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## Reviews

Marvels & Tales Editors

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## REVIEWS

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*The Tale of Tales; or, Entertainment for Little Ones.* By Giambattista Basile. Edited and translated by Nancy L. Canepa. Illustrated by Carmelo Lettere. Foreword by Jack Zipes. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2007. xxx + 463 pp.

Viewed in retrospect, Nancy Canepa's long engagement with Giambattista Basile has evolved by logical stages toward the courageous project at hand: that of translating his best-known and by far most problematic work, *Lo cunto de li cunti, ovvero lo trattenemiento de peccerille* (1634–36). Containing a frame tale plus forty-nine others, ten per day across a five-day span, it was given a secondary title, *Il Pentamerone* (1674), echoing that of Boccaccio's *Decameron* (ten days with ten tales each). But the similarity stops there: translating Boccaccio is indeed *trattenemiento de peccerille*, "child's play," compared to translating the "bizarrely facetious Baroque ironist" ("l'ironico barocchista . . . che si compiaceva nella celia bizzarra," as Basile was characterized by Benedetto Croce [1932], his authoritative Italian translator). The original text was and remains a significant obstacle to Italians themselves, who, given regional dialect cleavage, find seventeenth-century Neapolitan a hard code to crack, hence the multiple Italian translations over the centuries leading up to Croce's standard (1925). In this review we will be referring to the edition of Basile's Neapolitan text produced by Mario Petrini in 1976 (Laterza). There have been numerous other European translations—for example, into English (John Edward Taylor [1848ff], then Sir Richard Burton [1893], while Norman Penzer [1932] merely translated from Croce's Italian), and most conspicuously into German, following that nation's long commitment to Märchen scholarship. Given the precocious French adaptive response to Basile (Charles Perrault, Mme. d'Aulnoy), it is odd that a proper translation was instead so long in coming (Françoise Decroisette [1995]; also Myriam Tanant [1986]). Significantly, dialect-to-dialect translations were prepared—for example, several into eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Bolognese—suggesting that Italian writers in other regions sensed a better socio-stylistic match for Basile's endeavor in their own patois, a reminder that the only just translation could be from one cultural matrix into another its near-equal (also compare with Canepa 28ff).

For those increasingly called to teach important historical texts in English translation, Canepa's effort finally makes inclusion of Basile on literature and folklore course syllabi feasible. As far as Italian materials are concerned, Canepa's translation forms an ideal complement to another in Wayne State University's list of publications in fairy-tale studies, Elizabeth Mathias and Richard Raspa's *Italian Folktales in America: The Verbal Art of an Immigrant Woman* (1988). While Mathias and Raspa present traditional oral tales from a mountain hamlet in the Dolomites (Faller, in the province of Belluno), as recorded viva voce in Detroit by the teller's daughter, a Wayne State folklore student, Basile's *Cunti* instead represent rhetorically elaborated fairy tales, embellished with tongue-in-cheek literary, mythologic allusions by an urbane seventeenth-century poet-courtier. Canepa's synopsis of its "Publishing History" (8f) reminds us how successfully the work addressed sophisticated readers with the taste and means to buy books. The goals and parameters of seventeenth-century literary taste shaped the *Cunti* as much as, if not more than, their putative origins in an oral substratum. Nor can any oral substratum adequately account for their language. And therein lurks one challenge to trans-fusing them into contemporary English.

Basile delighted in discord, that is, incongruity between form and content (to shock and amuse, à la Bergson), especially interweaving high-style mythologic topoi with low-down language. He even, one suspects, lowered the low-down by inventing insults and rustic idioms while revelling in strongly physical verbs, such as *magnare* ("eating") and *cacare* ("excreting"), even used figuratively—for example, sweet Marziella (4.7) *puzzava de regina* ("had the **stink** of a queen about her") (Canepa 345, like Petrini 333), versus Croce, *che odorava di regina* ("who had the air, the sweet scent, of a queen about her"). Did the shrews who unleash streams of invective draw solely upon their native inventory of epithets? That so vast an arsenal of abusive verb + complement compounds preexisted Basile seems unlikely (e.g., from one tirade in the introduction [*vommeca-vracciolle, affoca-peccerille, caca-pezzolle, cierne-vernacchie* (Petrini 8)] to "blood-sucking witch, baby-drowner, rag shitter, fart gatherer" [Canepa 37], with *cacare* the favored verb throughout—e.g., *cacasella* ("seasoned horseman" becoming "saddle shitter" for Canepa [257] and for Burton "shit-in-the-saddle" [222]). On this model, Canepa has freshly interpreted the erstwhile "magic formula" *arre, cacaure* (Croce, "Arri, cacauro!") as "giddyup, shit-gold!" from *caca + oro* (Canepa 45). *Hapax legomena* are legion; both semi-macaronic "dialectalizations" of learned terms along with emphatic neologisms, the superlative *stra-* EXTRA-/TRANS-: *vedenno stralucere . . . 'sta bellezza da strasecolare, mirandola e strammirannola e schiudennola tutta* (Petrini 243) ("At the sight of such astonishing beauty . . . Narduccio gazed at her, feasted his eyes on her, and examined every bit of her" (Canepa 256); *'nnorcaese la voc-*

*cola* (Petrini 40) (“to gobble up the hen”) (Canepa 71), literally, “to devour like an ogre,” modeled on similar bestial verbs for devouring—for example, *allopapare* (“to wolf down”), *scrofonejare* (“to swill like a sow”), *cancarejare*, *ciancolejare* (“to devour with pincers [crab] or talons [birds of prey]”). As to cultivating rusticity, of two saws hinged on the donkey, one rings true—“you can predict bad weather from an ass’s ears” (3.6) (Canepa 260)—but the other scarcely seems spontaneous folksay from a nasty town-dwelling teenager: “What, you think you made my donkey pregnant and I should give you my stuff?” (4.7) (Canepa 345), *Che m’avive ’mprenato l’aseno che te voleva dare la robba mia?* (Petrini 334), or more explicitly: “What? Did your jackass mount my jenny that I should owe you a stud fee?”

Yet Basile’s “vertiginous rhetorical play,” if a bit arcane because idiosyncratic, may be less a hurdle than recovering the psycho-semantic valences of his lubricity. Before attempting to weigh Canepa’s success in rendering the everyday as against the risqué in Seicento Naples, one needs briefly recall a pair of Baroque goals: the exaltation of wit (*argutezza*) and daring (*arditezza*). “Raising eyebrows” ought be the writer’s aim (*far inarcar le ciglia*), or so advised the arch-theorist of Seicento literary praxis, Emanuele Tesauro (ca. 1670). Though Tesauro had verse in mind, as transformed by G. B. Marino (1569–1625), peripatetic Neapolitan and daring subverter of Bembesque Petrarchanism, had the realm of prose equally fallen within his purview, equal praise might well have gone to Basile’s *Pentameron* as an audacious inversion of Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, the reigning exemplar of Bembesque prose. (Thus Pasolini implicitly nodded to Basile when choosing Neapolitan as metalanguage for his 1970 cinematic anti-*Decameron*.) Some 375 years later, Canepa’s new translation may still raise a few eyebrows, as she is the first to admit (28ff).

Coming to the crux of the matter, Canepa warns that translating from the nonstandard speech of an underclass “into standard American English” risks sanitizing and domesticating the original (Canepa 29–30). Her example, from “The Goose,” meets the issue head-on:

Ma, scoppa di e fa buono iuorno, la bona papara commenzaie a cacare scute riccie, de manera che a cacata a cacata se ne ’nchiero no cascione. E fu tale cacatorio che commenzaro ad auzare capo. (Petrini 383).

And when morning breaks it’s a nice day, for the good goose began to shit hard cash until, shitload upon shitload, they had filled up a whole chest. There was so much shit, in fact, that the two sisters began to raise their heads. (Canepa 30, 389)

There was so much “shit” as to make one suspect that *cacare* may not have carried quite the same force as in modern American English. Cultural relativism

reigns supreme in semantic spheres commonly graded from mild distaste, to disgust, to outright taboo. For example, blasphemy has become fairly desemanticized in American English, but scatology far less so; while the inverse would seem to have obtained in Italy and France. Bowdlerization, of course, is no longer thinkable. Yet a counter tendency may also arise—namely, raising the smut quotient through literalism. The local (endocentric) value of *cacani-tola* (“last-born”) may not have resonated in all its etymologic explicitness as “the last little nest shitter” (Canepa 256)—that is, “last to fledge and fly the nest,” hence the “last to continue smutting the nest.” Basile’s hypercharacterizing the sleazy side of folk-speech for effect may not uniformly license scatologic interpretations; for example, *’na bella squàcquara* (“a lovely little fart of a baby girl”) (Canepa 217; Petrini 200) or *comm’aveva ’nzertato a tanta squacquare* (“how he had grafted so many little farts”) (Canepa 256; Petrini 242, 758) may be gratuitously anal; this, notwithstanding that *squàcquara* by phono-aesthesia covers an unattractive lexical grouping, for example, “clucking [of quail],” “querulous woman,” “gross, squat, dumpy woman,” and so forth, *squacquarato* (“deformed, bloated”), *squacquaracchià* (“dilate, give birth”) (D’Ambra 1873: 361, Altamura 1968: 330–31), whence the crude term for “birth of a girl,” and then, jestingly, “newborn girl.” Perhaps the scholarly scruple that elevated accuracy over “empathetic recreation” entailed a slight cost in connotative socio-semanticity for the receptor language. This would be a mere cavil, since truly remote referents are smoothly updated and even explicated; for example, “a few starving servants” (4.5) carries the narrative forward, while the curious can learn just how reduced the servants were in the original from Canepa’s note (Canepa 329n5 with reference to Croce, for *quatto pane-a-parte, fella-pane-e-miette-vruodo* [“four underpaid bread-slicing broth-boilers on short rations”] and Petrini 318, 714). The annotations, glosses, and critical apparatus are of capital value, precious to scholars and to curious lay readers alike.

