Universal Fairy Tales

and

Folktales

A Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Animal Suitor Motif in the Grimms' Fairy Tales and in the North American Indian Folktales
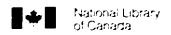
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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master's of Arts.

Abriß

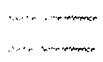Das Hauptziel dieser M. A. These ist es, einige Mißverständnisse über nordamerikanische Indianermärchen zu klären, welche in der älteren und in der zeitgenössischen Sekundärliteratur erscheinen. Viele Folkloristen basieren ihre Märchenkriterien auf kulturelle Unterschiede anstatt Ähnlichkeiten. Die daraus resultierende ethnozentrische Sicht hebt die Grimmschen *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* auf einen Standard, gegen welchen alle anderen Märchen nicht konkurrieren können. Wenn wir eine Weltsicht anstreben, die jede Art von Literatur einschließt, während sie die Individualität aller Kulturen anerkennt, dann müßten wir uns auf die wesentlichen Ähnlichkeiten der Weltliteratur stützen und nicht auf die Unterschiede. Die Absicht, die Kultur der nordamerikanischen Indianer als Vergleich heranzuziehen, liegt darin, die zu engen Definitionen für Märchen in Frage zu stellen. Vielleicht könnten sogar die kulturellen Werten, wie zum Beispiel Achtung vor der Tier- und Umwelt, die in den nordamerikanischen Indianermärchen zum Vorschein kommen, für unsere multikulturelle Welt zum Vorteil sein. Diese kulturellen Werte könnten die westlichen Werten nicht nur bereichern und wiederbeleben, sondern auch Lösungen für dringende aktuelle Probleme anbieten. Anhand einer Vergleichsstudie des Motivs des Tierbräutigams bzw. der Tierbraut in den Grimmschen sowie in den Indianermärchen, hoffe ich, die nicht zu übersehenden Analogien dieser Erzählswelten und die Vielfalt ihrer kulturellen Werte darzustellen.

Abstract

The primary objective of this M. A. thesis is to correct some false assumptions found in both older and more recent secondary literature on North American Indian narratives. Many folklorists base their folktale criteria on terms of cultural differences instead of similarities which results in an ethnocentric point of view that holds the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* as a standard against which all other folktale collections fall short. If we want to strive for a world view that will embrace all types of literature, while respecting the individuality of each culture, then we must focus on the essential similarities among world literatures and not the differences. The purpose of using another culture as a comparison, such as that of the North American Indians, is to question the ethnocentric definitions of folktales and fairy tales which have often been too rigid. Perhaps those cultural values exhibited by North American Indian folktales could prove to be beneficial to the world's multi-cultural society, in that these values could enrich and rejuvenate some Western values, such as respect for animals and the environment. These values may offer solutions to urgent contemporary world problems. Through a comparative analysis of the animal suitor motif found in the Grimms' fairy tales and North American Indian folktales, I hope to call attention to the stark cross-cultural similarities in universal folklore and to bring to light the multiplicity of cultural values which are deeply rooted in fairy tales and folktales around the world.

Sommaire

Le but principal de ce mémoire est de corriger quelques-unes des suppositions erronées se retrouvant dans la littérature critique, récente et moins récente, des contes populaires amérindiens. Plusieurs folkloristes basent leurs critères d'évaluation des contes populaires sur les différences culturelles plutôt que sur les similarités. La perspective ethnocentrique qui résulte de cet état de fait utilise les contes de fées des frères Grimm comme standard absolu à partir duquel tout autre conte sera évalué négativement.

Dans un effort d'aborder tout type littéraire de façon globale, en respectant l'individualité inhérente à chaque culture, nous devrons nous concentrer sur les similarités reliant les multiples littératures du monde et non sur les différences les séparant. L'utilisation de la culture amérindienne comme élément de comparaison permettra la remise en question de certaines définitions ethnocentriques, souvent rigides, des contes populaires et des contes de fées. Les valeurs culturelles véhiculées par le biais des contes populaires amérindiens pourraient se révéler enrichissantes pour une société occidentale multiculturelle, en ce qui a trait au respect des animaux et de l'environnement par example. Ces valeurs pourraient même offrir des solutions à certains problèmes urgents auxquels le monde contemporain se trouve confronté. À travers l'analyse comparative du motif de l' "animal-fiancé(e)" se retrouvant dans les contes de Grimm ainsi que dans les contes populaires amérindiens, j'éspère révéler les similarités interculturelles fondamentales du folklore universel ainsi que la multiplicité des valeurs culturelles qui y sont représentées.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Professor Josef Schmidt, whose tireless constructive criticism and corrections led to the final completion of this project. Without his dedication and support, this thesis could never have been completed.

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Thanks are also dedicated to my boyfriend Tom Sayer who stood by my side until the final completion of this task. I would also like to thank Matthew Pollard for his input in the final editing of the manuscript. Finally, I warmly thank my friends Elena Pneuvmonidou and Elizabeth Rettenwender for their recommendations and contributions to the final manuscript.

To my parents

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Introduction

During a visit to Germany last summer, I was browsing through a book store in Munich searching for summer reading material. In the well known bookstore Hugendubel, I came across the following three collections of North American Indian folktales: *Indianermärchen aus Kanada* (1990), *Indianermärchen aus Nordamerika* (1991), and *Märchen der Nordamerikanischen Indianer* (1992). To my surprise, the collectors used the German word "*Märchen*" in the titles to describe North American Indian narratives. Until recently, I had been under the impression that they resembled anything else but "*Märchen*," because the term "*Märchen*" usually occurs in connection with the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1859) - a fairy tale collection that most Western children grew up with.

Once having read and re-read North American Indian folktales, I found out that I enjoyed them from a literary point of view as much as the Grimms' fairy tales. In addition, I discovered that they have distinct resemblances to the Grimms' fairy tales: they convey the same moral didactic intentions, they follow almost identical morphological patterns, and have striking similarities in motifs. The differences I noticed originated in opposing life situations and cultural beliefs all of which are reflected in the fairy tales and folktales. This difference in cultural beliefs tends to promote the belief among scholars that North American Indian folktales lie on a lower literary scale of value than the European fairy tales.

Prominent literary critics have sought to establish rules for folk narratives. For example, Max Lüthi's highly reputable work entitled *Märchen* (1962, re-edited by

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Heinz Rölleeke in 1990) uses the following abstract concepts to define the European fairy tale: depthlessness (*Flachenhaftigkeit*), one-dimensionality (*Eindimensionalität*), the tendency to isolate (*Isolierungstendenz*), the use of metallic and mineral transpositions (*Metalisierung, Mineralisierung*), sublimation (*Sublimierung*), and the abstract style.[1]

In this same work, Lüthi denigrates North American Indian folktales, by including racist anthropological terminology instead of the European set of stylistic rules in his definition. This fact was discovered in the graduate seminar 129-637A "Die Morphologie des Märchens" offered by Professor Josef Schmidt. The graduate students and Professor Schmidt determined that an extremely derogatory attitude towards North American Indian folktales still prevails in most secondary literature

> Die Geschichten der Naturvölker sind im ganzen genommen
> **dumpfer, schwerer,** nicht selten **fiebrig,** stärker und
> unmittelbar mit der Welt der Wirklichkeit, des Traums, der
> Angst, des Glaubens, und in der Sitte verknüpft, die der
> Orientalen motivistisch realistischer, in der Erzählart oft der
> Neigung zu **ungebundenem Schweifen der Phantasie**
> oder zur **Spekulation** oder Konstruktion hingegeben.[2]
> [bold is my emphasis]

Lüthi's definition should remain questionable, because it embodies an eurocentric view point. Most scholars continue to put forward a eurocentric focus on literature, that is, they include stereotypical terminology, such as "nicht selten fiebrig," "dumpf," "schwer" which prevents the inclusion of North American Indian folklore and literature in world literature. In this thesis, I would like to correct some misconceptions

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[1] Lüthi, Max, *The Fairy Tale as an Art Form and Portrait of Man* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984) 40.

[2] Lüthi, Max, *Märchen* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1990) 38.

with regard to North American Indian folktales analysis, and reinforce the fact that they should be considered as structured folktales with literary value. The inclusion of North American literature into world literature is vital, because the standard collection *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1859) only reflects a very small portion of the world's folktales. Only by placing the folktales and literature of all cultures on equal footing, can we move toward creating a view of literature and culture that is equal and balanced.

Thesis Overview

The first chapter will briefly describe the characteristics of European and North American Indian oral narratives. The first section will discuss the problems of defining oral narratives. Some European literary scholars, such as Max Lüthi, seek to establish rules for universal folk narratives on the basis of one corpus of fairy tales: *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1859). Since folktales are universal, scholars must expand these rigid criteria in order to make them more culturally inclusive. The second section will give a brief synopsis of the importance and function of oral narratives in society. Oral narratives are very important literary genres, because they teach and entertain a culture about its particular value system. Since the belief systems of all cultures should be considered as equal, scholars must validate the oral narratives of all societies as having the same literary value. The third section discusses how German oral narratives gained acceptance in world literature since the literary period of Herder and the Grimms. Herder believed that since the "soul" of a nation is reflected in folk poetry, the works of each culture should be appraised according to its own cultural merits. Although Herder and the

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Romantics saw a need in respecting the individuality of a particular culture's folk poetry, little efforts have been made since their era to achieve this world view. In fact, North American Indian folktales still remain widely excluded from world literature in the twentieth century. The fourth section will give a brief overview of the exclusion of North American Indian folktales from important international folktale works, and will offer possible reasons for this exclusion.

The second chapter will investigate the thematic similarities in folktale variants from a universal point of view. All folktale variants are comprised of similar plots, themes and structure, and this is why folktales are considered by some scholars as being universal. In folklore scholarship, four important theories exist that attempt to explain the occurrence of these thematic similarities: 1) Indo-Germanic, 2)Theodor Benfey and Max Müller, 3) the anthropological and ethnological school, 4) the Finnish School. All four theories are important, because they allude to universality of oral narratives.

The third chapter will primarily be based on the works of the formalist school: Vladimir Propp's *The Morphology of the Folktale* (1928) and Alan Dundes' *The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales* (1964). The aim of this chapter is to illustrate that North American Indian folktales function morphologically in the same manner as European tales. Hence, North American Indian folktales should be regarded as structured narratives with literary value.

Following these morphological comparisons, the fourth chapter will undertake a case study, which, due to time and space constraints, will be limited to an examination of the "animal bridegroom" tale type. It occurs frequently in universal

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folklore and therefore lends itself well to cross-cultural analysis. This analysis will show how the Grimms and North American Indian folktales function in the same manner but vary due to different cultural values. i.e., different perceptions toward animals. The "animal bridegroom" tale type will provide a suitable example upon which one could on the one hand establish a common base and on the other give each culture its due. I will conclude by offering a commentary on how North American Indian folktales can be of value in our understanding to world literature from both a morphological and cultural perspective.

The Terms "Fairy Tale" and "Folktale"

The Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* embrace many types of narrative genres, including fairy tales and folktales. Folklorists, such as Stith Thompson, who stress the roots of the tales in oral traditions, refer to the collection as **folktales**. However, literary critics, such as Max Lüthi, often refer to the collection as **fairy tales**. Moreover, the term "fairy tale" is often associated with both oral and literary traditions and is above all reserved for narratives set in a fictional world in which preternatural events and supernatural intervention are taken wholly for granted.[3] According to Maria Tatar in *The Hard Facts of The Grimms' Fairy Tales*, the fairy tale can thus belong to the folktale, but in contrast the folktale tends to offer a more realistic setting. Since this study concerns itself with both universal fairy tales and folktales, the terms "fairy tale" and "folktale" will be used interchangeably.

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[3] Tatar, Maria. *The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) 33.

Use of Terms for Native People

Although the terms *Native American* and *North American Indian* are used by convention interchangeably in this thesis, not all Native North Americans are American Indians. The Inuit (Eskimo) peoples of northern Canada comprise a culture that is distinct from the North American Indians who inhabit the southern areas of this country. In Canada, the terms Native, Indian, Peoples of the First Nation, Metis are used rather than North American Indians. In the United States, American Indian and Native American are terms used to refer to the native inhabitants of North American, Central America and South America. Wherever possible, this thesis refers to the specific tribe in order to respect the individuality of each tribe, for example *Cheyenne* or *Blackfoot*.[4]

The Fairy Tale and Folktale Collections

The German fairy tales under discussion are taken from the collection *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, which is considered by many to be the basic work for any international tale study and is fundamental for a comparative approach. As a stylistically and ideologically standardized story book, "it reinforced earlier narratives and influenced the formulation and maintenance of the tales in both oral and literary circulation."[5] The

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[4] For further reference on the usage of terms for Natives see either Caduto Machael and Joseph Bruchac, *Keepers of the Animals* (Golden, Colorado: Fuloum Publishing, 1991) or *Native America in the Twentieth Century. An Encyclopaedia.* 1st edition (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1994).

[5] Metzger, Michael M. and Katharina Mommsen, eds. , *Fairy Tales as Ways of Knowing* (Bern: Peter Lang Publishers, 1981) 22.

Grimms' close friend Achim von Arnim, upon receiving a copy of the book described it as an "excellent book" and rightly predicted a long selling period for the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*. It is hardly surprising that in short time the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* ranks, "by virtue of the number of its German editions and translations, as the runaway best seller of all German books."[6] Moreover, it is "the greatest seller in the history of publishing...Only second to the Bible."[7]

Stith Thompson's collection *Tales of North American Indians* (1966) provides the best representative collection of the standard North American Indian tales. Stith Thompson, a renowned specialist in North American Indian folklore, compiled a collection of the most popular North American Indian tales from government reports, folk-lore journals, and publications of learned societies. In the introduction of his book, Thompson writes: "No other primitive people has such an extensive and accurate record of its myths, tales, and legends as the North American Indian."[8] I chose the folktales of North American Indians as a basis of comparison, because out of all cultural products of Indigenous cultures, they were recorded the most accurately and therefore best mirror the customs and beliefs of their culture in particular. I will not focus on a specific Native American Indian community, because folktales are rarely confined to particular geographical places, historical times, and cultural limits.

