

Seago, K. (2005). Aspects of gender in translations of "Sleeping Beauty". *Comparative Critical Studies*, 2(1), 23 - 43.



**CITY UNIVERSITY
LONDON**

[City Research Online](#)

Original citation: Seago, K. (2005). Aspects of gender in translations of "Sleeping Beauty". *Comparative Critical Studies*, 2(1), 23 - 43.

Permanent City Research Online URL: <http://openaccess.city.ac.uk/1756/>

Copyright & reuse

City University London has developed City Research Online so that its users may access the research outputs of City University London's staff. Copyright © and Moral Rights for this paper are retained by the individual author(s) and/ or other copyright holders. All material in City Research Online is checked for eligibility for copyright before being made available in the live archive. URLs from City Research Online may be freely distributed and linked to from other web pages.

Versions of research

The version in City Research Online may differ from the final published version. Users are advised to check the Permanent City Research Online URL above for the status of the paper.

Enquiries

If you have any enquiries about any aspect of City Research Online, or if you wish to make contact with the author(s) of this paper, please email the team at publications@city.ac.uk.

Aspects of Gender in Translations of ‘Sleeping Beauty’

Inspired by the Romantic interest in folk songs and stories, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm started collecting traditional tales from written and oral sources in the first decade of the nineteenth century. They saw these tales as evidence of an ancient German literature in danger of extinction and initially conceived their *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (a literal translation could be *Tales for Children and the Home*) as a scholarly resource, which would record the material in unedited form and include an apparatus giving information on sources, variants and contaminations. Between 1812 and 1857, they continued revising the corpus of tales, adding, removing and merging stories; by the final edition of 1857 the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (hereafter *KHM*) contained 200 tales and 10 legends. In the course of German reception, the collection also increasingly moved away from its original scholarly orientation and became more and more a children’s book. Deviating from their original intention, Wilhelm substantially edited the stories in content and form throughout the seventeen editions of the *KHM*. In the process, he created not only a unique voice but also a distinct genre, which was taken for many years as the prototypical model of the German fairy tale; it made the *KHM* a classic of German children’s reading matter and one of the most translated works of German literature.¹

Edgar Taylor’s 1823 rendering *German Popular Stories* was one of the earliest translations of the *KHM* and the first translation into English. It was a highly influential text, which was reissued throughout the century and is still popular today.² Nevertheless, in every single decade of the nineteenth century there were new English translations of the *KHM*.³ All of them were selections from the 210 stories in the *KHM*, ranging from a handful of tales to 190 stories, until Margaret Hunt’s scholarly translation in 1882, which for the first time translated the complete corpus of all tales in one collection and also included the critical apparatus. Margaret Hunt’s translation is unique among English translations; it is a remarkably uninflected rendering, which does not shy away from sensitive topics and the depiction of sexuality, violence and profane material.⁴ In this she differs markedly from all other nineteenth century translations, which took care not to offend the children’s reading market where fairy tales were considered for a large part of the century as morally dubious and insufficiently didactic reading matter.⁵ English translations of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* inserted the German tales into the context of English children’s literature, adapting the tales to its genre conventions and often casting them in the tradition of established sub-genres, such as the moral story or, later in the century, the adventure story. Translating the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* as children’s literature also introduced a more consciously socializing framework in which the representation of male and female characters was made to conform to norms of nineteenth century gender expectations.⁶

This article will draw on the textual analysis of all (eight) nineteenth century translations of ‘Dornröschen’, known today in the international canon as ‘Sleeping Beauty’.⁷ This tale lends itself particularly well to a study of gender behaviour because the story revolves not only around the infraction of an interdiction (the paradigm of female curiosity), but also because it involves such a range of different gender roles, which are articulated across sex, age and class. In addition, the story contains a number of ‘rich’ points, where tensions exist between expectation and behaviour and where characters appear to transgress the norms of what is considered

appropriate gender conduct. Amongst other issues, these involve the dubious circumstances in which the queen learns that she has, at last, conceived a child, the king's responsibility for bringing about the curse on his daughter, the representation of the 'good' fairies and the 'bad' fairy, and the parents' neglect of their daughter on the crucial day. While the German text also shows uncertainties around the depiction of these moments (there is continuous editing across the 17 editions), a detailed textual study of the English translations shows that they are far more interventionist in how they deal with these ambiguous elements. There is a clear trend to render all male and female characters so that they conform to normative nineteenth century gender characteristics.

The king, for example, is exonerated from being responsible for his daughter's fate in various ways. In the German text, the thirteenth fairy curses the young princess because she had not been invited to the feast the king had ordered in his joy over the birth of his daughter. But because he had only twelve plates, and there were thirteen wise women in his kingdom, he decided that one of them had to stay at home. In the majority of the nineteenth century English translations, this implied lack of paternal care, and even more importantly, lack of foresight, is perceived as highly problematic and the passage is revised so that the king cannot be held responsible for the decision not to invite all the fairies. Strategies range from abstract phrasing, which glosses over the king's responsibility and weakens his link to the fateful invitation, to more interventionist additions and deletions on the source text meanings and even a shifting of motivation.

Edgar Taylor's 1823 translation is an example where the exoneration is achieved through abstract phrasing in the target text. The simple German *konnte er eine nicht einladen* (KHM, 1819:177) which can be translated as 'he could not invite one of them' is rendered as 'he was obliged to leave one of the fairies without an invitation' (Taylor, 52). The grammatical shift from active to passive voice suggests that the king's decision is to some extent determined by other factors, outside his control; this is reinforced by the lexical choice 'obliged' which also implies that he is acting against his better judgment. Matilda Louisa's 1855 translation uses a similar strategy. The clauses which deal with the lack of plates and the sending out of invitations are restructured into a gerund and an impersonal passive: 'but having only twelve golden plates, invitations were only sent to that number'. (Davis, 193) This removes the king as subject from these phrases and results in a shift of responsibility by concealing the agent responsible for the invitation.

