men's legends. Since the nisse is a being primarily linked to the farm's economic integrity—including animal husbandry and harvest—and secondarily to its domestic integrity, the slight disproportion is understandable.

The frequency with which animals appear in the informant repertoires is unaffected by the sex of the informant with one notable exception. Farm animals occur in a greater proportion of the male informants' legends. This can be attributed to the division of labor in the nineteenth century farm where men were in charge of the farm animals. The rate of inclusion, at 97%, is identical for both groups and underscores the importance of farm animals in the lives of agrarian Danes. Neither men nor women were more dependent on farm animals than the other. Rather, the higher proportion found in the men's repertoires reflects the greater responsibility men had for the care of the farm animals.

A complementary phenomenon occurs with regard to the variables "secular structures" and "inside." Secular structures appear in a greater proportion of the male informants' legends. Conversely, legends in which the action takes place inside appear in a greater proportion of the female informants' legends. Each case supports the hypothesis that legends reflect the social reality of the narrator. Men were charged with the care of buildings and large animals, while women were charged with the care of the domestic space.

The inclusion of topographical features appears to be little affected by the informants' gender, although several exceptions exist. Uncultivated land appears in a larger proportion of the male informants' legends. This discrepancy as well may be linked to the concept of spheres of economic action. Uncultivated land stands in stark opposition to cultivated land. The initial cultivation of land—clearing and plowing—and the continued preservation of fields were primarily male coded activities. Uncultivated land, its inherent threat to cultivated land and, by extension, the successful completion of male coded economic tasks understandably receives greater expression in the legends of male informants.

Running and standing bodies of water and mounds all appear with slightly higher frequency in the men's repertoires as these are topographical features found outside of the boundaries of the farm. However, the discrepancies are low enough to call this distinction into question. Men do seem to tell legends which include roads with greater frequency than women do. A similar phenomenon exists for conveyees, both land and water. Once again, these trends are linked to the concept of social reality and spheres of action. Men traveled more often than women, and this carries over into their social expression.

The remaining discrepancies between the groups lie in the category of objects. Legends which include mention of implements and tools appear in a greater proportion of the male informants' legends. This phenomenon is attributable to the male coding of many of these objects, including plows, swords and other weapons. Marker stones also occur with greater frequency in the men's repertoires. Once again, this object is located in the male sphere of economic action. The negative ramifications of plowing over a boundary stone—the most frequent appearance of boundary stones is in this context—is a greater concern for men, since they were the ones charged with plowing. Men who plowed the fields had a greater appreciation of both the location of boundary stones and the temptation to move these stones for personal gain. These factors help account for the observed disparity in proportions. In contrast to references to tools and implements, references to food occur more frequently in the women's repertoires. Food preparation was a primarily female coded activity. The fear of contamination during preparation or unsuccessful preparation with its implicit suggestion of infertility was therefore an area of greater concern for women than men.

The evaluation of legend elements according to the informant's gender has resulted in the identification of numerous trends. The general repertoire make-up of the two groups is different—men have larger repertoires and exhibit a clear tendency to tell more jokes and descriptions than women. Legend repertoire size, however, is equivalent. Stylistically, women tend to claim closer relation to the narrated events. The frequency with which the various legend elements appear in the repertoires is closely linked to the spheres of actions—in nineteenth-century Denmark, men worked in an extra-domestic space as opposed to the domestic space women worked in. Women included more female actors in their legends than men did, although male actors appeared
with similar frequency across the groups, suggesting a tendency on the part of men to marginalize women in their stories to the extent that they were eliminated. On the other hand, women made more frequent use of the parson, a reflection of their desire to posit an authority figure above the dominant position of the husband. Other elements, such as topographical features, conveyances and food, appear to be closely linked to the spheres of action and the fears and desires associated with those actions.

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<th>Male</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Elves</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender
Element

Female | Male
--- | ---
\( \hat{p} \) | SE | \( \hat{p} \) | SE

Male Bjørgfolk | 4.0% | 0.4% | 5.2% | 0.4%
Female Bjørgfolk | 1.9% | 0.2% | 3.0% | 0.2%
Male Giants | 1.6% | 0.3% | 1.2% | 0.1%
Female Giants | 0.2% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.04%
Male Ghosts | 14.3% | 0.7% | 13.9% | 0.5%
Female Ghosts | 6.9% | 0.4% | 5.0% | 0.2%
Child Ghosts | 1.6% | 0.2% | 0.7% | 0.1%
Devil | 3.9% | 0.4% | 5.0% | 0.3%
Nisse | 1.6% | 0.2% | 2.8% | 0.2%
Supernatural Household Animals | 3.8% | 0.4% | 2.6% | 0.1%
Supernatural Farm Animals | 4.0% | 0.2% | 5.4% | 0.3%
Supernatural Wild Animals | 4.0% | 0.3% | 2.7% | 0.2%
Fantastic Animals | 1.3% | 0.1% | 2.2% | 0.1%
Household Animals | 2.1% | 0.2% | 3.0% | 0.2%
Farm Animals | 17.0% | 0.8% | 21.3% | 0.5%
Wild Animals | 2.8% | 0.3% | 4.2% | 0.2%
Legless Animals | 0.6% | 0.1% | 0.8% | 0.1%
Mounds and Hills | 11.7% | 0.7% | 12.1% | 0.4%
Valleys | 0.1% | 0.07% | 0.5% | 0.09%
Running Water | 2.5% | 0.2% | 3.8% | 0.2%
Standing Water | 2.4% | 0.3% | 3.8% | 0.2%
Dams and Bridges | 1.9% | 0.2% | 2.4% | 0.1%
Beaches | 0.7% | 0.1% | 0.7% | 0.1%
Cultivated Land | 5.2% | 0.3% | 6.0% | 0.2%
Uncultivated Land | 1.3% | 0.1% | 4.7% | 0.3%
Boundary Markers | 1.6% | 0.2% | 2.5% | 0.1%
Roads and Paths | 7.9% | 0.5% | 9.6% | 0.3%
Land Conveyances | 5.0% | 0.4% | 8.1% | 0.4%
Water Conveyances | 0.8% | 0.1% | 2.2% | 0.1%
Secular Structures | 6.9% | 0.5% | 10.2% | 0.5%
Religious Structures | 6.1% | 0.4% | 7.4% | 0.3%
Doors and Passages | 3.7% | 0.3% | 3.8% | 0.3%
Inside | 14.2% | 0.9% | 11.4% | 0.5%
Building Materials | 1.5% | 0.2% | 1.9% | 0.1%
Cloth | 6.0% | 0.4% | 6.7% | 0.2%
Treasure and Money | 6.2% | 0.4% | 7.9% | 0.3%
Bells | 0.4% | 0.1% | 1.0% | 0.1%
Tools and Implements | 13.3% | 0.5% | 16.1% | 0.4%
Food | 10.0% | 0.5% | 7.1% | 0.2%
Books | 3.6% | 0.4% | 2.5% | 0.1%

Figure Six: Although the male informants have a larger range of values for their total repertoire, both graphs peak at 35 records, representing a little more than 30% of the respective informant pools.
Figure Seven: Interestingly, the peak midpoint value for men and women who include descriptions in their repertoires is 15, with approximately 41% of each group.

Figure Eight: Although the graph of legends in repertoire for male informants has a greater range of values, the female informants' graph peaks at twenty-two legends while the male informants' graph peaks at seventeen legends. This suggests that neither gender group dominates the legend tradition.
Figure Nine: While the graph of female human actors appearing in legends for the male informants emphasizes the left side, the graph for the female informants exhibits a marked peak at twelve legends, and a substantial emphasis on the right side.

Figure Ten: The graphs show the female informants' more frequent use of the person in their legends.
Analysis By Class Affiliation

As noted before, Kristensen made his own judgement on the relative value of informants based on their class affiliation. While the observation that cotters were better informants may obtain as regards folktales and ballads, that same observation does not seem to hold true for the legend genre. Cotters indeed outnumber farm owners by a substantial margin, with seventy-one cotters and twenty-nine farm owners constituting the informant pool. However, this difference may be attributable to a combination of the smaller size of the farm owner class and Kristensen's bias against farm owner informants. For the ensuing evaluation, each group of informants is assumed to be representative of the exceptional legend informants in their class as a whole.

As regards generic proficiency, Kristensen's evaluation of cotters as better folktale narrators is confirmed, but the discrepancy for ballads is not nearly as notable as that for folktales. While cotters have a slightly greater range of values, the mean values are close enough to each other for the difference to be insignificant. However, substantial differences exist for the genres "jokes" and "descriptions." The farm owners' repertoires include a substantially larger range of values for jokes, and a greater percentage of the farm owners included jokes in their repertoires: 42% versus 23% among cotters. It is quite possible that the farm owners used jokes as a means for expressing their evaluation of the poorer classes and the learned members of society—read parsons—in a socially acceptable form. Many jokes posit the parson as an object of satire or parody, portraying him as an imbecile or buffoon.

One place, the parish clerk had forgotten to close the church door one Sunday after services and a rutting sow found its way into the church. Then it managed to shove the door shut behind it and so it couldn't come out again. It grunted about in there so it could be heard down in the whole town. The parish clerk heard it and went to the parson and told him. He gets his book and they go up there together. Then the parson positions himself in the church door and he is going to conjure the ghost. Then the sow comes and says: "huu!" and goes
right between his legs and takes him with it.  "Goodnight, my good Per Degn, he got me!" 20

The portrayal of other characters in jokes often relies on a comical revelation of poor education or reasoning skills.

A man had the habit of thinking aloud. One time, he rode past a yard from which an apple tree stretched its branches over the road, and the most wonderful apples hung right over his head. But he couldn’t reach a single one. So then he tried to stand up on the horse and now he could reach them. He picked and put them in his pockets, but just as he was standing there, he happened to say to himself, "What would happen to me if someone came by now and said: Giddyap?" The last word he said so loud that the horse heard it and it immediately took off, but the man fell down. 21

In addition, the joke can be a politically charged expression, and farm owners, who often served on parish boards, may have used jokes as a means of expressing unpopular or derogatory views.

Descriptions also occur with markedly disparate frequency across the groups. Nearly half of the cotters did not include descriptions in their repertoires, as opposed to only one third of the farm owners. Descriptions, usually of topographic features, may have gained prominence in the farm owners’ repertoires due to the close ties between the farm owners and their land. Unlike the cotters, farm owners did not move from area to area in search of work. Land ownership resulted in a closer connection to their area. The descriptions often act as a means of bringing national history onto a local scale. Since the farm owners owned land, bringing national history into the local arena would serve as a means for increasing personal importance. Farm owners also may have privileged the position of the non-narrative statement in their repertoires as a means for presenting themselves as knowledgeable, learned individuals. The desire to be considered an authoritative source of information could have led to the frequent use of descriptions. Legends, however, occur with nearly equal frequency in the repertoires of each class. The frequency graphs illustrate the interesting distribution of values for each group, with the cotters having a larger range of values than the farm owners (fig. 12). The data support the assertion that legend is distributed equally across class boundaries and, unlike some other forms of cultural expression—most notably folklore—is not exclusively associated with the expression of a disenfranchised social class.

Stylistic aspects of the legend repertoires reveal trends which may be related to the generic distribution discussed above. Place names appear in a greater proportion of the legends in the farm owners’ repertoires. This phenomenon meshes well with the generic emphasis on descriptions observed in the farm owners’ repertoires. Both trends suggest a tendency among the farm owners to rely heavily on synchronic etymology. Farm owners also tended to include personal names with greater frequency. The tendency toward more frequent use of independently verifiable elements reflects the farm owners’ desire to present events in a highly localized manner and to appear as authoritative sources on local history and events.

The cotters included narratives told from a first person standpoint more often than the farm owners, although the other two categories describing the narrator’s engagement exhibit nearly identical proportions. The preferred mode of performance for both groups was one of narrative detachment. While the difference between the levels with which informants tell accounts attributed to known individuals is insignificant, the disparity becomes notable in the case of first hand accounts. The farm owners’ narrative detachment might be attributed to an attempt at appearing as detached observers—local historians—rather than participants. The farm owners had moved into a position where they were conscious of the politics of performance. Performance of legend among these class members possibly became linked to the establishment of an “official” local history. The cotters, in contrast, were perhaps not as conscious of the political ramifications of performance, and therefore may not have viewed legends as a means of self-aggrandizement through the presentation of self as “authority.” Other stylistic aspects of performance, such as the use of verifying tags and time specifiers, have equivalent distributions across the groups. This distribution supports the earlier observation that these elements are aspects of personal style.

Thematic considerations, such as supernatural contact and positive or negative resolutions, appear to be uninfluenced by
class affiliation. The trend is clear that, while class affiliation affects the generic make-up of the repertoire and certain stylistic aspects of legend performance, it has little effect on the thematic content of the accounts. Neither group is more inclined to include supernatural contact in their accounts nor is either group more inclined to resolve legends positively or negatively. Both groups reflect proportions for thematic considerations similar to the proportions for the informant pool as a whole.

There are few categories of empirically observable legend elements which exhibit disparate distributions or proportions, with a few noteworthy exceptions to this trend. For example, cotters included ellefolk in a larger proportion of their legends. Other categories of supernatural beings in human form occur with similar frequency, suggesting that the term ellefolk may have been part of the vocabulary of the lower classes, farm owners using different appellations for similar phenomena. Female ghosts also occur in a greater proportion of the cotters’ legends. The discrepancy may be partially attributable to the gender of the informants, with more women in the cotters informant pool than in the farm owner informant pool. A second interesting disparity between the classes lies in the proportion of legends in which “male folk healers” appear, with this element occurring in a higher proportion of the farm owners’ legends. Since the farm owners often were members of the parish board, they may have preferred the use of non-politically marked individuals in the role of positive human actor with supernatural powers. Parsons who represented a potential political threat to the farm owners’ power base were reserved for use in jokes. The positive marking of the parson may have been deemphasized in the farm owners’ legends through the use of a non-political figure in the role of social protector.

A topographic feature—“roads and paths”—and a complementary object element—“land conveyances”—appear in disparate proportions of the legends of the two classes. The frequency with which “land conveyances” appear in the legends is directly related to the frequency with which roads appear, both elements appearing in a greater proportion of the farm owners’ legends. Farm owners had greater access to wagons and it was their property, in the form of harvests and milled grains, that was being transported. Roads, as a link between farms, may occur more frequently in the farm owners’ repertoires because of their reliance on roads for continued economic success. It must be kept in mind, however, that the farm owner pool includes more men than women, and this may skew the values, as it was already observed that men tell legends with roads and wagons more frequently than women.

In the case of legend elements which occur in only a small proportion of the total legend repertoires, it is interesting to consider the percentage of the informant pool which includes the given element at least once in their repertoires. This “zero-level” analysis provides a helpful view of the rate of inclusion of a particular element. Although it is difficult to ascertain the level at which a substantial difference in the percentage of informants whose repertoires include a particular elements exists, a 15% gap is certainly large enough to suggest a significant difference of inclusion. This evaluation results in the identification of five variables which exhibit such distribution disparities.

It was noted that ellefolk appear in a greater proportion of the cotters’ legends. Cotters also have a significantly higher rate of inclusion for bjargfolk (particularly bjargmænd) than farm owners. Coupled with the observation concerning ellefolk, there is a suggestion that farm owners did not include legends of human form supernatural beings situated outside the boundaries of the farm as frequently as their counterpart counterparts did. This finding supports the observation that farm owners wanted to appear “modern” and chose expressions in line with such an image. Such supernatural beings in human form may not have been believable among the farm owners. By assigning the role of “outside threat” to non-supernatural forms, the farm owners could avoid inclusion of non-believable elements. Therefore “outside” threat was assigned a more believable human form in their repertoires—the “outsider.” It is also possible that farm owners did not feel the “outside” threat to social integrity as intensely as the cotters, accounting for a slight skew in the farm owners’ repertoires towards “inside” threats. For example, “witches” are a supernatural threat originating within the community as opposed to the “outside” origin of the human form supernatural beings. They often threaten the success of farming activities, particularly the health of animals. Farm owners probably included this threat with a
greater frequency because of their closer economic reliance on animal husbandry than the cotters.

Interestingly, the nisse occurs with similar frequency across classes. The nisse is a different form of being than the witch and other “inside” threats, since it can be both a positive and a negative figure. The activities of the nisse are generally concerned with the enforcement of acceptable and expected behaviors. As such, the nisse has a broad scope of action. While nisse may help a farm owner through assistance in milking, harvesting, milling and care of animals, nisse can also harm the farm owner who does not treat him with respect:

One Christmas eve, the man went out and asked the nisse if he would tend the animals the next year as well. Then he asked him, if they wanted him to be a stall hand, what they wanted him to tend. Then the man could say either cattle or horses, but he couldn’t say sheep, because the nisse wouldn’t tend them, they tried to step on him. He was supposed to have a little pot of porridge with butter in it every Christmas eve, he didn’t eat at other times, and he was to eat it from the pot that it was cooked in. Then there was a woman who had put the butter so far down that it couldn’t even be seen. He ate a little bit of it, but when he didn’t notice any butter, he got angry and went in and broke the neck of a cow...

The next day, when the cows were out to water, the stones and whips danced against the walls, because the new cow was foreign and his wanted her to behave like the old one.55

Nisse also has frequent contact with day laborers, farm hands, maidservants and small-holders—the cotters class—and presents the same potential for help or hindrance. The nisse is an expression of a broad range of agrarian concerns and hopes. Inclusion of such an expression transcends class boundaries. Often the form a threat takes is linked to the believability of that form among the tradition participants. For farm owners, the ellefolk, bjargfolk and troide were less believable forms, while witches, foreigners and robbers were more believable manifestations of threat.

As land owners, one might expect that a higher percentage of farm owners would include legends with references to cultivated lands. Just the opposite is true. While 76% of the cotters include such legends, the corresponding figure for the farm owners is only 48%. One can attribute this disparity at least in part to the cotters’ relation to land and its cultivation. The cotters who owned land, owned so little that their economic survival was always in jeopardy. This increased their attention on the cultivation of land—the threat of poor harvests and the hope for a successful crop—and was reflected in their legends. Cotters who did not own land had to work the land for others. As such, cultivated fields and the work that went into their cultivation symbolized their oppression and economic hardship. Coupled with the physical demands of menial labor, cultivated land represented a continuing source of preoccupation for the cotters.

Related to the level of land ownership is the ability to build. While only 30% of the cotters included legends with reference to building materials in their repertoires, 52% of the farm owners included legends with such references. The cotters were not as frequently involved in building as the farm owners due to the expense of such an undertaking. Conversely, farm owners often had to repair and make additions to farm buildings. Furthermore, as members of parish councils, farm owners were more directly involved in the construction of churches. The threat to and benefits of the successful completion of buildings was more directly felt by farm owners, and this could explain the distribution of this content element.

A final difference in the rate of inclusion may be found in legends which occur inside. Legends which occur inside appear in 92% of the cotters class repertoires, but only in 75% of the farm owner class repertoires. Part of this discrepancy is attributable to the differences in gender distribution. The discrepancy may also be in part attributable to the spheres of action for the two classes. While farm owners worked primarily in the fields and were concerned with the safe transportation of their property, cotters had a broader range of economic action. Work such as weaving, knitting and smithing all occurred inside. Also, while farm owner class members could probably divide their work and living areas, cotters could not—they often lived in the same place where they worked. be it a mill, a barn or a workshop. Finally, poverty resulted in a more threatening home environment for the cotters, resulting in a preoccupation with a hope for the betterment of that environment. Such discomfort inside quite possibly led to the greater frequency of inclusion of legends.
occuring inside.

Class affiliation does not have as significant an effect on the legend repertoires as gender does. It does, however, have marked affects on the generic composition of the overall folklore repertoires. Furthermore, class influences the stylistics of performance. In contrast, most thematic and content elements occur with strikingly similar frequency in the repertoires of each class. However, economic concerns and spheres of action result in differing levels of inclusion of several legend elements.
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<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legless Animals</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mounds and Hills</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valleys</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running Water</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing Water</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dams and Bridges</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaches</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivated Land</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncultivated Land</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary Markers</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads and Paths</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Conveyances</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Conveyances</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secular Structures</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Structures</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doors and Passages</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inside</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Materials</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure and Money</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bells</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools and Implements</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure Twelve: Here the variable is the number of legends in total repertoire. While the cotter graph exhibits a greater range of values, the farm owner graph peaks at twenty-two compared to the peak at seventeen for the cotter graph.
Analysis By Age

Unlike the processes of making gender distinctions or deciding on class affiliation, making age group distinctions is a fundamentally subjective exercise. Because of the wide range of informant ages, from twenty-three to eighty-nine, and because of the lack of any obvious divisions, the informant pool has been divided in two different manners, and subsequently analyzed according to these divisions. The first division is based on the democratic constitution of 1849, which fundamentally changed the political and economic prospects of large parts of the population. People who were confirmed before 1849 had worked under the old manorial system, while people confirmed after 1849 entered the work force after the democratization of the country. The age of confirmation marked the point at which a child moved into the adult labor force, and was generally fourteen years of age. Thus, the first age division divides informants born before 1835 and those born in or after 1835 into two separate groups (see table nine). The second division is based on the age of the informant at first collection. The informant pool was broken into four equally sized groups—informants under fifty, informants from fifty to sixty-two, informants from sixty-two to seventy-three and informants seventy-three and older. The age division is essentially arbitrary—however, by making four divisions, trends based on age at first collection become easier to identify. The majority of the analysis is based on the two extreme categories—under fifty and over seventy-three—as a means for contrasting the repertoires of young and old informants (see table ten).

The age of the informant has a noted effect on the generic composition of the total repertoire. The most marked difference in the repertoires lies in the number of folktales told by informants in the various age groups, with older informants telling more than younger informants (fig. 13). Kristensen felt that the “older” informants were storehouses of folklore and that folktales were dying out among the younger generations. Among the younger informants, there is a significantly lower rate of inclusion, suggesting at least partial confirmation of this observation. Holbek notes the role of the fairytale as a

means for expressing emancipative hope among the peasant class. Informants who worked in the pre-democratic Denmark undoubtedly felt the oppression of the land owning class to a greater degree than their post-democracy counterparts, and therefore had a more pressing need for such expression. The decline of the bindesstue, an important arena for folktale performance, may have also contributed to the paucity of folktales in the younger informants’ repertoires.

Although ballads and rhymed expressions constitute a similar proportion of the repertoires, jokes and descriptions exhibit marked differences in both proportion of repertoire and rate of inclusion. Younger informants tell more jokes than older informants. In the under fifty group, jokes comprise 3.5% of repertoire and in the over seventy-three group 1.5% of repertoire. The discrepancy nearly disappears, however, if one considers the pre/post constitution divide, and suggests that informant age and not social historical factors plays the major role in affecting generic inclusion. Descriptions, on the other hand, appear to be linked to the pre/post constitution distinction. Descriptions constitute 20 of the pre-constitution informants’ repertoires compared to 26.5% of the post-constitution informants’ repertoires. The disparity is only slightly larger along the under fifty/over seventy-three divide. With the advent of democracy came the advent of more accessible education, which, in turn, led to an appreciation of history and a desire to bring that history into a local reference frame. Interestingly, age has no apparent influence on legend repertoire size. The larger mean total repertoire size of the young informants is attributable to the significant difference in the number of descriptions in their repertoires. Description is apparently a genre better suited to the expression for the young informants than the folktale, a form preferred by the old and pre-constitution informants. This difference may in part be attributable to the level of the narrator’s experience, the younger informants being in the process of attaining the narrative skills accordant with the craftsmanship of folktale performance through performance of shorter, less complex forms.

The stylistic aspects of legend occur in a similar proportion of legends across all of the age groups. One exception to this rule is the proportion of first person accounts. While the discrepancy is insignificant between the
pre/post constitution groups, the under fifty/over seventy-three grouping reveals a substantial difference. This latter group includes such accounts in a larger proportion of their legends and also has a slightly higher rate of inclusion of such accounts. Unlike the young informants who, through their frequent use of descriptions revealed their bias towards detached observation, old informants preferred to attribute themselves a closer link to the narrated events. This difference is similar to the one observed between the gender groups, in which women preferred more narrative proximity. Possibly, because of the marginal status of both women and the old they were not considered as authoritative sources by their audiences and required this narrative proximity to be persuasive. The desire to appear "modern," and consequently more detached, coupled with the higher educational level among the young informants may help to explain further this trend.

Supernatural contact appears with equal regularity in the repertoires across all age groupings. The same holds true for time specifiers, verifying tags and positive resolutions. One finds an interesting discrepancy between the under fifty informants and the over seventy-three informants in the category of "negative resolutions," with these occurring more frequently in the younger informants' repertoires. The inequality may reveal a trend among younger informants towards a more pessimistic world view, in which threats are often not resolved in a positive manner. This more negative world view, in turn, may help explain the lower frequency with which the generally positively resolved folktales appear in their repertoires.

Although most categories of human actors appear in a similar proportion of the legends across the various age groupings, certain discrepancies, generally quite small, exist for several categories. Post-constituent informants tend to include old actors in a slightly greater proportion of their legends than pre-constituent informants. The discrepancy in usage is even more noticeable along the under fifty/over seventy-three divide. This inversion, with young informants telling legends referring to old actors more frequently than the old informants, seemingly contradicts the observation that informants tend to include actors most like themselves in their legends. However there are several explanations for the observed disparity. First, older informants tell more first hand accounts than young informants. Because references to the narrator are not coded according to age, the number of old actors in the old informants' repertoires may be higher than coded. Second, old informants may not have made as frequent age distinctions as young informants because they may not have perceived themselves as "old." Third, and most important, old informants may not have perceived age and the aging process as threats. Young informants observed a substantial difference in social and economic status between age groups in nineteenth-century rural Denmark, with old people often living on the edge of subsistence. They themselves could not predict how they would weather the aging process, particularly the prospects of economic hardship and failing health. Old informants already were "old" and no longer had to fear the unknown aspects of old age.

Female human actors also appear with disparate frequencies across the age groups. Once again, the discrepancy is greatest along the under fifty/over seventy-three divide, with a higher rate of inclusion among the older informants. Old informants no longer worked in the exclusive male spheres of action and, because of their domestically situated lifestyles, came in more frequent contact with women. Also, unlike the marginalizing tendencies noted among men in the analysis by gender, old informants may no longer have felt the threat to their power base represented by women. The frequency of inclusion for the category "female children" is also different. In this case, young informants show a higher rate of inclusion than the old informants. Although old informants were occasionally charged with the care of children, young informants were more closely involved with parenthood—they were either still having children themselves, or their children were just reaching the age of parenthood. In either case, young children were a greater part of their day-to-day anxieties and aspirations.

The category of human actors with supernatural powers also appears in unequal proportions of legends across the age groups. As in many of the cases discussed above, the differences appear primarily linked to the age of the informants and not their pre/post constitution group affiliation. The most marked difference involves the category "parsons," with the old informants including the element in a
larger proportion of their legends. The education of the parson and his ability to read undoubtedly posited him as a mysterious and powerful figure among the often illiterate and uneducated old informants. Having grown up in a stricter version of the Danish folk church, the old informants allowed religion to play a more central role in their lives. These factors led to the parson commanding a far greater authority in the views of the old informants.

Conversely, “male folk healers” appear in a greater proportion of the under fifty informants than the over seventy-three informants. The young informants include “male folk healers” in almost the same proportion of their legends that they include “parsons,” thus supporting the above observation concerning their relation to the parson. Education and literacy led to a demystification of the parson’s power. The only other discrepancy in usage of human actors with supernatural abilities can be found in the category “male witch.” There is not a single legend which includes a male witch in the repertoires of those over seventy-three, while in the repertoires of those under fifty, the estimate of proportion is only slightly higher. Old informants apparently considered domestic threat as purely female coded threat, while younger informants allowed for the possibility of a male coded domestic threat.

In the category of human form supernatural beings, a significant trend exists in regards to the frequency of inclusion along the under fifty/over seventy-three divide. Old informants have a higher rate of inclusion for supernatural human form actors situated outside the bounds of the farm, particularly for the “female elf” category with rates of inclusion of 34% for the young informants and 60% for the old informants. The only exception to this trend is in the category of trolls, with a higher rate of inclusion for young informants, which suggests that the term “trol” is a newer addition to the legend vocabulary. It could also suggest that the extreme differentiation between outside human-form supernatural beings apparent in the older informants’ repertoires broke down and the term “trol” became an undifferentiated referent for such supernatural beings among the younger informants.

“Male ghosts” appear in an equal proportion of the legends in the under fifty/over seventy-three repertoires, a contrast to the disparate proportions found for “female ghosts” and “child ghosts.” In the old informants’ repertoires, the “female ghosts” appear in approximately 7%, of the legends compared to only 3% in the young informants’ repertoires. The tendency of old informants to refer to “female ghosts” in a larger proportion of their legends complements the observation that old informants were more likely than young informants to code inside threat as female. In addition, it is possible that the more rigid society in which they were brought up felt that unwanted pregnancy was a greater social ill, thereby resulting in more frequent use of legends dealing with infanticide.

Many of the remaining categories of legend elements exhibit extremely close distributions across both the pre/post constitution division and the under fifty/over seventy-three division. There are, however, several categories which exhibit either disparate proportions or rates of inclusion, or even both. The main area of these disparately distributed elements is the large category of topographic features, both man-made and natural. There is a substantial difference between the frequency with which “roads and paths” appear in the pre/post constitution repertoires, with the post-constitution informants including the element in a larger proportion of their legends. Once again, the difference is more pronounced along the under fifty/over seventy-three divide. The difference can be attributed to the spheres of economic action, discussed in the above analyses. Young informants still actively engaged in agricultural production would make more frequent use of roads, traveling to and from mills and markets and between communities. As such, travel and, by extension, roads were intimately connected to their economic well-being and therefore a source of both hope and potential anxiety. Furthermore, more and better roads were being built at the time of Kristensen’s collecting trips and those most affected by these additions to the landscape, namely the younger informants, probably responded to these changes by incorporating references to roads into their legends.

The same analysis may be applied to the interpretation of a similar discrepancy in the category “cultivated land,” which appears in a greater proportion of the young informants’
legends. Young informants were more actively engaged in the cultivation of land, and their economic success was more closely tied to the successful cultivation of land. Although the greater frequency with which secular roofed structures appear in the repertoires of the old informants at first appears anomalous, since building maintenance and construction were primarily concerns of the younger members of society, the domestic location of the majority of old informants' economic activities may help explain this phenomenon. Old informants, primarily living on 
aftegi or public assistance, spent most of their time in the immediate farm area, often helping with farm chores. The disparity supports, rather than discredit, the assertion that primary areas of economically related action are often reflected in an increased frequency of usage in the legend repertoire. This phenomenon is echoed in the rate of inclusion for legends with references to building materials, with 58% of the under fifty informants including such references and only 20% of the over seventy-three informants including such references. The construction of buildings was a greater concern for the young informants than the old informants, who were no longer responsible for such activities. Success and failure weighed heavily on the shoulders of those primarily responsible for building—a symbol of communal integrity, prosperity and productivity—and therefore these concerns found expression in their legends.

