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# Reviews

Marvels & Tales Editors

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*Féeries: Études sur le conte merveilleux XVIIᵉ–XIXᵉ siècle 5, Le Rire des conteurs.* Edited by Jean Mainil. Université Stendhal-Grenoble 3: UMR Lire, 2008. 186 pp.

In studying the late seventeenth-century French fairy tale as both a literary and sociocultural phenomenon that lasted well into the eighteenth century, over the last some thirty years various scholars have suggested that the particular use of the marvelous reveals a certain irony on the part of the authors. If the French fairy-tale writers seem to have directed this irony especially at the marvelous, the genre's use of the *invraisemblable* (improbable), its frequently naïve tone, and its association with folklore were all subject to a great deal of irony.

Many authors of literary fairy tales indeed sought to distance themselves by means of irony from the ways peasant storytellers used supernatural features. The pretext that their tales merely served an educational and moral purpose also functioned ironically in that the authors both imitated and manipulated purportedly naïve folktales in order to promote their modernist conception of literature. It seems, at least in certain passages, as though some authors made fun of the marvelous features at play in their narratives, presumably composed and read in irony. In his study *Mme d'Aulnoy et le rire des fées* (Mme. d'Aulnoy and the Laughter of the Fairies) (Paris: Kimé, 2001), Jean Mainil was one of the first to analyze the narratives and the genre itself as ironic fairy-tale writing. Interestingly enough, several other scholars have recently also taken a keen interest in the tales' comic and ironic dimensions.

After publishing four previous issues on topics as varied as "The Collection" (1/2003), "The Oriental Tales" (2/2004–2005), "Politics of the Tale" (3/2006), and "The Tale [as] the Stage" (4/2006), the journal *Féeries* dedicated its 2008 issue to examining the "Laughter of the Storytellers." This issue comprises eight articles investigating the role that irony, humor, parody, satire, and comedy assumed in the writing and performing of tales.

In his article "Le sourire des fées" (The Smile of the Fairies), Jean Mainil shows how already in the first French literary fairy tale, *L'île de la félicité* (The

Island of Happiness), published in 1690, Mme. d'Aulnoy endeavored to amuse her readers by referring to Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (a novel most of her readers probably knew, since it had been published earlier the same century) while making fun of the protagonists. The ways that Mme. d'Aulnoy makes calculated and ironic use of Cervantes's novel attest to the author's tendency to distance herself from her characters by means of irony.

Jean-Paul Sermain asks the question "Dans quel sens *Les Mille et Une Nuits* et les féeries classiques sont-elles comiques?" (In What Way Are the *Arabian Nights* and the Classical [i.e., seventeenth-century] Fairy Tales Comic?) In his article, Sermain relates the tales' comic features to the underlying narrative and semiotic logic of each story. In this context, he examines how the authors play on the discrepancies between realism and fantasy while associating the comic and ironic effects with the bizarre, unsettling, disquieting, or even fantastic elements at play in each tale.

Manuel Couvreur's article "Du Sourire à la Mosure: L'humour dans la traduction des *Mille et une nuits* par Antoine Galland" (From the Smile to the Bite: Humor in Antoine Galland's Translation of the *Arabian Nights*) deals with the humoristic features of both the original tale and the translation. Couvreur points out that, having only an incomplete manuscript at his disposal, Galland had to resort to his powers of invention to complete the last volumes. Couvreur's thorough analysis demonstrates how, while faithfully preserving the humoristic elements in translating the work's first part, Galland's translation even reinforces the humor in the second part of *Arabian Nights*.

In her article "Féeries à la foire" (Fairy Tales [on stage] at the Fair), Nathalie Rizzoni examines numerous, mostly unpublished, texts and excerpts from plays with a fairy-tale setting staged in the eighteenth century in order to show that the playwrights' insistence on comic features was incomparably stronger than the tendency to use comic elements apparent in other comedies or fairy tales written in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. In so doing, Rizzoni invites the reader to discover a very rich corpus of fairy-tale plays that has hitherto been largely ignored.

Françoise Gevrey's article "L'amusement dans *Grigri* de Cahusac" (Amusement in Cahusac's *Grigri*) studies the author's use of parody in an effort to amuse his readers. For instance, she explains how in choosing the names of his characters Louis de Cahusac immediately implies their trivial and petty nature. In mocking a court society that tends to reverse values, the author makes great fun of fashionable people, poets, and storytellers alike. Yet, according to Françoise Gevrey, while intended to make the reader laugh, the tale seems to avoid excessive laughter in that its humor is more reminiscent of Shaftesbury's derision than of plain comedy.

In "Les *Contes hiéroglyphiques* de Horace Walpole et la question du 'non-sense'" (Horace Walpole's Hieroglyphic Tales and the Question of "Non-sense"), Jan Herman sets out to demonstrate how Walpole's tales constitute an early example of the so-called nonsense that he considers so typically British and so rare in French tales. Herman's article analyzes the "nonsense" in Walpole's stories as resulting from the author's particular way of using anagrams, serial structures, and subverted proverbs that contribute to the text's peculiar "logic." Yet the "nonsense" merely serves to reinforce what Herman calls the "écriture de l'absurde" (the writing of the absurd) that informs the parody.

In his article "Le rictus moral de Marmontel" (The Moral Laughter of Marmontel), Nicolas Veysman shows that although the father of the moral tale, Jean-François Marmontel, defined his narratives as intended to make the reader laugh, the comic elements proved to be increasingly incompatible with morality. According to Veysman, after 1758 moral tales were thus more likely to make the reader cry instead. Yet, while narratives written in the style of Marmontel's tales became less and less amusing, so-called anti-moral and im-moral tales made much fun of moral tales. Equally, tales such as Voltaire's *Bégueule* and Dorat's *Combabus,* deliberately (and certainly not without irony) labeled as moral tales, offer much to laugh about.

