

Images of Witches:

History,
Fairy Tales,
Films

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I am honoured to be given the opportunity to speak at the Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tales and Fantasy. As a historical anthropologist with a geographical predilection for Europe, "folklore" (whatever it may be) is one of my major areas of expertise. Tonight, however, I will primarily address the relation between fantasy, in some of its cinematic manifestations, and fairy tales. Or to be more precise: the relation between witches on screen and those in fairy tales. Such an undertaking is, by definition, historical - at least I am incapable (and unwilling) to approach it otherwise. I have also to admit that the relation between screen witches and fairy tale witches turned out not to be as straightforward as I thought it would be, at least not when their images are concerned. The reports folklorists have collected about everyday-life accusations of witchcraft will mainly offer a contrasting perspective. A last introductory remark: what you will be going to hear and see is very much a work in progress. I am new to film studies and have my own way of looking at the screen. I am also still in the middle of this project and I look forward to your comments and questions afterwards.

Let me start with a seemingly simple question: How are witches imagined? I will not confront you with a definition of witchcraft and then proceed to show how various screen witches do or do not fit

in it.¹ Such would be academic pigeonholing and may turn out to be counterproductive. Instead, I will give you an example.



In one of the early episodes of the American television series *Bewitched*, with the title "The Witches Are Out" (1: 7) and first aired on 29 October 1964, the female protagonist Samantha (Elizabeth Montgomery) is having tea with her three aunts. Samantha is a young, blonde and beautiful housewife, while her aunts appear elderly. They are all witches. They discuss the way witches are depicted at Halloween. Aunt Mary remarks:

"It's not the broomsticks I mind so much, it's the way they make us look ... those ugly, horrid warts and those long, crooked noses".

Whereupon Samantha replies: "I guess they just don't realize that we're like anybody else, almost." And her aunt Bertha (who in season 3 would be rebaptized as Hagatha) suggests: "Someone ought to rewrite those fairy tales. Well, you know, show Hansel and Gretel for what they really are ... a couple of pushy kids going around eating sweet old ladies' houses."

