

DIAMONDS AND ASH:
CLASS AND SOCIAL MOBILITY IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CINDERELLA

by

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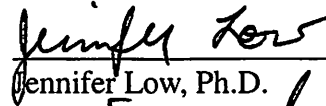
Laura Diaz de Arce

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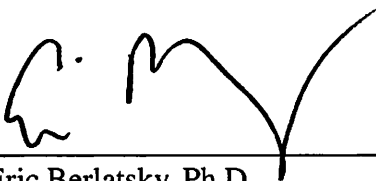
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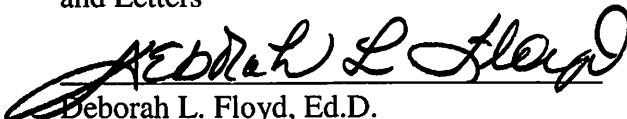
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ABSTRACT

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This thesis discusses the intersections of class and the lack of social mobility in three versions of Cinderella from the seventeenth century. The works covered are Giambattista Basile's "La Gatta Cenerentola" ["The Cat Cinderella"] (c.1634), Charles Perrault's "La Petite Pantoufle de Verre" ["The Glass Slipper"] (1697), and Marie-Catherine D'Aulnoy's "Finette Cendrone" ["Clever Cinderella"] (1697). The seventeenth-century versions of Cinderella all reaffirm the existing class system. In each of these versions the message is that the ruling elite must maintain or regain to their status. We can see this by the ways in which the characters gain and lose status in their respective narratives. Ultimately, the early modern Cinderella story is one that supports a hereditary class system.

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Dr. David Dittman, who was patient and supportive throughout this entire process. This thesis is also dedicated to our cats, Tony and Hermes, who helped by jumping on my desk and throwing my work around when it was time to take a break.

DIAMONDS AND ASH: CLASS AND SOCIAL MOBILITY IN SEVENTEENTH
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I. INTRODUCTION

Fairy tales are ingrained in popular culture. Today's versions of the classic stories are often reoriented to appeal to more progressive and adult audiences. Shows and films such as ABC's *Once Upon a Time*, NBC's *Grimm*, Universal's *Snow White and the Huntsman*, Disney's *Maleficent* and *Into the Woods* take what was considered a children's medium a generation ago and rewrite it for adult audiences. One of these stories, Cinderella, has been adapted into musicals and big-budget films, including a live-action Disney version which premiered in 2015. Cinderella's appeal could be said to come from its hopeful premise, one that seems focused on finding a true love that transcends class boundaries. In these modern iterations, a pauper marries a prince and becomes a princess. However, this is not true to the historic Cinderella story, which is not one of class mobility but a story that rigidly opposes social mobility. Historically, Cinderella is the daughter of a duke, prince or king; she is temporarily removed from her status by a usurper and social climber (the stepmother) and then re-instated through divine intervention that leads to an advantageous marriage. In brief, a story that is often seen as a triumph of social mobility was originally opposed to the concept.

In this thesis, I will examine the political ramifications inherent in three seventeenth century versions of Cinderella and demonstrate that these stories support the aristocracy. In them, the divine forces justify the aristocratic rule that pervaded through early seventeenth-century Italy and late seventeenth-century France. During this period, the concept of social stratification shaped all politics. The versions of Cinderella to be

considered are Giambattista Basile's "La Gatta Cennerentola" ["The Cat Cinderella"] (c.1634), Charles Perrault's "La Petite Pantoufle de Verre" ["The Glass Slipper"] (1697), and Marie-Catherine D'Aulnoy's "Finette Cendrone" ["Clever Cinderella"] (1697). The seventeenth-century versions of Cinderella all reaffirm the existing class system. In each of these versions the message is that the ruling elite must maintain or regain to their status. We can see this by the ways in which the characters gain and lose status in their respective narratives.

There is a shift of the status quo wherein Cinderella's stepmother (or mother, in one case), typically an individual with a less prestigious class standing, rises to a noble position by marriage. The stepmother or mother is described as manipulative and able to control Cinderella's father, who then neglects his daughter and is complicit in her loss of status. Cinderella's parents place her in a lower status and inadvertently violate the divine and social contract. The parents are then punished in some way until order is restored in the form of Cinderella regaining her rights. The tension that arises from a woman climbing social strata through marriage (as the stepmother does) is reflective of the real world. Anxiety surrounding the changing status of the nobility, also contributed to the creation of these three versions.

While the stepmother signifies the social interloper/parvenu, the fairy Godmother stands in for a supernatural presence. The godmother's interference and favoritism towards Cinderella shows support of noble bloodlines, since members of the nobility were historically linked to the divine. Order is restored when Cinderella regains her title or actually ascends beyond her original status. Despite having differences in actual story content, the three versions of Cinderella reenact this premise.

The stories call attention to how women exercise a degree of agency and achieve upward mobility (through marriage and sacrament). This mobility undermines the rigid social structure. In all three stories, the heroine is a woman who *utilizes* her godmother to surpass her original place in society.

The close readings of the three pieces I have selected to examine will use the translated versions to analyze plot and theme, and then the original versions, in Neapolitan and French, to examine the subtle parallels between the vocabulary/word choice and the principle beliefs and political systems of their times. The evidence I will use is biographical information about the authors and historical information about the political climate of their respective eras.

The Cinderella story is one of the most widely known stories in the world (Dundes xiv). For several centuries, scholars have been recording and categorizing hundreds of versions (Dundes v-vii). The three I have selected are representative of that modern Western fairy-tale tradition.¹ I chose these works because they have subtexts of thwarted social mobility, the interconnectedness of nobility with divinity, and the restoration of class systems. All suggest how ideas of governance and class infuse fairy tales. The time when these stories were written was a transitional one, wherein the position of the nobility was in flux. While absolute monarchies were strengthened during the sixteenth century and the definition of the aristocracy was tightened, there was also a humanist movement which sought to dismantle these very power systems (Kagan 458-64).

I will cover Basile's "The Cat Cinderella" in Chapter one. Basile was from a

¹ Although I chose these three texts, there are other tales from the time period for which the theories I employ here could be applied, including those outside the Cinderella mythos.

region embroiled in territory wars between France, Spain and localized nobility throughout the sixteenth century. All three factions fought for control over what is now modern Italy (Sella 1-10). Basile's career as a bureaucrat and as an entertainer to the Neapolitan nobles exposed him to the intersections of divided politics (Zipes 824-25).

Chapter two will focus on Perrault's "The Glass Slipper," the most famous version and the basis for the Disney animated feature and the Rogers and Hammerstein musical. Perrault's career and his storytelling aspirations in combination with his writing style, make for an interesting version. His hope was to educate the masses with his published stories. Perrault's process included recording the stories related to him by his son's illiterate wet nurse (Darnton 13-16). He would then sanitize and censor the works, ending them with a tacked on rhyming epigraph. These epigraphs were meant to summarize what moral lesson could be gleaned from the tales and worked with varying degrees of success. He merged a form of entertainment of the populace with moral lessons that supported the existing power dynamics (Tatar 346-50).

Finally, I will examine D'Aulnoy's "Finette Cendrone" (published just a few months after Perrault's tale in 1697). D'Aulnoy was a contemporary of Perrault's and her fascinating personal history was filled with political intrigue and class tension. As a woman and a member of a noble class, who was a fugitive, she offered a unique perspective in the plot of "Finette Cendrone" that deviates most from the other two. Her Cinderella is a princess with no stepmother; but her parents lose their kingdom and holdings due to their incompetence. This complicates the typical stepmother-stepdaughter tension present in other versions. Despite this, the general plot of removal to restoration of status is a theme integral to this version as well (Zipes 454-56, 824-23).

While the versions I will be analyzing are published works with known authors, they are not necessarily far removed from their folklore roots. Perrault himself was a folklorist (although that term did not exist until the nineteenth century). Neither Basile, Perrault, nor D'Aulnoy are the original creators of their core stories. All three took popular tales and re-told them for pleasure and profit, adding or subtracting parts and ideas to fit their needs. Robert Darnton notes that "whether they were meant to amuse adults or to frighten children... the stories belonged to a fund of popular culture, which peasants hoarded over the centuries with remarkably little loss" (17).

Approaches to Cinderella have ranged from mapping the historical origins to psychoanalytic approaches to feminist applications to anthropological studies and Marxist analyses. Folklore studies is traditionally tracks the origins of the tales as well as categorizing stories. An important text is *Verzeichnis der Marchentypen* (or Directory of Fairytale Types) by Antti Aarne (1910), which categorizes hundreds of folktales by plot. This text has since been updated and expanded upon, but the tale types remain in use (Loulmala 747-49).² In this system, Cinderella stories are categorized as tale type 510, in which a noble girl is in disguise and later marries a prince. This tale type would include plot devices such as a shoe and abusive stepsisters to meet the categorization in 510A, while 510B, alternately called "The Dress of Gold, of Silver, and of Stars" would have an abusive father, and gowns made of those materials (Dundes xiv).³

Other popular studies of fairy tales have focused on psychoanalysis in an attempt

² Later, Aarne's tale types were revised by Stith Thompson, making the newer system the Aarne-Thompson index.

³ Aside from the Aarne-Thompson index, Marian Roalfe Cox and later Anna Birgitta Rooth each separately categorized hundreds of Cinderella stories into more specific subtypes. The Cox index considers the Cinderella story a 510A, whereas the Rooth index considers it a story type 510B (Dundes xiii-xiv). Only some elements of tale type 510B are related to themes discussed in this thesis, but that type is better represented by stories such as "Donkey-Skin" by Perrault and "All Fur" by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm.

to find symbolic representations of anxieties and desires latent in folktales (Darnton 10-11). In these situations Cinderella and the other characters are removed from their specific contexts and read as symbolic characterizations. Often this type of research completely removes the actual story and turns the motifs into symbols and references. A modern incarnation of that mode can be found in Jeannette Mageo's "Cultural Models and The Dream: US Cinderellas and Identity." That article discusses the intersection of dreams and gender expectations through the concept of hair and symbolic Cinderella. The subject of the study, Marlene, is referred to as having "Cinderella" tendencies because of her disgust over whom her father dates and her fascination with designer items (Mageo 229-246). The issue with psychoanalytic readings is that those readings rely heavily on case studies and conjecture.

Some contemporary approaches to fairy tale research focus on feminist readings. This includes interpreting how Cinderella as a story type reaffirms or subverts gender dynamics, its use in popular media, and its relationship to modern values. Amanda K. Allen's "The Cinderella-Makers" embodies all three approaches. Allen's work examines how capitalism reshaped the Cinderella story in the 1940s and 50s. She examines two specific films, *Going on Sixteen* and *Rosemary* as the discussion of art as reflective of culture (282-299). That method is similar to that I employ here.

The theoretical basis for this thesis is influenced by Jane Yolen's assessment of Cinderella, as "*not* a story of rags to riches, but rather riches recovered; *not* poor girl into princess but rather rich girl (or princess) rescued from improper or wicked enslavement; *not* suffering Griselda enduring but shrewd practical girl persevering and winning a share of power" (emphasis original 21). Yolen's discussion of Cinderella critiqued popular

American readings and places more emphasis on Cinderella as a heroic figure. My research is historical and more focused on how Cinderella reaffirms seventeenth-century social paradigms.

Interdisciplinary and anthropology studies that "show how cultures reshape a folktale to fit local value systems" (Dundes xvi). In fact, much of this thesis is derived from theories drawn from symbolic anthropology. One interprets "symbols in the context of the processes of social and cultural life" (McCormick and White 93). Anthropologist Victor Turner's definition of symbols as "conscious and unconscious representations and objects of power" was influential on my methodology (McCormick and White 93). My thesis is focused on how certain events within fairy tales are symbolic of cultural anxieties and events. I will also discuss in depth how the author may have been influenced by the political and social climate. Yet much of the analyses will be close textual readings.

Some folklorists and historians focus on piecing together the original folk-collected versions (Darnton 13-17). For the purposes of this thesis, I will focus on the authors and their specific tale, not on their relations to older versions. The published versions, derived from folktales, nonetheless significantly deviate from some of the principle properties of that tradition. The act of publishing changes the audience and act of storytelling. Rather than storytelling as a performative and social activity, the fairy tale can become solitary (Darnton 14-16). Instead of an audience comprised of all ages and classes, a published work excludes the illiterate except when read aloud. The performances of these stories go from improvised to scripted. With that change, the audience shifts. As with any retelling new values and goals enter the stories. Basile,

Perrault and D'Aulnoy addressed audiences very different from the fireside clusters of the folktale tradition. So rather than approaching these works as part of a larger folklore tradition, I will be approaching them as works of literature.

Cinderella's incarnations in these texts differ substantially from the original oral stories. All three writers had intimate interactions with the upper classes and often their audience was the nobility. In the case of D'Aulnoy, she was a part of the nobility (Zipes 822).

