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Reviews

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REVIEWS

Ludwig Tieck: *Die sieben Weiber des Blaubart. Eine wahre Familiengeschichte.* Mit einem Nachwort von Frank Witzel und Messerschnitten von Marco P. Schaefer. Hamburg: Textem-Verlag, 2007. 168 pp.

Der Textem-Verlag hat eine neue Reihe Gespenster-Bibliothek mit Ludwig Tiecks *Die sieben Weiber des Blaubarts* eröffnet. Diese romanhafte *réécriture* von Charles Perraults "Blaubart," die 1797 in Berlin unter pseudonymem Herausgebernamen (Gottlieb Färber) und mit kaschiertem Impressum ("Istambul, bey Heraclius Murusi, Im Jahre der Hedschrah 1212," i.e.: Berlin: C. A. Nicolai) zum ersten Mal erschienen war, wurde zu Tiecks Lebzeit nur noch einmal, im 9. Band seiner Schriften (Untertitel: Arabesken; Berlin: G. Reimer 1828), aufgelegt. Unter den modernen Ausgaben ist lediglich ein Faksimile-Reprint (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1966) dieses Zweitdrucks zu verzeichnen. Daher ist die neue Buchausgabe—eine elektronische Fassung der *Schriften* ist im Internet aufrufbar—zu begrüßen, nicht nur, weil der Roman ein Glanzstück der deutschen Frühromantik ist, sondern weil er in der Serie der *Blaubart*-Bearbeitungen und -Umarbeitungen keine unwichtige Stelle einnimmt (vgl. u. a. W. Memminghaus, Suhrkamp, 1995, insb. 92–190; M. Puw Davies, Oxford University Press, 2001, 98–110; M. Szczepaniak, Böhlau, 2005; S. Scherer, de Gruyter, 2003, 272–90).

Die vorliegende Leseausgabe präsentiert sich in einer anziehenden äußerlichen Ausstattung. Für die Textedition wurde auf die Zweitauflage (1828) zurückgegriffen. Hier, in der Vorlage, erscheint die "Familiengeschichte" in 33 Kapiteln unterteilt, wobei ein Fehler dem Autor (?) unterlaufen ist: Vom dreizehnten Kapitel springt man zum fünfzehnten, das nun in der modernen Ausgabe als vierzehntes stillschweigend berichtet wurde. Es ist anzunehmen, dass die Erstausgabe den Fehler bereits enthielt, so dass Tieck—hätte er ihn bemerkt—den Roman um ein weiteres Kapitel vermehrt hätte, um die symbolträchtige Zahl 33, die im Roman eher parodistisch verwendet wird, zu erreichen. Ein anderer Fehler ist hingegen übersehen worden (im Satz "Peter suchte . . . darzustellen" auf S. 109 sollte Bernard anstelle von Peter als Subjekt stehen). Ansonsten hätten erläuternde Nachweise der verschiedenen, im Text

z.T. halbversteckt zitierten, Werke zeitgenössischer Erfolgsautoren (August von Kotzebue, August H. J. la Fontaine usw.) den Leser durchaus erfreut. Das Nachwort des Schriftstellers Frank Witzel bietet keine Angaben zu Text oder Autor.

Der junge Tieck hat sich mehrmals mit dem *Blaubart*-Thema befasst. Vor der Romandrucklegung hatte er 1796 das Märchendrama *Ritter Blaubart* verfasst, das ein Jahr darauf sowohl separat als auch als erstes seiner *Volksmärchen* von dem fiktiven Herausgeber Peter Lebrecht aufgelegt wurde. Zwischen 1816 und 1818 beabsichtigte der Autor eine dritte Fassung zu schreiben, die aber Entwurf blieb. Welche Zwecke beabsichtigte Tieck mit dieser Prosa-Version? Im letzten Kapitel rühmt der fiktive Herausgeber sich, "die etwanigen dunkeln Parthien" des Märchenstoffes, wie etwa Fragen, warum der Hauptheld einen blauen Bart trage, oder warum er die Weiber so hasse, "in ein deutliches Licht" (S. 152) gesetzt zu haben. Es sind dies alles Fragen, die im Roman eine Antwort finden, allerdings auf eine programmatisch-parodistische Art, die auf den Unsinn der Fragen bzw. auf den Deutungszwang verweist.

Das literarische Verfahren besteht zum Teil darin, dass der Plot des Märchens als bekannt vorausgesetzt wird, so dass es genügt, auf den Subtext hinzuweisen. Einige Innovationen des Romans gehen in die spätere deutsche *Blaubart*-Überlieferung über, u.a. die Feudalisierung des "ursprünglich" großbürgerlichen Märchenmilieus, der Perraultsche Bürger wird bei Tieck zum Ritter geschlagen oder das hier zum ersten Mal auftretende Motiv der sieben Ehefrauen.

Der Roman stellt dem blaubartschen Plot Kindheit und Jugend des Helden (Kapitel 1 bis 10) voran. Peter Berner (der Held) ist der Sohn eines Ritters, nach dessen Tod habsüchtige Verwandte sich seines Erbes bemächtigt haben. Dem kleinen Kind wird ein seltsames pädagogisches Programm aufgezwungen: Es lernt weder lesen noch schreiben, während ein Vogel ihm kunstlose bis nihilistische Lieder vorsingt. In derselben abgelegenen Burg lebt das zweite Kind, Adelheid, mit dem ihre Wärterin nur kindische Worte wechselt, während der erwähnte Vogel auch ihr die trivialsten Lieder vortrillert, was verhindert, dass sie sich zu einer gescheiterten Person entwickeln kann. Die Intrige des Ritterromans, das pädagogische Programme und psychologische Konzept zur Motivierung und Erklärung der Entwicklung bleiben so parodistisch auf der Strecke.

Bei den Kindern treffen sich die Zauberer Bernard und Almida: Bernard übernimmt die *paternage* für Peter, sie die *maternage* für Adelheid. Beide Mentoren erscheinen zugleich als Schriftsteller und als deren Parodie: Ihre "Kreationen," insbesondere Peter, entziehen sich ihrem Einfluss. Bernard spart ihm

deshalb keine Kritik, er warnt ihn davor, dass seine Geschichte—der Roman—nur negative Rezensionen haben werde. Bernard handelt am Anfang zum Teil wie eine Märchenfee: Er trifft den Helden des öfteren im Wald; einmal, bei einem solchen Treffen, eröffnet er ihm die Möglichkeit, sich das eigene Glück sowie das eigene Unglück auszuwählen, was für Peter einer Lotterei in einem zeitgenössischen Trivialroman gleichkommt—doppelte Parodie auf Zaubermärchen und zeitgenössische Erfolgsliteratur. Am Schluss, definitiv enttäuscht über die Unverbesserlichkeit seines *protégé*, zieht er sich, ähnlich einem desillusionierten, aber nicht ganz unbemittelten Schriftsteller, auf seine unterirdischen Landgüter zurück, um diese in Ordnung zu bringen, da sein Sohn, ein ruchloser Zaubergeist, viele Schulden darauf gemacht hatte (S. 146).

Entscheidend für die Laufbahn des Helden als Blaubart sind erstens das von ihm ausgesuchte Glück, den Sieg gegen jeden Feind davonzutragen, sowie Unglück, nämlich dasjenige mit seinen Weibern, zweitens “eine gewisse Blödsinnigkeit,” die gerade bei der freien Wahl des Glücks/Unglücks zutage tritt. Als Ersatz für den fehlenden Verstand schenkt ihm eine unterirdische Zauberin, die Bernard zur Seite steht, einen bleiernen Kopf. Dieses Automatenfragment, eine Parodie des Wissens und ein Oxymoron, da bleiern—“plumbeus”—stumpfsinnig bedeutet, soll an Stelle von Peter denken und ihn beraten, sobald er ihn mit dem dazugehörigen goldenen Schlüssel berührt. Der Kopf muss in einem eigenen Raum aufbewahrt werden, “damit er nicht von Narren gestört [wird] und so seinen Verstand unnötigerweise verschwendet” (S. 39)—was Peter eigentlich nie droht. Eine wissbegierige Närrin ist hingegen seine Haushälterin Mechthilde, die, nachdem sie das Zimmerverbot übertreten und das Geheimnis des Mannes aufgespürt hat, das Orakel bis zur Ermattung befragt. Am Schluss ist sie in Zauberei und Weltweisheit so erfahren, dass sie den Tod entgeht. Peter, der nichts gegen sie unternehmen kann, schwört, sich dafür am ganzen weiblichen Geschlecht zu rächen (Begründung für Blaubarts Zukunft als Frauenmörder). Weibliche Neugierde ist in seinen Augen das schlimmste Übel, das alle anderen nach sich zieht.

Bei einem zweiten Besuch bei der Zauberin wünscht sich Peter als äußerliches Zeichen seiner Männlichkeit einen Bart; da er aber die Zauberin beleidigt, bestraft sie ihn mit einem blauen Bart, mit dem er sich letztendlich zufrieden gibt. Da nun zum bekannten Plot alle Vorbereitungen getroffen, die Märchenrequisiten beschafft sowie die “dunklen” Stellen des Märchens (verbotenes Zimmer, Manneshass gegen die Frauen, blauer Bart usw.) geklärt sind, kann Peter in die Hauptrolle schlüpfen: Er heiratet sieben Mal Frauen, die das Zimmerverbot übertreten. Dieser Raum ohne Leichen bleibt für die Frauen leer, insofern der darin aufbewahrte Kopf ihnen—Mechthilde ausgenommen—verborgen bleibt: Blaubarts Strafe trifft bloß ihre Neugier und ihren

Ungehorsam. Fünf Mal tötet Blaubart (dabei werden die Mordszenen erzählerisch ausgeblendet), während die siebte Frau dem Tod dank der Hilfe des Bruders entgeht. Vor seinem eigenen Tod stürzt Peter den Kopf aus Überdruß von der Burg.

