

## CONTENTS

<b>Friends in Folklore Research</b>	
<i>by Ülo Valk</i> .....	3
<b>Charms, Charmers and Charming. Committee Update</b>	
<i>by Jonathan Roper</i> .....	5
<b>Proposal for a Folklore Server System</b>	
<i>by Rolf Wilhelm Brednich</i> .....	6
<b>The ISFNR and H-Folk – A Global Forum for Folklorists</b>	
<i>by Donald Haase</i> .....	7
<b>A Note on Membership Fee</b>	
<i>by Ulf Palmenfelt</i> .....	8
<b>The 15<sup>th</sup> Congress of the ISFNR in Athens, Greece</b>	
<i>by Marilena Papachristophorou</i> .....	8
<b>In Memory of Reimund Kvideland (1935 – 2006)</b>	
<i>by Sabine Wienker-Piepho</i> .....	9
<b>In Memory of Lutz Röhrich (1922 – 2006)</b>	
<i>by Rolf Wilhelm Brednich</i> .....	12
<b>The 2007 <i>Europäischer Märchenpreis</i> to Toshio Ozawa</b> .....	13
<b>Relations Between Folk Culture Scholars of Europe and Latin America</b>	
<i>by Manuel Dannemann</i> .....	14
<b>Between Orality and Literacy in Milwaukee: Reflections on the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society in Milwaukee, Wisconsin</b>	
<b>The European Fairy Tale Tradition: Between Orality and Literacy</b>	
<i>by Dan Ben-Amos</i> .....	17
<b>Books, Folks, and Fairy Tales</b>	
<i>by Ruth B. Bottigheimer</i> .....	18
<b>From Tartu to Milwaukee: The Genesis of a Fairy-Tale Debate</b>	
<i>by Francisco Vaz da Silva</i> .....	20
<b>The Rise and Fall of the “Rise Tale”</b>	
<i>Jan M. Ziolkowski</i> .....	21
<b>Reflections on the American Folklore Society Annual Meeting 2006</b>	
<i>by Jeana Jorgensen</i> .....	23
<b>A Degenerating Debate</b>	
<i>by Linda J. Lee</i> .....	24
<b>Orality and Literacy in the European Fairy Tale</b>	
<i>by Adam Zolkover</i> .....	25
<b>International Conference on Advances in Oral Literature Research in Belgrade</b>	
<i>by Merili Metsvahi</i> .....	27
<b>Malta International Wise Fool Conference and International Storytelling Festival</b>	
<i>by George Mifsud-Chircop</i> .....	29
<b>Third Circular of the ISFNR Interim Conference “Folk Narrative and Society” in Santa Rosa, La Pampa, Argentina</b> .....	34
<b>ISFNR Membership Application Form</b> .....	37



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## Dear Friends in Folklore Research,

The second issue of the ISFNR Newsletter gives evidence of diverse activities and trends of thought in international folkloristics. From strong feelings of ownership of one's national heritage and from national pursuits we have been moving towards a comprehension of folklore as a common heritage in our culturally diverse world, which cannot be divided according to ethnic and political borders. Furthermore, folklore is a creative resource and continuous practice, open to various, even contradictory applications. As members of an international academic society, we seek new ways of co-operation and aim to build stronger bridges between the research traditions of different countries and regions. It should come as no surprise that research in folk narrative serves as a firm foundation for such international endeavors. While we can easily disagree between ourselves about the scope and limits of folkloristics, perhaps nobody would exclude narratives and narrating from our field. Moreover, most folklorists would probably agree that "classical" genres such as fairy tales, legends, myths and epic songs belong to the very core of our discipline, form its definitive essence and as such allow various approaches and a wide range of challenging research problems.

Therefore it is no wonder that one of the most heated debates at the 2006 American Folklore Society (AFS) meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, centered on European fairy tales. This discussion of orality and literacy in the European fairy tale also provides a stimulating example of the dynamics of scholarly debates: started at the 14<sup>th</sup> ISFNR Congress in Tartu, it later continued on another continent and

will no doubt be carried on in the future. This Newsletter tries to bring to you some of the spirit and vigor of the Wisconsin meeting by giving the floor to both participants at the roundtable and to members of the audience. In addition, you will find here reviews of recent folklore conferences held in Serbia and Malta, where many ISFNR members gave papers, thus contributing to the success of these events.

On September 20-22, 2007 the ISFNR will meet in Santa Rosa, La Pampa, Argentina on the occasion of the next interim conference, dedicated to the topic of "Folk Narrative and Society". On behalf of the whole Society, I would like hereby to wish good luck to Ana María Dupey, María Inés Poduje, Martha Blache and other members of the organizing committee of this conference. In connection with this important event the ISFNR Newsletter features an essay by Chilean scholar Manuel Dannemann, the Society's vice-president representing Latin America, discussing the history of contacts and relationships between

Latin American folklorists and their colleagues on other continents.

As regards the future schedule of the ISFNR, please also note the dates June 21-27, 2009, when we shall hold our 15<sup>th</sup> Congress in Athens.

We are happy to report in this Newsletter that the 2007 *Europäischer Märchenpreis* was awarded to a member of our society – the distinguished Japanese folklorist Toshio Ozawa. In addition, the following pages will provide you with information about the activities and plans of various special committees of the ISFNR, as well as about the initiative of the AFS to establish H-Folk, an international online discussion list for folklore and ethnology scholars.

In the year 2009, the ISFNR will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Looking back at the Society's history means looking back at the scholarly networks and individuals who built these bridges, which sometimes means sharing sorrowful news. In 2006 two former



Ülo Valk and Elo-Hanna Seljamaa in the library of the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, University of Tartu, February 2007.

Photo by Risto Järv.

leaders of the ISFNR and its honorary members – Reimund Kvideland and Lutz Röhrich – passed away. This reminds us of other sad losses during recent years – Alan Dundes, Lauri Honko, Eleazar Meletinsky, Donald Ward, Leea Virtanen and other great folklorists have left this world, but remain among us as the leading scholars in the history of our discipline. Over the past year, many of us have been making efforts to update the membership list of the ISFNR. Together with Cristina Bacchilega, Chair of the Membership Committee and vice-president for North America, I would hereby like to express gratitude to everybody involved in this strenuous and, in fact, neverending task, and to give special thanks to all the ISFNR members who responded to our call for help in the 2006 issue of the Newsletter – as well as to the following friends in folklore research:

Ezekiel Alembi (Kenya), Mehri Bagheri (Iran), Jürgen Beyer (Estonia), Martha Blache (Argentina), Véronique Champion Vincent (France), Michael Chesnutt (Denmark), Nicolae Constantinescu (Romania), Doroteja Dobрева (Bulgaria), Meret Fehlmann (Switzerland), Axel Füllgrabe (Germany), Terry Gunnell (Iceland), Laura Haapa (Finland), Lauri Harvilahti (Finland), Galit Hasan-Rokem (Israel), Mary Hufford (USA), Gabriela Kiliánová (Slovak Republic), Violetta Krawczyk-Wasilewska (Poland), Ildikó Kríza (Hungary), George Levinton (Russia), Åsa Ljungström (Sweden), Fumiko Mamiya (Japan), Stein R. Mathisen (Norway), Joseph L. Mbele (USA), George Mifsud-Chircop (Malta), Margaret Mills (USA), Nada Milošević-Đjordžević (Serbia), Tatiana Minniakhmetova (Russia), Ilona Nagy (Hungary), Dorothy Noyes (USA), Caroline Oates (UK), Diarmuid Ó'Giolláin (Ireland), Janika Oras (Es-

tonia), Marilena Papachristophorou (Greece), Christine Shojaei-Kawan (Germany), Michèle Simonsen (Denmark), Karen Skovgaard-Petersen (Denmark), Ingrid Tomkowiak (Switzerland), Maria Vasenkari (Finland), Francisco Vaz da Silva (Portugal), Jack Zipes (USA), Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir (Iceland).

In the process of checking and correcting the data in the membership list, our thoughts were with all the people in our Society, some of whom are difficult or seemingly impossible to reach. As you get an index of names and addresses together with this issue of the Newsletter, kindly check not only your own data, but also the information about your friends and colleagues, both in your own country and abroad. Your help is of vital importance to improving this directory.

Also, please think about your friends and colleagues in folk narrative research who might want to become members of the ISFNR, but have not submitted an application yet. Younger scholars in particular might be in need of encouragement from more experienced colleagues actively involved in the Society.

I am happy to share with you the good news that during the past year the following folklore scholars have joined the ISFNR: Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich (Germany/ New Zealand), David E. Gay (USA), Barbara Hillers (USA), Anu Korb (Estonia), Mare Kalda (Estonia), Aado Lintrop (Estonia), Theo Meder (The Netherlands), Guntis Pakalns (Latvia), Zuzana Panczová (Slovak Republic), Jonathan Roper (UK), Murray Shoolbraid (British Columbia, Canada), Marju Kõivupuu (Estonia), Francisco Vaz da Silva (Portugal) and Jack Zipes (USA). During the

past few months, more applications have reached our desks in Honolulu and Tartu and will be proposed to the Executive Committee in due course.

I am grateful to Cristina Bacchilega for her dedication to various membership matters, as well as to Donald Haase, representative of the ISFNR in the H-Folk team, and to other colleagues in the ISFNR Executive Committee for their remarkable work. I would also like to thank Elo-Hanna Seljamaa, the secretary of the ISFNR for her hard and invaluable work in editing this Newsletter, updating our web site, preparing the updated ISFNR membership list and keeping in contact with members worldwide. I am grateful to the authors of this issue of the ISFNR Newsletter and to our language editor, Frank Carney. I thank the artist Marat Viires whose dynamic vision of Argentina – the land of tango and sunshine – will hopefully energize many readers to make their way to the ISFNR interim conference in Santa Rosa, La Pampa. Last but not least, the ISFNR acknowledges the support of its active members, whose regular payments of membership fees have helped us to deliver this Newsletter into your hands.

Ülo Valk,  
President of the ISFNR

## Charms, Charmers and Charming. Committee Update

by Jonathan Roper, National Centre for English Cultural Tradition, Sheffield, UK



From the left: charming scholars Lea Olsan (USA), Jonathan Roper (UK), Andrey Toporkov (Russia), Éva Pócs (Hungary) and Maria Vivod (France) at the second Charms, Charmers and Charming Conference in London, September 2005.

Photo: private collection.

The International Society for Folk Narrative Research is establishing a committee dedicated to the study of charms, charmers and charming.

The committee is not being formed *ex nihilo*, it is rather a continuation of a grouping of scholars who met in London in January 2003 and again in September 2005 to discuss verbal charms themselves (known in other languages as *Segen*, *scongiuri*, *zagovory*, *loitsut*, etc.), as well as the practice of charming, and the practitioners of charms and their clients. At the meetings, the scholars addressed these topics in a variety of historical processes, as well as in the present day.<sup>1</sup>

Our focus has been largely European to date, as signalled by the title of the book which grew out of our first meeting, *Charms and Charming in Europe* (London: Palgrave, 2004, ISBN 140393925X). However, we are hoping to expand our geographical focus, and two papers about Malay and Malagasy charms in the forthcoming

book based on our second meeting are a first sign of that.

Our third meeting, and first meeting as an ISFNR committee, will take place in Pécs, Hungary from Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> to Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, 2007, with a welcome dinner on Thursday the 10<sup>th</sup> and optional sightseeing on Monday the 14<sup>th</sup> (dependent on the number of participants). The exact location is the headquarters of the Pécs Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (PAB Székház). Confirmed speakers include Mostofa Tarequl Ahsan (Bangladesh), Arne Bugge Amundsen (Norway), Alexander Panchenko (Russia), Christa Tuczay (Austria) and Vilmos Voigt (Hungary). Other speakers will be from France, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, Sweden, and other countries. And the time frame their papers address ranges from the medieval to the contemporary. The programme should be online shortly at the ISFNR website, <http://www.ut.ee/isfnr/> under Special Committees. And further particulars can be had from the conference orga-

niser, Éva Pócs, at [pocse@chello.hu](mailto:pocse@chello.hu)

The members of the collegium of the committee at present are Lea Olsan, Éva Pócs, Jonathan Roper, Andrey Toporkov, Ülo Valk. The meeting in Pécs is a formative one for us and more information about the committee as a whole should be available after May on the ISFNR website.

<sup>1</sup> See the *ISFNR Newsletter* No. 1, pp. 28-29, for an overview of the 2005 meeting.

## Proposal for a Folklore Server System

by Rolf Wilhelm Brednich, Wellington/ Göttingen,  
New Zealand/ Germany

### The Problem

Internet pages of non-institutional origin are often short lived, but may contain valuable information. This creates major problems for scholarly research:

- Important sources of scholarly interest get often lost forever
- Authors publishing in internationally acclaimed journals referring to those web pages lose their references and hence a part of their credibility.

It is therefore necessary to initiate action to remedy these problems.

### The solution

#### a. Structural aspects

Internet documents which are quoted in publications and regarded as relevant to the science community must be archived in a central institution. Each reader who finds an URL associated with a web site could then find the document even if it is not longer available on the Internet. The science community would be able to retrieve the saved document(s) for his or her own scholarly use.

The documents should be saved according to an international acclaimed standard format which guarantees that no secondary alterations can be made.

The project has to be regarded as a long-term project and needs a certain degree of supervision to be able to remedy the problems mentioned above.

The functioning of the Server must be self explanatory and understandable even for participants without special IT knowledge.

#### b. Technical aspects

The Server saves the documents submitted by external users and makes them available to the science community. A suitable format for the dated documents, which should be dated, would be PDF (portable document format, Adobe). The database should be researchable according to main categories as well as to keywords. The authors provide the system with the Internet source and the date of the last access.

Access for research purposes is free for every Internet user. The possibility of storing documents is only available for subscribers. The user approaches the System Administrator, will be assessed, and he/she will receive a password and a user ID per e-mail if appropriate.

#### c. Practical aspects

The user who wants to deposit a document – usually a web site – prints the documents (instead of on a printer) into a PDF-Writer (e. g. Acrobat Distiller) and creates a PDF document instead of a document on paper. If a number of pages form a larger document, the user can assemble the different data using Acrobat Writer.

For the saving of the documents a central server with a high storage capacity is needed. For security reasons the operating system should be configured with Linux or a Linux derivate. The database research can be done with MySQL. The Homepage offers information about the project. The page is linked with a subscription page, a deposit documents page and a search for documents page.

- The subscription page asks for



Rolf W. Brednich, president of the Organization Committee of the ISFNR 1998 Congress in Göttingen showing the Congress participants' Göttingen's landmark *Gänseliesel* or "the most kissed girl in the world". It is a tradition that all new doctoral graduates from the University of Göttingen kiss the cheeks of this statue figuring a girl herding geese.  
*Photo by Ülo Valk.*

name, institution, e-mail address etc. The system administrator allocates a password and a user ID per e-mail.