Canepa’s introduction to the translation economically subsumes materials published in her earlier writings, and thereby provides an excellent historical overview of critical editions, translations, and scholarship while reviewing the main cultural and linguistic issues of Basile’s Naples.

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***Fairy Tales from Before Fairy Tales: The Medieval Latin Past of Wonderful Lies.*** By Jan M. Ziolkowski. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007. 500 pp.

In this beautifully crafted and handsome tome, Jan M. Ziolkowski, Arthur Kingsley Porter Professor of Medieval Latin at Harvard University, presents an innovative assessment and analysis of hitherto unexplored Medieval Latin folk

narratives. With thorough international perspective and intellectual contextualization, Ziolkowski masterfully historicizes and politicizes oral and literary tale collecting, style, transmission, transcription, and the role of wonder, while tackling dominant conceptions and common misconceptions.

Latin folktales have been overlooked largely because they fell through the cracks of working definitions and classifications, a process that is seeded in the late tenth to early thirteenth centuries. So prominent were wondrous and miraculous motifs that they were co-opted by religious genres (cf. hagiography). There were no specific corresponding genres for secular or nonreligious wonder tales and motifs, which hid out in literary forms such as poetry, verse, and fabula, until after the Enlightenment, when they would be relegated to the nursery and find new life as fairy tales.

The book is divided loosely into two parts. The first half (introduction, six chapters, and conclusion), throughout which Ziolkowski weaves his indefatigable scholarship and erudite exposition, is followed by appendixes of primary textual data in translation, extensive notes, a formidable multilingual bibliography (from which Francisco Vaz da Silva's 2002 *Metamorphosis: The Dynamics of Symbolism in European Fairy Tales* is curiously absent), a general index, and concluding with a numerical listing of tale types and motifs. While chapter 1 provides an overview and discussion of folktales in Medieval Latin poetry (and reads as an extension of the introduction), subsequent chapters focus on the narrative life of a particular text that survives in medieval, Latin, and later classic fairy-tale forms: a late tenth-century poem with Jonah and Pinocchio associations; an early eleventh-century poem with Red Riding Hood allusions; an eleventh-century version of Little Claus and Great Claus; a version of The Turnip Tale from around the twelfth century; and The Donkey Tale (also ca. twelfth century).

In investigating sources and diachronic transmission and diffusion, Ziolkowski is interested, not in a futile search for *Ur*-forms, but in meanings, associations, and cultural implications. He explains his heavy reliance on the Grimms as a factual necessity. For example, among the many nuggets, Ziolkowski suggests that William R. Bascom's "any time," "any place" of folk narratives, which often manifest themselves in medieval tropes (princesses, dwarves, and castles, etc.), is precisely because the texts have medieval antecedents. Inspired in part by the German Romantic movement and by their idealization of the medieval period, the Grimms' research, which would forever change the nature of fairy tales and fairy-tale scholarship, "was rooted in the languages, literatures, and religious beliefs of the Middle Ages" (23).

*Fairy Tales from Before Fairy Tales* has broad and cross-disciplinary appeal and belongs on the shelves of medievalists, folklorists, historians, Latinists, narratologists, philologists, and comparative and literary critics alike. Although

a high level of shared knowledge is assumed, this book does not exclude all but a specialized academic audience.

In bringing Latin folktales back into the fold, Jan M. Ziolkowski has effectively done for medieval folklore studies what his endower did for Romanesque art. In this seminal work, the ways in which tradition and transmission in the Middle Ages are understood are forever enhanced. In short, *Fairy Tales from Before Fairy Tales: The Medieval Latin Past of Wonderful Lies* is a milestone.

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***Politicizing Magic: An Anthology of Russian and Soviet Fairy Tales.*** Edited by Marina Balina, Helena Goscilo, and Mark Lipovetsky. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2005. xiv + 418 pp.

Now that the kind of cachet that Russia had during the Cold War has moved to new languages and regions, many Russian programs on college and university campuses have discovered that Russian fairy tales make a popular undergraduate or general education topic. A number of courses now taught in the United States descended from one originally created by Helena Goscilo, professor of Slavic at the University of Pittsburgh. *Politicizing Magic: An Anthology of Russian and Soviet Fairy Tales* aims partly to serve such classes and partly to do much more. It includes translations by a number of individuals, some done expressly for this book, framed with theoretical essays by three editors who are all prominent scholars of Russian literature and culture. As these origins suggest, the book may serve as a required or supplemental text in courses on folklore, culture, and literature in a framework of Russian or Slavic studies but also as Russian material in a comparative course. It can also be profitably employed for pleasure reading, individual study, or research, particularly the enlightening and richly footnoted section introductions.

The book's three sections present "Folkloric Fairy Tales," "Fairy Tales of Socialist Realism," and "Fairy Tales in Critique of Soviet Culture," followed by brief notes on the translators and sources. Goscilo points out (xii) that the editors chose to exclude nineteenth-century Russian literary fairy tales, such as Pushkin's tales in verse or Aksakov's version of "Beauty and the Beast," "The Little Scarlet Flower," since that line of development does not lead neatly to the Soviet uses of folklore forms. Goscilo provides the edition's foreword (ix–xiv) and introduces the section of folkloric fairy tales, presenting them largely in terms of the course she created, with a description and evaluation of Russian and Western European folklore theory and analysis. The subsequent twelve translations by Goscilo include some of the tales that are most popular among Russian and other readers and some that have been adapted by

Russian composers for opera, ballet, or orchestral treatment: "Vasilisa the Beautiful," "The Tale of Prince Ivan, the Firebird, and the Gray Wolf." Goscilo also includes "The Magic Ring," a cheerful example of Aleksandr Afanas'ev's bawdy folktales, which have been published more than once in English translation but never combined with the "censored" general collection. Goscilo's translations are brisk and pragmatic, with an occasional slip in style (anachronistic expressions, run-on sentences), but enjoyably readable as she captures the down-to-earth style of the originals.

Marina Balina (professor of Russian and German at Illinois Wesleyan University) introduces the Socialist Realist tales that Richard Dorson might have described as "fakelore." Balina's well-informed survey outlines the Soviet adoption of fairy tales for propaganda purposes and explains in elegant detail how propaganda functions in each of the five tales that follow. This section shows vividly how inapt the English term "Fairy Tales" is for many Russian examples—"magical tales" is a better rendering of the term *vol'shebnye skazki*. These Stalinist creations show the era's ambition to force once-imaginary wonders into reality, as magic beings or objects illustrate the transition to new social norms or teach class consciousness and properly unselfish behavior (Valentin Kataev's "Flower of Seven Colors"). Fairy tales have even served to provide vocabulary: the Russian word *samolët* (literally "self-flyer"), used in tales of flying carpets, replaced the borrowed, foreign term *aero*, "airplane," in the 1930s. One Stalin-era tale, "The Old Genie Khottabych," is excerpted here. Another, Pavel Bazhov's "The Malachite Casket" (adapted from a 1949 translation by Eve Manning), is set in the pre-Revolutionary past and has a true fairy-tale feeling, flattened psychology, and a folkloric plot alongside its literary features and careful adherence to a Soviet view of social class; the magical ending even gives it a touch of shamanism, appropriate to the tale's Ural setting.

Mark Lipovetsky (associate professor of Russian at the University of Colorado) introduces the final section, of works that employ magical or fairy-tale elements in critique of Soviet society, what he calls "the *anti-totalitarian* vector of the fairy-tale tradition in Soviet culture" (234). Lipovetsky addresses the development and psychological function of fairy tales throughout Russian and Soviet history and the long relationship of folklore to education of the masses. His illuminating and quotable observations on fairy-tale discourse in Soviet culture, official and dissident, map its place from the point of view of cultural studies. The five texts provided are quite various, from Yevgeny Zamyatin's stylistically persuasive *Fairy-Tales for Grown-Up Children* (1922) and part of Yevgeny Shvarts's play *The Dragon* to works from the 1970s. The length of most of these compels the editors to print only excerpts, and, unfortunately, the cuts impact the works' artistic value, though they do prove that fairy-tale elements may lurk in works that lack the tale's characteristic brevity. Vasily



Shukshin's "Before the Cock Crows Thrice" amusingly combines in a single tale a mass of classic Russian folktale figures living in a library (the fate of oral culture in a literate society?), somewhat like the movie *Shrek*. Grigory Gorin's play *That Very Munchausen*, on the other hand, has fantastic elements galore but resembles Cyrano de Bergerac's trip to the moon more than anything in Russian folklore.

