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Beautifully Blonde or Enchantingly Ugly: Re-Imagining the Swedish Nation through Text and Image in the Illustrated Fairy Tale Annual *Bland tomtar och troll* (*Amongst Gnomes and Trolls*)

APPROVED BY
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:

Supervisor:

Kirsten Belgum

Sandra B Straubhaar

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Matthew Owen Anderson, B.A.

Report

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Abstract

Beautifully Blonde or Enchantingly Ugly: Re-Imagining the Swedish Nation through Text and Image in the Illustrated Fairy Tale Annual *Bland tomtar och troll* (*Amongst Gnomes and Trolls*)

Matthew Owen Anderson, M.A.
The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

Supervisor: Kirsten Belgum

Much like oft-repeated quotes or catchy movie soundtrack tunes, famous illustrations often outweigh and outlast their original contexts and establish themselves as iconic cultural reference points for generations to come. Over the last 100 years in Sweden, John Bauer's fairy tale illustrations have maintained a strong grip on that nation's popular imaginary through over thirty reprint editions, museum exhibits, stamp collections, and, of course, stylistic imitations. While their century-old narrative contexts remain relatively unknown and uninteresting to contemporary audiences, his beautifully blonde children, enchantingly ugly trolls, and stark, Swedish landscapes continue to be bought, sold, and validated as embodying a *typically Swedish* relationship to nature.

Why John Bauer's work has remained so influential over time while the publication they appeared in has faded is a question that many of his biographers have attempted to answer. Harald Schiller, the most thorough of these, claims that "when one sees [his] images in black and white or color, they capture one's interest to such a degree that there is none left for the text" (152). This essay uses Schiller's comment as a starting point to pose one answer to this question. By exploring the dynamic potential of the relationship between Bauer's images and their early twentieth-century contexts, it locates

the artist's appeal over against his narrative guidelines and the historical movements of his time. To this end, its comparative analysis of the textual and visual narratives in the illustrated Swedish fairy tale annual, *Bland tomtar och troll* (*Amongst Gnomes and Trolls*) explores how the interplay between the historical pregnancy of its fairy tale stories and the Swedophilic affects of John Bauer's illustrations contributes to the project of imagining and proliferating a new Swedish national identity at the beginning of the twentieth century.

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Introduction

Much like oft-repeated quotes or catchy movie soundtrack tunes, famous illustrations often outweigh and outlast their original contexts and establish themselves as iconic cultural reference points for generations to come. Over the last 100 years in Sweden, John Bauer's fairy tale illustrations have maintained a strong grip on that nation's popular imaginary through over thirty reprint editions, museum exhibits, stamp collections, and, of course, stylistic imitations. While their century-old narrative contexts remain relatively unknown and uninteresting to contemporary audiences, his beautifully blonde children, enchantingly ugly trolls, and stark, Swedish landscapes continue to be bought, sold, and validated as embodying a *typically Swedish* relationship to nature.

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Nordic Nationalisms – Imaginings, Inventions, and Replications

What exactly do luminous children and lumpy trolls have to do with national identity in Sweden? To begin with the latter, trolls typically occupy positions of super-natural, cultural, and ethnic alterity across Nordic folklore – they are, in effect, the absolute Other against which civilized human beings define themselves. As Jeremy De

Angelo notes, northern-dwelling groups such as the Lapps, Finns, and Sami have often been considered to be the real-life trolls of the old stories – they "stand out for the largely negative treatment they receive in the sagas" (263). Their unfamiliar customs, clothing, and gear (i.e. skis) often invite accusations of trickery, deceit, or even sorcery. One thing is clear: magical or not, trolls fulfill the negative social function of being the social, cultural, and aesthetic foil to superior, human communities. In this sense, the irreconcilable Otherness of trolls is enough to establish a foundational common ground on which to build such a communal bond – a simple conceptualization of a broader, national identity. Given the historical use of troll figures to this end, it is perhaps not so surprising that they feature so prominently as extreme Others to the innocent, brave, and beautiful child heroes and heroines of twentieth-century Swedish fairy tales, stories written during a period of modernization and national reconfiguration.

Early twentieth-century Sweden was marked by a host of social, political, and cultural shifts – changes that often upset long-standing national and regional identities. One of the keys to negotiating such widespread structural flux was education. Theorist Ernest Gellner notes that, as the effects of modernism and industrial expansion permeate society, an individual's education becomes "by far his most precious investment, and in effect confers his identity on him" (35). As opposed to particular, regional identities, education "identifies" the individual with the processes of modernity, namely progress and (social) mobility, providing orienting nodes through common institutional entities (schools), standardized language, and literacy (enabling access to mass media).

With higher rates of literacy, modern society is the first in which "a high culture becomes the pervasive culture of the entire society, displacing folk or low culture" (Gellner 29). In the particular case of Sweden in the early 1900s, the pervasive "high culture" that displaces "low culture" is, in fact, a nostalgic appropriation[1] of the latter for the purposes of creating a standardized, national culture. Education is the primary means to transmit such a national culture throughout the political state, and children are its target audience. Media targeted at this demographic (e.g. children's literature) thus has

incredible influence in inculcating a particular national identity. While in its most radical form, this can manifest itself as a (potentially violent) revolutionary program to rally a cultural core against external, non-national rule (i.e. *re*education), when political sovereignty already rests with a majority cultural nation, the dissemination of a national culture need not rely on such overt, assertive methods.

The history of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Norway, Finland, Iceland, and Sweden) clearly illustrates the distinction between these two paths to a national culture. As sovereign nations, Sweden and Denmark were not at first faced with the same national imperative as their Nordic neighbors (though Danish nationalism emerged earlier, primarily in response to external pressure from Prussia). In Sweden[2], the popular, cultural imaginary was often preoccupied with its colonial territory in Finland or its neighbor and close cultural cousin, Norway, rather than consolidating an internal, Swedish nation-state.

By contrast, subordinate to the colonial, political, or economic sovereignty of Sweden or Denmark, Norway, Finland and Iceland sought to assert their national specificity in the nineteenth century, predominately through literature and the arts. Swedish cultural hegemony in Finland was challenged in 1835 with the publication of Elias Lönnrot's national epic *The Kalevala,* a collection of Finnish oral poetry. In Norway, strategic redeployments of folkloric elements, such as Asbjørnsen and Moe's *Norwegian Folktales* (later illustrated by Theodor Kittelsen and Erik Werenskiold), which first appeared in 1841, asserted a distinctly Norwegian cultural heritage. In both cases, folkloric pasts were nationalized in order to establish and romanticize a distinct, cultural unity.

