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**„Encountering Hexenbiests and Blutbaden:  
The Representation of the Other in the TV series *Grimm*“**

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## CERTIFICATION

I, Nives Kovacec, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts, in the English Department of University of Vienna, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

## Abstract – English

TV series are increasingly popular media and thus strong carrier for ideology. This thesis analyses the TV series *Grimm* which is inspired by the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm. The dominant ideology in *Grimm* is an ideology of difference: the American self is established by contrasting it to an opposite. The unknown cultural values of this other fuel the fear of the different other. This is expressed through supernatural beings called "Wesen" which occur in the series and symbolize negative personality traits which are in addition connected with other cultures. More specifically, many characters are depicted as German and Austrian. Therefore, the most common German and Austrian stereotypes will be categorized in this thesis. Also, the thesis investigates how the German language is used to stress this difference. Last, mythological creatures in the series will be compared to the ones described by the Brothers Grimm and it will be analyzed if they hold stereotypes of races and cultures, gender and social classes.

## Abstract - Deutsch

TV-Serien haben sich in den letzten Jahren zu den populärsten Entertainment-Formaten gemausert und sind daher besonders effektive Träger von Ideologien. Im Zentrum dieser Master These steht die TV-Serie *Grimm*, die von die Märchen der Gebrüder Grimm inspiriert wird. Die dominante Ideologie in *Grimm* ist eine Ideologie der Differenz. Andersheit wird zur Bestätigung des kulturellen Selbst genutzt und auch die Angst vor dem unbekannten Anderen drückt sich in der Serie aus. Diese Arbeit untersucht Stereotype des kulturell Anderen, im Speziellen von der deutschen und österreichischen Kultur. Desweiteren soll herausgestellt werden, welche Rolle die Benutzung der deutschen Sprache als 'Sprache der Anderen' spielt. Zu allerletzt soll die Darstellung der Fabelwesen in *Grimm* mit der der Gebrüder Grimm verglichen werden, um die unterschiedliche Beschreibung von Klasse, Rasse, Kultur und Geschlecht zu untersuchen.

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## 1. Introduction

Mass media supplies us with the elements with which we construct our identity. In mediated narratives ideological resources like symbols, metaphors and myths are provided, which form our values and sense of difference. As Stuart Hall argues: "[T]he media's main sphere of operations is the production and transformation of ideologies" (Hall, 1995: 18). A popular TV series' power to spread a set of beliefs is enormous: Not only does it reach millions of people worldwide, it also reaches them every week and its ideological views can therefore consolidate easily in the minds of the viewers.

At the centre of this thesis stands the TV series *Grimm*, a series that burgeons with stereotypes. The protagonist of the series is the homicide detective Nick Burkhardt, who finds out that he is a Grimm: A descendant from a German hunter family, who can see behind the human mask of so-called "Wesen" and detect their true nature. These supernatural creatures can transform their outer appearance from human to a beast-like form, which also functions as a metaphor for their often dangerous and morally questionable characters. It is Burkhardt's duty to maintain order in this "multicultural" society.

In the course of the series, it becomes clear that language is used as a means to stress the difference between culturally adapted Americans and other beings. The basis for the characterization of supernatural creatures is derived from myths and fairy tales from all over the world, but none comes from white American culture.

References to supernatural activities are depicted with German terms, but the grammar and pronunciation used in the series is mostly incorrect. By doing so, the producers of *Grimm* seem to touch upon a well-known stereotype often attributed to Americans, namely their lack of knowledge of other languages. The German language functions as a marker for all beings and practices that are different from the stereotypically American way of life. As Stuart Hall explains it, difference is needed to construct meaning (see Hall, 1997: 235). Various stereotypes are used as a means of alienating the "Wesen" from the world that is considered normal by targeted viewers. An audience that regularly watches the series *Grimm*, absorbs a huge amount of condensed (mis-)information on non-American cultures. Still, the fantasy series does not leave the attentive viewers in the belief that any of these constructed stereotypes should be taken

seriously. At a closer look, we can see that everything in this series is stereotyped. And therefore *Grimm* seems to function as an exaggeration of the culture in which it is produced.

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the most dominant stereotypes in *Grimm* and explore the series' way of othering its characters. I will pay special attention to stereotypes of German and Austrian culture and examine how difference is constructed and what use it might have in the society. According to Hall, difference is an essential factor to the production of meaning (see Hall, 1997: 234). Moreover, I want to analyze the symbolism of the supernatural creatures in *Grimm* and compare them to the ones appearing in the tales collected by the Brothers Grimm.

The first part of this thesis deals with the theoretical background. It will include different views on popular culture and ideology and it will explain semiotics and other representation theories as a methodology for analyzing products of culture. Furthermore, it will introduce stereotyping and othering as a means to analyze the series and explains the importance of fairy tales.

The second part summarizes the methodology and analyzes the use the most common German and Austrian stereotypes in the series. Furthermore, the German language as a marker for difference will be investigated and at last it sheds light on the symbolism and characteristics of the mythological creatures in the series and compares them to the ones we know from the tale collection of the Brothers Grimm. The last chapter contains the conclusion of findings.

## 2. Theory

*Grimm* is a very popular American TV series which has fans all over the world and as such is a powerful medium to spread certain beliefs. I think, it is very important to consider contemporary TV series as for example *Grimm*, to understand not only what ideas are transported into millions of heads, but also as a state of the art of a nation's ideology.

My interest in *Grimm* originated in its unusual use of the German language and its depiction of mythical creatures as German stemming characters. It occurred to me that this connection was not drawn by coincidence but as a cultural map to handling otherness. *Grimm* is an American series and thus mirrors the American ideology. I want to prove with this thesis, that the series is influenced by an ideology of difference and that the fear of the other determines its worldview.

In RQ3 the symbolism of the creatures in *Grimm* will be analyzed and compared to the tales of the brothers Grimm. In RQ2 the incorrect use of the German language as language of the Other will be interpreted and in RQ1 the most important German stereotypes in the series will be depicted and analyzed.

In the following chapter, the theoretical background will be laid bare, in the main part the analysis of the series will have its place.

### 2.1. *Ideology and the Media*

The concept of ideology is not easy to define, as it is one of the most important words in the field of cultural studies, and there are many different competing opinions about it. All these theories agree that ideology shows itself in our beliefs, wishes and even cultural practices and that it is delivered to us by features of the society we were brought up in.

According to Storey (2006: 2) "ideology can refer to a systematic body of ideas articulated by a particular group of people". This could be a professional group, political party or any other group of people that share common economic, social or religious ideas. Sometimes ideology seems to be seen as a rather subliminal message, something that works best when concealed. It is shared by most people from the same culture and influences their behavior, so

it can be used to wield power over particular groups of people. This Marxist view on (capital) ideology suggests that distorted images are imposed by a dominant class on the subordinate classes, without the latter realizing it. Storey gives as an example feminists, who would see a patriarchal ideology's impact on gender equality. (Storey, 2006: 2)

Last but not least, the study of ideology tries to shed light on how cultural texts, that is everything from moving images and songs to real texts and novels, convey a picture of the world. Storey suggests: "Texts are said to take sides, consciously or unconsciously, in this conflict." (Storey, 2006: 3) Roland Barthes suggests that ideology is a secondary, connotative meaning that cultural products convey. Ideology has the ability to make appear natural, what in fact is artificially added, that is cultural. (Storey, 2006: 3)

Luis Althusser claims "[i]deology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (Althusser, 1971 In: Storey, 2006b: 338). Those ideologies do not mirror the world, but are imaginary and thus have to be "'interpreted` to discover the reality of the world behind their imaginary representation of that world". (Althusser, 1971 In: Storey, 2006b: 338) Moreover, Althusser argues that ideology is not just an idea it is a "material practice", which shows in everyday customs. As the individual acts on their beliefs, they will "have corresponding attitudes, inscribed in ritual practices 'according to the correct principles'". (Althusser, 1971 In: Storey, 2006b: 340)

In this thesis, the term ideology will be used like a metaphorical looking glass, through which our social reality is viewed and our worldview is formed. It includes all pictures, symbols, concepts that color our view on the material world in culturally appropriate colors. I say culturally appropriate colors, because ideology is not a conscious work of an individual, but one of society. An individual can utter statements "*within ideology*" (Hall, 1995: 19)

Media is an important agent, when it comes to propagating ideological views. Kellner claims:

"Radio, television, film, and the other products of media culture provide materials out of which we forge our very identities; our sense of selfhood; our notion of what it means to be male or female; our sense of class, of ethnicity and race, of nationality, of sexuality; and of "us" and "them." (...) Media stories provide the symbols, myths, and resources through which we constitute a common culture and through the appropriation of which we insert ourselves into this culture." (Kellner, 2015: 1)



Media teaches us, many from early childhood onwards, how to be a social human being. Media is a vivid source of cultural knowledge, here we learn what we have to fear, think and feel. (Kellner, 2015: 1)

"[T]he media's main sphere of operations is the production and transformation of ideologies." (Hall, 1995: 18) Hall argues, that media's potential influence on a person's worldview is strong enough to insert beliefs in that person's head or lead them into an ideological struggle, as media is "part of the dominant means of *ideological* production". (Hall, 1995: 19) As Ideologies are naturalized, they are spread unconsciously, as we are not aware of their influence on us. "They work most effectively when we are not aware that how we formulate and construct a statement about the world is underpinned by ideological premises". (Hall, 1995: 19) Hall mentions gender and race as very strong ideologies, which seem to be natural to us, in the same manner we would consider the stereotypes we know about other cultures as equally natural. (Hall, 1995: 19)

Additionally, media has the means to add other connotations and interpretations to an already existing meaning. This is also true for the connotations that come to our mind when we think about mystical beasts and interpretations of fairy-drawn morals. We can take the TV series *Grimm* as an example, which is presenting the concept of the big, bad wolf to its audience, a concept that is known from the brother Grimm's fairy tales. It also adds a concept of the personification as "real human" to it. At this point the audience interprets Grimm's concept of the bad wolf and adds to it features from the TV series, which poses and at the same time answers questions like: Are those people white, male or female, which nationality do they belong to, how are they dressed, how do they behave? The moral concept of the bad wolf is expanded and interwoven with the ideological field of race, gender and culture and stored in the minds of people for further use. Even if these characters in the series are fictional, after they are memorized they become part of ideology and therefore are as good as reality. Hall argues that these representations are then conceived as natural, no matter if they are based on fiction or fact, they become "unquestioned assumptions" (Hall, 1995: 20).

## **2.2. Culture, Popular Culture & Mass-Media**

Matthew Arnold argues religious and political groups arrange their doctrines in easy digestible bits like texts of popular literature, to make their ideological ideas stick to people of lower classes. But culture seeks for perfection of individuals, without imposing it with force on society. So, culture equals anarchy in its lack of prescription. (Arnold, 1869 in Storey, 2006b: 7)

There are many definitions of the term 'Culture'. It can either describe a development of intellect and religion, works and practices in an artistic sense, or a lifestyle of a group of people or period in time. (Storey, 2006: 1)

On the other hand, the concept of Popular Culture is not so easy to grasp and many have a negative connotation with it. Williams (Storey, 2006: 4) describes it as work that is made to be liked by many people, but also as inferior. Storey writes that one way of defining Popular Culture is first of all defining high culture and excluding everything that does not meet its standards. According to Pierre Bourdieu the term Popular Culture aims to differentiate classes. (Storey, 2006: 5) Others would say that its means of production define it as inferior art, namely its origin in mass production, made to be passively consumed by an audience that does not ask for more. It is said to be an American invention. The fear of Americanization is particularly strong in Europe and is, claims Storey, related to a distrust, as it is seen as threat to high culture and its values. (Storey, 2006: 7)

Gramsci developed the term Hegemony which describes the way in which the classes are drawn into a subordinate relationship with a dominant group through "intellectual and moral leadership". He argues that subordinate classes and struggle to resist the dominant forces to impose their interests on them. According to this theory, Popular Culture is what happens in between, namely the struggle for the compromise. (Storey, 2006: 8)

Another definition of Popular Culture is a more positive one, namely it is presented as folk culture, a culture that comes from the people. John Fiske's semiotic approach suggests that it is an active process: "mass culture is the repertoire, Popular Culture is what people actively make from it, actually do with the commodities and commodified practices they consume". (Storey, 2006: 7)

So, there is not only one true definition of Popular Culture and as Storey (2006: 11) claims it lacks something to which it stands in contrast to.

If one believes in the distinction between high culture and Popular Culture, the generally accepted opinion would probably be that most TV series count to the field of Popular Culture, whereas classical music and Shakespearean literature would be accepted as High Culture. However, Kellner argues "[c]ultural studies allows us to examine and critically scrutinize the whole range of culture without prior prejudices toward one or another sort of cultural text, institution, or practice" (Kellner, 2015: 3). The categorization is often more an emotional, than a logically comprehensible one and underlies the "ideology of mass culture". Ang argues that an ideological discourse always serves as well as an emotional function as a cognitive one. Thus a product of American (mass)-culture, or Popular Culture, such as a TV series, must be considered "bad". (Ang, 1985 In: Storey, 2006b: 189-90) This can be seen especially well when a product of Popular Culture ceases to be popular.

For instance, Theodor W. Adorno (1941, In: Storey, 2006b: 73) distinguishes two kinds of music in his essay "On Popular Music": popular music and serious music. The differentiation is not due to complexity of a song's harmonies, melody, or rhythm, but by factors such as standardization, mass production and contexts of musical elements. Adorno criticizes the recurring structure or form that most popular songs follow. Nevertheless, one could also argue the same was true for Shakespearean plays which have been seen as mainstream theatre and entertainment for the masses, while today they are seen as the best that was thought and done by man. According to Ang, what is lacking in the study of Popular Culture, is the "recognition of pleasure" as valid argument:

"Pleasure, however, is the category that is ignored in the ideology of mass culture. In its discourses pleasure seems to be non-existent. Instead it makes things like responsibility, critical distance or aesthetic purity central – moral categories that make pleasure an irrelevant and illegitimate criterion. In this way the ideology of mass culture places itself outside the framework of the popular aesthetic, of the way in which popular cultural practices take shape in the routines of daily life." (Ang, 1985 In: Storey 2006b: 197f.)

The question is if some cultural products can be seen as better or worse than others, or if this assessment underlies rules that are rather based on emotions than logic and maybe changes with the generation of recipients. I do not want to

bother my readers with the question whether this is not just a matter of perspective, as it might not be even possible to compare one kind of music to another as they are so different and cultural needs in between the high time of one and the raise to fame of the other.

At this point, I just want to add my motivation on why I considered a product of Popular Culture for my thesis, if we still think of it in those categories. The field of cultural studies employs itself with culture and everything that emerges from culture. It can investigate how a culture was a long time ago, and how it has changed over time. Still, it can also engage in research on societies nowadays, and draw a recent picture and maybe even grasp a glimpse on where a culture is heading to. As the word Popular Culture suggests, it is popular and therefore a significant number of people nowadays participate in it. The logical consequence for me would be that products of Popular Culture have a high impact on the whole society and on its future. Let us consider for instance the TV series *Grimm* which has finished its fourth season on NBC network with 88 episodes all in all, and an average of 4.81 million viewers per episode in the USA only. (TVseriesfinale.com, 2015) The first season even registered 5.02 million viewers, mainly in the age-group 18-49 and the series is aired in many more countries in the world already. (TVseriesfinale.com, 2012) This offers a lot of possibilities for contact with ideological views and stereotypes which are carried by the TV series and viewers happily absorb every week. Each episode is awaited with pleasant anticipation, it is reflected on after it is watched, or happenings are re-evaluated over coffee with friends. "There may even be an element of peer pressure involved in watching TV series, since the fact that friends, classmates, or colleagues watch a particular series is the reason many viewers start watching the same series." (Allrath et al, 2010: 8) Conclusively, a TV series is the perfect propaganda for an underlying ideology. This gives significant power to the genre of TV series, but also bears the risk of abuse.

### **2.3. Reality, Representation and Language**

The theory of representation is a key-concept in the field of cultural studies, because it is believed that representation creates meaning and therefore defines how people see the world. What first derived from a linguistic approach,

has become strongly interwoven with Cultural Studies, as the importance of the concept of representation lies in its being a basic element of communication and the latter being a foundation pillar of a functioning society. According to Stuart Hall, representation "means using language to say something meaningfully about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people" and "connects meaning and language to culture". (Hall, 1997b: 15) For this thesis Stuart Hall's view on representation plays an important role to explain underlying cultural manifestations of representation in the NBC TV series "Grimm". In the following, Hall's definition of stereotyping is of importance, too.

For this thesis, the concept of reality must be defined, as in many instances of the TV series a 'standard' view on reality is questioned. It must be made clear that the existence of a general reality, in the meaning of "something that is neither derivative nor dependent but exists necessarily", (Merriam Webster, 2015b) is taken for granted. However, due to human's limited cognitive ability their view on the world is understood as being biased. People do not observe the factual world objectively, but clouded through their own experiences, language, feelings and ideology. So, for this paper the concept of reality is always regarded as subjective, even if a material world exists without man influencing it. Humans not only live in a real, natural surrounding, but also in a symbolic one, one which are irrevocably blended into each other, so that a differentiation is not possible. Burkart claims that signs can only signify concepts that already are established in a person's mind: "Wörter können immer nur auf solche Begrifflichkeiten hindeuten, die im individuellen Bewußtsein bereits vorhanden sind." (Burkhart, 2002: 93) Metaphorically said, we see our surrounding through a looking glass of representation. The culturally forged language system is our medium through which we filter the world. (Burkhart, 2002: 93)

It can be claimed that human beings never see the material world without a symbolic context of their representation system. Ethno-Linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf argue that people living in different regions and cultures have developed their looking glass of representation differently from each other. Their different lifestyles have lead to distinct needs for specific representative signs and their sign-system would in return change how they perceive or reconstruct the world. (Burkhart, 2002: 95) Sapir (1951: 162)

believed that language plays a significant role in how we view the world and reflect on our surrounding.

"It is an illusion to think that we can understand the significant outlines of a culture through sheer observation and without the guide of the linguistic symbolism which makes these outlines significant and intelligible to society." (Sapir, 1951: 161f.)

Sapir claims to find proof for his theory in the comparison of different languages. "No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality." (Sapir, 1951: 162) Sapir and Whorf studied languages of many cultures and found that every cultural group generates a symbolic filter that serves as a tool with which nature, thoughts, events and relations are structured. Areas of life that are more important also enjoy more linguistic attention, that is more signs are developed for those areas. Sapir examined the language of Inuit, who seem to have more words for snow than other cultures, and compared Japanese's plenty distinguished words for rice to europeans only one. Sapir's student Benjamin Lee Whorf formulated these findings into the so called 'linguistic relativity principle' which is better known as 'Sapir-Whorf-Hypothesis'. (Burkhart, 2002: 97ff.) But before examining further how language manages to represent anything, we have at first to deploy some definitions.

