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***Re-Orienting the Fairy Tale: Contemporary Adaptations across Cultures*, edited by Mayako Murai and Luciana Cardi**

Nada Kujundžić
Independent researcher

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Tolkien's work, Costabile points to Fëanor as Nietzsche's 'Superman'—the argument hinges on the concept that both Tolkien and Nietzsche conceive of mankind as "power-sick" (74). Nietzsche's understanding of his imaginary Zarathustra, Moses, and St Paul are each held up against Fëanor in turn and the parallels demonstrated between God's role in Moses's and Fëanor's undertakings is particularly engaging.

Costabile does address Tolkien's own statements regarding the capitalisation of Lord as applied to Morgoth and Sauron, but concludes by asserting the view implicit in every contribution to this collection: that Tolkien's own Christian and Catholic views "should not constitute a reason to forbid any different reading in the applicability of a literary work" (80).

This is a very fitting end way to end this volume. Each contribution attempts to offer a new avenue into reading Tolkien's works and may well stimulate a more varied and nuanced approach to reading spirituality in Tolkien. While this volume may run into challenges from those who insist the only 'correct' reading is a Christian, if not a Catholic, one, all individuals who are interested in spirituality in Tolkien will benefit from this collection—bearing in mind that those contributions which attempt to reinterpret or redefine Christian concepts may be open to greater scrutiny.

—Alana White

WORKS REFERENCED

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RE-ORIENTING THE FAIRY TALE: CONTEMPORARY ADAPTATIONS ACROSS CULTURES. Mayako Murai and Luciana Cardi, eds. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2020. 432 p. ISBN 9780814345368. \$34.99.

A COMMON CRITICISM DIRECTED AT THE RAPIDLY FLOURISHING AREA of fairy-tale studies is its Western-centrism, evident in its (until fairly recently) almost exclusive focus on Euro-American storytelling, and subsequent marginalization of non-Western traditions and voices. In an attempt to overcome this limitation, recent years have seen an increase in efforts to expand scholarly horizons so as to include previously overlooked corpora, cultures, languages, geographical areas, media, and authors. *Grimms' Tales around the Globe*, edited by Vanessa Joosen and Gillian Lathey (2014), Mayako Murai's *From Dog Bridegroom to Wolf Girl: Contemporary Japanese Fairy-Tale Adaptations in Conversation with the West* (2015), and especially the expansive and comprehensive *Fairy-Tale World*, edited by Andrew Teverson (2019), are but a few notable titles which call for a de-centralization of both the discipline and the

(Western) fairy-tale canon by highlighting non-Western storytelling contexts and the stories they produce, as well as their responses to and adaptations of Western classics, such as the Grimms's tales. The recently published edited volume *Re-Orienting the Fairy Tale: Contemporary Adaptations across Cultures* continues this trend by providing a model for a more inclusive and diverse fairy-tale scholarship. The titular re-orientation is expressed in multiple forms as contributions to the volume—based on the presentations and lectures given at the 2017 international conference held at Kanagawa University in Japan—urge readers to look beyond the (narrow) Western canon, view familiar material through novel theoretical and methodological lenses, and even reconsider the very meaning and cross-cultural appropriateness of the term *fairy tale*, which has itself “led to the reinforcement of the cultural authority of Western narrative traditions” (7).

In their introduction, editors Mayako Murai and Luciana Cardi describe the volume's twofold aim to “disorient” the occidental foundations of fairy-tale scholarship and “re-orient” it into a more global discipline (2). As exemplified by the individual contributions to the volume, this goal hinges on challenging the supposed universality of the fairy-tale genre as well as the heretofore dominant Western tradition not only by considering non-Western narratives, but also (and, perhaps, even more so) by analyzing them within the specific sociocultural, historical, and linguistic contexts that produced them, rather than “only in relation to a Euro-American canonic discourse” (3). In addition to shifting the focus to previously marginalized voices and perspectives, the editors argue, it is essential to develop novel, “decentering approaches” which span disciplines and media, as well as a new vocabulary and methods that are better suited to analyzing non-Western traditions (4). Organized into three thematic parts, the volume's 14 contributions (not counting the aforementioned introduction) provide models for such analyses and approaches, as well as the dis-/re-orienting project in general.

