Modred's mother and Arthur is his father, Taliesin is surprised at her matter-

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[51] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 128.
[52] Shaw, "Feminism," 471.
[53] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 135.
[54] Spivack, *Merlin's Daughters*, 13.
[55] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 12.
[56] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 12.

of-fact reaction: "The son Arthur got upon me that day. What did you think?"[57]

It is also interesting to mention the king-nephew tradition and how it is represented in Sampson's text. Arthur himself has a son, Anir, who dies in a hunt: Modred must then come to the forefront of the novel in order to occupy the throne after Arthur, and more so after Morgan's confession that he is his own son. But he also needs to prepare the final battle with the well-known outcome: Arthur has to kill Modred and the son must lethally wound the father. Since Modred moves to the centre of the narrative, there is no need to focus on any of the other nephews of the king: Gawain is named a few times and his death is dealt with in a couple of lines: "Arthur had no one but the warband he brought from Armorica and they are dying with every battle. Great Gawain himself is dead."[58] Following here the Galfridian tradition, Sampson must also name another character who could continue with the Arthurian dream and oppose Modred: "We skirt Exeter. Custennin its king stands high in Arthur's favour."[59] However, another interesting point that may explain Gawain's very secondary role here is the focal point of the story. Many medieval texts are focused on manly deeds and, consequently, their main characters are masculine. Geoffrey of Monmouth´s *Historia regum Britanniae* (c.1136) creates a comparison between good Gawain and evil Modred: "While Modred's acts against his uncle and king are nearly unspeakable Gawain's reveal faithful service."[60] Although it is implicit that Gawain is loyal to his uncle and king, Sampson´s text is female-centred, so she does not need to elaborate a comparison between both nephews. This is also observed in Anir's death: even though Arthur is grieving his son's death, it is Arthur's eldest sister, Elaine, who holds Anir's dead body and "comforts" her dead nephew: "Sleep, little one. Fair women will attend your wounds and wine-cups await you. The harps of Summer Island will soothe your slumber. In the morning, all shall be well."[61] Guinevere's feelings towards Mordred are also a prime example of the female-centredness of this text. In Geoffrey of Monmouth's text, the queen gives "way to despair. She fled from York to the city of the Legions and there, in the Church of Julius the Martyr, she took her vows among the nuns, promising to lead a chaste life."[62] In Wace she feels

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[57] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 56.
[58] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 172.
[59] Sampson, *Taliesin's Telling*, 172.
[60] Cherewatuk, "Dying in Uncle Arthur's Arms and at His Hands," 54.
[61] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 80.
[62] Thorpe, *History*, 259.

remorse for having desired Modred but she also ends her days in a nunnery. In Layamon, Guinevere is given more responsibility by making her an active agent of resistance and opposition to Arthur and advising Modred. It is only after the battle fares better for Arthur than the queen (called Wenhaver here) "was sorry to be alive! She left York by night and made her way as quickly as she could towards Caerleon […]. And her head was covered with a holy veil, and she, the most wretched of women, was a nun there."[63] So, in these medieval texts, the authors are punishing women who violate the law. Sampson somehow also punishes Gwenhyvar, as she is left in the nunnery never to be heard of again. Despite this, Sampson´s text shows a more modern approach to the queen, as she finds her own voice to make decisions, since she wants to go to battle to be close to Modred. Gwenhyvar is the principal reason why the Arthurian dream collapses, and she can be considered the "agency in the unleashing of the death and destruction overtaking the realm."[64]

Sampson also follows Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace in the motif of the Battle of Camlann and, namely, in the demises of father and son, whose deaths are not "individualised": they both die "in the general mêleé."[65] It is Urien who tells Taliesin that "Great Arthur is dead. Bedwyr bore him away from the battle, dreadfully wounded. He could not have lived. We seek his body,"[66] whilst adding that Mordred was "killed by his father's hand."[67] The lexis that Taliesin uses to describe the aftermath of the battle helps the Arthurian reader to build a picture of the atrocity of the battle. Words such as "carnage," "entrails," "disembowelled," "harvest of corpses" or "headless torso" are illustrative enough for a battle that has not been described in the text and whose brutality in the description is paralleled to those we may find in Wace or in Layamon. However, the focus has not been on the battle, because this is not a male-centred text. In fact, Sampson's tale follows the pattern of other historical fantasy novelists where "the events also shift in importance, with battles and politics losing emphasis in favour of human relationships and reactions."[68] In Sampson's series, the Battle of Baddon is hardly ever mentioned, whilst the Battle of Camlann is never described, because it is not the prime focus of the narrative, but the aftermath, which

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[63] Barron and Weinberg, *Layamon´s Arthur*, 251.
[64] Noble, "Woman as Agent of Death in Tennyson´s *Idylls of the King*," 203.
[65] Cherewatuk, "Dying," 61.
[66] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 192.
[67] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 192.
[68] Spivack, *Merlin´s Daughters*, 9.

includes Morgan's departure with her dead brother. Neither Geoffrey nor Wace nor Layamon state that Arthur kills Modred and that the latter wounds the king lethally. The first time both of them are depicted clearly fighting against each other is in the alliterative *Morte Arthure* (c. 1400). As Sampson draws on these earlier chronicles, the depiction of the battle is inexistent and has little or no interest. The motif of the mutual killing present in the alliterative poem probably derives from Robert Mannyng's *Chronicle*, where we read: "Moddred he smot, and he smot hym, on boþe parties were woundes grym."[69] Another possible source may be *La mort le roi Artu* (c.1225), where the king attacks Modred with a spear: "The king, bearing down on him with all his force, stuck him so hard that he ripped apart the links of Mordred's hauberk and thrust the steel of his lance through his body. And the story says that when the lance was withdrawn, a ray of sunlight shone through the wound."[70]

Two images of the aftermath of the battle in Sampson bear resemblance to two different motifs in the alliterative *Morte Arthure*. When a "horse passes, riderless, wild-eyed and nervous,"[71] Taliesin falls on a "trampled cornfield."[72] This image is based on Gawain's death in the alliterative poem at his own brother's hands, when he dies "fallen on his face, fingers clutching the grass."[73] At the same time, whilst Urien breaks the news to Taliesin that Arthur is dead, his "warriors behind him keen like women,"[74] which recalls the moment when Arthur starts crying for his dead nephew whilst Sir Ewain says the king "[t]o weep like a woman is not judged wise."[75] Sampson's text shows the softer side of those warriors weeping and crying for their king and colleagues. By contrast, in fantasy novels, "the female protagonists also demonstrate physical courage and resourcefulness, but they are not committed to male goals."[76] Female characters do not want to "mimic" male deeds, and this is something that Sampson wanted to make very clear in the series, as she acknowledged in an interview with R. H. Thompson: "Nor was I interested in the kind of feminist writing that just reverses roles, seeing Morgan as good and Arthur as bad (….). I was much more interested in the

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[69] Cherewatuk, "Dying," 67, ll. 14275-6.
[70] Lacy, *The Death of Arthur*, 126.
[71] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 191.
[72] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 191.
[73] Stone, *King Arthur´s Death*, 156.
[74] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 192.
[75] Stone, *King Arthur´s Death*, 157.
[76] Spivack, *Merlin´s Daughters*, 8.

ambivalence of my characters."[77] Another narrative element that female feminist writers use is "the circular as opposed to the linear plot […] the total self is not achieved until [….] a return to the starting place."[78] Although the three sisters in Sampson's series are queens over northern territories of the British Isles, they move south towards the end of the story, where they were brought up, bringing with them a heavily pregnant Gwenhyvar. This also has a relation with the motif of "the return to the matriarchal society of the ancient Celtic world,"[79] which Sampson symbolises in the "Mother" that the sisters' worship. Whilst there is opposition between Christianity, usually depicted as intransigent, as we have seen above, this rivalry is not so obvious as it is in Zimmer's *The Mists of Avalon*, perhaps because in Sampson's novels Christianity is already the most important religion, whilst the "Mother" is worshipped privately and secretly. In fact, of the four narrators that focus on Morgan, two of them are Christian: Luned, the White Nun, and Taliesin. The fact that Morgan is described through four different characters helps to offer a more balanced description: "I had set out in the four previous books to tell Morgan's story from the viewpoint of these four different characters: two male, two female; two sympathetic to her, two antagonistic."[80]

Taliesin's keenness for immortal fame has already been mentioned. Reputation and fame were important for a bard's status. The oldest information we have about the importance of bards in medieval Welsh is collected in *The Laws of Hywel Dda,* the group of laws used in medieval Wales before the English conquest. It was passed down orally and it was first codified during the reign of Hywel Dda in the mid-10th century, but they were developed by law makers in consecutive centuries. What is interesting here is that these laws must pre-date the Hywel Dda´s times, "for occasional passages which are found only in comparatively later manuscripts are so archaic in substance or language that they must go back to a very early date."[81] Concerning the figure of the bard, these laws state that he is the eighth of the king's officers. As such, he "is entitled to his land free and his horse in attendance, and his woollen clothing from the king and his linen clothing from the Queen."[82] Although most of the time Taliesin is accompanying Morgan, he knows he is the King's bard and shows pride in

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[77] Thompson, "Interview with Fay Sampson."
[78] Spivack, *Merlin´s Daughters*, 9.
[79] Spivack, *Merlin´s Daughters*, 9.
[80] Thompson, "Interview with Fay Sampson."
[81] Jenkins, *Hywel Dda,* xviii.
[82] Jenkins, *Hywel Dda,* 20.

this: "chief bard of Rheged, not the family's harper, to sing in the woman's room."[83] According to the medieval Welsh laws, the bard has the right to sit next to the Captain of the House on Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide days, highlighting the importance of the role: "When a song is required to be sung, the chaired bard starts, first of God, with the second to the king to whom the court belongs,"[84] but nothing is said in those laws about the role of the bard with the queen.

