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Reviews

Marvels & Tales Editors

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Bonnie C. Marshall has been traveling to Russia and collecting stories of many kinds for a long time. Her interest in Russia led her to Siberian peoples and their tales, which drew her into exploring the folklore of all peoples of the circumpolar North. The resulting book has more than eighty tales presented in seven thematically defined parts. Many but not all of the stories have notes that include Marshall’s sources and other useful background. The “reteller’s” introduction provides history and general information on peoples of the North, organized by culture group: Inuit, Yupik, Northwest America, Innu, Saami, and peoples of northern Russia (including Karelians but not Russians). The remarkable thing one comes away with after the introduction is the uniformity of experiences of colonization, suffering, and cultural renewal in the last thirty to forty years.

The stories in Part 1 (“Tales of Daily Life”) struck me as a grab bag of silly encounters; I found them funny and entertaining. The good stuff really begins in Part 2 (“Creation Stories and Myths”), where Marshall retells some of the great classic myths of the North, including “Sedna” and “Raven Steals the Daylight.” The Raven story is credited as Inuit and Dene, but the notes point the reader to other versions among many cultures of the North American Northwest Coast. Part 3 (“Tricksters and Fools”) naturally includes several Raven tales, including those from Koryaks and Chukchi in northeast Asia and those from the American Northwest. Part 4 (“Legends and *Pourquoi* Tales”) contains many stories that one could classify as origin stories, but perhaps Marshall considers the origin of mosquitoes (from a cannibal monster, one of my favorites from Part 4) of a lesser order than the origin of caribou or how the sun got into the sky.

Part 5 (“Stories About Animals and Marriages with Animals”) presents some of the most gripping stories because adventure is combined with intimate relationships. “The Woman Who Adopted a Polar Bear” cannot but end
sadly, as bears and people are fundamentally in conflict. The story about two
girls who are abducted by Eagle and Whale and the one about a man marrying
a seagull are also gripping adventures where the reader cannot be confident of
the end until it happens.

I found it difficult to clearly demarcate the last two parts: “Spirits,
Shamans, and Shapeshifters” (Part 6) and “Heroes and Heroines” (Part 7).
These two could have been combined with the tricksters section even, because
the Trickster or Transformer is a standard category in Native American folk-
lore. These stories are great adventures, often of vengeance, and feature various
kinds of shamanic combat.

Although I found many of the stories enjoyable to read, the further I read,
the more disturbed I became. As a child, my first serious interest in Native
American cultures came through reading Indian stories. They were intriguing
puzzles, presented undorned with details and full of action but rarely
explaining motives for why coyote killed that one or ate another, for example.
Marshall’s introduction seems to be intended for secondary school students,
but its reliance on Wikipedia and other websites, many now gone, is hardly a
model of scholarship for schoolchildren, especially because general back-
ground information on Arctic peoples is easy to find in readily available books.

More disturbing, Marshall has erased the individual storytellers from the
presentation of some gripping tales. The stories are presented as from a culture,
and only occasionally are the names of the storytellers provided in the end-
notes. Marshall presents an outmoded view of folklore, reminiscent of Richard
Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz’s (1984) collection American Indian Myths and Leg-
ends. Even twenty-five years ago they were attacked for erasing the names of
individual storytellers and appropriating their art as anonymous oral traditions.
Marshall’s retellings erase all the differences in style and voice among the dif-
ferent cultures of the Arctic and present bland prose full of asides, explanations,
and justifications that should have been presented in a nuanced introduction,
or perhaps in footnotes. It is shocking, really, that Marshall ignores all the
painstaking work in northern folklore done by translator-editors such as Robert
Bringhurst, Dell Hymes, Ron Scollon, Brian Swann, and Dennis Tedlock, just to
name a few of the many people who changed the way folklorists thought about
the oral traditions of Native Americans in the 1980s and 1990s. Far North Tales
is an example of white appropriation of indigenous peoples’ cultural heritage
that I thought was long impossible to produce, despite the legacy of colonial
and postcolonial domination by European speakers around the Arctic.

Oral traditions are not anonymous. They are performed by poets. The
skilled storytellers from Greenland, Siberia, and elsewhere were and are indi-
viduals of considerable ability. Serious translation has long acknowledged the
competing demands of fidelity to the original and comprehension to the audience, which is achieved by balancing difference and identity, not by sacrificing all difference in the hope that the reader can identify with the story. It should be standard practice to acknowledge the storytellers’ skill by using their names. It should be standard practice to present their oral poetry on the page in terms of lines and not prose. These standards are long established. They originated in the academy among specialists in folklore and anthropology but are no longer bound to the ivory tower. The consequences are significant. Marshall has only succeeded in trivializing rich bodies of world literature into light entertainment for children, much as the photos of souvenirs opposite page 133 reduce the gorgeous visual arts of northern peoples to cute knickknacks.

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It is impossible to be a scholar of fairy tales in the digital age without having some experience with Heidi Anne Heiner’s hypertextual compendium of fairy-tale lore: the SurLaLune Fairy Tale Website (www.surlalunefairytales.com). It is part introduction to the field, part overview, part taxonomy, part catalogue—both literary and visual—and wholly fascinating, a kind of fantastical chimera of a website. Heiner is now filling a much needed role in the field by publishing casebooks on the major tale types: they cover much the same territory but are excellent for reference by students and scholars alike and present Heiner’s intriguing classifications and cross-connections between tale types and variants. In this review I examine a selection of the offerings, concerning Frog Prince tales, Sleeping Beauty tales, and Rapunzel tales.

Heiner’s casebooks (like her website) are a deviation from the normal model that results from the intersecting factors of technology, necessity, and entrepreneurship. With regard to technology, Heiner hyperlinks, annotates, and, perhaps most important, uploads available materials from their extant but inaccessible publications, which date back to the early days of the fairy tale’s popularity in English. As for entrepreneurship, through these self-published anthologies of public domain works, Heiner presents the texts in a format that
is not dissimilar to that of her website. The tales are not overtly academic—jargon-free—but they are scrupulously well researched and thoroughly and accurately cited; these are valuable tools for amateurs and experts alike.

Heiner, a librarian by training, began her site as a project during a graduate course in 1998, with the intention of annotating “Bluebeard.” In the intervening fourteen years the website has become a clearinghouse for tales common and uncommon and a gateway for fairy-tale aficionados (SurLaLune cannot be discussed without a tip of the hat to its message boards, which present a fascinating interplay between students, scholars, and popular authors of contemporary märchen). In keeping with those antecedents, Heiner’s casebooks present appealing, bare-bones introductions, with occasionally pointed critical observations. For instance, in the essay addressing “Snow White,” Heiner says, “We love the wicked queen. She is the narrative force of the tale, the character who arguably brings us back over and over for more thrills. Her evil machinations are much more interesting than the domesticated Snow White’s cloying innocence” (7). The introductions are reprinted from their earlier publications in *Faerie Magazine*, and although much of their material is likely to be familiar to an academic audience, it serves admirably as introductions for undergraduates and as mainstays for scholars: the former for obvious reasons, and the latter because Heiner is extremely thorough in fulfilling her intention to present the tale types as completely and in as much breadth as possible.

