M A R I A K A L I A M B O U

The Transformation of Folktales and Fairy Tales into Popular Booklets

Introduction: The Importance of Popular Booklets of Tales

From the very beginning of the history of books, in the middle of the fifteenth century, popular print constituted an important part of book production. Chapbooks with various contents—among them booklets of tales—were produced and widely distributed in many European countries. Despite its significance, popular print was long ignored by the academic community, and only since the 1960s has research into theoretical and literary aspects of popular print begun. The same must be said about folktale and fairy-tale research, which, until recently and parallel with literary criticism, took only scholarly collections of oral tales into consideration, ignoring tales in popular booklets.

This article will focus on popular booklets of folktales and fairy tales published in Greece from 1870 to 1970. These popular prints, which do not belong to scholarly collections of the elite and thus have long been condemned as worthless, make up an important medium for the distribution of fairy tales in Greece.[1] Folktales and fairy tales are often transformed in those booklets. Why is this so, and to what extent does it happen? Studying them demonstrates differentiated paths of transcribing and transforming literary tales into a popular medium. Evidence from these popular booklets contributes to our understanding of the dialogue between oral and popular written literature. Whether popular printed material influences oral literature and vice versa is a question of far-reaching historical and theoretical significance.

Popular Literature in Greece

The history of the Greek printed book began in 1476, when a Greek publisher published the first book in Greek in Milan, a center of Italian print (Staikos 135f.). In the early modern period, Greek-language publishing was largely carried on in international publishing centers such as Venice (with its remarkably large book production in Greek), Milan, and Leipzig, among others (Staikos and Sklavenitis); but with the establishment of the Greek state in 1830, publishers increasingly founded publishing houses within Greece.

The first Greek printed books were mainly religious or educational. Greek popular literature has existed from the very early years of Greek printing, a fact that leads Greek scholars to divide book production into two categories: "good," expensive elitarian books addressed to a well-educated readership, and "bad," cheap books for common use. According to the Greek historian and philologist Alkis Aggelou, however, until the middle of the nineteenth century the borders between "high" and "low" literature were fluid, and thus the dichotomy between them cannot be easily proved ("To laiko entipo"; "Logia kai laiki").[2]

In the nineteenth century Greek popular literature underwent a remarkable development. For the Greek philologist Panagiotis Moullas, the year 1845 marks the beginning of the mass distribution of popular literature in Greece. In that year novels by Alexander Dumas and Eugene Sue were translated into Greek, and from that point onward Western European books were translated into Greek and distributed mostly in urban centers, so that one could speak of a "translated popular literature" (Moullas 116). Thus, popular literature constituted a stable and conspicuous part of Greek editorial policy.

The expansion of popular books in the second half of the nineteenth century was accompanied by the first theoretical approaches to them begun in Greece. The first definition of popular books was made by the founder of Greek folklore, Nikolaos Politis. In 1877 he noted their significance for the Greeks, because, according to him, they were for many years almost the only reading material of the Greeks under Turkish rule ("Dimodi" [1877]: 176). Politis's list of popular Greek book titles includes the well-known *Arabian Nights* translated from Western European languages and later distributed in the form of popular booklets of tales.

The first decades of the twentieth century brought a new era in Greek popular literature. Some remarkable changes in the 1920s and 1930s should be mentioned. First of all, on the social level, the number of people who could read increased immensely (Tsoukalas 393, 468). Furthermore, the feuilleton novel, which had first appeared in the middle of the nineteenth century as a newspaper insert, now established itself as an indispensable part of newspapers and journals. Feuilletons usually had eight or sixteen pages per issue and

were produced in large numbers. Popular magazines of various kinds, which began being published in the 1920s, also played an influential role in the success of the feuilletons (Dermentzopoulos 54).

Popular literature covers many genres: almanacs, novels, theater, songs, tales, saints' lives, religious or magical stories, and technical and scientific texts. The dominant genre in popular literature was undoubtedly the novel. Translations from Western European literature as well as local production of many novelistic subgenres (such as romance, criminal, detective, religious, or historical popular novels) were widely distributed and represented the main characteristics of popular literature in Greece.