Legend repertoires, like any other folklore repertoire, are in a constant state of flux. The legends a person tells change constantly to reflect the fears and aspirations he or she feels at the time. Formative experiences influence the development of personality, which in turn influences the eventual expressions an individual finds meaningful. Contemporary social and economic forces are also important factors contributing to the composition of an individual's legend repertoire. Because of the constant change in an informant's repertoire over time, age had to be treated in this analysis in two manners—the date of birth as a means for identifying historical groupings of informants, and the age of first collection as a means for establishing relative groupings of the informants. The differences between the pre- and post-constitution groups were not striking. Social institutions change extremely slowly, leading to a consistency in the societal forces affecting the informants. The most noteworthy differences between these two groups lay in the perceptions of threat and means for mediation of threat. In this regard, a substantial difference was identified in the assignation of the role of social protector to the "parson" in the pre-constitution group as opposed to the "male folk healer" in the post-constitution group. More substantial differences in usage came to light in the comparison of the two extremes of the informant age scale. Here, the phenomenon of spheres of economic and social action played important roles in the shaping of legend repertoire. In addition, generic make-up of folklore repertoire, particularly the inclusion of folktale, was shown to be closely linked to the informant's age.
### Table Nine
Percentage of Legends in Which Element Appears
By Age Group—Post and Pre Constitution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Post Constitution</th>
<th>Pre Constitution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\hat{p}$</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Repertoire</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legends</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptions</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jokes</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folktales</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballads</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhymes</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known Source</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Person</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verifying Tags</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Time of Day</td>
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<td>Time of Year</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supernat. Contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Females</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Males</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Females</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Males</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Females</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsons</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk Healers-M</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk Healers-F</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male Witches</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Witches</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Outsiders</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female Outsiders</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Trolls</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female Trolls</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Elves</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Elves</td>
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### Informants and Repertoires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Post Constitution</th>
<th>Pre Constitution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>$\hat{p}$</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Bjergfolk</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Bjergfolk</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Giants</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Giants</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Ghosts</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female Ghosts</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Ghosts</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devil</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nisse</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Supernatural**
- Household Animals | 2.4% | 0.2% | 3.3% | 0.2% |
- Farm Animals | 4.7% | 0.3% | 5.2% | 0.3% |
- Wild Animals | 2.9% | 0.2% | 3.1% | 0.2% |
- Fantastic Animals | 1.4% | 0.2% | 2.3% | 0.1% |

**Natural**
- Household Animals | 1.6% | 0.2% | 3.4% | 0.2% |
- Farm Animals | 20.5% | 0.6% | 19.7% | 0.6% |
- Wild Animals | 3.6% | 0.2% | 3.9% | 0.3% |
- Legless Animals | 0.8% | 0.1% | 0.7% | 0.1% |
- Mounds | 11.9% | 0.6% | 12.1% | 0.5% |
- Rivers | 0.05% | 0.02% | 0.07% | 0.1% |
- Running Water | 4.4% | 0.3% | 2.8% | 0.2% |
- Standing Water | 3.2% | 0.3% | 3.5% | 0.3% |
- Bridges | 2.2% | 0.1% | 2.3% | 0.2% |
- Beaches | 0.7% | 0.1% | 0.7% | 0.1% |
- Cultivated Land | 5.9% | 0.3% | 5.7% | 0.3% |
- Uncultivated Land | 3.6% | 0.4% | 3.8% | 0.3% |
- Boundary Markers | 2.6% | 0.2% | 1.9% | 0.1% |
- Roads | 10.5% | 0.4% | 8.2% | 0.4% |
- Land Conveyances | 6.2% | 0.5% | 7.8% | 0.4% |
- Water Conveyances | 1.6% | 0.1% | 1.9% | 0.2% |
- Secular Structures | 7.5% | 0.5% | 10.4% | 0.6% |
- Religious Structures | 6.6% | 0.4% | 7.3% | 0.3% |
- Passages | 4.4% | 0.4% | 5.6% | 0.3% |
- Inside | 11.0% | 0.5% | 13.1% | 0.6% |
- Building Materials | 2.6% | 0.2% | 1.3% | 0.1% |
- Cloth | 5.3% | 0.3% | 7.3% | 0.3% |
- Treasure | 5.7% | 0.4% | 8.5% | 0.4% |
- Bells | 0.4% | 0.1% | 1.1% | 0.1% |
- Tools | 15.6% | 0.5% | 15.0% | 0.4% |
- Food | 7.6% | 0.3% | 8.2% | 0.3% |
- Books | 3.3% | 0.3% | 2.5% | 0.2% |
### Table Ten

Percentage of Legends in Which Element Appears
By Age: Under Fifty/Over Seventy-Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Element</th>
<th>Under Fifty</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Over Seventy-Three</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Repertoire</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legends</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptions</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jokes</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folktales</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballads</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhymes</td>
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### Informants and Repertoires

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Analysis By Marital Status

Marriage was an important institution in agrarian nineteenth century Denmark. Farm life centered around the family and few individuals remained single for their whole life. While the majority of Kristensen's informants were married at the time of collection, numerous informants were single—either unmarried or widowed. The groupings of informants for this analysis reflect this aspect of social organization: unmarried, married and widowed (see table eleven). Although many of the widowed informants were relatively old (over seventy-three), this did not apply to the entire group of the widowed informants. The goal of this particular analysis is to identify aspects of folklore repertoires and legend repertoires which appear to be linked to the marital status of the informants. In the ensuing analysis, it must be kept in mind that differences do not always obtain across all groups—often one group is different from the other two which, in turn, exhibit similar proportions or statistically insignificant differences in proportions.

The average total repertoire size is largest for the widowed informants, although the differences do not reach statistically significant levels. A closer look at the proportions represented by the genres which constitute the total repertoire reveals several interesting areas of difference. The proportion of legends in the repertoires is equivalent across the groups. The closely allied category of non-narrative "description" also exhibits an equivalence in proportions. However, differences can be found among several of the other genres. The most striking difference between the groups lies in the proportions of total repertoire represented by folktales. Even though the broadest range of values is found among the married informants, both widowed and unmarried informants (the single informants) have a substantially higher rate of inclusion for the genre. Among exceptional legend informants, folktale appears to be a communication most relevant to the lives—social, economic and political—of the single informants. The emancipative aspects of folktale, as noted by Holbek, may be particularly relevant to the social positions of the single informants in rural nineteenth-century Denmark. The only
other genre which exhibits strikingly disparate proportions is “joke.” Married and widowed informants include a higher proportion of jokes in their repertoires than unmarried informants. While the rate of inclusion of the genre is quite close for the unmarried and widowed informants, it is significantly higher for the married informants. This suggests that jokes, although not present in the majority of the repertoires, are slightly more suited to the communications of married informants. Joke may be more audience dependent than other forms of oral folkloric expression due to the genre’s extreme reliance on performance context. The discrepancy may therefore be attributable to Kristensen’s own marital status—married, although twice widowed. This marital status posited him as a more suitable audience for the joking expressions of married and widowed informants. As a married individual, it is quite possible that Kristensen was not acceptable as an audience for the joking expressions of an unmarried informant, and therefore was unable to collect such expressions.

An examination of the variables concerned with the stylistics of legend performance reveals a startling consistency across the groups with few disparate proportions. The unmarried informants tended to include accounts attributed to known individuals in a smaller proportion of their legends. Single individuals may not have held as well developed a social network as their married and widowed counterparts. The relative paucity of such outside sources and the smaller scope of their social network may have carried over into their legend expression, with legends attributed to unknown individuals or to themselves appearing most frequently in their repertoires. Place names appear in a greater proportion of married informants’ legends than in single informants’ legends, possibly attributable to the lower mobility of the married informants. Family precluded frequent moves and, thus, the married informants had a closer bond to their immediate area. It must be noted that place names still occur in the vast majority of legends in all of the informants’ repertoires—83% percent of unmarried informants’ legends, 88% of married informants’ legends and 84% of widowed informants’ legends—suggesting that the effect of marriage on this particular stylistic device was minimal. A noticeable difference can be seen in the proportion of legends which include time of day referents. Unmarried informants told a significantly smaller proportion of legends with such referents than married and widowed informants. The rather clear implication is that time boundaries become more important after marriage and remain so even after the death of a spouse. This narrative trend may reflect the interdependency of individuals in married life, in which daily activities become more time dependent as a matter of coordination. An increased sense of time results in a greater appreciation of daily time boundaries and their liminal qualities, and consequently a corresponding increase in usage of time of day referents. Neither the use of verifying tags nor time of year referents appears in a disproportionate number of the legends in any of these groups as well.

Certain thematic elements occur disproportionately in the legend repertoires across the marital status groups. “Supernatural contact” is one of the few thematic categories occurring in equal proportions in the marital status groupings. Conversely, the proportions represented by the various “resolution” categories reveal several interesting discrepancies. Unmarried informants generally included a larger proportion of positively resolved legends in their repertoires than the married and widowed informants. If positive resolution of conflict can be taken as an expression of a positive world view, then unmarried informants had the most positive world view. The higher proportion of positively resolved legends could also be interpreted as expressing a greater need for such resolutions. Expressions of hopes and desires, as opposed to fears and anxieties, account for a larger proportion of the unmarried informants’ legends, implying a functional difference for legend expression among the groups. While unmarried informants tended to use legend as a means for expressing aspirations and a hopeful world view, the married and widowed informants tempered their expressions of hopes and desires with a negative outlook. This evaluation is confirmed in the disparate proportions observed for the category “negative resolutions.” In this case, the unmarried informants told the smallest proportion of legends with negative resolutions. Widowed informants also told a significantly smaller proportion of negatively resolved legends than the married informants. Perhaps the data suggest that being married negatively affects one’s outlook on life. Or
perhaps the larger proportion of negatively resolved legends in the married informants' repertoires reflect these informants' greater responsibility for the well-being of others.

Human actors of both sexes appear in disparate proportions across the marital status groups. One such noteworthy discrepancy appears in the categories "old male" and "old female." In both cases, the married informants included these elements in a larger proportion of their legends. "Old male" and "old female" actors occur in an equal proportion of widowed informants' legends while, in the repertoires of the unmarried and married informants, "old females" appear in a substantially higher proportion of the legends than "old males." Married informants possibly included "old" actors in a greater proportion of their repertoires due to the "aftegt" system which placed an economic burden on their shoulders while, at the same time, provided an opportunity for economic gain. Unmarried individuals were infrequently in a position to have "aftegt" pensioners living with them, while widowed individuals often were on some form of "aftegt" themselves. "Adult males" appear in a larger proportion of the married informants' repertoires than in those of the widowed informants, while "adult females" appear in a larger proportion of the unmarried informants' repertoires than in those of the married informants. The discrepancy in the use of "adult" humans in the legend repertoires may be attributable in large part to the gender distribution in these groupings. In addition, in the married households, the position of the male as head of household may have resulted in a privileging of status. The increased focus on the male head of household possibly carried over into the legends, resulting in the observed trend. Children are the only human actors used consistently across the groups.

Discrepancies across groups can also be found in the proportions of legends which include mention of human actors with supernatural abilities or powers. "Parsons" appear in a much greater proportion of the married and widowed informants' legends than in the unmarried informants' legends. Predictably, "male folk healers" appear in a larger proportion of the unmarried informants' legends. The proportion of "male folk healers" appearing in legends is lowest among the widowed informants and is significantly lower than the proportion among the married informants.

This proportion, in turn, is significantly lower than that among the unmarried informants. The exact opposite holds true for the proportions observed for "parsons." Unmarried informants felt more inclined to posit a non-institutional, non-authoritative individual in the role of protector of social integrity. The individualistic attitudes of the unmarried informants are expressed in part in their use of the unattached folk healer in this role. Religious practices, including the family orientation of the nineteenth-century Danish folk church, help explain the more frequent reliance on "parsons" in the repertoires of the married and widowed informants. The proportion with which religious structures appear in the legend repertoires confirms the greater connection between families and the church. Religious structures appear in a substantially larger proportion of the married informants' legends than in the legends of the unmarried informants. Interestingly, if one adds the proportion of legends with parsons to the proportion of legends with male folk healers in each marital status group, one arrives at essentially equivalent sums—20%—further supporting the equivalence of function for "parsons" and "male folk healers."

Among the negatively marked human actors with supernatural abilities or powers, only the category "male witch" exhibits disparity in proportion of repertoire. Unmarried informants include the feature in 4.5% of their legends, as opposed to 0.8% for married informants and 0.1% for widowed informants. The 34% rate of inclusion for the unmarried informants is also significantly higher than the 21% rate observed for the married and widowed informants. Furthermore, the proportion of legends with references to "male witches" in the unmarried informants' repertoires is quite close to the proportion of their legends with references to "female witches." This phenomenon is observed only in this group of informants. Unlike the married and widowed informants, unmarried informants did not code the domestic threat represented by witches according to gender. The clearer division of labor precipitated by marriage, particularly the coding of domestic space as female, affected the coding of domestic threat. Among the unmarried informants, domestic space had not been fully coded as female, allowing domestic threat to take on both a female and male manifestation. Once the threat had been codified in the minds of the informants as
female—a coding precipitated by marriage and a clearer division of areas of economic endeavor—it remained so, even after the dissolution of marriage through spousal death, as evidenced by the widowed informants’ legends.

Few disparities in proportion can be found in the use of supernatural beings. It is noteworthy that human form supernatural beings situated outside the boundaries of the farm appear in a nearly equivalent proportion of the legends in the repertoires of all three informant groups. Thus, the use of these elements is apparently not linked to the informants’ marital status. “Ghosts” and the “Devil,” however, do appear disproportionately across the informant groups. “Ghosts,” in general, appear in a smaller proportion of the unmarried informants’ legends than the married and widowed informants’ legends, implying that fear of revenants was not prevalent among those informants who were or had been married. Many of the revenant legends, as noted previously, concern unwanted pregnancies and infanticide. While both topics certainly were a more relevant concern of the unmarried individuals in society, the performance of such legends, with their obvious prescriptive function, may have been concentrated in the repertoires of informants among whom the described behaviors did not obtain. The intended audience of such legends were unmarried individuals. Quite probably, these legends were told by parents or grandparents to their adolescent children or grandchildren as a means for communicating expected conduct. Another reason that legends concerning infanticide were more frequently told among married and widowed informants may relate to the “unknown” aspects of the spouse’s past. A seemingly nurturing mother could have a grisly past which is later revealed in the appearance of ghastly infant revenants, as shown previously. Or the dead mother may return from beyond the grave to reveal marital infidelities, as in Ane Laurdstatter’s story:

Over in Hem, a woman died leaving behind a tiny baby, and the third night after she was buried, she came again. It was Søren Iversen’s wife. The girl sat and rocked the baby, and the candle stood and burned, and it was twelve o’clock at night. Then the door opened, but she couldn’t see anything. It came over to the cradle and grabbed around it, and all the while she couldn’t rock it; it became so heavy, that she couldn’t rock it, but when it left, she could do it again. Then it was over by the husband, it rattled in his clogs, but he didn’t notice it. He had had another before the wife died, and it was in fact the girl in the farm. On her deathbed she had forbidden him to take her, but he took her anyways. The door slammed shut after it was all over, and the girl who heard it has told me that herself. I knew both the man and the woman well.

Both scenarios reflect a terrifying threat to the integrity of the family. Other legends including ghosts may appear in a larger proportion of the married and widowed informants’ repertoires for performance oriented reasons. A good ghost story may have been a common performance in the evening with the entire family present.

Closely linked to the disparity in proportions observed for “parsons” is a similar disparity in the category “Devil.” The closely allied category “supernatural household animals,” a form that the Devil often assumes in his jaunts through the nineteenth-century Danish countryside, also exhibits a similar disparity in proportions. The Devil is a religiously coded symbol of threat. The observation that religion and accordingly religiously coded threat were more likely to play a role in the lives of married and widowed individuals helps explain why this particular manifestation of threat and its accompanying zoomorphic forms appear in a larger proportion of the legends of the widowed and married informants.

References to “cultivated land” also appear with disparate proportions across the informant groups. The married informants include a greater proportion of legends with such references than do the widowed informants, while the unmarried informants’ legends exhibit an intermediate value for legends with such references. The category “roofed secular structures” exhibits a similar distribution of proportions. In both cases, the concept of spheres of economic action can help explain these trends. Of all the informants, those most linked to and dependent upon land cultivation and the maintenance of barns and farm houses were the married informants. The added responsibilities of caring for a family heightened the anxieties associated with agricultural endeavor, and led to more frequent reference to the elements associated with such endeavor. The higher proportion with which boundary markers appear in the married informants’ legends supports this interpretation. Fiscal responsibility and the threat of
economic disaster, with the accordant repercussions for the well-being of the family, increased both the fears and aspirations of the married informants, leading to the observed disproportions between the informant groups for these variable categories.

Support for the theory that spheres of economic and social activity influence the folkloric expression of individuals can be found in the observed proportions for the category “inside.” Unmarried informants have the lowest proportion of legends with this element, widowed informants have the highest proportion and married informants have an intermediary proportion, much closer to the widowed informants’ level than the unmarried informants’ level. Unmarried informants often worked as hired hands and, as such, the majority of their economic activity took place outside. Furthermore, child rearing and food preparation, both activities which take place indoors, were not a large part of the social or economic activity of unmarried individuals, and did not constitute as substantial a source of hopes and fears as they did for the married individuals. Widowed informants had become sensitized to these concerns during their married lives and often continued to perform domestic tasks as pensioners. Therefore, they continued to express these concerns in their legends.

In nineteenth-century Denmark, marriage affected the manner in which an individual perceived the world. An increase in economic and social responsibility apparently resulted in a heightened awareness of previously unperceived threats. Even after the dissolution of marriage by the death of a spouse, the widowed individual retained many of the perceptual categories acquired during married life. Generic make-up of the folklore repertoire is only slightly dependent on the marital status of the informant, most notably in the proportion with which folktales appear in the repertoire. Numerous functional slots in the legend vocabulary are affected significantly by the informant’s marital status. In the case of the disparate usages of “parson” and “male folk healers” between the unmarried informants on the one hand and the married and the widowed informants on the other hand, the motifemic slot is that of protector of social integrity. The “parson” and “male folk healer” are allomotifs which can fit the slot. The ascription of particular allomotifs to a
### Table Eleven
#### Percentage of Legends in Which Element Appears By Marital Status

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<th>Married</th>
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### Informants and Repertoires

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Conclusion

While the first level of the analysis helped identify the distribution of legend tradition in nineteenth-century Denmark, this analysis moved from the anonymous and purely quantitative view of tradition to a focus on both the individuals who told legends and the legends they told. Groups of individuals and groups of repertoires were compared as a means for establishing an overview of the tradition participants and their communications. The statistical analysis of the repertoires of the exceptional informants has led to the discovery of numerous trends. Most notable among these trends is how various environmental forces—social, economic, political and historical—are reflected in the repertoires of the legend performers. The trends which were uncovered in this level of the analysis provide a starting point for the following analyses of individual repertoires. How do individuals express personal fears, aspirations and beliefs in legend? To what extent are these personal expressions reflections of tradition and to what extent are they expressions of personality? These are some of the questions to be addressed in the evaluation of personal repertoires.

NOTES

1. The cut-off point of fifteen legends was established in chapter two.
3. The statistics program used for this analysis is the S.A.S system and was run on an IBM 3090 under the CMS operating system. Any statistical package would work for this type of analysis as long as it includes a facility for calculating weighted means, weighted standard error and is able to produce frequency charts. The S.A.S system software was chosen because of its flexibility, and the IBM 3090 was chosen because of its ability to process large amounts of data extremely quickly.
4. The date of first collection has been determined by correlating entries in Minder og Oplevelser with the field diary page numbers. Those individuals whom Kristensen contacted in the same month have been arranged according to the order in which they appear in the field diaries.
5. This is the same topographic index as that used by Dansk folkemindesamling (Skjelborg 1967).
6. Where possible, this part includes information on the informant’s parents which can be useful in determining social and economic background. It also helps establish relative economic status and the general direction of their economic and social mobility.
7. The titles of the biographical works, collections and indices are abbreviated, with a list of abbreviations in the appendix.
8. Narrative, for the purposes of this study, is defined according to Labov and Waletzky’s definition as “any sequence of clauses which contains at least one temporal juncture ...” (Labov and Waletzky 1967: 28).
10. As Dégé has pointed out, the border between joke and legend is often vague (Dégh 1976b). In cases in which generic affiliation has been hard to determine, the record has been included in the legend category.
12. A map with the location indices indicated on it can be found preceding the “Table of Informants.” The appendix includes an alphabetical index of the informants, a geographical index, and a list of the abbreviations used in the “Table of Informants.”
13. Henry Glassie, in his ethnography on Balleymene, Northern Ireland, noted a similar difference in the transmittional links in the narratives in that community, differentiating the narratives according to “self,” “known others,” and “unknown others” (Glassie 1982: 70). Pentikäinen and, more recently, Butler, have made similar distinctions (Pentikäinen 1978; Butler 1992: 36). An initial attempt was made to code legends according to the presence of direct address. However, after examination of Kristensen’s field recordings, it became apparent that such a distinction would reveal more about Kristensen’s collection methodology and editing processes than the actual performance sessions.
17. The proportion of unresolved legends (U) equals the difference between the total number of legends (100%) and the sum of the proportions of positively (P) and negatively (N) resolved legends:
   \[ U = 100 - (P + N) \]
20. Seven major divisions, with subsequent sub-divisions, were made. These divisions presented themselves during the initial examination of Kristensen’s legend collections. They were modified during subsequent readings of the field recordings and during the coding process itself. The variables are tradition specific. This assures that the conclusions of the analysis concerning trends in the tradition are based on the tradition itself and not the biases of the collector or folklorist.
21. This lack of differentiation may suggest that very young children were seen as gender equivalents, sexual differentiation becoming a relevant element in social discourse once gender difference became physiologically significant.
24. Rohrich points out that, in the folklore, the thief and robber are social opposites. The thief is a tradesman and his craft is socially equivalent to any other craft, including apprenticeships, journeymen and master status. The robber, on the other hand, is an asocial outsider (Rohrich 1964: 214). This distinction does not appear to be entirely functional in the Danish legend tradition considered here, with both robbers and thieves acting as a social threat. The only distinctions between robbers and thieves in the legend tradition are that, while robbers always appear as an outside threat, thieves could appear as an inside threat, and that, while robbers always act as a group, thieves act primarily as individuals.
27. For a discussion of the Devil in animal forms, see Woods 1939.
30. A number of scholars have considered the role of the snake in north European tradition and the possible reasons for the proliferation of stories which include mention of such legless animals. For example, see: Holbek 1987: 480-495; Egli 1982; Dvorišk 1977; Rohrich 1968.
33. The data-base consists of one hundred observations—each informant represents one observation—with eighty-six variable fields; ten biographical fields and seventy-six repertoire fields. Each legend variable contains the number of legends that informant’s repertoire containing the element described by the variable as outlined above. Zero values are treated numerically, and there are no missing values. This analysis was carried out with SAS statistical software.
34. There are four possible ways in which to draw these graphs—number of informants versus number of legends, number of informants versus percentage of legend repertoire, percentage of informants in group versus number of legends and percentage of informants in group versus percentage of legend repertoire.
35. In certain cases it has been necessary to group the legend counts into classes larger than a single legend—the numbers along the horizontal axis then refer to the midpoint of the class interval. When the informant pool is broken into groupings as a means for comparison, the vertical axis refers to the percentage of informants within the particular grouping and not to the informant pool as a whole, unless otherwise noted. This facilitates comparisons of the graphs, particularly in cases where the group is significantly larger than the other (e.g. cotters and farm owners). For many of the variables, an important area of comparison is the zero-level of the graphs. This illustrates the tendency of informants to include or exclude the characteristic from their repertoire. The primary graphs represent legends in terms of absolute numbers, rather than percentages of the informant’s total repertoire. This avoids a scenario in which an informant’s repertoire of fifteen legends with a single legend exhibiting a particular trait (7% of total repertoire) is compared with another informant’s repertoire of nineteen-nine legends, three exhibiting that same trait (3% of total repertoire). At times, the comparison of percentage of total repertoire can augment the comparison of the number of legends. The percentage graphs provide a view of the tendency of particular informants to include a specific characteristic in their legends compared to the remainder of their legend repertoires.
36. The weighted estimate of proportion (\( \hat{p} \)) is calculated as:
   \[ \hat{p} = \frac{\sum_{i} \frac{x_i}{\sqrt{n_i}}}{\sum_{i} \frac{n_i}{\sqrt{n_i}}} \]
   Here, \( x_i \) refers to the number of legends with a particular trait an informant tells and \( n_i \) refers to the total number of legends they tell.
37. The SE(\( \hat{p} \)) is calculated as:
Interpreting Legend

\[ SE(\hat{p}) = \frac{\sqrt{m\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}}{\sum n_i} \]

Here, \( m \) is the total number of informants in the group. A rough confidence interval of 95% is equal to \( \hat{p} \pm 2SE \). In a comparison of a variable across groups, if the rough confidence intervals do not overlap, the difference between the two groups in regards the variable is considered to be statistically significant.

38. Since large repertoire informants provide more information than small repertoire informants, the accuracy of the information provided by their repertoires is greater. Therefore, the estimates of proportion and SE are weighted to account for this.

39. Like the symbiosis between joke and legend identified by Dégh, legends and descriptions also exist in symbiosis. (Dégh 1976b).


42. Here, the graph is drawn as a percent/percent graph to better illustrate the phenomenon.

43. For example, the time of day at which the events took place is included in fifty percent of the legends in one informant’s repertoire.

44. Sandemose 1933.


46. The use of different figures for equivalent functions in legend corresponds to Dundes’ concept of motifs and allomotifs in folklore (Dundes 1964).

47. Kristensen 1892-1901(1880), vol. 7: 184.


52. The percentage of cotters who include bjergmand is 55% while the percentage of farm owners is only 38%.

53. For farm owners, 69% of the informants include legends with male outsiders, while for cotters, the corresponding figure is 54%.

54. The percentage of farm owners who include female witches is 73%, while for cotters it is only 55%.


56. The disparity, although present, is not as marked in the category “child ghosts.”


Informants and Repertoires

58. In both of the previous cases, the unmentioned group had intermediate values which were not significantly different from the other two groups’ values.

59. While the differences in proportions for “male ghosts” reflect this trend, the differences in proportions for “female ghosts” is only observable between the unmarried and widowed informants’ repertoires, with the latter group telling a higher proportion of legends with this element. This higher proportion carries over into the variable “child ghosts.”

60. Kristensen 1892-1901(1880), vol. 5: 316.
Plate One: Photograph of Peder Johansen
(from Dansk folkemindesamling).
Chapter 5

The Life and Legends
of a Confirmed Bachelor:
Peder Johansen’s Repertoire

In February of 1888, Kristensen set out on one of his numerous collecting trips during the cold Danish winter months. Traveling south by train from Bredsten to Skanderborg and then Alken, Kristensen continued by foot to Bjedstrup where he began collecting. His initial contact, a local teacher by the name of A. J. Meldgaard, led him to other story tellers in the area. Several of these informants suggested that Kristensen contact Peder Johansen, saying that he “was so excellent at telling stories.” So, through an initial contact and word of mouth, Kristensen found his way on February 6, 1888 to a man who was to become one of his more prolific informants. Kristensen was at first reserved about this contact, writing in *Minder og Oplevelser* that Peder “was quite young and unmarried.” However, he was reassured by his contacts that he would not regret a visit to him.

Kristensen set off to find Peder and finally caught up with him at *Fuldbro* mill, where he worked as a journeyman miller. Peder, it turned out, was both a miller and the area *spillemand* (fiddler) and therefore was occupied much of the time. True to form, when Kristensen arrived at the mill, Peder was busy and he was told to return later in the evening after Peder had finished his work. That evening, Kristensen returned:
... in the evening I went down to the mill again, and sat down in the mill room where all of the mill guests came after old habit and had a dram. It was a long time before Peder Johansen finished his work and came in and had his dinner and he could finally sit down with me. I spent two evenings like this there in the mill.\(^4\)

In the period from February sixth to February eleventh, Kristensen managed to collect from Peder three times. The six days Kristensen spent in the Svejstrup area coincided with fastelavn, the Danish pre-lenten celebration. Seven years later, in May of 1895, Kristensen returned to the area and contacted Peder once again.

Peder Johansen represents a rarity in late nineteenth century rural Danish society in his being a relatively young (although well past the average age of marriage), able-bodied bachelor. He remained a bachelor his entire life. For means destitute, one can only infer that his bachelorhood in a society in which the vast majority of people eventually married was a matter of personal choice. His profession as a miller positioned him as a solid member of the lower class. Kristensen provides the following short biographical sketch of Peder in Gamle folks fortællinger om det jyske almueliv. Tilleg:

Peder Johansen was born on the 15th of April, 1855 in Svejstrup. His father was a miller in Svejstrup and, because of this, he too became a journeyman miller. His father's foster-father was a very well-known folk healer, who died at the age of eighty, when Peder got confirmed, and was already quite weak. This same folk healer was good at telling stories, and it is right out impossible for Peder to remember everything he heard from him. Now he is a journeyman miller at Fulbro mill, and he was that the first time I met him as well and he told stories to me. But in the meantime he has been away from there for a while. In all, he has been there six years. Some of his stories I wrote down there in the mill room where the mill guests were served a dram and a drink of beer. He is also a fiddler, and one time when he was going to play for a fastelavn party, I got hold of him for a few hours before he began.\(^5\)

Peder lived in a small house near the mill along with his sister who kept house for him. Keeping things clean was apparently an area in which Peder could use all of the help he could get, as a more personal biographical sketch provided by Karen Plovgaard, a neighbor, reveals:

It has been suggested that Peder accorded his appearances little weight ... But if the truth is to be told, he was a downright slob. This fact was a thorn in my mother's eye, and she needed all of her kindness towards Per if she were going to ignore it. She kept quiet when he showed up unshaven and with old flour dust in his hair and on his clothes. Once she did let it drop that, when he got paid, he should go to Skanderborg and get outfitted. "There's no need for that," announced Per, "I've got several yards of homespun in the bottom of my trunk. It just needs to be sewn." — But the sewing in the meanwhile was allowed to wait. He wasn't terribly interested in new clothes, and didn't want to be bothered with going to a tailor. Maybe he didn't want to pay money for sewing, when it could be used for better things.