Sixteenth-century theorist Jean Bodin wrote *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, wherein he claims that power should remain in the absolute hands of a single ruler. This is reinforced with certain divine or heavenly connections. To summarize his opinion, "government is instituted by providence for the well-being of humanity" (Kagan 335; Britannica). The belief that the divine favored the ruling elite led to the "Divine Right of Kings," articulated in early modern Europe in *A True Law of Free Monarchies*, written by King James I in 1598. In his view kings and the ruling elite are chosen by God to rule a populace. Therefore it follows that these kings deserve their position because they will naturally be guided by God to create stable states. As explained by Bishop Jacques-Benigne Bossuet, "God is holiness itself, goodness itself, and power itself. In these things lies the majesty of God. In the image of these things lies the majesty of the prince" (Kagan 433).

This divine providence extends beyond monarchs to their families. Being noble entitles them to the privileged perception that they are guided by divine providence, "good" and deserving persons. In most cases, heirs and those of nobility could not just

adopt the title, they had to be born into it.⁴ This blood connection became especially necessary in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth century as new laws were set to govern noble titles and inheritance (Asch 16-17). The working subtext of the seventeenth-century versions of Cinderella is that the good nobility are rewarded and gain a happy ending, while the wicked poor are punished. The story of Cinderella concerns an aristocratic girl being unjustly displaced from her class by a stepmother, often one of lower-rank, or by those that ignore her rank, such as a father or sisters.

The feudal system, with its stratification and set power divisions had begun to deteriorate by the fifteenth century because of a changing economy (Kagan 335). Monarchs consolidated their power and their bureaucrats outside of the nobility served as administrators, effectively cutting out the nobility from influence (Kagan 335). This muddled the divisions of power made some social mobility possible. Additionally, the areas that were under direct influence of monarchies were often in flux with wars, proxy rule, and territorial disputes. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Italian states were carved up by their native duchies and republics, as well as by the French and Spanish kingdoms (Sella 1-9). Until the early seventeenth century, the French themselves were in the midst of continuous religious wars (Sella 3-4).

There was an effort to reign in social climbing and create rigid definitions to prohibit class mobility. Monarchs wanted to make it harder to claim nobility in order to increase state revenue. Proven nobles and nobility were often excluded from taxation and this motivated potential social climbers to fit these increasingly rigid standards in order to avoid being taxed. Other pressures to stall social mobility and the claims to nobility came from the noble classes themselves, who did not agree with policies that effectively

⁴ This excludes the tradition of buying titles discussed in chapter 1.

allowed newly rich farmers, merchants and tradespersons to buy titles. As Ronald Asch explains: "Older families as well as those who had just managed to establish themselves among the nobility [in the sixteenth century] were now eager to close the road to social advancement to others. Not only in France but also in many other European countries, lineage as a criterion for social status was increasingly emphasized" (13-14). Because wealth, land, education, connections and marriage could be acquired through luck and work, but bloodlines were un-alterable (except by perjury), it was easy to create an exclusionary definition. Even critiques against this stratification by humanists, such as Nikodermus Frischlin "helped to create a concept of noble identity, which defined nobility exclusively in terms of lineage or even blood and race" (Asch 14, 55).⁵ This emphasis on blood relations and descent becomes increasingly important upwards from the sixteenth through the eighteenth century (Asch 11-15).

The emphasis on nobility as defined by "blood" is discussed in Cinderella. The ever-tightening doorway to nobility is expressed in the versions of Perrault and Basile. While D'Aulnoy's tale has to do with the restoration of nobility, the link between lineage and good behavior is more complex. The use of divine interlopers within all three stories represents this connection with lineage. Fairy godmothers or god-fairies stand in as symbols of class division. Cinderella's connection with these otherworldly creatures is representative of her class differences. Her direct interaction with fairies and the favoritism the fairies express towards her separate the titular character from the others. Their interference brings about renewed stratification.

The concept of "restoration" to power is one that permeates the genre. Fairy tales

⁵ Nikodermus Frischlin was a poet and intellectual who hated the nobility. He accused the nobility of treating their peasants like slaves and having poor manners. He was later imprisoned and died during an escape (Asch 55).

typically follow a very simple outline: order – chaos/disorder – a return to order. These fictional royals, who during their stories are usurped by pretenders to the throne, are restored to power in the end. As such, these rulers are assumed to rule and control these harmonious kingdoms. Thus, these fairy tales tacitly reinforce the concept of the divine right of kings by giving the impression that the ability to rule and access to privilege aligned with the divine and was reserved for those of royal lineage.

In order to maintain these power structures, social mobility, while not entirely preventable, must be tempered. Justifying some upward mobility with a connection to the divine serves to strengthen that belief that the nobility deserve their position. Yet it challenges the idea that *anyone* can improve her situation this way. Cinderella's stories are incarnations of the idea that mobility is only possible within the noble bloodlines.

Cinderella is often presented as a rags to riches story when it is opposed to social mobility. I selected these three versions due to their impact as well as their historical context. Basile heavily influenced the other two and he himself wrote for a noble audience (Zipes 824-25). Perrault and D'Aulonoy were contemporaries in France during the reign of Louis XIV, an absolutist monarchs (Zipes 821-23, 838-840). At the same time, I am also intrigued by how these stories show how women still manage to transcend their station. Aside from Cinderella, the step-mother offers new feminist readings of the texts.

II. GIAMBATTISTA BASILE'S "THE CAT CINDERELLA"

Giambattista Basile was a soldier and poet with a middle-class upbringing whose writing and connections gave him access to a courtly lifestyle. These connections led to Basile's appointment as a governor to a district in Naples (Zipes 824-825). His social mobility aside, Basile was someone disenchanted by society at large. As Jack Zipes' brief biographical entry describes:

Despite the many poems that he wrote in praise of his patrons, there are strong signs that he was discontented with his employment, which did not provide him enough time for his writing, and that he was very critical of the customs and behavior of nobility. Though fond of the peasantry, he was also critical of their crude manners and superstitions and was disposed to depicting the humorous side of their lives in his tales. (824-825)

While he may have been critical of his employers, he was writing for a courtly audience who would not have taken very kindly to direct criticism. He performed his tales for various courts before they were published posthumously (Zipes 824). This tension and distaste for his employers is visible in "The Cat Cinderella," wherein class struggle plays out with murder and magic. Ultimately, despite his tongue-in-cheek criticism of nobility, the story still serves to maintain the status quo.

Basile remains a mysterious figure despite the fact that his work was highly innovative and influential. Nancy L. Canepa and Armando Maggi have re-translated Basile's work. Canepa's work includes historical information and annotations that were

essential to the writing of this thesis. Unfortunately, Armando Maggi's work was not released until late in the development of this thesis.

Basile's writing was highly influenced by his upbringing in Naples. Unlike most other areas in Italy in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, Naples had a strong noble class. The rest of Italy had been the battleground for France, the Papal State and Spain for much of the previous decades, culminating in fluctuating power structures in much of the peninsula. But Naples, with its steady, hands-off Spanish rule, had a noble class that was relatively intact. This was mostly due to the Spanish empire's reliance and dependency on the noble class in its provinces. And while the Spanish still continuously granted new titles to keep its influence, this left the Neapolitan nobility to its own devices in most matters (Sella 52-3).

The nobles were not completely autonomous, Naples was one of the financial assets of Spain as it overspent on other conquests. This forced the Neapolitan nobility to continuously devise new strategies to deal with the increasing Spanish financial burden. While a peasant revolt in 1647 took place over a decade after Basile's death and his time as a governor, the cause of the dissidence had been at work during Basile's lifetime. In order to support the Spanish court, the nobility in Naples saw fit to come up with new and more inventive taxes for the populace. This caused unrest and poverty in a city whose population was upwards of 300,000 (Lancaster 87-98).

It was perhaps due to this rising population and heavy taxation that the majority of the population (the working class) lived in squalor. This condition endured although Naples was a large maritime trade center with a robust fishing industry. Some trades, such as the silk industry, provided the primary exports of the city. Even with those

industries, overpopulation and taxation kept the middle-class burdened. The economy was artificially modeled in such a way that the city with its vast trade and natural resources was still importing *en masse* (Lancaster 87-96). "Madrid used the Kingdom of Naples as a seemingly inexhaustible source of revenue – as its 'richest and most dependable Peru,' to use the words of a contemporary observer" (Sella 28). Wheat however, was heavily price controlled and stored by the city, helping to maintain a cheap food source (Lancaster 87-96; Sella 95-97).

Many Neapolitans worked for the nobility themselves. By maintaining a large poor populace, the nobility retroactively reinforced its importance as an economic mainstay by employing some of the poor. Basile worked for the nobility and gained some financial security in the process. Yet, there were distinctions within the noble class in Naples. Nobles "of the piazze" lived in and governed the city proper (Lancaster 92). Other landed nobility that were not part of the five piazze families were then "outside of the piazze" but still maintained a degree of power and influence (Lancaster 92-93).

Landed gentry had inherited the land and power but the working aristocracy, known as the *nobilta' di seggio*, administered cities (Sella 52-53). There seems to have been some tension between the two types of nobility, particularly in their relations with Spanish royalty. The Spanish crown was dependent on landed gentry to provide military support and to act as direct liaisons with the populace (Sella 52). The Spanish gained capital and maintained power in Naples by selling titles to those administrators who could afford to buy them. In the city proper, they had the distinction of being a newer urban elite (Asch 15-16). As the city centers became more important economically, socially and politically, the traditional nobility began to move inward. The urban

aristocrats would buy up feudal territories to serve as investments as well. Thus the transition of feudal nobility into the *nobilta' di seggio* "gave stability to the cultural and social identity of the nobility as an estate, and tended to replace the traditional parliament or diet as the monarchy's partner in matters relating to the entire kingdom" (Asch 33-35). While there may have been some animosity between the two types of nobility, there was a measure of permeability which kept the noble class in a state of perpetual flux.⁶

Basile was born into this atmosphere, in the province of Posillipo outside of Naples in or around 1575. It is assumed that he was born into a large middle-class family (Basile - Canepa 3). Several of his sibling became singers and one became a composer. His life in Posillipo influenced the topics presented in his works, most pointedly *Le Avventurose Disavventure* (The Adventurous Misadventures) (Basile - Canepa 3-5). Yet, all that is known about his early adulthood is that Basile left the kingdom of Naples at the start of the seventeenth Century (Basile - Canepa 3).

Basile also had connections to Venice, where he ingratiated himself with a local noble and gained the opportunity to further his education (Basile - Canepa 4). After having left Naples he made his way to Venice and enrolled as a mercenary fighting

⁶ While the economic situation paints a dismal picture of the Spanish Kingdom's presence in Naples, the relationship is by far more complex. The governmental structure follows other colonial governments, where there is a system of viceroys and appointed bureaucrats that serve the crown. The Spanish had occupied Naples for so long that the people were irrecoverably intertwined. The language of Neapolitan itself, a mix of Italian and Spanish, is indicative of this historical melding. There were long periods of peace and cultural immersion that contributed to Naples becoming a large metropolis. As Benedetto Croce writes: "We should not imagine the Neapolitans' feelings toward the Spaniards to be characterized by the bitterness, repugnance, and hate which we see in the relations between Italians and other foreigners in various other periods of history. Under the viceroys of Naples there was no nationalistic struggle... union under the rule of the kings of Aragon and Castile stood on firm ground... the city noblemen took pride in serving them in the same way that they had served their former kings... [The barons] joined in this sentiment of loyalty and devotion." (Croce 134-35). "This affection for the Spanish may have well been instrumental in their continued presence at Naples. Perhaps Naples was treated exceptionally better than other Spanish colonies. That stated, when economist Antonio Serra laid blame on the Spanish economic policies for the widespread poverty in Naples in his report to the viceroy in 1613, he was immediately arrested (Croce 132, Lancaster 94). Perhaps that affection only went so far.

against the Turkish forces in Candia (Basile - Canepa 3-4). At the time Venice was negotiating a treaty with the Ottoman Empire to keep up maritime trade, although war a full-fledged war in Candia would come in the 1620s (Sella 11-12). It is likely that Basile was employed by the French or Austrian government, who were both trying to usurp power within the peninsula (Sella 10-15).

The ability to buy noble titles that was a reality in most other states in Italy, was challenged in Venice by a particularly strong push-back. Established nobility put tight restrictions on the definition. As Davis writes, "[Venetian Nobility] did this [restricted selling titles] by adopting a policy of rigid exclusiveness...the Venetians did not confer nobility even upon the wealthiest, most decorous and most loyal of the nonnoble families" (34). This policy may have contributed to Venice's successful resistance to Spain and France's efforts to gain control of the republic (Sella 11). Even Venetian families who had fallen out of power and into financial ruin or disgrace could not sell their titles (Davis 34).

