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Reviews

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REVIEWS

Archetypes and Motifs in Folklore and Literature: A Handbook. Edited by Jane Garry and Hasan El-Shamy. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2005. xxxv + 515 pp.

Despite some lacunae due to the broad scope of the six-volume work, Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk Literature* has certainly remained an invaluable and indispensable research tool for all students of folk narrative for half a century. Jane Garry and Hasan El-Shamy intend their handbook as an introduction to Thompson's monumental work while presenting "in-depth essays on a few . . . motifs . . . of primary significance." After providing a historical overview of methods used in devising motif indexes and describing the structure of Thompson's *Motif-Index*, the editors conclude that his failure to consider psychological principles calls for rectification. Both Freudian and Jungian methods for analyzing folktales are no doubt capable of providing much helpful insight into psychological factors at play in the narratives. The ten-page introduction to this handbook expressly emphasizes the need for including Jungian approaches in folklore study. As evident in the title, in editing this collection of sixty-six essays, Garry and El-Shamy seek to extend the investigation beyond motifs to archetypes. Accordingly, the editors introduce the reader to the notion of archetype, as derived from Carl Gustav Jung's psychoanalytical studies and applied to literary theory, while differentiating it from the concept of motif.

In addition to making their case for elaborating on archetypes, the editors provide a six-page guide for using this book, explaining how they organized the essays according to the subject headings Thompson used in his *Motif-Index*. Whereas the sections of this handbook follow the organization of the *Motif-Index*, the editors chose to amplify three of Thompson's subject headings and to refine some of his descriptions. As such, this book comprises entries written by twenty-four prominent scholars, with ten essays being contributed by Garry and four by El-Shamy.

Given the number of entries, it is possible here to provide only an overview of a few selected sections, all of which vary greatly in length. The largest section, organized around the subject heading "Mythological Motifs," presents ten essays examining (1) the nature of the creator integrating opposites and contraries; (2) various motifs in the hero cycle; (3) the dying or departing god motif in mythologies and mystery religions; (4) the creation myth as a symbolic and sacred narrative; (5) the complicated relationship between gods and giants in mythologies; (6) the doomsday motif in religions and present-day culture; (7) the origin of Pentecost; (8) the confusion of tongues motif in creation myths; (9) motifs that serve to explain and justify inequalities in myths, legends, and folktales; and (10) hermaphroditism in ancient creation myths, folklore, and popular culture.

The second section includes five entries under the term "Mythical Animals." These essays deal with (1) mythical beasts and hybrids in mythology and folk narratives; (2) the dragon motif in mythology, folktales, elite literature, and popular culture; (3) mythical birds in stories from India, Persia, Turkey, China, and Egypt; (4) the leviathan motif in international folklore; and (5) the motif of marriage and/or love between humans and magical animals.

The eight essays in section 4 involve the subject "Magic." These entries investigate the following motifs in folklore and literature: (1) magical transformations, (2) magic flight, (3) magic bodily members, (4) soothsayers, (5) magic invulnerability, (6) invisibility, (7) bewitching, and (8) fantasy wish fulfillment.

The four essays presented in the section about "Marvels" concern the motifs of (1) otherworld journeys in myth, legend, and folktale; (2) fairies and elves in folklore and literature; (3) water spirits in religious and mythological texts; and (4) extraordinary sky and weather phenomena in legends and literature.

Five of the twenty sections comprise merely one entry each. For example, the section titled "The Wise and the Foolish" consists of an essay by Hasan El-Shamy relating Jung's concept of the individuation process to the classificatory system of Thompson's *Motif-Index*.

As a last example, section 18 gathers three entries under the subject heading "Sex." The motifs examined here relate to (1) miraculous conceptions, maternal cravings, male pregnancy, and extraordinary births in folk traditions; (2) monstrous births in American Indian myths and European legends; and (3) incest in mythology and folktales.

Written so as to be accessible even to those who are not folklore experts, yet very well researched and including extensive, valuable bibliographical references, all entries attest to the vast scholarship of the contributors to this handbook. Of course, any handbook entry inevitably remains somewhat cursory in exploring a given subject. With an average length of four to five pages, the contributions hardly constitute "in-depth essays," as announced in the introduction. Yet the reader will appreciate this handbook as a helpful reference tool.

Moreover, well-known works by Marie-Louise von Franz and other scholars have long established the validity of a Jungian approach to interpreting folk narratives. As creative virtualities that make up the formative, structuring dynamism of the human psyche, archetypes manifest themselves in primordial images expressed in universally disseminated symbols found in the religions, myths, and folk traditions of all communities. Jungian scholars therefore have long considered folk narratives a treasure trove for their research. Yet it is not always easy to accept all the symbolic meanings assigned to the recurrent, archetypal images that are present in folktales. It is equally difficult to acknowledge the Jungian notion of folk narratives as spontaneous utterances of the unconscious about itself, since it implies that the narratives were created by individual storytellers completely independent of any tradition. Significantly enough, some Jungian scholars have admitted that their interpretation is their way of telling stories. While this statement by no means diminishes the insight provided by Jungian approaches to folklore study, it attests to an awareness of their limitations. It thus remains arguable whether psychological concepts, such as archetypes, “can and should be used as indexing devices,” as Hasan El-Shamy claims. Notwithstanding the reservations about the Jungian tendency, this collection of excellent essays on numerous motifs will prove very useful for scholars in various disciplines.

Harold Neemann
University of Wyoming

Folk and Fairy Tales. A Handbook. By D[ee] L. Ashliman. *Greenwood Folklore Handbooks*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004. viii + 268 pp., bibliography, index, illustrations.

