



BNN Newsletter, July 2018.

Dear members of Belief Narrative Network,

Warm and sincere thanks to everybody who contributed to BNN sessions in Ragusa, moreover, also for those who wrote their pieces for the Newsletter!

The Newsletter includes

1. Announcements from BNN: updates of bibliographies. Kaarina Koski
2. Announcements from BNN: abstracts of Ragusa conference. Mirjam Mencej
3. A book by prof. Robert Miller *The Dragon, the Mountain, and the Nations: An Old Testament Myth, Its Origins, and Its Afterlives*
4. Recent publications of Maria Ines Palheiro
5. CFP, "The Undead" theme issue of *Thanatos*
6. From Belief Narratives to the Folkloristics of Religion: Towards the EASR Conference in Tartu (June 25-29, 2019), report written by Ülo Valk
7. 5th International Conference "Demonology as a Semiotic System", May 24–26, 2018, RSUH, Moscow. Conference report and CFP written by Dr. Olga Khristoforova
8. Disability before Disability. PhD project of folkloristics at the University of Iceland. Eva Þórdís Ebenezersdóttir
9. Cicadas and FIFA World Cup. Note by Desmond W. Kharmawphlang
10. Biographical article and list of publications by Robin Gwyndaf
11. "Absent Werewolf", a research article by Willem de Blécourt.

Sincerely,

Kristel Kivari

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On behalf of the BNN Committee:

Mirjam Mencej, Willem de Blécourt, Terry Gunnell, Anders Gustavsson, Desmond Kharmawphlang, Fumihiko Kobayashi, Mare Kõiva, Kaarina Koski, Dilip Kumar Kalita, Mirjam Mencej, Maria Ines Palheiro, Tok Thompson and Ülo Valk.

Announcements of BNN:

I Updates to the International Annotated Belief Narrative Bibliography

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A collection of belief narrative scholars' bibliographies is available in the BNN/ISFNR webpage, and the information is updated yearly. All BNN members have now the possibility to send a short CV and bibliography related to belief narratives to be published in the BNN site or to update their already published data. You can check the published bibliographies in BNN webpage (<http://isfnr.org/belief-narrative-network.php>). Your data should include:

- * CV including name and surname; degree; present professional status and affiliation; e-mail address and contact details (if you agree to publish them on Internet);
- * list of main research interests (in form of key words). Please add this information at the end of your CV;
- * personal bibliography, related to belief narratives (books written in one of the major languages or with a summary in one of these languages; papers written in one of the major languages).

Please send your data to Kaarina Koski (kaakos@utu.fi) by the end of September 2018.

II Follow-up from conference in Ragusa: abstracts of the BNN session

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You can read the abstracts of BNN sessions from [HERE](#)



A book by Prof. Robert Miller (Catholic University, Washington DC): *The Dragon, the Mountain, and the Nations: An Old Testament Myth, Its Origins, and Its Afterlives*

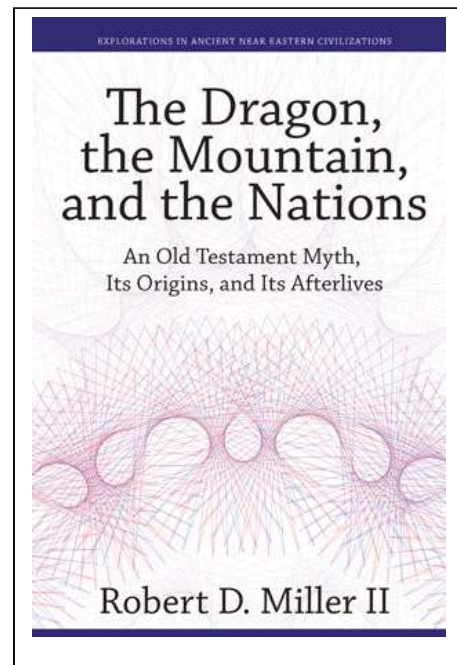
Prof. Robert Miller
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Professor Robert Miller (Catholic University, Washington DC), has published *The Dragon, the Mountain, and the Nations: An Old Testament Myth, Its Origins, and Its Afterlives* (www.eisenbrauns.org/books/titles/978-1-57506-479-6.html), which examines the stormgod-slays-dragon/sea myth in Indic, Ancient Near Eastern, and Greek literature. Focus is on the Hebrew Bible, with discussion of reuse of the myth in Rabbinic Judaism, New Testament, and later traditions.

Intro from the publisher's webpage:

The Dragon, the Mountain, and the Nations investigates the origins, manifestations, and meanings of a myth that plays a major role in the Hebrew Bible and a substantial role in the New Testament: the dragon-slaying myth.

The dragon-slaying myth has a hoary ancestry, extending back long before its appearance in the Hebrew Bible, and a vast range, spanning as far as India and perhaps even Japan. This book is a chronicle of its trajectories and permutations. The target of this study is the biblical myth. This target, however, is itself a fluid tradition, responding to and reworking extrabiblical myths and reworking its own myths. In this study, Robert Miller examines the dragon and dragon-slaying myth throughout India, the proto-Indo-European cultures, and Iran, and among the Hittites as well as other ancient Near Eastern and Mesopotamian traditions, and then throughout the Bible, including Genesis, the Psalms, Daniel, and ultimately the New Testament and the book of Revelation. He shows how the myth pervades many cultures and many civilizations and that the dragon is always conquered, despite its many manifestations. In his conclusion, Miller points out the importance of the myth as a hermeneutic for understanding key parts of biblical literature.