In *The Frog Prince and Other Frog Tales from Around the World*, Heiner makes a point of including the multiplicity of tale types featuring amphibious protagonists, with categories ranging from “Frog Kings, Princes, and Bridegrooms” to “Frog Brides” to “Frog Wooing and Courting” to Mark Twain’s “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County,” and their alternative versions and/or translations when relevant. I was particularly pleased to see that Heiner included both Verra Blumenthal’s 1903 translation of “The Tsarevna Frog” and Post Wheeler’s 1912 version, “The Frog-Tsarevna.” These two tales feature the same basic plot, albeit with the former being a more truncated version and the latter being an extended (and more internally logical) variant that includes appearances by Baba Yaga and Koschei the Deathless. Heiner demonstrates comparable thoroughness throughout.

Being an accessible anthologist, Heiner references more accessible authors than is typical in academe. By rejecting the error of omission that plagues far too many fairy-tale scholars, who rattle off lists of literary writers whose work only indirectly references traditional fairy tales but who ignore the genre writers who deliberately retell and rearrange the old tropes, Heiner makes a point of recommending popular retellings. In *Rapunzel and Other Maiden in the*
Tower Tales from Around the World, for example, she points readers to Donna Jo Napoli’s Zel and the young adult trilogy of retold fairy tales written by Adele Geras. In addition, Heiner does not adhere to the traditional ATU tale types, which leads to some interesting juxtapositions. In the Rapunzel collection, for example, she parallels the more traditional ATU 310 stories (“Rapunzel,” “Petrosinella,” “Persinette,” etc.) against other stories that involve immured women—from Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper” to Marie de France’s “Lay of Yonec” and Marie-Catherine d’Aulnoy’s “The Blue Bird.” The last two stories are usually considered variations on “Beauty and the Beast” and classed under the category “The Prince as Bird” (ATU 432), but Heiner includes them, as well as the story of Maid Maleen, an Entombed Princess (ATU 870, “The Princess Confined in the Mound”). It is an interesting decision, with variable repercussions depending on the nature of the audience in a kind of whimsical reader-response. For a layperson, this is a value-added introduction to less commonly represented works and an expansion of the associative boundaries of the tales. For an expert audience the cross-category connotations, going against the grain of received wisdom and accepted scholarship as they do, can be invaluable: I would not be surprised if these juxtapositions were to inspire a master’s thesis or three.

The collection Sleeping Beauties: Sleeping Beauty and Snow White Tales from Around the World parallels two tale types with putatively more in common: the stories emphasizing female passivity are among the most popular. Notably, Heiner has refrained from issuing a Cinderella companion to round out the top three, presumably because its popularity has ensured examples in the field, and there is no sense in plowing it anew. Heiner has a lot of material to work with for these tale types, and she makes the most of the opportunity, not only including a diverse selection of stories but also including sections suggesting exhaustive further reading and a country index. These sections are much more expansive in this collection than in the other two reviewed here, presumably because there is correspondingly more material elided, and Heiner makes a point of leaving no stone unturned.

Heiner’s work hearkens back to and expands exponentially on the kind of important, lasting, foundational work that we saw from the likes of Marian Roalfe Cox in the nineteenth century with Cinderella: Three Hundred and Forty-Five Variants of Cinderella, Catskin, and Cap O’ Rushes (1893). Although technology and circumstance permitted Cox the one volume, Heiner’s horizons are considerably broader. I have little doubt that her legacy will be all the more far-reaching.

Helen Pilinovsky
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Silhouettes traverse this book. Like Peter Pan's shadow, they draw the reader-viewer into a nostalgic neverland of ancient tales and illustrations that, editor Noel Daniel hopes, will never grow old. The book's virtue lies less in retranslating the famous tales than in resuscitating their lesser known illustrations by famous artists from the 1850s to the 1950s. Illustrating the brothers' tales, Daniel explains, had become a rite of passage for graphic artists. Her selection provides a superb overview of the evolution of popular art, finding in the Grimms' tales an ideal point of anchorage. Although attention has clearly been given to retranslation by Matthew Price, it is doubtless the spotlighted illustrations that constitute the book's raison d'être. Following the tales, a helpful appendix offers more than biographical information about the selected artists: Daniel's meticulous contextualization of each illustrator is in itself an art history lesson. This is, therefore, a book for art lovers, full of captivating information about the artists and their works; and this amply compensates for the arguably less enthralling attempts at textual analysis.

Physically—unsurprisingly for Taschen—the object-book is a delight. Lush, heavy, fabric-bound, it is the ideal reliquary for the vibrant art it enshrines and has immediate aesthetic appeal. Although today's children may not relate to it as much as Daniel wishes, there is no elitism of form or content in this extremely reader-friendly book. The unobtrusive underlying argument is that an illustration is an interpretation. From sylvan wildernesses to tamer domesticity, artists translate contemporary aesthetic tastes, political stances, and conceptions of narrative. Sir Walter Crane's 1874 “Frog Prince,” which opens the collection, fascinatingly reintegrates the story within the noble world of imperial Britain. Home-bred orange trees in Chinese pots, cornucopias, black servants, and tropical fruit nourish the symbolic glorification of an empire that culminates with the Prince, his tunic splattered with sunflowers evoking a kingdom on which the sun never sets. Imbued with ideology yet retaining aesthetic appeal, these illustrations invade the interpretive gaps, allowing worldviews to blossom.

From delicate lithographs to Art Nouveau aesthetics, the reader's eye leaps-frogs between graphic identities. Earlier works are stiffer, precious, composed, idyllically imbued with Golden Age rurality but also with sociopolitical commentary. Gustav Sus's 1855 “class war” treatment of “The Hare and the Hedgehog” is a treasure of early caricature art. More spiritual, Otto Specker's 1857 “Rapunzel” distills, through careful cross-hatching and high-angle shots, a beautiful Christian symbolism. Fedor Flinkzer's 1881 lithographs for “Little...
Brother and Little Sister” display the semantics of contour and framing. The ornate frames, composed of tenderly intertwined branches, provide freer symbols of the children’s love than the stricter images they enclose.

Readers might be surprised by the modernity—or the postmodernity—of later artistic styles. Heinrich Leutemann’s rich 1883 treatment of “The Wolf and the Seven Little Goats” accumulates panels, pinned and nailed together in trompe l’oeil and bleeding outside their frames, where they mingle with realistic flowers. The result recalls postmodern wordless comics, asking the reader for astute visual literacy. Rudolf Geissler’s endearing 1892 broadside for “The Bremen Town Musicians” displays similar enthusiasm for the narrative power of the wordless pictures, aptly rendering the tale’s slapstick nature.

Tales of female maturation permit noteworthy creative freedom. Herbert Leupin, with proto-psychedelic colors, celebrates the excesses of adolescent passion in his 1948 “Sleeping Beauty,” the bold pink skies against black thorns adding playful eroticism to a mature reading while remaining child-friendly. Wanda Zeigner-Ebel’s 1920 illustrations of “Snow White,” influenced by Russian and Asian arts, are an ode to adolescence. Splendidly rendered on a double spread and choosing to sidestep the Grimms’ gruesomeness, the glass casket, surrounded by floral patterns, signals Zeigner-Ebel’s interpretation of the tale as a story of female maturation, a romance. The jubilatory plasticity of the tales surfaces again: an illustration is an interpretation.