Although its sovereignty remained unthreatened, the loss of Finland (1809) and the dissolution of the political union with Norway (1905) compelled Sweden to re-conceive itself in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As H. Arnold Barton

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[1] Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson have both emphasized the significance of appropriation in the construction of national identities, the former through the invention of new traditions, the latter through the abstract "imagining" of a national community through a standardized mass media culture.

[2] Erik Ringmar argues that, due to its status as a sovereign political entity, "Sweden, we could argue, has never known nationalism, but only, and only occasionally, patriotism" (31). While this semantic distinction is perhaps valuable in differentiating between shades of national sentiment, it is inappropriate in this particular moment of Swedish history because even the progressive, "patriotic" vision of Swedish national identity is equally as constructed as its more virulent, militaristic forebear.

argues in *Sweden and Visions of Norway,* the Swedish state looked to its neighbors, but particularly to Norway, as a guide to its own nation-building (or rather, consolidating) project. Adopting this model affirmed Sweden's artists, authors, and educators as the guiding forces in reshaping the nation's self-image, its past, and its future. In order to better understand their roles in this national transition, it is necessary to sketch out Sweden's transition to modernity in greater detail.

Shrinking Borders, Expanding Horizons – Sweden and Modernity

Sweden's early twentieth-century national project took place within the context of several key social and economic developments. One of the most significant of these is the emergence of a National Romantic movement which appeared very late on the scene relative to Continental trends. Sweden's erstwhile lack of conspicuous nationalism is often attributed to a combination of uninterrupted political sovereignty, territorial integrity, and over two hundred years without war. Swedish national sentiment during this period can be divided into two distinct forms. The established, conservative strain of nationalism consisted of an "old, militant patriotism" that drew upon Sweden's past military success and long-standing political sovereignty as it looked to reassert Sweden's international (and colonial) significance (*Sweden and Visions of Norway* 259). By the early 1900s however, this brand of nationalist nostalgia was slowly losing ground to a "young, vibrant '*fosterlandskärlek,* or love of native land', that was 'pacifistic, tolerant, [and] accepting of Sweden's new small-power role in Europe" (260). Instead of mourning the territorial (Finland) and political (Norway) losses that bracketed nineteenth-century Swedish history, this new nationalist attitude sought to re-envision Sweden by emphasizing its geographic and cultural uniqueness over (past) geopolitical successes.

While the older nationalist movement was primarily supported by wealthy aristocrats and state bureaucrats, the new-found *fosterlandskärlek* was a predominately middle-class phenomenon. It spread via the proliferation of modern Swedish folktales and the increasingly concerted effort on the part of school reformers to promote cultural and geographic competence by means of literary textbooks such as Selma Lagerlöf's *Nils Holgerssons underbara resa genom Sverige*. In the visual arts, the focus centered on

Romantic depictions of peasant life in unsullied, idyllic environments or, in the case of Carl Larsson and other members of the nascent Arts and Crafts movement, the simple pleasures of domestic (bourgeois) interior settings.

One development that encompasses these tendencies within the fine arts is the creation of various ethnographic repositories in the heart of urban Stockholm, pioneered and developed by Swedish teacher and folklorist Artur Hazelius. Before the turn of the century Hazelius had established two monuments to Nordic diversity in Stockholm's *Djurgården* whose popularity grew steadily in the early years of the twentieth century: the Nordic Museum (*Nordiska museet*) and Skansen. Originally named the Scandinavian Ethnographic Collection (*Skandinavisk-etnografiska samlingen*) the Nordic Museum was established in 1873 as a collection of objects highlighting the cultural and regional diversity of the Nordic countries. Initially conceived as an extension of this traditional museum model, Skansen, an open-air ethnographic museum showcasing Sweden's pre-industrial flora, fauna, architecture, and ethnic diversity quickly became one of Stockholm's most compelling attractions, especially for successful urbanites – as Barton notes, "to visit Skansen became a veritable pilgrimage for city-dwellers of the upper and middle classes nostalgic for the old rural Sweden in a time of rapid and often unsettling urbanization and industrialization" (*Essays on Scandinavian History* 132). Hazelius' two ethnographic museums thus (somewhat democratically) located Sweden's cultural uniqueness in its decentralized, untamed provinces at the same time as it asserted the sole authority of the middle class to interpret it.[3]

The nostalgia fueling projects like Hazelius' was common in an era that saw large portions of Sweden's rural population relocate to the growing urban centers of Stockholm and Gothenburg. Alongside Sweden's rapid industrialization at the end of the nineteenth century, contemporaneous agricultural reforms had ousted the traditional, community-

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[3] This type of appropriation is neither new nor uncommon – the pulse of such a movement is strengthened and maintained by what Eric Hobsbawm terms "invented traditions", sets of "practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition" (1). Furthermore, through increased literacy and the dissemination of information via print capitalism, these modern inventions are able to codify and inculcate a print culture to a broad public, creating what Benedict Anderson terms a national "imagined community" around the abstract, mass public.

driven village model in favor of more production-oriented, privately owned farms. This forced many rural Swedes towards the metropolitan production centers[4] and, notably, into a complex relationship to the growing, middle-class fascination with rural traditions. The early twentieth-century bourgeois national romanticization of rural, folksy lifestyles was peaking "at a time when the peasantry throughout most of Sweden were abandoning them as a humiliating culture of social inferiority, seeking to emulate the ways of life of the town middle classes, or emigrating in large numbers to America" (*Sweden and Visions of Norway* 131). This trend meant that "national romantic revival of interest in the old peasant Sweden…came at a time when much had already been lost and had therefore to be reinvented" (132). One way of negotiating the problematic intersection of abandoned and re-appropriated folk traditions was to simultaneously increase social opportunity and affect widespread, national standardization by expanding general education opportunities for the next generations.

The push for general education and increased literacy had already met with great success in the last decades of the nineteenth century, but progressive voices locating the nation's potential in its youngest generations sought to further extend educational opportunities. In her famous work, *The Century of the Child,* Ellen Key supported an affirmative (as opposed to punitive and disciplinary) educational philosophy: "education must be based on the certainty that faults cannot be atoned for, or blotted out, but must always have their consequences" (108). She further stated that letting a child "move about freely in this world until he comes into contact with the permanent boundaries of another's right will be the end of the education of the future" (110). She saw a less rigid and disciplinary pedagogical model as an effective means towards producing creative and innovative young minds that would be vital to the perpetuation of a progressive, dynamic Swedish nation-state.

[4] Both within Sweden and abroad: between 1880 and 1905, approximately 1 in 5 Swedish citizens opted to emigrate to America alone (Facos 34).

