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THE ANIMAL HELPER

IN GERMAN AND CHINESE FAIRY TALES

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Arts Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Shao-Fang Huang (黃紹芳)

August 1990

To my parents Kuei-Sheng Huang (黃桂生), Pi-Mei Lin (林碧梅)

and

my two brothers K'ai-Min (開民), K'ai-Chi (開基)

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ABSTRACT

The Kinder- und Hausmärchen of the Brothers Grimm is a German fairy-tale collection well-known throughout the world. In China, however, indigenous fairy tales have not received adequate study and are still largely unknown to Western society. This thesis presents the similarities and differences between the animal helper in German and Chinese fairy tales as well as information about the way German and Chinese people present the animal helper in their fairy tales.

Chapter I deals with the animal languages. In both Chinese and German fairy tales, the animal appears as the human being's helper, his friend as well as his adviser. It speaks and gives him advice in human language. In some fairy tales, the animal has its own language. The fairy-tale protagonist then achieves his goal by having the ability to comprehend animal language. Often no explanation for this magic power is given, but sometimes the protagonist gains the power in a specific way, such as consuming snake meat.

Chapter II discusses the transformation of the animal helper. It is interesting that most of the animal helpers in German fairy tales are human beings who are transformed by an evil power and are sometimes the hero's dead relatives or an angel in disguise; the Chinese animal helpers, on the other hand, are real animals which transform themselves into human form to help human beings for a certain purpose or are the magic creature, the dragon.

Chapter III tells how protagonists obtain the animals' help and what rewards people get from these animals. It is a general

assumption in Chinese and German fairy tales that good deeds bring rewards. The rewards people gain from animals are wealth or a royal marriage, which are the common people's wishes that are unfulfilled in daily life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
I. THE LANGUAGES OF ANIMALS	11
A. Animals That Speak Human Language	11
B. Animals That Speak in Their Own Languages	19
II. TRANSFORMATION	24
III. HELP AND REWARDS FROM ANIMAL HELPERS	38
CONCLUSION	49
WORKS CITED	52
APPENDIX	57
VITA	60

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SHORT TITLES

ABBREVIATION/ SHORT TITLE	AUTHOR/EDITOR AND TITLE
CN	Wolfram Eberhard, Die chinesische Novelle des 17.-19. Jahrhunderts
FTC	Wolfram Eberhard, Folktales of China
KHM	Brüder Grimm, Kinder- und Hausmärchen
"Once There Were . . ."	Jack Zipes, "Once There Were Two Brothers Named Grimm"
SOC	Wolfram Eberhard, Volksmärchen aus Südost-China

INTRODUCTION

"Es war einmal. . . ," "once upon a time. . . ," or "很久很久以前"; all of the children in Germany, English-speaking countries, and China know these magical words. No matter of what nationality they are or what languages they speak, smiles appear on their faces when they hear this famous phrase. It has also brought adults the pleasure of imagining, dreaming, and hoping. It is the familiar start of many fairy tales, and from this phrase on, the fairy tale carries its reader into an enchanted kingdom. There, one finds dreams come true which are impossible to fulfill in real life: the rich, handsome, and gentle prince on the white horse; the beautiful princess with long, silken blonde hair; a house built of all kinds of chocolate, candy, and cakes; a small table which will be laid with all sorts of delicious food, if one speaks the right magic words. Here one also meets some imaginary creatures which can be lovely, hateful, or horrible: a helpful animal, a wicked witch, a man-eating giant, or a devil.

People in different places as well as different periods express their life style and value judgments in their literary works, including fairy tales. One can find more than imagination in these tales. According to the Wörterbuch der deutschen Gegenwartssprache, the definition of "Märchen" is ". . . auf Volksüberlieferungen beruhende, oft auch als literarisches Kunstwerk gestaltete, kurze Erzählung, in der von wunderbaren und phantastischen Begebenheiten berichtet wird." Since the fairy tale is told by common people and

handed down from generation to generation, it reflects their philosophy of life, their opinions about nature, and their religious beliefs, as well as their fantasies. Folklorist Wolfram Eberhard said: "Märchen stehen in einer Kultur nicht für sich allein. Sie sind nur ein Ausdruck der Kultur einer Volksgemeinschaft, sie sind mit all der sonstigen Kultur dieser Gemeinschaft eng verbunden" (SOC 10). One must always ask: Why did these storytellers imagine this particular story? How does the story reflect the philosophy of life of the folk?

A brief explanation of terminology is necessary. The noted fairy-tale scholar Jack Zipes states that the term "Volksmärchen"--best translated by "folk tale" in English--"clearly signifies that the people were the carriers of the tales," but he traces the term "fairy tale" to the French "conte de fées" (Breaking the Magic Spell 23). Since "fairy tale" is commonly used interchangeably with "folk tale" in English, however, the two terms will be employed synonymously in this thesis.

Besides human beings, animals also play an important role in fairy tales. The worlds of human being and animal are not far apart here. Animals interact with human beings in various ways. Sometimes an animal is a helpful being; sometimes it is a magical being or an evil creature. It can speak and behave like a person. It also has emotions and feelings as people do. These ideas about animals are part of the folk imagination and philosophy, too.

One can date the origin of animal tales back to primitive times. Animals were then very important to the people. In the Paleolithic

Age, people survived by hunting. They encountered wild animals in nature. In the Neolithic Age, they started to tend and herd animals and made good use of these farm animals for food and clothing. At that time, the relationship between animals and human beings was inseparable (Juan 12-13). In The Folklore of Fairy Tale, Percival Yearsley suggests that there were two periods of primitive man's cosmic belief--Naturism and Animism (4). In the Naturism period, ". . . man had reached to no explanation of nature suggestive of anything personal in the way of spirits. . . . The world was not yet regarded as full of spirits, but as merely alive" (Yearsley 4). Gradually, man advanced to the Animism period in which

> . . . he conceived that all nature objects, animate or inanimate, possessed a nature like his own. Everything was as much alive as himself. This stage of Animism has exercised a very widespread influence upon the world, and has led to remarkable developments in superstition and worship, . . . (Yearsley 4)

The concept of Animism is often expressed in the fairy tales in which animals are anthropomorphized. For example, in the famous fairy tale "Der gestiefelte Kater" (KHM, Anh. #5), the cat can speak and give advice as the hero's good friend. The role it plays in the story is as important as that of its human companion. According to Yearsley, ". . . they [the animal helpers] enter largely into men's lives not merely as a means of subsistence, but as companions and friends" (51).

As a Chinese majoring in German, I have the background necessary to study a fairy-tale topic in a major culture of both Oriental and Western literature. I have chosen "The Animal Helper in German and

Chinese Fairy Tales" as the subject of my thesis. Since there is a reasonable corpus of such tales in both Chinese and German, this is a good comparative topic. The definition of the animal helper here will differ slightly from the folklorists' traditional definition, which encompasses all kinds of animals, including birds, fish, and insects, which help people directly or indirectly. Since there are some Chinese fairy tales in which the animal helps in human form and since these are comparable to some German fairy tales in which the animal helper is an enchanted person, I have for the purpose of the thesis expanded the definition to embrace both persons who help in animal form and animals who help in human form. I will explain what kinds of animals often appear as helpers, what similarities and differences exist among animal helpers in Chinese and German fairy tales, and what caused these similarities and differences. Although the dragon is a mythical creature in China, it will be treated as an animal in this thesis, for the dragon appears so often as a helpful creature in Chinese fairy tales. The dragon in German fairy tales, on the other hand, is always evil and never acts as a helper so it will not be considered here. My main sources are three fairy-tale collections: for Germany, the Kinder- und Hausmärchen of the Brothers Grimm; and for China, Wolfram Eberhard's Folktales of China and his Volksmärchen aus Südost-China.

The Grimms' Kinder- und Hausmärchen is one of the best-known and most loved books in the world; in many countries, it is second only to the Bible in popularity (Zipes, "Once There Were . . ." xxix). It has been translated into numerous languages and read by children and

adults around the world. The Disney company has made film adaptations of these tales, and the films have brought fairy-tale characters to life and etched them into the heart of viewers everywhere.

The brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm (1785-1863, 1786-1859) were two of the most famous authors and scholars during the Romantic period in Germany. German culture was one of the Romanticists' main concerns. It led those scholars and authors to "an interest in folksongs; to the study of Germanic legends and folklore; [and] to a rediscovery of the national past, including particularly the glorious national literature of the Middle Ages; . . ." (Ellis 5). Consequently, the Brothers Grimm devoted themselves to "research on ancient German literature and customs" ("Once There Were . . ." xxiii). In 1806, Clemens Brentano, who was publishing the folksong collection Des Knaben Wunderhorn (1805-08) with Achim von Arnim, suggested that the Grimms collect German fairy tales, for he knew that they had "vast knowledge of ancient German literature and folklore" ("Once There Were . . ." xxiii). Thus the Brothers Grimm began a task that resulted six years later (1812) in their Kinder- und Hausmärchen, which soon became the standard German fairy-tale collection.

