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Paul Barchilon

Sandy Grabowski

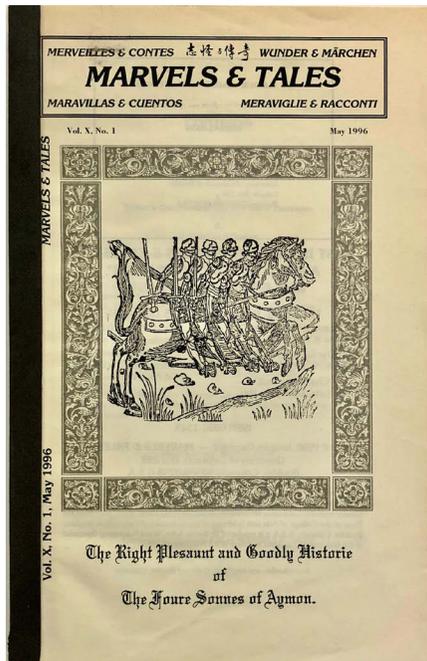
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HOW THE JOURNAL BEGAN

Behind the Scenes with Paul Barchilon and Sandy Grabowski

Paul Barchilon: Jacques Barchilon, my father, was the creator and editor of *Merveilles & Contes*, the journal that went on to become the publication in your hands: *Marvels & Tales*. He passed away in June of 2018, at the ripe old age of 95, after an extraordinary life. This issue of the journal is paying homage to him, and I thought it might be fun to tell the behind-the-scenes story of how the journal came to be.



I worked at what was then Kinko's (now FedEx Office) for fifteen years, starting in 1986. When I first started, there were no computers in the store, and photocopying was the poor man's brother of offset printing—which used steel plates and was incredibly expensive. Our Kinko's in Boulder worked closely with the University of Colorado, and professors and students alike came in daily to make photocopies of everything from handwritten notes and typed papers to books they had checked out from the library.

This world of photocopying was about to be radically altered by the development of the desktop computer and the laser printer, which were introduced to our store a year or so after I started working there. On campus, my father had been struggling to deal with an IBM DOS (Disk Operating System) computer, which had no graphic interface at all and operated solely on typed commands. It printed only text, made up of dots, on paper with holes in the side. My dad hated that computer, and he fought with it daily. He was never particularly good with technology, but he always tried and usually persevered. I remember him constantly calling for service, and, when the technician came, he would invariably tell him it was the DOS. My father often wryly remarked, "They always tell you about the DOS, but they never tell you about the don'ts."

When Macintosh computers came out, he leapt at the chance to use a system that made any kind of sense at all. As the laser printer began to revolutionize the industry, my father started to realize that it might be possible to make a scholarly journal at a fraction of the cost that would have been required with offset printing. Photocopying and binding a document would have been too expensive also, but fortunately he had a son at Kinko's. My dad was a fixture at our store; everybody knew him on a first-name basis and thought he was an adorable absent-minded professor. My boss also really liked my dad and gave me permission to give him a discounted rate on copies—less than half of the normal price. The only catch was that I personally had to do all the work so that no other employees would be working on a project at cost. Dad managed to get a grant from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and a tiny subsidy for publication. It wasn't quite enough to cover costs, but I suspect that Dad made up the shortfall.

Sandy Grabowski (then Sandy Adler): In early 1986, I moved from my job in personnel to the place where I would be fortunate enough to spend the next eighteen years of my life: a little basement office in the McKenna building at the University of Colorado, Boulder, which had once been a women's dormitory. My official title then was Senior Word Processing Operator, which over the years I managed to have renamed to Foreign Language Communications Support Specialist—a title I made up. My job was to do word processing (how quaint that sounds now!) for the language departments.

