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## REMEMBERING, REPEATING AND WORKING THROUGH THE APPEARANCE OF THE DEPENDENT SELF\*

S. FORBES

In *Remembering, Repeating and Working Through* (1912), one of Freud's most important papers, he traces the development of technique in psycho-analysis. In the beginning hypnosis was used to remember what situation caused the symptom and to aim at discharge of mental processes involved in that situation. When hypnosis was given up free association was used as the way in which the patient's resistances through interpretations would be removed and what he failed to remember would be uncovered. Here the cause of the symptom and the situation giving rise to it remained the focus of interest. Finally, there evolved the present technique where the analyst gives up all attempts to focus interest on the cause or problem and instead studies whatever is surfacing at the moment on the patient's mind and interprets whatever resistances he recognises to make them conscious to the patient.

Freud then tells us that as in hypnosis which was so simple where the patient recollected the earlier situation and brought it into consciousness, in the new technique "nothing is left of this delightfully smooth course of events." Sometimes certain patients do start to behave as in hypnosis by bringing into consciousness certain memories and then this stops altogether, whereas others from the start do not remember anything of what is forgotten, that instead of remembering they act it out. The patient "reproduces it not as a memory but as an action; he repeats it, without, of course, knowing that, he is repeating it."

\* Read to the Bombay Group of Analysts, April 1989

Freud says; "As long as the patient is in the treatment he cannot escape from this compulsion to repeat: and in the end we understand that this is his way of remembering." What interests us most of all is naturally the relation of this compulsion to repeat to the transference and to resistance. The greater the resistance, the more extensively will acting out (repetition) replace remembering. The main instrument, however, for curbing the patient's compulsion to repeat and for turning it into a motive for remembering lies in the handling of the transference." A little later Freud tells us something which I feel is very important and which forms the theme of the latter part of this paper. He says: "Further dangers arise from the fact that in the course of the treatment new and deeper lying instinctual impulses, which had not hitherto made themselves felt, may come to be repeated."

My thesis is that in the course of the treatment there begins to appear in the consulting room a picture of the patient called the dependent self. And that this self is experienced and actually felt both by the patient and the analyst as a baby or child. This at first is fleetingly felt but as the situation is worked through its presence becomes frequent, insistent and powerful. The consequences to the patient (this would include both adult and child patients) is of feeling exposed, vulnerable and of being at great risk because there is now a child feeling both defenceless and helpless. The experience of the analyst at this time is of holding a great responsibility almost like a mother who has given birth. I would like to make clear that I am not talking here of defensive situation, of a refusal to grow up, or a false self situation where the analyst is deceived into acting out with the patient's manipulations or of the patient's passivity where the whole responsibility lies with the analyst. I am describing the dependent self more as the birth of something new and unknown and unpredictable, a frightening experience for both parties but without which there would be no real development of the personality. I think Bion describes this quite well when he says, "The patient only has to go on coming for a certain length of time to have a pretty good idea of the analyst's various foibles and habits. That patient can be just like the analyst and be cured just like the analyst. The trouble is that it doesn't seem to be adequate or satisfactory. It is the result most easily and quickly achieved;

getting to a stage where the patient does not become just like analyst, but becomes someone who is becoming somebody, is more difficult and somewhat frightening it might mean becoming insane. Patients will, therefore, often prefer to fall back on being like the analyst."

The second part of my paper discusses the issue of repetition and Freud's idea of the compulsion to repeat which in fact made its first appearance in his above quoted paper. I am going to try to describe what I think Freud meant by his statement of dangers of deeper lying instincts coming to the fore. I feel it was the form of Freud's genius that in his ideas of the compulsion to repeat he unconsciously was already connecting it to the instincts, which he finally clarifies in his monograph on 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' (1920), where he links the compulsion to repeat to the death instinct. Following on these ideas I will try to prove that the appearance of the dependent self is also simultaneously the appearance not only of remembering but the origin of thinking itself, and that the compulsion to repeat leaves no space for thinking.

Strachey's classic paper on the mutative interpretation, leading to therapeutic progress, involves a transference interpretation of the here and now. What I am now suggesting is that for the furtherance of the individual personality in the analysis there should take place what I could call the mutative transference situation: a therapeutic situation in the analysis where the dependent self is present or is becoming present. This is a birth of remembering, of memory and a reconstruction not just of the past but a reconstruction in the present where real development can now start from. This also could be an answer to the controversy of whether it is important to reconstruct the past. Since the past, as Freud points out, is now in the present, reconstruction is a phenomenon which now takes place from the experiences between the patient and the analyst arising from the appearance of the dependent self. Reconstruction then would be a gradual process of remembering the birth of dependent self in the analysis, a turning towards the object, the analyst and gradually allowing the memory of this experience, which at times is quite emotionally turbulent, to develop and grow leading to the growth of the personality.

I will now present clinical material which will make clearer

Freud's idea of the repetition of the past being acted out in the analysis, along with resistances against remembering the pathogenic situation, the working through of these resistances, and the appearance of the dependent self which the resistances were mainly directed against.

The first case is of a man of 24 who after a period of 2 years of analysis when the repetition of the past situation in the transference was somewhat understood, and certain resistances lifted, the dependent self made its appearance in the very clear form of falling in love with the analyst, an intense desire and longing to be constantly near his analyst in a very special parent-child relationship. This desire of his is not to be confused with the idea of an ideal omnipotent relationship, but with one where a child is special and important to the parent, an experience which he missed out on. This appearance of the dependent self was felt as very threatening to him, he at times felt he was homosexual, like a woman, a little boy, etc, but the most threatening was that he would have to face inevitable pain unknown and dreaded and that neither he nor I could cope with the demands, disappointments, frustration and anger of the dependent self. This led to a hostile transference, resistances to the appearance of the dependent self intensified, he almost broke off treatment, but we did manage to work this through. I shall describe a recent session to show once again how the dependent self makes its appearance and how such an appearance though ultimately beneficial is always accompanied by mental pain and emotional turbulence.

I will give you some background information about this patient but I will only choose what is pertinent and specific to the theme of this paper. My patient has six siblings, his experience was of rather mean parents who openly favoured the other children. My patient has always felt an outsider in his family, his parents openly showed a preference for the others and treated him as in no way special to them.

