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Reviews

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Reviews


One cannot look back and imagine folktale and fairy-tale research of the last forty years without Jack Zipes. Researchers have benefited from his analyses of the function of the folktale and fairy tale. We have watched his guidance and development of the sociohistoricist method and wondered at his voluminous translations of German, French, and Italian tales. Zipes stands like a giant astride the field. Anyone familiar with the extensive contributions Zipes has made to folktale and fairy-tale scholarship might wonder that he could add any more. Yet, Catarina the Wise and Other Wondrous Sicilian Folk & Fairy Tales further enriches Zipes’s legacy.

With its lively tales and illustrations, Catarina the Wise brings to popular notice the work of Guiseppe Pitrè (1871–1944), who collected “an astounding mass of material” (2). Pitrè was an esteemed collector in his own time, but he has been largely overshadowed by the Brothers Grimm in our time. From over four hundred of Pitrè’s collected tales, Zipes selected and translated the fifty included in Catarina the Wise, thus introducing a new, important collector into the popular realm.

What creates the important tales that reverberate across popular media? The quality of the tale, its hero or heroine, its storyline, or its message can be factors, but another factor is what kind of tales are popularized. Pitrè’s collection and Zipes’s translation highlight the strength and wit of Pitrè’s storytellers, who were mostly women. From his book Don’t Bet on the Prince (1986) to his seminal chapter on “Rumpelstiltskin” in Fairy Tale as Myth/Myth as Fairy Tale (1994), Zipes has already shown special consideration for women’s roles in the fairy-tale realm. With Catarina the Wise, Zipes again contributes to the heroines in the folktale and fairy-tale canon.

For example, “The Old Hag’s Garden” begins as a fairly typical Rapunzel tale but develops a wonderful heroine. This young girl shows the initiative and
strength of a Gretel as she pushes the witch into the oven, then graciously invites her mother to live with her in the hag’s home. “The Old Hag’s Garden” is a pleasant departure from the popularized “Rapunzel” that ends with the outcast and pregnant Rapunzel searching for her prince or popular versions of “Hansel and Gretel” where Gretel’s initiative is often upstaged by her male cohort. “The Old Hag’s Garden” is a tale of potent women. Even the pregnant woman’s cravings for food from the witch’s garden take on a different flavor when told by a woman. Instead of the typical Eve who wheedles her husband into a transgression, the expectant mother in this story goes into the forbidden garden herself, accompanied by a woman friend. Told by a witty storyteller, Elizabetta (Sabedda) Sanfratello; collected by Pitrè, who obviously enjoyed this woman’s tales; and selected by Zipes, who has many times brought women’s contributions to the fore, “The Old Hag’s Garden” is a wonderfully empowering version of this tale type for women.

Other tales also include empowered female protagonists. The tale of “The Magical Little Date Tree” features a Cinderella who refuses to go to the ball with her sisters and father. Instead, she chooses to go to the ball on her own. “The Talking Belly” ends with the prince saying to his beloved queen and ex-farmer’s daughter, “Take this kingdom and rule with your talents in your own way” (102). With Catarina the Wise, the storytellers, collectors, and editor/translator Zipes have given our modern reading public some lovely, traditional, feminist tales.

As a woman in the field who started my career rescuing heroines, I greatly appreciate Catarina the Wise as yet another gift from Zipes, who has filled this book with tales by female storytellers. In fact, thirty-one of the fifty tales are told by women. The number and quality of heroines reflect the number and quality of these female storytellers. Indeed, regarding the tale, “The Pot of Basil,” Zipes comments, “Such heroines seem to have been a favorite with Agatuzza Messia, Pitrè’s major informant” (269).

True to form, Zipes has recognized the importance of Pitrè’s enlightened collection style. Pitrè gave credit to his storytellers by giving us their names and other details. Zipes passes this key information along: “eighteen-years-old, a villager” (75), “the blind Giovanni” (127). Pitrè was also dedicated to the “accurate renditions of the spoken word” (5). When published, Pitrè’s tales were often criticized by the elite as vulgar and trivial because the tales were published in Sicilian dialect. Zipes translates in a way that “remains faithful to the different styles of the storytellers and to recapture some of the melodic quality of the tales” (xi). This may seem a little thing, but this kind of respect for the storyteller is a treasure. Zipes, the translator, has respected Pitrè, the collector, who respected the storytellers and the oral telling so much as to leave in little personal asides: “Months passed—a tale doesn’t keep time” (103). This respect shows an understanding of the web of relationships that comprises the folktale and fairy tale.
The notes in *Catarina the Wise* include ATU Tale Types, some variants, a list of other variants, as well as comments from Zipes’s encyclopedic knowledge of folktales and fairy tales. In one note, he mentions that tale #47 “can be traced back to the Panchatantra (c. 100 BC)” (279). In other notes, he explains local customs and wordplays. As with any book by Zipes, the notes alone make a fascinating reading.

*Catarina the Wise and Other Wondrous Sicilian Folk & Fairy Tales* embodies the thoughtful and caring contributions Zipes has made and continues to make to the world of folktales and fairy tales. Respecting the intertwining of teller, collector, translator, and editor, Zipes has done a masterful job of moving these tales from the oral tradition of one country and language to the written tradition of another country and language. In so many ways, *Catarina the Wise* is a remarkable book gracefully built upon years of outstanding scholarship. It will hopefully be enjoyed and appreciated for years by scholars and feminists, as well as by readers who simply love folktales and fairy tales.

*Kathleen Ragan*


The Classic Fairy Tales, edited by Maria Tatar, has been a staple in the fairy-tale classroom for nearly two decades. The first edition, published in 1999, has been used at the graduate and undergraduate levels as an introductory text to the field, and, despite the publication of several excellent fairy-tale handbooks in recent years, Tatar’s text has remained a popular pedagogical text. The long-awaited second edition of *The Classic Fairy Tales* does not disappoint. Tatar has updated and expanded the text while keeping much of the structure and content that made the first edition so useful.

The book consists of an introduction, primary fairy-tale texts accompanied by brief introductions, a variety of secondary critical texts, and a selected bibliography. The introduction is both extremely readable and informative. Tatar weaves quotations from the likes of C. S. Lewis, Neil Gaiman, Vladimir Nabokov, Claude Lévi Strauss, and Angela Carter into her prose, creating a “kaleidoscopic” view of the fairy tale that encompasses “sparkling beauty, austere form, and visual power” (xii). Transformation and adaptation provide a through-line as Tatar emphasizes again and again the multiplicity and variation among tales. Writing against canon formation or the pursuit of a “pure” tale, Tatar instead notes that

the reverence brought by some readers to fairy tales mystifies these stories, making them appear to be a source of transcendent spiritual truth and authority. That kind of mystification fosters a hands-off
attitude and conceals the fact that fairy tales are constantly shape-shifting, endlessly adaptable as they turn into different versions of themselves depending on the cultural surround. (xvi)

Deftly explaining and entwining oral, literary, and mass media means of tale creation, Tatar delights in the “marvelous messiness of fairy-tale networks,” acknowledging the shortcomings of traditional classification methodology when addressing adaptations and exploring questions of cataloging, history, and authenticity that have no simple answers (xxiii).

“The Texts of The Classic Fairy Tales” is, at 347 pages, the longest portion of the book and a considerable expansion on the previous edition. Delightfully, Tatar prefaces these primary texts with Neil Gaiman’s poem “Instructions” (2001), a piece that features motifs from a wide array of stories and sets the stage for the curated collection that follows. The tales, which vary in form and style, and are drawn from oral and literary sources. Though the chosen texts are primarily Western European, there are also tales from China, Egypt, Japan, Russia, and other less commonly sourced countries. The structure is very similar to that of the first edition of The Classic Fairy Tales—the stories are grouped into sections, each prefaced by a brief introduction. Most sections are titled under famous fairy-tale names; there are sections called “Little Red Riding Hood,” “Beauty and the Beast,” “Snow White,” “Sleeping Beauty,” “Cinderella,” and “Bluebeard.” The “Sleeping Beauty” section is a new and welcome addition to this volume, whereas the others feature revised introductions and expanded story selections. The section formerly labeled “Hansel and Gretel” has been retitled as “Tricksters.” This choice is a bit jarring, since it is the only section named for a motif or character type, but it does allow for a wider range of stories under its heading. The two remaining sections are named for authors: Hans Christian Andersen and Oscar Wilde. The selection of Wilde stories remains unchanged from the first edition, but the Andersen section now includes two additional tales: “The Emperor's New Clothes” and “The Nightingale.” The vast majority of the primary texts are pre-twentieth-century, but a handful of twentieth- and twenty-first-century texts are scattered through the sections, including pieces by Angela Carter, Anne Sexton, and Gabriel Garcia Márquez.

The criticism portion of the book is thoughtfully chosen, containing accessible pieces that demonstrate the breadth of the field of fairy-tale studies. Many of the pieces from the last edition remain, including work by Jack Zipes, Donald Haase, and Tatar herself. Important new pieces from Cristina Bacchilega and Jessica Tiffin have taken the place of influential but dated scholarship about childhood and psychology. The range of approaches in this section showcase the interdisciplinary strength of fairy-tale scholarship, and the discussion of gender in fairy tales is particularly well represented. In a
future edition of this text, I hope to see pieces that also address queerness and
disability in the fairy tale, as the field is actively moving in these directions.

I highly recommend this excellent text, for fairy-tale scholars and for lay
readers. It would be an ideal text for an introductory fairy-tale course or even
an introduction to folklore course that has a strong narrative focus. It could
also serve as a useful supplement in a composition course—its short texts and
lucid introductions are prime short reading assignments, and the range of crit-
ical approaches would be perfect, preselected materials for discussions of sec-
ondary sources. Finally, I would absolutely recommend The Classic Fairy Tales
to lay readers who are enthusiastic about folklore and fairy tales and want a
place to begin learning more.

