2-14-1978

# A Philosophical Analysis Of Grimms' Marchen

James C. Moss

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87106

## Policy on Use of Theses and Dissertations

Unpublished theses and dissertations accepted for master's and doctor's degrees and deposited in the University of New Mexico Library are open to the public for inspection and reference work. *They are to be used only with due regard to the rights of the authors.* The work of other authors should always be given full credit. Avoid quoting in amounts, over and beyond scholarly needs, such as might impair or destroy the property rights and financial benefits of another author.

To afford reasonable safeguards to authors, and consistent with the above principles, anyone quoting from theses and dissertations must observe the following conditions:

1. Direct quotations during the first two years after completion may be made only with the written permission of the author.

2. After a lapse of two years, theses and dissertations may be quoted without specific prior permission in works of original scholarship provided appropriate credit is given in the case of each quotation.

3. Quotations that are complete units in themselves (e.g., complete chapters or sections) in whatever form they may be reproduced and quotations of whatever length presented as primary material for their own sake (as in anthologies or books of readings) ALWAYS require consent of the authors.

4. The quoting author is responsible for determining "fair use" of material he uses.

This thesis/dissertation by James C. Moss has been used by the following persons whose signatures attest their acceptance of the above conditions. (A library which borrows this thesis/dissertation for use by its patrons is expected to secure the signature of each user.)

| NAME AND ADDRESS | DATE |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

10/73—1M
L-133

This thesis, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the Graduate Committee of The University of New Mexico in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF GRIMMS' "MÄRCHEN

*Title*

JAMES C. MOSS

*Candidate*

PHILOSOPHY

*Department*

Bernard Spolsky

*Dean*

February 14, 1978

*Date*

*Committee*

Matthieu Gaselee

*Chairman*

Robert T. Alexander

Mary Martha Weigle

# A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF GRIMMS' MARCHEN

BY

JAMES C. MOSS

B.A.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
1973

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

in the Graduate School of
The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico
MAY 1978

# A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF GRIMMS' MARCHEN

BY

JAMES C. MOSS

## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
in the Graduate School of
The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico
May 1978

ABSTRACT

Grimms' Märchen are not only a delight to encounter, but they contain material of substantial philosophical value. This is a philosophical analysis of Grimms' tales, intended to introduce folklore to the realm of philosophy. Two major areas are investigated. They are the value of Märchen to a theory of knowledge and the existential value of these tales in influencing living, thinking, and acting. The major areas analyzed are the epistemology or world view, horror, humor, and ethics of these tales.

The epistemology section discusses the hybrid nature of these Märchen as a synthesis of mythic consciousness and scientific or discursive thought. This synthesis offers a keystone factor in the completion of a theory of knowledge, discussed by Ernst Cassirer. Also, the value of Märchen world view as offering new perspectives of being and the subsequent existential effect is discussed.

Next a phenomenology of horror in Grimms' tales is analyzed. The metaphysical implications along with the existential effect of the realm of horror should be recognized by philosophers. "Being" is expanded and meaning is restored. Also, there is discussion of the humor in Grimms' Märchen. The major fun-generating stimuli are analyzed and humor is found to offer valuable perspectives to philosophy. Humor is a way to cope existentially, along with offering new

perspectives of existence.

Ethical analysis proves that these tales powerfully convey a set of useful ethics. The development of individual character is stressed. No categorical imperative is present. Rather, the consequences of certain actions and traits prove what is desirable and what is not according to Grimms' Märchen ethics. Grimms' Märchen are philosophically valuable and deserve to be recognized as a substantial body of philosophy in their own right.

CONTENTS

# INTRODUCTION

Grimms' tales have been enjoyed by children and adults alike for generations. These stories have an appealing charm and wonder in addition to their international quality. Grimms' tales are Märchen. Märchen is the German word for magic tale--a wondrous narrative. The "fairy-tale" can refer to a whole variety of oral narratives. Besides, only a small number of Märchen actually involve fairies. Märchen are a specific type of tale; they are wondrous narratives involving a definite succession of episodes.

Structural analysis shows that Märchen have a very definite and unique morphology. But the fantastic content is what gives Märchen their particular flavor. Magic and the supernatural are major elements of the Märchen world. The Grimms define the Märchen as the union of the supernatural with the common events of daily life. Types are involved rather than specific characters and localities. Occasionally names are used, but they are very common ones such as John or Jack. More often the characters are the epitome of such types as the beautiful maiden, the simpleton, the unpromising youngest son, or the wicked witch.

Nature in its totality participates in these Märchen. The actors in these stories include royalty, servants, peasants, tradesmen, animals, plants, and natural objects. Witches, sorcerers, giants and other villains are numerous.

Grimms' Märchen are a collection of genuine German folktales. The brothers did not write the tales. These famous tales were originally composed by intelligent, imaginative German peasant folk and told for mutual entertainment by adults. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimms' Kinder und Hausmärchen (Folktales for Children and the Home) put out in 1812, is a collection of 200 German folktales from before and during the 18th century. These tales were taken in part from contemporary oral tradition and also from older printed sources.

Most of the tales were from the Grimms' own country, the backward region of Hesse. Applying all his or her knowledge of life and understanding of humanity, the teller with his tale was a form of living art. A major source was "Old Marie," nanny and housekeeper of the Wild family who were neighbors of the Grimm brothers. From her came such tales as "The Frog King" (#1), "Sleeping Beauty" (#50), "Rapunzel" (#12), and "Hansel and Gretel" (#15). These tales represent the pinnacle of Märchen style. Also, a painter from the fishing regions, Otto Range, submitted some fine tales, including "The Fisherman and His Wife" (#19), and "The Juniper Tree" (#47)--a haunting tale of cannibalistic horror. The Grimm brothers wanted to remain true to the oral tradition. They say: "Our aim in collecting these stories has been exactness and truth. We have added nothing of our own, have embellished no incident or feature of the story, but

have given it substance just as we ourselves received it."[1] This has been a controversial point; apparently the brothers reproduced the tales in a reworked "form of expression" according to their own taste and judgement. Impoverished stories were filled out from more detailed ones, and the plots were often tightened and clarified in order to obtain a more closely knit story.

From the beginning of their collecting project the brothers had the reading public in mind, not merely scholars. Contrary to popular notion, these tales are not essentially for younger children. The collection was designed for "adults and serious people."[2] The tales appeal essentially to the grown-up with a taste for a good story well told. There is nothing childish or juvenile in the diction, style, and development of the various narratives.[3]

[1]Margaret Hunt, trans., Grimms' Household Tales, (1884; rpt. Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1968), p. 4.

[2]Murray B. Peppard, Paths Through the Forest, (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971), p. 41.

[3]For this study the English translations used were Francis P. Magoun, Jr. and Alexander H. Krappe, The Grimms' German Folk Tales, (Carbonadale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960), and Margaret Hunt's transaltion. Both translations are as literal as possible from the original German manuscript from the Grimms' Kinder und Hausmarchen, published in 1857.

As for the milieu of Grimms' Märchen, the brothers say:

> ". . .their world is confined, it contains kings, princes, faithful servants and honest craftsmen, above all, fishermen, millers, charcoal-burners and herdsmen, in short, all who have stayed closest to nature. All else is alien. The whole of nature is animated, as it is in the myths of the Golden Age. Sun, moon and stars are our fellows. They give presents and even have garments woven for themselves. Dwarfs work the ore in the mountains, nymphs sleep in the waters, birds, plants and stones can talk and express their sympathy. The very blood can call and speak."[4]

The images evoked in the tales express people's hopes, anxieties, aspirations, deepest desires and fears. Anything can happen. Horror, cruelty, suffering, pain and laughter all have their natural place in the world.

These tales are profoundly human. Their significance extends far beyond the realm of mere entertainment. Indeed, they contain material of substantial philosophical significance.

In this thesis, I want to introduce the realm of Grimms' Märchen to philosophy. By doing a philosophical analysis of Grimms' Märchen, I basically aim to offer another perspective to the philosophy of culture. A major objective is to show the philosophical value of the tales. The process will be to explore some essential areas and to indicate the contribution of Märchen to a theory of knowledge, by exposing the different conceptions of reality revealed in the tales.

[4] Ruth Michaelis-Jena, The Brothers Grimm, (New York: Praeger Press, 1970), p. 53.

However, most important is to show the existential effect of Grimms' Märchen. How can they influence life, thinking and action, leading towards a greater fullness and authenticity of existing? In short, what is their existential value?

These Märchen are life-affirming and world-expanding. The plots usually involve real life characters in emotional and active situations. There is a play of imagination with the events of daily life. The heroes and heroines of these tales have a certain style and definite character to their living. To them living is an adventure, not a chore. Consequently, they are active participants in living, not merely observers. Their existence is enriched with the adventure of seeking new visions and situations which continually build character, as well as produce a positive, creative and productive view of living. By emulating this style, we can add adventure and uniqueness to our own individual existence. With this fullness, living can reach substantial meaning and value. The existential worth of these tales becomes even more important with the advent of technological society and the resulting potential for insipid forms of existence. Wilhelm substantiates the existential value of these tales when he says:

> ". . .just as wherever the eye can pierce we find the domestic animals, grain fields, and kitchen utensils, household furniture, in fact, all the things without which social life would be impossible-so do we also

> find sagas and stories-the dew which waters poetry-corresponding with each other in this striking and yet independent manner. They are just as much a necessity of existence as these things; for only where avarice and the jarring wheels of machinery benumb every other thought can we imagine it possible to live without them. . ."[5]

Some philosophical aspects of Grimms' Märchen are not touched upon in this study, for example: the role of Christianity, the relation of these Märchen to Nordic Aryan mythology, and the aesthetic value of these tales. Interesting as these topics are, they are beyond the scope of this study. Due to the vast amount of explorable area related to these tales, my analysis can in no way be exhaustive, but rather suggestive. I have chosen what I feel are the most significant areas to examine. These are the epistemology or world view, horror, humor and ethics of Grimms' tales.

Through a philosophical analysis of these areas one is brought closer to understanding human being and being human. Grimms' Märchen confront the realities of human existence. Love, death, good vs. evil, horror, humor, etc. are continually encountered. A philosophical analysis will show that these Märchen provide a valuable source of information in studying our own perspectives of the world, and the significance of our lives.

[5] Stith Thompson, The Folktale, (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1946), p. 369.

# CHAPTER I

## "MÄRCHEN WORLD VIEW

The world view of Grimms' "Märchen encompasses the whole of existence. The term "world view" includes metaphysics plus 'episteme'. I use metaphysics as referring to man's view of external nature or being. 'Episteme' is man's knowledge of that being. In this chapter, I want to show what constitutes the world view of Grimms' "Märchen and how this view contributes to a theory of knowledge. How the "Märchen conception of the world can affect an individual's existence is a further concern of this section.