Constructing a National Future through a Fairy Tale Past

Following Asbjørnsen and Moe's success in Norway, Swedish publishing houses began collecting, writing, and illustrating local folk and fairy tales en masse around the turn of the century. The fairy tale in particular played a significant role, functioning as a subtle medium through which moral and cultural values can be codified, challenged, and transmitted to a popular readership. Like other folktale subgenres, fairy tales feature "ordinary protagonists to address issues of everyday life", but it does so by recourse to "*magical or marvelous events or phenomena as a valid part of human experience*" (Jones 9). Through exaggerated symbolism and extensive use of metaphor, fairy tales can effectively represent deep-seated emotional responses to such everyday challenges while avoiding overt politicization (Jackson 124). This allowed early fairy tale authors to unify a broad, social base across political lines.

Throughout nineteenth-century Europe, oral folk tales and other traditional folkloric repositories served as source material for modern fairy tales and folkloric adaptations. As the mechanisms of modernity continued to unravel traditional social forms and a Romantic yearning for natural and cultural idylls grew, fairy tales were either "rewritten and watered down with moralistic endings, or they began to serve a compensatory cultural function" in light of increased social alienation (Zipes 15). As on the Continent, widespread (middle-class) nostalgia for rural lifestyles and natural landscapes found such compensation in Sweden through the imagined spaces of fairy tale forests.

In the Swedish context, the familiar, proscriptive form of the folk tale (that was to form the primary source material for fairy tale constructions) "was based on a fundamental opposition between the known and the unknown, the familiar and unfamiliar, Christian and non-Christian, human and non-human" ("Continuity in Swedish Legends" 375). The loss of "familiar" territories in Finland and political disunity with Norway thus aligned with the increasingly insular culture of the fairy tale homeland. Alongside this, the aforementioned political prerogatives of educating the lower classes, alongside the budding genre of children's literature and the bourgeois obsession with

reinventing rural folk traditions under the rubric of National Romanticism provided an ideal discursive space for the fairy tale genre.

It was precisely during this period of vigorous interest in folk- and fairy tales that *Bland tomtar och troll* emerged. The publication, still in print today, was founded in 1907 by Swedish publicist Erik Åkerlund and Cyrus Granér (an organist and popular author of Swedish children's literature). Its initial volumes featured between four and seven illustrated stories per issue and was released once a year during the holiday season, corresponding to a dense period of Swedish folk celebrations (Santa Lucia, *Jul*, New Year's etc.). A list of the various contributors to the fairy tale annual reads like a "who's who" of Sweden's best-known contributors to children's literature – household names such as Elsa Beskow and Helena Nyblom appear multiple times in early issues.

While it was neither the first nor the last to participate in the project of reconstructing an imagined national past from the conglomerate trove of pan-Scandinavian folklore, *Bland tomtar och troll* was – and is to this day – certainly one of the most popular. Its enduring success has built upon John Bauer's iconic illustrations from the early 1910s, images which have appeared as early as 1931 in reprint editions. Over thirty such re-releases have been published since that date[5] but, perhaps more significantly, current volumes from Semic Bokförlag "always include classic stories illustrated by Einar Norelius and John Bauer" alongside new tales (*Semic*). Publishers thus tacitly acknowledge the brand value of those early illustrations, but how did they become more recognizable than their attendant stories? Insights from the field of children's book studies reveal the dynamic potential of illustration to achieve this sort of iconic power, and are explored in the following section.

Parallel and Perpendicular – Notes on the Interplay between Image and Text

According to the image-text theory of children's book analyst Joseph Schwarcz, illustrations can fulfill a variety of functions relative to the textual narrative. They can be congruent, depicting yet inevitably elaborating on the narrative action; elaborative by amplifying, extending, or complementing the text; or deviant in that they oppose,

alienate, or counterpoint the text (*Ways of the Illustrator* 14-18). One thing is common to each of these functions –associating image with text is always an act of translation, of intentional interpretation and intervention. Once a literary text is accompanied by a significant number of such interventions (for Schwarcz the magic number is around six to ten), the illustrator establishes his own visual continuum that extends beyond the merely "decorative" (11).

Through such interventions, illustrators have the ability to mold the aesthetic and affective horizons of expectation in young readers. Particularly in industrialized, urban, "unnatural" environments – spaces in which "humanity acquires its attitudes toward nature, the landscape, and the environment through art, and not vice versa" – images establish foundational expectations in young minds of what the natural world is and what type of relationships to it are possible (*The Picture Book Comes of Age* 114). Illustrations accompanying a textual narrative can thus not only impact the perception of that narrative (as Schwarcz suggests), but can also establish an interpretive foundation for future readings.

In a sense, then, illustrations operate on two levels vis-à-vis their textual accompaniments, which I term *perpendicular* and *parallel* modes of intervention. As *perpendicular* interventions, they intersect the narrative at key moments to add specific details to the existing story, elicit particular interpretations, or challenge the textual narrative. In this regard they correspond to the functions that Schwarcz outlines. Taken in sum, however, a group of illustrations[6] creates a *parallel* narrative (with its own, internal structure and logic) that exists alongside the written story and merits its own reading. Such a reading not only opens up more discursive space between the author and the illustrator, but it places otherwise discreet illustrations in dialogue with one another.

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[5] A quick OCLC catalog search reveals over 30 editions of Bauer's work in seven languages.

[6] While their potential to create a cogent counter-narrative is more limited, texts with only a few illustrations can still produce powerful parallel narratives through inter-textual allusions (e.g. to the illustrators other works).

Iconic "Red Threads" – John Bauer's Impact on *Bland tomtar och troll*

Such a rich relationship between text and image is readily apparent in the case of *Bland tomtar och troll,* in which the visual narrative has both outweighed and outlived its textual housing. This is due in large part to the long period of artistic continuity the publication enjoyed from 1907 to 1915 in the person of its sole illustrator, John Bauer.

Like many of his contemporaries, Bauer's style and success are intimately linked to his rural Swedish hometown of Jönköping, a location he often returned to for rest and inspiration and whose landscapes inspired many of his stage-like fairy tale settings. Beginning in 1900, Bauer's formal training at the Royal Swedish Academy of Arts exposed him to the romantic nostalgia of many Swedish artists and a broader connection to the "Swedish" landscape. As part of the "in-between generation" (*mellangeneration*), Bauer was drawn to the work of still-living Swedish greats such as Anders Zorn, Albert Ekström, and, of course, the renowned plein-air painter Carl Larsson, but gradually grew away from their stylistic tendencies in an effort to develop his own, distinctive register.

