

The Fairy as Hero(ine) and Author Representations of Female Power in Murat's "Le Turbot"

The fairy tale "Le Turbot" (1699) by Henriette-Julie de Castelnau, Comtesse de Murat, is remarkable for its foregrounding of the fairy Turbodine: not only is Turbodine both the tale's true hero and heroine, but she is also the tale's author, a character both developing plot—her own and others'—and narrating it. Far from being an auxiliary character, Turbodine is the protagonist of the tale whose story is ultimately her story, not that of the traditional heroic couple of prince and princess. Her exceptionality is conveyed not only through her hyper fairy function—she ultimately shapes the destinies of three kings (Coquerico, Lucidan, and Grimaut), two queens (the unnamed Queen of Caprare and Grimasse), three princes (Fortuné, Princillon, and Brillantin), and four princesses (Bluette, Risetete, Princillette, and Fleurbelle)—but also through her status as an independent sovereign queen with more influence and wealth than her husband, le roi de Coquerico, and more initiative and prowess than King Lucidan.

Turbodine is a woman who possesses power typically associated with masculinity, such as ruling and bestowing kingdoms, waging war, and arranging marriages. While highlighting this power, which is integral to her authorship of the plot, the narration also disguises it by placing limits and conditions on Turbodine's fairy art and attributing them to the superior dictates of fate. Further, the narration excuses and glosses over the specifics of Turbodine's masculine actions; thus is Murat able to present Turbodine as a forceful but feminine character without the need for cross-dressing or metamorphosis. Turbodine's virile heroism is tempered by the fact that she ultimately uses her

power in pursuit of love, an appropriately feminine concern, working to restore her own marriage and coupling princes and princesses of the next generation. However, power and knowledge in the tale are repeatedly figured as feminine, and the precious concerns of the *conteuses*¹ (e.g., infidelity, marriage of inclination, and female independence) are given a strong voice through Turbodine, who is also a vehicle for Murat's "defense of women" and the contestation and undermining of patriarchal authority, evident throughout her oeuvre.²

Whereas Murat figures the *woman author as fairy* in her preface, "To Modern Fairies,"³ which opens *Histoires sublimes et allégoriques*, "Le Turbot," which closes this collection of tales, figures the *fairy as author*. The figure of Murat-as-Turbodine is self-empowering, whereas that of Turbodine-as-Murat acknowledges the limitations of the power of women in the literary field, in what would later come to be known as the republic of letters.⁴ The ostensible limits to Turbodine's power and her simultaneous influence over all the events in the tale mirror the status of Murat and her fellow *conteuses* as *salonnières* and women writers: although writing in a minor and ridiculed genre and mocked as *femmes savantes* or *précieuses* by opponents in the *Querelle de femmes* and the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, French women writers of the 1690s were supporters of the arts, arbiters of taste, and creators of new literary genres, including the portrait, the *nouvelle*, and, of course, the literary fairy tale or *conte de fées*. Turbodine's stated limitations are representative of Murat's realization of her own limited efficacy in contributing to the discourse on and defense of women: throughout her oeuvre she "insists on subjecting her heroines to the laws of society" in acknowledgment of the societal forces that render them powerless (Clermidy-Patard 191). Yet Turbodine's triumph and the passing of fairy power and authorship to her heir, Princillette, at the end of the tale signal two other characteristics of Murat's oeuvre identified by Geneviève Clermidy-Patard, doubling and amplification, which offset the ambiguity of women's power in the tale; they also suggest the intertextuality of the *conteuses'* tales. "Le Turbot," with Turbodine as fairy author, seems to be the narrative counterpoint or the textual embodiment of the spirit of Murat's "To Modern Fairies."

Turbodine in Context

Looking at "Le Turbot" in relation to its source tale, Straparola's "Pietro the Fool" (1550), and to Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy's own version of Straparola's tale, "Le Dauphin" (1698), reveals how innovative Murat is in creating Turbodine.⁵ Although d'Aulnoy changes Straparola's simple rise tale into one of restoration, replacing the lowly born fool with an ugly prince, she otherwise retains the basic plot of "Pietro the Fool": a fish grants the fool's wishes, which allows the fool to trick and ultimately win the beautiful but

spurning princess as well as a kingdom for himself. Even though there are slight revisions to the source material and much elaboration in d'Aulnoy's tale, the structure and details of Straparola's plot are recognizable throughout, and the focus and sympathy remain with the male protagonist. The only major fairy character in d'Aulnoy's tale is the dark fairy, Grognette, who, serving as a new antagonist, resembles the "old, ugly, poorly dressed, and poorly housed" fairies who perform "base and childish" activities that Murat condemns in her preface "To Modern Fairies" (Tucker and Siemens 129).⁶ A minor fairy character, who goes unnamed and undescribed, makes a brief appearance to move the original plot along.

Murat takes a completely different route. Although "Le Turbot" opens with and follows almost identically the plot and characters of "Pietro the Fool," the story and the focus quickly shift from both the fool and the fish to the completely new character of the *fairy* behind a much longer and complicated tale, of which the fool's story is a minor plot. About six times longer than Straparola's tale, "Le Turbot" uses "Pietro the Fool" as a springboard to tell the tale not of a fool rising to the throne but of a powerful and benevolent female fairy correcting a wrong of which she is both the victim and the perpetrator, the tale's disequilibrium resulting from her husband's infidelity. This is a completely new story of Murat's invention with a new protagonist, the fairy Turbodine. Thus Murat feminizes the tale, taking a story originally centered on a male character and substituting a female heroine (Jasmin 371). Instead of a patrilineal ending, Murat substitutes a female legacy, one that stems from a strong female ruler.

Looking at Murat's reworking of Straparola's tale from the perspective of the fairy Turbodine as the central figure answers the question of Raymonde Robert, who in analyzing Murat's divergence from Aarne-Thompson tale type 675 is puzzled by the "bizarre manner in which a fairy repays the fisherman who saved his [the turbot's] life by replacing him with another in the bed of the princess" (Robert 130).⁷ In Murat's tale the fool Mirou figures as a tangential character; even the turbot has no actual power to grant Mirou's wishes. Rather, the fairy Turbodine confers that power on her husband the turbot in order to protect him in his metamorphosed form, and the character of Mirou is simply the means to an end serving Turbodine.

Turbodine is unique as a fairy within both Murat's own oeuvre and that of her fellow women writers. Although other tales by Murat or the *conteuses* contain a fairy as the protagonist or a fairy that finds her love match at the end, none of these fairies functions in the same way as Turbodine in the narrative of "Le Turbot." None of them simultaneously ensures her own happy fate while helping to ensure that of the traditional heroic couple. For example, looking at Murat's tales, the unpublished "La Fée Princesse" features a fairy heroine, but

her mother (the antagonist) and her governess (her helper) are also fairies. It is the governess who acts as La Fée Princesse's helper, reuniting her with the prince Zélindor. In another of Murat's unpublished *contes*, the dysphoric "Peine Perdue," the protagonist (Peine Perdue, daughter of a fairy) and the heroic couple (Anarine and Isabel) are not the same; the plot focuses on the sad fate of Peine Perdue, who is destined to be unhappy in love and for whom the heroic couple functions as antagonists. As heroines, both La Fée Princesse and Peine Perdue are quite traditional in that they need the intervention of the helper fairy for success or, as in the case of Peine Perdue as the antiheroine, to alleviate the pain of failure. In the works of Murat's contemporaries the fairy may function as the main character as well, but she tends to function either as the antagonist, as in Charlotte-Rose de Caumont de La Force's "Tourbillon," or she begins as the protagonist/heroine but becomes the antagonist/antiheroine, as in Catherine Durand Bédacier's "La Fée Lubantine." Neither of these fairies is triumphant in love in the end, as is Turbodine.

