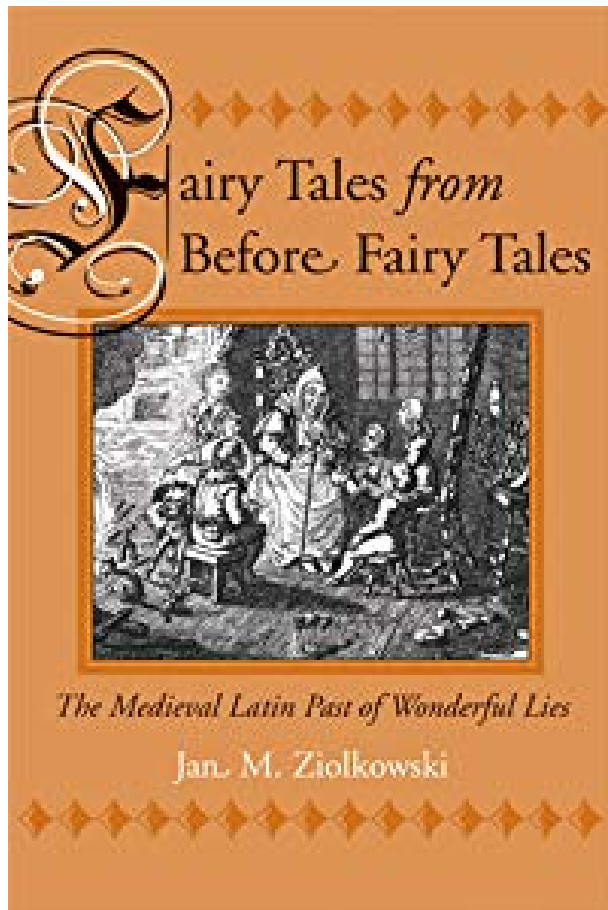


Fairy Tales from Before Fairy Tales: The Medieval Latin Past of Wonderful Lies



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When did fairy tales begin? What qualifies as a fairy tale? Is a true fairy tale oral or literary? Or is a fairy tale determined not by style but by content? To answer these and other questions, Jan M. Ziolkowski not only provides a comprehensive overview of the theoretical debates about fairy tale origins but includes an extensive discussion of the relationship of the fairy tale to both the written and oral sources. Ziolkowski offers interpretations of a sampling of the tales in order to sketch the complex connections that existed in the Middle Ages between oral folktales and their written equivalents, the variety of uses to which the writers applied the stories, and the diverse relationships between the medieval texts and the expressions of the same tales in the "classic" fairy tale collections of the nineteenth century. In so doing, Ziolkowski explores stories that survive in both versions associated with, on the one hand, such standards of the nineteenth-century fairy tale as the Brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen, and Carlo Collodi and, on the other, medieval Latin, demonstrating that the literary fairy tale owes a great debt to the Latin literature of the medieval period. Jan M. Ziolkowski is the Arthur Kingsley Porter Professor of Medieval Latin at Harvard University.