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Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child? Bettine's  
Das Leben der Hochgräfin Gritta von Rattenzuhausbeiuns<sup>1</sup>

Shawn C. Jarvis

Bettine and Gisela von Arnim's fairy tale novel Das Leben der Hochgräfin Gritta von Rattenzuhausbeiuns has gone almost completely unnoticed in the reception of their works and in discussions of the Märchen genre. This is perhaps not surprising, given that Kunstmärchen by women have generally been ignored and that this particular work has led a somewhat dubious existence for the past 140 years. Gritta was not published during Bettine's or Gisela's lifetime (mysteriously, Bettine never included it in her own collected works), nor was its authorship and date of inception certain<sup>2</sup> until recent archival work uncovered manuscripts in Gisela's hand, her drawings of pivotal scenes from the Märchen and the typeset title page dated 1845.<sup>3</sup> Thus the questions that preoccupied literary historians like Mallon and Konrad could be laid to rest.

A far more fundamental question, however, which impinges on our understanding of the piece itself, has either been brushed aside or never raised by literary critics: why did the work remain incomplete? Mallon, who originally discovered the manuscripts and typeset pages in the Grimms' literary estate, argued that the gap between page 208 of the original and the concluding paragraph can be explained by the misplacement of the pages or their disappearance among other files in the estate. But, he assured: "Der Verlust kann . . . nur geringen Umfang haben und auf zufälligem Anlaß beruhen: die auf Seite 229 erzählten Begebenheiten bei Grittas Brautzuge drängen erkennbar zum Ende der ganzen Handlung" (Mallon 249).

Although it hardly seems likely that the last pages, except the very last, should be misplaced and as yet undiscovered in a mass of material exhaustively studied by numerous researchers, Mallon's misconceptions are explicable: he was writing in 1925 and based his assumptions on the understanding of the traditional bourgeois Märchen. We, like Mallon, all intuitively know that the fairy tale concludes with a marriage. What Mallon's analysis failed to take into account was that this work might only superficially be a Märchen, at least in terms of the bourgeois model evinced by Perrault and the Grimms,<sup>4</sup> and that Bettine and Gisela may have been unable or unwilling to resolve the conflict between the personal narrative they wanted to project for themselves and the social narrative implied by the form they implicitly rejected: a case of irreconcilable differences which forced them ultimately to divorce themselves from this *mésal-*

liance. With Gritta they suggested an alternative which broke with the bourgeois tradition and which necessarily remained incomplete.

In contrast to the assertions of critics like Konrad who insist: "In der Gritta hat Bettine ganz absichtsfrei gestaltet, unproblematisch und heiter" (Anmerkungen 160), it is my contention that this piece and Bettine's choice of the Märchen genre were anything but unintentional and unproblematical. In many ways, Bettine and Gisela remained true to the generic form and content. Within a framework of traditional fairy tale plot (the daughter's banishment by the stepmother, her happy reunion with the family and the inexorable move toward the correct bourgeois conclusion, Gritta's eventual presumed marriage to the Prince) are embedded a number of other Binnenmärchen and fairy tale motifs. The constellation of characters are also structurally correct: there is a cruel stepmother, a wicked witch (here represented by the nun Sequestra), a king, a prince (Bonus von Sumbona), a surrogate princess (Gritta), a fairy queen (the Elfenfürstin), faithful servants, as well as magical and animal helpers. But within this framework, a number of inconsistencies come to light.

The understanding of these inconsistencies is the most difficult task in interpreting this work. It could, of course, be that Bettine and Gisela were using the genre as Goethe did<sup>5</sup>: as a form "zugleich bedeutend und deutungslos,"<sup>6</sup> intent only upon the "context-free" literary experiment--this might explain their introduction of several motifs which never find their resolution within the piece (e.g., the implicit intention of the Ahnfrau to help Tetel recover his eyesight or the interdiction about the evil privy councilor by the Elfenfürstin, among others). It may also simply be bad literary craftsmanship.<sup>8</sup> Neither of these suggestions, however, seems likely in light of Bettine's other literary endeavors. A third alternative is that she and Gisela were calling the entire genre as it had existed into question. Is this "paradise" where eleven girls live sequestered in their cloister, happily doing what women have always done--spinning and weaving--, and where the princess marries an ineffectual prince whose greatest worry is the rumpling of his starched collars?

