

SIR ORFEO, DEATH AND *KATÁBISIS* *

When one thinks of descent, *katábisis*, the tale of Orpheus¹ often comes to mind. It is the story of a lover who travels to the depths of Underworld in search of his beloved, only to lose her when doubt in the duplicitous Hades, befalls him². The myth of Orpheus holds a special place in the medieval world³. It is carried through the centuries by authors wishing to explore the morals present within the narrative, and its chivalric message made it perfect for medieval adaptation. This paper will examine the elements of descent present within one of the Orphic lai⁴ produced in the middle ages⁵, *Sir Orfeo*. The death of Heurodis, the humility of Orfeo and variants from the original tale will also be taken into consideration.

* I would like to thank Jean-Michel Roessli for his suggestions and input for this article.

1. The classical versions of this tale recounted by Virgil, who made the unhappy ending of the Orpheus myth famous, and Ovid remained central in the medieval mind and can be considered the “canonical” accounts of the narrative.

2. For studies on the Orpheus myth see J. WARDEN (1982), C. SEGAL (1989), M. O. LEE (1965).

3. See, for example, J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000) [1970]. For a French translation of Friedman’s work, see J. B. FRIEDMAN (1999). For German studies on the Orpheus myth in the middle ages, see K. HEITMANN (1963a), and K. HEITMANN (1963b).

4. A lai, or lay, is a lyrical narrative poem which generally presents a story of romance or adventure. Some of the best examples can be found in the works of Marie de France (1154-1189), as well as lyrical poetry from Brittany. Drawing on these lais, Middle English authors and minstrels recounted tales of chivalry in the same manner.

5. Various Orphic tales existed in the Medieval and Renaissance periods, while *Sir Orfeo* will be examined here, Robert Henryson’s *Orpheus and Eurydice*, written around 1470, is another good example of a medieval rendition of the classical story. For an annotated version of Henryson’s poem see R. L. KINDRICK (1997). For studies on Henryson’s work see Beatrice MAMELI (2012); Joanna MARTIN (2008); K. R. R. GROS LOUIS (1966).

The tale of *Sir Orfeo*'s and its context

The Middle English lai *Sir Orfeo*, written around 1325 CE ⁶, diverges from its Greco-Roman predecessor in various ways. It tells the tale of King Orfeo and his wife Queen Heurodis. While out one day in May with her ladies in waiting ⁷, Heurodis falls asleep in the shadow of a grafted tree, *Ympe-Tre*. There she dreams of a fairy king and his hunting party. The fairy king warns Heurodis that she will be taken back with him, on the morrow, to his kingdom. Waking in terror Heurodis goes mad and ravages her body, clawing at her face (77-82) ⁸. Fearing for her safety and state of mind, her ladies in waiting return to their queen's court and summon aid. Hearing of his wife's condition Orfeo rushes to her promising to protect his queen from her would be captor. Knowing her fate to be set, the Queen warns her husband that the fairy king will take her no matter what the cost, or where she may be, even if it means harming her physical body and tearing her limbs (165-174).

As promised, though under heavy guard, Heurodis is stolen away from Orfeo and the king loses his beloved. Orfeo, lamenting the loss of his queen, gives up his kingdom, appoints a steward and instructs him to hold a parliament to elect a new monarch should he fear the true king has died (201-217). Sir Orfeo abandons all wealth and goes into the woods bringing with him only his harp, as he is a great musician (241-248). Ten years later Orfeo spots his lost wife hawking with a group of fairies. Observing them from afar, he is able to locate the entrance to the fairy world, the face of a rock. Orfeo is adamant in his purpose, he will reclaim his wife. Entering the land of fairy, Orfeo makes his way to the throne of the fairy king. There he plays his harp with great skill and is offered any reward he desires by the king of fairies. Orfeo asks for Heurodis but the fairy king at first refuses, only to concede shortly after due to his promise of recompense (469-473). Unlike the Virgilian version of the tale there is no trap or snare set by the fairy king. Orfeo and Heurodis are reunited; they return to their kingdom and take back the crowns they lost (593-596).