This handbook of *Folk and Fairy Tales* by D. L. Ashliman is intended for students, teachers, storytellers, and readers of folktales who want to know more about the stories that are so familiar to them. As Ashliman puts it, his handbook “examines the origins of these traditions and their development into the body of literature known today as folk and fairy tales” (vii). The handbook has five chapters, each with its own introduction, and it contains numerous historical illustrations. The first two chapters give a survey of the history of folktale collections in the Indo-European tradition—the question arises as to why he limits his scope to this tradition—and describe genres as well as problems of classification.

In chapter 1 several main areas of research are outlined relating to the age of folktales, their migration, their function, their meaning, and their symbolism. The second chapter deals with definitions and classifications. Ashliman gives terse information on terms such as “folklore”; he describes special varieties like the fairy tales by Charles Perrault (Mother Goose) or those by the Brothers Grimm; he defines genres such as myth, legend, folktale; and he informs us of the classification system of the International Type Catalog AT

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(now ATU) and illustrates specific elements of style and structure of the International Type Catalog by practical examples. In chapter 3 Ashliman briefly comments on examples of storytelling in different genres, which are listed in alphabetical order: from the cumulative tale, the etiologic tale, up to the urban legend, a term that has gone out of use (“modern legend” is more current). The examples are mainly taken from printed sources and stem from well-known collections (*Panchatantra*, *Gesta Romanorum*, Thomas Percy, Johann Peter Hebel, Brothers Grimm). Chapter 4 is quite short and is dedicated to scholarship. It outlines different approaches and fields of folk narrative research.

Chapter 5 gives a summary of all activities related to folktales up to our time. The result is a conglomeration of themes, which allows Ashliman to present topics he has already discussed in a different context. In the same chapter he points out phrases derived from famous folk and fairy tales that have become current in everyday language, for example, “Kiss a frog” or “Let the genie out of the bottle.” Joke makers and artists of diverse backgrounds use the imagery of folktales in their productions, Ashliman tells us. Finally, he shows in an exemplary manner how motifs, themes, and subject matters appear in the works of famous authors like Giovanni Boccaccio, Shakespeare, and in children’s literature and the media of the twentieth century. At the end of the book there is a glossary, a bibliography, a list of Internet resources, and an index.

D. L. Ashliman has worked repeatedly on the history of the European fairy tale. He has presented a typological list of folktales following the AT classification system under the title *A Guide to Folktales in the English Language* (1987). His Internet homepage (<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/ashliman.html>) provides useful links for folk-narrative research. On the whole, his handbook is a convenient tool for narrative research and provides a good orientation to students and other people who are interested in the topic. It is not suited for more advanced studies. Ashliman remains caught up in a romantic perspective on folk and fairy tales and does not take important new fields of research into consideration. Of course, a handbook can offer only a rough and superficial survey of such a vast area like folk-narrative research, as becomes clear by comparison: the *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* expects to have around thirty-eight hundred articles to cover the field (eleven volumes have been published so far, up to the article *Seele* [soul]).

The purpose of giving concise information, however, does not account for all weaknesses of the book. The conception of the work and the way it emphasizes certain areas and leaves out others provokes criticism. One gets the impression that the author had compiled lecture-scripts without strictly structuring them. Ashliman makes his readership believe that the topics he presents and that have indeed occupied scholars of folk-narrative research for decades are still the main focus of scholarship today. That is not the case. Ashliman tells us about the age,

origin, and dissemination of folktales and what makes the classification in genres problematic. But he does not mention modern scholarship on context and performance, or the international discussion about the narrator. He equally leaves out the discussion about the authenticity of texts, which has been revived on the basis of recent fieldwork. The interdisciplinary research on folktales is only touched upon. On the one hand, Ashliman does not mention North American folk-narrative scholars who have been leaders in their respective fields, like Wayland D. Hand, Wolfgang Mieder, Archer Taylor, Lee Utley, or Donald Ward. On the other hand, he lists some names without further information about their background and what school of thought they represent. Ashliman takes only written literature into consideration. In his bibliography one can find some of the relevant anthologies, encyclopedias, and journals that focus on folk narrative research, but it is limited to English texts. Important recent collections are not listed.

In my opinion, it is not sufficient to relate to the *Gesta Romanorum* alone when referring to the Middle Ages. Jacques de Vitry and Caesarius von Heisterbach are important collectors of exempla that have to be mentioned as well. The same goes for the French and the Arabic traditions. Charles Perrault's *Contes de fées* and the *Thousand and One Nights* do not represent the diversity and wealth of these nations' or regions' folk and fairy tales. As far as the Oriental tradition is concerned, Petrus Alfonsus was a key figure in drawing on themes that were traditional in the East, as communicated from India via Persia to the Arabs and to the West via Petrus, and needs to be included even in a survey on the topic. Important authors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are either left out or listed without any further information. The important sources of Roman and Greek antiquity are treated only superficially. Ashliman does not examine the stories of Byzantium or of the Humanists. What is also missing is a reference to older narrative cycles that have decisively influenced animal tales and fables like *Kalila and Dimna*, the beast epics of the Middle Ages like the *Roman de Renart*, or its adaptation in *Reineke vos*, and other vernacular versions.

As far as new approaches in research are concerned, Ashliman takes no notice of the geographic-historic method as a successor of the Finnish school. Also structural semantics as launched by Algirdas Julien Greimas would have been worth mentioning. Last but not least, it is essential for everybody who is involved with the subject to know the historical and comparative folktale research, whose leading experts are Albert Wesselski, Lutz Röhrich, Rudolf Schenda, Jurjen van der Kooi, and Bengt Holbek, among others.

