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”Crossover fiction” and narrative as therapy: George MacDonald’s *Adela Cathcart*

Abstract: Prior to the publication – famously assisted by George MacDonald and family – of C. L. Dodgson’s (or ‘Lewis Carroll’s’) Alice’s adventures in Wonderland (1865), there was little market for Kunstmärchen or literary fairy-tales in Victorian England. To get his own fairy-tales published, MacDonald had to insert them in the ‘realistic’ frame of his adult novel Adela Cathcart (1864), in which a series of stories (including fairy-tales) are composed and read to a group whose secret purpose is to cure a young woman suffering from the kind of mysterious non-specific illness typical of young Victorian women. The narrator ‘John Smith’, transparently a MacDonald-persona, says of his first contribution (‘The light princess’) that it is ‘a child’s story – a fairy-tale, namely; though I confess I think it fitter for grown than for young children’. This anticipates MacDonald’s later celebrated which virtually provided the slogan for ‘crossover fiction’, about writing ‘for the childlike, whether of five, or fifty, or seventy-five’. This paper will address not only the issues of target audience raised by the frame-narrative, but also the issues raised by the three fairy-tales themselves, each of which is arguably related to a specific stage of life (childhood, adolescence and old age).

The trouble with fairy tales

The early 1860s was not a good time to get literary fairy tales published in England. Although from 1823 onwards there were English versions of Grimms’ *Fairy tales* (as the *Kinder- und hausmärchen* came to be called in Britain), and translations of Andersen’s fairy tales were available from the 1840s, there was little by way of indigenous British *Kunstmärchen* or literary fairy tales in the mid 1800s. One notable exception was John Ruskin’s *The king of the golden river*, published almost as an afterthought in 1851. One of the ironies sur-

rounding George MacDonald's novel *Adela Cathcart* is that, rather bizarrely, Ruskin actually appears in MacDonald's novel, thinly disguised as Adela's aunt, Mrs Cathcart; the latter represents the kind of rigid "evangelical" Christianity in mid-Victorian England which was actively hostile to fairy tales, and which made their publication difficult. With an "insinuating smile", Mrs Cathcart asks the narrator of *Adela Cathcart*, John Smith, who is about to recount "The Light Princess", the first of the fairy tales in the novel, whether he approves of fairy tales for children. Smith – clearly a persona of MacDonald himself – replies that fairy-tales, of which he is confident God approves, are "not for children alone ... but for everybody that can relish them" (MacDonald 1994, 56). Indeed, he says, his fairy tale is "fitter for grown than young children" (MacDonald 1994, 55). Here MacDonald introduces the idea that "childhood" is more than a merely chronological category, and anticipates the famous lines from his later essay "The fantastic imagination": "For my part, I do not write for children, but for the childlike, whether of five, or fifty, or seventy-five." (MacDonald 2007, 205; 1999, 7) These lines could be seen as practically providing the slogan for "crossover fiction". Already in *Adela Cathcart* MacDonald is insisting that his stories are "for the childlike", whatever their age. What will also become clear is that he hopes that the effect of reading or hearing his stories will be to help the reader or hearer to become more childlike. "Childlikeness" is the most highly valued state of being, as is clear from another of MacDonald's fairy tales, "The golden key" where, in a possible allusion to Swedenborg (Raeper 1987, 258), "the oldest man of all – the old man of the fire" turns out to be "a little naked child" who is clearly in some sense divine (MacDonald 1999, 138-40). At the heart of MacDonald's use of "crossover fiction" is not just some generalized Romantic nostalgia for childhood (though doubtless that is there), but a very specific theological conviction which I will discuss below, a conviction that is theologically unorthodox, and which brings him, as I have suggested elsewhere¹, closer in spirit to Philip Pullman than to the writer who claimed to be MacDonald's greatest disciple, C.S. Lewis.