One time his slovenliness went too far—my mother felt. That was when she and her servant girls found a chewed tobacco-plug in the flour for the big rye bread baking. She told about it like this:

"We had baked white bread with American flour, and when Per came on his usual coffee visit, slices of the fresh bread were offered around.

"Tell me what you think of it!" said my mother.

"Yeah, that's some," Per could really swear, "good bread.

"You don't find any tobacco plugs in that flour either; that happens sometimes with the flour from Fulbro mill."

"I'll be damned." But nonetheless, that time Per felt caught and he got red in his unshaven face.\(^6\)

The description hints at a slightly lazy nature. Perhaps Peder's sloppy habits contributed to his continued status as a bachelor, or perhaps they were a result of his bachelorhood.

The social status of the bachelor in late nineteenth century Denmark is somewhat ambiguous. While a bachelor was not as marginal a figure as a spinster, he still lacked the social network based on interfamilial relations which accompanied marriage. Kristensen's initial reaction to the suggestion that he contact Peder also reflects the general societal attitude towards bachelorhood—he was dubious of Peder's worth as an informant not only because of his relative youth but also because of his marital status. An important implication of Peder's marital status relates to his social and economic spheres of action. As a miller, his economic sphere of action...
was primarily populated by men. Because of his lack of a wife, his social life, as evidenced by the collecting session noted above, was probably also dominated by men. His social interactions certainly lacked the aspects of family life—interactions with a wife and children—which played a central part in the social interactions of a married man. It is quite possible that Peder’s interactions with women were nearly exclusively limited to his sister and his neighbor.

Legend Trends and Peder’s Repertoire

The following analysis of Peder’s repertoire examines in part the extent to which his expressions reflect the trends discovered in the previous chapter and, at the same time, the extent to which his expressions differ from those of his peers. The generic composition of his repertoire does not deviate greatly from what one would expect. Folktales and descriptions, however, constitute a larger percentage of his repertoire than that of the average male, cotter, young and unmarried informants. Because of this discrepancy, legends predictably constitute a slightly smaller percentage of his total repertoire. Stylistically, Peder’s legends closely mirror the general trends of his peers, although he tells legends attributed to unknown third parties to a slightly greater degree than average. Most notable is the extremely low percentage of his legends which are first person accounts, a marked divergence from the observed trends.

Peder includes place names in his legends with greater frequency and personal names with less frequency than expected. The percent of positively resolved legends in his repertoire exhibits the effect of off-setting trends, with a lower percentage than the average male, a higher percentage than the average single and young informant, and an equivalent percentage to the average cotter. Conversely, negatively resolved legends constitute a smaller percentage of his repertoire than expected. Verifying tags and time references also appear with less frequency in Peder’s legends than in those of his peers.

Supernatural contact is a frequent feature in Danish legends. Although close to 65% of Peder’s legends include such contact, this is still slightly less than what one would expect. Among supernatural nature beings, trolls play a significantly greater role in his legends; this may suggest a tendency in Peder’s vocabulary, since his repertoire does not diverge greatly from the observed trends in the usage of other supernatural beings. One interesting discrepancy, considered in greater detail below, is the higher percentage of legends in which female ghosts appear.

It was hypothesized that male informants tended to use the male folk healer rather than the parson as protectors of social integrity in their legends, a trend reinforced by the evaluation of the unmarried informants’ repertoires. Surprisingly, Peder includes parsons in a greater percentage and male folk healers in a smaller percentage of his legends than expected. It was further hypothesized that men tended to marginalize women in their legends to the extent that they often did not appear at all. This finding is entirely consistent with Peder’s male-dominated spheres of social and economic interaction. In Peder’s legends, men appear in a higher percent while women appear in a strikingly lower percent of the legends than average. His treatment of women in his legends is particularly interesting and is explored in greater detail below.

Peder’s First Session

The ensuing analysis is divided according to performance sessions. This organization allows for an evaluation of the flow of Peder’s narratives and an appreciation of the connections between narratives that Peder, either consciously or subconsciously, felt existed. Since each performance session has its own distinct structure and functions in its entirety as a communicative act, the various performance sessions can also be compared. This comparison allows for the identification of repeated themes in Peder’s legends. Such thematic repetition implies importance. Discrete legends from the various performance sessions have been singled out for further examination as well. In these cases, the structure, style, and elements of content and theme are closely scrutinized in an attempt to understand the motivations behind the performance of the legend. These legends are compared to similar expressions from other informants’ repertoires, with an eye towards revealing the unique aspects of Peder’s legends. Differences, rather than similarities, are
the main focus of these comparisons as it is in the unique aspects of an individual's legends that one can discern personal expression.

The first collection session Kristensen had with Peder took place in the evening at the mill, as described above. Despite the "disruption" caused by the mill guests, Kristensen managed to collect several stories from him. The performance context of the mill undeniably represents a more accurate representation of non-induced folkloric performance and social interaction than the contrived one-on-one sessions that Kristensen preferred. As such, the first session and the third session may provide a better view of the dynamics of performance since they took place in a setting to which the participants were accustomed. During this first session, Peder told what Kristensen later printed as two stories. In the field diaries, these two accounts take up twenty pages. Obviously, these are not ordinary accounts. Rather, they represent a series of linked narratives forming complex accounts, and attest to Peder's considerable skill as a story teller.

The first story Peder told Kristensen is a story of perceived wrongs, revenge and harsh justice. The story, through its use of well-known plot elements, equates a tenant and his family evicted from the property because of their slovenliness and lack of a work ethic with a threatening and murderous robber band. The social organization of rural Denmark is made abundantly clear in the story, with the tenant farmer ultimately entirely dependent on the good will of the manor lord for his survival.

The second story performed during the session is an even longer series of linked episodes centering on the marginally homicidal and outrageous actions of a farm hand in his quest to better the economic fortunes of his employer, a poor farmer threatened with eviction from his property. The story balances precariously on a generic tight-rope between the legend and the folktale. While many of the elements and episodes could be performed as believable narratives, and the account reflects some of the extreme ectypification often associated with the legend genre, Peder also uses devices common to the folktale, while the inclusion of several simply incredible episodes may qualify the account more as a tall tale. However, such generic hair-splitting is wholly counter-

productive. Young suggests that certain adept narrators have the ability to manipulate genres in performance and that "multiplying or blurring genres must be regarded as a strategy in the telling of legends." What the story does reveal is the dynamic inter-play between "forms" of folklore in a natural performance session. In the absence of performance cues, it becomes impossible to discern Peder's narrative intentions—whether he meant the story to be humorous, whether he expected his audience to be convinced of the account's believability or whether he meant the account to be an unrealistic tale of events which transpired long ago in an unspecified place.

The story opens with a farmer and his wife, in danger of losing their property, discussing their economic situation. They decide to enlist the aid of a strong young man to help them in their attempt to avoid financial disaster. Fortuitously, the old man encounters a farm hand along the road, and they strike a deal by which the farm hand will eventually come into possession of the farm as remuneration for his labor. The farm hand immediately begins his economic terrorism, using his strength and, more importantly, his quick wits to outsmart and trick the various local farmers. The first act of trickery is the farm hand's successful manipulation of the mill:

At that time it wasn't like it is now; one unharnessed [one's horses], and each man carried his sacks in. When a person came in with them, he had to watch out and stay nearby and when the person who had his [grain] milled just before him was done, he had to toss his grain in, otherwise he wouldn't get [his grain] milled that day. That's the way it went that time too. The farm hand goes and fusses about so long that the next person comes in and they start to mill his [grain], the one who was behind him in line. Then he goes to the master journeyman and complains to him that such and such had happened, and he wanted to know if he couldn't give him some advice. "Well," says the journeyman, "I don't have any advice for that, you're going to have to wait until tomorrow morning, otherwise you'll have to wait here long into the night until we're done."—"Yes, but I absolutely have to get home," and then he slips a mark to the journeyman. "Well, now I'll tell you something. Watch out until someone comes and is going to have his sack taken away, and make sure that you get there first and take it away and then you can put your own sack in its place." Well, he was so good at that, that he gets the
one sack after the other, all fine grain, and then he drives home with the entire load.\textsuperscript{13}

This is a particularly noteworthy scene since Peder explains how a quick-witted individual, with the miller's collusion, could take advantage of the established system for picking up milled grain. Peder, one should remember, was employed at a mill and theft from the mill would presumably not be in his best economic interest. Nevertheless, the scene may also be an expression of his frustration with his status as a journeyman miller and act as a means for venting this frustration.

The impoverished farmer delights in the farm hand's abilities, and sends him to a neighboring wealthier farm with bread as a repayment for the numerous times they had borrowed from that farm. The wealthy farmer's mother-in-law lives at this farm and she is renowned for her obsessive curiosity. Predictably, she becomes curious about the surprising change in fortunes of the once poor neighbors. Because of her overwhelming curiosity, she manages to convince her son-in-law to conceal her in a trunk and store the trunk at the poor farmer's house. The farm hand, upon seeing the trunk, immediately breaks it open, despite the protestations of the poor farmer and his wife. When he discovers the old woman hiding inside, he clubs her to death with an axe. The farm hand then begins a morbid series of thefts, all of food, using the body of the woman as a cover by playing on the popular fear of revenants frequently alluded to in Danish legends. In each case, the wealthy farmer is led to believe that his departed mother-in-law has consumed an extremely large amount of food or drink. Eventually, the farm hand goes to the extent of using the supposed revenant as a means for extorting money not once but twice from the wealthy farmer, asking for payment in exchange for conjuring her down.

The story suggests that deception can be used as a means for economic gain. The farm hand is portrayed as a positive force helping the poor farmer and his wife who are threatened by economic calamity not because of laziness but because of extremely poor soil. He uses trickery and cunning, rather than his considerable strength and size, to creatively redistribute the wealth. His eventual "conjuring" of the voracious false revenant relies on the common legend scenario in which a parson is called on to conjure the spirit of a dead person. In this case, there is a certain irony to the event—of which Peder is undoubtedly aware—since not only is the perceived revenant the result of the farm hand's manipulative behavior and not a supernatural event but the conjuring is also equally fabricated. As such, the conjuring can be seen as an ironic play on the legends in which the parson has to conjure the revenant down several times before he is successful.\textsuperscript{14} Such ironic manipulation of tradition occurs frequently in Peder's stories.

It is possible that Peder sees a little bit of himself in the farm hand. The scene in the mill can therefore be interpreted as an example of wishful thinking on his part. Having worked in a mill most of his adult life, Peder knew how a wily individual could steal the fruits of another's labor. He uses the farm hand as an expression of extortionary schemes that he himself could carry out but, due to social constraints, does not. The tale presents an interesting example of a narrator's expression of desires, particularly the attainment of food and money through the use of cunning rather than hard work. It also expresses an appreciation of the seemingly random distribution of wealth through society, in which hard working individuals can find themselves the victims of unrelenting nature, symbolized by the farm's poor soil, while dim-witted and gullible individuals can find themselves in possession of considerable wealth. In Peder's conception of fairness, the redistribution of wealth to those deserving of a reasonable existence is a just and laudable event, even if the redistribution relies on deceit.

Examining each performance session as a whole allows one to discover the links between the stories perceived by the narrator—the order of performance reflects a choice on the part of the narrator. In the first session, a story which focuses on the ability of a farmer to protect his property against the threat of a vengeful villain leads into a story which centers on the abilities of a quick-witted farm hand to better the economic situation of himself and his employer. The continuity between the two tales is quite marked. In the first case, a farmer is helped by low-status individuals in his attempts to derive economic gain from a poor property. A strong man assists him in the final protection of the property. In the second case, a farmer is helped by a low-status individual, a strong farm hand, in his attempts to derive
economic gain from a poor property. Both legends make use of the quick-thinking servant as a central actor in securing the farm against threat. Furthermore, outside help in the guise of a strong farm hand ultimately secures the economic fortunes of the once poor farmer.

Peder’s Second Session

The second performance session was perhaps the most productive of all four sessions. The performance context, however, was highly contrived: a one-on-one session in the local parish clerk’s house. Peder had been up most of the previous night playing his fiddle at a local fastelavna party, and was undoubtedly tired. Most prominent in this session are stories which highlight his attitudes towards women, members of wealthy land owning classes, and institutional expressions of authority. A sense of justice based on harsh punishment pervades many of the stories and the supernatural often rears its head. In general, the stories from this session have a negative resolution, although a number of them are resolved in a positive manner, usually through the intervention of a male figure.

The second session, because of the large number of stories it contains, provides a better view than the first session of the linkage between stories. The first story focuses on a sex-crazed misogynistic count whose arrogant behavior ultimately leads to his economic demise at the hands of cunning farmers. The second story in the session relates the attempted conjuring of the spirit of a cruel manor lord:

There is a manor farm here to the east a bit, they call it Stadsård, and ghosts haunted there in the old days. It was the earlier owner who went again because he had been so barbaric towards his peasants. He went in the shape of a monster with horns and bustled about aloft in the main room. Nobody dared to be at the farm at night because of him. So they gathered the parsons together—there were twelve altogether—one night at midnight. They came in the evening and they were also served before they were to go to it. Then at twilight, a beggar came, he was otherwise known as Klemmen Ufød because he had been cut out of his mother’s side, and he asked for lodgings for the night. But they said no. First of all, they didn’t have any reasonable room to give him, and second of all, he couldn’t very well be there when everyone else was going to flee from there, and nobody other than these twelve chaps were going to be there, how was he going to handle himself. “Yes,” he says to them, “just let me stay, who knows, you might find my help useful in a bit.”—“Yes,” says one of the people, “if you aren’t any more afraid that you offer to help them, well then there’s a bed here in the hall next to the main room, why don’t you go and lay down there.” So he went in there too. Up towards midnight, these twelve parsons arrange themselves in a circle in the main room, each one with a psalm book or whatever in their hands, and they open them up and begin to make quite the racket with songs and prayers and what have you. Then when the clock struck, the door burst open and in comes this monster and for every nod it made towards a parson, his psalm book flew out of his hands. Then he says, Klemmen he said: “Now it’s my turn, I guess.” So he went in there and there was nobody who could understand what he said, but the animal stood still and so he went over and bound a red thread around its horns. Then he pulled it out the south-east corner of the farm, where there was a large linden tree in those days, and he tied it [the monster] to it [the tree] until the next day when he conjured it down. After that, he didn’t have to ask to get lodgings at the farm.12

The apparent link between the stories is the cruelty inflicted on the lower classes by the economically privileged. In both cases, the disenfranchised are able to defeat the economically and physically oppressive force.

Peder then draws a connection between the male wise man, Klemmen Ufød [Unborn], from the second legend and Svend Felding who, in the third legend, tricks the supernatural beings into granting him exceptional physical strength. The connection relies on the supernatural abilities of these men and their success in their dealings with the other world. In the next legend, Peder returns to the concept of revenants brought up in the legend of Klemmen Ufød, but retains the negative coding of female supernatural beings from the Svend Felding legend. In this legend, the mediating figure is not a folk healer but rather a parson. The following legend also concerns revenants, and retains the parson in the role of mediator. Peder also includes in this legend the concept of harm directly attributable to the inappropriate actions of the parson. Apparently this reminds him of two strict parish clerks who had taught in the area, and he recounts the harsh punishments attributed to Niels Ring and the strict, yet slightly humorous
attitude of his successor, Søren Jul.

Peder then returns to the revenants whom he had abandoned to address the actions of local religious figures. He tells the tale of a man forced to give his shirt to a female revenant in need of burial garments for her child. The female revenant becomes slightly more harmful in the ensuing legend, in which a young man is affected for life by his late night encounter with the ghost of an old woman. The next legend returns to a theme brought up previously, namely the inappropriate actions of parsons. Peder tells of a church which sank during a mass because of the ungodly parson's activities. Local residents attempt to recover the treasure which sank with the church and no avail. This reference to sunken treasure leads him to tell two closely related narratives about unsuccessful attempts to dig up buried treasure. The disturbing appearance of a krunhjorn [buck elk] at the end of the second buried treasure legend apparently brings the realm of supernatural beings to Peder's mind, as his next legend recounts bow the bjargfolk dance a young girl to death.

At this point, Peder seems to drop his thread and diverges to tell two legends he had heard from a German ropemaker, the first a humorous account of a snake eating its way through a bucket of intestines, and the second an account of two enemies so bent on fighting that their amputated hands continue the fight even after death. He then returns to the doings of supernatural beings, telling the story of a young girl kidnapped by trolls. Perhaps the "otherness" of the German ropemaker was brought to mind by the initial reference to the bjargfolk. The stories attributed to the German ropemaker are framed by stories about the threat "outside" supernatural beings pose to social integrity. The German ropemaker is an ethnic outsider and, therefore, also a potential threat to communal integrity.

A legend about a young girl's acrobatic interlude with some trolls segues into the story of a lindorm which eats a man and his plow before being defeated and buried. In each case, sexual excess appears to be symbolically represented in the form of threatening supernatural beings. Peder adds a verifying tag noting that his grandfather knew the location of the stone dike under which the lindorm had been buried. This attribution to immediate relatives apparently brings to mind other stories which close family members had told him. After a brief description of local geography, probably motivated by the reference to the stone dike, Peder relates his parents' encounter with a headless horseman. The next account tells of the arrival of the plague and the etiology of the custom of blessing people after they sneeze.

There was a plague which came with such a sneezing and when there was someone who managed to say, "God bless you!" before they finished sneezing, then they were saved, otherwise they were as good as dead. That's where that custom comes from.\(^{15}\)

The focus on disease leads him to tell about a devastating animal plague. He then returns to stories told by his relatives, first relating a story about two kjærlinger [gypsies] whose fight his mother had witnessed and then about the antics of Axel, whom his grandfather had known.

To suggest that a strictly linear progression from one legend to another governs the flow of performance would be an oversimplification of the dynamic at work. Peder's frequent return to themes he had brought up earlier suggest a rather complex associative process as part of the motivation for the performance of particular legends at any given time. By the time he has performed the story concerning Axel, he is already well into the performance session. Every legend performed can act as a reference point for the next legend performance—while linear connections seem to appear with regularity at the beginning of the session, later on in the session he begins to pick up on themes from legends performed earlier.

The next legend reflects such a break. In it, he tells of a woman's contact with a nisse family and her assistance in the nisse wife's birthing. The woman eventually is rewarded by the nisse for moving her animal and helping him give a gift to the local church. The next legend also does not reflect continuity with the legend performed immediately before it. The legend relates the thieving exploits of Kyling Søren and Jens Knop, their eventual capture and punishment. Kyling Søren is able to outwit the authorities and holds onto his freedom. Aspects of this legend resonate particularly well with the legends performed in the first session and the first legend of this session, in which trickery, deceit and theft as a means for redistributing the wealth are lauded. Peder then goes back
to stories about local churches which he had considered in
several legends interspersed throughout the session.

The next legend relates how a local slob was tricked into
washing. Given what is known about Peder’s own personal
hygiene, one can only wonder if he grasped the irony implicit
in his performance of this tale. The following legend also
includes the concept of cunning so frequent in his legends. In
it, a farm hand uses a stingy manor lady’s idiosyncratic church
attendance as a means for tricking her into being more lenient
towards her workers. As in many of Peder’s legends, religion
is portrayed in a negative light and the lady’s hypocrisy—strict
attendance at church but cruel treatment of her workers—is
corrected by the intervention of a quick-witted farm hand.

Religion serves as the linking device for the final two
legends in this session as well. His ironic use of the parish
clerk in the role of buffoon at the end of his session is
probably deliberate and reveals his awareness of the flow of
the session. By ending the session with two overt accounts
directed against religious figures, Peder is reveling in his
position as guest at the parish clerk’s house, and therefore
beyond reproach. At the same time he voices his displeasure
at having to sit there rather than at his more accustomed mill
house. His session reveals a sharp sense of humor and an
exceptional ability to tell stories, moving smoothly from one
story to another, using and building on themes touched on in
earlier narratives.

In many of Peder’s legends, women are presented either as
victims in need of protection or as dangerous beings who
cause illness and death. The first legend collected in this
session relates the story of an evil count who forces the area
women to act as his sex slaves before tossing them into the
moat of his castle:

At the farm Urup, there was a count Jørgen who owned
seven manor farms besides Urup, and whenever he drove
in formal finery, he had eight white mares before his
carriage. The farm was stoutly built and there was a
drawbridge leading into it. The door posts and the
knocker were made out of whalebone, and the
windowsills were sculpted out of fine stone. But this
count Jørgen was a lecherous fellow, because he stole
their girls round about the area and he had one to lie
with every night. Afterwards, he would throw her out
into the moat, and then she could take care of herself,

whether or not she could make it to land. Then he got to
thinking that he wanted to get married and he marched
on down to Venge farm; a rich woman lived there, she
only had one daughter. He courted her, and he had his
horses shod with gold horse shoes before he rode over
there and there was a group of guys who followed along
in procession. When he came to the farm, the woman
was standing at the gate, so he told her his errand there
on his horse. When he was finished, the woman
answered: “No, my daughter is not going to have so
lecherous a bloke.” Then he threatened her but I can’t
remember how it turned out since I was only six years
old when it was told to me. The woman got out of it by
getting five manor lords from her kin to go after him,
and they cheated him. He played with such ardor that he
slammed the dice down on the table so it sang, but
before it was day, both Urup and the seven estates were
lost, and he became such a poor beggar that he went
about begging until his death. This is supposed to have
really happened.17

The count is ultimately punished for his arrogance and sexual
misdeeds by the removal of his wealth through the use of
deceit and trickery.

Particularly worthy of note are Peder’s descriptions of
women in this legend and their position as victims of an
extra-community aggressor. As a member of the aristocracy,
the count is not a member of tradition group. The wealth of
high-status individuals is seized by lower status individuals in
this legend as well. Although the woman is referred to as rich,
and appears to be related to several wealthy manor lords,
there is still a concept of class difference. The woman’s wealth
is also a prerequisite for the act which spells the ultimate
doom of the count—it identifies her daughter as an acceptable
spouse. The class hierarchy comes to the fore in this legend:
the count, a representative of the aristocracy, victimizes the
peasants and tries to increase his wealth through a marriage to
a daughter of a manor lady. The mother’s refusal and the
subsequent economic defeat of the count both act as
subversions of the class hegemony. The mother in this legend
represents one of the few cases in which a woman is valorized
in Peder’s legend expression.

In Peder’s legends, women are often the victims of
sometimes brutal sexual aggression from either marginal
figures in the society or manifestations of outside threat. In a
legend he tells slightly later on in the performance session, he
recounts the story of the torture inflicted on one unruly girl for her behavior from an area parish clerk renowned for his harsh punishments:

The oldest parish clerk that I know about in Svejstrup was called Niels Ring. He was first a servant for the manor lord at Venge farm, and he appointed him to the post. He was so severe that, when he one time punished a young girl, he hiked up her skirt and put her up with her bare bottom on the glowing wood stove for a while so that the flesh was half burned when she came down again. But then he got too old, and the children teased him, and they covered his chair with pins.\footnote{18}

This legend also includes an expression of Peder's distaste for religious figures, an attitude which is explored below in greater detail.

Another surprisingly ferocious and borderline misogynistic scene appears in one of the final legends Peder tells during the session. Describing the thieving deeds of two gypsies who forcibly redistribute wealth from the rich to the poor, an action that Peder endorses, he relates their less noble actions: “but they were harsh. They cut the breasts off of the women and stabbed the children to death with their knives.”\footnote{19} The women are deprived of their breasts, a symbol of their nurturing role as mothers in society. Their children, who represent the potential for a continued community, are slaughtered. The ultimate effect of these actions is that the wealthy are prevented from maintaining their social integrity. For Peder, the wealthy are situated “outside” of his community and through their economically oppressive acts, represent a threat to his continued well-being. However, within the legend itself, the threatened community is the wealthy class. Members of that community are threatened by the two gypsies—ethnic outsiders. The locus of the action, namely the forest, underscores the “outside” aspect of this threat. In this legend, as in many of his legends, women are sexually victimized by an embodiment of outside threat, with the ultimate result that the ability of a community to perpetuate itself is endangered.

In two closely related legends, Peder relates the fate of young women who come in contact with “outside” supernatural beings. In the first case, a young girl who decides to stay behind at a mound during lunch is found dead by her companions, danced to death by bjargfolk. The girl leaves herself open to this attack because she rejects the social interaction of a communal meal and decides to remain outside her normal domain of social action. In the second case, a young girl is saved from the aerial acrobatics of a group of trolls by the timely intervention of a man plowing a field. The girl has ventured out of the bounds of her normal sphere of social action, namely the farm. A man tending his normal economic activities of plowing a field, a further symbol of his role in the continued fecundity and economic success of the community, is able to save her from the danger brought on by her breach of socially acceptable behavior.

In Peder's legends, women who are not busy being victimized by manifestations of outside threat are to be avoided. The third legend in the second session tells of Svend Felding's contact with ellepiger who try to kidnap him so that they can take advantage of his exceptional building skills. He outwits these otherworldly temptresses, but is only partially successful. The legend immediately following this story focuses on two groups which appear frequently in Peder’s repertoire—revenants and religious figures. In the legend, a unmarried pregnant girl is unable to give birth. Rather than reveal the identity of her lover, an action that could save her life and that of the baby, she chooses to die. As a result, she returns as a revenant and has to be conjured down by the parson.

More female ghosts appear several stories later. The first of the two legends tells of a man's late night encounter with a female ghost requesting burial clothes for her daughter. Only after the man offers her part of his shirt is he able to escape. The second legend tells of a young man who, while walking home one night, encounters an old woman by the side of the road. He greets her three times with a blessing, at which point she follows him. He finally escapes from her at a cross-roads where she touches him. The boy is never the same after this encounter.

In all of these cases, Peder has coded threat to social integrity as female. In the first three cases, there is a clear connection between the female threat and social integrity. In the first legend, elf girls try to deprive the community of a good builder—an important contributor to the continued
economic success of the community. In the second legend, a woman purposely dies in childbirth and thereby negates her role as mother and nurturer. She returns to threaten the continued success of the farm in general and her married lover—a potential father—in particular. In the third legend, a male community member is threatened by the revenant of a dead (ergo non-fertile) woman. It is the last case, a young man just reaching the age of adulthood is negatively affected by an old woman—also a non-fertile member of society.

Central to all of these legends in which women play a major role are the concepts of fertility and interactions between men and women. The legends in which women are victimized reflect Peder’s anxieties concerning the threat to social integrity presented by breaches in acceptable sexual conduct. The evil count, the dancing bjærgfolk and the flying trolls all embody sexual threats to young women. Complicity in such sexual frenzy, implicit in the account of the girl danced to death by the bjærgfolk, results in a calamitous and cathartic end—death, the antithesis of fertility. The female ghosts also reflect Peder’s concerns about interactions with women and their sexuality. Two of the ghosts are girls who have presumably died because of their promiscuous sexual activities. As a young unmarried man, it is understandable that Peder would be concerned with the possible repercussions of premarital liaisons with women.

The second legend which mentions a dead girl’s revenant underscores Peder’s concerns in regards to the repercussions of sexual promiscuity:

There was a guy who came past Dover church at night. Then a woman-figure came there and wanted burial clothes for her child. To get away from her he had to tear off his shirt tail and give it to her, and she was happy with that.26

Similar stories prevalent in the tradition identify such female revenants as perpetrators of infanticide and suicide. Thus, this legend complex represents a threefold attack against continued social integrity and fertility. First, a child who represents both the community members’ ability to reproduce and the community’s future, is killed. Second, the woman kills herself, completing the process of negating her socially important role as a mother. Third, the woman has had a sexual encounter with a man, presumably not her husband, a further breach of the rules governing interactions between men and women. The woman’s threat to the ability of the community members to perpetuate their group is underscored by the threatening encounter between the revenant and the man. Once again, women, because of their willingness to break the social norms governing reproduction, are presented as threatening entities.

Peder’s attitudes towards the church and religious figures also come to the fore in the legends performed during the second session. A slightly mocking attitude towards religious figures is present in many of the legends which Kristensen collected from the Jutish populace. Such attitudes appeared to be particularly common in the repertoires of the young, the male and the single.21 The second legend which Peder tells during this session tells the story of the attempted conjuring of the revenant of a meretricious manor lord by twelve parsons. The parsons called to conjure the terrifying and powerful revenant fail. Instead, a local folk healer, Klemmen Ufød [Unborn], so called because he was delivered by what could best be described as a Cesarian section, succeeds at the task. The celebration of the folk healer at the expense of the ineffectual and numerous parsons may be linked to Peder’s background. Although the motif of the folk healer succeeding where parsons failed is not unique to Peder’s repertoire, by positioning the legend at the very beginning of the session, he implicitly suggests that the legend is of importance to him. When one considers that Peder’s father’s plejefader [foster father] was a folk healer and that Peder learned many of his stories from this man, it is understandable that he would include such an expression in his repertoire. Furthermore, it is not surprising that he would have a less than positive attitude towards the abilities and importance of religious figures, since, as a folk healer, Peder’s grandfather would have undoubtedly come into conflict with area parsons.

Peder’s attitude towards religious figures, however, is not as clear-cut as the legend may suggest. Instead, his attitude reflects the ambiguity of the influential yet marginal status of religious figures in nineteenth century rural Denmark. Often, the parsons and parish clerks came from other communities, while their educational level further set them apart. Their religious role and their implicit supernatural abilities attributable to their close connection to God further served to
situate them in an ambiguous social space.  

The fourth and fifth legends in the second session lack the overt negative evaluation of the parson’s ability to protect the society from threat. Instead, the parson’s supernatural abilities are highlighted but his actions are cast in a slightly negative light. In the first of these two legends, the parson tries unsuccessfully to get a young girl to confess the name of her lover. This failure on the part of the parson to elicit a confession, part of his general religious duties, results in his need to resort to his supernatural abilities to conjure. In the second legend, the parson wakes a suicide, presumably to avoid the possibility of a revenant. While such preemptive action is an admirable attempt on the part of the parson to avert a potential threat to the communal integrity, it backfires. A farm hand sleeping nearby witnesses this and is never the same again. Although the supernatural abilities of the parsons are not questioned in these legends as they were in the first legend, the appropriateness of their actions is questioned. Peder’s negative attitude towards religious figures carries over to the figure of the parish clerk, particularly Niels Ring, the parish clerk who burns the girl’s behind on the wood burning stove as punishment.

