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Reviews

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REVIEWS

The Big Book of Urban Legends by Jan Harold Brunvand. Adapted by Robert Loren Fleming and Robert F. Boyd, Jr. New York: Paradox Press/DC Comics, 1994. 223 pp.

In the introduction and commentary to *The Big Book of Urban Legends (BBUL)*, Jan Harold Brunvand wonders “is this the climax of my career as a folklorist—to see my collections of urban legends turned into comics?” (7). He continues, saying that his mentor, the late Professor Richard M. Dorson, would probably have approved as Dorson himself wrote an illustrated book, *America in Legend*. Magnanimous, Brunvand also observes that “comics are just another manifestation of the same popular culture that gives rise to many urban legends in the first place.” Despite Brunvand’s low estimation of comic books, *BBUL* should be of interest to folklorists and storytellers.

BBUL is a collection of two-hundred urban legends (ULs) selected from Brunvand’s previous works: *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* (1981), *The Choking Doberman* (1984), *The Mexican Pet* (1986), *Curses! Broiled Again!* (1989), and *The Baby Train* (1993).

BBUL is not a reprint as the ULs are presented in an entirely different format: one-page black-and-white comics. What further sets *BBUL* apart is that it is unusual for any collection to have two-hundred different illustrators and their art styles. The styles range from iconic, straightforward simple lines tending toward the abstract; to expressionistic works, reflecting the illustrator’s inner chaos; to the photo-realistic. With so many stylistic shifts, a reader might expect a jarring experience. The different styles however do not detract from the reading experience; rather the variety could be seen as a visual translation of the range of narrative voices from the various testimonials printed in previous Brunvand works.

A first-time reader may be surprised that nine panels are sufficient space in which to tell a UL. What the reader may not consider is that the comic book is

a subtractive and additive art. That what is there is as important as what is not there. The imagination of the reader also plays an important part. Because comic books are not complete without an audience and the engaged imagination of that audience, reading a comic book is a demanding task, requiring an active participation. A comic book page has not just the panels, but the space in between, known in the industry as the *gutter*. Neither has any meaning without the imagination of the reader. The panels and gutters fracture space and time, creating a staccato rhythm of storytelling. In the gutter, a second or an eternity can pass. And it is in the gutter that the reader has to construct and continue the narrative. This is *closure*, the observation of parts, being able to perceive the whole based on experience, the most important act to commit while reading a comic book.

Readers must understand that the format is not the only change; the storytelling aspect is radically different. For example, from chapter one, "Moving Violations," is "The Decapitated Motorcyclist" (27). Done in an illustrative style similar to Lynd Ward's woodcuts, the comic is dense with shadow and hatching, lending a weight suitable to this grisly UL. This nine-panel comic is *silent* (no word balloons, expository captions, or sound effects). A script of the comic follows:

Title panel: Road sign with title and blood spatter. Skull in helmet at foot of sign.

Panel two: High-angle long shot. Motorcyclist riding motorcycle with sidecar behind truck in foreground.

Panel three: Medium shot. Truck flatbed. Chain securing sheet metal breaks.

Panel four: Long shot. Motorcyclist moves onto oncoming lane to pass truck.

Panel five: Close-up shot. Truck tire in pot hole.

Panel six: Medium shot. Dislodged sheet metal decapitates motorcyclist.

Panel seven: Medium shot. Horrified truck driver as torso, spurting blood from neck, passes by in foreground.

Panel eight: Medium shot. Truck driver clutches chest with both hands, an apparent heart attack.

Panel nine: Long shot. Truck barrels through guardrail and toward people at bus stop.

Even if readers are not familiar with this particular UL, there is no need for explanatory text. It would be redundant. This type of comic book storytelling is picture-specific word-image combination, that is, the words, if present, do not significantly add to the story's meaning and function only as a soundtrack.

This is, however, not the usual method of storytelling in *BBUL*. The

majority are word-specific, where the illustrations do not significantly add to the text; or duo-specific word-image combinations, where the words and images convey the same message. Chapter two (“Wild Kingdom’s Alligators in the Sewers”) contains examples of both word-specific and duo-specific combinations. An example of word-specific combination is the second panel:

Panel two: Station wagon loaded with luggage on interstate, passing sign reading “You are now leaving Florida.” Caption: “The problem began in the Sunshine State . . . “

Mother: “Tommy! I’m not going to tell you again to keep that baby alligator away from your sister.”

In this panel, the image is redundant. The expository caption and dialogue provide the reader with all the pertinent information. There is no significant difference between this panel and a passage from a text narrative.

The following panel is an example of the duo-specific combination:

Panel five: Alligators attempting to eat rats. Caption: The baby alligators adapted to this strange new environment by feeding on rats and raw sewage.

Elimination of either the words or images does not significantly impact the reader’s understanding. The narrative could be completely graphic or completely text; there is no synergy allowing the sum to far exceed its parts. This is the one weakness of the collection. Most of the illustrators do not take full advantage of the other, more powerful, word-image combinations.

The additive and interdependent word-image combinations predominate in comic book storytelling and fully illustrate the potential in the art form. The additive combination has the word and the image building upon one another—but not dependent upon one another for meaning—while interdependent combinations require both the word and image to relate meaning that neither could relate separately. In chapter six, “Crimes and Misdemeanors,” the eighth panel of “The Toothbrush Story” is a good example of the interdependent combination:

Panel eight: Husband sits on bed reviewing recently developed pictures; wife sits next to him, looking over his shoulder as she brushes her teeth.

Husband: “It’s a photograph of some hairy brute in a hotel room just like ours.”

Wife: “Omigosh! He’s mooning the camera! But what are those two stems sticking out of his—”

The text offers new insight to the image while retaining a meaning apart. The same is true for the image; in conjunction with images from panels seven and

nine, it can still relate the UL, but there is an added depth of meaning when the text is included. The pure-text version of this UL cannot convey the reading experience of watching a woman realize the defilement that the toothbrush she is brushing with has undergone.

BBUL at its worst is just a text with illustrations. At its best, *BBUL* has this word-image synergy, which enlivens the ULs, adding nuances impossible in pure text. This alone is reason enough to read the collection. Graphically, the various illustrative styles destroy the stereotypes of the superhero sensibilities found in the garish four-color pulps of comic books from childhood and the simple single jokes of the Sunday morning newspapers. It is also a cross-section of the illustrators in the comic book industry, from legendary veterans to the newest rising stars to those in between. This collection is a step forward in showing the true potential of comic books and in setting aside the misconceptions that it is a hybrid, low-brow art.

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The Big Book of Grimm by the Grimm Brothers as Channeled by Jonathan Vankin & over 50 Top Comic Artists. Paradox Press/DC Comics. New York, 1999. 191 pp.

