

Chapter 3

Characters' Roles and Sibling Relationships in the Selected Tales

Like other kinds of children's literature, fairy tales provide children with examples of life experience they may face. Many themes of these tales reflect views of childhood and family life. A prominent theme in the tales, unsurprisingly, has been the relationship between a child and other family's members, especially siblings' relationship. The comparative analysis of Thai and the Brothers the Grimms' fairy tales is divided into three parts: characters' roles (major and minor characters), sibling relationship types (positive, negative, and insignificant) and the comparison of the noteworthy points in the analyses.

Characters' Roles

This section portrays the analyses of major and minor characters found in the selected fairy tales. Major characters are divided into two kinds: a protagonist and an antagonist. Supporters are minor characters. They help either major characters or minor ones.

1. Major Characters

Most of the youngest children (41 out of the 55 selected fairy tales) are the protagonists--twenty-four youngest brothers as the heroes and seventeen youngest sisters as the heroines. The rest of the tales, fourteen, shows either the eldest or the middle children as the protagonists. Regarding antagonists, the roles are mostly played by the stepmothers and the elder siblings, with the stepmothers assuming, the role of the arch-opponents. In studying the character roles, scholars have paid great attention on the hero types based on their objectives and activities, which, in turn, relate to their interaction with other characters, especially the antagonists.

1.1 The Protagonists

There are various kinds of protagonists' roles found in the selected tales (figure 1, page 30): the foolish, the helper, the victim, the fortune seeker, the scapegoat, the provider, the clever or tricksters and the lucky. The foolish are usually the lucky ones as well. They surprisingly get reward such as the male sibling in "The Youth Who Couldn't Shiver and Shake" and "The Queen Bee". The youngest sibling's roles in "The Crystal Ball" and "The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids" are examples of the victims. Two of the selected tales, "The King of the Golden Mountain" and "The Two Kings' Children" portray the heroes as the social victims. They devote their lives in order to save a kingdom or the land. Both the helpers and the victims are often seen in these selected tales. The victim is sometimes the helper afterwards. Some tales portray the female role as that of the good helper such as in "The Seven Ravens", "The Enchanted Stag" and "The Six Swans". The fortune seeker has some adventure in finding a magical object. For example, the group of brothers in "The Fortune Seekers", "The Three Trades" and "The Father's Legacies" go away from home because they want to search for fame. The examples of the providers are the youngest siblings in "The House in the Wood" and "The Three Little Men in the Wood". The provider role usually belongs to the female character. The trickster or the clever is sometimes the same person as the foolish or the simple such as the youngest brother in "The Youth Who Couldn't Shiver and Shake" and "The Queen Bee". The protagonists with insignificant sibling relationship are usually the tricksters or the clever, the youngest sibling in "The Bride Choosing" and "The Three Sluggards", for example. Another role is that of the lucky. The siblings playing this role are mostly the trickster and the clever.

Two prominent scholars of fairy tales: Valadimir Propp and C.G, Jung pay a particular attention to the hero types in the myth and the fairy tale. They similarly classify hero types according to hero's actions and objectives; therefore, their hero types seem parallel to a certain extent.

In studying the collective unconscious and the archetype, while expanding Freud's theory of the unconscious. Jung (1968 quoted in Guerin, 1999 : 163) outlines

three hero archetypes differentiated by actions and life purposes: *the quest-hero*, *the initiation-hero* and *the sacrificial scapegoat*. The quest-hero makes himself responsible for some long journeys to seek good fortune. An example of the quest hero is Oedipus who faces a supernatural monster called Sphinx. He answers her riddle and later saves the kingdom (Guerin, 1979 : 168). To Jung, *the quest-hero* leaves home to perform impossible tasks receives magical power/gets good things solves riddles overcomes the obstacles restores the kingdom/marries a princess. The archetype of *the initiation-hero* is similar to the quest-hero in that he undergoes ordeals and is helped by magical agents or receiving magical power but differs from the first in terms of his objectives. The initiation-hero's life objectives relate to birth-death-resurrection whereas those of the quest-hero do not. There are three distinct phases of the initiation-hero: separation, transformation, and return. The third hero archetype, the sacrificial scapegoat hero must die to compensate for people's sins and restore the kingdom (Jung, 1979 : 162). Phrixus and Helle, who are King Athamas's children, are sent to be sacrificed to Zeus, for people who die in famine, for example (Frazer, 1983 : 290).

Propp (1975 : 37-39) differentiates three types of heroes by their functions and actions: *the seeker-hero*, *the victim-hero* and *the provider-hero*. Propp believes that the hero of all types has a magnificent attribute representing the rite of passage: separation initiation return. The seeker-hero leaves home to search for either his fortune or relatives. The victim-hero is usually pursued or driven out of home; his/her destiny may depend on magical agents. The provider-hero spends his time seeking good fortune and offering something to the lowly.

In terms of hero's objectives, both Jung's and Propp's types of heroes seem similar in that the hero of each type passes through obstacles and seeks good fortune or a companion. Later, the hero deserves rewards: inheriting the kingdom, getting some property and getting married. However, the types of heroes of both Propp's and Jung's differ in terms of content. Jung focuses his study on the archetype of characters which relates to the collective unconscious, while Propp (1975) concentrates on characters' functions "which are character's acts defined from the point of view of their significance for the course of the action"(21).

Regarding character's actions, the hero types seem very much alike. Through the initiation processes, the protagonist illustrates his/her abilities and develops his/her ego-consciousness. Most heroes/heroines of both Jung's and Propp's face the separation from their relatives or siblings. After that, their appearances may change because of the enchantment or the curse broken and good luck granted. However, Jung uses the term 'initiation' to relate to birth-death and resurrection, which may not be paralleled to that of the heroes of this present study. Propp's hero types, therefore, seem more appropriate than those of Jung. However, the terms used by both Jung and Propp are defined with overlapping meanings. The seeker (Propp's term) plays the same role as the quest hero (Jung's term), and the victim (Propp's term) is also similar to the scapegoat (Jung's term). As discussed above, all kinds of hero must pass through the initiation processes. The initiation hero (Jung's term) may relate to all three kinds of Propp's heroes. Thus, the three types of heroes--the victim, the seeker, and the provider--will be employed for character analyses.

The victim protagonists are mostly found in the tales which present the relationship between the stepmother or the wicked mother and her stepchildren such as, in "Pla Boo Thong", "Nang Sib Song", "Cinderella", "The Widow's Two Daughters", "The Three Men in the Wood" and "The Crystal Ball". The main character, usually female, often suffers from the jealousy and enmity of his/her stepsiblings and the stepmother. Eventually, the protagonist succeeds with the help of magical agents and/or because of his/her virtues. The victim-protagonists represent the triumph of the oppressed over the other more fortunate.

Female main characters are usually victim protagonists. Most of them are badly treated and some of them are driven out of home, and await the help of magical agents or animals. In "Pla Boo Thong," and "Cinderella", the female protagonist finds consolation with the lowly beings that later turn out to be their magical helpers. She also can communicate with or befriend animals such as birds, rats and ducks.