Chandler defines representation as "the construction in any medium (especially the mass media) of aspects of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts." Representation therefore includes not only a word or a sign, it can be a picture, a symbol, or even a person and everything that can convey meaning and stand for other things. Stuart Hall differentiates three theories on how the world is represented by language: The reflective theory, which suggests that language is only a mirror for the real world and does not change or add meaning in any way. The intentional theory only focusses on the individual meaning of the speaker's words, because people have different intentions and observes the world in their special way. But most the most important approach for Cultural Studies and also for this thesis is the constructionist approach, which is influenced by a semiotic approach by Ferdinand de Saussure and a discursive approach by Michel Foucault. (Hall, 1997b: 15, 24f.) It merges both, the reflective and intentional approach, and claims that we express ourselves in order to be

understood. Therefore, language must follow certain rules, refer to the factual world, but also transport a talker's unique worldview. Meaning is constructed with the help of a representation system such as language, it is neither fixed by individuals, nor by the factual world around them, it is agreed on by a society. (Hall, 1997b: 25f.)

Also, meaning depends on the symbolic function of a representation system, as it gives possibilities for interpretation. This means that signs do not contain a fixed meaning by themselves, they are culturally charged. A culture has agreed on a certain meaning of a sign, such as colors of traffic lights. However, the meaning of a word or any other sign can change in the course of time. (Hall, 1997b: 26f.)

Hall distinguishes two systems of representation: First, the "system" or matrix with which all real world objects and also all abstract ideas are connected to equivalent mental concepts in our mind. So, it becomes possible to think about an object or its function, without it being in sight. These concepts help us interpret everything around us because "[m]eaning depends on the relationship between things in the world". (Hall, 1997b: 18) Still, it is assumed, that this matrix varies from one person to the other and certain concepts might not be the same, which can lead to misunderstandings, especially between people belonging to different cultures.

The second system of representation is language. Language is a set of signs that is socially fixed and arbitrarily connected to these concepts in people's minds and used to express thoughts. The term 'signs' means in this case a combination of sounds or images, but also

"visual images, whether produced by hand, mechanical, electronic, digital, or some other means, when they are used to express meaning. And so are other things which aren't 'linguistic' in any ordinary sense: the 'language' of facial expression or of gestures, for example, or the 'language' of fashion, of clothes, or of traffic lights." (Hall, 1997b: 18f.)

In this sense also TV series would speak their own language. The specific facial clothing of characters, the use of words, signs, sounds and music, all of that creates meaning. This meaning is understood against the background of the target group's own culture, but also in connection with the virtual reality and virtual culture that is produced by the series. (Hall, 1997b: 21)

The linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857 – 1913) assumed that there has to be a code or structure that makes these signs work properly in the heads of thousands of people within a culture. Saussure claimed that a sign consists of the signifier and the signified. He labelled the appearance of the sign the signifier, whereas the signified denoted the concept in our head. Only together they can convey meaning. It is the relation between signifier and signified that must be agreed on in a culture to be functional. (Hall, 1997b: 31) As the connection between signifier and signified is arbitrary, each cultural community might draw different connections. Not only does each culture produce its own signifier, it also establishes its own concepts of real world objects and therefore its own signifieds. Saussure also states that the system of representation is a system of differences. Through the establishment of opposites, is a means to produce meaning. (Hall, 1997b: 32)

Saussure is known as the "father of modern linguistics" (Hall, 1997b: 30), although many researchers do not agree with some of his theories. One of these controversial ideas is the claim that the structure of language is reconstructable as it always follows the same rules. Some researchers were not too convinced by the idea, and thought the subject to be more complex, as meaning can not be fixed and changes throughout time. It is dependent on the creativity of a group of people or a culture, which interprets it and is actively involved in changing or adding meaning to a sign. (Hall, 1997b: 32, 35)

Saussure however differentiated "langue", the rules of a language and the speech act, or act of expressing language in any other way which he called "parole". He mainly occupied himself with the language, as a fixed structure could be analyzed more conveniently, and called his linguistic school of thought Structuralism. (Hall, 1997: 33) This linguistic approach was later adopted into the field of cultural studies, where it was called semiotics, the study of signs. Semiotics can be used to analyze any cultural objects that transport meaning. Applied to a TV series one can use the

"pictures on the screen as signifiers, and use the code of the television soap opera as genre, to discover how each image on the screen made use of these rules to 'say something' (signifieds) which the viewer could 'read' or interpret within the formal framework of a particular kind of television narrative" (Hall, 1997b, 37)



Thus, it can be said that language is not only the medium to transport our thoughts, it is part of the message, or as Postman puts it: "We do not see nature or intelligence or human motivation or ideology as 'it' is but only as our languages are. And our languages are our media. Our media are our metaphors. Our metaphors create the content of our culture." (1985: 15)

This freedom to interpret language and add meaning to a sign, might be one of the reasons why any kind of double meaning develops out of cultural discourse. Roland Barthes called these different layers of meaning 'myths', and it counts as distinct representation system. Barthes differentiates the representative system of the myth from the language system. To make this clear, he divides representation into two layers: first, the layer of language, where the signifier is known as 'sign', and the signified is the 'concept', both together will become the "form". The other layer belongs to the myth which depicts the 'form' interpreted in context of a cultural discourse and becomes the myth. Myth is "a type of speech defined by its intention (...) much more than by its literal sense". (Barthes, 1973 In: Storey, 2006b: 296-7) Also, Burkhardt proposes, that signs can never be analyzed without considering the social situation from which they have emanated. This principle also works the other way around: a person's worldview can be filtered out of their utterances, as it is the seed from which their thoughts have bloomed. (Burkhardt, 2002: 91f.)

Toni Morrison stated in her work (1993) on black American literature that in the American literary canon black people played a minor role. There was seldom a black character that truly played an important role. As a reader, Morrison suggested that black people just were not significant part of white writers imagination. But as she changed her view from being a reader to reading as a writer, she realized that what she saw was an instance of racial ideology. According to her, writers have the ability to imagine the world beyond themselves, they are able to write beyond their own worldview. (Morrison, 1993: 14-17) Morrison compares this ability with a fishbowl: the writer not only can see its content, but also its transparent glass bowl. The glass is not to be seen for other people though. The glass stands as a metaphor for a stories structure. It consists of everything that writers decide to write about, the form, but also everything they decide to omit. Everything is there, or not there, for a particular reason. The absence of one aspect has to say equally much as its presence.

Moreover, the presence of a black character in white American literature is always for a reason. The reason is, according to Morrison, a need for a counterpart, so the white American identity is strengthened. A sense of difference is needed to confirm the self. (Morrison, 1993: 17)

## **2.4. Difference**

Our similarities bring us closer together while our differences help us to establish our individuality through contrast to others. People naturally like to engage with others who have similar interests. When we meet someone who is completely different from us, we might not be able to identify with this person. Which puts the other into the position of being potential danger to our person and our worldview. Hall (1997a: 225) poses the question of how people and places are being represented that are different from us. He also raises the question of where our voyeuristic fascination of otherness comes from. These are questions that this thesis tries to analyze too and with the help of the TV series Grimm will hopefully get one step closer to a possible answer.

As a starting point, inclusion and exclusion are important hints on the work of ideology.

"Deciding where to look is highly political because it involves deciding where *not* to look, what to exclude from sight, and these choices are as much influenced by what culture has on offer as by any decisions made by the individual". (Thomas, 2001: 4)

It is our brain that sees and not our eyes. Looking also includes filtering and interpreting the information, and therefore strongly depends on prior knowledge. (Thomas, 2001: 4-7) Jaques Derrida even doubts that one single concept would be understandable on its own: as signifiers need opposites, or more generally speaking a "negative relation with the rest of the sign system". Hence, "it always already contains the trace of its other and this also applies to the meaning of 'visuality' and 'language', which are interdependent rather than distinct". (Thomas, 2001: 7)

In his analysis of visual representations, Hall (1997a: 228) differentiates between a primary meaning and a connotative meaning. Still, Hall argues that most often meaning is ambiguous and that it always depends on the previous

knowledge of the reader. But instead of thinking of right and wrong meaning, one should rather ask for the "preferred meaning", which is the meaning that was meant by the sender or, as Foucault would argue the meaning that is dominant in cultural discourse at this moment. As meaning circulates, a text can be read differently every time. This ambiguity is what must be considered when analyzing a sign. (Hall, 1997a: 228).

"This having-it-both-ways is important because, as I hope to show you, people who are in any way significantly different from the majority – 'them' not 'us' – are frequently exposed to this *binary* form of representation. They seem to be represented through sharply opposed, polarized, binary extremes – good/bad, civilized/primitives, ugly/excessively, attractive, repelling-because-different/compelling-because-strange-and-exotic." (Hall, 1997a: 229)

However, binary oppositions are needed because they construct meaning, even if they tend to be over-simplified and turned into negative stereotypes. Saussure argues that a concept by itself does not mean much, however by putting one concept in contrast to another meaning is created through the relation of both to each other, that is through difference. (Hall, 1997a: 234f.)

Another attempt to explain the importance of difference comes from the Russian linguist Mikhail Bakhtin who claims that difference constructs meaning in a dialogue with the other. This however leads to the problem that these things and people have to be assigned to a category and can not switch categories easily. Those who do not find a place in specific categories, or belong to more than one, bring chaos to this system. Those troublemakers are then bound to be removed. (Hall, 1997a: 236)

According to psychoanalysis establishing difference helps to construct or find the self. Freud argues that sexual identity is formed in the phase of Oedipus complex, where difference becomes important and defines us as subjects. However, Lacan claims that children can not distinguish their own body from their mothers until they are able to recognize themselves in the mirror. So, according to the psychoanalytic approach humans need a significant other to define their own identity. (Hall, 1997a: 236f)

In my opinion, the personality of a person is variable as a means of survival and according to its surrounding and education it changes throughout our whole lives. Thus, society's acknowledgement and acceptance of a person leads to a stable self. If the person is not accepted, it leads to low self esteem

and eventually to the person adjusting his/her behavior and personality, which has a significant impact on his/her self conception.

Hall (1997a: 244) draws our attention to the fact that difference is used to secure power for one dominant group. culture and nature are seen as opposing elements, but while a culture is developed and maintained by the dominant group in a fight to overcome nature, for the subordinate groups culture and nature are the same thing. Hence in the dominant group whites are at the top, white culture is perceived as superior, while blacks are subliminally marked as savages. "If the differences between black and white people are 'cultural', then they are open to modification and change. But if they are 'natural' – as the slave-holders believed – then they are beyond history, permanent and fixed." (Hall, 1997a: 245) Thus, an attempt is made to justify one group of people with specific characteristics ruling over another. This happens not only with whites and blacks, but all the dominant races try to conceal their 'superiority' with the help of ideologies like this.

All these definitions do not stand in contrast to each other, but could easily go hand in hand. They tell the same story from different perspectives. The upshot of this summary would then be that difference is a very important element for culture, the establishment of meaning and for the individual. It helps us to form ourselves, form our culture and understand the world.

## ***2.5. Stereotyping and Othering***

Stereotypes are a form of social representation, containing a couple of characteristics "reduced to a few essentials, fixed in nature by a few, simplified characteristics". (Hall, 1997a: 249) Stereotypes help us make sense of the complex world around us faster and are thus important for our social functionality. Broszinsky-Schwabe (2011: 195) claims that communication relies on the anticipation of the other's behavior. Accordingly, communication with strangers starts with foreshadowing aspects of their culture and interpreting their behavior. As a basis for usual behavior in the social sphere the own culture is always taken as a model. Expectations of the other are thus fueled by what we know is 'normal' for us and the stereotypes and knowledge about the other culture that help us interpret the conversation. This procedure is exhaustive and

takes a lot of patience, while emotions like fear and hope contort perception of the other. Thus, one can deviate that stereotypes are in fact highly functional in building bridges between groups of people, despite their negative image. Of course, this can lead to misconceptions: One might think to understand someone or something fully when analyzing the roles they play in society, the gender, nationality and race they belong to, and which other linguistic categories they could fit in according to their features. (Hall, 1997a: 257) Hall even argues that stereotyping aims at fixing meaning finally, which is not possible, as we have learned in the previous chapter. Even stereotypes change throughout time and are adaptable to the needs in social discourses. This process of building new meaning on top of the old, is called trans-coding. (Hall, 1997a: 270)

Still, what comes out when people are reduced to their most striking characteristics and exaggerate them is a caricature of the original. This is an effective representation technique and can also be described as fetishism, which depicts in our case the objectification of a person by substituting "a part for the whole, of a thing" (Hall, 1997a: 266).

Stereotypes could be seen as one connection between representation and power. For Foucault this reductionism is part of a power/knowledge relation and a cultural leadership that Gramsci called hegemony, where a dominant class has the symbolic power to represent groups of people according to their wishes. (Hall, 1997a: 259) Having the power to represent someone, and to form stereotypes also means to be able to take power away from them. As Hall demonstrates on the example of the white male slave master who assigned attributes like 'infantility' and 'oversexed' to the black male slave and therefore denied him the right to own property, authority and responsibility for his own family. Foucault stresses that power circulates and everyone is part of the game, just not on equal conditions. (Hall, 1997a: 261) The intellectual leaders thus have the power to split the people in groups and therefore assure their position. Stereotypes keep groups smaller and therefore easier to control. Postman argues that human beings are "Great Abbreviators, meaning that none of us has the wit to know the whole truth, the time to tell it if we believed we did, or an audience so gullible as to accept it." (Postman, 1985: 6)

When Hall explains stereotyping as reduction to a few characteristics, it must be considered that this procedure is triggered by the use of language

itself. Devrin (2015: 7) advocates finding out what the origin of particular stereotypes is, instead of exposing common stereotypes or trying to get rid of them which he believes to be impossible. More important is the 'how', and the 'who', as stereotypes say more about the person uttering them than about the depicted and thus tells us something about their cultural identity.

Othering too, is a form of representation that is strongly related to stereotyping, and similarly undermines the complexity and individuality of a person. Its main purpose is to mark something or someone as 'other'. Conclusively, Othering is a difference or sameness marker and like stereotypes rather focused on the identity of the person applying the method to the other. (Devrin, 2015: 7)

## ***2.6. Visual Representation: How TV series convey meaning***

"All texts, however 'realistic' they may seem, are constructed representations". "Representations which become familiar through constant re-use come to feel 'natural' and unmediated". (Chandler, 2015) And if one aims to teach certain values to a large mass of people, the best way to make the information stick is through a decent amount of entertainment. Being able to make fun of something makes it feel more natural than anything else. Neil Postman (1985: 4) claims, that Americans are "a people on the verge of amusing ourselves to death". He observes that looks are more important than actual competence. Postman's utterance is 30 years old, as I write this thesis, but never has been so prevailing. "Indeed, we may have reached the point where cosmetics has replaced ideology as the field of expertise over which a politician must have competent control" he claims, and adds that humor is the direct way to people's hearts. (Postman, 1985: 4f.) An overweight, less charming president Obama would not have moved into the White House so easily, despite his undoubted political competence, and Arnold Schwarzenegger would not have gotten the chance to empty California's state treasury without being a former hero in action movies. Postman claims that media changes the way politics and journalism work, because they create the form in which news are presented. (Postman, 1985: 8) Equally, through genre conventions a TV series defines a certain form of how their content is presented. Moreover through a fixed style of

lightning and coloring and always the same narrative structure, a particular form is provided for the content to be shown. This form strongly influences the perception of potential meanings and promotes one preferred meaning, namely the one "that performs the work of the dominant ideology". (Fiske in Rivkin and Ryan, 1998: 1087) Fiske suggests that television uses codes to create meaning. A 'code' is a system of signs governed by rules, which are shared within a culture. Fiske (in Rivkin and Ryan, 1998: 1088) differentiates for example between speech as a social code and (TV-)dialogue as technical one, because it is obviously scripted. It is hard to distinguish these categories from each other though, because real-life-dialogues are equally being scripted through social conventions and the makers of the series are "merely using these codes more consciously and more conventionally, which means more stereotypically". (Fiske in Rivkin and Ryan, 1998: 1089)

Fiske argues further that the codes of television are divided in three levels: social codes which work on the level of reality and include a person's gestures, expressions, outfit, makeup, behavior and speech. Those are already previously encoded by codes of culture and then are again encoded by technical codes on the level of representation. This happens with the help of camera, lightning, music, editing, and sound to form them into bigger units as narrative, conflict, character, dialogue, setting and so on. On the last level, the level of ideology, the previous clusters of meaning are further organized to achieve social acceptability with the help of ideological codes. In other words, they are made to seem 'natural'. At this level the preferred meaning emerges which could be something like individualism, patriarchy, race, class, capitalism etc. (Fiske in Rivkin and Ryan, 1998: 1089)

TV series are different from other audiovisual formats in many ways. The most striking difference is of course that they are narratives that go on for many months with hopefully no end in sight. Another difference that changes the way we watch a series is that they appear as one part of a never-ending stream of TV-programs. We leave the cinema after a movie and close a book after it is finished, but TV series are "both preceded and followed by other programs". (Allrath et al, 2010: 3). This fact has an impact on how we perceive a series and how it is produced to have the biggest possible impact on its audience. The camera distance, for instance can give a hint on if a character is a hero or a villain, as a extreme close-up is conventionally used to show the face of a

villain. But also editing influences our sympathies for a character, especially because heroes usually have more time on screen and therefore viewers have more time to identify with them. Without music a movie would be boring. Music captivates the viewers, indicates dangerous situations and can turn the whole situation into a comedy. The sound of a TV series is basically more important for understanding than the visuals. All those technical codes transport the ideological code to the viewers, who decode it then to receive the final meaning. (Fiske in Rivkin and Ryan, 1998: 1088, 1091-94)

Mikos argues that audiovisual media convey meaning in a variety of systems of signs, that is written language, speech, pictures, sounds and music. Because there are so many signs coming together, as films are "polysem", the ideological view conveyed in the film is not always consistent. (Mikos, 2008: 107) As there are so many layers of meaning, it often even happens that contradicting ideological views occur in a series. Therefore it is important to differentiate between denotative, or obvious, meaning and connotative meaning which is everything that can be linked to the sign. (Mikos, 2008: 107-109)

Mikos (2008: 112) defines 5 layers of analysis for films and TV series which will be used in the analysis of *Grimm*. First, features from the layer of content and its representation, that includes plot, which depicts the content. Furthermore, its story, which stands for the interpretation of the viewers. Also time, space, interactions, and situational framework belong to this category. According to Mikos fictional texts are representations of an existing society, "[s]ie korrespondieren mit gesellschaftlichen Strukturen, darin liegt ihre ideologische Komponente" (Mikos, 2008: 107).

Viewers are constantly trying to fill the moving pictures with meaning and basically use their knowledge, emotions and social skills to interpret them. (Mikos, 2008: 112) The level of content and representation accesses to viewer's life experience and the level of audiovisual media reveals a connotative and denotative meaning by the way images are processed. (108) Also, humor is a feature on this layer of analysis and is highly ideological. The effect of humor unfolds in the heads of the viewers, as it generally is conveyed through the plot, but plays with the knowledge and expectations of viewers. It aims at a surprising situation, and includes all the knowledge that an audience possesses on the world and culture. (147) Humor influences the sympathy the audience



feels for a character, it can brighten up dark scenes and can strongly influence meaning, for example if a genre is parodied.