Sampson's Morgan, Gwenhyvar, Margawse and Elaine prove the character of St Patrick in Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon* wrong when he asserted that women are weak, sinful and irrational and, above all, in his idea that women, at their best, are passive companions to husbands. Spivack claims that "The enchanted quest for contemporary women writers is a quest for change on the social as well as individual level, and it is a distinctively feminine quest."[85] The changes observed in contemporary Arthurian fantasy written by women encapsulate gender roles, with strong female characters. The traditional values can be changed and "the other," in this fiction written by women, "is posited as gender, race, or ideology [whose] aim is not to destroy it or to convert its nature, but to accept and integrate it."[86] With the depolarization of values, darkness and light share equal importance as well, as Morgan exemplifies in several contemporary retellings of the legend. These strong feminine characters that Spivack mentions are the "anti-heroes" in Fries's terminology. Bold, active characters, such as Morgan, are more attractive than the usual female, passive "heroine" characters. It is important to emphasise that the popularity of Morgan and the feminine characters in today's Arthurian literature is not only a result of the "feminist re-envisioning"[87] of women in society, but also "from the important principles of female empowerment which have come to the fore in the last fifty years."[88] The popularity of fantasy as a literary genre has become a spring for the recognition of female characters, and, above all, for the absolution of Morgan, from a wicked witch to a round, more credible character.

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[83] Sampson, *Taliesin´s Telling*, 12.

[84] Jenkins, *Hywel Dda*, 20. Jenkins also adds that other possessions that belong to him are "a cow or an ox from the booty which the bodyguard takes in a strange country [as well as] a whalebone throwboard from the king and a gold ring from the Queen."

[85] Spivack, *Merlin´s Daughters*, 163.

[86] Spivack, *Merlin´s Daughters*, 165.

[87] Larrington, *King Arthur´s Enchantresses*, 198.

[88] Larrington, *King Arthur´s Enchantresses*, 198.

According to Ross Chambers, "[t]o tell a story is to exercise power."[89] As the story develops, the story-teller exercises "authority in ways that are potentially radical."[90] The life of Morgan in Sampson's series has been recounted by her old wet-nurse, a nun, a black-smith and a bard: some of them keep nice memories of Arthur's sister; all of them have retold their truth, but it is the fifth and final instalment of the series that will radically explain Morgan's truth, where she will not only explain the reasons behind her doings here, but also her thoughts about her representation in literature. Indeed, this is a radical retelling of a female character who has won a deserved redemption in contemporary retellings.

[89] Chambers. *Story and Situation*, 50.
[90] Chambers, *Room for Maneuver*, 11.

Chapter 9
Revival in the Cave of Pan: Heterotopias of James Stephens's *The Crock of Gold*

Gülden Hatipoğlu

James Stephens is one of Ireland's finest storytellers and a dedicated believer in the revolutionary and transformative potential of literature. Although his literary fame seems to be restricted to the insular cultural landscape of Ireland, his impact is recognised in the works of some internationally acclaimed brand names of modern Irish fiction, including James Joyce and Flann O'Brien. Commemorated alongside Lord Dunsany as one of the most accomplished Irish writers of fantasy and the supernatural, his literary achievement is predominantly marked by reworkings of Irish myths and folk tales, often filtered through his humorous style. Stephens's authorship, in this respect, is representative of the literary climate of Irish intelligentsia especially in Dublin in the first decades of the twentieth century.[1] He was a devoted and cherished member of a literary circle attached to the Irish Renaissance, which was a cultural, artistic and literary movement that sought to revive Gaelic language as well as Irish literature. The publication of W.B. Yeats's *Wanderings of Oisin* and Douglas Hyde's *A Book of Gaelic Stories* in 1899 is usually noted as the initiating steps of the Revivalist march in the calendar of Irish Renaissance, and they constitute the first energizing examples of a cultural agenda of "creat[ing] a literature in English which would express the national consciousness in Ireland, which would throw Irish thought back upon its own tradition and thus release it from an intellectual dependence on England."[2]

Although drama and poetry are the shining stars of the movement as its generic markers, novels like Stephens's *The Crock of Gold* and *Demi-Gods*, or Lord Dunsany's fantastic prose fiction still attract scholarly attention for their idiosyncratically vibrant style and rich content that reflect on issues about emancipation and national rebirth. My concern in this chapter is to

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[1] Markey in "The Discovery of Irish Folklore" provides a remarkable survey of scholarship on Irish folklore, and traces the scholarly emergence and development of Irish folklore studies in Ireland (*New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Winter 2006: 21-43).

[2] Morris, *The Celtic Dawn*, 6.

read Stephens's *The Crock of Gold* (1912) as a text of liberation, and discuss the novel's heterotopic textual space—populated by humans, fairies, gods, and ancient folks of Erin—as an allegorical reflection of the land of the dispossessed. The idea of liberation or emancipation is deeply connected to the idea of mobility, as all acts of liberation begin as a movement from a fixed point of departure towards a path reaching forward, occasionally beyond boundaries. In the context of this notion of movement and flow against fixation, heterotopic spaces of the textual universe of the novel contribute to the undertones of the central motif of journey, introducing a thematic as well as structural conflict with the symbolic arrival and disappearance of Pan the foreign deity.

According to the anecdotal detail provided by Patricia McFate, due to his "tiny stature and elf-like appearance" Stephens was often referred to as the "Leprechaun of Irish Literature."[3] He is also one of the rare names of his generation of fabulists whose linguistic wit and talent is praised by James Joyce, so much so that he asked Stephens to finish *Finnegans Wake* if he died before accomplishing the task himself. Joyce must have found a kindred spirit in Stephens, especially in his interest in the wonders of life. "Aristotle finds at the beginning of all speculation the feeling of wonder," observes Joyce in the opening sentence of "The Soul of Ireland," a review of Lady Gregory's *Poets and Dreamers: Studies and Translations from Irish*.[4] Stephens manages to blow the soul of Ireland into "the strange machinery of fairyland"[5] in *The Crock of Gold* which is heavily symbol-driven and allegorical in form and content. The allegorical quality of Stephens's fantastic *fabula* has a great deal to do with the particular way Irish writers and poets at the turn of the twentieth century relate to the politics of storytelling in their anti-colonial performances of authorship. As remarked by R. F. Foster, "[w]ords have always been the last weapons of the disarmed, and the elaboration of the compensating inner world of fantasy is a feature of the psychology of most colonised and even post-colonial people, apparent today in the fabulistic techniques [of] many Irish novelists."[6] Putting old Irish material into new bottles, fabulists like Stephens left their mark on Irish modernism which was peculiarly distinct from mainstream European modernism in its characteristic blend of oral material from Irish belief and

[3] McFate, *The Writings of James Stephens*, 1.
[4] Joyce, "The Soul of Ireland," 74.
[5] Joyce, "The Soul of Ireland," 74.
[6] Foster, *The Oxford History of Ireland*, 233.

folklore with modern forms and modes of writing. In this context, taking allegory, "the captain of all rhetorical figures of speech"[7] as his prime companion, Stephens turns Ireland's "machinery of fairyland" into a fanciful tale of liberation and change.