The preceding session to the one I am now describing was emotionally intense. For the first time in his analysis, he wept when he became aware of how much he wants to be included within his family as an important and loved member and how intensely he wants his parents to notice him and appreciate his achievements. Almost all his life he had tried hard to hide and control such long-

ings by appearing uncaring and indifferent. The following is the next session where we see his reaction to this appearance of the dependent self.

He'd noticed I'd put a brighter light in the waiting room. He thought I was wasting electricity by lighting up the patient's area. Today he did not wear his chappals because they were broken, wore shoes. His broken chappals would have been crushed to bits with the crowds in the bus.

Why did I rake up those feelings in him yesterday? His wanting praise, love and all that shit. I'm out to humiliate him, he feels like a beggar. He was reading an analyst's article the other day and especially his comments that he never gets involved with his patients because then it becomes a mess outside. I also say these things to him but the real stuff is reserved for my family.

His father has delayed in giving him the money he's asked for. Father is also in financial difficulty, must be worried that he will drain him. Father also has this bleeding in his urine, may be a stone inside. Why is he so worried? But what can he do he needs this money from father for his analysis. He should have been a successful professional making lots of money, father must be disappointed that he's not.

His 7 year old nephew hassled a lot yesterday. He has found a new friend. He has said that old friend is also very welcome. The old friend is the one who he'd told me would'nt let anyone touch his toys. This old friend has a year older brother who told his son not to come into their house. He suspects this boy's mother also agreed, she's a shrew, is very interested in people with wealth. He'd like to hit that boy. His nephew was the only child not invited to his friend's birthday party. They want to mingle only with wealthy neighbours.

I spoke of his preoccupation with yesterday's session, his feeling he'd exposed a little boy's needs to come in and be invited into the family—today he's suspicious and worried. So today he has to be in strong tough shoes, yesterday's broken feelings can't lead to his being crushed, because although I say he is welcome here I might actually secretly not want him here.

Pause. His brother is looking forward to his parents return, they'd gone on holiday. He said he's glad they enjoyed themselves

but is now looking forward to their return and to see them again. My patient thought of making some catty remark but controlled himself. Would like to tear him to pieces. He was burning up. He will get him smash him up.

The rage here is of his not being included in the richness of this relationship between brother and his parents. It is pure agony for him to be witness to it and brings up a sadistic rage. But he also ignores what I said in an attempt to control his rage towards me, since he feels I am purposely showing him my rich relationship with my family to humiliate and hurt him and make him feel excluded.

A couple of minutes were left and he commented on how painful it was every time when he had to leave. He dreads the ending. He just does not like me. He repeated his dislike of me.

Here again the dread is related to his worry about losing control, both in voicing his agony about losing me and his rage at his humiliation of my looking forward to being with my family with whom I have a wealthier richer relationship. Something special which he can never have with me.

This session shows both a continuation from the preceding session and a reaction to it which threatens to break the continuity. Let us say that the appearance of the dependent self, the child who now turns towards his objects and wants to renew and acknowledge his needs and longings for them, is also felt as a situation where there is a breakdown of his old defences and he feels he may be crushed 'in the crowd', the crowd denoting remembering his painful feelings of being excluded from his family circle. In this session he tries to distance himself from this painful memory by mocking it 'all this shit', being cynical and suspicious of his objects instilled in the analyst, to once again repeat his turning away from his objects, and from the experience of the preceding session. And yet we also see depressive feelings in this session, connected with his infantile feelings of demands, jealousy and rage. He is worried about his father having his own difficulties and being drained and being internally attached by his burning-urinary jealousy. As also his trying to control his hatred towards the close and rich relationship between his sibling and his parents, and in the transference controlling himself at the end of the session.

He also does communicate to me both his desires and his burning, clawing, biting feelings, and also his worries about harming people close to him.

I think that repetition of the past in the transference is always a repetition of the way the patient turned away from his objects. Once this is worked through and gradually analysed the appearance of the dependent self, at first sporadic but later more consistent, brings with it once again the remembering or reconstruction of the turning towards the early objects leading to growth and development. In the case I've just described the appearance of the dependent self is more open and omnipotent phantasy has broken down to some extent laying the path open for the experience of both psychic pain and growth. But there are cases where we are reminded of Freud's comment that there are dangers, after some effective analysis we may find deeper—lying instincts becoming activated. This means that when the dependent self makes its presence noticeable it can be excessively attached and omnipotent phantasy can be substituted in a destructive narcissistic way. Therefore remembering and memory can never be allowed access. Remembering the dependent self and memory of it is always connected with the reality principle and thinking whereas omnipotent phantasy always denies the experience. Thought itself springs from the experiences of the dependent self and admits its existence. Thus hatred of the dependent self is an attack on thought itself—resulting in illusion, delusion, hallucination, and a mental apparatus which constantly has to rid itself of the experiences of the dependent self. Of course this being in the realm of omnipotent phantasy real needs are never really satisfied. Freud tackles this problem in his paper 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' where he tries to sort out the puzzle of a compulsion to repeat which never brings any real satisfaction and even when the individual knows this through past experience he still repeats it, as Freud states; "They seek to bring about the interruption of the treatment while it is still incomplete; they contrive once more to feel themselves scorned, to oblige the physician to speak severely to them and treat them coldly; they produce a plan or a promise of some grand present which turns out as a rule to be no less unreal. None of these things can have produced pleasure in the past, in spite of that, they are repeated, under

pressure of a compulsion." Freud was then forced to see this phenomena as a death instinct, a turning away from life forces and a repulsion of or return to an earlier inorganic state.

