

as part of the modernization of the nursery-rhyme tradition in Finland. One of her later books is the humorous and colorful picture book *Into, parrakas vauva* (*Into, the Bearded Baby*, 1985), illustrated by Pekka Vuori, in which a baby with a beard examines the wonders of the world during an adventurous journey. Helakisa also translated children's literature and wrote **television** plays and radio dramas, several of them **adaptations** from her own stories and fairy tales.

Elina Druker

See also Feminism; Feminist Tales

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Hélias, Pierre-Jakez (1914–1995)

A major figure of twentieth-century Breton-speaking Brittany, Pierre-Jakez Hélias published numerous **folktales** both in Breton and in French. Born in a very poor Bigouden family, he learned French in school as a second language. Though he became a French-speaking academic, he never turned away from his origins but dedicated his life to his ancestor's language and literature. As a radio host in Breton, he had the opportunity to travel around Brittany and gather various kinds of stories. His best-selling memoirs *Le Cheval d'orgueil* (*The Horse of Pride*, 1975) have been translated into many languages, and were adapted for the cinema by Claude Chabrol in 1980.

Hélias offers both collections of tales, such as *Les Autres et les miens* (*The Others and Mine*, 1977), and reflections on how tales are told, like *Le Quêteur de mémoire* (*The Memory Collector*, 1990). Considering himself a native **storyteller** rather than an ethnographer, his aim was not to transcribe and preserve folktales as he had heard them. In his view, tales are not stable but change every time they are told, and consequently he provided his own versions based on his memories of the tales he had heard.

Cyrille François

See also Collecting, Collectors; Ethnographic Approaches

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Helvig, Amalie von (1776–1831)

A writer and collector of **legends**, **sagas**, and **literary fairy tales**, Amalie von Helvig portrayed strong mythical and historical **women** in her works and created a kind of feminist **utopia** in them. She enjoyed the patronage of Johann Wolfgang von **Goethe** and Friedrich Schiller and was a frequent contributor to numerous illustrious journals and almanacs.

Her writings fall into two periods: classical and Germanic/Romantic. Her greatest literary success was her debut, an **epic** poem in hexameter, "Die Schwestern von Lesbos" ("The Sisters of Lesbos"), published in 1800 in Schiller's *Musen Almanach* (*The Muses' Almanac*). In her second literary phase, she published *Taschenbuch der Sagen und Legenden* (*Pocket Book of Sagas and Legends*, 1812) in collaboration with Friedrich de la Motte **Fouqué** and with illustrations by Peter Cornelius. This was followed in 1817 by another *Pocket Book* with Nordic themes. Her 1814 *Sage von Wolfsbrunnen: Ein Märchen* (*The Saga of the Wolf's Well: A Fairy Tale*) is an interesting composite of both literary phases: it reflects the Romantic writers' interest in classical mythology and their fascination with the nature of the elements, while telling the tale of the soothsayer and arbitrator Velleda, a Germanic historical figure mentioned in Tacitus.

Von Helvig was an important liaison for introducing the work of Swedish Romantics in Germany. Her 1826 translation of Esaias Tegnér's *Frithiofs Saga* is still considered definitive.

Shawn C. Jarvis

See also Feminism; Feminist Tales; German Tales; Romanticism

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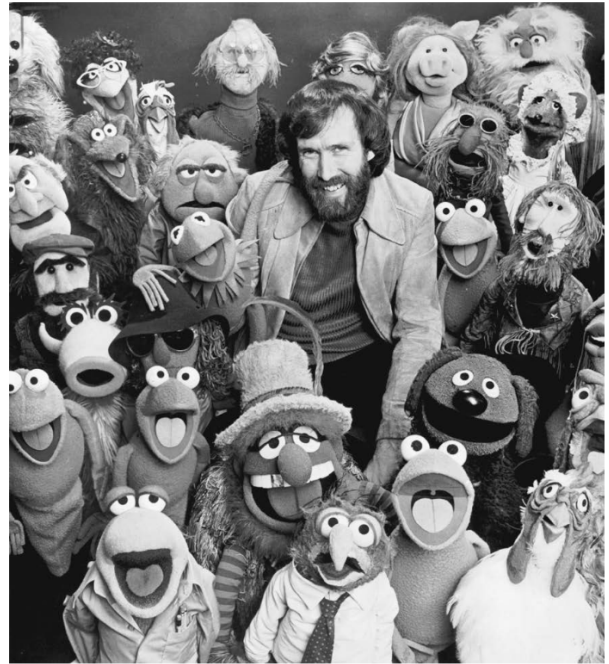
Henson, Jim (1936–1990)

Jim Henson, an American puppeteer, writer, producer, and director of children’s television and film, produced several works that drew extensively on fairy-tale and folktale sources. Born in Greenville, Mississippi, Jim Henson is best known for his creations the Muppets, a combination of puppets and marionettes that have appeared in three different television shows, *Sesame Street* (1968–), *The Muppet Show* (1976–81), and *Muppets Tonight* (1996–98), as well as in a number of feature films. Henson’s puppet creations have varied in size from small hand puppets to large creatures operated by multiple people, and they have been frequently used alongside human actors. Before his death by pneumonia in 1990, Henson created several works with folktale sources.

In 1969, Henson directed *Hey, Cinderella!*, an adaptation of ATU 510A, Cinderella. Henson’s version focuses the story on the fairy godmother character and the help she receives from a number of different sources, including Muppet characters such as Kermit the Frog. *Hey, Cinderella!* outlined the pattern that would recur in all of his Muppet folktale adaptations, with reflexive humor and original musical numbers, and Muppets playing characters alongside human actors.

The Muppet Musicians of Bremen (1972), a Muppet version of ATU 130, The Animals in Night Quarters, was Henson’s second foray into folktales. Similar to *Hey, Cinderella!*, this adaptation featured music and humor and incorporated a frame narration by Kermit the Frog.

Henson’s next fairy-tale project was *Tales from Muppetland: The Frog Prince* (1972), a version of ATU 440, The Frog King or Iron Henry. In this production, various roles were filled by Muppets, most evidently the title role, which was played by a new



Muppet creator Jim Henson with his Muppets on set of *The Muppet Show* in 1980. (Michael Ochs Archives/Getty Images)

Muppet named Robin, who was said to be Kermit the Frog’s nephew. Similar in form to his other Muppet productions, *Tales from Muppetland: The Frog Prince* was aired regularly on public television through the 1970s and 1980s.

During this period, Henson produced a recurring sketch called “Sesame Street News Flash” for his regular children’s show on the Public Broadcasting Service’s *Sesame Street*. In these sketches, Kermit the Frog, a Muppet portrayed by Henson himself, conducted a series of humorous interviews with Muppet versions of characters in fables, nursery rhymes, and fairy tales. These sketches have continued to be a regular feature of *Sesame Street*, although no new ones have been produced since Henson’s death.

In 1986, Henson coproduced the film *Labyrinth* with George Lucas, creating puppets based on the conceptual art of Brian Froud. This film drew on fairy beliefs about the abduction of small children and featured puppet versions of goblins and other fairy creatures. While not based on a traditional tale type, *Labyrinth* draws on fairy tales for