Twenty-nine out of the selected tales show the victimized protagonists: twenty-four female main characters and five male counterparts. Victim-heroes are found in such tales as "The Singing Bone" and "The Royal Turnip". The roles of victim protagonists are more passive than those of other kinds of hero. Similar to the female

protagonists, these heroes often wait for the help of magical agents. Both the female and male victim protagonists are generous, loyal, and optimistic to the point of being naïve.

Only two tales present the social victims or Jung's scapegoats who sacrifice themselves for people's sin. In "The Two Kings' Children" and "The King of the Golden Mountain" the heroes devote themselves to breaking the enchantment and marrying the princesses. "The objective of the heroes is to make the divinity less angry or to purge society of its aggressiveness" (Burrows, 1973: 403). The hero of this type is brave, loyal and devoted. No sacrificial scapegoat protagonist is found among the selected Thai tales.

The seeker hero knows what his destination is or why he leaves home but the victim hero's journey mark the beginning of his adventure without any objective. Most tales focus on the variety of expeditions which obstruct the protagonist's success such as in "Holwichai and Khawee", "The Tailor's Three Sons", "The Fortune Seekers", "The Golden Bird" and "The Father's Legacies". Seeking fortune or a magical object may signify the way to find a new world. Hope and victory are the seeker's rewards. The main characters in this type are primarily brave, cunning and generous heroes.

The provider's major role is to give help as requested by the poor or the lowly, although he/she seems to have very little to offer. Usually, he/she happens to find a magical agent often in disguise as an old man, an animal (usually a wolf) or an old woman, in the woods or along a route, for example, in "The House in the Wood", "Snow-White and Red-Rose", "The Golden Goose" and "The Three Feathers". The provider-protagonist's objective is similar to that of the seeker; he has a long journey to make to find something, which will be valuable to him later. The provider protagonist's characteristics as found in the selected tales are generosity, optimism, courteousness and bravery. Generally, the attributes of heroes are bravery, generosity and resourcefulness. Also, the female protagonists are courteous, loyal and cunning.

Each hero type in these selected tales can be grouped into the three types of Propp's hero terms from the aforementioned discussion. Firstly, the foolish, the victim, and the scapegoat are victim heroes. Secondly, the provider plays the same role as the helper. The last group, the seeker, includes the clever/the trickster, the lucky and the

fortune seeker. All types of heroes/protagonists can be grouped in these three types of heroes according to Propp's hero categories. These types of heroes under this study can be illustrated as follows:

Propp's hero types	The Victim	The Provider	The Seeker
8 hero types found in these selected fairy tales	The Foolish The Scapegoat The Victim	The Helper The Donor	The Fortune Seeker The Clever / The Trickster The Lucky

Figure 1. Hero types in the selected fairy tales

1.2 The Antagonists

The antagonists in the selected tales are usually stepmothers (the terrible mothers) and elder siblings. However, in "Sang Thong", King Samol (the male protagonist's father-in-law and the female protagonist's father) may be considered an antagonist. Generally, the antagonists play the roles against the protagonist who is usually the youngest child. The terrible mother or the stepmother contrives a way to destroy the protagonist.

In Thai tales, the antagonist's role is assumed by the minor-wife of the protagonist's father, that is, the minor-wife is also the stepmother. As polygamy used to be a common practice in Thai traditional society, the minor wife-- stepmothers are very commonly found. Besides, the mother-in-law's role in Thai tales is also as prominent as that of the stepmother in the Grimms' tales. Like the stepmother, she tries to destroy her stepdaughter's happiness. Generally, the relationship between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law in Thai tales is negative. However, in this study, tales with such relationship can not be found, due to the limited number of the tales.

The antagonists may be villainous or only hostile. They intend to destroy the protagonist. Some try to kill the protagonist or cause him/her great harm, such as

abducting, causing injury, or leaving the protagonist to danger, while others just want to trouble the protagonist. Propp (1975 : 31-34) suggests the following forms of ill intent which the villain can do: “abduction, seizure, pillage, causing injury, causing a sudden disappearance, enticement, breaking a spell, murder, imprisonment, threat and threat of cannibalism”.

The following discussion will elaborate on the roles of the mother (or the stepmother), the elder children and the father as either the antagonist or the villain.

1.2.1 The (Terrible) Mother as the Antagonists

Of the 55 selected tales, nineteen tales of both the Grimms’ and Thai fairy tales illustrate the inhumane role of wicked (step)mothers (7 tales), witches (4 tales) and terrible mothers (8 tales) (see appendix 6). All the female antagonists of this category intend to get rid of their stepchildren by murder. The stepmother is usually a wicked witch or a giantess in disguise such as the mother in “The Crystal Ball”, “The Enchanted Stag” and “Nang Sib Song”. The process of the stepmother or the terrible mother uses includes, firstly, trying to force her stepchild to face the hardship, secondly, injuring the unlucky protagonist or putting him/her under an enchantment, and then, imprisoning and finally, killing. Typically, the stepmothers of the fairy tale are mean, sadistic and hideous. Bad luck always falls on them at the end of the tales.

1.2.2 The Elder Children as the Antagonists

In twelve of the selected tales, the elder children clearly play the role of the antagonists. These elder siblings include four sisters and eight brothers. Their objectives are the same as those of the stepmother--killing and sometimes getting rid of a competent character (usually the youngest sibling). However, not all of the elder children intend to murder their youngest child. The female elder children in “The

Drummer”, “The Dwarf”, “The Lion’s Castle” and “Sang Thong” and the elder brothers in “The Queen Bee”, “The Three Feathers”, “The Golden Bird” as well as “The Golden Goose” cause harm to their youngest sibling. Only the elder brothers in the other four tales: “The Singing Bone”, “The Water of Life”, “The Royal Turnip” and “Sang Silp Chai” attempt to kill their youngest brothers. A few of the elder siblings help their mother to destroy the protagonist’s plans.

1.2.3 The Fathers as the Villains

A few tales present the father as the antagonist. However, none of the Grimms' tales are in this category. In "Sang Silp Chai", "Sang Thong" and "Jampa Si Ton" on the other hand, the protagonist's father (presumably "encouraged by his minor/other wife"), orders that the protagonist (who appears unnatural at birth) be put to death, and drives away the protagonist's mother from his kingdom. In "Sang Thong" the female protagonist's father is also credulous and unkind. When his youngest daughter chooses an ugly and lowly husband (the male protagonist), he drives her together with her husband away and tries by all means to kill his unacceptable son-in-law. Then, he commands the male protagonist to complete impossible tasks, hoping that, if the protagonist does not succeed, he will receive a death punishment. The terrible father’s role in “Sang Thong” presents a conflict between the father and his children. The problems between them relate to jealousy among co-wives, marriage and social conflicts.

The antagonists in the selected tales of this study are hostile and often destructive figures. They create difficulties, which are like conditions for the protagonist to prove his/her stamina or capability.