As its title indicates, the four texts included in the volume's first section, “Disorienting Cultural Assumptions,” are dedicated to the first of the book's two aims. By exploring interactions between the Western and the non-Western, the contributions successfully demonstrate how moving beyond the narrowly defined Western boundaries not only brings into focus a plethora of new and exciting material, but also opens different avenues of thinking about familiar stories. The opening text by Cristina Bacchilega considers fairy tales across cultures and media as “events positioned, produced, and received in specific locations and times” (15). The author is primarily interested in how visual artists and contemporary writers such as Neil Gaiman and Toni Morrison use fairy tales and fantasy to examine power relations, social hierarchies, (in)justice, and inequalities. *kuʻualoha hoʻomanawanui* provides an

illuminating overview of Hawaiian oral traditions, historically contextualized in a way which highlights their gradual silencing within settler colonialism. Special focus is on traditional tales (*mo'olelo*) about the demigod Maui and the ways in which they have been reclaimed by the Indigenous peoples and revitalized in (among others) graphic novel and stage reimaginings. At the center of Roxane Hughes's article is the role fairy tales and their adaptations play in constructing ethnic identity. Her analysis of two 1980s American adaptations of Yexian, a ninth-century Chinese variant of "Cinderella," demonstrates how cultural and ethnic values of the Chinese tale were supplanted by references to "Cinderella" variants more familiar to the target audience, primarily those by the Grimms and Charles Perrault. Natsumi Ikoma offers an inspired interpretation of Angela Carter's short story "The Loves of Lady Purple," traditionally viewed as a retelling of Perrault's "Sleeping Beauty." By identifying strong influences of the performative and literary traditions of Japan in the story, Ikoma exposes the limitations of a Western perspective, revealing the various cultural interactions that give birth to stories.

The four texts included in the second section, "Exploring New Uses," discuss novel ways of utilizing fairy tales in adult- and child-oriented entertainment and education, especially in the form of adaptations across media. The first two chapters address the educational context: professional storyteller Hatsue Nakawaki's exploration of Japanese tales (*mukashibanashi*) with active heroines serves to highlight the importance of traditional fairy tales in children's education and the need for stories with more progressive gender roles and positive portrayals of socially marginalized groups such as children and the elderly, while Shuli Barzilai demonstrates how picturebook adaptations of the story of the three little pigs can serve as creative pedagogical tools for teaching students literary theory. Aleksandra Szugajew's analysis of contemporary live-action fairy-tale films aimed at adult audiences identifies two strategies prevalent in these self-proclaimed "dark" versions of fairy tales: appeal to the origin (both in terms of the story and its "dark" origins, and the characters and their backgrounds) and appeal to darkness. Often dismissed as unworthy of scholarly consideration, Szugajew argues for the importance of studying popular films such as *Snow White and the Huntsman* (2012) and *Hansel and Gretel: Witch Hunters* (2013), because, she claims, they reflect "the values of modern society and global culture" (209) as well as "the goals our global community sets for itself" (225). The section closes with another study of fairy-tale film, Pablo Berger's *Blancanieves* (2012), which Nieves Moreno Redondo views as a means of deconstructing both stereotypes about Spain (passion, violence, bull fighting) and stereotypes prevalent in Spanish cinematography (the *españolada* genre), and ultimately exploring "the power of the image in the formation of national identities and cultural assumptions" (253).