Das Muster der Geschlechterbeziehungen ist im Roman spielerisch variiert, ebenso die Gründe, aus denen die Frauen die Ehe eingehen. Blaubarts Weibergalerie ist parodistisch-satirisch aufgebaut und trifft sowohl Frauentypen wie die literarischen Gattungen, wo solche auftreten: Sie reichen von der romantischen, sentimental liebenden, durch den Vater zur Ehe gezwungenen Friederike bis zur hysterisch-krankhaften, durch Legendenlektüre und Klostererziehung geprägten Catherine, die an ihrer eigenen Phantasie (einer Schauervision) stirbt. Höhepunkt ist ein Mädchen ohne Bildung und Charakter, und ohne ausreichende Neugier, um das Verbot zu übertreten, das von Blaubarts Haushälterin, Mechthilde, zu eben dieser Übertretung veranlasst werden muss, um zu verhindern, dass diese «aus Dummheit die Tugendhafteste seyn sollte» (S. 134).

Die poetische Gerechtigkeit (das “Criminalbuchgesetz der Kunst” S. 13) erfordert, dass Übeltäter ihrer Bestrafung nicht entgehen, somit auch Mechthilde sterben muss (Selbstmord). Die Lebensgeschichte von Blaubarts Mitwisserin und-täterin, ist auch sehr verzweigt: Von bürgerlicher Herkunft, verliebt sie sich in einen Ritter und wird Mutter und schliesslich von diesem verlassen. Sie vergiftet ihn. Zweimal entgeht sie im Roman dem Tod: einmal dem Anschlag durch Blaubart, das zweite Mal dem Mordversuch durch die Hand seiner zweiten, eifersüchtigen Ehefrau. Ein Gegengift rettet sie, verursacht aber eine hässliche Veränderung ihrer Person, die sie (selbstironisch) mit folgenden Worten kommentiert: “O wie gerecht ist das Schicksal!” (S. 94).

Diese sehr verkomplizierte Handlung ist durch Digressionen wiederholt unterbrochen. Der Autor macht meistens ironisch-parodistische Einschübe. Intertextualität und Intermedialität (Tieck bezieht andere Medien wie Malerei ein) prägen seinen Text. Das erste Kapitel ist der Moralität, was eben im französischen “Original” am Schluss (Perraults “moralité”) steht, gewidmet und dabei endgültig aufgehoben. In der Figur Bernards spricht der Autor über seine schriftstellerische Praxis und Poetologie: Der Verfasser habe sich tausende Geschichten ausgesucht, die seinem Humor am besten zusagten (d.h. Literatur aus Literatur), und dabei Einheit in der Mannigfaltigkeit gesucht—eben das, was in einer Leserapostrophe kritisiert wird: “Lieber Leser, Du sprichst so viel von der Einheit, vom Zusammenhange in den Büchern, greife einmal in Deinen Busen, und frage Dich selber; am Ende lebst Du ganz so, oder noch schlimmer, als ich schreibe.” Daher ist Menninghaus’ Bezeichnung des Romans als ein Buch ohne allen Zusammenhang, das den Leser permanent verstöre, durchaus zutre-

ffend. Eine genauere Analyse aller literarischen Schichten und Codes, die das Gewebe dieses Romans ausmachen, steht jedoch aus.

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Index of Catalan Folktales. By Carme Oriol and Josep M. Pujol. *Folklore Fellows Communications* 294. Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 2008. 313 pp.

As with Isabel Cardigos's recent *Catalogue of Portuguese Folktales*, Carme Oriol and Josep M. Pujol's *Index of Catalan Folktales* illuminates the contours of an Iberian folkloristic landscape first mapped in 1930 by Ralph Steel Boggs. Boggs, who observed astutely that "political boundaries are very little related to folkloristic boundaries," chose to limit his own Iberian index along linguistic lines, confining his efforts exclusively to Spanish (*Index of Spanish Folktales* 6). Oriol and Pujol do much the same, limiting their index to Catalan. As such, their index is not regional strictly in terms of physical or political geography. The folktales of Catalonia proper fall within its scope, but so do narratives from Aragon, Valencia, el Carxe, and the Balearic Islands in Spain; so, too, do narratives of the sovereign nation of Andorra, of the *Department des Pyrenées Orientales* in Southern France, and of L'Alguer in Italy (10). These regions, as they write, once "formed a confederation of states governed by the . . . Crown of Aragon" (10). And today, while Catalonia is the only region in which Catalan is an official language, all share a common cultural, as well as linguistic, heritage.

Neither author of this volume is new to writing tale-type indexes. Pujol and Oriol each compiled Catalan indexes, relatively well known but never published, as their doctoral dissertations at the University of Barcelona, Terragona (in 1982 and 1999 respectively). Moreover, this is not their first edition of this index. The *Index of Catalan Folktales* is a revision of their 2003 volume, the *Índex tipològic de la rondalla catalana*—a public folklore project, commissioned by the autonomous government of Catalonia as a resource for "teachers, cultural animators, writers, illustrators, professional tale tellers, etc." (15). As the authors write in their introduction, the current iteration is in fact mostly revision. It has been expanded by about one quarter, but it is primarily a translation and correction of their original text, redirected toward a scholarly audience.

As that is the case, we would expect this index to be a mature scholarly resource. And in many respects it is. Structurally, it mirrors *The Types of International Folktales*, Hans-Jörg Uther's 2004 revision of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson's *The Types of Folktale* (2nd rev., 1961). It contains the customary divisions into Animal Tales, Tales of Magic, Religious Tales, and so on. Entries are titled and numbered in accordance with Uther's revised system. And

though it omits references to entries within Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* (1955–1958), it includes illustrative plot summaries.

Further, in no small part because of its limited scope, the volume offers some useful innovations on the form. Each entry includes full bibliographic listings, broken down by region, for each version available in print. And each includes a listing of which other Catalan catalogs include the tale, as well as where they appear in those volumes. The entry for type 300, The Dragon-Slayer, for instance, includes bibliographic listings for twenty-six versions in seven Catalan-speaking regions, as well as page numbers for two separate entries in Josefina Roma's 2006 edition of Sara Llorens's *Rondallari de Pineda* (60–61). The entry for type 882, The Wager on the Wife's Chastity, includes eight listings in four regions, four listings for Catalan versions of unknown origin, and references to entries in two additional catalogs (173–74). The overall result is a resource with better usability than Uther's international index, or even many of its older, regional companions. The changes that Oriol and Pujol institute would be difficult to propagate on a larger scale. But in this context they make the sometimes-esoteric conventions of tale-type indexes significantly more user-friendly.

That said, although the scope of the index allows for better accessibility, it is also the volume's single most disturbing weakness. Oriol and Pujol, in the course of their research for this index, claim to have discovered a body of well over 6,000 individual folktales. And yet they address only 2,766 of them—less than half of the full corpus. “In this volume,” they write, they have included only “information concerning the tales included in the international index,” Uther's index, adding that local materials “will be the object of a separate publication” (15). Although the additional bibliographic materials that they provide for existing tale types are valuable, the result of this approach is an index with limited appeal, one that, at best, feels half complete. So much of the purpose of regional indexes is to provide a more thorough accounting of folk narrative traditions on a smaller scale; and so much of their purpose is to provide a practical guide to narratives not found in the international index. And in its failure to include local types, the *Index of Catalan Folktales* accomplishes neither of these objectives.

Ultimately, this is something the authors themselves seem to recognize. They write in their introduction that this is not really a stand-alone document at all and that, “parallel to the publication of this volume,” they have published a website (www.sre.urv.cat/rondcat) that includes “all types, regardless of whether they are type ATU or not” (15). The website is useful; it does, as they say, serve as “a good tool for developing research into types which are not” otherwise indexed (15). But it also leaves an important question: if the authors have this information available—if they have organized it for presentation on

the World Wide Web—why, then, have they not also included it in the book? As a second edition, we would expect the *Index of Catalan Folktales* to be a mature scholarly resource. And in this sense it is not. For all its useful innovations in terms of presentation and ease of use, its value is ultimately limited by the authors' failure to address what is arguably the more important part of the body of folk narrative they are attempting to catalog.

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Bibliothèque des Génies et des Fées 8. II. La veine orientale (1704–1789). 1. Les orientalistes. François Pétis de la Croix. *Histoire de la sultane de Perse et des vizirs*. Édition critique par Raymonde Robert. *Les mille et un jours, contes persans*. Édition critique sous la direction de Pierre Brunel avec la collaboration de Christelle Bahier-Porte et de Frédéric Mancier. Abbé Jean-Paul Bignon. *Les aventures d'Abdalla*. Édition critique par Raymonde Robert. Paris: Champion, 2006. 1333 pp.

Bibliothèque des Génies et des Fées 13. III. Le retour du conte de fées (1715–1775). 2. Les conteuses du XVIIIe siècle. Madame Levesque, Madame de Gomez, Madame de Dreuillet, Madame Le Marchand, Madame de Lintot, Madame de Lassay, Madame Fagnan, Mademoiselle Falques. *Contes*. Édition critique établie par Raymonde Robert. Mademoiselle de Lussan. *Les veillées de Thessalie*. Édition critique établie par Nadine et Jean-Claude Decourt. Paris: Champion, 2007. 825 pp.

Bibliothèque des Génies et des Fées 16. IV. Contes parodiques et licencieux (1730–1754). Antoine Hamilton, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Henri Pajon, Jacques Cazotte, Carl Gustav Tessin, Charles Duclos, Denis Diderot. *Contes*. Édition critique établie par Anne Defrance et Jean-François Perrin. Paris: Champion, 2008. 1590 pp.

Bibliothèque des Génies et des Fées 17. IV. Contes parodiques et licencieux (1730–1754). Claude Crébillon. *Contes*. Édition critique sous la direction de Régine Jomand-Baudry, avec la collaboration de Véronique Costa et de Violaine Géraud. Paris: Champion, 2009. 1095 pp.

Bibliothèque des Génies et des Fées 18. IV. Contes parodiques et licencieux (1730–1754). Fougere de Monbron, Senneterre, Chevrier, La Morlière, Bret, Boissy, Gautier de Montdorge, Voisenon, Cahusac, Galli de Bibiena, Mme. Fagnan, Baret et Anonymes. *Contes*. Édition critique établie par Françoise Gevrey. Paris: Champion, 2007. 1173 pp.

