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Reviews

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REVIEWS

Briar Rose. By Robert Coover. New York: Grove Press, 1996. 86 pp.

During the course of his retelling of "La belle au bois dormant," Charles Perrault parenthetically mentions the fact that the legends surrounding the eponymous heroine are silent on the subject of her dreams, allowing him to speculate on the probability that the good fairy would have furnished her charge with fitting entertainment. Robert Coover's *Briar Rose* is, in part, a characteristically rich exploration of this gap in the legend on the Sleeping Beauty, Coover expanding on a minor detail in one of his sources in a manner that will be familiar to all readers of his densely allusive novel, *Pinocchio in Venice* (1991). As a parallel to the dreamscape that Coover imagines for his sleeping princess, his prince is caught in a similarly unworldly hedge of flowering brambles, and it is within these static, internal spaces that the desires and fears of the two protagonists circulate, described in a series of variously interrelated prose fragments. Trapped in this "strange mechanism"—"the eternal city of the tale"—the two characters reflect on their status, the degree to which their lives are caught within a preexistent chain of narratives (identifiable to the knowing reader as variants by, among others, the Grimms, Perrault, and Basile, together with a host of related plots from medieval romance): the prince as the subject of the generic perilous quest, an interchangeable protagonist increasingly unsure of his role as hero, and the princess as the object of desire, the eponymous heroine in the process of questioning her preordained lack of autonomy. Both the young protagonists thus ask questions about themselves as selves, and Coover uses repetition to set up a series of reflections on the nature of selfhood and its construction, including repeated reference to the notion or process of *making a name for oneself*, as in the case of the hero, and to the predicament of having a ready-made name, as is the case for Briar Rose. Hence, perhaps, Coover's use of the familiar translation of the Grimms' variant ("Dornroschen")

as his title, which in effect refers to both protagonists: the legendary name that is passively acquired by one and, for the other, the barrier that represents the means of actively acquiring such an inextinguishable name.

While this suggests themes familiar from other fictions by Coover, it is the third character in the novella who is the most unmistakably Cooveresque: the "old crone," who acts as an amalgam of the good and bad fairy, and the spinning woman, from the source tale type (AT 410). Like the eponymous figure in Coover's variation on the "Snow White" tale type ("The Dead Queen," 1973), his fairy is an inveterate plotter, an "ancient scold" (and scald) who is both the instigator of the plot—through her "ingenerate ambivalence"—and the narrative repository within which circulate the multiple versions, old and new, of the tale of which she and her characters are a part. She is the voice of experience who inhabits the dreams of the sleeping princess, her memory less "ninny," acting as a point of refuge from the cycle of trauma within which the latter is caught: a refuge which simultaneously figures as the scene of the trauma—the spinning room—and as another of the scenes of traditional tale-telling: the nursery or kitchen. She is thus Coover's Mother Goose, "entangled in her storied strands, joining thread to thread, winding them into seductive skeins"; a manipulative and scabrous, but also concerned, narrator, alive, like Coover, to the darker and deeper aspects of her material: "the contest between light and dark, the passions of jealousy and desire, cannibalism, seduction and adultery," all of which percolate through the family romance of the tale.

Like all of Coover's experiments in fiction, *Briar Rose* is hugely inventive. Using a patchwork of specific minor details, often the personal additions of previous narrators of this tale type, his text literally incorporates the familiar versions into its newly created space. Indeed, while this is thus perhaps the most folklorically informed of the reimaginings that have appeared intermittently throughout Coover's writing career, the influence of his recent interest in hypertextual narrative can also be detected, in the use of a story space within which narratives come and go as part of an ongoing process (and which allows for a plucked goose to be flung out of a window at one stage by the fairy, only to reappear, both talking and flying, in another of the princess's dreams). This space is additionally informed by the various schools of thought that have sought to explicate the tale type, most notably psychoanalysis, the symbolic interpretations of which provide various genital and scatological details; but Coover ultimately refuses to suggest a single meaning, always preferring instead to explore another narrative angle. The protagonists thus end where they began, still caught within a magnified piece of their own life stories, of which this particular set of versions is, of course, a part. It is this attention to narrative, together with linguistic ebullience, that informs all

of Coover's work and marks *Briar Rose* as lusciously Cooveresque. *La sauce Robert* indeed.

Stephen Benson

The Princess Hoppy or The Tale of Labrador. By Jacques Roubaud. Trans. Bernard Hoepffner. Normal, IL: Dalkey Archive, 1993. 132 pp.

Below the almost comically dreadful photograph on the front cover, the prospective reader is informed that this is "a novel by Jacques Roubaud." In a book crammed full of puzzles, clues, and "false indications," this is perhaps the biggest hoax on offer, and readers should trust instead to the titular reference to a "tale" and to the name of the author, Jacques Roubaud: professor of mathematics at the University of Paris, with pure mathematics as a specialty; member, since 1966, of Oulipo, the workshop of potential literature; author of editions, free translations and a study, of troubadour poetry; and translator into French of, among other things, *The Hunting of the Snark* (whose author was another academic mathematician). This list of achievements would lead the reader to expect, not a novel, at least not in any traditional sense, but rather a tale of mathematically oriented linguistic puzzles, patterns, arcane structures, of talking animals, whimsical humor, and a worrying feeling of readerly obtuseness. And that is what the reader gets.

Like fellow Oulipian Italo Calvino's *Il castello dei destini incrociati*, Roubaud's tale mixes a love of formal invention with an interest in prenovelistic narratives (in this case, Arthurian romance), with the former feeding off the explicit formalism of much medieval literature, including the poetry of the Troubadours (a fusion of tradition and innovation central to the philosophy of the Oulipo). Yet while the yoking together of the mathematical and the medieval is thus less anachronistic than may at first be thought, the emphasis in this particular tale is very much towards the Oulipian: the first and second chapters originally appeared in French as the second and seventh issues of the *Bibliothèque Oulipienne* (in 1975 and 1978, respectively); in 1980, Chapters 3 and 4 appeared in *Change* (38), the journal founded by Roubaud and Jean-Pierre Faye in 1970, and the tale thus conforms to the anthological, composite nature of certain forms of medieval literature. In addition, it also professes to be an oral tale, told by "the Tail of Labrador" and prone to "the hazards of oral transmission"; yet, again, it relies on the written word, not only for the permanence necessary to even begin to follow the puzzles, but also in its meaningful use of several typefaces. If the readers are thus referred to as "listeners," they are also advised to be "grasshoppers," possibly as a hint that the book is best held open at several pages at a time, between which the "listener" can flit to try to make sense.

The tale revolves around a princess, her dog, who is "enraptured by

numbers" and sets the "79 Questions for Listeners to the Tale" that act as the Appendix, her four uncles, all kings, and their wives, the former of which are the nephews of Uther Pendragon (which may suggest that King Arthur is the Princess's absent and unmentioned father, although this could be a big mistake), together with a host of animal subjects, including Epaminondas, an English squirrel (rather than a Theban militarist) who reads the *Times* and Saint Augustine, a Canadian beaver called Monsieur de Casimir, and a Troubadour hedgehog named Bartleby, who bears no obvious relation to Melville's taciturn scrivener, beyond the tenuous fact that he keeps the registers of the "General Company for Navigation" run by one of the kings. The tale falls into two parts, each of which would seem to be a variation on the other, perhaps a reflection of the interchangeability of characters in the basic narratives of the medieval romance (although probably signifying much more). Each section is prefaced by thirty-one "Indications about What the Tale Says," which read like a set of variations on the theme of postmodernist textual ambiguity, as well as on D.H. Lawrence's warning about trusting the tale and not the artist. In addition, the tale is littered with literary allusions that point to certain possible models, including an "Indication found in Saragossa," a verbose astronomer from Baghdad whose tale evokes a sort of highfalutin Arabian Night, a meeting between the Snoopyesque dog and "Efellel, President-Pounder of Oulipo" (sic), who both wait for "Raymond," and most explicitly, a suggestion that the tale is meant "for listeners fairly well acquainted with *Alice in Wonderland* and, if possible, familiar with *The Story of the Grail*, by Chrétien de Troyes."

Yet all this is by way of avoiding the fact that this particular "listener" failed to solve virtually every puzzle—and thus all the hidden puzzles lodged, no doubt, throughout the course of the tale. Reviewers of fiction are supposed to avoid giving away the ending, which in this case, the ending being the dog's seventy-nine questions, will not be difficult. One of the characteristics of the tale is that it *literally* asks questions common to much contemporary fiction: questions about the processes of reading, about the possibility of interaction between reader and text, and about the possibility of translation. Yet unlike most other fictions, the questions as posed here have definite answers, which Roubaud withholds, just as he leaves the few narrative threads of the tale (ostensibly) unsolved. Regarding these answers, the dog suggests that, having "listened" to the tale, the "listeners" should be "perfectly able to find them by themselves." No doubt there is an Internet site devoted to aiding those of us who are perfectly unable; if not, then perhaps Martin Gardner, polymath annotator of *Alice* and the *Snark* (and whose column in *Scientific American* was avidly read by Oulipian founders François Le Lionnais and Raymond Queneau), could be persuaded to lend a hand.

Stephen Benson

Burning Your Boats: The Collected Short Stories. By Angela Carter. Introduction by Salman Rushdie. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995. vi + 462 pp.

Burning Your Boats, introduced by longtime friend Salman Rushdie, gathers together forty-two tales, Angela Carter's short story corpus. Specifically, the volume contains: three stories headed "Early Work, 1962-6," the tales, respectively, from *Fireworks: Nine Profane Pieces* (1974), from *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979), from *Black Venus* (1985), and from *American Ghosts and Old World Wonders* (1993); three other tales headed "Uncollected Stories, 1970-81," an appendix providing Carter's "Afterword to *Fireworks*," and a descriptive listing of where, when, and how the stories were originally published.

In his introduction, Rushdie characterizes Carter's personality as being "by turns formal and outrageous, exotic and demonic, exquisite and coarse, precious and raunchy, fabulist and socialist, purple and black" (ix). These same words can be used to describe her stories, thereby providing as succinct a précis of the tales as one might want. The stories' rich intrareflexiveness and wide ranging interliterary allusiveness do not reduce easily to encapsulation.

The finality of the action described in the collection's title *Burning Your Boats* comments both with sadness and with a sense of nostalgia on Carter's death in 1992. Her passing has necessarily canceled readers' means of transport to yet additional Carterian worlds of the fantastic and the macabre. Ironically, in the volume's final tale "The Quilt Maker" (published originally in 1981), the title character, who serves as the tale's narrator and as one manifestation of Carter's authorial voice, characterizes herself as a boat transport that is in the process of becoming antiquated—a kind of passing from the eye of the world in itself:

Like the culture that created me, I am receding into the past at a rate of knots. Soon I'll need a whole row of footnotes if anybody under thirty-five is going to comprehend the least thing I say.

And yet . . . (454)

Perhaps not coincidentally, the tension between the seeming finality of the collection's title and the implied reprieve of the phrase "And yet . . ." is suggestive of much of what Carter accomplished in her stories.

Demonstrated throughout these tales and, to be sure, actually constituting them is Carter's exploration of a rhetoric of possibilities, her argument of and for the "And yet . . ." of literature and of life. What she rails against, on the one hand, are stultifying and/or viciously oppressive sociocultural systems and their representative agents. Within the tales these range from, for example, the masochism practiced by the Count of "The Scarlet House" to the Puritans' banning of Christmas in "The Ghost Ships" to linguistic tyranny as in one of the contrasts drawn, in the story "Impressions: The Wrightsman Magdalene."

between the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene: "One is a virgin and a mother, the other is a non-virgin, and childless. Note how the English language doesn't contain a specific word to describe a woman who is grown-up, sexually mature and *not* a mother, unless such a woman is using her sexuality as her profession" (410). On the other hand, Carter deprivileges and optionalizes artful and/or mythologizing narratives—from, for instance, Jacobean drama to *Märchen* to historical report—which professional evaluation has calcified into authoritative stoniness, apotheosizing them as souvenirs of one Grand Gesture or another. Operating as a literary "saboteur," Carter challenges this process of ossification, in Rushdie's words, by "open[ing each] old story for us, like an egg, and find[ing] the new story, the now-story, we want to hear within" (xiv). Thus, Carter recontextualizes John Ford's 1633 tragedy *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* as a twentieth-century movie Western directed by the American filmmaker John Ford. The traditional *Märchen* of "Cinderella" is retitled "Ashputtle or The Mother's Ghost" and then refracted into three subtales, each taking its own look at how mothers can affect their daughter's lives. And there is the story "The Fall River Axe Murders," which ambiguates distinctions between history and fiction, memory and nightmare, regarding the day Lizzie Borden murdered her family. Elite literature, popularized film, traditional tale, and historical "fact": these become resources rather than templates under Carter's pen.

Carter then is both an engenderer and a chronicler of possibilities. She offers her readers tales/vignettes/myths/histories that both are and are about alternatives. Her own choice in favor of possibility is punctuated by the metaphor of the mirror, a device that creates analogous forms. Almost every story in the collection contains a reference to a mirror of some sort. And her choice is also emphasized throughout by the metaphor of the door (particularly in the tale "The Snow Pavilion"). Such doors open forward and backward, up and down, into other and still other narrative chambers, each with its own thresholds of access and exit. For example, Carter offers the story "Gun for the Devil" as a reworking of her own story "The Bloody Chamber," which itself is a reframing of Charles Perrault's literary *Märchen* "Bluebeard." Carter's retelling of Perrault's retelling of a tale once told by the folk: such a claim of performances and receptions suggests one aspect of the fluid ontology in which Carter's stories characteristically participate.

Finally, within this collection whose tales function, so to speak, as literary anagrams, Carter explores through her characters a whole slew of roles that females in literature and life have fulfilled. Among these are the role of mother, lonely/brave/wise child, selfish brat, virgin bride, lover, incest survivor, puppet, hunter, crone, adulteress, revenger, captive, seductress, were-cat, whore, dominatrix, murderer, daughter, icon, transvestite, and ghost. Admittedly, women themselves have not positively valued all of these roles, nor does Carter. Yet, as

if shuffling through a feminist Tarot, Carter accepts each within her reckoning of that which has been possible within the world.

