

Christine A. Jones and Jennifer Schacker. *Marvelous Transformations. An Anthology of Fairy Tales and Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. (Peterborough: 2013, Broadview Press. Pp. 584. ISBN: 9-781-554810-4-37)

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Michael A. Robidoux est passionné par son sujet. Cela se voit. La passion peut parfois être mauvaise conseillère et introduire un biais dans l'analyse, dans le regard que l'on porte sur son sujet. Bien conscient de ce péril, c'est à cette fin que l'auteur s'attarde au quatrième chapitre de son ouvrage à présenter l'autre côté de la médaille. Après avoir montré comment le hockey a été repris et actualisé par les membres des Premières Nations, il était nécessaire pour l'auteur de rappeler que le sport n'était pas pour autant une panacée. L'alcool et les drogues restent des réalités bien présentes dans ces communautés fragiles. Qui plus est, l'auteur a lui-même été témoin au cours de ses visites des comportements discriminatoires dont sont victimes les Amérindiens, eux qui ont la réputation d'être turbulents, pour user d'un euphémisme, alors que le phénomène des « hooligans » à la grandeur du monde, en Europe en particulier, n'est plus à démontrer. À ce propos, le titre de l'ouvrage est on ne peut plus approprié. Si le hockey permet en effet aux membres des Premières Nations de grandir au sein de leurs propres communautés, ils n'en sont pas moins isolés dès qu'ils en sortent un tant soit peu.

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Christine A. Jones and Jennifer Schacker. *Marvelous Transformations. An Anthology of Fairy Tales and Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. (Peterborough: 2013, Broadview Press. Pp. 584. ISBN: 9-781-554810-4-37)

This engaging anthology of fairy and folk tales, edited with an atypical arrangement of material, is the result of the two editors' challenge to readers to rethink their own knowledge of these tales, the individual collectors, and the functions and contexts of these tales in both their own timeframe and the readers' contemporary milieu. Throughout the ongoing discourse, readers are reminded of this challenge again and again, along with the fact that new ways of looking at the old tales are, and should be, in constant

flux. The editors believe that the conversations, like the tales themselves, should never be considered static and worn. The editors' assurance of "our commitment (as scholars, teachers, and editors) to exploring the complex relationship between literary history and folklore history, specifically the history of the field based collection of oral storytelling" (16) is fulfilled with this valuable compilation.

The weighty volume is separated into two major parts. The first section contains the tales themselves, often new translations of French and Italian tales which highlights one of the focuses of the collection of the "creative interventions" made by the translators themselves (15). Jones and Schacker do avail themselves of modern technology by providing access to six additional longer tales on an accompanying pass code-protected website but, unfortunately, other than access to these tales and the book's table of contents, the website is fundamentally inert. The introductory essay for this section, penned by Jones and Schacker, provides their fluid blueprint on how to read a fairy tale, discussing "Little Red Riding Hood" as an exemplar. They maintain that the apparent timeless lessons of not talking to strangers, dangers in the unknown forest, rites of passage and sexual awakening inherent in this tale are only constructs of interpretations built on earlier interpretations without careful re-readings of the original texts. They conclude that the Grimms' "Little Red Cap," on re-examination, "is a story about the power of language and its use in discursive strategies (above and beyond simple politeness)" (34), stressing their conviction of the importance of really reading and knowing the tales themselves rather than the standard critical interpretations that have become culturally accepted norms.

The tales are arranged chronologically rather than by national constrictions, with representations of place and time rather than thematically, and concentrating on tales that reflect current academic interest. Part one is further divided into five segments: early written traditions, early print traditions, romanticism to the *Fin de Siècle*, modern and postmodern tales and contemporary transcriptions and translations. Each complete tale, excerpt from longer pieces and poem has a concise introduction written by the editors, placing it with the context of contemporary contemplation and scholarship for both pedagogical activities and further research. Each of the entries is printed verbatim and, when available, includes footnotes and commentaries of the translators. Among the perhaps more traditional offerings are Perrault's "Blue Beard," "Cinderella," "Little Red Riding

Hood,” and “Sleeping Beauty,” Grimms’ “Hansel and Gretel,” “The Worn Out Dancing Shoes,” “Snow White,” “The Maiden without Hands,” and “Six Swans;” Andersen’s “The Tinderbox,” “The Princess and the Pea,” and “The Red Shoes;” and Asbjornsen and Moe’s “East o’ the Sun and West o’ the Moon,” “Tatterhood,” and “Little Annie the Goose Girl.” There are several familiar entries for the section on modern and postmodern tales including Sylvia Townsend Warner’s “Bluebeard’s Daughter,” Anne Sexton’s “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,” and excerpts from Robert Coover’s novel *Briar Rose* and Nalo Hopkinson’s *Skin Folk*. Also collected is material accessible for younger readers, such as Neil Gaiman’s poem “Instructions” and Kelly Link’s tale of “Swans.” There are an equal number of entries that may not be very familiar at all, but all provide intriguing reading. The selections in the fifth section personally delighted me as a storyteller with translated tales from Puerto Rico, Hungary, India, French Canada, Arabia, and, rounding out the global swirl, an example of one of the Scottish Traveller tales.

While I enjoyed dipping and tasting and meandering through the substantial first part of the anthology, it was the second part that delighted me even more. This section entitled *Contemporary Critical Approaches* presented a diverse treasure trove of original concise essays, arranged by theme and written by literary and folklore scholars, offering much food for contemplation and reflection for students and scholars alike. As with the first part, the editors provide the reader with an introductory essay suggesting how to navigate these essays. They offer three concise essays on each of the topics of genre, ideology, authorship, reception, and translation, providing concrete examples of the diversity and complexity of the field of folk and fairy tale scholarship: “No one essay stands as the definitive statement on the topic but rather as a contribution to the dialogue – a dialogue that will ideally be perpetuated by the volume’s readers” (486). A quick glance at the essays regarding genre, for example, offers readers extremely diverse perusals by the editors themselves in a look “On Fairy Tales and Their Anthologies,” Gina M. Miele’s “Intertextuality,” and Bill Ellis’s “Fairy Tales as Metacommentary in Manga and Anime.” Other notable contributors who wrote specifically for this volume include Christina Bacchilega, Marina Balina, Anne E. Duggan, Henry Glassie, Elizabeth Wanning Harries, Armando Maggi, Donald Haase, Molly Clark Hillard, Sophie Raynard, Ruth B. Bottingheimer, Nancy L. Canepa, who provided several translations for entries in the first section, and Muhsin

al-Musawi. The anthology concludes with notes on the contributors and a bibliography of sources for the tales.

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