Can we consider ‘Belle de Jour’ a fairy tale?

A study based on Vladimir Propp’s *Morphology of the Folktale.*

by

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Abstract

This thesis uses the methodology devised by Russian folklorist and scholar, Vladimir Propp, in his *Morphology of the Folktale* (1968) to illustrate the hypothesis that Luis Buñuel’s *Belle de Jour* (1967) shares the same narrative events and archetypal character which are highlighted in the *Morphology*, and that accordingly, the film may be considered to operate as a fairy tale. This thesis will parallel the structure of events and characters in *Belle de Jour* with those in Charles Perrault’s *Little Red Riding Hood* (1697). The parallels will demonstrate that the film exhibits the same narrative structure as an existing fairy tale, and that therefore Propp’s methodology may be applicable to other mediums such as film. Thus illustrating Orenstein’s suggestion that “not only individual tales but also entirely different tale types share the same basic structure and fundamental characters” (231).

Accordingly, important topics which will be covered in this thesis include the distinction between the terms folk and fairy tale, whereby the main distinction occurs in folk tale’s existence as an oral narrative form, and fairy tale pertains to the literary version of such tales. Other key terms include the concept of adaptation as a process whereby an important element of the original source tale or text is carried over in some way, given that both works within this thesis are fed from existing sources. Furthermore, Vladimir Propp’s *Morphology* is to be understood as the structure of a fairy tale as following a set narrative structure and sequence of events. The French term *conte* will be used throughout this thesis, as it best describes the original form of the tale written by Charles Perrault. The term *conte* simply means ‘a short imaginary story’.
Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, S. C. Sprigg.
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Dedication

To those who dream, and make those dreams possible.
INTRODUCTION

At an early age children are weaned on the marvelous, and later on they fail to retain a sufficient virginity of mind to thoroughly enjoy fairy tales. [...] Fear, the attraction of the unusual, chance, the taste for things extravagant are all devices which we can always call upon without fear of deception. There are fairy tales to be written for adults, fairy tales still almost blue.

Andre Breton, *Surrealist Manifesto.*

Fairy tales began as oral narratives going as far back as the Megalithic period (Zipes 2008), and continued to serve as inspiration for authors such as Charles Perrault in writing *Histoires ou contes du temps passé* (1697). The genre witnessed the re-writing of Perrault’s tales by the Brothers Grimm, as well as countless other authors and film makers. For hundreds of years, children have learnt from fairy tales which, especially at the time of Perrault’s writing, were often used to educate or instruct and to exemplify potential dangers within society. The fairy tale genre has also been the focus of discussion by scholars such as Vladimir Propp in his *Morphology of the folktale* (1968), which would later influence anthropologists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss. Propp was a Russian scholar, formalist and folklorist (Kolesnikoff in Makaryk 450). The *Morphology of the Folktale* was published in Russian in 1928, and the English translation in 1968¹. The benefits and limitations of a formalist approach will now briefly be examined.

Formalism

Propp belonged to the Russian school of formalism (Kolesnikoff in Makaryk 449). Kolesnikoff maintains that “Propp believed that all folktales are structurally identical if we approach them from the point of view of their composition rather than their characters” (in Makaryk 450). This method of thinking went on to influence French structuralist thinkers such as Claude Levi-
Strauss (Kolesnikoff in Makaryk 450). As can be seen in his study of myth, where Levi-Strauss asserts that the meaning derived from a tale does not come from an isolated element within it, but from all the elements combined. Propp also discusses the need to understand fundamental ‘base’ elements such as grammar and structure, when examining a language system as a whole (Morphology 15). He states clearly that the result of his endeavour will be “a description of the tale according to its component parts and the relationship of these components to each other and to the whole” (Morphology 19). This adheres to the Russian formalist school of thought, which focused “attention on the analysis of distinguishing features of literature, as opposed to the prevailing tradition [in the twentieth century] of studying literature in conjunction with other disciplines such as history, sociology or psychology” (Makaryk 53). A point which LeRoy confirms, in stating that “when Propp took up the study of Russian folktales, he concerned himself only with what he might find within the tales themselves, the properties of narrative” (5). Furthermore, in Russian formalism, “it is not the text itself which constitutes the field of literary analysis but certain techniques employed in the text” (Makaryk 53), techniques which Propp sets out to examine in the form of structures and patterns of such structures.

By comparing the themes of the tales, Propp set out to form a coherent understanding of the way in which fairy tales function. Smith and Riley praise Propp’s approach, in stating that “[h]is particular achievement was to demonstrate that this regularity could exist in the sequential organization of stories” (14) and that “Propp’s work demonstrates a powerful ability to uncover commonality amid apparent diversity” (14).

Formalism lends itself as an applicable method of comparison with which to assess the fairy tale aspect of Belle de Jour because the essence of Propp’s argument was to compare the themes within fairy tales, and their relationship to other tales within the genre. This approach is useful
because, as Propp also notes, the scenarios and content which make up a fairy tale will differ from tale to tale, which is why it is important for the Morphology to work that the actions contained within a tale are examined and compared. For this reason, formalism is an applicable method of comparison to use in this thesis, as it examines and compares the form of a given work with another, thus, is not dependent on outside factors such as the historical period within which a work was created.

In contrast to the benefits of a formalist approach which have just been highlighted, there are also limitations. Soriano notes how “[folkloric] specialists don’t like it when an attempt is made to regroup the themes of tale types” (210), adding in a footnote how Propp’s endeavour was met with reserve amongst such specialists (210). Furthermore, Smith and Riley state that “[i]f there is a limitation to Propp’s work it is that he was concerned mostly with the narrow study of the Russian folktale” (14). In a similar way, LeRoy notes how “the functions are simply observed to exist as an arbitrary and inexplicable string of events without conceptual sense or cultural meaning. For example, Propp makes no attempt to relate his functions to Russian culture” (6). This is an important point, given the previous discussion of the importance of the socio-historical context of a tale.

In relation to LeRoy’s concern, Smith and Riley also talk about Propp’s “failure” (16) to address the wider questions such as whether “the structure of the folktale correspond[s] to social forces and needs […]” (16). A point which is supported by Kolesnikoff (in Makaryk) who states that “[t]he formalists insisted on isolating the object of literary studies from those of other disciplines by focusing solely on literary facts and not on the external conditions under which literature is created. […] Accordingly to this view, it is not the text itself which constitutes the field of literary analysis but certain techniques employed in the text” (53). This statement demonstrates
the narrow limitations of a formalist approach, and notes the importance of comparison with the societal settings under which it was produced.

What is more, formalism can be faulted as a rigid, impersonal method of interpretation for something as subjective and socially-dependent as a fairy tale. Zipes comments on this aspect in stating that “these studies tend to formalize the structural patterns of folk and fairy tales too rigidly and do not take into account significant variations in form and content as folk and fairy tales were developed in different historical periods by different cultures” (Breaking the Magic Spell 126).

A formalist approach however, by its nature, disregards the content and focuses on the form, which is why such a comparison is functional for this thesis. In taking each function and analyzing its theme, we will be able to acknowledge its presence in either the film or the conte, and combine it collectively with the rest of the tale.

This thesis will argue that we may consider the surrealist film, Belle de Jour (1967) by Luis Buñuel, a fairy tale according to the Proppian definition. This assertion will be demonstrated by comparing the narrative structure of the film with that of Charles Perrault’s tale of Little Red Riding Hood, which was published in 1697, in Histoires ou contes du temps passé. A collection which was comprised of eight tales, or contes that were intended for children but which also had an adult audience in mind. The two works will be paralleled by the sequence of Proppian functions and the presence of archetypal characters. Throughout this thesis an analysis of fairy tale motifs encountered in the tale, which also resound in the film will also be highlighted, so as to exemplify ways in which the film demonstrates traits of the fairy tale genre. It will then
conclude what significance the similar themes of the two works have with regards to the consideration that *Belle de Jour* may be considered a fairy tale.

Fairy tales have been used by significant psychoanalysts such as Sigmund Freud and Bruno Bettelheim as a base from which to explore the development of the human psyche and the workings of the unconscious mind. Bettelheim’s *The Uses of Enchantment* (1976) insists upon the symbolic importance of fairy tales in the role of children’s understanding of darker concepts such as loss and abandonment.

Furthermore, the surrealist art movement was also concerned with the mechanisms of the unconscious, and is linked to fairy tale in this way. It is a genre which “is interested in the collapsed nature of the conscious and unconscious worlds (rather than a separation between them), just as in fairy tales the magical and the real are collapsed” (Haase pp 73-74). Surrealist filmmakers such as Jean Cocteau have explicitly referenced fairy tales in their works, such as *La Belle et la Bête* (1946).

Perrault’s collection of fairy tales, *Histoires ou contes du temps passé* were written under the pseudonym “P. Darmancour”, Perrault’s son (Dundes *A Casebook*). They were dedicated to Elisabeth Charlotte d’Orléans, and as such, are written with the style and tone that they be directed to children. However, they are also infamously dark and subversive. The *contes* were a *clin d’œil* to the literary elite as they were published as tales for children, yet with an adult audience in mind, as Lavignette-Ammoun (19) explains; “Perrault did not forget that it was the parents who would read the *contes* to their children, and continually slid several winks and touches of humour into his text which he intended also, implicitly, for adults³” (19).
Moreover, Perrault was a prominent member of seventeenth century society, acting as secretary to Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the finance minister in Louis XIV’s government. Perrault was a member of the Academie Française from 1671 (Zipes Oxford companion 379). As such, he was able to use his influential position to promote change amongst the literary elite. He took great interest in the famous literary “Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns” (Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes), and maintained that “France and Christianity could progress only if they incorporated pagan beliefs and folklore and developed a culture of enlightenment” (379). For this reason, Zipes asserts how Perrault used the contes as a mouth piece “to address social and political issues as well as the manners and mores of the upper classes” (379). Similarly, Seifert adds to this assertion in stating that that “the fairy tale vogue had strategic meanings in the context of the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns” (232).

Yet, Perrault was also hampered by his privileged position, as Shavit (in Dundes A Casebook) notes in stating that Perrault “did not feel comfortable writing texts that it was felt should be written by young people or by upper-class women, whose social status was lower than his. […] It appears that the main reason for Perrault’s behaviour is embedded in a social convention current among elite literary circles of the time vis-à-vis folktales” (140). Shavit also maintains that this is the reason for which Perrault published under the name of his son, Pierre Darmancour. Though “guesses as to the identity of the author of the tales were not limited to Perrault’s son” (in Dundes A Casebook 139).

What is more, Zipes (Trials and Tribulations) asserts that the tales were integral to the civilization process of children at the time of the seventeenth-century, which was aimed at instilling good behavioural patterns and “improv[ing] the minds and manners of young people” (Zipes Trials and Tribulations 27). Lavignette-Ammoun is also in accord with the fact that the
contes were written for children, but maintains that they also catered to an adult audience. Lavignette-Ammoun writes that “Perrault wanted to offer children a means to instruct whilst entertaining them” (19). Zipes (Trials and Tribulations) states that “Perrault wrote for both children and adults of the upper educated classes. The irony of his narration suggests that he sought to appeal to the erotic and playful side of adult readers who took pleasure in naughty stories of seduction. This irony was lost on younger readers, who could still enjoy the warming aspect of the tale and the play between the wolf and Little Red Riding Hood […]” (25). For example, this notion is also supported by Rodriguez who asserts that “the scene where the arms, legs, ears, eyes and teeth of the wolf are successively listed matches the fun exercises or childish jokes used by teachers of [the seventeenth-century] and today to introduce children to familiarize them with their own body” (44). This assertion is also backed up by Soriano who also alludes to the presence of ‘games’ in the conte (154).

Additionally, Shavit asserts that the audience was compliant with the games that the author played. She states that “[t]he game surrounding the author’s ambiguity paralleled the game around the intended audience’s identity. […] Even though the literary elite knew who the true author was, it preferred to pretend that the work was written by Perrault’s son, just as it preferred to pretend that the tales were meant for children” (in Dundes A Casebook 140). The tales were therefore shrouded in a sense of irony; a device which the surrealist filmmaker, Luis Buñuel, also frequently employs in his work. Buñuel directed Belle de Jour in 1967 as an adaptation from Joseph Kessel’s original novel by the same name in 1928.

In addition, Buñuel and Perrault share common attributes as authors. As will be discussed momentarily, this is largely due to the intent of their work. Perrault, writing more than three hundred years before Buñuel, sought to adapt pre-existing oral narratives and texts (Zipes Oxford
companion 174) with a view to not only educating and amusing young children, but to also employ his modernization of such pre-existing narratives as a rallying call to invite attention to the prevailing literary quarrel. Bories-Lu maintains that other motives also included providing the contes as warning tales (81).

In a similar way to Perrault, Buñuel’s work also scrutinized existing ideas and preoccupations of the twentieth century, which Braudy lists as “[t]he bourgeois obsession with food, money, and language […]” (72). The surrealist movement to which Buñuel belonged was “[…] a reaction to traditional art and bourgeois values and lifestyle” (14). Braudy also notes how Buñuel’s “[…] hatred of the bourgeoisie springs not so much from any concerted political philosophy as it does from an aesthetic one, founded on the belief that religious modes of patterned meaning and bourgeois modes of possessive meaning are oppressions of the eye, the mind, and the spirit” (72).

