THE STRUCTURE OF NARRATED TIME IN THE FOLKTALE

Wilhelm F.H. NICOLAİSEN

At the conference which highlighted the centenary celebrations of the Folklore Society,¹ I had the opportunity to comment on one of the most fascinating characteristics of the folk-narrative genre, especially the folktale—its handling of time. In that preliminary investigation, based on a close analysis of variants of ten international tale types,² I came to the conclusion that in the folktale "... within the outer frame of timelessness, we have an inner frame of sequentially structured time that relies on the day as its basic unit of reference and quite pointedly and necessarily invites comparison with the daily lives of the audience and the storyteller."³ The two time frames in question I called "narrative time" and "narrated time," adapting for my purposes two terms which the German literary critic Günther Müller introduced and employed centrally in his examination of the morphology of the narrative arts.⁴ Since my use of these two terms, despite my indebtedness to Müller, involves more than a simple loan-translation and may therefore be misleading for those who are familiar with his fundamental concepts of "Erzählzeit" and "erzählte Zeit," there seems to be a need for both clarification and amplification in this respect. For this reason, I wish, first of all, to restate my position, compare and contrast it with Müller's, and make an attempt at greater terminological and conceptual precision by suggesting that we have to be aware of, and account for, two additional aspects of temporality when examining the notion of time as a major organisational and structural principle of the folktale.
Secondly, I hope both to substantiate and to schematize some of the tentative findings of my earlier paper, especially with regard to the inner structure of narrated time (erzählte Zeit), using again the same ten tale-type variants on which my first study was based. This paper is consequently to be understood as both reaffirmation and extension of my previously stated position.

If initially, then, the derivative nature of the terms narrative time and narrated time leads us to Günther Müller's view of the relationship between Erzählzeit and erzählte Zeit, a relationship which he regards as a structuring device in its own right, created through the kind of essential tension which results from their polarisation, it must also be stressed at the outset that this admitted terminological derivation is secondary to the original conceptual stimulus which my desire to come to grips with the temporal quality of the chronological chain of events narrated in a folktale received from the writings of Max Lüthi. My adoption of the term narrative time was therefore a terminological response to Lüthi's assertion that the folktale disregards the passage of time because it is, essentially, "timeless." My contention is that this is only true, and then in a modified form, of the outer frame, the hull of a story, because opening phrases like 'Once upon a time' remove "the events to be narrated from the datable, calendar bound, documentable chronology of history," whereas closing phrases like "and they lived happily ever after" ease the story back into that temporarily abandoned historical time. Narrative time, or more precisely folk-narrative time, is consequently, once it has been appropriately and understandably signalled, "other" time, time outside the chronological framework which we usually impose on the past to make it accessible and recallable; it is not in this sense true timelessness, non-time or time standing still, but an attractively convenient suspension of historical time. Folk-narrative time is the time in which apple trees speak, magic is abroad, and the dead return to haunt, help or warn the living. Folk-narrative time is the time when the frustratingly impenetrable barrier between life and death ceases to divide; when the rigidly three-dimensional confinement to a personal, individual, non-interchangeable body finds yearned for release in spectacular transformations; when the numinous and the profane intersect
with astonishing ease.

Its close affinity to Lüthi's perception of a "triumph over time"8 deprives it therefore of any similarity with Müller's Erzählzeit which is said to have two major facets, i.e., on the one hand, the time immanent within a story in the re-presentation of narrated time and on the other, the physical time taken by a reader or narrator to read or tell a story re-creatively.9 The first of these facets, while obviously of significance in written art literature with its definitive versions predetermined by an author, is only applicable in a limited fashion to stories in the folk-cultural register in which each type exists only in its variants and nothing is ever truly definitive; the closest folk-narrative analogue to the written story might well be the individual variant in its genealogical descent from storyteller to storyteller but even then distorting interference through extraneous shaping forces as well as through personal predilection and whims is likely to be considerable. After all, the desire to innovate is often as strong as the hankering after the retention of what one has inherited, always assuming the by no means self-evident presence of narrative competence.