The Crock of Gold (1912), defined as a "philosophical phantasy" by Derek John[8] or "nationalist fantasy" by R. W. Maslen,[9] is a gay and joyous assemblage of folk imagination, druidic wisdom, Irish fairy lore and witty humour. In Stephens's fabulous "cosmos of words,"[10] a law abiding philosopher, his Shee wife, leprechauns, Celtic deity Angus Og, and Greek nature god Pan share with a bunch of clumsy country policemen the same time and setting. Open and closed spaces like forests, caves, houses, barracks, prison cell and roads become sites of carnivalesque encounter between the old and the new, traditional and the modern, supernatural and the real, the mythic and folkloric. Although the pastoral space of the novel occasionally provides ground for uncanny encounters, Stephens's narrative draws us back to the tale's cheerful atmosphere before the eerie gets the upper hand. The most remarkable spatial characteristic of *The Crock of Gold*, however, is the theatrical composition of its six parts in the fashion of Acts with Scenes in a dramatic performance. The heterotopic semiosphere of the novel owes much to this narrative construction and division, providing a fitting example for the third principle of heterotopia Foucault describes in his "Of Other Spaces." The heterotopia, Foucault infers, "is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible. Thus it is that the theatre brings onto the rectangle of the stage, one after the other, a whole series of places that are foreign to one another."[11] The dynamics of the textual space of *The Crock of Gold* operate in line with this principle, enabling a juxtaposition of real, mundane, urban, rural, fantastic, folkloric and mythic spaces, each of which is accommodated with similarly diverse beings that belong to diverse ontological categories.

Stephens uses archetypal motifs and tropes such as journey, captivity and homecoming as connecting devices in order to relate multifarious spaces to one another, as well as to accommodate his tale in the familiar convention of

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7 Fletcher, "Allegory Without Ideas," 9.
8 John, "James Stephens, (1880/82-1950)," 80-88.
9 Maslen, "Fantastic Economies," 136-151.
10 Obbink, "Early Greek Allegory," 17.
11 Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 25.

storytelling. As Tolstoy is speculated to have remarked, all great literature is one of two stories: a man leaves his hometown and goes on a journey, or a stranger comes to town. *The Crock of Gold* opens with the book "The Coming of Pan" which introduces the unprecedented appearance of a foreign deity in the land of Erin. This alien invasion—as it is perceived by the native folk—is thematically connected to the eponymous crock of gold through the role the philosopher plays as an agent capable of solving problems and restoring order. Being a man of words rather than a man of action, the philosopher is analogous to poets who were expected to assume the role of *filí* who represented not only wisdom but also the poetic power of logos in a precolonial cultural order. The philosopher not only provides the native folk with information and guidance, he also shoulders responsibility and agrees to leave the comfort of his house and take to the roads. In this contextual trajectory, the book "Coming of Pan" is followed by another five books including "The Philosopher's Journey," "The Two Gods," "The Philosopher's Return," "The Policemen" and "The Thin Woman's Journey and the Happy March," respectively.

Heterotopology of *The Crock of Gold* is not limited to the above mentioned structural design of the novel's dramatic textual space. The overarching heterotopic narrative is composed of several individual heterotopias of varied forms. To begin with, in the first book, before we are introduced to Pan the usurper and seducer, we zoom in to the lives of two philosophers living in a secluded house in the midst of a dark pine wood populated with leprechauns and other fairy folk. The character and atmosphere of the philosophers' house is quite unlike the pastoral luminescence associated with the symbolic space that wise old men commonly occupy in fairy tales. In this pine wood "the sun never shone because the shade was too deep, and no wind ever came there either, because the boughs were too tick, so that it was the most solitary and quiet place in the world."[12] It is this allegorical solitude and darkness that enables the philosophers to nourish their pastoral wisdom uncontaminated with modernization. Even death and burial is welcomed as part of the natural flow of life and it is handled like other mundane tasks of their daily routine. When one of the philosophers and his wife die in the most absurd fashion, they are buried inside the house, underneath the hearthstone by the surviving philosopher's wife, The Thin Woman of Inis Magrath. The house literally turns into a graveyard, assuming a heterotopic quality. Foucault draws particular attention to the fact that

[12] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 6.

cemeteries as the space allocated to the dead began to be "located outside the border of cities" in the course of modernity and as heterotopic "other spaces" they were separated from the space of the living.[13] While the burial of deceased family members in one's garden or landed property was considered normal in premodern communities, it may easily be read as a sign of covered up murder by the inspecting gaze of the modernised/industrialised legal bodies. This is what happens when the policemen, upon the leprechauns' vengeful denouncement, search the house and arrest our philosopher for murder. Transgression of spatial laws that separate the spaces of the living from spaces of the dead is only one of several border-crossings or threshold experiences in the novel. The dark and secluded atmosphere of the philosophers' habitus is contrasted to sunny and warm spaces beyond the thick trees that almost guard the borders that separate the inside (their realm of philosophy and mind) from the outside (nature and body). In the course of the novel, this binary opposition is followed by several other dichotomic images and symbolizations.

The underground dwellings of leprechauns, as fantastic as they are, form another type of heterotopia. Readers are given a detailed description of this space when leprechauns, in order to punish the philosopher for having a hand in the theft of their crock of gold, decide to kidnap his two children. Recalling Alice's fall into the rabbit hole, the children are tricked by one of the leprechauns to play a game called "leap-frog." While the children were jumping over one another, "without noticing it they had passed through the edge of the wood," and they forged ahead jumping until they reached "a broad, low tree." With their next jump, one after the other they "slid down a hole at the side of the tree" and "disappeared from view."[14] The description of the space underground is worth quoting in length:

> When the children leaped into the hole at the foot of the tree they found themselves sliding down a dark, narrow slant which dropped them softly enough into a little room. This room was hallowed out immediately under the tree, and great care had been taken not to disturb any of the roots which ran here and there through the chamber in the strangest criss-cross, twisted fashion. To get across such a place one had to walk around, and jump over, and duck under perpetually.[15]

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[13] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 25.
[14] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 40-41.
[15] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 73.

It is in this wondrous space that the leprechauns, "dressed in tight green clothes and little leathern aprons," are "busily engaged making shoes."[16] The grotesquely entangled chaotic form of the underground space is in stark contrast with the systematic and orderly mechanism of their collaborative labour of producing shoes. Operating like an underground factory, this fairy dwelling allows access only to their own tiny folk and small children. According to the fifth principle Foucault indicates in "Of Other Places," "[h]eterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and make them penetrable. […] To get in one must have a certain permission and make certain gestures."[17]

Pan's cave in the mountains is similarly heterotopic. The cave is accessed through a hole "covered by a thick brush" which led to "a high, narrow opening."[18] It embodies one of Foucault's examples of heterotopic sites with seemingly "pure and simple openings" that provide access to "curious exclusions."[19] Pan's cave is indeed a "geographical marker"[20] for Caitilin's deflowering. The symbolic archetypal imagery of the caves as the wombs of mother earth bears strong Freudian overtones, and also relies heavily on the underpinnings of the grotesque as the prime representation of transgression. It may be noteworthy at this point to remember that transgression is itself a spatial metaphor conceptualised in terms of bodies stepping beyond normative thresholds.

While Pan's cave represents a heterotopia of crisis in Foucault's classification, the prison cell as the philosopher's place of confinement stands for a heterotopia of deviation that are reserved for "individuals whose behaviour is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm."[21] Like leprechauns' dwellings and Pan's cave, the cellar used as a prison cell in the police barracks is "built beneath the level of the ground" and accessed by means of a "wooden ladder [leading] down to the cell from a hole in the ceiling."[22] Interestingly, this dark space of deviation becomes a lacuna of storytelling when the two thieves who accompany the philosopher in the cell tell stories of loss of sorts. It is in this confined space which represents institutional state authority over citizens that the novel assumes a dispirited,

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[16] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 74.
[17] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 26.
[18] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 87.
[19] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 26.
[20] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 25.
[21] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 25.
[22] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 242.

gloomy and cheerless tone. Thr formerly humorous and merry vision of the philosopher gives way to visions tormented by "mental imprisonment" and "abysmal demons."[23]

As the brief spatial reading of *The Crock of Gold* reveals, while open pastoral spaces function as sites of free encounter and contact, heterotopias of enclosed structures symbolically articulate a politics of space rising from the conflict between inside and outside. Given that the novel is woven around the theme of emancipation in its anti-colonial allegorical context, the most prominent inside-outside conflict is observed in the dichotomic personifications of the native god Angus Og (representing the inside) and the foreign god Pan (representing the outside). In between these two forces stands a beautiful maiden—personification of Ireland—as a valuable possession. Along with the theft of the Leprechauns' crock of gold, the seduction of this local maiden, Caitilin, by a foreign deity with a grotesque hybrid body constitutes the major source of disorder and conflict on which the narrative machinery of the book is actually erected. These two conflicts blend elements of folk/fairy lore and mythic lore in the literary *heterotopia* of the novel, suggesting an infrangible coexistence of both in the Irish imagination.