2. Minor Characters

The minor characters include magical agents such as the Good Mother, magical objects and helpful animals. All play supportive roles, to help and encourage either the protagonist or the antagonist.

2.1 Protagonist's Supporters

The magical agents are revealed when the protagonist faces difficulties. Three types of magical agents are found in these selected fairy tales: helpful animals, good persons including the Good Mother, and magical objects.

The helpful animals play prominent roles in fairy tales. Usually these helpful animals seem insignificant and often weak in the eyes of ordinary people. In the Grimms' fairy tales, wolves, a golden bird, bees, ants, and fish are usually found. A duck and a fish are the helpful animals illustrated in "Pla Boo Thong", although they do not help the female protagonist to find a magical object as those in the Grimms' tales. The generous animals of such tales not only plan to do something for the protagonist but also guide him/her to kill or destroy his/her adversaries. Besides, the three animals in "The Queen Bee", ants, ducks and bees incidentally represent different elements; the ants stand for earth, the duck for the water in which they swim and the bees the air in which they fly" (Bettelhiem, 1976 : 78). In "The Golden Bird", the wolf waits for the male protagonist in order to tell him the way to get the golden bird back. These animals, sometimes, make a decision for the protagonists who are usually either the providers or the seeker heroes who have been kind to these lowly creatures and the latter reward them later when they are in danger.

In the selected fairy tales, many of the helpful animals symbolize some beliefs according to Western mythology. The wolf, for example, is a prominent character in the mythologies of the North American Indians of the Central woodlands. "In woodlands mythology, the wolf figures are most prominently the beloved brother of the culture hero", and "in Basin myths, the wolf and the Coyote, the trickster, are the brothers or partners who travel and share adventures together" (Leach, 1984 : 1180).

Likewise, the wolf in “The Golden Bird” advises the youngest child (the protagonist) to catch the golden bird. They both go into the forest and accomplish their goal.

Apart from helpful animals, good persons, such as Indra and the hermit are especially prevalent in Thai tales whereas the wise old man and the fairy godmother are often presented in the Grimms' tales as well. They usually help and support the victim protagonists.

Indra generally plays an important role in Thai and other Eastern fairy tales and myths. He is the chief of the gods and goddesses. Two of the selected Thai tales show Indra as a good helper and a judge. In “Sang Silp Chai”, Indra gives the male protagonist a magical bow and an arrow. He also creates a wonderful palace for the main character. Indra of this tale is like a foster-father. In the same way, the God Indra in “Sang Thong” is a protective elderly father figure. He assists Phra Sang to prove his ability and reveal his true self at the end.

The hermit in “Pla Boo Thong” creates a new life for the female protagonist. He takes care of her as a godfather or more accurately, a grandfather. A similar (grand)fatherly role of the hermit can also be found in “Khawee” in which the orphaned cub and the young bull are magically turned into princely brothers. Both Indra’s and the hermit’s roles are, therefore, those of the grandfather or the old benevolent male figure.

The fairy godmother is an anomaly and a very kind supernatural being in fairy tales. She often bestows good fortune and good things especially on the victim. The godmother’s role in “Cinderella” is the most recognized. She transforms the female protagonist’s shabby old clothes into a wonderful dress and provides necessary things for her.

The good mother’s roles in “Snow-White and Red-Rose” and that of the mother-in-law in “Manohra” of the *Jataka* version are compatible with the fairy godmother’s role. The mothers of both tales support and overwhelmingly help the victimized female. The mother in “Snow-White and Red-Rose” encourages her daughters to help each other and sympathize with the poor. The good mother-in-law in “Manohra” is unlike the stereotype of the wicked mother-in-law because she helps her daughter-in-law escape from being sacrificed.

A surprising finding in this study is that there are very few "good mothers" in the selected tales. The protagonists' mothers are either dead, killed, banished or have very little role. The mother's role is replaced by that of the threatening stepmother who creates hardship for the protagonist.

In the Grimms' tales, an old man's supportive role in "The House in the Wood" is similar to those of the dwarfs in "The Water of Life" and "The King of the Golden Mountain". In the present study, both the old man and the dwarfs are depicted as tricksters. In "The House in the Wood", the old man plays a trick on the two elder sisters by placing them under enchantment. The old man reveals his true self when the youngest sister comes and overcomes the difficulties. The dwarfs in both "The Water of Life" and "The King of the Golden Mountain" help the protagonists and make a plan to escape from danger created by the protagonist's elder brothers.

All these supportive characters, animals or humans, magical or non-magical motherly, fatherly or elderly, help and support the protagonist in difficulty. The protective figures provide useful information, and give magical objects or supernatural help necessary for the protagonist.

2.2. The Antagonist's Supporters

When the stepmothers are the antagonists, most of the elder siblings are their conspirators and thus are less outstanding. However, there are exceptional elder sisters who are protagonists: "Three Little Men in the Woods", "White and Black" and "The House in the Wood". Besides, fathers of a few tales can be considered the antagonist's supporters also as in "Pla Boo Thong", "Hansel and Grethel" as well as "Nang Sib Song". These fathers seem to be under the influence of their wicked wives and participate in the attempts to get rid of their own children in one way or another.

Under this study, the roles of the principal figures of both cultures have many similar aspects—the protagonists' types, objectives and activities. However, among protagonists, the seekers and the victims are more predominant than the providers which exist only in the Grimms' tales. The comparative study of the main characters will be pursued in the last part of this chapter.

Sibling Relationships

The comradeship among siblings and rivalry between siblings exist in both Thai and Western families. The differences of social contexts, beliefs and opinions within each family probably influence sibling relationships. Patronage is a common social value in traditional Thai society. This results in assistance within a group as presented in “Nang Sib Song” and “Manohra”. The collective groups of sisters benevolently attempt to help their troubled sibling. However, in Western society, self-reliance is the common social value.

The sibling relationships both in Thai and the Grimms' fairy tales in this discussion are divided into three types: positive, negative and neutral. Each type of sibling relationships is in turn classified genderwise as female-female, male-male and male-female.

A positive relationship between siblings exists when they sympathize with each other in the face of danger or an unpleasant situation. A negative relationship between brothers or sisters, on the other hand, occurs when the siblings have conflicts because of jealousy and rivalry. In almost all cases, the elder children are jealous of the youngest siblings. Most tales with insignificant sibling relationships show neutral or slightly positive attitude of siblings. At the beginning, they may separate to search for fortune and show their ability. The youngest child usually plays the prominent role. Sometimes, the main characters are portrayed in a humorous way. In the Grimms' tales, the insignificant sibling relationship is more numerous than in the Thai counterparts.

1. Sibling Relationships in the Thai Tales.

Human relationship is generally conditioned by its cultures context. In examining sibling relationships, certain Thai characteristics emerge. First, as polygamy was a common practice in the Thai traditional society, half-siblings abounded in Thai tales. Second, as Thai people tend to consider others, even non-relatives, as their kin, sworn siblings in Thai tales are regarded as real brothers.