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[6] Metzger and Mommsen, xxiii.

[7] Metzger and Mommsen, 34.

[8] Thompson, Stith, *Tales of the North American Indians* (1929; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966) xvi.

It is not the intention of this thesis to establish a new set of rules by which academia should or should not include the folktales of North American Indians. However, I would like to suggest a new perspective from which literary scholars could approach the analysis of North American Indian folktales. Literary scholars should consider incorporating the folktales of other cultures into their own work, because all cultures contribute to the universal aspect of this world. This thesis will therefore remain suggestive rather than conclusive in nature.

1. German and Native Oral Narratives and World Literature

1.1 Description of Short Narrative Forms

Oral narratives are very important literary genres, because they transmit a nation's cultural values. If we want to consider the literature of all peoples as equal, then we must include the oral narratives of all cultures in world literature rather than excluding them through rigid guidelines derived from what literary critics think these narratives should be. The purpose of this sub-chapter is not to engage in a lengthy literary discussion of the generic qualities of folk narrative, but to give a short critical description of European and North American Indian short narrative forms.

The importance and influence of oral narratives is largely underestimated by literary scholars. Oral narratives are stories that were passed down by the word of mouth for centuries and have entered great literary collections, such as Aesop's Fables and the folktales recorded by Perrault and Grimm.

Since oral narratives are much older than written forms of literature, it is often difficult to transcribe this originally oral form into the more recent literary form. Scholars like Stith Thompson in *The Folktale* (1946) stipulate the difficulty of drawing a sharp line between written and oral traditions. However, literary scholars, such as André Jolles, Petsch, and Max Lüthi generally divide oral narratives into the following types: from time immemorial, simple tales of personal recollection, stories told by way of gossip, jokes, sagas, legends, saint's legends, myths, and folktales. These literary scholars who contend that it is a simple form of literature, are primarily interested in the folktale as a

narrative form. Max Lüthi, in his major work *Das europäische Volksmärchen: Form und Wesen* (1968), provides a basic summary of the following short narratives:

Stories told by way of gossip (*Klatschgeschichten*), are stories that arise when people recount human experiences of secondary importance. People tell these stories for two reasons: partly for personal entertainment and partly to measure them against an ethical standard. **Jokes** (*Witzgeschichten*) are humorous tales that delight in the violation of accepted rules, in the inversion of standard, and in the establishment of grotesque relationships. **Sagas** (*Sagas*) focus on family situations and they perceive, interpret, and judge everything from the family's point of view. **Legends** *(Legenden)* tell of extraordinary, strange or unprecedented events which illustrate cultural ideals and values. **Saint's legends** (*Sagen*) are sacred dogmatic tales which explain individual events. **Myths** (*Mythen*) trace essential constantly recurring processes of real life back to a unique event that becomes destiny. **Folktales** (*Märchen*) incorporate motifs developed by these simple forms of narration, and turn them into the constituent parts of a far-ranging narrative that remains purposeful, regardless of the number.[9]

While discussing short narrative forms in his work *Once Upon a Time* (1970), Lüthi emphasizes the fact that European narrative forms are easily classified, because they are highly structured. Hence, Lüthi regards the European oral narrative as "highly cultivated." However, if a distinction must be made, while discussing North American Indian short narratives, Max Lüthi suggests that these genres are not clearly

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[9] Lüthi, Max, *Das europäische Volksmärchen: Form und Wesen* (1947; Bern und München: Francke Verlag, 1968) 77.

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separated into categories and writes the following derogatory commentary on the North American Indian oral narratives:

> ....it is characteristic of **primitive** tales that everything is still rolled up all together, **undifferentiated** and **undeveloped**, as in the seed of a plant, and that the unfolding and structuring are left to a later stage of development.[10]

Including stereotypical terminology, such as "primitive," "undifferentiated," and "undeveloped," keeps North American Indian short narratives from attaining a status equal to the Grimms' internationally recognized *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1859). In addition, this discriminatory terminology misleads some scholars into believing that North American Indian folktales exist on a lower evolutionary scale, that is a literary stage that is not well developed. Not only is this statement false, but this perception also downgrades the value of North American Indians as a people and as a civilization.

Ethnologists and folklorists offer a view in contrast to those of literary scholars. Stith Thompson and Franz Boas, the chief ethnologist of Columbia University, are less concerned with genre distinction. Boas discusses the difficulty of defining the terms "folktale" and "myths" in his article "Mythology and Folk-Tales of the North American Indians " (1916). According to Boas, these terms have been used inaccurately in American Indian collections: "No matter which of the current definition of mythology we may adopt, there will arise difficulties that cannot be settled without establishing arbitrary definitions."[11] Scholars have on the whole been unable to distinguish between

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[10] Lüthi, Max, *Once Upon A Time* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1970) 95.
[11] Boas, Franz, "Mythology and Folk-Tales of the North American Indians," *JAF*, XXVII, (1916) 377.

oral narratives, because the same content appears in all folkloric genres. Boas warns that for the purpose of analytical interpretation, both groups should be considered together without regard to the "artificial limits" implied in the definition. However, Franz Boas remarks that when in doubt, scholars should adhere to the definition of myths and folktales as given by the North American Indians themselves.

> For our purposes it seems desirable to adhere to the definition of myth given by the Indian himself. In the mind of the American native there exists almost always a clear distinction between two classes of tales. One group relates incidents which happened at a time when the world had not yet assumed its present form, and when mankind was not yet in possession of all the arts and customs that belong to our period. The other group contains tales of our modern period.[12]

Frederick Hetmann in *Indianermärchen aus Kanada* (1992) distinguishes between the three following categories. First, the **creation stories** tell about how the earth looked like before our time. Their purpose is to explain the origin of certain animals, plants, people and the universe itself. A typical Native story belonging to this category is how the earth was created on the Turtle's back. Second, the **Trickster tales** tell about the adventures of cultural heroes, such as Gloosap and Manabozo. The Trickster has many functions, leaving his position in literature ambiguous. His adventures are filled with wonder and magic, animals and monsters. The third group of tales tell about the **daily lives** of the Native American Indians in which elements of the miraculous and the fantastic

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[12] Boas, 377.

play a significant role.[11] It is in this group of tales that we find the portrayal of animal marriages, supernatural beings, and magic. The reader can also identify traditional social and cultural settings as well as the North American Indian innate relationship to nature.

In contrast to Lüthi, who sets strict rules for the fairy tale genre, the American folklore scholar Stith Thompson prefers to avoid the problems these terminological issues provoke. In his work *The Folktale* (1946), Thompson expresses the belief that it is futile to attempt to distinguish between the individual narrative genres. Thompson posits that the most suitable term on a world-wide basis is the German term *Märchen*: "A *Märchen* is a tale of some length involving a succession of motifs or episodes. It moves in an unreal world without definite locality or definite characters and it is filled with the marvelous."[14] The closest English approximation to the German term "*Märchen*" is "folktale" which Stith Thompson explains as follows:

> Although the term 'folktale' is often used in English to refer to the 'household tale' or 'fairy tale' (the German Märchen), such as 'Cinderella' or 'Snow White," it is also employed in a much broader sense to include all forms of prose narrative, written or oral, which have come to be handed down through the years.[15]

According to Stith Thompson, no attempt has been made to define the term "folktale" exactly, but it has remained as a general word referring to all kinds of narrative.

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[11] Hetmann, Frederik, *Indianermärchen aus Kanada* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1992) 134-136.

[14] Thompson, Stith, *The Folktale* (Bloomington: Dryden University Press, 1946) 4.

[15] Thompson, 4.

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Because oral narratives can vary widely and become intertwined with several others, the written form can be difficult to classify by way of strict European guidelines. Due to this difficulty, Thompson justifiably uses the somewhat broad term "folktale" to include all types of literary narratives. In this aspect, using an unprecise definition of the "folktales" can prove to be advantageous when used conscientiously, because the generic boundaries may be expanded to include folktales from all nations.

1.2 Oral Narratives and their Function in Society

Fairy tales and folktales are universal. The tremendous popularity of oral narratives is proven by their preservation until they are frozen into a literary text. Despite the literation of folktales, storytelling is still one of the most favourite pastimes the world over and holds a distinct position in contemporary society despite the modern influence of books, radio and television.

In the German literary tradition, the folktale and fairy tale passed through many stages of development. The importance and function of the fairy tale varied according to the prevailing opinions of each literary period. The Enlightenment, a period in which reason attempted to demystify the world, had the goal of dismantling old myths that enfeeble the mind, so that people could act clearly and rationally. However, the attempt to render the world more rational by removing fairy tales and folktales seems questionable. In opposition to the period of Enlightenment, the Romantic movement strongly focused on the preservation of the German cultural goods or *Kulturgut*, and intended to capture the soul and beliefs of the German folk in the poetry created by the

people, that is with *Naturpoesie*. In this aspect, the Grimm Brothers and their fellow Romantics reinstated the fairy tale as a simple form with literary value.

Traditionally told at fireside gatherings or in spinning circles, fairy tales originally had the purpose of explaining an occurrence, seasons or celestials. In Germany, the narrating of folktales persisted as a widespread custom among adults until the Franco-Prussian war in 1870. With the rise of industrialization, the need for communal chores and harvesting activities "that originally created a forum for oral narration."[16] became less prominent, and "folktales as a form of public entertainment for adults died out."[17] The art of narration as an adult method of group education and diversion in European society changed since the Grimm Brothers. The Grimms re-adapted the content of the folktales in order to make it more suitable for the education of children of bourgeois households. Today, fairy tales are usually told in order to indoctrinate children with societal values. Disney's interpretation of numerous bridegroom fairy tales as *The Frog Prince*, or *Hans The Hedgehog*, for example, has reached children around the world.

Among some Native tribes in North America, folktales are still much more than a casual aspect of life. Taletelling is a function and duty of a few chosen professional storytellers known in Native communities as elders and is cultivated as a serious art. Voice, gestures and narrative effects are carefully studied and practiced. Storytelling in North American Indian societies is sacred and fairy tales and folktales are perceived as religious doctrines or truths. The function of folktales is very similar in both the Indo-

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[16] Tatar, 23

[17] Tatar, 23.

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Germanic and North American Indian culture; they are necessary in all societies, because they transmit the traditions and the history of a people. Important lessons are learned from these stories, because they reflect traditional values from the past and provide a basis from which we can understand the moral challenges of the present. Fairy tales and folktales are part and parcel of all cultures, and for this reason all folktales should be carefully preserved and considered to have equal literary value.

1.3 Herder and the Grimms: How German Oral Narratives Gained Acceptance in World Literature

Johann Gottfried Herder was a theologian, philosopher, literary critic and a poet. A brief description of Herder's ideas of *Volk* and *Naturpoesie* is necessary, since his ideas not only influenced the German Romantic movement, but also laid the groundwork for the fields of comparative literature and comparative folklore. In his numerous essays and in his folksong collection entitled *Volkslieder. Stimme der Völker in Liedern* (1778-1779), Herder discusses the concept of *Volk* as an individual entity deeply rooted in the past. He believes that since each *Volk* has a "soul," the works of each culture should be appraised according to its own cultural merits. Herder argues that only if the individual cultural values and merits are taken into consideration, can they be compared cross-culturally on an equal scale. All nations must participate in a joint effort, in order to achieve a method of evaluation that judges the literature of all peoples as equal. In terms of Herder's world view (*Weltanschauung*), that is, a view that will embrace a better understanding of all human culture, each nation has to fulfil a twofold responsibility. First, each culture must develop its own creative potential through the crystallisation of a

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representative collection of its own "nature" or "folk poetry" (*Naturpoesie*). Second, each individual culture's contribution must further the understanding of the language, folklore and literature of the world. Only when all nations have successfully contributed to both of these aspects, can we hope for a world that is more balanced and equal within the scope of world literature.

Herder developed his world philosophy at a time when German language and literature played a secondary role to what were considered the great classics in the eighteenth century. During this period, the Greek classics of Homer's, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, were considered the ultimate measure of all literature, and Herder felt a need to restore the faith in German cultural identity. He consequently advised his compatriots to write down German folk literature, regardless of the jugements of other Nations. Throughout the next centuries, Herder's statements were either misinterpreted as being ethnocentric or misused by others to propagate nationalism, particularly by Nationalist Socialist ideology. One should re-emphasize the fact that Herder never intended to nourish this kind of nationalism nor ethnocentrism. His deepest concern was to advocate Germany's recognition within the realms of world culture and world literature.[18]

In terms of folktales and fairy tales in our modern world, the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* have become the absolute measure of the world's folktales and fairy tales. As demonstrated by the popularity of the Grimms' collection, Germany has gained her status in terms of cultural equality. Germany's previous lower status has

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[18] For a more complete overview of Herder's importance to the study of folk culture, see Crista Kamenetsky, *The Brothers Grimm and Their Critics* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1992) 55-62.

