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C[arl] W[ilhelm] v[on] Sydow



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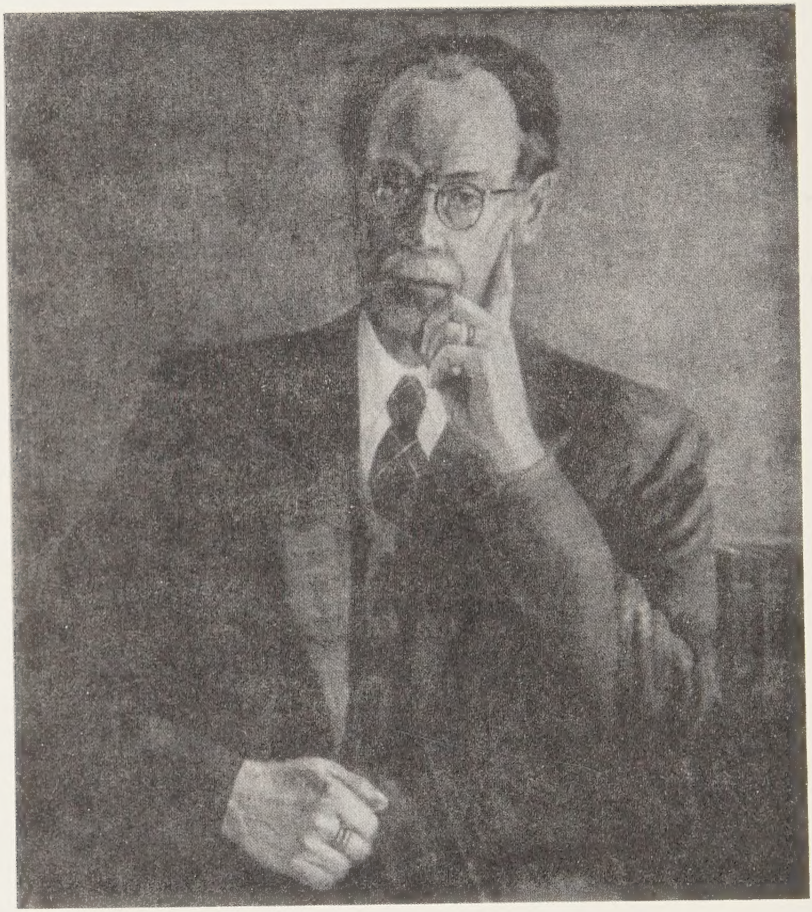
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C. W. Snyder.

C. W. v. SYDOW

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PREFACE

The articles are printed in chronological order without changes in the text, an arrangement which has entailed certain repetitions. Nos. 1, 5, 8 and 9 are translated from the Swedish originals, and in them consistent use has been made of *sagn* instead of *sägn, Sage* or the incorrect "legend" (used by English authors). In No. 2, *ecotype* has been altered to the more correct *oicotype,* and the other articles have been made to accord. Otherwise only slight typographical corrections have been made. Professor von Sydow's constant endeavours to build up an adequate terminology have resulted in the same subject sometimes being called by different names, which will appear from the index. All notes are assembled at the end of the book.

L. B.

ON THE SPREAD OF TRADITION

The Problem.

The early schools of folklore research paid little attention to the problem of how traditions are spread. The mythological school in Germany, as well as the British School of Anthropology, saw in tradition only inheritance, and did not, to any considerable extent, count on diffusion from one place to another, or from people to people. It was not until Benfey introduced his theory, that all folk-tales originated in India in the period following immediately after Buddha, and were disseminated from there all over the world, that the point of view of inheritance was discarded — somewhat too rashly — and superseded by the theory of migration. Apart from the purely literary dissemination of story-matter from India, which was actually proved by Benfey, the theory of India as the country whence all folk-tales were derived is, however, both unreasonable in itself and contradicted by an array of clear facts. The Finnish School used the language of commonsence, against Benfey when they emphasized the fact that folk-tales may be composed among any people, and that accordingly the possibility cannot be ruled out that a variety of tales may be spread from various centres. The migration theory, however, prevailed and has been generally and exclusively applied in folk-tale research. The migration of folk-tales was compared to a stream flowing from the home country all over the countries where the tale is now to be found, or to the rings that are formed when a stone is thrown on the surface of water, extending equally in all directions. A closer examination of the possibility of either one thing or the other has been dispensed with. In other words: scholars have failed to study the biology of tradition. I

cannot here give a full account of all the relevant problems, but I shall try to give a few suggestions of some of the factors at work in this process.

The Distribution of Tradition.

The traditions of the peasantry are, maybe, most often thought of as if they were the common property of the whole peasantry, to be found everywhere "in the depths of the soul of the people". Nothing can be more false. If we search a parish for a certain tradition, *e. g.* a folk-tale, a sagn, a conception, or a custom, we shall soon find that each tradition has its own bearers, amounting only to a very small number of the whole population of the parish. The various traditions differ both as to number and to kind of their bearers. If *e. g.* a hunting tradition is searched for, we shall get to know nothing at all if we ask the women, and only a very small number of the men will have anything to tell. The case of other kinds of tradition will be much the same. Such an uneven distribution of various traditions is not peculiar to our own time, but has always existed, even if the number of people with no tradition is now relatively greater, and the bearers of tradition relatively smaller than in former days. Schools, newspapers, and books have certainly caused great changes in the conditions of tradition, but they have not done away with it nor abolished the laws that govern the continuation of its life. Now as heretofore, tradition is bound up with certain social circles, family, township, working group, etc. If we want to understand the life of tradition, its origin and development, its dissemination and transmission, we must therefore in the first place give heed to these circles and the various kinds of bearers of tradition. Among these we may distinguish two separate kinds, acting, however, in altogether different ways as regards the several kinds of tradition: the active bearers, and the passive ones. Among these it is the active bearers who keep tradition alive and transmit it, whereas the passive bearers have indeed

heard of what a certain tradition contains, and may perhaps, when questioned, recollect part of it, but do nothing themselves to spread it or keep it alive.

Various Bearers of Tradition and their Importance.

The simplest way to become an active bearer of tradition is by inheritance from the home, because the children of a family will often hear the same rules, tales, sagns, and songs, and see the same customs observed; and thus taught they will often carry on the same tradition later. In such cases as give us an opportunity of comparing the sum of traditions at the command of the parents with those of the children, we always find, however, no slight dissimilarity, as the different temperaments and dispositions of the children urge them to make a selection. Such selections are widely different in the case of several children of the same family, amongst other reasons because the tradition practised in a home changes from time to time, so that various brothers and sisters are brought up in a different tradition. In a big family *e.g.* some of the children will often be together with either or both of the parents for a longer period and in a more intimate way than their brothers and sisters. Nor should we ignore the wider domestic circle made up by the former-day "village home", with its work in common, feasts, entertainments, etc. The children will therefore become bearers also of a good many traditions which they have not received from the parents, but from other families in the village, from comrades, and not least from the places where they have served, as in the last mentioned cases we may imagine a frequent repetition of the same traditions, which are thus instilled into their minds in much the same manner as in their own home. This applies also to the common life during military service, in which the same stories, songs, etc. are often repeated day after day, and likewise during long periods spent together at sea, in felling timber, etc. Among all those who listen to tales and songs, however, there

will in all these last mentioned cases be only a very small number who become active bearers of the tradition that is so often served up to them. During my own military service I had the opportunity of observing such an instance, as a conscript would tell one and the same story in leisure hours time after time. Each time everybody listened with undiminished interest, but only two of them tried to tell the same story again, and that only when the original storyteller was absent. Most likely only these two have become active carriers of the tradition, and even they may be supposed to have put it away before long and to have become passive bearers of tradition. I myself was only passive, but should at that time surely have been able to give a tolerably verbatim report of the story. Even yet I can recollect clearly a formula, which was repeated in several places in the tale whereas I only remember disconnected features of the rest of the contents.

If there is no longer any active bearer of the tradition, it will disappear; but if there are still passive bearers of the tradition alive, it may be possible to get information, sometimes fairly complete, but most often uncertain and fragmentary. Besides, the passive carriers of a tradition have the important task of giving it resonance. Thus *e.g.* the young people's leaders must be considered as active bearers of the tradition relating to a good many processions on the occasion of a variety of festivals, whereas those who have married, have of course changed into being passive. Their good-will and sympathy are, however, of importance for the survival of various customs, and the difficulty of disseminating such customs consists certainly, to no slight extent, in the circumstance that passive carriers of such a tradition are missing and difficult to find in sufficient numbers to the necessary resonance. Moreover, the passive bearers act, to some extent, as a check on tradition. If some deviation should be made, they can easily correct it, and they do so, which is of great importance for the unchanging survival of the tradition.

The border-line between active and passive bearers of tra-

dition is, of course, far from being fixed; it is ever fluctuating. An active bearer may become passive for various reasons. That is the case of all bearers of the special traditions of youth, as has just been pointed out. An active teller of tales will become a passive bearer of folk-tale tradition when nobody cares to listen to him any longer and this may happen for various reasons. In religious revolutions a great variety of traditions will always become obsolete because they do not conform to the new form of religion, which will often take up a hostile attitude to them and force their bearers to inactivity. A similar change may occur in the case of political or social revolutions.

A passive bearer of tradition may likewise change into an active one through being so accustomed to listen to a tradition or to see it being practised that he grows conversant with it and thus comes into a position to take it actively in hand. This is exactly the natural course for the development of an active carrier of tradition but that kind of thing does not happen to all of them; the majority of them remain passive for the whole of their lives.

Having distinguished between active and passive bearers of tradition, I do not, of course, imply any classification of the population into two classes according to their different attitude to tradition, one being passive, the other active. Among the peasantry one person may be active as regards certain traditions, and passive in respect of others, indeed entirely without certain other traditions. A carrier of tradition is thus active only as regards part of his stock, being passive in so far as perhaps the major part is concerned.

The Bearers of Tradition and its Dissemination.

If now a tradition is normally transmitted by passing from parents to children, or at any rate in such circumstances that the receiver has the opportunity of repeatedly listening to or observing the tradition concerned, it is obvious that the normal

cause of its diffusion will be the circumstance that the active bearers of tradition move, for a shorter period, to another place than the one where they have received their tradition. If the bearer of tradition only remains within his new circle, he may there transmit his tradition, if conditions are otherwise favourable. If he stays there only for a short time, there will certainly be a possibility for the tradition to take root there, but, as a general rule, this possibility must be supposed to be very small, for the shorter the time he stays there, the greater will be the probability either that he will not be given the opportunity of making known his tradition to others, or that all those who have received the tradition from him, remain passive.

If you move to another place the move will in the great majority of cases take place within the political boundaries of your own country, and the tradition you carry with you will remain inside the home country. Through a lot of such migrations of bearers of tradition within the same country it will thus be possible for a tradition to be spread to all, or to most of the provinces of the country. Much more often the active bearer of tradition will meet with passive bearers of the same tradition, and sometimes, but not very often, with other active bearers as well. The tradition in question will thus come to undergo a process of unification within its own area through the mutual control and reciprocal influence of its bearers, and altogether independent of corresponding traditions in other countries. It will therefore also receive a more or less distinct national character: an oicotype characteristic of its cultural area is formed. The narrower the cultural area is, the more uniform will be the development and the more distinct the oicotypification.

A small percentage of all those who in a certain country move from their homes, emigrate to a foreign country, and among those will be a smaller percentage still of active bearers of a certain tradition. In the new country conditions will more often than in the home country be such as will not offer any oppor-

tunity for the bearer to make his tradition known or carry it on to others; he then changes into a passive bearer. Sometimes, however, the tradition he carries will take root and be diffused slowly within the boundaries of the country. If a kindred tradition is already to be found there the newcomer will at first be felt as an oicotype that is foreign to the place, and it may happen that it is soon superseded by the national oicotype already existing in the country, which disposes in advance of a flock of active and passive bearers who will turn away the new-comer. But in certain conditions, e.g. if it is so different from the home tradition of the country that it is recognized as something independent and valuable, it may also be maintained along with it, as its equal. It may, however, also easily be influenced by the other traditions of the new country and become subject to an independent development as against the tradition of the home country, so that a new oicotype is formed.

This transfer from one country to another is accordingly no migration over the frontier from village to village, from parish to parish, etc., with the bilingual population of the border-land as an implied medium, such as scholars used to imagine the case when the wanderings of tradition were compared to a stream flowing in a certain direction. On the contrary it takes place by leaps, or as when a seed carried by the wind falls to the ground far from the place of its origin and grows into a plant, the seeds of which will later on be spread among the nearest surrounding or perhaps some day go astray to new and possibly very remote places. It is obvious, however, that various traditions may be spread in very different ways, just as various herbs have different ways of diffusion. Certain traditions, but not all or even any great number of them, will thus follow the trade routes, and others will be of such a nature as to be spread quickly by word of mouth in all directions, but this will certainly not be considered as a rule, rather as an exception. The best illustration of the case will be by means of special rules for

special kinds of tradition and with practical examples from definite areas of tradition.

The Dissemination of Various Traditions.

As a sort of short-lived tradition, popular sagns of a sort, let us consider the *rumours of the day*. They proceed fast from mouth to mouth on account of their highly topical character, but they die as soon as the matter has lost its topical interest. We may, however, also as regards rumours, distinguish between the active and the passive carriers, and they certainly do not spread in so regular a way as the wave-rings on water, although the spread of a rumour is just a case on which the metaphor may, to an extent, be applied. Just as the rumour of the day cannot live as tradition for any longer period than its topical interest lasts, it cannot be spread geographically outside the area in which it is topical.

Related to the rumours of the day are, in fact, many *sagns limited to the locality*, such as have begun as an account of the latest sensational rumour, but have been remembered because what they have to tell happened in that place, or because people are reminded of them by visible monuments, such as burial mounds, runic stones, places of sacrifice, buildings, natural formations, etc. Although almost everybody in the neighbourhood knows the sagn in question, and its active bearers must be found in a very great number, it cannot be spread outside the neighbourhood to which it belongs, because only there has it any topical interest. There it is told maybe every time people happen to pass the place where the event dealt with in the sagn occurred, or they happen to speak about it, not because the event is in itself very remarkable, but because it happened in that very place, in the locality well known to all the inhabitants of the nighbourhood. If one of the bearers of a tradition moves to another neighbourhood, it will no longer occur to him to tell the

sagn, and if by some accident he should happen to do so, no one will take note of it and carry it on.

An *evental sagn,* i.e. a sagn of an occurrence which arouses interest, independent of the actors, or the place where it happened, may be diffused over more extensive areas and be attached to new persons and places. Under this head come partly memorial sagns, based on actual events of a more memorable kind, partly fabulates invented to illustrate a certain idea. These "evental" sagns demand somewhat greater gifts of narration and a better memory than such as are strictly limited to one locality, amongst other things because they are not repeated so often, and they have therefore a much smaller circle of active bearers than the local sagns. If such a fabulate is a crystallization of popular belief, it will be condition of its diffusal, outside its original area, that the same popular belief is to be found in the new circles to which it is transmitted, in so far as it is not changed there into a merely entertaining story.

The short *Animal* and *Jocular Fables* consisting of a single episode are, as a rule, easy to remember, and in that respect they are of much the same nature as the abovementioned evental sagns. Whoever has the narrative gift and is alive to the contents of these little stories, can learn them quickly, perhaps even by having listened to them once. Nevertheless the active bearers of these fables are not very numerous. Average peasants are not able to receive them so as to carry them on unless they have heard them repeatedly, a fact of which I have convinced myself by way of experiment. The jocular fables, however, often have sufficiently large an audience, and so ample recruiting of bearers that it may be possible to compare their spread with that of rumours, although it will, of course, pass off much more slowly and in a much more desultory manner. The jocular fables are, I think, the kind of tradition that come nearest to the rumours of the day as regards demand, and the latest ephemeral joke may be reckoned as a kind of transitional form. As to evental

sagns the demand is somewhat more limited, and smaller still in the case of the animal fables, the dissemination of which is accordingly still more desultory than that of the jocular fables.

The long *Chimerates* and *Novellates* make still greater demands on the retentive memory as well as the narrative gifts of the raconteur. Whereas short animal fables and jocular fables may be casually told in a few minutes, this is entirely out of the question in the case of the long narrations, which may require half an hour, or even a whole, and must be told by a special raconteur with the direct purpose of beguiling the time for a listening audience. Thus the folk-tale lives an entirely different life among the people, and its tradition is distributed among a very small number, some of whom may be characterized rather as professional raconteurs. The good tale-teller is to be compared to the good singer: just as the singer needs a good voice and a musical ear to do his things well, the tale-teller will need a good memory, fabulating powers, and the art of dramatic representation so as to carry away his audience, qualities which are not too common. By direct experiments I have satisfied myself that the folk-tale passes on to a new bearer of the tradition only with difficulty, and a speedy wandering by words of mouth and to mouth, from village to village, from parish to parish, is altogether out of the question. This is confirmed by the scarcity of the active bearers of tale tradition. In districts very rich in tradition, and where accordingly this tradition is in frequent use, the number of its active carriers may be somewhat greater, and there a collector will obtain information so easily from the tale-tellers, who are well-known in the neighbourhood, that he does not realize how small a percentage of the population they amount to. When scholars, especially in the case of these folk-tales, have presumed a diffusion from mouth to mouth, like a stream flowing forth over huge areas, this assumption has been made from the very start by such scholars as have not applied themselves at all to the study of living tradition, and who have accordingly tried to

form by pure construction and unsupported by facts a picture of how the spread was brought about. And it is this fanciful-tale which was taken over later on by folk-tale research in good faith without any attempt at checking it by examination of the actual facts.

Consisting several episodes, but more closely related to the local sagn, as dealing with subjects of highly local interest, is the *Family Tale*. As oral tradition it is as narrowly limited as regards power of dissemination as the local sagn, for only in the district where the family or hero mentioned in the family tale lived and is known, do people take a sufficient interest in its contents. Moreover, the number or these is extremely small who are able to remember the many episodes and details of a long family tale, and its active bearers are therefore very rare. That is the reason why it will easily die or split up into minor sagns, which may have a somewhat greater vitality.

Related, in a way, to the family tale is the *Hero Tale,* but it is governed by altogether different laws. It may be hampered in its spread by cultural and linguistic frontiers, but it is not in any way limited to the local districts. Even if its plot is connected with a certain locality, its interest consists in the personalities depicted and in their deeds of good and evil. There is a pathos in its story, and it appeals more to humanity generally than to feelings that are confined within narrow national limits. That is why so many Germanic hero tales have come to be spread among so many different Germanic peoples, which have all understood and valued the hero's achievements of sufferings to the same degree. The bearers of these hero tales were, however, extremely few and besides, marked with a certain professional stamp. As soon as a revolution was brought about in cultural or economic conditions such that the wandering minstrels could no longer earn their living by relating the hero tale, their tradition must needs become extinct, even if to a certain extent it might linger on in literature. The hero tale occurs as a rule in

the form of metrical poetry, and is thus influenced also by the special circumstances that apply to such poetry.

Popular Poetry, in particular the *Popular Ballad* delights its listeners not only by its contents, but also by its form, and thus makes great demands on accurate memory, at the same time as rhythm and rhymes serve, to an extent, as an aid remembrance. The bearers of ballad tradition must accordingly go through a more systematic training. Here the tune steps in as an aid and at the same time a hindrance, as only persons with a singing voice and a musical ear can become fully active bearers of the tradition. This is partly a hindrance to dissemination, but on the other hand it makes the ballad more coveted, so that people are more apt to go out of their way to get hold of it. It is not unusual, therefore, in countries where literacy is common property, for ballads to be taken down in ballad-books, and that even by unmusical persons. Again, the fact that the ballad is so highly coveted by the common people, has often elicited a rich harvest of cheaps popular literature, which in turns have influenced tradition appreciably, a circumstance which is also known in the field of the folk-tale, although not to the same extent. The tradition bears often a more or less professional stamp. It is a natural consequence of the metrical form of the ballad, that language frontiers will often be a hindrance to their spread, but bilingual ballad-singers consider it often worth while to translate a ballad, and when the translation is well done the ballad will be relatively easily diffused partly by the efforts of itinerant ballad-singers, and partly by the zeal shown by resident bearers of tradition in acquiring new ballads. Thus the life of the ballad, and the manner in which it is spread, differ widely from the conditions of prose tradition, being of a much more literary character.

As for *Popular Belief* it is difficult to lay down general rules, for the ways of the various kinds of belief are widely different. The beliefs relating to *Popular Medicine* have in the first place

these so-called wise men and women with some knowledge of healing as their active bearers; we should, however, take note of the fact that their tradition is often a learned and literary one, transmitted through the so-called black books. But persons who have had an occasion to apply a certain treatment for a complaint will not only take note of the cure, but will later on assist their neighbours with the same treatment when required, and among the peasantry it is not unusual to find persons only acquainted with a small number of the methods of treatment known to popular medicine, and who are nevertheless often consulted for certain complaints without being therefore considered as wise men in the strict sense of the word. They are thus among the active bearers of the tradition of popular medicine and are more numerous by far than the so-called quack doctors, nevertheless they are only a very small percentage of the whole population. A small number of remedies are in such frequent use that they may almost be said to be common property, such as the application of cobweb to wounds, certain cures for warts, etc. Some disorders, *e. g.* epilepsy, cause such general fear and apprehension that at least some of the remedies for them, or other notions about them, belonging to popular medicine, are known to everybody. A good many beliefs of popular medicine must, however, be considered as a lore which the quack doctors try to keep for themselves exclusively, and which is taught to others only under certain very special circumstances. On the other hand, there are hardly any bounds, cultural or linguistic, to the possibilities of their dissemination.

Customs and Beliefs Connected with Work are common to the working group; and the active bearer of their tradition is, I think, most often the leader of the work, usually the master. When working methods and tools change, the customs connected with them will frequently disappear and give place to others, which are more often than not of individual origin and a fairly limited geographical distribution. A good many customs connect-

ed both with festivals and work have often difficulty in crossing certain boundaries, because on the other side of such a boundary other customs already exist which render the new ones superfluous. Added to this there are various kinds of sectionalism which manifests themselves, amongst other things in the fact that people may know very well how they do things in the neighbouring district, but nevertheless consider themselves too good to do them in the same way. In these fields, therefore, we will often find marked variety and changeability, as will be illustrated below. — As to *Festival Customs* we may there, just as in the case of popular poetry, sometimes reckon on dissemination by way of literature.

Practical Examples.

To illustrate the rules of which a rough and general outline has just been given, I will now in addition mention a few practical instances derived from various kinds of tradition, and traditional conditions, in several countries.

An excellent example of how tradition is shut out by political frontiers, is the custom of "*carrying May into the village*" by singing the May song, a custom which occurs over the whole of Denmark of the present day together with the former Danish provinces Scania, Halland, and Blekinge, now belonging to Sweden[2]. The custom itself, as well as several of the songs used in connection with it, existed already in the Middle Ages, and it would, it seemes, have had time enough to spread northward and eastward into Småland. It has not been possible, however, for it to cross the boundaries, though this long boundary is no language frontier and accordingly the song need not be translated in order to be used in Småland. The reason why the custom was not able to pass the political frontier before the conquest of the Scania provinces, is explained by the circumstance that moves across the frontier did not take place to any considerable extent,

and that in consequence there has been no possibility for active carriers of the custom to be implanted into the soil of Småland. These conditions have, broadly speaking, remained unchanged, also during the centuries in which the Scania provinces belonged to Sweden: no Scanians have taken jobs in the poor parishes of Småland, and where transfers took place by the purchase of farms or by marriage, the transferred Scanians have no longer been active carriers of tradition. Nor have the Småland population to any considerable extent taken employment in Scania except as seasonal workers, who have not, accordingly, received and carried home any traditions. Not till the very last decade has it been attempted to introduce the custom in a Småland border parish. This would seem to suggest that the intercourse between the border parishes has been made more frequent by the railway and other modern means of transport. It is, however, more likely that we must here count on a transfer by way of literature and by the intermediary of the regional cultural movement.

I will try to make clear the spread of the custom of singing the May-song within its area of distribution, it is obvious that in some way or other it must have started from one point and have been diffused from there. One would be inclined to think of the possibility of the people of the neighbouring parish learning the custom by intercourse with the inhabitants of the parish in which it originated, and introducing it into their own parish. It is sure to have happened that way in many places, and one would be inclined to use the metaphor of the stone that is thrown on the surface of water producing ring-like waves, extending ever farther outward from the centre. But even here this metaphor does not fit in with the actual facts. Even between neighbouring villages, the intercourse is often negligible, because one village will not be in touch with the other, and above all will not be taught by its inhabitants, as it has been shown so vividly by Thorkil Gravlund in his scenes of Danish country life. Again, the intercourse

between the several parishes of one connected area is most unequal. Two neighbouring villages often turn, as it were, their backs to each other, having all their approaches from diverse directions so that there is no occasion for frequent intercourse. This will *e. g.* often be the case if the common boundary of the parishes is also the boundary of a hundred, which from the start would mean that the parishes within it had closer connection with one another than with those situated outside the hundred. Besides, there is often strong antagonism between neighbouring villages, so that when their inhabitants meet at common fairs, the people of the two parishes will inevitably come to blows. Such parishes do not learn popular customs from each other. For such a custom as the May singing to be taken over in a new place, it is further a condition that the leaders of the youth in that place have the will and powers to make their comrades fall in with the idea of introducing a new custom, and that they are able also to prevail upon the elders to welcome the procession, a condition which is far from always the case. Thus the diffusion goes on in a completely desultory way within a connected area. For the custom to be spread across the Sound, however, or the Great Belt, or the Little Belt, it can not be disseminated merely by ordinary intercourse between the parishes, but must follow such persons as move over for a shorter or longer period and either become leaders themselves in introducing the custom, or awaken such an interest in the matter by their lively descriptions of how the thing is done in their native parish, or in a place where they have been staying for some time, that people learn the song and introduce the new custom.

Strange to say, the custom is missing in two areas belonging to the old kingdom of Denmark. One is Bornholm, which is so distant from the rest of Denmark and Scania, that for that reason the circumstances have not been very favourable for introducing it there, to which must be added that the form of settlement there is one of independent holdings, not village communities.

The other area is that of Östra Härad (Hundred) in Bleking, which is divided from the rest of the province by vast forests, and which therefore in all respects shows a close cultural connection with the southern part of Kalmar Län in spite of the circumstance that the political frontier through centuries has divided the Hundred from Kalmar Län.

The singing of the May song has been subject to literary influence in so far as the original medieval May song has been partly superseded by a religious one, composed in the early part of the 17th century and disseminated by cheap leaflets. This displacement of the old song was brought about in western Scania, in Sealand and Funen, while the original song has survived in eastern Scania, Bleking, Halland, and Jutland. These cheap-leaflets had their starting point in Malmö and Copenhagen, and by virtue of being printed, they were held to be of a higher rank than the old secular song, which lived on only in oral tradition. The intinerant sellers of songs did not, however, walk very far from the printing offices, or they must have run out of stock when they had got to a certain distance from the places of publication, with the result that the old song could linger on there without competition. So we can see clearly partly what was still in existence of the common tradition, and partly that the song had developed somewhat differently in the various marginal areas, which had little connection with each other.

An instance of deliberate contrast between neighbouring places is related by Eva Wigström (Folkdiktning, II p. 90): In the parish of Örkened in northern Scania she has been told that in the neighbouring parish of Virestad in Småland it was customary to sacrifice at harvest time 3 or 9 straws to the *gloso* (Glowing Sow), which the people of Örkened did not care to do. That they were acquatinted with the customs of the neighbouring parish, shows that they had sufficient communication with people there for certain kinds of tradition to be taken over from one parish to the other, but in this particular case they rejected the tra-

dition of the neighbouring parish, which they thought notable but not worth imitating. Such a state of things is, I think, fairly usual in the field of popular customs, more especially perhaps when the custom is based on a particular belief which is only to be found in connection with the custom in question.

The customs prevalent at home are naturally governed by other laws than those that apply to such customs as are common to the whole village. In my early home *"the crane laid eggs"* in our beds on the eve of Lady Day (March 24th), i. e. my mother put a bag of sweets under our pillows when we had fallen asleep. This custom has arisen in connection with a calendar rhyme commonly known in Sweden, *"the crane brings light to bed"*, generally connected with Lady Day, which is said to be the day of the crane's arrival. The custom is frequent all over Småland and Öland more particular in towns and at manor houses[2]. It was also in use at the home of my mother's parents, and likewise with all my numerous cousins on my mother's side, independent of which ever province in northern or middle Sweden they resided in and independent of the customs otherwise prevailing there. In the case of a good many families it is accordingly an inheritance from my mother's early home. How the custom came to the home of my mother's parents, I have never been able to ascertain. The circumstance that the same custom prevails also at a cousin's home on the side of my mother's father, may indicate that it was the latter who introduced the custom from his early home, the more so, as it cannot possibly have been brought to the cousin's family in question through the wife, who did not know it from her own early home. It may, however, be argued against this inference that at another cousin's house, on the side of my mother's father, an altogether different custom was in use: there was no crane laying eggs, but instead of that one of the maids was dressed up as crane driving the children to bed with a rod, a custom which is based on the same calendar rhyme and is common in Kalmar Län. The two cousin's

families of my mother's must accordingly have received their Lady day customs from different quarters. According to what I was told, it was in the latter case the servants who introduced the custom and amused the children by dressing up, after which that form of the custom was followed also in the next generation. It is possible, of course, that the custom of the crane's laying eggs has been introduced in like manner in the first-mentioned cousin's family, and that the custom prevailing in my mother's early home has followed her mother from her home in northern Småland. However that may be, it is at any rate obvious that it is here to a great extent a question of family inheritance. Servants naturally play a not negligible part in family tradition where such things as amuse the children are in question, and in such cases it is obvious that the transfer of traditions are due to a person moving. A third possibility is that people hear of such a custom being in use in other families, and then introduce it in their own, because they know that it will amuse the children. No doubt this form af transfer occurs, and the custom may thus by degrees be transferred from a family of newcomers to the other families in the village. We should not, however, over-estimate this form of transfer. Although the custom of crane's laying eggs is common in Växiö, I never heard of it during the nine years I spent at the Växiö Higher School, and that in spite of the fact that the custom was in use in my own home. Nor do I know any case of adoption of the custom on the part of the families who were associated with my own people or with any of the other families descended from the home of my mother's parents.

Family customs of a very spectacular nature, such as the dressing up of *Lucia*[3], have recently become widely spread in Sweden because of the pictures in Christmas magazines; and schools and associations have often taken the lead. Commercial interests may in such cases play a not negligible part. Again, the Christmas tree has been spread not only by pictures in Christmas magazines, but the cheap and glaring German Christmas tree decorations

have also been of considerable importance in this respect. Likewise, images in marzipan, or pictures on Easter cards, etc., of the German Easter Hare have begun to a certain extent to spread the German custom of the Easter hare, or at least Easter hare fictions, in Sweden. In such cases, however, the metaphor of a stream rapidly flooding a certain area cannot be employed. I would rather use another metaphor: a cloud-burst submerging the whole area. For here it is not a question of dissemination from place to place in geographical succession, nor of migration.

How closely the spread of traditions may be connected with the moves of persons is shown by the occurrence of the following motif of popular belief. When men and animals disappear, and nobody knows where they have gone to, they are said in Sweden to be *bergtagna* (kidnapped into the mountain). In Finland, on the other hand, they are said to be *skogstagna* (k. into the woods). This is certainly a purely Finnish conception which from the Finns has been transmitted to the Swedish population in Finland by the mixture of the peoples. Miss Ella Ohlson, who is thoroughly conversant with popular belief in Ångermanland and who in a seminar dealt with the concepts of supernatural beings prevailing in that province, has shown how in parishes which of old were colonized by Finns—and only there—people speak of *skogstagning,* and that in the other parishes of the province they speak of *bergtakning.* The Finnish colonization took place at so early a time that the people have amalgamated completely with the Swedish population and speak no other language than Swedish. The notion of *skogstagning* has come with the settlers and remained with them. A transmission of the conception from mouth to mouth and from one place to another has not occurred. The two conceptions of the same phenomenon exclude each other. Where one belief is already to be found, the other is superfluous and cannot be maintained unless introduced by a sufficient number of immigrants who are able to keep their own

tradition alive and drive out the other conception which may have existed beforehand in the area where they have settled.

In the field of popular sagn relatively few reliable investigations have been made. I have myself examined *the sagn of the Giant Finn*[4] who built the Cathedral of Lund against receiving the sun and the moon, or the eyes of Saint Lawrence, as his reward if the latter could not guess the name of the giant before the cathedral had been finished. The sagn has been attached to a great many churches in Scandinavia and Finland, but has not had the power to spread outside this area, apart from a few variants taken down in Holstein which was politically connected with Denmark during a long period. The numerous bilingual population in Jutland and the lively cultural intercourse between Denmark and Germany have accordingly not been factors of sufficient strength to enable the sagn to spread. It is certain that the sagn has originally been connected with the Cathedral of Trondhjem and its diffusion all over the Scandinavian countries must be ascribed to the great numbers of pilgrims to Saint Olaf's tomb in Trondhjem.

The question may here be asked whether the dissemination was brought about by the pilgrims on their way home from Trondhjem, engrossed with what they had seen and heard, relating the sagn as they went on their way; or whether they brought it home, there to take root in tradition. Both ways are possible. The pilgrims were sure to find a thankful audience everywhere on their way, and in return for the board gratuitously offered on them they did their best to tell as much as possible, which of course contributed to the spread of many traditions. As, however, only a small number of the pilgrims can have been good carriers of tradition, and as most often only slight remnants are left in memory from such casual visits, I am inclined to consider the second possibility as being without comparison the more important. This is borne out by the relatively great uniformity of the sagn in the whole area of distribution, which can more easily be

accounted for on the ground that the pilgrim bearer of the tradition was often given the opportunity of telling the same sagn as he had learnt at Trondhjem.

As to the way in which folk-tales are disseminated, the tale of The two Brothers written down on an Egyptian papyrus about 1300 B.C. is of great interest. The fact is that this tale has survived up to our own day in oral tradition, independent of the Egyptian papyrus, partly on Indian and Persian ground, and partly on Slavonic, and this fact alone shows that a tale can live for more than 3000 years unsupported by written literature. In spite of plenty of time being allotted to it apparently, it has, however, not been capable of spreading to the rest of Europe. From Western Europe only three records of it are known, and all three have obviously been introduced by casual immigrants in the 19th century and have certainly not survived in tradition. I will here only give a rough outline of the results I have laid down in a more detailed report[5].

If we collate the Slavonic and the Indo-Persian types, it appears that in both cases the tale consists of a nucleus K, but in the Indo-Persian versions the motifs a, b, and c mainly derived from other tales have been inserted; these motifs are missing from the Slavonic type, in which in turn the motifs d, e, and f, not to be found in the Indo-Persian type, have been inserted. In the Egyptian papyrus, besides K the tale contains both a, b, c, and d, e, f, and moreover som other motifs x, y, and z, not to be met with either in the Slavonic, or in the Indo-Persian type, but which are evidently later additions made in Egypt, partly incompatible with the rest of the story as regards fact, and partly in striking contrast to its style. It is impossible to state the tale to be originally Egyptian, both because he Egyptian additions x, y and z, appear clearly as Egyptian motifs, tached on in a clumsy manner, and without any original connection with the rest, and because the rest of the composition shows close relationship to Indo-European tale-composition, but a glaring dissimilarity to

what is known to us of truly Egyptian tales. Besides, it would be difficult to explain how an originally Egyptian tale K + a, b, c + d, e, f + x, y, z, should split up by emigration into K + a, b, c, and K + d, e, f. On the other hand, it is more comprehensive that a person who is an active bearer of a type Kabc and happens to hear a type Kdef, would supplement his own type d e f and then tell the whole of the tale, thus worked up, to an Egyptian listener, who in turn would add the Egyptian motifs x y z without realizing that they did not fit in well with the style of the tale itself, heretofore unknown to him.

It is impossible to explain the Slavonic type as immigrating from Indo-Persian quarters, for then it would have had to throw away the Indo-Persian abc and replace them by d e f. This is impossible because both abc and def were already to be found in the ancient Egyptian record. For the same reason the tale cannot have migrated from the Slavonic area into the Indo-Persian either. I cannot see how any better explanation is possible than that Indo-Persians and Slavs had the tale in the form K in a common Satem age, and that after the parting of the Indo-Persians from the Slavs, this K developed among the formers into K + abc, among the latter into K + def, and that a casual amalgamation of both types came to Egypt about 1300 B.C., where they were enlarged into K + abc + def + xyz, which fortunately was preserved in the papyrus, but had no possibility of surviving there, being so different from all other tales of that country. It is implied in this, however, that as early as 1300 B.C. the tale had passed through a lengthy development of maybe some further thousand years; and this is not more preposterous in the least than the clear fact that the tale has survived in oral tradition for more than 3000 years without undergoing any appreciable alterations. This tale, then, is an incontrovertible argument against the theory that all tales should have originated in India during the period following Buddha's appearance and have wandered like a stream from

the East from village to village, from country to country, until the whole of Europe was flooded in the Middle Ages. Further, it proves the point of view of inheritance to be justified as against the onesided migration theory, and that the dissemination has taken place through the migration of persons.

The tale of King Lindorm (Aa 433 B)[6] dealt with in a brilliant study by Axel Olrik (*Danske Studier,* 1904) is suggestive as to the ways of transmission. In Scandinavia, it is to be met with only in Denmark and Scania, and within that area it has been taken down in 15 variants in different provinces. Its occurrence in Scania indicates with certainty that it was to be found in Denmark before, in 1658, Scania was separated from that country. The tale is unknown in the rest of Scandinavia and likewise in other countries in the Scandinavian area. It occurs moreover in Italy, south-eastern Europe, Persia, and India. It is evident that it is within this area, and not in Denmark, that the tale has its original home, and perhaps it may be characterized as originally belonging to the Satem-speaking Indo-Europeans. It can hardly have come to Denmark, wandering from village to village on a westward stream, for then it ought to have occurred also in Germany, but has certainly been introduced at some time or other, by a single bearer of its tradition. At what time this can have taken place it is not easy to tell. To guess at the Viking period might in so far be natural, as a lot of prisoners of war of a great variety of nationalities were just then sent home *e.g.* from expeditions in South-eastern Europe and the near East. Olrik points out, however, that the title of the tale always is "King Lindorm" in contradistinction to another serpent's tale called "Orm the King's Son". The latter is older and occurs also in the other Scandinavian countries. It may be conjectured with great probability that it was to be found here as early as the Viking period, but judging by the name King Lindorm must be younger. If it had existed in Denmark in the early Middle Ages it would certainly have spread

to Sweden and Norway during the period of Scandinavian union, in which there was a lively intercourse between the Northern countries. It is therefore most likely to have come to Denmark towards the end of the Middle Ages. All the variants of the tale were taken down in the early 19th century, and at that time there must accordingly have been at least 15 bearers of its tradition. I think we get nearest the truth if we estimate them twice as many at that time, but even if we might reckon with ten times that number, it is obvious that the active carriers of the tradition have amounted to less than 1/100 per cent. of the population of Denmark-Scania. No wonder then, if among those migrating from Denmark to the rest of Scandinavia or to Germany there was not one active carrier of the tradition of this tale, or, if so, that he was not capable of transmitting the tradition to the new surroundings.

Another instance of how the spread of a tale is limited within distinct boundaries, is the tale of The Princess in the Pit (Aa 870) which occurs generally within Scandinavia and Finland, but not outside that area, apart from the variants in Holstein, which on account of the long union of that country with Danish territory may naturally be considered as belonging to the purely Danish ones. W. Liungman has shown in his study of that tale[7] how the grouping of the variants suggest the same cultural connection between the districts as may be established in respect of other cultural elements. This would, however, not imply, as supposed by Liungman, that the tale should have been transmitted by word of mouth from village to village along certain routes, but surely that in this case also the move, for a shorter or longer period, of a bearer of its tradition must better explanate the dissemination in question. The construction of the tale, with many interspersed verses makes it impossible to learn it in any other manner than by hearing it repeatedly. Although the tale may have been transmitted to the German linguistic area by the transmigration of a bearer of its tradition it has not been

able to penetrate further into Germany, and this fact cannot be accounted for by the explanation that a people of superior civilization should not receive folk-tales from their inferiors, for the Danes cannot in any way be held culturally inferior to the Germans, and as persons of the German tongue in Holstein have received the tale, the question would seem to be one of transmission from German to German. The distribution all over Scandinavia may already have taken place in the period of Scandinavian Union and has accordingly proceeded fairly unchecked.

The Teachings of Northern Tradition.

It appears from a closer examination of the stock of folk-tales in the North that the stock has developed differently in the three Scandinavian countries, the Swedish variants exhibiting a distinct difference from the Danish variants of the same tale, i.e. the tale has become oicotypified into different oicotypes for Denmark-Scania and in Sweden, and tales which are common in one country, may be rare or altogether wanting in the other. In Norway and in Gothland which were long under Danish rule, some tales of clearly Danish type have been taken down, obviously because transmigration of people from Denmark into those countries and vice versa took place as long as they constituted a political whole together with Denmark. In like manner several tales and sagns of clearly Norwegian type are to be met with in Denmark-Scania.

Interesting from the point of view of the biology of tradition is the relationship between Icelandic and Norwegian tradition. When Iceland was colonized, this was done by mass emigration from Norway, more particularly from its western parts. In so great a number of emigrants there were naturally many active bearers of folk-tradition, and the circumstance that almost all the colonists came from an area, where the same stock of traditions prevailed, facilitated the survival of the tradition they carried with them. The bearers of tradition who had thus emigra-

ted, did not, however, represent all the traditions of the whole of Norway not even those of Western Norway. The fact is that a considerable part, indeed the major part, of the population remained in their home country, and among those there were certainly many bearers of such traditions as were not represented among the emigrants. The whole of the stock of tradition that was carried to Iceland by the early settlers must thus have been considerably smaller and poorer than the stock left in Norway, even if, to some extent, the Norwegian tradition in the home country naturally was reduced by the emigration. A considerable part of the traditions brought to Iceland by the early settlers were soon to disappear, because they could no longer be applied under the new circumstances, *e.g.* all the agricultural customs, which had to be dropped when they had no more fields to cultivate; or all tradition connected with the forests and hunting in Norway, which could no longer be put into use, or building customs, which had to be changed on account of the lack of timber etc. The whole of the tradition brought from Norway must thus have shrunk very considerably in the course of a very short time. Instead it came to be to some extent supplemented by immigration from the Viking settlements in Scotland and Ireland, by which an important element of Celtic tradition was absorbed, more particularly such tradition as has women as its bearers. After the period of colonization proper a certain increase in the population by immigration must be supposed to have taken place and therewithal a certain amount of tradition, most probably however, only a slight one. The literary influence on tradition has on the other hand been of great importance. Among this I count all the matter learnt abroad which travelling Icelanders brought home with them. But besides this the adoption of tradition by the Icelanders has to a great extent changed tradition. Whereas the old Icelandic literature contains popular sagns which in all particulars conform to sagns which are told in Scandinavia even yet, the sagns and

folk-tales which in recent times have been transformed and become literary, influenced by the old Icelandic sagas in style as well as in the choice of motifs. That there is now little conformity between Norwegian and Icelandic tradition, is due to the fact that the same sagns, tales etc. for the tradition of which in the more densely populated Scandinavia there have been bearers in every generation, became much more easily extinct in Iceland with its considerable smaller population, and further that, on account of the literary inclinations of the people, the interest was not so much attached to simple popular tradition as to efforts bearing a more literary stamp. Unless sagns and folk-tales were given literary form in a manner to which there is no counterpart in Scandinavia or in the rest of Western Europe, it was not possible for them to be retained in memory there. And that is why the traditions in existence in present-day Iceland are so dissimilar to those of the rest of Scandinavia, apart from a small fundamental stock of common origin, inherited from the first settlers. We should not, therefore, from the paucity of this fundamental stock draw the inference that at the time of the first settlement they had no richer tradition in the home country. The same is true, where applicable, of the relation between tradition in the Faroes and in Norway. Here also the very small number of active bearers of tradition and the enormous revolutions in the stock of traditions which must result from the transmigration into another country, have made the stock of traditions in the distant Northern outpost dissimilar to those of their old home.

Finland's traditions have, quite naturally, been greatly influenced by Sweden and Russia through the union of Western Finland with Sweden and an almost equal period of Russian rule in Eastern Finland. As regards folk-tales, the tradition of Western Finland bears an obvious Swedish stamp, and that of Eastern Finland a no less palpable Russian impress. Has this now been brought about by two streams flowing forth from village to vil-

lage, thus flooding the country from two quarters, but keeping each other in check? The question must be answered decidedly in the negative. There is no reason why two such streams should check each other, and besides, there is little foundation, if any, for assuming the existence of two such streams when folk-tales are dealt with. The problem is, in fact, simple enough: by the immigration of individuals! In the whole of Western Finland there were plenty of immigrated Swedes: civil servants, officers, landowners, etc., attended by no small number of Swedish servants, and likewise Finnish servants following their masters to Sweden, for shorter or longer periods, but certainly to return in most cases to their native soil in Finland. Thus Western Finland was steeped in Swedish tradition and culture, and in Eastern Finland the case was much the same, with the exception that there the immigration was Russian. In particular, attention should be called to the significance of the military frontier along the eastern boundary of Western Finland with numerous Swedish military settlements, which caused the Swedish cultural influence in Eastern Finland to be most likely greater than in the more westerly districts of Finland. The Swedish population in the coastal district was in continuous contact with the Swedish side of the Gulf of Bothnia, and shows broadly speaking the same traditions as the corresponding latitudes in Sweden, but has also absorbed an appreciable purely Finnish element, by whom a purely Finnish tradition was implanted. This process of cultural penetration of Finnish population by immigrated Swedes or Russians and of Swedish population by the immigration of Finns has given the same result as regards tradition, as when the custom of Maysongs or the tale of King Lindorm were spread to all the Danish provinces.

After the union of Eastern and Western Finland by the Russian conquest, the possibility of transmigration of individuals, and therewithal the possibilities of the spread of traditions, from one area to the other have considerably increased, although the

years that have passed since then have not had too much influence in this respect. That in Western Finland also tales of Russian type are now met with may, of course, to some extent be due to this circumstance. As a general rule I think, however, that another explanation will be more correct. It was not, to any considerable extent, the former inhabitants of Eastern Finland that availed themselves of the possibility of moving westward, but so much the more did the Russians do so: civil servants, merchants, and garrisons. By the fairly frequent intercourse of these Russians with the Swedish-speaking population, the latter did not only take over some Russian folk-tales, but the very appellation of *skaska,* which in some quarters in Nyland is used for the tales, is borrowed from Russian.

The question may be asked whether a genuinely Finnish stock of folk-tales has not survived. It seems to me not improbable that it should be so, even if to a great extent it has been supplanted by the tale-tradition imported from without. It must, however, have been considerably nearer to sagns than are our chimerates, and it may be that for that reason they have not been noted by Finnish folk-tale research. Finnish scholars appear to have been studying exclusively international folk-tale tradition, giving little heed to sagn compositions proper, apart from such sagns as take the form of Kalevale songs. It would, however, be of great value, also to international folk-tale research, to get acquainted with Finnish folk-tale tradition, and I very much hope that interested Finnish scholars will be found who will take up this important field for investigation.

Similar examples of a cultural penetration by immigration of foreign elements into an area may, of course, be found in other quarters. How great is the importance of political conditions in this respect, is shown by comparing Poland and her situation between Germany and Russia with Finland and her situation between Sweden and Russia. Just as Finland was christianized from Sweden, Poland was christianized from Germany by the

German orders of knighthood, and thus came to have her principal cultural connections to the West. The German influence in Poland is shown in a lot of German loan-words, and in folk-tradition as well. But Poland remained up to her division a great and independent kingdom, and this circumstance involves that the immigration of bearers of tradition from the West has been comparatively negligible, and that accordingly the stock of Poland's folk-tales is mainly typical Slavonic. The fact that Russia became a member of the Greek church made Poland's cultural connections with those quarters slight, even if no distinct cultural frontier should be thought of. As to a great extent distinct geographical boundaries are missing, the political frontiers also between Poland and Russia were in former days fluctuating. Nor is the linguistic frontier distinct, and also as regards traditions there may be said to be vast transitional areas. So important was, however, the divergent cultural orientation of Russia and Poland, that the common Slavonic stock of traditions shows a not negligible difference by different oicotypification in the two countries. The existence of any currents of tradition independent of immigration, or of various literary currents, cannot be established.

Germany has, however, in her eastern districts, considerably more Slavonic elements of tradition than there are Finnish elements in Russian tradition. This is due, in the first place, to the vast Slavonic areas which have there become germanized. There are still a lot of small isolated areas using the Wendish language surrounded on all quarters by a German population. It has been difficult for them to maintain their Slavonic stock of traditions, which was certainly not inconsiderable from the start, if we consider the Wendish area as a whole. In each isolated area, however, it has only been possible to find a fraction of the whole Wendish tradition, just as in the Faroes a fraction only of the whole of Norwegian tradition was to be found. When the Wendish areas were isolated from each other by German

settlements, the German penetration became quite naturally very predominant in so far as most kinds of tradition are concerned. For within a small area, a chain of tradition will easily be broken when any of its active bearers move to other places, or die, without having had the opportunity of transmitting their knowledge to another active bearer. Such discontinuations may certainly occur also within the separate districts of an extensive connected area, but there it does not, in so far as the whole area is concerned, make itself felt to the same degree, because a tradition which has lost life in one district will survive in another, and what tradition loses in one quarter, may be made up in another part of the same area of traditions. On the other hand, in the isolated Wendish areas, any loss of tradition means that it will easily be replaced by German tradition, and that the original Slavonic tradition will thus to a great extent disappear or fade away, and at the same time a good deal of Slavonic tradition will be transferred to German-speaking bearers. Thus the purely Slavonic conception of the vampire is to be met with among the German-speaking population in Pommerania. It is thus the isolation of the many small areas from their original connection, which has brought it about that small sections of the Wendish people possess, to such an extent, a tradition which bears the German stamp, and not that they were in the way of a stream of tradition which flowed forth over them at the same time as it flooded the interjacent German area.

Conclusion.

It has only been possible here to give some suggestions on the problem of the dissemination of tradition, a problem which has been too much neglected on account of preconceived ideas which have never been gone into, whereas the problem that was set in folk-tale research was not that of the manner of dissemination, but only of the country of origin. The solution of the relevant

problems should, however, be of importance not only for folklorists, but for historians as well. For the historian it is in any case of importance to distinguish between active and passive bearers of tradition, and likewise to observe the different possibilities of dissemination and transmission of various traditions. While a tolerably rich living tradition is still in existence, it is therefore important that thorough investigations of these questions should be made in the field, and that as many concrete examples as possible should be collected to illustrate the relevant questions. Such investigations would certainly be of great use as regards questions of method[8].