While in Venice and Candia, Basile was able to gain the support of Andrea Cornaro, a Venetian nobleman. This patronage led to Basile's introduction to the Academy delgi Stravaganti (Basile - Canepa 4). This association may have set a precedent for Basile's future career, wherein he gained the affections of nobility who helped to financially nurture his writing. Due to his sister Adriana's success as a singer, he was able to return to Naples in 1608 and find positions both in the courts and literary societies (Basile - Canepa 4-5). The rest of his life was spent within the sphere of noble courts or in an administrative capacity. His first position was as a concierge in charge of entertaining his patrons. Some of these tasks utilized his skills in storytelling including

"writing songs, devices, anagrams, and occasional verse for the celebration of significant events in the life of his patrons" (Basile - Canepa 4). At the same time he continuously pursued his own personal writing by crafting novellas, epic poetry, dramas and fairy stories. In 1611 he helped found the Neapolitan Accademia degli Oziosi (Basile - Canepa 4-5).

After two years in Mantua, he moved back to Naples and continued his work within and for the courts. He served as a governor of Avellino under the prince of Avellino Marino de Trevico in 1619. Then he was made royal governor of Lagolibero in 1621 and later governor of Anversa under viceroy Antonio Alvarez de Toledo in 1626. His final position was as governor of Giugliano under Duke Galeazzo Pinelli. In early 1632 he passed away as one of the victims of a flu epidemic (Basile - Canepa 4-7).

Basile is primarily remembered for his collection of fairy tales *Lo cunto de li cunti* (1634), alternately known as *The Tale of Tales: Entertainment for Little Ones* or *Il Pentamerone* [The Pentamorone], a multi-volume anthology published after his death by his sister Adriana. During his life he wrote and published numerous works of poetry, prose and drama in both Italian and Neapolitan. These included *Il pianto della vergine* [The tears of the virgin] (1608), the aforementioned *Adventurous Misadventures* (1611), *Eglogh amorse e lugubri* [Amorous and Lugubrious Eclogues] (1612), *Venere addolorata* [Venus Afflicted] (1612), *Il guerriero amante* [The Warrior Lover] (1620), *Monte di parnaso* [Mount Parnassus] (1630) and more. In addition to this, Basile translated numerous texts and contributed to the works of his friends. Some of his other pieces, such as *Le muse napoletante* [The Neapolitan Muse] (1635), were also published posthumously (Basile - Canepa 3-8).

This thesis is focused on *Lo cunto de li cunti*. The collection features fifty tales told in a frame story.⁷ The frame story involves a Princess who will not laugh and is supplanted by a servant woman who is cursed to crave stories. Then ten grotesque storytellers are brought forth to each tell a story a day for five days. The various stories are then broken up into five days and each has its own designated storyteller and theme (Basile - Canepa 35-42). This courtly setting is reflective of Basile's own career as a concierge in the courts where he arranged to entertain the nobility. Basile was also known for his wit, sarcasm and dissatisfaction with the nobility, and this shows through in the frame story by making the courtly setting a parade of oddities. All the storytellers are given pejorative names such as "Big-Nosed Tolla," "Cross-eyed Paola," and "Shitty Iacova" (Basile - Canepa 42). This sets the tone for the rest of the collection, wherein Basile's purpose was not just to entertain, but also to critique by using humor. The stories are a distorted reflection of the way they would have been told in life. There are still storytellers entertaining nobility, but in the frame story the tellers are disfigured and the nobility includes a servant in disguise. This serves to undermine the values and attitudes of Basile's contemporary Neapolitans.

"La Gatta Cennerentola" ["The Cat Cinderella"], published in *Lo cunto de li cunti* in 1634, is the oldest literary version of the Cinderella story on record in Western Europe (Basile - Canepa 83). It is the sixth story told on the first day, related to the reader by "Drooling Antonella." The tale's theme concerns 'nmidia' [envy] which (we are told) can cause a girl to drown and causes "cierte figliole 'nmediose" ["certain envious girls"] in the story to fall (Basile 52; Basile - Canepa 83).

⁷ A frame story sets the stage for one or more stories to be told within it. This device is not uncommon and can be found in the fourteenth century works *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer and *The Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio, which predate Basile (Bergin xxi- xxiii; Coghill 11-15).

In Basile's story, the heroine's name is Zezolla, and she has a hand in changing her stepmother. Zezolla is the daughter of a widower prince who takes "a rambunctious, evil, and diabolical woman as his wife, and this wicked lady was so repulsed by her stepdaughter that she began throwing her sour glances, making wry faces, and scowling at her" (Zipes 445). From the beginning we are given Zezolla's class. As the daughter of a prince she is nobility in her own right, and the friction between her and the stepmother may be related to succession. This stepmother here may dislike Zezolla because she has more access to wealth and power as a blood relative of the prince. The plot also expresses the tensions of blended families (families with step-parents or siblings) wherein newly integrated family members uproot traditional power structures (father-mother-child). The evil stepmother is used repeatedly in fairy tales such as *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Juniper Tree*, and *Snow White*. According to Maria Tatar in her annotations to *The Juniper Tree*, the stepmother represents "maternal power run mad" and that "the inheritance issue creates friction even today in many blended families" (159-61). A stepmother was a good way to create a realistic tension, giving readers an easy reference for villainy and chaos.

This stepmother does not last very long. Zezolla instead loves her sewing teacher Carmosina, who becomes the surrogate mother figure. The choice of making the new stepmother a sewing teacher is an interesting one on Basile's part. He spends a line detailing the different types of stitches that Zezolla learns such as hem-stitch and openwork, to perhaps add a touch of realism (Basile - Canepa 83). Yet, Zezolla's father the prince "essenose" ["hires"] Camosina for Zezolla, which designates an employer-employee relationship between the two. Zezolla's father is paying someone else (presumably of a lower class) to instruct his daughter (Basile 52). Basile probably saw

many nannies, nursemaids, teachers, tutors and other servants develop relationships with the children they served. That sort of close interaction may at times seem to blur class distinctions, but here Basile, by mentioning that Camosina was hired and is thus an employee, reasserts her lower status.

Zezenia's pesters Carmosina, begging her to replace her current stepmother. This causes Camosina to devise a plan to murder the current stepmother and take her place. She has Zezenia murder her first stepmother by closing a trunk on the stepmother to behead her. To explain this behavior, Basile includes the detail that Camosina was "*cecata da mazzamauriello*" ["crafted by a demon"] (53).⁸ After a short period of time, Zezenia is able to convince her father the prince to marry Carmosina. For a short time Zezenia is happy with this arrangement, as this stepmother dotes on her, but then Carmosina brings her six daughters into the family and they win the affections of the prince, replacing Zezenia's position as his favorite.

*Redusse de la cammara a la cocina, e da lo vardacchino a lo focolare, da li sfourge de seta e d'oror a le mappine, da le scette a li spite, né sulo cagnaie stato, ma nomme perzi, che da Zezenia fu chiamata Gatta Cennerentola. (Basile 54)*⁹

[Zezenia was reduced to taking the room next to the kitchen and went from the canopy to the hearth, from the luxury of

⁸ In Neapolitan dialect, *Mazzamauriello* refers to a specific myth of an evil elf or imp from one of the armies of the devil. People did not say the names of these devilish legions aloud for fear of repercussions (Hauschild 198).

⁹ For clarity, sections of Basile's original Neapolitan version will be followed by the matching Zipes translations from *The Great Fairytale Tradition*, unless otherwise indicated. The Neapolitan has been copied as closely as possible from the 1976 printing of *Lo cunto de li cunti*.

silk and gold to rags, from the scepter to the spit. Indeed, she changed not only her condition but even her name and was no longer called Zezolla but Cat Cinderella"]. (Zipes 445-46)

Here is where Basile begins to show his beliefs about class distinction. This new stepmother is a pretender to the throne. She is wicked not just because she plots murder but because she has audaciously risen above her station. This section represents the disorder-tension within a fairy tale wherein the world is turned upside down. Basile uses the contrast of luxury items with articles of poverty to express this tension and loss, "from canopy to the hearth, from the luxury of silk and gold to rags," (446). The last part is emblematic of her fall from the status of royalty, from "scepter to the spit," (Basile 446). It confirms her change from a place of privilege to a laborer. That this is a plot "devised by the demon" only enhances Zezolla's position as divinely ordained. Tatar explains that in a similar instance in *The Juniper Tree*, the author was influenced by religious beliefs (164). In that instance "the stepmother's duplicity is connected with a diabolical force that incarnates the spirit of division and divisiveness," (Tatar 161). Even though it is Zezolla who actually commits the murder, the blame is still heaped on Carmosina for being the one that is influenced by an impish/demonic figure. This is because Zezolla is of noble heritage, divinely ordained, and therefore exempt from the influence of demons and devils while Carmosina is not.

When Carmosina marries the prince, a speaking dove comes to Zezolla offering the services of the queen of the fairies to grant her any wish she wants. After her family's neglect starts, Zezolla's father is suddenly called on an important trip. He asks all his

stepdaughters what they would like as gifts and they in turn all request luxury items (dresses, cosmetics). He then asks Zezolla what she wants and she responds:

*Nient'altro, se non che me racommanne a la palomma de la Fate,
decennole che me manneno quarcosa; e si te lo scuorde non puozze ire né
'nanze né arreto. Tiene a mente chello che te dico: arma toia, maneca toia.
(Basile 54).*

["Nothing," Zezolla replied. "But give my regards to the dove of the fairies and ask her to send me something. And if you forget, I wish that you will not be able to move either forward or backward. Remember what I've said. Woe to you if you don't keep your promise!"]. (Zipes 446).

He forgets Zezolla's request and the ship becomes trapped in Sardinia, unable to return.¹⁰ It takes a prophetic dream from the captain to realize what has happened. In the dream the fairy states that the prince "Perche lo prencepe che vene con vui ha mancato de promessa a la figlia, allecordannose de tutte fora che de lo sango propio" ["The prince has remembered all the other promises except the one that he made to his own flesh and blood"] (Basile 54; Zipes 446).

The interference of other-worldly benevolent powers, such as the fairies, underscores Zezolla's importance. The function and presence of these fairies offering up their services to the heroine serves to exemplify her natural "goodness." In other words, the good fairies come to her rescue because Zezolla is considered naturally good and deserving of favoritism. Yet she committed murder in order to replace her stepmother. The phrase "sango propio" is better translated as "own blood" or "real blood" and

¹⁰ Sardinia is off the coast of Italy and directly across Naples. The maritime trade positions this story as taking place in Naples.

emphasizes the importance of noble lineage. The father's betrayal of his legitimate heir creates a real world consequence (the inability to go home) enacted by his daughter's curse and the fairies. It also speaks to her pure-blood lineage, something that is opposed to her stepsisters, the daughters of a sewing teacher. Making sure to refer to her as "own blood" reestablishes the importance of a biological connection to her nobility and continues the contrast with her stepsisters' low birth.

The prince is given a date tree and several golden planting implements to give to Zezolla. She plants the tree, and in four days' time a fairy emerges from it to grant her wish. Zezolla wishes for a way to escape her home every once in a while, and so the fairy gives Zezolla access to special gowns and disguises whenever she recites an incantation. At the next festival Zezolla's sisters go out to celebrate, Zezolla chants the incantation and is transformed. She is "comme 'na regina" ["dressed like a queen"], given a horse and attendants, and heads to the ball in this guise (Basile 55; Zipes 447).

When her sisters see her they

*che fecero la spotazzella pe le bellezze de 'sta penta palomma. Ma, Comme
Voze la sciorte, venette a chillo luoco stisso lo re, lo quale visto la
spotestata bellezza de Zezolla ne restaie subeto affattorato.* (Basile 55)

[drooled with envy when they saw the beauty of this splendid dove. The king caught sight of the incredible beauty of Zezolla, and was immediately enchanted by her]. (Zipes 447)

He sends his servant to find out about her but Zezolla distracts him by throwing gold coins that he stops to pick up as she escapes. When she gets home and changes back, her "ugly sisters... told her all about the beautiful things they had seen to vex her" (Zipes

448). This happens two more times, with Zezolla looking lovelier each subsequent occasion. She distracts the servant with items of luxury twice more to narrowly escape. By the third time, in an effort to race away, she loses a slipper (Zipes 447-48).

Class distinctions are the crux of the tension and humor here. Zezolla, as our heroine of noble background, is described as beautiful and dressed as a queen. Her sisters of low birth are described as ugly, and shown to delight in tormenting their sister. Virtuous and noble persons are typically described as attractive. Good or noble persons are only described as ugly or monstrous when they have been cursed or are in hiding, as in the case of *Donkeyskin* or *East of the Sun, West of the Moon* (Tatar 187-200, 214-228). Thus the trope of Zezolla being a beauty beyond compare is a cue for the audience to recognize that she is of good character. Conversely, her sisters (who have not had prior access to luxury) suffer the indignity of being depicted as grotesque, a commentary on their low birth and lack of noble blood.

Basile's degradation of the poor is shown by the servant as well, who is depicted as foolish for stopping to pick up the coins thrown on the ground instead of following his master's orders. Here, Basile has added humor at the expense of the laborer, but it also indicates another allusion to the city of Naples itself. Because there was such a large wealth gap, it is understandable that a poor servant would take the time to pick up a gold coin. Zezolla, for her noble heritage, has a seemingly endless supply of coin (through the magical fairy tree). This detail may stem from the author's discomfort at the way the nobility spent their money, something that he had witnessed as a concierge and governor.