Bettine and Gisela were certainly aware of the didactic potential of the Märchen genre, as the concluding lines of the work indicate:

Hier endet die Lebensbeschreibung der  
Hochgräfin Gritta von Rattenzuhausbeins--dem  
weißen Wickelkinde, dem klugen Kinde und dem  
Muster aller Bräute, die später ein Muster der

Königinnen ward, woran ein jedes Kind sich ein  
Exempel nehmen kann.<sup>10</sup>

They had probably been intent upon following the fairy tale code. The example Gritta sets, however, and the world in which she sets it, are not the traditional ones of either the Grimms or the Romantics. A look at the models available to Gritta are important as a backdrop for her own betrothal.

Gritta's is a decidedly female world, filled with strong female characters who assert their wills and wiles against generally ineffectual males. Gritta's stepmother, the fey Gräfin Nesselkrautia Bollena Anna Maria Rattenweg, defiantly insists on marrying Gritta's father while her legal guardian, "fast weinerlich," tries to impress upon her the advantages of marrying according to fairy tale norms: "Aber bedenken Sie doch, meine Liebe, die Sie den Schönsten bekommen könnten, mit einem so schönen Schnurrbart, und so vielen Goldstücken in der Tasche, denken Sie doch, Kind, so ein Zuckermännchen" (27). The mate he describes is the fairy tale prince, handsome, rich, genteel. But the countess is unswayed in her choice; the ensuing verbal and physical battle between Krautia and the legal guardians finds the latter in retreat. The oldest of the guardians, tears on his fat cheeks, cries in defeat: "Frevle nicht! O frevle nicht!" (42), an admonition which equates Krautia's rejection of the "guardians'" demands with a sacrilegious act against societal and fairy tale forms. Krautia rejects patriarchal and fairy tale structures by not marrying the handsome, genteel prince of her guardians' dreams, but instead the man of hers. And by doing so, she cleverly circumvents the guardians' motives: the first wishes she had never married (the money would have devolved to the guardians); the second, that he had been able to woo her successfully; and the third, that she had become a nun (again, for pecuniary reasons). Bettine and Gisela exposed here both the subtext of bourgeois fairy tale plots and bourgeois traditions: the men ostensibly appointed to protect a woman's interests are in fact protecting theirs.

The second significant model for Gritta is her ancestor, Fräulein Bärwalde. Taking the best from Brunhilde tearing wild bears asunder<sup>11</sup> and Joan of Arc leading armies to victory, she falls in love with the man her father has chosen for her, but not as the bourgeois tradition demands: "Jetzt liebte sie den Grafen mit Leidenschaft; sie war nicht seine Braut, das durfte man nicht sagen, sie war sein Geselle,--aber das konnte ihrem Herrn Papa keine Freude machen . . ." (29). She marches off to war with her beloved, and thereby incurs the wrath of her father, who curses her with a restless grave, "bis ein Mädchen aus ihrem Geschlecht so gut sei, daß es nie eine Rute verdiene" (31). The somewhat bemuddled Müffert, the last remaining servant at the burg,

ponders why Fräulein Bärwalde deserved this punishment. He concludes:

. . . was den bösen Worten des Grafen Wirkung gab" [and here Müffert unveils the subtext of the bourgeois Märchen] war wohl, daß sie dem alten Herrn davon gelaufen war. . . .

In bourgeois society and fairy tale alike, daughters may be cast out, deserted, disowned or disinherited, but they generally may not neglect to marry the man determined for them by the patriarchal order.