GEOGRAPHY AND FOLK-TALE OICOTYPES

One of the most serious deficiencies in the study of folk tradition has been that investigators have, to a far too great extent, been content with extracts, instead of seeing their information as part of a natural, living whole. In questions of belief and custom this has led to their concentration overmuch on chance similitude, and neglecting to find out if there was any deeper connection. Often enough this chance similitude has been so superficial that it did not even indicate a real analogy. And how much has been considered as belief and ritual, whereas it was only fun and play!

The same fault has been committed in folk-tale research. To be able to survey your material you have, of course, to use extracts; but if you are content with them without bothering about the original, you will not be able to treat your material critically but will get involved in purely schematic methods, which will almost certainly lead you astray. But it is not enough to study folk-tales as tales only. It is also necessary to make oneself familiar with the use of folk-tales, their life in tradition, their transmission and spread. In these respects, great differences prevail between different kinds of folk-tale: Seriously meant fabulates *(Zeugen-sagen)* and fables have certainly been composed by others than by those who were responsible for the construction of the equally simply formed humorous anecdotes. They are used on other occasions, and before a somewhat different audience. They must, therefore, to an extent, obey different laws for their transmission, their spread, *etc.* In exactly the same way the long, fantastic "chimera tales," as I call them, which contain so many episodes,

must obey other laws than the short anecdotes, which contain one episode only. Unfortunately the necessity of studying folk-tales in their living context was overlooked from the beginning, and so investigating was built up all the time on faulty theories, formed in the air.

The scientific achievement of Theodor Benfey, in his *Pantschatantra*[9], was of the highest importance, in that he showed how, during the Middle Ages, this old Indian collection of fables was translated from Sanskrit, with Pehlevi, Arabic, and Hebrew as intermediate links, into Latin, and from Latin into later, vulgar tongues. But when he inferred from this that all folk-tales arose in India after Buddha's time and migrated to Europe, he showed how little he knew of the laws and life of tradition. One can conclude nothing about the migration of oral tradition from a literary tradition, which, moreover, hardly contributed to European folk tradition; and the content of European oral folk-tale tradition is generally of quite another kind than that of the literary collections of short stories and fables. This is especially true of our chimera tales, which do not occur at all in Pantschatantra[10], and many of which can be shown to be very much older. Benfey brought the concept of *migration* into folk-tale research. Scholars allowed themselves to be suggested by the word, and constructed theories about migration without basis in reality.

First the Finnish School, Kaarle Krohn and Antti Aarne, systematized folk-tale research, and have produced careful work in a long series of monographs, making many valuable observations. But the most important contribution here, without comparison, consists in the detailed catalogues of the folk-tale treasures of different countries that have been drawn up thanks to Aarne's cataloguing system[11]. By means of these, investigators have got considerably wider facilities in finding the material they may need in studying folk-tales. But as the Finnish School have for the most part been content to study extracts, the life of the tradition has escaped them; and instead they have built on a number

of postulates constructed in the air without connection with reality; and so these laboriously produced monographs must be considered as mistaken in their chief results.

In the name of common-sense the Finnish School have rejected Benfey's theory of the origin of all folk-tales in India, and state it as a matter of principle that folk-tales may arise in *any* country. But they consider that certain countries have been the foremost folk-tale nuclei, and that *practically* all folk-tales originate from India. Indeed, it can be said that the Finnish School in practice accepts the Benfey theory in its entirety with, however, the reservation, that its validity need not be regarded as absolute.

Benfey's hypothesis of the migration of tales from India had been associated by him with certain important historical events which brought peoples into an intimate contact with one another, resulting in a natural interchange of cultural material. He lays, therefore, great weight on the rise of Buddhism and its preaching missionary monks, on Alexander's conquests, the spread of Islam, and the Crusades. The Finnish School, however, is but little concerned with this, and holds that the wanderings of tales was an automigration, which takes place without any movements of persons, migrations of peoples, or historical events. "It is indeed, as a rule, the tales themselves which spread from mouth to mouth. The storytellers themselves need not go farther than to their neighbours' houses, and this migration can take place at any time," says Kaarle Krohn[12]. This automigration of tales, according to Krohn, takes place either uniformly in every direction like spreading rings on water, or, in a certain direction, like an overflowing river. The Finnish School did not reckon with any kind of frontier, for frontier populations are usually bilingual, and so let the tradition stream through without hindrance. Where the streams of tradition met with no frontiers, then historical events were not required to set them in motion or release them. How consistently and uniformly Krohn holds to the theory of the automigration of tales is clear from the following remarks[13] against Olrik's theory

about the myth of the fettered Loki as having originated in Caucasus and through the intermediation of the Goths carried by them from their kingdom on the Black Sea to Scandinavia: "A non-literary connection between Caucasian and Scandinavian traditions presupposes that these traditions exist also in the countries which lie between them." The automigration of tales has not been supported by a single example, and I do not know any real example of automigration for any sort of tradition. But even to those who believe in automigration it should be clear that Scandinavian travellers with the Goths, learning there a number of traditions, could take them with them on their river journeys through Russia and establish them in their own country without giving them on the way to peoples whose language few of them understood. The method of investigations was to collect in extracts as great a number of variants as possible, and to construct the "original form of the tale"—in reality its most complete form—by statistically examining the variations of the different motives; and the country where the variants of the folk-tale were found to be most like the constructed original form was declared to be the homeland of the tale.

Sharp, and in many respects accurate, criticism has been directed against the Finnish School by Albert Wesselski, perhaps the foremost scholar of medieval short story literature of our times. But his essential deficiency lies in the fact that he knows nothing about oral tradition, and therefore, quite incorrectly, thinks it has arisen from written literature. And he asserts that the oldest available written form of any folk-tale is the form from which all other variants originate, a conception which is, to put it mildly, grotesque, but which is more or less shared by a number of scholars and literary historians. One may inquire, for example, from what written literature the tales of the Red Indians have been derived, tales which in their technique of composition and force of imagination are quite comparable with European tales. And if the same tale has been written down in different parts of North America,

must then the last recorded variants be derived from the first made record? Just as the North American Indians have a tradition of storytelling independent of all written literature, so there exists also in the Old World a story-tradition independent of literature. All that is necessary is to compare on the one side the contents of Pantschatantra and the other novel and fable-collections with, on the other hand, Europe's oral tale-tradition, to see how slight the connection is. Wesselski builds, as much as the Finnish School, on theories constructed in the air without investigation of the real life of the folk-tale in tradition. Whereas the Finnish School only works with extracts, Wesselski has, thanks to his literary studies, a considerably surer grip on the subject, although he has neglected to study the real life, kinds, and distribution of the oral folk-tale, and therefore constantly considers it as degenerate literature. And now I will try to sketch out the main features of the life of folk-tale tradition, and the laws for its spread and variation.

People have far too often imagined that tradition as such is the property of all. Nothing can be further from the truth. It is true of all tradition that in comparison with the whole people its carriers are *very* limited in number. But the proportions are very different for different kinds of tradition. For example the beliefs and customs connected with hunting are something of which the majority have no idea. Only those directly occupied in hunting are real carriers of the proper tradition; and even they have not quite the same methods and ideas, as much of this sort of thing consists of secrets that the initiate will not disclose unnecessarily. If anyone outside the hunter's circle picks up something or other, this will only lead to this outsider's becoming a *passive carrier* of the tradition; it is of no importance for the tradition's continued existence. In the same way, the so-called "wise people" are the real carriers of the peasantry's medical ideas, although, of course, much of this tradition is also found with other people. We may especially remark that old women, without being counted among the wise ones, often have a rich tradition about children's and

women's diseases and everything connected with the care of children.

It is the same with folk-tales. The percentage of folk-tale tellers is as small as—perhaps even smaller than—the percentage of "wise ones" in the population of a district. And here too we may distinguish between a larger and a narrower circle. The really active carriers of folk-tale tradition, the *traditors,* are but one or a few in the district, who are called upon when people want to hear folk-tales. Each of them knows but a few tales, but knows them well. They tell them with life and gusto. Sometimes narrators with a bigger repertoire are to be met with, but as far as the chimera tales, which I am especially referring to, are concerned, it is very rare in Teutonic districts for a narrator to know many, and then they are often mingled and arbitrarily altered. As long as a folk-tale traditor remains in his district, anyone else will hardly try to tell *his* tales, for in this they like to observe a kind of literary copyright. Not until he is gone can we reckon on someone else assuming his mantle. Of course, there are many who have heard his tales, but most of them lack the power of remembering a long tale or the capacity to narrate. These can hardly be considered as possessing any folk-tale tradition at all. Others have heard a tale so often that they remember its course fairly well; and by questioning them one would be able to get a fairly good account of the tale; but they do not think of telling it for the entertainment of others, and most of them hardly have the ability to do so. We may call them *passive tradition carriers.* As long as they remain passive they have no part in the handing-down of the folk-tale, but they have some significance. They know the traditor's repertoire and encourage him to tell his tales. So they act as a kind of sounding-board for the tale. It is often due to their presence and insistence that the traditor consents to function; and if he moves from the district and no longer has their insistence, he often ceases to be active.

When the original traditor of a district is gone, perhaps one

of these passive hearers summons up courage to try and tell his tales. At first things go perhaps slowly, but if the attempt is repeated several times, he grows more sure of himself. Thus in the main the folk-tale will be told in the same way as before, more especially as the passive tradition-carriers correct deviations: not that this stops the new tale-teller consciously or unconsciously making and keeping to some alteration or other. Some such alterations are pure adiaphora to the audience, and do not touch the real content of the tale. But it might quite as often happen that no one in the district assumes the disappeared traditor's mantle, and then the tale disappears there. If a previously passive tradition-carrier moves to a new place, they may possibly urge him there to become a narrator. One can imagine his new acquaintances urging him to tell something he has heard in his old home as a change from what they already know very well. Then he is subject to less control, and may make bigger alterations on account of lack of memory or personal taste.

The tradition of a whole country is combined from those of the various districts. A certain tale which has belonged to a country from of old is far from being found in every district: it is found only in a *very limited* number of places. It is risky to give a clear idea of the proportions, but I will try. In Denmark and Scania, about 1850, fifteen variants of the tale of King Lindorm[14] were taken down. If we assume that the tale then had double the number of traditors, and thus existed in thirty places, we shall probably be nearest the truth. If, for safety's sake, we increase this number ten times, the result is not more than one in ten thousand of the whole district. There are folk-tales which are spread ten times as much, but hardly more; and if we reckon the number of traditors of one special folk-tale as being at most one *per mille* of a country's population, we are probably, even so, making a high estimate.

A country is often made up of several different cultural districts, with comparatively slight contact with one another. Such districts will then also vary in their folk-tales: partly in that to a

certain extent they have different repertories, partly in that tales of the same main type will form special types, *oicotypes*[15] in the different districts.

Starting from what I have already said about carriers of folk-tale tradition, this is not difficult to explain. Within a cultural sphere there is a certain amount of movement in the population. They visit neighbouring districts, and perhaps move to one of them. Sometimes, though rarely, traditors from different districts may meet, compare one another's folk-tale variants, and make alterations by mutual agreement. More often they meet passive tradition-carriers, who may also make observations on this or that episode, this or that motive, and thus work in the same direction. On the other hand, meetings with some traditor from another cultural sphere occur very seldom indeed. This necessarily leads gradually to a common development, so that the tradition of one cultural sphere obtains a uniform stamp when compared with that of another cultural sphere, which, of course, requires a long time.

As a rule a political boundary puts a strong check on moving in and out. Emigrants from a country are but a small part of its whole population. As I have already mentioned, the traditors of a certain tale in a country can hardly amount to one *per mille* of the whole population; but among emigrants they are a still smaller percentage, for, as a rule, only young people emigrate, and they have not yet acquired any very large number of fixed traditions. For this reason alone then one country can influence another country's folk-tale tradition to but a slight extent. Countries as close as Sweden and Denmark, therefore, which are not even divided by any real linguistic boundary, have in general extremely different traditions, and this is also apparent in the folk-tales. Scania, Halland and Bleking, which were conquered by Sweden from Denmark nearly 300 years ago, and completely incorporated in an incredibly short time, still have typically Danish traditions. The past 300 years which have made closer communication over the boundary possible, have hardly brought with

them any alterations in tradition. In contrast to the Finnish School's opinion that national boundaries do not hinder the course of tradition, the circumstances here show that a boundary which is *not* a linguistic boundary, and which has ceased to be a political boundary for nearly 300 years, is still a marked tradition boundary. There are many such tradition boundaries in Europe. As examples of the distinct effect boundaries generally have, we may cite the above-mentioned folk-tale about King Lindorm, which in Scandinavia is only to be found in the old Danish sphere, and is not to be met with in Germany either, a fact which excludes the possibility of its having migrated by itself into Denmark. Another folk-tale The Princess in the Cave[16], which must have arisen in the early Middle Ages, and which is spread over the whole of Scandinavia and Finland, has not been found in the rest of Europe except in Holstein, which was long under Denmark.

That such a tradition boundary may sometimes be transgressed is plain, but this does not occur by means of a tradition current, flooding over the boundary independently of moving people, but by means of an emigrating traditor. Although many circumstances may cause a traditor who has moved to a new country to cease telling his tales, yet it may be that he goes on telling them, and really succeeds in implanting his tradition there. The folk-tale he thus transmits is of an oicotype strange to the new place, and perhaps it will have to be immediately modified for the new circle of listeners. If there exists a related oicotype in the country, perhaps the two will sooner or later fuse. On the other hand, if it is a folk-tale completely strange to the country, it may agree too little with the temper and other traditions of the people, and so will soon die; but it may adapt itself more and more to prevailing taste, becoming fully acclimatised; but then it develops by degrees into an oicotype separate from that of the country of origin.

An example of a folk-tale thus acclimatised in a new country is the above-mentioned tale of King Lindorm. Its proper dissemina-

tive sphere is Italy, the Balkan countries, Turkey and Persia. It does not exist in Western Europe or other Teutonic territory, and must have entered Denmark through, probably, one single traditor, most likely before the 17th century. It has adapted itself to Danish taste, been influenced by other Danish folk-tales, and made into an independent oicotype.

Quite recently a treatise has been published about that myth of late antiquity, "Great Pan is dead."[17] The author demonstrates that this myth is widespread, but only in North-Western Europe, where it exists, partly in a Celtic oicotype, the only one in the British Isles, partly in a Teutonic oicotype-group. The Celtic oicotype, which is easily recognisable in that the demons appearing in it have cat form, exists sporadically in Scandinavia and Germany too, but constitutes the majority of the French variants. The Teutonic oicotype also exists in French territory, but is in a minority compared with the Celtic one; and the antique myth appears to be clearly a Teutonic oicotype which certainly came to Greece with Teutonic immigrants, of whom there were plenty at that time. But there the myth was so out of place that it could not survive, though it was preserved in writing by Plutarch.

In *Beowulf,* Beowulf's struggle with Grendel and his mother is plainly of Celtic origin, since a similar tale is common in Celtic territory, and agrees perfectly with the rest of Celtic tradition. But nothing similar exists in Teutonic territory, except for an episode in the Icelandic saga about Grettir, an episode which manifestly comes more or less direct from Beowulf itself. In the hero-tale about Sigurd Fafnisbane there are several loans from Celtic folk-tale in the Scandinavian Sigurd tradition, as the Northmen were in constant connection with the Celts through their colonies in Ireland. Thus the episode of how Sigurd roasts the serpent's heart for the sleeping Reginn, fingers it to see if it is done, burns himself, puts his finger in his mouth, and thereby understands bird language, is a manifest loan from the Gaelic *Finncycle.* If one compares the episode with related Teutonic and

Celtic folk-tales and legends, one cannot avoid the conclusion that it is an obvious Celtic oicotype formation, taken over by the Northern peoples. In the German Niebelungenlied the episode where Sigfrid wins Brynhild for his brother-in-law Gunter is an equally obvious *Russian* folk-tale. German scholars, especially Andreas Heusler, have tried to explain the Russian tale as derived from the German Brynhild episode, for patriotic reasons. But in Teutonic folk tradition there is not a single trace of that kind of motive, and the whole poem seems most unfamiliar to anyone who knows the way of thinking of the Teutonic folk. On the other hand, the Russian folk-tale is popular in Russia, where it has been taken down in quite a number of variants in different parts of that enormous country. It is also in complete correspondence with Russian folk-tale composition, for the "superhumanly strong woman" is a popular motive in several different folk-tale types there, and in the whole of Eastern Europe and Near Asia. The Russian folk-tale attracted a German minstrel, who heard it in Russia, and on account of certain associations worked it into the Brynhild poem instead of an earlier motive of perhaps the same content as the Scandinavian Brynhild episode. The great poet of the *Niebelungenlied* took the motive from the minstrel's more vulgar poem; but it could not remain in the folk-tradition because its whole character was too exotic for the Teutonic conception. This honours the taste of the German people, but it is no shame to the minstrel or the poet of the Niebelungenlied that they used the Russian folk-tale. That *anyone* could believe that the Russian tale originated in Germany results from the fact that the tale was seen in complete isolation, without knowledge of other Russian traditional material; but folk-tales are organically bound up with a great traditional *milieu,* and it is therefore unreasonable to draw wide conclusions from isolated extract material.

The transference of folk-tale tradition may, however, take place on a larger scale. An interesting example of this is Finland. Western Finland was part of Sweden for eight hundred years,

but its population was predominantly Finnish. Here Swedish culture was introduced, and here the folk-tales are of purely Swedish type. Eastern Finland, on the other hand, belonged to Russia, and had Russian culture, the Greek-Orthodox Church, and typically Russian folk-tales. The Finnish School noticed this, were astonished that the Russian folk-tales did not migrate further west or the Swedish further east, and thought they ought to explain this by a rule: where two folk-tale currents meet, they check one another. In itself the rule is unreasonable. There has never been any question of folk-tale currents: the two halves of Finland have each been leavened with Russian and Swedish culture respectively on account of immigrating officials, landowners, soldiers, and their servants. It looks as if the original Finnish folk-tales were supplanted in the process, but it may also be that they were of a more particularized kind, and were therefore not noticed by the folk-tale collectors, who collected only folk-tales of international type. After the Russian conquest in 1808 folk-tales of Russian type were found among the Swedish element of the population along the coast; but this is not due to the immigration of East Finns, but to influence from immigrant Russians. This is apparent among other things, from the fact that the Swedish dialects in Finland have taken over the Russian word *skazka* as a term for a folk-tale.

Here I have touched upon folk-tale transference and the formation of new oicotypes through immigrants. But oicotypification also takes place, of course, if a people is divided up into separate cultural spheres, or further, gives birth to new, separate peoples, so long as they had, before the division, common traditions that afterwards survived. Scholars have forgotten to take this possibility into consideration since the migration theory came into existence, but it is of the very greatest importance. There was a time when all Teutonic peoples spoke the same language and had common traditions, and a number of these still survive in separate oicotypes. The same is true of the Gaels and Kymri. Wherefore in no wise

does it follow that every agreement which exists between Gaelic and Kymric tradition can be interpreted as a loan from one people to the other. There was a time when all Indo-Europeans spoke roughly the same language, and also of course, had other traditions in common, these afterwards developing into separate oicotypes. I will give a few examples.

The folk-tale about The Giant Without a Heart[18] is spread among all Indo-European peoples. A giant who has carried away a princess cannot be vanquished because his heart is hidden and strongly guarded. But the hero learns the secret from the princess, and succeeds in getting hold of the heart. When it is destroyed the giant dies. This folk-tale may be divided into two great oicotype groups: the Asiatic, which has it that the giant's life or heart is in, or identical with, a bird or insect in a distant place, guarded by demons or dangerous beasts; and the European, which has it that the heart is in an egg in a bird which is usually enclosed in a whole series of beasts that have to be killed first. Here the migration theory cannot be used, for why should just the boundary between Europe and Asia compel so thorough a remodelling of the tale? The most natural explanation is that the folk-tale was originally a much simpler narrative, based directly on people's belief; but it incited the imagination to extend the account, to make it more thrilling by increasing the difficulties that the hero has to overcome. In so doing, different ways have been followed in Europe and Asia. This puts the origin of the tale back to a couple of thousand years B.C., and this is not in the least unreasonable, as the way of thinking is extremely primitive in it; and the tale seems to have influenced the tale of The Two Brothers, which was written down about 1300 B.C., and with which I shall deal more closely later on in this paper. This tale of The Giant Without a Heart can also give another proof of its age. Among the Slavs and the Celts it developed oicotypes of a kind peculiar to these groups of peoples, but both these oicotypes exhibit such mutual correspondence compared with the Teutonic oicotype that

they must have a special connection with one another. A migration over Teutonic territory is not to be thought of: the explanation must lie in the fact that Celts and Slavs dwelt next to one another about 600 B.C., with the result that they then had a whole number of traditions, and among them several folk-tales, in common.

The folk-tale of The Princess on the Glass Mountain[19] (only he who could reach her should have her), spread among all Indo-European peoples, has been oicotypified in this way:—The glass mountain is only in the Teutonic oicotype. It corresponds to a high tower in the Slav oicotype, and to a high palisade in the Indian. Migration from India to Europe is unthinkable, as the Slav oicotype already existed more than a thousand years B.C., when it was imported into Egypt and set down there.

The folk-tale of The Two Brothers, written down in Egypt about 1300 B.C., is of great interest. As folk-tradition it exists exclusively among the *satem*-speaking Indo-Europeans. It is found in two main oicotypes: a Slav, and an Indo-Iranian. I cannot, unfortunately, give here a complete account, but must content myself with a schematic sketch[20]. If we let *K* signify what is common to both oicotypes, then they have become separate from one another by the Slav adding the motives a, b, c, while the Indo-Iranian has instead added the motives p, q, r. The old Egyptian version has K+abc+pqr+xyz. In the whole of its composition the old Egyptian variant is unlike anything that we know of Egyptian folk-tale production, and is typically Indo-European; but in style and content xyz is a purely Egyptian addition, opposed to the rest of the tale both logically and stilistically. The tale cannot have migrated from Indo-Irania to the Slavs, for then the motives pqr would have been found among the Slavs, as they already existed 1300 B.C. in Egypt. And for the same reason the tale cannot have migrated in the opposite direction. It cannot have migrated from Egypt, for then it would be incomprehensible why it should have abandoned just abc+xyz on

the way to Persia, and pqr+xyz on the way to the Black Sea countries. Both oicotypes must have developed before 1300 B.C. Two traditors, one from each direction, met and told one another the tale. One introduced the other oicotype's peculiar features into his own version, and in this enlarged form told the tale to an Egyptian scribe, who wrote it down with his own additions. This tale obviously had time to migrate to the rest of Europe, but did not, for folk-tales *do not migrate*. Only three variants have been taken down in Western Europe: one in Småland, Sweden, imported by a Russian prisoner of war in 1808; one in Gothland, taken there by Esthonian servants, and one in Hessen, introduced by an Austrian. But the folk-tale thus imported has been unable to survive anywhere in Western Europe, because it agrees ill with the traditions existing there.

This last example corroborates what I previously asserted: the difficulty of transferring tradition to new surroundings; and in this connection it should be stated that folk-wanderings practically always bring along with them the mass extinction of folk tradition. The abnormal circumstances which existed during the wanderings of the peoples and under the period of transition, present no good occasion for the use of the tradition, and direct attention elsewhere. The Teutonic folk-migrations surely put an end to masses of Teutonic traditions, not least folk-tales. Interest turned instead to the great events of the day, and a fruit of this was the Teutonic heroic epic. On account of the uncertain conditions which prevailed for centuries, and settlements often of but a short period, even in Tacitus' time the continental Teutons must have been far poorer in tradition than the Scandinavians who remained at home. On the conquest of new countries the tradition of the indigenous population got the upper hand of that of the conquerors. So in Switzerland tradition is Celtic although the language is German. Iceland was uninhabited when the Northmen came there, but the settlers had not much use for folk-tale tradition then: the family-saga achieved predominant interest at the

cost of the folk-tradition proper. The folk-tradition now existent in Iceland is extremely unlike that of Scandinavia, although there are a number of traditions taken from Norway that have developed into peculiar oicotypes. In Sweden, Norrland was the district most recently colonized, to a large extent so recently that many good traditions are still available there which are associated with the first Swedish colonization. But apart from this, folk-traditions there are much scantier and poorer than they are in those parts of Sweden which have been inhabited from an earlier period, in spite of the fact that the traditions of the North have been less interfered with by modern culture. Among the richest and most outstanding folk-traditions in Europe is that of the Gaels in Ireland and Scotland; and it is one of the most important objects of European folk-tale research to pay as much attention to it as possible. Its rich vitality is to be attributed partly to the fact that the people have had their present dwelling-places so long, partly that there used to be professional narrators, there being nothing analogous to them in Teutonic territory. Ireland has probably preserved both Celtic and pre-Celtic traditions too.

I have been thinking chiefly of the long chimera folk-tales, but on the whole the same things are true of the shorter forms of narrative, although they have far more traditors, and so are transmitted more readily. The law of oicotypification is also true of them, and may also be more or less applied to other kinds of tradition, such as belief and custom. But I should perhaps stress that oicotypification takes time, and if folk-tales are found that have not been oicotypified, it is usually due to the fact that they are recent, and have perhaps been spread in a literary way.

But I must return to what I asserted in the beginning: we must build our research on the life and laws of the tradition, not on dry and lifeless extracts. The flesh which research puts on such dry lifeless bones is, and remains, dead, without connection with a living reality, and therefore without value[21].

KATEGORIEN DER PROSA-VOLKSDICHTUNG

Eine wissenschaftliche Systematik.

Eine richtige Auffassung der verschiedenen Kategorien von Volksüberlieferungen, ihrer Lebensbedingungen und Gesetze ist für eine befriedigende Erforschung dieser Überlieferungen gerade so notwendig wie das gut ausgebaute System z. B. für die Zoologie und Botanik. Man denke sich beispielsweise diese beiden Wissenschaften noch unbearbeitet und eben erst entdeckt, weil Physiker oder Chemiker infolge ihrer Untersuchungen auf das Gebiet des organischen Lebens gestossen waren und hier den einen oder anderen Versuch anstellen mussten. Man dürfte da sofort merken, dass unmöglich haltbare Ergebnisse erzielt werden können ohne weite Überblicke und eine gründliche Ausarbeitung des natürlichen Tier- und Pflanzensystems, so dass Arten und Gattungen klar geschieden und auf ihre natürlichen Familien, Ordnungen und Klassen bezogen werden können. Ohne eine feste Klasseneinteilung können nämlich sonstige wissenschaftliche Gesichtspunkte auf dem Gebiete der Tier- und Pflanzenwelt sicht nicht geltend machen, denn Anatomie und Physiologie, Pflanzen- und Tiergeographie, Fortpflanzungs- und Verbreitungsverhältnisse usw. sind sämtlich verschieden für die verschiedenen Klassen und Ordnungen, Gattungen und Arten. Genau das gleiche gilt für das Gebiet der Volksüberlieferungen. Die verschiedenen Überlieferungsarten unterstehen völlig verschiedenen Gesetzen, und ohne Vertrautheit mit dem System der Überlieferung, dem gegenseitigen Verhältnis und den ungleichen Lebensbedingungen der verschiedenen Kategorien usw. kann man zu keinen zuverlässigen Forschungsergebnissen gelangen. Viele wissenschaftlichen Fehl-

griffe, die lange Zeit die Forschung am Fortschritt hinderten, sind gerade durch den Mangel an Einblick in die Kategorien und das Unvermögen, sie gründlich zu scheiden, veranlasst.

Märchen und Sage.

Eine bereits von den Gebrüdern *Grimm* getraffene Unterscheidung auf dem Gebiete der Volkserzählungen ist die zwischen Märchen und Sage. Während »Sage« die kurzen Berichte bezeichnet, die vom Volke als wahr betrachtet und ausserdem oft lokalisiert und an bekannte Personen angeknüpft werden, versteht man unter »Märchen« die vielfach langen Erzählungen, welche das Volk selbst als erdichtet ansieht und lediglich zur Unterhaltung verwendet. Wenn auch eine derartige Begriffsbestimmung nicht als wissenschaftlich befriedigend angesehen werden kann, so wird dadurch doch eine klare Unterscheidung zwischen den beiden Gruppen getroffen. Gewiss kann man bisweilen über die Grenzlinie im Zweifel sein, vor allem, da beide Kennzeichen an und für sich etwas zu unbestimmt und unsicher sind; doch lässt sich das Material in den allermeisten Fällen mit Leichtigkeit der einen oder anderen Seite zuteilen. Bei näherer Prüfung ergibt sich jedoch, dass eine genauere und methodischere Abgrenzung nur unter gleichzeitiger Aufteilung beider Gruppen in Untergruppen stattfinden kann, und geschieht dies, so kann die alte Grenzlinie, die alten Kennzeichen, nicht länger aufrecht erhalten werden.

Hier muss ich kurz einen Versuch von André *Jolles* (Einfache Formen. Halle 1929) berühren, einige hierher gehörige Begriffe festzulegen. Bei dem Versuch, den Inhalt des Begriffes Märchen zu bestimmen, lässt er diesem nicht den weiten, ihm von den Gebrüdern Grimm gegebenen Umfang, sondern beschränkt ihn auf das, was Antti *Aarne* (Verzeichnis der Märchentypen. Helsinki 1910) »Eigentliche Märchen« oder »Zaubermärchen« nennt. Dagegen ist eigentlich nichts einzuwenden, da man vor allem diese Gruppe im Auge hat, wenn man das Wort Märchen anwendet. Bedenklicher verfährt Jolles bei der Klarlegung des

Begriffes Sage (schwed. sägen, dän. Sagn). Er wendet sich da an lexikalische Handbücher, statt an des Sagenmaterial. Mit Recht bemängelt er, was Grimms Wörterbuch anführt, da es Bedeutung und Begriffsbestimmung verwechselt und die Bedeutung auf das rein Negative festlegt, dass die Sage etwas ist, was »einer historischen Beglaubigung entbehrt«, während das Wort im gewöhnlichen Sprachgebrauch einen ausgesprochen positiven Inhalt besitzt. Jolles' eigene Auseinandersetzung beruht indessen auf einem grossen Missgriff. In einem englischen Wörterbuch findet er das Wort Saga mit einer ursprünglichen Bedeutung »mittelalterliche isländische Familiensaga«, daneben mit der sekundären einer Erzählung von tatsächlicher oder vermutlicher Gleichheit mit der isländischen Saga, ausserdem in »incorrect uses« die Bedeutung Sage im Sinne der Gebrüder Grimm. Das englische Wörterbuch bezeichnet den letztgenannten Gebrauch des Wortes Saga mit vollem Recht als unkorrekt; dass man aber den Ausdruck »Saga« überhaupt aufgenommen hat, um »Saga« zu bezeichnen, beruht auf völligem Mangel an einer eigenen und korrekten Bezeichnung für den Begriff Sage im Englischen. In verzweifeltem Notbehelf und höchst unkorrekt gebraucht es dafür teils das Wort Legende, wie das Französische, das ebensowenig einen besonderen Ausdruck für Sage besitzt, teils das Wort Saga.

Obwohl Jolles erkennt, dass die Verwendung des Wortes Saga im Englischen gänzlich unkorrekt ist, bedient er sich selbst dieses Wortes, um den Inhalt des Wortes »Saga« zu bestimmen. Nachdem er festgestellt hat, dass »der innere Bau der Islendingasaga bedingt wird durch den Begriff Familie«, überträgt er dies auf die Sage: »Es gibt eine Geistesbeschäftigung, in der sich die Welt als Familie aufbaut, in der sie in ihrer Ganzheit nach dem Begriff des Stammes, des Stammbaums, der Blutsverwandtschaft gedeutet wird . . . und diese Welt meinen wir, wenn wir das Wort Sage gebrauchen. Diese Welt, nur diese Welt wollen wir von nun an mit Sage bezeichnen.« Dies Verfahren von Jolles muss als unrichtig bezeichnet werden. Da die Grundbedeutung von Sage ist:

»das, was gesagt wird«, so hat sich die besondere Bedeutung entwickelt: »das, was das Volk sagt von früheren Geschehnissen oder überhaupt von allem, was Interesse hat für das Volk«. Nur zu einem *sehr* geringen Teil handelt dies von Familienverhältnissen; für das Wort Sage bzw. sägen muss man daher an eben der Bedeutung festhalten, die Grimm hineinlegte und die sowohl in Deutschland wie in Skandinavien die geläufige ist. Dass man auf Island dazu gelangte, in das Wort Saga eine Sonderbedeutung zu legen, weil dort eine ganz eigenartige, mit fast nichts in der Weltliteratur zu vergleichende Sagadichtung entstanden war, berechtigt nicht, den Inhalt dieses Sonderbegriffs auf Sage und sägen zu übertragen, die niemals einen solchen Inhalt hatten, und die Bedeutung zu verwerfen, die das Wort bereits besitzt. Will man die Überlieferung bezeichnen, welche auf die Familie als Hauptinhalt abzielt, so kann dies nicht mit dem einfachen Wort Sage geschehen, das bereits eine ganz andere Bedeutung hat, sondern bespielsweise mit »Familiensage«.

Jolles' scharfsinnige und sehr anregende Erörterungen über »einfache Formen« leiden überhaupt an dem Mangel, dass sie auf einer kleinen Auswahl, statt auf einer vollständigen Übersicht beruhen. Seine Umwertung des Wortes Sage kann natürlich nicht gutgeheissen werden, doch hängt sein Verfahren wohl damit zusammen, dass die herkömmliche Bedeutung des Wortes so weit und unbestimmt ist, dass sie auf die Dauer für wissenschaftlichen Gebrauch sich nicht eignet. Die Züge, die man oft als bezeichnend für die Sage gegenüber dem Märchen anzuführen pflegt, nämlich dass sie oft verknüpft ist mit einer bestimmten Person oder einer bestimmten Stätte, zeigen sich z. B. bei näherer Prüfung als ganz wertlose Kennzeichen. Eine sehr grosse Gruppe von Sagen, und gerade die am künstlerischsten ausgeführten, entbehren nämlich in der Regel Personen- und Ortsnamen, sofern diese nicht willkürlich zur Erhöhung des Interesses eingefügt wurden, und etwas Ähnliches kommt zuweilen auch bei Märchen vor. Die Bedeutung der Sage für den Volksglauben kann nicht geleugnet werden, aber

der Glaube an die Sage ist oft nur ein Halbglaube, und es ist selbstverständlich, dass die Stellung einer Erzählung in einem wissenschaftlichen System nicht darauf beruhen darf, ob sie geglaubt wird oder nicht. Die Frage nach dem Glauben an den Inhalt kann infolgedessen nicht ernstlich zur Grenzlinie zwischen Märchen und Sage dienen. So bleibt kaum eine andere Unterscheidung zwischen Märchen und Sage übrig als die, dass das Märchen zur Unterhaltung, die Sage aber zur Belehrung erzählt wird, was jedoch auch eine schlechte Unterscheidung ist, insofern verschiedene Märchengruppen ebensosehr wie die Sage zur Belehrung erzählt werden, andererseits viele Sagen entschieden in erster Linie auf Unterhaltung abzielen. Wie die grosse Gruppe Volksdichtung, die man unter den Begriff Märchen zu bringen pflegt, in ihre natürlichen Unterabteilungen aufgeteilt werden muss, so muss das gleiche auch mit dem geschehen, was man Sage nennt. Erst diese kleineren Gruppen können ernstlich verglichen und scharf gegeneinander abgegrenzt werden.

Hauptgruppen des Märchens.

Der erste, der mit der klaren Erkenntnis hervortrat, dass für ungleiche Kategorien innerhalb des Märchens auch ungleiche Gesetze gelten, war Theodor *Benfey;* er fandt die Tierfabel in stilistischer Hinsicht so ungleich den übrigen Märchen, dass er sie von Griechenland herleitete, während nach seiner Ansicht alle übrigen Märchen ihren Ausgangspunkt von Indien genommen hatten. Selbst wenn seine Folgerung hinsichtlich der Tierfabel falsch war, muss man Benfey doch alle Anerkennung aussprechen für die klare Einsicht, es handele sich um derart ungleiche Kategorien, dass gemeinsamer Ursprung und Beherrschtsein von denselben Gesetzen unter keinen Umständen angenommen werden durfte. Doch fehlte es Benfey, was gleichzeitig hervorgehoben werden muss, an dem Blick dafür, dass die übrigen Märchen keineswegs eine Gruppe von einheitlicher Artung bildeten, sondern mehrere unter sich stark verschiedene Kategorien. Da das

Pantschatandra auf literarischem Wege von Indien nach Europa gewandert war, zog Benfey den Schluss, dass die ganze übrige Märchenüberlieferung Europas denselben Weg zurückgelegt hatte, ein Schluss ebenso falsch, wie wenn man die ganze Romanliteratur Europas von Russland herleiten wollte, da wir von dort die Romane Tolstois, Turgenjews, Dostojewskis und anderer russischer Schriftsteller bekommen haben. Schlimmer war jedoch, dass die Wundermärchen von Benfey mit den übrigen Märchen über einen Kamm geschoren und als Einfuhrgut aus Indien betrachtet wurden, trotz ihres fast völligen Fehlens im Pantschatandra, das ausser Novellen fast nur Tier- und Scherzfabeln enthält.

Was bisher in populärer Weise unter der gemeinsamen Benennung Märchen ging, muss in natürliche Gruppen aufgeteilt werden. Denn erst, wenn dies geschehen ist, treten die oft stark unterschiedlichen Eigenschaften in einer Weise hervor, dass man ohne weiteres einsehen muss, dass, was für die eine Gruppe gilt, für die andere keineswegs zu gelten braucht oder überhaupt kann. Eine Aufteilung, die sich dabei von selbst ergibt, ist die in *Einepisodisches* und *Mehrepisodisches*. Die erstere Gruppe nenne ich *Fabeln,* die leztere *Märchen (sagor)*. Diese Einteilung erweist sich bei nährer Prüfung als höchst natürlich und kann mit der Einteilung der Pflanzen in solche mit einem und solche mit zwei Keimblättern verglichen werden.

Fabelkategorien.

Die Fabel ist typisch einepisodisch, beruht auf einer einzigen Idee. Auf Grund ihres einfachen Baus und ihres auf einem ebenso einfachen Gedanken fussenden Inhalts ist sie leicht im Gedächtnis zu behalten, und man erinnert sich ihrer oft nach nur einmaligem Anhören. Die Fabeln besitzen daher bedeutend zahlreichere aktive wie passive Überlieferungsträger als die längeren Märchen, und der Sammler hat es ausserordentlich viel leichter, auf Fabeln zu stossen als auf Märchen. Die Fabeln kommen auch bedeutend

häufiger zur Anwendung als Märchen, denn in die Unterhaltung eingeflochten zu werden ist typisch für sie, wobei sie als eine Art Illustration zum Gesprächsstoff dienen. Oft ist eine Fabel allen so geläufig, dass man sie gar nicht zu erzählen braucht, sondern lediglich auf sie anspielt; dies verschaffte den Fabeln einen gewissen Einfluss auf die Sprichwortbildung. Es lassen sich leicht drei verschiedene Arten von Fabeln mit teilweise ungleichen Lebensbedingungen unterscheiden: Tierfabeln, Scherzfabeln oder Schwänke, und Parabelfabeln.

Die Tierfabeln unterscheiden sich stark von den beiden übrigen Fabelgruppen dadurch, dass die Handlung ganz von Tieren getragen wird, die freilich oft als Menschen in Tiermasken auftreten, d. h. in starker Anlehnung an menschliche Verhältnisse geschildert sind. Die Tierfabel entstand auf Grund des starken Interesses, welches Menschen von primitiver, naturverbundener Lebensführung an Tieren nehmen; sie ist daher am stärksten in rückständigeren Ländern vertreten, während sie in den Kulturländern im Schwinden begriffen ist. Sie findet jedoch stets eine gewisse Verwendung als Unterhaltungsstoff für kleine Kinder, die einer längeren Erzählung nicht zu folgen vermögen, aber gern von Tieren berichten hören. Im Vergleich mit den Tieren haben die Pflanzen nur in geringem Masse die Aufmerksamkeit der Fabeldichter auf sich gezogen, und die wenigen Pflanzenfabeln, die sich finden, können am ehesten als eine Unterabteilung der Tierfabel angesehen werden oder als deren unbedeutender Anhang.

Die Tierfabel ist typisch einepisodisch, doch kommen *zweiepisodische* Tierfabeln nach dem Prinzip des Gegensatzes bisweilen vor, z. B. »Fuchs und Storch laden sich gegenseitig ein«, wobei die beiden Gastmähler zwei symmetrisch entgegengesetzte Episoden bilden. Nicht selten werden mehrere Tierfabeln zu einem längeren *Konglomerat* verbunden, jedoch von losem und zufälligem Aufbau. Tatsächlich mehrepisodische, festgefügte Kompositionen, vergleichbar den eigentlichen Märchen, sind ungewöhnlich, doch trifft man bisweilen auf sie, besonders bei exoti-

schen Völkern; auf dem Gebiet der Kunstdichtung haben sich das *Tierepos* und die damit vergleichbaren Gebilde entwickelt.

Die *Scherzfabeln* sind realistische Berichte, die sich ganz auf dem Gebiete des Alltagslebens bewegen; die Handlung wird gewöhnlich von Personen aus den niederen Gesellschaftsklassen getragen. Sie beruhen auf einem einzigen scherzhaften Gedanken. Während es für die Scherzfabel typisch ist, beiläufig in den Gang der Unterhaltung eingestreut zu werden, kann sie bei gehobener Stimmung oft Hauptbestandteil der Unterhaltung werden, so dass die Anwesenden wechselweise Scherzfabeln erzählen: kaum ist einer fertig mit seiner Geschichte, fällt ein anderer ein mit einer neuen, bis man sich anschickt aufzubrechen, oder die Gedanken in andere Bahnen gelenkt werden. Wie in der Tierfabel können Gebilde mit zwei Episoden auftreten, auch Konglomeratbildungen sind nicht ungewöhnlich.

Die *Parabelfabeln* stimmen mit den Scherzfabeln in ihrem äusseren Aufbau überein, sind jedoch ernsthafter Art und haben es auf die Vermittelung einer wichtigen Lehre abgesehen. Da diese oft religiöser Natur ist, können in den Parabelfabeln übernatürliche Wesen und allegorische Figuren auftreten. Natürlich können auch hier zweiepisodische Gebilde vorkommen. Die Parabelfabel gelangt jedoch weit weniger oft zur Anwendung als die Scherzfabel. Sie ist daher weniger allgemein und besitzt viel weniger Überlieferungsträger.

Märchenkategorien.

Die eigentlichen Märchen sind mehrepisodische Kompositionen und daher viel zu lang, um ins Gespräch eingeflochten zu werden. Man erzählt sie zum Zeitvertreib bei Arbeiten oder Festen innerhalb der Familie oder gemeinsam vor dem ganzen Dorf; dabei wird eine Person zum Erzählen aufgefordert, während die übrigen die aufmerksame Zuhörerschaft bilden. Die Märchen lassen sich infolge ihrer Länge bedeutend schwerer einprägen als die Fabeln, was eine um so grössere Rolle spielt, als sie längst

nicht so oft Anwendung finden. Ausserdem stellen sie grosse Anforderungen an die Erzählungskunst und das Gedächtnis, was verursacht, dass auf dem Gebiet der eigentlichen Märchen die Anzahl der Überlieferungsträger bedeutend geringer ist als auf dem der Fabeln. Die Märchen sind auch für gewöhnlich Familienerbe. Nur in der Familie des aktiven Überlieferungsträgers werden seine Märchen so oft vor Kindern oder Enkeln erzählt, dass das eine oder mehrere von ihnen sie übernehmen und weitergeben können, während die, welche Märchen bei einer Festlichkeit hören, in der Regel nur passiv beteiligt bleiben: sie erkennen zwar das Märchen bei neuerlichem Anhören wieder und erinnern sich seiner vielleicht gerade noch so weit, dass sie Abweichungen berichtigen können, deren der Erzähler sich schuldig macht, aber sie vermögen die Märchenüberlieferung nicht selbst fortzupflanzen. Das gilt mehr oder minder von allen im Volk überlieferten mehrepisodischen Erzählungen, und in so höherem Grade, je zahlreicher die Episoden und je kunstvoller die Komposition ist. Die wichtigsten Märchengruppen sind das indogermanische Schimäremärchen, die Novellenmärchen, das Parabelmärchen, Konglomeratmärchen und Kettenmärchen.

Die für uns wichtigste und interessanteste Gruppe sind die *Schimäremärchen,* welche z. T. den Nummern 300—749 in Aarnes Verzeichnis entsprechen. Wenn ich hier weder Aarnes Benennung Zaubermärchen verwende noch die von mir früher sebst gebrauchte Benennung Wundermärchen (undersagor), so beruht dies z. T. darauf, dass das für diese Märchen Typische weder in Zauber, noch auch in dem einen oder anderen Wunder besteht, denn das eine wie das andere kann sehr wohl auch in Märchen anderer Art vorkommen. Auch müssen viele der bei Aarne als Zaubermärchen katalogisierten Märchen unter andere Rubriken eingeordnet werden. Das für die Schimäremärchen Charakteristische ist dagegen, dass die Begebenheiten ganz nach einer unwirklichen Phantasiewelt verlegt werden und von Königen handeln, von Prinzen und Prinzessinnen, Riesen und Dra-

chen, unausführbaren Aufgaben, deren sich zu erledigen dem Helden trotz allem glückt, von Verwandlungen, übernatürlichen Helfern und phantastisch wunderbaren Talismanen, all dies von einer Art, wie es der naive Märchendichter im wirklichen Leben niemals angetroffen hatte, sondern ganz nach seiner Lust und Laune gestaltet. In guter Übereinstimmung damit, dass das Ganze auf einer unwirklichen Phantasieebene aufgebaut ist, kennt das Schimäremärchen keine Zeitbestimmungen: »Es war einmal« bedeutet, dass es nie geschehen. Ebenso fehlen wirkliche Orts- und Personennamen. Nur um der Bequemlichkeit oder Scherzhaftigkeit willen hat man besondere Märchenbenamsungen (Schneewittchen, Dornröschen, Goldener, Kammland, Handtuchland) verwendet oder auch willkürlich gewählte Allerweltsnamen (Johannes, Hans, Peter). Die Komposition ist immer *geradlinig,* d. h., die Episoden folgen sich in logischer Ordnung, so dass die eine Episode einen deutlichen Hinweis auf das Hauptthema der folgenden gibt; für gewöhlich herrscht das Prinzip der Dreizahl.

Wenn ich diese Schimäremärchen als indogermanisch anspreche, so tue ich dies deshalb, weil sie im ganzen indogermanischen Bereiche anzutreffen sind und ausserhalb dieses Bereiches nur als zufälliges Lehngut von indogermanischen Völkern vorkommen, oder weil die nicht-indogermanischen Völker (Finnen, Ungarn, Türken), welche sie in grösserer Menge besitzen, einen wesentlichen Teil ihrer Kultur von Indogermanen (Germanen, Slawen, Rumänen, Griechen, Persern) empfangen haben und damit auch Schimäremärchen. Sie haben auch auf indogermanischem Gebiet schon lange vor Chr. bestanden, was teils aus ihrem offenbar sehr zeitigen Auftreten in Griechenland hervorgeht, wie Spuren in den Heldensagen deutlich zeigen, teils aus dem Umstande, dass einige als Lehngut aus den Ländern am Schwarzen Meer in Ägypten früher als 1000 v. Chr. aufgezeichnet wurden. Die Bezeichnung indogermanisch bedeutet jedoch *nicht,* dass nicht auch andere Volkstämme (Semiten, Mongolen, Eskimos, Indianer, Neger)

Märchen von höchst unwirklichem und zaubererfülltem Inhalt dichten können, aber solche exotischen Märchen gehören einem ganz anderen Kompositionstyp und Stil an, was genau beachtet werden muss. Es ist auch möglich und wahrscheinlich, dass ein Teil unserer Schimäremärchen von denjenigen nicht-indogermanischen Völkern, z. B. in Südeuropa, herstammt, die durch die indogermanische Einwanderung und Eroberung ihres Landes indogermanisiert wurden. Man wird dies feststellen können durch das Studium der Verbreitung sowie der Stileigentümlichkeiten der verschiedenen Märchen, obgleich man damit rechnen muss, dass sie mehr oder minder stark indogermanisiert wurden, was ihren ursprünglichen Stil veränderte.

Die *Novellenmärchen* sind keine einheitliche Gruppe. Was sie vor allem von den Schimäremärchen unterscheidet, ist ihre bedeutend grössere Wirklichkeitsnähe und die realistischere Art ihrer Darstellung, was u. a. darin sich zeigt, dass Könige und Prinzen eine bedeutend geringere Rolle spielen. Ein Teil der Novellenmärchen dürfte europäischen Ursprungs sein und besitzt ungefähr die gleiche geradlinige, zahlbeherrschte Komposition wie die Schimäremärchen und entbehrt Personennamen wie diese. Doch ist es schwer, den Umfang dieser Gruppe zu bestimmen. Von den in Aarnes Verzeichnis als »novellenartige Märchen« aufgeführten Märchen bin ich geneigt, die Nummern 850—879 als Schimäremärchen zu betrachten, obgleich sie weder Zauber noch Wunder enthalten, denn ihr Inhalt trägt den Stempel der gleichen unwirklichen Phantasie wie der der Schimäremärchen. Und Aarnes Nummern 930—949 möchte ich unter die Parabelmärchen rechnen. Von den übrigen Novellenmärchen Aarnes ist ein grosser Teil nichteuropäischer Abstammung. Dagegen befinden sich unter den von Aarne als Schwänke bezeichneten Stücken verschiedene, die auf Grund ihrer Komposition als Novellenmärchen bezeichnet werden müssen. Hier muss eine gründliche Arbeit einsetzen, um die verschiedenen Unterabteilungen herauszustellen.