It is often thought that the Brothers Grimm wandered around Germany and wrote down tales told to them by German peasants in the narrators' exact words. In the introduction to his English translation of the Kinder- und Hausmärchen, The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm, Jack Zipes explains that this belief contains some misconceptions:

> Their [the Grimms'] primary method was to invite storytellers to their home and then have them tell the tales aloud, which the Grimms either noted down on first hearing or after a couple of hearings. Most of the storytellers during this period were educated young women from the middle class or aristocracy. . . . Most of the brothers' informants were familiar with both oral tradition and literary tradition and would combine motifs from both sources. In addition to the tales of these storytellers and others who came later, the Grimms took tales directly from books and journals and edited them according to their taste. ("Once There Were . . ." xxiv)

The Grimms' excellent background in history and philology helped them to record the stories in a beautiful and literary style. They often made changes in the fairy tales for moral or linguistic reasons ("Once There Were . . ." xxv, xxviii), so the tales are not exact renditions of the stories their contributors told them.

It was very difficult to find a standard version of Chinese fairy tales which would provide the Chinese sources needed for the thesis and serve as a suitable parallel to the Kinder- und Hausmärchen. I could not recall any Chinese fairy-tale collections. I tried to categorize the tales I had heard and read in my childhood, such as Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio (Liao-chai-chih-i), and came to the conclusion that most of these are either legends or novellas (Eberhard, CN 116). In order to explain why it is so difficult to find a Chinese fairy-tale collection and whether fairy tales even exist in China, I must refer briefly to the history of Chinese fairy tales and the background of Chinese literature.

The Chinese term for fairy tale is "童話." This term did not exist in China until it was imported from Japan at the end of the nineteenth century (Su 349; Ch'uan-yü Chu 355), but there have been

fairy tales in China for thousands of years. One can easily find fairy-tale motifs in the classic Chinese novellas, novels, and poems, and especially in the plays. These stories were also passed down from generation to generation and spread all over China.

There are no standard collections of the tales because of several traditional Chinese views. In ancient China, adults were the center of society. Children played no important role in a Chinese family. They were expected to obey the authority of their parents and behave like adults. In school, they were forced to read the so-called Four Books and Five Classics, which contain the theory of managing affairs and governing the nation (經世治國), in order to prepare themselves to pass the imperial examination, which consisted of qualification tests for the civil service.

The Chinese have been under the influence of Confucianism for hundreds of years. Lun Yü (Confucius' Analects), which contains the conversations and discussions between Confucius and his students, recorded: "The subjects on which the master did not talk, were--extraordinary things, feats of strength, disorder, and spiritual beings" (Ssu Shu 65). Han Yü (768-824), a great scholar in the Tang Dynasty (618-906), stated: "The language of composition should be in accord with reality" (Nienhauser 99). Affected by these theories, Chinese writers and intellectuals in all periods devoted themselves to managing affairs and governing the nation. They abandoned folk tales and other forms of folklore, although these did exist and were quite popular among the people.

This situation did not improve until the beginning of the

twentieth century. After World War I, a new literary movement was proposed: ". . . called variously the New Culture Movement, the New Thought Movement and the New Tide, this literary renaissance aimed at freeing literature from its classical bonds and emancipating the modern Chinese man and woman from the restraints of the past" (Dorson v). From this time on, reformers started to find beautiful folk tales in the rich Chinese classical literature and among the common people.

Unfortunately, China has suffered several wars since the New Culture Movement began. The political instability cannot give Chinese intellectuals a suitable environment in which to research the folk tales. Now China has been separated into democratic Taiwan and mainland China for almost forty years. Although some books containing Chinese folk tales have been published recently in mainland China, many of them reflect communist propaganda (Eberhard, FTC xxxv-vi). Taiwanese collections do not contain enough fairy tales to be representative. None of these efforts can be a standard or complete collection due to the political situation.

Wolfram Eberhard (1909-) is a Western scholar who has concerned himself with Oriental studies and has investigated Chinese literature, including Chinese fairy tales (Contemporary Authors 160f.):

> Trained in Germany as a Sinologist and sociologist, he engaged in extensive field work in southeastern China in the 1930's and taught on the faculties of Peiping and Peking universities. Familiar with the European system of the tale-type catalogue, through which a national stock of folktales is identified, he constructed an index for the relatively meager hoard of three thousand tales available for China, where systematic field collecting had begun only

since the literary renaissance. (Dorson xxviii)

In 1937, Eberhard brought out Folktales of China, which

> . . . is a landmark in the history of Chinese folktale studies. For the first time it presented to Westerners the oral folktale culled from the inaccessible little books and periodicals where Eberhard's Chinese colleagues had recorded their field work and from the unpublished texts of his friend Ts'ao Sung-yeh. (Dorson, xxix)

In 1941, Eberhard published Volksmärchen aus Südost-China, in which the tales come from the oral narration of schoolchildren and other people in China (SOC 5). Since these two Eberhard collections record tales told by the common people, they are appropriate sources of Chinese fairy tales for my purposes.

This thesis is organized into three main chapters. The first treats animal language and the ways in which animal helpers communicate with humans. In some fairy tales, the animal can speak the human being's language and give the hero good advice, while in others, the animal possesses its own language, and the hero receives its help by understanding that language. The second chapter deals with the transformation of the animal helper. In some German fairy tales, the animal helpers are enchanted persons. Sometimes the enchanted people are the hero's friends or relatives. They help the hero, and the hero fulfills their requests, thus enabling them to return to their original form. Some Chinese animal helpers, however, are animals in human form. The third chapter treats the reward the hero gets from the animal helper. In this part, I explain how fairy-tale heroes receive help from animals and what kind of rewards the heroes get. These chapters will cover different kinds of animal

helpers in the German and Chinese fairy tales and present the animal helpers in various aspects.

CHAPTER I

THE LANGUAGES OF ANIMALS

As mentioned in the introduction, the relationship between man and animal in fairy tales is very close. Unlike the situation today in which people think they are superior to all creatures in the world, animals in fairy tales play a role as important as that of human beings. Röhrich explains the reason for this:

> Nach der ursprünglichen volklichen Auffassung . . . steht der Mensch in der Natur ohne Grenzen den anderen Geschöpfen gegenüber; das Tier ist noch nicht das Untermenschliche, sondern es steht im selben Kosmos wie der Mensch: Die Menschen haben die Ordnung des Lebens noch nicht als eine spezifisch menschlichsittliche erkannt und sie deshalb der natürlichen Ordnung tierischen Lebens gleichgestellt. Der einfache Mensch denkt nur in menschlichen Begriffen und unterstellt den Tieren menschliche Eigenschaften. (85)

Consequently, animals in fairy tales have the ability to communicate with human beings, and to this end they use language.

A. ANIMALS THAT SPEAK HUMAN LANGUAGE

There are a few fairy tales which portray animals speaking in human language. Indeed, some tales contain the formula "Als noch die Tiere sprachen" (Bolte and Polívka 3: 283). These animals help people by giving them good advice. Here the animal plays the role of the wise "person."

One of the best-known such animals in the fairy tales is the cat

in "Der gestiefelte Kater."[1] After the inheritance is divided, the miller's youngest son gets only a cat, which he thinks useless. But to his surprise, the cat starts to speak and claims that it can help its master if he will follow its direction. At the cat's request, the youngest son gives it a pair of boots. The cat puts the boots on and walks erect like a human being. It then goes to the king's palace, sends the king some partridges, and claims they are presents from its lord, who is a count. Since, as the cat expects, the king believes the miller's son is a count, he marries the princess to him.

In this story, the cat plays the typical fairy-tale role of the wise person. It is omniscient, and everything is under its control. It tells its master what to do and how to act. For example, it advises him to swim in a lake by which the king and princess drive. By following his cat's guidance, the miller's son gets the opportunity to meet the beautiful princess.

The cat not only possesses the power of human speech, but also is skilled in using language as human beings do. It knows how to flatter the king, to make the common people in the meadow, wheat field, and forest obey it, and to infuriate the sorcerer into transforming himself into a mouse, which the cat then eats. Here the cat has characteristics of both human being (speaking) and cat (eating a mouse).