A more pronounced intervention can be found in Mrs. H. H. B. Paull's 1872 version, which entirely restructures the invitation passage:

Grimm (1857:257)	Literal	Paull (193)
Er ladete ... auch die weisen Frauen dazu ein, damit sie dem Kind hold und gewogen wären. Es warn ihrer dreizehn in seinem Reiche, weil er aber nur zwölf goldene Teller hatte, von welchen sie essen sollten, so mußte einen von ihnen daheimbleiben.	He ... invited ...also the wise women, so that they be favorably disposed towards the child. There were thirteen of them in his realm, but because he only had twelve golden plates, from which they should eat, one of them had to stay at home.	He ... invited ... also the wise women, who could endow his daughter with fairy gifts. There were thirteen of these wise women; but only twelve were invited, and twelve golden plates were placed for them.

This restructuring removes the reason why only twelve of the thirteen fairies are invited and avoids spelling out the consequences of this limited invitation. The place setting of the twelve golden plates becomes an entirely redundant detail and the tone of the passage is brisk, authoritative and does not give space in which the king is

associated with doubt, failure or even a sense that the limited invitation is fateful as the source text does.

The most explicit strategy is to separate the king completely from any involvement and to shift responsibility for the fateful invitation to the fairies to another character. In Taylor's 1839 revised translation, it is the queen who is to blame, while it is the thirteenth fairy in an anonymous translation of 1853. Here the exclusion of the uninvited fairy is rationalized in a circular argument by introducing a shift in the motivation for the invitation, which ultimately holds her responsible. In this translation a qualified invitation is issued; only those 'wise women who are kind and affectionate to children' (Wehnert, 243) are invited; when the excluded fairy attends the feast in a rage and curses the child to die on her fifteenth birthday, she proves that she does not qualify as 'kind and affectionate to children' and that she therefore could not or should quite rightly not have been invited. The fault is her own, the reason for her exclusion lies in her nature; the king's decision not to invite her was right and his judgment is shown to be superior.

Showing the king to be in control of the situation is an important element in the English translations. In line with nineteenth-century conceptions of manliness which were in the process of being constructed and were mediated through the public schools and children's literature, he and the prince acquire 'manly' traits such as rational decision-making, patience, authority, rationality, control over themselves and others.⁸

The king's emotional responses to his daughter illustrate the different attitudes to what extent men can be seen to express feelings or even have them in the German source texts and the English target texts. In the German texts, the king's reaction to the birth of his daughter is highly emotional and it is increased in the editorial process. In the first edition of 1812, the king is 'so pleased' (*so erfreut*, 107) that he orders a feast. From 1819 onwards, his joy is so great that he loses control of his faculties, even to some extent his reasoning faculties. The meaning of the German phrasing 'vor Freude sich nicht zu lassen wußte' (1819:176; 1857:257) is that the king 'did not know what to do for joy' but also 'did not know what to do with himself for joy'. This excessive emotional state and loss of control is a feature which the English translations are careful to temper and in some instances even remove. Davis chooses 'the king in his joy hardly knew what to do' (1855:193) which shifts the focus away from the emotion to a decision-making process. Neither Taylor nor G. Cunningham (1828) allow any suggestion that the king might be overcome: Taylor replaces the German king's rapture with single-minded attention when he translates the phrase as 'the king could not cease looking on it [the baby] for joy' (1823:52) while Cunningham removes any mention of emotion: 'her father was never tired of gazing upon her' (283).

Similarly, when the curse and its mitigation have been announced, in the German source text everybody is shocked and frightened, and these reactions are increased in the course of the editing. The English translations again tone them down and in some instances take care to separate the king from the rest of the company in this expression of fear. Paull's translation goes even further in its attempt to establish the king as entirely rational, completely in control of any emotion and possessed of calm decision-making and foresight. In his attempt to protect his child from the curse (that his daughter should pierce herself on a spindle and fall into a one-hundred year sleep), the German king immediately orders the destruction of all spindles in his realm. However, Paull shifts the point at which the father takes this decision away

from the moment of the curse to the time fifteen years later when the curse is supposed to strike.

Grimm (1857:257)

‘Es soll aber kein Tod sein,
sondern ein hundertjähriger tiefer
Schlaf, in welchen die
Königstochter fällt.’

Der König, der sein liebes Kind
vor dem Unglück gern bewahren
wollte, ließ den Befehl ausgehen,
daß die Spindeln im ganzen
Königreich sollten verbrannt
werden.

Literal

‘But it shall not be death, but a
hundred year-long deep sleep, the
King’s Daughter shall fall into.
The King, who dearly wanted to
protect his dear child against the
misfortune, issued the order that all
spindles in the entire realm were to
be burnt.

Paull (193)

‘The king’s daughter shall not die,
but a deep sleep shall fall upon her,
in which she shall remain for a
hundred years.’

The little child, who was endowed
with such wonderful gifts, grew up
to be the delight of her parents.
But, as she approached her
fifteenth year, the king became
very unhappy and issued a decree
that all the spindles in his kingdom
should be burnt.

Instead of a panic-stricken, emotionally determined response, the king’s delayed reaction in Paull’s translation demonstrates his manly ability to rise above the situation, assess the danger and issue appropriate orders when necessary. The ability to wait and a capacity for rational deliberation are also traits evident in the portrayal of the saviour-prince in Paull’s version. In the German source text and all other English translations, the prince immediately sets out to breach the hedge of thorns once the old man has told him of the sleeping princess in the castle hidden among the thorns. Paull’s phrasing and narrative structuring, however, suggest an interval:

The prince, when he heard his grandfather talk of the fate of former princes who had tried to force their way through the hedge of thorns, and how they were caught by the bushes, and died a miserable death, would say, ‘It matters not to me, I have no fear; I am determined to discover this beautiful May Blossom.’ The good old man gave up attempting to dissuade the willful prince, and said no more. Just at this time the hundred years had nearly come to a close, and the day at last arrived for May Blossom to be awaked from her long sleep. On this very day the prince started on his enterprise... (195)

Together with a concern to show dominant male characters in control of their emotions (the prince, for example, is not directly influenced by the princess’s beauty to kiss her as he is in some editions of the German source text), issues of authority and power are also evident. Most English translations are keen to establish the king’s sovereignty by introducing phrases which accentuate this aspect. Lexical choices show a preference for directive verbs such as ‘ordering’ (Wehnert, 243; Hunt, 197), ‘ordaining’ (Crane, 204) or ‘proclaiming’ (Davis, 193) rather than ‘arranging a feast’ (*ein ... Fest anstellte*, 1819:176; 1857:257) or by inserting additional references to the king’s ‘dominions’ where the source text is unspecific (Davis, 193), and insisting on the personal pronoun to link objects and persons to the king where the German uses the definite article (Davis, 193-4). When the king ‘gave the order’ (*ließ den Befehl ausgehen*, 1819:177; 1857:258) for the destruction of the spindles, this is reinforced in several of the English translations: ‘issued an order directing’ (Cunningham, 284), ‘issued a decree commanding’ (Wehnert, 244), ‘issued a decree’ (Paull, 193). Davis is particularly expansive, adding a clause to the order of destruction that the king also ‘appointed officers to see it carried out’ (Davis, 194).