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shifted to a status that is perceived by many as culturally superior, especially in comparison to indigenous peoples. Today, it is no longer German cultural works that are being neglected and treated with contempt, but the cultures of indigenous people the world over. If Herder were alive, he would have possibly given the North American Indians the same advice as he had given his fellow Germans, that is, to produce a representative collection of their own folk songs and folk tales that accurately portray their folk customs and beliefs. Since North American Indian folktales are often still excluded from European folktale analysis, North American Indians must, if one were to extrapolate from Herder's view, also contribute an equal share in achieving the goal of creating a world view that will recognise all literature as equal. The addition of North American Indian folktales will allow the "soul"[19] of their nation to become part of world literature. Their "soul" will be an invaluable contribution to recover the "lost soul" of this planet, because of the North American Indian's innate relationship to nature and the animal world.

The Grimms shared Herder's belief that folklore reflected the soul of a nation. Furthermore, they believed that the "soul" of the folktales is ancient, because it originated in oral traditions. They focused their attention on preserving oral tradition and on comparative myths, legends and folktales. They emphasized their perception of "natural poetry" (*Naturpoesie*) rather than "art poetry" or "poetry as an art form" (*Kunstpoesie*). Herder also saw differences between both terms, and while he emphasised the concept of *Naturpoesie*, he still found it legitimate to create folk ballads of his own. In this respect, the Grimms differed from Herder, Goethe, and their friends August Wilhelm

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[19] The term "soul" is strictly used in Herder's sense.

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and Friedrich Schlegel: they all defended the idea of using old folk ballads as an inspiration for poetry of their own. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm strongly opposed this view, because they believed that *Naturpoesie* should not be altered, because it was most beautiful in itself.[20]

1.4 Historical Development of North American Indian Literature and Folklore

North American Indian mythology has long been excluded from international folktale analysis. Until today, scholarship fails to offer a comprehensive folkloristic or literary analysis of North American Indian folktales. In fact, the folktales are still primarily dealt with on a anthropological and ethnological level. For example, Kurt Ranke's international *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* (1980) provides relatively few articles dealing with a folkloristic analysis of North American Indian folktales. Friedrich von der Leyen's edition of *Märchen der Weltliteratur* (1965-) in 2 volumes collected folktales from societies the world over, but not a single article or appendix exists that deals with a cross-cultural analysis of the folktales. However, Wolfgang and Ingeborg Weber's book entitled *Auf den Spuren des göttlichen Schelms* (1983) undertakes a cross-cultural comparison of European and North American Indian folktales from three aspects: structure, hero, and motifs. The nature of the comparison indicates by itself that the folktales of both cultures can be compared on equal footing. Nevertheless, there still remains a great deal of ground for folklore scholars and literary critics to cover.

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[20] Kamenetsky, cf. 63-68.

Only since the twentieth century have ethnologists seriously considered examining North American mythology in its literary aspects. The folktales of North American Indians stem from oral tradition and were usually collected, translated, and often heavily edited and distorted by non-native missionaries, anthropologists, and hobbyists. They tended to represent these folktales as Native "tales" from the igloo, the smokehouse, or the campfire as "quaint" or "exotic". Despite a genuine interest in North American Indian mythology, these studies have generally failed to recognise that North American Indian myths are in fact folktales with literary value. Some early attempts at a so-called literary analysis of these folktales had been made by scholars such as Boas, Lowie, and Swanton. Most of these studies concern themselves with a systematic analysis of myths and the tabulation of the motifs, episodes, and themes instead of a cross-cultural analysis from a literary point of view. Paul Radin notes the following in his article "Literary Aspects of North American Indian Mythology" (1915):

> Most of these investigators seem, however, to have been
> oblivious of the implications necessarily entailed by the
> recognition that in primitive mythology we are dealing with
> literature in the true sense of the word.[21]

Approaching the twenty-first century, a preliminary step has been made to recognize the literary aspect of the North American Indian tales. This may also be due to the fact that only in the 1960's were Canadian Natives made citizens of Canada and given the right to vote. In the 1970's Native authors began to write down the history of their

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[21] Radin, Paul *"Literary Aspects of North American Indian Mythology."* Canada Department of Mines, Geological Survey, Museum Bulletin 16, *Anthropological series,* 6 (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1915) 2.

people, expressing their cultural values, as well as their views on the Canadian colonial legacy, such as Maria Campbell's *Half-breed* (1973) and Howard Adams' *Prison of Grass* (1975). In the 1990's, North American academia is becoming increasingly aware of Native literature. The works of Native authors are receiving increased attention and Native literature is becoming established with the literary mainstream. For example, the University of British Colombia celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1990 with a double issue of *Canadian Literature* dedicated to Native authors in Canada.[22] With regard to the position of Native literature in Canada, Hartmut Lutz maintains that certain rifts still exist between the Canadian government and the Natives, divisions which must be openly discussed or be remedied before Native literature can achieve an equal status in relation to Canadian and world literature. Hartmut Lutz declares the following:

> While the proliferation of texts by Native authors, and the increasing attention their works receive from non-Native academia and critics may indicate that Native literature is on its way to becoming established in the mainstream, the appropriation issue and the Oka confrontation clearly demonstrate that there still are several fundamental rifts between First Nation People and non-Native people in Canada. These rifts are manifest in the inequality of economic, social and cultural power between these two groups. An ongoing internal colonialism affects all layers of Native/non-Native relations in Canada, including the arts.[23]

The colonial legacy still remains peripheral for the Canadian Government, even when it is necessary for the government to come to terms with this issue. A failure

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[22] Lutz, Hartmut, *Contemporary Challenges. Conversations with Canadian Native Authors* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan : 5th House Publisher, 1991) 2.

[23] Lutz, 1.

to confront the colonial legacy might continue to mark Native literature as intellectually inferior. In order to achieve a world view that judges the literature of all people as equal, it is important to remedy these cultural and political inequalities.

With regard to recognizing the folktales of North American Indians from a literary aspect, the scholarly works remain few and sporadic. Scholars such as Stith Thompson in his work *The Folktale* (1946) and Alan Dundes in his work *The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales* (1964) advocate that North American myths are actually folktales with literary value. As Paul Radin remarked in 1915, once North American Indian folktales are perceived as having literary value, academia must continue to acknowledge this fact:

> For, the moment such an admission is made, we are justified
> in applying to this primitive literature, the same methods of
> analysis and criticism that we apply to our own--paying due
> regard to the personality of the author, or, if you will the
> author-raconteur; to his literary peculiarity; to his stylistic
> peculiarity of the area, etc.[24]

Despite these earlier attempts, some non-Native literary critics still retain a very derogatory attitude toward Native literature and folklore. Hence, the research in this area remains scarce. Many possible explanations can be offered for the exclusion of North American Indian folktales from European literary and folkloric analysis. The primary and most crucial fact is that while analyzing the folktales of North American Indian folktales, most Western scholars still follow a eurocentric train of thought, that is, the belief that Western culture and values are the highest. The following quotation from the introduction

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[24] Lutz, 2.

from Franz Boas' *The Mind of the Primitive Man* (1918) seems to recognize racism and nationalism as problems which have primarily kept North American Indian folklore from inclusion into mainstream literature:

> The conviction that European nations possess the highest aptitude supports our impressions regarding the significance of differences in type between the European race and those of other continents, or even of differences between various European types. Unwittingly we pursue a line of thought like this: since the aptitude of the European is the highest, his physical and mental type is also highest, and every deviation from the White type necessarily represents a lower feature.[25]

According to Boas, these stereotypes are endemic to European mentalities. Scholars who still follow a eurocentric train of thought, namely, those who believe that the Grimms' collection *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* is the ultimate measure of popular literature, ought to begin to change their perceptions, in order to make the folktale genre more culturally inclusive. Openly acknowledging the folktales of the North American Indians would also require acknowledging the values and beliefs encoded in the folktales as being on an equal ethical and spiritual footing with Western beliefs and values. Directly acknowledging the values of the North American Indian belief system would seriously question Western cultural values, upon which the predominant belief system had been built. Hence, the acceptance and inclusion of North American Indian folktales is a challenge faced by the scholarship of the next century. The following chapter will show from a morphological point of view that North American folktales are structured folk

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[25] Boas, Franz, *The Mind of the Primitive Man* (New York: The Free Press, 1938) 5.

narratives with literary value. Before carrying out a cross-cultural comparison for a shared motif. it is necessary to lay out the theoretical groundwork used to explain such universal similarities.

2. Theories Explaining the Thematic Similarities in Universal Folktales

Folklore scholars have long recognized oral tradition as a means of transmitting culture. Since Herder and the Grimms, four schools of thought emerged that endeavor to explain recurring thematic similarities among different cultures, in their case, the animal suitor motif found in universal folklore: the Indo-Germanic theory, the dissemination theory, the anthropological theory, and the work of the Finnish school.

The Indo-Germanic theory holds that myths are remnants of ancient Germanic myths, which the Grimms related to the Indo-European continent. The dissemination theory contends that myths spread from one country of origin by oral transmission. Max Müller justified this theory on a linguistic basis, and Theodor Benfey sustained his theory on the basis of similar motifs. The anthropological and ethnological school explain the similarities in universal motifs by relating them to similar living conditions around the world, i.e., rites and rituals that gave rise to these thematic similarities. The Finnish school invented the most refined technique for investigating the distribution of folktale variants. These four theories all sustain the argument that universal fairy tales and folktales have common themes.

2.1 Indo-Germanic Theory

The Grimms believed that folktales were remnants of ancient Indo-Germanic myths and tried to explain similarities found in folktale variants on a linguistic

basis, relating them to the topographical realm of the Indo-European continent. Wilhelm

Grimm wrote in the appendix to *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* in 1856:

> Gemeinsam allen Märchen sind die Überreste eines in die
> älteste Zeit hinaus reichenden Glaubens, der sich in
> bildlicher Auffassung übersinnlicher Dinge ausspricht. Dies
> Mythische gleicht kleinen Stückchen eines zersprungenen
> Edelsteins, die auf dem Gras und Blumen überwachsenen
> Boden zerstreut liegen und nur von dem schärfer blickenden
> Auge entdeckt werden. Die Bedeutung davon ist längst
> verloren aber sie wird noch empfunden und gibt dem
> Märchen selbst seinen Gehalt.[26]

Wilhelm Grimm explains in his notes to the editions of *Kinder- und*

Hausmärchen in 1812 and 1822 that folktales on the Indo-European continent have

striking similarities. It is stable elements, such as the basic plots, themes and characters

that make up the substance of tales, and they remain the same throughout the world.

Wilhelm calls such a stable element the "thing" or "substance" *(die Sache)* and he

considered it to be universal. His theory provided a basis for explaining the thematic

similarities in folktales that recurred in all folktales around the world. According to his

account, the wording, names, subthemes, minor plot elements and individual motifs

usually differ drastically from one culture to the next, while the folktale substance remains

the same.

Wilhelm considers changes related to language often too drastic and

believes that these changes lead to essential differences rather than to variants. However,

he could not explain why variants in countries far remote from each other and outside of

the Indo-European sphere of influence had such striking similarities. Wilhelm Grimm

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[26] Brüder Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, (Stuttgart: Philip Reclam, 1982) 409.

came to the conclusion that in cases where linguistic, geographical, and historical theories did not apply, one had to look for another reason that he called "mysterious". He postulated that these variants, folktales and myths had created themselves "independently from each other" (*unabhängig voneinander*). Rather than to give a speculative answer, he concluded that to search for the meaning and origins of folktale variants is futile: "Es bleibt wie etwas Unerforschliches und Geheimnisreiches in der Dunkelheit zurück."[27] While refusing to commit himself to a single theory of folktale origins, Wilhelm did allow for the possibility of oral transmission of folktales throughout history. He considered the existence of variants in itself proof of oral transmission because it represented a sure sign of people's shared experience with a "primal poetry" (*Urpoesie*). These variants showed that similar human conditions had existed everywhere. The language of the folktale was also universal in terms of expressing the early experiences with poetic thought. Its closeness to nature and spirit of naivety were proof of what Herder had called the "one humanity of humankind" (*die Humanität*).

Wilhelm Grimm defined the folktale as a folk narrative that was not bound to a geographical location or a definite time in history. Whereas the legend was either tied to historical circumstances or an identifiable place, the folktale was free from both: "Darum kennt es weder Namen und Orte noch eine bestimmte Heimath und es ist etwas dem Ganzen Vaterlandes Gemeinsames."[28] Very much like Herder, Wilhelm Grimm

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[27] Kamenetsky, Christa, *The Brothers Grimm and Their Critics*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1992) 103 (qtd. in: *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, vol. 3 [Berlin: Reimer, 1822]).

[28] Kamenetsky, Christa, 65 (qtd. in: Introduction to *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* [Berlin: Reimer, 1812]).

considered the folktale as something that belonged to the entire nation and ascribed to it a force capable of permeating through the boundaries of all nations. In this light, Wilhelm already alluded to the universality of the folktale in the introduction to *Deutsche Sagen* (1816):

> Die Märchen also sind theils durch ihre äußere Verbreitung,
> theils ihr inneres Wesen dazu bestimmt, den reinen
> Gedanken eine kindlichen Weltbetrachtung zu schaffen, sie
> nähren unmittelbar, wie die Milch, mild und lieblich, oder
> der Honig, süß und sättigend, ohne irdische Schwere.[29]

Wilhelm Grimm refers to the folktale's animated nature that reflects the mythical view of the Golden Age of humankind: a language of concrete symbols in which all creatures speak with a human voice and all inanimate objects are animated. The characteristics assigned to folktales and simple folk was by no means restricted to Germany, and was to be found in the poetry of all nations. According to Kamenetsky in *The Brothers Grimm and Their Critics*, with the words "simple" and "naive life", Wilhelm implied a life that was reflected in the eyes and souls of children. The Grimms' philosophical definition of "naivety", must be understood within the context of the time period in which they wrote. The Romantic movement strongly opposed the ideas of the Enlightenment that set out to rationalize and disenchant the world. "Naivety" therefore suggests a condition of mind rather than a topographical place, that is a "naive" state of mind that had remained untouched by the spirit of Enlightenment.[30]

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[29] Grimm, Jacob und Wilhelm, *Deutsche Sagen* (1816; New York : Arno Press, 1977) viii.

