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## Reviews

Marvels & Tales Editors

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## REVIEWS

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*L'âge d'or du conte de fées: De la comédie à la critique (1690–1709)*. Edited by Nathalie Rizzoni, Julie Boch, and Nadine Jasmin. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007. 621 pp.

This volume of texts and criticism opens with three comedies related to fairies and the fairy world. Each leads its readers into apparently familiar but essentially alien territory.

On March 2, 1697, Charles Rivière Dufresny and Claude-Ignace Brugière de Barente brought *Les Fées, ou Les Contes de ma Mère l'Oie* to the stage of the Hôtel de Bourgogne in Paris. Performed by the Comédiens Italiens du Roi, its trifling plot required little more than forty-five minutes to perform (including songs) and presented a princess who is abducted by an ogre (who wittily offers her a choice between “marriage, ou carnage” [72]) and is eventually saved by a prince. Insubstantial and irreverent, *Les Fées, ou Les Contes de ma Mère l'Oie*'s literary props are borrowed from recent fairy fictions and fairy tales: flying chariot, princess in tower, seven-league boots, enchanted wand, fairy palace, ogres, and fairies. The text edges toward suggestiveness with the words “un ogre te dérobera / Ta fille et puis, et caetera” (67), its “et caetera” an unadorned reference to sexual defilement. Directly thereafter, a fairy highlights the evident fragility of chaste virtue by declaring that she can protect a girl's honor only until the age of fifteen years and six minutes (67). Dufresny and Barente's comedy, with its numerous vulgar double entendres, offended taste-minders and was speedily suppressed, along with the *comédiens italiens* themselves.

The second fairy drama, *Les Fees*, by Florent Carton Dancourt, opened on September 24, 1699, at the court at Fontainebleau and a month later in Paris at the *Comédie française*. The drama's thin plot details King Astur's curiosity, which drives off his fairy wife, Logistille. The education of their two daughters has been turned over to Logistille's fairy sisters, the Fairy of Pleasures (who oversees the sober Cléonide) and the Fairy of Wisdom (assigned to the fun-loving Inégilde). The fairies, at war with each other over the princesses' companions and education, choose inappropriate suitors for their charges, which amplifies the drama. The plot—little more than a vehicle for a spectacle of musical

interludes, declamations, and repeated allusions to France's royal family and its high literature, allegorical figures, and dances—is predictable but with occasional good moments. For instance, the king, who panics when his long-absent fairy wife returns, obviously loves her memory more than her presence. His alarm parodies final-scene reunions as he states flatly that she didn't have to return in order to sort out everybody's problems—she could have done it by mail!

*La Fée Bienfaisante*, composed by le chevalier de La Baume, was a much later, and far more distant, production, debuting in Grenoble on July 7, 1708. It never appeared anywhere else and has been previously noted only by Mary Elizabeth Storer. It provides a standard collision between a good fairy (Bienfaisante) and a bad fairy (Grognon), whose names were probably familiar to theatergoers in the early 1700s, since Mme d'Aulnoy had used "Grognon" in "Gracieuse et Percinet" (and Grognette in "Le Dauphin") and Mme de Murat had named her beneficent supernatural "Bienfaisante" in "Le Roi Porc," not to mention Mme d'Aulnoy's "La Grenouille Bienfaisante." The titular beneficent fairy tests the love of the poor but virtuous Clitandre, and when he proves constant in his devotion to Climène, song and dance conclude the piece.

Between 1697 and 1709, staged fairy fictions were evidently disappearing from fashionable theatrical view. But what kind of fairy world was it that these dramas purveyed? Nathalie Rizzoni concludes that Dufresny and Barente's play was the most successful of the three in transposing the narrative structure of the *conte de fées* and its textual fabric to the stage; in Dancourt's *Fées* we hear far more about fairy power than we actually see (23–24). Rizzoni also reminds readers that as a genre, the French *conte de fées* revolves around great personages (kings, queens, princes, and princesses) and (noting the exception of "Little Red Riding Hood") has a happy ending. Here she apparently brackets out the conteuses' dystopic tales. Noting that theatrical conventions of that period normally posed noble characters' sufferings in tragedies and happy endings in comedies, Rizzoni wonders whether the *conte de fées* itself, with its then paradoxical linkage of noble characters to happy endings, provoked these comedies' burlesque distortions (26–27). In any case, she concludes, "atténuations du féérique" produced a kind of theatrical realism (28). Alas, no description of a performance of any of these little dramas survives, and we know nothing of their reception.

In contrast, much was written about literary fairies between 1697 and 1709 (33). The second part of *L'âge d'or du conte de fées*, "Le Conte en débats," offers extracts from critical statements by Perrault, Mlle Lhéritier, the Abbé de Villiers, Mme Durand, the Abbé Faydit, and the Abbé de Morvan de Bellegarde. The last-named, a seldom mentioned author, discusses differences in the ancients' and the moderns' morality and esthetics (338), and in the third of his *Lettres curieuses* (1702) creates a fairy who inquires about the reality and

origins of fairy enchantresses. Like Morvan de Bellegarde himself, Julie Boch situates the critical writings principally within *Le Querelle*.

Although the Abbé de Villiers pointedly avoided criticizing [Charles] Perrault in his *Entretiens*, l'Abbé Faydit, in writing about Fénelon's *Télémachus*, puns an attack against "Perrault and the Parrots" ("[Pierre] Perrault et les Perroquets"; 339), while according both the author of Perrault's tales and contemporary women authors praise for spirit and fertile imaginations and exempting them from criticism for their abundant use of the marvelous (340).

When Boch writes that it was Perrault above all who assumed that tales (*les contes*) owed a great debt to oral tradition, she is on well-trodden but insufficiently examined ground. Her statement would be truer if she had stated that *later critics* have attributed to Perrault an assumption of a seventeenth-century debt to oral tradition where fairy tales are concerned. Close readings of Perrault's statements about country people telling tales do not necessarily indicate that country people were telling the same kinds of tales that Perrault himself produced. The *Mercurie galant* of January 1697 phrases what Perrault wrote in slightly different terms when it states that an infinitude of fathers, mothers, grandmothers, governesses, and intimate friends had told stories since time immemorial (346n1). This statement has long been understood as an all-embracing endorsement of the existence of Perrault's fairy tales before Perrault by the *Mercurie*. However, the fact that Perrault did not name the stories told by earlier generations has been ignored. *Storytelling* has remained a constant for millennia, while *the tales that have been told* have changed from mythic to miraculous and magic ones. The true constants from one generation to another since ancient Greece have been caregivers' scary threats: "If you don't \_\_\_\_ (come in now/stop yelling/stop hitting your sister), the \_\_\_\_ (insert the scare figure of the day) will get you." Perrault himself stressed the superior moral value of the French tales of his day, which confirms his awareness of a shift in the nature of seventeenth-century tales from ancient ones (346).

The third component of the volume is a tale by an anonymous author, "Le Mariage du Prince Diamant et de la Princesse Perle," edited by Nadine Jasmin. One of five tales framed within storytelling sessions in a country house, it was published in Rotterdam in 1707 in *Contes et nouvelles avec des réflexions* and was reproduced in *Marvels & Tales* in December 1996 (10.2: 317–77). Jewels, fountains, magnificent palaces, mythological references (oracle, Apollo, Venus, Medea), a completely amiable princess, and an unexceptionably charming prince (whose marriage will unite the empires of the Orient and the Occident), together with an urgent need to rid the realm of destructive monsters on the eve of their wedding, constitute "Le Mariage."

*L'âge d'or du conte de fées* incorporates brief biographical notices for each of the (known) authors and a bibliography of sources for *contes de fées* as a whole,

as well as a listing of relevant French critical works (divided into pre- and post-1800 periods). In addition, a highly useful summary of tales in the first four volumes of the *Champion Bibliothèque des Génies et des Fées*, indexes of the principal characters in the *contes de fées* and the three comedies, and an index of the titles of tales published between 1690 and 1709 round out the concluding reference section. It is hard to imagine a more useful guide to the dizzying variations on themes and characters' proper names in French *contes de fées* between 1690 and 1709. All the more reason to praise and be grateful for this excellent volume.

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**Thomas-Simon Gueullette: *Contes*.** *Edition critique établi sous la direction de Jean-François Perrin. 3 vols. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2010. 2,396 pp.*

Thomas-Simon Gueullette (1683–1766) is not a household name in the twenty-first century, but during his long life he was well known among his contemporaries. Born into a family long connected to government bureaucracy (9), he was educated by Jesuits (10) and later studied law. Gueullette loved the theater, was on an intimate footing with many of its actors and directors, and translated theatrical pieces for the *Comédie italienne*. During his fifty-six-year tenure as Procureur du Roi au Châtelet, as characterized by Jean-François Perrin, the general editor of this three-volume critical edition, Gueullette read widely, edited carefully, translated and wrote, acted, inspired spectacles, composed successful tale collections, was friendly with authors and the publisher Prault, while maintaining a deep interest in history and capably carrying out the duties of a respected magistrate (19).