Eine wichtige Gruppe der Novellenmärchen verdient jedoch

besonders genannt zu werden: *die semitischen Novellenmärchen.* Diese Gruppe, trefflich vertreten in E. Littmanns Beduinenerzählungen (Strassburg 1908), ist bedeutend realistischer als die in Europa vorkommenden. Die Personen werden nicht nur mit ihren wirklichen individuellen Namen genannt, sondern für die stärker im Mittelpunkt stehenden Gestalten werden geradezu Stammbäume aufgestellt. Es wird von wirklichen geographischen Örtlichkeiten gesprochen. Und nicht zum wenigsten realistisch ist die Komposition, die ich im Gegensatz zu der des Schimäremärchens *springend* (*slingrande,* eigentlich schlängelnd) nenne, d. h. die eine Episode gibt nicht den geringsten Anhaltspunkt für den Inhalt der folgenden, sondern das Ganze besteht aus einer Reihe Überraschungen. Genau derselbe Kompositionstyp und die gleiche Art des Inhalts, die Littmanns Beduinenerzählungen kennzeichnen, tritt bereits in den Erzählungen der Genesis von Jacob und Esau oder von Joseph und seinen Brüdern auf, ein Umstand, der zeigt, dass diese Art der Dichtung ebenso alt und charakteristisch auf semitischem Gebiete ist wie das Schimäremärchen auf indogermanischem. So kann man hier von Märchengruppen völkischen Gepräges reden. Das semitische Novellenmärchen hat nur in äusserst geringer Ausdehnung auf indogermanisches Gebiet übergreifen können, wo seine Verbreitung sich beschränkt auf die von den Arabern eroberten und mit arabischer Kultur durchtränkten Länder, besonders Persien, wo es die anerkannt herrschende Märchenform wurde, während das indogermanische Schimäremärchen nur ein verborgenes Leben im Harem führt, ein klarer Beweis gegen die Einwanderung des Schimäremärchens aus Indien unter persischer und arabischer Vermittlung.

Ich habe eben das *Parabelmärchen* im Zusammenhang mit den europäischen Novellenmärchen genannt. Es ist in der Tat eine Art Novellenmärchen, doch liegt das Hauptinteresse nicht bei den Begebenheiten selbst, sondern bei der Lehre, die man aus der Erzählung schöpfen kann. Eine scharfe Grenze zwischen

Parabelmärchen und Parabelfabel besteht natürlich nicht. Der Unterschied liegt bloss in der mehrepisodischen Komposition des Parabelmärchens, was zu einem gewissen Unterschied in der Verwendung und folglich auch zu anderen Lebensbedingungen führt. Zu den Parabelmärchen rechne ich verschiedene Märchen, die Aarne legendenartige nennt, ebenso einige seiner novellenartigen.

Im Zusammenhang mit Tier- und Scherzfabel kam ich darauf zu sprechen, dass sie zuweilen zu grösseren Konglomeraten von mehr oder minder zufälligem Charakter zusammengefügt werden. Zuweilen sind lose Kompositionen entstanden mit einer einigermassen festen Einleitung und ebensolchem Abschluss, aber mit einem Hauptteil von wechselndem konglomeratartigen Charakter. Solche Märchen kann man füglich zu einer besonderen Gruppe, den *Konglomeratmärchen,* vereinigen. Hierher gehört z. B., was in Aarnes Verzeichnis unter den Nummern 1000—1029 zusammengefasst wird, die alle zu ein und demselben Konglomeratmärchen vom Knechte gehören, welcher mit dem Bauern einen Kontrakt abschloss, dass der, welcher zuerst zornig würde, bestraft werden solle. Aarnes Nummern 1030—1165 enthalten einige einepisodische Fabeln oder Fabulate, aber viele dieser Nummern gehören zu einigermassen festen Konglomeratmärchen vom Knaben und dem Riesen. Konglomeratmärchen sind auch Aarne Nr. 326, 650, 700 u. a.

Eine besondere Märchengruppe sind die sogenannten *Kettenmärchen,* Erzählungen, welche durch wiederholte Abwandlung ein und desselben Motivs mehrepisodisch werden. Das Grundmotiv kann aus der Tierfabel (Grimm 10, 41, 27), der Scherzfabel (Grimm 119, 131, 143) oder dem Kinderspiel (The house that Jack built, Aa 2035) stammen. Sie werden hauptsächlich zur Unterhaltung kleiner Kinder erzählt, aber einige, besonders die, welche sich der Scherzfabel anschliessen, dienen dem gleichen Zwecke wie gewöhnliche Märchen.

Wenn ich unter diese Märchenkategorien Aarnes »legendenartige Märchen« oder »Märchen vom dummen Teufel« als be-

sondere Gruppen nicht aufnahm, geschieht dies, weil ich sie nicht als selbständige oder einheitliche Kategorien betrachten kann. Ein grosser Teil der legendenartigen Märchen sind in Wirklichkeit Parabelmärchen, und das Auftreten übernatürlicher Wesen in ihnen braucht nicht den Ausschlag für ihre Einordnung in das System zu geben. Wenn man in ein Märchen Jupiter und Merkur als handelnde Personen einsetzt, so wird dadurch die Artbeschaffenheit des Märchens keine andere als zuvor, und ebensowenig kommt eine Artveränderung zustande, wenn man späterhin die beiden Götter durch Unsern Herrgott und den Heiligen Petrus ersetzt. Der Teufel, vom Volke als wirkliches Wesen aufgefasst, kan den Charakter eines Märchens nicht ändern, wenn er an Stelle eines Riesen oder Trolls tritt.

Sagenkategorien.

Der Bereich der Sage ist von der Forschung bedeutend weniger beachtet worden als die Märchen, vielleicht wegen seiner geringeren internationalen Bedeutung. Man hat deshalb das Wort Sage in einer so weiten Bedeutung verwendet, dass es schliesslich bedeutend mehr umfasste, als was Dichtung des Volkes genannt werden kann. Es ist klar, dass man hier schärfere Grenzlinien als bisher ziehen muss.

Zu allererst muss von der Sage ein Gebiet abgetrennt werden, das zwar mancherlei Verwandtschaft mit ihr hat, aber weder dichterischen Charakter noch Überlieferung aufweist: die Erzählungen der Leute über eigene, rein persönliche Erlebnisse. Diese geben eigene Erinnerungen wieder, weshalb ich sie *Memorate* nennen will. Selbstverständlich kann ein derartiges Memorat starke Eindrücke von Sagen über ähnliche Begebenheiten empfangen, aber es liegt keine Überlieferung vor, solange es auf den, der den Inhalt erlebte, beschränkt bleibt. Ein Memorat verdient grosses Interesse als Beispiel dafür, was das Volk erlebte, was es als denkwürdig und beachtenswert ansah, und wie es das Erlebte auffasste. Viele Memorate können dazu übergehen, Tradition zu

werden, indem andere Personen sie interessant genug finden für eine Weitergabe. Dabei unterliegen sie in der Regel starken stilistischen Veränderungen infolge Auslassung des für den neuen Erzähler weniger Interessanten und vielleicht auch Abwandlung des Inhalts in Übereinstimmung mit geltenden Vorstellungen. Auf diese Weise geht das einstige Memorat über in eine *Erinnerungssage* (*minnessägen*), aber die Grenze ist oft äusserst schwer zu ziehen.

Eine zweite Überlieferungsgruppe, die zwar zu den Sagen gerechnet wird, jedoch nichts Erdichtetes enthält, sondern zum Wissen des Volkes gehört, ist, was ich *Chroniknotizen* nennen möchte: allerhand unterschiedliche Erinnerungen, dargestellt in Form einer Behauptung. Derartige Notizen können von Personen, Familien, Orten und Landstrichen, Kulturverhältnissen u. dgl. handeln. Sie vereinigen sich nicht selten mit Sagen verschiedener Art und spielen eine gewisse Rolle in der Überlieferung.

Was man jedoch gewöhnlich unter dem Worte Sage versteht, sind kurze, einepisodische Erzählungen, in deren Hintergrund allerdings Erlebnisse und Beobachtungen stehen; doch sind sie nicht unmittelbar aus diesen hervorgegangen, sondern aus einer derartigen Elementen entsprungenen Vorstellung, die sich in ihnen sozusagen kristallisierte. In der Gestalt, die sie annahmen, können sie sich nicht ereignet haben, sie wurden vielmehr von der Fabulierkunst des Volkes geformt, das den von der Sage behandelten Stoff zurechtzulegen versuchte, und zu erklären und zu bezeugen bestrebt war, wie es sich damit verhält. Ich habe sie früher *Zeugensagen* (*vittnessägner*) genannt; aber da sie in Aufbau und Verwendung so nahe mit gewissen Fabeln übereinstimmen, dürfte es richtiger sein, ihnen einen anderen Namen beizulegen. Ich schlage die Benennung *Fabulat* vor, was nicht nur einen guten Gegensatz zu Memorat bildet, sondern als internationaler Ausdruck auch gut für jegliche Sprache passt.

Die reichhaltigste und interessanteste Fabulatgruppe bilden die

Glaubensfabulate, die an den Volksglauben anknüpfen und ihn in verschiedenen Stücken veranschaulichen, z. B. hinsichtlich übernatürlicher Wesen, geheimer Kräfte usw. Hierhergehörige Gebilde findet man überall, aber die Verbreitung der einzelnen Fabulate ist u. a. abhängig von dem Vorkommen des Glaubens, auf den das Fabulat sich gründet. Doch können etliche von ihnen von einem Wesen auf ein anderes übertragen werden, so dass ein und derselbe Fabulattyp in verschiedenen Gegenden von einer Waldminne (skogsfru), einem Wasserwesen oder einem Riesen erzählt wird. Da die Glaubensfabulate sich ja in Wirklichkeit nicht zugetragen haben können, sondern frei erfunden sind, gehören Personen- und Ortsnamen ursprünglich gewiss nicht zu ihrem typischen Inhalt, fehlen auch oft. Infolge ihres Anspruchs auf Wahrheit zeigt sich jedoch das Bestreben, Namen bekannter Personen und Örtlichkeiten als Kriterium ihrer Zuverlässigkeit einzusetzen. Oft kommen auch andere *Kriteriumsmotive* vor, indem man die Brautkrone zeigt, oder den Becher, den man dem Troll abnahm und der sich noch in der Kirche befindet. Derartige Motive deuten nämlich nur scheinbar auf einen ätiologischen Zweck des Fabulats, sie müssen vielmehr wie die Namen als Kriteriumsmotive aufgefasst werden, welche die Glaubwürdigkeit des Berichtes bestärken sollen. Die Glaubensfabulate werden in der Hauptsache dann erzählt, wenn der Glaube, über den sie Licht verbreiten wollen, gestärkt werden muss, und wenn man vor den Gefahren warnen will, die drohen, wenn man z. B. gewisse Tabus übertritt. Das Volk glaubt an die Fabulate, doch ist dieser Glaube bezüglich vieler Fabulate nur ein Halbglaube: man sagt so, aber man kann ja nicht so genau wissen, ob das wirklich sich so verhält. Oft ist ein Fabulat von so ausgelassen scherzhafter Art, dass man sicherlich nie verlangte, es ernst zu nehmen. Hat man einmal mit der Erzählung von Fabulaten begonnen. so kommt man oft derart in Zug, dass ein Fabulat das andere ablöst. Das pflegt besonders bei Spukfabulaten einzutreten. In der Verwendung gleichen die Glaubensfabulate

somit in hohem Grade den Scherzfabeln, während sie durch ihren Glaubensgehalt den Parabelfabeln näher verwandt sind, gegen die eine Abgrenzung nicht besteht; es sei denn dass die Fabulate mehr national, die Parabelfabeln mehr allgemein-menschlich bedingt seien. Selbst eine Menge der kurzen scherzhaften Märchen, die Aarne Märchen vom dummen Teufel nennt, sind typische Fabulate, deren Scherzhaftigkeit allerdings grösser ist als ihr Glaubensgehalt.

Der Scherzfabel nahe steht eine grosse Anzahl *Personenfabulate*. Im Grunde sind sie Scherzfabeln, obgleich sie bekannten und namentlich genannten Persönlichkeiten angedichtet oder angehängt sind. Auch ernste Personenfabulate trifft man zuweilen. Solche Fabulate über Personen bilden oft ganze *Fabulatzyklen* (Till Eulenspiegel). Doch ist die Grenze zwischen Personenfabulat und Erinnerungssagen von Personen schwer zu ziehen.

Unter den Sagen findet sich eine grosse ätiologische Gruppe, die ich *Ursprungssagen* (*upphovssägner*) nannte. Viele von ihnen sind so ausführlich und episch gut ausgeformt, dass sie in der Tat auch zu den Fabulaten gerechnet werden müssen. Ich möchte jedoch die Ursprungssagen in zwei Gruppen aufteilen, je nachdem sie die Form eines Berichts oder einer Behauptung besitzen. Die berichtenden können füglich *Aitionfabulat* genannt werden, während die, welche die Form einer Behauptung besitzen, *Kausalfiktionen* genannt werden müssen, worüber später weiteres. In einem Aitionsfabulat kann das ätiologische Element selbst in sehr verschiedener Weise hervortreten. Man kann oft zweifeln, wie weit es ursprünglich ist oder späterer Zusatz.

Unter den Aitionsfabulaten verdienen die *ätiologischen Tierfabeln,* oder was Dähnhardt *Natursagen* nennt, besonders hervorgehoben zu werden. Einige von ihnen sind von Aarne unter die Rubrik Tiermärchen aufgenommen worden, aber ihre nahe Verwandtschaft mit der Tierfabel ist greifbar. Es ist nicht leicht zu sagen, ob »der Fischfang des Bären« (Aa 2) ein ursprüngliches Aitionfabulat ist, was voraussetzen würde, dass die Varianten,

welche statt Bär »Wolf« haben, sekundär sind, oder ob das ätiologische Moment in die Fabel hereinkam, nachdem der Wolf durch den Bären ersetzt wurde. Kaarle Krohn neigt zur ersteren Ansicht, während ich eher zur letzteren neige. In anderen Aitionfabulaten ist die Sache einfacher, da das Ganze auf unterschiedlichen Tierstimmendeutungen beruht. Selbst hier kann man scheiden zwischen eigentlichen Aitionfabulaten (Nachahmungs-(härm-) Fabulaten) mit berichtendem Inhalt, und reinen »härm« in Form einer Behauptung, *Imitat.*

Mehrepisodische Sagenbildungen.

Wie die Märchen können auch die Sagen in ein- und mehrepidsodische eingeteilt werden. Die bislang behandelten Formen sind typisch einepisodisch. Zu den mehrepisodischen gehört vor allem die *Familiensaga.* Allgemein bekannt ist sie durch die isländische Familiensaga, die jedoch literarisch ist. Doch hat man in Skandinavien auch rein volksmässige Familiensagas angetroffen, vielepisodische Berichte über ein ganzes Geschlecht, das Glied um Glied geschildert wird, oder über Personen, deren Lebenslauf erzählt wird. Solche Familiensagas beruhen auf der Erinnerung an wirkliche Geschehnisse; damit sie sich bilden können, ist es jedoch erforderlich, dass eine Gegend von merkwürdigen Geschicken geachteter Geschlechter Denkwürdiges zu erzählen weiss, denn die Familiensaga ist immer an eine Gegend, ihre Gehöfte und Menschen gebunden. Ausserdem müssen in dieser Gegend geeignete Überlieferungsträger oder geradezu Überlieferungsschöpfer sich finden, die mit Interesse in Gegenwart und Vergangenheit der Gegend forschen und die Gabe besitzen, all dies zusammenzustellen und darüber zu berichten. Die Familiensaga ist nämlich nicht bloss eine lose Sammlung von Erinnerungen, sondern eine zielbewusste Komposition, erwachsen aus prüfendem Ausgleich des Erinnerungsstoffes: der Gerüchte und Vermutungen, Erinnerungen und Beobachtungen, Personensagen und ganzer Zyklen und Genealogien, geschriebener Aktenstücke

u. dgl. Solche Familiensagas fand ich noch im Schwang in einem Kirchspiel in Blekinge, wo man bei Festlichkeiten stets eine kundige Person diese Familiensagas vortragen lässt. In Norwegen sind eine ganze Menge Familiensagas aufgezeichnet worden, und *Knut Liestøl* hat die Probleme der Familiensaga auf mustergültige Weise in seinen beiden Werken: »Norske Ættesogor« (Kristiania 1922) und »Upphavet til den islandske Ættesaga« (Oslo 1929) behandelt. Die Familiensaga führt also ungefähr dasselbe Leben wie das Schimäremärchen, ist aber immer streng auf die Gegend ihres Ursprungs beschränkt und wird niemals zwecks Unterhaltung von Kindern erzählt. Natürlich wird man Familiensagas auch in anderen, nichtskandinavischen Ländern finden können; wenn man ausserhalb des Nordens keine aufzeichnete, dürfte das darauf beruhen, dass man sich nicht für Dinge interessierte, die, ohne stärkeren Phantasieeinschlag zu besitzen, lediglich von Bauern handeln. Als internationalen Ausdruck für derartige volksläufige Familiensagas möchte ich *Chronikat* vorschlagen.

Mehrepisodisch ist auch die *Heldensage,* die infolge ihres Anspruchs auf Glaubwürdigkeit den Sagen und der Familiensaga zuzuordnen ist; infolge ihres Inhalts erhält sie jedoch einen anderen Charakter und Aufbau. Während die Familiensaga vor allem die auf die eigene engere Heimat und ihre Grossbauernfamilien sich beziehende Neugier befriedigen will, und das Fabulat eine notwendige Belehrung zu erteilen bestrebt ist, sofern nicht das rein unterhaltende Element überwiegt, will die Heldensage Gefühlen der Bewunderung und Liebe für den Helden, den sie gerne als leuchtendes Vorbild hinstellt, Raum geben und dieselben Gefühle den Zuhörern einprägen. Sie kann infolgedessen nicht aus alten Sagen hervorgegangen sein, sondern hat lebendige Erinnerungen zum Hintergrund, Erinnerungen, die jedoch mit allerhand phantastischen Zusätzen ausgeschmückt werden, die aus Sagen und Märchen, Mythen und Legenden, oder aus des Vortragenden eigener Phantasie stammen. Diese Zu- und Umdich-

tung nimmt um so mehr zu, wie sich die Heldensage in Zeit und Raum von ihrem Ausgangspunkt entfernt.

In ihrer Komposition weicht die Heldensage etwas ab von der Familiensaga, weil sie infolge ihrer gefühlsmässigen Einstellung kein Gewicht darauf legt, den Lebenslauf des Helden vollständig zu behandeln, sondern mit Vorliebe bei denjenigen Episoden aus dem Leben des Helden verweilt, die mehr wie andere geeignet sind, die Gefühle der Zuhörer in Schwingung zu versetzen. Sie lässt sich daher leicht in kürzere Abschnitte aufteilen, deren jeder für sich ein Ganzes bildet. Diese nehmen gerne gebundene Form an, was zu seinem Teil dazu beiträgt, die Heldensage lebendig zu erhalten, da die gebundene Form ihr höheres Ansehen und Wertschätzung verleiht und zugleich ein gutes Hilfsmittel für das Gedächtnis bildet[22]. Teile von ihr behalten jedoch die prosaische Form und dienen zur Ergänzung und Erklärung des Übrigen. Gebundene Form ist jedoch nicht immer notwendig. Auf Irland ist die gesamte Heldendichtung ursprünglich Prosa, und in die isländischen Familiensagen sind nicht selten Teile eingefügt, die man als Heldensage bezeichnen kann. In weniger entwickelter Form ist die Heldensage oft ganz einfach ein Zyklus von Sagen, die lediglich durch die Person des Helden miteinander verbunden sind. Eine Helden- oder Familiensage, die sich infolge Verlustes ihrer aktiven Träger in Auflösung befindet, was u. a. bei starken kulturellen Umwälzungen leicht eintritt, fällt in ihre Bestandteile auseinander; die können als Erinnerungssagen oder Fabulate weiterleben.

Fiktionen.

Die bislang besprochenen Gruppen von Volksdichtungen waren durchweg erzählender Art. Es gibt jedoch eine Menge dichterischer Einfälle in Prosa, die genau so wie der Volksglaube die Form der Behauptung besitzen und deshalb bedauerlicherweise fortwährend mit dem Volksglauben verwechselt und als Aberglaube

aufgefasst werden. Ich nenne diese kurzen dichterischen Einfälle des Volkes in behauptender Form Fiktionen, da sie Glauben nur fingieren, ohne solcher zu sein, wenn sie auch unter gewissen Umständen in sekundären Glauben übergehen können.

Äusserst gewöhnlich sind *Scherzfiktionen,* die am einfachsten durch einige Beispiele gekennzeichnet werden. In Schwaben sagt man bei starkem Abendrot: »Schau, die Mutter Gottes backt Küchlein«, und in Biel (Schweiz): »der liebe Gott brate die kleinen Kindlein«. Man hat das als abergläubische Anschauung aufgefasst und gefunden, »die Gedanken, die zur Bildung solcher Anschauungen führten, seien teilweise schwer zu ermitteln«. Wer solche Gedanken für »schwer zu ermitteln« hält, fasst die Sache deutlich als ein Überlebsel auf, einen Überrest vorchristlichen Glaubens, da sie ja unmöglich der christlichen Lehre angehören kann. Da ein solcher Glaube ebensowenig auf bekannte germanische Götter passt, hat man schon gedacht, es handle sich um eine uralte Entlehnung aus der keltischen oder vorindogermanischen Religion, die man leider nicht kennt. Die Sache ist jedoch äusserst einfach. Das leuchtende Abendrot gleicht einem grossen Feuer, das Feuer befindet sich deutlich droben im Himmel, im Himmel wohnt der liebe Gott und die Jungfrau Maria, es ist also deren Feuer, und was tun sie mit dem Feuer? Auf diese Frage ist jene ausgelassen scherzhafte Antwort erfolgt, die ersichtlich Anklang fand und sich in der Volksüberlieferung hielt. Aber weder wer zuerst auf solche Witze kam, noch die vielen, die sie ihm nachsprachen, haben jemals gedacht, dass jemand einen solchen Unsinn glauben könne; und hat irgend ein einfältiges Kindlein verdutzt die Augen aufgesperrt und gefragt, ob das wirklich wahr sei, so hat man herzlich gelacht, ohne zu ahnen, dass gewisse Gelehrte das ernst nehmen, denn es war ja *lediglich* eine Scherzfiktion.

In ganz derselben Art ist es Fiktion und nicht Glaube, wenn man in Holstein bei Sonnenregen sagt: »die Hexen backen Pfannenkuchen« oder wenn man in Västergötland, sobald das Feld

nach einem Regenschauer im Sonnenschein raucht, sagt: »das Waldweib macht Feuer«, oder wenn man bei Gewitter in Ditmarschen äussert: »der liebe Gott wirft mit dem Brotknust«, oder wenn man bei aufsteigendem Nebel sagt: »die Hasen oder Hühner backen« oder »das Moosweib braut« oder »zündet Feuer an«. Viele Wesen, die in solchen Fiktionen genannt werden (das Waldweib [skogskärring], das Moosweib [mossakärring]) sind auch rein fiktive Wesen und haben nichts mit dem Glauben zu tun, wenn auch die Namen bisweilen (skogskärring) an Namen von Wesen, an die man glaubt, erinnern können wie etwa die Waldfrau und andere Waldgeister (skogsfru, skogsrå, skogssnuva). Die Hexe der Fiktion ist etwas ganz anderes wie die Hexen der Fabulate und des Volksglaubens.

Eine besondere Form der Scherzfiktion trifft man in den Kalendersprüchen, die gewisse Regeln für Kalender und Witterung in fiktiver Umschreibung aufstellen. Wenn es am Sara-tage regnet, so glaubt man, es gebe eine schlechte Nussernte, und man drückt das in Schonen mit folgender Umschreibung aus: »Nässt (= pisst) Frau Sara in die Nüsse, so bilden sich keine Kerne in ihnen.« Die Weihnachtszeit schliesst mit dem Knut-tag, und man sagt: »Knut jagt die Weihnacht fort«, d. h., man personifiziert den Tag und lässt ihn die gleichfalls personifizierte Weihnacht fortjagen. Gerade der angeführte Kalenderspruch kann die Jugend dazu verlocken, vermummt herumzuziehen, wobei mit Peitschen und Besen angeblich die Weihnacht fortgejagt wird, ein Brauch, der sich also keineswegs aus irgend einer verblassten Erinnerung an die Lebensrute oder Totenfeste oder dergl. entwickelte. »Peter Katt (= Petrus in cathedra) wirft den heissen Stein in den See« ist eine scherzhafte Umschreibung dafür, dass das Eis nach dem 22. Februar ebenso sehr von unten wie von obenher schmilzt, und es handelt sich weder um den Glauben an einen Heiligen noch um den Glauben an einen ursprünglichen Frühlingsdämon, der zufällig mit einem Kalendernamen kombiniert wurde. In gleicher Weise ermangeln Tor und Göja als Per-

sonifikationen von Monatsnamen eines Zusammenhanges mit altem heidnischem Glauben.

Eine Anzahl Fiktionen findet mehr oder minder scherzhaft in erzieherischer Absicht Anwendung Kindern und Dienstleuten gegenüber. Wenn man sagt, dass »die Perchtel den faulen Dirnen den aufgeschnittenen Bauch mit Kehricht füllt«, so gibt das nicht einen Glauben, sondern reine Fiktion wieder. Behauptet man, dass der Hase die gemalten Ostereier lege, so ist dies eine ganz spät erfundene Scherzfiktion, damit die Kinder grössere Freude an den Eiern haben sollen. Sagt man zu den Kindern, die Hebamme hole die kleinen Kinder aus einem hohlen Baum oder der Storch hole sie aus einem Tümpel, so geschicht dies, um ihnen nicht die richtige Erklärung geben zu müssen, die sie aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach noch zeitig genug erhalten werden; aber irgend ein Glaube hat in dieser Richtung nie existiert. Und doch wollten Gelehrte daraus einen uralten heidnischen Storchengott und derlei Geschichten konstruieren.

Zu den Kinderfiktionen gehört ein guter Teil der Begründungen richtigen Betragens. So sagt man z. B. wenn Kinder vor dem Kirchgang sich nicht kämmen, sie bekämen Friedhofsläuse oder die Läuse drehten ein Seil aus ihren Haaren und zögen sie ins Wasser hinunter. Wenn die Kinder rücklings gehen, sagt man, sie zögen Vater und Mutter in die Hölle, und wenn sie den Brotlaib mit der Oberseite nach unten legen, so backen sie Brot für den Teufel. Eine Anzahl fiktiver Wesen wird auch genannt, um Kinder von dem einen oder anderen abzuschrecken, Wesen in Menschen- oder Tiergestalt. Im Brunnen haust z. B. der Brunnenalte, der die Kinder in den Brunnen hinunter zu ziehen sucht, wenn sie zu nahe herangehen; auf dem Acker haust ein gefährlicher Alter oder eine Alte oder ein Wolf, der die Kinder packt, wenn sie die Saat niedertrampeln; alles erzieherische Fiktionen, kein Glaube.

Selbst erwachsene Personen werden gelegentlich mit ähnlichen Schreckfiktionen gewarnt. Wer in der heiligen Nacht, die Zu-

kunft zu erforschen, »den Jahresgang geht«, bekommt alles zu sehen, was in der Siedlung das Jahr über sich ereignet. Dies ist Glaube, und noch heutigen Tags finden sich Leute, die den Jahresgang gehen; doch die es tun, warnen andere davor, den Versuch zu unternehmen, weil man dabei der gefährlichen »Gloso« (Glüh- oder Glotzsau?) zum Opfer fallen kann, die in diesem Fall rein fiktiv ist und erdichtet wurde im Anschluss an den Glauben an einen Kirchhofsspuk in Schweingestalt, die »Gräbersau« (gravso). Die »Gloso« ist als fiktives Schreckwesen in einigen wenigen schwedischen Kirchspielen so populär geworden, dass man darüber eine Fiktion erdichtete, die erklären sollte, weshalb man die drei letzten Halme auf dem Acker stehen lässt. Diese Sitte hat sich gebildet, um das restlose Abernten des Ackers zu vermeiden, was als unglückbringend gilt; aber da man dies schliesslich nicht mehr verstand, hat man eine neue Erklärung erfunden, nämlich dass die Getreidehalme ein Opfer für die Gloso seien. Eine derartige Fiktion nenne ich *Kausalfiktion*, da sie erdichtet wurde zur Begründung der Sitte. Sie ist nämlich auf die gleiche Art erdichtet worden, wie ein Aitionfabulat, und hat ebenso sehr dichterischen Charakter, obgleich sie die Form der Behauptung und nicht der Erzählung besitzt. Doch wie man an das Aitionfabulat glaubt, kann man an Kausalfiktionen glauben, obschon sie offensichtlich sekundär sind und keinesfalls die Sitte veranlassten, die sie erklären wollen.

Kausalfiktionen sind äusserst gewöhnlich in jeglicher Volksüberlieferung. Eine Unterabteilung von ihnen könnte man *Tabufiktionen* nennen, da sie die schrecklichen Folgen schildern, die eintreten können, wenn ein gewisses Tabu verletzt wird. Es kann keinem Zweifel unterliegen, dass sie erfunden wurden, um von der Verletzung eines bestimmten Tabus abzuschrecken, und dass nicht umgekehrt das Tabu eingeführt wurde zur Vermeidung der Gefahren, von denen die Tabufiktion handelt. Auch die Tabufiktionen können Anlass zu fiktiven Wesen geben, z. B. der Holdermutter (hyllemor) oder Holderfrau (hyllefru), von denen

man sagt, sie straften den, der unter einem Holderbusch seine Notdurft verrichtet. Charakteristisch für alle Fiktions-Wesen ist, dass sie in Glaubensfabulaten nicht vorkommen und nur in Fiktionen genannt werden, während der Glaube an übernatürliche Wesen fast mit Notwendigkeit Glaubensfabulate hervorruft. Es besteht daher selbst in dieser Hinsicht eine ganz klare Grenze zwischen Fiktion und Fabulat.

Schlussbemerkungen.

Wenn ich eine, im Grunde all zu knappe Übersicht über die Kategorien der Prosa-Volksdichtung gab, so habe ich sie von Anfang an mit dem natürlichen Pflanzen- und Tiersystem verglichen. In einer Hinsicht hinkt der Vergleich: es handelt sich ja um Menschenwerk, nicht um Geschöpfe mit selbständigem Leben. Innerhalb der Tier- und Pflanzenwelt können die Arten schärfer voneinander abgegrenzt werden, und nur sehr nahe verwandte Arten können Mischlinge miteinander erzeugen, die jedoch nicht fortpflanzungsfähig sind. Auf dem Gebiete der Volksdichtung können nicht nur nahe verwandte Arten hybridisieren, sondern selbst sehr wenig verwandte Typen aus weit auseinander liegenden Teilen des Systems können es unter gewissen Bedingungen. Oder soll man vielleicht in solchen Fällen sagen, sie treten in Symbiose zueinander? Dass auch in der Volksdichtung die Hybriden sich unfruchtbar erweisen und weder sich verbreiten noch fortpflanzen können, sieht man oft genug, und man kann daher in der Regel Arten und Gattungen gut auseinander halten.

Eine andere Übereinstimmung mit dem zoologischen System ist, dass man eine Entwicklung der höheren Kategorien aus einfacheren Typen nachweisen kann. Eine grosse Gruppe von Schimäremärchen hat sich dergestalt aus einfachen Fabulaten infolge Fortsetzungsdichtung entwickelt, d. h. man hat weiter fabuliert, wo das Fabulat zu Ende war. Das Märchen von den Schwanenjungfrauen hat sich z. B. deutlich aus einem Fabulat von der Ehe mit einem übernatürlichen Wesen entwickelt, das seinen

Mann verlässt, weil er ein Tabu verletzt. Hier schliesst das Fabulat, das lehren will, wie wichtig es ist, sich streng vor einer Tabuverletzung zu hüten; aber man hat späterhin sein Vergnügen darin gefunden, der Phantasie die Zügel schiessen zu lassen, und hat weiter fabuliert, wie der Mann seine Frau sucht und nach vielen wunderbaren Abenteuern wieder mit ihr vereinigt wird. Man ist so von dem Glauben und der Wirklichkeit ausgegangen und zur völlig ungebundenen Phantasie hinübergewechselt.

Wie gross ist nicht die stilistische Verschiedenheit zwischen dem Schwanenjungfraumärchen und dem von Hänsel und Gretel! Und doch sind beide vielleicht gleich uralt. Die Verschiedenheit kommt daher, dass das Schwanenjungfraumärchen sich aus einem Fabulat entwickelte, Hänsel und Gretel dagegen aus der Kinderfiktion: hütet euch, einsam im Walde zu streifen, denn da kommt eine gefährliche Hexe und nimmt euch mit! Aus dieser Fiktion kann sich kein Fabulat entwickeln, wohl aber ein *Fiktionsmärchen*. Im Gegensatz dazu haben solche Märchen wie Tischleindeckdich einen ganz anderen Stilcharakter. Sie haben sich weder aus Fabulaten noch Fiktionen entwickelt, sondern aus reinen Wunschmotiven, die das freie Spiel der Phantasie entfesselten.

Ich glaube hier eine ganze Reihe wichtiger Probleme für die Erforschung der Volksdichtung aufgewiesen zu haben, Probleme, die der früheren monographischen Forschung entgingen, da sie zu enge Gesichtspunkte und infolgedessen zu ungenügende methodische Hilfsmittel besass. Nur durch eine auf weitem systematischem Überblick beruhende Arbeit können Ergebnisse erzielt werden, die geeignet sind, Interesse ausserhalb dem engeren Kreis der Märchenforscher zu erwecken. Nur bei solchem Ausgangspunkt gelangt man zu wirklicher Kenntnis der Lebensbedingungen und Gesetze für die verschiedenen Volksüberlieferungen und gerade das ist es, was Bedeutung auch für alle übrigen philologischen und historischen Disziplinen besitzt[22a].

THE CATEGORIES OF PROSE TRADITION

To achieve definite results from research one must be familiar with the categories of prose tradition, its vital conditions and its laws. The differentiation between *sagn* (Sage) and *folk-tale* (Märchen) made by the Grimm brothers and A. Jolles (Einfache Formen, Halle 1929) is unsatisfactory from a scientific point of view. The first to distinguish between categories of folk-tales was Benfey, who, for stylistic reasons, segregated the fable as a separate category.

What is generally comprised in the popular concept of *folk-tale* must be divided into several groups, and it is natural, as a principle for that division, to distinguish between single-episodic and multi-episodic tales. The *fables* are typically single-episodic and easily remembered because of their simple structure and uncomplicated content, wherefore they are more easily rendered than the longer tales. They are taken as illustrations in conversation and often are so universally known that it suffices merely to hint at them, whereby they may exercise an influence on the forming of proverbs. The *animal fable* treats of animals, often such as appear in human guise. The bi-episodical animal fables that do exist are built upon the principle of contrasts; several fables are often tied together into a long conglomerate. The *jocular fable* is a realistic narrative, whereas the *parable fable* is of a serious, often religious character.

Folk-tales are stories combining a plurality of motives and related for pastime. Because of their length and composition they make greater claims upon power of narration and memory, so that tellers of folk-tales are fewer than those of fables. The *chimerates* comprise in part Nos. 300 to 749 in Aarne-Thompson's *Type-Register*. In these the plots is laid in an unreal world of fantasy; there are no dates or real names of persons or places; the action is linear and the various episodes logically succeed one another. They are known from the time before the Christian Era and are confined geographically to the Indo-European culture sphere, besides being borrowed in the non-Indo-European cultures within that region. The unreal and magic-laden folk-tales to be found among Semites, Mongols, Eskimos, Indians and Negroes are of another type of composition. The *novellates* [Novellenmärchen] are a heterogeneous group which, in contrast to the chimerates, come close to reality. This group is difficult to segregate; but of the group "Novelle (Romantic Tales)" in Aarne's *Type-Register* I am inclined to rubricate Nos. 850 to 879 under chimerates

and Nos. 930 to 949 as *parable fables.* One special group is the *Semitic novellates,* which have a curious spiral composition. To the *conglomerate fables.* I place Aa. Nos. 1000 to 1029 and also Aa. Nos. 1030 to 1165, as well as Aa. Nos. 326, 650, 700 *etc.* Another special group is *Chain tales.* It will appear from the above that I do not reckon Aarne's groups: "Religious Tales" and "Tales of the Stupid Ogre" as separate groups.

Sagn Categories: Memorates are narratives of personal happenings which may pass into the tradition as *memorial sagns* [Erinnerungssagen]. Another group which also comes under sagn is *chronical notes* [Chroniknotizen], which may deal with any subject and often combine with sagns of various kinds. Sagns properly so called are short, single-episodic tales, built, it is true, upon elements of real happenings and observations, but with this background of reality transformed by the inventive fantasy of the people. I would suggest calling these sagns *fabulates* and dividing them into the following groups: *belief fabulates* [Glaubensfabulate] are associated with popular beliefs and often with persons, objetcs, *etc.,* which act as a *criterion motive* intended to confirm the truth of the story. To *jocular fabulates* [Scherzfabulate] I place *inter alia* some of the "Tales of the Stupid Ogre" in Aarne's *Type-Register.* Close to this group are the *person fabulates* [Personenfabulate], which are connected with definite, named persons and which sometimes expand into *fabulate cycles* (*e. g.* Till Eulenspiegel). The large group of *aetiological sagns,* which are often fabulate in character, I divide into two groups: the "narrative" I call *aetion fabulates,* whereas the other, the "assertive", I call *motival ficts* [Kausalfiktionen]. The former group is divisible into *aetiological animal fables,* to which *i. a.* I place The Tail-Fisher (Aa. 2) and *Imitates,* which are based upon the imitation of animal voices.

To the multi-episodic sagns I place *family tales,* which not only occur in the form of the literary Icelandic *Sagas* but are also known in Scandinavian folk-tradition *(chronicates).* Whereas these groups, which tell of actual events, are known and of interest only within confined, geographical regions, where the acting persons are known, the *hero tales,* often in metric form, are intended for a wider audience which must be moved and touched, for which reason the actual events related are usually interwoven with sagns, folk-tales, myths and legends.

Ficts are fictive notions which, like popular beliefs, have the form of assertions. They include the very common *jocular ficts* [Scherzfiktionen],

which sometimes have the form of *calendar ficts* containing calendar and weather prophecies. *Imperative ficts,* which often are jocular in character, are employed pedagogically. This group glides easily into *motival ficts* [Kausalfiktionen], composed for the purpose of explaining the cause of the origin of some custom or other; it also includes *taboo ficts,* which describe the consequences of infringing a taboo.

THE MANNHARDTIAN THEORIES ABOUT THE LAST SHEAF AND THE FERTILITY DEMONS FROM A MODERN CRITICAL POINT OF VIEW

Few investigators have had such a decisive significance for the study of mythology and folk tradition as Wilhelm Mannhardt. He was the first to realize the importance of a systematic collection of folk tradition parish by parish, village by village, and he was the first to start magnificent collection work by sending out thousands of copies of printed questionnaires in Germany, Scandinavia, and other countries. This method of his, of collecting material must still be used, even though it has perceptible defects, and should be controlled and supplemented by other methods. One result of his investigations, the demonstration of the close correspondence between many agricultural customs of classical antiquity and those still carried on in Europe, will be for all future time an important corner-stone for research into tradition, independent of his theoretical explanations.

On the other hand we must remember that at Mannhardt's time, nearly sixty years ago, the material was far from being a universal collection and still less systematically arranged and worked through. And it should be self-evident that the theories that could be constructed by Mannhardt in such circumstances cannot possibly meet, for the most part, the demands of modern investigation. This should hardly need discussing, but unlike Mannhardt himself, who was always ready to listen to the voice of criticism in the interest of scientific truth, a Mannhardtian repetitive orthodoxy has arisen, which carries the old Mannhardt theories to absurdity, going clean against the certain results that

science was able to reach after Mannhardt's time. Here, in brief, I shall take up for critical scrutiny his theories of fertility demons and the last sheaf.

In his most important work, *Wald- und Feldkulte,* Mannhardt sets out his conception of belief in supernatural forest beings, powers dwelling in the trees, and the use of mayboughs, maytrees, and maypoles, in somewhat the following manner: Trees had been conceived by the folk as animate beings analogous to man. Every tree had its animus, which might leave its tree in human or beast form, but whose life was indissolubly connected with the tree. But from this belief arose the idea that the tree might be the temporary dwelling of a human soul, or the guardian spirit of the farm; or that the tree animus might be the guardian spirit of a human being, a farm or a family. The guardian spirit of the house or a ship ("tomte," "nisse," "klabauterman") might come into being because the animus of a tree accompanied the timber and stopped in the house or the vessel. From the idea of the tree animi arose the belief in the various demonic beings that filled the forest, and from whom higher demonic beings could develop, imagined as ruling the forest, and even vegetation in general. This might explain the offering of flax or hay to *die Holzfräulein* in certain German districts. That in Sweden the wood-wife was supposed to have a cow's tail might imply that she originally had the shape of a cow, and this in its turn might designate her as a fertility demon; according to Mannhardt there is evidence of this in other Swedish traditions, which say that the wood-wife hunted by Odin the huntsman had such long breasts that she threw them over her shoulders as she ran. The maytree, maybough, maypole, and the log which is used among several peoples to feed the Christmas fire, were the vegetation spirit in tree form; but the same spirit was also imagined more or less anthropomorphically, sometimes had human dress in the maypole, and might be considered as identical with the persons who appear at certain festivals

enveloped in leaves or straw. When in the spring fires, they burnt up the maypole, or a straw doll, or anything else that according to Mannhardt represented the vegetation spirit, he considered that this did not at all signify the destruction of vegetation, but only its cleansing from harmful influences on growth, such as insects, and demons causing crop failure.

In the same way Mannhardt considered that the crop in the field was thought of as animate. Corn demons had been supposed to dwell in the corn stalks as their animi, and they appeared sometimes in human, sometimes in beast shape. To frighten the children with the old man, the old woman, the wolf, the bull, etc., in the corn, was to frighten them with various manifestations of the vegetation spirit. When at harvest they cut or bound the last stalks, the vegetation spirit had moved from stalk to stalk, and was caught in the last of them. When they bound in straw the man who cut the last stalks, or the master, or a passing stranger, they did it because he was identified with the vegetation spirit. When they gave various nicknames to the one who was last with harvesting or threshing, they made him or her into the representative of the vegetation spirit. When they treated the last sheaf in various ways, these were different ways of making use of the vegetation spirit. In antiquity the vegetation spirit inherent in the last sheaf grew right up into a goddess, Demeter.

All this theory of Mannhardt's about spring and harvest customs was something so new and strange for the mythologists of the time that for long they did not know what attitude they should take up to it. Mannhardt's intimate friend Müllenhoff, to whom he dedicated *Wald- und Feldkulte,* hardly managed to read the work through, still less to review it. The new things that Mannhardt brought forward were so completely outside the mythologist's investigational sphere that no one could master them critically; but at the same time they could not help being struck by the correspondence between antique and modern folk-custom. Not until Sir James Frazer had taken up the Mannhardtian

theories in his grand-scale work *The Golden Bough* were they generally accepted. And yet Frazer, in spite of his wide and deep knowledge and bright intelligence, was really hardly better equipped to decide relevant questions than the German mythologists. He had *not* had the opportunity of obtaining a clear conception of the life and character of the tradition by intimate personal association with European peasants; or the acquaintance with the peasantry's world of ideas that it inevitably necessary in order to be able fully to solve relevant problems. On the basis of material from exotic peoples, however, Frazer had arrived at similar ways of thinking, and when he became acquainted with the material collected and treated with systematic thoroughness by Mannhardt, and found that the results stated agreed in many respects with his own ideas, he attached himself to Mannhardt's views, though with certain strong reservations in the last edition of *The Golden Bough*. The moment Mannhardt's theories were advanced in Frazer's great masterpiece, they were generally recognized and considered as pretty well faultless. They have not been subjected to any other criticism than insignificant modifications in one or two details, based rather on personal taste than requisite knowledge. Such criticism is, of course, more or less worthless, so long as it does not investigate the hypotheses and test their maintainability. If, however, you investigate Mannhardt's premises in this way, you soon notice that they will not stand the test of modern research.

Before Mannhardt became absorbed in the study of agricultural traditions, he had, as Jakob Grimm's pupil, pursued mythological studies after the manner of the time. That period's idea of what a myth was must be characterized as extremely false and muddled. For they thought a myth was an allegorical representation of some natural phenomenon, and the task of myth study was to find the allegory that lay behind the myth, in doing which the most arbitrary methods were employed. What was interpreted by one scholar as the strife of the sun-god against the

powers of cold and darkness, might be interpreted by another, with quite as much right, as the strife of the rain god against the demons of drought and sterility. With this completely false conception of what sort of thing a myth was, it was not to be wondered at that they looked for myths everywhere, not only in the god-songs of the *Edda* and in the literature of classical antiquity, but quite as much in heroic sagas, folk-tales, songs, children's rhymes, and riddles: in short, in material that never had anything to do with myths. Such attempts to interpret and find myths distinguish Mannhardt's earlier works, *e.g. Germanische Mythen* (1858), and *Götterwelt der deutschen und nordischen Völker* (1860). We find here such myth interpretations as that the cauldron in which Aegir was to brew beer for the gods signifies the firmament, and the beer is the rain. Similar fancies were common among mythological scholars in Mannhardt's time, and they all had the same fundamental conception of myths as allegories. But there were some scholars, such as Müllenhoff and Haupt, who demanded a more severe method, and opposed the tendency to look for myths everywhere. Mannhardt unreservedly admitted the justice of the criticism, and rejected his own earlier theories. Through Benfey's *Pantschatantra* he became convinced that the folk-tales could not contain Teutonic myths, and he also admitted that this must apply to children's rhymes, riddles, etc.

Mannhardt now applied himself instead to the study of traditions attached to agriculture, a sphere hitherto untried by research. Here also he looked for myths, but along different lines from those he had followed up to now. In his *Primitive Culture* Tylor had referred to conceptions among the primitive peoples and the so-called lower mythology, and it was this that Mannhardt now looked for in the agricultural traditions; but his method was still to interpret these traditions according to a scheme drawn up beforehand. No other theory for the explanation of folk superstition and fiction was at his disposal except

Tylorian aninism, and with this he tried to explain everything, although it is far from being sufficient in this respect. Later research has shown the large and shifting group of conceptions that have been called, by a rather unsuitable name, preanimistic—one might better call them vivism and orendism; and had these been known and noticed at Mannhardt's time, he would certainly not have advanced his all-inclusive animistic theory. It is of course correct that animistic conceptions are to be met with among all known peoples, and the analogical relation between human beings and plants *may* among certain peoples take the form that plants are thought to have a spirit like man. But this conception is not to be met with either among Teutonic peoples, or among Indo-European peoples except purely sporadically. It has never been a general folk belief, and has not succeeded in setting its stamp on the customs of the folk. And with this the very basis of Mannhardt's view is destroyed. It is characteristic of the lack of criticism with which they have accepted Mannhardt's theories in Germany since Frazer took them up, that they have kept them unaltered; although, ever since preanimism has been established by research, very many of them have wished to advance the notion that the Teutonic peoples never had any animism at all, but remained pure preanimists until the introduction of Christianity, a theory quite untenable. But in so far as the traditions dealt with by Mannhardt have anything to do with belief, this belief is entirely of vivistic or orendistic type, in no case animistc.

Maybough and maypole are originally only the visible tokens that May or summer has come. But as soon as the custom became established of carrying home mayboughs and maypoles, the bough or the tree was regarded as filled with a certain power, an "orenda," that can be useful. This view can get additional support from the fact that the maybough either is the *first* green bough or is regarded as such.

Often people pay a special attention to a certain tree in the

courtyard, the "vårdträd" or "tunträd," believing that it is bearer of the farm's or the owner's luck. This belief does not imply any thought of an animus in the tree, but the whole idea is founded exclusively upon the fact that it is the only or the most remarkable tree near the house. It therefore becomes intimately associated with the house and its inhabitants by a combined association of similarity, contact and emotion, that easily leads to ideas about luck or omen. As the tree is regarded as bearer of luck, it is easily associated with another bearer of luck, the guardian spirit of the house, the "tomte" or "nisse." One can therefore occasionally find the idea that this guardian spirit dwells in or under the tree, but this connection is not common. It is quite secondary and has nothing to do with the original ideas either of the "vårdträd" or of the guardian spirit.

Another hypothesis behind Mannhardt's theories is the idea that the traditions of the folk developed from a kind of primitive philosophy, *i. e.* that speculation and attempts to build up a system engender folk belief. But this hypothesis, which he also took from Tylor, is false. A study of folk tradition soon shows that this is no matter of philosophic speculation, but of more or less chance formations, arising from associations of various kinds, short, isolated lines of thought that, even if they are bound up with one and the same object, often lack all internal connection. The investigators who have conceived the whole as a primitive philosophy have erroneously thought of everything as organically coherent, and of everything as equally important—as long as it fits their own preconceived opinions! And this defect also adheres to Mannhardt's analyses, in that he could not distinguish between the *primary* and the *secondary;* and this has led his whole conception astray. I will indicate an example or two.

When Mannhardt interprets the maypole as the embodied vegetation spirit, among other things because in some districts of Sweden the maypole has been given a quasi-human form with clothes, etc., he is basing his idea on a completely secondary and

chance phenomenon of slight extent. Wherever the maypole occurs it is nothing else than one or several garlands hung up on a pole; and here the pole has no other primary significance than that of a technical expedient. It is the garlands that mean everything, and so, where the pole is not used, they can be hung on a wall, from a roof, or in a tree, and nevertheless mean the same thing. In certain districts of Sweden they have jokingly called the maypole "maja"; and as this is a girl's name, a short form of Mary, the humorous appellation has led them, purely associatively, to hit on the idea of dressing the maypole in girl's clothes. But this has occurred without the least connection with folk belief, and has nothing to do with the primary significance of the maypole. It was a swiftly passing freak that achieved a certain popularity; but people soon tired of this joke, which had become dull, and went back to garlands again. When Mannhardt mixed up the secondary and the primary here, and thought there was a background of folk-belief where there never was one, he only made himself guilty of the same mistake that so many investigators have committed both before and after him; because they had no time to become fully acquainted with the immense and multivarying material contained within tradition, and with the laws of its existence. I hardly need point out here that the further decorations fastened to the maypole in different places: a cock, dolls, eggshells, trade-emblems, etc., are also secondary and chance additions, which cannot in any way help to throw light on the original meaning of the maypole. The cock and the dolls are not the vegetation spirit in beast or human form, and the eggshells are hardly fertility talismans; they have all arisen from the people's naïve desire to adorn their pole and make it as beautiful as they can, so that it may, if possible, excel the maypole of the neighbouring village.