"Of all helpful animals, none has been so popular with

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[1] This tale was included in the first KHM edition in 1812, but was deleted later because of its similarity to Perrault's version (Obenauer 191).

taletellers as the horse" (Thompson 59). The horse has long been thought to be a "prophesying" animal in Western society: "Das Pferd steht in dem Ruf, in die Zukunft schauen zu können und geister- und spuksichtig zu sein" (Bächtold-Stäubli 6: 1619). The speaking-horse motif is popular in folklore and can be traced back to Greek mythology. Achilles, the greatest hero in Homer's Iliad, has two immortal horses, Xanthos and Balios, which serve as his chariot horses during the Trojan War. These two horses can speak, and they prophesy Achilles' death (Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend 1185).

In the Grimms' fairy tales, there are two stories which contain speaking horses as advisers and helpers. In "Die Gänsemagd" (KHM #89), the princess gets the speaking horse Falada as a present from the queen upon leaving for a distant kingdom to marry the prince there. On their way to the kingdom, the evil chambermaid forces the princess to change clothes with her. When they arrive at the palace, the chambermaid pretends she is the true bride and marries the prince. The old king gives the princess the task of tending the geese every day, and the chambermaid has the young king order Falada killed, for she is afraid the horse might speak the truth. At the princess' request, the knacker cuts off Falada's head and nails it on the wall of the gateway through which she must pass daily. Thus the princess can talk to the horse's head every day. These conversations, reported by the goose boy, rouse the king's curiosity and lead him to discover the true bride.

In "Ferenand getrü un Ferenand ungetrü" (KHM #126), the

speaking-horse motif appears again. Faithful Ferenand receives the horse as a present from his godfather and saves the princess from the giants by following its instructions. Unlike Falada in "Die Gänsemagd," the white horse in this story has the role of "prophesying" animal. It can not only speak, but also knows more than its master. It knows how to pacify the giants and birds. Just as in "Der gestiefelte Kater," here, too, everything happens as the animal adviser predicts.

The animal-as-adviser motif is very common in the Grimms' fairy tales. For example, the fox in "Der goldene Vogel" (KHM #57) helps the kind-hearted prince to fetch the golden bird, golden horse, and the beautiful princess from the golden castle. Although the prince sometimes does not follow its instructions and therefore gets into trouble, the fox forgives him and keeps on helping him. Another tale which uses this motif is "Die zwölf Jäger" (KHM #67). Here it is a lion which advises the king how to find out that the twelve huntsmen are women.

In China, too, there are fairy tales in which animals speak human languages. "The Bank of the Celestial Stream" (FTC #23) is one such popular tale which exists in several variations. There is a poor young man who has nothing but one cow. He is always called the cowherd. One day the cow speaks to him and tells him to go to the stream, for the seven heavenly fairies are going to bathe there. Instructed by his cow, the cowherd steals one of the fairies' dresses. The fairy who loses her dress is a weaver. Since she

cannot go back to heaven, she stays on earth and becomes the cowherd's wife. Shortly afterwards, the cow feels ill and tells the cowherd to cut off its skin, fill the skin with golden sand, take the ring from its nose, and make the ring into a packet after its death. The cow also prophesies that these things will help him when he is in trouble. After several years, the cowherd carelessly tells his wife the secret of where he put her dress. The weaver seizes her dress and flies back to heaven. The cowherd takes their two children with him and is able to follow the weaver to heaven because of the cowhide he has on his back. In heaven, the weaver tries to stop her husband by taking her hairpin and drawing a huge river between herself and the cowherd. The cowherd opens his cowhide and throws the golden sand out to fill the river, but the weaver then draws a celestial river. The god of the heaven is angry with them and condemns them to stand on opposite banks of the celestial river forever. They are allowed to meet each other once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar.

This beautiful and romantic fairy tale is the story behind the Chinese Valentine's Day (Lovers' Day), the day on which the cowherd and the weaver are reunited each year. According to Eberhard, "[t]he story appears in an early form in the second century B.C. as an astral tale; . . ." (FTC 209). Several variations of this tale do not contain the speaking cow, but the version recounted here is the most popular one in China. Actually, this story contains the ideas of ancient Chinese people concerning their observation of constellations and the Milky Way. The cowherd is Altair, the brightest star in the

constellation Aquila, and the weaver or Spinning Maid is Vega, the brightest star in Lyra. The two constellations are on opposite sides of the Milky Way, which is the celestial river drawn by the weaver's hairpin, and the stars in it are the golden sand from the cowherd's cowhide. The two small stars near Altair are said to be the children of the cowherd and the weaver. On the seventh day of the seventh month, Altair and Vega reach their closest annual proximity. It usually rains on that day. People in China say these raindrops are the tears of the weaver, who is crying about her unfortunate separation from the cowherd.[2]

The tale of "The Bank of the Celestial Stream" reflects several traditional Chinese points of view. It is well-known that China has been an agricultural society for thousands of years. Farming is the most important aspect of life. The fact that the hero and heroine of the fairy tale are called cowherd and weaver conveys the traditional roles that men and women played in ancient China--the man tilled the soil, and the woman wove cloth (Hung 80-94). Clearly, the relationship between man and cow[3] is very close, for cattle are important in farming. People use them to plow the land, and in China, one can

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[2] For more information on the background of this tale, see my source, Williams 373-74.

[3] According to the dictionary Tzu-hai (辭海), the word "niu" (牛) means "Bos taurus," which is the type of cattle used by farmers to till the land or haul a cart in China. Since Parsons uses the word "cow" in his translation of Eberhard, I use that word in reference to this story in my thesis. However, the animals customarily used for agricultural work in China are the ox and the water buffalo.

tell how rich a person is by counting his cattle. In ancient times people respected cattle because they thought that cattle worked hard for people and helped greatly in farming. For this reason, Chinese people did not like to eat beef, for they thought it a sin to eat the meat of an animal which works hard and is so helpful to them. Even now that farming has been mechanized, some farming families in China still observe the tradition and refuse to eat beef. There are some areas in China that have temples in which people worship cattle. These cultural circumstances account for the choice of a cow as the adviser of the hero in this tale.

Another Chinese tale, "The Wild Goose Lake" (FTC #46), also describes how animals advise a human being. The heroine, Sea Girl, finds Wild Goose Lake, which she thinks could save her village, P'o-lo, from drought. She cannot make an outlet from the lake because of the mountains, rocks, and forest around it, but she does find a stone gate. Then some birds come to advise her. First, a wild goose tells her she needs a golden key to open the gate. Three parrots instruct her to find the third daughter of the dragon king, who will help her to fetch the golden key. Then a peacock informs Sea Girl that she can find the third daughter of the dragon king in the southern mountain and that she must sing folksongs to lure her. As predicted, the dragon king's third daughter loves the folksongs so much that she comes out of the lake and helps Sea Girl to open Wild Goose Lake, thus solving the drought problem of the village P'o-lo.

The fairy tales that contain animals which speak human language are quite different in Germany and China. Nevertheless, there are

still some commonalities among them:

1). The animals which speak and give advice reflect the storytellers' awareness of class; i.e., different classes of people have different kinds of animals as advisers or companions. For example, the miller's son has a cat, the king a lion, the young handsome man a white horse, and the poor young farmer an old cow. One never finds a lion giving advice to a poor farmer or an old cow helping a king. One can clearly see how the fairy tales reflect real life. People in different classes have different life styles and encounter different animals in their everyday life. A farmer keeps an old cow for farming; a lion is the pet of a king.

2). In the animal-as-adviser stories, the animal always knows far more than the human being. It knows all of the secrets which are not known by human beings. For example, the lion in "Die zwölf Jäger" knows that the twelve huntsmen are women, a secret which the king does not know. The fox in "Der goldene Vogel" knows where to find the golden bird, golden horse, and the beautiful princess from the golden castle. The cow in "The Bank of the Celestial Stream" knows the heavenly fairies are going to bathe in the stream, and so on.

The tales do not explain how the animal comes to know these secrets, but it is clear that the human being must follow the animal's advice without hesitating; otherwise, serious trouble will result. For example, in "Der goldene Vogel" the fox tells the prince to stay overnight in the shabbier inn. He obeys, and everything goes well. When he ignores the fox's instructions, however, he gets into trouble

at once: he chooses the golden cage instead of the wooden one for the golden bird and the golden saddle instead of the wooden one for the golden horse. Consequently, he is arrested twice by the animals' guards. In a variation of "The Bank of the Celestial Stream" which is called "Cowherd and Weaver" (Chieh-fan Chu 19), the cow warns the cowherd not to give the dress back to his wife. The cowherd disobeys and then loses his wife.