Recent publications of Maria Ines Palleiro

Maria Ines Palleiro

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- 1) Palleiro, Maria (2018) *The lady ghost. Labyrinths of memory in the folktale*. Buenos Aires, La bicicleta ediciones. (Original title: *La dama fantasma. Los laberintos de la memoria en el relato folklórico*. ISBN 978-987-46844-0-0. This is an analytical study of a corpus of Argentinian belief narratives dealing with the motif "The vanishing hitchhiker", collected in fieldwork. It is an updating of a previous research, with new material, and it includes as well a comparative approach to Estonian, English and Italian versions, as well as mediatic recreations.
- 2) Palleiro, Maria ed. (2018) *Dancing bodies (second edition)*. Buenos Aires, Maria Palleiro, editor (*Cuerpos que danzan*). This volume includes different chapters of Argentinean scholars dealing with coreographic recreations of folk narratives. ISBN: 978-987-42 5 661-0. Authors: Goldin, Daniel; Escobar, Silvina Paula; Pascuchelli, María Natalia; Randisi, Liliana Mabel; Vázquez, Sonia Judith; Grizy, Mariano Andrés; Vargas, Amalia Noemí; Regirozzi, Silvia; Castelluccio, Nilda; Ifrán, Hugo; Sangoy, Beatriz; Alcoba, Enrique; Alcoba, Marcelo; Sánchez, María Belén; Aricó, Héctor; Ostrowsky, Constanza; Pagliai, Lucila; Palleiro, Maria.
- 3) Romero, Juan (2018) *The power of his saint*. Buenos Aires, Edición del autor (Original title: *El poder de su santo*) This is a study based on fieldwork, of a vernacular devotion to "Saint The Death" (*San La Muerte*). The author one of my doctoral students (. ISBN: 978-987-42-6849-5

Call for papers: "The Undead" theme issue of *Thanatos*

Kaarina Koski

See full CFP from [HERE](#)

Revenants, living dead, ghosts, wraiths, vampires, ancestor spirits, saintly apparitions, restless souls, zombies, corpses reanimated by magic, decapitated heads that speak, angels – death has not always been the end; the dead do not always stop living or cease to exist. Some of the deceased have appeared as incapable or unwilling to cross the border between this world and the afterworld permanently. Occasionally, the dead return or remain present in the social reality of people, in the minds of those who have survived, or in their physical environment. They can have a physical appearance or appear as incorporeal beings, they can be passive objects or active agents. Sometimes the border between the world of the living and the world of the dead is crossed in dreams, visions and apparitions or through various ritualistic means. The undead – the deceased who are dead and absent, but simultaneously as if alive and present as they affect the lives and reality of the living – are known in various cultural and historical contexts. They may have acted as upholders of moral norms, values and traditions, or they have helped or

harassed the living, or searched for justice as a consequence of the injustice they have suffered. In stories told, they may have served as an entertaining element. As alternative discourses, they have also offered sites where the structures of power can be challenged, questioned and criticized. They may have represented communal concerns or symbolized psychological traumata. Sometimes the undead are passive objects of magic without any free will of their own; sometimes they consist of a group of unindividualized spirits, or appear as an abstract unpersonified force. Being undead may have been considered a threat or an opportunity as well as the dead person's right or his or her punishment.

The theme of the 2019 spring issue of *Thanatos*, the peer-reviewed, multi-disciplinary open access journal published by the Finnish Death Studies Association (<https://kuolemantutkimus.com/in-english/>), *Thanatos* (<https://thanatos-journal.com/in-english/>), will be "The Undead". We are looking for papers that discuss the undead from a variety of perspectives, in different source materials, in different historical and cultural contexts and deal with such questions as:



We invite abstracts for articles to be published in the undead special issue by September 5, 2018.

Abstracts are to be sent to the editor responsible for the theme issue, Kirsi Kanerva (University of Turku), ktkane@utu.fi.

Who, or what, are the undead? What is the role of the undead? What are the types and modes of their manifestation? What is the source of their existence? Where does the energy that reanimates, motivates or produces them originate from? What are the spaces (abstract or concrete ones) where the undead operate? What kind of conceptions of the soul, the mind, individual and agency are reflected in people's understanding of the undead? How have conceptions of the undead and of their role and agency changed as a consequence of various historical and cultural changes and ruptures that have shaped people's worldviews and their social and physical reality (such as e.g. Christianization, secularization, urbanization, scientific and industrial revolutions).

We invite abstracts for articles to be published in the undead special issue by September 5, 2018. The information about the acceptance of the articles will be sent by September 15th. The deadline for articles is November 30, 2018, after which the articles will go through a double-blind review process. The revised articles should be submitted by May 15, 2019. The estimated date of publication is in June, 2019.

The primary publication language in *Thanatos* is Finnish, but we also accept manuscripts in English and Swedish. (However, the costs of proofreading for non-native English or Swedish speakers are the responsibility of the author).

Abstracts are to be sent to the editor responsible for the theme issue, Kirsi Kanerva (University of Turku), ktkane@utu.fi.

For guidelines for the authors, please consult the journal web page at <https://thanatos-journal.com/in-english/> (in English), <https://thanatos-journal.com/pa-svenska/> (på svenska) or <https://thanatos-journal.com/kirjoittajalle/> (suomeksi).

For further information, please contact the editor responsible for the theme issue, Kirsi Kanerva (University of Turku), at ktkane@utu.fi.

From Belief Narratives to the Folkloristics of Religion: Towards the EASR Conference in Tartu (June 25-29, 2019)

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The European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR) conference Multiple Religious Identities: Individuals, Communities, Traditions in Bern between June 17th and 21st, 2018, (<http://www.easr2018.org/>) saw nearly 500 papers delivered by presenters from around 40 countries. It would be impossible to reflect upon the vast field of religious studies in its multiplicity; however, one

of the trends of the 21st century is that more and more scholars have turned their attention away from institutional and world religions. Instead, their interests are shifting to marginal and incipient forms of religious life and its vernacular interpretations past and present. It is not surprising that many papers discussed topics that are closely related to contemporary folklore studies, addressing religious phenomena and developments at the grassroots level of society, such as conversion, identity discourses and belonging, healing narratives, sacred places, ritual practices and indigenous traditions. A set of panels was dedicated to Ernesto de Martino (1908–1965), a critical and reflexive scholar from Italy whose contribution to the study of magic and folk religion was grounded in extensive fieldwork and whose theoretical and methodological innovations are now widely acknowledged.