In the *Histoires sublimes and allégoriques* itself, the second story, "L'Île de la Magnificence," appears to function as a prototype to "Le Turbot" in that its fairy, Queen Plaisir, orchestrates multiple marriages and achieves a love match of her own at the end, making herself one-half of a heroic couple. Yet Plaisir is definitely not the heroine or even the focus of this similarly long and complexly layered tale in the same way that Turbodine is the focus and heroine of "Le Turbot." Even though the narrative makes it clear that Plaisir is driving the action of the multiple storylines, she uses her adopted sons to resolve the various love plots, including her own, while she remains in the background.⁸ With "Le Turbot," the last story in the collection, Murat takes the fairy's prominence and dominance one step further, promoting her to the starring role of hero(ine), whose power, though integrated in the tale, can be divided into contemporary notions of male and female.

Turbodine As Hero(ine)

Turbodine features prominently in "Le Turbot," and the fact that Turbodine herself narrates for nearly half the tale (twenty-two out of forty-seven pages) only increases her dominance all the more. She also exhibits the traits of the other *conteuses'* heroines, such as agency, beauty, and a perfect combination of masculine and feminine qualities.⁹ But what qualifies Turbodine as the heroine per se instead of the auxiliary fairy is that she is the main protagonist of the story with her own arc and happy ending. Briefly, the tale revolves around the consequences of Turbodine turning her husband, le roi de Coquerico, into a fish (the turbot of the tale's title) upon discovering his infidelity and the

consequences of her wishing to arrange a marriage for her husband's brother Fortuné. The unforeseen outcomes of these two events ultimately result in Risetite's pregnancy and Fortuné's transformation into a butterfly, two problems that Turbodine works hard to resolve. Upon their resolution, Turbodine's husband is restored to her, and the major and minor heroic couples of the tale, whom she has worked to unite, marry and inherit the kingdoms she either possesses, has conquered, or has saved.

Murat seems to be playing with the conventions of fairy tales by combining the hero, the heroine, and the fairy into one character. According to Vladimir Propp's morphology, a fairy tale has seven dramatis personae defined by their functions in spheres of action. These include "the hero," "the villain," "the donor (provider)," "the helper," and "the princess (a sought-for person) and her father" (79–80).¹⁰ Raymonde Robert effectively modifies Propp's cast of characters when formulating what is unique about the French fairy tale. In place of Propp's separate heroes and princess-objects, for Robert a defining characteristic of the late-seventeenth-century and early-eighteenth-century *contes de fées* is the existence of the exemplary heroic couple who are destined to marry one another, with the hero and heroine and their respective helpers united on the good side of the plot and the antihero, antiheroine, and other antagonists united on the bad side, with both moral and physical attributes distinguishing who belongs to which side (Robert 35). In the traditional structure of a French fairy tale, the fairy's role is that of the donor/helper or villain to the plot's hero (prince) and heroine (princess). Because Turbodine fits this description, she has traditionally been passed off as an auxiliary character (Murat, *Contes*, 474).

As Geneviève Patard describes, however, the characters in Murat's tales are notorious for their refusal of conventional boundaries. Murat's fairy-tale protagonists are not neatly divided into their conventional roles of heroes, opponents, and assistants. The heroic couple are often not the protagonists of the tale, and the function of these characters frequently evolves (e.g., from donor/helper to villain) (Murat, *Contes*, 39–40). Propp asserts that "functions of characters serve as stable, constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled" (21). This means that a particular character can serve in more than one role simultaneously, because it is the *function* of the character that it is important, not the specific person who fills it. Thus the fact that Turbodine fulfills the function of auxiliary fairy to the major and minor heroic couples in the tale does not preclude her from also being its heroine and for acting on her own behalf with her own fairy powers.

In fact, Turbodine displaces the heroic couple of Risetite and Fortuné as the main protagonist of the tale, for not only does she repair the misdeed perpetrated on Fortuné by the jealous fairy Mandarine, but she also repairs the misdeed

perpetrated on herself (her husband's infidelity) by turning le roi de Coquerico into a fish as punishment—two actions that are inextricably intertwined. If it were not for Mirou catching her fish-husband and wishing for Risetete's pregnancy, Turbodine would not have found a way to disenchant Fortuné; conversely, if Mandarine had not transformed Fortuné into a butterfly with such particular conditions for his release, then Turbodine would not have been able to ethically fulfill Mirou's wish. Hence the plot originates in Turbodine's disequilibrium, which is caused by her husband's faithlessness and revolves around her subsequent hasty decision to punish her husband for twenty years; her amelioratory measures ultimately allow for the union of the traditional heroic couple of Risetete and Fortuné and for the reunion of the superficially heroic couple that Turbodine forms with le roi de Coquerico. Furthermore, Turbodine plays a role in Fortuné's metamorphosis, for Fortuné is afraid to ask for Turbodine's help in rescuing Merline because he has already declined to marry Blulette, whom Turbodine has chosen for him and whom he does not love. Thus, although Turbodine acts as the helper fairy to the stricken Fortuné, Fortuné adopts the role of helper to Turbodine in turn. His plight enables her to keep her husband safe until his twenty-year sentence expires and to stay true to her fairy oaths.

Masculine Powers and Heroism

Turbodine's male-associated powers include ruling and bestowing kingdoms, waging war, and arranging marriages. Thus she possesses both the royal and the familial *pouvoir du père*. This power, coupled with Turbodine's assistance to every male character in the tale, especially to the traditional hero Fortuné, works to undermine masculine agency and power. Turbodine's masculine exploits also highlight the myth of self-sufficient masculinity, that is, a masculinity that exists without the interpretation and projection of its ideals by women (Seifert, *Fairy Tales*, 173). Not only is Murat as woman author interpreting masculinity and projecting it onto Turbodine, but also Turbodine enacts masculinity herself, having it projected onto her by the feminized would-be heroes in the tale. In fact, Murat substitutes Turbodine in the place of patriarchal authority (Clermidy-Patard 123–24), making her the tale's hero, with her own masculine goals of conquest and control, instead of merely the traditional hero's helper.¹¹

Strong fairy queen versus weak kings

In "Le Turbot" Murat uses the same strategy as d'Aulnoy to discredit male figures by contrasting the roles and authority granted to her heroine Turbodine to the weak kings of le roi de Coquerico and Lucidan. A weak king implies not

only that he is *not* the hero but also that, incapable of ruling his kingdom, he is an impotent father and spouse, because the king was the symbolic father of the people (Jasmin 351–68). Compared to the two kings, Turbodine is both more powerful and more virile: it is she who rules and she who defends and conquers kingdoms. These activities immediately mark her as male, for despite the *femme fortes* of history, the regent queens, and the women of the Fronde, the antiwoman side of the long-standing *Querelle de femmes* argued that women were incapable and unfit to rule because of their inherent psychological and physical weaknesses.¹² Even the apologists in favor of women rulers, while acknowledging the restrictions placed on women in a male-controlled society, advanced their argument by appealing to women's nonphysical virtues or her differences from men (Ronzeaud). Yet Turbodine is the *queen*, who possesses these "male" qualities without narrative comment and without the need for cross-dressing (as in the case of Murat's Constantine or d'Aulnoy's Belle-Belle) or metamorphosis (as with d'Aulnoy's Chatte Blanche or Aimée).¹³ This is significant and makes Turbodine unique among the *conteuses'* virile heroines.