[30] See Kamenetsky for further references on the Indo-Germanic theory, cf. 99-105.

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2.2 Max Müller and Theodor Benfey

Although the Grimms' Indo-Germanic theory did not prove viable, it provided a foundation for future studies of comparative folklore. In the late nineteenth century, the Oxford Linguist and Sanskrit scholar Max Müller in *Chips from a German Workshop* (1869) took the Grimms' linguistic theory one step further. He developed a theory that linked the origins of all Indo-Germanic myths and folktales on the basis of slow transmission to India. In a systematic way, Müller used linguistic evidence to trace these origins. Theodor Benfey, also a Hindu Sanskrit scholar, was the first to seriously investigate on "a factual historical basis"[31] the migration of folktales from one central homeland to societies the world over. In the introduction to his edition of the *Panschantara: Fünf Bücher indischer Fabeln, Märchen, und Erzählungen*[32] in 1859, Benfey discusses the origins of European and Asian folktales in India. As opposed to Müller, Benfey gave specific evidence to his theory, using two key motifs (the thankfulness of animals and the unfaithfulness of women) as a basis for his theory. Since Benfey used specific factual evidence, his dissemination theory was considered revolutionary and had a great impact on folklore scholarship.[33]

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[31] Thompson, Stith, *The Folktale* 429 .

[32] The *Panchantara* is an ancient collection of Hindu folktales.

[33] Thompson, cf. 391–448.

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2.3 The Anthropological and Ethnological Schools

The anthropological and ethnological schools challenged Max Müller's and Benfey's theories contending that India was the sole origin of similarities found amongst world myths, disseminated from one place of origin, that is, India. Andrew Lang, for example, believed that both Müller and Benfey should have looked outside the Indo-Germanic area, because not all similarities found in myths and folktales could be explained as having come from one place of origin. Furthermore, he dismissed the idea of conscious borrowing from one culture to the next, for he believes that since peasants, as the main bearers of folk culture, usually remained in one place, they would be less likely to absorb foreign tales. He did agree with Max Müller on one point, that there may be some validity to the theory of slow transmission. While rejecting the theory of monogenesis, he formulated the theory of polygenesis, that is, the idea that resemblances in universal stories arise independently, because tales portray beliefs, customs and rituals, common to all people at the same stage of culture.[34] These rites, rituals and other practices of oral-literate societies that are reflected in folktales are the focus of the following standard anthropological and ethnological works: Andrew Lang's *Custom and Myth* (1901), Bronislaw Malinowski's *Myth in Primitive Psychology* (1926), and James Frazer *The Golden Bough* (1890). Andrew Lang explained that the ideas in "savage" tales were very reliable sources for folktale interpretations, since they still reflect ancient taboos, good luck and bad luck omens, or even the practice of cannibalism. He also found traces of

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[34] Andrew Lang's ideas were influenced by the English anthropologist Edward B. Tylor in *Primitive Culture* (1871) who began to investigate certain aspects of human behaviour by accumulating data from all over the globe.

kinship with animals, metamorphoses, and other traces of magic, all of which appeared

real to the "primitives", yet were perceived as marvelous in the Grimms' folktales. Such

archaic beliefs as animate and inanimate worship, or marriage and funeral customs are then

carried through time in motifs that are still recognized in tales the world over today.[35]

Andrew Lang's theories emphasize the word "savage" with regard to what the Grimms

considered poetic. In this respect, Kamenetsky concludes in her work *The Brothers

Grimm and Their Critics*: "As Lang made no allowance for the epic connection, nor for a

symbolic view in relation to mythology, some parents began to question whether such

'savage' tales belonged on their children's bookshelves."[36]

Despite this obvious denigration of indigenous cultures, Lang's theory

increases the readers' awareness of recurring cross-cultural folktale motifs. By means of

his hypothesis that similar folktale motifs arose instantaneously in different parts of the

globe, he emphasizes the fact that all archaic societies at one time had common

fundamental needs. Wilhelm Grimm also brought up the issue of an international source

of folktales the world over when he wrote in the third volume of the *Kinder- und

Hausmärchen* that the common element in folktales resembles a well whose depth is

infinite, yet from which everyone draws water in accordance with his need.[37] Wilhelm

Grimms' observation must once again be viewed in the context of the period in which he

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[35] The combination of the two theories: the direct and parallel evolution of cultures and of
their survival in culture led J. A. Macculloch to compare folktales of Natives with ancient
European and Asian cultures in his work *The Childhood of Fiction* (1905).

[36] Kamenetsky, 262.

[37] For further information see Kamenetsky, 262 (qtd. in: introduction to *Kinder- und
Hausmärchen*, vol. 3 [Berlin: Reimer, 1822]).

wrote and lived. As a Romantic, Grimm idealized the past, thus he did not consider primitive people in terms of "savages." Wilhelm Grimm referred to what other scholars referred to the "Savage Age" as the Golden Age of mankind, which he considered as far superior to ours, because of man's unmediated relationship to God and nature. Today Grimms' worship of the "Golden Age" would be perceived as problematic, because idealizing and overly sympathizing with a particular culture also implies a form of unintentional racism.

The cultural anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, who studied indigenous people in new Guinea and Africa, stressed the "reality" in myths and folktales, since these myths depict primitive rites and rituals. In his work *Myth in Primitive Psychology* (1926), he postulates that the tales function in "primitive societies" as more than mere entertainment, since they were told to explain the occurrence of certain customs, rites and rituals in a given tribe. He writes that folktales and myths are similar around the world because rituals among primitive people were similar. Music, dancing, painting, and storytelling all stem from a tribal ritual, and all had been sacred before becoming secularized. For this reason, myths and folktales also had a sacred origin. Since "primitive" man perceived rituals as real and true, he also placed folktales and myths on the same level as religious doctrines or truths. In this respect, folktales are far from representing symbolic language aimed at entertaining audiences around the world. Since myths and folktales are religiously coded, they have little in common with what today's reader would consider fantastic or marvelous. Malinowski therefore opposes the interpretation of a traditional tale according to its symbolic meaning. According to

Malinowski, in order to interpret a tale accurately. we must find out what rituals gave rise to a given folktale. Malinowski's theory is of limited use to the literary scholar, since it is not always possible to trace all primitive rites and rituals in a given folktale. However, his theory is important, because it calls attention to the sacred aspect of storytelling.

Sir James Frazer was aware of the component of reality in folktales, and saw the origins of myths and folktales in ancient rituals, customs and folk beliefs. In his twelve volume work titled *The Golden Bough* (1890). Frazer compares story motifs, rites and customs among North American Indians, natives of Australia, and natives of South Africa. He reminds his readers not to forget the "real" origin of folktales and myths. For example, he states that tales of magic and transformation are not mere tales, but mirrors of ancient rituals in primitive communities celebrated for various purposes, e.g., to alleviate hunger, to subdue the fear of death, or to ensure good hunting. Frazer often refers to Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie* (1835-1837). In a similar manner, he cites numerous parallels from myths and rituals around the world. However, he broadens the scope of his cross-cultural analysis, by incorporating African, Asian, and North American Indian myths and folktales. While Jacob Grimm was concerned with providing linguistic evidence for the similarities in folktales, Frazer emphasized a ritualistic origin in tales.

2.4 The Finnish School

The dissemination theory was soon revived by the Finnish school, led by Kaarle Krohn and Antti Aarne. Folklore scholars in the nineteenth century recognized that the fundamental structure of a particular tale is variable, and that different variations are

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widely distributed geographically and historically. Folklorists saw a dire need for a systematic classification of folk narrative to facilitate folkloric research. They wanted to construct a system of classification that would in some way resemble a biologist's scientific method for classification of listing and cataloguing. Biologists label their flora and fauna by a universal system and by using this type of method they have published thousands of inventories of animal and plant life of all parts in the world.[18] With a similar system in mind, Kaarle Krohn and Antti Aarne proposed a model for assembling and classifying folktales from around the world, known as the historic-geographic method. Although many undertakings previously existed to classify folktales in a joint effort, Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson launched one of the greatest international research projects of the twentieth century. Using the historic-geographic approach, they compiled a large index of tales from around the world entitled *The Types of Folktales (Verzeichnis der Märchentypen, 1910)*. The index classifies each tale according to its motif and reduces the numerous variants of each narrative to certain basic types. The index distinguishes between "animal tales", "ordinary folktales" (including under this rubric tales of magic, religious tales, novellas, and tales of the stupid ogre), and "jokes and anecdotes" (including tall tales). Much more extensive than the *Tale Type Index* is Thompson's *Motif Index of Folk Literature* (1931). The index contains 40 000 motifs and gives numerous literary references. The classification is done according to the letters of the alphabet, in that A represents mythological motifs, B represents animal motifs, C represents taboos, etc. The animal paramour motif is found, for example, in the section titled "Animal

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[38] Thompson, 413-414.

Paramour" under the subcategory "Marriage to animal in human form" and is given the tale type number B 650. Moreover, the *Tale Type Index* and *Motif Index* are cross-referenced and also include references to Johannes Bolte and Georg Polivka's five-volume *Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm* (Leipzig, 1913-1932). They classify international folktale variants by labeling their motifs with letters and numbers. In this volume, Bolte and Polivka classified tales by incorporating as many parallel versions as they could find for the 210 popular narratives in the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812 and 1815).

The first guide to the methodological study of folklore was written by Antti Aarne in *Leitfaden der vergleichenden Märchenforschung* (1913) for the study of tales by the historic-geographic method. This type of study should try to indicate the tale's time and place of origin and the course of its dissemination. Concerning the place of origin of the tale, Aarne indicated that it is impossible to determine the exact origin of the tale, and that the most that could be expected would be a general idea of its origin, such as in Europe, in South America, or in North America. Since especially the fairy tale is unlikely to be concerned with definite places, the text is rarely a reliable source. Among other suggestions, Aarne recommends that in order to reach a better understanding of the original place and time of a tale, it may be useful to examine older literary versions of a particular tale.

Serious investigations of folktales have not only been confined to Europe. According to Aarne, North American Indian folktales are also well suited for the study of folktale dissemination. For example, Franz Boas uses this method to compare the entire

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mythology of one tribe with its neighboring tribes in *Tsimshian Mythology* (1916), while R. H. Lowie's *Test-Theme in North American Indian Mythology* (1908), compares the motifs of various North American Indian tribes. Thompson states: "Though this scheme has, as we shall see, been subjected to some adverse criticism, it has been employed in a number of excellent studies, the general validity of which can hardly be doubted, and the method has been continually improved."[39] It is, however, interesting to note that during the course of the twentieth century, the Finnish school, which had previously strongly opposed the anthropological school, also began to include ethnological and anthropological ideas into their research. Compiling an index of the universal thematic similarities is the first move towards recognizing the literature of all people as equal.

The critical discussion of the historical development of comparative folklore, which began with Herder, is essential for a balanced and productive perspective on the whole scope of this analysis. We can now conclude with the observation that folklore scholars since Herder who view folktales as "natural poetry" (*Naturpoesie*), contend that folktales the world over are equal and universal. Discrepancies primarily lie with literary critics who consider folktales and fairy tales as "narrative art" (*Kunstpoesie*). They seek to establish rules for folk narratives, while placing the emphasis on one corpus of tales, mainly the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*. Such literary critics have something to learn from other scholars who see universal folktales as valuable cultural goods.

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[39] Thompson, 429.

3. Comparative Structure of Fairy Tales and Folktales

Despite the extensive research which has established thematic similarities in folktales around the world, other folklore scholars argue that North American Indian tales are not structured narratives with literary value, primarily basing their assumption on the form of folktales. Joseph Jacobs, a member of the English Folklore Society, remarked in his essay *The Problem of Diffusion: Rejoinders* (1894):

> Those who have read these [North American Indian] tales
> will agree with me that they are formless and void, and bear
> the same relation to good European fairy tales as
> invertebrates do to the vertebrate kingdom in the animal
> world.[40]

The description of North American Indian folktales as "formless" and "void," and the biological imagery has kept them from incorporation in the international folklore canon. The aim of this chapter is to reinforce the fact that North American Indian tales are structured tales, and that they indeed merit further analysis as folktales. To support the hypothesis that North American Indian folktales are structured folk narratives, we will use a morphological approach of studying folk narratives. Both the following celebrated works Propp's *Morphology of a Folktale* (1928), and Alan Dundes' *The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales* (1962 and 1964) make up the basis for a morphological study of international folklore. A combination of Propp's and Alan Dundes' models will show how both the Grimms and North American Indian folktales follow similar

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[40] Jacobs, Joseph, "The Problem of Diffusion: Rejoinders" *Folk-Lore*, 5 (1894) 137.

morphological patterns, while the content may vary either due to an author-raconteur's preference or due to cultural differences.