The final two stories in the performance session, both humorous narratives, further highlight his attitude towards religious figures. The first lacks all subtlety in its negative evaluation of parsons:

During harvest time, a boy was to drive Mjesing minister to the parish. They had nobody else to send, since they were busy. “Can you also drive with me, my son?” he says. “Yeah, I should hope so, since I’ve driven a load of shit before.”

The second is slightly more subtle in its treatment of the parson and the parish clerk, although the burlesque ending highlights the buffoonery of the two clergymen:

The parish clerk in Mjesing was supposed to ring [the bell] and there was a pause after the first ringing. The parish clerk used this pause to eat his lunch there in the anteroom. The parsonage’s hens knew this since he often tossed them crumbs. Then one day the parson came over during his meal and the parish clerk wanted to chase the hens out but they wouldn’t go, so he takes his hat and swings it down between them. *But he is unlucky enough to knock the rooster out cold. So he puts it into

his pocket under his long robe and he goes in and gets the parson up on the pulpit and then sits down to sleep. Then the rooster wakes up, crawls out and flies up to the altar where it crows. The parish clerk wakes up and sings ‘Amen.’

Peder’s background and social status probably contribute in large part to the negative attitudes concerning religious figures expressed in his legends. His education was limited and the frequently overlapping roles of parish clerk and teacher may have been a contributing factor to his anti-clerical attitude. Furthermore, it must be kept in mind that this second performance session occurred the morning after a fastelavn party at the home of a parish clerk. Fastelavn is marked by an inversion of social hierarchies and a relaxation of the social norms which regulate what can be expressed publicly. Possibly, Peder had taken part in story telling at the party the night prior to the session with Kristensen, since he was known in the area to be an excellent story teller. Therefore, his stories may highlight attitudes prevalent during the fastelavn celebration. Finally, the recording session was probably an imposition on Peder, as Kristensen had extracted a promise from him the night before at the fastelavn party that he would perform for him: “I went in there and talked to him during a break and I got him to promise that he would come the next day over to the parish clerk’s and stay there and tell [stories] for me ... He came also after the arrangement but since he had played most of the night and had not really had a good night’s sleep, he was not in the best form to tell [stories].”

As such, the negative attitudes towards parsons and, more overtly, parish clerks may be an expression of Peder’s annoyance with Kristensen’s persistence. It is probably not coincidental that he chooses to end his story telling with a comical tale which posits the parish clerk—Kristensen’s host—in the role of buffoon.

**Peder’s Third and Fourth Sessions**

The third collecting session took place once again at the mill on the evening of February eleventh. In the previous sessions, Peder performed several long narratives. By the third session, he had apparently “used up” much of his best material. Thus the legends and other accounts he performed during this session lack the enthusiastic performance, nuance
and detail of the accounts from the first session and the range and humor of the accounts from the second session. The records from this session do not exhibit the smooth segues and thematic links between accounts characteristic of the first two sessions. Instead, many of the records are quite short, often non-narrative expressions referring to local beliefs, folk cures or descriptions of local topographic features.

Several of the accounts from this session make direct reference to Peder's grandfather, the folk healer. The first of these uses the grandfather's authority as a means for establishing the veracity of the account. A second story tells of his grandfather's abilities to stop stampeding animals, albeit with negative repercussions for the animals' health. The privileging of the position of the folk healer is less apparent in the legends recorded during this session and religious figures are not portrayed as negatively as they were in the second session. Instead, the one legend which includes reference to a parson places him in a powerful role meting out a standard punishment for the theft of apples:

There was a man in Blegind, he went to the minister's many nights and stole some of the good apples they had there. They noticed that somebody was taking them and then the farm hand asks the minister if he shouldn't sit guard and see who it was. "That isn't really necessary, because by the time you wake up tomorrow morning, then you can go out and see." When the people got up the next morning and went out in the yard, one of the townsmen sat up in the tree and had a sack in one hand and in it was a single apple so that one could see that it was that he was out after and he was holding on with the other hand. Then people tried to help him down but they couldn't. When the minister came he said, "It's sad that you aren't smarter than to occupy yourself with something like this," and then he could come down.28

Religious figures do not appear in any of the other recordings from this session, although Peder does perform a legend with reference to the supernatural powers associated with the church. A bell which was cursed during casting flies into a pond the first time it is rung. This legend is linked in many ways to the reference to the sunken church found in the second session. In each case, irreverent behavior results in the deprivation of a community's ability to use a religious object, which is itself a symbolic expression of the community.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of the third session is the extent to which Peder presents himself in the narratives. The first two sessions include only occasional verifying tags, and most of the stories are attributed to unknown individuals. In this session, he makes more frequent use of verifying tags. He also presents many more prescriptive statements as addenda to his legends. Also, he tells more stories attributed to known individuals and even tells one with himself as the main figure:

I was walking [home] one night from Boes mill where I had been working and then it starts blowing up to a terrible thunderstorm, but then it wasn't completely over but it wasn't raining either. Just as I'm going past Dakhjørg I feel something around me. A flame came up out of my cap and there was fire in my beard. I got scared because I'd heard about that mountain and I wasn't happy about it and I ran home. But that was of course the mædr fire.29

This account comes very close to the end of the session. It may reflect in part Peder's proximity to the statements of belief which comprise a great deal of the performance session. The willingness to recount a first person story may also be an expression of his acceptance of Kristensen as an interested and admisible audience member.30 Unlike the first two sessions in which Peder showcased his considerable talents as a story teller, the third session is a communication of a series of beliefs and descriptions, with only an occasional narrative.

The fourth and final session took place during one of Kristensen's photographic excursions through the country and occurred more than seven years after the initial three sessions. During the session, Peder told a single folktale, cataloged in the Danish Folklore Archive's folktale index under the rubric of "Stærke Hans og Herremanden" [Strong Hans and the Manor Lord], AaTh650a, thereby setting up an interesting continuity between all four of the sessions. In each session, Peder includes a story which relates to the exceptional strength of a male actor. He opens the first session with a reference to a herremand's [manor lord] exceptional strength:

A manor lord lived in Illerup who was called Hjelmslev, and he was a man who was renowned for being so immensely strong. When he sat in a chair and seven farm hands bound a rope around him, they couldn't pull him from the chair. He had a sword which had a name I
can’t remember nor its length. This manor lord ruled the peasant farms in that area.31
This is followed by a reference to the considerable size and strength of the cunning farm hand from the second story: 'They now come home to his wife and the husband says: 'Here is the farm hand.' 'Well, he’s a little bit biggish, but we'll likely get the food.' In the second session, Peder tells about Svend Felding who tricks the elf girls into giving him the strength of twelve men, with the downside being that he develops an equally sized appetite. This voracious appetite resonates well with the appetite of the herremænd in the first story, or even the sexual appetite of the count in the first story of the second session. In the third session, Peder tells a long account of Kristen Sø, a strong man, which mentions:

Kristen Sø, he could take the Hammel churchbell and ring it between his legs and it was such that it took six farm hands to raise it up into the belfry when they were finished building the tower. A man came from there out west and wanted to look him up. Kristen had only a pair of oxen and he went and plowed with these. He took hold of one of the plow horns and pointed with it [the plow]. ‘Well, then I certainly don’t need to ask where the man is.’32

Exceptional physical strength appears in multiple records in Peder’s repertoire and probably should be considered as one of his more important concerns. It is possible that he frequently told stories about strong men because he wanted to be considered to be of their ilk. In his job as a miller, exceptional physical strength would have been an asset, and could lead to substantial economic gain. In most of the cases, exceptional strength in the legends leads to economic gain—another expression of wishful thinking on Peder’s part. In a negotiation of the unlikely attainment of exceptional strength, Peder acknowledges an economic downside to such physical endowment, namely a need to consume vast quantities of food.

Themes in Peder’s Legends

The evaluation of Peder’s repertoire results in the identification of several thematic concerns which appear with regularity. His low esteem for women, as evidenced by their roles as either victims of brutality or manifestations of threat to male fecundity, has already been noted. His view of religious figures as incompetent or socially inept has also been discussed above. In several of his longer and more detailed stories, the young, able-bodied and quick-witted farm hand is valorized, and can be interpreted as self-projection into the legend expression.34 Although Peder himself may have been lazy and unkempt, his legends frequently relate stories about diligent and cunning young men. His frequent emphasis on young male heroes who use deceit as a means for economic gain may be seen as an expression of his own desire in a folkloric form. A complementary phenomenon is the generally negative manner in which he treats the wealthy, usually represented by herremænd [manor lords] or aristocrats. The unsuccessful quest for sunken or buried treasure is also a recurrent theme in Peder’s repertoire. It may represent a negotiation of his desire for attainment of great wealth with the realities of his economic situation. By failing in the quest for treasure, the economic status quo is maintained and disruption avoided.35

Supernatural contact is an integral part of Peder’s legend repertoire. Supernatural beings offer one of the easiest ways to code threat to members of a homogeneous society. Supernatural beings are situated clearly outside the bounds of the tradition group—they live in places where members of the society do not live, they eat things which members of the society cannot or do not eat, they have powers which normal members of the society do not possess. Perceived threat can therefore be assigned a symbolic representation in the form of supernatural beings—either non-human beings, such as hjerntolk and trolls; supernaturally endowed human beings, such as witches; or supernatural human form beings, such as revenants.

Revenants are the most prevalent form of supernatural beings in Peder’s legends.36 Often, the contact with the dead is either unmediated, as in the case of the young man who encounters the old woman, or unsuccessfully mediated, as in the case of the young man who witnesses the exchange between the parson and the suicide. The most successful mediator of contact with the dead is the male folk healer, as evidenced by Klemmen Ufødt’s successful conjuring of the evil herremænd’s revenant. In Peder’s legends, revenants often symbolize an embodiment of a breach of a social norm. The
first revenant he mentions is the spirit of an evil manor lord, while the second revenant is that of a girl who dies in childbirth. The third revenant is that of a suicide, the fourth, the revenant of an implicit perpetrator of infanticide, and the fifth the revenant of an old woman. The people most affected by the contact with revenants are young men who are entering their most economically and socially productive years.

Peder also makes use of supernatural ‘beings’ whose domain is outside the boundaries of the nineteenth century farm, such as trolls and bjørgfolk. In these legends, the most frequent victims of their activities are young women. The only legend actor who successfully mediates an encounter with these supernatural beings is Svend Felding, who manages to acquire exceptional strength. Peder also told several legends which included reference to nisse, the ambiguous farm spirit who could be both helpful and hurtful. The first appearance of the nisse occurs in a legend which addresses the concept of reproduction, one of Peder’s major thematic concerns. In the legend, a farmer’s wife is kidnapped to help the nisse’s wife birth. She initially throws away the reward offered her, not realizing its value. Later she is paid a second time in exchange for moving an animal from its stall directly above the nisse’s table and helping the nisse donate a gift to the church. The use of the nisse in this role is somewhat unique to Peder’s repertoire since, in Danish tradition, the most common supernatural being to appear in similar legends is the bjørgmand. It may be that Peder found the nisse to be a more fitting embodiment of the ambiguous role of “other” found in this legend than the generally negatively marked bjørgmand. He often personalized his expression in such a manner—the first legend he told is similar to legends found in other tradition participants’ repertoires about robber bands. Frequently in his legends, a manifestation of a clearly outside threat is replaced by an ambiguously situated manifestation of threat.

The Legend of the Stingy Lady

The analysis of the performance sessions as a communicative whole provides an overview of the nature of Peder’s folkloric expressions, while the identification of frequent themes and the links between these themes and his background partially help explain the motivations behind performance. Nevertheless, a thorough analysis of repertoire cannot be considered complete without several truly in-depth analyses of single expressions. Such analyses should be predicated on the proposed synthetic methodology in which all of the analytical tools available to the folklorist are brought to bear on a discrete legend performance. The legends selected for such scrutiny have been chosen to reflect some of the major concerns expressed by Peder in his legends identified in the above analysis.

Near the end of the second session, Peder performed the following legend:


There was a woman who was a bit stingy towards her workers. She lived nearby to a church and had the church key in her house. She had the habit of going into the church every Saturday evening to say all of her prayers for the whole week. Now, she had gotten a new karl in November, and he speculated over how he could teach her to give them some better food. Now, he had noticed this church going and so he thought, “I’ll trick her there.” A Saturday evening he is in time to get in before her and he gets in behind the altar. The old hak
now comes and falls down onto the kneeler and she spreads her hands out and says: "Oh, how well you live." "Yeah, the devil feeds your body." Now she gets a little hot around the ears, since she believed that it was someone from the other world. "Why do you say that, dear sir?" "Because you give your workers so little to consume." "Oh, I'll improve myself." "Yeah, well then I'll be merciful." "But you see, I'm keeping all of that for my God." "Yeah, rather the little-one [Sælan] should tear out both your eyes." Then she took off out of the church, as fast as the reins and bridle could hold. Since that time, she went to church along with other people, and her workers received fare like at the other places.

The story reflects certain stylistic qualities which are consistent with much of Peder’s legend expression. His peers considered him to be a particularly adept story teller—besides his exceptionally large and diverse repertoire, his performance style was probably one of the reasons he was considered to be such. The detail of action he includes in his narratives is one of the hallmarks of an adept narrator. When the woman arrives at the church, she falls onto the kneeler and throws her arms out. All of the verbs Peder uses to describe action, and the detailed action he includes, contribute to the remarkably nuanced style common to his performance. Such nuanced action is not present in variants recorded by Kristensen from other tradition participants. For example, several variants only relate that the woman begins praying without including the detail present in Peder’s account:

- Hun begynder at bede ... [She begins to pray ... ]^{18}
- Da hun nu begynder sin aftenbön ... [When she begins her evening prayer ... ]^{19}
- Da han kom hen over alteret, hørte han hende bede ... [When he got in over the altar, he heard her pray ... ]^{20}
- Hun begynder nu at bede sådan ... [She now begins to pray like so ... ]^{21}

Peder even includes the woman’s intermediate reactions to the startling responses she receives to her prayers: “nu blev [hun] jo lidt hed om ørene” [now she gets a little hot around the ears]. Other variants simply present the rhymed responses and the woman’s eventual reform.

Unlike many of Peder’s stories, there is a marked lack of both personal and place names in this account. However, he does situate the house geographically, noting that it was close to the church. Rather than locating the story in a specific geographic area with known individuals, he uses slightly less definite characters and places. Verisimilitude is maintained, however, and the use of specific times—the action takes place on a Saturday night in November—helps imbue the account with its believability. This story is told immediately after a brief legend which includes extreme localization and named individuals. Therefore, Peder may have felt less of a need to locate this legend within the community, as the previous account had already brought the immediate community to the fore. The lack of personal and place names may also be attributable to the inherent thematic shift in the story transition. The previous story refers to a specific event with specific characters in the local community, and centers on the tricking of an individual to conform to social standards. The second story refers to a specific event with generic characters in a generic community and centers on the tricking of an individual to conform to social standards. In the first case, the breach of social norms is relatively unthreatening and easily rectified. The story describes interactions among members of the same social and economic class, thereby accounting for its extreme specificity. In the second case, the breach of social norms is extremely threatening and requires the intervention of a quick-witted young man. The story describes interactions between classes and can be seen as an expression of class struggle. Since it deals with classes of people rather than specific people, the high level of specificity is abandoned.

It may be helpful to incorporate Nicolaisen’s structural scheme into this discussion.^{42} In the orientation of a legend account, the legend teller signals which groups of individuals the account will focus on. Because of the close relation between the inner reality of the legend account and the outer reality of the narrator, the groups chosen by the narrator may be closely related to the conflicts in the narrator’s day-to-day life which are of primary importance. In this case, Peder presents a conflict between the wealthy and stingy manor lady and the overworked and underfed peasantry. Her stinginess brings the usual economic tension between the classes to a breaking point. While economic differentiation was a fact of life in late nineteenth century agrarian Denmark, extreme oppression manifest in stinginess required at least narrative
action.

With the complicating action of the legend account, the legend tells the story of the interaction between a woman and a man. Here, the complicating action of the legend centers on the woman's breach of the tradition against Saturday evening church attendance and the verbal exchange between her and the farm hand. The interaction between the woman and the farm hand, presented as a rhyming statement-response, is the climax of the legend. The legend resolution allows the legend teller to decide how the confrontation will be negotiated. The narrator can decide not only whether or not there will be a clear winner and loser, but also which group from the orientation of the account will prevail. The resolution of a legend therefore reveals a great deal about the attitudes of the legend teller. In this case, the legend is resolved when the woman decides to conform to societal norms by attending church “along with other people,” and agrees to abandon her overt oppression of the peasants by providing them with adequate food.

The orientation of the legend sets up two dynamic oppositions which figure frequently in Peder’s expressions. The first opposition is one between classes. The landowning class, represented by the woman, oppresses the peasant class, represented by her employees, the “folk.” In the legend, the oppression of the workers is a deliberate action of the woman. Legends often relate the extraordinary: while the woman's stinginess may not necessarily have been an extraordinary act, the farm hand’s ability to eliminate this example of economic oppression apparently was extraordinary.

The second opposition that Peder establishes in the legend is that between man and woman. The newly hired farm hand immediately begins to plot how to force the woman to feed them properly. By denying her workers reasonable fare, the woman reject her role as a nurturer. Rather than providing for the well-being of her employees, she hoards food, thereby jeopardizing the long-term economic integrity of her micro-community. Poorly fed workers cannot work as well as well-fed workers. This, in turn, threatens their ability to successfully plant and harvest the fields and thus puts the entire community at threat for economic disaster.

The woman’s solitary Saturday attendance of church represents the most apparent breach of acceptable behavior in the legend. One is supposed to attend church on Sunday, during the day, not on Saturday at night. Other legends from the contemporaneous tradition area refer to the negative consequences of attending church at the wrong time. Attending church is a social action. By attending church alone, the woman positions herself outside of the realm of normal social interaction. Furthermore, her private attendance of church is motivated by her stinginess—by attending church alone on Saturday night, she can say all of her prayers for the week at once and avoid saying prayers for the rest of the week. The woman in this legend is socially incompetent: she increases the tension between the classes by her stingy ways, she rejects her role as nurturer, and she ignores the rules governing religious behavior and social interaction. As such, she leaves herself wide open for supernatural retribution.

Peder plays on the well-known legends of the midnight mass of the dead in this legend. The farm hand's actions lead the woman to believe that she has come into contact with the other world because of her breach of rules governing social interaction. The exchange between the farm hand and the woman is presented in a highly stylized form, each of the farm hand’s responses rhyming with the woman’s statements. In most other variants, the exchange ends with the woman agreeing to conform to normal rules governing social and economic interaction. Peder adds a final exchange not present in other variants which includes the threat of severe physical mutilation. This at once brings to mind the horrible punishments that Peder has non-community legend men inflict on community legend women.

The legend reflects many of the themes common to Peder's repertoire. The clever farm hand successfully forces the woman to conform to common practices and thereby secures the economic well-being of his fellow workers. The oppression by the upper class, manifest as a culturally incompetent woman, is mediated by the quick-witted intervention of a young single male. The woman is forced back into the position of social conformity by the farm hand’s trickery. The farm hand relies on folk belief for the efficacy of his deceit—the woman is well aware that her stinginess and
Saturday night church-going are breaches of the rules governing behavior. Her expectation, therefore, is that she could encounter a supernatural being. Like many of his legends, Peder uses this legend to express a world view in which the quick-witted peasant farm hand is able to successfully mediate both the threat posed to his class by the economic policies of the wealthy, and the threat posed to men by women.

Buried Treasure

Peder’s legends about buried treasure and the unsuccessful attempts to recover it further express the frequent negotiation between wishful thinking and everyday economic reality apparent in his repertoire. Two legends, printed as a single record in Danske sagn, provide an interesting view of this process:

Der ligger en kongelsning i Silkeborg skov, og derover står en stor eg, men den er er sandet til. Så var der en mand, der bekostede en hel del på at grave den ud, og de havde kastet dem så langt ned, at de var komne til roden af egen, Dertil kom de så ikke længere [men længere kunde de ikke komme, for] lige så stærkt som de kastede, lige så stærkt skred det. De kunde bulle, ligesom de vilde, længere ned kunde de ikke komme.


Der var også hlevet kastet efter det [skatten], og de havde også fundet stenen, men den mand var nok så forSIGTIG som de fleste andre, der graver, efter sådant noget, for han drager over på den sorte skole i Kjøben havn, og der fik han sig et blat lys. Hvor det lys brænder, der findes der ingen skatte, [men] hvor det går ud, der skal en søge, der er skatten. Og Det beviser sig også rigtigt nok, da han tændte lyset, for det brændte alle andre steder end der, der kunde det ikke brænde. Så gav ham og hans kærlig sig til at kaste efter det [skatten], og der kom alle slags dyr og vilde forstyrre dem, for de måtte jo ikke snakke eller gå fra det. [Der er jo det ved det, at en kongelsning sætter dobbelt så dybt til næste gang, når de får gravet efter
den og ikke før den.] De havde det så vidt, at de havde ved banken af kæleden. Så kommer der en stor kronhjort, og den giver sig til at skabe på hans hånd, der havde ved den ene øjen, og så kunde han ikke blitte sig længere, men sagde: “Nej, om du er så Gamle-Erik selv, så giver a ikke slip,” Pludselig, uden at de kunde forstå det, lå karle og bakker og spader ved hver sin side af højens, og den var jævnet, som der aldrig var kastet der. De prøvede siden på at grave [igen], men kom ikke til det [skatten] tiere før er det ved det, at en kongelsning sætter dobbelt så dybt til næste gang, når de får gravet efter det. A king’s ransom lies out in Silkeborg forest and a large oak stands over it but it is sanded over. Then there was a man who invested a lot on digging it out and they had dug so far down that they had come to the roots of the oak. But they didn’t get further than that because just as fast as they dug, [the sand] slid back in. They could work as hard as they wanted, they couldn’t get any further down.

My grandfather was at a place where there was a king’s ransom. It was by the side of a mound and when one stands on the mound and looks down at a certain time, finds a peacock in the afternoon, and looks straight down at the foot of it then one can see a large square stone with inscriptions on it. But it is illegible and if one goes to look, then there is nothing but earth.

They dug after that too and they’d also found the stone but that man was more careful than most others who dig for that kind of thing since he had gone over to the Black School in Copenhagen and he got himself a blue candle there. Wherever the candle burns there is no treasure to be found, where it goes out, that’s where one should look, that is where the treasure is, and it turned out to be true enough, when he lit the candle because it burned every place except there, it couldn’t burn there. Then he and his farm hand started to dig for it and all sorts of animals came and wanted to disturb them because they couldn’t speak or go away from it. They had gotten so far that they had the handle of the kettle. Then a giant buck elk appears and it begins to scrape his hand, the one who had hold of the axe, and then he couldn’t keep quiet any longer but said: “No, if you’re Old Erik himself, I won’t let go.” All of a sudden, without them being able to understand it, the men and the picks and shovels lay on each their side of the mound and it was leveled like it had never been dug up before. They tried to dig but they didn’t get to it again because it is so, that a king’s ransom sinks twice as deep the next time, when someone has dug for it.
The first legend of an unsuccessful treasure hunt leads to an account attributed to Peder's great grandfather which serves as the orientation of the second legend of an unsuccessful treasure hunt. It is this second legend of buried treasure which will be analyzed here.

The introductory legend about the disappearing stone provides a smooth transition from the first less detailed account to the second account. The detail of the introduction—the precise time and location at which the stone can be seen—is a reflection of Peder's attention to the build-up of his stories. The orientation of the legend is broken into two sections. The first is the more personally situated account relating Peder's great grandfather's knowledge of the treasure's location. The second orientation is the introduction of the eventual treasure seeker who has procured a magical treasure-locating light at the Black School in Copenhagen. The light confirms the treasure's location and initiates the complicating action—digging for the treasure. As in the previous legend about the stingy woman, Peder includes direct address at the climactic moment of the encounter. In this case, the interaction is between human and supernatural being.

The protagonist in this legend is a man who, like in the first legend about buried treasure, has put a great deal at stake to successfully attain the treasure. He goes to the extent of attending the Black School and acquires supernaturally powered equipment to aid him in his quest. By attending the Black School, he removes himself from the close knit community and returns as a marginal figure—a potential threat to the community as evidenced by his blue light. His quest for a long hidden treasure, and the potential economic disruption attendant its discovery, further underscores his threatening nature. At the same time, his nearly successful quest for the buried treasure is an example of wishful thinking. The treasure and economic well-being are there within hand's reach. As long as the interdiction against speaking is maintained, the treasure can be won. This particular interdiction is intimately related to the concept of communal threat, since it requires the rejection of communication, the basis for all social interaction. In a negotiation of the wishful thinking represented by the proximity of the treasure and the weight of day-to-day economic reality, the interdiction is violated and the economic status quo is maintained.

The treasure in this particular legend is a konge løsning—the amount of money necessary to free a king from captivity in times of war. Thus, the treasure is closely related to the vast wealth of the aristocracy. The treasure can be seen in part as a representation of the economic divide between the wealthy land-owning aristocrats on the one side and the impoverished peasantry on the other side. That the treasure is buried in the ground strengthens this connection—the aristocrats' unattainable wealth is closely linked to the concept of land ownership. Despite the land reform acts of the nineteenth century, land ownership was still out of the reach of many peasants. While the concept of "limited good" may be a part of the motivational complex behind the legend, it seems more likely that the treasure in this particular case is a means for expressing the economic divide between the classes. The inability of the peasants to attain treasure may be in large part an expression of economic reality.

The legend sets up an interesting negotiation of the economic dynamic extant in rural nineteenth century Denmark. Wealth in the form of land, represented here by treasure buried in the ground, exists and is supposedly attainable. The only prerequisite to gain this land-bound wealth is to reject communal membership, or rather accept a move from one economic class to another. Although the protagonist is willing to sacrifice membership in the community to gain this wealth, he ultimately fails. In his failure, he restores himself to membership in the community. The legend thereby reconciles the seeming possibilities of attaining wealth with the realities of economic life by positioning the attainment of such wealth as a threat to communal integrity and the failure as a reaffirmation of communal integrity. Peder notes that once the treasure hunter had reaffirmed his position in the community by engaging in a communicative act, everything was just as it had been before—all evidence of the attempt to disrupt the status quo disappears.

**Conclusion**

Peder was a remarkable story teller. The detail and nuances of his legends attest to the considerable skill he
exercised in his narrative sessions. His legends express both the fears and hopes, the anxieties and aspirations of an individual member of a complex community. His own experiences and attitudes are often manifest in the stories which he chose to tell. The moves from legend to legend highlight the aspects of the stories which he felt to be of prime importance. Often, his legends centered on the abilities of young men to better their economic situations not by virtue of hard work but rather by virtue of deceit and trickery. Peder's bachelor status and his spheres of social interaction colored his view of women. For Peder, two social oppositions seem to be paramount—the poor versus the wealthy and the male versus the female. The ensuing chapters continue to examine the role of social factors and personal experiences in the development of the folklore expressions of individual tradition participants.

NOTES

5. Kristensen 1900-1902 vol. 6: 310.
7. The records can be read in the order they were performed by consulting the various published collections. The first session should be read: DS IV 1517; JFMVII 64. The second session should be read: DS IV 720; DS V 607; DS I 959; DS V 1163, 822; JA VI 639; DS V 1133, 1370; DS III 744, 2367; DS I 767; MA II 424; DS V 872; DS I 830; DS IIE 20; DS IV 121; DS V 202; DS IV 1689; JA I 263; JA V 579; JA VI 176; DS I 1140; JA V 357; DS III 870; JA V 212; JA III 456; JFMXIII 37; FK 483, 196. The third session should be read: DS IIC 120; DS I 1016; DS II 78; DS VII 419; DS III 515; DS IIB 13; DS VI 98; DS VII 169; DS IV 1075; DS III 222; DS III 340; DS V 61; DS III 528; DS IIG 356; DS III 1779, 1851; JA II 413; DS IIE 120, 156; DS VI 995; DS IIJ 69, 47; DS VII 1487. The fourth session should be read: JFMXIII 39.
8. In her study on story telling in Dartmoor, Katharine Young notes that "adjacent stories are mutually constitutive. Each points up or plays out elements of the other. Elements come thereby to thread through and tie together two or more stories." (Young 1987:85).
9. This story was published as Danske sagt IV: 1517.
10. Kristensen publishes the account in a collection of Jutish folktales and the folktales catalog includes the account under the heading of "Kællingens nedmønstring," assigning it the international folktales index number AAuH1536a, "the woman in the chest." Both of these cataloging devices are extremely reductionist as the account involves much more than the conjuring of an old hag or the gruesome manipulation of a corpse by a boy intent on personal gain. (Aaikk and Thompson 1961: 441).
14. This situation calls the power of the parson into question. (Stokker 1991).
21. It was further hypothesized that such an attitude was prominent in the 
   repertoires of farm owner class informants.
24. Kristensen 1899a: 71-72.
27. This session may represent a situation in which Kristensen was mining 
   the last folkloric nuggets from Peder's memory, an activity that Kristensen 
   often alludes to in the forewords to his collections and Mindes og 
   Oplevelser (Kristensen 1871: ix; Kristensen 1876b: vi; Kristensen 1883: 
   388; Kristensen 1923-1927 vol. 3: 364-365). At the same time, the 
   session also highlights Peder's ability to tell stories and his apparent eager-
   ness to be the center of attention. Although Kristensen makes no mention 
   of any particular "challenge" to tell a certain number of stories or 
   whether or not he was paying Peder for stories, both are possibilities 
   which could have been motivating factors for Peder to continue performing 
   for Kristensen.
30. Erving Goffman suggests that the presentation of self in narrative is not 
   a clear correlation, asserting that "what the individual presents is not 
   himself but a story containing a protagonist who may happen to be him-
   self" (Goffman 1974: 512; see also Roland Barthes 1974-75: 263).
32. Kristensen 1895: 345.
36. Trolls and the like appear with slightly less frequency in his repertoire.
37. Kristensen 1891-1893 vol. 3: 133; Field Diary 3781a; bracketed words 
   appear only in published version, italicized words appear only in field 
   notes.
38. Kristensen 1891-1893 vol.3: 133.
42. Nicolaïsen 1987; Labov 1972.
43. The complicating action is a structural element which Labov states "is 
   essential if we are to recognize a narrative" (Labov 1972: 370).
Plate Two: Photograph of Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter (from *Dansk folkemindesamling*).
Chapter 6

Upward Mobility and Legend: Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter's Repertoire

Unlike the trip on which Kristensen first met Peder Johansen, the trip on which he first met Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter took place in the late spring. After having worked on his own little kitchen garden at his house in Hadsten, Kristensen decided it was time to try his hand at field work in eastern Jutland. Starting off from Hadsten, he set his course eastward, walking through Galten, Hinge and on to Aarslev where his collecting began in earnest. Kristensen soon found himself at Villendrup, Rasmus Kjær's farm. Although his inquiries concerning Rasmus’ whereabouts were initially unanswered, he was finally able to find him. Rasmus turned out to be a willing and able story teller, and, in turn, he suggested that Kristensen visit his sister: “He thought now that it would be best if I went over to his sister who lived in Hornslet since she was much better at telling [stories] than he [was] and I decided to visit her immediately.”