As we grow up with fairy tales, we simultaneously grow up with pictures, I suppose. If they aren't pictures in comic books and on the screen, then they are the illustrations in books read to us, we play with, or later on read ourselves. Such pictures both become part of and remain detached from the verbal narrative. The narrative, in turn, may or may not develop its own inner pictures for the listener or reader.

A personal example: Attractive books were hard to come by for children when I grew up in post-war Germany, especially books with colorful pictures. An old edition of the *Arabian Night* tales had, among a few others, a bright, full-page illustration of turbaned Sindbad clinging to the upper branches of a tree, while a huge and most fantastically-colored serpent stretched upward around the trunk, mouth wide open, teeth glaring. I kept turning to this page, obsessively, even after I was old enough to read the stories myself. I see the image before me as I type, more vividly than I can recall the various translations of the tales of Sindbad the Sailor I have read over the decades. I was not afraid of the image, I think: it transported most intensely, just as my favorite tales transported me.

We all have memories of this sort, and they come back as we return to favorite stories. Now, what happens when a selection of Grimm tales—about fifty of them—are transposed into graphic narratives? The texts and introductions are all by one author, Jonathan Vankin, but each story is drawn by a dif-

ferent comic artist. At the very least the collection demonstrates the striking range, diversity, and competence of contemporary comic art. Together the adaptations provide a good set of possibilities to reflect about text and image.

The Paradox Press “Big Book Library” cheerfully pictures and sensationalizes many, on the whole responsibly-gathered factoids throughout the series. For instance, it’s not easy to find a sharper pre-Castro mini-history of Cuba than the one in *The Big Book of Vice*. But of course this approach gets tricky with a collection of fairy tales. So Vankin “channels” his “original, uncensored bedtime stories in all their grim glory,” as the cover promises, with a big blood splash that horrifies Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf in the central illustration, all nicely edged by a skulls-and-roses border. And he arranges, in exposé fashion with introductions, his sections as “Family Hell,” “Prisoners of Childhood,” “Nuptial Nightmares,” and—rather loosely linked to this triad—“Magical Strangers” and “Lessons Learned—the Hard Way.” The sales trick, of course, is to make it appear as if all of this were quite radical and hard to come by, as if bowdlerized versions have been all we have generally been able to get hold of—somewhat similar to the perennial collections of “Forbidden Books of the Bible.” Granted, this may up to a point still be true for typical illustrated fairy-tale collections for children, and stories-for-kids is an obvious association for many adults when it comes to comics.

Aside from the hype necessary to sell the book and fit it into the exposé pattern of the series, what about the renditions of the tales? This isn’t the place to review arguments about realism and pedagogic value of folktales as re- and devalued in various markets. Grim tales (and of course the pun works better in English!) are part of all cultures, whatever that says about our pleasures and needs. In our time, it seems to me, many of the Grimm tales have had the tough luck to be received between rocks and hard places: worried over and sanitized because of whatever trauma they might cause, or celebrated as Texas chainsaw massacres ahead of their time—“one [. . .] makes Jeffrey Dahmer look like Cap’n Crunch” Jonathan Vankin promises in his introduction to “Nuptial Nightmares,” and the graphics for “The Robber Bridegroom” do their best to live up to the promise.

Are such visual shockers the obvious result of transforming a *märchen* into a more or less realistic graphic sequence? Do such changes work well for certain kinds of tales, and less well for others? Is it primarily a matter of the art itself since styles differ very widely here, though all the artists in *The Big Book of Grimm* are competent and some do very striking work indeed? I would like to focus on a few of the tales, without getting carried away by personal preferences in contemporary comics for “mature audiences,” as the dubious label has it.

As with all adaptations or stage direction, it most essentially matters whether the artist or director manages to convey a forceful way of perceiving

story or script. I do not imply here a need for a unified form: the most powerful Grimm tales strike me as inherently ambiguous, and this is what I hope to find reflected in a successful adaptation. For instance, “The Girl with No Hands” tells the Job/Griseldis tale of the girl’s suffering and, as perceived maybe by most of us, her anticlimactic final restoration and reward both with laconic flatness and haunting echoes of biblical and legendary narratives. In Randy DuBurke’s adaptation the stylized girl’s neutral suffering is effective enough until she becomes queen, though surrounding her with a batch of cartoon characters, including a chubby little rococo angel, is a dubious affair. In the end she is a cute girl on a weird trip, and this in itself strikes me as far less compelling than the original tale.

All adaptive transformations necessarily lack something of the original; good adaptations make up for it by adding something striking of their own. In most of the versions here, I fear (“The Juniper Tree,” “Cinderella,” “Rapunzel,” “Rumpelstiltskin” are some of the famous ones), we simply get a plot retelling by way of pictures and speech bubbles.

Grotesques are frequently more successful here if the artists have a sense for pictorial exuberance and inventiveness. Joe Stanton has “Hans My Hedgehog” convincingly ride on his rooster, play the bagpipes, and breed his pigs—and all along the lively and self-assured hedgehog appears to be more real and sympathetic than the humans he deals with. Even as Hans acts the monster bridegroom to the first, unsatisfactory bride, the pictorial narrative shows a convincing mix of humor, suspense, and horror. Hunt Emerson transports “Clever Hans” into his very own Enchanted Mesa with a cute farmer’s daughter and a mother whose tobacco pipe grows into a wondrous Rube-Goldberg contraption as poor Hans jumbles advice and figures of speech. Fine, at least for those of us who like this kind of comics! And to pursue comics referentiality for a moment longer, I vaguely enjoy James Francis’s rendition of “Sweetheart Roland,” with its mix of 1950s true-romance and horror comics!

The one rendition that genuinely impresses me is John Cebollero’s “Hansel and Gretel.” In a style that owes much to the old EC *Tales from the Crypt*, Cebollero creates a splendid witch in her claustrophobic gingerbread house. More impressive still is the meticulously realized mother whose sullen attractiveness reverberates as an eerie counterpart to the witch. Close-ups and confrontation scenes are excellent. The children themselves—childlike, ancient, frightened, and indestructible—supplement our imagination most adequately. They remind me of Maurice Sendak’s wonderful children’s illustrations. This visual rendition of “Hansel and Gretel” is as good as I can imagine. It does justice to the tale, and maybe I’ll remember Cebollero’s image of the cruel mother as well as Sendak’s great Hansel-and-Gretel illustration in *The Juniper Tree*.

In the end, though, if I want pictures with märchen, I'll pick up *The Juniper Tree*—or, in gratitude to DC Comics, Neil Gaiman's magical *Sandman* Series!