I will now give clinical material which clearly shows the workings of this compulsion to repeat, which shows the presence of omnipotent phantasy, the absence of the dependent self and therefore thinking itself—and how this state is linked to the death instinct. This is a 25 year old woman who has been in analysis for 3 years, she had come with confusional thinking. Both parents have died. She was hardly ever present in her home and had built a life of isolation with the result that she also suffered from pathological loneliness, and a life of an orphan. After extensive working through in the transference there have been improvements, she feels better and stronger. And yet there is no acknowledgement of where this came from, or very grudging patronising acceptance of my role in nourishing her. At the most part I seem to have the position of her employee or servant who seems to be doing a good job. More work on this has made her a bit aware of what she is doing but a real awareness would lead to the appearance of the dependent self which she is desperately fighting against. The worrying part is that she can only fight it by substituting omnipotent phantasy for it, no place for thinking, and a compulsion to repeat this state no matter what I say. Whatever I say the meaning is taken out and we are back to zero, as if, there have been no interpretations, no sessions and no presence of our being together or developing anything together. She also repeats parrot like that I can no longer do anything more and we have come to the end of our journey although she herself adds that she knows she is being very stupid and destructive. She has turned away from her object, not just in anger like with the last patient, but with an attempt to break all links with objects. This is a state of death, because without a link to objects there is a state

of both mental and physical starvation. Incidentally, I do not know how far this is relevant but she was a premature baby, kept in an incubator, fed through tubes, which means a primary experience of being without any links to living objects. What are the consequences of a baby going through such an experience? Is the death instinct intensified since at the beginning there was no living object it could be projected outwards into? I do not know.

This is a recent session following a trip she took for a week, I have no idea why, also following two days when I had to cancel due to illness.

She came 5 minutes late. She said her trip had been in unhygienic areas where there was no good food so she drank only orange juice. But it was very nice, she had a nice time. She much prefers it there, and now she's back here with all these unpleasant servants.

Here we can see her awareness of a place with no nourishing food-analysis, she feeds herself on juice but says that's nice. Being in this unhealthy state of no nourishing analytic object is nice and she prefers it. Prefers turning me into an unpleasant servant who will nag and criticise her for missing sessions.

She said she knows she's being destructive, being in a place where there's no help or support and yes I'm absolutely right that she seems to prefer it. So what is to be done now? She heard on her trip that a young man died within two days of a powerful virus for which there was no cure. She was very frightened that if she or her son got infected they would both die.

This was an allusion to my missing two days because of illness. She said on her way here she thought of that and wondered whether I was still alive. She's relieved that I am not dead, she

was very keen and curious to find out. Here she is suggesting both that it's a relief that I'm not dead but turns it into an impersonal curiosity from her side, she's perhaps glad I've survived, but from her side there's no attempt at concern, wish to revive, repair, help. She's just glad I seemed to have managed. There's no attempt at revival of her object because there is no belief in cure or life giving food, also it seems to be rather nice, that way. Through internalisation there is also an idea of a dying or dead analyst inside her which nothing can cure. There is a moment of fear about this because if she's infected or gripped by it as a preferred nice state it would lead to her own death.

She reacted to this by saying it was exact understanding of what she was going through and I was completely in tune with her. I said here there is also a fascination that we are both in tune together in this infected state, mother and child being wiped out in what she feels is a powerful, omnipotent state. She actually thought that by missing sessions and turning away from me she infected me and I lay dying or dead. No place for thinking that she has cheated herself of the sessions—the good food just the destructive omnipotent phantasy of infecting and sinking both herself and her object.

She thought my understanding today was excellent and she can see that I'm very much alive and alert today. Pause. She feels things are clearer today and she understands more because she went on her trip and there was a gap. Pause. But I'm very negative about her, everything I say is showing negative things, how destructive she is. So what if she has orange juice? There's no other food around, and orange juice is healthy, in fact the oranges over there are better than the ones in Bombay. And it may be an unhygienic place but she went there for something much

more. At times like that health is not so important. Any way all this will be her decision, whether she makes a wise or stupid decision or destroys what is helpful to her. The important thing is that it's her responsibility and her decision.

Here we can actually see the death of all meaning and the understanding analyst taking place, which otherwise might lead to the appearance of the dependent self. She is back to the beginning of the session as if I had't spoken at all. She will depend on her own feeding of herself, tells herself that is better. And even if she starves, it is still better than turning towards her object and depending on him. This situation I feel is the pure culture of the death instinct. I am convinced that the death instinct is represented by the breaking of all links to need satisfying objects, by the instilling of a narcissistic omnipotent phantasy of being self-sufficient and having no dependent self needing an object. What makes this a dangerous repetitive situation is, as we have seen with this patient, that there is no place for remembering the analytic food that has been given, i.e. no place for thinking, and therefore there is no place in her mind that she can think of what I am communicating to her, digesting it, and growing. There is just the omnipotent phantasy which has filled and gripped her mind.

### Conclusion

With the help of clinical material I have tried to show that the compulsion to repeat does aid us in bringing the past situation, of the way the patient has turned away from his early objects, into the consulting room. The gradual working through of this would result in the appearance of the dependent self, of remembering the memory of turning towards the object, of thinking and developing. This always involves mental pain.



However, we sometimes find that after an effective amount of working through the compulsion to repeat intensifies and becomes excessive, and instead of the appearance of the dependent self, of thinking and growth, there is substituted an omnipotent phantasy. The aim is to avoid all pain associated with the appearance of the dependent self. This is connected to the death instinct, which breaks links with the need-satisfying object and therefore with life itself.

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### AN ANALYSIS OF SOME STORIES OF "THAKURMA'R JHULI" — A BENGALI FAIRY-TALE COLLECTION

BY JAYANTI BASU

*The present paper analyses ten stories of "Thakurma'r Jhuli"—a Bengali fairy-tale collection by Mitra Majumdar (1907-08). Four judges analysed the stories in terms of uniformity of plot construction and nature of motivation of the characters. Implication of the findings in the context of Indian culture is discussed.*

*Key words : Fairy tale, culture and personality, motivation.*

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A story can be conceived of as a message with a number of explicit and implicit ideas of the author to be conveyed to the reader. It has long been recognized that the author's unconscious ideas, fantasies and attitudes are projected in a story (Freud, 1907, 1908, ; Bellak, 1975).

The case is somewhat different for a folk-lore. Reber (1985, p. 281) defines folk-lore as "the complex of songs, legends, stories etc. that make up the unwritten traditional literature of a culture." The author of a folk-lore is necessarily anonymous ; and its special feature is its endurance across generations, and its acceptability and access to a large number of people within a given culture. So one can surmise that although there is no single identifiable creator of a folklore, yet some salient elements of their mother culture must be projected through them.