"The golden key" was not contained in *Adela Cathcart* however, but in MacDonald's later *Dealings with the fairies* (1867) where it was added, with another fairy tale entitled "Cross Purposes", to the three fairy tales in *Adela Cathcart*. In that three year gap between having to smuggle three fairy tales into print within the frame of the mid-Victorian "realistic" novel (*Adela Cathcart*), and the overt publication of a book of literary fairy tales (*Dealings with the fairies*), something momentous occurred in the history of children's literature: the publi-

cation in 1865 of *Alice's adventures in Wonderland* by "Lewis Carroll". This publishing sensation changed everything, both for children's literature in general, and for George MacDonald in particular. It is fitting that the book that enabled MacDonald to reissue his fairy tales explicitly as a fairy-tale collection was originally tried out in manuscript form on the MacDonald children. MacDonald and C. L. Dodgson ("Lewis Carroll") first met perhaps as early as the late 1850s (Raeper 1987, 170). In July 1862 Dodgson set off to visit the MacDonalds, five days after his famous boat trip with the Liddell girls which gave rise to *Alice's adventures in Wonderland*; ironically he bumped into MacDonald who was on en route to a publisher with the manuscript of "The light princess" (Raeper 1987, 173). MacDonald's visit to the publisher proved fruitless, however, as his fairy tale was rejected; but within six months the MacDonald family had read together, at Dodgson's request, the manuscript of *Alice's adventures underground*, and MacDonald's son (and later his biographer) Greville had made his famous remark, as he recounts:

Accordingly my mother read the story to us ... When she came to the end I, being six, exclaimed that there ought to be sixty thousand volumes of it. Certainly it was our enthusiasm that persuaded our Uncle Dodgson, as we called him, to present the English-speaking world with one of its future classics, *Alice in Wonderland*. (Greville MacDonald 1924, 342)

Whatever intertextual relations there may be between *Alice's adventures in Wonderland* and MacDonald's earlier *Phantastes* (1858), there certainly seem to be some connections between the Alice books and MacDonald's "Cross Purposes" in the post-Alice collection *Dealings with the fairies*. MacDonald makes a series of intertextual jokes about this literary indebtedness to *Alice's adventures in Wonderland*. The heroine of "Cross Purposes" is named Alice, though unlike the original Alice, she has a "buddy" named Richard. The adventures of MacDonald's Alice echo those of Dodgson's, though they also repeat motifs from MacDonald's *Phantastes*, which Dodgson had himself imitated in his *Alice* book.²

But pre-*Alice*, MacDonald had to resort to the presentation of his fairy tales in the framework of a novel which, though "realistic", was hardly conventional. There seems to be some kind of self-reflexive metafictional questioning of the very idea of "realism" when the narrator replies to the hostile question of the odious Mrs. Cathcart as to the truth of one of the tales:

“I object to the question,” said I. “I don’t want to know. Suppose, Mrs. Cathcart, I were to put this story-club, members, stories, and all into a book, how would any one like to have her real existence questioned? It would at least imply that I had made a very bad portrait of that one.” The lady cast a rather frightened look at me, which I confess I was not sorry to see. (MacDonald 1994a, 127)

Adela’s mysterious illness and Mr Smith’s marvellous medicine (the Story club)

Moreover, although the “realistic” frame has the pragmatic purpose of providing a mechanism by means of which MacDonald could get his fairy tales into print, nevertheless it also has another motivation – that of suggesting the power of stories to heal. It is not the case that for MacDonald any old frame would do. It is simply wrong, for example, when one website devoted to MacDonald describes *Adela Cathcart* as “a creative attempt on MacDonald’s part to package a collection of short stories in the guise of a ‘novel’”. In it a group of travelers becomes snowbound in a country inn and pass the time by telling each other stories.”³ Not only is this inaccurate – the story mostly takes place in the home of Adela’s uncle, Colonel Cathcart, who has invited various people for Christmas, when, unsurprisingly, it snows; actually the framing narrative is much more interesting than that. Adela Cathcart is suffering from the kind of “mysterious ailment” to which young women were so notoriously prone in Victorian times⁴. The medicine provided by the stuffy Dr Wade (“steel-wine and quinine”) is clearly failing to make any headway with Adela. Her uncle, the narrator John Smith, is inclined to try “the homeopathic system – the only one on which mental distress, at least, can be treated with any advantage” (MacDonald 1994a, 13). *Adela Cathcart* was “affectionately dedicated” to a well-known homeopathic doctor, John Rutherford Russell, whose account of homeopathy MacDonald discussed in his review (later published in *A dish of orts*) of Russell’s *The history and heroes of medicine*. Without being enthusiastic, MacDonald quietly approves of Russell’s sober defence of homeopathy’s historical credentials (MacDonald 2007, 156-8). Russell actually appears in MacDonald’s novel *The portent* – published in the same year as *Adela Cathcart* – thinly disguised as Dr Ruthwell (Docherty 1994, 22n4). According to the narrator, Ruthwell “was one of the few [in the medical profession] who see the marvellous in all science, and, therefore, reject nothing merely because the marvellous

may seem to predominate in it. Yet neither would he accept anything of the sort as fact, without the strictest use of every experiment within his power." (MacDonald 1994b, 97)