Female characters, on the other hand, are infantilized, restricted to the female sphere of house, garden and nursery (again in explicit interventions which contradict the source text), are over-emotional and irrational, and cannot judge long-term

implications. This applies to all female characters but I will concentrate here on the representation of the fairies. In the German, these are powerful, semi-divine beings who have the power over life and death and as ‘wise women’ (*weise Frauen*) are related to the norms or fates of Nordic and Greek myth respectively. In the English translations, these mythic powers are humanized, domesticated and in some translations associated with the nursery and its trivialities. Five of the nine translations do not refer to them as ‘wise women’ but render this as ‘fairies’, a term which, especially in the first half of the nineteenth century, was closely associated with the saccharine flower fairies of didactic and moral tales who not only were much smaller but were also representations of female virtues such as patience or meekness. With this loss in stature, and the loss of ‘wisdom’ as an explicit attribute in their name, the fairies are further portrayed in some translations as rather silly and prone to feminine competition. In his revised version of 1839, Taylor has them wear exaggerated fashions, ‘each with a high red cap on her head, and red shoes with high heels on her feet, and a long white wand in her hand’ (Taylor, 28). Cunningham’s 1828 translation foregrounds the family context by presenting all the fairies as ‘sisters’. In addition, the relationship between these sisters is drawn in terms of competition, rather like the competitiveness amongst children in the nursery. Cunningham expands the twelfth fairy’s direct speech and has her condemn the immaturity of ‘her spiteful sister.’ (Cunningham, 284) Nursery associations are also prominent in Davis’s rendering when she translates the passage where the twelfth fairy mitigates the death curse as ‘apply[ing] some remedy against the effect of the thirteenth fairy’s decree’ (Davis, 193). This calls to mind a mother’s reaction to a simple childhood hurt, more closely associated with sticking a plaster on a superficial injury rather than responding to the threat of death and having the power to overcome death.

Narrative logic requires the mitigation of the curse by one of the fairies, and none of the translations goes so far as to assign this feat to another character; nevertheless, the English versions are reluctant to allow a representation of the fairies as supreme beings and downgrade any manifestation of their power through the lexical choices made. Their ‘magic gifts’ (*Wundergaben*, 1819:177; 1857:257) are rendered as ‘fairy gifts’, for example, by Paull (1872, 193), ‘best gifts’ by Taylor (1823:52), or ‘wonderful gifts’ (Cunningham, 283; Wehnert, 243; Paull, 193; Crane, 204). The last, although a close rendering, does not have the primarily powerful and supernatural connotations that the German *Wundergaben* has. As a further strategy to minimize their presence and influence in the text, the fairies are backgrounded through the use of indirect speech instead of the direct speech in the German source texts. *Märchen* (fairy tales) are simple narrative forms in which dialogue is highly ritualized and direct speech only occurs at crucial moments, uttered by important characters. In her study of the distribution of direct speech in the *KHM*, Ruth Bottigheimer has shown how good female characters are increasingly silenced, with indirect speech or narratorial summary replacing their direct utterances.⁹ Negative female characters, on the other hand, retain their direct speech to some extent but, in contrast to male characters, for them it is a measure of their evil. This is a pattern which can also partly be traced, in the English translations. While it is only in Taylor’s versions (1823:52-3; 1839:29) that the twelfth fairy loses her direct voice for the mitigation, most translations emphasize the loudness, anger, disturbing presence of the thirteenth fairy.

In the German source texts, the anger of the thirteenth fairy is presented, at least in the early editions, as justified. She has extended direct speech in which she explains why she has come to curse the child. In later editions, this direct justification

is replaced by narratorial summary and the extent of her justification is toned down. Nevertheless, there remains a sense of the injustice done her and that she is acting, if not in an entirely justified way, then at least in a way that is understandable given the circumstances. In the translations, this double perspective, which shows the thirteenth fairy in a rational light, is removed. She is represented as overemotional and irrational and her reaction as unjustified when her anger is ridiculed by translating the offence, which had caused it as a trivial 'affront' (Davis, 193) or as 'disrespect' (Cunningham, 284). While thus the cause for her behaviour is minimized, at the same time her reaction to it is increased: in Cunningham she is 'greatly incensed' (284), Wehnert shows her in a 'tremendous passion' (244), while she is 'burning to revenge herself' in Crane (204). In the German, she wants to revenge herself for her exclusion (*wollte sich ... rächen*, 1857:257). As a result, the thirteenth fairy's behaviour is delegitimated; she transgresses expectations of how women were expected to behave by not accepting with good grace her exclusion from the feast. Advice given to women by influential conduct book writers counseled that a woman proved herself a 'rational being' if she bore 'provocation' with 'equanimity' and did not contest her husband (or other male guardian) in an argument but stayed silent and meek even if she had been wronged.¹⁰ Mrs. Chapone, whose conduct books were popular throughout the nineteenth century, states categorically that 'an enraged woman is one of the most disgusting sights in nature.'¹¹ In Taylor's 1839 revised version, the thirteenth fairy is shown as particularly transgressive. When she arrives, she is identified at a distance by the great noise she makes in the courtyard, dressed like the archetypal witch 'with a black cap on her head, and black shoes on her feet, and a broomstick in her hand', she 'was very angry, and scolded the king and queen very much, and set to work to take her revenge.' (Taylor, 28) Crucially, it is not only her behaviour, which is seen as reprehensible, but the evil is presented as part of her nature. Wehnert (244) and Cunningham (285) refer to her as explicitly 'evil', Cunningham as 'spiteful' (284) and Paull as 'bad' and 'wicked' (193). She is demonized and excluded from the circle of humanity, which she disrupts, while the twelve 'good' fairies are humanized, domesticated and integrated into the private sphere with an affinity for the occupations of nineteenth century femininity. This results in a clear division into good and bad women, which serves as a model to inculcate appropriate behaviour in girls. In addition, the 'bad' fairy acquires attributes which identify her as a social outcast. In comparison to contemporary texts on the woman question or prostitution, for example, she is described in exactly the same terms as single women, or as prostitutes – both seen to be a great social problem around the mid-century. She is noisy and protesting, according to contemporary conduct books a sure sign of moral collapse where a woman's complaints about her husband (however justified) were seen as a betrayal, the first step to adultery, which would inevitably lead to prostitution.¹² Furthermore, in popular articles and medical discourse a loud, harsh or hoarse voice was named as one of the marks by which a prostitute could be identified;¹³ a matter of great concern in the fifties and sixties when the 'social evil' of prostitution created great anxiety over its possibility of infecting 'healthy areas'.¹⁴ In a similar way that public debate agonized over how streetwalkers could be excluded from contact with decent women, the treatment of the thirteenth fairy in the translations shows concern over how to exclude her polluting influence.