Reinhard Schulze (University of Bern) in his keynote lecture discussed the ambiguities of religious self-expression in early modern times and how they do not suit the modern paradigm of religious identity, which is viewed as definite, unambiguous and connected to national identity. Jörg Rüpke (University of Erfurt) in his keynote speech showed that personal identities in antiquity also did not fit the religious self-definitions of modern times. People engaged in multiple cults, especially in urban environments that offered a variety of public spaces, including temporary spaces for storytelling and performances that were dedicated to gods. Thus, historical research offers plenty of evidence of multiple religious identities in the past, which contradicts the Cartesian understanding of the singular self. The same fluid notion of identity appeared in several panels that discussed contemporary vernacular religion. The University of Turku offered a panel on co-imagination and controversial relationships. Tiina Mahlamäki discussed the practice of unicorn healing in Finland today and the related gendered discourses. Minna Opas offered case studies of indigenous peoples in Amazonia who are imagined to live in voluntary isolation. Jaana Kouri discussed the continuities of shamanic traditions today and animism as social imaginary. Other folkloristic sessions addressed expressivity, tradition,

institutional authority and ambiguities of belonging in vernacular religion. Reet Hiiemäe (Estonian Literary Museum) discussed sauna rituals in contemporary Estonia as a way of re-enchanting the profane world in the broader context of religious and cultural change. Marion Bowman (The Open University) examined the Argentinean cult of Gauchito Gil, a vernacular saint without official institutional recognition. She showed that the concepts of proximity, approximation and appropriation can shed light on important aspects of vernacular religion. Madis Arukask (University of Tartu) explored the animistic perception of trees that is characteristic of the Finnic peoples (for example the Veps, the Vote and others) who live in the forested regions of North-West Russia. Margaret Lyngdoh (University of Tartu) reflected upon her fieldwork among the Khasis in North-East India, highlighting the entangled realities of human animal transformations and the related experience narratives. Alevtina Solovyova (University of Tartu) discussed narrative traditions in post-socialist Mongolia, reflecting on the relationship between Buddhism and shamanism within the context of a revival of religious life. Baburam Saikia (University of Tartu) introduced the culture of satras, monastic neo-Vaishnava institutions in Assam, India, discussing the Kālasamhati traditions and related narratives and vernacular stereotypes about this secret religious lineage. Ülo Valk (University of Tartu) argued that ambiguity and uncertainty belong among the characteristic traits of belief narratives of the supernatural and of the liminal world between reality and fiction that is brought to life in storytelling.

Another trend seems to be the blending of new spirituality with discourses of indigenous religions. Suzanne Owen (Leeds Trinity University) showed this using the example of druidry, which at the same time as becoming a global tradition is also claimed to be indigenous. Jenny Butler (University College Cork) revealed the connections between contemporary Irish paganism, celticity and indigeneity. Graham Harvey (The Open University) reflected upon experiments with bear feasts among the neopagans of England, even though there are no longer bears in the wild. Angela Puca (Leeds Trinity University) explored the positively changing meanings of ‘witch’ and ‘shaman’ in Italy in the context of indigenising discourses.

The next annual conference of the EASR, Religion – Continuities and Disruptions, will be held at the University of Tartu between June 25th and 29th, 2019. Belief narrative scholars and the ISFNR in general have much to offer this forum to introduce folkloristics of religion as a distinctive approach. Growing interest in non-institutional and non-scriptural forms of belief and ritual among the scholars of religion has prepared a fertile ground for closer interdisciplinary co-operation.

Hopefully, several BNN members will participate in the conference in Tartu. Panel proposals are expected until Oct 15th, 2018, and abstracts until Dec 15th, 2018. For the call for papers see <https://easr2019.org/> where more information about the conference and registration details will appear soon.



May 24–26, 2018, the 5th International Conference "Demonology as a Semiotic System" Russian State University for the Humanities (RSUH), Moscow

Dr. Olga Khristoforova, Dr. Dmitriy Antonov
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On May 24–26, 2018, the 5th International Conference "Demonology as a Semiotic System" was held at the Russian State University for the Humanities (RSUH), Moscow. It was organized by the RSUH Centre for Typological and Semiotic Folklore Studies.

International interdisciplinary conferences "Demonology as a Semiotic System" have been held at the RSUH every two years since 2010. These meetings encourage fruitful communication and exchange of opinions between specialists representing different countries and academic fields (philology, history, folklore studies, anthropology, arts), open up new research perspectives and set new academic tasks.

Areas of specific focus include:

- demonological images and beliefs in contemporary mythology, folklore and post-folklore;
- demonological topics in rituals and ritualized behavior;
- demonological plots in booklore and visual tradition: interaction languages of image and written narration;
- the relationship and mutual influence of the church ("scholar", "book") canon and folk beliefs, vernacular demonology;
- spirit possession and related beliefs and practices;
- witchcraft beliefs: general patterns and local contexts;
- demonological models in political-ideological discourse and visual propaganda;
- demonization of out-group and / or in-group: functions, rhetoric, social contexts, cultural memory.

[https://www.academia.edu/36713514/Демонология_как_семиотическая_система. Материалы V международной научной конференции. Москва РГГУ 24 26 мая 2018 г. Сост. и ред. О.Б. Христофорова Д.И. Антонов. М. 2018. 196 с](https://www.academia.edu/36713514/Демонология_как_семиотическая_система.Материалы_V_международной_научной_конференции.Москва_РГГУ_24_26_мая_2018_г.Сост._и_ред._О.Б._Христофорова_Д.И._Антонов._М._2018._196_с)

Following the conference, we publish the annual journal "In Umbra: Demonology as a semiotic system" (eds. Dmitry Antonov, Olga Khristoforova).

It does not include only conference proceedings, but is a top-ranking scholarly yearbook. It was established in 2012 and this year we are collecting works for the 7th issue (2018). Articles are published in Russian or English, the limit is 40,000 characters, illustrations are welcome (published in black and white). See for example:

[https://www.academia.edu/20342991/In Umbra Демонология как семиотическая система. Альманах. Вып. 2 Отв. ред. и сост. Д.И. Антонов О.Б. Христофорова. М. Индик 2013](https://www.academia.edu/20342991/In_Umbra_Демонология_как_семиотическая_система_Альманах_Вып._2_Отв._ред._и_сост._Д.И._Антонов_О.Б._Христофорова_М._Индрик_2013)

The journal is already well-known among slavists in Russia and Europe and now we would like to focus on English articles and promote it more intensively in Europe and the USA. Please contact us

if you have an article or an idea of an article to be included in the next issue.

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Dr. Olga Khristoforova

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Professor, Centre for Social Anthropology

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Disability before Disability and a PhD Project in Folkloristics at the University of Iceland.

Eva Þórdís Ebenezersdóttir

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In November 2017, the new multidisciplinary project 'Disability before disability' (DbD) was launched at the University of Iceland. DbD is a three-year project funded by the Icelandic Research Fund's Grant of Excellence. The main aim of this research is to reach an understanding of how different bodies were understood in the past in Iceland, and how this understanding may have shaped the real lives of people with impairments. When this approach is applied to folklore research and folkloric materials, it often reveals various kinds of

underlying stigma, enabling us to reach a better understanding of what was considered normal and abnormal at different times, and the way the wonderful shades of “normality” in between these two were deeply imbedded in people’s worldview and the folklore that reflects this. In short, it sheds light on how those who were considered abnormal were stigmatized in everyday life, ideas and words.

