STRUCTURAL-TYPOLOGICAL STUDY OF FOLKTALES

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INTRODUCTION

Morphology of the Folktale by V. Propp, published in 1928, remained nearly unknown for years and was at times even dismissed as formalistic, perhaps because it was ahead of its time in many respects. The true value of Propp's scientific discovery was not revealed until later when the method of structural analysis entered the linguistic and ethnologic sciences. Today, *Morphology of the Folktale* is one of the most well-known works in the entire folkloristic literature. It was published in English translation in 1958 and 1968, and in Italian translation in 1966.[1] In the 1920's there was a marked interest in the problems of art forms, including the folktale, but only Propp discovered the structure of the folktale in his analysis of form. For him, morphology was not an end in itself; he did not pursue a mere presentation of poetic methods, rather he wanted to find, by analyzing the genre specificity of the fairytale, a historical explanation of its structural unity. The manuscript which he submitted at that time to the editors of *Problems of Poetics* (State Institute for the History of the Arts) still comprised an attempt at such a historical explanation. This, however, was not included in the final version. Propp later expanded this discarded chapter into his basic work *The Historical Roots of the Fairytale*, published in 1946. In analyzing the specificity of the fairytale, Propp started from the premise that an exact synchronic description has to precede any diachronic, i.e. historical-genetic analysis. He wanted to examine the constant elements, the invariants of the fairytale, of which the researcher would not lose sight when passing from one tale type to another. It is precisely these invariants and their correlations

within the composition of the tale which Propp discovered, and which form the structure of the fairytale.

Before Propp the so-called atomistic conception was dominant, which considered either the motif or the whole type as an elementary 'monad' of the tale. A. N. Veselovsky (1940), quoted with great respect by Propp, started from the motif and viewed types as combinations of motifs, presenting their correlations merely in numerical form. Recurrent motifs were for the most part interpreted as borrowings or itinerant motifs. Karl Spiess (1924), Friedrich Von Der Leyen (1925), and others later treated motifs as recurrent elements of the folktale. Antti Aarne, the author of the *International Catalogue of Folktale Types,* and the entire Finnish, i.e. historic-geographic school, used the type as a constant element of folk poetry. The type also recurs as a constant element in the investigation of the folktale in R. M. Volkov's (1924) well-known book *The Folktale Investigation into the Theme Structure of the Folktale.*

V. PROPP

The first pages of Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* contain a vivid polemic against his predecessors. He demonstrates the inadequacy of motif and type and also points out the lack of unambiguous criteria for the delimitation of the type, i.e. for a convincing differentiation of independent types and their variants. According to Propp neither type nor motif, in spite of their constancy, determines the specific structural unity of the fairytale. It may at first sound paradoxical that we are dealing with variable elements of the tale. One should note, however, that the association of motifs within types, or more exactly their distinct arrangement and distribution within a type itself, depends on the constant structure of the composition of the tale.

Joseph Bédier (1893) in his interesting inquiry into the fable had already dealt with the discrimination of variable and invariable tale elements, but according to Propp he did not succeed in exactly differentiating and defining these elements. Nearly at the same time as Propp, A. I. Nikiforov (1928) outlined the tasks of structural-morphological research in a most instructive paper. He summarized his interesting observations in a few morphological laws, among which he distinguished:

(1) the law of repetition of dynamic elements of the tale which slows down and diversifies its general course;

(2) the law of the center of composition (folktales may have one or two heroes who either have equal rights or not);

(3) the law of categorical or grammatical formation of the plot.

Nikiforov suggests analyzing actions on the model of word-formation. According to him, the following actions can be differentiated:

(1) prefix actions of great variability;
(2) root-actions, nearly invariable;
(3) suffix and flectional actions.

He closely approaches Propp's position with his thesis that the function and dynamic role of the protagonist are the only constants in the folktale. The principal dramatis persona is seen by Nikiforov as carrying biographic functions, the secondary dramatis personae, however, as carrying various ramified functions of adventure (e.g. assistance or hindrance to the hero, or the function of the object of his courting). It is of interest that Nikiforov's schema literally anticipates Greimas' (1966) structural model of actors. The arrangement into certain combinatorial possibilities of principal and secondary dramatis personae's functions constitutes the main motivation of the structure of the folktale, according to Nikiforov. These and other ideas are very constructive; unfortunately they were not developed into a systematic analysis of syntagmatics of the tale, as in Propp's work. Moreover, Nikiforov does not always exactly distinguish the separate levels (e.g. theme, style, etc.). Finally, he does not keep apart structural principles and atomistic concepts as consistently as Propp does.

   Propp has clearly shown that the specificity of the fairytale is not based on motifs for a great many of its motifs occur also in other genres, but on certain structural units around which the motifs are grouped. In his analysis of the plots in the tales of Afanasev's collection, he found unity beyond motif variation. Propp discovered the constant recurrent elements of the fairytale in the functions of dramatis personae. He recorded altogether thirty-one such functions: departure of the hero, interdiction, violation of the interdiction, discovery of the villain (opponent), information about the hero given to the villain, deceitful trickery, complicity therein, harmful act (villainy) or lack (manque), mediating action, beginning of counteraction, dispatch, first function of the donor, the hero's reaction, receipt of the magical agent, spatial transference, struggle, identification of the hero, victory, liquidation of the lack, return of the hero, pursuit, rescue, unrecognized arrival, claims of the false hero,

difficult task, solution of the task, recognition and exposure, transfigura-
tion, punishment, wedding. Certain functions may be lacking in individual
folktales, but their number is limited and their sequence remains con-
stant. Similarly constant are the number of roles (seven in all) distributed
among the actual actors of the folktale with their attributes. Each of
the seven dramatis personae (i.e. roles), namely, villain, donor, helper,
princess or her father, dispatcher, hero, and false hero, has his own sphere
of action, i.e. fulfills one or more functions. Thus Propp developed two
structural models, of which the first (temporal sequence of actions) is
more clearly marked than that of the dramatis personae. From this
follows Propp's twofold definition of the fairytale; he first characterizes
it as a "story built upon the proper alternation of the above-cited func-
tions in various forms", and second as a "tale subordinated to a seven-
personage scheme". The sphere of action, i.e. the distribution of functions
according to roles, makes the second model dependent on the first,
fundamental model. Precisely by shifting the analysis from motifs to
functions, Propp was able to proceed from the atomistic conception to
a structural one. Propp's first and most important operation is the dis-
section of the text into a sequence of successive actions. Accordingly,
the content of the folktale may be retold in the following short sentences:
the parents go into the forest, they order the children not to run into
the street; the wicked snake carries the girl away, etc. The predicates
reveal the composition of the folktale; the subjects, objects, and other
parts of speech, however, determine the theme. This is a matter of re-
ducing the content to a few short sentences. These sentences are further
generalized in such a way that each concrete action is mapped onto a
certain function which is coded by a noun (e.g. departure, trickery,
struggle, etc.). The respective section of the text containing this or that
action (and the corresponding function) would in modern terminology
be labeled a tale syntagm. All temporally consecutive functions form a
linear syntagmatic chain, as it were. Certain deviations from the regular
sequence are not seen by Propp as invalidating this principle, but as
facultative, reversible sequences. Not every function necessarily occurs
in a folktale, but in principle one function implies the next.[2] However,
there are cases where, in Propp's words, "the functions are fulfilled in
exactly the same way as assimilation of a form by another". The function
can then be exactly defined only by its consequences. As an example of

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[2] Hence the testable hypothesis that folklore is an ergodic system. We are in the
process of implementing a computer program to investigate this proposition on the
basis of very large corpora. [P.M.]

such an assimilation of functions, he quotes folktales in which the original dispatching of the hero by the sender and the hero's difficult task, or the test by the villain or the donor, are identical. Propp stresses that the first functions of the donor (e.g. the hero's choice of the horse at the witch's) and the difficult task of the villain (e.g. to select the bride, i.e. the sea-king's daughter, from among twelve maidens) are not interchangeable. As we shall see presently, this postulate has deeper implications for the opposition of these two functions, i.e. of the preliminary test through which the hero receives the magical agent, and of the main test which leads to the liquidation of the lack, and is basically associated with the specific characteristics of the fairytale genre. This thesis is not actually formulated by Propp but his analysis suggests it. Propp's definition of the binary character of most functions is of the greatest importance in the perspective of the structural method (lack-liquidation of the lack; interdiction - violation of the interdiction; struggle - victory, etc.). We should be reminded that Propp endeavored to achieve the structural analysis of the fairytale genre; that he made his investigations on the basis of the theme or, specifically, on the basis of the system of dramatis personae; and that he arrived at a certain model within which actual folktales form a set of variables. He certainly also opened up avenues leading to the analysis (in the framework of the metasubject) of individual types of groups of fairytales in his *Morphology of the Folktale*. He referred, for example, to the fact that two pairs of functions (struggle against the villain-victory over the villain, and interdiction - violation of the interdiction) are never present at the same time in one folktale: rather, they occur at about the same point in the sequence of functions. One would say now that the two pairs of functions are in complementary distribution. Propp assumes that folktales with the paired functions interdiction-violation of the interdiction, and struggle-victory, really belong to different sets. Moreover, he suggests differentiating types according to the variants of function A (harmful act, villainy) or a (lack), which exist in any folktale. In this connection an observation appears to be worthwhile which we find elsewhere in the book; it refers to the two forms of the initial situation, either the seeker and his family, or the victim and his family. Another useful reference for the differentiation of types is to the parallelism of folktales about a villain in the form of a snake or of a wicked stepmother. These criteria may provide clues for the analysis of individual types.