Aware of these two models and cast out of her father's house in <sup>12</sup> true fairy tale form (at the <sup>13</sup> urgings of her stepmother), Gritta is sent to a convent, "zur Erziehung." Together with eleven other girls, she escapes and they begin a series of adventures that take them through woods and towns, until the girls are finally lost at sea and then shipwrecked on a desert island. It is this new beginning, apart from established society, that constitutes the truly subversive sequence of Gritta.

Once the Prince, Bonus von Sumbona, appears,<sup>14</sup> the most fairy tale-like events leading up to the fairy tale conclusion occur in dizzying succession. These events, as in the bourgeois Märchen, lead inexorably to wedding bells. Magic helpers in the form of elves abound. Gritta is reunited with her parents, now humbled by the rats. She encounters the Elfenfürstin on her way to the castle to a rendezvous with the Prince; he hauls her up the side of a turret in a reverse Rapunzel theme. Once inside, she outwits the King and extorts a promise from him. The evil privy councilor flees<sup>15</sup>, all wrongs are righted, and Gritta is engaged to the Prince. But, what superficially looks like the traditional betrothal is a far cry from the Cinderella story.

Gritta has two models: Fräulein Bärwalde, who rejected patriarchal constraints and was condemned to wander the Earth as a spirit, and Gräfin Nesselkrautia, her stepmother, who also rejected patriarchal structures by marrying the mate she chose, and who was ultimately impoverished, driven out of her home and suffering the blinding of her child by the agents of patriarchal order, the rats<sup>16</sup>. The options are not overly appealing. Gritta possesses something her precursors<sup>17</sup> did not, however, a supportive, autonomous female community. Its existence and viability contribute to the subversive impact of Bettine's and Gisela's Märchen.

Gritta's reasons for seeking out the Prince are altruistic: she wants to assure security for her parents and the other girls

and to deliver the letter from the Elfenfürstin warning the king of the danger Pecavus presents. She is not looking for a mate. Gritta does reach the castle and manages to plead her case to the King, after locking him into a closet. Her request ("Du mußt mir versprechen, freien Ausgang zu meinen Eltern zu lassen, und mir und ihnen erlauben, ruhig in der Stadt zu leben, sonst laß ich Dich nicht heraus" [106]) is met by a fascinating response: "Kind, mach auf!" rief der König, "alles, alles erfüll' ich Dir, Du sollst selbst mit dem Prinzen Bonus Thronfolger spielen dürfen, wenn Du aufmachst!--" (106, emphasis added).<sup>18</sup> Here the idea of Gritta as queen is still only on the level of play--an idea she apparently fails to register--but in keeping with the traditional expectations of the bourgeoisie Märchen in which the maiden always marries the prince. Later, when the King suggests the marriage for real, Gritta is "über alle Maßen erstaunt" and "erschrocken," but assents with a nod of her head.

As she proceeds to the marriage place (the convent the girls have established in the woods), Gritta's dilemma is clearly portrayed in the text:

[D]er Hochgraf [gab] Gritta sanft einen Stoß  
 . . . und sagte: "Bedenke doch, Gritta, daß Du eine Braut bist!" Sie warf sich schnell wieder in die Brust, daß das Brautkrönlein auf ihrem Haupt zitterte, und trippelte in das dunkle Kreuzgängelein hinein. Sie zählte die Türen an der Seite: es waren grade zwölf, zu jeder Seite sechs, also auch für sie war ein Zellchen bestimmt. Sie machte die Augen zu, um es nicht zu sehen, denn es tat ihr leid, nicht darin wohnen zu können, doch sie wollte das Heiraten dem Prinzchen einmal zu Gefallen tun (emphasis added, 114).