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Moral Fictions: Tamil Folktales in Oral Tradition. By Stuart Blackburn. *FF Communications CXXVIII, No. 278.* Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2001. 338 pp.

The author of *Moral Fictions: Tamil Folktales in Oral Tradition*, Stuart Blackburn, is familiar to Tamil folklorists as he has been a frequent visitor to Tamil Nadu, the Tamil-language-speaking state of South India, and his work on Tamil folklore includes the well-known title, *Singing Birth and Death: Texts in Performance*. This is yet another book from this author.

Largely a well-planned and well-edited book, it gives one hundred tales in seven sections. The author has omitted 226 tales after collecting 326 tales from eighty-seven different tellers to bring out this book. Thus, according to the information given in the end of the book, he included tales by only forty-one tellers. In the introduction the author gives a detailed account of his field trip to this part of India, during a four-month period in 1995–96. Though he does not mention all the reasons why he has left out a large number of tales and tellers, he writes that, in selecting which tales to include in this book, he was guided first by the quality of the telling of the tales and then by the need for a balance among the tales. From what he mentions in the afterword which gives a theoretical background to the collection I presume that the omitted tales included many versions of these one hundred tales. A detailed discussion of the tales omitted from this collection could have provided helpful information as to the editor's selection criteria for a collection that is meant to represent a language region for the first time to the readers of international folktales and particularly in a book where the author makes the claim that "the dominant scholarly and popular view of folklore" is different from his.

The author divides the one hundred tales collected from forty-one tellers into seven chapters, the first six chapters organized on the basis of six folktale-telling sessions held in different places and chapter seven putting together all the other tales collected from individuals as "single tales." The author says that he has understood that the tales included in the first 6 chapters have tended to pursue a particular narrative logic. But here too, if one reads all the tales of chapter seven and the details given about the tellers of those tales, s/he gets the idea that out of forty-one tellers twenty-one tellers have contributed to this category of "single tales." Now it becomes clear that the tales of fifty percent of informants are put together here. One also notices that the educational back-

ground of the tellers of chapter seven is markedly different from that of the tellers who are represented in the sessions. Two tellers whose tales are included in chapter seven hold postgraduate degrees, and one has a PhD; Christians also figure in the list of tellers within this particular chapter. Chapter seven also includes a few tales which are either jokes or anecdotes that anyone in Tamil Nadu will be familiar if s/he travels there. The tale "Broken Mirrors" may be known to everyone as this is found in all the elementary language text books. Another tale, "A Modern Rama Story," is usually the stuff one hears from political platforms.

An impressive part of this book is the afterword, chapter eight, which places Tamil folktales in an international tradition of folktale scholarship. He refers to the study of folktales of rural Spain by James Taggart to elucidate the point that difference in the moral perspectives of a tale is likely to exist concurrently within the tradition among women and men. Another important scholar of fairy tales that Blackburn draws on to explain his concepts is Bengt Holbek whose opposition to "unconscious meaning" is approvingly mentioned, as this approach complements the author's. And Steven Swann Jones's idea of the "innocent persecuted heroine" is compared with the Tamil folklore heroines. Due to the author's deft handling of concepts using different books by international folktale scholars covering different regions of the world, Blackburn's book offers a different perspective in spite of the fact that it covers a very small part of the Tamil area: that is, only six places, Karaiyamputtur, Pakur, Panaiyakottai, Melalavu (Melavalavu?), Sakkottai, and Tanjavur, as the places of the twenty-one tellers whose tales are grouped in chapter seven are not mentioned in this book. But we can presume that these twenty-one tellers represent still more places even if some were met with in one place, on a particular day or on different dates; unfortunately the dates of collection of these tales are not available in this book.

The point of the author is that, deviating from general scholarly consensus, these Tamil tales are vehicles of communication and specifically the vehicle of communication of moral view from one speaker to another. Blackburn juxtaposes this against the view of scholars whose emphasis is on the fantasy element of the tales; in this context he mentions the names of Max Lüthi, Marina Warner, and Jack Zipes. The author, then, goes on to trace the local history of the collection of such tales and considers that certain tales printed in the nineteenth century influenced the modern Tamil folklore collections. But here the mention of two collections of printed tales, the *Vikkramatittan Katai* and *Matanakamarajan Katai*, as Tamil tales may be disputed by some as they are available in other Dravidian languages and there is the probability that these tales might have come from other languages. Then the author mentions that since the 1980s local academics and institutions started giving attention

to the collection and study of Tamil tales. Here too the mention of a few pioneering collections could have given credit to this author, given that approximately fifteen collections of different merit have come out in Tamil, and earlier versions of some of the tales of this book appeared in those volumes. Since Blackburn is well-versed in the Tamil language, I wonder why he left out those collections. Then the author responds to different international authors and compares their findings with the “initial formulae” and the tale-endings of these tales, which brings him to his main argument. In order to present these tales as “tales of Tamil morality, if not as Tamil tales of morality,” he analyzes a select group of tales of this collection from different perspectives; he says the point of view of the teller is important, of course, even after knowing that the meaning of a tale is constructed only historically and in performance. Stuart Blackburn also arrives at the conclusion that morality is presented in Tamil tales through analyzing a few tales of brother-sister incest, tales that deal with crimes and punishment and studying how the public proclamation of truth is made in Tamil tales. The different male and female characters of these tales are also subjected to a study from the point of view of morality, and thereby the author is again able to emphasize that morality is an important meaning of Tamil tales. And using specific tales, the author considers how traditional ideas of generosity and reciprocity are viewed in these tales. Furthermore, Stuart Blackburn wants to prove his point from another angle. He takes a few tales that may be considered to be fantasies and demonstrates that they are not while they present fictional visions, thus defining fiction differently from fantasy. But my point here is that this kind of analysis may warrant a full-length study of a different kind using still more data which this author is fully qualified to undertake.

From reading this book, two important questions arise. Who is the typical teller of a Tamil folktale? And what is the generic definition of a folktale? The tellers of these Tamil folktales range from tellers who tell one tale (about twenty of them) to one teller who tells as many as thirteen tales. The tellers included in chapter seven tell one tale each on an average. In Tamil Nadu one can expect one tale each from any man or woman. In that case, can all the Tamil-speaking people be considered tellers of folktales? The other question, what is the generic definition of a folktale, relates to the inclusion of shorter versions of the story of Krishna and longer ballads in this collection, along with modern-day jokes as in the case of the tale “A Modern Rama Story,” which is commonly meant to hurt the feelings of a political adversary and that person’s followers. In sum, I hope this book will encourage more research and debate in the field of international study of Tamil folktale.

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Ariadne's Thread: A Guide to International Tales Found in Classical Literature. By William Hansen. *Myth and Poetics* edited by Gregory Nagy. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002. xv, 548 pp.