This sister was Kirsten Marie. Once again, coincidence led Kristensen to an informant who became one of his most prolific sources for a broad range of folkloric expressions. Over the course of the next five years, Kristensen visited Kirsten Marie on four separate occasions, collecting stories from her during the first three meetings and photographing her at the last meeting.

Kirsten Marie was the daughter of a cotter who eventually saved enough money to purchase his own farm. When she was old enough, Kirsten Marie married a farm owner as well.
From her beginnings in the cotter class to her eventual membership in the farm owner class, she was one of the few who fell into the category of upwardly mobile members of late nineteenth century rural Danish society. Kristensen provides the following biographical sketch of Kirsten Marie, which he wrote in 1895:

Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter was born on the 27th of October, 1827, [in a house] south of Rud church in Bodholm, which is in Nielsenstrup in Rud parish. Her father was from a farmstead called Sahule in Nielsenstrup. The farmstead had been moved by the grandfather from the town up to Sahulested. Her mother was born at the farmstead which is still right near the church. Later, her father bought a farm in Villendrup, which Kirsten Marie’s brother still owns, and she was married away from there. She had [learned] her stories and legends from her mother, who in turn had [learned] them from her father who was also from Nielsenstrup. At parties, he could gather all the people around him, since he was adept at telling [stories]. Kirsten Marie married Niels Møller and they still live on Hornslet field, west of the station. One of her daughters has taken the teachers’ examination.²

In his memoirs, Kristensen briefly describes the farm her father had purchased, now in the possession of her brother Rasmus and comments on his wealth: “He still had a large farmhouse with enough rooms and was quite well off. But he was the parish officer and so it could be that, in that capacity, he did not like to offer lodgings to wanderers like myself.”³ Kirsten Marie herself lived with her husband in a farm on the outskirts of Hornslet.

Kristensen provides little detail of the actual collecting sessions he had with Kirsten Marie. He describes his first meeting with her only briefly, commenting on both her pleasantness and the warm reception he received from her family:

Now I settled down at the house of the sister, Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter, and it was lucky that I came to her because she was the best source for me of all of them whom I met on that trip. I had at that been widely about and in many towns and homesteads. All in all, I have to say that, if I except Kirsten Marie’s performances, this trip gave a very meager yield. At night I went in to the station and looked up Dr. Feilberg’s house—he had now become the district doctor there, and so I got lodgings at

his place. The next day I went out to Kirsten Marie again, and once again wrote down a good bit, and they were good things she knew. It was, all in all, a nice place to come, and the husband and daughter were also nice to me.⁴

The first session, which took place on May eleventh and twelfth, was broken into two parts, spaced by Kristensen’s overnight stay at Dr. Feilberg’s house. Kristensen’s rousing endorsement of Kirsten Marie’s considerable skills as a storyteller is repeated in his brief description of his second trip to visit her several years later in mid-October, 1892:

From there, I went back to Åhus and took the train to Hornslet, because I wanted to go back to Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter out there on the field, and then I got to visit Dr. Feilberg at the same time. She could still tell a great deal and Feilberg remarked jokingly that she was probably my especially good friend.⁵

These playful remarks may be an expression of the slight impropriety of a married man traveling off to visit a married woman. The third session took place two years after the second, in the winter of 1894. Kristensen provides essentially no information on this meeting, simply reiterating his evaluation of her as a particularly adept narrator and a plentiful source for folklore.

Legend Trends and Kirsten Marie’s Repertoire

Kirsten Marie was a married farm owning woman, who had reached confirmation age before the constitution of 1849. The statistical analysis suggests off-setting trends in regards to generic make-up of repertoire for someone like Kirsten Marie. While women and older informants told fewer jokes and more folktales, farm owners and married informants told more jokes and fewer folktales. Kirsten Marie was a generically agile informant—both folktales and jokes made up a considerable portion of her repertoire. The only genre notably absent from her repertoire is the ballad, an absence that suggests her partiality towards prose forms.

One would expect Kirsten Marie to attribute the sources of her legends to known individuals—this trend is borne out by her repertoire. In the biographical sketch, Kristensen notes that she learned many of her stories from her parents and, accordingly, immediate relatives often appear as the source for
her legends. Interestingly, Kirsten Marie told only one first person narrative in her sessions with Kristensen, a substantial divergence from expectations. Furthermore, she includes neither verifying tags nor names as frequently as her peers. In contrast, place names appear in a significantly higher percent of her legends than expected. Her strong connection to the farm and the ramifications of land ownership may explain her frequent use of place names. The resolutions of her legends also reflect slight divergence from the observed trends. Although negative resolutions should outnumber positive resolutions, this does not obtain for her. Instead, the majority of Kirsten Marie's legends are positively resolved, probably a reflection of her folktales, most of which have happy endings.

Many of the observations concerning elements of content suggest off-setting trends for Kirsten Marie. Male humans appear in a larger percentage of her legends than expected for women, farm owners or pre-constitution informants and in a smaller percentage than that expected for married informants. Interestingly, Kirsten Marie includes female humans in an average number of legends for pre-constitution and married informants, but in a slightly smaller percentage than average for women and farm owners. Possible explanations for these discrepancies can be derived from closer analysis of her actual legends. Another noteworthy discrepancy concerns the role of social mediator, a role which female informants often assigned to the parson but which farm owners often assigned to a folk healer. Both figures appear in Kirsten Marie’s legends, although she does seem to favor the parson.

Land, both cultivated and uncultivated, and structures, both religious and secular, appear in a substantially higher percent of her legends than average. This divergence reflects Kirsten Marie’s extreme consciousness of her role as a farm owner. Because of her upward social and economic mobility, she was sensitized to the relationship between land ownership and wealth. In contrast, animals—supernatural and natural—play but a small role in her legends. Even domestic farm animals do not occur with the same frequency as the mean for her peers. This could be due to her status as mistress of the farm—care of and interaction with farm animals was reserved for the hired hands. The above-mentioned divergences from the trends represent the most noticeable differences between Kirsten Marie’s repertoire and the hypothetical average legend teller’s repertoire. The ensuing analysis of her legends in performance helps clarify these discrepancies.

**Kirsten Marie's Sessions**

Kirsten Marie told a far greater number of stories in the first session than in the last two sessions combined. While the first session includes remarkable generic and thematic diversity, the second and third sessions are more focused. In the last two sessions, Kirsten Marie also told stories she had told earlier. This repetition provides the opportunity to examine multiple performances of a particular story spaced over several years. The first session can be characterized as an exhaustive session at which Kirsten Marie told stories addressing a broad range of concerns in an equally broad range of genres. The second session highlights interactions with outside manifestations of threat—either supernatural beings or ethnic others. Kirsten Marie's wry sense of humor comes to the fore in this session, particularly with the last four accounts. The third session focuses primarily on area customs, and includes a detailed description of wedding celebrations. As in the second session, humorous stories make up a great deal of the performance. The stories from these two sessions will be used to augment the analysis of the first session presented below.

The first story Kirsten Marie told relates the encounter of a skovfoged [forest ranger] with an elf girl who offers him pancakes. As soon as he cuts a cross in the pancake with his knife, both elf and food disappear. In Kirsten Marie's legends, humans are often able to successfully avert the danger which accompanies supernatural contact. Here, a religiously coded action—an affirmation of the man's membership in a social network—performed with a metal implement—another expression of the man's membership in society—negates an attempt by the other world to seize control of the domestic economic space (production of food) and thereby disrupt the status quo. The skovfoged, a figure of authority and economic control, avoids the seductive attempts of the elf girl and is able to continue his economic activities through the religiously charged expression of communal membership.

Food serves as the link to the next story which tells of a kusk [driver] who, while driving a manor lord and lady home,
is inexplicably unable to pass through a whale bone gate. Forced to carry the lady, the driver and the lord finally arrive at a house that at first inspection seems odd because it lacks windows. Initially, the lady rejects the possibility of accepting food or lodging at the house but soon discovers that her fears of the “otherness” of the farm are unfounded. With this tale, Kirsten Marie makes ironic reference to the snobbery of the aristocrats towards the food of the lower classes by playing on the concept of the danger associated with the food of the other world. Asking for food—begging in short—calls up the next story, which relates how Kirsten Marie’s father tricked a local beggar into believing that another beggar (her father in disguise) was encroaching on his territory. The beggar is referred to as a *stodderkonge* [beggar king], a significant detail taken in light of the previous story in which high-status individuals were forced into a low-status position. In this legend, Kirsten Marie’s father deliberately assumes the role of a low-status individual as a means for further mocking the beggar who is derisively referred to as a king. Both legends rely on the reversal of status for their complicating actions. Begging, and the expected behavior of beggars, plays a frequent part in Kirsten Marie’s legends. These legends may express her extreme awareness of the division between classes, an awareness brought on by her own upward mobility.

The next story constitutes a thematic break. In it, Kirsten Marie tells of a wicked minister’s wife, Dorrit, who abuses her maidservants and, in concert with her children, so plagues her husband that he dies, bidding farewell to the congregation during services. His cheeks remain red for fifteen years after his death, underscoring the untimely nature of his death. The negative valuation of the wife is an uncommon element in Kirsten Marie’s repertoire. Perhaps Kirsten Marie includes this legend as an example of the results of especially mean spirited and socially inept behavior. Dorrit, in turn, dies and is conjured down in the cellar of the house, the spot marked by a pole. The maidservants are terrified of this pole and the potential wickedness it represents.10

The story of Dorrit’s conjuring is set off from the story of her misdeeds by another legend about conjuring. The mention of Dorrit and the parson brings *Per Fæbinder* [Per Cattlebinder] to Kirsten Marie’s mind. In this legend, three parsons assemble to conjure down an unruly revenant. A local *kappelan* [curate] appears and implies, to the parsons scoffing, that he could be of help. Using remarkable divinatory skill, he gains control of the revenant when the parsons fail. The slightly negative positioning of the parsons may be in part attributable to Kirsten Marie’s status as a farm owner, since farm owners were more likely than cotters to posit parsons in a negative role. However, Kirsten Marie’s view of parsons—and religious figures in general—is predominantly positive.

The next legend picks up on the theme of parsons and their contact with the other world. *Mester Laust*, on his way from Århus, sees a light in a church late at night, and so he instructs his farm hand to stop. He goes up to the church and upon his eventual return, he drives the wagon home on three wheels. A revenant or the devil presumably acts as the fourth wheel.11 The contact with the other world is successfully mediated, with Mester Laust only momentarily absenting himself to bring whatever it was up to the cemetery: “Then he was up there a little while and came back again, and then everything was in order.”12

Kirsten Marie attributes the next legend to her grandfather. It too includes a late night supernatural encounter and late night (mis)use of a church:

My grandfather told how he and another farm hand lay up in the church anteroom and it was night time and they were to take turns watching the cattle. It was during the barley planting time, late in the summer, because at that time they sewed the barley seed late. Then my grandfather was lying and sleeping and the other one was supposed to look after the cattle. Then he comes in as fast as he can and wakes him up and says: “Ras Kjær, get up, the red jade is missing.” Then when he gets out of the cemetery, the other one says, “Oh god, I’ve had an encounter with a plow, and had to plow around. I didn’t see anything, but there was someone who put me to the plow and said to me: Take this one here for me and set that one there for me. Then I put my clogs down and accompanied him, and when I came back to the clogs, I was free.” Then both farm hands went together to get the cattle and pull them away from there because they didn’t dare stay there any longer because of the haunting. It wasn’t true that the jade had disappeared, but he didn’t dare say anything about the revenant inside the church.13

It is significant that her grandfather and his friend had been taking turns napping in the church. Here, a breach of
acceptable social behavior results in a threatening encounter. The threat in this case is two-fold. The threat may be perceived first and foremost as a threat to the boy's economic production. The boy is forced to plow a field, an economically marked activity, while out guarding the herd, another economically marked activity. There is an implication that, had he not taken the proper measures, he would have been forced to plow this field forever, thereby removing him from the economic realm of the human community. Thus, the boy would be forced into the economic service of the supernatural community at the expense of the human community. The threat may also be perceived as a threat to the boy's eventual role as a father (adult community membership). His fecundity is threatened symbolically in the forced plowing, an act closely linked to the concept of fertility (the plow prepares the field in which seeds are to be sown). As in many of her legends, Kirsten Marie includes common expressions of folk belief that help lead to a successful mediation of supernatural contact. Here, the boy remembers to remove his shoes before plowing, which allows him to get free at the end of the furrow.

The next legend once again picks up on the theme of the beggar. In this case, the wandering mendicant appears as a substantial economic threat to the farm, particularly the domestic space of the farm. Sidsel Rolland and her traveling companion, Døve Lars, convince a couple from whom they have received lodging that the farm is cursed. Sidsel extorts money from the farmer and his wife, ostensibly to remove the curse. Unlike the attitude of Peder Johansen, who would probably have reveled in the deceitful actions of Sidsel and Lars, Kirsten Marie condemns the trickery, taking care to note that Sidsel ended up in prison. As part of her extortory scheme, Sidsel digs at the foot of the couple's bed, finding the skin of a mole which she had surreptitiously buried there. Digging inside the house is a highly unusual behavior since it brings an “outside” coded action “inside,” and represents a transgression of the boundaries governing the locus of economic actions.

The concept of digging inside the house is echoed in the following legend. Problems with the animals prompt a folk healer to suggest that the farmer dig in his house, where he would find a buried treasure. Although the farmer rejects the folk healer’s proposal, his son suspects that the action was eventually undertaken. The family’s financial situation changes considerably for the better and the animals no longer suffer. In this legend, grossly inappropriate behavior results in the discovery of a long hidden treasure. With the discovery of the treasure, the family’s economic situation is bettered in two ways—they come into possession of a treasure and their animals become healthy. The treasure is buried inside the farm, thus linking the farm to the concept of economic prosperity. Since Kirsten Marie traces her own prosperity to her father’s ability to purchase a farm, it is not surprising that she includes this legend in her repertoire.

The next story, joking in tone, returns to Dorrit’s inappropriate actions and her husband, the able parson, Mester Laust. A woman comes to the church asking for her child to be baptized and for her to be churched, a somewhat inappropriate combination of events. Dorrit at first says no, but Mester Laust agrees. At the baptismal font, the mother nearly forgets the child’s name, prompting a sardonic comment from Dorrit. Through the legend, Kirsten Marie comments on the inappropriate actions of both the mother and Dorrit. The legend also augments the importance Kirsten Marie places on religious institutions and the role of the church as a locus for social interaction.

The next five legends are all closely related accounts of unmediated interactions between members of the community and revenants or other spirits of the dead. The first legend in the series echoes the humorous nature of the story concerning Dorrit and the mother:

They told that a headless horse went up and down the road in Nielstrup. Some said that it wasn’t true, but Niels Bødker said that it was true because that horse had stuck its head in through the chaff room window while he stood and cut chaff. He lived later as an adult in Nielstrup.

In the second session, Kirsten Marie performed the same story:

One night they sat in Nielstrup and told that a headless beast ran up and down the road in Hvalfjörð. Then there were some others who said that it wasn’t true. Then Ras Bødker comes along quite horrified and says that it was true because when he stood and cut chaff by moonlight in the chaff room, then it could come and stick its head in to him through the window.
This second version places more emphasis on the humorous aspect of the story, and ties in well with its location near the head of a run of humorous stories concluding that performance session. The first version, in contrast, appears to place more emphasis on the apparition of the headless horse, and not that it would poke its head through the window. 

Kirsten Marie attributes the next story to her grandmother. She and a young boy had been crossing a heath when they saw two men linked together by a chain speaking a foreign language. The men suddenly disappear and Kirsten Marie's grandmother and the boy hurry home. The next story tells of two men who hear the sounds of an army late at night, although they do not see anything. The sounds turn out to be a portent of war. The concept of portent, particularly the ligskare [funeral procession] as a portent of impending death, occurs in the following two legends. In the first legend, the sound of a funeral procession late at night forewarns the death of an old woman at the farm several months later. In the second legend, a man driving home from a mill is forced off the road by a funeral procession which he watches disappear at the church. These last two legends seem to concern the disruption of the community caused by death. In the first legend, the domestic space is disrupted first by the sound of the funeral procession and then by the eventual death of one of the household members. Perhaps the choice of an elderly female in this role is linked to Kirsten Marie's own status. As such, the legend may be an expression of her anxiety about aging and death. In the second legend, the man is prevented by the apparition of the funeral procession from carrying out part of his economic duties—bringing the milled grain home. The disruption of the man's economic activities is, in turn, linked to a disruption of the domestic space and female coded activities, since without milled grain, it is impossible to bake bread, a staple of the rural diet.

Mention of the church at the end of the second legend about funeral processions leads Kirsten Marie to tell a story about Rude church and why it was built where it was:

Rude church was first supposed to have lain in between Ståhat and the place where it now is, namely right on Brådragene. Didn’t become anything and so they laid a stone on a sledge and let a couple of oxen go off with it. Then the oxen went a bit more to the east and so they built the church there. While the variants are quite similar, details such as place names and emphasis on certain actions are slightly changed. The implicit supernatural intervention of the first version which precipitates the geomantic activity is missing from the second version. The second version is performed after a series of descriptions of area customs, and so the concept of supernatural intervention is absent. Therefore, it is not surprising that Kirsten Marie omits the supernatural motivation behind the method for choosing the church site. In contrast, the first version follows directly after a series of legends about interaction with supernatural forces and beings. Supernatural contact and intervention were very much a part of the performance context, thereby motivating Kirsten Marie to include these concerns in her account.

The next legend also includes unmediated contact with the supernatural, in this case ending with a positive resolution:

There was a farm hand who read past a mound which they called Henningshøj, it lies south of Hornslet. There he saw so many little people and they were dancing and hopping outside of the mound. Then he stopped and wanted to watch what was going on and then one came over and offered him a gold [drinking] horn and bade him drink it up. He took it but threw it back behind him. Three drops landed on the back of the horse and it took both the hair and skin off. Now he rode all that he could and the little people came after him and the hug in the front. Then he could see that he couldn’t hold his own with her, so he set off across the plowed field. She couldn’t run over that, she had to run around each furrow, and then she yelled out to him and said: “You should ride on the road (boør) and not on the land (bojr) and at the same time she took a clump of dirt and threw it at him. That becomes a mound on the field which they call Vædingshøj [Turning mound], since she turned around at the same time, she could see that she could neither catch him nor hit him. Its later been changed to Henningshøj. Now that he’d gotten away so luckily from her, he used the [drinking] horn [as
payment] to build Horns church, and it gets its name
from that.22

This legend echoes many of the concerns of the very first
legend of the session, and the etiological tag resonates well
with the legend about the location of Rude kirke. Unlike the
first legend of the session, the main legend actor is a farm
hand—a relatively young member of the community without
any particular economic authority. His encounter with the
supernatural woman is not precipitated by the performance
of any explicitly economically related task. However, his proper
behavior—rejection of the proffered drink and riding across
furrowed land—allows him to gain both economic and social
status, a climb somewhat reminiscent of Kirsten Marie’s own
fortunes. While riding across plowed land at first seems
destructive, it serves two important purposes. It accentuates
the farm hand’s role in the cultivation of land, and thereby
reaffirms his social and economic role in the community.
Riding across the furrows also draws a religiously charged
sign—a cross—into the ground, thereby reaffirming his
membership in the religious community as well.

Kirsten Marie tells a remarkably similar version of the
story as the penultimate story of the first session:

One time a farm hand came riding by a mound, they call
it Hvönbjerg. Then a high-class lady came running
down from the mound and asked him to stop while she
poured him a drink. He stopped too and took the gold
cup from her but instead of drinking it he threw it
behind himself and some drips landed on the horse
which took all of skin off the horse in those places. But
he kept the [drinking] horn in his hand and set off all
that he could, right across all the fields and he set off
behind him and asked him to ride on the hard places
and not on the bare because she had to follow the road
and could not run on the plowed land. She ran with a big
handful of earth in her hand and when she had gotten a
ways along, she flung it and then she turned around and
sought her way back. There where she flung the clump of
earth became a large mound and they call it Vendlidshøj
[Turning mound]. But the farm hand brought the gold
cup here to Hornslet and then they said that the church
was built from that [drinking] horn, therefore it’s now
called Hornslet, before it was just called Søller. Now
they call the mound Havnildshøj, but it is Vendlidshøj,
because she turned around there and it lies between
Hornslet here and the forest.23

The first version was probably told on the first evening and
the second version on the following day. The two versions
bear notable differences despite the small amount of time
between performances. The first version contains a
noteworthy inconsistency in that the farm hand is said to ride
past a mound which is created later in the legend. In both
cases, it is a supernatural woman who offers the farm hand a
drink, although in the first legend she is surrounded by an
entourage of small hopping and dancing beings.24 The
consideration of these two variants provides an interesting
view of the level of stability in Kirsten Marie’s narratives over
a relatively short period of time. Place names change and
details of action are altered, although the main structural
aspects remain relatively constant.

The next legend also concerns interactions with højkfolk,
except here the proffered food is helpful rather than hurtful:

Over in Voldum there was a farm hand who drove and
plowed between Voldum and Hvalløs and a tiny mound
lay right close by. So when he was down at the other
end, an [oven] rake came up and it was in pieces. He
then fixes it. At noontime, he drove home to Voldum
and went back out there in the afternoon. Then there
was a cake lying there at the place where the [oven] rake
had lain. He cut a hole in it and ate it and it went really
well for him.25

Here, Kirsten Marie seems to be commenting on rules
governing behavior in both this and the preceding legend.
Each legend positions the farm hand outside the bounds of the
farm where they have a supernatural encounter. The first
farm hand rejects the advances of the supernatural woman,
and reaffirms his position in the religious and social
community. His proper reaction to the seductive advances
of the woman are reflected in his construction of a church from
the proceeds of his encounter. The farm hand in the second
legend also behaves properly. By repairing the rake, he helps
the højkfolk maintain their economic prosperity. The cake is a
reward for his industriousness and not an attempt to lure him
away from his social and economic activities.26 Just as he
helps the højkfolk prosper, they help him prosper.

At this point in the session, Kirsten Marie tells a series of
humorous stories. In most of these stories, the humor centers
on inappropriate behaviors in social situations. As noted,
Kirsten Marie's folkloric expressions often dwell on proper or expected behaviors. In these stories, Kirsten Marie appears acutely aware of the social distinctions between economic classes, an awareness which may have been born of her own upward mobility.\textsuperscript{27} As a group, the stories constitute a break in the session. The next legends do not overtly pick up on any of the themes, characters or actions found in the humorous accounts. A solid line crosses the entire page of the field diary immediately after the last humorous record. These cues all suggest that the series of humorous stories marked the end of the first half of the session. The second session also ends with a flurry of humorous stories which suggests that this may have been a common way for Kirsten Marie to end a session. Peder Johansen also tended to end his sessions with such joking stories, which suggests that such a close may have been a common way for narrators to signal the end of their performance.\textsuperscript{28}

The first two legends of the second half of the performance session relate the asocial and incompetent behaviors of a \textit{rakker} [knacker] as witnessed by a \textit{kusk} [driver]. The first legend is slightly humorous in tone and therefore may be part of the preceding complex of jokes, a distinct possibility if the performance break did not occur as hypothesized. However, in this story, the knacker's asocial behavior seriously threatens the integrity of the community. His subsequent missalization of an animal in the following legend reveals a high degree of incompetence in the economic arena. Such incompetence complements his social incompetence revealed in the first story. In both stories, the driver distances himself from the activity. In the first legend, he does so to protect both his physical well-being and his social network. In the second legend, he does so to protect his economic well-being:

\begin{quote}
The driver sat up in the barn loft and saw that but he didn't dare go down and help him, even though he was fond of him, because if he'd done that, he would have lost his job.\textsuperscript{29}
\end{quote}

The driver's non-involvement is a proper behavior in the face of these threats and allows him to come through the encounters unscathed, physically, socially and economically.

In the next story, Kirsten Marie returns to the theme of beggars and, in particular, beggars who behave inappropriately given their social status. First, she tells of the arrival of two gypsies, ethnic outsiders, who, even though they are begging, use inappropriate language and threats when asked a question by a visiting tailor. The gypsies are beaten by the housewife with a \textit{mungletre} [mangle roller] not once, but several times, as punishment for their behavior. Here, as in the next account, the woman takes control of the domestic space and drives out a foreign threat to the economic and social integrity of that space. It is significant that she uses equipment used for female-coded domestic activity to expel the threat. With this legend, Kirsten Marie provides a view of the power of women in the domestic space, their ability to repel threat and the class structure of rural nineteenth century Denmark all in one fell narrative swoop. The tailor is not presented in a flattering light, and one finds numerous negative accounts about tailors in Kirsten Marie's repertoire. This negative view of tailors may be linked to the frequent interactions women had with them in late nineteenth century rural Denmark. The next legend draws a clearer connection between the legend woman and Kirsten Marie. In this story, Kirsten Marie's great grandmother beats a begging gypsy who refuses bread with the ubiquitous \textit{mungletre}. Refusing the bread is both a breach of the rules governing the economic and social interaction inherent in begging. By breaking the rules governing such interaction, the gypsy becomes a threat to the integrity of the domestic space. Kirsten Marie's great grandmother repels this threat through the generous application of the domestically coded \textit{mungletre}.\textsuperscript{30}

Kirsten Marie then continues with her stories about the relationship between peripatetic mendicants and the stable farm owning class. Her next story tells about a junk man who borrowed a mark from her father at the beginning of every week before setting out on his rounds. At the end of every week, he returned the coin, convinced that it had brought him luck during his week's dealings. The return of the coin is the focus of the account and perhaps represents the recognition of the economic reliance of the peddler on the wealthier classes. By assigning her father the role of the guardian of the coin, and by extension guardian of the junkman's economic fortunes, she highlights her close association to the story.

Kirsten Marie attributes the next story to another one of her relatives, this time her great grandmother. It too includes the concepts of class distinctions. A gypsy marries the
daughter of a miller, an obvious breach of the rules of social interaction:

Out west near a mill there was a gypsy man who had
dropped in love with the miller’s daughter and she ran away
with him. She could have had the mill if she’d let him
be but now the parents completely disapproved her.
They didn’t get along well and quarreled occasionally.
One day he came to my father’s [house] near Rude
church and then he says to my mother: “Haven’t you
seen Gjertrud, moer?”—“No, I really haven’t.”—“She’s
gone away and taken all of our possessions, she’s taken
the backpack and the side packs and she’s even taken the
handbag, moer!” and then he went. Several days later he
came again with Gjertrud so happy and glad, now they
had reconciled. My great-grandmother cried over that
pitiable woman whenever she came there.31

The end of the story suggests that Kirsten Marie’s great
grandmother cried for the woman because of her terrible
economic and social situation, a decline which was infinitely
avoidable. The girl breaks with the rules of social interaction
by marrying down economically and out socially and suffers
the economic catastrophe attendant such action. This
marriage is the exact opposite of Kirsten Marie’s.

Kirsten Marie next relates a series of cures and charms,
which in turn lead into several legends concerning the
marginal success of a local female folk healer. First Kirsten
Marie tells about her maternal uncle’s unsuccessful attempt at
having his blindness cured by Vindblads kogen, a female folk
healer. The story includes a detailed description of the folk
healer’s prescription, which is a carry-over from her
performance of the cures and charms. The next legend also
tells about the same folk healer and her inability to provide a
cure for a dying boy. She does, however, accurately predict
the death of a passing baker. In both instances, her actions
appear to hurt, or at least amplify the disruption of, the social
integrity. Folk healers appear only occasionally in Kirsten
Marie’s repertoire and then their actions usually portend a
disruption of the status quo. In these two legends, the female
tfolk healer is portrayed in a negative light, somewhat like the
witch in a legend from the second session who causes a boy’s
wagon to tip over every time he passes her house.32 Along
with the legend concerning the misdeeds of Dorrit, these are
the few cases in which Kirsten Marie places women in a
disruptive role.33

The next legend skips back to an earlier theme, namely the
interaction between men and elf women, first encountered in
the very first legend of the session. In this legend, the man
breaks with accepted behavior and opens himself to
supernatural threat:

A cabinet maker from Nielsstrup went down and danced
with the elf hags when he was supposed to be taking his
afternoon nap. But he became so thin from that and
wound up looking so feeble.34

The dance with the elf woman, possibly a symbol of excessive
sexual drive, negatively impacts the man’s health. His
thinness represents a failure in both his economic and
reproductive well-being.

The next account, a short non-narrative, returns to the
theme of wandering gypsies. Kirsten Marie describes how
people moved their houses closer together with the gradual
influx of gypsies to the area, thereby echoing the sentiment
that these ethnic others were a threat to the integrity of the
community. Her next story, which she had heard from an
unidentified girl, tells about a pair of wanderers who asked for
lodging at the girl’s parents’ house. The next morning,
seventeen people lie sleeping on the floor. The unexpected
guests and corresponding implicit transgression of the offered
hospitality resonates well with another story in Kirsten
Marie’s repertoire, this one told in the second session:

Two gypsy women came to Ravel and asked for lodgings
for the night. But then one of them got sick and gave
birth to a child and the people had to get both
townwomen and the midwife for her. She stayed there
a month after she’d had the child and then two men came
to see her with so much food and drink and other stuff and
they held a big party for the townpeople, all of those
who had helped them and taken care of the woman in
her birthing bed. It was supposed to be a birthing party
and the child was brought to the church immediately.
The party was really fantastic, since there was both
gambling and dancing. The townpeople thought that it
was odd that those gypsies could be so well-off and throw
such a big party for them. Afterwards, the men left with
their wives and children.35

Both stories hint at the ethnic outsiders’ complete ignorance of
or disregard for the inside group’s rules governing social
interaction. There also may be a hint at the excessive
reproduction associated with these ethnic outsiders.
The next story is unrelated to the previous stories. It is the only first-person narrative in Kirsten Marie's repertoire and tells of how she encountered a snake eating a frog. She interrupts the snake's repast, thereby saving the frog. A Swede, another ethnic outsider, informs Kirsten Marie that she could have helped a birthing woman if she had stepped between the two animals. The concept of birthing possibly links this story to the preceding one. She follows this short story with a statement of belief concerning a snake with an incurable bite, marking the second possible break in the narrative session. Like the previous break, it too is followed by a solid line drawn across the page of the field diary. The four stories which follow it are all cataloged as folktales and are of considerable length and complexity, a marked change from the short descriptions and legends performed up to this point. It is conceivable that, if this does not represent the evening break, it represents another break—either for a rest or perhaps a meal.