- The pages for searching documents allow access to documents according to document IDs, listed categories or keywords.

- On the deposit page the user has to type in user ID and password. The user can check all documents which he has provided. For the depositing of new documents, the page offers a list of categories, a field for attributing keywords, a field for submitting the original URL of the documents and the date at which the pages had been accessed. Before sending the document to the server the user has to save it on his/her own computer (e. g. C:\own data\document.pdf). After the submission the system will instantly provide a document ID.

- The creation of a Newsgroup for the discussion of general topics about the system and its functions is optional.

#### d. Costs

A suitable server with an adequate operating system will cost ca 1,500 €. Programming the database and the HTML pages will cost another 2,000 €. Users can download PDF writers as freeware. Compared with experiences in similar comparable projects, it would take ca. six months to have

the Folklore Server ready for use in the Web. A workgroup should at first develop a list of categories and a basic catalogue of keywords which could be updated later on.

As the project could only work on a long-term basis, it should be associa-

ted with a well functioning institution with a responsible system administrator.

For more information about the ISFNR Committee for "Folktales and the Internet" please visit the ISFNR web site:

[http://www.ut.ee/isfnr/index.php?p=special\\_committees&cm=3](http://www.ut.ee/isfnr/index.php?p=special_committees&cm=3)

## The ISFNR and H-Folk – A Global Forum for Folklorists

by Donald Haase, Wayne State University, Detroit, USA

Member of the Executive Committee of the ISFNR

When Jacob Grimm penned his "Circular wegen Aufsammlung der Volkspoesie" in 1815, he recognized the need to reach out to others interested in folklore—to find a means of initiating communication with like-minded individuals about the discipline that was then taking shape. Nearly 200 years later the need persists. Scholars and students of folklore and ethnology require a forum where they can discuss important topics and share information. And because the contemporary study of folklore and ethnology thrives on the work of researchers from around the globe and from a broad spectrum of scholarly disciplines, any serious forum would have to be equally far-reaching and inclusive. The Internet makes this possible in ways that Jacob Grimm could not have imaged. Recognizing the need for improved communication and taking advantage of the possibilities offered by the Internet, the ISFNR has joined other scholarly societies in proposing the creation of H-Folk, an international online discussion list for scholars of folklore and ethnology.

The purpose of H-Folk is to promote international communication among folklorists and foster scholarly dialogue in the fields of folklore and ethnology. In addition to encouraging discussions of research, teaching,

policy, and historiography, the forum will publish announcements of conferences, fellowships, course materials, and information about new publications. H-Folk will be open to scholars, advanced students, teachers, and professionals both from within and outside academic institutions. Subscription to H-Folk will be free to participants worldwide.

The American Folklore Society, where the idea for H-Folk originated, has taken the lead in setting up the international listserv with H-Net, a non-profit consortium with its base at Michigan State University in the US. However, the principal responsibility for the daily operation of H-Folk will be carried out in Estonia at the University of Tartu and the Estonian Literary Museum with the collaboration of Ülo Valk, Ergo-Hart Västriik, Kristin Kuutma, and Elo-Hanna Seljamaa.

Oversight of H-Folk will be the responsibility of an advisory board composed of members drawn from the major international societies, including the ISFNR, the Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et Folklore, the American Folklore Society, the Folklore Studies Association of Canada/Association Canadienne d'Ethnologie et Folklore, and the Folklore Society of Great Britain. Cristina Bacchilega



Donald Haase is the editor of *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy-Tale Studies* as well as of the *Series in Fairy-Tale Studies* published by the Wayne State University Press.

Photo: private collection.

and Donald Haase (representing the executive board of the ISFNR) and Ergo-Hart Västriik (representing the participating Estonian institutions) met with representatives of these other organizations in October 2006 at the annual meeting of the American Folklore Society. As a result of that meeting, the executive board of the ISFNR has accepted the invitation to co-sponsor this important global project and appointed Donald Haase to serve as the society's representative on the H-Folk advisory board. More information about subscribing to H-Folk will be available when the listserv is up and running, which is tentatively envisioned for spring.

## A Note on Membership Fee

by Ulf Palmenfelt, Gotland University, Visby, Sweden

### Treasurer of the ISFNR

The ISFNR membership fee is 30 USD or 25 EUR for each congress period. In case you have not already paid for the period running from Tartu 2005 till Athens 2009, please kindly do so now. For the time being the membership fee can be paid by means of bank transfer, though we are working towards a system allowing for credit card payments.

### Bank details of the ISFNR's bank account in Sweden:

#### Beneficiary's name:

**International Society for Folk Narrative Research**

#### Name of the bank:

Handelsbanken, Visby, Sweden

#### Bank account number:

# 378 834 398

#### IBAN:

SE 61 6000 0000 000 378 834 398

#### SWIFT code: HANDSESS

Please note that all bank charges are assigned to the payer.

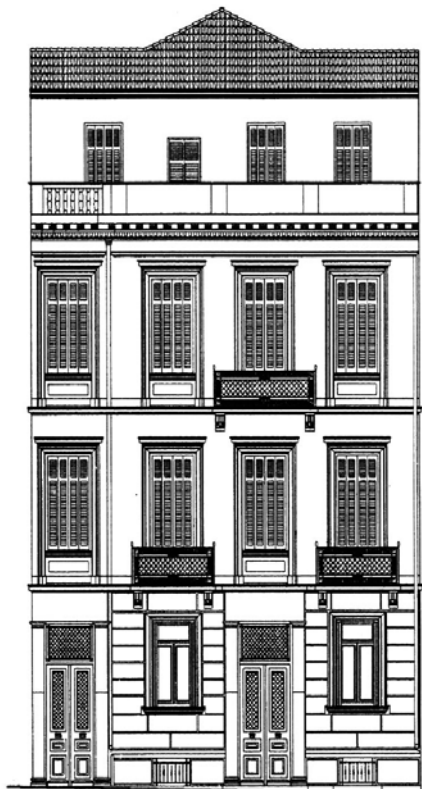
**Please do not hesitate to contact me for information about your earlier payments:**

E-mail: [ulf.palmenfelt@hgo.se](mailto:ulf.palmenfelt@hgo.se)

Tel.: + 46 498 299 806

## The 15<sup>th</sup> Congress of the ISFNR in Athens, Greece

by Marilena Papachristophorou, Hellenic Folklore Research Centre, Athens, Greece



Building of the Hellenic Folklore Research Centre on Iptou street in Athens.

Drawing by Aggeliki Svoronou.

**The Hellenic Folklore Research Centre, Academy of Athens, will host the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the ISFNR in Athens, from June 21 to 27, 2009.**

The 15<sup>th</sup> Conference in Athens coincides with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the ISFNR in August 1959, in Copenhagen and it is the second time in the history of the ISFNR that Athens will host the Conference.<sup>1</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> "International Congress for Folk-Narrative Research", held in Athens in September 1964, consolidated the foundation of the ISFNR by means of the approval of its Statutes by the General Meeting of the Members of the Congress. The Statutes were drawn up by a Committee, appointed to this end, in Copenhagen. The Proceedings of the 4<sup>th</sup> Congress were published in *Laographia*.<sup>2</sup>

The Hellenic Folklore Research Centre, initially named the "Folklore Archive", was founded in 1918 by Nicolaos G. Politis, the founder of Folklore Studies in Greece. The "Folklore Archive" and the "National Music Collection" – which was founded in 1914 – were incorporated in the infrastructures of the Academy of Athens

in 1927. In 1966 the Folklore Archive was renamed the Hellenic Folklore Research Centre. Since 1996, thanks to the assistance afforded by European Community programmes, the Centre has been modernizing its operation and digitalizing its rich archival material. The aims of the Hellenic Folklore Research Centre mainly consist in field research, the archiving of folklore material and the publication of scholarly works and essays.

#### Links:

<http://www.academyofathens.gr>

<http://www.academyofathens.gr/ecportal.asp?id=635&nt=18&lang=2>

<http://www.cityofathens.gr/portal/site/AthensPortalEN/>

<sup>1</sup> See the *ISFNR Newsletter* No. 1, pp. 5-6, for a historical reflection upon the ISFNR by Reimund Kvideland (Eds. note).

<sup>2</sup> Annual review of the *Hellenic Folklore Society*, volume XXII, 1965. Editor: Georgios A. Megas. Athens.

## In Memory of Reimund Kvideland (1935 – 2006)

A very sad message has reached us: on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2006 Professor Reimund Kvideland passed away unexpectedly at the age of 71. He was struck by a heart attack while on his way to the bus stop in his native town of Paradis, near Bergen, Norway. Although retired, he had remained connected to his former institute as well as to his colleagues and friends worldwide. Many of us will cherish a vivid memory of him actively participating in previous ISFNR events, including the 2005 Congress in Tartu.

Born in 1935, Kvideland studied Nordic Philology, History of Literature, and Folkloristics in Oslo, Frankfurt am Main, and Copenhagen. His Master's thesis *Eventyrforteljaren og fortelmiljø* from 1964 focused on the storyteller and storytelling milieu, a perspective encouraged by his teacher in Oslo, Svale Solheim. Kvideland's approach was influenced by that of Otto Brinkmann, Gottfried Henssen, and Linda Dégh, who in 1962 had published her "Märchen, Erzähler und Erzählgemeinschaft" (*Folktales and Society. Story-telling in a Hungarian Peasant Community*, 1969). Kvideland entered the field at a period of crisis when narrative research in Norway was disrupted by gradual recognition of the weaknesses of the hitherto dominant historic-geographic method or the *Finnische Schule*. In 1966 he became a lecturer and was later appointed tenured associate professor (*førsteamanuensis*) at the newly founded Department of Folkloristics at the University of Bergen. He soon rose to be one of the innovators of the field, with several of his important publications dating back to the 1970s. Moreover, in 1971 he es-

tablished *Tradisjon*, a periodical that quickly evolved into the most significant medium of modern Scandinavian folkloristics. Up until the year 1995 he succeeded in maintaining the journal as a peer-reviewed periodical of the highest quality; in 2002 it merged into *Tidskrift for kulturforskning* along with several other periodicals.

Although committed to historical research, Kvideland was first and foremost interested in people, and openly attacked traditional folk narrative research for its text-centeredness. In his view, human context presided over text and performance over pure philology. Kvideland was counted among the "young, wild ones" advocating a broad, interdisciplinary, functional, and, above all, a social-historical approach. He articulated his position in a number of articles that, despite their unpretentiousness have continued to inspire newcomers in the field. Some of these works, like the article "Den folkelege songtradisjonens funksjonelle aspekt" ("The Functional Aspect of Popular Song Tradition") continue to be included in students' compulsory-reading lists both in Oslo and Bergen, and thus belong to the canon of the field. Another text of this kind is his article about his fellow-countryman Rikard Berge published in 1970 in ARV, *Journal of Scandinavian Folklore*. Concise, stimulating and embracing the discourse of the time, it is a biographical *breviarium* characteristic of Kvideland. In 1975 appeared his survey of emigrant songs (*Emigrantviser*), subtitled "Propaganda and Nostalgia": A contribution to ethno-folkloristics". By elegantly and succinctly introducing new ideas soundly based on his thorough knowledge, he influenced

the field of Nordic folklore scholarship from the very beginning of his career. Furthermore, it was Kvideland who newly internationalized *Nordic* folk-tale scholarship. His good command of languages along with the pleasure he took in travel stood him thereby in this respect. From 1991 to 1997 Kvideland directed the *Nordisk Institutt for Folkeediktning* or the Nordic Institute of Folklore (NIF) in Turku, Finland, dedicating himself to administrative matters as well as to various NIF publications. In collaboration with several of his colleagues, he edited *Folklore Processed*, a collection of articles on the methodology and theory of folklore published in 1992 in honour of Lauri Honko on his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

First and foremost, Kvideland made a name for himself in the field of folk song research with the above-mentioned studies of emigrant songs and handwritten songbooks as well as with surveys of the ballads of railway workers. Kvideland was one of the most active and long-term members of SIEF's International Ballad Commission, which for over 40 years has been holding meetings in various places around the globe. At the 2004 Conference held in Riga, Kvideland gave a presentation on 19<sup>th</sup> century female ballad-collectors who published either anonymously or under their husband's names, thus raising issues reaching far beyond the genre of ballad.

The scope of Reimund Kvideland's scholarly interests was, however, impressively wide. Besides folk songs, he had a special interest in folk legends and memorates and in Scandinavian belief concepts in particular. He also liked to undertake excursions into



seemingly marginal phenomena such as letters from heaven (*Himmelsbriefe*) or “Neuruppiner Bilderbogen”. Children’s folklore enabled him to point out culturally-specific norms and taboos in the process of socialization. In addition, Kvideland profiled folktales. He was one of the editors of the *Norwegische und isländische Volksmärchen* (1988) – a real German-language classic – as well as of the renowned academic folktale collection *Norsk eventyrbibliotek* (1967-1981), a true mega-project of Norwegian scholars. This folktale series of 12 volumes offers a complete overview of the Norwegian folktale tradition organized according to geographical regions. While Kvideland was solely responsible for volumes 3, 8, 10 and contributed to the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> volume, he was also instrumental in compiling the 1<sup>st</sup> volume – dedicated to folktales from Rogaland.

As well as working on such large-scale series, Kvideland also found time for comprehensive and fundamental single publications like the repertoire-oriented collection *All the World’s Reward: Folktales Told by Five Scandinavian Storytellers* (1999), co-edited with Henning K. Sehmsdorf and published in the U.S. Their other books published in tandem include *Scandinavian Folk Belief and Legend* (1988) and *Nordic Folklore: Recent Studies* (1989).

Indeed, Kvideland’s works on storytellers and their repertoire require special attention. His survey of Olav Eivindsson Austad (e.g. in *All the World’s Reward*) covers the biography and genealogy of “Norway’s last great storyteller” as well as his repertoire and ties to other tradition-bearers – to the storytelling community. Kvideland examined several female storytellers, including one woman descending from a Jewish-Lithuanian tradition and with a repertoire mixing

Baltic and Jewish lore respectively. As a contemplator of “social and intercultural gender”, Kvideland thus balanced the relationship between the masculine and the feminine. Just as in his other analytical surveys, so in his repertoire-studies too he foregrounded not only the functional, but also the gender aspect, and emphasized questions of enculturation. One could not write about repertoire anymore without taking note of Kvideland’s writings and his definition of the term.



Building bridges with smile: Reimund Kvideland (on the right) with Diarmuid Ó'Giolláin from Ireland during the ISFNR Congress in Tartu.

Photo by Ülo Valk.