Burning Your Boats offers an extravaganza of interpenetrating tales within which interpenetrate motifs, patterns, and character roles of choice and of restriction. The volume's posthumous publication stands as a well-deserved tribute to Angela Carter: artisan of the palimpsest, *bricoleur* of "And yet . . .".

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Feminist Fairy Tales. By Barbara G. Walker. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996. x + 244 pp.

I have been a purist. Rewritten fairy tales, whether for the edification of children, for the advancement of Third Reich ideology, or for the goals of gender equality, the issue here, have troubled me. For that reason, I once found Jack Zipes's 1986 anthology, *Don't Bet on the Prince: Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales*, and Tanith Lee's 1983 *Red as Blood, or, Tales from the Sisters Grimm* suspect. Anthologies of authentic, traditional texts are the ones with which I have been most comfortable. *The Old Wives' Fairy Tale Book*, a volume in the Pantheon Fairy Tale and Folklore Library edited and introduced by Angela Carter in 1990, has been satisfying, for example, because it purports to be selections drawn from world folktales with implicit feminist themes already in place. The latter anthology exemplifies what Kay Stone noted some twenty-five years ago, in her classic article, "Things Walt Disney Never Told Us," that such tales exist, recorded in the field and ignored by mainstream Western culture, that contain active, positive heroines, possible models for emulation.

So, within this critical context, Barbara Walker's twenty-eight in-your-face feminist tales, not only rewritten but sometimes originals, shiver my metaphorical timbers. "Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess with skin white as snow and hair black as night, so she was called Snow Night," Walker writes and I writhe. Another story begins: "Once upon a time, in an old-fashioned feudal kingdom, there lived a poor widow named Ganga Dean, otherwise known as Mistress Dean the dressmaker." It comes as no surprise that the erstwhile lady, herself an inversion of Gunga Din of movie fame, I presume, has a daughter, Ala, who encounters a wonderful lamp and a genie. Ala, however, asks for social justice rather than for the more usual materialistic requests of her male counterpart, Aladdin. Other too-obvious, inverted tale titles indicate the broad moralistic sweep of the rewrites—"The Frog Princess," "Ugly and the Beast," and "Jill and the Beanroot"—and of the originals—"Barbidol" and "Prince Gimme and the Fairy of the Forest."

Walker's introduction to each tale can also give scholarly purists a headache. Viewed in the worst light, the introductions mash references to ancient world

mythologies, classic fairy-tale collections and studies, and New Age spiritual movements together with nary a footnote or sufficient explanation. "This tale," one such introduction begins, "recalls the descent of Babylon's goddess Ishtar (Sumerian Inanna) to the underworld to resurrect her lover, Tammuz (Sumerian Dumuzi), who may have been biblically reincarnated as doubting Thomas." And the introduction to "Snow Night" connects "the wicked stepmother" motif, "ubiquitous in European fairy tales," with "the pre-Christian priestesses" later vilified as witches in Judeo-Christian traditions.

Yet, when I read these tales to my twelve-year-old daughter in the evenings, something strange happened. She listened. I was entertained in spite of myself. And we discussed some of the reversals and their implications. Hmm. "Jill and the Beanroot" is really quite clever. Not only is the gender of the protagonist reversed with sly allusions to "Jack and Jill" of nursery-rhyme fame, but so is the phallic imagery of the beanstalk reversed to the uterine imagery of the underground cavern created by the beanroot. Walker tells readers so in her introduction so that the tale's Jungian immersion comes as no surprise; I guess that at least Clarissa Pinkola Estes's *Women Who Run with the Wolves* and Marie-Luise von Franz's *The Feminine in Fairy Tales* float as opaque references through this and other tales in the collection. As a person who returned to graduate school in Folklore Studies many years ago because of Joseph Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces* but who learned to question the universal premises of psychoanalytic approaches since, I teeter on the edge of ambivalence. I am torn between the need for the cultural specificities of my ethnographic stance and the desire for the archetypal wholeness of heroines while my daughter giggles.

Yet Walker's Jill goes down into this womblike space, "where the sun doesn't shine," to emerge victorious, not only in the tale, but from psychoanalytic and cultural criticism as well. No predictable dragons for her such as other heroines face in Robin McKinley's *The Blue Sword* and in Patricia C. Wrede's *Enchanted Forest Chronicles* series, for example. My comparison here to young-adult fantasy literature suggests a move from "authentic folk texts" to "juvenile literary adaptations." In that space, and the shortness of each tale suggests this shift, I rest more comfortably.

Yet I think something else is going on in Walker's collection. Enough textual references hint at a battle being fought on adult ground. Her tale "Ugly and the Beast" is ground zero. Its eponymous heroine does share something with the studious and overly modest protagonist of Robin McKinley's *Beauty*, who defines herself as "not attractive" and so confronts the moral issue of beauty for its mostly teenage readership. Yet Walker's Ugly is truly handicapped. She is "hunchbacked, bowlegged, pigeon-toed, overweight, coarse-skinned, and lank-haired, with small pig-like eyes, a bulbous nose, crooked teeth and a deformed jaw." And she stays that way. "Ugly and the Beast" is politically correct, but not

in the same way as the tongue-in-cheek 1994 *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories* is. Could her *Feminist Fairy Tales*, a rather late example of feminist revisionism, be Walker's answer to James Finn Garner's hugely successful, but basically backlash, social parody? I think it's possible. Her adaptations of classic fairy tales, often parodic in themselves, might be fighting fire with fire. Unintentional parody deserves censure; intentional parody is another thing, a possible tool in the culture wars of literary and social critics.

Judging from the literary and parodic comparisons I've set up above, I see that Walker and I have crossed into yet another territorial discussion. We have moved ever so quickly from questions of "authentic folk texts" through "literary adaptations" to "literature." And surely I accept Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, Isak Dinesen's *Seven Gothic Tales*, and Anne Sexton's *Transformations* as literary rewrites worthy of the latter term. Where is that delicate line that separates the one from the other? And how do I trace it? Walker's *Feminist Fairy Tales* puts me in that strange transitional zone, a postmodern space of insecurity, in which I question now not only how far the term "literature" ranges for me, but also where is the vanishing point of "authenticity" of folk texts as well. Its eclectic style and possible genre parody complicate a facile criticism and suggest that textual purity, like any other, is, and has been, negotiable from the moment story versions have been recorded.

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Her Stories: African American Folktales, Fairy Tales, and True Tales. By Virginia Hamilton. Illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon. New York: Blue Sky/Scholastic, 1995. 114 pp.

Her Stories brings together fifteen pre- and post-Civil War African American tales from oral tradition, all of which feature female protagonists. It is a volume designed to be read and to be heard by both young and old, and by folklore enthusiasts as well as a more general audience. Hamilton, who has won numerous awards for her juvenile fiction, respectfully and lovingly goes back to her own experience with the shaping power of story to retrieve and reinvigorate tales in five areas: Her Animal Tales, Her Fairy Tales, Her Supernatural [Tales], Her Folkways and Legends, and Her True Tales [Oral History]. Hamilton provides a brief "Comment" for each of the stories, usually locating the historical or cultural contexts of the tale and noting its relationship to other tales of its kind, both in the U.S. and internationally. While many of the motifs will be familiar to the scholar, Hamilton does not try to index them so much as to note the enduring power of their central themes. Her sources include various archival collections, especially transcriptions made in the 1930s by WPA folklorists; in only one case does Hamilton admit to having actually

written a tale around a motif ("Mom Bell"); for the most part, she restores and polishes traditional materials.

Her Stories has something for most every taste: there is a variant of Cinderella ("Catskinella"), a vampire/voodoo tale ("Lonna and the Cat Woman"), a comic cosmological tale in which the first woman emerges superior to the whiny first male ("Woman and Man Started Even"), a cognate tale to Brer Rabbit ("Little Girl and Buh Rabby"), and several merwoman/selkie stories. Then there are tales based on local legend, such as the haunting story of Annie Christmas in New Orleans, who was "coal black and tree tall" (she stood seven feet and weighed in at 299, with a moustache!). While there are some formulaic phrasings, these "household tales" (*Hausmärchen*), as Hamilton terms them, do not have the crafted polish or irony of literary tales (*Kunstmärchen*); instead, they possess an exuberance and sense of wonder that comes directly from women who inhabited a dangerous and difficult world, one where "happily ever after" was not automatically dispensed to the fairest of them all. So despite differences in time and cultural location, the tales still possess a ring of authentic, lived experience. When uncharitable women are turned to owls for their meanspiritedness ("Who You!"), we can immediately recognize the same propensities in those we know, if not in ourselves—the tales tell truth.

Hamilton has taken special care to restore and preserve the dignity of the tellers' voices. Eschewing the reductive and denigrating "Negro dialect" of a Joel Chandler Harris or Paul Laurence Dunbar, Hamilton carefully reestablishes authentic and unique voices for the anonymous tellers, whether they speak in Gullah or Louisiana Creole. She will gloss an occasional unfamiliar word, such as the lovely "dayclean" for "dawn," or even "fodder" for a young audience now far from an agrarian world. In this careful attention to the voice and rhythm of the tale, Hamilton quietly undoes the racist devocalization that long prevailed through the false homogenizing of many tongues into one set of "des/dat" speakers of seemingly low intelligence. While Hamilton mentions the "Negro dialect" in several of her comments, the book is not a manifesto; it is simply a quiet correction. The same holds true for her exclusion of male protagonists; one does not sense that Hamilton has an agenda to fulfill so much as that she has some really good stories to convey, and women are at the center of those stories. Even the book's title, *Her Stories*, avoids the etymologically bogus "herstory" for "history"—these are indeed *her* stories, and that is all that need be said. Less is more.

While the tales are in themselves entertaining, perhaps the most touching part of the book comes at the end, in the "Her True Tales" section. Here, the reader encounters the words of three women who heard and told these tales in the nineteenth as well as twentieth centuries. We learn that some slaves were fed at troughs, like hogs, and that what General Lee did at Appomattox

Courthouse was called "The Surrender," an event so momentous, so impossible to comprehend, that everything subsequent was measured against it. These elder narratives sensitively and powerfully humanize the earlier fictional tales—they give the ancient tellers a character, an identity, a humanity, and they link those long gone with those now meeting the tales, perhaps for the first time. This linkage of women and story across generations compellingly deepens the power of the tales.

Hamilton's final section, "More about *Her Stories*," is essentially an anecdote of her first remembered hearing of a tale, one told by her mother to assuage a child's fear in a cyclone. This parable, retold now by a master teller, subtly illustrates Jane Yolen's (another master storyteller) contention that "It's story, all the way down."

Each tale is illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon, whose work, like Hamilton's, has received many prestigious awards. Hamilton's retellings and the Dillons' images skillfully bring together two very different kinds of storytelling. Limited to one image per tale, the Dillons' rich colors and evocative detail enhance rather than overwhelm the words and the voice speaking them. Their African American characters, human or supernatural, all reflect individuality and strength; there's not the faintest hint of a stereotype in any of the Dillons' work. And the images are fun, as well—Buh Rabby looks suspiciously like a relative of the great hare in Kit Williams' *Masquerade* (1980), and isn't that Billie Holiday or Eartha Kitt posing in front of the mirror as *Catskinella*?

Finally, as book form this is an exceptionally well-designed volume, as the proud colophon attests (there is also a limited edition). The hardbound version is big enough to be shared on a lap, and the type is large enough for a young—or an older—reader. The page design is spacious and graceful; the first page of each tale offers a discreet white emblem of the forthcoming contents, a detail which will engage the prereader and which could easily have been sacrificed to the all-powerful bottom line.

Her Stories, then, is a book of recovery, the recovery of samples of a rich and proud tradition of tales by African American women about African American women, which are now here for us to discover. While not aimed at the academic researcher, the volume nevertheless should be of interest to all those interested in folklore, but more importantly, to all those interested in good story.

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The Bedbugs' Night Dance and Other Hopi Sexual Tales. Collected, translated, and edited by Elkchani Malouki. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1995.

Students and admirers of American Indian culture should welcome this bilingual edition (original Hopi text, with facing English translation) of twenty

folktales representative of one of North America's most fascinating native peoples. And since four of the six narrators of these tales were dead by the time of publication, one gets the impression that the preservation of these and similar stories is occurring not a moment too soon.

As the book's title denotes, these Hopi tales center on sexual themes of the type generic to an agricultural society living precariously in a harsh environment, where sexuality is an integral part of survival. Close living in an extended family structure, with few restrictions on sexual conduct, further fosters sexual openness, so that frankness of language in discussing sexual matters, to a degree which might appear crude or even obscene to modern American ears, is the rule. In fact, the primary intent of the editor in publishing these tales is to preserve them from the bowdlerization that has occurred through the purifying zeal of missionaries, government officials, and educators, as well as through basic Euro-American prudery. The stories run a gamut of themes from celebration of male sexual potency, courtship and marriage rites, bridal contests, birth rituals, male fear of female domination, tricksterism, marital difficulties, to hunting, warfare, and the like.

Given the significance of the stories for understanding Hopi culture, it is unfortunate that the introduction (written by E. N. Genovese and the only interpretative section of the book) is directed toward comparing the tales to the myths of Classical Greece and Rome, a comparison largely irrelevant, since Classical mythology is notably lacking in the kinds of folklore represented by these stories, and unnecessary, since the folktales of less developed cultures do not need linkage to Classical mythology to enhance their worth.