Ariadne's Thread may prove an invaluable sourcebook not only for classicists but, perhaps more importantly, for folklorists. The author, William Hansen, is both a classicist and a folklorist who studied with Alan Dundes and is currently professor of classics at the Indiana University, Bloomington. Hansen has published dozens of studies of folkloric themes, tale types, and motifs in classical literature, and *Ariadne's Thread* represents the culmination of much of that work.

The book, named best reference work in 2002 in its category (single volume, humanities) by the Association of American Publishers, deals with international oral narratives attested in ancient Greek and Latin literature (xi, 19). Hansen draws from a broad range of ancient source material including epic, tragedy, comedy, philosophy, history, biography, inscription, novels, and ancient collections of jokes, fables, and anecdotes, among others, and examines the relationship between the ancient tales and variants from around the world. The book contains nearly a hundred entries devoted to individual tale types or motifs, and compares variants that may or may not be historically related. That is, Hansen provides typological comparisons without insisting that early variants influenced later versions: "a chronologically early text does not necessarily reflect a developmentally early form of a narrative"; the first published form of a tale does not make it an "urtext" from which later variants developed (8).

This may seem obvious to folklorists, but classicists need the reminder. Similarly, much of Hansen's introductory chapter is aimed more toward classicists than folklorists, who are more likely to be familiar with the comparative study of folktale, including the work of the Grimms, Bolte and Polívka, Aarne, and Thompson. At the same time, folklorists may be interested in Hansen's specific history of the study of the *classical* folktale and the necessity for understanding genre variance when comparing ancient and modern tales: "many stories that in modern times are attested as folktales are found in ancient societies as legends" (8), because the ancient Greeks often treated narratives as historical. This leads to a useful discussion of the relationship between ancient narratives and magic tales, novella, lying tales, numskull tales, animal tales, and other subforms of the folktale (12–19).

In the essays that comprise the nearly one hundred entries on tale types and motifs, Hansen's main goal is to connect particular international narratives to specific classical stories. To do this, Hansen provides six main categories of correspondence between ancient and modern texts: (1) *overall*, in which ancient and modern texts exhibit similar structure and content; (2) *partial*, in which an

ancient story corresponds to an episode within a modern tale but not to the whole tale; (3) *intermittent*, in which the ancient texts exhibit partial parallels in function and content; (4) *structural*, in which the ancient and international tales share basic structural elements; (5) *allusive* or *fragmentary*, in which an ancient statement, proverb, or story fragment implies acquaintance with the international tale; and (6) *nascent*, in which the ancient narrative shows a remote resemblance to a familiar tale and may actually be an early form of it.

Each of the dozens of essays begins with a general description of the tale type and its AT number or, in the case of motifs, its Thompson Motif-Index number (and, for a few tales, their ML number, based on Christiansen). Hansen follows this with sample modern analogues. Then he presents the ancient version along with its source, and explains the specific correspondences as well as differences, drawing on the six categories above. The essays are arranged in alphabetical order according to AT titles.

For example, the first essay covers “Apprentice and Ghost” (AT 325*), summarized thus: “A sorcerer’s apprentice (servant) reads a verse aloud from the forbidden book belonging to his master and thereby evokes a ghost (devil, etc.), which he is unable to make disappear again. When finally the sorcerer comes and utters the proper formula, the troublesome spirit disappears” (35). Hansen provides variants from England and points out the correspondences with ML 3020, “Inexperienced Use of the Black Book,” and AT 565, “The Magic Mill.” He then presents the earliest attestation of this tale, which appears in Lucian’s *The Lover of Lies*, written in Greek in the second century AD, which he titles “Eukrates and the Automaton.” The Greek story may be familiar to modern readers as “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice” segment from Disney’s *Fantasia*: Eukrates overhears his magician master casting a spell to animate a broom or pestle and ordering it to draw water. Eukrates can’t wait to try the spell himself, with disastrous results: he forgets the counterspell, and the pestle floods the house. The master comes back and stops the pestle, but is furious with Eukrates and ends his apprenticeship. The correspondences between the ancient and modern variants are very clear, and demonstrate category (1) above, *overall*.

Another essay, “Frog King” (AT 440), demonstrates category (5) above, *allusive* or *fragmentary*. Hansen explains, “Although the story of ‘The Frog King’ is not attested in ancient literature, several scholars have seen a possible allusion to it” in Petronius’s *Satyrica*, where one character says, “Qui fuit rana, nunc est rex” or “He who was a frog is now a king” (145). This apparently proverbial statement may refer to a Frog-King tale, but “the evidence allows no certain conclusion” (145).

Also appearing is the story of “Cinderella,” for which the ancient analogue is the courtesan Rhodopis, whose sandal is snatched by an eagle and found by

a king who then searches the land to find the woman who wore it. The “Judgment of Solomon” (AT 926), for which Hansen gives Indian examples, turns out to have a Greek analogue that may date back to the fourth century BC, while the “Shepherd who Cried ‘Wolf!’ too often” (AT 1333) appears in at least two ancient fable collections.

Other ancient stories may already be more familiar to folklorists, such as “Cupid and Psyche,” an ancient analogue to the “Disenchanted Husband” tale (AT 425). The “Dragon Slayer” (AT 300) appears in ancient literature in the stories of Perseus and Herakles, among others. “Girl as Helper in the Hero’s Flight” (AT 313) is represented by the stories of Jason and Medea as well as Theseus and Ariadne, while the “Homecoming Husband” (AT 974) has an early analogue in the return of Odysseus to Penelope. For “Man Swallowed by Fish” (AT 1889G), Hansen provides the modern version from *The Adventures of Baron Münchhausen* and an ancient variant from Lucian’s *True Stories* as well as the story of Jonah.

As Hansen points out, no one really knows how many international tales appear in Greek and Roman literature, since no exhaustive catalogue of international stories exists. Thus, the aim of *Ariadne’s Thread* is “to be representative rather than exhaustive.” Yet readers will note that several tales mentioned in the introduction have no separate entries in the text, such as the story of *The Ring of Polycrates* (AT 736A), which may leave some wondering how Hansen decided which stories to include or omit from his collection. Although this is slightly disappointing, it has the advantage of leaving the reader wanting more: a second volume might not be out of the question. Written in Hansen’s clear, pleasant style, *Ariadne’s Thread* is overall a fascinating collection that, one hopes, will encourage folklorists to learn more about the earliest extant versions of many tales and motifs and the labyrinthine paths they follow in their migrations.

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Tales, Then and Now: More Folktales as Literary Fictions for Young Adults.
Anna E. Altmann and Gail de Vos. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 2001. xxiii + 296.