Jean-François Perrin's article "Le règne de l'équivoque" (The Reign of Ambiguity) proposes a redefinition of tales written between 1730 and 1760 by authors such as Count Anthony Hamilton and Jean Jacques Rousseau, tales traditionally considered as satires and parodies. Perrin suggests redefining these tales by examining them in terms of mockery and irony, as evident in both language and literature, and the political dimensions of the libertine philosophy that informs the texts. Perrin concludes that the philosophical and critical potential of these works is proportional to their unsettling quality.

The "Laughter of the Storytellers," indicative of the ironic distance authors kept to both their narratives and characters, represents an intriguing aspect in reading and studying fairy tales. The papers published in this issue of *Féerie* constitute a valuable contribution to fairy-tale scholarship in that they investigate a significant dimension of storytelling. The research conducted by the scholars who contributed to this issue permits reading for humor or irony on the part of certain authors whose views and attitudes discernibly marked their narratives.

The above articles certainly attest to the solid scholarship of their authors. For students of the fairy tale, in the broadest sense of the term, this issue of *Féerie* allows for insight into various dynamics at play in composing or performing narratives with a fairy-tale setting. The authors indeed deserve great credit for exploring the humoristic, comic, ironic, and satirical potential of

several tales, an aspect that has received relatively little critical attention until quite recently. Their articles will no doubt encourage further research into the dynamic forces at work, especially the parts humor and irony play, in tale writing.

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***Handbuch zu den "Kinder- und Hausmärchen" der Brüder Grimm: Entstehung–Wirkung–Interpretation.*** *By Hans-Jörg Uther. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008. 526 pp.*

The *Handbuch zu den "Kinder- und Hausmärchen" der Brüder Grimm: Entstehung–Wirkung–Interpretation* (Handbook of the Grimm Brothers' "Children's and Household Tales": Origin–Impact–Interpretation) is a useful work of reference for students and scholars of fairy tales that provides critical and illuminating encyclopedia-style entries for each of the 250-some tales the Grimms published in their collections of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (KHM). The reference book was developed out of Hans-Jörg Uther's 1996 critically annotated edition of the KHM and demonstrates the author's extensive knowledge of the Grimms' tales, their history, reception, and interpretation. Uther, recipient of the 2005 Europäischer Märchenpreis, an award for scholars and organizations that have made significant contributions to the field and preservation of European fairy tales and folklore, accompanies the handbook's entries with a concise chapter on the tales' history, a select bibliography, and several indexes. The bibliography, instead of listing several thousand works, contains editions as well as critical texts chosen because they present new findings or important elaborations on older criticism. The exhaustive indexes enable the reader to quickly find entries based on sources, contributors, titles, locations, motifs, and themes of the tales.

The entries on individual tales, though succinct, provide sketches of each tale's literary and publication history, folkloric classification, descriptions of popular illustrations associated with the tale, and a select bibliography. The entries also contain details about the narratives' possible sources and their significance as well as thematic interconnectedness within the Grimms' complete works. The tales are, moreover, fully cross-referenced with other stories collected by the brothers. Characteristic illustrations of the narratives, though unfortunately not in color, can be found throughout, and the book even includes reproductions of two pages handwritten by Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm.

An invaluable feature of this handbook is that Uther documents and comments on all fairy tales published in the KHM editions, including the ten children's legends (*Kinderlegenden*) and those forty-six narratives that the Grimms excised over the course of the KHM's printing history in their lifetimes. The en-

tries on excised tales provide reasons for the brothers' decision to exclude, for example, the popular tales "*Blaubart*" (Bluebeard) and "*Der gestiefelte Kater*" (Puss in Boots) from KHM editions after their first publication in 1812; they also cross-reference other narratives that share similar motifs or plots.

These cross-references allow readers to easily locate connected texts, such as "*Blaubart,*" "*Der Räuberbräutigam*" (The Robber Bridegroom), and "*Fitchers Vogel*" (Fitcher's Bird). Uther discusses, in appropriate detail, the tales' similarities and differences and provides background information on the development of variations within the same tale type, accounting also for rewritings by the Grimms and later adaptations. For example, Uther points out that KHM 40, "*Der Räuberbräutigam,*" first published in 1812 based on the narration by Marie Hassenpflug and deemed incomplete, was significantly changed for the 1819 edition and replaced by the conjunction of two texts from Niederhessen. Several elements from the excised "*Blaubart*" were incorporated, in later editions, into both "*Der Räuberbräutigam*" and KHM 46, "*Fitchers Vogel.*"

In the entry on "*Fitchers Vogel,*" Uther explains that fairy tales of the type KHM 46 differ from those older *Blaubart* tales based on Charles Perrault's narrative in that they are structured according to the following themes: bride capture (*Brautraub*), woman in the control of a demonic being (rather than married to a rich man with a distinguishing physical mark), the prohibition to enter a certain room or open a specific door, death due to the failed obedience test, the youngest woman as successful adversary, wondrous reanimation and salvation, punishment of the tort-feasor. In addition, the clever and active role of the woman is much more prominent in KHM 46 than in the related tales "*Der Räuberbräutigam*" and "*Blaubart.*" As Uther points out, although the first two wives are killed in "*Fitchers Vogel,*" the third and youngest enters the marriage only in pretense and contributes significantly to the events that lead to her opponent's death.