Why such a divergence from the original story? Who is the fairy king? Where is the original *katâbasis* and *anâbasis*, descent and ascent? In order to understand the changes made to the story it is first important to under-

6. J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 175. For a critical edition of *Sir Orfeo* see Anne LASKAYA and Eve SALISBURY (1995), who not only provide detailed footnotes on the interpretations of the lyrics of *Sir Orfeo*, but they also present modern diction for various Middle English words used. For a study on Celtic influence in *Sir Orfeo* see Marie-Thérèse BROULAND (1990).

7. May is a time when fairies are particularly active in the medieval world.

8. All references of lyrical lines from *Sir Orfeo* correspond to those found in Anne LASKAYA and Eve SALISBURY (1995).

stand what Orpheus represented to the medievals. While the Greco-Roman world had their tales of Orpheus, Judaism and Christianity amalgamated into their belief system the classical world in which they grew. Similarities between Orpheus and King David⁹ were soon discovered. David was from the line of patriarchs, while Orpheus was descendent of Apollo¹⁰. Both men played music; both had power over death¹¹. The similarities between David and Orpheus can be seen in medieval depictions of both men, oftentimes in similar surroundings, with animals listening to their songs and enthroned as monarchs. The lines between the two men became blurred. Orpheus to the medieval was also a king, hence the birth of King Orfeo¹².

While *Sir Orfeo* gives a contemporary account of the Orpheus myth, for example the fairies are out falconing when we first meet them; it also builds on prior alterations to the original tale. King Alfred's translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* centers the Orpheus story in a romantic frame. It is placed in fairy tale time, and Orpheus, losing Eurydice, retreats into the forest to sit and wait for his wife¹³. Whether or not the *Orfeo* poet knew of King Alfred's Boethius translation, or the Orphic tale recounted by Ovid, is not clear. John Block Friedman, however, believes some knowledge of these texts may have existed, yet errors point to a limited knowledge¹⁴. For example, Orfeo is a descendant of King Pluto and King Juno¹⁵. These errors show limited knowledge of primary texts, but support a filtered knowledge, one which was passed down through other tales or *lais*¹⁶ and could have been sources for the *Orfeo* poet. Poems, authored by Thierry of St. Trond, Godfrey of Reims, and some others, did ex-

9. Links between Christ, David and Orpheus also exist, especially with regards to their abilities to overcome death.

10. For the examination of the *interpretatio Judaica* and the *interpretatio Christiana* see J.-M. ROESSLI (1999b), p. 285-310.

11. J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 148.

12. J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 155.

13. J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 161.

14. J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 189.

15. The fairy king's role as Pluto, Hades, seems to be overlooked by the poet. There is also confusion with the sex of Juno, a female, being identified as a king.

16. There exist, for example, several Breton *lais* which also tell the tale of Orpheus. The *Lai d'Orpheus*, though referenced in *Sir Orfeo* is in fact a missing manuscript which may have influenced the *Orfeo* poet's work. *Sir Orfeo* in itself acted as inspiration for a Scottish ballad, composed in the sixteenth century, entitled *King Orfeo*. For a modern French translation of this ballad, see J.-M. ROESSLI (1999b), p. 303-306.

ist which highlighted the romantic elements in the Orpheus story ¹⁷, and could have been used sources.

Death of Heurodis in *Sir Orfeo*

While Orpheus sets out in search for Eurydice in the classical versions of this tale, Orfeo does not actively search for his queen. In fact he is under the assumption that he will possibly never find her again. He warns his steward that he should call a parliament when he believes the king has died, in order to elect a new monarch.

And when ye understond that y be spent, Make you than a parlement, And chese you a neue king (215-217).

[And when you understand that I have been spent, make you then a parliament, and chose yourselves a new king ¹⁸.]

Orfeo clearly believes his wife is gone forever, and her departure from the human world supports his understanding of the situation.