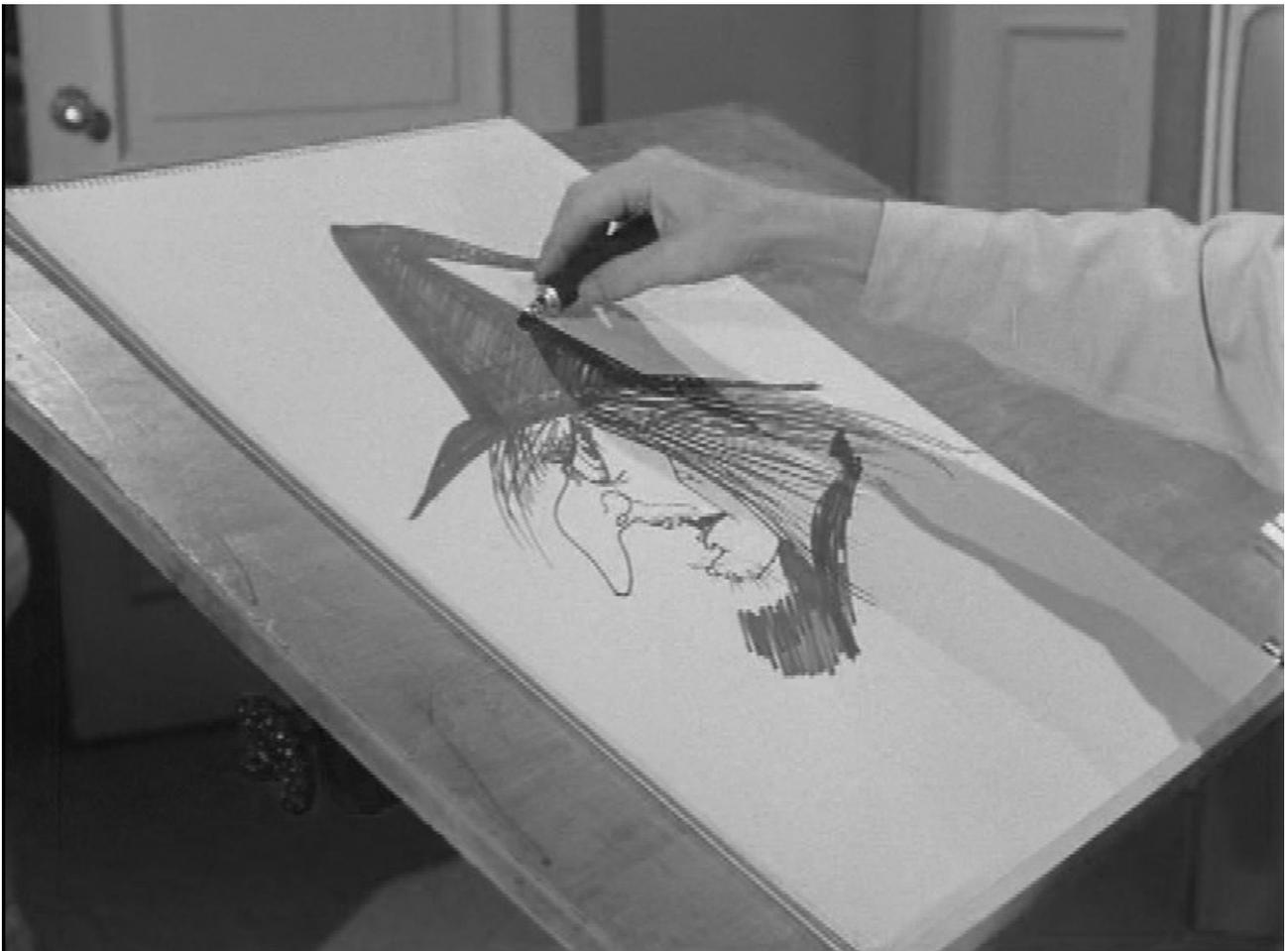
At the same time Samantha's husband Darrin, an advertising executive (at that time played by Dick

1 Cf. Emily D. Edwards, *Metaphysical Media. The Occult Experience in Popular Culture* (Carbondale 2005).

York), is meeting a client, Mr. Brinkman, who has a very firm idea of how he wants to visualize the campaign for his sweets.

"An ugly old crone, with a long nose, I mean long. And then warts on her chin and broken teeth, a lot of broken ... A whole mouthful of broken teeth ... and a tall black hat and a broomstick."

A potential conflict is born, for Samantha has suggested her aunts to ask Darrin to help them to counteract the negative, degrading witch image. When Darrin comes home Samantha's aunts have exited through the wall (apart from aunt Clara, who bumped into it). He proceeds to visualize his client's wishes. Samantha sees it and becomes upset. The following dialogue ensues:



Samantha: Why did you do it?

Darrin: Because that's the way most people think witches look

Samantha: Is that any reason to discriminate against a minority group?

Darrin: What minority group?

Samantha: Witches, of course.

Darrin: Sam, people don't believe in witches.

Samantha: What's that got to do with anything?

Darrin: How can you discriminate against something you don't know exists?

Samantha: Don't split hairs.

In the end, Samantha manages to convince Darrin that each Halloween she had horrible experiences when she and her mother had to escape the country to avoid the onslaught of the wretched witch images. The next day in his office, Darrin has more trouble persuading his client and his boss. He has drawn an alternative, more sexy image, but they are not so easily swayed. When Darrin mentions witches to his boss, the latter responds:

Larry: Witches? You mean with long noses, blacked-out teeth and warts?

Darrin: No, of course not, they probably look more like [he thinks for a moment, obviously does not want to mention his wife] ... Glinda.

Boss and Brinkman both: Who?

Darrin: Glinda. The Good Witch of the North in *The Wizard of Oz*. Oh, she's gorgeous.