Tales, Then and Now: More Folktales as Literary Fictions for Young Adults is the much-anticipated sequel to *New Tales for Old: Folktales as Literary Fictions for Young Adults*, which came out in 1999. Modeled after the earlier work, the new volume has essentially the same format, providing a synopsis; an analysis of each tale’s tale-type and motif elements according to the Aarne-Thompson indexes; a brief overview of the tale’s literary history, with references to its place within oral tradition; and then a detailed annotated listing of selected

scholarly critical interpretations of the tale arranged chronologically, followed by annotations of literary reworkings of each tale in novel, short story, film and stage play, poetry (which includes selected music recordings), picture book, and graphic novel form, as well as references to Internet resources and suggestions for classroom use.

New Tales for Old presented this detailed analysis for eight wonder tales derived from European oral tradition. *Tales, Then and Now* focuses on tales excluded from that previous work because they are primarily literary in origin, although some have moved from print into the oral tradition and others had oral roots before being cast into literary form. The division between these categories blurs at times but, for the most part, it works. The essential requirement is that the tale must have generated enough literary reworkings—"versions that are more radically changed than simple retellings" (xvii)—to warrant in-depth analysis. For this volume, Altmann and de Vos have chosen to include "Beauty and the Beast," two Jack stories, two ballads—"Tam Lin" and "Thomas the Rhymer" treated together within one chapter—and five stories from Hans Christian Andersen. Three, "The Snow Queen," "The Emperor's New Clothes," and "The Princess and the Pea," with fewer reworkings, are treated together within one chapter that gives an analysis of Andersen's work as a whole. Two, "The Little Mermaid" and "The Wild Swans," are treated more extensively, each within their own chapter, with detailed analysis of the Disney movie for the first, and of the folk sources for Andersen's tale (three versions in the Brothers Grimm: "The Six Swans," "The Seven Ravens," and "The Twelve Brothers") for the second. Next, the authors provide a chapter of updates to their first volume, adding more recent literary reworkings of "Cinderella," "The Frog King," "Hansel and Gretel," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Rapunzel," "Rumpelstiltskin," "Sleeping Beauty," and "Snow White." Unfortunately, this chapter *only* updates literary treatments and doesn't attempt to update the very useful sections on critical analysis. Finally, the book concludes with an unannotated appendix of literary reworkings of ballads, Andersen tales, and folktales not otherwise covered in these two volumes, recognizing that their choice to present detailed analysis of a limited number of specific tales results in many notable literary reworkings of other tales being overlooked. This appendix is a way of adding breadth, however superficially, to the impressive depth of the two main volumes.

Robin McKinley's *Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty and the Beast* (1978) was one of the original inspirations for the undertaking. In the chapter on "Beauty and the Beast," the French literary roots of the tale are clearly expounded, as well as its connections to earlier "Animal Bridegroom" folktales. The authors acknowledge their debt to Betsy Hearne's *Beauty and the Beast: Visions and Revisions of an Old Tale* (1989), which gives a solid foundation to

this chapter. Although not comprehensive, the critical interpretation section includes significant analyses by Jack Zipes, Marina Warner, Maria Tatar, Cristina Bacchilega, and others. This chapter provides insightful assessment of film adaptations by Jean Cocteau and the Disney Studios, in addition to reviewing other film and TV adaptations and the numerous literary reworkings. Altmann and de Vos describe Cocteau's film as "a story of dualities" that "does not moralize" but is "preoccupied with meaning rather than education" (40). They agree with Hearne's concern over the "violation of profound elements" in the Disney film and also note that Beauty, like other Disney heroines, is never offered the choice of loving a mature man. "For a Disney heroine, to love is to nurture" (42). Noting valid feminist criticism of Disney, they suggest that "[m]en ought to take exception to the characterization of male characters, too" (42). This is a strong chapter with much to offer.

I must admit I was surprised to find the Jack stories treated in the volume on *literary* folktales, since to my mind, Jack tales are clearly established in the oral tradition. The authors acknowledge Jack's oral roots, but they concentrate their attention on "Jack the Giant Killer" and "Jack and the Bean Stalk" (both are AT 328, *Boy Steals Giant's Treasure*), which the Opies argue do not seem to have been transmitted orally before they appeared in print in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Altmann and de Vos cite Carl Lindahl's argument that "Jack has been part of the folklore research landscape of the English-language speaking world as far back as one can research. However, this Jack was a character often off limits to women and children because of the scatological and obscene references within the tales. Only when the editors decided to market the tale to children were these 'undesirable' elements eliminated from the printed tales" (53). There are references (Lindahl, the Opies, Tatar) to the "moral" revisions made in Benjamin Tabart's *The History of Jack and the Bean-Stalk* (1807) and subsequent retellings. Even today, the story invites commentary from both critics and revisionist authors on the moralities of the basic plot, the fact that Jack is essentially a thief who steals the giant's treasures in response to his wife's hospitality. Other Jack tales are not considered in this chapter. While a good selection of sources is included in the critical interpretations section, I was disappointed that an outstanding contribution to Jack tales literature, *Jack in Two Worlds: Contemporary North American Tales and their Tellers*, edited by William B. McCarthy (1994), was not included. Although this reflects the editors' interest in literary interpretations rather than performance studies, I regret its absence.

As noted, this volume includes one chapter on tales in ballad form, an interesting departure from the editors' other choices, though their decision to include this chapter was in a way inevitable, as they note that Dianna Wynn

Jones's *Fire and Hemlock* was one of the inspirations for the entire project. They are able to follow the same format as in other chapters, relying on Katherine Briggs, Margaret Read McDonald, and a newer index by Natascha Wurzback and Simone Salz for motif analysis. The critical interpretations section seems extensive. I would have liked to see a reference to *The Mudcat Café*, <<http://www.mudcat.org>>, a fabulous resource for discussion of folk songs, in the Internet resources section, but their focus is on web pages rather than discussion groups, and *Mudcat's* scope is both broader and less structured than the extremely informative websites they do include. Not having studied ballads in any detail myself—and loving some of the literary retellings of ballads that I have come across—I found this chapter especially useful.

I was initially disappointed that so much of this volume was dedicated to Hans Christian Andersen, whose tales I have never really cared for, but reading the historical and critical sections made me realize that as an adult I had never really experienced Andersen in a good quality unadulterated translation. Perhaps I should try again, allowing for the romantic sensibilities as I do when reading George MacDonald and other nineteenth-century writers. While the sentimentality, Christianity, and depressing endings will still be there, reading Andersen's tales again as an adult may allow me to better recognize the humor and irony that are highlighted in these chapters. I have certainly appreciated some of the literary reworkings of his tales, notably Joan Vinge's *The Snow Queen* and Juliet Marillier's outstanding *Daughter of the Forest*—although I associate that novel more with the Grimms' story "The Six Swans" set in a Celtic landscape than with Andersen's "The Wild Swans." I found that I appreciated the analysis here more than I had expected.

