

Propp's Functions

Initial Situation

element 0: introduction & setup = initial situation – α (alpha)

- α — introduction of protagonist(s) and setup for story (context)

preparatory section

function 1: member(s) of family absents themselves from home = absention – β (beta)

- β_1 — absention (departure) of elder(s)
- β_2 — death of parent(s)
- β_3 — absention (departure) of sibling(s)

function 2: an interdiction is addressed to protagonist(s) = interdiction – γ (gamma)

- γ_1 — interdiction issued
- γ_2 — inverted form of interdiction issued as order or suggestion

function 3: interdiction is violated = violation – δ (delta)

- δ_1 — interdiction violated
- δ_2 — order or suggestion executed

function 4: antagonist(s) makes attempt at reconnaissance = reconnaissance – ϵ (epsilon)

- ϵ_1 — reconnaissance by antagonist(s) to obtain information about victim(s) / protagonist(s)
- ϵ_2 — inverted form of reconnaissance by victim(s) / protagonist(s) to obtain information about antagonist(s)
- ϵ_3 — reconnaissance by other person(s)

function 5: antagonist(s) receives information about victim(s) / protagonist(s) = delivery – ζ (zeta)

- ζ_1 — antagonist(s) receives information about victim(s) / protagonist(s)
- ζ_2 — inverted form of delivery as victim(s) / protagonist(s) receives information about antagonist(s)
- ζ_3 — information received by other means

function 6: antagonist(s) attempts to deceive victim(s) / protagonist(s) in order to take possession of them or their belongings = trickery – η (eta)

- η_1 — deceitful persuasions by antagonist(s)
- η_2 — direct application of magical agents by antagonist(s)
- η_3 — use of other forms of deception or coercion

function 7: victim(s) / protagonist(s) accept deception and unwittingly help antagonist(s) = complicity – θ / λ (theta/lamda)

- θ_1 — victim(s) / protagonist(s) reacts to persuasions of antagonist(s)
- θ_2 — victim(s) / protagonist(s) mechanically falls victim to influence of magical agent
- θ_3 — victim(s) / protagonist(s) gives in or reacts mechanically to deceit of antagonist(s)
- λ — preliminary misfortune caused by deceitful agreement

complications

function 8 (and/or 8a) is always present in tale

function 8: antagonist(s) causes harm or injury to victim(s)/member of protagonist's family = villainy – A

- A1 — kidnapping of person
- A2 — seizure of magical agent or helper
- Aii — forcible seizure of magical helper
- A3 — pillaging or ruining of crops
- A4 — theft of daylight
- A5 — plundering in other forms
- A6 — bodily injury, maiming, mutilation

- A7 — causes sudden disappearance
- Avii — bride is forgotten
- A8 — demand for delivery or enticement, abduction
- A9 — expulsion
- A10 — casting into body of water
- A11 — casting of a spell, transformation
- A12 — false substitution
- A13 — issues order to kill [requires proof]
- A14 — commits murder
- A15 — imprisonment, detention
- A16 — threat of forced matrimony
- Axvi — threat of forced matrimony between relatives
- A17 — threat of cannibalism
- Axvii — threat of cannibalism among relatives
- A18 — tormenting at night (visitation, vampirism)
- A19 — declaration of war

function 8a (and/or 8) is always present in tale

function 8a: one member of family lacks/desires something = lack – a

- a1 — lack of bride, friend, or an individual
- a2 — lack of helper or magical agent
- a3 — lack of wondrous object(s)
- a4 — lack of egg of death or love
- a5 — lack of money or means of existence
- a6 — lacks in other forms

function 9: misfortune/lack made known, protagonist(s) approached with request/command, they are allowed to go/dispatched = mediation, the connective incident – B

- B1 — call for help received, protagonist(s) as seeker(s) dispatched
- B2 — protagonist(s) as seeker(s) dispatched directly
- B3 — protagonist(s) as seeker(s) released, allowed to depart
- B4 — announcement of misfortune in other forms, protagonist(s) as seeker(s) departs
- B5 — transportation of banished protagonist(s) as victim(s)
- B6 — condemned protagonist(s) as victim(s) released, spared
- B7 — lament or plaintive song by/about victim(s), heard/sung by protagonist(s)

function 10: protagonist(s) agrees to or decides on counteraction = beginning counteraction – C

- C — protagonist(s) as seeker consents to counteraction

function 11: protagonist(s) leaves home = departure – \uparrow

- \uparrow — departure, dispatch of protagonist(s) from home

donors

function 12: protagonist(s) tested, interrogates, attacked, etc. which prepares way for receiving magical agent or helper = first function of donor – D