In addition to these general trends, which are articulated in a more or less pronounced way in the eight translations analyzed, there are also distinct differences in tone and orientation between the different translators which can be traced to

historical context, but also to gender. In the following I will analyze two translations as an example for a gender-biased agenda, which is revealed in the translators' choice and interventions. Taylor's early translations develop a clear anti-female agenda which is read against historical context while Crane's late version shows a submerged profeminist voice which engages with contemporary debates on femininity.

The German texts certainly showed in their editorial treatment that they responded to social norms of expected gender behaviour. Nevertheless the role of the *KHM* providing evidence for an established German cultural identity in the political endeavour for a unified German nation state protected the German tales to some extent. Socially and didactically motivated editorial interventions threatened to remove the tales too far from their postulated origin in Nordic myth which the Grimms saw as proof of an historical German literature. Representations which were grounded in the tales' mythic origin were maintained even if they did not conform to social norms. In the case of 'Dornröschen', this applies specifically to the character of the wise women / fairies, and the depiction of nature. The *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* are characterized by an organic worldview, where nature, man and woman exist in a state of mythic oneness. In contrast to this, the English texts as a rule establish man as a separate entity, clearly divorced from nature but also separated from woman. My previous discussion of male and female gender roles has already shown how the English translations introduced and maintained separate spheres for men and women. This was particularly evident in the treatment of the fairies whose powerful agency in the German source texts aligned them more closely with the male sphere of work and decision-making. In the translations they are removed into the female sphere, domesticated and identified with nurture and the nursery.

The ideology of separate spheres is enunciated particularly strongly in Taylor's translations. In his 1823 version he had changed the motif where the queen learns about her pregnancy from a crab. In the German text this occurs when the queen is bathing in a natural pond, where the crab, later a frog, shares the water with her. The sexual overtones of this scenario created problems for almost all English translations. In Taylor's rendition, the queen takes a walk by the river instead and a little fish raises its head out of the water to announce her pregnancy, thus protecting her modesty and virtue against any implications of untoward behaviour. In his 1839 revision, Taylor further changed this motif. The queen still takes a walk, but this time the river along which she strolls runs at the bottom of the castle's garden, firmly protected in the private enclosure of the domestic sphere. He also introduces further evidence of her female virtue: this time the little fish lies gasping on dry ground and the queen rescues it by throwing it back into the water. It is this act of charity which motivates the fish's prophecy that the queen shall bear a child. Taylor has rendered this motif in a way which firmly inserts the tale into an established fairy tale paradigm: the queen's pregnancy is a reward for a good deed, and by the conventions of the genre this further establishes her as a blameless character.

Taylor's version clearly emphasizes marriage; he explicitly states that 'the couple have been married for many years' (27). He stresses that the queen is not attempting to go beyond the boundaries of her married state, both materially (she stays in the garden, within the confines of the marital home); and symbolically (any suspicions about the pregnancy are precluded by her virtuous act and the grateful animal's reward).

Taylor also stresses the marital couple: in contrast to the German source text where the queen is marginalised once the baby is born, the king and queen in his version are a unit. It is the couple who discuss the celebration, the couple who do not

own sufficient numbers of golden plates, the couple who are rebuked by the angry thirteenth fairy. However, while this gives the queen a visibility which she does not enjoy in any of the other translations, this strategy also ensures that responsibility for the fateful further development is to some extent removed from the king. In actual fact, this exoneration of the king is ensured explicitly in Taylor's treatment of the motif where the invitations to the feast are issued. The invitation is split so that it is the king who invites the harmless friends and relatives but it is the queen who insists that the fairies are invited as well. It is thus the queen who is solely responsible for initiating the actions which will result in her daughter's calamity.

Taylor's intervention has further implications. The queen has been established as a chaste wife and mother, a paragon of feminine virtues, but this positive representation applies only as long as she stays within the parameters of the domestic sphere. The moment she transgresses the boundaries of female responsibilities and ventures to make decisions with far-reaching consequences her actions are placed in a negative context. Taylor ascribes a positive motivation to the queen's wish to invite the fairies: it is her concern to provide for her daughter, to secure the fairies as powerful patrons. But the outcome of the story proves that this positive wish is misguided, that it leads to disaster and that ultimately the queen needs to be guided by a male to make decisions that go beyond the merely domestic. In addition to the suggestion that it is highly problematic for women to have an opinion of their own because they are incapable of weighing up the consequences of their actions, Taylor's revision also implies that women's speech is dangerous. He gives the queen direct speech to insist on her desire, and, importantly, to oppose the king: 'But the queen said, "I will have the fairies also, that they might be kind and good to our little daughter."' (28)