From these fairy tales containing animals that speak in human language, one can see how important the animal is for the human being. In her Tales From Eternity, Rosemary Haughton says the speaking animals always save people from danger:

> . . . the fairy-tale animals are not proper animals at all, but rather express a humanness which we ignore at our peril, . . . they are necessary for us at a time when failure to listen to this aspect of our humanness has led us to despise and misuse the world of nature to which we also belong. For the openness to experience, the humility and the sense of respect which is necessary in order to appreciate the value of the wise animal of the tales is exactly what we need if we are to live at peace with and within nature, instead of ignoring it and arousing its powers of revenge. (52)

In view of the countless instances of animal extinction in recent decades, the human being who considers himself "the wisest of all creatures" would do well to take this message of the fairy tales containing these speaking animals to heart.

B. ANIMALS THAT SPEAK IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGES

Röhrich says: "Das Problem [animal language] hat zwei Seiten, die man gut auseinanderhalten muß: Entweder versteht der Held die

Tiersprache, oder es spricht ein Tier in menschlicher Sprache" (86). Thus, despite the tales in which the animal speaks man's language, there is a general belief that animals have their own language and cannot be understood by human beings. "Der Glaube an eine eigene Tiersprache, die der Mensch nicht ohne weiteres versteht, ist über die ganze Erde verbreitet" (Bächtold-Stäubli 8: 941).

In some fairy tales, the hero becomes wealthy or escapes danger by understanding animal language. In most cases, fairy-tale characters attain their understanding of animal language through some magic power. For example, the hero sometimes receives the ability to understand animal language by eating a snake. One can find this motif in both German and Chinese fairy tales, e.g., in "Die weiße Schlange" (KHM #17) and "Kung Yeh-ch'ang Understands the Language of Birds" (FTC #38).

In "Die weiße Schlange," the trusted servant of the king starts to make his fortune after he eats the king's secret dish--a white snake, for eating it enables him to comprehend the language of animals. This knowledge leads him to discover the whereabouts of the queen's lost ring and to recognize the problems of three trapped fish, the ant king, and the starving ravens. Thus he is able to help these creatures, who then reward him for his kindness.

In the ancient Western world, when people still practiced the cult of totemism, they believed that consuming a snake would give them the power of understanding animal language: "Da die Schlange alle Sprachen der Welt kennt, verleiht der Genuß einer Schlange, ihres Blutes . . . oder eines ihrer Organe (Leber, Herz) Kenntnis der

Tiersprache" (Bächtold-Stäubli 8: 941). A related motif can also be found in Greek mythology. Melampus, the first person with prophetic powers, was said to have the ability of understanding animal language. He raised two young snakes as pets after their parents had been killed by Melampus' servant. One day while he slept under a tree, the snakes licked his ears. When he awoke, he discovered he could understand the language of birds (Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend 701).

In "Kung Yeh-ch'ang Understands the Language of Birds," the hero, Kung Yeh-ch'ang, makes his fortune in a way similar to that found in "Die weiße Schlange." He eats a snake's liver, which is a gift he receives as a reward from a serpent princess whom he saves from danger. After consuming it, he can understand the language of birds. This special knowledge enables him to perform an unusual service for the king: feeding a strange bird. By succeeding in this task, Kung Yeh-ch'ang protects his country from war, for the foreign land which sends the strange bird threatens to invade if Kung Yeh-ch'ang's country fails to feed the bird. The emperor is pleased with Kung's deed and makes him an "earl with ten thousand families" (FTC 86).

The search for the sources of this story yields some interesting information. First, the ancient Chinese were also totemistic. The snake was one of their totems, which is why it later became a symbolic creature of the Chinese animal zodiac. Although there are many stories about snakes, it is difficult to find any other instances in Chinese folklore in which eating a snake results in the ability to

understand animal language.

Second, unlike the usual situation in fairy tales, the hero of this story has the name of a real person: Kung Yeh-ch'ang was one of Confucius' disciples (FTC 218). He is said to have had the power of understanding bird language, but tradition does not explain the source of his knowledge.

Third, although there are no folk beliefs that eating snake will give one the power of understanding animal languages, people do eat snakes in China. "Snakes are offered for sale as food in many cities and the poisonous kinds are sold to the druggists for the manufacture of medicines" (Williams 363). There is even a street called "Snake Market" in Taipei, Taiwan, which is famous for its snake soup. Chinese people consider the snake meat, especially the gall bladder, to be highly nutritious and medicinal. It seems very likely that many of these factors related to snakes have been mixed together and have entered the fairy tale about Kung Yeh-ch'ang.

These two tales about snakes reveal that, in both the Eastern and Western worlds, people have worshipped certain animals and believed that, if they did the right things, those animals would give them special powers, such as the ability to comprehend animal language. By understanding the animals, people can obtain more help from them:

> Versteht ein Mensch diese Tiersprachen, dann können ihm die Tiere nicht nur in augenblicklichen Notlagen und Verlegenheiten helfen, weil die Tiere ja vieles instinktiv wissen, was wir gar nicht bemerken; sondern: der die Tiere verstehende Mensch wird milde, wird barmherzig auch mit ihnen verfahren, und wenn er dies tut, werden die Tiere ihm zum Ausgleich dafür in seinen Nöten und Aufgaben beistehen. (Obenauer 152)

Knowing the language and situation of animals enables the human being to be closer to animals and to know them better. This knowledge also offers the fairy-tale hero an opportunity to gain help from the animals.

CHAPTER II

TRANSFORMATION

In the introduction, I mentioned the primitive belief in Animism. Yearsley explains:

> To the primitive mind there is nothing illogical in these beliefs [Animism and related views]. If every man, animal, and plant, every rock and stone, every star, river, and wind, is animated by a spirit, there is nothing to prevent such spirits passing from one object into another, . . . (58)

Influenced by these ideas, many fairy tales contain the motif of the transformation of human beings into animals and of animals into human beings. It appears often in the animal-helper fairy tales, for some animal helpers are enchanted persons.

In "Der arme Müllerbursch und das Kätzchen" (KHM #106), Hans, the miller's youngest apprentice, sets off to look for the best horse in the world. When he walks along in the forest, he meets a little cat covered with spots. The little cat promises him the best horse in return for seven years of faithful service. When this time is up, the cat not only brings Hans the finest horses but also marries him, for it is an enchanted princess who now returns to her original form. Then Hans and the princess live happily in her castle.

In another tale, "Die Alte im Wald" (KHM #123), a white dove comes to help a girl who is lost in the forest after her master was killed by some robbers. The dove offers the girl everything she needs to live. After a few days, the dove asks if the girl can do it a

favor. To fulfill the dove's request, she goes into a little cottage, ignores what the old woman--a witch--says to her, and takes the plain ring she finds there back to the white dove. After receiving the ring, the dove can return to its form as a human being, for it is a prince who was transformed by the witch in the little cottage.

Two other Grimm tales which contain this motif were mentioned in the first chapter. In "Der goldene Vogel," the fox asks the youngest prince to shoot it and cut off its head and paws after it helps the prince to complete all his tasks. The prince does what it wishes, and the fox regains its original human form as the brother of the princess from the golden castle. The white horse in "Ferenand getrü un Ferenand ungetrü" asks faithful Ferenand to gallop around a certain heath three times. Then the white horse turns into a prince again.

The transformations in these fairy tales have some aspects in common. These include the following:

1). The transformation of the enchanted persons into animals occurs or continues against their will. In one case it is stated, and in the others it is implied that there is an evil power behind the transformation of these animal helpers. The white dove in "Die Alte im Wald" tells the girl after it regains its human form: "Du hast mich erlöst und aus der Gewalt der Alte befreit, die eine böse Hexe ist. Sie hatte mich in einen Baum verwandelt, und alle Tage ein paar Stunden war ich eine weiße Taube . . ." (182). Although the other fairy tales do not mention how or why the princess and the princes were transformed, it is clear that they do not like their animal form, for they all request that the protagonist do something which will help

them return to their human form by breaking the evil spell on them. For example, the fox in "Der goldene Vogel" asks the youngest prince twice to kill it, and when the prince finally does so, the fox can return to its human form.

2). Although these enchanted persons have been transformed into animals, they retain their human speech, now coupled with the instinct of the animal into which they have been transformed. They advise the protagonist in human language and help him by their animal instinct. For example, the white horse gives faithful Ferenand advice and carries him on its back.

