

## Comparative Mythology and Folktale Studies: Kore, Demeter, Baldr, and the fairy tale “Sleeping Beauty”

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### A1. Ancient Indo-European Myths of Non-Functioning Deities: Demeter and Baldr

(Ginevra 2020)

- **The Greek myth of Demeter and Kore-Persephone** (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter*): Demeter’s daughter Kore-Persephone kidnapped by Hades, Lord of the Dead. Demeter searches for her, can’t find her. Enraged, leaves the other gods, takes shape of old woman, eventually arriving at palace of kings of Eleusis, Celeus and Metaneira. Demophon episode (below). Cosmic winter threatens humanity. Ending: Kore half year with Demeter (spring), half Hades (winter).
- **The Norse Baldr myth** (*Gylfaginning 49*): Baldr fears for his life, precautions are taken (below), they fail. Baldr killed by a mistletoe twig thrown by Hǫðr. Baldr’s death is the unluckiest deed that ever happened among gods and mortals. Baldr’s mother Frigg sends the god Hermóðr to bring Baldr back from Hel, the Realm of the Dead. All efforts to bring Baldr back from the dead fail. End of Time: Baldr will come back and corn-fields will grow without sowing.

### A2. The *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, the Baldr Myth, and the Modern Folktale “Sleeping Beauty” (ATU 410)

(Ginevra 2019)

“Demophon episode” of the *Homeric Hymn* and beginning of Baldr myth: close parallels in beginning of folktale type ATU 410 “Sleeping Beauty.”

*Hom. Hymn* DEMETER: The prince Demophon (‘he who shines on the people’) is conceived **late** and **beyond hope**. The King and Queen Metaneira are **concerned regarding** his **safety**. They ask Demeter (disguised as old woman) to **ensure** the **safety** of the prince. Attempt is **unsuccessful**. **Oath**. Demophon remains **mortal**.

**BALDR myth**: Baldr (‘shining’) is the **son of the kings of the gods**, Odin and Frigg. **Concerns** for his **safety** after Baldr’s **doom** is **prophesized**. Frigg attempts to **ensure safety** of Baldr by making him invulnerable from anything that may hurt him. The attempt is associated with an **oath**. It is **unsuccessful**. Baldr is **wounded** and **killed**.

ATU 410 “Sleeping Beauty” (PERRAULT, GRIMM et al.): A **princess** (Disney’s ‘Aurora’) conceived **late** and **beyond hope**. **Concerns** arise **for** her **safety** after her **doom** (by touching a spindle) **prophesized**. King and Queen attempt to **ensure** the **safety** of the princess, by protecting her from anything that may hurt her. Attempt associated with a **public decree** (all spindles in the kingdom must be destroyed). The attempt is **unsuccessful**. The princess eventually touches a spindle and **meets** her **doom**.

### A3. Today’s question: May further parallels be identified between DEMETER, BALDR, and PERRAULT and GRIMM’s *Sleeping Beauties*? And are they useful?

Vladimir Propp’s (*Morphology of the folktale*) methodology: semiotic / narratological approach ( ≈ cognitive linguistics and narratology: frames & scripts)

- Basic theses:
1. **Functions of characters serve as stable, constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled.**
  2. **The number of functions known to the fairy tale is limited.**
  3. **The sequence of functions is always identical.**

## B. On some shared features of Sleeping Beauty (GRIMM+PERRAULT), *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and Baldr myth

### I. Absentation (*ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF A FAMILY ABSENTS HIMSELF FROM HOME*)

*The person absenting himself can be a member of the older generation.*

**The parents (King and Queen | Demeter) of the main characters (Princess | Kore) leave them alone.**

**GRIMM:** It happened that on the very day when she was fifteen years old, the **King and Queen were not at home, and the maiden was left in the palace quite alone.**

**PERRAULT:** About fifteen or sixteen years after, **the King and Queen being gone to one of their houses of pleasure,**

**DEMETER 1ff:** I begin to sing of rich-haired Demeter, awful goddess —of her and her trim-ankled daughter whom Aidoneus rapt away, given to him by all-seeing Zeus the loud-thunderer. **Apart from Demeter,** lady of the golden sword and glorious fruits,