Indeed, having its roots in the Dada anti-art movement which preceded it, Surrealism was genetically predisposed to explore the theme of rejection. It thus rejected the bourgeoisie’s “[…] comfortable, hum-drum experiences […]” (Elder 261) with a view to artistic reformation (261). Surrealism sought to achieve an overhaul of the arts via an exploration of the subconscious and repressed desires, as well as addressing the imagination at different levels of consciousness. Dada, from where surrealism derives its lineage, was a notoriously playful collection of artists, and Buñuel carries forward this attribute in his work. He favors leading the audience on “all sorts of critical wild goose chases” (Forcer 20), often inserting signs, sounds and symbols which leave the audience bewildered and searching for meaning. Accordingly, the entire reactionary body of surrealism facilitated a new method of introspection for society as a whole, during an age in
which an increasing avant garde of cinema was emerging, and which Buñuel utilized fully to
establish his notion of “[...] the suppression of desire in any bourgeois setting” (Braudy 72).

Subsequently, Buñuel and Perrault wrote to impart a social commentary of their respective
societies. The audience for both creators (whether unintentional for Buñuel) was the bourgeoisie.
Schrader notes that the popularity of Belle de Jour with the middle-classes was largely due to the
film’s colour medium, and also because “[i]t abounds in the fetishes and kinky sex which ha[d]
recently become acceptable (and faddish) among the middle-class liberals” (N.p). Perrault’s tales
are evidently aimed at children, as Bories-Lu maintains that “the cautionary tale which
constitutes the overall form of Little Red Riding Hood, is also a variety of narrative specially
destined for children” (45). Yet, she also points out that the tale is addressed to adults, due to the
fact that in the moral the narrator uses the French third person ‘on’, or ‘one’ in English, which is
used “in the sense of “me, the narrator, and “you” who have just read the fable. This “on” is
addressed to an adult narratee who is informed on the subject which will be discussed in the
moral. The author declares in a frank and direct manner, his belonging to the adult narratee

group. The “on” designates, in these two uses, an adult narratee in complicity with an adult
narrator” (76).

Schrader and Bories-Lu’s previous comments situate the two works within society and within
history, as well as indicate their intended respective audiences. Though principally aimed at a
younger audience, Little Red Riding Hood indeed possesses elements which are targeted at an
adult audience, thus, the film and the conte share this aspect in common by which they may be
compared.
Furthermore, the two mediums of film and literature may also be compared by their structure and themes. This notion is supported by Prinsloo, who asserts that even though “Propp confined his analysis to the Russian folk tale […] he did suggest that it was possible that these narrative forms, ostensibly stylized and primitive, might have the same armature as the modern realist texts” (68), and that “[s]uch significance relates to the correspondence between the folk tale and film, sharing popular forms and similarity of ideological function” (68). In addition to this, the Morphology has facilitated an analysis of film in previous years, such as Peter Wollen’s analysis of Hitchcock’s North by Northwest (1976) whereby “[…] the film’s “surface” patterning can be transposed into the fairy-tale format” (Bordwell 198).

This thesis therefore aims to demonstrate that there are elements of correspondence between Little Red Riding Hood and Belle de Jour, when examining these elements using the Morphology as a base. The Morphology consists of thirty one narrative functions, all of which Propp maintained were present in Russian folk tales. He upholds that not all thirty one functions needed to be present in each tale. Walter Burkert in Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual (1982) has also demonstrated that Propp’s thirty one narrative functions can indeed be found in most fairy tales. He demonstrates this by explaining how seemingly unrelated Greek myths can be compared by their similar structures.

Propp also specifies that the functions will occur in the same sequence, and the order in which one function proceeds another will always be the same. Lastly, Propp defines seven archetypal characters whom he calls the dramatis personae. They are considered to be present in each tale. He defines them as; the Villain; the Donor; the Princess and her Father; the Dispatcher; the Hero, and lastly the False Hero. The purpose of this approach was to show that there are certain characters and events within a fairy tale which are always present in the narrative. Propp’s
method has since been used in the field of child psychology and has also influenced key structuralist thinkers such as Claude Lévi-Strauss in *The Structural Study of Myth* (1955).

Choice of works

As Prinsloo has suggested, a Proppian analysis may be possible for any given text or film, therefore the significance of the specific versions of *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Belle de Jour* which will be examined in this thesis must now be outlined. *Little Red Riding Hood* is a well-known fairy tale which has undergone many different transformations over its hundreds of years in existence, including the famous reworking of the tale by the Brothers Grimm in the nineteenth-century and *The Company of Wolves*, another variation of the tale by Angela Carter and published in her book *The Bloody Chamber* (1979). Carter also published her own translation of Perrault’s tales in 1977.

Opie and Opie maintain that “[t]he tale of *Little Red Riding Hood* is remarkable both for its extraordinary popularity, and for the fact that no version of the story has been found prior to Perrault’s manuscript of 1695” (93). Ziolkowski differs in his opinion and maintains that a Medieval Latin piece, which is a collection of oral folk tales transcribed by Egbert of Lièges between 1022 and 1024 entitled *Fecunda ratis*, or *About a Girl Saved from Wolf Cubs*, can be considered to be an even earlier variation of *Little Red Riding Hood*. Finally, Soriano, a specialist in folklore and Perrault’s works, who should surely have the last word, maintains that “this conte is, without doubt, nothing more than an “adaptation”” (160). The notion of adaptation is therefore pertinent to this thesis.
An adaptation is a variation, and it has carried over some essential element of its original source. It is vital to note that “[a]n adaptation’s double nature does not mean, however, that proximity or fidelity to the adapted text should be the criterion of judgment or the focus of analysis” (Hutcheon “In Defense of Literary Adaptation” 6). Consequently, we should not aim to critique Buñuel’s adaptation of the novel, but rather use the novel as a basis from which to investigate whether the film lends itself better to a Proppian analysis, given that the additions to the text offer the potential to derive more functions.

With regards to the intent with which the tales were written, it has been previously stated that they were intended for the twenty one year old Elisabeth Charlotte d’Orléans. In addition, Zipes also asserts that the tales were written with an ironic intent and that Perrault had an adult (bourgeois) audience in mind “[…] that would understand his humour and the subtle manner in which he transformed folklore superstition to convey his position about the ‘modern’ development of French civility” (Zipes Oxford Companion 380).

Moreover, the moralité in verse which came at the end of each (prosaic) tale added another level of irony, a theme which Dundes considers to be present in Little Red Riding Hood in particular. He comments on an ironic tone in the moral which he notes is “almost a parody of a moral: Watch out for gentle wolves!” (A Casebook 3). The theme of irony also been acknowledged in Perrault’s works by Bettelheim, who describes how Perrault “added ironic verse morals to provoke his readers to reflect on the ambivalent meaning of the tales” (380). In contrast to this though, Soriano asserts how “the moralité is precisely a warning, and is just that” (153).

Furthermore, it is undeniable that Perrault’s conte contains sexual connotations which have been amplified over the years of the tale’s retelling. Lavignette-Ammoun contemplates the sexual connotations within Perrault’s conte and states that “[t]he final moral, which evokes all “sorts” of
wolves who follow “young women into their houses” expresses this implicit association between the devouring of the wolf and coitus⁹” (19). In later versions of the tales, such as one by Jacques Ferron in 1961, the sexual references become more explicit.

In addition, the majority of Perrault’s *contes* are decidedly dark when compared to other fairy tales within the genre. The Brothers Grimm, for example, published *Children’s and Household Tales*¹⁰ in 1812, which differs significantly in tone. The brothers themselves wrote in the introduction to their second edition that “we have taken care to leave out of this new edition expressions which were not suitable for children” (in Dundes *A Casebook* 146). Several of the Grimm’s tales, such as *Cinderella* and *Little Red Riding Hood* have indeed been inspired by Perrault’s versions. However, in their endeavours to make the tales more child friendly, significant changes were made to Perrault’s rendering of the stories.

Compared with the Brothers Grimm’s version of the tale, *Little Red Riding Hood* carries tones of tragedy, death and punishment. Shavit (in Dundes *A Casebook*) notes in particular the different endings between the Grimm’s and Perrault’s version as “happy versus tragic” (147). Shavit also compares the differences between Perrault’s and the Grimm’s versions of the tale. He notes how in Perrault’s version, “the girl picks flowers for her own enjoyment alone, while in the Grimm version she picks them to bring as a gift to her grandmother” (150). He also comments on how, “[i]n the Grimm version family ties are much stronger than in Perrault’s” (150), this could be due to Shavit’s own acknowledgement of the role of the ‘child’ becoming more defined in the eighteenth-century, as in the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries children had to grow up fast and were either married or worked from a tender age (Shavit in Dundes *A Casebook* 132).
Accordingly, Perrault’s *conte* also differs in style to other tales which could have been considered for the topic of analysis of this study. This is largely due to the author’s intent, as previously mentioned, as well as the intended audience. Shavit’s (in Dundes *A Casebook*) comparison of Perrault’s and the Grimm’s version of the tale remarks how “[…] the tone of the texts [can be considered as] ironic versus naïve […]” (147). Further justification for subjecting Perrault’s version to an analysis is that one could posit that Perrault had an adult as well as a child audience in mind, given Zipes’ statement that “[t]he irony of [Perrault’s] narration suggests that he sought to appeal to the erotic and playful side of adult readers who took pleasure in naughty stories of seduction” (*Trials and Tribulations* 25). Whereas “[…] the Brothers Grimm thought it necessary to revise [the tales], gearing them to a child’s level of understanding, particularly from a stylistic point of view” (Shavit in Dundes *A Casebook* 147). Thus, so far, it has been established that Perrault’s tales will form a part of this analysis due to their intended audience, which consequently influenced the style and the ironic tone in which they were written.

Shavit also provides additional validation for studying Perrault’s *contes* as she notes that “[w]hereas Perrault used satire and irony to address the literary elite, the Brothers Grimm made a noticeable effort to preserve the illusion of the naïve narrator” (in Dundes *A Casebook* 147). Again, Perrault’s ironic intentions and the notion that the *contes* are not as innocent as first appearances would indicate, illustrates further reason for choosing Perrault’s work over other possibilities. In a similar way, Buñuel’s work is also ironic in tone, as well as a confrontational subject matter which will now be discussed in order to justify the inclusion of his version of *Belle de Jour* in particular.
Luis Buñuel is one of the most notable surrealist film makers of the twentieth century. His most well-known, provocative works include films such as *L’Age d’Or* and *Un Chien Andalou*. *Belle de Jour* was his first colour production, and is an adaptation of Joseph Kessel’s novel by the same name. Kessel maintained in the preface that his intention for the novel was “to show the desperate divorce that can exist between body and soul; between a true, tender, immense love and the implacable demands of the senses” (viii). He concludes, that “[t]he subject of *Belle de Jour* is not Séverine’s sensual aberration; it is her love for Pierre independent of that aberration, and it is the tragedy of that love” (ix).

Wood informs us that Buñuel found the novel “an old-fashioned, sentimental serial novel” (28). The motivations for his adaptation of it are as follows: in his memoir, *My Last Sigh* (1983), Buñuel wrote that *Belle de Jour* “offered me the chance to translate Séverine’s fantasies into pictorial images as well as to draw a serious portrait of a young female bourgeois masochist” (154). It is interesting to note the similarities which occur regarding the way in which the Brothers Grimm, like Kessel, placed emphasis on innocence in their tales, and that Perrault, like Buñuel, used a more subversive strategy in his work.

In regards to this, Lim observes how “Buñuel wants us to understand Séverine by contemplating the nature of her obsession. Instead of indulging in Kessel’s sentimental psychology by staring into Deneuve’s eyes, Buñuel fragments Deneuve’s body into its erotic constituents” (44). It seems that, Kessel’s tale at the fore is one of innocence, to which Buñuel has added a second layer of consciousness which he uses to explore the nature of Séverine’s desire. It is thus in a backwards reversal of events that we may consider the two works to be linked: Perrault’s antecedent, multi-layered tale was adapted and ‘softened’ by the Brothers Grimm, and Kessel’s
‘love story’ provided the inspiration for Buñuel’s stratified adaptation. Thus, reasons for comparing the film and not the novel with *Little Red Riding Hood* also lie in the author’s intent.

Being adaptations, differences evidently exist in each story of *Belle de Jour*. Specifically, the novel and the film differ in ending. In Kessel’s novel, Séverine confesses to Pierre of her own accord, thus providing minor redemption to the proverbial fall which Pierre has taken. Whereas, in the film, Séverine is ‘turned in’ by Husson; the viewer never having any idea as to whether Séverine had any inclination so as to relieve Pierre of emotional guilt. Secondly, in the film, Marcel, her gangster lover, dies, whereas in the novel he is spared and sent to prison. Consequently, both Buñuel’s *Belle de Jour* and Perrault’s *Little Red Riding Hood* have also been chosen for their similar ‘unhappy’ endings, whereby the protagonist is not redeemed and either dies (Perrault) or is left to face a lifetime of guilt and shame (Buñuel). It is for this reason that Perrault’s *conte* will be analyzed and not other variants of the tale, such as the Grimm’s version, which offers the ‘happy ending’ which has come to be expected of a fairy tale.

Fairy tale motifs are also present Kessel’s novel, and it is possible that these motifs have been transposed into the film. These elements will be explored in further detail in chapter one, as well as an exploration of what the changes in the screenplay bring to Kessel’s novel. I will then demonstrate if and how they affect the connection between the film and the fairy tale, and lastly, how these changes affect the Proppian analysis of the film.

The conscious/unconscious link

Associations with the mechanisms of the conscious and unconscious lie within each work. The connections between the conscious mind and its dream state fascinated the surrealist group, and
it is well documented that Breton was an avid reader of Sigmund Freud (Higginbotham 36). Higginbotham claims that “[m]yths and fairy tales are no less revelatory than dreams and have in common with them, as Breton remarks, the capacity to “portray preconscious apprehensions, longings and aspirations” (138).