The magic flounder in "Von dem Fischer un syner Fru" (KHM #19) is also an enchanted person. A poor fisherman catches the flounder, which begs him: "Hör mal, Fischer, ik bidd dy, laat my lewen, ik bün keen rechten Butt, ik bün'n verwünschten Prins" (KHM 119). The fisherman returns the flounder to the water, and the grateful fish then serves as an animal helper by fulfilling all the wishes the fisherman's wife makes except the last one, when she wishes to be like God. Due to her greed, the fisherman and his wife lose everything the flounder has granted them, and the story ends with them living in the old shack they had at its start. This fairy tale is different from other fairy tales mentioned previously in that the protagonist loses all he gains from the animal helper because of greed, and that the animal helper remains in animal form instead of being transformed back into a human being.

In another type of animal-helper fairy tale, the animal is the

protagonist's dead relative transformed or an angel in disguise. In the famous fairy tale "Aschenputtel" (KHM #21), after her mother's death, Aschenputtel visits her mother's grave every day and sits under the tree she planted from the twig her father brought her. A little white bird always comes to her and gives her what she asks for, including the pretty dress to wear to the prince's ball. The white bird may be seen as the spirit of Aschenputtel's mother, for it is a traditional belief that the spirit of a dead person will become an animal and come back to help the living (Obenauer 137).

In his Das Märchen: Dichtung und Deutung, Obenauer explains:

> Der "primitive" Mensch lebte nicht nur tagtäglich wirklich mit den Tieren des Hauses, der Herde, des Waldes und Feldes; er war von ihnen abhängig; er fühlte auch sein inneres Leben an einzelne Tierarten ganz eng gebunden, weil die Ahnen seines Geschlechts in Tiergestalt umgehen oder sich in diese verwandeln konnten. (132)

Birds and snakes are the most popular animal forms for dead persons to assume. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff says in his Der Glaube der Hellenen: "Er [ancient man] hat sie [the dead] in der Gestalt eines Vogels, einer Schlange leibhaft gesehen; solche Gestalt nehmen ja auch Götter an" (310). This motif can also be found in the duck of "Die drei Männlein im Walde" (KHM #13), the bird of "Von dem Machandelboom" (KHM #47), and the duck of "Die weiße und die schwarze Braut" (KHM #135).

The motif of an angel assuming animal form to help human beings can be found in "Die Nelke" (KHM #76). The queen is imprisoned in a tower for seven years when the evil cook steals her son, who possesses the magic power of making wishes that will be fulfilled, and claims that the queen allowed the boy to be seized by wild animals. During

her imprisonment, ". . . Gott schickte zwei Engel vom Himmel in Gestalt von weißen Tauben, die mußten täglich zweimal zu ihr fliegen und ihr das Essen bringen, bis die sieben Jahre herum waren" (KHM 270).

In these German fairy tales, one often finds that the human side of the animal helpers has primacy and that the creatures are not "really" animals. In his "Mensch und Tier-Verwandlung und Erlösung," Röhrich compares the human being-animal transformations in European fairy tales and the fairy tales of primitive peoples:

> Im europäischen Märchen ist das handelnd und sprechend auftretende Tier eben kein wirkliches Tier, sondern ein verzauberter Mensch. . . . Im Naturvölkermärchen dagegen sind es oft richtige Tiere, die die Partner stellen; allerdings sind diese meist zugleich auch Wesen, die willkürlich zwischen tierischer und menschlicher Existenz wählen können. (94)

As one would expect, the animal-helper fairy tales collected by the Grimms clearly reflect this tendency of European fairy tales.

One rarely finds in the Kinder- und Hausmärchen fairy tales of the type common among primitive peoples in which an animal is transformed into a human being, but this motif does appear in "Die drei Federn" (KHM #63). The old king wants his three sons to find the finest carpet, the most beautiful ring, and the most beautiful woman in the world so that he can decide which son should inherit his kingdom. The youngest prince enters a kingdom of toads. The large fat toad, which seems to be the leader among them, gives him the finest carpet and a golden ring on his first and second visits. When he finally comes in search of the most beautiful woman in the world, the toad says: ". . . die schönste Frau! Die ist nicht gleich zur

Hand, aber du sollst sie doch haben" (KHM 345). After making this promise, it gives the youngest prince a hollow carrot harnessed with six little mice. It then tells the prince to choose one little toad and put it in the carrot. The little toad is transformed into a beautiful woman; the carrot becomes a coach; and the mice turn into horses. When the youngest prince brings this beautiful woman home, the king decides the kingdom should belong to his youngest son since his two oldest sons have brought peasant women. But the two oldest princes ask their father to give them one more chance and to set a jumping contest, for they think their peasant women will be able to outdo the delicate beauty in such a match. When the peasant women jump through the hoop hanging in the middle of the hall, they fall down and break their arms and legs, but the beautiful woman, who is a transformed toad, easily succeeds due to her animal ability. So in this case it is with the aid of two animal helpers, the big toad and the small one, who becomes a beautiful woman, that the youngest prince inherits the kingdom.

Unlike the animal helpers in German fairy tales, who are usually a spirit or a person transformed into an animal which helps the hero, many of the animal helpers in Chinese fairy tales are animals which transform themselves into human form to help the hero. Such fairy tales thus belong to the type Röhrich identifies as typical of primitive peoples. One of the best-known fairy tales which contains this motif is "Die Schneckenfrau"(SOC #22). A young man likes to

fish. One day he goes fishing, catches a big snail,[4] and brings it home. From that time on, every day when he comes home, delicious food is ready for him. This situation continues for a few days, and the young man is curious about who is doing this for him. So he hides one day and finally discovers that a beautiful girl comes out of the bucket in which he put the snail and cooks the food for him. Then he understands the beautiful girl is the snail he caught several days before. The young man jumps out, ties the girl with ropes, and stuffs her mouth with rice. When the snail girl has eaten the cooked human food, she cannot return to snail form, so she becomes the young man's wife. They live happily for several years and have two children. One day the children wonder about their mother's background and ask their father to tell them the truth. The snail girl overhears their conversation and feels ashamed. She takes the shell which the father shows to the children, returns to snail form, and never comes back again.

This fairy-tale motif of a human being marrying a transformed animal is very popular in classical Chinese literature. For example, the same motif can be found in "The Son of the Turtle Spirit" (FTC #29), which describes an affair between a young girl and a turtle spirit. The popularity and frequent occurrence of the motif can be attributed to two traditional Chinese points of view:

1). "Die Schneckenfrau" reflects a strong religious belief known

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[4] The animal which Eberhard refers to as "Schnecke" here is "Viviparus idiopoma" (田螺) according to the dictionary Tzu-hai.

in Buddhism as metempsychosis or reincarnation. It is a prevalent belief among Chinese people that everything, including both living creatures and inanimate objects, has a spirit. The highest level of metempsychosis is the so-called immortal. The next level is the human being, followed by animals, and so on. In the cycle of metempsychosis, every spirit strives to advance to a higher level. To reach this goal, each spirit must observe strict ascetic rules in its present existence. Doing good deeds is one of the ascetic rules, for the Chinese believe that good deeds bring rewards. In order to gain immortality in their next existence, most Chinese do benevolent actions in their lifetime and believe the reward will be granted in their next incarnation or to their offspring.

Of course, the goal of the animal's spirit is to become a human being. Animals can succeed in this goal by befriending human beings, helping them (doing good deeds), and imitating them. Marrying a human being is the best way, for having a sexual relationship with a human being will give the animal a good opportunity to draw on the vital spirit of the human being. Therefore, animals want to marry a human being if they are morally good enough to transform themselves into human form (Kung 344-50; Chang 79-82).

The fox is the most popular transformed animal in Chinese folklore, especially folklore from the northeast part of China, for the mountains there harbor many foxes. The Tai Ping Kwang Chi records: "When the fox is fifty years old, it can change itself into a woman, when a hundred into a beautiful woman, . . ." (Harvey 114). According to Eberhard, the snail-girl tale is found in Chekiang,

Kuangtung, and Kiangsu provinces (Typen chinesischer Volksmärchen 60), which are in the southeast part of China where the land is flat. In the people's daily life in the south, the snail is a more common creature than the fox, so the tellers of this tale chose the snail instead of the fox found in the northern region of China.

In the fairy tale, the snail which the young man catches is apparently good enough or old enough to transform itself into a beautiful woman. She wants to perform good deeds by cooking for the young man and tidying up the house. She also marries the young man and gives him children. But when her husband and children talk about her snail form, she feels ashamed that they know she was an animal, so she returns to her original form and leaves them. As Röhrich explains, ". . . die Tiermannerzählungen der Naturvölker, . . . [nehmen] oft genug ein tragisches Ende . . . , wenn der tierische Partner nach vorübergehender Menschlichkeit wieder zum Tier wird" (95).