Naturally, the other facet of Müller's Erzählzeit is as important to the folktale as it is to art narratives—the time a storyteller takes to tell his story or, saying the same thing somewhat differently in order to do more justice to the general context of the occasion, the duration of the storytelling act. This might be termed performance time or, in a narrower sense, narration time. This, of course, applies to a chunk of measurable historical time and, in contrast to the written story and its elusive readers, takes it for granted that telling time and listening time are not only equal in length but occur simultaneously. Narration time, i.e. simultaneous telling time and listening time combined, also comprises creation, or re-creation, time for the orally transmitted tale, whereas this is normally separate from, earlier than, and also considerably longer than narration (=reading) time in the actualization of a written story. As far as the relationship between narration time and narrated time is concerned, there is only rarely complete congruity; it is most likely to occur in the rendering of dialogue embedded in the story since the storyteller probably takes about as much time
narrating it as the characters involved would have taken speaking it. Otherwise the time taken to narrate actions will usually be much shorter than the actions narrated. The sentence "so she left with the baby and reached home," while pronounced in only two or three seconds, narrates an action lasting at least several hours, perhaps even days. Or, the sentence "The father told them that they should draw lots to see who should leave" takes perhaps about the same amount of time to narrate as the father's injunction itself, but its obedient sequel "They did so" telescopes into a fraction of a second of narration time at least several minutes of narrated time. Similarly, the total amount of narration time required to tell a story—half an hour, let us say, or an hour, or even several hours—is bound to be almost always disproportionately shorter than the total time recounted in a story, i.e. the sum of narrated and non-narrated time. My own telling (= reading aloud) of "The Maiden in the Tower" took about 7-1/2 minutes whereas the total amount of recounted time in that story is an estimated 30-35 years. Even when the relationship of narration time to recounted time is less lopsided, as in "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff," for example, a narration time of less than 3 minutes still renders several hours of recounted time (not including the narrative coda of a summer grazing season).

What is here termed recounted time—and the term has been deliberately chosen to suggest also the sense of re-counted time—is the equivalent of Müller's general use of his term erzählte Zeit in contradistinction to Erzählzeit, or narration time. He contrasts, for instance, the eight years of total erzählte Zeit in Goethe's Wilhelm Meister with the twenty-four hours of Erzählzeit, i.e. the time it would take to narrate (= read) the novel, or the twelve hours of erzählte Zeit in Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway with the six hours of Erzählzeit, required to read the book. He does, however, not have a separate term to distinguish within this total recounted time the portions of time actually narrated, however briefly, from those which are not narrated at all but explicitly or implicitly inferred. This does not mean that he is not aware of the distinction, quite the contrary; for he sometimes refers to "expressly narrated time" (ausdrücklich erzählte Zeit) or to "the particular form of recounted time" (die besondere Form der erzählten Zeit) which he defines as
"those portions which are selected by the narrator from the physical flow of time of the narrated, as meaningful and form-giving and built into the story."\textsuperscript{12} It is this "expressly narrated time" which I regard as \textit{narrated time} proper and have therefore dubbed \textit{narrated time}. As it is the only portion of \textit{recounted time} which has substance and is quite clearly choice time, the principles underlying its selection, its structure, its extent, its function, its interpretative and creative force are well worth investigating, not least in its relationship to historical time outside the outer frame of narrative time.

Before we focus on these principles, let us reiterate, for clarity's sake, the different kinds of time which must be conceptually distinguished in the art of storytelling in the folk-cultural register: First of all, there is \textit{narration time} which is to be understood as the time it takes to narrate and listen to a story; as performance time this is a chunk of measurable historical time. Then there is \textit{narrative}, especially \textit{folk-narrative}, time which sets the general time frame of the story apart from historical time. Embedded within \textit{narrative time}, but bearing many of the hallmarks of historical time, there is \textit{recounted time}, the total time encompassed by a story, and this \textit{recounted time} consists of both narrated and non-narrated portions, is therefore the sum total of \textit{narrated} and \textit{non-narrated} time. It is to this \textit{narrated time}, and the chunks of \textit{non-narrated time} which separate its units, that we shall now turn.