Thus a central theme of *Adela Cathcart* is alternative approaches to healing, including those in which "the marvellous may seem to predominate". Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), the figure usually credited with founding homeopathy, had argued that to identify the most appropriate treatment, homeopathic physicians should take into account not just the disease, but the patient as a whole. In *Adela Cathcart*, the handsome young Dr Armstrong, who is also a gifted musician, impresses the narrator: "'A wonderful physician this!' thought I to myself. 'He must be a follower of some of the old mystics of the profession, counting harmony and health all one.'" (MacDonald 1994a, 47) Armstrong agrees that working from the inside out may be better for Adela than any "physical remedies"; he suspects that the cause of her illness is "a spiritual one", and expresses the belief that many women "go into a consumption just from discontent" (MacDonald 1994a, 52). The alternative therapy proposed by Smith, Adela's uncle, and seconded by the young doctor, is a diet of stories, to "bring her out of herself"; thus a sort of "narrative therapy group" is set up (MacDonald 1994a, 50-1). This "story club" forms the narrative frame within which MacDonald can present a series of stories. In this "cure" arranged for Adela, "the marvellous" figures significantly, since fairy tales constitute a major ingredient in the narrative medicine prescribed.

Christmas and "The child in the midst"

The fact that the frame-narrative is set at Yuletide has the obvious advantage that Christmas is traditionally a time for story telling. Another advantage of the Christmas setting is that it emphasizes "The Child in the Midst", to use the title of the first of MacDonald's *Unspoken sermons*, published in 1867. The Christmas sermon recounted at the beginning of *Adela Cathcart* clearly echoes themes in MacDonald's later sermon "The child in the midst" (when exactly the latter was written, as opposed to published, remains uncertain). As mentioned above, childlikeness is for MacDonald the condition to which we should aspire, as is evident in the sermon in Chapter 2 of *Adela Cathcart* where the preacher claims that God is addressing each of the congregation as follows:

My son, my daughter, you are growing old and cunning; you must grow a child again, with my son, this blessed birth-time. You are growing old and selfish; you must become a child. You are growing old and careful; you must become a child. You are growing old and distrustful; you must become a child. You are growing old and petty, and weak, and foolish; you must become a child – my child, like the baby there ... lying in his mother's arms in the stable. (MacDonald 1994a, 19)

If such an admonition seems absurd, the preacher admits, because the Son of God is no longer a child but the King of Heaven, he nevertheless continues:

He who is the Unchangeable, could never become anything that He was not always, for that would be to change. He is as much a child now as ever he was. When he became a child, it was only to show us by itself, that we might understand it better, what he was always in his deepest nature. And when he was a child, he was not less the King of Heaven; for it is in virtue of his childhood, of his sonship, that he is Lord of heaven and of earth. (MacDonald 1994a, 19)

The Christmas paradox that the Maker of the universe should lie as a child in a manger – like “the supper of an ox and ass”, as Luther’s hymn, translated by Smith in Chapter 3 of *Adela Cathcart*, puts it⁵ – is intensified by MacDonald in “The child in the midst”, the first of his *Unspoken sermons*. The paradoxical claim at the centre of this sermon is that:

God is represented in Jesus, for that God is like Jesus: Jesus is represented in the child, for that Jesus is like the child. Therefore God is represented in the child, for that he is like the child. God is child-like. In the true vision of this fact lies the receiving of God in the child. (MacDonald 2008, 11)

In contrast to this emphasis on the childlikeness of God, stands what MacDonald calls the ‘martinet’ view of God:

How terribly ... have the theologians misrepresented God ... Nearly all of them represent him as a great King on a grand throne, thinking how grand he is, and making it the business of his being and the end of his universe to keep up his glory... (MacDonald 2008, 12)

This God of the theologians is false, according to MacDonald, who calls such a God “that monstrosity of a monarch” (MacDonald 2008, 12). The real God for MacDonald is child-like God, into whose image it is the hope of Christians to re-made.