Although some parts of the handbook are indeed useful for a first approach to the study of folk and fairy tales, considering the book as a whole reveals too many omissions and a superficial treatment of the subject. As shown above, important areas in scholarship and research have been left out. This is why older studies on the topic, such as *The European Fairy Tale* by Max Lüthi, the *Encyclopedia of Folklore*

and *Literature* by Mary Ellen Brown, or Jack Zipes's *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales*, have either to be additionally consulted or are even to be preferred.

Hans-Jörg Uther
Göttingen

Album Mille et une nuits: Iconographie choisie et commentée par Margaret Sironval. Paris: Gallimard, 2005. 268 pp.

As the paper cassette it is housed in states, the little book under review has been put together especially for the fifteenth anniversary of the “Bibliothèque de la Pléiade,” French publisher Gallimard’s prestigious library of canonical European literature. The images it contains have been selected by French researcher Margaret Sironval, whose extensive dissertation on the tale of Aladdin is hopefully to be published soon. Sironval, who also wrote the book’s text, has demonstrated her expertise in the field of *Arabian Nights* research by contributing to the preparations of the large exhibition on the *Arabian Nights* that took place in late 2004 at the National Museum for Ethnography (Minpaku) in Osaka, Japan.

On its just over 230 text pages the book contains a wealth of 248 images, most of them in color. The images are accompanied by short, yet informative passages of text. In approaching her subject, Sironval reminds the readers that the *Arabian Nights* has been introduced from a world without pictures—the Islamic Near and Middle East, where images of living beings are forbidden by religious law—into a European world constituted by images. Consequently, her subject contains only a few illustrations (of texts other than the *Arabian Nights*) originating from “Oriental” sources. Instead, it consists almost exclusively of images, portraits, and other pictorial renderings of subjects deriving from European inspiration.

Sironval starts by discussing the *Nights* in Antoine Galland’s French adaptation (picturing portraits of Galland as well as a specimen of his manuscript diary). She then uses the voyages of Sindbād (originally a separate book that was only integrated into the *Nights* by Galland) to lead over to the enlarged Joseph Charles Mardrus translation, whose reception in the Paris belle époque she extensively demonstrates, and continues by presenting various topics: *jinnīs*, voyages in the air, magicians, and magic. The following passages on performances of tales from the *Nights* in music and drama contain some of the book’s most fascinating details as Sironval convincingly argues how newly invented artificial illumination, first with gas lamps and later by way of electricity, was put to use so as to underline the magic effect of Aladdin’s lamp. Next, themes and topics from the *Nights* toward the turn of the twentieth century are shown to occur in commercial advertisements (particularly for chocolate), in ballet, music, painting (Chagall, Matisse), and, finally, the cinema: in particular, Lotte Reiniger’s *Adventures of Prince Ahmad* (1927) and Douglas Fairbank’s *The Thief of Baghdad* (1924) constitute treatments of the *Nights* that remain influential in the history of film,

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while screen plays such as versions of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* with French comedian Fernandel (1954) or American actors Maria Montez and John Hall (1944) document the lasting popularity of one of the most popular tales from the *Nights*. In her final passage, Sironval justly praises the *Nights* as a powerful source of imagination whose transnational appeal has generated innumerable objects of creative expression.

The *Album*'s images to a large extent derive from large collections such as those in the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale or the Osaka Minpaku, besides various smaller and some unnamed private collections. Its text constitutes highly entertaining and informative reading, and the general reader would hardly notice some minor mistakes—such as when Sironval mentions the “third calender being carried away by the ebony horse,” (50) whereas the third calender rides on a flying horse of flesh and blood totally different from the artificially constructed one in the story of the Ebony Horse, or when in a rare touch of Orientalist approach Sironval refers to Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Il fiore delle Mille e una notte* as rendering the “fleur” of the spirit of the *Nights* (242) when all Pasolini did was to present his selective version of “best” (implying sexually pronounced) tales from the *Nights*.

Beautiful and appealing as the *Album* is, its publication has two serious drawbacks. First, the pocket-book size, with numerous illustrations being hardly larger than a postage stamp, does not do justice to the beauty of many of the illustrations; here, a more generous layout would have increased the spectator's pleasure. And second, the book is not for sale; instead, it is given for free to any buyer who acquires at least three different items from the publisher's “Pléiade” collection. While this way of advertising the book has probably been devised as a clever trick of merchandising, public libraries would already possess most of the items connected with their fields of interest, and individual buyers might be put off by the considerably high price of most of Gallimard's books. To ameliorate this situation and to give Sironval's admirable work due credit, the publishers would be well advised to prepare a second edition that is enlarged in size and for sale on the regular market.

Ulrich Marzolph
Enzyklopädie des Märchens, Göttingen

The Arabian Nights: A Play. By Mary Zimmerman. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2005. 144 pp.

The Arabian Nights: A Play. By Mary Zimmerman. Directed by John H. Y. Wat. Mid-Pacific Institute School of the Arts, Honolulu, Hawai'i, May 2005.

Director and playwright Mary Zimmerman's two-act play *The Arabian Nights* had its world premiere at the Lookingglass Theatre Company in Chicago on 22 September 1992. Since then *The Arabian Nights* has been staged many times in

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theaters across the country and abroad, both with and without Zimmerman as the director. Hearing that the script was to be published in 2005, John H. Y. Wat, drama instructor at Honolulu's Mid-Pacific Institute School of the Arts, immediately made plans to stage the play. Wat was familiar with Zimmerman's work from Chicago and had greatly admired her productions of *The Odyssey*, *Metamorphoses*, and *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* at performances in various parts of the country.