These five volumes constitute an invaluable collection of eighteenth-century tales that otherwise would have been forgotten, many of them having

been published only once. Together they represent a cohesive example of how the fairy-tale genre developed in the eighteenth century, and they should launch new research interests. The editors, in agreement with the collections “Sources classiques,” went to great lengths to reproduce texts as they appeared in their original editions, with as few modifications in punctuation, capital letters, and italics as possible. However, the spelling and, in some volumes, the punctuation and the codification of dialogues have been modernized, which can present a loss for the scholarly reader. At the end of each volume one will find a helpful outline of the tales, an index of characters, a table of illustrations, and the table of contents. One might regret that the editor of the collection did not add a general table of contents for the entire collection into each volume. Since the rationale for this collection is explained only in the first volume, it is difficult to have an overview of the collection and of the vogue of fairy tales it illustrates from an examination of individual volumes in the series. Still, the priceless amount of research and the collection of original texts reproduced here demonstrate the recent change of mentality toward the importance of non-canonical literature for a better understanding of French early modern culture as a whole.

La veine orientale (1704–1789). Vol. 8.

This volume is really three texts under one cover, united by a theme. Since each text has a unique editor, the three texts are presented differently. However, the quality of the volume doesn't suffer from it; the richness of the introductions, notices, prefaces, analysis, and notes makes up for the apparent lack of organization.

The brief general presentation of the volume by Raymonde Robert situates the three texts in their relationship with Antoine Galland and the production of oriental/orientalizing tales.

Covering the period between 1707 and 1714, roughly the same period as Galland's *Les mille et un nuits* (1704–1712), these texts present an interesting view of the evolution of the oriental tales according to their “degree of authenticity” (8). The oriental tale is introduced to the French public in 1704 by Galland's very personal translation of fictional tales taken from authentic manuscripts. Then, in 1707, François Pétis de la Croix translates not only the fictional tales of the *Histoire de la sultane* but also religious, administrative, and legal texts from a Turkish manuscript. The French public is confronted with a more “complete” and “concrete” image of the orient than the one offered by Galland. The third step represents the creation of orientalizing tales. The narration of *Les mille et un jours* (1710) is the author's creation, and some of the tales, oriental in origin, have been adapted and modified by Pétis. Whereas these

texts are still, to a degree, authentic in origin, Jean-Paul Bignon's *Aventures* (1712–1714) are completely invented by the author, with a variable degree of authenticity. Bignon's techniques range from dressing occidental tales with an oriental flavor to imagining adventures that could pass for oriental, nonetheless demonstrating his great knowledge of the culture. From 1715 on, authors tended to choose one or the other model for their productions until the oriental vogue was taken over by the writers of licentious tales in the 1730s.

Eight illustrations punctuate this volume, and an expansive bibliography and the principal variants of the tales are found at the end of the volume.

Les conteuses du XVIIIe siècle. Vol. 13.

This volume assembles the serious tales written by women in the eighteenth century, tales that have been completely suppressed. Many of them were not inserted in the *Cabinet des Fées*, were published only once, and, as in the case of Mme. de Dreuillet's and Mme. Le Marchand's tales, were taken off the market soon after. In her short introduction, Raymonde Robert explains this phenomenon according to several points: these tales were diffused over a period of thirty years, and each writer published few of them; they were marginalized by the mainly male orientaling and licentious tales that belonged to a recognized category of burlesque literature that flourished at the same time; and, unlike Mme. Le Prince de Beaumont's, they weren't recognized for their pedagogical value, because they were written for adults. Robert then offers a short bibliography and sends the reader to volume 1 of the collection for further information. The bibliography mainly reflects the research until the 1990s except for two more recent studies written in French by Jean-Paul Sermain and Sophie Raynard.

The tales are presented chronologically and are preceded by a notice including a biography of the authors, an analysis of the tales, and a list of the editions and of critical studies, if any. Because the Decourts have published several studies of *Veillées de Thessalie* elsewhere, it is not reviewed in depth here. The four illustrations come from the *Cabinet des Fées*.

These tales unquestionably suffer from an almost complete lack of attention from modern critics. However, in regard to Robert's analysis, though it is crucial to identify the intertexts with other literary tales and folktales—perpetuating the assertion that literary fairy tales are undeniably “issued” from folklore, which they “arrange,” simply because they can be related to a tale type—undermines the new research interests in the genre that have been flourishing within and outside of France since the late 1990s.

Contes parodiques et licencieux (1730–1754). Vols. 16, 17, and 18.

The first of these three volumes dedicated to the licentious tales of the eighteenth century includes Jean-François Perrin's interesting preface to *contes parodiques et licencieux*. Perrin summarizes the main criticism of the last three decades by Jacques Barchilon, Raymonde Robert, and Jean-Paul Sermain and builds upon it to explain the particularities of the vogue of fairy tales and their context. Initiated by Antoine Hamilton and developed by Claude Crébillon, the tales of this period follow the same pattern: they are firmly anchored in the society of their time; they establish a dialogue between the teller and the reader; and the use of parody, equivoque, and burlesque never really allows the reader to understand fully the meaning of the text—should they laugh, or are they being laughed at?

Volume 16 is divided by author. Starting with introductions of various lengths (ninety-five pages for Hamilton, fewer than three for Denis Diderot), the editors present a bibliography of the authors' publications, an explanation of the criteria and decision-making process for the choice of the text or edition used, and finally a critical bibliography. The corpus follows, and a notice explaining the circumstances of its creation and publication precedes each tale. Pages 1,248 to 1,280 are missing from the volume, and for the section on Carl Gustav Tessin, only the tale is printed. At the end of each author's section comes an appendix including the reception of the author's work and relevant quotes, which helps to put the work into context. The volume is well illustrated with twenty-four images and reproduces the drawings ordered by Tessin for one of his tales that are considered to be the source of Charles Duclos's "Acajou et Zirphile."

Volume 17, the second of the three volumes of fairy tales that fall under the category of licentious tales, is entirely dedicated to Claude Crébillon's tales. The texts chosen for this volume are, among the many editions of the time, the most reviewed and corrected by Crébillon.

Crébillon is one of the key authors of literary fairy tales because of his popularity as a writer as well as the fact that his work sits at the crossroads between traditional and orientaling tales, which constitute the essential ingredients for the creation of the licentious tale. His peers recognized his role in the genre right away, and although he follows the road opened by Alexander Hamilton, he brought *libertinage* to the genre. He contaminated his tales with all possible literary genres in vogue at the time, and a dialogue with his contemporaries is integrated within his tales.

After the general introduction, each tale is separately introduced and carefully annotated. "Atalzaide," which has been attributed to Crébillon and/or Henri-Charles de Senneterre as an example of collaborative writing in vogue in

the salons of the 1750s, appears in the appendix. The appendix is followed by the variants of the tales, the history of the editions, and a bibliography for Crébillon in general and each tale in particular. Despite the fact that there are no illustrations reproduced in this volume, it is very professionally conceived and should inspire scholars to investigate this often neglected part of Crébillon's literary production.

The third volume of licentious tales, volume 18, is the most heterogeneous in the number of authors included and the furthest removed from what Charles-Joseph Mayer tried to do with his *Cabinet des fées* (1785–1789). For this reason, the tale “Kanor” by Mme. Fagnan is part of this volume, while her other tale, “Minet Bleu et Louvette,” considered serious, finds its place in volume 13, which is dedicated to the *conteuses*.

This volume is based upon a cohesive corpus according to several criteria: the rupture with Charles Perrault's tradition; the recognition of Hamilton and Crébillon as models; the ongoing theme of eroticism; the cohesion of words and expressions and the recurrence of objects and places; the tone and style of the authors; and the constant intertextuality—and sometimes plagiarism—and auto-referencing, which allowed the new authors to place themselves within the tradition of their predecessors.

Many of these tales were published anonymously and clandestinely, with very few illustrations. It was sometimes difficult for their readers to identify the author, and many have been falsely attributed to Crébillon. These authors explicitly put their work(s) into the realm of minor and frivolous genres. They have the particularity of being ephemeral, written in order to be read only once, and do not subscribe to the rules of the genre as established by the authors of the first vogue. These features contribute to the de-valorization of the marvelous, but as parody and satire of the authors' surroundings, the tales' milieu undeniably reflects the Paris of the 1750s.

Except for the tales of Voisenon, they are presented in the chronological order of their first publication so as to emphasize the intertextuality between the tales. The general bibliography, following the main introduction, is not exhaustive nor is it specific to this volume.

Each tale is preceded by a biographical note about the author, if any; a notice explaining its publication history; a tale-specific bibliography of publications in the eighteenth century, and in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, if any; a list of the other works of the author, if relevant; and a list of critical studies. This volume contains eleven remarkable illustrations of the tales, usually postdating their first publication.

Thanks to these five volumes of tales, modern readers and scholars are presented for the first time with a blueprint of the fairy tale's evolution during the

eighteenth century. The extensive research the editors have already compiled will surely inspire fairy-tale and eighteenth-century scholars to develop new areas of study, as this collection opens doors into new and almost uncharted territory.

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Die Brüder Grimm: Eine Biographie. By Steffen Martus. Berlin: Rowohlt, 2009. 608 pp.

A dominant theme in Steffen Martus's impressive biography of the Brothers Grimm is the interplay between unity and individuality, or what Wilhelm Grimm referred to as the "innere Einigkeit der Gegensätze" ("inner unity of contrasts"). The straightforward title of Martus's work suggests this interplay: as the plural and singular indicate, this is both one biography and yet two, a portrait of two distinct personalities who shared the closest of brotherly and scholarly bonds. Some works on Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm have tended to focus more on Jacob than on Wilhelm, as, for example, Ludwig Denecke's *Jacob Grimm und sein Bruder Wilhelm* (1971). By contrast, Martus successfully conveys the "inner unity" of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimms' brotherhood and scholarly pursuits without neglecting either figure's unique identity or achievements. His work is also more detailed than Hermann Gerstner's biography of the Brothers Grimm (1970) or more recent works such as the considerably shorter biography by Hans-Georg Schede (2004). Readable, engaging, and insightful, *Die Brüder Grimm: Eine Biographie* is a much-needed contribution to Grimm scholarship.