The feature of threat in a series is always a play with the audience's knowledge, the emotional stability of characters is questioned and the viewers stand on the edge of losing control over their emotions. Humor and threat often are used in combination, like it is the case in *Grimm*, as it constantly throws viewers from the extreme of pleasure to the extreme of fear. (Mikos, 2008: 152)

Moreover, the investigation of characters and their relevance for meaning is of importance. Social interactions belong to this analysis, as sympathy or antipathy change the way audience identifies with a character, and how a character's actions are perceived. In TV series the personality of a character is unfolded throughout the whole series and not only in one episode. Characters in series not only stand for fictitious personalities, but also play particular social roles. (Mikos, 2008: 163-173) Also, aesthetics and technical arrangement have influence on meaning. Mikos (2008: 191) assumes that everything that is seen in a film or series is there for a reason, no image or sound is unnecessary or coincidental.

And last but not least, the context of a series should be taken into consideration. A series is a discourse, or put differently, it is a part of social communication in a society. It engages in a discussion about society and it gives society something to talk about. A series does not only stand in context to the Zeitgeist, that is to social and cultural developments, it also deploys a link to the aesthetic and technical developments of the medium itself. (Mikos, 2008: 259) Also, a TV Series can convey meaning through intertextuality, production for a specific market and genre. (Mikos, 2008: 5)

## **2.7. *Fairy Tales' Origin and Purpose***

In this chapter it will be investigated, what the purpose of storytelling is, how these stories came into being and how they reflect the cultures in which they were produced. Often folklore tales are regarded as historic evidence of the culture of a nation. What is often disregarded, is the long way a fairy tale had to go through many cultures and the stages of adaptation it went through to be claimed a nation's property.

Hartland (1891: 2) argues that the urge to tell stories is a human instinct. They are, on a closer look, very similar in every culture of the world. In Hartland's definition, fairy tales are depicted as traditional stories with a significant amount of divine or supernatural happenings, whereas the analysis of fairy tales is rather interested in the conveyed traditions and not the literary work itself.

"Man's imagination, like every other known power, works by fixed laws, the existence and operation of which it is possible to trace; and it works upon the same material,— the external universe, the mental and moral constitution of man and his social relations." (Hartland, 1891: 3)

The purposes of story telling reach from defeating depression and madness in lonely hunting situations, over delight and silencing of young children and the proof of the own existence. (Hartland, 1891: 2) Fairy tales have been what TV Series are now: a never-ending source of entertainment. Hartland depicts the celtic tradition to assemble in the household of a good story teller in long winter nights and listen to stories full of joy, laughter, fear and even tears. While the elders would recite stories of their ancestry, their youngsters would occupy themselves with romantic stories or games. However, the source for new stories were journeymen, who would pick them up when looking for work in different houses and traveller. "When a stranger came to the village it was the signal for a general gathering at the house where he stayed, to listen to his tales. The goodman of the house usually began with his favorite tale, and the stranger was expected to do the rest." (Hartland, 1891: 7) Old people were often seen as the favorite story tellers, as they have heard many in their lives and might bring to memory some new ones. Also, women were considered talented story tellers especially for nursery tales, and many tale collections, including the Brothers Grimm's, are only due to female sources that handed it down to the Brothers Grimm. (Hartland, 1891: 12-13)

Thus, fairy tales were a means of entertainment. Also, tales were used as a means to get acquainted with strangers. In many countries all over the world a capable storyteller was a gladly seen as guest and often was hospitably served for many days. (Hartland, 1891: 8) Those stories convey certain knowledge about the culture they derive from, and the listeners "therefore, know something of the habits, the natural and social surroundings, and the modes of the thought of the people whose stories he examines." (Hartland, 1891: p.21)

An adaptation of these stories takes away parts of the cultural treasures they carry in them. Grimm, as an American adaptation of the Brothers Grimm tales, becomes again a new story, as the stories historical core and its values become reinterpreted to fit the other culture. It therefore says equally much about the American culture as it once has said about the German. So, the TV series *Grimm* is not only a modernized German fairy tale, but an American hybrid, depicting the Americanized view on German culture.

## **2.8. The Magic of Fairy Tales**

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm are known as the founding fathers of German philology. In their thorough studies of German language, and especially historic texts, they were able to reconstruct many old high German and middle high German poems, define the law of the Consonant Drift, and develop philologically correct and close high German translations for literature and poetry. In 1838 the project of a German etymology dictionary was started, including historic explanations for every word and long after their death it became the first etymological dictionary in Germany. (Grimm, 2004: 381-88) The Brothers Grimm realized early that language is not imposed on us by a higher power, but crafted by humans' minds according to their needs. In Jacob Grimm's academic paper "Über den Ursprung der Sprache", he states that language is the bond between nations, without it, they would fall apart. This also implies the thought that language always carries ideological meaning, which might derive from the fact that both brothers were also politically interested and even worked for the government. Their conviction is that a strong nation's power lies in its togetherness and shared culture. (Lauer, 2004b)

Myths and fairy tales have been known long before the Brothers Grimm, a distinct fairy tale genre has been known since the sixteenth century, when they became popular. Before German fairy tales existed in published version, early records of French and Oriental fairy tales could be detected. In Germany, such tales were only transmitted in oral tradition or songs. (Grimm, 2004: 382) Its written style however, started in 1782 with Johann Carl August Musäus' "Volksmärchen der Deutschen" and many after him, and is dependent on the

literary style of the epoch. Thus, the aesthetics of its textual appearance was still in development at this time.

This also explains the brutality of the first fairy tales, which was adapted from time to time, but is partly still criticized by psychologists today. Especially in Romanticism the supernatural was embraced by writers. According to a letter Novalis wrote to Friedrich Schlegel in 1800, that a real fairy tale must be a prophecy and its composer a visionary of the future. (Lauer, Grimm Museum, 2004a) The Brothers Grimm first started collecting tales for their friend and writer Brentano, who then neglected the project and paved the way for the Brothers Grimm tale collection. (Grimm, 2004: 38ff.)

When it comes to the methodology to find and transcribe the tales, the brothers had to rely on the knowledge of primarily female sources. The Grimms listened to narratives of befriended women, who were mostly better educated and from higher social strata. Furthermore, they did not change the stories in content, but applied some textual aesthetics which was in their understanding fitting for folk poetics. Soon an ideal for this new style was developed and it was agreed upon adapting the collected texts to it if necessary. (Röllecke, 2007: 97-98) The purpose of the fairy tale collection by the Brothers Grimm was in this context more the try to collect those stories before they are lost forever, and furthermore to strengthen the German notion of togetherness. Many of the stories are therefore marked as true German fairy tales, even if they were hybrids of stories from different times and places. The brothers even could detect the similarity to a few French and Italian tales. (Lauer, 2004c) Some of these stories are known in cultures all over the world. So we can assume, that fairy tales have something that humans feel attracted to, "there is something universal about fairy tales". (Grimm, 2004: 38)

Zipes suggests that it is not our reason that lets us make sense of the world, but our fantasy. This is also how he explains the popularity of texts like the Bible or the Grimm's fairy tale collection: "unlike reality, they allegedly open the mysteries of life and reveal ways in which we can maintain ourselves and our integrity in a conflict-ridden world" (Zipes, 2008: 2) He thus hints at the value providing character of fairy tales by the use of supernatural incidents and strokes of fate. Zipes (2008: 3) furthermore argues, that the fairy tales, and by the way also the Bible's purpose is "to take our minds off reality, to enjoy a moment of calm estrangement or titillation, to appreciate the extraordinary in the

ordinary, to reevaluate our values and alternatives to determining social forces." He claims further though, that fantasy does not function as compensation for a boring life, but rather as fuel for our spiritual self "and to contemplate alternatives to our harsh realities". (Zipes, 2008: 3) Fairy tales encourage our fantasy to let us dream of a better life by contrasting it to the a worst case scenario, but at the same time gives us the believe that everything will be alright in the end. (Zipes, 2008: 3) Thus, it gives us what we are missing, a kind of fulfillment that we never can get from life. Moreover, it proposes a meaning for life, that is found in the fight against evil.

The idea of the Brothers Grimm hunting evil mythical creatures is not new. In "Brothers Grimm" (2005), a cinema production of director Terry Gilliam, the two brothers Luke and Will Grimm, played by Matt Damon and Heath Ledger, earn their living with witch- and ghost-huntings. Similarly, in "Hansel and Gretel – Witch Hunters", the two siblings who have killed the wicked witch in their childhood, have grown up and have become quite skilled headhunters specialized on witches. The audience does not feel mercy when it come to the hunt of mythical beings, and in that case the goal justifies the means. As they are depicted as simply evil and completely different from humans, we only observe them with distanced curiosity. No explanation for their actions is given and they are mere stereotypes of the ultimate threat. If they are killed it means relief for society. These creatures stand outside of society, their value is not that of a human being, thus nobody really cares about their death, in fact a certain amount of "justified violence" is even advocated. (Harshbarger, 2013: 490f.)

Hansjörg Hohr (2013: 600) states that fairy tales' purpose is to teach its reader a lesson. It's strength lies in the "reflection of values, norms and rules". (Hohr, 2013: 610) But while the Romanticists believed that these stories are "artifacts of the national community, of the folk spirit, thus reflecting, furthering, and preserving the national heritage, tradition, values, ideals, and identity." (Hohr, 2013: 600) and would unfold the positive effect of their morals implicitly and without help of the author, people of the Enlightenment period rather played it safe and presented the moral lesson of the tale in the coda of the story.

Fairy tale's brutal way of dealing with wrongdoers is criticized since the 18th century. They are regarded as highly influential, especially when it comes to its younger audience. The use of negative stereotypes to teach social behavior to children is achieved through simplifying certain types of people and

behaviors and processing them into stereotypical characters. (Harshbarger, 2013: 490) Harshbarger can see a "historical relationship between the classic fairy tale and nationalist ideology", where a certain amount of brutal fighting is justified for the greater good, or the 'happy ending' which could however only exist when the alien other is suppressed. (Harshbarger, 2013: 491) Harshbarger claims that

"(...) it was and is hard to overlook the fact that the Grimm Brothers and the Nazis had much in common, not the least of which was their shared interest in transporting their readers/followers into narrative worlds where, after a good deal of violent struggle with demonic adversaries, the good and pure could live "happily ever after."" (Harshbarger, 2013: 491)

The Nazis even went so far to change the stories accordingly, so they would be better media for their ideology. The Grimm's original tales were written in a time of uproar, in the middle of the Napoleonic invasion of Germany. The Brothers Grimm tried to save a proof of their German national identity before it was lost forever. (Grimm, 2004: 384)

The makers of the series *Grimm* draw their inspiration for the series from a highly nationalistic and culturally influenced text collection. So, it is no wonder that the series itself also imposes such strong cultural symbolism and the history between Germany and the USA contributes its share of implied criticism.

However, the series *Grimm* takes up a slightly different stance, because it provides the audience with information about the social lives of these alien creatures that are the apparent badasses in the stories. It gives them human personality traits, which makes it harder to see them die in the series. The hero, whose duty it is to eliminate all monsters, starts doubting the working tradition of his ancestors and turns to more social methods.

"Intrusion, disintegration, and threats to the harmony of the family and community appear to be common themes in postmodern US-America. (...) The heroes in comic books and graphic novels are no longer Captain Marvel, Superman, Wonder Woman, Batman, and others who work with the government to tame the forces of evil. Instead, they are often mutants like the X-Men, who try to restrain politicians, the military, and police from establishing neo-fascist regimes or from destroying the world. Or they are outsiders and refugees who endeavor to maintain a sense of community in an unwelcoming atmosphere." (Zippes, 2008: p.9)

This kind of modern fairy tale also can be found in the series *Grimm*. While a few humans and less dangerous, herbivorous creatures assemble together to form an open-minded patchwork family, they also fight against racism, social

inequalities and dangerous creatures. There is room for all the peculiar cultural traditions that come with the alien other, as long as it is harmless and subordinates itself to the greater good.

In this chapter we have encountered many important aspects of the study of Popular Culture with the help of representation theories. Most of all we have laid the foundation for an analysis of stereotypes and otherness with a method based on Stuart Halls theory of representation. We have discovered that meaning can never be finally fixed and that language has a significant impact on how we see the world. We have talked about the power of mass media as a means to spread ideology. Last, we have explained the important place of TV series in Cultural Studies and have shown a few possibilities of visual media to convey meaning. In the next chapter the TV series *Grimm* will be analyzed according to its ideology with the help of stereotypes and content.

### **3. Analysis**

#### **3.1. Methodology**

In the second part of my thesis, the TV series *Grimm* will be analyzed on the base of the theory that was explained in the last part. Examples from the series' content will be given to stress the value of my ideas concerning the fear of difference and how stereotypes pretend to aid as relief in that matter. With the help of Mikos' (2008) layers of analysis some instances of ideology at work can be identified. Cultural signs, like stereotypes and symbolic animals will be sought out in the series and the tales by the brothers Grimm and analyzed according to their position in fear-reduction in society. Scenes will be analyzed by close reading paired with film analysis, in an necessary extend. Furthermore, language examples will be examined to evaluate the use of the German language in the series.

#### **3.2. Introduction to *Grimm***

*Grimm* is a NBC TV Series counting 4 seasons with 88 episodes so far. The series belongs to the genres fantasy, horror, mystery and drama and was created by writers David Greenwalt, Jim Kouf and Stephen Cooper. The first season was aired in 2011 and the series was renewed for a fifth season lately. (IMDB, 2015)

Allrath et al (2010: 5) explain that the distinction between series and serial lies in the closure of the narrative in each episode. While the storyline of a serial goes on over more than one episode, in a series the cast stays the same, but each episode provides a new story that has nothing to do with the one before. Hence, *Grimm* would be a "hybrid" form, as story lines are usually closed in each 45-minutes-long episode. Still, there are some that go over a couple of episodes, or even over a whole season.

*Grimm* is set in contemporary Portland, Oregon, USA. The protagonist Nick Burkhardt (played by David Giuntoli), a homicide detective, learns that he is one of the last Grimms – a hunter of supernatural beings like witches, demons, and mythical creatures. Most of these evil characters which the series



termed "Wesen", are loosely based on mythical creatures that have their origin in the tales by the brothers Grimm and later in the series also of other folktales. *Grimm* enfolds meaning through difference and stereotypes. This is supported in various ways, such as for example a settled foundation for the narrative through a fixed structure, lightning, camera, music, characters, additionally through the use of humor, the setting of contrasts and many more. The analysis of some of these features shows how the fear of otherness is represented, stirred and sometimes dissolved. *Grimm* depicts a fantasy-world with powerful, uncontrollable mythical creatures which stand in contrast to civilized human beings in contemporary American society. The danger that comes from these supernatural beings, derives from their otherness and apparent lack of control over themselves which can also be describes as a lack of culture. Often, *Grimm* breaks out of this scheme that is controlled by the fear of this otherness, and shows, with the help of humor and plot developments, that it does not take itself serious. Main themes in *Grimm* are the age-old fight of good versus evil, and the communication of morals, like it is expected from traditional fairy tales. These are the superficial purposes of each episode. However, below the surface, other themes contain also the identification of the other and the fear of the foreigner, the nearly impossible integration of the others into an existing society and the suppression of their special needs. Consequently, another focus lies on the odd cultural practices of these beings which can only be performed in secret, and the threat it is to a homogenous society.

### **3.3. The Ideological Foundation of Grimm**

As many people work together for the production of a TV series, the meanings of its parts sometimes can contradict each other. But even if particular elements of the series will be considered for the analysis, their impression as a whole and how they work together, will always convey the most relevant meaning. *Grimm* touches upon many problematic topics of any society. It uses metaphors for its depiction of discourses on race, gender and on American identity. It tells stories about hate crimes, bullying, greed, domestic violence and many other illnesses that infect our society, but what connects all of them is the **fear of the other**. All these crimes are committed by people who are different. This might be just because it is easier to believe that wrongdoers must be different from the 'good',

adjusted people. So, fear of difference is a mechanism for self-protection and it seems more and more valid that difference is the key to danger. Markus Keuschnigg and Magdalena Pichler, the initiators of the Slash Film Festival in Vienna, write in the introduction to their program for the autumn 2015 that the fear of the other, that is the fear of everything different from oneself, is the basic ingredient for every horror movie. They explain that many movies containing monsters, such for example a new film adaption of "Frankenstein" by director James Whale, do not so much tell the story of the monster but about monstrous society: "die sie mit Heugabeln in die Windmühle jagt und jubelt, als sie bei lebendigem (?) Leib verbrennen." (Keuschnigg et al, 2015) The monster is destroyed and the ones considering themselves normal have pleasure experiencing it. But only as long as they do not fall out of the group of 'normals'. (Keuschnigg et al, 2015) Because then they might find themselves in the monster's position.

Special attention must be given to the question on how difference is conveyed in the series which can be answered partly through features of film analysis, but mostly through the interpretation of the plot and its elements of representations. I want to get to the bottom of this fear of the stranger, and see what its consequences are.

First of all, I want to give an overview on the structure of *Grimm* that is the framework in which ideology can work its spell. Nearly every episode of *Grimm* is structured in the same way, and surprisingly it is not build up like a fairy tale at all, even if it starts with an off-voice quoting a phrase from a fairy tale that seems to be the inspiration for the series. *Grimm* is a crime or cop series which gives the audience a psychological glance into the villains soul. The order of conveying information brings to memory the crime series *Murder, she wrote* (1984), where crime novelist Jessica Fletscher (Angela Lansbury) solves cases in her witty, charming way and background stories of perpetrators and victims take center stage while evidence is collected. Similarly, *Grimm* plays with charm and humor both with its characters and on its technical layer of representation. In both series at first a crime is shown to the audience and the problematic situation conveyed, before the heroes are introduced to the crime scene. Also, in both series, the protagonists unfold their skills at the point where police work comes to its limits.

Each *Grimm*-episode starts out with laying bare the case that will later be solved by the Grimm. Therefor, a murder or other criminal act is being showed, focalizing either the victim or delinquent. The scene in which the Wesen commits the crime, always includes a transformation of criminal, sometimes also of the victim, into a mythical being with an animal face, supernatural strength and stereotypical behavior, which always goes in accordance with the person's negative character traits and motive. Every creature has assigned a few properties that are seen as antisocial, evil or in the best case weird for western culture. For instance, an aggressive, strong vandal in a biker bar is often depicted as wolf figure, a touchy, seductive and arrogant woman often transforms into a witch-ghoul character and a fearful, abject coward into a mouse. The narrative is told from a multi-focalizing perspective, the viewer often knows more about events and people than the protagonist. This is an important means to create suspension and makes the viewer hope that Nick Burkhardt will find out soon enough.

The setting is divided into a human sphere such as the police department, courthouse, restaurants and streets, and a Wesen sphere which consists of the Wesen' homes, the woods, cottages in the woods, other places where nature is dominant, deserted buildings and places that were especially built out of a need in Wesen culture. That is especially Rosalee's "spice, herbs and tea"-shop, where not only medicine and potions are sold like in a pharmacy, but also aids for recreational use and at other similar places also illegal substances such as "human gallbladder". (Grimm, S1E15) The usual settings show that the Wesen feel rather comfortable in nature, than inside city life. However, the crimes are almost always perpetrated by a Wesen in the middle of the night and equally often in a more natural scene, e.g. woods, like the city. The night seems to be the time of action for Wesen as it most often is for human criminals too. The darkness gives them the freedom to act out their nature, by day they disguise as human beings.