Wat became desperate, however, when unforeseen delays at Northwestern University Press stalled the script's publication. With the deadline looming, he e-mailed Zimmerman at Northwestern University, where she is a professor of performance studies, and she graciously sent him the text. In the director's note to the Mid-Pacific Institute School of the Arts' production, Wat states that he read it in one sitting, laughing and weeping throughout, sometimes simultaneously. On 6 May 2005 the Mid-Pacific Institute School of the Arts student production of Zimmerman's play proved Wat's tears and laughter right: *The Arabian Nights* is theater in the best tradition. It balances comedy with tragedy and universalizes moral truth through the filter of individual characters.

Zimmerman's adaptation of the story cycle known in English as *The Arabian Nights* is based on the version of the tales published by Edward Powys Mathers in 1923 as *The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night*. Mathers translated it from the French *Le livre des mille nuits et une nuit* by Joseph Charles Mardrus, who, inspired by the success of fellow Frenchman Antoine Gallard's first European translation, *Les mille et un nuits*, in 1704, published his own translation of what he considered the "best" Arabic version, namely the Bulaq, in sixteen volumes between 1899 and 1904. Unlike several other translations of *The Arabian Nights* previously published in English (e.g., Sir Richard Burton, Edward William Lane, and John Payne), Mathers's translation is very readable. But being a translation twice removed from the Arabic texts, his text also exemplifies many of the problems associated with European translations of *The Arabian Nights*—in particular, the insertion of non-Arabic tales, the Orientalist representation of Arabic culture, and the overt emphasis on the erotic and exotic.

Mardrus's, and hence Mathers's, text is thus more of an adaptation than a translation. In his companion to *The Arabian Nights*, British scholar Robert Irwin notes that Mardrus embroidered the original Arabic, inserted whole new stories, and lied about the texts he claimed to be translating from. But to be fair, the reputation of as monumental a figure as Sir Richard Burton does not fare much better. In fact, one of Mardrus's inserted stories is the burlesque "Abu al-Hasan's Historic Indiscretion" (which appears as "The Clarinetist's Tale" in Zimmerman's adaptation). Mardrus likely borrowed this story directly from Burton, who called it "How Abu Hasan Brake Wind," but Irwin declares there is no Arabic original for it.

Speaking of “original” stories in regard to *The Arabian Nights*, however, deflects from their immense influence on Western narrative tradition and imagination. Over the centuries, *The Arabian Nights* have emerged from oral and decidedly low-class traditions in the Middle East to a middle- and upper-class literate, and literary, tradition in the West. The narrative is a cycle of stories within stories that are held together by the frame story of clever Scheherezade and despotic Shahryar. This misogynist tyrant has made it a habit to marry a virgin every night and have her executed the next morning so that he may never again experience the pains inflicted upon him by his unfaithful first wife. With the assistance of her younger sister Dunyazade, Scheherezade devises a plan to save her neck. Realizing the spell-binding power of narration, Scheherezade spins a web of stories that not only catches Shahryar’s attention and delays her execution, but also transforms Shahryar from a coldhearted tyrant to a compassionate husband and ruler.

It is precisely these transformative powers of narration that Zimmerman brings out in her adaptation of Mathers’s text for the stage. She focuses on the dangerous and unbalanced Shahryar, whose despotism is rooted in rage and humiliation. Through Scheherezade’s nightly trials of narrating for her life with his knife at her throat, we realize that although Shahryar is the most powerful man in the kingdom, he is also the most miserable. Scheherezade understands the cause of his loneliness and misery as well as the need to uphold a façade that allows him to think he is in charge. At the same time, the play demonstrates that her submission to his outbursts of anger and his despotic whims has in fact the effect of disarming him, rendering him increasingly gentle and whole. This approach, where the transformative power of love can humanize even the most angry and destructive character, concurs with Western fairy-tale traditions like “Beauty and the Beast,” for example. Zimmerman’s understanding for these narrative techniques clearly strengthens the play’s appeal to audiences of all ages, because it creates layers of meaning within its own text.

Act 1 contains two stories (with embedded stories) that are aimed at softening Shahryar. Scheherezade teaches him to cope with women’s sexuality through the edifying examples of “The Madman’s Tale” and “The Perfidy of Wives,” two humorous and erotic stories full of joie de vivre. As the chorus points out in the introduction to act 1, Shahryar’s custom of killing his bride at the break of day kills not only the woman, but also “anything of him that she might have inside” (4). The celebration of the erotic is thus not merely an ode to *les plaisirs d’amour*, but also a celebration of life and its continuation. Rolling with laughter at the hilarious story about Abu al-Hasan’s famous fart, Shahryar and Scheherezade end act 1 kissing—first tentatively, then passionately—and with Scheherezade discreetly passing Shahryar’s knife to Dunyazade.

In act 1, Scheherezade has warned Shahryar that “although these anecdotes are very moral, some of them might seem licentious or lewd to those with gross

and narrow minds” (39). Act 2, however, has four stories (with substories) that focus exclusively on morality and destiny: “Sympathy the Learned,” “The Mock Khalifah,” “The Confusion of Stories,” and “The Forgotten Melody.” Once again aimed at educating Shahryar, these stories emphasize the value of learning, humility, empathy, and generosity. Of these, “The Confusion of Stories” is the most remarkable. Six stories are being told and performed simultaneously, with the actors entering and leaving the stories as they are needed. This section ends with the performers joining Scheherezade in counting off the nights until they get to the 1,000th night. “The Confusion of Stories” is a clever device to indicate the span of time and the number of stories that Scheherezade tells until, happily, on the 1,001st night Shahryar releases Scheherezade from the threat of execution, and she presents him with the children she has born him.

The Mid-Pacific Institute School of the Arts production of *The Arabian Nights* follows Zimmerman’s stage directions closely. The thrust stage is surrounded by the audience on three sides with the performers entering from the curtains at the back. At the opening, the actors unroll Persian carpets so that they overlap across the stage and place large pillows on low platforms. Mideastern-style lamps hang from the ceiling. The musicians (who are also performers) are seated on the stage, off to the side of Shahryar’s chamber, which is centered at the back so that Shahryar can observe all the enacted stories from the privileged position of his throne/bed.