Read against historical context, this insistence on women's inability to judge what is good for their children, even if their intentions are good, is particularly revealing. At the time of Taylor's revision, women in Britain were subject to their husband's rule. Considered minors by law, they had no legal rights to any possessions, not even money they earned themselves, and even more importantly, they had no legal say in the education of their children nor were they their legal guardians. The position of the father as sole parent and women's suitability for custody had been a matter of intense public debate since 1837, two years before Taylor's revised version came out. Caroline Norton was a chaste and virtuous wife who had left her abusive husband out of concern over her children's safety. In her fight for custody of her three sons, she wrote two pamphlets in an attempt to influence public opinion and force a debate in Parliament. While her first pamphlet, *The Natural Claim of a Mother to the Custody of her Child as Affected by Common Law Right of the Father* did not succeed in swaying opinion sufficiently (the Bill brought by Serjeant Talfourd to change the law of custody was thrown out by the Lords), her second attempt, *A Plain Letter*, submitted under a male pseudonym, decisively influenced the passing of the *Infant Custody Bill* in 1839 which gave women charge of their children under the age of seven.¹⁵

The queen in Taylor's version is, like Caroline Norton, a deeply conflictual figure. Both Norton and the queen conform to the expectations of the dutiful wife and mother; nevertheless, both transgress their natural role and take upon themselves responsibilities and decisions outside their sphere. They both intervene with male authority to influence their children's future life – in the case of the queen with disastrous consequences. Given the socialising impetus of fairy tales, Taylor's

revision promotes a traditional view of parental responsibilities, querying the suitability of women for a guardian's role.

The text's critical attitude to female intervention in the public domain can also be seen in the representation of the fairies, and in particular in the treatment of the 'thirteenth' fairy which suggests further parallels between Caroline Norton and undesirable female behaviour. Taylor clearly establishes a dichotomy of the good and bad woman, which is articulated through external attributes and behaviour. The good fairies are dressed 'each with a high red cap on her head, and red shoes with high heels on her feet, and a long white wand in her hand' (28), while the bad fairy arrives with 'a black cap on her head, and black shoes on her feet, and a broomstick in her hand'. Dressed like this, she is unambiguously identified by Taylor as a witch, a representation deeply contradictory to the German source text editions, which never explicitly identify the thirteenth fairy as bad and continue to call her a 'wise woman' by implication.

All aspects of her behaviour are exaggerated to create a deeply negative portrayal, transgressing all norms of female behaviour:

... a great noise was heard in the courtyard, and word was brought that the thirteenth fairy was come, with a black cap on her head, and black shoes on her feet, and a broomstick in her hand: and presently up she came into the dining-hall. Now as she had not been asked to the feast she was very angry, and scolded the king and queen very much, and set to work to take her revenge. (28)

The 13th fairy behaves in direct opposition to what is expected of a good wife, and, of course, she does exactly what Caroline Norton was doing. She generates a lot of noise in the public domain, she is being talked about, and instead of bearing the provocation of being excluded from the feast, she insists on attending. Intruding into an environment where she is not wanted, as Caroline Norton intruded into Parliament with her petitions and into public debate with her actions, she challenges the decision of the king, as Norton challenged the law of the land. Her behaviour and her actions clearly mark her as an outcast, and also prove that ultimately the king's decision to exclude her was the appropriate one after all since she is clearly not fit to participate in polite society. In contrast to this, the good fairies are assimilated into the domestic and female sphere; they form a circle of well-meaning and care, showering the little princess with all the virtues a good girl needs: 'they gathered round in a ring and gave all their best gifts to the little princess. One gave her goodness, another beauty, another riches, and so on till she had all that was good in the world.' (28)

Taylor creates a clear dichotomy of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in women and associates this with generally accepted characteristics for deviancy thus establishing a strict code of conduct for a good woman. In portraying the protesting woman in terms that link her with prostitution, he articulates an anxiety over the status of single women, which had become a matter of general concern and would become a matter of intense public debate after the Census of 1851 provided statistical evidence of the large proportion of unmarried women. In the 'Woman Question,' as this debate became known in England, unmarried women were referred to as 'odd' women, were treated with pity and contempt and regarded with distrust.¹⁶ Their unmarried state was seen as a problem since it barred them from their role as mothers for which nature and instinct had predestined them. Unable to fulfill this role, they were seen as unnatural and deviant and a danger to stable society.¹⁷

In contrast to Taylor's repressive script where even the good woman (the queen) is in danger of straying into unnatural territories (when she insists on inviting the fairies), Lucy Crane's late nineteenth century translation inserts meanings which

reverse the trends established by most previous translations, offering a gender dynamic which is supportive of female roles and critical of male roles. Unusually, Crane does not introduce any changes or translation choices which align female roles in the story to conform to models of propriety. Her version is unconcerned with the sexual implications of the bathing scene which troubled other translators and she even endows the princess with the gift of 'cleverness,' a quality universally understood to be an unattractive and even unnatural attribute; for the conduct book writer Dina Craig, for example, a clever woman 'is not properly a woman.'¹⁸ In contrast to the pervasive belief that cleverness is an obstacle to romance - 'Man is wisely averse to 'cleverness' in a woman' declares one of the characters in a popular late nineteenth century novel by Mary Cholmondeley¹⁹ - in Crane's version, it is precisely this characteristic in the princess that appears to cause her being loved spontaneously by everybody.

Grimm (1857:258)	Literal	Crane (205)
... es war so schön, sittsam, freundlich und verständig, daß es jedermann, der es ansah, lieb haben mußte.	... it [sic] was so beautiful, virtuous, friendly and understanding that anybody who looked on her, had to hold her dear.	... she was so lovely, modest, sweet, and kind and clever, that no one who saw her could help loving her.