Introductory space could better have been spent analyzing the serious themes and questions raised by these stories and their significance for Hopi and similar cultures. Their narrative setting, for example: who recited them and on what occasions? Of significance are the prominence of food, food preparation, and hair in Hopi marriage rites and elsewhere; the use of greenery in courtship; the symbolism of music and animals; the roles of the Spider Woman and of Löwatamwuuti, the monster woman who possesses literally the vagina dentata; the emphasis on sexual potency in the male as well as the surprising (in respect to Western culture) emphasis on female sexual desire and the importance of satisfying it. The younger of the two Kokopöl brothers, for instance, wins two wives through his extraordinary sexual prowess, who agree to share him without jealousy because of that prowess. The tale concludes with the flourish: "He worked really hard on them at night."

Introductory space might also have enlarged upon the discussion raised in the preface regarding the sources for the stories. What means were taken to select the narrators and ensure the authenticity of their stories during the oral transmission? The role of narrator Michael Lomatuway'ma in editing stories

narrated by others by "adjusting" their dialects to fit the majority dialect of the Third Mesa (his own) raises concerns that need explanation.

On the positive side, one must single out the delightful glossary at the end of the work, some eighty pages (bilingual) of Hopi terms, that provides not simply their meaning, but little essays on their use and significance for Hopi culture. A valuable addition.

A word about the translation. Since the primary goal of the editor is to preserve the sexual frankness of the stories from Euro-American prudery, the reader expects an explicitly robust, racy, even obscene, in a healthy sense, translation. This seems to have been easier said than done, for the translation is disappointingly tame, utilizing the very clinical and Latinized English terms the translator was concerned to avoid: penis, vagina, intercourse, copulate, semen, and the like. We are told that Hopi has a severe shortage of sexual terms, a "total absence of swear words and other so-called dirty words, which distinguish the vocabularies of English"; but, if so, there must be a range of nuances to them for a people who, we are also told, sing "bawdy ditties" to satirize the opposite sex and insert sexual references into stories for comic relief or as an end in themselves. Leaving key sexual terms untranslated (that is, in their original language) is an unsatisfactory solution. And so the bowdlerization continues.

Yet, although the book could have been improved, the mere transmission of these earthy stories in their original language and with English translation is of notable significance. All Americans should be concerned to further their knowledge of native American culture, and this edition is a worthy place to begin.

Ernest Ament

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Anthology of Catalan Folktales. Edited and translated by Edward J. Neugaard. Catalan Studies: Translations and Criticism 16. New York: Peter Lang, 1995. 156 pp.

This anthology is part of a collection that aims to disseminate Catalan culture more widely in English-speaking academic circles. To further this aim, Neugaard proposes to divulge an aspect of Catalan culture, Catalan folktales ("rondalles") which have had a considerable tradition up to the present day throughout the Catalan linguistic area. The author has selected five folktales from collections belonging to different regions of the Catalan territories (Alghero, Majorca, Barcelona, Vallespir, and Valencia). The texts are presented in the dialect of Catalan that is spoken in each of these regions and also in their corresponding English translation. The author includes a brief introduction and a bibliography.

In the introduction, Neugaard describes the development of Catalan folktales and mentions a good number of folktale collections published in the

Catalan territories since the second half of the nineteenth century. He names important authors and collections, but, unfortunately, he makes several errors. For example, there are bibliographic sources cited both in the introduction and in the bibliography at the end of the book with different information.

One of the most important errors is the statement that in 1853 Manuel Milà i Fontanals published 207 Catalan Folktales in the *Gaceta de Barcelona* and that this is one of the largest Catalan collections. In fact, Milà i Fontanals published only twenty Catalan folktales, half of which are only summaries of ten lines at most, under the title "Cuentos infantiles (rondallas) en Cataluña" in *Observaciones sobre la poesía popular con muestras de romances catalanes inéditos* (1853), and in the same year he published 18 of these folktales in the *Gaceta de Barcelona* no. 203 (20–XII) and no. 206 (23–XII). This brief collection is important not for being the longest but for being the first of a folkloric nature to be published in the Catalan territories.

Chapters 2–11 contain the selected texts, the even-numbered chapters being the Catalan text and the odd-numbered chapters their English translation (in this review, I give the title of the tale in Catalan and, in brackets, Neugaard's English translation). For each text there is a bibliographic reference (which does not include details of the first edition), a brief note about how the tale is classified according to the Aarne-Thompson catalogue (with some errors), and some linguistic information about the dialect of the Catalan text.

The first folktale, "La filla del rei Serpenti" (The Daughter of the Serpent King), belongs to the *Rondalles algueresses* (1985) by Pascual Scanu, but it should be specified that it was included in a collection by A. Useri and previously published in the *Butlletí del Centre Excursionista de Catalunya* 145 (1907): 54–60. Neugaard points out that it contains elements of the type AT 425 and 433, but in fact, it is AT 872*, as is "La princesa Serpenteilla," no. 80 of the *Folklore de Catalunya I: Rondallística* (1950) by Joan Amades, which is already included in the Aarne-Thompson catalogue. It can be seen that the Amades text is, in fact, a reworking of the Useri text. "Es dos bessons" (The Twin Brothers) is part of the *Rondaies mallorquines d'en Jordi des Racó* (1975, vol. 21) by Antoni M. Alcover. The folktale was previously published in *Alpech de rondalles mallorquines d'en Jordi des Racó* (1896, vol. 1). The tale is indeed AT 303. "La Ventalocs" (Fire-Fanner) is folktale no. 4 in the *Folklore de Catalunya I: Rondallística* (1950) by Joan Amades. It is, indeed, AT 510, but more precisely it is AT 510A, and this is how it appears in the Aarne-Thompson catalogue. "Els tres consells" (The Three Counsels) belongs to the *Rondalles* (1972) by Esteve Caseponce. It should be pointed out that the folktale was previously published by Caseponce in *Contes vallespirenchs replegats per En Mir y Nontoquis* (nd). Neugaard considers the folktale to have features of AT 150, but the correct classification is AT 910B. Finally, "El Príncep desmemoriat" (The Forgetful Prince) is from the *Rondalles*

valencianes (1986) by Enric Valor. The folktale had been published before in *Obra Literària Completa* (1976) by Valor. The folktale does not only contain the forgotten fiancée motif (which is D2003) of AT 313, as Neugaard points out, but its classification is AT 313C.

The bibliography that concludes the book contains a number of important collections of Catalan folktales, but it has two fundamental problems. In most cases, it does not mention the year in which the first edition was published. And, what is more, not all of the books cited are collections of Catalan folktales; some of them are literary creations that belong to literature, not to folklore, such as *Tots els contes* by Apeles Mestres. The bibliography also contains a section about studies on Catalan folktales that is very brief.

The author has made a good selection of texts to include in his anthology, and they show the presence of Catalan folktales in the different Catalan-speaking territories. What is more, the book has the value of being the first collection of Catalan folktales to be translated into English. The effort involved in translating texts written in different Catalan dialects into English is worthy of special mention. But from the point of view of folklore studies, the comments and annotations are imprecise, making it advisable to use the book with a certain caution.

Carme Oriol

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Monsters, Tricksters, and Sacred Cows: Animal Tales and American Identities.

Edited by A. James Arnold. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996. 291 pp.

The 1992 quincentenary of Columbus's arrival in "The New World" was, in many academic quarters, an occasion for somber reflection. At the same time, there was often a guarded optimism, as if, in re-cognizing Columbus as a genealogical icon for the Eurocentrist camp in the debate about sources and directions of identity in "America," the quincentenary highlighted the inadequacies of official cultural narratives. Centuries-old paradigms promised, as it were, to be pressured open from "below" by the sheer abundance of testimony and story that assimilationist myth fails to take in account.

A modestly celebratory tone pervades the volume at hand, comprised of ten articles on Animal Tales, drawn from talks at the quincentenary conference at the University of Virginia. Derek Walcott, who had just that morning learned of receiving the Nobel Prize, gave the keynote address, which appears as an "Afterword" on "Animals, Elemental Tales, and the Theater." Walcott's essay brings full circle the work outlined in editor A. James Arnold's "Introduction," which gracefully finds "little common ground" in the battle between Eurocentricists like Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.—who writes that "Europe is the *unique* source" of American national identity—and proponents of a decentered, postnationalistic conception of "American" identities.

For Arnold, "taproot" positions, whether Eurocentric or Afrocentric, simply "do not correspond to reality." Thus he and the organizers of the Virginia conference begin with a "rhizomatic" notion of cultural systems, which Edouard Glissant describes as "a poetics of Relation, according to which all identity extends itself in relation to an Other." In this account of cultures and identities, the diverse, interconnecting stories of peoples who crossed borders—voluntarily or not—or who were crossed by borders, replace unitary nationalist myth: master narrative gives way to the contingencies of localized, sometimes creolized, and mobile histories, in which storytelling plays a vital part.

For the most part the essays in *Monsters, Tricksters, and Scared Cows* do not stage their discussions as part of a rhizomatic project of New World Studies. (*Monsters* is part of a New World Studies, a series Arnold edits). Rather, if they contribute to a reenvisioning of American identities they do so cumulatively by each focusing on the complex histories and functions of Animal Tales in specific locations. Each essay at least implies that Animal Tales have a residual power that percolates up through sedimented layers of history, often resignifying aspects of regional cultures and remaining vital to contemporary identities. In some cases, as Jeremy Poynting argues in "From Ancestral to Creole: Humans and Animals in a West Indian Scale of Values," contemporary fiction writers focus on "the animal-human interface" as expressed in their ancestral cultures as a means of exploiting "creative ways forward from colonial mimicry."

Contemporary cultures thus emerge as "rooted"/"routed" and adaptive. Gary H. Goosen, for instance, discusses ancient and persistent MesoAmerican belief in animal co-essence (*tonalismo*) as a faith that "resides at the very core of what might be called a native metaphysics of personhood." Goosen tracks a *tonalismo* from pre-Christian MesoAmerican civilizations to the contemporary Zapatista rebellion. Several of the essays caution against generalizing about Animal Tales and their functions. Dell Hymes discusses ways in which popular coyote stories must be read "as the stories of those who told them, not as expressions of constant culture." Likewise, Jay Miller and Vi Hilbert demonstrate ways in which, in Lushootseed (Puget Sound) Animal Tales, "changes in history become changes in narrative." Kandioura Dramé's "The Trickster as Triptych" moves from a detailed consideration of "transcontinental characters" like Uncle Bouqui, Brer Rabbit, and Brer Anancy, to a traveling theory of folktale, in which aspects of a tale are displayed in "responses to existing conditions." Contemporary forms of Animal Tales thus contain both the creative "vibe" of a culture and an inventory of the peoples' interactions with contingent cultures, who may be figured in the stories as powerful, not necessarily morally inferior "others."

Here the tales of marginalized groups often differ markedly from those of Eurocentric culture. Michael Palencia-Roth's discussion of "Monsters and the Theologies of Conquest," the first article in the collection and only to

deal with European Tales, provides a valuable context in pointing out the propensity of Western cultural narratives to abject what cannot be assimilated, as in teratologies (monster myths) from Classical Times through the Age of Discovery. Palencia-Roth shows how Columbus was held within traditions that figured monsters and monstrous behavior as "enemies of God." In contrast, as Joanna Overing argues in a discussion of Piaroa (a Venezuelan Amazonian tribe) images of alterity, native cultures often make a place for Western "others" within their Animal Tales—in Piaroan representations of whites Overing finds a measure of tolerance for difference, "as well as a fascination and fear of it and a strong desire for it."

In several cases, arrival in the New World resulted in the invention of traditions involving Animal Tales. In "Accounts of Encantados by Descendants of Runaway Slaves," Candace Slater surveys transformation narratives in Amazonia, in which supernatural entities assume the guise of aquatic animals. The stories bring together "indigenous, European, and African cultural influences in a hybrid, unmistakably contemporary form." In "Animal Images in Caribbean Hindu Mythology," Brinsley Samaroo analyzes stories told among indentured Indians. Chosen for their ability to do plantation work, these immigrants belonged largely to agricultural castes, which were simplified into "easily understandable divisions" in the new world. Samaroo examines selective transfers at work in their inventive creation of traditions involving the use of "real animals as symbols in Hindu worship in the new environment."

That the authors of these essays come from several disciplines (cultural anthropology, folklore studies, history, comparative literature) gives the collection a lively, heterogeneous quality. However, methodological diversity is not automatically a strength, as certain disciplinary procedures may (unwittingly) preserve a Eurocentric perspective. If, as Arnold argues, the essays move together in alliance with a larger narrativizing project, a few occasionally do so in problematic ways, especially around the generally misguided question of how studied groups "really believe" the stories they tell. The project of "preserving" at these moments appears as a quite different one than that of "perpetuating." As Walcott notes in his canny "Afterword"—with a hint of caution—the business of "preserving what belongs to the people . . . has elements of a curious kind of patronage."

This is a serious concern, but it does not reflect the overall tenor of the volume. Rather, the essays are distinguished by their elegant and assessable historical and cultural scholarship. Most rewarding of all, the articles are careful and respectful in providing ample space for some fascinating Animal Tales to speak for themselves.

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The Narrative World of Finnish Fairy Tales. By Satu Apo. *Folklore Fellows Communications* 256. Helsinki: *Academia Scientiarum Fennica*, 1995. 322 pp.

In the academic study of fairy tales, motifs and tale types have long dominated. But fairy tales are, after all, a basic *narrative* form, and so it is eminently appropriate that plot and characterizations should engage the attention of contemporary scholars. Exploring recurring elements in narratives is the task that Satu Apo, Associate Professor of Folkloristics at the University of Helsinki, set for this ethnographic and sociohistorical study. To the discomfiture of fairy-tale scholars, terminology remains a problem, which is equally true for the study of fairy-tale narrative (as opposed to motifs), where "no widely accepted terminology has yet been devised for the structural analysis concentrating on plots" (26).

Siting her work within the relationship between tradition and culture, Apo notes early on that it "may well be that the texts collected by the methods of the 19th century do not in fact reflect the tales as they appeared in authentic storytelling situations; they seem to point more to a second, concealed form of folklore, human memory, and the cognitive structures by which narrators memorized their stories" (15). With this underlying and tantalizing question always in the background, Apo set out to try to determine what systems of meanings narrators have woven into the role casting of the characters in their tales.