The Yule log has nothing at all to do with vegetation or fertility. It is only a special form of the Christmas fire that ought to be burning the whole Christmas night or during the whole

Christmas week. The fire can here have an apotropaeic power as an addition to its purely practical aim, but moreover it has a directly *festive* character. On a great feast all must, if possible, differ from the everyday customs, and therefore the fire may also be made in an uncommon way. As the Christmas fire must be continually burning several days, people have got the idea of using a big log that can burn at the one end and by and by be pushed into the fireplace. This uncommon arrangement causes several new ideas and customs. The children are jokingly told that a bird is in the log, a pure joke that does not have any connection with belief about a vegetation spirit or such things. People do often contend about getting the biggest Yule log, but that is also more a natural joke than an act of belief. Such contentions are exceedingly common among the peasants in all sorts of work or festival customs, and they are never founded on belief, although one jokingly promises some advantage for the winner in the contest. All that here looks like belief is only half belief or a joking belief and has secondarily been combined with the custom. All belief connected with the Yule log is clearly a secondary orenda-belief.

In the year-fires people used to throw different things, sometimes the maypole, sometimes a doll of straw or other substance, sometimes living animals. Though some of these customs are brutal enough, they are only joke or play, and have never been anything else. They come from the common human inclination for playing with the fire. It is obvious that all these things that are burnt in the year-fires are secondary in relation to the fire itself. It was not for burning the one or the other object that the year-fire was invented, but when the fire existed, one got the idea of burning different things or of doing something else in connection with it. That is evident from the great variety of such inventions and the equally great variety of sayings which are used as explanations of such pranks. Every attempt to get unity and original religious belief into this muddle will not result in

anything but a worthless quibbling for a hypothesis without any connection with real life.

We have a similar state of affairs with the customs and ideas connected with the last sheaf. In the first place the last sheaf signifies the happy end of heavy and highly important work, and this fact gives rise to both unbridled frolic and serious thoughts. Naturally they thought of the next harvest, and liked to take the omen for the next harvest from the last sheaf. According to whether the last sheaf turned out big or little, the next harvest would be big or little. Ideas about omen are originally something other than magic, but when they took the omen they did what they could to ward off evil omens and call up good ones; and this procedure might be called *ominal magic,* since a certain action is performed in order to influence what is going to happen in a certain direction, but considered as magic it is a secondary phenomenon in relation to the omen. Here ominal magic is applied thus: they intentionally make the last sheaf as big as possible, and sometimes even tie stones in, so that it, and with it the next harvest, may be heavy. But the ominal significance in the last sheaf might also be associated with the person who cut the last stalks or bound them into a sheaf. But then this was interpreted as meaning that that person would be last in everything; and as young people like joking about one another's marriage prospects, they say that he or she will be last married, or only get a gaffer or a gammer, a widower or a widow. Thus this kind of omen is to a large extent jestingly emphasized, giving rise to the custom that the person concerned must dance with the sheaf at harvest home; that he or she gets the nickname of gaffer or gammer; that the last sheaf itself gets such a name, etc.: all of which is pure joking without any trace of belief, at most half-belief, in that you think it is irritating all the same to be last in the race, a belief of the same kind as when you play patience and promise yourself a reward if the patience runs even. In order that no one should be the last, all the reapers together may cut the last stalks

and bind the last sheaf, also a form of ominal magic. That this humorous omen-taking and ominal magic has no connection with that previously mentioned about the next harvest is manifest, although it has happened to become attached to the same object. That neither has anything to do with a vegetation demon caught in the last sheaf should also be obvious to any unprejudiced investigator.

But the last sheaf not only serves for the taking of omens. It is born home in triumph, often decorated with flowers and gaudy ribbons. This does not happen because there was a belief that it was the hiding-place or manifestatory form of some fertility demon but because it is the visible sign that harvest work is done, in the same way as the maybough is the visible sign that summer has come, or the Christmas tree, Christmas straw,[23] sheaf set out for the birds, Yule log, holly and mistletoe, etc., the visible signs that Christmas has come. Thus the whole of this frolic has nothing to do with superstition, but can be characterized as a *festive ceremony* purely and simply. And we must also count as wanton festive joking—and nothing more!—such fancies as binding someone in the straw at harvest or in green twigs on May Day, and many other sorts of dressing-up. One must have it clear in one's mind that all this is *youthful frolic;* and what young people are up to in wanton, dizzy festivity does not come under the head of religion or folk belief. And as a rule there is no reason to ascribe any symbolic or rational meaning to such pranks—free associations are enough. But in so far as such pranks have become fixed tradition, they are afraid of stopping them, for this might bring on a harmful omen, or bring along with it some harmful effect on something or other; but all such scruples are secondary, having nothing to do with the original meaning of the prank; and investigators unfamiliar with folk life who unfortunately all too often imagine that they have to do with this meaning, have irremediably damaged their theories.

After harvest the last sheaf is used in various ways: set out

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for the birds, put up as an ornament in the home, given as fodder to the Christmas pig; or its corn may be used as seed, or to make the so-called sowing-cake,[24] etc. All this has no direct connection with superstition, but only a purely secondary one, and it is certainly not founded on *any* belief that the vegetation spirit is in the sheaf, for such a belief has not been met with anywhere in Europe. When Mannhardt shaped his theory about the vegetation spirit in the last sheaf, he partly lacked the perspective of, and familiarity with, other tradition groups than just agricultural customs, thus having insufficient analogies to be able to decide the question aright; and partly it was his job to see the thing mythically, this being the only point of view that interested German philologists at that time. Had he heeded the fact that the concepts *first* and *last* play a large part in folk tradition in general, he would soon have found, with the help of plenty of analogous material, that this sort of thing cannot be a question of some mythical conception, some demon; but that the last or first among a large number of factors similar to one another may thereby be separated from the mass and attain a special position in the same way as through unusual colour, size, form, etc. This special position gives them the power of attracting into their association all kinds of conceptions that happen to suggest themselves on various occasions. This is what I call *emotive association*. If the birds or the Christmas pig are to be given a special sheaf, or if the sowing-cake is to be made with the corn of a special sheaf—this, by the by, is not usual—it occurs most readily to the mind to choose the first, or better still, the last sheaf; for it is the only one that stands apart from the great mass of sheaves. Thus the last sheaf is readily surrounded with a certain nimbus, the sense of being filled with a special power; but this sense is not demonic belief, it is orendism.[25]

When the last sheaf is often as it were identified by the folk with the wolf, bull, witch, etc., that is used to scare children from trampling down the corn, there is nothing mythical in this identi-

fication, and it does not contain a trace of demonic belief. An essential lack in former tradition research was that it understood everything the folk said in assertive form as belief. Nothing can be more absurd. All these bogy figures that the folk scare children with: the old man of the well who catches them if they go too near the well; and the wolf, witch, etc., who catches them if they trample down the corn, etc., are *purely fictitious* beings that the adults only *pretend* exist, but do not believe in themselves. They are *pedagogical fictions,* which the adults fancy for the children, and want them to believe in, until they understand better, and do not get into trouble or cause damage. The elders talked about the dangerous beings in the corn before it was cut, but when it is, the beings do not appear. And then they may jokingly say, as in Russia, that the beings were previously as high as the corn, but after harvest no higher than the stubble; or they may also say, jokingly, that the wolf or witch is caught in the last sheaf; and may also try perhaps to make an animal or human figure out of the last sheaf, this too being pure joking. Or those who fell ill or hurt themselves during harvesting were said to have been bitten by the wolf, etc.; yet no one believes it, knowing quite well that it is *only a joke.* If there really had been a belief behind such fancies, they would have been applied in every circumstance, above all by the more artless; but this has occurred *only* where there was occasion for pranks and jokes. The crofter who reaps his patch alone, or only with his wife's help, observes no such customs. If you are present, and see how it happens, you cannot avoid noticing that it is only a joke. The closeted scholar who reads information about such things in the form of dry excerpts, takes everything seriously; and if he thinks it seems too queer for people to believe, he persuades himself that *now* it is only a survival, but that *formerly* people believed firmly and sincerely in the whole thing! The study of primitive peoples, however, teaches us otherwise, for here too there are humorous fictions in masses; and our harvest fictions have *never* been anything else, no more than folk

in former times can ever have believed that the stork came flying with babies to their wives, or that the midwife fetched them out of a great stone, to which she alone had the key.

I should perhaps add that besides the purely humorous fictions that no one believes in, and the child fictions that only the children believe for a short time, there are quite a number of *causal fictions,* meant somewhat more seriously, and invented to motivate certain customs and taboos. When the corn is cut the last stalks are often left on the field, and in Southern Småland (Sweden) they say that the *gloso* (the ghost-sow with the glaring eyes) shall have them. The explanation that the ghost-sow is to have the last stalks is a causal fiction of this kind. The original meaning of the custom is obviously the belief that it is bad luck to leave the field quite empty, in the same way as people do not like to spend the last copper in their purse, and prefer to leave at least one apple on an appletree, etc. As it has become a fixed custom to leave the last stalks demonstratively behind, however, the folk have not been clear about it, but understood it as an offering; and then they invent a causal fiction as an answer to anyone that wants one. When they answer, in a small district of Småland, that it is the ghost-sow, this is not because the ghost-sow is a fertility demon that demands offerings in order to be of profit or to avoid causing damage; but because it is a *fictitious bogy* that has such a prominent place in folk imagination just in that district that it may be connected with the offering through emotive association more readily than other things. In other districts they say that Odin's horse, or the mermaid, or the goblin, etc., is to have the last stalks, and this for the same reason. Others again say that the rats or birds are to have them, so that they may not damage the rest of the crop—all pure causal fictions that have nothing to do with the primary custom and belief!

Another such causal fiction connected with the harvest is of a more humorous kind. When the last stalks have been cut or the last sheaf bound, it often happens that the whole crowd utters

a loud shout (*e.g.* "the neck"). The real reason for this is that they want to let the neighbours know they have finished harvesting, but they like to give a humorous explanation. In Dalsland (Sweden), for example, they say that the shout serves to scare the hare over into the neighbour's field. And in certain districts they call the last stalks the hare, because, the inexperienced leverets like to hide in the last stalks, where they are easily caught, a thing I often saw when I was a child. This happens so often that in joke they have called the cutting of the last stalks the taking of the hare; and from this humorous fiction—for the folk has never thought of the hare as a fertility demon—they have derived the playful, causal fiction of frightening the hare to the neighbour who has not managed to finish his field.

But what about Demeter? Mannhardt suggests that the name etymologically is identical with Kornmutter, Cornmother, the name which in East Germany is used as the name of a fictitious witch in the corn to scare children with, and even as the name of the last sheaf. I think this suggestion is probable enough, but that can prove *neither* identity *nor* analogy between the ideas which chanced to get the same name. Whether the name "Cornmother" has from the beginning belonged to a goddess or to a fictitious child scarer, no one can decide, for such a name is easily invented and just as easily removed from one thing or person to another through association, a fact which Mannhardt has not noticed. The most natural, if Mannhardt is right, is, I think, to explain Demeter as the corn vivistically conceived and anthropomorphicized. But, as Dietrich with an equally good etymology suggests, she can also have been conceived as the fertile earth. In either case she would have got most of her attributes and symbols —especially in connection with a harvest feast—from the corn and the harvest. The animistic corn demon, which nowhere is believed in but only mistakenly constructed by Mannhardt, ought not here to be considered at all. It is evident that Mexican mythology cannot prove anything about European beliefs.

A real cult of the last sheaf has *not* been found anywhere in Europe, and here I must accentuate, that one of the greatest mistakes in settling the problems has been to understand the customs concerned as *survivals,* when they are only chance pranks. They were quite the same in antiquity. And what are neither harvest customs nor cult, ought not to be understood as such. The story about the sheaf, that the monks of Abingdon laid on a shield and floated on the canals to show the boundary of the monastery, is *not at all* a "document bearing upon the veneration of the sheaf," for it tells of no veneration at all but of a divinatory rite, which has *no* connection with the harvest or the last sheaf, and in which usually a loaf is employed instead of a sheaf. And where on the strength of the Abingdon rite an attempt has been made to explain the Northern god Ull as a defied last sheaf—the shield has in Scaldic poetry got the name "Ull's ship"—this attempt also is quite unreasonable. Even the corn demon in the last sheaf depends on a misunderstanding, but to deify it is a nonsense not supported by any facts.[26]

Here I have touched on but a few of the short and mutually incoherent lines of thought that have become associated with the last sheaf, and now just for a moment I will return to the supernatural forest being, the wood-wife or wood-fairy. According to the folk belief she has nothing to do with vegetation, either for its good or harm. Nor has she developed out of some kind of animism. Ideas about her have arisen from various experiences in the forest, first and foremost erotic dreams and hallucinations. Her cow's tail is not a relic from an earlier stage of development, for here we cannot speak of any earlier stage of development. And the rule that every kind of animal attribute in a god or demon signifies that the god or demon previously had the form of an animal is absolutely false; not that this would prevent it from corresponding to actual facts in certain cases, for in certain cases even sheer lies may be verified. The cow's tail is not among the normal attributes of the wood-fairy in the Swedish tradition, but

has entered some few variants of that tradition through influence from Norwegian ideas about trolls, where it has the character of a *bizarre motive,* meant to act as a criterion to the effect that the woman seen was not a human being but a troll or wood-wife. Such bizarre motives are often met with in the tradition, and of this kind are the long breasts of the wood-wife that flees from Odin the huntsman. Thus neither the cow's tail nor the long breasts are of the least use as evidence of the wood-wife's character as a protector of vegetation. Offerings of flax to the "Holzfräulein" do not signify that she is a vegetation spirit; she gets them because she often is said to have been seen spinning and so is needing flax.

I have only had time to make a few short suggestions, but I hope I have been able to illuminate the importance of starting, not from preconceived mythological or other opinions, but from contact with living reality. He who does not know the folk's habits with fictions and a figurative way of talking, their use of bizarre motives in fancy and dream experience, their associative thinking, their festive pranks for the sake of pleasure and nothing else, without the accompaniment of superstitious or religious thoughts —he can *never* arrive at reliable results. My criticism has been directed against Mannhardt's theories, but not against Mannhardt. With the knowledge of his time, and the limited horizon which was inevitable for him, it was not possible to obtain better results. But he did the best that was possible in his age, and we must do the best we can with the possibilities of our own. Here criticism is imperative duty, and the only worthy continuation of Mannhardt's magnificent and devoted work.[27]

POPULAR DITE TRADITION
A TERMINOLOGICAL OUTLINE

The Importance of Terminology.

The lack of a scientific terminology makes trouble not only because terms for what we would express often fail us but also because this very failure leaves us without an accurate view of the field concerned.

For a striking instance, take the terms *saga* (folk-tale) and *sägen* (sagn, legend). Neither has scientific precision. Both are more or less popular appellations with originally very loose limits. After all, they signify the same thing, *something that is said,* and the differentiation between them made by science is a rather arbitrary one. This might not matter much if the arbitrary use of the words gave us a clear distinction between two categories; but that is precisely what in this case it does not do.

If the material within the two groups is arranged according to relationship the border line between *saga* and *sagn* comes to be largely smoothed away. That such border lines have not yet been marked out, nor the terms indispensable to scholarly research introduced, may be ascribed to the fact that people have been too much inclined to deal with special problems only and have made too slight efforts to gain a really comprehensive view. But this very fact has, in the nature of the case, prejudiced of the solution of the special problems themselves, because on all points where experience of a wider field was required such experience has had to be replaced by loose and more or less erroneous hypotheses.

Dites.

If narrative tradition has been difficult to handle the same is naturally none the less true of the rest of popular prose tradition, regarding which there has been no thought of separating out different natural groups. Setting out to draft a grouping of the field, I must begin with a term for all such traditions as are not narrative. These traditions, whether a matter of belief, knowledge, or fiction, I call *dites.*

The term has been formed as an analogue to the word sägen, but as it is intended for international use, I have taken a word form as international as possible. That I have not chosen the Latin *dictum,* a choice which might well have been made, comes in part from the consideration that the word should rather be in keeping with modern usage, in part from the too great similarity of the syllable *dict* to the Swedish *dikt* and the international *dictate.* The word is intended to denote what people have to say about one thing or another without characterizing that which is said as true or false, believed in or fictitious. The word cannot be confounded with any other current word, and it says neither too much nor too little about the thing it is intended to denote. The only limitation I would place on the range of meaning possible for the word is, that among dites I do not count *narrations,* which, strictly speaking, do come under the head of things said, but which nevertheless must make up a separate province, including *inter alia* the folk-tale and the sagn. This does not rule out, however, that the step *e.g.* from sagn to dite may be sometimes quite a negligible one, as will be illustrated in detail below. The objection may be made that a term with so wide a scope cannot confer any considerable advantage, as indeed no slight confusion must occur within its range. However, the advantage consists in the brevity of the word and the ease with which it combines with other words to distinguish the different special groups.

The dites may be classified in two large natural main groups:

assertive dites, or *affirmates,* expressions which simply assert something, point out a thing as an actual or imaginary fact; and *imperative dites,* or *consiliates,* expressions which give precepts or advice as to what should be done, or what must not be done.

Memorial Dites.

Some dites are closely related to *memorates,* or minnesägner, as rendering something that at least *may* be real or remembered, even if it is not always possible to decide whether or not that is really so. To quote some examples, which I do not take out of any particular collection of traditions but only give in a rough rendering from memory:

1. On that oak a man once hanged himself.
2. Near that stone a murder was committed.
3. In that place a light has been seen.
4. Under that tree Charles XII is said to have once taken a rest.
5. The first man to grow potatoes in this parish was a soldier.

All these dites may, of course, be entirely true, and may hence be characterized as *memorial dites.* They differ from memorates only in that they simply point to a fact without narrating how it happened. I have formerly called such dites *sagn-notes* or *chronicle notes,* termes which may also be used. One and the same event may be recorded now as a mere assertive dite, now as a narrative sagn. Whether the elaborate sagn has evolved from the dite or has arisen independently of it, or whether the dite has arisen from the sagn as a sort of summary, cannot always be determined with certainty.

Fanciful, Aetiological, and Jocular Dites.

Nat all assertive dites, however, are memorial dites, an appellation that cannot *e.g.* be applied to those that follow:

1. Near that stone in Vittsjön Gustav II Adolf was nearly drowned.

2. In that tree dwells the *skogsnuva* (fairy).

3. Under that stone there live *trolls*.

4. That stone will spin round whenever it catches the smell of newly baked bread.

5. See, the *mossakäring* [bog-hag] is at her brewing! (said of the mist arising from the bog).

6. Wedding (*bröllop*<*brudlopp* "bride-leap") has its name from the custom that formerly a man ran away with the bride.

7. That boulder was thrown there by a giant.

8. Where that lake is, there used to be a manor-house that has sunk underground.

9. "God bless you" is said after sneezing in memory of a sneezing plague.

Of these, the first, it is true, might easily be taken for a memorial dite, because we know that Gustav II Adolf was nearly drowned in an opening in the ice of Vittsjön. This fact can, however, hardly have been handed down in memory by the people of the neighbourhood, for he was among his men, who rescued him; and it is unlikely that the people of the region, since they were then his enemies, should have got to know what dignitary had had the mishap. Moreover there is evidence to prove that the event cannot possibly have taken place near the particular stone or stones pointed out by the local population. The dite in question was not invented till later days when people in Vittsjö had learned about the matter by reading historical textbooks. After reading about it someone in that region, wondering where the averted drowning might have taken place, noticed the stone sticking out of the water, and telling himself it must have been there he has circulated his guess, which is accordingly a mere figment of the mind. The dite is thus, notwithstanding its sober appearance, no memorate, but fiction, or, the latter

word being used ambiguously, a *fict*. The instance shows how easily memorial dites and fanciful dites may, in certain circumstances, be confused.

Dite No. 2 is more obviously a fict. The tree aroused attention by its queer appearance, and just as the Vittsjö-stone became associated with the historical event, which people had read about and got interested in because it had taken place in the neighbourhood, the queer tree in the same way was coupled with the *skogsnuva* said to haunts the neighbouring wood, stirring their imaginations. This association was made without any support in already existing popular belief, which is not at all concerned with the whereabouts of the *skogsnuva*. Dite No. 3 is likewise a fict, which arose in the same manner as No. 2, on account of the form or size of the stone.

The fourth dite may, in a way, be considered as sheer madness, as of course a stone has no sense of smell. That people took it into their heads at all to say such a thing about a stone is due, however, to the circumstance that, in some way or other, this stone attracted attention. In order to banter some silly person, somebody invented the little dite, which must have had a telling-effect, and may be characterized as a jocular dite.

That dite No. 5 is a jocular dite as well, is obvious. The mist rising from the bog is suggestive of the steam in a brewery. "Who is brewing ale out there in the bog?" we may ask in jest; for we know that no one is. But people go on jesting and invent a woman dwelling there, the *mossakäring* (bog-hag), who is known not to exist and in whom nobody believes, except maybe some little child who wonders if that woman be dangerous. The whole dite becomes a jocular explanation of the mist, a jocular *aetiofict*.

Dite No. 6 has been invented in order to read some sense into an etymology, but it is no less a fict than the foregoing ones. That a man should have run away with a girl in order to marry her, is a thing that is sure to have happened more than once; it has never been custom, though, but always an offence against

custom, and accordingly such conduct cannot have given the custom its name. This fict, being an attempt to explain the origin of a word-form, may be properly characterized as an earnest aetiofict.

The same may be said of dites Nos. 7-9. No. 7 is closely related to aetioficts about similar phenomena; it narrates, however, nothing, is but a dry statement. Whoever has seen boulders and has been told that they were thrown into their present place by giants, may when catching sight of a similar boulder say out of hand that this boulder as well must have been thrown there by some giant. This statement is no sagn; only when something more is added about what the giants name was and where he lived, about his rage at the ringing of bells from the newly built church —how, with his garter for a sling, he tosses the rock at the belfry, and misses his aim.

The case of the following two dites is much the same; they must, however, most likely be considered as derivatives of more detailed *aetiofables*. The explanation of the lake as the site of a sunk manor-house given in the eighth dite, presupposes a fully developed sagn, out of which only the very ending has been extracted. That it is some peculiarity in the appearance of the lake or in its surroundings that gave rise to the aetiofable and the aetiodite derived therefrom, can be assumed with great probability, provided the sagn did not originally belong to another place altogether and underwent transfer in a purely mechanical manner (*e. g.* through an error of memory), to another lake, where it may not suit at all.

The ninth dite deals with a custom which is no longer understood by those who use it, and which therefore wants explanation; the existing dite is a short extract taken from such an explanation or aetiofable.

All the dites here cited must be characterized as ficts, composed about an object, a phenomenon, a custom, or a word which attracted attention. The majority are of an aetiological

character, but the first four are fanciful dites which have, by way of emotional association, knitted other ideas, serious or jocular, to the object on which the fict-composer happened to fix his attention.

Fanciful Dites about Animals and Men.

Many of the dites dealing with the habits and attributes of animals and the customs of man may be rather elaborate, verging on narration. It is not, however, individual happenings that are dealt with, but something that is said to be customary. Some dites of this category may be based, more or less, upon experience, whereas others are altogether fictitious.

For example:

1. The bear has the wits of 3 men and the strength of 12.
2. The bear eats nothing but that he has killed himself.
3. When the fox wants to rid himself of fleas, he puts a tuft of moss in his mouth and goes slowly backwards into the water; and when the fleas, shunning the wet, have got into the moss-tuft, he lets it loose and goes out.
4. In autumn, the cuckoo changes into a hawk, devouring its fosterparents.
5. In winter, the swallow will lie on the bottom of the sea.
6. The pelican feeds her young with her own blood.
7. The Phoenix is born and dies in the fire.
8. In the neighbouring district or parish people are so stingy or poor, that when they have herring and potatoes for dinner they hang the herring on a string under the roof and take turns licking it or peeping at it.
9. When formerly a peasant wanted to give a daughter in marriage, he took her to every pew on the men's side saying: "*Min doter vill mannas*" (My daughter wants a man), and she caught up with: "*Fars ord ska sannas*" (My father's words shall come true). Then the one who wished to marry her stepped up

and thrust his sheath-knife into the empty sheath she was holding in her hand; and thus the match was made.

10. Formerly people were killed when they grew old, and there were special clubs for that, the so-called "Ätteklubbor".

That the first little dite is based on experience of the bear's sagacity and strength is obvious, but it is fiction by virtue of its formulation, in which there is, of course, no slight exaggeration. That is true, I presume, also of No. 2, which is based on a fact of experience, namely, that many a one has succeeded in escaping a bear by feigning death, whereas at the same time it runs counter to huntsmen's experience of bears resorting to carrion. Both dites are closely related to hunter fabulates about encounters with bears.

The third dite about the fox's method of ridding itself of fleas can hardly be supposed to build on direct observation, and it must be characterized as a fict intended to illustrate the extraordinary cunning of foxes. The step from this fict to narration is easy: "Once upon a time a fox was awfully tormented by fleas. But he thought of an expedient; he took a big tuft of moss, etc." The strong point of a sagn is that it passes for truth, but one feels at once how, precisely by virtue of its narrative form, the fict has lost its power to convince. It might even be given the form of a memorate: "Walking into the woods I once happened to see a fox scratching himself desperately. Obviously the fleas would not leave it in peace. And what do you think he did? He took a tuft of moss, etc." That would, however, amount to no more than the form of a memorate, and the audience were sure to respond: "Oh, you are telling a lie! You cannot stand staring at a fox so long without its becoming aware of you and taking himself off, etc." Such points can easily be made at the expense of a fictitious memorate but are not so easily applicable to a dite like the one before us, such a dite being understood as resulting from many men's experience. The dite form is in fact the more impressive and hence the better one.

The fourth and fifth dites are both of them due to false interpretations of observations of nature. The cuckoo has almost the same patterning as has the sparrow-hawk; and its foster-parents are often overcome by too much exertion. Between them, these two correct observations have led to the false inference. And the swallows migrate to more southerly countries when winter sets in; but the dippers, which have sometimes been caught accidentally in nets for ice-fishing, may have been mistaken for swallows, a circumstance which explains the origin of the fict. Notwithstanding the fallacies in the contents of the two dites, which cause them to be taken preferably as ficts, it would seem possible, on account of the observations of nature just mentioned, to characterize them as empiridites as well.

As to the sixth dite, its fictitious nature should be obvious. Told about the pelican, it shows no trace of association with experience. If originally it was about the vulture, the sight of a vulture blood-stained from its prey may have given rise to the idea that it would feed its young with its own blood. On the other hand, the death of the Phoenix and its rise from its own ashes is mere fiction.

The eight and ninth dites are clearly jocular ficts. It is usual to make jokes about the people of the neighbouring parish; and if there is actually a flaw in their cast, it will be greatly exaggerated in jocular fabulates and ficts. Likewise the odd behaviour of people in former days is rather a favourite topic. Some slight touch of reality may, indeed, slip in, but the whole thing remains a jocular fict, which should not be taken for memories or experience of actual custom; for nothing of the kind really existed.

The tenth dite is of a more serious nature than the preceding two, but it should be considered as a fict of much the same nature as the ninth. It is based, in part, on a misinterpretation of the so-called *ätteklubbor,* and uses them as a sort of criterion. The *ättestupor* [steep rocks, from which old men in heathen times are said to have thrown themselves down when they felt they

had had their day] mentioned in historical text-books may have been instumental in giving rise to such an explanation of the *ätteklubbor*. It goes without saying that the dite does not convey any real memory of established custom.

The importance of being able to distinguish clearly between memoral dites and empiridites on one hand, and fancy- and joculardites on the other is evident. However, the fact that the outward form is the same, sometimes causes awkward mistakes, more particularly when the scholar is working from detached statements, which he does not see in their natural context and life in the realm of tradition. For handling them with full discernment it is a requirement that he should know the body of facts available to the people, and how this is applied and worked up by the people.

Memoral Rules.

A good many of the dites so far dealt with refer to things that happened on an empirical occasion once in the past. The last group discussed deals with something that is thought to be customary or to have been customary in certain circumstances. Both kinds of dites may be considered as a sort of entertainment dites, dealing with things regarded rather as curiosities, interesting to listen to but of no practical consequence. A great many dites, however, deal with things of importance to man, things which one should pay attention to and lay to heart. Here are some instances:

1. The crane takes light to bed.
2. Frost in the night before Lady Day means frost during 40 nights.
3. When St. Andrews splashes, Christmas will crisp with frost.
4. When the dog eats grass there will be rain.
5. When swallows fly high it will make good weather.
6. Many rowan-berries mean a cold winter.
7. On midsummer night the herbs have their best potency.

8. Between Christmas and Candlemass the Holy Virgin's soap is in the water.

9. The cock's crowing drives away ghosts and trolls.

10. Steel protects against sorcery and trolls.

11. Mountain-ash protects against sorcery.

12. The fern-flower, which blooms only on Midsummer Night, will make you invisible.

The first six of these dites are *calendar and weather dites,* which if having a rhythmical or rhymed form (Nos. 1 and 3, in their Swedish form) may be called *calendar* and *weather verses.* Nos. 2-6 may also be called *ominal dites,* as giving instruction on *omens,* foretokenings of what is going to happen; in the present case: what sort of weather can be expected. I will not here weigh their validity in terms of a scientific meteorological examination, but it is obvious that all these dites are based, more or less, on experience, even if this experience does not fully bear out the contents of them all. Rules like these of course, are practically always based on too limited a material of observation to be fully dependable.

Dites 7 and 8 are also calendar dites of a sort, though not ominal dites, because they do not deal with the ominal significance of the phenomena, but with the peculiar virtue held to be, at certain times, inherent in the things themselves, places and waters. Even here experience may possibly have played a certain part. The herbs have no doubt a somewhat varying content of aromatic and other substances at different times. It is therefore not a matter of indifference at what time they are culled, and the idea is not so very unreasonable that midsummer, the time when the sun is highest above the horizon, should be particularly propitious for gathering *e. g.* medicinal plants. On the other hand, midsummer is for several reasons a time which stirs the imagination, and it is therefore probable that, even on that ground and without any direct experience, people should have been apt to attribute a greater potency to herbs then gathered than to those

gathered at more ordinary times, just as a greater virtue has been attributed to ashes from the Christmas fire and tallow from the Christmas candle than to other ashes and tallow, matter which may after all originate from the wood of the same tree, or from the same killing.

Nor, I think, is it impossible that in January the water should be better for washing than at other times. The colder the water is, the less salts and other substances it can hold in solution; and the more free it is of foreign substances the more suitable will it be for washing. Thus there may be here a correct observation. However, the limitation to the period between Christmas and Candlemass is due, in part, to the circumstance that Christmas is a particularly holy time and therefore considered as lending to everything a more than ordinary virtue. As the Christmas days themselves must not in any circumstances be used for washing, and a great wash and other cleaning would have been done immediately before Christmas, this peculiar suitability of the water for washing was assigned to the days between the Birth of Christ and the Purification of the Holy Virgin, with a half jocular reference to the circumstance that Maria had to wash the diapers of the Infant Jesus during that time, whereby her soap would get into the water and add to its purifying power.

Dites 9-10 likewise deal with the virtue of various objects as protecting against ghosts, trolls, and sorcery. The first two can be said to be based, each in its own way, on experience. When a man in his sleep has been haunted by many dreams and is awaked by the cock's crowing, this crowing will come as a deliverance from something very painful. Upon awakening, one may easily take the dream for some uncanny mysterious reality, and thus one comes to have the experience that the cock's crowing drives away an evil thing. The same conclusion may, however, be reached theoretically: The cock's first crowing in the morning may be understood as the border line between night and day, and as ghosts and trolls can assert themselves only by night,

their power will come to an end with the cock's crowing which, at first simply a sign that the day has come and the power of the trolls has been broken, comes to be thought of as itself potent, so that the dangerous powers have to fly before the cock's crowing at any time of day or night. Steel in its usual blade-like form is well known as a defensive weapon, and it becomes a defence even against supernatural dangerous beings, which are thought to be kept off by everything that is sharp. Secondarily, this concept is then transferred to steel simply as a material.

While dites 9 and 10 may thus to a certain degree be understood as based on experience, dite No. 11 unquestionably grews out of a sort of speculation. The mountain-ash, which grows each tree more or less to itself, differs in many respects from most other trees: its slender stem, its decorative foliage, its white fragrant clusters of blossoms, the somewhat acrid smell of the bark and the leaves, and its red berries. All these things make people inclined to think that the mountain-ash differs from other trees likewise in having peculiar powers. As on the whole a strong smell and the red colour are held to be preventive, the mountain-ash has got the reputation of possessing this quality more than other trees. A mountain-ash that had happened to be planted up on another tree by birds and thus did not touch the ground, was on account of this peculiarity held to be more powerful still. Thus the whole of this concept cannot have been formed on the basis of experience, but by emotional association, which has connected the idea of power with that particular kind of tree, peculiar in so many respects.

The twelfth dite has a similar origin, but here the flower itself is an invention. People made the quite correct observation that ferns have no flowers in the usual sense of the word. Thinking, however, of flowers as something which all plants have they have inferred that ferns too must have flowers, even if only on Midsummer Night. As no such flower has ever been seen, they came to conceive it as invisible, and to imagine that it must be able to

confer its own invisibility on a person carrying such a flower on his body. Thus this last dite is to a high degree a fanciful fict.

Imperative dites.

The imperative dites, or *consiliates,* differ markedly from the assertive dites, inasmuch as in the former it is not a case of pointing to actual or imaginary facts, but of giving advice and citing precepts for what should be done or not done in various circumstances in life. The difference is a palpable one, but it does not make any insurmountable barrier. Indeed, the transition from the one to the other may be rather an easy one. When a dite points out that under a certain stone there live trolls, this may be understood as a warning to beware of that stone, lest one should fall foul of the troll. When the dite about the bear states that he will not touch what he has not killed himself, this implies a piece of advice: to feign death when a bear threatens to attack. And even the information about the power of steel and of the mountain-ash would seem to imply a piece of advice: one should be equipped with such preventives in a predicament. In the cases here dealt with, however, the advice is not the primary thing, nor is it stressed. Altogether different is the case of the consiliates proper, as will appear from the following examples:

1. Don't draw your spittle in and out between your teeth!
2. It is sinful to walk backwards.
3. Never put a *brödkaka* (loaf, cake), upside down!
4. Don't whistle while it is thundering!
5. Don't put your shoes with the toes pointing towards your bed!
6. Cover up your bed when you have got out!
7. Straw should be strewn on the floor at Christmas.
8. It won't do to make calls on Christmas Day.
9. One should spit three times when a cat runs across the road.

10. The sign of the Cross shall be made three times over fingers and toes with the scissors when the nails have been pared.
11. If you have the jaundice, eat up three yellow-hammers with bones and feathers!
12. If you have a toothache, put some peas in your mouth and sit down on the hearth. When the peas boil in your mouth, the toothache will be gone.

In the case of these dites there can be no question of truth or fiction in the sense in which these terms apply to the assertive dites; nevertheless, the particular precepts are quite unlike in character. The first six *may* at least be considered as mere rules of order, even if the fourth bears a certain stamp of superstitious horror and religious quaking. The first two are mainly aimed at children.

The seventh dite bears the character of festive custom, and this being now obsolete in our country, it might be more correctly given the form of an assertive dite, saying that people used to do so. It might, however, be considered as a rule of order, in so far as it may be thought to originate and to have its proper aim in an increased comfort and ease, a sort of festive luxury, the straw making the floor, otherwise cold and maybe consisting of pounded clay, considerably more comfortable and nice than usual. The eighth dite, too, is a festival regulation, but even this dite *may* point out what is good order on such a holy day as Christmas Day, and that without any ulterior motive of a superstitious nature.

On the other hand, dites 9 and 10 are of a palpably irrational nature, originating in rules of the kind represented by dites 9-12 of the preceding group. The same applies in part to dite No. 11, which should, however, rather be considered as fiction, as scarcely any jaundice patient can be supposed ever to have resorted to that horrible cure, which has rather been invented as a sort of excuse for the remedies actually administered in case these prove slow in taking effect. The cunning one might *e.g.*

say some such words as these: "Well, it would certainly be good with those three yellow-hammers, you know, but they must be eaten up as they are, with bones and feathers. But if you think this too hard, we must try another remedy, one which is not, however, so sure." One may guess that any jaundice patient faced with such an alternative will prefer the less sure remedy; but if it does not work as soon as hoped for, the blame will lie with himself and not with the cunning one, who has warned him beforehand that it was less sure.

The last dite is so obviously jocular that no one can even think of doing anything so crazy as making himself into a cooking vessel for peas which he has put in his mouth. It is fiction of the same description as the assertive dite about the stone turning round every time it catches the smell of new bread. It would be possible, of course, to instance many other types of imperative dites. Sometimes they are strict bans and commands — most often bans! — or more or less dubious advice or mere information of what is done, such information as might in many cases be almost as well considered as assertive dites. Sometimes they are ritual precepts or directions, sometime merely practical instructions. For want of space, however, the examples already cited must suffice. They illustrate how, even here, there is a distinction between fiction and fact, jokes and seriousness. The distinction is even more obvious in the traditional commentary accompanying several dites of this group, as will be shown in greater detail below.

Motival Dites.

It has been pointed out already that some consiliates are closely connected with assertive dites, from which they spring as natural conclusions. Very often, however, an imperative dite is supplied with an argument which has nothing whatever to do with its origin, the explanatory assertive dite being an invention which serves to give some reason why the advice should be taken,

and constitutes a pedagogic warning against ignoring the consiliate. Such a motival dite is accordingly a fict, and should be carefully distinguished from primary popular beliefs, even if it is believed in, more or less, by simple-minded people, more particularly by children.

The first dite of the preceding group is aimed at a nasty habit with which children sometimes amuse themselves. One may content oneself with saying: "Stop that! That habit of drawing your spittle in and out is too nasty." But to children it is not always sufficiently deterrent to hear that a thing is nasty, and then the reprimand is strengthened with: "In so doing one churns butter for the Evil One." Maybe that will work better. Indeed, the child thinks it sounds incredible, but anyhow one had better stop —. The second dite, warming children against walking backwards, has of course been suggested by anxiety lest the child should either make a false step and hurt itself, or else trample on something that will not stand being trampled on. It may not be very dangerous, indeed, while you are there on the lookout yourself, but it may be repeated some day in much more dangerous conditions. This cannot be so easily and tellingly explained to children, but then one adds the terrible threat: "He who walks backwards will drag father and mother to hell!" This motival dite invented for a pedagogic purpose is likely to work rather well.

The third *dite,* forbidding one to put a *brödkaka* upside down, may be considered as a mere rule of order, because in all circumstances it looks more neat and tidy when the cake lies right side up. Besides, it is neat and proper to regard the bread with reverence and awe. It was a dear commodity in days of old and was specifically mentioned in the Lord's Prayer. Failing reverence might bring evil. In order to emphasize the injunction not to waste bread it was said: "Whoever puts the *brödkaka* upside down, bakes bread for the Evil One." This does not imply that such statements are entirely unsupported by popular

belief. It is known that in sorcery the rites are, as a general rule, performed the wrong way, *e.g.* by walking backwards or against the sun. This may help towards inspiring aversion to anything that is done the wrong way. But the motival dites here cited must in all circumstances be considered as invented arguments in support of a ban that has already been established on other grounds, accordingly as motival ficts of a pedagogic nature. The argument given in support of the fourth dite is that the whistling attracts the thunder, which is so close at hand for the person fearing the thunder that one may well acknowledge its justification as an original motive for the ban. But in addition motival dites, connecting whistling with the devil and all sorts of like dangers, are not seldom invented, and then it is evident that it is a case of a clear motival fict.

The injunction, contained in the sixth dite, to put one's shoes with the toes pointing away from the bed, may be a mere rule of order. It might, of course, be objected that it looks better if the shoes are put with the toes under the bed, but if they stand with the toes outwards, it is easier to put one's feet right in them when one gets out of bed in the morning, whereas otherwise they must be shifted about. If nevertheless one looks for a superstitious background for the consiliate, it may be suggested that perhaps the outward-pointing toes were thought to ward against invisible dangers, according to the principle "sharp against". A widespread motival dite, however, explains the matter thus: if a succubus should come to torment the sleeper, she must first put her feet in his shoes, but she cannot do so if the shoes are turned outwards from the bed. As it cannot possibly be thought to be inherent in the nature of the succubus that she should be forced to step into the sleeper's shoes before beginning to ride him, and as this feature is not found in any other tradition about her, it is obvious that the motival dite is a jocular fict which has been so widely disseminated just on account of its jocular nature.

The sixth dite must have been originally a mere rule of order, even if from a modern point of view one would be inclined to insist instead on the uncovering of the bed in the interest of hygienics. A fanciful motival fict has, however, been composed to the effect that he who has been lying in the bed will get the jaundice if a yellow-hammer happens to fly over the house and the bedstead before the bed is covered up in the morning.

The rule to have straw on the floor during Christmas can, as pointed out above, be fully accounted for on grounds of festal technique and practical considerations. There are, however, two different motival dites about the matter. According to one, the more widespread, one should have straw on the floor and lie on it during Christmas Night, because on that night the Infant Jesus lay on the straw of the manger. According to the other, one should lie on the straw oneself, while the beds should be ready for the dead of the family, who were thought to visit their old homesteads on that night. Each of these motival dites seems quite plausible. A simple custom of lying on straw during Christmas Night may well be thought to have arisen in memory of the manger in Bethlehem, and the church could hardly withhold its approval. And the death rites afford so many good analogues of people surrendering their own beds for the benefit of the dead kinsmen, that in itself the matter does not seem improbable. So much should be evident, however, that *both* motival dites cannot be authentic and original; one of them must in all circumstances be secondary. As the comparison with Jesus' manger has a decidedly wider dissemination, and presumably also a greater density of occurrence, one might be inclined to infer that it is the more original. It must be admitted, however, that the comparison with the straw of the manger is so extraordinarily obvious that once launched it will have every prospect of becoming generally accepted at the cost of competing motival dites. As the festive custom is fully accounted for under the purely practical aspect of comfort, both motival dites should

accordingly be considered as ficts linked to an already established custom.

One more thing may be pointed out in this connection. It occurs now and then that such straw as has lain on the floor during Christmas is held to be powerful, in some way or other, so that it strengthens the cattle if they get such straw in their fodder, or adds to the fertility of the fields when laid there. Well, then, is not this the original motive underlying the custom? Certainly not. For such a notion about the leavings of the Christmas straw is altogether analogous to the concept that ashes and coal from the Christmas fire and tallow from the Christmas candle have a similar peculiar virtue. No man in his senses would, however, put it into his head to maintain that the original meaning of the Christmas fire and the Christmas candles should be that of obtaining the valuable ashes and the tallow. Nor can the Christmas straw have any such meaning, which appears distinctly from the varying occurrence of the conceptions belonging to this sphere.

The ban on visiting other farms on Christmas Day can be sufficiently accounted for by reasonable considerations of order and decency. On the day of such a holy festival people should stay at home. Moreover, after the small amount of sleep enjoyed during the preceding night they would hardly be fit to make calls. People do not themselves explain the matter otherwise. But the consiliate to stay at home on Christmas Day is strengthened by a warning dite: "If any visitor comes, on Christmas Day it is all right to throw the fish-sauce at him." It may be doubted if anybody has availed himself of this right. The dite in question is of a palpably jocular nature, but nevertheless a very effective underlining of the advice to stay at home on Christmas Day.

Retrospect.

What I have here presented is only a few examples fetched at random from memory. It does not claim, accordingly, to be

any complete system of classification for popular dites. The fict, for example, does not constitute any homogeneous subsection of the dites, but is to be found within most of the dite groups. By the people themselves they are considered now as mere fiction, now as fairly probable solutions to intricate problems. Nor does there exist any distinct line between memorial dites and fanciful dites.

If thus the dite groups I have here sketched out do not give any definite indication as to how every dite that comes under them should be considered, I hope, nevertheless, to have shown that the scholar is not entitled to treat them all alike but must examine each dite on its own merits. More particularly, it cannot be stressed too much that the distinction between what is *primary* and what is *secondary* is a question of the utmost importance, which should not be disregarded. Want of attention to this point has often made the scholar lose himself in the wayless wilderness of mere chimera[28].

POPULAR PROSE TRADITIONS AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION

At the folklore congress in Lund in 1935, I stressed the importance of a natural scientific system for the classification of folk-tales, and to a certain degree, naturally, for all traditional material. This, of course, does not mean that the catalogue-system which Antti Aarne has published in *The Types of the Folk-Tale* must be disregarded, or that I wish immediately to supplant it. On the contrary, I am convinced that for a long time to come it will be indispensable for indicating the type of a tale one wishes to refer to in any connection. And it is therefore not only necessary to print new editions of Aarne-Thompson's Types but they must be made as complete as possible by the insertion of new numbers, while the old numbers must be retained unchanged in their present places, unchanged even in the cases where their position is contradictory to the logic of the system itself.

My demand for a natural scientific system is therefore not a negatively critical demand, but concerns a purely positive study of tales. We must first of all decide what tales are closely related and then place them in natural groups, greater and smaller. It is these groups which ought to be studied, and it is necessary to discover the laws which govern the different groups, their origin and development, their use and distribution. What in this respect appears valid for one group, will certainly yield important viewpoints also for other traditional material, but it is of full validity only for the smaller group under investigation. Just as a zoologist cannot without reservation apply the scientific results obtained at from the study of bats to elephants or whales, so the student of tradition must be aware that laws which he has found applic-

able to, for instance, a group of *animal tales* cannot in the same way be applied to *novelles,* or *hero-tales.* The aforementioned traditional groups have not only different contents and composition but are differently used, in as much as they belong to different social grades, or groups, which fact causes them to be transmitted and spread in different ways, just as they originate and develop in different ways.

This ought to be a self-evident fact above all discussion, but up to now scholars have hardly observed it and in any case they have not drawn the right conclusions from it. Remember, for instance, how Grimm's hypothesis regarding the origin of tales from Indo-European myths has been misused. When Grimm put it forward he naturally did not mean *all* the traditional tales which have been brought under the general name of "Märchen," but only the group which I call chimera tales or *chimerates,* in as much as certain tales in this group show some similarities with certain myths. Regarding even chimerates Grimm's hypothesis was in principle a mistake, but the mythologists who then took up the tales, did not confine themselves to chimerates. That in their work they did not make comparisons with real myths but with mythical schemes freely composed by themselves about sun-heroes and aurora-goddesses is one matter, but they looked for these myths not only in the fanciful episodes of the chimerates but also in the purely realistic episodes of humorous tales about master thieves and tailors, in which, for instance, the tailor was interpreted as a sun-hero, since as a tailor he must have needles, which have some resemblance to sunbeams. The knowledge that chimerates and humorous tales form quite separate tradition groups with quite different origins, contents and uses could have saved science from such curious mistakes. And now look at the orientalist Benfey. He did prove that the literary Indian collection of fables, called *Panchatantra,* came to Europe in the Middle Ages by means of written translations from one language to another. From this fact he drew the conclusion, not only rela-

tively but absolutely false, that all the oral traditional tales in Europe, with the exception of the animal tales, were also transmitted orally from India to Europe at the same time. If he had observed the colossal difference between our chimerates and the Panchatantra's humorous tales and fables, he should with equally good reason have exempted the chimerates, which are almost completely absent in the Panchatantra, as much as the animal tales. There is not the slightest evidence for concluding that our chimerates come from India, even if a number of them occur there. As the flora of the Orient differs from that of Europe so may also the story stock of India differ from that of Europe.

These examples ought to suffice to show the necessity for distinguishing between the natural tradition groups, which must be studied without confusion or intermixture. A scientific system is, however, not made in an instant, but obviously needs a long time and much thought to be fully evolved. Since the relation between different tales is often difficult to decide immediately and prove clearly, such a natural system can only grow by degress, group after group, and this task should be equally divided among many different scholars who should be in continual co-operation. The task of building up such a system is of fundamental importance for scholarship, since without a scientifically clear, fixed terminology, by means of which related things can be grouped and the essential differences clearly determined, the real laws for traditional matter cannot be studied in a satisfactory way. A proper understanding of the whole can never be arrived at by purely monographic research.

Of great assistance in finding the position of a certain tale in a natural system is Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index,* which by coordinating related motives indicates the mutual connection between different tales which would not otherwise be so easily noticed. The relation between different tales lies, however, not only in the motifs but also in the nature of the composition. I have earlier shown the fundamental difference between the

Semitic *novelle* tales or *novellates* with their realistic tendency and zigzag composition on the one hand and the Indo-European chimerate with its fantastic tendency and straight composition on the other. The difference in the motifs themselves is here only *one* side of the question, but the style of composition is just as important a point of distinction for the two different groups. Here, however, I must stress the fact that this briefly formulated characterisation of the Indo-European chimerate does not apply to *all* the tales grouped in Aarne's system under the headline "Zaubermärchen" or "Tales of Magic," because this group of Aarne's includes material, heterogeneous as regards both style and composition, of which only a small portion are chimerates. The presence in or absence from a tale of supernatural incidents is not in itself sufficient to decide the position of that tale in a scientific system. More important is it to observe the arrangement of the motifs themselves and the nature of the composition.

I intend here to show in a more detailed way how a natural scientific system requires very different boundaries and gives a clearer view on the material than an artifically made catalogue system. I shall therefore here submit Aarne's groups of "Animal Tales" to a closer examination.

A quick glance over the arrangement and grouping gives the immediate impression that Aarne used two different bases of classification, which seem to disagree with each other and cause confusion. The one is based on the following lines: wild animals and domestic animals:

1. Wild animals.
2. Wild animals and domestic animals.
3. Man and wild animals.
4. Domestic animals.

The other is built on different classes of animals:

5. Birds.
6. Fish.
7. Other animals and objects.

One may here rightly ask why for example fables about birds, which can be wild as well as domestic, have not been divided according to the aforementioned classification. This inconsistency in Aarne is, however, only apparent. I, myself, co-operated with Aarne in the making of the system, and he explained then that by animals in the first four groups was meant mammals. In this way he had in the beginning determined that each fable in which *one* of the actors is a mammal should be placed there in the following way. Under 1. are grouped all fables having as actors only wild animals of which at least one is a mammal. Under 2. tales in which one of the actors is a wild mammal and one a domestic animal. Under 3. those in which together with a wild animal a human being can appear as an actor; and under 4. those in which all the mammals are domestic. In group 5. should be placed only fables in which the chief actors are birds and contain no mammals. In group 6. the chief actors should be fish, but mention no mammals or birds. And in group 7. are placed fables where none of the actors are mammals or birds or fish.