Arguably, not all the images have aged well. Kay Nielsen’s 1913 watercolors for “The Twelve Dancing Princesses,” dreamlike, fluid, and delicately patterned, may be more palatable to a modern reader than his stiffer 1925 “Rumpelstiltskin.” But the alienation of the older-fashioned art is thought provoking. The unappetizing gingerbread house in Heinrich Merté’s 1881 “Hansel and Gretel” contrasts with Herbert Leupin’s gloriously anthropomorphized, mouth-watering chocolates in his 1949 rendering of “Mother Holle.” Exacerbated by Leupin’s skill as a poster artist, between the two lurks a new audience to captivate—the postwar child, gorging on colorful imageries of desire engineered by the emerging capitalist economy. The Grimms’ fairy tales appear in all their updatability. Amusing proto-Disney stylization emerges: Gustav Tenggren’s glamorous 1955 “Snow White and Rose Red,” with its incongruous chipmunks, provides the clearest bridge between the tales and their cinematographic adaptations. In Tenggren’s and Leupin’s hands, the Grimms’ worlds become Technicolor wonderlands that still influence, more garishly perhaps, contemporary illustrations for children.

Although this collection excels in presenting such artwork to neophytes, its attempts at textual analysis are weaker. Daniel’s expertise clearly lies on the side of illustration. Her suggestion that adult readers may bowdlerize the
violent passages “to adapt for young ears” sounds odd in a book seeking to reach out to new generations (13). Yet more problematic are the short introductions to each tale. Relying excessively on sweeping statements, such as “one of the most beloved stories” (59), these epigraphs hardly do justice to the tales. Of all that could be said about these abundantly studied stories, it is puzzling to find such descriptions as “no other fairy tale is as inextricably linked to a piece of clothing” (“Little Red Riding Hood” 125). Despite occasional name-dropping, major scholars such as the Opies, Bruno Bettelheim, and Jack Zipes are never appropriately contextualized, and thus the citations remain anecdotal. Granted, the book has no academic pretensions; but next to the enlightening and rigorous illustrators’ biographies, these short epigraphs pale all the more. This is a book, therefore, about illustrations and artists, not about tales and their interpretation; once this premise has been accepted, it is easy to succumb to its undeniable appeal.

Clementine Beauvais

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Anyone who studies the Grimms’ folktales and fairy tales anywhere owes a great debt to Heinz Rölleke. A retired professor of German philology and folklore at the University of Wuppertal, Rölleke is fortunately anything but retired, as his most recent book demonstrates. He began to make a name for himself as the most eminent scholar of the Grimms’ tales when he published Die älteste Märchensammlung der Brüder Grimm (The Oldest Tale Collection of the Brothers Grimm) in 1975, the first and most thorough annotated edition of the Grimms’ written manuscript of 1810, usually referred to as the Oelenberg Manuscript. This work enabled scholars to examine how the Grimms vastly changed the tales before they went into print in the first edition of 1812–1815. Rölleke followed this book with Märchen aus dem Nachlass der Brüder Grimm (Tales from the Posthumous Papers of the Brothers Grimm, 1977); Wo das Wünschen noch geholfen hat (Where Wishing Still Helped, 1985), a collection of his shorter essays; and Die Märchen der Brüder Grimm (The Tales of the Brothers Grimm, 1985; rev. 2004), an exceedingly informative introduction to the Grimms’ tales. Altogether Rölleke has published well over sixty books that deal with the Grimms’ tales, and he has also edited reprints of the first, second, third, and seventh editions of Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children’s and Household Tales) and the Grimms’ correspondence. In short, Rölleke’s careful philological work has laid the basis for most of the important
The present book, whose title in English reads “Once Upon a Time . . . : The True Tales of the Brothers Grimm and Who Told Them to Them,” is a collaboration with the talented German illustrator Albert Schindehütte, a notable Grimm specialist in his own right who has published two significant books on Johann Friedrich Krause and Marie Hassenpflug, two of the Grimms’ important informants. *Es war einmal* is filled with Schindehütte’s unique illustrations of the Grimms themselves, twenty-five illustrations of their different contributors and several friends, and thirty-five illustrations for each of the tales in this collection. The purpose of this edition—and to a certain extent Rolleke has come full circle in his research—is to uncover and pay tribute to the people who provided the Grimms with different kinds of tales in their earliest versions before they were changed and honed, largely by Wilhelm Grimm. It is commonly known that the Grimms did not provide detailed information about their informants and exactly when, where, and how they passed on the stories that they either told to the Grimms or wrote down for them. Even when the Grimms did indicate the sources of the tales, some of their information was misleading.

Rolleke has made it his mission over the past thirty-five years or so to trace the history of the informants. During the course of these years, his voluminous essays have clarified how the Grimms obtained their tales and what their sources were. Finally, in *Es war einmal* Rolleke has published selected tales from twenty-five informants that can be found in the Oelenberg Manuscript or the 1812–1815 edition. These tales are truer to the authentic storytelling tradition of their time and are quite different from the same tales that the Grimms gradually edited until they reached their polished form in the seventh edition of 1857. Rolleke’s plan is to let the informants speak for themselves, true to the present methods of modern folklorists, who generally take care to provide biographical information of the storytellers and the context in which the tales are recorded.

In *Es war einmal* we now gain a more comprehensive understanding of the background of the tales and how the Grimms worked. As Rolleke demonstrates, most of the early informants were literate; many knew French, and almost all were from the bourgeoisie; they were also, relatively speaking, young. Either their tales belonged to their personal repertoire, or they filtered the tales from an unknown source or their memory as children. In the process of establishing “appropriate” versions for print, the tales often underwent censorship and self-censorship. And of course the Grimms contributed to the censorship. Rolleke cites the famous cases of Rapunzel, who is impregnated
by the prince who climbs into her tower, and the princess in “The Frog King,” who sleeps with the frog in her bed once he transforms himself into a handsome king. These incidents were actually in the early versions of the tales and then eliminated by the Brothers Grimm, who made every effort to “purify” the tales and make them seem anonymous, as though they all stemmed from the folk.

Rölleke and other scholars have long since exploded the myth that the Grimms traversed the countryside and gathered unvarnished tales from “genuine” peasants. It is not his intention in Es war einmal to repeat previous scholarship. What is significant in this book is Rölleke’s extensive historical recuperation of neglected documents: he supplies as much information as possible about the early informants, showing their contributions that stemmed from their personal interests and clarifying the intricacies of transcribing oral tales that the Grimms felt obliged to change according to their concept of what constituted oral folk language and storytelling. Rölleke emphasizes that the Grimms, who began collecting tales in 1806, were not falsifiers. They were in their early 20s and were utopian. Rölleke explains: “They hoped to be able to distinguish splinters of the Germanic mythology in the oral tradition that had not been passed on through writing, and when they were necessarily reconstituted, these splinters could perhaps be fused together as a whole entity. All this was brilliantly and innovatively conceived, but in the final analysis had to remain utopian” (37, my translation).