In a five-page introduction, Martus contrasts the Grimms' recollections of an idyllic childhood with prevailing views of children in the nineteenth century, as well as with the harsh depictions of childhood in many of the fairy tales they collected. He observes that the Grimms' admiration of the child's naïve curiosity sheds light on their own scholarly inquisitiveness, and he describes their appreciation of the past as making them two of the "most modern traditionalists of their time" (9). He further observes that the Grimms were simultaneously revolutionary and conservative in their political stances and that their contemporaries often found their scholarship provocative or disappointing. These observations, together with the overarching theme of unity and individuality, are studied in the seven chronologically arranged chapters that follow. A useful timeline of important dates appears at the end of the book.

Rich detail accompanies Martus's presentation of Jacob's and Wilhelm's lives. In the first chapter, for example, the reader learns that Jacob's aunt Charlotte Schlemmer taught him to read by pointing out the various letters of the alphabet with a pin and that, according to Jacob, the letters on the page were all soon pierced through with pin marks—symbolic, in Martus's view, of the

penetrating power of literacy (24). Commenting on the death of the Grimms' father, Martus relates Jacob's moving recollection of seeing his father's casket and observes that the pension their family subsequently received made up only about one-sixth of the income the family had previously enjoyed (thus making the support provided by aunt Henriette Zimmer indispensable to the family's financial well-being). The brothers' industriousness as students, their status as underdogs, and factors such as Wilhelm's precarious health are probed in the opening chapters, and here as in subsequent chapters Martus gives a nuanced assessment of the brothers' respective personalities.

Qualifying the tendency to portray Jacob as the chief scholar of the two, Martus emphasizes that such portrayals undervalue Wilhelm's role as the contact person for many of the Grimms' scholarly interests. To facilitate the collecting of fairy tales, he notes, Wilhelm maintained an extensive correspondence and participated in many social gatherings. Whereas Jacob disregarded etiquette and convention, Wilhelm was the more flexible of the two. These and other character traits are also palpable as Martus explores the brothers' relationship with figures including Clemens Brentano, Achim von Arnim, Friedrich Carl von Savigny, Friedrich Heinrich von der Hagen, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, Bettine von Arnim, and Hoffmann von Fallersleben, to name only a few. Of further interest is Martus's portrayal of the Grimms' occasionally strained relationship with their younger siblings and of Wilhelm's friendship with Jenny von Droste-Hülshoff and marriage to Dorothea Wild.

Martus also vividly describes the Grimms' relationship to the places where they lived, and he perceptively assesses the impact of Hessian, Hannoverian, and Prussian monarchs and political figures on the Grimms' personal and professional lives. In addition, he gives a thorough analysis of the Grimms' political engagement as members of the Göttingen Seven—or, in Jacob's case, as a participant in the Frankfurt National Assembly. He juxtaposes the Grimms' indifference to established authority with their zeal for scholarship, and he relates the brothers' political stances to their fundamental interest in the relationship between unity and the constituent parts to be united.

As Martus stresses, this relationship also characterized the Grimms' philological methods. Whereas their detractors at times viewed their works as unwieldy assemblages of minute details and observations, Martus emphasizes the Grimms' understanding of the interrelationship between the general and the particular. For example, in discussing Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie* (Germanic Mythology), he traces Jacob's attention both to individual, historical circumstance and to general, supra-historical conditions.

The discussion of the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Childhood and Nursery Tales, KHM) is approximately twenty pages in length. It provides a

summary of the origins of the fairy-tale collection and the manner in which the Grimms collected the tales. The reader will find some of the usual examples given to illustrate the Grimms' editorial practice through the various editions of the KHM. The deletion of the reference to Rapunzel's too-tight clothes (and thus to her pregnancy) is used to exemplify the Grimms' sanitization of sexual content. And the daughter's reward of a king in "The Frog King" illustrates the murky morality at play in some of the tales: the frog is transformed into a king only when the daughter, having been told by her father that she must keep her promise to the frog, angrily hurls the frog against the wall. It is unfortunate that Martus does not venture very far beyond these and other fairly standard examples. Nevertheless, the reader will find many of his observations interesting. For example, he relates the tension between pain and joy in the tales to the tension between style and content: while the tales themselves often depict harsh circumstances such as violence or poverty, the "once upon a time" tone in which they are told conveys a motherly comfort.

Indeed, whereas the Grimms viewed the mother as the ideal parent to read fairy tales from the KHM to children, Martus notes that in conceiving of the *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (German Dictionary), they regarded fathers as the parent who ought to select a few words each evening from the dictionary to study with their sons. Both works, they hoped, would become standard possessions in German households. In his discussions of the Grimms' various individual and collaborative projects, Martus pays close attention to the Grimms' sense of their intended audience, and he discusses the market factors that often determined the initial success or failure of particular works.

He also notes the social obligations that too often hampered their scholarly work in Göttingen and Berlin, and the fact that for a significant portion of their careers they were celebrated more as librarians than as philologists. One of the most striking observations in the biography concerns what Martus describes as the intertwining of brotherliness (*Brüderlichkeit*) and the love of books (*Bücherliebe*) in the brothers' relationship to each other. He observes with penetrating insight how books strengthened the brotherly bond between Jacob and Wilhelm, led them to make friends and enemies with others, and determined their daily schedule and often their travel plans. Books, he notes, became tantamount to friends for them.

In view of this, one at times wishes that Martus would have discussed books themselves at greater length. He devotes a mere three pages, for example, to Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie* (367–69). And while he pays significant attention to the reception of the Grimms' works within their lifetimes, one also wishes he had included a concluding chapter on their reception in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Similarly, it would have been helpful if Martus, in his introduction, had briefly situated his biography of the Grimms

within the context of previous scholarship. Anglophone scholars will also note the lack of reference to North American scholarship on the Grimms. This is particularly surprising in light of the many significant contributions of North American scholars to research on the Grimms' fairy tales. In a bibliography that is some thirty-two pages in length, the sole English-language reference is to William Clark's *Academic Charisma and the Origins of the Research University* (2006).

These quibbles aside, *Die Brüder Grimm: Eine Biographie* is an excellent study of the Grimms' lives. Martus deserves high praise for the thematic and scholarly integrity of his narrative. His biography gives thoughtful and nuanced portrayals of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, and it is particularly outstanding in its contextualization of the Grimms' careers within the political and cultural landscape of their time. This most impressive achievement is Steffen Martus's first contribution to Grimm studies—the first, I hope, of many.

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Enchanted Ideologies: A Collection of Rediscovered Nineteenth-Century Moral Fairy Tales. Edited and with Annotations and an Introductory Essay by Marilyn Pemberton. Lambertville, NJ: True Bill Press, 2010. 307 pp.

Scholarly studies of the British fairy tale in the nineteenth century have been flourishing over the past five years. Matthew Grenby has led the way in revising our notions about the social and cultural reception of pre-Victorian fairy tales with a superb essay, "Tame Fairies Make Good Teachers: The Popularity of Early British Fairy Tales," in which he argues that fairy tales were not discredited at the end of the eighteenth century but experienced a smooth development into the nineteenth century, adapting as a genre to new conditions in Great Britain (*Lion and the Unicorn* 30.1 [2006]: 1–24). In another important study, Laurence Talairach-Vielmas has drawn unusual parallels between the nineteenth-century fairy tales and the sensation novels of the same period. In particular, her *Moulding the Female Body in Victorian Fairy Tales and Sensation Novels* (Ashgate, 2007) examines how these fairy tales and novels reveal the pressures and expectations that obliged young Victorian women from the middle and upper classes to transform themselves according to aesthetic and cultural models constructed according to male interests and to the rapidly growing commodity market in England. More recently, Caroline Sumpter has shown through her original research how British magazines and newspapers employed fairy tales in diverse ways at the end of the nineteenth century to speak to both children and adults and to try to influence them according to political and religious views. Her significant study *The Victorian Press and the Fairy Tale* (Palgrave, 2008) has added to our understanding of how working-class people

were exposed to and used the fairy tale to their own interests. Now, in *Enchanted Ideologies*, Marilyn Pemberton has further enriched our understanding of the British fairy tale in the nineteenth century by publishing a valuable anthology of rediscovered moral fairy tales for young women and children.

Pemberton's book consists of a long sociohistorical introduction about the ideological and cultural development of the fairy tale and twenty-one unusual fairy tales that appeared from 1818 to 1899, mainly in women's magazines such as *La Belle Assemblée; or, Belle's Court and Fashionable Magazine*; *The Ladies Cabinet of Fashion, Music, and Romance*; and *The World of Fashion* or in publications for girls such as *Aunt Judy's Magazine*. Several of the writers are anonymous or unknown, while others like Mary Martha Sherwood, Dinah Mulock Craik, Mary de Morgan, Evelyn Sharp, Mary Molesworth, and Edith Nesbit are recognized literary figures. Building on Grenby's essay, Pemberton focuses more on fairy tales written for and featuring young girls and women. She argues that the fairy tale was very much alive and vibrant throughout the nineteenth century. However, its function and form changed somewhat due to the rise of the middle classes and the transformation of the family in the nineteenth century. The formation of distinct gender roles and "new" domesticity—note that Pemberton concentrates on the bourgeoisie—led to the publication of books on manners and the writing of moral fairy tales in which girls and women were likened to flowers, domestic angels, and faultless wives. Similar to some of the fairy tales published by Sarah Fielding and Madame Le Prince de Beaumont, these stories were intended to prepare young women for marriage and proper roles as good wives.

From a literary perspective, the tales in the anthology from the early part of the nineteenth century, such as "The Rose," "Aglæ," "The Wishing Cap," "Elmina," and "Zerinda," tend to be too didactic and schematic and are only readable as representative "historical documents" of how the fairy tale was flattened to "civilize" young women according to gender and religious expectations. The tales written later by De Morgan, Sharp, Molesworth, and Nesbit problematize the situation of young girls and women and have more literary merit. What becomes apparent from reading the entire collection and Pemberton's introduction is that there was no such thing as *the* Victorian fairy tale. Rather there was a major conflict about the meaning and significance of fairy tales for children and adults throughout the nineteenth century.

