

mean only that a common general theme is approached from various perspectives; it also requires that these approaches have the purpose of mutual understanding and cross-fertilization. Such exchange might have occurred at the conference at which the papers were originally presented and, supposedly, discussed among the participants. In this book, however, the reader is left out in the cold and given the impression that many of the authors were only interested in self-gratification or—to put it a little milder—in enjoying the results of their otherwise valuable academic endeavors within the small circle of their own discipline, thereby defeating in this sense the very *raison-d'être* of the conference and of the learned society that sponsored it. If, instead of two short pages of introduction, this book would have concluded with a lengthy overview of the various themes dealt with in the conference and given a summary of the discussions, it would have been “interdisciplinary” in the true sense of the word. In its present form, it leaves much to be desired.

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DUNDES, ALAN. *Folklore Matters*. Knoxville, Tennessee: The University of Tennessee Press, 1989. xii+172 pages. Color plates, index. Hardcover US\$19.50; ISBN 0-87049-608-5.

This book contains eight articles, all of which were written during the last few years. The articles deal with a variety of topics and, combined, offer the reader a sharp insight into the major themes at present under discussion in the field of folkloristics.

In the first article, “Defining Identity through Folklore,” the author examines the way in which various disciplines such as philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and psychology have previously defined the question of personal identity. Following on from this, he proceeds to focus his attention on folklore, in terms of both folktales and other material, and the sense of personal identity that these reflect. Dundes’s conclusion is that folklore offers social scientists an ideal field in which to study and prove the sense of self-identity felt by both individuals and social groups. This article introduces a theme that, to a greater or lesser extent, characterizes all of the articles contained in this book, i.e., the argument that folkloristics is a valuable branch of science, no less important than any other field of study, and of greater worth than many. This statement is made in various ways, depending on the circumstances in each case, but is continually supported by new and significant reasoning.

In his article “The Fabrication of Folklore,” Alan Dundes takes up the question of what Richard M. Dorson, in an essay published in 1950, termed “faklore.” I do not wish to belittle Dorson’s role in bringing about this concept and fighting against it, but cannot restrain myself from pointing out that the concept of “fake tales” (*gervith-jóðsögur*) was already being used to cover a similar phenomenon as far back as 1942, in an article dealing with the collection of folktales and other folklore material (S. J. ÁGÚSTSSON 1942, 428-30).

As examples of faklore, Dundes takes amongst other works Macpherson’s *Ossian*, the Grimm brothers’ *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, and the *Kalevala*. He gives logical reasons why all of these works might be regarded as faklore. Concerning the Grimms’ Fairy Tales, he admits that it might seem blasphemous to label them in this way, but

feels that "when oral materials are re-written, embellished and elaborated, and then presented as if they were pure, authentic oral tradition, we do indeed have a prima facie case of fakelore" (45).

Comparison has long been a common subject for folklorists, and one of the articles here is dedicated in particular to the comparative method. I cannot recall ever having encountered a better presentation of how necessary it is that the material compared at any given time should actually be cognate. In addition to this, the author gives a clear outline of the history of the comparative method that is not only interesting but also informative.

There is little limit to what a folklorist can use as source material. The subject of one article in the book is that of a toy, the "Pecking Chicken," which the author has collected from all the various continents of the world, and provides him with material with which to study nations, their individual characteristics, and differences in world view. It is educational to see exactly how much one can learn about the difference between nations from these examples of microcosmic material phenomena.

Precision in narrowing oneself down, and in forming clear and logical definitions, is of particular importance in folkloristics because of how close the subject comes to the living substance of human society, and the most ordinary things. What should be termed superstition and what a proverb? One of the articles in the book emphasizes the essential difference between these two things with the use of several lucid examples. Another essay deals in particular with the tradition of the April Fool. This subject has been somewhat neglected in the past by folklorists. Dundes, however, demonstrates the original nature of such pranks, and points out the particular circumstances in which they were usually carried out. He then presents a probable argument for why the first of April was chosen as the principal day for such pranks.