She must be reminded of her bridal status and nuptial responsibilities by her father, a member of the patriarchal order. The other option available to her--the assumption of her place within the female community--must be forcibly rejected by denying its existence: it cannot be seen. And finally, Gritta accedes to the marriage only because by doing so can she assure a safe haven for her family and friends.

When we look at Gisela's drawing of this scene, the fundamental disruption of the fairy tale hierarchy in Gritta surfaces. In both the patriarchal order and authoritarian narrative structure of the bourgeois Märchen, the king assumes the highest place.<sup>19</sup> In Gisela's drawing, the King still enjoys a pivotal position in the center, with the Prince and her parents (the upholders of the bourgeois order) on the right; Gritta is

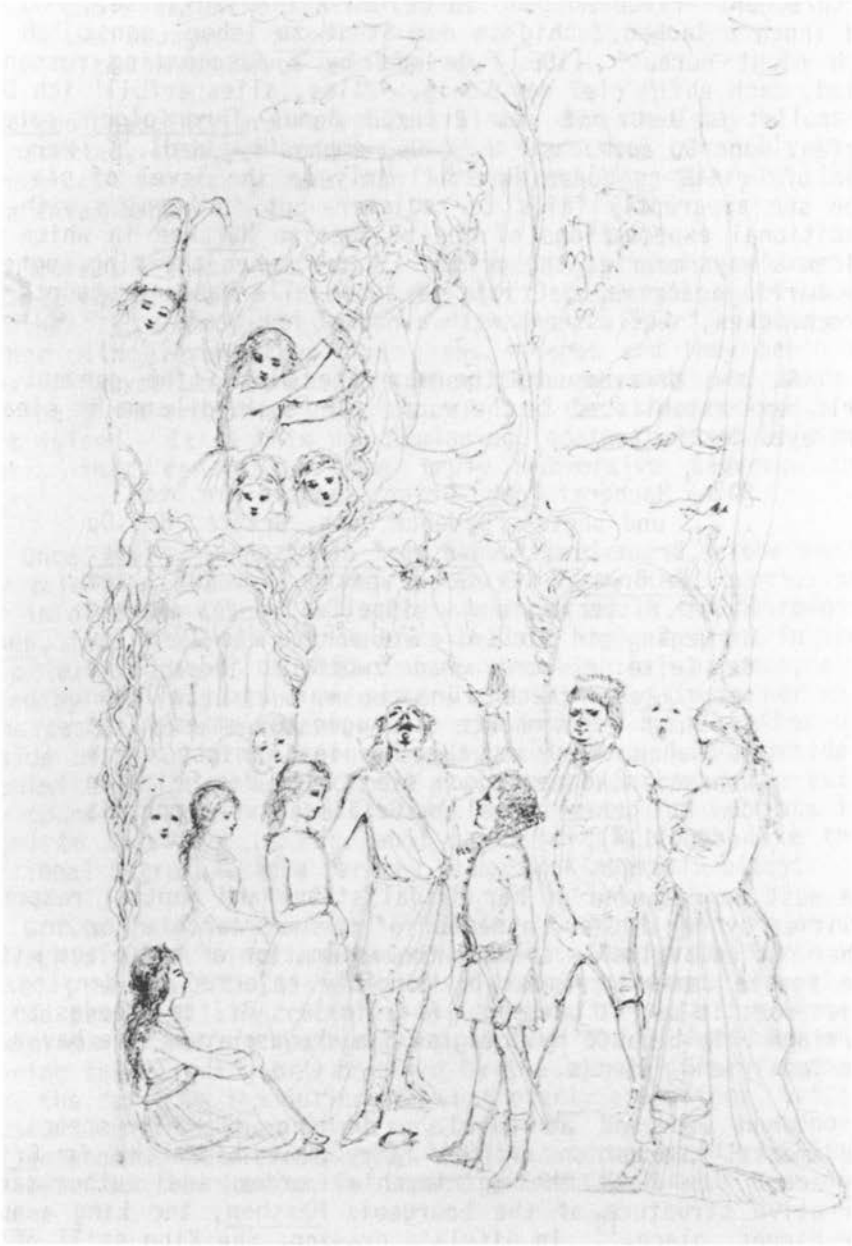


Fig. 1.

solidly allied with the female community and the spirits of nature on the left.<sup>20</sup> The girls represent an alternative to the formal hierarchy and actually reign above it.