Heurodis' first vision of the fairy king occurs under an *ympe-tre*, a grafted tree. These trees are generally fruit trees and are linked to erotic and other worldly experiences. Arthurian legends, for example, have Lancelot abducted by sorceresses while sleeping under an apple tree ¹⁹. Lancelot, Guinevere and Heurodis all disappear under an *ympe-tre* ²⁰. Guinevere and Heurodis were both Maying when they disappeared ²¹. Curtis R. H. Jirsa, drawing on the history of arboreal folklore, illustrates how sleeping under certain trees could be detrimental. Examining Pliny's *Naturalis historia* and Lucan's *De bello ciuili*, we see that sleeping under a yew tree can cause death ²². Bartholomaeus Angelicus' *De proprietatibus rerum* warns of "the yews' noxious shadow to those who slumber beneath it" ²³. Angelicus' works were in fact translated into English by John Trevisa in 1398 and therefore the *Orfeo* poet would most likely have been aware of these

17. For a more detailed account of these tales see J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 164-165. See also A. BOUTÉMY (1947), A. BOUTÉMY (1949), P. DRONKE (1962). There are also various medieval poems related to Orpheus found in P. DRONKE (1965-1966). Finally, for a more recent study of Godfrey of Reims, see J.-Y. TILLIETTE (2002).

18. In my translations of *Sir Orfeo* I have attempted to remain as close to the original meaning as possible, and therefore, have only "modernized" the language. In certain cases I have deferred to Anne Laskaya and Eve Salisbury's diction of words all of which can be found in Anne LASKAYA and Eve SALISBURY (1995). For a poetical rendering of the lay of *Sir Orfeo* see J. R. R. TOLKIEN (1975).

19. C. R. H. JIRSA (2008), p. 142.

20. K. M. BRIGGS (1970), p. 81.

21. K. M. BRIGGS (1970), p. 82.

22. C. R. H. JIRSA (2008), p. 144.

23. C. R. H. JIRSA (2008), p. 145.

dangers, perhaps not through direct knowledge of the text but through common understanding of the time. It is also important to note that these warnings are not connected solely to yew trees, but to others as well ²⁴. For Jirsa we should not connect the *ympe-tre* with any specific tree, nor should we claim the *Orfeo* poet had direct knowledge of Pliny. Instead we should examine this lai in light of the common knowledge of the time ²⁵.

Heurodis not only sleeps under the tree, which can be lethal to her, she naps at “undrentide” ²⁶ (65). John Block Friedman states that “vndrentide” or “undrentide” is linked to the morning by the Oxford English Dictionary. However, he also points out that in Middle English it is understood to be between nine in the morning to three in the afternoon. Furthermore, Psalm 90:3-6 speaks of a noonday demon ²⁷. This leads us to believe that “undrentide” is most likely noon, and the fairy king could possibly be associated with the demon referenced in the Psalm.

With this framework of the time and location of Heurodis’ disappearance, the threats made by the fairy king are better understood. When the queen has her first vision of the fairy king he warns her that he will take her to the fairy world no matter what.

*Look, dame, tomorrow you will be
right here under the ympe-tre,
and then you shall go with us
and live with us evermore.
And if you hinder us,
where you will be, we will get you
and your limbs will be all torn
that nothing shall help you;
And though you will be so torn,
you still will be born away with us* ²⁸.

These threats prove to be true, for even with Orfeo and his guards around, Heurodis is still abducted by the fairy king on the following day. The queen was taken into the fairy world because she slept under the *ympe-tre* at noon.

The text presents us, however, with a perplexing situation. What is the fairy world? Is this similar to the Underworld? Is it hell or purgatory? John

24. C. R. H. JIRSA (2008), p. 145. Chestnut trees are also listed amongst the dangerous trees which could cause harm to those who remain in their shadows.

25. C. R. H. JIRSA (2008), p. 146.

26. J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 188.

27. For a detailed examination of the Noonday demon, see R. CAILLOIS (1991), A. SOLOMON (2001), Kathleen NORRIS (2008).

28. *‘Loke, dame, tomorwe thatow be / Right here under this ympe-tre, / And than thou schalt with ous go / And live with ous evermo. / And yif thou makest ous y-let, / Whar thou be, thou worst y-fet, / And tofore thine limes al / That nothing help the no schal; / And thei thou best so toturn, / Yete thou worst with ous y-born’* (165-174).