A common characteristic of popular prints is repetitiousness. Rudolf Schenda, who established research into popular print ("Lesestoffforschung") in Germany, speaks of a common repertoire of European popular books that circulated everywhere and at all times (Schenda 327).[3] From the very beginning of the history of Greek printing, publishers used the same strategy: they took old material and published it with a new cover. The Greek historian Phillipos Iliou called this phenomenon "artificial modernization" (A. Politis, "Technites" 271), because publishers tried to convince their audiences that they were producing something new and modern, whereas in fact they were recycling old material. The absence of copyright intensified this attitude, with the result that old and new material circulated in parallel.

A possible explanation for the recycling of print can be found on the financial level. On the basis of a late nineteenth-century Greek book catalog, the Greek philologist Alexis Politis demonstrated persuasively that the apparent republication of an old print was a reliable indicator that it had failed to sell on its first appearance. In an attempt to recoup his financial losses, a publisher would try to sell the unsold printed sheets a second time ("Kiklofories" 270).[4] However, a reoffering of old material was no guarantee that it would sell the second time around.

Greek Popular Booklets of Folktales and Fairy Tales

Since the middle of the nineteenth century, in the era of the European Romantic tradition of collecting oral material, Greek folktales and fairy tales have also been the focus of collectors' and specialists' attention, and they gained an important role in the Greek literature market. Along with diverse—translated or indigenous, old or new—Greek popular print, publishers showed their interest in publishing tales and incorporated them as a stable and continuing part of their editorial programs. The publishing of folktales and fairy tales in Greece followed two directions: on the one hand, there were editions by scholars who supported collecting and studying oral material; on the other hand, a great number of booklets of tales of a popular nature were also

circulated in the market. The two publishing paths were and still are important for the dissemination of folktales and fairy tales in Greece.[5]

As an urban phenomenon, popular booklets of tales were published mostly in the Greek capital, Athens, as well as in other developed cities of the Greek periphery. During the nineteenth century and until the first decades of the twentieth, writers edited, printed, published, and sold their own work, as there was no distinct differentiation between these professions. Publishing houses were predominantly family businesses. Most of the writers as well as other professionals (such as translators and painters) who contributed to those publications remain unknown.

The first booklets have only a few illustrations; the issues published from the 1930s onward have distinctively colorful covers, a feature that also functions as effective advertising. They are usually badly printed on cheap paper, published in many copies, and generally in series. Priced at about the cost of a single piece of bread, everybody could afford them. Initially the booklets are addressed to children and adults, but from the 1930s onward they are addressed solely to children.

The booklets' texts themselves are of great interest. They consist not only of folktales and fairy tales, as one might expect, but also a variety of other genres, such as legends, jokes and anecdotes, short stories, and riddles. Additionally, coarse and vulgar texts, which are frequently found in the booklets of the nineteenth century, disappear from later booklets.

Booklet authors did not apparently specialize in a single genre, but were commissioned by their publishers to write in diverse genres such as novels, tales, songs, jocular anecdotes, and popular stories. However, in some booklets of tales it is possible to recognize the writing character and preference of specific, although anonymous, authors. If they wrote many mystery or detective stories, for example, a similar atmosphere pervades the booklets containing their tales.

An analysis of popular print shows intertextual relationships between two prose genres—popular novels and the tales of popular booklets—and a "dialogue" between them is evident in two areas. On the linguistic level texts move from standard Greek to everyday language, with the use of colloquial expressions, adjectives and adverbs, diminutive and superlative forms, metaphors and comparisons, dialogues, and direct speech. On the aesthetic level of popular print, there is sentimentalization, moralization, dichotomy, and story extension of popular novels (Kaliambou, "Popularmärchen").

Patterns of Transformation of Folktales and Fairy Tales into Popular Booklets

The texts included in popular booklets originate from three principal sources:

Greece, Western Europe, and Eastern tradition. After the 1930s stories from Slavic countries and even from the Far East (China and Japan) were also included in popular booklets of tales. This phenomenon demonstrates the gradual cultural opening of the Greek book market to distant, unknown cultures.[6]

In the last three decades of the nineteenth century, European fairy tales began to be translated into Greek. According to the only bibliography of nineteenth-century Greek children's books, Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales were initially translated into Greek for the Greek public in 1873, followed by Charles Perrault's in 1876 and those of the Grimms in 1886 (Ntelopoulos). These first translations circulated in small books with details about their origins, and with their date and place of publication on their title pages—metatextual information that placed them within "high" literature with its customary publishing data.