Furthermore, Higginbotham notes how Séverine embodies Beauty from *Beauty and the Beast*. A tale which has as “the central theme [...] the young woman who, living in spiritual love with her father, comes to terms with the animal or erotic principle of love” (131). Higginbotham observes how “[t]his theme appears to explain much of the action in *Belle de Jour*” (131). Higginbotham also comments on the way in which *Belle de Jour* “ [...] contains, like traditional fairy tales, clues to human growth and development” (138). This statement implies that *Belle de Jour* possesses the capacity to educate and instruct as a cautionary tale, in the same way as Zipes (*Trials and Tribulations* 25) considers *Little Red Riding Hood* to operate as a cautionary tale.

Furthermore, in addition to the notion of the unconscious within the film, Vitor Reia-Baptista, in his Master of Arts thesis in 1987, comments on how Buñuel’s films “act [...] upon the sub consciousness of the spectators in the same way that many other fairy tales, fables, parables, metaphors, aphorisms and allegories do: as exercises of observation and catharsis. Reia-Baptista also maintains that “[t]he films of Luis Buñuel [...] assume, indeed, the role of the ancient folk tales in their relationship to myths, religion and transcendental mysteries. They are modern tales with specific functions, and we can find some structural similarity between these and those analyzed by Propp in the folk tales [...]” (N.p).

In this way exists another similarity between Buñuel’s films and Propp’s *Morphology of the Folktale*:
Buñuel's metaphors cannot be analyzed with the traditional instruments of literary criticism, which, despite their unfitness, have been used too many times as instruments of film criticism. To approach the pedagogical value of the Buñuelian imagery requires more than a mere identification of the tenors and the vehicles in the metaphors. It requires, essentially, the identification of functions and themes, patterns of heresy and of moralism, signs and contexts of signification. This means we are not too far away from Vladimir Propp's study of the folk tales, which he defined as a "study of the folktale according to the functions of its dramatis personae (Reia-Baptista 1987).

The knowledge gap

The previous statements demonstrate that comparisons between fairy tale and surrealist works have started to be explored, however not to the extent whereby the different mediums of text and film have been examined. There exists therefore a knowledge gap in this area. At first glance, a comparison between a literary text and the medium of film may indeed seem impractical. Yet via the similarities in regards to a Proppian sequence of events, along with similarities in the authors’ styles and ironic intent, as well as references to the society which bore the works, a foundation arises from which to build up a solid comparison.

The layout of the structure of this thesis will be as follows. Chapter one will commence with an analysis of Belle de Jour the novel, alongside the film, so as to establish points of similarity and differentiation. An exploration of the changes and adaptations from novel to film will be examined, followed by the implications that this has for a Proppian analysis of the film. Propp’s Methodology will then provide a base for the analysis of the way in which the dramatis personae, or “characters as such” (Propp Methodology xxvi) of each work can be considered to occupy the
same roles. In the final part of chapter one, I will demonstrate that the two narratives share the first five narrative elements of the thirty one, as set out by Vladimir Propp in his *Morphology of the Folktale*.

Chapter two will consider the notion of desire within *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Belle de Jour*. This theme will be explored via Peter Brooks’ study of desire as the driving force within the narrative, as that which drives the text forward. This assertion will be assessed with the two narratives. Secondly, the element of voyeurism within the film and whether this is a theme which is also possible within literature, will be examined.

Finally, chapter three will exemplify Carl Jung’s statement that “the symbolic imagery of fairy tales may be viewed as depicting the exploration of the unconscious mind” (in Swann Jones 129). A statement which may be applied to *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Belle de Jour*. Lacanian methodology in this chapter will also provide an interesting pivot from which to centre the discussion, as Buñuel’s surrealist films, by their very nature, explore links with the unconscious.

Lastly, the implications of being able to successfully consider *Belle de Jour* a fairy tale, using Zipes’s discussion regarding the influence of fairy tale on society (*Why Fairy Tales Stick*), will be analyzed. The implications of being able to consider *Belle de Jour* a fairy tale, along with the implications of this in the broader sphere of cultural influences will also be contemplated, as well as an exploration of the limitations of Propp’s approach.

The conclusion will summarize whether the present analysis permits *Belle de Jour* to be considered a fairy tale by Proppian standards, and will also assert that by reading *Belle de Jour*
through Propp’s *Morphology*, the framework of fairy tale itself becomes enhanced and enriched through the medium of film.
CHAPTER ONE

If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.

Albert Einstein.

This chapter will commence by addressing the specific terminology which will be used in this thesis. Secondly, the presence of the dramatis personae in *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Belle de Jour* will be considered, followed by a consideration of the notion of adaptation within the literary and cinematic spheres. Adaptation is an important topic given the fact that both *Belle de Jour* and *Little Red Riding Hood* have undergone an adaptation of some kind. Therefore with this in mind, the changes which occur from Joseph Kessel’s novel, *Belle de Jour*, to Buñuel’s film will also be considered, followed by the details which have been directly transposed from the novel into the film. This will culminate in a commentary on the effect of these changes on a Proppian analysis of the film. Lastly, this chapter will consider the fulfilment of Propp’s first five narrative functions in both *Belle de Jour* and *Little Red Riding Hood*.

Terminology

Primarily, it is necessary to define the key terms which will be utilized throughout this thesis. The title of Propp’s work has been translated as *The Morphology of the folk tale* from the original Russian *Morfológiya skázka*, yet, *Little Red Riding Hood* is commonly referred to as a ‘fairy tale’. There exists therefore, a demarcation between the words ‘fairy’ and ‘folk’ tale, which must be outlined, given the fact that this thesis intends to analyse the structure of a fairy tale using a method that is supposedly intended for the ‘folk’ tale. The clarification lies in the
original Russian. Wagner (in Propp’s *Morphology*) notes that “[i]t is evident from the text that the unqualified word *skázka* is used by Propp both in the sense of tale in general and in the sense of fairy tale, depending upon context’ (ix).

Furthermore, Propp in the *Theory and History of the Folktale* (1984) maintains that his magnum opus was mistranslated, and notes how it should have been translated as the *Morphology of the Wondertale*. Evidently, the volume of works in many different languages makes it hard to form a clear cut distinction between the genres, as many critics have offered their own guidelines as to what constitutes a folk, fairy or wondertale. For example, Haase dedicates three pages to discuss the possible parameters with which to define ‘fairy tale’, including its length, its purpose, the “proverbial happy ending and the obstacle-laden quest” (324), and the realm of reality in which the tale takes place. In his definition, Haase alludes to Propp’s consideration “that fairy tales are narratives of initiation” (324). He concludes that “[f]rom this perspective, the fairy tale is synonymous with the wondertale and fulfills a sociocultural purpose” (324). Thus, we can consider the terms ‘fairy tale’ and ‘wondertale’ to be synonymous based on Haase’s assertion.

Additionally, Neemann holds the concept of “literary fairy tale” (20) to be synonymous with the French expression *conte de fées*. He also considers that oral folktales equate to the term *conte populaire* in French. A notion which is also supported by Soriano (489), who states that “works from popular tradition are not only *anonymous*, but apparently *spontaneous*, that is to say, elaborated without elaborations, individualised without an individual” (481). This relates back to the oral, and therefore spontaneous nature of the *contes populaires*. Soriano acknowledges that there are a certain number of *populaire* characteristics in Perrault’s work by the way in which the *contes* are representative of traditions within society, as well as verbal techniques which were
prominent at the time. He maintains that Perrault was not of a *populaire* origin, but that his works indeed reflect *populaire* elements (489).

Moreover, Neeman states that “the French word *conte de fées* constitutes an expression fixed by usage, invariably designating the *conte merveilleux* and *conte populaire*, as well as the literary genre that coined the term” (20). He adds that *contes merveilleux* “practically always exploit tale types and themes pertaining to oral tradition by freely elaborating on them, which adds to the confusion between *conte merveilleux* and *conte populaire*” (20). Therefore *conte merveilleux*, also known as *conte de fées* was another well-known version of the *conte populaire*. For reasons of space, this thesis will not examine at great length the differentiation between the aforementioned terms, as that is another thesis in itself. It is acknowledged however that there are multiple concerns when addressing a specific tale type as a *conte merveilleux*, *conte populaire* or *conte de fées*.

Accordingly, the present thesis will merely seek to justify the use of ‘fairy tale’ or *conte* to label Perrault’s *Little Red Riding Hood*. Propp includes this tale in the corpus of the *Morphology*, therefore, for Propp, it falls within the genre of wondertale (given the previous assertion regarding the word *skázka*), which then follows that it may also be considered to fall under the category of fairy tale, given that the previous paragraph established that the genre of ‘wondertale’ can be considered tantamount to ‘fairy tale’.

The question now remains to distinguish fairy tale from folk tale. Zipes (*Breaking the Magic Spell*) considers that a folk tale is an oral tale, and consequently that it may be distinguished from a fairy tale, which he defines as the literary version of the oral or spoken tale. He states that
“fairy tales have been in existence as oral folk tales for thousands of years” (*Breaking the Magic Spell* 2). Zipes also posits that oral folk tales transitioned into literary fairy tales during the seventeenth-century, thus during the time when Perrault was writing *Histoires ou contes du temps passé*. Zipes makes sense of the notion that a ‘fairy tale’ need not necessarily contain fairies. He maintains that “it was only after [Catherine-Anne] d’Aulnoy had introduced the title contes de fées in 1697 or before in the salons that other writers began using the term that signified much more than tales about fairies. The use of the term was a declaration of difference and resistance. […] These tales were programmes of actions or social symbolic acts projecting moral and ethical conflicts in alternative worlds” (*Breaking the Magic Spell* 224). He asserts that the term “has stuck in French and English to the present day” (*Breaking the Magic Spell* 224).

Furthermore, surrounding the notions of fairy tale lies the bigger concept of the marvelous, or merveilleux, in French. This concept will be explored in slightly more detail as this also extends into the society at the time, a point which is crucial in the coming chapters. Seifert defines ‘marvelous’ as “supernatural […] characters and settings” (in Canepa 131) which “denote […] an excessively unrealistic situation or idea” (131). He adds that “the marvelous recurs with great frequency in literary fairy tales (as opposed to folktales)” (131). With regards to the behaviour and characteristics of the marvelous, Seifert notes how “the marvelous offers a retreat from the constraints of the real or the present and a fantastic resolution of ideological contradictions. The marvelous creates an alternate plane onto which the real can be transposed and reimagined. To do so, however, the marvelous must be adapted to the cultural contexts in which it is evoked […]” (in Canepa 131). Thus, the place of society in the concept of the merveilleux is indeed important.
Additionally, Seifert talks specifically about the place of the *merveilleux* in the *contes de fées* of seventeenth-century France, stating that “[i]n all of the seventeenth-century *contes de fées*, as in most of the folk and fairy tales that employ it, the marvelous is perhaps best described as a context that suspends the rules and constraints of reality” (132). This is exhibited in *Little Red Riding Hood* by the wolf’s capacities to talk.

Indeed, the notion of the *merveilleux* also applies to *Belle de Jour* when we consider Stone’s comment that the surrealists “conceived of art as a poetic process that mobilized our unexpected encounters with the marvelous in our conscious and unconscious life” (3). He observes the *merveilleux* in the work of the surrealists, and argues also that the *merveilleux* is connected to the real world in that it “reproduces and reaffirms familiar social structures and values […] The *merveilleux* is capable of reproducing familiar realities, but also of revealing their incoherences and suggesting, in however a schematic a way, a different future” (132). This is manifested in *Belle de Jour* by the way in which Séverine slips in and out of daydream into masochistic fantasies.

Furthermore, another crucial term which must be defined is the use of the word ‘morphology’, which Propp defines as “the tale according to its component parts and the relationship of these components to each other and to the whole” (*Morphology* 7). Briefly stated, Propp’s *Morphology* identifies thirty one generic narrative functions which will occur in a fixed order, and will possess up to eight archetypal characters. The concepts within the *Morphology* will be explained in greater depth presently.
Understanding the *Morphology*

As mentioned, the operations within Propp’s methodology will now be examined so as to clarify the approach of comparison between Buñuel’s film and Perrault’s *conte*. Propp’s *Morphology* was intended for Russian fairy tales, though, Dundes asserts that “it is perfectly legitimate to expect that Propp’s analysis would indeed apply to the general tale types […]” (*Folklore Matters* 123). Dundes is correct in his assertion given that the fairy tales which Propp analyzed were tale numbers 300-749 from the Aarne-Thompson index, an international categorization system of fairy tales, of which *Little Red Riding Hood* is number 333. A consideration of whether Propp’s analysis extends into other mediums such as film, will be attempted in the present analysis.

It has so far been established that the *Morphology* considers that a fairy tale is achieved by a number of functions fulfilled in any one tale. To expand upon this point, Propp considers a function to be an action which is “[…] defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of the action” (*Morphology* 21). Thus, a function is determined by its chronological place in the narrative. To reinforce this idea, Aguirre points out that “[t]he same action will have different morphological values depending on its place in the story. [For example], [a] wedding may be a reward […] only if it occurs at the end of a sequence or of the tale” (5). Furthermore, the event within the function may be interpreted differently and therefore equate to a different function, depending on its place in the narrative. This will be a consideration when comparing the functions in *Belle de Jour* the film and in *Little Red Riding Hood*.

Correspondingly, each function leads to an event which allows for a progression of the narrative, and therefore different functions may lead the tale in different directions, and as such, “[…] identical acts can have different meanings, and vice versa” (Propp *Morphology* 21). Because of this, Bordwell notes that “[b]ecause the motifs or objects and persons can vary from tale to tale,
only the actions […] can form the constants that trigger our intuition that two tales are similar” (9). Thus, the actions within a function will more than likely be different, as will be explained presently.