The dove motif is important here. Earlier in the text Zezolla asks her father to give her regards to the "*palomma de la Fate*" ["dove attendant of the faeries"]. At the first ball,

Zezenia is said to "*pe le bellezze de 'sta penta palomma*" ["resemble the beauty of a splendid dove"]. This later simile draws a firm connection to the fairies, further linking her to the supernatural. The gowns are a result of the magic date tree given to Zezenia, implying that Zezenia has the queen of the fairies' favor, wherein the queen wants her to resemble her messenger.

The story ends similarly to the popular versions. After the king has waxed poetic on the beauty of this unknown woman, he declares that all women in the kingdom must come to a great party, and there try on the slipper. He does not find Zezenia at the first party, and asks that all the women must come, no matter who they are or what status they hold. The king is then confronted by Zezenia's father, the prince, and he says "'Aggio 'na figlia, ma guarda sempre lo focolaro, ped essere disgraziata e da poco, e non è merdevole de sedere dove magnate vui'" ["I have a daughter, but she always looks after the hearth because she is worthless and a disgrace and doesn't deserve to sit at the table where you eat"] (Basile 57; Zipes 449). The king insists that he bring everyone. He finds Zezenia and the slipper fits. She is crowned queen. The final lines address the sisters: "Se la sfilaro guatto guatto verso la casa de la mamma, confessanno a dispetto loro *Ca pazzo è chi contrasta co le stelle*" ["So they slipped off home to their mother, confessing in spite of themselves that *you must be mad to oppose the stars*"] (Basile 58; Zipes 448-49, italics in both original and translation).

The happy ending is a return to order. Zezenia has gone from the daughter of a prince to a full-fledged queen, but this is actually a restoration of her position. In the end, the story tells people to stay in their place; the stepsisters and stepmother are the source of conflict as they attempt to move above their station. As the final line reaffirms in a

more accurate translation, "how crazy is one who opposes the stars." This implies some predestination, that Zezolla was destined to be good, and then also *destined to nobility*. When this fate is challenged by the stepmother and stepsisters usurping the upper-class positions, supernatural forces work to rectify this. The fact that the lines are said by the stepsisters and stepmother also implies that they knew they were tempting destiny by trying to gain a higher status. This line serves as an admonishment to the poor or lower classes to know their place. While the case could be made that the prince is noble but not shown in a necessarily positive light, as he denigrates his own daughter; this is meant to imply the influence of his wife and stepdaughters and only goes to support the idea that they are divisive figures.

Basile was not a writer who dealt in absolute good or evil. For one thing, he often wrote sarcastically. It would not have been lost on his contemporary audience that Zezolla for all her rewards is not a purely good person, as evidenced by the murder she has committed. Her success is more a representation of her untouchable status as a person with noble blood. But in many ways Basile wants the audience to also feel a sense of compassion towards the stepsisters and Carmosina, who bookend the story. The story is about "envious girls" who are seen at the end cursing the stars. In that respect, Basile re-orientes the story to include working-class struggles and the inability to transcend status. He does not have the girls cut off their feet as other writers do, but paints them in a sympathetic light, dejected, defeated and merely envious. Basile, himself a social climber, knew the frustration of not being born to privilege, and in many ways the march of the sisters at the end adds a touch of poignancy to an otherwise comic story.

III. CHARLES PERRAULT'S "THE GLASS SLIPPER"

Charles Perrault has the distinction of being a noted name in Cinderella Studies. Just the title of his version "La Petite Pantoufle de Verre" ["The Small Glass Slipper"] is synonymous with the Cinderella motif, in part because this was the version adopted in the popular Disney animated feature (Yolen 21-22). Perrault's autobiography, offers a glimpse into the life of an administrator in the court of Louis XIV. Perrault is studied in terms of his political position and his influence on the French academic system. Despite his contribution to French society in other areas, his fairy tales, *Contes de Ma Mère L'Oye* [*Tales of Mother Goose*] remain his most popular works (Barchilon and Flinders 63-65).

Perrault was born in 1628 to a large and generally successful family. He was younger twin to a brother, François, who died in infancy and he was the youngest brother to survive past childhood. It is clear from his autobiography that his four older brothers were an important influence in his life. He grew up in a home that valued intellectual development and also managed to be somewhat well-connected. His siblings included a lawyer, the general of finances of Paris, a doctor of medicine who also dabbled in architecture, and a theologian. Charles was primed for future success as both an author and a scholar (Perrault "Memoirs" 29-31).

During his secondary school years, Perrault apparently left formal schooling in favor of independent study. This was allegedly due to a falling out with his instructor, who commanded that he be quiet and prohibited him from debating the other students.

Together with a friend and with the aid of his older brother, Charles was able to continue an informal classic education. This education included biblical and moral texts as well as Greek and Roman authors such as Virgil and Horace. He also spent his free time doing burlesque translations of famous Latin texts in verse for his and his friends' entertainment.¹¹ Perrault talks of his affinity and natural talent for verse in his autobiography. He credits two odes that he wrote for the young King Louis XIV as being a reason he was employed by Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the right-hand of the King and head of the Academies.¹² Perrault also includes the incident where poet Philippe Quinault published one of Perrault's poems as his own. He alludes to his ability as a storyteller in the same memoir, including an account of his winning an informal competition to create the stories that would be showcased on royal tapestries (Perrault "Memoirs" 30-39).

Perrault fancied himself as a natural artistic genius. He tries to strike a balance between humility and self-aggrandizement. He recounts how he and a friend were accepted into the University at Orléans. During the interview and entrance exam the interviewing scholars told Charles and his friend that "it was over two years since they had examined such clever students, and who knew as much as [Charles and his friend] did," (Perrault "Memoirs" 36). Perrault continues by undermining that very sentiment in the sentence that follows, "I think that the sound of our money, which someone was counting behind us during our examination, played some part in making them believe our answers to be better than they actually were" (Perrault "Memoirs" 36). It is intriguing that Perrault would take the time to acknowledge his privilege. His reflection that the sound of his money made his answers "better than they actually were" indicates a sly critique at the

¹¹ Here the term "burlesque" refers to parody.

¹² Jean-Baptiste Colbert was the Minister of Finance and chief adviser to King Louis XIV (Sturdy 39-40).

ways in which wealth could be said to have corrupted the French systems.

This and numerous other episodes in his autobiography show Perrault's underlying philosophy on the nature of behavior and talent. Perrault declared that "when one has natural talent, one does as well at the beginning as later on, and the only virtual difference is in the greater facility for writing which one acquires with time," (Perrault "Memoirs" 39). At the same time, Perrault understood the need for humility and sometimes undercut his achievements. This modesty may be due in part to his religious education, including that which was given to him by his older brother Nicolas, the theologian, on whom Perrault lavishes praise for his humility (Perrault "Memoirs" 32-35). Or it could have been a political ploy, since a number of his contemporaries found him to be an opportunist and a "manipulative schemer of mediocre abilities," (Perrault "Memoirs" 22). Either way, the theme of talent or an internal goodness tempered with humility is one that is carried through in his fairy tales and particularly in his "Cinderella."

Perrault was also influenced by his relationship with the government, particularly with Colbert and the King himself. He never fully writes about the different political challenges that Louis XIV faced, but he shows a seemingly genuine reverence for the younger king.¹³ Perrault's skills in glorifying the king and his regime led to his employment. After a short period as a mediocre lawyer, Perrault was able to parlay his

¹³ When Perrault was 20 years old, a series of rebellions took place collectively known as "The Fronde" which challenged the rule of Louis XIV's mother, Queen Anne, and her chief adviser, Giulio Mazarin. This generally began with the prince of Condé, formally one of the queen's biggest supporters, who became one of the chief agitators for the Fronde. Condé went from being the queen's top military ally to her largest aggressor when the position he had been trying to secure for his brother would not come to fruition. This led to the first set of rebellions. The second Fronde, known as the Fronde of Princes, pushed France into a number of deadly battles, draining the country of resources and people. Condé and the other princes of the blood (*Princes du Sang*) called for the expulsion of Mazarin, and when they were arrested, decided it would be best to forcefully remove the royal family. The Fronde were quelled by Louis XIV's full ascension (Dunlop 17-28, Sturdy 30).

connections and poetry into a full time career at the academies (Perrault "Memoirs" 41-53).¹⁴

As a member of the academies, Perrault had a tremendous effect on Louis XIV's France. When the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, of where that Perrault was a member, was first formerly introduced to the king, by Perrault's account he stated:

You may judge, Messieurs, of my respect for you, since I am entrusting you with the one thing in the world which is most precious to me: my honor and reputation. I am sure that you will work wonders; for my part, I will attempt to furnish you with material worthy of use by men as clever as you. (Perrault "Memoirs" 46)

Perrault became a cog in Louis XIV's propaganda machine. Being a part of the Little Academy also ensured Perrault's consistent contact with the king, as he and the committee met with Louis XIV twice weekly (Perrault "Memoirs" 41-50).

During his years working under Colbert, Perrault was an artistic advisor. He functioned as both a clerk, handling many of the financial and bureaucratic duties, and as an artistic authority meant to guide other artists in how to properly glorify the king (Barchilon and Flinders 25-26). It seems that Perrault was someone wholeheartedly

¹⁴ Academies were one of the hallmarks of the political climate. One of Colbert's largest contributions to the reign was his use of propaganda, and the Academy structure was the machine for it. Both he and Louis knew the importance of presenting a strong monarchical image to both the public and those around them. Colbert was a shrewd economist, but he knew the importance of art. For this reason, Colbert, and by extension the king, launched a vast program of art patronage and development. Artists understood that the works best suited were those that raised the stature of the Sun King. The regime funded and produced numerous academies such as *Académie Française*, *Académie de Danse*, *Académie Royale de Reinture et de Sculpture* and *Académie Royale de Musique*. The arts ranged from architecture, medals, tapestries, painting, sculpture and literature (Burke 49-53).

Colbert appointed Perrault to the Academy of Incriptions and Belles Lettres (first known as the Little Academy) and later to The French Academy. The purpose of the former was to advise on how to commemorate great events in the Kingdom's contemporary history which Perrault (Barchilon and Flinders "Chronology"). The latter dealt with language. In addition to this Perrault aided in the development of the Academy of Sciences and the French Academy (Perrault "Memoirs" 41-53).

believed in the king, and this showed in how ready he was to defend Louis XIV even after Perrault lost his employment in 1682, after losing favor with the Academies (Barchilon and Flinders 27-28).¹⁵

Even if Perrault was given to political maneuvers, he doesn't indicate any "noble" aspirations. During Perrault's era, within in a few generations, a family could "buy" or be granted titles to be considered nobility. Having that title came with a number of benefits, but primarily it meant that a person of nobility did not have to pay taxes. This led to increased hostility between the old nobility, new nobility, and the crown (Parker 136-143).

Perrault's fairy tales put him in an awkward position. He was proud of them even though the other members of the French Academy shunned fairy tales as a less than worthy pursuit (Perrault "Memoirs" 19). However, Louis XIV's era was one that appreciated fairy tales. During his reign there was a revival in studies of mythology, legends, and fairy stories. Louis XIV and Colbert both had an open fondness for fairy tales, which were often recited to the nobility at Versailles (Barchilon and Flinders 78-79). Perrault had experience taking known works and then transforming their verse, such as in his early experimentation with burlesque classics. His most famous collection of tales was *Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passé* [*Histories of Tales of Past Times*], alternatively known as *Contes de Ma Mère L'Oye* [*Tales of Mother Goose*], published in

¹⁵ In 1687, Perrault accidentally began the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns. This academic argument was spurred by Perrault's poem "Le Siècle de Louis de Grand" (translated as The Century of Louis the Great) wherein he mocked Plato. According to Perrault his current era was more informed and advanced than classic cultures like those of ancient Greece and Rome. This created a rift where some championed the Ancients - the Greeks, Romans and Renaissance artists, scientists and scholars – versus the Moderns, those of Perrault's day. While he was much maligned for his viewpoint, here we get an interesting view of Perrault's personal character: he had conviction (Perrault, Zarruchi 15-18). While there may be doubts to his authorship of certain projects it seems that Perrault was not one to speak or write something he wasn't committed to believing.

1697. The collection includes famous works such as "Barbe Bleue" ["Bluebeard"] and "La Belle au Bois Dormant" ["Sleeping Beauty"]. But the story that concerns this thesis is "Cendrillon ou la Petite Pantoufle de Verre," known in English as "Cinderella or The Little Glass Slipper" (Barchilon and Flinders 63).