Block Friedman argues that the fairy world in *Sir Orfeo* is similar to the Celtic Otherworld, a realm we can gain access to from mist, a river or a “fairy barrow mound”²⁹. This is evident by the way Orfeo enters into the fairy world, through the face of a rock. The fairy world is not purgatory as those inhabiting this realm do not seem to be working towards their salvation. Instead they exist as they did at the moment of their death.

*Some stood without their heads,
And some had no arms,
And some had wounds throughout their bodies,
And some lay mad and bound
And some armed on horses sat,
And some strangled as they ate,
And some were drowned in the water
And some were shrivelled with fire,
Wives there lay in the childbed,
Some dead and others driven mad*³⁰.

Jirsa finds evidence of the identity of these suffering individuals in Jacob Grimm’s *Deutsche Mythologie*³¹. There we find the notion of the “Taken.” Humans “who suffer a violent death before their fated time [and] join the “furious host”: a company of fairies or spirits doomed to ride through mortal realms, much like the two fairy hunts that Orfeo himself witnesses”³².

While the inhabitants of the fairy realm all seem to be suffering from serious injuries, why is it that Orfeo sees Heurodis sleeping under a tree in the Otherworld?

*There he saw his own wife,
Dame Heurodis, his dear life
Sleeping under an ympe-tre
– by her clothes he knew that it was she*³³.

The answer comes from Jirsa’s interpretation of the arboreal folklore. Heurodis died young and before her fated time. She had fallen asleep, at undrentide, in the shadow of a noxious *ympe-tre*. It is only fitting that Orfeo finds her, as he did all the other deceased, in the position she held in her final moments of life.

29. J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 191.

30. *Sum stode withouten hade, / And sum non armes nade, / And sum thurth the bodi hadde wounde, / And sum lay wode, y-bounde, / And sum armed on hors sete, / And sum astrangled as thai ete; / And sum were in water adreynt, / And sum with fire al forschreynt. / Wives ther lay on childe bedde, / Sum ded and sum awedde* (391-400).

31. As cited by C. R. H. JIRSA (1966), p. 918-920.

32. C. R. H. JIRSA (1966), p. 148.

33. *Ther he seighe his owen wiif, / Dame Heurodis, his lef liif, / Slepe under an ympe-tre - / Bi her clothes he knewe that it was he* (405-408).

Katábasis in Sir Orfeo

Sir Orfeo not only changes the Underworld of the “canonical” Orpheus tale to the fairy world, it also rewrites the ending. Orfeo manages to find and return to his kingdom with his wife. Yet, his journey to the realm of fairies is anything but downward. In fact, Orfeo moves into a new realm to find his queen, a horizontal movement. This does not, however, mean no descent occurs. For Orfeo does indeed descend from his throne into the wilderness. While we expect Orfeo to go in search for his wife, eventually leading him to the Underworld, as occurred in Virgil’s and Ovid’s accounts of the story, he does not actively search her out. Instead the king gives up his crown and goes into the wild. Orfeo’s self-imposed exile may be his way of being with Heurodis. He gives up the life they shared the moment she is taken from him³⁴. “By humbly abandoning his material pleasures and donning the mantle of a pilgrim, Orfeo indicates his acceptance of the loss of Heurodis and his recognition of the proper role of man on earth”³⁵. His rejection of the world “asserts to the universe the dignity of man and the strength of man’s love – love based not on passion, but on charity”³⁶. We should take note of the end of the lai as well; Orfeo is not triumphant when he regains Heurodis. Instead he is grateful, bending his knee to the fairy king and leaving with his wife.

*He kneeled down and thanked him swiftly.
His wife he took by the hand
and he was swift out of that land,
and he went out of that country –
right as he came, was the way he went*³⁷.

He displays humility.

Orfeo’s humble nature and his willingness to give up all for his lost love, once again shows the *Orfeo* poet may have had access to King Alfred’s translation of Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy*. There Boethius gives us the story of Orpheus. He begins by recounting the origins of Orpheus:

34. K. R. R. GROS LOUIS (1967), p. 249.

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*

37. *He kneeled adoun and thonked him swithe. / His wiif he tok bi the hond, / And dede him swithe out of that lond, / And went him out of that thede - / Right as he come, the way he yede* (472-476).