Gueullette's five volumes of *contes* incorporate the results of his prodigious reading in biography, history, geography, ethnography, philosophy, theology, criminal jurisprudence, memoirs, tales, novellas, and romances, which provided the material for this eighteenth-century hybridist extraordinaire. Since his tales also incorporated so much material from the 1697 *Bibliothèque Orientale* of Barthélemy d'Herbelot (completed after his death, it should be noted, by Antoine Galland), Gueullette's oeuvre is often considered a fictionalized popular abridgement of that massive compendium.

Gueullette adopted Mlle Lhéritier's conviction that *contes de fées* came from medieval troubadours. But he went one better in his first tale collection, *Les Soirées Bretonnes* (1712), by setting its frame tale half a millennium earlier, even though the tales themselves were based on two early modern works, the 1557 *Peregrinaggio di tre giovani, figlioli del re di Serendippo* (a framed collection of seven novellas, itself with a lengthy history in Middle Eastern narrative) and Beroalde de Verville's 1610 *Histoire véritable*. Truly hybrid, the tales as Gueullette

rewrote them express not ancient or even century-old attitudes, but the sensibilities, values, and even characters' names from late seventeenth-century *contes de fées*, while taking place (despite their Breton title), not in familiar France, but in exotic *Arabie*.

The second of Gueullette's tale collections, *Les Mille et Un Quarts d'Heure: Contes Tartares* (1715, expanded 1723) achieved the greatest immediate success of all his works, perhaps because it spoke to readers in immediately comprehensible language and images. The beauty of his women, for instance, exemplifies the rococo sensibilities of Antoine Watteau's contemporary paintings ("les charmes d'une des deux jeunes dames lui revinrent mille fois dans l'esprit. Deux grands yeux bleus"; 1: 232), and the fears of their men often resemble those of eighteenth-century employers vis-à-vis their servants ("Sunqui répéta ces mots tant de fois et les prononça d'une voix si élevée que son mari craignait que les domestiques ne l'entendissent"; 3: 1965).

*Les Mille et Un Quarts d'heure: Contes Tartares* formed part of the crowd of the "Thousand and One" titles unleashed by the success of Galland's *Thousand and One Nights*. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, *Les Mille et Un Quarts d'Heure* was translated into Spanish, Italian, Russian, German, English, Dutch, Portuguese, and Danish. Whether these translations made their way into the popular press of those languages and thence into oral tradition would be worth investigating. Gueullette's subsequent tale collections, also translated into some of those languages, were never as popular as *Les Mille et Un Quarts d'Heure*, either at home or abroad.

Before Jean-François Perrin focused his attention on these tales, Gueullette scholarship was scant. There was, for instance, a 1934 Montpellier doctoral dissertation on *L'Oeuvre Romanesque* by Armand-Daniel Coderre and a 1938 biography by J. E. Gueullette. Perrin treated Gueullette within larger conceptual frameworks in "Recueillir et transmettre: l'effet anthologique dans le conte merveilleux XVIIe-XVIIIe siècle" (*Féeries* 1 [2003]: 145–71) and "L'invention d'un genre littéraire au XVIIIe siècle" (*Féeries* 1 [2004/2005]: 9–27), and focused squarely on his work in "Une interface paradoxale au XVIIIe siècle: Conte merveilleux et bibliothèque des savoirs chez Thomas-Simon Gueullette" in the 2010 collection *The Conte: Oral and Written Dynamics* (93–110). Perrin's scholarly treatment of Gueullette's brief narratives culminates in this four-volume Champion critical edition of *Les Soirées Bretonnes* (1712, ed. Christelle Bahier-Porte), *Les Mille et Un Quarts d'Heure: Contes Tartares* (1715, expanded 1723, ed. Carmen Ramirez), *Les Aventures merveilleuses du mandarin Fum-Hoam: Contes Chinois* (1723), *Les Sultanes du Guzarate, ou les Songes des hommes éveillés, Contes Mogols* (1732, both ed. Jean-François Perrin), and finally *Les Mille et Une Heures: Contes Péruviens* (1733, expanded 1759, eds. Marie-Françoise Bosquet and Régine Daoulas).

A detailed introduction precedes, and brief essays about individual stories immediately follow, each critical text. Considerably longer scholarly addenda for each appear in volume 3 in the “Annexes” or appendixes. There are, for instance, supplementary sources for *Les Soirées Bretonnes* such as the article on “Arab” from d’Herbelot’s *Bibliothèque Orientale*, a June 1712 article from the *Mercure galant*, Mailly’s 1719 translation *Voyages et Aventures des trois princes de Sarendip* from the 1557 Italian, and de Verville’s 1610 *Histoire ou Voyage des princes fortunes* (3: 2045–50). The appendix for *Les Mille et Un Quarts d’Heure* (3: 2051–82) contains an essay on the reception of *Les Milles et Un Quarts d’Heure* together with numerous contemporary references to the work and comparative tables of contents of the 1715 and 1753 editions. There is similarly illuminating primary material for *Les Aventures merveilleuses du Mandarin Fum-Hoam* (3: 2083–94), *Les Sultanes de Guzarate* (3: 2095–104), and *Les Mille et Une Heures* (3: 2105–13). A more general appendix (3: 2115–36) treats meta-editorial subjects, such as Gueullette’s listing of his published works in a codicil to his last testament, a listing of republications in part or in whole of his *contes de fées* in other publications, such as Lenglet-Dufresnoy’s *Bibliothèque des Romans* or Mayer’s *Cabinet des fées*, as well as references to Gueullette and his works in eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century literary histories.

Volume 3 also contains an extensive bibliography for *contes de fées* as a whole and for Gueullette’s individual *contes* (3: 2147–71); a summary of each tale in each of the five texts (3: 2127–338); an index of characters in those tales, identifying each individually and locating each by tale and book title (3: 2339–81); a table of illustrations; and finally an overall table of contents.

Like all the volumes in the Champion series, Gueullette’s *Contes*, with its learned historical and literary introductions and commentary, is a work of imposing erudition. Of inestimable value also is the inclusion of Gueullette’s own front matter, such as the *avertissement*, dedication, and address to the reader.

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**Sendbad-name.** By Mohammad ‘Ali Zahiri Samarqandi. Edited by Mohammad Baqer Kamalodini. Tehran: Miras-e maktub, 2002. 56 + 311 pp.

The *Book of Sindbad* (in Persian *Sendbad-name*), also known in the West as *The Seven Sages (of Rome)*, is an ancient “Oriental” collection of tales that through its numerous translations into a variety of Near Eastern and Western languages since the Middle Ages has become part of world literature. Essentially, the book consists of a frame tale involving alleged illicit sexual advances and subsequent calumny, such as told in an exemplary manner in the biblical tale of Joseph and Potiphar’s wife. Embedded in this frame are shorter tales that are narrated either by the king’s viziers in defense of the prince who is

being wrongly accused of having attempted to rape the king's favorite, or by the young woman who fears that her own unlawful conduct might lead to severe consequences. Against this backdrop, the collection's various versions primarily contain differing numbers of tales belonging to the "wiles of women" genre as well as tales about faithlessness and deceit. Many of these tales have become part of an international narrative tradition up to the point of being included in major reference works for the discipline of folkloristics (see Bea Lundt, "Sieben weise Meister" in *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, vol. 12., 2007: cols. 654–60).

Considering various arguments suggesting ancient Indian, Greek, and Iranian antecedents of the collection or specific parts thereof, for a long time researchers have discussed the book's ultimate origin. Meanwhile, it is commonly agreed that the earliest unambiguously datable textual version preserved is the Persian one compiled by Mohammad 'Ali Zahiri Samarqandi around the middle of the twelfth century, thus this version deserves particular attention. Although it has been translated into Russian (1960) and French (1975), the *Sendbad-name's* only available English version today remains the one published in William Alexander Clouston's often quoted *Book of Sindibad; or, The Story of the King, His Son, the Damsel, and the Seven Vizirs* (Glasgow 1884). That version in turn relies on the rather vague and fanciful translation of a Persian versified version dating to the fourteenth century that was prepared by Forbes Falconer in 1841. Adequate translations can be prepared only from a reliable source text, thus the importance of Mohammad Baqer Kamaloddini's new edition of Samarqandi's book, which the present review aims to present to English-reading audiences. At the same time, the review points to how this book supplements the available bibliographical documentation on the *Sendbad-name's* Persian (and Arabic) versions, currently supplied by the analytical bibliography on *The Seven Sages of Rome and The Book of Sendbad* prepared by Hans R. Runte and others (1984) and its updates on the Internet (see <http://myweb.dal.ca/hrunte/ABSupp.html> and <http://myweb.dal.ca/hrunte/ABSupp2.html>, accessed 29 August 2011).