Of the seven selected Thai tales, one portrays sisterly friendship ("Nang Sib Song"), two show brotherly comradeship: "Howichai and Khawee" and "Jampa Si Ton". Negative relationships can be found in "Pla Boo thong", "Sang Silp Chai" and "Sang Thong" while, "Manohra" illustrates insignificant sibling relationship.

1.1. Positive Relationships

Siblings often help each other to overcome obstacles, though they may not succeed. As least three Thai tales portray positive sibling relationships.

1.1.1 Female-Female Relationship

“Nang Sib Song”

In this tale, the youngest child is the protagonist and all the elder siblings act as a group of supporters. At the beginning, the twelve sisters are left in the forest because their parents cannot earn enough money to support the family. They are later fostered by a giantess. One day, the eldest sister finds that the foster-mother is a giantess, so they all leave her, and the eldest sister plays the role of the protector. Later they get married and happily live with their husband. The giantess disguises herself as a beautiful woman and entices their husband into banishing the twelve sisters. They are also blinded, and imprisoned in a cave. In starvation, when the elder ones have babies, they divide the babies' bodies among themselves for food. They try to support each other in their misery.

However, it is the victimized female protagonist in "Nang Sib Song" who attempts to liberate her sisters and herself. When the twelve sisters are blinded and imprisoned in a cave, the youngest sister finds a way to save her elder sisters from

famine and also her son from being devoured by her starved sisters. Eventually, the son frees them all. Besides the theme of love, these two tales show sisterly unity.

While the elder sisters in "Nang Sib Song" act in unison, the youngest sister (the protagonist) plays a remarkable role of the savior. Although she cannot help herself, it is her son, whom she has successfully saved, who can finally liberate them all.

1.1.2 Male-Male Relationship

"Sang Silp Chai" and "Holwichai and Khawee"

These two tales present the harmony between male siblings who are sworn-brothers ("Holwichai and Khawee") and half-brothers ("Sang Silp Chai"). In "Sang Silp Chai", two generations of sibling relationships and jealousy are depicted. Sibling jealousy among sisters of the first generation and that among half-brothers of the second generation will be discussed under the negative relationship. The positive relationship in this tale is manifested in the co-operations between two stepbrothers who faithfully help and support each other as if they were real brothers.

The brothers in "Holwichai and Khawee" are at first a tiger cub and a calf. Later, they become human beings through a hermit's magic and swear that they will be brothers. They love each other and wander to seek for good fortune. Along the way, Khawee, the younger brother helps and saves his elder brother's life. Then, they decide to have separate journeys. Khawee marries a princess but is killed by a wicked woman's plan. At the end, his elder brother restores his life and takes vengeance for him.

"Jampa Si Ton"

This tale demonstrates the harmony among male siblings. The four brothers and their mother are banished because of a wicked plan worked out by the king's minor wife. However, the brothers are separated from their mother and live with an elderly couple. Later, the antagonist (the king's first wife) kills them all. Fortunately, Indra helps them and gives them to a hermit who teaches them magical knowledge. The four brothers help each other fight against the enemies many times and attempt to search

for their mother. Finally, they are altogether avenged and happily live with their parents. According to this tale, the four brothers cooperate and act in unison. They do not have any conflict or rivalry. When they face problems, they join force to solve them.

In the above Thai tales, the perfect harmony and comradeship in the group exist either in the sisterly or brotherly relationships. The elder female / male siblings pay attention to the youngest child, although they cannot save his / her life. The assistance, conciliation and sympathy presented in these tales make sibling relationships positive.

1.2 Negative Relationships

The negative sibling relationship in the Thai tales is primarily caused by rivalry and jealousy. The tales in focus are “Pla Boo Thong”, “Sang Thong” and “Sang Silp Chai”.

1.2.1 Female-Female Relationship

“Pla Boo Thong” and “Sang Thong”

Both tales --“Pla Boo Thong” and “Sang Thong”-- present frictions between sisters and the other family members, such as the stepmother in “Pla Boo Thong” and the father in “Sang Thong”. Though the relationship between siblings is negative, it is not the main focus of the stories. In fact, the intense conflicts of both stories originate from the protagonist's stepmother. In "Sang Thong", the negative relationship between the male protagonist and his father-in-law is more obvious than that between the female protagonists and her sisters.

“Pla Boo Thong” is the only selected Thai tale in which the elder child is the protagonist, and the unpleasant relationships between the stepsiblings and between the daughter and her stepmother are very prominent. The rivalry between two stepsisters and the stepmother’s violence toward her stepdaughter are vividly dramatized in this tale. The conflict between the stepsiblings, in fact, is comparable to that in “Cinderella”. The stepmother’s daughter usually incites her mother to make life

horrible for the female protagonist who has to endure the stepmother's scolding and whipping. The two antagonists try to kill both the protagonist and her mother, whereas the protagonist attempts to keep good relationships with both of her oppressors. In the end, the antagonists are punished. Although having suffered a lot, the female protagonist is still kind and shows no sign of revengefulness.

The conflicts of the story come from two rivalries- - between the first wife and the minor-wife, and between stepdaughters. The minor-wife of the protagonist's father and her child are the antagonists. The stepmother wants to get rid of both her stepdaughter and the protagonist's mother. The stepmother cooperates with her own daughter to distress her stepdaughter. The conflict between the first wife and the minor-wife, in particular, is acute. The protagonist's mother is murdered (she was hit and pulled into the river) and her life is brought back, again and again, in the forms of a goby fish, an egg-plant tree and a pipal tree. Her daughter tries to save her mother's life several times. Unfortunately, the stepmother and her own daughter are intent on their wicked plans.

In "Sang Thong", the negative relationship and conflicts exist when the youngest sister marries an outcast. The elder sisters make every effort to vilify their youngest sibling. The youngest sister suffers patiently from her elder sisters' insidious acts. Unpleasant relationship among the seven sisters exists because the six elder sisters look down on her youngest sister and the youngest seems assertive as well.

Getting married to an underdog (the male protagonist) also causes a negative relationship among the family members. Negative relationships not only happen among sisters, but also between the father-in-law and the son-in-law (the female protagonist's husband). Like the stepmother in "Pla Boo Thong" who conspires with her own daughter to get rid of her stepdaughter, the father-in-law in "Sang Thong" schemes with his elder sons-in-law to kill his youngest sons-in-law. He orders all his sons-in-law to carry out difficult tasks: first, finding one hundred fish and then hunting for wild deer. Fortunately, the hero has supernatural power and he can accomplish both tasks and proves himself the winner twice. To crown it all, after showing his real superior identity, the male protagonist wins the polo game in which all of the elder sons-in-law are defeated, and therefore, inherits the kingdom.