In conjunction with the previous statement, Liberman (in Propp and Liberman) acknowledges that the action within a function may be different, and notes how “[t]he main lesson of his Morphology was that the folklorist is not allowed to compare one magic horse with another […] but only one function with another” (xxxv). For example, Propp states that the first function of absentation may occur in one of three ways: the first being whereby “[t]he person absenting himself can be a member of the older generation” (Morphology 26) secondly that “[a]n intensified form of absentation is represented by the death of the parents” (26). Lastly that “[s]ometimes members of the younger generation absent themselves” (26), for example, “[t]hey go visiting” (26). It is under this last variant of the function which Little Red Riding Hood illustrates absentation as she goes to visit her grandmother. Likewise, in Belle de Jour, Séverine absents herself from the tennis game. The two occurrences are obviously not the same, yet they can both be classed as fulfilling the function of absentation. The result of comparing tales in this way in the Morphology was that Propp was able to demonstrate that tales with no apparent relation shared structural similarities.

Accordingly, the functions which occur in Belle de Jour the film and in Little Red Riding Hood will be set out in the order in which they appear in their respective narratives, and compared relative to the order of functions in the Morphology, so as to determine whether they occur in the same sequence. In addition to the functions, Propp maintained that a tale will also contain a key set of archetypal characters or dramatis personae, who will be now analysed.
The dramatis personae

Having just examined the role of the functions within the *Morphology*, this thesis will now consider another vital cog in the *Morphology*, which are the characters who are considered to always be present in any given fairy tale. Propp defines these character as dramatis personae. Hale believes that many researchers have been led astray in their investigations of the Proppian model by the overwhelming details which Propp sets out regarding the dramatis personae (23). Hale comments however, that Propp’s methodology “works” (23), and asserts that

[T]he wide differences in the story’s “content” are simply differences in detail, epiphenomena that prevent the common generic identity of the tales from being readily grasped. Past researchers have been led astray […] because they have paid too much attention to the proliferation and variability of dramatis personae; his method looks past the superficial difference […] to examine the actions these characters perform – and he finds astonishing uniformity in tales that otherwise might seem uncomparable (23).

This comment relates back to the previous explanation regarding the way that the functions must be examined, which is by their action and not their content. In the same way, Hale suggests that the dramatis personae must be evaluated for their actions, in order that we may find their equivalents in a wide range of otherwise seemingly unrelated fairy tales (23).

To exemplify Hale’s point, in Propp’s explanation of the dramatis personae he states that it was possible to have a combination of variants regarding shared roles and character fulfilsments (*Morphology* 81). Bordwell reinforces this idea in stating that in the *Morphology* the same
character may illustrate the characteristics of two dramatis personae, and equally, several characters may all fall under the category of the same dramatis personae (9).

The role of the hero

Propp considers that seven archetypal dramatis personae will always be present in each tale and will each fulfill a different function. Propp lists the dramatis personae as; the Villain; the Donor; the Princess and her Father; the Dispatcher; the Hero, and lastly the False Hero. Furthermore, the functions of the characters “[…] logically join together into certain spheres” (Morphology 79) of action. Let us take the hero as our first example, as (s)he is the first character who we encounter in both tales in the form of Little Red Riding Hood and Séverine. Propp states that the sphere of action of the hero consists of a “departure on a search” (Morphology 80). Little Red Riding Hood demonstrates this aspect of the hero as her mother sends her away to the grandmother’s house in the next village, saying “go and see how your grandmother is, for I have been told that she is ill. Take her a cake and this little pot of butter¹²” (Perrault Histoires 48) In Belle de Jour, Séverine also fulfills the role of hero as her departure on a search is for Madame Anaïs’ brothel.

The Villain

As well as the sphere of action in which they reside, the hero is also defined by their involvement with the villain. According to Propp “[t]he hero of a fairy tale is that character who directly suffers from the action of the villain” (Morphology 50). Séverine therefore fulfills her role as hero as she suffers the action of the gangster villain Marcel, who shoots her husband Pierre. The girl in Little Red Riding Hood also illustrates this quality of the hero as she is eaten by the villain
who is the wolf. Propp also notes that the hero can be the person “who agrees to liquidate the misfortune or lack of another person” (*Morphology* 50). Propp denoted “lack” (50) to mean a ‘problem’. The little girl in *Little Red Riding Hood* liquidates a lack or problem, as grandmother’s sickness constitutes a ‘lack’, and by taking the items which her mother (who, consequently fulfills the role of the dispatcher) has prepared, Little Red Riding Hood also seeks to fulfill this ‘lack’.

Hence, the sphere of action of the hero entails a departure on a search and involvement with the villain. Similarly, the sphere of action of the villain contains “a fight or other forms of struggle with the hero” (Propp *Morphology* 78) and has as its constituents “villainy […]; a fight or other forms of struggle with the hero; [or] pursuit” (Propp *Morphology* 79). Lastly, the villain’s “[…] role is to disturb the peace of a happy family, to cause some form of misfortune, damage, or harm” (Propp *Morphology* 27). Again, the wolf fulfills the villain role as it “disturb[s] the peace” (27) of the family by devouring the girl and her grandmother, the *conte* detailing how “this wicked wolf fell upon Little Red Riding Hood, and ate her up” (Perrault *Histoires* 55). In *Belle de Jour* Marcel disturbs the peace, as he shoots Pierre who is the husband and provider, thus leaving Séverine to care for him, incapacitated in a wheelchair.

Propp also distinguishes between “seeker-heroes” and “victim-heroes” (*Morphology* 23). A seeker-hero is a character who has left home in search of another, and as such the narrative focus emphasizes the seeker’s route. Whereas conversely, if the narrative concentrates on the victim or lost character’s story “[…] for example, [if] a girl is driven out and there is no seeker, then the narrative is developed along the route of the victim hero” (23). Orenstein confirms Little Red Riding Hood’s character function as the victim hero in the narrative (229). In a similar manner, Séverine is also a victim-hero in *Belle de Jour*. 
The Donor

In addition, Propp defines the donor character as the “provider” (*Morphology* 39) in the tale. Husson fulfills the role of donor as well as the villain, given Propp’s (*Morphology* 81) and Bordwell’s assertions that a character may fulfill multiple roles (9). Propp maintains that the donor is encountered in the tale accidentally and provides an “agent” (*Morphology* 81) to the hero. He notes that an agent is an “[…] object of transmission […]” which may simply be a “qualit[y] or capacit[y] which [is] directly given […]” (*Morphology* 44). The agent therefore provided by Husson to Séverine is Madame Anaïs’ address, as it is an object of transmission. Perrault’s tale does not contain the dramatis personae of the donor as Little Red Riding Hood does not encounter a character who transmits anything to her. Propp addresses this obstacle and states that “[w]hen a helper is absent from a tale, this quality is transferred to the hero” (*Morphology* 83).

Adaptation

Consequently, the functions and the dramatis personae form the structure of the *Morphology*. This section will now address the notion of adaptation, as it is an important concept to both pieces within the scope of this thesis.

Regarding cinematic adaptation, Andrew states that “[…] the task of adaptation is the reproduction in cinema of something essential about an original text” (31). Hutcheon adds that the original literary text, “[r]ather than being displaced by the adaptation (as is often feared), […] most frequently gets a new life” (“In Defense of Literary Adaptation” 14). Such as with Kessel’s
novel, for example, in adapting a literary text for a cinematic audience often the original is rejuvenated and receives new attention.

Consequently, concerning the adaptation of fairy tales, Haase comments that “[t]he concept of “adaptation” refers to the process that occurs when folk and fairy tales are changed into new versions, or variants, in the course of their transmission. Adaptations can occur when a text or tale type is retold orally or rewritten and when it is transferred into a different generic form […] or into a different medium (such as […] print to film […]” (2).

From these statements we may posit that adaptation is a process whereby an important element, or the essence of the original source tale or text is carried over in some way. To exemplify Haase’s comment, an adaptation is a ‘variation’ of a tale or text. Further to this, there must be specific reasons which incite adaptation, as suggested by Hutcheon (“In Defense of Literary Adaptation” 85). Hutcheon adds that adaptation also brings with it the chance to reach a wider audience, as well as economic or profit-driven motivations in addition to personal and political incentives (A Theory of Adaptation 92). Hutcheon considers how in this respect, “[the director] not only interpret[s] that work but in so doing they also take a position on it” (92).

In addition, Buñuel’s Belle de Jour (1967) has become known as an essentially surrealist work which was adapted from Kessel’s 1928 novel. This is due to Séverine’s story as” a narrative based on the logic of the unconscious” (Kernan 41). The film delivers the ‘essence’ of the novel as it depicts the lives of Séverine, a bourgeois housewife played by Catherine Deneuve, and her husband Pierre played by Jean Sorel. Forcer observes how the film portrays Séverine’s “[…] transformation from virgin newly-wed (as Séverine) to Baudelairean vamp (as prostitute Belle de Jour)” (21). Séverine’s masochistic desires of domination are contrasted with the innocence with which her bourgeois contemporaries regard her.
Moreover, Wood comments on how “Buñuel said that the idea of the two levels of reality, where in Kessel there was only one, was what provoked him to film the story in the first place” (“Double Lives” 28). Wood also remarks how “Séverine’s daydreams are Buñuel’s contribution to the plot-line offered him by Kessel’s novel” (28). Kessel applauded Buñuel’s take on the novel, noting that “Buñuel’s genius has surpassed all that I could have hoped. It is at one and the same time the book and not the book. We are in another dimension; that of the subconscious, of dreams and secret instincts suddenly laid out” (in Levy N.p.).

Furthermore, Perrault’s *Little Red Riding Hood* is commonly considered to be an adaptation of a pre-existing oral tale, as Haase mentions how “Perrault and the Brothers Grimm were themselves in many cases adaptors of pre-existing tales […]” (2). Furthermore, Zipes maintains that *The Story of Grandmother*, collected in 1885 in Nièvre was based on a French superstition about werewolves, and is considered to be one of the early influencing oral folk tales which preceded and shaped Perrault’s *Little Red Riding Hood* (*Trials and Tribulations* 21). Some critics also claim that Perrault took influence from the Italian folkloric tales *Le piacevoli notti* by Giovanni Francesco Straparola; a two-volume collection of seventy three stories in total, published in Italy between 1551 and 1553 (Bottigheimer 58).

However, Carpenter challenges these assertions, insisting that *Little Red Riding Hood* was an original tale created by Perrault, as he maintains that earlier versions of the tale do not seem to exist (126). Conversely, according to Zipes, Perrault upheld that the collection of *contes* in which *Little Red Riding Hood* resides were the tales told to him by his nanny (*The Irresistible Fairy Tale* 16). Soriano states that without a doubt, the tale comes from preceding oral versions as there are no literary versions of it prior to 1697 (148). Evidently, there are and still remain
quarrels regarding the underlying sources and influences of the *contes*. The essential point about adaptation is that both œuvres within this thesis have shown to have been fed from a previous source.

Comparing and contrasting; from novel to film

The previous section considered the notion of adaptation and asserted that elements of an original’s essence will be carried over into its variants. It was also noted that elements will often differ – new themes will appear and old ones may be disregarded. A consideration of the presence of fairy tale elements in the novel will now be explored as it may aid an understanding of the functions that occur in the film. This will be followed by a consideration of new elements which appear in the film, and what potential impact they have on a Proppian analysis.

Thus, Kessel informs the reader in the preface of *Belle de Jour* that his aim in writing the novel “[…] was to show the desperate divorce that can exist between body and soul; between a true, tender, immense love and the implacable demands of the senses” (viii). This can be considered a fairy tale motif given the fact that in many fairy tales, the theme of a ‘forbidden love’ exists, such as Perrault’s *Beauty and the Beast*, which explores the concept of desire for an unsuitable subject. Likewise, in the tale of *Cinderella*, the protagonist is forbidden from going to the ball which is beyond her social ranking, again demonstrating a desire for something which is not socially appropriate. This theme is also demonstrated in both versions of *Belle de Jour* whereby Séverine desires Marcel, a character whom she is forbidden to possess as her social standing forbids her from doing so. Interestingly, Higginbotham has likened Buñuel’s *Belle de Jour* to the fairy tale of *Beauty and the Beast* (133). A notion which will be explored in more depth in chapter three.
Conscious versus unconscious

Moving on from the fairy tale motif of forbidden love, we will now examine the notion of the battle between the conscious and the unconscious in *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Belle de Jour*. Bettelheim considers that “[f]airy stories speak to our conscious and our unconscious […]” (174), and specifically that *Little Red Riding Hood* demonstrates the battle between the girl’s id and her superego (175). A point which Zipes challenges, stating that “Bettelheim has a one-dimensional way of examining the relation of literature to the psyche” (*Breaking the Magic Spell* 183).

However, to credit Bettelheim’s notion, Sangiovanni maintains that *Belle de Jour* illustrates “Freudian […] concepts about the divided structure of the human mind […]” (N.p.) This can be illustrated by the way in which *Belle de Jour’s* surreal frame of reference is exemplified as the film puts the spotlight on the interplay between the conscious and the unconscious as the camera switches between Séverine’s daydreams and reality. To take a specific example, following Séverine’s return from her first encounter with a client at the brothel, she burns her clothes upon her return home and the next time we see her she is in bed with a migraine. The following scene depicts Pierre and Husson heating soup over a fire. Wood remarks how we see “Pierre, on screen, but without moving his lips” (*Belle De Jour* 49) saying “it’s cold and I can’t warm it”. He then proceeds to ask Husson whether bulls are given names like cats, to which Husson replies, again, without moving his lips, “yes, most of those are called Remorse, except for the last one; he’s called Expiation”. Thus, the words appear as if in the character’s thoughts. At this point the extra-diegetic sound of bells chiming can be heard, signalling that we are in the unconscious realm.
Edwards notes regarding this scene that “[i]t is no coincidence that this daydream should occur after Séverine’s first day of work at the brothel run by Madame Anaïs, for the sexual liberation she seeks to achieve by doing so is accompanied by feelings of terrible wrongdoing” (A Companion 69). This notion is supported by the naming of the bull as ‘Expiation’. The viewer is led to believe that Séverine is seeking some kind of atonement after working in the brothel, which represents the ego’s connection to the moral conscience and sense of duty. Yet, following the dream scene, the film then cuts to Séverine pleading with Madame Anaïs to have her back a week later (we know that this time has elapsed given Madame Anaïs’ displeased remarks: “you want to come back I suppose, and disappear again for a week […]?”). This sequence of scenes therefore illustrates the divided structure of the human mind, as Sangiovanni suggests, by the way in which this dream scene alludes to Séverine’s remorse over the brothel. Yet, evidently, the id’s animalistic tendencies win, as upon Séverine’s return to reality following the bull scene, her desire to be a part of brothel life has clearly triumphed as she reappears on Madame Anaïs’ doorstep.