The "Märchen world is full of wonders, making the tales appear to be contrived to the storyteller's whim. But structural analysis shows that "Märchen have a definite order and rationality behind the seeming nonsense. Wilhelm Grimm explains:

> "The meaning of the mystical element is long since lost, but is still felt and gives the fairy tales their content while at the same time satisfying the natural pleasure in the miraculous; they are never just the ornamental play of idle imagination."[6]

The mind must be clear of prejudices. Try to understand the "Märchen world. Simply try to accept its wonderment. It is delightfully essential.

The world view portrayed in Grimms' "Märchen is a unique

[6] Murray B. Peppard, Paths Through the Forest, (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971), p. 50.

interpretation of being. This interpretation is the result of a particular consciousness or awareness of the external world. A definite relationship of human consciousness to the world, people, and oneself is expressed. The Märchen consciousness is a synthesis of two opposing world views. Elements of scientific thought and mythic thinking are found in Märchen. This combination places the Märchen consciousness in between mythic and scientific consciousness. At this point, a general look at the "scientific" and "mythic" modes of thought is needed.

Characteristic of scientific thought is its critical, logical, theoretical and evaluative approach to the objects of experience. Every apprehension of a specific empirical thing of occurrence is analytically evaluated. So, scientific thought is an analysis and a breakdown of the objects of experience. It must operate analytically, synthetically, progressively and regressively, which must break down the particular contents into their constitutive factors. Empirical truth of the object cannot be apprehended immediately, but can only be achieved by the progress of theorized law-governed thought. There is continual mediation. Unlike mythic thought, which sees a conglomerate of "things" in a peaceable co-existence, empirical-theoretical thought finds a complex of "conditions." By a gradation of conditions a specific place is assigned to each particular content. The mythic view is content with determining the "what" of

particular contents, but the scientific discursive view changes the "what" into a "because." Scientific thought repeatedly differentiates between the constant and the variable, the objective from the subjective, and the truth from the appearance. This gives empirical thinking its logical character. So, in the realm of theoretical thought there is continuous critical approach of the intellect in which the "accidental" is progressively distinguished from the "essential."

On the other hand, for mythic consciousness the contents of experience are completely homogenous and undifferentiated. No line is drawn between the world of truth and the world of appearance. There are no degrees of reality, only efficacy. "To be real" and "to be efficacious" are the same thing. Myth is an unreflecting consciousness. It lacks any rigid dividing line between "representation" and "real" perception, between the "image" and a "thing." The "image" is the "thing." To illustrate, if a man's shadow is stabbed, to the mythic mind, the man himself was stabbed. There is no mediated thought as in scientific thinking. Mythic thinking is immersed in the immediate, momentary apprehension of the objects of experience. Mythic consciousness does not extend the moment forwards or backwards. Instead of the progressive and regressive movement characteristic of scientific thought which links every given particular with other particulars in

a series and then ultimately traces them to a general "law" and process, in mythic thought there is but the impression itself and its presence at that moment. There is total immediacy in the apprehension of the external world. Also, unlike scientific thought which isolates, abstracts, and singles out specifics from a complex whole, mythic thinking does not dissociate separate factors. For scientific apprehension, the whole consists of its parts. In fact, for the logic of natural science, the whole results from the parts. But for the mythic view, a total indifference about the relationship between the whole and its parts prevails. The whole does not "have" parts and does not break down into them; the part is immediately the whole. Whereas the scientific approach dissects an event into constant elements and seeks to understand it through the complex combining, interpretation, and constant conjunction of these elements, mythical thinking accepts the total representation as such and is satisfied with picturing the simple course of what happens.

The hybrid nature of the Märchen consciousness combines some elements of scientific thinking, particularly the dissection of whole and parts, along with many elements of mythic thought. The result is that the Märchen world view emerges as a unique "form" of knowledge in its own right, even though it lies between mythic consciousness and scientific-empirical thought on the evolutionary scale.

Now the specific elements of the Märchen world view can be looked at in greater detail. Since Märchen are more mythic in character than scientific, the mythic elements found in Märchen will be discussed first.

Many elements of mythic consciousness are manifested in these tales. The peculiar and marvelous features so indigenous to Märchen are derived and inherited from the mythic mode of regarding the world. There is an acute perception of existence. Being is expanded. For Märchen consciousness as in mythic thought, there is fundamentally one dimension of reality, one single plane of being. Nothing is more "real" than anything else, only more efficacious. Only immediate existence and immediate efficacy is known. All being is alive.

The major idea in Märchen is the concept of animism. All animate and inanimate nature is alive. Märchen logic follows mythic reasoning: "If man has life, then all things must." Man and nature are on the same level; human beings are a part of natural being, just as is everything else. Nature is given personality. Also, like humans, natural objects are conscious of themselves and are possessed of some power of reasoning. The world is alive. Birds, fish, trees, people, stones, etc., talk and interact. Moreover, there is every tendency to minimize the differentiation between people and animals in mythic and Märchen consciousness. The

fox of "The Golden Bird" (#57) was in essence a prince as was the frog in "The Frog Prince (#1).

The mythic idea of animism is transferred further in Grimms' Märchen. Inanimate beings can even speak. The drops of blood in "Lover Roland" (#56) reply to the witch's call of "Where art though?" "Here on the stairs," answered one drop. The second said, "Here in the kitchen, warming myself." The third replied, "Here in bed sleeping." In Märchen, as in the mythic world view, "beasts and birds, trees and plants, the sea, the mountains, the wind, the sun, the moon, the clouds and the stars, day and night, heavens and earth, are alive and possessed of passions, cunning and the will to feel within themselves."[7]

Other mythic ideas show up in Grimms' Märchen. All of nature is related. Human kinship with animals is common. "Rabbit's Bride" (#66) is a tale of the marriage between a hare and a peasant girl. Also, the fox in "The Golden Bird" (#57) was actually the princess' brother. "The Twelve Brothers" (#9) and "The Six Swans" (#119) are other tales depicting human to animal kinship.

Metamorphosis is another very prevalent mythic idea that appears in Märchen. This carries the "all nature is related" concept further. Frogs change to princes, drowned

7 Edwin Sidney Hartland, The Science of Fairytales, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1891) p. 25.

infants turn to birds and a little girl becomes a flaming log. "The Frog Prince" (#1), "The Three Birds" (#96), and "Frau Trude" (#43), respectively, are tales involving these transformations. Be careful of how you treat nature; the log you burn may be someone's daughter. Grimms' tales abound in such metamorphoses.

Word power is also a common mythic notion expressed in these tales. Power over a demon is gained by knowing its name. In "Rumplestiltskin" (#55) the queen saved herself from the anguish of giving up her child by guessing Rumplestiltskin's name. Nothing escapes word magic. Everything is subject to verbal spells of enchantment. Castles, people, animals, natural objects, water, the sun and stars, are all subject to the bewitching power of the spoken word.

Furthermore, the mythic view of death is manifested in Grimms' Märchen. There is definite belief in entering an underworld after death. "Godfather Death" (#44) is a tale of a successful doctor who tried to deceive death. Death leads him to an underground grotto filled with lighted candles. These were life-lights of all the people of the world, and Death was sovereign over all of them. Underground was Death's domain. Because he tried to cheat Death, the poor doctor's life-light was snuffed out. Another common mythic idea in these Märchen is that souls of the dead return in various forms. "The Juniper Tree" (#47) is a tale exemplifying this notion. The evil step-mother

butchered her step-son and fed him to his unsuspecting father, who licked the bones clean. The boy's sister mournfully laid his bones beneath the juniper tree. Suddenly, a fiery mist arose from the spot and out of the fire flew a lovely bird. Cannibalism is a danger. The witch of "Hansel and Gretel" (#15) says of Hansel, "As soon as he's fat, I'll eat him! That will be a nice bite!"

Also carried over from the mythic attitude towards the world is the Märchen view of magic. To Märchen contemplation humans and natural objects can be magically bound. In the tale "The Two Brothers", two princes became blood brothers by slitting themselves with a knife. It was then stuck into a tree. The knife served as an index for each brother's condition. If one was in trouble, his side of the knife would be rusty. If a brother was faring well his side of the knife remained shiny. The knife and the two brothers became part of each other because they came into contact; each existence was dependent upon the other. In the magical world things in contact acquire substantial unity. The knife was not merely an object. Its being was united with each brother.

The Märchen concept of causality is directly related to the magical view towards the world. The Märchen world view definitely has a causal concept. Nothing is "accidental"; everything is given a specific cause. Causality in the

Märchen view arises as much from magical sources as from what we may consider "natural" causes. It is not that the Märchen concept of "cause and effect" is so different as much as that the causal agents are different. The kinds of events taken to be causes are of a supernatural or magical sort. Magical interventions are the true cause. Every co-existence provides a causal sequence. Events occur because of enchantment. For instance, a fox is a prince because of an evil spell cast, or the moon in the tale "The Moon" (#175) is in heaven because magic power placed it there. In the Märchen world view a free selection of causes is at one's disposal. Anything may come from anything, because anything can stand in temporal or spatial contact with anything.

A concept of magical time and space shows up in Grimms' Märchen. A certain timelessness invades these tales. However, unlike myths which are a sacred account of events which took place in primordial time, Märchen are a profane account of events which occurred in the cosmos as it presently exists. Hence, there is the familiar "Once upon a time," rather than the myth-like, "In the beginning...". One never knows the actual duration of the adventures. The magical relation of time passes over all temporal and spatial distinctions. The magical "now" is no mere now. It is laden with past and charged with the future. The tale "Briar Rose" (#50) is a concrete instance. Through an evil fairy's spell,

a deep sleep lasting for a hundred years spread over the castle. A legend spread about the Sleeping Beauty confined to the enchanted castle. Many bold princes tried to free her, but all became trapped in the briar roses and died a miserable death. Finally, a handsome prince tried his luck on the day the century-long enchantment was to end. As he kissed Sleeping Beauty, she awoke and they were soon married and lived happily.

Although the Märchen world view is dominated by mythic ideas, elements of scientific or cultivated thought are present. Whereas mythic thought binds particulars into a total unity, a characteristic of scientific thought is that it divides and separates the whole from its parts. To the mythic mind, the whole does not have parts, the part is the whole. For example, if a man moves his arm, mythic thought says the man moved, not merely his arm. The scientific habit of dissecting qualities from objects and interpreting them by themselves is found in some of Grimms' Märchen. The thing and its attributes are sometimes distinguished. Qualities begin to be isolated and separated from objects. There is a process of mediation lacking in mythic thought. "The Riddling Tale" (#160) will serve as an example of the hybrid nature of Märchen world view.