1.2.2 Male-Male Relationship

“Sang Silp Chai”

A group of elder brothers of this tale conspire to eliminate their youngest brother who seems more competent than they are. The main conflicts, in fact, come from the sibling jealousy in two generations. Of the mother’s generation, seven sisters and a servant are a king’s wives. Their husband loves and pays most attention to his first wife, the servant, because she has the first pregnancy. Later, when each of the other wives has a son, the youngest sister’s baby, the protagonist, seems divine. Being envious, the elder sisters accuse the baby of being unnatural and thus bringing bad luck. The youngest sister and her baby, the protagonist Sang Silp Chai therefore, are banished. Similar to the situation in the first generation, the protagonist's six elder brothers try to destroy him. Later, all of the siblings wander through the woods on a mission which only Sang Silp Chai succeeds, the elder brothers try to kill him because they are afraid that their father would favor him as the successor to the throne. They entice their youngest brother into going out hunting in the forest and push him into a chasm. Fortunately, Indra saves the protagonist’s life and sends him back to the kingdom.

1.3 Insignificant relationships

According to the *Pannasa Jataka* version of “Manohra”, there is a perfect harmony among siblings: the seven mythological half-woman half-bird beings happily visit the fantastic pond in the Himmapaant forest every day of the full moon. They love each other, and when the youngest sister is captured and suffers, her six elder sisters show great sympathy and willingly try without avail to help her. In “Manohra”, the youngest sister is caught in a hunter’s magical trap and is forced to marry a prince. Through her cleverness and courage, she can free herself from difficulties.

Of three types of sibling relationships, the positive tendency seems more dominant than the negative one. Though "Manohra" shows the insignificant

relationship, it is rather positive. The noticeable point in the Thai tales is the harmony between sworn -siblings ("Holwichai and Khawee"). In the Thai tales with negative sibling relationship, marital frictions tend to be the main cause of the conflicts. The quarrel between co-wives of the protagonist father often brings problems for the children.

2. Sibling Relationships in the Grimms' Fairy Tales

Like in Thai tales, the sibling relationships in The Grimms' tales can also be divided into positive, negative and insignificant. Of the selected tales, twenty tales show friendship among siblings, twenty negative sibling relationships and sixteen insignificant relationships. The perfect harmony of the cross-gender sibling relationship is very noticeable whereas the adverse relationship between the stepsiblings of the negative sibling relationship is also vividly portrayed.

2.1 Positive Relationships

The relationship of the cross-gender siblings is the most outstanding in a positive category of the Grimms' fairy tales. Most siblings with the same sex of the harmonious relationship act as twins and sympathize each other as friends.

2.1.1 Cross-Gender Relationship

The relationships between cross-gender siblings in the Grimms' tales are always positive and more frequent than those with the same sex. Nine out of fifteen tales present favorable relationships between male-female siblings: "The Twelve Brothers," "The Seven Ravens," "Hansel and Grethel," "The Enchanted Stag," "The Lamb and the Fish," "The Six Swans", "The Almond Tree", "The Water Sprit" and

“The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids”. In almost all of these tales, the remarkable role of the female protagonist is emphasized. She can rescue her brother’s life, although she herself is in trouble. In almost all these cases, the youngest sister plays the role of the heroine.

“The Twelve Brothers,” “The Seven Ravens” and “The Six Swans”

These three tales present the harmony of siblings in a group of cross-gender siblings: a group of elder brothers and one sister, the youngest child. In “The Twelve Brothers”, the twelve elder brothers wander through the forest because they are under a curse which says that whenever the youngest sister is born, all brothers will be killed. They, therefore, save their lives by living outside the kingdom. In the forest, they help each other and live happily. In the kingdom, the youngest and only sister grows up to be a beauty. When she knows what has happened to her elder brothers, she devotes herself to help them by not talking with anyone for seven years as this is the only way to break the spell and set them free. Meanwhile, she has to get married and has to face danger and suffering. Through her sacrifice, toward the end of the seventh year, the enchantment is broken and all her brothers are freed and arrive in time to save their only sister’s life.

Siblings in “The Seven Ravens”, “The Six Swans” and “The Twelve Brothers” show similar friendship among siblings. The elder brothers of these three tales are turned into animals and their only sister is the heroine who helps them all, even though she has to undergo troubles to set her brothers free. These above tales show the female protagonist’s strength to willingly go through the ordeals.

“Hansel and Grethel” and “The Enchanted Stag”

The comradeship of the siblings of different sexes in these two tales are similar. In both stories, the children are left in the forest because their parents cannot earn enough to support the family as one may expect, it is the terrible stepmother who "urges the father" to abandon the children. At first, the elder brother takes good care of his sister and plays the role of the protector. They try to return home, but do not succeed. He comforts and consoles his younger sister. The children in “Hansel and

Grethel” find a gingerbread house, which belongs to the wicked witch, eat lots of bread and cakes that decorate the witch’s house and are captured. The witch feeds only the elder brother because she wants to devour him as her big meal. Meanwhile, the sister works hard and starves. However, she uses a trick to trap and bake the witch in the witch’s own oven and can save her brother’s life. “Hansel and Grethel” ends with the protagonists returning home and finding happiness and worthiness. Zipes (1979 : 164-165) points out that the female protagonist is not only a good helper but also a destroyer. Also, Zipes illustrates children’s psychology inherent in this fairy tale.

It is females- - the stepmother and the witch- - who are the inimical forces in this story. Grethel’s importance in the children’s deliverance reassures the child that a female can be a rescuer as well as a destroyer. Probably, even more important is the fact that Hansel saves them once and then later Grethel saves them again, which suggests to children that as they grow up they must come to rely more and more on their age mates for mutual help and understanding. This idea reinforces the story’s main thrust, which is a warning against regression and an encouragement of growth toward a higher plane of psychological and intellectual existence.

Similarly, in “The Enchanted Stag” the brother and the sister are badly treated by their wicked stepmother, and escape from home and wander through the forest. The elder brother later falls under a spell and becomes a stag. His younger sister takes good care of him and lovingly consoles him. One day, a king comes into the forest and meets her. He wants to marry her and invites her to his kingdom as his queen. She accepts the king’s invitation, but insists on keeping the stag with her. Meanwhile, the enchantment is broken and the fawn returns to his human form.

“The Almond tree”

This tale shows the comradeship between a stepbrother and a younger stepsister. The stepsister’s mother intends to kill her stepson. Unlike other tales about stepchildren, the two children are fond of each other. The sister sympathizes with her elder stepbrother who is later helped by a good woman. Finally, the curse is broken and the two children come back home and happily live together. The sympathetic

relationship seems like that of the sworn siblings in “Holwichai and Khawee”. The roles of the two children are identical; they take turns at helping each other.

“The Lamb and the Fish”

Both male and female siblings are under a curse. The brother is turned into a lamb and his younger sister is changed into a fish. A cook sets the two victimized siblings free and a wise woman changes them into their proper forms.

“The Water Sprite”

Unlike the above tales, the protagonist of this tale is the elder brother who rescues his younger sister’s life. The relationship between them is as pleasant as those in both “Hansel and Grethel” and “The Twelve Brothers”.