3.1 Systems of Analysis for the Structure of a Folktale

The formalist approach to the study of the wondertales was pioneered by the Russian folklorist Vladimir Propp, whose renowned work *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928), was unfortunately not translated into English until 1958. The impact of this work in the field of folklore is indicated in part by the number of studies it did inspire during the 1960's (Lévi-Strauss 1960; Dundes 1962 and 1964; Bremond, 1964, Greimas 1966).[41]

As opposed to the theories that attempt to discover the reasons for thematic similarities in universal folktales, the formalist and structuralists offer two distinct methods to analyze the form of a folktale. The first is termed the syntagmatic structural analysis, which describes the structure or formal organisation of a folklorist text. It follows the chronological order of the linear sequence of elements in the text as reported from an informant. Propp uses this type of structural analysis in *The Morphology of the Folktale* (1928). Heavily based on Propp's scheme, Alan Dundes also uses a syntagmatic structural analysis in his *The Morphology of the North American Indian Folktale* (1964). The second type is referred to as a paradigmatic, because it is influenced by the notion of paradigms in the study of language. This type of analysis seeks to describe the pattern of a folktale which is usually based upon an *a priori* binary principle of opposition which

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[41] Propp, Vladimir, *Morphology of the Folktale* (Austin & London: University of Texas Press, 1975), cf. xi. In the introduction to the second edition to *The Morphology of the Folktale*, Alan Dundes discusses the influence this work had on contemporary Western works.

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allegedly underlies the folkloristic text. The second approach is used by Claude Lévi-Strauss in an article published in the *Journal of American Folklore* entitled "The Structural Study of Myth" (1955).[42] Lévi-Strauss deserves a great deal of credit for emphasizing the necessity for a paradigmatic study of myth and for calling attention to the fact that it is not the isolated elements which enter into the composition of a myth, but the way these elements combine.

Since many folklorists are not aware of the differences between the "syntagmatic" and "paradigmatic" structural analysis, they tend to place Propp and Lévi-Strauss into one category. The most significant difference between these two studies lies in the degree of emphasis the authors put on content. Propp deals with the text isolated from its social and cultural context, while Lévi-Stauss relates the paradigm(s) described in myths to other aspects of culture such as cosmology and world view.[43] In this sense, the approach of Lévi-Strauss has led to a new notion of myth (and other forms of folklore) as models.[44] Other examples of the usage of "paradigmatic" analysis can also be found in the works of Greimas, Leach, Sebagm Köngas and Macarda. Although Lévi-Strauss' approach has been widely accepted, we will focus on the works of Propp and Alan Dundes, since their scheme of analysis is better suited for the nature of the morphological cross-cultural analysis undertaken in this thesis.

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[42] Lévi-Strauss' article later became an entire chapter in his two volume book dedicated to structural anthropology entitled *Structural Anthropology* (1976).

[43] Propp, xiii.

[44] Propp, xiii.

3.2 Propp's Analytic Scheme

Propp's syntagmatic analysis of one hundred Russian folktales is without a doubt "a landmark in the study of folklore."[45] Moreover, as Alan Dundes has pointed out in the introduction to the second edition of *Morphology of the Folktale* (1968), Propp's scheme of analysis is applicable to other folktales genres and to the folktales of any culture around the world.

Propp wrote this study primarily in opposition to the research of the Finnish school for two reasons. First, Propp believed that by collecting and classifying the motifs of folktales according to content, the original structure of the tale becomes invisible. The enormous amount of material covered can lead to mistakes, because themes and motifs in fairy tales are often tied together. This makes it difficult for the reader to determine when a theme begins and where the other ends. Hence, Propp's aim was to illustrate a morphology of fairy tales, by using the fairy tales classified by Aarne between 300-749.[46] Furthermore, he parallels the innumerable sentences in language, which have different content but same constructions with the fairy tale. The fairy tale is constituted by a structure, which is constant and invariable, and a content, which is variable. In this sense, Propp defines morphology as "a description of the folktale according to its component parts and the relationship of these components to each other and to the whole."[47] In order to accomplish this, Propp devised a new basic unit, *the function*,

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[45] Propp, xvi.

[46] The numbers 300-349 represent the tales classified by Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson in the index entitled *Verzeichnis der Märchentypen* (1913).
[47] Propp, 19.

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which is the basic unit of the plot action of the folktale. Propp defines the function in the following manner:

> 1. Functions of characters serve as stable constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled. They constitute the fundamental component of a tale.
> 2. The number of functions known to the fairy tale is limited.[48]

Hence, the function is an action of the *dramatis personae* who are the central component of the folktale. The *dramatis personae* are considered without regard for the specific actor performing the action. The number of functions in a fairy tale is thirty-one[49] which are spread out over seven types of plot of actions.[50] While Propp was studying the functions of the dramatis personae of Russian fairy tales, he discovered that the number of these functions was limited and that they appeared in a predictable order. Propp concluded on a morphological basis that "all fairy tales are of one type in regard to their structure."[51]

Propp's scheme of analysis primarily focuses on the distinction between form and content. The somewhat abstract functions are reinforced by concrete actions. For example, function 6 "The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take

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[48] Propp, 21.

[49] See Appendix A

[50] See Appendix A

[51] Propp, 23.

possession of him or of his belongings" may take on the following actions: a dragon turns into a goat, or a handsome youth, a witch pretends to be a sweet old lady and imitates a mother's voice, a priest dresses himself in goat's hide, a thief pretends to be a beggar woman. The distinction between form and content was already previously applied by other scholars. For example, Lowie describes the explanatory element of a folktale in his article "The Test-Theme in North American Mythology" (1908) and Gladys A. Reichard analyses the taboo element in her article entitled "Literary Types and Dissemination of Myths" (1921). Nevertheless, Propp made a distinct contribution from a theoretical point of view. Defining his unit of form, i.e., the function more precisely, he demonstrated that the number and sequence of his units in a folktale are fixed. Moreover, using morphological criteria, Propp showed how tales of completely different content could belong to the same structural type.

Propp cited thirty-one functions, however, not all of which are of equal importance. The most important is function 8, "The villain causes harm of injury to one member of a family." The performing actors of this function are: the villain abducts a person, seizes or takes away a magical agent, etc.[52] According to Propp, this function is "exceptionally important, since by means of it the actual movement of the tale is created."[53] A morphological equivalent exists to function 8 which is 8a, "One member of a family lacks something or desires to have something." Propp notes several possibilities for a lack: 1) Lack of a bride, 2) a magical agent is needed, 3) wondrous objects are

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[52] Propp, 31.

[53] Propp, 30.

lacking, 4) a specific form: a magic egg containing death, 5) rationalised forms: money,

the means of existence, 6) various other forms. Either villainy or lack begin the folktale's

plot development. In addition, a villainous act may also cause a need or an insufficiency,

e.g., the villain steals daylight. In the folktales in which no lack is present the act of

villainy serves as a counterpart. Furthermore, Propp distinguishes between function 8 and

8a as follows:

> In the first instance, a certain act is given, the result of
> which creates an insufficiency and provokes a quest; in the
> second instance a ready-made insufficiency is presented
> which also provokes a quest. In the first instance, a lack is
> created from without; in the second it is realized from
> within.[54]

The initial situation is vital for the actual setting of the tales. Due to its

importance in the plot development, Propp also considers it as a function. The initial

situation, followed by the first seven functions, make up the preparatory section of the

folktale. These initial functions prepare the way for a villainous act or state of

insufficiency. Not all seven functions are necessarily encountered in a folktale, because

two basic alternative means of leading to villainy exist (function 8). Either function 2, "an

interdiction is addressed to the hero", and function 3, "the interdiction is violated" lead to

function 8. Or the alternative pair function 6 "The villain attempts to deceive his victim in

order to take possession of him or her belongings" and function 7 "the victim submits to

deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy" may appear. Propp maintains that one

[54] Propp, 35.

or the other pair may lead to an act of villainy or a state of insufficiency. Hence, if one pair is used in a folktale, the other pair may be unnecessary.

The function of pairs is vital for the development of a folktale, the most important of which being the functions 8 or 8a and function 19 ("the initial misfortune or lack is liquidated"). In most tales, if the first half of the pair occurs then the second half is almost inevitable, in the sense that interdictions are always broken and deceitful proposals are always fulfilled. Furthermore, the second half can sometimes exist without the first. For example, in the Grimms' tale the *Frog Prince* or *Iron Henry* the princess leaves home to play in the forest by herself, the interdiction of playing alone in a dangerous area is omitted. Most pairs, if they appear in a tale, do so in sequence, e.g., functions 2 and 3; functions 4 and 5; functions 6 and 7; functions 16 and 17; functions 21 and 22; etc. An exception to this rule are the functions 8 or 8a and 19, because villainy and liquidation are separated from each other by a long story. According to Propp, the separation between these two functions may be so long that what is recovered may not be the initial lack. For example, in *The Frog Prince or Iron Henry*, the Princess seeks to recover her golden ball which fell into a deep well, but the tale ends with the Princess marrying a handsome prince. The initial lack, which was to recover her golden ball, is not what is recovered at the end. Dundes believes that "the separation of the fundamental pair of functions 8 or 8a and 19 will be shown to be an important point of differentiation in comparing the structure of American Indian folktales with the structure of Indo-European folktales."[55]

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[55] Dundes, 53.

3.3 Propp's Scheme Applied to the Grimms' Fairy Tale The Frog Prince or Iron Henry

To gain a better insight to Propp's system, we will apply it to the Grimms'

fairy tale *The Frog Prince, or Iron Henry,* because this is the first Grimms' fairy tale and

one of the best known European fairy tales which deals with animal marriages.

In olden times when wishing still helped one, there lived a King whose daughters were all beautiful, but the youngest was so beautiful that the sun itself, which has seen so much, was astonished whenever it shone on her face. Close by the King's castle in a great dark forest, and under an old lime-tree in the forest was a well and when the day was very warm, the King's child went out into the forest and sat down by the cool fountain. And when she was bored she took a golden ball, and threw it up on high and caught it; and this ball was her favourite play thing.

Now it so happened that on one occasion the princess's golden ball did not fall into the little hand which she was holding up for it, but on the ground beyond, and rolled straight into the water. The King's daughter followed it with her eyes, but it vanished, and the well was deep, so deep that the bottom could not be seen. At this she began to cry, and cried louder and louder, and could not be comforted. And as she thus lamented, someone said to her: "What ails you, King's daughter? You weep so that even a stone would show pity." She looked round to the side form whence the voice came, and saw a frog stretching forth its big ugly head form the water. "Ah old water-splasher, is it you?" said she; " I am weeping for my golden ball, which has fallen into the well."

"Be quiet, and do not weep," answered the frog, "I can help you, but what will you give me if I bring your plaything up again?." "Whatever you will have, dear frog," said she: "my clothes, my pearls and jewels, and even the golden crown which I am wearing."

The frog answered: "I do not care for your clothes, your pearls and jewels, nor for your golden crown; but if you will love me and let me be your companion and play-fellow, and sit by you at your little table, and eat off your little golden

plate, and drink out of your little cup, and sleep in your little bed—if you will promise me this I will go down below, and bring you your golden ball up again."

"Oh, yes," said she, "I promise you all you wish, if you will but bring me my ball back again." [...] But the frog when he had received this promise, put his head into the water and sank down, and in short while came swimming up again with the ball in its mouth, and threw it on the grass. The king's daughter was delighted to see her pretty plaything once more, and picked it up, and ran away with it. "Wait, wait" said the frog. [...] Then said the King: "That which you have promised must you perform." [...] At this time she was terribly angry, and took him and threw him against the wall. But when he fell down he was no frog but a king's son with kind and beautiful eyes

The initial situation, although not one function is of equal importance to other functions, introduces the King's youngest daughter. The introduction of her golden ball symbolizes the importance of the youngest King's daughter in the fairy tale, because gold is the attribute of a sought-for personage. After the initial situation, the frog, which is the villain, is introduced and begins to act. Function 2 "an interdiction is addressed to the hero" and function 3 "the interdiction is violated" are not necessary, because the alternative pair is used. The frog attempts to find out information about the princess with the evil intention of tricking her. The question "What ails you King's daughter?" is function 4 that is "the villain makes attempt at reconnaissance." The princess engages in a dialogue with the frog, which is function 5 by which "the villain receives information about his victim." The frog attempts to deceive his victim by using means of deception or coercion. The frog coerces the King's daughter to promise that she will marry him in return for her golden ball, function 6 "the villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to

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take possession of him or his belongings." The King's daughter agrees, because she does not take the frog seriously, i.e., the marriage to an animal, i.e., function 7 "The victim submits to deception and thereby wittingly helps his enemy." Once the princess obtains her golden ball from the frog, she runs away. This negative action of the hero is necessary for the course of action. The villain demands or entices his victim by pursuing his erotic advances, by way of function 8 " the villain causes harm or injury to a member of the family." The misfortune of the promise to marry the frog is made known to the King: function 9 "Misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched." The princess agrees to keep her promise, but she counteracts by throwing the frog against the wall, by bringing out function 10 "the seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction." The princess throwing the frog against the wall results in the metamorphosis of the animal into a handsome prince, and the hero is married, function 31: " The hero is married and ascends the throne."

3.4 The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales

Inspired by Propp's analysis, the American folklore scholar Alan Dundes applied a similar structural system for the North American Indian folktales in his work *The Morphology of the North American Indian Folktales* (1964). Dundes' eminent study provided a breakthrough for the morphological approach of North American folktales and his structural methodology will allow us to determine that North American Indian folktales function in the same manner as the Grimms' fairy tales. He concludes in his study that

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North American Indian folktales are "highly structured"[56] tales, because like European tales they adhere to consistent plot *functions* or *motifemes*.

Dundes primarily based his structural system on Propp's scheme of analysis. Dundes found a certain number of deficiencies in Propp's model. According to his account, the main deficiency was Propp's unit, the function. While Propp labeled the individual functions, he did not label the elements that make up the function. Referring back to Kenneth L. Pike's article "Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior" (1954),[57] Dundes eliminated the deficiencies found in Propp's scheme and replaced them with more suitable terms borrowed from Pike's scheme, because Propp's term *function* had not yet achieved much recognition in folklore scholarship. For this reason, Dundes preferred to use Pike's term *motifeme* or *emic motif* as the basis of morphological analysis. Dundes uses the term *motifeme* in his structural model to represent the minimum feature of his unit mode which is analogous to Propp's unit the function. The term *allomotif* is reserved for motifs in a motifeme context. According to Dundes: "Allomotifs would bear the same relationship to motifeme as do allophones to phonemes and allomorphs to morphemes."[58] Since the term *motif* is already very well defined in folklore scholarship, Dundes uses this term to describe the plot

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[56] Dundes, 11.