In “The Study of Folktale Repertoires”, his contribution to a collection of folklore studies published in memory of Bengt Holbek (*Telling Realities*, 1993), Kvideland stated that “ideally a repertoire should include what a person has performed more or less regularly in the course of his or her life to one or more types of audiences. (...) Nothing should be left out for any reason. A repertoire may change over time and space. (...) A repertoire should also include what a person knows but does not perform”

(pp. 106). For Kvideland, the concept of repertoire was thus a far more complicated phenomenon than one would have thought at the first glance. In a symposium dedicated to his colleague Holbek, Kvideland even called for “repertoire studies” in his presentation. Bengt af Klintberg recalled this in a speech he gave on the occasion in 1998 when Kvideland was awarded a Professor’s title. Af Klintberg said the following: “This article is evidence of Kvideland’s best scientific virtue: he is

not dramatic, but his efforts to fathom a concept display an impressive stubbornness”.

This applies *mutatis mutandis* not only to Kvideland’s repertoire, performance, and gender studies, but also to his subtle reflections upon the various filters through which a folktale is passed before it is written down. His approach is oriented toward the present for Kvideland tenaciously traced the life of traditional folktale motifs in newspapers and contemporary grammar books. He

also examined how traditional stories become alienated in school books or audiovisual media as well the processes of re-oralization – the creation of narratives about screen versions of folktales and other media experiences. Such critical queries deepened Kvideland's interest in the history of the discipline. He compiled biographies of collectors and publishers as well as an anthology of articles written by Scandinavian scholars about Nordic folklore research. His bibliographies, reference books and indexes will remain precious working tools for international, historical and comparative folktale research, while at the same time bespeaking Kvideland's courage in confronting large quantities of evidence and demonstrating the systematic nature of his thinking.

It was precisely on the international level that Kvideland evolved into a mediator of the highest rank. His excellent language skills certainly added to his international reputation, and he published in many languages. To cite just one example: in 2002 he was invited to Japan to deliver two lectures on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Prof. Toshio Ozawa's *Märchenakademie*. Kvideland spoke in English about "The Supernatural World in Norwegian Folktales" while his other paper discussed Norwegian folktale illustrations and was presented in German; both were published in Japanese in the quarterly *Children and Folktale*. It is noteworthy that Kvideland apparently often willingly published in German, assisted just as often and willingly by his wife Karin, who is of German origin and a theologian by training. Just to add a few more examples of his work, Kvideland's survey of Norwegian resistance songs was published in *Festgabe für Lutz Röhrich zu seiner Emeritierung* (1990) while the *Festschrift* dedicated

to Rudolf Schenda (1995) included his study of handwritten song books.

In addition to all this writing and publishing, one must draw attention to his equally refined oral skills. Kvideland's presentations were small rhetorical masterpieces: slowly and concisely, never apodictically or *ex cathedra*, but rather gently and in an enquiring manner did he include his audience in his thinking process.

Kvideland's administrative and leadership skills were legendary, proven by the fact that he consecutively, and for a brief period simultaneously held two of the most responsible and important positions in our field: he was the president of SIEF from 1987 to 1990 and the president of the ISFNR from 1989 to 1995. He was also a member of the Folklore Fellows and associated with the German *Alfred Toepfer Stiftung* and its folk-art prize awarded in various European countries. For many years he contributed to the *International Folklore Bibliography*, *Nordic Bibliography of Ethnology and Folkloristics*, as well as to various journals and periodicals both in Europe and Asia (incl. Dresden-based *DEMOS*, *Journal of Indian Folklore*, *Contemporary Legend*). His support for the *Märchenspiegel*, the organ of Märchen-Stiftung Walter Kahn, was especially valuable during the magazine's first years when it was establishing itself in the field. Thus in issue 4/1995 Kvideland introduced the NIF he was working for at the time; issue 3/1996 includes his homage to Pirkko-Liisa Rausmaa, the 1996 *Europäischer Märchenpreis* laureate.

Such overviews are yet another noteworthy specialty of Kvideland's; for example, he contributed a brief, but pertinent article about "The Collecting and Study of Tales in Scandinavia" to

the eminent *A Companion to the Fairy Tale* (2003). Needless to say, he also furnished the Göttingen-based *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* with an article about Norway (*Norwegen*) as well as pieces on *Eikard Berg*, *Olaf Bø*, *Reidar Christiansen*, *Gläubiger*, *Interessendominanz*, *Kausalfiktion*, *Konglomerat*, *Konglomeratmärchen*, *Memorat*, *Jørgen Moe*, *Moltke Moe*, and *Novellate*; articles concerning *Schiff* and *Schreckmärchen* were published only recently. It was precisely in such terminology and genre articles that Kvideland demonstrated his high level of theoretical sophistication and his ability to effectively outline theories and schools.

His countless works and duties connected him with the entire world. In Reimund Kvideland the field of folkloristics has lost a critical and committed scholar, highly versed in methodology, an international academic with extensive interests, and at the same time with a talent for delving into detailed specific questions. Grievous is the loss of such a wonderful person. What was special about him was that he could always, be it about professional or personal matters, give you help and a piece of advice. His sense of humour enabled him to create contacts, to strengthen and maintain old friendships while at the same time starting new ones. Making stopovers in his homey Paradis, he seemingly effortlessly moved between continents and cultures. Kvideland knew how to put academic folklore research in the service of international communication and friendship.

Sabine Wienker-Piepho, Munich,  
Germany

Translated from German by Elo-Hanna  
Seljamaa

## In Memory of Lutz Röhrich (1922 – 2006)

On December 29, 2006 we received the sad news that Lutz Röhrich, Professor emeritus of Folklore, Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg, had died at the age of 84. After the death of Donald Ward, Alan Dundes and Reimund Kvideland, this is another big loss for folk narrative research and our Society. Lutz Röhrich was one of the last German scholars to represent the discipline of folklore and ethnology in its entirety, covering in his research, publications and teaching, both oral traditions and material culture. In folkloristics, he will always be remembered as one of the most productive and influential scholars in his field, his publications on folktale research and paremiology being internationally accepted as landmarks of our discipline.

Lutz Röhrich was born on October 1922 in Tübingen. At the age of 19, he was drafted into the German Wehrmacht, served on the battlefields of France and Russia, and returned home heavily injured. From 1945, he studied German language and literature, history, music history and Latin at the University of Tübingen and received his PhD in 1949 with a dissertation on demons in Swabian folk belief. As a folklorist, he was self taught, but he started looking for contacts with the few German folklorists who had survived the war. Kurt Wagner, professor of German and Folklore at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz offered him a position as research assistant in 1950, and supervised his habilitation thesis on *Märchen und Wirklichkeit (Folktale and Reality)* published in 1954. This will no doubt become one of the major contributions to the modern discipline of folkloristics. In Mainz, he developed



Lutz Röhrich, a weariless spokesman for folklore theoretical matters.

Next to him (on the right) Sabine Wienker-Piepho, one of Röhrich's renown students.

Photo by Rolf W. Brednich.

a small school of folklore where his students Rolf W. Brednich, Leander Petzoldt and Hannjost Lixfeld graduated under his guidance. One of the major achievements during his time in Mainz were the two textbook volumes of *Erzählungen des späten Mittelalters und ihr Weiterleben in Literatur und Volksdichtung bis zur Gegenwart (Tales of Late Middle Ages and their Survival in Literature and Folk Poetry into the Present, 1962/67)*.

In 1967, Lutz Röhrich was appointed Professor of Folklore at the Albert Ludwig University in Freiburg, and in 1969 he also became director of the German Folksong Archives. During his 23 years of active service for his university, he made the Folklore Institute of Freiburg University into one of the leading European centres for historical and comparative folk narratology, balladry and folksong research. During his time, he edited among many other works the two volumes of *Handbuch des Volksliedes (Handbook of Folksong 1973/75)* and his famous *Lexikon der sprichwörtlichen Redensarten (Encyclopedia of Pro-*

*verbial Sayings, 1973, enlarged edition 1991/92)*, for which he received the Folklore Prize of the University of Chicago. He was also engaged in the study of the smaller genres of folk poetry, and wrote a book about the joke (*Der Witz, 1977*). He belonged to the first editorial board of the *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, to which he contributed an astonishing number of 50 major articles, from *Adam und Eva* to *Sage*. Under his supervision, a big number of folklore students graduated from his school and became well known scholars, among them Dietz-Rüdiger Moser, Klaus Roth, Rainer Wehse, Sabine Wienker-Piepho, and Tunde Okanlawon. Lutz Röhrich became an internationally well known and highly respected scholar who travelled widely and also taught at American universities in Kansas and Vermont.

Beginning with the first post-war meeting in Kiel and Copenhagen in 1959, Lutz Röhrich attended many, if not most, of the ISFNR conferences, always contributing significant papers of theoretical importance. He was Vice-President of the Society from 1979-89, chaired the Theory Committee, for which he co-edited the volume *Storytelling in Contemporary Societies* (1990), and was eventually made an Honorary Member. He received Festschrifts at his 60<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> birthdays, and was honoured by a third one at the occasion of receiving his Emeritus status in 1990 (with bibliography of his works by Gertraud Meinel). In 1985, the University of Marburg bestowed on him the prestigious Brothers Grimm Prize. Lutz Röhrich is survived by his wife Ingrid, two sons and a daughter. He has been laid to rest at Günterstal cemetery near Freiburg.

At one of the ISFNR conferences, Alan Dundes asked me in relation to one of Röhrich's many publications: "When will this man ever stop?" Now,

sadly, death has eventually stopped him, but he will live on in our memory, and remains present to us in his outstanding publications.

Rolf Wilhelm Brednich, Wellington/  
Göttingen, New Zealand/ Germany

## The 2007 *Europäischer Märchenpreis* to Toshio Ozawa

The ISFNR congratulates its honorary member Prof. Dr. Toshio Ozawa from Japan on receiving the 2007 *Europäischer Märchenpreis* (European Fairy Tale Prize) of the *Märchen-Stiftung Walter Kahn* (Munich, Germany). The prize of 5000 Euros was awarded to Ozawa in recognition of his lifelong and wide-ranging work in the field of fairy tale research.

Ozawa's professional development was decisively shaped by his several study visits to Prof. Kurt Ranke in Göttingen. In 1956 he submitted his doctoral thesis on the genesis of the Grimm's *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* based on his analysis of the Ölenberg Manuscript (*Grimm dowashu seiritsushi. Ölenberg ko dainanahan*

*no hikaku*). Working for decades as professor of German language and literature, comparative literature and later as professor of children's and youth literature in various universities in his home country, he was repeatedly appointed a visiting professor in Germany. Ozawa was elected president of the Japanese Society for Folk Narrative Research and vice-president of the ISFNR. In 1992 he established a fairy tale academy (Mukashibanashi Daigaku) in Japan.

The prize further acknowledges Ozawa's field work, editorial activities and translations. Owing to him, friends of and specialists in folktales alike have access in Japanese to writings by Lutz Röhrich and Max Lüthi. Another of his praiseworthy achievements is the publication of the quarterly *Kodomo to mukashibanashi* (Children and Folktale). All of his undertakings are marked by his appreciation of the power of folktales to connect people, a principle he has passed down to his numerous likewise renowned students.

The *Europäischer Märchenpreis of the Märchen-Stiftung Walter Kahn*, established in 1986, is awarded to individuals and organizations which over a sustained period have contributed to research into and the preservation, public promotion and cultivation of European fairy tales and legends. Previous laureates among the ISFNR members include Sigrid Schmidt (2006), Hans-Jörg Uther (2005), Reimund Kvideland (2004), Helmut Fischer (2002), Siegfried Neumann (1999), Katalin Horn (1998), Pirkko-Liisa Rausmaa (1996), Lutz Röhrich (1991), Isidor Levin (1989), and Max Lüthi (1988).

Märchen-Stiftung Walter Kahn, Munich  
<http://www.maerchen-stiftung.de/>



The *Märchenakademie* established by Toshio Ozawa in 1992 can today be found in over 50 cities throughout Japan.

Photo by Alar Madisson.

The bestowal of the prize will take place in October 2007 in the course of the Folktale Days in Volach, Germany.

## Relations between Folk Culture Scholars of Europe and Latin America

by Manuel Dannemann, University of Chile, Santiago, Chile  
Vice-President of the ISFNR for Latin America

In less than a year, folklorists from various countries of the world will be participating in the 2007 interim conference of the International Society for Folklore Narrative Research which will be held in the province of Santa Rosa de la Pampa, in Argentina, South America.

Maybe most of these scholars are not familiar with this region; many of those coming from countries outside Latin-America will perhaps perceive some kind of exoticness and strangeness in its form of life and not a few will feel the appeal of an adventure, almost like that of an ethnographic expedition. However, they might also wonder about the interests of Latin-American folklorists and the kind of folklore studies carried out in this part of the world.

While trying to respond to these questions in the following, I will have to limit my observations to a synthesis of my own experiences of the methods and intentions of European and Latin-American colleagues, since an extensive analysis of the relations of Latin-American folkloristics to folklore studies in other countries and cultures would be beyond the scope of the present article.

The first time that numerous scholars from Europe, North-America and Latin-America came together, was the 1960 International Congress of Folklore held in Buenos Aires, the capital of the Argentine Republic, which up to the present day has remained a lively centre of the study of folk culture. The

Congress proved a stimulus to participants from the host country as well to those coming from Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico and other countries, for they had an opportunity to acquaint themselves with such famous representatives of U. S. and European folklore scholarship as Stith Thompson and Roger Pinon.



Professor Manuel Dannemann doing fieldwork with Pedro Antonio Madariaga, an excellent storyteller and traditional singer from Casablanca in Central Chile.

Photo: private collection.

The 1960 Buenos Aires conference verified the impression that more was known in Latin-America about the studies, research methods and university teaching practiced in European and North-American folklore scholarship than was known in Europe about Latin-America. One of the rare exceptions in this respect was the North-American scholar Ralph S. Boggs, who dedicated a considerable

amount of his academic life to visiting Latin-American countries and to editing the still-remembered journal *Folklore Americas*. Though its publication has now ceased, it is without doubt the most effective embodiment of communication and mutual respect that we have known so far.

What is the situation today? Generally speaking, it seems as if in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the state of affairs of the 20<sup>th</sup> century persists. Certainly, there are Latin-American folklorists collaborating on the *International Folklore Bibliography* now being edited by Karin Maria Rooleid from Estonia. However, since at present only scholars from Argentina, Chile and Peru contribute, it is difficult to ensure the inclusion of books and articles from Latin-America. During the period of Rainer Alsheimer's editorship collaborators periodically held meetings in order to discuss technological changes, academic cooperation, and the system and financing of the Bibliography. I would here like to refer to discussions concerning the classification method applied in the Bibliography that began in 1992, intensified in 1996 and in some ways are still ongoing. Drawing on my experience with the Bibliography of Chilean Folklore, I proposed that a classification on the basis of functions be used instead of one based on subjects.

Collaboration on the *International Folklore Bibliography* has indeed been one of the few occasions to interchange ideas, concepts and procedures between the European and Latin-American scholars of folklore and also one

that has been documented.<sup>1</sup> However, it is undoubtedly the International Society for Folk Narrative Research that has more than any other institution contributed to interrelations between European and Latin-American folklore scholars. The first ISFNR vice-president representing Latin-America was Yolando Pino Saavedra (1901-1992), followed by our Argentine colleague Martha Blache and later by the author of this article. One must thankfully acknowledge the efforts made by Martha Blache to integrate the Latin-Americans into the ISFNR.