Finnish fairy tales demonstrate strong regional variety: eastern, Karelian ones were much influenced by Russian folklore, western ones by Scandinavian. Within individual communities, fairy tales' position in the nineteenth century was broadly marginal, told on the outskirts of villages, their style and material often beyond the limits of accepted decency, and their tellers socially peripheral.

Apo's research material comes from six parishes in the western Finnish region of Satakunta and consists of 235 fairy-tale texts collected by three different folklorists between the 1850s and 1906. Choosing tales from a single cultural area made it easier to relate tale content to ambient cultural concerns. Family size is small, stepmothers are prominent, and economic and political "masters" are decidedly negative. In a rural society marked by deepening poverty, an eager appreciation of material comfort and benefits is commonplace, the ideal wife is an heiress without brothers, and warm relationships between parents and children are notably rare, appearing in only 4 of 235 texts.

The largest part of Apo's analysis concerns gender relationships. Among the eighty-six narrators of the Satakunta tales, sixty-nine were men and seventeen women. Apo's data, which parallel those of the late Bengt Holbek, suggest that each tale collection needs to be examined carefully to determine whether women or men predominate. In this case, narrator gender, as so often, affected tale gender. "Masculine tales were told by both men and women almost equally,

but male narrators avoid feminine plots to some extent" (51). In this rubric, "feminine" material involves a heroine-victim who overcomes a crime or the threat of a monster or of persecutors, but who, unlike her male counterpart, "does not enlist helpers in order to perform a suitor's task." On the contrary, "Helpers appear spontaneously on hearing the girl weep and when the time is ripe . . . [she] often acquires a husband by passive means, by showing off her good looks and sometimes her wealth" (168). A masculine hero-victim in "masculine" tales, however, is rare (168), where "the most popular plot is of the type 'hero wins spouse' [and where] the woman's chief role is to act as the object sought by the hero. She is by no means the object of sexual desire, even less of romantic feelings; she is simply an instrumental object: by marrying a woman from a higher social class, the hero achieves his primary goal, acquires a favorable position in the social hierarchy and with it power and wealth" (170).

Because male narrators dominate the Satakunta tales, male gender attributes are strongly marked. Apo finds a "deep-rooted cultural asymmetry" (171). "There is a clear pattern to the attitudes displayed in the aggression towards women: the woman always 'deserves' what she gets, whereas the men who suffer at women's hands are always innocent" (181). Perhaps, she adds, that is because women's undesirable qualities (immorality, disloyalty, disobedience, and independence) often occupy a central position, whereas corresponding male failings are very seldom criticized. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that in these oral tales, as in Grimms' tales, gender distinctions represent a male point of view. Even in "feminine" plots that feature heroines, the sexes' presentation harmonizes with male-dominated cultural values. Apo notes, however, that women in oral fairy tales are not exclusively passive or helpless: "Activeness and the ability to defend herself were regarded as virtues in a peasant woman. She did, after all, take part in agricultural production and help to support her family on a scale quite different from that of her upper-class counterpart. The only signs of revolt against the norms of the feminine peasant role are to be found in the spinning tales (AT 500, 501). In these a bone lazy and stupid young girl marries a prince and is freed for the rest of her life from the basic chores carried out by women—making clothes" (173–74).

This single example, so remarkable in Grimms' tales as well, suitably introduces welcome observations about oral-written (print) relationships, especially important since the Satakunta region had many printing presses, newspapers, libraries, fairy-tale broadsheets, cheap books, . . . and readers. Much evidence points towards a marked literary influence on oral tradition, especially of Grimms' tales. Thirty of the Satakunta texts were clearly related to fairy tales published in Finland between 1847 and 1885, and nine were word-for-word Finnish versions of Grimm originals. Yet none of the narrators acknowledged

a printed source. Apo is equally, and in my view justifiably, skeptical about widely-held assumptions that "everyone knew fairy tales" (50) or that fairy tales existed in the medieval period.

In her conclusion, Apo poses the question that has occupied social historians who would like to be able to use fairy tales as a source for historical attitudes and experience: are there structural homologies between fairy-tale content and cultural reality (199)? Her response is performance-oriented: in nineteenth-century Finland "we may be quite safe in assuming that everyday reality provided an ample sounding board for the critical and aggressive social attitudes manifest in fairy tales (and other genres of folklore)" (218). This is so, because of marked population increase, rise in the numbers of rural poor, and a growing discrepancy in income that harshly distinguished prosperous landholders from an improvised and dispossessed peasantry (219). With its detailed description and rigorous analysis, Apo's study contributes admirably to the growing body of socioculturally oriented folk narrative scholarship.

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In and Out of Enchantment: Blood Symbolism and Gender in Portuguese Fairy Tales. By Isabel Cardigos. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1996. 273 pp.

Any folklore scholar interested in questions of genre and/or gender will have to reckon with this book, which offers a striking understanding of masculine and feminine voices in fairy tales.

Part I consists of three chapters that lay out the scope, approach, and method framing the analysis in Part II of four European fairy tales found in Portuguese collections. First, Cardigos brilliantly reformulates the relationship of fairy tale and myth by questioning the assumption of their continuity; rereading Propp, Lévy-Strauss, Rank, and Eliade in light on gender considerations; and revisiting the "unheroic" fairy tale in connection with the verbal ritualization of women's initiatory experiences. The fairy tale emerges transformed, "a narrative characterized by alternations between enchantment and disenchantment," speaking with "a multiple voice" because of its history and generic function, and very much tied to women as tellers and performers—though not always narrative subjects. Second, while strongly asserting her irritation with Jungian "prejudiced analyses," the author refuses nonetheless to renounce interpretation as such and focuses on "the 'language' of the inherited symbolism of fairy tales." Her approach differs both from Bengt Holbek's interest in symbols as used by specific tellers in specific contexts and from Clarissa Pinkola Estes's or Robert Bly's methodologically questionable reliance on one or few texts rather than a plurality of versions. Thus, Cardigos acknowledges the "reluctance of modern folklore research to envisage a text in terms of its universal symbolism" (a

reluctance I share, I feel compelled to state from the start), and yet places her work squarely within the tradition of competent, serious folklore studies. Third, as the key to decoding the pendularity of fairy-tale syntax, its oscillation between separation/enchantment and togetherness/disenchantment, she proposes the symbolically powerful ambivalence surrounding the female blood of menstruation, defloration, and childbirth.

Skillfully employing a comparative method, Part II follows with a close reading of four bloody tales, the reference texts of which are presented in their entirety as translated from Ataíde Oliveira's collections, *Contos Tradicionaes do Algarve* (1900 and 1905); substantial references to other Portuguese versions are included in appendix. The first two tales, "The Beast With Seven Heads" (AT 303) and "The Prince Turned into Stone" (AT 516), Cardigos argues, are "dominated by a male voice" and exemplify the heroic tale in which undifferentiation is to be feared and the powerful association of dragon with maiden destroyed. In both tales, she notices the "glorification of male homosexual spirituality set against woman and heterosexual love"; and in both tales, the relationship between culture and nature is conflictual and gendered.

"The Little Snake" is instead a tale of solidarity between women which celebrates the "periodical, changing nature of woman," the powers of her bloody fertility, without defeating or excluding the male. Interestingly, Cardigos notes how difficult it is to classify such a tale; in its initial plot, it appears related to "The Snake Helper," which, however, then proceeds along the lines of female rivalry typical of "The Black and White Bride." Cardigos is at her strongest in this chapter, weaving intertextual readings together with a symbolic understanding of the girl's connection with the snake and effectively contrasting the value of blood in "The Prince Turned to Stone" and "The Little Snake." The fourth tale Cardigos analyzes, "Branca Flor or the Devil's Daughter," is presented as a version of "The Girl as Helper in the Hero's Flight" (AT 313), which, in its second sequence, turns into a heroine tale. It is also contrasted to "The Swan Maiden" (AT 400), where the hero does not return the maiden's clothes and thus establishes a rapacious rather than reciprocal relationship with her. In "Branca Flor," Cardigos concludes on a conciliatory or utopian note, both hero and heroine break kinship ties to establish their own bond as empowered by "the menstrual quality of the heroine's magic."

Each of these readings is a "self-contained" study and, thus, as Cardigos acknowledges herself, the overall structure or her genre/gender argument is not foregrounded. Once again nondefensively, she explains: "if I did not impoverish the magic of the tale when reread, the effort will have been worthwhile." She also punctuates her detailed readings with helpful reminders of the nature/culture, female/male, myth/ritual, death/life issues at hand. And indeed her project is complex. Rejecting the easy equation

female : enchantment = male : disenchantment, Cardigos inserts time (and space) into the formula so as to envision a *phase* (and a place) of enchantment or disjunction for both women and men, and another of disenchantment or conjunction in fairy tales. Women's blood, in its biological and cultural (de)valorization, plays a central role in the tales' encoding of these dynamics. Particularly successful and suggestive, in relation to this larger picture, is her comparative analysis of "The Prince Turned into Stone" and "The Little Snake," in which similar plot structures support opposite gender ideologies clearly revolving around the value of female or life-giving blood. Here Cardigos's rejection of binary oppositions, influenced by thinkers as diverse as Ben Knight and Hélène Cixous, works best. But some other slip-pages confused me. Are masculine and feminine "voices" and "plots"—terms sometimes seemingly interchangeable in this book—the same? Does symbolic reading necessarily cancel their difference? And can structural relations between tale types serve, almost automatically, a historical argument—the female solidarity model did not survive and was supplanted by the female rivalry one?

I also think that "homosocial" rather than "homosexual" would better define the female and masculine ties that Cardigos is so attentive to. This matter of terminology is closely related to theoretical perspectives on gender and culture, which I wish had been probed rather than raised in fragmented or purely heuristic fashion in Part I. Working more closely with Cixous and other gender theorists could have only added to the depth of this book; it would have, of course, also added to its length, and we know that authors have only some say on that. But Cardigos's interest, in this book at least, is clearly not theory but interpretation. To this purpose, methodological eclecticism works well for her, as she aptly produces Proppian, deconstructive, and Freudian readings as needed, side by side, and tailored to her purposes. She also makes good use of Holbek's *Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, a book that perhaps has yet to be read productively in the United States.

Both a sympathetic reader (questions of gender and narrative interest me) and a resistant one (I am always suspicious when someone wants to tell me what the heroine's blindness might mean sexually), I was not always convinced by Cardigos's interpretations, but I consistently found her approach generative and, in an unassuming way, almost daring. Symbolic readings are problematic for very good reasons, but this book provides an interestingly gendered understanding of the fairy tale/myth dynamics, it confronts the misogyny of the Jungian "feminine," and it listens keenly to another "feminine voice" in fairy tales.

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Fairy Tales, Sexuality and Gender in France, 1690–1715: Nostalgic Utopias. By Lewis C. Seifert. Cambridge (UK) and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 276 pp.

This is in many ways an outstanding scholarly achievement. Nonetheless, I have a few reservations concerning the author's reliance upon the latest American critical discourse on sexuality and gender. I continue to have problems with the concept of gender, even though it has been in current usage for the past twenty years or so. There is no such term in French critical language. I do understand the meaning of it; and since we, the readers of French fairy tales, are mostly bilingual, let us say that in the language of Descartes gender means something like this: "masculin/feminin en tant que construction culturelle et sociale, et non pas seulement comme simple donnée biologique" (quite a long curriculum). It would be nice if French critics could use the English term—provided there would be no confusion with the French word *genre*—or, a new expression could be coined.

Since 1956, and especially in my *Conte merveilleux français* (1975), it seems I was practicing gender criticism without knowing it, like Monsieur Jourdain speaking in prose. There is at least a difference in vocabulary, however. Discussing the same passages Seifert now calls "genderly" or considers sexually excessive, I, twenty years earlier, simply wrote that in her tale of *Vert et Bleu* Mlle de La Force is deliciously erotic when she describes how Princess Bleu, naked in her bath, is discovered by her future lover and fiancé Prince Vert.

Seifert's book begins with an introduction to methodology, insisting on the centrality of the "patriarchal 'sex/gender system'" in the corpus of fairy tales studied, a corpus well defined as the productions appearing between 1690 and 1715. Chapter 1 deals with the structural and ideological contents of the tales, what is aptly defined as "marvelous realities." Five more chapters follow. Perhaps the best one is the succinct account of "The marvelous in context: the place of the *conte de fées* in late seventeenth-century France" (chapter 3). For the reader not too well informed on the vogue of fairy tales three hundred years ago, it might come as a surprise that during the relatively brief span of twenty-five years, one hundred tales were published by seventeen authors. While ten of these were men, the seven women authors produced far more tales. Mme d'Aulnoy alone wrote some twenty-five.

If it follows logically and ideologically for this critic that the fairy tales are gendered, they are feminine, of course. I am not trying to be ironical, nor do I even think that these women's tales could fail to reveal their authors' gender. But I am not sure I can accept wholeheartedly the profusely "demonstrated" notion that the expression of sexuality is nostalgic. These women express a wonderful love in a neverland of fulfillment. Perhaps, and yet, could not one feel that in these tales a kind of liberation takes place, or a license to love and be loved?

Although I do agree (for the most part) with Seifert's thesis, I would certainly express it in different terms.

In chapters 5 and 6 the author deals respectively with the depiction of masculinity and femininity. The treatment is both ingenious and thorough in its scholarship, as the author shows great familiarity with the major feminist voices both in these United States and abroad. Yes, there is "gender trouble" in these fairy tales (see Judith Butler). Masculine heroes are affirming their patriarchal privileges (overtly and covertly) and the princesses (or many of them) are fulfilling idealized visions of femininity.