Despite certain contradictions in their work, Rölleke maintains that the Grimms managed to uncover numerous mythological motifs, parallels, and explanations, important for the study of folklore and the German language. At the same time, they artfully reconstituted the tales they received in accordance with their philological concept and growing awareness that the tales were widespread in Europe. Rölleke has been among the first of the Grimm scholars to stress how important Philipp Otto Runge’s plattdeutsch dialect version of “The Fisherman and His Wife” was to the Grimms’ notion of a genuine folktale. Because there are only two dialect tales in the final 1857 edition of the tales, it is illuminating to read in Es war einmal the other unusual versions of tales that resonate in the style of oral storytelling. In addition, Rölleke frames these “true” tales within brief historical and biographical sketches that bring storytellers and their tales to life. For example, we learn that Krause’s “Herr Fix und Fertig” (Mr. Fix and Finish) and “Von der Serviette, dem Tornister, dem Kanonenhütlein und dem Horn” (About the Napkin, Knapsack, Canon Hat, and Horn) reflect his experiences as a soldier who later became poor and exchanged his stories with the Grimms for leggings. Rölleke gives a full account of the most famous informant, Dorothea Viehmann, who told the Grimms
about forty tales, of which twenty were part of the final edition. Significantly, Rölleke notes that she drew her tales from French, Dutch, and Hessian oral and written sources and that she led a hard life, which may account for her telling tales of strong female protagonists, such as “Hans mein Igel” (Hans My Hedgehog) or “Aschenputtel” (Cinderella). Another significant informant was Friederike Mannel, a minister’s daughter, whom Rölleke considers one of the most original writers of eight fairy tales, such as “Vom Fundvogel” (About the Finder’s Bird) and “Goldkinder” (Gold Children). She was in love with Wilhelm and was especially dedicated to the Grimms’ project. Every one of the twenty-five early informants and their tales receives careful attention by Rölleke, and ironically, although the tales are more mediations of prevalent folklore in Germany by literate people than they are direct authentic tales of the folk, they reveal a complex symbiosis between oral and literary tales. Moreover, as Rölleke stresses, the so-called Hessian or German tales owe more to a greater European literary and folklore tradition than most people realize. And perhaps this is the reason that the tales never belonged to the informants or to the Grimms and why they are so globally popular today. Whatever the truth, Rölleke’s spadework adds luster to the accomplishment of the Grimms as great European folklorists.

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This new edition of George MacDonald’s At the Back of the North Wind offers an insight into the world of Victorian children’s classics. It not only presents to readers the text as published in the 1871 one-volume Strahan edition but also places MacDonald’s work within a wider nineteenth-century culture, pointing out MacDonald’s possible influences and sources and underlining the importance of illustrations in the fantasy.

The edition contains a preface by Stephen Prickett, an introduction, a chronology, abundant textual annotations, and numerous appendixes. Stephen Prickett, famous for his groundbreaking Victorian Fantasy (1979) among other works, makes explicit from the start that At the Back of the North Wind deals first and foremost with Victorian social conditions, from poverty to disease, yet combines realism with fantasy and draws on biblical imagery. At the Back of the North Wind is indeed a significant example in MacDonald’s career and shows how fantasy enabled him to defamiliarize the real, as the editors stress in the introduction. The introduction briefly relates MacDonald’s life and his works, from novels and children’s stories to his volumes of poetry and sermons. It also
brings home the central place of MacDonald’s writings in British children’s literature by pointing to the influence that MacDonald may have had on such writers as Edith Nesbit, Philippa Pearce, and Neil Gaiman. The dual audience that MacDonald may have had in mind in his writings (or “cross-writing” [22]) is mentioned, most particularly because MacDonald’s works tend to engage in contemporary debates, such as those on class and gender.

The next section, which traces the chronology of MacDonald’s life and works, also points out the differences between the 1871 one-volume Strahan edition and the serial version published in Good Words for the Young and the changes in the placement of illustrations. The illustrations, which pay homage to the art of the Pre-Raphaelite illustrator Arthur Hughes—but whose quality may, perhaps, disappoint readers—are numerous, just like the textual annotations. The notes clarify words that may seem obscure to contemporary readers and trace references, allusions, or influences. We may wonder, however, whether some of the notes do not overload the edition, in particular, the systematic citations of entire nursery rhymes, the comments on MacDonald’s rhetoric, especially his use of figures of speech (from similes and paradoxes to synesthesia), his narrative patterns, such as analepses, and even the names of the twelve apostles and references to contemporary novels (such as Philip Pullman’s 1985 Ruby in the Smoke [210] to explain the geographic situation of some scenes). The explanation of the rise of the Metropolitan Police Force (75) when a policeman appears on the scene is another example.

There are six rich appendixes. The first appendix presents the children’s magazine Good Words for the Young and MacDonald’s active participation in the serialization of At the Back of the North Wind, Ranald Bannerman’s Boyhood, and The Princess and the Goblin. Mark Knight’s introductory essay is followed by the 1869 and 1870 covers of the magazine and the 1869 address of the first editor (Norman Macleod), followed by MacDonald’s address when he took over the editorship in 1870. Excerpts from Andersen’s tales, songs, and Arthur Hughes’s illustrations of other works by MacDonald can also be found.

The second appendix focuses on the changing definition of the child and the evolution of children’s literature. It contains a contemporary review of At the Back of the North Wind, letters from Mark Twain to MacDonald, poems by William Wordsworth, examples of MacDonald’s sermons, a caricature of MacDonald, and illustrations from two famous deathbed scenes (Little Nell’s deathbed scene in Dickens’s Old Curiosity Shop [1841] and Eva’s in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin [1852]).

The next appendix points out MacDonald’s possible literary and cultural influences, from Aesop’s fables to Charles Kingsley’s Water-Babies (1863) or Lewis Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland (1865), and a passage from
Henry Mayhew’s *London Labour and the London Poor* (1852). The fourth appendix presents documents dealing with the Victorian fairy tale, such as Dickens’s celebrated essay, “Fraud on the Fairies,” written in reaction to George Cruikshank’s (whose name is misspelled on p. 68) “Cinderella and the Glass Slipper” and aimed at advocating teetotalism; Ruskin’s introduction to *German Popular Stories* (1868); Cruikshank’s illustrations to some of the Brothers Grimm’s tales; and MacDonald’s essay “The Fantastic Imagination” (1893).

The illustrations of *At the Back of the North Wind* occupy the fifth appendix, with an essay by Jan Susina on the collaboration between MacDonald and Arthur Hughes, the roles that Hughes’s illustrations play in *At the Back of the North Wind*, and the importance of Hughes’s work in the world of Victorian illustrations. The essay is followed by later illustrations of MacDonald’s fantasy (by George Storrs Graves, Maria L. Kirk, Frank Cheyne Papé, Jessie Wilcox Smith, and Francis D. Bedford). Last, a few maps and other tables (such as for Victorian currency) follow in the last appendix, which precedes a select bibliography.

The edition certainly highlights how much George MacDonald’s *At the Back of the North Wind* was a product of its time, influenced by Victorian culture and reflecting contemporary issues. It also stresses the centrality of the fantasy in the world of children’s literature and MacDonald’s impact on later works. The editors’ thorough knowledge of MacDonald’s work and of the period is undeniable and makes this edition a rich and deeply contextualized book. If we may sometimes wonder what type of audience the editors had in mind, the edition will nonetheless certainly prove a useful introduction to the world of MacDonald’s writings for students interested in Victorian children’s literature.

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In *One Earth, One People*, Marek Oziewicz attempts to synthesize a century of fantasy criticism into new definitions of fantasy and mythopoeic fantasy and then presents four case studies of authors whose work he considers mythopoeic. He approaches the fiction from the outside in; rather than providing insightful readings of fantasy literature as a way to derive interesting theories about the genre, Oziewicz engages in lengthy analyses of theory in an attempt to derive interesting readings. The result will mainly be useful to scholars interested in definitional issues; it is not, primarily, a book about Le Guin, Alexander, L’Engle, and Card but about the genre of mythopoeic fantasy: its history, its development, its present, and its future.
REVIEWS

About three quarters of the book is given over to reviews of the secondary literature on fantasy, myth, and Oziewicz’s chosen authors. In Chapter 1 Oziewicz gives overviews of fantasy criticism, attempting to show that fantasy criticism suffers from confusion. In Chapter 2 Oziewicz reviews fantasy criticism itself, arguing that such confusion stems from two incompatible approaches, the reductionist and holistic approaches, and, further, that holistic criticism is more useful for understanding fantasy. This gives way to Chapter 3, in which Oziewicz presents a review of holistic criticism, including the critical writings of both C. S. Lewis, who created the term mythopoeic fantasy, and J. R. R. Tolkien, whose fictional works are held up as the most representative texts of mythopoeic fantasy. Oziewicz reviews twentieth-century approaches to myth in Chapter 4; this chapter seems outside the scope of the book, with little bearing on either the theories discussed earlier or the approaches of the authors discussed later. Each of the four case studies consists of ten pages covering the scholarship on the author (including the author’s published discussions of his or her own work), followed by fifteen pages of analysis of the author’s work.