In this framework the series creates a discourse on multiculturalism and all its problems. The focus of each *Grimm*-episode rather lies on the personal story, behavior and abilities of the character and only secondary on solving a criminal case. The crime serves as an introduction to the characters' evil mind or dangerous powers. Therefore, it functions similarly like a tabloid newspaper which awakes a discussion about immigration and justifies the fear that the

human characters have. In the end, the investigation always leads to a solution of the case and the punishment that is deserved for the Wesen. This endows a satisfactory conclusion to the viewers, who by then have made up their minds over the criminal. Sometimes no punishment at all is deserved, as the series distances itself from the inhuman depiction of those 'foreigners' and consequently takes a firm stand against racism. However, *Grimm*'s attitude on otherness is ambiguous. On the one hand, it apparently aims to dissolve negative images of foreigners, by taking the side of victim or delinquent. But on the other hand, it uses them as a means to justify Nick's rising vigilantism by conveying their odd lifestyle, cultural practices, magical powers, and danger.

In this framework, the differentiation of 'culture' and 'nature' is very visible in the characters of *Grimm*. Wesen are hiding their true nature from the other citizen and thus subordinate themselves to the authority of humans, even if with their strength and magical powers, they are strong enough to easily overpower men and rule the world. So the question arises, how it happens that Wesen do not come out of the darkness and show themselves, especially because they are not depicted as particularly peaceful creatures. The answer therefor can only be found in the dominant ideology in *Grimm*, because humans' intellectual and cultural superiority is subliminally acknowledged. Still, without the role of the Grimm, who is the missing link between *Wesen* and humans, chaos would come over the world. *Wesen* are depicted to be mostly human-devouring-beasts. Also, they show their savage behavior by fighting each other and killing for fun. It is only that they have learned how to behave properly, through centuries of suppression and adaptation to human culture. But even nowadays at some points their "nature" overcomes them and they give in to their savage temper. Their dangerous cravings and questionable morals are so strong, because they lack culture, which is reflected in their animalistic appearance. They fear the Grimm, as he can see their animal form even when they are able to hide from ordinary human beings and will punish any inappropriate behavior.

It becomes clear that the dominant group depicted in the series consists of white Americans, whose culture is seen as 'normal' or 'standard' and everything deviating from it is perceived with cautious curiosity. The dominant group's culture also stands opposition to nature. Nature is regarded as dangerous and incalculable, hence control must be retained over it by the rules and structures of culture. But within *Wesen*-beings culture is non-existent, and

therefore their nature is predominant and can only be suppressed at times but not be overcome completely. Their lack of culture turns them into savages which pose a danger for society, as they can not control themselves and have no moral values. It goes without saying that such beings should not be given ruling powers over a country. This lack of culture is stressed in the series and made to seem natural. The fact that Wesen have adapted to the dominant culture, however is only superficially true and I will discuss how Wesen undermine the dominant culture in the next chapter. Those creatures conceal themselves from the view of human beings. They hide their identity and work on fading in to American society in the hope that maybe if they can integrate themselves they lay the foundation for an easier survival in urban jungle. Still, what all those creatures have in common is their foreign origin which is always stressed by stereotypical characteristics for people of other countries. Those stereotypical characteristics betray them as foreigners, even if they try to keep their origin a secret and only engage in their odd cultural practices in the safe walls of their homes.

That leads me to my next claim, namely that this difference can only be suppressed, but never fully eliminated. A Wesen that is perceived by American citizen in the series, does not look different from them. Wesen have adapted quite well, and can keep up the appearance of being human. On a closer look however, these beings have never integrated themselves fully to the American society and what one sees from them is only the tip of the iceberg. In the darkness of the night and save in their personal spheres, they still practice their Wesen lifestyle and one can see that they are not integrated as well as one might have thought. In this sense they represent a danger for dominant culture and its values. We have already made clear, a dominant ideology gains its power through making other ideologies appear less valuable. Hence, what is even more threatening than the mass-import of a large number of foreigners with questionable values, is that the danger is sleeping under the surface of someone appearing to be 'one of the good people' and thus can not be estimated. The unknown other can not be identified and is hiding behind a well-integrated, American, human-mask. On the picture in Fig.1, one can see the ad for the TV Series *Grimm*.



*Fig. 1: Nick Burkhardt and Monroe (Netflix, Grimm)*

On the level of denotative meaning we see Nick and Monroe sitting at a table with stern facial expressions, one of their shadows looking like a canine creature approaching the other. On the level of connotative meaning we understand that this situation depicts a police interrogation. From their body posture we can guess that while Nick Burkhardt is listening, Monroe seems to explain something to the police officer. The shadow shows the wolf creature that hides underneath the human being and which the Grimm can see due to his supernatural power. But the picture also can be interpreted in a symbolic way, namely the wolf shadow standing for bad personality traits slumbering in certain people, while the police officer represents the moral values of dominant class. The hidden danger of the unknown culture is touched upon as it looks like the wolf shadow's claw is nearly touching Nick's hands. The two men are sitting in darkness, the scarce lightning comes from below, and only reveals their faces. Thus, the strangely lightened faces look particularly scary and remind us of a horror movie. Their eyeholes are dark and they wear the same sinister facial expression. Nick not only sees into the souls of convicts, he is equally deadly, even if he seems passive at this particular moment. Their shadows however, tell a different story: The wolf is bigger than Nick's shadow and approaches him with a half open mouth, revealing its teeth. There is no aggression in this scene, but rather a subliminal expression of power. This ad shows an ambiguity in

dominance. With the knowledge we have about investigation situations, we can say about the figures in the front that it is Nick who has Monroe in his grip, as he is the passive and rather relaxed police detective and Monroe has to explain himself. While with the shadows, the wolf seems to be more dominant and slowly creeping towards the other.

In short, Wesen proceed to practice their own, age-old culture which they have imported to the US. This causes a clash of ideologies in the series and leads to the questions if Wesen culture is a threat and which culture will prevail as the dominant one. Wesen are a metaphor for all foreigners who set foot on American soil and bring with them their own cultural traditions and the dangers they pose to society. The next chapter will give an insight into Wesen lifestyle and depict in how far Wesen undermine dominant culture by their own cultural practices.

### **3.4. Discourse Wesen-Culture: Depicting the Difference with Metaphors**

The mythical creatures in *Grimm* are called 'Wesen' (pronounced /vesɪn/) and live amongst the American citizen. They disguise as human beings but they do not always act in accordance with the cultural codes and rules of the human world, as it simply is not always appropriate to their needs. Hence, Wesen secretly live the signifying practices of their own culture, and practice spiritual, magical and cultural rituals in their homes or in the woods. Wesen keep mostly to themselves and run their own institutions, such as the Wesen Council which is the law-enforcement in the western Wesen world. It is responsible for keeping their existence a secret and coping with undesired and conspicuous individuals who transgress the law of the "Gesetzbuch Ehrenkodex" (Grimm, S2E14). Such a transgression could be murder of a person of human origin that is without supernatural powers, a delict that will be punished with death. Another institution, namely one of allegedly seven royal families is introduced in the series and rules from its base in Vienna, Austria over the Wesen people. Whereas it is to say, even if it seems that Wesen are not fully integrated into human society, the royals' meaning to a Wesen's every day life is limited as the latter officially lives by the political system of the human world. Still, Wesen do not give up their centuries old traditions and institutions, instead they practice it

in the underground, keeping it a secret from the outside world. Also, it is suggested that royals are not just a political group that can be easily replaced. Royal blood marks the members of an indomitable race and is backed by a couple of institutions. One of those institutions is called the "Verrat", an organization of headhunters who gets rid of enemies of the royal family. Hence, even in the fairy tale world, predominant ideology is at work to depict members of the royal family in an untouchable position by making their reign appear natural. From the viewpoint of history the fact that the dominant class is fixed by nature, that is by blood, is a very old idea. No politically fair system has the power to overcome what naturally is fixed.

The Wesen-integration goes even further, as Wesen have their own language which is based on and claimed to be German, but not many Wesen speak *Grimm's* pseudo-German language fluently anymore. Except for the use of a few German words to depict the leftovers of Wesen-centered practices, like transformations, illnesses and rituals, where the English language is simply lacking terms and sometimes even the appropriate linguistic concepts, the English language is preferred in private and public spheres.

Wesen people are not a homogenous group. They stem from many countries and have many different signifying practices and appearances. Still, the language they share, identifies them as just one large group of foreigners. Similarly like in different cultural discourses they lead to the same problematic discussion as is often encountered with race, gender and nationality. Wesen are depicted very stereotypically and most of the time as less civilized, as they can often not control their emotions and transform into their animal form when experiencing strong emotions. Additionally, the series does not show criminal cases of human delinquents at all, only the special cases in which criminals with Wesen origin are depicted. Therefore, all the viewers know about Wesen is that they are associated with criminal acts which is somewhat comparable to what we read about people with migration background in the tabloid papers. We have learned to be suspicious with everybody who is obviously different. Thus, it sometimes comes as a shock to learn that a seemingly harmless and well integrated character is in fact a Wesen, as is for example true with one of the officers and even the captain of the police department in the series.

Even if its characters and narratives are fictional, they still stand for something seen and heard in the culture they are produced in, as TV series



reflect the cultural conditions of which they arise. One could deploy a comparison of today's American culture and the *Grimm* universe and would find plenty of similarities. As the writers and producers of *Grimm* were raised in a cultural surrounding, inoculating them with the corresponding ideology, their worldview will always be incorporated at the very roots of the series, no matter if they are aware of it or not. I will consider the TV series *Grimm* as a representative system mirroring the outside world through an ideology-blurred American eye. *Grimm* puts a metaphorical 'looking glass' revealing an unknown culture of fables and their specific signs in front of its viewers' eyes. With this 'Grimm-looking glass' we see an alleged United States reality, with its familiar cultural practices and people, but also with their prejudice. Digging deeper under its surface, we come to see a heterogeneous assembly of cultures and creatures. On the one hand, the preferred meaning conveyed in *Grimm* episodes is about morals, friendship and heroism. On the other hand, Wesen symbolize an exaggerated representation of foreign cultures from the viewpoint of an American society. Everything that is foreign and does not adapt can arouse the fear of difference. Although the individual Wesen stem from totally different backgrounds, their characteristics are combined in stereotypes, which help the understanding of the unknown. Most of these stereotypical depictions and moral flaws could be assigned to any other human, still *Grimm* chooses to depict Wesen as non-human and supply us with a nationality to every criminal Wesen. This is achieved either in terms of a foreign sounding name, or a specific look, or cultural practice. The series distinguishes between Americans, and people from other cultures, which are almost always from Wesen origin. In this case actual cultures and not necessarily nationalities are meant, as for example becomes clear in the episode "Mishipeshu" (*Grimm*, S4E18). A young Native Indian is used as a host for a mythical spirit, which leads to him sleepwalking and taking revenge on the murderers of his father. Of course, the youngster later wakes up and is covered in blood, but has no memory on what he has done. His infection is due to his culture and his beliefs, not the land of origin. Wesen are depicted as 'natural beings' instead of 'cultural beings', or in other words their culture is at the same time their nature. They can not behave differently than to follow their instincts and therefore need supervision by a *Grimm*. As with American humans, their nature is different from their culture. The latter is built up and maintained, while nature is just something one can not

shake off and is bound to be suppressed. By that way, the old American inferiority complex deriving from a felt lack of intellectual work and culture might be processed by comparing it to a people that even is less culturalized.

According to Hall (1997b) black people were assigned that role of the wild savage, not easy to be civilized, childish and unable to take responsibility, only guided through their distinctive sex drive. These stereotypes then were pronounced nature, and therefore depicted as unchangeable. The same happens with Wesen people in the TV series *Grimm*. It is shown that protagonist Nick Burkhardt can see Wesen even in their original form when they become either very angry or otherwise emotional and 'woge', that is transform, unintentionally. Wesen are depicted as not being able to control their natural urges, which sometimes includes to kill and eat humans, and therefore it is legitimate to punish them without lawful trial. Most encounters end in death of at least one Wesen and often enough in the faking of evidence to make it look like a different crime for human police, which does not feel wrong at all for the audience.

In contrary to his ancestors, Nick Burkhardt does not kill every Wesen just by sight. Burkhardt takes care of innocent Wesen, especially of these who seem to have all the evidence against them, but are innocent and put in this situation by their Wesen nature. For example, in one episode the Grimm encounters a brutal husband who harasses and force-feeds his shy and weak wife. It turns out that the wife is a seldom Wesen called 'Seltenvogel' producing a golden egg, called the 'Unbezahllbar' in her throat. The husband of course stands as a metaphor for 'greed' and is interested in the gold. He therefore keeps her hostage and forces her to go through the inconveniences of eating worm-shakes to make the egg grow. The Grimm then rescues the timid woman and cuts the egg out of her throat before she dies from suffocation. (Grimm, S1E16) *Grimm* often broaches social issues in the series, such as domestic violence in this case, drug-addiction (like in S1E15), or corruption and suppression of a Wesen race by another. Wesen are always depicted as an animal that fits to their portrayed character: a timid bird, a sly fox, an aggressive wolf. The depicted issues are of course not only 'foreign' problems, however, bad people are never just humans in the series, they always have Wesen origin and are therefore depicted as something 'other' than American.

Even if there is no remorse following a Wesen-kill, Nick often tries to solve a problem as police man and not as Grimm. Still, the moment when Nick's Police Captain Sean Renard is possessed by the ghost of Jack the Ripper and kills innocent Wesen-prostitutes and a black human woman that tried to help him, the crisis of conscience is complete. If he laments the human only or also the wesen women, can not be said at this point, but the moral consequence is sure to come in the next season. (Grimm, S4E21) Throughout the series Burkhardt even makes friends with some Wesen without whom he would have no access to important information about the Wesen world. Without their assistance, he would in fact be dead by the second episode, as he is a stranger to the Wesen culture and does not know what dangers to expect. Nevertheless, it is always the Grimm that keeps the balance between the worlds, the Wesen themselves are used to their wild and unregulated society and do not ally against the dangerous creatures in their world without the leadership of the Grimm. There is not such a thing as Wesen police, and the Wesen council only regulates the outer appearance towards society and a break of codes, but not murders within the Wesen race or the like. Likewise human police does not adapt to the needs of Wesen crime and the Grimm is actually there to kill all Wesen, not defend the weak ones. The fact, that there is no organization that keeps Wesen people save again suggests their lack of culture. In the Wesen world the basic rule for survival is to eat or to be eaten, it functions by the basic rules of nature, that is the survival of the fittest.

### **3.5. *Intertextuality and Social Critique***

We have learnt so far, that Wesen stem from cultures that are different from that of the dominant group and represent those cultures or at least the dangers deriving from them. Furthermore, the series transports an ideology of difference which basically supports the fear of what one does not know. But *Grimm* also reflects on this ideology and questions it. Therefore, a deeper look into the series way of critically approaching culture is necessary. In this chapter, the series usage of intertextuality and social critique will be investigated.

The Grimm world functions by its own rules which feels misleading for the audience as this world appears to be set in contemporary United States and

thus certain rules are expected. However, the series places historic events into context of the Grimm world and explains them on its own terms. The series exhibits a vast amount of intertextuality, not only because it suggests that the fairy tales by the brothers Grimm are accounts of real happenings, written down by the Grimm-family as a means for profiling Wesen for their descendants to identify and kill those creatures. The world presented in the series is a metaphorical reflection of cultural reality, with many references to the outside world. In the ninth episode of season four, the wolf-like Wesen Monroe, who also is one of the main characters, is abducted before his wedding and held prisoner by a group of fanatics. The name of the group is the "Wesenrein" and, as the two German terms "Wesen" and "rein" suggest, the groups duty is to keep Wesen from different races from intermarrying in order to keep the bloodlines clean. As his girlfriend Rosalee is a Fuchsbau and he himself a Blutbad, the Wesenrein tries to punish him. The visual appearance of the "Wesenrein" clothes seems like a combination of the Swastika-Symbol with the red, black and white colors of German Nazis and the pointed hood and cloaks known from the KuKluxKlan. In this way, *Grimm* uses the historic discourse to represent the German antagonists and the danger that comes from their values.



*Fig.2: Wesenrein (GrimmWiki, 2015)*

Also, in the first season, Nick goes through some old videos and finds footage of one of Hitler's speeches in public. The politician suddenly transforms into a

Wesen in a moment of high emotion. (Grimm, S1E13: 42:00 min.) It seems that the national socialism is an often occurring theme and the audience quickly agrees that it represents for the ultimate evil.



*Fig.3: Adolf Hitler in Grimm: a Wesen (GrimmWiki, 2015: Adolf Hitler)*

Other instances of intertextuality concern the myths and fairy tales in which the monsters had their origin. Most of the episodes of the first season borrow mythical creatures from Grimm tales: The "Blutbad", that is a bad wolf trying to eat little girls with red hoods and sweatshirts (S1E1), the story of the three bears (S1E2) introduced the "Jägerbär" creature. A fox, that is a "Fuchsbau", had its origin in the Grimm fairy tale "the master thief" (S1E13). Viewers further encountered rats and bees, witches and ogres and many more. Later *Grimm* lets go of serving the Grimm tales only, but adopts Wesen from other tales and cultures. Other animals that appeared in the series were for example lions, which were borrowed from the roman saga of "Androklos", a Wesen called "Cracher-Mortel", and a character named "Baron Samedi" who is drawn from voodoo culture and zombified the Grimm in the episode called "the waking dead" (S2E21). A doglike Wesen resembling the egyptian god "Anubis" (S3E15). "El Cucuy", an hispanic version of the bogeyman, is derived from the original legend "Coco", and in the TV series depicts a Wesen that can hear the voices of people in danger, and comes to revenge them. (S3E5) Furthermore, "La Llorona" another hispanic legend is introduced in Season 2, Episode 9. "Tarantella" is based on an ancient Japanese tale called "The Goblin Spider" (Grimm, S1E11) and depicts a spider-like Wesen that harms people and can transform into a human being. (GrimmWiki, 2015) The Danish fairy tale "the

snow queen" by Hans Christian Andersen (Andersen, 2015) is the starting point for "Hibernaculum" the seventeenth episode of the fourth season. In this episode an evil Wesen feeds on people and freezes them to death, the connection to the fairy tale is quite far fetched and can only be guessed from the quote at the opening of the episode. (Grimm, S4E17)

The opening quote is a passage from the myth or tale that is being referred to which is read by an off-voice-narrator at the beginning of every episode. The quote does not depict the moral lesson, that is being taught, as one might guess. It rather prepares the viewer for the degree of danger and kind of the Wesen that will soon arrive. The pilot episode, for example, holds following quote: "The wolf thought to himself, what a tender young creature. What a nice plump mouthful...". (Grimm, S1E1) Episodes that are not devoted to a specific Wesen, or are sequels of the prior episode, often stand under a specific motto and feature quotes from well-known literary works or historical texts. The episode "Maréchaussée" for instance, is inspired by Machiavelli's "the Prince" (S4E12). Also, "Go, Havoc!" the twenty-second episode of the fourth season quotes Shakespeare's Hamlet: "O, from this time forth, my thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth", and lives up to it's motto by increasing the body count in the TV series. Most of the time however, the quote does not add much to the episode and more or less just gives some fairy tale charm to the series.