It is important to note that Perrault was familiar with and influenced by Basile's stories. He was also present at the salon of Madame d'Aulnoy, who is discussed in Chapter 3 (Zipes 444). As such, Perrault's version can be seen in conversation with the other two authors. It was customary for authors to share their works in progress at salons, so d'Aulnoy would have heard much of Perrault's work recited and vice versa. There is no proof that d'Aulnoy and Perrault knew of, let alone shared, their respective Cinderellas, but they were both participants in salons that venerated the fairy tale as an art form (Barchilon 355; Trinquet 34).

Perrault's Cinderella is a much more sympathetic figure than Zezolla. Her father is not a prince but a gentleman. Cinderella's father "qui épouia en secondes nœces une femme, la plus hautaine et la plus fière qu'on eût jamais vue" ["took for his wife the most vain and haughty woman imaginable"] (Perrault 57; Tatar 30).¹⁶ Likewise, she has two cruel daughters. Cinderella is said to have taken "elle tenoit cela de sa mère qui étoit la meilleure personne du monde" ["after her mother, who had been the finest person you can imagine"] (Perrault 57-58; Tatar 30). She is made to work as a servant, doing the household chores. Meanwhile, her father is described as being controlled by his new wife. The contrasts between the sisters and Cinderella continue (Tatar 30-31). "Cependant Cendrillon avec ses méchants habits, ne laissoit pas d'être cent

¹⁶ For simplicity, the early French version by Perrault will typically be followed by Tatar's translated version found in *The Annotated Fairy Tales*. If her name is absent in the citation that will indicate my translation. The French in this and in the following chapter was and corrected by Cecilia Sabarot.

fois plus belle que ses sœurs, quoique vêtues très-magnifiquement" ["The stepsisters dressed in magnificent clothes, yet Cinderella looked a thousand times prettier, even in her shabby apparel"] (Perrault 59; Tatar 31).

There is no indication of the rank of the stepmother, the social upheaval comes from Cinderella's sudden demotion to the level of servant. Her beauty is still synonymous with her virtuous disposition, and her stepsisters are meant to be a contrast to both these. This is all to make her plight all the more sympathetic. One of the first pieces of information we are given is her lineage. This establishes her as a genteel and associates the positive aspects of her personality and attractiveness with her birth. Her father, is guilty of neglect but the blame is put on the stepmother who is described as able to "le gouvernoit entièrement" ["govern him in entirety"] (Perrault 58). The fact that this woman governs her husband paints her as a corrupting force.

Cinderella's sisters are invited to a ball and Perrault showcases Cinderella's behavior. As her stepsisters prepare for the celebration, they take the time to mock her. She is in turn forced to iron their clothing and do their hair (Tatar 31-33). Despite their teasing, Perrault writes that "Une autre que Cendrillon les auroit coëffées de travers, mais elle étoit bonne, et elle les coëffa parfaitement bien" ["Anyone else but Cinderella would have given them unflattering hairdos, but Cinderella was good-natured, and she put their hair up perfectly"] (60, Tatar 33). As they head out to the ball, Cinderella's fairy godmother comes to her as she pines to go. "Hé bien, seras-tu bonne fille, dit sa marraine, je t'y ferai aller?" ["Well, if you're good,' she says, 'I'll make sure you get there'"] (Perrault 61; Tatar 34). The fairy godmother turns a pumpkin into a carriage, some mice into horses, a rat into a coachman, lizards into pages, and transforms her

clothing into "d'or et d'argent, tout chamarrés de pierreries: elle lui donna ensuite une paire de pantoufles de verre, les plus jolies du monde" ["into garments of gold and silver, encrusted with jewels. Then she gave her a pair of glass slippers, the most beautiful ever seen"] (Perrault 63; Tatar 34-35).

Perrault, whose goal was to educate the populace and spread morality, continuously makes the heroines who have happy endings paragons of virtue. Even the fairy godmother provides the caveat "seras-tu bonne fille" ["will be good"] which indicates that there is a reward and punishment system (Tatar 34). Cinderella is forgiving and not spiteful, as Perrault includes the detail that she does not seek vengeance by giving her stepsisters ugly hairdos, but instead "elle les coëffa parfaitement bien" ["gives them perfect coiffures"]. To further underscore her nature, he makes it clear that she rises above petty behavior that "anyone else but Cinderella would have given them unflattering hairdos". The reward to her displays of forgiveness, kindness, and generally good behavior is the brief restoration of her status. Her resplendent appearance, covered in precious metals and jewels, is a fantasy reward to encourage good behavior. Perrault's involvement in the court of Louis XIV would have given him a fine understanding of the power of an opulent image. Considering how much Louis lavished on the arts as propaganda, it is easy to see how Perrault would know that a beautiful image can convey power and virtue.

Yet, Cinderella's genteel heritage and the fact that her stepsisters are given fine garments shows that her lineage is privileged in the first place. Like Zozolla's fairy in the date tree, the fairy godmother serves to reinforce the supernatural at work to restore the natural order. While she serves as a moralizing figure, the fairy godmother's presence acts

as a divine intervention. As with the divine right of kings, God, or in this case good fairies, a higher power provides for the heroine. Even the godmother's transformation of lowly creatures is temporary and relegates them as accessories to Cinderella, equating laboring persons with little more than pests and just as disposable.

Her fairy godmother explains to Cinderella her curfew. She must be home by midnight before everything changes back. The prince hears of a princess arriving and escorts her himself (Tatar 35-36). As Perrault writes, "tant on étoit attentif à contempler les grandes beautés de cette inconnue" ["everyone was so absorbed in contemplating the great beauty of the unknown lady who had just entered"] (64; Tatar 37). The attendees are fascinated by Cinderella and her clothing: "Toutes les dames étoient attentives à considérer sa coëffure et ses habits, pour en avoir, dès le lendemain, de semblables, pourvu qu'il se trouvât des étoffes assez belles, et des ouvriers assez habiles" ["All the ladies were carefully inspecting Cinderella's headdress and clothing so that they could try to find the same beautiful fabrics and hire able hands to make what she was wearing"] (Perrault 64; Tatar 37-8). Cinderella takes some time to chat with her stepsisters, who do not recognize her while she "leur fit mille honnêtetés" ["paid them a thousand compliments"] (Perrault 65; Tatar 38). She leaves promptly before twelve but is invited to the ball the next day by the prince, who is enamored with her. At home, she thanks her fairy godmother, and feigns ignorance about the ball with her stepsisters. They tell her all about a mysterious princess that has stolen the prince's heart. Cinderella begs to borrow a yellow dress from one of them, who refuses it (Tatar 38-39). At this refusal Cinderella "en fut bien-aise; car elle auroit été grandement embarrassée si sa sœur eût bien voulu lui prêter son habit" ["was pleased, since she would have been terribly embarrassed if her

sister had been willing to lend the dress"] (Perrault 67; Tatar 39).

The prince may indeed be enamored by her beauty but it only stands out due to his assumption of her social status and wealth. Because she is dressed in such finery, she gains access to royalty. Her ability to be seen as beautiful is due to the clothing she wears, which helps to give the appearance of a princess. It stands to reason that the essential physicality (face, body) that makes her beautiful does not change, but what makes her one of "les grandes beautés" ["the great beauties"] is her clothing (as the evidence of her heritage). Yes, she may have looked better than her sisters even in her shabby dress, but that does not mean that being a natural beauty would have given her access to the prince. She is considered attractive not just because of her physical beauty, but because she carries all the trappings of a princess. Perrault deliberately describes the dress as made of "d'or et d'argent, tout chamarrés de pierreries" ["gold and silver, bespeckled with jewels"] to exemplify its opulence.

The detail about the ladies inspecting Cinderella's clothing so that they may hire skilled hands to recreate it also telling. In the court of Louis XIV, fashion is power. When the ladies at the party plan on imitating the style of Cinderella, this is symbolic of real social relevance. William Ray notes that

This general obsession with fashion reveals something more than simple imitation of the court by the urban classes or a concern with clothing and appearance... fashion in France was inextricable from fundamental questions of personal liberty and one's affiliation to society. (91)

French society at the time was obsessed with being "in fashion," creating an imitative atmosphere (Ray 91-94). Cinderella's presence *creates* fashion and this would not have

gone unnoticed by Perrault's contemporaries.

The interaction at the ball between Cinderella and her stepsisters is also shows how clothing can dictate status and change. Cinderella is so transformed that even her relatives cannot recognize her. This could be said to be the same case in Basile's version, where in *Zeuzolla* "astonishes" her sisters at one of the balls but is not recognized by them (Basile – Zipes 448). That Perrault's Cinderella pays them a thousand compliments ["leur fit mille honnêtetés"] creates a comic effect. It serves as a sign of Cinderella's charming personality, one that can persuade even her evil stepsisters, if in the right costume.

At the ball, however, Cinderella's good nature seems to give way to some vanity. This is shown by her reluctance to borrow a dress from her stepsister because it is lesser quality than the fine clothing given to her by her Fairy godmother. As it stated that "auroit été grandement embarrassée" ["she would have been greatly embarrassed"] perhaps because the dress was not in good taste. This suggests that Cinderella's sisters lack knowledge of fashion in comparison to herself.

The second day, Cinderella arrives at the ball "mais encore plus parée que la première fois" ["dressed even more magnificently than before"] (Perrault 67; Tatar 39). Distracted by the prince, she misses her curfew, drops one of her glass slippers and barely escapes notice as the guards "qu'ils n'avoient vu sortir personne, qu'une jeune fille fort mal vêtue, et qui avoit plus l'air d'une paysanne que d'une Demoiselle" ["had not seen anyone leave except a girl who was poorly dressed and looked more like a peasant than a lady"] (Perrault 68; Tatar 40). The prince is determined to discover his princess and having found the glass slipper, tries it on every woman in the kingdom, stating that he will marry the one whose foot fits (Tatar 42). They try "juste à la pantoufle. On

commença a l'essayer aux Princesses, ensuite aux Duchesses, et à toute la Cour, mais inutilement" ["the shoe on the princesses, then on the duchesses, then on everyone at court, but in vain"] (Perrault 69; Tatar 42). When the slipper arrives at Cinderella's home and her sisters' feet do not fit, she offers her foot. Cinderella's foot magically fits and she takes out the other shoe to prove that she is the mysterious princess (Tatar 42). Then her godmother appears and makes "les habits de Cendrillon; les fit devenir encore plus magnifiques que tous les autres" ["Cinderella's garments more magnificent than ever before"] (Perrault 70; Tatar 42). Her sisters beg her forgiveness and Cinderella helps them to marry two noblemen the same day that she marries the prince (Tatar 43).

The appearance of nobility is necessary for Cinderella to be recognized. She goes from being the belle of the ball, "mais encore plus parée que la première fois" ["dressed even more magnificently than before"] to resembling a peasant. Clothing marks a clear demarcation of class. She is not viewed as a "Demoiselle" ["Lady"] but a "paysanne" ["peasant"]. The stripping away of her garb strips Cinderella of her identity, rendering her little more than invisible. In the story's context, the rags are the costume that hides the true nobility and by extension, her virtuous presence.

Cinderella does resemble someone of high birth at the ball. Yet after those persons have been exhausted and eliminated, the phrase "inutilement" ["in vain"] gives the impression of the disappointment of not finding her, and the anxiety that she may not be of noble birth. It is not just her natural beauty and grace that was attractive but her high standing. For Cinderella to be fully recognized in the end, even after the slipper fits, her godmother has to come and transform her clothing. The presence of the divine (fairy godmother) declares Cinderella as worthy of her new office (that of a princess). The show

of forgiveness to her sisters and her ability to marry them off to two noblemen also indicates that they are of some noble status to begin with. This is unlike Zozolla's sisters in Basile's work, who in the end are forced to look on in frustrated jealousy and to walk home dejectedly.

A Perrault story would be incomplete without a tacked-on moral or two in poetic verse. The first moral begins innocently enough with a praise for good grace over beauty. But towards the middle and the end it seems to state that grace is something given: "la bonne grace est la vrai don des Fées, sans elle on ne peut rien, avec elle on peut tout" ["Grace is a gift that the fairies confer/ Ask anyone at all; it's what we prefer"] (Perrault 71; Tatar 43). The lines of the alternative moral continue this line of thinking

C'est sans doute un grand avantage,
D'avoir de l'esprit du courage,
De la naissance du bon sens,
Et d'autres semblables talens,
Qu'on reçoit du Ciel en partage:
Mais vous aurez beau les avoir
Pour votre avancement ce seront choses vaines,
Si vous n'avez, pour les faire valoir,
Ou des parrains, ou des marraines. (Perrault 71-72)

Surely it's a benefit
[To show real courage and have some wit,
to have good sense and breeding too
And whatever else comes out of the blue.

But none of this will help you out,
if you wish to shine and gad about.
Without the help of godparents
Your life will never have great events]. (Tatar 43)

The only chance at a happy ending is by having "the help of godparents." This could refer to having beneficial familial relations, or if referring to the actual fairy godmother, divine intervention. This is further supported by the lines at the other moral that state "grace est la vrai don des Fées" ["grace is a gift that the fairies confer"]. Much like the final line in Basile's version that one "must be mad to oppose the stars," accession to royalty is decreed by heaven. Perrault's Cinderella is a much more sympathetic figure because of her virtues, but both Cinderella and Zezolla succeed in becoming a princess and a queen respectively because they are helped by the divine, represented by the good fairies. Cinderella's class mobility from being the daughter of a gentleman to a princess is a larger leap than Zezolla's, but accomplished because the precedent for her nobility remains.