Morphology of the Folktale was reviewed favourably by D. Zelenin (1929) and V. Perets (1930). Perets considered Propp's research to be

a development of Goethe's, Bedier's, and, particularly, Veselovsky's ideas, but at the same time he emphasized the analysis of functions proposed by Propp, and felt that the book was thought-stimulating. His most essential comments were to the effect that grammar was not the substratum of language, but its abstraction, and that it would appear doubtful to derive an archetype from the description of folktale functions. In his rather brief review, Zelenin restricted himself to Propp's basic tenets, yet as a final observation he expressed his conviction that this method would have a great future. These words turned out to be a prophecy, fulfilled only after many years, as problems of form were neglected in Soviet literary science in the 30's and 40's for various reasons. Propp's book, which actually revealed new perspectives in folklore and folkloristics, preceded the structural-typological research of Western countries.[3] In his book *Einfache Formen*, published one year after Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*, André Jolles (1929) still treats the folktale as a fixed genre-monad, as a primary 'simple form'. He derived the genre-specificity of 'simple forms' from conceptions based on language itself. According to Jolles, the folktale corresponds ideally to the optative mood, the legend to the imperative, and the myth to the interrogative mood.

The renaissance of Propp's morphology began after the English translation was published in the United States in 1958. It was caused by the success of structural linguistics and anthropology. In her preface to the American edition, S. Pirkova-Jakobson quite incorrectly labels Propp an orthodox and active Russian formalist. She contrasts Propp's transition from diachronic to synchronic investigation with the historic-geographic, i.e. the Finno-American school. This school of thought played a leading role in the United States until very recently, above all represented by Stith Thompson, the Nestor of American folkloristics. It may be

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[3] In 1929, Bogatyrev and Jakobson wrote an article on the use of functional and structural methods in folkloristics and ethnography (Bogatyrev and Jakobson 1929). In his notes to an American translation of Russian folktales, Jakobson (1945) underlines the significance of Nikiforov's and especially Propp's morphological studies and refers to their theoretical relationships with works in structural linguistics. Under the influence of Russian scholarship, Stender-Petersen (1953) proposed to differentiate, in the analysis of a legend of a hero's death by his horse, the constant elements of the theme from the variable and labile ones. His approach is in part, however, a return to Bédier. Stender-Petersen fails to keep apart dynamic elements and labile ones. Souriau's essay of a structural analysis of drama must also be mentioned (1950). He distinguishes altogether six functions, each corresponding to certain powers marked with astrological symbols and represented by dramatis personae. He maps these functions into innumerable dramatic situations (210,441 in all). Souriau's method is similar to Propp's but less precise.

mentioned here that in his morphology of the folktale Propp more decidedly opposed the historic-geographic school than the diachronic method. In Propp's view, synchrony has to precede diachrony. The English edition of *Morphology of the Folktale* was reviewed favourably by Melville Jacobs (1959a) and by Lévi-Strauss, and was widely echoed. Propp's work, already 30 years old, was hailed as a novum, and immediately used as a model of structural analyses in folklore and later also in other narrative genres. It also exercised an essential influence on contributions to structural semantics.

C. LÉVI-STRAUSS

It was not until the 1950's that specifically structural-typological investigations in folklore were published in France and the United States, in connection with the success of the ethnographic school of cultural models, and particularly under the influence of the rapid development of structural linguistics and semiotics. The article published in 1955 under the title "The Structural Study of Myth" by the leading French anthropologist and structuralist Claude Lévi-Strauss has the character of a scientific manifesto. To what extent the Russian edition of *Morphology of the Folktale* was then known to him is difficult to determine. Lévi-Strauss not only attempts to apply the principles of structural linguistics to folklore; he considers myth as a phenomenon of language manifested on a much higher level than phonemes, morphemes, and sememes. 'Mythemes' are gross constituent units found on the sentence level. If the myth is broken down into short sentences, and each sentence written on an index card in corresponding sequence, then it will be possible to distinguish certain functions and at the same time to show that the mythemes have the character of relations (each function is linked to a given subject). Here Lévi-Strauss comes very close to Propp, but then significant differences become apparent, above all due to the fact that Lévi-Strauss mainly investigates myths, whereas Propp investigates folktales. Both authors, however, acknowledge a basic relationship between these two genres. Propp calls the fairytale a mythological folktale mainly because of its evolution from myth, and Lévi-Strauss sees the folktale as a slightly 'attenuated' myth. He starts from the assumption that myth, in contrast to other linguistic phenomena, belongs equally to both Saussurean categories, *langue* and *parole*, for myth is diachronic as a historical account of the past, and is synchronic and temporally

reversible as an instrument of interpretation of the present or future.
It must be pointed out, however, that in his interesting discussion Lévi-
Strauss attempts in vain to develop to completion his successful analogy
between myth and natural language. But this does not essentially change
the problem itself. As a consequence of the complex ambiguous and
equivocal character of myth, its true constituent units reveal their symbolic
character not as isolated relations, but only as bundles, i.e. as combina-
tions of such relations with two dimensions, the diachronic and the
synchronic. These combinations of relations can be uncovered methodi-
cally, if a myth's variants are arranged in superposed sets so that on the
horizontal[4] axis is situated the sequence of mythical events and episodes,
while individual relations are grouped along the vertical axis, forming
bundles in such a way that each column includes relations belonging
to the same bundle with a definite meaning, independent of the sequence
of events within a variant. The horizontal axis is of importance when
reading the myth; the vertical axis when trying to understand it. Contrasts
between myth variants yield a system of multiple strata.

According to this method, Lévi-Strauss formed four vertical columns
to analyze the variants of the Oedipus myth. The first column (Cadmos
seeks Europa, Oedipus marries Jocasta, Antigone buries Polynices)
characterizes the over-rating of blood relations; the second, however,
the under-rating of blood relations (the Spartoi kill one another, Oedipus
kills Laios, Eteocles kills Polynices). The third column represents the
denial of the autochthonous origin of man: it refers to the victory over
'chthonian' monsters that prevent mankind from leaving Earth to live
in daylight (Cadmos kills the dragon, Oedipus slays the Sphinx). The
fourth column contains a positive reference to the autochthonous origin
of man insofar as men, born from the Earth, often cannot yet walk
straight (the names of Oedipus' ancestors refer to disabilities which pre-
vent them from walking upright). Lévi-Strauss interprets the general
meaning of the Oedipus myth as an attempt to solve the contradiction
between the belief that mankind is autochthonous (origin from the Earth,
like the plants) and the biological generation of man by a couple of
parents, i.e. by two persons of different sex.

The correlation of the four columns, according to Lévi-Strauss, reveals
a specific method to overcome this contradiction. However, it does not
overcome the contradiction; the problem is only displaced. Lévi-Strauss

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[4] [Translators' note: Apparent error in the German translation; *recte*: horizontal
axis - historical sequence; vertical axis - bundle of relations; cf. Lévi-Strauss (1958:
212-214).]

has, in his own words, attempted to read the Oedipus myth "*à l'améri-caine*", by focusing on the peculiarities of considerably more archaic Pueblo Indian myths. In his analysis of Zuni myths he tries to show how the myth resolves the dilemma of life and death and how this resolution again determines its structure. He therefore regards myth above all as a logical instrument (taking into consideration the peculiarities of primitive thought) capable of overcoming these contradictions. Thus mythological thought develops from a conceptual definition of oppositions to a pro-gressing mediation between these concepts. The problem is not resolved but attenuated as two stronger oppositions are replaced by two weaker concepts.[5] The opposition death-life is reduced to the opposition flora-fauna, which again is reduced to the opposition plant-animal food. The latter opposition is finally cancelled by the assumption that the mediator himself, i.e. the mythical hero, is a carnivorous animal (Coyote among the Plains Indians, Raven among the Indians of the Northwest). He is therefore intermediary between the predatory and the herbivorous animals. The hierarchy of the basic elements of Zuni tales coincides, according to Lévi-Strauss, with a progression corresponding to the above described structural shift from life to death, and vice-versa. Also connected with this logical chain is the mythical process of overcoming the contradiction between the conception of the persistence of the autoch-thonous origin of mankind, corresponding to the growth of plants, and the actual alternation of generations as a permanent cycle of death and birth. In this way too, Lévi-Strauss interprets the Oedipus myth. Without regard to the fundamental differences between myth and folktale, he tends to see such mediating devices in the folktale heroes (e.g. in the person of the Ash-Boy among North American Indians, or Cinderella in European folktales). In his view, the ambiguous and equivocal charac-ter of the dramatis personae of myth and folktale is also connected with this mediating process (cf. his review of Anna Birgitta Rooth's book on the Cinderella tale cycle). Lévi-Strauss proposes to express the structure of myth as model of a mediating process in the following formula;

$$f_x\,(a) : f_y\,(b)\ {}^a f_x\,(b) : f_a^{-1}\,(y)$$

Here (*a*) and (*b*) are two terms (actor, dramatis personae) of which the first (*a*) is associated with the purely negative function (*x*), whereas (*b*) is associated with the positive function (*y*); however (*b*) is also capable