One specific category of folk lore is traditional stories. According to Burne (1914), traditional stories naturally group themselves into two classes: those told as true (myths, legends, hero-tales, and sagas) and those told for amusement and hence not necessarily true (folk tales and fairy tales).

Psychological interpretation of the traditional stories follow either of two mainstreams. One approach emphasizes the generality and universality of certain ideas and emotions which are reflected through such stories. Examples are Freud's analysis of the story of Oedipus Rex (Fraud, 1916) or a number of works by Jung (1949). Other authors have also emphasized this aspect, calling fairy tales the gateway to human unconscious (Riklin, 1908; Abraham, 1909; Rank, 1919; Federn, 1924; Donen, 1983). The second approach emphasizes the fact that elements of a particular culture are reflected through such stories. Smelser (1983-84) has tried to identify the cultural and political elements of California culture in some Californian myths. Kawai (1985) has identified the trace of Japanese ideology, religion and social structure, on the whole, a glimpse of the Japanese mind in Japanese mythology. These two approaches need not necessarily be contradictory, but may supplement each other.

As stated above, fairy tales are a specific kind of traditional story told for amusement. They are directed towards children of a given society. Like other traditional stories, fairy tales are reflections of a culture's characteristic features; but it serves an additional function as well.

Hoffer (1981) emphatically pointed out that fairy tales serve an educative purpose in children. They project a chunk of the child's impulse life and then skilfully manipulate it. This treatment of impulse life through stories serve two complementary ends; one is that it conveys to the child the values and ideas in various behavioural and attitudinal domains; secondly, through fairy tales, as in play (Erikson, 1968), the child tentatively tests the fate of his impulses and wishes, projected on to the fictitious characters, and thus acquires some mastery over them.

The present study attempts to investigate whether and how these two functions of a fairy tale are served through the popular Bengali fairy tale Collection—"the Tkakurma'r Jhuli (The Grand-Ma's Bag)

by Dakshina Ranjan Mitra Majumdar. The stories were collected through verbal communication with elderly women in a number of villages in the-then undivided Bengal. The collection is arranged in 3 sections. Section I (Dudhe'r Sagar; The sea of Milk) contains 6 stories concerning kings, queens, princes and princesses as major characters, Section II (Rup—Tarasi; The frightening ones) includes 4 stories with kings, queens, princes as well as Rakhasas and Khokakasas (demons). Section III (Chang Bang) includes 4 stories involving animals and/or common people.

Freud (1900) has contended that in human unconscious the child's parents are symbolised by kings and queens, while small animals and insects may represent siblings etc. Judged from this viewpoint, the 10 stories of the first two sections are related to the child's fantasy regarding parent-child relationship. For the purpose of precision within the limit of a small study, only these ten stories will be dealt with.

#### Summary of the Stories

For those who are not acquainted with the stories, a short summary of each story is provided below.

#### Story I. Kalavati Rajkanya (Princess Kalavati)

A king had seven queens, but could not beget a child. One day a hermit came and gave the queens a magic root, which if smashed and devoured would enable them to give birth to children. However the five elder queens tactfully took the smashed root and the two younger queens got only its residue diluted in water. In due time the five elder queens gave birth to five handsome princes, and the two younger queens gave birth to an owl and a monkey, named Bhutum and Buddha. The king drove away the younger queens along with their sons who fell in poverty and disaster. As they grew up the five elder princes became cruel and tyrant, while Bhutum and Buddha grew up to be loving, intelligent and courageous. The five queens and their sons however used to torment the younger queens and their sons in various ways, while the king remained a puppet in their hands. He dared not and cared not to express his love. One day a beautiful princess named Kalavati came to that country and declared that she would wed the man who can successfully overcome

a number of dangers and present her with a flower made of gems. The five elder princes went in pursuit of her in decorated ships while Bhutum and Buddha went in shells of betel-nut. On the way to the princess's country numerous dangers befell the princes, who were about to die, and each time Bhutum and Buddha saved them. In return the princes tried to kill their younger stepbrothers. Finally, the princes were imprisoned by the princess, but Buddha, through his tact and good will succeeded in marrying Kalavati and rescued the five evil princes. Bhutum married another princess. Even after that the five princes tried to kill Bhutum and Buddha and claimed the hand of Kalavati. However, Kalavati tactfully revealed the truth to the king; Bhutum and Buddha also came back and the king realized his mistake. The evil queens and their sons were put to death. After some time Bhutum and Buddha were found to have been wearing disguises of owl and monkey, and their real identities as deities were revealed. After that the king, the two mother queens, Bhutum and Buddha and their wives lived happily together.

*Story 2 : Ghumanta Puri ( The palace in sleep )*

A prince goes to travel all alone. After a long journey he sees a forest. In the centre of the forest is a big castle where everybody is deep asleep. In one room the prince finds a beautiful princess sleeping in a bed of flowers. The prince sees a golden stick and a silver stick in the bed. As he picks up the two sticks the golden stick accidentally touches the forehead of the princess. The whole castle wakes up, the king of the castle thanks the prince, and the princess marries him.

*Story 3 : Kanakmala—Kanchanmala*

A prince and a herdsman were close friends. The prince promised to make the herdsman his minister when he would be the king. In time however, he forgot his promise and insulted the herdsman. The next morning he woke up and found thousands of needles piercing his body which could not be pulled out. The poor queen Kanchanmala went to take a bath in the river where she met a girl named Kankanmala who wished to be her maid. As the queen agreed to employ her, she stole the queens' clothes and usurped the position of the queen. The real queen Kanchanmala had

to work for her. One day Kanchanmala saw a man who claimed to pick out all sorts of needles. Kanchanmala brought him home. He took out the needles from the king's body, tactfully exposed the false queen and punished her. He turned out to be the herdsman who finally absolved the king.

*Story 4 : Sat Bhai Champa (The Seven Champa brothers)*

A king had three queens but no child. After a long time the youngest queen begot seven sons and one daughter. The elder queens became extremely jealous. They killed the newborn babies, threw them away and reported to the king that the youngest queen has given birth to mice and toads. The king drove the youngest queen away from the palace.

