

out. And many of Schwitters's fairy tales revolve around the notion of *Glück*. Schwitters's Merz fairy tales are not of a time when wishing still helped one to become happy. His characters are granted a great many wishes, but neither a steep rise in social status from swineherd to prince, as in "The Swineherd and the Great, Illustrious Writer," nor beauty and riches, as in "Happiness," nor power, as in "The Three Wishes," leads to happiness. In fact, no matter how rich, beautiful, or powerful Schwitters's characters are, it always seems to be other people who have reason to be happy, as the narrative of "The Fairy Tale about Happiness" explicates. Schwitters's characters face a hard time in their search for happiness. To readers of his tales happiness comes effortlessly—for example, while reading sentences like the following when, dissatisfied with riches and world domination, a character reasons: "Naturally, fish, they've got it good" (128).

*Lucky Hans and Other Merz Fairy Tales* performs the feat of being a both serious and likable collection of Schwitters's Merz fairy tales. It works as a scholarly edition with Jack Zipes's comprehensive introduction to Schwitters and his times and through Zipes's commentary on the individual fairy tales, their contemporary context, and translation issues at the end of the book. *Lucky Hans and Other Merz Fairy Tales* is also a thoroughly enjoyable little book of fairy tales. Irvine Peacock's illustrations reflect Schwitters's playfulness and sense of humor, and Schwitters's tales themselves provide reading pleasure and much food for thought. The Merz fairy tales are the first volume in a series called *Oddly Modern Fairy Tales*, and they set a high standard for future volumes, which, hopefully, will explore more of the lost Weimar tradition of entertaining and thought-provoking fairy tales.

Karin Kukkonen

Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz/University of Tampere

***The Forgotten Bride.*** By Sigrid Schmidt. *Afrika Erzählt* no. 10. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 2009. 535 pp.

This volume begins with sixty-two folktale texts that the author collected in Namibia from Nama-speaking informants from the 1960s through the 1990s. The tale types they represent are all of international provenance; for example, there are representatives of the popular female-centered folktale cycles of the Forgotten Bride, Substituted Bride, and Cinderella, along with male-centered hero tales such as "The Three Stolen Princesses," "The Dragon Slayer," and "The Helpful Horse." For each text, the narrator and the tale type are identified in part 2, and analogs in other volumes of the series, *Afrika Erzählt* (Africa Narrates), are listed. The volume includes indexes (tale type, motif, subjects) and a bibliography.

Part 3 establishes the international importance of Namibian tradition. First the history of European folktales in southern Africa is sketched. Beginning in

the seventeenth century, immigrant settlers came to South Africa, bringing their folktales with them. The early settlers were largely Dutch (now Afrikaans) along with some Belgians and French and a smattering of other nationalities. This “ancient,” predominantly oral, tale tradition largely predates the Grimms’ tales. European tales were eventually adopted by the African Nama-speakers for family entertainment. Forty-eight of the most popular of the complex tale types (magic tales, religious tales, and novellas) are discussed individually on the basis of the author’s lifetime collection and her research in folktale collections from Namibia (beginning in the eighteenth century) and elsewhere.

Part 3 is full of interesting discoveries. For example, the names of the seven-headed dragon; of the hero’s fantastic, loyal dogs; and of the boy Thumbling come from Afrikaans. For two interesting versions of ATU 329, Hiding from the Princess, Schmidt identifies Czech, Austrian, and French analogs. There are two different forms for ATU 302, The Ogre’s Heart in the Egg, each with foreign examples. Some of the complex tale types are represented in as many as three or four redactions, each corresponding to a different ancestral nationality. AT 313C, The Forgotten Bride, includes a curse that is also found in southern Europe. This remarkable ability to match up details of the Namibian texts with those of foreign countries works like archaeology: old forms of the traditional tales are reconstructed and corroborated. In contrast, other Nama tales (e.g., ATU 533, The Speaking Horsehead) come directly from Grimm versions. Some types have two forms, one international and one identified as ancient African.

The native people (Nama, Damara, and Hai||om) consider the international tales their own rather than seeing them as imported or borrowed. While from a comparatist’s point of view these narrators have preserved an “ancient” tradition, they have also made some interesting changes. For example, witches become ghost women or man-eaters, and a goblin is turned into a devil. The “grateful dead” helper is a bird. Some changes result from forgetting or misunderstanding, while others seem more constructive. Of course these people also have African and indigenous folktales. Volume 9 in Schmidt’s Afrika Erzählt series, *Children Born from Eggs* (2007), concentrates on African magic tales, and earlier volumes were assembled based on other genres (volumes 1–7 are in German and 8–10 are in English).

In 1989 Schmidt published *Catalog of the Khoisan Folktales of Southern Africa* (2 vols. Hamburg: Buske). (Nama, also called Khoekhoe, is the official language of Namibia, spoken by about two hundred thousand people there. It belongs to the Khoisan language family.) Tale types in that catalog can have local, regional or African, or more thoroughly international currency. In the next two decades, through her Afrika Erzählt volumes, Schmidt has repeatedly augmented and updated this catalog. Because, unlike many collectors, she

recorded “European” folktales from her African informants, she herself has greatly added to the evidence available.

Part 4 of *The Forgotten Bride* gives abstracts and references for tale types numbered ATU 300 and higher, up through the cumulative tales. For example, five variants of AT 313C are listed in the 1989 catalog while *The Forgotten Bride* lists eighteen (plus bibliographic references). Similarly, seven variants of ATU 613, The Two Travelers, have been joined by seven more. When Schmidt began her collecting in 1960, only seven tale types from the entire section ATU 300–999 were known from Namibia; now that number is eighty-nine (213). As for the native magic tales, *Children Born from Eggs* includes a section that updates the section of the *Khoisan Folktales* catalog that covers regional (as distinct from international) tales featuring life-threatening supernatural powers.

*The Forgotten Bride* would work as a self-guided introduction to comparative folktale scholarship. The texts in part 1 are engaging. Part 2 identifies each tale-type number, which the reader can use in part 4 to locate a summary and corroborative texts. Then, in many cases, part 3 explains the variation in that tale type and its distribution in Namibia, Africa, and elsewhere. More experienced folktale scholars can use the book in the same way, but they will also value the glimpses it affords of folktales in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As Schmidt points out, many of the striking details in the tales in part 1 replicate folktale elements from different parts of Europe and elsewhere. Modern Anglophone fairy-tale scholarship is largely concerned with literary or heavily edited texts disseminated through published sources. The Grimms have been treated as folktale authors more than as collectors. Granted that they assembled many of their folktale texts from separate components, we would still like to know as best we can what the earlier forms of the tales were. Oral tradition, even in Africa, preserves many intriguing archaic elements.

Christine Goldberg

University of California, Los Angeles

**Mütter und Anti-Mütter in den Märchen der Brüder Grimm.** By Nathalie Blaha-Peillex. Tübingen: Tübinger Vereinigung für Volkskunde, 2008. 266 pp.

In this published dissertation, Nathalie Blaha-Peillex explores the transformation of maternal figures from the first (1812/1815) to the seventh edition (1857) of the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (KHM). She examines a corpus of sixty-four fairy tales in the KHM in which mothers or “anti-mothers” appear. By analyzing Wilhelm Grimm's contamination of the tales over several editions, she is able to draw attention to how the KHM reveals the nineteenth-century bourgeois construction of a cult of motherhood. As her analysis shows, this cult highlighted in particular the “Stimme des Blutes” (literally the “voice of the blood”) revealed in the mother's devotion to her biological child.