Overall, I find this new volume a valuable supplement to the first. Both volumes will be useful to storytellers, librarians, researchers, and teachers in high schools, colleges, and universities. The authors make a strong argument for the value of using folktale reworkings in the classroom. I hope Altmann and de Vos will be inspired to compile further volumes, as their tantalizingly brief appendix suggests that there are many more tales worthy of such analysis, although they may not yet have reached the critical mass of literary reworkings yet. I would love to see another category added to their treatment, that of illustrators who have done significant interpretations of these classic tales, although I recognize this may be impractical. As it is, these annotated bibliographies make a solid contribution to the literary study of folktales. Studying them provides a pathway to wealth of reading opportunities awaiting anyone who delights in such retold tales.

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SurLaLune Fairy Tale Pages. Heidi Anne Heiner. 11 April 2003.

<http://www.surlalunefairytales.com>.

In 1998 then-graduate student Heidi Anne Heiner launched *SurLaLune*. In the subsequent five years, *SurLaLune* has developed into a valuable and fascinating resource/clearinghouse for scholars, students, and the general public interested in folktales and fairy tales and their illustrations. The site is visually attractive, easy to navigate, and provides a myriad of quick-loading links to additional information, to other Internet sites, to hard-to-find illustrations, and more. Heiner states in her bio section that she does not make a profit from the site (although she has associated it with Amazon.com and Art.com to help defray her expenses in hosting the site) and she allows individuals and classes to link to the site free of charge (she does not reciprocally list those who do link with *SurLaLune*).

The site is an evolving work in progress and is divided into three parts. Part one, "Frontmatter," contains basic attempts to define the fairy-tale form (Heiner's own, Zipes's, Tolkien's, etc.); a general introduction to folklore study; FAQs about the site, and access to the "Fairy Tale Bookstore," which seems to be a selection of Heiner's favorites (in and out of print). One needn't spend a great amount of time here, unless one is a true neophyte to the field or is looking to purchase books.

Part two, "The Annotated Tales," is Heiner's primary concern. Here she provides reliable textual versions of twenty-six "classic" western tales, primarily but not exclusively taken from Perrault, Grimm, and Andersen. Each tale is adorned with vertical sidebars featuring key illustrations from past as well as current editions; each of the thumbnail illustrations can be enlarged and many lead to other selections of images by the artist. For me, these links were seductive: I found images that I had never seen before—Harry Clarke for *Sleeping Beauty*, for instance, and a number of other fine illustrators past and present with whom I was not familiar. Heiner carefully addresses issues of copyright for these images in her FAQ section. The "annotation" of the tales themselves is internal; that is, key words, phrases, plot events, etc., are blue and link to capsule discussions of the term, theme, or concept. Sometimes the annotations are historical/cultural, sometimes they deal with motif typing, and sometimes they are academic discussions; the material seems to be quite reliable. In each case, Heiner provides enough information in the capsule for the interested reader to probe further. Her critical predilections seem to run, though again not exclusively, to Jungian archetypal criticism (von Franz) and Marxist theory (the ubiquitous Zipes). Not all of the twenty-six tales have yet been annotated, and it is not clear in what ways Heiner may wish ultimately to expand the annotations—more Grimms? non-Eurocentric tales? contemporary tales? feminist retellings?

Part three, "Appendix," contains a miscellany of material related somehow

to fairy tales. There is a very useful site on illustration past and present (sorted by illustrator's name or tale title) and a complete version of *Il Pentamerone* with illustrations by Warwick Goble and George Cruikshank. But the most interesting sections of part three are the discussion groups, which are hosted under *EZBoard* (one need not register with *EZBoard* to post, apparently). The discussions are asynchronous postings related to a theme, issue, or question raised by visitors to *SurLaLune*. Several current discussions run at the same time and past discussions are accessible through *SurLaLune*'s archives. As one might expect, the postings range from the highly informed to the novice's question, but in general they seem thoughtful and respectful—this is not a cheap chat room. For instance, six months or so ago a student asked me about the recurring motif of cannibalism in folk- and fairy tales; I searched in *Google* and was led to a discussion group (my first visit to *SurLaLune*, by the way) and discovered over twenty pages of responses to cannibalism—they weren't lurid, but were well referenced and serious in tone. That a writer of the stature of Jane Yolen rather frequently enters these discussions under her own name lends sure-fire credibility to their value.

Heiner acknowledges that *SurLaLune* will never be finished, and she also acknowledges similar efforts to compile large sites devoted to folktales and fairy tales, providing useful links to many of them. The problem with *SurLaLune* is the problem with all such "compendium" sites: can we trust the information/editing/scholarship (especially in a .com site, but my browsing implies that we can in this instance) and how much time do we want to spend meandering through the hundreds (thousands?) of links the site provides? This last question, of course, is not mine to answer. *SurLaLune* is well worth a visit: either use the address at the beginning of this review or use most any major search engine to pull it up under "surlalune."

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Imagined States: Nationalism, Utopia, and Longing in Oral Cultures. Edited by Luisa Del Giudice and Gerald Porter. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2001. 217 pp.

Twenty years have passed since Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) popularized the idea that the histories of print culture and nationalism are inextricably linked. Anderson observed that national identities are fundamentally discursive constructions, requiring an imagined rather than an experienced sense of collectivity and solidarity. The creation of collective identity on a grand scale became possible, he suggests, through a series of historical and political developments, including the emergence of "print-as-commodity" (37)—the mass production and wide dis-

semination of text made possible by the invention of the printing press in the sixteenth century and the rapid rise of vernacular languages in print form in the decades and centuries that followed.

In *Imagined States: Nationalism, Utopia, and Longing in Oral Cultures*, editors Luisa Del Giudice and Gerald Porter acknowledge Anderson's influence. But while Anderson's focus was primarily on the conditions that made national identity formation possible, the diverse contributions to *Imagined States* offer insight to the dynamics of identity construction as they appear in a range of traditional and popular print forms—including English and German broadsides, Neopolitan festival, Scandinavian occupational lore, and Latvian folk poetry. Several significant shifts of focus are implicated here.