Wat’s direction emphasizes the play’s communal aspect by showing storytelling as a collective event. This is an important choice that aids in making *The Arabian Nights* relevant to Hawai‘i, where storytelling traditionally includes non-verbal community-oriented forms like the hula. In the play, the chorus forms at crucial moments to narrate with one voice, then quickly dissolves into individual characters immersed in their own stories. In her staging directions, Zimmerman suggests that all of the performers remain in full view of the audience throughout the play, that they play several roles, and that the action be continuous without character exits or entrances. The overlapping of performers, scenes, and locations is made possible by the overarching Scheherezade-Shahryar frame: Shahryar remains seated in the central spot behind the middle of the stage, now and then commenting upon the story being narrated and performed, while Scheherezade physically and narratively weaves in and out between performers and actors, stringing together stories and characters like a golden thread. Sometimes she is merely a fly on the wall (as when she hides in the privy with the jester’s wife’s lovers); sometimes she shadows or mirrors the movements of a character (Azizah, for example); and at other times her narration is the bridge from one setting to the next (as when she narrates how Harun al-Rashid follows the mock *khalifah* on the Tigris).

The Mid-Pacific Institute School of the Arts cast is an energetic ensemble of student performers. Under Wat’s direction they bring out the true joy of telling

and enacting a story, and a story within a story, with feeling and finesse. At the same time, they demonstrate a keen understanding for the play's exoticism: like the fabled *khalifah* Harun al-Rashid's Baghdad court in *The Arabian Nights*, Hawai'i, too, is surrounded by webs of romanticized notions that feed Western imagination with velvet dreams. Therefore, to stage *The Arabian Nights* "under the hula moon" (to use Don Blanding's romantic expression) requires deftness and sensitivity in order to avoid turning the exotic into kitsch. Wat's approach steers clear of this pitfall. His direction focuses on the power of storytelling and the levels of narrative made possible by the script. For example, Sympathy the Learned's defeat of all the sages at Harun al-Rashid's court suggests a feminist triumph embedded in an apparently patriarchal narrative. She "kills" these learned men with her smarts and strips them of their academic vestiges not to take their position at court, but simply to show that she *can* fleece them. And in the ribald "Madman's Tale," Perfect Love scolds the Madman, "Did your masters teach you nothing at school?" when he fails to name her sex (34). He eventually ends up in chains for failing to satisfy her the twelfth time. Here again, there is a feminist agenda embedded in the suggestion that the Madman must learn the language of the female body in order to gain her love and respect and hence his own freedom. Importantly, however, patriarchy as political and social institution is never challenged openly. Like despotism, patriarchy is a fact of life in *The Arabian Nights*, just as the absolute monarch reigns unperturbed in European fairy tales.

Zimmerman adds an ultimate frame—a meta-frame, actually—to *The Arabian Nights*, which Wat includes in his production: in the closing scene, the performers join in repeating "and all the nights over Baghdad were whiter than the days" with the sound of air-raid sirens and radio static mounting ominously (130). This frame takes us from the magical world of *The Arabian Nights* to the reality of the conflict in present-day Baghdad. Yet, at the same time, this meta-frame preserves the magic of *The Arabian Nights* as a storytelling event—a once-upon-a-time originating in a region now torn apart by war and civil unrest—and ultimately casts a glimmer of hope and compassion in a time of darkness.

Kirsten Møllegaard

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

The Secret of Laughter: Magical Tales from Classical Persia. Compiled by Shusha Guppy. London: I. B. Tauris, 2005. xviii, 209 pp.

Ever since the Grub-Street prints of tales from the *Arabian Nights* at the beginning of the eighteenth century, English-language readers have been fascinated—as have many others—by Oriental tales. While in the eighteenth century the Central European perception of the "Orient" was dominated by the Ottoman Empire and its provinces, the country of Iran (whose denomination as Persia derives from the Greek name of its ancient heartland province of Fārs) entered common

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European consciousness somewhat later. Particularly since the beginning of the British Empire's engagement on the Indian subcontinent, Iran's strategic position earned the country attention not only in politics, but also in terms of religion, history, language, and, eventually, culture. English-language collections of "Persian tales" were notably publicized by the indefatigable William Alexander Clouston (1843–96) in books such as *The Book of Sindibād* (1884), *Flowers from a Persian Garden* (1890), and *Some Persian Tales, from Various Sources* (1892). The first major, and still today the only sizeable, English-language collection of Persian tales from living oral tradition was published by British colonial officer David Lockhart Robinson Lorimer and his wife, Emily Overend, in their *Persian Tales, Written Down for the First Time in the Original Kermani and Bakhtiari* (1919). Since then, just over half a dozen English-language collections of Persian tales have been published, including L. P. Elwell-Sutton's *The Wonderful Sea-Horse* (1950), Anne Sinclair Mehdevi's *Persian Folk and Fairy Tales* (1965), Eleanor Brockett's *Persian Fairy Tales* (1970), Alan Feinstein's *Folk Tales from Persia* (1971), and Asha Dhar's *Folk Tales of Iran* (1978). At the same time, European interest in Persian folk and fairy tales appears to have diminished in reverse proportion to the available knowledge. Particularly since the Iranian revolution of 1978–1979 and the ensuing public perception of Iran as a political reality, the country appears to have lost its appeal as a never-never-land of European fantasy. Meanwhile, this loss of interest outside of Iran is paralleled with a tremendous upsurge in indigenous Persian folklore studies and folk narrative research, and in the past decade alone dozens of new collections of tales collected from living oral tradition have been published. It is against this backdrop that Shusha Guppy's new book has to be seen.