It is quite clear that this basis of division is neither natural nor scientific, in as much as it pays no regard to the action or composition of the fables. But it is quite logical if it is built exactly according to the afore-said principles, so that one could hardly doubt to which group a single fable variant—I will not say fable-type—ought to belong. It also makes it possible to place together smaller groups of fairly natural stamp under the larger headings. Thus, for example the group 1—69: "The Fox, the Clever Animal," which is certainly far from being uniform, but is characterised by a natural idea, which makes several of the fables belonging to it closely related to each other.

An inherent weakness of the principle of differentiation worked out by Aarne lies in the fact that different variants of quite the same action types must be placed in different groups if the system is exactly followed. Aa. 6 should be placed in group 1.

only if the actors are wild mammals such as bear, wolf or fox, but if quite the same action is carried out by cock and fox, one may ask if the fable should not be placed in group 2., and that question must be answered in the affirmative if the actors be cat and rat. Aa. 15 belongs to group 1. if the actors be bear and fox, but to group 5. if the actors be cock and hen. Aa. 247 is placed in group 5. since it is an owl which regards its young as the most beautiful in the wood, but this rôle is often taken by the monkey and then the fable should be placed in group 3. Such difficulties throw light on the weakness of an artificially made system which is based on purely occasional incidents without regard to the chief idea in the fable, and which just therefore can vary greatly. This difficulty can, however, to a certain degree be overcome by references in the different groups.

Perhaps it is just these difficulties which were partly the reason why the system drawn up by Aarne himself was not worked out fully according to its own logic. While Aa. 56, 57, 60, 61, 62, 76, and 85 are placed in group 1. (Wild animals) since at least one of the actors is a wild mammal and the other is a bird, Aa. 222, 225, 226, 227, 228, and 248 are placed under group 5. (Birds), even though mammals occur in them as actors with quite the same prominence as in the first mentioned group. So also Aa. 275 is placed in group 6. (Fish), although the fox is one of the chief actors, and on that account should be placed in group 1.

This is not due to oversight on Aarne's part. Aarne has not chosen to follow the rigid rule of classification exactly, but has modified it to the extent that "in fixing the place that ought to be given to a tale, the deciding factor should be that animal which takes chief part in the action." This accommodation of the rule makes the system more arbitrary. It is certainly right that in Aa. 70 (More cowardly than the hare), the hare is the chief actor and the fox has been included merely as a companion on account of this popularity in the fables but without any im-

portance for the action of this special fable. In Aa. 278, too, the dog can be regarded as outside the action which begins with the death of the dog and is afterwards totally concerned with the sparrow's revenge on the man who caused the dog's death. But in other cases the question about who plays the principal rôle in the action is not so easily decided. Aa. 275 lets the crayfish win a race with the fox, but that hardly means that the crayfish is the chief actor, because this fable deals also with "the fox, the clever animal," and the crayfish has not been placed here on its own account, but in order to find a plausible excuse for letting the fox in spite of all his cleverness be defeated, much the same as in Aa. 47 and 122; the same holds good for Aa. 225—227. Through a pure oversight Aa. 279 (Grasshopper and ant) has been placed in group 5. despite the fact that no bird is mentioned there. Its correct place should naturally have been in group 7.

The principle of letting the actor who takes the important part in the action decide the fable's place is reasonable enough in itself, but it is not easy to apply in a quite mechanical system. In such a system it is only misleading and makes the system as such more difficult to survey and less easily handled. A scholar is therefore often obliged to go through all the numbers of the system to find a certain fable type, so long as he has not a good register to help him.

I have here dealt with the division "Animal Tales," only from the point of view of its present group-division and its degree of handiness. In an attempt to devise natural groups, one must in the first case make clear the type of tales which belongs to the Animal tales in the essential meaning of the term, and the types that clearly belong to other tale-groups.

That the Animal tales must deal with animals is self-evident, but not all tales about animals can rightly be placed here. The animals play such a large rôle in man's life, that a tale recording the fate and deeds of human beings very often gives room also

to animals. Characteristic of an animal fable, however, is the circumstance that an animal, at a later stage even a plant or an object, plays the chief rôle and is the special actor of the tale. As such actors the animals, however, do not play a realistic part, but act and speak very often as human beings would have done in a similar position. The fable is in this way anthropomorphising or perhaps I should rather say *analogistic*.

In Aa. 15, for example, the bear and fox keep house together and have hidden a crock of honey or butter in a suitable place for winter use. The fox behaves disloyally towards his companion, goes to the hiding-place under the pretence of being invited to a christening and eats up the hidden store. Here a number of circumstances differ from the real life-facts of these animals. The bear and fox cannot in reality be regarded as friends or keeping house together, but that is an incident taken from human life, and both animals may here be regarded as representing two different human temperaments. The communal owning of food stores and the pretence of going to a christening are purely human incidents. If one put the names of two persons in place of bear and fox, nobody would think that the tale really dealt with animals.

In other fables it is not possible to exchange the animals for persons, but they talk as persons and their mutual relations are rather the relationship of human neighbours, in as much as they are often described as having tools and other objects which in reality only humans own. In Aa. 60 the stork possesses long-necked bottles, and the fox flat plates, when they invite each other to dine, but that difference in kitchen utensils is directly connected with their animal form—the stork's slender beak and the fox's snub-nose. When the situation is more natural, as in Aa. 56 (Fox and magpie) or Aa. 61 (Fox and cock), where the animals have not human tools, and where they appear in closer relation to reality, human speech and the fiction that, by bluffing or by friendly or threatening words, one animal can

get the other to commit such imprudent actions that it comes into the other's power, always occur.

The aforementioned analogistic incidents in animal tales are so evident that the artist who illustrates them readily portrays the animals walking upright on two legs and dressed at least partly in human garments. One can almost formulate a rule that if an animal tale can suitably be illustrated by dressing the actors in human clothes and making them pose as human beings it belongs here. The rule, however, does not apply to all the material belonging here. Aa. 77, the didactic fable about the hart who sees his own reflection in the well and admires his proud antlers but is ashamed of his slender legs, would certainly not be illustrated wearing human clothes or in human standing position. That, however, depends rather on the fact that the most characteristic of the hart, the antlers and the legs, are the subject of the hart's monologue and so must have a prominent place in the picture, which must show one or two hunting scenes.

Analogistic fantastic incidents are accordingly indicative of all real animal fables, whether it be that they are of a more humorous and popular type or more didactic and literary. The difference between these two groups can certainly be great in many cases but there is no sharp distinction between them, in as much as the didactic fable rather directly imitates the popular trickster fable and quite especially attaches to the analogistic strain.

As regards composition the animal fable may be described as usually single-episodic like the *sagn* or fabulate, of which the fable can be regarded as a particular form. Sometimes it consists of two episodes which stand in contrast to each other; for example, Aa. 60 (Fox and crane invite each other). More than two episodes occur only when several fables form a more or less haphazard conglomeration.

From the genuine fables the aetiological fables, sometimes called *Natursagen,* must in most cases be separated as a fundamentally different type of fiction. While the genuine animal

fables either show animals in a more or less comical situation as the trickster fables, or let animals in a certain situation pronounce or visualize several wise advices as the didactic fables, the one as the other in a more or less analogistic form in reference to human life, the aetiological fable, or shorter *aetiofable,* will explain how a certain curious feature in appearance or way of life arises. When the action in these aetiofables is thought to have taken place at the creation where a creator of one type or the other is forming the animal or decides about its manner of life it is this creator who is the chief actor of the fable, not the animals, even though the animal is a necessary ingredient of the fable. A typical aetiofable of this kind is about the creation of the loon or Northern diver. When Our Lord created the seabirds, St. Peter also wished to make one, and so he created the loon and put it out on the water. But then he observed that he had not given it legs, and so he had to throw a pair of legs after it. They fastened themselves at the hindpart of the bird and that is why the feet of the loon are placed so far back. Later on when they wished to give food to the birds, the loon was more greedy than the others and wished to push them aside. Then St. Peter struck him on the back with the bag of meal. Since this the loon has a back coloured grey by the meal dust. In the whole tale St. Peter is the chief actor, and the loon totally misses analogistic traits. A tale of that type can accordingly not be confused with genuine animal tales.

No sharp dividing line can, however, be drawn between genuine animal fables and aetiofables. There are several different intermediate links between them. In a number of aetiofables the animals are, for instance, much more active in as much as of their own accord they visit the creator themselves to make various requests. Then a sort of analogy in their behaviour cannot be avoided even if this analogism be perhaps closer to that of genuine fairytales than to that of the animal tales. In other aetiofables it is the animals themselves who on their own account

cause a number of changes, for example in Aa. 237, where the single-eyed nightingale borrows the single eye of the one-eyed blindworm, but refuses to restore it, and from that day the nightingale has two eyes but the blindworm is blind and possessed of a lasting hatred against the former. In this case the fable is stamped with the same analogism as in other animal tales and can be placed in the one group as much as in the other. Such fables based on an aetiological motif are, for example, Aa. 232, 235, 236, 270, and on account of their typical analogism they answer to their place among the genuine animal tales. Such aetiofables have, however, often together with analogistic elements also chimeristic elements, such as borrowing each other's eyes or skins, etc.

An aetiological explanation can, however, force itself into the genuine animal tales as well as into genuine fairy-tales in a purely secondary way. So in Aa. 2 (The bear fishes with his tail), the explanation of how the bear happens to have such a short tail has, as a secondary incident, been attached to the story. When the bear following the fox's sly advice tried to fish with his tail in an opening in the ice, the tail froze in the ice and was lost to the bear when he tried to extricate himself. To judge from all the older versions, as well as from the great majority of later variants of the tale, it is the *wolf*, that originally had the rôle, and it is only in a restricted area that the wolf was later supplanted by the bear, by means of which the aetiological explanation could be introduced into the tale. It is clear that the whole of Aa. 2 is a typical analogistic trickster tale. In the same way an aetiological idea has been introduced into several animal tales explaining how the fox comes to have a white tip to his tail through associate ideas from the fable itself. When the fox smears himself with cream and afterwards dupes the bear that he has been so severely beaten that his brain has come out, one has got from that the idea of the farmer's wife throwing the remaining cream into the pail after the fleeing fox, whereby the

tip of his tail became whitened for ever. And from the tale of how the bear or the wolf pursues the fox who must take refuge in a hole and use the device, "Let go the root and take the foot!," one has got the idea of allowing the bear at the last moment to catch the tip of the fox's tail with his paw, so that thenceforth the tip of the tail became white. Thus there are aetiologies of the same type, which we can sometimes find in one chimerate or another.

From the animal tales we should further carefully distinguish realistic tales about the life of animals which do not describe animals in an analogistic way but just as one really sees them. A good example of this is Aa. 116, which can easily be a true tale. That the bear can have his winter sleep in an outlying barn is quite possible, and that he awakes with a start and runs out on to the sledge, when the farmer wishes to take hay, could easily happen in such a case, and that the horse then takes fright is quite natural. Even though people have not really believed that it was the priest or the bailiff who, dressed in bearskins, went by in such haste, it is natural for popular humour to happen on such an explanation. There is no trace of analogism in the tale which quite simply deals with a bear adventure which ends happily. It is not the bear but the farmer who is the chief actor. If it is based on a real happening, it could be described as a memoral sagn or a traditional memorate. This however cannot be proved, because the whole tale may be a pleasant fiction of what would happen if a bear took his winter sleep in such a barn, that is, a kind of witness tale or fabulate. As the whole is supported by the humorous situation and therefore lives as a tradition and is spread over a rather wide area, the tale could also be regarded as a humorous tale, or what the Germans call *Schwank*. In all cases it can not be described as an animal fable[29].

A similar tale is Aa. 156 (The thorn in the foot of the bear or lion). Even that can be a true tale, a memorate, even though such a happening is rare. In any case it is not an animal fable

since it includes nothing analogistic, but is thought quite realistic. Another thing is, that in certain cases it appears together with genuine animal fables, which fact, however, does not alter its genuine character.

To the same group of tales clearly enough belongs also Aa. 285 about the child who lets a snake eat out of its own milk-bowl but scolds it for only drinking the milk without eating the bread broken in it. The tale is highly realistic, and one can very well imagine a child behaving exactly in that way. Nothing prevents the tale from being a picture of a real event and in that case it is a memorate. The snake is looked on in quite a realistic way, while the *child* regards the snake as an analogy to itself. The child has been strictly told to eat the bread in the milk, and now it passes the same command on to the snake. Even this little tale can in this case be regarded as a memorate, a fabulate or a humorous fable, while it definitely stays outside the realm of animal fables.

Aa. 121 also belongs to the fabulates or to the humorous fables. If it tells of a man who fled into a tree from the wolves, it is the man who is the chief actor in the tale, not the wolves, which in any case are described in a realistic way without any analogism. The situation itself that the wolves climb up on each other to reach the man is probably unlikely, but not analogistic. It is the description belonging to the fabulate or possibly certain lying tales and it can be best compared with and is most closely connected with Aa. 1875 and perhaps also with Aa. 1250. If the man in Aa. 121 be exchanged for a pig, the whole becomes very much more fantastic. The real actor is then an animal, and a certain analogism possibly makes itself felt (pigs do not climb in trees as men can do). That the tale at all events is sharply distinguished from the genuine animal fables with regard to style should be obvious.

Even Aa. 230 may most properly belong to this group in as much as it almost completely lacks analogism. It is more nearly

a humorous fable about a stupid person who mistakes a bird and thinks that the large-headed bird is a young one, and the tale can best be compared with such humorous fables as Aa. 1225, 1315, 1319, and so on.

Aa. 151 and 153 must be regarded as kinds of humorous tales, not as animal fables, since men play the chief rôle in them, while the animal plays practically the same rôle as the ogre in the group of humorous fables, in Aarne-Thompson called "Tales of the Stupid Ogre," that is to say, the bear has been given the same rôle as the duped ogre, apparently dangerous but easy to deceive. One could find here a certain type of analogism, not the same as occurs in the genuine animal fables but rather that found in chimerates, and I would, therefore, prefer to describe it as chimerism. I am obliged to regard Aa. 150, 154, 155, 158, and 159 as of the same type of tales.

A small group of animal tales can best be described as hunter fabulates. Such a one is Aa. 33 about the fox who came into a pit, but pretending to be dead was thrown up from the pit and with that takes to his heels. Whether any fox in reality has used this trick, I am not competent to judge, but it is convenient for a hunter to tell all kinds of fabulates of this type to illustrate the colossal slyness of the fox, in order, amongst other things, to make his own failure at the fox-hunt less disgraceful, or to stress his own skill in succeeding despite everything in catching such a clever animal. From this point of view the aforementioned tale is typical, free, as it is, from any analogism. Even Aa. 31 may properly find its place here, although on account of a conversation between the two animals imprisoned in the pit, it can easily go over to the style of the animal fable. Aa. 1 of the fox's stealing from a peasant could also be reckoned in the group of hunter fabulates, but as soon as another animal is included, it is easily changed to an animal fable. If the fox, for example, meets a wolf and tells him about his trick and the latter afterwards tries to use the same trick but fails, it becomes immediately a

two-episodic animal fable. The transition is in such a way very easy but the distinction is equally clear. In such a way it is not uncommon that tales of widely separated types can be combined because of some common incident, in this case the fact that the same animal is included in the description.

Aa. 206 where on Christmas night a farmer hears the conversation of the domestic animals which disclose that the corn is badly threshed belongs to another group of fabulate. The animals' conversation has nothing to do with the analogism of the genuine animal fables, but the fabulate has developed from the folk belief that animals can speak on Christmas night, while genuine animal fables permit the animals without any special reason to speak on account of its more or less humorously meant analogism. And the chimerates permit the animals to speak on account of its chimerism in as much as its complete action takes place in an unreal chimeric world. Thus in Aa. 206 the animal's speech is a miracle in connection with the blessed night, a miracle of the same style as the speech of Balaam's ass. That miracle belongs quite completely to the fabulate's, or, if you prefer, to the legend's style.

Some of the tales cited in Aarne's group Animal Tales are not Animal fables but chimerates. Such a one is Aa. 160, in which a part of the action is taken by animals, but the tale's real hero and principal actor is the man who draws up the animals from a well and afterwards gets help from them. The animal's rôle here is almost the same as in Aa. 554 and in a number of other chimerates. Their action is not analogistic but chimeric even if they as in many Indian tales are more close to the animals of the fabulate than in the European chimerates.

In Scandinavia there is a widespread and much varied tale about a woman who fell into a wolf-pit, where she had a fox, a wolf, and a bear as companions. Moltke Moe has in an early essay regarded this as having sprung from Aa. 160, which it

certainly has not. It is more probably a fabulate or a humorous fable, and deals with how the woman reacts to the animals before she fell into the pit, and how she changes her tune when she herself falls into the pit.

Aa. 212 is also a distinct type from the animal fables because the goat is discribed not analogistically but more like the animals of the chimerates which have the property of speech. Its owner has three sons, but he believes more in the goat than in his sons. This he finds later to be a mistake.

Aa. 217 is not an animal fable but rather an Oriental problem tale bordering on the humorous tales. The cat there described has no analogistic significance, but is an ordinary cat which has been trained to hold a light at the guest-table. The chief actors of the tale here are Solomon, whose statement about the superiority of art to nature is to be proved by the action, and his clever friend, who by letting loose one mouse after the other succeeds in getting the cat to drop the light and chase the last mouse.

Also Aa. 248 about the dog and the sparrow is not a real animal fable. A man is the centre of the tale because it tells how his crime of driving over the dog is punished by the action of a little bird. The bird is described not analogistically but rather chimerically, and the whole tale has to a certain extent a legendary character. It can be most closely compared with such a tale as Aa. 715 (Demi-coq), although this is somewhat more fantastic.

Some of the animal tales which are put in the list of Aarne, and which naturally tell of animals are not genuine animal fables but tales for small children. Typical in this respect are Aa. 123 (Wolf and kids) and Aa. 124 (Blowing the house in). Both have certainly a sort of analogism in an exaggerated form suitable for small children, but it is not in the first instance the trickster-animal's successful tricks or the didactic animal fable's wisdom of life, which is at the bottom of it, but the pedagogic children-fiction with its warning against the dangers impending

for children who go out alone. This is illustrated by the dangerous wolf, even though the story after all ends well, just as in the typical children-fict story, Aa. 327, with which it has a certain relationship, and, also, with Aa. 333 (Red Riding Hood).

Another form of tale for children, chain stories or *catenates,* is more or less clearly represented by Aa. 37, 85, 130, 170, 210, 295, which certainly are analogistic but throughout their whole composition are sharply divided from animal fables. Aa. 170 is most closely related to Aa. 1655, and Aa. 210 is close to Aa. 2021, 2022, and 2033. All are more or less distinctly multiepisodic.

In summarizing the remarks which I have here made, I wish to say that the trickster and didactic fables about animals cannot be strictly separated from each other but must be grouped together under the general rubric *Animal Fables.* As regards aetiofables only those which are purely analogistic and have animals as the chief actors can be placed here. Such animal tales as Aa. 116, 121, 230, 156, 285, 33, 206, 160, 151, 53, 150, 154, 155, 158, 159, 212, 217, 248, 123, 124, 85, 130, 170, 210, 295, ought not, for the aforementioned reasons, to be placed here.

As I have already mentioned, a definite proposal for a scientific system can not be drawn up in an instant. Both the basic principles and details must be carefully tested and discussed. I think, in any case, that I have succeeded in the main in making clear what belongs to the domain of animal fables and what must be regarded as extraneous. I shall not try to define positively the grouping in this division of tales, but I shall try to present some points of view. A first grouping could be made according to the number of actors in the tale. That may appear to be an extremely abstract method of division, but when viewed more closely one cannot fail to see how important this feature is for the tale's composition, and therefore also for its style.

A group of tales with only one actor is comparatively rare:

Fox and rowan-berries or grapes, Fox and theatre-mask, Fox and drum, Jackal and bowstring, Aa. 34 (Wolf dives after reflected cheese), Dog and piece of meat, Aa. 70 (More cowardly than the hare), Aa. 77 (Stag admires himself in the stream). Some of these titles appear, perhaps, as if it were a question of two actors, but rowan-berries, theatre-mask, and drum, are not actors but objects which the single actor reflects upon while the frogs or sheep which in Aa. 70 have been frightened by the hare are not actors, nor are the dogs which hunt the deer in Aa. 77. All these groups of animals are quite realistically portrayed without any trace of analogism. It appears, however, as if the single-actor fables should be classed as didactic fables, and they form therefore a rather uniform group.

The majority of animal fables have *two* actors. Amongst them are found quite naturally trickster- as well as didactic-fables. An important systematic point of view for their grouping is the question of whether the tale is built on an action or on clever replies. The latter group should surely principally include didactic fables. For the rest natural groups could be represented by fables about the sly weakling who triumphs over the strong simple-minded individual, about the clever one who, in spite of his slyness, gets into difficulties, about the two animals who play tricks upon each other, about the sly animal deceiving his prey, about races between two animals, *etc.*

The fables with three or more actors are comparatively few. Amongst those which Aarne has in his list, I mention at the outset Aa. 51 (Lion's Share) and Aa. 50 (Sick Lion), both of a stylistic type clearly distinct from our two-actor fables, and both of which are of Oriental origin. That also holds good for the group of fables which deal with animals' counsels and wars, such as Aa. 110 (Belling the Cat), Aa. 220 (Council of Birds), Aa. 221 (Election of Bird-King), Aa. 222 (War of Birds and Quadrupeds), Aa. 224 (Wedding of Turkey and Peacock) and several others. It seems as if the rest of the Animal tales in Aarne's list

with three or more actors comprise the catenates and children's tales already separated from the genuine animal tales, and if they for practical reasons should be included in *animal fables,* they form, in any case, natural groups of fables with three and more actors.

My choosing animal fables as the subject for this *exposé* in systematics depends on the fact that they form a comparatively small and easily surveyed division of our folk tradition, but similar points of view must also be used on all other traditional material, in the first place in what Aarne calls *Zaubermärchen* or Tales of Magic, which is not at all a uniform group. I need only mention Aa. 300 (Dragon-Slayer), Aa. 301 (Three Stolen Princesses), Aa. 302 (Ogre's Heart in the Egg), Aa. 313, 314 (Magic Flight), etc., tales which I call *chimerates* and which I strongly contrast with those found in the same division Aa. 363 (Vampire), Aa. 365 (Dead bridegroom carries off his bride), Aa. 366 (Man from the gallows), which are all pure fabulates, while again Aa. 327 (Children and Ogre) and Aa. 333 (Glutton or Red Riding Hood) are stories for little children and have developed from children's ficts. It ought to be self-evident that three such very different groups of tales as the forenamed within "*Tales of Magic*" cannot follow the same literary rules, do not belong to the same social ranks and, therefore, not to the same scientific categories. Before that becomes impressed on the general scientific consciousness, continuously more or less big mistakes will be made by those who work on these problems, and the science as a whole cannot attain the important results which should be achieved from such an old widely spread material.[30]

DIE BEGRIFFE DES ERSTEN UND LETZTEN IN DER VOLKSÜBERLIEFERUNG MIT BESONDERER BERÜCKSICHTUNG DER ERNTEBRAÜCHE

Die letzte Garbe.

Seit Mannhardts Zeit spielt der Begriff der »letzten Garbe« eine hervorragende Rolle in der Volkskunde und im Studium primitiver Religion. Mannhardt gab ihr eine mythische Deutung, indem er ihren Platz im Volksbrauch damit erklärte, dass die Seele des Korns oder ein Wachstumsdämon bei der Ernte von Halm zu Halm flüchtete, je weiter die Schnitter kamen, und schliesslich in den letzten Halmen blieb, so dass sich in der letzten Garbe die Fruchtbarkeit und Wachstumskraft der ganzen Ernte konzentrierte. Diese Erklärung Mannhardts war möglich zu einer Zeit, die bloss nach Mythen suchte, während ihr der Blick für alles andere fehlte. Sie wird indessen allein durch den Umstand widerlegt, dass sich ein derartiger Glaube beim Volke selbst nicht nachweisen lässt. Sie ist eine ausgesprochene »Als ob«-Konstruktion eines wirklichkeitsfremden Stubengelehrten. Die Überlieferungen, die sich beim Volk an die letzte Garbe knüpfen, wechseln ausserdem so stark, dass die Vorstellung des in der Garbe gefangenen Wachstumsgeistes — selbst wenn sie irgendwo existierte — unmöglich als Hauptnenner von sämtlichen, ja auch nur von dem grösseren Teil der betreffenden Überlieferungen — wie man gemeint hat — angenommen werden kann.

Eine andere Erklärungsformel für die Bedeutung der letzten Garbe lautet folgendermassen: die erste Garbe ist ein Opfer, ein Erstlingsopfer, die letzte ist ein Kraftkonzentrat. Diese Erklärung, die jedoch nicht in unmittelbarem Widerspruch zu Mannhardt steht, nimmt insofern eine Vorzugsstellung gegenüber der Mannhardtschen ein, als sie die beiden einander ergänzenden Gegen-

sätze »erst« und »letzt« in einen natürlichen Zusammenhang stellt. Aber bei näherer Prüfung des gesamten Überlieferungsstoffes erweist sich diese Regel bald als falsch. Es zeigt sich nämlich, dass nur ein kleiner Teil des Stoffes wirklich mit ihr übereinstimmt. Die erste Garbe *kann* als Opfer angewandt werden, aber das ist noch lange nicht die Regel, und auch die letzte kann als Opfer dienen, ohne dass man einen Nachweis dafür erbringen kann, dass dies auf einer Verwechslung mit der ersten beruht.

Sowohl die Mannhardtsche Konstruktion wie die eben angeführte Regel sind Beispiele für Irrtümer und fehlerhafte Methoden, wie sie nur allzugewöhnlich sind innerhalb der Forschung, die sich mit primitiver Religion, Volksglaube und Brauchtum befasst. Der Fehler liegt vor allem darin, dass man seine Untersuchung auf einen Spezialfall beschränkt, statt ihn in den grösseren Kreis von Erscheinungen, Traditionsbildungen oder psychologischen Haltungen einzureihen, in den er gehört. Man kann die letzte Garbe nicht richtig verstehen, wenn man sie lediglich als Erntebrauch betrachtet. Sie muss in Zusammenhang gebracht werden mit all den übrigen Vorstellungen im Volksleben, die dem »Letzten« irgendeiner Gattung besondere Aufmerksamkeit schenken. Genau so muss das »Letzte« selbstredend mit dem »Ersten« in Beziehung gebracht werden, das zwar in mancher Hinsicht einen anderen Aspekt erhält, aber doch eine durchaus entsprechende Erscheinung ist. Man darf nicht übersehen, dass das Letzte und das Erste ausserdem nur Spezialfälle des »Ungewöhnlichen« sind, das in irgendeiner Beziehung vom Alltäglichen abweicht und deshalb die Aufmerksamkeit auf sich lenkt. Ich will hier versuchen, die beiden Begriffe in ihren grösseren Zusammenhang einzufügen und ihnen damit ihre natürliche Erklärung zu geben.

Externe und interne Dominanz.

In einigen früheren Aufsätzen[31] habe ich gezeigt, dass die magische Kraft, Mana oder Orenda, in Personen, Plätzen, Ge-

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genständen, Zeiten, Handlungen, Worten usw. mit etwas Interesseerweckendem, etwas Ungewöhnlichem bei den jeweiligen Trägern des Orenda zusammenhängt, das beim Beobachter die Vorstellung einer dem Gegenstand innewohnenden besonderen Kraft hervorruft. Diese Tatsache beruht auf einer eigentümlichen Form der Assoziation, die ich Emotionalassoziation genannt habe. Diese ruft indessen nicht nur Orendavorstellungen hervor, sondern auch eine Menge anderer Traditionserscheinungen der verschiedensten Beschaffenheit, was gerade aus der Entstehungsweise der Assoziation verständlich wird. Das Ungewöhnliche ist etwas, das die Aufmerksamkeit nach aussen hin beherrscht und soll darum hier *externe Dominante* genannt werden. Diese externe Dominante verknüpft sich mit etwas, das das Interesse des Beobachters im Augenblicke beherrscht, seiner *internen Dominante*[32]. Diese Assoziation zwischen einer externen und einer internen Dominante muss sich infolge der vom Zufall abhängigen Beschaffenheit beider Teile als etwas äusserst Regelloses erweisen. Was an einem Ort, zu einer Zeit oder für eine Person das Interesse beherrschen kann, kann unter anderen Umständen vollständig ohne Bedeutung sein. Und was in einer Umgebung, zu einer Zeit oder in gewöhnlichen Fällen zum Alltäglichen gehören kann, ohne irgendwie zu dominieren, kann zu anderer Zeit, an anderem Ort, oder bei gewissen Anlässen, in gewissen Situationen überraschend oder auffallend sein; eine ausgesprochene externe Dominante.

Bloss unter gewissen Umständen bestehen die internen Dominanten aus Wunsch- oder Schreckmotiven; dann knüpfen sie Orenda- oder Tabuvorstellungen, eventuell auch Omenvorstellungen an die externen Dominanten. Oft bestehen jedoch die internen Dominanten aus ganz anderen Vorstellungen und Gedanken. Etwas Ungewöhnliches, das man zu sehen bekommt, kann sich mit einer Sage verknüpfen, vielleicht auch mit einem Scherz, und da gilt die externe Dominante keineswegs als etwas irgendwie Kraftgefülltes, sondern wird nur eine Art Denkmal für

die Sage oder den Scherz. Während z. B. eine ganze Menge Bäume von eigentümlichem Aussehen als angefüllt mit krankheitserregendem oder heilendem Orenda betrachtet werden, da Krankheit und Heilung zu den natürlichen internen Dominanten der Landbevölkerung gehören, haben andere, gleich eigentümliche Bäume ganz andersartige Vorstellungen an sich gezogen. So hat man bestimmte Bäume als Behausung übernatürlicher Wesen aufgefasst. Andere haben geschichtliche Erinnerungen angehängt bekommen. Wieder andere haben zu der Sitte geführt, den Baum im Vorbeigehen zu grüssen oder auch bei ihm haltzumachen und das Pferd sich verschnaufen zu lassen, während man selbst einen Schluck trinkt, etwas zu sich nimmt usw.[33]

Nichts steht natürlich der Möglichkeit im Wege, dass eine Anzahl verschiedenartiger Dominanten mit einer und derselben externen Dominante verknüpft werden. Jedoch kann eine interne Dominante, die schon einmal von der Tradition stark an eine externe geknüpft worden ist, auch verhindern, dass sich andere Vorstellungen an dieselbe Dominante knüpfen, und das dürfte wohl geradezu das Wahrscheinlichste sein, obwohl sich hier keine feste Regel aufstellen lässt.

Das »Erste« als externe Dominante.

Zu den externen Dominanten muss all das gerechnet werden, was das Erste oder Letzte seiner Art ist und sich eben dadurch von anderen Dingen derselben Gattung unterscheidet. Die beiden Gegensätze nehmen hier im grossen ganzen eine deutlich analoge Stellung ein. Hinsichtlich seiner Bedeutung in der Volksüberlieferung hat jedoch das Erste entschieden den Vorrang vor dem Letzten: In einer grossen Menge von Fällen schenkt man nämlich aus ganz natürlichen Gründen gerade dem Ersten seine Aufmerksamkeit, während das Letzte hier unmöglich irgendwelche Rolle spielen kann.

Man sagt z. B., dass man die erste Anemone, die man im Frühjahr findet, verzehren soll, damit man in diesem Jahr vor Schüt-

telfrost bewahrt bleibe. Warum nicht die Letzte? Ganz einfach weil die Letzte weder aktuell ist noch aktuell sein kann. Die erste Anemone ist eine frohe Überraschung, der Vorbote der ganzen Frühlingsblütenpracht, die man während des Winters entbehrt und herbeigesehnt hat und nach der man in den ersten Frühlingstagen suchend späht. Findet man sie, so weiss man bestimmt, sie ist für dies Jahr die erste ihrer Art. Wenn die letzte Anemone blüht, sind die Anemonen nicht mehr aktuell. Man sucht nicht mehr nach ihnen, denn inzwischen ist eine Fülle von anderen Blumen erblüht, die nun ganz und gar die Aufmerksamkeit auf sich lenken. Schon deshalb ist es klar, dass die letzte Anemone ganz übersehen wird, und sollte man sie zufällig doch sehen, so kann man ja gar nicht wissen, ob es wirklich die Letzte ist, die man hier zu sehen bekommt, und ob nicht irgendwo noch einige stecken, die man noch später finden könnte.

Genau so hat man natürlich auf die erste Schwalbe des Jahres achtgegeben, den ersten Fisch, den man fängt, das erste Mal, das man sich an einer bestimmten Arbeit beteiligt oder eine bestimmte Reise unternimmt. Das Letzte kann in allen diesen Fällen nichts bedeuten, teils weil es jeder Aktualität entbehrt, teils weil es sich unmöglich feststellen lässt, ob es sich hier wirklich um das Letzte handelt. Überall wo das Erste als etwas Bedeutungsvolleres beachtet wird als alles übrige seinesgleichen, ist es offensichtlich die Emotionalassoziation, die sich in verschiedener Weise geltend macht; daher wird das Erste ominell, tabu, als Vertreter alles folgenden gedacht, dem Scherz, der Ehre ausgesetzt usw.

Das Erste als Omen.

Erscheinungen ganz gewöhnlicher Art misst man im Allgemeinen keine besondere Bedeutung bei. Sind die Zugvögel im Frühling zurückgekehrt, so kann man sie jeden Tag sehen, ohne dass man in ihnen etwas anderes erblickt als liebe alte Bekannte. Etwas ganz anderes ist es jedoch, wenn man sie im Frühling zum ersten

Mal sieht. Dann sind sie externe Dominante und man findet an ihnen Vorzeichen für Ehe oder Tod, für Glück oder Unglück.

Im Menschenleben gibt es ja eine ganz Reihe von Dingen, die zum ersten Mal eintreffen und deshalb ominell werden. Das erste Bad des Kindes, seine erste Suppe, sein erstes Wort, das, wonach er zuerst greift, wird in verschiedener Weise ominell. Bei einer Hochzeit zieht man ominelle Schlüsse auf die Zukunft des Brautpaares aus einer Menge seiner Handlungen: wer von beiden den andern zuerst sieht, zuerst aus dem Becher trinkt, zuerst ins Bett steigt usw. Bei einem Begräbnis sieht man Vorzeichen darin, wer zuerst zum Trauerhause kommt, wer zuerst dem Leichenzuge begegnet usw. Auf einer Reise ist die erste Begegnung ein Omen für die ganze Reise. Beim Besuch in einem neuen Haus findet man u.a. ein Vorzeichen im ersten Traum. Der Diener schliesst aus der ersten Tätigkeit seiner neuen Stellung auf die Zukunft, der Kaufmann vom ersten Kunden, vom Preis der ersten Ware, die er verkauft, der Schreiner aus der ersten Bestellung, der Jäger aus dem ersten Schuss. Auch die erste Garbe und der erste Heuwagen geben Vorzeichen für gute oder schlechte Ernte, gute oder teure Zeit.

Das Erste als Orenda.

So wie das Erste als ominell aufgefasst wird, kann es auch als kraftgeladen, mit Orenda gefüllt, betrachtet werden. Oft ist die Analogie zwischen dem Ersten als Omen und als Orenda vollkommen klar, und bloss die Beschaffenheit der Gegenstände entscheidet darüber, ob die eine oder die andere Auffassung die geltende werden soll. Die erste Anemone kann überhaupt kein Vorzeichen sein, aber sie hat ein solches Orenda, dass man das Jahr über von Schüttelfrost frei wird, wenn man die Blume verzehrt. Dieselbe Vorstellung hat sich ausser an Frühlingsblumen und Erdbeeren auch an den ersten Maikäfer geknüpft, nur mit dem Unterschied, dass man ihn lieber als Amulett gegen Schüttelfieber benutzt, weil man ihn zu wenig geniessbar findet.

Der erste Kuckucksruf gilt nicht als ominell. Sein Orenda macht es gefährlich, ihn nüchtern zu hören; daher verzehrt man zu den Zeiten, da man ihn erwartet, einen Bissen Brot, sobald man aufwacht, damit man ihn nicht nüchtern hört. Dieselben Vögel, die bei ihrer ersten Ankunft als ominell aufgefasst werden, können auch als orendagefüllt betrachtet werden, wenn man bei ihrem ersten Anblick eine bestimmte Handlung ausführt. Wenn man die erste Schwalbe sieht, kann man verschiedene wertvolle Talismane erwerben, wenn man gleich eine Handvoll Erde, einen Stein usw. aufliest. Hört man den Donner zum ersten Mal im Jahr, soll man sich auf dem Boden wälzen, dann bleibt man vor Krankheit bewahrt usw.

Eine erstgeborene Person ist nach dem Volksglauben erfüllt von einem gewissen Orenda, das ihr die Macht verleiht, auch das mit Erfolg auszuführen, was andere nicht zu vollbringen vermögen, und die Nachgeburt eines Erstgeborenen soll gegen Muttermale wirksam sein. Das erste Haar, das beim Kinde abgeschnitten wird, verwendet man als Amulett für verschiedene Zwecke. Das erste Garn, das ein Kind spinnt, soll Glück bringen. Die erste Frucht, die man isst, soll einem die Erfüllung eines Wunsches gewähren. Das erste Ei einer erstmalig legenden Henne wird als hexenentschleiernder Talisman verwendet. Das erste Stück des Weihnachts- oder Neujahrsbrotes wird bis zur Frühjahrsarbeit aufgehoben, sichtlich im Gedanken daran, dass es mit einer Kraft geladen ist, die der Frühjahrsarbeit zugute kommen soll. Den ersten Anschnitt des ersten Brotes auf dem Hochzeitstisch verwahrt die Braut als Talisman, denn solange er bewahrt wird, wird das Haus keinen Mangel leiden. Die erste Garbe bei der Ernte ist gefüllt mit einem Orenda, das den, der sich darauf setzt, während der Arbeit gegen Rückenschmerzen schützt.

Die hier angeführten Beispiele zeigen, dass das Erste nicht nur als ominell aufgefasst wird, sondern als erfüllt von einem Orenda, das nützen oder unter Umständen auch schaden kann. Dass man

das Orenda der ersten Garbe damit erklären wollte, dass sie ein Opfer sei, kam lediglich daher, dass man nicht bemerkt hatte, dass das Erste auch in Fällen, wo es sich unmöglich um Opfer handeln kann, schon allein in seiner Eigenschaft als Erstes für orendageladen gilt.

Das Erste als etwas Gefährliches oder Gefährdetes.

Die Mehrzahl der hier angeführten Orendavorstellungen, die den Begriff des Ersten betreffen, stehen im Zusammenhang mit Wunschdominanten. Das Erste kann indessen noch leichter mit Schreckdominanten verknüpft werden, die den Verdacht wecken, dass das Erste gefährlich sei oder sein könne, oder dass eine Gefahr gerade durch das Erste wirksam gemacht werden könne. Diese Vorstellungsart ist im Zusammenhang mit Grenzen verschiedener Art wohlbekannt. Der oder das Erste bildet in dieser Hinsicht eine Grenze, die man überschreiten muss zu einem neuen Gebiet, mit dem man nicht ganz vertraut ist. Worin die Gefahr besteht, ist indessen für den, der an der Grenze steht, nicht von vornherein klar. Er kann sie als ein unpersönlich gedachtes Unglück auffassen, das blindlings den trifft, der die Grenze überschreitet, oder er kann sich denken, dass er durch die Künste irgendeines zauberkundigen Neiders von etwas Schlimmem getroffen werden kann, wenn er nicht beim Überschreiten der Grenze, bei der Behandlung des Ersten, gewisse Vorsichtsmassregeln beachtet oder Abwehrmassnahmen trifft. Man kann sich aber auch in oder bei dem Ersten mächtige Wesen wirksam denken, Wesen, die man besänftigen oder überlisten muss, bald mit magischen Schutzmitteln (Amuletten, Formeln oder Riten), zuweilen durch Gebet oder Opfer. Es gibt ja hier so viele Auswege, und unter diesen tritt das Opfer bei weitem nicht am meisten hervor. Ich will ein paar ausführlichere Beispiele geben.

Einem Jäger kann auf der Jagd das Missgeschick zustossen, dass seine Büchse so verhext wird, dass sie nicht treffen kann,

wenn nämlich irgendein Neider den ersten Schuss vernimmt und dabei gewisse Zauberkünste vollführt.

Beim Dreschen trifft man in Süddeutschland die Vorsichtsmassnahme, dass man die ersten drei Schläge mit dem Flegel nicht auf die Korngarben führt, sondern auf Wacholderbüsche oder Tannenzweige, denn ein Bilmesschnitter kann, wenn er die ersten Schläge hört, etwas tun, wodurch er Macht über das ganze Getreide bekommt. Das Erste wird hier offensichtlich als Vertreter alles übrigen gefasst. Jedoch hat dadurch, dass die ersten Schläge beim Dreschen nicht das Korn treffen, sondern die Wacholderbüsche, der Bilmesschnitter keine Macht über das Korn.

In Skåne erzählt man sich eine Sage von einem Bauern, der zwei »Kålla's« (Schüttelfrostdämonen) belauschte. Die eine wollte den Bauern in ihre Gewalt bekommen. Das sollte so zugehen, dass sie, falls der Bauer bei der abendlichen Grütze das Tischgebet vergässe, die Macht bekommen sollte, sich im ersten Löffel voll Grütze zu verstecken. Auf diese Weise würde der Schüttelfrost in den Bauern kommen und ihn mit kaltem Fieber plagen. Der Bauer wusste aber Rat. Er unterliess zwar richtig das Tischgebet, aber den ersten Löffel Grütze steckte er nicht in den Mund, sondern in seinen Tabaksbeutel, den er dann zusammenschnürte und an die Wand hängte. Dann ass er seine Grütze ohne weiteren Schaden, aber jeden Tag gab er dem Tabaksbeutel eine ordentliche Tracht Prügel mit dem Stock. Als er dies einen Monat getan hatte, zerriss der Beutel und der Fieberdämon kam heraus. Der Bauer hörte dann die Kålla ihrer Kollegin erzählen, sie habe einen ganzen Monat lang nicht mehr als einen Löffel Grütze bekommen, aber Schläge jeden Tag.

In diesen drei Beispielen wird das Erste sichtlich als magisch empfindlich aufgefasst, d. h. als gefährlichen magischen Einflüssen ausgesetzt, die alles folgende treffen, wie in den beiden ersten Beispielen, oder möglicherweise als Versteck für gefährliche Wesen oder Kräfte, die dem, der sich unvorsichtig das Erste angeeignet

hatte, dadurch schädlich werden könnten. Es gilt daher, sich auf die eine oder andere Weise gegen drohende Gefahren zu sichern. Ich will hier noch einige weitere Beispiele aus verschiedenen Lebensgebieten geben.

Das erste Badewasser eines Kindes erheischt unbedingt bestimmte Schutzmassnahmen, aber diese können völlig verschiedener Art sein. Man muss das Wasser im Stall oder unter einem Stachelbeer- oder Rosenbusch ausgiessen. Zur Erklärung dafür, warum dies gerade an solchen Plätzen geschehen soll, sagt man, das Kind bekomme dann eine schöne Gesichtshaut bzw. in den beiden letzteren Fällen Kraushaar. Aber die ursprüngliche Meinung war hier zweifellos, dass der Schade, der drohte, falls es unter freiem Himmel geschah, das Kind nicht treffen könne, wenn das Wasser unter einem Dach ausgegossen werde, wobei man sich die Tiere vielleicht geradezu als Schutz dachte. Und die stacheligen Büsche werden ja infolge ihrer Stacheligkeit als apotropäisch aufgefasst. Das Wasser konnte aber dadurch gesichert werden, dass man vor dem Ausgiessen verschiedene apotropäische Gegenstände hineinlegte, z. B. Zwiebel, Eisen, Schwefel, Eier.

Bei Hochzeiten trifft man massenhaft apotropäische Vorsichtsmassnahmen, nicht zum mindesten im Hinblick auf das Erste unter gewissen Dingen und Handlungen. Hierher gehört z. B. sexuelle Enthaltsamkeit während der drei ersten Nächte, der sogenannten Tobiasnächte. Dies ist missverstanden worden als ein Zugeständnis an eine asketische Richtung, die alle Sexualität als sündig verurteilte, gründet sich aber in Wirklichkeit auf die Befürchtung, dass das Erste gefährlich sein, bzw. dass irgend ein Neider auf magische Weise während der drei ersten Nächte den Ehegatten schaden könnte, entsprechend den oben angeführten Beispielen vom ersten Schuss des Jägers oder den drei ersten Schlägen beim Dreschen. Dadurch dass man sich ganz einfach der drei ersten Nächte enthält, entgeht man einer derartigen Gefahr.

Der Einzug in ein neues Haus gilt unter Umständen als gefährlich. Man glaubt, der Erste, der es betritt, könnte vom Unglück getroffen werden oder zuerst sterben. Man lässt deshalb eine Katze oder ein anderes kleineres Tier vorausgehen, damit das Unglück das Tier treffen soll und man selbst davor bewahrt bleibt. Dies kann auch zu solchen Bräuchen führen, wie z. B. ein Tier unter dem Hause lebendig zu begraben oder ein Tier zu schlachten und durch alle Zimmer tragen. Das kann kaum als Opfer betrachtet werden, obwohl man es Bauopfer genannt hat, sondern man bezeichnet es am besten als Schutzzauber. In ähnlicher Weise hielt man es für gefährlich, als erster auf einem neuen Kirchhof begraben zu werden, da dieser Erstbegrabene nach dem Volksglauben keine Ruhe bekommt, sondern ständig umherwandern muss. Ein Mittel einem solchen Unglück auszuweichen, war wohl, ein Tier lebendig auf dem Kirchhof zu begraben, oder auch unter der Kirche, was indessen gewöhnlich so erklärt wird, dass man dadurch der Kirche einen Schutzgeist verschaffen wollte.

Beim ersten Austreiben des Viehs im Frühling pflegte man eine Menge der verschiedensten schutzmagischen Massnahmen zu treffen. Genau so, wenn eine Kuh zum ersten Mal kalben, wenn das Kalb zum ersten Mal Milch bekommen und wenn eine Kuh zum ersten Mal gemolken werden sollte. Die erste Milch wird oft weggeschüttet oder einem Armen gegeben. Oft heisst es, die erste Milch dürfe nicht weggeschenkt werden, da man fürchtet, sie könnte verhext werden. In ähnlicher Weise gilt es als gefährlich für den Fischer, seinen ersten Fisch wegzugeben. Das erste Geldstück, das man verdient, ist ja freilich dazu bestimmt, wieder ausgegeben zu werden, aber um einem Unglück vorzubeugen, spuckt man darauf, sonst hat man kein Glück mehr mit seinem Geld.

Auch beim Pflügen trifft man eine ganze Reihe magischer Schutzmassnahmen, wenn man die Arbeit beginnt, und in manchen Gegenden versucht man so zu pflügen, dass es unmöglich

ist, zu sehen, welche drei Furchen die ersten sind, denn ein Zauberer könnte sonst alles Glück von dem Acker nehmen, wüsste er bloss, welche Furchen die ersten sind. Beim Säen wirft man die drei ersten Hände voll Korn im Namen der heiligen Dreifaltigkeit, damit der Saat nichts schaden kann. Zuweilen heisst es, die drei ersten Hände voll Saat gehörten den Vögeln oder den Mäusen, damit sie nicht der übrigen Saat oder dem Korn überhaupt schaden.

Bei der Ernte lässt man gern die drei ersten Halme von einem kleinen Kind schneiden, das nicht denselben Gefahren ausgesetzt ist wie Erwachsene oder das der übrigen Ernte nicht im selben Mass würde schaden können wie ein Erwachsener. Aber man hat auch andere Möglichkeiten, die ersten Halme so zu schneiden, dass kein Schaden geschehen kann; man schneidet sie z.B. kreuzweise, legt sie kreuzweise auf den Acker, in Weihwasser usw. Die erste Garbe schützt man dadurch, dass man allerhand apotropäische Dinge hineinlegt, z. B. geweihtes Salz, Gründonnerstagseier, Palmsonntagspalmblätter usw. Dazu kommt, dass sie in manchen Gegenden verbrannt wird, damit niemand durch sie dem Getreide schaden kann. Gelegentlich wird sie auch den Vögeln oder Mäusen gegeben. Der erste Erntewagen wird rückwärts in die Scheune gefahren, damit er vor Schadenzauber bewahrt bleibt, oder Bauer und Knecht führen, wenn der Wagen kommt, ein rituelles Gespräch, um ihn dadurch zu schützen.

Vom ersten Brot isst man das erste Stück nicht selbst, sondern gibt es Hund oder Katze. Dass dies aus Furcht davor geschieht, dass das Erste gefährlich sein könnte, geht aus einer ganzen Anzahl Angaben hervor, dass mit dem ersten Bissen das Fieber komme; so wirft man den ersten Bissen fort, wenn man etwas Essbares findet, wirft ihn unter den Tisch usw., Bräuche, die oft, auch vom Volk, als Opfer gedeutet werden, die aber wohl am ehesten im Hinblick auf die Sage von der »Kålla« gedeutet werden dürften: im Ersten könnte sich irgendeine Gefahr verbergen.

Sieht man den ganzen Stoff, der sich auf den Begriff des Ersten

bezieht, zusammengestellt, so sieht man freilich eine Reihe von Beispielen, die an Opfer erinnern, aber den Opfergesichtspunkt zum entscheidenden und bezeichnenden für das Ganze zu machen, ist doch unmöglich. Wird eine Sache weggeworfen aus Furcht, sie könne etwas Gefährliches enthalten, so bedeutet dies, dass man sie *aufopfert,* aber nicht, dass man sie *opfert.* Dass man unter gewissen Umständen sozusagen aus der Not eine Tugend macht und der Kirche, dem Krankenhaus, den Armen usw. opfert. darf kaum als das Primäre ausgelegt werden. Es ist vielmehr allen Anzeichen nach eine sekundäre Erscheinung.

Das Letzte als Dominante.

Die Ungleichheit zwischen dem Ersten und Letzten in der Volksüberlieferung beruht auf der Gegensätzlichkeit der beiden Begriffe. In vielen Fällen kommt das Letzte überhaupt nicht in Betracht. Bei Wettstreiten steht der Letzte gewissermassen als peiorativ ergänzender Gegensatz dem Ersten gegenüber. Im übrigen ist jedoch die Entsprechung so handgreiflich, dass man notwendig beide unter demselben Hauptgesichtspunkt betrachten muss. Auch das Letzte muss somit als externe Dominante verstanden werden, die allerhand interne Dominanten an sich knüpfen kann.