On a different note, in the beginning of the book, the author stresses the infantilisation process of these tales too much. I would simply say that it is a longstanding literary convention that fairy stories pretend to be for children, while destined for adults. As for the childish behavior of some characters—notably in Mme d'Aulnoy's tales—I believe it is a function of a parodic/humorous rendition of fictitious "reality." One other rather important tenet of this work is that the "future past" so prevalent in the narratives under discussion is a generalized expression of nostalgia, a longing for a mythical past when things were better than in the present. Viewed in this light these works are utopias. It is difficult to disagree with such a notion, but somehow nostalgia explains too much. Finally, rather than a conclusion, there is a kind of rejection of it in an "Afterword" suggesting that the vogue these fairy tales enjoyed three hundred years ago coincided with a period of social and cultural transition, again stressing "the tyranny of nostalgia." But the few remarks formulated above are not really objections or adverse criticism, for the general impression of this reviewer is that this is an important work of scholarship, which belongs in every university library and in the collections of all fairy-tale lovers.

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The Sibling Society. By Robert Bly. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1996. xiii + 240 pp.

In a sequel to his acclaimed *Iron John*, which interpreted a European folktale for its meaning to modern American men, Robert Bly now addresses himself to both men and women. He asserts that Americans are a society of adolescents, deaf to the counsel of our elders and deprived of the cultural heritage of our past. Electronic communication has prevented the human neocortex from developing our curiosity, exploration, and contact with the environment. People in our sibling society are hopeless, "sick of being human." They are habituated to literalist thinking; they are flat, numb, absent; they expect their life partners to be just like themselves instead of complementing them. Much of Robert

Bly's book is the sort of jeremiad that confirms parents in their hopelessness; much of it is convincing, for instance his analysis of the Promise Keepers group (178–81). It does endorse some cures. For one thing, adolescents need adults. The reader who identifies with the parent generation is summoned to "pull the youth into adulthood." (I don't know what the reader who identifies as an adolescent is supposed to do; maybe he or she is not the intended audience.) For another, we need the "inexhaustible energies of the cosmos [which] are called by extremely elaborate practices and stories." Metaphor, the invocation of the messages of art, is the main cure. Folktale and myth evoke "a profound athletic energy" from us; Robert Bly demonstrates their power in his beguiling interpretations. Robert Bly's interpretive method is familiar to readers of *Iron John* and Clarissa Pinkola Estes's *Women Who Run with the Wolves*. Quotation of a few paragraphs at a time alternates with social or psychological commentary and allegorical interpretation. For Robert Bly, the Giant in Jack's story incarnates the destructive force of greed "that has led American society . . . to a culture in which twelve-year-olds shoot each other, Calvin Klein uses children for sexually explicit advertisements, and we overeat. . . ." At the end of the Jack section, the author points to what we have yet to learn from the story: "We don't know how to steal 'gold' back from the Giant," so "our story ends with Jack being eaten." Three other folktales, Ganesha (Indian), Tatterhood (Norwegian), and the Lindwurm (Swedish), are treated similarly. The range of cultural reference is impressive: in nine pages (185–93) we encounter the Lascaux cave paintings, an anecdote about African literacy, the Three Billy-Goats Gruff, Joseph Chilton Pearce, poems by Trakl, Neruda, and Lorca, a television documentary on segregation, a quotation from Ortega y Gasset, and an article in *Esquire*.

Like so many contemporary interpreters of folktale, Robert Bly uses the artworks of supposedly simpler people to nourish our hungry souls and cure the ills of our complex society. Since he makes no secret of his prescriptive intentions, it is irrelevant to object that the symbols in fairy tales and folktales are specific to their own environments. For in the sort of interpretation practiced by Bly and Estes, all symbols are available for any purpose, and no purpose is more important than giving modern Americans what they need. Kenneth Burke remarked during the Depression that what people did with the best-selling book *How to Win Friends and Influence People* was not to act on its lists of what to do, but to achieve a symbolic empowerment by reading it. It is too bad that Robert Bly's book is probably destined for that fate, for its diagnoses are often accurate and its effect often uplifting.

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Six Myths of Our Time: Little Angels, Little Monsters, Beautiful Beasts, and More. By Marina Warner. New York: Vintage Books, 1995. xxiii + 134 pp.

Marina Warner's *Six Myths of Our Time* is a collection of lively and informative essays written for the prestigious Reith Lecture series broadcast annually since 1948 in memory of Lord Reith, who developed and shaped the BBC. In her foreword to the book, Warner mentions what she calls the "invisible establishment character of the lectures," as British an institution as "Henley regatta, cream teas and pantomime dames" (xv). This, she states, was the reason for her being only the second woman ever invited to give the lecture series. As Warner points out, to be a woman giving the lectures was one of the "most conspicuous tasks" she could have agreed to, and she was "ipso facto representative of [her] sex" (xvi).

Considering this "most conspicuous" forum for Warner's lectures, as well as its establishment character, it is surprising that her essays are at times quite controversial. While tracing the traditional literary and historical fictions behind the mythologies she addresses, Warner leads inexorably to their modern day political and sociological ramifications. Much in the style and ambience of Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* (1957), Warner begins her essays from the kernel of an idea taken from popular culture and builds on that idea to expose the ideologies behind it and the seamless way in which such myths govern society's most deeply rooted functionings and belief systems.

The first of the essays, "Monstrous Mothers," moves from an observation about the two rapacious female velociraptors in *Jurassic Park* to an analysis of the blame for all social ills, which is laid at the feet of women in general and feminism in particular. Tracing the motif of the monstrous feminine back through timeless stories of gorgons, sirens, Amazons, Medusa and Medea, wilful wives and despised old hags, evil witches and Thelma and Louise, Warner shows how the tropes of popular culture draw on ancient sources to perpetuate the mythology of the "ungovernable female appetite" (16). Warner links the contemporary hysteria over the breakdown of "the family" and attacks on single mothers, for example, to this perpetuation of the myth through cultural representations, which obfuscates the real economic, political, and social reasons for such phenomena. Instead of addressing the needs of mothers and children, politicians buy into the monstrous mother myth and place blame accordingly.

This myth of monstrous mothers compounds the view of women as alien and other, a view which is confirmed in the next essay "Boys Will Be Boys." Beginning with the Future Entertainment Show in London—a show devoted to virtual reality toys and video games—Warner proceeds to expose the myth that aggression defines the male character. The almost complete absence of women from such games intensifies "the sense of apartness, of alienation,

of the deep oppositeness of the female sex" (33), while the violent modus operandi of the games confirms the male as aggressor and sexual criminal. Warner makes a very perceptive point that, in the grander scale of myth, there is a rule that "if the girls are getting tough, the tough get tougher" (33). This mythological "rule" accounts for the contemporary importance of "warrior strength," or the overembodiment heroes of contemporary culture—for example, Stallone, Robocop, Schwarzenegger—the importance of body-building, and male identity linked to physical attributes rather than mental agility. Warner's point is that aggression is socially prescribed, not inherent, that monsters are made, not given, and that much of male aggression and violence is learned through representational repetition in video games, media, advertising, and so on. Boys are not necessarily boys, implies Warner, and the myth of exaggerated masculinity equaling power and heroism is inappropriate in today's culture, and more than a little responsible for young male delinquency and fatherless families.

The subject of the third essay is children, who, as the title "Little Angels, Little Monsters" suggests, have an ambivalent mythology in their relationship to adult desires. On one hand is the myth of childhood innocence (in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary), which is perpetuated by an "adult investment in a utopian childhood state" (45) where children must stand as the "guarantors of humanity's reputation" (46). On the other hand are the extraordinarily pervasive representations of "bad children." For every representation of child-heroism, for example in *Jurassic Park*, there is a child-monster, as in *The Exorcist*. Warner claims that children have become the source of widespread fear and horror, more so than "even their single mothers" (55). These "little monsters" express an adult lament over the loss of an ideal of children, and this loss is blamed on the children themselves. The ambivalence over children is neatly summed up in Warner's wink to a Foucauldian thematic: never has the sexuality of children been of such great interest, concern, and intense scrutiny (for example, child abuse and pornography), while at the same time "there circulates more disguised kiddie porn than at any other period in history" (59) in advertising, fashion, TV shows, and so on. We demand that children be innocent, then utilize them as the "principal incitements to desire" (59). Warner concludes the chapter by chiding the social systems that accelerate this process.

The fourth essay, "Beautiful Beasts," discusses the convergence of terms such as man/beast, art/nature, and wild/tame in modern myth. The point of this essay is less clear than the first three, although Warner invokes a huge array of myths, legends, and fairy tales in which the man/beast dichotomy is explored. The result is disappointingly unenlightening and already contained in the introductory paragraph: "Within today's myths of human nature, the warrior

and the wild creature . . . don't stand at opposite ends, but are intertwined. . . . And yet they're in polar opposition to one another, too" (63). Nevertheless, the essay is a good deal of fun to read, touching as it does on the exploits of *Gilgamesh*, the sexuality of *King Kong*, and the "virile but tender" New Man beast of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*.

In "Cannibal Tales," Warner explores the popularity of the myth of cannibalism, which extends back as far as the Olympians, consumed by Cronus, to current offerings such as *Silence of the Lambs*, and synchronically as both a metaphor for outrageous transgression and a symbol conferring great power, as in the Christian miracle of transubstantiation. The essay is framed at the start by Ruskin's elegiac reference to Turner's painting "Slavers throwing overboard the dead and dying—Typhon coming on," and at the end by Guyanese-born poet David Dabydeen's poem on the same painting, but from the point of view of one of the drowning slaves. The cannibalism Warner refers to in this painting is the metaphor of "consuming and being consumed, devouring and being devoured" (85), with the hungry, pink sea monsters standing in for the merchant slave traders. Warner links the myth of cannibalism to other fears, fears "about mingling and hybridity, about losing definition, . . . fears about a future loss of identity" particularly on the part of early European "explorers" (100).

The fear of loss of identity in the cannibalism essay leads very well into the final essay on the myth of "Home," particularly in the myth of "England" as home, and the myth of national identity. Warner points to some of the more egregious expressions of the longing and desire for that "golden afternoon in the past" which evokes a fantasy of a "permanent, unchanging national idyll" (106). In this regard, the Grimm brothers obviously loom large, as do ethnic hatred and the present British monarchy. Warner points out the inevitable interdependence of home, identity, and women, what she terms "the mythology of the hearth," and how the association of an "authentic origin with the feminine realm" is deeply imbedded in national mythologies. It is this, suggests Warner, which is behind the fury with which the public has reacted to the perceived transgressions of the royal family: "the Queen symbolizes the imaginary personality of the nation," and her family has failed to keep faith with the "hearthside story of national identity" (116). Warner ends by questioning what "home" means: is there not perhaps "another way of talking about home, without harking back to nostalgic lies about the hearth, the throne, the greensward, the island race" (117)? Her answer is found in the poetry of the 1992 Nobel Prize winner for literature, Derek Walcott, a British subject born in colonial St. Lucia with both black and white grandparents, who declares, "I bear/my house inside me, everywhere" (118).

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Wie Dornröschen seine Unschuld gewann: Archäologie der Märchen. Mit einem Essay von Peter Bichsel. By Beat Mazenauer and Severin Perrig. Leipzig: Kiepenheuer, 1995.

This book is an absolutely fascinating read, especially for those who crave mountains of historical detail, insight into bizarre attitudes, and perverse narratives. The authors supply all of the above in abundance. Instead of taking a traditional approach, that is, instead of using depth psychology and myth analysis in the critical study of folktales, this book embeds tales in historical contexts. Changing societal structures, evolving hierarchies and customs, the history of daily life, and especially the history of mentality, or as the authors call it, "Mentalistätsgeschichte," form the framework for this innovative study of some of our most popular fairy tales.

The volume traces the development of five different tales—"Snow White," "Blue Beard," "Red Riding Hood," "Cinderella," and "Dummling"—over several centuries. Each of the five chapters contains excerpts from several different versions of the tale in question. The reader may sometimes be frustrated that entire texts are not included, but what the book loses in completeness it more than makes up for in breadth. The retellings span many centuries and allow the reader to trace fascinating changes over a long period of time: the oldest text included dates from 420 B.C., the most recent from 1978, but most date back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. With this historical emphasis, the authors are attempting to draw scholarly attention away from the reception of the Grimms' tales and toward the evolution of the tales before Jacob and Wilhelm make their appearance. In fact, since the Grimms' collection coincided with the advent of the use of folktales as pedagogical tools for children, their work is part of a trend to tone down these rather wild stories.

The second section of each chapter contains a sociohistorical analysis of the texts, and it is here that the book is at its most fascinating. Consider, for example, that "Snow White" actually began as a tale dealing with the possibility of conception by a comatose woman, a medicinal tale which put limited contemporaneous knowledge of human reproduction to the test. Or is it simply a testimony to necrophilia? "Blue Beard," not surprisingly, is contextualized within the history of misogyny and the desire for violence in entertainment, while "Red Riding Hood" is analyzed as a political fable. Although it started out as a tale of warning for the vulnerable against the powers that be, it became a narrative demonstrating the subversive potential of the underdog, so to speak, in his or her fight against the cunning, powerful wolf. "Cinderella," on the other hand, began as a sermon, an early Christian homily praising humility and service. Only later did it take a drastic turn and evolve into a commentary on absolutist culture, dancing, sex appeal, and greed. Finally, the analysis of "Dummling" offers an engaging history of stupidity, but also places Hans Dumm

into the late Renaissance, where the bourgeoisie was beginning to accumulate greater net worth than its noble neighbors. In spite of its money, however, this new class was never able to measure up socially; it always remained ignorant of important customs and thus appeared stupid.

The copious endnotes form the third section of the text. The curious may turn to these for additional mounds of information regarding publication of the texts quoted, tales with similar content but not included in the book, various commentaries on the tales, perhaps nontrivial historical "trivia" (the use of barrels as punishment or the lowly station of cooks), etymologies, and so on. Its three-part structure, as well as its witty style, allow the book to appeal to professional and nonprofessional readers alike.