As Pemberton clearly demonstrates, numerous writers, female and male, sought to sanitize, Christianize, and nationalize the fairy tale to reinforce the patriarchal notions of good British society. Even the tales of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm were adapted for these purposes. At the same time, these moral tales were eventually questioned and subverted by serious moral writers

such as Molesworth, Ewing, and Nesbit, not to mention George MacDonald, Lewis Carroll, Oscar Wilde, Laurence Housman, and others. Pemberton's anthology is a solid reminder that fantasy and fairy tales, while often counter-cultural, can produce—as is the case in today's consumer culture—widespread banality that reflects the dominant ideological trend of the times. Fortunately, we do not tend to remember these tales. Collected for their historical importance, they serve as a reminder and warning that narrow-minded didacticism and conformist thinking cannot produce art.

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Fairy Tales Reimagined: Essays on New Retellings. Edited by Susan Redington Bobby. Foreword by Kate Bernheimer. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009. 260 pp.

This collection grew out of an Northeast Modern Language Association conference panel, and it displays both the strengths and the weaknesses of its inception. The collection's large number of essays, sixteen plus a foreword and introduction, precludes any of them from having the length for a complex development of their theses. And I would have loved much more of Bethany Joy Bear on Peg Kerr's 1999 queering of Hans Andersen's *Wild Swans*, or of Joanne Campbell Tidwell's reading of Jane Yolen's recuperation of Barrie's *Peter Pan* in her 1997/2000 "Lost Girls," where Peter becomes the patriarch enforcing Victorian heteronormativity and the pirates a revolutionary democratic community. "Yolen's story," Tidwell writes, "is of the truly oppressed of Victorian times, girls of mostly working class origins, and it restores the revolutionary and emancipatory nature of the tale" (66).

Despite the relative brevity of the essays, one of the real strengths of the collection is its focus on recent publications of retellings where little criticism has as yet been generated, with stories from the 1990s and 2000 on. Alongside the new stories, the collection embraces an expansive inclusion of less-considered women writers such as Peg Kerr, Emma Donoghue, Robin McKinley, Louise Murphy, and Shannon Hale. And in a genre that Mathilda Slabbert argues is sometimes regarded as "the domain for female writers and the platform for feminist commentary" (69), it is also exciting to find serious consideration of a number of male writers: Robert Coover, Neil Gaiman, Gregory Maguire, Philip Pullman, Gaétan Soucy, and Bill Willingham. Indeed, Willingham's comic book series, *Fables* 2002–2006, with its cast of fairy-tale figures presented in the "real" world of New York post 9/11, is one that will be new to large swathes of the fairy-tale academy. Mark C. Hill's analysis of the representations of masculinity in its protagonist, Bigby Wolf—"part hard-nosed detective, part soldier, part anti-hero . . . he is the embodiment of the villainous

wolves of European fairy tales” (181)—is subtle and engaging, concluding that the series mirrors an America that “glorifies war and the soldiers who fight them” (192).

The claims of the collection’s subheadings are a little overblown, and the organization of essays within them are at times misleading, but the discussions that circulate around gender and sexuality, representations of emotional trauma, cultural critique, and the contemporary retelling of the fairy tale are rich and engaging. I would have liked more focus on the metafictional issues of retelling, given the collection’s subtitle, but the essays rarely do that, with the exception of Amie A. Doughty’s discussion of Robin McKinley and Helen Pilonovsky’s impressive analysis of Kate Bernheimer’s *Complete Tales*. It is also a pity that the reference used consistently by the authors is Adrienne Rich’s 1972 “When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision,” a useful and thought-provoking argument but a little dated in the twenty-first century for a discussion of contemporary and postmodern retelling.

Don’t look here for cutting-edge theoretical engagement; there is hardly a reference to Bacchilega or Benson (to begin at the Bs of theoretical tale-telling). And the lack of proper dating of the primary texts is a scholarly omission that at times does not allow more useful comparisons. Margarete J. Landwehr compares representations of the Holocaust in Yolen’s *Briar Rose* and Louise Murphy’s *Hansel and Gretel* as if they were contemporaneous novels (as indeed her editions imply), but the fact that Yolen’s was written a decade before Murphy’s is surely relevant to a comparative reading of retellings. It was frustrating that I constantly had to go outside the volume to discover the original dates for much of the work under discussion. In her foreword, Kate Bernheimer’s autobiographical musing on the fairy tale raises a fascinating question as to whether it is affect that unifies the genre in all its many manifestations and retellings. Sadly, this question, given that it is the nature of the foreword to be written after all the essays have been composed, is not addressed in this volume, but certainly deserves further consideration.

What you do get in *Fairy Tales Reimagined* is a collection of detailed and interesting readings of contemporary writers using the fairy tale as part of their novels, short stories, and poems. This is a collection to whet the appetite and send you off to read the books as yet unknown to you. Martine Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère’s analysis of Emma Donoghue’s *Kissing the Witch*, with its dramatizations of “the passing of intimate experience, painful secrets and unofficial knowledge between women” (16), is a good case in point. More canonical writers are included alongside the less critically known; Kate Bernheimer, A. S. Byatt, Robert Coover, Philip Pullman, Anne Sexton, and Jeanette Winter-son are writers we are familiar with, but the texts chosen do tend to be their later works, where critical analysis is all the more welcome. Pullman’s 2000 *I*

Was a Rat! for example, is a revision of the Cinderella story from the viewpoint of a boy not returned to his original genus on the stroke of midnight. Maureen Torpey explores Winterson's 2001 *Powerbook* as a rewriting of Alice both in Wonderland and through the Looking Glass, and the critical reading will send me back anew to a text I know well. Most of the articles are good, and a few are very good indeed. The collection delivers an engaged and comprehensive discussion of contemporary writers who utilize fairy tales metatextually. I suggest that the collection is essential for the institutional library, and it will be a welcome addition to many individual libraries as well.

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Fairy Tales: A New History. By Ruth B. Bottigheimer. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009. 152 pp.

In this short book, Ruth Bottigheimer provides an account of the theories she has developed since the early 1990s in a series of articles and in *Fairy Godfather: Straparola, Venice, and the Fairy Tale Tradition* (2002). These theories engage two interrelated areas: a definition of fairy tales and an alternative history of their origins and dissemination via print routes. In five efficient chapters (115 pages without back matter), Bottigheimer recapitulates her arguments concerning “what constitutes a fairy tale?” and “who first composed these stories? how did they spread?” in her characteristically direct and forceful style. The reader is informed at once: “folk invention and transmission of fairy tales has no basis in verifiable fact.” Past and present perceptions of the oral history of such tales are not just “built on a flimsy foundation” but require “an absence of evidence” to sustain them (1–2). The long-held distinction between oral and literary fairy tales is both inaccurate and misleading. Since this distinction has served to promote “an unproveable theory of oral origins and transmission,” Bottigheimer rejects the terms “oral” and “literary”—which are the key terms of the debate provoked by her book-based history—from the outset: “I’ll therefore avoid them in what follows” (8). Even a cursory glance, however, shows that such an avoidance is not strictly adhered to throughout the book; these terms are apparently too useful to be completely discarded. Nevertheless, Bottigheimer’s declared intent puts a point of objection, and contention, on record.

In *Fairy Tales: A New History*, Bottigheimer also restates the corollary of her replacement of an unlettered country folk with literate urban authors (“city-oriented people like ourselves” [113]) and of oral with print pathways: Europe’s first modern fairy tales emerged in the sixteenth century, in Venice, with the publication of Giovan Francesco Straparola’s *Pleasant Nights* (1551, 1553). Books were the vehicle that transported his creation from one place to another.

Their diffusion over several centuries followed this route: Straparola's new fairy tales were augmented in Naples during the early seventeenth century, further developed in France during the late seventeenth century, and then exported to Germany during the second half of the eighteenth century. "In the late eighteenth century," according to Bottigheimer, "they began a triumphal march on little book feet throughout literate Europe" (23).

Between the polemical bookend chapters of *Fairy Tales*, Bottigheimer presents what she calls "a history in reverse," working back in time from German to French and, lastly, to Italian fairy tales (26). The title of the second chapter, "Two Accounts of the Grimms' Tales: The Folk as Creator, the Book as Source," already points to its advocacy of the book—that is, of print origins in general and *Pleasant Nights* in particular—as the source of all modern fairy tales. Likewise, the fourth chapter's title forthrightly announces, in reverse chronological order, "The Two Inventors of Fairy Tale Tradition: Giambattista Basile (1632–1636) and Giovan Francesco Straparola (1551, 1553)," with the epithet "inventors" serving as the red-flag word of this title.

Chapter 3 alone seems to bear a title unmarked by controversy: "The Late Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Layers: Perrault, Lhéritier, and Their Successors"; however, the word "layers" is another indicator of the battle lines drawn in this argument. Although Bottigheimer describes her book as a history arranged in reverse, suggesting a linear horizontal trajectory, the dominant chrono-trope and method used is vertical. Frequently invoking the discourse of archaeology (excavation, layers, digging beneath or below, etc.) and, by indirection, the prestige accorded to an established science with its precision instruments, Bottigheimer sifts through the printed evidence from the nineteenth century straight down to the sixteenth—and stops: "Dig where we may, no rise fairy tales can be found in layers of literary remains before Straparola" (100). But the archaeological analogy simultaneously undoes or undermines the thesis it is intended to support. In contrast to the finite, measured findings of archaeologists at a designated site, folklorists and fairy-tale scholars are advantaged—or disadvantaged, if you will—by the widespread territorial disposition of the materials they investigate. Thus it is conceivable and even commonsensical that from "beneath or behind" the tangible evidence cited in *Fairy Tales*, other stories may turn up in unpredicted and far-flung places, overturning or unsettling the premise that, say, Straparola got there (that is, to the place where certain tales are said to begin) before all the others.