First, the narrative legitimizes Turbodine's power by making her the "sole heir" of L'Île des Roches,¹⁴ a flourishing kingdom left to her by her parents that she rules through a "long succession" of family ownership (Murat, *Contes*, 319). This is noteworthy, because in French society Salic law prohibited women from inheriting property and the throne.¹⁵ The fact that she is sole heir softens this illegality somewhat, but at the same time Turbodine's parents are mentioned collectively, as though they have equal ruling power. What is striking is that Turbodine's king father is never mentioned anywhere in the story, whereas her fairy queen mother is mentioned twice. Thus Turbodine is presented as clearly a female ruler, with a female legacy. This heightens the differences, discussed later in this essay, between her and the male kings and princes in the tale.

Second, Turbodine is presented as superior to the male rulers seeking her hand and to le roi de Coquerico, whom she marries for love, even though his state is less wealthy than hers. Whereas her kingdom is rich in precious stones and metals, amber, crystal, and pearls, le roi de Coquerico's kingdom is "little" (*était peu de chose*) in contrast: "the commerce of the people being only flowers" (Murat, *Contes*, 319–20).¹⁶ Turbodine even states that she is rich enough not to need her husband's lands, which she plans to bestow upon his brother Fortuné (Murat, *Contes*, 323). Thus le roi de Coquerico is feminized as soon as he is introduced, both by his association with flowers, usually associated with women, and by a wife richer than him and in control of the disposition of his lands. This feminization further continues with his extreme distress at Turbodine's separation from him when she leaves to help

a neighboring prince in trouble, which typically is the role of a male ruler. Although she experiences a lot of pain, he acts as though he were going to die (Murat, *Contes*, 320).¹⁷ Because only Turbodine's aid can help the afflicted prince, le roi de Coquerico stays behind, acting the part of the woman emotionally and physically.

Third, the narrative further shows Turbodine's dominance over le roi de Coquerico when she turns him into a fish upon discovering him being unfaithful to her with Blulette, a neighboring princess. Returning home from assisting a prince in need, Turbodine witnesses this scene of infidelity as she searches for a place to stop her war horses, a detail that reminds the reader of her power.¹⁸ As in d'Aulnoy's tales, the "assumption of animal form entails a distinct loss of power" where the "anthropomorphic royal male is disabled and often ridiculed" (Hannon 88). Even though le roi de Coquerico does not have much power in the first place relative to Turbodine, he is certainly further demasculinized as a fish, especially because he depends on Turbodine for speech and protection. Le roi de Coquerico is also weak in his protestation of innocence, when he claims he was surprised by Blulette's advances (Murat, *Contes*, 322). Even in seduction, women control him. Most compellingly, Turbodine gets to punish her husband for his infidelity, because in the real world of the *conteuses*, women had no recourse for a cheating spouse: only a man could bring charges against a woman for adultery, not vice versa, because marriage was an affair of property and a woman's adultery could result in property being distributed to bastard children (DeJean, *Tender Geographies*, 152, 258n29). The further twist here is that Turbodine is the one with property in her marriage.

And ultimately, when le roi de Coquerico's twenty-year sentence finally expires and Turbodine returns him to his human form, she welcomes him "to take again the place you are due in my heart and on *my throne* (Murat, *Contes*, 348; emphasis mine).¹⁹ While the cheering people may cry "Long live King Turbot and Queen Turbodine!"²⁰ it is clear that Turbodine is the real ruler (Murat, *Contes*, 349). Hence le roi de Coquerico's name is ironic or mocking: he is far from the domineering rooster implied by his name, with its implications of ruling on a smaller scale than a kingdom, and he has no victory of which to sing.²¹ In fact, le roi de Coquerico does not even speak in the tale. He has no direct dialogue, and his speech and actions are always reported through either Turbodine or the narrator; even his explanation of infidelity is reported indirectly to Turbodine through the medium of a halcyon sent to protect the fish-king. Thus Turbodine and le roi de Coquerico are the epitome of the popular fear of "the world upside down,"²² where men are in a "state of domestic submission" and women take up arms and politics (Ronzeaud 9).

Lucidan is also the feminized, weak king to Turbodine. Suffering from grief after exiling Risetete and thus not on his guard, he flees when the neighboring king and queen, Grimaut and Grimasse, invade. It is Turbodine who acts not only to get Lucidan reinstated on his throne but also to avenge the attack and seize Grimaut's kingdom in turn. First, in absentia in her own kingdom, Turbodine initiates war, ordering Fortuné to "go reestablish the king your father-in-law in his lands," providing him with "a fleet equipped with everything necessary" (Murat, *Contes*, 344).²³ In contrast, and as befits the prince of the traditional heroic couple, Fortuné accomplishes this task, but only at the command and with the aid of Turbodine. While Fortuné performs "an infinite number of noble deeds"²⁴ in recapturing the kingdom, nothing is said of Lucidan, who seems to have only gone along for the ride (Murat, *Contes*, 344).

Second, with Lucidan passively restored to his throne and the now prodigal Fortuné gambling away his fortune at his own palace, it is up to Turbodine to take revenge on Grimaut on Lucidan's behalf. When she informs Fortuné and Lucidan of the imminent arrival of a fleet to do so, Lucidan submits to Turbodine, saying that "she was the mistress" (Murat, *Contes*, 346).²⁵ This time Turbodine is on board for the fight, joined by Fortuné and his son Princillon. Significantly again, Lucidan is absent, his revenge overseen and enacted by Turbodine. It is *she* who chases and turns the usurpers into stone, forever immobilizing them; she then returns to Caprare to inform Lucidan "of that which *she* had done" only after "*she* had given the orders necessary to keep *her* conquest" (Murat, *Contes*, 347; emphases mine).²⁶ Thus the narrative makes it clear that it is Turbodine—not Lucidan or even his son-in-law Fortuné—who is the restorer and conqueror of kingdoms. Turbodine, the fairy queen, is the hero king.

Word equals action: authoring plot

The power of the fairy in the *conteuses'* tales is like that of the absolute king. What she decrees happens immediately; the power of her words reigns supreme. The fairy has the power to create reality, through both stating an action and by naming heroes for the traits they possess by means of the gift she has granted them (Jasmin 383–84). In the case of Turbodine, she names the titular antihero for the punishment granted to him by her. The plot of "Le Turbot" thus turns on the omnipotence and immediacy of the fairy's word, both Turbodine's and the opposing fairy's, Mandarine. Soon after Turbodine orders her husband to become a turbot and touches him with her wand, she regrets her action but cannot undo it because the term of twenty years she has

imposed cannot be revoked (Murat, *Contes*, 321). This sets off the chain of events that links all the subplots of the tale together, as Turbodine finds a way to both protect her husband and fulfill the conditions of Mandarin's punishment on Fortuné. Like Louis XIV, Turbodine uses exile to punish her husband for his crime.²⁷ Significantly, his identity as turbot, which Turbodine has created for him, sticks at the end of the tale: When returned to his human form at last, the people hail him as "King Turbot" (Murat, *Contes*, 349), an identity also reinforced by the title of the tale itself. Thus both the king's crime and his weakness in relation to Turbodine's power are emphasized. Also significant is that the narrator consistently refers to the fairy as "Turbodine" ("because that is what she is called")²⁸ (Murat, *Contes*, 311), although independently from her husband she is "la reine de l'île des Roches"²⁹ (Murat, *Contes*, 319), a title that precedes the first section of the tale narrated by Turbodine herself. This means that although Turbodine is a ruler of her own kingdom, she is *defined by* and *known for* her action of turning her husband into a fish—that act (and her control over her husband) have become an integral part of her identity, with her name a constant reminder of that power. Mandarin even once refers obliquely to Turbodine as the "reine de Coquerico," which, while identifying her with her husband's kingdom and not her own, also reminds the reader that Turbodine is queen while her husband is a fish and underscores that Turbodine is the ruler of her husband (Murat, *Contes*, 329). *Le roi de Coquerico*/the turbot is never referred to as "le roi de l'île des Roches," which again reinforces Turbodine as the dominant figure in the couple.