In this fairy tale, all is not necessarily well that ends perfunctorily well. Gritta's desire to remain in the female community finds no compensation in the performance of a favor to the Prince. And yet she seemingly cannot escape the generic, social or nuptial exigencies of the fairy tale heroine.

Bettine's and Gisela's break with tradition becomes clear upon consideration of the underlying didactic message of the bourgeois Märchen. Elisabeth Lenk has pointed out that:

[Märchen] lehren es, daß Knaben dazu bestimmt sind, Abenteuer zu bestehen und Heldentaten zu begehen. Mädchen hingegen dazu, auf den Prinzen zu warten, der sie erlöst. Falls sie, wie die Königstochter im Froschkönig nicht erlöst werden wollen, werden sie durch die Zusammenarbeit von Vater und Heilsbringer zwangserlöst (69).

Lenk's description applies only partially to Bettine's and Gisela's piece. In Gritta, the passive and active roles are reversed: it is the girls who set off on adventures, perform heroic deeds and establish their own non-hierarchical community. Prince Sumbona, on the other hand, begs Gritta to rescue him from his royal ennui<sup>21</sup> and her father depends upon her fortunes to secure his future. Gritta, then, is the redeemer, but one who redeems in order that others may become autonomous. A surface reading of the text suggests the pattern of the bourgeois Märchen, Gritta's acceptance of the marriage as a sign of passivity (Lenk's Zwangserlösung of the princess). Another reading hints that her decision reflects a calculated form of community spirit. The role reversal in Gritta is not the most significant departure from the bourgeois Märchen, however, but rather the existence of an alternative to marriage as the bourgeois happy end for women: the autonomous female community. Gritta, in contrast to her fairy tale predecessors, has a choice. That choice means a difficult decision.

\* \* \* \* \*

While it is, of course, speculative to conjecture about "missing" pages in an "unfinished work," the inconsistencies in the Gritta Märchen lend themselves to such speculation. Bettine and Gisela may never have actually written the conclusion, other than the pro forma closing words. Mallon, writing in 1925, could find no reasons why the piece was never published--either broken



off prematurely or kept secret--"[denn] in der Gritta [ist] nichts Anstößiges, weder in politischer noch in sonstiger Hinsicht zu finden" (244). He was wrong. Gritta does suggest something shocking: not the abolition of the monarchical hierarchy but rather a system of alternates. Like the bourgeois Märchen, Gritta represents "a struggle for power and autonomy."<sup>22</sup> The marriage scene in Gritta can never be consummated, however, because Gritta seeks a different level of power and autonomy than is possible in the bourgeois fairy tale: a woman's power to decide herself. She is still trapped in the old forms, the old genres, but there is a glint of a new horizon.

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POSTSCRIPT: Since completion of this article, my discovery of the typeset conclusion to Gritta radically modifies the assumption that the work remained incomplete because of Bettine's and Gisela's reservations about the Märchen genre. Through its presence, the actual conclusion does more to intensify the break with the bourgeois fairy tale tradition by emphasizing the supremacy of the female community and Gritta's role as queen. I report on this and my other archival discoveries dating the work and indicating Gisela's dominant role in the creative process in the afterword to the first complete edition (including 17 illustrations from Gisela and Herman Grimm) of: Gisela and Bettine von Arnim, Das Leben der Hochgräfin Gritta von Rattenzuhausbeius (Frankfurt: Insel Verlag, 1986). The book is scheduled to appear in late October.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Research for this article was supported in part by a Dissertation Fellowship and a Grant for Travel Abroad from the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota. I would like to express my gratitude for these grants and the Graduate School's continued support of my research. Ruth-Ellen Boetcher Joeres also deserves my thanks here: besides inspiring my initial work on this fairy tale, she has also continued in the course of my research and grant writing to give generously of her time, her resources, her encouragement and her insights. I extend special thanks to the Freies Deutsches Hochstift/Frankfurter Goethe-Museum for kind permission to reproduce Gisela von Arnim's drawing included in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> Literary historians and critics have generally