To this however, Wood notes that “[t]he trouble is that this sequence makes far too much symbolic sense, and is so elaborately and tritely orchestrated, so full of tacky images of piety, that it suggests both that Séverine is enjoying her guilt, perhaps finding in it a secondary source of pleasure, and that Buñuel is up to something. But what?” (“Double Lives” 51). While Wood may be correct in his assertion that the director is playing games with the audience, the crucial element for this thesis in the aforementioned assemblage of scenes, is the break from reality which they convey. This break connects the film to the notion of the merveilleux, according to Seifert’s definition of it, which will be discussed presently.
The combination of dream and reality in the previously discussed brothel/bull/brothel sequence demonstrates the notion of the *merveilleux* as it is directly related to the idea of *vraisemblance*, or “verisimilitude” (Seifert in Canepa 135). A term which “had very precise meanings in the context of seventeenth-century France” (Seifert in Canepa 26). “*Vraisemblance* was the result of the [...] representational system that dominated artistic practice and theory in early modern Europe. According to this system, imitation was, above all, artful (if not artifice) in that it employed analogy or allegory rather than direct reference” (26), the result was verisimilitude, which, Seifert states, “came to designate obligation, rather than mere plausibility as an abstract referential notion” (in Canepa 28). This assertion has also been made by DiPiero, who maintains that “the literary text was charged with reproducing not extratextual reality in the referential sense [...] but an ideology” (86). Neemann also talks about the notion of *vraisemblance* in seventeenth-century fairy tales and that “the marvelous both defies and reaffirms reality” (23).

Furthermore, Seifert notes that in the seventeenth-century, the concept of the *merveilleux* was also connected with the ongoing *Querelle du Merveilleux* (Quarrel of the Marvelous), of which there were two sides; Christian and Pagan *merveilleux* (in Canepa 137). Perrault belonged to the Christian ‘side’, as Barchilon and Duggan confirm (213). They state that Perrault “was a profoundly religious person [...] but at the same time extremely enlightened in terms of thinking” (213), which was furthermore shown in his position in favour of modernity in the “Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns”. In this literary quarrel, writers “exploited the marvelous in conscious narrative strategies to deal with real social issues of their time” (Zipes *Why Fairy Tales Stick* 71). This point clearly demonstrates how the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* was directly linked to the *Querelle du Merveilleux*. 
Specifically, *Little Red Riding Hood* illustrates the Christian aspect of the quarrel, which can be exemplified from Zipes’ comment that “[t]he wolf was crucial in archaic thinking as a representative of the human wild side, of wilderness. […] The moral lesson, which the wolf brings with him, was both Christian and male […]” (*Trials and Tribulations* pp 32-33).

Subsequently, in light of the connection between the two literary quarrels, Seifert declares that “advocates of the Christian merveilleux, and particularly Perrault, argued that the plausibility of the marvelous was relative to the culture in which it was produced” (in Canepa pp 137-138). Raynard supports Seifert’s assertion that Perrault’s tales reflect the culture at the time, as she states how “[i]n innumerable ways, Perrault made his *Tales* reflect seventeenth-century society: socially, […] stylistically, […] historically […]. The tales also present a wide variety of genres […]. “The Little Red Riding Hood” is colored by sexual innuendo” (54). Thereby exemplifying the way in which *Little Red Riding Hood* was a reflection of society at the time. A closer look of how the conte reflected seventeenth-century society will be undertaken in chapter three.

Seifert adds that “the marvelous offers a retreat from the constraints of the real or the present” (in Canepa 131) and “an alternate plane onto which the real can be transposed and reimagined. To do so, however, the marvelous must be adapted to the cultural contexts in which it is evoked […]” (131). This implies that the merveilleux must have some relation to reality to begin with, in order that the belief in it be suspended. This assertion is confirmed in Seifert’s explanation that “the marvelous is an estrangement of empirically defined reality since it is either an exaggeration of the real or an assertion of the impossible […] the marvelous also reproduces and reaffirms social structures and values” (in Canepa 132). In *Little Red Riding Hood*, many elements within it are ‘estranged’ from reality. Firstly, as has been previously mentioned, the wolf’s ability to
converse, along with other unfeasible situations such as the little girl not realising that the wolf is in fact not her grandmother until it is too late (Zipes *Trails and Tribulations* 360). Alongside this, Zipes considers that the conte “reaffirms social structures” (360) by the way in which the little girl wears a red *chaperon* “which was a small stylish cap worn by women of the aristocracy and seventeenth centuries [...] For a village girl, in Perrault’s story, to wear a red *chaperon* signified that she was individualistic and perhaps nonconformist. Perrault probably intended that she bear the sign of the middle class” (in Dundes *A Casebook* 122).

However, Zipes also contradicts himself regarding this assertion in a later statement in which he asserts that “the little girl is a potential witch with her red hat – witches, evil fairies, and Jews wore red hats in the oral stories which circulated in the late Middle Ages up through the nineteenth century” (“A Second Gaze” 95). Yet, Zipes’s statement may bear weight when taken in consideration with Soriano’s observations regarding the seventeenth-century that sorcery was on the rise in peasant communities, and which reached its peak between 1625 and 1672, it was therefore highly topical at the time that the contes were being conceived (91).

Zipes undermines his own claims again when he asserts that *Little Red Riding Hood* was intended to make children aware of the consequences which arose from being spoiled. He asserts this time that the red hood, “as a present from a doting grandmother, [...] refers directly to the child’s “spoiled nature”, and Perrault obviously intended to warn little girls that this spoiled child could be “spoiled” in another way by a wolf/man who sought to ravish her” (Zipes *Trials and Tribulations* 26). Evidently, there are many different interpretations as to the significance of the red hood, and Soriano maintains that if there is a reason, we shall never know it, as the hidden meaning (if there is one) remains with Perrault (160).
Furthermore, a suspension of reality is encountered by the viewer in the dream scenes of *Belle de Jour*, as it cuts between the reality of the aftermath of Sèverine’s first shift at the brothel to her masochistic fantasy, and back to the reality of her returning to brothel life. To illustrate the presence of the *merveilleux* in *Belle de Jour*, Seifert adds that, “the marvelous is perhaps best described as a context that suspends the rules and constraints of reality” (*Fairy Tales* 132). Thus, the bull scene illustrates the concept of the marvelous in this particular instance in *Belle de Jour* as the viewer has departed from reality, which, lastly, is reinforced by the sound of bells, being Buñuel’s marker to signify such a shift.

Moreover, Wood states that “[i]n *Belle de Jour* what is pictured as imaginary and what is pictured as real may both be questionable, as all fictional images are, but the narrative requires us to think about their difference” (*Belle de Jour* 54). This point is related to Seifert’s notion of the *merveilleux*, which considers that for a particular tale, event or character to have an element of *merveilleux*, it or they must have a base in reality to start with to achieve some form of distance from it. In *Belle de Jour*, the *merveilleux* becomes more apparent as Sèverine’s lapses into daydream become more frequent as the film progresses, a notion which Kernan has also observed, noting how “Buñuel cuts back and forth between fantasy, dream, and reality [...]” (38). The daydreams are more closely connected with Sèverine’s desires, and therefore the id. Examples of which include her romp under the table with Husson, whilst Pierre talks about it, seemingly un-phased (Wood *Belle de Jour* 52).

Furthermore, the opposition between the two endings of *Belle de Jour*, as proposed by Wood (*Belle de Jour* 64) would also seem to indicate the notion of the *merveilleux*. Wood argues that
“[t]he incoherence of the film’s ending is a reflection of Séverine’s uncertain mind. We have not left the dream, and the dream plays out the two extreme alternatives, Pierre’s death and resurrection, Séverine’s doom and deliverance” (64). The viewer is lead to believe that the film will end on a sombre tone, with Pierre’s incarceration and Séverine’s secret revealed, yet the element of *invraisemblance* is added when Pierre gets out of his wheel chair, which the cut suggests happens almost instantaneously.

Also, the character of Marcel in both the novel and the film is connected with Séverine’s unconscious (id) by appealing to her underlying desires. The id is influenced by the pleasure principle, as it seeks immediate gratification and is associated with the libido and desire. The pleasure principle, whereby “[…] one wants to devour all at once, ignoring the consequences […]” (Bettelheim 44) is manifested in Séverine’s desire for Marcel. Marcel is a gangster from the underworld of Parisian society, and Séverine is drawn to fantasize about the things he has seen and to romanticise about a world which she has never known. Thus, Séverine demonstrates the unfavorable consequences of giving in to the id’s animalistic tendencies over the ego. The notion of the id is present in *Little Red Riding Hood*, as Bettelheim considers the wolf to represent the “[…] potentially destructive tendencies of the id” (172).

Lastly, the ego, as the waking sense of the self, is more reasonable and is associated with delayed gratification, and is governed by the reality principle; the converse of the pleasure principle. Pierre manifests Séverine’s ego or conscious, as Pierre is a safe and logical option for her as he provides stability and security within her bourgeois society.
The film’s fairy tale ending

The two endings of the film therefore display the opposition between the conscious and the unconscious. The ‘unconscious’ or dream ending also endows the film with the infamous ‘happy ending’, which Shavit deems “is considered an indispensable component of the folktale; it can be said to be a distinctive feature […]” (in Dundes A Casebook 148). In the final dream sequence, the formerly wheelchair-bound Pierre gets up and proposes a holiday in the mountains. Wood points out that Buñuel’s ending means that “[…] the film ends on an image of love and moral and mental release […]” (“Double Lives” 22), as opposed to the novel which ends on a melancholic tone as Pierre never speaks or walks again following the shooting.

Wood also likens the double ending of Buñuel’s Belle de Jour to that of a fairy tale. The first ending reflects reality, and the second (dream) ending reflects the fairy tale (“Double Lives” 20). Wood comments that in the dream ending, “[…] Séverine has exorcised her fantasies by acting them out, and she and Pierre can now live happily ever after […]” (“Double Lives” 21), thus illustrating the classic notion of the fairy tale happy ending. Though, “[…] in reality, her lover is dead” (21). Wood also comments that “[w]hat is surely strongest here is the sense of two perfectly possible, but perfectly incompatible conclusions to Séverine’s story” (“Double Lives” 22). A point which relates back to Sangiovanni’s notion that the conflict between the conscious and the unconscious may never be resolved.

Zipes notes that Little Red Riding Hood does not end on a happy note (Art of Subversion 39). To this, Shavit asserts that the reason for this is that “the fairy tale without a happy ending is simply the result of the transformation of the text from an oral tale into a written tale” (Poetics 19). Later versions of the tale do indeed end on a happy note, such as the Grimm’s version where the
girl and her grandmother are rescued. Shavit adds that Perrault’s ending had been “deliberately done in order to signal his adult reader” (Poetics 19). Conversely, Zipes maintains that Perrault’s ending “warns girls against their own natural desires, which they must tame” (Art of Subversion 44) and that “the task performed by Perrault’s model female is to show reserve and patience; that is, she must be passive until the right man comes along to recognize her virtues and marry her” (Art of Subversion 40). Evidently, numerous interpretations of Perrault’s ending, as well as the moralité which follows, exist.

It is briefly worth noting the similarity between Perrault’s ending and the other, ‘unhappy’ ending which Wood describes (“Double Lives” 21), where Pierre dies. Soriano points out that Little Red Riding Hood is the only tale in the contes which ends badly (150). Even though the unfortunate endings in both Little Red Riding Hood and Belle de Jour would not necessarily conform to Propp’s final function wedding, and therefore will not be examined within the confines of this thesis, it is worth noting that these unfortunate endings tie them together.

Moreover, the fairy tale motif is certainly not new territory to Buñuel as it features in his previous works. Having used the fabulous epigraph “Once upon a time” in the introductory subtitles to Un Chien Andalou, Buñuel places fairy tale markers in many of his works. The fairy tale motif of spatio-temporal dislocation is also often experienced in the genre, and will be addressed momentarily. Wood (“Double Lives” 21) and Forcer (20) both mention that Buñuel was a mischievous and playful director, therefore any sort of signposts or markers ought to best be interpreted vigilantly.
That being said, a fairy tale setting had conceivably been in the peripheries of Buñuel’s work for quite some time before shooting Belle de Jour. He spent an apprenticeship with Jean Epstein, during the course of which they shot Mauprat (1926) which bears physical resemblance to the fairy tale Beauty and the Beast by the way in which it is “[…] distinguished by its violent personal relationships and its sombre settings of woods and castles […]” (Edwards Discreet Art 17). The fairy tale setting is encountered in Belle de Jour in the beginning, as we see the young couple being driven through the forest by a horse-drawn landau. The spatial location of the forest was a popular fairy tale setting, according to Canepa (47) and Zipes, who comments that “[t]he woods are the natural setting for the fulfillment of desire. The conventions of society are no longer present” (Trials and Tribulations 93).