Despite these earnest attempts made in good faith, it is worth repeating the question as to the knowledge that Europeans have of Latin-American folk culture, its research methods and teaching practices. A relevant answer today would presumably be very different from the one that resulted in the above-mentioned 1960 International Congress of Folklore in Buenos Aires. Congresses and conferences help to make up for the lack of personal, face-to-face meetings of folklorists from two worlds that until now have seemed to be somewhat distinct. Another significant event in this respect was the XXXVII International Congress of Americanists in Mar del Plata in the province of Buenos Aires in 1966, which brought together representatives of both European/North-American approaches and Latin-American folklore scholarship. Among the determined exponents of the former were Roger D. Abrahams, Richard M. Dorson, Alan Dundes, Americo Paredes, and of the latter Paulo de Carvalho-Neto and Florival Seraine from Brazil, Mildred Merino de Zela from Peru, Miguel Acosta from Venezuela along with Augusto Raúl Cortazar and Berta Elena Vidal de Battini, as well as many other outstanding figures of Argenti-

nian folklore studies.

After the Congress, Americo Paredes published an article where he reflected on his impressions of the meeting. It was titled "Divergences in the concept of folklore and the cultural context" and appeared in the journal *Folklore America* (XVII, January – 1967, No 1) which at the time was being edited by Professor Stanley L. Robe from the University of California, Los Angeles. In his article, Professor Paredes capably summarized and verified the fundamental differences between the Latin-American and North-American position, starting with a notion introduced at the beginning of this article: while Latin-Americans were familiar with works by several of their North-American colleagues, the latter knew only the names of some of the leading representatives of Latin-American folkloristics. Synthesizing the discord between the two, Paredes claimed that the Latin-American folklorist considers that "the North-American folklorist is empirical, is not familiar with general ideas (concepts) and lacks discipline in his investigations". The North-American folklorist in turn thinks that the Latin-American is "absolutist and undemocratic. Confronted with a theoretical problem he does not look to solve it by examining the facts that obtain, but goes to the opinion of some patriarch of folklore..." (30-31).

On this occasion, it is relevant to mention some important antecedents of Latin-American folklore studies. For instance, according to the Mexican musicologist Vicente T. Mendoza, in Mexico the word "folklore" appeared for the first time in 1890 in the newspaper *El Nacional* (February 7, 1890, No 181). In an article dating from 1957 (*Folklore Americas*, vol. XVIII, December 1957, No 2: 4-5), Mendo-

za claimed of the term folklore that "it seems that every day its sense is understood better" and stressed "the necessity of leaving the discussions and definitions and to dedicate oneself completely to the methodical recollection of materials".

This priority of collecting folklore has sometimes taken on an obsessive character, similar to the Spanish case of searching for and accumulating riddles and proverbs. Reflection on folk culture, its structures and functions, on the other hand, has been severely limited. During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scholars readily accepted the classic concept of folklore established by European folklorists. Elsewhere I have summarized anonymity, orality, traditionality, and popularity as its four main characteristics. Although there has been a lot of intense and influential discussion of these criteria in recent decades, there are still folklore scholars in all of the Latin-American countries who more or less rigidly continue to accept this norm. One proof of it can be found in the last issue of "Letter of Brazilian Folklore" dating from 1995. It is stated there that: "Folklore is the substance of the cultural creations of a community based on its traditions and individual or collective representations of its social identity. The constitutive factors or identifications of folklore are collective acceptance, traditionality, dynamics and functionality. Our understanding of folklore and popular culture is equivalent to the one that UNESCO praises..." (cited from *Revista de Investigaciones Folklóricas*, Buenos Aires, vol. 13, December, 1998: 9).

In my commentaries on that concept ("Commentaries on the "Letter of Brazilian Folklore" " in: *Revista de Inves-*

*tigaciones Folklóricas*, Buenos Aires, No 13, December 1998) I pointed out that it would cause differences between scholars to ask them whether cultural goods were to be preferred to behavior and communication and to which social class folk culture corresponded. Furthermore, defining folklore in terms of collective acceptance, traditionality, and its functions would lead to a continuation of the classic folklore doctrine.

During the past thirty years, the horizons of Latin-American folklore studies have nevertheless been broadened by various novel concepts of folklore. In 1986 Martha Blache founded a journal titled *Revista de Investigaciones Folclóricas* (Journal of Folklore Research), which has been instrumental in introducing these ideas and continues to be published regularly under her editorship. In *Teorías del Folklore en América Latina*, a book published in 1975 in collaboration with several of my colleagues, I introduced the ideas of the Swiss scholar Richard Weiss (1907-1962) on behavioral community and tradition. Elaborating on and modifying them, I proposed a concept of folklore as a cultural category in which three planes or levels come together intensely. The first plane concerns the social cohesion of personal traditions, representative identity and community action. The second plane indicates the capacity for social transformation and community-building by means of homogenizing members of a socio-economically, ideologically, educationally, territorially and generationally heterogeneous group. The third level is one of local specificity, which could be regarded as the most notable unifying feature of a social system.

Another approach which during recent decades has shaped Latin-American

folklore studies is one introduced by Martha Blache in collaboration with Juan Ángel Magariños de Morentin from Argentina. With the first issue of the above-mentioned *Revista de Investigaciones Folklóricas*, Martha Blache started her continuing and valuable labor of examining the Latin-American classic folklore doctrine and suggesting modifications to it based on empirical materials. One of her first articles in this series concerned the criteria for delimitation of a folklore group, in which she made fruitful critical use of works by such North-Americans folklorists as Richard Bauman and Dan Ben-Amos. In order to provide a notion of her approach, I will next refer to some of the main ideas on “the constituent part of the folkloric group” presented in the first paragraph of this article. It is suggested there that members of a particular folklore group are identifiable from some socially-recognized and conventionally-established empirical factors which distinguish them from other groups. As such they can be regarded as attributes or actions included within the pre-existing institutional structure of the given society. There is a constant interaction between members of the same folklore group and a circulation of messages in a special form.

In 1909 the first folklore society in Latin-America was established by the great philologist Dr. Rodolfo Lenz (1863-1939), Professor of German at the University of Chile. If this were to be taken as the starting point of folklore studies in this region, we are about to leave the first century behind us. Lenz regarded folklore as “that branch of the ‘science of man’ which looks for the materials needed in ethnology for the application of inductive and comparative methods. It gathers myths and all the manifestations of popular

beliefs, legends, traditional wisdom, stories, songs, proverbs, superstitions, and customs. While general ethnology always has to take into account all the nations of the world regardless of their level of civilization and kinship, folklore is limited to a single nation or a group of nations sharing a common history, but it can also be further limited to a single province and even to a single class of individuals.” (*Revista de Folklore Chileno*, Santiago, tomo I, 1911: 8.)

One could not require that all European folklore scholars dedicated themselves to learning about things that have happened in Latin-American folklore studies during these hundred years. Those interested in the matter are advised to refer to the *Historia del folklore iberoamericano* by Paulo de Carvalho-Neto (1965, Santiago de Chile, Editorial Universitaria). Still, we can try to familiarize ourselves with what is happening in Latin-American, European and North-American folklore scholarship – in the field of folklore anywhere in the world – and to enhance communication by overcoming languages difficulties.

The 2007 interim Conference of the ISFNR offers such an attractive prospect, and I would like to extend a welcome to all countries that participate with the objective of establishing a universal and pluralistic discipline.

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Manuel Dannemann and Brigitte Emmrich in Beittl, Klaus & Hummer, Hermann (eds.) *Internationale Volkskundliche Bibliographie: Systematik und Datenbanke: Papiere der 5. Tagung der Arbeitsgruppe für die Internationale Volkskundliche Bibliographie (IVB) vom 8. bis 10. September 1994 in Petronell-Carnuntum (Niederösterreich) und Kittsee (Burgenland)*, Wien 1996.

## Reflections on the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, October 18 – 22

### The European Fairy Tale Tradition: Between Orality and Literacy

by Dan Ben-Amos, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA



Dan Ben-Amos, initiator of "The European Fairy Tale Tradition" roundtable at the AFS 2006 Annual Meeting in Wisconsin listening to presentations at the ISFNR Congress in Tartu, July 2005.

Photo by Alar Madisson.

Occasionally discussions at congresses of the ISFNR spawn debates in national and local scholarly meetings. Such was the case of the session devoted to "The European Fairy Tale Tradition: Between Orality and Literacy" in the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society in Milwaukee, Wisconsin last October. A heated debate followed Ruth Bottigheimer's lecture on "Fairy Tale Origins: Fairy Tale Dissemination, and Folk Narrative Theory" at the 14<sup>th</sup> Congress of ISFNR in Tartu, Estonia. It was obvious to all participants that the issues she raised were crucial to the literary history of the European folktale, and the post-lecture debate hardly touched the surface of the problems she raised.

In her presentation she summarized the ideas she had explored in her

recent book *The Fairy Godfather: Straparola, Venice and the Fairy Tale Tradition* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), and proposed to recognize the pivotal role Giovanni Francesco Straparola (born between 1480-1490--d.1557) played in the development of the magical fairy tale in European folk and literary tradition. In his book *Piacevoli Notti* (Venice, 1550-1553) [English translation: W. G. Waters, *The Nights of Straparola* 2 vols. (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1894)], Bottigheimer argues, he introduced into the European "rugs-to-riches" fairy tale the role of magic as a contributory factor for the hero's or heroine's social rise.

Such a thesis has multiple implications to basic folklore theories. It addresses the question of the significance of historical-geographical diffusion to the literary history of the folktale; it challenges the current assumptions about the relations between orality and literacy. The thesis proposes to highlight the role of literary invention in oral tradition, and finally examines the relations between social-economic conditions and the rise of folk-literary forms.

During the debate in Tartu speakers from the floor challenged Ruth Bottigheimer on all of these accounts, but obviously no definite conclusion has been reached. She and I realized that it was necessary to continue the discussion. Although she knew that I was critical of her position, she consented

to subject her research to critical examination in the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society.

The participants in the roundtable in the American Folklore Society meeting were Francisco Vaz da Silva (ISCTE), Jan Ziolkowski (Harvard University), Dan Ben-Amos (University of Pennsylvania), chair, and Ruth Bottigheimer (SUNY at Stony Brook), respondent.

The subject drew a large crowd and the session in Milwaukee was a "repeat performance" of the Tartu debate. The speakers cited European examples of pre-sixteenth century magical fairy tales, while Ruth Bottigheimer defended her position, arguing for the essential role literacy plays in the creation and dissemination of tales that represent upwardly mobile heroes and heroines in an upwardly mobile society. She emphasized the contribution of education and literacy to oral storytelling, while the panel speakers as well as the speakers from the floor underscored the oral culture that flourished in Italy in the sixteenth century, and the central position Italy played in the reception, transmission, dissemination of oriental and Near-Eastern narrative oral traditions, being the gateway to Europe for seafaring people from the Orient and the Mediterranean countries. The participants in this roundtable are currently preparing their lectures for publication.



## Books, Folks, and Fairy Tales

by Ruth B. Bottigheimer, SUNY at Stony Brook, USA



Sue Bottigheimer at the ISFNR Congress in Tartu.

Photo by Alar Madisson.

In a session of the 2005 ISFNR meeting in Tartu, my doubts about the origins, dissemination, and definition of fairy tales elicited a stormy response. That tempestuous exchange revived a year later at the 2006 AFS meeting in Milwaukee in a session organized by Dan Ben-Amos to discuss an alternative history and definition of fairy tales that I proposed in the opening chapters of my 2002 book, *Fairy Godfather*.

The strength of participants' reactions is easy to understand: my postulated print history of fairy tales denies the validity of some past and present work in folk narrative studies. What I have tried to do, and am continuing to do, is to clarify in my own mind and work the meaning and significance of the terms "folk," "narrative," "folk narrative," and "fairy tales."

What is the folk? Must the folk in every time and place be unlettered, in order to be a "folk" within the meaning of "folk narrative"? Does "unlettered" mean preliterate? aliterate? nonliter-

ate? unschooled? unschoolable? What social groupings does "folk" include? Urban artisans in Renaissance Italy? (This was a group that has been documented to have been literate.) Is a late nineteenth-century elderly French peasantry with elementary schooling in its childhood to be considered "folk"? (A schooling that in all likelihood included memorizing Perrault tales.) Is a late nineteenth-century elderly German peasantry with elementary schooling in its childhood "folk"? (With a schooling that in all likelihood included memorizing Grimm tales.) When informants say that an elderly grandmother told them a particular story, scholars in the field have been quick to conclude that the grandmother formed part of a chain of oral transmission. In fact, she may well have memorized the story from a classroom or a school textbook in her youth rather than being a putative link in a chain of oral transmission extending back into antiquity?

What is a "narrative"? That is an equally broad term, with definitions that vary markedly depending on their context, and so let us proceed directly to "folk narrative." What are the possible relationships, and which of those relationships are essential to the study of "folk narrative"? Is it narrative *told* by the folk, as attested by generations of collectors in the field? Or might it be narrative bought, read, listened to, loved, or remembered by the folk? Those myriad possibilities inhere in the late Rudolf Schenda's fruitful exploration of what people have told each other over centuries in his invaluable 1993 study *Vom Mund zu Ohr. Bausteine zu einer Kulturgeschichte volkstümlicher Erzählens in Europa* (Göttingen:

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht). Significantly, Schenda concluded that, historically, fairy tales formed a vanishingly small part of folk repertoire.

It is fairy tales that are central to my work. For years I've listened to and read the work of serious scholars who use terms so flexibly that their listeners could interpret them in different, and even contradictory, ways. There has often seemed to be an intentional effort to *avoid* defining the terms of discussion. "Don't try to define 'fairy tales,'" one listener in Milwaukee advised me. "Call them anything. Call them 'Fred'. But not 'fairy tales.'" And yet, rational discourse requires agreed-upon terms.

In discussing fairy tales, the most inclusive term of all is the German *Märchen*. Fairy-tale specialists have qualified its inherent vagueness by coining terms such as *Wundermärchen* or *Zaubermärchen*. The marvels and magic connoted by those terms can denote a wide range of supernatural events and creatures, but the result, nonetheless, is that *Wundermärchen* or *Zaubermärchen* do not line up with French discussants' understanding of *contes de fées*. The English term "fairy tales" is perhaps the most problematic of all. On the one hand it has come to refer to all of the types of tales included in the Grimm collection, simply its English title is *Grimm's* (sic) *Fairy Tales*. On the other hand, "fairy tales" can mean tales that have fairies in them, sometimes called "fairy stories." Or in common parlance fairy tale can mean a rags to riches story.