While the individual entries thus also serve to establish connections between the narratives, the concluding chapter on the history of the KHM provides relevant general information on their earlier and literary history (*Frühgeschichte* and *Textgeschichte*), problems of genre (*Gattungsproblematik*), editing trends, illustrations, aftereffects, and approaches to interpretation. Moreover, Uther sketches the Grimm brothers' methods of collecting and comments on their competitors and their criteria for the tales' organization in the various editions. Further information is also provided here on the KHM's didactic and educational purposes, including the brothers' incorporation of Christian motifs and morality. In the section on *Sittenlehre und Erziehungsbuch* (Deontology and Educational Text), Uther discusses that while the first KHM edition of 1812 bore sociocritical traces, the later KHM show a clear tendency toward the reinforcement of the social status quo, following the Lutheran idea

of the distribution of wealth and poverty as God-given. In fact, the number of new tales in which the male and female protagonists are characterized as pious and obedient grew with each edition, and around thirty tales feature a narrator who in commenting on the events draws particular attention to a Christian morality.

This concluding chapter thus rounds out a successful and well-researched reference book that will make a useful and informative addition to the libraries of fairy-tale students and scholars.

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*The Arabian Nights in Transnational Perspective.* Edited by Ulrich Marzolph. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2007. xvi + 362 pp.

*The Arabian Nights* has captured the imaginations of European readers since the early eighteenth century, when in 1704–1717 Antoine Galland published his immensely popular and influential *Les Mille et une Nuits, contes arabes traduit en français.* Addressing that longstanding and ongoing popularity, *The Arabian Nights in Transnational Perspective* is a collection of nineteen essays that developed out of a 2004 symposium commemorating the three-hundredth anniversary of Galland's work, but which moves far beyond the European frame of reference. As Ulrich Marzolph notes in his introduction to this volume, *Alf Layla wa-Layla,* the *Arabian Nights,* is a kind of "shape shifter" (xvi), a text that has repeatedly crossed boundaries of language, time, culture, and medium. The wide-ranging essays included here certainly attest to the complexities of the sources, manifestations, adaptations, and influence of *Alf Layla wa-Layla*—not only in forms of print culture, but also in the visual arts and oral traditions. The result is a collection that is truly interdisciplinary and international, extremely ambitious in scope. A thread that could have bound these essays together—namely, the "transnational perspective" of the book's title—is not articulated as powerfully as it could be, nor is it situated in terms of critical debates around transnationalism that have engaged political scientists, anthropologists, and media scholars for two decades.

The book is organized into five sections, and it seems fitting that the first is concerned with Galland and the resonance of his *Contes Arabes* with other forms of French writing—in this case, the later eighteenth-century French fiction of Jacques Cazotte. The contributions by Aboubakr Chraïbi, Sylvette Larzul, and Joseph Sadan suggest the extent to which a number of blurred boundaries—between scholarship and literary creation, the oral and the written, the familiar and the exotic—are negotiated in eighteenth-century France, where they become central to both learned and literary discourses. Further editorializing could have foregrounded the ways these three essays speak to or

complicate some of the current understandings of transnationalism, including what Homi Bhabha has called "counter-narratives of the nation" (*Nation and Narration,* 1990), those counter-hegemonic narratives that challenge and disturb essentialist constructions of national identity.

The four essays in the second section of the volume, "Texts and Contexts of the *Arabian Nights,*" examine thematic concerns in the tales (as in Hasan El-Shamy's study of sibling relationships and Robert Irwin's piece on political philosophies) and textual histories (such as Gert Jan van Gelder's study of tales, both within and beyond the *Nights,* which feature a slave girl as a central and generally admirable character). At least one of the essays in this part of the book has the potential to speak directly to the "transnational" concerns suggested by the volume's title and established in section one: Heinz Grotzfeld's study of the text's manuscript history. Grotzfeld's contribution demonstrates that long before Galland, Arabic compilers and copyists made efforts to produce "complete" versions of the *Nights,* capitalizing on the text's popularity and marketability. Grotzfeld's essay also includes embedded observations that have the potential of challenging prevailing "wisdom" regarding the European manipulation and commodification of the *Nights'* content and distinctive narrative form. Nineteenth-century Britons frequently cited the formal structure of the text—its division into "nights," which interrupt the flow of Shahrazad's storytelling—as a mark of cultural difference, as characteristically oriental and too tedious for modern British sensibilities. Grotzfeld's work suggests that the impatient British common readers of the nineteenth century had Arabic "forerunners in the tenth century" (54), and once again the citation of the *Nights* as an aesthetic manifestation of otherness is revealed to be highly problematic.

The two essays that comprise the third section, "Framing as Form and Meaning," offer fascinating comparative perspectives on the narrative that sets the *Nights* in motion, the frame story that establishes the Shahrazad as storyteller. In her contribution, Sadhana Naithani examines the respective frame stories of the *Nights* and the *Panchtantra,* both "stories about storytelling," while Lee Haring's piece draws on folklore fieldwork to suggest that framing itself crosses communicative boundaries, serving as potential metacommentary on performance dynamics and social relations. While the *Nights'* frame story is often regarded as one of the most distinctive features of the work, these pieces illuminate some of the significant continuities between texts and between the strategies employed in oral and literary forms of storytelling.

The fourth section of the volume, "Translation, Adaptation, and Reception," offers case studies that situate the *Nights* in the politics of culture of several diverse locales (including East Africa, Turkey, Iran, and Germany), complicating our understandings of the place of the *Nights* in discursive constructions of national identities and differences. For example, Cristina Bacchilega and Noelani

Arista discuss selections from the *Nights* as they appeared in a nineteenth-century Hawaiian newspaper. In their analyses of these nineteenth-century translations from English to Hawaiian, Bacchilega and Arista discovered critically neglected transnational perspectives on the *Nights*—as they served constructions of the Western imagination rather than those of the "fantastic Orient" (178).