Other markers pertaining to the fairy tale genre include the aforementioned dislocation of spatio-temporality which proliferates in the genre. Zipes asserts how “once we begin listening to or reading a fairy tale, we experience estrangement or separation from a familiar world […]” (Art of Subversion173). In Perrault’s Little Red Riding Hood for example, the two instances of the unspecified word ‘village’ mobilize this estrangement. To illustrate, the tale depicts how “a little village girl” (Perrault Histoires 47) “set out immediately to go to her grandmother, who lived in another village” (Perrault Histoires 48). Thus, “by its absence of contextualisation, the conte creates a story which takes place in an immemorial past and a strange place” (Lavignette-Ammoun 81). The minimal descriptions invite the reader to project their own situation onto that of the protagonist.

Additionally, the same spatio-temporal dislocation is present in Belle de Jour. One way in which this occurs is that there is no indication of the time which has elapsed between scenes, and especially between Séverine’s dream scenes and actual daily life. For example, Wood describes
his first “literal” (*Belle de Jour* 63) interpretation of the final sequence to depict a shift from reality into daydream, which unfolds as whereby “Marcel shoots [Pierre], he is paralysed, Husson informs on Séverine, Pierre is distraught, time passes – while Séverine is sewing […] and Pierre gets better” (63). Wood is correct in his observation that “time passes” (63), as the film gives no indication of the amount of time to have passed between Pierre’s paralysis and his miraculous recovery. Indeed, the viewer ought to be careful to assume that a short space of time has passed, based on the single temporal reference in the film which explicitly states how much time has elapsed, which is the brothel/bull/brothel sequence, where, in the space of two scenes, the action has been carried forward over a week. That a week has elapsed over the course of two scenes also brings into question the time line for the rest of the film.

Accordingly, in the fairy tale genre, the type of displacement mentioned in the previous paragraph enables identification with the characters and settings, given that any reader or listener could apply them to their own situation. This point is illustrated by Zipes’ comment regarding how “[t]he process of reading involves dislocating the reader from his or her familiar settings and then identifying with the dislocated protagonist so that a quest for the *Heimische* or real home can begin” (*Art of Subversion* 173). This builds on the notion of the *merveilleux* which was discussed in the previous section. In *Belle de Jour* the disruption which is caused to conventional reality by the interruption of Séverine’s day dreams correlates with the spatio-temporal displacement so often encountered in fairy tales. Even in *Little Red Riding Hood*, the presence of the opening line of “once upon a time”, which is considered by Barchilon and Duggan as “the same vague beginning, specific without being specific” (210), alludes to a displacement.

Additionally, displacement is again found in *Belle de Jour* in the brothel/bull/brothel scenes, which unfold as follows. After Séverine comes home and we enter the daydream, Husson asks
what time it is, and Pierre replies quoting the same words which Séverine used at the brothel: “between two and five, but no later than five”. The dislocation of time and the uncertainty of the film’s place in it illustrates displacement again.

Similarly, in Little Red Riding Hood the time period is not defined, we just know that “one day her mother, having cooked and made some galettes said to her, "Go, my dear, and see how your grandmother is doing”” (Perrault Histoires 48). Furthermore, the names of the villages, the forest, nor any of the protagonists are also never divulged, thus rendering the space of the action and the characters within it, vague. Though Rodriguez does point out in a footnote, the presence of the moulin (the windmill) in the next village (49). This dislocation, in both the film and the conte therefore disorients the addressee.

The presence of the first five functions

Accordingly, the idea of a dislocation from that reality corresponds to the notion of the merveilleux, and its relation to vraisemblance and the fact that a tale need not ‘adhere’ to reality, but resemble it. What is more, Little Red Riding Hood and Belle de Jour have been shown to exhibit such a dislocation or displacement, as well as also having the key link to the society in which they were created, which was another critical part to the Querelle du Merveilleux. In the ways just described, Belle de Jour exhibits qualities which are tied to fairy tale. The following section will now address the ways in which the film fulfills the first five functions of Propp’s Morphology, so as to further illustrate the film’s links with the fairy tale genre.

The first of the thirty one narrative functions according to Propp’s Morphology is absention. This is defined as where “one of the members of a family absents himself from home” (Propp
Morphology 12). This is the first function to appear in Little Red Riding Hood as the girl leaves the safety of her home to take her grandmother a cake (une galette) and a pot of butter, following the request from her mother. This first function is also fulfilled in Belle de Jour when Séverine absents herself from the tennis game, saying “I can’t hit one ball today, replace me”\textsuperscript{23}, and is then seen going alone to Madame Anaïs’ house.

Likewise, Reia Baptista also investigates the presence of absentation in the film, and maintains that absentation occurs when Pierre leaves home every day for his job at the hospital, thus absenting himself. The definition of absentation proposed by Propp renders each of these suggestions plausible, as Propp does not specify whether it must be the hero who absents him or herself from home, merely that “one of the members of a family absents himself from home” (Propp Morphology 12).

Thus, absentation is first to occur in both Belle de Jour and Little Red Riding Hood, thereby fulfilling Propp’s stipulation that all functions must occur in sequence. In Belle de Jour, we can see how the events take place in the sequence as set out by Propp.

Subsequently, the third function is violation, whereby “the interdiction is violated” (Propp Morphology 27). Propp asserts that “[t]he forms of violation correspond to the forms of interdiction” (27). Thus, in Belle de Jour, the illustration of this function is in the form of Séverine disregarding her moral obligations to her marriage, and proceeding to the brothel. As there is no interdiction in (Perrault’s) Little Red Riding Hood, the function of violation does not occur.
Following on, the fourth function, *reconnaissance*, whereby the villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance, has as its definition “[t]he reconnaissance has the aim of finding out the location of the children, or sometimes of precious objects” (Original italics. Propp *Morphology* 28). This is fulfilled during Marcel’s first visit to the brothel, when he inquires as to Séverine’s real name, her age, if she has a protector and asks where she is in the day. Evidently, in *Little Red Riding Hood*, the wolf attempts reconnaissance when he enquires ”[d]oes [your grandmother] live far?” (Perrault *Histoires* 50), so as to gauge the girl’s destination.

Additionally, the fourth function also ties in with the fifth, which is *delivery*. Whereby “[t]he villain directly receives an answer to his question” (Propp *Morphology* 28). The wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood* finds out where she is going, and Marcel in *Belle de Jour* receives answers to his interrogations upon his first visit to the brothel. He learns that Séverine is twenty three and she is ‘not available’. The only thing which Séverine will not reveal is her real name, merely her pseudonym ‘Belle de Jour’.

In summary, this chapter has demonstrated how *Belle de Jour* fulfills the first narrative element, *absentation*, followed by a brief outline of the fulfillment of the second, third, fourth and fifth functions in the film, and how they occur in sequence. The film’s ability to satisfy these first five elements of Propp’s methodology, as well as possessing the archetypal characters which he insisted are present in fairy tale, reinforces the hypothesis that we may consider *Belle de Jour* a fairy tale by Proppian standards.
CHAPTER TWO

Fairy tales begin with conflict because we all begin our lives with conflict. We are all misfit for the world, and somehow we must fit in, fit in with other people, and thus we must invent or find the means through communication to satisfy as well as resolve conflicting desires and instincts.

(Zipes The Irresistible Fairy Tale 2)

Chapter one discussed important terminology which will be used, as well as exploring the operations within the Morphology. It then discussed the dramatis personae and their presence in a tale, with specific reference to the presence of the roles of the hero, the donor and the villain in Little Red Riding Hood and Belle de Jour. It then discussed the role of adaptation within fairy tale and cinema, whilst referencing its importance within this thesis. Following this, the similarities and differences which occur between Kessel’s novel and Buñuel’s film were examined, so as to see whether the changes brought about in the film, such as an extra level of consciousness, conformed to a better Proppian analysis. It was demonstrated that because of the way in which the film extends into the unconscious, further functions were able to be drawn from the Proppian model because of it. Furthermore, as the film changes from reality which was representative of the bourgeois ideology at the time, into dream, this creates a break or estrangement from reality which in turn exemplifies the concept of the merveilleux in the contes of seventeenth-century France. The contes were considered to be merveilleux by their portrayal of society at the time and secondly, by their break with this recognized reality. Lastly, chapter one discussed in detail the presence of the first five morphologic functions in both the conte and the film.
Desire

This chapter will thus progress to analyze the notion of desire in the narrative in *Belle de Jour* and *Little Red Riding Hood*, in three ways. Firstly, desire will be explored as a subject, based on Peter Brooks’ notion of desire as inherent to the progression of the narrative, and as something which compels the reading process forward.

Secondly, the link between desire and the unconscious will be explored. Desire can be linked to Freud’s pleasure principle, whereby the id, which is connected to the libido, seeks immediate gratification for its desires. Dundes (*A Casebook* 184) maintains that in getting into bed with the wolf, Little Red Riding Hood illustrates the willingness to give in to the pleasure principle. Bettelheim also comments that this *conte* illustrates the conflict between the conscious and the unconscious. This second section will explore how the unconscious, dreams, and fairy tales are all linked. Buñuel comments that “[a film’s] way of functioning is most reminiscent of the mind during sleep. A film is like an involuntary imitation of a dream” (in Edwards *Discreet Art* 60). Thus a film is like a dream, and a dream is also like a fairy tale in that within the dream world individuals are able to resolve and fight conflicts, just as the hero or heroine of a fairy tale.

Thirdly, this chapter will consider the notion of desire from its role within voyeurism, and how this extends into both the *conte* and the film. This aspect of desire will be examined from the perspective of the viewer and their corroboration with, or rejection of such a theme.

Desire in the narrative

First of all, this section will consider desire as a force which drives the text forward. Brooks considers “[…] desire not only as the motor force of plot but as the very motive of narrative”
In other words, both “the narrative of desire and the desire of narrative” (48). In film and other visual art, an image or sign is provided from which is formed an interpretation of the scene or image. As with the interpretation of an image, literary analysis also involves breaking down a sign into a signifier and a signified. Contrastingly to an image, however, a literary work relies completely on the reader to use their own vision along with past experiences and socio-historical context, as mentioned by Zipes (*Trials and Tribulations* 357), in deciphering a sign to create the parameters of desire which they then attach to a piece of literature. In a literary text, the word is the sign which must be decoded and understood. In this way, we may consider that film can also be ‘read’ like a text, as it incorporates a signifier/signified decoding system. Accordingly, *Belle de Jour* demonstrates the structuralist properties of the progression of a sequence of events. At the same time, *Belle de Jour* is also connected to the unconscious, which also possesses the structuralist properties of a language. The previous two points are important as they imply an underlying, subconscious way in which narrative operates. Consequently, the question which arises is what drives the quest for narrative.

Brooks mentions how “[d]esire is always there at the start of a narrative […]” (38), and that “[o]ne could no doubt analyze the opening paragraph of most novels and emerge in each case with the image of a desire taking on shape […]” (38). This is certainly true in the case of *Little Red Riding Hood*, whose beauty is insisted upon in the very first opening lines to the *conte*, which reads “Once upon a time there lived a little village girl, the prettiest creature who was ever seen” (Perrault *Histoires* 47). Secondly, desire certainly exists in the opening scene of *Belle de Jour*, as the camera follows the couple through the woods and proceeds to witness the unfolding of one of Séverine’s sexual fantasies where she is undressed and subject to male domination. This event upholds Brooks’s notion that desire may always be felt at the start of a narrative.
Furthermore, Brooks considers that desire is present not only at the start of a text, but that it is essential to its progression, as a reader brings the ambition and desire to undertake and read a text. Brooks states that “[s]omewhat in the manner of the traditional sequence of functions in the folktale analyzed by Propp, ambition provides an armature of plot which the reader recognizes, and which constitutes the very “readability” of the narrative text; what enables the reader to go about the construction of the text’s specific meanings” (39). That “ambition provides an armature of plot” (39) indicates that ambition is the framework on which the plot thrives; and that without a “forward–looking intention” (xiii), a reader would have no interest to undertake, let alone complete, a narrative. The plot is therefore the framework, or the base, of the story, and it is on the plot that the tale rests. To understand this concept, Brooks gives the analogy of a painter “where the most beautiful colours laid on without order will not give one the same pleasure as a simple black-and-white sketch of a portrait. Plot, then, is conceived to be the outline or armature of the story, that which supports and organizes the rest” (11), to continue the analogy, the story is the colours which complete the sketch.

To resume the equivalence of plot to a sketch, one of the ‘colours’ which develops the sketch is an identification with the characters in a tale. Brooks upholds that protagonists are “[…]‘desiring machines’ whose presence in the text creates and sustains narrative movement through the forward march of desire, projecting the self onto the world through scenarios of desire imagined and then acted upon” (pp 40-41).

Additionally, Belle de Jour illustrates Brooks’s concept of desire in the narrative. Regarding the ending, Wood notes that despite the number of seemingly exhaustive different readings given the two (conscious and unconscious) realities, we are “addicted” (Belle de Jour 64) to the pursuit of any interpretation, whatever that may be. Wood observes that it is a “false trail, but we stay on it
because the trail and its disappointments are the very movement of our watching the movie” (64). This statement relates back to the presence of a driving force and a quest for the narrative, which is implied by his notion of the ‘trail’ which the viewer actively follows throughout the film. Wood then claims how “the pleasure of the movie seems different from its riddles, larger, simpler, more direct. The riddles are part of the pleasure [...]” (*Belle de Jour* 64) and consequently, part of the narrative.