The most significant essay of the book is called "The Psychoanalytic Study of the Grimms' Tales: 'The Maiden Without Hands' (AT 706)." In this article, the author commences by giving a detailed outline of the history of psychoanalytical research into the Grimms' tales over the past century, and examines in particular the weaknesses involved in the research of both the psychoanalysts and the folklorists in this field.

Nonetheless, the author produces valid reasons why psychology can be a capable means of shedding light on certain of the Fairy Tales. When a folktale has been examined in the traditional ways, its paths of diffusion plotted, and the nucleus of the story revealed in the light of extant variations, certain unsolved problems occasionally remain to which the traditional folkloristic approach can find no logical answer. The answer, however, is sometimes obvious if one only applies the psychoanalytic approach.

The author's psychoanalytical explanation of the story of The Maiden Without Hands is very convincing, and after reading it, one finds oneself wholeheartedly agreeing with Dundes's statement that the "psychoanalytic approach to fairy tales is too important to be left in the hands of psychoanalysts" (144). I, too, am convinced that the attitude of students of folkloristics and of folklorists themselves to the psychoanalytical examination of folktales is bound to change before long. No other folklorist has made a greater contribution to creating the grounds for such a change than Alan Dundes.

The final article of the book involves an investigation of certain Balkan ballads that relate how a young bride is walled up in the foundation of a castle, bridge, or monastery to ensure the successful completion of the building. The summary of investigations into this ballad and the discussion in general is both informative and highly amusing. At the end of the article, Dundes puts forward new comparative

material that places the ballad in a wider context than before. He then proceeds to offer a new explanation of the content of the ballad, now based on the viewpoint of the victim.

*Folklore Matters* is not a large book, but that makes all the more admirable the way the author succeeds in doing justice to so many of the most important subjects in folkloristics. This book is a key work, and should be made compulsory reading in every university in which folkloristics is studied.

REFERENCE CITED:

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1942 *Thjóðsögur og gervithjóðsögur*. Reykjavík: Helgafell.  
 Jón Hnefill AÐALSTEINSSON  
 University of Iceland  
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DUNDES, ALAN, editor. *Cinderella: A Casebook*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. xii+316 pages. Maps, diagrams, selected bibliography. Paper US\$14.95; ISBN 0-299-11864-9.

DUNDES, ALAN, editor. *Little Red Riding Hood: A Casebook*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. xi+251 pages. Illustration, tables, suggestions for further reading, index. Cloth US\$35.00; ISBN 0-299-12030-9. Paper US\$12.95; ISBN 0-299-12034-1.

Of all the world-famous fairy tales, Cinderella and Little Red Riding Hood must rank near the top of the list in terms of the wealth of scholarship generated in the past hundred years. Professor Dundes's veritable "anthology" of Cinderella studies has been an invaluable research tool and a source of great inspiration. Welcome indeed is the news that it is now reissued and made available along with its new and equally impressive companion on Little Red Riding Hood from the same publisher.

These two volumes stand as milestones, near-complete sources of primary and secondary materials on their respective subjects, and epitomes not only of folklore studies but also of literary criticism replete with everything possibly needed by anyone surveying the past scholarly achievements or planning further research in the field. They provide various versions of the tales in English translation, some rare and not readily accessible, such as Basile's "The Cat Cinderella," and some totally new, such as the Indic variants.

The selected analytical writings include definitive classics and new discoveries, covering the whole range of methodological modes and theoretical perspectives from early forms and typology to myth-ritual, social-historical, anthropological, and psychoanalytical readings. The annotated bibliographies are most helpful, illuminating, and comprehensive, encompassing publications in other Western languages and works by Asianists.

In fact, Asianists stand to gain most from this pair, for one of the messages coming through unmistakably clear is Professor Dundes's call for eclectic scholarship and a comparative study of Asian cognates as well as older oral tales to avoid the pitfalls of ethnocentrism resulting from the misdirected concentration on the literary versions of Perrault and the Grimm Brothers for analysis.

A greater time depth of Oriental variants is illustrated by concrete examples.