The use of the divine was a tactic well employed by Louis XIV's council. The king was consistently made allegorically to part of divine mythologies, tying his character to his bloodline or mythical persons (Burke 61-83).¹⁷ Cinderella's tale of goodness as an inheritance follows and expounds that same belief system. This story's morality is proof that Perrault was fully indoctrinated to that line of thinking, whether working under the supervision of the king or not.

¹⁷ During his reign, Louis XIV commissioned numerous art pieces to glorify himself and his conquests. Charles Lebrun "painted nine pictures of the Dutch war, including one of Louis sitting in a chariot holding a thunderbolt in his hand, and accompanied across the Rhine by Minerva, Hercules and the personifications of Glory and Victory" (Burke 77).

IV. MARIE-CATHERINE D'AULNOY'S "CLEVER CINDERELLA"

While less famous than her contemporary Charles Perrault, Marie-Catherine le Jumel de Barneville, Comtesse d'Aulnoy (who will be referred to as d'Aulnoy) may have been the more influential. She added a degree of originality to the fairy tale by creating characters with complexity, as well as lengthy and exciting plots (Jones 239-241). Some of d'Aulnoy's stories are proto-feminist, following the steps of women writers before her.

Like many woman innovators of the fairy tale tradition, d'Aulnoy has been largely ignored in favor of her male contemporaries. This is ironic, considering that d'Aulnoy is credited with coining the term "fairy tales" ["Contes de Fees"]. Her writing was popular in her time and exerted influence in France and England (Jones "British" 239-41).

Scholarship on d'Aulnoy explores her influence, motifs, and themes. From J.R. Planché from the mid nineteenth century (whose translation is used here) to Melvin Palmer in the 1970s and Christine Jones, she has been closely studied. Allison Stedman's work on feminism in d'Aulnoy's work is featured here, as well as Jacques Barchilon's scholarship on d'Aulnoy's motifs.

D'Aulnoy's tale, "Finette Cendron" ["Clever Cinderella"], is outwardly very different from the two aforementioned versions. There is a fairy godmother, a missing shoe, ashes and a noble girl losing and gaining status. Yet, this story that is longer and more complex. There are no stepmothers nor stepsisters: Cinderella's biological mother and sisters serve as her antagonists. "Finette Cendrone" also includes a "Hansel and Gretel" style abandonment and a battle with ogres. In a number of ways d'Aulnoy's story

has some epic traits, for the hero braves numerous trials using wit to return home.

In d'Aulnoy's, Perrault's and Basile's tales the primary source of conflict stems from a loss of wealth and status, which is restored through marriage. Finette's problem is a lost fortune and her goal (aside from survival) is the restoration of her fortune. Due to the fact that d'Aulnoy's story has added layers of narrative, the theme has a more nuanced meaning than the typical "restoration of status" theme that is characteristic of the Cinderella story type. D'Aulnoy's "Finette" also serves to undermine and critique both that typical narrative and that hierarchical system.

D'Aulnoy was born in Normandy to a noble family in either 1649 or 1650 (Planché xvii; Zipes 821). At fifteen she was married to "François de la Motte, Baron d'Aulnoy, who was thirty years her senior and a notorious gambler and libertine" (Zipes 821-22). In 1669, d'Aulnoy, along with her mother and their respective lovers, sought to frame her husband for treason and have him beheaded (Zipes 822). According to Planché, the plan backfired when one of the conspirators suffered a pang of guilt and revealed the plot before the Baron could lose his head (xvii). This led to d'Aulnoy's and her mother's lovers being executed and d'Aulnoy's arrest. Her mother fled from Paris. It's alleged that d'Aulnoy and her mother worked as secret agents for France in their exile, which could explain why they were able to return to Paris in 1685 (Zipes 822). In her exile, d'Aulnoy traveled through Holland, Spain, and England. Her time in the latter countries inspired *Mémoires de la cour d'Espagne* [*Memories of the Spanish Court*] (1690) and *Mémoires de la cour d'Angleterre* [*Memories of the English Court*] (1695). However, while she spent time in those countries, there is no evidence that she ever was in the courts of England or Spain (Zipes 822).

Back in Paris, d'Aulnoy set out to cultivate a literary presence. At the time the salon structure was an intellectual party or gathering, hosted by women of means. Artists, scientists, intellectuals of different kinds could meet and exchange ideas (Stedman 31-35). The salon stood in opposition to the state-sanctioned academies, which often did not admit women. Louis XIV's patronage of the academies led to academic praise of him. The academies were under the patronage of the king and Colbert. The various academies "mobilised artists, writers and scholars in the service of the king" (Burke 50). Salons were independent of royal patronage, hosted by women, exercised feminine authority and power in artistic innovation (Stedman 32-5).

In 1690 d'Aulnoy published both her first work and inadvertently the first published French fairy tale. The story "L'île de la félicité" ["The Island of Happiness"] as hidden in the larger work *Histoire d'Hypolite* [*The Story of Hippolytus*].¹⁸ This work predates Perrault's fairytales by half a decade. A story within a story, "The Island of Happiness," is a proto-feminist re-working of the Cupid and Psyche tale. In the story, d'Aulnoy swaps the traditional gender roles. In order to make the swap obvious she draws comparisons to the original myth within the text itself with metaphors and allusions (Stedman 32-5).

It's clear that d'Aulnoy considered fairy tales to be important to intellectual discussion, including, "the subtle, anti-absolutist discourse that French fairy tales would have the capability to express in the decades to come" (Stedman 38). At her salons guests were invited to dress up as their favorite fairy-tale characters (Zipes 822).

In her version of Cinderella, the protagonist is a paragon of heroic and virtuous

¹⁸ This story is considered both tale type 425 Cupid and Psyche, much like "East of the Sun, West of the Moon" or "Beauty and the Beast" and tale type 470, "The Island Where No One Dies" (Anderson Chapter 4 and Barchilon 354)

nature. D'Aulnoy's version has a touch of epic grandeur, for her Cinderella contends with ogres and homelessness, as well as abandonment by her parents and the fairies. Crafting lengthy and convoluted narratives for fairy tales is something that is somewhat unique to d'Aulnoy. Due to their length, her tales have been referred to as "novellas written from an aristocratic perspective" (Barchilon 355).

D'Aulnoy uses elements from several stories to create a hybrid. This particular version was probably inspired by Perrault's story "Little Thumbling" (Barchilon 357).¹⁹ "Finette Cendrone" deals with similar circumstances, with the addition of abusive sisters and a lost kingdom and a prince in love with her shoe.

D'Aulnoy employed numerous deliberately subversive literary treatments. She often added tongue-in-cheek commentary as well as revealing a character's inner thoughts and motivations. She complicates or critiques societal conditions rather than reinforcing them. This is especially true in her use of divine intervention and her depictions of nobility. Her longer and more convoluted tales allow the reader to experience a deeper characterization. As Barchilon mentions, "[d]'Aulnoy displays a richly baroque imagination, full of hyperbole and playful humor (356). There is a sense of play and folly within all the characters that showcases many of the issues d'Aulnoy observed in her time.

The heroine, Fine-Orielle ("Shrewd Listener"), whose nickname is Finette (meaning clever girl), shares the moral fortitude of Perrault's Cinderella. Finette is an idolized amalgam of steadfast devotion to her relatives (regardless of whether they

¹⁹ From tale type 327, for modern readers this is known as "Hansel and Gretel" type. In "Little Thumbling" seven brothers are abandoned by their poor parents in the woods. The story is named for the youngest, Thumbling, who is the most clever and resourceful one. The boys are caught by an ogre who plans on eating them. In the end Thumbling's guile helps them escape with the ogre's gold and they return home alive and rich (Perrault "Thumbling" 704-711).

deserve it), cunning, and hard work. While Finette is careful to hold on to her morals, the dialogue showcases that she is not a pushover. Finette does not always do as she is told, or silently take abuse as other Cinderellas had. This story breaks down many seventeenth century conventions.

It begins on a transgressive note:

Il étoit une fois un Roi & une Reine qui avoient mal fait leurs affaires, on les chasse de leur Royaume, ils vendirent leurs couronnes pour vivre, puis leurs habits, leur linge, leurs dentelles & tous leurs meubles pièce à pièce les Fripiers étoient las d'acheter, car tour les jours ils vendoient chose nouvelle: quand le Roi & la Reine furent bien pauvres, le Roi dit à sa femme, nous voilà hors de notre Royaume, nous n'avons plus rien, il faut gagner notre vie & celle de nos pauvres enfants, avisez un peu ce que nous avons à faire, car jusqu'à-présent je n'ai su que le métier de Roi qui est fort doux. (d'Aulnoy 103)

[Once on a time there was a King and a Queen who had managed their affairs very badly. They were driven out of their kingdom. They sold their crown to support themselves; then their wardrobes, their linen, their lace, and all their furniture, piece by piece. The brokers were tired of purchasing, for every day something or other was sent for sale. When they had disposed of nearly everything, the King said to the Queen, "We are out of our own country, and have no longer any property. We must do something to get a living for ourselves and our poor children. Consider a little what we can do: for up to this time I have known no trade but a

king's which is a very agreeable one"]. (Planché 227)²⁰

Finette's story begins with a drastic loss of status and not the loss of a parent which is blamed on the actions of the king and queen. It is clearly stated that they "qui avoient mal fait leurs affaires" ["had managed their affairs very badly"] and were hence punished by being "on les chasse de leur Royaume" ["driven out of their kingdom"].

Jacques Barchilon points out that "the suggestion that kings and queens could be thrown out of their country appears rather 'revolutionary' in 1697. Yet, d'Aulnoy, who had spent time in England would have been aware of the execution of King Charles I in 1649; his wife, Queen Henriette, was the aunt of Louis XIV" (358). The Fronde, a series of rebellions by the nobility against Louis XIV's mother, Queen Anne, occurred in d'Aulnoy's lifetime (Dunlop 11-28). These rebellions were quelled as Louis XIV came to power, but she must have had an awareness of them while growing up amongst nobility.

There is an element of sly criticism as the king freely admits that he doesn't know any other trade outside that of being a king. This is humorous, since it suggests that the king knew one skill (being a monarch) but wasn't particularly good at it (having lost the kingdom due to mismanagement). These royals are incompetent. Their folly isn't due to the manipulation of someone of a lower station, but on their personal failings. The tale seems to imply that this incompetence gave license to other forces to discard the rulers. This is revolutionary indeed.

The queen decides that they should abandon their daughters, "ce sont de franchises paresseuses, qui croient encore être de grandes Dames, elles veulent faire les Demoiselles" ["they are downright idle girls, who think themselves fine ladies, and would

²⁰ For this chapter, the original French will be followed by the translated version done by Planché unless otherwise indicated.

fain live in that style without work"] (d'Aulnoy 104; Planché 227). The queen plots to take the girls far away and leave them there. Little do the king and queen know that their youngest, Fine-Orielle (living up to her name), is listening through the keyhole and discovers the plot (Planché 227-228). It should be noted that while poverty is the key motivation the King and Queen have to discard their daughters, the additional description of their idle nature further drives home the indication of a lazy and unskilled royalty.

Finette decides to seek help from her fairy godmother Merluche.²¹ She gathers the ingredients to make a cake and sets off to find the fairy's home. On the way she grows exhausted, but like magic, a saddled horse sent by Merluche comes to meet her. The horse dutifully takes her to Merluche's grotto. When Finette reaches her godmother she tells her that she has brought the ingredients "faire un bon gâteau à la mode de notre país" ["to make a cake with after our country fashion"] (d'Aulnoy 106; Planché 228). They greet one another, embrace and "[Merluche] l'embrassa deux fois, dont Finette, resta très-joyeuse, car Madame Merluche n'était pas une Fée à la douzaine" ["[Merluche] kissed her twice which Finette was greatly delighted, for Madame Merluche was not one of those fairies you might find by the dozen"] (d'Aulnoy 106, Planché 228). Merluche then has Finette "soyez ma petite femme de chambre" ["act as her lady's maid"] and comb her hair "le plus adroitement du monde" ["as cleverly as possible"] (d'Aulnoy 106; Planché 228-9).

Like other Cinderellas, Finette is willing to supplicate others. By bringing cake ingredients and brushing her fairy godmother's hair Finette displays her humility. Merluche as a fairy stands in symbolically in for the divine; she holds a higher status than

²¹ "Merluche" refers to fish species, either hake or cod. In some cases it refers to salted hake or cod sold by fish peddlers (Gaidoz 392).

Finette as a former princess. Thus Finette acting as a lady's maid makes sense in their relative social context. In this situation, Merluche's kisses are symbolic of her bestowing her favor on Finette.