Larry: The Good Witch of the North?

Brinkman: He does not want to hurt her feelings.



Samantha and her aunts then decide to take action. They form a picket line in Brinkman's bedroom (or in his dream), explain that they are witches and do not look as he thinks they should. To underline their argument, they change Brinkman's face into that of the kind of witch he imagines. Not just with a long nose and warts, but also green. That helps. The next day he decides to choose Darrin's design of a scanty clad young witch, with the text: Only the choicest witches eat Witches' Brew candy. It lands him a big increase in sales, because it turned out that men bought most of the sweets.



Although on the surface Samantha appears to be a housewife, who mainly stays within the domestic space to do the cleaning and the cooking while her husband goes out to work, over the course of the series it becomes clear enough that it is she who wields the power. Darrin may have asked her not to exercise any of her craft (which she does with the twitching of her upper lip), but there are always reasons to make an exception. And often Darrin falls victim of the wiles of his in-laws; he is also changed into a kid, an old man, an old woman, an ape, a werewolf, and even into his boss. The show emphasizes that to live in suburbia is actually impossible without a little witchcraft now and

then, that is to say, the power to manipulate inanimate objects and living beings and of instant transportation.

While it would certainly be possible to analyse the episode I just discussed (as well as others) in terms of its plot structure and script writing, it also offers a good introduction to the prevailing witch images in 1960s America. In the first place, a witch is unnoticeable, that is to say indistinguishable from everybody else. But when she takes on her witch aspects, she is equipped with a robe, a hat and a broom. A few episodes later, when Darrin imagines how their children would look like, they may have shed the nose, warts and faulty denture, but they still fly around on broomsticks and wear a black cape and a pointed hat (1: 12). Again later, when Samantha has to prove to Michael, a boy who stays overnight with them for Christmas, that she is really a witch, her robe is not sufficient and she has to add the hat and the broom (1: 15). Such is also the appearance of the cartoonized witch icon with which each episode opens. However, the evil witch is not completely absent. She is manifested as Samantha's mother Endora, although primarily in her relation to husband Darrin: to him "witch" becomes synonym with "mother-in-law".

The image I have called "the unnoticeable witch" is actually very close to the historical, everyday-life witch. At least within Europe, and by extension the American colonies, people operating in what I call the "witchcraft discourse" did not know what a witch looked like. Anyone could be a witch and the available rituals functioned to discover the proper witch, for, according to the rules of the discourse, only the one who had inflicted the bewitchment could undo it - a feature that occurs in a slightly weakened form in *Bewitched* (a spell can only be undone when its exact wordings are known, and often only by the person who cast it). The unwitchment rituals are documented, sometimes even depicted, and can be studied. In everyday life the witch herself existed only by way of ascription: someone said that so and so was a witch and it depended on how convincing the argument was whether the label stuck and that particular person was consequently treated as a witch, that is to say, subjected to violence and/or ostracism.

From this perspective Samantha and her relatives only operate within a very particular witchcraft discourse, in this case the one of the television show. It saves them from attacks within the series, and, at least in the nineteensixties and early seventies mostly from outside it, too. At the time, the show could raise a number of issues more easily than others because it was "only about witchcraft". Within the show's universe witches are occasionally exposed, but the usual way to counteract exposure, is to keep it restricted to one person, in particular Samantha's neighbour Gladys, who is then declared insane. When half way the show's eight seasons Darrin has become so desperate of all

the witchcraft around him that he gives up his struggle to contain it and wants to tell the world, Samantha shows him in a dream what will happen: they will either be put on display, persecuted, or used for military or commercial purposes. (4: 28 I Confess)