Besides a detailed introduction, Kamaloddini's new edition comprises the full text of Samarqandi's version (with comparative notes on the text) and a number of appendixes: explanatory notes, mainly referring to the book's Arabic sentences and Persian verses, words that might not be comprehensible to the modern reader, and an extensive bibliography that lists mostly Persian-language publications and translations but also takes into account a number of important English-language publications, such as B. E. Perry's essay "The Origin of the Book of Sindbad" (1959).

The editor's introduction is a learned and highly conscious survey of virtually all of the relevant previous statements concerning the origin and history of the *Sendbad-name*, ranging from tenth-century Arabic historical literature to the studies of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western and Iranian scholars



such as Hermann Ethé, Theodor Nöldeke, Jan Rypka, Mojtaba Minovi, and Mohammad Ja'far Mahjub. Rightfully dismissing the *Sendbad-name's* at times proposed Indian origin in favor of its credibly documented Iranian provenance, the author proceeds to discuss the book's various Persian-language versions. Unfortunately, most of those versions have not been preserved, yet there is sufficient proof to argue that the book's initial version was compiled in the Pahlavi language. This original version was probably compiled during the reign of Sasanian ruler Khosrou I Anushirvan around the year 570 CE; his reign also witnessed the (adapted) translation of the book of *Kalila and Dimna* from the Sanskrit language. The editor is firmly convinced of the veracity of the statement in Ibn al-Nadim's early tenth-century catalog of books, to the effect that two versions of the *Sendbad-name* existed—a shorter and a longer one. He sees the longer version essentially as giving rise to the subsequent Persian-language versions, while the shorter one is said to lie at the basis of the Arabic version and, hence, most, if not all, of the book's subsequent versions in languages other than Persian.

To my knowledge, this is the very first survey of all the existing (or presumed) Persian-language versions of the *Sendbad-name*, and it will be important to make this information available to international scholars. The earliest traces of the Pahlavi version appear to be preserved in a few lines of poetry composed by fourth-century poet Rudaki, who also prepared a versified version of *Kalila and Dimna*. The earliest version in modern Persian was composed by a certain Abu al-Favares Fanaruzi in the year 950. While Fanaruzi's version is said to have been composed in plain and simple language, it has not been preserved for posterity. Fanaruzi's version served as the basis of Zahiri Samarqandi's version in ornate prose, written around 1161–1164.

Short chapters sketching the value of Samarqandi's version in terms of content and language and outlining the book's different versions in world literature follow the editor's exhaustive historical survey. These chapters primarily address a Persian audience and from a Western perspective might be supplemented by a host of foreign-language references. Concluding his introduction, the editor discusses the manuscripts upon which his edition is based. His most important source text is a hitherto neglected Izmir manuscript dating from the beginning of the thirteenth century CE and thus written less than half a century after the original work. This is supplemented by a Tashkent manuscript dated 685/1286 and the AteÖ edition, which is itself based on three manuscripts dated 785/1383, 1084/1673, and 650/1252, respectively. In this manner, the new edition constitutes a resource of prime importance for the further study of the *Sendbad-name's* first preserved version and surely deserves to be made accessible to international scholarship in translation.

As a footnote to the historical discussion, another recent discovery also deserves mention. Researchers agree that the *Sendbad-name's* Arabic version played a major role in the text's international diffusion. Besides the version included in the *Thousand and One Nights* (see *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, edited by Ulrich Marzolph and Richard van Leeuwen, 160–61, no. 181), another Arabic version of the *Sendbad-name* is known to be included in a work that constitutes the “smaller sibling” to the *Thousand and One Nights*—namely, the collection known as *A Hundred and One Nights* (in Arabic, *Mi'at layla walayla*). In 2005 the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, an internationally renowned institution, acquired a manuscript of the *Hundred and One Nights* (see my “The *Hundred and One Nights*: A Recently Acquired Old Manuscript,” in *Treasures of the Aga Khan Museum: Arts of the Book and Calligraphy*, Exhibition Catalog, edited by M. S. Graves and B. Junod [Istanbul 2010, 206–15]). The newly acquired manuscript appears to be quite old, probably even dating from the thirteenth century. Considering the fact that so far the oldest unambiguously dated manuscript of the *Hundred and One Nights* dates from 1776, and that the oldest preserved manuscript of the *Thousand and One Nights* dates from the fifteenth century, the recently discovered manuscript of the *Hundred and One Nights* deserves particular attention, since the version of the *Sendbad-name* it contains might well constitute the text's oldest Arabic version known so far.

Ulrich Marzolph  
*Enzyklopädie des Märchens*

***Bluebeard: A Reader's Guide to the English Tradition.*** By Casie E. Hermansson. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009. 289 pp.

Casie E. Hermansson's most useful survey, *Bluebeard: A Reader's Guide to the English Tradition*, shows how very ubiquitous this tale of the ogre who kills multiple wives is, and has been, in our Anglophone cultural imaginary, especially in print, visual, and performance modes. The book's preface, aptly subtitled “Three Hundred Years of ‘Bluebeard’ in English,” points to the tale's complex history discussed in the chapters on variants and variations in part 1 and to the volume's own chronological structure, especially evident in the chapters of parts 2–4, which examine “Bluebeard” in the popular culture of the English eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries respectively. Extensive illustrations, notes, and bibliography round out the volume.

The title's strengths include its very inclusiveness of a wide range of sources, both primary and secondary, that are not usually brought together. Space limitations curtail full discussion here, so I will note highlights. Part 1, for example, discusses bluebeards in true-crime writing and pirate Bluebeard narratives (chapter 2) in conjunction with the more usual discussion of Bluebeard variants

(chapter 1). Part 2 discriminates between different early eighteenth-century translations of Charles Perrault's influential 1697 text and posits their varying effects on the English tradition (chapter 3). It also traces the eighteenth-century orientalizing of the Bluebeard tale, something long recognized by fairy-tale studies scholars, but its focus on the influence of specific stage productions—especially George Colman and Michael Kelly's popular 1798 play, *Blue Beard; or, Female Curiosity: A Dramatic Romance*—adds a new performance component (chapter 4).

Part 3, in certain ways the heart of the book, examines the Bluebeard tale in nineteenth-century chapbooks and juveniles (chapter 5), on the comic stage (chapter 6), and in Victorian arts and letters (chapter 7). It develops what fairy-tale scholars have seen as new areas of study, the pantomime and the comic stage, as “hybrids” between the oral and the written forms of the fairy tale, rewriting what folklorist Jennifer Schacker sees as the academic stereotype of fairy tales and Victorian morality. By chance, I also read A. S. Byatt's novel *The Children's Book* (2009), as I was reading this volume for review. The novel is replete with late Victorian and early Edwardian puppet and stage performances of fairy tales and includes a major character, a fine potter, who is also a Bluebeard with a secret room. Both titles mutually inform each other and reveal something about nineteenth-century British culture.

Part 4 outlines what Hermansson sees as a crisis in the Bluebeard tale in the twentieth century (chapter 8); ironic, modernist presentations of the tale (chapter 9); and contemporary treatments (chapter 10). Examination of early Bluebeard films such as Georges Méliès's 1901 *Barbe-bleu* is illuminating, but that of other issues seems truncated here. For example, I found that the discussion under the subheading “Feminist Revisionism” is not sufficient for what I see as a major component of twentieth-century criticism of the Bluebeard tale and as Hermansson's own critical interest as well.

The whole text is, in fact, somewhat short (178 pages) to cover so much ground, so its inclusiveness can also be seen as a limitation, since description and critical assessments are not as fully developed as they might be. The preface contains a subheading, “Interpreting Bluebeard,” that summarizes critical approaches to the tale (historical anthropology, universal folklore classifications, psychological archetypes, and feminist and postmodern approaches), but the book itself most often draws on the latter approaches, implicitly referring to Hermansson's earlier critical book, *Reading Feminist Intertextuality through Bluebeard Stories* (2001), but not developing, as I indicated above, those theoretical issues.

In all fairness, however, there are two points I would like to make. The first is that I am more familiar with twentieth-century feminist criticism than with other centuries discussed, so I can be more critical, as reviewer, of the

condensations and exclusions in this section than in others, rightly or wrongly. And the second is that this volume is specifically subtitled as *A Reader's Guide*. The goal is literally to guide readers to the references so that they can use the materials listed therein. This goal mitigates the volume's shortness, especially if one conceives of the text as an extended introduction to the excellent fifty-page bibliography. So, in conclusion, I see this as an invaluable reference work for scholars interested in this most evocative of tales.