Indeed, what may become most clear from *Politicizing Magic* is that later appropriations of fairy tales are not folklore at all and provide a very different experience. Readers seeking fairy tales proper may be disappointed in the later sections of the book; enjoying them requires preparation to understand the significance of their exploitation, recycling, or canny citation of fairy tales. The introductions are therefore essential to this collection, no matter how it is to be used. Rich and informative, *Politicizing Magic* will be of value both for studying this essential element in Russian and Soviet culture, and as an example of how fairy tales may be and have been used and abused.

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***In Quest of Indian Folktales: Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke.*** By Sadhana Naithani. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006. xi + 328 pp.

"In 1996, I located the handwritten manuscripts of William Crooke's famed collection of the folktales of northern India in the archive of the Folklore Society, London" (vii). So begins the preface to Sadhana Naithani's recent study and tale collection, *In Quest of Indian Folktales: Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke*. Forty years ago, and in a very different cultural moment, Richard Dorson opened his preface to the seminal folkloric study, *The British Folklorists: A History* (London: Routledge, 1968), in strikingly similar terms. "This book began a long time ago," Dorson wrote, "in the summer of 1948, when on a casual visit to my sister who lived in London I stumbled across the library of The Folk-Lore Society" (v). Whether it is intentional or not, Naithani's prefatory echo of her prestigious forerunner is revealing, both because it indicates the extent to which these two studies are working in the same tradition, and because it reminds us, simultaneously, how far folklore studies has traveled in the intervening years. On the one hand, this echo draws our attention to the fact that these two studies have similar objects in view: both are works of scholarly "detection" in which an archival discovery sparks a long and wide-ranging quest for information, both seek to contribute something new to our understanding of the history of folk-narrative collection, and both are, at least partially, works of literary biography that aim to reconstruct the lives of notable folklore scholars who had hitherto remained in the shadows. Even as these parallels became

apparent, however, it simultaneously becomes clear that both works, while pursuing similar objectives, do so with a very different cultural and political agenda. Dorson, writing at a time when folklore studies was struggling to be accepted as a serious academic subject, sought to justify it and embed it by celebrating the lives and works of its dominant progenitors. Naithani, by contrast, writing at a time in which folklore studies no longer needs to justify itself, and at a time in which the postcolonial imperative to plumb imperial archives for their gaps and exclusions has become institutionally embedded, wants to discover, not what the dominant discourses of British folklore were, but what alternative discourses they have silenced, marginalized, or obscured. Although both of these works may, therefore, be said to mark major contributions to the field of folktale scholarship, they do so from very different perspectives, for while Dorson's is a work of scholarly constitution, Naithani's is a work of scholarly reconstitution—and indeed, as it transpires, restitution.

The particular act of restitution that Naithani aims to effect in *In Quest of Indian Folktales* is of the reputation of the Indian scholar Ram Gharib Chaube, who assisted William Crooke in his collection of 158 tales from the North-Western provinces and Oudh between 1892 and 1896, and who has, subsequently, been all but erased from memory. Chaube, Naithani shows, gathered the bulk of the tales in Crooke's manuscript collection, translated them into his own distinctive English, and mediated them for Crooke by identifying the narrators and by offering a series of insightful and explanatory marginal annotations. In return for this hard work, however, Crooke failed to "acknowledge Chaube in any of his published writings" (15), leaving Chaube's role to be discovered by Naithani only because he signed the manuscript (perhaps anticipating his future obscurity) and, later, wrote a long letter to Crooke in which he reflected upon their past friendship and requested Crooke's help in obtaining a job. As was the case with so many of the Indian intellectuals who helped British collectors, it appears, Chaube could only be seen by Crooke as a "native assistant," not as a professional equal. Naithani's more sensitive postcolonial reconstruction of Chaube's contribution, however, allows us to see him in a different light, as a scholar in his own right who had a distinctive and important shaping role in the collection of Indian folklore.

Since it is Naithani's dominant goal to recuperate the contribution made by Chaube, it is unsurprising that she frequently accords him the kind of prominence that he could never have expected in his own lifetime. With a pleasing feel for retributive justice, she not only puts his name on the title page of the collection, but, significantly, she also puts it *before* Crooke's. Further, she elects to organize the collection of tales according to a plan that she imagines Chaube himself might have used—something that would almost certainly not have happened had Crooke ever found time to publish the collection himself.

All this is very heartwarming, and, in the event that he still haunts the archives, offers some posthumous consolations to the ghost of Chaube. This study, however, is no straightforward act of postcolonial revenge. On the contrary, Naithani is at pains to resist the vindictive impulse to paint Crooke as a “colonizer folklorist” intent upon usurping the labor of hapless Indians (56). In such a “post-Said . . . paradigm of thought,” she suggests, “the colonized or the oriental” is as much “the passive point . . . the same silent ‘other’ as in the colonial orientalist writings” (56). Instead Naithani mounts a plea for a more intricate view of the “colonial intellectual world,” according to which Crooke and Chaube are not placed in “binary oppositional categories” but are seen as “[b]oth . . . self, both ‘other’—depending on whose perspective they are seen from” (58, 57).

If there is a disadvantage to Naithani’s overriding goal to examine the relationship between Chaube and Crooke, it is that the tales themselves, which form the bulk of this work, can sometimes appear to be a footnote to the Crooke-Chaube drama rather than a fascinating body of fictions that are of interest in their own right. For instance, it is indicative that the presentation and the titling of the work foreground its critical-biographical aspect and, in the process, sideline the fact that it is primarily a folk-narrative collection (I, for one, did not realize it was a collection of tales until I opened the book and saw them on the page). One cannot help but think that a title that mentions the fact that the work contains a substantial body of folktales of northwestern India would have been preferable to one that foregrounds the fascinating, but ultimately *supporting*, “frame” narrative of Crooke and Chaube. A related, and perhaps more constitutive, problem is that in organizing the tales according to a set of categories that she imagines Chaube might have used, Naithani alights on an arrangement that is at best idiosyncratic. For instance, it is not clear why Naithani should place one variant of the “Beauty and the Beast” narrative (Tale 151) in the category titled “Corrective Measures” and another (Tale 42) in the category “The Colors of Life” when they are, for cataloging purposes, broadly similar stories; neither is it clear why these tales do not appear together in yet another of Naithani’s categories, “Magical Mind,” which, we are told, is explicitly designed to accommodate fictions in which “beings can transform into other beings” (222).

These are relatively minor concerns, however, and it remains true that aside from the organization of the tales, which the disorder of the manuscripts has made necessary, Naithani has proved a noninterventionist editor who has presented us with the tales, “just as they were found” (27), in a manner that largely allows them to speak for themselves. This, combined with the liveliness and the scholarly discernment of the introduction, the vividness with which the story of Crooke and Chaube is told, and the relevance of Naithani’s arguments

to contemporary scholarship, has resulted in a vital and timely work that should be widely read by scholars working in this field, and that deserves to take its place alongside Dorson's *British Folklorists* as a major contribution to our understanding of the formation and reformation of international folk traditions.

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***Crosscurrents of Children's Literature: An Anthology of Texts and Criticism.***

Edited by J. D. Stahl, Tina L. Hanlon, and Elizabeth Lennox Keyser. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. xli + 1009 pp.

***The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature: The Traditions in English.***

Edited by Jack Zipes, Lissa Paul, Lynne Vallone, Peter Hunt, and Gillian Avery. New York: W. W. Norton, 2005. xxxv + 2428 pp.

What is children's literature? How does children's literature differ from young adult and adult literature? Do authors of children's literature write for the very young, for adults, or for both? How do our conceptions of childhood shape the production as well as censorship of children's literature? *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* and *Crosscurrents of Children's Literature* both grapple with these and other questions surrounding the genre, and they refrain from providing a clear definition of children's literature due to the genre's inherent ambiguities. Yet both anthologies, though different in their selections and approaches, successfully introduce and illuminate children's literature from varying angles and allow students and scholars alike to further their understanding of this relatively young genre.

Covering the last 350 years and including more than 170 writers and illustrators, *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* represents a significant historical account of the genre that is "designed to introduce students to the variety and abundance of literary works for children" (xxvii). Each of the nearly twenty sections in the table of contents examines a subgenre of children's literature, including fairy tales, animal fables, legends, fantasy, science fiction, and comics; every section contains a critical introduction, at least one complete reprint of a relevant text, and excerpts of several other works in chronological order. The extensive unit on fairy tales is particularly impressive and contains a detailed study of *Little Red Riding Hood* that outlines the tale's development over time, beginning with Charles Perrault's and the Grimms' versions and ending with more recent rewritings by authors such as Roald Dahl and Francesca Lia Block. (Surprisingly, however, none of Angela Carter's tales are included in this collection.) The anthology's section on picture books, too, is outstanding with its fifty pages of illustrations, many of which are in

color, and points toward the need for scholars to further integrate illustrations into critical discussions of children's literature.