The book ends with an essay by Peter Bichsel, which describes narration as a process that functions almost independently of any specific teller or theme, and which does not even concern itself with the transmission of new information. Narration is instead the evolution of common stories, stories which, once learned, actually enable us to perceive the world as narrative. A fitting ending for a book which demonstrates that folktales can be seen as documents of cultural history rather than of individual development.

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Creative Storytelling: Building Community, Changing Lives. By Jack Zipes. New York: Routledge, 1995.

The title of this practical manual on storytelling promises great things, but the content is considerably more modest. Zipes, with experience as a storyteller in both Europe and the United States, proposes a program of "subversive storytelling" intended to encourage creativity and critical thinking in students. Ideally this might eventually lead to more humanistic school communities. He proposes an organized program that takes place over a number of weeks, giving a teller ample time to develop ideas and to encourage children and teachers to take a full part. This may be as simple as a fully staged production based on scripts composed by the students.

Zipes organizes his twelve chapters into three sections. In the first, "Setting the Scene with Fairy Tales," he introduces what he calls "classical" fairy tales, which he contrasts negatively with modern fantasy stories. He demonstrates how he uses these contrasts to involve students in the creative process. The next section, "Exploring Genres," is the heart of the book and by far the longest and most detailed. It presents different types of stories, an odd and uneven mix of fables, legends, myths, tall tales, science fiction, and what he calls "utopia and wishing tales." He suggests various techniques, largely taken from creative drama, to engage audiences in story-creation and related activities. The last

section, "Storytelling in Context," contains only one brief chapter entitled "On The Use and Abuse of Storytelling," but it is a key chapter that explores various issues in storytelling.

Zipes includes many story texts, including his own, and offers an extensive bibliography of story anthologies, individual tales, and books about stories and storytelling. Many of these are geared to child-oriented storytelling in a school context, but he also includes a few scholarly examinations of the Grimm tales, such as those of Ruth B. Bottigheimer and Maria Tatar. It is surprising that he misses the excellent 1993 anthology, *The Reception of Grimms' Fairy Tales: Responses, Reactions, Revisions*, edited by Donald Haase, since the Grimm tales as they exist today are so central to Zipes's presentation.

He writes clearly and fluidly, though he often makes sweeping generalizations to support what in fact is a somewhat narrow view of the nature of fairy tales. In his second chapter, "Mixing It Up with Salad Games and Acrostics," he says, "As long as I counter the [traditional] story with a tale that I find more ideologically suitable, I feel comfortable telling the traditional tale" (38). In other words, he uses "traditional" stories as straw figures to be knocked down by modern literary stories that are, in his opinion, more suitably ideological. He goes on to say, "After I tell the classical version, I recite one or two 'subversive' tales to challenge the so-called definitive text. Here the children sense the purpose of my animation. They are stirred up, but I do not impose my own views on them. Telling a counter version to a classical tale is enough provocation" (38).

This statement reveals both the strengths and the weaknesses of *Creative Storytelling*. Tellers who are "stirred up" by what they tell are obviously more effective than those who are not. Providing listeners with different variants and versions allows them to make their own connections and draw their own conclusions. They take a direct part in the creative process by composing their own stories based on what they have heard.

However, Zipes's confrontational method imposes his views on listeners, despite the disclaimer. His ultimate test is ideological. In limiting his discussion to a "so-called definitive text," Zipes misrepresents the richness of fairy tales. He mentions the existence of variants, but in fact he makes it clear which stories fit his model and which do not. He clearly prefers contemporary literary fairy tales as an antidote to what he sees as the negative qualities of traditional tales. In the end this encourages either/or thinking, and not the fully open critical thinking that Zipes hopes to stimulate.

He would support his case just as well by introducing positive examples of authentically collected tales as a challenge to popular stereotypical fairy tales. Showing how atypical folktales compare rather than contrast with modern stories might be less confrontational, but no less effective. "Subversive" storytelling

is an old tradition. Narrators have had the opportunity to use stories as critical commentary on the world around them, and to incorporate their own life experiences in their stories. Authentic folktales are not anonymous (as Zipes certainly knows, having prepared the notes to his 1987 translation of the Grimm tales). To introduce modern children to more positive examples of traditional tales would remind them that we enjoy a long history of creative subversion. The old stories, which come, after all, from the common people, often present a realistic view of ordinary life that is not merely wish-fulfilling. In *Folktales and Reality*, German scholar Lutz Röhrich offers an effective antidote to the idea that stories must be rewritten to be relevant and challenging. In speaking of traditional oral tales he states: "The folktale did not begin changing in the modern technological world; 'folktales' have always, at all times, adapted to the current picture of reality, and they assimilated to the present reality even after centuries of development. The relationship between folktales and reality is therefore different in every epoch; it takes new shape again and again, and must be interpreted anew as well" (215).

Zipes is strongly committed to utopian views, devoting one of his longest chapters to "Utopia and Wishing Tales." Here again, the "classical fairy tales" are offered as negative examples because they portray a dangerous utopia, one that presents an unrealistic world of wish-fulfilling happy-ever-after endings that repress their darker content (particularly child abuse and other forms of human violence). To his credit he does not suggest censorship, but rather recommends telling "ideologically correct" stories that offer clear alternatives to violence and motivate children to find "different ways of narrating their lives and assuming responsibility for their action" (194). In this way storytellers can contribute to achieving the community-building and life-changing promised in his utopian book title. Delightfully, he proposes the honest child in "The Emperor's New Clothes" as a model for tellers who wish to "expose the ridiculous nature of power and the shame of the community" (224). He states that "the genuine storyteller must feel the urge to divulge what it means to live in an age when lies often pass for truth in the mass media and the public realm." He disdains performers who are primarily interested in "making consumers out of children" (223). I agree most heartily, though I am not comfortable with his judgmental term "genuine storyteller."

I also agree that children and adults, in schools and in the community at large, are in desperate need of honest humanistic alternatives to alienation, materialism, and violence. I know, from my own experience and those of the many tellers I have worked with, that storytelling offers personal face-to-face alternatives to the impersonal commercialism of much contemporary entertainment. Zipes's book is one of dozens (including a 1985 book with a similar title, *Creative Storytelling*, by Jack Maguire) that propose a practical

program for carrying this out in a school setting. I do not agree with everything he proposes, and I find his choice of tales narrow; but the book is worth considering for anyone concerned with the use and abuse of stories and storytelling. Whether the imperfections are great or small depends on the interests and demands of those who wish to try out the ideas and suggestions included in the book.

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The Grammar of Fantasy: An Introduction to the Art of Inventing Stories. By Gianni Rodari. Translated by Jack Zipes. New York: Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 1996. 139 pp.

Rodari's book is dedicated to a city, Reggio Emilia, with good reason. This politically "Red" northern Italian city gave rise to the militant *Movimento di Cooperazione Educativa* of the 1960s and 1970s, in which Gianni Rodari (1920–80) played an integral part. Reggio Emilia produced the most advanced school system in Italy—a system that is now attracting the attention of educators worldwide. Although the original, *La grammatica della fantasia* (Turin: Einaudi) was written in 1973, this English translation speaks to concerns which remain absolutely current. Rodari might have been pleased by Herbert Kohl's polemical preface, which opens: "The word imagination does not appear in the government's list of (Goals 2000), nor does it turn up on lists of behavioral objectives or educational outcomes" (ix). Rodari too would have been appalled by the conservative educators' retrenchment of our times and he would have continued to infuse optimism and especially compassion for children into the picture. The publication of the book by the New York-based Teachers and Writer's Collaborative carries forward the spirit of the original work, meant to apply the creative imagination to practical teaching. This "grammar" of creativity is no less a manual and reference work that should be placed next to the dictionary and thesaurus.

The reform philosophy essentially redefines the teacher's role as an "animator" and collaborator (that is, participant) rather than the *auctoritas*, and recasts children as producers rather than merely consumers of culture. Their creativity can only be engaged by stimulating the imaginative faculties through inventive play. This book will teach you *how* to play. As Rodari states: "To have generated the desire in children to play seems to me to be a great success for a book" (12+) and that is a fair assessment of the book's impact—but not merely on children.

Those who come to this synthesis of theory and praxis after reading Rodari's children's books (he is as well known in Italy as Dr. Seuss in the U.S.) will be fascinated to catch the mad story wizard at his alchemical best divulging recipes for his "potions." Rodari's "grammar" is indeed distilled from half a lifetime's

experience as a writer of children's stories (he was awarded the prestigious Andersen Prize) and will prove vivifying to anyone who teaches creative writing, writes (children's) books, and to anyone who is ever confronted with that seemingly simple request: "tell me a story." An apparently timeless act and yet something many find utterly mysterious.

Much of Rodari's "deep" play apparently hinges on randomness and the surprising images and plots that come from "shifting space" (by placing familiar things in unexpected contexts, inverting the commonplace surrealistically), but it is coupled with personal memory, experience, dreams, and ideology. By juxtaposing "binary oppositions" or "fantastical binomials" (two random words) stories are born and grow. Here are other simple but explosive creative tools for inventing stories: have two children choose words without knowledge of each other's selections, place these words next to each other, then join them with prepositions, and see what images result—for example, "a dog on/with/in a closet." Try a "what if" proposition: what if everyone were made of wood (like Pinocchio), or chocolate, smoke, marble, glass—apply a "fantastical logic" and follow the repercussions of this initial hypothesis (discover the "laws" of this character). Pinocchio could become rich by intentionally and continuously telling lies and by selling the "harvested" wood. Play with prefixes. Stories can sprout up around words such as: *anti-cannon*, *de-sharpener*, *tri-noculars*, *vice-dog*, *sub-cat*, *micro-hippopotamus* (22–23), or from creative errors (*Lampland* instead of *Lapland*), from the clipping and rearranging of news headlines. Rodari devotes a series of chapters to fairy tales that have a special place in his imagination. He gives acknowledgeable excursions on fairy-tale scholarship and writes something of an apology for the fairy tale so unjustly marginalized (particularly by Italians). There are many ways of playing with fairy tales: through reversal (Little Red Riding Hood is bad and the wolf is good); by tossing up a "fairy tale salad" (Cinderella marries Bluebeard, Little Red Riding Hood meets Tom Thumb and his brothers in the woods); or by using Propp "cards," each bearing the name of the thirty-one Propp "functions" as narrative building blocks (see the metaphor of the deck of Tarot cards so astutely used to narrate tales later by Italo Calvino in *Il castello dei destini incrociati*); retuning a tale in a new "key" ("The Pied Piper of Rome," in 1973, who keeps cars, not rats, at bay); or even by dramatizing them (see Franco Passatore and Roman children's theater). Had he lived to read them, Rodari would have been pleased by the flurry of fairy-tale rewritings today.

We are impressed with his tricks, yet it is surprising to discover Rodari's lesser known work as an educator and activist. Zipes gives a marvelous and succinct overview of Rodari's life, weaving together its various strands: "Rodari was a teacher, Communist, journalist, poet, musician, theoretician, and writer to children, all in one. Perhaps no work of his makes his multifaceted life more

clear than *The Grammar of Fantasy*" (xix). Zipes traces Rodari's rise from the Catholic Church's blacklist to his veneration as a "patron saint of children." A baker's son, a promising young violinist, Rodari lived under Fascism, engaged in left-wing activism, and pursued careers as journalist, teacher, and writer for children. His activism in favor of the working poor, especially children, and his hatred of tyranny of all sorts, are found in all his writings, fictive as well as journalistic. The cultural politics of the 1960s and 1970s is integral to Rodari's thinking and writing in this book, just as it forms the substratum of many of his stories written for children. Rodari was one of those deeply, politically engaged activists who brought his ideology to bear in every area of his life. His work is unapologetically antiauthoritarian (particularly anti-Fascist, and antidisciplinarian), freethinking and innovative, and it is against rote learning ("The imagination is not a 'bad wolf' to be feared, or a criminal who must be constantly persecuted and carefully controlled"). It is especially child-friendly. Rodari is generous, engaging, and personable as he constantly shares bits of advice, personal experience, joking with his reader as he plays with words, and then auctions them off to the highest bidder.

His breaking the bounds of leftist circles to a much broader audience, however, came about by an ironic twist of fate. Rodari's rise to fame in Italy resulted from the translation into Russian of many of his works and his wide currency (especially *Cipollino*) in the Soviet Union—which brought him to the attention of Italians (*nemo propheta in patria*). When Einaudi—one of the major publishing houses in Italy—began to publish his work in the 1960s, his national fame became secure. Some of his best work ensued, the result of exchange with school children and educators to whom he was invited to speak.

Translating Rodari took courage. Zipes needed to choose between the letter and the spirit of an author who reveled in wordplay. Thus, as expressly stated (xii), for the sake of retaining "the spirit" of Rodari, words and passages have changed (yet alas, with nary a footnote to mark the spot): Zipes "adapted and played with [Rodari's] notions so that they [might] be more readily gasped and appreciated by an English-speaking audience." A text so full of wit, rhyme, and puns (visual and verbal) may well have called for bravura rather than pedantry; however, quick translator's notes would have mattered much to this reader, who tried desperately to read "through" the text to recover the original. For instance, the "closet" (131) placed in fresh, droll relation to "dog" was most likely the large piece of furniture, *armadio* or "armoire," rather than the small room of American homes; thus the dog could carry it, de Chirico could paint one in a landscape, and so on. Notes might have advanced Zipes's purpose, which was to create links between Rodari's agitation for an Italian school reform, and "the need to develop a stimulating grammar of the imagination in English-speaking countries in our own time." The desire to forge the link and make

this material relevant is, of course, laudable, but I imagine a second edition might mark deviations from the text in notes—as is customary. Zipes may have taken Rodari's casual, unpedantic style too much to heart! ("But I don't want to drop names. That would only, inevitably, reveal my dilettantism, eclecticism, and confusion. I am a simple reader, not a specialist . . . I am not ashamed to confess how impoverished my cultural background is. As a result, it does not permit me to write a scholarly essay on the imagination of children, even though it gives me free hand to draw upon my experiences" [118]). Yet Zipes does add a useful glossary of authors cited, as well as a Rodari primary and secondary source bibliography, as a courtesy to readers.

