

4.3 'Kuttel Daddeldu erzählt seinen Kindern das Märchen vom Rotkäppchen'

Joachim Ringelnatz' text 'Kuttel Daddeldu erzählt seinen Kindern das Märchen vom Rotkäppchen' recontextualises material from 'Rotkäppchen' (*KHM* 26) by presenting the tale as an overt narrative act, in the form of a *Rahmenerzählung* and accompanying *Binnenerzählung*:

Also Kinners, wenn ihr mal fünf Minuten lang das Maul halten könnt, dann will ich euch die Geschichte vom Rotkäppchen erzählen, wenn ich mir das noch zusammenreimen kann.¹

The version of 'Rotkäppchen' which follows could be described as a strong fictional 'misreading' of the tale, with the sympathies and interests of the fictional narrator expressed through directed modification of the tale and the addition of motifs from other *Märchen* and further, apparently arbitrary sources. The metafictional device of the *Rahmerzählung* sets up a contrast in 'codes' between the *Binnenerzählung* of 'Rotkäppchen' and 'Rotkäppchen' (*KHM* 26), by foregrounding the fact of narration in the *Binnenerzählung*, signalling the existence of a fictional narrator who mediates between the 'code' of preformed material from 'Rotkäppchen' (*KHM* 26) and the immanent 'code' of the fictional narrative. The narration of the tale by the character Kuttel Daddeldu to a number of children, and his consequent deformation and alteration

¹ Joachim Ringelnatz (pseudonym for Hans Böttcher): 'Kuttel Daddeldu erzählt seinen Kindern das Märchen vom Rotkäppchen' in: Röhrich: 'Zwölfmal Rotkäppchen', pp. 133-135.

of the material can thus be read as drawing attention to the process of authorship by which any given version of 'Rotkäppchen' takes shape, and the conditions of production and reception involved.

The authority of the fictional reading of 'Rotkäppchen' offered is invoked by the fictional narrator in the *Rahmenerzählung*:

Der alte Kapitän Muckelmann hat mir das vorerzählt, als ich noch so klein und so dumm war, wie ihr jetzt seid. Und Kapitän Muckelmann hat nie gelogen.²

Comic incongruity results from conflict between this claim and the apparently arbitrary modification of 'Rotkäppchen' by the fictional narrator, since the narrator's attempts at maintaining stylistic consistency fail in the opening paragraph of the *Binnenerzählung*:

Da war mal ein kleines Mädchen. Das wurde Rotkäppchen angetitelt - genannt heißt das. [...] Das war ein schönes Mädchen, so rot wie Blut und so weiß wie Schnee und so schwarz wie Ebenholz [...] und hinten so ganz dicke Beine und vorn - na, kurz eine verflucht schöne, wunderbare, saubere Dirn.³

Although much of the content and phraseology of the opening paragraph of 'Rotkäppchen' (*KHM* 26) is preserved, albeit in somewhat garbled form, apparently arbitrary details are introduced, such as the reference in the fictional narrator's description of Little Red Riding Hood to 'Sneewittchen' (*KHM*

² Ringelnatz: 'Rotkäppchen', p. 133.

³ Ringelnatz: 'Rotkäppchen', p. 133.

53), and the lengthy description which follows of the alcohol which the little girl is given to carry in her basket.⁴ As these interpolations increase in frequency and absurdity, attention is drawn to the constructed nature of the narrative, to the character of the fictional narrator and to the social setting of the tale telling. Thus, the fictional narrator has the Grandmother swallow the Wolf, and alludes to the presence of a sexual relationship between Little Red Riding Hood and the Hunter, displaying an attitude of increasing indifference towards the act of narrating the tale:

Na- und was geht uns das an, was die beiden dort im tiefen Walde miteinander vorgehabt haben [...] jedenfalls brachte er sie auf den richtigen Weg.⁵

The tale comes to an absurd conclusion, mixing elements of Grimms' version of the tale with the inventions of the fictional narrator, with the Hunter hearing the Grandmother's snoring and the Grandmother going on to swallow Little Red Riding Hood and the Hunter. The narrative returns to the *Rahmen-erzählung*, where the fictional narrator makes contradictory comments about the authority of the version of 'Rotkäppchen' presented and demands to be left alone to drink:

Ja, da glotzt ihr Gören und sperrt das Maul auf, als käme da noch was [...] Mir ist sowieso die Kehle ganz trocken von den dummen Geschichten, die doch alle nur erlogen und erstunken sind.⁶

⁴ Ringelmatz: 'Rotkäppchen', p. 133.

⁵ Ringelmatz: 'Rotkäppchen', p. 134.

⁶ Ringelmatz: 'Rotkäppchen', p. 135.

The overt presence of the character Kuttel Daddeldu as a fictional narrator and as the immanent 'author' of the version of the tale presented foregrounds the emergence of a process of 'controlled discrepancy' between the 'code' of the preformed material and the 'code' of the fictional narrative, a process which is accentuated by the comic failure of Kuttel Daddeldu's attempts at maintaining stylistic consistency. By showing that his incorporation of preformed material into the narrative is largely determined by his own interests, the limits of his knowledge and by the social setting of tale telling, discontinuities in the multiple authorship of his version of 'Rotkäppchen' are highlighted, as well as the heterogeneity of the text itself. The *Rahmerzählung* can thus be read as metafictional relativisation of the authority of the version of the tale presented, since it draws attention to the act of narration as an oral performance and to the social setting in which tale telling takes place. On another metafictional level, a contrast in 'codes' is set up between the parodic text and 'Rotkäppchen' (*KHM* 26), since attention is drawn to the parodic text's implicit claim to a higher semantic authority through the fictional narrator's contradictory statements about the authority of his narrative, and to the process by which preformed material is incorporated into the structure of the parodic text through the *Rahmerzählung/ Binnenerzählung* structure. The *Binnenerzählung* of 'Rotkäppchen' can be read in terms of the internal consistency of the fictional narrative provided by the character of its fictional narrator, but can also be read in the context of the overt fictional narration in a number of ways; as comment on the 'authoritative' status which Grimms' version of 'Rotkäppchen' (*KHM* 26) enjoys through its popular reception, as a demonstration of the fact of the authorship of any given

version of a tale and of the ideological and situational content invested in a tale through its authorship, and as calling into question the possibility of an 'authentic' version of 'Rotkäppchen', since the parodic text shows how the fictional narrator's character, sympathies and interests cause him to create discrepancies and discontinuities in retelling the tale.