Das Letzte kann ja vielleicht als Vorzeichen weniger geeignet scheinen, aber eine ganze Reihe Omina werden gerade durch das Letzte bestimmt. Im Blumenorakel der Mädchen, bei dem sie unter Hersagen einer bestimmten Formel (die kürzeste besteht bloss aus ja — nein) äusseren Blütenblätter einer Gänseblume (Marguerite) abzupfen, gibt immer das Letzte den Ausschlag. Es gibt eine ganze Reihe derartiger Orakel. Mit ihnen lassen sich die Abzählreime der Kinder vergleichen.

Beim Wettstreitsorakel bekommt der Erste den vorteilhaftesten Ausschlag, aber auch der Letzte kommt in Betracht, insofern er am wenigsten Glück erhält. Wer zuerst von der Christmesse heimkommt, kriegt sein Korn als Erster unter Dach und Fach, wer

zuletzt kommt, wird auch bei der Ernte der Letzte sein. Wer am Neujahrsmorgen zuerst aufsteht, wird während des kommenden Jahres bei allem der Erste, wer zuletzt aufsteht, wird bei allem der Letzte sein. Bei vielen derartigen Wettbewerben heisst es, dass der zuletzt Kommende nicht heiraten wird, jedenfalls nicht im selben Jahr. Derartige Wettvorzeichen sind natürlich von Anfang an nichts anderes als Scherze — vielleicht pädagogische Scherze — und ihr Inhalt eine Art scherzhafte Belohnung; sie sind vom Volke nie ernster genommen worden als z.B. der Glaube, dass die Lösung einer Patience die Erfüllung eines Wunsches mit sich bringe, was nicht hindert, dass das Wettspiel mit grossem Eifer durchgeführt wird.

Auch die letzte Garbe ist stark ominell. Wird sie gross und schwer, so ist im nächsten Jahr reiche Ernte zu erwarten, wird sie klein, nur geringe. Deshalb tut man alles, um sie so gross wie möglich zu machen und bindet sogar Steine hinein, damit sie recht schwer wird. Aber auch für die Binderin ist die letzte Garbe ominell. Das Vorzeichen für sie heisst: wer die letzte Garbe bindet, muss ledig bleiben, oder bekommt ein uneheliches Kind. Dass diese Art von Vorzeichen nichts anderes ist als Scherz, eine Art Wettstreitscherz, dem sich jedoch niemand freiwillig aussetzen wollte, ist offenbar, und ähnliche Scherze, oft, wie der eben angeführte, von etwas derber Art, sind in vielen Fällen äusserst gewöhnlich und brauchen keineswegs einen Fruchtbarkeitsdämon zu ihrer Erklärung.

Auch das Letzte gilt oft als orendageladen. Der letzte Bissen einer Brotschnitte oder irgendeines Gerichtes wird oft als Kraftbissen bezeichnet, und wenn man ihn nicht aufisst, so bekommt man auch keinen Anteil an der Kraft des Brotes. Das Brot, das zuletzt in den Ofen geschoben wurde, pflegte man oft besonders zu bezeichnen und betrachtete es als Kraft- oder Glücksbrot. Auch die letzte Garbe wird oft als Kraft- oder Glücksgarbe angesehen, die einen Ehrenplatz erhält wie ein Glückstalisman, vielleicht auch im Gedanken daran, dass sie ebenso wie die erste

Garbe besonderen Schutz benötigt. Hie und da kommt es auch vor, dass man zu bestimmten wichtigen Zwecken gerade die letzte Garbe wählt.

Aber oft gilt es auch, das Letzte zu meiden. So heisst es oft, man dürfe nicht die Schüssel leeressen, denn da könnte es geschehen, dass man ledig bleibt oder zuletzt von allen Anwesenden heiratet. In diesen Vorstellungen ist jedoch auch ein anderer Gesichtspunkt enthalten, der als *horror vacui* bezeichnet werden kann. Man betrachtet es als unglücksbringend, eine Schüssel, eine Kiste, einen Acker, einen Obstbaum, einen Geldbeutel usw. völlig zu leeren. Irgendetwas muss übrig bleiben, sonst hat man kein Glück mehr damit. Das auf diese Weise Übriggelassene betrachtet man zwar in der Regel nicht als besonders glücks- oder kraftgeladen, aber wenn es nicht übrig gelassen wird, wo soll das Glück da hinkommen? Das Übriggebliebene kann auch nicht als Opfer angesehen werden, denn wenn es sich z. B. um irgendwelche Behälter handelt, dann opfert man ja nichts, sondern verwahrt es noch im Gegenteil.

Auf dem Acker kann das Übriglassen des Letzten indessen ostentativ, vielleicht geradezu rituell vor sich gehen, und daher leicht als Opfer aufgefasst werden. Auf die Frage: wer soll das Opfer haben? muss eine Stegreifantwort gegeben werden, und da greift man denn zu irgendeinem Wesen, was einem gerade in den Weg kommt, das zu den internen Dominanten gehören kann. Die Antwort fällt daher in verschiedenen Gegenden recht verschieden aus. Man greift etwa zu Gott, aber oft wählt man einen heidnischen Gott, und da lautet die Antwort wohl deshalb in den meisten Fällen Odin, weil er ein Pferd besitzt, das Futter braucht. Sonst kann man ja auch an die Meerfrau denken, an Wichte und Heinzelmännchen, an ein gespenstisches Schwein usw., lauter Wesen die in *keiner* Weise in unmittelbarem Zusammenhang mit der Ernte stehen, und das ist ganz natürlich, da das »Opfer« an und für sich nur eine sekundäre Umdeutung des horror vacui ist. Man darf daher aus diesem »Opfer« keinerlei

Schlüsse auf das eigentliche Wesen seines Empfängers ziehen, sondern höchstens schliessen, dass er in der betreffenden Gegend eine einigermasen vorherrschende Rolle in der Volksphantasie gespielt hat.

Zuweilen wird das Letzte aber auch als gefährlich oder empfindlich aufgefasst. So kann es vorkommen, dass man den letzten Bissen einer Mahlzeit nicht verzehren darf. Dies kann auf einem horror vacui beruhen, es kann aber auch eine Folge davon sein, dass man glaubte, derjenige, der den letzten Bissen esse, werde damit auch in allen anderen Dingen der Letzte sein, Pech haben usw. Auch in solchen Fällen hat man aus der Not eine Tugend gemacht und das Letzte als Opfer für eine Macht bezeichnet, die zufällig eine interne Dominante bildete. So sind z. B. die Speisereste oft zum Opfer für die armen Seelen, Frau Percht usw. geworden. Die letzten Halme auf dem Acker hat man, wie die ersten, zuweilen als gefährlich oder empfindlich betrachtet, vielleicht bloss weil niemand der Letzte sein wollte, und deshalb musste ein Kind, ein unbescholtenes Mädchen usw. sie schneiden.

Schon bei der Behandlung des Letzten als Vorzeichen habe ich auf den scherzhaften Charakter solcher Vorzeichen hinbewiesen. Der Letzte ist überhaupt dem Scherz leicht ausgesetzt und er kann mit mehr oder weniger hässlichen Spottnamen rechnen. An bestimmten Tagen beeilt man sich besonders, um nicht der Letzte zu sein, zu spät ins Bett zu kommen oder aufzustehen, zuletzt heimzukommen usw. Dabei bekommt der Letzte allerhand Spitznamen, der Erste dagegen Ehrennamen angehängt. Der Letzte beim wird Schornsteinfeger genannt. Andere Scherze über den Letzten sind etwa, dass wer am Neujahrstag zuletzt vom Tisch aufsteht, zu spät in den Himmel kommt, und dass die Hexe, die zuletzt auf dem Blocksberg landet, dem Teufel beim Wurstmachen als Hackblock dienen muss. Der Hüterjunge, der zuletzt heimkommt, wird von den anderen mit Wasser begossen. Der letzte Junge der nach dem Bade die Mütze auf

den Kopf setzt, wird mit einem unanständigen Spitznamen verhöhnt.

Auch bei der Ernte sind eine Menge Spottnamen üblich, die besonders dem Letzten verliehen werden. Man hat sich zuweilen an die Tatsache geklammert, dass einige dieser Schimpfnamen unanständiger Art waren, d.h. sexuelle Anspielungen enthielten, und ihre Herkunft so gedeutet, dass man sich den Letzten eben als Verköperung des Fruchtbarkeitsdämons gedacht habe. Die Lust, gerade sexuelle Spottnamen zu erfinden, hängt jedoch damit zusammen, dass das Sexuelle bis zu einem gewissen Grade überall tabuiert ist und es reizvoll sein kann, dieses Tabu zu brechen, wenn sich eine Gelegenheit dazu bietet. Solche Sexualschimpfnamen gibt es daher auch in einer Menge anderer Fälle, nicht nur bei der Ernte, und sie haben also tatsächlich nichts mit der Fruchtbarkeit zu tun. Ihr Vorkommen bei der Ernte erklärt sich daraus, dass sich bei einem solchen Anlass losgelassene Jugend beider Geschlechter zusammenfindet.

Rückblick.

Die hier gegebene Erklärung der Begriffe des Ersten und Letzten in der Volksüberlieferung hat, so denke ich, definitiv die Unhaltbarkeit der bisher geltenden Fruchtbarkeitsdämonentheorie erwiesen. Überhaupt wird der von der Forschung bisher so stark betonte Fruchtbarkeitskult schon durch eine einfache Untersuchung der internen Dominanten des Volkes widerlegt. Diese sind, wie Albert Nilsson[34] gezeigt hat, nicht sehr zahlreich, und gerade die Fruchtbarkeit nimmt unter ihnen nur einen äusserst kleinen, wenn überhaupt einen Platz ein. Der ganze Begriff scheint ein Oberklassenbegriff zu sein, dem die Bauern keine weitere Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt haben. Die Fruchtbarkeit des Bodens gehört für sie zum Alltäglichen und Selbstverständlichen, während die Furcht vor Schaden irgendwelcher Art eine stark hervortretende Dominante bildet. Was die Forschung für den Gedanken an Fruchtbarkeit gehalten hat, war teils der Wunsch

nach Glück und Reichtum, teils die Furcht vor Schadensstiftung. Hier liegt also ein wichtiges Feld vor, das gründlicher Revision bedarf[35].

THE IDEAS OF THE "FIRST" AND THE "LAST" IN THE FOLK TRADITION, ESPECIALLY IN HARVEST RITES

Mannhardt explained the last sheaf of corn mythically as the seat of the soul of the corn or of a corn-spirit which was chased from cornstalk to cornstalk as they were cut, until at last it was shut up in the very last sheaf. But that was the explanation of a closet scholar without sufficient knowledge of popular thinking. Others have explained the first sheaf as a first-fruit sacrifice, and the last sheaf as a centre of power. This is not contrary to the theory of Mannhardt so far. Neither is it based on the material. But it has the advantage of emphasizing the connection beaween the first and the last. The wrong thing is, that the starting point is too narrow. The first and the last sheaf of corn must not be looked upon as harvest rites alone, but must be taken from a more comprehensive point of view of the first and the last of anything as something special.

External and internal dominants. The idea that something has a special magic power, mana or orenda, presupposes something in it which arouses the interest (external dominant). The kind of interest aroused depends on the conception of the person in case (internal dominant) and changes with it. Something which may interest in one place, at one time or in one person, will under other circumstances not be noticed at all. In case the internal dominants are wish or fright motives, they will attach ideas of Orenda or Taboo to the external dominants. But the dominants may as well consist of a legend or joke, and then they will not bring about any notion of power.

The "first" as external dominant. Both the first and the last of a thing are external dominants, though by far mostly the "first", because as a matter of course it usually will be more interesting than the "last". The first anemone is the one to eat in order to protect oneself from ague, not the last, which is noticed by nobody. The first swallow is ominous of summer, — not the last!

On the whole the "first" is very often taken as an *omen,* f. i. the first

reactions of a baby, the first look, the first step, the first drink of bride or groom at a marriage, the first meeting when travelling etc. The first sheaf of corn can be ominous as to a good or a bad harvest, a good or a scarce year.

The "first" may be thought of as *Orenda* too, as the first anemone or the first piece of the Christmas cake which is kept to do benefit to the spring work by being given to the horses or the ploughmen. The same with the first sheaf of corn which is sometimes supposed to protect the person who sits down on it from pains in the back.

The "first" as something dangerous. The Orenda of the "first" is very often due to wish dominants. Still more often though to fright dominants, because it is the introduction to something new and unknown which one does not know if one can trust. The danger may be regarded as quite impersonal, as something which hits one in the very moment one passes the boundary, or it may be due to some envious person versed in magic art, if one does not take the precautions prescribed. It may also be thought of as a powerful being, which must be satisfied or duped by magic protection (amulets, rites), prayers or sacrifices. That is the reason why there are so many rites at child-births, marriages, movings, when the cattle are driven to pasture for the first time, when ploughing and sowing and reaping is started, and that is the reason why the first sheaf of corn has to be protected by consecrated salt, is burnt or given to the birds, the mice, likewise as the first piece of bread is given to the cat or dog, very often with the argument that it will give the fever. This shows that it is a fright motif, so that the explanation as a sacrifice must be secondary.

The "last" as dominant. The "last" must be regarded from the same point of view as the "first", i. e. as an external dominant which may be connected with all kinds of internal dominants. It may be ominous, f. i. girls count on a daisy about their love. In competitions the first one usually will have the best of it, but the last one is also of some importance, in so far as he will be worst off. Very often the last is said to remain unmarried. But that is of course only a joke, nobody ever believed in it. The last sheaf of corn is ominous too. A big sheaf means a good harvest, a little one a bad one. And the girl who binds it will never be married, or she will be the mother of a bastard. But it is all a joke and has nothing to do with fertility cult. The last part of something

is often supposed to be filled with Orenda too, f. i. the last bite, which it is very important to eat, if the food is to do one any good. The same with the last sheaf of corn, to which a seat of honour may be assigned at the harvest festival. But just as often it is contrary. Nobody cares to take the last apple, to cut the last cornstalks, to bind the last sheaf. It is like a "horror vacui". And that is the reason why it is left on the tree, the field, not that it is a sacrifice. That is a secondary idea. This appears also from the fact that many different spirits have been invented as receiver of the sacrifice.

The last part of something may be looked upon as dangerous too. That is the reason why the last piece of bread may be left, and the last corn uncut. This too may be a horror vacui or perhaps only the result of the said superstition that the one who does it, will be last in everything. Later it has been explained as a sacrifice.

The person who is last with his work will always be exposed to mockery and nicknames, often indecent. That is the case with the last reaper too, and many of the nicknames given to him are in the same way more or less obscene, perhaps still more here where young people of either sex are together, not because they have anything to do with fertility cult.

On the whole people in the country do not give much thought to fertility. That is something which comes of itself. Fear for the crop is much more dominating.

COMPARATIVE RELIGION AND POPULAR TRADITION

One thing of fundamental importance in modern philologico-historical method is the criticism of sources. Unless the scholar is able to form a critical estimate of the authenticity, nature, date, and origin, *etc.* of documents, he will not get very far. That the study of religion must avail itself of all the methods of philology and historical science is selfevident and has also been realized by the scholars working in this field. Study of the fundamental texts in their original languages, and knowledge of the cultural and historical milieu to which the various scriptural religions belong, have rightly been held indispensable; and, as a general rule, these religions have therefore received a thorough and satisfactory philological and historical treatment where confessional considerations did not interfere.

In the exploration of the field of primitive religion the case is different. Here the investigator has to work on material which is not only oral but in most cases fragmentary and fortuitously brought together, since more often than not it has been gathered by missionaries as casual travellers who are themselves usually mere amateurs in these fields. In so far as European traditions are concerned, the material is available to a considerably larger extent and in greater variety, but the students of Comparative Religion have failed to obtain a comprehensive view of the field and been content with a one-sided arrangement of the material at their disposal. Hence it has not been possible for them to obtain a thorough knowledge of the different categories of oral tradition and the real nature of these categories. This failure

has been a heavy handicap to their work. Although not a few very important contributions to the study of primitive religion have been made, in this field too serious mistakes have been committed, which might have been avoided through a fuller study of tradition, without which an adequate historical criticism is not possible and the results will turn out accordingly.

Popular tradition was first taken up for serious scientific consideration when the Grimm brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm, collected, published, and annotated German folk-tales, and Jacob Grimm, in his *Deutsche Mythologie,* threw light on German myths from a variety of popular traditions. The folklore material available to them was comparatively scanty, and so we cannot wonder that they were not always able to distinguish between the various categories of tradition, or to discover the different laws that govern them. For this reason many of their points of view were soon to become obsolete. We feel, however, the scientific ingenuity in their exposition, to which we must therefore often resort even yet.

The nearest successors of the Grimm brothers clung to the most barren speculations on myths. Everything was viewed under the aspect of myth, but they did not understand how to distinguish myth from other categories, and they knew nothing of the simple or primitive man's actual habits of thinking and imagining things. Their speculations on sun myths and astral myths, myths about the seasons and meteorological myths, were therefore devoid of any trace of the historical criticism requisite for all scientific work, and have accordingly been discarded, on the whole rightly, as utterly worthless, even if now and then they crop up again to disfigure some work or other in the field of the history of religions.

The other great achievement in the field of popular tradition was done by the British School of Anthropology. The great British folklorists, E. B. Tylor, Andrew Lang, and James Frazer, have, by comparing European popular traditions with the vast

material derived from primitive peoples in various parts of the world now available, obtained results of far-reaching significance. Thus it is these British scientists that have laid the first foundations of a truly comparative study of folklore, with an open eye for universal human features, such as are independent of national aspects, while on the other hand the latter were neglected by them. They have thus been able to point out many features of primitive thought which are broadly identical all over the world and have determined popular belief wherever it is found. And they have established the importance of rites in the realm of religion and the relationship of rites to beliefs and myths.

The work of the British folklorists is of great value, but at the same time it suffers from very conspicuous shortcomings. In tradition, the British school seeks for beliefs and rites only, and fails to study tradition on its own merits. Everywhere they see survivals from a time when the European peoples were primitive peoples living in a state of nature, but are not aware that even now simple thoughts are all alive, ever finding new expressions. They proceed too exclusively by way of analogy, unaware of the fact that many of the analogies they point out are false, proving nothing. Thus, in order to explain a traditional phenomenon in one place, they point to uncertain and often false analogues from the opposite side of the globe, without realizing that in order to be rightly understood it must in the first instance be viewed in connection with the other traditions of the *same* country, and conditions prevailing there. They seek in religion only primitive or magic beliefs and rites, without inquring into the various kinds of tradition, and examining their different qualities and conditions of life and therewithal their unequal value as sources in matters concerning belief and rites.

The British folklorists have to very great extent left their mark on the scientific study of primitive religion. Now this study, which had heretofore been almost exclusively concerned with myths, principally became a science of rites. In so far, however, as

studies in the field of primitive religion are concerned, the science of religion is still suffering from the shortcomings inherent in the British school. Sharply formulated assertions like the following one are not rare: "To science, myths are of no value at all, only the rite is of scientific importance, because it is maintained unchanged from time out of memory while everything else within the domain of tradition and religion changes." An assertion like this is excessively amateurish, and fortunately the programme it lays down is not strictly adhered to by scholars. The assertion is false both as regards myths and rites. Because myths are no less essential an attribute to religion than rites, any study of religion which neglects myths must be characterized as seriously biassed; and of course myths have a great scientific value, provided they are studied according to sound scientific methods, which was not the case with the old sun and weather mythology. Rite deserves to be studied, of course; but even if there are rites and elements of rite of great antiquity, rite cannot be characterized as being more tenacious and unchangeable than other traditions. Just as the old school of mythologists were not able to distinguish between myths and other categories of tradition, recent research into primitive religion has been suffering from inability to distinguish rite from a variety of other things, and has thus been lacking in the historical criticism requisite to true science. The school of Comparative Religion is thus incapable of seeing independently which categories of tradition are of importance for the study of religion and which have nothing to do with religion at all; they have contented themselves, in good faith, with the material prepared by former scholarship, and have now and then added some detail which might seem relevant. *Reliable scientific work in the field of primitive religion presupposes broadly based studies of popular tradition and a thorough knowledge of all its several categories.*

By way of illustration I shall quote examples of one or two categories of tradition which have been entirely misunderstood

by the school of Comparative Religion, and have given rise to false theories which have too long formed the basis of a very considerable part of the work done in this field, and left their mark thereon.

In an article in the *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens,* an outstanding work in many respects, a German scholar refers to the alleged fact that "at Biel (Switzerland) there is a widespread belief that God the Father (*der liebe Gott*) roasts infants by the evening glow", and he considers that "the thoughts which have given rise to such notions are, in part, difficult to trace". At once the author was of course aware, that the notion of God the Father as roasting infants does not belong to the Christian religion, and in that he is decidedly right. Hence he infers that it must be a survival. We can imagine that he has found no plausible association with the Teutonic gods, and that he knows nothing of the pre-Teutonic gods (Celtic, or Rhaetian) with whom such a belief might have been associated. His great fallacy is, however, that he sees survival in such a tradition, for it is nothing of the kind, nor is it a belief. Nowhere in Europe, nor at Biel, has it ever been *believed* that God roasted infants by the evening glow. It is but a jocular fictitious saying which has never been believed in. On the other hand, the saying is by itself very easily understood. A blazing evening glow produces the thought of a fire. That fire is in heaven; there lives God; and then a joker has hit upon his joke, certainly with the intention of shocking, but with no thought of being believed. Suppose a bystander had asked if that was really true, the whole party were sure to have burst out laughing at such simplicity. The somewhat risqué joke has, however, been appreciated as a sally of wit, and is often repeated when people see a blazing evening glow. The assertion that God roasts children by the evening glow does not belong, nor did it ever belong, to the category of "popular dogma", but comes under the category of "fictitious sayings", or *ficts,* as I call them for brevity. It might

be called a jocular *aition* as well, which would, however, make no difference if we realize that from the start, and ever since, it has only been meant as a joke.

In Swabia people say of the same thing, the luminous evening glow, that it comes from God's Mother roasting chicken. I need hardly say that every word I have written about God roasting infants also applies to the Holy Virgin's being occupied with roasting chicken, even if in this case the fict is somewhat less shocking to the Protestant ear. Likewise, it is jocular fict when people in Havelland say it is *der heilige Christ* (in other quarters Saint Nicholas) baking gingerbread, or when people in Western Bohemia say about white clouds in the sky that they come from Saint Peter baking bread.

The fact that the ficts here cited deal with baking and roasting places them in a special class so that one would seem justified in thinking — as some scholars actually have done — of some primitive concept providing a background against which they should be seen, a concept of the fecundity of Nature as a baking process of a sort in the enormous oven of the firmament, or of Nature, where the demons of vegetation produce the fertility of the earth, a concept which is supposed to have been transferred later on to God the Father, the Holy Virgin, Holy Christ, Saint Peter, or Saint Nicholas. There is no vestige of a warrant for such deep interpretation. As late as twenty or thirty years ago there were nevertheless in Sweden scholars who would have taken such a construction in earnest, and in the recent *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* there are contributors who think it self-evident. All these sayings are nothing but jokes, and *merely* jokes without any belief.

People may knit similar jocular ficts to other beings as well. When it is blowing a gale, and big bodies of white foam are formed along the sea-shores, it is said that the mermaid is doing her washing. There was a popular belief in the existence of a mermaid, and this belief is reflected in sagas which were rife

about her and in endeavours to protect oneself from getting into her power. It would, however, be out of character for her to do washing — she is no washing demon! But seen from a distance the white flakes of foam look like washing spread out to dry, and so people have invented the joke that they are the mermaid's washing. Likewise the glittering sunshine over the waves is said to be the mermaid driving her cattle to the fields. People really believe that she keeps cattle, and caution must be taken lest your cows should have any dealings with the sea-bull. But there is no belief behind the jocular fict that the glitter over the waves is dubbed the mermaid's cattle.

When mists arise from the bog, it is said to be the *mossakärring* (bog-hag) malting or brewing. The mist reminds people of the smoke from a fire, or the steam in a brewery, and then, having to explain who is brewing ale out there, they invent a purely fictitious being, the *mossakärring,* in whom no one believes; but brewing is, as a general rule, done by woman, and the person brewing ale out there in the bog must accordingly be a woman, the *mossakärring*. People do not, however, believe in her, so there are no sagns about her.

In Swabia, people say of the mist in the woods that it comes from the hares baking bread, in Waldeck it is the poultry that bake. In Schleswig the mists are said to come from the fox brewing ale, and in the Upper Palatinate it is the mountains that are said to brew. It is not here, any more than in the foregoing examples, a question of any belief, only of a jocular fict; and the fictitious nature of the saying is further stressed by the fact that it is animals, such as hares, hens, and foxes, or natural phenomena, such as mountains, that are here said to brew or bake. Everybody knows that hares do nothing of the kind, neither do hens, foxes, or mountains, and that there does not exist any belief at all that the demons of vegetation in the shape of hens or foxes look after nature's oven or brewer's copper.

All the instances of jocular ficts here quoted have been invent-

ed in connection with natural phenomena. Another group of ficts serve a pedagogical purpose. The assertion that it is the stork that fetches the infants from a bog, a pond, a spring, or a well, is an instance of this. There neither is, nor ever was, a mother who believed that it is the stork that has brought her child. People only say so to the little children in order to check their curiosity for the time being. Time enough for them to know how things really happen, and for the present they are thought to be none the worse for the funny story about the stork.

It is obvious, I think, that this is only a fict without any vestige of ancient belief, but learned men have nevertheless seen in it a relic of an ancient birdlike god promoting fecundity, and this deity has been identified with Hönir, mentioned in the *Edda,* and have accordingly derived his name from *ciconia.* What sort of a god Hönir was is another question, and the few details about him given in the Edda throw little light on it. Even if it should be possible to prove him to have been a bird deity, the stork fict cannot possibly bear this out. Its original content, that the babies are fetched from a humid place, is a jocular allusion to the birth organ. Secondarily, and very late, the conception of the stork as bearer has been added thereto, amongst other things because he is very busy in the low meadows, without any notion of his rôle as a being promoting fecundity for there is no authorization for such a belief to be found anywhere. Sound historical criticism must discard the stork fict as a scientific religious document.

Another group of pedagogical ficts aims at scaring children into keeping away from places where they might come to harm or do mischief. Children are warned against spending their time near the well by telling them that a dangerous *brunnsgubbe* (ogre of the well), or in the Scanian dialects *brunn-kessa,* lives there and may catch them. It is easier to make children understand that such a *brunnsgubbe* is dangerous to them than make them realize that some slight unwariness might have the most

serious consequences. But the grown-up people do not believe in the *brunnsgubbe,* and when the children have come to be intelligent enough to take care that they do not fall into the well, they will also learn that the *brunnsgubbe* does not exist.

In like manner people scare children from trampling down the grain by saying that there is an evil being, man or woman, a wolf or the like, who will catch them if they go there. This, too, is a case of typical ficts credited by no grown-up person, but useful for keeping the children off the cornfields. It is natural that such ficts should be considered by the grown-ups as mere jokes, but at harvest-time it may be kept going without any pedagogical aim, when those who happen to hurt themselves are jokingly said to have been bitten by the wolf, or people when cutting the last straws say they are catching the wolf or the hag. For this is but a purely jocular continuation of the former fict and no manifestation of belief.

Mannhardt and his followers, who were never aware of the category of fict, have thus entirely misunderstood the material, in which they saw manifestations of true belief. The scholar will easily fall a victim to such oversight if he has limited his attention to the smaller group association with harvest customs without being aware that the whole variety of groups together form one natural category of jocular tradition. This implies a lack of historical criticism resulting in the false construction of a belief in demons of fertility in human form or in the form of animals, a belief which *never* did exist anywhere in Europe. The lack of historical criticism has thus been a decisive factor in the study of Comparative Religion in Europe, which has got stuck in false theories about the cult and magic of fertility, theories which could not possibly have come into existence if the scholars had had a comprehensive view of popular tradition and knowledge of the true nature of its various groups.

A similar lack of historical criticism and, in consequence thereof, failing attention to the peculiar nature of tradition have made

themselves felt in the comparative study of religion in other ways as well. Thus almost every action outside the purely practical field has been taken for a rite with an originally magical or religious implication. A German scholar, whom I otherwise esteem, has *e.g.* quite recently pronounced that every play and every dance which is now certainly nothing but a purely profane play or dance, was at one time of a religious or magic nature, *i.e.* they were survivals of ancient rites. This is a very strong exaggeration of the space taken up in life by religion and magic. Both of them may certainly get associated with almost anything, but this does not imply that they should also be the *origin* of everything with which they had become associated. Besides, every one should be able to realize that children invent plays and even dances, *i.e.* rhythmical movements, by mere spontaneous action, obviously because they delight in rhythmics with no side-glances at religion or magic at all. The same is true of animals, which no one has seriously suspected of religious or magical intentions, even if it has been pointed out that certain species of animal sometimes act in a ritual manner.

Because the idea of survival is so carelessly conceived, and the conception of what should be understood by a rite so obscure, scholars have naturally gone astray. Thus the driving race home after Christmas matins and the *Staffansritt* on Saint Stephen's Day have been described as fertility rites. Critical research shows them to be something quite different.

The driving race home from the Christmas matins needs, strictly speaking, no other explanation than that several vehicles driving on the same road in the same direction will yield spontaneously to a natural urge to race. This is true of motor cars as well as of peasants' conveyances. Besides, there is an obvious connection between this custom and the circumstance that Christmas was held to be a time for signs, when people took presages or omina for next year's character and events. Such an omen was taken from the journey home from the Christmas matins. The

first to get home would also be the first to gather in his crops. It is only natural that, with an omen of this kind, people should be the more eager to get home before the others, and besides the spirit of competition has no doubt been additionally spurred through over-refreshment with Christmas ale or brandy. The strife to be the first cannot, however, be considered sufficient for making the drive home from the Christmas matins a rite; and as the race did not apply to the quantity or quality of the crops, but only to who should be the first to get them into the barns, there is no occasion whatever for calling it a fertility rite. To use the terms *rite* or *fertility rite* in this connection must be characterized as thoughtless jargon, because in so doing scholars have not made it sufficiently clear to themselves what is the exact meaning of the word rite, and have fancied they found ideas of fertility, fecundity, *etc.* everywhere, which is in fact a great fallacy.

The absurdity of taking the driving-race from the Christmas matins for a rite may be illustrated by an analogous example: A young girl is playing patience. Starting on another she says: »If this patience comes out I shall have a pleasant letter to-morrow.« The expected letter is most likely a love letter, and her anxiousness to get it makes her strain her intelligence to an extremity to make the patience come out, and may be she will even cheat a little for safety's sake. I doubt that any student of religion will dub the girl's playing patience a rite. But what if the girl be changed for a farmer, hoping, instead of a letter, for an excellent harvest if the patience comes out? Would it be a rite then? I have difficulty in believing that any scholar jealous of his reputation would call the farmer's playing patience a fertility rite, but it *should* be considered so no less at least than the driving-race from the Christmas matins!

In itself a problem of playing cards cannot, of course, be taken for a rite, no more than can a race. The addition that next day a pleasant letter may be expected, or that one may be the first

to finish the harvest, it no real belief, only a half-belief, which on this occasion serves as a sort of winnings or prize, but which does not, any more than any other prize, make the game or the race a rite. In the life of the common people competitions are very frequent occurrences, and people may then content themselves with the knowledge *that* they came out first, or at least that they did not come off worst. But it is very usual that various prizes are offered.

Sometimes the winner of the competition will get a visible prize, *e.g.* clothes, victuals, or money, but most often only some sort of ornament, some gay ribbons for his hat, wreath of flowers, or perhaps the privilege of being attendant to the prettiest girl of the village during the next year. Where the prize consists of such visible ornament or other palpable privileges, no one will, I think, consider the contest as a rite.

Another group of competitions will procure for the winner a title of honour, while the last will get a more or less ugly nickname. In some parts of Denmark the first in driving out the chattels on the morning of Saint Swithin's is dubbed King, the second Queen, the third Beadle *(Stodderkonge)*, but the last will be dubbed *Syvsover* (= Seven-Sleeper = Slug-a-bed) and will be heartily scoffed at. In other parts of Denmark a similar contest takes place at Whitsun, with almost the same honourable titles, while the last is dubbed Pig-whipper *(Svinepisker)*, Nightraven *(Natteravn)*, or Louse King *(Lusekonge)*. In the Mälar districts in Sweden similar competitions for getting out of bed first in the morning are known at Easter time; here, however, no honour is conferred on the first, it is only a matter of taking care not to be the last, for the poor devil will get such nicknames as Crow-Turd *(Kråklort)*, Longlazy *(Långlate)*, Secondday's dunce *(Anndagståsk)*, *etc.* The last riser on the 13th December *(»Luciadag«)* is in many places called the Louse, and in Kalmar County the last to get to bed on the night before Lady Day is dubbed *Horn-as* (Horned Carrion). In the case of these contests too, scholars have wisely

refrained from calling them rites, because one could hardly put religious or magical construction on the contest or the names, but possibly on the circumstance that it is said of the person who gets the nasty names that he will be last in everything during the period to follow.

The opprobrious names given to the last harvester have been viewed under a different aspect. The nicknames are there usually of a sexual nature; more often than not they are the names of sexual organs in a variety of drastic combinations and therefore less suitable to be cited in a public lecture, but they have given rise to the following argument: The harvest is seen mainly from the viewpoint of fertility; the sexual organs serve fertility; the sexual nicknames have been chosen for the sake of fertility; he among the harvesters to whom such a nickname is given is accordingly held to have been filled with the fecundity of the fields or of the crops, or to be obsessed by the fertility demon. The whole reasoning is a fallacy from first to last, *all* the premises being false. Scholars have too loosely and uncritically assumed conceptions and points of view than are quite foreign to the common people. The wishful thoughts entertained by the peasants in respect of the harvest concentrate on two things: lucky weather and good corn prices, but the notion of fecundity and, indeed, almost the very word of fertility, are altogether foreign to them. In the eyes of the common people the sexual organs, strangely enough, have nothing at all to do with fertility. All abuses and nicknames with a sexual colouring — and they are very numerous and used in a great variety of combinations — are defamatory names devoid of any thought of fertility. They are used because words of that category are tabooed and held to be particularly objectionable. When used as defamatory names they generally characterize the bearer as backward, tardy, and incompetent, but never as imbued with fecundity, and it is this very attribute of tardiness and incompetence that people would like to pin to the person who happens to be the last to have done with the harvest, just as the

same defamatory terminology is used in a lot of games and other contests. It seems queer to many a one who has not familiarized himself with the points of view that are here nearest at hand. The sexual organs are by the children only considered under two aspects: as urinary organs, and as tabooed organs, which should not be shown or talked about except where necessary. This explains the conception of them as shameful organs which underlies the defamatory names with a sexual colouring, but also their use for precautionary, apotropeic purposes (against dangerous beings, noxious animals, and sorcery). These viewpoints of the child are retained continuously in folk life as the governing points of view. *Very* soon the sexual organs come to be seen besides as organs of pleasure. This, together with the shameful aspect, has given to sexual matters a wide scope in the jests of the common people, especially in carnival processions, which have nothing to do, however, with fertility. Rarely, if ever, does the point of view of fertility manifest itself in folk life, and many primitive peoples are altogether without knowledge of the connection of the sexual organs with fertility. Scholars working in the field of Comparative Religion have almost entirely ignored the two above-mentioned points of view, and have built their theories of phallus cult, fertility magic, *etc.* one-sidely from the point of view of fertility, as if this were the only one possible, although it is very rare, if it does exist at all. Indeed they have even tried to explain the apotropeic use of the sexual organs by that theory of theirs about the fecundity inherent in these organs, an explanation which is pure nonsense. That it has been possible for students of religion to arrive at such false theories at all comes from the fact that the material at their disposal has been so extremely one-sided that it did not admit of any valuation in terms of historical criticism, and could not therefore be rightly interpreted either. They have, for example, heard nothing of the fact that such nasty names were used on other occasions than during the harvest work.

An omen pointing to the fact that a man will be the first to

have gathered in his crops, or the first to have finished all his tasks in the course of the year, is a prize in just the same manner as in similar cases a garland or an honourable name. And as in many contests people are less concerned with being the first, than eager that above all they should not be the last and and be given the ugly and defamatory names, the point is often that of escaping the bad omina supposed to fall upon the last. The last to get home from the Christmas matins, and likewise the last to get up on certain critical days, is said to be the last in all his doings during the period to follow, and that should, of course, be avoided. In harvesting, the last to have gathered in his crops, is threatened not only with the shame, but even with all sorts of dismal omina. She — or he — cannot get married, at least not that year, or she will only get a widower or an elderly rustic. That nothing of all this suggests that the latter should be filled with fecundity, is obvious; it is only intended to say that she will be a victim to one of the worst disasters that can befall her, a very severe punishment for her tardiness. Thus all these omina come as a sort of prize to the first, but as a threat to the last, but they suggest nothing about fecundity, and their association with the match cannot possibly make the latter either a rite or a fertility rite. *To the modern scholar such names must suggest a curious romantic coxcombry, which finds pleasure in seeing survivals of ancient primitive heathendom everywhere.*

In connection with the driving-race from the Christmas matins I mentioned the *Staffansritt,* or *Staffans skede,* on St. Stephen's Day, that too being often a contest, a race. From the Christmas matins people had at any rate to get home, and it is there only a competitive feature that has been added. Otherwise in the case of the *Staffansritt;* it is here an extra arrangement which in itself need not be indispensable. More or less, it is beyond the purely practical everyday points of view. Well, then, is the *Staffansritt* a rite? Certainly not. As more often than not it is undertaken

beyond the scope of practical needs, it appears under a great variety of forms. According to Olaus Magnus, who wrote the oldest report to my knowledge, the *Staffans skede* is a mere horse-race with the practical purpose of deciding which horses are best. First he tells us about the old Goths that they used to gather their best and finest horses within each separate province at public races, partly in order to sacrifice the very best to the gods, partly to offer the swiftest to their king for military purposes. This must be supposed rather to be his own speculations in connection with the classical authors he quotes, Herodotus and Strabo, but then he adds: "Now, in so far as the races arranged for public entertainment are concerned, it is customary for innumerable crowds of inhabitants within each province (observing, however, the distinction between the various townships) to gather on the 26th December on the ice-bound ponds and streams, where the ice is bright as a mirror, there to ride a match, either in order to win a prize or merely for the honour of the thing. The boundary or goal set for such races is at a distance of four or six Italian miles. The spoils of victory are some bushels of seed or a suit of new clothes, or that the horse that did not reach the goal falls to the winner. Nowhere in the North, however, are such matches arranged more often than among the Östgötar and Vestgötar. For their boundaries contain an exuberance of sappy meadows yielding nourishment to herds of many thousands of horses which gather there quite naturally on the exquisite grass bottoms." (*Hist. de Gent. Septentr.* I 24).

It seems that this description by Olaus Magnus states the actual conditions at his time, maybe somewhat rationalized, and he takes the whole thing to be a purely profane match with prizes in kind to the winner. Even if his preceding learned lucubrations on the purpose of the races be accepted, the latter must be held to be purely profane; for though the best horses were to be sacrificed, the purpose of the race was that of finding, by purely practical

means, which horses were the best. We cannot, therefore, from Olaus Magnus' statement deduct anything to the effect that it should be a question of a rite.

More recent statements relating to the *Staffansritt* give a different picture; according to these statements it is not a case of a horse-race arranged officially for the purpose of seeing which horse is the best, but a matter of watering the horses, so that it comes to be a contest between the grooms of the separate farms to be the first.

This ride to a well in order to water the horses must date back very far. It is mentioned in a *Staffan* Ballad, widely disseminated in Sweden, saying about *Staffan* that he "watered his five colts by the bright star". This form of the ballad is certainly of a relatively recent date, but the watering mentioned in the ballad is already depicted in the ceiling paintings of the old church of Dädesjö, which paintings have been dated to the later half of the 13th century, long before the time of Olaus Magnus. When Saint Stephen, the proto-martyr, who originally had nothing at all to do with horses, has come to be a patron saint of horses, and appears here as a "*stalledräng*" (groom) watering horses, this comes from the fact that his legend has absorbed that feature from an older custom, which can be proved to have existed as early as the 13th century, and certainly existed at a much earlier date.

It may be asked: Why, then, has the custom of watering horses in the early morning when "no daylight is as yet to be seen, but the stars in the heaven glimmer" been assigned to Saint Stephen's Day of all days? This fact may very well be accounted for from the implications of the Christian festival of Christmas. Christmas Day has always been considered as a very quiet day, on which no work, no visits, and no processions were permissible. Thus, on Christmas Day people were just allowed to give the cattle their fodder, but not to clear away the dung from cowshed and stables, which business accordingly had to be done on Saint Stephen's

Day, when people vied with one another to finish the job. In reward they got the *måkebull* (clearing bun), *i. e.* an extra treat, and farm hands often saw their chance to clear other people's stables before those in charge of that job had managed to get up, thus seizing upon their *måkebull*. It might also happen that they played a trick upon each other, so that a tardy groom, coming at length to do his work, might find the whole dunghill scooped into the stables, the tools hidden away, and other mischief done. It is clear that these customs in connection with Saint Stephen's Day, and everything associated therewith, can be fully accounted for by the fact the day was the next after Christmas Day.

In like manner the contest for being the first to water the horses may easily arise from the necessity to be early up and doing on the morning of Saint Stephen's Day; and here the usual type of Christmas presage will be helpful: The first to finish the watering of the horses on the morning of Saint Stephen's Day will be the first in every undertaking throughout the year. The prize for the contest is in this case a good omen, and in so far it is clearly analogous to the race to be the first to reach home after Christmas matins. This prize may, however, easily be given a more magical accent by saying that the first to reach the well would get the "cream" or the "fat", *i. e.* the power, of the water, so that his horses would keep healthy and well during the whole of the next year. The distinction is, however, insignificant and does not make the watering a rite, no more than if it had been merely a question of an omen. Popular tradition can here afford many analogues of the "Cream" or the water. A good analogue also is the pool of Bethesda, which healed only the first to step into it after its waters had been troubled by the angel; and the race to reach the pond has by no one, I presume, been taken to be a rite; nor is it, of course.

A particular power in the water during Christmas is mentioned in other traditions as well. Thus on Christmas Night all water is changed into wine at the hour of the nativity of Christ, and be-

tween Christmas and the Purification the water is believed to be particularly good for washing, for the Holy Virgin's soap is then in the water, as at that time she has to wash diapers continually. Is is therefore natural to award such a prize to the winner of the contest, so that he will receive a power from the waters not to be given to others.

A single horse-race to the common watering place of the village, which is sure to be the archetype, is often changed for a longer ride. In some places it is said to be a foreign well, preferably extra-parochial, or even situated in another district, or they are not content to visit *one* well, it must be *nine;* or the watering must take place in running water, preferably running northward. Such special rules may bear some semblance to ritual, because in rites also there is often an endeavour to get away from the humdrum of everyday routine by all sorts of special rules; but this will hardly suffice to make the whole proceeding a rite, a half-rite at most.

Another typical youthful procession is a form of *Staffansritt* in which the whole cavalcade take part, more or less dressed up and bedizened, passing from farm to farm to sing the Staffan Ballad and get some extra treat, but without a thought of anything magical or ominous. In relation to the watering ride this form is certainly secondary, and it is entirely bound up with the Saint's festival of the day, but this fact does not make it a rite. In catholic times this youthful cavalcade with the Staffan Ballad was associated with the patron saint of the day, not so much, however, for religious reasons as with a view to getting some amusement on the plea of worship, and it was the more apropos as the preceding day was too sacred to be used for processions. Even in catholic times the Staffan Cavalcade with the ballad was no rite, but a mere pageant.

I have explained the various forms of *Staffansritt* as contests and processions originating in the Christian festival of Christmas. How are they connected with the horse-races said by Olaus Mag-

nus to take place regularly on the 26th December? This is, to some extent, dependent on what may have existed before Christian times. Olaus Magnus describes the custom as very old and dating back to heathen times. From the Icelandic sagas we know that stallion fights took place in Iceland and in Norway in heathen times, and as in Sweden too there exist very old pictures of such fights, there seems to be a great probability that horse-races also took place, and the names of certain places seem to suggest the same thing. Whether in heathen ages these horse-races were actually connected with yuletide, is entirely unknown. The existing accounts of horse-races in heathen times connect them, if anything, with summer, but not with any mid-winter festival. In view of this, it would not be justified rashly to derive the *Staffansritt* from the heathen yule. I am not, however, blind to a certain possibility that the heathen winter festival may have afforded conditions no less favourable. The quiet of Christmas Day and the ban on clearing the stables may have had their equivalent in a day devoted to elfin sacrifices, a day on which every dealing with games had to be strictly tabooed because of the elves. On the next day this would as likely as not have resulted in customs corresponding to those connected with Saint Stephen's Day. Further there is every reason to believe that, like Christmas, the heathen festival abounded in omens *etc.*, for this is a common feature of all festivals, Christian or heathen, only there is no trace of evidence, and it is therefore needless to indulge in fancies about such a series of consequences, the more so, as all our Staffan customs may be fully accounted for by the Christian festival in its existing form. If the Staffan customs originate in the requirements of Christmas, the big races mentioned by Olaus Magnus may have been evolved from the more local Saint Stephen's rides, possibly by the transfer to Saint Stephen's Day of the official horse-races which used to be held at other times of the year. When scholars have taken the Staffan cavalcades for rites, instead of realizing that they are mere youthful processions and nothing else, this is

partly because they have not been aware of the fact that youthful processions will *secondarily* often have magic or ominal conceptions attached to them, and partly because they have not fully realized that, merely by virtue of its festive character, any religious festival will absorb all kinds of youthful frolic, contests and festive decoration, which have no more connection with the religious content of the festival than have the fairs, which also often spring up in connection with festivals of any kind. This is true of Christmas as well as of heathen festivals, and consequently no inferences concerning the religious or magical content of the festival should be drawn from such processions or festive decorations, nor should we see, a priori, anything religious in the additional merrymaking and decorations, even if they happen to allude *e. g.* to the saint of the day. If such attempts are made, the result will be nothing but quibbling constructions entirely foreign to the popular trains of thought that have produced the additions, and are therefore worthless to sound science.

What I have here dwelt on, are things which have nothing to do with real belief or with actual rites, and which have been mistaken by scholars, as we have seen, for documents of primitive religion. This does not imply, of course, that our popular tradition should be of no use to the study of religion. On the contrary, popular tradition abounds in material relating to primitive belief as well as rites, and this is of the highest value for studies in Comparative Religion. Indeed, for European research into primitive religion no other path is practicable than the one by way of our popular tradition. Only by an all-round study of this tradition will the scholar be able to discern which categories of tradition are really of a religious nature. Unless he teaches himself, by careful morphological studies in tradition, how to distinguish between categories, and has come to know what kind of documentary value can be attributed to each of them, he will have no possibility of acquiring a true scientific insight into the

relevant phenomena, whether their nature be one of belief, or of myth, or of rite.

Only the scholar trained in the field of living tradition will thus be able to assess rightly the traditional matter relating *e. g.* to Old Scandinavian or to Greek and Roman religions that has come down to us. Whoever is not able to distinguish between belief and fiction, between rite and procession, *etc.* in the field of popular tradition, will, in the nature of the case, be still less able to do so when he meets with the same categories in the authors of classical antiquity.

This applies, of course, to inquiries into the religions of primitive peoples as well; these, too, must be examined under the aspects of traditional studies. Such a religion as e. g. that of the Australians has been considered as a sort of paradigm of true primitive religion, but the study of it has given no particularly good results because the students of religion have not realized how tangled a medley are, indeed, the available accounts concerning their various ceremonies and other traditions. They are not all of them rites, by far, but a medley of religious and magical rites on one hand and purely profane processions on the other. And what is told for explanation by the aborigines, is not merely belief and myths, but to a large extent fict and other sorts of invention.

To disentangle all these intricacies in rough outline is a task in which only the scholar trained in the field of tradition will succeed. But to form a detailed estimate of all the facts will not be possible to any one who has not access to other material than the statements of the explorers, and who has not in person studied the aborigines on the spot; for the selection of dates given even by able explorers concerning Australians or other primitive peoples is insufficient for making a sure estimate of the material at hand. This material must necessarily be compared with the other traditions of the aborigines. The necessary milieu will never come fully into its own in the accounts of the explorers, who content

themselves, as a general rule, with the most glaring features, and offer no opportunity of distinguishing incidental additions and alterations from what is constant and essential.

To sum up I therefore want to emphasize that European studies of primitive religion must build on a extensive and all-round study of popular tradition, so as to make the scholar conversant with the whole variety of its categories and their morphology as well as their biology. The study of exotic primitive peoples must be made on the spot and not exclusively from travellers' accounts, but it must be backed by a fundamental knowledge of the life and nature of tradition, which the scholar can only acquire through studies of the rich and varied traditions of his own people[36].

FOLK-TALE STUDIES AND PHILOLOGY
SOME POINTS OF VIEW

Folklore has figured in philology ever since the beginning of the last century when the Grimm brothers fixed the attention of philological scholarship on the popular tradition of tales and sagns. For it is obvious that every philologist working on old literature will often meet with some matter derived, more or less directly, from oral tradition. This is true of the myths, hero sagas, and family sagas that have come down to us from classical antiquity, from the East, and from early Scandinavian times, no less than of the tales, poems of chivalry, fabliaux, etc. of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Such poetry can only be fully understood when studied in the light of kindred matter derived from popular tradition. The scholar must not only be acquainted with popular motifs and acquire a thorough general view of the field; he must, of course, also know the laws that apply to such tradition.

The slow progress made in exploring popular tradition is bound up with the facts that a necessary general view has only been attainable by slow degrees, and that the explanation of the laws of tradition has too often and too long been replaced by ill-founded hypotheses, which have certainly been of some use, but have also led scholars astray and thus detained scientific research and prevented it from reaching the goal. It may be of some interest to review the errors of scholarship, the more so, as the demands to be made on future scholars also will thus stand out the more clearly.

The great and definitive discovery of the Grimm brothers was the international spread of folk-tales and the great antiquity that must often be ascribed to them. These two weighty facts, which

have been thoroughly borne out by later discoveries, made a closer examination of them an important and significant task even by itself, apart from the bearing they may have on the study of old literature. When the Grimm brothers tried to account for these remarkable facts they introduced the hypothesis that these folk-tales had been handed down from a remote Indo-European past, and that they were relics of a common mythology of the Indo-European peoples. Their hypothesis was natural at a time when the mutual relationships of the Indo-European languages had just been discovered, and some common features had been found in the myths of various peoples.