This is a good example for Crane's technique in producing a female-oriented version. Unlike Taylor who added, removed and rewrote whole passages, Crane's strategies are less dismissive of the source text and far subtler. In the example above, Crane introduces 'clever' in an attempt to render the full meaning of the German *verständlich* which means both 'kind' and 'clever' in German. Other translators had chosen to restrict themselves to only one of the two meanings, and left out the quality with negative connotations. Similarly, Crane's decision to translate the German princess's name '*Dornröschen*' (literally 'Little Thorn Rose') as 'Rosamond' (206) confers upon her an individuality which is further substantiated when Crane's text also minimizes those descriptions of the princess which foreground her as a relational being: she refuses to translate *Königstochter* as 'king's daughter', opting for 'princess' (204) instead, but has no problem with rendering *Königsson* as 'king's son' (206). Crane also takes care to minimize the suggestion that beauty is a fundamental attribute in winning love when she restructures and summarizes the paragraph where the prince finds her in such a way that the link between her beauty and his compulsion to kiss her is weakened. And finally, it is not the king who gives the princess's hand in marriage (as in Paull's version of 1872) or the prince who marries the princess as all other versions depict the happy end; Crane's version foregrounds a ceremony in which both partners are equally involved when they marry *each other*: 'Then the wedding of the Prince *and* Rosamond was held' (207). A similar interest in establishing, if perhaps not full equality, then comparability between the sexes can be seen in the way that Crane frames the description of the prince and princess finding the little chamber in the tower.

Unusually, Crane expands on the German source text to introduce a description of the prince climbing the stairs, which is phrased in such a way that it mirrors the experience of the princess.

Princess (Crane, 205)	Prince (Crane, 206)	Literal	Grimm (1857:260)
till at last she came to an old tower. She climbed the narrow	and at last he came to the tower, and went up the winding stair, and	and finally he came to the tower	und endlich kam er zu dem Thurm

winding stair opened the door and opened the door und öffnete die Türe

Establishing such a parallel between the prince and princess signals a similarity in male and female experience which is in stark contrast to the prevailing ideal of a complementarity of the sexes. The ideology of separate spheres rested on an understanding of a fundamental qualitative difference between the sexes formulated in terms of inherently different characteristics and a biological disposition that suited men and women to different tasks.²⁰ This sexual differentiation had found its most enduring symbolization in Coventry Patmore's popular poems in *The Angel in the House* (1854-63) and was articulated by John Ruskin in his popular lecture series 'Of Queen's Gardens' (1865):

The man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention: his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest, wherever war is just, wherever conquest necessary. But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle, - and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision. She sees the qualities of things, their claims and their places. Her great function is Praise: she enters into no contest, but infallibly judges the crown of contest. (136-6)²¹

Patmore's and Ruskin's terminology of domestic angels and queenly gardens influenced the representation of an ideal of femininity in all spheres of public and artistic expression and also found its way into contemporary adaptations of the fairy tale of Sleeping Beauty in literature and art. Particularly important for Crane's translation is a series of paintings by the Pre-Raphaelite Edward Burne-Jones, which provide an interesting foil for an analysis of Crane's translation choices. Burne-Jones's 'Briar Rose' series contains four images, two of which are fairly conventional choices of the prince passing through the hedge and the princess lying asleep. Crucially, the two remaining scenes are dedicated to a depiction of the male and female domain. The king is shown, alone and surrounded by councillors, on his throne in 'The Council Room' while 'The Garden Court' shows the female sphere. Accompanying verses by William Morris convey the separation of men and women in their tasks as well:

The Council Room (10)

The threat of war, the hope of peace
The Kingdom's peril and increase.
Sleep on, and bide the latter day
When fate shall take her chains away.

The Garden Court (11)

The maiden pleasance of the land
Knoweth no stir of voice or hand,
No cup the sleeping waters fill,
The restless shuttle lieth still.²²

In contrast to such a clearly articulated separation of the male and female, where Burne-Jones's king is interrupted in affairs of state by the sudden onset of sleep, still holding important papers in his hand and surrounded by his councilors, Crane's version includes the Queen in the council chamber. While this is partly due to the source text where the king and queen are surprised by the enchantment just as they had entered the throne chamber, nevertheless we have here again a subtle shift where translation choices further emphasize connection and parity of status between the sexes rather than separation and differentiation. In the German text, the prince finds the king and queen 'lying asleep up by the throne' (*und oben bei dem Throne lag der König und die Königin*, 260); Crane translates this in the plural as 'on their thrones, slept the king and the queen,' (206) giving the queen her own throne and thus signalling her inclusion and participation in matters of the throne room rather than her exclusion to the sweet affairs of the garden court of female company.

Textual changes to how the king and queen are treated further support an agenda in favour of connection rather than separation of the sexes. Problematic decisions and actions taken by the couple together are rendered in a way which minimizes negative connotations while those actions which are taken by the king alone are more negatively inflected. The fact that the king and queen leave their child alone on precisely the day when the curse is supposed to strike had proved problematic for all translators and Crane is not alone in mitigating the parents' responsibility for their apparent lack of care.

Grimm (1857:258)	Literal	Crane (205)
Es geschah, daß an dem Tage, wo es gerade funfzehn Jahr alt ward, der König und die Königin nicht zu Haus waren	It happened that on the very day, when it [sic] turned fifteen, that the King and Queen were not at home	It happened one day, she being already fifteen years old, that the king and queen rode abroad

In Crane's rendering, the parents leave her alone after the dangerous day has passed and are thus absolved of any fault. In addition, Crane's translation of their absence avoids the possible negative associations of 'not being at home' by choosing the vaguer description that they 'rode abroad.' She also suggests that the parents had returned home for some time before the curse struck and were thus, in fact, present at the fateful moment (in the German, they enter the great hall just when the curse strikes).

Grimm (1857:258)	Literal	Crane (205)
der König und die Königin, die eben heimgekommen und in den Saal getreten waren	the King and Queen who had just come home and had stepped into the hall	the king and queen, who had [...] returned and were in the great hall

Similar subtle changes in emphasis and lexical choice result in a shifting of responsibility and an intensification of the king's guilt in his decisions surrounding the celebration of the birth of his daughter.