Grimm offers a lot of social critique in its own metaphorical, sometimes not logical way. In the episode "Three bad wolves" (S1E6) a Bauerschwein Wesen tries to explain his kills of two Blutbaden. Apparently, Bauerschwein have an age-old feud with Blutbaden, as some of the latter are still killing the pig-creatures for fun. Bauerschwein usually are quiet fearful creatures, who do not pick a fight easily. Normally, they would hold the other cheek, but lately this seems to have changed: The story of this specific episode suggests a moral lesson, namely that revenge is wrong and everybody should have the right for a fair trial. Light and Shadows equally influence our opinion on a character as the camera perspective does in this scene. As Blutbad Monroe is threatened by the mad policeman with a shotgun, the important role that camera close ups play becomes obvious. The camera is closer to the policeman, who is in fact a Wesen called Bauerschwein, and shows his furious and determined expressions and sweaty forehead in a close up and super close up as it tries to

explain his motive. Monroe on the other hand keeps a calm distance, not aiming at a fight, knowing his counterpart is highly emotional but will not kill him yet. So the camera gives Monroe space to breathe with a little space of air above his head. (Grimm, S1E6: 35:00 min.) The lightning of TV Series often is not so versatile like it would be in a movie. Often the antagonist is set in the same light as the protagonist, like in this scene for example. Still, the camera often gives hints on the sympathy the audience should feel for characters.

So, in this episode the Bauerschwein's motive is revenge, but he also justifies his brutal murders in the series with an argument about race and who has the right to be called human. They are depicted as holding together with their own kind, but are likely to have brutal conflicts with others. As for example a Seelengut, a sheep-like Wesen, claims: "Do you think that I could or would kill one of my own?", the audience realized that killing your own people is considered a capital sin. (S2E5: 28:00 min.) Even lone wolfs, like Blutbaden, do not hurt each other, even if they do not enjoy each others company as well. However, killing another Wesen race is regarded less of a problem. From this example it can be concluded that Wesen deny each other basic human rights, as they accuse each other to be too animalistic to be human which can be seen in a dialogue between the Bauerschwein and the Grimm (S1E6: 38:00 min.):

Bauerschwein: "I realized maybe you being a Grimm, maybe that's not such a bad thing, we're kind of on the same side (...)"

Nick: "I don't think so"

Bauerschwein: "(...) Angelina Laster is a monster, you go after monster, so do I"

Nick: "You killed two people"

Bauerschwein: "Blutbaden are not people. Ralph was an animal, just like his sister."

The moral lesson of this episode suggests that Bauerschwein and Blutbaden should have solved this feud with the help of the law. However, the series applies double standards. While at the end of this episode, the Bauerschwein, of course, is arrested, Nick Burkhardt resumes his work as a Grimm. His job is basically to kill monsters, as the Bauerschwein claimed. While the pig creature was punished for its self-administered justice, the Grimm is depicted as hero. In fact, only a few minutes before that the hero of the series had his gun pointed at the wolf Wesen, but the Bauerschwein was simply faster in pulling the trigger. Still, it occurs often that the Grimm kills Wesen in vigilantism. It seems that other rules apply for him than for Wesen, and the

reason for this is the culture he shares with the viewers. The audience trusts him to have some deeply rooted values and a conscience that will not fail him. He is human and his cultural background keeps him from reacting too emotional and unreflected, this is why he is superior to Wesen and why only a human being can inherit the duty of a Grimm.

### **3.6. RQ. 1: What are the common and unusual German stereotypes and behaviors in the series?**

As we have already discussed stereotypes can not be dissolved, but TV Series play a big part in changing current stereotypes or adding meaning to them. (see Hall, 1997a: 270) In this chapter, the stereotypes appearing in *Grimm* will be analyzed. The analysis will start with the most important human and non-human characters and their most striking appearances on screen, and dialogues and behavior will be taken into account, too. Especially stereotypes about German and Austrian people will be investigated in order to see which role they play in an American series.

The series depicts stereotypes about other cultures and their roles in contemporary society and masks them with a Wesen story. Wesen represent human character traits, and besides are marked as different, that is non-American, by foreign names and cultural practices. However, it soon becomes clear that the characters are constructed in a dualistic way, often appearing to be something and then surprising with a totally different behavior. Especially the protagonist and his helpers carry mutually exclusive traits. Nick Burkhardt is a police inspector and therefore strong defender of the law. In this role his duty is to resolve criminal cases, arrest criminals and bring them to trial. Still, an increasing number of cases involve supernatural delinquents and Nick has to operate as Grimm and not as police officer. This often includes vigilantism, holding back evidence and killing somebody or letting a suspect flee and finally setting the police on the wrong track.

The red thread going through the series is the loss of morals, like it is known from traditional fairy tales, and like them, it is highly didactic. In each episodes morally questionable situations are shown in a metaphorical clothing.



The Grimm serves as a representation of morals. So, the audience sees a character acting in a selfish way, the Grimm then serves as the advocate of morals and makes clear that this behavior will not be left unpunished.

All those Wesen have flaws and linger below the skin of the human looking characters in the TV Series, and the most dangerous are those who can be definitely assigned to foreign origin. If *Grimm* is a metaphor for our contemporary society and its beliefs, one could argue, stereotypes function as a form of ordering this society. Similarly like Hall defined a "grammar of race" (1995: 21), I am going to develop a specification of 'Grimm-stereotypes' and then identify if they correlate with common stereotypes of a culture that is depicted in the series. In this chapter we are also going to see how ideology is conveyed in the characters and what problems this might bring.

### 3.6.1. *Non-Wesen main Characters*

Like we have already observed, not all individuals in the series are created equal and enjoy the audiences sympathy. And if it can be agreed on Wesen representing other cultures, their deviation from the dominant ideology is the reason why they can not be trusted equally much. The series suggests that it always needs a dominant culture to control the less developed ones and it does this by very stereotypically depicting characters and thus, constructing a hierarchy.

In *Grimm*, we experience the story of a hero, accepting his faith which comes with the duty to keep the balance in a supernatural, multi-cultural society. For this job a really stereotypical American hero is needed and a homicide detective who risks his own life for the innocent and weak every day fits just perfectly well into this picture. Nick Burkhardt represents the ultimate American hero, despite his German sounding name: he is a good-looking, intelligent, fearless, white American, good to the bones with a strong sense of justice. His superhero power is the sight of the Grimm which he learns to handle in the first season. It sharpens his senses and gives him a deeper insight into the human soul. His power is, similarly to the Wesen's a hyperbole of the same personality traits that made him a good police man, namely his good knowledge of the

human nature. These are stressed by his Grimm-gene and transformed into an actual x-ray vision into the human soul.

His job as a Grimm would be to eliminate all Wesen, however, good-hearted Nick Burkhardt soon finds out, that not all Wesen are evil and he can not simply kill them because they are different. Soon he gives in to his strong sense for justice which is also an American ideal. He then becomes the symbol for absolute justice, especially by applying justice beyond the limits of the law.

Nevertheless, Wesen fear the Grimm as becomes clear in every Wesen encounter throughout the series, because of the Grimm's negative reputation. For instance, the Eisbiber Rupert (Bud) Ferdinand Wurstner is sent by his company to Nick's house to repair his refrigerator and realizes that he is a Grimm. The Eisbiber flees from the house and in later episodes brings presents to calm him, until he realized that Nick is not going to kill him and his family. (S1E5 and E7) In later episodes it becomes clear that not only the Grimm can see the nature of Wesen, but also Wesen recognize him as a Grimm immediately after looking at him, because of what they see in his eyes. A big panic breaks out, when Nick's co-Grimm and Protégé Trubel crashes a Wesen-Wedding. While Nick wears sunglasses, Trubel did not protect her eyes. It results in an uproar, while the whole room of Wesen guests tries to decide if it is better to attack or to run away. (S3E22: 39 min.). The Grimm's eyes are how a Wesen can identify him as an enemy. According to Monroe and Rosalee, Nick's Wesen-best friends, the eyes of a Grimm are completely black, or like Monroe explains it: "black's too weak a word, more like infinite darkness, and we see ourselves reflected in that darkness. We see our true Wesen nature (...). It's actually very unsettling." (12:25 min.) A Grimm's eyes apparently mirror the darkness of a Wesen's soul. This explains the shock most Wesen have when recognizing the Grimm, including of course the tradition that a Grimm kills all Wesen they encounter. It is important to mention however, that the Grimm is not a Wesen himself, but a human with the talent to see people's true being. He might even be the missing link between humans and Wesen, but lacks the transformation into a Wesen, as Nick is the perfect human being. He stands for true American values, and hence for justice, liberty, egalitarianism, individualism, that is somewhat for the idea of American Exceptionalism. This would also explain why he is allowed to act in vigilantism, whereas others, no matter if Wesen or humans, are punished if they try. For such a responsibility,

one must be a very exceptional human being, that consequently can not be evaluated the same as the others. In fact, the Grimm can only be judged by a higher power. He stands for all the positive values that can be achieved by culture, the best that was thought and done like Adorno (1941, In: Storey, 2006b: 73) defined culture. The American hero can not be compared to ordinary people and his assessment is beyond their knowledge. But with this heroism comes the great responsibility of a hero, he is to take care of weaker individuals and do what is best for the greater good. This is also the role that the USA likes to see itself in when it comes to foreign affairs. But this also leads to a very lonely life.

Basically, Nick lives two lives, one as Grimm and one as police detective. And thus is a quite ambiguous as a character, but also as an American. He sometimes transgresses the law, makes friends with dubious creatures and betrays his own kind to save the weak ones. His Grimm-skills complement his abilities as a policeman most of the time, but he sometimes has to fail one to fulfill his duty in the other. He often experiences a discrepancy when it comes to solving cases of supernatural origin. Solving the case as police man does not always work out, so he has to act as a Grimm, which includes violating the law and brings Nick sleepless nights. Sometimes the burden of his duty is stressed in the series and brings up in him a very typical characteristic for heroes namely: self-blame. In the first season (Grimm, S1E1-22) Nick plans to propose to his girlfriend Juliette Silverton. Nick's aunt and co-Grimm Marie however, advises him against a marriage and even against a girlfriend, because she will never be save with him. Marie herself dies in a hospital after multiple attacks from her enemies. (Grimm, S1E1-3) Thus, Nick Burkhardt steps in the footprints of other super heroes like "Spiderman", "Batman" or "The Arrow", who all experience the loss of their own personal happiness in order to fulfill their super hero duty. This is not only a super hero ideal, but a very masculine ideal that can also be observed in many old sagas. The male hero or soldier is always expected to choose his professional fate and the fight for his country over a woman he loves. Conclusively, Nick is not only the prime example of dominant ideology, he also stands for masculine values and therefore supports patriarchy.

So, at first it looks as if Nick is due to lead a lonely life without anyone to share his secrets with. But Nick Burkhardt decides differently and stays with his girlfriend and throughout the series also spills his secret to her. The

consequence is Juliette becoming the notorious damsel in distress of the series. Not even when she learns about Wesen, is she much help, except that she can sporadically use her abilities as a veterinarian to help Wesen. Nevertheless, Juliette stays ball and chain and her role is more the signifying of what a 'normal life' would mean if Nick did not have the duty of fighting the evil in his spare time. Juliette's role does not contribute much to the series and she also loses the audience's sympathy when she is happy about Nick's loss of his Grimm-powers at the end of the third season which gives him an identity crisis. Later Juliette is coincidentally transformed into a Hexenbiest by a magical spell and turns to the bad side which is the first time the boring American, always understanding woman becomes interesting for the audience. In the last episode of season four, her ill-doing has an end, as she is killed on Nick's behalf by another Grimm. So, an ideological crisis overcomes the audience from this questionable outcome. Juliette was the perfect wife, and as uncomplicated as one can wish, her only fault was that she was boring. So, this is what happens to an ordinary human that engages in Wesen culture? Or is this just what happens to a woman, who lets go of the cultural roles that were applied to her? We will come back to this question later when discussing the Hexenbiest Wesen, as another female character shows similarities to Juliette.

Other non-Wesen protagonists in *Grimm* are the obligatory black best friend and loyal police partner Hank Griffin (Russell Hornsby), and the Asian police sergeant Wu, who is attributed the role of a funny sidekick. Wu and Griffin are at first assisting the police detective Nick Burkhardt and later become also assistants to the Grimm. They are no heroes by themselves, but they are good in helping the Grimm to handle dangerous situations. Both of them are not initiated into Nick's secret for a long time, and Hank Griffith only learns about the Wesen world in the second season (S2E3) after he has been thinking he is going crazy and similarly sergeant Drew Wu is threatened to lose his mind after being traumatized by a Wesen encounter. (S4E9) Being thankful to learn that they are not mentally ill, both become helpful partners and eager learners of the Grimm universe. Even if they are not as intelligent and heroic as Nick, they symbolize loyalty and friendship. The question of race is not addressed once in the series, both characters are marked as American through their English sounding names and positive attributes. Those two are examples that make clear that the fear of the other is circulating: Drew Wu is not depicted as Asian

American and Hank Griffin not as Black American, both are integrated into the group of American people for the reason that there is something much more dangerous, or better said much more different, to fight against. The series suggests that people who share similarities, in this case they are sharing one culture, can band together against a threat by another more different people. This is an interesting fact, in a world where people are differentiated by skin color or gender can still belong to one cultural group despite their differences, if they are fighting for the same goal or against the same threat.

So on the one hand, the cast of non-Wesen beings in the series is very stereotypical and goes from the typical hero to the submissive wife, over to the ethnic sidekicks who help to solve the case. The supernatural cast on the other hand is a lot more elaborated, but equally stereotypical.

### 3.6.2. *Wesen-origin Characters*

Evil characters are usually depicted as committing crimes with bad ulterior motives such as financial benefits, aggression, racism, ignorance or because it just is their instinct which they can not control. *Grimm* often enough illustrates characters in best fairy tale manner as either good or evil, but it sometimes also fathoms the depths of the human's soul and does deliver explanations and mild understanding when usually good characters do bad things.

All of these flaws occurring in Wesen are actually human personality flaws. But they are exclusively attributed to Wesen in the series, while human characters only have positive or very neutral character traits. Many bad killers are encountered in the series, such as the deadly 'Lausenschlange' (first appearance in *Grimm*, S1E9) who kills with its supernatural strength for whatever reason is just handy, or the 'Hundjäger' who is a hound dog like race working for the Verrat and is slaying down enemies of the royal houses (*Grimm*, S1E18). Each Wesen's culture, and actually there are more than one, has their own signifying practices. Bauerschweine enjoy a decent mud bath in their bathtub, which allegedly relaxes them and soothes their skin. (*Grimm*, S1E6: 38:00 min.) Eisbiber tend to help together build and repair things, and rather live a do-it-yourself-philosophy instead of consumerism. Others hunt in the woods to

initiate their youngsters to the clan. The Wesen spice shop is the best example, as it offers odd substances particularly for the need of Wesen, from pain killers to aphrodisiac. (S1E16) Before being attended in this shop, a Wesen has to woge to prove that it belongs to the other world. The Woge is an important ritual and serves not only as a replacement for an identity card, but for building trust and sometimes salutation. Wesen operate their own clubs and restaurants, where guest have to woge for the securities at the doors to gain permission to enter.

The series seems to suggest, that people with bad character traits are always Wesen, like it is common in fairy tales: humans make mistakes, but the bad wolf, simply is evil. Thus, a rowdy is never just an aggressive human, but always a Wesen that follows its animalistic drives. Simultaneously, a timid wife who lets her husband tread her badly, is often depicted as a Wesen, too. These negative characteristics can be attributed to particular creatures according to the symbolism of western fairy tales. These fairy tales and hence also the Wesen have their origin in a variety of countries. One could argue, that these Wesen symbolize the negative character traits and not really people from another culture which would be typical for fairy tales. And some Wesen sometimes even seem to be Americans, but at some point throughout the episode their names, cultural practices revealed the fact of the German heritage of Wesen culture. It is focussed on nationalities to indicate that being a monster is only dependent on behavior. So in short, *Grimm* ideology states that humans with anti-social behavior and those who can not control their animalistic urges can be seen as monsters to a society. These monsters in the series are metaphors for the negative human properties. However, it also builds bridges from the metaphorical monster to foreign sounding names and cultural practices and therefore depicts that difference is an unwanted characteristic for a functioning society.

What is important, is that the series does not suggest that all foreign cultures are Wesen, however we never meet a foreigner who is human. It also does not claim that there is no American Wesen, in fact some of them look American, only their behavior, language and names depicts their difference. This is the ideology conveyed in *Grimm*, the basic belief that the series draws from recent American culture. The series shows one stereotype after the other, decodes it and encodes it again with additional meaning, often making clear

how narrow minded the stereotype is. Bad wolves, for example, are described as aggressive, bloodthirsty and controlled by their animalistic drives. Some people have a bad wolf in them and therefore become a threat to society, which can be seen as metaphorical stereotype. But *Grimm* constructs this basic assumption often only to destruct it on their own conditions. For example, let us examine a situation that is laid bare in the Pilot-Series (*Grimm*, S1E1): The story is leaned on the Grimm's tale "little red riding hood". Nick Burkhardt is investigating a case where young girls in red sweatshirts become victims of a wolf Wesen which at first overpowers them and then either eats them at the spot, or kidnaps them to keep them in his basement for a later snack. Their bodies look as if an animal has attacked them, however, the only tracks Burkhardt can find are the footsteps of a human being (S1E1: 02:30 min.). Looking for the owner of these shoes, he follows the tracks to an peculiar loner, living in the neighborhood. At nightfall the Grimm observes the man's house, observing him woge, that is transform, into a wolf like Wesen, called Blutbad in the series. Nick sneaks into the man's garden and notices that the so called Blutbad is marking his territory by urinating at his own fence (S1E1: 23:00 min). Again, this is not a behavior one would expect from a human, but the series keeps on deceiving its audience. The man walks back into his house and as the Grimm wants to leave the garden and walks past an closed window (S1E1: 24:00 min.), the transformed wolf crashes from the inside of the house through the window to attack Nick. It shoves Nick against the side wall of the house and says: "You shouldn't have come back.", but as Nick reaches for his gun, the Blutbad adds: "Okay, okay, lighten up. I'm just making a point. Come on, let's grab a brew. And by the way, you're paying for that window" (25:00 min.). By saying this Monroe transforms back into his human form. At this point *Grimm* has made clear that it knows about certain connotations when it comes to big bad wolves, but it also is determined to break them. This first Blutbad the Grimm encounters turns out to be a "Widerblutbad", a reformed bad wolf, who turned away from the tradition of killing people. This is the first encounter with Monroe, an eccentric, vegetarian clockmaker, who is "staying good" through a "strict regimen of diet drugs and Pilates" (26:00 min.). Monroe lives a boring lifestyle, which mostly consists of repairing clocks and playing classical compositions by German composers on the cello. This is not at all what the big, bad wolf stereotype would suggest, it is the complete opposite.