Merluche already knows of the King and Queen's plot to abandon the girls. The fairy gives Finette magical thread that will never break and instructs her to fasten an end to the door and use it to find her way home. She also gives her "qui lui remplit un sac de beaux habits tout d'or & d'argent" ["a bag full of fine dresses all of gold and silver"] (d'Aulnoy 107; Planché 229). The next morning, the Queen tells her daughters that they will go to see her sister and be entertained. Finette's sisters, Fleur d'Amour and Belle-de-Nuit, are excited to leave their desert home. "[E]lles allèrent si loin, si loin, que Fine Oreille avoit grand' peur de n'avoir pas assez de fil, car il y avoit près de mille lieues; elle marchoit toujours derrière ses sœurs, passant le fil adroitement dans les buissons" ["They went so far - so far, that Fine-Oreille was much afraid her thread would not be long enough, for they had gone nearly a thousand leagues. She walked always behind the others, drawing the thread cleverly through the thickets"] (d'Aulnoy 108; Planché 229). The Queen instructs the girls to sleep in the thick wood, at which point she abandons them.

Similarly to Perrault's and Basile's versions, the Cinderella is given gowns of gold and silver that reflect her intrinsic worth and noble heritage. The royal family has been exiled to a desert, which reflects their dire situation. Finette's cleverness is clear when she hides the thread from her mother and sisters so that she will not be caught.

Finette pretends to sleep that night: "Je sai assez que vous n'en ferez rien, dit Finette, mais je n'en serai pas moins bonne sœur, & se levant elle suivit son fil & les

Princesses aussi, déforte qu'elles arrivèrent presque aussi-tôt-que la Reine" ["'If I were an ill-natured girl,' she said to herself, 'I should go home directly and leave my sisters to die here, for they beat me and scratch me till the blood comes. But notwithstanding all their malice, I will not abandon them'"] (d'Aulnoy 109; Planché 230). Finette wakes her sisters, tells them everything, and they beg Finette to take them with her. "[E]lles se mettent à pleurer & la prient de les mener avec elle, qu'elles lui donneront leurs belles poupées, leur petit ménage d'argent, leurs autres jouëts, and leurs bonbons. Je sai assez que vous n'en ferez rien, dit Finette, mais je n'en serai pas moins bonne sœur & se levant elle suivit son fil & les Princesses aussi" ["They began to cry, and begged her to take them with her, promising that they would give her beautiful dolls, a child's set of silver plate, and all their other toys and sweet-meats. 'I am quite sure you will do no such thing,' said Finette; 'but I will behave as a good sister should, for all that'"] (d'Aulnoy 108-9; Planché 230). The girls arrive home and convince their parents to let them in. At home Finette demands the dolls and such that were promised to her, but instead her sisters give her a beating.

To be clear, these are not step-sisters but Finette's biological sisters, another display of royalty behaving badly. They not only routinely beat Fine-Oreille, but do so after promising to give her gifts. This reinforces their horrible temperaments, though the girls themselves attribute the beatings to their own jealousy. They tell Finette that she is the reason for "the King's caring so little" for them (Planché 231).

Finette is outspoken. While Basile's and Perrault's narrators describe the abuse Cinderella is subjected to, Finette speaks for herself. She actively resents her situation. Her retort to her sisters' pleading that "Je sai assez que vous n'en ferez rien" ["I am sure

you will do no such thing’"] shows a brashness not displayed in either of the other Cinderellas. Ultimately she will not abandon her sisters because she does have principles. That does not mean that she is happy about it and she is willing, at least in soliloquy, to voice her displeasure.

That night Finette cannot sleep because of the bruises she has received and she overhears her parents plotting to abandon the girls again. Finette creeps out of bed into the yard and takes two hens, a cock and rabbits, killing them and putting them in a basket to take to her fairy godmother. On her way the magical horse picks her up again. Finette meets with her godmother, presents her with her gifts and begs for her help.

Merluche dit à sa fillolle de ne s'affliger pas, elle lui donna un sac tout plein de cendres, vous porterez le sac devant vous, lui dit- elle, vous le secouerez, vous marcherez sur la cendre, & quand vous vouldrez revenir, vous n'aurez qu' à regarder l'impression de vos pas, mais ne ramenez point vos sœurs, elles sont trop malicieuses, & si vous les ramenez, je ne veux plus vous voir. (d'Aulnoy 111)

[Merluche told her goddaughter not to afflict herself, and gave her a sack full of ashes. "Carry this sack before you," said she, "and shake it as you go along. You will walk on the ashes, and when you wish to return you will have only to follow your footmarks; but do not bring your sisters back with you. They are too malicious, and if you do bring them back I will never see you again."] (Planché 231)

Finette brings practical gifts in the form of food stuffs. She habitually gives before receiving anything; and this scene is meant to further highlight her principled behavior.

At the same time, Merluche's relationship to nature is noteworthy. Like the godmother in Basile's *Cinderella*, Merluche is tied to the pastoral. She commands a magical horse and lives in a grotto. These indications of the pastoral function as symbols of the divine. However, Merluche also wants to be served with simple gifts of food. In many ways, Finette's offerings are poor exchanges for the ability to travel home, for diamonds and gowns. But Merluche responds to those gifts because Finette is purposefully transcending class distinctions. If you will recall, the function of the nobility during the *ancien régime* was reduced to almost impotence. Finette performing menial tasks on her own indicates her usefulness and repositions her as a character of noble background who is active in her own salvation. This is in opposition to the passive role many nobles played in seventeenth century France.

This is also an intriguing use of ash. "Cinder" in "Cinderella" typically refers to her menial status. As Maria Tatar notes, "Cinderella is always the household drudge, a creature who not only has to discharge domestic chores but whose true beauty is concealed by *soot, dust, and cinders*" (30, emphasis mine). Instead of cinders or ash being the mechanism that hides Finette, it becomes an item which helps her return home. This plot twist acts as an inversion of that typical trope. Unlike Basile and Perrault, d'Aulnoy has not yet described the housework that Cinderella must do, describing instead the abuse she takes at the hands of her sisters. Her housework has generally been in the context of her godmother, such as Finette wringing the necks of the cock and hens to bring to Merluche. As noted by Tatar, soot is used to conceal Cinderella's beauty. Here it becomes the mechanism that should reveal the way home. The fact that she must step on it parallels the later slipper that reveals her identity.

Merluche's admission that the sisters are better left lost is also revolutionary. In the fairy godmother's dismissal of the princesses, royalty is not granted divine protection. This presents an ultimatum to Finette, that she should abandon both her sisters and principles. Finette, like many heroes, faces a test of morality.

After taking the ash, Merluche gives Finette a box filled with diamonds. The next day, after her mother has abandoned her, Finette decides to take home Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour, defying Merluche's request. But again, Finette overhears her mother's plot to abandon them, and this time it succeeds, as Finette cannot go to her fairy godmother for a solution. Her sisters try using peas to mark the way, but they are eaten by pigeons. The girls are lost for some time until they locate a mansion in the distance. The sisters steal Finette's dresses and diamonds from Merluche and prepare to head to the mansion (Planché 232-235).

The theft of the gowns and diamonds reinforces the sisters' cruelty, but it also plays with the typical description given to Cinderella when she is in the gowns granted by a fairy. They are "accommodées comme des Soleils" ("shining like suns") and are transformed by the clothing just as Cinderella typically is (Planché 235). Splendor is the key to beauty in Cinderella stories and here that beauty or splendor is in the clothes not worn by the heroine.

The girls head towards the mansion with Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour imagining how they will be treated: "nous mangerons à la table du Roi! mais pour Finette elle lavera les écuelles dans la cuisine, car elle est faite comme une souillon; & si l'on demande qui elle est, gardons-nous bien de l'appeler notre sœur, il faudra dire que c'est la petite vachère du village" ["We shall dine at the King's table; but Finette will

have to wash the dishes in the kitchen for she looks like a scullion; and if anybody asks who she is, we must take care not to call her our sister; we must say she is the little cowkeeper in the village'"] (d'Aulnoy119; Planché 235-236). Finette thereby officially loses her status. She and her sisters may be equal in social terms (though Fine-Orielle is the youngest) but they have demoted her to scullery maid. They have stolen her status. The sisters take the place of Cinderella's father, as in Basile's or Perrault's stories, by violating a divine contract, essentially demoting a royal-born. This violation is typically from neglecting to confront the abuse Cinderella faces, but here the violation comes from the abusers. This is a small, critical difference that will impact the story's end.

They reach the mansion only to find that an Ogre couple live there. The Ogress is described as a horrific being: "elle n'avoit qu'un œil au milieu du front, mais il étoit plus grand que cinq ou six autres, avoit le nez plat, le teint noir, & la bouche si horrible qu'elle faisoit peur; elle avoit quinze pieds de haut & trente de tour" ["She had but one eye, which was in the middle of her forehead, but it was bigger than five or six ordinary ones. Her nose was flat, her complexion swarthy, and her mouth so horrible that it frightened you to look at it. She was fifteen feet high and measured thirty around her body"] (d'Aulnoy119-20; Planché 236).

As the Ogre is out, the Ogress wants to eat the girls by herself and hide them from her husband. But before she can eat Finette, the Ogre comes home and she hides the girls from him so that she may keep them for herself. The Ogre, after eating fifteen children, can smell the girls. The Ogress has to confess to their existence but makes up the excuse that she wishes for them to remain as her servants because she is getting old and tired. After arguing for a bit the Ogre agrees not to eat them right away and they are brought

out and asked what kind of work they can do. The girls list their skills and are set to work. The Ogre asks Finette how she will tell that the fire is hot enough, and she replies by saying that she licks melted butter in the oven to make sure (Planché 236-8). While making the fire Finette throws butter deep into the oven and asks the Ogre lick the butter for her, since she cannot reach. Thus she tricks the Ogre into putting his head far into the oven and "desorte qu'il brûla jusques aux os. Quand l'Ogresse vint au four, elle demeura bien étonnée de trouver une montagne de cendre des os de son mari" ["so all the flesh was burnt off his bones. When the Ogress came to the oven she was astounded to find her husband a mountain of cinders!"] (d'Aulnoy124; Planché 238).

Again Finette saves herself and her sisters. Aside from that, the use of cinders is once again an inversion of the "Cinderella" tradition. Whereas ashes revealed the way home, the transformation of the Ogre into ash frees the girls. This inversion could also foreshadow Finette's re-ascension into royalty. Without a social-climbing stepmother or stepsisters, another class usurper could be the Ogres themselves. They live in a fantastic mansion even though they are monstrous and terrorize the area. There also may be something deeply xenophobic or racist about the way the Ogress is described, as having "le teint noir" ["black skin"]. If we consider that, it may point to the idea that the Ogres are transgressing by living in a luxurious mansion. The Ogre's fate, turning into ash may be a moment where class becomes "corrected." At least this is true for Finette, who eliminates the Ogre not just for her own safety, as shall be seen, but in order to take over his property.

The Ogress begins to cry at losing her husband. The girls comfort the Ogress by doing her hair and dressing her up so that she may find a new husband. While Belle-de-

Nuit and Fleur d'Amour are chatting with the Ogress and primping her hair, Finette comes from behind and chops the Ogress' head off with a hatchet (Planché 238). Finette bears some resemblance to Zezolla in that she does not shy away from killing.

Undoubtedly this is rationalized by the plan of the couple to eat her and her sisters. In relation to her sisters and their abuse, Finette often confronts them by context, or readers are given information on how dejected she feels. When Finette actively kills, d'Aulnoy does not give her a voice. The girls are overjoyed at being saved but there is little interaction with the actual action of the moment. In many ways, the lack of detail in the scene is uncharacteristic of d'Aulnoy and suggests that she did not want to dwell on the action of killing but rather on a victorious hero.

Finette's activity in this story speaks to a larger conversation about gender. According to Christine Jones, successful French fairy tale heroines are "gender benders" in that they take on traits traditionally assigned to the masculine ("Heroism" 23-4). This includes "a default masculine ideal of ingenuity and cunning. Heroines who would not die of stupidity or grief survive by appropriating behaviors – words and deeds – not culturally designed for them" (Jones "Heroism" 24). Not even Little Thumbling, in the eponymous story by Perrault, kills ogres ("Thumbling" 708-710). Finette does not simply meet the heroic male ideal, Finette "conquers" the Ogre's mansion. She kills her oppressors and then takes their property by utilizing cunning and strength. Rather than act as a noble woman in need of rescue, she is her own salvation.