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[5] This process could be analogous to the definition of unsolvable equations in mathematics. See Lévi-Strauss 1955b, especially end of Chapter 23, and "The Story of Asdiwal", in Leach, ed. 1967. [P.M.]

of assuming the negative function (x) and thereby becomes a mediator between (x) and (y). The two sides of the equation represent two situations and between these situations exists a certain relation of equivalence insofar as one term has been replaced by its opposite in the second part of the formula (and, correspondingly, in the second half of the mytho- logical process or type); and hence an inversion is made between the function value and the term value of the two elements. The last part $f_{a-1} (y)$ shows precisely that this is not only the cancellation of the initial situation but an additional characteristic, a certain new situation as the result of a spiral-like development, as it were.

In his brief essay on the folklore of the Winnebago, Lévi-Strauss applies his method, presenting a comparative structural analysis of the four themes of the hero's uncommon fate:

(1)   the story of a youth who is slain by the enemy for the glory of his tribe;
(2)   the story of a man who recovers his wife from the realm of the spirits after defeating them;
(3)   the story of the victory over the spirits of deceased members of a shamanic society whereby the hero obtains the privilege of self- metamorphosis;
(4)   the story of the orphan boy who overcomes the spirits and through this victory resurrects the chief's daughter who loves him.

The differences of these four themes can be analyzed according to the following aspects:

to sacrifice	for another person	(theme 2)
	for a group	(theme 1)
	for oneself	(theme 2)
to conceive of death as	inhuman aggressor	(theme 4)
	human aggressor	(theme 2)
	seductor	(theme 1)
	companion	(theme 4)
to perform an act	against a group	(theme 4)
	outside a group	(theme 2)
	inside a group	(theme 3)
	for a group	(theme 1)

Besides this, the following oppositions are dealt with: nature - culture; life - death; immortal spirits - heroes who cannot live their life to the

end and leave the rest of their life to the group; common life - unccmmon life (of negative and opposed character in theme 4).

The analysis of myth in Lévi-Strauss' extensive investigations into the problems of primitive thought and mythology is also of interest (1962, 1964, 1966, 1968). His ideas in these fields are profound and constructive. Objecting to the traditional view of primitive thought as an underdeveloped, merely intuitive and concrete form of thinking incapable of abstractions, he postulates a certain intellectual content on this level of cognition. He analyzes the specific character of this type of thought and convincingly demonstrates that totemic terms are used in archaic societies to express complex classifications as material for a semiotic system *[Zeichensystem]*.[6] He presents an interesting analysis of certain semantic oppositions (raw-cooked; moist-dry, etc.) which are of crucial importance for myth and ritual of the South American Indians.

A study of Lévi-Strauss' work facilitates the understanding of his specific method of myth analysis in all its strong and weak aspects. He sees myth as an instrument of primitive logic, and the cases he examines are therefore structural analyses not of mythic data, but of mythic thought. Nonetheless, he provides very pertinent and detailed ideas on the method of structural analysis of myth.

In principle, Lévi-Strauss takes the narrative sequence – the horizontal axis – into consideration, but in practice he focuses mostly on the bundles of relations and on their symbolic and logical meaning.[7] Propp, on the other hand, considers above all the narrative line in his search of the genre specificity of the fairytale; he analyzes temporal sequences and hence syntagmatics, clarifying the functional significance of each syntagm within the framework of given themes. His structural model is therefore linear. Only in the last stage of his research, i.e. in his book *The Historical Roots of the Fairytale*, does he intepret the functions ethnographically on a genetic basis.[8] Lévi-Strauss is interested essentially in mythological logic and therefore starts from myths; grouping the functions along the vertical axis only, he attempts to explain the paradigmatics of the myth variants by opposing them. His structural model is non-linear. To him, the historical difference between myth and folktale is essentially irrelevant. His mediation formula contains certain references to structural analysis as it attempts to express the final inversion of the situation and spiral-like

[6]   On this important aspect, see Bulmer 1970 and Lévi-Strauss 1971b.
[7]   However, see his *Mythologiques*. [P.M.]
[8]   However, see Propp. 1972. (The original was published in 1928 in *Poetika, Vremennik Otdela Slovesnyx Iskusstv* 4: 70-89.) [P.M.]

developments. This very peculiarity of the theme was defined by Propp
in more concrete terms: the hero not only liquidates the lack (for that
purpose he or his supernatural helpers have to confront the villain
negatively, which corresponds to the ambiguous and equivocal character
of term (b) in Lévi-Strauss' formula); he also creates a new situation and
in addition acquires miraculous qualities.

Lévi-Strauss' investigations were of considerable influence on folk-
loristics and ethnography; they prompted a number of limitations
and discussions (cf. the attempt of an analysis of the Biblical myth by
Leach 1961). In his review of Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*,
Lévi-Strauss rates this work very high in general, offering at the same
time a number of critical comments and suggestions. The difference in
the methods of these two authors has already been pointed out above,
for both approach the solution of the problem from diametrically opposed
positions. In this perspective, Lévi-Strauss' critical comments do not
appear to be very enlightening. He conceives his polemic against Propp
as that of a structuralist against a formalist, believing that Propp separates
form from content, folktale from myth, ignores ethnographic context,
and thus builds a grammar without lexicon, as it were, disregarding the
fact that folklore as a specific phenomenon differs from all other lin-
guistic phenomena, and that it combines dictionary and syntax in one
function. The reduction of all folktales to a basic scheme is seen as a
consequence of this approach. In contrast, Lévi-Strauss sees a greater
unity behind the relative multiplicity of functions, and presents some
functions as resulting from transformations of others (connection of the
initial and terminal series of functions, e.g. struggle with difficult task,
villain with false hero, etc.). Moreover, he wants to replace the functions
by a set of operations patterned after Boole's algebra (a group of trans-
formations of quantitatively small elements). To Lévi-Strauss the drama-
tis personae of the folktale are mediation devices linked to opposites
(e.g. male-female, high-low, etc.). His idea of interpreting individual
functions as resulting from transformations of identical types appears
indeed very instructive; nevertheless such an investigation should better
be undertaken after, and not in lieu of a summary morphological analysis.
The various relations between the functions can hardly be established
before the functions themselves have been defined. However, the defini-
tion of functions must be preceded by an exact breakdown of the tale
into syntagms according to their temporal sequence; otherwise the
determination of the relations between the functions and their arrange-
ment in bundles, the explanation of the symbolic meaning of these

bundles, and the derivation of the paradigm will contain a great many arbitrary elements, and will not go beyond the scope of penetrating and partially correct speculations.

Propp considered his syntagmatic analysis to be the first stage of the history of the folktale and also of the exploration of the 'entirely independent logical structure of the folktale', which was a preparation for the investigation of the folktale as myth. Therein he agrees with Lévi-Strauss. But the analysis of the syntagmatic structure is not only indispensable as a first stage of the exploration of folktale structure, it also directly serves Propp's purpose, namely, to determine the specificity of the folktale, and to describe and explain its uniform structure. The reduction of all fairytales to one basic scheme is therefore not a fallacy; it rather follows from a research objective. The reproach of ignoring the ethnographic context is not justified and can only be explained by the fact that Lévi-Strauss was unaware of Propp's book, *The Historical Roots of the Fairytale*. His comment, that the ethnographic context is missing but not 'the historical past', must therefore be refuted as Lévi-Strauss disregards the historical character of this context anyway; i.e. the fundamental historical difference between myth and folktale as two stages in the history of folklore whose relation is one of genetic dependence, each having a specificity of its own. Lévi-Strauss himself agrees that thematic opposition and transposition are less marked in folktales. They show greater variability. However this is not only a slight attenuation but a result of folklore development, and consequent upon the separation of folktale imagination (which to a certain extent is already poetic) from the concrete 'ethnography', from the religious concepts and rituals within a culture area, defined ethnically as well as evolutionally. As will be shown, not only are the dramatis personae of the folktale more contingent, but also their rules of behavior; they have the character of rules of the game to a much higher degree than in myth. The new ethical and moral criteria of the folktale differ mainly qualitatively from synonymous ethnographic models of behavior and interpretation of the environment. The accusation of formalism levelled against Propp is therefore doubly unjustified. Propp himself commented on this in the epilogue of the Italian edition of his book, pointing out that this work was the first part of the comparative-historical study on the fairytale, continued later on. Non-uniform terminology and omissions in the English edition had given rise to certain misunderstandings. Propp emphasized that the folktale, not the myth, had been the object of his investigation; he had explored categories such as theme,

composition, and genre, the analysis of which cannot be separated from the linear syntagmatic sequence, and he had restricted himself to the fairytale in particular.