My research for my PhD thesis forms part of the folkloristic strand of the DbD project. Its focus is on how bodies and behavior that were viewed as being different or ‘abnormal’ are portrayed in archived Icelandic folkloric material, most in printed legends and belief narratives. The questions focus on what the contemporary understanding of different bodies at different times may have been? How did worldview shape this understanding of bodies and vice versa? In short, my work looks at bodies, and worldview, beliefs, and knowledge which reflect the ex-/inclusion of people that were considered different in folklore material, and along with this material that reflects the social status and (lack of) power of such people at different times.

Just as disabled people are found throughout society, legends that tell of different bodies can be found all over the archives. In spite of the fact that they are rarely identified as part a direct motif or ATU number, or as particular types of supernatural entity and that some legends merely touch on differences vaguely or in passing. Each example is nonetheless important if one wishes to put together a map reflecting the understanding of different bodies and minds and people’s responses towards them, so often reflected in various kinds of folkloric material.

While this material focuses on the archives and the distant past, this project is very important for me personally as it is providing me with an opportunity to research my own marginalized group and how they were seen over the course of time. As a disabled PhD student, my own impairment gives me a voice in the discourse on disability. I am nonetheless aware of the importance of not imposing my own 21st-century views upon people of the past. Views regularly change, and what is regarded as a disability today may well have been something that received no special attention in the past. In short, my research calls for respect and honesty to be taken towards the material I am dealing with, the research, myself and my colleagues, and not least the disabled people of the past and present.

I would be very grateful to hear from any other scholars working in this field of research: my e-mail is: ethe3@hi.is

Bionote: Eva Þórdís Ebenezersdóttir is a PhD. candidate in folkloristics at the University of Iceland, where her advisor is Dr. Ólafur Rastrick. Her PhD project, *Different Bodies in Icelandic Folklore* forms part of the multidisciplinary project: ‘Disability before disability’ led by Hanna Björg Sigurjónsdóttir, professor in Disability Studies, which is funded by the Icelandic Research Fund’s Grant of Excellence. She holds an MA in Folkloristics from the

University of Iceland. Her research field focuses on the connection between folkloristics and disability studies. She has already published several articles on disability in changeling legends and on disability and humour.

Miscellanea: Cicadas and FIFA World Cup

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During a wine-enriched lunch of the BNN Committee at Ragusa, I was encouraged to write about a phenomenon taking place at an area where I live and work, a phenomenon which is assuming folkloric dimensions. Even as I am writing this piece, an insect of the cicada family scientifically known as *Chremistica Ribhoi* is making its appearance in thousands upon thousands. What is remarkable about this insect is that it appears once in four years and ALWAYS during the FIFA World Cup. The local name of the insect is Niang Taser and now has earned the sobriquet Niang World Cup or the World Cup insect. It emerges after dusk, moults from the pupal case and becomes an adult in a few seconds. The closing stage comes to an end at about 11pm. It emerges again after three hours. The fact that the insect figures in anecdotes and narratives makes it an increasingly rich item of discourse and the future of its role to contributing to local folklore is immense. Would it not be interesting to have a BNN meeting after four years to celebrate the year of the Niang Taser?



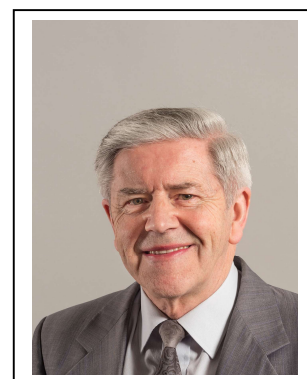
Photo courtesy: Northeast Now

Robin Gwyndaf: Recording Folk Beliefs and Belief Narratives in Welsh Oral Tradition: a Biographical Note

Dr Robin Gwyndaf, Cardiff, Wales, an Honorary Member of ISFNR, has been active for over 55 years in studying and fostering the rich folk culture of his native country. Here he gives a brief description of his life-long dedication to recording Welsh folklore, and lists a selection of his publications in English relating, in particular, to folk beliefs and belief narratives.

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I was born 1 March 1941, and brought up on a mountain farm in the rural parish of Llangwm, Uwchaled, Denbighshire, North Wales. It was – and still is – a mainly Welsh-speaking district, renowned for its bards and singers, storytellers and craftsmen. My own father was a community-bard with a great interest in recitation, and as children (six of us) we also were encouraged to recite poetry at local *eisteddfodau*. (An *eisteddfod*: a competitive cultural festival of music, poetry, oral



presentations, arts and crafts.) Presenting poetry and, occasionally, prose from memory on the stage was an excellent introduction to the Welsh literary tradition, dating from the sixth century. It is little wonder that a deep and long-lasting interest in poetry developed at an early age. Also in storytelling - in Wales and abroad.

From the age of about sixteen I took great pleasure in the company of friends and tradition-bearers in Uwchaled and the surrounding area, and in making notes of their lore and language. This interest (or should I say 'passion'?) continued throughout my university years at Bangor, North Wales, 1959-64) and, needless to say, has continued ever since. The subjects studied at Bangor were Welsh, History, Theology and Philosophy. I graduated in Welsh and did research in the field of sixteenth century Welsh History. Although there were no official courses in folklore or ethnology available at any University of Wales department then, I ventured to share my love for the history and folk traditions of my native country with others from the age of about twenty one. Those early talks and lectures were, no doubt, far from satisfactory, but the response and warm welcome of listeners was a lasting inspiration.

In October 1964 I was appointed to the post of Research Assistant 1 in the Department of Oral Traditions and Dialects, Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans, as it was then known. The Museum was founded in 1946 and opened to the public in 1948. Later the name was changed to Museum of Welsh Life. Now it is known as: St Fagans: National Museum of History. It endeavours to tell the story of Wales from prehistoric times to the present day. It is an open-air museum, with over 100 acres of grounds and 248 members of staff (9 May 2018), and is one of the seven major branches of Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales (www.amgueddfacymru.ac.uk / www.museumwales.ac.uk). Sain Ffagan / St Fagans is a village five miles from Cardiff, whereas the National Museum itself is based in the civic centre. The Welsh name for the open-air museum at St Fagans from the beginning has been Amgueddfa Werin Cymru. (*Amgueddfa*: museum; (*G*)*werin*: people; *Cymru*: Wales. The word '*amgueddfa*' derives from an old Welsh word, '*amguedd*', meaning 'treasure'.)