The wandering action of the novel is initiated by leprechauns who have stolen the local farmer Meehawl Mac Murrachu's washboard "because their bird had undoubtedly been slain by his cat."[24] When Meehawl consults the philosopher to find out the identity of the thief and the whereabouts of his stolen property, he is informed that it was the Leprechauns of Gort na Cloca Mora that took his washboard and he thus has to search a hole under a tree in the south-east of the territory. Meehawl's search ends with his discovery of the leprechauns' crock of gold hidden inside the hole underneath the tree. Leprechauns are the most popular folk of the Irish fairy world, and the pot of gold they are associated with is an integral part of their popular image and lore. It takes "many thousands of years" for a leprechaun community to amass their crock of gold, and a "Leprecaun without a pot of gold is like a rose without perfume, a bird without a wing, or an inside without an outside."[25] It is central to their existence more than anything, so much so that "[a] community of Leprecauns without a crock of gold is a blighted and merciless community, and they are certainly justified in seeking sympathy

[23] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 245.
[24] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 30.
[25] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 30.

and assistance for the recovery of so essential a treasure."[26] This material possession is essential also for their safety and security, for it is their only means of paying the ransom if they are captured or kidnapped by humans. The eponymous crock of gold is taken away from a hole underneath the tree of Gort na Cloca Mora by the local farmer Meehawl Mac Murrachu who has been directed by the philosopher to the very spot where the pot lies hidden. Recapturing their "treasure" proves to be impossible for the leprechauns when they find out that Meehawl has "understood the customs of the Earth Folk very well" and "buried the crock of gold beneath a torn bush, thereby placing it under the protection of every fairy in the world."[27] As fairies are bound by certain laws that dictate how they are supposed to behave in their interactions with humans, the leprechauns can do nothing but "respect its hiding-place, and even guarantee its safety with their blood" until it is "removed from this place by human hands."[28] The philosopher therefore becomes their enemy, yet they are "unable to organize a direct, personal hostility against [him], because [his wife] the Thin Woman of Inis Magrath […] belonged to the Shee of Croghan Conghaile, who had relatives in every fairy fort in Ireland."[29]

The initial scenes of the first book display conflicts that arise from the loss of material possessions. Ironically, local folk seem to consult the philosopher only on matters concerning missing or lost goods or material items, and do not heed much to his philosophical talks or aphorisms on other aspects of life. Meehawl Mac Murrachu's second visit to the philosopher's humble house concerns his missing daughter, Caitilin, who is the allegorical personification of the land of Erin. It is significant that Meehawl talks about his daughter in terms of her added-value in the family economy, stating that she "helped her father and mother in all the small business of their house, and every day also she drove their three cows and two goats to pasture on the mountain slopes."[30] Her physical body, as the allegorical representation of the mother land, is conceived as an appropriated possession to be reclaimed from the foreign usurper.

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[26] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 165.
[27] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 32.
[28] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 32.
[29] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 33.
[30] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 50.

With the scene in which Meehawl's young and beautiful daughter Caitilin[31] is lured by the sirenic tunes of Pan's music in the pastures on the mountain slopes, the humorous tone that accompanies the conflict between leprechauns and humans abruptly gives way to a sexually coloured pastoral tone of romance. Caitilin's spiritual unrest, an unnameable sense of novelty she feels ticking in her heart and mind, and "a disquietude to which she had hitherto been a stranger"[32] are indicators that she is at a threshold of sexual awakening and about to enter a phase of transformation. Stephens masterfully captures her sense of estrangement in his poetic language:

> A thought was born in her mind and it had no name. It was growing and could not be expressed. She had no words wherewith to meet it, to exorcise or greet this stranger who, more and more insistently and pleadingly, tapped upon her doors and begged to be spoken to, admitted and caressed and nourished. […] The fingers of her soul stretched out to clasp a stranger's hand, and her disquietude was quickened through with an eagerness which was neither physical nor mental, for nether her body nor her mind was definitely interested. Some dim region between these grew alarmed and watched and waited and did not sleep or grow weary at all.[33]

In the overarching allegorical construct of the novel, Caitilin is the embodiment of Ireland on the verge of a new experience and on the threshold of a rite of passage.

The next day Caitilin hears an enchanting melody on the hills, a tune much sweeter and wilder than any bird's. The moment she sets eyes on the Great God Pan, the source of this mesmerizing tune, she is almost frozen with fright and terror. Although Pan, the "Master of the Shepherds," a hybrid embodiment of man and beast, with his "shaggy and hoofed . . . legs of a goat" and "wonderful, sad, grotesque face,"[34] induces panic and dread in Caitilin at first sight, he speaks to her "in a strange voice, coming like a wind from distant places," and complains about the lack of "reverence" to him in Erin

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[31] Her name bears an overt reference to Cathleen ni Houlihan, the female embodiment of Ireland in Yeats's pathologically fetishised play in which Cathleen, a hag, transforms into a beautiful maiden once the young male protagonist abandons his fiancée to join the battle to fight against the oppressor to liberate mother Ireland, and eventually dies to this end. The name Cathleen has since become the symbolic marker for female personification of Ireland's call for liberation and sovereignty.

[32] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 51.

[33] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 51-52.

[34] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 57.

where he feels lonely and estranged.[35] As he praises beastly love, passion, and pleasures of the body, Caitilin is convinced to go away with him and embrace his love and lust. We are informed that "she did not go with him because of love, nor because his words had been understood by her, but only because he was naked and unashamed."[36] In the meantime, upon Caitilin's disappearance, her desperate father visits the philosopher once again for advice. The philosopher informs the father that although "there is no record of [Pan's] ever having journeyed to Ireland,"[37] it must be this Arcadian God himself who has captured his daughter and that since he is a stranger in a foreign land without any knowledge of the place, he has been directed to her most probably by the Leprechauns of the Gort who are still seeking vengeance for their bird and crock of gold.

Pan is perceived as a seductive usurper and his coming is associated with a kind of incursion. Stephens's choice of making Pan the allegorical personification of foreign threat in *The Crock of Gold* is telling. Pan not only signifies earthly desire and sexuality in his phallic image, and thus performs a discourse in stark contrast to the desexualised nationalist rhetoric of the Irish Literary Revival, he also holds a unique place in the Greek pantheon of divinities because he is the only Greek God who actually died. Being an ambivalent nature god, he is the embodiment of carnal desires, lust, and material satisfaction. In Paul Robichaud's words, Pan "comes to have a rich variety of identities that shift and change through the centuries: cosmic god of All; symbol of bestial lust; demon; protector of forests; cipher of Stuart monarchs; symbol of the latent powers in nature; terrifying god of the abyss; source of occult knowledge; symbol of gay love" as well as the "archetype of the unconscious."[38] The source of Pan's alluring music is his pipe composed of seven reeds. The story of his Sirenic reed pipe is recounted by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* in the transformation tale of the nymph Syrinx. As in many tales that tell the transformation story of female entities sexually haunted and hunted by lust-driven gods, Syrinx is terrorised by the seductive pursuit of Pan and desperately prefers to abandon her bodily existence and turn into a reed in order to escape Pan's rape and sexual tyranny. Facing the futility of his hunt, Pan bounds these reeds and designs a pipe to play enthralling notes of yearning for Syrinx. Thereby, ironically enough, the pipe he uses as an

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[35] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 58.
[36] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 62.
[37] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 69.
[38] Robichaud, *Pan*, 8.

instrument of seduction is indeed the metamorphosed body of one of his female victims.

In "The Two Gods," the third book of *The Crock of Gold*, Pan's sensual love is set against a higher form of spiritual love represented by Angus, the Irish god of love, poetic inspiration and youth. He appears at the mouth of Pan's cave, with a "ring of singing birds" flying about his head,[39] and calls Pan to account for his unbidden presence on Irish soil: "Why have you come from your own place to spy upon my pastures and my quiet fields?"[40] He asks Caitilin to choose between them, justifying his need for her as follows:

> I want you . . . because the world has forgotten me. In all my nation there is no remembrance of me. I, wandering on the hills of my country, am lonely indeed. I am the desolate god forbidden to utter my happy laughter. I hide the silver of my speech and the gold of my merriment. I live in the holes of the rocks and the dark caves of the sea.[41]

Once Caitilin agrees to go with Angus, Pan disappears from the book's textual universe, never to be seen again. Yet, it is symbolically suggestive that as Caitilin "withdrew herself from the arms of her desire," "so strong was the hold of Pan upon her that when she was free her body bore the marks of his grip, and many days passed away before these marks faded."[42] Cultural injuries and damages caused by foreign occupation have similarly left their marks in Ireland and were still visible even in the wake of the foundation of the Free Irish State.