“The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids”

In this fairy tale, the wolf disguises himself as the mother goat. The kids, deceived by the wolf’s masquerade, allow him into their house. The wolf devours the six elder kids. Fortunately, the last one can escape this misfortune. After the mother goat’s return, the youngest kid tells her this sad event. Together, they find the wolf sleeping near the riverbank. They cut the wolf’s stomach open and pull out all the six victimized kids and replace them with stones. After the wolf’s waking, the stones make the wolf thirsty; so he tries to drink water. And because of the weight of the stones, the wolf throws himself into the river.

Of cross-gender sibling relationship, the remarkable role of the youngest sister is presented as a good helper. She helps and frees her elder brother from enchantment. Sympathy and love make the sibling relationship positive.

2.1.2 Female-Female Relationship

Of the Grimms' fairy tales, there is only one tale that provides good illustration of the perfect harmony between sisters as well as the good relationship among family’s members (between the mother and children). The mother in “Snow-White and Red-Rose” partially helps to bring about the good relationship between her daughters.

“Snow-White and Red-Rose”

This is the only of the Grimms' tales with the good mother's role and a positive relationship between female siblings. The two female siblings, encouraged by their mother, provide shelter for a bear. Later, he leaves this family and goes to the forest to hide his treasures from the wicked dwarfs. After his leaving, the sisters' mother allows them to ramble through the forest. There, they meet three dwarfs in trouble. The sisters help them all. Suddenly, the enchantment is broken and the bear is turned into a prince. Eventually, he and his younger brother marry the two sisters. In this tale, the good mother influences her daughter to be generous.

2.1.3 Male-Male Relationship

The conciliation among brothers in searching fortune and in completing the tremendous hardship is highlighted in the following tales in which the siblings interact with others as friends.

“The Crystal Ball”

Here the relationship among the three brothers is positive. The two elder brothers are put under a spell and turned into an eagle and a whale by their mother, a sorceress, but the youngest brother can escape this fate. According to the curse, whoever wants to destroy the enchantment should get a crystal ball and hold it before her. The youngest brother does this and sets his elder brothers free from danger, but he himself is turned into a wild beast. However, his elder brothers who are still in animal forms, later help him. Eventually, the youngest brother obtains the crystal ball and breaks the enchantment. The three brothers cooperate to end the spell and help each other.

“The Twin Brothers”

This tale presents the friendship of the twins. The sibling relationships occur in two generations: that of the older generation is negative, but that of the younger is positive. The twins’ father and their uncle have a negative relationship, which will be discussed later under the negative relationship. The twins separate to find good fortune. One of the twins plays the role of a trickster in order to contrive a way to kill the witch who wants to murder his brother. Eventually, they return to the marked-place and agree to live together.

"The Fortune Seekers", "The Four Clever Brothers" and "The Three Trades"

These tales illustrate the harmony between brothers who set out on their journey to find the best thing. Though, at first, the brothers separately go on an expedition, they later meet each other to share good experience. They are finally back home and spend the rest of their life happily.

Of the positive sibling relationships, the female character’s role of cross-gender siblings is more outstanding than the protagonist's role in both male-male and female-female relationships. In danger, the female character can usually compose herself and use her cleverness and carefulness to help herself and her siblings. She proves herself a capable and dedicated planner and actor. The younger sisters in “Hansel and Grethel” and “The Seven Ravens” rescue their elder brothers while they, themselves, are in difficulties. She gives a new life to her elder brothers and willingly nourishes their hope. The friendship between siblings of the same sex, such as “Snow-White and Red-Rose” and “The Twin Brothers” tends to be the same as that of the twins: each sibling’s role seems identical to that of the other.

2.2 Negative Relationships

The stepmother and the elder children usually create conflicts and negative sibling relationships. Especially, in female-female relationships, frictions between the stepmother and the stepsiblings are very noticeable. Jealousy and rivalry are the common causes of enmity between siblings.

2.2.1 Female-Female Relationship

The negative relationship among sisters does not only present a sense of jealousy among siblings, but also hostility between the stepchild and the stepmother. The following tales usually show the stepchildren's misery and their struggle against oppression.

“Cinderella ”

Many of the Grimms' tales display the negative relationship between siblings and stepchildren. Among these tales, “Cinderella” exemplifies agony resulted from siblings' rivalry. In real life, sibling rivalry is a miserable experience and a notably painful aspect of childhood. Probably this is why “Cinderella” is one of the most liked fairy tale. The following is a typical scene many children have often heard:

They would either treat her with scorn or else push her out of their way so roughly that she sometimes fell among the pea shells and cabbage leaves that lay in the yard. (Owens, “Cinderella” 1981 : 90)

Degradation and abuse make the protagonist's life miserable, but she succeeds in the struggle against maltreatment.

"White and Black", "The Widow's Two Daughters" and "The Three Little Men in the Wood"

These three tales clearly reveal the greedy stepmother. She wants to become rich, and she tells her own daughter to imitate her stepdaughter's action. But as the latter is unkind and impolite, she gets nothing, and is punished instead.

“One Eye, Two Eyes, Three Eyes”

This tale has one exceptional point: the middle child, not the youngest child, is the protagonist for an obvious reason: her elder sister has one eye and her younger sister has three eyes. The middle child is scolded and degraded by her sisters and mother. She has to work hard while her sisters stay idle. Her mother and her sisters

want to get rid of her, for they are jealous of her receiving a magical object and later, becomes rich.

Thematic patterns, in fact, emerge from these tales: first, the main figure is rewarded because she is very dedicated to the housework whereas her younger stepdaughter is punished due to her laziness. These tales, thus, clearly reflect traditional feminine qualities: hard work, politeness, and kindness. Second, the (terrible) mother sends her own daughter to do the same as the protagonist. Because of the greed and rudeness, both the stepmother and her daughter get nothing and are cursed.

2.2.2 Male-Male Relationship

“The Three Feathers” , “The Queen Bee” and “The Old Griffin”

These three tales apparently present the mental struggle of the youngest child who first appears to be the most "stupid" and the "weakest". The youngest brother in these tales attempts to show his power and ability, but the elder brothers of these tales play the hinderers' role and they try to obstruct their youngest brother's action.

In “The Three Feathers”, three brothers start on their expedition by following the directions of their feathers. The two elder brothers laugh at their youngest brother whom they look down upon. At the end, the youngest brother can prove himself a hero and inherits the kingdom.

In “The Queen Bee”, the elder brothers want to cut their ties from their youngest because the latter seems weak and simple-minded. However, the youngest one turns out to be the winner in competition with his elder brothers.

The male protagonist in “The Old Griffin” plays the role of a provider. Similar to the heroes in “The Three Feathers” and “The Queen Bee”, the youngest brother of “The Old Griffin” first appears a simpleton. The three brothers must have a long journey to bring apples from the mysterious forest in order to rescue the princess from a cursed disease. The two elder brothers are in stiff competition because each of them

wants to win. They try to conceal what they have done. On the contrary, the youngest brother reveals all that he takes from the mysterious forest. Though no one believes in his ability, he can complete all of the tasks and marries the princess.