### VII. Complicity (*THE VICTIM SUBMITS TO DECEPTION AND THEREBY UNWITTINGLY HELPS HIS ENEMY*)

*2-3. The hero mechanically reacts to the employment of magical or other means (i.e., falls asleep, wounds himself, etc.).*

**Amazed by what they see as a toy (a spindle | a flower), characters reach for it. Magic plant (color, smell, height) becomes their doom. (D 1364.3).**

**GRIMM:** So she went round into all sorts of places, looked into rooms and bed-chambers just as she liked, and at last came to an old tower. She climbed up the narrow winding-staircase, and reached a little door. A rusty key was in the lock, and when she turned it the door sprang open, and there in a little room sat an old woman with a spindle, busily spinning her flax. "Good day, old dame," said the King's daughter; "what are you doing there?" "I am spinning," said the old woman, and nodded her head. **"What sort of thing is that, that rattles round so merrily?" said the girl, and she took the spindle and wanted to spin too.**

**PERRAULT:** the young Princess happened one day to divert herself running up and down the palace; when going up from one apartment to another, she came into a little room on the top of a tower, where a good old woman, alone, was spinning with her spindle. This good woman had never heard of the King's proclamation against spindles. **"What are you doing there, Goody?" said the Princess. "I am spinning, my pretty child," said the old woman, who did not know who she was. "Ha!" said the Princess, "this is very pretty; how do you do it? Give it to me, that I may see if I can do so."**

**DEMETER 5ff:** she was playing with the deep-bosomed daughters of Oceanus and gathering flowers over a soft meadow, roses and crocuses and beautiful violets, irises also and hyacinths and the narcissus, which Earth made to grow at the will of Zeus and to please the Host of Many, to be a snare for the bloom-like girl — a marvellous, radiant flower. It was a thing of awe whether for deathless gods or mortal men to see: from its root grew a hundred blooms and it smelled most sweetly, [...]. And the girl was amazed and reached out with both hands to take the lovely toy,

**BALDR:** And Frigg answered: "There grows a tree-sprout alone westward of Valhall: it is called mistletoe" [...] but Loki took mistletoe and pulled it up and went to the assembly [...] Hödr took the mistletoe and shot at Baldr, being guided by Loki

(*Völuspá* 31<sup>5</sup>–32<sup>4</sup>) Famous and fair in the lofty fields, full grown in strength the mistletoe stood. From the branch which seemed so slender and fair came a harmful shaft that Hödr should hurl.

**VIII. Villainy (THE VILLAIN CAUSES HARM OR INJURY TO A MEMBER OF A FAMILY).**

*The first seven functions may be regarded as the preparatory part of the tale, whereas the complication is begun by an act of villainy. The forms of villainy are exceedingly varied. 1. The villain **abducts a person** [Kore ...] 3. The villain pillages or spoils the crops [...] 4. The villain seizes the daylight [...] 6. The villain **causes bodily injury** [Sleeping Beauty, Baldr ...] 7. The villain causes **a sudden disappearance** [Kore ...] 11. The villain **casts a spell upon someone or something** [SleepBeau ...]. The villain often causes two or three harmful acts at once. [...] 14. The villain **commits murder** [Baldr ...] 15. The villain **imprisons or detains someone** [Kore ...] 16. The villain threatens **forced matrimony** [Kore ...] 16a. The same form **among relatives**. [Kore]*

**GRIMM:** But scarcely had she touched the spindle when the magic decree was fulfilled, and she pricked her finger with it. And, **in the very moment when she felt the prick, she fell down upon the bed that stood there, and lay in a deep sleep.**

**PERRAULT:** She had no sooner taken the spindle into her hand, than, whether being very hasty at it, somewhat unhandy, or that the decree of the Fairy had so ordained it, **it ran into her hand, and she fell down in a swoon.**

**DEMETER 15ff:** But the **wide-pathed earth gaped open** there in the plain of Nysa, and the lord [Hades], Host of Many, with his immortal horses sprang out upon her — the Son of Cronos, He who has many names. **He seized her by force and drove her off on his golden car**

Cf. **BALDR:** The [**mistletoe twig**] **flew through him, and he fell dead** to the earth; and that was the greatest mischance that has ever befallen among gods and men.