Sara Cleto
The Ohio State University

Variations françaises sur les Mille et Une Nuits: quelles versions pour quels
effets? [French Variations on the Thousand and One Nights: Which Versions for
Which Effects?] Special issue of Francofonia no. 69. Edited by Aboubakr Chraibi

As the editors Aboubakr Chraibi and Ilaria Vitali explain in their introduc-
tory essay, this special issue of Francofonia commemorates the tricentenary of
Antoine Galland’s death in 1715. Emerging from a conference at the University
of Bologna (September 2014), co-organized by the Institut National des
Langues et Civilisations Orientales (Inalco), the essays focus on the monumen-
tal impact of The Nights within the French literary and cultural fields from the
eighteenth century to the present. This impact is due to Galland’s translation
and publication of a Syrian manuscript of The Nights (1704–17), which became
eminently popular throughout Europe, giving way to innumerable adaptations
and imitations. The Nights’ popularity was then renewed in fin-de-siècle France
with Joseph-Charles Mardrus’s translation/adaptation (1898–1904). Moving
from The Nights’ influence on various literary trends to its impact on dance and
visual arts, the volume presents the reader with a wide scope through which to
appreciate the ways The Nights indeed form an integral part of French culture.

The first set of essays examines the immediate repercussions of the intro-
duction of The Nights into the French literary field. Abdellattah Kilito connects
The Nights to Denis Diderot’s Jacques le Fataliste (Jacques the Fatalist, 1796), in
particular with respect to the ways in which both texts involve “fourvoie-
ments,” or detours, distractions, and taking the wrong path, within the context
of a “road novel” (16). Jean-Paul Sermain focuses on how Galland adapted The
Nights to the norms of eighteenth-century sociability and civility through the
use of a vocabulary embedded in Parisian culture of the period. Both Richard
van Leeuwen and Raymonde Robert explore the relation between The Nights

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and the fantastic, a subject that merits further exploration. Through the examination of works by Jean-Paul Bignon and Jacques Cazotte, Van Leeuwen foregrounds the ways in which The Nights served as a site to “experiment with religious and philosophical ideas” through the questioning and relativizing Western religious practices (53). Like Van Leeuwen, Robert foregrounds the demonological tradition implicit in works inspired by The Nights and carries out a comparative analysis of William Beckford’s Vathek (1786) and Cazotte’s Diable amoureux (The Devil in Love, 1772) and Maugraby (Magician, 1789). The last essay treating the period of the Enlightenment by Svetlana Panyuta demonstrates the ways in which the Abbé Voisenon blends French traditions of the fairy marvelous with the oriental tradition.

With respect to the nineteenth century, Dominique Jullien explores the influence of The Nights on Honoré de Balzac’s creation of the character Vautrin in his Comédie Humaine (Human Comedy). The issue then jumps to the end of the century with a study of the fascinating publication history of Joseph-Charles Mardrus’s version of The Nights and its impact on the cultural field. Evanghélia Stead embeds Mardrus’s translation/adaptation within the fin-de-siècle literary avant-garde through a study of the dedications to André Gide, Paul Valéry, and Stéphane Mallarmé, among others. For her part, Ilaria Vitali makes a compelling argument that Mardrus’s Nights may have shaped Serge Diaghilev and Michel Fokine’s Ballets Russes. Both the text and the Ballets Russes emphasize the “erotic character” (134) of The Nights and include “orientalist amplifications” (137). The century wraps up with Marie Mossé’s analysis of Pierre Loti’s deployment of The Nights in his depictions of Turkey, particularly the figure of the melancholic sultan who inspires fear.

The next series of essays looks at twentieth- and twenty-first century French manifestations of The Nights, beginning with Anna Zoppellari’s examination of Henri de Régnier’s Le Veuvage de Schéhérazade (The Widowhood of Scheherazade, 1926), in which the heroine moves from being the teller to the listener of tales. Cyrille François analyzes three rewritings of The Nights in the works of Jules Supervel, each of which eliminates the post-Mardrus exoticism of the tales to express more abstract notions about the reenchantment of the world and the power of imagination. In their essay, Isabelle Bernard and Wael Rabadi again provide an example of an artist who is less interested in the exoticism of The Nights and more interested in how the work can help us explore the idea of storytelling and “life lessons” in their study of Bertrand Raynaud’s Mille et une nuits théâtre (Thousand and One Nights, 2007) (184). Yves Ouallet explores the narrative techniques inspired by The Nights deployed by Pascal Quignard in his Albucius (1990) and the ways in which storytelling “replaces predatory desire with narrative desire, and sexual jouissance with the pleasure of listening” (210).
The final essays of the special issue look at the impact of *The Nights* on visual culture. Isabelle Bernard examines Florence Miailhe’s animated short *Schéhérazade* (1995), while Rachid Medjeli explores how the “myth” of *The Nights* “acts as a symptom of a phantasm of an imaginary Arab Orient” in Pierre Gaspard-Huit’s *Shéhérazade* (1962) and Philippe de Broca’s *1001 Nuits* (1001 Nights, 1990) (232). Georges Bertrand’s study provides the reader with an overview of paintings that take subject matter from *The Nights*, from Paul-Emile Destouches’s *Shéhérazade* (1824) to the work of Picasso and Marc Chagall. Ulrich Marzolph’s essay on the comic *Iznogoud*, created by René Goscinny (of *Astérix and Obelix* fame) and Jean Tabary in 1962, brings the impact of *The Nights* squarely into the domain of French popular culture, which is a nice way to close the special issue.

This special issue is an important contribution to the increased scholarly interest in the history and reception of *The Arabian Nights* that has emerged over the past ten years. While Marzolph’s edited volumes *The Arabian Nights Reader* (2006) and *The Arabian Nights in Transnational Perspective* (2007) take a global look at the impact of *The Nights* on world culture, this special issue of *Francofonia* zooms in on its impact in France, the major site of diffusion of *The Nights* within Europe due to the seminal translations of Galland and Mardrus. The essays cover a broad terrain—three centuries of French literature, art, and cinema—and lead the reader to consider the significant ways in which this tale tradition truly reshaped the French cultural landscape, representing an important instance of cultural métissage (miscegenation).

Anne E. Duggan
Wayne State University


Is it possible to write critically about fairy tales by writing a fairy tale? Until reading Carol Mavor’s stunning magical analysis of how fairy tales transform themselves and influence all aspects of art, literature, and life, I would have said no. Yet, Mavor has proven me wrong, for she has created an extraordinary, poetical, and analytical fairy tale that embraces all types of fairy tales and demonstrates how we comprehend and metonymically live our lives through these stories. Her method is highly original: each chapter—what I would call a sociohistorical–personal illumination instead of chapter—begins with an italicized statement of purpose that quickly transforms itself into a different font or script and includes fascinating photographs providing evidence for Mavor’s interpretations of how fairy tales spawn the making of the photos and literature that she discusses. Needless to say, the photos are as tantalizing as Mavor’s insightful comments.
Mavor explains that “an ‘aurelia is the pupa of an insect, which can reflect a golden color, as the chrysalises of some butterflies do. Aurelia is a feminine name, derived from the Latin aureus meaning golden. Pupa means doll in Latin, hence the French poupée. Play and imagination magically animate the doll, just as biological life ‘magically’ animates (metamorphoses) the pupa into a butterfly” (15–16). Mavor calls herself an Aurelian because she collects and studies the “pupa” of fairy tales and how they emanate, flower, and fly to the strangest and most exotic places of art and literature. She states that her book “is told with a butterfly tongue that celebrates, warns, swallows, chews and rebels. Aurelia awakens the fairy-tale realm in a wide range of authors, artists, books and artists which fall down its hole” (33).

There are eleven chapters that expose readers through text and photographs to the Aurelian essence of works by the Brothers Grimm, Lewis Carroll, Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Hans Christian Andersen, Matisse, Bernard Faucon, Roland Barthes, Ralph Eugene Meatyard, Miwa Yanagi, and Langston Hughes. The Aurelian essence is the secret life of fairy tales. The golden key to her method can be summarized in a quotation from Roland Barthes: “That the world of things can open itself to reveal a secret life—indeed to reveal a set of actions and hence a narrativity and history outside the given field of perception—is a constant daydream” (37).

Mavor is a materialist visionary who mines the daydream aspects of fairy tales in tales, novels, paintings, photographs, and history. Ernst Bloch, the great German philosopher of the principle of hope, argues (against Sigmund Freud) that daydreams are more significant than dreams that tend to be unconscious, traumatic, and disturbing, and often turn into nightmares. On the other hand, daydreams tend to be conscious, bright, and optimistic, more like wish dreams propelling us further with hope. Though Mavor explores sadism, cruelty, and darkness in fairy tales and related works, she does this with the hopeful intention that the gold of art and literature will shine and lead us to see the world anew. This is why she employs well over a hundred photographs that are literally breathtaking. Many seem as though they have nothing to do with fairy tales, and, yet, Mavor draws out their meaning in relationship to the clandestine implications of fairy tales.

One good example of how she works is her chapter 10, “What is Black and White and Red All Over? Answer: The Photographs of Ralph Eugene Meatyard” (251). In keeping with the format of her fairy-tale book, she begins with an italicized preface:

As dramatic replays of the Civil Rights Movement (including the murder of Emmett Till), the butchery of the Vietnam War and the hope that was shot down with the brutal killings of the Kennedys and
Martin Luther King, the black-and-white photographs of Ralph Eugene Meatyard are not only mouthfuls of the Southern Gothic literary tradition, but the blood of the carnage in America during the time in which they were made. They are black-and-white pictures of the politics of the period, charged with the red voices of ‘Snow White,’ ‘Rumpelstiltskin,’ ‘The Juniper Tree,’ ‘Hansel and Gretel’ and ‘Little Red Riding Hood.’ Perhaps Derek Jarman said it best: ‘Red is a moment in time.’ (251)

All the fairy tales she mentions, including Andersen’s “The Red Shoes,” are blended into the discussion of Meatyard’s photos and a history of the time in which he took them. They are then followed by similar somewhat disturbing fairy-tale photos by the Japanese photographer Miwa Yanagi that recall the devastation of Hiroshima and the horror of Red Riding Hood inside the body of the wolf. Red must be read anew and all over in this chapter that connects with all the luminous colors in the other chapters of the book.