In the final section of the volume, "The *Arabian Nights* in International Oral Tradition," Francesca Maria Corrao and Marilena Papachristophoru examine parallels to the *Nights* found in archives of tales collected in Sicily and Greece, respectively, while Margaret Mills and Sabir Badalkhan ground their pieces in their own fieldwork—Mills in Afghanistan and Badalkhan in Pakistani Balochistan. These last two essays offer particularly compelling accounts of the blurring and mutual influence of oral and print traditions in the history and ongoing interpretation of the *Nights*.

*The Arabian Nights in Transnational Perspective* is an ambitious collection, but there are some missed opportunities here for truly interdisciplinary *dialogue*. The implications of the volume's essays, not only for researchers already interested in the *Nights* but also for those who focus on discourses of the national and the global, are left largely unexplored, but should provide impetus for further research, analysis, and debate.

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*Les Mille et une nuits: Entre Orient et Occident.* By Jean-Paul Sermain. Paris: Desjonquères, 2009. 201 pp.

In many respects Jean-Paul Sermain's *Les Mille et une nuits: Entre Orient et Occident* reads more like an essay than a scholarly book, at least as scholars in the American tradition might expect a book to be structured and written. Sermain focuses on the poetic value of the *Arabian Nights,* and throughout he looks at the ways Antoine Galland rewrites the *Nights* to create a hybrid Oriental-Occidental text. However, the book's meanderings do not necessarily follow a clear development and at times read like ruminations. For example, chapter 4 revolves around Galland and his "putting the *Arabian Nights* into French" and all that this implies, arguments touched on earlier in the book, which creates some unnecessary repetition. This chapter would have been better situated at the beginning of the book, setting up the context for the other chapters about the formal and moral structures of the *Nights,* as well as what the *Nights* say about French and Arab cultures. I also would have liked to have seen more solid documentation and depth to statements regarding, for instance, the contribution of Antoine Galland's translation to the cultivation of "scholarly curiosity about the Orient and more specifically about the *Nights*" (14, all quotations are my translation). This remark leads one to wonder what was happening at

the level of official institutions of Orientalism and the organization of knowledge about the Orient before and after the publication of the *Nights*. Finally, Sermain insists on the nonideological quality of the text, which his own readings at times appear to contradict and which ignores the complex ideological tensions inherent in the creation of such a hybrid text.

Sermain opens by comparing Galland to the porter of "The Story of the Porter and the Three Dervishes." As "porter" of oriental tales, Galland seeks to share Arab morality and civilization with a Western public. For Galland's readers, these tales are simultaneously strange and familiar (Sermain mentions at one point the uncanny), because despite the strangeness of oriental culture expressed through the tales, they nevertheless articulate a political spirit, a sense of humanity, and a taste for magnificence with which French readers could identify. At the same time, Galland renders the tales familiar to French readers by grafting elements of French language, culture, and literature onto his version of the *Nights*.

In the same way that Sermain tries to create a parallel between Galland and the porter, he also establishes a parallel between the quartered body of Cassim, Ali Baba's brother, that is sewed back together, and the texts of the *Nights* that Galland unites into a coherent, overarching narrative. Sermain notes some of the changes Galland made to the source story related to him by the Syrian storyteller Hanna, including Ali Baba's name (Galland transcribed the name of Hanna's hero as "Hogia Baba") and the title (originally "The Ruses of Morgiane"). Sermain associates the opening of the cave door and the magnificent treasures it hides to Western fantasies of the East. Sermain reads the tale in terms of the concealment of crime (as essential elements of the narrative) and the revelation of crime, which is the story itself. He views the tale as "the articulation between a struggle of power and ability . . . and the solidarity among criminals" (31). Through his reading of "Ali Baba" Sermain also insists on the emphasis in the *Nights* on "the production and manipulation of signs" (32).

I found Sermain's insistence on the nonideological nature of the *Nights* problematic. He states: "The relation between the frame and the stories in *The Arabian Nights* is not ideological, but dramatic. As such, it conforms better to the nature of the tale" (41). Later Sermain insists, and rightly so, that characters who tell stories in an attempt to communicate a moral or political message find that the message itself never quite gets delivered, for the embedded listeners—including Scheherazade—often do precisely the opposite, for better and for worse, of what the interpolated tale advises. What remains is the aesthetic control the teller exercises to surprise and appeal to the listener. In other words, controlling the behavior of the listener does not happen at the level of the content of the tale, but rather at the level of its formal aesthetic qualities that attaches and surprises the listener.

I find this argument compelling, but perhaps some nuance of the argument is needed. Even if moral messages are not always directly communicated to listeners (Scheherazade never explicitly condemns Schariar's abuse of women), they nevertheless circuitously address pertinent issues. Nearly all of the tales treat the question of the abuse of arbitrary power, which Sermain does mention later in his discussion. In fact, when discussing the set of tales belonging to the "Fisherman and the Genie" sequence, Sermain declares, "The narrative does not respond to the intention of the fisherman but it leads the genie to view with horror his actions and reform himself" (51). Here Sermain seems to suggest that although not immediately ideological, the tales can in fact have the effect of modifying behavior for moral or political reasons, exemplified by the fact that Schariar never has Scheherazade killed.