Thus, the series proves that its makers made their choices deliberately and they know exactly what ideology is depicted in the series. Monroe (Grimm, S1E1) from then on is Nick's connection to the Wesen world teaches him about his duty and later becomes one of his best friends. His quirky personality and humor, that mostly shows in sarcastic comments, make him the favorite character of *Grimm*-fans. There are plenty of instances, where *Grimm* breaks with common beliefs the audience might have about those beings and Monroe serves as the perfect mouthpiece for such an occasion. Let us take for example the scene when Nick and Monroe are standing in the woods (S1E1: 32:00 min.) in the Pilot series, and Monroe can hardly keep his body from 'wogeing'. From the context it becomes clear, that Monroe can not stand the smell of another wolf being near, but Nick interprets the situation according to his cultural background knowledge about mythology and asks Monroe if Bludbaden (plural) can be killed with silver bullets. Nick thus refers to a solution that is known to the audience from different werewolf movies, and the viewers might suggest it is full moon, even if the moon is not visible. *Grimm* plays with what the audience knows about fairy tales and mythology and uses their metaphors. From these metaphors stereotypes are made and codes are drawn. The series anticipates how the viewers encode the information, namely according to what they have learned from fairy tales, and humorously depicts it as wrong.

Another helper of the Grimm is the Fuchsbau Rosalee, who owns the magic herbs and utility shop. She helps to brew potions and heal the victims after attacks and later becomes Monroe's wife. Some other Wesen become friends with the Grimm and complete what their fans call "the Scooby-Doo Gang", such as the timid and tradition-loving Eisbiber and Nick's part-royal-part-Zauberbiest Police Captain. Except for Nick's girlfriend, and his police partners, there are no human characters in the TV series. Of course, on the side of the enemies characters are fluctuating quickly. A few, however, stay for longer and become important components in the series. One of those is Adalind Schade, a Hexenbiest, that is the female form of Zauberbiest and depicts a ghoulish Wesen with magical powers. In her human form, she is beautiful and alluring, but also conniving and always does what is best for her own benefit. At first she is Nick's worst enemy, because she tries to kill his aunt Mary and therefore is hunted by the Grimm and loses her magical powers by his hand. However, she is not killed and afterwards regains importance in the series as she at first is pregnant with a



royal baby and then with Nick's own baby, after a spell went wrong. Still, her character does not gain many sympathies. To come back to my theory, it must be said, Adalind Schade's nationality is not clear. Except for her frequent visits to Austria and her name that sounds somewhat German, nothing suggests that she could not be American. Also, her surname is pronounced like "shade" which would fit better depicting her connection to the dark side. But in her case, the cultural discourse the series hints at, is not about her origin, it is about her gender. Adalind is a former lawyer, she is the stereotypical egocentric business woman and takes no prisoners to get what she wants. Again *Grimm* plays with a common stereotype, namely that of the egoistic, strong and self-dependent woman which does not fulfill the tradition that was intended for her gender. She is not an old, ugly witch, like we know from the old Grimm tales, but a pretty, young blonde, using her attractiveness and charm to influence others and if this is not enough, she turns to magic. *Grimm* peaks through a looking glass of patriarchal ideology on Adalind and sees her turn into a witch, or better said a Hexenbiest. The series connects the antagonistic role of the Hexenbiest with undesired characteristics like selfishness and manipulation, but pairs it with desired feminist character traits like self-reliance and female strength. *Grimm* suggests that women have a role they are supposed to play in our patriarchal society, and if they are not, it influences their image negatively. This is seen especially when Adalind unintentionally becomes pregnant in the second season and decides to sell the partly-royal baby to gain her powers back, the audience's sympathy is not on her side at all. In an interview with TV Guide, Claire Coffee, the actress playing Adalind, explains about Adalind's loneliness in the third season: "Instead of trying to make friends, she's going to try to take over the world." (Nguyen, 2013) This seems to be the exact opposite of what is expected from a woman of her age. However, in the third season Adalind's motherly feelings set in and she decides to keep her baby. She slowly changes from antagonist to ambiguous character, and as soon as she embraces the idea of being a mother, becomes someone who must be protected by the Grimm. For the fifth season, the fan base even is speculating on a possible love relationship between Adalind and Nick. This is due to the fact that Adalind slowly submits herself into the patriarchal system and Nick's current girlfriend Juliette is turned into a Hexenbiest beyond repair. Every attempt to heal her from her 'illness' is refused by her, because she enjoys her new feminist

strength. Therefore in the last episode of the fourth season, Juliette is killed after creating plenty of problems and admittedly playing a part in the killing of Nicks mother. (Grimm, S4E22)

*Grimm* is not the only series that is taking mythology too serious. It shows some similarities to the TV Series "Supernatural", considering the plot and the connection to fables and myths. But besides aesthetic elements, its humor is an important factor that makes it unique. Humor is a means of creating meaning, especially if one thing is said and another meant as it is the case with irony. But humor also enables us to talk about topics that are socially critical and not easy to be talked about. Furthermore, humor is the series method to make stereotypical presentations seem natural and most importantly, humor is an indicator for difference, as most of the Grimm's German Wesen-friends are depicted as awkwardly funny or sarcastic, while the American, french and other characters have no such properties.

Like so many series with comedy elements, *Grimm* puts its finger on the sore spots of society. Stereotypes are laid bare, ideology not only transported, but also wrapped outside-in in some cases. In *Grimm* not all characters have humorous traits, while others stay serious and pretend not to notice, this contrast is contributing to the series humor. Humorous characters are Sergeant Wu in the sphere of police work, Monroe, Rosalee and Bud Wurstner in the sphere of Wesen. Humor is mostly conveyed on a dialogic level, but often also with mimics or actions and situational comedy. It is used in the series to offer relief when suspense is high, but also to show how strange a specific belief or behavior is. Dangerous Wesen are hardly ever comical, humor and especially sarcasm is a property that is left to characters assisting the Grimm and harmless Wesen. Humor is a sign for a humane character, therefore dumb evil criminals can be funny too. This is especially true for those who commit a crime out of despair or self-defense.

Grimm's humor plays with expectations, an example would be the following scene (Grimm, S1E15: 19:06 min.):

Juliette Silverton comes home in the evening. She is alone in the house and it is dark inside. Suddenly, she hears a sound at her back door. The viewers know the situation from the thriller and mystery genre, and would maybe expect an attacker. Juliette slowly approaches the door, watches the handle turn by itself, and tries to peak through the window in the door. At the same time Bud

Wurstner looks up through the window, both see each other and startle. As Juliette opens the door the Eisbiber is standing in front of her with a screwdriver, and says: "Oh my gosh, you scared me". Juliette answers in a matter of fact way: "I'm sorry." (19:22 min.) As the identity of the man is revealed relief sets in and the humorous effect is established. Juliette seems somewhat more dangerous than he. When she is tiptoeing in the darkness of the house, hard shadows darkening her face, but as she opens the door Bud is standing outside fully covered in the soft light of the porch lamp. Bud explains that he repaired the door because Nick is so busy. So far, this scene could still arouse an discomfort, as it is an unusual situation. But then Bud picks up a basket with cherry-pie, that his wife baked for Nick and Juliette and insists that they take it. This somewhat odd scene reaches its peak, as it becomes clear that Bud shyly packs his tools together and is already sounding the retreat as Juliette asks him what she should do with the basket: "Thats for you too, my kids made it". (20:05 min.) *Grimm* illustrates this helpfulness as an odd behavior and immediately triggers suspicion towards the other. This scene arouses discomfort in the audience as Bud is behaving different from their expectations and intrudes into the private sphere of the main character's house. But the series humor lightens the situation and gives the audience their feeling of security back.

### 3.6.3. *German Stereotypes*

*Grimm* depicts many European characters and apparent rituals. It contrasts the Old World, which is the origin of most of the Wesen, with the New World, namely the comparatively young United States of America. As it seems it takes an old Culture to bring up the mysterious, old spirits of Wesen, or as James Baldwin puts it: "Europe has what we do not have yet, a sense of the mysterious and inexorable limits of life, a sense, in a world, of tragedy. And we have what they sorely need: a new sense of life's possibilities." (Baldwin, 1993: 11f.) He claims this in connection with the American self and the need to define one's status in contrast to others. This can be very effectively observed in the TV series *Grimm*, where the European culture is used as a starting point for comparison and self-finding for the American self.

As the Series is based on the fairy tale collection by the brothers Grimm, we can find many depictions of German and Austrian people in the series. In this chapter I am going to show some of the stereotypes that appear in the series and the roles German and Austrian people play. Most of the time, the series just suggests character's origin by their germanic names or special cultural practices, hardly ever does it openly talk about their heritage. With some of the Wesen, it is clear, that they live in the United States for many generations, but still are depicted as different, as they did not let go of their peculiar traditions. Many only adapted superficially, but stick to their peers and spheres.

#### 3.6.4. *Insider and friend: the funny German sidekick*

In the first episode of *Grimm* (S1E1) we encounter Monroe, a reformed Blutbad, who years ago was a bloodthirsty bad wolf, but lately has decided to let go of his aggressive habits and become a vegetarian and good citizen. He is the most ambiguous character on the series: a bad, big wolf on the one hand, a trustworthy and quiet loner on the other. Actor Silas Weir Mitchell explains the fascination about his character

"[b]ecause it offers this idea that the world is not exactly as it seems. [...] Monroe is not what he seems. He is a sort of bookish, quiet [...] guy who is just trying to fix the clock and live on the straight and narrow and do the right thing. Beneath that is this rapacious vibe to his ancestry and I think that makes him such an interesting character. Someone who is kind of in two places at once." (Leichner, 2013)

Monroe is "in two places at once" not only because of his animalistic features, but also because of his cultural origin. If one interprets his properties as metaphors for his German personality, they add up to no less than another stereotype. The typical German in the eye of *Grimm* is a quiet, old-fashioned person, in which a wolf slumbers. Mostly sheepish, but nevertheless dangerous and not to be underestimated. This of course could hint at Germany's position in the two world wars and their talent to disguise as peaceful nation until they start a war.

Monroe has a German origin, but his family lives in the USA for at least three generations or more. Still, he was taught some cultural traditions that he

still practices and which depict him as different. His German origin is revealed throughout the series with conscious and unconscious behavior and signs. For instance, Monroe has a colorful window on his front door, showing a wolf emblem, surrounded by green leaves. (S1E11: 21:45 min.) This is of course a fitting window painting for a wolf and might at first remind one of a fairy tale scene. But on a closer look there is so much more to see: The emblem bears some resemblance to the emblem of the city of Passau in eastern Bavaria. Many other German cities also have wolf emblems, for example Hannover or Wüflingen. Monroe apparently knows a lot about Germany and especially the Black Forrest, that is German 'Schwarzwald' in western Bavaria, which is the mythical origin of many Wesen stories. The leaves around the heraldic animal could suggest his connection to these woods. So, Monroe's origin is embedded in his front door window, and he still seems to have a strong feeling of belonging to German traditions, and he was taught so by his parents.

Another example can be found in episode 11 of the first season: Monroe is preparing "Baden-Wurst", a dish his mother used to make and explains he was feeling "home-sick" (Grimm, S1E11: 21:50 min). According to Monroe it usually was filled by his mother with "whoever was around", but as he is a vegetarian he processed red beed instead. Although the name is fictional, the "Badenwurst" coincides with German 'Blutwurst', which is also a kind of a sausage, with a deep red color and is nowadays apparently made of swine blood, bacon, rind and spices, but in former times any other offcuts of meat were processed into it. So, Monroe's definition is not so far away from the original after all.



*Fig.4: Wolf of Passau comparison with Monroes window (Grimm, S1E11: 21:50 and Wikipedia, 2015)*

Monroe still knows some German vocabulary and therefore functions as the Grimm's translator and teacher for Wesen lifestyle. He is an insider, and at first he is forced into this role, as the Grimm leaves him no choice. But later Monroe becomes Nick's best friend and helper and puts himself in danger to fight for the Grimm's cause. This relationship only functions so well because he is not dangerous anymore, and is a reformed bad Wolf, a so called "Widerblutbad". Monroe is depicted as odd and socially awkward. He lives a insular life, but is very amiable, intelligent and polite. He always has a beer in his refrigerator if Nick wants to talk which might be another German stereotype. He works as a clockmaker, one of the best craftsmen worldwide, which coincides with the stereotypical German quality of craftsmanship. Of course, he is also always on time, firm as a rock, when Nick is in danger. He lives his life on a strict regimen, stands up early, never skips his Pilates training, forbids himself the things that would be considered fun for a Blutbad which includes everything animalistic, that would reveal his true nature. This hints at another stereotype about Germans, who are known to follow the rules and as a Christian country does not approve of entertainment as long as it does not have any other practical value. This argument is also supported by the fact, that Monroe drives a very old car, a German VW Käfer, that does not work properly anymore, but a new one is not yet necessary as it seems.

Nevertheless, Monroe practices playing the cello for many hours a day, of course mostly classical pieces by German and Austrian composers, such as Bach, Mozart, and Brahms. (S3E10) The Austrian culture is known all over the world for its classical music and ambitious art culture. Monroe combines old German and Austrian values in him, such as craftsmanship, classical music, discipline and therefore can be seen as a hybrid of both tradition. Still, he has made himself a fan-favorite as funny, peculiar, sidekick and mentor of the main character. One of his roles is to brighten the situation, and therefore release tension and entertain the audience by behaving strangely and adding sarcastic comments. Monroe seems to unite many different roles, because additionally to being the Grimm's jester, he also is a trustworthy adviser and warrior, who can be counted on. Even if their friendship can not be understood by other Wesen, he is the Grimm's right hand. After all, he lets the audience never forget that

there is a wolf sleeping in him, which he is waking whenever his friends are in danger and it looks more frightening than any other Wesen in the series.

Rupert 'Bud' Wurstner is another example of a handy craftsman. As a member of the Eisbiber race, he is the owner of Wurstner's refrigerator repair, his talents lie in repairing and building things. Eisbibers have a talent for construction working (S1E19). In fact, most of construction companies in town are owned by Eisbibers, especially those responsible for the building of bridges. Eisbibers are characterized as rather fearful, very conservative and not keen to change. They rather stick to a tradition, even if this means that they will be subordinated to another race, like it is the case in "leave it to the beavers" (S1E19), where Eisbiber construction workers are blackmailed by a troll-like Wesen which is known by the name 'Hässlich'. The 'Hässlichen' "think they own the bridges", (S1E19: 16:20 min.) and if an Eisbiber company does not pay, the workers will be brutally killed as a warning to others. While Nick Burkhardt talks about extortion, Bud corrects him: "tradition. It has always been this way. No one likes it". (S1E19: 16:36 min.) After an Eisbiber is killed, Nick is eager to solve this case as a police detective, but he can not find the witness. Nick Burkhardt seeks the help of Bud, but before the witness may give testimony, the Eisbiber committee in the 'lodge' has to be asked. The lodge is a place in a backyard of an old factory, which nature already is taking back. The meetings take place at night, fires light the yard, wood and greens decorate the place. It becomes clear, that Eisbibers are a withdrawn, peaceful folk, rather wearing muted, earthy colors, and plain clothes. They are not so much interested in possessions, but highly value family and togetherness. These Eisbibers stand for traditions and old family structures. The female Eisbibers stay at home, cook and care for the family. The males are good craftsmen, they build all the family needs with their own hands. Their mostly more than-two kids per family learn the handicraft work soon and add their part to help together. The lodge voters decide against the witness and request at "the Grimm to not cut off our heads for opposing him on this question. (...) We are what we are." (S1E19: 29:00 min.). Bud apologizes by saying: "bravery is not in our nature". (31:00 min.)

The Eisbiber community somewhat reminds me on the originally-German Amish people, but can not be definitely assigned to them, as an Amish-stereotype would speak a specific language, have the well-known haircut and

beard and lives on farms rather than in a city suburb. However, these similarities had to be mentioned as there are many indications of them being a peculiar group with their own rites and a special concern for tradition. It is also clear that modern amish have adapted to the city-life, but still keeping to themselves and to many of their traditions.

What all the Germany-originating characters have in common is their discipline and efficiency, but also their awkwardly stiff character and domestic-focused lifestyle. Those characteristics can also be found in common stereotypes. However, their funny or sarcastic traits totally stand in contrast to the cliché of Germans having absolutely no sense of humor, except for Carnival time, or as the Guardian (2015) notes: "If Germans do have a sense of humor perhaps it has to be clearly noted in the calendar." The American characters in the series are hardly ever funny on purpose, except the Black American and Asian American Police officers detective Hank Griffin and Sergeant Wu. If one considers fan based rumors, Wu was for the first three seasons believed to reveal to be a Wesen himself, because of his strange behavior. Because while the German characters are comical in their behavior as well as their statements, the police officers convey their humor only in dialogue and always on purpose.

### 3.6.5. *The Grimm*

As far as we know from the series, the Grimm himself stems from a long line of German Wesen-hunters. However, we can not consider Nick Burkhardt as a German character, as he is deeply americanized. He only learns about his ancestry after his aunt dies and he receives his Grimm powers. Nick practices no hidden, foreign rituals and at first is a rather serious, straight-forward police officer. In the course of the series, while Nick learns about his German ancestry, he also gains a humorous side to his character. Still, his humor is controlled and equally like Hank's and Sergeant Wu's, restricted to witty comments on recent events.

So, even if the hero of the series seems to have German ancestry, he can not be taken as an example of German culture, as he is fully integrated and rather belongs to the American fraction. Still, he is the missing link between the Wesen and American culture. He seems to understand the other and is open for



it, even if he finds it threatening at first. But of course, he is special when it comes to this, because he is built to do.

### 3.6.6. *Evil German Criminals and Naive Victims*

Due to its connection to the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm, the series *Grimm* depicts many of its antagonists as stemming from the old continent and especially from Germany and Austria. Some of them are actually imported into the United States to do evil or to eliminate the Grimm for example the headhunting Hundjäger (Grimm, S1E18). Others have immigrated a longer time before, but have not let go of the aggressive behavior from their rough past, such as the "Lauseschlange" (S1E9), "Jägerbar" (S1E2), "Geier" (S1E10), "Fuchsteufelwild" (S2E16) and many more. Sometimes, the origin of some Wesen is only hinted at by the choice of name, or a paragraph in the Grimm's registry book that gives advice on where they were originally found and how to disarm them. With some other Wesen, however, the origin becomes very clear through context, for example when Germany's historic past of National Socialism is touched upon in the episode "Wesenrein" (S4E9). Like I have already mentioned above, Wesenrein is a group of Wesen fighting interracial romantic relationships and is willing to kill Wesen who transgress this unwritten rule. Supporters of Wesenrein try to keep the blood of the Wesen races clean, which does not seem to be a very new idea, but rather a conservative old thought. It is also suggested by the series that there might be a biological reason behind that, but the relationships are disapproved mostly as a matter of principle. Traditionally Wesen keep to themselves, but modern Wesen seem to have transgressed the point where race matters. (Grimm, S3E12)

When there is a crime, there also is a victim and in *Grimm*, the victims are Wesen, who most often are weak and timid personalities and can not help themselves. Even if those Wesen are not dangerous, they are depicted in a freak show manner by the series, and watched by the viewer with curious suspicion. Their weakness is not an amiable characteristic, but is understood as flaw and used as critical approach to depict social problems. For example, the Wesen "Seelengut" (Grimm, S2E5) who is encountered in a church by the Grimm. Monroe explains to him: "There are people who are born leaders, and

then there is Seelenguter", (S2E5: 16:00 min.) a race with a strong herd mentality and no interest in individuality. Seelenguter like to follow a leader who makes them feel secure and takes away any responsibility from them. In this episode their reverent is a reformed Blutbad, one could also say he is a metaphorical wolf in sheep's clothing. Their blind trust is fooled as the wolf kills one of the sheep to take the church's money. The Seelengut's strong religiosity can be understood as a connection to the old catholic countries like Germany and Austria, but also reminds the viewer on the problem of extreme subjective perception of some religious communities in the USA. Nevertheless, as Wesen culture is an old culture and therefore must follow old believes and traditions, in this episode old Europe, or more precisely Spain, is mentioned in a sermon as the source of their believe. (S2E5: 18:00 min.) Still, victims in the series are a means to establish a discourse on social problems and less on nationality. Therefore, the questions of negative effects of thoughtless naivety and peer mentality to a society stand in the foreground of this episode.