Parallel with these elitarian editions, these well-known European tales were already circulating in Greece at the end of the nineteenth century as popular booklets. The translated fairy tales were very often accompanied by axiological labels in their titles, such as "curio." The expression "curio" should not surprise us. Many nineteenth-century Greek editions that were translations from Western European literary texts bore the same labeling information. The purpose was to excite common readers' desire for new writings. This indirectly marks the European fairy tales by Perrault and Grimm as still unknown to the Greek public at that date. In the twentieth century the descriptor "curios" was replaced by other expressions, such as "the best fairy tales" or "the masterworks of world literature." All of these rhetorical devices also functioned as the best advertising for the popular books.

Comparisons between stories in the Greek popular booklets and the originally translated French and German fairy tales demonstrate diverse results with reference to their adaptation and transformation in the popular booklets. There is no unified form for the transformation of European fairy tales into the form they take in Greek popular booklets. A close and detailed analysis of the popular tale texts demonstrates that the adaptation of the originally translated texts ranges from free, creative, and innovative handling of the originals on the one hand and on the other a faithful (word-by-word) translation.[7] Let's examine these two categories more closely.

Creative transformations of the originals

The internationally known tale of "Little Red Riding Hood" (ATU 333) provides a characteristic example. It was translated at the end of the nineteenth century into Greek and is one of the most widely distributed tales in Greece. Popular booklets played the most influential role in establishing its popularity. In secondary education, Perrault's French version was used from 1884 onward in

Fig. 1. *The Poor Girl and the Twelve Months* (The Best Fairy Tales 32; Athens: S. Daremas, [ca. 1950s]). This Greek popular booklet contains a Greek oicotype of the fairy tale The Kind and the Unkind Girls (ATU 480).

Greek schoolbooks for learning French as a foreign language, something that shows that the tale has had many uses in Greece since its first translations.[8]

In international terms, the most widely distributed versions of "Little Red Riding Hood" are based on the literary texts by the Grimms with its happy ending and by Charles Perrault with its dystopic ending (Shojaei-Kawan 11: 855). The first Greek translation of "Little Red Riding Hood" was distributed in the 1880s in a booklet and is a compilation of several differing and unknown orig-

inals. It can hardly be said what sources publishers used for their material. By then, other tales from the Grimm and Perrault collections had been translated into Greek. The anonymous author of the popular Greek version combines motifs and plots from both literary texts. The Greek folktale researcher Marianthi Kaplanoglou has concluded that this first translation was influenced principally by the Perrault text, because some episodes are word-by-word translations from the Perrault original. More surprising is the new ending of the first Greek translation: it is gentler and bears no resemblance to either known text. Which sources did the popular author use for his new ending? It is difficult to reconstruct all the unknown sources used by the—also unknown—authors. The case of "Little Red Riding Hood" demonstrates once again the variety of the originals. Did the author use an undocumented oral version and mix it with diverse literary versions? A possible undocumented oral version is probably not the case, because according to the international Greek tale catalog, "Little Red Riding Hood" has a minimal presence in Greek oral tradition (Aggelopoulou and Brouskou 463–68). Thus, the author may have used another, and unknown, literary author with his individual version of the fairy tale, or he may have created his own text. In any case, the author created his own version by combining diverse motifs from existing literary texts.

The creativity of popular text authors is also evident in a 1914 version of the tale in a popular booklet published by a large Athens publishing house. Here, in a unique version, the heroine is a girl from a minority group, the Vlachs, with the entire story located in their village.[9] Another particularity of this version is that Christmas and its rituals frame the story: the little girl brings her grandmother "Christmas food." In this second, and shorter, version, indirect speech prevails, and stylistic features and linguistic elements that strengthen the emotional atmosphere are characteristic: the little girl is as "beautiful as an angel," is "an unfortunate girl," or a "beautiful little angel;" the bad wolf is a "wild and merciless wild beast"; the forest is big and "you hear only wild screams." The tragic ending, with its terrifying atmosphere, resembles popular crime and detective novels.[10] The Greek translator here situated the story of "Little Red Riding Hood" with a familiar quotidian environment and infused it with his individual style.