Overall Sermain's book is an eclectic look at *The Arabian Nights.* At moments he provides some understanding of why these tales were so appealing to the French reading public of the 1700s. For instance, he reads into the *Nights'* connections with Jean de La Fontaine's fables, Blaise Pascal's conceptions of force versus justice, and the salonlike appeal of Scheherazade. Sermain foregrounds the internal tensions between interpolated tales and frame narratives, the often ambiguous if not ambivalent relation to the moral of the tales, and finally, he celebrates Galland's sincere interest in and appreciation of the Orient and the oriental tale. Although Sermain provides many interesting insights into the *Nights,* his arguments could have been made more convincingly with a crisper organization, more solid documentation, and a deeper probe into the cultural, institutional, and political context in which Galland produced his Franco-Arab version of *The Arabian Nights.*

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***Archaeology of Intangible Heritage****. By Francisco Vaz da Silva. International Folkloristics, Vol. 4. New York: Peter Lang, 2008. 191 pp.*

In this densely argued book, Francisco Vaz da Silva invites us to uncover the root meanings of the metaphors commonly used in our cultures and, in so doing, recover the lost connections to our "intangible heritage." Although the book's title appears to be paradoxical, since archaeology should deal with "tangible" artifacts, the author competently applies archaeological methodology to investigate the "intangible," conceptual dimension of familiar metaphors and imagery that we regularly use without acknowledging their cosmic connotations. In so doing, Vaz da Silva asks questions that might sound relatively childlike, such as "why should horns and cuckoos be the attributes of the unhappy husband?" (7). Yet his answers to such questions are sophisticatedly

formed through careful analysis and examination of key literary works, documents, popular religious texts, and ritual practices from the classical period to contemporary folk beliefs, in Europe as well as in Melanesia. This highly impressive assortment of primary sources, along with Vaz da Silva's archaeological approach to the concepts, helps restore back from oblivion the mythical meanings of otherwise apparently trivial metaphors.

This book is divided into three parts. The first part, "Physiology," begins by investigating the notion of the transmissible sexual horns and thereby introduces the reader to the world of esoteric folklores and folk practices. Vaz da Silva focuses in particular on the human body, sexuality, and gender relations in all their grotesque details. The chapters abound with tales of bodily fluids and secretions, drawn widely from sources across time and space. Through such an archaeological project, the reader is brought face to face with a folk theory of anatomy and the gender hierarchy inherent in such a theory. Vaz da Silva convincingly takes the reader on a trip from specific cultural beliefs and practices to a universal folk frame of reference that struggles to explain human existence and connect various observable phenomena under a single, coherent worldview. Semen, milk, and menstruation become linked to the wider world of seasons, plants, and animals. This interconnected worldview is precisely what we have lost as metaphors seep into general usage and are reduced to words without meaning.

The second part, aptly named "Metaphysics," moves on from the physicality of the first part to the realm beyond the physical. Vaz da Silva takes off from the folk worldview at the end of part one to explore female dominance of the cycle of life and men's struggles to define their existence and superiority within this cycle. The cycle of life then becomes another step in Vaz da Silva's argument to propose that the key characteristic of folk worldview is the cyclical cosmos. The folkloric world that Vaz da Silva describes has no beginning and end. Instead the cycle turns relentlessly, and there is neither birth without death nor death without birth. The second part ends with a discussion of the blurred boundaries between the linear Christian worldview and the cyclical folk worldview as different beliefs and practices meet and merge.

The third part, "Transpositions," excavates the remains of such "intangible heritage" in the idioms of Christianity. Vaz da Silva locates imagery from the cyclical worldview in premodern Christian sources, such as an illumination in a late thirteenth-century manuscript of the Gospel of Nicodemus, and argues that it is only in the modern era that cyclical cosmology disappears, leaving only traces without meaning. In the epilogue, Vaz da Silva laments the repeated failure to understand the outlook of traditional cultures from a presentist viewpoint, which imposes our contemporary linear worldview on texts and images that are

so enmeshed in the cyclical worldview. Vaz da Silva calls for a restoration of our "intangible heritage" and ends by noting that with moon phases, daily cycles, and seasonal revolutions, all humans live under cyclical conditions. Thus, making sense of the world through cyclicality should not come as a surprise.

Overall, Vaz da Silva's book provides an astonishingly fresh perspective in a book that is clearly and concisely written. While scholars have long discovered elements of sexuality and reproduction in folktales, Vaz da Silva fascinatingly integrates all these elements into a cyclical frame of reference that includes reincarnation as well. The use of a very broad range of texts to support the argument, however, is both a strength and a weakness in this book. While reading the works of Pliny the Elder, Hildegard of Bingen, and Dante Alighieri as well as the Bible, a Hindu scripture, and the folktales of Melanesia to uncover the same cyclical worldview is certainly plausible, the book could gain from Vaz da Silva's providing more of a justification for such a monolithic reading of such a range of diverse sources. Another theoretical issue not explicitly tackled by Vaz da Silva is the distinction between what is folk and what is not. While the absence of such a discussion may be intentional to avoid setting a totalitarian conceptual model in place, a fuller discussion of Vaz da Silva's opinions of this distinction would be helpful. Overall, *Archaeology of Intangible Heritage* is not only suitable for folklore specialists but is also recommended for everyone who is interested in cultural heritage.

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***Once Upon a Time: Myth, Fairy Tales, and Legends in Margaret Atwood's Writing.*** *Edited by Sarah A. Appleton. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2008. 186 pp.*

But for Shuli Barzilai's lively account of tracking a new intertext (the Tasmanian tiger and written reports thereof) in Atwood's writing, Sarah Appleton's collection might be better subtitled "Or, Essays in Honor of Sharon Rose Wilson." With the exception of Atwood's early novel *Life before Man* (1979) the essays here largely focus on writings published since Wilson's book and, as such, supplement it. Wilson's (then-)definitive text, *Margaret Atwood's Fairy Tale Sexual Politics* (1993), is therefore a common intertext for these essays, although it is cited in only four of the nine chapters. Wilson herself updates her book and other writings with her essay on *The Blind Assassin* (2000), "Fairy Tales, Myths, and Magic Photographs in *The Blind Assassin*," first published in 2002.