“The Singing Bone, ” “The Royal Turnip, ” and “The Twin Brothers”

These three tales show jealousy among brothers. The elder siblings envy the youngest one, because the latter has magical objects and wins people’s admiration. Both male protagonists in “The Singing Bone” and “The Royal Turnip” are killed by their elder brothers who want to gain big rewards.

The relationship of the twins’ father and their uncle in “The Twin Brothers”, is negative. Their rich uncle is jealous of the twins’ father and takes vengeance on his nephews instead of his younger brother.

The common cause of brothers’ conflicts occurs within the group of siblings whereas most conflicts of their female counterparts often come from the stepmother and her children. Besides, male siblings exhibit a higher degree of cruelty and violence than the female counterparts. The elder male siblings intend to kill their younger ones whereas female siblings just try to get rid of their youngest sibling out of their way.

2.3 Insignificant relationships

Almost half of the selected tales show the insignificant relationship which is slightly positive. Though the youngest siblings of this category seem to be the fools, they finally receive the best reward.

“The Youth Who Couldn’t Shiver and Shake”

This tale shows an outstanding role of the younger brother who tries to go forth to learn fear. Also, he is too stupid to understand what he hears or remembers of his father’s orders. He does not understand anything happening to him. His relationship with his elder brother does not seem negative, but that with his father is relatively bad. At the beginning of the tale, the younger sibling kills the sexton and is also accused of murder. His father drives him away, so he goes through the forest and lands in order to learn fear. Afterward, he approaches a dangerous kingdom. He is lucky because he is

not afraid of anything that comes to harm him. He can pass through the difficulties and finally gets the rewards.

“The Mountain Sesima, ” “Knoist and His Three Sons” and “The Sparrow and His Young Ones”

The three tales present the youngest sibling’s good luck. In “The Mountain Sesima”, the youngest sibling finds a great deal of treasure and a heap of gold in a mountain by chance. The brothers in “Knoist and His Three Sons” can pass through obstacles and reach God. Similarly, the youngest brother in “The Sparrow and His Young Ones” gains knowledge from God. The protagonists of these three tales do not interact with their siblings.

“The Three Sluggards” and “The Bride-Choosing”

These two tales illuminate the youngest child’s role in a humorous way. In “The Three Sluggards”, the king wants to find a descendant who is the laziest. The youngest brother inherits the throne because “he will hang himself and waits for someone to cut off his rope. In “The Bride-Choosing”, the youngest sister is chosen because she can slice the cheese into splendid pieces.

The trend of insignificant sibling relationship in the Grimms' fairy tales is rather positive, although not obviously so. The relationship between the protagonist and the others is satisfactory. A clear evidence is that neither friction nor rivalry is shown. If there is any conflict between characters, it can be solved in a positive way.

Under these three types of sibling relationships of the Grimms' fairy tales, the perfect conciliation between the cross-gender siblings and the antagonism between the stepmother’s children and her stepchildren are the most prominent. The life of the protagonist (usually female) who has a stepmother is full of frustration and misery. She has to endure tremendous hardship planned by her stepmother and the stepmother’s children. The stepmother also has an influence on sibling relationships, making it negative. The common conflict that causes unpleasant sibling relationships come from jealousy and rivalry. Frictions between the stepmother and the

stepmother's children usually relate to the protagonist's good fortune, good appearance and his / her ability, whereas jealousy always belongs to the antagonists.

In almost all cases, the youngest sibling must prove himself/herself through tests. To pass the test, the protagonist usually faces or seeks a magical agent: a wise old man or a helpful animal. The protagonists of these selected tales are often tested by their parents. Sometimes, the main character is a trickster. Although, most of the trials seem impossible but the hero/heroine always pass them. The main protagonist also illustrates his/her ultimate worth or special ability.

3. Comparison

Some limitation must be acknowledged: the number of the selected tales is imbalanced--the Grimms' fairy tales are greater in number than the selected Thai tales. As there are only seven Thai tales, the findings can show only some tendency, and cannot be said to be conclusive.

The following comparison between the Thai and the Grimms' fairy tales focuses upon two major points: characters' roles and sibling relationships. The questions to be pursued are first, whether the siblings (elders versus the youngest) of each group of tales assume comparable roles; second, whether their relationships are similar; and third, if there are differences, how.

3.1 Characters' Roles

Among the protagonists of both Thai and the Grimms' fairy tales, we can find 29 victims, 27 seekers and six providers respectively. As for the antagonists although many of the older siblings are hostile, many are supportive or have little role. The real "wicked ones" seem to be the stepmother or the evil witches.

Because of the theme and plot structures, victims and seekers appearing in both Thai and the Grimms' fairy tales are prevalent. The victims are almost always underdogs who are later helped by supernatural beings, such as helpful animals and a

godmother. Clearly, the number of female victimized protagonists is greater than that of the male counterparts.

At a glance, the victimized characters of both Thai and the Grimms' fairy tales share some similarities in that the characters play submissive and passive roles. Most of them are female characters. The victims of the tales cannot find any possible ways to help themselves. Psychologically, the female protagonist encounters trying situations in a limited place in order to await help because she wants to prepare herself to pass through an initiation period or reach maturity afterwards. As Bettelheim (1976 : 226) claims,

... after the period of inactivity which typically occurs during early puberty; adolescents become active and make up for the period of passivity; in real life and in fairy tales they try to prove their young manhood and womanhood, often through dangerous situations. Survival, self-preservation, docility and domestication seem to be the female victimized protagonist's attributes.

The duration of time, when the victimized protagonist is made inactive, may imply the period of preparation for a central character to face the difficulty surrounding himself/herself.

One obvious difference is that some of the female victimized protagonists in the Grimms' tales are the providers who nourish and rescue the lives of others as those in "The Enchanted Stag", "The Seven Ravens" and "The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids".

The quest heroes of both Thai and the Grimms' tales share some similarities in that they attempt to find the best thing for themselves and have good opportunities to pass through difficulties and get good things. Zipes (1979 : 65) points out that "the quest of the hero, his course of movement, is characterized by the active questioning of what makes man, which suggests its reverse: how can man make society so that man knows and controls the force acting upon him?" Presumably, the seeker often finds or even creates a new world for his needs. Most male characters are normally characterized as adventurous, challenging and risky person.

Genderwise, the role of the seeker (twenty-eight tales out of the 55 selected tales) belongs to male characters (twenty-two tales) whereas female characters are almost always victims (twenty-four tales out of the twenty-eight tales). In most traditional societies, men have more power in decision-making than women. The monopoly of society commonly belongs to men. Women, therefore, are under men's control. Traditionally, there was the division of roles. Men required fulfillment in public whereas women were seen as the followers. Hughes (1955 : 6) claims that men often had prominent roles outside home while women were almost always confined to home. Men were usually seen as the ruler and the head of the family according to a patriarchal monarchy, but women must pay attention to domestic work, such as children rearing. According to anthropological evidence, Yos Santasombatti (1997 : 122-124) points out that men have dominated most communities, because they have power over the following areas—kin and marriage systems, political systems, religions and division of labor. As wives, women have been made submissive and objects in order to exchange for fidelity and affection from her husband (Charvet, 1982 : 11). Of the political system, a leader, a king and a tribal chief almost always belong to men because they are often seen as the protector and the leader of the family. It is evident that women cannot be religious leaders, especially in Buddhism and Roman Catholicism. Regulations and religious taboos show gender inequality.