Bewitched presented a blueprint for the plot of the more recent *Harry Potter* books and films. Joanne Rowling was certainly inspired by the *Bewitched* universe, for a considerable number of similar concepts can be identified, first and foremost the congruence between what are called mortals in the television show and "muggles" in the film and the contempt that some of the witches harbour towards them. The television show also refers to its predecessors: *The Wizard of Oz* and *Hansel and Gretel*. And film historians will immediately point to two earlier American films which informed *Bewitched: I Married a Witch* of 1942 and *Bell, Book and Candle* of 1958.² It is usually overlooked that the crux of the series, the witchcraft practicing wife versus the husband who does not want to have anything to do with it, was not a theme of those two films, but of the British film *Night of the Eagle* of 1962, released in the USA as *Burn Witch, Burn*. From the point of view of other screen representations of witches, *Bewitched* is not just synchronally representational, it is also diachronally pivotal. Of course, with more than 250 episodes *Bewitched* had much more space to try out various concepts than a single film, or even a sequence of eight films.

Both *Bell, Book and Candle* and *I Married a Witch* deal with the courtship between witch and non-witch. *Night of the Eagle*, on the other hand, is much more about university politics and since the husband has destroyed all his wife's witchcraft paraphernalia in the beginning of the film, most of the action is taken up by his attempts to save his wife. *Bell, Book and Candle* exhibits a subtle and stylish imagery; its main witch Gillian (Kim Novak) is an independent woman who runs her own shop with primitive art (she studied anthropology). Witches look like everybody else, are "unnoticeable", only they are incapable of blushing or crying. Although the title of the previous *I Married a Witch* only covers the tail end of the film, and would like *Bell, Book and Candle* more appropriately have been named *How I was Snatched Away by a Witch on my Wedding Day*, the witch Jennifer is likewise young and beautiful. For the iconography, however, the promotional pictures are much more revealing than the film itself. In the former, the actress (Veronica Lake) appears with exposed legs and a witches' hat, very much as in Darrin's drawings. The pumpkins on the background expose the Halloween connection. On one picture she even rides a broomstick. In the film she is fully clad, does not wear a pointed hat, and only rides a broomstick in non-corporeal form. *I Married a Witch* was based on an unfinished manuscript *The Passionate Witch* by Thorne Smith (1892-1934), who may very well have read the Oz books by L. Frank Baum (1856-1919).

2 F.i.: Walter Metz, *Bewitched* (Detroit 2007), 20-24.



The 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz* is a quest story in which the main characters are all looking for their heart's desire: the scarecrow for a brain, the tin man for a heart, the lion for courage and the female lead Dorothy for home. In this, they are aided by a good witch and obstructed by a bad one. The film has, so the American historian Carol Karlsen, "done more than any single witch to shape the popular stereotype in this country". As a film historian observed: "Anyone who grew up in the US has likely watched *Wizard* on television numerous times, as it was aired yearly beginning in 1956."³ According to Karlsen the witch in *Oz* has two forms: "In her earthly form she resembles the most negative recent depictions of New England witches. Angry, aggressive, contentious, and vindictive, she is given to unreasonable provocation of the decent folk who live around her, even innocent children, and shows calous indifference to the most basic human values. In her supernatural form, she is murderous."⁴ In the film the transition is made visible when Dorothy is transported from Kansas to Oz, farmhouse and all, by a cyclone and things and people pass her window, which at that point functions as a film screen within the film. Her neighbour Ms. Gulch is first seen on her bike, but then the bike changes into a broomstick and the neighbour into a witch. The dual nature of the witch, natural and supernatural, is mirrored in the other main characters of

³ Katherine A. Fowkes, *The Fantasy Film* (Chichester 2010), 63.

⁴ *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman*, p. 310, n.2.

the film, with a few notable exceptions where it concerns the other women. The men who inhabit Dorothy's world in Kansas, also accompany her in the land of Oz.

The wicked witch will have bestowed her green face on subsequent witches, especially the Halloween ones, but she did not have any warts or missing teeth. These derived from Oz's cinematic predecessor and competitor, Walt Disney's *Snow White* of 1937.

In the film *The Wizard of Oz*, the wicked witches are contrasted by the good witch Glinda, who actually looks more like a fairy. When Dorothy has just landed in Oz and more specifically in Munchkin country, accidentally killing the Wicked Witch of the East, Glinda welcomes her.