Guppy, a well-known writer, singer, and songwriter introduces her tales as retellings from the memories of her childhood in Iran, when her nurse used to tell her tales. Her small collection presents altogether eighteen tales labeled as "classical Persian." While one tale, "The Story of Bijan and Manijeh," is acknowledged as a personal retelling from the Persian national epic, Ferdousi's *Shāh-nāmeḥ*, the other tales in Guppy's selection correspond more or less to tales that are still today—or at least were until quite recently—current in Persian oral tradition. European readers might particularly cherish her version of the tale known in European tradition as "The Table, the Donkey, and the Stick" (ATU 563), but many of her tales belong to a particularly Eastern and, sometimes, typically Persian stock. The volume's eponymous tale "The Secret of Laughter" is already known from Sufi poet Farīdaddīn 'Attār's (died 1221) *Elāhi-nāmeḥ* (see Hellmut Ritter's epochal work *The Ocean of the Soul* [1955], recently published in an English rendering, pp. 640–41), the story of "Soltan Mahmoud and the Band of Robbers" from Jalāloddin Rumi's (died 1273) *Masnavi-ye ma'navi* (see A. J. Arberry, *More Tales from the Masnavi*, 1966, no. 191). Most of the other tales have been documented from Persian oral tradition in Ulrich Marzolph's *Typologie des persischen*

Völkermärchens (1984): “The Padishah and His Three Daughters” (type *986*), “The Thief and the Cunning Bride” (879), “The Talking Skull” (*875D₁), “The King and the Prophet Khizr” (*1641 E), “The Cruel Mother-in-Law” (*1407 B), “The Man Whose Luck Had Gone to Sleep” (*461), “I Know That Already” (1374*), “The Good Young Man and the Heavenly Woman” (*832 A), “The Thorn-Seller and the Bird of Paradise” (834 A), and “The Fortune-Teller’s Fortune” (1641+1646). As many of the tales most popular in Iran are missing in her selection, Guppy’s choice is not exactly representative of Persian oral tradition, deriving, as it is, from selective personal experience.

The verbal (and sometimes verbose) style of Guppy’s personal retellings is strikingly atypical, not only for Persian folktales, but for traditional folktales in general. While Guppy has earned praise for “making you live moments of real enchantment” (Nathalie Sarraute), and for putting the reader “in touch with the ancient experience of a whole people” (Ted Hughes), a specialist in Persian folktales cannot help but being struck by her refined language, her use of numerous words that do not blend with common folktale style (such as “opinionate,” “insouciance,” “atrophied,” “hirsute,” “caparisoned,” and many others). Moreover, the tone of her retellings is highly moralistic, turning each and every tale into a slightly compulsive example of righteous and morally unobjectionable behavior. Whereas folktales are known for disregarding the psychological development of their heroes, Guppy often goes into lengthy elaboration, such as to explain why a certain woman was as malevolent as she was (“The Cruel Mother-in-Law”). Persian folktales, instead, traditionally employ a simple, down-to-earth language, and characters are taken the way they are, without bothering to explain how they came to be that way. Guppy’s constant urge to employ the tales for the didactic purpose of moral education even goes as far as spoiling a good tale—such as when the lion, who is supposed to devour the foolish man who does not catch his luck when advised to do so, supplies him with yet another moral exhortation admonishing him “to give up laziness and get down to work like everybody else” (126). The double mention of the Sabbath (130, 183)—instead of the Islamic Friday—makes one wonder to what extent the moral tone of Guppy’s tales might be influenced by Judeo-Persian tradition, a once lively tradition that nowadays is primarily known from emigrants to Israel but has nevertheless been richly documented in the texts collected in the Israel Folktale Archives in Haifa.

Guppy’s is a popular presentation of Persian tales, some of them “tales of magic” (as the title states), others tales of cleverness and guile. While in her introduction she is right in acclaiming the stories of the classical Persian mystical poets bearing “an ecumenical and universalist vision,” her description of the tales of the Persian mystics—and, by extension, of Persian tales in general—as a mixture of Zoroastrian wisdom, blended with Islamic mystical doctrines and philosophy, drawing

from Hebraic religious traditions (xiii), bespeaks a simplified vision that risks siding with the superficial. This also goes for her optimistic statement that “in recent years, in spite of competition from television, the cinema and the Internet, *naqqals* [i.e., professional storytellers] have come back” (xiii): it is true that they have, but the storytellers in traditional teahouses and restaurants in downtown Teheran are but a faint echo of the traditional profession and rather serve as a nostalgic ingredient of public entertainment in a country whose rigorous rules restrict other, more lively or spontaneous modes of expression.

Considering Guppy’s choice of tales as well as her wording and style, this reviewer feels the need to caution against taking her texts as representative of whatever Persian tradition there was and still is. Her tales represent a highly personalized, individual experience that might or might not appeal to the general public. Even though some of her tales are not without a specific charm, future readers deserve a more complete presentation, one that is closer to the fascination Persian tales may still yield if taken from authentic indigenous performance.

Ulrich Marzolph

Enzyklopädie des Märchens, Göttingen

Salonnières, Furies, and Fairies: The Politics of Gender and Cultural Change in Absolutist France. By Anne E. Duggan. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005. 288 pp.

Salonnières, Furies, and Fairies is a compelling study of how seventeenth-century French writers used literary production to dialogue with one another over issues of class, gender, nobility, religion, politics, morality, and individual subjectivity. Over the course of six clearly written chapters, which weave the stories of the individual writers into a complex sociohistorical context, Anne E. Duggan “tells a story” (20), beginning with Madeleine de Scudéry and the public influence of salon women, moving on to the patriarchal reaction of academicians like Boileau and Charles Perrault, and finally focusing on Marie-Catherine d’Aulnoy’s response to the decline of the salon, the nobility, and the moralist discourses responsible for late seventeenth-century parental and spousal domination. In doing so, Duggan opens up three important paradigms regarding the study of early modern French literary history.