Put another way, the pervasive and privileged metaphor of archaeology calls attention to the conceptual-methodological problems of Bottigheimer's book. To demonstrate this disjunction, I want to look briefly at a specific textual example. In discussing Charles Perrault's 1695 manuscript collection of fairy tales, Bottigheimer contends that the story of "Blue Beard" has "no known

precursor in European literary history, and there is much that points to Perrault's having written [it] himself" (64). While Perrault apparently borrowed a suggestive dialogue from an earlier, and otherwise unrelated, story collected in Basile's *Pentameron*, he used or "seized upon" this extant material, in her view, "to construct a warning morality tale of his own making"—namely, his "Blue Beard" (66). However, to borrow some metaphors from Bottigheimer's archaeological cluster, my research into this fairy tale has unearthed other textual layers below Perrault's version: a tale-cum-parable with distinctive Bluebeard features already appears in the Palestinian Amoraic Midrash literature of Late Antiquity (200–500 CE). This variant of the tale, as I discuss in chapter 1 of *Tales of Bluebeard and His Wives from Late Antiquity to Postmodern Times* (New York: Routledge, 2009), serves as a gloss for Genesis 3, verse 11, in *Genesis Rabbah*, the midrashic commentary provided by the early rabbinic scholars, the *amoraim*—an Aramaic word meaning "those who say"—who discussed, disputed, and eventually codified the teachings of Judaic oral tradition after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. The main point here, however, is neither that Bottigheimer might do well to add ancient Aramaic and Hebrew to her substantial arsenal of languages, nor that her attribution of authorship to Perrault is based on insufficient research. Rather, it is an exhilarating and/or deplorable fact of folklore and fairy-tale studies that "new news" has a tendency to crop up and extend "new histories" downward or sideways or any which way with supplementary information.

Because the issues raised in Bottigheimer's work have complex implications that are crucial for contemporary folklore and narrative theory, on the one hand, and yet are by now familiar to many folklorists and fairy-tale scholars, on the other, I shall not further discuss these issues in the present context. Instead, I would refer the interested reader to several instructive, in-depth appraisals: the Critical Exchanges section in *Marvels & Tales* 20 (2006): 276–84; Cristina Bacchilega's review of Bottigheimer's *Fairy Godfather* in *Western Folklore* 66 (2007): 383–85; the "Reflections on the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society in Milwaukee" in the *ISFNR Newsletter* (March 2007): 17–26; and the special issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* 490 (Fall 2010), devoted to the controversy surrounding *Fairy Godfather*, which contains an introduction by the guest editor, Dan Ben-Amos; articles by Ben-Amos, Francisco Vaz da Silva, and Jan Ziolkowski; and a response by Bottigheimer.

Summarily, although Bottigheimer's impressive archival skills and her knowledge of print histories continue to yield nuggets of valuable information, the primary contribution of *Fairy Tales: A New History* lies in its textbook-like digest. As already indicated, this book recapitulates the print-based history that Bottigheimer has articulated, both in various public (oral) and published (literary) forums, in the contemporary debate about what came first—the telling or

the writing of fairy tales. If my formulation at this point recalls the old conundrum of which came first—the chicken or the egg—the evocation is, of course, deliberate. In our post-Derridean and postmodern era, the search for definitive stories of origins, for the equivalents of “In the beginning was . . .,” has been frequently, and rigorously, challenged. Likewise the binary oppositions, the “either this/or that” which sustained so many metaphysical positions (and holy wars) in the past, have been undermined and, on occasion, even transcended. It may thus be a good and timely idea to put aside either “folk as creator” or “book as source” divisions and move on to more productive aspects of current folkloric research.

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De la merveille à l'inquiétude: Le registre du fantastique dans la fiction narrative au XVIIIe siècle. By Emmanuelle Sempère. Bordeaux, France: Presses universitaires de Bordeaux, 2009. 611 pp.

There are many interesting observations and arguments in *De la merveille à l'inquiétude* about the conception of the fantastic in eighteenth-century French fiction. However, they get watered down in the overextensive commentaries and examples Emmanuelle Sempère furnishes her readers, which often is the case with published dissertations. I found that the organization of the book could have been better presented in the introduction, which reads as if this is a book primarily about Jacques Cazotte when in fact the scope is much larger, examining the relation of the fantastic to numerous and disparate texts, from Augustin Calmet's treaty on vampires, Cazotte's *Diable Amoureux* (*The Devil in Love*, 1772), the *Encyclopédie*, tales by various *conteuses*, to works by the Abbé Prévost and Crébillon. The interest of the book lies in the foregrounding of the multiple perspectives (theological, rationalist, parodic, etc.) regarding the fantastic that result from such an examination.

This is first and foremost a book about the function of the fantastic in eighteenth-century narrative. Sempère examines the fantastic as a “registre,” which translates into “style” or “tone,” rather than as a genre. And the effect the fantastic exercises over characters and readers can be expressed by “inquiétude,” which can mean “anxiety,” “worry,” or “fear,” but it also suggests the “uncanny,” which in French translates as “l'inquiétante étrangeté” (literally, “worrisome” or “anxiety-provoking strangeness”). Sempère situates the fantastic within the epistemological shift away from an order founded on religious and popular beliefs to an emerging order based on secular rationalism. The fantastic, then, can be read in terms of the “return of the repressed” (i.e., of forgotten or repressed superstitions and beliefs) as well as a way of trying to deal with inassimilable or unacceptable “objects” (including characters) that cannot

be incorporated into contemporary thought systems, whether orthodox Catholic or secular in nature. The register of the fantastic in the eighteenth century, Sempère contends, is not necessarily anti-Enlightenment, but rather it represents a crisis in thought.

I found the first section of the book to be the most compelling. The underlying direction of these chapters follows the work of Robert Muchembled, who has argued that one of the principal functions of witch trials in France was to reinforce Catholic orthodoxy by suppressing popular forms of religious expression that are dubbed “superstitious” by religious as well as secular elites. Henceforth emerges the notion of a “true” supernatural, issuing from Orthodox Catholicism, and a “false” supernatural attached to popular traditions. Sempère examines the work of Augustin Calmet in this light, all the while highlighting the tensions present in his treaty on vampires, which move between his desire to uphold orthodoxy and his personal fascination with narratives about vampires. In a similar manner, Sempère foregrounds the paradox of the *Encyclopédistes*, who attempt to combat superstition by refuting it, but who end up, by virtue of putting into published words their opposition to it, giving superstition at least a momentary existence, for fantastic phenomena are first and foremost effects of narrative. Finally, Sempère examines the ambiguity of Cazotte’s *Devil in Love*, in which the status of Biondetta (is she a woman or the devil, real or fantasy?) provokes anxiety in the main character as well as in the reader throughout the narrative.

The second part of the book focuses on the monstrous as it manifests itself in fairy tales, gothic texts, and cabalistic texts by such authors as Madame d’Aulnoy, Madame de Murat, Crébillon, the chevalier de Mouhy, Catherine Bernard, Cazotte, and writers of oriental tales. Generally speaking, Sempère views monstrosity as a symptom of disorder within the social or biological order, as well as, again, an *inquiétude* regarding its status as true or false. She also discusses parodic texts within this context, which seek to reveal the falsity of popular superstitions. I felt that parts of this section would have benefited from the work of Holly Tucker and Kathryn Hoffmann, whose studies situate representations of the monstrous in tales by French *conteuses* within medical discourses, folklore, and fairground freak shows in very specific and concrete ways.

In the third part of the book, Sempère examines the fantastic as “convulsive,” which refers to the subject’s failure to name or master reality, resulting in involuntary movements of sickness and madness. It is a reaction to being confronted with strangeness. Sempère follows the convulsive effects of the fantastic through the works of Calmet, Mademoiselle L’Héritier, Cazotte, Abbé Prévost, Madame Levesque, and Mademoiselle de Lubert, among others. While the second part of the book focuses on the monstrous, the third part foregrounds the physiological reactions to fantastic objects or situations. Since much of this

chapter concentrates on death, disgust, and the body, the theoretical work of Julia Kristeva on the abject—which also is characterized by ambiguity, ambivalence, the inability to name or determine, the body, as well as disgust—might have provided the chapter with a bit more theoretical depth.

Sempère includes a plethora of texts within her study of the fantastic, and I do think this is a book worthy of our attention. Research on the fantastic in the eighteenth century tends to concentrate on Cazotte, and Sempère's study provides a much broader framework within which to approach the question of the fantastic in this period. I believe this would be a truly wonderful book if it were streamlined and shaped into a more concise study. This would better highlight what is at stake, which has to do with how the fantastic expresses our unease, fear, even loathing of objects and phenomena that seem to fall between the cracks of our systems of knowledge, thus escaping our grasp. Although I would love to see an abridged and more focused version of *De la merveille à l'inquiétude*, this edition does provide an interesting framework for studying the notion of the fantastic within eighteenth-century narrative.

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The Fox's Window and Other Stories. Translated by Toshiya Kamei. New Orleans: Uno Press, 2009. 227 pp.

The Fox's Window and Other Stories is the first English-language collection of Naoko Awa's most representative works. Toshiya Kamei's elegant English translation captures the unique beauty of Awa's fantasy world and introduces one of the most popular Japanese writers of children's literature to English-speaking audiences. Awa, who disappeared from the literary scene with her death in 1993 at the age of fifty, was widely known by Japanese readers for the originality of her stories, grounded in Japanese folklore but, at the same time, enriched by the twists of her vivid imagination. During her long career as a writer, she developed a unique lyrical style that fascinated both critics and audiences. In fact, she won many awards, including the Japan Children's Literature New Author Award and the Shogakukan Literature Award, and was considered a "second mother" by the generation of young readers who grew up reading her stories, as Kamei explains in his translator's note. Her tale "The Fox's Window" became so popular that since 1992 it has been included in the Japanese textbooks for elementary school students.

The Fox's Window and Other Stories features thirty fairy tales ordered chronologically and published in Japan in a period of time spanning from the mid-1960s to the early 1990s. Some of them are based on a wide repertoire of Japanese folktales where foxes, *tanuki* badgers, cranes, *yamanba* (mountain

witches), and other characters familiar to Japanese audiences interact with human beings and often play tricks on the villagers. Other tales are influenced by Awa's readings of the Grimms and Hans Christian Andersen and by her studies of North European children's literature. The result of the encounter of these different narrative traditions is a collection of delightful and highly imaginative tales, where humans, animals, plants, and supernatural creatures move easily across different worlds by changing their shape and interact as if they were on the same level. For example, cosmos flowers send complaint letters to their noisy human neighbor ("Wind Chime in Autumn"), a weasel on roller skates steals a piece of smoked bacon from a farmer ("The Roller Skates in the Wind"), a whale gets married to a rich lady ("The Lost Earring"), three badgers pretend to be an old woman's grandchildren ("Wild Rose Village"), and a young girl turns into the mountain wind ("Becoming the Wind"). Some tales clearly take inspiration from Japanese folklore, while others evoke North European children's literature. For instance, "The Sky-Colored Chair" is set in a "northern town where potatoes and milk are delicious"; and "The Bird and the Rose" will remind Western readers of "Hansel and Gretel" when the protagonist finds a small house in the forest and meets a deceitful witch.