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***Bluebeard Gothic: Jane Eyre and Its Progeny.*** By Heta Pyrhönen. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010. 277 pp.

Heta Pyrhönen's *Bluebeard Gothic: Jane Eyre and Its Progeny* offers an extremely intelligent understanding of the functions and processes of literary adaptation. Building upon the work of scholars such as Anne Williams and Michelle Massé, Pyrhönen points out that "Bluebeard," with its motifs of the threatening patriarch and the mysterious house that conceals a terrible secret, embodies central elements of the Gothic. Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, a self-consciously Gothic narrative, expands upon the "Bluebeard" story by granting the fairy-tale characters complex psychological motivations and justifications. While many scholars have identified "Bluebeard" as a key intertext within *Jane Eyre*, only Sandra Gilbert and Maria Tatar (2004) have treated the subject at any length. Pyrhönen has expanded admirably upon Gilbert and Tatar's arguments, offering not just a nuanced reading of *Jane Eyre* as a reworking of "Bluebeard" but also a stellar examination of how *Jane Eyre* itself has been reworked by writers such as Jean Rhys, Jeanette Winterson, and Angela Carter.

Pyrhönen identifies the category of what she calls "Bluebeard Gothic"—Gothic narratives that center on the question of a young woman's marriage and the secrets of the house and of her husband (6). In her estimation this category consists of texts that respond both to "Bluebeard" itself and to *Jane Eyre*'s specific adaptation of "Bluebeard"; these works include Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, and Carter's "The Bloody Chamber" and "The Fall River Axe Murders," among many others. In the tradition of much scholarship of the Gothic, Pyrhönen uses the lens of psychoanalysis to illuminate "the intimate link between physical and mental space in the topography of Bluebeard Gothic" (22). The results are often fascinating, such as her application of psychoanalytic theories of hysteria—the physical embodiment of mental distress—to identify key similarities between Jane and Rochester. However, occasionally this serves to undermine her arguments. The subtitle of the book is "*Jane Eyre and Its Progeny*," to underscore Pyrhönen's reading of the familial relationship between *Jane Eyre* and later adaptations; however, though

she cites Linda Hutcheon's dictum that "previous" does not equal "authoritative" (10), her insistence on the "progeny" metaphor, and its psychoanalytic implications, does place the texts in a hierarchical relationship. But this is a relatively minor quibble, especially since she focuses upon how later writers adapted both "Bluebeard" and *Jane Eyre* as a means of critiquing the ideological assumptions of those narratives.

Chapter 1 is an extended discussion of *Jane Eyre* as a rewriting of "Bluebeard," with special focus upon the psychic similarities between Rochester and Jane, as both are haunted by a "red room." This focus on psychic distress is carried through in chapter 2, which explores literary responses to *Jane Eyre* through trauma theory. Pyrhönen argues that "later writers have served as witnesses to Jane's narrative of trauma" (67); this trauma is figured not just as that of individuals but also, in postcolonial responses such as *Wide Sargasso Sea*, as that of entire cultures. Chapter 3 demonstrates that romantic iterations of the "Bluebeard Gothic" highlight the violence inherent in patriarchal romance, thus exposing these narratives that are so often presented as "normal" to be perverse. Thoughtful readings of Daphne du Maurier's supposed romance *Rebecca*, Diane Setterfield's densely intertextual *The Thirteenth Tale*, and D. M. Thomas's dark sequel to *Jane Eyre*, *Charlotte*, enable Pyrhönen to articulate how these authors examine discourses of the perverse, including sadism, masochism, and incest, as part of a critique of Bluebeard Gothic. Chapter 4 analyzes the religious issues surrounding "Bluebeard" and *Jane Eyre*, particularly discourses of obedience and sacrifice. The heroine of "Bluebeard" is often linked with that other famously disobedient woman, Eve; Pyrhönen reads *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* as a reinterpretation of the Fall and Sarah Waters's *Fingersmith* as an examination of scapegoating. Finally, chapter 5 studies Angela Carter's recapitulations of "Bluebeard" through a very careful application of Harold Bloom's construct of the "covering Cherub," particularly her skepticism about "Bron-tëan Bluebeard Gothic" (200–01).

Pyrhönen collapses several tale types together to form what she calls the "Bluebeard' tale cycle": "Bluebeard" (ATU 312), "The Robber Bridegroom" (ATU 955), and "Fitcher's Bird" (ATU 311). Although the tales are certainly related, an extended consideration of these three groups of stories as distinct from one another would enhance her analysis of the tales themselves and of the literary texts that incorporate them. All three tale groups hinge upon a depiction of female disobedience; Perrault's "Bluebeard," the best-known version of the tale, is notorious for its equation of the wife's crime of curiosity with her husband's crime of serial murder. However, as Pauline Greenhill (2008) notes, "The Robber Bridegroom" and especially "Fitcher's Bird" celebrate the heroine's curiosity as a successful survival strategy. Because these two tale types differ so much from "Bluebeard" in their assignation of gendered virtue and villainy,

Pyrhönen's arguments would have been strengthened if she had spent more time discussing which elements of which specific tales in the "Bluebeard" cycle were incorporated into the literary works she considers. She gestures toward this in chapter 2, where she fruitfully links trauma theory's role of the "witness" with the heroine's narration of her fiancé's murder of a young girl in "The Robber Bridegroom" and its variant "Mr. Fox." However, although Pyrhönen does address "Fitcher's Bird" in the context of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, aside from a brief comparison of Rhys herself with the clever third sister, she does not discuss this particular tale further, except to link the heroine's bird disguise to "the conventions of totemic society" (207) in her consideration of Carter's bird-woman stories. She spends just enough time on these specificities to make one wish for more detail. For example, the climactic house fires in both *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca* mimic the conflagration that destroys Fitcher. What do Jane and the second Mrs. de Winter owe to that story's clever, duplicitous heroine rather than to Bluebeard's naïve wife?

In addition to a more detailed consideration of the folk narratives that comprise the "'Bluebeard' tale cycle," a more careful use of terminology would have deepened Pyrhönen's readings of *Jane Eyre*'s progeny. Pyrhönen does not distinguish between texts that only allude to the narrative tropes of *Jane Eyre*, such as Anna Leonowen's *Romance of the Harem*, and texts such as *Wide Sargasso Sea*, in which readers are expected to recognize the characters as those created by Brontë. Pyrhönen's readings of the ways *Jane Eyre* and "Bluebeard" operate in the latter novels would have benefited from a consideration of fan fiction, which makes use of preexisting characters in a manner identical to that of Rhys, Sally Beauman, and other writers she discusses. Moreover, the growing body of scholarship surrounding fan fiction locates it within female-dominated interpretive communities; Abigail Derecho (2006) argues that fan fiction has often served as a vector for feminist literary, social, and cultural critique, an argument of obvious relevance to Pyrhönen's.

Despite my desire for more precise differentiation among both the sources and the responses to Brontë's novel, Pyrhönen's work is overall excellent. This book will prove extremely relevant and useful not just for scholars of "Bluebeard" and *Jane Eyre* but also for the field of adaptation studies.

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**Le texte littéraire: Pour une approche interdisciplinaire.** By Jean-Michel Adam and Ute Heidmann. Louvain-La-Neuve, Belgium: Academia Bruylant, 2009. (Série: Au coeur des textes)

This coauthored book reflects the fruitful collaboration of the linguist Jean-Michel Adam and the comparatist Ute Heidmann at the University of

Lausanne in Switzerland. Compact and lucidly written, it presents and exemplifies the method of *differential comparative analysis* that the authors have elaborated over the years. In particular, it provides a useful introduction to their recent study of seventeenth-century French fairy tales, *Textualité et intertextualité des contes: Perrault, Apulée, La Fontaine, L'héritier . . .* (2010). Inspired by Bakhtinian dialogism and the discursive turn in the human sciences, Adam and Heidmann's study aims to bridge the divide between linguistics and literary studies. Based on a series of articles published separately, it highlights the fact that each text is produced through complex discursive practices and proposes a dynamic model of literary and cultural history involving constant reinventions, adaptations, and reconfigurations.

In 1971 already, Roland Barthes observed in "From Work to Text" that the prime heuristic value attributed to interdisciplinarity in the human sciences must meet certain demands in order to be truly effective. According to Barthes, interdisciplinary study is not achieved "by simple confrontations between various specialized branches of knowledge," but consists of creating "a new object and a new language" that begins only when the old disciplinary "solidarities" break down.

In keeping with Barthes's injunction, the programmatic introduction synthesizes the authors' joint efforts to challenge the dominant paradigm of their respective disciplines and clarifies the theoretical and methodological principles adopted in the study. The authors explain their choice of reintroducing the sociohistorical context, editorial history, and material conditions of textual production evacuated by linguistic studies and engages with issues of textuality and narrative that are often neglected by cultural and comparative studies.