suggested that Gisela and Bettine created Gritta together, although their respective roles have not been definitively established. Recent archival work has verified this assumption. The most well known arguments are those of Mallon, Konrad and Körner. See Otto Mallon, Nachwort, Das Leben der Hochgräfin Gritta von Rattenuhausbeius, by Bettine and Gisela von Arnim (Berlin: S. Martin Fraenkel Verlag, 1926); Gustav Konrad, Anmerkungen, Werke und Briefe, vol. 4 (Märchen), by Bettina von Arnim (Frechen: Bartmann-Verlag, 1963); Josef Körner, rev. of Das Leben der Hochgräfin Gritta von Rattenuhausbeius, by Bettina and Gisela von Arnim, Literaturblatt für germanische und romanische Philologie 48 (1927): 99-100.

3 Archival work in Weimar and Frankfurt/Main by members of the Freies Deutsches Hochstift/Frankfurter Goethe-Museum uncovered the manuscript fragments. See the catalogue of the 1985 Bettine exhibition in Düsseldorf and Frankfurt (Freies Deutsches Hochstift/Frankfurter Goethe-Museum, Herzhaft in die Dornen der Zeit greifen. Bettine von Arnim 1785-1859 [Frankfurt: Freies Deutsches Hochstift/Frankfurter Goethe-Museum, 1985] 94). I discovered the drawings (see p. 82 of this article) while examining an 1846 diary from Gisela at the Hochstift. They are pasted into the bound volume; identification was possible because one of the drawings bears a note to Gisela in Herman Grimm's hand: "Wilbebeere/ verbessere es/ besonders die Hände." The nine drawings portray the girls in the woods, their flight from Pecavus, Gritta at the baker's door, and other scenes. I discovered the title page of Gritta at the Hessisches Staatsarchiv Marburg: it was typeset in Charlottenburg by Egbert Bauer in 1845 and edited by J. F. Klein. The author is Marilla Vitchersvogel, Gisela's nom de plume according to Maxe von Arnim's memoirs, although there is also the possibility that the name is a permutation of Juliana Morella, Bettine's pseudonym for some of the early pieces she wrote together with Achim. See Freies Deutsches Hochstift, 96, 227. One other reference to this name appears in a letter from Joseph Joachim to Gisela on 31 May 1856. There he discusses his meeting with Mörrike and the latter's interest in Gisela's work: "Er fand viel ähnliches in Deinem Fantasie-Reichthum mit Deiner Mutter; er sagte mir, wie hoch er Dich ehrte, er kannte die Sachen von Marilla Vitchersvogel, auch das Heimechen etc etc." See Briefe von und an Joseph Joachim, eds. Andres Moser and Johannes Joachim, vol. 1. (Berlin: J. Bard, 1911) 344-345. 3 vols. 1911-1913.

4 The 19th century witnessed the German bourgeoisie's attempt to consolidate power by making its morals those of the nation. This attempt was documented nowhere so clearly as in the Grimms' fairy tales: the so-called Volksmärchen which were actually bürgerliche Kunstmärchen, filled with subliminal social and political content and made to look like true renditions of

oral tales. Men had appropriated the form from female informants and used it to express their "Idealisierung der sozialen Hierarchie" (Elisabeth Lenk, Die unbewußte Gesellschaft: Über die mimetische Grundstruktur in der Literatur und im Traum [Munich: Matthes und Seitz Verlag, 1983] 64). With the advent of the Romantic Kunstmärchen, writers began to question and criticize the social and literary structures evinced by the true Volksmärchen and those collections like the Frenchman Charles Perrault's Histoires ou contes du temps passé, avec des moralités (1694) and the Grimms' Kinder- und Hausmärchen (first edition, 1812). The romantic, male-authored Kunstmärchen was a response to and a turning away from the tightly-knit composition of the traditional genre in favor of an open-ended, multi-dimensional narrative. Both content and form reflected this change.