[57] Pike is primarily a linguist who developed a system for a linguistic approach to the study of North American Indian folklore. He put forward the idea that units of linguistics should include all aspects of human behaviour.

[58] Dundes, 50.

actions of a function: "elements fulfilling the motifemes, elements which Propp left nameless."[59]

Alan Dundes determined that there are definite recurrent sequences of these motifemes and that these sequences constitute a limited number of distinct patterns which make up the structural bases of the majority of North American Indian folktales. He considers each motifeme as a structural model, an abstract model which is tested by comparing its properties with the properties of actual folktales. The sequences can appear in two, four or six motifemic pairs. Furthermore, Dundes contends that most folktales move from the state of disequilibrium to equilibrium (surplus or lack) depending on the point of view in a folktale. For example, a flood may represent a surplus, but at the same time a lack, e.g., a lack of land. In this manner, Dundes defines a folktale as one or more motifemic sequences:

> An American Indian folktale may consist simply of Lack and Lack Liquidated. Similarly, a tale may be composed of Violation and Consequence . In this case, an interdiction might be understood though not explicitly stated. It is possible for a tale to end with the consequence, that is, with no effort to escape the consequence. However, a great many American Indian tales may best be defined structurally as combinations of motifemic patterns.[60]

Some tales may only consist of the two motifemic sequence: Lack (abbreviated "L") or Lack Liquidated (abbreviated "LL"). This motifemic sequence corresponds to Propp's functions 8a and 19. As opposed to the Grimms' tales, the North

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[59] Dundes, 59.

[60] Dundes, 75-76.

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American Indian folktales may only be constituted of this motifemic sequence. From a structural point of view, it is not the type or form of the object which is lacking, e.g., sunlight, fire, moon, or food that is of primary importance, but the function of the object in the story. Propp also points out that the form of the folktale is not determined by the object of an abduction, nor by what is lacking. It is the morphological pattern of these tales that is important rather than the content, i.e., object. Tales belonging to this category, begin with the motifeme L. For example the Tsimashian folktale *The Raven's Adventure*.[61] begins with the following L, "At one time the whole world was covered with darkness." The motifeme LL often terminates the tale. For example, "The fishing frogs named him Txä'msen, and all the world had daylight."

The motifemes L and LL determine the outer boundaries of the tale. Their fundamental importance is not reduced by motifemes intervening between L and LL. Dundes observed in his study that there appear to be only three alternative pairs: a first pair is Task, (abbreviated "T"), and Task Accomplished, (abbreviated "TA"). This motifemic sequence corresponds to Propp's function 25 and 26. The second alternative pair is composed of the sequence Interdiction (abbreviated "Int") and Violation (abbreviated "Viol"). This sequence is analogous to Propp's functions 2 and 3. The third pair Deceit (abbreviated "Dct") and Deception (abbreviated "Dcpn") equals Propp's functions 6 and 7.

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[61] Tsimshian folktale, *Raven's Adventures*, in: Stith Thompson: *Tales of North American Indians*, 19.

The four motifemic sequence is the most widespread structural pattern in North American Indian folktales. It consists of Interdiction. Violation. Consequence (abbreviated "Consq"), and an Attempted Escape (abbreviated "AE"). This sequence must consist of a minimum of the Violation and Consequence motifeme. Similar to European tales, it is not always necessary in North American Indian tales to overtly state the interdiction. The Interdiction motivates the plot development and the Consequence may serve as a Liquidation of the Lack. It is also possible for a tale to end with the "Consq" motifeme, and the motifeme of Attempted Escape remains optional. According to Dundes, it is extremely important to note that the Interdiction/Violation motifeme sequence may occur by itself, independent of the nuclear motifeme sequence L and LL.

The central element in this group of tales is disobedience. To quote Dundes: "Disobedience of instruction is, of course, a common element in folktales all over the world."[62] Disobedience as an infringement on taboo has already been observed by other folklore scholars. J. A. MacCulloch noted in his work *The Childhood of Fiction* (1905): "Such tales as introduce a broken tabu are ethical where they serve to show the dangers of disobedience, especially if the tabu affects moral conduct (sic)."[63] On the same topic, Dundes writes: "Yet apparently no one has realised that the theme of disobedience

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[62] Dundes, 66.

[63] MacCulloch, *The Childhood of Fiction* (John Murray Albemale Street: London, 1905) 12.

is the basis of a widespread transcultural form which is manifested in a great variety of monocultural content."[64]

Dundes implies that a number of tales of North American Indians which are culturally unrelated seem to follow identical motifemic patterns. For example, a number of scholars have pointed out that all North American Indian folktales have an explanatory motif in common which usually appears at the end of the tale, e.g., "This is why people get bald today." Hence, Dundes concludes that the explanatory motif serves as a functional element in the tale, but its presence or absence does not affect the structure of the tale. As we shall determine in chapter four, the four motifemic sequence is typical for the animal bridegroom tale type in *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* and *The Tales of North American Indians*.

The most common way to remedy a Lack in North American Indian Tales is through Deception. As Dundes notes: "Tales of this pattern consist of the following motifemes: Lack, Deceit, Deception, and Lack Liquidated."[65] Dundes' Deceit motifeme corresponds to Propp's function 6: "The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him or his belongings." The Deception motifeme in Alan Dundes' structural model refers to Propp's seventh function: "The victim submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy." Propp also points out that in Indo-European tales, deceit is often the work of a villain. Conversely, Dundes observed that in North American Indian tales, deceit is often used by heroes. It seems to me, that the primary reason for

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[64] Dundes, 66.

[65] Dundes, 72.

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this morphological difference may lie in diametrically opposed cultural values. Indo-European societies follow the belief that the duality of good and evil are two separate and opposing entities. Both concepts are represented in the images of God and the Devil respectively. As Stanley Diamond notes in his introductory essay entitled *Job and the Trickster* in Paul Radin's work *The Trickster* (1972): "Both God and the Devil are at an infinite and dissociated remove from human experience, and this reflects the structure of civilisation."[66] Since these dualistic cultural values are embedded in folktales, the European folktale focuses on opposing entities, such as good and evil which must be personified by two separate characters, such as the hero and the villain respectively. This dualistic style of the European fairy tale is absent in North American Indian folktales, because in North American Indian cultures all entities are fused together into one ritual cycle. These fused cultural values are reflected in the trickster figure, as Stanley Diamond explains:

> The sacred is an immediate aspect of man's experience. Good and evil, creation and destruction—the dual image of deity, as expressed in the trickster—are fused in the network of actions that define primitive society. Therefore, moral fanaticism, based as it is on abstract notions of pure good, pure evil, and the exclusive moral possibility or fate of any particular individual—what might be called moral exceptionalism—is absent among primitive people.[67]

In this manner, the North American Indian belief system views society as composed of people who are capable of anything. In other words, the separate entities of

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[66] Diamond, Stanley, "Introductory Essay: Job and the Trickster" in Paul Radin, *The Trickster* (New York: Schocken Books, 1972) xxi.

[67] Diamond, xxi.

good and bad in society do not exist, but they put forward the idea that people or society in general can be both good and bad at the same time. Moreover, Stanley Diamond remarks that North American Indian people are held accountable for each action: "But every step of the way, the person is held accountable for those actions that seriously threaten the balance of society and nature."[68] Unfortunately, this moral ambiguity, as Dundes notes, is problematic: "There are still many students of American Indian folklore who are troubled by the fact that folktale characters are often neither good nor bad, but are instead a curious mixture of both."[69] One of the best examples of this type of motifemic sequence is found in the Trickster cycle of *Monabozho's Adventures* (C).[70] Monabozho wants to capture some ducks (L). He orders the victims to dance and to close their eyes (Dct). They do as he tells them (Dcpn). He hits them over the head with a bundle of bark (LL). While the structure of the tale remains the same, the content may vary from tribe to tribe. The variability of the content within a specific culture shows that the structure of the tale is not affected.

Many scholars have referred to the Trickster tales as "random accretions or combination of motifs." Boas remarks in his book entitled *Tsimshian Mythology* that "there is little cohesion between the component elements;"[71] and Erna Gunther in her

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[68] Diamond, xxi.

[69] Dundes, 72.

[70] Thompson, Stith, *The Tales of the North American Indians* (1929; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966) 54.

[71] Boas, Franz, *Tsimshian Mythology* (Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1916) 878.

article "Accretion in the Folktales of the American Indians" (1927) compared the construction of a North American Indian tale with a snow ball: "Rolling along and picking up more and more as it goes."[72] However, Dundes reiterates the fact that from a structural point of view, "one can see that the variability of the motifs does not alter the constancy of the motifemic structure."[73] After having illustrated how tales can consist of only two or four motifemic sequences, Dundes shows how these motifemic pairs combine to form more complex tales. It seems that the application of this structural model to more complex North American Indian folktales may determine its validity.

3.5 Dundes' Scheme Applied to the Inuit Folktale The Fox-Woman

In order to test the validity of Dundes' structural model, we will apply it to the Labrador Eskimo (Inuit) folktale *The Fox-Woman*. This folktale is of particular interest, because it is more complex and positively portrays the motif of animal marriage. This completely positive perception of animals is less familiar to the Western audience.

> A hunter who lived by himself found when he returned to
> the place after an absence that it had been visited and
> everything put in order as a dutiful wife should do. This
> happened so often with no visible signs of tracks that the
> man determined to watch and see who would scrape his skin
> clothing and boots, hand them out to dry, and cook nice hot
> food ready to be eaten when he returned. One day he went

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[72] Gunther, Erna, "Accretion in the Folktales of the North American Indians" *Folk-Lore*, 58 (1927) 54.

[73] Dundes, 73.

away as though going off on a hunt, but secreted himself as to observe the entrance of anything into the house.

After a while he saw a fox enter. He suspected that the fox was after the food. He quietly slipped up to the house and on entering saw a most beautiful woman dressed in the skin clothing of wondrous make. Within the house, on a line, hung the skin of a fox. The man inquired if it was she who had done these things. She replied that she was his wife and it was her duty to do them, hoping that she had performed her labor in a manner satisfactory to him .

After they had lived together a short time the husband detected a musty odor about the house and inquired of her what it was. She replied that she emitted the odor and if he was going to find fault with her for it she would leave. She dashed off her clothing and, resuming the skin of the fox, slipped quietly away and has never been disposed to visit a man since that time.

The folktale of *The Fox-Woman* belongs to a greater category of tales that Stith Thompson categorized as "The offended supernatural wife" (Motif C 35). The letter C places it in the taboo section of Stith Thompson's *Motif- Index*. In this group of tales it is forbidden to refer to the animals' origins. The man wishes for a wife (L). The man marries a woman in the form of a fox (LL). He is not allowed to mention her smell (Int). The husband inquires about a musty odour in the house (Viol). The fox-woman reassumes the skin of a fox and slips away and has never been disposed to visit a man since that time (Consq).

The above analysis supports the validity of Dundes' model, because it can also be applied to a more complex folktale. In *The Fox-Woman*, the number of motifemes is limited and they appear mostly in pairs and in chronological order. The pairs appearing in the following chronological order are: Deceit/Deception; Interdiction/Violation;

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Consequence/Attempted Escape. In the same way that the number of motifemes is limited, the number of pairs is also limited. The motifeme pair Lack/ Liquidated form the fundamental structure of *The Fox-Woman*. In this manner, the basis for structurally simple tales is also applicable to more complex tales. Following a morphological analysis of this type shows that North American Indian folktales are structured folktales with literary value, and should no longer be considered as "formless and void." The next chapter will analyze in more detail that North American Indian folktales are structured because they adhere to a constant and stable morphological pattern. The next chapter will focus on clarifying some misconceptions based on anthropological criteria that downgrade North American Indian folktales as "void" and "undeveloped."

4. A Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Animal Suitor Motif

4.1 The Animal Suitor Motif as a Marvellous Feature in Universal Fairy Tales

When scholars judge the content in folktales of other cultures by their own standards, the result is frequently an inaccurate interpretation. Using the animal suitor motif as a basis will reveal that North American Indian folktales are not "dumpfer," "schwerer" und "nicht selten fiebrig," in comparison to their European counterparts, nor do they lie in a lower evolutionary scale. The division of the European fairy tales and North American Indian folktales into three categories, according to diverging perceptions of animals will prove that the structure of a tale is not affected by cultural values.

All fairy tales that deal with animal marriages are classified by Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson as the "animal bridegroom" tale type. In the bridegroom fairy tales, the animal suitor motif represents the animistic belief that heroes and animals can normally communicate with each other on the same level. This animistic idea is similar to the archaic European philosophical concept known as animism. Since the beginning of time, three types of belief systems have developed: animism, religion and science. Of all three systems animism is the most archaic; it "is the most consistent and exhaustive and [...] gives a truly complete explanation of nature and the universe."[74] Out of all the numerous

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[74] Freud, Sigmund, *Totem and Taboo* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1950) 77.