Not only was Kirsten Marie an exceptional legend informant, but she also knew a great many folktales. While the in-depth analysis of folktales is not essential to this discussion, the evaluation of the general content and thematic elements of the tales is important in developing an understanding of what Kirsten Marie decided to express and how she decided to express it. Her folktale telling probably influenced her legend telling. The converse is also likely true. In the first folktale, cataloged as a combination of tale types AaTh461 and AaTh779a, the murderous intentions of Ridesvends Krammer, precipitated by his fear of St. Peter's prophecy, are averted by a minister. In this story, Kirsten Marie's view of religious figures as protectors of social integrity is reinforced. The next folktale Kirsten Marie performed reiterates several of the themes found in her legend expression. This tale is cataloged as AaTh873, under the rubric "Sultanens søn" [The Sultan's son]. In the story, several high-status people take turns assuming the identity of a low-status wanderer. The tale also contains a daughter who falls in love with a person apparently below her social status, as in the legend of the miller's daughter who falls in love with the gypsy. The tale, however, is ultimately one in which social status is reaffirmed, the apparently low-status suitor turning out to be the son of the sultan. Surprisingly, neither of these folktales appears in any of Kristensen's published collections.

The next folktale is the only folktale in Kirsten Marie's repertoire which made its way into print. In the folktale catalog at Dansk folkmindesamling, the tale is listed under the rubric "Lyset og Staalmanden" [The Light and the Steelman] and is assigned the index number AaTh562. This tale is far removed from the believable realm of Kirsten Marie's legends but, at the same time, reenforces her views on the potential for upward social and economic moves. The next story Kirsten Marie tells is also a folktale and is given the title "Kunstner og Lærling" [Artist and Apprentice] and the index number AaTh325 in the folktale catalog. It too emphasizes a move from low economic status to high status. Kirsten Marie then moves on to a legend about a farm hand who has the ability to be in two places at once, an apparent play on the shape changing abilities of the boy in the preceding folktale.

Her next legend is not published in any collection:

My great grandfather's wife had gotten sick and then he went a wise man [male folk healer]. She was so bad off and he left when she screamed. Then when he came to the man he told him how she was. And then he told him that since that afternoon at two o'clock, there was nothing wrong with his wife. Then the man went home and expected that his wife was dead now. Then when he came into the living room, she yelled out from the bedroom: "Is that you, Rasmus? You don't have to walk so quietly, since I've suddenly gotten better. Since two o'clock, nothing has been the matter with me." Then the man realized that it was correct what the folk healer had said. But how it could be explained he could never figure out.

It closely parallels a legend she tells at the very opening of the second session:

My great grandfather's wife was so sick in her thighs and hips and screamed so. They lived near Rude church and the minister went over there with his cattle on Sundays, he was called Bußmann by the way. Then my great grandfather said to him, "I don't know what I should do, father, I wonder if I should go to a wise man [male folk healer], since some have advised me to do that, but I don't really know."—"Yes, little Rasmus," says the minister, "just you go in God's name, since there are both good and evil folk about." So then he went to the
man, I don’t know where he lived, and my great grandfather was so bereaved. The folk healer said: “You can take it easy because since this afternoon at two o’clock she’s been at peace.” Then he thought that she was dead. But when he went back and came in the door, she yelled out to him: “You don’t have to walk so quietly, Rasmus, because since this afternoon at two o’clock I’ve had peace, I’ve really gotten better.” Then the man realized that it was right what the folk healer had said but how it could be explained he could never figure out. The woman got better from that day on.43

Kirsten Marie makes a distinct break with the flow of the folktale telling performance and returns to the earlier consideration of the role and abilities of folk healers. While the Vindblæs kone’s abilities as a folk healer were earlier questioned, this male folk healer’s abilities are praised. It is quite possible that at this point in the session Kirsten Marie was moving back into the performance of legends, having exhausted her folktale repertoire. The next record is a highly fragmentary start at another folktale, quite possibly a result of Kristensen’s prodding. Kirsten Marie does manage to call another folktale to mind before returning to her legend telling. This tale, listed as “De To Brødre” [The Two Brothers] (AaTh303), is quite long and complex, and is the last folktale Kirsten Marie performs. It occasionally echoes details or actions from her other folktales, such as a sword which fells everything its edge is pointed at.

Kirsten Marie firmly situates the next legend in the immediate area, moving away from the indeterminate space of the folktale realm: “The people in Hallendorp, they had a nisse, and the people in Grindorp, they had one too.”44 The legend appears to be a conflation of two common nisse legends—one about the fight between two thieves nisse and one about how the nisse learned to rest. The legend is primarily humorous and it is unclear the level to which Kirsten Marie intended this story to be believable. The story acts as a smooth transition from the unbelievable world of the fairy tale to the believable world of the legends, balancing on the blurry line between genres.

Kirsten Marie attributes the next legend to her father, moving definitely into the performance of believable stories. Having carelessly left his pipe in the field, Kirsten Marie’s father appeals to a folk healer who tells him that the pipe will disappear, an obvious parallel to the folk healer who had earlier told the father not to worry about his ailing wife, predicting her quick recovery. Kirsten Marie places much greater store in the abilities of male folk healers than female folk healers, an apparent reflection of her views on the role of women as protectors of their own domestic space. While she feels that divinatory and healing practices are an acceptable endeavor for men, she suggests that they are unacceptable behaviors for women.

The next legend reinforces the position of the male folk healer as a mediator of other people’s domestically situated problems. The legend also focuses on the potential economic threat posed by low-status individuals within the domestic arena:

There was a man who had some money but they disappeared from him. Then he went to a wise man [male folk healer] and wanted him to show them again. He asks if he didn’t suspect any of his people. Well yes, he wasn’t free of suspicions. “Yes, I will come tomorrow at noon, and just at that time you should have your people in for lunch.” Just as they sat the next day, the man looks out into the farm courtyard. “Well,” he says, “now the wise man is here.” When he came in, he went and looked them up and down and then he says to them that now he would cut a stick for each of them and they should take good care of it. And the one who had stolen, their stick would be an inch longer than the others’ early tomorrow morning. Then the girl, who had taken the money, thought that that would be a good lie. She took a measuring stick and measured off an inch and she cuts that from her stick. The next morning when they came with their sticks, hers was an inch shorter than the others’. Then they could see who had taken the money.45

The servant girl’s trickery is uncovered, and she is punished for her attempt to redistribute the wealth. Kirsten Marie’s attitude towards such economically subversive activity contrasts sharply with the attitude found in Peder Johansen’s legends. Most likely, this difference can be attributed to the differing economic and social status of these two informants.

The next story, a humorous one, seems strangely out of place coming as it does after a story about theft and retribution and before a story about tragic death. In the story, a man forgets to grease his wagon wheel, a neglect of his
economically linked duties, and instead gets drunk. On his way home, the anthropomorphised wheel complains loudly. Perhaps as the session was coming to a close, Kirsten Marie was racking her brain for stories she knew, and the mutually constitutive aspect of non-coerced performance had begun to fade. The next legend tells about a river which claims an occasional victim. In this instance, a couple on their way to market fall into the river and drown. The social and economic integrity of the community is seriously compromised by this tragedy. The impact on the immediate community is lessened since the couple is identified as coming from a different district. The next legend, in turn, relates how a shepherd boy, missing for eight days, is saved from the dancing frenzy of a group of beautiful maidens by the quick intervention of a farm hand. The boy, however, is never quite the same after this supernatural contact. The legend seems to be a comment on the boy’s neglect of his economic duties in favor of premature social (perhaps sexual) functions. The performance session ends with the following unpublished story:

The mistress at Vesmøsgaard went out to a stone pile in the woods one place. At night. They accused her that it was a lover she had. But then it was shown that it was her brother.

Here a woman’s seemingly improper behavior turns out to be perfectly acceptable.

Dead or Alive?

A close reading of several specific legends highlights not only aspects of her personal style, but also reveals how she uses traditional forms as means for personal expression. In the second session, Kirsten Marie performed the following legend:

Præstens kone i Haslum døde, og så skulde hun jo sættes ind i kirken om natten for hun skulde begraves, sådan var det skik den gang. Men så listede degnen sig derinde med hans lyste, for han vilde stjæle en guldring, hun havde på hendes lillefinger; men han kunde ikke få den af hende, og derfor tog han hans kniv og vilde skjære fingeren af med. Så kom hun til live og sagde: “Av, min lillefinger!” Da degnen hørte det, fik han angst i livet og rente, og de hverken hørte eller så ham mere. Præstekonen tog lysten og gik hjem. Hun så, at der var


The minister’s wife in Haslum died and then she was to be placed in the church the night before she was to be buried, that was the custom at the time. But then the parish clerk sneaked in there with his lantern, because he wanted to steal a gold ring she had on her little finger, but he couldn’t get it off of her and therefore he took his knife and wanted to cut her finger off with it. Then she came to life and said: “Oh, my little finger!” When the parish clerk heard that, he got scared to death and ran, and they neither heard from him nor saw him again. The minister’s wife took the lantern and walked home. She saw that there was light in the kitchen, because the girls went and busied about there late that night, and so she went over to the window and asked them to let her in. They ran in to the minister and said to him: “The lady was here.” —“Oh children, that’s not true,” he answered. “Yes, it is,” they said. So the minister went out to them. “Oh dear papa let me in,” she said out there. “Oh dear mamma go to your grave and lay down.” —“Alas no, I’m quite alive, let me in.” —“Alas no,” he said again, “go to your grave and lay down.” —“For Christ’s sake, let me in. I’m freezing to death.” Now the minister let her in and she told him how she had come to life and what the parish clerk had been up to. She had six children after that time, but her left side was never warm again.

This legend presents a slightly more complex structure than Nicolaisen’s scheme allows. The death of the wife constitutes the legend’s orientation, augmented by Kirsten Marie’s explication of common burial practices for the time. The introduction of the parish clerk immediately sets up the hierarchical social oppositions which then become the focus of the account. The parish clerk’s attempt to steal represents a complicating action with the initial result of the woman’s
unexpected awakening and exclamation. The resolution comes with the parish clerk's hasty departure. However, the legend moves on to a second complicating action, namely the wife's startling appearance at the kitchen window. The woman assumes the role of a presumed revenant and the serving girls respond accordingly—they jump up in fright. Her husband refuses to allow her in, cognizant of the threat to the domestic space the revenant of his wife would pose. She finally convinces her husband that she is very much alive and he allows her inside—the final resolution of the legend. Kirsten Marie provides an important coda noting that the woman bore six children after this event, although her left side was always cold. Here is recognition of her eminence capability of fulfilling her role inside the bounds of the farm. This structural breakdown provides a clear picture of the two central actions of the legend.

The first part of the legend centers on the thieving parish clerk. The parish clerk is a lower status individual in this farm's hierarchy. He attempts to take advantage of the temporary disruption of the status quo and better his personal economic situation. His behavior is completely antithetical to his position as a religious figure and constitutes breaches of norms on many levels. First, the parish clerk violates the prescription on entering a church late at night. Second, he attempts not only to steal the woman's gold ring, in itself an inexcusable action, but does so inside the church. His position as a parish clerk, a religiously charged position, heightens the outrageousness of his actions. Finally, he attempts the theft through bodily mutilation. According to the folk belief present in Kirsten Marie's legends, any one of these actions would be sufficient to precipitate supernatural intervention. The woman's apparent return from the dead is consistent with this folk belief.50

While the woman's death represents a serious disruption of the domestic space, the parish clerk's attempted robbery constitutes not only an attempt to upset the economic status quo but also an attempt to further undermine the seriously damaged social situation. The woman's ring is a symbol of both her economic status and her marriage to the parson with its corresponding social status. Thus, the attempted theft of the ring may also be an attempt by the parish clerk to subvert the parson's role as spouse—by removing her ring the parish

clerk attempts to make a posthumous claim to sexual alliance with the deceased. The parish clerk therefore represents a multivalent threat—he threatens the domestic space once dominated by the woman, he threatens her physical well-being, he threatens the economic status quo and he threatens the religious institutions and practices which underpin social interaction. The woman's awakening immediately subverts the parish clerk's project, and he leaves, never to be heard from again—a clear and decisive removal of the threat.

Kirsten Marie's negative portrayal of a parish clerk is not consistent with the rest of her legend repertoire. In one legend, the parish clerk is even portrayed as more competent than the parsons.51 This inconsistency suggests that the focus on the parish clerk is motivated by differences in social status rather than the activities of corrupt religious figures. In general, Kirsten Marie views religious figures as positive social forces. However, in this legend, the most positive social force is the woman, who moves quickly to reinsert herself in the domestic space and resume her position as mother.

Kirsten Marie makes deliberate use of the common beliefs about evil revenants in much the same manner Peder Johansen made ironic reference to similar beliefs in his story of the false revenant. Here, the servant girls react as would be expected. The presumed revenant seems to have returned to threaten the social and economic space over which she presided while alive. The parson also assumes his proper role and behaves as would be expected given the circumstances. When the woman finally utters "For Jesu navne skylde" she is allowed in. As in several of Kirsten Marie's legends, a religiously coded action—a reaffirmation of membership in the community—results in the readmission of the woman into the domestic space. There is an interesting twist here. The threat turns out not to be to the "insiders," as in the cases of encounters with supernatural beings. Rather, a perceived supernatural threat turns out to be a threatened member of the community—the weather is cold and the woman's physical well-being is in jeopardy. If she were not allowed in, she would be deprived of her position inside the house, possibly freeze and quite probably be buried, the presumed goal of the initial orientation. Her subsequent reproductive feats underscore her ability to be productive in the domestic realm.
The time has come...

A legend which appears twice in Kirsten Marie's repertoire concerns the drowning death of a couple on their way to market. She tells the first version in the first session:

Ved Sjelle bro løber en å, og dem, der boede ved den og kendet det, de kunde høre på den, når den vilde have nogen. Efter gammel snak skalde den sådan rabe om aftenen, og der druknedes også til nogle. De kunde altså høre det på den, når den vilde have et offer. Sådan var det en nat, der kom nogle Molboer og kjørte til Randers med fisk, og da var strømmen så stærk, at de pludselig ned mand og kome og hest og vogne og druknede. Folkene der omkring kunde høre næsten en hel time, te konen skrek, og de mente, at det var hendes skjørter, der havde holdt hende op, men mandens røst blev snart forstummet. Hun drev ned efter Fløjstrup, og der landet de hendes lig.\(^{52}\)

Near Sjelle bridge runs a river and those who lived near the river and knew it, they could hear when it wanted someone. According to old talk it was supposed to call at night and often someone drowned there. They could also hear from it when it wanted a victim. It was like that one night, there came some Molboers and drove to Randers with fish and then the current was so strong that they splashed down in there, man and wife and horse and wagon and drowned. The people around there could hear for almost an hour how the woman screamed and they believed that it was her skirts which had held her up, but the man's voice soon became quiet. She drifted down past Fløjstrup and there they found her body.

She tells the second version in the second session:


Some people came from Mols and drove each Saturday morning to Randers with fish. Then they had to cross Alling river. The water could from time to time go way up over the bridge, since it was low and there wasn't any real drain for the water. Then people could hear a voice once in a while which said: "The time has come, but the man has not come." One morning a couple of Æbeltoft people came driving with fish and it was really dark and gloomy so they couldn't see where they should drive. Then the water took them. The husband soon met his end but the wife screamed pitifully for a long time, she continued for almost an entire hour. Her skirts had probably held her up. When they found her body, they saw that she had stopped against an alder root. My uncle wept, every time he told me the story.

Both stories are quite similar, although minor discrepancies, particularly with place names, dot the accounts. Other differences, such as the time of day the action takes place and the nuance of the actions distinguish the two accounts from each other.

The couple's demise is not brought on by any breach of social norms. Rather, the tragic death is unavoidable. Many legends in repertoires of Kirsten Marie's contemporaries reflect the unavoidable nature of this type of death. The couple has traveled from their home district on an errand directly related to their economic well-being—they are driving fish to market. The time of day in both accounts reflects the liminal qualities of the journey. The fish have been caught but not yet sold and, thus, the couple's economics are at a threshold stage. Crossing the river by a bridge, a human control of a natural barrier, heightens this liminality. The area people are aware that the river occasionally claims a victim and avoid it at those times. These unsuspecting travelers are caught unaware and their activities in this liminal time and space are harshly punished.

Kirsten Marie includes more women in her legends than many other legend tellers. The majority of stories in Kristensen's collection which concern a river claiming a victim identify the victim as male. However, Kirsten Marie identifies women as an essential part of the economy of the rural community. In her legends, women play an important role in the domestic economy, and are not marginalized as they are in the legends of many male informants. In this legend, the woman's death is foregrounded as the most tragic. While the
man drowns quickly, the woman is buoyed up by her skirts and her screams carry to the neighboring farms. In the second variant, the desperate but unsuccessful attempt to rescue the drowning woman leads into Kirsten Marie's evaluation of the story, noting: "My maternal uncle cried every time he told me that story." Here, the sympathies are directed towards the woman's death and the implicit disruption of social networks precipitated by that death.

Conclusion

This analysis of Kirsten Marie's folkloric repertoire confirms Kristensen's evaluation of her as one of the most talented and able story tellers he encountered. Most noteworthy in her legends is the emphasis on class divisions and the behaviors which govern social interactions. She frequently underscores the importance of religious figures and practices as essential to the social order. Kirsten Marie was one of a few people who experienced upward mobility in late nineteenth century rural Denmark. Although probably not wealthy, she was intensely aware of class distinctions and the behavior expected of members of the various classes. Breach of expected behavior in her legends often leads to supernatural contact. This contact is most often mediated by religiously charged action. Kirsten Marie's status as a huskone placed her in charge of the domestic economy. A large number of her legends express anxieties consistent with such responsibility. Nevertheless, Kirsten Marie's legends are usually resolved in a positive manner. As a prolific folktale teller, she specialized in the "happy ending," a fact that coincided well with her own social and economic experiences. Kirsten Marie seems to have thoroughly enjoyed telling stories and a wry sense of humor pervades many of them. Sarcasm and irony, including the ironic use of folk belief, were two of her major weapons. Her diverse repertoire reflects both the myriad values and beliefs that came with being a farm owner class housewife in rural nineteenth century Denmark and the concerns and thoughts of her own engaging personality.

Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter

NOTES

5. Kristensen 1923-1927 vol. 3: 446.
6. Session one should be read in the following order: DS IIA 57; JA II 213; JA V 524; DST IV 469; DS V 687; DST IV 469; DS V 810, 1542; JA V 724; DS V 982, 549; JA VI 183; DS IV 289; DS I IH 141; DS V 1430; DS IIH 436, 460; DS III 887; DS I 1882; DS I 400; unpublished three records; JA VI 527; unpublished one record; JA V 613, 612, 624, 559; unpublished one record; JA V 697, 558; DS VII 1569, 1658, 1628, 1614, 539; unpublished one record; JA V 697, 558; DS VII 1569, 1658, 1628, 1614, 539; unpublished one record; JA V 697, 558; DS VII 1569, 1658, 1628, 1614, 539; unpublished one record; JA V 697, 558; DS VII 1569, 1658, 1628, 1614, 539; unpublished one record; JA V 697, 558; DS VII 1569, 1658, 1628, 1614, 539; unpublished one record; JA V 697, 558; DS VII 1569, 1658, 1628, 1614, 539; unpublished one record; JA V 697, 558; DS VII 1569, 1658, 1628, 1614, 539; unpublished one record; JA VI 581, 970; DS IV 1839; DS VI 884; DS IIA 99; DS III 1566; JA V 572; DS III 145; unpublished one record; AEV 1512, 1513; JFmXII 3; AEV 1514; DS VI 2; unpublished one record; AEV 1511b, 1515; DS III 50; DS VI 1079; JAT VI 205; Fab 531; DS III 50; DS III 100; DS I 783; unpublished one record.
7. Session two should be read: DS VII 177; DS IIO 85; DS III 363; DS VII 13112; JA VI 225; DS IV 1092; JA V 574, 543; DS IIE 84, 213; DST IHE 39; JAT VI 1042; DST I 240; MA II 456 (DS IHE 141); JA V 543; unpublished two records; MA II 457; JAT V 18.
8. Session three should be read: unpublished three records; MA II 6; DSK I 248; JAT VI 1187; JAT IV 68, 717, 180, 217; JAT III 213; DSK III 477; JAT V 109; JAT III 1737; DSK 14.
9. Accepting the facts of the other world has been linked by Bogberg to acceptance of membership in their community and, consequently, rejection of the human community (Bogberg 1938: 56).
13. Field notes 5212b-13a. The published version (Kristensen 1892-1901(1980), vol. 5: 434-435) is an inaccurate transcription of the field notes.
14. Kirstensen includes a lengthy newspaper account from 1837 in Gammel folks fortællinger om det jyske almueliv (Tillægsbinder) which purportedly recounts Sidsel Rollandsdatter's extraordinary schemes (Kristensen 1890-1902 vol. 6: 359-360).
15. After childbirth, women were not allowed back into the church until a ceremony, "churching," had been performed for them.
16. This story is followed by a short non-narrative account. In it, Kirsten Marie relates how a local farmer killed a *sansk rytter* [Spanish knight]. Once again one sees the outside threat, manifest as an ethnic outsider, successfully countered by the community members.

21. Young notes that often, "context is a matter of relevance, not proximity" (Young 1987: 70).

24. While the first version includes direct address at the climax of the complicating action, the second version relates the supernatural woman's comments as indirect speech. However, this difference seems primarily attributable to Kirstensen's editing rather than a reflection of the performance. A transcript of the relevant sections from the field diaries reflects this: "... og sågde du skulde ride paa det boor og ikke opad det joor ..." (DA 5215b) as opposed to, "... og bad ham om at ride paa det haarde og ikke på det baare ..." (DA 5229b).

27. These joking stories are all closely linked, exhibiting aspects of "adjacent stories" noted by Young (Young 1987).
28. Or this could be a reflection of Kirstensen's collection methodology. After he had extracted as many stories as he thought he could, he would ask the informant to perform jokes. This seems unlikely since Kirsten Marie continues to perform a remarkable number of stories in the ensuing half of the first session.

29. Kirstensen 1891-1893 vol. 5: 238.
30. Kirsten Marie then relates a one line saying, unpublished in any of Kirstensen's collections: "Dronorne sad: Vi skider paa alle kokkerne (ileg.) og den lange med" [The dragoons said: We shit on all the cooks (?) and the long one too.]

36. Holbek includes her in his list of exceptional folktale informants (Holbek 1987: 128).
37. The religious figures in the story are quite powerful being none other than God and St. Peter.
39. Holbek (1987: 607) notes the inconsistency between the vast numbers of folktale collected by Kirstensen and the glaring lack of published versions of these collections.
40. Kirstensen 1897b: 3.
41. Holbek provides an exceptionally in-depth analysis of Danish fairy tales in his work, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, and theorizes that fairy tale mediates three major oppositions: young/old, female/male, poor/rich (Holbek 1987: 604-605).
42. DA 5225b.
45. Kirstensen 1900-1902 vol. 6: 92.
47. DA 5230a.
50. Honko 1964.
Plate Three: Photograph of Jens Peter Pedersen (from Dansk folkemindesamling).
Chapter 7

Spinning Yarn(s):
Jens Peter Pedersen's Repertoire

Whenever Kristensen met with Jens Peter Pedersen, it rained. Kristensen's first contact with Jens Peter came on October 5, 1893 on a collecting trip that also doubled as a lecture tour. It had taken Kristensen through Jerup, Bratten, Frederikshavn and on to Taars. Kristensen complained of the frequent downpours he had to endure on this trip: "The next day I was supposed to go to a dairy cooperative meeting and since no wagon came for me, I had to walk in the pouring rain..." and "...now it had started raining and it rained every day so it was no fun for me to walk the long stretches of road and my feet were wet the whole time."\(^1\)

On a short side trip from Taars, Kristensen found his way to Ilbjærg where he met Jens Peter: "Now I found my way over to Teacher G.P. Andersen in Lørslev and was of course up to [see] the spinner in Ilbjærg, Jens Peter Pedersen. He seemed to be a bottomless well from which to draw."\(^2\) Over the next five years, Kristensen visited Jens Peter four times. Each time he was impressed with Jens Peter's large and diverse legend repertoire and his extreme willingness, almost urgency, to tell his stories.

Jens Peter led the hard life of a poor spinner. During one of his photographic excursions in 1895, Kristensen penned this short biographical sketch:
Jens Peter Pedersen was born May 1, 1836 in Bårup mark in Tårn. His father was born in Tranum, in Han province, and he told Jens a great deal of the things [Jens] knows. But both his father, mother and maternal grandmother told many stories. This last person was from Tårn and was, by the way, the sister of Chr. Steen, the book seller in Copenhagen who had left home probably to get out of working at other farms, came to Copenhagen and became an apprentice book binder. Jens Peter learned to spin in Hjörting and has lived in Ilbjerge in a little house for twenty-six years now. He has never been married and it looks extremely shoddy at his house. When we last parted, he was really pained with saying goodbye to me. I could see clearly that he wanted me to have stayed there a bit longer, since it interested him so much to get these old things written down. One night he came in the pouring rain up to visit me in Løslev school and he sat in his wet clothes the entire evening and told [stories]. He was used to the hard life and a little rain didn’t do anything, he said.3

The only inaccuracy in this description concerns Jens Peter’s marital status—Jens Peter was not a bachelor, but rather a widower. On November 11, 1864, Jens Peter married Marianne Christensen from Ugilt. Later, after they had moved to Ilbjerge, she died and he remained unmarried. When Kristensen visited him, Jens Peter was living alone as a widower.

Legend Trends and Jens Peter’s Repertoire

Jens Peter was a male cotter from the post-constitution generation, younger than most of Kristensen’s informants and widowed. He was undoubtedly poor, as the profession of rokkedrejer [spinner], was not particularly lucrative, even by the standards of the cotter class.4 Jens Peter was widowed at a young age and had been a widower for a considerable amount of time when Kristensen first met him. These two factors account for divergences from the trends uncovered in the repertoires of his peers. Nevertheless, as in the cases of Peder Johansen and Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter, Jens Peter’s legends confirm many of the observed trends. Jens Peter’s repertoire is notably lacking in almost all other genres of folk expression found in late nineteenth century rural Denmark. Except for an occasional non-narrative description of local geography. Jens Peter’s repertoire is made up exclusively of legends.

Confirming the trend that men tended to tell the majority of their legends about third parties unknown to them, Jens Peter only occasionally attributed his accounts to known individuals. When he did, the attribution appears as a verifying tag, such as, “my father could remember it,” rather than including known individuals as legend actors. The use of relatives—his mother, father and grandfather—as authorities meshes well with Kristensen’s biographical notes: “But both his father, mother and maternal grandmother told quite a bit.”5 Not too surprisingly, Jens Peter told only two stories which refer in some way to himself directly. In general, he preferred a detached narrative position.

Almost all of Jens Peter’s records include place names, while nearly a third include personal names. In this respect, his legends are consistent with the trends observed for male informants and is also consistent with the frequencies observed in the general informant pool. Surprisingly, he recounts a substantially smaller number of descriptions than would be expected from a male, post-constitution informant with a large legend repertoire. Jens Peter excelled at telling legends, and that is what he told.

Men figure prominently in Jens Peter’s legends, as would be expected. However, in light of the tendency for men to exclude female actors from their legends, it is surprising to discover that women appear frequently in Jens Peter’s legends. Furthermore, unlike the women appearing in Peder Johansen’s legends, these women are not always subjected to cruel and misogynistic punishments. Another manifestation of Jens Peter’s personal expression in his legends is the high frequency with which parsons appear and the startlingly low incidence of male folk healers in his repertoire. Given the general analysis of trends one would expect the frequency of male folk healers to exceed greatly the frequency of parsons. Just the opposite is true in Jens Peter’s repertoire. Furthermore, Jens Peter told considerably more stories about female folk healers than about male folk healers. He conflates the concept of male folk healer and parson, referring in one legend to the exploits of a “klog prest” [wise minister].6 This is a slightly odd location as the adjective “klog” [wise] is primarily reserved to describe folk healers.
The majority of Jens Peter's legends include some form of supernatural contact. Often, this contact takes the form of the Devil or his agents—witches, revenants, black dogs and cats appear frequently in his legends. However, supernatural beings such as bjørgfolf, elleføl, and trolde appear with less frequency than one would expect. Another anomaly appears in the resolution of Jens Peter's legends, a substantial majority of which have positive resolutions, while few of his legends have negative resolutions.

**Jens Peter's First Three Sessions**

The first session Kristensen had with Jens Peter occurred on a rainy October day in 1893 and was rather short. Kristensen managed to collect nine stories from Jens Peter that day, all of them legends. The two main actors in these legends are parsons and female folk healers/witches. The figure of the parson is an ambiguous one in Jens Peter's legends, a feature which is highlighted in this brief session. The parson is presented as compassionate, reflected in his willingness to sell grain to peasants at a low price (two scoops for the price of one), but savvy, reflected in his humorous reversal of his normal sales practice when a man attempts to take advantage of him. The parson is also portrayed as somewhat bungling and inept, as he makes grossly inappropriate remarks at a funeral:

> The minister was afraid of cows and is standing and watching one that wants to get into the cemetery while he was casting dirt on a casket. When he tosses the first shovelful down [into the grave], he says, "Now she's putting her tail in the air." At the second shovelful, he says, "Now she's starting to run," and then when the cow gets loose and is running off, he says with the third shovelful, "Now she's taking off to Hell." It was the parish clerk's cows which were out in cemetery.

This legend is one of only a few truly humorous accounts in Jens Peter's repertoire, using the parson as a source for amusement. A parson's inappropriate behavior, and possibly limited abilities, also come to the fore in a legend about a would-be ghost. However, in other legends from this session, the parson is portrayed as a capable protector of social and economic integrity. One parson conjures a greedy revenant who has returned for his money, while another protects a class of confirmation candidates from a menacing hell hound which appears in the church.

