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Translator's Introduction

The following translation supplements my essay "Grimm Nights: Reflections on the Connections Between the Grimms' Household Tales and the 1001 Nights" in the present volume of Marvels & Tales. The translation presents the section of Bernhard Heller's essay on folktales and fairy tales in Arabic literature and popular tradition that discusses the particular connections between the Grimms' tales and the 1001 Nights (pp. 405–409). Heller's essay was originally published in the fourth volume of the Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm, edited by Johannes Bolte and Jiří Polívka (Leipzig, 1929: 364–418), a volume that contains a number of essays that discuss the history of folktales and fairy tales on an international scale.

In his day Bernhard Heller (1871–1943) was one of the most knowledgeable experts on both Jewish and Arabic narrative traditions. Although some of Heller's positions are now outdated, his essay retains its position as a historical document. Essentially, Heller's detailed argument bespeaks the comparative approach of the historic-geographic method in vogue in his day. Informative as it is, from today's perspective Heller's positivistic amassing of vaguely similar or overlapping motifs in the Grimms' Household Tales and the 1001 Nights constitutes at best a quarry for further research that would have to study the mentioned details with great scrutiny.

Considering the density of the German shorthand sentences, the translation aims to be as faithful as possible. The references to other volumes of Bolte's and Polívka's Anmerkungen have been amended to "BP"; the code KHM, for sake of clarity introduced in the translation, refers to the Grimms' Kinder- und Hausmärchen. Several detailed references other than to these basic works have been deleted.

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Galland's translation [of the *1001 Nights*] offered unexpectedly rich and new material to satisfy European taste and curiosity. Its impact on the educated audience, readers as well as writers, is easily explained. The problem is not so easy when we study the manifold connections between the *1001 Nights* and the European folktale. The existence of some of these tales can be traced back to a past that preceded Galland's period by centuries. At this point, we must assume that in their journey from the Orient to the Occident, tales would also take along parts of the *1001 Nights*. At any rate, this assumption is necessary to explain the impact of some motifs of the *1001 Nights* on the medieval epic.

The Brothers Grimm approached the *1001 Nights* with sympathetic appreciation. "By far the greatest number [of the collection's tales] includes tales that are felicitous in terms of content as well as charming and delicately beautiful in terms of presentation" (KHM, 3: 350). For eight tales [of their own collection], they had recognized and listed connections to the *1001 Nights*. These tales are "The Fisherman and His Wife" (no. 9), "The Thief and His Master" (no. 68), "How Six Men Got on in the World" (no. 71), "The King of the Gold Mountain" (no. 92), "The Three Little Birds" (no. 96), "The Water of Life" (no. 97), "The Spirit in the Bottle" (no. 99), and "Simeli Mountain" (no. 142). In addition, the Brothers Grimm (KHM, 3: 181) also listed the Harz mountain legend of the Dummburg [. . .] that is also found in the *1001 Nights* [see BP, 3: 138].

Since the times of the Brothers Grimm, our perception of the connections between the *1001 Nights* and fairy-tale literature has widened and deepened. One should not, however, believe that for every analogy, the respective tale or motif has simply been adopted from the *1001 Nights*. Rarely is the path of migration clear. Based on the first three volumes of Bolte and Polívka, these connections between the *1001 Nights* and fairy-tale literature may be summarized as follows.

Of all tales in the *1001 Nights*, the tales of "Ali Baba" and of "Aladdin" appear to have had the greatest impact. The tale of the "Simeli Mountain" (KHM 142) comes straight from "Ali Baba." The evil brother shouts "Simeli, Simeli, open up!" instead of "Sems, Sems!" This "Sems" originates from the "Sesame" of the Arabic tale. Oriental superstition ascribed a miraculous power to the sesame plant [. . .]. Apparently, the Harz mountain legend of the Dummburg or Hochburg, in which ghosts instead of robbers guard the treasure, has developed from this tale. But already German legend is familiar with the Sesame mountain (see BP, 3: 138, 139; as for the tale's distribution see 3: 138–40). The tale's popularity is also betrayed by the fact that the ending (the suffering of the chief of the robbers) has also penetrated into the Serbian variant of "Fitcher's Bird" (KHM 46; see BP, 1: 402) and into the Czech variant of the tale of "The Little Peasant" (KHM 61; see BP, 2: 3). An Albanian tale repeats the motif of a mark on

a door being made on all other doors (BP, 2: 543), and similarly we find it in Arabic and North African tales of the master thief (BP, 2: 465; [. . .]).