When English-speaking scholars refer to "fairy tales," their listeners are therefore free to understand them as *Märchen*,

*Wundermärchen*, *Zaubermärchen*, or *contes de fées*. And since each of these terms comes with its own set of historical and literary associations, discussions tend to dissolve around the edges. For that reason, I have introduced two new terms, “restoration fairy tale” and “rise fairy tale.” Each has a characteristic plot and an identifiable history (worked out in *Fairy Godfather*) that marks it off clearly within the two overarching, but different, categories of *Märchen* and *contes de fées*.

Attempting to define the terms of discussion seems to me a useful rather than a revolutionary undertaking, but many readers and listeners have thought otherwise. I won't recapitulate my reasons here for postulating that fairy tales, as I've defined them, have a different and distinctive history and method of dissemination from genres such as, for instance, animal tales and etiologies, and that their history and dissemination are intimately linked to urban experience and to the urban technology of printing and urban-origin practices such as publishing and bookselling. I've done that in *Fairy Godfather* and in numerous articles. But evidence from literary and folklore scholars is mounting in support of these propositions. In the last few months, for instance, I've heard Nathalie Guézennec on word-for-word oral tellings that suggest a single memorized print source; John Conte-Morgan on “Mama Watah” tales that mix European and indigenous African folklore; Caroline Sumpter on nineteenth-century newspaper as a source for nineteenth-century knowledge of fairy tales; and Brian O'Cathain on reading aloud from manuscripts of Irish traditional narrative cycles that existed in every Gaeltacht village in Munster in mid-nineteenth century Ireland, not to mention the presence of Boccaccio tales on the remote Blasket Islands off Ireland's west coast.

Generations of researchers have based their work on a commonly agreed upon set of propositions: fairy tales are 1) ancient and anonymous folk creations 2) passed along orally from one person to another from time immemorial 3) until recorded by a literate listener. These propositions are clear and comprehensible. They provide answers for many questions that inevitably arise in researchers' quest for further historical information about fairy tales. They originate with the revered founders of fairy tale studies, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. And they have been added to and supported by respected thinkers who have formulated laws and principles of folk narrative to explain both change and continuity in individual fairy tales.

In Tartu and in Milwaukee, one of my statements became a lightning rod: “the absence of evidence is evidence of absence.” By that I meant that the absence of evidence [of the existence of a tradition of passing fairy tales on orally] is evidence for the absence [of the existence of that tradition]. Oralists have proposed some initially appealing refutations. For instance, if a tree falls in a forest, but no one hears it, was there a sound? Common sense tells us that a falling tree necessarily produces a crashing reverberation when it hits the ground. But this easy and familiar example does not apply to folk narrative. Why? In the field of folk narrative a parallel statement of this philosophical conundrum would be: Is a tale heard when it is told in the absence of a listener? Here common sense tells us that only its teller hears the tale, which is, of course, irrelevant for questions of dissemination. Thus, in my opinion, the proposition that the absence of evidence is evidence for absence continues to stand.

Acknowledging and incorporating the

results of contemporary book history research suggests that terms used in fairy-tale studies should be updated. Authors of European fairy tales of the rise and restoration type existed and are namable; an anonymous folk did not create these genres. Books have provided the stable memory that has carried fairy-tale narratives from one century to another and from one country to another. Editors have inserted their knowledge of local conditions to create regional oicotypes. Printers have saturated local markets with individual fairy tales with identical wordings. Both local and colonial school systems have drilled fairy tales into pupils' memories. And individual storytellers have individuated single fairy tales to make them fit their and their audiences' worldviews. These are all statements about fairy tales. Some also apply to animal tales, religious tales, and warning tales.

All of this suggests that we may substitute literate authors for “folk” and print pathways for “folk.” But in the end, everything hinges on our definition of fairy tales. We may disagree on conclusions, but it is my hope that by agreeing on basic terms, we can foster mutually understandable discussions of the origins, history, and definition of fairy tales.

See also

Bottigheimer, Ruth B., *Fairy Godfather: Straparola, Venice, and the Fairy Tale Tradition*. Philadelphia/ London: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.

——, “Luckless, Witless, and Filthy-Footed: A Socio-Cultural Study and Publishing History Analysis of ‘The Lazy Boy’ (AT 675)” in *Journal of American Folklore* 106. 421 (Summer 1993): 259-84.

## From Tartu to Milwaukee: The Genesis of a Fairy-Tale Debate

by Francisco Vaz da Silva, *Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa*,  
Lisbon, Portugal



Francisco Vaz da Silva chairing one of the fairy tale sessions at the ISFNR Tartu Congress.  
*Photo by Alar Madisson.*

Perhaps one of the most controversial moments in the 14th Congress of the ISFNR in Tartu was a presentation in which Ruth Bottigheimer proposed that Straparola started the fairy-tale tradition. Unfortunately, there was no time at that ISFNR session for proper debate; fortunately, Dan Ben-Amos adjourned the incipient discussion to a roundtable panel at the 2006 annual meeting of the American Folklore Society in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. And so the debate came into bloom.

Unlike King Arthur's fabled company, though, participants in the Milwaukee roundtable did not actually gather around a circular table in order to smooth the edges of disagreement. Instead, they actively engaged in making the long-awaited controversy happen. One after another, Francisco Vaz da Silva (ISCTE, Lisbon), Jan Ziolkowski (Harvard University), and Dan Ben-Amos (University of Pennsylvania) exposed their reasons for thinking that fairy tales were not in-

vented by anyone in recent European history; then Bottigheimer (SUNY at Stony Brook) responded. While this part of the debate was frank but deferential, the sort of lively exchanges foreshadowed in the Tartu session started flourishing when the discussion was opened to the floor. The audience, which included some of the world's leading authorities in fairy-tale studies, raised a number of issues concerning Bottigheimer's proposition—including whether it is appropriate to redefine fairy tales the way she does, whether it is wise to ignore long-standing fairy-tale traditions (both in Europe and elsewhere), and whether it is acceptable to ignore phenomena of Eurasian diffusion when speculating on the origin of European fairy tales. Bottigheimer's responses were incisive but proved less than convincing, or so the mutinous atmosphere and occasional heated exchanges suggest.

Why is Bottigheimer's hypothesis cre-

ating such a stir? There is, of course, the obvious point that whereas her proposition assumes oral tradition is doomed to transmit (and corrupt) stories invented in literary circles, contemporary folklorists have reasons to think otherwise. Over the last few decades, a wealth of ethnographic studies have shown that the workings of oral transmission involve individual creation within a conventional framework, which explains both the variability and the overall stability of oral traditions. Insofar as folklore transmission and individual creation are inextricably bound, it is pointless to seek original texts amidst the protean variability of oral tradition. Therefore, willy-nilly, folklorists have come to make peace with the notion that it is as futile to search for the inventor of fairy tales as it is to seek the inventor of language, the creator of mythology, or the architect of religion.

This basic disagreement notwithstanding, the stir Bottigheimer is raising probably relates to the fact that she is promoting the literary-creation stance without bothering to examine oral tradition or even consider the work of folklorists. With admirable innocence, she maintains that the first person to write a fairy tale must have been its author. The trouble is that, as every folklorist knows, the existence or lack of a given theme in mouth-to-mouth transmission cannot be settled by means of the date of its first appearance in written documents. And, as every historian knows, the oldest known written source for a given theme is just that—the oldest *known* extant source—for other print versions may have been lost or,

as yet, remain unknown. Hence, as Bottigheimer is bound to eventually realize, one cannot decree that the eldest known source for a tale is the first of its kind.

In the same way, the very claim that Straparola invented fairy tales takes admirable courage—or considerable naiveté. Consider: it amounts to defending the proposition that fifteen or so magic tales first published in Venice between 1551 and 1553 precipitated the whole Indo-European fairy-tale tradition. To substantiate this claim itself requires nothing short of magic. It entails (i) being satisfied that there is absolutely no record of fairy tales before Straparola's *Pleasant Nights*, (ii) showing that Straparola's meager showcase of fifteen or so magic tales could possibly have generated the

whole range of myriad variants within ATU types 300 through 749, and (iii) making a convincing historical case that Straparola's tales have indeed spawned, in just three centuries, all of the richly diverse European (and non-European) fairy-tale traditions.

In my Milwaukee roundtable presentation, I pointed out that none of these minimum requirements has yet been met. Not only is Bottigheimer's redefinition of fairy tales flawed; her claim that fairy tales (by whatever definition) did not exist before Straparola's life-span is demonstrably wrong. Moreover, to this day Bottigheimer has failed to explain in terms of print-history research (let alone of morphological-generative analysis) how Straparola's scant collection of magic tales could have spawned the massive

corpus of modern fairy tales.

But the debate is still ongoing, and it might yet evolve in interesting ways. To my mind, it is not fruitful to approach the study of fairy-tale transmission in terms solely of either literary influence or oral creation. Clearly, both processes have long been at work, and it would be interesting to see literary scholars and folklorists cooperate in unraveling specific threads of the overall mesh. Undoubtedly, Bottigheimer's expertise in print histories would be a precious asset in any study of tale transmission that takes both dimensions into account.

## The Rise and Fall of the "Rise Tale"

by Jan M. Ziolkowski, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA



Jan M. Ziolkowski is the Arthur Kingsley Porter Professor of Medieval Latin at Harvard University.

Photo: private collection.

The temptation to formulate absolute dichotomies runs strong when phenomena such as orality and literacy or folklore and learning come into play: this story had oral origins, that one had written; this tale qualifies as folklore, that one as learned; and so forth. Among many possible causes for dichotomizing, two could prove particularly relevant to the present discussion.

One reason for polarization could be that in general human beings seem predisposed to think in blacks and whites, imposing stark and simple oppositions, despite the fact that the realities, such as skin color, may reveal infinite gradations. This tendency is rewarded even, or especially,

in academics, since one of the best ways to secure renown is by advancing a powerful, even extreme, thesis. Moderation can have hope at best for *succès d'estime*.

Another explanation is that researchers tend, not always consciously, to develop rationales to justify their own personal and professional commitments, and for a long time folklorists and literary scholars, especially philologists, have quarantined themselves in largely separate domains, with each having arguments to support its supremacy over the other, and each being defensive vis-à-vis the other. Folklore lays claim to authenticity and defends itself with fieldwork, tale types, and motifs as its shields. Philo-

logy assumes the aesthetic superiority of its texts and prides itself on the long history of its evidence.

Nor is friction of the sorts just described a modern or postmodern invention. Many of the different movements that can be subsumed under the heading of classicism and that have produced literature, particularly "high" literature, have been distinguished by their opposition to the social groups that may be most readily associated with folklore. Examples would be slaves and other oppressed social classes, such as women. Maybe the most notorious would be old women, whose "old wives' tales" once comprehended not just pseudo-scientific lore but all sorts of speech, including tales.

As a Latinist I have encountered many texts that I believe have embedded in them folk literature. Furthermore, I am convinced that some of them from antiquity and the Middle Ages pass muster as what is considered fairy tale today not only by many general readers but even by many scholars. How did these tales survive, if the literary tradition and above all the Greco-Roman literary tradition were so energetically opposed to folkloric materials? For one, classicism did not go unopposed. In late antiquity we have the stunning example of Apuleius, whose *Golden Ass* or *Metamorphoses* contains the tale of Cupid and Psyche, narrated by none other than an old woman. In the Middle Ages we find, above all from the twelfth century on, texts flooding in that purvey tales from the East as well as from throughout Europe and that are sometimes presented explicitly as coming from the folk or at least from professional entertainers who did not belong to the clergy.

How does this long preamble relate

to the argument that Ruth Bottigheimer advances in her *Fairy Godfather: Straparola, Venice, and the Fairy Tale Tradition*? In this slim volume Professor Bottigheimer advances the stout claim that the sixteenth-century author Zoan Francesco Straparola created what she regards as the classic fairy tale, one that traces the rags-to-riches ascent of a poor hero or heroine who has magical assistance in marrying into royalty and obtaining wealth. According to her, the tales that Straparola invented established the genre of the modern fairy tale as they became diffused throughout the world.

The main basis for Bottigheimer's argument is ten pages in which she closely paraphrases Straparola's early "rise tales" (to use the term she promotes). The first of these is "Prince Pig." This tale has been classed as ATU 441, where we are indeed informed that "the oldest complete literary text is Straparola." But ATU also points us to ATU 425C and 433B. Furthermore, ATU 425A contains cross-references not only to ATU 441 but also to ATU 430. ATU 425C is the story of Cupid and Psyche, of which the earliest literary evidence is furnished by Apuleius, while ATU 430 is The Donkey, of which the first attestation in the West is the Latin *Asinarius* from around 1200.

A few questions arise. One would be whether these texts are closely related or not. If they should indeed be grouped together, another issue to be interrogated is whether they stand in a direct relationship of source and influence, whether in an indirect one, or whether in a looser relationship of analogues. Within the congeries of questions about filiation belongs the further puzzle of whether the differences between ATU 441 and (to take

only one example) 430 result from innovations by Straparola himself. Such conundra are excluded *a priori* by Bottigheimer, who does not even identify the tales by their ATU designations.

From Bottigheimer's perspective the only productive approaches to the affinities between the tales of Straparola and other tales that resemble them are ultimately by applying her contributions to genre theory in defining the "rise tale" and to literary history in tracing the print reception of *Le piacevoli notti*. Folklorists might prefer to define fairy tale in other ways and to take into account oral literature. And maybe a new class of eclectics might wish to allow for the possibilities that we may never know whether a given story originated orally or in writing, that we must accept the impossibility of a universalizing theory that covers all tales of any given type, and that we need to approach each and every story with an open eye to orality lurking behind literariness as well as to literariness behind orality. Life without absolutes can be disconcerting, but much richer.

See also

Ziolkowski, Jan M. *Fairy Tales from Before Fairy Tales: The Medieval Latin Past of Wonderful Lies*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007.

## Reflections on the American Folklore Society Annual Meeting 2006

by Jeana Jorgensen, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA

The theme of this year's AFS meeting was homelands and diasporas, but I noticed another theme concurrently informing many of the papers and discussions: agency. Individual choice, subjectivity, and group constraints were topics that sparked conversations and appeared within panels, from those on dreams and sleep to those about rehumanizing medical narratives. Even material culture topics such as foodways and vernacular architecture presented numerous possibilities for debating the role of the individual within social metanarratives. Within this polyvocal frame, ongoing folk narrative research flourished.

Contributions to fairy tale studies were especially prominent at the conference. The panel composed of Jack Zipes, Cristina Bacchilega, and Donald Haase sparked a discussion that lasted well after the panel itself ended. Zipes brought mimetics and relevance theory to the study of folk and fairy tales; Bacchilega analyzed the creolization in Nalo Hopkinson's postcolonial, speculative fairy-tale rewrites; and Haase examined hypertexts and other non-linear transmissions of fairy tales. All of these approaches looked for meaning in the methods of folk and fairy tale diffusion, as well as theorizing the relationships of individual choices and reinterpretations to larger cultural and biological structures.