In short, Mavor’s chapters form an artistic fairy-tale composition that dissects the inner meanings of fairy tales through photos and personal commentary. Her book is most unique, for it prompts readers to imagine the realities of the world through the gold of “once upon a time.”

Jack Zipes
University of Minnesota


The point of Deconstructing Dahl, the author states, is to extend the coverage of current scholarship on Dahl by “mov[ing] away from the author and the reader so as to focus on the critical context, the texts and paratexts that make up the packaging of ‘Dahl’” (4). In pursuit of her goal, Laura Viñas Valle’s monograph is divided into three main chapters. Chapter 1 is intended to “offer the first thorough overview of the criticism and the language employed to discuss Dahl since the 70s, the difficulties that using such language entails and how it still permeates current criticism,” and thus take the essays in the most recent book on Dahl, Roald Dahl (2012), edited by Catherine Butler and Anne Alston, a step further (3). Chapter 2, Valle says, extends the work done by Alan Warren (Roald Dahl, from the Gremlins to the Chocolate Factory, 1988) and Mark West (Roald Dahl, 1992) on the entire canon of Dahl’s works, both for children and for adults, by “drawing comparisons and contrasts and exploring the common traits and patterns that bring his whole work together,” looking in particular at “how Dahl understands ‘children’ and ‘childhood’ and, therefore, how he constructs his children’s books as ‘children's literature’ in contrast to
his `adult stories" (3). In chapter 3, using Gerard Genette's theories regarding paratexts and drawing from such things as letters and editorial correspondences, as well as extraliterary materials such as illustrations and book covers, promotional materials, and reviewer comments, Valle examines such aspects of the Dahl canon as marketing strategies, editing decisions about audiences, and "how his publishing house and allies contribute to mediate and sustain the Dahl public persona" (4). The very brief introduction and epilogue merely reiterate the purposes of the book, and an extensive works cited listing of primary and secondary sources, plus an index, round out the monograph.

Valle is correct in her observation that there is surprisingly little scholarship on such a significant and popular children's author, so any new academic study of Dahl is a welcome addition to Dahl scholarship. Her decision to examine his total body of work through the dual lens of various conceptions of "childhood" and of marketing is a different and potentially useful approach. Yet, there are serious limitations to this study. Two are the length and organization of the book. As the foregoing summary indicates, there are only three main chapters (which are quite broad in scope), plus the very brief introduction and epilogue; the entire book, from front matter to the end of the index and including the fifteen pages of works cited listings, is less than 200 pages, and that is not enough to do more than begin to "deconstruct" Dahl from the various perspectives that Valle identifies as within her purview. Furthermore, chapter 1, the longest chapter of the three, is little more than a review of the scholarly literature, a common strategy with which to begin a dissertation on a particular subject, but not so common for an academic study that is a step past that. (De-constructing Dahl is a revised version of Valle's 2004 doctoral dissertation, according to her acknowledgments.) Her stated purpose in providing such a review is to examine the underlying predetermined biases and approaches of the critics through their language. Yet, her conclusion, that most of the published criticism about Dahl is steeped in traditional ways of thinking about children's literature, is not particularly surprising, given that most of it was produced in the last three decades of the twentieth century. Other than providing a nicely organized overview of Dahl criticism, what value there is to this chapter lies more in providing a demonstration of how children's literature academics of the past few decades define "child" and "childhood," an idea that naturally leads into the focus of chapter 2, how Dahl himself defined these concepts.

In examining chapter 2, Valle looks at four repeating strategies or motifs in both Dahl's adult and children's works: narrative voice, characterizations, bodily functions, and conflicts of power. Despite the intriguing approach of comparing commonalities in his works for children and his works for adults, this chapter contains perhaps the biggest drawback to the study: Valle's treatment of quotes in support of her arguments. Unable to get permission from
the Roald Dahl Literary Estate to reproduce quotes from his books, Valle compensates by representing quoted lines with lines of Xs as stand-ins for the words, resulting in a clunky and ultimately rather impractical discussion, since nearly every page in this chapter has at least one extended “quote” on it, and most of them more than one. Why either Valle or her editors thought this was a workable solution, rather than skirting the problem through paraphrasing, is inexplicable, but the result is distracting to look at and frustrating to try to read through.

Chapter 3 is perhaps the most interesting, given that Valle examines material outside of the texts themselves in order to assess how the marketing and publishing of Dahl’s books for children and for adults influenced—or conversely, were shaped by—the cultural constructions of the ideas of child, childhood, and children’s literature in the last half of the twentieth century. Such questions are guiding questions in the academic field of children’s literature today, and therefore this chapter is both timely and thought-provoking. Unfortunately, it is also the shortest one of the three (only thirty-six pages), and tantalizingly ends with the impression that Valle’s work in this area had just begun.

_De-constructing Dahl_ is a work more of interest to children’s literature academics and Roald Dahl fans than to fairy-tale scholars, and, even to that group, it is of somewhat limited usefulness—there is no discussion of his use of the fairy-tale genre or of folkloric elements, and only brief mentions in passing of a few of the poems in _Revolting Rhymes_ (1982). However, Valle does provide quite a few interesting tidbits to think about regarding Dahl as a writer for children, regarding publishing for children, and regarding underlying assumptions in the children’s literature academy in general. In addition, as she herself observes, there is precious little scholarship on this, a major children’s literary figure. For that reason alone, _De-constructing Dahl_ is a welcome addition to the field.

Martha Hixon
Middle Tennessee State University


_Echoes of Valhalla: The Afterlife of the Eddas and Sagas_ by Jón Karl Helgason provides an overview of creative works from the last century and a half that rewrite the Norse eddas and sagas, the history and mythology, of medieval Iceland and its neighbors. Helgason is interested in the universal appeal that these works have had for both contemporary society and for rural Icelandic residents centuries ago. He takes care to avoid judging the adaptations as mere reproductions of the older sagas, but rather as creations in their own right, with their own concerns and conditions of material creation. The book
provides a broad summary of the many modern manifestations of Norse myth and history across several media. Folklore scholars will be interested in the way Helgason shows the progression of ancient tales across time. This book contributes to the reception studies subfield of medieval studies. Previous monographs have focused narrowly on the afterlife of the sagas in Scandinavia, Germany, and Britain, as well as on translations into non-Icelandic languages. However, as Helgason says, “[R]elatively few of these earlier studies are cross-culturally comparative and, apart from the attention given to the reception of the eddas and sagas in early twentieth-century Germany, modern adaptations have been somewhat under-represented” (11). That is just the gap Echoes fills; this book joins two others published in the last decade focusing on modern adaptations. This study moves beyond northern Europe into North America and Southeast Asia; specifically, Helgason studies works from Scandinavia, Great Britain, and the United States, but also from Germany, Italy, and Japan.

The contextual framework is set up in the prologue and chapter 2, with the other chapters showing examples of the interplay between source and reformulation. In the prologue, Helgason frames these adaptations as postmodern texts. Following Fredric Jameson and Linda Hutcheon, Helgason is aware that the “diverse intentions and constraints” shape the adaptations as much or more than any historical truth about the original sagas (11). Using a more field-specific frame, Helgason uses an allegory of Odin and “the mead of poetry” to show the “perpetual creative process” of myth retelling (12). The process of storytelling follows the same beats as the allegory: “amalgamation, metamorphosis, brewing, devouring, digesting and spewing” (13). The tale of Odin from the Snorra Edda (Prose Edda), Helgason says, “is an inventive ‘digestion’ of various earlier pre-texts, both written and oral, in verse and prose,” just like the creative works discussed throughout the book (15). More academic in tone than the prologue, chapter 2 gives a history of Snorri Sturluson, notable storyteller in late thirteenth-century Iceland, to illustrate the medieval and contemporary understandings of the pre-text and adaptation. In crediting Snorri primarily for creation, readers might “downplay” the work of “generations of witnesses, story-tellers, historians, writers, editors and scribes” (63). Although Snorri has without doubt “reshaped and supplemented chapters of the work with certain aesthetic and ideological principles” as a chronicler of oral tales, scholars of the sagas must remember that many voices contributed to the Heimskringla and Snorra Edda (63). Snorri’s compositions are a medieval example of the same sorts of adaptations Helgason finds in the last century and a half.

All but the last chapter focus on how the sagas radiated out from Iceland. In each, Helgason pairs generous excerpts of the sagas against summaries of
the adaptations, showing how the similarities and differences create new meaning. Chapter 1 is an example of Snorri’s digestion of pre-texts (15). The chapter is overwhelmingly focused on Marvel comics, Thor in particular, but also mentions Japanese manga. Chapter 3 studies three dramas (Henrik Ibsen’s *Hærmændene paa Helgeland* [The Vikings at Helgeland, 1858], Gordon Bottomley’s *The Riding to Lithend* [1909], and Thit Jensen’s *Nial den Vise: Udstyrskuespil fra Islands storhedstid: friet efter Sagaen* [Njal the Wise: Equestrian Drama from Iceland’s Greatness: Free of History, 1934]) and compares their productions to *Njal’s Saga*. Chapter 4 focuses on postmodern novels and travel narratives, which first were created by British explorers to familiarize readers back home with the sites of the stories as a bit of local color writing; Helgason focuses mostly on the originator of this trend, Frederick Metcalfe. Chapter 5 explores pioneering musical composers who tell stories of the Vikings in their songs, especially Johann Ernst Hartmann, Richard Wagner, and Led Zeppelin. Chapter 6 traces the afterlife of four of Ottilie A. Liljencrantz’s novels into two movie adaptations: *The Viking* (1928) and *The Vikings* (1958). The epilogue narrows the book’s focus from internationally produced works back to the afterlife of the sagas in Iceland. The epilogue presents outside interrogation into meaning with two surveys conducted in Iceland in the 1920s and in 1994, as well as the author’s personal experiences with the sagas over his life. In addition to these chapters, the book includes a timeline, references, select bibliography, acknowledgments, photo acknowledgments, and an index.