- D1 — donor tests protagonist(s)
- D2 — donor greets and interrogates protagonist(s)
- D3 — request of favor after death
- D4 — entreaty of prisoner for freedom
- *D4 — entreaty of prisoner for freedom, with preliminary imprisonment
- D5 — request for mercy
- D6 — request for division
- d6 — argument without express request for division
- D7 — other requests
- *D7 — other requests, with preliminary helpless situation of person making request
- d7 — helpless situation of donor without stated request, possibility of rendering service
- D8 — attempt to destroy
- D9 — combat with hostile donor
- D10 — offer of magical agent as an exchange

function 13: protagonist(s) reacts to actions of future donor = protagonist's reaction – E

- E1 — protagonist(s) withstands ordeal (or not)
- E2 — protagonist(s) answers greeting (or not)
- E3 — protagonist(s) renders service to dead person (or not)
- E4 — protagonist(s) frees of captive
- E5 — mercy to suppliant
- E6 — protagonist completes apportionment and reconciles disputants
- Evi — protagonist(s) deceives disputants
- E7 — performance of some other service, fulfillment of request, pious deeds
- E8 — attempt at destruction averted by turnabout
- E9 — protagonist(s) vanquishes hostile donor (or not)
- E10 — deception in an exchange, protagonist(s) employs magical agent on donor

function 14: protagonist(s) acquires use of magical agent = acquisition of magical agent – F

- F1 — agent is directly transferred
- f1 — gift is of a material nature
- F — agent is not transferred
- F= — protagonist's negative reaction provokes cruel retribution
- F2 — agent is pointed out
- F3 — agent is prepared
- F4 — agent is sold and purchased
- F43 — agent is made on order
- F5 — agent is found by chance
- F6 — agent suddenly appears of its own accord
- Fvi — agent appears from out of earth
- F7 — agent is drunk or eaten
- F8 — agent is seized
- F9 — agent offers its services, places itself at someone's disposal
- f9 — agent indicates it will appear of its own accord in some time of need
- F96 — meeting with magical helper(s) who offers their services

from entry of helper to end of first move

function 15: protagonist(s) transferred, delivered or led to vicinity of object of search = transference, guidance – G

- G1 — protagonist(s) flies thru air
- G2 — protagonist(s) travels on ground or water
- G3 — protagonist(s) is led
- G4 — route is shown to protagonist(s)
- G5 — protagonist(s) makes use of stationary means of communication (stairs, bridge, passageway. etc.)
- G6 — marked trail shows the way (blood, tracks, yarn, etc.)

function 16: protagonist(s) and antagonist(s) join in direct combat = struggle – H

- H1 — fight in an open field
- H2 — contest, competition
- H3 — game of cards
- H4 — weighing with scales

function 17: protagonist(s) branded = branding – J

- J1 — application of mark to body of protagonist(s)
- J2 — transference of token (ring, towel, etc.)

function 18: antagonist(s) defeated = victory – I

- I1 — antagonist(s) defeated in open battle
- *I1 — antagonist(s) defeated by one protagonist(s) while the other(s) hide
- I2 — antagonist(s) defeated in contest
- I3 — antagonist(s) defeated at cards
- I4 — antagonist(s) defeated in weighing with scales
- I5 — protagonist(s) kills antagonist(s) without preliminary fight
- I6 — expulsion of antagonist(s)

function 19: initial misfortune or lack is liquidated = liquidation – K

- K1 — direct acquisition thru application of force or cunning
- Ki — direct acquisition thru application of force or cunning, with one person compelling another
- K2 — acquisition accomplished by several helpers at once
- K3 — acquisition achieved with help of an enticement or decoy(s)
- K4 — liquidation of misfortune as direct result of previous actions
- K5 — object of search attained instantly thru use of magical agent
- K6 — poverty done away with thru use of magical agent
- K7 — object of search captured
- K8 — breaking of spell on victim
- K9 — resuscitation of slain
- Kix — resuscitation, with preliminary obtaining of water of life
- K10 — release from captivity
- KF1 — liquidation in form F: object of search is transferred
- KF2 — liquidation in form F: object of search is pointed out
- KF3 — liquidation in form F: object of search is prepared
- KF4 — liquidation in form F: object of search is sold, purchased
- KF43 — liquidation in form F: object of search is made on order
- KF5 — liquidation in form F: object of search is found
- KF6 — liquidation in form F: object of search appears of its own accord
- KFvi — liquidation in form F: object of search appears from out of earth
- KF7 — liquidation in form F: object of search is drunk or eaten
- KF8 — liquidation in form F: object of search is seized
- KF9 — liquidation in form F: object of search offers its services, places itself at someone's disposal
- KF96 — liquidation in form F: object of search are helpers who offers their services