(Demophon episode [see above]. *Homeric Hymn* narratologically comprises 3 separate episodes, e.g. Richardson 2015)

**Repeated VII. Complicity**

**Character surprised after looking into another chamber and seeing an old woman (mortal | Demeter in disguise) doing something they do not understand (spindling | burning Demophon in the fire).**

**GRIMM:** So she went round into all sorts of places, **looked into rooms and bed-chambers** just as she liked, and at last came to an old tower. She climbed up the narrow winding-staircase, and reached a little door. A rusty key was in the lock, and when she turned it the door sprang open, and there in a little room sat **an old woman** with a spindle, busily spinning her flax. "Good day, old dame," said the King's daughter; "what are you doing there?" "I am spinning," said the old woman, and nodded her head. "What sort of thing is that, that rattles round so merrily?" said the girl, and she took the spindle and wanted to spin too.

**DEMETER 243ff:** had not well-girded Metaneira in her heedlessness kept watch by night and **spied from her sweet-smelling chamber**. But she wailed and smote her two hips, because she feared for her son and was greatly distraught in her heart; so she lamented and uttered winged words: "Demophon, my son, **the strange [old] woman** buries you deep in fire and works grief and bitter sorrow for me."

**Repeated VIII. Villainy**

**Catastrophe happens (princess touches the spindle | Queen Metaneira stops Demeter from making Demophon immortal). Characters faint/fall asleep.**

**GRIMM:** But scarcely had **she touched the spindle** when the magic decree was fulfilled, and she pricked her finger with it. And, in the very moment when she felt the prick, **she fell down upon the bed that stood there, and lay in a deep sleep.**

**PERRAULT:** She had no sooner taken the spindle into her hand, than, whether being very hasty at it, somewhat unhandy, or that the decree of the Fairy had so ordained it, it ran into her hand, and **she fell down in a swoon.**

**DEMETER 250ff:** Thus she spoke, mourning. And the bright goddess, lovely-crowned Demeter, heard her, and was wroth with her. So with her divine hands she snatched from the fire the dear son whom Metaneira had born unhopèd-for in the palace, and cast him from her to the ground; for she was terribly angry in her heart. Forthwith **she said to well-girded Metaneira:** “[...] I would have made your dear son deathless and unaging all his days and would have bestowed on him everlasting honor, **but now he can in no way escape death and the fates.** [...] And straightway Metaneira's knees were loosed

**IX. Mediation, the connective incident (MISFORTUNE OR LACK IS MADE KNOWN; THE HERO [...] IS DISPATCHED)**

1. A call for help is given, with the resultant dispatch of the hero [...] The call usually comes from the tsar and is accompanied by promises. 2. The hero is dispatched directly [...] 4. Misfortune is announced [...] More often, however, a story of misfortune does not come from parents, but rather from various old women or persons casually encountered, etc. [...] 5. The banished hero is transported away from home (B5): The father takes his daughter, banished by her stepmother, to the forest. [...] 7. A lament is sung [...] The misfortune becomes known, thanks to this, and evokes counteraction.

(a) Someone is unable to react to the misfortune. Someone cries. People hear and come from other rooms, they try to help, but do not succeed.

**PERRAULT:** The good old woman not knowing very well what to do in this affair, **cried out for help. People came in from every quarter in great numbers; they threw water upon the Princess's face, unlaced her, struck her on the palms of her hands, and rubbed her temples with Hungary-water; but nothing would bring her to herself.**

**DEMETER 281ff:** and [Metaneira] remained speechless for a long while and did not think to take up her late-born son from the ground. **But his sisters heard his pitiful wailing and sprang down from their well-spread beds: one of them took up the child in her arms and laid him in her bosom, while another revived the fire, and a third rushed with soft feet to bring their mother from her fragrant chamber. And they gathered about the struggling child and washed him, embracing him lovingly; but he was not comforted, because nurses and handmaids much less skilful were holding him now.**

Cf. **BALDR:** Then, when Baldr was fallen, **words failed all the gods, and their hands likewise to lay hold of him [...].**

But when the gods tried to speak, then it befell first that **weeping broke out**, so that none might speak to the others with words concerning his grief.