An important preliminary question to be answered in this respect concerns the relationship between narrated time and recounted time, or how much recounted time is actually narrated. Taking again the first ten stories of Stith Thompson's \textit{One Hundred Favorite Folktales} as our sample, the following rough estimates emerge, in the general, stylistically typical, absence of precise references to a datable calendar of the events narrated:

I. \textit{The Three Billy-Goats Gruff} (AT 122): With the possible exception of a coda lasting a Norwegian summer grazing season ("There the billy-goats gruff got so fat they were scarce able to walk home again."), recounted time and narrated time are practically identical, i.e. the time it takes for three goats sequentially to walk to and over a bridge, have a conversation with a troll and walk up the hillside, with the addition of the time used by the third goat to fight
and kill the troll. Whether one imagines the second goat to have set out after the first had reached the hillside (and the third after the second had arrived there) or allows for a somewhat earlier departure of the second and third goats is not significant, since the total time of the incremental tripartite action narrated would still span the best part of the daylight hours of one day.

II. The Ingrates (AT 155): Recounted time is approximately 24 hours from one morning till the next. Since the events of the night which splits the two portions of narrated action are not narrated, narrated time extends to approximately 12-14 hours.

III. John the Bear (AT 301): In contrast to a total recounted time of about 16 years, only portions of 19 days are narrated with greatly varying density and detail.

IV. The Giant Who Had No Heart in His Body (AT 302): Out of 20-25 years of recounted time, about 5 days are narrated in some way, while several weeks are summarized in brief statements.

V. The Castle of No Return (AT 303): The total of recounted time is an estimated 21-22 years, but narrated time consists of portions of nine days and two nights.

VI. The Danced-Out Shoes (AT 306): Altogether only a few days, or perhaps a few weeks, are recounted; and of these mainly two days and the intervening night are narrated, with brief hints of other events.

VII. The Maiden in the Tower (AT 310): The total time recounted is an estimated 30-35 years, but only a few days, probably six, are narrated.

VIII. How the Devil Married Three Sisters (AT 311): Recounted time is somewhere between a year or two, narrated time is 10 days, or rather portions thereof.

IX. The White Cat (AT 313c): Out of about a year and two or three weeks, portions of nine days and two nights are narrated.

X. The Little Gardener with Golden Hair (AT 314): The total recounted time lies between one year and one month and one year and six months; narrated are portions of nineteen days.
Although the percentage figures in Table I seem to range widely from 100 per cent to a fraction of one per cent, the discrepancies are not as unpredictable or accidental as may appear at first sight. The higher percentage figures all apply to stories whose recounted time is comparatively short (part of a day, 24 hours, a few days). As soon as the recounted time covers more than one year, the percentages drop considerably (1.4-4.8 per cent), and when it stretches over several years or even decades the figures for the actual time narrated do not even add up to one per cent, despite the fact that the figures suggested in the Table for narrated time are rounded up, insofar as each portion of a separate day has been counted as one day.

It is these figures that offer the necessary explanation because their range is so much more limited, their mean being approximately 8 days. Significantly, the maximum 19 days are narrated out of 16 years of recounted time in one instance (III) and out of a year or a year and a half in another, whereas the maximum 30-35 years of recounted time yield only 6 days of narrated time. Since the number of days narrated fluctuates so very little, there is therefore no direct and measurable proportionate relationship between recounted time and narrated time. It is also worth noting that, whenever references to calendar time (undated, of course) are available, narrated time can be counted in days, either singly or in clusters, whereas the events of intervening nights are only narrated when these are of central,
or at least oblique, concern to the story. When the night is of importance, midnight becomes a notable dividing point.

What emerged from Table I, are a consistent preoccupation with the day as the unit employed in complex folk-narratives for the structuring of narrated time and the quite startling concentration on a comparatively small number of such days even in tales whose recounted time spans several decades. Not the clock or the calendar but the sun and its chronometrical counterpart, the sundial, thus become the means by which narrated time is measured or, more loosely, referred to in the folktale.

