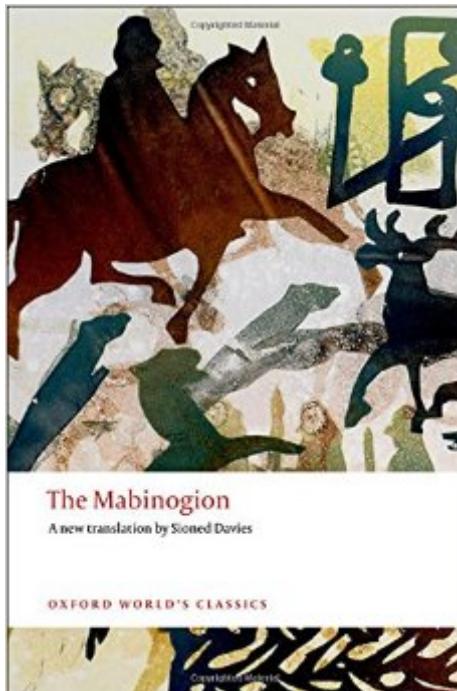


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The Mabinogion (Oxford World's Classics)



Synopsis

Celtic mythology, Arthurian romance, and an intriguing interpretation of British history--these are just some of the themes embraced by the anonymous authors of the eleven tales that make up the Welsh medieval masterpiece known as the *Mabinogion*. They tell of Gwydion the shape-shifter, who can create a woman out of flowers; of Math the magician whose feet must lie in the lap of a virgin; of hanging a pregnant mouse and hunting a magical boar. Dragons, witches, and giants live alongside kings and heroes, and quests of honour, revenge, and love are set against the backdrop of a country struggling to retain its independence. This new translation, the first for thirty years, recreates the storytelling world of medieval Wales and re-invests the tales with the power of performance.

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Book Information

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Customer Reviews

How does this handsomely bound new rendering by Sioned Davies, Chair in Welsh at Cardiff, compare with the standard edition widely used and often praised, Harvard professor Ford's? Will his "30th Anniversary" U of California paperback reissued edition find itself in a dead heat with Davies

in this elegant Oxford U.P. offering? The race may prove a photo finish! I compared their translations of a favorite passage of mine early on in the First Branch, Pwyll's tale. Arawn's just been reunited with his queen after the year's test by unwitting yet steadfast doppelganger Pwyll. She wonders, post-coitally after a long year's lapse, why it's been so long since her husband made love with her. Here's Ford (1977 ed., p. 41) first at the starting line. "Shame on me," she said, "if from the time we went between the sheets there was even pleasure or talk between us or even your facing me--much less anything more than that-- for the past year!" And he thought, "Dear Lord God, it was a unique man, with strong and unwavering friendship that I got for a companion." And then he said to his wife, "Lady," he said, "don't blame me. I swear to God," he said, "I haven't slept with you since a year from last night nor have I lain with you." And he told her the entire adventure. "I confess to God," she said, "as far as fighting temptations of the flesh and keeping true to you goes, you had a solid hold on a fellow." "Lady," he said, "that's just what I was thinking while I was silent with you." "That was only natural," she answered. -- You can feel the hesitant insertion of the teller's dramatic pauses implied with the "saids." These intensify rhythms of the poet's strong, confident prose.

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