Travel, both domestic and international, played a significant role in influencing Bauer's visual style. After successfully completing his training in Stockholm in 1904, Bauer's first artistic commission was to travel to Lapland, Sweden's northernmost province and home to Scandinavia's indigenous Sami, and create a visual, ethnographic catalog of the Lapps. Beyond his many trips to the staged environments of the Nordic Museum as a student, this formative experience further cemented in Bauer an affinity for traditional Swedish culture and a love of nature. Following his marriage to fellow art student Ester Ellqvist in 1905, Bauer began illustrating *Bland tomtar och troll* in 1907 and drew further artistic inspiration from sojourns abroad to Italy and Germany (Lindqvist). It was during this period that Bauer began to integrate the stylistic elements of Italian Renaissance master painters, with their slender and tapered female forms; and German artists such as Albrecht Dürer, into his own work (Schiller 127).

While *Bland tomtar och troll* gave Bauer a public space to fuse his aesthetic proclivities with his affinity for the local Swedish landscape, it also became an inextricable part of his artistic legacy. Though disputes with publisher Erik Åkerlund over intellectual property rights pushed Bauer away from the publication in 1911, he was

eventually reinstated[7] in 1912, and continued to illustrate *Bland tomtar och troll* until 1915. His illustrations during this period remain among the most recognizable and reprinted of his career, and have left tangible marks on Swedish culture (through commemorative stamps and museum exhibitions, alongside the aforementioned plethora of reprinted editions), international cinema (having inspired the likes of Brian Froud, whose concept designs for Jim Henson's 1982 cult classic *The Dark Crystal* bear striking resemblances to Bauer's frumpy, lumpy trolls), and, along with Norwegian artist Theodor Kittelsen,[8] the established aesthetic conceptualization of the figure of the troll (Schiller 119).

Bauer's success as an illustrator was monumental, his recognition broad – extending even to his older peers,[9] the superstars of the Swedish art establishment. However, his life and career were tragically cut short when he, his wife, and their young son Putte drowned in the wreck of the *Per Brahe,* a regional Swedish ferry, in 1918. Despite his untimely demise, Bauer's legacy lives on through a sizeable canon of fairy-tale illustrations spanning nine years and eight editions of *Bland tomtar och troll.*

While the publication employed 18 different fairy-tale authors during that period – each with his or her own interpretation of folkloric and fairy-tale traditions – Bauer's illustrations introduce a constant, visual filter that enhances, complicates, and ties their textual narratives together. To explore the dynamic between the written and visual stories over the so-called Golden Years of *Bland tomtar och troll* – 1912 to 1915 – it is necessary to look at several typical stories from that period.

For practical purposes, I have limited my selection to four stories – one from each of the publication's "best" years. The individual stories were chosen based on three factors: variety of perspective (especially regarding the diverse deployment of normative

[7] Bauer not only returned, but his name became inextricably affiliated with the publication's subtitle, which changed from *A Collection of Stories and Tales* (*En samling sagor och berättelser*) to *A Collection of Stories with Illustrations by John Bauer* (*En samling sagor med teckningar av John Bauer*). The illustrator's recognition has since grown to the point where reprinted editions of early fairy-tales in the publication do not even mention *Bland tomtar och troll,* preferring title's such as *John Bauer's Enchanting Fairy-Tale World* (*John Bauers förtrollande sagovärld*) that emphasize his enduring artistic legacy.

[8] Whose illustrations similarly canonized the image of the troll for subsequent decades in Norway.

[9] Including Carl Larsson but, interestingly, not Selma Lagerlöf, who rejected his offer to illustrate her recently produced *Nils Holgerssons underbara resa genom Sverige.*

and subaltern subject positions), social and cultural themes present, and continuing visual resonance (especially in Bonnier-Carlsen and Semic reprint editions). In the interest of producing a more legible understanding of the tensions between written and visual narratives, I have arranged the analyses thematically and not chronologically, beginning with Walter Stenström's *The Boy and the Troll* or *The Adventure*[10] (1915) and Helge Kjellin's *The Story of Skutt the Moose and the Little Princess Tuvstarr*[11] (1913), followed by Elsa Beskow's *When Mother-Troll Washed the King's Laundry*[12] (1914) and Vilhälm Nordin's *The Troll-Boy who Had Sun in his Eyes and Became a Forester*[13] (1912). For each fairy tale, a brief synopsis and narrative analysis precede comparisons between the author's story and Bauer's illustrations.

The Boy and the Troll *or* The Adventure

Axel Walter Stenström (1881– 1926) was a popular Swedish author, drama-writer, and lecturer best known for, amongst other works, *The Final Exam at Ruskaby School,* a comedic play that lampoons the late nineteenth-century Swedish education establishment. His *The Boy and the Troll* or *The Adventure* begins with a framing story: an unnamed young lad packs his lunch, leaves the city, and heads into the woods in search of adventure – and the narrative. At the same time, the reader is informed that there is a problem in the kingdom – the young princess has gone missing and, overcome by grief, her father the king has effectively surrendered control of the realm into the hands of his second wife, a conniving woman suspected to be responsible for her stepdaughter's disappearance.

As the boy travels further and further from his home, he encounters three troll brothers on the road, Big Brother, Medium Brother, and Little Brother. Through his polite forms of address, "good evening uncle!", the boy treats the trolls as he would any other, adult stranger, essentially unfazed by their hulking forms and casual threats. The trolls, on the other hand, are genuinely taken aback by the presence of a human boy,

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[10] *Pojken och trollen eller Äventryet*
[11] *Sagan om älgtjuren Skutt och lilla prinsessan Tuvstarr*
[12] *När trollmor skötte kungens storbyk*
[13] *Trollsonen som hade solögon och vart skogsman*

believing him at first to be a dwarf, a *tomte* (a particularly Scandinavian creature similar to a garden gnome), or a pixie, respectively. In each case, the trolls comment on how hideous the boy appears and make a point to accentuate their own physiognomic traits: Big Brother has enormous ears, Medium Brother a huge chin, and Little Brother has a very prominent nose. The boy replies that he is "satisfied with what he has been given" and, through courteous inquiry, discovers that each is heading home to the mountain with costly goods (silver, gold, and precious stones) and tasty treats (a garden snake, a frog, and a toad) to court a young princess (31, 32, 36). "This was the beginning of the adventure!", cries the boy, and follows the trolls to their home (36).

Figure 1 - *Godkväll farbror*! (Stenström 32)

The narrative then shifts to the perspective of the princess, who is being held captive by the trolls' mother until she decides which of the three trolls to marry. A minor intervention by benevolent elves brings fresh air and wholesome food (fruit instead of mud-soup with frog-legs, bat ears, and poisonous henbane porridge) into the dank, dirty chamber, but their help is insufficient to overcome the trolls' magic. Just as the boy peers over the window and sees the captive princess, Mother-Troll reveals two things: first, that the princess' step-mother is, in fact, her sister and a troll; and second, that the only thing that has power over trolls are certain magic words spoken by a fearless young boy:

> Come fresh winds and blow away
> Long-Ears, Huge-Chin, and Big-Nose!