Both versions of this well-known fairy tale are innovatively transformative. The authors, having left their personal stamp on the stories, cannot be characterized with the pejorative stereotype of simple "compilers," which is often said of producers of popular literature.

Faithful adaptations

The adaptation and transformation of some tales remain astonishingly restricted. The fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen, who enjoys greater admiration

in Greece than Charles Perrault and the Grimms, offer the most characteristic examples of faithful adaptations.

The dissemination of Andersen's fairy tales in Greece followed different paths than those traversed by Perrault's and the Grimms' fairy tales. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, elite scholars were responsible for the translations into Greek of Andersen's fairy tales, stories, and autobiography. The language of their source texts remains uninvestigated, but it was probably English, German, or French. The translated texts were chosen without a specific criterion and were published in magazines and newspapers for children as well as for adults (Kaliambou, "Hans Christian Andersen's 'Reise'" 82). Some of the Andersen stories translated in the nineteenth century were omitted from later editions, which shows variability in editorial policy at the beginning of Andersen's reception in Greece. Another plausible explanation for differences in the reception of his stories and fairy tales might be the existence of a mixed reading audience of both adults and children.

From the 1930s onward, when Andersen had been famous in Greece for more than a generation, popular booklets became the most important medium for disseminating his fairy tales. For popular booklets shorter fairy tales were preferred, with the result that the gradual canon formation of the "best" Andersen fairy tales in Greece paralleled that of Andersen's best-known fairy tales all over the world.[11]

A close examination of Andersen's fairy tales in Greek popular booklets published between 1930 and 1970 demonstrates a faithful translation into these booklets. A comparison of Greek texts with a German translation of Andersen's fairy tales leaves no doubt that the Greek translator did not invent his own story, but hewed close to the original. It is worth restating that in all of these cases we must speak of "chain translations," for the originals— whether French, German, or English translations of the original Danish, or less likely, Danish itself—remain unknown. At present, therefore, we can only hypothesize about the chosen original language that was translated.

Andersen's case demonstrates two interesting reception mechanisms in Greece. On the one hand, Greek scholars and literates who introduced Andersen for the first time to the Greek readership modified the translations and gave them a pedagogical, moral, or national coloration,[12] but the producers of popular booklets remained faithful to Andersen's prose. This fact, exactly as with "Little Red Riding Hood," disproves once again the pejorative argument that popular authors were "compilers" who ignored the original texts.

Although the majority of the translated texts remain faithful to Andersen's content, in some cases the Andersen text is "domesticated" to its new Greek environment. Surveys of southeast European literature demonstrate that an acculturation of foreign texts takes place. That accommodation to fundamen-
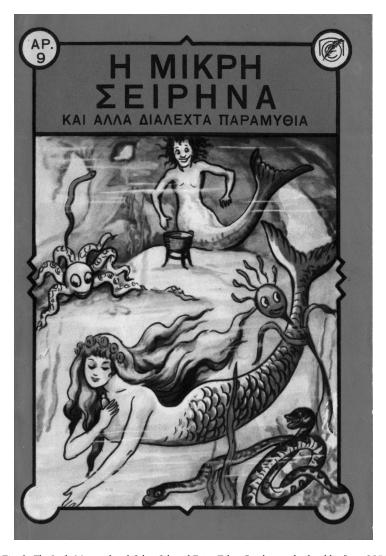
Fig. 2. *The Little Mermaid and Other Selected Fairy Tales.* Greek popular booklet from 1956 with famous tale by Hans Christian Andersen.

tal systems of social and cultural values and norms (Roth and Roth 609) includes religion. In a popular booklet of the 1960s, Andersen's poetic fairy tale "The Bell" offers a special opportunity to follow diverse patterns of omission within the acculturating process. "The Bell" was faithfully translated up until its single religious scene. In Andersen's original, the children are con-

firmed, a religious ritual that is totally unknown in Greece; in the Greek translation this episode was simply deleted.

From the 1960s and '70s onward, a general change in popular print took place that was consistent with technological improvements such as the perfection of offset image production. In this same period Andersen's fairy tales underwent radical changes: faithful translations gave way to free adaptations; colored images in the booklets came to take up more space than text; the texts, because of limited space, maintained only the stories' central plots. Moreover, in most of the tales in this period, arbitrary transformations and free translations occurred.