Glinda: What the Munchkins want to know is, are you a good witch or a bad witch?

Dorothy: But I've already told you, I am not a witch at all. Witches are old and ugly. What was that?

Glinda: The Munchkins. They're laughing because I am a witch. I'm Glinda, the witch of the North.

Dorothy: You are? I beg your pardon. But I've never heard of a beautiful witch before.

Glinda: Only bad witches are ugly.

The film, of 1939, was not just a cinematographic version of Baum's book *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* of 1900. In between the material was performed many times: on stage as a musical since 1902, as a so-called "fairy-logue" (a combination of slides, narration and pieces of film) in 1908 and 1909, as a silent film in 1910 and in 1925. In the late 1920s there were theater performances for children and even a marionette version. An animated film appeared in 1933 and a radio show later that year.⁵ In all these different manifestations of the story, the presence of the Wicked Witch fluctuated. While part of the book, she was written out of the musical,⁶ made a comeback in the 1910 film as Momba the Witch, and disappeared again from the 1925 film. Momba was just a different name for the Witch of the West, derived from the sorceress Mombi in Baum's *The Marvellous Land of Oz* of 1904.⁷ By then Baum had switched his original illustrator William Wallace Denslow for John R. Neill. Yet the film was, like the musical, mostly based on Denslow's design.

In his turn, L. Frank Baum, who was an actor and something of a jack of all trades before he found his calling as a writer of children's books, was influenced by mother-in-law Mathilda Joslyn Gage.⁸ Her 1893 book *Woman, Church, and State* was "an early classic of reimagined women's history, written in a tearing hurry and in time snatched from a political activism which left no space for original research". Gage linked the romantic witches of French historian Jules Michelet (1798-1874) with matriarchal society. "To Gage, they became pagan priestesses who had preserved the secrets of that golden age, especially in the realm of healing, and were persecuted by churchmen not just to wipe out their religion but to complete the breaking of any spirit of female independence".⁹ As the Oz books were mostly set in a fantasy land, the ideology became even more radical, with mostly female rulers. As historian Marion Gibson concluded: "Braun's witches had almost overnight become liberal metaphors for political dissent and female self-empowerment."¹⁰ That, of course, only applied to the good witches.

It has been argued that Dorothy's wish to return home to Kansas "inhibits her status as a prototypical feminist". That is certainly the case in the film, when one of the scriptwriters was instructed to that extent.¹¹ Nevertheless, even within the film it creates a dilemma, as dull sepia toned Kansas is set against the colourful Oz and Dorothy has expressed very vocally that she longed for a place "over the rainbow". As Salman Rushdie expressed it:

5 Mark Evan Swartz, *Oz Before the Rainbow* (Baltimore/London 2000), 2.

6 Swartz, 34, 52, 165.

7 Swartz, 177-183.

8 Marion Gibson, *Witchcraft Myths in American Culture* (New York/London 2007), 139.

9 Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon* (Oxford 1999), 141.

10 Gibson, *Witchcraft Myths*, 140.

11 Alissa Burger, Wicked and Wonderful Witches. In: Phyllis Frus & Christy Williams, *Beyond Adaptation* (Jefferson 2010) 123-132, 125.

Are we to believe that Dorothy has learned no more on her journey than that she didn't need to make such a journey in the first place? Must we accept that she now accepts the limitations of her home life, and agrees that the things she does not have there are no loss to her? `Is that right?' Well, excuse *me*, Glinda, but it is hell.¹²

In the fourteen tome *Oz* series of books, however, Dorothy kept returning to Oz and eventually brought her adoptive parents with her.¹³ Even if the influence of the film will have been greater than the book, since "the vast majority of those who come to Oz come to it ... long before they encounter the book"¹⁴, then the domestication of Dorothy will still have been counteracted within the film. The film nevertheless contributed to the witch image: Brinkman's green face in *Bewitched* can be seen as an indication for that as is the mention of Glinda. Yet Halloween witches dressed up as Glinda are as rare as they are in films or television series (or unrecognizable, because taken for fairies or princesses). Did the depiction of the good witch then pave the way for the unnoticeable witch? That is questionable in as far as the role of the highly visible Glinda is restricted to Oz, and without any US equivalent. At least the unnoticeable witch offered an alternative to the good witch.