In the meantime the eight children were reborn as seven champa flowers and one parul flower. The king's gardener came to pluck them, but the flowers climbed higher and higher up on the tree and demanded the presence of the elder queens and finally the king. When the king arrived the flowers transformed into children and disclosed everything to the king. The king killed the evil queens and the youngest queen was accepted again.

*Story 5 : Sheet — Basanta*

A king had two queens—the favoured and the unfavoured. The favoured queen had no child, while the unfavoured queen had two sons: Sheet and Basanta. The jealous favoured queen turned the unfavoured queen to a golden parrot through some magic and declared her dead. The golden parrot flew away and was kept by a princess named Rupabati. In due time the favored queen gave birth to three sickly sons. The queen went to the king and demanded the blood of Sheet and Basanta. The king agreed and ordered accordingly. But the servant who was supposed to kill them, released them in the forest. Sheet and Basanta went into the forest, where by chance they separated. A king's elephant took Sheet away and he was made the king. Basanta stayed with a hermit.

During this period the favoured queen and the king lost their property. The king abandoned the queen who went to the forest with her three sons. There they were drowned in the sea. In the meanwhile the golden parrot became a favorite of Rupavati. Rupavati

had declared that she would wed the prince who would bring a gem (Gajamoti) which is placed on the forehead of an elephant residing near the sea. Many princes tried to recover the gem and were killed by the elephant. Sheet came to know about this, attacked the kingdom of Rupavati and imprisoned her.

In the meantime Basanta tried to get the Gajamoti and succeeded. He also brought three golden fish buried in the sand beside the sea. Then he went to the kingdom of Sheet in search of Rupavati and the two brothers were united. The three golden fish turned out to be their three sick step brothers. At the same time the golden parrot was also released of her curse and became the queen again. Basanta married Rupavati; the king was also brought back and the family lived happily ever after.

#### *Story 6 : Kironmala*

A king married the youngest of the three sisters who belonged to a poor family. When the queen was about to deliver a child the two jealous elder sisters arranged to put the newborn baby in a pot and threw it in the river. The queen was reported to have given birth to a dog. Similar events happened thrice and finally the king drove the queen away. The three babies were carried away by the river and found by a brahmin who brought them up. The two older boys were named Arun and Barun and the youngest sister was named Kironmala. After the death of the Brahmin and his wife the three siblings stayed together.

One day a hermit came by and inspired them to go and find the diamond tree with golden fruits, the spring of pearl and the golden talking bird. Arun went in search of them in the magic mountain and never came back. Barun went in search of Arun, but he also never returned. Then Kironmala started in search of her brothers. She courageously overcame the numerous horrors of the mountain and brought those valuable things. Arun, Barun and many other princes, turned to stone in that mountain were rescued.

Then one day they invited the king, and the golden bird revealed the facts of their life to the king as well as to them. The king understood everything, brought back the queen and the family was reunited. The evil sisters were killed.

#### *Story 7 : Nilkamal a'r Lalkamal (Nilkamal and Lalkamal)*

A king had two queens, one of them being a Rakshasi (demon) in disguise. They had two sons. Ajit was the son of the Rakshasi and Kusum was a human. While the brothers loved each other very much, the Rakshasi was planning evil. One day she called her friends, devoured the human queen, inactivated the king by spell and destroyed everything in the kingdom. When she started devouring Kusum, Ajit stood up in protest and the queen devoured them both. The next morning she spit them out in the form of two eggs. The princes were reborn from the eggs as Nilkamal and Lalkamal. They travelled a lot, fought with a number of demons, and married two beautiful princesses. The Rakshasi queen learnt about it and tactfully arranged to send them to the land of the Rakshasas where they would be killed. However with the help of two birds they reached that land of horror, killed all the Rakshasas and finally killed the Rakshasi queen. Then they were united with their father.

#### *Story 8 : Dalim Kumar*

A king had a queen and a son named Dalimkumar. The life of the queen was contained in a dice. A Rakshasi came to know this, sent the dice away and devoured the queen. Then she took the appearance of the queen. The king did not suspect anything, but the prince understood everything. In due time the Rakshasi queen gave birth to seven sons who however loved their elder brother. One day the eight brothers went away for travel. The Rakshasi called for her agent—a snake named Suta-shankha, who informed the Rakshasi that the life of the prince was contained in a seed of a fruit. She concealed it within the staircase and at once Dalimkumar became blind. The seven younger brothers did not know this and moved on while the blind prince fell from the horse on the verge of a city. In the meanwhile the seven brothers reached the kingdom of the seven Rakshasi sisters who played dice with them and after their defeat devoured them.

Sutashankha, upon the order of the queen has come and resided within the body of the princess of the city near which Dalimkumar fell. Every night the princess was married to a man who became the king for a night, and the snake devoured him. Dalimkumar was selected the king that night. When the princess slept Sutashanka

came out to devour him. The blind prince cut him to pieces with a sword and at once got back his sight. A letter was obtained from the stomach of the snake wherefrom the prince understood everything. He went to the seven sisters who were also agents of the Rakshasi queen, defeated them and killed them. He also slayed the Rakshasi queen disguised as a mouse. The real queen mother was revived and all were reunited.

*Story 9: Patal Kanya Manimala (Manimala, the princess of the lower world)*

A prince and a minister's son were close friends. They went for a travel where they saw a big python with a gem on its forehead. They killed it and took the gem. Then they entered into a pond which gave them way to go down and down, till they reached the world below the earth, which is resided by thousands of snakes. However as long as they possessed the gem, the snakes did not do any harm. There they saw Manimala, the princess, who married the prince. Then his friend started toward home to inform everybody.

One day Manimala took the gem and went up the surface of the pond where another prince saw her. After Manimala immersed into water this unfortunate prince became love struck and mad. An old woman saw the whole affair and went to the father of the mad prince and suggested that if he would promise to offer his daughter to her ugly son Pencho then she might cure the prince. The king agreed. The old woman tactfully caught Manimala, took the gem from her and delivered her to the king. As soon as Manimala was gone, her husband was surrounded by the snakes whose poisonous breath made him unconscious.

In the mean time the minister's son came back and understood everything. He dressed up like Pencho, deceived everybody, took the gem from the old woman and married the princess as promised by the king. Then he told everything to the princess and rescued Manimala who was united with her husband.