The first part of the hypothesis, the notion that the tales were relics of a common past, should be alive even yet, as a whole series of them can be shown to date back at least 3000 years, which fact proves it to be possible for tales from such a remote period to be handed down by oral tradition within one or several peoples. This must, however, be qualified by three important reservations. First, that new tales have been invented and may be invented at any time, and that accordingly a lot of folk-tales must be of a considerably later date. This is self-evident and was, of course, also realized by the Grimm brothers. Their Indo-European theory was certainly not conceived as applying to more than a certain number of tales, only above all the fantastic chimera tales, which bore a certain resemblance to myths. That the theory did not make a sufficiently clear distinction between the various categories of folk-tales, was due to the fact that terminology was as yet insufficiently developed.

The second reservation must be made in respect of loans of tradition from other peoples. The Grimm brothers were inclined to deny the possibility of loans, apart from purely exceptional cases. That a strong resistance to loans may be proved very often, is sure enough. This may be seen from the Tale of the Two Brothers written down in ancient Egypt about 1300 B.C. This remarkable tale was pieced together from an Indo-Persian tale and

a kindred one from the Pontic countries with some particularly Egyptian additions, and did not in its totality belong to Egyptian folk-tradition. The two stories here united exist as independent folk-tales even yet, one in Western Asia, the other in Slavic or Slavic-influenced countries; but although they have a very long time behind them, they have not spread beyond the area of Slavic culture, even if one or two records have been made which have clearly been brought by immigrants from the East. This tells strongly in favour of the view that loans from aliens by way of oral tradition is beset with considerable difficulties. There do exist, however, clear instances of loans from quite exotic peoples. Thus the tale of The Animal Sons-in-law and their Magic Food (Aa 552 B) has been borrowed from the Eskimos into Danish and Norwegian popular tradition[37] and is thus certainly no ancient Indo-European heirloom.

The third reservation applies to the circumstance that the Indo-Europeans have absorbed part of the non-Indo-European peoples, who have thus become Indo-Europeanized, but may well have retained their own tradition of folk-tales, as indeed is most likely to be the case. All the Mediterranean peoples in Western and Southern Europe have from the start been superior to the Indo-European immigrants as regards peaceful civilization, and they must also be supposed to have made important contributions to the stores of folk-tales preserved by the Indo-Europeans of our day. There exist not a few tales which are hardly to be met with north of the Alps, but are among those in greatest favour in Southern Europe. An instance of this is the Tale about the Three Oranges (Aa 408) which was certainly taken down by Asbjørnsen in Oslo and must be supposed to have been brought there by some immigrant or perhaps a book, but which is otherwise generally speaking not to be found north of the Alps. It is an important task for future folk-tale studies to mark out the border line in this respect between Indo-European folk-tale tradition proper on one hand, and Mediterranean and other tradition on the other. As

yet no serious attempt to elucidate these facts has been made. I shall, however, point out an example which suggests most interesting problems.

The tale about the Magic Flight (Aa 313) is most singularly widespread. In fact, its occurrence seems to coincide with the extensive spread of megalithic culture, and it may therefore with great probability be characterized as a megalithic tale! Megalithic culture appears to have originated in the Middle East, presumably among a Mediterranean people, and it has been spread by colonization over the ocean to the islands and coastal districts in the Mediterranean and northward along the Atlantic coasts to the British Isles and to French, Northern German, and Scandinavian coastal districts, but also along the coast of the Indian Ocean to parts of India, to Japan, and to the islands in the Pacific as far as Samoa, perhaps even to America. The colonizing Megalithic people have everywhere been amalgamated with the original population of the countries colonized by them, and the strange tale of the Magic Flight has followed it persistently all over the wide area. This singular dissemination suggests that the tale in question was composed not later than about 2500 years B.C., which would give it an age of 4500 years at the least. We must not be too much amazed at this great antiquity, as the story enters into the composition of the early Greek (probably pre-Greek!) tale of the Argonauts[38] as an important part of it, which fact proves it to have existed in Europe at least for 3000 years. Somewhat similar must be the case of the tale of the Swan Maidens (Aa 400), which has much the same composition, many common motifs, and, broadly speaking, the same spread as has the tale of the Flight from the Ogre. When, in 1919, Helge Holmström published his work: *Studies on the Swan Maiden Motif,* he tried to account for the singularly wide circulation of the tale by the assumption that India, centrally situated in relation to the home countries of the widely spread variants, was the country of origin. The assumption was understandable, as at the time

when the paper was written scholars did not, as a general rule, give a thought to inheritance, but saw every aspect of the dissemination of a tale as a result of migration, about the precise nature of which they had only very vague ideas. But as there is nothing else to bear out the assumption that India should be the original home of the tale, it is more reasonable to seek the explanation, not in the migration of the tale, but in the colonial formation brought about by the Megalithic people within an area of such immense extent.

The last part of the Grimm hypothesis, the derivation of the folk-tales from time-old myths, was very natural at a time when linguistic studies had suddenly given to the myths a novel interest and scholars had not yet come to understand the true nature of either the myth or the folk-tale. The mythological theory of the folk-tale must, however, be characterized as an absolute mistake, although useful in so far as it enhanced the interest in the folk-tales to a high degree and served as a strong lever to collective activities. But for this strong incentive the stock of folk-tales taken down would certainly have been considerably more meagre and scanty than it is now; and the possibilities of scholars arriving at good results would have been more limited.

If the mythological theory has thus done some good, we should not, however, be blind to the fact that, being false, it led the scholars of the 19th century most seriously astray. It had not been realized what a myth was precisely, amongst other reasons because popular beliefs and sagns associated therewith had not been studied, which is an indispensable condition for scientific mythological research. Scholars were deceived by the apologetic interpretation of the myths as symbols of elements, natural phenomena, etc. made by the ancient Greek philosophers who endeavoured thus to explain away what in many Greek myths was found objectionable from a religious or ethical point of view. These speculations of the ancient Greek philosophers were, however, in the 19th century understood as rendering the true mean-

ing of the myth, and scholars therefore grafted this kind of allegorical interpretation on to folk-tales and myths instead of studying the common man's actual habits of thinking. When at length they became aware that the most dissimilar allegorical interpretations might with equal right be attached to one and the same mythological or folk-tale motif, it was realized that the procedure must be altogether wrong. Thus the whole study of mythology lost its former reputation and has not yet found its proper place in science. The failure led to the false inference that myths are without any scientific value, which is, indeed, an absurdity, because myths constitute an essential part of any religion. A properly planned study of mythology is therefore a natural ingredient of an adequate science of religion.

The next important achievement in the field of folk-tales was attained by the Indologist Theodore Benfey, who published, in 1859, his important discovery that the *Panchatantra,* the ancient Indian collection of tales, had reached Europe already in the Middle Ages through translations from Sanskrit into Medieval Persian, and further into Syrian, Hebrew, and ultimately into European vulgar tongues. He had thus established an important cultural influence from the East on Medieval Europe, which influence was not confined to the translation of the *Panchatantra,* but evinced itself also in the transfer of similar people's books into Latin and other European languages.

Starting from this fact, Benfey drew, however, an analogy equally bold and false: All our folk-tales, so he asserted, animal fables excepted, had been composed in India within historic times, in the centuries immediately following Buddha's appearance. Later on they had migrated to Europe, partly by way of literature, partly by oral tradition. He considered that the beginning of such a migration of tales might have been made through Alexander's Indian expedition, but that it was mainly through the intermediary of the Arabs and during the Age of Crusades, maybe also by the Mongolian conquest of Russia that

the great stream of Indian tales flooded Europe. Benfey himself realized, however, that all this was only a working hypothesis, and that the theory had to be proved by examination of every separate folk-tale. The faults in the theory were, however, very obvious.

As a matter of course, no analogy at all can be drawn from the migration of a literary collection of tales to Europe from India by way of literary translation, to oral tradition. For the latter obeys its own laws which are altogether different from those governing written literature. The possibility that such an oral tradition may be spread by wandering mendicants, Buddhist or Christian, cannot be entirely ruled out in special cases; but there is here a very far cry from possibility to probability and actual fact, more especially if this is asserted to apply to all folk-tales. Mendicants will *e.g.,* as a rule, have no use for chimera tales and should accordingly not be credited with their dissemination. That Benfey did not realize immediately that his daring hypothesis was altogether mistaken, was due, among other things, to the fact, that at Benfey's time the folk-tales had not been colleced to a sufficient extent, and that for this reason alone he could not have an approximately all-comprehensive view of the stock of folk-tales, in Europe or in India, apart from the literary collections known to him.

A sufficiently comprehensive view has not been possible till our own time, and then only thanks to the assiduous registration work done by such scholars as Reinhold Köhler, Johannes Bolte, Svend Grundtvig, H. F. Feilberg, Antti Aarne, Stith Thompson, and Albert Wesselski; in spite of this, however, only few have allowed themselves the time to acquire such a comprehensive view.

If we study the *Panchatantra* and compare its contents with Aarne-Thompson's *Types of the Folk-tale,* it cannot escape us that there are here two quite different worlds. The index of tale types found in Aarne-Thompson is not complete, but its more

than a thousand different numbers represent the European stock of folk-tales quite well. Very few of these, scarcely more than six, namely 3 animal fables and 3 jocular fables, are to be found among the ninety tales or so contained in the *Panchatantra*, and among these six some have so rarely been taken down in Europe that they are evidently borrowed articles that have slipped in accidentally from books and cannot be said really to have taken root in European tradition.

The chap-book *The Seven Sages* is of oriental origin in so far as the framework-story and four of the tales have actually been taken from the corresponding oriental collection held to be derived from an Indian source, which has not, however, come to our knowledge. The other eleven tales in our chap-book have been taken from European tradition but are missing in the oriental redactions of the same book.

In Indian oral tradition there are likewise only a few tales that approximately correspond to, and may be identified with, European types. Thus it is shown already by comparing the type of folk-tale to be found in Asia and in Europe respectively, that a mass immigration of folk-tales from the East into Europe is out of the question; and the few cases of congruity do not in themselves prove India to be the donor, and Europe to be the receiver, apart from just a few cases where it is a matter of loans taken exactly from written literature. That Benfey ventured to advance his theory about the Indian origin of all European folk-tales, is thus in part a consequence of the fact that he neither had nor could have any comprehensive view of the European stores of oral tale tradition. Likewise he could not know that a whole series of European tales may now with certainty be attributed to a much earlier period than that of the rise of Buddhism, or the connections between India and Europe which he considered as decisive. That a folk-tale study, built on so false an assumption as Benfey's Indian hypothesis could not forward research to any considerable extent, is obvious.

Other failings also added to the difficulties. At Benfey's time scholars had not learned to distinguish clearly between the sharply defined types of folk-tale. Benfey's just claim that his hypothesis should be tested in the case of every separate tale, gave rise to scamped comparisons of the European tales with those of India, and if only *some* resemblance was found, the Indian origin was held to be established. When Benfey himself set out to examine some tales with strange helpers (A 513), he grouped as variants of one and the same tale, several altogether dissimilar tales without any mutual relationship and even belonging to quite different categories, merely because they contained characters with strange attributes, which were not, however, the same in the types compared. From the story in the *Panchatantra* about the Lion and the Bull who were intimate friends but were divided by a jackal who set them against each another by evil slander, various scholars of the Indian School have derived the tale of the old Woman as Trouble Maker, in some Swedish variants called Kitta Grå, who could set a husband and wife at variance whom the Devil had not been able to divide (Aa 1353)[39]. The two tales are altogether different in respect of cast and details, but they build on the fact that it is possible to divide friends by slander. This method of picking a quarrel has been used innumerable times in real life without the mischief-maker having to learn it from one tale or another. And this kind of intrigue has everywhere been capable of creating such effects, so that entirely independent stories might be composed about it in different countries. The absurdity of deriving the tale of the old Woman as Trouble Maker from the Indian tale about the Lion, the Bull, and the Jackal, of all tales, is shown, amongst other things, in the fact that the latter is obviously a *literary* tale, in which human matters have been deliberately remodelled into an animal fable, as has been done in various other tales in the *Panchatantra*. He who composed the tale of the Lion, the Bull, and the Jackal, is sure to have known stories with human actors

such as Aa 1353, for there are various types of such stories in India and in other countries, probably independent of one another. On the other hand, what is true in this case is that the tale was disseminated by preachers who had learnt it from collections of homiletic examples, some of which were derived from the East, in part from India. We should not, however, in such cases overemphasize India as the country of origin. Jews and Arabs are at least as good composers of examples, and as the tale about the old Woman as Trouble Maker in its European form does not appear to have been known farther East than among the Arabs, there is no occasion for seeking the country of its origin farther away.

The Indian School had thus from the start both an insufficient view of the material on which they theorized, and insufficient method. In spite of this they have no doubt done some service to science. For they have contributed not a little to teaching scholars how to distinguish between myths and tales, and have thus been instrumental in putting an end to the thoroughly mistaken fantasies on myths prevalent at the time between Grimm and Benfey. Such a scholar as Reinhold Köhler, who had at first unreservedly approved Benfey's theory, was soon to become aware of the shortcomings of the school. He therefore changed right over into mere registration work, through which an important foundation of a more comprehensive view was laid. Average philologists, however, who have not gone in for folk-tale studies, have, precisely because of their ignorance of the European stock of types, dogmatically clung to the oriental origin of all tales. They have thereby got confirmed in their view that a considerable part of the matter contained in the medieval collections of homiletic examples, probably the only folk-tale material in which they have taken interest, is actually oriental.

This does not, however, apply to all philologists. In his famous treatise on the Fabliaux, so popular in the Middle Ages, Joseph Bédier[40], the distinguished French philologist, established that the

bulk of French fabliaux had no counterpart in the whole literature of oriental tales, and that those which had, were better in their French form than in the oriental. He was inclined, therefore, to maintain that this sort of jocular tale originated in France, admitting, however, that this could not be strictly proved, and that the same type of tale might well arise independently in any place.

This was a point of view which had also been urged by British anthropologists. It must be acknowledged as correct to a certain degree, inasmuch as one and the same idea, one and the same point, may give rise to narrative composition among various peoples. It is a possibility that must always be allowed for by the scholar. The notion that two stories with highly individual motifs should originate independently in different quarters, is however an absurdity. I can here refer to the above-mentioned example of the Bull, the Lion, and the Jackal on one hand, and the old Woman as Trouble Maker on the other. The conformity between the two stories consists only of the universal human fact that friendship or love may be done away with by an artfully arranged campaign of slander. On the other hand, the very plot of the second tale, with a kind of contest between the Devil and the wicked woman to be able to sow dissension between husband and wife, is so individually devised that one would be apt to presume a traditional connection between all variants with that content. And this is further strengthened when the wife is enticed to cut some stubbles of beard from her husband's throat during his after-dinner nap in order to make sure of his love, while her husband has falsely been made to believe that the wife has promised to cut his throat that day. All variants with the whole of this content must have a common origin, and wherever in Europe they are found, they are almost certain to be derived, more or less directly, from the homiletic example.

The importance of Bédier's attack on the Indian theory consists not so much of the results of his examination. He did not

arrive at a fixed, established result; and, with the better access to the material open to present-day scholars, a renewed scrutiny of the fabliaux might give quite different results. The important thing was, however, partly that he created justifiable doubts of an ill-founded hypothesis, and that he confined himself to a natural group governed by different laws from those that apply to other groups of tales. In the latter respect previous scholarship had been singularly careless. It could already be said of Grimm that he used the common appellation *Märchen* for all popular tradition, even when thinking of the fantastic chimera tales only. Benfey had, at any rate, segregated animal fables as a distinct group which he found so different in kind from all other folk-tales that — for altogether insufficient reasons — he considered this group as originating in Greece and not in India, where, however, animal tales abounded. But when, on the other hand, he dealt with the rest of all the various groups indiscriminately, it must be called a serious mistake. Bédier spoke only of the jocular fables, even if he believed that the independent origin of the same tale among various peoples might apply to other groups of tales as well. His contribution was in any case a serious warning against founding thoughtless and one-sided hypotheses on a thing of so multifarious an aspect as the folk-tale. At the same time, however, his doubt of the possibility of attaining certain results deterred scholars from continuing studies of the folk-tale, and that may be the reason why, since his treatise, so little has been done in France in the field of folk-tale research.

The next step forward in folk-tale research was taken by Kaarle Krohn, the Finnish literary historian. From Julius Krohn, his father, he had learnt the geographical method the latter had applied to the *Kalevala-cycle,* and he availed himself of it in his these, *Bär (Wolf) und Fuchs,* 1886, in which he examined the animal fable about the bear, or the wolf, fishing with his tail through a hole in the ice. It was the first monograph on a

folk-tale to be undertaken by careful scientific method. Krohn aimed at collating, as far as possible, all the variants of the tale, and furthermore each motif was made subject to close critical scrutiny. By a statistical and psychological examination of all the several variations in their geographical occurrence Krohn endeavoured to reconstruct the original form of the tale and to determine its home, which he defined as Northern Europe. It could neither be India, nor Greece, as imagined by Benfey. Krohn also asserted that any people might produce folk-tales.

Kaarle Krohn's monograph marks an epoch in the history of folk-tale research, introducing for the first time a strict method. He thereby showed what thorough detailed work must be applied to the study of a folk-tale before it is possible to say anything with certainty about its original home, and that what was true of *one* tale could not be considered to apply as a matter of course to *all* folk-tales. His work was thus an urgent call for scientific sobriety. Originally he had thought of dealing with all fables about bears, wolves, and foxes. Having to give it up for reasons of time and scope, he had, however, thereby procured for himself a wider outlook on kindred matter, which was a great advantage in preparing the material scientifically.

What was wanting, however, in Kaarle Krohn's treatment of his animal fable, was the insight into the laws that govern the kind of material dealt with which is a prerequisite of any scientific investigation. Want of such insight was, however, most natural at his time. The work heretofore bestowed on the folk-tales had not been thorough enough for scholars to have made, or to be able to make, the observations required by science concerning the origin, evolution, application, and spread of various tales. So it was self-evident that Krohn had to fill up the gaps in the knowledge of the tales then at hand with unchecked hypotheses.

Even in his thesis on the Bear (Wolf) and the Fox, such a hypothesis has led him to deny what actually appears from the material. When, in the title of the thesis, he brackets the wolf,

it is because he considers the bear as belonging originally to the fable, and that the wolf has got into some variants probably by mistake instead of the bear. The fact is, however, that the whole of the medieval material always makes the wolf appear as the adversary of the fox who tricks him into fishing with his tail; and the same holds good of the whole of the Russian, German, British, and French material. It is only in Scandinavia and Finland that the bear has taken the place of the wolf. Krohn, however, considered this to be the original idea, because in that way an aitiological explanation is obtained, to account for the fact that the bear has no tail. This, he thought, must be the original reason why the tale has come to exist at all. He here neglected the fact that aitiological explanations of the shapes of animals are as a rule jocular, and that they have often been placed in a context where they must decidedly be secondary. Likewise, for an animal to lose his tail, in order that his utter failure may be made obvious, is not a very rare motif. There are *e.g.* various fables about foxes, jackals, and wolves in which these animals lose their tails by some accident, but there is not the slightest occasion for assuming that the fable in question should originally have been made about a permanently tail-less animal, in order to explain such a bodily structure. There is every reason for presuming a mutation of the fable, by which a facetious narrator intended to make the contrast between the strong animal and the sly more striking still than that between wolf and fox and at the same time to obtain a humorous explanation of the fact that the bear has no tail. This mutation of his of the wolf into bear got the ascendancy in the Scandinavian-Finnish area so as to become the sole prevailing oicotype of the fable there. Had the aitiological motif been the original one, the fact that it has not been maintained anywhere outside the Scandinavian area would have been incomprehensible.

Kaarle Krohn did not continue his work on folk-tale studies, but proceeded to devote himself exclusively to the continuation

of his father's studies on the *Kalevala*. He set a fashion, however, through Antti Aarne, his pupil, who applied the same method to an array of profound thorough monographs on folk-tales. His principal achievement, however, is his *Verzeichnis der Märchentypen,* later on adapted and enlarged in Aarne-Thompson: *The Types of the Folk-Tales,* which is of supreme value for the registration and cataloguing of folk-tale types. This list of types is a systematic arrangement which makes it possible, in cataloguing a collection of tales, to quote only the systematic number of each tale; and it is a most helpful guide for the scholar.

The failings in the method of folk-tale studies instituted by Krohn and Aarne consist, as has already been pointed out, in the circumstance that the life and laws of the folk-tale have not been sufficiently explored. The failing knowledge of these matters had to be replaced by working hypotheses which later on proved themselves to be false. The point of view of inheritance, which is indispensable, as the tales have indeed not only been spread abroad but also handed down through thousands of years, has been entirely lost from sight, while the concept of migration introduced by Benfey has been the sole prevailing point of view. This must be considered a serious instance of one-sidedness.

The very word "Folk-tradition" had in former times led to the false and romantic notion that this tradition belonged to the people in its totality, who were correspondingly imagined as consisting solely of composers of tales. This false idea must be supposed more or less to underlie Krohn's and Aarne's notion of how a tale migrates. They have availed themselves of two images to illustrate this view. One image is that the tale spreads like rings on the calm surface of water when a stone is thrown on it. The other, that the migration wells forth like a stream. Both are obviously wrong, founded on the false supposition that every one who hears a tale will carry it on to others. In fact the dissemination of a tale is desultory to a high degree. Only a very small number of active bearers of tradition equipped with a good

memory, vivid imagination, and narrative powers do transmit the tales. It is only they who tell them. Among their audience it is only a small percentage who are able to recollect a tale so as to recount it, and a smaller percentage still who actually do so. Most of those who have heard a tale told and are able to remember it, remain passive carriers of tradition, whose importance for the continued life of the tale consists mainly in their interest in hearing it told again, wherefore they point out the active carrier of tradition, the *traditor,* as a good narrator, and call upon him to narrate. For a tale to be transferred from the place where the narrator has his home, some active carrier of tradition must not only come to the new place but also remain there long enough for a new *traditor* to be trained. That sort of transfer takes place in a most desultory manner, subject to no rule, and has not slightest resemblance to the rings that spread on water.

From that false hypothesis of his, that tales spread like rings on water, Kaarle Krohn inferred that if a tradition should be met with in two places A and B, it must exist also in the whole of the interjacent area. The inference is correctly drawn, but is nevertheless false, because all the premises are false. When Axel Olrik made the assertion that the Caucasian myth of the Fettered Giant was transmitted to the North from the realm of the Goths on the Black Sea by Goths visiting their old Northern homes, Krohn objected to this result as preposterous, because the myth about the Fettered Giant must then have occurred in the whole of the interjacent area of Russia. As it was not to be found there, a transfer from Caucasus to the North could not possibly have taken place.

Whoever knows anything about the actual life of tradition will easily be able to prove this inference to be false. The travelling Goth, going up the streams of Russia — indeed he was even to make the voyage through the Mediterranean and round Europe — need not on the whole journey make use of the traditions he

bears in memory. Maybe he will not even get into touch with the people whose land he traverses, but whose language he does not know. And if a talk be brought about by means of an interpreter, or by gesture, it is done in order to get necessary information about the route, or of such things as he may need to acquire by barter. Certainly he will not take into his head to serve up his stock of tales or sagns during these proceedings. And should it happen on a few occasions, it is almost certain that it will be a thing of so little actual interest to his audience, that it will not survive there. Whereas the traveller on his way will have no use for his stores of tradition, and no occasion to narrate, the more occasion will he have on reaching the North. He is the traveller from afar and will be the centre of interest at feasts and other gatherings. He will be called upon to tell about all sorts of things. Opportunities for narration will crop up spontaneously, and the transfer of the myth about the Fettered Giant on to Loki, who belonged to the race of giants, but was on good terms with the gods until their rupture, is brought about without difficulty.

To folk-tale research questions regarding the bearers of tradition and occasions to narrate must be problems of first rate importance, and if they are ignored, and scholars build instead on uncertain working hypotheses, the results must be false, more or less. Again, it is of vital importance to strike a right balance between the points of view of inheritance and dissemination, between the conservatism of tradition and its new formations.

These points of view should, I think, be self-evident, but when Aarne wrote his monographs, no one had opposed Krohn's comparison with the rings that spread on water, although Benfey had already realized the importance of the historic connections between the peoples. Krohn stressed his point by saying that, in his opinion, frontiers offered no resistance to the spread of folk-tales, because border populations are bilingual. Such border populations do not, however, play any important part in these matters, for the number of carriers or receivers of tradition is

not greater among them than in other places. Denmark has, indeed, a common frontier with Germany, and on it a bilingual population, but the influence from German tradition that is to be met with in Denmark, is due less to a bilingual border population than to German immigrants, and to such Danes as have returned to the home country after a long stay in Germany. That Sweden, too, has German folk-tale traditions, can have nothing at all to do with a border population, but must be ascribed exclusively to German immigrants, or to Swedes that have returned home from Germany. In both cases German influence may naturally also be ascribed to tales that have been translated in children's books and chap-books, a possibility which must be allowed for anywhere.

The other metaphor used by Kaarle Krohn to illustrate the way in which folk-tales are disseminated, was that of a stream welling forth in a certain direction. This metaphor, I think, he has most likely taken over from the Indian School. His first work was, indeed, directed against the one-sidedness of the Indian School. But it was an incontestable fact that traditions had been influenced by the East, and that France through her fabliaux had influenced the rest of Europe considerably. He therefore thought of these influences as streams springing partly from India, partly from France.

In this metaphor he was very literal. He pointed out *e. g.* that in Finland two streams of folk-tale traditions had met, one from the East which had left a Russian stamp on the Karelian stock of tales, and one from the West which had marked the folk-tradition of Western Finland with a Swedish impress. He said to me that it seemed as if this fact suggested a law: "Where two streams of tradition meet they will check one another."

The whole of this reasoning, however, rests on a mistake. Eastern Finland had long been under Russian control, and it was not till 1809 that it was definitively united with Western Finland into a grand duchy. It was by no means the streams of tradition

from the East and from the West, passing through bilingual border districts, that caused the formation of two such different areas of tradition. The part of Finland which had belonged to Sweden politically for so long a period, had been furnished at that time with a lot of Swedish officers and civil servants, who often brought with them servants of Swedish nationality. The part belonging politically to Russia received in like manner Russian garrisons and Russian civil servants. Among these Swedes and Russians, who had come into the country for political reasons, were many carriers of folk-tale tradition, and they implanted the folk-tale traditions of their home countries on Finland. The law of the streams that meet, is accordingly altogether mistaken and is based on a false hypothesis.

Another hypothesis, most natural for incipient folk-tale research, was that the original form of a folk-tale should be the most complete and the best, also the most logical; and likewise, that where the most original form is to be found, there will also be the original home of the tale. The better a folk-tale, the greater will be its popularity, and the more easily will it survive. Scholars will therefore be apt to presume that incomplete, or relatively poor, variants are products of degeneration. Such was my own view when I made my first efforts in the field of folk-tale research. It is, however, based not on experience, but on mere guesswork. However specious the argument, it must be characterized as a false hypothesis.

Not a few folk-tales have been composed with a sagn for a starting-point, and then the original thing is, of course, the sagn. Such a sagn may be continued in the manner of a tale, and various tale-composers may invent entirely different continuations. Striking instances of this are the various tales about the Grateful Dead (Aa 505-508)[41]. The nucleus of the tale is that a man provides for the burial of an unburied corpse. To this nucleus there has been added, at the sagn-stage, even an event which is considered as a reward for the good turn, and with this

addition the sagn is already to be found in Cicero *(De divinatione* I 27). But various tale composers have, starting from the sagn, gone on fabulating, making the grateful dead man enter into the service of the generous youth, however without giving himself away, and assist him on various occasions, so that he succeeds in winning a princess. We may imagine that the various tale-composers had the sagn only at their disposal, but one or several of them may, of course, have heard a complete tale and composed another to the same opening. If so, the new tale may be considered as a mutation of the model; but such a thing will be difficult to decide with certainty in their case. There exists in the East a mutation of the opening about the Grateful Dead[42], formed so that a prince severs a serpent from a frog, but in order not to bereave the serpent of its natural nourishment he gives it a piece of his own flesh. Later on both serpent and frog assume the human form, come to the prince as servants, and help him to win a princess much in the same way as in the tales about the dead helper. The resemblance between the two openings is so great that they cannot be altogether independent of each other. The last quoted form must be supposed to be a mutation of the opening about the dead helper, but fused on to other stories about severing serpent and frog (cf. *e. g. Gesta Romanorum* 99).

Mutation is an important phenomenon in the tales, and it is not always easy to decide which of two or several mutations of one and the same folk-tale motif or composition is nearest to the original form. An original motif may be superseded by a new mutation, but a new mutation may also yield to the older form, being unable to assert itself at its expense. If a motif is particularly popular, this very fact may induce various narrators to mutate it in different ways.

As an example of such a motif, popular in its home country, where it exists in several mutations, take the motif *Hjaðningavíg*, well-known to Germanists. It was borrowed from Ireland by Norse poets, and during the viking age it was popular in the

North, where it was mixed up with a German heroic saga, but has later on disappeared altogether from Northern popular tradition. In Irish tradition it is popular to this day, and has been preferably attached to the *Finn-cycle*. It is about a contest which is ever renewed because a witch resuscitates the fallen warriors, who next day wage a new fight against their conquerors. The contest is brought to an end by a foreign hero, who does not go home to rest after the victory, but remains on the battle-field waiting for the witch. He withstands her lethargic sorcery and kills her. There exist, however, other mutations. One of them, for example, is about Finn's arrival in the country of the giants, where he is appointed court dwarf to the king of the giants. He becomes aware that the King is always tired, because he has to wage a single combat every night with a redoubtable giant. Finn goes fighting in his place, defeats the giant, and the giant's father too, and in the end also the giant's mother, who was the worst of all. As to which of the various mutations is the principal form of the motif, there can, however, scarcely be any doubt in this case. The simplest and least specialized form is, I dare say, both the most common in Ireland and the most original.

Another instance is the Cinderella tale[43]. *Strabo* has a tale of how Rhodopis, the beautiful hetaera in Egypt, when bathing, was bereft of one shoe by an eagle, who carried it away and let it fall into Pharaoh's lap. Pharaoh made up his mind to marry the one whom the shoe would fit. He made all women try it on, and thus found Rhodopis. This is one of the oldest records of the Cinderella tale, and we feel surprised at not finding the episode there about the prince's feast, at which she performed and enchanted him, and how she lost the shoe in her hurry to get home. We wonder if this is not a corrupt or a defective form. It is more logical to fall in love with one whom you see than with one whom you never saw. As, however, the same episode is wanting in Further India too, where it is likewise an eagle that carries the shoe away to drop it into the lap of the King,

we must consider the simple and less logical form to be the more original version. Later on, in some place or other, a tale-composer improved on it by adding the episode of the prince's feast; and this additional episode came to prevail everywhere: It was only on the outskirts of the area, in Further India for example, or in a very ancient record taken down in Egypt, another marginal country, that the more simple version was maintained. The fact that the original version was preserved on the outskirts of the area over which the tale was spread, does not, however, imply that either of these countries should be its original home. On the fringes of the area, or in some other remote or isolated place, the more ancient and original form may have lingered, because the later and better version did not get so far. We cannot tell where the new episode about the prince's feast was composed, for every *narrator* of the older form will improve upon his version as soon as he hears the novel addition, exciting as it is, and more logical too. In this case, therefore, the original form does not give any indication as to where the original home was situated. The eagle that drops a shoe into Pharaoh's lap is but a mutational variant of the bird that lets the golden hair of a woman fall into the lap of the king, with the result that he sends the hero of the tale out to seek for its beautiful owner. The Cinderella tale must here be studied in connection with the various tales, the opening motifs of which, as to the hair, the lock, etc., have a mutational relationship to the eagle with the shoe. The various types of tale with several such mutations for their opening motifs may perhaps give a hint on this point.

A third example may be taken from the above-mentioned tale of the Magic Flight (Aa 313). Among the laborious tasks assigned to the hero by the ogre, one has fallen out of many European variants. In Ireland and on the whole in western Europe, i. e. in France and Spain as well, the hero is told to fetch an egg down from the top of a tree reaching to the clouds with a trunk as smoth as glass. The ogre's daughter, who has assisted the hero

in his previous tasks, points out that there is nothing for it but to slaughter her and take all the bones out of her body. If he puts them against the trunk they will serve as a foothold enabling him to climb the tree. In getting down he must, however, take them with him and throw them into the sea. She will then come to life again; but he forgets a joint of her little finger at the top of the tree. That joint is missing from her body, which mishap turns out all for the best in one of his later tasks.

This episode is not to be found at all in any of the variants taken down in more eastern regions, but in its artless ferocity it is very popular in the most westerly megalithic area of Europe. In Spain, however, another form of the same episode has been taken down: The hero has to fetch a ring from the bottom of the sea, and his helper points out that he must kill her and fill a vessel with her blood and another one with her flesh, and throw both vessels into the sea. She then is transformed into a fish, who fetches the ring out of the sea, and is restored later on to her human form. It is obvious, in spite of dissimilarity in other respects, that both motifs are mutations of one and the same; for the episode has not only the same place in the composition of the tale; it also contains the killing of the girl and the feature that she is thrown into the sea. The episode with the ring is, however, less logical. Whereas slaughtering her is better accounted for by the circumstance that all the bones are required for steps, it seems incomprehensible why such procedure should be necessary for the sake of changing into a fish. The fact is, however, that the only Spanish record has one counterpart in Ireland, one in the Balkans, and one in Samoa, where it was taken down in the form of an ancient heroic ballad, which existed there before the arrival of the Europeans. I should be inclined, therefore, to see in this version a primeval form of the episode, ruled out, however, later on in the major part of the area, because it was found illogical and unnecessarily brutal. In western Europe, some one has brought about the mutation with the tree,

possibly in connection with a motif about a glass mountain contained in a tale of Cupid and Psyche. And this mutation has almost entirely supplanted the older motif. The latter has, however, as regards the ring on the bottom of the sea, many counterparts, more particularly in Mediterranean tradition, but with different solutions to the problem, the ring being found in a fish that has been caught, or fetched by some fish, frog, or natalorial bird, who was willing to help, etc. If it be so, the original form does not indicate the country of origin. The tale must be supposed to have reached Samoa at the very end of its long wanderings, but it must have left the country of its origin before any one had brought about the mutation with the tree, and certainly before the whole episode was discarded and replaced by something altogether different, as is the case in the bulk of variants taken down east of, say, the 5th meridian E. of Greenwich.

Of a good many tales there exists a great number of mutations adapted, more or less, to the individual taste of the narrator, or invented with the intention of being able to offer something novel. The tale of The Ogre's (Devil's) Heart in the Egg (Aa 302) *e.g.* has a great variety of mutational types, each with its own area of dissemination, but all of them obviously of the same type. There are also mutations intended for a definite social class. Of some tales, for example, there are special mutations for sailors, and for soldiers as well, adapted to the taste of the audience concerned by such attractive devices as making the hero a sailor or a soldier respectively.

In speaking of mutations I have confined myself to the more sweeping changes resulting from intentional remodelling. A good many changes are, however, brought about in a different way. Every receiver of a tale-tradition will always make a few alterations in some motifs, partly on account of failing memory, partly in order to make the story conform better to his own views and

tastes, or to kindred motifs in such other tales as he may know. More particularly, this is true of the side-motifs of a tale. In a district with a good *narrator,* or where some book of tales has been read frequently, it may therefore occur that a good many persons recount by word of mouth, or write down on paper, one and the same tale with individual alterations accordingly. This does not prove that each of these people should have received his own tradition from his own separate *traditor,* as has been suggested in explanation of this fact[44].

Another alteration in the contents of a tale is brought about by way of oicotypification, which consists of a certain unification of the variants within one and the same linguistic or cultural area on account of isolation from other areas. It may consist of the circumstance that one mutation has prevailed over the rest so as to become the oicotype of the tale within the area concerned. Oicotypification will, as a general rule, take a long time, and will therefore not evince itself in all folk-tales. I shall quote but one or two examples.

The tale of Odysseus and Polyphemus (Aa 1137), spread all over Europe, often contains an episode not to be found in the Odyssey. When the man has got out of the giant's den, the latter presents him with a gift of hospitality. Taking it, however, the man clings to the gift, which cries out and betrays his whereabouts so that the giant is on the point of catching him, and the man must cut off his finger, or hand, to get away. In Western European variants, more particularly in the Celtic ones, it is always a question of a golden ring, in the Eastern European variants it is a club, a stick, or an axe of gold. The oicotype appears thus in two different oicotypes, one with a ring, the other with a weapon. It is difficult to say which is the original, but they must be derived from a common source, the contents of which have been fixed in a somewhat different manner. We may ask at what time the common archetype may have existed,

and to which people it then belonged. Most often we are inclined to think of the remote period when Celts and Slavs lived side by side near the Carpathian Mountains.

We are struck by much the same idea when seeing how a mutation of the tale of The Ogre's (Devil's) Heart in the Egg (Aa 302) has been split up into two oicotypes, one Slavic, and the other Celtic. In the Slavic type a prince has won a princess, who gives him all the keys, warning him however not to open a certain door. He does so nevertheless, and then in the forbidden room he finds an ogre, or a giant, chained to the wall, or shut up in a barrel. The ogre asks for water, and the hero gives it to him. But then the chains, or the barrel, break, the ogre runs away with the princess, and disappears. The corresponding episode in the Celtic oicotype of the same mutation makes the hero, on his way to fight three giants, pass a naked man hanging on a tree and asking to be set free. Twice the prince refuses his request, but the third time he sets him free. Then instantaneously the prince finds himself hanging naked on the tree; and the man he has set free runs away with the princess. It is obvious that there are here two different oicotypes of the same mutation. When the plot takes a different course, this is due to the circumstance that each of the two types has for a long period been developed independently, without any renewal of traditional connection.

All these questions about the bearers of tale-tradition, of the cases in which a tradition is applied and can be transmitted, the changes that may be brought about by various kinds of mutation, and by oicotypification, are naturally of the greatest weight for a scientific study of the folk-tale; and the results of such study cannot, even by the best of methods, be correct unless they are based on a right knowledge of the life of the folk-tale, and the laws by which it is governed. When Krohn instituted his method, the necessary knowledge was not available, and he worked out

the method with a view to monographic investigation only. The necessary knowledge cannot be acquired by that kind of investigation, but only by all-round research into the stock of folk-tales in their natural context. A natural system which groups together such types as are closely related to each other, and which may illustrate each other as required, will be of great importance for this work. Continued registration work will also be necessary of course.

Krohn and Aarne saw in folk-tale monographs the immediate task to be performed by scholarship. By such monographs, however, it has not been possible to solve the most important problems of folk-tale research; and the interest these studies have attracted has been only slight. As a general rule scholars have confined themselves to using them for their first work; and in actual fact any student can, without previous knowledge, collect the material of variants needed for such a monograph from the handbooks now available. Once the material has been provided, he can of course arrange it geographically, find out special types, *etc.* Unless he is conversant with what is of particular interest to science, and with the life of the tales and the laws that govern them, the result will, however, be uninteresting, even if the grouping of the material will always give some new results.

Faced with the task of preparing a folk-tale monograph, even an able philologist who is not steeped in the problems of tradition will be almost as handicapped as a freshman, apart from the circumstance that his philological training may enable him to select more interesting subjects for examination. He will not take any type-number at random from Aarne-Thompson, but will prefer a tale which has an obvious connection with one of the myths, legends of saints, fabliaux, or the like, in which he takes an interest because he knows that among scholars there is a desire for light to be thrown on them from traditional sources. He forgets, however, that oral tradition is governed by other

laws than those that apply to written literature. He is, *e.g.* accustomed to date a literary product from the oldest manuscript in which it is preserved, in so far as there is no reason for suspecting the oldest manuscript of being a copy of a lost MS of greater antiquity.

The tales and sagns of popular tradition are considerably more timeless than manuscripts, and a philologist who is not conversant with their true nature, will easily draw the rash inference that the first allusion to be found in literature to a sagn or tale, is derived almost directly from the archetype of the sagn concerned, and accordingly considers it as dating back only one or two decades. He does not reckon with the possibility that the version given in his written source may be a faulty fragment, just as there are both faulty and good variants among the records taken down in the field by present-day scholars, as of course has always been the case. He has not a sufficient knowledge of the common people's habits of thinking and expressing themselves, nor the licences taken by the popular tale-teller as regards the development of side-motifs of minor importance to the main plot. He therefore often attaches too great a weight to details which are altogether irrelevant for a critical examination of the subject.

To illustrate this I will give one or two examples. The earliest indication of the existence of the tale about The Magic Flight (Aa 313) is, as mentioned above, to be found in the tale of the Argonauts. This cannot, however, be held to represent the original form of the tale to any higher degree than can the record of the Samoan heroic ballad of Siati[45] taken down in Samoa in the beginning of the 19th century. The Greek heroic tale consists of a fusion of at least three distinct tale-types, the original episodes of which have partly supplanted each other, a fact which alone reduces their originality. Besides, artistic poetry has in many places remodelled it and alienated it from

the original form and contents of the tale. Furthermore we are enabled to determine a few traits as being actually original, amongst other things they are in full conformity with the Samoan version as compared with all other variants. The marginal variant in Samoa gives us in more than one respect good criteria for determining the original form of the tale, although Samoa cannot possibly be the country of its origin.

Another example is the ancient Egyptian tale of The Two Brothers, which has been mentioned above. As it consists of two tale-types that have been worked up in one, it helps the scholar to determine a good many of the features contained in both of them as original. By the very fusion, however, important traits have disappeared from each of them, being replaced by parts from the other. The ancient Egyptian record is accordingly not in its totality the original form of either of the tales from which it was drawn. If the tales of this group had been examined by a philologist without intimate knowledge of folk-tale research, prior to the discovery of the Egyptian scroll of papyrus, he would certainly have determined the date of the tale to some decade or other before the composition of the Russian chap-book containing the earliest European record of the tale, or he might simply have stated it to be Indian.

I point this out, on the particularly occasion of a demand made on folklore research from philological quarters in Sweden, that it should be purely philological, which demand only proves that the demandant does not understand at all how important it is for traditional matter to be studied according to its own laws. Still worse is a suggestion, no less singular, that folk-tale research should be purely Scandinavian, not comparative. Such national one-sidedness has indeed been attempted, but has been of no importance except as a warning.

On the other hand, it is evident that collaboration between philology and the study of folklore is of supreme importance.

Philologists can produce much material of very great value to folklore research, as has from old literature been proved, I think, by the examples quoted. But the oral material is no less important for placing the contents of the ancient sources in the living whole to which they belong, and for supplementing their statements, which are often both fragmentary and otherwise corrupted.

It was an idea of Kaarle Krohn's that every separate type of tale should first be dealt with monographically. Later on "folk-tale research proper" was to be started. The very attempt has proved that folk-tale studies proper must be taken in hand long before all types of tales could be dealt with. These studies must be so directed as to undertake investigations that are of interest also to others than those belonging to the circle of professional folklorists, in the first place, of course, to the philologists, with whom as close a collaboration as possible must be established.

Here *e.g.* the work of Axel Olrik and Moltke Moe has been of exceptional importance by their inquiries into the fundamental laws of tradition, work based on a profound and comprehensive view of the stores of folk-tales and sagns, and on studies of their life in tradition. This work was carried out, of course, by methods altogether different from those applied to the monographs. Folk-tales must necessarily be studied not according to their types only, but above all by groups, so that the study of the individual type is connected with the study of all types belonging to the same natural group. This makes, however, considerably greater demands on the resources of the scholar than would suffice for a monograph of the old type. Here first and last the collaboration of as great a number of scholars as possible is required. In this connection one important *desideratum* is a large-scale international research institute for the purpose.

Having emphasized the distinction between philological methods and that of folklore research, and the lack of understand-

ing which has often made itself felt on the part of philologists in their attitude to folklore research, I want at the same time to express my thanks to Professor Arthur Christensen for his profound and sympathetic understanding of folklore studies and for the valuable work done by him on Iranian heroic epics as well as on oriental and occidental folk-tales. He is thus a living exemplification of what good results may be achieved by a synthesis of philology folk-tale research[46].

DAS VOLKSMÄRCHEN UNTER ETHNISCHEM GESICHTSPUNKT

Frühere ethnische Gesichtspunkte.

Schon als die Brüder Grimm das Volksmärchen in die wissenschaftliche Diskussion einführten, wurde die Frage nach seinen ethnischen Zusammenhängen zu einem Hauptgesichtspunkt. Wilhelm Grimm erklärte nämlich die weite Verbreitung der Volksmärchen damit, dass sie Reste der ältesten gemeinsamen Mythologie der Indoeuropäer darstellten. Als die Theorie von Th. Benfey und seinen Nachfolgern abgelehnt wurde, bedeutete dies nicht, dass damit der Gedanke an einen bestimmten ethnischen Zusammenhang ausser Funktion gesetzt wurde, denn Benfey erklärte alle Märchen, mit Ausnahme der Tierfabeln, für indisch statt indoeuropäisch, und zwar vertrat er die Ansicht, dass sie in Indien auf Grund des Bedarfs des Buddhismus an Predigtbeispielen entstanden seien.

Die Grimmsche Theorie ist freilich seit langem endgültig aufgegeben, da die Abstammung von Mythen, die man im übrigen nicht kannte, der Kritik nicht standhalten konnte. Und Benfeys Lehre hat sich als falsch erwiesen, da die in den indischen Märchensammlungen vorkommenden Märchen praktisch in der europäischen Tradition fehlen, während man den für Europa typischen Märchen kaum in Indien begegnet; da aber der völlig richtige Standpunkt der finnischen Schule, dass Märchen, wenigstens theoretisch, bei jedem beliebigen Volk entstehen können müssen, nicht zu einem Nachweis dessen geführt hat, was nun das Eigentum jedes einzelnen Volkes war, ist man in der Praxis bei einer Modifikation der Benfeyschen Theorie geblieben: die meisten Märchen sind im Mittelalter aus Indien

zu uns gekommen. Auch dieser Modifikation bietet indessen das vorliegende Material keine Stütze, selbst wenn verschiedene Erzählungen aus morgenländischen literarischen Sammlungen hier und dort in Europa zur mündlichen Tradition haben übergehen können oder wenn sogar ein Märchen auf mündlichem Wege von Osten her nach Europa gelangen und hier Verbreitung finden konnte.

Haben sich nun diese älteren an das Volksmärchen angelegten ethnischen Gesichtspunkte als unrichtig erwiesen, so liegt die Frage nahe, ob ethnische Gesichtspunkte überhaupt, was das Märchen angeht, als absurd zu betrachten sind. Die Antwort muss selbstverständlich ja lauten, wenn man sie für alle Märchen auf einmal als zusammenhängendes Gebiet gelten lassen will. Als Grimm seine Theorie aufstellte, beging er nicht nur den Fehler, die Märchen von einer ungekannten Mythologie herzuleiten, sondern ausserdem den Fehler, dass er keine ordentliche Unterscheidung des äusserst mannigfaltigen Materials vornahm, das man unter dem gemeinsamen Namen Volksmärchen zusammenfasst. Hätte man ihn gebeten anzugeben, welche von seinen Kinder- und Hausmärchen er auf indoeuropäische Vorzeit zurückführen wolle, so hätte er zweifellos eine grosse Menge ausgeschieden, für welche die Theorie nicht zutraf, und nur eine kleinere Gruppe mit ausgesprochen phantastischem Inhalt übrigbehalten. Mit einer solchen Einschränkung würde die Theorie nicht mehr von vornherein so verwerflich sein, sondern hätte eine eingehendere Prüfung verdienen können, als sie ihr die Wissenschaft bisher hat zuteil werden lassen. Desselben Fehlers, nämlich einen allzu heterogenen Inhalt in einer gemeinsamen Bezeichnung einzuschliessen, machte sich auch Benfey schuldig, selbst wenn er klugerweise der Tierfabel eine Sonderstellung zuerkannte.

Es liegt in der Natur der Sache, dass Unterhaltungserzählungen—und nichts anderes liegt in dem Begriff des Märchens—von der verschiedensten Art sind, möge man nun alles betrach-

ten, was es an solchen Erzählungen auf der ganzen Welt gibt, oder möge man sich innerhalb einer einzigen Völkergruppe halten. Diesem ganzen gewaltigen Material einen einzigen gemeinsamen ethnischen Ursprung zuzusprechen, geht unmöglich an. Etwas gänzlich anderes ist es indessen, wenn man versucht, mit gewissen Völkern oder ethnischen Gruppen gewisse Märchengruppen mit eigentümlichem Inhalt und mit eigentümlichem Stil zusammenzustellen. Genau wie sich bestimmte Kunststile in einem Volk oder einer Völkergruppe entwickeln, genau so können sich natürlich auch gewisse Stilformen der Erzählkunst in einem bestimmten ethnischen Gebiet entwickeln. Bisher sind noch keine ernsteren Versuche zur Untersuchung der verschiedenen Stilgruppen der Märchen und ihrer ethnischen Zusammengehörigkeit gemacht worden, aber je gründlicher und umfassender eine solche Untersuchung durchgeführt werden könnte, um so wertvoller würde man sie nach ihrem allgemeinen wissenschaftlichen Interesse z.B. mit der Entdeckung vergleichen können, dass sämtliche indoeuropäischen Sprachen eng miteinander verwandt sind. Ich werde indessen versuchen, hier einige Andeutungen darüber zu machen, was man bereits heute über die ethnischen Verhältnisse der Märchen weiss und was man darüber hinaus nur ahnen kann.

Ägyptische und semitische Märchen.

Aus dem alten Ägypten sind uns verschiedene Märchen von grossem Interesse erhalten. Die wenigen, die bereits aus der Zeit des alten Reiches stammen, sind sowohl nach ihrem Stoff—sie handeln von ausserordentlich geschickten Zauberern—als nach ihrem Stil von einem so eigentümlichen Charakter, dass man sagen kann, sie besitzen ausserhalb Ägyptens kein Gegenstück. Man dürfte sie daher ohne weiteres als eine Märchengruppe für sich mit klar ägyptischem Gepräge bezeichnen können. Eine deutlich verwandte Erzählung ist zwar die Erzählung des Exodus

von Moses' Wettkampf mit den ägyptischen Zauberern, wenn sie auch rein äusserlich durch die Verpflanzung in die Tradition eines ganz anderen Volkes etwas umstilisiert worden ist. Sie ist indessen sicherlich jedenfalls in der Hauptsache ägyptischen Ursprungs, und wenn es keine anderen Beweise dafür gäbe, dass die Israeliten in Ägypten geweilt und unter dem Einfluss ägyptischer Kultur gestanden haben, so würde diese Erzählung allein schon genügen, um eine solche Berührung zwischen Ägyptern und Israeliten zu beweisen.