The position had been created for the sole purpose of publishing just one journal in the Department of East Asian Languages in Chinese on the then-revolutionary Xerox Star System, a massive two-terminal, two-server complex with a laser printer that took up two rooms, one with A/C to keep the printer and servers cool, at the far end of a dead-end hallway with a lovely garden-level view of the surrounding greenery and the pond. The Star System could produce printed text in just about any language, including Asian and Cyrillic alphabets, had a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) screen and a mouse, and was eventually instrumental in the development of the Apple Mac (see *Wikipedia* for much more detail). I worked completely on my own. My supervisor, who was in another building, gave me free reign as long as none of my sixty-some clients complained—and no one ever did! I loved my job!

The first and only other holder of the job had departed for the West Coast after a year, and my assignment, should I decide to accept it, was to offer my services to all of the faculty of the foreign language departments to do whatever they needed done. After a few weeks of studying the manuals and preparing an intro spiel, I trekked around to the language departments to sell my services. Let me add that I had had a long history already then of language learning and word processing, including a German/French major, a number of years of working in Germany at an international conference center and a major dubbing studio, and working at translation and temp jobs in Boulder, where I had learned firsthand about new word-processing technologies as they developed. But since people at that time weren't truly aware of what word processing even was, and since my skills had not previously been available or even known to its now-target audience, the first few months were lonely indeed.

One day Professor Jacques Barchilon from the French Department came down the long hallway to my office, carrying a stack of papers, floppy disks, picture books, and sample journals. He introduced himself, said he had heard about me from the department secretary, and asked if I would be interested in his project of publishing an international fairy-tale journal in as many languages as people would submit articles in, with lots of graphics. "Oh, my, YES!" was my answer. "I have plenty of time!"

That was the beginning. Jacques would receive submissions from around the world, in different languages, sometimes typed, sometimes handwritten. Over the years, as computing developed, we received the articles on disk in the authors' languages. But in those days I had to retype them all—at least the ones in languages I know—and then put them into the standard *Merveilles* format, place the graphics strategically, and print them. (Since the format was two pages to an 11 × 8.5-inch piece of paper, the lines were quite short. Hyphenating words in the more exotic languages to make the lines even out posed a special

challenge!) We would scour every conceivable source for illustrations and decorative borders. We created elaborate layouts and then physically cut out and taped or glued all the illustrations and borders on each page. I even had a special pair of scissors with a 6-inch blade so we could make sure the graphics were evenly cut. Jacques, always the gentleman, would often bring me snacks if I stayed late to finish.

Then came the payoff. Twice each year, after months of planning and pasting and printing and proofing and incorporating authors' comments, Jacques would take the box with the final copy and rush off to Kinko's. The reward was when we could admire the first final copy of each issue. *Merveilles* was my favorite task in that job at CU, and I was sad when it came to an end (after ten years!). Fortunately, though, it has been carried on so capably to this day in its current form. I'm happy to have been a part of it.

Paul Barchilon: The first issue, in May of 1987, had 88 pages. Dad's colleague Francesca Sautman, at Hunter College/CUNY in New York City, was on board as coeditor. "Here is No. 1 of more than just another little magazine, but the beginning of a long-lived review," my dad wrote in the first issue. "This issue presents scholarship from France, the United States and Sweden. Our contributions range from the realm of Herodotus in Greek antiquity down to modern times via articles on a seventeenth-century French fairy tale, the Grimms' fairy tales and their reception, and reviews of bibliographical entries of very recent works on the fairy tales. There are a number of other contributions in reserve to fill part of the winter issue, **but we need more submissions.**" (Dad was always fond of bold text and all caps; he wanted to get people's attention!) "We publish in French, English, Spanish, Italian, and German. The magazine is interdisciplinary and cosmopolitan," he added for good measure. That first issue had six illustrations, and the cover, on goldenrod cardstock, bore an illustration by John Tenniel from *Alice and Wonderland*. The only durable binding available at the time was a horrid strip of black plastic called Velo binding. It bound a document together firmly but made it impossible to open it flat. We compensated by using wide margins so you could at least read all of the text.