*Story 10: Sona'r Kati Rupa'r Kati*

A prince had four friends. All of them were very idle. So their fathers arranged to give them cinder instead of rice, whereby

they felt insulted and left their homes. They reached a forest where they saw a head of a deer which they decided to have for dinner. But this head was really a Rakshasi in disguise who devoured the three friends of the prince. The prince ran for life, but the Rakshasi also ran in pursuit. Finally a big mango tree concealed the prince inside its trunk. Then the Rakshasi took the appearance of a beautiful damsel. The king of that city married her.

Then the Rakshasi queen pretended to be ill and ordered the mango tree to be destroyed. The prince was concealed in a mango by the tree and delivered in the pond. A big fish ate it up. Then the Rakshasi ordered that fish to be caught and the fish concealed the prince within a snail's shell. A housewife broke the shell, saw the prince and gave her shelter.

Then the Rakshasi persuaded the King to send the prince to the land of the Rakshasas to bring a specific fruit. The prince had to go, and finally reached the land of the Rakshasas. There he saw a princess captivated by the Rakshasas. She gave him shelter and also told him how to kill the Rakshasi who captivated her. The life of this Rakshasi was contained in a snake residing within a crystal pillar beneath a pond and the prince had to kill it within one breath without spilling any blood. The prince succeeded in doing it. All the Rakshasas were killed. The prince took the princess, also took the parrot that contained the life of the Rakshasi queen, reached the court of the king and exposed and killed the Rakshasi. The three friends were revived and all of them went back home.

#### METHOD

Four judges, two of them being lecturers at the department of Psychology at the University of Calcutta and two being Lecturers of Bengali and History at two different colleges, judged the first 10 stories of the Thakurma'r Jhuli. The domains of interest were specified before hand, keeping in mind the purpose of the study. These domains were,

i. A search to determine whether there exists a recognizable configurational pattern of plot construction running through the stories.

ii. If such a configuration could be found, a subsequent analysis of the motivational and behavioral aspects of the characters including,

- a) Initial need state of the characters
- b) The reinforcing aspect of the events, that is the distribution of reward and punishment.
- c) Treatment of the libidinal and aggressive impulses.

For dealing with Domain I, the four judges independently sorted out the pattern running through the stories. For dealing with Domain II the technique of content analysis was resorted to. All the characters of the stories were identified and the judges assigned them in various relevant categories. However keeping in mind Barthes' (1972) criticism, simple counting of references was not done. Each judge was asked to take into account not the mere frequency of reference, but the significance of the character's contribution in the context of the total organization of the story.

It was observed that the judges agreed almost on all points, probably because the characters of the stories are quite unambiguous and simple. The very few points of discrepancy were noted down and agreement was sought by mutual discussion.

Finally an attempt was done to understand how the stories of "Thakumar Jhuli" as analyzed by the judges, serve the two major functions of fairy tales. That is, to what extent they are reflections of the Indian culture, and secondly, how they are supposed to help the young readers to master their future roles.

## RESULT & DISCUSSION

### Domain I

All the judges identified a definite pattern of plot construction in 8 out of 10 stories. These two exceptions are 'Ghumanta Puri' and 'Kanchanmala — Kankanmala'

In all the other 8 stories there is a father figure who is to some extent passive, rather insensitive and lacking in decision. Under evil influence he harms the hero, although at times unknowingly, as in Patal Kanya Manimala.

At the end of the story however, he admits his fault and lovingly accepts the hero.

In most of these stories (except Patal Kanya Manimala) there is a real mother who is highly passive, loving but an insignificant entity. The villain in all cases is a woman, an evil step-mother or

an evil old woman or a Rakshasi masquarding as a queen. This evil mother somehow manipulates the king, usurps power, often harms or destroys the good queen, and persecutes the hero. In the end, the hero manages to survive, overcomes the evil striving of the persecutor female and finally destroys her. The good mother is revived. During his adventures, the hero comes across a beautiful damsel, rescues or wins her, and weds her. This last statement is, however not applicable to two stories, viz. Sat Bhai Champa, and Kironmala.

As stated before, two stories fell totally out of this pattern, namely 'Ghumanta Puri' and 'Kanchanmala — Kankanmala'. The former is featured with intense romanticism and has a lyrical quality, but hardly any organised plot. The second is a story with much more complication than all the rest, and this is the only story included in the present category where a character belonging to low social status is ascribed a highly significant role.

However since a definite pattern of plot construction is discernible among 8 out of 10 stories it can perhaps be assumed that it does contain a definite message which is important in some way in the context of the culture where it is generated, and serves some definite purpose as far as its receivers are concerned. If it did not touch the sentiment of the people in some way or other, it could not have survived the long ordeal of transmission through numerous generations.

In the following section the nature of this message would be dealt with in detail.

### DOMAIN II

#### a) Analysis of the initial need state

The initial need state of the heroes seem only very vaguely defined. In 6 out of 10 stories (Sheet Basanta, Ghumanta Puri, Neelkamal—Lal Kamal, Dalimkumar, Patal Kanya Manimala and Sonnr Kati Ruper Kati) the fate of the heroes lead them to their destiny; No recognisable conscious motive force bar a streak of curiosity in some cases, appears to initiate the chain of events. The heroes are sort of "thrown into the events". The events are not inevitable consequences of their actions.

In 4 other stories, however, definite motivational spring-boards

can be identified. In Kalavati Rajkanya, the two heroes, Bhutum and Buddhu, pave their own way to prosperity, initiated by their rivalry and grudge against their tormentors, as well as by heterosexual attraction. In the story of Kanchanmala, the herdsman has devised methods to have revenge on his traitor friend, the king. In Kironmala, the two brothers, Arun and Barun begin their adventure in search of glamerous material possession, while Kironmala's motive force is her wish to rescue the brothers. In Sat Bhai Champa, the seven brothers and one sister turned to flowers, act tactfully so as to undo the wrong done to them and to expose the evil-doers.

So, as far as the heroes are concerned, we find explicit mention of need for revenge and only occasional mention of need for prized possession and sex.