Without doubt Propp's work forms the basis of a more profound structural analysis of folklore. It is not surprising that here and abroad every folkloristic research in structural models had to refer to Propp after publication of his fundamental monograph.

A. J. GREIMAS

From France, where structuralism is a widespread school of thought, several papers by A. J. Greimas (1963a, b; 1966a, b) must be mentioned first. In his article "La description de la signification et la mythologie comparée" (1963a),[9] Greimas attempts to illustrate Dumézil's research in comparative mythology, using exclusively Lévi-Strauss's method. He assumes the mythemes to be paradigmatically connected, and the model formula of myth to be

$$\frac{A}{\text{non } A} \simeq \frac{B}{\text{non } B}$$
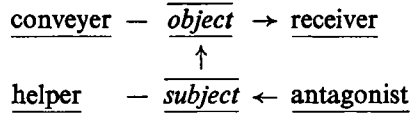
(two oppositions connected by a general relation).

From the analysis of some mythic themes (social contract, good - evil, supra-dimensional sphere, etc.) in various mythologies, Greimas concludes that semantic oppositions are differentiating symbols (beneficent - maleficent; spirit - matter; war - peace; integral - universal, etc.), and interprets two mythological conceptions as transformations of other conceptions. In his articles 'Le conte populaire russe – Analyse fonctionnelle" (in 1966a) and "Éléments pour une théorie de l'interprétation du récit mythique" (1966b),[10] and in the corresponding passages of his *Sémantique structurale* (1966a), Greimas even relies on the English translation of *Morphology of the Folktale* when treating certain aspects of linguistic semantics. He aims at a synthesis of Propp's and Lévi-Strauss' methods, i.e. at a synthesis of syntagmatics and paradigmatics by revising Propp's schema with the tools of modern logic and semantics. In analyzing folktales, Greimas uses Propp's methodology supplemented or improved by Lévi-Strauss' theory for the analysis of myths. He developed

[9]   English abridged version in Maranda, ed. 1972. [P.M.]
[10] English version in Maranda and Köngäs Maranda, eds. 1971. [P.M.]

the following structural model of the acting dramatis personae by oppos-
ing the schemata of Propp and Souriau:[11]

$$\text{conveyer} \; - \; \overline{object} \; \rightarrow \; \text{receiver}$$
$$\uparrow$$
$$\text{helper} \quad - \; \overline{subject} \; \leftarrow \; \text{antagonist}$$

The dramatis persona of the petitioner combines Propp's 'dispatcher'
and 'princess' father', while 'supernatural helper' and 'donor' are
merged in the dramatis persona of the helper. In the folktale, the receiver
is somehow connected with the hero, who is at the same time the subject;
the princess is the object. Greimas ranks helper and antagonist with the
secondary dramatis personae, who are associated with certain circum-
stances. They carry out the subject's will in the plot. According to
Greimas, the opposition conveyer - receiver is equivalent to the modality
of the verb *to know*, the pair helper - antagonist is equivalent to the
modality of *to be able*, and the opposition subject - object to the modality
of *to want*. The hero's desire for an object is realized on the level of
functions of the quest type. As to syntagmatic functions, Greimas reduces
them from thirty-one to twenty, in favor of an arrangement by pairs,
based on Propp's binary functions. He not only considers each pair to
be associated by implication, i.e. one function entailing the emergence
of another in the syntagmatic sequence ($s \rightarrow$ non-s), but also by disjunc-
tion (s versus non-s) as a certain paradigmatic relation independent of
the course of theme developments and of linear syntagmatic sequences.
Greimas attempts to present these paired functions (capital letters) as
semantic correlations of two pairs, one negative and one positive.

$$\frac{s}{\text{non-}s} \; \text{versus} \; \frac{\bar{s}}{\overline{\text{non-}s}} \; \text{or } S \text{ versus } \bar{S}$$

Greimas connects the negative series of this double function syntagma-
tically with the beginning of the folktale (misfortune - lack), and the
positive series with the last part (liquidation of lack - reward of the hero).
The onset of the conflict and its resolution, which stand at the beginning
or at the end of these two series, are conceived of as violation of a con-
tract, which leads to disaster; or as restoration of a contract, as it were.
The core of a folktale consists of a sequence of tests, each of which starts
with the conclusion of a contract for the forthcoming test. The test also

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[11]   The following passage differs only slightly from the related section in Chapter 4.
[P.M.]

consists of the struggle against the antagonist and the consequences of the hero's victory. Greimas sees a certain congruity of the test structure with the structural model of the acting dramatis personae. 'Contract' is equivalent to the basic communication conveyer-receiver, and to 'struggle' on the level helper-antagonist, and similarly with the acquisition of a desired object and result of the test. In the preliminary test (qualification of the hero for the decisive tests) the conveyer acts as antagonist; in the second or main test, and in the third test which leads to victory, complete congruity of the functions with the acting dramatis personae can be ascertained.[12] The remaining functions are also distributed among the three levels (delivery of information; power; desired object). Finally, Greimas outlines the scheme of the hero's spatial transferences more exactly. Departure and arrival are reformulated as presence or absence of the hero, assuming that the concept of absence carries a certain mythological connotation. According to these principles, Greimas remodels Propp's schema in this way:

$$\bar{p} \ \bar{A} \ \bar{C_1} \ \bar{C_2} \ \bar{C_3} \ \bar{p} \ A_1 \ p \ (A_2 + F_2 + \text{non } c_2) \ d \ \overline{\text{non } p}, \ (F_1 + c_1 + \text{non } c_3)$$
$$\text{non } p_1 \ d \ F_1 \ p_1 \ (A_3 + F_3 \ \text{non } c_1) \ C_2 \ C_3 \ A \ (\text{non } c_3)$$

A = contract (command-acceptance)
B = struggle (attack-victory)
C = communication (dispatch-receipt)
p = presence
d = rapid transference

The violation of a contract $\bar{A}$ (at the onset of the conflict) consists of the paired function interdiction - violation of the interdiction ($\bar{a}$ versus $\overline{\text{non-}a}$), which is correlated with the function: conclusion of a contract A (command - acceptance, a versus non-a). Wedding resolves the conflict and restores the original contract (the conveyer delivers the desired object to the receiver, i.e. the subject). The designations read as follows:

A_1 mediation - beginning counteraction
A_2 first function of the donor - hero's reaction
A_3 a difficult task is proposed to the hero in the last test.

The negative series C_1, C_2, C_3 in the beginning of the scheme has the following meaning: reconnaissance - delivery; trickery - complicity; villainy - lack; it is distributed along the axes: information, i.e. question-answer (1); power (2, this is quasi the loss of the hero's power), and de-

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[12] For explications, see below, Chapter 4. [P.M.]

sired object (3, the acquisition of the princess represents the liquidation of lack). The positive series consists of C_1, C_2, C_3. Marking-recognition is correlated with the pair reconnaissance - delivery as a form of communication (C_1 versus $\bar{C}_1$). Exposure - transfiguration, as manifestations of the hero's powers, are in opposition to trickery - complicity (C_2 versus $\bar{C}_2$). Moreover, the acquisition of the magical agent is in opposition to the loss of the hero's power, expressed by the function complicity ($\text{non-}c_2$ versus $\overline{\text{non-}c_2}$). Villainy is equivalent to punishment of a villain on the positive side; lack is not only cancelled by direct liquidation but also by the wedding which compensates the hero (C_3 versus $\bar{C}_3$). Greimas takes into consideration that all test results (acquisition of the magical agent $\text{non-}C_2$, liquidation of the lack $\text{non-}C_3$, and recognition $\text{non-}C_1$), and therefore these tests per se, aim at overcoming the harmful consequences of an 'alienation'. To Greimas the main result of his above-mentioned reduction of Propp's functions is the establishment of a paradigmatic structure and also of a possible double analysis for sememes and semantic meaning, leading to two semantic levels. He further attempts to investigate the overall nature of the fairytale and its general significance by means of a structural analysis on the basis of Lévi-Strauss' correlation method and mediation theory, in a combined syntagmatic and paradigmatic approach. The initial series $\overline{AC}$ is syntagmatically correlated with the terminal series CA : in a world without law and contract ($=A$), the values C are negative and their positive transformation opens the way for a restoration of the law. The correlation $\bar{A}{:}A \simeq \bar{C}{:}C$ is also possible in an achronic sense, indicating that existence vs. non-existence of a social contract is in the same relation as existence vs. non-existence of equivalent values. According to Greimas, the right side of the formula expresses the individual sphere of value exchange, i.e. the alternative expropriated vs. omnipossessive man; the left side of the formula, however, signifies not only the lawful order of society, but postulates also the existence of personal freedom, reflected in the violation of the interdiction. It is therefore possible to state that a correlation exists between personal freedom and the introduction of an order. The restoration of this order is a prerequisite of a reintegration of values. The functions test-struggle are understood by Greimas to be not only syntagmatic connectors between $\overline{AC}$ and CA, but also mediating devices which transform the structure

$$\frac{\bar{a}}{\overline{\text{non-}a}} \simeq \frac{\bar{c}}{\overline{\text{non-}c}} \text{ into } \frac{a}{\text{non-}a} \simeq \frac{c}{\text{non-}c}$$