As the journal grew, Dad became excited about the possibility of using some of the new technologies that were coming out. He found a strong ally in Sandy, a confessed geek. Finally, after they had worked on an issue for months, Dad would bring it to me and I would hand-place each page to create a photocopy master. We were doing it as a half-size booklet, which meant printing pages two-up and formatting everything so that the document could be cut in half and bound. If the journal had 128 pages, for example, the first double-sided sheet would have page 128 on the left and page 1 on the right. Its back side would have page 2 on the left and page 127 on the right. So all the preliminary steps to creating the document were quite involved, right on the edge

of what could be done with the combination of the new technologies available and good old-fashioned hand labor.

By the second issue, in December of '87, the journal was off to a good start. Dad scored a coup, getting British author Angela Carter to contribute an original version of *Cinderella*. We printed the cover on lunar blue cardstock, with an illustration by John D. Batten. Future issues cycled through all the brilliantly colored cardstocks we carried at Kinko's. An editorial committee was formed, bringing Bengt Holbek (University of Copenhagen), Ester Zago (University of Colorado), and Jack Zipes (University of Florida) on board to help Dad and Francesca. In his Editor's Communications, Dad commanded, "**There are no contributions from folklorists.** We need to expand and internationalize this journal. . . . We also need articles in **Spanish, Italian, and German** from a worldwide body of contributors." Dad also acknowledged that "the readership has grown, but not enough to support a financially independent magazine. . . . Could each reader have *one* friend or his/her university library subscribe?" He also announced the first of what would become many special issues with a call for "international and diachronic" contributions to the next issue, to be titled "Sleeping Beauty through Time and Space."

I can't remember what year it was that we finally got a better binding system, a hot-melt glue binding that allowed us to make an actual fold around the cover and print on the spine. Dad was ecstatic to finally have a more professional-looking binding, one that could be read on the shelf like a paperback book! The only downside was that the covers had to be printed on oversize cardstock in order to work, and the only color we had in the larger size was ivory—which was why all later issues were that color. The subscription base was growing, too, and we were beginning to have larger print runs. It was starting to be a lot of work for me, so Dad would come in and do the binding himself—my boss gave him permission to come behind the counter and work on the bindings at night. Dad maintained the subscriber list, and he put every issue in its envelope and mailed it, too. Subscriptions were \$15 apiece in the beginning for two issues a year, eventually going up to \$20 as the journal grew larger and larger.

The special issues became more and more elaborate. By 1991, the special issue on Charles Perrault (always Dad's favorite) had almost 400 pages and a staggering number of illustrations. We also reproduced several chapbooks in near-facsimile quality in that issue. Even the regular issues regularly featured lovely borders and patterns, which were used liberally throughout. For Dad's swan song—volume 10, no. 2, December 1996—we even added a few color pages that had to be collated in by hand. Dad paid the extra price for those color copies himself; it was too much for the budget. After ten years, he passed

the journal on to Donald Haase, who continued the fine tradition until 2014, when Cristina Bacchilega and Anne Duggan became coeditors.

My dad was incredibly proud of what the journal grew into, and he was always amazed that it had become so successful and was still going after all these years. He was in and out of the hospital a lot in his final year, but he was always excited to receive the latest copy of *Marvels & Tales* when it arrived in the mail. “Well, Paul, our little journal has really grown up now!” he would say. Much of my dad’s life was taken up in scholarship, and he found a freedom in the written word—both in reading it and in writing it. I think he always felt that he couldn’t express himself properly in person; he was too prone to acting first and thinking later, often regretting things he had said. At the typewriter, he always had time to reflect on what he was saying. In many ways, he came most alive when immersed in his work. His scholar’s curiosity and his alert intellect remained with him right up to the end. He spent his final days poring over fine-art books at my sister’s house, delighting in learning more about art-ist’s he was familiar with, and discovering ones he didn’t know. He was a man who never stopped learning. He was always open to an adventure and was always ready to dive into a fresh one in the pages of the nearest book.