The power of the fairy's (male) word is also demonstrated when Turbodine tells Lucidan they will attack Grimaut's kingdom in revenge. Lucidan responds, "That she only had to give her orders, and they would be punctually followed" (Murat, *Contes*, 346–47).³⁰ There is no fairy magic involved here or threat; it is only the authority of Turbodine herself that commands Lucidan's acceptance. Likewise, Fortuné submits to Turbodine's will, despite his great impatience, as she works to free him from his butterfly form through her various deceptions: "He obeyed me always, and he found it so beneficial to abandon himself to my command that he did nothing without my ordering it" (Murat, *Contes*, 340).³¹ Throughout the tale action takes place at the command of Turbodine, either by word or a wave of her magic wand.

The ultimate demonstration of fairy word into action, but one that takes a lot more planning and manipulation on Turbodine's part, is the dream marriage of Risetette and Fortuné. Here Turbodine creates a reality so ridiculous that Risetette believes it is a dream, but the fairy's authority to proclaim and consummate this marriage, even without the requisite parental or kingly consent, is a testament to her male power.³² It also shows her skill as an author, who

cunningly casts the roles in this scenario to ensure the marriage's ultimate legitimacy. Although disguised as Risetete's mother and using the husband of another fairy to play Lucidan, Turbodine is acting as Risetete's father (and thus as her sovereign), forcing her marriage. Conflicted over the deception, Turbodine is ultimately pleased with her prowess, for her plan succeeds (Murat, *Contes*, 339).

Textual Deflection of Male Heroic Power

For all the examples of Turbodine's male power just discussed, the text itself superficially tries to distract from it. The most prominent example is Turbodine's immediate regret and subsequent extreme distress over the metamorphosis of her husband, which can be seen as a narrative punishment for her rash act. Ruth Bottigheimer identifies anger as a defining characteristic of AT 675 and states that "anger is the prerogative of authority figures, whose authority is often constituted by their maleness," whereas "women . . . are not allowed to express anger in these tales" ("Luckless," 266–67). Thus, although Turbodine may be punished for her male anger and power, these two attributes also drive the entire plot of the tale, without which there is no story.

Other examples of narrative deflection of her masculine prerogative involve Turbodine remaining ostensibly within a female role, as when she disguises herself as Risetete's mother in the dream wedding. In proving the validity of Risetete's dream marriage to Fortuné, Turbodine calls in the authority of the male druid who was present, thus legitimizing her actions. Male authority is summoned again in the form of Mirou, whom Turbodine uses as a witness to Risetete's propriety, granting him reason—popularly conceived as a male attribute—to do so.³³ Although it is Turbodine who acts to get Lucidan reinstated and avenged, the plan is executed along with the appropriate male stand-ins of Fortuné and Princillon. Turbodine's specific acts in this revenge, beyond turning Grimaut and Grimasse into stone, are unspecified and thus bloodless. The particular help that Turbodine provides to her neighboring prince at the beginning of the tale also goes unmentioned. Leaving Turbodine's acts of aggression vague lessens the impact of her virile qualities.

Further counterbalancing Turbodine's wielding of male power is the fact that the result of all her machinations is happiness in love. Love is the accepted domain of women and the focus of the *conteuses'* tales (Raynard 239–60), and Turbodine uses all her powers in pursuit of it, for herself and others. While pursuing her ultimate goal of keeping her husband safe in anticipation of their reunion, Turbodine arranges the love matches of the major and minor heroic

couples in the tale: Risetette and Fortuné, Princilliette and Brillantin, and Princillon and Fleurbelle. Never mind that in the process she conquers Grimaut's kingdom and annexes that of the adulterer Bluette, because, in the end, she distributes these kingdoms among them.

Finally, the *conte* is titled "Le Turbot" and not "Turbodine," which seemingly places the emphasis on the plight of le roi de Coquerico. Murat perhaps is playing on the tale as a restoration plot as envisioned by d'Aulnoy with "Le Dauphin," with the royal turbot losing and then regaining his crown; however, "King Turbot" is a passive participant throughout, thoroughly eclipsed by Turbodine. The title is simply a subtle way of showing Turbodine's strength while also emphasizing the problem of infidelity.

Invoking Fate: Limitation or Empowerment?

Another way in which Turbodine's male power is disguised in the tale is the foil of fate or destiny. As in other stories by Murat, fate in the service of love, whether it results in a happy or unhappy ending, checks the power of the fairy and is acknowledged by the fairy as a limitation she cannot overcome.³⁴ This notion of the limitation of a fairy's powers, especially limitation by the dictates of fate, becomes curious when we look at the etymology of the word *fée*, which is "traced to the Latin feminine word *fata*, variant of *fatum* referring to the goddess of 'fate,' but also to *fatum*, past participle of *fari*, 'to speak, reveal, bear witness.' Speaking the fate that the folk- or fairy-tale narrative acknowledges from the outset, fairies wield considerable power" (Seifert, *Fairy Tales*, 198).

Fairies, by their definition, would thus seem to be determiners of fate, but the fairies in Murat's stories explicitly state that they are helpless to change fate, and the protagonists and heroic couples meet their destined ends despite the fairies' deliberate interventions. Taken at face value, the same limitation would appear to be true for Turbodine: "Fate stronger than my art rendered me powerless,"³⁵ she states when she cannot undo her husband's metamorphosis, and later in the tale's chronological timeline the turbot explains to an angry Risetette that "fate has a greater part in your misfortune than me" (Murat, *Contes*, 321, 309).³⁶ The narrative explicitly supplies examples of Turbodine's supposed powerlessness. Yet Turbodine, unlike Murat's similarly curtailed fairies, is effectual in resolving the plot of the tale happily, after an interesting interplay between her own powers and the dictates of fate.

Turbodine exemplifies both root meanings of *fée*: not only is she the driving force behind all of the events—what she says happens—but she is also the primary teller of the tale, bearing witness to all that has happened. Even though fate has been said to represent the woman writer, who must set limits

to the fairy's power so that there can be the plot of a misdeed and its reparation (Jasmin 388–89), the role of fate in “Le Turbot” works within the text itself to disguise the actual power of the fairy in driving the plot forward, a plot in which a woman sovereign reigns supreme, especially over the male characters. The *fairy*—especially *this* fairy, Turbodine, who is actively authoring this tale and her own fate—represents the woman writer. Yet the fairy must at the same time necessarily submit to her author's whims (Jasmin 389), just as the *conteuses* had to camouflage the subversive *précieux* ideas of their plots within the framework of the playful, not-to-be-taken-seriously *conte de fées*. In another light, one could argue that Turbodine ultimately succeeds because destiny has already decreed the love matches in the tale. As Geneviève Clermidy-Patard points out, for Murat, destiny is another term for love, and love is a superior power to patriarchal authority (128–29). Thus Murat is able to both acknowledge and subvert masculine authority with the same device, simultaneously disguising Turbodine's power with the very means that allows it to triumph. To the uninitiated, Turbodine's power is (at least superficially) checked; for the circle of *conteuses* and their privileged audiences, both foil and fairy have the same goal and are one.