Various posts and responsibilities at the Museum in St Fagans over the years included: 1971: Assistant Keeper; 1984: Curator of Folklore. In addition: 1985-87: Director of the Government's Manpower Service Commission (MSC, the Museum Information Retrieval Projects – seven persons were employed to index the folklore collections); 1991-95: Head of St Fagans Warding Staff; 1991-97: Head of St Fagans Tape, Film and Manuscript Archives; 1997: Head of the Department of Cultural Life.

During 1964-2018 I was given the opportunity to talk to about 3,000 to 4,000 persons throughout Wales. And what a truly great honour it was to be warmly welcomed as a friend into their homes. How immeasurable is my debt to them. Of these men and women, some 450 were recorded on tape (c. 900 hours of sound recordings, mainly in the Welsh language). All the tapes have been fully transcribed and indexed (according to subject, district, and informant). For each tape there is also a 'list of contents' (on an 8 by 5 inch card), and the task of digitising these cards is in progress. The majority of the tapes were recorded during the years 1964-90 but, I may add, once a fieldworker – fond of people and their lore – always a fieldworker!

The 'content cards' list roughly 20,000 items. But I hasten to note that there is no plan to count every item in detail! The ethnologist should always be aware not to place folkloristic items in neat, compact, and precisely named 'scholarly' boxes. The human brain knows no such finality. A holistic approach is vital. Equal attention should be given to text and context. 20,000

items may have been recorded and identified, but an attempt was also made to understand the close interrelation between these items and, needless to say, their function, form variation, and oral transmission within and outside the community. We study folklore, ethnology, and anthropology not as a collection of static items of culture, but as culture in context. Culture in action. We study folklore, ethnology, and anthropology, not merely as distinctive subjects in their own right, but also as intricate and inexplicable intrinsic parts of people's culture. (The proposed title of one book, not yet published, will be: *Culture in Action: Essays on Folklore and Ethnology, People and Community*.)

As regards my own fieldwork, the main emphasis was on folk narratives, folk beliefs and charms, but much material was also recorded relating to folk poetry, folk hymns, riddles, folk sayings and proverbs, nature lore, regional ethnology (mainly the author's native district of Uwchaled), repertoire studies, and world-view. Numerous narratives (tales, legends, personal narratives, belief legends, motifs, memorates, chronicles, and anecdotes) were recorded on the subject of folklore relating to the supernatural, such as supernatural beings and paranormal experiences. These narratives included, for example, material relating to fairies; ghosts; witches; wise-men and conjurors; saints; giants; premonitions of death; divination; caves, lakes and wells; and mythic animals, such as dragons, the Black Dog, and the hare.

Life-long learning and sharing the culture ...

On retiring from the Museum (1 March 2006), I was made an Honorary Research Fellow (2007), an honour which is greatly appreciated. In addition to tapes, photographs and manuscripts stored in the Museum Archives, numerous folklore and folk culture collections which have accumulated over the years (mainly correspondence files, research files, tape transcripts, and card indexes) are kept together in one fairly large room at the Museum in St Fagans, safeguarded for the future, but also, just as importantly, readily available to colleagues and current researchers. I share my working days now between this office and my own study at home in Llandaf, Cardiff. And here I may add: I have always considered it a pleasant duty to offer students, visiting researchers, and especially younger colleagues and curatorial staff, any assistance possible.

An early motto of the National Museum of Wales was: 'To teach the world about Wales and the Welsh people about their own fatherland'. These words, I feel, reflect my own desire and aspiration – indeed my dream – since I first began to appreciate the rich culture and folk traditions of my native country. But, before I could share this treasure with others, I had so much to learn myself. That is why I must, first of all, express my most sincere gratitude to colleagues past and present at the Museum for their unfailing support. Also, to innumerable friends and scholars in so many countries. It has always been a great pleasure to meet students and renowned folklorists and ethnologists, perhaps for the first time, and learn about their current research, the history of their institutions, and new projects being undertaken.

Furthermore, it was always a pleasure to invite foreign scholars to visit Wales and the Museum, and to give a talk or video presentation to Museum staff and other interested individuals. However, whatever benefit and pleasure was derived from such visits, and whatever appreciation colleagues and researchers at our own Museum felt as a result of any assistance and support I was able to offer, the benefit to myself and my own appreciation were

of equal magnitude. Why? Because it was always a two-way process of life-long learning. They learn – I learn.

This two-way learning process was also evident in my involvement with a number of cultural, literary, and folkloristic societies and organizations, both in Wales and beyond. We join certain organizations because of our interest in the subject; because we wish to learn more; and because we enjoy the company. But, occasionally, there will also be an opportunity to contribute ourselves. We may be asked to be one of the officials. We may be asked to give a talk on a specific subject. That is, we share with others what we have learnt. (For a list of societies and organizations in Wales and abroad I have been privileged to be a member of or associated with, see Appendix B.)

Needless to say, being given the opportunity to record aspects of the folk culture of Wales and to share that culture with my own people and people in other parts of the world has been a joy and privilege beyond words. As many means as possible were utilised in this process of sharing: replies to oral, telephone, written and email enquiries; lectures and talks; storytelling sessions and dramatic presentations in words and music; radio and television programmes; tapes, cassettes, discs and films; exhibitions; websites; articles and books.

From the very beginning, there was much emphasis on giving talks and lectures in the towns and villages of Wales and further afield. But once more, we are conscious of the importance of a two-way process of communication. To lecture without lecturing! Easier said than done! But audience participation is vital. We talk; we inspire; we listen. The audience learn, and we, the so-called teachers, also learn.

The invitation to give a series of lectures and seminars at Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff and Swansea University Colleges was greatly appreciated. From 1982 to 1999 I was privileged to be an Honorary Lecturer in the Department of Welsh at the University College of Wales, Bangor, and to be responsible for the first ever folklore undergraduate course in Wales. During the final year (1998-99) 30 students attended the course. Each student was expected to prepare an extended essay, based primarily on fieldwork and folklore recorded from oral tradition. All these valuable essays are now in the Manuscript Archive at St Fagans.

If lecturing was important, so too was publishing: c. 350 articles and 17 books relating to folk culture. (Also published were poetry, literary essays, and articles and three books on the subjects of peace, justice, and religion.) About three quarters of the publications on folk culture are in Welsh. For a selection of works published in English, mainly in international journals, relating to folk beliefs and belief narratives, see Appendix A.