The literature review attempts to synthesize and distill the works discussed into a coherent and comprehensible new approach. Oziewicz demonstrates that holistic approaches have been better than reductionist approaches to fantasy, but he locates too much of the reason in the supposed uniqueness of fantasy among other genres; it is likely that holistic approaches are superior overall for examining works of art, which are generally thought to be greater than the sum of their parts. Similarly, Oziewicz is convincing that fantasy is a cognitive strategy and (perhaps) a worldview, but he compromises this insight by making confusing claims about whether fantasy is a genre. He says that it is not but often treats it as though it were, without ever defining “genre” or clearly identifying the tradition of genre analysis from which he proceeds. Moreover, Oziewicz repeatedly defines fantasy as “a worldview and a cognitive strategy which assumes the existence of the supernatural,” thus seeming to define worldviews (such as religions) and cognitive strategies (such as meditative prayer) as fantasy. This may present a problem for some readers.

Oziewicz defines mythopoeic fantasy as a genre that “addresses our vital psychological, cultural and aesthetic needs” through “the use of a secondary world in which everything is suffused with a moral sense” and the use of “the regenerative powers of myth and mythmaking” (66). He later defines mythopoeic fantasy at greater length (84–90). After seemingly completing the definition, he adds important ideas to it, for example, stating that mythopoeic fantasy involves “a search for a new mythology of unified humanity” (92). These ideas are worthy of consideration. Oziewicz fails, however, to differentiate clearly between mythopoeic fantasy and related genres. Given how often
he modifies his description of the genre and how little he discusses other genres, it would be helpful if he gathered all the elements vital to mythopoeic fantasy into a single, concise definition. Sadly, he never does.

The case studies are interesting but limited by the book’s format: fifteen pages is not adequate to explore the meanings of a series of fantasy novels. Nevertheless, Oziewicz provides insight, especially into Le Guin and Alexander. Le Guin, he points out, proceeds from a worldview influenced by Taoism and tells stories in which the future of the world depends on balance and harmony. Alexander, he believes, is primarily concerned with the idea of traditions, including folk traditions, creating a bridge between the past and the future. Oziewicz supports these contentions well with examples from the novels.

Oziewicz’s chapters on Card and L’Engle are not as successful. He praises Card for his “understanding of what reconnecting with nature means,” which, Oziewicz opines, “must not be confused with uninformed, tree-hugging environmentalism” (209). After this gratuitous swipe at the environmental movement, Oziewicz quotes Card making similar attacks. Oziewicz insists that Card’s Alvin Maker novels are about “the quest for sustainable environmental ethics” (209). Because this is the only series discussed that I have not read, I can’t judge whether Oziewicz’s interpretation accurately describes the books’ attitude, but it hardly jibes with Card’s shrill anti-environmentalist rhetoric elsewhere.

Oziewicz believes that L’Engle’s books are about balancing science and spirituality, exemplifying his outside-in approach. Having chosen this frame, he is obliged to find ways in which incidents in the books reflect scientific principles; many of his examples stretch credulity. It would be more accurate to say that L’Engle’s Time books are about balanced, well-rounded lives that include science and spirituality but also work, art, daily life, and, above all, love. Oziewicz’s decision to examine two of these above all others hurts his ability to interpret the series.

It is odd, in a book so deeply concerned with synthesizing past arguments, that Oziewicz does not attempt more synthesis among his case studies. Because certain themes are common to all four writers, it would be interesting to compare them across the authors. We can only hope that Oziewicz will do so in a future study.

Stephen D. Winick
American Folklife Center, Library of Congress

Freud in Oz: At the Intersections of Psychoanalysis and Children’s Literature.

In seeking to examine the intersection of the history of children’s literature and the development of psychoanalytic discourse, Kenneth Kidd sets before himself a daunting task—daunting not so much because of the complexity of
the cultural history he seeks to explore but because, as Kidd himself notes, it is difficult “to historicize psychology in a culture largely (in)formed by psychological discourse. We are arguably all colonizers of the psyche, even as we are also all its subaltern subjects, which makes all the trickier the historicist understanding of picturebook psychology” (130). This insight comes rather late in the book and is limited to Kidd’s discussion of a particular genre of children’s literature, but it could be taken as the central theme of the entire project. Kidd handles his weighty subject with an impressively light touch, even a hint of ironic distance, which enables him to remain mostly objective about the particular ways that psychoanalysis has become a paratext informing children’s literature and vice versa. Kidd’s work is historical rather than theoretical and hence will be of more interest to those seeking the cultural history of the dialogue between two fields than to those trying to determine the utility of psychoanalysis for literary interpretation.

Kidd argues that psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on childhood experience, legitimates critical interest in children’s literature, starting with the fairy tale. His first chapter will be of particular interest to readers of Marvels & Tales, as it not only explores the intersection of classical psychoanalysis with fairy-tale scholarship but also makes an interesting argument for why fairy tales are largely seen today as children’s literature. By exploring the literature of the folk while examining the enduring anxieties and complexes of childhood experience, psychoanalysis granted the fairy tale a new kind of interpretive value and weight, one that linked it to childhood trauma and developing skills for integration and coping. Thus psychoanalysis established a new use for enchantment that paved the way for other children’s literary forms by taking magic, enchantment, and play seriously as therapeutic interventions. Nearly every psychoanalyst in the classical tradition has undertaken an interpretive study of fairy tales, but perhaps more important, the case studies of psychoanalysis are shot through with references to classic fairy tales. Kidd claims that this association benefited psychoanalysis as it moved into popular culture and that it also lent gravitas to children’s literature studies. He expands this claim in his second chapter, which focuses on the trend in child psychoanalysis for analysts to learn about children by playing with them. He connects this trend to Winnie-the-Pooh, in which a benevolent adult coconstructs the imaginative world where children work out their anxieties through play. He also examines the way that adult critics have played with Pooh in satirical and serious examinations of the book’s latent and manifest wisdom.

Kidd’s third chapter turns to the big three classics of children’s literature: Alice in Wonderland, Peter Pan, and The Wizard of Oz. He explores how these fantasies have been taken up into pop-psychological discourse and have been
endlessly repeated through case writing, a genre that Kidd broadens to include not only the writing up of cases but also the interpretations of literary critics and the adaptation of concepts through pop psychology as well as intermedial revisions of the works. Kidd comes to the rather dubious conclusion that “they might not have become classics were it not for the psychoanalytic turn of the twentieth century” (102).

Although I might challenge this conclusion for these works, it is certainly clear that the work of Maurice Sendak would not have been possible without the psychoanalytic turn. Kidd takes Sendak as an exemplar of the intersection between psychoanalysis and picture books, but he also refers more broadly to the use of drawing in the therapeutic setting and to the work of other picture-book artists who have created the genre as an exercise in playful interaction between artist and child that has perceived psychosocial benefits. In this chapter Kidd turns for the first time to analysis of individual works, a practice he continues in the following chapter on adolescent literature, in which he emphasizes the movement toward an explicit exploration of the problematic inner turmoil of the adolescent with regard to sexuality and gender. Kidd concludes with a chapter that examines the “literature of atrocity,” focusing on Holocaust literature and the works that appeared for children in the immediate aftermath of 9/11.