The six chapters are organized around these key methodological principles and conceptual tools. A series of comparative analyses demonstrates the uniqueness of each literary text in the dialogic unfolding of European literary history, from Jean-Pierre Camus, Perrault, the Grimms, and Andersen to Kleist, Baudelaire, and Kafka, who are made to illustrate various aspects of the generic dialogue out of which new writing emerges. The creative process is seen as resulting from a complex interaction with other texts and genres, past and present, but also from the composition and actual making of the book itself, including its editorial history, circulation, and reception in different contexts and cultures, notably in translation. For example, a close comparative reading of Andersen's and the Grimms' versions of "The Princess on the Pea" (or "The Blue Light" in another chapter) elucidates how each text reconfigures the story through linguistic, stylistic, and discursive strategies that change and renew its meaning in subtle but significant ways. This in turn invites the reader to distinguish between the Danish *Eventyr* and the German *Hausmärchen* (and, by analogy, the French *conte*, the Italian *fiaba*, the English *fairy tale*, etc.) as be-

longing to related but distinct cultural, aesthetic, and social contexts. Differential comparison thus allows for a text-based examination of works and genres from a multilingual and cross-cultural perspective and points to the limitations of single disciplinary models and national approaches to literary history.

The most notable contribution of the proposed approach lies in its cutting across traditional academic/institutional frontiers in such a way as to question critical commonplaces and challenge the unspoken assumptions that often underlie fairy-tale criticism and folkloristic studies. By privileging difference over similarity and by rigorously documenting linguistic, textual, and generic variations, the authors shed new light on the history of the fairy tale instead of looking for a lost urtext or mythical “tale type.” This radically challenges the notion of a universal invariant to which individual tales are conventionally reduced or compared and eschews the hierarchical or normative model that underpins it.

Adam and Heidmann share an interest in genre (or, as they rename it, genericity); draw on Genette’s suggestive image of the text as palimpsest; and resort to the categories of paratext, co-text, and intertext. They nevertheless insist on distinguishing their individual contributions as pertaining to different disciplinary fields, practices, and interests (a separation materialized in the bipartite structure of their latest book): Heidmann proposes a comparative method to which Adam contributes from the perspective of text linguistics and discourse analysis. In *Why Fairy Tales Stick*, Jack Zipes had already noted the authors’ contribution to the field of fairy-tale studies, and it is to be hoped that the present book will soon be made available in English, for it sketches out the principles of a methodologically coherent, rigorous, innovative, and informed approach that is capable of renewing conventional understandings of the history of the fairy tale and so will be helpful to both students and scholars.

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***Beyond Adaptation: Essays on Radical Transformations of Original Works.***  
*Edited by Phyllis Frus and Christy Williams. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010. 216 pp.*

As the title of this collection suggests, the editors and contributors have attempted to broaden the understanding of adaptation and, in doing so, challenge the ways that texts are read, reread, and retold. Using the more fluid term *transformation* to link original stories to their various retellings is one of the appeals of this collection, but it is also one of its limits. In their introduction, the editors delineate between terms—*transformation*, *adaptation*, *intertextuality*, *revisions*, and so on—and speak to the “transformative” possibilities of these definitions overlapping. At times it feels like these words are simply interchangeable, and the text becomes lost in the rhetoric. For some of the essays,



however, the fluidity of the term becomes more useful because it allows for individual authors to interpret transformation within their own disciplines—to “transform” transformation. This is particularly true of the many chapters that discuss fairy tales (“Mulan,” “Beauty and the Beast,” “The Little Mermaid,” “Bluebeard,” “Snow White”) and is one of the many strengths of this collection.

In their introduction, Phyllis Frus and Christy Williams begin by defining transformation as a “text that reworks an older story or stories, making a transformation very much like an adaptation” (3). Like their analogy of a caterpillar transforming to a butterfly, transformations move beyond adaptations and “transform the source text into something new that works independently of its source” (3). Transformations may not be obvious references to original texts as adaptations are, but, instead, allow for more flexibility and interpretive possibilities with the source text.

This concept is a refreshing way to look at how certain stories are rewritten, especially in relation to intertextuality and other, earlier transformations. The editors note that this type of scholarship has already been taking place in fairy-tale and folklore studies. In particular, fairy-tale scholarship offers certain questions: Why this text? Why now? What is the appeal in retelling this story in this way? These are questions that many of the authors in this collection also ask.

For the chapters on fairy tales, transformation is particularly effective by not simply transforming the texts, but by offering the disciplines or scholarship transformative possibilities. Stella Bolaki’s chapter on four retellings of “Snow White” (Angela Carter, Anne Sexton, Olga Brouhmas, Emma Donoghue) does not offer anything new about these texts, but it does discuss the importance of feminist transformations—not simply the writing of feminist versions of old tales, but how these transformations are understood as feminist and what revisiting them can tell us about the ever-changing nature of feminism itself. These stories, then, do not just offer us subversions of limiting representations of women in fairy tales; they also offer us revisions of the feminist discourses that frame our analysis of these works: feminist transformations become transformations of feminism.

Mark DiPaulo’s essay on “Beauty and the Beast” laments the transformation of Belle from a feminist character to one of the mass-marketed figures in the Disney Princess line. Although I disagree with DiPaulo’s assessment of Belle as a feminist and with the film as taking up a 1990s resurgence of feminism, his discussion of the transformation of Belle into a commodity that undermines the strength and intelligence that many see in Belle is important. While DiPaulo does acknowledge that many feminist fairy-tale scholars would disagree with his interpretation of any Disney character as a feminist, he makes good points about the pervasiveness of this type of transformation. Whatever we may think of Belle as a character, or whether or not we agree with DiPaulo’s

assertion that the commodification of Belle is Disney's own backlash against Linda Woolverton's feminist message, DiPaulo's discussion of the "omnipresence" of the Disney Princesses as an image and an ideal sold to young girls is a reminder that transformations are not always positive. It is also a reminder of the power of fairy tales as cultural knowledge and of the appeal of retelling these stories; for every Disney Princess doll selling a version of "happily ever after," there is another transformation where Belle's story is quite different.

Other contributions focus on aspects of transformation that move beyond the usual reinterpretations in film and literature by thinking about new technologies and media. Jennifer Orme's essay on the *Arabian Nights* discusses how the traditional text can be understood within the context of the DVD release and its special features, where it becomes a "form of visual cultural tourism" (147). Orme's discussion of a television miniseries that aired in 2000 largely focuses on the frame story of Scheherazade and the power of storytelling itself. Orme notes that as well as the focus on the importance of Scheherazade as a storyteller, the larger context in the DVD package and marketing tells a story that is just as important. This "paratextual information" claims an authenticity that links this DVD version to the old by including special features, creating a context that "gestures towards a fidelity to the source texts" and tells the viewer how to understand the story (146). Unlike other literary or cinematic transformations, this *Arabian Nights* emphasizes the importance of storytelling to the original text and thereby allows for a transformation of Scheherazade herself in its retelling.

Cathlena Martin's analysis of *Alice in Wonderland* as a video game discusses the ways that classic texts like Lewis Carroll's function as part of cultural learning and how the "multiple incarnations" in film, television, literature, and other forms of adaptation "have placed these stories into cultural consciousness" (134). Video games can also be understood as part of children's cultural knowledge, new ways of learning that recognize Alice as a "prominent figure in popular culture" (135), but they do so with the original source always in sight. The new media of video games and the culture of gaming itself create new and potentially deeper ways of understanding the original source while remaining relevant to a contemporary audience through multiple intertextual references.

As Frus and Williams suggest, transformation is about the relationships between texts, between original sources and any number of interpretations, references, and revisions, where the "plurality of voices" creates a rich and pleasurable experience for the audience (12). Whether the transformation focuses on a video game, a Disney doll, or a DVD miniseries, these new and innovative ways of understanding original stories become the "radical" transformations of the book's title.

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*Erfahrung schrieb's und reicht's der Jugend: Geschichte der deutschen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert. Gesammelte Beiträge aus drei Jahrzehnten.* By Hans-Heino Ewers. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010. 336 pp.

Notwithstanding Germany's central role in folklore and fairy-tale research since the Grimms' pivotal contribution, the development of criticism about German children's literature has still received insufficient attention. Hans-Heino Ewers successfully reevaluates the history of German children's literature, analyzing the fundamental aspects of the situation of children and their relationships with adults, school, and religion from the late eighteenth to the twentieth century.

The monograph consists of essays published between 1980 and 2005 and is divided into three parts. The first analyzes children's literature from the Enlightenment to the Biedermeier era, which, for Ewers, represents a fragment of the social history of the emancipation of the bourgeois family. The scholar reconstructs pedagogical attitudes and numerous debates on the most appropriate literature for child recipients.