(b) **The king, who is also the father, learns about the misfortune and is the only one who understands its implications.**

**PERRAULT:** And now **the King**, who came up at the noise, **bethought himself of the prediction** of the Fairies, **and judging very well** that this must necessarily come to pass, since the Fairies had said it,

**DEMETER 294ff:** they (Keleos's daughters) **told powerful Celeus all things** without fail, **as the lovely-crowned goddess Demeter had instructed them.**

Cf. **BALDR:** But **Odin** bore that misfortune by so much the worst, as **he had most perception of how great harm and loss for the gods were in the death of Baldr.**

(c) **The father/king commands his people to transport the character('s lifeless body) away, to a finest apartment | rich temple | funerary ship.**

**PERRAULT:** [**The King**] **caused the Princess to be carried into the finest apartment** in his palace, and to be laid upon a bed all embroidered with gold and silver.

**DEMETER 296ff:** Celeus called his countless people to an assembly and told them to **build a goodly temple for rich-haired Demeter** and an altar upon the rising hillock. And they obeyed him right speedily and harkened to his voice, doing as he commanded.

Cf. **BALDR:** The gods took **the body of Baldr and brought it to the sea.** [...] Then was **the body of Baldr carried out on to the ship** [and it was set fire to]

(d) **The character is left there waiting for the moment she can join her loved ones again.**

**PERRAULT:** One would have taken her for an angel, she was so very beautiful; for her swooning away had not diminished one bit of her complexion; her cheeks were carnation, and her lips like coral; indeed her eyes were shut, but she was heard to breathe softly, which satisfied those about her that she was not dead. The King commanded that **they should not disturb her, but let her sleep quietly till her hour of awakening was come.**

**DEMETER 301ff:** Now when they had finished building and had drawn back from their toil, they went every man to his house. But golden-haired **Demeter sat there apart from all the blessed gods and stayed, wasting with yearning for her deep-bosomed daughter.**

(e) **The character's misfortune extends to the surrounding environment (everyone falls asleep | nothing grows anymore, cosmic winter).**

**GRIMM:** **And this sleep extended over the whole palace;** the King and Queen who had just come home, and had entered the great hall, began to go to sleep, and the whole of the court with them. The horses, too, went to sleep in the stable, the dogs in the yard, the pigeons upon the roof, the flies on the wall; even the fire that was flaming on the hearth became quiet and slept, the roast meat left off frizzling, and the cook, who was just going to pull the hair of the scullery boy, because he had forgotten something, let him go, and went to sleep. And the wind fell, and on the trees before the castle not a leaf moved again.

**DEMETER 305ff:** **Then she caused a most dreadful and cruel year for mankind over the all-nourishing earth:** the ground would not make the seed sprout, for rich-crowned Demeter kept it hid. In the fields the oxen drew many a curved plough in vain, and much white barley was cast upon the land without avail..

(f) **The misfortune becomes known and powerful characters try to solve the problem (king's sons | the gods = Zeus's sons). Threat of death.**

**GRIMM:** But the story of the beautiful sleeping "Briar-rose," for so the princess was named, went about the country, so that from time to time **kings' sons came and tried to get through the thorny hedge into the castle. But they found it impossible**, for the thorns held fast together, as if they had hands, and the youths were caught in them, could not get loose again, and died a miserable death. After long, long years **a King's son came again to that country, and heard an old man talking** about the thorn-hedge, and that a castle was said to stand behind it in which a wonderfully beautiful princess, named Briar-rose, had been asleep for a hundred years; and that the King and Queen and the whole court were asleep likewise. He had heard, too, from his grandfather, that **many kings' sons had already come, and had tried to get through the thorny hedge**, but they had remained sticking fast in it, and had died a pitiful death.

**DEMETER 310ff:** So she would have destroyed the whole race of man with cruel famine and have robbed them who dwell on Olympus of their glorious right of gifts and sacrifices, had not Zeus perceived and marked this in his heart. [...] **[Zeus] sent forth all the blessed and eternal gods besides: and they came, one after the other, and kept calling her and offering many very beautiful gifts and whatever rights she might be pleased to choose among the deathless gods. Yet no one was able to persuade her mind and will**, so wroth was she in her heart; but she stubbornly rejected all their words: for she vowed that she would never set foot on fragrant Olympus nor let fruit spring out of the ground, until she beheld with her eyes her own fair-faced daughter.