Come west wind and sweep away

The trolls from the grey mountain! (43).

Upon hearing this, the boy recites the magic words, rescues the princess, and the two travel back to the city, where Troll-Mother's sister the queen is plotting with her troll-daughter to nail all the windows in the land shut and build a huge wall around the kingdom to keep out the west wind (53). Just as the queen has declared her daughter the heir to the kingdom in front of an assembled public deeply suspicious about her intentions, the boy and the princess arrive with the a train of wagons filled with the trolls' treasure: gold, silver, and precious stones (57). To the jubilation of the common people, the boy confirms that he has indeed rescued the real princess and identifies the queen as Mother-Troll's evil sister, at which point the queen and her daughter suddenly appear hideous and troll-like. The boy once more recites the magic words and the west wind blows the trolls away.

Figure 2 - Princess at Grey Mountain (Stenström 42)

The story's final scene reinforces the moral and ethical significance of cleanliness (both in the bodily and spiritual sense), the most readily identifiable distinction between human beings and trolls. Having come back to his senses, the king gives the boy his daughter's hand in marriage and declares him his heir due to a peculiar combination of qualities: "he is neither afraid of trolls or darkness, he enjoys fresh air and gladly washes himself. He will be a good enough king" (60).

The figures of the well-behaved, morally and physically clean *male* child and the morally and physically revolting troll create the central binary in Stenström's *Adventure*. The nameless protagonist is brave, polite, and, perhaps most significantly, capable of climbing the social ladder – making him a decidedly bourgeois hero (and the identification figure for the urban romantic). While the monarchy and the masses are inept at affecting necessary social change, the boy is the only figure with the social and political agency, the only figure capable of progress of any sort. The fearless, progressive spirit of the young boy promises to give an outmoded, ineffective governing structure the necessary infusion of both political agency and popular representation (the boy was, after all, the son of a palace guard and one of "the people" and the one to confirm their suspicions about the troll-queen).

Trolls, on the other hand, occupy a more tenuous subject position that is never clearly defined except in opposition to the child paragon. In Stenström's world, their revolting physical alterity is clearly connected to their moral decrepitude, which is primarily manifested as greed. Those trolls in power (the queen) seek to consolidate it by (literally) barricading themselves behind a morally corrupt and hygienically questionable monarchy that only serves their own interests, while those aspiring to power (the Troll-Mother and her sons) are willing to use any means necessary to achieve it. In a way, the trolls personify the negative results of rapid industrialization: exploitation, widespread squalor, and a static social hierarchy (dominated by economic interests) incapable of addressing fundamental socio-cultural shifts.

As in most fairy-tale narratives, Stenström's unnamed figures present character archetypes instead of individuals. On the textual level, the trolls are cast as large, threatening beings that are clearly non-human but yet exhibit recognizably human features. They have exaggerated human physiognomies, with overly large ears, chins, and noses; and are significantly larger than their child counterparts. The fairy tale text further describes their human habits and desires: they cook food, give gifts, have marital relationships, aspire to social forms of power, and recognize the value of treasure and precious stones; but ultimately accentuates their devious motives.

By contrast, Bauer's four visual illustrations (each depicting interactions between children and trolls) support a less threatening depiction of the antagonists. In particular, the use of traditional Sami clothing – inspired by "the alien culture of the Lapps" – creates an affective link to established cultural knowledge and the formal parallels between natural forms and human or humanoid figures (Agrenius 23). While this association taps into the immediate, ethnographic interest of the time, it also draws on the long-standing literary (ab)use of Finns, Lapps, and Sami as treacherous, sorcerous, hideous and generally untrustworthy ethnic Others (see DeAngelo, Lindow, Straubhaar). However, far from highlighting their less then savory characteristics, Bauer's trolls evoke a sort of good-hearted, unkempt charm – they are clearly Other, but their imposing, hulking physicality is tempered by their unity with nature itself. The troll's rotund forms and mottled clothing seem to grow out of the rocks and hills of their cave and forest surroundings, their necklaces are made of the pebbles littering the cave floor (see *Figures 1* and *2*). Such formal affinities are strengthened through Bauer's highly filtered, earthy color palette – the yellow, brown, and green hues of the trolls' bodies blend seamlessly into the surrounding landscape.

The closeness of the landscape setting itself is what brings both trollish and child figures into focus. Bauer's settings feature little background or midground articulation, which creates a remarkably flat and stage-like landscape. In *Figure 1,* the imposing figure of Big Brother Troll and the hill he is treading upon create a flat, massive plane that blocks out nearly all of the forest behind it, giving the impression that the boy hero is looking *at* a mural. Conversely, the princess in *Figure 2* is perched in front of the flat set of troll admirers, acknowledging the gaze of both the trolls and the reader. In both instances, the closeness of the child figure is further accentuated by their luminosity: while the trolls bear virtually no formal or chromatic contrast to their environments, the children are set apart by extra lighting – the gloomy shadows and greenish hues of the forests and caves do not effect them. They are actors on the stage of nature, Bauer implies, but instead of an external light source shining upon them, their own lightness seems to radiate out into their immediate surroundings.

These visual depictions of trolls are typical throughout Bauer's canon, as are the iconic figures of the young boy and princess. *Figure 1* displays the former, clad in simple peasant garb with the characteristic feathered cap, a slender and lanky hero whose face is rarely seen; the princess, clothed in her finest dress and wearing a regal, particularly Swedish, crown, is the center of attention in *Figure 2.* In both cases, the trolls are arrested by the presence of the softly glowing children, literally stopping midstride (*Figure 1*) or fawning in admiration (*Figure 2*). These figures, Bauer's illustrations suggest, have the ability to cast their own enchantment upon the trolls – they are the ones capable of advancing the story, of growing tall and slender like their formal allies, the bare-limbed firs of the forest behind them.

Aside from creating a dark, closed, and contemplative mood, Bauer's forest backgrounds make ample use of the fir tree, a national symbol of Sweden first popularized in Prince Eugen's 1892 painting, *The Forest* (Facos 101). Indeed, many have commented that Swedes have "an inexplicable spiritual connection to boreal forests", one that Michelle Facos describes as typical of bourgeois National Romantic's "biomystical relationship with nature" (102, 104). Nina Kokkinen argues that Bauer's settings embody Mircea Eliade's experience of nature as sacred and eternal, drawing on established mythic archetypes to convey the experience of a transcendental reality. While there does appear to be a strong spiritual connection between nature and humanity in Bauer's illustrations, the metaphor of the stage is perhaps a more poignant way to explore *Bland tomtar och troll's* visual settings and aesthetic roles as "enactments" of *fosterlandskärlek.* Significantly, as the next story will suggest, growth in terms of character development and class advancement is limited to male children – and the forest is the stage on which this development occurs.

