

21L.012, 6 November

(student presentations on Grimms)

Germany in the early 1800's

- language united people
- shift from multicultural empires to culture-centric nation-states

Grimms advocated preservation of popular antiquities: the people's stories

observations of Grimms' fairy tales

- more gruesome than modern-day versions
- stories exhibit women's power within households
- storylines differ significantly from modern versions (key elements added or missing, morals not always obvious)
  - e.g., story about the frog ends strangely

Grimms fairy tales

- told not just to teach morals
- engage difficult questions

the frog king story

- questions it addresses
  - father-daughter relationship: tensions between the two
  - pg. 19: daughter resists frog;
    - note contrast between daughter and frog: pristine vs. dirty
    - note how frog advances step-by-step
    - gods of the ground: chthonic
    - story: contrast between solar and chthonic powers
    - by the father instructing girl to go to bed with the creature, the story confronts sexual anxiety
    - raises issue, but doesn't solve it

story of Brother Lustig

- What's the moral?
- Is that the correct question to ask?
- What can humans achieve without grace of God?
- he fails at what St. Peter achieves

story of Cinderella

- an innocent girl who is degraded, then restored
- has to pick lentils from fireplace: pick the good from the bad
- nature endorses societal order