This book will appeal to scholars of orality and tale transmission. Helgason points out that, because the sagas originated in an oral society, an “original” version of each saga story is difficult to pinpoint. The tradition under study in this book, then, is very much that of folklore revision, or, as Helgason calls it, “an accumulation of texts, images, sounds and ideas that reverberate through the fabric of various cultures at various times” (12).

*Eddas* is a great reference for the beginning scholar of Norse sagas; due to its breadth, the book necessarily does not require field-specific language. The medieval or premedieval scholar will likely find the most to learn in the connections to more contemporary content. Helgason provides literature reviews of how scholars have interpreted the sagas, and he identifies which of those interpretations still fit the updated narratives. However, readers looking for extended analyses of the significance of these different adaptations will be disappointed. The corpus of Norse folklore has held meaning and relevance for too many audiences to make an exhaustive analysis possible, but, with this edition, Helgason has succeeded in establishing transnational connections for any scholar or casual reader to build upon.

Susan Wood  
*University of Mississippi*
**The Fairytale and Plot Structure.** By Terence Patrick Murphy, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 204 pp.

An outside observer of the last century of folkloristics might venture a guess that our favorite pastime is figuring out the best way to organize tales. Many of our seminal texts have been arguments in favor of one method over another. The ATU index that emerged from the Finnish school is now ubiquitous; narratives are categorized into tale types based on their motifs. There is no shortage of criticism of this system, one of the more notable being Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928). Whereas the ATU index categorizes tales by motif, Propp's system focuses instead on the *function*: the significant actions of characters in the tale. In his analysis of 100 Russian fairy tales, Propp identified 31 different functions. He argues that, although all 31 do not appear in every narrative, the functions always appear in the same order. Propp's system itself was not immune to criticism—the loudest from Claude Lévi-Strauss—but it has been continuously used in folkloristics even nearly a century after it was published. It has also become an important text in fields such as literary analysis and narratology. Terence Patrick Murphy contributes to this ongoing discussion in his 2015 *The Fairytale and Plot Structure*. Murphy revisits Proppian analysis; he does not dispute it, but instead develops "a much more flexible interpretation of Propp's morphology" (162). The text that results from this effort is a history of plot, narrative, and character theories; a useful overview of the evolution of folklore morphologies through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; and, the bulk of the book, twelve detailed functional analyses of familiar fairy tales.

Murphy introduces the book with a thorough history of the Western understanding of plot, narrative structure, and theories of character. He begins with Aristotle's *Poetics* and continues through nineteenth-century European folklorists, migrationism, the historical–geographical method, and Propp. These chapters describe the long fascination humanity has had with story and with what makes a good one. Murphy also dips briefly into character theory, again reaching back to the works of Aristotle, Theophrastus, Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson.

Whereas the first few chapters focus on theater and literature, Murphy's discussion of plot and character theory eventually leads to fairy tales, and how the study of folklore has impacted our notions of plot and narrative. He gives an overview of the folklorists who preceded Propp—from Antti Aarne, Stith Thompson, and Axel Olrik, through Alexander Nikolayevich Veselovsky, Joseph Jacobs, and Aleksandr Nikiforov. I found this historical overview riveting. Understanding the ongoing scholarly dialogue to which Propp's *Morphology* is a response helped me appreciate the significance of this seminal text.
Murphy's own system of analyzing fairy-tale plots is a revision of Propp's system. Like Propp, he identifies in every narrative a series of functions, but Murphy argues that every narrative has its own distinct number of functions—not necessarily 31—which is its “plot genotype” (162). Tales may have more or fewer than 31 functions in four ways: deletion—some narratives are missing a short sequence of Propp’s 31 functions; repetition—some narratives repeat functions within the same story; inversion—some narratives include functions reversed for narrative effect, for example, when a good character pretends to be bad or vice versa; and translocation—when motifs break off from a narrative and attach to other tales (163).

To illustrate these plot genotypes, Murphy does something remarkable—in over 120 pages, he performs Proppian functional analyses on twelve familiar fairy tales by using his new additions. Each tale is given a chapter and a detailed breakdown of its functions, with extensive explanatory notes. A few of the tales he submits to this analysis are Charles Perrault’s “Cinderella” and “Little Red Riding Hood”; the Grimms’ “Ashputtel,” “The Robber Bridegroom,” and “Fitcher’s Bird”; Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont’s “Beauty and the Beast”; and Joseph Jacobs’s “Tom-Tit-Tot.” His first example, “Cinderella,” is a tale that aligns with Propp’s 31 functions. In another example, “The Robber Bridegroom,” Murphy demonstrates that this plot structure is actually very different—there are only 29 functions, in a different pattern. In this way, Murphy illustrates how each tale does or does not diverge from the 31 functions.

It is worth noting that this text already has a sequel, From Fairy Tale to Film Screenplay: Working with Plot Genotypes (2015; reviewed in Marvels & Tales, vol. 31, no. 1, 2017), in which Murphy builds on his idea of the plot genotype developed in this book and uses it to analyze film. It appears, then, that his plot genotype was designed to identify structures in fairy tales to better analyze film and other popular narratives that use fairy-tale plots. Perhaps because this book is primarily a contribution to film and narrative studies, not folkloristics, there were some surprising omissions in the text: Murphy thoroughly overviews theories of plot structure that precede Propp, but does not cover the more recent, significant work of scholars who succeed him, such as feminist scholars Susan S. Lanser (1986) and Rachel Blau du Plessis (1985), who question the Proppian centrality of the marriage plot; Maria Tatar’s (1987) significant contributions to fairy-tale plot structure; and scholars who, like Donald Haase (2004), call for “decolonizing fairy-tale studies”—an important consideration given that Propp’s system is based on Russian narratives only and thus does not necessarily represent a universal plot structure.

Murphy’s interpretations of the Proppian system are intuitive and logical, and I believe they will be immediately useful to scholars undertaking such an analysis, especially with Indo-European fairy tales. They will doubtlessly
encourage the reader to revisit the tales analyzed herein and to appreciate in a
new light their artful, complex plots. They will also be useful in the classroom,
especially the opening chapters, which I believe would be an excellent resource
for students in an early folklore course to understand the cultural and histori-
cal situations of seminal folklore texts.

Psyche Z. Ready
George Mason University

Fairy Tale Interrupted: Feminism, Masculinity, Wonder Cinema. By Allison

With dizzying scope, Allison Craven presents a number of ideas about
“Beauty and the Beast” (both the fairy-tale text in early French manifestations
and the 1991 animated Disney film of the same name); about the intricacies of
feminist theory, masculinity studies, postfeminism, and the men’s mythopoetic
movement; and about the gendered balances of power in various contempo-
rary live-action fairy-tale films. That she attempts to do so in a single book is
ambitious and, in my opinion, not entirely feasible. Still, her book yields
insights for scholars wanting hot takes on the various fairy-tale films that hit
the screen in the early 2010s, on intertextual connections between “Beauty
and the Beast” retellings, and specifically on Australian contributions to femi-
nist theory.

At the book’s heart, Craven is concerned with the gender politics of fairy-
tale films, leading to incisive observations about the animated film. For exam-
ple, “As a (Disney) feminist, Belle is a reformist, critical of Gaston’s masculinity,
but surprisingly tolerant of the worse aspects of Beast’s” (211). Organized into
three sections, the book opens with a lengthy introduction that I had to reread
parts of in order to get the gist of its assembly. The first section, “Retelling
‘Beauty and the Beast’ in the 1990s,” walks us through major pre-texts for the
animated Disney film and chronicles some of Disney’s major changes to the
traditional plot. However, I did not see one reference to tale types, which baf-
fled me. The second section, “Arcade,” tours feminist theory and how both
femininity and masculinity have been imagined in the second wave and
beyond (as well as in the minds of the “greats” like Freud, who continue to
influence scholarship on gender and power). The third section, “Aftermath
and After-Party; or the Return of the Unrepressed,” details the uses of pastiche
in fairy-tale film and specifically analyzes live-action remakes for their depic-
tions of gendered struggle (which are ultimately not that progressive).

As noted earlier, this is an ambitious scope for a book, and it suffers from
diversions that are not sufficiently explained. As an example, Craven cites Th-
resa de Lauretis’s work, suggesting that the sphinx in the Oedipus story is actu-
ally a princess. This is fascinating, but Craven does not provide enough of the
logic for a reader to really grasp why this is the case. And it remains unclear how this relates back to the main fairy-tale intertext the book revolves around, which focuses on beastly bridegrooms rather than beastly brides. On a similar note, one chapter section is titled “Belle’s Tumescence.” I remain unclear on why. Further, the scope of the book is disorienting. If the author of a scholarly fairy-tale book wants to take a break from discussing fairy tales to sift through an unwieldy amount of feminist thought, I am usually game because I enjoy that kind of discussion. But it is bizarre to frame it through the eyes of a fairy-tale character. For example, Craven writes, “Belle’s curiosity is therefore piqued by the feminism that has made such a difference to her situation; she is even thinking it might be some kind of weird fairy godmother. In the next section of the book, she heads off to learn more and get a little consciousness-raising” (93). Pushing the boundaries of what constitutes acceptable academic writing is an admirable goal, but consistently referring to Belle’s adventures frolicking through the annals of feminist history struck me as an odd choice.