2). In addition to the idea of metempsychosis, this fairy tale also contains a rebellious attitude toward traditional Chinese marriage. In ancient China, a young person had no right to choose his or her own spouse. Chinese parents picked their son-in-law or daughter-in-law according to the person's background, financial status, or their own tastes. Thus many brides and grooms had not seen each other before they got married. Some lovers were not allowed to marry, and some couples were forced into loveless marriages. Young people looked forward to having the right to choose their own marriage

partner. The young man in "Die Schneckenfrau" goes fishing, catches a snail, and then marries the girl into whom the snail has transformed itself. In a variant, it is a young farmer who picks up a snail on his farm (Tan 14). Such tales contain the idea of a marriage of choice, of which most young people dreamed, but which they could not achieve. The storyteller uses a marriage between man and animal to express indirectly a rebellion against traditional Chinese marriage.

The dragon is another animal which appears often as a helper in Chinese fairy tales. "From the most ancient time, the dragon has been considered the Chief of the Four Spiritual Animals (these being Ling 麟, the Unicorn, Feng 鳳, the Phoenix, Kuei 龜, the tortoise, and Lung 龍, the dragon)" (Werner 289). Unlike the dragon in Western literature, which is considered evil, the dragon in China conveys the meaning of deity, luck, royalty, and protection. The Chinese dragon is a symbolic animal which Chinese people believe has "the head of a camel, the horns of a deer, eyes of a rabbit, ears of a cow, neck of a snake, belly of a frog, scales of a carp, claws of a hawk, and palm of a tiger" (Williams 133). It is a creature of the Chinese people's imagination and was the symbol of the emperor in ancient China. Even today the Chinese claim to be "the heirs of the dragon." Chinese parents expect their children to be a "dragon son" or a "dragon daughter" (a person who is successful in everything). Since the dragon is so meaningful in China, it is not surprising that the dragon appears as an animal helper in Chinese fairy tales.

In these tales, the dragon usually takes the form of the dragon king or his third daughter. According to the entry in Werner's

dictionary of mythology, dragon kings are "[t]utelary genii of seas, rivers, lakes and waters generally. The Neptunes of the Chinese, . . . [t]he Dragon-Kings have their palaces at the bottom of the ocean, . . ." (285). The dragon king lives in his underwater palace and has the sea creatures as his servants; for example, the shrimp as soldiers, crabs as generals, etc. He is the god of the sea and controls the "fertile rain, rain-sending clouds, thunder and lightning" (Werner 286). Since the dragon is a mythological creature, it is believed that

> the dragon's transformations are unlimited. Therefore it is no wonder that Chinese literature abounds with stories about dragons which had assumed the shape of men, animals or objects. When they transformed themselves into human beings, they mostly appeared as old men or beautiful women; . . . (De Visser 126)

The motif of the dragon king which transforms himself into a human being and helps human beings can be found in a number of Chinese fairy tales. A few of these will be discussed here.

In "The Pig That Warms the Ocean" (FTC #25), poor young Baldhead happens to get a magical pig which can warm the ocean. While boiling his pig in a pot, Baldhead also boils the sea in which the dragon king lives. This drives the dragon king out of his kingdom to stop him. The dragon king invites Baldhead to his kingdom for a few days. At the advice of the water carrier in the dragon king's kitchen, Baldhead requests and receives the third vase on the table as his present on his departure. After Baldhead comes home with the vase, he finds that his meal is always ready for him every day when he returns from work. Soon he discovers that the vase turns itself into a beautiful maiden

who cooks his meal. When he seizes the maiden, she tells him she is the dragon king's third daughter. Here one can see strong similarities to the "Schneckenfrau" tale. The dragon king's daughter gives Baldhead a beautiful house, and they live together happily. She also helps Baldhead complete the impossible tasks which his jealous neighbor Chang imposes on him.

In "Hsiang Meets the Dragon King" (FTC #45), kind-hearted Hsiang helps the poor, which annoys the emperor. While escaping from the emperor, Hsiang enters a cave by accident. In the cave, "he reached a bright, shining place. In the main hall was a man in a splendid dragon gown. . . . The man in the dragon robe said, 'This is the dragon palace, and I am a dragon king'" (FTC 99). Hsiang stays there and enjoys himself. After a few days, he leaves the dragon king's palace. No one in his hometown recognizes him, for a day in the dragon palace is a year in human time reckoning. Of course he escapes the evil emperor's clutches thanks to the dragon king's hospitality.

Two other tales, "Tales of the San Kuan" (FTC #64) and "The Wishing Stone" (FTC #65), also contain the motif of the dragon king as man's helper. In both tales the dragon king comes in human form to help the hero when the latter is in trouble. The heroes have a good time in the dragon king's palace. When they leave, they get a present from him. At the suggestion of the dragon prince in "Tales of the San Kuan," Ch'en asks for the little box on the table which contains three flowerpots into which the dragon king's three daughters have transformed themselves. They then marry Ch'en and give him sons. The

youngest son in "The Wishing Stone" gets a wishing stone as his present, and it brings him luck.

Although these German and Chinese animal-helper fairy tales are different not only in the animals they choose, but also in the animal helpers' form--e.g., the German animal helpers are usually enchanted persons, and the Chinese animal helpers are animals in human form--they share one common aspect which is very important: the fairy tales reveal the life philosophy of the people. These fairy tales strongly reflect the desires of the common people. In "Der arme Müllerbursch und das Kätzchen," "Die Alte im Wald," and "Ferenand getrü un Ferenand ungetrü," the persons enchanted as animal helpers are either princes or princesses. The protagonists who break the spell on these royal persons are commoners. One suggested explanation for this phenomenon is that the common people, oppressed by the ruling class, may wish that royalty suffer some punishment by an evil power. In the fairy tales, that punishment is expressed as transformation. As his or her reward for saving the royal character by breaking the spell, the heroic commoner marries the prince or princess. Such tales reveal the vengeful or rebellious attitude of the common people as well as their desire to enjoy the privileged life of royalty (Zipes, Breaking the Magic Spell 5-7, 24, 27-30, 136).

The fairy tales in which a bird or other animal is a transformed dead person or an angel in disguise reflect another wish of the people. Here we see the common expectation that the dead will protect the living forever and ensure that the blessings of God will favor them always.

The Chinese fairy tales also convey the desires and attitudes of the people. "Die Schneckenfrau" expresses the wish for marriages that are not arranged. The dragon king-as-helper tales are somewhat like the German tales in which common people befriend or marry royalty. Chinese people imagine there is also a kingdom under the sea, and the emperor of the sea is the dragon king, who befriends the common person who enters his realm. Unlike the earthly emperor, who often executes intruders, the kind dragon king always invites the stranger to enjoy life in his palace and offers a present on the hero's departure. The best gift the hero gets, of course, is the dragon king's daughter, because he, the common person, then becomes related to royalty.

CHAPTER III

HELP AND REWARDS FROM ANIMAL HELPERS

In this final chapter, I investigate why people get help from animals in these tales and what kinds of rewards people obtain from the animal helpers. From Chapters I and II, it is clear that the animals help human beings by giving advice and performing tasks imposed on the hero. Whether the hero gets the animal's help by chance or the animal helps intentionally, and whether the incident occurs in Western or Oriental society, only kind persons can gain the animal's help.

In German fairy tales, the animal helper often appears in tales concerning a search. Sometimes the hero is searching for adventure and sometimes for a specific object. In "Die weiße Schlange," for example, the servant understands animal language after he eats the king's secret dish, the white snake. When he sets out to seek his fortune, he meets three types of animals--fish, ants, and ravens. Since he understands animal language and thus knows the animals' problems, the kind servant puts the trapped fish into water, prevents his horse from disturbing the ants, and saves the young ravens from starving. These grateful animals all tell him: "Wir wollen dir's gedenken und dir's vergelten!" (KHM 114-15). Then they really do what they have promised. When the servant must perform three tasks in order to marry the beautiful princess, the fish, ants, and ravens come in time to help him accomplish the tasks; i.e., the fish get the ring from the bottom of the sea; the ants pick up every grain of millet in

the grass; and the ravens bring him the apple from the Tree of Life at the ends of the earth. Then he marries the princess and lives happily ever after.

The three princes in "Der goldene Vogel" set out to find the golden bird. The two oldest princes are unsuccessful because of their unkindness to the fox, which apparently knows more than they do and offers them advice. The eldest prince shoots at the fox, the second ignores its advice. The youngest prince, however, pities the little fox and says, "Sei ruhig, Füchslein, ich tue dir nichts zuleid" (KHM 294). The fox answers, "Es soll dich nicht gereuen" (KHM 294). The grateful fox then keeps its promise by becoming his adviser and accompanying him to find the golden bird, golden horse, and the beautiful princess from the golden castle.