Furthermore, Wood notes that even if the viewer fails at a ‘correct’ interpretation of the overall ending of the film, the very desire to attempt an analysis is what drives the spectator, as the failure “[…] becomes the form our success takes” (*Belle de Jour* 65). This statement relates back to Brooks’s notion of the desire for the narrative as, in *Belle de Jour*, the viewer seeks a progression, not necessarily a logical one given the film’s surreal frame of reference, but a progression or conclusion nonetheless.

Desire and the unconscious

The previous section discussed the presence of desire in the narrative. This section will now progress to examine how desire is also connected to the unconscious, and how this idea can be seen in *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Belle de Jour*. Metz has argued that “[…] the rhetoric of cinematic language is analogous to the rhetoric of dreams or the Unconscious […]” (in Prinsloo 69). Film is a more immediate and quicker medium than literature in terms of projection, and the expectation of film is to be entertained more so than educated and edified, whereas one could argue that literature is the antithesis of this. Likewise, the unconscious is instantaneous in nature, as images (or thoughts) are immediate. This again, goes in opposition to the conscious mind, in which thoughts or actions are premeditated and thought-out.
Moreover, López links surrealist film with the dream world in noting that “Buñuel believed that cinema was closer to the immediacy of thought than any other artistic form and that it could be used to represent unconscious processes, dreams, and basic human emotions” (37). To support this claim, Buñuel notes how “[…] my discovery of Freud, and particularly his theory of the unconscious, was crucial to me” (My Last Sigh 229). Similarly, the Freudian notion of the unconscious is also linked with desire, as Freud considered that the unconscious was where repressed desires lay. The unconscious, or the id, seeks instant gratification for its desires and is linked to the libido. The conscious, or ego, mediates reality and the pleasure-seeking id, thus postponing gratification.

Moreover, Surrealist film was evidently branching out of traditional narrative cinema during its emergence in the twentieth-century. This is due to the depth of its area of investigation into the unconscious, a notion which is specifically addressed in Belle de Jour by the way in which Séverine shifts between her waking and dream states with her recourse into the dream world enabling her to live out her fantasies. In relation to this, Evans considers how “Belle de Jour remains a disturbing and far-reaching enquiry into the motivations of female desire” (Films of Luis Buñuel 152), thereby exemplifying the film’s link with the Freudian notions of the id and the ego.

Williams argues that “[…] the textual practice of [Buñuel’s films] acts out the psychoanalytic process of desire through the dominance of its surrealist rhetorical figures which then act out the Lacanian nature of desire” (in Kuenzli pp 204-205). William Evans exemplifies this point in stating how Buñuel’s films reflect the turmoil of sexual desire (175). This nature pertains to desire which arises from some sort of lack, or loss. Lacan is well known for having progressed
the Freudian topic of desire, and Rosen discusses this in asserting that desire arises from a lack which is encountered during the childhood development stage, which is centred on an awareness of the lack of the penis, rendering it a desired object (165). This can be illustrated by the way in which the symbol of the phallus in Belle de Jour is representative of the process of desire. Furthermore, Freud related blindness, or the fear of going blind, to the fear of castration. In this line of thinking, Pierre’s resulting blindness at the end of the film (which was not an element in Kessel’s novel) can also be linked to castration anxiety. The presence of the phallus in this way in Belle de Jour further represents the process of desire when we consider the role of Husson in the film, who, as Evans describes “[…] is regarded as the film’s key mechanism of desire. His presence is felt everywhere […]” (Films of Luis Buñuel 158). Consequently, if Husson signifies desire, then in Lacanian terms he surely represents the phallus, and thus, a lack.

In review of Evans’s previous comment that Husson’s presence is felt throughout Belle de Jour, the omnipresence of the male form may also be similarly found when considering Mulvey’s notion of the role of the passive female (9). Mulvey considers that ‘looking’ in cinema is generally considered an active male role, with the female fulfilling the role of the object. This exemplifies Séverine as the object of desire in the film (10). This notion is further exemplified when considering that the creators of the two works were male. In addition, Baxter comments on Buñuel’s foot fetish, and remarks how “Buñuel’s fetishism was connected with feet, calves and high-heeled shoes” (48). This is exemplified in the film from the lingering shots on Séverine’s feet as she ascends the stairs to the brothel. Furthermore, regarding Little Red Riding Hood, Zipes has talked about Perrault’s “fear” (Art of Subversion 40) of women, which he subsequently projected onto his character of Little Red Riding Hood (40).
Desire as a threat

Another element of desire which *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Belle de Jour* also address is the threat of sexuality. The wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood* evidently perceives the sexual act as a threat as he devours the girl in the grandmother’s house when it was ‘safe’ to do so, not in the open woods where there are people who could protect the girl. In addition, Eric Fromm considers *Little Red Riding Hood* to be “a moralistic tale warning of the danger of sex” (in Dundes *A Casebook* 211).

Furthermore, it is important to note that in the *conte*, the last thing that Little Red Riding Hood comments on is the size of the wolf’s teeth. Teeth being an implement designed to pierce, thus which can be related back to the phallus. It is worth noting that at the time of Perrault’s writing in the seventeenth century, certain expressions surrounding wolf vocabulary, such as the phrase *danser le branle du loup* was common, and implied pleasure with a woman (Leroux 338).

*Little Red Riding Hood* also explores the concept of desire as a threat because the ending implies that engaging in the sexual act will ultimately lead to one’s demise. The sexual connotations in *Little Red Riding Hood* are most striking in the *moralité*. Zipes maintains that the moral “warns children to be more alert and to beware of strangers” (*Trials and Tribulations* 26). Zipes also states how

Perrault obviously extends the definition of wolf to include deceptive male seducers of bourgeois women. Still, the overall notion of the fairy tale concerns the regulation of sex roles and sexuality. Where order and discipline reign – Perrault supported the absolutism of Louis XIV – young girls will be safe from both their own inner sexual drives and outer
natural forces. Inner and outer nature must be brought under control, otherwise chaos and destruction will reign (*Trials and Tribulations* 78).

The *moralité* is distinctly different from the *conte*, and is clearly defined, firstly, by its position on an entirely separate page in the original *Histoires*, and secondly, from the change which it facilitates from prose to verse. Lastly, the *moralité* appears to talk directly to the reader, Perrault thus appears to be imparting his wisdom directly, as such, the reader is no longer in the fairy tale realm of suspended belief. To this, Neemann observes how “as a prominent characteristic of these marvelous tales, [...] the final morals are distinctly non-marvelous, which is reminiscent of the interdependence between *vraisemblance* and *invraisemblance*” (24). Therefore the interpretation of the *moralité* provided by Zipes in the preceding paragraph appears to be justified, given Neemann’s comment. The *vraisemblance* of the *moralité* also addresses the notion of desire as a threat.

Voyeurism

Thus fair, the notion of desire has been explored from its position in the narrative, the unconscious, and most recently, as a threat. The final aspect of desire to be considered will be the voyeuristic act, which, by definition is the heeding of an urge to observe the sexual act. The act of watching, rather than the sexual act itself, becomes the primary means of gratification. This causes a displacement of desire as the act of watching has now become *the* desire. In this way, in the overall medium of film, the viewer’s active engagement with the scene presented implicates film as an inherently voyeuristic medium. This issue has been discussed by Mulvey who states that “the extreme contrast between the darkness in the auditorium (which also isolates the spectators from one another) and the brilliance of the shifting patterns of light and shade on the
screen helps to promote the illusion of voyeuristic separation” (60) The cinematic setting “give[s] the spectator an illusion of looking in on a private world” (60), which also brings into consideration the viewer’s position as a subject²⁹.

Thus, whilst observing *Belle de Jour*, the viewer either makes a choice to corroborate the desire by watching, or demonstrates an empathetic response and displays the desire to look away. An appropriate example in this instance would be the scene where Séverine is encouraged to partake in a voyeuristic act, by watching Charlotte engaging in activities with the gynecologist through a peep-hole, which Madame Anaïs reveals. This creates a ménage à trois of film spectatorship as the viewer is compliant in Séverine’s voyeuristic engagement. Evans comments at length on this scene, calling it a “self-conscious conspiratorial gesture to the real spectator, highlighting the text’s artifice […]. It also confronts the voyeur, here represented by Séverine, with a mirror image of herself” (*Films of Luis Buñuel* 161). Evans also notes how in this scene, Séverine at first withdraws from the peep-hole, yet shortly returns, compelled by “[…] an uncontrollable desire to satisfy a natural curiosity about deviant forms of sexuality, but also fascination with the spectacle of someone from her own social background admitting to desires outlawed in the outside world to which they both belong” (161).

This scene also demonstrates the objectivity of cinema, as Evans has highlighted, as well as illustrating a simultaneity which exists between the projection of the film itself - outwardly to the audience, and the shared vision between the spectator and the protagonist. The spectator facilitates the cinematic viewing, and also submits to the same viewing in which Séverine is currently engaging – the viewer is essentially viewing the spectacle of a spectacle. Though the viewer never fully sees the bedroom scene unfolding, they nevertheless project their own interpretation of desire on to the scene.
Wood also upholds, regarding *Belle de Jour*, that in the final scene of the film, “[…] we don’t know what [Séverine] sees, and we supply all the shades of possibility, from despair to some sort of ultimate relief. […] Séverine […] doesn’t appear to be feeling half of what we think she ought to feel. Buñuel, having filled our imagination with fictions, leaves us alone with our gaudy projections […]” (*Belle de Jour* 61). Thus demonstrating how the spectator is left to form their own interpretation of the scene, thus projecting themselves onto it. Much like the notion of a ‘vague’ spatio-temporality and characters in *Little Red Riding Hood*, which enables personal projections to enter into the tale. This was discussed in chapter one. In support of this, Zipes insists that the final interpretation of an artistic endeavour will always arise from what personal experiences the reader or viewer projects onto it (*Trials and Tribulations* 357). Zipes explains that “[i]t is up to us as viewers/readers to convey ultimate meaning upon the patterns, and we do this in a conscious and unconscious manner but always within a socio-historical context which has already framed the way we receive signals about sex and sexuality” (357).

Additionally, one could posit that voyeurism does not exist in literature because it relates to concealed watching, so when desire is recreated in the film it is either by engaging with it – thus by looking at it, and hoping it goes the way we want, or being empathetic, and not wanting to see what is unfolding. This idea may be illustrated if we consider the first scene in *Belle de Jour* where Séverine is pulled from the carriage on its journey through the woods, stripped and then whipped.

In summary, chapter two has addressed the notion of desire, both in *Belle de Jour* and *Little Red Riding Hood*. Having commenced with voyeurism and what the spectator or reader brings to a work, it then progressed to address the semiotics of literary desire which lead to an undertaking
of the notion of desire as that which drives a narrative, as suggested by Brooks. It then addressed
the idea of the threat of sexuality in the conte and the film.
CHAPTER THREE

The symbolic imagery of fairy tales may be viewed as depicting the exploration of the unconscious mind.

Carl Jung (in Swann Jones 129).

Chapter one examined the workings of the Morphology in regards to the thirty one narrative functions, with a consideration of the roles of the dramatis personae within them. This chapter also detailed a more in-depth consideration of the presence of the first five functions in Belle de Jour and Little Red Riding Hood. In turn, the notion of adaptation and its importance within this analysis was discussed, which lead to a reflection of certain fairy tale traits which are present in the film and the conte, such as the battle between the conscious and the unconscious mind and spatio-temporal dislocation.

Chapter two then considered the notion of desire in the narrative. Within this, the theme of voyeurism was observed regarding its role in the film, and also in relation to literature. Secondly, Brooks’s notion of desire as being the driving force of the narrative was examined. Then, the audience’s position in respect to desire within the narrative was discussed.

The final chapter of this thesis will move to examine functions eight, nine and eleven, followed by function fifteen through to nineteen, and subsequently function twenty nine. The order in which the functions occur in Belle de Jour, as well as in Little Red Riding Hood will be examined and whether this sequence follows the system as set out in Propp’s Morphology. Zipes also stipulates that a fairy tale will reflect the society in which it was created (Art of Subversion 30), a notion which will form the second part of this chapter. Within this, aspects of Belle de
Jour will be assessed to demonstrate how the film shares this aspect of the fairy tale genre. The reason for doing so is that a reflection of their respective societies was a crucial element of fairy tales in the Querelle du Merveilleux during the seventeenth-century. It will be interesting to analyse whether Belle de Jour also possesses this trait, and subsequently reflects twentieth-century society. Lastly, the resilience of the fairy tale genre will be explored, drawing on inspiration from Zipes’s Why Fairy Tales Stick, followed by the limitations of Propp’s approach.

The functions

Chapter one discussed the presence of the first five functions of the Morphology in Little Red Riding Hood and Belle de Jour. Function six is trickery whereby “[t]he villain attempts to deceive the victim in order to take possession of him or of his belongings” (Propp Morphology 29). This function is exemplified in the conte by the wolf who says “I'll go and see [the grandmother] too. I'll go this way and go you that, and we shall see who will be there first” (Perrault Histoires 50). The seventh function, complicity, is where the “victim submits to deception, and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy” (Propp Morphology 30), which again, is illustrated in the conte by the way in which “the little girl took a roundabout way, entertaining herself by gathering nuts, running after butterflies, and gathering bouquets of little flowers which she found” (Perrault Histoires 50).

It is possible for trickery and complicity to be read in the film when considering Wood’s comment regarding the dream scene where Séverine disappears under the table with Husson. Wood observes that “it is clear that Séverine is acknowledging, in fantasy, a complicity with Husson which she denies in real life” (Belle de Jour 52). But does Husson ever really ‘trick’
Séverine? Wood further suggests that complicity may arise from Husson having given Séverine Madame Anaïs’ address, though he also adds that it cannot be as simple as this. This in itself would also suggest that trickery occurred from the same action; perhaps Husson intentionally gave the address knowing that Séverine would go there, indeed “he rather insistently gives her the address [of the brothel]” (Wood Belle de Jour 48). It is hard to definitively assert whether these two functions; six and seven, can be considered to take place in Belle de Jour.

