

Reviews

Nemanja Radulović and Smiljana Đorđević Belić, eds. *Disenchantment, Re-enchantment and Folkloric Genres*. 2021. Belgrade: Institute for Literature and Arts. 286 pages. ISBN: 978-86-7095-286-7.

Reading the array of papers assembled by the editors Nemanja Radulović and Smiljana Đorđević Belić around the general theme of the evolution of folkloric genres is informative, thought-provoking and, last but not least, very pleasant.

This manuscript assembles twelve papers, organized in three parts that roughly correspond to the past, present, and forthcoming evolution of folkloric genres. A rigorous introduction discusses and justifies the book's title, presenting the seminal 1917 lecture "Science as a Vocation" in which Max Weber (1919) made famous his concept of the disenchantment of the modern world, where mystery has disappeared with the forces of magic to be replaced by the iron cage of causal rationality that induces bureaucratization and science. The book's editors present the influence of the disenchantment concept in various disciplines, including sociology, religious studies, and anthropology, and give several recent examples of the debates this complex concept has opened amongst various authors, including Otto Ranke, Nicole Belmont, Linda Dégh, Richard Jenkins, and Bill Ellis.

Disenchantment has never been complete and today, it is towards a re-enchantment of the world that these disciplines turn, especially with the seminal concept of "occulture" offered by Christopher Partridge in *Re-enchantment of the West* (2005-2006) and in the studies of the New Age and of postmodernism. The authors then explain that the book's purpose is to link current folkloric research to the twin notions of disenchantment and re-enchantment. Folkloristics have developed between the two poles of philology and ethnography. The authors aim to present their diversity through the study of folkloric genres, both in their poetic and pragmatic aspects.

To this end, the authors review the modern evolution of folkloric genres. While some classical genres have disappeared, others have evolved and can incorporate new and current content, including near-death experiences, dream memories, and life histories, infusing culture studies on a vernacular level into folkloristics. This overview of the links

between the twin processes of disenchantment and re-enchantment and folklore concludes by stressing the centrality of the permanent questioning of folklore's boundaries.

The four contributors of the book's first part, "The Enchanted World and its Twilight," deal with traditional folklore and its enchanted world. Topics covered include fairy tales and their magic, symbols of the female lifecycle, competing analyses of Greek fairy tales between realism and utopia, transformation of the enchanted world in Icelandic sagas, and conceptions of folklore that shaped the creation of the Serbian folklore archive.

In the second part, "Genres of Enchantment, Past and Present," four contributors discuss the evolution of these genres today. Subjects addressed include an overview of the interpretations of "The Animal as Bridegroom," its Croatian variants, and its connection to today's cyborg narratives; Argentinian parody and advertisements alternating disenchantment and re-enchantment in modernized tales; dreams about the deceased and their conflicting conceptions of the dead amongst Serbian communities; and modern uses in Serbian online advertising of miracle and miraculous healing.

In the third and final part, "Facing the Disenchantment: The Emergence of Re-enchantment," four contributors highlight the processes of creation and re-enchantment through new forms and renovated folklore genres. Topics include horror legends about video games spread on the Internet and their strategies of authentication resorting to the rhetoric of journalism (by operator of the *Spokus* rumors and urban legends website Eymeric Manzinali); the new popular culture genre of folk horror in modern England; the links to fairy tales of Turkish and Georgian soap operas; and the transformation of the *Book of Veles*, a twentieth-century hoax supposed to describe the religion of the ancient Slavs into a core sacred text of Slavic Neo-Paganism.

A portion of the book's allure emanates from the predominant contributions rooted in the Catholic sphere of Southern Europe and South America, as well as the Orthodox territories of Eastern Europe and the Balkans. *Disenchantment, Re-enchantment and Folkloric Genres* is recommended for its original, innovative analyses and its ability to bring new data from underreported regions that enrich the universe of folkloristics.

Work Cited

Partridge, Christopher. 2005-2006. *Re-enchantment of the West: Alternative Spiritualities, Sacralization, Popular Culture, and Occulture*. 2 vols. London: T&T Clark.

Weber, Max. 1919. "Science as a Vocation." In *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 129-156. New York: Oxford University Press.

Veronique Campion-Vincent
Maison des Sciences de L'Homme