The foreign deity Pan's removal from the picture, however, does not provide full resolution. There is still the wrongfully imprisoned philosopher to be rescued from confinement. In the closing chapter of the novel, "The Happy March," Angus tells Caitilin that "[they] will go down to the world of men—from [their] quiet dwelling among the hills to the noisy city and the multitude of people" and that "[they] will not return from that journey, for [they] will live among [their] people and be at peace."[43] When Angus and Caitilin leave the hills and begin their journey, they encounter members of various clans, fairy forts, ancient kingdoms and many others, who join Angus Óg in his happy march towards the city. The list of these citizens of Irish antiquity and folk belief covers three pages and includes people of the Shee, members of Tuatha da Danaan, queens of North and South Munster,

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[39] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 148.
[40] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 149.
[41] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 154.
[42] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 156.
[43] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 303.

guardians of Ulster, ancient leprechauns of the world, chieftains of several clans, so on and so forth. Their minds and bodies are "locked . . . with a simultaneous understanding, a collective action—which was freedom," and they dance and sing in joy "with the unity of one being."[44] Like a resurrected army of precolonial Erin, they enter the city in merry defiance of established order and rescue the philosopher from the prison.

In the context of the literary agenda of the Irish Revivalist movement, it is clear that the allegorical ending of *The Crock of Gold* heralds a brand new beginning for the people of Erin. That Angus Óg is a prophetic god makes this threshold experience even more significant, in the sense that the novel's symbolic universe is portrayed as the land of the dispossessed and its people as seekers of justice, regainment, reunion, or emancipation. The ending has been interpreted even as a manifestation of "[a]pocalypse, in the sense of a prophetic revelation of a new age of creativity-to-come."[45] The symbolic march of Erin's subjects led by a deity of love is suggestive also in terms of its emphasis on open public spaces like woods, hillsides and roads—where collective action takes place—as opposed to closed spaces that are informed and guarded by authorities. Stephens points at collective action as the only form of political power to be fuelled by folk imagination and mythic heritage, and as a revolutionary means of liberation for those who are culturally displaced in lands of the dispossessed. The novel, in this context, testifies the role of folkloric and mythic materials of storytelling as powerful antidotes to cultural amnesia and as politically significant mnemonic agents of cultural revival. Spatial poetics of ideologically empowered works like *The Crock of Gold* underscores the symbolic function of narrative space as "a place of resistance,"[46] in Ufuk Gündoğan's words, and reminds us yet again the matchless capacity of fantasy to "[reflect] . . . power structures and sexual politics and [propose] solutions to age old conflicts."[47] *The Crock of Gold*, in this regard, also testifies the role of folkloric and mythic materials of storytelling as powerful antidotes to cultural amnesia and as politically significant mnemonic agents of cultural revival. Ultimately, such narratives invite us to reconsider the deep and dynamic link between tales, memory, and power, emphasising how imaginative landscapes not only preserve cultural heritage but actively forge a collective vision of resistance and renewal.

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[44] Stephens, *The Crock of Gold*, 308.
[45] Nolan, "Apocalypse in James Stephens," 5.
[46] Gündoğan, "Reconstructing Gender in Science Fiction," 16.
[47] Gündoğan, "Reconstructing Gender in Science Fiction," 27.

Chapter 10
The Siren's Song: Reimagining the Pied Piper in Miéville's *King Rat* and Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice*

Züleyha Çetiner-Öktem

> *Your head is humming, and it won't go, in case you don't know. The piper's calling you to join him.*
>
> — Led Zeppelin, *Stairway to Heaven*

Introduction

The story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin is one of the most enduring legends in Western folklore, blending themes of betrayal, justice, and the mystical power of music. Originating in medieval Germany, the tale recounts how a mysterious figure used his magical flute to lead away the town's rats—and later its children—when the townsfolk reneged on their promise of payment. Over centuries, the narrative has evolved through oral tradition, literary retellings, and cultural adaptations, resonating as a cautionary tale and a moral allegory. Its timeless appeal lies in its allegorical richness and its ability to adapt to the socio-cultural anxieties of different eras.

China Miéville's *King Rat* (1998) and Terry Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents* (2001) are two strikingly different reimaginings of the Pied Piper legend. Although both novels retain the essence of the original tale—namely, the enigmatic figure of the Piper and his use of music to exert control—each text recontextualises these elements to explore themes relevant to contemporary readers. Miéville's *King Rat*, an urban fantasy set in a gritty, modern-day London, transforms the Piper into a malevolent, almost godlike figure whose music embodies oppression and destruction. Here, the protagonist Saul Garamond is drawn into a subversive world of rats and rebellion, as he learns to resist the Piper's domineering influence. The novel combines folklore with urban myth, delving into issues of hybridity, marginalisation, and identity. By contrast, Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice* adopts a more satirical and metafictional approach. Set in Discworld, a fantastical universe with its own peculiar rules, the novel

centres on Maurice, a talking cat, and his band of intelligent rats. Together, they stage fake "Pied Piper" rescues to con unsuspecting townsfolk. The narrative eventually encounters a "real" Piper-like figure and grapples with darker questions about exploitation, ethics, and the nature of storytelling. Pratchett's treatment of the legend retains its moral weight while infusing it with humour and a profound commentary on agency and manipulation. Both texts, however, feature the Pied Piper's music as more than a tool for luring rats or children—it becomes a powerful symbol of control and resistance, echoing folkloric traditions where music embodies magical or transcendent properties. In *King Rat*, Miéville draws on the anarchic energy of drum and bass to counter the Piper's melodies, presenting sound as a weapon and a cultural force. Conversely, in *The Amazing Maurice*, music's moral ambiguity is central as it can be wielded for both deception and liberation.

Foundational Framework

Folklore and fairytale studies offer invaluable insights into the processes of adaptation and reinterpretation of narratives such as the Pied Piper legend. By examining the structural and thematic elements of traditional tales, theorists have illuminated how these stories evolve across time and cultures, taking on new meanings in contemporary contexts. In analysing Miéville's *King Rat* and Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice*, this framework is essential for understanding how both texts use music as a central motif for power, persuasion, and in some cases resistance. Through the lens of Vladimir Propp's structuralism, Jack Zipes's theories on adaptation, and the works of Maria Tatar and Marina Warner on subversion, we see how these foundational texts transform the Piper's music into a motif of control, rebellion, and identity formation.

In the context of narrative structure and character roles, we turn to Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (1968), where he analyses recurring narrative functions and archetypes in traditional tales. In his study, Propp identifies 31 functions or plot elements that recur in folk narratives,[1] as well as a set of archetypal character roles, such as the hero, the villain, and the donor. In the context of the Pied Piper legend, the Piper functions as both donor—offering the solution to Hamelin's rat infestation, and villain—punishing the townsfolk for their betrayal. In *King Rat*, Miéville retains this duality but amplifies the Piper's villainy. The Piper is reimagined as an ancient and destructive force, embodying systemic oppression.

[1] See Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, 25-65.

Miéville's descriptions enhance the folkloric archetype, portraying the Piper's music as a weapon of domination and control as "The dancers moved as one (…) obeying the Piper's flute."[2] Furthermore, our reluctant hero Saul Garamond, who learns he is half-human half-rat, must embrace his hybrid identity to resist the Piper, echoing Propp's depiction of the hero's journey as a confrontation with malevolent forces. In contrast, *The Amazing Maurice* uses the Piper archetype more satirically. Maurice the cat and his band of rats initially mimic the Piper's role to con townsfolk and later face a "real" Piper as an antagonist who embodies yet another form of trickery. Propp's concept of the false hero is evident in Maurice's initial duplicity, as he exploits the rats for his schemes. The traditional archetype is further subverted when Darktan declares, "we're in the heart of the Dark Wood now and we've found the Dark Wood in our hearts and…for tonight…we are something…terrible,"[3] signalling the rats' emancipation from folkloric victimhood as they take matters into their own paws.

On another note, Jack Zipes's theories on the transformation of fairy tales highlight their role as vehicles for cultural critique. In *Breaking the Magic Spell* (1979), Zipes argues that adaptations reflect contemporary societal values, reinterpreting traditional motifs to address modern concerns:

> Each historical epoch and each community altered the original folk tales according to its needs as they were handed down over the centuries. By the time they were recorded (...) as literary texts, they contained many primeval motifs but essentially reflected late feudal conditions in their aesthetic composition and symbolic referential system.[4]

Miéville and Pratchett exemplify this dynamic, using the Pied Piper legend to interrogate power structures and moral ambiguity. In *King Rat*, Miéville positions music as a metaphor for systemic control, embedding it within the urban landscape. The Piper's melodies are destructive, as "Without pause, the tune he was whistling changed, became less organized, more insidious,"[5] almost becoming notes that burrow into the mind and tear at the will. The drum and bass scene of the London underground, however, becomes a tool of resistance. This juxtaposition reflects Zipes's observation that fairy tales are not static but are always in dialogue with the socio-political contexts in which they are told: "In each historical epoch they [fairy tales] were

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[2] Miéville, *King Rat*, 290.
[3] Pratchett, *The Amazing Maurice*, 225-226.This quote
[4] Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell*, 8.
[5] Miéville, *King Rat*, 187-188.

generally transformed by the narrator *and* audience in an active manner through improvisation and interchange to produce a version which would relate to the social conditions of the time."[6] Similarly, Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice* critiques the exploitative dynamics of the original legend. Maurice's schemes highlight the ethical dilemmas of power, while the semi-climactic encounter with the Piper figure underscores the dangers of unchecked influence. As Zipes notes, modern fairy tales often challenge the very power structures they once sought to legitimise:

> From the very beginning folk tales tended to be contradictory, containing utopian and conservative elements. What kept the utopian aspect alive was the context in which the tales were actively received and retold by the common people. (…) Despite all the possible utopian images contained in the narrative structures (…) which certainly contain anti-capitalist tendencies, they cannot have a liberating effect because of the context in which they are embedded.[7]

Pratchett's talking rats, who reject their assigned roles in the legend, epitomise this subversive approach.