Since 1965 I have been most fortunate to be able to travel abroad once or twice every year (with the exception of 2017). The main purpose: to visit folklore archives, museums and libraries; to present papers at international conferences; or to visit universities as a guest lecturer. In 1965 I spent valuable time at the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, and the Irish Folklore Commission (it later became part of the Department of Irish Folklore, University College, Dublin). The summer of 1966 was spent learning about the great Nordic folkloristic and ethnographical collections in Sweden and Finland: (Gothenburg, Lund, Uppsala, Stockholm, Turku, and Helsinki, including, of course, the renowned Kalavala archive at Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura: SKS: the Finnish Literature Society). Visits to Norway and Denmark soon followed, and, later, to other European countries, such as Iceland, Hungary, Poland, Germany, Austria, Estonia, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic.

Countries outside Europe included America, Argentina (Patagonia), India, Japan, Kenya, and South Africa

Learning about the major folklore collections in many different countries; meeting folklore scholars across the world; and discovering more about their current projects and research was a unique experience and a golden opportunity. It all had a lasting influence, for which I will be forever grateful.

It was in 1969 that I became a member of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research, and the meeting in Bucharest, Romania, that year was my first ISFNR Congress. Since then I have been fortunate to attend the majority of the meetings. And what excellent meetings they have been. The experience has been exceptionally valuable and memorable. I have endeavoured to describe in print the pleasure of attending one of these congresses, namely the congress in Tartu, Estonia, 2005. (See the article: 'In the Land of the Olive Branch: Visit to Estonia, July, 2005', *ISFNR Research Newsletter*, no. 1, January 2006, pp.16-17.)

An important development in the history of the ISFNR was the development of the Belief Tales Network, as it was known initially, and it is worth reminding ourselves here when and why the original name was changed. During a meeting of the Belief Tales Network at the Athens Congress (25 June 2009) I ventured to make a suggestion regarding this name, and I quote from an article: '15th Congress of the ISFNR in Athens, the Belief Tales Session', by Tina Sepp and Siiri Tomings-Joandi (*ISFNR Newsletter*, no. 5, May 2010, pp.16-17):

'After a suggestion from Robin Gwyndaf (Cardiff, Wales), the name of the network was almost unanimously changed from Belief Tales Network to Belief Narratives Network (BNN), to better match the ISFNR name, which refers to narrative. Also, 'narrative' is a neutral and clear term, but 'tale' has many interpretations and can, therefore, cause confusion.'

Since our meeting in Athens, the BNN has gone from strength to strength. The word 'network' in the title is important. The publication in January 2017 of the first issue of the *BNN e-Newsletter* was a major step forward. It is a chain; a vital link that holds us together. A golden necklace. We who belong to the ISFNR and to the BNN have the great honour of belonging also to one large international family of folklore friends.

I end this article, therefore, by sincerely expressing in my own language to members and officials of the ISFNR and BNN: *Canmil diolch* ['a hundred thousand thanks']. I wish you all every joy and blessing.

Appendix A

Folk Beliefs and Belief Narratives in Welsh Oral Tradition

A selection of publications in English by the author

- 'The Prose Narrative Repertoire of a Passive Tradition-Bearer in a Welsh Rural Community [Lewis T Evans]'. Part 1: *Studia Fennica*, vol.20, 1976, pp.283-93; part 2: *Fabula*, vol. 22, 1981, pp.227-44.

- 'Memorates, Chronicates and Anecdotes in Action: Some Remarks Towards a Definition of the Personal Narrative in Context', *Papers of the 8th Congress of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research*, Bergen, vol.1, 1984, pp.217-24.
- 'The Cauldron of Regeneration: Continuity and Function in the Welsh Folk Epic Tradition', in *The Heroic Process: Form, Function and Fantasy in Folk Epic, Proceedings of the International Folk Epic Conference* (Dublin, 1985), Dun Laoghaire, 1987, pp.413-51.
- 'The Welsh Folk Narrative Tradition: Continuity and Adaptation', *Folk Life: Journal of Ethnological Studies*, vol.26, 1987-8, pp.78-100.
- *Chwedlau Gwerin Cymru – Welsh Folk Tales*, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 1989, 3rd reprint, 1999, pp. 102, 106. A bilingual volume, illustrated by Margaret D Jones. The 63 tales were also illustrated in a coloured poster-map of Wales.
- 'Personality and Folklore in Action: The Folk Speech and Folk Narrative Repertoire of a Welsh Joke-Teller', *Fabula*, vol.31, 1990, pp.193-207.
- 'Fairyllore: Memorates and Legends from Welsh Oral Tradition', in *The Good People: New Fairyllore Essays*, ed. Peter Narvaez, Garland Publishing, New York and London, 1991, pp.155-95.
- 'Folk Legends in Welsh Oral Tradition: Principles of Research, Continuity and Function', *Béaloideas*, vols.60-61, 1992-3, pp.215-40.
- 'A Welsh Lake Legend and the Famous Physicians of Myddfai', *Béaloideas*, vols.60-61, 1992-3, pp.241-66.
- 'The Past in the Present: Folk Beliefs in Welsh Oral Tradition', *Fabula*, vol.35, 1994, pp.226-60. (Another version of this article was published with the title 'Deisidaimonia, "Fear of the Gods": Function and Form of Traditional Folk Beliefs in Wales Today', in *Folk Belief Today*, eds., Mare Kõiva and Kai Vassiljeva, Institute of the Estonian Language and Estonian Museum of Literature, Tartu, 1995, pp.90-118.)
- 'Religion in Everyday Life in Wales: Belief, Norms and Behaviour', in *Religion in Everyday Life, Proceedings of the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities*, vol.31, Stockholm, 1994, pp.165-85.
- 'Welsh Tradition-Bearers: Guidelines for the Study of World-View', in *Folk Narrative and World View*, ed. Leander Petzoldt; Peter Lang, Frankfurt, vol.1, 1996, pp.227-44.
- 'The Sorrow of all People: Death, Grief and Comfort in a Welsh Rural Community', *Folk Life*, vol.36, 1997-98, pp.84-105.
- 110 commentaries on Welsh folklore, in *The New Companion to the Literature of Wales*, ed. Meic Stephens, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1998. Also published in Welsh. (This is an expanded edition of *The Oxford Companion to the Literature of Wales*, Oxford University Press, 1986.)
- 'Memory in Action: Narration, Communication, and the Repertoire of a Passive Tradition-Bearer', *Folk Life*, vol.39, 2000-01, pp.49-65.
- 'Tales of Welsh Tradition-Bearers'. (Text in Welsh, with an English translation, and a sound recording of 32 folk narratives.) www.welshfolktales.org, 2004.
- 'Poetry in Action: Verse and Narration in Everyday Communication', *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore* (www.folklore.cc/folklore), Tartu, Estonia, vol.33, 2006.
- 'Llên Gwerin Bro Hiraethog / The Folklore of Bro Hiraethog' [a bilingual article relating to a rural community in North Wales], *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, vol. 163, 2014, pp.298-306.