It happened formerly that there was a harper, in the country called Thrace, which was in Greece. The harper was inconceivably good. His name was Orpheus. He had a very excellent wife, who was called Eurydice³⁸.

Yet, this tale does not end as happily as the Orfeo lai does.

Wellaway! What! Orpheus then led his wife with him, till he came to the boundary of light and darkness. Then went his wife after him. When he came forth into the light, then looked he behind his back towards the woman. Then was she immediately lost to him!³⁹

The moral of the story is highlighted:

This fable teaches every man who desires to fly the darkness of hell, and to come to the light of the true good, that he look not behind him to his old vices, so that he practise them again as fully as he did before⁴⁰.

In the *Consolation of Philosophy* Orpheus represents the νοῦς, mind, while Eurydice is the ἐπιθυμία, desire⁴¹. By turning back on his climb out of the Underworld, Orpheus failed to recognise salvation and that human longing should be directed heavenwards. Orpheus turned his mind away from heaven⁴². Orfeo does not repeat the mistake of his namesake. Upon the loss of his wife, he turns away from the worldly goods and looks to the wilderness. He gives up the pleasures of kingship, which he could have taken solace in after the death of Heurodis. Instead he was willing to give up all for his lost love. From gems and silk to tattered clothes⁴³, Orfeo learnt the lessons of Boethius and won his wife back⁴⁴. The *katábasis* in *Sir Orfeo*, then, is not only a journey into the Otherworld and back, but also a

38. S. FOX (1999), 3:35:6. For a French translation of the Orphic tale in King Alfred's translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* see J.-M. ROESSLI (1999b), p. 299-300.

39. S. FOX (1999), 3:35:6.

40. *Ibid.*

41. This is a simplified explanation of the allegorical representations of Orpheus and Eurydice. For a more detailed account see J.-M. ROESSLI (1999a).

42. J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 180.

43. See *Sir Orfeo* lines 241-248.

44. While Orfeo regained Heurodis, it is important to note that many scholars recognize her demeanor after her "rescue" is far from perfect. She is silent and does not speak a word. In fact, the joyful reunion we expected between Orfeo and his wife is never experienced. Tara Williams points out that the happy reunification occurs instead at the meeting between king and steward and this satisfies our expectations. See Tara WILLIAMS (1970), p. 554-558. Heurodis' lack of voice, especially since she was the central figure of the lai, can be alarming when considering the possible implications. For example, Orfeo and Heurodis never have children. The *Orfeo* poet tells us: *And sethen was king the steward [And afterward the king was the steward] (596)*. Could this imply Heurodis' silence is a larger indicator that her death and resuscitation was not fully successful? After all the line of "King Pluto" and "King Juno" would be broken if the monarchs did not produce an heir. For a study on succession in *Sir Orfeo* see O. FALK (2000), p. 247-274.

spiritual descent; one which takes a man from the height of society to the very bottom of Fortuna's wheel.

Fairy king as Satan?

While the *katábasis* is generally controlled by Orfeo, the fairy king, who plays the role of Hades, and possibly Satan, holds the keys to the *anábasis*, the ascent. Two important elements should be discussed here. Firstly, while Hades places a condition on Orpheus' ascent, do not look back to your wife, the fairy king does not place any conditions on Orfeo's emergence from the fairy realm. This in itself is important, for while the fairy king does at first refuse Orfeo's wish of taking Heurodis back, he relents to ensure his word is kept. "

*The [fairy] king said, "See then it is so,
take her by the hand and go:
"With her I wish that you have bliss" 45.*

The fairy king keeps his word and allows Orfeo to freely leave his kingdom with Heurodis.