The problems of Adela Cathcart become evident when she is unable to respond emotionally to the Christmas sermon about the Christ-child. When the narrator asks her what she felt about the sermon, she replies:

“I don’t know. I thought it very poetical and very pretty; but whether it was true – how could I tell? I didn’t care. The baby he spoke about was nothing to me. I didn’t love him, or want to hear about him. Don’t you think me a brute, uncle?”
(MacDonald 1994a, 25)

The narrator replies: “No, I don’t. I think you are ill. And I think we shall find something that will do you good” (MacDonald 1994a, 25). Although Adela is 20 years old, she is more than once referred to in the novel as a child. It is therefore ironical that her problem is that she cannot make the “crossover” from her liminal state of almost-adulthood to the childlikeness that is, according to MacDonald, humankind’s real goal and its real well-being. Adela is not well. In modern terms she is suffering from depression, of which she gives a powerful description, recalling the effects of the “black sun” in MacDonald’s *Phantastes*⁶ as well as of Philip Pullman’s “spectres” and J.K. Rowling’s “dementors”:

“I woke ... with an overpowering sense of blackness and misery. Everything I thought of seemed to have a core of wretchedness in it. ... It was as if I had awaked in some chaos over which God had never said: ‘Let there be light’. ... I began to see the bad in everything ... Nothing seems worth anything. I don’t care for anything.” (MacDonald 1994a, 25)

Such inability to respond to the Christmas message about “the child within” is presented as an illness, or the result of social and/or emotional deprivation: MacDonald was well aware of the “unchildlike child”, spoiled as much by indulgence as by poverty. Such “unchildlike children” can be seen “now in a great house, clothed in purple and lace, now in a squalid close [slum], clothed in dirt and rags” (MacDonald 2008, 7). A cure for Adela’s inability to respond emotionally seems to lie in the power of stories to compel a response. Once

this possibility has been seen, the 'story-club' is set up (without of course explaining its therapeutic purpose to Adela).

“The light princess”

The first story, “The light princess”, is told by Smith, the narrator, and seems to speak indirectly to Adela’s depressive illness. Although “The light princess” contains no actual fairies, it is clearly in the fairy-tale tradition, and contains a witch, Princess Makemnoit, who “beat all the wicked fairies in wickedness”. In its opening sequence, which plays intertextually with the beginning of “Sleeping beauty”, Makemnoit pronounces a baptismal curse that condemns the princess to eternal levity. This represents the mirror image of Adela being condemned to depression. Both Adela’s depression and the princess’s levity could be interpreted as “hysterical”, in various senses; both can be seen not only as curses, but also as obstacles, even resistances, to growth into full womanhood, including sexual maturity. Both the novel *Adela Cathcart* and “The Light Princess” conclude with a lovers’ union. The fairy tale’s happy ending is engineered (literally, since the prince stops the disastrous draining of the lake by using his own body as a plug) by the prince’s death and quasi-resurrection. The resuscitation is performed by the princess’s old nurse, who turns out to be a “wise woman”, and “knew what to do”. This is one of the series of “wise women” who figure so largely in MacDonald’s fantasy writing. While the nurse’s contribution is crucial to the outcome of “The light princess”, she is mentioned almost in passing. The prince’s redeeming death is presented both as being Christ-like (complete with Eucharistic wine and bread/biscuit) and also as highly Romantic. It is indeed a kind of *Liebestod*, only on this occasion it is the male lead who dies – a reversal of gender stereotypes which is underlined by the fact that in “The light princess” it is the prince who needs the kiss. Here MacDonald achieves a synthesis of Christian teaching and the Romantic fairy tale – a synthesis that flies in the face of the likes of Mrs Cathcart, who prefer to keep their evangelical creed pure of the inappropriate levity of mere fairy tales. It was mainly from MacDonald that C.S. Lewis learned to use fairy tales to slip Christian ideas past watchful dragons such as Mrs Cathcart (Lewis 1982, 73).