At times, the writing style is opaque and off-putting. Craven does not adequately define how she uses terms like myth and, thus, as a reader, I had trouble grasping her meaning in passages like this: “It may not come as any surprise that, by direct or circuitous route, the discussion of myths and fairy tales in feminism might lead back to wunder cinema. It is not by magic, and feminism is not an enchanted narrative. But the culture of patriarchy, as so many feminists have recognised, is built on myths, so it is perhaps inevitable” (158). What seems inevitable here is that a folklorist would grow annoyed at such genre generalizations and seemingly different uses of myth in the same passage. There are also some citation gaps in this book that I found strange. In addition to the lack of the aforementioned tale-type numbers, the author offers an extended discussion of the mythopoetic movement and fails to mention Jack Zipes’s essential essay “Spreading Myths about Iron John” (1994). Given that Craven cited other works by Zipes, this is an odd omission.

However, there are some really fascinating tidbits in the book, places where I wanted to see Craven’s interpretations pushed farther. I enjoyed Craven’s ruminations on how even the recent trend for empowered fairy-tale heroines still dovetails with compliant femininity (the opposite of hegemonic masculinity). For example, “Compliance is not necessarily inactive and all forms of action are not agency. Just making sleeping girls into action girls does not necessarily overcome the coerciveness of patriarchal culture if agency is not exercised in the awakening” (193). I want more of that and less of the tenuous linkage and odd writing style that Craven seems to favor.

At the end of the day, I am not certain whether to recommend this book, unless one is researching one of the topics it dives into. The sections on films like Mirror, Mirror (2012), Snow White and the Huntsman (2012), Maleficent
(2014), Shrek (2001), and Red Riding Hood (2011) are intriguing. If, like me, you are happy with any excuse to feel cranky about the men's rights movement, Craven's overview of it (citing the requisite scholarship on hegemonic masculinity by R. W. Connell, among others) will be a fun, enlightening read. But many moments in my experience of the book led to more confusion than enlightenment, and, although I am not certain that I could have done any better trying to string together all these topics into a coherent whole, I also do not know that I will be returning to it all that often for quotes or other insights.

Jeana Jorgensen
Butler University


In Ireland's Immortals, Mark Williams set himself the Miltonian task of explaining the ontology of Irish beings often, but not always, regarded as mythological figures, as well as their relationship to Irish culture over the centuries. The result is an almost 600-page text of amazing depth, breadth, and at times complexity as Williams weaves his way through a forest of characters who appear and disappear; tales that expand, contract, and overlap or interweave; and academic theories that offer competing and alternative discussions of authenticity and meaning. In the end, Williams admits that “the distinctiveness of the Irish setup lies in its restless refusal to resolve” into an absolute pantheon with fixed stories and definite roles for its members (493). To reach that fascinating end, Williams sifts through a mountain of primary, secondary, and ancillary materials and provides cogent analyses along the way.

Ireland's Immortals is divided into two distinct halves. The first half is the larger and traces the materials up through the late Medieval period and the political and cultural fragmentation of the Celtic lands; the second half traces the reemergence of Celtic figures in the literature of the Anglo-Irish Celtic Revival of the nineteenth century and follows that revival into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. That division is logical for a number of reasons. One obvious reason is that the first part of the book deals primarily with literary and cultural materials in the Irish language, whereas the second part, focusing on such writers as Yeats, has much more well-documented primary sources and is largely written in English. Another reason is that the two historical periods are separated by the intrusion of classical (Greek and Latin) literatures and languages into the British educational system in the sixteenth century.

The first half of the book deals with what could be a bewildering array of stories and characters, and the theories about them, that have come to us through the writings of Christian scribes. Williams deftly sorts this material,
focuses on the Túatha Dé Danann in general, and looks specifically at several stories. In the second chapter, he discusses “The Otherworld Adventures of Connlae” and “The Voyage of Bran” as poems that contrast a world more deep and true than the superficial world “tied to time” (58). In the third chapter, “The Wooing of Étáin” and “The Second Battle of Moytura” provide examples of a subtler use of pre-Christian settings to “showcase Christian themes” (73). The fourth and fifth chapters discuss “The Book of Invasions” and “The Finn Cycle” because they illustrate an increasingly complex interrelationship of the pre-Christian stories with Christianity and with the changes in Irish culture. The sixth chapter brings section 1 to a close, arguing that “new additions to the mythology were rare after about 1400” (248), that “uncanniness ceased to be among the aesthetic aims in writing about the Túatha Dé Danann” (273), and that “it was to be nearly three centuries before [the Irish gods] reemerged and took up divine shapes again” (274). Williams attributes this fading of the Irish gods to cultural developments that began with the Norman invasion of 1066 and continued such that English and Irish cultures turned increasingly toward the Continent for inspiration and away from their Celtic and Scandinavian roots that seemed barbaric in comparison to the sophisticated materials from Greece and Italy.

The second half of the book will be easier going for most readers because it deals, for the most part, with materials written in English. It also deals with that literature as part of the rising sense of national identity in Ireland, a more conscious connection between the literature and the political activity of the time. The seventh chapter looks at the beginnings of this movement, citing Thomas Gray's *Norse Odes* (1768) and James Macpherson's “faux-Gaelic Ossian material” (1760), “so influential in Romantic constructions of the Celtic” (285). In chapter 8, Williams discusses George Russell “AE” and William Butler Yeats as they came to “crystallize an iconography for the indigenous gods” (310) and anticipated “the return of Ireland's pagan divinities” (344). Chapter 9 jumps to Scotland, focusing on Scotland's close ties with Ireland and on writings of William Sharp, better known as Fiona Macleod, and the art of William Duncan. Chapter 10 has an odd duality as Williams examines, first, Augusta Gregory's full English versions of the Mythological Cycle and the Finn Cycle, which he praises for their faithfulness to Medieval tradition and, second, the possible connections between Irish and Indian beliefs and attitudes, both united through an ancient Indo-European inheritance. Chapters 11 and 12 bring Williams's study up to the present, looking first at opera, music, art, poetry, and satire, then at children's literature and fantasy, and finally at contemporary Celtic paganism. Chapter 12 looks over the entirety of the book and makes a number of summary statements before Williams focuses on “an extraordinary figure whose work hints that cultural mileage may yet be left in the pantheon

itself. Kerry-born John Moriarty (1938–2007), whom the Dictionary of Irish Biography arrestingly lists as a ‘philosopher and shaman” and whose books “advocated an enlarged Christianity that would enfold and be enriched by pre-Christian myth” (497).

Ireland’s Immortals is an amazing book for many reasons. But let me say first that we all have our hobbyhorses; mine is Medieval Welsh Celtic myth and legend, and I miss the many connections Williams could have made between the Irish and the Welsh materials. That said, he had many, many choices of what to leave in and what to leave out, and I am sure other people will pick at some of those. But this is a very, very fine volume. I applaud Williams’s use of footnotes; they allowed him to reference materials for further study, and they will be read avidly by some readers but can be skipped by others who will still receive a magnificent overview.

As a scholarly study of the appearances of the Irish gods and goddesses in literature down through the ages, and the connection of that literature and the mythology behind it with Ireland’s national consciousness, as well, this book is without rival. As such, Ireland’s Immortals has my highest recommendation.

C. W. Sullivan III
East Carolina University


The first time I taught a course on fairy tales, I ended the semester with Jane Eyre (1847). Maria Tatar herself seemed to validate my choice: in her introduction to the first edition of The Classic Fairy Tales (1999), she points out that Charlotte Brontë “inaugurated with full force the critique of fairy-tale romance in fiction by women for women” (xvii). Jane begins as a Cinderella figure, enters Bluebeard’s castle when she accepts a position at Thornfield, and finally saves the Beastly Mr. Rochester, who believes she is a Beauty. However, she ultimately rejects these fairy-tale paradigms, instead writing her own story, a new kind of narrative for women.

Abigail Heiniger’s monograph is an interesting, worthwhile addition to previous scholarship on the fairy-tale elements in Jane Eyre by scholars such as Tatar and Karen Rowe, whose “Fairy-born and human-bred: Jane Eyre’s Education in Romance” (1983) adds “Sleeping Beauty” and “Snow-Drop” to the list of fairy tales that influenced Brontë. Like Tatar, Rowe argues that Brontë eventually renounced the fairy-tale narratives that structure Jane Eyre because they did not allow for female autonomy. Heiniger takes a different approach, arguing that, rather than renouncing these narratives, Brontë added to them by incorporating pre-Victorian fairy lore from her native North Country to create a “heroic changeling” (2). Jane’s changeling nature, both human and fairy,
enables her to become a different kind of heroine—not a passive Cinderella or Beauty, but an independent woman with a voice of her own. From the combination of fairy tale and lore, Brontë created a new model of the female bildungsroman. This is only the first step in Heiniger’s argument, and it does not always fit easily with the later steps, which move away from discussing *Jane Eyre* and onto various responses to Brontë’s novel in England and America, none of which incorporate the heroic changeling. Heiniger argues that Brontë herself finally rejected this heroic changeling narrative, which proves inadequate for Lucy Snowe in *Villette* (1853).