Several other passages throughout the tale explicitly mention destiny's hand, and all ultimately have to do with a love match. When Risetete first consciously meets Turbodine, Turbodine introduces her to her husband thusly: “Beautiful princess, there he is whom *fate arranges for you* to take for your husband.” In the next paragraph Turbodine enjoins both Risetete and Fortuné to accompany her to their new home: “Let us go and leave this inhospitable place in order to bring you to the palace *destined to you*” (Murat, *Contes*, 311; emphases mine).³⁷ When Turbodine is struggling to find a way to simultaneously grant Mirou's wish and disenchant Fortuné, she realizes that “this adventure . . . appeared to me thus an effect of the drive of destiny, which had taken this way to make Mandarine's impossible subjugations possible, and to get me out of the commitment to my oaths” (Murat, *Contes*, 334; emphasis mine).³⁸ However, Turbodine goes to such extraordinary lengths to legitimately marry the heroic couple and rescue Fortuné that the narrative detail of her elaborate machinations far exceeds the few lines about the role of fate on her power. Turbodine even claims control for herself: when concluding the story of Risetete's adventures, she tells Risetete, “I then prepared all things to put to an end to *that which I had so fortunately begun*” (Murat, *Contes*, 340; emphasis mine).³⁹ Although the plan she concocted may indeed seem like it was formulated by destiny—even destiny as love—Turbodine claims full credit for it.

The narrative even juxtaposes the power of fate with the power of Turbodine herself. Following the sentence in which Turbodine introduces

Risette to her destined husband (quoted earlier) is this one, addressed to Fortuné: “Come *receive from my hand* this kind princess for your wife” (Murat, *Contes*, 311; emphasis mine).⁴⁰ Here it is clear that Turbodine is actively giving Fortuné to Risette. There is an interesting gender dynamic here as well: fate gives the female her husband, but Turbodine gives the male his wife. Turbodine is Fate personified for Fortuné, who, like all the other men in the tale, has his fate controlled (i.e., authored) by a woman.

By the end of the tale, there is a reversal in the hierarchy of fate over fairy in the narrative itself, as destiny is now seen to be acting in accord with Turbodine’s wishes, for reciprocal love has bloomed in the hearts of Brillantin and Princillette, whom she wishes to have marry (Murat, *Contes*, 348).⁴¹ Fate is now favoring Turbodine’s love match, which contrasts with Turbodine’s failure in the beginning of the tale to match Fortuné and Blulette.

By invoking the controlling hand of fate, the narrative explicitly excuses any possible critique of Turbodine: her extreme punishment of le roi de Coquerico, the scandalous way in which she impregnates Risette, or the authority she assumes in marrying Risette and Fortuné. Although submission to fate is another disguise for Turbodine’s exercise of male prerogative, it is a weak one, as Turbodine’s actions show her to be in control. And tellingly, there is no appeal to fate while she is attacking or avenging kingdoms. Even though the dark fairy Mandarinne erroneously pronounces to Fortuné that she will always be mistress of his destiny (Murat, *Contes*, 332), Turbodine is the mistress—and author—of her fate and everyone else’s in the tale (even Mandarinne’s), despite the claims of submission to destiny. If love is superior to patriarchal authority and Turbodine as fairy is equated with the fate that is also equated with love, then Turbodine is also greater than patriarchal authority.

Female Knowledge and Authorship

Power and knowledge in “Le Turbot” are coded as feminine, even if much of Turbodine’s power is associated with masculinity, because both come from the hands of women. For example, Turbodine receives the fairy art through her mother,⁴² and she also looks to her mother’s notes and books when trying to solve the moral dilemma of impregnating Risette. And at the end of the tale, Turbodine passes on her fairy knowledge—and her narrative legacy—to her chosen heir, Princillette, “to whom such astonishing things occurred that they will one day make a most pleasant story,”⁴³ just like the story of Turbodine that the narrator—and Turbodine herself—has just told (Murat, *Contes*, 349). It is also to Princillette (and only by default to Brillantin, who has no other narrative function than to be Princillette’s husband) that Turbodine leaves her own

kingdoms, which include those of her husband and Blulette. The promise of women's power—and storytelling—thus continues down the generations.⁴⁴

Turbodine also controls the disclosure of knowledge in the tale, a form of power and authorship in itself. For example, she reveals to Risetete the whole of Risetete's adventures in two parts, thus not giving her the complete story at once. The first time is at the request of Risetete, who, rescued, married, and pregnant with Princillette, wants to know the backstory of the fish behind her adventures. At this point, Turbodine tells Risetete of le roi de Coquerico's treachery and transformation, revealing only that prince Fortuné is *not* Mirou transformed. The revelation of Princillon's paternity—and thus the story of Fortuné and of Risetete's impregnation—is delayed until *after* the birth of Princillette: "It is time that *I let you know* the outcome of all your adventures" (Murat, *Contes*, 323; emphasis mine).⁴⁵ Although this is partly because of the terms of Mandarine's spell on Fortuné (he will be released from his butterfly form only after the birth of his daughter), such secrecy is not logically necessary for the narrative, because the spell is well on its way to being broken (Risetete is pregnant with Princillette) and, moreover, Turbodine has found a way to keep Fortuné's human form for all but two hours a day. Turbodine thus could have chosen to tell Risetete the whole story the first time but chooses to wait. Risetete has no idea of her husband's butterfly state, thanks to Turbodine's fairy skill, enabling Turbodine to keep that secret as well and to reveal it at her will. Turbodine is thus the creator of both Risetete's external and internal reality, authoring her identity.

Further, the revelation of knowledge between Turbodine and Risetete is given the aura of secrecy. Turbodine draws Risetete aside privately in her quarters, and "after she was *enclosed* there with her," tells her the story of Fortuné and the dream marriage (Murat, *Contes*, 323; emphasis mine).⁴⁶ Even though Turbodine trusts Fortuné with the secrets that allow him to participate in the dream marriage, she keeps the knowledge of Risetete's suffering from him to spare his feelings. She tells Risetete, "I shared [your pains] with you without his knowing" (Murat, *Contes*, 340).⁴⁷ Women's pain is thus transformed into secret (female) knowledge, which plays to the contemporary male conception of the salon as a place of women's secrets, with its preoccupation with matters of love and marriage: although the salon was "'public' to the extent that conversation and various forms of belles lettres were 'published' there, its feminocentric character lent it an association with the secret or private" (Harth 182). With Risetete as Turbodine's primary audience for the tale, Murat reinforces the primacy of a female community of authors and readers suggested by her preface, "To Modern Fairies."

The postponement of knowledge is also reflected in the narrative itself in the very *naming* of Turbodine. When Risetete—and the reader—are introduced

to her character, she is first “a lady of a surprising beauty and magnificence” and then “the fairy . . . [who] was one of the most powerful.” Finally, a page and a half later, she is referred to as “la fée Turbodine” (Murat, *Contes*, 309–11).⁴⁸ The delay in the revelation of her specific identity anticipates Turbodine’s own narrative withholding. Turbodine thus is a stand-in for the woman writer, Murat herself, in the crafty chronology of the tale.

Fairy as Author/Author as Fairy

Just as d’Aulnoy in “La Chatte blanche” “has transformed a tale about a wandering prince into a tale about a powerful princess, whose storytelling, both written and oral, is part of her power” (Harries 43), so also has Murat in “Le Turbot” transformed a tale about a male fool and a male wish-granting fish into a tale about the powerful female fairy behind the wish granting, who possesses the same storytelling power. In actively narrating over half of the fairy tale, Turbodine is as much the author of “Le Turbot” as she is its heroine, informing its characters of the plot while speaking as others. She simultaneously fills in the reader and Risetete on not only Turbodine’s own history but also the stories of both Prince Fortuné and Risetete, which are linked with hers. In telling Fortuné’s story, she recreates his first-person dialogue, thus appropriating his voice. Recounting to Risetete how it was that Risetete became pregnant, Turbodine presents her with the sequence of events leading up to and behind that which Risetete herself only experienced hazily as a dream. Risetete’s own memory of the events is but poorly integrated into her identity until Turbodine reveals what only Turbodine, as orchestrator, can know. Risetete’s new narrative knowledge only increases her happiness and respect for Turbodine, regardless of the fact that Turbodine played an integral part in Risetete’s previous misfortunes.