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theories, Freud offers the most precise definition of animism in his work *Totem and Taboo* (1950):[75]

> They [primitive societies] people the world with innumerable spiritual beings both benevolent and malignant; and these spirits and demons they regard as the cause of the natural phenomena and they believe that not only animals and plants but all the inanimate objects in the world are animated by them.[76]

According to Wundt in his work *Elemente der Völkerpsychologie* (1913), in European societies, the archaic systems animism and totemism paved the way for religion and industrial science:

> Nehmen wir alles dies zusammen, so ergibt sich mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit der Schluß, daß die totemische Kultur überall einmal eine Vorstufe der späteren Entwicklungen und eine Übergangsstufe zwischen dem Zustand des primitiven Menschen und dem Helden- und Götterzeitalter gebildet hat.[77]

One must question the fact that the transition from animism to science is actually a process of cultural evolution. According to the philosopher Adolph Bastian:

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[75] Due to the vast amount of material, Freud restricted his definition to the standard works of Herbert Spencer, J. G. Frazer, Andrew Lang, E. B. Tylor and Wilhelm Wundt.

[76] Freud, 76.

[77] Wundt, Wilhelm. *Elemente der Völkerpsychologie* (Leipzig: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1913) 139.

"We cannot, [...] assume that cultural evolution always follows a straight line from lower to higher."[78]

As the smallest fairy tale building block, motifs undergo continuous historical development and their meanings are constantly readapted to society's changing realities. According to Lang, in "savage" societies all animate and inanimate objects were endowed with a magic power, differing from human beings only in bodily form. Hence, the belief that animals could marry and also bear children was perceived as real and true to the 'primitive' societies. In a sublimated style, the Grimms' fairy tales reflect this animist view. The Grimms omitted any element in their fairy tales that they considered as "savage" or as "offensive" with the intention of making these tales more suitable for the children of the nineteenth century bourgeois household. As the European belief system developed from an animistic idea to a belief system rooted in science and Judeo-Christian religions, the perception toward animals changed from an animistic view to a marvellous interpretation of the motif. As Lüthi posits in his numerous books, once a supernatural belief is no longer understood it becomes demystified (*entwirklicht*), and once it is demystified, the motif becomes a marvellous feature of the fairy tale. In conjunction with this development, the Grimms replaced the original animistic idea of the animal suitor motif with a more contemporary and understandable meaning. For example, animals portrayed as Gods and animals bearing children is common fare in Indo-Germanic mythology. In Skandinavian mythology, two of the offspring of Loke and Angurboda were the Fenries wolf and the Midgard Serpent. However, when the Grimms wrote down

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[78] Koepping, Klaus Peter, *Adolf Bastian and the Psychic Unity of Mankind* (London and New York: Universtiy of Queensland Press, 1983) 169.

tales from "the folk" in the nineteenth century, they were obliged to adjust the content to the moral codes of the community. This adjustment to the moral codes of the community required a further association of the animal suitor motif to the marvellous motif of enchantment and disenchantment.

As opposed to the marvellous interpretation of the animal suitor motif in the European context, the North American Indian motifs offers a different magical conception of the animal suitor motif. Since animal marriages are still connected to the value systems of the North American Indians, the animal suitor motif is portrayed in a more realistic style. The traditional North American Indian belief system viewed animals as god-like and ascribed sacred qualities to them. In the anthology of the *Indian Legends of The Pacific Northwest* (1953), Peter Noyes of the Col ille Reservation recalls stories about animals in his childhood. He says: "The animals were people of this country. They talked to one another the same as we do. And they married too. That went on for many, many years, and then the world changed."[79] The origin of this belief was explained to him by an elder Puget Sound Indian in the following way:

> This time, long ago, animal just the same like men. He talk everybody understand. Fur and skin he put on and take off just like coat. Same way everybody-animals, birds, and fish.[80]

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[79]Clark, Ella, ed., *Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1953) 81.

[80]Clark, 81.

The two foregoing statements expressed by the Natives themselves clarify the image of animals in the North American Indian belief system. Even though certain aspects might resemble the European archaic animistic idea, the Native concept is quite different, because North American Indians believed animals were the first inhabitants of this world. In Judaeo-Christian religions, God created nature in which humans are the highest being. Subordinate to the humans are the animals and nature. By contrast, in North American Indian religions, animals were not only attributed spirits but were also worshipped as gods who participated in the creation of the present world. Before this creation, animals were giant mythical creatures (Mosquito, Spider, and Ant) with supernatural powers. Unlike the Judaeo-Christian religion, which ascribes the creation of the world to God, North American Indian religions relied on the general help and co-operation of certain animals to create the world. These underlying belief systems explain the negative perceptions of animals found in the Grimms' animal suitor motif and the positive perception of animals in the North American Indian belief system. Before we can categorize the corpus of the Grimms' fairy tales and the North American Indian folktales, we must take into account the underlying belief system which gave rise to the different perceptions of animals. Only in this manner can we respect and understand cultural values as they are expressed through literature.

4.2 Categories of the Animal Suitor Motif

While analyzing and comparing the animal suitor motif in the folktale collections of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* and *The Tales of North American Indians*, we can break down the entire corpus into three categories based on the perception of animals:

> 1) The marriage to an animal is viewed as a negative experience by the human partner and by the community.
>
> 2) The human partner sees the marriage as a positive experience but the community condemns it.
>
> 3) Both the human partner and the community consider the marriage to an animal as a positive experience.[81]

The first group of tales portray marriage between humans and animals under a negative aspect. In this group of tales, the human partner does not willingly desire to marry the animal, because he or she falls into the marriage either by unintentional wishing or through the power of a love-starved animal. This category is very typical for the Grimms' fairy tales, because the animal marriages are viewed as a regression, but it is atypical for the North American Indian folktales, because the belief that animals and humans can marry is still connected to the belief-systems of the people. For example, folktales that belong to this category are the Grimms' fairy tale *The Singing and Soaring Lark*, and the Inuit folktale *The Eagle and Whale Husbands*.

In the second group of tales the animal marriage is accepted by the human partner, but he or she is shunned by the community. In this group of tales, the animal may

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[81] Weber, Ingeborg and Wolfgang use this method of classification of the animal bridegroom folktales in their cross-cultural study entitled *Auf den Spuren des göttlichen Schelms* (1983).

appear in the role of a lover. Tales falling into this category would be any older version of

the Grimms' fairy tales including Indo-Germanic myths, such as the Greek Myth of *Cupid*

and Psyche and the Cheyenne folktale, *The Dog Husband*. This almost positive

perception of the animal suitor motif leads us into the next group of tales.

The third category is of particular interest in this comparison, because a

completely positive perception of an animal marriage remains alien to the Grimms' corpus

of fairy tales. The North American Indian narratives which fall under this category convey

the traditional idea of the animal suitor motif, perhaps before the time of European

colonization. For example, in the Inuit folktale *The Fox-Woman* and in the Thompson

Indian's folktale *The Youth Who Joined the Deer*, both the human partner and the tribe

have a positive conception of animal marriages. These three categories are indicative of

the type of cultural values present in folktales, which show that while the morphological

patterns may be same, the cultural perceptions differ.

4.3 The Animal Suitor Motif in the Grimms' Fairy Tales

Most of the Grimms' fairy tales fall into the first category in which the

animal suitor motif is mostly viewed as a regression. Wolfgang und Ingeborg Weber note

the following with regard to the European animal suitor motif in their work entitled *Auf*

den Spuren des göttlichen Schelms (1983):

> In allen unseren bekannten europäischen Beispielen der
> Tierehe-Märchen wird die Tiergestalt des Bräutigams als
> Regression gewertet, und der Handlungsimpuls ist stets der
> Wunsch nach Rückgewinnung der menschlichen Gestalt.[82]

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[82] Weber, Ingeborg und Wolfgang, *Auf den Spuren des göttlichen Schelms* (Stuttgart: Friederich Fromm Verlag, 1983) 53.

In almost all of the Grimms' animal bridegroom fairy tales, the morphological patterns remain identical. The hero who portrays the good must be removed from all social taboos. To keep the hero removed from all social taboos, the King usually finds himself in a situation in which he promises his daughter in marriage to a male animal suitor for services rendered by the animal. In this manner, the daughter always marries the animal out of duty and obedience to the father, and never out of love for the animal. In addition, the animal suitor is never a "real" animal. He is mostly an enchanted prince who must wait for the unconditional love of a princess in order to lift the evil curse. The Grimms' fairy tales always end with the metamorphosis of the animal into a handsome prince. After this transformation, the couple marries and lives happily ever after in a marvellous castle. Using Dundes' scheme instead of Propp's illustrates more precisely that the Grimms' fairy tales follow the same morphological pattern as the North American Indian folktales. Taking the Grimms' fairy tale *The Frog Prince* once more as an example, we can deconstruct this tale morphologically according to Dundes' scheme.

The princess plays in the forest by herself (Viol). The frog tricks her into marrying him (Dct). The princess agrees to marry him (Dcpn). The frog is magically transformed into a handsome prince. The handsome prince and the princess marry and live happily ever after in a marvellous castle (LL).

Like most of the Grimms' animal bridegroom fairy tales, this folktale has a four motifemic sequence and has the following pairs which appear in chronological order: The motifemes (L) and (LL) determine the outer boundaries of the tales with the motifemes Interdiction/Violation and Dct/Dcpn represent the inner boundaries. The

Deceit/Deception is an important structural difference to the North American Indian animal bridegroom tale type.

Since the motif of animal marriages is no longer a popular supernatural belief, the marriage requires the lifting of the frog's curse. According to Max Lüthi, this is why all sexual and erotic elements have been demystified (*entwirklicht*) and sublimated. Love and sexual feelings appear in the Grimms' fairy tales only in the sense of the idea in a sublimated form. On the other hand, in the North American Indian folktales everyday erotic desires are explicitly described and appear as real to the community. Due to the degree of sublimation in the Grimms' fairy tales, the princess never actually courts a "real" frog, but an enchanted human. However, in older versions of the Grimms' *Kinder-und Hausmärchen* the frog's erotic advances are more explicit. In this case the older versions could fall into category two, because this older version portrays a more positive animal-human marriage. Despite the presence of animistic ideas in the Middle Ages, these older folktale versions are not considered by scholars to have less of a literary value than the more recent Grimms' *Kinder-und Hausmärchen* (1859). As McGlathery remarked in his work *The Brothers Grimm and the Folktale* (1988):

> The curious point is that in these stories the girls show
> themselves to be extremely bold in the face of the unnatural
> prospect of becoming the bride of an animal suitor, as
> though they do not shrink from committing sodomy (sic).[83]

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[83] McGlathery, James, ed., *The Brothers Grimm and Folktale* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988) 61.

When the more recent version of *The Frog Prince* (1859) is juxtaposed

with the version found in the first manuscript of the Grimms, the amount of editing that

they undertook to remove the erotic elements between human and animals becomes

visible. In *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1859), the frog clearly pursues the princess by

asking her permission to: "sit by you at your little table, and eat off your little golden plate,

and drink out of your little cup, and sleep in your bed." In this most recent version the

frog's erotic advances appear as sublimated and very subtle. However, while reading the

same phrase in the Grimms' first manuscript, the frog's erotic intentions are stated more

explicitly: "take me to your bed. I want to sleep beside you."[84] MacCulloch points out in

his work *The Childhood of Fiction* (1905), that in older versions of this tale the princess

does not throw the frog but kisses it in order to lift the curse. Moreover, MacCulloch

notes that the idea that a kiss, or the marriage bed could release a person from a

monstrous curse, thrilled readers in the Middle Ages. The idea of kissing the frog instead

of throwing him against a wall in order to lift the curse shows that during the Middle

Ages, the animal suitor motif was portrayed in a more realistic and erotic manner. For this

reason, it is possible to suggest that a more respectful view of nature and the animal world

must have predominated in Europe. The industrial revolution increasingly estranged

humans and the animals they once depended on. The rise of the industrial revolution

lessened the human's dependence on animals, while increasing their dependence on

machines. This shift in dependence from animals to machines led to an estranged

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[84] Ellis, John, M. D., *One Fairy Story too Many, The Brothers Grimm and Their Tales* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1983) 126.

relationship between humans and animals, that is in European societies humans viewed themselves superior to animals and in control of nature.

4.4 The Animal Suitor Motif in North American Indian Folktales

Contrary to European societies, North American Indian societies did not experience the effects of the industrial revolution until after the time of colonization. This is why their folktales illustrate a deep sympathy and mutual respect towards animals and humans. Although the animal suitor motif is on the whole viewed more realistically and positively in North American Indian tales, they fall under all three categories.

Hunger and death were daily concerns that found their expression in folktales of Native American communities. Since Natives were obliged to maintain a direct dependence on the animals they hunted for survival, they continued to perceive animals partly as their creator and partly as people.[85] This shows a very positive relationship to animals, which is further sustained by the fact that in North American Indian folktales, Natives address animals as "my brother" or as "animal people." Linguistic evidence proves that no clear distinction exists between humans and animals: .

> While studying the Pit River Indian language (Achumawi)
> 50 years ago in California, the linguist Jaime de Angulo
> discovered that this particular tribe did not have a word to
> describe animals. The closest thing they could come up
> with for animal was *qaade-wade toolol aakaadzi*, which
> means "the beings which are world over, all living.[86]

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[85] Caduto, Michael and Joseph Bruchac, *The Keepers of the Animals* (Golden, Colorado: Fulcum Publishing, 1991)4.

[86] When Native participants enter to purify themselves in sweat lodges, they say: "all my relations," as a greeting to all relations on this earth.

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But this term included people, rocks, and all other living beings, which exemplifies the North American Indian idea of interconnectedness. According to the very recent encyclopedia entitled *Native America in the Twentieth Century. An Encyclopaedia* (1994), this North American Indian idea that the world is interrelated, mislead some of the first colonists to describe the society of North American Indian as "unstructured" and consequently lable it as "uncivilized."

