

Stith Thompson - The Folktale - p 126-129

Probably the best known of all folktales is Cinderella (Type 510A), particularly if we include its special development known as Cap o' Rushes (Type 510B). These tales were not only included in the influential collections of Basile and Perrault, but they both have an even older literary history. A good literary version of Cinderella has been reported from the ninth century after Christ,⁴² and Cap o' Rushes has appeared in both French and Italian literary treatment from the beginning of the sixteenth century. This pair of tales was the subject of Miss Cox's Cinderella which appeared in 1893 and was the first extensive investigation ever made of a folktale.

42 - For a discussion of this version see R D Jameson Three Lectures on Chinese Folklore pp. 45ff

In Cinderella the heroine is abused by her stepmother and stepsisters. Her name is always connected in some way with ashes (Cendrillon, Aschenputtel, or the like), indicating her lowly position in the household. The poor girl receives supernatural aid, sometimes from her dead mother, or from a tree on the mother's grave, or from an animal (often a reincarnation of the mother), or from a fairy godmother. In some versions the helpful animal is killed, and a tree springs up which magically provides beautiful clothes for the girl. As in the familiar Perrault telling, she may dance three successive nights with the prince and escape just before the forbidden hour. Some versions tell how the prince sees the girl in church. At any rate, she flees from the prince and a search for her is necessary. It is not always the lost slipper which brings about identification, but she may be found by any of the approved methods known to readers of fairy tales — a ring thrown into the prince's cup or baked in his bread, or the special favor shown her when the

tree bows before her so that she can pluck its golden apple.

The version of Perrault is so familiar through two hundred and fifty years use as a nursery tale that we are likely to think that all the details which he mentions are essential. Some of them, as a matter of fact, are practically unknown elsewhere, for example, the glass slipper. A vast majority of the versions do have a slipper, but not of glass. It has been suggested that Perrault's glass slipper comes from a confusion between the French words *verre* and *vaire*, and this may possibly be true. The fairy godmother is a relatively rare occurrence in the tale. On the other hand, traits not found in Perrault assume importance as we trace the tale around the world the help of the dead mother, usually reincarnated as an animal, the clothes colored like the sun, moon, and stars, and the appearance of the heroine as a herder of turkeys.

This story of Cinderella appears in not fewer than five hundred versions in Europe alone. It seems to be popular in India and Farther India and has been taken without change by Europeans to the Philippines and elsewhere in Indonesia. It is found among the North African Arabs, in the Western Sudan, in Madagascar and on the island of Mauritius. It has also been well received in America. The French have brought it to Missouri and Canada, and the isle of Martinique. It has also been reported from Brazil and Chile. Especially interesting are the modifications of this story by the North American Indians, the Piegans of the Glaciar Park area, the Ojibwa of the Great Lakes, and the Zuni of New Mexico. In the latter version an almost complete adaptation to the Zuni environment has been made. The abused daughter is a turkey herd (as in some European versions) Her turkeys take pity on her and furnish magic clothes. She attends the tribal dance and attracts the chief's son, but she disobeys her turkeys and overstays her tune. They punish her by taking away all her beautiful clothes. A reader who was not familiar with the Cinderella story might

well imagine that this is a native Zuni tale. Its actual Spanish origin is unmistakable.

As Miss Cox's analysis of this cycle shows, there is very considerable mutual influence exerted between Cinderella and the related tale of Cap o' Rushes (Type 510B). This story begins with the flight of the heroine from home, or with her banishment, because her father wishes to marry her (as in the tale of The Maiden Without Hands [Type 706]). Or it may be that, like Cordelia in King Lear, she does not reply as her father wishes when he asks her how much she loves him. She says that her love is like salt, in contrast to her sisters who have compared theirs to sugar.⁴³

43. This motif, Love like Salt sometimes appears as a separate tale (Type 923), and, with a slight variation in another (Type 923A) See Motif H592.1 and literature there cited.

In either case, the heroine assumes a peculiar disguise, indicated by the various titles of the stories, not only the two mentioned here, but others like Katie Woodencoat, Allerleirauh, etc. She takes service among strangers and is accidentally seen by the prince in her own beautiful clothes. The story then proceeds much like Cinderella. Frequently there is the thrice repeated flight from the prince and the elaborate recognition after the search for the girl. This latter is usually brought about by means of a ring placed in his food or drink, rather than by fitting the slipper. In those stories where it is appropriate, the heroine shows her father how much more valuable salt really is than sugar. The interesting way in which all these motifs shift as we go from version to version and yet maintain the essential plot is skillfully displayed in Miss Cox's detailed analysis.