5 Katharina Mommsen has shown by quoting parts of Bettine's Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde that Goethe's idea of a good Märchen was one in which he was the protagonist: "Ein Märchen betrachtete Goethe als die geeignetste Exposition zu seinem Schaffen und zwar ein Märchen, in dem er selbst als Erzähler und Held auftrat" ("Über Goethes Märchendichtungen," Goethe Märchen by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Insel Taschenbuch 825 [Frankfurt: Insel Verlag, 1984] 113). It would be interesting to look at Goethe's influence on Bettine in this respect as regards the Gritta Märchen, especially if one interprets the conclusion in terms of Gritta's (Bettine's) overt desire to subordinate herself to the king and her covert wish to be his partner; Ingeborg Drewitz's study suggests such models in Bettine's own life. See Bettine von Arnim: Romantik, Revolution, Utopie (Düsseldorf: Diederichs, 1969) 194.

6 Quoted in Katherine M. Arens, "Humboldt and Goethe's Märchen: A Generic Approach," The German Quarterly, 57.1 (Winter 1984): 56.

7 Mallon's interpretation would support such a contention: "In ihren anderen Werken hat Bettina immer einen bestimmten Zweck verfolgt, bestimmten Personen ihrer Erinnerung ein Denkmal gesetzt oder soziale und politische Tagesfragen anregend behandelt. In der "Gritta" hat sie sich fast gänzlich dem freien Spiel ihrer künstlerischen Eingebung überlassen und Anspielungen auf bestimmte Verhältnisse, Ereignisse und Menschen dem Gange der ganzen Handlung untergeordnet. Ein ungrüblerisch fröhliches Buch ist die "Gritta". In glücklichen Stunden muß sie einst niedergeschrieben worden sein" (Mallon 251-252).

8 Gustav Kühne's arguments about other von Arnim Märchen support this thesis. In his review of "Heimelchen" (by Armgart), "Aus den Papieren eines Spatzen" and "Mondkönigs Tochter" (by Gisela, possibly with Bettine's help), Kühne takes the authors

and their works to task for their poor punctuation and seeming incoherence. See "Die Märchendichtung von heute," Europa: Chronik der gebildeten Welt, 22 September 1853:619. For a discussion of the authorship of these tales, see Freies Deutsches Hochstift, 94-97.

9 The image of women weaving and spinning, which became increasingly negative in the Grimms' collection, may actually have been a positive model for Gisela and Bettine. Heide Göttner-Abendroth, in her study of the Grimms' fairy tales, has suggested new potential for this motif: "Spinnen und Weben sind uralte matriachale Künste und zugleich Symbole für die schicksalhafte Macht der Frauen, denn diese spinnen und weben nicht nur Fäden, sondern auf geheimnisvolle Weise auch Leben. Aus dieser Vorstellung entstand das Bild der drei Schicksalsgöttinnen, welche den Lebensfaden spinnen, weiterreichen und abschneiden . . ." (emphasis added). See Die Göttin und ihr Heros: Die matriachalen Religionen in Mythos, Märchen und Dichtung (Munich: Verlag Frauenoffensive, 1980) 144.

10 Bettine and Gisela von Arnim, Märchen der Bettine, Armgart und Gisela von Arnim, ed. Gustav Konrad (Frechen: Bartmann-Verlag, 1965) 116. All further page references to the text refer to this edition and will be indicated in parentheses following the citation.