While drawing attention to the total extent of recounted and narrated time and to the proportional relationship between them, Table I does not specify what is perhaps even more important, i.e. the points in recounted time at which significant days are narrated, and the degree of generosity or miserliness bestowed by the storyteller on the narration of such days. Both the intentional selection and the relative amplitude of structurally meaningful days are, however, in the long run more likely than any other aspect of narrated time to throw light on the organisation of folk-narrative art. It is also reasonable to expect the tension between recounted time and narrated time to be of greater narrative significance to the creation or recreation of a felicitous tale, through the act of oral storytelling in the folk-cultural register, than the tension between narration time and narrated time which Müller considers to be of primary importance in the telling (reading) of sophisticated written narratives. Naturally, the peculiar distribution of those portions of narration time which represent narrated time over the whole of the narrative performance is nevertheless an important factor in the foregrounding actualization of any story, even in an oral-aural setting.

The brief survey of potential nodal points which follows addresses itself chiefly to the times in the protagonists' lives when events of particular days are narrated and only secondarily to the mode of narration which will be given some attention afterwards.

1. There is no definite clue in this story as to when the events narrated might have taken place. It is quite possible, however, that the threefold encounter with the troll may have occurred at the beginning of a grazing season, perhaps even
more precisely when the three goats were permitted to go to the grazing for the first time on their own, a rite of passage, so to speak, or at least an overcoming of winter and the forces of death and destruction.

II. The one day and following morning singled out in this story appear to have their place somewhere in midlife. The human protagonist has reached manhood and has also acquired enough wisdom to outwit the snake and to outfox the fox.

III. The events narrated are clearly related to different stages in the development of the boy: Conception, birth, four years (still unable to act as more than a child), seven years (outgrows childhood; ready for the outside world), 15/16 years (passage from adolescence into adulthood).

IV. If one assumes that the seven sons were born in seven consecutive years (not an unlikely assumption in a folktale), the eldest was perhaps about twenty and the youngest about thirteen, or possibly a few years older, "when they were grown up." At any rate, the youngest is still too young to leave his father's house to find a bride for himself, and even when he sets out to rescue his brothers he is not yet considered ready to leave the shelter of the parental home and to do his own wooing, although several months, if not a year, must have passed in the meantime. All the narrated events are concerned with the passage from adolescence to sexual maturity, from dependence to independence.

V. The story narrates significant events preceding or connected with the conception and subsequent birth of human, animal and gladiate twins, before moving to the twin boys' adventures when the oldest sets out to find, court and marry a wife. The risks involved in leaving the parental home and facing life by oneself are the main theme, accentuated by the parallel lives and rivalries of twins.

VI. The few days or weeks narrated are all part of the end of bachelorhood leading to marriage.

VII. The first narrated episode encompasses the pilgrimage to end sterility, pregnancy, birth, baptism and abduction of a child. The later events relate to the girl's puberty,
nubility, initial unsuccessful attempt of attaining independence through marriage, and later successful attainment of the married state.

VIII. All the narrated time is devoted to the devil's threefold wooing, marriage and deception.

IX. The first day is narrated in connection with a young man's gambling losses and his subsequent domination by the devil.
A year and a day separate this from the several days narrating his liberation from the devil and his wooing and marriage, or the passage from immaturity (gambling) to maturity (wedding feast).

X. After telescoping the education of the young boy into a year and a day ("he came to know more than his teachers knew"), the story narrates a complex sequence of days and clusters of days in which he breaks his devil-godfather's taboos, escapes with the help of a mule, becomes a king's gardener and marries his youngest daughter. In a final cluster of days, the protagonist proves himself victorious in battle, vindicates himself in the face of his brothers'-in-law treachery and becomes the king's chosen successor.