The book is divided into four chapters: of these, the first and third will likely be most interesting for scholars of fairy tales. In the first chapter, Heiniger describes how Brontë created her heroic changeling based on the tales she heard while growing up around Haworth, England. The fairies of these tales are vocal and active—when they marry mortals, fairy brides agree to stay only so long as certain conditions are met. Like Jane, they respond to broken promises by departing for other realms. Heiniger argues that this fairy lore gave Brontë alternative ways of constructing femaleness and enabled her to write a heroine who speaks with the verbal dexterity of the pre-Victorian fairies. Heiniger’s description of this fairy lore is fascinating; indeed, I wish she had described it in more detail. What sorts of stories might the Brontë children have heard?

Heiniger’s second chapter examines Julia Kavanagh’s *Nathalie* (1851), Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s *Aurora Leigh* (1856), and *Villette* as responses to *Jane Eyre* that attempt to reimagine their female characters not as nationalistic heroic changelings but as cosmopolitan new Eves. In *Villette*, Brontë herself “critiques the changeling heroine and the fairytale plot of *Jane Eyre*” (57). Polly Home, the fairy figure in *Villette*, achieves domestic happiness but not heroism, becoming yet another Angel in the House. In her third chapter, Heiniger turns to the American continent. Whereas English writers such as Kavanagh and Browning tried to create a new Eve, American writers modeled their heroines on the Cinderella rise narrative. Heiniger finds this paradigm in Susan Warner’s *The Wide, Wide World* (1850) and L. M. Montgomery’s *Anne of Green Gables* (1908). Here again Heiniger makes a fascinating argument about the distinctively American character of this Cinderella story, in which a young woman rises from rags to riches, a trajectory that parallels the American rise narrative of the self-made man. Heiniger argues that, in contrast to *Jane Eyre*, “the American Cinderella transmutes the heroic female back into a celebrated but thoroughly domestic heroine” (81). However, it is not always clear how this chapter connects back to the first: although Heiniger approaches Warner’s and Montgomery’s novels as responses to the Cinderella narrative in *Jane Eyre*, they seem more directly responses to “Cinderella” itself, which came to the Americas through multiple sources.
Perhaps the most interesting part of this argument is Heiniger's examination of The Bondswoman's Narrative, written around 1850 by the fugitive slave Hannah Craft. As Heiniger shows, Craft’s story critiques the Cinderella paradigm as available to only white women and exposes the exploitation necessary to make the fairy tale’s happily ever after come true. This section, together with her examination of Jean Rhys’s Wide Sargasso Sea (1966) in the fourth chapter, reveals the hidden costs of the Cinderella narrative for nonwhite populations. Like Craft, “Rhys demonstrates that the white fairy tale in the Americas rests upon exploitation of nonwhite labor” and “excludes nonwhites from embracing fairytale expectations” (118). This final argument brings Heiniger’s monograph back to Jane Eyre in a satisfying way.

I have some quibbles with Heiniger’s argument, particularly her claim that, since Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s analysis of Jane Eyre in The Madwoman in the Attic (1979), scholars “have accepted Cinderella as the novel’s primary fairytale paradigm” (4). Neither Tatar nor Rowe analyze the novel in that way, and even Micael Clarke, who focuses on Brontë’s use of “Cinderella,” does so in relation to the German version, not an “indefinite cultural myth” (111). Similarly, the claim that novels such as The Wide, Wide World and Anne of Green Gables have conditioned readers to approach Jane Eyre as a Cinderella story seems tenuous—my students, raised on a steady stream of Cinderella narratives, did not see that element of the novel until it was pointed out. Nevertheless, Heiniger presents us with two fascinating arguments: that Brontë incorporated pre-Victorian fairy lore to create a changeling heroine in Jane Eyre, and that a distinctively American Cinderella rise tale became central to the female bildungsroman on this continent. One wonders what sorts of stories might have been told had Brontë’s heroic changeling become our model of female development rather than a Cinderella filtered through the American Dream.

Theodora Goss
Boston University


Through her book, The Pleasures of Metamorphosis, Lucy Fraser crosses oceans, cultures, and genders as she explores retellings of the Hans Christian Andersen tale. Focusing these narratives through a “lens of ‘pleasure’” (6), she travels between different tales and traditions, surfacing with key texts: “The framework of ‘pleasure,’ I argue, can bring together texts that might otherwise be separated by differences in language, background, time period, genre, and medium” (1).
Fraser seeks to expand both English and Japanese fairy-tale scholarship by introducing readers to myriad mermaid tales, culture, and critical concepts otherwise critically inaccessible due to language and the lack of cultural context.

Fraser establishes the parameters of her exploration in chapter 1, “Fairy Tale Transformations in Japanese and English.” Drawing from intertextual, adaptation (Mikhail Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva, and Linda Hutcheon), fairy-tale, and postmodern (Jack Zipes, Marina Warner, and Cristina Bacchilega) scholarship, she formulates two frames, transformation and pleasure, through which she experiences the texts. “That writers and readers read and retell fairy tales because doing so is pleasurable seems so obvious” yet overlooked, she points out (6). Focusing on that transformational pleasure—both experienced within the tale and by the reteller in telling and the reader in reading—emerges as a fundamental connection to and continuation of the retelling process. After setting up her critical framework, she describes her method of moving between cultures and languages, following along “an interwoven, intertextual ‘web’ of fairy tales” and “the fairy tale architext,” with nods to Bacchilega’s Fairy Tales Transformed? (2013) and Gérard Genette’s Architext (1992), respectively (15).

In chapter 2, “Children’s Pleasures in Animated Film Adaptations,” Fraser considers Disney’s The Little Mermaid, directed by Ron Clements and John Musker (1989), and Studio Ghibli’s Gake no ue no Ponyo (Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea), directed by Miyazaki Hayao (2008). Touching upon socialization, gender, transformation, and spectacle (both visual and aural), Fraser examines the two animated films as adaptations resonating with intertextual play.

In chapter 3, “Fairy Tale Architextuality and the Prince’s Pleasure,” she alters the focus from the mermaid to the prince. Shifting this perspective not only provides authors with flexibility, but with a different view of longing and desire. Through reading Oscar Wilde’s “The Fisherman and His Soul” (1891), Tanizaki Jun’ichirō’s “Ningyo no nageki” (The Mermaid’s Lament, 1917), Abe Kōbō’s “Ningyō-den” (Legend of a Mermaid, 1962), and Kawakami Hiromi’s “Hanasanai” (I Won’t Let You Go, 1998), she explores what she calls the “fairy tale architext” coupled with this shift in perspective (71). By using narrative norms to lock our recognition and expectation into place, the four authors push and play with objectification, exoticism, and male desire. Fraser asks if the pleasure experienced by the reader through these textual enchantments changes with a character’s gender (93). In each of these tales, the mermaids enthrall the princes, not only successful in their quest, but also in destabilizing identity.

In chapter 4, “Mermaids Repeated, Inverted, and Reversed,” Fraser returns to the perspective of the mermaid and concentrates on stories that parody or
revise the tale. Keeping close to her framework of the pleasures of transformation, she details readings where familiarity also sparks sharp difference: a feminist retelling by Matsumoto Yūko, an inverted mermaid body from Kurahashi Yumiko, and Ogawa Yōko’s merman tale of longing and loss. Illustrations, frame stories, and paratextual elements, such as Kurahashi’s postface, magnify the instability of the stories and highlight the narrative contradictions. In this chapter, Fraser begins to note seemingly tangential gendered elements, which factor more prominently in her next few chapters: pleasures of candy, reading, and shōjo culture. Shōjo, or teenage girl, describes both an aesthetic and a period in a girl’s life that captures both the stasis and the transformation between childhood and adulthood.

For chapter 5, “Girls Reading and Retelling ‘The Little Mermaid,’” Fraser approaches the two main texts through shōjo culture. Hoping “to gain a fresh perspective on girls’ mermaid stories and in particular their intertextual pleasures” she uses “Japanese theories of the shōjo (girl)” for their “cross-cultural origins and their emphasis on girls’ reading communities” (126–27). Here, she discusses representations of the pleasures and dangers of girls’ reading and how the continued retellings of fairy tales illustrate active and engaged readers and provide some insight for this practice.

As a natural continuation from the world of the girl to the transformed woman, chapter 6, “Beyond Happily Ever After,” uncovers the possibilities following a fairy-tale finish. The postmodern readings in this final chapter show an increasing duplicity, or even ambivalence, to the happily ever after ending when characters are faced with multiple possible endings or when characters live in a harsher world beyond their fairy-tale façade. Unveiling some of the architext artifice encourages multiple readings, but also enables the reader to engage consciously with flexibilities of identity, gender performance, and sexuality.

Fraser concludes with a summation of her primary investigation: following Hans Christian Andersen’s tale through its own transformations, she develops the framework of pleasure to read texts that differ in language, literary tradition, cultural production, and media. She carefully crafts her framework and provides efficient, but comprehensive, context for the English-language reader to avoid both superficial reading and falling into binaries of East and West. She accomplishes her goal of illustrating the already expansive intertextual genealogy of “The Little Mermaid” by translating and critically reading a wide range of Japanese retellings for the Western reader hampered by language barriers. But she also engages with larger questions in fairy-tale scholarship. Running as an undercurrent throughout her text, her attentiveness to the reading culture of girls surfaces as a vital theme. Pointing to pleasure as key, she asserts that the transformative power of the tale is not merely within the text,
but in what it does to the reader and how the reader seeks that transformative pleasure by becoming a reteller. Through this cycle, she suggests not only a reason for the continued use of the fairy-tale form, but also emphasizes the transformative act of reading.

Amy Carlson
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa


For a nonspecialist of Middle Eastern Muslim literature (that is, Persian, Arabic, and Turkish ones), Relief after Hardship by Ulrich Marzolph seems at first a challenge, if not a hardship, to read through, being full of difficult-to-read names and bibliophilic details about a mostly unknown world. But, with great relief, the reader is quickly pulled into this exciting investigation, through centuries and faraway lands (with manuscripts spreading from London to Tashkent), of the textual relationships among three major collections of tales—namely, the French Pétis de La Croix’s Mille et un Jours (henceforth 1001 Days), the Ottoman Turkish Ferec ba’d es-sidde (Relief after Hardship), and the Persian jāmi’ al-hīhāyāt (Collection of Tales).

