

p. 244 f., Nr. 46 = AT 2023; p. 245 f., Nr. 47 = AT 56 A + AT 1310 C; p. 247—249, Nr. 48 = AT 402 + AT 813 III; p. 249—253, Nr. 49 = EB 71; p. 253—262, Nr. 50 = AT 590 + AT 303; p. 262—272, Nr. 51 = AT 563 + EB 257, vgl. AT 532 + EB 258, vgl. AT 814; p. 272—274, Nr. 52 = AT 960; p. 274 f., Nr. 53 = EB 11 III; p. 275—280, Nr. 54 = AT 725 + AT 513 A; p. 281—283, Nr. 55 = EB 162, AT 1064, AT 1060, AT 1049 + AT 1115; p. 284—286, Nr. 56 = AT 613; p. 287—291, Nr. 57 = AT 891; p. 291 f., Nr. 58 = AT 841; p. 292—297, Nr. 59 = AT 1539 + AT 1535 V; p. 297—300, Nr. 60 = AT 938.

Göttingen

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Finnegan, Ruth, *Limba Stories and Story-Telling*. The Oxford Library of African Literature. Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1967. Pp. 352.

Until recently, it was still possible for Godfrey Lienhardt, one of the general editors of The Oxford Library of African Literature, to comment that there was no good and convincing account of adults sitting together in an African village, telling stories for entertainment. (*The New African*, 1966: 124.) At long last, here is a book which provides exactly that: a convincing description of adult African villagers telling stories to each other as recently as our own decade. The tales they exchange are not a negligible part of their culture, a degenerated, barely remembered tradition. On the contrary, among the Limba people, story-telling is a vital, dynamic activity in which all men partake. In fact, they almost compelled the researcher to collect their narratives, as they themselves viewed it as a significant part of their culture.

Ruth Finnegan did not fail the Limba people who entrusted their literature to her. She spent the year of 1961 among them in the hilly savannah country of northern Sierra Leone and then revisited them for two months in 1963—1964. The present volume, which is based upon her doctoral dissertation, is a result of this field research. It is a welcomed contribution to the study of storytelling in general and in Africa in particular.

The import of this work lies both in its theoretical basis and its methodology of investigation and presentation. Unlike most linguists and anthropologists who record folktales as a means to an end, Ruth Finnegan studied Limba narratives as literature, worthy of analysis for their own sake. She does not view them merely as a cause or result of social structure and cultural values, nor as an expression of psychological tensions. For her, these stories are verbal and mimetic artistic forms which comply with cultural conventions of narrating, conform with indigenous aesthetic standards and exhaust a stock of traditional themes and characters. Such an approach to oral literature involves consideration of four aspects of these Limba tales: the cultural conception of the narratives, their rhetorical delivery in the story-telling situation, their thematic content and, finally, the biographical background and the artistic idiosyncrasies of individual informants.

While Ruth Finnegan treats all four aspects of the tales equally well, her most important contribution is the analysis of the story-telling occasion itself as the literary totality of verbal art. She seems to contend that what the written page is for the critic, the story-telling situation is for the folklorist. She considers the tales as performance, not only as literary composition. Therefore, following her discussion of the literary treatment of topics and characters, she analyzes in detail the style and techniques of narrating, focusing upon such conventions as repetition, parallelization and mimicry. The composition of the audience and its reaction and formal participation is as much part of the performance as the telling of the tale itself.

Miss Finnegan does not reserve this description for the general discussion of Limba story-telling. Rather, the headnotes to the individual stories contain description of

the general mood at that particular evening, the narrators' intonations and gestures, and the audience reaction to the tale, all matters which the written text itself does not communicate to the reader. For example, she comments on the story "The Jealous Mothers," a version of Type 926 "Judgement of Solomon," "The plot is rather confusing at the beginning. Its main interest for the listeners was the brilliant way in which it was told, with particular vivid characterization of the two women as enacted by the teller. He made full use of the techniques of pausing, varying speed, tone, and volume, and exaggeratedly indicating surprise, horror, or despair." (p. 272).

This type of commentary, which is rather rare in folktale collections, is a direct result of an imaginative, though simple, field methodology. In order to induce as much as possible the natural context of story-telling, Miss Finnegan recorded the tales, or took them down from dictation in the original Limba language in the presence of other villagers. They provide the actual cultural setting, and the result is a much richer study than any collection based upon informant-folklorist relationships can yield.

The next step in the publication of folktales could very well be a detailed description of the pauses, variations in speed, and changes in volume, tone and intonation made by the narrator. This could be done either by insertions into the text or by some other method. It would enable a closer analysis of the story-telling performance and a better understanding of the nature of the audience participation in that occasion. The recording of Limba tales may provide valuable material for such a purpose. According to Miss Finnegan, there are two forms of institutionalized audience participation in story-telling: singing and reply. The first is a group response in which the listeners join the narrator in the chorus of the songs. The second is an individual response of a particular person, appointed by the teller, whose function is to interject into the tale such phrases as 'yes', 'fancy that', 'really' at the appropriate moments, and to react quickly with laughter, exaggerated amusement or dismay at the events related in the story. The analysis of an exact transcription of such a narration with replies might be a valuable study of the story-telling process.

In their present form, the tales themselves make for pleasant reading. They are grouped into three sections: stories about people (45), stories about Kanu and origins (26), which revolve mainly around the Limba supreme diety Kanu, and, finally, stories about animals (25), in which the most prominent figure is spider, a rather stupid, gluttonous, selfish character who is consistently outdone by his wife.