The motives of the villains are almost uniform in all cases. They are depicted as intrinsically cruel and malicious, jealous, vindictive and harming the hero almost relentlessly. This relentlessness signifies an instinctual impulsive character. There are however two exceptions. In the story of Kanchanmala-Kankanmala only, the maid wanted to usurp power and tortured the queen for that purpose. In Patal Kanya Manimala the evil old woman wanted to get her son married to the princess. In all other cases, the villains were already queens, or Rakshasi under the guise of queen. But obtaining this status appeared not to satisfy their destructiveness. In a few stories, an initial cause for the aggression has been mentioned, that is the jealousy toward another queen who could bear a child.

So, on the whole, the major need of the villains is aggression and destruction.

There is also little mention of definite motive in the heroines. Whenever mentioned, their major motive is to attain a suitable groom. They are often smart, beautiful damsels, hetero-sexually oriented and tactful on occasions. Sometimes they have deliberately set up rules to select the most worthy suitor. Thus their major need is need for marriage and sexuality.

The major explicit motives for the paternal figures is the desire to have children, love for children and sexual attraction. The mother figures are of two types. One is the villain Rakshasi type mentioned before. The other is a good mother, but so pallidly portrayed that no picture of her personality emerges at all.

However, even in the cases where no conscious motive is explicitly stated in the stories, it can be assumed that there must exist some need state even at the unconscious level. This unconscious motive is usually reflected through the result of an action as a compromise between cathexis and counter-cathexis (Freud, 1916). So analysis of the end result in terms of distribution of reward-punishment provide further insight into the motives of the character.

#### b) Distribution of reward and punishment

It is observed that all the heroes are necessarily rewarded by bestowing upon them the status of the king or the crown prince; in 8 cases, they are also married to a beautiful girl. They also achieve the glory of destroying the evil and in most cases there is parental acceptance and reunion. Thus although sexuality was rarely mentioned as a conscious motive it crops up as a salient feature in the form of reward.

The villain, on the other hand, almost always meets with dishonour and death. It is also interesting to note that the hero often finds way to destroy the evil entity (often the evil mother figure) through her own design to persecute the hero. For example, the Rakshasi sends the prince to the land of death where he discovers his lady love as well as the means to destroy the Rakshasi. Thus, it seems that the ultimate destruction of the evil mother is a result of her own aggression.

So the message regarding motivation of the characters as conveyed through the stories of the "Thakumar Jhuli" can be summarized as follows: There are some persons, who, favoured by their stars and through their valour, can undo any evil act directed against them. They may or may not actively seek prosperity. But grand experiences are thrust upon them. Any effort to do harm to them is ultimately thwarted, and the designer of such evil act is crushed. The heroes are bestowed with power, money, status and sexual gratification. On the part of the women, the main reward is marriage. The motivation of the villains are sometimes embedded in intrinsic malevolence, or occasionally in an effort to usurp power. It is also interesting to note that although marriage has been considered as the ultimate reward in many cases, definite sexual attraction on the part of the hero and the heroine is seldom explicitly men-

tioned. This however is occasionally clearly stated for the parental figures.

In the following section a detailed analysis of the expression of the two major impulses, namely libidinal and aggressive impulses, would be done.

### c) Analysis of the impulses

One characteristic of the stories is that there is comparatively little expression of direct libidinal impulse, whereas aggressive impulse and its various nuances have been elaborated upon.

Sexual attraction is directly mentioned only in two cases: these are the prince in "Ghumanta Puri" and the king in "Sonar Kati Rupar Kati". In both of these cases the physical beauty of the maid is the source of attraction. In many other cases however the kings are behaving unjustly under the influence of the queens, but the libidinal nature of their bond is not explicitly mentioned. The princesses are also mostly heterosexually oriented, but the specifications of their attractions are lacking.

The overall impression is that, although the impact of sexuality cannot be ignored in the stories, it is, in general mentioned implicitly, thus signifying a mechanism like repression in operation.

Analysis of the characters along the aggressive-non-aggressive dimension however reveals the presence of rich variations. Here aggressive behavior has been defined as any action that injures the opponent or causes the opponent to retreat. (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica Micropedia, 1987).

Aggressive behaviour has been categorized here mainly in terms of conscious intent. Five categories have been discerned, viz. hostile, selfish, prosocial, unintentional and non-aggressive. This line of approach in judging aggressive behaviour has been discussed by Buss (1961), Bandura (1969), Silverman (1971).

The percentage of occurrence of various categories of aggressive behaviour have been shown in Table 1 below:

TABLE 1

Percentage of aggressive behaviour in various categories for characters of various significance.

Significance	A g g r e s s i o n									
	Hostile		Selfish		Prosocial		Unintentional		Nonaggressive	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Very high	2.65	25.81	0	3.23	15.79	3.23	0	0	21.05	16.13
High	2.63	6.45	0	0	2.63	0	2.63	0	7.89	19.35
Moderate	2.63	3.23	0	0	0	0	10.55	0	10.53	9.68
Low	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.89	0
Very low	0	3.23	0	0	0	0	2.63	0	10.53	9.68



It is observed that the number of non-aggressive characters are highest for each sex, followed by hostile characters, where however females greatly outnumber the males. Then comes prosocial aggression where males outnumber females. Unintentional aggression is depicted only for males, while selfish aggressive act is conducted by females only.

In terms of significance of the character in the story, the category of aggressive behaviour displayed was also judged. Inspection of Table 1 shows that the male characters judged to be of "very high significance" are predominantly non-aggressive or prosocial. Females judged to be of "very high significance" are predominantly hostile, then non-aggressive.

"Highly significant" females are either hostile or non-aggressive, but "highly significant" males are primarily non-aggressive.

The consequences of aggression are also typically patterned. Hostile aggression by both sexes initially appears to serve the intended purpose, but soon disaster befalls the evil-doers, often as a logical consequence of the person's hostile activity, but also aided by some stroke of luck. The final punishment is death in all cases, with the exception of the king in "Kanchanmala" - "Kankanmala", who is rescued after prolonged and deadly suffering.

The consequence of aggression with pro-social intent is always rewarding; the pro-social aggressor is bestowed with status, sexual gratification, money, and reunion with loved ones.

The non-aggressive men constitute a mixed group in terms of significance in the story. When they are significant characters (Buddhu, the prince in "Ghumanta Puri", and Sheet and Basanta) they always thrive. But when they belong to the comparatively insignificant categories their fates are often left untold.