At least eight of the ten tales surveyed, therefore, place their segments of narrated time—mostly days—at maturation points in their protagonists' lives, with special emphasis on the gaining of personal independence, adulthood, separation from parental, often paternal, shelter and the promise or achievement of sexual fulfillment, all exemplifying crucial places in the development from conception and birth through childhood, puberty, adolescence and nubility to married manhood or womanhood. As a consequence, the distribution of portions of narrated time within the total framework of recounted time is an extremely lopsided one, especially since the end of the last segment of narrated time usually coincides with the termination of recounted time, unless one is willing to assign to the "ever after" some real temporal extent and definition.

When it comes to the assessment of how substantially the strategically selected days are narrated in the various tales, this involves probing the most central questions relating to "The Structure of Narrated Time in the Folktale," for "substance" here not only
means content but also internal structure which is, after all, what we have set out to investigate from the beginning. What actually happens during a "narrative day," quite apart from the stylistic devices employed by the storyteller to convey those events? Here is a detailed analysis of five of the ten stories:

I. On the only day narrated, three goats in order set out for their grazing, are, on their way, threatened by a troll at a bridge, converse with him and move on to the hillside to graze; an exception is the last, and incrementally largest, goat who also fights, gores and kills the troll. These are three simple, largely parallel actions repeated in chronological sequence and, because of their somewhat overlapping nature, taking up less time than if they had been performed strictly one after the other, i.e. each subsequent, somewhat larger goat, not leaving its starting point in the valley until the previous one had reached the hillside or, perhaps, completed its encounter with the troll.

II. During the portion of the day narrated, presumably taking up most of the daylight hours, a man walks into a forest, frees a snake, and converses with it; they walk as far as an oak-tree, converse with a thin horse, walk to a mulberry tree, converse with it, walk on to meet a fox, converse with it; on the advice of the fox the three return to the spot where the snake was found, place it under the stone again, thus restoring the original situation; the man promises a reward to the fox. The following morning the fox goes to the man's farm, picks up a bag with dogs, walks to a distant valley and is eaten by the dogs.

III. Day 1: Wife takes soup to her husband in the forest, is caught, is carried off by bear.
Day 2 (9 months later?): Birth of a son.
Day 3 (4 years later): Boy tries unsuccessfully to lift stone at entrance of cave where he and his mother are kept.
Day 4 (3 years later: Mother requests boy to lift stone; he does so successfully.
Day 5 (next day): Mother and son escape from cave in the morning, arrive at woodcutter's hut at midnight.
Day 6 (8 years later): In school, boy hits comrade and
and schoolmaster, is expelled.

Day 7 (shortly afterwards): Enters apprenticeship at a blacksmith's.

Day 8 (3 days later): Asks for pay, goes to another blacksmith.

Day 9 (3 weeks later): Leaves, goes to third blacksmith.

Day 10 (after indefinite time): Makes iron cane weighing five hundred pounds, leaves blacksmith, journeys, meets 3 companions one after the other, talks with them, requests them to join him.

Day 11 (after two days and two nights): Arrive at castle, enter, eat, draw lots, three go hunting, one guards, prepares meal, giant enters, knocks him down, the three others return at dinner time, question their companion.

Day 12 (after one night): Second companion stays in castle, prepares food, giant arrives, strikes him down, departs; the others return, question their companion.

Day 13 (after one night): Protagonist remains in castle, prepares dinner, giant arrives, is split in two, the others return; protagonist explores castle, finds a passage down, three companions are lowered on a rope, frightened and pulled up again; protagonist descends, meets fairy, frees three princesses by destroying their evil guardians, princesses are pulled up to the top after giving protagonist tokens, protagonist is dropped by companions, breaks a leg, is restored to health immediately, takes fairy's advice and makes his way to the top by a different path, comes upon the three departing companions, chases them away, and sends princesses home.

Day 14 (after traveling for an unspecified period): Becomes workman in the shop of a blacksmith.