As the work's subtitle, *The Traditions in English*, indicates, this *Norton Anthology* is concerned primarily with the Anglo-American tradition of children's literature and consequently incorporates only few works in translation. Indeed, one of the collection's aims is to trace "the historical development of genres and traditions through 350 years of children's literature in English" (xxxii), and thus only translated works that have had a significant impact on this development are represented, while some others are referred to in the chapter introductions. The editors' historical approach to children's literature, moreover, results in the notable absence of many acclaimed contemporary writers of children's literature that one might expect to find excerpted in this anthology, such as Phillip Pullman or Lois Lowry. While this focus on the Anglo-American tradition of children's literature allows the *Norton Anthology* to present a detailed account of the genre's history that would hardly be manageable were texts from other countries to be considered, it may be advisable for instructors of children's literature to supplement selections from this collection with tales from other cultures.

*Crosscurrents of Children's Literature*, an anthology that includes both literary texts and criticism, offers such a comparativist approach, containing a large variety of both works in translation and texts written in English. Thematically organized, this anthology is divided into eight sections, most of which examine a particular tension or apparent binary recurrent in the genre. Part 1 raises the question of how the classic literary principle of *prodesse et delectare*, instruction and delight, applies to children's literature, whereas part 2 explores the "subjection of the child and subversion of adult authority" (xxxvi). Subsequent sections focus on more specific issues, including gender, realism and fantasy, and censorship, with each unit placing works in translation by, for instance, Astrid Lindgren, Carlo Lorenzini, or Gudrun Pausewang, side by side with those written in English. The emphasis here is primarily on contemporary writers, although some classic authors like Lewis Carroll and Mark Twain are also included.

The anthology's juxtaposition of primary texts with critical essays that introduce the various sections furthermore prompts students to critically examine the genre's prevalent themes and to question preconceived notions of children's literature; as the editors point out, this collection aims to "convey the complexities of [the] subject and to encourage readers to challenge common assumptions about childhood, children, and the works produced for them" (xxxv). *Crosscurrents of Children's Literature* thus invites a comparativist approach to the genre that explores the recurrence of a variety of themes both over time and across cultures. If the *Norton Anthology*, in its two-thousand-some pages, allows for the teacher to select texts and themes within English-language traditions,

*Crosscurrents* is at the same time more ample cross-culturally and more selective and focused thematically. Though it offers an alternate table of contents that divides texts according to subgenre, this collection's listing of subcategories pales in comparison to the *Norton Anthology's* precise divisions: while the *Norton* includes, for example, sections on school stories, alphabets, or picture books, *Crosscurrents*, in this alternate table of contents, simply groups texts into broad categories like nonfiction, poetry, or "tales from the oral tradition." For use of the anthology in the classroom, then, following *Crosscurrents'* organization of the selected texts into eight thematic sections is certainly preferable to weeding through its listing of subgenres.

While both *Crosscurrents of Children's Literature* and *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* are tailored toward university students, the former provides a particularly useful framework that "meet[s] the traditional needs of the undergraduate children's literature course" (xl), inviting classroom discussion and a critical engagement with the genre. Even a graduate course on children's literature could benefit from the inclusion of this anthology as an introduction to the genre's various themes and as a springboard for a more detailed examination of different texts. Because of its comparativist and cross-cultural approach, *Crosscurrents* could serve as a relevant textbook for children's literature classes in comparative literature departments especially, or for courses in English departments that employ a comparativist or world-literature perspective.

*The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature*, on the other hand, has been envisioned by its editors not only to serve as a textbook in children's literature courses but also to encourage teachers to incorporate discussions of the genre in "introduction-to-literature, writing, and survey courses of various kinds" (xxxv). The collection's detailed exploration of various subgenres and its superb overview of the genre's history certainly do provide instructors with useful tools for broadening children's literature's appeal for students. As the *Norton Anthology* includes many rare texts and represents a large variety of subgenres, it will also serve as a crucial reference tool for scholars invested in the field. Moreover, the mere fact that Norton has now published an anthology of children's literature, though limited to the Anglo-American tradition, attests to the genre's rising significance in academia and encourages further scholarly investigation into this innovative literature.

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***The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature.*** Jack Zipes, editor in chief. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. 4 volumes, 1952 pp.

We have entered the second golden age of the encyclopedia. Part of this renaissance is the result of the proliferation of academic publishers that regularly

announce new, and indispensable, encyclopedias on important-sounding subjects. Invitations to contribute to these worthy volumes of scholarship are extended much to the relief of eager graduate students and assistant professors anxious for publications. Printed encyclopedias began in the eighteenth century thanks, in part, to the ambitious work of intellectuals and encyclopedists during the French Enlightenment. The alphabetic format was introduced in 1704 by John Harris, with his *Lexicon Technicum; or, An Universal English Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*. However, Ephraim Chambers, who published a two-volume *Cyclopaedia* in 1728, is sometimes credited as the father of the modern English-language encyclopedia. But perhaps the best-known work in this genre remains the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, first issued in 1768. Move ahead about 250 years, and print encyclopedias, including the formidable *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, are experiencing stiff competition from upstarts on the Internet, such as *Wikipedia*. While the accuracy of information circulating on the Web may be questioned, what we are seeing is that such materials are relatively quick and easy to access, edit, and debate. Reliable print text sometimes migrates to the Web, where copyright rules and attributions may be murky. Even so, Web resources are where students often turn first.

*The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* has evolved out of this historical legacy and complicated contemporary milieu. This is one big encyclopedia that fills up four volumes and took five years to produce. Although Jack Zipes's name appears on the title page as editor in chief, he is quick to acknowledge the work of two editorial boards of eight associate editors and twenty-two advisory editors and more than three hundred contributors. There are 3,214 entries arranged in alphabetical order and almost 400 illustrations that were thoughtfully selected by Andrea Immel, the curator of the Cotsen Children's Library at Princeton University. Given the importance of illustrations to children's literature, these images are a significant aspect of the encyclopedia. Most of the historical and international images are credited to the Cotsen Children's Library, although several of the more contemporary examples are credited to the personal book collections of either Zipes or Immel.

Zipes suggests that *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* is "the first comprehensive reference work in English to provide detailed information about all aspects of children's literature from the medieval period to the 21st century on an international scale" (xxix). As a reference work, it is certainly bigger than other similar children's literature reference books, but bigger does not necessarily make it better. Like *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* (2005) that Zipes also helped to edit, the sheer size makes it somewhat cumbersome. As a faculty member who regularly teaches a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses in children's literature, I am impressed by the size and scope of *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* but question the need

of a 2,471-page anthology of this genre. What sort of course can adequately use such a textbook?

Similarly, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* is not the only children's literature encyclopedia available, and its publication raises the issue of how many children's literature encyclopedias are needed. It seems that as a field of scholarly study, children's literature has quickly moved from the great excluded to the overextended. I own a shelf full of such reference works, including Humphrey Carpenter and Mari Prichard's *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* (1984); Anita Silvey's *Children's Books and Their Creators* (1995) and her expanded second edition, *The Essential Guide to Children's Books and Their Creators* (2002); Victor Watson's *The Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English* (2001); and Bernice E. Cullinan and Diane G. Person's *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* (2003). Zipes recognizes these books in his introduction as helpful but lacking in breadth and depth of this new reference tool. In many ways, the model for *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* seems to be Klaus Doderer's *Lexikon der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur* (1982), another four-volume set. Zipes omits Peter Hunt's *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* (1966) or its substantially revised second edition that appeared in 2004, Hunt's *Children's Literature: Critical Concepts* (2006), and Paula S. Fass's three-volume *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society* (2004) from his list of similar reference works, but omissions and gaps are bound to occur.

Although *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* strives to be international in its scope, both in terms of its entries and contributors, it retains an English-speaking bias in terms of authors and texts. The covers of the volumes feature ten images of well-known children's authors or characters from children's literature: eight of them are American—Louisa May Alcott, Samuel Clemens, Laurence Yep, Maurice Sendak, W. W. Denslow's illustration from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Dr. Seuss's *The Cat in the Hat*, a Disney cartoon version of Winnie the Pooh and Piglet, and a Wild Thing from Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*; one image is English—Arthur Rackham's illustration of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*; and thank goodness for the appearance of Astrid Lindgren. I admire Sendak as much as most readers, but why both his photo and an image of a Wild Thing are featured on the covers of *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* is simply beyond me.

No single print encyclopedia can contain everything, and as soon as a text is published, it has become dated. We are long past the time of John Amos Comenius's *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (1658), one of the first illustrated textbooks for children, which optimistically attempted to present "a Picture and Nomenclature of all the chief Things that are in world" (3: 197), although it seems that *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* hopes to do that for



the vast field of children's literature. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* provides excellent entries on John Amos Comenius and *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, written by Gillian Avery.