Although Kidd invites others to fill in the inevitable gaps in his work, there are still significant omissions in his last two chapters, the most troubling of which is Kidd’s lack of attention to the relationship of the American multicultural community and literature to the discourses of psychoanalysis. Kidd devotes a single paragraph (!) to African American books that treat the trauma of slavery. He claims that this is because such works are eclipsed by literature attending to the Holocaust, but he fails to note the repetition of the trauma of racial prejudice in most African American books for children and young adults; indeed it is rare to find a book, even a picture book, that does not address African American racial identity as an unresolved cultural trauma. Nor does Kidd acknowledge the similarities between the Holocaust literature he does examine and the African American literature he doesn’t in terms of the use of folktales as an attempt to rehabilitate a trauma, another point likely to be of interest to those who study the literature of wonder. Like the authors of Holocaust literature, writers such as Virginia Hamilton, Julius Lester, Walter Moseley, and Jeffrey Kluger use magic realism and folktales to create impossible scenarios of triumph for their enslaved characters. How does this literary trend correspond to the psychoanalytic temper of the culture, and what does race have to do with it? For the most part, one could argue that the African American, Asian American, and Latino communities have been excluded from
or have rejected the discourses of psychoanalysis. The question remains as to how that has affected the literature for children produced by and for those communities.

My mention of this missed opportunity is meant to be a backward compliment to the overall effectiveness of the book. The research base is both deep and broad, and the connections that Kidd draws between children’s literature and psychoanalytic discourse in the early chapters are so convincing and carefully articulated that they set expectations that go underrealized in the final two chapters. Hence Kidd does indeed successfully set the stage for others to continue this fascinating study.

Karen Coats
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It is certainly no secret that Philip Pullman, author of the His Dark Materials series (1995–2000), has distaste for C. S. Lewis’s Chronicles of Narnia (1950–1956), particularly Lewis’s inclusion of Christian teachings and his promotion of childhood and innocence over experience. What is perhaps less well-known is that Pullman worked to distance himself from the entire fantasy genre. In this volume William Gray includes excerpts from interviews with Pullman in which he first says, “I don’t like fantasy” (152), and then later, “I always took a dim view of fantasy—still do in fact. Most of it is trash, but the most of everything is trash. It seemed to me writers of fantasy in the Tolkien tradition had this wonderful tool that could do anything and they did very little with it” (153). But, as Gray convincingly argues in this volume, despite Pullman’s positioning of his work against Lewis in particular and fantasy literature in general, Pullman is actually engaged with many of the same facets of the Romantic mythopoetic tradition that authors such as Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, George MacDonald, and E. T. A. Hoffman were. In addition to crafting this overarching argument, Gray also traces the threads of influence between these authors, highlighting such connections as those between MacDonald and Lewis, between David Lindsay and Pullman, and between Milton and both Lewis and Pullman, which lends support to Gray’s claim that the encounter between Pullman and Lewis “almost amounts to a family feud” (127).

After offering up a concise version of this argument in the opening “Prelude,” Gray traces the threads of Romanticism that run throughout fantasy literature, beginning with the Kunstmärchen of German authors such as Ludwig Tieck, Novalis, Clemens Brentano, Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué, and Hoffman.
The thread that is perhaps most important to Gray’s overall argument is his examination of the larger myths that these German Romantics created in their works: “Typically, then, the protagonists in Hoffmann’s fairy stories are, or are fantasized to be, participants in a much grander narrative or myth” (22). Such a foundation proves helpful in the later chapters on MacDonald, Tolkien, and Lewis by providing a framework for understanding their engagement with the Christian myth as part of the larger impulse of Romanticism and for understanding how Pullman’s His Dark Materials creates its own mythology in spite of his objections to Lewis and Christianity (a mythology that, as Gray provocatively suggests in a later chapter, might be an alternative version of the Christian myth rather than a different mythology altogether). In addition to emphasizing the appearance of grand narratives in many Romantic works, this initial chapter also serves as a useful introduction to some of the philosophical underpinnings of Romanticism, including an emphasis “on the imagination and on creativity,” which, as Gray points out, “derives in large measure from the philosophy of Immanuel Kant” (11).

Later chapters focus on the works of MacDonald, Tolkien, Lewis, and Pullman, respectively, and in each chapter Gray explores the ways in which certain works of each author both align themselves with the Romantic tradition and distinguish themselves from other fantasy works within this tradition. For example, in the chapter on MacDonald, Gray explores MacDonald’s theological views because “Pullman’s atheism is partly based on a view of God that MacDonald equally detests, a detestation that has been largely occluded due to the influence of Lewis” (46). Such comparisons not only demonstrate the nuance and subtlety of Gray’s analysis but also add richness and depth to the fantasy tradition that Gray is examining.

One distinction that might be of particular interest to readers of fairy tales and fantasy literature who are tired of being told that such stories are escapist comes in the chapter on Pullman’s works, in which Gray analyzes the distinction that Pullman makes in The Amber Spyglass (2000) between “true stories,” composed of details that imaginatively invoke the real world, and “lies and fantasies” (157). This is a distinction, Gray argues, not between “fiction and fact, but rather between fantasy (in a negative sense) and the imaginative intuition of reality” (157). Such a passage seems to provide a ready-made answer for those who dismiss the importance of fantasy literature by suggesting that the imagination is the way to access reality. This discussion of the difference between (negative) fantasy and imagination also provides Gray with a transition into another one of the major philosophical threads running throughout many of the authors’ works addressed in the study, namely, Platonism. Of particular interest to Gray in this volume is the tradition of Christian Platonism as seen in
authors such as Lewis. Whereas Pullman criticizes this tradition for being world-hating, Gray suggests that through his immersion in the works of William Blake, Pullman himself is, perhaps unconsciously, involved in “the tradition of heterodox Christian Platonism” and that the “power of Pullman’s myth, then, may derive partly from sources beyond his conscious control” (162).

Gray concludes *Fantasy, Myth, and the Measure of Truth* with a brief examination of J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series (1997–2007) and whether or not she belongs in the mythopoetic tradition stretching from Hoffman to Pullman. Although such speculation provides an intriguing conclusion to the study, Gray’s attempts to insert references to the *Harry Potter* series earlier in the volume seem rather out of place and awkward. Perhaps the biggest challenge to the readability of Gray’s study, however, is actually, and unfortunately, a formatting issue: namely, throughout the volume Gray abbreviates the titles of more than sixty books, referring to them only by initial. Although this choice certainly seems like a reasonable way to make Gray’s many references more wieldy, because of the sheer number of these texts and the frequent movement between them, these abbreviations have the potential to hinder the reader greatly. Flipping back to check the “Abbreviations” page disrupts the flow of what is otherwise an engaging, detailed, and ultimately convincing argument.

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Somaya Sami Sabry makes a considerable contribution to studies of diaspora, Arab American identity, transnational feminism, and post-9/11 ethnicity in this book, although folklorists may be disappointed by how little time is actually spent discussing *The Arabian Nights*, despite its prominence in the title. Indeed, Sabry makes much of “Sheherazadian narrative” and “Sheherazadian orality” in her texts, terms that she uses to refer to “a narrative which resists stereotypical and exotic representations through reformation of the frame tale of *The Thousand and One Nights* or the invocation of its orality” (3). However, the matter of what precisely makes a narrative Sheherazadian is not explained to my satisfaction; is it a particular quality of Arab or Muslim women’s speech acts, or does it require concrete intertextual references to *The 1001 Nights*? So many cultures have complex relationships with orality and frame tales that Sabry is on firmer ground when she discusses the fascinating context of contemporary Arab American cultural translations.