The Story of Skutt the Moose and the Little Princess Tuvstarr

An office bookkeeper prior to his studies and eventual career as a medieval art historian, Helge Kjellin (1885–1984) was a philosophy student finishing his exams at the University of Uppsala when he wrote *The Story of Skutt the Moose and the Little Princess Tuvstarr.* Due in large part to the cultural currency of Bauer's illustrations of

this story, Tuvstarr remains one of the most recognizable figures in the Swedish popular imaginary to date.[14]

The fairy-tale begins with a curious framing device that foreshadows its conclusion, posing the following question to the reader: “Have you perchance ever been up in the great forests and seen a strange, black tarn hidden far within, enchanting and almost frightening?” (Kjellin 81). The narrator describes such a place, where sedge-tufts encircle a deep pond and all of nature seems to be holding its breath in anticipation. A solitary moose pauses at the edge of the forest pond, then bounds off into the forest. “This is real life”, remarks the narrator, “and now comes the story” (82).

Figure 3 - Tuvstarr in the meadow (Kjellin 85)

This “story” follows the young princess Tuvstarr (the Swedish name for *Carex cespitosa,* a species of perennial sedge common to Scandinavia), as she is borne from the Dream Castle (*Drömslottet*) “into life” on the back of her guardian and companion Skutt (lit: Leap, Bound) the moose. As she plays with her long, golden hair in the castle’s flowering meadow, she meets Skutt, who compliments her on her beauty. She exclaims, “How great and stately you are. And you too have a crown. Take me with you! Let me sit there behind your neck! And so bear me out into life!” (88). When Skutt warns her that the world is great and cold, full of evil and spite, she scoffs and replies, “I am young and warm, I have warmth for everyone. I am small and good, I want to give of my goodness” (88). Skutt consents to take her and they begin their journey to his home at Skogmossebo (lit: Forest Bog Home).

[14] As Nina Kokkinen explores in *Constructing Experiences of Sacred and Eternal,* Bauer’s iconic image of Tuvstarr by the pool inspired an international analogue in the work of Danish illustrator Kay Nielsen.

Over the course of the trip, they have the first of two unpleasant encounters with local forest spirits. Tuvstarr sees a group of elves dancing through the trees. Skutt warns her that these elves may look "fine and friendly, but they are not to be trusted…remember what I say: don't answer them, but hold on tightly to my antlers", but when the elves begin tearing at her clothes and hair, she lets go with one hand and the elves are able to wrench her golden crown from her golden hair (94). After spending the night in Skogemossebo, Tuvstarr sheds her clothing – except for the golden, heart-shaped locket around her neck – and drapes it over Skutt's back as they continue deeper into the forest.

Figure 4 - Tuvstarr at the tarn (Kjellin 111)

As Tuvstarr and Skutt, who "can't refuse her anything", come across a forest sprite, the moose repeats his previous warning to avoid communication and hold on tightly to his antlers (101). The princess, of course, forgets this warning and lets go of the antlers to show the sprite her dress, which the forest spirit promptly makes off with. Deprived of both crown and clothing, Tuvstarr presses on with Skutt, and they eventually enter a deep, dense, and foreboding grove of trees to arrive at a tarn never before seen by human eyes (108).

Just as Tuvstarr bends over to examine the wonderful, black and brown pool she experiences her third loss: the heart-shaped necklace slips off her head and is lost in the deep. Overcome with grief at the loss of her mother's gift and desperate to recover her heart, Tuvstarr refuses to leave with Skutt and bids him farewell. "Tuvstarr still remains",

says the narrator, "and peers wonderingly down into the water, still just as small and slender and dainty, but the heart is gone forever" (113). Skutt visits her from time to time, but she cannot follow him: the "wonderful water has taken her captive, and deep, deep below lies a golden, glittering heart" (113).

Helge Kjellin's tale is a sad and cautionary, albeit very paternalistic one for the child reader. It asserts the necessity of listening to the good advice of authority figures (i.e. parents and guardians) – and the danger of naively trusting strangers, and ultimately suggests that only a tightly controlled experience of nature is safe for the female child. The careless princess proves so passive that when she is finally stripped of all the trapping's of civilization (crown, gown, and necklace), she becomes rooted to the spot at the side of the lake as another aquatic plant – ultimately regressing from active agent to forest décor.

Bauer's take on the tale echoes the static, floral traits seen here, and is best described through his two visual bookends. The first illustration faithfully depicts Tuvstarr in the meadow, gazing down at the crown[15] that she has just laid down amongst the flowers (see *Figure 3*). Like the nameless princess in Stenström's tale, Tuvstarr is both passive and vulnerable – as her Nordic forebears, she too is waiting for a male figure to act upon her (Straubhaar 107). Three other illustrations show Tuvstarr leaving the castle, sleeping under Skutt's watchful eye, and fleeing from the forest sprite. Towards the end of the story, Bauer chooses to intervene again in the narration, at the moment just after the princess has lost the last vestige of her humanity, her heart-shaped locket, in the depths of the pool. This image (*Figure 4*), the most iconic in his visual canon, captures the sad, beautiful innocence of the girl without necessarily implying – as the narrative does – that she is doomed to be rooted there for all eternity as a plant. Yet instead of emphasizing her punishment as the story does, Bauer uses visual means to disassociate her from the nameless, archetypal princess seen throughout the rest of his canon.

Nina Kokkinen claims that Tuvstarr's symbolic death (harkening back to Narcissus) at the tarn prevents her from accessing a higher spiritual consciousness

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[15] A symbol not only of the monarchy, but of the Swedish monarchy – the three crowns (*tre kronor*) have been a part of the Swedish coat of arms since the fourteenth century.

through unity with nature, and the image subtly hints at this loss (39). The set of this scene is particularly revealing in this regard. The tarn is framed by four columnar tree trunks arranged in a strikingly symmetrical manner that highlights its artificial, staged nature (the two trees neatly divide the illustration into equal thirds). Her form mirrors that of these sylvan columns but, in contrast to the other stories in which this alliance suggests both moral uprightness and growth, this explicitly ties her to the backdrop. Unlike the other children who are highlighted and placed in front of the scenery, she belongs to the same visual plane as the two outermost trees, and lacks their characteristic glow. While she is still identifiably a human child, Bauer's illustration thus confirms that she has abandoned that role and become an inescapably rooted part of nature. The next story examines the inverse of this transition, the uprooting of nature in order to conform to the foregrounded, human agent position.