This raises a more difficult question: who is the intended audience for this reference work? The "Topical Outline of Entries" shows that most of the entries are given over to authors and illustrators, although there are also numerous entries on specific titles and characters, genres, countries, and special terms. While there are four volumes in this set, at least half of the final volume is devoted to the outline of entries, index, and contributors. The size and cost of this encyclopedia, which Amazon lists as \$495.00 but discounts to \$185.83, suggests it is a reference work intended primarily for libraries rather than individuals.

For academics or specialists working in children's literature who can perhaps afford one of the single-volume encyclopedias, I think other reference books are more comprehensive and useful: for those working in historical children's literature, Carpenter and Prichard's *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* or Watson's *The Cambridge Guide to Children Books in English*; for contemporary children's literature, Anita Silvey's *Children's Books and Their Creators* and its revision, *The Essential Guide to Children's Books and Their Creators*; for international children's literature, Peter Hunt's second edition of *The International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*. In the interest of full disclosure, I must admit that I have contributed entries to *The Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English* as well as other encyclopedias, so if there is an overabundance of academic encyclopedias these days, I am part of the problem rather than the solution.

Given the strong crossover among fairy tales and folktales and children's literature, as well as Zipes's well-deserved reputation as a folktale scholar, there are many entries in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* dealing with significant authors, editors, and illustrators of fairy-tale collections and literary fairy tales, including an outstanding entry on "Fairy Tales and Folk Tales" written by Zipes. However, I would respectfully recommend that those working with fairy tales would be better off consulting Zipes's *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (2000).

The ambitious scope of *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* is certainly its great strength, but it does reveal several limitations. The entries are of an inconsistent quality. Some are cross-referenced and others are not; the lack of cross-referencing appears to have little to do with the length of an entry. More disappointing is the inconsistent use of bibliography, which comes at the end of some, but certainly not all, of the entries. Sometimes an entry lacks a bibliography or has only one work cited and another entry of equal length has as many as four secondary and/or primary texts. There is also the distressing

tendency for the contributors to cite themselves, whether experts or not. The decided mixed quality of scholarship limits the overall effectiveness of this reference work. While no encyclopedia is intended to be read straight through, this encyclopedia seems to lack editorial cohesion. As ambitious as its scope, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* is a decidedly mixed work. I think that it makes a good addition to other children's literature reference books, but it hardly supercedes them. Despite my reservations concerning the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, I noticed that on at least two occasions last semester, students in my children's literature courses had read and recycled entries from it for their research papers. The time-honored, but questionable, tradition of taking an encyclopedia entry and changing the text just enough so it is "in their own words" seems to suggest that some undergraduates have already found *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* a helpful research tool.

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***When Dreams Came True: Classical Fairy Tales and Their Tradition.*** By Jack Zipes. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 2007. xiv + 322 pp.

This revised and expanded edition of a book first published in 1999 aims to "provide a sociohistorical framework for the study of the classical tradition of the literary fairy tale in western society" (x). It consists of an overview of the development of the literary fairy-tale tradition, followed by twelve essays on fairy-tale writers ranging from the seventeenth-century French salon précieuses to Herman Hesse. These essays also cover Charles Perrault, Antoine Galland (and the European reception of the Arabian Nights), the Brothers Grimm, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Hans Christian Andersen, various Edwardian and Victorian authors with an emphasis on Oscar Wilde, Carlo Collodi and his *Pinocchio*, Frank Stockton, L. Frank Baum and his utopian realm of Oz, and J. M. Barrie's cycle of adventures in Neverland. Although all of the essays had been previously published, this book is no mere anthology of scattered texts. Its unifying thread is the examination of the manners in which writers have used fairy tales to articulate their personal desires, political views, and aesthetic preferences. Indeed, Jack Zipes assumes that the fairy tale has been historically "determined and overdetermined" by writers with unusual talents and tantalizing views about their search for happiness, which, he stresses, "is coincidentally ours as well" (x).

This remark points to one important leitmotif of this book: the role that the literary fairy tale assumes in imparting values, norms, and aesthetic standards to children and adults alike. Zipes is quite clear on this subject. Fairy tales serve a meaningful social and aesthetic function as long as they awaken

“our” wonderment so as to enable “us” to project counterworlds to the status quo (31). From this point of view, the craft of fairy-tale writers is intrinsically “ideological” (6). Fairy tales deal with wonderlands and so propitiate imagining alternative worlds (7). And even though some tales (and their writers) may be conservative or sexist, Zipes maintains that they still call forth their readers’ capacity “to wonder.” No matter what the plot may be, then, fairy tales “keep our sense of wonderment alive and nurture our hope” for change (7).

This is an interesting point. Even while Zipes proposes that fairy tales promote wonder and defy conformism, he presents a book that extols the imagination as a means to oppose alienation. In other words, this collection of essays on utopian narratives is itself a utopian manifesto, which is to say that *When Dreams Came True* presents scholarly research on fairy tales with the uplifting ethos of a meta-fairy tale.

As scholarship goes, this book expresses delightfully sober views. Take Zipes’s description of how seventeenth-century French authors have appropriated folktales into the literary realm (a trend taken over from Straparola and Basile) in the specific context of aristocratic salons. His nuanced and documented examination of this multilayered process shinningly contrasts with the unidimensional, and yet fanciful, quality of another recent reading of the same process as essentially a recasting of Italian fairy tales first invented by Straparola (tellingly, Ruth Bottigheimer’s proposition goes unmentioned in this book). In the same vein, Zipes describes the Grimm brothers’ work in light of its specific sociopolitical context and brings out, with a wealth of details, the significance of their “extraordinary scholarship” (67). While Zipes acknowledges that the Grimms did not collect or preserve their Märchen as a modern folklorist must, he steers clear of a modern trend of ad hominem attacks and summary accusations against the two brothers (John Ellis’s indictment also goes unmentioned in this book). A consistent willingness to recognize the complexity of cultural phenomena, along with a balanced approach to all the works and lives under scrutiny, gives each and every essay in this book the Midas touch.

So far I have referred to “fairy tales” as if the scope of this notion were self-evident. However, any definition of fairy tales that encompasses stories by Herman Hesse, the trials and tribulations of Pinocchio, Wendy’s adventures in Neverland, and the wanderings of Dorothy in Oz must be rather broad. Therefore, a few words are called for on this matter. To his credit, Zipes has long advocated the terminological distinction between (literary) fairy tales and (oral) wonder tales. He acknowledges that wonder tales work according to Vladimir Propp’s morphological model, which implies that wonder tales “triumph over death.” From Zipes’s perspective, this means wonder tales are futuristic and have a “utopian kernel” (4); they hinge on breaking the spell, which “equals

emancipation" (6). In short, wonder tales predictably induce "wonder" (5). And while Zipes recognizes that the literary fairy tale sprang from the wonder tale, he adds that the newer genre has established "its own conventions, motifs, topoi, characters, and plots" (3). This means, of course, that the literary fairy tale can no longer be defined in terms of Proppian functions. Still, Zipes insists that fairy tales have inherited from wonder tales the power to "induce wonder," which is, ultimately, the definition of both genres (7). So, then, what Pinocchio, Neverland, and the Oz stories share with a writer like Hesse, as well as with wonder tales, is the superimposition of a fantasy realm upon a realistic situation (Hesse, too, "sought to blend the worlds of reality and imagination" [250]), which allows the status quo to be transcended and keeps hope alive. Again, we reach the utopian core of this book.

In essence, what Zipes says incidentally about a fairy tale by Salman Rushdie—that it urges readers to question authoritarianism and to become inventive, given that Rushdie provides hope for solutions without supplying definitive answers (30)—might be said about Zipes himself. He ascribes to the best fairy-tale writers the belief in the power of the imagination to make a better world—and this is a fitting description of his own work. Indeed, *When Dreams Came True* celebrates imagination and provides hope for solutions without supplying definitive answers. For its vigorously utopian spirit and solid scholarship, this jewel of a book is a must-have and a pleasure to read.

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***The Arabian Nights Reader.*** Edited by Ulrich Marzolph. Series in Fairy Tale Studies. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006. 392 pp.

Reading the essays selected for inclusion in *The Arabian Nights Reader* will take some readers on autobiographical journeys of their own development as *Nights* scholars. I found myself transported back to graduate school as I reread the essays from the 1970s and 1980s, those studies I had immersed myself in as I was finding my own voice and path through the *Thousand and One Nights* as a young academic. *Nights* scholars will all find themselves in one essay or another in Marzolph's representative sampling of twentieth-century scholarship. The original publication dates for these studies range from 1942 (Gustav E. von Grunebaum's "Greek Form Elements in the *Arabian Nights*") to 1997 (Fedwa Malti-Douglas's "Shahrazad Feminist"), and just as far-ranging are the paleographical, critical, and theoretical approaches these writers take to the *Arabian Nights*.