A Riddling Tale (#160)

> Three women were changed into flowers and were in a field. One of them, however, was allowed to be home nights. On one occasion as day was approaching and she had to get back to her playmates in the field as she became a flower, she said to her husband, "If you come this afternoon and pluck me, I'll be freed and from then on may stay with you." So it was done.
>
> Now the question is: How did her husand recognize her, since the flowers were all alike, with no difference among them? Answer: Since during the night she had been at home and not out in the field, no dew had fallen upon her as on the other two. That is how her husband recognized her.[8]

Mythic ideas such as metamorphosis and plants being humans are present in this tale. But such scientific attributes as quality abstraction and isolation, along with logical deduction are present also. The flower and its attributes (dew) are distinguished from each other, and the husband logically chose the correct flower to pick. "The Little Herdsboy" (#152) is another tale that involves a breakdown of whole into parts. This separation occurs when the boy correctly counts all the drops of water in the Great Ocean. "Choosing a Bride" (#155), "The Riddle" (#22), "Table-Be-Set, the Gold-Donkey, and Cudgel-Come-out-of-the-Bag" (#36) are other tales depicting the hybrid nature of some of Grimms' Märchen. Each tale either involves some quality abstraction or discursive thought. The exemplative tales above illustrate

[8] Francis P. Magoun, Jr. and Alexander H. Krappe, The Grimms' German Folk Tales, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960), p. 526.

how Märchen are a combination of elements characteristic of mythic and scientific thought. Containing elements of both types of thinking, Märchen conciousness emerges as a unique synthesis and form of knowledge in its own right.

The Märchen consciousness as another form of knowledge contributes to a theory of knowledge. The Märchen world view is an addition to that realm of cultural epistemology explored in volume two of Ernst Cassirer's The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. He established that scientific thought and mythic thought were both valid interpretations of being. Each is a unique form of knowledge. Märchen consciousness, which combines elements characteristic of scientific thought along with elements indigenous to mythic thought, should be added as another form in which the mind can apprehend and interpret the world of being. The gap between mythic thought and scientific thinking is brdiged by the Märchen world view. In this way, Märchen consciousness can be seen as a keystone factor in the evolution of scientific thought.

Another significant contribution of the Märchen world view is its potential effect on the scientific concept of reality. A faith in wonderment is needed. Reality is expanded. Whatever is efficacious is real. All of empirical existence is brought into play. Modern science is not content with an observational empiricism. All descriptions of nature are methodical procedures for arriving at exact explanations.

Ultimately the physio-chemical explanation is deemed the "true" view of the activities of nature. However, science, like Märchen, is a certain interpretation of the world. Facts are interpreted events. To always purport a scientifically intelligible view of nature is incomplete. The "objective knowledge" of science is not sufficient. The human dimension must be recognized as playing an integral part in the formation of Märchen world view. Märchen are a manifestation of human spirit. Husserl says, "to look upon environing nature is in itself alien to spirit, and to support humanistic science with natural science to make it more exact, is nonsense."[9] That does not mean that the scientific way of regarding the world should be disregarded. Rather, the Märchen view should be accepted along with the scientific consciousness. To accept both world views results in an original synthesis between the "symbolic" and "rational" means of regarding the world. Existence opens up when all being and change are viewed rationally and symbolically at once. One sees rather than merely looks. A new freedom of the consciousness arises, and a new style of existence can evolve.

The Märchen way of regarding the world can affect one's own existence. Sensitivity to the world can be restored.

9 Edmund Husserl, Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy, Laner translation (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 154.

Nature is full of wonders. Märchen events may seem scientifically illogical, but a greater or less degree of logic is not the issue. Simply, a different type of reasoning is involved in Märchen.

Märchen offer a valuable perspective on the world. No way of regarding the world is any more "right" than another. The world of being has no meaning until one gives it meaning. Magic becomes real and efficacious because it is meaningful to those who participate. A man who dies because his shadow was stabbed demonstrates the causal efficacy magic may have on believers. Of course the scientific view would be that the man's psyche was so affected by the knowledge of his shadow being stabbed that he simply thought himself to death. This example is merely to illustrate the powerful effect that a particular mode of thinking can have on a person's existence. To the mythic mind, what is real is efficacious, and so "real" because it is given true meaning and power.

Furthermore, the Märchen world view can improve one's attitude towards nature. Modern man still suffers from the encultured view that man is lord and master of nature--that nature is totally exterior to him. Human beings are a part of nature in Grimms' Märchen. We as humans should recognize our affinity with nature and strive to see ourselves on the same plane as all nature, not above or apart from it.

Now, in no way do I mean to advocate massive return to nature. For everyone to go back to farming and eating health foods is no alternative. That view is shallow. Too often campaigns to save nature are at bottom only attempts to satisfy man's own desires. "Save nature so we can enjoy it and use it" is a common ploy. But in that sense man is still above and apart from nature. Nature is being; humans are part of nature. Preserve nature for nature's sake, not merely for man's sake.

Following the Märchen world view can broaden one's perspective and understanding of the world. All consciousness of existence can be efficacious, including the sort of perspective by which one can develop a fuller and more appreciative knowledge of an attitude toward the world. A new enriched style of existence may emerge from such a greater perception and appreciation of being.

# CHAPTER II

## HORROR

Grimms' Märchen are saturated with horror. Unfortunately, our sense of horror has been shallowed to the realm of throat slitting and spine splitting--blood for blood's sake. Westerns, war stories, crime dramas, and news all have elements of the horrible--murder, blood, crime, etc.--but these alone are not Horror. The Horror in Grimms' tales goes deeper.

The Märchen phenomenon of horror has its own ontology. The essence of horror as portrayed in Grimms' tales must be determined. Horror is above all an atmosphere, a macabre mood contrived from horrific elements. Essentially the spirit of horror thrives on the supernatural and the unknown. A tone is sustained. Unbound powers of darkness, lurking shadows, strange alien forms, sinister castles, and beautiful sensitive women, contrasted with the most atrocious ugliness, are some of the most frequent horrific elements in Grimms' Märchen. The creatures of horror are often darkly sinister or beautifully alluring. Evil witches, sorcerers, nixs, and ghosts are encountered. For the victims, fear, dread, and terror result. Elements of the supernatural play a considerable role.

Murder is a spicy additive to any mood of horror, and Grimms' tales have plenty of gruesome murders. "The Juniper

Tree" (#47) has a haunting account as the bird sings; "My mommy she butchered me, my father he ate me." The dismemberment of corpses and the vat of blood in "Fitcher's Bird" (#46) is a further example. Of the Grimms' many horror tales, "Fitcher's Bird" (#46) is among the best. Many elements of horror are in this tale, including an evil wizard, a dark foreboding forest, a sorcerer's hut, and a chamber of blood and hewn peices of dead people. Imagine the terror.

Fitcher's Bird (#46)

There was once a wizard who used to take the form of a poor man, and went to houses and begged, and caught pretty girls. No one knew whither he carried them, for they were never seen more. One day he appeared before the door of a man who had three pretty daughters; he looked like a poor weak beggar, and carried a basket on his back, as if he meant to collect charitable gifts in it. He begged for a little food, and when the eldest daughter came out and was just reaching him a piece of bread, he did not but touch her, and she was forced to jump into his basket. Thereupon he hurried away with long strides, and carried her away into a dark forest to his house, which stood in the midst of it. Everything in the house was magnificant; he gave her whatsoever she could possibly desire, and said, "My darling, thou wilt certainly be happy with me, for thou hast everything thy heart can wish for." This lasted for a few days, and then he said, "I must journey forth, and leave thee alone for a short time; there are the keys of the house; thou mayst go everywhere and look at everything except into one room, which this little key here opens, and there I forbid thee to go on pain of death." He likewise gave her an egg and said, "Preserve the egg carefully for me, and carry it continually about with thee, for a great misfortune will arise from the loss of it."

She took the keys and the egg, and promised to obey him in everything. When he was gone, she went all around the house from the bottom to the top, and exam-

ined everything. The rooms shone with silver and gold, and she thought she had never seen such great splendour. At length she came to the forbidden door; she wished to pass it by, but curiosity let her have no rest. She examined the key, it looked just like any other; she put it in the keyhole and turned it a little, and the door sprang open. But what did she see when she went in? A great bloody basin stood in the middle of the room, and therein lay human beings, dead and hewn to pieces, and near by was a block of wood, and a gleaming axe lay upon it. She was so terribly alarmed that the egg she held in her hand fell into the basin. She got it out and washed the blood off, but in vain, it appeared again in a moment. She washed and scrubbed, but she could not get it out.

It was not long before the man came back from his journey, and the first things which he asked for were the keys and the egg. She gave them to him, but she trembled as she did so, and he saw at once by the red spots that she had been in the bloody chamber. "Since thou hast gone into the room against my will," he said, "thou shalt go back into it against thine own. Thy life is ended." He threw her down, dragged her thither by her hair, cut her head off on the block, and hewed her in pieces so that her blood ran on the ground. Then he threw her into the basin with the rest.

"Now I will fetch myself the second," said the wizard, and again he went to the house in the shape of a poor man, and begged. Then the second daughter brought him a piece of bread; he caught her like the first, by simply touching her, and carried her away. She did not fare better than her sister. She allowed herself to be led away by her curiosity, opened the door of the bloody chamber, looked in, and had to atone for it with her life on the wizard's return. Then he went and brought the third sister, but she was clever and crafty. When he had given her the keys and the egg, and had left her, she first put the egg away with great care, and then she examined the house, and at last went into the forbidden chamber. Alas, what did she behold! Both her sisters lay there in the basin, cruelly murdered, and cut in pieces. But she began to gather their limbs together and put them in order, head, body, arms and legs. And when nothing further was wanting the limbs began to move and unite themselves together, and both the maidens opened their eyes and were once more alive. Then they rejoiced and kissed and caressed each other.

On his arrival, the man at once demanded the keys and egg, and as he could perceive no trace of any blood

on it, he said, "Thou has stood the test, thou shalt be my bride." He now had no longer any power over her, and was forced to do whatsoever she desired. "Oh, very well," said she, "Thou shalt first take a basketful of gold to my father and mother, and carry it thyself on thy back; in the meantime I will prepare for the wedding. Then she ran to her sisters, whom she had hidden in a little chamber and said, "The moment has come when I can save you. The wretch shall himself carry you home again, but as soon as you are at home send help for me." She put both of them in a basket and covered them quite over with gold, so that nothing of them was to be seen, then she called in the wizard and said to him, "Now carry the basket away, but I shall look through my little window and watch to see if thou stoppest on the way to stand or rest."