11 There is an interesting contrast between Fräulein Bärwalde in Gritta and the queen in Bettine's early Märchen "Der Königssohn." In that tale, the queen is helpless when a bear retreats into the woods with her beloved son. Forty years later in Gritta, Fräulein Bärwalde tears a bear apart for attacking her.

12 Assuming we follow the traditional structural necessity of the fairy tale, Krautia will have to be defeated somehow in the course of the Märchen by Gritta. This is not the case. Gritta neither literally nor figuratively shoves the wicked witch into the oven as the Grimms did so often without compunction. Instead, the agent of Krautia's downfall is not the oppressed Gritta, but rather the wicked rats, the cohorts of Sequestra and Pecavus. Gritta spends her last days contemplating how to fulfill her stepmother's (albeit petty) needs.

13 The interlude in the convent is important insofar as it serves as a pendant to the convent of the Zwölf Landstreicherinnen at the Märchen's end. The girls have translated the enclosures that oppressed them into artifacts that express them. They learn to use the convent structure to their own purposes. For a discussion of such transformations, see Rachel M. Brownstein's analysis of Richardson's Clarissa in Becoming a

Heroine: Reading about Women in Novels (1982; New York: Penguin Books, 1984) 41-77.

14 There is an interesting role reversal in the scene where the girls imagine what a prince can do for them. "(E)r wird wohl nichts zu tun haben, und kann uns ein wenig die Gegend zeigen,--und vielleicht hat er später Zeit, uns eine Suppe zu kochen oder ein Feuerchen anzuzünden, daß sein flammendes Schwert zu Nutzen kommt. . . . O, wenn er wollte, so könnte er auch später meinen Rock flicken" (84).

15 Pekavi/Pecavus, as evil personified, is allowed to escape up the chimney flue rather than being destroyed, as the bourgeois Märchen usually demands (see note 5).

16 The rats had been working with Sequestra and Pecavus to rob Nesselkrautia of her inheritance.

17 See Edith Waldstein's article, "Romantic Revolution and Female collectivity: Bettine and Gisela von Arnim's Gritta" in this volume for further discussion of this topic.

18 In a fascinating example of how our expectations about the traditional Märchen inform our critical attitudes, Mallon severely misrepresents this passage in his afterword.

Im Königsschlosse sperrt Gritta den König Anserrex mit List in einen Schrank und läßt ihn seine Freiheit durch Versprechungen erkaufen; daß er ihren Vater in Gnaden aufnehmen, ihre Gefährtinnen sicher heimsenden und sie selbst seinem Sohne zur Gemahlin geben wolle (Mallon 233).

The actual text in no way supports this summary. Mallon projects his own expectations onto Gritta (e.g., that she would want to become the Prince's bride) because of his instinctive understanding the bourgeois fairy tale structure.

19 This generally immutable structure of the bourgeois fairy tale is perhaps best summed up by Elisabeth Lenk:

Der autoritären Erzählstruktur entspricht nun der Gegenstand, oder, wie Jacob Grimm sagt, der "Gehalt" des Märchens: eine streng nach hierarchischen Prinzipien geordnete Welt, an deren Spitze in schrankenloser Machtvollkommenheit der König waltet (61).

20 As in Tieck's Kunstmärchen "Die Elfen", the benefactors

of the community are the elves led by a supernatural spirit. It is significant that in Gritta this supernatural spirit is not a king, but rather a queen, the Elfenfürstin.

21 When the Prince invites Gritta to the Rapunzel rendezvous, he expresses his desire to escape the constraints of the patriarchal order and his concomitant inability to do so. In his letter, he writes: "Ach, wie gern entflöh ich mit Dir. Aber ich verstehe gar nicht, meine feinen Halskragen einzupacken, daß sie nicht verderben" (100).

22 Jack Zipes, Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization (New York: Wildman Press, 1983) 57.