Ruskin, one of the earliest readers of “The light princess”, guessed that he was being caricatured in the figure of Mrs Cathcart. Like Dodgson, Ruskin had seen “The light princess” prior to publication, and in a letter to MacDonald in July 1863 had complained that it was

“too amorous throughout – and to some temperaments would be quite mischievous” (Raeper 1987, 222). In terms of “crossover fiction”, Ruskin is suggesting that “The light princess” – a fairy tale for children of all ages – is actually too “adult” in the modern sense of “sexual”. After reading *Adela Cathcart* the following year, Ruskin wrote to MacDonald:

You *did* make me into Mrs Cathcart – She says the same things I said about the fairy tale. It’s the only time she’s right in the whole book, you turned me into her, first – and then invented all the wrongs to choke up my poor little right with. I never knew anything so horrid. (Raeper 1987, 223)

Ruskin is right about the unmistakable aura of sexuality in “The light princess”, though whether this is “mischievous” is another matter. Echoing the element of eroticism – even “sexual healing” – in the work of Novalis, as well prefiguring the climax of Pullman’s *His dark materials*, there is definite sexual charge in some of the scenes between the prince and the princess in “The light princess”, especially the swimming scenes that Ruskin thought particularly *risqué*. As MacDonald says in his fairy tale: “Perhaps the best thing for the princess would have been to fall in love” – a suggestion echoed in the not entirely disinterested second opinion of Dr Armstrong in the strange case of Adela Cathcart: “Isn’t there any young man to fall in love with her?” (MacDonald 1994a, 53-4)

“The shadows” and “The giant’s heart”

There is a fairy-tale in all three volumes of *Adela Cathcart*, each told by the narrator, and each dealing with a particular stage of life. “The light princess” in Volume 1 is primarily concerned with adolescence and growing up, and with young love. “The giant’s heart” in Volume 3 seems appropriate for younger children. “The shadows” in Volume 2 appears particularly related to old age, as implied by the fact that its hero is called “Old Ralph Rinkelmann” [‘Wrinkleman’!]. Rinkelmann, a writer, has been selected as “king of the fairies”, who wait until he is “dreadfully ill” and “hovering between life and death”, before taking him off to their country; they can only do this when grown-up mortals are in such a liminal state. “The shadows”, probably MacDonald’s first fairy tale, was composed during the writing of *Phantastes*, when he himself was ill (Broome 1994, 12). MacDonald was at this period much influenced by E.T.A. Hoffmann,

though echoes of Andersen are also detectable. Adela complains that this seems like another fairy tale, but is told that, despite the opening, fairies do not play much part in this tale. It is really about the shadows, also subjects of Rinkelmann, whom he had overlooked at his coronation. The shadows place Rinkelmann on a litter or bier "covered with the richest furs, and skins of gorgeous wild beasts, whose eyes were replaced by sapphires and emeralds, that glittered and gleamed in the fire and snow-light", and transport him to their Church in Iceland (MacDonald 1994a, 191-2; 1999, 58). The journey to the church of the shadows is perhaps the best feature of the tale, evoking the piercing mystery of the "Northerness" which later overwhelmed C.S. Lewis, and which also appears in Pullman's *Northern lights* – MacDonald's description of the *aurora borealis* is based on the experience of someone born and bred in the North of Scotland. The "human shadows", as they insist on being called, spend the rest of the story mingling on the frozen mountain-lake, that is not only their church but also their "news-exchange", their "word-mart and parliament of shades", where they tell each other about the various ways they have intervened in human lives. Far from having any malign intent of frightening people, the shadows wish "'only to make people silent and thoughtful; to awe them a little'" (MacDonald 1994a, 196; 1999, 62). In the silence that follows the tale, Adela asks her uncle about the different kinds of shadows, and, puzzled by his reply, accuses him:

"I do believe, uncle, you write whatever comes into your head; and then when anyone asks you the meaning of this or that, you hunt round till you find a meaning just about the same size as the thing itself, and stick it on." (MacDonald 1994a, 217)

To which MacDonald/Smith replies: "Perhaps *yes*, and perhaps *no*, and perhaps *both*." (MacDonald 1994a, 217) Smith's laid-back attitude to meaning not only prefigures "The Fantastic Imagination", but also echoes the Shadows' intention "'only to make people silent and thoughtful; to awe them a little'".

The final fairy-tale in *Adela Cathcart*, "The giant's heart", is "'only a child's story'", says Smith, and "'absurd to read ... without the presence of little children'"; so some local children are drummed up as an audience (MacDonald 1994a, 315). Ironically, however, this slightest of stories receives the weightiest introduction. In a passage which, with its contrast between fancy and the imagination, seems close to MacDonald's "Imagination: its function and its culture", published

three years later, MacDonald/Smith reflects on “the wondrous loveliness with which the snow had at once clothed and disfigured the bare branches of the trees” (MacDonald 1994a, 312). His meditation continues:

“This lovely show ... is the result of a busy fancy. This white world is the creation of a poet such as Shelley, in whom the fancy was too much for the intellect. Fancy settles upon anything; half destroys its form, half beautifies it with something that is not its own. But the true creative imagination, the form-seer, and the form-bestower, falls like the rain in the spring night, vanishing amid the roots of the trees; not settling upon them in clouds of wintry white, but breaking forth from them in clouds of summer green.” (MacDonald 1994a, 312)

In contrast to the artificial world, seemingly of marble, which is created by the snow, there is something very earthy about “The giant’s heart”; it harks back to English folk-tales such as “Jack and the Beanstalk”, as well as perhaps forwards to Roald Dahl’s *BFG*. It is difficult to draw any “uplifting” message from it. As McGillis has shown in his analysis of “The giant’s heart”, there is a systematic subversion of any kind of “moral” to be drawn. MacDonald uses a highly conventional fairy-tale form to subvert conventional expectations (McGillis 1992, 7-13). The audience of children in *Adela Cathcart* does not know what to make of “The giant’s heart”; nor do subsequent critics, as McGillis has shown. Yet the tale is so free from any kind of saccharine Victorian sentimentality, as well as so ruthless in its exposure of cruelty and hypocrisy, and of how ambivalently interlinked they can be, that it can provoke a sardonic delight. If the tale does have a message, it perhaps lies in the final sentence: “A fountain of blood spouted from [the giant’s heart]; and with a dreadful groan, the giant fell dead at the feet of little Tricksey-Wee, who could not help being sorry for him after all.” (MacDonald 1994a, 337; 1999, 98) By leaving the last word to a female response to male violence, a gesture is perhaps made towards the moral that Smith draws at the end of the chapter, when he reflects “how much more one good woman can do to kill evil than all the swords of the world in the hands of righteous heroes” (MacDonald 1994a, 338).

Conclusion

At the end of the novel, Adela is cured. How much her recovery is the result of the “narrative therapy” provided by the “story-club” is left open. The narrator puts the following question into the mouth

of an imaginary reader: “Pray, Mr. Smith, do you think it was your wonderful prescription of story-telling, that wrought Miss Cathcart’s cure?” The narrator’s response is agnostic: “How can I tell? ... Probably it had its share. But there were other things to take into the account...” He continues:

‘I am content to know that the end has been gained... In the present case, Adela recovered; and my own conviction is, that the cure was effected mainly from within.’ (MacDonald 1994a, 459)

The phrase “mainly from within” suggests that the real issue in *Adela Cathcart* is to do with “the child within”, who must be nurtured – or awakened – into a genuine childlikeness, a childlikeness which for MacDonald is in the end a response to, and a participation in, the divine childlikeness. Although the basis for MacDonald’s narrative therapy may in the end be theological, it is far from orthodox. As was noted above, MacDonald’s presentation of the divine child in “The golden key” refers explicitly to Novalis, whose Gnostic theology increasingly focused on his intended child-bride Sophie, just twelve when Novalis first met her, and living barely beyond her fifteenth birthday. For MacDonald – as for both his unorthodox precursor Novalis and (arguably) his resolutely heretical, and explicitly Gnostic, heir Philip Pullman – the child is indeed in the midst⁷.

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1 William Gray. "Pullman, Lewis, MacDonald and the anxiety of influence". In Gray, 2008, pp.85-102. See also *Mythlore* 25 (2007) 3/4: 117-32.

2 On the intertextual games played by MacDonald and Dodgson see William Gray, *Fantasy, myth and the measure of truth: tales of Pullman, Lewis, Tolkien, MacDonald and Hoffmann*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p.44.

3 <http://www.macdonaldphillips.com/bibliographygeorge.html>

4 See Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The madwoman in the attic*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1979, pp.53ff. Also Elaine Showalter. *The female malady*. London: Virago, 1987.

5 This translation by MacDonald of no. 29 of Luther's *Geistliche lieder* appears, slightly altered, in 1897 in Rampolli: *exotics, translations, diary of an old soul*. Whitehorn, CA: Johannesen, 1995.

6 See William Gray. "George MacDonald, Julia Kristeva and the black sun". In Gray, 2008, pp.9-24. See also in *SEL* 36 (1996): 877-93.

7 See my forthcoming paper "The child in the midst: childhood and salvation histories from George MacDonald to Philip Pullman", "Changing childhood" Conference, University of Chichester, July 2009 (publication details not yet available).