Traditionally, Thai men and women have different social positions. Men usually have more power and honor than women. Komin (1990 : 51-57) states that Thai women fundamentally pay attention to family security and happiness, true friendship and cleanliness. On the other hand, men are concerned with national security, equality, freedom and brotherhood spirit. As a result, women are usually interested in personal matters while men concentrate upon public activities. Probably, the aforementioned values reduce women's roles to those of passive or inactive positions. The female does not have much opportunity to present her abilities in public. Women's active public roles, then, are often rejected. Most of the societies around the world consider women as caregivers while men are breadwinners.

The above information leads to an assumption that women have usually played a passive role for a long time. According to the selected tales, women are often

presented as victims. The ones who seem to have power are many times depicted as wicked, such as the witches, or the stepmothers. On the other hand, the male seeker who attempts to find the best thing for himself are portrayed as the leader. The qualities of masculinity are characterized as--“strong, ambitious, successful, rational and emotionally controlled” (Wood, 1999 : 22).

The roles of the stepmothers in the Grimms’ fairy tales or the minor-wives in Thai tales seem as crucial as those of the youngest child. They tend to have more power than other family members. The stereotype of these characters is the stepmother in “Hansel and Grethel” who orders her husband to abandon his children in the woods. An example of the minor-wife’s role is that in “Pla Boo Thong”; she invades the family and takes all her husband’s belongings. The minor-wife/stepmother probably needs love and security as those who are her victims, but she also brings frictions and difficulties to the family. Both the stepmother and the minor-wife are the stereotypical “terrible mothers”, the horrible and threatening females. Their roles are more highlighted than that of the good mother. This probably relates to the traditional tendency toward negative views on women found in many patriarchal societies.

Only two tales (“Manohra” and “Snow-White and Red-Rose”) out of the fifty-five display the good mother’s roles. The good mother is often the same person as the fairy godmother who overwhelmingly supports the protagonist and the lowly. Actually, both positive and negative mothers are in one person. Bettelheim (1976 : 167) asserts that a mother becomes "the terrible mother" when she is angry. This is because the animosity a child holds for his/her mother turns the latter into a wicked stepmother. The prevalent "stepmothers" in tales, therefore, are the mechanism that helps remove children's sense of guilt of disliking their own mother.

The fathers of both Thai and the Grimms' tales are usually the antagonist's supporters. The fathers very often help their new wife to get rid of the protagonists. Neither Thai nor the Grimms' tales show the fathers as leaders. Comparatively, however, the antagonistic role of the father in “Sang Thong” seems more dramatic than those of the Grimms' tales. He tries hard to get rid of the male protagonist. Similarly, the fathers in other tales care little about their children. In fact, as the head of the family members, the father should protect his wife and children from

difficulties. But this is not the case in this study. For example in “Hansel and Grethel”, at the beginning of the tale, the father simply follows his wife, a witch in disguise, and tries twice to abandon their children.

Of the selected tales, the wise old man / woman and the helpful animals are often supportive characters. The supporters always come to help the main characters, whether the protagonist or the antagonist. One obvious difference between Thai and the Grimms' tales is types of the supporter. Of the selected Thai tales, the supporter is usually a wise old man (Indra) whereas in the Grimms' fairy tales the helpful animals are wolves, bees and birds.

Although the supporters' types are different, their images both in Thai and the Grimms' tales are similar. The wise old man (Indra) and the Good Mother symbolize the savior or the helper. Jung (1979 : 217) proposes that the wise old man/woman usually represent cleverness, knowledge and wisdom. Moral qualities always belong to him/her.

Notable similarities of characters' roles of both Thai and the Grimms' fairy tales are that the female figures are considered either “weak” or “terrible” as many tales exhibit the female roles as either victims or wicked (step)mothers. This suggests negative views in both cultures. On the other hand, many male characters (34 tales) are seekers in both the Thai and the Grimm's tales.

3.2 Sibling Relationships

Comparing the selected Thai tales to the Grimms' tales, we can find general similarities regarding sibling relationships and a few differences. As a whole, there are about the same number of positive sibling relationships and the negative ones, 20 each, (both of the negative and positive sibling relationships can be found in "Sang Silp Chai" and about the 16 insignificant relationships, mostly, slightly positive. This ratio can be said to reflect the tendency we find in our everyday life: siblings are sometimes helpful to each other, sometimes hostile, and sometimes indifferent. On this point, the Thai and the Grimms' tales (15 from 16). Although this is a distinct difference, the significance is not much, as in these tales the numbers of the siblings are mentioned

just to make it seem like a family, or to follow the traditional number; no meaningful interaction is intended.

Among the positive relationships, one of the Thai tales shows devoted comradeship between non-blood brothers: Khawee and Holwichai, the sworn siblings. Such relationship does not exist in the Grimms' tales. This may be due to the fact that in the Thai culture, similar to many other eastern ones, people like to consider and treat others as their kin.

Another interesting point of difference is that while the heroes of both groups of tales outnumber the heroine, there are five of the Grimms' tales in which the female protagonists are apparently the providers/ rescuers of their male siblings. Such characters and relationships cannot be found in the selected Thai tales, for all the Thai heroines belong to the passive victimized type.

The tales with negative relationships have several common characteristics. First the major conflicts stem from envy. As a rule, the protagonists are mostly the youngest siblings who appear weak or lowly at the beginning, but turn out to be the most able, best-looking or the luckiest at the end. In both of the Thai and the Grimms' tales, the majority of the major antagonists are female, 23 of them, compared with only 13 male counterparts. If we compare this with the ratio of the protagonists' sexes: 24 females and 30 males, it is clear that the tales reflect obvious negative views of women: more wicked ones and fewer virtuous ones. It is interesting to note further that, of the 36 major antagonists, only 16 are the bad siblings and 20 are the wicked witches and (step)mothers. With this evidence, we can say that the tales of both cultures suggest that women are much more terrible than men; the most terrible being the older women. On the other hand, older men are rare in the tales and very few that can be found are "not so bad," as they behave rather badly only because the wicked women urge them to.

When we relate this characteristics of the antagonists to the siblings relationships, we can arrive at the conclusion that although more than half of the negative relationships (14 from 20) come from the siblings themselves, mostly the elder brothers (11 from 14) the stepmothers and the witches take substantial part in causing such bad relationships. Besides instigating bad sibling relationships (as well as

"urging the fathers to treat their children badly) these wicked women solely act as the prime antagonists in the tales presenting co-operations between the siblings. The possible reasons behind these situations, however, will be fully discussed in the next chapters.