The test cancels the negative terms and is replaced by an equivalent.
It is the functional, dynamic, and anthropomorphic expression of a com-
plicated semantic structure with negative and positive elements. The
intermediary character is also manifested in the lack of an equivalent
pair of functions. The hero's actions during the test are variable and
indeterminate, including the alternative between two irreversible moves.
These are traits which determine the historical activity of man.
Accordingly, the implied association between A and F is lacking;
they are associated only through the test results. The overall intermediary
role of the folktale is thus revealed: it resolves the contradictions between
structure and action, continuity and historical development, and society
and individual.

In his analysis of myth, Greimas strives to uncover not only the para-
digmatics, but also the syntagmatics of myth, by applying his interpreta-
tion of Propp's method to a Bororo myth taken from Lévi-Strauss'
Le cru et le cuit (1964). He starts from the obligatory negative denotation
of the first half, and from the positive denotation of the second half of
the tale (dichotomy of the temporal dimension of the tale into before-
after). In the first half, the principal theme is preceded by an introductory
part, in the second half the closing part is correlated with the main part,
but both parts remain outside the principal theme. Greimas distinguishes
three categories of narrative functions: contractual *(contractuelle)*,
performative (*performancielle*, i.e. tests), and disjunctive (*disjonctive*,
i.e. departure and return). He moreover suggests differentiating two
narrative genres, namely, untrue and true. Following Propp's example
he maps the more or less independent fragments onto functions and onto
the distribution of roles among individual dramatis personae within an
episode. Thereby he can trace the mechanics of the change of roles of
one and the same person, which is essential in order to understand the
general meaning of a theme. In the Bororo myth he analyzed, the son
who had committed incest and incurred the father's wrath turns into
a positive hero in the end, and his revenge against his father arouses
sympathy. Greimas treats this process as a reversal of the sequence of
contractual functions (interference with the contract, violation, existence
of a new contract, i.e. a new phase of the game of acceptances and refusals
and as an exchange of roles between father and son as result of a twofold
transformation: while the father changes from conveyer and subject
to receiver and villain, the son passes through the reverse development).
Greimas' decisive theoretical achievement is the interpretation of these
correlations and of the mutual interweaving of the discursive and struc-

tural isotopies, i.e. a comparison of the numerous diachronic elements of the tale with certain transformations of essential contents. A mythological dictionary and a number of cultural-ethnographic codes (relative to nature, food, or sexuality) are used to uncover the essential units of the contents which can be correlated to each other. Here transitional elements are manifested in the characterization of the heroes according to the intermediary function they fulfill in mythological oppositions, i.e. ultimately in the domain death-life (in Lévi-Strauss' sense).

It is not possible here to further elaborate on these aspects of Greimas' analysis. Greimas' investigations are of great interest. To be welcomed are his endeavors to establish paradigmatic relationships between syntagmatic functions, to define certain types and groups of functions, and to consistently combine the analysis of syntagmatics with a dynamic redistribution of roles among the concrete dramatis personae of the folktale and with the evolution of the values aspired to in the tales. He succeeded in exactly determining the key position of tests in the folktale, as means of conflict resolution, by transforming a negative into a positive situation. However, he achieves his logical 'deepening' of Propp's theory, and reaches a logical conclusion, at the expense of some obvious exaggerations. Besides, his theory betrays scholasticism mainly because he conducts his inquiries out of touch with concrete folklore material. He operates with Propp's functions as initial factors without regard to the subject matter to be interpreted. For example, is it possible to view the acquisition of a magical agent and the unwitting complicity of hero and villain as an equivalent pair? This complicity is an entirely natural reaction to deceitful trickery and corresponds to the hero's rules of conduct but not to acts designed to obtain 'values' in the folktale. If, *partout*, one wants to construct a semantic four-term formation consisting of two pairs of functions, then deceitful trickery - complicity with the villain constitutes the negative variant of the pair command - acceptance, for in both cases the hero cannot decline to meet the request. Similarly, the isomorphisms deceitful trickery - complicity and exposure - transfiguration are forced. It is correct to state that the pair deceitful trickery - complicity is in the same relation of opposition to the pair reconnaissance - delivery as is power to information, or more precisely, action to word. The semantic four-term configuration may, therefore, be correctly formulated in this way:

$$(\text{villain - hero}) \ \frac{\text{reconnaissance - delivery}}{\text{deceitful trickery - complicity}} \simeq$$

$$\frac{\text{question - answer}}{\text{command - acceptance}} \text{ (donor - hero)}$$

This formula is correlated with the first part of the folktale and reflects the opposition of actions which lead to disaster, and actions which provoke counteractions. There are evidently no concrete correspondences of individual functions in the initial and in the final phases of a series, only a general opposition of the unhappy mood in the beginning and the happy solution at the end. Moreover, these two series may nearly be totally lacking, as a folktale may immediately start out with a villain or with a lack and end with the main test – it is not by coincidence that Propp transferred certain functions to the prologue of the tale. The additional tests and the corresponding functions (e.g. exposure - trans-figuration, punishment of the protagonist) form another optional action sequence of the fairytale. Thus, Greimas' conception is mainly based on optional elements of the folktale and cannot, therefore, claim general validity. He emphasizes the opposition of wedding and violation of an interdiction, considering this as violation and restoration of a contract. However, this violation of an interdiction is also an optional function in the introductory part; the adversary's attack may of course be regarded as violation of a certain peaceful harmony but not of social contract. There are neither magical agents nor the element of violation of a peaceful order in folktales about wooing. Only in folktales of the heroic knight-type, in which the hero saves the community from the demonic assault of an enemy, can the wedding be interpreted as the hero's reward, albeit in a very general sense. Yet this folktale type reveals distinct traces of myth by showing a preference for cosmic dimensions and collective fates. All other fairytales focus mainly on the fate of individuals, on the com-pensation of those unjustly expelled, of those socially disadvantaged, etc. Their collective significance manifests itself only in sympathy for the fate of the hero with whom one can readily identify. Here Greimas reveals his failure to recognize the specific qualitative differences between myth and folktale (the same is true of Lévi-Strauss) when believing that a scheme based on the analysis of the specific morphology of the fairytale can be extended to myth. Neither the general category of tests nor the first qualifying test in particular is characteristic of or relevant to myth. In spite of its methodological value, Greimas' research is, therefore, in need of a number of important corrections.

C. BREMOND

While Greimas extends to myth the results of Propp's research on the fairytale, Claude Bremond (1964, 1966)[13] attempts to deduce from Propp's analysis general rules for the investigation of any narrative. Moreover, in contrast to Greimas, he focuses not on the mythological context of the tale, but on the logic itself of the narrative; not on paradigmatic oppositions, but on the syntax of human actions. In his opinion the function, which he relates to the same level as Propp, is in reality the atom of the narrative, and the narrative is constructed by the grouping of such atoms. He sees the elementary sequence as a triad of three functions which correspond to the three phases obligatory in any process.[14] The first function establishes the very possibility of a process, in the form of appropriate behavior or of anticipated events; the second function realizes this possibility; the third completes the process by producing the appropriate results. In contrast to Propp, however, it is Bremond's view that every phase does not necessarily entail the onset of the following phase. The actualization of a certain move or aim, as well as the non-actualization, is possible in any case. Certain alternatives and the choice made by hero and author are the first determinants. The elementary sequences are then grouped in complex sequences, possibly showing some configurations which Bremond terms elements and parentheses "scattered everywhere". The events are dichotomized as ameliorations and degradations. Bremond analyzes a good number of such sequences and labels them (e.g. task, contract, error, trickery, etc.). He demonstrates a possible chain of functions designed to realize an amelioration (cf. Propp's liquidation of lack), always on the premises that certain obstacles are overcome by adequate means. A concrete task results which is frequently delegated to an ally (cf. the helper and the donor) against the adversary (cf. the enemy). The hero's relations *with* his ally have the character of a contract; they may often be comparable to the relation creditor - debtor (cf. Greimas' contractual functions). The adversary may be rendered harmless, either peacefully through negotiations or violently through aggression. These negotiations may assume the character of tempting offers or threats; aggression often turns into a fraudulent maneuver under hypocritical pretexts necessary to trick the adversary. Every dramatis persona may be the carrier of a certain sequence of action, but as there are usually two dramatis personae

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[13]   See also his "Morphology of the French Folktale" (1970). [P.M.]
[14]   Cf. Serebriany's approach, below. [P.M.]

participating in an action, the latter consists of two opposite aspects corresponding to each of the two actors (fraud by one means being outwitted for the other, solution of the task by one presupposes errors of the other party, etc.). The functions may develop in various directions, e.g. a requital may be reward as well as retaliation. According to this principle, the series amelioration - degradation shows a complementary distribution:

	amelioration	degradation
	merit of the ally - of the creditor;	voluntary sacrifice for the ally - for the debtor;
mean to realize	merit of the ally - of the debtor; forced attack; successful trickery; revenge.	payment of the debt to the ally - to the creditor; suffering an attack; mistake, error; punishment.