In "Die zwei Brüder" (KHM #60), the poor broom-maker's twin sons set off to see the world. They meet a hare, a fox, a wolf, a bear, and a lion, all of which they want to shoot for food, but they spare each animal's life in response to its plea to do so. The grateful animals give each twin one of their babies, and these baby animals help the twins in their future adventures. For example, the foxes find food for them. One twin's animals help their master to slay a seven-headed dragon and save the princess. Unfortunately, their master is killed by the evil marshall, who passes himself off as the dragon-slayer because he wants to marry the princess. With the help of his animals, one of which fetches a special curative root for him, the young man comes back to life and exposes the evil marshall's

deception. He then marries the princess and becomes the ruler of her kingdom.

"Die Bienenkönigin" (KHM #62) is one of the typical fairy tales about a search which includes an animal that helps a kind person. Three princes set out to seek adventure. The youngest prince saves the anthill, the ducks, and the bees from his brothers, who want to kill the animals. Each time he stops his brothers by saying: "Laßt die Tiere in Frieden, ich leid's nicht, daß ihr sie tötet" (KHM 341). Finally, they come to an enchanted castle. In order to break the magic spell, they must perform three tasks imposed by the gray dwarf in the castle. The kind-hearted prince gets help from the animals he saved. The ant king leads five thousand ants to collect the pearls from the moss, which completes the first task. The ducks perform the second task by getting the key to the princess' bedroom from the bottom of the lake. The third task, which is the most difficult one, is to determine which is the youngest and loveliest of three sleeping princesses, all of whom look alike. The only difference is that one ate sugar; another, syrup; and the third, honey, before they went to sleep. The queen bee comes and lights on the lips of the youngest princess, who has eaten the honey. Then the youngest prince finishes the third task and disenchants the castle. He marries the youngest princess and becomes the king of that realm.

"Die beiden Wanderer" (KHM #107) is another fairy tale which contains a good person who is rewarded and an evil one who is punished. A tailor and a shoemaker set out together in search of adventure. The shoemaker has an evil heart and tries to harm the

tailor. For example, he blinds the tailor and tells the king false and slanderous things about him. The king then demands that the tailor perform impossible tasks. The tailor, however, succeeds with the help of a foal, a stork, two ducks, and bees, which he had set free earlier. The shoemaker is punished for his evil deeds, and the tailor marries the princess.

It is not explicitly stated that Hans in "Der arme Müllerbursch und das Kätzchen" is a kind-hearted person. However, the circumstances of the tale implicitly suggest this. The two older apprentices who abandon him in the cave and always make fun of him are clearly ill-natured, but Hans gets the opportunity to meet the cat which assists him and gives him the best horse in the world, which he is seeking.

From these German fairy tales, one can see clearly that kindness is the characteristic that qualifies the hero to receive the help he needs to fulfill the tasks imposed on him. If a fairy-tale character is unkind, he cannot succeed. For example, in "Die Bienenkönigin," the two older princes, who are cruel to animals, fail at the very first task and are turned to stone. The youngest prince, who has the kindest heart, however, carries out all three tasks with the animals' help and becomes rich. As Haughton says, "[t]he wisdom of the 'animal' is available and helpful for good ends only, and only to the one who brings to his mission humility and love. Without these the very same quest leads to destruction" (58).

It is noteworthy that in some of these fairy tales the hero

encounters three or four animals before he starts his tasks. These animals represent the realms of air, earth, and water (Meyer 108). For example, in "Die weiße Schlange," one finds fish, ant, and raven; in "Die Bienenkönigin," ant, duck, and bee; and in "Die beiden Wanderer," foal, duck, bee, and stork. The tasks which the hero must perform cannot be accomplished by human effort alone, but require the special abilities of animals in the water, on earth, and in the air.

Becoming wealthy is the wish of many people. The most important way to wealth in the fairy tales consists of showing kindness to living things. Human beings live with the help of all creatures in the water and air and on the earth, and they should sometimes give a helping hand to these animals when they are in need. This prescription for the attainment of an ideal world is clearly promoted in these animal-helper fairy tales.

As discussed in Chapter II, the idea that good deeds bring rewards is one of the traditional beliefs among Chinese people, who expect to advance to higher levels of being as a result of such deeds. Therefore, many Chinese fairy tales, especially the animal-as-helper tales, contain kind-hearted heroes who are rewarded for their good deeds. In "The Tiger General" (FTC #51), a young man goes into the hills for firewood. Suddenly the woodcutter hears cries of pain and discovers a tigress in complicated labor. He hurries home and asks his mother, an experienced midwife, to help the tigress. With the aid of the young man and his mother, four little tigers are born safely. The old woman jokingly tells the tigress it can bring them a young girl as a reward, for they are too poor to afford a daughter-in-law.

One night the tigress and her four cubs come upon a bridal party, kidnap the bride, and take her to the woodcutter's house. The bride is his reward from the grateful tigers. The rightful bridegroom learns of the incident and brings charges against the woodcutter. The latter's mother asks the tigers to be witnesses on her son's behalf. When the judge asks them whether they abducted the bride, the five tigers all nod their heads, so the young man is set free. At a later time, the land is under siege by a rebel accompanied by wild beasts. The emperor has the woodcutter lead his tigers against the rebel. Of course, the woodcutter and his tigers win the battle, and the pleased emperor gives him the title of "Five Tiger General" and a position on the frontier.

"The Gratitude of the Snake" (FTC #52) begins with the childhood of its hero, who is a kind-hearted child and always helps animals in need. He saves a wounded snake and raises it as a pet. Years later, the young man goes to the capital to take the imperial examination and takes along his snake, which has never left him since he saved it. On his way, he sets the snake free in the mountains, for he is afraid that he may die in the wild area and the snake may starve to death in his bundle. One day he stays overnight in a haunted room at an inn. At midnight there is a terrible battle in his room. After it ends, he finds a millipede and snake lying dead on the floor near his bed. He realizes this is the snake he had freed. Apparently, the snake followed its master to the haunted room and saved him from the millipede's attack. The young man then passes the examination and

becomes an official in his hometown. He makes a grave for the snake and offers a sacrifice there. Then he marries and lives peacefully with his family.

Two young men are central characters in "The Man in the Moon" (FTC #54). The first boy is kind-hearted and loves animals and all living things. One day, he finds a wounded swallow, takes it home, and nurses it devotedly. After the bird is cured, it brings him a yellow pumpkin seed as a reward. The boy plants it in his garden, and it produces a huge pumpkin. When he opens the ripe pumpkin, gold and silver pour out. A mean child in his neighborhood hears about this good fortune and becomes very envious. He hopes to make the same luck for himself by knocking a swallow off the roof and then caring for the bird as the first boy did. When he opens his pumpkin, he finds a well-dressed old man instead of silver and gold. The old man takes him to the moon, to the Palace of Boundless Cold, and tells him to cut down the cinnamon tree, which is made of gold and precious stones. He cannot go home until he performs this task. His repeated attempts always fail, however, because a silver white cock attacks him, and the tree immediately recovers from his blows. Thus, he is doomed to remain on the moon forever.[5]

The fairy tale "Tales of the San Kuan" also contains the motif of

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[5] This fairy tale is similar to "Frau Holle" (KHM #24) in that an ill-natured child wants to have the same luck as a good child but gets bad results because he does not imitate the good child correctly. And the motif of a task that must be performed repeatedly with no hope of completion is familiar from the legend of Sisyphus.

a good deed which brings a reward. One day the hero, Ch'en Kuang-jui, buys a large carp with which he wants to make a fish soup for his sick wife. As he is preparing to cut the carp, it starts to weep. Kind Ch'en is so distressed by this that he orders the cook to remove three scales and then set the fish free.[6] Later on, when Ch'en is in danger after the pirate Niu Hung throws him into the sea, the carp which he spared rescues him. The carp--actually, the dragon king's third son--takes him to stay in the dragon king's palace for a few days.

Some fairy tales from the Volksmärchen aus Südost-China contain similarities to the fairy tales above. In "Der Dank der Ameise" (SOC #10), an incident also happens on the hero's way to the imperial examination. The hero makes a bridge for some ants struggling in the water. When he writes a composition in his examination, he forgets to put a point on the word t'ai (太). This word means "very big"; without the point it is ta (大), which means "big." Then the ants gather on his paper to make the points he missed. Because of the help of the grateful ants, the hero gets a good grade on his examination.

"Der Dank des Tigers" (SOC #12) is a variant of "The Tiger General." An old mother saves a tiger in difficult labor. The tiger then brings her a young girl to be her daughter-in-law since the poor woman cannot afford to obtain one herself. "Die Vergeltung des Tausendfusses" (SOC #13) is similar to "The Gratitude of the Snake."