**X. Beginning counteraction (THE SEEKER AGREES TO OR DECIDES UPON COUNTERACTION)**

*Sometimes this moment is not expressed in words, but a volitional decision, of course, precedes the search.*

**A character decides to (in the folktales) or agrees to (in the myths) counteract the misfortune.**

**Grimm:** Then **the youth said, "I am not afraid, I will go and see the beautiful Briar-rose."** The good old man might dissuade him as he would, he did not listen to his words.

**DEMETER:** Now when all-seeing Zeus the loud-thunderer heard this, **he sent the Slayer of Argus [= Hermes] whose wand is of gold to the Underworld, so that having won over Hades with soft words, he might lead forth chaste Persephone to the light from the misty gloom to join the gods**, and that her mother might see her with her eyes and cease from her anger. **And Hermes obeyed**

**PERRAULT:** **The young Prince** was all on fire at these words, believing, without a moment's doubt, that he could put an end to this rare adventure; and pushed on by love and honour resolved that moment to look into it.

Cf. **BALDR:** Now when the gods had come to themselves, **Frigg spoke, and asked who there might be among the gods who wished to have for his own all her love and favor: let him ride the road to Hel, and seek if he may find Baldr, and offer Hel a ransom if she will let Baldr come home to Ásgard. And he is named Hermod the Bold, Odin's son, who undertook that embassy.**

## ***XV. Spatial transference between two kingdoms, guidance (THE HERO IS TRANSFERRED, DELIVERED, OR LED TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF AN OBJECT OF SEARCH)***

Generally the object of search is located in "another" or "different" kingdom. This kingdom may lie far away horizontally, or else **very high up or deep down vertically**. [...] 1. The hero **flies through the air (G1): on a steed** [...] [...] 2. He **travels on the ground** or on water (G2): **on the back of a horse** [...] 4. The **route is shown to him (G4)**. [...] 5. He makes use of stationary means of communication (G5). He **climbs a stairway** [...] It should be noted that "delivery," as a function in itself, is **sometimes absent: the hero simply walks to the place**.

Also environment (more or less explicitly) associated with death.

**GRIMM:** But by this time the hundred years had just passed, and the day had come when Briar-rose was to awake again. When **the King's son came near to the thorn-hedge**, it was nothing but large and beautiful flowers, which parted from each other of their own accord, and let him pass unhurt, then they closed again behind him like a hedge. In the castle-yard he saw the horses and the spotted hounds lying asleep; on the roof sat the pigeons with their heads under their wings. And when he entered the house, the flies were asleep upon the wall, the cook in the kitchen was still holding out his hand to seize the boy, and the maid was sitting by the black hen which she was going to pluck. He went on farther, and in the great hall he saw the whole of the court lying asleep, and up by the throne lay the King and Queen. Then he went on still farther, and all was so quiet that a breath could be heard, and at last **he came to the tower, and opened the door into the little room where Briar-rose was sleeping**.

**PERRAULT:** Scarce had he advanced towards the wood, when all the great trees, the bushes and brambles, gave way of themselves to let him pass thro'; **he walked up to the castle** which he saw at the end of a large avenue which he went into; and what a little surprised him was, that he saw none of his people could follow him, because the trees closed again, as soon as he had pass'd thro' them. However, he did not cease from continuing his way; a young and amorous Prince is always valiant. He came into a spacious outward court, where everything he saw might have frozen up the most fearless person with horror. There reigned over all a most frightful silence; the image of death everywhere shewed itself, and there was nothing to be seen but stretched out bodies of men and animals, all seeming to be dead. He, however, very well knew, by the ruby faces and pimpled noses of the beef-eaters, that they were only asleep; and their goblets, wherein still remained some drops of wine, shewed plainly, that they fell asleep in their cups. He then crossed a court paved with marble, went up the stairs, and came into the guard-chamber, where the guards were standing in their ranks, with their muskets upon their shoulders, and snoring as loud as they could. After that he went through several rooms full of gentlemen and ladies, all asleep, some standing, others sitting.

**DEMETER** <sup>34off</sup>: And Hermes [...] left the house of Olympus, straightway **sped down to the hidden places of the earth**.