Such a two-dimensional analysis of each action through close examination of the alternatives is very productive for the course of the narrative. However, Bremond's analysis is too abstract (and therefore insufficient) due to his option against a genre-oriented view (like that of Propp) in favor of a general analysis. Moving even further in this direction are R. Barthes, T. Todorov, and G. Jennet.

R. JAKOBSON, T. A. SEBEOK, M. JACOBS

The American translation of *Morphology of the Folktale* gave a fresh impetus to structural-typological research on the folktale in the U.S. A certain basis had already been laid by the work of structural linguists like R. Jakobson (1945), T. A. Sebeok and F. I. Ingemann (1956), and T. Sebeok (1957), who were also doing work in folkloristics, and by the representatives of the school of culture models in ethnography. Among the latter is M. Jacobs (1959b, 1960, 1966), author of an interesting book on stylistic clichés of forms of dramatization of the narrative in myths and folktales on the basis of North American Indian culture models. In his review of the American edition of the *Morphology of the Folktale* he values Propp's investigations as the most important outcome of research done before 1940, and at the same time advocates the discovery of further structural units in various areas (style, social relations, value

system) through the analytical techniques of structuralism, and the definition of the formative processes and the causal mechanisms involved.

R. P. ARMSTRONG

An attempt is also made in R. P. Armstrong's "Content Analysis in Folkloristics"[15] (1959) and in J. L. Fisher's "Sequence and Structure in Folktales" and "A Ponapean Oedipus Tale" (1960, 1966) to combine functional-syntagmatic analysis with the investigation of certain categories of social behavior and types of value systems. Armstrong, who chose a sample of trickster tales, suggests the segmentation of the text into consecutive acts and the determination of their functions (i.e. the same as Propp suggested) in order to then demonstrate syntagmatic units which are relevant to reveal attitudes of a certain ethnic group towards culturally sanctioned values and to determine the semantic structure and the character of aesthetic objectives. For this purpose, Armstrong provides a way of differentiating actions on the basis of certain semantic criteria: reward - punishment; resistance - attack; permission - prohibition; gratification - deprivation;[16] acquisition and loss of property; acquisition and dissemination of information; acceptance and avoidance of obligation. According to these criteria, actions are differentiated as positive, neutral, or negative (e.g. $\bar{o}$ – retrieve, acquire, bargain; o – keep; ϱ – lose, etc.). A comparative analysis has to uncover the different conditions prevailing in particular culture areas.

J. L. FISCHER

Fischer also compares the tale variants of individual tribes and demonstrates structural differences. Thus he finds in Micronesian tales from Truk the dominance of a series with only slight variations of episodes, while alternating episodes with opposed outcomes are predominant in Ponapean tales. The reason is found in the specific social organization of the individual tribes. In his structural analysis of Micronesian tales, Fischer opposes four semantic grids: (1) temporal segmentation; (2) spatial segmentation which is a temporal segmentation in a more general

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[15] Also in Maranda, ed. 1972, Chapter 7. [P.M.]
[16] [Translators' note: based on Armstrong's text, p. 165. "Gute Tat - Gefälligkeit", probably incorrect German translation.]

sense; (3) division of the dramatis personae into two parties, amicably
or inimically inclined towards the hero; and (4) sequence according to
the solution of the basic conflict. In Fischer's interpretation of the organ-
ized system of episodes, a certain influence of Lévi-Strauss and of psycho-
analysis can be felt, as well as the influence of the general methodology
of the school of culture models.

E. KÖNGÄS AND P. MARANDA

The contributions of E. K. Köngäs and P. Maranda are of great interest
from the point of view of developing a structural methodology in folk-
loristics. Particularly noteworthy is the critical analysis of Lévi-Strauss'
well-known formula in their study *Structural Models in Folklore* (1962).[17]
In this study they deal with the limited applicability of the formula
which describes the process of mediation, $f_x(a) : f_y(b) : : f_x(b) : f_a^{-1}(y)$.
They also propose a simpler paralle! formula: $QS:QR : : FS:FR$ in
which QS (quasi-solution) and also QR (quasi-result) designate the initial
situation and its direct consequences; FS (final solution) is the turning
point and is in association with mediation; FR designates the final
result. Köngäs and Maranda arrived at the conclusion that Lévi-Strauss'
formula is not only applicable to myths, but also to other, quite different
genres of folklore. However, its applicability is limited insofar as the
mediator may sometimes be lacking altogether (their model 1), or failing
(their model 2); even in the case of his success the conflict may sometimes
simply be nullified in the outcome of the tale (their model 3), without the
inversion which Lévi-Strauss' formula demands (their model 4). Köngäs
and Maranda show that models 3 and 4 differ fundamentally from the
first two models: in models 3 and 4 the three-dimensional structure,
which requires a mediator, includes not only correlation of individual
relations but also the correlation of the correlations. Myths, jokes,
legends, even lyrics as well as proverbs and sayings are quoted as examples
by the two authors; missing are, alas, only fairytales. The exploration
of initial contrast and final outcome is, to the two authors, the basic
method of uncovering the structure. In their view, the original conflict
in narrative genres is solved in the narrative itself, while in lyric genres
it is not solved, and in rituals it is solved by the en- and decoder's partici-
pation. Mediation, which in lyric genres is not sought at all, is found in

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[17]   Second edition, revised and enlarged: *Structural Models in Folklore and Trans-
formational Essays* (The Hague, 1971). [P.M.]

the plot itself in narrative genres; while in ritual it is found outside the plot in the external action. Köngäs (1966a, b) and Maranda (1967a) have in further papers been able to demonstrate the striking distribution of model 4 in European folklore, and of models 1, 2, 3 in archaic-primitive societies. The result is revealing, for it points to the historical limits of the complex structural model 4 which corresponds to Lévi-Strauss' formula – although this consequence may perhaps not have been intended by the two authors.

A. DUNDES

A very important contribution to the structural analysis of the folktale is Alan Dundes' *The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales* (1964). Dundes had already dealt with related problems in articles (1962a, b). While Köngäs and Maranda investigate the range of applicability of Lévi-Strauss' formula and simplify and define it precisely, Dundes assumes a highly critical attitude on this point. He criticizes Lévi-Strauss for attempting to include in the morphological structure, on the one hand, the dramatis personae (e.g. trickster and mediator – the same criticism is directed against the Marandas) and, on the other hand, purely linguistic units. Dundes stresses that a myth does survive translation from one natural language to another (Fisher[18] had already referred to this), and that it may not be expressed in verbal languages, but also in the language of painting, miming, etc.[19] There is no reason, according to Dundes, to apply literally the methods of structural linguistics to folkloristics. He also declares himself against overemphasizing related models and also against Lévi-Strauss' method of analyzing not the structure of concrete myths, but the structural relationships between myths. Dundes' pronounced critical attitude against Lévi-Strauss is only partly justified, for despite doubtlessly profound and productive basic ideas a certain inaccuracy and vagueness is betrayed in his conception of paradigmatic analysis. He appears to correctly recognize the qualitative difference between folktale and myth (opposition collective-individual; cf. E. Meletinsky 1963:24). For precisely in this, and not in structure per se, lies the fundamental difference between myth and folktale (in

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[18] And Lévi-Strauss. [P.M.]
[19] Cf. Lévi-Strauss' definition of codes, and Maranda and Köngäs Maranda, "Le crâne et l'utérus – Deux théorèmes nord-malaitains", in Pouillon and Maranda, eds. 1970. [P.M.]