The wizard raised the basket on his back and went away with it, but it weighed him down so heavily that the perspiration streamed from his face. Then he sat down and wanted to rest a while, but immediately one of the girls in the basket cried, "I am looking through my little window and I see that thou art resting. Wilt thou go on directly? And whenever he stood still, she cried this, and then he was forced to go onwards, until at last, groaning and out of breath, he took the basket with the gold and the two maidens into their parents' house. At home, however, the bride prepared the marriage-feast, and sent invitations to the friends of the wizard. Then she took a skull with grinning teeth, put some ornaments on it and a wreath of flowers, carried it upstairs to the garret-window and let it look out from thence. When all was ready, she got into a barrel of honey, and then cut the feather-bed open and rolled herself in it, until she looked like a wondrous bird, and no one could recognize her. Then she went out of the house, and on her way she met some of the wedding-guests, who asked;

"O, Fitcher's bird, how com'st thou here?"
"I come from Fitcher's house quite near."
"And what may the young bride be doing?"
"From cellar to garret she's swept all clean,
And now from the window she's peeping, I ween."

The bridegroom looked up, saw the decked-out skull, thought it was his bride, and nodded to her, greeting her kindly. But when he and his guests had all gone into the house, the brothers and kinsmen of the bride, who had been sent to rescue her, arrived they locked

> all the doors of the house, that no one might escape, set fire to it, and the wizard and all his crew had to burn.[10]

Magic is a very powerful force of horror. Practicers of sorcery are wizards and witches. Sorcerers are males who use magic in the spirit of evil. These wizards have powers over living souls and the dead. They are murderers and bringers of misfortune. The sorcerer of "Fitcher's Bird" (#46) is a concrete example. He is evil. He kidnaps unsuspecting girls only to butcher them later.

The female counterparts to wizards are witches. Any sorceress had supernatural powers in a natural world, especially to work evil. Witchcraft is one of the most prevalent notions of the Middle Ages retained in Grimms' tales. Apparently witches were not considered dangerous until the fifteenth century. They were benevolent, and occupied themselves by brewing love potions, and curing warts and psychosomatic maladies. The church saw witches as evil, and this pejorative view carried into Grimms' Märchen.

The witches in these tales are terrifying. They are ugly, skinny, crooked old women with yellowish-green crinkly skin. Their eyes are red and their noses are crooked enough to reach their chins. If a witch hates someone she will spit poison and gall, as did the witch in "Jorinda and Joringel"

[10] Margaret Hunt, translation, Grimms' Household Tales (1884; rpt. Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1968), pp. 178-181.

(#69) when she attacked Joringel. On the other hand, witches may be beautiful but evil as was the wicked queen in "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (#53).

Witches are evil characters. Being horribly jealous, they wish death and misfortune of their rivals. Recall that the witch of "Lover Roland" (#56) tried to decapitate her step-daughter merely for an apron. Another example is the witch who gave a poison apple to her rival in beauty, Snow White. Witches use evil means to achieve malevolent ends. They transform people and objects with evil intent. For instance, in "Frau Trude" (#43) the horrible woman turned the little girl into a flaming log.

Another terrifying trait of witches is that they are often cannibalistic. They eat their rivals and also little children. In "Hansel and Gretel" (#15) the witch built her cottage of bread just to lure children there. Once she got a child in her power, she would kill it, cook it, and eat it. The wicked sorceress in "Snow White" (#53) ordered the poor girl to be taken into the forest and slaughtered. Her lung and liver were to be returned as a token. However, the huntsman pitied the innocent girl and spared her life. He brought back the lung and liver of a young boar as a token. The huntsman had to cook them in salt, and the wicked queen ate them thinking that she had eaten Snow White's lung and liver.

Evil witches and sorcerers always receive a just end in Grimms' tales. Greed, envy, pride, cannibalism and wanton evilness result in horrible deaths. Witches and sorcerers are usually burned, drowned, or ripped apart. In "Brother and Sister" (#11) the witch was miserably burnt while the wicked woman of "Lover Roland" (#56) was ripped apart as she was compelled to dance in a thorn bush.

The magical powers of sorcerers and witches are the foundation of all spells, enchantment and incantations. These types of magic can transform people, objects, all of nature, in fact, into any form of being. In "Jorinda and Joringel" (#69) the two lovers were strolling in the middle of a vast wood without noticing that they were near a sinister castle. It was a witch's abode. Suddenly Jorinda became a gurgling nightingale and Joringel was petrified until the spell was broken. Such evil enchantments are numerous in Grimms' Märchen.

Lycanthropy is one such horrific bewitchment. Sorcerers and witches could have themselves and others changed into noxious animals. Lycanthropy "indicates the popular belief that on occasion a human being can actually transform himself, or be transformed, into a wolf or some other animal. In this form he slays and eats men."[11] In Germany

[11] Anthony Masters, The Natural History of the Vampire, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1972), p. 29.

the most common cause of lycanthropous transformation is by drinking from enchanted streams.[12] This notion of lycanthropous streams in Germany is substantiated by the Grimms' tale "Brother and Sister" (#11). Brother took his sister by the hand and fled from their evil step-mother. However, their step-mother was a witch and put a spell on every spring in the forest. Brother was very thirsty, but when they reached a glittering spring it was saying, "Whoever drinks me, will be turned into a tiger, who drinks of me will be turned into a tiger." Sister then cried, "Dear Brother please don't drink or you will turn into a wild animal and tear me to pieces." So brother waited until they reached the next stream. But this one murmured, "Who drinks of me will be turned into a wolf, who drinks of me will be turned into a wolf." Then the girl cried, "Brother, please don't drink the water, or you'll be turned into a wolf and eat me up."[13]

The Devil or Satan is a ubiquitous character of evil in Grimms' tales. "The Farmer and the Devil" (#189), "The Grave Mound" (#195), "Bearskin" (#101), and "The Devil's

12 This is a reference to werewolf tales of Germany in Elliot O'Donnel's Werewolves, (New York: Longvue Press, 1965), in particular the tale of a countess who drank from a mountain stream and later became a she-wolf which terrorized an entire village.

13 Francis P. Magoun, Jr. and Alexander H. Krappe, translation, The Grimms' German Folk Tales, p. 4.

Sooty Brother" (#100) are some specific tales that revolve around the action of the Devil. The Devil is such a common character in Grimms' tales that the origin of Satanism during the Middle Ages should be explained.

> "Unfortunately from the Church's point of view, witchcraft and satanism began to gain converts. Under the feudal system the greater masses of people were poverty stricken and little more than slaves to the powerful Lords and Barons. Since the church had to rely on the rich for support, its obvious alliance was with the ruling classes. The poor, living in squalor with no hope of improving their lot during their lives could hardly fill their growling stomachs, or clothe their naked children with shining promises of paradise in the hereafter. There began to grow among the people the earliest rumblings of a desire for freedom, for individual dignity, for hope of a better life on earth. They felt that God was letting them down and they turned to Satan. Satan promised them riches, power, and tangible things while they lived."[14]

And so the Devil appears in Grimms' Märchen as a tempter who bargains for souls.

He is the "Evil One." He is guileful and occupied with stealing souls. The "Evil One" is recognized in these tales as a gaily-feathered, black, sooty, man-beast with a cloven foot. But no matter how frightful his appearance is, the Devil is easily dealt with.

"The Grave Mound" (#195) is a concrete example of how the Devil is usually treated in Grimms' tales. A soldier and a poor man are guarding a fresh grave when the Evil One approaches. He says, "Be off you raggamuffins, that soul

[14]Anthony Masters, The Natural History of the Vampire, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1972), p. 62.

belongs to me!" The clever soldier bargains with the Devil, so that a sum must be paid for the dead man's soul. They agreed that Satan should fill up one of the soldier's boots with gold coins. As the Devil returned to town for the money, the soldier cut out the sole of his boot and placed the boot in the high grass. The Devil returned, poured the gold in, but the boot remained empty. Disgruntled, he returned to town for more money, but only to find that it too was not enough to fill the boot. As Satan made subsequent trips to get enough money, the night slipped by and when dawn came the Devil went shrieking away. The man's soul was saved. Other tales such as "The Spirit in the Bottle" (#99) and "The Farmer and the Devil" (#189) show the Devil as the one who gets tricked. In every tale, he suffers ignominy and degradation.

The realm of horror is preoccupied with death and the grave. Many of Grimms' Märchen concern death. Death is always victorious in these tales. It may be deterred or played with, but Death always wins in the end. No one escapes Death. "Godfather Death" (#44) is a tale of a successful doctor who tried to cheat death. A king was ill so the doctor was summoned to cure him. When the doctor entered the bedroom he saw Death at the foot of the king's bed, ready to take him away. The doctor turned the sick man around so that Death was standing at his head, and soon the

king was healthy again. Since Death was the doctor's godfather, the young man was only warned. Later, the doctor cheated Death again in the same way. Death became angry and took the young man to an underground cave with thousands of candles burning. They were the life-lights of all mankind. The doctor asked to see his, whereupon Death snuffed out the poor man's life-light.

Death appears in these tales in the figure of a cloaked skeleton. Death itself tells us the general view of death as portrayed in Grimms' Märchen. In the tale of "Death's Messengers" (#177) Death had nearly been defeated by a giant. Along came a good youth and helped Death to its feet with a healthful drought. Death introduced itself. "I am Death, I spare no one and can make no exception with thee--but that thou mayst see that I am grateful, I promise thee that I will not fall on thee unexpectedly but will send my messengers to thee before I take you away." The youth went happily on his way feeling secure that Death would not take him by surprise. However, youth and happiness did not last long. Soon the man was plagued with sickness and sorrows. But finally, he was back to health and living happily. Then one day someone tapped his shoulder. Looking around, the youth saw Death who said, "Follow me, the hour of thy departure from this world has come." "What!" replied the man, "Wilt thou break thy word? Didst thou not promise me

that thou wouldst send thy messengers to me before coming thyself?" Death answered, "Have I not sent one messenger to thee after another? Did not fever come and smite thee, and shake thee, and cast thee down? Has dizziness not bewildered thy head? Has not gout twitched thee in all thy limbs? Did not thine ears sing? Was it not dark before thine eyes? And besides all that, has not my own brother sleep reminded thee every night of me? Did'st thou not lie at night as if thou wert already dead?"[15]

And yet, man has never accepted that death is the end and that dust is merely dust. In Grimms' Märchen, the dead often return. This shows a belief in some mysterious element which survives the death of the body. A common horrific element in these tales is for murder victims to reappear and take revenge. In "Fitcher's Bird" (#46), for example, parts of the dismembered corpses were reunited, and the girls sprang to life to help destroy the evil wizard. The buried bones of the butchered boy in "The Juniper Tree" (#47) reappeared in the form of a beautiful bird. But the bird let a mill-stone fall from its neck to kill the murderess. There are other revenants. A strong belief in ghosts is expressed in these tales. This probably stems from the concept of animism, that everything has a soul, and

15 Margaret Hunt, translation, Grimms' Household Tales, pp. 277-278.

each death adds another ghost or spirit to the world. However, ghosts are not always malevolent. They are restless souls who return in a spectral form to haunt the living. From the Grimm brothers' notes on the tales, it appears the tellers never questioned the credibility of ghost stories. The existence of ghosts was accepted. The tale "The Shroud" (#109) is one such ghost story.