A female folk healer/witch, Støv Karen, is treated with equal ambiguity in this first session. One cannot help but wonder whether she is a folk healer or a witch, or whether Jens Peter perceived any difference between the two categories. After a legend in which Støv Karen has cured a woman of her inability to eat anything but foreign food, and has returned a flock of missing sheep to the same farm—actions associated with the role of folk healer—Jens Peter adds: "She continued to live in Støvhuslet for many years and was a downright evil woman and round about [in the area] they were so afraid of her." In a previous story, there is no mistaking Jens Peter's portrayal of her as a witch. However, in legends from later sessions, it is apparent that Jens Peter does not always mark the role of female folk healer/witch negatively. Instead, there seems to be an overlap between the two roles in his legends. His frequent use of the male parson as the protector of social integrity may be an implicit condemnation of the undifferentiated female folk healer/witch because of her close connection to the devil. The figure of the parson, however, is not entirely innocent of satanic alliance either, which contributes to the ambiguity surrounding him as well.

Threat does not take any single form in the legends from the first session. However, the threat to the economic well-being of the farm, particularly barnyard animals, is codified in the figure of the witch, with her abilities to curse animals and cause their death. The "witch as threat" obtains for many of the legends in the following sessions as well. Like Kirsten Marie, Jens Peter also values appropriate behaviors in his legends. Furthermore, the breach of norms governing behavior often leads to either dangerous situations or a humorous evaluation of inappropriate actions.

The second session, which took place in November of 1893, provides a more substantial view of Jens Peter's considerable narrative skills and the diversity of his legend repertoire. During this session, Jens Peter told approximately twenty legends. The session opens with a series of stories about travelers who are accosted on their way home by robbers. The attacks are unsuccessful. Other stories in the
session include the threat posed by robbers to both the continued economic well-being and future prosperity of the community:

Daniel lived in a mound east of Ugilt church on the south side of the road to Linderum. He was so strong and bad about killing people. He supposedly ate two baby hearts and would have eaten the third, he had it in his hands when he was caught. If he'd gotten it, nobody would have been able to catch him, he could have smashed both iron and everything to pieces. He was decapitated.\textsuperscript{13}

Here, the thief Daniel begins to acquire supernatural abilities through the ingestion of children’s hearts. By killing children, Daniel attacks both communal fertility and the community’s future and, through these attacks, enhances his ability to attack the same community’s current economy. The outsider’s threat to the insiders’ fertility is a common theme in many of Jens Peter’s legends.

Another series of stories in the session focuses on the inappropriate actions of high status individuals. In one instance, a countess attempts to play the role of folk healer. However, she so completely botches the job that she and her two companions are torn to shreds by a somewhat enraged Satan when they inadvertently invite him into the room.\textsuperscript{14} In a second legend, a cruel manor lord is conjured after he returns as a revenant. Jens Peter then uses a similar beginning for a following legend, which tells about the cruel and harsh ways of a count. However, he twists the tale into a story about sexual dalliance and amusing euphemism:

It was in 1806, there was a count Feer at Bæggsvøgn. He was so harsh to his peasants and he tormented and harassed them with work. Then one day during the harvest all of the peasants were gathered for vesture and were to drive the grain. Then there were two peasants who accompanied each other from Sindal and now, as the countess was out walking in the woods, the one says to the other, “That’s a beautiful woman.” — “Yes,” says the other, “that’s a beautiful woman, it must be great to sleep with one like that.” Then the first one says that he’d gladly give his horses and wagon for that. The countess goes and hears this out in the garden. As soon as they had unloaded and were going to drive off again, a message was sent to the man, he was to go up to her. Would he stand by what he’d said? Yes, he sure would, he says; but what was it he’d said? Yes, he’d give his horses and wagon to sleep with her. Then she tells the servant that he should unharness the man’s horses and drive the wagon down into the courtyard. Then the man went in with her a little bit, it really wasn’t too long, and then he thought he was going to get his horses and wagon back, but he didn’t get them. So now he wants to walk home and he walks along complaining and said: Yeah, the one was like the other, but he didn’t notice that there was any change, it was the same. The count was out in the field and he comes up to him as he’s walking. He scolds him, why was he walking along and why didn’t he have horses or a wagon. “Yes,” he says, “the countess took it from me, because she said that my loads were smaller than the others”, but I couldn’t tell that there was any difference, I thought my loads were just as big as theirs.” “I see,” says the count, “that’s no good, you can follow me home to the farm, then you’ll get your horses and your wagon again.” Then they accompanied each other and come in to the countess. “Listen here, my dear wife,” says the count, “is it true that you took horses and wagon from this man?” “Yes, it is true.” “He says that his loads were smaller than the others’.” “Yes, they were, too.” “Yes, but you can’t be that strict,” says the count. “He is to have his horses and wagon again.” “OK, OK, he’ll get them too.” He got his things and he could start driving grain again, and then that was done with.\textsuperscript{15}

The aristocratic count rewards his wife’s lover and reverses the tables, albeit unknowingly, on himself. Such a repositioning of status resonates well with the aforementioned legends in which individuals of high status are punished for their cruel deeds or inappropriate actions.

\textbf{Jens Peter’s Fourth Session}

The fourth session, which took place on June 5, 1898, was remarkably long, even though Kristensen mentions that Jens Peter had walked in the pouring rain to meet up with him, being eager to tell more stories.\textsuperscript{16} He told forty-one legends during the session, several of which were variants of legends he had told in earlier sessions.\textsuperscript{17}

The session opens with a brief story about the tricking of Elias, the area’s first gypsy, into giving alms to the same person three times. The story is reminiscent of Kirsten Marie’s story in which her father tricks a beggar into believing that someone is encroaching on his territory. In Jens Peter’s
story, the gypsy has risen to reasonable economic stature, and the false beggar appears to be mocking this rise through his repeated begging. Attitudes such as those found in Kirsten Marie's legends concerning gypsies as threatening outsiders are absent from this story. Jens Peter comments that a local farm owner's son marries Elias's daughter. While this would have resulted in dire consequences for the son in Kirsten Marie's legends, Jens Peter seems to regard the marriage as confirmation of Elias' assimilation into and success in the community. Whereas Kirsten Marie's attitudes are exclusive, Jens Peter's attitudes are inclusive. Perhaps the conflicting attitudes towards these ethnically marked outsiders may be related to the class structure of rural nineteenth century Denmark. While the farm owning class informant views marriage alliance with the ethnic outsider as a threat to the economic integrity of the farm—thus the focus on the downward economic move of the daughter—the cotter class informant views the alliance as a constructive enterprise and thus the focus on the upward economic move of the gypsy.

The following legend in the session appears to be completely unrelated to the first story. It possibly represents the process by which Jens Peter started his story telling, groping for threads which he could then spin into longer stories and series of stories. In this story, a mermaid seemingly attempts to seduce a farm hand guarding a salt works. He rejects her move into the human community by scalding her, thereby unleashing the supernatural fury of the merman who destroys the salt works. The farm hand's protective actions—scalding the mermaid—result in the destruction of an important community structure. The salt work was essential for the continued well-being of the community during the war, as salt was used to preserve meat and fish, and its loss probably resulted in communal hardship. Nevertheless, the farm hand escapes alive and the supernatural stewards of the ocean—the source for the salt—are prevented from gaining access to the human community.

The mermaid brings the world of the supernatural to mind for Jens Peter, as evidenced by the following two stories which both include supernatural mound dwellers. In the first legend, a man hears smithing inside a hill while on his way to the mill. Somewhat haltingly he calls out and asks the smith to make him a plowshare. On the way home, he passes the mound again and a dwarf rushes out and asks him to wait. Instead, the man increases his speed, but the dwarf manages to toss the plowshare into his wagon. The plowshare turns out to be indestructible and remains in use for several generations. The concept of the dwarf as smith resonates well with Scandinavian mythological texts, many of which were being popularly disseminated at the time of this collection, in which the dwarves are shown to be the most capable of all smiths, producing Thor's remarkable hammer Mjölnir among other exceptional items. In the following legend, a boy and his father plow their field and pass by a mound. As they pass the mound, a hand reaches out with a broken peal, which the father repairs. As a reward, a loaf of warm bread appears on the mound, which the father eats. He derives great benefit from eating this food. His son refuses to eat it and subsequently dies.

These two legends play on the potentially helpful nature of the supernatural "others." In the first legend, the passing peasant, en route to fulfill part of his economic duties, conscripts the services of the dwarf, albeit unwittingly, through his verbal request. The resulting plowshare is indeed one of the most valuable of all treasures, as it never wears out. As such, the economic fortunes of the peasant are greatly enhanced by his contact with the dwarf. In a slight reversal of that situation, the second legend presents a request from the supernatural "other" to assist in the restoration of the domestic economy's status quo, symbolized here by the production of bread. By accepting the bread, the father acknowledges the transaction, and prospers because of his recognition of the need for balance in both worlds. The boy's rejection of the bread, on the other hand, is an inadvertent refusal to recognize the transaction and therefore precipitates negative consequences. In both legends, there is an implication of economic interdependence between the two worlds—the world of humans and the world of nature beings. This interpretation can be extended to cover the story of the mermaid as well. The boy (and the community) are deriving economic good from the sea, and therefore should allow the mermaid to warm herself by the fire. By denying her that privilege, the boy denies recognition of the community's economic dependence on the sea—her domain—and therefore sets himself and, by extension, the community, up for
In the following two legends, Jens Peter shifts from the ambiguous nature beings to the destructive and evil satanic beings—the Devil, his animal forms and revenants. Attempted hangings tie the two stories together. In the first of these stories, Jens Peter tells about a ship's crew who, to stave off the boredom of being becalmed, decide to take turns hanging themselves. An elderly sailor bails at the idea, but later attempts it alone. His precautions against inadvertently dying are undermined by the mysterious appearance of a black cat. At the last second, he is saved from dying by his crewmates who suddenly notice him missing. When they break into the room where he is hanging, the black cat is sitting on his head. As they cut him down, the cat disappears.

In the following legend, a young girl, deceived by her lover, decides to hang herself in a barn. However, the barn is dark and she cannot find a rope. Suddenly the barn lights up as bright as day, startling the girl into reciting the "Our Father." As soon as she does this, the barn is plunged back into darkness, and she aborts her suicide attempt. The girl's prayer undermines the Devil's attempt to facilitate her suicide, thereby denying him her soul. The religiously coded action of prayer identifies her as a member of the human religious community. In the first legend, the cat also attempts to facilitate the old sailor's suicide in an attempt to procure another soul for Satan. Instead, the expression of community implicit in the sailors' en masse entrance and rescue of the elderly sailor prevent the completion of the asocial act of suicide.

Unlike Peder Johansen's unsympathetic treatment of women, Jens Peter's attitude towards women is far more compassionate and understanding. His repertoire includes an interesting account of the birthing process and the pain associated with it:

A midwife in Torslev was with a woman, who was going to give birth. The birth pains were so bad and the woman wailed pitiably. Then her husband says, "Yeah, that's really something to blubber about, what a wretch," and he tells his wife to shut up. "You shouldn't say that," says the midwife, "you better believe its a hard trip." No, he didn't count that as anything. "Then you'll also get to feel it," says the midwife. Then the man goes out, but just as soon as he gets outside, he gets so sick, so sick, and he gets the pains his wife had before. And he continued to have them until his wife gives birth, but then it was over. The midwife calls to him now and asks if he'll stand by those words he'd said before. No, he wouldn't, it was a really hard trip.

The midwife is accorded supernatural powers and uses it to punish the husband for his unsympathetic remarks and behavior. The punishment is instructive, however, and ultimately contributes to a strengthening of the integrity of the domestic space. Through the process of the legend, the husband is moved, albeit forcibly, into a position of understanding the pain and terror associated with child birth.

The reference to the midwife's supernatural abilities sets up the next legend, which concerns a young girl adept at the skills of witchcraft. Word gets out about her seemingly innocent but economically disruptive acts and she is forced to perform for a parson and a manor lord. The two figures represent the community's religious/social organization and economic organization. During her demonstration, the girl milks a cow to death and causes a windmill to turn without wind. While the first action is undoubtedly negative, the second action is arguably positive. She is not executed or imprisoned after her display, but is rather rebaptized. The rebaptism marks a reacceptance into the human community through a dissolution of her ties to Satan. After her rebaptism, she reverts to an infantile state, thereby instilling her with future potential to develop as a member of the religiously circumscribed human community and removing her abilities to threaten the economic integrity (the mill) and the fertility (the cow) of that same community.

The four legends Jens Peter tells next return to interactions between people and non-satanic supernatural beings. In the first of these legends, Jens Peter relates why a group of trolls decide to leave the area. The trolls tell a local man that the ringing church bells are so unbearable that they had decided to move to Russia. The church bells, a religious token, define the bounds of the human community. Since they are not members of the community, the trolls are forced to move to an area beyond the human boundaries defined by the church bells. The following two stories center on the farm and the farm spirit, the gärdbo or nisse. In it, a farm hand
The precarious nature of Jens Peter's own economic situation.

Jens Peter then switches his focus from these thefty yet strangely benign supernatural beings to the more threatening realm of revenants and witches. In the first story, a farm is plagued by perpetual theft and other hauntings. Neither parsons nor folk healers are able to halt the hauntings and the farm is sold for a pittance. Even the intervention of humans with supernatural powers is unable to avert the disruption of the economic and domestic space in this legend. Jens Peter next tells about the folk healer/witch, Stöv Karen:23

A woman lived in a house called Stövhuset [Dust house] down here west of Vugdrup in Tars parish, and they called her Stövkaren. Then she comes up to a house they called Stenbroen [Stone bridge] and wants some milk. The woman [of the house] says, “No, I can’t today, because we have a calf and my husband won’t eat veal unless it has been milk-fed. But in eight days we’ll slaughter it and then you can come and get milk.” Then the woman went away, but she had barely left before the calf got sick and began to jump up and down the walls and continued to jump until it had killed itself. It was no lie because my mother was there and grew up there. Then the man [of the house] gets mad and he goes off down to Stövhuset the next morning and took a large staff along with him. A little to the west where the poorhouse is, he meets her and she came walking along with a pail in her hand. Before she got to her, she plants her staff in the ground and she turned herself into a crow and stood on the top of the staff and crowed. The man got so scared that he ran home and told his wife that as soon as Stövkaren came, she should give her everything she wanted. Well, so then she comes soon after and the wife says to her: “Yeah, you better believe that we’ve suffered a big loss because of you.” She answered: “Well Christ ... I know nothing.” (she couldn’t say Christ properly). Yes, that’s how it was, that the calf had become crazy and had killed itself. Yes, she was totally innocent of that. The wife gave her some meat and bread and a bit of everything because they’d gotten scared of the haunting, and she left with all of it.24

Stöv Karen uses supernatural intimidation to extort food from the family, even though she pleads her innocence at the end of the account. Her supernaturally charged actions undermine the farmer’s attempt to position himself in the strong, dominant male role—his intention is to beat her with a club. The subversion of the power status of the male inherent in her
actions underscores the ability of the folk healer/witch to threaten the domestic organization—and thus the integrity—of the farm. This subversion also resonates well with the reassignment of the birthing pains to the unsympathetic husband. Jens Peter’s legends often include such examples of remarkably strong women who undermine the attempts of antagonistic men to “put them in their place.”

A short account of Knold Kæn’s use of Cyprianus comes next in the session, and seems to be motivated by Jens Peter’s focus on human actors with supernatural abilities. The story is one of the few cases in which Jens Peter makes direct reference to himself:

Knold Kæn had Ceperánus [Cyprianus]. He had gotten it down in Torslev from a man who had four, but he never used it. One time he’d taken it down from the shelf though and sat and read it. Just as he’s sitting there really nice, a swirl stone which is right beside him breaks into two and it makes such a bang, like somebody had shot off a rifle right next to him. Now he got scared and put Ceperánus up on the shelf again. I was supposed to get it from him and we’d agreed on a day when he was supposed to come with it. But then my father got me to run an errand in town and he also told me what was on the title page. When I heard that then I’d also had enough. Knold Kæn came sure enough and when I wasn’t home, he went to Lørsløv and I didn’t get any book.25

Cyprianus is closely linked with the Devil, and is often referred to as the “Black Book.” Jens Peter’s personal fascination with the Cyprianus helps explain the numerous legends he tells concerning witches, revenants, the Devil and their counterparts—folk healers and parsons. His reaction to the title page further explains his view of the threatening nature of people who rely on such works. Jens Peter is both terrified of and attracted to the demonic.

The next legend in the session concerns the actions of a witch. She agrees to remove all of the wolves from Denmark and bring them to Norway in exchange for a promise to halt all of the witch burnings in the country. A man meets her as she is finishing her task and she explains what she is doing and why. As in several of Jens Peter’s legends, a negatively marked human with supernatural abilities performs an action that ultimately has positive ramifications for the human community. In this case, the wolves which prey on livestock and an apparently powerful witch are both banished from the country.

Once again Jens Peter puts down a narrative thread and picks up another, this time turning to the concept of buried treasure and guardian dragons, a thread he follows for the next two legends. This thread does not become terribly strong, and Jens Peter returns to stories about revenants, the Devil and attempts to counter their threat. In this narrative series, he tells ten stories related to these themes. The first story provides a smooth transition back to these manifestations of threat and concerns a would-be ghost rather than an actual revenant.26 A parson’s wife tires of her husband’s nightly jaunts through the cemetery and has the driver dress as a ghost to scare him. Instead, the parson begins to conjure the driver and, despite his entreaties, the parson is forced to conjure him completely down. He does, however, give the driver the last rites before completing the conjuring. The parson’s wife goes mad when she learns what has happened. By putting on the sheet and moving to the cemetery, the driver falsely signals his membership in another community—that of the dead. This masquerade constitutes a serious breach of communal integrity. When the parson begins the process of reintegrating the driver into his supposed community (the world of the dead), the driver cries out in an attempt to reassert his membership in the human community. The parson, however, is unable to interrupt this incorporation rite once he has begun it.

Although the apparent reassertion of the driver’s membership in the community inherent in the religious action of communion should counteract the driver’s false assertion of membership in the community of the dead, the last communion is in fact a transitional rite and facilitates the driver’s move into the community of the dead. After the parson administers this final communion to the driver, it is then only fitting and indeed necessary for him to complete the conjuring process.27 The dissolution of the domestic integrity inherent in the parson’s wife’s madness completes the destruction wrought by the driver’s false assertion of membership in a community other than the human one.
Inappropriate action leading to calamity in the domestic space informs the next legend as well. In an attempt to lift the curse on the farm’s livestock, a woman borrows books from a female folk healer. Regretfully, she is unable to control the satanic forces she unleashes and a blood spattered room and three dismembered corpses are the result. Similar difficulty with animals and the barn leads into the next legend. In this story, a farmer is unable to keep his cowherds because of the unruly nature of a big black ox. The threat here is directed against the ability of the farmer to care for his animals, a main part of his economic livelihood. A special rope is fashioned for the beast and, after spending a night in this harness, the ox turns into a calf. A farm hand releases the animal which immediately runs for the door, fartering on its way out. Although the smell lingers, the farmer no longer has problems retaining his cowherds.

Supernatural beings in the form of domesticated animals also appear in the next account. Two farm hands head home after a day’s work, one on foot, the other on horseback. The one on horseback soon discovers that the horse he has chosen that day is no ordinary mount. Soon he finds himself galloping through the sky on a horse with horns. The startled farm hand falls from the horse and, although he survives, spends a month in bed and is scared of riding for the rest of his life. Thus, a contact with a supernatural being in the form of a common domesticated animal once again hints at the ability of human community members to function in the economic realm.

The concept of supernatural speed provides the link to the ensuing legend. Jens Peter relates a confrontation between a parson and Satan. The parson, having difficulty conjuring, agrees to race the Devil—the parson above ground and the evil one below ground. Cleverly, the parson chooses a stump filled swamp as the path of the race and is able, although only barely, to outrun Satan and complete his conjuring. The following legend also centers on a parson’s encounter with a satanic being, here the revenant of a greedy man. The parson disallows a man’s final wish to be buried with his money, thereby setting up the confrontation between the parson and the man’s revenant. In this case, the revenant appears as a black dog, solidifying the connection between the Devil, his animal manifestations and revenants in Jens Peter’s legends. The man’s final wish can be interpreted as a desire to harm the economic status quo of the living human community, since his wish would deny his heirs their inheritance. The final wish also expresses an equivalence between the living and the dead by suggesting that the dead have use for money. This expression of equivalence between the living and the dead is similar to the driver’s expression of membership in the community of the dead in the legend of the would-be ghost.

Difficult revenants also appears in the next legend. A cruel manor lord dies and the new owner of the estate enlist the aid of a parson to conjure the unwelcome revenant of the former lord. While the parson is conjuring the revenant down near a mill, a curious miller pokes his head out of a window to watch. This intrusion of the human community into the supernatural struggle allows the revenant to gain the upper hand. The miller becomes frightened and retreats inside, thereby allowing the parson to prevail. The questionable outcome of the conjuring is reminiscent of the parson’s close race with Satan. In Jens Peter’s legends, the outcome of interaction with the dead, the Devil or his auxiliary spirits is never certain—the threat is substantial and cannot be taken lightly. Perhaps the early death of his wife and the economic, social and personal burdens of that event led Jens Peter to tell so many stories in which death appears. In his legends, the dead successfully threaten the ability of the human community to prosper.

The next legend returns to the concept of inheritance. A farm hand obtains a loan from a friend, using the farm madam as a guarantor. However, the friend is sent off to the army and dies. He returns as a haunting requesting repayment of the loan. The madam confronts the haunting, since it was she who refused to let the loan be repaid to the soldier’s estate and, as a result of this encounter, she becomes sick. Instead, a parson is able to still the spirit by repaying the loan to the estate of the soldier. As such, his heirs come into their rightful inheritance and the economic status quo of the community is reestablished. Jens Peter tags on a short story about the original loan recipient and his eventual marriage to a parson’s daughter, positing his father in an important role in this account.
Jens Peter ascribes himself narrative attachment to the next story as well. Each New Year’s eve, a farm is visited by a black dog who sits down by the gutter in the outer kitchen. If the proper preparations are not made, all hell breaks loose. These unfortunate events prompt the man to move his farmhouse not once or twice, but three times before the haunting finally stops. Jens Peter mentions that he remembers when the house was rebuilt for the third time. As in many of Jens Peter’s legends about hauntings, the economic integrity of the farm is threatened by the appearance of a haunting. The dog’s actions also disrupt the domestic space of the farm, tossing people from their beds and howling madly. Jens Peter’s legend actors often have difficulty counteracting the threats of these supernatural beings. A final legend about hauntings ends this series of stories.

In the next legend, Jens Peter rather inexplicably switches narrative gears and tells a story about a robber who eats children’s hearts as a way to gain supernatural power. The robber inhabits a mound but is caught before he ingests the important third heart. The concept of mounds linked to economic activity leads Jens Peter to recount a second variant of his tale of buried treasure. In this variant, an old woman accompanies the treasure diggers:

There was a legend that there was supposed to be so much money buried in Støvøje, that’s the highest peak of the Ælærge [Fire mountains]. A group of people from Lenslev decided to dig and they dug for many days. Finally they come to a really big chest with a gold handle. There was an old hag along and she tells when she sees it, “By all means, hold tight!” but then they got nothing. Then the dragon says, “Yes, if she can’t be in Støvøje, then she should never be drawn to Sørup lake either.” (?) The gold handle was brought to Hjørring and stored in the church, now it is supposed to be walled in in the tower, it’s said. I heard about that when I was in Hjørring.

The old woman, a non-fertile member of the community and quite possibly an economic burden (either aflægt or fattighjem [poor house]), prevents the increase in communal wealth with her well-intentioned, albeit mistimed, assistance. The recovered gold ring is placed in the church underscoring the communal nature of the treasure digging.

Buried treasure appears in the following legend as well. A farm hand sent out to cleave stones, an action reminiscent of a somewhat earlier story, uncovers Holger Dansk’s resting place. The farm hand cleverly tricks the somnolent hero into believing that an iron pole is his finger, prompting Holger to comment that the Danes still seem to be strong. He then shows the farm hand his treasure chest which will be used to aid the country in time of need. Besides being an amusing story of the exceptional strength of Holger Dansk and a farm hand’s quick thinking, there is an obvious link between the wealth and strength of the country being buried in the earth and the economic dependence of the country on its agriculture.

Supernatural mound dwellers appear in the next legend as well. A girl disappears for five or six years but returns to her father’s farm one Sunday morning when everyone else is at church. Her father, now an aftagtsmand, is at home and the girl cooks for him. She tells him of her life in the mound, but rejects the entreaties of her father to stay. Fifty years later, a spade stuck into the mound comes out bloody. The girl’s return to the farm and feeding her father act as expressions of community membership. Despite this expression of membership in the human community, she decides to return to the other world. Interestingly, her father is no longer a contributor to the community economy and does not attend church, one of the marks of social membership. As such, the kidnapped girl and the old father are marginal figures. The final episode with the bloody spade may be a confirmation of her membership in the human community. Even though she chooses membership in the community of the supernatural beings, her actions and the spade identify her as a human. In the following story, Jens Peter also tells about a girl kidnapped by the supernatural mound dwellers. In this case, the girl does not attempt to return to the human community but rather attempts to hide when she discovers that she has been seen by members of that community. The legend focuses on the shepherds’ fright upon seeing the girl and her strange disappearance. As with the previous girl, Jens Peter attributes a marginal status to these people kidnapped into the mounds since this process confuses their community status.

The next series of stories constitutes another thematic break. Published as a single record in Danske sagt. Ny rekke,
they tell about the exploits of præst Thomas. Jens Peter pays particular attention to the parson’s quick comebacks and sardonic remarks. The stories about the parson lead into a short series of stories about local characters with supernatural abilities. One legend centers on the Bragholdt kjelling. Although she is considered to be a folk healer, she derives a great deal of her power from an uneasy alliance with the Devil. As such, she is yet another figure in Jens Peter’s repertoire who balances on the fine line between folk healer and witch, good and evil:

Eighty years ago a man lived on Knudsholmen in Ugil, and they called him Iver Holm and he was both a parish sheriff and a superintendent of a recruiting area. Then one night one hundred and twenty feet of canvas disappeared and they looked far and wide for this canvas, but it couldn’t be found. Then Iver goes to this here Bragholdt hag and wants her to show it again. He gets over there and also gets to talk to her and asks her advice. Then she says: “I’ll tell you sure ‘nough where your canvas is but you can come back tomorrow, it’s pretty late now.” The man didn’t think too highly of this, it was a long way from Holmen to Bragholdt, and he had to go over Asted bridge north of the farm Ebjærg, it wasn’t too nice to travel over it at night. But then he sees that the walls of the barn where the barn are weak and a lot of them were down; so he decides to go into the barn and tie down. He lies down in some hay and packs himself in. Then during the night, two come into the barn, and one of them was the hag and then a little man. He can hear that she’s good and drunk and she has a dishcloth in her hand which she smacks this little guy hard in the head with. He was supposed to tell her where the canvas was. But then he yells, “He hears! He hears!” She was so toasted that she didn’t hear what the little man said and she continued to beat him so he had to tell her. It lay in a sink hole in the minister’s field east of Holmen. So, as soon as they’d left the barn again, Iver Holm goes back home and finds his canvas and he was happy. But the next day, the after-shock came. A message came from her that he should come over, she wanted to talk to him. Then he had to pay what she wanted and he didn’t get off easy before he was allowed to go home.

The story relies on an amusing role reversal. Rather than a drunken husband beating his wife, the drunken folk healer beats the Devil. Thus the legend can be seen to have affinities with the story in which the husband is forced to endure his wife’s birthing pains. The reversal of social organization leads to the restoration of the economic status quo. Iver Holmen’s attempts to avoid his financial obligation backfires as well, thus upholding the economic organizing principle of payment for services—his theft of services is thwarted by the folk healer just as easily as the thief’s theft of Iver’s canvas, which had prompted the visit in the first place.

The next story in the session is humorous and describes a tailor’s attempt to discover the secret behind a woman’s remarkable success at churning butter:

A man lived in Ravheden, his wife was called Ane Marie. They had brought a tailor to the farm and it was old Ib the tailor, an old funny guy, he was pockmarked and we knew him. Now he sat on the table and sewed and the farm wife was going to churn. So she sets the churn in beside the wood burning stove and she was going to do it there but goes out to the kitchen for a bit, just as she was going to start and comes back with a slip of paper, she has it in her hand, something was written on it. She puts this under the bottom of the churn and goes out into the kitchen again. Then the tailor jumps down from the table and grabs this here slip of paper. He wanted to read it but didn’t have time because the farm wife comes in at the same time. He stuffs the slip of paper down his pants and the farm wife begins to churn. After she’d churned for a quarter of an hour, the tailor yells out: “Stop, my dear woman, because now my pants are totally full of butter, they can’t hold any more.” Well, then she helped him off with his pants and they were totally full, it was quite a sight. “Now I’ll give you five rix dollars,” she says, “if you’ll keep quiet about this.” Yes, he promises that, and then he gets the five rix dollars. After they’d gotten the pants clean, he saw what was written on the slip of paper and there was written that she wanted a spoonful of cream from each man in the parish who had cows. But the only thing he forgot was to be quiet because the first place he came to sew he told what had happened with the hag.

The woman’s ability to succeed in the domestic space is linked to skills commonly associated with witches—her bribe of the tailor underscores the illicit nature of her activities. Her activities seek to undercut the economic fortunes of the entire community for her own personal gain through the theft, however small, of milk, a staple of the rural economy. The legend may also include sexual innuendo, a concept not foreign to Jens Peter’s legend expression. Her exceptional and
prolific butter churning could be linked to sexual daintiness and promiscuity—with each of the men in the district no less!

The woman's churning charm brings a cure for bleeding to Jens Peter's mind, the only cure that Jens Peter includes in his sessions with Kristensen. Jens Peter returns once again to the activities of the supernaturally-abled. The following two stories, published as a single record in Danske sagn, tell of Jermín's abilities to stop fires and identify thieves:

There was a curate in Serrildave, he was called Jermín and lived in the annex farm. Then the big Vildmoose had caught fire and there had never been a swamp fire like that in Vendsyssel before. It burned both winter and summer and burned for nine or ten years. Jermín said then that he could stop the fire easily, he could be at home in the parsonage and stop the fire but he didn't want to because then people would think he was involved with witchcraft. But now they could drive with him up to the fire. They did that too and he sat in the wagon and drove around the fire. Then it was put out. Then there was theft in Vrå church, and the thieves stole both the chalice and the drinking vessels and everything. Now there was a rural dean in Vrå that time, and he wanted that it should be shown again ultimately, and then Jermín was to do it, because he was so wise. The dean got two ministers with him to the church to watch that he showed it again. While they were there, he said that he would now show them something they'd never seen before and would never want to see again. At that time, they had leaded windows in the church just like at other places and so he took a needle and went and poked three holes in the lead. Next, he advised them that they should notice the thieves and see if they could recognize them, there were three, who had done it, and all three were to go through the holes in the window lead. The dean and the two ministers got really scared by that sight. The dean said that he wished never to see it again. He knew all three thieves and it was three cotters from Vrå parish. I also heard their names, because Maline from Øksenvad who the dean had confirmed knew them personally and she told me that. But they got all of their silver back again.