myth, the lacks are of cosmic nature).[20] Dundes is impressed by the
convincing clarity and accuracy of Propp's syntagmatic analysis, and
he deliberately takes Propp's direct succession. He supplements Propp,
albeit not in any essential way, by Pike's views on verbal and non-verbal
behavior. He has also practically adopted Pike's terminology: opposition
of the etic, i.e. classificatory, vs. the emic, i.e. structural approach; use
of the term *motifeme* in the sense of an emic unit, instead of Propp's
term *function*. In his review of Dundes' book, Theodore Sterne calls the
latter an epigone of Propp, and censures (along the lines of Lévi-Strauss
and Jacobs) the under-estimation of the cultural context, the abstract
character of the investigation, and insufficient consideration of dramatis
personae. Just as Propp, Dundes perceives in the paired functions the
nuclear motifeme (i.e. function) sequence: lack (*L*) - lack liquidated
(*LL*). There are American Indian tales which, in contrast to European
folktales, can be reduced to this simple structure. It is true there are often
other paired functions intervening between the two nuclear motifemes
(i.e. elementary functions), which are particularly familiar to us from
Propp's book, as interdiction (*Int*) - violation (*Viol*), deceit (*Dct*) -
deception (*Dcpn*), and task (*T*) - task accomplished (*TA*). Dundes
introduces two further functions: "consequence of the violation of the
interdiction" (*Conseq*) and "attempted escape from the consequence"
(*AF*). These two functions are not absolutely necessary as they may in
most cases be interpreted as lack and lack liquidation. Dundes defines
and analyzes some typical motifeme sequences, and groups the tales
accordingly. He demonstrates that the more complex Indian tales consist
of combinations of simple motifeme sequences and lists, e.g. the following
motifemic patterns: *L-LL*; *Viol-Conseq*; *L-T-TA-LL*; *L-Dct-Dcpn-LL*;
Int-Viol-L-LL; *Int-Viol-Conseq-AE*; *L-LL-Int-Viol-Conseq*; *L-T-TA-LL-
Int-Viol-Conseq-AE*; etc. In principle, the motifemes *T-TA*, *Int-Viol*,
Dct-Dcpn alternate in North American tales and myths.[21] Dundes
regards *Int-Viol* and *T-A* as forms prescribed for the hero, the distribu-
tion of which differs ('task' always intervenes between lack and lack
liquidated, the violation of the interdiction either precedes the lack,
or follows its liquidation). Of some interest is the comparison of folktale
and folk belief ('superstition'), e.g. the juxtaposition of the motifeme
sequence *Int-Viol-Conseq-AE* and the system condition - result - counter-

[20] See below, Chapters 2 and 4. [P.M.]
[21] For a comparative application of his approach, see Dundes, "The Making and
Breaking of Friendship as a Standard Frame in African Folktales", in Maranda and
Köngäs Maranda, eds. 1971: 171-185. [P.M.]

actant. Dundes, it is true, uses the same methodology as Propp, but he arrives at different, much simpler schemata, evidently a consequence of the archaic character of North American Indian folklore. Dundes pays as little attention to the many variants of the fairytale as he does to the difference between fairytale and myth, which again points to characteristic features of his material, namely to its genre-specific syncretism. A juxtaposition of Propp's and Dundes' schemata is, therefore, of considerable value in the solution of the problems of historical poetics.

W. E. H. STANNER

Interesting contributions to the structural analysis of myth and folktale, taking their pattern from American research, are also known from Australia. Apart from some attempts at a paradigmatization of themes in the perspective of culture models (Berndt 1966), a series of articles by W. E. H. Stanner (1960-63; cf. Ogibenin 1965) deserves attention. His investigation of the semiotics of the culture of the Murinbata tribe in Australia contains an exact comparative analysis of the subject-specific paradigmatics of myths and rituals, i.e. of the texts represented by word, pantomime, and painting. By convincingly demonstrating the fundamental structural identity of myths and customs, including the myths without equivalent customs, and vice versa, Stanner succeeds in discovering important paradigmatic relationships in the symbolic language of Murinbata myths. Some of his conclusions reveal a surprising analogy to the theses in Propp's *The Historical Roots of the Fairytale*, of which he certainly had no knowledge (thematic and structural relationship of myths and initiatory customs). Unfortunately this problem cannot be discussed further here.

U.S.S.R.

In recent years, interest in Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* has also been growing in the Soviet Union. This investigation was highly praised by V. M. Zirmunsky and P. N. Berkov at a scientific conference on the occasion of Propp's seventieth birthday. The author of the present article also read a paper on the topic. However, the steadily growing interest in this book at home and abroad was caused above all by the development of structural linguistics and semiotics. Propp's name as author of *Morphology of the Folktale* and *The Historical*

Roots of the Fairytale was frequently mentioned, in connection with that of Lévi-Strauss, in symposia on semiotics and in research on the secondary model system. The number of papers and publications directly dealing with this topic is still very small, aside from numerous papers on general semiotics in mythology (V. V. Ivanov, V. N. Toporov, D. M. Segal, A. M. Piatigorsky, J. M. Lotman, B. L. Ogibenin, et al.), on theme arrangement in literary works (V. F. Egorov, J. K. Sceglov), as well as on structural investigations of folklore genres other than the folktale (e.g. papers on folk drama by P. G. Bogatyrev, on the ballad by V. N. Toporov, on the *bylina* by S. J. Nekludov, on the magic spell by I. A. Cernov and M. V. Arapov, on the proverb by G. L. Permiakov).

D. M. SEGAL, V. V. IVANOV, AND V. N. TOPOROV

D. M. Segal's "Attempt at a Structural Description of Myth" (1965)[22] aspires to present a structural analysis of three related versions of the same theme (the rejected but finally triumphant hero) among the Tsimshian Indians of Northwest America. He basically relies on Lévi-Strauss' method and compares fragments of myths syntactically and paradigmatically. Taking the category of value as his point of departure, he analyzes the various levels of mythological meaning and infers the congruence of the myths of the rejected hero with etiological myths. Ivanov and Toporov (1963, 1965) use Propp's scheme directly, making use of it in the fixation and analysis of various narratives. They recommend rational ordering of the symbols by means of modern formal logic, interpreting function always as the interrelationship of various dramatis personae or objects of the folktale. Both authors follow Propp's example in associating the analysis of functions with research on basic semantic oppositions which play an important role in myth, and for whose notation the authors also propose certain symbols.

S. D. SEREBRIANY

S. D. Serebriany (1966) attempts a partial correction of Propp's formula in his contribution, starting, in his opinion, from a more exact formal interpretation of the material. He proposes to consider the function B as bundle, the function K as motivation, and T as mere concomitant

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[22] In Maranda, ed. 1972, Chapter 12. [P.M.]

of the individual functions. He holds that the entire folktale can be divided into three main points:[23] (1) in the beginning, activity of the villain from which the tale starts A (D, B-Z, Pr, F); (2) the hero's appropriate reaction (G, R-P); (3) happy end, restoration of the temporarily disturbed order of things (L, Sp, U, O, N, S); among these there are certain displacements. In Serebriany's view a folktale develops through elaboration of this three-pronged schema.

E. MELETINSKY, S. NEKLUDOV, E. NOVIK, AND D. SEGAL

Finally,[24] some ideas on possible further morphological interpretations of the fairytale on the basis of Propp's principles will be briefly touched upon here (Meletinsky 1966; Meletinsky, Nekludov, Novik, and Segal 1968). Further associations between Propp's functions as well as their uniform syntagmatic and, in particular, semantic character are revealed in the analysis of abstract levels of larger syntagmatic units. Such units are the various forms of tests and the values obtained by the hero in the tale as a result of these tests. It is the rhythm of loss and gain which links fairytales to myths and to other folkloric genres. Similar key positions according to distribution are those of tests in folktales, of cosmogonic and 'cultural' feats of demiurges in myths, of tricksters' stunts in animal tales, and of specific forms of tests leading to the solution of dramatized individual conflicts in novellas. Specific to the classical form of the fairytale is the dual opposition of the preliminary to the main test, namely, (1) according to the result (in the first case, only the magical agent necessary for the main test, in the second case, the attainment of the main objective), and (2) according to the actual character of the task (test of proper conduct and of heroic feat). In archaic syncretic folklore this opposition may either be lacking or be irrelevant, but in the fairytale it is rooted in semantic structure and is therefore unavoidable. Besides the preliminary (ε) and the main (E) test, there are in the fairytale often some supplementary tests (E') for the purpose of identifying the hero. Moreover, the actions of the adversary or of the hero himself (violation of an interdiction, trickery) which lead to misfortune and lack, may be classified as negative tests ($\bar{E}$) as it were. Designating by analogy, the loss or lack as l; the magical agent which the hero receives from the donor after the preliminary test (magical object, helper, advice) as λ; the liqui-

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[23] Cf. Bremond's approach, above. [P.M.]
[24] The following section is considerably expanded in Chapter 4. [P.M.]

dation of the lack as a result of the main test, as l, the following formula can be proposed.

$$\underline{E}l \dots \varepsilon\lambda \dots \underline{E}l \dots \underline{E'}l'$$
$$\text{with } \underline{E} = f(\lambda), \text{ and } \underline{E'} = f(l)$$

The fairytale herewith appears on a very abstract thematic level as a distinct hierarchic structure of binary terms, the last one or pair of which has to have positive meaning. In comparison to the classical fairytale, the more labile structure of archaic syncretic tales is manifested as metastructure, as it were. Propp's functions are easily transferable to the binary terms mentioned above, i.e. to the larger syntagmatic units. The functions struggle - victory and task - solution of the task ($\underline{A_1B_1}$ and $\underline{A_2B_2}$) are identical not only from the distributive point of view, they are also allomorphic, i.e. interchangeable, components of the main test (chivalresque and pure folktale variants); furthermore, supernatural spatial transference to the object of search (ab) and magical escape ($\overline{ab}$) differ distributively (they are placed before and after the struggle, respectively), and are dynamic, i.e. connecting elements of the main test. Accordingly, the unfounded claims of the false hero and the recognition of the true hero, or its negative equivalent (escape [disguise] of the hero - pursuit of the culprit), form a complex of supplementary tests. Ambiguous relations are possible among these functions (cf. Propp's comments on the syncretism of functions). Thus, the escape of the modest hero, which is part of the system of supplementary tests, may at the same time be interpreted as a countervariant of magical childhood.