Cf. **BALDR:** Then Sleipnir was taken, Odin's steed, and led forward; and Hermódr mounted on that horse and galloped off. [...] he **rode nine nights through dark dales and deep**, so that he saw not before he was come to the river Gjöll and rode onto the Gjöll-Bridge; which bridge is thatched with glittering gold. Módgudr is the maiden called who guards the bridge; she asked him his name and race, saying that the day before there had ridden over the bridge five companies of dead men; but the bridge thunders no less under thee alone, and thou hast not the color of dead men. Why ridest thou hither on Hel-way? He answered: 'I am appointed to ride to Hel to seek out Baldr. Hast thou perchance seen Baldr on Hel-way?' She said that Baldr had ridden there over Gjöll's Bridge,--'but **down and north lieth Hel-way**.' Then Hermódr rode on till he came to Hel's gates; he dismounted from his steed and made his girths fast, mounted and pricked him with his spurs; and **the steed leaped so hard over the gate that he came nowhere near to it**.

***XIX. THE INITIAL MISFORTUNE OR LACK IS LIQUIDATED.***

*This function, together with villainy, constitutes a pair. The narrative reaches its peak in this function. [...] 4. The object of a quest is obtained as the direct result of preceding actions [...] 7. The object of search is caught [...] 8. The spell on a person is broken [...] 9. A slain person is revived [...] 10. A captive is freed.*

**(a) The seeker reaches the place where the character lies/sits.**

**GRIMM:** **There she lay**, so beautiful that he could not turn his eyes away; and he stooped down and gave her a kiss.

**PERRAULT:** At last **he came into a chamber** all gilded with gold, where **he saw, upon a bed**, the curtains of which were all open, the finest sight was ever beheld: a Princess, who appeared to be about fifteen or sixteen years of age, and whose bright, and in a manner resplendent beauty, had somewhat in it divine. He approached with trembling and admiration, and fell down before her upon his knees.

**DEMETER 342ff:** **And he found the lord Hades in his house lying on his (death-)bed** (ἤμενον ἐν λεχέεσσι) with [Kore], who was much unhappy, because she yearned for her mother [...] And the strong Slayer of Argus [= Hermes] drew near and said: "Dark-haired Hades, ruler over the departed, father Zeus bids me bring noble Persephone forth from Erebus unto the gods, that her mother may see her with her eyes and cease from her dread anger [...]". So he said. And [Hades], ruler over the dead, smiled grimly and obeyed the behest of Zeus the king. For he straightway urged wise Persephone, saying: "Go now, Persephone, to your dark-robed mother"

Cf. **BALDR:** Then Hermod rode to the hall and dismounted from his steed, **went into the hall, and saw sitting there in the high-seat Baldr, his brother;** and Hermod tarried there overnight. At morn Hermodr prayed Hel that Baldr might ride home with him, and told her how great weeping was among the gods. But Hel said that in this wise it should be put to the test, whether Baldr were so all-beloved as had been said: 'If all things in the world, quick and dead, weep for him, then he shall go back to the gods; but he shall remain with Hel if any gainsay it or will not weep.

**(b) The spell on the princess is broken and she wakes up | Kore, allowed to leave the Dead, is happy and and jumps. ( | Hermod gets up? Baldr with him?)**

**Grimm:** But as soon as he kissed her, **Briar-rose** opened her eyes **and awoke**, and looked at him quite sweetly.

**Perrault:** And now, as the enchantment was at an end, **the Princess awoke**,

**DEMETER 370f:** When he said this, wise **Persephone was filled with joy and hastily sprang up for gladness.**

Cf. **BALDR:** Then Hermod **arose**; but Baldr led him out of the hall

***XX. Return (THE HERO RETURNS). → Repeated XV. HERO TRANSFERRED, DELIVERED, OR LED TO OBJECT OF SEARCH***

**Kore is brought to Demeter by means of horses which fly through the air (Propp: *The hero flies through the air on a steed*)**

**FOLKTALES:** see above.

**DEMETER 375ff:** Then Aidoneus the Ruler of Many openly got ready his deathless horses beneath the golden chariot. And she mounted on the chariot, and the strong Slayer of Argus took reins and whip in his dear hands and **drove forth from the hall, the horses speeding readily. Swiftly they traversed their long course, and neither the sea nor river-waters nor grassy glens nor mountain-peaks checked the career of the immortal horses, but they clave the deep air above them as they went.**

Cf. **BALDR:** Then Hermod **rode his way back**

**Repeated XIX. THE INITIAL MISFORTUNE OR LACK IS LIQUIDATED.**

*The narrative reaches its peak in this function. [...] 4. The object of a quest is obtained as the direct result of preceding actions [...] 7. The object of search is caught*

- (a) **Kore reaches the place where her beloved mother Demeter is situated.**

FOLKTALES: see above.