The first category, "animals are viewed in a negative way," tells rather little about the North American Indian perception of animals, because of the visible degree of European transmission. However, this group of tales is important, because it shows the transition the animal suitor motif underwent in the corpus of North American Indian folktales. The Inuit folktale *The Eagle and The Whale Husbands* can be deconstructed into the following motifemic pairs.

Two little girls unintentionally wish for an eagle and a whale husband (Viol). The wish is realized (Cons). The eagle and the whale kidnap the girls (Det). The protagonists escape with the help of their brothers (AE).

Using the Inuit folktale *The Eagle and the Whale Husband* as an example, we can conclude that this fairy tale follows the same morphological pattern as the Grimms' *The Frog Prince*. It is a folktale with a four motifemic sequence, which includes the minimum Int/Viol motifemic pair. The interdiction of not to wish for an animal husband is implied, but not stated. The protagonists carelessly disobeying the interdiction must pay for their transgression which results in their abduction by the animals. The animal suitors who wish to court the female protagonists are depicted as mean and

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ferocious, because they kidnap the humans. It is not the type of animal that is of vital importance for the plot development, but rather its function in the story as a villain. Since the animal is depicted as a villain who must pay for his deceit, Ingeborg and Max Weber concluded that this group of tales must be of recent development: "Scham über eine Tierehe ist eine späte indianische Verhaltensweise und die Märchen, die diese Scham dramatisieren, sind mit Sicherheit jungen Datums."[87]

The second category, in which the human partner views the animal marriage in a positive way, but is shunned by the community illustrates a more positive image of animals. In the Blackfoot tale *The Bear Woman*, the animal does not function as a villain who attempts to deceive his victim, but as a lover to a single woman. The protagonist chooses a bear as her lover (Viol). The father, being extremely proud of his daughter, is appalled by her choice of suitor and kills the bear (Cons). The most beautiful daughter becomes infuriated and to show her revenge she transforms herself into a powerful medicine woman (AE).

The interdiction of not to choose a bear as a lover is not explicitly stated in this folktale. As opposed to category one, the animal in category two does not function as a villain, hence the exclusion of the Dct/Dcpn motifeme. The father killing the bear represents the community's negative perception. The transformation of the Chief's daughter into a powerful medicine woman is rooted in the North American Indian belief that a medicine man or shaman could transform himself or herself and others into animal shapes. In order to change shapes, the shaman had to go into a trance, and it was in the

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[87] Weber, 61.

state of a trance that the transformation was completed. When Lüthi refers to the North American Indian folktale as "nicht selten fiebrig", then he bases his assumption on anthropological criteria, that is, on sacred North American Indian cultural rites and rituals which required fasting or sweating in a sweat lodge to attain this state of hallucination.

The implicitly positive perception of the bear might be explained by the fact that the bear was the totem animal of the chief's most beautiful daughter. The totem animal is very sacred to most Native American societies, because it does not only protect a particular Native community, but also determines the role an individual plays in society (as healer, warrior, provider of food, leader or teacher). According to Bruchac in *Keepers of the Animals*, many Native healers belong to the Bear Clan, and people belonging to this clan are usually strong and decisive. This could explain why the protagonist in the folktale *The Bear Woman* acquired the powers of a medicine woman. Since totemistic values like these manifest themselves in North American Indian folklore, many ethnologists and literary critics attempt to explain them in terms of their own standards. They try to explain the positive idea of animals by relating these ideas to remnants of the archaic European idea of animism and totemism. For example Frazer dedicated an elaborate discussion of totemism in his four volumes entitled *Totemism and Exogamy* (1910):

> A totem..... is a class of material objects which a savage [sic]
> regards with superstitious respect, believing that there exists
> between him and every member of the class an intimate and
> altogether special relation[....]The connection between a
> man and his totem is mutually beneficent; the totem protects
> the man, and the man shows his respect for the totem in

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various ways, by not killing it if it be an animal, and not cutting or gathering it if it be a plant.[88]

The association of the North American Indian idea of totemism with the European notion is academically inappropriate, because this comparison devalues the North American Indian culture for the benefit of the European culture. It is important to keep in mind that most European scholars who conducted this type of research did not have first-hand experience with traditional Native beliefs. In addition, most did not speak Native languages, which may have lead to inaccurate interpretations. This almost positive perception of animals as totemic figures leads us into the next category.

The third category is of particular importance, because it portrays the animal marriage in a positive manner, that is, the animal marriage is free from any social and moral taboos. The Thompson Indian's folktale *The Youth Who Joined The Deer* is very interesting, because this folktale represents the traditional North American Indian idea of animals as the Creator. This tale mirrors a hunter's preoccupation with the animals he hunted. The hunter's thoughts about the deer preoccupied him even into his dreams. Opposed to the foregoing fairy tales and folktales, *The Youth that Joined the Deer*, the Int/Viol sequence is implied but not fulfilled.

The community needs venision for food (L). The hunter who hunts deer for food is so preoccupied with the deer that through time and association with the deer, he changes into the shape of a deer and marries there. The deer teach him about the deer

[88] Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy* vol.1 (1887; Toronto: Mackmillan Company, London, 1910) 3-4.

people and how humans must be careful when killing the deer and eating the meat. If the bones are carefully preserved the deer will be plentiful (Int). When his deer wife, his child, and himself return to visit his relatives to teach them about the deer they transform back into human form. Eventually, his deer son chooses to become human and stays with the tribe, while the hunter chooses to live the life of a deer and returns to the underground deer-kingdom with his deer wife (LL).

This tale is composed of the minimum requirement of the two motifemic sequence of (L) and (LL). It conveys the ethical value of respecting the deer they hunted; the motifemic sequence of (Int) not to molest the bones of the animal, and the (Cons) deer will no longer present themselves to the people for food, is stated but the interdiction is never violated. A further didactic moral is transmitted: the belief in the ethical values of giving and receiving. When North American Indians prepared for a hunt, they offered prayers and gifts to a spirit of the animal which they hunted. These offerings were usually made in a respectful and religious manner. The animals accepted the gifts and presented themselves for the people. The North American people hoped that the Creator would forgive them, because humans need vernision to survive. Rituals were also usually performed while preparing the meat and again once the meal was finished. The bones were carefully preserved and returned to Earth with a final prayer.

The preoccupation of the hunter with his prey leads the hunter to a deer person who leads him to a mysterious underground deer kingdom. The hunter is amazed by the resemblance of these deer people to humans. He describes the underground deer kingdom as follows: "They were well dressed in clothes of dressed skin, and wore deer-

skin robes." Choosing not only the marriage to an animal but also the life of an animal illustrates the North American Indian belief that animals and humans had two forms of existence. Moreover, the animal-human marriage comes to an extreme when the deer wife bears the hunter a child. This child also has the power to switch shapes between animal and human. As opposed to the social and moral taboos associated to the European animal suitor motif, the animal marriage in North American Indian folktales appears to be accepted. The transformation from the hunter into a deer does not require a magical act, but it does require the hunter to live among the deer for a long period of time in order to complete the metamorphosis. The transformation is strictly a question of convenience, according to where the family decides to live: with the deer or with the humans.

4.5 Concluding Remarks

The motif of animal bridegrooms in the Grimms' fairy tales and North American Indian folktales all have identical recurrent motifemic sequences in common. These sequences form alternative distinct patterns of the Interdiction/Violation or Deceit/Deception motifemic pairs and they combine to form a structural base. I therefore conclude that North American Indian folktales, in contrast to the judgements of Max Lüthi, are structured folk narratives.

The classification of the corpus of the Grimms' fairy tales and the North American Indian folktales according to the different perceptions of the animal suitor motif illustrated that different cultural beliefs or perceptions, i.e., content does not affect the structure of the tale. In addition, the cultural beliefs transmitted through the animal suitor

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motif are all equally important elements that contribute to shaping the values and beliefs of a particular culture. In the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, animal motifs are marvellous features in which the animals can help the hero accomplish a task, communicate with the hero as a norm, or the animal marries a princess. This originally believed animal bridegroom motif has become a marvellous feature of the folktale. For this reason, European societies viewed fairy tales as fantastic.

Conversely, the sacred and the real are intricately tied together in North American Indian tales. Every aspect of life could be viewed as possessing this sacred meaning, such as animals, music, medicine, and storytelling. Since for the North American Indians such motifs are very spiritual, the animal suitor motif is still considered real. The anthropological and ethnological school link this belief system to the archaic primitive societies of Europe. According, to the article "Anthropologists and Native Americans" in *Native America in The Twentieth Century. An Encyclopaedia* (1994), relating to the belief system of Native Americans as "primitive" is derogatory and racist, because these stereotypes contribute to the moulding of the popular image of Native Americans as people who are "child-like", "primitive" and "savage." At the beginning of the twentieth century, Native Americans were largely unaware of the research and writings of scholars practising at the time. Today, Native Americans are becoming acutely aware of the shaping of popular opinion about Native North Americans, and this awareness is causing a push for change. These developments have affected the relationship between Natives and academia and pressures for change confront the discipline today:

> A common complaint by Native Americans is that anthropologists reinforce cultural stereotypes by emphasising the abnormal and the bizarre, or the unfortunate effects of conquest programs of forced assimilation.[89]

The North American belief system was actually more structured than scholars had anticipated at the time. In fact, the North American belief system carries this kinship with animals as portrayed in primitive societies one step further to the "era of heroes and gods." In this era, animals were sacred. Even today, traditional rituals are performed to honour "animal spirits", because they participated in the creation of the Earth and humankind. It is this difference in religion that prompted scholars to believe that North American Indian folktales embody a less evolved form of literature than the European folktales, hence excluding them from European literary analysis.

If the world is perceived as a cyclical process, then a return to the modes of thought and values once held by Europeans and the First Nations is essential to help comprehend the issues that plague the world today. As we are approaching the twenty-first century, European scholars must begin to question if the belief of living in harmony with nature, or perceiving nature as alive, is in fact primitive. The disrespect for nature has caused severe environmental damage and now we are trying to evolve towards a more nature conscious paradigm. Including all fairy tales and folktales found in this "global village" into world literature can contribute to creating a world that is more conscious and

[89] *Native America in the Twentieth Century. An Encyclopedia* Davis, Mary, B, ed, "Anthropologists and Native Americans," by Walker, E. Dewars. (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1994) 41-43.

balanced. I hope this study provided a basic understanding and corrected some misconceptions that are encountered in secondary literature of the world's different but also similar cultures.

APPENDIX A

The Functions of the Dramatis Personae

1. One of the members of the family absents himself from home. (Definition: *absentation.*)
2. An interdiction is addressed to the hero. (Definition: *interdiction.*)
3. The interdiction is violated. (Definition: *violation.*)
4. The villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance. (Definition: *reconnaissance.*)
5. The villain receives information about his victim. (Definition: *delivery.*)
6. The villain attempts to deceive his victim in order to take possession of him or of his belongings. (Definition: *trickery.*)
7. The victim submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy. (Definition: *complicity.*)
8. The villain causes harm or injury to a member of the family. (Definition: *villainy*)
8a. One member of the family either lacks something or desires to have something. (Definition: *lack*)
9. Misfortune or lack is made known: the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched. (Definition: *beginning.*)
10 The seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction. (Defintion: *beginning counteraction*)
11. The hero leaves home. (Definition: *departure*)
12 The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc., which prepares his way for his receiving either a magical agent or helper. (Definition: *the first function of a donor*)
13. The hero reacts to the actions of the future donor. (Definition: *the hero's reaction*)
14. The hero acquires the use of a magical agent. (Definition: *provision or receipt of a magical agent*)
15. The hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of search. (Definition: *spatial transference between two kingdoms, guidance.*)
16. The hero and the villain join in direct combat. (Definition: *struggle*)
17 The hero is branded. (Definition: *branding, marking*)
18. The villain is defeated. (Definition: *victory*)
19. The initial misfortune or lack is liquidated. (Designation:K.)
20. The Hero returns. (Definition: *return*)
21. The Hero is pursued. (Definition: *pursuit, chase*)
22. Rescue of the hero form pursuit. (Definition : *rescue*)
23. The Hero, unrecognized, arrives home or in another country. (Definition: *unrecognized arrival*)
24. A false hero presents unfounded claims. (Definition: *unfounded claims*)
25. A difficult task is proposed to the hero. (Definition: *difficult task*)
26. The task is resolved. (Definition: *solution*)
27. The hero is recognized. (Definition: *recognition*)
28. The false hero or villain is exposed. (Definition: *Exposure*)

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29. The hero is given a new appearance. (Definition: *transfiguration*)
30. The villain is punished. (Definition: *punishment*)
31. The hero is married and ascends the throne. (Definition: *wedding*)

The distribution of the functions among dramatis personae

1. The sphere of action of the villain
2. The sphere of action of the donor (provider).action for the transmission of a magical agent (D); provision of the hero with a magical agent (F).
3. The sphere of action of the helper. Constituents : the spatial transference of the hero (G); liquidation of misfortune or lack (K); rescue from pursuit (Rs); the solution of difficult tasks (N); transfiguration of the hero (T)
4. The sphere of action of a princess (a sought for person) and of her father.
5. The sphere of action of the dispatcher
6. The sphere of action of the hero
7. The sphere of action of the false hero.

APPENDIX B

The Abbreviations of Dunde's Motifemic Pairs

1. Lack: "L".
2. Lack Liquidated: "LL".
3. Task: T".
4. Task Accomplished: "TA".
5. Interdiction: "Int".
6. Violation: "Viol".
7. Deceit: "Det".
8. Deception: "Dcpn".
9. Consequence: "Consq".
10. Attempted Escape: "AE"

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