The second element is the often cited connection between the fairy king and Satan, or the noonday demon mentioned in the Psalms. John Block Friedman notes that while we may be tempted to link the fairy king with Satan, not much in the poem indicates that we should read it as a Christian allegory⁴⁶. More central, however, is the way in which this fairy king acts. He is not duplicitous, nor is he a breaker of oaths. He promised Orfeo anything he asked for because of the beauty of his music, and though he does at first refuse the request, giving the reader pause, he relents when his honor and word are put into question. The devil would not have given in for fear of a broken promise. This makes it clear that the *Orfeo* poet is placing more emphasis on chivalry and honor than anything else. Orfeo gives up all for his lost wife, a truly chivalrous act, while the fairy king maintains his honor by keeping his word.

Morality is one of the central elements of this lai. The presence of magic highlights to the reader that morality is present, since morality and magic are often linked in medieval literature⁴⁷. The text does two things: it highlights the moral code of the fairies, as seen in the fairy king's interactions with Orfeo⁴⁸, and it encourages moral reactions from the readers⁴⁹.

45. *The king seyð, 'Sethen it is so, / Take hir bi the hond and go; / Of hir ichil thatow be blithe'* (469-471).

46. J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000), p. 190.

47. Tara WILLIAMS (1970), p. 540.

48. Tara WILLIAMS (1970), p. 548.

49. Tara WILLIAMS (1970), p. 541.

Just as Boethius' tale of Orpheus taught us to look away from earthly goods to the Ultimate Good, so too does the *Orfeo* poet direct his readers. "The gallery functions like a mirror, reflecting aspects of chivalric ethics that have not been distorted so much as pressed to the extreme. The scene does not signal that the audience should reject chivalry, but encourages them to ponder its limits and pitfalls; in short, the gallery may induce readers to wonder whether the ethics of chivalry are also moral"⁵⁰. Chivalry and morality are the main elements of the relationship between Orfeo, Heurodis and the cryptic fairy king.

Conclusion

Sir Orfeo should not be seen as a deviation from the Greco-Roman original Orpheus myth, but instead a variation of the tale. It is a story for the fourteenth century medieval, one which amalgamated everyday life with legends of the past. It taught morality, chivalry and a lesson of humility. Orfeo humbles himself, descending from the heights of kingship, in grief for his lost love. This very act of humility allows the king to eventually find and regain his queen. A lofty monarch may have attempted to seize his consort from the hands of the fairy king, possibly even going to war for her return, yet Orfeo's humble nature enabled him to succeed in his quest. It was not through wealth, arms or strength that Heurodis was saved. Instead it was through music and gratitude. The *katábasis* of *Sir Orfeo* takes place on a personal level.

Joseph VIETRI
Concordia University, Montréal
joseph.vietri@concordia.ca

50. Tara WILLIAMS (1970), p. 552; Tara Williams also makes the case that upon seeing this morality in the fairy realm, Orfeo utilizes his knowledge of chivalry to gain the upper hand in negotiating with the fairy king. "*Sir Orfeo* seems to encourage [...] the cross-cultural encounter between Orfeo and the fairies, which challenges the "norms" of chivalric ethics. Here again, the diction is key: when Orfeo "biholds" the gallery (387), that verb may call up for the medieval audience what Sarah McNamer describes as "a distinct way of seeing and feeling that is coded simultaneously as an ethical imperative" toward compassion and empathy. I have already suggested that the gallery reveals aspects of the fairies' moral code to Orfeo, who then exploits that knowledge in his negotiations with the king". See Tara WILLIAMS (1970), p. 552.