This last story is in many regards similar to the story of the Bragholdt kjelling and Iver Holmen in that stolen property is recovered through supernatural intervention. In this case, however, the thieves are subjected to particularly cruel punishment, a punishment usually reserved for the Devil. The curate, although a religious figure, seems to be poised on the same ambiguous tight rope between good and evil as the folk healer/witch, evidenced by his initial refusal to quell the fire.

The following four stories focus on the loss of livestock or food. The parsons of the previous legend serve as a narrative link to the first of these legends in which a parson, with the help of his shepherd, discovers that bjørgfolk are eating him out of house and home. Once the food is blessed, however, the bjørgfolk cannot eat it and ultimately leave the area to avoid starvation. Thus, this story resonates well with Jens Peter's concern over the migration of the trolls to Russia due to the unbearable ringing of the church bells. A religiously charged activity protects the integrity of the community and the economy of the farm from the outside threat of the bjørgfolk. Bjørgfolk also appear in the next legend. A man renowned for losing animals at his farm removes peat from a mound. The bjørgfolk appear at his window that night and ask him to rethresh their roof. Although he at first refuses, saying that he had not damaged anybody's roof, he eventually complies with their request by replacing the peat on the mound. As a result of his good will, the bjørgfolk warn the farmer when any of his animals are in distress. In this manner, he manages to reverse his fortunes. Once again, the supernatural nature beings are presented as potentially helpful to the human community as long as their economic and domestic space is respected.

Jens Peter mentions that the man who told him the next story personally knew the man it had happened to. This farmer also has difficulty with his animals, losing one after the other. A Norwegian appears at the farm while the farmer is away, and his wife attempts to chase him off. Her actions are perfectly understandable in light of the farm's problems, the threatening nature of foreigners, and her desire to protect the domestic economy. Her husband, however, welcomes the Norwegian into the house. When he hears of the farm's difficulties, he helps the farmer discover the source and, once the curse is uncovered out in the barn, helps the man burn it. A neighbor woman appears but is not let into the barn, and the man's problem with his animals is solved. Here, the two sides of the fine line between good and evil are highlighted. The farmer's wife initially suspects the Norwegian, an outsider, to be an agent of evil. Instead, through this outsider's intervention, the evil ways of a known community
member—an insider—are revealed.

In Jens Peter's next legend, both a swineherd and his pigs simultaneously disappear, kidnapped by a band of robbers. When the farmer and his wife eventually discover the kidnapped swineherd, all of the pigs have been slaughtered and eaten. This legend comes near the very end of the session, and its reiteration of the theme of the economic threat posed to the human community by outsiders suggests that this was an important concern of Jens Peter. The band of robbers is eventually captured and executed.

Jens Peter's last two stories deal with the feats of two exceptionally strong men. Their accomplishments are tempered with Jens Peter's evaluations of their actions:

Sixty or seventy years ago there was a strong man out in Dronninglund forest, they called him big Køn Buur. He was so strong that he could pull a tree up with its roots when it wasn't too big and he had the strength of six or eight men. He could load a tree onto a wagon by himself, which two horses at that time couldn't pull; but the roads were also bad. So when people had come and chopped down a tree in a dale or on the side of a hill, they could harness their animals to one end and he could lift the other end up and carry it. He could carry the roots when the horses could only pull the top. Big was he, over six feet, and he'd been that big since before.36

A bricklayer journeyman who was named Ketting, he worked here in Linderumgård thirty years ago and he was so strong that he could lift two horses at once. A girth was strapped around the horses and then he could go in between them and take them. Once he bet the stablemaster at the farm, he was called Ammeldahl, that he could pull a load of gravel from the pit with one hand that the horses couldn't take. In that way, he won twenty rix dollars. He could lift a mortar tub up onto the wall, which two men couldn't get off the ground. But he was also 77.5 inches tall.37

Unlike the stories of strong men found in Peder Johansen's repertoire, Jens Peter does not seem to be expressing any self-identification with these actors; rather he appears to be commenting on the unnaturally high view of their abilities.

Dealing with Satan

One of the recurrent themes in Jens Peter's legends is the close affiliation between folk healers and parsons on the one hand and witches on the other hand. Both are closely linked to the forces of evil—the Devil and his manifestations. The actors who combat the threat to the community represented by the Devil tread a fine line between good and evil, occasionally crossing over to evil themselves. Folk healers in particular seem to balance between being protectors of the community and threats to the community. They are ambiguous and marginal figures in Jens Peter's legends. He makes it quite clear that the powers of folk healers and that of witches involve considerable skill. Incompetent attempts to control the forces of evil often have calamitous effects. One of his most notable stories, collected in two variant forms, showcases these concerns. The first variant comes in the first third of the second session and leads into a series of stories about the actions of folk healers and the threats to economic and domestic integrity posed by the Devil and revenants:

They had so many oxen at Baggesvogn. One winter half of them died and then the countess thought that there was someone who had bewitched them. There was a hag on the estate they called Bragholts hag, she lived in Bragholts and was a real witch and had Cyprianus. The countess borrows these books from her. Then an ox was slaughtered and many spells were cast. The countess had two hags with her that night in the room where they cast spells with the ox. They call the Devil in to them, he was to tell them who had cursed the ox. But then they don't really know how they should speak to him and it went thus that the three women were torn apart into small stumps. In the morning they lay in there, both the countess and the two hags, and their blood was splattered about on the walls. It was in 1808. My father remembered it as a child. One of the hags had a son who worked at the farm as an ox hand. Just as it happened, three slashes appeared in the comforter over him, so it was just like it was going to tear it into three pieces. If the Bragholts hag had also been there, then it would have gone well because she knew the spells really well.38

The second variant is told near the end of the fourth session in the middle of a series of legends about revenants and conjuring:

A count Feer lived at Baggesvogn and his wife is buried in Sindal cemetery. They had oxen on the farm and then one winter fifty of them died. Then they believed that it was evil people who were guilty of it. The lady borrows some wise books from the Bragholts hag and then she got two other women with her who were to help her with
about the helpful Norwegian, the obvious locus for such activity, she conducts the ritual inside the house. In the first variant, she goes so far as to bring an ox into the house. The arrival of the Devil and her inability to deal with him leads to a calamitous worsening of the farm's fortunes.

The attempted ritual and the appearance of Satan constitute the complicating action of the account. Since the women do not know how to deal with such a powerful entity, he tears them apart. The coda mentions that the blood stains could not be removed from the walls despite repeated attempts at replastering. In the second variant, Jens Peter mentions that his paternal grand aunt was the first person to discover the grisly result of the failed ritual while, in the first variant, he mentions that his father had remembered it happening as a child. Both verifying tags posit Jens Peter in a slightly more attached position to the action than he usually accorded himself. This narrative proximity may suggest that this story was of particular importance to him in his repertoire.

The result of the botched ritual is multivalent. The domestic space is seriously compromised by the countess' actions. By bringing the animals into the house, she has already transgressed the normal organization of the human dwelling. Reading the Devil into the room without the ability to control him represents a transgression of both the religious and social rules of the community. The slaughter of the countess and her two companions concretizes all of the disruptions in the social and economic fabric of the human community. First, the domestic space is so violated that the subsequent owner is forced to tear down the walls of the room. The domestic space must be completely destroyed before its integrity can be restored. Second, the integrity of the society is disrupted by the women's deaths. Third, the fertility of the community and the role of the mother are compromised, as is signified by the three slashes which appear on the farm hand's bedding.

In the first variant, Jens Peter makes specific reference to the incompetence of the countess: “Havde Bragholdt-kjællingen nu ogsaa været til Stede, saa havde det gaaet godt, for hun kjendte Kusnørne til Gavn” [If the Bragholdt hag had also been there, then it would have gone well because she..."

This passage illustrates the complexity of the interaction between the domestic and the supernatural, and the ways in which the narrative is structured to emphasize the consequences of the countess' actions.

There are several discrepancies between the two stories. In the first variant, the countess and the count are not introduced. This introduction is taken care of in the immediately preceding legend in the session. However, the loss of oxen obtains for both accounts and prompts the countess' attempt at remedial action. While Jens Peter characterizes the Bragholdt kjælling as “a real witch” in the first variant, and identifies the book the countess loans as Cyprianus, he is less specific in the second variant making no characterization as to the Bragholdt kjælling's role in the community and identifying the loaned books simply as klog buger [wise books]. Here the use of the adjective klog seems to imply that she was a folk healer and not a witch. However, for Jens Peter, the two appellations seem to be nearly equivalent.

The orientation of the legend posits the action among the aristocracy. The woman who attempts to use the black book is a countess, an outsider to Jens Peter's own class. Furthermore, she assumes the position of the local folk healer/witch, a person well below her aristocratic status, both economically and socially. Although her actions are intended to bolster the farm against a considerable economic threat, they have the opposite result. By assuming the role of folk healer, the countess tries to express her membership in a community to which she does not belong. Furthermore, she carries out the ritual in the wrong place. Rather than trying to remove the curse on the animals in the barn, as in the legend..."
knew the spells really well. While numerous legends can be found in Kristensen's collections about unauthorized use of magically charged books, the effects of which are usually counteracted by the timely intervention of the book's owner, Jens Peter's legend presents a peculiar twist. The use of the book is not unauthorized, but rather incompetent. The Bragholte kjæling loans the book or books to the countess, fully cognizant of the potential for disaster—after all, she knew "Kunstærme til Gavn. One must consider that the Bragholte kjæling could have foreseen the outcome of the loan and therefore was complicitous in the calamity. Such a negative role would be in keeping with the witch figure who often seeks to damage a farm's domestic, economic and social integrity through subtle and disguised attacks. Here, she has the mistress of the house attack her own farm.

The indirect attack is understandable if other information Jens Peter provides about the count and countess concerning their treatment of the local peasants is brought to bear on the account. The legend immediately preceding the first variant mentions that the count, "var så stræng mod hans hsvænder og pinte og plagede dem med arbejde" [was so harsh to his peasants and he tormented and harassed them with work]. The countess is also shown to be prone to inappropriate behaviors—she has numerous extramarital affairs with the peasants. This description sets the count and countess up for retribution from members of the peasant class. From other legends in Jens Peter's repertoire, one knows that the Bragholte kjæling is helpful to the local peasantry despite her link to the Devil. Thus, the death of the countess can be seen in part as an attack by a low-status individual against a high-status individual, and may be an expression of wishful thinking on Jens Peter's part. Here, the peasant class deals a crippling blow to the ruling aristocracy.

Ambush!

The disruptive actions of thieves also recur frequently in Jens Peter's legends. The second session opens with a flurry of such narratives, all remarkably similar. All include the attempted theft of a considerable sum of money from an individual traveling away from home on an extraordinary economic mission. The third legend from the second session reads as follows:

A man on Spangerhede who was named Færch, he sold a horse to [someone in] Ålborg for six hundred rix dollars. At the same time, a farm hand worked there as a driver, he was called Jens Snrup and had been a cavalry soldier in Randers and was used to riding. So he rode on a cavalry horse and was leading the sold horse. When he came to Langbro inn on the way home, he went in there and wanted a shot of akvavit and a taste of beer. Two others were sitting in there. He sits down now and tells the innkeeper that he'd been in Ålborg and had six hundred rix dollars on him. "You'd better stay here tonight," says the innkeeper, "because you won't get through the Østhjærg hills." The two had namely left just after they'd heard that. Yup, he says, he wants to go home because his master was waiting for him, he had to go home to Spangerhede tonight. The horse got a little feed then and he journeyed off. Then when he was half way into the canyon, a guy comes up to him and really wants to be allowed to ride, he was so tired. But Jens wouldn't let him up. "I'm used to riding by myself." But then he continues to walk along holding onto the bridle. When they were a good way in, then the other one calls out that he should hold tight to the horse. Then the farm hand cuffs him one on the ear so he spins two, three times around. The horse was off and running fast immediately, but the two are so fast that one of them is right up front with him in a moment. But then he wallops him with the butt of a pistol he had with him so he stumbles along the road and the other one fled. Then he didn't see them any more. The farm hand was very strong and he relied on that.

The orientation of the legend establishes the farm hand's identity as a capable horseman and presents his economically coded errand. At the inn, the farm hand drinks and carelessly lets slip that he is carrying a large amount of money. This allows the two robbers to leave and set up an ambush. Although the innkeeper warns the farm hand of the potential danger, he departs anyway. The boy has transgressed several rules of social conduct, leading to the establishment of a threat to the economic success of his employer and a physical threat to himself.

Predictably, the boy is attacked on his way through the Østhjærg bakker, the location of all ambushes in Jens Peter's legends. This ambush constitutes the complicating action of the legend. As in previous legends, Jens Peter uses direct
address here as a narrative strategy to increase the tension of the confrontation. At the appointed place, the other robber initiates the ambush. Although the farm hand smacks the first attacker so hard that he spins, "en to, tre gange," he manages to regain his footing and, along with his companion, race up to the galloping horse. Luckily the farm hand has his pistol along—so he can pistol whip the assailant. He too stumbles around in the road, while the other one, probably smarting from the first beating, takes to his heels. Ultimately, the attack fails and, as a result, the farm hand escapes.

Conclusion
In many of Jens Peter's legends, threat is primarily of an economic nature. A partial explanation for this lies in the crushing poverty which characterized his life. Jens Peter also told numerous legends about contact between the human community and supernatural beings. For him, trolls, elves and mound dwellers were only dangerous when their community and social organization had been threatened. They were easily chased off by religiously charged expressions. Manifestations of threat linked to the Devil proved to be more difficult to deal with in Jens Peter's legends. His legends reveal a close link between parsons, folk healers and witches. While the parsons are predominantly predisposed towards protecting the community from satanic threat, the folk healers and witches are ambiguously coded, being just as capable of harming the community as helping it. The dead also appear in Jens Peter's legends, often as threatening revenants. The link between death and threat—social, economic and emotional—is in part attributable to his wife's early death. Finally, female actors appear frequently in Jens Peter's legends. Unlike the women in Peder Johansen's legends, the women in Jens Peter's legends are neither marginalized nor subjected to barbaric treatment. Instead they are portrayed with as much nuance and range of action as male actors. Although Jens Peter's repertoire is diverse, one can draw close correlations between his life—his social and economic status—and his legends. His legends present an interesting look into the world view of a poor, nineteenth century widower who definitely liked to spin a yarn.
26. In his first session with Kristensen, Jens Peter told a variant of this legend as well.
27. Kathleen Stokker provides another parallel interpretation of similar legends centering on the concept of confession (Stokker 1991).
28. This account parallels a variant told in the second session with one considerable difference. In the first variant, the parson races a revenant whereas here he races the Devil. The substitution suggests a motifemic equivalence for revenants and the Devil in Jens Peter's repertoire.
29. Jens Peter told a variant of this story in the first collection session.
30. This legend is a variant of a story he told during the second session.
37. Kristensen 1900-1902 vol. 2: 76.
40. The first variant also provides more detail to the magic attempted by the countess and her helpers. The greater detail may be due to the performance situation—Kristensen may have indicated during the second variant that Jens Peter had told him the story earlier, prompting him to shorten it.
42. Kristensen 1900-1902 vol. 2: 19.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Another spring day, this time in 1911. The peripatetic Kristensen continues his jaunts through the Danish countryside. As usual, his weathered bag is crammed with notebooks, pencils, pen, ink, perhaps lunch or possibly one of his numerous books which he hopes to sell along the way to a school teacher. Although the bag weighs heavily on his shoulder, the sixty-eight year old Kristensen is indefatigable. Walking from one town to the next, he makes his way to Bredsten and finally arrives at Kjerbølling, home to Rasmus Holgersen. Rasmus is an amiable story-teller, one who hits his stride with a good pipe in his hand. Kristensen has visited him once before, and soon Rasmus is rattling off stories:

There was a young man, he was called Poul Rasmussen, he had killed his girl friend, but what he had done had never been made public. The twenty-third of every month he'd have such an attack of madness, and it would go on for two or three days. It was precisely that day that he had done the dirty deed. But otherwise he went about and was completely easy-going. At night, he was locked in in a room with iron bars over the windows. Then they put another farm hand to watch him, he was called Simon Simonsen, he was twenty-four or twenty-five at the time when it happened, and he'd probably be about eighty now if he was still alive. He wasn't supposed to do anything but watch Poul. He watched him for three years too. But then one night Simon went to a dance or a gathering, and when he came home late at night and went in to the farm hand to check on him, he lay like he was dead. So they fetched the doctor, but
the doctor said that he wasn’t dead. So they fetched two more and they said the same thing. Then they fetched the parson and he said the same thing too. He lay like that for six weeks. There were no doctors who would sign the death certificate, and sweat dripped down his cheeks. Then they fetched Pastor Svejsstrup from Nørup and he was alone with him for two hours. Then when he came out, they asked him what he said about it. Then he says, “There’s nothing to do with him, the Evil One has possessed him.” He was totally warm and never cold and they had forced a little food into him now and then. But then the parson and the three doctors agreed that he should be buried, and he was buried in Nørup cemetery and he had been a rich farm owner’s son.1

One’s first inclination might be to ask, “Is this true? Did it really happen?” But, as pointed out in this study, these questions are not the most pressing. Rather, one might now be inclined to ask, “Who was Rasmus? And why did he tell this story?”

Everyone tells stories and everyone likes to listen to a good story. But, while everyone may tell stories, they do not always tell them the same way. This study of story telling—particularly legend telling—has revealed how both individual personality and social experiences help shape tradition. Time and again, it was shown how social standing, economics, village organization, the division of labor and cultural norms affect what gets told. So, once again, the question can be posed, “Who tells what to whom in the form of a legend, and why?” And now we are much closer to being able to answer it.

The first obstacle to answering the question is deciding what is and what is not a legend. Genre definition is always a questionable enterprise, since definitions often tend to be overly rigid and exclusionary. However, it is also difficult to study something if, at the very least, the typical characteristics of the phenomenon have not been clearly laid out. For this reason, it was necessary to try to develop a characterization of legend. Fortunately, scholars over the years have been able to identify some of the main characteristics of the legend. Synthesizing the main points of these studies allows one to develop a working characterization of the genre—a characterization with enough flexibility to allow for the often blurry line between genres in individuals’ repertoires and during performance. Typically, legend is a traditional, (mono-)episodic, highly ecotyped, localized and historicized narrative of past events told as believable in a conversational mode. Psychologically, it acts as a symbolic representation of folk belief and it reflects the collective experiences and values of the group to whose tradition it belongs. Although it is unlikely that Rasmus would have typified any of his stories in such a fashion, the characterization allows a means for delimiting the scope of this study. At the same time, it became apparent that the entire folkloric repertoires of the tradition participants had to be evaluated in the course of trying to interpret legends, since one can not always distinguish between genres during performance. Thus, it is important to know that Rasmus told virtually nothing but legends, while Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter often told folktales with happy endings, and that Jens Kristensen loved to sing ballads.

Once legend had been sufficiently characterized, other parts of the question could be addressed. In an effort to establish consistency, the “to whom” part of this study was restricted to Kristensen. In the over forty years he spent criss-crossing Denmark, Kristensen managed to amass thousands of pages of field notes. Keeping track of his informants through short biographical sketches, and developing a short-hand for the accurate transcription of performances, Kristensen was able to produce a folklore collection unrivaled by any other in the world. Although he may not have been the perfect audience, his ease with the various Jutish dialects and his own cotter class background allowed him to develop a close rapport with his informants. Sitting around chatting in the main room of a poor cottage, he was able to induce natural performance contexts, such as his evening encounters with Peder Johansen at Fulbro mill. So, when Kristensen visited Rasmus on this spring day in 1911, he had already been by once before, and they were good friends. They would sit together there at Kjærhølling and, while Rasmus packed his pipe, he would spin his tales.

Rasmus enjoyed telling stories, and he knew quite a few legends. In this regard, he was not too different than most people in rural nineteenth century Denmark. Virtually everyone Kristensen encountered could tell at least one legend—those that could not often directed him to someone who could. Thus, it seems that the entire population of Jutland were tradition participants, either active or passive.
No one group—neither men nor women, rich nor poor, old nor young, married nor unmarried-dominated the legend tradition. Unlike some other folkloric forms, such as folktale or ballad, legends were part of everyone’s repertoires. The stories people remember well enough to tell again are the ones that have particular significance for them. And even if someone remembers a story, they may not ever tell it again. In this regards, story telling reflects a choice on the part of the teller. What motivates a particular individual to tell a specific story becomes the most pressing concern. However, to understand possible motivations for legend telling, it is necessary to know quite a bit about the legend tellers. Certainly an understanding of the social and economic conditions affecting people’s day-to-day lives is necessary before one can begin to interpret their traditional expressions.

The majority of the population in nineteenth century Denmark fell into two main classes—the farm owners, who were generally poor, and the cotters, who were even poorer. Kristensen had a professed preference for the poorest of the poor in his collection endeavors, and so it is not too surprising that they constitute the vast majority of his informants. Despite this collecting bias, the farm owners turned out to be just as adept at telling legends as their cotter counterparts. Perhaps the believable characteristic of legend allowed the farm owners the opportunity to present themselves as authorities on “local history.” Often, the more educated farm owners did not want to appear to be given to “superstition” or “old-fashioned” things. At the same time, they needed to tell stories. The legend provided them the opportunity to both tell stories and yet present themselves as “modern” or authoritative. This suggestion would explain the striking divergence from Holbek’s confirmation of Kristensen’s belief that cotters were much better sources than the wealthier farm owners. While such an evaluation appears to be true in regards ballads and folktales, the observation does not obtain for legends and, interestingly, jokes. At the end of the study, the answer to the question, “Who tells legends?” must be, “Everybody tells legends.”

But not everybody tells as many legends as everybody else. Instead, just as there are outstanding folktale narrators and remarkable ballad singers, so too there are exceptional legend tellers. Most everyone could tell one or two stories, but only a small percentage of the seven thousand or so people Kristensen contacted could tell fifteen or more. One finds a similar phenomenon in current: traditions as well—while many people can tell one or two stories, only a handful can tell many. The individuals who told many stories to Kristensen were the “craftsmen” of the tradition. Presumably, they told legends often and well—many of these informants were characterized by either Kristensen or their peers as “really good” story tellers. Among these one hundred craftsmen, some had repertoires which suggested generic specialization, such as Jens Kristian Kristensen Mosen, while others had repertoires which revealed a broad range of genres, such as Klaus Andreas Pedersen. But, like Rasmus, they all had one thing in common: they told a lot of legends.

Different people tell different stories. However people with similar experiences and values often tell similar stories. Therefore, one should be able to discover trends in the legends of members of groups of people. Once the craftsmen of the tradition had been identified, it was necessary to organize them in a meaningful way and develop a system for describing their stories which did not rely on overly subjective processes. First, all of their legends were classified according to seventy or so categories describing content elements or general structural attributes. After this had been done, a statistical overview of the repertoires of all one hundred informants was made. Trends concerning the generic make-up of repertoires and the frequency with which various content elements appeared were easily identified. But such an overview provided only a more articulated view of the tradition without answering any of the questions concerning “who told what.” Dividing the informants according to sex, class, age and marital status seemed to be the most reasonable way to address differences in repertoires and legends across groups since these divisions mirror the actual social and economic organization of rural nineteenth century Denmark. The comparisons across groups led to some interesting discoveries.

Neither men nor women dominated the legend tradition. However, while women tended to include both men and women in their legends, men tended to exclude women from their legends. So it is not surprising that no live women appear in Rasmus’ legend. When men did include women in
their legends, they often took the form of a threatening being, either a revenant or a witch. Numerous other trends were discovered as well. Different groups used the figure of the parson in disproportionate numbers of their legends. Women frequently told legends which included the parson, while men often did not. Perhaps the parson, a male authority figure, could be used by women to subvert the patriarchal authority of their husbands. cotters as well made more frequent use of the parson in their legends than farm owners. Since farm owners were more politically powerful than their cottor counterparts, they often substituted the male folk healer in the place of the parson, thereby side-stepping the narrative praise of an institutional power figure. When the parson did appear in farm owner’s or men’s legends, he was often the object of ridicule.

Other trends confirmed the hypothesis that legends reflect both the fears and aspirations associated with economic or social activities. Thus, men often told stories situated outside the farm while women told stories situated inside the farm. Extra-domestic activities appear more frequently in men’s legends, while domestic activities appear more frequently in women’s legends. Similarly, farm owners told legends which reflected concerns associated with land ownership and the transport of harvests, while cottors told legends which reflected concerns associated with working the land and the wicked machinations of evil manor lords. Frequently, legends include a threat to either the economic or social status quo of the community. These threats can prevent people from carrying out their economically-coded duties or they can harm the ability of the community to perpetuate itself. While many legends end with the triumph of the human community over the threat, just as many legends end with the triumph of the threat. Surprisingly, an equal number of legends end ambiguously, with the human community remaining as before the appearance of the threat. However, the frightening implication that the threat could easily reappear lurks below the surface of the unresolved ending.

Supernatural beings or supernatural events are perhaps the most frequent manifestation of threat in legends. In fact, well over two thirds of the legends Kristensen collected include some form of supernatural contact. Although many of the supernatural phenomena related in the legends originate outside the community—such as trolls, elves and Satan—many of the phenomena originate within the community—such as witches and thieves. Often, these supernatural intrusions are called forth by the inappropriate actions of a community member. Thus, it is not too surprising that the boy’s murder of his girlfriend in Rasmus’ legend results in Satan’s terrifying intrusion into the house. Luckily, religiously coded activities, or other behaviors which mark the threatened human as a member of the human community, usually countermanded the horrifying intrusion of the Other world. Regretfully, such is not the case in Rasmus’ legend, and the young man is buried alive.

Other trends discovered in the analysis of the repertoires of the one hundred legend “craftsmen” included the discovery of interesting motific equivalency across groups. The younger informants tended to make the same substitution of the male folk healer for the parson as found in the repertoires of men and farm owners. In this case, the substitution was probably linked to the demystification of the parson’s power, a result of the younger informants’ better education. In a related phenomenon, the better educated farm owners often used human manifestations of outside threat rather than make use of the “less modern” supernatural beings, such as trolls. Numerous, less striking, trends also emerged in this statistical evaluation of the craftsmen’s repertoires, and helped paint a more complete picture of “who” told “what.”

However, the trends that were uncovered were just that—trends. No one single informant had a repertoire that faithfully reflected all of the trends. Instead, it became apparent that to understand the legend tradition of rural Denmark, it was also necessary to look at the repertoires of several individuals. The statistics could not predict that Rasmus would tell the story he did. Rather, they could simply confirm that it was not unexpected for him to tell a story of murder and Satanic retribution with both supernatural contact and a negative resolution in which the power of the parson is called into question.

The exploration of individual repertoires was divided according to the sessions Kristensen had with them. Each performance session can be read as an entirety. When a person tells stories, the story just told often calls to mind
another story. By examining the links between stories over the course of several sessions, one can discover the narrator’s main concerns—which themes do they highlight? Repeated themes, in turn, imply importance. If Rasmus told a lot of stories about murder, Satan and the questionable abilities of doctors and parsons, one could be sure that they reflected his attitudes. In turn, one could look to his biography to find possible explanations for those attitudes. The close analysis of three informants’ repertoires—those of Peder Johansen, Kirsten Marie Pedersdatter and Jens Peter Pedersen—revealed the role of the individual in shaping tradition. The personalities and individual concerns of these three came to the fore in the evaluation of their repertoires. And it was possible to propose interpretations of why they chose to tell the particular stories they told.

Close readings of individual legends furthered the process of interpretation. Using Nicolaisen’s structural map as a guide through the legends, it was possible to isolate the points in the legend where the narrators made choices. In the orientation, the narrator decides on the people who will appear in the story. Why does one narrator choose a male actor while another chooses a female actor for the same role? With the complicating action, the narrator chooses what happens to whom. And the resolution of the story lets the narrator choose the level of success the legend actors achieve. By dissecting several legends in light of the informant’s biography and general folkloric repertoire, one begins to see what that person felt was important, how they expressed it and why they felt it was important.

Who tells what to whom in the form of a legend and why? By now, this question has become a bit repetitive. But repetition implies importance. Nearly everyone told Kristensen legends. What they told often depended on the experiences associated with their social or economic group, their sex and their age. Their motivations were diverse, but it was apparent that individuals shaped their stories to fit their needs. Interpreting legend is a continuous process. It seems most expedient to approach traditional expressions from as many angles as possible. A methodology that synthesizes the views of numerous disciplines will ultimately help attempts to interpret the traditional expressions of disparate cultural groups. This study has been one such attempt.

NOTES

2. Thieves often use the supernaturally charged “thief’s finger” to guarantee success.
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**List of Abbreviations for Table of Informants**

ETK — Evald Tang Kristensen

1906/23 — Special collection *Sagn og tro at Dansk folkemindesamling*.

1906/60 — Special collection at *Dansk folkemindesamling*.

1906/135 — Special collection “Biographical sketches of folklorists and collectors” at *Dansk folkemindesamling*.

1929/1 — Original copies of materials sent to Kristensen. Housed at *Dansk folkemindesamling*.

1929/94 — Copies of proverbs from L. N. Bertelsen’s collection. Housed at *Dansk folkemindesamling*.

1929/102 VI3 30 — Unpublished third series of *Jysk almueliv I-VI*. Housed at *Dansk folkemindesamling*.

1929/129; — Alphabetical index to all of Kristensen’s informants. Housed at *Dansk folkemindesamling*.

1929/137 — Newspaper articles and unpublished notes about Kristensen. Housed at *Dansk folkemindesamling*.

Æv — Brandt 1974.


BKI — Kristensen 1896-1897, vol. 2.

BS — Kristensen 1897a.

DFGånder — Kristensen 1913.

DFÆv — Kristensen 1884-1888 (1888).

DS — Kristensen 1892-1901 (1980).

DST — Kristensen 1928-1939.

DSk — Kristensen 1900.

DSkv — Kristensen 1901.

DSkvTill — Kristensen 1901, addendum.

DqF — Grundtvig 1853-1976.

Efkk — Efterklangsvis.

FM — Kristensen 1898.
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