Scholars ultimately have agreed that the French collection was mostly based on the Turkish one, which was itself a translation of the Persian one. This being said, the latter collections were not much studied for themselves but only as hypotexts, at least in the Western world. Marzolph, following in the steps of Austrian scholar Andreas Tietze and with some other researchers such as Aboubakr Chraibi and Helga Anetshofer, believes those assumptions need to be reconsidered. He takes his reader along with him into a detailed comparison of the structure of the three collections, advancing with great prudence. (He confesses at times with frankness that a certain point “remains to be determined” [27].)

The book is divided into two parts. In the first, through a series of short chapters, Marzolph conducts a methodical demonstration. Then in a second part, dutifully, he offers detailed summaries and comments for each of the forty-two tales of Ferec ba’d es-sidde, which is a feat in and of itself, given the very intricate narrative of those stories.

Marzolph first shows that “out of the forty-two tales Ferec ba’d es-sidde contains, Pétis de la Croix used elements and plots from a mere seventeen tales” (10). In other words, most of the Turkish tales remain unknown through the French collection. Marzolph then shows that the Turkish collection is actually more autonomous from the Persian one than previously believed. To be sure, the traditional ways of cultural transmission run from Persia to the Ottoman world, and, consistently, in the Turkish collection, titles of the tales...
are in Persian. Yet, it is necessary to distinguish in *Ferec ba’d es-sidde* between the tales of the first half, which are homogeneous in terms of literary genres, and the tales of the second part, which are much more diverse. Most of the tales of *Ferec ba’d es-sidde* belong to the “marvelous and strange” genre (as in the *1001 Nights*) “so as to teach that there is more to life and living reality than the ordinary experience,” for the purpose of Muslim propaganda, among other reasons (37). The regular appearance of supernatural characters would show “the boundlessness of God’s power thus inspiring even more awe and amazement” (38). Many tales pertain also to the “relief after hardship” genre (40). Some others rely on the “seriousness and jocularity” technique (40). Those tales of the first part probably do come from the *Jāmi’ al-hikāyāt* collection, though in different sequences, but the tales of the second part are based on a variety of sources and perhaps on Persian versions of tales originating in the Arabic tradition.

However, Marzolph, in a postscript coming as a *coup de théâtre*, adds news of the rediscovery of a Persian manuscript, compiled around the early thirteenth century, that could again reshuffle the cards of this literary investigation. I shall not spoil here the pleasure of this book by revealing more about it: actually, it can probably be appreciated only once the reader has made the effort to advance step by step with Marzolph, gaining an intimate view of the literary research in progress.

In a concluding chapter, Marzolph discusses the special interest in Ottoman Turkish literature in general, and *Ferec ba’d es-sidde* in particular, as being a pivotal point in the transmission of “middle literature” (a concept coined by Aboubakr Chraïbi about anonymous wonder tales ranging “between the classical and colloquial languages”) from the East (Persian and Arabic worlds) to the West (45). Marzolph ventures to hypothesize that the structure of European fairy tales originated there, from Straparola’s collection of tales, with a protagonist of royal descent “attain[ning] ultimate happiness,” that is, wealth and power, by marrying a princess (46). However, this question needs careful examination, for, in the case of Charles Perrault’s emblematic collection of tales, this narrative model is nowhere to be found: Donkeyskin, Sleeping Beauty, and Bluebeard’s spouse are searching for the right marriages and not for power, as well as Cinderella, who is practicing the art of seduction to leave home; Puss in Boots and the miller’s son, aiming at attaining perpetual leisure but not power, are maneuvering for the latter to marry a princess; the Little Thumbling story is about taking the lead among brothers, etc.

Marzolph’s new book very convincingly shows the importance of the *Ferec ba’d es-sidde* collection in its own right and offers at the same time a glimpse into some of the debates pertaining to the literature of Middle Eastern Muslim folktales in general. *Relief after Hardship* is indeed an entertaining, though...
demanding, read. The tales’ summaries and comments constitute a lasting encyclopedia, which is a most welcome gift to the community of scholars, as well as the complete bibliography and indexes. This book, with a beautiful figurative illustration on the cover (yet, we learn on the back cover that the illustration was originally used for a Persian edition of 1001 Nights, contradicting Marzolph’s objective of emancipating lesser known and especially Turkish literature), is certainly destined to give an international audience a better understanding of the rich and varied folktale literature of the Muslim world.

Pierre-Emmanuel Moog
École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris


New Fairy Tales, reads the subtitle of The Starlit Wood, and that subtitle at first read may seem misleading. Although each story in this anthology puts a fresh face on a traditional tale, the core interest of the book is the dialogue between old and new rather than the production of purely new stories in the fairy-tale vein. This book follows in a long tradition of retelling anthologies, especially popular since the 1990s with books such as Snow White, Blood Red (1993), and its companion volumes, edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling. In the process of retelling, old stories are made new, and their perspectives and priorities are refreshed to reflect current culture, as happens with folktales over time.

The Starlit Wood takes a distinctly twenty-first-century approach with its parameters, including not only the usual European stories like “Little Red Riding Hood” and “Sleeping Beauty” as inspiration, but also non-Western tales such as “Đất Trăng and the Pearl” from Vietnam and “The Tale of Mahliya and Mauhub and the White-Footed Gazelle” from the Arabic tradition, recently released in its traditional form as a part of the Tales of the Marvellous and News of the Strange collection (2014), translated by Malcolm Lyons. The balance of inspirational tales in The Starlit Wood makes the book valuable both for those interested in the Western fairy-tale tradition and for those with broader interests.

Each tale in the anthology takes a specific traditional story as its inspiration and revises, retells, or remakes the tale in the context of current modern sensibilities. Many of this book’s tales, mainly those with origin stories from the European tradition, rely on the reader’s familiar knowledge with the inspiration to work their magic. Some, like Seanan McGuire’s opening tale “In the Desert Like a Bone,” even act as sequels, rather than strictly retelling, following up on aspects of the traditional tale that may puzzle or frustrate a modern reader. McGuire picks up on the sexual subtext of “Little Red Riding Hood”
and creates a story in which the young protagonist becomes more like the wolf herself, an interesting and somewhat violently empowering counterpoint to the victimization narrative of traditional versions of the tale preserved by Charles Perrault or the Grimms.

Many of the stories here focus on restoring the agency and empowerment of women in particular, reclaiming stories—again, especially those coming from the Western world—from the patriarchal trope of “boy saves girl” and transforming such tales into examples of women saving themselves and/or each other. Amal El-Mohtar's award-winning “Seasons of Glass and Iron” accomplishes the latter elegantly and intentionally, combining two traditional tales—“The Glass Mountain” and “The Black Bull of Norroway”—and using their complementary magical elements to solve the challenge of each protagonist. The vivid and brilliant story “The Briar and the Rose” by Marjorie Liu achieves a similar effect, but changes all the primary players in the story—including the figure of the prince—into women. Liu’s main character, the Duelist, embodies both feminine and masculine qualities, fulfilling the role of the prince—at least in the sense of rescuing the sleeping beauty—with more nuance than the average fairy tale usually grants its hero.

Therein lies one of the great achievements of this particular collection of tales: every story offers up a nuanced consideration of the parent tale. Although gender empowerment is a dominant theme, and one of the most evidently thought-through, it is not the only one. Even stories such as Daryl Gregory’s “Even the Crumbs Were Delicious”—which takes a casually postmodern approach to “Hansel and Gretel,” setting the retelling in the author’s own universe, complete with home-printed drugs and a light-hearted tone despite its serious themes—clearly and cogently consider the social implications of fairy-tale plots and themes. What really happens to kids whose parents do not want them? How do young women survive the predations inherent in a patriarchal world? These are just two of the questions the various stories of this anthology pose, while entertaining and engaging the reader at the same time.

Gregory is not alone in his postmodern treatment of an older tale. Genevieve Valentine, in her story “Familiaris,” takes apart the traditional narrative and reassembles it in pieces that vary in perspective and style. This stylistic play engages, but also intrigues, and opens up conversations about narrative itself, how it works on the reader, and how it should work. Such questions and conversation openings abound in this anthology, which is not only entertaining for the lay reader, but also potentially useful in undergraduate literature courses where comparisons between these and their origin stories might induce thoughtful responses on how literature evolves and what it does to the reader; in graduate literature courses where the intersection between older literary tradition and postmodern structure is still a topic for discussion; and,
more broadly, in humanities and gender studies courses where conversations about the social influence of narrative are especially valuable.

The book itself is a beautiful volume with a cover evocative of old-fashioned fairy-tale collections. The central cover image—a massive tree, illuminated and open at the bottom like a door—invites exploration as much as the tales within. Visually, structurally, and narratively, this is indeed a book that is both new and yet also in sync with the long tradition of fantastical tales. Although one or two stories stray too far into their thought experiments, creating wish-fulfillment narratives that are over-the-top enough to detract from the reader’s enjoyment of the text, the vast majority of the stories here succeed in both commentary and storytelling, as fairy tales always have been meant to do. In that way, and in so many others, The Starlit Wood is a worthy successor both to the traditional tales it uses and to the retelling tradition in which it participates.