Works cited

- A. BOUTÉMY (1947): "Trois œuvres inédites de Godefroid de Reims", *Revue du Moyen Âge latin* 3, p. 334-366.
- A. BOUTÉMY (1949): "Une version médiévale inconnue de la légende d'Orphée", in *Hommages à Joseph Bidez et à Franz Cumont* (Collection Latomus, 2), Bruxelles, p. 43-70.
- K. M. BRIGGS (1970): "The Fairies and the Realm of the Dead", *Folklore* 81, 2, p. 81-96.
- Marie-Thérèse BROULAND (1990): *Sir Orfeo : le substrat celtique du lai breton anglais*, Paris.
- R. CAILLOIS (1991): *Les Démons de Midi*, Montpellier.
- P. DRONKE (1962): "The Return of Eurydice", *Classica et Mediaevalia* 23, p. 198-215.
- P. DRONKE (1965-1966): *Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love-Lyric*, 2 vol., Oxford.
- O. FALK (2000): "The Son of Orfeo: Kingship and Compromise in Middle English Romance", *Journal of Medieval and Early Moderns Studies* 30, 2, p. 247-274.
- S. FOX (1999) (transl.): *King Alfred's Translation of Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy*, Cambridge.
- J. B. FRIEDMAN (1999): *Orphée au Moyen Âge* (traduit de l'anglais par J.-M. ROESSLI, avec le concours de Valérie CORDONIER et F.-X. PUTALLAZ) (Vestigia: Pensée antique et médiévale, 25), Paris - Fribourg.
- J. B. FRIEDMAN (2000) [1970]: *Orpheus in the Middle Ages*, New York (first published at Harvard University Press, Cambridge [Mass.], 1970).
- J. GRIMM (1966): *Teutonic Mythology*, translated by J. S. STALLYBRASS, New York.
- K. R. R. GROS LOUIS (1966): "Robert Henryson's Orpheus and Eurydice and the Orpheus Traditions of the Middle Ages", *Speculum* 41, p. 643-655.
- K. R. R. GROS LOUIS (1967): "The Significance of *Sir Orfeo's* Self-Exile", *The Review of English Studies* 18, 71, p. 245-252.
- K. HEITMANN (1963a): "Orpheus im Mittelalter", *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 45, p. 253-294.
- K. HEITMANN (1963b): "Typen der Deformierung antiker Mythen im Mittelalter. Am Beispiel der Orpheussage", *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* 19, p. 45-77.
- C. R. H. JIRSA (2008): "In the Shadow of the Ympe-Tre: Arboreal Folklore in *Sir Orfeo*", *English Studies* 89, 2, p. 141-151.
- R. L. KINDRICK (ed.) (1997): *The Poems of Robert Henryson*, Kalamazoo (MI).
- Anne LASKAYA, Eve SALISBURY (1995): *The Middle English Breton Lays*, Kalamazoo (MI).

- M. O. LEE (1965): "Orpheus and Eurydice: Myth, Legend, Folklore", *Classica et Mediaevalia* 26, p. 402-412.
- Beatrice MAMELI (2012): "Robert Henryson and His Orpheus and Eurydice", *Journal of the Northern Renaissance* 4, p. 1-33.
- Joanna MARTIN (2008): "Robert Henryson's 'Traite of Orpheus Kyng'", in Joanna MARTIN, *Kingship and Love in Scottish Poetry, 1424-1540*, Aldershot, p. 79-102.
- Kathleen NORRIS (2008): *Acedia and Me: A Marriage, Monks and Writer's Life*, London.
- J.-M. ROESSLI (1999a): "Nature et signification du mythe d'Orphée dans le *De Consolatione Philosophiae* de Boèce", *Archivum Bobiense* 21, p. 27-72.
- J. M. ROESSLI (1999b): "Postface. De l'Orphée juif à l'Orphée écossais: Bilan et perspectives," in FRIEDMAN (1999), p. 285-350.
- C. SEGAL (1989): *Orpheus: The Myth of the Poet*, Baltimore - London.
- A. SOLOMON (2001): *The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression*, New York.
- J.-Y. TILLIETTE (2002): "Le retour d'Orphée. Réflexions sur la place de Godefroy de Reims dans l'histoire littéraire du XI^e siècle", in M. W. HERREN, C. J. MACDONOUGH, R. G. ARTHUR (ed.), *Latin Culture in the Eleventh Century. Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Medieval Latin Studies, Cambridge, September 9-12, 1998*, Turnhout (Publications of the Journal of Medieval Latin, 5), p. 449-463.
- J. R. R. TOLKIEN (transl.) (1975): *Sir Orfeo*, in C. TOLKIEN (ed.), *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl and Sir Orfeo*, New York, p. 169-190.
- J. WARDEN (ed.) (1982): *Orpheus: The Metamorphosis of a Myth*, Toronto.
- Tara WILLIAMS (1970): "Fairy Magic, Wonder and Morality in *Sir Orfeo*", *Philological Quarterly* 91, 2, p. 537-568.