Neill's illustrations of Oz were closely related to those of the fairy tales which had inspired Baum. This is even visible in the film, for instance when a shot of the Wicked Witch of the West is compared with an illustration by Arthur Rackham for a story in the *English Fairy Tales*.

I will therefore take yet another step back into history and briefly dwell with two fairy tales. Generally it concerns a printed tradition here, from which witches were mainly absent: Italian seventeenth-century stories featured the opposition of fairies and ogress, which in late seventeenth century France became fairies and evil fairies. Only in early nineteenth-century Germany the evil fairies were transformed into witches.

Hansel and Gretel contains without doubt one of the most well-known of today's fairy tales witches (ATU 327A). Its popularity was enhanced by the German composer Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921), who in the late eighteenthundreds turned the story into an opera which is still performed today. Yet the story of Hansel and Gretel itself is no older than the early nineteenth century, when it was put together out of existing story parts by Marie Hassenpflug with a little help from Dortchen Wild; both women were teenagers at the time and friends of the Brothers Grimm. The parts they

12 Salman Rushdie, *The Wizard of Oz* (London 1992), 56-57.

13 Alison Lurie, *Boys and Girls Forever* (London 2004), 44; Jack Zipes,

14 Kevin K. Durand, The Emerald Canon. In: Durand & Leigh (eds), *The Universe of Oz* (Jefferson 2010), 11-12.

used mostly derive from the cluster of stories that is known as The Magic Flight, among others Madame d'Aulnoy's *L'oranger et l'abeille* (The Orange Tree and the Bee), and they can all be found in printed works. In the Magic Flight stories the boy and the girl are lovers and the girl has magical power, too, like her mother the witch. The early nineteenth century version was infantilized. The history of Hansel and Gretel can easily be the subject of a separate talk, as can be the tracing of its nineteenth-century popularity all over Europe. What is important to stress here, is that its witch did not have any relation to the everyday-life witches (nor does the theme of abandoned children contribute anything to social history).



In the Two Brothers another story in the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* by the Brothers Grimm, the witch only appears at the end (ATU 303). One brother has conquered the dragon and lives happily ever after with his princess, when at one evening he sees a light in the distance. He has to investigate and falls into the clutches of an old witch, who turns him into stone. This is one of the stories that the suppliers of the Grimms took from the Italian collection of Gianbattista Basile *Lo cunto de li cunti* (better known as the *Pentamerone*) and adapted it slightly. For in Basile's 'Lo mercante' (I.7) the hero Cienzo, instead of spotting a witch sees a beautiful young woman who can ensorcel men with her hair. He falls for her and has to be liberated by his brother Meo. That is a much more sensible plot and it reveals that the transition from seductive enchantress to evil witch

has to be located in early nineteenth-century Germany.¹⁵

Genuine witchcraft narratives circulating in oral tradition gave people advise how to act: where to go, what to do and whom to avoid. Still very much present in the twentieth century, witchcraft stories not only come by the thousands,¹⁶ they also appear in several guises which have different relations to perceived bewitchments. Yet they do tap into a set of concepts and stories passed on from mouth to mouth and from generation to generation. It is, however, impossible to conclude the same when it comes to fairy tales. Witches in oral tradition are usually neighbours; they are rumoured to bewitch with their touch, their eyes, or their words. Occasionally they are said to change into animals, cats or hares, or an array of other species. In fairy tales witches live in woods, they do not bewitch, but they change other people into animals or petrify them. Fairy tales do not provide agendas for action; they offer entertainment at the most.