In the bequest of the Brothers Grimm there is also a complete version of the tale of "Aladdin," which they recorded in 1813; they did not, however, include it in their collection, since they tended to regard it simply as an adaptation of the Arabic tale (see BP, 2: 544). For the tale of "The Blue Light" (KHM 116), the Brothers Grimm also had a variant that reminds one of "Aladdin" (BP, 2: 535–37). Elements of the tale of "Aladdin and the Magic Lamp" have also entered into other versions of this tale (BP, 2: 541–43), as they have into the Ukrainian tale of the faithful animals (BP, 2: 457), into an Arabic variant of "The Drummer" (KHM 193; BP, 3: 210), and into the Armenian variant of the tale of the grateful dead (BP, 3: 505).

The nucleus of each the following pieces of the KHM corresponds to a specific tale from the *1001 Nights*: "The Girl Without Hands" (no. 31), "Puss in Boots" (no. 33a), "The Wishing-Table, the Gold-Ass, and the Cudgel in the Sack" (no. 36), "The Thief and His Master" (no. 68), "From the Maker and Turner" (no. 77a), "The Gnome" (no. 91), "The King of the Gold Mountain" (no. 92), "The Three Little Birds" (no. 96), "The Water of Life" (no. 97), "The Spirit in the Bottle" (no. 99), "The Faithful Animals" (no. 104a), "The Two Travelers" (no. 107), "The Skillful Huntsman" (no. 111), "The Four Skillful Brothers" (no. 129), and "The Drummer" (no. 193).

In the tale of "The Girl Without Hands" the virtuous heroine loses her hands without being guilty and later regains them miraculously; in one of the pious tales in the *1001 Nights*, the innocent persecuted virtuous woman suffers a similar fate (BP, 1: 310).

As the miller's son in "Puss in Boots," lazy Kaslān is supported by a monkey (BP, 1: 334).

Magic objects such as the wishing-table, the golden ass, or the magic cudgel often make their appearance in tales. In the *1001 Nights*, Jawdar receives a food-providing bag, a magic writing board, and a magic ring (BP, 1: 359).

"The Thief and His Master" describes the competition of two magicians; similarly, the sorcerer succumbs to his apprentice (BP, 2: 67; see also 3: 431).

The tale of the magic horse in the *1001 Nights* sees the hero fly through the air on a horse made from ebony wood and win a princess. The tale of "The Maker and the Turner" (KHM 77a) also knows wooden wings. But compare "The Wooden Horse" (BP, 2: 131).

The tale of the envious brothers, in which the youngest brother kills the subterranean demon, slays the dragon, and is carried to the upper world by the grateful bird Rokh, is the basis of several versions of "The Gnome" (KHM 91; BP, 2: 307, 314).

Two versions of the same kind, the simpler one about Mazin, and the more famous one about Hasan of Basra, narrate how the hero outsmarts the quarreling heirs so that he gains the magic objects, including a magic cap. These traits belong to the tale of "The King of the Gold Mountain" (KHM 92; BP, 2: 334; also in the romance of Seif [al-moluk], see BP, 3: 391).

A strange problem is connected with "The Three Little Birds" (KHM 96). The oldest recorded version is found in Straparola. "Les Soeurs jalouses" (The Jealous Sisters), published by Galland in 1704, is one of the two tales in the *1001 Nights* whose Arabic original has not yet been located. It is quite unlikely that it was Galland who moved the Italian tale into the world of Chosrus. Accordingly, an as yet unknown tradition of this subject matter must have existed that gave rise to both the Italian and the Arabic version (BP, 2: 391).

For "The Water of Life" (KHM 97), the Brothers Grimm themselves noticed the connection to the *1001 Nights* (BP, 2: 399).

"The Spirit in the Bottle" (KHM 99) demonstrates the power to rule spirits; this has been extensively studied by Isr. Lévi, "Le Conte du Diable dupé," *Revue des Études juives* 85 (1928): 137–163 (BP, 2: 419).

A hero who spares or saves animals and consequently receives help from them or is saved by them is found in the tale of the fisherman's son in the *1001 Nights* and the Grimm tale of the "The Faithful Animals" (KHM 104a).