DEMETER 384ff: And Hermes brought them (the horses) **to the place where rich-crowned Demeter was staying** and checked them before her fragrant temple.

- (b) **The princess wakes up and looks at the prince | Kore and Demeter see each other and are mad with joy.**

GRIMM: But as soon as he kissed her, Briar-rose **opened her eyes and awoke, and looked at him quite sweetly.**

PERRAULT: And now, as the enchantment was at an end, the Princess awaked, and **looking at the prince with eyes more tender** than the first view might seem to admit of:

DEMETER 386ff: And when **Demeter saw them, she rushed forth as does a Maenad** down some thick-wooded mountain, while Persephone on the other side, **when she saw her mother's sweet eyes**, left the chariot and horses, and leaped down **to run to her, and falling upon her neck, embraced her.**

- (c) **The princess and the prince spend hours talking in love and joy | Kore and Demeter spend the whole day giving each other joy and love.**

PERRAULT: "Is it you, my Prince," said she to him, "you have tarried long." The Prince, charmed with these words, and much more with the manner in which they were spoken, knew not how to shew his joy and gratitude; he assured her, that he loved her better than he did himself; his discourse was not well connected, but it pleased her all the more; little eloquence, a great deal of love. He was more at a loss than she, and we need not wonder at it; she had time to think on what to say to him; for it is very probable (though history mentions nothing of it) that the good Fairy, during so long a sleep, had entertained her with pleasant dreams. **In short, when they talked four hours together, they said not half what they had to say.**

DEMETER 434ff: So did they then, with hearts at one, greatly cheer each the other's soul and spirit with many an embrace: **their hearts had relief from their griefs while each took and gave back joyousness.** Then bright-coiffed Hecate came near to them, and often did she embrace the daughter of holy Demeter: and from that time the lady Hecate was minister and companion to Persephone.

**XX. Return (THE HERO RETURNS).**

**Characters (Princess + prince | Demeter) go to meet other characters. Everyone wakes up and eat | the Earth becomes fertile again (= spring).**

**GRIMM:** Then **they went down together, and the King awoke, and the Queen, and the whole court, and looked at each other in great astonishment.** And the horses in the court-yard stood up and shook themselves; the hounds jumped up and wagged their tails; the pigeons upon the roof pulled out their heads from under their wings, looked round, and flew into the open country; the flies on the wall crept again; the fire in the kitchen burned up and flickered and cooked the meat; the joint began to turn and frizzle again, and the cook gave the boy such a box on the ear that he screamed, and the maid plucked the fowl ready for the spit.

**PERRAULT:** In the mean while, **all the palace awaked;** every one thought upon their particular business; and as all of them were not in love, **they were ready to die for hunger;**

the chief lady of honour, being as sharp set as other folks, grew very impatient, and told the Princess aloud, **That supper was served up. The Prince helped the Princess to rise,** she was entirely dressed, and very magnificently, but his Royal Highness took care not to tell her that she was dressed like his great grand-mother, and had a point-band peeping over a high collar; she looked not a bit the less beautiful and charming for all that. **They went into the great hall of looking-glasses, where they supped,** and were served by the Princess's officers; the violins and hautboys played old tunes, but very excellent, tho' it was now above a hundred years since they had been played;

**DEMETER 47off:** And rich-crowned **Demeter** did not refuse but straightway **made fruit to spring up from the rich lands, so that the whole wide earth was laden with leaves and flowers. Then she went, and to the kings who deal justice,** Triptolemus and Diocles, the horse-driver, and to doughty Eumolpus and Celeus, leader of the people, she showed the conduct of her rites and taught them all her mysteries, to Triptolemus and Polyxeinus and Diocles also, — awful mysteries which no one may in any way transgress or pry into or utter, for deep awe of the gods checks the voice. Happy is he among men upon earth who has seen these mysteries; but he who is uninitiate and who has no part in them, never has lot of like good things once he is dead, down in the darkness and gloom. But when the bright goddess had taught them all,

**XXXI. Wedding (THE HERO IS MARRIED AND ASCENDS THE THRONE)**

*A bride and a kingdom are awarded at once [...] Sometimes, on the contrary, only accession to the throne is mentioned.*

**Princess and prince get married | Kore and Demeter literally ascend to Olympus where they dwell beside Zeus as powerful goddesses.**

**GRIMM:** And then the **marriage of the King's son with Briar-rose was celebrated** with all splendour, and they lived contented to the end of their days.