The roundtable on orality and literacy in the European fairy tale tradition brought these issues into sharp relief as noted scholars took positions. A continuation of the debate sparked at the ISFNR meeting in Estonia in 2005, this roundtable invited Francis-

co Vaz da Silva and Jan Ziolkowski to comment on Ruth Bottigheimer's hypothesis regarding the literary origins of fairy tales. Dan Ben-Amos presided over the discussion. Vaz da Silva began by summarizing Bottigheimer's main contentions, namely that Straparola's 16th-century collection of fairy tales was the first of its kind, and provided the basis for the development and spread of European fairy tales. Bottigheimer distinguished between two types of fairy-tale plots: rise and restoration tales. In rise tales, a poor protagonist is aided by magic to achieve marriage and a moneyed position, whereas in restoration tales, a noble protagonist falls to poverty, and through the wily use of magic, ascends to his or her former position. Vaz da Silva employed folkloristic techniques to refute Bottigheimer's position, stating that Straparola's collection being the first of its kind does not mean that the tales did not exist prior to publication; namely, the absence of evidence does not connote the evidence of absence, especially in relation to

orally circulating materials. The oldest known source of a tale is not necessarily the same as the oldest source of that tale. Jan Ziolkowski spoke on fairy tales before fairy tales, contributing his perspective on early oral and written texts. He affirmed that oral and literary influences flow both ways, yet in each case, problems remain in determining the relationship between evidence for and the prevalence of fairy tales. Ruth Bottigheimer defended her views by restating why she believed the rise/restoration division of fairy tale plots to be important: the tales' content is related to audience expectations, and as European populations shifted into urban centers, fairy tales began to incorporate the possibilities of urban life, the hopes and dreams inspired by cities. Bottigheimer restated her belief that there is no evidence that unlettered peoples created rise and restoration tales. The ensuing discussion was quite heated, as (aforementioned) scholars interested in transmission questioned Bottigheimer's estimates of literacy in early modern European



Genre preferences at the AFS 2006 Annual Meeting (from the left): Jeana Jorgensen gave a paper on personal narratives, while Linda J. Lee discussed supernatural legends.

Photo by Alar Madisson.

cities, for example. Additionally, the issue of Straparola's incomplete biography came up. Other questions arose, such as how long stories stay in oral transmission, how we account for the arts and memory of master storytellers, and how long tales take to congeal.

I found this discussion and others to be incredibly productive in my thinking about agency. One of my main concerns was Bottigheimer's contention that both rise and restoration

tales evolved in the context of elite, literate tale-tellers. Restoration tales feature protagonists who are already empowered to use magic and cunning to restore them to their proper place in the social hierarchy. Does this mean that rise tales feature poor protagonists who cannot progress without magical aid from others because elite tale-tellers believe illiterate populations incapable of exercising agency? Is magical aid unnecessary for those who already "deserve" it? Underlying the assumption that upward so-

cial mobility results from outside help and not individual agency is a power imbalance that I find troubling. Positioning some individuals (the nobility) as empowered within fairy tale plots, and some individuals (the literate) as empowered within fairy tale transmission has ramifications for theoretical and practical directions in fairy tale studies. The role of the individual working creatively within social constraints continues to be a fascinating topic for those of us involved with folk narrative scholarship.

## A Degenerating Debate

by Linda J. Lee, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA

At the ISFNR 2005 Congress, during the Theory and Methods session, Ruth (Sue) Bottigheimer presented a controversial paper titled "Fairy Tale Origins, Fairy Tale Dissemination, and Folk Narrative Theory." In it, she addresses ideas more fully developed and explained in her 2002 book, *Fairy Godfather: Straparola, Venice, and the Fairy Tale Tradition*. Sue's paper sparked a strong response, including some of the most vehement, intense debating among scholars I had ever witnessed. Time constraints prevented a thorough exploration of her arguments and their broader implications. To continue this discussion in a public forum, Dan Ben-Amos organized a follow-up roundtable discussion at the American Folklore Society annual meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in October 2006.

The session opened with Dan providing background information about the debate that started at the ISFNR Tartu Congress and describing the sharing of ideas and information that

took place among the panelists in preparation for the session. Hearing this, I expected a more productive conversation than the one that occurred at the ISFNR. Francisco Vaz da Silva offered a methodical and comprehensive point-by-point analysis of and response to Sue's main arguments. He provided numerous reasoned objections and counterpoints that, ideally, would have served as a basis for further discussion and debate. Unfortunately, the intended roundtable discussion did not proceed as productively as it might have.

In response to Francisco's careful analysis, Sue primarily reiterated her earlier arguments. She argued for the recognition of two very different types of fairy tales, what she calls "restoration" and "rise" tales. Very similar stories may be told in these tale types, but there is a crucial difference: restoration tales begin with a high-status protagonist who loses his or her high status, often through deception or misfortune, and eventually

is restored to his or her initial status. Rise tales, by contrast, begin with a low-status protagonist who attains a higher status at the completion of a quest. Further, she argues—and this was the crux of the debate—the rise plot represents an important innovation for the fairy tale form, and she credits Straparola with its invention in 16<sup>th</sup> century Venice. She reverses the traditional underlying assumption of fairy tale scholarship: rather than oral versions serving as the source for literary tales, she contends that the origin of the "rise" oral tale as we know it is a literary source.

Sue's argument hinges on the lack of documentary evidence demonstrating that rise tales circulated in oral tradition prior to the publication of Straparola's *Pleasant Nights*. Her position makes sense given her intellectual interest in publishing histories and the relationship between genre and socio-historical context. She stated repeatedly during the AFS session that folkloristics is the only discipline

that gets away with using imagined or assumed evidence (that is, the existence of an unrecorded oral version) in place of documented textual evidence. As might be expected, her easy dismissal of the intellectual foundations of an entire discipline sparked hostility, defensiveness, and even some anger.

For me, the most frustrating aspect of this panel was Sue's reluctance or refusal to engage in a discussion about the various objections to her argument. For example, rather than consider how examples raised by Francisco (from the *Arabian Nights*) or Merrill Kaplan (Icelandic examples) complicated the neatness of her argument, Sue instead simply stated that those examples did not meet her definition of "fairy tale," and therefore were beyond the scope of her argument. This approach was not particularly useful, leading to divisiveness and

near hostility, rather than intellectual engagement and collaboration.

Toward the end of the session, the panelists were asked directly if they felt Sue had sufficiently addressed the issues and concerns they raised, and Francisco—whose prepared remarks brought up the greatest quantity of issues—reluctantly admitted that she did not. The not-surprising but still regrettable reality is that what could have been a productive conversation where interested scholars participated in a meaningful back-and-forth discussion instead degenerated into a heated albeit poorly orchestrated debate in which participants too often talked past one another rather than responded to each other. In many respects, this session was indicative of need that many scholars have to protect their ideas and disciplinary integrity—an attitude that is perhaps exacerbated in an already-marginali-

zed field like folkloristics.

Regardless of whether we agree with Sue's arguments, it is perhaps useful that she has forced a discussion about some of the underlying assumptions of folkloristics. She certainly is correct in her observation that folk and fairy tale scholars for at least two centuries have uncritically and unquestioningly assumed an oral source for fairy tales. The assumption that there are unrecorded prior oral versions has always influenced folkloristics, whether the goal of scholarly inquiry was to reconstruct the Ur-form of a tale or to understand patterns of transmission and variation. We have an opportunity to decide how our discipline responds to this charge. Do we retreat to a position of academic defensiveness, or do we consider the reasons beyond tradition and convention for some of our underlying assumptions?

## Orality and Literacy in the European Fairy Tale

by Adam Zolkover, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA



Adam Zolkover's paper at the AFS meeting in Wisconsin dealt with gender construction in contemporary legends.

Photo by Alar Madisson.

At the end of the roundtable on Orality and Literacy in the European Fairy Tale – near the end of the 2006 meetings of the American Folklore Society in Milwaukee Wisconsin – I arose from my chair, made my way to the front of the small, crowded hotel conference room, and quietly thanked Ruth Bottigheimer for her good humor in not only allowing the event to happen, but participating in it herself. With what was surely more poise and dignity than I could have mustered were I in a similar position, Bottigheimer allowed her self and her work to become the center of a firestorm of critique, standing quietly aside as notable scholars Francisco Vaz da Silva

and Jan Ziolkowski peeled away at the arguments of her 2002 volume, *Fairy Godfather: Straparola, Venice, and the Fairy Tale Tradition*.

The seeds of this roundtable – the notion that an extensive public discussion of Bottigheimer's work was necessary – were planted at the ISFNR meeting in Tartu, Estonia, in the summer of 2005. There, Bottigheimer presented a condensed summary of many of the arguments in her book that led to a spirited discussion (one of my colleagues has accurately termed it a shouting match) among the panelists and the audience. She argued in that paper, as well as in the



book, that a distinction can be made between two basic plot types in European fairy tales: “rise” and “restoration.” The latter – in which a formerly wealthy protagonist must restore his or her family to their former glory – is a pattern that has been present in fairy tales since antiquity. While the former – in which an originally poor protagonist becomes wealthy – is a strictly literary invention, pioneered by Gianfrancesco Straparola as a response to the increased urbanization of the sixteenth century, and then emulated throughout Europe.

Needless to say, the theory has proved unpopular. And at the roundtable at AFS, Vaz da Silva and Ziolkowski set out to disprove it altogether. Vaz da Silva, using a broadly folkloristic methodology, pointed to several basic flaws in Bottigheimer’s arguments. Most notably he observed that “rise” and “restoration” tales have no significant structural differences – that only the most peripheral of plot details separates them – and that the absence of “rise” tales in the written record in the period prior to Straparola’s collection is not conclusive proof that they did not exist. While Ziolkowski, using a more historical method, pointed to numerous instances of narratives that could be construed as “rise” tales in classical literature.

And in the question-and-answer portion of the roundtable, audience comments continued along these same two basic lines. Scholars from more literary strains of fairy tale studies pointed out that much of Bottigheimer’s historical detail is inaccurate, and that written versions of many of these tales were, in fact, recorded prior to Straparola. While those who approach folklore from a more social scientific perspective balked at the

echoes of *gesunkenes Kulturgut* in Bottigheimer’s argument, and pointed to non-Western analogues as proof of the theory’s implausibility.

For all of the vehement criticism, however, it seems as though many in the room, participants and audience alike, missed the larger issue. So entangled were they in questions of history and literary genealogy that they were unable to see the forest through the trees. That is, until Cristina Bacchilega asked precisely the right question: what does this get us? Issues of fact and accuracy aside, what is the purpose of pinning an entire phylum of fairy tales to a single source? And where is the value in insisting that they are literary and patriarchal in origin? The endeavor resounds with the legacy of nineteenth century butterfly-collecting approaches to folklore – with an emphasis on product over practice – and leads to a kind of circular quibbling about etiology that ultimately produces little more than another set of fanciful origin narratives.

The roundtable itself, in many ways, mirrored exactly this kind of non-productivity. It was not especially beneficial to its participants or its audience in the sense that there was no resolution, nor even the groundwork for resolution, of any of the issues that were raised. And yet it was also not without value. As I commented to Ruth Bottigheimer when I spoke to her at the end of the session, the roundtable may not have changed any minds one way or the other – it may not have brought either closure or increased interest – but it caused every person in the room to reflexively examine their own relationship to fairy tales and fairy-tale scholarship, and for that alone, it was valuable.

## International Conference on *Advances in Oral Literature Research* in Belgrade, Serbia, November 24-26 2006

by Merili Metsvahi, University of Tartu, Estonia

Towards the end of November 2006, I was lucky to participate in an oral literature research conference in Belgrade, Serbia, and in this way expand my knowledge of Europe, of humanities in the Balkans, of folklore studies and the field of oral literature research in particular. We Estonian folklorists do not know much about Serbia and our Balkan colleagues, so the conference held in Serbia afforded a good opportunity to discover these “undiscovered” areas both in geographical and scholarly terms.

With this scholarly event the Spanish department at the University of Belgrade celebrated its 35th anniversary. About a half of the conference was therefore held in Spanish. However, since the English and Spanish sessions were organized separately, those who didn't speak Spanish could always choose an English session. The conference lasted three days. In addition to eleven plenary sessions, there were three parallel sessions running through these three days. My following short overview reflects the choices I made, firstly on the basis of my personal interests and language skills, and secondly depending on the attractiveness and comprehensibility of the chosen papers. The order of introductions follows the order of presentations in the conference programme.

David Elmer (Harvard University) dealt with techniques for managing narrative progress in the epic discourse of South Slavic singers. At moments demanding extra attention from the



Getting ready for advances in oral literature research: glimpse of the conference venue and the audience before the start of a session.

*Photo by Madis Arukask.*

audience (e.g. the appearance of new characters, spatial movements, a change of viewpoint), the singer appeals directly to the listener. Such specific techniques intensify the performative relation between the performer and the audience, and are a matter of the singer's idiolect.

Anna Bonifaci's (Harvard University) approach was similar to the one applied by David Elmer, though instead of the Milman Parry collection she used Homeric poems as her empirical material. According to Bonifaci, there is a large number of discourse-markers in Homeric poems that do not contribute to the content but rather indicate certain moves in the epic performance, and these are usually left out in translations. Bonifaci used metaphors drawn from photography to describe these different kinds of discourse-markers found in the Iliad and in the Odyssey: the shifts of viewpoint were compared to zooming out, zooming in and flash (this last fixing emotionally

relevant moments).

David R. Olson's (University of Toronto) keynote paper titled “What happens when oral traditions are written down?” contrasted the oral with the literary. Olson argued that literacy should be understood as a social practice that creates new discourses and genres. By writing something down the distinction between the statement and the utterance is settled and categories are introduced that make it possible to think about the properties of speech. Olson regarded the sentence as a product of literacy, created for the discussion of human thought.

Slavica Srbinovska's and Maja Bojadzievska's (Ss Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje) joint paper dealt with the role of curses in Macedonian oral tradition. It was suggested that in Macedonian curses the category of gender is strongly emphasized and is associated with the dualistic pairs of passive—active, bad—good,



David Olson from Canada (on the right) and Thomas A. McKean from Scotland enjoying traditional Serbian desserts at the concluding dinner of the conference.

Photo by Madis Arukask.

nature—culture and private—public. Curses serve as an influential conduit of social politics in Macedonian society, with the mother's curses being the most widespread.

Ruth Finnegan (Open University, London) reviewed briefly in her keynote paper the history of the discipline of oral literature and discussed the category of the oral. She claimed that both literacy and orality have many dimensions (in the case of literacy this is expressed by the term 'multiliteracies'). Furthermore, since these two categories interpenetrate and overlap, one cannot draw a clear line between them. In her view, the most important element of a performed event is voice in all its aspects. In the concluding part of her presentation, Finnegan proposed the use of an enlarged notion of oral literature.