Day 15 (soon after): Blacksmith ordered to king, who makes request for three bells; blacksmith discusses the matter with protagonist who promises to attend to it.
Day 16 (after unspecified time allowed to accomplish the task): Protagonist surreptitiously produces the three bells given to him by the princesses, blacksmith takes them to the king who rewards him and shows bells to his daughters, they tell him about protagonist; king twice sends guards to persuade protagonist to come to the palace, threatens him with death, protagonist goes to palace, is greeted by king, chooses youngest (most beautiful) daughter.

Day 17 (3 months later: Marriage celebrated.

IV. Day 1: Six sons of a king set out on journey of courtship.

Day 2 (after unspecified time visiting many palaces, many princesses): Woo six daughters of a king.

Day 3 (after unspecified time): Go on homeward journey with six princesses, are all turned to stone by giant.

Day 4 (after indefinite period of waiting since Day 1): Youngest son persuades father to let him go in search of his brothers, is given poor horse, rides for a little while and a bit further, then a long, long way, meets wolf, gives him horse to eat, after a while rides wolf to giant's house, converses with princess, creeps under the bed; giant comes home, princess and giant go to bed and converse about the place where his heart is hidden.

Day 5 (next day): Giant departs early for wood, protagonist and princess search in vain for his heart, disguise their activities, protagonist creeps under bed, giant returns home, converses with princess, they go to bed and converse about the place where his heart is hidden.

Day 6 (next day): The same as Day 5, except for conversation in bed.

Day 7: Giant departs early for wood, protagonist takes farewell from princess, rides wolf for a long distance, swims through lake to island, raven fetches keys from church tower, protagonist enters church, finds duck
in well, lifts duck, duck drops egg into well, protagonist calls salmon who fetches egg from bottom of well, wolf tells him to squeeze egg, giant screams, protagonist squeezes egg again, giant begs for life, protagonist sets conditions, giant disenchants six brothers and their princesses, protagonist squeezes the egg in two, giant bursts, protagonist rides wolf back to giant's house, goes into hillside after his bride; they all return home.

Day 8 (after several days or weeks): Wedding feast celebrated.

VI. Day 1: Big feast; king asks for someone to find out where his 12 daughters go every night, promises favorite princess in marriage; needy nobleman promises to do so, but soon begins to have doubts, leaves palace, walks outside town, meets old woman, has dialogue with her, she gives him an invisible cap, he thanks her and returns to the palace. Night: Nobleman is assigned bed, lies on it, is brought wine with sleeping drops by princess, pours it away.

Day 2: At Midnight: Princesses come to room, have discussion among themselves, open underground passage, go down to realm of accursed king, nobleman following invisibly, accidentally steps on dress of youngest princess, discussion among princesses, they all go down ladder, nobleman picks flowers, breaks a twig, ground rumbles, youngest princess reacts, they arrive at underground palace, are met by king and courtiers, music begins to play, they dance till shoes are torn, wine is ordered, nobleman drinks some, puts goblet in his pocket, farewells are made, they return home, undress, go to sleep. Morning: Nobleman is summoned, has discussion with king, reveals the answer to king's question; princesses are called, deny nobleman's explanation, nobleman produces flower and goblet, princesses confess, underground passage is ordered walled up.
Day 3 (a few days later): Marriage of nobleman to youngest daughter.

Even a brief glance shows that there are days which are brimful of action while others are either devoted to a single activity or presented as anything but action filled. There is a kind of commodious fullness about some of them while others display a tenacious single-mindedness. Among the latter would be those days on which a stone is lifted with or without success, in front of a cave (III. 3 and 4), on which a child is born (III.1) or a wedding celebrated (III.17; IV. 8; VI.3), whereas some of the former include III.13, III.16, IV.4, IV.7, and VI.1 and 2. In fact, some of them are so densely and intensely eventful that it is difficult to imagine that all the action can be accommodated in one day. III.13 and IV.7 are particularly good examples of this, as are the first day of II. and the nightly activities of VI.2. It seems therefore that folktale days are not necessarily of the same length but can be compressed or, especially, extended according to narrative needs. Naturally, it is always understood that, on most days, activities other than the ones narrated take place, too, just as life goes on during those days which are not alluded to at all. On other days, however, essential, sequential action is so varied, so pulsating, so concentratedly segmented and so richly detailed that it would be impossible to think of anything else, however trivial or momentous, that might conceivably have happened between sunrise and sunset. Some of those more lusciously energetic days suggest a temporal spaciousness that verges on the permanent.

