# Geographic Enchantments: the Trickster and Crone in Contemporary Fairy Tales and Storytelling

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## Abstract

Fairy tales are enchanting geographical stories, which affectively organize space-time in socially, politically, and ethically significant ways. Despite this, fairy tales have been neglected in the discipline of geography, and the inter-discipline of fairy tale studies has rarely interrogated the spatialities of tales, or of storytelling more widely. This thesis addresses this lacuna by theorizing the relationship between fairy tales, storytelling, and geography through the subversive folkloric figures of the trickster and crone. It posits, first, that we understand fairy tales as iterative stories that constitute mythic communities; and second, that trickster and crone figures are enchanting territorializing and deterritorializing refrains that subvert this mythic community. These two concerns are explored through Nolan's (2008) Batman film *The Dark Knight*, and Maitland's (2009) short story *Moss Witch*. An experimental research approach provides insight into these 'worldly,' enchanting, and symbolically rich stories, without sacrificing their liveliness or 'systematizing' them for ideological gain. The research begins with an interpretive textual analysis to address the symbolic traditions of the fairy tale refrains. Collage enables a 'retelling' of the stories as materially and visually expressive media. Genealogical analysis traces the material-discursive matterings of the geographical refrains within academic 'storytelling.' These combined approaches 'story' the trickster and crone as spatial patterns with affective force. Trickster refrains are animating forces of destruction and chaos. They shift between the centre and periphery of mythic community, violently overturn its seemingly ordered realities, and unfold insecure and profane in-between places, where (human) community can no longer be sustained. The crone refrain enacts a 'wilding' in fairy tales, entangling the civilized, storied human *polis* (or culture more generally) with the nonhuman 'environment,' and undermining both relational accounts of being and more romantic discourses of dwelling. Going forward, continued engagement with this nexus of geography, storytelling, and fairy tales promises to enrich our multidisciplinary endeavours, highlight our theoretical 'matterings' of fairy tales, and enable more responsible engagement with these endlessly enchanting stories.

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