Grimm (1857:257)	Literal	Crane (204)
Es waren ihrer dreizehn in seinem Reiche, weil er aber nur zwölf goldene Teller hatte, von welchen sie essen sollten, so mußte eine von ihnen daheimbleiben. ... Das Fest ward mit aller Pracht gefeiert	There were thirteen of them in his realm, but because he only had twelve golden plates, from which they should eat, one of them had to stay at home. ... The feast was celebrated in all its splendor	There were thirteen of them in his kingdom, but as he had only provided twelve golden plates for them to eat from, one of them had to be left out. However, the feast was celebrated with all splendour

The German text gives a fairly neutral, and inevitable, reason why one of the fairies was not invited: the king only had twelve golden plates. Crane's decision to translate the German *hatte* (had) as 'had provided' (204) identifies the king as responsible – the insufficient number of plates is the result of the king's decision, he could have 'provided' more. This shift towards foregrounding the king's culpability in bringing about the curse on his child is further reinforced in Crane's translation choices in the phrase which names the consequences of the lack of plates. In the German, this is again rendered as an inevitable situation, almost as fateful: *so mußte eine von ihnen daheimbleiben* (therefore one of them had to stay at home, 257). Crane's translation of this - 'one had to be left out' (204) – moves away from the inevitability of the German and suggests human agency and preference in the lexical choice of 'leaving somebody out'. A sense of wrong-doing, which is entirely absent in the German, is further introduced when Crane adds the qualifying conjunction

‘however’ to link the passage describing the lack of plates with the celebration going ahead (204). This suggests an awareness that perhaps the feast should not have been celebrated under the circumstances. And this expectation of a retribution for the king’s decision to exclude one of the fairies is confirmed by a range of very small changes in the description of the fairy’s arrival at the celebration. Crane drops any qualifiers which suggest surprise at the fairy’s appearance instead creating a sense of logic and the curse as an expected outcome of the slight:

:		
Grimm (1857:257)	Literal	Crane (204)
Als elfe ihre Sprüche eben getan hatten, trat plötzlich die dreizehnte herein	Just as eleven had had their say [given their blessing], suddenly the thirteenth entered	And when eleven of them had said their say, in came the uninvited thirteenth

Such textual moves which reinforce the king’s guilt and exonerate to some extent the fairy’s curse are in stark contrast to all other English translations which had instead taken care to exonerate the king and create a representation of the fairy as witch.²³

Thus, while it was the single woman who was suspect in Taylor’s translation, Crane’s text establishes the single, autocratic, decision-making male as the problem. Read against Burne-Jones’s series of paintings with their iconic representation of separate spheres, Crane’s translation questions the value of such an ideology and posits connection rather than difference as the ideal.

The English texts discussed in this article were all chosen because they identified themselves as translations of the story from the Grimms’ *KHM*. Other versions of ‘Sleeping Beauty’ were widely available throughout the nineteenth century, in particular translations of Charles Perrault’s ‘La belle au bois dormant’ which was first translated into English in 1764 by Robert Samber. Perrault’s seventeenth-century version had close links with the German oral versions of the story the Grimms collected in the early nineteenth century from contributors with a French background or knowledge of French. Wilhelm’s editing of the German tale took care to emphasize those motifs which could be derived from Nordic sources.²⁴ Individual English translations of the *KHM*-based text were marginally influenced by representations derived from Perrault, such as occasionally emphasizing the link between age and evil in the ‘witch’-figure, a rare use of conventional descriptions of beauty (‘coral lips’) or an isolated instance of reticence on the part of the prince when admiring the sleeping princess. However, as the nineteenth century progresses, a general trend can be observed of a tendency to create a hybrid, international, tale which uses the most popular motifs from the French and the German. This merging is most pronounced in adaptations of the tale for the stage, children’s (picture) stories and versions of the story for the popular market.

Karen Seago
London Metropolitan University, GB

¹ The body of literature on the *KHM* is extensive but Heinz Rölleke’s work on the genesis and development of the Grimms’ collecting and editorial work are of particular relevance here: Heinz Rölleke, ‘Nachwort,’ in *Brüder Grimm Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Ausgabe letzter Hand mit den Originalanmerkungen der Brüder Grimm, 3 vols, ed. by Heinz Rölleke (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1982), pp. 590-617 and Heinz Rölleke, ‘Zur Biographie der Grimmschen Märchen’, in *Brüder Grimm, Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Nach der zweiten vermehrten und verbesserten Auflage von 1819, textkritisch revidiert und mit einer Biographie der Grimmschen

- Märchen verstehen, ed. by H. Rölleke (Munich: Diederichs, 1989), pp. 521-582.
- Birgit Stolt provides an interesting discussion on the creation of the Gattung Grimm. 'Textsortenstilistische Beobachtungen zur 'Gattung Grimm'', in *Die Brüder Grimm, Erbe und Rezeption*, Stockholmer Symposium 1984, ed. by Astrid Stedje (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wikse, 1984), pp. 17-27.
- ² Brian Alderson, 'The Spoken and the Read: *German Popular Stories* and English Popular Diction', *The Reception of Grimms' Fairy Tales, Responses, Reactions, Revisions*, ed. by Donald Haase (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993), pp. 59-77.
- ³ Most of the translations were based either on the second edition of the *KHM* in 1819 or the last edition of 1857. They are the source texts referenced in the discussion of the English translations. The following editions were used: *Brüder Grimm, Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Nach der zweiten vermehrten und verbesserten Auflage von 1819, textkritisch revidiert und mit einer Biographie der Grimmschen Märchen versehen, ed. by H. Rölleke (Munich: Diederichs, 1989), pp. 176-9 and *Brüder Grimm Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Ausgabe letzter Hand mit den Originalanmerkungen der Brüder Grimm, 3 vols, ed. by Heinz Rölleke (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1982), pp. 257-60.
- ⁴ Martin Sutton, *The Sin-Complex, A Critical Study of English Versions of the Grimms' Kinder- und Hausmärchen in the Nineteenth Century* (Kassel: Brüder Grimm Gesellschaft, 1996), p. 274, p.279, p.285.
- ⁵ F. J. H. Darton, *Children's Books in England, Five Centuries of Social Life*, rev. by Brian Alderson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3rd edn 1982), p.99 and Peter Butts, 'The Beginnings of Victorianism (c.1820-1850)', in *Children's Literature, An Illustrated History* Hunt, ed. by Peter Hunt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 77-101.
- ⁶ The body of work on English translations of the *KHM* is not large. Sutton has provided a detailed analysis of a selection of different stories from the range of nineteenth-century translations in his *Sin-Complex*. Other studies address individual aspects in the English translations: Alderson's 'The Spoken and the Read: *German Popular Stories* and English Popular Diction'; David Blamires, 'The Early Reception of the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* in England', *Bulletin John Rylands Library*, 71:3 (1989), 63-77; Ruth Michaelis-Jena, 'Edgar and John Edward Taylor, die ersten englischen Übersetzer der Kinder- und Hausmärchen', in *Brüder Grimm Gedenken II*, (Marburg: Elwert, 1975) pp. 183-202; Karen Seago, 'Shifting Meanings: Translating Grimms' Fairy Tales as Children's Literature', *Aspects of Specialised Translation*, ed. Lucile Desblache (Paris: La Maison du dictionnaire, 2001), pp. 171-180.
- ⁷ The translations are:
German Popular Stories, trans. from the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* Collected by M.M. Grimm from Oral Tradition, trans. by Edgar Taylor (London: Baldwin, 1823), pp.51-7. Hereafter Taylor 1823, cited in the text.
Foreign Tales & Traditions Chiefly Selected from the Fugitive Literature of Germany, transl. G. G. Cunningham (Edinburgh: Fullarton & Co, 1828), pp.283-7. Hereafter Cunningham, cited in the text.
German Popular Stories and Fairy Tales As Told by Gammer Grethel, trans. Edgar Taylor (London: Bell, 1839), pp.27-32. Hereafter Taylor 1839, cited in the text.