In this sense the book is a useful supplement and tribute (to Atwood, to Wilson) but does not redefine the terms of either one of these writers. Theodore F. Scheckels's essay, "No Princes Here: Male Characters in Margaret

Atwood's Fiction," provides a tidy taxonomy in five groups: Dark, Shadowy, Comic, Sad, and Unfinished Princes. His groupings are sound, his examples faultless, but the essay reads like a fond walk down a memory lane of Atwood's characters, and this is the tone of the book as a whole. Sarah Appleton's essay, "Myths of Distinction; Myths of Extinction in Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*," uses Jungian psychology to analyze the novel and its main protagonist, Jimmy. Carol Osborne's essay, "Mythmaking in Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*," uses mythography as another means of psychoanalyzing Jimmy. Shannon Hengen's brief contribution, "Staging Penelope: Margaret Atwood's Changing Audience," shifts ground "from page to stage," but does not bring a new context to bear in analyzing the results. A context in adaptation studies, such as that by Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006), is still wanting. Coral Ann Howells, in "'We Can't Help but Be Modern': *The Penelopiad*," does a better job of providing contexts for the titular work and grounds it in several contexts: Gothic constructions, female tricksters, and female revisionist "herstory." However, all are familiar to Atwood, readers of Atwood, and readers of Howells's own wonderful work. Similarly, although the research in Kathryn VanSpanckeren's "Atwood's Female Crucifixion: 'Half-Hanged Mary'" is new and thorough (both excellent virtues), by now the topoi are worn. The chapter supplies a lack in Wilson's book by, again, including a work published after Wilson's prior text but one that would be perfectly at home in Wilson's book.

The two contributions that feel like the freshest territory are those by Karen Stein and Shuli Barzilai. Although Stein's essay cites Wilson early, it brings a new look to an old novel, and one that Stein suggests is "Atwood's least studied work" (95). Stein examines the constellation of signs dividing realism from myth in the novel and reads a hopeful result, one that counters the prevailing criticism on *Life before Man*. Out on a limb in this collection, Barzilai rejects the terms of *Once Upon a Time* at the outset: "On occasion, however, Atwood does something else. She tells a story that only appears to belong to one or more of these categories. Rather than a reinterpretation and rewriting of an earlier tale, it becomes clear on closer examination that the tale is her own invention. She is not pouring old wine into a new bottle" (127). Whether it is Atwood or Barzilai or both, the resulting essay feels innovative.

However, as Carol Osborne writes of Jimmy in *Oryx and Crake*: "He cannot depend on the old narratives; it is not enough to parrot what has come before" (39). *Once Upon a Time* is solid, useful, comfortable, and familiar, but in the main this story has been told before and Appleton's introduction offers no compelling reason to revisit it.

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*Red Riding Hood for All Ages: A Fairy-Tale Icon in Cross-Cultural Contexts.*
*By Sandra L. Beckett. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2008. 244 pp.*

*Red Riding Hood for All Ages* is Sandra Beckett's second book devoted to retellings of the tale of Little Red Riding Hood. The first book, *Recycling Red Riding Hood* (2002), focused on contemporary versions of the fairy tale for children. Beckett's 2008 study, as her title announces, examines what she calls "crossover works" that appeal to children, adolescents, and adults in a wide range of international contexts. "The multiple layers of the short tale," as Beckett explains, "make it a perfect subject for multiple readerships" (3). Although Beckett looks at some works dating from the early and mid-twentieth century, most versions discussed in *Red Riding Hood for All Ages* have appeared since the 1970s and reflect current concerns and issues.

Beckett includes both pictorial and textual reinterpretations of "Little Red Riding Hood" in her study. The many black-and-white drawings and color plates reproduced in *Red Riding Hood for All Ages* conclusively demonstrate the tale's continuing ability to inspire visual artists. Although repeatedly retold in words and images by previous generations, the tale has evidently not been "used up" or superannuated; on the contrary, as Beckett shows, it remains an inexhaustible source and resource for new generations of authors and illustrators. In addition, one of the important contributions of Beckett's book is its discussion of literary recastings of the fairy tale that have never before been translated into English and are inaccessible to most English-speaking readers. With the assistance of multilingual friends and colleagues, Beckett has been able to examine versions that have appeared to date only in Afrikaans, Catalan, Dutch, Hungarian, Japanese, Norwegian, Portuguese, and Swedish, among other languages, and that represent a large number of countries in several continents. Similarly, the impressive examples of modern revisualizations of Red Riding Hood's story assembled in this study also represent diverse styles and cultures.

Each of the five chapters of *Red Riding Hood for All Ages* has a distinct thematic focus. Chapter 1, "Cautionary Tales for Modern Riding Hoods," deals with versions in the venerable tradition of the *Warnmärchen* that rework the tale as a warning for women of all ages against abuse by rapacious men. The themes of violence and rape continue to predominate in many visual and verbal revisions of the story, bringing to mind (if such reminders are necessary) the age-old adage that the more some things change, the more they tend to stay the same. Chapter 2, "Contemporary Riding Hoods Come of Age," examines versions in which the initiatory aspect of the tale is foregrounded. The encounter with the wolf in these renditions serves the story of the heroine's coming of age and often entails her initiation into sexuality. In some of these retellings "Little Red Riding Hood" becomes a love story, a romance between girl and wolf, in which the cautionary tradition is obscured or forgotten.