*The Arabian Nights Reader* is perhaps best suited, however, to the new scholar or curious reader who will have the pleasure of indulging in some of these essays for the first time. One learns some of the basics, such as the

fact that the frame story of the *Arabian Nights* (better known as *Alf Layla wa-Layla* among Arabic scholars) dates from at least the ninth century of the common era and was most likely adapted from a Persian tale titled *Hazar Afsana* (Thousand Tales) from relatively early essays by Nabia Abbott (1949) and Solomon D. Goitein (1958). Abbott's "A Ninth-Century Fragment of the 'Thousand Nights': New Light on the Early History of the *Arabian Nights*" not only sheds light on the provenance of the *Nights*, but also describes one of the earliest (if not *the* earliest) fragments of a "paper book outside the ancient Far East" (73) and explains how the material itself indicates much about the source of the fragment.

How much of the history and transmission of the *Arabian Nights* scholars do not yet agree on or know for a certainty is demonstrated by Heinz Grotzfeld's "Neglected Conclusions of the *Arabian Nights*"; his "The Age of the Galland Manuscript of the *Nights*"; and Muhsin Mahdi's "Sources of Galland's *Nuits*." The first of these essays outlines the various ways in which the conclusion has been cast in the various versions of the *Nights*, explaining how Shahrazad's gender and fertility were chosen by some redactors as more significant than her storytelling prowess, some of which Malti-Douglas returns to in "Shahrazad Feminist." The Grotzfeld and Mahdi essays on the Galland manuscript demonstrate one of the many mild controversies regarding this work in that each dates the Galland source manuscript by different means and comes to a different conclusion. For the general reader, the difference between a fourteenth- or fifteenth-century manuscript might be negligible, but for *Nights* scholars steeped in the exciting and frustrating history of a lack of documentary evidence for so much concerning this work, the debate continues to fascinate.

Amid all the discussion of the various Arab, Persian, and Indian sources of the *Arabian Nights*, von Grunebaum ("Greek Form Elements in the *Arabian Nights*") and Peter Heath ("Romance as Genre in *The Thousand and One Nights*") bring out the parallels between some of the form and content of the *Nights* and those of Greek romance genres. While "the very nature of the Greek contribution formed the greatest obstacle to its discovery" (von Grunebaum 138), various hints of Greek influence are apparent in the structure of some of the shorter embedded tales as well as in their character development.

Readers who are more interested in studying the content of the *Arabian Nights* will be more interested in the second half of *The Arabian Nights Reader*, which includes several studies from the '70s, '80s, and '90s that delve into psychological and structural criticism as well as historicism and mythical interpretations. In his essay "From History to Fiction," Mahdi uses his depth of knowledge about the history of the Middle East to interpret the content of "The Tale Told by the King's Steward" as well as to draw several convincing conclusions about its origins.

Jamel Eddine Bencheikh also uses the play of history and imagination to delve more deeply into the love stories in the *Nights* in her 1997 contribution, "Historical and Mythical Baghdad in the Tale of Ali b. Bakkar and Shams al-Nahar." Her analysis of the role of caliph Harun ar-Rashid in this love story illuminates his role throughout the *Nights* as both historical personage and mythical symbol. The question of whether the audience was accepting the romance of Ali and Shams as historical fact or dreamy fiction rests in their understanding of the reality and myth of Baghdad itself, much as Western news audiences today must balance their own preconceived notions of the Iraqi capital with what they see on their televisions each night.

Tzvetan Todorov ("Narrative-Men") and Peter Molan ("Sindbad the Sailor") both use structure to explore deeper meanings of embedded tales in the *Arabian Nights*. Todorov, one of the first to demonstrate the link between narrative and survival in the *Nights* shows how the proliferation of embedding allows the characters more life than the language used to describe them: "Only the coldest travel narrative can compete with Sinbad's tales in impersonality" (227). Molan's analysis of the highly complex structure of repetition and embedding in the Sindbad the Sailor tale shows the power of story pattern among the tales of the nights, each lending additional significance to the next and revealing an "ethics of violence" that Shahrazad subtly communicates to Shariyar through her telling of these tales.

The tercentenary anniversary of Antoine Galland's 1704 translation of the *Arabian Nights* heightened academic interest and expanded scholarly production on this well-known work of murky provenance. Ulrich Marzolph's selection of sixteen essays in *The Arabian Nights Reader* will satisfy much of that academic interest by bringing together some of the twentieth century's very finest *Nights* scholarship in English, but as Marzolph himself indicates in the introduction, serious scholars will avail themselves also of the many studies available in French, German, and, of course, Arabic. I hope that the essays contained in *The Arabian Nights Reader* will inspire even more of this level and diversity of scholarship on this most important international work of literature.

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***Lies That Tell the Truth: Magic Realism Seen through Contemporary Fiction from Britain.*** By Anne C. Hegerfeldt. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005. 347 pp.

Although *Lies That Tell the Truth: Magic Realism Seen through Contemporary Fiction from Britain* is not primarily about folklore or fairy tales, this text is worth the attention of scholars who are interested in the hybridity of contemporary literary fairy tales. It also points in interesting directions for discussions of the intersections of magic realism and contemporary fairy-tale texts.

Anne Hegerfeldt approaches the contentious topic of what texts can be said to be magic realist and takes the stand that as a mode rather than a genre, magic realism is open not only to Latin American or even postcolonial authors but also to authors around the globe. The techniques, effects, and functions of magic realism, argues Hegerfeldt, can be found even in literature from the dominant Western world. She argues that as a textual mode, magic realism is available to everyone; however, she is careful to stress that magic realism is postcolonial “in that it re-thinks the dominant Western world-view in a number of ways” (3). As such, magic realism serves as an alternative form of knowledge production and critiques dominant Western epistemologies that privilege rationality over “ex-centric” worldviews and ways of knowing, and is also open to Western authors, because “critical re-evaluations may also be conducted from within” (346).

Having removed the locational strictures often placed upon magic realist fiction, and as her title indicates, Hegerfeldt focuses on contemporary British authors who are very familiar to students and scholars of English-language contemporary fairy-tale fiction—Angela Carter, Robert Nye, Salman Rushdie, and Jeanette Winterson—and upon the novels *The 27th Kingdom* by Alice Thomas Ellis, *Wild Nights* by Emma Tennant, and Marina Warner’s *Indigo*.

Of particular interest to folktale and fairy-tale scholars is chapter 3, “Magic ‘Mongrel’ Realism: The Adaptation of Other Genres and Modes,” which looks closely at the hybrid nature of magic realist fiction as it “exploits” realism, “flirts” with the marvelous, “plays” with the literary fantastic, and “puts you on” like the tall tale. Hegerfeldt asserts that “[b]oth in its unorthodox use of realism and its resulting stance of matter-of-factness, magic realism . . . is closer to the tall tale than to the literary fantastic” (109).

While she does not dwell on the elements of the fairy tale employed by her focus texts, Hegerfeldt does recognize that “there undoubtedly are texts that could be understood both as modern fairy tales and as instances of magic realism” (80). This observation with its limited examples—Angela Carter’s *The Bloody Chamber* and Marina Warner’s short story “In the Scheme of Things” (80n32)—reveals the need for further study into connections between magic realism and fairy-tale fiction in the work of Carter and Warner as well as other texts that do not fall under Hegerfeldt’s purview, such as the work of Nalo Hopkinson or Luisa Valenzuela or films such as Tim Burton’s *Big Fish* or Guillermo Del Toro’s *Pan’s Labyrinth*, to name just a few.

*Lies that Tell the Truth* effectively employs the tools of narrative theory to look at the techniques, functions, and effects of magic realism at the level of the text, thus taking a stand in the contentious arguments about who can “do” magic realism and contributing insight into the ways in which this mode critiques dominant Western systems of thought. Further, by looking at narrative

techniques and effects rather than becoming bogged down in the identity politics of postcolonial authenticity debates, *Lies* makes a valuable contribution to discussions of the functions of magic, storytelling, and hybridity in contemporary narrative fiction and should be welcomed by readers of *Marvels & Tales* who are interested in pursuing the intriguing and potentially rewarding directions for further study into the knotty relationship between magic realism, folktales, and fairy tales.

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***Moulding the Female Body in Victorian Fairy Tales and Sensation Novels.*** By Laurence Talairach-Vielmas. Aldershot, VT: Ashgate, 2007. viii + 176 pp.

During one of her startling growth spurts, Alice exclaims, "When I used to read fairy-tales, I fancied that kind of thing never happened, and now here I am in the middle of one!" Talairach-Vielmas represents Victorian heroines, whether of fairy tales or of sensation novels, as willy-nilly "in the middle" of fairy-tale patterns and expectations. Although their shape-shifting is rarely as radical as Alice's, the central subject of her book is the female body and the nineteenth-century forces that she thinks conspire to change, reshape, or obliterate it. She argues that "while Victorian fairy tales and fantasies seek to erase woman's physicality, sensation novels, on the other hand, propose a new version of the construction of femininity to show the subversive potential that inheres in the turning of woman into a commodity" (87).