Both Marina Warner and Maria Tatar also explore how traditional tales adapt to reflect shifting cultural and ideological contexts. In *From the Beast to the Blonde* (1994), Warner emphasises the timeless allure of fairy tales, attributing their enduring relevance to their ability to reinvent themselves for diverse audiences and eras. She also suggests they evoke a sense of wonder, hinting at worlds rich with possibilities and untapped potential. She writes:

> [A]ll the wonders that create the atmosphere of fairy tale disrupt the apprehensible world in order to open spaces for dreaming alternatives. The verb "to wonder" communicates the receptive state of marvelling as well as the active desire to know, to inquire, and as such it defines very well at least two characteristics of the traditional fairy tale: pleasure in the fantastic, curiosity about the real. The dimension of wonder creates a huge theatre of possibility in the stories: anything can happen.[8]

Miéville's *King Rat* exemplifies this adaptability by recontextualising the Pied Piper legend within the gritty realities of contemporary urban life. The novel's treatment of hybridity and marginalisation reflects how outsider

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[6] Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell*, 33. Emphasis in the original.
[7] Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell*, 140.
[8] Warner, *From the Beast to the Blonde*, xx.

figures in fairy tales and folklore often embody societal fears of the Other. The Piper's music, which ensnares and controls its listeners, serves as a potent symbol of cultural hegemony, while Saul's defiance represents the subversive potential of reappropriated narratives. In contrast, Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice* employs metafiction to interrogate the ethical complexities of the Piper story. Maria Tatar's observation that "Fairy tales seem to have a built-in refresh button, inviting us to adapt and repurpose as they make their way into new scenes of storytelling (…)"[9] underscores the novel's challenge to conventional heroism and morality. Malicia's assertion that "If you don't turn your life into a story, you just become a part of someone *else's* story"[10] reinforces its exploration of narrative agency, illustrating how storytelling both shapes and is shaped by those who wield it.

As explored above, music—as a folkloric motif—is central to the Pied Piper legend, serving as both a magical instrument and a tool of persuasion. In folklore, music often represents supernatural power, capable of influencing emotions and actions. Both Miéville and Pratchett draw on this motif to explore themes of control and rebellion. In *King Rat*, the Piper's flute is a weapon of domination; and against this, the drum and bass scene emerges as a countercultural force, embodying resistance and hybridity. Music seems to act as a bridge between worlds, both uniting and dividing. Pratchett's treatment of music is more nuanced, reflecting its dual potential for manipulation and liberation. In *The Amazing Maurice*, the Piper (a.k.a. Keith, or simply the kid), alongside the scheming Maurice and the talking rats, uses music as a shared tool rather than a means of dominance. Together, they work to redefine the power of sound, turning it into a symbol of collective agency. This cooperative reimagining of the musical motif underscores the novel's themes of collaboration and autonomy.

The Piper's Haunting Tune in Miéville's *King Rat*

Miéville's novel reimagines the Pied Piper legend, embedding its core motifs into the fabric of urban fantasy while reflecting on themes of oppression, resistance, and cultural identity. Music, central to the original folktale, is reconceived as a dual force: a tool for both domination and defiance. In this narrative the Piper's music functions as a weapon of absolute control where the novel's urban setting amplifies these tensions.

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[9] Tatar, *The Hard Facts of the Grimm's Fairy Tales*, xvii.
[10] Pratchett, *The Amazing Maurice*, 148. Emphasis in the original.

Miéville positions the Pied Piper's music as an instrument of authoritarian control. Unlike the playful, magical melodies of the traditional folktale, the Piper's music in *King Rat* is deeply malevolent, a mechanism for stripping away autonomy and enforcing submission. The Piper's skill with the flute is undeniable, but it is his ability to bend minds and bodies to his will that makes him truly dangerous. As one character ironically remarks, "he plays like a fucking angel, (…) He's the original nutter, you're right, I know, but there's something very right about his playing."[11]

This manipulation of sound resonates with the novel's broader critique of systemic control. The Piper, as an antagonist, is more than a musician; he embodies historical and cultural forces of oppression. His music is a medium of forced assimilation, binding both humans and animals into a single, unnatural rhythm of submission. In one of the most striking scenes, the Piper's music takes over an entire dancefloor:

> At that moment, the bassline of *Wind City* burst into the room, pared down and simple. And riding it, sailing over the troughs and peaks of beat and bass, was the flute.
>
> The dancers moved as one.
>
> They moved in time, dancing again, an incredible piece of choreography, every right foot raised together, coming down, then every left, a strange languorous hardstep, arms swinging, legs rigid, up and down in time to the beat, obeying the Piper's flute. And every step aimed at a rat.
>
> This was war.[12]

Here, music transcends its artistic function and becomes a mechanism of absolute control, metaphorically turning its hearers into zombies. The Piper's flute-playing does not merely enchant—it enforces a violent order, compelling people to destroy without questioning their own actions.

Yet, if the Piper wields music as an instrument of control, the novel also presents sound—specifically, the raw energy of Jungle, of the beat and bass—as a potential force of resistance. The chaotic, labyrinthine cityscape of London mirrors the tension between subjugation and rebellion. The underground music scene, particularly Jungle, becomes a counterpoint to the Piper's imposed harmony. As much as the Piper uses Jungle for his own purposes by weaving various flute lines into the mix to achieve absolute

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[11]Miéville, *King Rat*, 74.
[12] Miéville, *King Rat*, 290.

control over all living things, there is one that is able to defy the siren's song. Saul, as a hybrid figure, ultimately resists the Piper's spell by rejecting its coercive structure altogether. At the novel's climax, Saul refuses to submit, embracing the disruptive force of jungle:

> *Because the bass is too dark for this*, thought Saul suddenly, with shocking clarity, the bass is too dark to suffer this, the insubordinate treble, *fuck the treble*, *fuck the ephemera*, *fuck the high end*, *fuck the flute*, and as he thought this the flutelines faded in his mind, became nothing more than thin, clashing cacophonies, *fuck the treble*, he thought, because when you dance to Jungle what you follow is the bass…[13]

By privileging bass over melody, Saul symbolically rejects the Piper's structured control, choosing instead the raw, improvised rhythms of resistance. Miéville's narrative thus positions music as a contested space—both a tool of domination and a potential means of defiance.

The novel's conclusion reinforces this idea. When Saul finally confronts the Piper, he asserts his autonomy: "You can't play my fucking tune, and your flute means *nothing to me*."[14] With this defiance, Saul not only breaks free from the Piper's spell but also refuses King Rat's own manipulations, carving out an identity that is neither wholly rat nor human. Through *King Rat*, Miéville transforms the Pied Piper's music from a simple tale of enchantment into a complex allegory of power, resistance, and the fractured soundscape of the modern city.

Saul, the novel's reluctant protagonist, exists in a liminal state, neither fully human nor fully rat. His hybrid nature sets him apart, marking him as uniquely capable of resisting the Piper's influence. Unlike the rats, who fell victim to the Piper's tune centuries ago, and unlike humans, who remain oblivious to the power struggles beneath the city, Saul embodies an in-between state that allows him to challenge both forces at play. His journey is one of self-discovery, but it is also one of manipulation—King Rat sees him as a tool for vengeance rather than as a rightful heir or ally.

King Rat, as his supposed mentor, introduces Saul to the hidden world of London's underbelly, teaching him *the ways of the rat* while simultaneously shaping him for a singular purpose: to defeat the Piper. He is a cunning and morally ambiguous figure, driven not by a sense of justice but by a deeply personal vendetta. His grudge against the Piper stems from an ancient

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[13] Miéville, *King Rat*, 300. Emphasis in the original.
[14] Miéville, *King Rat*, 301. Emphasis in the original.

betrayal—the mass drowning of his rat subjects in Hamelin. Remembering the mass genocide he says "I dragged myself out of the river, and laid myself down under a stone. The cries of the dying continued for a while, and then they went out, and the river swept all the evidence away behind it. And I lay and breathed and swore revenge for my Rat Nation."[15] This thirst for retribution fuels his interactions with Saul, shaping him into a weapon rather than a successor.