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[6] The motif of setting a magic fish free is similar to that found in the Grimms' "Von dem Fisher un syner Fru" (KHM #19) and "Die Goldkinder" (KHM #85).

A young man keeps a millipede as a pet. Eventually, it saves him from the attack of a snake and loses its life in the process.

In addition to the belief in metempsychosis, which leads the Chinese to do good to living things, other points of view which have existed in China for thousands of years are reflected in these animal-helper fairy tales. In her article on "Chinese and Animals" in the Taiwanese magazine Sinorama, Chin-ju Chang says:

> In the traditional Chinese view, all living things are on a par with each other. . . . In fact, in traditional Chinese thought, there is an exceptional feeling of "humanity" toward animals. The late philosopher Tang Chun-yi said that, where there is no conflict of interests, Chinese cannot bear to see them die. This goes even for the lowly rat. The Chinese poet has written, "Love the rat and leave little rice; take pity on the moth and do not light the lamp." (9)

Because of this traditional view, the heroes in Chinese fairy tales are all willing to help animals, even those as lowly as an ant. Thus we have seen that some heroes help the tiger to deliver its cubs just as they would help a human being, and that another hero sets a weeping fish free because he cannot stand to see another living being die.

In Chinese fairy tales, animals which receive help must reward their benefactors, for reciprocity is an important foundation of Chinese society (Yang 350).

> The Chinese have for ages been in the habit of doing to others almost exactly what they wish others to do to them. This proceeding is called "propriety" (禮). Witness the dictum of the Book of Rites, "Propriety is reciprocal; if there is giving, but no receiving, this is not propriety; if there is receiving, but no giving, neither is this propriety." (Smith 289)

Since animals are regarded as the equals of human beings in China, animals in fairy tales are expected to behave like human

beings. After an animal receives help from the hero, it gives a reward which is sometimes of greater value, for "[r]eciprocity, in theory, signifies that one person honors some other person a linear (or other) foot, and this other person should in return honor him ten feet" (Smith 290).[7] Thus some fairy-tale animals, like the snake in "The Gratitude of the Snake" and the millipede in "Die Vergeltung des Tausendfusses," even sacrifice their very life to save their benefactors.

For common people who live from hand to mouth, it is hard to become rich or to be able to afford a wife. Becoming wealthy and marrying a beautiful woman are desires shared by many common people throughout the world, and these wishes are expressed vividly in Chinese fairy tales. People, especially poor people who cannot fulfill their dreams on their own, hope to obtain wealth or a wife with the help of animals as a result of their good deeds.

Since German fairy tales put considerable emphasis on achieving wealth and high rank, the kind hero usually marries a princess or becomes a king at the end of the tale. In "Die weiße Schlange," the servant marries the princess and lives happily in her palace. With the help of the fox, the youngest prince in "Der goldene Vogel" inherits his father's kingdom and marries the beautiful princess of the golden castle. The youngest prince in "Die Bienenkönigin" breaks the spell placed on a kingdom, becomes its king, and marries the

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[7] Here the reference to the number of feet conveys the amount of honor given.

youngest princess, all due to the help of the animals he has saved. And the kind-hearted tailor in "Die beiden Wanderer" becomes the king's son-in-law after he finishes his tasks with the help of the animals he has aided.

In China, getting married, passing the imperial examination, and becoming an official used to be very important personal goals. A well-known Chinese proverb says that "[t]here are three things . . . which are unfilial, and to have no posterity is the greatest of them (不孝有三 無後爲大)" (Smith 300). Consequently, marriage was essential to a young man in Chinese society, and that is why some animal helpers reward the fairy-tale hero with a young girl who will be his wife. This reward is found in "The Tiger General," "Tales of the San Kuan," and "Der Dank des Tigers." Helping the hero to succeed in his imperial examination so that he can become wealthy is another characteristic reward given by animal helpers in Chinese fairy tales. We have seen this in "The Gratitude of the Snake" and "Der Dank der Ameise." Another possibility for the reward is that the grateful animal provides the hero with wealth more directly, as in "The Man in the Moon."

CONCLUSION

This thesis, which compares animal helpers in German and Chinese fairy tales, is an attempt to study this motif in a discrete body of Western and Oriental folk literature. As I stated in the introduction, there has been relatively little research on Chinese fairy tales even in Taiwan and China, and these tales are virtually unknown in Western society due to differences in language and culture. Furthermore, the animal helpers in the Grimms' fairy tales have not yet received adequate study. Thus the resources available on my topic were very limited. I have tried to present various aspects of different kinds of animal helpers and draw conclusions about Chinese and German animal helpers.

In Chapter I, I discussed how animal helpers communicate with human beings in the fairy tales. The animals play the role of the wise "person" and give advice in human language. In both the Chinese and German tales, the animal advisers always know more than their human friends and tell them how to be successful by avoiding danger. Anthropomorphized by the storyteller, the animal helper, like the cat in "Der gestiefelte Kater," not only speaks but sometimes also behaves like a person. In some fairy tales, the hero obtains the animal's aid due to his ability to understand animal language. Sometimes it is not stated how the hero gets this ability; other times he obtains it by a specified means, such as consuming snake meat.

In Chapter II, I studied two types of animal helpers in Chinese and German fairy tales. The German animal helpers are usually an

enchanted prince or princess. They help the protagonists with both their human and animal abilities. After the protagonists reach their goals, the animal helpers normally ask them to do a certain thing which helps the animals to regain their original form. Sometimes the German animal helpers are the protagonist's dead relatives or an angel in disguise. The Chinese animal helpers, however, are really animals. Because of the traditional belief in metempsychosis, Chinese people think that animals transform themselves into human beings for certain purposes, like the attempt to gain immortality. A number of Chinese animal-helper fairy tales deal with the dragon king and his daughter. The dragon in China is a spiritual and magic animal. It represents luck and possesses the power of transformation. As a helper, it usually appears in human form as the dragon king or his daughter. Although the form animal helpers assume in Chinese and German fairy tales is different, these tales reflect the general attitudes of the Chinese and German commoner storytellers, for example, the desire for revenge against royalty.

Chapter III explains how the protagonist gets help from an animal helper and what reward he gains. It is a general assumption in fairy tales that good deeds bring rewards. One can see this clearly in the Chinese and German fairy tales since it is always the kind-hearted person who receives special support and help from animals. The grateful animals help the protagonists to reach their goals, which are unfulfilled wishes in the daily life of commoners, like becoming wealthy or marrying royalty. With the aid of animals, the dreams of

common people come true in these animal-helper fairy tales.

This thesis has revealed some different aspects of animal-helper tales in China and Germany. More importantly, it has elucidated some points of view shared by Chinese and German fairy tales which reflect ideas and feelings common to people all over the world. Many of these common views lead the readers and hearers of these fairy tales to consider their role as human beings and the proper way to treat the other creatures in the world.

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APPENDIX

LIST OF FAIRY TALES MENTIONED

TITLE	BOOK AND TALE NUMBER
Aschenputtel	KHM 21
Der arme Müllerbursch und das Kätzchen	KHM 106
Der Dank der Ameise	SOC 10
Der Dank des Tigers	SOC 12
Der gestiefelte Kater	KHM, Anh. 5
Der goldene Vogel	KHM 57
Die Alte im Wald	KHM 123
Die beiden Wanderer	KHM 107
Die Bienenkönigin	KHM 62
Die drei Federn	KHM 63
Die drei Männlein im Walde	KHM 13
Die Gänsemagd	KHM 89
Die Goldkinder	KHM 85
Die Nelke	KHM 76
Die Schneckenfrau	SOC 22
Die Vergeltung des Tausendfusses	SOC 13
Die weiße und die schwarze Braut	KHM 135
Die weiße Schlange	KHM 17
Die zwei Brüder	KHM 60
Die zwölf Jäger	KHM 67
Ferenand getrü un Ferenand ungetrü	KHM 126
Frau Holle	KHM 24
Hsiang Meets the Dragon King	FTC 45
Kung Yeh-ch'ang Understands the Language of Birds	FTC 38

Tales of the San Kuan	FTC	64
The Bank of the Celestial Stream	FTC	23
The Gratitude of the Snake	FTC	52
The Man in the Moon	FTC	54
The Pig That Warms the Ocean	FTC	25
The Son of the Turtle Spirit	FTC	29
The Tiger General	FTC	51
The Wild Goose Lake	FTC	46
The Wishing Stone	FTC	65
Von dem Fischer un syner Fru	KHM	19
Von dem Machandelboom	KHM	47

VITA

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