David C. Rubin's (Duke University) keynote paper combined the study of oral traditions and cognitive psychology, especially the research done on long-term memory. According to Rubin, ballads survive down the

centuries because each word that is sung offers cues to different memory systems related to, respectively, emotional significance, metrical conditions, visual and spatial imagery. In addition, the narrative form serves as an aid to recall, and there are specific narrative scripts that can be found in different oral traditions and in both oral and literary genres.

Sonja Miladinovic (University of Göteborg) spoke about the influence of south-slavic folksongs on Johan Ludvig Runeberg's poetry. The Finland-Swedish poet Runeberg, author of the Finnish national anthem, is regarded as the national poet of Finland. When writing his first poems, Runeberg was influenced by Swedish literature, but after reading south-slavic folksongs and translating "Serbische Volkslieder" (1827) into Swedish he started to model his poetry on south-slavic folklore. Since the translations of south-slavic folksongs were published after Runeberg's songs, his contemporary readers were not aware of the south-slavic influence on his poetry.

Louise O. Vasvári (SUNY at Stony Brook) examined the Hispanic *donçella guerrera* ballad from the perspective of gender studies, including the idea that gender is both the product and process of its representation. She argued that the given ballad with its "warrior maid" motif plays with the transgressive female to male transgenderism in order to promote gender-appropriate roles. At the same time a resistant reading is possible, because the story's transgenderism also serves to affirm the permeability of gendered boundaries and highlights the contrived and contextualized nature of "male" and "female".

Jelena Filipovic (University of Belgrade) connected a theory of the ethnography of speaking and the theory of cultural models in cognitive anthropology. She proposed that cultural models reflect ideologies, including those associated with gender. Filipovic studied different versions of one particular Serbian folksong that had different endings. She concluded that the different endings refer to different genders: the lyrical endings of the song reflect female cultural models and the epical endings male ones.

Thomas A. McKean's (University of Aberdeen) paper aimed to offer an insight into the world of an oral composer. He recollected the process of editing his book about the songs and life of the Gaelic songmaker Iain Macneacail. When McKean went back to him with his songs in order to look them over and make them acceptable to the songmaker, it turned out that it was impossible to fulfill this task: each performance was equally valid in its own context and not comparable to fixed printed texts.

In addition to making participants think

about theoretical questions concerning the composition of oral poetry, the conference afforded an opportunity to taste a real oral poetry performance with all one's senses. In a concert that took place in the Cervantes Institute, listeners were treated to three performances given by a Spanish ballad-singer, a Serbian gusli-player and a joint Cuban-Canarian band respectively. The last one proved to be the climax of the concert even for those members of the audience who did not understand Spanish. Two Cuban singers invited by the organizers for the occasion improvised songs into which they incorporated various topics relevant to the participants of the conference. The faces of the majority of the listeners – those who understood the language – were perpetually tear-stained due to the sustained laughter. Another good way to relax

and spend time together with our hosts was to participate in the informal pub nights they had planned for each evening. Some weeks later I heard from a Polish man that Belgrade is considered to be the party-capital of Europe. My recollections of the Cuban pub "Revolution" in the old town of Belgrade certainly confirm this description.

For the chance to take part in such a well-organized and interesting conference in a fine city in that "country of wonderful oral literature" (words of Ruth Finnegan from her speech in the opening ceremony) I am thankful to the Estonian Cultural Endowment. For the wonderful organization of the conference I owe very many thanks to the main organizer of the conference Jasmina Nikolic and her helpers.



Discovering the "undiscovered": Merili Metsvahi against the background of Novi Sad, the second-largest city in Serbia, and the river Danube, the second-longest river in Europe.

Photo: private collection.

## Malta International Wise Fool Conference and International Storytelling Festival

by George Mifsud-Chircop, University of Malta, Malta



H. E. Paolo Andrea Trabalza, the Italian Ambassador to Malta, addressing the opening session of the Conference at the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura*, Valletta, Malta. From left to right: Manwel Mifsud, Ulrich Marzolph, George Mifsud-Chircop, and Francesca Maria Corrao.

Photo: George Mifsud-Chircop.

The Department of Maltese, Malta University G. F. Ablea Junior College, in collaboration with the *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* at the Academy of Sciences, Göttingen, Germany, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Malta, the Austrian Embassy in Malta, the Italian Embassy and the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura* in Malta, and the European Commission Representation in Malta have organized in Malta the First International Folk Narrative Conference on 'The Wise Fool in Narrative Cultures' (7-10 December 2006) and the First International Malta Storytelling Festival (11-13 December 2006) with the participation of international storytellers.

### The Wise Fool Conference

The conference focused on the phenomenon of the trickster in the Mediterranean area and elsewhere. Twenty-five international scholars from sixteen different countries participated in the four-day conference. Papers were presented on the wise fool in Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, Italy, Lausanne, Lithuania, the Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Turkey, and Wales. Participants examined the different regional characteristics of the trickster figures, as well as discussing possible connections, overlaps and contrasting conceptualisations of the same. Special emphases were given to the transnational character of trickster culture.

The opening session was held on December 7 at the *Istituto Italiano di Cultura*, Valletta, and opened by H. E. Paolo Andrea Trabalza, Italian Ambassador to Malta. Prof. Manwel Mifsud, Head, Department of Maltese, University of Malta, and Dr George Mifsud-Chircop, Conference President, also addressed the participants. During the first Plenary Session Francesca Maria Corrao of the *Università Orientale of Napoli* discussed 'Giufà and his Never Ending Story'. Ulrich Marzolph of the Georg-August University, Göttingen, Germany, and senior editor of *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, Göttingen, Germany, focused on 'Trickster Narratives – Between Political Criticism and Ideological Concern,' with special reference to the position of humorous narratives in the Near East, more specifically the narratives focusing on the most popular Near Eastern trickster character, best known by his Turkish name, Nasreddin Hoca – thus demonstrating that the position of humorous narrative in between political criticism

and ideological exploitation is a very delicate one.



The University of Malta  
G.F. Abela Junior College

## The First International Conference on THE WISE FOOL December 7-10, 2006

The Conference banner.

In her paper 'De-emphasizing the Trickster, Transnationalizing the 'National' Hero in the Global Ethnoscape,' Hande Birkalan-Gedik of the Yeditepe University, Istanbul, reconsidered the representation of Nasreddin Hoca beyond the Hoca stories and examined his 'meta-narratives' through a wide range of media in the age of globalization. Anil Kumar Boro's paper, Gauhati University, India, 'The Trickster in Assamese Folktale' was read *in absentia*. His study endeavoured to examine the special traits of the Assamese trickster figure in the context

of the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society of Assam. According to Boro, the trickster figure in Assamese tales is *not* a culture hero, and the reason for this is found in the specific socio-cultural context of Assam.

### Africa

Sigrid Schmidt of Hildesheim, Germany, in 'Three African Tricksters, Fools or Wise Fools?' discussed the balance between the mythical hero and the mythical fool in the persons of Kaggen of the Xam Bushmen of South Africa, Haiseb of the Damara of Namibia, and Waito of the Baka in the Cameroons, three trickster figures endowed with some of the attributes with some aspects of a culture hero but regarded as figures from mythical primeval times and sometimes depicted as fools. Thomas Geider of the *Institut für Afrikanische Sprachwissenschaften* at the University of Frankfurt am Main, Germany, focused on the spread of 'Abu Nuwas, from the East African Coastlands and Savannahs to Schoolbooks and Popular Media': Abu Nuwas (750?-815?) was analysed as the trickster, sage and fool of East Africa, its variation and tale types, its local ethics and semantic shifts. The geo-literary dimension of the paper also considered variants from elsewhere, showing that Abu Nuwas once more emerges as a figure familiar from world literature (while folklore and non-European philologies indeed still have to revisit and re-map the concept of 'world literature').

### Central and Northern Europe

In her paper 'The Rat Meal – Storytelling of a Trickster between Reality and Fiction,' Ruth-E. Mohrmann of the Institute of European Ethnology, University of Münster, Germany, dealt with a long poem written in Low Ger-

man about a historic trickster, who was seen as a troublemaker, and the relationship between reality and fiction, between the oral and written tradition, putting this example in the wider field of folktale traditions of exchanged meals. Silke Meyer of the same Institute investigated the case of the historic figure of Dagobert who, from 1988-1994, kept Germany in suspense with a series of blackmailing and bomb attacks in Berlin. Her paper, 'Hero, Fool or Rogue? Arno Funke alias Dagobert in media discourse,' discussed the positive image of Dagobert as a popular hero based on the narrative tradition of trickster stories, though detecting a noticeable shift in the representation and reception of these disturbers of established orders.

Robin Gwyndaf, St Fagans, National History Museum, Cardiff, Wales, included various anti-heroes in his presentation 'Humour and Heroism. Fools and Tricksters in Welsh Tradition': Thomas Jones is portrayed in tradition and legend as a Welsh Rob Roy who, through his mischievous deeds and clever disguises, became a renowned folk hero and supporter of the poor against the tyranny of the

ruling classes; so-called fools and entertainers are employed by the Welsh gentry; fools in tale-cycles are associated with certain districts in Wales, such as Aberdaron and Llangernyw, north Wales, and Llanwnnw, south Wales; popular local characters are well-known for their quick, witty remarks and one-upmanship; and historical and imaginative characters are portrayed in legend and tradition as simpletons and fools, yet, through their ingenuity and humour, they emerge as heroes, much to the joy and satisfaction of the listener and reader.

Violetta Krawczyk-Wasilewska of the University of Lodz, Poland and Martin Dobbie of the University of Wales, drew 'A Comparative Cross-Cultural Study of the Wise Fool in the Genre of Jokes', contending that, though at first sight many jokes seem to have an ethnic or cultural specificity, they provide a subliminal dialectic that is intended to expose the absurdity of social stereotyping by engaging the 'wise fool' paradox. In her paper 'The Wise Fool in Slovak Oral and Literary Tradition,' Zuzana Profantová of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, discussed several heroes famous in rural environments and

wise fool heroes operating in urban environments in Slovakia, embodying an anthropological constant as the beloved heroes of the times.

Bronislava Kerbelyte of the Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania, asked 'Why is it the Third Brother who is the Fool in the Tales of Magic?': the intelligent brothers act identically in their incorrect behaviour and they always lose; however, in the same circumstances the fool behaves in the opposite way (correctly) and wins. In his paper '*Unfinished Monuments. The Cosmic Trickster in Estonian Mythology*,' Hasso Krull of Tallinn University, Tallinn, Estonia, concentrated on the visible geomorphic structures of the trickster's activity often interpreted as '*unfinished monuments*' in the Estonian oral tradition, offering an overview of the divergent mythical motives and finding a cosmological explanation to the recurrent idea of 'an unfinished work'.

### The Mediterranean

Luigina Rubini Messerli of the University of Lausanne, Lausanne, discussed 'The Wise Fool between History and (Popular) Literature in Spain, Germany and Italy' in the sixteen and seventeenth centuries: she examined the character of the court jester and the tension between folly and wisdom, with special attention to dwarf-figures in the arts, including Velázquez's painting 'Meninas (Mari-Barbola)'.

In his fascinating paper 'The Wise Fool in the Greek Tradition' since Aesop, Stelios Pelasgos (Katsaounis) of Mount Pelion, Greece, contended that "all wise fools, the legendary (Aesop), the historical (Socrates) and the fictional (Karagiozis) are notoriously ugly and deformed. (...) The wise fool is



Robin Gwyndaf (far right) making his point during the closing plenary session of the Conference. From left to right: Mike Wilson, Thomas Geider, ex-President of the Republic of Malta H. E. Ugo Mifsud-Bonnici (chairing), Ellinor Silius-Ahonen, and Marilena Papachristophorou.

Photo: George Mifsud-Chircop.



Some of the professional storytellers participating in the First International Storytelling Festival in Malta. From left to right: Stelios Pelasgos and Domniki Mavridou (Greece), Anna Maria Civico (Italy), Robin Gwyndaf (Wales), Claudia Edermayer (Austria), Yoel Perez (Israel), Marlene Mifsud-Chircop (Malta), and George Mifsud-Chircop (organizer).

Photo: George Mifsud-Chircop.

either a genuine fool who acts foolishly and exposes the foolishness of those who consider themselves wise, or a wise man who pretends to be a fool in order to question the certainties of the wise, or an ambivalent figure, both wise and a fool, undermining notions of foolishness and wisdom in others with his antics." Pelasgos ably showed that "the wise fool is also a spiritual example in the mystic traditions of the Greek and the Mediterranean world." Marilena Papachristophorou of the Academy of Athens, Hellenic Folklore Research Centre, Greece, presented an in-depth study on 'The Chick-Pea Master as a Human Parallel for Trickster Fox in Greek Folk Tradition. Considerations on oikotype ATU 545D\*,' examining adaptations of the plot in the Balkan countries' traditions, and asking to what degree the human 'Chick-Pea Master' assimilates the qualities of the Fox Matchmaker, which normally replaces Puss in Boots in the Greek oral tradition.

George Mifsud-Chircop of the University of Malta, presented a reappraisal of 'A Wise Fool's Anecdotal Cycle in Malta', challenging the manipulation and bowdlerisation of the discursive

richness of Maltese folk culture, and citing the extent to which *Ġaħan*, the Maltese wise fool, has been characterised as 'light-headed', his anecdotes, brimming with sagacity, slyness, guile, tricks and deception, written off as 'stupidities'. Yoel Shalom Perez, Ben Gurion University, Israel, discussed 'Culture-hero Tricksters among Bedouin Tribes in the North of Israel': he dealt with two culture-hero tricksters, Djoha (Jucha, Joha), who is known all over the Mediterranean and also in the Judeo-Espaniol culture, demonstrating a possible connection between this story and stories ascribed to the famous Arab poet Abu Nuwas; and a more local hero by the name of '*Hassan-el-Shater*' (Hassan, the clever one). Doris Vella of Malta discussed 'The Trickster in Amerindian Tales', remarking that "unlike the trickster character of the Mediterranean, the Coyote anti-hero is distinguished by the fact that he is not personified by a human being; his world is the animal world – rather like Aesop's."

A whole session was dedicated to professional storytelling: Agnès Chavanon, artistic director of '*Paroles en Festival*', Rhône-Alpes, France,

commented upon 'The Function of Folktales in Contemporary Society: tales of wisdom and stupidity in the professional narration of the *femme de la parole*'. She explained why for her, a storyteller for twenty-five years, the stories of wise fools remain her favourite repertoire. Mike Wilson of the University of Glamorgan, Pontypridd, Wales, inquired into 'The Wise Fools of Contemporary Professional Storytelling,' on the one hand looking at the responsibilities of the professional storyteller today and building on Walter Benjamin and Jack Zipes by assessing the storytellers' potential for becoming wise fool themselves, especially in the challenging context of the increasing professionalisation and commodification of storytelling; he further considered a number of examples of practising storytellers who, through their work, attempt to adopt the mantle of the wise fool and, in doing so, revive the tradition of the storyteller as a subversive and emancipatory force. Marylyn Peringer from Toronto discussed her experience as a professional storyteller in her paper 'The Storytellers School, Toronto. *Ġaħan*: Rogue, Fool, Wise Man, and Friend to Storytellers'.