Talairach-Vielmas deals with both kinds of fiction, all published between 1853 and 1875, with emphasis on the 1860s. She begins with four chapters on fairy tales and fantasies: Jean Ingelow's *Mopsa the Fairy*, George MacDonald's "The Light Princess," Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Juliana Ewing's "Amelia and the Dwarfs," and Christina Rossetti's *Speaking Likenesses*. One might wonder why she begins with *Mopsa the Fairy*, published after MacDonald's and Carroll's fantasies and full of references to them—perhaps because we follow the adventures of Jack, a thoroughly ordinary little boy in a mysterious world ruled by a fairy queen. As Nina Auerbach and U. C. Knoepfelmacher suggest in their anthology *Forbidden Journeys*, Ingelow's tale is really a reversal of "Sleeping Beauty." Though the tiny fairy Mopsa sleeps in Jack's pocket throughout the first two-thirds of the tale, she eventually begins to grow or grow up. And Jack eventually leaves her in her castle, separated by some grass with "long spear-like leaves," and returns to his familiar home. In her analysis, however, Talairach-Vielmas focuses on the tales that female characters tell in Fairyland, stories of female confinement and even enslavement in the real world, emphasizing "the crippling potential of precast stories incarcerating heroines linguistically and literally" (31).



In the following three chapters she claims that the fantasy heroines, all little girls, are being domesticated, trained to be well-behaved young women. This is certainly not a new argument; what is new, however, are the tactics Talairach-Vielmas uses to support it. She argues that all of the heroines become both commodities and the “target” (80) of commodity culture. They can only escape this fate by conforming rigidly to Victorian standards for women. Or is it their Victorian education that makes them target themselves, creating “the self-destructive forces which education into female propriety have instilled in” them (81)? Talairach-Vielmas even turns the sadistic games in the first part of Rossetti’s *Speaking Likenesses* into a form of self-mutilation, reflecting Flora’s supposed desire to annihilate her own body. Though she mentions Rossetti’s sardonic sentence “the boys were players, the girls were played,” she casts Flora and her fellow fantasy heroines like Ewing’s Amelia as their own enemies.

The five later chapters deal with sensation novels, from Rhoda Broughton’s *Not Wisely but Too Well*, Dickens’s *Bleak House*, and M. E. Braddon’s *Lady Audley’s Secret* to three of Wilkie Collins’s lesser-known novels: *No Name*, *Armadale*, and *The Law and the Lady*. (In the introduction she summarizes *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*, as well as other novels like Mrs. Henry Wood’s *East Lynne*, but does little with them later.) Talairach-Vielmas dwells on their mid-Victorian cultural background, from sensational murder trials of the time to advertising and cosmetics, but readers of *Marvels & Tales* will probably be most interested in what she does with the fairy-tale elements in the novels. Though images from “Bluebeard” or “Cinderella” or “Little Red Riding Hood” occasionally surface, Talairach-Vielmas focuses on “Snow White” and the interplay between the queen’s mirror and the glass coffin, often echoing Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s thirty-year-old analysis. She sees the glass coffin as both a “crystallization” of the image of the perfect, passive woman and as an analogue for the Victorian glass conservatory, a place where women become exotic and seductive hothouse plants. (In *Not Wisely but Too Well*, Broughton repeatedly frames her sensual heroine Kate Chester within hothouses, from private conservatories to the Crystal Palace.) Throughout the book she repeatedly returns to mirrors, windows, glass houses, and Foucauldian panopticons. She even calls *The Law and the Lady* a “modern Snow White,” though other fairy-tale patterns—particularly from “Bluebeard”—predominate in that novel. In her analyses of both the novels and the fantasies, she insists that “the female body is associated with commodities and exhibited in crystal caskets” (72).

Talairach-Vielmas’s grasp of the history of literary fairy tales seems a little uncertain. For example, the French conteuses, predecessors of Victorian fairy-tale writers, wrote most of their important work in the late seventeenth century, but here they sometimes become eighteenth-century writers. More dis-

turbing are the interpretive problems, minor and major. We are often told that something is “literally” true when in fact it doesn’t happen at all. See, for example, the Mouse’s “dry” history of the Norman Conquest in *Alice in Wonderland*, which certainly does *not* “literally dry” (52) Alice and the other animals who have been swimming in her tears; as Alice says, “wet as ever.” Alice never “literally becom[es] the sign” (58), either.

Talairach-Vielmas also often claims that a tale or novel ends in gloom and despair. She says of *The Law and the Lady* that the novel “closes on a deadly realm of bodily decay and putrefaction” (171) when it actually ends with the—admittedly tenuous—reunion of the heroine and her newborn child with her husband. She says that in Collins’s *Armada* “the female actress is, after all, the victim of fate, or rather, a mere puppet in the hands of patriarchy” (157), true neither in that novel nor in *No Name*. Denying agency even to Collins’s wicked women, she also ignores the courage of heroines like the first-person narrator of *The Law and the Lady*, who defies many patriarchal injunctions in her quest to clear her husband’s name, or like Magdalen in *No Name*, who disassembles and even becomes an actress in order to reclaim her own name. Even Alice never can “master her fate nor voice her wishes” (65), according to Talairach-Vielmas, committed as she is to seeing most female Victorian characters as beset, disciplined, controlled, fragmented, wasting away, vanishing.

In short, this is a disappointing book. Though Talairach-Vielmas has situated these fictions both in a fairy-tale matrix and in Victorian culture, her repetitive, sometimes contradictory arguments do not always help us understand them—and often make them seem even darker or more “fatalistic” (an often-repeated word) than they actually are.

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***Film, Folklore, and Urban Legends.*** By Mikel J. Koven. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2008. ix + 199 pp.

Films offer excellent opportunities to demonstrate the legend’s dynamics. I have shown *The Burning* (1981), *Urban Legend* (1998), and other films to my students, explaining how they reflect and encourage the spread of traditional narratives. Until now, there has been no textbook that covers convergences of legends with film. Mikel Koven’s *Film, Folklore, and Urban Legends* fills that gap, explaining complex interrelationships with thoroughness, insight, and wit.

This book brings together revised versions of Koven’s previously published essays on folklore and film, with the purpose of examining the relationship between traditional folklore and popular culture. The author explains that this is not meant to be a “definitive” study of folklore and film; instead, it strives to

apply folkloristic terms to film analysis, redefining for folklore studies “what and how we can engage within popular film and television debates” (ix). He succeeds in this endeavor, explicating aspects of methodology, belief, and ostension that concern legend scholars and other folklorists.

In his introductory chapter, Koven summarizes questions raised in earlier scholarship. Do mass-mediated texts qualify as folklore? How do mass-mediated texts influence traditional storytelling style and content? Citing S. Elizabeth Bird's *For Enquiring Minds* (1992), he suggests that we focus on how “certain popular culture forms succeed because they act like folklore” (345). He decries “motif spotting” and tale-type identification, which connect films' traditional content to myth, Märchen, and legend, because these methods seem too superficial.

Part 2, “In Search of a Methodology,” introduces some diverse relationships between folklore and film. In the chapter devoted to Robin Hardy's film *The Wicker Man* (1973), Koven criticizes the film's creators for uncritically using Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* as the basis for their portrayal of human sacrifice by inhabitants of a Scottish island. This portrayal, he argues, “unproblematically literalize[s] a colonialist agenda that sees the Celtic nations as an undifferentiated whole” (33). While this argument rings true, the next chapter, “Searching for Tale Types and Motifs in the Zombie Film,” seems less persuasive. One can delve deeper than identifying types and motifs, to be sure, but comparison of oral-traditional and cinematic zombies to their quasi-cognates in European folklore raises intriguing issues. Koven admits that “placing these two phenomena side by side does create a discursive juxtaposition” (50); it also makes the reader think about cultural differences and analytic categories.

In part 3, “Issues of Belief,” Koven analyzes two episodes of the popular series *The X-Files*, finding that the series stimulates discussion “within a framework of legend collection and folkloristic debates about belief” (81). Such debates also arise in relation to “killer bee” films such as *Deadly Invasion* (1995). How, Koven asks, do relatively recent anxieties about killer bees compare to worries about killer bees in the late 1970s? In “Beeing Anxious” he explains that recent films show American families under attack, while older films depict a whole society struggling with disaster. Although he could go farther in interpreting what this focus on the family means, he persuades the reader that these popular films “reflect contemporary anxieties much as urban legends do” (95).

The second chapter of part 4 presents slasher films as folkloristic social scripts. Carefully defining the slasher film and discussing such richly folkloric films as *Halloween* (1978) and *Friday the 13th* (1980), Koven explains that “applying morphological and social-script approaches to these films reveals a different set of questions” (131). He asks whether *Scream* (1996) and other movies of that ilk have destroyed the possibility of audiences viewing

semi-humorous rules as social scripts. I suspect that the answer to that question is yes. In any case, Koven's call for "proper audience studies . . . on actual audiences' interpretations" is right on target (132).

Part 5 explores the key issue of ostension: translating a legend text into action. After considering studies by Linda Dégh, Andrew Vázsonyi, Bill Ellis, and Carl Lindahl, Koven closely examines how ostension works in *Candyman* (1992). First he identifies this film as "a basic 'beauty and the beast' story (AT 425) that replaces the 'beast' with the 'hook-handed killer' motif from urban legendry" (140). He aptly states that the film "intelligently engages in many of the current debates that urban legend scholars are engaged in" (151) and notes that for film viewers, "the watching becomes as inclusive as the participating" (152).