The relationship between Risetete and Turbodine mirrors that between the *conteuse* and her muse, the fairy, as illustrated both in the frontispiece of d’Aulnoy’s *Les Contes des fées*, where the fairy and the noblewoman are in private communication, and in the meaning of the collection’s title: “tales of the fairies” (Jones, “Poetics,” 66–67). Although the fairy acts as the muse for the woman writer, the fairy Turbodine acts as the author of Risetete’s destiny. Risetete’s story is literally a “tale of the fairy” Turbodine, told as well as created by her. And Murat is the ultimate fairy; as Clermidy-Patard remarks, Murat reuses Straparola’s text to better trick the reader, who is manipulated as Turbodine manipulates the naïve Risetete (Murat, *Contes*, 453), especially with the unexpected inversion of the misdeed and its reparation in the tale (Clermidy-Patard 219), for Turbodine’s *own* story is created and told by Turbodine herself.

In addition to orally recounting the events to the story's main characters, Turbodine also has the story written down to preserve its details for the masses, who have also already heard it: "Everyone in the kingdom of Caprare already knew the amazing story of Prince Fortuné and Princess Risetete, but to make sure everything would be known by everyone, she had it printed" (Murat, *Contes*, 347).⁴⁹ Interestingly, Turbodine also uses a living witness to substantiate the story: Mirou the fool, whom she brings back from exile. Granting him reason, she also conserves "the memory of all that happened, so that he could be an irreproachable witness to the princess' modesty" (Murat, *Contes*, 347).⁵⁰ This last bit of authoring on Turbodine's part warrants examination. On the one hand, Turbodine molds a man to suit her purposes, creating a whole new identity for him; on the other hand, she rewards him with riches and a place in Lucidan's court as recompense. Is Turbodine *buying* Mirou's testimony, his good word? It appears that a woman's word, either oral or written, is not enough in defending a woman's reputation. Despite all that she has achieved, Turbodine still needs a *man's* (oral) testimony to secure the good name of Risetete.

This is an interesting twist on the status of women's stories in Murat's France, where (lower-class) women were associated with the *oral* fairy tale, not the written, and men like Perrault paradoxically appropriated the female oral voice to sound more authentic but legitimized the stories—and thus the genre—by writing them down as *men* (Jones, "Poetics," 61; Harries 47–55). In "Le Turbot" the fairy and sovereign queen is the originator and first distributor of the story, not a Mother Goose or a nurse. Turbodine herself writes it down, or rather has it printed for her, presumably controlling the message. Mirou, although now risen through Turbodine's intervention, functions with both the authority of a lower-class "old wife" or *ma mère L'Oye* and the authority of a man, much like Perrault in his *Histoires ou contes du temps passé*, except that Mirou's testimony is oral, not written. Murat is thus playing here with conventions of authority in storytelling, both in terms of class and gender.⁵¹ And, even though Turbodine has professedly recorded the "story of prince Fortuné and the princess Risetete" for posterity, that story has the powerful fairy queen Turbodine as its central figure and author. Noémi Hepp notes that one of the measures of male heroism is public acknowledgment of the hero's exploits (14). Turbodine works toward this hallmark with the publication of her tale, although she does so in the service of Fortuné and Risetete. Thus does Turbodine push her way invisibly but invariably into history, as do Constantine and the fairy Obligeantine in Murat's "Le Sauvage," which links Turbodine as well to the "many women novelists and fairy-tale writers who preferred anonymity to signing" their names to their works (Hannon 207). But just as those in the

intended audience of the fairy tales knew the identity of authors regardless of elliptical signing (Hannon 169; Seifert, "Fées," 139), it is clear to the reader whom the tale of Risetite and Fortuné, or the tale "Le Turbot," is truly about.

Correspondingly, Turbodine, with her simultaneous male power and limitation or disguise of that power, is a representation of the woman writer. Although the fairy power of creating reality is reflective of the real influence of the *conteuses* and *salonnières* in the promotion of male authors and artists in *mondain* society, as well as in setting the standards of literary appreciation and developing the French language,⁵² that influence was predicated on essentialized notions of women's "natural," "instinctual" abilities of good taste and judgment in social affairs and literature, in contrast to rational "male" thought and acquired learning. Although praised for being superior, women's abilities were thus tied to their biology and reproductive abilities (Hannon 43). Even though the *conteuses* had a certain power within their milieu because of their sanctioned ignorance and privileged feminine graces, they could not entirely escape the restrictions placed on them as women in a society that increasingly limited the role of women to their "proper" duties of wifehood and motherhood and in which the rule of the father was both divinely and politically sanctioned. As Joan DeJean has noted, the entry of women into the literary field further intensified the debate about women and was a driver of the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns ("(Literary) World," 125). While safe "publishing" in the semipublic sphere of the salon,⁵³ the *conteuses* had to be more careful with the printed word, for not only was it against the tenets of *bienséance* to sign one's name as nobility, but women writers also had the added burden of being women, for whom it was "unseemly . . . to acknowledge the fruit of their intellectual labor" (Seifert, "Fées," 138). And even though fairy tales were popular with the reading public, they were ridiculed as inferior, frivolous, or immoral by the official literary establishment.⁵⁴ The French literary academies may have awarded the *conteuses* prizes, but they denied women membership, for the art of conversation and novels were the realm of women but science and philosophy were decidedly that of men.⁵⁵ Further, women's writing, with its aims to redefine love and marriage, was seen to be subversive to the nation-state, whose foundation rested on the distribution of power and wealth to families headed by men (DeJean, *Tender Geographies*, 14; Harth 189).

In this context Murat's disguising the male powers of Turbodine by evoking the limits of destiny and counteracting them with the pursuit of love, as well as her burying in the subplots such precious concepts such as reciprocity in love, can be seen as an example of women's double and triple layering of meaning to get their work past the censor (Hannon 165). Under the guise of a frivolous fairy tale and by using narrative strategies that downplay Turbodine's

actions, Murat can unapologetically show a sovereign woman and independent wife, whose existence was impossible in her own time, for by “assuming a name that offered them an etymological parentage with the mythological *Parques*, women fairy-tale writers implicitly claim the authority to invent alternative destinies” (Hannon 143).

Conclusion

Turbodine’s prominence, plot-creating actions, and narrative revelations make her the true hero, heroine, and author of “Le Turbot,” dominating and triumphant. As a hero(ine), author, and fairy, she is the ultimate representative of the woman writer, who is master of her narrative universe and powerful in her literary sphere of influence. Turbodine is Murat’s strongest and most positive fairy and heroine, and she truly embodies the qualities contained within Murat’s preface, where “giving . . . clarity to the most obscure things” refers to both Turbodine as narrator of a complexly woven tale and to Murat, who encodes subversive ideas of a powerful, independent woman in a “sublime and allegorical” tale.⁵⁶

Patard asks whether Murat contradicts her preface by explicitly excluding fairies from her last published *conte*, “Le Père et ses quatre fils” (contained in her novel *Le Voyage de Compagne*), offering that fairies reveal narrative artifice and confirming the allegorical nature of the “modern fairy.” She also notes that the preface is meant not only to distinguish her fellow women writers but to incite them to participate in shaping a progressive future (Patard 277–78). Hannon concurs with the forward-looking aspect when discussing the tales overall: the *conteuses*’ “prophetic fables create an exploratory space to prepare aristocratic women and their associates for an as yet undefined future in a changing society” (16).