Not that time stands still, but rather it becomes elastic (a stretch of time?) and seemingly endless in its continuity, exhibiting a certain affinity to the characteristics of narrative time. On other occasions, of course, the exact extent of a day—its demise at midnight and implied unrepeatability, for example—is of the greatest importance to folktale protagonists when their lives, or at least their well-being, depends on the completion of a task within a prescribed time limit. Similarly, the full measure of a calendar year is sometimes required to allow, even in a world of magic which incorporates miraculous simultaneous conception through the ingestion of two pieces of fish, for the natural gestation period of twin dogs (58-63 days), twin humans (250-285 days), twin horses (320-355 days),
and twin swords (presumably fewer than 365 days).

It appears therefore that narrated time, as an integral, segmented, substantial portion of recounted time, shares, in its internal structure, some of the principles of both historical and narrative time, despite their demonstrated basic incompatibility. In the shaping of its external structure, on the other hand, it relies essentially on the devices of strategic phasing and intermittent highlighting through the selective narrating of actions performed within the limits of a recognizable and discrete day. It would be misleading to claim that such structure is exclusively the hallmark of folktales, for Günther Müller, for example, noted a similar "sequence of distinct days" (eine Folge abgesetzter Tage) in C. F. Meyer's novel Jürg Jenatsch in which 14 significant days of 6570 are narrated. In this sense, then, both the proportional relationship of narrated to recounted time and the insistence on the day as the prime narratable unit place the folktale squarely in general narrative tradition. The structured organization of those narrated daily units and their peculiar non-datable, clockless elasticity are, on the other hand, very much the unmistakable prerogative and expectation of the folk-cultural register, and particularly of the tactics demanded by the episodic morphology of folktales.

NOTES

1. Nicolaisen, 1980
3. Nicolaisen 1980, p. 17
6. Lüthi, 1976, p. 44.
8. Lüthi, 1976, p. 44.
10. Ibid., p. 200.
11. Ibid., p. 206.
12. Ibid., p. 201. I have assumed that the phrase "vom Erzählen" in Müller's printed text is a misprint for "vom Erzählen" and have rendered it "by the narrator" rather than "by the narration".
BIBLIOGRAPHY


POSTSCRIPT

Only after the manuscript had been completed and fully typed did I become aware of Lubomir Doležel's article "A Scheme of Narrative Time," Slavic Poetics: Essays in Honor of K. Taranovsky (The Hague: 1973), pp. 92-98; reprinted in Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions, edited by Ladislav Matejka and Irwin R. Titunik (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1976), pp. 209-217. Although dealing with written art narratives and primarily interested in "the transformation of the input forms of physical time into the output forms of narrative time? (p. 210), Doležel comes to remarkably similar conclusions. As his terminology differs from the one employed in my paper, it seems advisable to present both together for clarification:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doležel</th>
<th>Nicolaisen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical time</td>
<td>Historical time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorial time</td>
<td>Creation time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader's time</td>
<td>Reading time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The time of the story-telling act</td>
<td>Narration time (Performance time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story time</td>
<td>Recounted time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action time</td>
<td>Narrated time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator's time (internal)</td>
<td>[No equivalent in the oral folktale]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are obviously not always identical equivalents but they correspond quite closely in most respects. A major difference lies in the fact that Doležel uses the term narrative time in contrast to physical time loosely for all "output" forms of time in narrative fiction, whereas I reserve it for the "time which sets the general time frame of the story apart from historical time."
INTERVENTIONS

Jean Verrier

- Je voudrais signaler deux références bibliographiques et demander à M. Nicolaisen s'il les connaît et les juge pertinentes à son propos ou si tout simplement il les ignore:
  - Les trois chapitres "ordre", "duree", "fréquence" que Gérard Genette consacre au temps dans "Discours du récit" (in Figures III Seuil, 1970)
  - L'article de Monique Schneider "Le temps du conte" dans l'ouvrage collectif La narrativité, éditions du CNRS, 1980. Il s'agit d'une approche psychanalytique de plusieurs contes ("Le petit chaperon rouge, les Oies-Cygnes, etc.").

