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)
    o 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
    o father-daughter relationship: tensions between the two
    o 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