Perhaps Turbodine is a strong enough projection of the woman writer, amply internalized by the Murat who created her, that Murat no longer needed the figure of the fairy in crafting her next novel and the fairy tale within. Indeed, there is evidence that Murat was re-envisioning the role of the author in the context of the salon and the literary field. Allison Stedman notes that Murat’s move from fairy tales to ghost tales in *Le Voyage de Compagne* signals that Murat is confident enough to challenge the social institutions of the ancien régime more directly, in the setting of an everyday reality, not a marvelous one (Introduction, 17). Further, Murat’s reclamation and presentation in her novel of the proverb comedy—a once subversive salon game appropriated by the Court as a vehicle for absolutist ideological reinforcement—reveals a shift away from collective, oral authoring and performance to individual authoring

and solitary reading (Stedman, "Rococo Fiction," 146–54). Through Turbodine the trope of author-as-fairy culminates in the fairy-as-author, which evolves into the more natural, reality-based author of Murat's next novel, where the female narrator's power of story alone regulates the behavior and discussion of her aristocratic audience (Clermidy-Patard 338).

Notes

1. Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy, Marie-Jeanne Lhéritier, Catherine Bernard, Charlotte-Rose de Caumont de la Force, Catherine Durand, Louise D'Auneuil, and Murat. Various scholars have shown how these women fairy-tale writers were a consciously interconnected group, with common concerns and aesthetics. See, for example, Böhm; Hannon; Jones ("Poetics"); Raynard; Seifert (*Fairy Tales*; "Fées"; "Female Empowerment"; "Feminist Approaches"; "Pig"); and Seifert and Stanton. For the *conteuses'* precious ideas, see Jasmin and Raynard. For Murat on marriage, also see Murat (*Contes*, 40–42), Raynard (245, 261, 393–94, 400–401, 429), Robert (211), E. Welch (503), M. Welch ("Femme," 53–54), and M. Welch ("Rébellion"). For a more general discussion of women's views of love and marriage, see DeJean (*Tender Geographies*).
2. See Clermidy-Patard.
3. "Aux Fées modernes" is Murat's fairy manifesto promoting her brand of fairies and the women writers of her social class and salon circle. Murat here conflates the characteristics and acts both of her beautiful and benevolent fairies and of her fellow *conteuses*, elevating both contingencies above the male writers of fairy tales and their base, lower-class fairies from folktales. For more on the meaning of Murat's preface, see Böhm (127), Hannon (185), Jones ("Poetics," 59–61), Patard, Seifert ("Fées," 142–43), and E. Welch (502).
4. See Goodman and Cherbuliez.
5. In her *Notice to Histoires sublimes et allégoriques*, Murat acknowledges her debt to Straparola and distinguishes her tale from d'Aulnoy's (Robert 140–41; Tucker and Siemens 129–30; Murat, *Contes*, 200). A full comparison of these two tales with "Le Turbot" is beyond the scope of the current essay, but such analysis reveals Murat's focus on women's issues. As Ruth Bottigheimer states, "Comparative studies based on Straparolean precursors have the potential to illuminate the writings of the *conteuses* and *conteurs* in ways that have not yet been explored" ("France's First Fairy Tales," 26). Several critics have discussed the divergences between Murat and Straparola in their corresponding tales, which have shown that in Murat's versions of the tale types, female characters are foregrounded and valorized, whereas cultural norms, such as forced marriage, are criticized. See Cromer and Seifert ("Pig").
6. This is a reference to the "old" folkloric fairies written by Charles Perrault, over which Murat claims superiority for the *conteuses* and their tales. For more on the meaning of Murat's preface, see Böhm (127), Hannon (185), Jones ("Poetics," 59–61), Patard, Seifert ("Fées," 142–43), and E. Welch (502).
7. For a sociocultural and publishing history of AT 675, see Bottigheimer's "Luckless." Although Bottigheimer mentions d'Aulnoy's "Le Dauphin" in the tale's

publishing history (275), she neglects to mention Murat's "Le Turbot" here or in her book *Fairy Tales: A New History* when discussing the tale type (69–71).

8. Not only does Plaisir direct the adventures of her three adopted sons, Ésprit, Mémoire, and Entendement, after they flee from her, but she also creates the links between the subplots of the separated heroic couples Verdelet and Blanchette and Grandimot and Philomèle.
9. Turbodine collapses the division Jasmin finds among d'Aulnoy's female characters, that of "valiant heroine" or "powerful fairy" (389). Like d'Aulnoy's heroines, Turbodine is "capable of acting on [her] individual destiny" and of "restoring peace and prosperity to troubled kingdoms" (370). Turbodine is perfect and beautiful, another characteristic of heroines, who as women were seen as superior and thus role models for civilizing men (Raynard 326, 349; Wolfgang 29–33); she also possesses both masculine and feminine qualities, a further characteristic of heroines (Jasmin 389; Raynard 337–50). Turbodine also fits Seifert's definition of a "resisting heroine," who, although unable to escape "patriarchal power relations," is anything but a "passive wife" at the end of the tale ("Female Empowerment").
10. Spheres of action of the hero are "departure on a search," "reaction to the demands of a donor," and "wedding"; those of the donor are "the preparation for the transmission of a magical agent" and "provision of the hero with a magical agent"; those of the helper are "the spatial transference of the hero," "liquidation of misfortune or lack," "rescue from pursuit," "the solution of difficult tasks," and "transfiguration of the hero"; those of the villain are "villainy," "a fight or other forms of struggle with the hero," and pursuit; those of the princess (sought-for person) and her father are "the assignment of difficult tasks," "branding," "exposure," "recognition," "punishment of a second villain," and "marriage" (Propp 79–80).
11. Seifert notes that without the female fairy's intervention, the chivalrous hero's "quest is doomed to failure. With it, he is assured of overcoming impossible odds to transcend the lack besetting masculinity" (Seifert, *Fairy Tales*, 151). Yet Seifert does not comment on what it means for the hero to achieve this masculinity through a woman. Although the plot device of a fairy may serve what Seifert calls the "nostalgic utopian" longings of the nobility for a masculinity currently unavailable to them, I wish to emphasize the fact that the means for the hero achieving the masculine goal is orchestrated by a *woman*, who possesses the agency and power the hero *lacks*.
12. The psychological weaknesses included "frivolity . . . pointlessness, fickleness, malice, shamelessness, deceitfulness, blind submission to the passions, jealousy, and excessive cruelty" (Ronzeaud 10n4; my translation).
13. Jasmin discusses the heroic qualities of Aimée and Belle-Belle (374–77). See also Jones ("Phèdre") for a discussion of Belle-Belle as a transvestite heroine. See Brocklebank and Raynard (340–42, 357–59) for more on heroines and cross-dressing.
14. "L'île des Roches" may be a reference to the Dames des Roches, a mother and daughter who held gatherings in Poitiers in the sixteenth century (Harth 187).
15. For more on Salic law and the *conteuses'* queens, see Seifert and Stanton (33n111). They note that, although fairy queens do exist in *contes de fées*, they "usually do not rule over a specific geographical realm." In contrast, Turbodine rules over and conquers named (if fictional) kingdoms.