Chapters 3 to 5 consider various innovative approaches to the tale that focus on "wolfhood" rather than on girl-or womanhood. Chapter 3 presents the wolf's story from different perspectives, including first-person retellings by the wolf himself. In most of these versions, the wolf is no longer simply or solely an aggressor and victimizer—the Big Bad Wolf of Disney Studio fame. As the reader learns, many writers and artists have chosen to spring the wolf out of his stereotypical entrapment in the traditional tale and recast him as victimized, slandered, and betrayed. Chapter 4, "The Wolf Within," examines encounters in which the figure of the predator is interiorized. In these instances, the wolf's symbolic function as an incarnation of human fears is not projected out onto the world; rather, it is experienced as a revelation of dark elements, of "inner demons" that are an integral part of Red Riding Hood's own psyche (133). The title of chapter 5, "Running with the Wolves," alludes to Clarissa Pinkola Esté's Jungian-inspired analysis of the psychic affinities between women and wolves, *Women Who Run With the Wolves* (1992). The authors and illustrators whose works are discussed in this chapter have chosen to break out of the standard story mold or, more positively put, to rebuild the tale by portraying protagonists who keep the company of wolves, or tame them, or become wolves themselves. Instead of running away *from* the wolf world, they join forces *with* it. As Beckett notes, these adventurous Red Riding Hoods "embrace and cultivate their wolfish nature" (203), thereby challenging the usual cultural construction of the story and its (re)inscription of conservative gender roles. Inherited social patterns—specifically, the feminine victim-prey position as opposed to the masculine victimizer-predator position—are thoroughly undermined in these revisions of the fairy tale.

This overview of *Red Riding Hood for All Ages* can only point to the richness and detail of its comprehensive content. Beckett's international assembly of Red Riding Hood materials constitutes a valuable resource to which students and scholars will turn in years to come. However, because Beckett has worked so long and closely on this one tale and devoted two books to its numerous interpretations, it is hardly surprising to find that her expertise, or what she herself describes as an "obsession" and "fixation," leads her, at times, to lose sight of the whole fairy-tale forest and what lies beyond it (10, 11). Thus her introduction offers a definitive but questionable assessment: "Little Red Riding Hood's well-known tale is undoubtedly the most effective of all literary intertexts" (3). Yet while some readers may want to quibble with Beckett's "most . . . of all," and suggest other possible candidates for this vaunted literary status, they are unlikely to entertain any doubts, after *Red Riding Hood for All Ages,* of the enduring appeal and effectiveness of the story of the little girl and the wolf.

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*Rhetorics of Fantasy.* By Farah Mendlesohn. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2008. 336 pp.

*Rhetorics of Fantasy,* by Sarah Mendlesohn, should sit on the bookshelf of the dedicated fantasy reader who yearns for quality research on this popular, yet rarely systematically analyzed, genre. It belongs beside earlier generic classification projects: John Clute and John Grant's *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1997), Michael Swanwick's *The Postmodern Archipelago: Two Essays on Science Fiction and Fantasy* (1997), Diane Wynne Jones's *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland* (1996), David Pringle's *Modern Fantasy: The Hundred Best Novels* (1988), and Baird Searles, Beth Meacham, and Michael Franklin's classic *Reader's Guide to Fantasy* (1982). These nonfiction works have placed diverse stories into historical and thematic clusters, mapping the mega-genre of fantasy—which imagines life, as Lord Dunsany famously defined, "beyond the fields we know." Today the reach of this "beyond" expands into new territories, from high fantasy to "weird fiction," from urban horror to fairy-tale adaptations, from contemporary takes on magical realism to paranormal romances—making taxonomy virtually impossible. Fantasy, like its rationalist twin, science fiction, contains subgenres, conventions, and modes without neatly delineated borders; Brian Attebery called its scope a "fuzzy set" of works, instead of consensually chartable canon(s).

This challenge has not dissuaded Mendlesohn, faculty member at London's Middlesex University, from categorizing nearly two hundred famous books of fantasy from the late 1800s to the present, using the tools of literary theory, particularly from rhetoric, narratology, and semiotics. In *Rhetorics of Fantasy* she poses the question, "Where are we asked to stand in relationship to the fantastic?" (xviii). Her rubric evaluates how an author positions the implied reader with respect to a story's fantastic elements: "How do we meet the fantastic? In what ways does this meeting affect the narrative and rhetorical choices? . . . [I]n what way does the choice of language affect the construction of the fantastic and the position of the reader? What ideological consequences emerge from the rhetorical structures?" (xviii). She foregrounds, through close textual readings, the implied reader's relationship to the fictional protagonist: specifically, the implied reader's affective experience of the protagonist engaging the fantastic. This reader-centric methodology is her major contribution to fantasy studies.

A speculative fiction editor and leader in the International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts and the World Science Fiction Convention, Mendlesohn draws upon professional knowledge and colleagues' opinions to place fantasy works into four rhetorical categories: the *portal-quest fantasy,* the *immersive fantasy,* the *intrusion fantasy,* and the *liminal fantasy.* Evaluating about twenty works for each mode, Mendlesohn sidesteps commonsensical taxonomies of

genre: by predictable themes, plotlines, or character types; sociohistorical contexts; authors; or symbolic/ideological meanings. Instead, she incorporates these factors into evaluating how the rhetorical modes shape an author's narrative patterns and thus the story's narrative structure; then how these formal elements, in turn, influence the author's rhetorical positions and therefore the linguistic choices through which the author connects the implied reader to the fantastic in the story. This structuralist logic allows Mendlesohn to analyze emotional effects of the author's style, tone, and voice, on the implied reader, and to assess the implied reader's agency vis-à-vis the implied author.