The Shroud (#109)

> There was once a mother who had a little boy of seven years old, who was so handsome and loveable that no one could look at him without liking him, and she herself worshipped him above everything in the world. Now it so happened that he suddenly became ill, and God took him to himself; and for this the mother could not be comforted, and wept both day and night. But soon afterwards, when the child had been buried, it appeared by night in the places where it had sat and played during its life, and if the mother wept, it wept also, and when morning came it disappeared. As, however, the mother would not stop crying, it came one night, in the little shroud in which it had been laid in its coffin, and with its wreath of flowers round its head, and stood on the bed at her feet, and said," Oh mother, do stop crying, or I shall never fall asleep in my coffin, for my shroud will not dry because of all thy tears, which fall upon it." The mother was afraid when she heard that, and wept no more. The next night the child came again, and held a little light in its hand, and said, "Look, mother, my shroud is nearly dry, and I can rest in my grave." Then the mother gave her sorrow into God's keeping, and bore it quietly and patiently, and the child came no more, but slept in its little bed beneath the earth.[16]

Other spirits and sprites besides ghosts appear in Grimms' tales. Water nixs are the most beautiful. They lure

[16]Margaret Hunt, translation, Grimms' Household Tales, Vol. II, p. 97.

men to a watery grave for revenge. In "The Nix of the Mill Pond" (#181), for instance, the water nix stole the miller's son and carried him with her to the bottom of the pond. Goblins or changelings are sprites which show up in Grimms' Märchen. They steal infants, but sooner or later they are always detected, and the infants are returned. The short tale "The Goblin" (#39) explains:

The Goblins (#39)

> Once there was a mother and the goblins had stolen her child out of the cradle. In its place they laid a changeling with a thick head of staring eyes who did nothing but eat and drink. In her misery, the woman went to ask her neighbor for advice. The neighbor told her to take the changeling into the kitchen, set him on the hearth, light a fire, and boil water in two eggshells. This would make the changeling laugh, and when a changeling laughs, that's the end of him.
>
> The woman did just what the neighbor told her, and as she was putting the eggshells full of water on the fire, the blockhead said;
>
> "Now am I as old
> As the western woods
> But never heard it told that
> people cook water in eggshells,"
>
> and he began to laugh and as he laughed there suddenly came a lot of little goblins who brought the right child and set it on the hearth and took their friend away with them.[17]

Monsters must also be included in the ontology of horror as depicted in Grimms' Märchen. Giants, dragons, and griffins are the most common. Giants are so powerful they

17 Lore Segal, translation, The Juniper Tree and Other Tales From Grimm, (New York: Farrar, Strous and Giroux, 1973) pp. 150-151.

can rip a tree up like a twig as in the "Giant and the Tailor" (#183). They also have a habit of eating humans but are so stupid they usually end up being tricked before any harm is done. "The Devil and His Grandmother" (#125) and "The Two Brothers" (#160) are the only Grimms' tales involving a dragon. In the first tale, the dragon is actually the Devil, who makes three deserters serve him for seven years. In "The Two Brothers" (#60), the dragon was a fire-breathing monster which had seven heads attached to an enormous crocodile-like body covered with scales. It lived in a cave and guarded a treasure. A princess was stolen by the dragon but a prince rescued her by decapitating the monster. Griffins appear in two of Grimms' tales, "The Lady and the Lion" (#88) and "The Griffin Bird" (#165). These are huge creatures with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion. In the first tale, the griffin was benevolent and helped the princess and prince escape the pursuit of a villain. Whereas in "The Griffin Bird" (#165), the creature ate Christians.

Now, it is not enough to merely analyze the phenomenon of horror in Grimms' Märchen. The realm of horror has substantial philosophical value. The existential and metaphysical implications of horror deserve recognition. The world of horror and of Grimms' tales as a whole is fantastic. Horror thrives on the unknown and the supernatural.

Immediately the imagination is stimulated. Unfortunately this cherished attribute of the human mind is slowly facing extinction in our world of mechanization. Yet fantasy should be recognized as an element of the mind which can be meaningful and valuable. The contemporary psychiatrist, R. D. Laing says, "Fantasy as encountered in many people today is split off from what the person regards as his mature, sane, rational, adult experience. We do not then see fantasy in its true function but experienced merely as an intrusive, sabotaging, infantile nuisance."[18] For Laing, as long as fantasy does not render a person functionless in society, then it is always experimental and meaningful. Fantasy offers a valid and new perspective of looking at the world.

Our childhood imagination is worthy of recapturing. Broadened imagination expands the world of being. It keeps existence alive and stimulating to the mind. I do not advocate that we all return to living in a far-off fantasy world, but only that we recognize the imagination as a valuable attribute of the human mind. The intellect is activated and forced to work in the enriching of consciousness.

The realm of horror also increases sensitivity to being. Metaphysically, it expands and keeps open the world of

[18] Ronald D. Laing, The Politics of Experience, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1967), p. 31.

existence and allows for fresh actions and reactions. It builds the will to conceive of all things. Do ghosts, goblins, the Devil, or witches actually exist? Through horror, I become unwilling to deny it. In this way, my world of possibilities expands. From the realm of horror I am coerced to participate in the possibility of such existences. The world of being is enriched.

Gamble! As Nietzsche reveals, "For believe me! The secret of realizing the greatest fruitfulness and greatest enjoyment of existence is: to live dangerously. Send your ships out into uncharted seas![19] Neitzsche's advice "to live dangerously" extends beyond the actual guest for situations of real danger. He is telling us to take chances, to make a stand, to choose, and to participate in the self-creating of one's life. Avoid becoming too "comfortable." As Nietzsche reveals, "comfort" is the path to stagnation and a stale existence. Do not be idle. To participate in the quest for a new perspective of being is naturally uncertain and risky, but nevertheless valuable. Expanded understanding and perception of the world accompanied by an enrichment of living are rewards worthy of the risk and uncertainty of such an adventure.

Technological society threatens our lives with the

19 Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, translation, Walter Kaufman, (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 283.

increased potential for stale, insipid existence. Horror can enrich our lives and the world of being. In "The Pit and the Pendulum," Edgar Allen Poe says, "It is not that I feared to look upon things horrible, but that I grew aghast lest there be nothing to see." Is this the fate of people and being--that our imagination and our perspectives are being deadened so that "there should be nothing to see?" Better then to return to horror and the Märchen world.

# CHAPTER III

## HUMOR

Grimms' Märchen are charmed by a definite sense of humor. However, to pinpoint "the humorous" is very difficult because for every laughing mind the comic quality varies. Since Grimms' tales are in literary form they necessarily have a "low key" type of humor. No belly-laughing or foot-stomping occurs when one reads these tales. Also, there are no sexual jokes. But a definite sense of fun is conveyed.

Underlying the various humor in these tales is the juxtaposition of two habitually incompatible associative contexts.

The humorous situation depends on an emotional state. The first law of humor in Grimms' Märchen is that things must be taken in fun. When things are received in fun, then the humorous situation arises. There are several types of humor and humorous situations in these tales.

Humor of superiority is the most common. This brand of fun is intended to degrade someone. Practical jokes are a quick way to dupe someone in fun. This plays on a universal delight in tricks. The trickster is the main character who plays practical jokes. In Grimms' tales this is the cunning African type trickster--in African folktales the trickster is a tremendously cunning spider who is rarely

himself tricked. But in Grimms' tales this clever ingenuity is seen in the character of Tom Thumb, who appears in the tales "Tom Thumb" (#37) and "Tom Thumb's Wanderings" (#45). He delights in roguish amusement. Thumbling betrays people cunningly and cleverly, and mocks and imitates everyone. He is able to escape from all accidents to which his tiny form makes him liable. In the tale "Tom Thumb" (#37), at Tom's request, his father sells him to two travelers for a piece of gold. Perched on the brim of the traveler's hat, Tom happily ran around. Later, Thumbling implored the man to let him down. Once on the ground, Tom suddenly slipped into a mousehole which he had discovered. "Good Night, gentlemen. Just go home without me," he called out in mockery.

Slapstick is another form of a practical joke. The tale "Mr. Korbes" (#47), is filled with slapstick antics. A hen and a cock built a coach, hitched four mice to it and went to visit Mr. Korbes. Along the way they picked up a cat, a millstone, an egg, a duck, a pin, and finally a needle. When they all arrived at Mr. Korbes' house he was not in. So the cat went to the fireplace, the duck sat by the well, the egg wrapped itself up in a face towel, the pin stuck itself in a chair cushion, and the needle jumped up on the bed in the middle of the pillow. When Mr. Korbes came home, he went to the fireplace to make a fire. Whereupon the cat threw ashes in his face. He ran to wash himself and the duck spurted water in his face. Mr. Korbes then reached for

the towel, but the egg rolled out, broke and stuck in his eyes. He wanted to rest and sat down in the chair, then the pin pricked him. In a rage he threw himself on the bed, but as soon as he touched the pillow the needle pricked him. "The Vulgar Crew" (#10), is another tale depicting similar slapstick antics.

The humor of superiority also makes fun of forbidden behavior. The tales show the absurdity of a certain person or trait by making fun of them. Noodle tales or numskull tales imply nonsensical or unsocial behavior. Tales such as "Clever Elsie" (#34), "The Clever Servant" (#162), and "Clever Hans" (#32) degrade the stupid person by making them look absolutely ridiculous. For example, Clever Elsie is sent to the basement to fetch some beer. When she did not return for a long time, Hans went down to see what happened and found her lamenting. When asked why, Elsie pointed to a pickaxe above the beer barrel and wailed, "I've good reason to weep. If I get you and we have a child and it's grown up and has to draw beer down here, perhaps the pickaxe will drop on its head and kill it." "The Clever Servant" (#162), is another tale of idiocy about a servant sent to catch a cow. His master found him wandering aimlessly about the field. The master asked, "Did you find the cow I sent you out after?" "No Sir," answered the servant, "I didn't find the cow, but then I didn't look for it." "What did you

look for?" asked the master. "Something better," said the servant, "Three black birds." "And where are they?" asked the master. "I see one, I hear the second, and I'm after the third," answered the clever servant. In satire, the warning is "Take example from this, pay no attention to your master and his orders. Do, rather, what occurs to you and do what you want; then you'll be acting just as wisely as the clever servant."[20] The type of humor in these numskull tales is designed to make fun of anyone who behaves foolishly.