Contrary to King Rat's expectations, Saul does not blindly follow his supposed mentor's lead. His hybridity means that while he can navigate the rat world, he does not fully belong to it. When King Rat seeks to reclaim his throne, Saul rejects this destiny. His defiance comes to a head in a confrontation where he dismantles King Rat's authority, rewriting history: "I'm going to tell my troops about how you cowered and begged the Piper for your life… I'll tell them all what a craven lying coward Judas you were."[16]. In this moment, Saul exposes King Rat's opportunism and refuses to be a pawn in his schemes.

The novel's climax reinforces the distinction between Saul and King Rat. While Saul is able to resist the Piper's control, King Rat, despite all his bravado and superior strength, is ultimately ensnared by the very forces he sought to manipulate. As the final battle unfolds, Saul confronts the Piper head-on, wielding his resistance as a weapon. In this moment, Saul asserts his defiance, rejecting both the Piper's dominance and King Rat's expectations: "I'm not rat plus man, get it? I'm bigger than either one *and I'm bigger than the two*. I'm a new thing. *You can't make me dance*."[17] This assertion marks Saul's complete rejection of imposed identities, solidifying his agency in the narrative. Instead of aligning with either side, he embraces his hybridity on his own terms, refusing to be a pawn in another's power struggle.

In the end, Saul is neither rat nor man, neither hero nor villain; yet his hybridity offers him closure by underscoring the novel's central theme: that identity is fluid, and that the power structures of both the human and rat worlds are equally flawed, proclaiming that "It's time for a revolution. (…) I declare this Year One of the Rat Republic."[18] Thus, his final act is not to take up King Rat's mantle but to walk away, severing ties with both his would-be

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[15] Miéville, *King Rat*, 131.
[16] Miéville, *King Rat*, 310.
[17] Miéville, *King Rat*, 301. Emphasis in the original.
[18] Miéville, *King Rat*, 317.

father figure and his supposed destiny. In his last act, Saul topples King Rat's kingdom, rejects the role of royalty, emancipates the rats, and declares himself to be "Citizen Rat"[19] aligning himself with the man who raised him.

Miéville's *King Rat* is not merely a retelling of the Pied Piper legend but a radical reimagining that relocates the tale to the gritty, multicultural landscape of contemporary London. By shifting the story from its medieval origins to an urban setting, Miéville transforms a simple morality fable into a complex meditation on power, identity, and resistance. In doing so, he challenges the traditional binaries of good and evil, recasting the Piper not as a supernatural avenger but as a force of systemic oppression, wielding music as a tool of control.

In traditional versions of the Pied Piper story, music is an unambiguous force of enchantment, used to rid Hamelin of its rats and, later, to punish its people. Miéville complicates this dynamic by introducing moral ambiguity. The Piper is not simply a vengeful outsider but a manipulative force representing systemic oppression. Unlike traditional versions where the rats are passive victims of the Piper's music, *King Rat* reimagines them as part of a larger struggle but without any control over sound. Instead, it is Saul—unique in his hybrid nature—who alone can resist the Piper's influence, not through music, but by rejecting the very framework of control the Piper imposes.

This reinterpretation aligns with the work of folklore scholars like Maria Tatar, who argue that modern adaptations of traditional tales often serve as critiques of their cultural origins. Tatar writes "Even if stories were told 'once upon a time,' in another time and place, they can provide opportunities for reflecting on cultural differences, on what was once at stake in our life decisions and what is at stake today."[20] Miéville's use of music to explore themes of resistance and hybridity demonstrates this evolution, as he reframes the Pied Piper legend to address contemporary urban realities. Furthermore, Miéville's portrayal of the Piper resonates with Warner's analysis of villains in folklore, particularly in relation to the power of music and speech. As Warner observes, "The anxiety about word-music and its lure—the fear of seductive speech—changes character and temper down the centuries, but the sirens' reputation does not improve. Their connection with carnal danger, with moral breakdown, with potent fictions, with

[19] Miéville, *King Rat*, 318.
[20] Tatar, *The Hard Facts*, xxvii.

bewitchment, deepens." [21] The Piper, like the sirens, embodies society's deepest fears, serving as a reflection of collective anxieties. His music, with its capacity to enchant, manipulate, and ultimately destroy, mirrors contemporary concerns about cultural homogenisation and the erosion of individual agency.

Ultimately, *King Rat* reconfigures the Pied Piper's music into a contested space where oppression and resistance collide. By framing the legend through the lens of urban fantasy, Miéville interrogates themes of hybridity, identity, and subversion, positioning sound as both a weapon of coercion and a tool of liberation. The Piper's rigid, domineering music is undone by Saul, whose chaotic, improvisational rhythms reject imposed order in favour of self-determination. Through its innovative engagement with folklore, *King Rat* not only revitalises a traditional narrative but also offers a pointed critique of contemporary structures of power and cultural hegemony.

The Pied Piper's Enchantment in Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice*

Pratchett's novel reimagines the Pied Piper legend through a satirical lens, infusing it with humour, ethical complexity, and a modern sensibility. The novel critiques traditional folktale archetypes and introduces a subversive approach to themes of control, manipulation, and more importantly, agency. Pratchett's satirical reinterpretation of the Piper legend not only explores its ethical dimensions, but also the power of music and its influence in the tale.

Pratchett's narrative dismantles and reconfigures the traditional Pied Piper story, placing Maurice, a sentient cat, at its centre. Maurice is a trickster figure; a character archetype frequently employed in folklore to challenge conventions and disrupt societal norms. His role in orchestrating the "rat plague" scam—where trained, intelligent rats invade towns only to be driven out by a boy playing a flute—is a parody of the Pied Piper's legendary abilities. Maurice's motivation, however, is neither vengeance nor artistry but pure self-interest. For him, it is all about the money, whereas for the rats, it is about securing the means to build a stable homeland—an entirely different story. Just before their final con, Maurice eagerly encourages the rats: "Let's make this the *big* one, then, eh?"[22] Thus, through Maurice, Pratchett critiques the commodification of traditional narratives, particularly those surrounding human-animal relationships.

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[21] Warner, *From the Beast to the Blonde*, 402.
[22] Pratchett, *The Amazing Maurice*, 28. Emphasis in the original.

The Piper's music in the original tale is an instrument of divine or supernatural justice; in Pratchett's retelling, however, it becomes a tool in a commercial enterprise. Maurice's schemes highlight the absurdity of blindly adhering to folklore conventions, underscoring the novel's satirical tone. Pratchett also deconstructs the Piper's cultural legacy by reframing the relationships between humans and animals. The rats, unlike their folkloric counterparts, are neither pests nor victims. Instead, they are intelligent beings with their own culture, language, and moral compass. Their perspective on the Piper legend reflects a profound critique of human arrogance and exploitation.

One of the central ethical questions in *The Amazing Maurice* is the morality of using music—or any form of manipulation—to influence others. Keith, the pipe-playing human accomplice in Maurice's schemes, constantly referred to as the "kid," is not a trickster like the Piper of legend but a genuine musician who simply loves to make music. As Maurice observes, the kid wanted nothing more than simply "to be allowed to play his flute and be left alone."[23] The music he plays is captivating but not magical, drawing people in naturally: "people tapped their feet when they heard the kid play. They smiled for a while,"[24] possibly forgetting about their daily worries. Unlike Maurice, who masterminds the deception, the kid does not seek control or manipulation.

The novel contrasts Keith's quiet sincerity with the rats' growing self-awareness. Unlike the legendary Piper, Keith does not wield music as a tool of power and manipulation; instead, he simply plays for its own sake. It is Maurice who orchestrates the con, with both Keith and the rats involved in the act. However, the rats, having developed intelligence through *mysterious means*[25] begin questioning their role. As Peaches challenges Maurice, "all this stealing grains and cheese and gnawing holes in walls is, well… (…) Is *not morally right*."[26] While Maurice defends their actions, exclaiming "But it's what rats do!,"[27] the rats, led by Dangerous Beans, however, seek a more ethical way forward.

This subversion of the original Piper's control underscores Pratchett's commitment to exploring themes of autonomy and self-determination.

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[23] Pratchett, *The Amazing Maurice*, 23.
[24] Pratchett, *The Amazing Maurice*, 35.
[25] Courtesy of the dump behind Unseen University.
[26] Pratchett, *The Amazing Maurice*, 22. Emphasis in the original.
[27] Pratchett, *The Amazing Maurice*, 22.