For the non-aggressive women, however, a more general pattern is discernible. All of them suffer at first, and thrive only later on, often saved by a pro-socially aggressive hero.

So, the message regarding aggressivity can be put into the following words; Hostile and selfish aggression befits only the evil minded person: Those with pro-social aggression are aided by luck and obtain glamour and glory. Those who are not hostile by nature, but are trapped unknowingly in acting aggressively are met with

happiness after suffering and repentance. The non-aggressive persons sometimes suffer at first, but ultimately flourish.

#### SUMMARY OF THE ABOVE DISCUSSION

Summarily, the following main features can be extracted from the stories.

1. Emphasis on fate-dependent life in contrast to conscious, self-made life style.
2. Hostile aggression for both sexes is considered punishable. Non-aggressive behavior is supposed to be rewarding.
3. Pro-social aggression is considered to be highly rewarding for men. Unintentional aggression is ultimately forgiven.
4. In women, hostile persons are highly active, and non-aggressive ones are usually quite passive. It can be said, that activity in women is generally associated with malevolence.
5. There is a specific pattern of plot in most of the stories: the vicious mother figure manipulates the father (but never kills him), destroys the good mother figure, persecutes the son often with the help of her own sons or agents, but is ultimately exposed and killed by the son. The son is married to a beautiful girl and the good mother is also revived.

As stated before, there are two stories that fall out of this pattern. One is "Ghumanta Puri" and the other is "Kanchanmala-Kankanmala". In the opinion of the present author these two stories should be treated separately, which is out of the purview of the present paper. Most of the comments made in the following section are only tangentially applicable to these two, but are directly related to the remaining eight stories.

#### Indian culture and the stories of "Thakurma'r Jhuli"

One may wonder how the above mentioned features of the stories befit Indian culture. To understand this, the nature of traditional India is to be discussed.

Mitra (1985) has described the existence of a typical Indian personality where he has recognised "an over arching communality encompassing the sub-cultures" (p. 38). He pointed out that lack of real warmth in Indian mothers coupled with excessive exposure of

the child to the breast facilitates the "split between the 'good' and 'bad' breast, laying the foundation for all later object relations. The good breast is a fantasy, while the bad breast is the experience. One wishes for the one, while one avoids the other..... The Indian mind is in conflict, over the good and the evil". ( p. 45 ).

Mitra agrees with a number of foreign observers of Indian culture that in Indian Society there is a definite identity confusion. In Indian training there is an emphasis on strict role playing within the context of a rigid role definition. The child does not develop into an integrated person assimilating the possible contradictions of human nature, but learns to play the role literally both within and outside the family. Thus, there develops "a diffusion of identity and an unclear identification with the parents". ( p. 48 ). Kakar and Ross ( 1986 ) have noted a similar phenomenon in their attempt to explain the story of Radha-Krishna in Indian context. They noted that in Indian love lyrics, there is a lack of development of independent character style. But the flavour of the poem dwells in an eroticism that is "narcissistic in spirit" ( p. 84 ) and characterised by description of immediate sensuousness. They also noted a blurring of "the boundaries between internal feeling and external sensation" ( p. 84 ). Thus there is much less differentiation of the ego than in western culture.

Mitra has further pointed out that in Indian Society the father is a physically proximate, but psychologically distant character. At the same time he is the final decision maker. The family is the focal ground of object relation, and the child learns to adapt to the immediate demands of the family from an early age. This adaptation, however, is obtained through literal role playing and thus gives rise to stereotyped behavioral expression within the boundary of specific defined social roles. This, coupled with ambiguous toilet training, generates tolerance of ambiguity, filth and dirt, and results in typical Indian "apathy".

This description befits the concept of what Reisman et al (1974) called tradition directed society emphasizing "security and sustenance" (Plummer, 1989).

The stories of Thakurma'r Jhuli in general reflect this typical India. There is necessarily a blurred father who hardly understands the wife or son, but who is the ultimate decision maker. In most

stories there are two mother figures—one good and one bad to the extreme, probably symbolising the good and the bad breast. Also perhaps because, as Mitra puts it, "the bad breast is the experience", the bad mother is portrayed with rich and vivacious colours ; but the good mother is never detailed. She is like a dim fantasy beyond the present evil. Also, the depiction of the characters are quite stereotyped, there is virtually no unexpected turn in any the characters. This may be a reflection of strict adherence to defined role in Indian culture, where scope of variety is considerably reduced. This feature may be related to the basic identity confusion of the Indian personality.

As stated before, there is a second aspect in understanding fairy tales, which needs attention. This is the educative function directed towards helping the child learn the rules of the society as well as to master its own impulses in the way prescribed by the culture. Reisman et al. ( 1974 ) pointed out that in tradition directed society stories with a moral is emphasized, since they facilitate role learning. The stories in "Thakurma,r Jhuli" sustain this character. All the stories end in punishment of the evil and glorification of the hero who abides by the role prescriptions. Thus they serve the useful purpose of maintaining the structure of the society as it is.

The second function of mastery of impulses is also important. Hoffer ( 1981 ) pointed out that fairy tales provide, in measured dosage, a scope to tackle in fantasy the libidinal and aggressive impulses, which, if encountered in real life, gives rise to extreme anxiety. The stories of "Thakurmar Jhuli" provides insignificant and stereotyped treatment of sexual impulse. Sexuality comes naturally, as a rewarding consequence of heroic acts, but its nuances are not detailed. This may imply a general acceptance of sexuality as a matter of fact and repression of its affec-

tive charge. On the other hand, aggressive impulse, directed specifically to the mother is dealt in vivid detail. This may be related to the fact that preoccupation with the aggressive mother is one major problem in Indian culture. In the stories of the "Thakurma'r Jhuli" the child gets a scope to deal in fantasy with the bad mother and can destroy her in the end, thus being better equipped to withstand the typical cultural reality.

In conclusion, it must be admitted that the present paper provides only a glimpse of the rich psychological material residing within these very popular stories. Quite a number of areas have remained untouched, including such important features like use of symbolism in the tales. It is however to be understood that a tale can be analysed at various levels, and the present paper has dealt only with the motivational level.

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