In the first chapter, Ewers begins his discussion with the 1760–1780s, when books for private tuition of bourgeois children emerged as a specific branch of German literary production. The creation of a market aimed at juvenile readership attests to how this kind of literature was seen as necessary within Enlightenment pedagogy. In the second and third chapters, Ewers discusses the movement of Philanthropism, the major exponents of which set out to reform not only the system of education but also children's literature. Arguing against Locke's idea about early intellectual development, since that method worked to form *Wunderkinder*, objects of prestige and victims of the parents' vanity, the Philanthropists started looking for material suitable to the child's level of comprehension and transparent in structure that would convey the message of morality through example. Their idea that the processes of learning should be enjoyable changed the structure of handbooks: they took the form of a journey to help engage the child's attention. Philanthropically inspired works were, nevertheless, a strictly authoritative kind of literature; the world of children was separate from that of adults and controlled by them.

In the fourth chapter, Ewers investigates the paradigm shift in the development of children's literature from the Philanthropism to Romanticism, which favored an appreciation for the didactics of traditional storytelling that also allowed them a symbolical or allegorical *mise en oeuvre* of modern themes or political issues. The Romantic authors preferred the fantastic and the marvelous, declaring folk and fairy tales to be a legitimate form of children's literature. In the fifth section, Ewers focuses on succinct close readings of some tales by Ludwig Tieck, E. T. A. Hoffmann, and Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué, argu-

ing that they had antiauthoritarian tendencies, which opposed them to the Philanthropists' works.

The sixth and the eighth sections contain references to the *Kindertheater*, which emerged in imitation of French school drama in the 1770s and centered on the bourgeois family's everyday life. Ewers provides cultural and biographical context for the literal achievements of August Corrodi, the largely unknown late-Romantic dramatist and illustrator, which created a bridge between Romantic and modern children's literature. Further, Ewers discusses the leitmotif of Biedermeier dramas: the representation of the family by August Rode, C. E. von Houvald, and C. F. Weiße. Ewers shows how von Houvald's *Schuldrama*, while still portraying the family as an emotional union, displayed a number of weak and insecure parent figures who needed the children to dispel their preoccupations. The author argues that von Houvald's plays reflect an increasing dissociation of family from society and comes to the conclusion that early nineteenth-century's *Kinderschauspiel* is no longer centered on the child's welfare, but on the parents' trauma.

The second part of the book addresses children's literature from the post-Romantic era until the Weimar Republic. Ewers provides an overview of neo-Romantic animal tales and school/holiday stories as well as of gender-differentiated literature for young males, colonial and adventure novels, and sentimental narratives for girls. The scholar highlights the influence of the political culture on all of these genres and the growing orientation toward a proletariat readership. He outlines Heinrich Wolgast's theoretical discussion of religious and politically engaged children's literature. Finally, Ewers focuses on Erich Kästner's production as well as on the figure of Walter Benjamin, as a collector of children's books, and his attitudes toward their illustrations. A discussion of Benjamin's scripts for the radio program *Jugendstunde* and of his theoretical-critical comments on children's literature might also have been desirable.

In the final part of the book, Ewers takes up the question of the evolution of children's poetry and prose from the Enlightenment didactic model to the modern one. The last section deals with the status and functions of the author/narrator and its transformation from simple transmitter of a story to educator or moralist. The volume closes with an appendix that includes recent publications on the history of children's literature.

Ewers's wide-ranging collection of essays constitutes a well-researched reference book. The author deserves great credit for providing a useful tool for surveying characteristics of the different mainstream ideas and changes in the understanding of German children's literature. There are, inevitably, minor criticisms that one could make. It is astonishing not to find in the volume, subtitled *Geschichte der deutschen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur vom 18. bis zum 20.*

*Jahrhundert*, any mention of the role of female authors. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, writers such as Benedikte Naubert, Bettina von Arnim, Caroline Auguste Fischer, Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, Dorothea Schlegel, and Sophie Tieck-Bernhardi had collected and published fairy tales, often adapted for children, that far outnumbered those written by male authors. So far, however, they have not received sufficient scholarly attention. Secondly, no space is given to the interest in French *contes de fées* and oriental fairy tales that boomed in Germany by the middle of the eighteenth century. In fact, with German translation of Mmes d'Aulnoy and de Beaumont's tales and of the *Arabian Nights*, these fairy tales were clearly part of the realm of German children's literature. Since Ewers's volume covers a large time span and range of themes, an index of cited names and subjects would also be useful. Although the volume cannot be considered a comprehensive study of German children's literature, Ewers nonetheless offers a broad historical and ideological panorama of the evolution of its literary criticism in Germany.

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***The Place of Lewis Carroll in Children's Literature.*** By Jan Susina. New York: Routledge, 2010. 232 pp.

About a dozen years ago, Jan Susina and I spent an afternoon with the late Martin Gardner. As longtime admirers of Gardner's *Annotated Alice*, we relished the opportunity to talk with Gardner about his interest in Lewis Carroll and the research process he went through when he annotated Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*. I was reminded of that afternoon when I read Susina's *The Place of Lewis Carroll in Children's Literature*. Gardner and Susina rank among the foremost experts on Carroll, but their approaches to Carroll's *Alice* books are as different as a raven is to a writing desk. Gardner's approach is more micro in orientation. His pithy annotations explain the meanings of British terms and traditions referred to by Carroll or the connections between particular events in Carroll's life and specific scenes from his *Alice* books. Susina, however, takes a more macro approach; his new book places Carroll's writings within their historical and literary contexts. As a scholar of Victorian culture and history, Susina provides contemporary readers with insights into the sources that Carroll drew upon when writing his *Alice* books, and as an authority on the history of children's literature, he sheds light on the influence of the *Alice* books on more recent children's literature and other forms of culture intended for children.

As Susina acknowledges in his introductory chapter, Carroll's *Alice* books transcended the didacticism that typified much of nineteenth-century children's literature, but Susina argues that viewing Carroll as an author who tran-

scended his times can lead to misinterpretations of his life and work. As he states in his introduction, “Carroll was very much a proper Victorian” (4).

Susina devotes several chapters to examining how Victorian culture and values influenced Carroll’s career. In a chapter on Carroll’s juvenilia, Susina shows how these early writings were shaped by his experiences growing up in a close-knit Victorian family. He then demonstrates how echoes of these early writings reverberate throughout the *Alice* books. In another chapter, Susina examines the connections between Carroll and the Victorian writers of literary fairy tales, paying particular attention to Carroll’s relationships with George MacDonald and Charles Kingsley. He argues that as writers Carroll and MacDonald “encouraged and supported one another” (30), but he maintains that Carroll was more strongly influenced by “Kingsley’s *The Water-Babies* than any of the fairy tales in MacDonald’s *Dealings with the Fairies*” (32).

Throughout much of his book, Susina examines how Victorian attitudes toward social class shaped Carroll’s worldview and permeate the *Alice* books. As Susina points out, the character of Alice is portrayed as a “member of the privileged class” (33). His thoughts on this topic are crystallized in a chapter titled “Coffee or Tea: The Two Nations of Victorian Children’s Literature,” where he contrasts *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* to Hesba Stretton’s *Jessica’s First Prayer*, which came out just two years after the publication of Carroll’s first *Alice* book. Although both works were popular children’s books during the Victorian era, Carroll’s book is still read today, while Stretton’s has largely been forgotten. Susina argues that one of the reasons for this is that Stretton’s book deals with the concerns of the impoverished children of London, while Carroll’s book does not even acknowledge “the existence of poor children” (111). Susina suggests that Carroll’s book, for all of its topsy-turvy qualities, is less unsettling to contemporary readers than Stretton’s tale about poverty, alcoholism, and dysfunctional families. As Susina perceptively observes, the differences between Carroll’s book and Stretton’s book play themselves out in the world of beverages. Carroll’s book is steeped in the upper-class traditions associated with tea, while Stretton’s book is tied to the working-class’s consumption of coffee. Susina argues that “the very use of coffee and tea in *Alice* and *Jessica* position the two books for two different social classes” (114). He concludes this chapter by stressing that *Alice* “was a text that celebrated middle- and upper-class values and appealed primarily to readers of those social classes” (115).

Susina devotes the concluding chapters of his book to analyzing the place of the *Alice* books in contemporary culture. In a chapter on the marketing of *Alice* to the readers of today, he stresses the role that illustration and book design play in making these books appealing. He notes that modern editions of books that are aimed at children tend to make extensive use of color illustrations, especially

on the covers, while editions that are intended for adult readers tend to use photographs on the covers. Susina devotes another chapter to the efforts to adopt the *Alice* books to today's electronic media. He argues that the fluid nature of the *Alice* books makes these stories particularly well suited to the flexibility associated with hypertext. In the final chapter, he takes up the subject of contemporary retellings of *Alice*, focusing much of this chapter on Jon Scieszka's *Walt Disney's Alice in Wonderland*, which came out in 2008. As Susina explains, Scieszka's book combines elements from Carroll's original story with elements from Disney's animated film version of *Alice*. However, Susina argues that the result is a book that lacks the humor that runs through Carroll's original version.