"The Two Travelers" (KHM 107) according to Chauvin shows the influence of the Arabic tale of "Abu Niyyatin and Abu Niyyatayn" (BP, 2: 473–74).

A whole cycle of tales has been composed around the major trait that a persecuted woman unites her beloved ones with her slanderers (in an infirmary or an inn); there she would humiliate her slanderers, prove her own innocence, and live happily with her beloved ones (Chauvin, 6: 154–71). The skillful huntsman (KHM 111) is also reunited with his bride, who has illegally been taken from him, in an inn that his bride has endowed (BP, 2: 505).

The four skillful brothers (KHM 129) complement each other with their skills; together they gain the princess, even though not all of them can possess her. For this tale type, Benfey has assumed an Indian origin (BP, 3: 45). This contradicts the relationship with the tale of "Pari Banu" (Chauvin, 6: 133), a tale that might well be of Persian-Indian origin. In this tale, three brothers join to accomplish the miraculous deeds necessary to heal and rescue the princess. In the end, they reach a peaceful agreement (BP, 3: 47; cf. 2: 95).

The tale of "The Drummer" (KHM 193) that fashions an abundance of motifs into an accomplished narrative appears in the *1001 Nights* in a total of three versions, including the famous one of Hasan of Basra (BP, 3: 412–14).

In this manner, it is possible to define a close relationship between the *1001 Nights* and fifteen tales from the collection of the Brothers Grimm.

Much more often, we encounter single traits and motifs in the *1001 Nights* that are also known from other tales. [For example:]

- The smart peasant shares money and strokes with the guard (BP, 1: 64)
- The hero vows to be buried together with his wife, should she die before him (BP, 1: 128)
- The woman wants to elicit from her husband the secret of the animal languages (BP, 1: 132)
- A bird designates the king to be elected (BP, 1: 325; [. . .])
- Peas are dispersed to mark the way (BP, 1: 370; in the *1001 Nights* it is bran)
- Magic sleep occurs, such as in "Sleeping Beauty" (BP, 1: 440)
- A shrew is humiliated (BP, 1: 449)
- The hero must fetch the magic bird (BP, 1: 510, 513)
- The husband prevents people from believing his garrulous wife by staging a rain of cakes or the end of the world (BP, 1: 527)
- A tree is a sign of life (BP, 1: 545; 2: 392)
- Brothers are envious (BP, 1: 551)
- A sword separates two people in a bed (BP, 1: 555)
- Grateful animals and spirits help sort the grain, empty the water basin, build a palace (BP, 2: 27)
- Three brothers compete for who will acquire the most astonishing object (BP, 2: 37)
- Six companions travel the whole world (BP, 2: 95)
- Clever Gretel accuses the guest of having taken the chicken (BP, 2: 130)
- The carpenter produces wings and flies away (BP, 2: 134)
- Wishes are depicted as foolish (BP, 2: 223)
- A slandered woman is reunited with her beloved ones and the slanderers ("The Singing, Springing Lark," KHM 88; BP, 2: 235, 505)
- The rendezvous is missed three times (BP, 2: 345)
- The task is to repair a mortar, a millstone, a pot (BP, 2: 367)
- A paradoxical judgment is proved absurd (BP, 2: 371)
- The sun brings the truth to the light of day (BP, 2: 534)
- People are transformed into animals (BP, 3: 7)
- The golden hair that a bird lets fall to the ground creates the desire for its female owner (BP, 3: 33; cf. 3: 86: Love arises from an image)
- A thrown apple is a sign of love (BP, 3: 111)
- A pot of milk is destroyed (BP, 3: 263)
- The princess poses riddles (BP, 3: 368–69)
- Polyphemus is blinded (BP, 3: 375)

The soul exists outside of its owner's body (external soul; BP, 3: 439, 441; Chauvin, 5: 175–77; 6: 88; 7: 67–68, 73)

Only a specific weapon brings death (BP, 3: 441; [. . .]; cf. also BP, 2: 365; [. . .])

Some of the motifs enumerated above already constitute specific tales (KHM 59, 77, 87, 115, and 164), so that we observe a relationship between the *1001 Nights* and the Grimms' tales in a total of twenty instances. In most instances, we should not think of a direct transfer; but sometimes the impact of the *1001 Nights* is beyond doubt, as for instance in the case of "Simeli Mountain" (KHM 142).

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