The first of these, to which Duggan herself calls attention in the preface, emphasizes the tendency of feminist criticism to study early modern women writers exclusively through the narrow scopes of their gender (female), their socio-cultural milieu (the salon), and their spheres of sociopolitical influence (the private or “particular”). Drawing upon observations from the works of Scudéry, Lafayette, Villedieu, Bernard, Maintenon, and d’Aulnoy, Duggan challenges the notion that women writers in the wake of Scudéry: “strove to create an *écriture* that was beyond person and beyond class, but not beyond gender” (DeJean, *Ten-*

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der Geographies 92, qtd. by Duggan 17), illustrating how early modern women categorically differ from one another on a range of issues that may or may not be gender-related—including the religious persecution of the Catholic counter-reformation (d'Aulnoy vs. Maintenon), the derogation of the *haute noblesse* (d'Aulnoy vs. Scudéry), and even the sociopolitical implications of marriage (d'Aulnoy vs. Lafayette and Bernard). As such, Duggan not only takes issue with Joan DeJean's claims regarding early modern "gendered writing," but she also opens up Nancy Miller's theory that seventeenth-century women writers used their works to contest the traditional plots made available by an exclusively male-orchestrated "dominant tradition" (*Subject to Change* 8, qtd. by Duggan 17). Illustrating a range of examples in which female authors challenged one another's works, Duggan brings forth several contexts in which women writers articulated ideological points of view on equal footing with men, positioning themselves not as women, but rather as members of particular social classes, religions, regions, and political affiliations.

A second important paradigm that Duggan's study addresses concerns the essentialist scope within which important seventeenth-century academic quarrels are generally studied. Addressing this paradigm on two levels, Duggan first takes issue with the nature of the authors and treatises involved. As Duggan demonstrates, the well-known "Querelle des Femmes," a debate over the role of women in the public sphere that officially took place between Boileau and Perrault toward the end of the century, was in fact a reactionary quarrel. It was not primarily motivated by classical texts of the remote historical past, as Boileau's position on the "ancient" side of the quarrel might suggest. Instead, the important sociocultural influence of women writers like Scudéry, whose historical novels or "fables" both asserted and modeled the active participation of women in public affairs, provided an important initial impetus for the debate. By the same token, as Duggan points out, serious engagement with Boileau's misogynistic contribution to the quarrel did not stop with Perrault's *Apologie des femmes*; rather, it was ultimately taken to task by late seventeenth-century writers, including d'Aulnoy in the context of her novel *Histoire d'Hypolite* (1690) and her subsequent fairy tales.

The fact that the writers who provided the most convincing models for refuting Boileau's reductive perspectives on women did so outside the scope of the official quarrel ultimately calls into question the degree to which seventeenth-century quarrels among academicians can be relied upon to provide meaningful forums of ideological debate. In Boileau and Perrault's "Querelle des femmes," for example, it would appear that in the quarrel's official context, the role of women in public affairs is in fact not up for debate at all; neither Boileau nor Perrault defends the positioning of women as influential players in the sociopolitical field. As Duggan demonstrates, beneath the misleading title of his *Apologie*, Perrault not only implicitly reinforces Boileau's misogyny toward "public" women, but he also takes Boileau's position to new heights, restricting women's influence in the context of

the domestic household and advocating ways to manipulate them into submission to their parents and husbands. In this way Duggan problematizes seventeenth-century academic quarrels not only on the level of scope, but also on the level of ideology. Indeed, if the debate between Boileau and Perrault is to serve as a model, the ancients and the moderns may not have been so ideologically divided as traditional literary history would have us believe.

A third and final important paradigm that Duggan's study addresses relates to the compartmentalization of ideology and genre—a trend that is particularly relevant to the study of late seventeenth-century fairy tales, in which the thirteen or fourteen authors who developed the vogue are nearly always ideologically lumped together as being pro-nobility, pro-women, pro-feudal, anti-absolutist, and anti-monarchical. As Duggan demonstrates through a series of enlightening close readings, however, such is not necessarily the case. The tales of Perrault and d'Aulnoy in particular differed radically from one another both stylistically and ideologically, especially with regard to positions on *bourgeois arrivisme*, the essentialist nature of the noble identity, and the influence of women in the public sphere. It would appear that, like the women novelists and male academicians examined earlier in the study, even members of a literary circle as closely allied as that of the fairy-tale *conteurs* may ultimately share more differences than continuities.

In the preface Duggan purports to limit her study primarily to two female authors (Scudéry and d'Aulnoy), and to the goal of opening up the early modern literary field to allow women writers a more distinctive role in the creation of major genres, in the evolution of the public sphere, and in general/official history by reading their works in dialogue with those of their male contemporaries (Boileau and Perrault). As we have seen, however, in addition to questioning paradigms regarding the limited scope with which early modern women writers are typically studied, the work simultaneously questions many other preconceptions that historically have served to compartmentalize scholarship on the period, including questions of genre, social class, and academic affiliation. The result is a new, radical conception of a dynamic literary field in which traditional ideological categories can no longer be viewed as absolute; rather, the individual subjectivity of the author takes precedence above all. The approach makes way for a new realm of possible connections between Old Regime and early Enlightenment mentalities. As such, it is sure to have an important influence on future scholarly trends.