Another fun generating stimulus in Grimms' tales is impersonation. Most common is the animal-man, or object-man imitation, in which animals or objects behave as if they were human. This double-existence is comic. "The Bremen Town Musicians" (#27) is a fun tale depicting the antics of a donkey who plays a lute, a singing cat, and a hunting dog who plays kettle drums. "The Straw, the Coal, and the Bean" (#18) is a tale involving these objects as talking, thinking, and encountering all the difficulties of traveling through the countryside. Coming to a stream, the straw stretched himself across and the coal, which was of a fiery nature, and tripped gaily over the newly built bridge. But when it got to the middle, it became too frightened to move. The straw,

20 Francis P. Magoun, Jr., and Alexander H. Krappe, translation, The Grimms' German Folk Tales, p. 533.

beginning to burn, broke in two and fell into the stream. The coal fell also and fizzled out in the water. The bean, who had cautiously remained on the bank, could not help laughing over the whole affair, and laughed until her side split. Fortunately, a kind tailor found her and stitched her up, but as he used black thread, all beans have a black seam to this day. This tale exemplifies the complex nature of humor. There are several fun stimuli at work. One is the object-man impersonation. Inanimate objects such as a coal, a bean and a piece of straw are taken out of their natural context and given human attributes such as fear of water and the ability to laugh. To mentally picture a coal dancing across a stream of a bean rolling in laughter creates a humorous image. Another fun stimulus operating here is the slapstick nature of the coal buring through the straw, falling into the water and subsequently being fizzled out. There is also the humor of superiority depicted by the cautious bean who laughed at the misfortune of its companions.

Surprise of the unexpected is another factor which creates a humorous situation. In this category, the logical development of a tale is subverted. The ending is a shock, and tension is finally relieved. "The Cat and Mouse Partnership" (#2) is one such tale. A cat and mouse live amicably together. This situation is against our better intuition; cats and mice do not co-habitate. A slight tension

from the incongruity arises. The roommates decided to store some fat in a church so they would have plenty to eat in the winter. One day the cat was hungry and so he pretended to go to a christening when he actually went and licked the top off of their store of fat. When he returned home, the mouse asked, "What name did they give the child?" "Top Off," replied the cat. Again the cat got a craving and pretended to go to a second christening. When asked the second kitten's name, the cat replied, "Half Gone." Not long after that the cat pretended to go to a third christening, and licked the fat until it was all gone. On his return, the mouse asked the name given to the third child. "It's All Gone," replied the cat. Now the mouse thought these were strange names and so he became suspicious. When winter came the mouse suggested that they visit their store of fat. When they arrived at the church, the pot was, of course, empty. The mouse exclaimed, "So! It's clear, first Top Off, then Half Gone...." "One more word and I'll eat you up." As the mouse had "All Gone" on the tip of his tongue, the cat pounced on it and swallowed it up. The tension builds, and unexpectedly our tension is released, so cats do eat mice!

Another sense of humor in Grimms' tales is based on linguistic play. Literalism is the humorous element in these tales. "The Story of One Who Set Out to Learn Fear" (#4) is an example. Although threatened by ghosts, dead men, and

fire breathing dogs, the intrepid hero complained that nothing could make his skin crawl. Just when something horrendous enough to make his skin crawl is expected, his irritated wife throws minnows in his bed and he is literally satisfied.

Exaggeration and caricature are more humorous elements. This type of fun distorts features in order to evoke a humorous image. "The Six Servants" (#134) exemplifies this. In this tale a traveling prince picks up six servants. The first man had a belly as big as a small mountain. The next man they met had tremendous ears which could hear anything in the world. Others were a man with legs a mile long, another with such powerful eyes that he had to wear a blindfold to see, and one man who froze the hotter it got, and got hotter the colder it was. The last man's neck stretched way out over the forest and fields. Here again, the complex nature of humor is shown. There are incongruities side by side with physical exaggeration. The clash of opposites creates fun, as the man who froze the hotter it became. Also, the physical absurdity of mile long legs is humorous.

Another humorous exaggeration occurs when trivial experiences are exalted, as in the tale "The Brave Little Tailor" (#20). One day he spread some jam on a piece of bread. As he eyed the bread, seven flies alighted on it. Irritated, the tailor killed them all in one swat. Feeling

confident with his new found gallantry, the tailor stitched "seven in one blow" on his belt and went out into the world. The tale then develops from the exaggeration and misinterpretation of such a trivial act as killing seven flies in one swat.

The humor indigenous to many of Grimms' tales has definite functions. The humor of superiority, or humor at the expense of others is a playful outlet for aggression. We feel pleasure at the cunning of Tom Thumb. No matter how small a person is, with clever rascality they can stay on top of any situation. Also, the humor of numbskull tales provides some protection against our own short comings. Self-confidence is reassured because we feel we could never be that stupid. There is comfort--even if very subconsciously--when one thinks "there is always someone worse off than I." From the humor of superiority a type of self-criticism emerges. Humor enables one to see oneself from the outside--to step back and admit in fun, "Aha! I can be fooled as well as fool others."

Humor also works as a release of tension. As "The Cat and Mouse Partnership" (#2) develops, tension builds and is finally released with the shock ending. The release occurs when this end is received playfully. In a peculiar sense there is co-existence with the tragic. Again, the emotional state of humor is recognized as important. Humor in Grimms'

tales offers a release from certain anxieties, as shown in the tale "The Poor Boy and the Grave" (#185). This is a humorous depiction of a very human concern over death. A miserable young apprentice decided to commit suicide. Thinking it poison, he drank some honey and thought, "If this is death, it is sweet." Then he drank wine instead of poison and his head began to spin. Believing that the end was near, the boy went to the cemetary and laid down in a grave waiting to die. He caught cold and never woke again. This tale could be tragic, but instead a major human concern is taken lightly, and so is more acceptable. This anxiety releasing humor becomes existentially necessary. By making fun of one's problems and concerns they are better dealt with. Problems diminish and concerns are less burdensome. Humor helps us to cope. Life is made fun instead of being deadened out by a spirit of gravity.

Furthermore, the philosophical sense of humor cannot exclude some definite metaphysical implications in humorous situations. In such humor we see the familiar in a new light. Everyday situations are twisted, and extended to create the ridiculous. The world of being is turned up-side down. Things become what they are not; beans split in laughter, men have legs a mile long, and a donkey plays the lute. The world expands and perspectives of being broaden. The humor of Grimms' tales is thought stimulating, life affirming and entertaining -- in short, philosophically valuable.

# CHAPTER IV

## ETHICS

Grimms' Märchen definitely convey ethical values, yet in a tacit way. The nonsense of a categorical imperative is absent; rarely is it stated "One ought," or "Thou shalt not." Rather, the consequences of certain actions and character traits prove what is advisable and what is not, according to Märchen ethics.

Grimms' tales offer distinct directives. They are oriented towards effecting one's own individual character, more than being morally oriented. My difference between morality and ethics must be distinguished. I am using Ethics in the Aristotelian sense--ethics serve as an ideal directive for individual character development. Grimms' Märchen ethics are teleological in that nobility of character is the end. On the other hand, morality pertains to social directives, not individual.

How Grimms' Märchen can affect an individual's character, and so action, is my concern. The majority of tales are filled with a heroic spirit--the clever doer who displays noble character is the one who fares well. An ethical analysis will decipher the major ignoble and noble characteristics displayed in the tales.

Possessors of ignoble qualities are certainly destined for ill fortune. A characteristic most important to avoid

is haughtiness. Grimms' Märchen show a contempt for great vanities. Boasting leads only to trouble. An ostentatious tailor in "The Giant and the Tailor" (#183) boasted of great deeds while producing none. Eventually he literally filled up with "hot" air and floated high in the sky, never to be seen again. Also, haughtiness is stagnating. "The Water of Life" (#97) displayed such consequences. An overly proud brother sought the medicinal water so he would inherit the kingdom rather than cure the dying king. Soon he met a dwarf who asked, "Whither away so fast?" The haughty prince replied: "Stupid little fellow, what business is it of yours?" In anger the dwarf cast an evil spell; soon afterwards the prince became jammed in a ravine, immobile. The second brother also met the dwarf, and fared no better. When asked the same question, the second brother quipped: "Little snippet, what does it matter to you?" Soon he also became stuck fast in a narrow gorge. "So fare haughty people" is our implicit warning.

Often the overly proud are grossly humiliated. Humiliation is even more severe because of excessive pride. The snobbish princess in "King Thrushbeard" (#52) turned away one suitor after another, and even mocked them. Soon after she was forced to become a beggar woman, subjected to housework, spinning, cleaning and even ridicule. The beautiful princess cursed the haughtiness which had caused her humil-

iation. Renouncing her pride and loving the king for his character instead of his looks, she married King Thrushbeard and lived happily forever. This leaves us with an optimistic note. Once people recognize their haughtiness, they can change themselves, and so fare well.

Haughtiness is often accompanied by jealousy. The futility of comparing ourselves with others is subtly exposed in many tales. Jealousy always leads to horrible consequences, as the fate of the witch's daughter in "Lover Roland" (#56) attests. The jealously wicked girl demanded the apron which her lovely stepsister wore. "Just wait quietly, my child," said the witch. "You shall have it. Tonight when she is asleep, I will go and chop off your sister's head. Only take care to lie on the farther side of the bed, against the wall, and push her well to the side." Fortunately, the heroine overheard their evil plans. That night she gently exchanged places on the bed with the evil girl. Later, the witch crept in, holding an axe in her right hand, while with her left hand she felt to find if anyone was there. Then she seized the axe with both hands, struck--and struck off her own child's head! So fare the jealous.

Punishment for evil is as ghastly as the crime committed. The witch of "Lover Roland" (#56) is horribly killed when Roland's magic fiddle compells her to dance

in a thorn bush. In "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (#53), the wicked witch is danced to death in red hot slippers. For murdering her step-son, the evil woman in "The Juniper Tree" (#47) was crushed to death by a falling millstone.

Another prevalent undesirable characteristic is greediness. Such a trait literally leads to nothing, as depicted in "The Little Folks' Present" (#182). A tailor and a goldsmith, upon approaching the singing little folk, were soon instructed to leave a pile of coals and return the next day. To the tradesmens' joy, the coals were replaced by gold. But the goldsmith hungered for more riches. The little folk declared: "A greedy man if he has much, still wishes to have more." The next time the goldsmith left bags to be filled as he expected, the sacks were full of gold, but were painful to carry to his cottage. Finally, returning home, a second metamorphosis had taken place. To his surprise the goldsmith had acquired two humps on his back, a bald head, and coals in the sacks instead of gold.

Excessive desire for material wealth is dangerous. Moderation is advocated. The wife in "The Fisherman and His Wife" (#19) was never satisfied. First, she wished a cottage, then a castle, and then to be Empress. Finally, out of her extraordinary greed, the wife wished to be like God himself. In a flash, she was resigned to living in a

pot again forever.