16. “Le commerce de ses peuples n’étant que de fleurs.” All translations from “Le Turbot” are mine.
17. “Je me séparerai du roi mon époux avec beaucoup de douleur, la sienne fut si violente qu’il en pensa expirer.”
18. For “war horses” the text reads *mes petits coursiers*. Patard states in a note that Murat’s usage of *coursiers* here is poetic, not literal, and gives the definition from Furetière’s dictionary: “grand cheval propre pour monter un homme d’armes; un cheval de bataille” (Murat, *Contes*, 321n1). I see no reason to assume a poetic use of the word here and offer that it is a deliberate choice on Murat’s part, as Turbodine has just returned from aiding a prince in his unspecified troubles, that is, war.
19. “Reprendre la place qui vous est due dans mon coeur et sur mon trône.”
20. “Vive le roi Turbot et la reine Turbodine!”
21. “Coquerico” (or “cocorico”) is the cry of the rooster. Modern definitions give the figurative sense of a loud cry of victory (*chanter* or *faire cocorico*) (*Le Trésor de la Langue Française informatisé*) or chauvinistic vainglory (*Le dictionnaire de l’Académie française*, 9th ed.) (both accessible at <http://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/>). *Coquerico*, or its variant *cocorico*, does not appear in Furtière’s 1690 *Dictionnaire universel*, but the figurative sense of the word *coq* as someone in power does, although this person is a bourgeois or parish ruler, not a king (518; <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k57951269>). This sense also appears in the 1694 edition of *Le dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (246; <http://artfl.atilf.fr/dictionnaires/ACADEMIE/PREMIERE/premiere.fr.html>). Clermidy-Patard notes the play on words of *coq* with “coquette-rie” and “coquets,” which emphasizes Turbodine’s husband’s (innate?) faithlessness and places male inconstancy at the heart of the story (219).
22. “Le monde à l’envers.”
23. “D’aller rétablir le roi son beau-père dans ses États”; “une flotte équipée de tout ce qui était nécessaire.”
24. “Une infinité de belles actions.”
25. “Elle était la maîtresse.”
26. “De ce qu’elle avait fait”; “elle eut donné les ordres nécessaires pour conserver sa conquête.”
27. For a discussion of exile as a strategy of power of the absolutist state, see Cherbuliez (16–21).
28. “Car elle se nommait ainsi.”
29. “L’Île des Roches” may be a reference to the Dames des Roches, a mother and daughter who held gatherings in Poitiers in the sixteenth century (Harth 187).
30. “Qu’elle n’avait qu’à donner ses ordres, et qu’ils seraient suivis ponctuellement.”
31. “Il m’obéit toujours, et il se trouvait si bien de s’être abandonné à ma conduite qu’il ne faisait rien que par mon ordre.”
32. Regarding kingly consent, in 1556 Henri II issued an edict that clandestine marriages (those by minors without parental consent) could be dissolved by the state (whereas previously marriage was only a church concern). Louis XIV later declared marriage to be solely the concern of the state, governed by civil law, not sacrament, because marriage and families were the foundation of the nation-state (De Jean, *Tender Geographies*, 110–12).
33. Or at least women’s reason was considered different from men’s, or was made to be, in order to exclude them from the literary marketplace, because literature was the “manifestation and purveyor of right reason, of certain norms of beauty, of

- vested ethical custom and particular political authority” (Reiss 200). Gains made for arguments of equal reasoning capacity in men and women made in the first part of the seventeenth century were eclipsed as more women’s literary influence increased (Reiss 202). “Male writers, such as Boileau, Perrault, and La Bruyère, excluded women from cultural production by claiming that men and women had qualitatively different kinds of reason, and that women’s reason limited their participation to certain types of cultural production,” such as letter writing, novels, and salon conversation (Wolfgang 55).
34. Anguillette cannot save Héb  from heartache and death in loving Atimir; Peine Perdue’s unnamed fairy mother cannot prevent her daughter’s destiny of unrequited love; Ravissante’s fairy is unable to bestow the gift of constancy on her and so sequesters Ravissante on an island. Ravissante’s love match happens despite the fairy’s precautions because love decreed the couple’s match. See “Anguillette,” “Peine Perdue,” and “Le Prince des Feuilles,” respectively (Murat, *Contes*, 85–117, 395–403, 159–77).
 35. “Le destin plus fort que mon art me rendait impuissante.”
 36. “Le destin a plus de part que moi   tes malheurs.”
 37. “Belle princesse . . . voil  celui que le destin vous ordonne de prendre pour  poux”; “Allons, quittons ce lieu incommode pour vous rendre au palais qui vous est destin .”
 38. “Cette aventure . . . me parut alors un effet de la conduite du destin, qui avait pris cette voie pour rendre possible les impossibles assujettissements de Mandarine, et me tirer de l’engagement de mes serments.”
 39. “Je pr parai ensuite toutes choses pour mettre fin   ce que j’avais si heurusement commenc .”
 40. “Venez recevoir de ma main cette aimable princesse pour votre  pouse.”
 41. “Le destin, secondant les desseins de Turbodine, qui songeait   unir Brillantin avec Princillette, fit na tre entre ces deux jeunes coeurs une inclination r ciproque.”
 42. The text reads that this fairy power “augmentait encore mon pouvoir,” the implication being that Turbodine was already powerful as a woman ruler before the addition of her otherworldly powers (Murat, *Contes*, 320).
 43. “  qui il arriva des choses si surprenantes qu’elles composeront quelque jour une histoire des plus agr ables.”
 44. It is interesting to note that Turbodine has no children of her own and bears no biological relationship to Princillette; yet she chooses Princillette as her fairy heir. Hannon states that in order to avoid the essential identification of women with the body, *salonni res* emphasized “women’s (innate) authorial powers while denying through omission the question of maternity” (209). This seems to be Murat’s strategy here. Hannon also argues that the *conteuses* “created fairy-tale heroines who experimented with autonomy at a time when noble ideology increasingly stressed the imperatives of lineage” (210).
 45. “Il est temps que je vous fasse conna tre le d nouement de toutes vos aventures.”
 46. “Apr s s’y  tre enferm e avec elle.”
 47. “Je les [vos peines] partageais avec vous sans le faire conna tre.”
 48. “Une dame d’une beaut  et d’une magnificence surprenantes”; “la f e . . . c’en  tait une des plus puissantes.”
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49. "On savait déjà dans tout le royaume de Caprare la surprenante histoire du prince Fortuné et de la princesse Risetite, mais afin que toutes les circonstances n'en fussent ignorées de personne, Turbodine la fit imprimer."
50. "La mémoire de tout ce qui s'était passé, de manière qu'il fut un témoin irréprochable de la sagesse de la princesse."
51. This tactic is a similar, although much less obvious, example of the way Murat undermines patriarchal institutions she appears to support in her tales. For example, Murat's authorial interjections about love and marriage provide ironic distance and dysphoric commentary in tales that otherwise have happy endings (Murat, *Contes*, 40–42) and the dream marriage in "Le Turbot" is a "veritable parody" that questions the very meaning and legality of marriage (Clermidy-Patard 124).
52. See DeJean ("Literary) World"), Duggan (41–49), Harth (187–88), and Wolfgang (39–49).
53. Harth notes that in the seventeenth century, "publish" meant conversation or writing (187). DeJean ("Literary) World"), Duggan (40–49), Goodman, Harth, and Seifert ("Fées) all discuss the semipublic/semiprivate world of the salon.
54. For example, the abbé de Villiers criticized the lack of a moral and disparaged women as a group for their lack of education (Seifert, "Fées," 140; Jones, "Poetics," 57).
55. The Académie française awarded literary prizes to Murat, Bernard, Lhéritier, and Durand, among others (Wolfgang 45). Only the Académie Royale de la Peinture et de la Sculpture admitted women, but only seven of them from 1663 to 1682; by 1706 women were no longer allowed (Duggan 48). By the end of the seventeenth century, however, twenty French women writers, including Murat, were elected to the Academy of the Ricovrati of Padua (Wolfgang 45).
56. Patard notes that the adjectives in the title of *Histoires sublimes et allégoriques* "immediately invite the reader to decode the underlying truth of the tales" (272).

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