The Absent Werewolf

The absence of particular legends can be as intriguing as their presence, although I am not aware of any publication in which this is thematised. Only in witchcraft studies does the question arise occasionally and then it is primarily couched in terms of decline of witchcraft representations.¹ This is partly the case in werewolf studies, too. At least the question is sometimes raised whether the disappearance of werewolves would be related to the disappearance of wolves or also to cultural influences, but the total absence of any legend has not been discussed.

When compiling our book on modern *Werewolf Legends*,² folklorists in Iceland,³ Ireland, and Greece, reported that they did not know of any material in their country. According to Alfons Roeck's unpublished werewolf thesis there are no werewolves in Spain, or in England either.⁴ The case of Switzerland is discussed below. This may not be exclusively a matter of a declining concept. It may very well be the case that some peoples never knew any werewolf narratives. Already Wilhelm Hertz has noticed that the werewolf does not appear in medieval Dutch sources.⁵ The Dutch medievalist Frits van Oostrum only found one example of a 'werewolf' in the early fourteenth-century work of Jan van Boendale, an Antwerp clerk, about a man who fools his wife in thinking that he is a werewolf, by putting a fox's tail in his behind and telling her that he bit the cattle in the neighbourhood.⁶ The medieval werewolf poems and romances are restricted to Iceland and Denmark (Norway included),⁷ and France.⁸ In early-modern England, werewolves had become very rare.

Yet absence does not imply a complete black hole. The criterium of multiple presence suggests that one narrative does not make a 'folk'-narrative. Where exactly the boundary lies, is unclear: five? more than ten? This also depends on the intensity of the research. Narratives that either touch on the theme of werewolves or are adjacent to it but are not werewolf narratives themselves do also reveal something about the creature's absence. When, for instance, a student in Bavarian Augsburg recorded the story about the man who quarrelled with his neighbour, this was probably not a very widespread story; it was also not about a *werewolf* (although the caption said so) but about an alsatian (*Wolfshund*), in which the man was said to have changed to attack the neighbour. The latter had a perpetual pain in his neck afterwards.⁹ This is one of the main examples of a man changing into a wolf in an overview of Bavarian legends. It indicates that animal metamorphosis may be present, but that the notion of werewolves may be slightly problematic. In the rest of this contribution I will pay specific attention to Southern Germany and adjacent areas.

1 Owen Davies, 'Researching Reverse Witch Trials in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century England', in: Cornelia Osborne & others, *Cultures of Witchcraft in Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present* (London 2017), 215-233.

2 Willem de Blécourt & Mirjam Mencej (eds), *Werewolf Legends* (in progress).

3 Cf. Terry Gunnell, 'Werewolves and Werebears on the Move: Cultural Movement and The Lack of Shape-Changing Legends in Iceland', Ragusa Lecture, June 2018 (I have only seen the abstract, so far).

4 F. Roeck, *De Nederlandse weerwolfsage in de negentiende en twintigste eeuw* (Leuven 1967), 470-471, 474.

5 Wilhelm Hertz, *Der Werwolf. Beitrag zur Sagen-geschichte* (Stuttgart 1862), 68.

6 Frits van Oostrum, *Stemmen op schrift* (Amsterdam 2006), 65.

7 Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir, 'The Werewolf in Medieval Icelandic Literature', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 106 (2007) 277-303. Vgl. Christa Agnes Tuczay, 'Into the Wild – Old Norse Stories of Animal Men', in: Willem de Blécourt (red.), *Werewolf Histories* (London 2015) 61-81.

8 Leslie A. Sconduto, *Metamorphoses of the Werewolf: A Literary Study from Antiquity through the Renaissance* (Jefferson en London 2008); Aleksander Pluskowski, 'Before the Werewolf Trials: Contextualising Shape-Changers and Animal Identities in Medieval North-West-Western Europe', in: *Werewolf Histories*, 82-118.

9 Günther Kapfhammer, *Bayerische Sagen. Sagen aus Altbayern, Schwaben und Franken* (Köln 1971) 82. Ms. 67/626, legend research of the pedagogical academy in Augsburg, not dated.



The werewolf in George W.M. Reynold's 'Gothic melodrama' *Wagner, the Wehr-Wolf* (1846-1847), appearing in book form in London in 1857, see: Brian J. Frost, *The Essential Guide to Werewolf Literature* (Madison 2003), 63-66. Nineteenth-century English literature about werewolves thrived in an environment without genuine werewolf legends.

Hertz's illustrating examples of nineteenth-century German legends all derived from the North.¹⁰ These findings are echoed in Adolf Wuttke's handbook on contemporary superstitions, which appeared in consecutive editions from 1860 to 1925, with reprints in 1970 and 2006. The 'belief in werewolves' was more prevalent in the North and East, than in the South, and also in regions where for two centuries no wolves had lived.¹¹ I leafed through the indexes and tables of content of the

¹⁰ Hertz, *Der Werwolf*, 79-88.