Furthermore, inevitable misfortune befalls anyone who displays falseness. Motives are the criterion for deception; deceit for any pejorative reason leads to horrible ends. A variety of consequences await deceitful characters. The falsely heroic brothers in "The Golden Bird" (#57) were put to death. Another common situation is depicted in the tale "Brother and Sister" (#11). Killing the queen, the witch placed her own daughter in the king's bed. After the deception was discovered, the daughter was taken into the forest where she was torn apart by wild beasts. The witch was thrown into a fire and miserably burned to death. Another instance is when the two step-sisters in "Cinderella" (#21) were blinded for falsely claiming to own the glass slipper.

There is blatant existential harm due to falseness; yet in Grimms' Märchen, this harm can be traced to a deeper level. A hidden deception that is existentially paralyzing exists. I refer to Sartre's famous notion of "Bad Faith," a type of lie to oneself. "Bad Faith" offers a dangerous delusion to truth. Many characters of the tales live in bad faith. Often would-be heroes believe that they are courageous and clever, only to turn out to be weaklings. The ostentatious tailor, or the weak brothers in "The Golden Bird" (#57) are some concrete examples. These are people

who are too feeble of spirit to make an honest commitment to themselves. They wallow in characterlessness rather than trying to improve themselves. Hence, bad faith is maintained; their lives stalemated.

The failure to think or question often causes such existential misfortune. Thoughtlessness is an undesirable trait; all goes wrong when one is non-reflective. Recall that every time the young prince in "The Golden Bird" (#57) failed to think, he found trouble. Not heeding the fox's warning, he thoughtlessly bought gallows meat (his brothers) and sat on the edge of the well. Were it not for the aid of the fox, the prince would have surely died. There is even a Grimms' tale that portrays the consequences of herd or mob thoughtlessness. In "The Little Peasant" (#62) a village's entire population was drowned after thoughtlessly allowing itself to be duped by the clever peasant.

On the other hand, Märchen ethics portray nobility of character. Any possessor of such desirable traits heads towards good fortune. Nobility of character approaches the highest of ethical goals. There are several essential traits to possess in order to achieve noble character.

Honesty is foremost. Not merely being the best policy, honesty is the only policy for faring well. Once anyone has given his word, he does not betray it. The situation in "The Frog Prince" (#1) exemplifies the imperative of being true

to one's word. One day, the lovely princess dropped her golden ball into a well. The frog retrieved the ball only after the maiden promised to love the frog best, play with him, let him be her dearest friend, sit beside her at the table, eat off her golden plate, drink from her cup and sleep with her in her bed. Having recovered her golden ball, she quickly forgot the frog. The next day she heard a knocking and a voice.

> "Princess, youngest princess
> open the door,
> don't you know what you
> said to me yesterday
> by the cool well-water?
> Princess, youngest princess,
> open the door!"

After the princess explained her plight to her father, the king said: "If you make a promise, you must keep it." The princess complied. Luckily for her, the frog turned out to be a handsome prince. They were married and lived happily.

By promising, one becomes the sovereign of his own responsibility. A promise becomes a relationship between the promiser and his own self as well as with others. An ostensible strength of character, honesty is a responsibility one must bear. Only the weak escape such self-imposed obligation by breaking their word--but the consequences are dreadful.

Directly related to honesty is faithfulness, also a responsibility. For one possessing this characteristic the

result is always advantageous. "Faithful John" (#6) is a concrete example. Through many adventures he remained faithful to his friend the young king. On the night of the wedding feast the queen suddenly fell down breathless. Faithful John carried her into a chamber, kneeling he took three drops of blood from her right breast. Immediately the queen returned to life. But the young king, now knowing the circumstances, witnessed all. In a rage he ordered John's execution. Faithful John, upon saying, "I have always been faithful" fell lifeless and became stone. Realizing his mistake the king was willing to put his own children to death for the return of John. The king drew his sword and cut off his children's heads and besmeared the stone with their blood. At once, the stone came alive and there stood Faithful John. Taking up the children's heads he set them on again and besmeared their wounds with their blood. Immediately they were jumping about and went on playing as if nothing had happened. After that, they all lived happily ever after, enjoying each other's friendship.

This idea of honesty and faithfulness can be extended to one's own existence. There is a degree of honesty projected in these tales that is all too often missing today. Honesty is worthy of restoration. Being honest with oneself and existence is a strength and a responsibility which enables an authenticity of living. As shown in the tales,

the results can only be advantageous. If one is to live in "Good Faith" as opposed to living in "Bad Faith", one must create his own character. Knowledge of self, and the honesty to critique one's self and existence is essential. This is self-assertive and individualistic, not escapist. Existence is enriched rather than denied; one's living gains value.

Another prevalent noble trait is cleverness. It approaches the status of unimpeachible wisdom in Grimms' Märchen. Lessons learned from experience and applied with cleverness govern the activities of daily life. The use of forethought and cunning, is often a matter of life or death. In the tale "Tom Thumb" (#37), Tom owed his life to reason. For instance, when a hungry wolf snapped him up, Tom did not lose courage. "Perhaps the wolf will listen to reason," thought Tom. The wolf was lured to Tom's parents' house by the promise of a feast. In the dead of night, Tom enticed the wolf to squeeze through the grating, the only entrance to the house. The wolf feasted and became so fat that he could not escape through the grating. Tom had reckoned on this and made a great commotion inside the wolf's stomach. Eventually, Tom's father woke up and killed the wolf with a blow on the head. The parents ripped open the wolf's body and rescued their tiny son.

Many heroes have fulfilled goals by the use of quick thinking. "The King of the Golden Mountain" (#92) exempli-

fies the value of such a trait. The hero needed the magic cap which could transfer a person where ever he wished. Noticing that two giants were quarrelling over which one of them should get the magic hat, the hero cleverly suggested that he would place the hat some distance away and the giants should race for it. The giants agreed. Once the hat was in his hands, the hero quickly wished himself on top of the glass mountain and won the princess. Similar situations are numerous in Grimms' Märchen. Combined with a little luck and rascality, the clever person inevitably fares well.

Another trait advocated in the tales' ethics is fairness. Give the other a chance. Often times the other may become a valuable helper. As the young prince learned in "The Golden Bird" (#57) by sparing the fox's life, fairness leads to good fortune.

Then there is fairness in the sense of justice. Good always triumphs over evil. The evil doer is always brought to justice, no matter how long ago the crime was committed. In "The Great Sun Brings It to Light" (#115), a peasant killed and robbed an innocent Jew. Many years later, when the peasant had become wealthy, the sun shone down upon him. He was compelled to reveal his crime and so was executed. Any murderer or murderess is certainly brought to justice by execution. The intent behind a crime also determines

the punishment. For instance, the jealous witch of "Lover Roland" (#56) meant to decapitate her step-daughter but mistakenly killed her real daughter. Although the step-daughter escaped unharmed, the witch was punished as if she had actually killed the girl. As punishment for her jealousy and intent to kill, the evil woman was compelled by Roland's fiddle to dance in a rose bush and she was miserably ripped apart.

The Grimms' Märchen view of sex must also be included in an ethical analysis. There is a disturbing sense of purity in these tales. The definite lack of anything as gross as obscenity, or mildly erotic is probably no accident. The brothers Grimm have been accused of rigidly censoring the tales. As their Märchen exist today, there is no blatant sexual content. Oftentimes, princes spend the night or sleep with their fiancees, but it is rather clear that they remain chaste.

However, sex is never deemed as a "sin" or as "bad." Actually, there is no mention of the sex act; yet sexual allusions are made in a few of the tales. Such a tale of sexual allusion is the incestuous tale "Many Fur" (#65). On her death bed the queen asked the king to promise not to marry anyone who was not as beautiful as she. Long after her death, with much prodding, the king sought a new wife. Only his daughter would do. His desire was so fierce that

he enticed her with many precious gifts. Horrified at his intentions, the king's daughter ran away. However, in the end, after many adventures, the king eventually married his daughter.

As for marriage infidelity, it simply does not occur in Grimms' tales. If the groom forgets his bethrothed and plans to marry another bride, as in "Lover Roland" (#56), the amnesia is always due to an evil spell. But the true bride always breaks the enchantment before the prince can marry another.

The impact of Grimms' tales as a child's directive is undeniable. Children should be obedient and respectful of their parents. The short tale "Frau Trude" (#43) will exemplify the effective way these Märchen display directives. As usual there is no "do not" of any kind, yet an ethical directive is impactually conveyed.

Frau Trude (#43)

"Once upon a time there was a little girl who was stubborn and inquisitive, and whenever her parents told her to do something, she'd never obey. How could she get along well? One day she said to her parents, "I've heard so much about Mistress Trudy; I'll call on her sometime. People say that her house looks queer and that there are many strange things in it. I've become quite curious." The parents forbade her going there and said, "Mistress Trudy is a wicked woman, given to evil things, and if you go there, we'll disown you."

The girl paid no attention, however, to her parents' orders and went to Mistress Trudy's just the same. When she got there, Mistress Trudy asked her, "Why are you so pale?" "Oh," she answered,

> shaking all over, "I'm so frightened at what I've seen." "What have you seen?" "I saw a black man on your stairs." "That was a charcoal burner." "Then I saw a blood-red man." "That was a butcher." "Oh, Mistress Trudy, I shuddered; I looked through the window and I didn't see you but I did see the Devil with his fiery head." "Is that so!" she said. "Then you saw the witch in her proper garb. I've been waiting for you for a long time now and have longed for you. Now you shall furnish me with light." Thereupon she transformed the girl into a log and threw it in the fire, and when it was all aglow, she sat down beside it and, warming herself at it, said, "That really does give a bright light."[21]

Furthermore, although no ethical critique in itself is present in Grimms' Märchen, a set of ethical standards is ostensibly displayed. In the writer's view, there is existential value to Märchen ethics. Questioning of one's ethical standards is stimulated, and a directive is given through the display of action. Now, reading Märchen is by no means the only source that stimulates ethical critique. Hopefully any treatise on ethics or morals will offer stimulation and questioning, but Märchen have a unique, enjoyable and exciting manner of presenting ethical standards. The simple story-line form of these tales impactually conveys Märchen ethical standards by depicting the actions and traits of the characters and the consequences of these traits and actions. "Frau Trude" (#43) exemplifies the simple manner yet powerful way in which tales convey ethical standards.

However, some Märchen ethical values should be criti-

21 Lore Segal, translation, The Juniper Tree and Other Tales From Grimm, (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1973), p. 310.

cized, because they are not desirable. For example, although not prevalent, the "Cinderella" ethical view deserves criticism. Cinderella is a fine portrayal of the existentially seduced person. She is pious and "good," essentially weak and frail. She is a server not a doer; in Sartrean terms, Cinderella is a Not. Such unsubstantial characters are usually women--suggesting that the obedient, submissive girl fares well. Such a value is defintely undesirable.