### 3.6.7. *Austrian Stereotypes*

There is not much evidence for Austrian traditions or at least not so much that it can be distinguished from the German culture. However, some of the footage sheds some light on Austrian characters in particular.

From the second season onwards, many scenes are filmed in Vienna, Austria. *Grimm* attaches no importance to historical or architectural accuracy, so settings in Austria are an unknown castle, allegedly in the woods, belonging to the royal family. Furthermore, the History of Arts museum, that is filmed from the Ring street but is supposed to represent the Opera. Also some other nonspecific coffeehouses and restaurants in very elegant atmosphere are presented as settings for the scenes where the Austrian tradition of coffee and cake is hinted at. Very often for the sake of authenticity, well dressed Austrian waiters are given short speaking parts in German. Their accent does not appear to be native, but at least it does not sound American.

Austrians are depicted as more elegant, good speakers, and lovers of the high arts. Wesen sometimes are connected with jobs in which they are particularly good at. The best occupations for Austrian Wesen are Leaders,

Lawyers, and Show-Masters. In contrast, German Wesen work as construction workers, craftsmen, police officers, and other lower class jobs and dirty works, but also as politicians and mortgage lenders. The only lower class occupation for Austrians depicted in the series is the stereotypical waiter in a coffeehouses and various servants for the royal family. Also, *Grimm* depicts Austrian based Gypsies with profound knowledge in magic, so even without being Wesen themselves they could help Hexenbiest Adalind Schade to gain her powers back. (Grimm, S2E15)

One austrian Wesen race is introduced in an episode called "Lonelyhearts", it is know by the name 'Ziegevolk'. (S1E4) These goat-like creatures are based on the the story "Bluebeard" by Charles Perrault. Still, according to the series Ziegevolk originated in Kitzbühl, Austria. The series depicts Ziegevolk as persuasive speakers, because of their power to dust pheromones onto one or more people, who then obey to their every will. (GrimmWiki, 2015) Where this perception correlates with stereotypical views on Austrian people, or if it is only a coincidence that Ziegevolk are depicted as Austrian is questionable. In recent times, Austrian movies and actors like Christoph Waltz, Arnold Schwarzenegger, but also Romy Schneider have helped to distinguish the Austrian culture from the German. The series might draw a connection to many well-known Austrian actors, who appear somewhat more elegant, and foreground the poetic traditions and the love for fine arts. It is interesting, that the first appearance of Ziegevolk depicts the Wesen as romantic monster. The male Ziegevolk is keeping cages with young women in his basement for 'herding'. (S1E4: 19:00 min.) This might be a coincidence, or else a discreet hint on the few cases of imprisoning young women in the basement for breeding, which might be one disagreeable tradition Austria is know for well. Monroe adds to the ordinary Austrian's defense: "that means he is not just a breeder, he is a herder, that's actually very rare for a Ziegevolk" (27:24 min.), at least he acknowledges, that this is not an Austrian's usual habit.

*Grimm* is not the only series that understands a difference in German and Austrian culture, but it decides to describe Austrian culture as being very elegant. On the contrary, the mystery series *Supernatural* picks up the Austrian newspaper headline that apparently went around the world in a less subtle way and turns it into the plot of an episode. The following quote is taken from the

only episode where the enemy is not a supernatural being, but a human girl that was held prisoner in the basement of her father. This story might ring a bell for every Austrian viewer and remind us on the case of Joseph Fritzl, who held his daughter prisoner in his basement for 24 years, a crime that came to light in Amstetten, Austria in 2008. The series commented on it:

Dean: "Oh gross. So the daddy was the baby's daddy too?"

Sam: "Yeah, dude was a monster, Dean."

Dean: "Wow. A Story ripped from an Austrian headline. Humans, man!"

(Supernatural, S4E11: 31:35 min.)

### 3.6.8. *Royals – political fairy tale*

One kind of people deriving from Wesen culture that plays an important role in *Grimm* is the royal family which is mainly ruling in Europe. It is not sure if the family members are Wesen themselves, as they do not change their appearance and only are marked by particular political power. Every fairy tale universe needs their kings and queens as it seems, still in *Grimm* they participate strongly in the ideological discourse, because they are mostly depicted in participating in power-relations. The royal discourse in *Grimm* is about social class rather than culture. The royals lead very powerful organizations in the Wesen world. One of seven royal families is depicted more closely in the series, namely the house of Kronenberg, which is said to be based in Vienna, Austria (GrimmWiki, 2015). However, the footage in the series does not show a castle in the city of Vienna but in an unspecified thick forrest, in a mountainous area. The forrest gives the royal family a mythical touch, the castle is old, made of grey stones, nothing from the pompous Viennese architecture can be found in it. The castle's appearance does not convey the Viennese elegance at all, but it rather looks as it was build in a much earlier, medieval era. It even has prison cells in the basement, in which Adalind uses to reside when she is not cooperative.

The royal household consists of the king, who is replaced more than once and very quickly throughout the series, some servants and counsellors and three princes, whereas one of them fled to Portland after he escaped an

assault from his step mother. The latter being Portland's Police Captain Sean Renard, who is a royal bastard, the son of the king and a Hexenbiest. So he is a Wesen-royal-hybrid and had to flee with his mother. Nevertheless, he still expects respect even in a place so distant from his ruling country, for this he often also reaps critique such as: "Times have changed my highness, royalty is not what it used to be" (Grimm, S1E12: 17:25 min.). His wishes still come true most of the time, suggesting that class is something that one is born with and can not be eliminated that easily. Here again the notion of naturalization comes into mind, as the class is tried to be presented as natural, not artificially created by culture. The royal family is not romanticized by *Grimm*, it is politicized. The life in this castle rather seems lonely and dangerous instead of magnificent. Royals are strict rulers, fighting for the sake of their own existence. There are no white horses, marriages or the similar. The pregnant Adalind Schade is not welcomed by the royals as a princess, but as a temporary guest, with the ulterior motive to take her powerful baby away and use her as informant to gain new methods to kill the Grimm. Royals are depicted as political organization, and a relict from former times, who are trying to gain back their power and strengthen their institutions with partly magical and partly brutal methods.

### 3.6.9. *Krampus*

So all in all, Austrian Wesen somewhat air the stereotypical gloomy Viennese attitude. Another Wesen, that originates from a rather dark tradition only comes into being in the month of December. Though it is not mentioned, the Krampus can only be an Austrian Wesen, as it is not known anywhere else. This Wesen lures and captures children in his sack and hangs them in the highest tree on the highest spot in order to eat them. The person transforming into this Wesen does not know about his Woge, a blackout is what follows a kill and therefore this Wesen can not be considered evil per se. The Krampus mocks the gruesome Austrian catholic tradition and has no further meaning than to show the alpine state's gloominess, which of course, is one of Austria's trademarks. But what we learn from this Wesen is, that you can get a Wesen out of its cultural surrounding, but not the culture out of the Wesen.

### **3.7. RQ. 2: How can the incorrect use of the German grammar be interpreted?**

*Grimm* stresses the origin of Wesen culture with the use of supposedly German language. Names for Wesen, cultural practices and institutions are depicted with German compound words, which are by no means really used in German language. Also, to enhance the feeling of German as a native language, sometimes Wesen use German instead of equally efficient English words and pretend it to be normal for them, while it feels strange for humans. For instance, (in S1E17) when Monroe and Nick are looking for a remedy in the spice shop, Monroe uses the German word "Zaubertrank" instead of the English word potion.

Monroe: "How many of these Zaubertrank are there?"

Nick: Zaubertrank means potion?"

Monroe: "Yep"

Nick: "Yeah. Wouldn't it be easier to say potion?"

Monroe: "Yep"

Nick: "Then why don't you just say that?"

Monroe: "Because it is so much more. It's wie durch Zauber, ein Zaubertrank." (S1E1: 20:30 min.)

Monroe suggests in this scene that the German equivalent is not the same as a potion and for him it might even be something special, as it is derived from an old culture and involves more than just a liquid with a particular healing effect. It involves all that has been done and said in Wesen culture and therefore is a carrier of meaning. In the second part of the last sentence, Monroe again switches into German, suggesting that anything to do with magic is usually said in German. His answer is not very logical, as he only argues that a 'Zaubertrank' is more than a potion as it includes magical work. However, for the viewer it is clear that magic is involved in the process of brewing a potion. So, as the primary meaning makes no sense, the representational meaning must be considered as the preferred meaning. The most probable explanation for the preferred choice of words, is that the choice of the German language is simply the appropriate register for magical practice.

So far we have argued that the German language is the language of choice when it comes to the magical world of *Grimm*. But considering the example of Monroe's "Badenwurst", the traditional sausage of the Blutbaden

race, that reminds us on German 'Blutwurst', hints at another, non-magical, use of the language, too. Some Wesen that appear later in the series have their origin in other European countries like French or Norwegian and have according names, like for example "Malin Fatal" (GrimmWiki, 2015: Wesen). There are also outer-European Wesen like Egyptian Anubis or Native Indian Coyotl and Balam (GrimmWiki, 2015: Balam). Still, the language of the magical world is German, even if the Wesen names are drawn from the language of the culture they come from. The reason for this is on the one hand that the typological registration of the Wesen always has been made by the members of the Grimm family, but also that German seems to be the dominant culture when it comes to magical beings. Monroe mentions in the Pilot: "Of course, I know about the books. You people started profiling us over 200 years ago" (Grimm, S1E1: 26:07 min.), referring to Nick's Grimm books. Other, more exotic Wesen are added only later in the series by Grimms traveling through the world. So conclusively, the German language is used to depict instances of difference, it is the chosen device to depict all non-American cultures additionally to magical practice.

Compound nouns that name creatures are made up by the makers of the series, the names of Wesen are not derived from the tale collection of the Brothers Grimm. So, *Grimm* somewhat distances itself from the Grimm's tales of the nineteenth century and thus claims to be more real than the former. Still, the Brothers Grimm are said to be the founders of modern German philology and in 1838 they started a large German dictionary project, with well-researched background stories for every word. A fact that comes to the series quite suitable, as a new word coinage is found in every episode and the series turns out to be linguistically very productive. (Lauer, 2004) It is important to notice, that the German language depicted in the series is again only a caricature, as it contains many instances of wrong grammar and vocabulary which are non-existent in German language. The German names for creatures used by the series mostly arises from the scriptwriters phantasy. The German language used on a daily basis by characters is produced with a strong accent, either American, or when it comes to supposedly Viennese waiters an unidentifiable one. One could be lead to believe that for *Grimm* German does not even pretend to be an existing language, but this assumption is wrong, it is even explicitly mentioned at many points that German is the actual language

they speak. In the first season, Monroe stresses the German origin of Wesen culture by often using German phrases in his speech, but most often with a comic effect. For example, he uses the phrase "Alles hat ein Ende, nur die Wurst hat zwei" on a funeral of a friend and later claims this his "father used to say whenever anyone died." (Grimm, S1E21: 21:36 min.). Also in the episode "three coins in a Fuchsbau", Nick calls Monroe to help him translate his Wesen registers which were written by his ancestors. Monroe joins him in his trailer and asks: "so we've got a little deutsche Geschwierigkeit", apparently meaning problems with German. (Grimm, S1E13: 21:00 min.) After having a look at the old leather-bound books, Monroe adds: "Steinadler, and Schakal. Oh, this is high German. This is the stuff my grandfather used to speak after a couple of beers." (21:30 min.) The fact that his grandfather used the language after being drunk, shows how unusual it must be.

Then he starts reading a German diary entry (22:42 min.): "Steinadler seem to be involved with the military. Like heroic, noble, apparently with very large... sausages. I don't think I'm translating that correctly." Monroe obviously does not speak German perfectly well, his expertise arises out of the lack of someone doing it better, even a non-German speaking audience would realize his deficit. In contrast to the french speaking characters, German is widely used in combination with humor, the language is used creatively to make it appear funny. What is important for us however, is not only what mistakes *Grimm* makes, but that they could have translated it correctly with not so much more effort. The decision not to translate German properly says as much about its stereotypes, as some of the characters do.

Like it is already mentioned at another point of this thesis names of Wesen depict their dangerous habits or animal properties. German grammar is also caricatured in these terms, and its wrong use is even stressed within the series. For example, the Wesen race of the 'bad wolf' is called 'Blutbad', however it is stressed that "the plural is Blutbaden" (S1E1: 27:17 min.) which is a plural form that does not exist in German language. A reformed Blutbad is a 'Widerblutbad', which is something like an not-bloodthirsty wolf, acting against its nature. A human person that does not know about Wesen's existence is a 'Kehrseite', whereas an initiated human would be called a 'Kehrseite-Schlich-Kennen'. (GrimmWiki, 2015: Kehrseite-Schlich-Kennen) According to the Duden (2015) the word "Kehrseite" either means 'backside', a negative side to



something or is a humorous word for a human's back and buttock. Accordingly, even if is not explicitly mentioned, the Wesen's word for non-magical people carries a negative connotation and might even be discriminating in a way. The word construction 'Schlich-Kennen' seems to derive from "Schliche kennen" or "auf die Schliche kommen", an old idiom for "knowing the ropes" or knowing one's trick. (GrimmWiki, 2015: Kehrseite-Schlich-Kennen) With the last example it becomes clear, that compound nouns are produced with little care about factual German grammar. The word "Kehrseite-Schlich-Kennen" shows clearly that no connection to a real German word collocations is intended.

Other creative, but grammatically questionable compounds can be found in Wesen names, for instance "Ziegevolk", "Gefrierengeber", "Fuchsteufelwild", "Bauerschwein", "Drang-zorn", "Fuchsbau", "Stangebär" or "Glühenvolk" (GrimmWiki, 2015: Wesen). Furthermore, another category of Wesen names are created by using adjectives as nouns like with the creatures called "Hässlich", "Reinigen", or "Seelengut". Lastly, names that include wrong spelling are common in Grimm, such as "Shnabeltiermörder", "Schneetmacher", "Rißfleisch", "Skalenzahne", or "Skalengeck". On the other side, unexpected details like correct gendering in female "Hexenbiest" and male "Zauberbiest" show that Grimm's neologisms are not false by carelessness, but on purpose. At this point I want to bring into memory Toni Morrison's (1993: 14-17) view on artistic productions. Specifically, she mentions that no thing occurring in a story has its place by coincidence. Authors choose wisely what thing, being or depiction plays a role in their story, like props are placed carefully on the set of a TV series. Likewise, Wesen names were given with specific intentions in mind and are a work of ideology. It would be easily possible to find a German native speaker who can translate names properly, but instead the series decides differently and shares this worldview then with the viewers.

I want to present a theory on the processes that might have led to this decision. In an Interview (Leichner, 2013) Actor Silas Weir Mitchell, who is playing Blutbad Monroe, explains his idea on the name choices for Wesen: "I think that's just the writers' sort of enjoying fun with language. [...] But it's mostly German language because of the Grimms." (Leichner, 2013) However, that the names are coined by coincidence can not be accepted after all we have encountered so far. As I have already mentioned, it must be considered that everything the audience sees in a TV Series is deliberately put into place. This

is true for characters and props, and even the cereals on the shelves of TV series. Their makers decide which logo is seen and what lifestyle is propagated and nothing is left to chance. Therefore, it has to be assumed that also the words used to depict creatures are no coincidence.

If one views the big picture, *Grimm* uses stereotypes as building blocks for its whole structure. It holds stereotypes of races and cultures, gender and social classes and many more. So, why should we not believe that the creators used stereotyping as an artful method of creating a whole alternative world that is familiar and strange at the same time? As stereotypes help the viewers understand the new world they are dragged into by comparing it to things they know. Ultimately, everything in this TV Series plays together and is held together by stereotypes. And in this tradition the language issues *Grimm* so playfully describes in the series is also just one more stereotype. Next to the heroic homicide detective and the always friendly, but personality lacking girlfriend, this is the last American stereotype that can be found in the series: the islander who does not care to learn about other cultures and other languages. Americans who are far away from the rest of the world, safe on their island, are often said to be ignorant concerning other cultures. This stereotype is worked into the series and is the only stereotype actively produced about Americans, while the other two appear from characters doing rather less than more. In contrast, this stereotype is even stressed by *Grimm* in many scenes, especially when the main characters express their frustration with the German pronunciation of foreign words like "Unbezahlbar" (noun):

Rosalee: "I think it is called an Unbezahlbar"

Monroe (on the phone with Nick): "Easy for you to say. She thinks it is called an... (holds phone to Rosalee)"

Rosalee: "Unbezahlbar"

Monroe: "Unbezahlbar" (*Grimm*, S1E16: 21:30 min.)

Rosalee pronounces the word more or less correctly, while Monroe makes no secret of his knowledge gap. Still there are times, when they learn German words properly and throughout the series the pronunciation is adapted. This happened for example to the verb "woege" that at first is introduced with its German pronunciation, but later resembles more and more 'to vogue'. As there was a need in American Wesen culture for this word, it was incorporated to the

English language. It is interesting to see however, that this stereotype is not only effective on the layer of the narrative, but also on the layer of production, as the writers are involved in the process of defining names and thus also can laugh about themselves.

### **3.8. RQ. 3: Symbolism of mythological creatures in the TV series? Comparison with mythological creatures in the original fairy tales.**

In this chapter, a selection of mythological creatures in *Grimm* will be compared to creatures appearing in the Brothers' Grimm fairy tales. The main point of analysis is how they are described in both texts. Through the following analysis it should be proven that the view on the other always depends on how a nation sees itself.

In *Grimm* the German creatures are viewed with suspicious curiosity. Their individual or cultural practices are laid bare in front of the audience like these of animals in the zoo. Thus it must be said that the TV Series is a lot more sensation-seeking than the tales of the Brothers Grimm. While the latter humanizes animals, the series does the contrary, by assigning animalistic traits to human beings and thus depicting them as savages because of their cultural difference and animalistic features. This depiction shows the self-conception of the nation the narrative was produced in as the only 'valid' culture. While the tales by the Brothers Grimm aimed at showing a common national tradition by collecting tales that are seen as cultural heritage, the series uses the same material to establish the American self by difference. Still, *Grimm* does not leave it with this, it rather seems to take stock of the zeitgeist and adds its typical fairy tale lesson of tolerance and morals to it.