Among the many tales it is possible to single out the story of "Adamu and Ifu" (pp. 267—270) as a text of a particular interest. This is a version of the Biblical story of Adam, Eve and the snake which Miss Finnegan told her Limba informant and then, two years later, recorded it from him as a Limba narrative. This experiment, which duplicates the Frank Cushing incident with the story of "The Cock and the Mouse" (*Zuni Folk Tales*, New York and London, 1901, pp. 411—422), illustrates clearly the changes that occur in texts in the process of diffusion of tales and their adaptation to a new traditional literature.

The main drawback in this important volume is the complete neglect of the interests of the comparative folklorist. Although Miss Finnegan includes Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* and *The Folktale* in the Selected Bibliographies, she makes no use of these works in her introduction or the notes to the tales. The appearance in Limba literature of such well-known Types as 312 "The Giant-Killer and his Dog (Bluebeard)," ("Sira and the Monster," pp. 117—125), 507 A "The Monster's Bride," ("Two friends," pp. 127—129), and 1074 "Race Won by Deception: Relative Helpers," ("The Dog and the Tortoise," pp. 323—325), goes without any reference to their international distribution. Similarly missing are any comparative notes referring to other collections of African folktales. These would have put Limba literature in the wider perspective which is so essential for the study of African oral tradition.

In spite of this gap, this is one of the better volumes to appear in The Oxford Library of African Literature, and it should take a prominent place in the library of every folklorist, regardless of his areal interest.

Philadelphia

Dan Ben-Amos

Frenzel, Rudolf und Rumpf, Marianne: Deutungen zur Rattenfängersage, in: Heimat und Volkstum. Bremer Beiträge zur niederdeutschen Volkskunde (1962/63) S. 47–64.

Im Februar 1961 hielt der Bremer Volkskundler Dr. Rudolf Frenzel († 14. 11. 1962) vor der Bremer Wittheit einen Vortrag über das Thema „Deutungen zur Rattenfängersage“. Nach dem Tode des Vortragenden hat sich Dr. Marianne Rumpf (Berlin) dankenswerterweise bemüht, „die Stellen, die im Vortragsmanuskript nur stichwortartig waren, druckreif zu formulieren und die angegebenen Quellen für Zitate bibliographisch zu ergänzen“. Somit liegt uns Frenzels Vortragstext — seit 1966 — auch im Druck vor.

Nach einem Hinweis auf die Beliebtheit der Rattenfängersage daheim und in aller Welt vermittelt der Vortragstext einen Überblick über die ältesten Fassungen dieser Sage. Dann beschäftigt er sich mit den wichtigsten der — nach seiner Zählung — 25 Theorien zum Auffinden des historischen Kerns der Sage: „Tanzwut, Kinderkreuzzug, Unglück, Kolonistenzug, mythologische und andere historische Deutungen.“ Er kommt zu dem Ergebnis: „Die Forschung ist also dort wieder angelangt, wo sie vor 300 Jahren schon einmal stand.“

Von Tanzwutausbrüchen in Hameln sei „in den alten Überlieferungen niemals die Rede gewesen“. Hameln und die Örtlichkeiten der historischen Kinderkreuzzüge lägen „zu weit auseinander“. Die Schlacht bei Sedemünde zwischen dem Bischof von Minden und der Stadt Hameln (28. Juli 1260 bzw. 1261) habe wegen ihres Tagesdatums mit dem Auszug der 130 Hamelner Kinder am 26. Juni 1284 nichts zu tun. Mythologische und tiefenpsychologische Deutungen setzten sich zu sehr über die historischen und volkskundlichen Bedingungen hinweg. Ein Kampf gegen die aristokratische Oberschicht als Hintergrund der Sage oder eine Flucht der Kinder vor der Pest kämen auch nicht in Frage.

Ausführlich geht der Vortragstext dann auf das Stichwort „Kolonistenzug“ ein. Gegen Dr. Wolfgang Wann, der an eine Auswanderung der angeblich durch einen Rattenfänger entführten 130 Hamelner Kinder ins Kolonisationsgebiet des mährischen Bischofs Bruno von Olmütz († 1281) glaubt, sei einzuwenden, daß die (im Hamelner Urkundenbuch auftretenden) Familiennamen Leist, Rike, Hake, Ketteler in ganz Mitteldeutschland gebräuchlich seien und nicht aus den angeblich ausgewanderten niederen Bevölkerungsschichten, sondern aus dem Patriziat stammen (Anmerkung des Rezensenten: Nur Leist und Rike sind Hamelner Patriziennamen; Hake und Ketteler sind Ritternamen). Mit dem Wortlaut der Lüneburger Fassung der Hamelner Pfeifer- und Kinderentführungsage (aufgezeichnet um 1430/50) sei Wanns Theorie unvereinbar. „Nach auswandernden jungen Männern mit ihren Frauen dürften die Mütter wohl kaum so aufgeregt bei den Bürgern gesucht und gefragt haben“ (Anm. d. Rez.: In der besagten Fassung der Sage heißt es, die Mütter der Kinder seien von Stadt zu Stadt geeilt und hätten nichts gefunden). Der Tenor der Sage sei düster und traurig, und ob Werber des Bischofs Bruno durch bunte Kleidung gekennzeichnet waren wie alle Spielleute, bleibe dahingestellt.

Dann wendet sich der Vortragstext der Rattenfänger-Deutung des Rezensenten zu: „Die jungen Hamelner Kolonisten sollen unter Führung des Grafen Nikolaus von Spiegelberg, der bei ihm mit dem Pfeifer identisch ist, ausgezogen und später mit