Sarah E. Gibbons
Michigan State University


Since her passing in 1992, Angela Carter has remained the quintessential agent provocateur of fairy tales. Carter’s works, bottomless wellsprings of layered, textured, and strikingly lush metaphors and imagery, allow for endless interpretations and continue to inspire artists and authors alike in their revisions of classical fairy tales. Strange Worlds: The Vision of Angela Carter, edited by Marie Mulvey-Roberts and Fiona Robinson, synthesizes selected works of art with essays and excerpts that remember Angela Carter and celebrate the legacy of her work. It was published in conjunction with the Royal West of England Academy’s exhibition of the same name (reviewed by Mayako Murai for Marvels & Tales, vol. 32, no. 1, 2018). In addition to functioning as an illustration of how influential Carter’s work has been, the collection asks the reader to think about the ways in which art can reflect or serve as a continuation of her work.

Foregrounding Carter’s lasting influence on art, the collection is comprised of around forty-five pieces of art and nine essays. Carefully curated, the editors “sourced work which reflects the pulsating and anarchic energy of Carter’s exuberant and excessive prose” (10). The artworks selected for this collection span roughly four and a half centuries, ranging from 1566 to 2016, and are accompanied by either an explanation from the editors or a descriptive reflection written by the artist. Complementing the art, as well as the overall celebratory tone of the collection, the essays, written by Christopher Frayling, Marina Warner, Jack Zipes, Victor Sage, David Punter, Christine Molan, Kim
Evans, Marie Mulvey-Roberts, and Fiona Robinson, read like love letters to Angela Carter as they fondly reminisce on their experiences with her and the enduring power of her literature.

Marie Mulvey-Roberts and Fiona Robinson do an excellent job of guiding those unfamiliar with the world of art through the collection and the intent behind many of the selections. In “Art and Angela Carter,” Mulvey-Roberts expounds upon the intimate relationship Angela Carter had with art, further discussing works that influenced her writing. Similarly, Robinson’s essay, “Contemporary Art and the Continuing Influence of Angela Carter,” explores the familiar themes that run through Carter’s work—the fairy tale, magical realism, and the Gothic—and unpacks select artworks that take up these themes. In addition to the explanations that accompany the selected artworks and editors’ essays, the contemporary artists briefly reflect on their experience with Carter’s work. The sharing of these private memories is perhaps one of the most unique and satisfying features of the collection.

The essays featured in the collection are memoirs that are written as much to Angela Carter as they are for the readers, and they work with the artwork to amplify the poignancy of the collection. David Punter’s essay, “The Sardonic Woman,” is a memoir beautifully written as a stream of consciousness that recounts two memories through alternating paragraphs, the memory of meeting Angela Carter the person—and later friend—and the memory of meeting Angela Carter the author—through her works. In “Authenticating Magic: Angela, Folksong and Bristol,” Christine Molan shares her memories of singing folk songs with Angela Carter at a Bristol club, discussing at length Carter’s fascination with folk songs. Victor Sage sheds light on Angela Carter’s philosophy in “Lizzie’s Handbag: Magical Unrealism and the Object,” noting that the question “Why not the other way around?” continually guided Carter’s explorations, playing an important role in her “dialectical reversals of systems of thought” (24).

Jack Zipes, in “A Down-to-Earth Working Girl,” recalls his first encounter with Angela Carter and goes on to share letters she wrote him when he began teaching at the University of Florida and the introduction he gave her when she spoke at the university. He closes the essay by sharing the last letter she wrote him, a response to an inquiry, and shares some thoughts on her “formidable” spirit (22). True to the title of the essay, “A Bath Literary Friendship,” Christopher Frayling focuses on his relationship with Angela Carter. Like many of the other essays, what might otherwise seem mundane, such as journal entries, trips, plays attended, and conversations had, becomes a fascinating window into Carter’s private spaces, providing additional insight into her enigmatic persona and work. Frayling’s essay ends with a short conversation on the critical work that has surrounded her work since her passing. Marina Warner’s
brief essay, “Threadwork: Remembering Angela Carter,” focuses on Carter’s use of language and discusses the popularity of Carter’s legacy. Finally, Kim Evans’s essay, “Angela Carter’s Curious Room,” remembers the months leading up to Angela Carter’s passing. These essays, appearing at the beginning of the collection, set the tone for the collection, emotionally preparing the reader to engage in the artwork to come.

This is a collection for those who love Angela Carter, for those who treasure any brief glimpses into her personal life, her thoughts, her philosophies, and her writing process. It is also for those who love art and are interested in exploring the ways in which Carter’s work has influenced, and continues to influence, artists around the world. Because the majority of the collection is comprised of artwork, when I first saw it, I believed it would make the perfect coffee-table book for the Angela Carter aficionado. This was an accurate assessment. The short essays and numerous works of art encourage the reader to consume the collection slowly, piece by piece. On a pedagogical level, this collection would greatly benefit those who are interested in exploring the connections to art in the works of Angela Carter. Additionally, it would serve as an excellent complementary resource in a class that focuses on Angela Carter as a major author.

Lacey Skorepa
Wayne State University


If you are the kind of person who is inclined to believe in fairies and has never been to Bateman’s, Rudyard Kipling’s former house in Sussex, then I would recommend it. If ever there was a place designed to encourage fairies, it is this one. I went with my sixteen-month-old, and he seemed completely at home bumbling across the lawns and bridges, chasing chickens, and discovering wooden mushrooms and houses for the elves. It is a place where small things feel at home, whether of this world or another one. It is also the setting for Kipling’s celebration of English fairy magic, Puck of Pook’s Hill (1906), the story of two children who inadvertently summon Puck by thrice performing Midsummer Night’s Dream on Midsummer’s Eve in a fairy ring. The first US edition of Puck of Pook’s Hill was illustrated by Arthur Rackham, who also lived for much of his life in Sussex. The 150th Birthday Exhibition, organized by the Sussex Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tale and Fantasy, celebrates the connection between the two artists.

In a light, cream-colored bedroom that overlooks the gardens, the exhibition displays Rackham’s own paintings, both watercolors and sketches of Sussex and Puck illustrations. All the artworks hum and vibrate with the life
that Rackham, as well as Kipling, saw in the surrounding landscape. One of the most striking, an oil painting entitled *Landscape at Houghton/Near Amberley* (1925), shows a dark, blue-gray sky above yellow hills, evoking perfectly the light before an evening storm. In the foreground are three gnarled trees or, rather, beings who have the shape of winter trees, with horny, peering heads, and roots that open convoluted caves into the undergrowth. At their feet are small, elfin creatures, sitting on cascading moss, one with a book in his lap the size of himself. In another work, used as the exhibition frontispiece, Puck himself salutes two children kneeling on a meadow with Bate-man’s in the background. Like the elfin beings and the tree creatures, Puck is at once familiar and strange. The slant of his chin and ears and his skeletal, leaflike hands and feet suggest he is more undergrowth than flesh. His smile is both impish and open, suggesting, as he himself does in the text, that he is a friendly fairy, the Other come to offer hospitality to the awestruck children who both expect and respect his existence.

The exhibition also features a local contemporary artist’s response to Rackham. Emma Martin’s paintings, laid out in the small kitchen with its sloping walls and latticed windows, and in the darker drawing room with mahogany table and illuminated skin tapestries, are, like Rackham’s, permeated with trees, earth, and sky that are themselves permeated with magic. In the work of both artists, the creatures that crowd the page are both knot in the wood and trick of the light, painted to enhance our could-be vision. However, Martin’s is not the Sussex of *Puck of Pook’s Hill*, in which guides appear thrillingly but gently, offering themselves at the service of the young adventurers. Martin’s fairies are not at anyone’s service. They crowd the knots of beech trees and oaks, haunt the hollows of Sussex yews with peering faces, and blink out of tree stumps like shrugging shadows, holding their own conversation with the dead and living wood of their existence.

I am just reading Ali Shaw’s *The Trees* (2016), and I am struck by the fact that Shaw, like Jo Walton in *Among Others* (2011) and Naomi Novik in *Uprooted* (2016), features fairies that are not simply scary, but not—necessarily—“fair.” They are more often pure patches of strangeness, uninterested in physical or emotional appeal to us. In Kipling’s time, fairies spoke English and gathered round English children like benign guides to Imperial visitors. These fairies do not. They speak tree and do so with no alleviation for any human hearer. Martin’s fairies, “mis”shapen and weird, are a challenge, both to our eyes and our imagination. And the challenging nature of her work is echoed in other pieces, not dedicated to Sussex. One such, hung in the darker room and entitled *Lady Grenfell* (2017), is a woman, treelike, with a thorn crown and a body of suffering faces. A hook hangs from her branching thumb, and her arms are twined with what may be a skein of gray thread. Behind her, windows in a tall tower...
are peopled with falling figures. Lady Grenfell, a specific reference to the fire that killed seventy-one people in an overcrowded London tower block in summer 2017, is not art meant to enchant, but to unsettle.

Responses to Martin's work, in the guest book laid out to receive them, are mixed. Some described the paintings as "magnificent," "an inspiration to look at the trees more closely." Others described them as "sinister," "ghostly—ghastly—horrible," one reviewer advising the artist to "use your talents for something more beautiful!" It is a shame that it is not done for artists to pen answers to these comments, as it would have been interesting to read a reply. I am not surprised that guests were challenged by the art, particularly in Bateman's. Like Puck of Pook's Hill, Bateman's is a place where amicable fairies seem to reign—the reason my little son loved it. In that sense, the two artists appear to be discordant, and to view Martin's work after a visit round the comfortable, friendly house and gardens is difficult. Yet, maybe it is important, particularly given the proliferation of difficult fairies in fantasy literature nowadays. These fairies recall the earlier, pre-Victorian fairies who crowded our medieval and Renaissance literature, reminding us of the complexity of the Other realm. Fairies are our way of inking in the livingness of the world that is not us. Perhaps we are coming today to realize that—unless we make urgent acknowledgment of the wonder, terror, and complexity of that otherness—we cannot, as Kipling imagined Dan and Una could—expect and respect it.

Joanna Gilar

University of Chichester