The Grimms considered fairy tale figures, witches included, as part of a derelict mythology. Jacob Grimm's linking of the witch in Hansel and Gretel to Circe certainly made sense, as long as it remained in the literary dimension. Beyond this, his view was at least selective. The main ordering

¹⁵ Clausen-Stolzenburg 1995: 397.

¹⁶ De Blécourt 1999.

principle of Jacob's *Deutsche Mythologie* is the decontextualized word, and the juxtaposition of similar words resulted in associative conceptual strings. In such a construction the medieval witch evolved out of a combination of goddesses, priestesses, swan maidens and *valkyrie*. "Fantasy, tradition, knowledge of remedies, poverty and spinsterhood made women into witches".¹⁷ With different emphases the echo of this view reverberated for over a century. It surfaced, among others in Gage's work and is still popular among the general public and self-proclaimed pagans. Among historians it is not taken seriously anymore.¹⁸



Two Foundlings the Spring, p. 133.

But if the witches in the fairy tales were fairly new, does that also apply to the way they were represented? The iconography of Hansel and Gretel is of little help here; the only conclusion that can be drawn from it, is that it fossilized the witch as an old woman, discarding the notion that the direct ancestor of Gretel was, although still a fairy tale witch, at least a young witch. Witches in fairy tales, however, do not fly and finding a broomstick among them is difficult. Two Brothers, illustration by George Cruikshank (1792-1878) to a translation of a collection by Albert Ludwig Grimm (1798-1872, no family of Jacob and Wilhelm) shows a witch with a cone hat. This Grimm

¹⁷ Grimm 1876: 868 [1854: 991].

¹⁸ Voltmer 2008: 112ff.

knew the story because his grandfather had told it to him, together with stories from the *Arabian Nights*.¹⁹ The latter points to a printed source.

To highlight the various connections between films and between films and fairy tales, I have shown the historical sequence backwards. I will now turn it around in proper historical order and start in the late Middle Ages. As it is still the history of today's witch image, with broomstick and pointed hat as in *Bewitched*, this implies not just an abbreviated but also a very fragmented history in which many other developments are largely neglected. It also needs to be kept in mind from the outset, that at the time the first ingredients of the current image came into being, it was already very difficult, if not impossible to legally identify a witch, that is to say a person who had caused bewitchments and had entered a pact with the devil. No one ever witnessed a flying witch and the closest people got was the observation of a sleeping woman who later declared to have been flying, if that was already not just a story. Flying witches also did not figure in an everyday-life context; when the notion occurred in a trial, usually in combination with the sabbat, it was imported through learned, demonological tracts. Even among the theorists, the concept of the flight was the most contested. At the same time, the lack of verification served very well to depict witchcraft. When an artist drew a flying witch, he could be certain that his, usually upper-class public would recognize her.



19 preface; Wilhelm Grimm later adjusted the KHM version on the basis of his story, Rölleke *EM* 6 (1990), 167-169.

The image of the witch on broomstick was mainly continental. Since the broom primarily served as a means of transportation to the sabbat, it was absent in places where the sabbat concept was not transmitted. But on the continent flying on a broom was only one way to reach a faraway witches' assembly. Oven forks and animals, such as a goat were also used. And when the meetings were nearby, witches simply walked. One of the reasons the witch trials stopped was that people in charge of them started to doubt the methods of obtaining proof. While the witchcraft discourse remained in place on an everyday-life level, intellectuals embarked on a process of distanciation. Apparently part of this process (there is still some research to be done here) included dressing up as a witch and putting her on stage. In this context and in England where witches had hardly been flying at all, the combination of pointed hat and broomstick first turns up. As Ian Bostridge wrote, it concerned: "a fossilized image of the plebeian countrywoman of the late seventeenth century, and a stereotype which has persisted into the children's books of the late twentieth century."²⁰



20 Ian Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations c. 1650-c.1750* (Oxford 1997), 170.

The tradition will also have continued, whether or not with fluctuations, in masked balls and celebrations which called for dressing up. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century it was taken up in Halloween feasts and transported to the USA. Apart from relying on other artists, illustrators fell back on this public tradition. The later film industry, hardly on the forefront of artistic renovation, needed a recognizable witch and opted for the trusted hat and broomstick image.