First, the current volume foregrounds ways in which discursive constructions of the Other are central to those of the Self, demonstrating that the conceptual vocabulary of identity formation often hinges on certain diametric oppositions (male-female, native-foreign, human-animal) and is as much a process of negation as identification. This is nowhere clearer than in Gerald Porter's insightful study of Welsh, Scottish, and Irish characters in London broadsides of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (“‘Who Talks of My Nation’: The Role of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland in Constructing ‘Englishness’”) and Tom Cheeseman's fascinating analysis of Turkish figures in nineteenth-century German *Bankelsång* (“The Turkish German Self: Displacing German-German Conflict in Orientalist Street Ballads”). In the former, Porter looks at Englishness as “a fiercely contested site” (105)—echoing the work of Linda Colley, Simon Gikandi, and others—but also reveals that Welshness, Scottishness, and Irishness as constructed in the London ballad tradition were equally unstable. Such figures as “The Welsh Fortune Teller” (105) or “Coy Moggy” (115) may have served to make the English consumer feel witty, worldly, or articulate by comparison, but Porter demonstrates that the broadside's “reductionist” (132) representational strategies were varied, denying England's neighbors the prize of national distinctiveness. In Cheeseman's study, the stock figure of “the Turk” is also shown to take multiple forms: lover, despot, infidel. Changes in German orientalist ballads are shown here to be less a reflection of Germany's political entanglements abroad than “a screen onto which local conflicts are projected” (144).

Another significant way in which *Imagined States* departs from *Imagined Communities* is in its intention to focus on “oral cultures”—a move which would seem to challenge, at a fundamental level, Anderson's own construction of modern subjectivity as the product of print communication. The subtitle of this book is, in fact, misleading: most of the traditions explored in these interesting essays are drawn from popular print culture of past centuries (in which orality often figures as a literary device or trope) not from the authors' own

ethnographic fieldwork. The most compelling contributions to *Imagined States* take account of medium and means of transmission in their analyses. For instance, Luisa Del Giudice's research on the Italian version of a "mythic land of plenty" (12), the Paese di Cuccagna, includes consideration of a wide range of expressive forms—from Renaissance art and literature through popular broadsides and Neopolitan carnival festivities. As a utopia, Cuccagna was characterized by dreams of free and easy access to Nature's abundance, of a world in which hard work is frowned upon and idleness is rewarded, thus striking at the heart of social and economic inequities. But Del Giudice's extensively-illustrated and well-researched paper demonstrates that in its varied manifestations, Cuccagna functions not only as an icon of gastronomic desires—an imagined state of plenty, abundance, bodily satisfaction—but also as a space in which to assert social control (as when the ruling classes of seventeenth-century Naples offered enormous mountains of food, "il monte di Cuccagna," to frenzied, hungry Carnival participants) or to construct an alternative social order (giving shape, for instance, to the quasi-mythic status of America as a new world of plenty in immigration narratives).

In "Prefaced Spaces: Tales of the Colonial British Collectors of Folklore," Sadhana Naithani investigates idealized visions that were framed not as imagined utopias but as cultural reality. Naithani's focus is not on the performance of tales in India, nor the folktales collected in India by British folklorists. She makes clear that the tale of interest here is a master narrative of cultural identities and differences created and recreated in introductory essays and prefaces to published tale collections—a narrative of benevolent colonizers, authoritative scholars, and charmingly submissive natives. As Naithani observes, the tale told by the "colonizer-folklorists" of her paper's title shaped the ways in which British colonial India was to be imagined, and also came to shape Indian scholars self-representations.

From the outset, Del Giudice and Porter make clear that the scope of this volume extends beyond the imagining of the nation-state to include social and existential visions, some of which are framed as fantasy. The issues that motivated this volume are far-reaching, and the thread that binds such matters as expressions of national identity, longings for alternate social realities, and reflections on the human condition does become strained at points. Nevertheless, each of the essays in this volume stands as on its own merits as interesting, intelligent scholarship. What we are still missing is the book promised by the subtitle: a book which would interrogate directly Anderson's assertion that print communication is a necessity of national consciousness and identity formation, a book focused squarely on nationalism in oral cultures.

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Scottish Traveller Tales: Lives Shaped through Stories. By Donald Braid. Jackson, Miss.: University of Mississippi Press, 2002. xiii + 313 pp.

The translation of a PhD thesis into a book is a precarious, and not always successful, undertaking. What may have satisfied a dissertation director, an advisory committee, and a small group of readers as regards contents, originality, structure, tone, and style of the issues discussed and the arguments advanced and made persuasive, often fails to impress a non-academic audience. The doctoral thesis submitted by Donald Braid and approved by Indiana University in 1996, with the title "The Negotiation of Meaning and Identity in the Narratives of the Travelling People of Scotland," may therefore well have raised an eyebrow or two when considered for publication outside its original domicile. Fortunately, the intellectual preciousness of the title did not deter the University of Mississippi Press from turning the thesis into a book called *Scottish Traveller Tales*, with the telling, but somewhat one-sided subtitle *Lives Shaped through Stories*, and the editors at the Press responsible for commissioning and then nursing it through the preparatory phase are to be congratulated on having had the foresight necessary to recognize this work's potential wider appeal.

What has struck this reader from the beginning and has accompanied his reactions throughout his reading performance is the unmistakable fact that the narrative of this book is in itself a personal experience story and that consequently the frequent use of the first person singular pronoun in conveying the author's voice is not incongruous or inappropriate but well suited in the voicing of his account. (This reviewer has not seen the original thesis, but if the dissertation director and other guiding hands in the Folklore Institute permitted this usage in the dissertation even in its academic guise, they should be applauded likewise for their tolerance.) In the kind of book which the thesis has become it does, of course, not jar at all.

The autobiographical mode of presentation which this stylistic usage allows is, not unexpectedly, particularly noticeable in the "Introduction" (1–50) which, in the course of narrating the "genesis" of the book, relates how the physicist and engineering technician Donald Braid, having turned storyteller and investigator of oral storytelling, is directed by the legendary Hamish Henderson to Duncan Williamson, one of the great Traveller storytellers of our time, and—how is this for effectiveness?—sitting on his backpack by the roadside reading one of Duncan's books in preparation for his first encounter, is observed by the storyteller himself who, approaching him, addresses him with the words, "What do you think of my book? I am Duncan Williamson" (5). No wonder Duncan becomes the door through which Braid enters the world of Scottish Traveller storytelling and also becomes his foremost mentor, both as a frequent performer of stories and a knowledgeable, thoughtful historian,

liturgist, participating observer and interpreter of the realm and practice of oral narration among the Travellers of Scotland.

Listening to and recording Williamson's—also others' but mainly Williamson's—stories, songs, observations, Braid's special concern is with questions of the Traveller identity, both with regard to individuals and to a culture within, or on the periphery of, the dominant culture of a settled community, and comes to the conclusion that “stories are an integral part of Travellers' interactions with each other” (37). More comprehensively, he offers the suggestion that “in addition to the functions of entertainment, education, identity, and comprehension of experience [. . .] Travellers use stories as a way of responding to the social, political, and historical issues that affect their lives” (46), quite a load to bear and responsibility to live up to, for the poor old story and its tellers, but nevertheless a statement with much validity. It should be said that in his “Introduction” and throughout the book copious relevant transcriptions from the author's field recordings are provided to illustrate a story told, a song sung, or a point made.