In the *portal-quest fantasy* the protagonist "leaves her familiar surroundings and passes through a portal into an unknown place" (1). The rhetorical strategy blocks the implied reader from asserting readings of the text different from those set by the dominant narrative pattern, thus reducing her to the protagonist's passive companion on a predetermined journey. *Reverie,* a stylistic trope, over-narrativizes the protagonist's exact thoughts to the implied reader. The plot device of the protagonist's heroic *destiny* emphasizes the teleological nature of history within the story world, minimizing the protagonist's and implied reader's abilities to develop interpretive agency and alternative actions. Touristic maps are offered to the implied reader as "truthful" knowledge of ambiguous lands to be explored/colonized by outsiders. Lacking "real depth, history, religion, and politics," these lands are "orientalized into the 'unchanging past'" (15).

In the *immersive fantasy,* set in a fictional place "built so that it functions on levels as a complete world" (59), details hypnotize the implied reader into believing she "is as much a part of the world as are those being read about" (59). The narrative, cocooned within "concentric shells of (reader) belief" (62), remains protected from external reality. Unlike other fantasy modes, which reinforce the boundary between the real and not-real, the immersive narrative dwells in "the reality of the fantastic" (61). Language builds coherency and depth of the world's characters, history, and environment, so the implied reader accepts the world not as mimetic, but empirically existing. The author employs realist techniques: "antagonistic" protagonists who problem-solve and debate; point-of-view characters; matter-of-fact tone; fictional vocabularies; sagelike omniscient narrators; exposition-prone side characters; and reader knowledge built from small details to a general worldview. Since the narrative "shows" instead of "tells," the implied reader encounters the fantastic in a contextualized way. In *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West,* author Gregory Maguire maneuvers the implied reader's knowledge to "imprison the reader within her immersion, to use the sense of expectation to seal off the fantastic and make it real" (99). He assembles point-of-view characters to build a 360-degree portrayal of Elphaba, accruing the implied reader's

knowledge of the world alongside knowledge of this protagonist as the world's "metaphorical edifice" (101). Characters discuss the nature and politics of Oz, reifying the land: "The arguable world is the revealed world" (101).

Using the immersive fantasy rubric, Mendlesohn assesses fairy-tale adaptations by Greer Gilman, Nalo Hopkinson, and Alan Garner. She perceives fairy tales as stories played out in endless variations, with modern authors shifting actors, plot, and language, in response to the implied reader's "tendency to resist the power of story" (103). Hopkinson, in her menarche story "Riding the Red" and its revised monologue, "Red Rider," plays with dialect—respectively using Cheshire English to adapt "Red Riding Hood" into the Caribbean tale-telling tradition, then using the Jamaican vernacular in a more local, less European story requiring greater reader attention. Hopkinson deploys language to expand her implied readership, to "draw readers into a world sung in a language not quite their own" (103).

In the *intrusion fantasy* "the world is ruptured by the intrusion, which disrupts normality and has to be negotiated with or defeated, sent back to whence it came, or controlled" (115). The implied reader journeys from denial to acceptance of the fantastic, as an otherworldly intruder invades the protagonist's life and drags her from the mundane world to the intruder's magical one. The implied reader follows the protagonist's emotional path, from naïveté about the fantastic's existence to heightened sensitivity about living in a permeable world. This changing awareness is achieved rhetorically through push-pull, cyclical rhythms of "suspension and release, latency and escalation, hesitation and remorselessness" (115) and aural description. Language shifts from what the protagonist *knows* about her static world to what the protagonist *senses* to the contrary, escalating into hyperbole of pace and tone, with identical episodes ending in new stability, before the next intrusion. Mendlesohn reads Lucy's character arc in *Dracula,* for example, as moving away from her unaware social circle into a sharpened sense of the vampire threat, "a movement away from the safety of the consensual world . . . toward intimacy with the intrusion" (128).

Though Mendlesohn declines to place traditional fairy tales in this category, because "they take place in the realm of fancy, rather than fantasy; their magic is part of the background context of the world, even though they disrupt the lives of the protagonists" (146), she discusses fairy-tale tropes as intrusions within modern fantasy. Popular from the 1980s, such stories posit fairy-tale characters in urban settings to create a muted sense of the absurd in the implied reader. Mendlesohn argues that these "*indigenous* fantasies" (147), as Attebery calls them, deny history rather than re-create it: "Repeatedly we can see that the American indigenous fantasy draws on European folklore, not the legends of the indigenes" (147). Beneath the threats of invasion, kidnap-

ping, and contamination by otherworldly visitors in the intrusion fantasy lies a colonialist discourse.

In the *liminal fantasy* the implied reader undergoes *equipoise,* a kind of Todorovian hesitation, as she experiences doubt, possibly with the protagonist, over whether the fantastic exists. Notoriously genre-crossing, this mode allows multiple interpretations, positioning the reader in an opposite rhetorical space from the portal-quest fantasy. Dissonance, bewilderment, strangeness, irony, and ambiguity mark this mode, where the fantastic feels both improper and taken for granted. Characters "do expect strange things to happen . . . but they still mark them as strange" (193).

Mendlesohn invites writers and readers of speculative fiction to debate this classification system. She acknowledges her unsystematic selection of texts and the nonexclusive nature of the rubric, which can be combined with other typologies (e.g., with Clute's fantasy structure as "wrongness," "thinning," "recognition," and "healing/return"). She also tests her model with potentially exceptional cases. For instance, "magical realism" by Gabriel García Márquez and Isabelle Allende, when held up to the immersive rubric, "only becomes fantastical because we Anglo-American readers are outsiders" (107), says Mendlesohn, making a critical distinction about diversity of readership. Mendlesohn's open, reflexive approach constitutes an invitation to critical discussion, a refreshingly feminist practice in the masculine world of speculative fiction genre studies.

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