In spite of that, various depictions of the screen witch have developed over the twentieth- and twentyfirst century (Edwards distinguishes eight)²¹, coinciding with different genres. In this talk I have left the more recent developments of screen witches out of the picture. The advantage of this is, that a more or less coherent theme arises that links *The Wizard of Oz* to *Bewitched*: the tension between the domestication of the witch figure on the one hand and her liberative power on the other.²² Dorothy's magical slippers are mainly meant to bring her home to dull Kansas; in that respect she falls into the same category as Glinda and it is thus no coincidence that the wicked witch and Dorothy have been construed as "polar opposites".²³ Jennifer, at the end of *I Married a Witch*, is portrayed as a knitting housewife, her loose hair contained. Her successor in *Bell, Book and Candle* has turned from a seductive femme fatale into a meek florist. Samantha of *Bewitched*, finally, has turned domestication into a virtue, although she possesses an almost unlimited, godlike power. Yet these observations only seem to apply to the good witches. Are wicked witches beyond domestication? Or do they serve as a warning what will happen to women when they do not subject to the male rule? One of the ways to counteract this, is to protest against the image of the wicked witch.

The television show *Bewitched* provided either the paradigm or the particular details for later witchcraft films and television series, especially in the USA. It set the standards. Apart from a not so succesful remake in 2005 with Nicole Kidman, its influence is clearly visible in for instance *Teen Witch* (1989), which even employed the actor Dick Sargent as the lead character's father. Sargent had replaced York as Darrin in the sixth season of *Bewitched*. In *Halloweentown* (1998) a suburban family is portrayed in which the mother tries to live without witchcraft, but is then interrupted by her mother who entices the children to come into their power. More generally, without *Bewitched* the series *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch* (1996-2003) would have been unthinkable and both paved the way for the other show, *Charmed* (1998-2006) where all things witchcraft were handled differently. In particular the *Bewitched* episode "I confess" revibrated in "All Hell Breaks Loose", the last episode of season 3 of *Charmed*. It also inspired the children's movie *Escape to Witch Mountain*

21 Edwards, 81.

22 Gibson 199-200; cf. Moseley.

23 Burger, 127.

(1975). It may also be possible to consider George Romero's film *Jack's Wife* (1972), also known as *Season of the Witch*, within the *Bewitched* parameters: it is all about a housewife who turns to witchcraft to lighten up her life in suburbia. And then there is *Harry Potter* which is a chapter on its own.



Within the *Bewitched* series a number of episodes were remade and in that sense, *Bewitched* also quoted itself. The episode I discussed at the beginning of this talk was filmed again in season six under the title "To Trick or Treat or Not to Trick or Treat?" (30 Oct. 1969). While crucial lines were kept, the theme of the witch's image is now more firmly positioned in the Halloween setting. Samantha and Darrin's daughter Tabitha (originally Tabatha) has become old enough to collect sweets in the neighbourhood and this time everyone also canvasses for UNICEF. Samantha is helping with the costumes, among them some witch costumes with gruesome masks, to which her mother Endora takes offence. To prove her point she puts a spell on Darrin (Sargent), who gradually changes into a Halloween witch, only without the green face. He uses his disguise to collect money and ends up a "Halloween Hero". As Samantha tells Endora: "Do you realise that you have given the witch's image that we hate more publicity than it's had since the Salem trials?" She then suggest to use an alternative image for an advertising campaign.

The message has therefore changed: even a popular television show should not try to attempt the impossible and alter the existing witch image. It should certainly not try to replace it with one that is degrading to women (that is my interpretation), but instead nudge it into the direction of the good witch whose face is like that of the model housewife. Almost.

Willem de Blécourt.

Stills from *Bewitched* 1.7 and 6.7