A clue to Awa's cross-border narrative, moving between Japan and Europe, can be found in "The Fox's Window," the tale inspiring the title of Kamei's collection. In a strange dye shop in the middle of the wood, a fox in human disguise dyes a hunter's fingers, creating a magic window in the hole made by his blue-dyed thumb and index fingers. This hole becomes the gateway to a new dimension, where time and space boundaries are overcome and past memories flood back into the present; inside the hole, the hunter watches the scenes of his childhood and hears the voices of his dead relatives. The fox's supernatural power affects also the world outside the hole, because a strange path opens in the wood, revealing a new, unexpected space between reality and fantasy. The magic of the fox's window is the secret underlying the structure of Awa's tales; like the fox's hole, the writer's surreal narrative creates a world where different space and time dimensions overlap, Japanese traditional folktales and European fairy tales merge, and the boundaries between human beings and natural elements are blurred. Her original fantasy world mirrors the Japanese attitude toward nature, because man, animals, and nature are portrayed as interdependent elements, linked by bonds of mutual affection. For example, in "The Fox's Window" the hunter feels compassion for the fox he wanted to kill, because he realizes that both of them have lost their families and are alone in the world. Similarly, in "Wild Rose Village," when the old lady discovers the badgers' trick, far from feeling resentful, she decides to love them as if they were the grandchildren she had always dreamed of.

Unfortunately for readers interested in Japanese literature, Kamei does not indicate the original Japanese titles of each tale and does not specify the Japanese collections where the stories were first published. However, with his faithful English translation, he skillfully captures Awa's lyrical language and secures a wider audience for one of the most appreciated Japanese fairy-tale writers. The tales are preceded by a brief translator's note, in which Kamei introduces Awa's biography and literary works and explains his personal experience as a young reader of Awa's fairy tales. Some of the stories in his collection have already been published in English-language literary journals; however, by featuring thirty tales written in different periods of Awa's life, *The Fox's Window and Other Stories* provides Western readers with a deeper understanding of Awa's fantasy world and with a new insight on Japanese fairy tales. In fact, while many traditional Japanese tales are largely available in English translation, contemporary Japanese fairy tales are, for the most part, still unknown to Western audiences. English-language readers will be charmed by Awa's stories, which are created out of the elements of Japanese and European folklore but, unlike postmodern fairy tales, do not use parody and the grotesque to subvert traditional tales. The evocative book cover by Amane Kaneko, the black-and-white illustrations, and the floral pattern decorating the incipit of each tale mirror the magic, surreal atmosphere of Awa's stories, appealing to both young and adult readers. I definitely recommend this book to all readers interested in fairy tales and in Japanese culture.

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The Year of the Fish. Written and directed by David Kaplan. Performed by An Nguyen, Ken Leung, Tsai Chin, and Randall Duk Kim. Gigantic Pictures, 2007. DVD.

The Year of the Fish is a small film with large ambitions, beautiful in its subtlety and provocative in its weaving of magic into a harsher immigrant reality. Writer and director David Kaplan is no stranger to fairy-tale film, and in his feature film debut he adapts the Chinese Cinderella story to modern-day Chinatown in New York City, challenging the contemporary fairy tale to raise issues of human trafficking and human worth. Though the film offers these complications, it also refuses to pass a heavy moral judgment, preferring, rather, to let the questions hang quietly in the air.

The film tells the story of Ye Xian (An Nguyen, in her feature film debut), a young and inexperienced woman from China who is sent to work at Mrs. Su's beauty salon in NYC Chinatown to make some money for her ailing father back home. Immediately a few initial enchantments are derailed. In actuality,

Mrs. Su (the accomplished Tsai Chin), called “Ma” by the bevy of young Chinese women who work for her, runs a massage parlor where the male customers expect more than massage. Ye Xian goes through her first transformation—decked out in tight U.S.-brand-name clothes and raucous eye shadow, she is incorporated into a system of prostitution. She gets an identifying call number and a new name, “Betty,” that will be easier for the American customers to pronounce. Besides changing both her appearance and identity to adapt to this new U.S. world, Ye Xian must also adapt to a new system of family, one based not in care but in capitalism and competition for male desire.

Ma makes the issue of money and self-worth explicit: “In America, without money, there is no dignity.” When Ye Xian cannot bring herself to perform sexual services to the paying customers, Ma screams that she is worthless, gives her the more menial tasks of cooking and cleaning, and alienates her from the other workers. Conditions worsen for Ye Xian as Ma and Katty, a jealous worker, conspire to hurt and punish her, and Ma’s lecherous brother makes repeatedly insistent and unwanted sexual advances. Ma does not stop reminding Ye Xian that as an illegal immigrant she has no other place to go—that personhood and agency, particularly for women immigrants, are fantasies best forgotten.

There are two points of hope for Ye Xian outside the massage parlor. The first is a magical fish she receives from a frightening hag of a fortune-teller, Auntie Yaga (the veteran actor Randall Duk Kim), who is also the alleged owner of a mysterious sweatshop that is the most horrible in all of Chinatown. The fish’s unnatural growth cultivates a sense of wonder in Ye Xian that allows her to continue to dream of freedom and a different life. He becomes Ye Xian’s only friend in her increasingly imprisoned life, but a friend whose own life is also at the mercy of Ma.

The second is the obligatory love interest—a handsome young musician named Johnny (the up-and-coming Ken Leung). Johnny’s character is the one decent guy in the film—upstanding, devoted (taking care of his grandmother), and, importantly, not interested in the sexual services provided by Ma’s massage parlor. In this last respect, he is strongly contrasted with all the other men in the film as a model of a “good guy”—someone who values real love over just sex. Although their romance is sweet and Leung as Johnny is extremely likable, he and Ye Xian share a total of maybe ten to fifteen minutes of actual face-to-face interaction. Some may object to the simplicity of this expected love story. I was a little disappointed with the simplicity of this romantic plot, but was also quite captivated with the actors’ effortless portrayals of these believable, regular people.

The story itself seemed at times awkwardly divided between the story of

Ye Xian and Johnny and the story of Ye Xian. For me, most of the tension and drama was based not in the romantic plot, but rather in the question of how Ye Xian would escape her increasingly dangerous and abusive servitude. With the help of the fish's magic and her own daring, which increases as her situation gets more desperate, Ye Xian uses kindness, perseverance, and creativity to stand up to the threats that surround her. These victories are subtle, however, and often do not seem to have larger effects or dramatically different consequences. In discussions with undergraduate students about this film in a class on fairy-tale adaptations, they repeatedly expressed frustration at Ye Xian's seeming lack of agency, especially in comparison with more brash and fiery U.S. fairy-tale heroines like Drew Barrymore's Cinderella in *Ever After: The Year of the Fish* offers a heroine with a quieter kind of strength, one that may not be satisfying for all viewers but raises important questions about what strength and femininity might mean in different cultures.

The mix of real danger with stereotypical fairy-tale expectations, like true love, interrogates the potential of the fairy-tale genre to make contemporary social commentary. There are no simple answers. For example, what does it mean that Auntie Yaga, the magical helper of the film who holds the key to Ye Xian's freedom, also runs her own inhumane immigrant sweatshop? Ye Xian's last encounter with Auntie Yaga introduces a larger context of suffering and labor into the making of the beautiful ball gown, a context that the characters in the film are forbidden to speak of. Auntie Yaga's own character is frightening, not for her magical capabilities, but because of her mysterious role in human trafficking and her graphic threats of physical violence.

This twisting of magic and reality is also evident in the camerawork and beautiful postproduction styling. The film is shot almost entirely with handheld cameras that bring an intimate and authentic feel—as if you yourself had gone around with a camera and filmed your friends, neighbors, grandmother, and neighborhood characters. According to the film's official website, www.YearoftheFish.com, the production crew put a lot of effort into involving the Chinatown community, holding casting calls on location and involving local businesses and organizations with shooting various scenes. These efforts were well rewarded, and the result is a sensitive homage to Chinatown itself. *The Year of the Fish* captures most beautifully these ordinary community moments—oil sizzling in a hot wok, the tai chi morning ritual in the park, the bright orange shopping bags. These intimate camera techniques are paired with an animation technique called rotoscoping that bleeds these images into each other as if we were in a moving watercolor painting. The rotoscoping technique makes even the most mundane street shots striking, inviting us to see these everyday scenes with a new sense of wonder. It also signals to us that we are entering a new, strange world—we are looking not only through the

lens of magic (the watery world of the magical fish) but also from the disoriented viewpoint of a new immigrant.

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Alice in Wonderland. Director Tim Burton. Screenplay by Linda Woolverton. Performers Johnny Depp, Mia Wasikowska, Helena Bonham Carter, and Anne Hathaway. Walt Disney Studios. 2010.

“You’ve brought us the wrong Alice,” complains the Dormouse in Tim Burton’s *Alice in Wonderland*. Even the Mad Hatter, Alice’s strongest defender, in this new film adaptation acknowledges that something is different about this Alice—she seems to have lost her “muchness.” Director Tim Burton and screenwriter Linda Woolverton make it clear that this is a different sort of Alice from that of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865). I suspect there is an inverse relationship between Tim Burton’s *Alice in Wonderland* and Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*: the more you like the *Alice* books, the more you are probably going to dislike Burton’s film adaptation.

But the title of the film is intended to alert viewers that this is Burton’s vision of *Alice*, which is only loosely based on the two *Alice* books. Burton’s film primarily focuses on the characters and episodes from Carroll’s darker *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871) rather than the more upbeat *Wonderland*. Burton adds his signature nightmare approach to the film. This is not a film version of the *Alice* books, but a film that uses significant characters borrowed from the *Alice* books to create a new story or continuation of the *Alice* books. In this regard, Burton’s film is reminiscent of Gavin Miller’s 1985 film, *Dreamchild*, in that an older Alice revisits Wonderland. However, in *Dreamchild* it is an eighty-year-old Alice reflecting on the books and her friendship with Lewis Carroll. In Burton’s film Alice is a fetching, independent nineteen-year-old contemplating a marriage proposal to a pretentious, titled young man. Unlike *Dreamchild*, Lewis Carroll is absent in this film as are his stand-ins, the Dodo and the White Knight. I think Burton’s film would more be more appropriately titled *Return to Wonderland*, although that title has already been used by Raven Gregory for one of his comic books in his Tales of Wonderland series. Burton’s *Alice in Wonderland* relates to Carroll’s *Alice* books in the same way that Walter Murch’s 1985 film *Return to Oz* relates to L. Frank Baum’s *Oz* series.