Eine andere klar ethnisch begrenzte Märchengruppe ist die, die ich als die semitischen Novellate bezeichne, eine Märchenform, die nach ihrem ganzen Stil und Aufbau höchst charakteristisch ist. Im Gegensatz zu unsern eigenen langen, phantastischen Märchen sind diese Novellate in hohem Grade realistisch. Sie nennen nicht nur den individuellen Namen aller auftretenden Personen, sondern teilen auch gern die Ahnentafel des Helden und der Heldin mit. Sie berichten sachkundig über Länder, Orte und Stämme. Die Darstellung schildert wirkliche Menschen, wirkliches Volksleben usw. und fügt gern realistische Einzelheiten ohne eigentliche Bedeutung für die Haupthandlung bei, nur um dem Ganzern ein möglichst lebendiges Wirklichkeitsgepräge zu geben. Das semitische Novellat ist vielepisodisch und hat eine realistisch verschlungene Komposition, indem die einzelnen Episoden, wie oft im wirklichen Leben, als Überraschungen kommen, so dass man nicht berechnen kann, was geschehen wird. Einen Teil dieser Charakterzüge des semitischen Novellats kann man in anderen Dichtungsarten anderer Völker wiederfinden, z.B. in der Heldensage und Familiensage, aber nicht alles, und man kann ohne Übertreibung sagen, dass die semitischen Novellate eine streng begrenzte und natürliche Traditionsgruppe bilden, die man ausserhalb des semitischen Kulturbereichs nicht findet. In demselben findet man das Novellat jedoch bereits in der Genesis, deren Erzählungen von Esau und

Jakob, angefangen mit der Heirat Isaaks bis hin zur Versöhnung der Brüder, sowie von Joseph und seinen Brüdern, äusserst typische semitische Novellate sind. Völlig derselbe Kompositions- und Erzählstil, oft mit identisch gleichartigen Episoden, lebt noch heute unter Arabiens Beduinen. Ich verweise hier besonders auf Enno Littmann, Arabische Beduinenerzählungen (Strassburg 1908), deren Lektüre ein grosses Erlebnis für mich war. Dieses Werk gab mir mit einemmal eine klare Idee von dieser ganzen typisch semitischen Stilart. Die gleiche Stilart gibt zwar auch Tausendundeiner Nacht in hohem Grade das Gepräge, indessen ist sie hier doch so stark mit allerlei anderem Material vermischt, dass man keinen klaren Begriff von der Einheitlichkeit der Stilart erhält.

Zum Unterschied von den altägyptischen Zauberermärchen ist das semitische Novellat eine noch lebendige Traditionsform, gleichwohl ist sie aber seit uralten Zeiten ethnisch klar auf die Semiten beschränkt. Anleihen an andere Völker sind zwar möglich, doch nur bis zu einem gewissen Grade. In Persien, das seine Religion von den Arabern erhalten hat und dessen Sprache mit arabischen Lehnwörtern durchsäuert ist, ist das semitische Novellat eingedrungen und hat sich durch die berufsmässigen Erzähler geltend gemacht, deren ganzes Repertoire gerade aus Novellaten besteht, die dort als die einzig feine Art von Erzählungen zu Ansehen gelangten, sich jedoch nicht als heimische Tradition durchzusetzen vermochten, u.a. weil sie zu schwer zu behalten sind und ein überdurchschnittliches Erzählertalent voraussetzen. Im Abendland hat das semitische Novellat einen gewissen literarischen Einfluss gehabt, indem die Novellendichtung schon der Antike, aber auch des Mittelalters und der Renaissance starke Eindrücke von den Novellaten empfing; die volkstümliche Überlieferung in Europa ist jedoch kaum beeinflusst worden. Tatsächlich dürften dem semitischen Novellat auf Grund seines ganzen Aufbaus alle Voraussetzungen dafür fehlen, in der europäischen Volkstradition ernsthaft Fuss zu fassen.

Die Chimerate.

Dass eine ethnisch so klar begrenzte Märchengruppe wie das semitische Novellat hat nachgewiesen werden können, ist von grosser Bedeutung. Es lässt auf die Möglichkeit schliessen, andere, ebenso eindeutig ethnisch geprägte Märchengruppen zu finden. Uns interessiert dabei in erster Linie die Frage, ob es eine Märchengruppe gibt, die ethnisch auf Europa oder auf die indoeuropäischen Völker beschränkt ist. Grimm glaubte an diese Möglichkeit, und wenn auch seine Theorie aus gewichtigen Gründen abgelehnt werden muss, so kann doch die Existenz einer solchen Märchengruppe nicht mehr von vornherein als unmöglich anzusehen sein, da es sich gezeigt hat, dass andere Völkergruppen auf sie begrenzte und für sie charakteristische Märchengruppen haben.

Tatsächlich gibt es auch wenigstens eine Gruppe von Märchen, die man mit einem gewissen Recht indoeuropäischen Völkern zusprechen kann, nämlich die Gruppe phantastischer Märchen, die so charakteristisch für unsere europäischen Märchensammlungen ist, und die ich *Chimerate* nenne. Als Grimm seine Märchentheorie aufstellte, meinte er zweifellos gerade die Chimerate, versäumte es jedoch, terminologisch näher zu umreissen, was er meinte. Und als Benfey, um seine Theorie zu stützen, —fälschlich!—das Motiv »die dankbaren Tiere« als buddhistisch bezeichnete, dachte er an das Vorkommen des Motivs in gewissen Chimeraten.

Unsere Chimerate sind ebenso wie die semitischen Novellate lange, mehrepisodische Erzählungen, die von besonderen Erzählern vorgetragen werden müssen, im übrigen kann man sie jedoch als das gerade Gegenteil der realistischen Novellate bezeichnen. Die Chimerate sind in hohem Grade wirklichkeitsfremd. Sie handeln fast stets von Königen, Prinzen und Prinzessinnen, von deren Leben der Erzähler keinerlei Erfahrung hat. Da blosse Unterhaltung bezweckt wird und die ganze Handlung bewusst ins Reich der Phantasie verlegt ist, kennen die Chimerate weder

Personen- noch Ortsnamen, sondern erfinden zufällige Benennungen für ihre Helden, wie Aschenbrödel, Goldhaar, Dornröschen, Schneewittchen, Namen, von denen sowohl der Erzähler wie auch seine Zuhörer wissen, dass sie niemals von wirklichen Menschen getragen worden sind. Oder man greift zu einem der allergewöhnlichsten Namen, wie Peter, Paul, Johannes, Hans, Jean usw., nur um eben einen Namen zu haben, soweit man sich nicht damit begnügt, vom Jungen, vom Königssohn, von der Prinzessin oder dergleichen zu sprechen. Die Geschehnisse sind stark phantastisch, man hört von Kämpfen mit Riesen und vielköpfigen Drachen, von Verwandlungen, von wunderbaren Talismanen und Dienern, hilfsbereiten Tieren, die stets im rechten Augenblick auftauchen, von Schiffen, die ebenso gut auf dem Lande fahren wie im Wasser, von goldenen Schlössern, die an goldenen Ketten in der Luft hängen und von Drachen bewacht werden, usw. Die Darstellung ist schematisch, gern nach dem Dreizahlprinzip und in geradliniger Komposition, so dass man den ganzen Ablauf in den Hauptzügen voraussagen kann, wenn man nur die Einleitung gehört hat. Es gibt natürlich auch bei anderen Völkern rein phantastische Märchen, selbst bei den realistischen Semiten, doch scheinen Märchen von dem ganzen Kompositions- und Stiltypus des Chimerats den indoeuropäischen Völkern eigentümlich zu sein.

Chimeraten begegnet man bei allen Indoeuropäern, und sie nehmen hier im Traditionsleben den gleichen Platz ein wie das Novellat bei den Semiten. Wo man sie bei nicht indoeuropäischen Völkern findet, scheint es sich um Lehngut von Indoeuropäern zu handeln. In der gewaltigen arabischen Märchensammlung Tausendundeine Nacht kommen z.B. einige wenige Chimerate vor, welche die Arabisten als Anleihe von den Persern festgestellt haben, doch sind sie bei der Entlehnung stark novellatisiert worden, mit Personen- und Ortsnamen, realistischen Einzelzügen usw.

Das Chimerat muss auch eine sehr alte indoeuropäische Mär-

chenform gewesen sein. In griechischen Heldensagen kann man deutlich eine ganze Reihe noch heute wohlbekannter und weit verbreiteter Chimerate erkennen. Schon dies gibt den Chimeraten ein Alter von etwa 3000 Jahren. In dieselbe Richtung deutet das interessante Märchen von den zwei Brüdern, das man in einem ägyptischen Papyros aus der Zeit um 1300 v. Chr. gefunden hat. Ägypten war damals durch zugezogene Kaufleute, durch Söldnertruppen und Sklaven fremdvölkischen Einflüssen zugänglich geworden, und dieses Märchen zeigt entschieden einen ganz anderen Stiltypus als die obengenannten altägyptischen Zauberermärchen. Dasselbe Märchen is noch heute unter Indern, Persern und Slawen verbreitet, und in seinem Hauptteil ist es ganz offenbar ein indoeuropäisches Chimerat. Der ägyptische Schreiber, der es einst aufzeichnete, hat jedoch dessen Stil, der ihm gänzlich fremd war, nicht verstanden, und er hat es deshalb mit einer novellistischen Einleitung im ägyptischen Geschmack, ägyptischen Personennamen und einigen anderen kleinen Motiven versehen, die teilweise im direkten Gegensatz zu der eigenen Darstellung des Märchens stehen. Zusammen mit den durch die griechischen Heldensagen aus früher Zeit belegten Chimeraten zeigt diese ägyptische Aufzeichnung, dass der Beginn der Chimeratdichtung bis in die neolithische Zeit zurückreichen muss. Das merkwürdigste an diesem alten Märchen ist jedoch, dass es nur unter den östlichen satemsprachigen Indoeuropäern verbreitet ist, und obwohl es einen viel längeren Zeitraum zur Wanderung zur Verfügung gehabt hat, als ihn die Anhänger der Wandertheorie für indische Märchen als notwendig angesehen haben, um nach Europa zu gelangen, ist es—von ein paar durch neuzeitliche Einwanderer mitgebrachten Varianten abgesehen—nicht nach Mittel- oder Westeeuropa vorgedrungen, sondern nur so weit, wie sich das slawische Kulturgebiet erstreckt.

Dass Chimerate bereits in neolithischer Zeit gedichtet worden sind, bedeutet natürlich nicht, dass alle Chimerate so alt wären, dass sie auf urindoeuropäische Zeit zurückgehen. Nach dem

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Muster der älteren sind ganz natürlich mal hier, mal da neue Chimerate gedichtet worden, und dies geht auch aus der oft begrenzten Verbreitung der einzelnen Märchen hervor. Wenigstens bis zu einem gewissen Grade dürfte die Verbreitung Anhaltspunkte bei der Beurteilung des Alters der verschiedenen Chimerate liefern können.

Einige kritische Vorbehalte.

Wenn wir also festgestellt haben, dass die Chimerate, wenigstens im grossen ganzen, den indoeuropäischen Völkern zugehören, so muss man hier doch gewisse Vorbehalte machen, und ihre ethnischen Verhältnisse sind damit nicht endgültig festgelegt. Die Indoeuropäer sind nämlich keine einheitliche Rasse, sondern eine Sammlung von in rassischer Hinsicht recht verschiedenartigen Völkern, von denen etliche mit Sicherheit ursprünglich ganz andere Sprachen gesprochen haben, später jedoch aus verschiedenen Anlässen indoeuropäisiert worden sind. So sind die Britischen Inseln, Frankreich und ganz Südeuropa zu verschiedenen Zeiten, aber verhältnismässig spät indoeuropäisiert worden. Welche Sprache die Völker dieser Länder vorher gesprochen haben, darüber weiss man ziemlich wenig, sicher ist jedoch, dass sie, bevor dieser Sprachwechsel stattfand, eine recht bedeutende Kultur erreicht hatten. Sie müssen schon vorher eine eigene Märchentradition besessen haben, die mit der Sprachveränderung keineswegs verschwunden sein kann. Ähnlich lagen die Verhältnisse in Vorderasien.

Hier kann man also bezüglich des Verhältnisses der Chimerate zu diesen verschiedenen Völkern verschiedene Möglichkeiten in Erwägung ziehen: Gehörten sie ursprünglich den ältern Völkern an, unter deren Einfluss die Indoeuropäer standen oder die letztere zu absorbieren vermochten, und wurden sie von diesen übernommen? Oder wurden die Chimerate gleichzeitig mit den neuen Sprachen bei der älteren Bevölkerung eingeführt? Oder haben beide Völkergruppen ihre eigenen Märchen gehabt, die

dann allmählich den gemeinsamen Chimeratstil angenommen haben? Dies sind Probleme, die sich die Wissenschaft bisher nicht gestellt, geschweige denn zu lösen versucht hat. Soviel ist indessen sicher, dass Südeuropa mehrere Chimerattypen gehabt hat, die nördlich der Alpen gänzlich fehlen und die vorindoeuropäisch sein könnten. Hier würde eine eingehende Untersuchung der Verbreitungsgebiete und Stilverschiedenheiten der einzelnen Chimerate wichtige ethnische Aufschlüsse geben können. Dabei müsste die Frage gemeinsamen Erb- oder Lehngutes von Fall zu Fall gelöst werden.

Wie bereits erwähnt, hat es sich gezeigt, dass das obengenannte, in Ägypten aufgezeichnete Märchen von den zwei Brüdern auf die satemsprachigen Indoeuropäer beschränkt ist. Dies stellt teilweise das gleiche Problem zur Lösung wie das Verhältnis zwischen Nord- und Südeuropa, ausserdem aber noch ein anderes. Ebenso wie sich die beiden Gruppen von Indoeuropäern, Satem- und Kentumvölker, durch gewisse sprachliche Veränderungen voneinander getrennt haben, scheinen sich auch die Märchen der beiden Gruppen teilweise in verschiedenen Richtungen entwickelt zu haben. Es ist möglich, dass gerade das genannte Märchen von den zwei Brüdern bei den Kentumvölkern ein Gegenstück besitzt, das aus denselben Wurzeln erwachsen ist, nämlich das Märchen von der untreuen Schwester (Aa 315). Falls sich ein solcher Zusammenhang wirklich feststellen lässt, so würde dies ein Erbe aus einer noch ferneren Vorzeit bedeuten. Etwas derartiges lässt sich mit einer gewissen Sicherheit bezüglich eines unserer altertümlichsten Märchen, des Märchens vom Riesen ohne Herz (Aa 302) nachweisen, dessen westliche und östliche Form zwar eine klare Zusammengehörigkeit zeigen, sich aber gleichzeitig so sehr voneinander unterscheiden, dass beide sich aus einem älteren, einfacheren, mehr fabulatartigen Chimerat herleiten müssen, das man hinter den beiden Sonderformen erkennen kann und das es bereits zu der Zeit gegeben hat, als sich Satem- und Kentumvölker voneinander trennten.

Hier ist vielleicht auch eine engere Übereinstimmung zwischen den Chimeraten der asiatischen Indoeuropäer und den südeuropäischen hervorzuheben, die demjenigen, der die Märchen beider Gebiete untersucht, bald auffällt. Besonders will ich an eine Gruppe von Chimeraten erinnern, die auf einem Glauben an Schlangen als eine Art von übernatürlichen Wesen aufbauen und die für Südeuropa und Vorderasien gemeinsam sind, in Nordeuropa aber nicht heimisch zu sein scheinen. Beruht dies auf einem mediterranen Einschlag bei den Satemvölkern oder haben sich diese Märchen später von dem einen Gebiet nach dem andern verbreitet? Die Frage harrt auf eine Lösung. Soviel kann man indessen bereits jetzt sagen, dass Entlehnungen oder andere Beeinflussungen seit alters her zwischen verschiedenen indoeuropäischen Völkergruppen in mehreren Fällen deutlich nachweisbar sind. Skandinavien und die Britischen Inseln haben z.B. gegenüber dem übrigen Europa gemeinsame Formen gewisser Märchen. So hat das Märchen von Amor und Psyche (Aa 425, 428) in Skandinavien und Britannien den Zug gemeinsam, dass der Bräutigam in einen Bären, Wolf oder Hund verwandelt ist, und das Märchen von der Froschprinzessin (Aa 402) handelt in demselben Gebiet nicht von einer Kröte, wie weiter östlich und südlich, sondern von einer Maus. Wie weit zurück diese keltisch-skandinavische Motivgemeinschaft datiert, ist nicht untersucht. Es liegt nahe, an die Wikingerzeit zu denken, doch haben sich schon bedeutend früher starke Verbindungen zwischen Kelten und Germanen—einschliesslich Skandinaviern—archäologisch nachweisen lassen, und es gibt folglich eine gewisse Möglichkeit, dass diese und andere Übereinstimmungen zwischen Skandinaviern und Kelten auf eine weit frühere Zeit als die Wikingerzeit zurückgehen können.

In einer ganzen Reihe verschiedener Chimerate herrscht eine bemerkenswerte Uebereinstimmung zwischen keltischer und slawischer Tradition, was auf die Zeit vor 600 v. Chr. hinzuweisen scheint, als Slawen und Kelten noch an den Karpathen neben-

einander wohnten. Bemerkenswerte Übereinstimmungen zwischen der Tradition im Norden und den Ländern um das Schwarze Meer sind früher von Axel Olrik nachgewiesen und mit den lebhaften Verbindungen quer durch Russland erklärt worden, die teils während der Wikingerzeit, teils auch früher, als noch das Gotenreich am Schwarzen Meer existierte, d.h. in der Zeit um 200—375 n. Chr., bestanden haben.

Die starke Verbreitung gewisser Märchen und Märchenmotive muss also teils auf lebhaften Beziehungen zwischen verschiedenen Völkern und teils auf den Wanderungen der Völker beruhen. Auf Grund dessen, was wir bereits über das Alter der Chimerate wissen, können wir damit rechnen, dass die indoeuropäischen Völker schon zu der Zeit, als sie von ihren ursprünglichen Wohnplätzen aufbrachen, Chimerate besessen haben, die sie von dort alt Erbgut mit sich führten, mögen sie diese nun selbst gedichtet oder schon vor ihren weiten Wanderungen in verschiedenen Himmelsrichtungen von einem anderen Volk erhalten haben. Wie es sich dabei mit jedem einzelnen Märchen verhält, ist indessen bei weitem noch nicht geklärt oder, richtiger, noch gar nicht.

Die Megalithkultur.

Wenn ich hier die Ausbreitung der indoeuropäischen Völker von den Steppengebieten Südrusslands und Vorderasiens nach verschiedenen Richtungen als einen wichtigen Faktor bei der Verbreitung der Chimerate betont habe, muss ich auch auf einen anderen Verbreitungsfaktor hinweisen, mit dem hier zu rechnen ist, nämlich die eigentümliche Küstengebietkultur, welche die Archäologen als die Megalithkultur bezeichnen. Diese hat sich nicht nur in Europa und Afrika längs den Küsten des Mittelmeeres und des Atlantischen Ozeans ausgebreitet, sondern auch über den Indischen Ozean und nach den Inseln des Stillen Ozeans. Diese Kultur kann man gewiss nicht einem einzigen Volke zuschreiben, sie ist im Gegenteil von vielen verschiedenen Völkern von verschiedener Rasse und mit verschiedenen Sprachen

getragen worden. Einen engeren Zusammenhang als nur die gemeinsame äussere Kultur, die vor allem durch die gewaltigen Steingräber und andere Steindenkmäler gekennzeichnet ist, muss es jedoch gegeben haben. So etwas wie die Sitte, Dolmen und Ganggräber zu bauen, sowie die religiösen Vorstellungen, die einer solchen Sitte zugrunde liegen müssen, wird nicht ausschliesslich durch Handelsverkehr und Nachahmung verbreitet. In dem Falle würde diese Sitte zweifellos eine andere Verbreitung zeigen, als sie in Wirklichkeit gehabt hat. Die Megalithkultur muss auf wirkliche Kolonisation zurückzuführen sein, wobei eine kleine Schar von Kolonisten auf dem Seewege gewisse Inseln und Küstenstriche in Besitz genommen, eine ältere und zahlreichere Urbevölkerung unterdrückt hat und mit dieser verschmolzen ist. Dabei ist selbstverständlich eine ganze Reihe verschiedener Kulturelemente—verschieden in verschiedenen solchen Kolonien—übertragen worden, und darunter sicherlich auch Märchen. Es ist daher von Bedeutung, auf den Märchenbestand der alten Megalithgebiete achtzugeben. Diese befinden sich zwar hier in Europa und in Afrika zum grossen Teil innerhalb des Verbreitungsgebietes der mediterranen Rasse, können aber vielleicht doch ein gegenüber dem übrigen mediterranen Gebiet nachweisbares eigenes Gepräge gehabt haben.

Es ist besonders ein Märchen, das mich an die Megalithkultur hat denken lassen, das merkwürdige Lang-Chimerat »die magische Flucht« (Aa 313). Es setzt sich aus drei verschiedenen Chimeraten von normaler Länge zusammen, die jedes für sich als selbständige Märchen vorkommen können: 1) gewöhnlich drei schwere Aufgaben, bei denen der Held Hilfe von einem zauberkundigen Mädchen erhält, das gewöhnlich als die Tochter des Unholds oder des Teufels bezeichnet wird, 2) die Flucht, bei der das Mädchen durch ihre Künste den Vater, der sie verfolgt, hindert, 3) die vergessene Braut, indem der Held ein Tabu bricht und deshalb seine Gehilfin, der er Treue gelobt hat, vergisst, und sich gerade mit einer anderen verheiraten will, als die verlassene

Braut durch ihre Künste sein Gedächtnis wiedererwecken kann, worauf das Ganze in unseren meisten Varianten glücklich ausgeht.

Man hat oft betont, dass zwar die einzelnen Märchenmotive uralt sein können, nicht aber die Märchen als vielepisodische Kompositionen. Dies ist in zahlreichen Fällen richtig, und es ist unter allen Umständen von grösster Bedeutung, den notwendigen Unterschied zwischen Märchen und Märchenmotiv zu machen. Was Aa 313 betrifft, so zeigt es sich, dass es schon vor 3000 Jahren als ein Lang-Chimerat mit allen hier aufgezählten Bestandteilen auftritt, und es stellt somit einen Beweis dafür dar, dass sich auch lange Märchenkompositionen sehr lange Zeit in mündlicher Überlieferung erhalten können. Es ist nämlich eins der Märchen, die der Argonautensage zugrunde liegen, in der sämtliche ebengenannten Hauptabteilungen deutlich zu erkennen sind. Der Unterschied zwischen der Darstellung der Argonautensage und unserem Chimerat beruht teilweise darauf dass in ihr auch einige andere wohlbekannte Chimerate in Aa 313 hineingearbeitet worden sind, die eine Reihe von Änderungen verschiedener Art erzwungen haben, und zum Teil darauf, dass der Erzählstil der Argonautensage nicht der des Chimerats ist, sondern einen mehr heroisch-mythischen Charakter trägt: die Darstellung ist realistischer, die Helden haben wirkliche Personennamen, und die ganze Fahrt ist geographisch so gut bestimmt, dass man sie fast in allen Einzelheiten auf der Karte abstecken kann, und ausserdem ist der Ausgang hier tragisch. Ist dies vielleicht der ursprüngliche Stil in Aa 313, das in diesem Fall erst später chimeratisiert worden wäre?

Derselben Märchenkomposition begegnet man in einem Heldenlied auf Samoa, wo G. Turner es aufgezeichnet hat (Turner, Samoa; London 1884). Das Märchen beginnt dort damit, dass der berühmte Sänger Siati vom Gott des Gesanges zum Sängerwettstreit herausgefordert wird, siegt und damit die Tochter Puapae, »Weissfisch,« des Gottes zur Gemahlin gewinnt. Durch

ihre guten Ratschläge schützt Puapae den Sänger Siati vor den bösen Anschlägen ihres neidischen Vaters. Als der Schwiegervater ihm drei schwere Aufgaben aufträgt, bewältigt er diese dank den Zauberkünsten seiner Frau. Der letzte Auftrag besteht darin, den Ring des Gottes vom Meeresgrund heraufzuholen, und er löst ihn so, dass er Puapae auf ihren Rat in zwei Stücke teilt und diese ins Meer wirft. Puapae verwandelt sich dabei in einen Fisch, taucht hinab, holt den Ring und wird dann wieder ein Mensch. Da ihr Vater auch weiterhin nach Siatis Leben trachtet, flieht dieser mit seiner Frau, die dadurch, dass sie Gegenstände hinter sich wirft, ihren Vater, der sie zusammen mit seiner anderen Tochter Puauli, »Schwarzfisch,« verfolgt, aufhält und tötet. Die Fliehenden entkommen glücklich, als aber Siati trotz der Warnung seiner Frau ein Tabu bricht, vergisst er sie und will sich mit einer anderen verheiraten, sie findet sich jedoch ein und macht ihm Vorwürfe, worauf er stirbt.

Der Zusammenhang mit Aa 313 ist völlig deutlich. Auch hier trägt die Erzählung keinen Chimeratstil, sondern eher einen mythischheroischen Stil von etwa derselben Art wie die Argonautensage. Das Vorkommen dieser Erzählung auf Samoa möchte ich mit der Ankunft der Megalithkultur auf der Insel in Zusammenhang setzen. Wann dies geschehen ist, weiss man nicht, sicherlich aber war es bedeutend später als die Ankunft der Megalithkultur im Norden, die man ungefähr auf die Zeit 2000 a 2500 v. Chr. veranschlagen kann. Wie G. Huet hervorgehoben hat (Les contes populaires, Paris, 1923, S. 22), besitzt die Ringepisode ein nahes Gegenstück in einer katalanischen Variante, wo der Held, um den Ring aus dem Meere heraufzubekommen, das Mädchen töten, ihr Blut in einem Gefäss, ihr Fleisch in einem zweiten sammeln und dann beide Gefässe ins Meer werfen muss. Soweit ich weiss, findet sich die Episode in dieser Form nur in diesen beiden Varianten, der katalanischen und der samoanischen. Die Ähnlichkeit kann kein Zufall sein, und in ihrer naiven Unlogik muss gerade diese Form der Episode die älteste sein, die in den übrigen west-

europäischen Varianten eine gänzlich andere Entwicklung erfahren hat: hier besteht der dritte Auftrag des Helden nicht darin, einen Ring vom Grunde des Meeres heraufzuholen, sondern darin, ein Ei aus einem Vogelnest in der Spitze eines wolkenhohen Turmes oder Baumes, der so glatt wie Glas ist, herunterzuholen. Auf Anraten des Mädchen muss er es schlachten und alle Knochen aus dem Körper des Mädchens sammeln. Als er sie an die Turmwand drückt, bleiben die Knochen haften und bilden Fusstritte, so dass er hinaufklettern und das Ei holen kann. Dann sammelt er alle Knochen beim Abstieg, legt diese ins Wasser, und sofort wird das Mädchen wieder lebendig, doch hat der Mann einen Knochen des kleinen Fingers oder der kleinen Zehe vergessen, und dieser Knochen fehlt dann dem Mädchen, als es lebendig wird. Dies kommt dem Helden später gut zustatten, als es gilt, sie im Dunkeln von ihren Schwestern zu unterscheiden. Dass diese Form des Motives jünger und besser ausgedacht ist, liegt auf der Hand. Die ganze Schlachtepisode findet man nur in Westeuropa (Irland, Schottland, Frankreich und Spanien), und es ist offenbar dieses westliche Gebiet, wo die neuere, ausführliche Form durch Umarbeitung der älteren, einfacheren Form entstanden ist. In einem anderen Zusammenhang hat die Argonautensage eine ebenso altertümlich grausame Episode, indem Medea auf der Flucht ihren Bruder schlachtet und die Stücke seines Körpers ausstreut, um damit den verfolgenden Vater aufzuhalten.

Ist meine Annahme richtig, so haben wir hier also ein Megalithmärchen, das seine Verbreitung gerade im Zusammenhang mit den Kolonisationsunternehmen der Megalithkultur erhalten hat. Es braucht deswegen nicht unbedingt ursprünglich in einem Megalithgebiet entstanden zu sein, sondern kann früher in wahrscheinlich einfacheren Formen und mit einer gewissen Verbreitung bestanden haben. Aber die zu ihrer Zeit vornehme Megalithkultur hat es umgestaltet und verbessert, und in der Form, die es in dem Verbreitungszentrum der Megalithkultur erhalten hat,

ist es teils weit nach Osten gelangt, bis nach Samoa, teils nach den westlichen Megalithgebieten, wo die Schlachtepisode umgedichtet worden ist, während sich die ursprüngliche Form doch in einer einzigen Variante erhalten hat. Ähnliche Beispiele dafür, dass sich alte Züge neben siegreichen Umdichtungen haben behaupten können, kennt man verschiedene von anderen Märchen, und oft sind es die Randbezirke der Verbreitungsgebiete, in denen die altertümlichsten Formen weiterzuleben vermochten, während jüngere und bessere Formen dort siegen, wo die Verbindungen am lebhaftesten sind.

Vielleicht hat der mythisch-heroische Stil von Anfang an in der Megalithzeit zu dem Märchen gehört. Die Argonautensage kann eine solche Annahme stützen. Man wendet vielleicht ein, Griechenland habe keine Megalithkultur gehabt. Das hindert nicht, dass das alte Griechenland lebhafte Verbindungen mit Megalithgebieten gehabt haben kann, was sich auch archäologisch beweisen lässt. Newgrange in Irland und verschiedene ähnliche vorzeitliche Gräber in Schottland, die zwar der Bronzezeit angehören, jedoch noch deutliche Megalithzüge aufweisen, stehen in einem deutlichen Verwandtschaftsverhältnis zu den Kuppelgräbern in Mykene. Und Megalithgräber findet man in Ländern, die so nahe bei Griechenland liegen und die so alte Verbindungen mit diesem Lande gehabt haben, dass die Übertragung von Megalithmärchen nach Griechenland in alter Zeit—oder Märchenentlehnungen von Griechenland nach Megalithländern—in hohem Grade plausibel ist. Die Einleitung des Samoamärchens, der Sängerwettstreit zwischen dem Gott des Gesanges und einem Sterblichen, besitzt ja ein eigentümliches Gegenstück in der griechischen Mythe von dem Wettstreit zwischen Apollo und Marsyas, obgleich dieser einen anderen Ausgang nahm. In den westeuropäischen Varianten besteht der Wettstreit meist aus Kartenspiel.

Wenn Aa 313 auf die Megalithzeit zurückgeht, so besagt dies, dass dieses Märchen ein Mindestalter von etwa 4000 Jahren hat.

Dies braucht nicht allzu kühn erscheinen, da man schon mit Bestimmtheit von diesem und mehreren anderen Märchen weiss, dass sie ein Mindestalter von mehr als 3000 Jahren haben. Ist meine Annahme richtig, was erst durch künftige Forschungen voll bestätigt oder widerlegt werden kann, so lässt uns dieses Märchen etwas mehr von den Gedanken und dem Phantasieleben der Megalithzeit erkennen, alt das wenige, was man aus den archäologischen Funden allein entnehmen kann.

Irländische Megalithtradition.

Da ich ein Megalithmärchen gefunden zu haben glaube, liegt die Frage nahe, ob sich mehr solche Megalithmärchentradition feststellen lässt. Einstweilen erscheint uns Europas Chimeratüberlieferung noch ziemlich einheitlich, was indessen nur auf dem Umstand beruht, dass das Gebiet zu wenig untersucht worden ist. Besondere Stilgruppen lassen sich sicherlich unterscheiden. Schon jetzt kann man mit Leichtigkeit einen gewissen Unterschied zwischen der Tradition nördlich und südlich der Alpen entdecken, und ebenso eine recht auffallende Verschiedenheit der Tradition in Ost- und Mitteleuropa. Doch sind diese Verhältnisse nicht Gegenstand eines so eingehenden Studiums gewesen, dass man die Bedeutung solcher Unterschiede hätte deuten können. Für mich ist es indessen am nächstliegenden, den Blick auf Irland zu lenken, wo noch eine ausserordentlich reiche Märchentradition lebt.

Ausser der gewöhnlichen europäischen Chimerattradition, die durch die einwandernden Kelten nach den Britischen Inseln gebracht worden sein kann, muss es dort eine präkeltische Überlieferung gegeben haben, die entweder mit der präkeltischen mediterranen Bevölkerung nach dort gelangt ist oder mit der ebenfalls präkeltischen Megalithkultur, die dort eine reiche und lange Blütezeit gehabt hat. Man wendet vielleicht ein, es sei schwierig, zwischen dem Mediterranen und dem Megalithischen zu unterscheiden, da die megalitischen Kolonisten sicherlich von mediter-

raner Rasse gewesen seien. Solche Übereinstimmungen wie die zwischen Newgrange und mykenischen Kuppelgräbern lassen sich indessen nicht nur auf rassische Zusammengehörigkeit zurückführen. Mit der Megalithkultur kam offenbar ein ganz neues und starkes Kulturleben herein, das unstreitig auch für die Märchentradition von Bedeutung gewesen sein muss.

Nun hat Irland-Schotland wirklich neben den Chimeraten eine reiche Märchentradition von gänzlich anderer Art als die Chimerate, nämlich die sog. Fianníachta, die Märchen von Fionn MacCumhaill und seinen Fianna. Die Phantasie dieser Märchen ist ungefähr ebenso lebhaft wie die der Chimerate, aber der Stil ist ein anderer, nicht derselbe wie in der hochliterarischen Heldendichtung in Ulster, aber die Personen haben wenigstens zum grossen Teil wirkliche Personennamen und die Handlung spielt sich zum grössten Teil auf irländischem Boden ab, und die Namen der verschiedenen Orte werden sorgfältig genannt. Vielleicht hat gerade diese Ortsgebundenheit dazu beigetragen, diese Märchen lebendig zu erhalten. Man könnte auch hier von einem mytisch-heroischen Stil von ungefähr derselben Art wie in der Argonautensage und dem Märchen von Samoa sprechen. Eng verwandt mit den Fianníachta sind die walesische Mabinogiondichtung und die Sagen von Arthur und seinen Rittern. Die Verwandtschaft braucht nicht darauf zu beruhen, dass sowohl Gälen als Kymren Kelten sind, sondern kann ebensogut darauf zurückzuführen sein, dass die vorkeltische Tradition mediterranen oder megalitischen Ursprungs an beiden Stellen fortgelebt hat. Dass dies der Fall ist, lässt sich zwar noch nicht mit Sicherheit beweisen, da sowohl die europäische Chimerattradition als die irländischen Fianníachta noch nicht genügend untersucht sind, eine bessere Erklärung ist jedoch noch nicht vorgelegt worden.

Als Stütze für meine Annahme einer präkeltischen, vielleicht in erster Linie megalitischen Tradition kann ich indessen eine ganze Reihe Motive anführen, welche die Fianníachta und irländische Chimerate mit der altgriechischen Heldensage und

dem nahen Orient teilen. Das aus der Theseussage wohlbekannte Motiv der schwarzen oder weissen Segel als Zeichen dafür, ob die Reise glücklich gewesen sei oder nicht, kommt sowohl in der Tristansage als in gewissen Fianníachta vor und scheint keine neuere literarische Entlehnung aus der griechischen Literatur zu sein. Ebenso kommen die wohlbegannten Sagen von Midas' Eselsohren und von Circe bei den britanischen Kelten in Formen vor, die eine literarische Entlehnung unwahrscheinlich machen. Ein Fianníacht von Finns Fahrt zum König von Frankreich lässt ihn eine Schar seltsamer Männer zur Hilfe bekommen, von denen jeder eine eigentümliche Spezialität bis zur höchsten Vollendung beherrscht. Ein Gegenstück findet sich in der Argonautensage, und die irländische Form steht gerade den Varianten der Mittelmeerländer am nächsten, während die Märchen von seltsamen Helfen, die man in Mitteleuropa findet, von einem ganz andern Typ sind. Das Märchen vom abgerissenen Arm, das Grendelmotiv, ist für Irland in hohem Grade charakteristisch, fehlt aber im übrigen Europa, wogegen es möglicherweise im Orient Verwandte besitzt, u.a. in Japan, wohin die Megalithkultur auch gelangt ist und wo man auch eine alte, doch fragmentarische Form von Aa 313 festgestellt hat. Ebenso verhält es sich mit dem Märchen von der Frau, die ihren Mann in einen Wolf verwandelt. Dies sind nur einige Andeutungen, um zu zeigen, wie die eigentümliche Märchentradition in Island, Schottland und Wales Beziehungen nur über so weite Entfernungen hat, dass man fast gezwungen ist, zu einem solchen Verbreitungsfaktor wie die Megalithkultur zu greifen, um sowohl ihre Existenz als ihre Verbindungen nach aussen zu erklären. Die alte Wandertheorie ist hier völlig unzulänglich.

Es sind nur Andeutungen, die ich hier habe geben können, zum Teil kühne Theorien, die jedoch besser unterbaut sind als früher vorgebrachte Vermutungen. Vielleicht wird eine künftige Forschung, die einen besseren und mehr systematischen Überblick über das gewaltige Material haben wird, sie umstürzen und

eine bessere Erklärung geben. Dies würde mich nur freuen, denn als Forscher suche ich nur die Wahrheit. Ich hoffe jedoch, dass meine Darstellung einen Begriff vom Reichtum des Arbeitsfeldes und von den wunderbaren Möglichkeiten gegeben hat, die hier der wissenschaftlichen Entdeckung harren. Ich möchte in der Hoffnung schliessen, dass die irländische Märchentradition, die reichste und bedeutsamste Europas, die Aufmerksamkeit und Pflege finden wird, die sie verdient, nicht nur so, dass sie in grösstmöglichem Ausmass gesammelt, sondern auch der Forschung zugänglich gemacht wird. Kann der vorliegende Aufsatz zum Verständnis hierfür beitragen, so würde mir das eine grosse Freude sein. Ebenso ist es mir eine besondere Genugtuung, mit diesem meinem Beitrag einem Manne huldigen zu dürfen, der sich so hervorragende Verdienste um das Studium der Vorzeit Irlands erworben hat[47].

THE FOLK TALE FROM THE ETHNIC VIEWPOINT

W. Grimm's opinion that folk tales are an inheritance from a common Indo-European mythology was not accepted by Th. Benley, who advanced the theory that all folk tales, with the exception of animal tales, have their origin among Indian non-Aryan peoples. Both views are wrong, because — as the Finnish school of thought has shown — tales may in theory originate anywhere. Nevertheles, the ethnic idea is important, as I hope to show in the following.

Handed down from the Old Kingdom in Egypt are some folk tales about magicians, related in a curious style, of which there is only one parallel — the story in Exodus about Moses and the Magicians, which in all probability came from Egypt. Another ethnically determined group is composed of the Semitic novels which are already to be found in *Genesis* (Esau and Jacob, Joseph and his Brethren) and are still known in Bedouin tradition (e. g. Enno Littmann *Arabische Beduinenzählungen*. Strassburg 1908). These novels are confined to the Semitic peoples, but through the instrumentality of culture contact they have intruded into Persia and into mediaeval European literature. The *chimerates* belong to the Indo-European peoples; elsewhere they exist solely as borrowings.

They are already to be found in classical Greek literature, and the same group also comprises the tale of The Two Brothers (preserved in an Egyptian papyrus dating from about 1300 B. C.), which brings us down into the Neolithic Period. The so-called Indo-European peoples, however, do not belong to the same race; the British Isles, France and the whole of South Europe were not incorporated into the Indo-European culture until relatively late, and these peoples may have had an earlier, independent tradition which possibly may still be preserved; and perhaps a thorough analysis of the style and range of the various chimerates will provide important, ethnic results. The story of The Two Brothers is the property of the Satem-speaking peoples and has been recorded in only a few immigrated variants among the Centum-speaking Europeans, where perhaps instead of it we find a parallel in The Faithless Sister (Aarne 315). If this is so, the common archetype must be earlier still. The Eastern and Western forms of The Ogre's (Devil's) Hearth in the Egg (Aa 302) are different, it is true, yet so much alike that the archetype must be a fable-like chimerate of the time before the Centum and Satem peoples became separated. Chimerates based upon the belief in serpents as supernatural beings are to be found only in Asia and South Europe, not in North Europe. Is this the result of a Mediterranean intrusion among the Satem peoples, or did these chimerates afterwards pass from the one region to the other? In Cupid and Psyche (Aa 425, 428) and The Mouse (Cat, Frog, etc.) as a Bride (Aa 402), Scandinavia and the British Isles have certain motives in common which do not occur in other parts of Europe. These Celtic-Scandinavian motives may have descended from a prehistoric culture contact that has been demonstrated archaeologically. In other chimerates there is a most remarkable resemblance of motives between Celtic and Slavonic tradition which may date back to the time prior to 600 B. C., when the two peoples had a common boundary at the Carpathians. Axel Olrik has proved the existence of curious conformities between traditions in Scandinavia and the regions around the Caspian Sea, going back to perhaps 200—375 A. D. The wide distribution of certain tales and tale motives is the result partly of lively culture contact and partly of tribal migration, and we must assume that when the Indo-European peoples left their original land they possessed chimerates. By means of colonization the strange Megalithic Culture spread along the coast of Europe and

Africa, across the Indian Ocean and to the islands in the Pacific. In the same region we find the peculiar long-chimerate The Magic Flight (Aa 313), a composition of three separate chimerates: The Ogre's Tasks, The Flight and The Forgotten Fiancee. This long chimerate is to be found in the three thousand year old tale of the Argonauts, where the story has a mythical-heroic character, and the same composition occurs in an heroic poem in Samoa (Turner, *Samoa.* London 1884), which has a distinct connection with Aa 313. I would place this tale in conjunction with the intrusion of the Megalithic Culture into Samoa, which took place after 2500—2000 B. C. It is true that Greece has no Megalithic Culture, but archaeological discoveries show that the country was in close culture contact with Megalithic regions. If my assumption, which is also supported by special motive resemblances, is correct, it means that we have here a folk-tale that is at least four thousand years old. This is not too bold an assumption, for we know that both this and several other tales are at least three thousand years old. A pre-Celtic, Mediterranean or Megalithic tradition must have existed in the British Isles, and the same almost certainly is to be found in the Irish Fianníachta, which are closely related to the Mabinogion (Wales) and the Arthurian legend; moreover, the Fianníachta have a motive relationship with the ancient Greek heroic sagns and traditions in the Near East; and, as there seems to be no question of recent literature borrowings, we must apply the Megalithic Culture as a spreading factor in order to explain the connection between the traditions. Here the earlier migration theory is inadequate.

NOTES

I

1 v. Sydow, *God afton om I hemma är.* Malmö 1917.
2 v. Sydow, »Tranan och Vårfrudagen«. *Folkminnen och Folktankar* 3. 1916.
3 v. Sydow, »Lucia und Christkindlein«. *Zeitschr. f. Volkskunde* 1930.
4 *Fataburen* 1907, 1908.
5 v. Sydow, »Den fornegyptiska sagan om de två bröderna«. *Vetenskaps-Societetens i Lund Årsbok* 1930 pp. 51—89.
6 Aa = Antti Aarne, *The Types of the Folk-Tale,* translated and enlarged by Stith Thompson. Helsinki 1928.
7 W. Liungman, *En traditionsstudie över sagan om prinsessan i jordkulan.* Göteborg 1925.
8 A paper read at the Nordiska Historikermötet i Helsingfors 1931, transl. from »Om traditionsspridning«, *Scandia* V, 1932.

II

9 *Pantschatantra: Fünf Bücher indischer Fabeln, Märchen und Erzählungen. Aus dem Sanskrit übersetzt mit Einleitung und Anmerkungen,* von Theodor Benfey I—II. Leipzig. 1859.
10 Apart from Aa 160, which belongs, not to the animal-tale section, but to the chimerates.
11 Note 6 above.
12 *Skandinavisk Mytologi.* Helsingfors 1922, p. 21.
13 *Skand. Mytologi,* p. 21.
14 Aa 433 B.
15 In the science of botany *oicotype* is a term used to denote a hereditary plant-variety adapted to a certain *milieu* (seashore, mountain-land, *etc.*) through natural selection amongst hereditarily dissimilar entities of the same species. When then in the field of traditions a widely spread tradition, such as a tale or a legend [i. e. sagn], forms special types through isolation inside and suitability for certain culture districts, the term oicotype can also be used in the science of ethnology and folklore. One can distinguish between oicotypes of a higher or a lower order: (national, provincial, parochial, *etc.*).

16 Aa 870.

17 Inger M. Boberg, *Sagnet om den store Pans Død.* København 1934 (With summary in German).

18. Aa 302.

19. Aa 530.

20 Note 5 above.

21 This paper was read on Aug. 1. 1934, at the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, held in London. Reprinted from *Beáloideas* VII (1932), pp. 346–355.

III

22 The metrical form does not mean in itself that the heroic sagns are produced by the higher classes, the ability of making verses being often innate and independent on the social classes.

22a Reprinted from *Volkskundliche Gaben John Meier zum siebzigsten Geburttage dargebracht.* Berlin und Leipzig 1934, pp. 253–268.

IV

23 Straw was spread on the floor at Christmas, and the people slept on it that night, for Christ slept on straw.

24 A cake baked at Christmas and dealt out at the spring sowing, some beeing scattered on the ground in certain places.

25 Incidentally it is uncertain to what extent this information about the utilization of the last sheaf is reliable, in the cases we are considering, and in similar ones; it may have been given in answer to the overdirect and insistent questions of a collector, who was more than properly eager to get new indications of the use of the last sheaf.

26 See my paper "Scyld Scefing" in *Namn och Bygd.* 1924.

27 A paper read at the Congrès International des Sciences Anthropologique et Ethnologique. Reprinted from *Folk-Lore* 45. 1934 pp. 291–309.

V

28 Translated from »Folklig dit-tradition. Et teminologiskt utkast«. *Nordiska Folkminnesstudier. Tillägnade Sverker Ek. Folkminnen och Folktankar* 1937, pp. 216–232.

VI

29 It can with certainty be proved that a humorous fable can be based on real happenings and in that way develop out of a memorate, but such a fable can also be regarded as a humorous fabulate. The dividing line between sagn (memorate, fabulate) and humorous fable is extremely vague.

It is not certain if the spreading in this case took place orally. Perhaps it is Asbjørnsen's version which by means of printed translations is responsible for its spread.

30 This paper has been read at the Edingburgh Congress July 1937. Reprint from *Saga och Sed. Kungl. Gustav Adolf Akademins Årsbok* 1938, pp. 17—32.

VII

31 v. Sydow, »Psychologische Gründe der Mana-Vorstellung«, *Vetenskapssocietetens i Lund Årsbok,* 1929; v. Sydow, »Det ovanligas betydelse i tro och sed«, *Folkminnen och Folktankar* XIII (1926), pp. 55 ff; v. Sydow, »Associationens betydelse i folklig tro och sed«, *Folkminnen och Folktankar* 15 (1928), pp. 67 ff.

32 Albert Nilsson, Interessedominanz und Volksüberlieferung, *Acta Etnologica* 1936.

33 v. Sydow, »Något om träden i folkets tro och sed«, *Svenska Kulturbilder* 6. 1932.

34 Albert Nilsson, *op. cit.*

35 Reprint from *Folk-Liv* 1939, pp. 242—254.

VIII

36 Translated from »Religionsforskning och folktradition«, *Folkminnen och Folktankar* 28 (1941), pp. 3—21.

IX

37 Grundtvig-Ellekilde, *Æventyr* (1924), No. 5.

38 S. Liljeblad, »Argonauterne och sagan om flykten från trollet«, in *Saga och Sed* 1935.

39 O. Gjerdman, »Hon som var värre än den onde«, in *Saga och Sed* 1941.

40 *Les Fabliaux,* Paris 1895.

41 Sven Liljeblad, *Die Tobiasgeschichte und andere Märchen mit toten Helfern.* Lund 1927.

42 Georg Rosen, *Tuti-Nameh* (Leipzig 1858), II, p. 27.

43 Aa 510.

44 Note 7 above.

45 G. Turner, *Samoa a Hundred Years ago, and long before.* London 1884, pp 102 ff.

46 Translated from »Några synspunkter på sagoforskning och filologi« in *Øst og Vest. Afhandlinger tilegnede Prof. Arthur Christensen* (København 1945), pp. 140—166.

X

47 Reprint from Féil-Sgríbhinn Eóin Mic Néill. 1940, p. 567—580.

LIST OF BOOKS AND PAPERS BY C. W. v. SYDOW

by JAN-ÖJVIND SWAHN (Lund).

1896

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1907

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Våra folkminnen. Folksaga, folksägen och folktro. Grundlinjer till föreläsningar över detta ämne vid sommarkurserna i Ronneby. Karlshamn.

Studier i Finnsägnen och beslägtade byggmästarsägner. In: *Fataburen.* 1907—08.

1908

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Våra folkminnen. In: *Svenska turistföreningens årsskrift.* Stockholm.

1909

Två spinnsagor. En studie i jämförande folksagoforskning, Stockholm 1909. 2. ed. with summary in French in: *Svenska landsmål.* Bihang B. 3.

1910

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Tors färd till Utgård. In: *Danske Studier.*

1911

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1912

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Världsspråk och vetenskap. In: *Mondo.*

1913

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Kung Orre. In: *Maal og Minne.*
Starka karlar. In: *Finn, utgifven af Lukasgillet i Lund.*

1914

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Drakahallar och Drakaryd. *Ib.*
Folkminnen och folkminnesforskning. *Ib.*
Moltke Moe. *Ib.*
Några ordspråk från Småland. *Ib.*
Jätten Hymes bägare. *Ib.* Also in: *Danske Studier.* 1915. And in: *Folkminnen och folktankars skriftserie.* I. Malmö.
Folkminnena och deras insamling. Råd och anvisningar. In: *Folkminnen och folktankars skriftserie.* 2. Malmö.
Grendel i anglosaxiska ortnamn. In: *Namn och bygd.* 2. Also in: *Nordiska ortnamn. Hyllningsskrift tillägnad A. Noreen.* Uppsala.

1915

Gåtor från Skytts härad i Skåne samlade av Olof Christoffersson, ordnade och försedda med inledning. *Folkminnen från Skytts härad. 3. Ur Folkminnesföreningens i Lund samlingar. 1 : 3.* Lund.
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1916

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Önskemål och synpunkter rörande insamling av folkminnen. *Ib.*

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1917

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1919

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1920

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1921

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1922

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1923

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1924

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Naturväsen. En översikt till ledning för samlare. *Ib.*

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1926

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1928

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1929

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1931

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Inledning. In: *Nordisk Kultur.* 9B.

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