When Mother-Troll Washed the King's Laundry

Despite their aforementioned formal and chromatic unities with the hills and rocks of Bauer's landscapes, the trolls in Elsa Beskow's *When Mother-Troll Washed the King's Laundry* are not welcome in their new, human environment. Beskow (1874–1953) was an author and illustrator of Swedish children's books from the beginning of the twentieth century until the mid-1940s, and is still regarded today as one of the best-known figures in the rich history of Swedish children's literature. In addition to her contributions to *Bland tomtar och troll,* Beskow published more than 40 children's books (including fairy-tales), most of which she also illustrated.[16] *When Mother-Troll Washed the King's Laundry* takes a sympathetic look at one troll family's failed attempt to assimilate into human society and raises a host of questions surrounding urban adaptation, the limits of social mobility, and the industrial exploitation of nature.

The story begins with a problem: in their quest to harvest more natural resources, human beings have begun to encroach upon troll territory in the Great Forest, cutting down trees, driving away wild game, and blowing holes in the mountainside in search of

precious minerals. Rather than seek refuge deeper in the wilderness to the north, one Mother-Troll and her son decide to move closer to the human settlements so that they too could partake of the good life as humans, drinking coffee and eating pork roast inside their cozy home.

Figure 5 - Wolves attack troll (Beskow 39)

Of course, in order to have this life of luxury, the trolls need a source of income, so mother and son tie up their tails, clothe themselves in domestic garb (i.e. Mother-Troll wears an apron), and offer their services washing clothes from the local village. With the help of a magic cauldron and her own considerable troll powers, Mother-Troll establishes a stellar reputation for her snow-white sheets and dirt-cheap rates (as a troll she didn't know how to count), and is soon washing everyone's clothes from miles around (Beskow 42). As long as the pork roast and coffee are provided for, all is well.

Washing the royal laundry awakens new longings in Mother-Troll, who begins stealing the princess' dainty dresses and fantasizing about marrying her son to a human girl and having grandchildren. When blame for the thefts is laid on Inge, the princess' innocent maid and attendant, the girl's unjustly gained disrepute forces her from the castle and into the provincial countryside, where she eventually finds refuge and acceptance in Mother-Troll's house. Grateful to her hosts but never comfortable (Mother-

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[16] In some respects, her career as an illustrator has had even wider resonance than Bauer's: for example, the Swedish Library Association (Svensk biblioteksförening) has given out an annual Elsa Beskow Plaque for

Troll's not-so-subtle matchmaking attempts notwithstanding) in her new home, Inge eventually discovers the trollish culprit's identity when Mother-Troll steals yet another piece of the princess' wardrobe – but keeps her lips sealed. When the truth behind the missing clothes eventually does come out, the innocent (blonde) girl is not only publicly acquitted, but betrothed to the handsome hunter whom she had, until then, only admired from afar. Inge gets her happy ending, but the trolls are shunned by human society, literally left out in the cold and peering enviously through her window as she cradles her newborn child.

Figure 6 - Locked out of his home (Beskow 43)

In contrast to its textual peers, *When Mother-Troll Washed the King's Laundry* explores the interior subjectivity of the troll figure. By casting the eponymous figure and her son in the narrative role of the Northern yokel moving south to "civilization", Beskow allows for a sympathetic (if ultimately pessimistic) reading of their failed assimilation alongside a social critique of the rampant exploitation of natural resources in the name of industry. Human encroachment in Beskow's fairy tale has a distinct, historical corollary: "modernity" arrived in Lapland with the establishment of the first railroad connection to Kiruna in 1895, and exploitation came a few years later in 1900 as massive iron ore deposits where discovered in the mountains (Lindqvist 16).

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the best illustrated children's book since 1958.

As such, Mother-Troll and her son are somewhat sympathetic and realistic characters, displaced victims of the forces of industrial exploitation. This perception is primarily enforced through Bauer's choice of scenes: four of the five illustrations come at the beginning of the story, and show trolls either as victims of human expansion (see the dogs attacking in *Figure 5*), forced to leave their traditional home and lifestyle (*Figure 6*), or happily bouncing along with their magic cauldron. Moments of theft, plotting, or human woe are left out entirely – in fact, none of the illustrations portray interactions between humans and trolls, undermining the notion that the trolls were anything but victims in the story.

The trolls' displacement from their native environment, however, is visually foregrounded and foreshadows their ultimate failure to integrate into human society. Though his shape mirrors that of the background hill, the troll in *Figure 5* is no longer part of the same visual plane, and the inhospitable, snowy background shoves him chromatically further into the foreground. Locked out of his mountain hold, the troll in *Figure 6* stubbornly acknowledges his newfound position and, like a pouting child, disappointedly stares back at the reader. In both cases, Bauer emphasizes the troll's forced disunity with nature by undermining his own established visual archetypes.

Figure 7 - Inge at the tarn (Beskow 55)

While there are no children in the story, the visualization of Inge at the tarn's edge (*Figure* 7), alludes to one of Bauer's prior illustrations, that of Tuvstarr gazing down into a similar reflective pool. As a woman, Inge is no longer aligned solely with the vertical

growth of the framing trees (which curiously bend to accommodate her mature, pear-shaped form), but also with the established rotundness of the rocks and the trolls – yet this formal synthesis is only accomplished through forced symmetry with a stage background. Such harmony with nature is only possible by molding and controlling it, by literally bending it to one's will. While this is not portrayed as a destructive act, Inge's presence alone imposes a new, civilizing order on her natural surroundings. In effect, she accomplishes visually what the trolls could not – successful adaptation to a new visual plane and subject position, moving from foreground agent and observer to harmonious part of a larger whole.

The Troll-Boy who Had Sun in his Eyes and Became a Forester

While the adult trolls failed to adapt to human society, a troll-child successfully completes the transition from a "state of nature" to civilization in the following story. Unlike the majority of fairy tale texts in *Bland tomtar och troll* which feature aesthetically normative, blonde, and radiantly beautiful child heroes and heroines, Vilhälm Nordin's "The Troll's Son Who Had Sun in His Eyes and Became a Forester" follows the red-headed troll's son, Humpe, in his attempt to come to terms with his marked physical alterity and find social acceptance. The boy's unnaturally clear and reflective eyes clearly mark his difference within troll-society, an

Figure 8 - Humpe and his mother (Nordin 47)