The Dialogue between Popular Booklets of Tales and Oral Tradition

In trying to answer the provocative question about reciprocal influences between oral tradition and printed material, we arrive at various and opposing conclusions. Recent surveys demonstrate the penetration of written literature into oral tellings. Let us make a comparison with the French example. According to Ruth Bottigheimer, Charles Perrault's fairy tales were disseminated in France in the form of cheap prints and reached the farthest borders of the country. "The process was so effective in creating a common national fairy-tale culture that nineteenth-century informants were able to recount 'Red Riding Hood' in very much the same language in which Perrault had originally published it" (Bottigheimer, "Ultimate Fairy Tale" 65). Bottigheimer argues further that printed material, the "unvarying texts of cheap publications read by generation after generation," led scholars to talk about "the existence of and the stability of purported oral tradition." With this argument Bottigheimer tries to show the commercial mechanisms that determined the dissemination of fairy tales and to debunk the orthodoxy in oral research about the stability of oral tradition. This has been confirmed in neighboring Bulgaria, where, as in Greece, Andersen's fairy tales have been translated since the end of the nineteenth century. There "through mass readings [they] penetrated the oral tradition" (Roth 105). In contrast, the Greek popular booklets, as exemplified by "Little Red Riding Hood" and Andersen's fairy tales, demonstrate the opposite: the most famous fairy tales, which were widely disseminated in Greece through popular booklets, did not penetrate into oral tradition. "Little Red Riding Hood" hardly exists there, with only six variants registered, which are, moreover, totally different from the literary versions in terms of their motifs (Aggelopoulou and Brouskou 463–68). The same minimal influence of written materials on oral tradition can be illustrated by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. "The Wild Swans" (ATU 451: The Maiden Who Seeks Her

Brothers), for instance, is evident in only two of its thirty-eight variants regis-
tered in the Greek tale catalog (Aggelopoulou and Brouskou 827–41).

A comparison with the French "Little Red Riding Hood" also brings to
light differentiated sets of proofs. Catherine Velay-Vallantin believes that this
well-known fairy tale, contrary to other tales by Charles Perrault (such as "La
Barbe bleue," "Peau d'Ane," "Cendrillon"), showed "greater resistance in its
original motifs" and that the book by Perrault had little influence on oral ver-
sions (174). However, things changed at the end of the nineteenth century.
According to Martyn Lyons, when Perrault's tales were adopted in readers for
children in elementary schools in France from 1888 onward, the literary ver-
sion of the tale influenced and became an indispensable part of oral tradition
(413). And yet the fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood" remained unknown in
Greek oral tradition, although it was inserted in schoolbooks. As mentioned
above, it was used from 1884 onward as suitable teaching material for learn-
ing French as a foreign language. Additionally, fairy tales were adapted for
spelling books for the first classes of primary school. Moreover, teachers in
Greece used folktales and fairy tales in accordance with the ideological peda-
gogical mechanisms of the time. Tales were also held to be suitable vehicles for
learning the mother tongue.[13] And although fairy tales came through school-
books into the mouths of a considerable segment of the population, some fairy
tales never became part of the people's oral repertoire.

Concluding Remark

Popular booklets of tales constitute an important part of popular literature in
Greece and a valuable source for folktale research. Within the rules of popular
literature, they offer a different frame for the reproduction of folktales. The study
and analysis of two characteristic examples published in Greek booklets since
the end of the nineteenth century—"Little Red Riding Hood" and fairy tales by
Hans Christian Andersen—has demonstrated a variety of transformations and
transcriptions of the tales: on the one hand, free adaptations (as in "Little Red
Riding Hood"), and on the other, faithful translations of Andersen's tales.

Furthermore, the analysis of "Little Red Riding Hood" and Andersen's
tales in Greece hint at a problem in understanding the dissemination of fairy
tales. Ruth Bottigheimer proposes two forms of dissemination of European
fairy tales: "a micro oral and a macro print form. The micro oral form spans a
short period of time and a short distance, and brings about dissemination that
survives through a maximum of two to three generations of tellings. The
macro print form transports tales over long periods of time, over great dis-
tances, and from one language to another." According to her theoretical struc-
ture, "print processes and print culture are central to the creation and the dis-

semination of European fairy tales" ("Fairy Tale Origins" 10). Indeed, the "macro print" form is responsible for introducing into Greece, as well as elsewhere, tales from distant and unknown countries, such as India or Western Europe or even from the Far East, to recall the various origins of the stories in popular booklets.