To understand the cultural meaning of the wolf, one could have a look at the proverbs that exist in a language. Činkure analyzed the German language in that way and found connections of the word "wolf" to adjectives like "hungry", "aggressiveness", "danger", "deceitfulness", and "evilness". Furthermore, the word "sheep" was connected to "good" and "naiv". (Činkure, 2005: 34) These findings are in accordance with the properties *Grimm* ascribes to the Wesen. A good example is the sheep-like Wesen that appears in "the good shepherd" (Grimm, S2E5). Like I have already mentioned above the Grimm

discovers a church full of "Seelenguter" (plural). Their name hints at a charitable and mild personality. The herd is also very naively following the guidance of a priest who is a wolf and takes advantage of them.

I have spent quite an amount of words on the "Blutbad" in this paper, as it is one of the more frequent appearing Wesen. The creatures' name itself suggests a terrifying encounter. The "Blutbad", plural "Blutbaden", is the equivalent of the Brother Grimm's big, bad wolf. The German fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood" (Grimm, 2004: 144), suggests that the wolf is a voracious, "wicked creature" (144) who "swallowed up Little Red Riding Hood" (147) with one gulp, as he did previously with her grandmother. Its death is caused by the huntsman, who finds it sleeping in the grandmothers bed and cuts open the wolf's stomach, rescues the women alive and they fill its stomach with stones which causes the wolf to wake up and try to run and finally to collapse dead. (148) The brutality towards the wolf comes as logical consequence and is justified by the wolf's evil character. The huntsman, who might be an equivalent to the Grimm, depicts it as "old sinner" (147). Not only is it evil, but also intelligent enough to lure the women in the story into a trap. Also, in "the wolf and the seven little kids" (Grimm, 2004: 235), the wolf had thought of every possibility to trick the goat's kids into believing that it is their mother and then "satisfied his appetite" (235). The wolf is a common antagonist in German fairy tales and he always is an insatiable fellow.

Rheinheimer (1994: 399f.) attempts to explain the fear from the big, bad wolf. Until the 18th century, the men of the villages in German Schleswig-Holstein had to hunt down every wolf that was detected by a villager, even if these animals normally are rather shy and do not approach humans or even mistake them as prey. Nevertheless, wolves were killed and without logical reason hung up onto gallons like criminals until they were extinct in that area. Rheinheimer claims that wolves have their dangerous image from preying on cattle, still the procedure of hanging up the wolf by its neck, is too brutal and lacking any sense. So, he suggests that this was a part of the fight against werewolves, who played an important role in witchcraft and superstitious beliefs. So, the wolf, which threatens the life and property of men was a symbol for death, wilderness and nature and its dangers to humans. Moreover, the wolf was equated with humans' own dangerous nature and sexuality. (Rheinheimer,

1994: 404-406) In early Sweden a criminal was hung on the gallows next to a wolf, the latter a symbol of the demonic personality traits. (406)

"Wenn die Bosheit eines Menschen über das Normale hinausging, bei unerklärlichen Schadensfällen, bei grausamen Verbrechen mußte der Täter nach den Vorstellungen der Frühzeit einen „wölfischen" Charakter besitzen, und er wurde als böser Dämon angesehen, der in die Welt der Lebenden schadenstiftend eingriff." (Rheinheimer, 1994: 413)

According to Rheinheimer (1994: 407) in times of inquisition, witches were said to be able to transform to wolves and demons were able to take possession of humans and wolves. So it is no wonder, that a connection from wolf to human was drawn to a wolf-human being, that is a werewolf. Up to 1700 it was the popular belief, even if science objected. (410)

In the TV series *Grimm*, the wolf even is a human being that can transform into a wolf-human-hybrid. It has a wolf's face, supernatural strength and hairy arms and claws, but stands upright like a human being. The transformation takes mostly place when Wesen become emotional, and more specifically when they are provoked. An undeliberate transformation is a sign of loosing self control and giving in to one's animalistic drives. Equally to the brother Grimm's tales, the Blutbad is seen as evil, carnivorous, and very intelligent. Still, some of the Blutbaden in the TV series are aware that what they do is wrong, and at some point in their lives feel sorry for their actions. They turn away from giving in to their instincts into the arms of culture. Thus, they abandon their nature, which is a constant fight, like fighting a drug addiction.

The Grimm's fairy tales teach a lesson of morals and christian values. Children most often run into mischief because they do not listen to their parents' advice and readers learn from their behavior to become a valid member of society. But the lessons of these fairy tales have to be seen in a bigger context: one where basically the parents' advice stands for the whole culture and the wolf stands for incalculable nature. So in the end, the wolf becomes a metaphor of the fear of everything that can not be controlled, of the unconscious drives and wishes of human beings, of our own nature and other cultures that might be too different to understand and therefore conceived as savages.

The wolf's aggressive behavior is assigned to the model-antagonists of the Grimm, which occurs more often in the series than any other creature. At the same time the wolf is the heraldic animal of many German cities and therefore can be easily identified with the German culture. The TV series *Grimm* takes up this symbolism of the bad wolf in exactly the sense which is given in the tales, but adds to it further stereotypical properties of the German culture. Harshbarger claims that national socialism in Germany already used this practice to establish a common national sense of belonging:

"Picking tales from the cultural heritage which reinforced authoritarian attitudes, fear of the alien other, and approval of redemptive violence, the Nazis would engage in a kind of cultural engineering in some ways parallel to the genetic engineering they were so fond of." (Harshbarger, 2004: 494)"

While the Nazis added nationalistic values to fairy tales to encourage a common German identity, *Grimm* uses the fairy tales to establish the American self by differentiating itself from the German tales. The wolf is no longer a sign for death and danger, it is a sign for German death and its danger to American society.

The ongoing feud between "Blutbaden" and "Bauerschwein" thus takes an interesting turn. The term "Bauerschwein" can be loosely translated into farmer's pig, while the wolf does not only symbolize death but also a more powerful social strata. In both, the series and the books, the wolves made it a tradition to hunt down the pigs to satisfy their appetite and bloodlust. This can be also applied as a metaphor on the level of society. So, the peasant is brutally killed by the counts, landlords and kings of their time, just for fun or to serve their own greed. In *Grimm* (S1E6) the storyline reverses the roles of the tale "three little pigs" by Joseph Jacobs. While in the fairy tale each pig builds a house, the first of straw, the second of wood, the third of bricks and the wolf blows it away to be able to eat the pigs, who outsmart him nevertheless. The series turns the roles around and the "Bauerschwein" take their revenge. The pigs blow up the wolves' houses and fuel this century old feud until the Grimm puts an end to this. The Bauerschwein, who also is a police officer, now has to face a trial for murder. Neither the wolf nor the pig have a positive connotation in the TV series, while the pigs outsmart the wolf in the tales. The reason for this might be that the folktales' suggests that hard work pays off and wit always trumps strength. So, the pig stands for the farmer's and their hard work,

whereas the wolf stands for a thief, who takes what he wants by force, and can be equated with a richer social sphere. However, the TV series only shows a century-old war between two opponents, solved by the hand of the American hero. Without him to step in between them and teach them both the right values, the fighting would have gone on forever.

Some religious meaning can be assigned to many characters in the tales and in the series. According to Broszinsky-Schwabe (2011), impure animals like rats, dogs and pigs have religious meaning (174) and therefore have a negative connotation. Furthermore, also witches, or better said "Hexenbiests" seem to have a deeply rooted religious meaning. The "Hexenbiest" character combines patriarchal ideology and the christian despise of pagan religions. She is the opponent of tradition, children bearing females, and christian values, as she is a selfish, independent woman, who always finds a way to get what she wants. The series depicts her as evil feminist, with an aryan look due to her blond hair and blue eyes. In the Brother Grimm's fairy tales, the witch character appears in "Hansel and Gretel" (Grimm, 2004: 124ff.). The witch lives outside of society, in a house of bread and cake which she only has built to attract children and is as evil as to eat those little children, who are societies' most helpless creatures. "Witches have red eyes, and cannot see far, but they have a keen sense of smell like the beasts, and are aware when human beings draw near." (Grimm, 2004: 131f.) The tales describe the witch as non-human creatures, exactly like the TV series. However, in the Grimm's tales, the witch is very old and does not use any magical powers. The tales differentiate between witches, enchantresses, and fairies, the latter two having magical powers and are able to curse the protagonists. In most stories dark magic is performed by fairies, e.g. in "the sleeping beauty" or "frog prince" (Grimm, 2004: 45ff. and 75ff.), in "Rapunzel" an enchantress takes the first born child of the royal family (102). There is no sign of a witch having other more supernatural powers than red eyes and a cannibalistic appetite. Throughout the years the creatures merged to one and probably paired with religious stereotypes through the witch hunting which lasted up until the 18th century the witch became the symbol for wickedness and dark magic. But the witch that has been depicted in the tales of the Brothers Grimm has nothing to do with the concept of the witch nowadays. In the TV series the Hexenbiests disguise themselves as beautiful human beings, but are in fact ghoulish-like creatures. These creatures use magic to harm

respectable citizen, like the witches in transmissions from times of christianization were said to practice. Not only does the Hexenbiest ignore christian values, it is also an evil feminist transgressing the laws of patriarchal tradition. The only male witch, the Zauberbiest, is only a Zauberbiest-Royal-hybrid and does not show any noticeable magical skills, except a well-trained, upper body and French and German speaking skills which however, give away that he is a Wesen.

Many more mythical creatures appear on the series that have been taken from fairy tales and symbolize certain character traits: one can find a witty fox; ogres who claim that all bridges are their property; cowardly mice; seldom, helpless birds; will-strong lions and many more. Not all of them can be interpreted in this chapter, due to lack of space. Still, it can be said, that the most prominent creatures were taken from the tales of the Brothers Grimm. *Grimm* starts to write its own tales transcoding the meaning of its creatures and therefore uses its power for an "transformation of ideology". (Hall, 1995: 18) In the further course of the series, the tales become more and more insignificant and rather serve as inspiration for new creature or have no meaning at all anymore. For example, an alien-like Wesen is featured in "Endangered" (S2E19). It is called "Glühenvolk", is part-reptile-part-human and has no known origin in any fairy tale. The tale that is taken as a reference in the opening quote is called "little brother, little sister" whose original plot is widely ignored. Other Wesen are added to the series and gain quite developed roles, but never have appeared in any fairy tale before, that is for example beavers which are called "Eisbiber". (S1E19) Wesen have their origin in a fairy tale or myth from cultures all over the world. Through transcoding the TV series adds meaning to an already existing symbolic meaning of the creature. What is however striking is the information that the characters give us about its makers and their culture. As it metaphorically employs its intellectual and moral values over the non-American Wesen, it gives away the deeply-rooted Hegemony of the American culture as a leading force.



#### 4. Conclusion

*Grimm* is a TV Series that uses stereotypes to describe a world that is similar to the one we know, but still a little bit different. It uses fairy tale metaphors as a code to talk about social problems, inequality and morals. Even if it is not structured like a fairy tale, but more like a criminal or mystery series, it still is highly didactic. It represents races, gender, people with different cultural backgrounds, and social classes in an exaggerated way, namely by the use of metaphorical creatures, and depicts an ideology of difference. By humorously depicting foreigners, it tries to raise sympathies for them, but says equally much about its own culture as of the other which it caricatures in the series. The representation of the foreigner is a means of defining the American self. Moreover, after the series makes clear that we fear what is different from us, it shows that fueled by the fear of the unknown we try to pin down the dangers that we need to expect from the alien other. Stereotypes help us minimize the fear, as it summarizes the most characteristic features of the other into digestible chunks of information. The fear of the other help us to find what we believe to be our equals and form cultural groups.

The communication with the unknown other is highly stressful, as usually actions can be anticipated. This is not possible with people from cultures that one does not know. Also dangers can not be foreseen so easily. (Broszinsky-Schwabe, 2011: 195) Stereotypes not only help to define the other and their possible dangers, but also apparently make communication easier, even if an incorrect interpretation of the other might lead to misunderstandings. Stereotypes thus strengthen togetherness in an existing culture. In the TV series *Grimm* the black, Asian and white American characters work together to defeat the evil foreign characters. That all the human characters are American is taken for granted, no matter what skin color they have, they are held together by their innate culture. While the American characters have moral values without doubt, the Wesen are believed to symbolize wild nature and therefore are a danger to society, as they can not always control themselves. The series serves as mirror for the American self as the intellectual and moral leadership. (see Storey, 2006: 8)

The series seems to pursue a practice of trans-coding, as it constructs characters with the help of peculiar stereotypes and adds to it further meaning

by combining them with fairy tale monsters. *Grimm* makes an effort to dig deeper into the personalities of the strangers depicted in the story and shows their human side, despite their strange alien practices. *Grimm* illustrates discourses on race, gender and identity, but does not content itself with this alone. I have showed many instances in the series where the typical fate of a Wesen is not accepted and the established ideology is criticized. Humor and technical possibilities of film-production are used to create sympathy and understanding for Wesen. Furthermore, it shows that the fear of the other is mostly because it is unknown. As soon as the Wesen and its practices is explained, it is not so frightening at all, and sometimes it even becomes a friend.

Still, *Grimm* does not go far enough by showing how to 'do it right' and stays a mere depiction of a cultural freak show. It reflects only the interest of one group within many and mirrors the American eye, instead of showing the other side. While American culture stays largely out of range for the fetishists gaze, other cultures are closely observed. Neither the depiction of other cultures, nor the appeal to engage with their peculiarities contributes to cultural understanding. But like Storey (2006: 3) suggests, texts are always partial to one side.

Furthermore, we have learned about the most relevant characters in *Grimm* and the roles they play. Most of them are stereotyped, but often not as one would expect. They are the product of ideology, such as the two faced partly-French-partly-Viennese Police Captain, who is not trustworthy for most of the time. The Eisbiber Bud, who represents tradition, anti-consumerism and abjectness, and therefore working class which is the opposite of living the American Dream. Furthermore, there is Adalind Shade, a feminist who has lost against patriarchal society, and is on the best way to become a good wife. Juliette, who first is human and plays the role of the damsel in distress and then is killed after she is turned into a Hexenbiest and embraces the power. Nick, the American hero, and Monroe, a reformed badass now representing German bourgeoisie and discipline.

*Grimm* is closer to being a metaphor for the culture it arose from, than just a continuation of the Brother Grimm's stories. *Grimm* depicts difference as a means to create identity, the other is needed to verify the American self.

But we do not only watch these creatures to identify the potential danger, but to derive pleasure out of it. Wesen are being obsessively watched with

fetish-like interest, their practices loathed or laughed at. (Hall, 1997a: 266) Often enough this pleasure comes from the feeling of pity for these poor creatures, who can not help doing what they do, and the notion of superiority because of one's sophisticated culture. But there is more to the phenomenon of identity: Not only do individuals draw their notion of belonging to a group from comparing themselves with others, but also do groups, that in other cases would want to be distinguished from each other, tend to move closer together, when an even more different group comes into play. Such is the case with white Americans, black Americans and Asian Americans in the series, who all become one culture, holding together against the dangers of Wesen culture.

Many Wesen are directly connected to Germany and Austria and bear some stereotypes about these cultures. A differentiation between Austria and Germany is made, however not a thorough one. Austria is depicted as more elegant than the German culture and produces royalty, irresistible public speakers and eloquent lawyers, while the German people are depicted as handy craftsmen. Austria is also famous for its macabre and gloomy traditions like the Krampus, but also for some incest crimes that inspire some episodes of the series. It is interesting that the series distinguishes German and Austrian culture at all, and that Austria plays such an important role from the second season onwards. The books of the Brothers Grimm would suggest that Germany is the more important setting, but the makers of *Grimm* choose to set the royal household and therefore plenty of featured footage in Vienna in Austria. Wesen carry many stereotypes, still not all of them are the typical ones. *Grimm* often chooses to depict modern and less known stereotypes and therefore proves that stereotypes are matter of change.

The roles Germans take on in the series are mostly always funny, but goodhearted sidekicks, even if the common German stereotype suggests that they do not have any sense of humor. Thus, the German Wesen provides comical relieve and serve the audience's fetish for an ongoing freak show with exotic behavior. The stereotype can also be seen as a caricature of the feared, making it appear less threatening. The nearest a trustworthy German or Austrian character comes to the role of a hero, is to aid him in his duty and rescue him when he is in danger. The German can be a friend in need, but not the protagonist himself. The Grimm himself can not be counted as German, despite his German origin as he is culturally too well integrated. The Grimm

family has its origin in Germany, but in his preferred culture is American. The series differentiates not according to nationality, but by actively practiced culture. The viewer can be sure, that a person behaving 'different' from what they expect is a Wesen. However, the fetishist gaze is mostly directed at non-American cultures, while the American is depicted as the standard to which everything else is compared. The typically 'normal' person, is so neutral and well adapted that no specific character traits can be depicted at all. Wesen however are often obtrusive.

Also, female characters are rarely used to aid the Grimm, but instead have ambiguous and antagonistic roles. Feminist behavior is also depicted as one of these alien behaviors that can be expected from a Wesen. Other roles German and Austrian people play are wicked antagonists and weak crime victims, where their peculiar social, racial and personal behaviors are paired with problematic social issues processed into an explosive storyline. It is striking that no non-Wesen German or Austrian character can be found in the series. This fact supports the theory of difference as a marker to establish the American identity in contrast to other cultures. And a fairy tale is the best framework to convey what is right and wrong. In this process stereotypes are its most efficient method as they convey the difference between two subjects in the most convenient way.

In the analysis of the symbolism of some of these creatures and their comparison to the tales of the Brothers Grimm, it was found that the dangerous creatures represent wilderness and lack of culture. The feared ones stand outside of society either because of their criminal actions or their lifestyle. Most have the same symbolism in the TV Series as they have in the tales, but the series has added additional meaning to cope with modern discourses in society. The symbolism and stereotypes used in the series are not always traditional ones, but sometimes the series surprises with unusual ideas like funny Germans which is the complete opposite of the common cliché. Grimm therefore does not only serve as a mirror for current American society, but also builds a bridge for new discourses to appear and serve the needs of an multicultural society.

Morrison's (1993: 14-17) statement that nothing an author chooses to add to his work is mere coincidence is true for TV series of course. The German language is used in the series as a marker for the magical register and Wesen culture. It

aids to make sure that the stereotypes of peculiar mythical characters are understood as "the other" which again stresses the importance of language for this creating meaning. The incorrect use of the German language can also be explained as a stereotype. Even if the possibility to use the language properly was given, the makers of the series decided differently. The use of incorrect grammar is no more than the "writers sort of enjoying fun with language" (Leichner, 2013) and at the same time making fun about themselves. It hints at the American stereotype of ignorance and being blind for other cultures in the typically humorous ways of *Grimm*, and thus adds the only American stereotype to the list that is otherwise only reserved for foreign cultures.

Thus, one can say that everything in *Grimm* is stereotyped. The series even goes so far to build its whole structure on stereotypes, combining things that are known to the audience with new information and thus changing their knowledge about the world step by step.

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