Dan Ben-Amos

- There is a need to add the notion of thought-time which is shorter and in reverse relation to narrative time.

- In my own work I found that most of the formulas refer to the passage of time.

Lauri Honko

- You are mostly operating within one genre (or are you?). It may be necessary to add some points of comparison by investigating the time concepts of other genres. This could be done, for example, by using a motif which is found in a number of genres. "The dead returns home" (Heimgänger) is conceived within different time concepts such as ritual time (when is it right for the dead to appear and when is it not), memorate time (the time concept of encounters with the dead), legend time (what the behavior of the dead is when they are encountered) and finally, your folktale time (if it is a single concept). These cross-genre comparisons of time concepts provide for important checks on one particular time concept, and they may lead to problems like: how are the shifts from one time concept to another actually made? Are there conflicts of the different time conflicts, and how are they eliminated?

Alan Dundes

- I think this is a wonderful topic and we need to have greater concern for the philosophical nature and worldview of the native categories contained in narratives. My only criticism is with your sample, which seems to be artificially selected. First of all you confuse the issue by mixing animal tales (which are single-episodic) and Märchen (which are multi-episodic); each group probably represents different time scales. Secondly, you have selected tales from various countries where time conceptions are probably completely different.

- Can we say that comments in folktales about time are meta-statements?
Juha Pentikainen

. I would like to ask about the concept of time. Narration time or narrated time can, of course, be measured in years, days, hours, minutes, seconds, etc. But it may not be as important as another concept of time, namely that defined by the storytellers. We should make a difference between the etic and emic concepts of time. One of the problems, important from the point of view of the genre, you describe -- the folktale -- has been described by you. I, however, think that you have not made your point. My statement is that a folktale is a structure escape from this world of structures to the world of anti-structures. This means that the time frame of a folktale is often liminal, anti-structured; i.e. different from this physical time.

Felix Siddell

. How widespread is the use of time as a theme in folktales, and the juxtaposition of two kinds of time. For example, in two Italian tales where the hero is taken up to paradise on his wedding day, or when the magicians take a man away for apparently forty years, but no time has passed.

RESPONSE

Obviously, it is possible to think of other notions and categories of "time" which may be applicable to folk narratives. Perhaps "thought-time (Ben-Amos) is one of these although its implications concerning the structure of narrated time are not immediately clear. The same is true of concepts of time as they shape and structure other genres (Honko). Naturally, the more of these concepts we investigate, the more knowledgeable we will become about the role time plays in the folk-cultural register. I do not regard folktale time (or folk-narrative time) as a "single concept" but there seems to be little doubt that it has certain particular characteristics of its own which do not appear to be much affected by what folklorists have perceived as sub-genres (Dundes), apart perhaps from the relationship between narrated and recounted time. In this exploratory study, I have deliberately shied away from making preconceived assumptions in this respect, in order to allow the texts themselves to speak. Since I have problems with Pike's linguistic contrast of "etic" and "emic" in folk-narrative research, I find it difficult to imagine "emic" concepts of time (Pentikainen). Narrated time may, in theory, be measured in any unit of time but my point is that, in practice, this is not the case. I have not come across any "anti-structures" in folktales, unless I have failed to recognize them when I saw them, but I have certainly encountered many structures. The notion of "escape" does not come into the argument.

It is my intention to extend this approach to single-country (or culture-specific) collections of folk-narrative and to the repertoires of individual storytellers. There is only so much one can do in a limited paper.

Sont également intervenus dans la discussion :

Linda Dègh, Christiane Seydou.