In a brief but amusing afterword, Susina returns to the topic of Carroll's humor. He recounts his efforts to interest his son in the *Alice* books. At first his son was not that enthusiastic about these books, but the books' humor grew on him. In this way, the *Alice* books gain new readers with each new generation.

*The Place of Lewis Carroll in Children's Literature* represents many years of thought and research, and the result is a scholarly work that should appeal to anybody who has a serious interest in Carroll's *Alice* books. I plan to keep a copy on the shelf next to Gardner's *Annotated Alice*, for they are books that deserve to be shelf mates.

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***A Giant's Garden: Special "Fairy Tales" Issue.*** Edited by Naomi Wood. *The Oscholars*, Spring 2009. [www.oscholars.com/TO/Specials/Tales/ToC.htm](http://www.oscholars.com/TO/Specials/Tales/ToC.htm).

Apart from Jarlath Killeen's recent work *The Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde* (2007), the two volumes of the fairy tales by Oscar Wilde, *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* and *The House of Pomegranates*, published respectively in 1888 and 1891, have rarely been studied on their own. And no wonder. This special issue of the online journal *The Oscholars*, edited by Naomi Wood, addresses the difficulty of framing and defining Wilde's tales. Presenting nine articles that look at Wilde's fairy tales, in an attempt to situate them both in the canon of Wilde's works and in that of fairy tales more generally, the editors are keeping the issue open, which allows them to add new articles to the collection at any time. As Wood underlines in her introduction, Wilde's fairy tales are shifty narratives, complex stories concealed beneath the mask of a supposedly naïve and sometimes conservative form. Addressed to a dual audience, they both challenge and reinforce bourgeois ideology, subvert and advocate the ideals of Victorian Christianity, and function as very good reflections of Wilde's writing. The apt motif of the garden is used by Wood to encapsulate the ambivalence of Wilde's tales, simultaneously pure and innocent but also depicting the violence of man's control over nature and the artificiality of beauty. Wood's introduction

sets the tone of this collection of articles that probe Wilde's fairy tales through multiple perspectives and approaches.

The question of audience raised by Wood underlies several of the articles in the collection. It may be connected, as a few essays suggest, to the religious imagery that informs Wilde's fairy tales, though the viewpoints on the meaning of religious motifs vary considerably from one article to the other. For Michelle Beissel Heath, the issue of Wilde's dual audience may be addressed through focusing on the tales' tragic endings, for instance, which underline how the issue of self-sacrifice (as in "The Soul of Man under Socialism," "The Happy Prince," "The Young King," or "The Star-Child") and the prevalence of Christ figures or Christlike martyrs typify Wilde's belief that the need for such sacrifices has passed. Unlike Heath (or Amelia A. Rutledge), Heather Kirkpatrick, following in the footsteps of Joseph Peace (*The Unmasking of Oscar Wilde*, 2000), contends that Wilde's sacrificial figures and his stress on the transformative power of love confirm the idea that the tales must be read as Christian allegories or "parables." The question of audience lies as well at the root of Anna Orhanen's essay, which deals with the interplay between aesthetics and ethics in such tales as "The Star Child" and Wilde's paradoxical discourse on the differences between "inner" (moral) and "outer" (aesthetic) beauty.

Inevitably, the idea that Wilde's fairy tales may have been written with a child audience in mind conjures up the question of form. If Wilde's narratives frequently point out the significance of orality and betray the writer's links with Irish culture, the fairy tale, as several critics argue, may have enabled Wilde to bridge the gap between oral and textual/literary culture. Helen Davies, looking at the representation of "voice" in Wilde's work, examines the account of feminine vocality, specifically singing, in Wilde's fairy tales. Her essay focuses on "The Fisherman and His Soul" in order to point out Wilde's simultaneous adherence to and challenge of accepted images of feminine vocality.

Other essays offer more psychological approaches to Wilde's fairy tales, from Neelima Luthra's Lacanian approach to the issue of subjectivity in "The Selfish Giant," "The Young King," or "The Star Child," to Heather Marcovitch's examination of "The Fisherman and His Soul," arguing that Wilde's tale proposes "an aestheticized map of the unconscious psyche"—the Soul's journey paralleling a descent into the unconscious.

Critics have often noted the presence of motifs from Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser*, but Amelia A. Rutledge further develops the study of the relationships between the works of Richard Wagner and Oscar Wilde, particularly highlighting links between "The Nightingale and the Rose" and Wagner's music drama *Tristan and Isolde*.

The symbolism of Wilde's tales is also tackled through his interest in occult and mystical knowledge and his involvement with Freemasonry and the



Theosophical Society. In her essay, Jacqueline Wiegard looks at “The Happy Prince” and “The Young King” through the motif of royal raiment, which she associates with various approaches to alchemy, to map out Wilde’s play between the material and the spiritual.

The collection also features a Spanish adaptation of *The Devoted Friend*, by Tatiana Flores Infante, performed in April 2008 in San Domingo (added to the issue in December 2009); a bibliography of criticism of Wilde’s fairy tales; and a discography of musical adaptations and readings of Wilde’s tales in various languages by Tine Englebert.

Though many of the articles do not aim to classify or define Wilde’s fairy tales per se, they nevertheless point out issues that often lie at the heart of fairy tales, from debates concerning audience to discourses related to morality and bourgeois ideology. If we may praise the dynamic dialogue between articles that look at the fairy tales from various perspectives, as well as the idea that essays may be added at any time to enrich the collection, we may perhaps regret the sometimes too loose definition of the fairy tale; some oversimplifications concerning folktales and the oral tradition; or the use of psychoanalytical theory secondhand and the intermingling of Lacan, Freud, and Bettelheim. In addition, if the multiple interpretations of Wilde’s fairy tales bring to light the tales’ complexity, they may give a sense of disorientation to a few readers, perhaps most particularly those who are not very familiar with Oscar Wilde. Still, to many others this open collection will be of interest precisely for its variety and for the dynamic interaction between the contributions—qualities that certainly pay homage to Wilde’s writing more generally. Last but not least, this collection is undoubtedly an excellent illustration of *The Oscholars’* vigorous perspective on art, literature, and Wilde’s writing.

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***The Good Man Jesus and the Scoundrel Christ.*** By Philip Pullman. New York: Canongate, 2010. 256 pp.

Pullman retells the story of Jesus Christ as that of two twins, but, rather than cast as opposites, or, as the title suggests, as good and evil twins, both Jesus and his brother, Christ, are complicated, interdependent, and ambiguous. More importantly, Pullman uses this split as a device to interrogate the process of narrativization, the role of storytelling; Jesus is a charismatic iconoclast whose teachings and life are retold by Christ to accommodate the needs of a budding religious institution. At the encouragement of a mysterious stranger, Christ begins to record and interpret Jesus’s life. As the force behind the story, “knot[ting] the details together neatly to make patterns and show

correspondences" (244), Christ embodies the ideological work of mythologization—the process by which events become *the* story.

To a modern readership, for whom the standardized story of Jesus Christ has been naturalized, Pullman's rendering is a "subversive retelling" that "challeng[es] the events of the gospels" (front cover flap). However, almost all of what Pullman develops in a modern, psychological manner is derived from gospel or apocryphal tradition. The very core premise of the two twins is not only widespread in mythological tradition, but it is also specifically anticipated in the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas, written in the third century, in which Didymos Judas Thomas is Jesus's twin and scribe. Pullman does subvert the content of these gospels, however: The Gospel of Thomas consists of the sayings of Jesus, with no narratives, and is therefore thought by some to be a more historical representative of the man than subsequent narratives of his life. In Pullman's version, however, Christ records the events in Jesus's life from first- and secondhand observation, embellishing and editing to make the story more like Truth. Additionally, the purpose of this narrativization in Pullman's version is the establishment of an institutional canon for the worldly Church. In contrast, the Gospel of Thomas, emphasizing the mystical tradition of seeking the "inner light," was marginalized in mainstream Catholicism. Pullman playfully weaves Thomas into the very story line as well.