In the first two chapters Sabry explores Sheherazade in the West in connection with Orientalism, the “racing” of Arabs, and views of Arab women...
that alternately position them as exoticized or subaltern. All this is to set up the exploration in the following three chapters of contemporary women’s uses of Sheherazade: “The resurgence of One Thousand and One Nights in the literary imaginations of Arab-American women writers represents an attempt at translating Arabic culture to an American public enveloped by limited, ‘raced’ representations of Arabs” (8). Cultural translation receives much attention here, because Sabry is concerned with the politics of representing one’s identity to an outsider audience, which becomes especially crucial in the anti-Arab aftermath of 9/11.

In the third chapter Sabry examines Arab American women’s narratives in the novel Crescent by Diana Abu-Jaber. The discussions of food in the text (and as a cultural marker in general) are fascinating, but the description of how the novel interacts with The Nights would have benefited from clarification. A simple plot analysis would have helped readers not familiar with Crescent understand how the novel departs from the tropes of The Nights. For instance, when Sabry states that “Abu-Jaber links her writing with the narrative tradition of Sheherazade, which as an oral narrative had the distinguishing characteristic of being infinitely fertile and fluctuating” (73), we are left unsure how exactly Abu-Jaber links her writing with Sheherazade (through explicit or implicit references? by borrowing the framing device? by using the same motifs or tale types?). Some characters are adapted from The Nights, but the rest of the interaction between the two texts is unclear. Moreover, Sabry’s romanticization of orality as “fertile and fluctuating” seems to be the same essentialization that she laments is projected onto Arab American women.

In Chapter 4 Sabry analyzes the poetry in Mohja Kahf’s collection E-mails from Scheherazad, with a focus on the veil or hijab in Muslim American women’s experiences. The connection between this work and The Nights is much more obvious, as seen in the title of the poetry collection; however, Sabry acknowledges that “Sheherazade’s name is mentioned overtly only twice in this collection of poetry” (91). Sabry’s main point in this chapter is that “Kahf foregrounds the diversity of Muslim-American women and their experiences of wearing the headscarf through recasting Sheherazadian narrative; in this she resists reductive perceptions of Muslim women and their identities” (88). This chapter contains a wealth of information about veiling practices and the scholarship thereon, challenging simplistic Western feminist conceptions of the veil that impose ethnocentric and dualistic judgments on a multifaceted phenomenon.

Sabry addresses the performance art (including stand-up comedy) of Laila Farah and Maysoon Zayid in Chapter 5. Again, the connection to The Nights seems a bit tenuous at times. Farah has a piece titled “Sheherazade Don’t Need No Visa,” and “Zayid makes no direct references to Sheherazade’s
frame tale of The Nights,” which Sabry still interprets thus: “Her performative resistant storytelling is a revival of Sheherazade’s storytelling” (147). The rest of the chapter is an intelligent exploration of how performance genres can contest discursive hegemonies, but the imposed connection with The Nights makes me pause. Is every French woman’s subversive storytelling a revival of Marie-Catherine d’Aulnoy, and is every English woman’s transgressive tale telling a reference to Mother Bunch?

The sixth and final chapter situates this research within the context of Arab American studies. Resistance through reappropriation is one of the major themes of this book, and Sabry convincingly demonstrates how women artists contest stereotypical depictions of Arab American women by reviving “Sheherazade and her storytelling techniques to unfix the traces of Orientalist and racist discourses which still shape their representations” (171). Thus one of this book’s strengths is its attention to power dynamics, whether they are constructed in regard to gender, race, or national identity.

Because The Nights is one of the foundational texts in literary imaginings of the Orient and one of the intertexts her study foregrounds, Sabry spends a reasonable amount of time discussing its origins and impact. She makes some salient points, such as how “the problem with most nineteenth-century translations of The Nights is that these tales were introduced as the ‘door’ to the understanding of a people as a whole, so that the approach to reading this textual world became primarily anthropological” (37). However, the fact that Sabry does not cite scholars such as Ulrich Marzolph or other folk narrative scholars who have worked on The Nights and related topics, such as frame tales (Lee Haring) or postmodern takes on folk narrative (Cristina Bacchilega), is disappointing. In Sabry’s discussion of performance too I would have expected to see folklorists such as Richard Bauman cited. Given the attention Sabry pays to oral and cultural performances, I was a little disappointed to see that the stereotype of the seductive belly dancer was mentioned briefly yet not interrogated.

Although this book might appeal to folk narrative scholars for endorsing sentiments such as the “human capacity to grasp stories” that contributes to “the urgency in exploring Sheherazadian narrative and performance as diasporic narratives, outlining Arab-American women’s worlds” (5), there are some red flags. Sabry’s uncritical merging of orality with the communal (130) and her omission of folkloristic research on The Nights are problematic. However, this book should interest scholars of The Nights (especially modern interpretations) and scholars of diasporic, Arab American, and women’s literature.

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And then? And what happened next? What happened after the 1,001st night? Readers of all ages are familiar with this sense of emptiness, almost of betrayal. Once such a long book is finished, one would like to continue the story, find out what happened to the characters.

The beautiful new book by Evanghélia Stead focuses on a particular aspect of the long history of the Western reception of the Arabian Nights: the texts that pick up where Scheherazade left off and tell the story of the 1,002nd night. Stead is the author of an earlier study, Seconde Odyssée: Ulysse de Tennyson à Borges (2009), published in the same series and devoted to modern variations on the ancient practice of continuing Homer’s epic by deriving additional stories from this or that character or episode. In Contes de la mille et deuxième nuit, she focuses on the question of the continuation of the Nights in Théophile Gautier’s “Conte de la 1002e nuit” (1842), Edgar Allan Poe’s “The 1002nd Tale of Sheherazade” (1845), and Nicolae Davidescu’s “La 1002e nuit : histoire critique” (1937). The question is how to make new texts with second-hand characters, episodes, and data. Both Poe’s and Davidescu’s stories are in bilingual presentation. In addition to these three tales, Stead includes the first translation of Poe’s 1002nd night, freely adapted as La mille et deuxième nuit—in homage to Gautier—by Richard Lesclide (1868), who later published the famous “Corbeau” by Mallarmé and Manet. This version is reproduced in facsimile, along with the delightfully cartoonish illustrations by André Gill, the last one, Scheherazade strangled, is priceless. A critical essay and several pages of impeccably researched and informative notes accompany each text in the edition. In addition to the illustrated Lesclide-Gill “Mille deuxième nuit,” there are five full-page illustrations. The book also includes a concise bibliography.

The introduction contextualizes the basic plot of the Arabian Nights and raises the question of the ending. Most endings, as retold by Galland and others, show the sultan dissuaded from his murderous folly and the storyteller, now safe, honored as his queen and the mother of his sons. What is left to tell? Stead picks up on the potential anxiety of this essentially modern question. How can one continue when all the stories have been told? Is it still possible to tell a story? Under the ironic veneer of the two nineteenth-century stories by Gautier and Poe, Stead detects seriousness, even anguish. These two stories are read in light of the one by Davidescu, who also translated both Poe and Gautier into Romanian. This reflexivity is evident in Davidescu’s “critical story” (1937), whose title is borrowed from Gautier and in which Poe (as the author
of “The Raven”) features prominently, alongside the original trio (Schahrazade, Schahriar, Doniazade) who all narrate, discuss, analyze, and compare stories.