Maurice himself undergoes a transformation, initially seeing the rats as mere tools for profit but gradually coming to respect their individuality. Maurice's acknowledgment that "If you knew what it was that people really, *really* wanted, you very nearly controlled them"[28] serves as a critique of hierarchical power dynamics inherent in the original tale. By the novel's end, Maurice acknowledges that true leadership is not about control but about understanding and respect, marking a significant shift from the exploitative dynamics of the original folktale.

Pratchett's retelling of the Pied Piper legend is both an homage to and a departure from traditional folklore. While he retains key elements of the story—music, rats, and themes of betrayal—he infuses them with humour, modern ethics, and a strong narrative voice. The novel's folkloric elements are not static but dynamic, reflecting Pratchett's belief in the adaptability of stories. The anthropomorphised rats, with their evolving language and culture, exemplify this transformation. Their self-awareness and ability to question their role in the traditional narrative highlight Pratchett's interest in exploring the perspectives of marginalised figures. Unlike the nameless, voiceless rats of the original tale, Pratchett's rodents are central to the story's moral and thematic structure. Pratchett also uses humour to subvert traditional folktale tropes. Moreover, Maurice's sarcastic commentary and the rats' pragmatic approach to survival create a narrative tone that is both irreverent and deeply philosophical. As Maria Tatar notes, humour in modern retellings often serves to expose the contradictions and biases of traditional tales:

> Despite asides here and there on the impropriety of hoodwinking one's superiors, the stories of village life compiled by the Grimms are remarkably bold in their indictment of the monied and powerful. Again and again they show the common man turning the tables on the wealthy or at least exposing their vulgar, fatuous ways. The underdog usually gets the upper hand by using his wits, but occasionally he obtains what he wants by engaging in utterly inane behavior. Either way, he succeeds in unmasking the privileged and in demonstrating their innate inferiority. [29]

Pratchett's use of satire thus becomes a tool for engaging with the ethical and cultural implications of the Pied Piper legend. Additionally, Pratchett addresses the ecological and ethical dimensions of human-animal

[28] Pratchett, *The Amazing Maurice*, 23.
[29] Tatar, *The Hard Facts*, 122.

relationships. By giving the rats their own voices and agency, he critiques the anthropocentric worldview implicit in many folktales.

As Jack Zipes observes in *Fairy Tale as Myth/Fairy Tale as Genre*, the best modern adaptations challenge the ideological underpinnings of their source material, offering new perspectives on old stories:

> Although a text may contain directives within it, it cannot prescribe its effect. Meaning shifts with the individual in history. And, if the more serious fairy tales of the twentieth century and specifically contemporary American fairy tales are to have any meaning today, then we must begin at first in the production phase with the proposition that many authors believe that the classical works are indeed patriarchal and anachronistic and have served an ideological function that needs to be replaced, or, at the very least, to be revised in light of the major socio-political changes since World War II.[30]

Pratchett's reimagining of the Pied Piper legend achieves precisely this, encouraging readers to question traditional hierarchies and embrace a more inclusive worldview. Thus, in *The Amazing Maurice*, Pratchett reinterprets the Pied Piper's music as a multifaceted symbol of manipulation, autonomy, and ethical complexity. Through his satirical approach, he critiques traditional folktale structures and offers a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between humans, animals, and the stories they share. By integrating humour, ethics, and folkloric motifs, Pratchett creates a narrative that is both entertaining and inspiring, inviting readers to reconsider the power dynamics at the heart of the Pied Piper legend.

Conclusion: Bridging theTexts

In reimagining the Pied Piper legend, both China Miéville's *King Rat* and Terry Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents* interrogate the power structures embedded within folklore, repurposing the tale to reflect contemporary concerns about authority and agency. While Miéville positions the Piper as an instrument of systemic oppression, whose music enforces submission and hierarchy, Pratchett approaches the legend through satire, exposing the contradictions inherent in traditional narratives of power. In both cases, music becomes the central motif through which control is exerted and contested, transforming the Piper from a mere trickster into a symbol of ideological struggle.

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[30] Zipes, *Fairy Tale as Myth*, 141.

Miéville's *King Rat* engages with the legend through the lens of urban fantasy, drawing on the anarchic energy of drum and bass as a counterpoint to the Piper's airy melodies. The novel presents an overt critique of imposed social order, with Saul's resistance symbolising an assertion of individual and collective identity against oppressive cultural forces. As Saul defiantly claims, "Well, I'm the new blood, mother*fucker*. I'm more than the sum of my parts,"[31] he becomes much more than a mere hybrid. Due to his dual nature, Saul is able to separately perceive the bass and the treble, the beat and the melody which ends up saving him. Here, sound becomes a battlefield, where improvisation and subversion counteract the Piper's rigid authority.

Conversely, Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice* dismantles the Pied Piper myth by infusing it with metafictional awareness and humour, using the rats' self-awareness to challenge their assigned roles within the folktale tradition. By centring the story on Maurice's cunning schemes and the rats' growing self-awareness rather than the traditional figure of the Piper, Pratchett not only critiques exploitative hierarchies but also highlights the transformative power of storytelling itself. Malicia's perspective reinforces the idea that those who do not shape their own narratives risk being swept into the designs of others, reflecting the novel's broader exploration of autonomy and narrative control.

Ultimately, these adaptations reaffirm that the Pied Piper remains an enduring figure of both fascination and fear. Whether portrayed as a tyrant wielding sound as a weapon or as a narrative device exposing the artifice of folklore, his presence in modern literature underscores the capacity of myths to both shape and challenge cultural narratives. Warner notes that "All the wonders that create the atmosphere of fairy tale disrupt the apprehensible world in order to open spaces for dreaming alternatives,"[32] a notion embodied in both *King Rat* and *The Amazing Maurice*. In the interplay between coercion and rebellion, silence and sound, these retellings invite readers to consider the ways in which stories can be reclaimed, rewritten, and repurposed to reflect shifting social landscapes. By engaging with the complexities of the legend, Miéville and Pratchett reveal that the Piper's tune, though ancient, continues to resonate in new and unexpected ways.

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[31] Miéville, *King Rat*, 301. Emphasis in the original
[32] Warner, *From the Beast to the Blonde*, xx.

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Slobodan Dan Paich was born in the former Yugoslavia in 1945. He acted on radio, stage, television and film from an early age in Belgrade. There, he started a number of experimental movement and dance theatre groups. He lived in England as a political exile from 1967 to 1985. In 1983, he graduated from the Royal College of Art, London. During his extended stay in London, he taught History of Art and Ideas, Design, and Art Studio from 1969 to 1985. He taught at the University of California at Berkeley from 1985 to 1992. At TanzFabrik Berlin–Centre for Contemporary Dance, he taught acting for dancers and performance for visual artists. He is one of the founders of Artship Foundation; where he also served as the former artistic director of the Artship Ensemble (formerly Augustino Dance Theatre) in San Francisco, and Principal Researcher of the Artship Inquiry—both programs of the Artship Foundation, of which he was executive director. He also served as a board member for the Society of Founders of the International Peace University in Berlin/Vienna from 1996 to 2002, and chaired the Committee on Arts and Culture. In his daily work, he led collaborative teams creating works for theatre, as well as curating exhibitions and presenting scholarly papers internationally on the history of art and ideas, on topics ranging from globalisation and the urban poor to prehistoric temples, polyphonic singing, the transmigration of ideas and ritual dances. His scholarship was informed by living practice, and his theatre productions were inspired by "lived ideas across time." Slobodan was an internationally exhibited visual artist, exhibitions curator and teacher of multi-disciplinary art who, in his words,

"is never far from a rehearsal process and has worked in theatre all his life." He passed away in 2022 in Istanbul. For more details, please see https://wikitia.com/wiki/Slobodan_Dan_Paich

Züleyha Çetiner-Öktem is an associate professor in the field of English Literature at Ege University where she has been teaching for over 20 years. She holds a PhD from the same university with a dissertation titled *Memory, Men and Chaucer*, and an MA thesis on medieval imagery in Gaiman's *Sandman* graphic novel series. Her teaching portfolio includes courses on children's fantasy literature, science fiction, graphic novels, posthuman narratives, and medieval literature and culture. Among her editorial contributions are works such as *Mythmaking across Boundaries* (2014), *Languages, Cultures, and Gender* (2016) and the forthcoming *Nautical Narratives* (2024), reflecting her leadership in curating interdisciplinary dialogues. She is also the author of *Memory and Men: From Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (2022) and has forthcoming studies focusing on medieval monsters and speculative urban narratives. Her professional affiliations include memberships in prestigious societies like the New Chaucer Society and the Science Fiction Research Association.

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