Allison Stedman
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Hans Christian Andersen: The Misunderstood Storyteller. By Jack Zipes. New York: Routledge, 2005. xvii+171 pp., endnotes, bibliography, film bibliography, index, illustrations.

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"I am worthy of you. . . . I am truly popular, truly appreciated abroad, I am famous," wrote Hans Christian Andersen in 1845 to his patron, revealing his deepest anxieties to receive recognition. Indeed, the Danish writer Andersen became one of the most beloved storytellers in the whole world. With the commemoration of his bicentennial birthday in 2005, a book with a new, provocative approach about Andersen has appeared. Its author, the renowned fairy-tale researcher Jack Zipes, claims to reconsider Andersen's reception in English-speaking countries and to discuss cinematic adaptations of his tales. The subtitle of the book, *The Misunderstood Storyteller*, shows his intentions: with this study, based on a sociohistorical critique, Zipes aims to reappraise Andersen and "reveal some new aspects of this pathetically great artist" (xvi).

The book consists of four chapters. The first two are revised and expanded essays from previous articles, while the other two are entirely new. Each chapter functions also as an autonomous survey, something that explains the repetitions of some references and thoughts in different parts of the book.

The first essay, with the title "In Pursuit of Fame: An Introduction to the Life and Works of Hans Christian Andersen," reveals Andersen's personal, uninterrupted struggle to achieve popularity and the acceptance of the upper class. Zipes draws a biographical picture of Andersen's family, his education, his friends, and his patrons. Furthermore, he refers briefly to the whole of Andersen's oeuvre, including his dramatic works, librettos, novels, poems, and travel books. While Andersen's significance as an author is based on his contribution to the development and revitalization of the genre *Kunstmärchen* and these fairy tales gave Andersen the fame he sought, he wrote 156 fairy tales, but only a small part of them have been reprinted and widely circulated. Zipes accurately describes a number of them and identifies their common features: "The major ideas concern the recognition of artistic genius, nobility of mind versus nobility of blood, the exposure of class injustice and hypocrisy, the master-servant relationship, the immortality of the soul, and the omnipotence and omnipresence of God" (32). He also investigates Andersen's position in the literary development in Denmark and esteems him "as a significant precursor of surrealist and existentialist literature" (40).

In the second chapter, "The Discourse of the Dominated," Zipes, whose previous works have opened up discussions among scholars about the ideological uses of tales, undertakes once again the project of reading Andersen's tales for their ideological point of view "and to analyze their function in the acculturation process" (48). Zipes argues that "Andersen created a canon of literary fairy tales in praise of essentialist ideology for children and adults" (47). He also demonstrates that Andersen's tales were encapsulated by the dominant middle-class ethic and, through a thorough analysis of some fairy-tale paradigms, comes to the conclusion that Andersen was not "rebellious": "Rather, he placed safety before idealism, choosing moral compromise over moral outrage and individual comfort and

achievement over collective struggle and united goals” (75). Zipes maintains that these “defects in Andersen’s ideological perspective . . . are the telling marks in the historical reception of his tales” (75).

The third essay, “The Discourse of Rage and Revenge: Controlling Children,” is an exploration of the complex nature of Andersen’s identity. According to Zipes, Andersen “used the fairy-tale form to sublimate fomenting anxieties, disturbing desires, and furious rage: the fairy tale became his compensation for feelings of misrecognition and lack. Andersen . . . employed the figures of children and childhood as tropes to speak out against the abuse he felt—often in sympathy with children and, at the same time, to put the child in his proper ‘Christian’ place” (78). Working with psychoanalytical methods, Zipes analyzes some “child-centered” texts in an aim to reveal “Andersen’s concept of childhood.” He registers two types of children in Andersen’s tales: “the good girl, who is mainly self-sacrificial, and the good boy, whose zeal, innocence, and talents leads him to fame and fortune” (86). Zipes asserts that Andersen, who had a very little contact with children, used them in his tales “to ward off his anxieties about sex and to channel his rage” (101). Provocatively, Zipes’s latest critique that “Andersen was not an innocent writer” focuses on the author’s figures of harmless children who “foster a myth of how an innocent, talented poor boy could, by God’s grace, reach heavenly heights” (101).

The fourth and last chapter of the book, “The Cinematic Appropriation of Andersen’s Heritage: Trivialization and Innovation,” deals with a heretofore less-discussed topic: the film adaptation of Andersen’s tales in America and in Europe. Zipes underlines that “the film adaptations of the classical tales by Andersen as well as those by Brothers Grimm and Charles Perrault have become better known than the classical texts, which, in comparison, have virtually lost their meanings due to the fact that the films have replaced them” (104). Zipes describes and offers various interpretations to film adaptations of six tales (“The Little Mermaid,” “The Princess on the Pea,” “The Swineherd,” “The Nightingale,” “The Emperor’s New Clothes,” and “The Shepherdess and the Chimney Sweep”). The comparison Zipes effectively draws between American and European films is very stimulating: “On the one side, there is the American view point that tends toward a commodification and trivialization of his tales; on the other side, the Europeans, especially in Russia, France, Czechoslovakia, and Germany, offer a different and more serious ideological view of Andersen’s tales based on artistic innovation” (106). Finally, Zipes warns us about “immoral trivializations” and poses questions of ethics concerning the freedom of artists. To what extent should artists transform and appropriate another artist’s work? Moreover, how do films about lives of artists, such as Andersen or the Grimms, reflect their reality, and what role do they play in their legacy?

Zipes reflects critically on our assumptions about Andersen's life and work, exactly two hundred years after his birth. This book, Zipes's synthesis of more than thirty-five years of researching and writing, constitutes a significant contribution to the scholarship about Hans Christian Andersen. Moreover, the book is useful to anyone who wants to understand the dynamics and interconnections of fairy tales and literature.

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