However, the contrary phenomenon must also be mentioned. In some well-documented cases (as the remarkable examples of "Little Red Riding Hood" and Andersen's tales bear out), a long-existing print culture did not influence the autochthonous oral tradition, as one would have expected. The dialogue between oral and written literature is here very limited. More surprising remains the case of "Little Red Riding Hood" in Greece, which demonstrates the stability and resistance of oral tradition to intrusion from print. The tale known throughout the world is worth mentioning here, because although it was disseminated through two significant means, popular booklets and schoolbooks, it left no stamp on oral tellings. Thus, in this case, the effect of popular prints on the production and reception of oral tradition has to be understood in relative terms.

Notes

1. For this kind of booklet tale I have conceived the German neologism "Populärmärchen," which more accurately defines, describes, and analyzes them (Kaliambou, "Heimat")..
2. Characteristically, Aggelou proposes the term "reading materials of the New Hellenism," a notion that describes without categorizing all printed Greek books (*Giulio Cesare dalle Croce* 9).
3. For more on this subject, see Rudolf Schenda, "Semiliterate and Semi-Oral Processes," in this issue of *Marvels & Tales,* 127–40.
4. Reselling old prints with new title pages to recoup earlier financial losses is a common phenomenon in other countries, too. Ruth B. Bottigheimer demonstrated that in England unsold sheets of Perrault's fairy tales were sold down-market in the 1760s ("Misperceived Perceptions" 9).
5. "The same editorial history of tales with the two publishing routes (the scholarly and the popular one) is demonstrated in the neighboring country of Bulgaria (K. Roth).
6. In this case one could use the expression by Hermann Bausinger, "expansion of the horizons" (Bausinger).
7. Manfred Grätz demonstrated a similar phenomenon in Germany. According to him, the translations of French fairy tales into German followed three paths: word-by-word translations, slightly changed versions, and, finally, completely Germanized versions (Grätz).
8. The role of schoolbooks in the dissemination of folktales and fairy tales is also shown in the study of German schoolbooks of the period 1770–1920 (Tomkowiak).
9. This minority group (Vlachs) is widespread in southeast Europe. Their dialect belongs to the Romance languages.

10. "At that moment the wild animal opened its huge mouth and crammed the beautiful little angel into it. After that, when it was satisfied by the human's flesh, it went to the wild forest. On its way, it didn't come upon another girl with a red cap, only upon good hunters with guns and black bullets. And immediately, as if it understood, it began to run very quickly, because it knew that shortly it would let its soul spill onto the rough earth and with its wild, black entrails it would pay for the innocent blood" (my translation). This example demonstrates once again the dialogue that existed between diverse popular genres, and especially the influence that the popular novel played in the formation of tales in popular booklets.

11. Of Andersen's 156 fairy tales, about 15 had by far the greatest distribution. These included the internationally known "Wild Swans," "The Princess on the Pea," "The Little Mermaid," "The Little Matchgirl," "The Ugly Duckling," "The Nightingale," and "The Emperor's New Clothes."

12. Characteristically, Dimitrios Vikelas, who translated nine fairy tales by Andersen in 1873, wrote in the preface of his edition: "My beloved children, I translate for you these fairy tales, because they are worthwhile entertainment for you, even if they are fairy tales, only when you have done your homework and your duties . . . Such books will open your disposition for learning and will multiply your wish to learn more things" (Andersen vi; my translation).

13. It is important here to explain that for the entire nineteenth century and the greater part of the twentieth century there existed in Greece the linguistic phenomenon of "diglossia"—that is, the coexistence of two language variants: the spoken folk language and the scholarly written language for administrative purposes. The decision to use one or the other had distinct sociopolitical dimensions and became part of a social debate and struggle in Greece, particularly in the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Supporters of the folk language esteemed folktales and fairy tales as one of the best pedagogical media for learning the folk language, and thus they contributed substantially to their dissemination in schoolbooks (Damianou 271).

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