Otherness reinforced by his diurnal sleeping patterns. This affinity with sunlight is dangerous to the other trolls, who will literally explode if exposed to too much of it, and engenders violent, if indirect, attempts on his life. However, when they finally succeed in keeping him awake all night in the hopes of forcing a fatal exposure to sunlight, Humpe proves not only to be immune to the troll's bane, but also able to capture and reflect sunlight in his eyes. Filled with the vigor of daylight, Humpe leaves the other trolls and wanders deeper into the forest. At first, daylight's illuminations unsettle Humpe, highlighting his continued, self-perceived alterity within this new setting. In his three main encounters with nature – in the mirror of the spring, the hazelnut tree, and the birch maiden– he is keenly aware of his physical ugliness and considers himself unworthy to partake of nature's gifts without their express permission. In each case, personified nature encourages him with the words "you have beautiful eyes, Humpe Trollson", offering the "enlightened" child its aid after dispensing gentle parental guidance (59). Seeing his reflection in a forest spring for the first time, Humpe's "trollish and heavy" visage frightens him, but the spring encourages him to drink and be unafraid of his own reflection (59). Hungry, Humpe then reaches for low-hanging hazelnuts and is reprimanded by the tree for his presumption, not, as Humpe believes, because he is so ugly. When, upon his kiss, a birch tree transforms into a beautiful maiden made of light,

Figure 9 - Humpe's reflection (Nordin 63)

he expects "the usual reminder…from the fair lips of the birch maiden, that he was an ugly troll's son", but is instead welcomed, and the two fall in love and move to the lakeshore (66). Humpe's lingering doubts about his ugliness resurface briefly as the birch maiden names him a forester and pledges to be his wife, but these are quickly removed as he sees his reflection again: he no longer "had troll-grey but healthy brown hair, had received red lips, sheen and waviness in his hair, and glimmering eyes" (71). His love for life in the sunlight had transformed him into an admirable, beautiful being.

Humpe's transformation from member of the nasty, brutish, and backward world of the trolls to glowing child-paragon in harmony with nature models the type of progressive shift needed to successfully integrate rural peasants into larger urban communities (exactly the type of moral/ethical change that Mother-Troll was incapable of). Ignorance, ugliness, and violence are personified in the trolls, whose unsightly characteristics cannot withstand the scrutiny of daylight, which brings knowledge, progress, and moral and aesthetic beauty. Significantly, it is the unenlightened child, and not his mother, who is able to survive the metamorphosis and become a progressive, productive member of society, pointing to the prime importance of younger generations in leading society from past darkness into the light of the future. As a child, he is imbued with the latent potential to perceive and reflect "enlightenment" – all that is required is the appropriate guidance and education, in this case, personifications of nature. By close attention to nature's examples in all cases, Humpe simultaneously learns to love knowledge and appreciate a harmonious relationship with all parts of a society (ecosystem).

In addition to valorizing the figure of the child as a luminary, Nordin's fairy tale potentially opens a discursive space opposing the discrimination of ethnic minorities. If Humpe Trollson can successfully be assimilated into non-trollish society, then that movement is potentially available to all who wish to seek it, regardless of their previous "backwardness".[17]

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[17] However, in personifying the illuminated being as a blonde birch maiden; the tale also reifies a normative, ethnic hierarchy by continuing to hold up the pure, blonde Scandinavian as the pinnacle of virtue and beauty.

Humpe's transition from downtrodden troll-boy to birch-maiden's husband is visually catalogued through Bauer's illustrations, which show a clear, formal transition from a stooped and curled troll infant (*Figure 8*), to a moment of reflection on his own trollish "heaviness" (*Figure 9*), in which he is still stooped and thereby formally still a "troll"), to the ultimate recognition of his own humanity in the straight, slender parallel to the birch-maiden's tree (*Figure 10*). His red hair marks him as a unique individual, neither troll nor prototypical male hero, despite bearing the raiment of the former and growing into the form of the latter. However, his counterpart, the birch-maiden, bears strong allusions to the particularly Swedish princesses of Bauer's earlier volumes – it is a natural, Swedish society that he enters into. As the story suggests, this transition is only possible for Humpe because he was born with the innate possibility to do so (as one who is "related to the sun") and is affected through the moral guidance of nature (in the personages of the pool, the hazelnut tree, the dewdrops, and the wise owl).

Figure 10 - Humpe meets the birch-maiden (Nordin 69)

Once again, the troll protagonist's surroundings reflect his metamorphosis as well. Beginning in the closed space of a cave (*Figure 8*), Humpe becomes increasingly distinct from the setting around him. Through increased depth and midground detail as he stares into the deep pool (*Figure 9*), the background begins to surround and envelop him, emphasizing his status as an individual in nature over his unity with it. Finally, in *Figure*

10 he steps onto the same stage as an agent and human being like the other children in Bauer's images. While his alterity is still chromatically marked by his red hair and culturally acknowledged through his trollish clothing, Humpe has effectively bridged the gap between Bauer's natural and human registers.

Conclusion: Child Luminaries, Magical Others, and Swedish Settings

These four stories each appropriate the established archetype of the troll to their own ends, some deploying the former as victims, some as malicious antagonists, some as potential human beings; while the figure of the child appears as the predominant creative, productive force in the tales. Yet despite their various narrative strategies, each of the stories is told against the same backdrop of John Bauer's illustrations, which not only establish the particularly Swedish scenery of the stories, but create character types that transcend the limited context of one story. Crafted from the sum of his perpendicular, textual interventions, Bauer's parallel visual narrative makes a strong affective case for embracing *fosterlandskärlek* by depicting the success of hale, hearty, and morally sound child archetypes on the stage of nature. By properly negotiating their environments without sacrificing their agency. Bauer shows that children have the dynamic potential to overcome natural and supernatural foes and, despite the potential for being lost (Tuvstarr), they develop a comfort and affinity to the Swedish landscape that has the potential to render social (i.e. class) rewards as well as peace and harmony. Ultimately, it is only through interaction with the rich geographic and cultural diversity of their Swedish environment that the child luminary spreads his or her light to the world, gaining the admiration of both elders, peers, and the real and magical Others that he or she confronts along the way.

As Harald Schiller suggested, many of Bauer's images are such powerful textual interventions that they have the potential to challenge, subvert, and condition the reader's experience of the fairy tale. Like their own natural backdrops, the continuity of these images provide the fairy tale narratives with the settings, costumes, and props; the theatrical means with which to weave their own story. The lens of their cumulative interventions reveals distinct, Swedophilic subtexts hidden amongst the historical and

social commentary in *Bland tomtar och troll's* stories and locates the publication's national agenda within a specific, progressive, cultural framework in early 1900s Sweden. However, as the effects of a dynamic relationship between image and text are often exceedingly complex to untangle within the context of a single story (let alone several), it is difficult to make stronger claims about *Bland tomtar och troll's* political agenda or popular legacy without considerably expanding the scope of this project. Future studies of this publication could analyze the renaming and reprinting of Bauer's works (another explanation for his enduring legacy), explore the objectives and perspectives of the publishers, or collect concrete data concerning the publication's reception. By locating the source of the publication's continued appeal in the historical pregnancy of its original context, my primary goal here has been to show how illustrations can overtake, outlive, and outweigh their narrative parameters.

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