As we once again enter into educational wars, it is important to bear in mind Rodari's pleading for the cultivation of the imagination, for however one comes down on the 3 Rs debate, the power to create, to invent, is fundamental to education—liberal arts or scientific. Rodari comes down clearly on the side of the children, for he truly believes in the creative power of children's imaginations and in the liberating power of the word—"brown" taboo words as well as pretty "pink" words (see 10, 76–77). (One supposes he would have applauded recent works such as *Everybody Poops*.) How much we could actually learn about the imagination by listening to children, by recording children's monologues and studying them, for instance. This "would be most essential for a grammar of the imagination," and it is only "due to our lack of attention [that] hundreds of inventions have been irretrievably lost" (69). Rodari goes on to say: "We have many intelligent theories about play, but we still do not have a phenomenology of the imagination, which gives life to play" (110).

His message may at times—to our jaded post-"free for all" ears—sound overly optimistic. We have questioned authority, and conservative values appear to be the *exception* rather than the norm. Yet one must marvel at the courage such statements took in the 1960s and 1970s in a postwar, post-Fascist Italy just awakening from the centuries-long monopoly of Catholic, and decades-long Fascist, education. We can only dimly perceive the urgency of questioning that authority today. Yet the forces of darkness are ever on the horizon and backlashes are forming even as I write.

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The Fairy Tale Revised: A Survey of the Evolution of the Tales, from Classical Literary Interpretations to Innovative Contemporary Dance-Theater Productions. By Katia Canton. *New Connections: Studies in Interdisciplinarity* 9. New York: Peter Lang, 1994. 186 pp.

Katia Canton's topic certainly fits the series in which this book appears, dividing its focus between several written fairy tales (with a passing nod at

their predecessors in oral form and allusions to such subsequent treatments as Disney's, without any detailed discussion) and their evolution in several new dance presentations. The volume bears clear structural evidence of having been a dissertation, with an introductory chapter which states (more than once, although not always consistently) the conclusion the author expects to reach by the end of the volume, that fairy tales are not timeless, but that sociohistorical and sociopolitical change makes itself felt as tales evolve through the years. Although many other scholars have reached this conclusion after close readings of various written versions of the texts, Canton's is the first book I have seen that uses dance versions of several tales to demonstrate her point.

Canton is clearly much more at home in her discussion of innovative dance performances of fairy tales than she is with the critical literature on fairy tales. She mentions a number of important critics, but never really delves into any critical analysis of the tales. Her descriptions of the dances, enriched by personal interviews with some of the choreographers, are interesting and far more confident in tone. She clearly knows a good deal about dance, and has carefully and repeatedly viewed the videotapes of the modern fairy-tale dances she describes here. Using "Sleeping Beauty" as her prototype, she goes on to talk about "Cinderella" as choreographed by Maguy Marin, Pina Bausch's version of "Bluebeard," and "Girl Without Hands" as presented by the dance group Kinematic (composed of three dancer-choreographers, Tamar Kotoske, Maria Lakis, and Mary Richter), which combines spoken text with dance. Canton's descriptions are evocative and thorough, and hold the reader's interest.

The critical apparatus of the book is disappointing, however. There is no index. The bibliography is fragmented between "Dance," "Theoretical Framework," "Fairy Tales and Literature," "Videotapes," and "Interviews." This makes it difficult to locate references. In addition, there are instances where a work is cited without a particular work being clearly referred to (as when several works of one author are cited in proximity); where page numbers are incorrectly cited; and where an author is cited in the text without any reference appearing in the bibliography.

Unfortunately, despite the author's acknowledgment to the editors of the series, this book shows no evidence of any editing at all, and in fact, not even of a spell-checker. Errors in spelling and diction abound on almost every page, including the Table of Contents, where the author coins the phrase "A Toysh Cinderella." In the chapter we discover that "Toysh" is neither a critic nor a dancer, but an innovative spelling of "toyish" (which does not appear in my dictionary either) or "toy-like."

The reader is constantly distracted by errors. A few samples: "disconsidering . . . their particular verrsions," "prisoner of his own self-image," "arform,"

"a way to refrain the country from the radical changes," "grandiose atmosphere," and "take advantage of a sleeping, defenseless woman."

Canton seems at home in a variety of languages, citing freely (sometimes without translating for her reader) from French, Spanish, and German. I suspect, although I have no way of knowing this, that English is not her native tongue, which could explain some of her difficulties in expression. If this is the case, and if (as seems likely) she was asked to provide camera-ready print, I sympathize with her predicament. Nevertheless, it is inexcusable that nobody did a close reading of the book before it went into print.

For readers with a specialized interest in dance, this book might prove useful. For those whose focus is primarily on fairy tales, it offers few, if any, revelations.

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Kinderleben oder das Märchen ohne Ende. By Friedrich Wilhelm Carové. Translated by Sarah Austin. *The Story Without an End.* Edited and with a commentary by Christoph E. Schweitzer. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1995. 73 pp.

In recent years Camden House has republished a number of historically significant English-language translations of Goethe and the German Romantics, including Thomas Carlyle's 1872 collection of the literary fairy tales of Ludwig Tieck and E.T.A. Hoffmann. The present volume is of particular interest in that Friedrich Wilhelm Carové's *Kinderleben oder das Märchen ohne Ende* (1830)—thanks in no small measure to the felicitous translation of Sarah Austin that appeared in 1834—proved much more popular in England and the United States than it did in Germany. In his scrupulously researched commentary and bibliography, Christoph Schweitzer lists thirteen editions of *The Story Without an End* that appeared in England between 1834 and 1913, as well as eighteen in the United States. When one considers that Carové has become an author unfamiliar even to specialists in German Romanticism and that Schweitzer's edition of *Kinderleben* is the first since its 1864 German-language publication for instructional purposes by Holt in New York, it becomes clear that *Kinderleben* and *The Story Without an End* both deserve republication, but their appearance in a dual-language edition more than doubles the value of the acquisition.

In his brief, but informative preface Schweitzer provides for the reader desirous of beginning with the tales themselves a capsule orientation that is later amplified in separate commentaries on Carové's *Kinderleben* and Austin's *Story*, where he also takes care to include interesting information on the author and his translator. For example, Carové had been a student of Hegel in Heidelberg between 1816 and 1818 who helped Victor Cousin understand Hegel's system of philosophy, and Austin's translation of Cousin's *De l'instruction publique*

dans quelques pays de l'Allemagne as *Report on the State of Public Instruction in Prussia* appeared in 1834, the same year as her *Story Without an End*; this leads Schweitzer to surmise that it was Cousin who directed Austin's attention to Carové.

Schweitzer stresses the philosophical ideas and stylistic features that link *Kinderleben* to the tradition of the German Romantic *Kunstmärchen*, or literary fairy tale, as practiced by writers such as Novalis, Tieck, and Hoffmann, but he also calls attention to the "Es war einmal" beginning and the high incidence of diminutives that indicate the simultaneous influence of the Grimm brothers and their approach to the fairy tale. Noting the (undistinguished) sonnets in the collection of Carové's writings entitled *Moosblüthen* (Moss Blossoms), of which *Kinderleben* is a part, Schweitzer quite plausibly suggests "the symbolic association of the number fourteen (the double of seven)" as a factor influencing Carové's division of the story into fourteen short sections (50). Upon reading this remark, the reviewer recalled that he had taken a brief pause at the close of section seven, where the unnamed child asks its friend the dragonfly to help distinguish between Above and Below, who recognizes "daß das Oben und das Unten nur in den Augen des Kindes für einander daseyen" (11; rendered by Austin, without direct recourse to Carové's vocabulary of philosophical idealism, as "that the height and the depth existed only in the eyes of the child"; 36). No doubt readers of this edition will find many similar instances where a judicious comment draws their attention to aspects of the original and its translation that otherwise might have escaped their notice. For example, Schweitzer points out how "the sex-neutral *Kind* of the original is a boy in Austin's version even though she dedicated the story to her daughter" (60). This led the reviewer to go back and compare the original with the translation and observe how Austin consistently provides gender designations in ways that sometimes accord with German grammatical gender ("die Libelle" is a "she" as the dragonfly), sometimes contradict it ("die königliche Sonnenjungfrau" of Section XII becomes a masculine "royal sun"), and at other times appear to represent a conscious decision to feminize Nature while giving Spirit a male incarnation (the "Wellchen" and its "Geschwister" in Section II are metamorphosed into "the drop of water" and "my countless sisters"). In this regard, Schweitzer's brief but weighty commentaries are likely to encourage and give direction to full-scale investigations of both versions of the tale.

In his discussion of the various prefaces, Schweitzer quotes extensively from the 1836 edition in Boston, where A. Bronson Alcott's words of introduction highlight the close ideological connections between Carové's ethical Christianity and New England transcendentalism: "The present volume is designed to quicken the hearts of the young, by displaying to their view, in the significant Imagery of Nature, an Emblem of their Spiritual Life. Under the Type of a

Child, the Soul communes with the Beautiful in the visible World, quickening whatever it beholds from its own Ideal, thus apprehending its latent faculties, their resurrection from the senses, and final ascension into the Spiritual . . ." (65). He also provides a description of the illustrations to the various editions, three of which are reproduced here: a vignette based on Philipp Otto Runge that immediately precedes *Kinderleben* in *Moosblüthen* and whose combination of children, flowers, and divine sunlight Schweitzer regards as a visual inspiration for Carové's story; the reproduction of the original title-page engraving for Austin's translation; and one of Eleanor Vere Boyle's color-printed plates for the 1868 edition. In the process, one learns quite a bit about publication history and the undercurrents affecting the reception of a work.

In summary, scholars interested in fairy-tale research and the history of German and Anglo-American literary relations owe a debt of thanks to Christoph Schweitzer and his publisher at Camden House for this erudite and handsomely produced edition of a long-forgotten work and its illustrious English-language reincarnation.

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Ei', welcher Unsinn liegt im Sinn? Robert Walsers Umgang mit Märchen und Trivilliteratur. Von Andrea Hübner. *Stauffenburg Colloquium* 36. Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1995. 226 Seiten.

In einer mitunter zähflüssigen Wissenschaftsprosa untersucht die Verfasserin im vorliegenden Buch vor allem Walsers frühe Märchendramolette (*Aschenbrödel* und *Schneewittchen*), einige seiner Märchen-Prosastücke und die Nacherzählungen von Trivialgeschichten, vor allem aus den Mikrogrammen der Berner Zeit. Anliegen der Verfasserin ist es u. a., zu zeigen, daß die Walserschen Texte nicht aus biographischen, psychologischen und soziologischen Daten heraus zu interpretieren seien, vielmehr soll Walsers Dichtung vor dem Hintergrund einer sinnentleerten, inkonsistenten Wirklichkeit betrachtet und die Affinität seiner Dichtung zur postmodernen Denkweise herausgestellt werden. Denn indem Walser die gewohnten Ordnungsschemata etablierter Formen (hier die der Märchen und der Trivilliteratur) zerstöre, negiere er die bedeutungstiftenden Kapazitäten der Dichtung: eine Vorgehensweise, mit der Walser zentrale Aspekte der postmodernen Philosophie und Literatur vorwegnehme.

Gleich zu Anfang sollen hier zwei Bedenken angemeldet werden: Erstens schließt Walsers eigene Skepsis gegen jegliche Deutungsstrategie sowie gegen jede Sinnbildung nicht aus, daß sein Werk—freilich keineswegs nur—aber auch biographisch interpretiert werden könne. Zweitens: obwohl es für die Verfasserin selber problematisch ist, Märchen und Trivilliteratur im gleichen Atemzug zu nennen (32–33), überzeugt ihre diesbezüglich rechtfertigende

Argumentation nicht ganz. Denn die "sinnstiftenden Kapazitäten" der Märchen unterscheiden sich doch wesentlich von denen der Kioskliteratur. Dementsprechend fällt auch Walsers Einstellung zum Märchen bzw. zur Trivilliteratur verschieden aus; eine Tatsache, die sich in seinen jeweils andersartigen Nacherzählungen konkretisiert. Während nämlich die Walsersche Ironie über das manichäische Weltbild und die Harmonisierungstendenz der Trivilliteratur sowie seine Demaskierung der (falschen) Sinnstiftung, der Sprache und der Lesegewohnheiten noch verhältnismäßig auf leichtem Fuß daherkommen, rührt die Trennung von Wirklichkeit und Traum bzw. Dichtung sowie ihre mühsame und fragwürdige Vereinigung in einem "heiligen, süßen Feste" in den Märchendramoletten eher an eine existentielle Tragik. Es gibt aber trotzdem eine einheitliche Aussage in den behandelten Werken Walsers, welche die Verfasserin mit vielen Zitaten belegt: Walsers nacherzählte Märchen, Kriminal- und Liebesgeschichten, ja seine trivialisierten Nacherzählungen klassischer Werke der Hochliteratur zeigen, wie für ihn Sprache ihren Erkenntniswert einbüßt, wie durch seine Negierung eines sinngesicherten Erzählens und durch die "Entmachtung" des Erzähler-Ichs die Begriffe richtig und falsch, Wahrheit und Lüge, ja wie Realität und Fiktion nicht mehr zu unterscheiden sind. Walser zweifelt sogar daran, daß eine vor der Sprache existierende Wahrheit existiere, die eine Aussage des Subjekts über sich und somit einen identitätstiftenden Prozeß möglich machen würde. Die Verfasserin zeigt durch minutiöse Textanalysen, wie bei Walser die traditionelle Auffassung von Subjektivität als Ort, an dem Denken, Wollen und Handeln in einheitlicher Tätigkeit koordiniert werden konnten, einer Vorstellung weicht, in der das Ich lediglich als diskontinuierliches Produkt heterogener Elemente beschreibbar ist.