function 20: protagonist(s) returns = return – ↓

- ↓ — return of protagonist(s)

function 21: protagonist(s) pursued = pursuit – Pr

- Pr1 — antagonist(s) flies thru air
- Pr2 — antagonist(s) demands guilty person
- Pr3 — antagonist(s) pursues, accompanied by series of transformations into animals
- Pr4 — antagonist(s) pursues, with transformations into enticing objects
- Pr5 — antagonist(s) attempts to devour protagonist(s)
- Pr6 — antagonist(s) attempts to destroy protagonist(s)
- Pr7 — antagonist(s) attempts to gnaw thru tree with protagonist(s) up in it

function 22: rescue of protagonist(s) from pursuit = rescue – Rs

- Rs1 — protagonist(s) carried thru air or runs quickly
- Rs2 — protagonist(s) places obstacles in path of pursuers [with transformation]
- Rs3 — fleeing, with transformation to escape recognition
- Rs4 — fleeing with concealment of escapee
- Rs5 — concealment of escapee by blacksmiths
- Rs6 — escapee goes thru series of transformations into animals, plants & stones
- Rs7 — warding of temptation of enticing object(s)
- Rs8 — rescue or salvation from being devoured
- Rs9 — rescue or salvation from being destroyed
- Rs10 — leap into another tree

beginning of second move —

(repeat from new villainy to unrecognized arrival)

function 23: protagonist, unrecognized, arrives home or another country = unrecognized arrival – o

- o — unrecognized arrival

function 24: false protagonist(s) presents unfounded claims = unfounded claims – L

- L — claims of false protagonist(s)

function 25: difficult task proposed to protagonist(s) = difficult task – M

- M1 — ordeal by food and drink
- M2 — ordeal by fire
- M3 — riddle guessing
- M4 — ordeal of choice
- M5 — hide and seek
- M6 — test of strength
- M7 — test of adroitness
- M8 — test of fortitude
- M9 — test of endurance
- M10 — tasks of supply
- Mx — tasks of manufacture
- M11 — sorting tasks
- M12 — other tasks

function 26: task resolved = solution – N

- N1 — food and drink consumed
- N2 — fire survived
- N3 — riddle guessed
- N4 — correct choice selected
- N5 — protagonist(s) not found
- N6 — test of strength passed
- N7 — test of adroitness passed
- N8 — test of fortitude passed
- N9 — test of endurance passed
- N10 — object(s) supplied
- Nx — object(s) manufactured
- N11 — sorting tasks completed
- N12 — other tasks completed
- *N — solution before deadline

function 27: protagonist(s) recognized = recognition – Q

- Q1 — recognition of protagonist(s) by mark on body
- Q2 — recognition of protagonist(s) by token
- Q3 — recognition of protagonist(s) by accomplishment of difficult task
- Q4 — recognition of protagonist(s) by family member

function 28: false protagonist(s) or antagonist(s) exposed = exposure – Ex

- Ex1 — exposure of false protagonist(s) or antagonist(s) by lack of mark on body
- Ex2 — exposure of false protagonist(s) or antagonist(s) by lack of token
- Ex3 — exposure of false protagonist(s) or antagonist(s) by failure to accomplish difficult task
- Ex4 — exposure of false protagonist(s) or antagonist(s) thru song / lament

function 29: protagonist(s) given new appearance = transfiguration – T

- T1 — new physical appearance by magical action of helper
- T2 — protagonist(s) builds palace
- T3 — protagonist(s) puts on new garments
- T4 — humorous and rationalized forms, new appearance achieved by deception

function 30: false protagonist(s) or antagonist(s) punished = punishment – U

- U — punishment of false protagonist(s) or antagonist(s)
- U- — false protagonist(s) or antagonist(s) pardoned

function 31: protagonist(s) marries and ascends throne = wedding – W

- W#* — protagonist(s) weds and ascends throne
- W# — protagonist(s) weds
- W* — protagonist(s) ascends throne
- w1 — protagonist(s) promised marriage
- w2 — protagonist(s) resumes marriage
- wo — protagonist(s) given monetary reward or other forms of material gain