A Plenary Session under the chairmanship of H. E. Dr Ugo Mifsud-Bonnici, ex-President of the Republic of Malta, closed the conference. Many participants took an active part in the discussion, including Prof. Ulrich Marzolph, and Drs Robin Gwyndaf, George Mifsud-Chircop, Marilena Papachristophorou, Stelios Pelasgos, Sigrid Schmidt, Ellinor Silius-Ahonen and Mike Wilson. It is hoped that the proceedings will be published in due course.

## The Storytelling Festival

All levels of Maltese society were involved in the festival, with the main focus being on the younger generations, including two sessions at the Corrective Facilities, Kordin Prisons and a session for B. Educ. University students. Storytelling involved telling improvised and dramatized narratives from the respective cultures in one's own language (and in translation). Many international storytellers from Austria, Canada, France, Greece, Israel and Italy and a number of Maltese storytellers participated, including Etty Ben-Zaken, Oded Shoub, Eitan Steinberg and Yoel Perez (Israel), Agnès Chavanon and Joseph Cutayar (France), Anna Maria Civico (Italy), Claudia Edermayer (Austria), Robin Gwyndaf (Wales), Stelios Pelasgos and Domniki Mavridou (Greece), Marilyn Peringer (Toronto), and Josephine Demajo, Marlene Mifsud-Chircop, and Rita Pace from Malta.

Over one thousand five-hundred students from state and private schools in Malta and Gozo attended the various sessions. Moreover, three conferences for the general public were held on 'the Storyteller's Way of Mastering and Fostering Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Intelligence' by Dr Stelios Pelasgos of Greece – purposely intended for teachers and educationalists; 'the Function of Folktales in Contemporary Society' by Agnès Chavanon, a French storyteller of international renown; and 'the Function and Value of Storytelling' by Dr Robin Gwyndaf of Wales.

The members of the organizing committee of both events, namely Saviour Seisun (chairperson), Anthony Cardona, Mario Cutajar, David Calleja, and Dr George Mifsud-Chircop, would

like to thank the official sponsors of these cultural events: Middlesea Valletta Life Assurance Company Ltd, the Malta Council for Culture and the Arts, the Ministry of Education, St James Cavalier, Valletta, Farsons Foundation, Publishers Enterprises Group (PEG) Ltd, the University of Malta G. F. Abela Junior College Administration, Park Hotel (Sliema), Heritage Malta, the Malta Photographic Society, the Malta Tourism Authority and Air Malta.



## Third Circular

ISFNR Interim Conference Sept. 20-22, 2007  
In Santa Rosa, La Pampa, Argentina

### “Folk Narrative and Society”

*The Organization Committee of the conference greets you and kindly invites you to participate in this important academic event. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Circular provides the following information:*

- Abstracts Presentation
- Registration and Registration Form
- Registration Fee and Registration Fee Form
- Tour
- Program
- Practical Information about Argentina and Travel Facilities

#### Supplements:

Registration Form  
Registration Fee Form

- Abstracts Presentation

The Organizing Committee wishes to inform and remind you of the rules concerning

#### ABSTRACTS PRESENTATION

##### Deadline: March 15, 2007

Format: Word Format

Typed: Arial 12 point.

Length: up to 300 words.

Double space between the title/author(s)/address and the main body of the abstract.

Single space between paragraphs.

Please note that all abstracts will have to go through a formal evaluation before the papers can be included in the academic program of the conference. In case of problems, the Organization Committee will E-mail applicants before **April 20<sup>th</sup> 2007. Your abstracts have been accepted if you have not received a notification by this date.**

##### Abstracts can be submitted

by fax: (54-11)-4783-6554

by e-mail: [anamdupey@tutopia.com](mailto:anamdupey@tutopia.com)

or [ana.dupey@inapl.gov.ar](mailto:ana.dupey@inapl.gov.ar)

### Or sent to this address:

Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Pensamiento Latinoamericano  
ISFNR Interim Conference – VII Jornadas de Estudio de la Narrativa Folklórica  
3 de Febrero 1378  
1426 Buenos Aires  
Argentina

The conference will be structured thematically in five sessions:

1. Folk Narrative: Structure, Process and Context.
2. Folk Narrative and Mass Media.
3. Folk Narrative and the Construction of Social Identities.
4. Folk Narrative and Social Memories.
5. Storytellers and their Audiences in the Narrative Event.

The official languages of the conference will be Spanish, Portuguese, and English.

- Registration and Registration Form

### The deadline for registration is March 15, 2007.

All prospective participants are asked to fill in the **registration form** and either fax, E-mail or mail it to the Organizing Committee. The registration form can be found in the 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of the ISFNR Newsletter as well as on the web site of the ISFNR.

Participants are encouraged to submit their completed registration form along with their abstracts. However, please note that a registration form is also to be submitted by those who have already presented their abstracts.

- Registration Fee and Registration Fee Form

**The registration fee is 50 Euros until May 20<sup>th</sup> and 75 Euros from May 21<sup>st</sup> and on-site.**

The registration fee covers conference materials and coffee breaks. Persons accompanying the participant do not need to pay the fee.

All participants are kindly asked to complete the **registration-fee form** and either fax, E-mail or mail it to the Organization Committee. The purpose of the registration-fee form is to inform the Conference Organization Committee of the payment; organizations will send each participant a confirmation letter upon receiving the fee.

The registration-fee form can be found in the 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of the ISFNR Newsletter as well as on the web site of the ISFNR.

Registration fee can be paid by **bank transfer.**

#### Bank details:

##### Beneficiary's name:

Asociación Amigos del Instituto Nacional de Antropología

##### Beneficiary's address:

3 de Febrero 1378,  
1426 Buenos Aires City, Argentina

##### Name of the beneficiary's bank:

Banco de la Nación Argentina

##### Address of the beneficiary's bank:

Cabildo 1900,  
1428 Buenos Aires City, Argentina

##### Beneficiary's bank account number (IBAN):

01100068-20000225565331

##### SWIFT code:

NACNARBA

**All bank charges are assigned to the participant.**

**Please be sure to mention the name of the participant on the bank transfer!**

- *Tour*

The ISFNR Interim Conference in Santa Rosa will close with a **guided tour of Santa Rosa City and the Luro Reserve Park on September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2007.**

The cost of the tour is **35 Euros.**

Due to government currency regulations, the charge for the tour could not be included in the registration fee and is to be paid on-site to the travel agency offering the tour.

All participants interested in participating in the tour are asked to contact **Ms. Paula Perrier Gustin** from **Perrier Viajes travel** for further details.

**E-mail: [perrierviajes@cpenet.com.ar](mailto:perrierviajes@cpenet.com.ar)**

The tour will begin at the heart of the city by visiting the Parliament House, the Municipal Hall, the Cathedral, and the city park, Center Don Tomás.

The excursion continues by taking route 35 South to the Luro Reserve Park in order find out more about the fauna and flora of the pampas. The tour will include refreshments outdoors.

Commentary in English by a professional guide during the whole tour.

Duration: 5 hours.

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- *Program*

**The program of the conference will be announced by June 20, 2007.**

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- *Practical Information about Argentina and Travel Facilities*

**Santa Rosa City is located 600 km from Buenos Aires City, Argentina.**

**How to get to BUENOS AIRES City:**

International flights arrive at the Ministro Pistarini International Airport located at Ezeiza, 35km (21 miles) southwest of Buenos Aires.

Address: Ministro Pistarini International Airport.

Phone: (54-11)-5480 2500.

More information about the airport can be found at:

<http://www.aa2000.com.ar/index.php> (English version)

The easiest way to get from the International Airport to BUENOS AIRES CITY is by **Manuel Tienda León bus, van and removal company.**

For information about schedules and rates, please visit

<http://www.tiendaleon.com.ar>

**How to get to SANTA ROSA City:**

From Buenos Aires city you can get to Santa Rosa, la Pampa by plane, air taxi or by bus:

1) **By plane:** flights to Santa Rosa depart from Jorge Newbery Airport (*Aeroparque Jorge Newbery*) in Buenos Aires City.

For more information about the airport, please visit:

<http://www.aa2000.com.ar/index.php>

Information about schedules and rates can be found at:

<http://www.aerolineas.com.ar> (English version).

Please remember that flight schedules and rates can be changed by the airline company.

2) **By Air Taxi:** information about air taxis can be found at: <http://www.vuelosargentina.com.ar/en/>  
<http://www.vipaviation.com.ar/>

3) **By bus:** the following bus companies depart from the Buenos Aires Bus Terminal to Santa Rosa bus station:

- The best company to travel with is the Expreso Alberino.

Timetable: every day 10.40 pm and 10.50 pm.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.expresoalberino.com/>

E-mail: [info@expresoalberino.com](mailto:info@expresoalberino.com)

- Nueva Chevallier

More information can be found at:

<http://www.nuevachevallier.com/>

E-mail: [info@nuevachevallier.com](mailto:info@nuevachevallier.com)

- Pullman General Belgrano

Information at site:

<http://www.gralbelgrano.com.ar/>

E-mail: [informes@gralbelgrano.com.ar](mailto:informes@gralbelgrano.com.ar)

All companies depart from the Buenos Aires city Bus Terminal (*Retiro Bus Terminal*). Address:

Antártida Argentina Av. and 10 Street; tel.: (54-11)-4310 0700.

**Visas to visit Argentina:**

For information about travel-document requirements, please contact the Argentine embassy or consulate of your home country. List of Argentine embassies and consulate offices around the world can be found at:

<http://www.embassyworld.com/embassy/Argentina/Argentina.html>

**Accommodation in Santa Rosa City:**

For information about hotels and lodgings in Santa Rosa, please visit:

[http://en.hospedata.com/hotels\\_argentina/reservations.php?province=la\\_pampa\\_argentina](http://en.hospedata.com/hotels_argentina/reservations.php?province=la_pampa_argentina)

(English, German, French, Italian versions)

or the official homepage of Santa Rosa City:

<http://www.santarosa.gov.ar/dormir.htm>

**Money:**

In Argentina we use the Peso or *pesos argentinos* (\$; ARS), so make sure you have some. Currency-exchange offices are located at airports and banks.

The exchange rate is 1 EUR = 4,10 ARS and 1 USD = 3,08 ARS.

All major credit cards are widely accepted. Automatic Teller Machines work round the clock. Banking hours are from 10 am to 3 pm. Banks are not open on Saturdays and Sundays. Please note that you are required to present your passport when exchanging currency.

**Electricity:**

220 V, 50 Hz.

Power outlets have 2 cylindrical holes or 2 flat holes with ground connection. It is advisable to bring an adaptor for these outlets to use your electric devices without problems.

**Time Zone:**

GT minus -3:00 hours.

**Dialing Codes:**

Country dial code: 54

Buenos Aires, city dial code: 11

Santa Rosa, city dial code: 2954

**Language:**

The official language in Argentina is Spanish.

**Internet:**

The Internet is available and widely used.

**Weather:**

September is spring in Buenos Aires and Santa Rosa. The average daily temperature is about 16° C/61 F (min 10° C/ 50F; max 19° C/ 66 F).

You can find a 4-day forecast at:  
<http://www.meteonet.com.ar/>

and at:

<http://espanol.weather.com/weather/local/ARLP0095?letter=S>

**Maps and further information:**

Maps of Argentina are available at:

<http://worldatlas.com/webimage/countries/samerica/ar.htm>

<http://www.argentinaturistica.com/informa/sroimapazona.htm>

Additional information about Argentina can be found on the official homepage of the Argentina Tourism Office:

<http://www.turismo.gov.ar/eng/menu.htm> (English version)

or at the Argentina Travel Net:

<http://www.argentinatravelnet.com/indexe.html> (English version)

**About Santa Rosa City and La Pampa:**

Santa Rosa is the capital of La Pampa province, located in the centre of Argentina. It is 600 km away from Buenos Aires. This province has a fairly uniform landscape, with green prairies in the East and wild, yellow steppe in the West. It is bisected from south to north by a line of forest. In the past, the region was inhabited mainly by nomadic aborigines with important settlements in Leubucó, Chilihué and Toay. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this territory was considered desert, on account not only of the natural environment, but also the absence of the white culture regarded as "civilization".

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the native populations were displaced and corralled by the so called "desert conquest". Colonization from the East was initiated by immigrants of varied origins who exploited the cattle trade by establishing big ranches. At that time, the first villages, Victorica and General Acha, were being founded. In

the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the influx of foreigners aiming to settle down with their families increased, constituting the *pampa gringa* with agriculture as their main economic activity.

Nowadays two economic systems coexist in the province: a) subsistence (economic units of 5000 inhabitants with a population density of 0,1 inhabitant per km<sup>2</sup>), in which native Ranqueles who survived the conquest predominate, and b) farming (with economic units of 1000 to 500 inhabitants and a population density of 20 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>) in which *criollos* and descendants of immigrants predominate.

Santa Rosa and General Pico are the most populous cities of the province with 50 000 inhabitants each; and a group of towns with around 5000 people each comprise the urban centers of the province.

This is the dominant image of the gaucho culture in the local rural world, which furthermore is a symbol of the Argentinean nation.

In order to check maps of Santa Rosa, La Pampa, please visit  
<http://www.pampanet.com/mapas/>.





## NOMINATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR FOLK NARRATIVE RESEARCH (ISFNR)

In compliance with the statutes of the ISFNR, Art. 5, "Any person qualified by his [or her] scholarly work in the field of folk narrative research may become a member of the Society. Requests for membership, supported by two members, shall be examined and decided on by the membership committee.---"

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I. First Name of Person Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name of Person Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Title, if any \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

II. Nomination should be signed by two (2) members.  
Nominating members can send an e-mail to the Membership Committee Chair in lieu of signatures (see address below).

Name (signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Name (signature) \_\_\_\_\_

III. Please supply the Curriculum Vitae and list of publications in folk narrative research.  
Include two recent offprints and/or abstracts that are representative of the applicant's scholarship.

#### IV. Please mail this form to:

**ISFNR Membership Committee Chair**

Professor Cristina Bacchilega  
Department of English  
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Honolulu, HI 96822  
USA  
**E-mail:** cbacchi@hawaii.edu

**ISFNR President**

Professor Ülo Valk  
Dept. of Estonian and Comparative Folklore  
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ESTONIA  
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The International Society for Folk Narrative Research is a scientific society whose objectives are to develop scholarly work in the field of folk narrative research and to stimulate contacts and the exchange of views among its members.

## Executive Committee of the ISFNR:

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Plaza San Martín is the central square of Santa Rosa, La Pampa. The statue figures General José de San Martín (1778-1850), the national hero of Argentina and the first president of Peru.

Photo by Diarmuid Ó'Giolláin.