The girls celebrate, exploring the rooms of the mansion, which are filled with riches. Soon, Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour decide that they wish to find husbands to marry but realize that it may be difficult to do so in a place that must be known as an

Ogre's home. They decide to get dressed and travel to the nearest city and instruct Finette to stay home and do all the chores or she would "que si elle y manquoit elles l'assommeroient de coups" ["be beaten within an inch of her life!"] (d'Aulnoy 126; Planché 239). Finette is distraught and mourns the loss of her relationship with her godmother as she works. When her sisters come back, they inform her that they have been to a fabulous ball which they go to the next evening. What happens next could either be providence or coincidence:

Un soir que Finette étoit assise proche du feu sur un monceau de cendres, ne sachant que faire, elle cherchoit dans les fentes de la cheminée, & en cherchant ainsi, elle trouva une petite clef si vieille & si crasseuse, qu'elle eut toutes les peines du monde à la nettoyer; quand elle fut claire, elle connut qu'elle étoit d'or. (d'Aulnoy 127)

[One evening that Finette was sitting in the chimney corner on a heap of cinders, not knowing what to do, she examined the cracks in the chimney, and found in one of them a little key so old and so dirty that she had the greatest trouble cleaning it. When she had done so she found it was made of gold.] (Planché 239)

Finette runs throughout the mansion and finds that the key opens a casket "il y avoit des habits, des diamants, des dentelles, du linge, des rubans, pour des sommes immenses" ["full of clothes, diamonds, lace, linen, and ribbons, worth immense sums of money"] (d'Aulnoy 127; Planché 239).

Finette's "Cinderella" makes an appearance with her sitting by the hearth on a heap of cinders, but she discovers a key. In this case, a golden key (a metaphor for a

princess or Duke's daughter), is hidden in ash or cinders or poverty. In Basile's and Perrault's stories, the fairy godmother's aid is an instrument of the divine, but here providence is more difficult to locate. In the mind of the reader this could very well be coincidence or luck, but it could also be a more subtle connection to the world of fairies. This discovery takes place after it is clear that Finette has officially taken on the Cinderella mantle. She is forced to perform housework below her station at the behest of her sisters. In having the "godmother" role replaced by a lucky key, d'Aulnoy has complicated the typical narrative and given her Cinderella much more agency. No godmother helps her, since the dresses and diamonds from the godmother were stolen.

Is d'Aulnoy then critiquing divine right by suggesting that Finette's own ingenuity enables her to recover the dresses? That would be the first assumption, but a close reading paints a more complex picture. It is later revealed that the casket keeps giving her new clothes because "la cassette étoit Fée" ["the casket was a fairy one"] (d'Aulnoy 129; Planché 241). If Merluche's magic powers are such that she can command a magical horse from a distance and know Finette's parents' plot to abandon her ahead of time, then it is possible that Merluche coordinates Finette's discovery of the trunk and the key. This event does occur after Finette has proven herself against two Ogres, and perhaps this discovery is a small reward from her fairy godmother. But the plausibility of its being coincidence does complicate the narrative. Cinderella cannot simply wait for her godmother to solve her problems - she needs to look for solutions on her own.

The next day when her sisters leave, Finette gets dressed in the clothing she has found and "elle se prépara de sorte qu'elle étoit plus belle que le Soleil & la Lune. Ainsi ajustée elle fut au même bal où ses sœurs dansoient & quoiqu'elle n'eût point de masques,

elle étoit si changée en mieux, qu'elles ne la reconnurent pas" ["adorned herself, till she looked more beautiful than the sun and the moon together. Thus arrayed, she went to the ball where her sisters were dancing, and though she had no mask on, she was so changed for the better that they did not know her"] (d'Aulnoy127; Planché 240). At the ball she causes a stir with her beauty and grace. When asked by the lady of the mansion what her name is, she replies "Cendron" (Planché 240).

The people at the ball gossip about how wonderful she is and her sisters, hearing about the mysterious Cendron, become jealous. They come to her and "en crevoient de dépit: mais Finette se démêloit de tout cela de la meilleure grace du monde, il sembloit à son air qu'elle n'étoit faite que pour commander" ["were ready to burst with spite: but Finette extricated herself from all ill-consequences with the best grace in the world. Her manners appeared those of one born to command"] (d'Aulnoy128; Planché 240). The sisters are charmed by Finette and do not recognize her. She leaves early and changes back into rags before her sisters arrive home. When Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour arrive they tell her all about the ball and the charming Cendron. This game continues, so that each day the sisters attend the ball and Finette appears in a new gown from the magical casket (Planché 240-1).

Most noteworthy is the phrase "il sembloit à son air qu'elle n'étoit faite que pour commander" ["her manners appeared those of one born to command"], which refers to her royal background. But above that, she is genuinely skilled, clever and resourceful, aspects specific to d'Aulnoy's characterization. Perrault does discuss his Cinderella's charm, but Finette's charm is a matter of skill rather than demure femininity. The very notion that she was made to "command" shows a poise already shown in her previous

acts of bravery, forethought, and cunning. When this is compared to her sisters' behavior and attitudes it paints a more complete picture of nobility that is more human and flawed. As a noblewoman, d'Aulnoy would have seen others as they are and would have no qualms referring to some of what she may have seen as her contemporaries' personal flaws.

One evening, Finette stays too long at the ball and loses a shoe. The kingdom's eldest Prince, Chéri, discovers it and falls in love with the shoe. He becomes physically sick over his obsession with it. After different cures are tried, it is determined by physicians that he is in love and they must find the owner of the shoe to remedy his illness. The King and Queen then charge that all single women must come to try the slipper and whomever the shoe fits should marry the Prince. Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour leave to try the shoe, leaving Finette home. Finette dresses in her most splendid outfit, and because she does not know the way to the right palace, Merluce's magic horse comes to her to take her there. The horse gallops by Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour and they realize that Cendron and Finette are the same person (Planché 241-243). The horse splashes them and Finette calls to them "Altesses, Cendrillon vous méprise autant que vous le méritez" ["Your Highnesses, Cendron despises you as you deserve"] (d'Aulnoy 134; Planché 243).

Finette arrives at the palace and "dès qu'on la vit chacun crut que c'étoit une Reine" ["the moment she appeared everybody thought she was a Queen"] (d'Aulnoy 134; Planché 243). The Prince, dying in his room, falls in love at first sight and the shoe fits. The Prince proposes and the King and Queen wish for them to marry immediately. Then Finette does the unexpected: she says no.

Instead she insists on telling the three her history: "Quand ils surent qu'elle étoit née Princesse, c'étoit bien une autre joye" ["When they found that she was Princess born, there was another burst of joy"] (d'Aulnoy 135; Planché 244). But then it is discovered that the King and Queen are the very same who conquered Finette's parents' kingdom. She refuses to marry the Prince until her parents' kingdom is restored, a proposition to which the King and Queen consent. Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour appear at the palace and Finette tells the Queen, "Madame, ce sont mes sœurs qui sont fort aimables, je vous prie de les aimer. Elles demeurèrent si confuses de la bonté de Finette, qu'elles ne pouvoient proférer un mot" ["Madam, these are my sisters; they are very amiable, and I request you will love them.' They were so confused at the kindness of Finette, that they could not utter a word"] (d'Aulnoy 136; Planché 244). In the end Finette sends gifts to her godmother and news to her parents about their kingdom being restored. Belle-de-Nuit and Fleur d'Amour are happily married and all three eventually become queens (Planché 244-5).

The last scenes of the story seem to show contradictory elements of Finette's character. On the one hand, she is too happy to humiliate her sisters while riding towards the palace. On the other, she shows a surprising amount of forgiveness towards her sisters' continuous abuses. But any idea that Finette's kindness is due to an unblemished moral character is undercut by the moral of the story:

Pour tirer d'un ingrate une noble vengeance,
De la jeune Finette imite la prudence;
Ne cesse point sur lui de verser des bienfaits.
Tous tes présents & tes services,

Sent autant de vengeurs secrets,
Qui dans son cœur troublé préparent des supplices:
Belle de Nuit & Fleur d' Amour,
Sont plus cruellement punies,
Quand Finette leur fait des graces infinies,
Que si l'Ogre cruel leur ravisoit le jour:
Suis dont en tout temps sa maxime,
Et songe en ton ressentiment,
Que jamais un cœur magnanime,
Ne sauroit se venger plus généreusement. (d'Aulnoy 137)

[Revenged on the ungrateful would'st thou be
Of young Finette pursue the policy.
Fresh favours on the undeserving heap;
Each benefit inflicts a wound most deep,
Cutting the conscious bosom to the core.
Finette's proud selfish sisters suffer'd more,
When by her generous kindness overpower'd,
Than if by Ogres they had been devour'd.
From her example then this lesson learn,
And good for evil nobly still return;
Whate'er the wrong that may thy wrath awake,
No grander vengeance for it could'st thou take.] (Planché 245)

D'Aulnoy's originality is striking. Finette is not necessarily kind or forgives her sisters.

Kindness is a type of revenge. The story ends with an incompetent king, a neglectful queen, and two outwardly cruel sisters all rising back to power. Not because the heroine loves them unconditionally, but so that her kindness will always be a reminder to them that she has the superior character. The sisters suffer more now that they have received undeserved kindness than if Ogres had devoured them. Throughout her trials, Finette displays tact, cleverness, bravery and resolve. But in the end, the moral does not espouse virtue or suggest that goodness is right for the sake of goodness. The moral is that Finette delights in vengeance and that kindness is the best cruelty of all.

Yet Finette restores the noble family to its original status. Merluce's, and by extension the divine's, approval of that is signaled by the magic horse taking Finette to the prince. And while the golden key may be mere luck, in a fairy tale Occam's razor bends towards magic. What d'Aulnoy has accomplished in relation to nobility and restoration is complicated the dynamic. Being noble may not automatically lead to a virtuous existence and one may not always keep that position. By giving her characters agency to succeed or fail as they choose, independent of their birth, d'Aulnoy challenges divine right. The ending reaffirms the original stratification. Finette may have earned her position as a queen, but her sisters are also restored through no effort of their own.

V. CONCLUSION

For Basile, position is something divinely ordained and not necessarily earned by one's personality. The game is rigged. The nobly born will always find themselves back on top in the end, as Zezolla does: "you must be mad to oppose the stars" (Basile - Zipes 449). Corrupt forces are the result of malevolent interference, sometimes a demon in the ear but more often a peasant getting out of line. Basile served at the pleasure of nobility, and consorted with them. It appears that he was aware of his place and the place of others and could not ascend above his birth. His was a time when, one was resigned to one fate and status, expecting only limited social mobility.

For Perrault, Cinderella is best when she is of both noble heritage and good character. But Cinderella's morality is a consequence of her good breeding. Cinderella is often rewarded for good behavior by the magical interference of her godmother, a fairy representing the supernatural. As a member and founder of some of the Academies, Perrault was surrounded with like-minded intellectuals. His position at court ensured that he was also in contact with the king and resident nobility. This courtly atmosphere was also melded with the creative in the salons he frequented. In a highly stratified world, it was best to be born into good graces as well as possess them.

D'Aulnoy's Cinderella is the most complex and the most challenging of the three. In her own life, d'Aulnoy challenged many of the norms of her day. D'Aulnoy's own story suggests that the nobility are not born inherently "good" but must decide their own morality. Of the three authors, d'Aulnoy gives her characters the most agency. Just as

Finette is free to make decisions that may or may not benefit her, her sisters and mother, are free to be as cruel as they desire. There are no excuses for their behavior, as if they are under the influence of a peasant or the devil. The characters ultimately are re-ordered into their birth. Noble born persons are not automatically created with inner goodness, but they should stay or be returned to their position. As a noble person herself, it may be that d'Aulnoy saw others in her social circle as they were, as fallible as anyone.

The need for Cinderella to be of noble heritage is very much a product of a rigid, hierarchical system. In a modern context, that distinction becomes less meaningful or detracts from the story.

In order for Cinderella to be restored to her status, she must have some sort of noble title to begin with. This detail is almost unique to this era and location, which exemplifies how fairy tales are made in the image of their cultures. For instance, an incident described by Strabo in the first century BCE referred to as "Rhodopis" features a slave woman who has her shoe stolen by an eagle and taken to the king of Egypt, who later finds her and marries her (Anderson ch. 2). As the tale took form, more attention was given to this early Cinderella's personal history. One of the earliest versions, Tuan Ch'eng Shih's "Sheh Hsien," written in the 8th century, features the title character as the daughter of a Chief (Jameson 74-77). But this version, recorded in the middle ages of China, also has the hallmarks of its culture and is only one of dozens recorded in this region centuries before Basile's.

Both the Disney animated feature *Cinderella* from 1950 and the 1998 film *Ever After* kill the father in the exposition. When the paternal blood link is completely absent, not simply neglectful, it undermines Cinderella's claim to a noble status. The editing of

Cinderella's past is a deliberate attempt to make the story more acceptable to a modern American audience, one that conceptualizes status as something earned. Cinderella's persona wins out over "destiny."

In some ways, we can see that as Cinderella stories are re-told, she has steadily gained more personality. Cinderella now has to earn her position to be queen in the eyes of the reader and the audience. She is no longer just born to rule. Today's audience wants a "rags to riches" tale, which has little to do with the early modern tradition on which we base much of our contemporary media. However, this modern Cinderella is no less legitimate. Basile's, Perrault's and d'Aulnoy's Cinderella stories show how one story can be told in so many different ways and yet share many elements in common.

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