Pullman's story of the twins Jesus and Christ roughly falls into two parts: the events leading up to their births and early lives, derived from the apocryphal stories in circulation; and the stories of the life and death of Jesus the preacher and the foundation of the Church, deriving from the four gospels. Modern readers of classical mythology as well as those raised in Christianity will be accustomed to the unexplained childhood of the hero, and yet, for Christians of the Middle Ages, these stories circulated as popular tales, and the iconography of the lives of Mary, St. Ann, John the Baptist, and Jesus in churches not only informed the faithful but also are the sediments of that knowledge into the present day. Pullman merely taps into that reservoir: the miraculous conceptions of Mary and John the Baptist, both to old, barren parents; the selection of the aged Joseph as Mary's husband by virtue of the sign of the flowering rod; the miracles of the child Jesus, making clay birds fly, sorting out the dyed yarn, and so on (see *The Infancy Gospel of St. Thomas*). These may seem new and novel to contemporary readers, but Pullman has adapted them into his story of the twin brothers—Jesus gets into trouble by virtue of his miraculous child's pranks, and Christ, the favorite of Mary, sorts things out. These short vignettes disrupt the conventional good-bad twin scenario, rendering the Holy Family average, ambiguous, and ordinary. Pullman goes further and undoes the very foundational dogma of the Church, which his character,

the scribe Christ, has put into motion: the nativity scene of the twins, in which the midwife and those present witness the birth of the second twin, Christ, coupled with the fact of the twin birth itself, seriously compromise claims on Jesus's divinity—as a twin, he is not unique. Mary's vaginal and ordinary birth as well as her subsequent children rule out her perpetual virginity, compromising her status as Mother of God. The conception and annunciation scene is also, in Pullman's version, ambiguous.

As the man Jesus begins to preach his populist message of personal salvation and the Kingdom of God that awaits his followers, both his message and the crowds he attracts come to the attention of the institutions of power—Roman and Jewish. Meanwhile, Christ has been encouraged by an unnamed “stranger” to write the story of Jesus, to tell the Truth, and not the history of the man, because “without a church, without a scripture, the power of his words and his deeds will be like water poured into the sand” (170). Christ is eventually convinced that for the good of the Church and the followers, the story he writes must have at its center an “ever-living presence of a man who is both a man and more than a man, a man who is also God and the word of God, a man who is brought to life again” (172). Here is Pullman's presentation of the power and ideology of myth and also the motivation for the action to follow: Christ (taking Judas's role) betrays Jesus to the Romans; Jesus is crucified, dies, is buried and exhumed; and then, Christ, Jesus's twin, impersonates the now “resurrected” Jesus, providing a great miracle and proof of Jesus's divinity, which substantiates the text Christ has written. Christ's final act is to leave the disciples with a ritual of remembrance: “just as the bread has to be broken . . . and the wine has to be poured . . . so I had to die in one life before I rose again in another. Remember me as often as you eat and drink” (235). Christ leaves and at this point is no longer part of the story, moving to an unnamed coastal town, marrying, and becoming a net maker. Meanwhile, the story that has been put into play develops, changes, is enhanced and embellished and yet controlled and further interpreted by the Church. By the time of the stranger's final visit to Christ, the ideological intent of the story is revealed: “the church must guard that love and teaching night and day, to keep it pure and not let it be corrupted by misunderstanding. It would be unfortunate, for example, if people came to read some of his sayings as a call to political action” (241). Coming to understand, to his horror, what he has been a part of, Christ speaks to the potency of narrative itself: “this story you and I and my brother have been playing out. However it ends, it will be a tragedy. His vision could never come to pass; and the vision that will come to pass is not his” (242). But the story has been put in place, and the historical actors, the events, and the author have become irrelevant.

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**Reckless: Steinernes Fleisch.** By Cornelia Funke. Hamburg: Cecilie Dressler Verlag, 2010. 349 pp.

**Reckless.** By Cornelia Funke. New York: Little, Brown, 2010. 394 pp.

While questing for treasures, the hero of the Grimm tale “The Golden Bird” (AT 550) enlists a fox helper, who turns out to be the enchanted brother of the princess who must be rescued. The analogous assistant in Asbjørnsen and Moe’s “Lord Peter” (AT 545B) is a cat; this time she herself transforms into the human hero’s true love at the story’s end. Cornelia Funke’s *Reckless: Steinernes Fleisch*—in which folktale tropes are subversively engaged to construct a post-modern narrative of siblings, parents, and young adult pair-bonding—features an incarnation of this animal-helper figure, perceived by many readers as the book’s most sympathetic character, although she is not its titular protagonist. Fox, a shape-shifting vixen-girl, yearns to upgrade her faithful-sidekick status to something warmer but is thwarted on two fronts: not only by the urgency of the quest she participates in but also by the impatience and self-centeredness of the book’s questing hero, Jacob Reckless.

Prior to the events of the novel, Jacob has been employed, like the hero of “The Golden Bird,” as a hunter of magical treasures for the nobility. Now, however, he is engaged in a race against time, attempting to counter a curse that has befallen his brother, Will. (No, their first names are not a coincidence.) Both brothers were born into the world we know—twenty-first-century New York City—and have accessed the alternative-European landscape that is Fox’s native land by the tradition-honored means of a magic mirror. Jacob has come to the perilous Mirrorworld many times and survived, but Will has made only one journey there, and it may result in something very like death for him. (*Is this my fault?* This is the persistent question haunting the four main characters: Jacob, Will, Fox, and Clara, Will’s medical-student girlfriend, also from our world.)

Funke’s novel plays its *Märchen*-motifs both straight (gingerbread houses and seven-league boots on the concrete level; young men who sally forth to “learn what fear is” on the thematic level) and crooked. Funke’s greatest subversion of her folktale sources is the doubt that any of its characters will actually find what they are looking for. Jacob, specifically, came through the Mirror the first time in search of his missing father, John Reckless, an engineer: he *may* meet him in a sequel volume, but perhaps he won’t.

The novel’s many allusions are drawn from broader sources as well. There is a gruff pub owner who, like any Beowulf, displays on his taproom wall the severed arm of a slain ogre. Anthony Hope’s Ruritania lurks in the names of secondary characters and in the alternative-Habsburg empire where the center of power lies. The cities of the Mirrorworld, with their Victorian fashions and steampunk technology, have their analogues in Terry Pratchett; the warfare, which is laying the landscape to waste, has a narrated nineteenth-century flavor.

Many magical beings inhabit the Mirrorworld, but at the top rung of the power hierarchy (deities being distant or absent in this very contemporary European worldview) are the Fairies, modeled on those in the Grimms' tale of Briar Rose. These Fairies are capricious, and their spells are effectively irreversible. Power politics are complicated by the fact that the Fairies come in only one sex and must therefore find love partners among other species: humans, dwarfs, and the Others.

These Others, called "Goyl," embody a major secondary theme of the novel—namely, the clash of civilizations. Interestingly, Funke narrates several chapters from the Goyl point of view. Their name evokes "gargoyle"; accordingly, they are made of stone. Until recently the humans of the Mirrorworld have habitually slaughtered them, but now the cave-dwelling Goyl make war aboveground, and they have better soldiers than the human empire does. The Goyl are hardy, but daylight is painful to them: "The red moon is their sun," says Jacob Reckless's brother, Will, indirectly quoting Schiller's *Die Räuber*, alluded to by Funke in earlier novels. And Will is in an excellent position to sense this, since, as the result of a Fairy's spell, former New Yorker Will Reckless is painfully and inexorably turning to stone: becoming a Goyl warrior, body and soul.

Echoing the novel's contrastive origins in a Europe that is both traditional and contemporary, miraculous events may be commonplace in the Mirrorworld, but religion is dying. The Goyl have realized, through painful experience, that human beings are not gods; on the human side, ecclesiastical institutions (cathedrals and priests) are still retained, but in skeleton form only, irrelevant to everyday life.

The style of *Reckless* is a departure for Funke, particularly for readers who know her chiefly for the *Inkheart* trilogy. This time her sentences tend to be short. Characters careen from scene to scene. Descriptions of the many evocative settings are poignant but brief, usefully augmented by Funke's moody pencil sketches. Perhaps Funke is attempting to evoke a more *Märchen*-like, or cinematic, mood; or perhaps she is reflecting the main protagonist's "reckless" character, since it is clear that the ever-impatient Jacob prefers forward momentum to contemplative thought.

*Reckless* was released simultaneously in September 2010 in twelve languages, of which I have seen the German and the English versions. This hastiness in production has resulted in some problems, such as pronoun trouble in the English version of chapter 1 ("the mirror will open only for he [sic] who cannot see himself") and alternative Europe cartographic issues later on: do our heroes follow the railway *eastward* (German) or *southward* (English; which makes more sense) from the eastern Goyl fortress, on their way to the em-

press's capital at "Vena"? Perhaps later editions will take care of these, and perhaps sequel volumes will be more careful.

And where is John Reckless? For my money, he's designing siege engines for the non-Tsar of the non-Russias somewhere in the remote East. Time will tell, or not.

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