A further step toward his avowed goal “to understand the multi-faceted relationship between Traveller stories and Traveller lives” (47) is taken in the first chapter proper of the book (51–103) in which Braid offers “an overview of Traveller Storytelling Traditions” in the shape of four sections: (1) an account of the place of storytelling in the daily lives of Travellers, focusing on context (campfire, visiting, ceilidhs) and the continuity of the storytelling tradition (54–67); (2) an explanatory section on what the Traveller term crack means, i.e., family stories, newsing, ghost stories, and burker tales (67–87); (3) an examination of the fictional stories (folktales) in family and public interaction, the nature of storytelling, and the literal and symbolic thread of continuity and correctness (87–98); (4) a short but important analysis of Traveller storytelling within the wider interaction between Travellers and non-Travellers, in view of the fact that Travellers have always existed in relationship to the surrounding culture. In this context, Traveller storytelling repertoire, claims Braid, is a product of mutual influence and exchange between Travellers and non-Travellers, an argument which he develops in some detail. It is, however, necessary to point out (and Braid knows this) that in spite of the publication of some Traveller stories at the end of the nineteenth century and occasional collecting of some songs (ballads) and stories from Travellers during the next few decades, public awareness of the traditional culture of Travellers was created only when, in the early fifties—in conjunction with intensive collecting activities by field workers, especially of the School of Scottish Studies but also by others like Maurice Fleming and Alan Lomax—Traveller performers began, were, in fact, invited to sing songs and tell stories to non-Traveller audiences, thus beginning a process of eroding but by no

means demolishing the existing prejudices and stereotypes in the minds of the settled population, even though the number of Travellers still on the road was gradually diminishing. This act of narrating between cultures has undoubtedly been an influential contribution to the breaking down of barriers between the two cultures. As Stanley Robertson, who in his youth still travelled, and who, after many years of working as a fish filleter, has recently been appointed a key worker in the Elphinstone Institute of the University of Aberdeen once commented to this reviewer: "It was at that time that Tinkers" (or even more derogatory, "Tinks") became "Travellers."

The theme of the deep inter-connections between Traveller stories and Traveller lives is continued in chapter two (104–43) with its focus on "Storytelling, Identity, and Worldview." In support of his "suggestion that stories afford a potent means for challenging and attuning individual constructs of worldview and identity" (107), the author presents a well-documented close analysis of two performances by Duncan Williamson of a traditional Traveller folktale, "The Traveller and the Hare," in the setting of a ceilidh, much of the surrounding context of which is also transcribed, in its triviality as well as its undoubted significance.

In chapter three (144–201), Braid enlarges on the closely related theme of "Storytelling and Community," particularly in a world that has changed considerably and rapidly for the Travellers, many of whom look back nostalgically on the "good old days" of being on the road when meeting other Travellers was a much looked forward-to social event in their lives. Appropriately and effectively much of this chapter is taken up by verbatim transcriptions of performances like Duncan Williamson's telling of the story of "The Crow and the Cheese" at an impromptu ceilidh and a song composed by his son Jimmy on his father's role as teller of tales and singer of songs (144–65), as well as an archival version of Duncan's impressive telling of a Traveller version of "Cinderella" (174–94). Braid analyzes in considerable detail Duncan's version of this international folktale type, with emphasis on the interaction between fictional stories and Travellers' real lives.

Chapter four (202–49) picks up echoes of the title of the original thesis by concentrating on "The Negotiation of Identity in Storytelling Performance" and by exploring five strategies that Travellers use in performing interactive stories during events when non-Travellers are present, with a special commentary "on the effect of media presentations of Traveller stories" (203). It is in these performances on the cultural borderline between Travellers and non-Travellers that the articulation of worldview and identity through fictions really matters, and the author therefore again uses transcriptions of the stories told under such circumstances to good effect, drawing the reader's attention to such

aspects as reported speech and action, reported evaluation of identity, fictional portrayals of interaction, etc. His theoretical discourses are persuasively underpinned by Duncan Williamson's tellings of an encounter between a Traveller broom maker and a settled crofter and of the story of "The Fox and the Dog," and Bryce Whyre's recounting of an incident during World War II.

The final chapter (250–82), which is devoted to "creativity, worldview and narrative knowing," opens with the observation that "the relationship between Traveller stories and Traveller lives should not be oversimplified (250), a warning not to be ignored in a study in which personal relationships and group cohesion can easily create personal allegiances for the fieldworker which may color their objectivity. The question whether a narrated event actually happened or not is addressed in Duncan Williamson's story of "The Black Laird and the Cattleman" (252–56), a particularly good example of a "Dream Story" in which several contradictions remain unresolved. Duncan's story of "The Boy and the Blacksmith" is another fascinating instance of this category (258–65). Again the audience is left wondering what really happened, and it is perhaps not surprising that Duncan Williamson also has a version of the contemporary legend of "The Vanishing Hitchhiker," set in Aberdeenshire, in his repertoire (275–76).

It is tempting for a reviewer to adopt an author's reasoned and reasonable "Conclusion" (283–92) as his own, and I have not completely resisted that temptation, as there are certain points which coincide with my own findings. I therefore accept that Donald Braid is not only telling a nascent story "about the Travelling People and the interplay between their storytelling traditions and their lives" (283), but also the progressive, autobiographical story of his own discovery of the world of oral storytelling and his meeting of Duncan Williamson and other Traveller storytellers and the subsequent transformation of his interests and ambitions. I also recognize from my own research the strong associations that Traveller storytelling has with a sense of place, but would, however, go further by adding to the human connections to which Braid attaches so much importance ("I learned this story from X") a mappable cartography of storytelling occasions ("I learned this story from X in place Y"), thus remembering or reconstructing a landscape of journeys, meetings and partings, locations for seasonal work (berry picking, potato harvesting, perhaps pearl fishing), and storytelling at the end of the working day. Both these concerns are, in fact, integral, mostly introductory parts of the stories to which they are attached and by no means extraneous to them. It is therefore gratifying to see that Braid, in the welcome transcriptions of his recordings frequently includes statements to this effect, thus in a true sense allowing story and life to be connected in the storyteller's performance.

Without a doubt, the author is in sympathy with the Travellers' point of view or even plight—how could it be otherwise—but this perspective has not clouded his judgments, and the reader will therefore find the book under review a reliable and persuasive introduction to its topic, Scottish Traveller tales.

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