-
- Household Stories*, Collected by the Brothers Grimm, Newly trans. with Two Hundred and Forty Illustrations by Edward H. Wehnert, 2 vols (London: Addey, 1853), pp.243-6. Hereafter Wehnert, cited in the text.
- Home Stories*, Collected by the Brothers Grimm, Newly trans. by Matilda Louisa Davis, Illustrated by George Thompson (London: Routledge, 1855), pp.193-6. Hereafter Davis, cited in the text.
- Grimms' Fairy Tales*. A New Translation. By Mrs. H.H.B. Paull, Translator of 'Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales,' and Author of 'Lucy West,' 'Mary Elton,' 'Pride and Principle,' etc. Specially adapted and Arranged for Young People, with Sixteen Original Illustrations by W. J. Weigand. (London: Warne, [n. d., 1872?]), pp.192-6. Hereafter Paull, cited in the text.
- Household Stories*, from the Collection of the Bros. Grimm, trans. from the German by Lucy Crane; and Done into Pictures by Walter Crane (London: MacMillan, 1882), pp.204-7. Hereafter Crane, cited in the text.
- Grimm's Household Tales*, with the Author's Notes, trans. from the German and ed. by Margaret Hunt, with a Preface by Andrew Lang, M.A. (London: Bell, 1884), pp.197-200. Hereafter Hunt, cited in the text.
- ⁸ Claudia Nelson, 'Sex and the Single Boy: Ideals of Manliness and Sexuality in Victorian Literature for Boys,' *Victorian Studies* 32:4 (Summer 1989): 525-550 (pp. 534-6) and J. A Mangan & James Walvin (eds.) *Manliness and Morality, Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987)
- ⁹ Ruth Bottigheimer, 'Silenced Women in the Grimms' Tales: The 'Fit' Between Fairy Tales and Society in Their Historical Context,' *Fairy Tales and Society, Illusion, Allusion and Paradigm*, ed. by Ruth Bottigheimer, (Philadelphia: University Press of Philadelphia, 1986), pp. 115-32.
- ¹⁰ Arthur Freeling, *The Young Bride's Book Being Hints for Regulating the Conduct of Married Women. With a Few Medical Axioms* (London: Washbourne, 1839), p. 32.
- ¹¹ Mrs. Chapone, *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind*. (Edinburgh: Anderson, 1823), p. 45.
- ¹² Freeling, pp. 38-9.
- ¹³ Jill Matus, *Unstable Bodies, Victorian Representations of Sexuality and Maternity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 48-9.
- ¹⁴ Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society, Women, Class, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 41.
- ¹⁵ Katharine Moore, *Victorian Wives* (London, New York: Allison & Busby, 1974)
- ¹⁶ E. M. Palmegiano, *Women and British Periodicals* (New York: Garland, 1976), pp. 70-95.
- ¹⁷ Mary Poovey, *Uneven Developments, The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England* (London: Virago, 1988), p. 4.
- ¹⁸ Dinah Maria Mulock Craik, *A Woman's Thoughts About Women* (London: n.p. , 1858), p. 263.
- ¹⁹ Mary Cholmondeley, *Red Pottage* (London: Longman, 1899), p. 32.
- ²⁰ Ruth H. Bloch, 'Untangling the Roots of Modern Sex Roles: A Survey of Four Centuries of Change,' *Signs* 4 (1978): 237-252 (pp. 237 and 245-6). Heidemarie Bennent traces this to the impact of Rousseau's ideas on gendered education developed in his *Émile ou de l'éducation* (1762). *Galanterie und Verachtung, Eine*

philosophie-geschichtliche Untersuchung zur Stellung der Frau in Gesellschaft und Kultur (Frankfurt: Campus, 1985), p. 91.

- ²¹ John Ruskin, 'Of Queens' Gardens', *Sesame and Lilies* (Orpington: George Allen, 1889), pp. 111-180 (originally published London: Smith, 1865)
- ²² Burne Jones, *The Legend of "The Briar Rose". A Series of Pictures Painted by E. Burne Jones, A.R.A., Exhibited at Thos. Agnew & Sons' Galleries, 39 Old Bond Street, 1890*. Small pamphlet containing an anonymous adapted translation of 'Sleeping Beauty' under the title of 'Briar Rose' with some amendments and some summaries in the text. The four verses accompanying the paintings are printed after the story and are signed by William Morris.
- ²³ The exception is Margaret Hunt's source-text-oriented translation which rendered most of the features that other translations adapted to the receptor culture.
- ²⁴ For a detailed discussion of this see Karen Seago, 'Constructing the Witch', *Storytelling: Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Perspectives*, ed. by I. Blayer and M. Sanchez (Frankfurt/Main, New York: Peter Lang), pp.72-85