¹¹ Karl Friedrich Adolf Wuttke, *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube der Gegenwart* (Leipzig 1925), 277 [fourth edition].

main Southern German legend volumes from around the middle of the nineteenth century and also encountered hardly any werewolves. Most of these books can be found online. This is to say: the table of contents of Ernst Meier's books on Swabia (South-West Germany), with special sections on the devil, witches, and animals, does not reveal anything that looks like a werewolf.¹² No *Werwolf* figures in the index of *Deutsche Alpensagen* which is over 400 pages long with 400 different narratives.¹³ Reiser's even thicker work on the Allgau does have sections on shape-changing witches and demons in animal form, and even a story about a man who was changed into a dog by a curse, but again no werewolves.¹⁴ From Swabia only one werewolf tale is known, about a shepherd who shoots a wolf and finds an injured man the next morning; this is basically a witch legend.¹⁵

In Schönwerth's volume on the Upper Palatinate, bordering on today's Czechia, mention is made of the *Wyrwolf* or *Wärwolf*. The stories, however, show very little of the creature. One is more a kind of a joke about a man who can turn into a fox with the aid of a belt; the belt is then tried out on a chaplain. Another, more serious, deals with a shepherd who stole sheep in the shape of a wolf, and a third is about another shepherd who could control wolves.¹⁶ Only the second story qualifies as a werewolf legend. Then there is the Book of Legends of the Bavarian Lands, also in three volumes, in which thirty shape-changing narratives feature. Most of them deal with people or things that turn into stone and only rarely does a human become an animal, such as the women who end up as ducks, or the man who has to spend the rest of his life as a roebuck.¹⁷ This leaves the 'werewolf' of Ansbach in Middle Franconia as one of the last subjects to be discussed.

Appearing in legend compilations,¹⁸ or in internet posts, the 'werewolf' of Ansbach was never a legend but the account of a late seventeenth-century animal trial against a wolf.¹⁹ This wolf was killed and then dressed up as a man; at the most one could call it a reversed 'werewolf'. Once more, featuring it as a 'werewolf' illustrates the lack of a genuine one. This absence of werewolves in Bavaria is neatly illustrated by the joke about them: when a wolf they have captured escapes, peasants consult a priest. He tells them that it must have been a werewolf and advises: 'The next time that you take that wolf ... see that you chain it by the leg, and in the morning you will find a Lutheran.'²⁰ In Catholic Bavaria there were as few Lutherans as werewolves. Austrian legend collections have one or two werewolf texts but significantly they contain a version of an early eighteenth-century trial, rather than memorates.²¹

The Swiss Alps was the area of origin of the European werewolf trials, but very little of that seems to have remained in the minds of its inhabitants.²² Ursula Brunold-Bigler did find several werewolves, however, and in her chapter on wolves (rather than werewolves), she printed six texts, four of which dealt with the change from human into wolf. That is still not much, especially if one considers that two of those four are already typified as close to the fairy tale (as *märchenähnlichen Erzählungen*) because the shape-shifting is the result of a curse. The third is about a wolf's hunt; the animal is finally found because someone puts his knife in an unknown tree trunk upon which the trunk first changes into a wolf and then in a witch. The fourth werewolf legend is a text from the French Dauphiné about a girl who is taken by a werewolf and devoured. This is not a large harvest of texts, and one can only conclude that legends about werewolves in the Swiss and Austrian Alps

12 Ernst Meier, *Deutsche Sagen, Sitten und Gebräuche aus Schwaben* (Stuttgart 1852), 3 volumes.

13 Johann Nepomuk Ritter von Alpenburg, *Deutsche Alpensagen* (Vienna 1861).

14 Karl Reiser, *Sagen, Gebräuche und Sprichwörter des Allgäus* (Kempten 1895), 284: the story was depicted on a panel hanging in a house in Vorderburg but had disappeared in the late nineteenth century.

15 Rudolf Kapff, *Schwäbische Sagen* (Jena 1926), 97; Johannes Künzig, *Schwarzwald Sagen* (Jena 1930), 6.

16 Franz Schönwerth, *Aus der Oberpfalz. Sitten und Sagen* (Augsburg 1857), 209-212.

17 A. Schöppner, *Sagenbuch der Bayerischen Lande* (München 1852-1853).

18 Kapffhammer, *Bayerische Sagen*, 213-215.

19 Bernhard Schemmel, 'Der "Werewolf" von Ansbach (1685). Ereignisse und Meinungen', *Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung* 33 (1973), 167-200.

20 Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil's Dictionary* (New York 1993), pp. 134-135.

21 Theodor Vernaleken, *Alpensagen* (Salzburg 1930), 51-52. Original: Chur 1858.

22 According to Elmar Lorey, 'Wie der Werwolf unter die Hexen kam', <https://www.elmar-lorey.de/werwolf/genese.htm>

are very rare indeed.²³ For the French part, thanks to the work of Charles Joisten, the researcher had access to a large amount of werewolf texts, of which some more could have been translated and incorporated in Brunold-Bigler's book.²⁴

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There was no lack of wolves in the area I am discussing here. Some of them even found their way into the legends. In Baden, the place name of Wölfigen was explained by the story about a wolf bitch who had attacked and devoured twelve children.²⁵ In the Bavarian Book of Legends, a woman figures who is attacked by wolves.²⁶ There may be more examples, but I did not really look for them.

The dearth of werewolves in the South of Germany and the adjacent Alps could in theory be due to a paucity of research. As this is very unlikely, my theory is that it is possibly related to the absence of werewolf trials. In the North of Germany and the Netherlands, without medieval werewolves, the late sixteenth-century trials introduced the concept of the werewolf. At that point, it was not indigenous, but the trials exhibited such a cultural force that the werewolf became popular afterwards.²⁷ This did not happen in Swabia or in the rest of Bavaria nor in England, where not much medieval material on werewolves was found. Only in Scandinavia and in France it is possible to point out a more or less continuous werewolf tradition. However, it is yet to be seen if the presence of werewolves in the modern period can be always related to werewolf trials. There may have been other factors in play.



Copper engraving of the Wolf of Ansbach, made by Georg Jacob Schneider in Nürnberg, 1685.

23 Ursula Brunold-Bigler, *Wolfsmensch und Bärenhexe. Tiere in Sagen und Märchen aus den Alpen* (Chur 2010).

24 Charles Joisten, Robert Chanaud, Alice Joisten, 'Les loups-garous en Savoie et Dauphiné', *Le Monde alpin et rhodanien* 20 (1992), 17–182.

25 Bernard Baader, *Volkssagen aus dem Lande Baden und den angrenzenden Gegenden* (Karlsruhe 1851), 329.

26 Schöppner, *Sagenbuch*, 51.

27 Rita Voltmer, 'The Judge's Lore? The Politico-Religious Concept of Metamorphosis in the Peripheries of Western Europe', in: *Werewolf Histories*, 159–184; Willem de Blécourt, 'Werwolf Berichte. Der Fall Peter Stump und seine Folgen', in: Rita Voltmer & Stephan Laux (eds), *Europäische Hexenforschung und Landesgeschichte* (Trier 2018).