What is striking about Burton’s film is the number of film allusions it contains. He has created a postmodern pastiche of fantasy films. He references many of his previous films, including *Nightmare before Christmas*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Corpse Bride*, and *Planet of the Apes*. Screenwriter Linda Woolverton has helped in the writing of Disney films such as *The Lion King* and *Beauty and the Beast*, so the film also includes a number of references to Disney

films, including the opening taken directly from the Disney-animated *Peter Pan*. Johnny Depp's Mad Hatter is a combination of Disney's Peter Pan, the Scarecrow from *The Wizard of Oz* combined with Jack Sparrow of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* series and the Joker from Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight*. There are plenty of references to Victor Fleming's *The Wizard of Oz* and the Broadway musical *Wicked*, Philip Pullman's *The Golden Compass*, and C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. The last two films were inspired by the success of J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, so that is in here, too. Burton's film reduces the two *Alice* books to an extended chase scene and a big battle sequence. The relationship between the Red and White Queens is borrowed from Gregory Maguire's *Wicked*. The fighting Dormouse owes a great deal to Kate DiCamillo's *The Tales of Despereaux*. The film's frame, which links characters from the real world to Alice's fantasy world, echoes the Kansas/Oz parallel of Fleming's *The Wizard of Oz*.

Woolverton seems to acknowledge some problems within the script. The running theme throughout the film is whether this is the "right" Alice. The Wonderland characters frequently ask the White Rabbit if he has brought the wrong Alice back. Is she an imitation Alice? She's not Alice, but Almost Alice. In short, Tim Burton has directed the wrong *Alice*. Burton seems to acknowledge this because the question of an authentic Alice is an essential element of the film. Alice is warned in this film not to divert herself from the path. Alice replies, "I don't divert myself from the path, I make the path." But if you are going to rewrite *Alice in Wonderland*, then you better be as good a writer as Lewis Carroll. Although Burton's film is not as bad as the dreadful *The Cat in the Hat* directed by Bo Welch, which featured Mike Meyers as the Cat, it is not as inventive as the interpretation of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* by Dave Eggers and Spike Jonze.

Mia Wasikowska makes an arresting Alice. However, viewers haven't seen so much skin in *Alice* since the 1976 X-rated, musical version of *Alice in Wonderland*. Not only does Tim Burton feature a twenty-year-old playing Alice, but she is also constantly on the verge of having her clothes slip off. Sometimes this film feels as if it is a *Maxim* version of *Alice in Wonderland*. In the beginning of the film, Alice refuses to wear a corset or stockings, which shocks her proper Victorian mother. Once the adventure begins, Alice is running around in flimsy petticoats in a land that's actually Underland, not Wonderland. Alice's clothes never quite fit; instead they are too tight, too loose, too short, or slipping off completely. This is less Queen Victoria's *Alice* and more of a Victoria's Secret *Alice*. This is not so much a children's film as a film geared for tweens and teens, the viewers who will want to purchase the gothic and steam punk Alice-inspired fashions available at Hot Topic stores.

Not only does Burton increase the sexualization of Alice, but he elevates the violence in *Wonderland* as well. This film transforms a minor episode of *Through the Looking-Glass*—involving the reading of the poem “Jabberwocky” that appears in a Looking-Glass book—into the key quest of the film. Burton has made his *Alice in Wonderland* a surprisingly violent film, as are many other contemporary children’s fantasy films. The original *Alice* books are much less violent. For example, when the Red Queen declares, “Off with their heads,” the Red King discreetly pardons the creatures; but in Burton’s film the Red King’s head is floating in the moat along with the many other severed heads that have been cut off on the Red Queen’s orders.

Still this alternative version of *Alice in Wonderland* does have several clever additions. Johnny Depp steals the film with his over-the-top acting as the Mad Hatter. Tweedledum and Tweedledee characters, played by Matt Lucas, are both comic and creepy. The landscapes are both menacing and grotesque, but have more in common with the worlds found in Burton’s *Nightmare before Christmas* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* than Carroll’s *Alice* books. The 3-D version of the film seemed more an unnecessary distraction to me; however, Carroll, who was fascinated with new technology, would have probably enjoyed it.

Although this film version of *Alice in Wonderland* may not be everyone’s cup of tea, it is a distinctive postmodern variation on Carroll’s characters. Burton’s *Alice in Wonderland*, with its increased sexuality and violence, is more reflective of contemporary culture than Carroll’s Victorian novels. Like Walt Disney in his popular 1951 animated film version of *Alice in Wonderland*, Burton is an ambitious and talented director who has attempted to put his own distinctive style and spin on Carroll’s classic children’s texts.

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Rank Devil Mountain: Three Smokin’ Folk Tales. Recorded by Barry Shannon. Performed by Jeff Gere. Mastered by Kelli Heath. Edited by Jeff Gere. Mana’o Radio, Maui, Hawai’i. Feb. 2005. CD.

The Two Brothers: A Rockin’ Musical Story Tellin’. Don Lopez, creative engineer. Performed by Jeff Gere. Mastered by Les Adams. Polishing by Kelli Heath. Edited by Jeff Gere, Mana’o Radio, Maui, Hawai’i, April 2007. CD.

In *Rank Devil Mountain* Hawai’i storyteller Jeff Gere presents three Jack tales: “Old Rink Rank,” “The Beauty, the Devil and the Shepherd,” and “Jack and the Evil Mountain Spirit.” The *Two Brothers* CD is Gere’s personalized retelling of a Grimms tale. Gere’s energized telling of these tales is accompanied by one or

more of a group of musicians—Les Adams on keyboard, Sandra Lee Akaka on percussion, Vince Esquire on guitar, and Alana Cini on the didgeridoo—who together create what the liner notes call “sizzlin’ soundscapes.”

This combination of storytelling and musical talents challenges the listener to embrace a new performance aesthetic applied to the telling of traditional tales. I came to these story presentations as a folklorist living and working in the heart of Appalachia, surrounded by and well acquainted with the work of Carl Lindahl, Leonard W. Roberts, and Jane Muncy Fugate. Jack and his tales are familiar and well loved here, and his adventures have meant far more than mere entertainment for generations of Appalachian children and adults.

Jack is an iconic figure in the Appalachian verbal tradition and to some degree a cultural response to common hillbilly stereotypes. He is the hero of the underdog and the downtrodden. Jack is usually poor, without formal education, sometimes lazy, and often the youngest child, a position that reinforces his status as a second-class citizen even within his family structure. Nevertheless Jack perseveres, and through bravery and cleverness, or sometimes dumb luck and charm, he is able to overcome the obstacles that face him and come out the winner in spite of circumstances. In the process he often saves not only himself but his brothers, princesses, and the pretty girls as well.

I came to this listening event with a host of personal biases about how a Jack tale should sound. My previous experience as a listener and teller of Jack and other kinds of tales has led me to focus on the story and on the skill of the teller to set the mood and to move the story through to its conclusion. Gere, with his use of “soundscapes,” expands and sometimes fragments the focus of the listener to include not only the story and the teller but also the musicians as well as the overall style of the telling event. This fragmenting of focus was the most challenging element for me, as a more traditional teller and listener, to appreciate.

On his website Gere describes the process he calls tune telling as “an exercise in tumbling gracefully beyond the borders of your box of comfort. It is jumping off a cliff with friends, who create, challenge, and support this falling. And then, do it again” (www.jeffgere.com/jg2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67:duets-tunes-n-tales-&catid=36:articles&Itemid=72).

Gere is definitely a powerful teller in his own right, and the musicians are talented at echoing, reacting, and creating an emotional tone for these story performances. At the same time, the whole performance periodically seems to become more of a competition for the audience’s attention than the telling of a tale. As I listened, there were times when I could not hear or understand the teller, because the music was overshadowing him. At other times Gere eclipsed the musicians so that I couldn’t hear or appreciate their individual and group

efforts. I can understand performers who get so caught up in the telling of a story that they bring a heightened energy to their performance, which is then translated to fellow performers and ultimately the audience. There are many moments during Gere's performances when the elements of tale, storyteller, and soundscape artists work together in a symbiotic relationship to build tension, enhance a mood, or create a sense of horror and anticipation, all of which added to my enjoyment of the performance. Consequently, those moments of dissonance were a noticeable disappointment to me as a listener.

As to the tales themselves, I wondered if some of the Jack tales were original tales created by Gere, or if they came from a collection, and, if so, which collection? How did he come to choose that particular tale of the Brothers Grimm? My curiosity about the inspirations for Gere's tale choices for these two presentations centered on his Jack tales—in particular, the "Old Rink Rank" tale. Gere's rendition of this tale started out similar to "Glass Mountain," a Polish fairy tale collected by Hermann Kletke, which I enjoyed in several different story collections as a child. Also the character Rink Rank seemed similar to Old Greasy Beard from Rex R. Stevenson's, "Jack and Ol' Greasy Beard" (*The Jack Tales*, Schulenburg, TX: I. E. Clark, 1991). Others, too, might be curious about the origins of these tales, and it might have added to our listening pleasure if Gere had included this information in the CD liner notes.

Although these are children's tales, the CD cover comes with a warning that the performance is inappropriate for children under twelve. Yet, at various times on both CDs, Gere addresses comments to the children in his virtual audience, leading me to ask, who is Gere's target audience for these CDs?

Gere has a talent for a wide range of vocal expression. The unique blend of story and music offered on these two performance CDs could be useful to storytellers who want to change their style or want to find a way to incorporate music into their telling sessions, or to musicians who want to work with a storyteller to expand their performance horizons. The total package of Gere's story presentation brings a modern experience to this set of traditional tales.

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