This tale has been made popular in the world of readers by treatment in every important literary collection of stories since the sixteenth century — Straparola, Basile, and Perrault. But its wide acceptance in the folklore of the whole area from Scandinavia to India would seem, for the most part, to be independent of these literary treatments. While not so universally told as its companion story, Cinderella, well over two hundred oral versions have been noted by folktale students. But only a single variant each from Africa and the two Americas have thus far come to light.

So closely related in detail to Cinderella and Cap o' Rushes that it is frequently considered a variant form is the story of One Eye, Two Eyes, Three Eyes (Type 511). Of the three sisters, the heroine is the only one with the normal two eyes. Her monstrous sisters, One Eye and Three Eyes, are in league with their mother against her. She is compelled to herd goats and to go hungry. She secures the aid of an old woman who provides her with a food supplying table which she can use with the aid of one of her goats which has magic power. In the course of time, her sisters spy upon her and kill the goat. On the advice of her old woman helper she has the goat's entrails buried and from them there grows a magic tree with golden apples. The tree will yield its fruit only to Two-Eyes, into whose hands the apples come of themselves. When a prince asks for some of the apples the sisters fail and only Two Eyes can give them to him. The tale naturally ends with her marriage to the prince.

It seems unlikely, in spite of Dr. Krapp's contention,⁴⁴ that this modern European folktale has any organic connection with the old Greek myth of Phrixos and Helle. There are, however, literary versions of our story in Germany and Sweden from the sixteenth century down. Though it is by no means as popular as either Cinderella or Cap o' Rushes, it is distributed rather evenly over the whole of Europe. It is also known in India, Indonesia, North Africa, and

Madagascar A version from English tradition has recently been reported from Virginia.

44. A. H. Krappe, Folk-Lore, XXXIV (1933),141ff

What may be considered a variation of this story is the tale of The Little Red Bull (Type 511*).⁴⁵ In this tale there is always a youth instead of a girl as the principal actor. He is helped by a magic bull (sometimes a horse) which provides food for him. When his enemies kill the animal he follows his helper's last instructions and keeps some part of the animal's body, through which he receives magic aid in all his adventures. Sometimes these adventures are the same as those of the hero of the *Goldener Märchen* (Type 314), and some folktale students have considered The Little Red Bull as a variant of that tale. Its wide distribution, however, and its relative uniformity would seem to indicate that we have here an autonomous tale and not a mere variation of some more popular story. Though in small numbers, it is scattered over the entire continent of Europe and is found in India, North and Central Africa, and among the Wyandot Indians of North America. Its peculiar distribution and its relationship to the two tales here indicated should make this story worth further investigation.

45. For discussion see Bolte Polivka, III, 65 Béaloideas, II, 268, 273

Although many examples of the fortunate youngest son have appeared in other connections in some of the tales we have already examined and in those to come later,⁴⁶ one story of a "male Cinderella" deserves special mention here. In The Prodigal's Return (Type 935) the youngest of the three brothers is a spendthrift, but clever. He goes abroad as a soldier and swindles his father into sending him

money. Through cleverness he makes his fortune and marries a princess. He visits his parents' home in humble disguise and is mistreated by his brothers. At the end, the princess arrives and puts the jealous brothers to shame.

46. Among other places, the favorite youngest son is found in the following tales: *The White Cat* (Type 402); *The Bridge to the Other World* (Type 471); *How Six Travel Through the World* (Type 513); *The Bird, the Horse, and the Princess* (Type 550); *The Water of Life* (Type 551); *The Grateful Animals* (Type 554); *The Knapsack, the Hat and the Horn* (Type 569); *All Sock Together* (Type 571), *The King's Tasks* (Type 577); *Beloved of Women* (Type 580), *The Healing Fruits* (Type 610), and *The Three Lucky Brothers* (Type 1650).

In Europe this story seems to be entirely confined to the Baltic states and Denmark, where it has been collected in large numbers. But its presence in America among the Micmac Indians and among the Missouri French gives every indication that it was brought across the ocean by Frenchmen. In Missouri it has been skilfully combined with the tale of *The Youth Who Wanted to Learn What Fear Is* (Type 326).