Rather, strength of character is needed. Grimms' Märchen show that it is the noble of character who fare well, the active, honest, and clever participants. Anyone less is headed for misfortune. Haughtiness, falseness, jealousy, greed and cruelty lead only to miserable ends. The noble characters have personality to their living. They are not submissive, unsubstantial people pondering "Do I dare?" to the point of inactivity. Rather, those who are clever, persistent, and fortunate enough to develop a strong and noble character are rewarded with lives enriched by participation in seeking, thinking and doing. Having a noble character leads to a fuller, richer and more authentic life.

Creating one's own character is a responsibility to one's existence. Grimms' Märchen offer valuable directives for such self-creating. A valuable life can be maintained

by the continuous and honest critique of one's values and the quality of living. Developing a set of personal ethics, stimulated by Grimms' Märchen ethics, is a means to overcome the mediocre--a way to see the worth of one's own values. Those who fare well in the tales do so because they have a noble character, a personal set of ethics. Yet the heroes are not obsequious. Rather, they are clever with a flavor of rascality, enough to make them interesting and adventurous. Living is an adventure; approach it with the style of the heroes. They are always seekers, doers, and thinkers--poets of their own living.

# CONCLUSION

Grimms' Märchen are a fantasia of delight to encounter, but they deserve recognition for containing material of substantial philosophical value. In fact, the potential contributions of other folkloric genres to philosophical interests deserves more attention. Not only Märchen, but proverbs, fables, riddles, legends, myths, etc., surely offer unexplored epistemological, metaphysical and existential perspectives. Because of the profound human qualities indigenous to Grimms' Märchen as well as other folkloric genres, new views on human being and being human are necessarily offered. These genres, whether created for etiological, ethical, religious, or entertainment purposes, remain an expression of human spirit. Views of man's place in the world are exhibited. The genres of Märchen, myths, proverbs, and fables, to name a few, present the thoughts, fears, hopes, loves, aspirations, in fact the innermost feelings, of humans. Other folkloric genres such as riddles, anecdotes, proverbs and fables, besides Märchen and myths are continually open for philosophical investigation.

Ethnophilosophy is working in this direction. Unfortunately, interested philosophers are rare. Ernst Cassirer's work on myth (The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms: Vol. II., Mythical Thought) stands as a monumental example of how an

expressive form such as myth can be philosophically investigated. Ethnophilosophy and its sub-study, ethnoepistemology, offer new views of the interdependencies between world view, value system and style of life. By contrasting our own world view, value system and life style with those of other cultures (presented in Märchen, myths, etc.) we must necessarily gain new insights into our own views.

Ethnoepistemology is an example. Cassirer's epistemological work established that mythical consciousness was indeed "thought," in fact, a very valid form of knowledge and interpretation of the world of experience. In this insightful view, "primitive" loses all the pejorative connotations. The scientific view and the mythic view, for Cassirer, are both valid forms of knowledge. I would like to add the Märchen world view. All are unique forms of knowledge, and each must be recognized as a specific form of interpretation of the world of being. As Cassirer says, "our perspectives widen if we consider that cognition...is only one of the many forms in which the mind can apprehend and interpret being."[22] Märchen have a special place in a theory of knowledge, because they contain elements of the scientific and mythic world views. Hence, Märchen bridge the evolutionary gap between mythic thought and the development of scientific

22 Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Vol. I, translation, Ralph Manheim, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 47.

thought.

Furthermore, Märchen are only one of the ways of knowing the objects of experience. A philosophical implication is that science loses its privileged status as the only "correct" way to view the world. To use Cassirer's argument, knowledge itself is a hermeneutic - a mode of interpretation. Science is a "form" of knowledge, but so is myth, and now also Märchen. Perspecticism assumes its role at this point. Myth, science, and Märchen must be evaluated according to criterion applicable to each form separately. Ecah type of consciousness has its own anatomy of form. Each constitutes some kind of interpretation of experience.

A direct consequence of the Märchen - mythic perspective is that the view of reality is altered. All of empirical existence necessarily interacts, so whatever is efficatious is real or "true." "Scientific objectivity" is too narrow a view. Our world view must be expanded to include the many forms in which the mind can apprehend and interpret being. The Märchen wonderment and expansion of being can be incorporated with a scientific view. Consciousness is broadened and reality of existences necessarily expands.

This expanded view of reality, exemplified by Märchen, offers new areas of metaphysical investigation. The existence and meaning of such supernatural beings as warlocks, witches, ghosts, and other revenants is open for exploration.

What kinds of beings are these? Are they merely psychic phenomenon or actual physical beings of a world beyond? Some, such as the famous ghostologist, Hans Holtzer, consider these questions very seriously. Märchen offer new forms of being open to metaphysical exploration.

Ethnophilosophy, which in my view, includes the philosophical analysis of Märchen and other folkloric genres, can also shed light into our own ethical standards. Märchen and other genres are very open to philosophers for comparative studies. Comparative analysis, say between Aristotle's Ethics and Grimms' Märchen ethics for example, would necessarily offer new ethical views which could be compared and contrasted with one's personal set of ethics. For instance, the challenges to character formation in the wondrous dramatic situations imagined in Märchen can offer perspectives to help the individual to develop an appealing character. Each person must learn their own responsibility in developing a self-created set of ethics to meet the needs of our time.

Furthermore, indigenous to the philosophical value of Märchen is a new humanism. Technological society continuously threatens us with the potential for an insipid, mediocre, stale form of existence. With the precariousness of life it is necessary to choose the life-style we deem most "valuable." Cassirer insists on man's active search for and creation of ideal meaning in human existence. Some of the most appealing

Märchen views of life and the world can be adapted to influence one's personal life-style. It is paramount to think, feel, act, seek and participate in living. Märchen philosophy offers new avenues for such enrichment of living. The philosophical exploration of new areas such as Märchen is to do justice to man and his freedom. The prize is a free personality of man and human individuality.

# SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Addy, Sidney Oldall. Folktales and Superstitions. Totow, New Jersey: Rowan and Littlefield, 1957.

Akoun, Andre, Morin, Francoise, and Mosseau, Jacques. "Claude Levi-Strauss, A Conversation with the Father of Structural Anthropology." Psychology Today, 5 May 1972, pp. 37-40, 74-82.

Bascom, William. "Four Functions of Folklore." In The Study of Folklore, by Alan Dundes. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965, pp. 279-298.

Cassirer, Ernst. The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. Vol. II. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955.

Clark, Kenneth and Mary. Introducing Folklore. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963.

Colby, B. N. "Analytic Procedures of Endochronic Study." Journal of American Folklore, 86 (1973), pp. 14-24.

Cox, Marian Roalfe. An Introduction to Folklore. London: David Nutt, 1904, pp. 130-233.

Douglas, Drake. Horror. New York: Macmillan, 1966.

Dundes, Alan. "Folk Ideas as Units of World View." In Toward New Perspectives in Folklore, edited by Americo Raredes and Richard Bauman. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972, pp. 93-103.

Eastman, Max. Enjoyment of Laughter. New York: Simon and Shuster, 1936, pp. 49-202.

Ellul, Jacques. The Technological Society. New York: Vintage Books, 1964.

Fry, William F., Jr. Sweet Madness. Palo Alto: Pacific Books, 1963.

Gifford, Denis. A Pictorial History of Horror Movies. New York: Hamlyn, 1973.

Grimm, Wilhelm and Jacob. Marchen der Bruder Grimm. Berlin: Droemer Knour, 1937.

_____. Grimms' Household Tales. Translated by Margaret Hunt. 2 Vols., London: George Bell and Sons, 1884, reprinted, Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1968.

_____. The Grimms' German Folk Tales. Translated by Francis P. Magoun and Alexander H. Krappe. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960.

_____. The Juniper Tree and Other Tales from Grimm. Translated by Lore Segal. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1973.

Hartland, Edwin Sidney. The Science of Fairy Tales. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1891, pp. 1-283.

_____. Folklore: What Is It And What Is The Good Of It. London: David Nutt, 1904.

Honko, Lauri. "Memorates and the Study of Folk Beliefs." Journal of the Folklore Institute., 86 (1964), pp. 5-19.

Husserl, Edmund. Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.

Jacobs, Melville. Patterns in Cultural Anthropology. Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1964, pp. 240-253.

Jansen, William Hugh. "The Esoteric-Exoteric Factor in Folklore." In The Study of Folklore, edited by Alan Dundes. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965, pp. 43-51.

Koestler, Arthur. The Act of Creation. New York: Macmillan, 1964, pp. 27-100.

Laing, Ronald David. The Divided Self. New York: Pantheon Books, 1969.

_____. The Politics of Experience. New York: Ballantine Books, 1967.

Levi-Strauss, Claude. The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology, I. New York: Harper and Row, 1969.

Levi-Strauss, Claude. Structural Anthropology. New York: Basic Books, 1963, pp. 206-231.

Maple, Eric. "The Witches of Dengie." In Folklore, 73 (Fall 1962), pp. 178-184.

Masters, Anthony. The Natural History of the Vampire. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1972.

Michaelis-Jena, Ruth. The Brothers Grimm. New York: Praeger, 1970.

Milner, G. B. "Homo Ridens: Toward a Semiotic Theory of Humor and Laughter." Semiotica, 5 (1972), pp. 1-30.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. The Gay Science. Translated and edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1974.

_____. The Portable Nietzsche. Translated and edited by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking Press, 1954.

O'Donnell, Elliott, Werewolves. New York: Longvue Press, 1965.

Oinas, Felix J. "Spirits, Devils, and Fugitive Soldiers." Journal of American Folklore, 76 (1963), pp. 225-230.

Peppard, Murray B. Paths Through the Forest. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.

Propp, Vladimir. "Les Transformations Des Contes Fantastiques." In Theorie de la Literature, edited by Tzvetan Todror. Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1965. pp. 234-262.

_____. Morphology of the Folktale. 2nd ed. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968.

Ranke, Kurt. Ed. Folktales of Germany. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.

Sartre, Jean Paul. Being and Nothingness. New York: Washington Square Press, 1968.

Schmidt, Paul F. Rebelling, Loving and Liberation. Albuquerque: Hummingbird Press, 1971.

Schneider, H. K. "Pokot Folktales, Humor, and Values." Journal of the Folklore Institute, 4 (1967) p, pp. 266-318.

Sexton, Anne. Transformations. New York: Houghten Mifflin Co., 1971.

Thompson, Stith. The Folktale. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1946, pp. 1-271, 367-461.

Ussher, Aarlan and von Metzredt, Carl. Enter These Enchanted Woods. Dublin: Dolman Press, 1957.

Verene, Donald P. Ed. Man and Culture: A Philosophical Anthology. New York: Dell Publishing, 1970.

Waugh, Butler. "Structural Analysis in Literature and Folklore." Western Folklore, 25 )1966), pp. 153-164.

Weiss, Harry B. "Something About Simple Simon." In The Study of Folklore, edited by Alan Dundes. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965, pp. 400-413.