The final chapter explores the complexities of *Most Haunted*, a wildly popular British TV show that has been on the air since 2002. Considering *Most Haunted* to be a form of ostension, Koven suggests that the "television text functions like a traditional legend teller, creating a complex, matrixlike relationship among the supernatural belief traditions, the television show, and those watching that show" (153). The show's investigative team goes on a carefully planned legend trip, using night-vision cameras to "re-creat[e] an experiential analogy of living conditions of the past" (155). Koven notes that Linda Dégh and Andrew Vázsonyi would not find presentations of legend-like materials on TV to qualify as ostension, because the theatricality of television performances decreases believability. Koven argues that reality TV creates a different impression; *Most Haunted* increases viewers' belief in what it presents by "laying bare . . . its own construction wherein the cameras, cables, and sound equipment are often in-shot and the show's crew members become central characters in the investigation, resulting in postmodern reflexivity and self-referentiality" (170). Although the show's producers argue that *Most Haunted* offers entertainment rather than investigation, it is clear that many viewers take the show very seriously.

Koven concludes with the reminder that legends can make us uncomfortable. They certainly can, and creators of both films and reality TV shows with strong connections to legends can find many ways to bring those feelings of discomfort to the surface. This book provides a much-needed entryway to deeper discussion of legends' and films' powerful partnership.

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***Pan's Labyrinth / El Laberinto del Fauno.*** Written, directed, and produced by Guillermo del Toro. Color. 119 minutes. In Spanish with English subtitles. DVD. Estudios Picasso Tequila Gang Esperanto Filmo, 2006.

If you believe what many have written about this Academy Award-winning film—that the world of Pan and his labyrinth and his stories is a mirage that

eleven-year-old Ofelia conjures up to protect herself from Franco's bloody Spain—don't see the film. But if you're up for a ride through the surrealistic realms of story, come along through the first door that opens. And in this wondrous film the doors just keep opening.

In *Pan's Labyrinth / El Laberinto del Fauno* Guillermo del Toro of Guadalajara, Mexico, creates two parallel worlds that intersect for people such as Ofelia. One is 1944, five years after the end of the Spanish Civil War, as Republicans keep trying to win back their country from the victorious Nationalists under General Francisco Franco and his dreaded *Guardias Civil*. Captain Vidal and his Nationalist soldiers are fighting against a small but determined group of Republican guerillas. Against doctors' recommendations, Vidal has his wife, Carmen (who is about to give birth), and her daughter, Ofelia (from her earlier marriage), chauffeured to his headquarters in a ruined mill in the forest. The film's other world reaches back before time, to the King and Queen of the Underworld, who await the return of their long-lost daughter, Princess Moanna. A faun and several spirits guard the labyrinth, the last open portal to the Underworld, waiting to guide the Princess through the three trials necessary for her to regain her rightful throne.

These two worlds make material what is true of orally told tales: although folktales are set in faraway realms, they are always also about our lives in the world at hand—human, contemporary, infinitely flawed. And that is why, in addition to all the other themes this multilayered film explores, it especially meditates on stories and storytelling. “Long ago in the Underground Realm,” the narrator begins, intoning the first words of the film and invoking timeless, castled pasts (p. 2, screenplay, [www.dailyscript.com/scripts/PansLabyrinthEnglishScreenplay.pdf](http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/PansLabyrinthEnglishScreenplay.pdf)).

And here, right at the start, unfolds one of the great pleasures of this film for those of us who love folktales: the chance to see on screen many favorite, resonant motifs and to experience “Oh, no” moments over and over because we know what's coming. Or we think we do. As Carmen and Ofelia are driven deeper and deeper into the woods, toward their new husband and father, Carmen sees her daughter reading a large book. “Fairy tales?” Carmen smiles condescendingly. “You're too old to be filling your head with such nonsense” (4). As soon as her words fade, she feels a wave of nausea and asks the driver to stop. Once out of the long black car, Ofelia finds a strange stone with an eye carved upon it. A breeze points her to a monolith bearing a faun figure who is missing an eye. We know: the mother, the pregnancy, the interdiction. And, of course, Ofelia re-places the stone in the hole.

Even as the narrator settles us into his story, del Toro unsettles us. For on the screen it is not a timeless, fairy-tale world alone that we see, but also people anchored in a particular historic moment, quite recognizable, rushing

along in a line of black Bentleys. Our pleasure lies not just in recognition of familiar motifs, but also in del Toro's making the familiar strange. Through the intersection of the two parallel worlds, del Toro challenges our storied expectations and offers commentary on war, obedience, gender relations, and storytelling.

Settings play a major part in the dialogue between fairy-tale and contemporary worlds. Tossed in a heap in the tyrannical Captain Vidal's study lay the gigantic mill wheel and wooden gears. The mill that provided flour and, thus, the staff of life itself now houses the Captain, who holds up a half loaf of bread, proclaiming that none in Franco's Spain will go hungry. And every night in his study, using tweezers and a jeweler's magnifying glass, Vidal oils and cleans the small gears and wheels of a gold and silver pocket watch that has a cracked glass (16).

The mill's kitchen, like the kitchens of the folktale world, resonates with significance. The kitchen is enormous; the open charcoal cook stove, itself, is two meters high and five meters wide (26). It is a place of women's work—and resistance. Mercedes, who manages the kitchen and befriends Ofelia, uses her trips to the woodpile to signal her brother, one of the guerrillas. We see her take a small sharp knife from its hiding place in the folds of her apron's waistband and chop an onion. Later that blade will save her life. Captain Vidal's trivialization of women proves his undoing.

Every major character has compelling, contradictory relationships to story, especially the Captain. At his sumptuous dinner party, the mayor's wife asks how Carmen and the Captain met. After Carmen tells her tale, the Captain slices through her one attempt at the loveliness story can provide: "Please forgive my wife," he says. "She hasn't been exposed to the world. She thinks these silly stories are interesting to others" (42).

Directly afterward, something more chilling is set in motion. The captain of the *Guardias Civil* dares to tell another personal story: he heard that the Captain's father, General Vidal, smashed his watch on a rock at the moment of his death so that his son, then very young, would "know the exact hour and minute of his father's death. So he would know how a brave man dies." "Nonsense!" sneers the Captain. "He didn't own a watch" (43). But we know otherwise. Why, though, does the Captain deny this story? His relationship with the fame of his general-father is obviously fraught, but the Captain also keeps his stories, like so much else, locked away. Only he can know them; only he will decide when, and if, they will be told.

This is the state of stories in the aboveground world. People's relationships with their stories are terribly fractured; they understand their stories—and their selves—only dimly. They think they can control stories. They demand stories from those they torture. Like Carmen, they can't allow themselves to

think about their stories; the pain is too great. "As you get older," Carmen screams at Ofelia, "you'll see that life isn't like your fairy tales. The world is a cruel place. And you'll learn that, even if it hurts. Ofelia!! Magic does not exist!" (76). Of course, Carmen is terribly wrong on several counts: fairy tales aren't just sugary sweet confections; life in 1944 Spain is quite like the story world of the Underground Realm; and she is about to die in childbirth—partially, it seems, because she has thrown into the fire the faun's magical mandrake root that had been keeping her and her baby alive.

Just as stories are mishandled, so words themselves have lost their meaning or have disappeared all together. "I want you to call him 'Father,'" Carmen instructs her daughter about Captain Vidal. "Do you hear me? 'Father.' It's just a word, Ofelia" (7). And when Ofelia asks Mercedes, "Do you know a lullaby?" her trusted friend must admit: "Only one, but I don't remember the words" (49).

Ofelia does her best to understand her aboveground and belowground lives and stories. Can she believe in the strange faun, with bugs crawling all over his hairy skin? And why, when he orders her about, does he sound so much like the Captain? She asks aboveground people for help with the belowground stories, but their replies offer little. Even Mercedes, hearing that Ofelia met fairies and a faun says, "When I was a little girl, I did [believe in fairies]. I believed in a lot of things that I don't believe any more. My mother warned me to be wary of fauns" (30–31). As she says those last words, Captain Vidal and his assistant walk toward her.

The film's ending speaks to these two worlds and their stories. Ofelia, murdered by Captain Vidal in the aboveground world, walks with wonder into the Underworld as Princess Moanna, having passed all three of the faun's tests. The story world, along with her father and mother, are alive for her; and she, within it. Aboveground, Vidal, ready at last to pass on his story, is denied the chance. As he hands his newborn son to Mercedes and the guerrillas, his captors, he pulls out his pocket watch: "Tell him about his father, about the time his father died." But Mercedes replies, "He won't even know your name" (95).

If Ofelia's brother never hears his full story, never knows who his "father" is, what then? *Are* some tales better left untold? After exploring these treacherous, vital realms of story, *Pan's Labyrinth* ends with yet another door wide open. Thank goodness.

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