**PERRAULT:** and after supper, without losing any time, the lord almoner **married them** in the chapel of the castle, and the chief lady of honour drew the curtains. They had but very little sleep; the Princess had no occasion, and the Prince left her next morning to return into the city, [SECOND HALF OF THE TALE]

**DEMETER 484ff:** [Demeter and Persephone] **went to Olympus** to the gathering of the other gods. And there they **dwell beside Zeus** who delights in thunder, awful and reverend goddesses. **Right blessed is he among men on earth whom they freely love:** soon they do send Plutus as guest to his great house, Plutus who gives wealth to mortal men. And now, queen of the land of sweet Eleusis and sea-girt Paros and rocky Antron, lady, giver of good gifts, bringer of seasons, queen Deo, be gracious, you and your daughter all beauteous Persephone, and for my song grant me heart-cheering substance. And now I will remember you and another song also.

## C. Spindles, mistletoes, and pomegranates: how to (temporarily) kill a Sleeping Beauty

(1) In the folktales and in the myth of Baldr (+ several others), the characters are pierced by an object before they fall asleep / die.

**GRIMM:** But scarcely had she touched the spindle when the magic decree was fulfilled, and she pricked her finger with it. And, **in the very moment when she felt the prick, she fell down upon the bed that stood there, and lay in a deep sleep.**

**BALDR:** The [mistletoe twig] flew through him, and he fell dead to the earth; and that was the greatest mischance that has ever befallen among gods and men..

**PERRAULT:** She had no sooner taken the spindle into her hand, than, whether being very hasty at it, somewhat unhandy, or that the decree of the Fairy had so ordained it, **it ran into her hand, and she fell down in a swoon.**

(2) *Hom. H. to Dem.:* Kore is (a) swallowed by earth and (b) taken down to house of Hades, who then makes her (c) taste a pomegranate.

(a+b) *Il.* 6.281-4 ὥς κέ οἱ ἀὐθι / γαῖα χάνοι [...] / εἰ κείνόν γε ἴδοιμι κατελθόντ' Ἄϊδος εἶσω [...] “If only the earth would gape for him at once! [...] If only I could see him going down into the house of Hades”; Verg. *A.* 4.24 sed *mihi uel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat* “but rather, I would hope, may the earth gape for me to its depths”

(c) DEMETER 372f: “But [Hades] secretly gave [to Kore] a sweet pomegranate seed to eat, to prevent her from staying for ever with [...] Demeter.”

- **Sleeping Beauty’s sleep:** reflex of a well-known folktale motif “magic sleep / temporary death” (Stith-Thompson D1364) = Kore’s “winter-death” as well?
- Camarena Laucirica (1985:274): magic sleep motif of Sleeping Beauty closely matches another famous folktale “Snow white” (ATU709).
- Propp (*Historical Roots of the Folktale*): 3 groups of objects cause temporary death, i.e.
  - (i) [PIERCING OBJECTS] : needles, thorns, splinters, hairpins, combs...
  - (ii) [FOOD, usually FRUIT (or BEVERAGES)] : apples, pears, grapes ...
- *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* (s.v. *Frucht, Früchte*): Apples and cherries are predominant in the folktales of large parts of Europe; figs, pomegranates and oranges have the same function in the Mediterranean area
- Names of mediterranean versions of Snow white: South-Italian *Granatina* ‘Pomegranate’; North-African Jewish Arabic *Romana* ‘id.’; Beduin “P. seed”.
- Association in Greek between [APPLES] and [POMEGRANATES]? Cf. formulaic verse ὄρχναι καὶ ῥοιαὶ καὶ μηλέαι ἀγλαόκαρποι (*Odyssey* 7.115; 11.589)

**CONCLUSIONS:** - Hades makes Kore eat pomegranate seed, resulting in temporary death = folktale motif (≈ Snow white).

- Functionally equivalent to piercing objects in Perrault and Grimm’s folktales and Baldr myth.