une identité et un visage opérant une coupure relativement brusque avec l'esprit "Ancien Régime". Cependant son analyse, si intéressante soit-elle, aurait gagné sans doute à être transcrite dans une langue, un rythme et une méthode d'exposition un rien moins académiques. Si elle manie souvent à merveille sa documentation en mêlant les éléments théoriques avec des anecdotes et des détails concrets illustrant parfois de façon poignante les problèmes exposés, à certains moments son souci de scientificité nous semble — pas toujours utilement — alourdir le texte. Il nous semble aussi qu'elle n'entre pas assez vite dans le coeur de son sujet et que ses longues explications du début, par exemple, descriptions élaborées des pratiques successorales ou commentaires sur le statut des sages-femmes, sont superflues dans le cadre des *Petits Innocents*. Ces passages nous donnent parfois l'impression d'appartenir plutôt à d'autres recherches qui auraient dû faire l'objet d'articles distincts.

Toutefois, ces moments plus faibles n'empêchent pas la lecture des *Petits Innocents* de demeurer intéressante puisque cette étude nous retient toujours par la découverte d'un aspect de notre histoire sociale qui sait nous en apprendre encore sur notre identité.

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PACIFIC COAST ADVENTURE

Cry to the night wind, T.H. Smith. Viking Kestrel, 1986. 160 pp. $12.95 cloth. ISBN 0-670-80750-8.

Combining elements of an animal story with an adventure, two major recreational reading interest categories of middle school readers, Smith has created a tale which should enjoy a sustained audience. In 1797, eleven-year-old David Spencer has already spent six months aboard *H.M.S. Langley*, a sailing vessel captained by his father, and faces another year before the ship again docks in England. Captain Spencer is almost a stranger to his son, for the father's naval career has taken him on a series of voyages each lasting 20 to 30 months. He has now decided, over his wife's wishes, to take David on this voyage, to survey the mysterious west coast of North America. Used as a form of officers' cabin boy, David is isolated from the

remainder of the 40 man crew which is composed of a combination of regular sailors and others pressed into service from such unsavory places as London's prisons. Capt. Spencer's communicated expectations to his son are ambiguous: at one moment he will admonish David "to act like a man", and then he will direct him "to act his age".

When the ship anchors in an inlet off the coast of present day British Columbia, David hopes to get ashore or join the survey longboats. Instead, he is confined to the *Langley* where he amuses himself first by befriending a baby seal while swimming and then by teaching the animal to do tricks. Greater excitement presents itself when three sailors, left aboard to clean the ship under the direction of a single officer, mutiny and try to take David as a hostage. Unknown to them, David has swum ashore with the seal; but his apparent safety is illusory for he is captured by hostile Indians. Taken to their village, he becomes the centre of a power struggle between the young chief Tuklit and the old Shaman. Tuklit wants to make David a slave but the old Shaman claims that David's blue eyes, yellow hair and white skin indicate that he is really the Spirit of the Seal, and that great harm would befall the village should Tuklit treat the Spirit Child in such a shameful way. The Shaman's interpretation prevails when the little seal which has followed David appears and performs at David's commands. The shrewd chief decides to capitalize on his tribe's good fortune in being chosen as the home of the Spirit Child. He holds a gigantic potlatch honouring the Spirit Child and demonstrating to all the other tribes Tulkit's great power and wealth.

David's hiatus of happiness is interrupted when one of the potlatch guests wounds the seal so that the animal does not appear when David is supposed to perform for the assembled throng. Humiliated before the very people he had intended to impress, Tulkit determines to kill David by sacrificing him to the killer whale. The last portion of the book consists of "the chase" and ultimately "the rescue" by David's father, with a farewell assist from the seal. In an epilogue, the three mutineers briefly appear as slaves of another tribe, leaving open the possibility of a sequel.

The story's fast pace will cause most readers to overlook the fact that the author really has not sufficiently developed the relationship between the seal and David, given the role this supposed animal-human bonding is to play later in the plot, and has overused coincidence to bring Captain Spencer's ships, through an electrical storm, to the very inlet where David was lost. The book jacket does not give any real indication of the period setting or the plot. The book's title, for all its hauntingly mysterious quality, is tenuously connected to the plot. If there is to be a sequel, it is to be hoped that Smith keeps all the action aboard ship, for in that setting both his dialogue and description have an authentic flavour and come alive.

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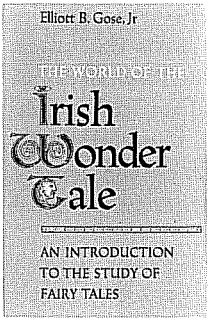
FAIRY TALES FROM IRELAND



The world of the Irish wonder tale: An introduction to the study of fairy tales, Elliott B. Gose, Jr. University of Toronto Press, 1985. 228 pp. $30.00, $12.95, cloth, paper. ISBN 08020-5646-6, -8020-6585-6.

Professor Gose approaches his subject by emphasizing the deep psychological meaning of simple narratives. His study is disorganized because of his sporadic concern with anthropology, comparative religion and folklore and because of his unsustained relation of the wonder tale to myth and archetypal criticism, but his insistence that psychic integration motivates the wonder tale is compelling. Still, readers of this journal might find some of his assumptions questionable. He distinguishes absolutely between the psychology of children and adults, holding that the Irish tales belong to a tradition significant to grown-ups alone. His paraphrases and analyses testify that he puts adult psychic integration above all else. Although he describes the tales' audience as poverty-stricken and non-literate, he discounts social criticism: it seems that, in their creation of psychic freedom, the tales are undetermined by social circumstance. Circular logic, unexamined assumptions, and a disjointed reliance on interdisciplinary ideas detract from the psychological focus.

To prove that fantasy provides answers to real problems, Gose presents "The King of Erin and the Queen of the Lonesome Island." It concerns a king whose unfaithful wife undermines his rule. Unaware of her infidelity, he fathers on a queen of the otherworld a son who brings back from that realm a wife who displaces the adulterous queen. The son renews his father's rule because he is both moral and instinctual: he also fathers a child in the otherworld who helps solve problems there. That Gose's psychological concerns tend to be moralistic is clear when paraphrasing "The Fisherman's Son and the Gruagach of Tricks," This tale describes a son who, after being taken away by a shapechanging mentor, returns home to make his father's life comfortable but is so fixed on shape-changing that