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From The Editors

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FROM THE EDITORS

In this issue several contributors focus on the relation of folktales and fairy tales to memory, gender, and identity. Moving from folktales that empower Palestinians in their recreation of “memory sites” to a reading of Shahrazād that problematizes the common view of her as a figure of female empowerment, this 2017 issue of our journal ponders the question of how tales are repurposed to legitimate as well as question cultural, gender, and national identities and norms. We learn that in the nineteenth century *The Arabian Nights* was redeployed to legitimate an emerging American ethos and that “Cinderella” and other classical tales have been retooled to validate the culture of Chinese immigrants in New York City or to support forms of vigilante feminism. Bodily metamorphosis from human to animal, often depicted as a punishment in tales by Marie-Catherine d’Aulnoy and Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve, is questioned in the work of Angela Carter, whereas the Little Mermaid’s attempt to transform into an “ideal” human form proves to be complex and far from idyllic. Collectively these essays play out the relationship of the body and trauma to individual and collective identity as represented in and by folktales and fairy tales moving across cultures and time.

Cristina Bacchilega and Anne E. Duggan