The final section, "Promoting Alternative Ethics and Aesthetics", brings together six contributions which call for interdisciplinary research by proposing novel approaches to interpreting the fairy tale, borrowed from different disciplines, and illustrate the importance of considering appropriate sociocultural contexts. Vanessa Joosen highlights the considerable potential of age studies for fairy-tale research, since, she believes, "analyses of age can help scholars distinguish between fairy-tale traditions in different countries and regions, and help them explore and explain what is specific to these traditions" (269). Adopting the lens of childhood and film studies, Michael Brodski examines Western and non-Western live-action adaptations of *Pinocchio* and "Hansel and Gretel" which challenge the traditional notion of childhood innocence and passivity. Such a viewpoint, he claims, not only reveals the nuances of children and childhood, but also promotes our understanding of the different, culturally dependent processes of socializing children. The following three texts deal with different aspects of Japanese culture. Lucy Fraser's exploration of the reception and adaptations of *Alice in Wonderland* in Japan (specifically, how Japanese girls' culture appropriated Carroll's work) reveals a fruitful interaction between the East and West, wherein Carroll's work is reinterpreted and reimagined by Japanese artists, and transported back to the West in novel and creative guises. The existence of such lively connections serves to dispel "tired Orientalist notions of mimicry and mere aspiration to the West" (329). Masafumi Monden demonstrates how anime series (specifically, *Princess Tutu*) challenge the tropes we have come to associate with the traditional fairy tale, such as passive heroines, female competition, clear-cut black-and-white characterization, and happy endings. The contribution by Katsuhiko Suganuma shifts the focus to a medium that has so far largely remained outside the scope of fairy-tale studies: popular music. Taking an anecdotal approach, Suganuma reads the story of the career of the Japanese female band Princess Princess, as well as the texts of their songs, as fairy tales, revealing the queer potential of what has long been viewed as a predominantly heteronormative genre (heterosexual marriage being an almost indispensable ingredient of the proverbial happily ever after). The section and the volume as a whole close with Daniela Kato's argument for eco-centric readings of fairy tales, with a special focus on plant life, exemplified through a reading of the different locations (plantation, garden, forest) featured in Angela Carter's short story "Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest." Kato's ecofeminist reading, reliant largely on multispecies ethnography and feminist theory, pays special attention to the forest as a space which problematizes the traditional nature-culture dichotomy.

Re-Orienting the Fairy Tale does what any good scholarly publication should do: raises important questions, presents novel ideas and sound research, and provides readers with ample food for thought. Its gaze is turned both

outward and inward: on the one hand, it pushes the boundaries of current fairy-tale scholarship, calling for and successfully exemplifying greater (linguistic, cultural, geographical, etc.) scope, while critically re-examining the foundations of that same scholarship, challenging its Western-centrism and questioning the universal applicability of its key concepts. Despite their somewhat uneven quality—some papers being more thought-provoking and thought-through than others being an inevitable drawback of this type of publication—the contributions in this stimulating volume live up to the ambitious project outlined in the introduction by bringing forth much novelty, both in terms of under-researched (and often under-appreciated) texts and media, and fruitful interdisciplinary dialogues. In this way, they open new avenues of thinking, and argue for more comprehensive transmedia and transcultural analyses while simultaneously providing their possible blueprints, thus promoting a more comprehensive, comparative, and truly global fairy-tale scholarship.

—Nada Kujundžić



GEORGE MACDONALD'S CHILDREN'S FANTASIES AND THE DIVINE IMAGINATION. Colin Manlove. Cambridge UK: The Lutterworth Press, 2019. 140 p. 9780718895549. £16.00 / Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2019. 140 p. 9781532668494. \$20.00.

SCHOLARLY AND ACCESSIBLE, *George MacDonald's Children's Fantasies and the Divine Imagination* by Colin Manlove is an enjoyable, easy read with numerous insights about several of MacDonald's fantasies dating from the 1860s to 1882. Manlove introduces the book with some background on MacDonald, fantasy, and the imagination. As a creative source, imagination turns ideas into images, as in, it "'gives form to thought'" (8). "For MacDonald, [the imagination] is clearly a part of the mind different from the intellect" (10) and "originates in God" (12), hence, the reference to the divine imagination in the book's title. Manlove evaluates MacDonald's usage of imagination in select fantasies for children, beginning with the shorter fairy tales in chapter 2 and moving to MacDonald's longer works for the next four chapters.

MacDonald's earlier fairy tales such as "The Light Princess" (1864) and "The Golden Key" (1867) show different aspects of the imagination and the characters' experiences of it, along with how it can be either good or bad. Manlove spends more time on MacDonald's four lengthier fantasies for children by homing in on an aspect of the imagination in each story. Chapter 3 discusses how the imagination is *in the world* in *At the Back of the North Wind* (1870). In one