The fundamental difference between preliminary and main tests and the corresponding differentiation between right and heroic acts has already been stated above. The donor tests the right behavior of the hero (he examines the good points of the hero's character, his intellectual capabilities, his good manner, or most of the time simply his knowledge of the rules of the game); he provides the hero with the magical agent which insures his success in the main test. Magical powers are quite clearly of assistance in accomplishing the heroic feat, sometimes even substituting for the hero; but the hero's good intentions, or the false hero's evil designs, are always revealed in his behavior. Behavioral rules, i.e. the structure of actions in the folktale, form a complete semantic system in which the functions reveal additional logical relations independent from syntagmatic relations. We can state that behavior according to rules may not only lead to success, in the preliminary test, but also to misfortune, insofar as each stimulus is followed by a definite response:

the hero must accept a provocation; he must respond to a question; he must comply with any request, not only by a neutral or well-meaning donor, but also by a hostile, cunning, and deceitful adversary. A certain formal character of the behavioral system is also emphasized by the absolutely necessary violation of an interdiction (convertible form of a compulsion to act).

We propose to designate the paired functions which refer to rules of behavior by the Greek letters $\alpha\beta$, to distinguish them from *AB*, *ab* used for the heroic feats. A bar on a letter denotes a negative form (i.e. the adversary, not the donor, tests the hero). The indices m and i designate material action and verbal information. In this way, we arrive at the following scheme:

$\alpha_1\beta_1{}^{\underline{m}}$ instruction - execution $\overline{\alpha_1\beta_1{}^{\underline{m}}}$ trickery - complicity
$\alpha_1\beta_1{}^{\underline{i}}$ question - answer $\overline{\alpha_1\beta_1{}^{\underline{i}}}$ reconnaissance - delivery
  $\alpha_2\beta_2{}^2$ challenge - acceptance
  $\alpha_3\beta_3$ recommendation of (invitation to choose) advice - right choice
$\bar{\alpha}\ \beta$ interdiction - violation of the interdiction

The structure of the hero's actions is always of the form $\alpha\beta$ (*AB*, resp.) or $\bar{\alpha}\beta$ (the second element, corresponding to the hero's reaction, must always be positive). The false hero's actions, however, are always of the form $\alpha\bar{\beta}$ (*A$\bar{B}$*, resp.) Hero and false hero differ in the second element (β); the preliminary test ($\alpha\beta$) and the negative test leading to misfortune ($\bar{\alpha}\beta$, $\overline{\alpha\beta}$) can be distinguished by the first element (α).

Propp's syntagmatic model already referred to the associated structural model of distribution of certain roles among the dramatis personae; Propp also examined the attributes of the individual dramatis personae. Here and in the analysis of the dramatis personae themselves certain binary paradigmatic relations can be found. Thus, for example in the scheme of the hero's and false hero's attributes, we see that a hero endowed with supernatural properties is associated to a false hero with the same characteristics (e.g. the 'oak-puller'). To other heroes are associated equivalent false heroes of the opposite spiritual, familial, or social sphere (opposition young-old, etc.). Heroes of the type 'unpromising' can be interpreted as negative variants of the handsome hero (preferred by folktales in contrast to epics). The relation hero - villain is mostly based on the opposition own - foreign (in group - out group) in various areas, e.g., house - forest (child - wicked witch; Baba-yaga); our kingdom - foreign kingdom (youth - snake); own family - foreign family (step-daughter - stepmother). The villain is congruent with the nature of his

deeds: the stepmother expels the stepdaughter to get rid of her; the
wicked witch lures the children in order to eat them; the snake takes the
princess by force in order to seduce her, etc. These are examples of a
strictly semantic analysis based on oppositions underlying folkloric
conceptions and corresponding world views. Propp himself found certain
allomorphic elements of the metatheme: he pointed out the complemen-
tary distribution of folktales with the functions struggle - victory and
those with the functions difficult task - solution of the task (i.e. A_1B_1
and A_2B_2 with A and a; in our terminology, with W – with or without
villainy). According to this principle some related theme types can be
distinguished: the cluster of tales 300-303 from the cluster 550-551 in
Aarne-Thompson's catalogue (the first has the structure Wl and A_1B_1,
the second the element l and A_2B_2); the clusters 311, 312, 327, etc. from
the clusters 480, 510, 511 (A_1B_1 and A_2B_2, respectively). However, for
the differentiation of larger and more important clusters other criteria
must be added, namely:

Opposition $O\text{-}\bar{O}$: The symbol O designates a contest for an *object*
which exists independently of the hero. The pair $O\text{-}\bar{O}$ determines the
tendency of the villainy and of the quest; O_1 designates a female dramatis
persona, exceptionally also a male, in general a potential marital partner;
O_2 the magical agent. The opposition $O\text{-}\bar{O}$ differentiates exactly the
folktales in which the hero appears as savior and seeker, and those where
he appears as victim and expelled, respectively.

Opposition $S\text{-}\bar{S}$: The symbol S indicates that the heroic deed serves
personal interests; $\bar{S}$ that it serves the king (tsar), the father, the collec-
tivity in general (applies equally to heroic epics and myths). The pair
$S\text{-}\bar{S}$ contrasts heroic folktales with typical fairy tales – specially those
heroic tales of mythical character with a hero of supernatural origin
commanding magical powers or with a test sometimes dominated by
the combat of the hero against a mythical adversary.

Opposition $F\text{-}\bar{F}$: F determines the familial character of the basic con-
flict; $\bar{F}$ indicates folktales about heroes who have been driven away by
a stepmother, older brothers, etc.

Opposition $M\text{-}\bar{M}$: differentiates between mythical and non-mythical
nature of the main test. It contrasts folktales in which the demonic world,
hostile to the hero, has a distinctly mythological flavor.

The main theme types OS, $O\bar{S}$, OS can be divided into further sub-
types: OS into F and $\bar{F}$; $O\bar{S}$ and OS into O_1 and O_2; all subtypes have

again the variants M and $\overline{M}$. In this way, the following fundamental theme types can be distinguished:

(1) $O_1\overline{SFM}$: heroic folktales of the dragon slayer type (AT 300-303);
   $O_2\overline{SFM}$: heroic folktales of the quest type (AT 550-551);
(2) $\overline{OSFM}$: archaic folktales of the type 'children in the clutches of a monster' (AT 311, 312, 314, 327);
   $\overline{OSFM}$: folktales about rejected children turned over to the forest demons (AT 480, 709);
   $\overline{OSF\overline{M}}$: folktales about rejected children without mythical elements (AT 510, 511);
(3) $O_1\overline{SFM}$: folktales about supernatural spouses (AT 400, 425, etc.);
   $O_2\overline{SFM}$: folktales about magical agents (AT 560, 563, 566, 569, 736);
(4) $O_1S\overline{FM}$: folktales about courtship tests (AT 530, 570, 575, 577, 580, 610, 621, 675);
(5) $O_1\overline{SFM}$: AT 408, 653;
   $O_2\underline{SFM}$: AT 665.

With this the road is open for a formal determination of folktale theme types and their classification. The next step must be the analysis of motifs in the perspective of structuralism. One has to take into consideration here that the distribution of motifs within the theme is structurally also reducible to the above mentioned formula. But if this formula itself represents a specific mechanism for the synthesis of folktales, then the motif is the most essential element of that analysis.

Thus, Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* stands at the beginning of a new school of thought in folkloristic research. Representing this new orientation, his book is still the best and most fundamental work and, although published almost half a century ago, in no way outdated.

After the completion of this manuscript, some interesting works in the field of folkloristics came to the attention of the author, which he unfortunately could no longer incorporate into this survey. Above all, the works of Mihai Pop should be mentioned here, dealing with the syntagmatic sequences of functions and the general logic of themes, with the role of parallelism of themes and antitheses, and with the structure of basic sequences and their trebling. Pop also analyses tale structure on the level of style (1957, 1968a, b). G. Vrabje presents an interesting analysis of the variants of composition. M. Rosianu devotes his dissertation to the study of the formula theme.