Wie konnten wir die Ergebnisse der vorliegenden Untersuchung zusammenfassen? Indem Walser in die märchen- und trivilliteratureigene "Textgrammatik" eingreift, zerstört er Gattungen, die bis anhin als mehr oder weniger genuine Metaphern für ein sinnvolles Leben rezipiert werden konnten. Damit aber macht er jene wiederum zu Bildern einer Welt, die ihres Sinnes und ihrer Durchschaubarkeit entkleidet ist.

Katalin Horn

Basel

Grimm-Philologie: Beiträge zur Märchenforschung und Wissenschaftsgeschichte. By Lothar Bluhm. Schriftenreihe Werke der Brüder Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm 2. Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann Verlag, 1995. xi + 198 pp.

In his preface Lothar Bluhm explains Grimm philology to mean research on the work of the famous brothers, and goes on to say that such research is of two basic types, the science of textual edition ("Editionswissenschaft oder Textologie") and the history of scholarly disciplines ("Wissenschaftsgeschichte");

viii). Under the first heading, Bluhm points to three areas: (1) establishing reliable bases for texts, with the ultimate goal of producing historical-critical editions, (2) textual documentation, the sifting through and making available of hitherto unknown materials, mostly manuscripts, from the Grimms' posthumous papers, including editing their letters; and (3) textual history, which especially in the case of the collections of narrative includes the history of a text's creation and critical investigation of sources. Of special interest with regard to "Wissenschaftsgeschichte" is the determination of the Grimms' standpoint in the context of the emerging field of German philology and, additionally, study of the challenge posed for them, in their correspondence with scholars abroad, to understand differing conceptual frameworks in the intellectual life of those countries in order to be able to stimulate research activity there. Bluhm's purpose in gathering these previously published, revised pieces of his in this volume is to provide "a glimpse into the research work of Grimm philology" (ix).

As Bluhm tells us in his preface, the first five of his essays collected here concern the study of narrative ("Erzählforschung"). The first piece, occasioned by failure to heed Heinz Rölleke's convincing demonstration that "old Marie" among the Grimms' sources was actually a young Marie of educated middle-class background and French cultural heritage, warns against a "remythologizing" of *Grimms' Fairy Tales* by claiming them to be representative of oral storytelling among common folk. The second essay about the Grimms' interest in sayings and expressions, gives examples to show how ideas about the culture of the 'folk' guided the narrative fleshing out of the stories. The third essay, about the Grimms' no. 180 ("Eve's Unequal Children"), offers an example of how the genesis of a given tale may be studied by examining earlier literary versions and other relevant documents, such as the Grimms' scholarly publications and their correspondence. How such study of a tale's genesis would be used in producing an historical-critical edition of the Grimms' stories is the subject of the following essay, using the tale about King Thrushebeard (KHM 52) as the example. The last of the five essays about "the study of narrative" concerns the contemporary reception of the Grimms' collection of tales, in this case as seen from Jacob Grimm's correspondence with an English jurist and literary scholar, Francis Cohen, a colleague of the first translator of the tales into English, Edgar Taylor. The remaining four pieces, devoted to learning more about the Grimms as scholars, belong more to the larger area of "Wissenschaftsgeschichte" than to "Erzählforschung" per se.

Bluhm's championing of "Grimm philology" can be welcomed equally by literary scholars and by folklorists. He does not dispute the contribution of oral tradition to the genesis of tales such as found in the Grimms' collection, but insists only on careful study of all relevant textual evidence, including not only literary versions of the tales and the Grimms' emendations in the course of the

succeeding editions of their collection, but also their correspondence with other scholars and their informants. What Bluhm is rightly intent on emphasizing is that the study of the Grimms' tales as literature should not be neglected out of a desire to see them only in relation to oral tradition.

As scholars we of course must strive to avoid judgments based on ignorance of available information. One of the challenges for Grimm philology, as represented for us here by Bluhm, is the old one of not losing sight of the forest for the trees. By and large in these essays he has avoided that pitfall. At times, however, and especially as concerns editing of correspondence and creating an historical critical edition, Bluhm inclines to a passion for thoroughness and completeness that leaves us to wonder how many scholars will have the time to wade through the detailed information provided in order to find something of potential importance.

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Die Schöne aus dem Glassarg. By Theodor Ruf. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1995. 118 pp.

By cleverly incorporating his own research into the genealogy of the German Counts of Rieneck, Theodor Ruf was able to mind-bendingly but affectionately parody meta-, quasi-, or pseudohistorical fairy-tale scholarship. Ruf's point of departure was the "remarkable discoveries" (12) of Karlheinz Bartels's *Schneewittchen: Zur Fabulogie des Spessarts* (1990), which affirmed Snow White's historical identity as Maria Sophia Margaretha Catharina von Erthal (born 29 June 1729 in Lohr). It was an accomplishment for which Bartels was rewarded, according to Ruf, with one of Germany's highest civilian honors, the Bundesverdienstkreuz.

Ruf lays out and analyzes the limitations of Bartels's conclusions, continues with a fine overview of contemporary fairy-tale research, and composes dazzlingly chromatic variations on a putative history for Snow White, whose decorative trills, grace notes, and arpeggios he adapts from familiar German cultural refrains. In his final section Ruf achieves a harmonious resolution by recapitulating and recasting the book's content in the voice of a perplexed reader:

"Honored Sir. If what you've written here didn't really happen, then that really leaves me cold.' And to that I would respond: Whether it really happened or not is all the same. The main thing is that the story is true! True means that it really could have happened exactly the way it is reported." . . . Here ends the tale. (90)

Is this concluding statement a resounding final chord? No. A coda follows, a jingly light reminder of Snow White's mid-eighteenth-century literary origins, with a reprise of the book's melodic line: "By changes to content and

language the Brothers Grimm made her into an 'actual' fairy tale, and so Snow White lives on today and will do so forever" (91).

Ruf's method is wonderfully suited to enchanting the novice and amusing the expert. However, it's necessary to state from the outset that the book is parodic at heart, although so skillfully parodic that until he exuberantly invokes Parzival himself, even a fairy-tale adept may vacillate between skeptical rejection and amused acceptance of the author's claims.

Ruf achieves success for his undertaking by interweaving history with story. Part IV, for example, details a straightforward history of the Rieneck family to "establish" a factual foundation for the purported details of Snow White's "real existence" (62-84). Hence the medieval practice of cloistering excess daughters is claimed to equal Snow White's sequestration in the woods, a reasonably speculative hypothesis to support the widely held assumption that fairy tales function as a form of literary or narrative concealment. To this Ruf appends a less reasonable theoretical consequence, which mimics the confounding logic that so often emerges in enthusiastic fairy-tale analysis: he joins a historically confirmable longed-for birth among the Rienecks to historical evidence for economically motivated desires among medieval parents to eliminate the significant dowry requirements of an excess daughter destined for either cloister or marriage to prove that the daughter in question was, in fact, the historical Snow White. To such "historical" details Ruf amalgamates local industrial archeology to account for material elements in "Snow White": the fairy tale's mirror, glass coffin, iron slippers, and miner-dwarves. Literarily its red-white-black schema encodes Lohengrin's white swan. Depth psychology, too, makes an obligatory appearance when a 1930 retelling by a small girl "reveals" immanent associations between Snow White's story and swans. The parody climaxes when Ruf "proves" intimate connections between the Counts of Rieneck, Snow White's reputed family, and Germany's medieval literary giants Heinrich von Veldeke, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Konrad von Würzburg and then further "proves" that Snow White was Agnes, daughter of a Loon-Rieneck scion and ancestress to none other than Bavaria's fairy-tale Wittlesbach king! (I remember the assertion that the Grimms' informant, Dorothea Viehmann, was Goethe's eighth cousin.) This is high parody indeed; Ruf clearly had a howlingly good time composing *Die Schöne aus dem Glassarg*.

Signaling his parodic intent early on by describing the counts of Rieneck in nonscholarly language as "a small but refined family" (15), Ruf concludes his "study" with a responsible apologia. Despite his fun, the author contributes to Snow White scholarship by including several illustrations, by reproducing differing published versions of the fairy tale (Musäus, A.L. Grimm, and the Grimms themselves from 1808 onward), and by drawing attention to editorial changes made by Wilhelm Grimm himself, such as changing the mother to a

stepmother in 1819, and by reminding us all that the Grimms' Snow White, usually portrayed as attractively buxom, was textually only seven years old.

Consistent with contemporary German scholarship as typified by the admirable *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, Ruf—in his serious moments—treats fairy tales as historical phenomena. This has been well documented by Manfred Grätz in his pathbreaking study, *Das Märchen in der deutschen Aufklärung* (1988), which remains lamentably little-known in the English-speaking world. When Ruf is not overtly and delightedly tweaking his readers' credulity, he is soberly affirming hard won contemporary conclusions that the *Märchen's* German roots lie in the eighteenth century, rather than in a distant medieval past.

A single problem, hybrid nomenclature, alloyed my enjoyment of Ruf's work. Strictly speaking the name "Schneewittchen" mixes "Schneeweißchen"—Ludwig Bechstein's name for his seven-dwarf heroine and Grimms' own name for the saccharine protagonist of a different fairy tale altogether, "Schneeweißchen und Rosenrot"—and "Sneewittchen"—the Grimms' own name for the heroine of their seven dwarves tale. "Schneewittchen" is, in all fairness, the name with which most Germans are familiar, but it never appeared in the Grimms' collection during their lifetimes. That is, however, a small objection to a delightful book.

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Who's Who im Märchen. By Ulf Diederichs. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1995. 395 pp.

Who's Who compilations are a tricky category among reference books. They tend to claim a far wider territory and a more balanced selection than warranted, just as they tend to work with certain unspecified assumptions about their audiences. All the same, they have their uses, and they package information that may be hard to come by in any other single location.

Ulf Diederichs's *Who's Who im Märchen* fits this pattern. It presents itself as the first truly international handbook of *Märchen* heroes and heroines in a wide sense, from figures traditionally considered in folklore to modern stars like Peter Pan, Bambi, and Andersen's Little Mermaid. Further, its alphabetical arrangement contains major entries on generic types—kings and princesses, animal bridegrooms, magicians, the devil plus grandmother and daughter. Finally, *Who's Who* notes illustrators relevant to main entries, film adaptations, some musical references, literary spin-offs, and various interpretations.

This is a big ticket, on less than 400 pages. The author manages it by addressing himself to a popular market within the German tradition, both in his choices and his treatment. He selects his figures primarily from Grimm tales; secondarily, from Bechstein, from the *Kunstmärchen* best known in Germany

(Andersen, Hauff, a few other Romantics); and from some tales in the *Arabian Nights* collections, and in those by Perrault, Basile, and Afanas'ev. Aside from the *Arabian Nights*, non-European references are negligible—there are brief entries on the Ramayana's Hanuman and Tripitaka's Chinese monkey companion, and on Chinese and Japanese foxes. Hence the topics are clearly selected according to what many German general readers with an interest in fairy tales may at least have heard of.

For such readers Diederichs provides generous and well-written plot summaries centered on the tales' protagonists. Who is Rapunzel? Rip Van Winkle? The Little Girl with the Matchboxes? Baba Jaga? The Man in the Moon? Readers who want to know these stories will get the plots, together with a few key phrases to jolt our memories. And they are told as lively stories, without intimidating Aarne-Thompson references or technical apparatus. This does also mean that there is little that stimulates a reader beyond the story plot. The references to interpretations get overly predictable, with Bruno Bettelheim in the forefront.

To some extent this predictable pattern also holds true for the comments on illustrations and interpretations. It is an excellent idea to include references to *Märchen* illustrations. Since our memories are increasingly linked to the image rather than the narrating voice, pictures are of central importance to our reception. Walter Scherf's excellent *Lexikon der Zauber märchen* (1st ed. 1982; greatly expanded in 2 vols. 1995) already included twenty well-chosen illustrations with commentary in an appendix. Diederichs's format permits no reproductions, but his references to illustrations in the German (and to some extent English) tradition are copious. Most of them begin with the *Bilderbogen*, the picture broadsheets of Munich in particular, or with Ludwig Richter's illustrations; they continue on to Doré, Walter Crane, the Robinson brothers and Rackham, as well as to German nouveau art; then on to prominently recognized artists of the Twenties and our time (Sendak, Janosch, Ungerer). I do not want to criticize unduly something that is certainly a good start, and that is slighted all too frequently. But especially in a handbook that focuses on popular appeal I find it curious that there is no mention of a number of immensely popular (in Germany!) sets of illustrations—those by Ruth Koser-Michaëls, for instance, for the Knauer Verlag's editions of Grimm, Andersen, Hauff, and others. This is a significant issue in the popular reception of popular tales. It is aesthetically tempting to focus on illustrations that once were very popular and influential, but that now have primarily an antiquarian or nostalgic value (*Münchener* or *Neu-Ruppiner Bilderbogen*, Ludwig Richter, Gustave Doré); on excursions into *Märchen* illustrations by renowned artists whose major work is done elsewhere (Heinrich Vogeler, Max Slevogt); or—most prominent here—on artists like Maurice Sendak, whose illustrations are famous far beyond being illustrations for children. Sendak's 1973 Grimm illustrations are stunning,

haunting, interpretations, for adults as much as for children, or more so. But as we cherish them, we should not forget the numerically much greater influence of successful mass-market illustrated books. A separate chapter would be more useful here than repetitive references to the same artist in each entry.

Ulf Diederichs's listings of film versions are, for me at least, one of the most interestingly suggestive aspects of his *Who's Who*. There is Disney, of course, but also many diverse animations, silhouettes, puppet films, and other adaptations from all parts of Europe. This range of references shows what one should keep looking for—and how much one keeps missing! The source and reference apparatus is concise and descriptive (8 pages). It lists the major reference works, text editions, and a variety of reception studies and interpretations for major texts in the German-speaking tradition.

Altogether then, this well-written handbook is a much less "international angelete[s] Lexikon" than promised on the cover. The author's name—so closely linked with the Eugen Diederichs Verlag's great series *Die Märchen der Weltliteratur*—does not guarantee the wide scope we are led to expect.

Reinhard Friederich

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