In Théophile Gautier’s story, “Conte de la 1002e nuit,” a distraught Scheherazade bursts into the narrator’s apartment one night, begging for a story to tell the sultan. Galland got it wrong, she complains: not only did she not get pardoned after 1,001 nights, but Schahriar is more insatiable than ever and she has run out of tales. The narrator tells her a story destined to become his Oriental ballet, *La Péri* (this inset story imitates the nesting narratives strategy of the original): unfortunately, it must not have been well received, for we learn that Scheherazade is beheaded. The stressful condition of a nineteenth-century Scheherazade working under the double threat of the loss of inspiration and the loss of her public’s favor is the most intriguing aspect of this irreverent, yet also profound, rewriting of the frame tale.

The Poe story, “The 1002nd Tale of Sheherazade,” which appears in the French translation by Claude Richard and Jean-Marie Maguin (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1989), also reveals a reflective storyteller and is rather close to Gautier’s, although there is no evidence that either read the other’s text. Poe’s Scheherazade has had time to think about her Sinbad stories and wishes to revise them, so she offers to tell an eighth voyage to the boorish sultan. Wonders of nature and fabulous technological inventions elicit only incredulity or boredom from this Oriental incarnation of a difficult public, and he sentences her to the bowstring: clearly Poe was satirizing his own predicament as an underpaid journalist whose genius was unappreciated by his readers. The tyranny of the modern press and the feuilleton is at the heart of Gautier’s and Poe’s rewritings. One of the bizarre monsters described by Poe’s Scheherazade is “a mighty thing that was neither man nor beast, but which had brains of lead, intermixed with a black matter like pitch, and fingers that it employed with such incredible speed and dexterity that it would have had no trouble in writing out twenty thousand copies of the Koran in an hour” (88)—the printing press, of course, and the modern Fiction Machine, which threatens to devour Gautier and Poe, and so many more.

Stead herself, a well-established translator from several languages, translates the Davidescu story, “La 1002e nuit: histoire critique,” for the first time into French. The story is a hall of mirrors, with a succession of stories reflecting one another. Doniazade, the younger sister, tells the first story, none other than Poe’s “Raven” in narrative form; Schahrazade tries to convince her of the similarities between this “tale” and other tales from the Nights, by means of an elaborate comparatist commentary. Finally Schahriar himself wakes up and offers another tale, here titled “Story of the Fisherman and the Cherry Pit.”
story is also featured in several Arabian Nights translations; Victor Chauvin records it as “Le rêve du trésor”; Borges rewrites it as “The Story of the Two Dreamers.” A fisherman dreams of a treasure hidden in a distant city where he will find, as a sign, a cherry pit; upon arriving there after a long journey, he meets another man who derides him because he also dreamed of a hidden treasure but does not give the dream any credit; from the second dreamer’s description of the hiding place the first dreamer recognizes his own house, returns home, and finds the treasure. In Davidescu’s story, Stead points out, this tale works as an allegory of the mutual interdependence of Eastern and Western traditions.

The book is enriched with a long afterword, which recapitulates the modern trajectory of the Nights’ postepilogue continuation. Both East and West, Stead reminds us, have been fascinated by the dream of the 1,002nd night, emblematic of the inexhaustible power of fiction. What happens in the Davidescu story—the stories reflecting one another, one story read as it were by and through another—is multiplied in form and content in Stead’s book, the very layout of which implies that the reader will find the treasure only after a detour through another’s dream. Perhaps it will come as no surprise that Edgar Allan Poe dominates this collection of stories. Not only do we have two different translations of his “1002nd Tale,” but he is also central to the Davidescu story. Poe, we recall, was also key to Borges’s inspiration, and a Borgesian raven flies over much of Stead’s book.

A number of publications on the reception of the Nights have recently appeared: Robert Irwin’s Visions of the Jinn (2011), my own Les amoureux de Schéhérazade: variations modernes sur les 1001 Nuits (2009), and Marina Warner’s Stranger Magic: Charmed States and the Arabian Nights (2012). One could also mention the upcoming multimedia exhibition on the 1001 Nights at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris (2012–2013): it is proof that the Nights today has lost none of its appeal, especially when, as Stead masterfully demonstrates, it is read through a network of interconnecting and cross-referential texts.

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The paintings of Françoise Pétrovitch’s New York debut feel like childhood memories. Simplified forms melt and metamorphose, and colors fade back to the black, red, and white filter of fairy tales. In Pétrovitch’s paintings personages shift in their skins between beast and human and settle, sometimes, on something in-between.
The French artist has a history of working with fairy-tale imagery. Paintings of Little Red Riding Hood were included in her installation at Paris’s Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature earlier this year. In the paintings Little Red Riding Hood wears the slain wolf’s skin, with the wolf’s head draped over her own—an image recalling the classical iconography of Hercules donning the pelt of the Nemean Lion, posing the victimized girl of a familiar tale in the stance of the mythical ideal of masculine prowess. In the images of the girl wearing the wolf’s skin can also be found a sense of the child blending together with the beast.

In Inklings Pétrovitch explores the in-between space where child and beast meet. Walking into the gallery, one enters a room dominated by a series of 5-foot-high red and black ink works depicting simplified human heads lying alongside more realistic animals, some bodiless, some whole. Reds and blacks bleed out between forms and, where the shapes meet, paper buckles and fissures form in too thick ink. There are landscapes in the spaces of melding and deformity.

The key to the pieces can perhaps be found in the room’s only small work: a triptych depicting a child’s metamorphosis. In the first panel a young girl sits alone, looking down at something the viewer cannot see, while a butterfly, maybe the most basic and appropriately childish symbol of transformation, dominates the space. In the middle panel a dead bird, lying on its back, is centered. This is presumably what the girl in the first scene is looking at. The final panel shows a girl-bird hybrid, the girl and the bird melded together, metamorphosed into a kind of siren or harpy. The girl-bird of the final scene stands with her back to the light. She looks down at the new shape of her shadow.

The large paintings of simplified heads and delicate animals could be viewed as depicting the in-between scene not shown in the keystone triptych: the confusing and overwhelming moment of transformation.

Although the Little Red Riding Hood paintings for the Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature installation show a girl covering herself under the skin of an animal, à la Hercules or Donkeyskin, the images at the FIAF Gallery are not of children affecting disguises but of truer transformations. The simplest take on the theme of the exhibition would be that the works are about the turbulent period of change between childhood and what comes after. This would seem to be confirmed by the second part of the show: a small red-walled room behind the main space of the gallery where a video is projected, accompanied by the constant and jarring sounds of syncopated drums. The video flashes ink-drawn images of children playing, of animals being hunted, and of shapes that seem to move between the forms of children and animals and, in doing so,
confusing their roles. There is throughout the video a feeling of unease. The animals do not carry any association with natural freedom: the bird children do not fly; the beast children are hunted. The opening image of the video is a red-ink drawing of two closed eyes. In the final scene, after all the violence of play and hunting and transformation, the two eyes are open.

Exiting that room back into the relative calm of a New York gallery, one remembers what it was like to be scared, to feel hunted and confused and small. The main space’s paintings, while simple and silent, seem to loom overlarge. Childhood transformations can be terrifying. Françoise Pétrovich helps us remember that feeling.

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