However, the next function of the Morphology which can absolutely be said to occur in Belle de Jour and Little Red Riding Hood is the eighth function; villainy, whereby “[t]he villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family” (Propp Morphology 30). Propp notes how “[a]bsentation, the violation of an interdiction, delivery, the success of a deceit, all prepare the way for this function […]” (Morphology pp 30-31). In both Little Red Riding Hood and Belle de Jour, villainy is present. Firstly, in the conte, villainy occurs as “[t]he wolf pulled the bobbin, and the door opened, and then he immediately fell upon the good woman and ate her up in a moment, for it been more than three days since he had eaten” (Perrault Histoires 52), and then later in the tale the “wicked wolf fell upon Little Red Riding Hood, and ate her up” (Perrault Histoires 55), thus causing harm to two family members. Similarly, in Belle de Jour villainy occurs when Marcel shoots Pierre in the street, thus leaving him in a coma.

The next function to occur in both works, in sequence, is function nine, which is “mediation, the connective incident” (Propp Morphology 36). This function is described as the one in which the “[m]isfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched” (36). In this function, the hero discovers the act of villainy, and is exemplified in Little Red Riding Hood by the progression of the realisation that the grandmother has been replaced by a grand imposter. The lack is definitively made known at the
end of the prose when the wolf devours the girl. Equally, mediation is portrayed in Belle de Jour, as, following the shooting, Séverine goes to the window to see Pierre wounded in the street, thus, the ‘lack’ (or problem) has been made known. This is the connective incident as once Pierre is incapacitated, Husson decides to relieve him of the guilt he knew he would bear if he thought he was a burden to Séverine, which he does by revealing her secret. Consequently, following the shooting, Séverine goes to the hospital, which in turn fulfills function eleven; departure, whereby “[t]he hero leaves home” (Propp Morphology 39).

Thus, the presence of functions nine and eleven are present in both Belle de Jour and Little Red Riding Hood. Function ten, beginning counteraction, has been left out of this sequence due to the fact that Propp notes that “[t]his moment is characteristic only of those tales in which the hero is a seeker” (39). It was established in chapter one that the protagonists in Belle de Jour and Little Red Riding Hood are victim-heroes.

Functions sixteen, eighteen and nineteen

Function sixteen occurs in both works pertinent to this thesis. This function is defined as struggle whereby “the hero and the villain join in direct combat” (Propp Morphology 51). In Belle de Jour a struggle occurs when Marcel tries to physically beat Séverine with his belt on her return from a vacation with Pierre, demanding to know where she was. The sixteenth function is present in Perrault’s version of Little Red Riding Hood, as the wolf challenges the little girl to a race to the grandmother’s house (“I'll go this way and go you that, and we shall see who will be there first” (Perrault Histoires 50)) as Rodriguez (44) asserts. The hero (the girl) and the villain (the wolf) thus join in “direct combat” (Propp Morphology 51).
Next in the sequence, function eighteen, whereby “the villain is defeated” (Propp *Morphology* 53) occurs in *Belle de Jour* when Marcel is shot dead by the police for having shot Pierre in the street. This action corresponds to the first variant of function eighteen, which is where “[t]he villain is beaten in open combat” (Propp *Morphology* 53). Function eighteen does not occur in *Little Red Riding Hood*, yet it may be found in other variations of the tale, such as the Grimm’s version of the story when the wolf is cut down by the woodcutter.

Regarding function nineteen, *liquidation*, Propp notes that “the narrative reaches its peak in this function” (*Morphology* 53). This is where an “initial misfortune or lack is resolved” (53) and the object of a search is seized (53). Furthermore, “[t]his function, together with villainy, constitutes a pair” (Propp *Morphology* 53). To briefly restate, *villainy* was the eighth function in the *Morphology* whereby “[t]he villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family” (Propp *Morphology* 30). In *Belle de Jour*, this “peak” (Propp *Morphology* 53) occurs when Husson comes to the couple’s house and tells Pierre everything regarding Séverine. This is supported by Durgnat’s comment of how, at this point in the film, Husson’s “intervention is climactic” (144). To illustrate this point, Séverine’s initial ‘object’ of search has been the brothel, which has now been revealed by Husson. Moreover, this function occurs after the aforementioned fifteenth, sixteenth and eighteen functions have taken place, thus fulfilling Propp’s requirement that the functions will occur in a set sequence. *Liquidation* is not apparent in *Little Red Riding Hood*, however.
Function twenty nine – *transfiguration*

Propp explains that even though not all of the thirty one narrative functions will occur in any one fairy tale, they will nevertheless appear in the same sequence. Following this assertion, function twenty nine, *transfiguration*, is the next function to occur in the sequence of fairy tale elements found in *Belle de Jour* after function nineteen. The Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘transfiguration’ as “[t]he action of transfiguring or state of being transfigured; metamorphosis” ‘Transfigure’ is defined as “[t]o alter the figure or appearance of; to change in outward appearance; to transform” It gives the definition of ‘transformation’ as “[t]he action of changing in form, shape, or appearance; metamorphosis”. Lastly, ‘transform’ is defined as “[t]o change the form of; to change into another shape or form; to metamorphose”. And “to change in character or condition; to alter in function or nature”. To summarize briefly, ‘transfigure’ therefore indicates a change in the outward appearance, whereas ‘transform’ implies a change in the inherent existence of a person or thing.

To verify this assertion, Propp defines *transfiguration* as where “the hero is given a new appearance” (Propp *Morphology* 62). Thus, the hero will appear ‘outwardly’, yet not inherently, different. Propp gives four instances of how *transfiguration* may occur, and lists the first example as whereby “[t]he hero passes through the ears of a horse (or cow) and receives a new, handsome appearance” (*Morphology* 62). The second case which would denote a transfiguration occurs when “[t]he hero builds a marvelous palace” (Original italics. Propp *Morphology* 63). Propp maintains that during this example of transfiguration, “although the hero is not always transformed [...], he nevertheless does undergo a change in personal appearance” (63).
In continuation of the first and second variations of transfiguration, the third situation which would merit categorization under this function is when “[t]he hero puts on new garments” (original italics. Propp *Morphology* 63) which accordingly transforms the hero’s appearance. For example, “[a] girl puts on a […] dress and ornaments and suddenly is endowed with a radiant beauty at which everyone marvels” (63). Lastly, the fourth variant of transfiguration may be found in “[r]ationalized and humorous forms” (Original italics. 63). In these cases, “actual changes of appearance do not take place […], but a new appearance is achieved by deception” (63). Propp lists the example of a fox being given royal garments to wear, and as such is mistaken for a tsar’s son. Thus, these four instances illustrate Propp’s concept of ‘transfiguration’. They point towards a change in outward appearance, and not a fundamental character change.

In light of this, Rodriguez maintains that transfiguration in *Little Red Riding Hood* is performed by the wolf in the tale, who “plays many roles” (50). This is problematic as Propp stated that the transfiguration will happen to the hero. This hindrance is a potential flaw in the *Morphology*, and it would be interesting to see, when Propp was compiling his research, where this function fits into the tale. However, purely for the interest of this thesis, the function of *transfiguration* will be examined in the wolf’s character, though it is certainly acknowledged that this does not conform to the *Morphology* in this case.

Firstly, then, the wolf “takes the place of the child as well as the grandmother in an ambivalent, but essentially aggressive relationship” (Rodriguez 50). Rodriguez notes that “his double role results only in a surface transformation” (50). This surface transformation is essential for this function, and demonstrates that ‘transfiguration’ as Propp (1968) defines it, has occurred.
Furthermore, Séverine’s transfiguration corresponds to the variations as set out by Propp as she does indeed undergo a change in personal appearance. Her transfiguration occurs in one of the final scenes, which Wood describes as “[…] the most haunting scene in the film, and one of the most inward and sustained pieces of movie-making anywhere in Buñuel” (Belle de Jour 60). The scene documents Husson’s arrival to the couple’s home, following which he asks whether Séverine would like to witness the conversation “to tell [Pierre] all that I know about you”; she does not reply and Husson enters the room without her. Afterwards “we simply watch Séverine waiting” (60). The spectator does not hear or witness the conversation, merely Husson’s departure sometime after, having just informed Pierre of Séverine’s involvement with the brothel.

Following this, Séverine then enters the room and sits down, resulting in a scene which displays “a visual version of controlled anxiety” (Wood Belle de Jour 61). The viewer wonders how Pierre has taken the news, and one can imagine not well. However, this is then followed by shots of the couple smiling as Pierre miraculously gets out of his wheelchair, pours them each a drink and proposes a vacation. Thus, the transfiguration occurs in Séverine’s appearance as she transitions into one of her unconscious fantasies as she goes from seeming incredibly anxious and apprehensive in what the viewer assumes is reality, to smiling and happy in her daydream. This change from anxiety to contentedness can be considered to amount to “a new appearance” (Propp Morphology 62).

The penultimate function is function thirty, punishment, whereby “[t]he villain is punished” (Propp Morphology 63). Propp maintains that the villain “is punished only in those cases in which a battle and pursuit are absent from the story” (63). Marcel, the villain in Belle de Jour was defeated and killed, thus fulfilling function eighteen, therefore, a battle has already occurred.
Finally, function thirty one, *wedding*, is defined as whereby “[t]he hero is married and ascends the throne” (Propp *Morphology* 63). *Belle de Jour* could conform to the fifth variant of this function whereby, in the case of an already married hero, “the marriage is resumed” (Propp *Morphology* 64). This occurs given the final dream sequence, where the ‘happy ending’ comes into play as the couple intend to go to the mountains. The film ends on a shot of the landau passing through the forest. To conclude the functions, Andonovska-Trajkovska maintains that this function occurs in *Little Red Riding Hood* as “the wedding is the most logical end […] some gain has to be achieved. In this case Little Red Riding Hood is taught a lesson” (1699).

The principle of dissociation

Thus, the double ending of *Belle de Jour* presents the possibility to acknowledge the presence of Propp’s final function in the film. The notion of the opposition of the two realities which make up the ending, illustrates Lyon’s (1973) principle of “dissociation” (45), or “displacement” (45). This concept having also been illustrated by André Breton in the first *Surrealist Manifesto* whereby two contrasting realities, such as the conscious and unconscious minds, are opposed, thus “creating an element of shock or surprise” (Lyon 45). Dissociation occurs in *Belle de Jour* by the way in which the boundaries between dream and reality become increasingly blurred as the film progresses. Séverine’s conscious and unconscious meet and are thus opposed. Dissociation is also commonly experienced in the fairy tale genre, as it is this disengagement from reality which allows the reader to journey into the fairy tale world.

During the dissociation experience, in order to acquire meaning from this “random assemblage” (Lyon 45) of realities, Lyon insists that “the juxtaposition [of realities] must produce a transformation in the relationship between the elements within the image and between the
beholder and the object. It is this transformation, or displacement, which produces the effect of shock or surprise” (45). Furthermore, it is essential to point out that it is a detachment from objects or reality, rather than a loss, which facilitates dissociation.

Accordingly, detachment in Belle de Jour occurs from the extra-diegetic sounds, such as cowbells and meowing, which produces an effect of shock or surprise, as the sounds are disconnected from anything we might see on screen. Within dissociation, it is from this detachment from reality that one can truly gain an insight into the unconscious mind, which is why Breton maintains that “dissociation is not just a matter of disconnection but of reconnection to some larger whole” (193). Belle de Jour’s involvement with the unconscious implies that the film extends beyond the parameters of mainstream cinema, which generally tend not to deal with such Buñuelian forays into the unconscious, and addresses fundamental surrealist concepts. For this reason critics, such as Evans, have commented on the film’s connection to the notions of the unconscious mind and psychoanalysis (Films of Luis Buñuel 158).

For example, Evans attributes Sèverine’s introduction to the subversive world of prostitution as facilitated by her acquaintance with Husson. This relationship subsequently submits her “[…] to a process that will not simply release her own sexuality but also, more interestingly, reveal the origins of the neuroses and obsessions by which she is troubled” (Films of Luis Buñuel 158). A process which in turn leads to “[…] the release of her libido and access to knowledge about her sexual retardment […]” (158.). Additionally, this justifies the assertion that Husson fulfils the requirements of the dramatis personae of the donor, as “it is from him that the hero […] obtains some agent […]” (Propp Morphology 39). That agent being the brothel made known to Sèverine in the first place, and secondly, to which Husson also provides the address.
In a not too dissimilar way, the process of dissociation can be connected to the seventeenth-century concept of the merveilleux, which will now be discussed. The two strands can be compared by the way in which they place emphasis on the need for a ‘break’ in conventional reality. The view of the merveilleux from its position within seventeenth-century society will therefore now be discussed, which will accordingly lead to the overall consideration and representation of society in the conte, and furthermore the film.

Society and the fairy tale genre

Zipes underlines the importance of societal influences within the fairy tale genre (“Second Gaze” 78), a concept which was addressed in chapter one from the perspective of its importance within the Querelle du Merveilleux. The current section will also draw on this idea to explore how fairy tales respond to influences from within their respective societies. In turn, Belle de Jour will be analyzed to see if it exhibits similar qualities of the twentieth-century society in which it was created.

Within the Querelle du Merveilleux, the content of the contes de fées was pulled between “the Christian marvelous […] who sought to revive and promote the use of supernatural characters and events […] while, generally, but not always, condemning the use of gods and other figures from Greek and Roman mythology as incompatible with Christian belief” (Seifert Fairy Tales 29) and the pagan marvelous, “who either tolerated both the mythological and Christian traditions […] or promoted the exclusive use of mythological gods and characters in the epic” (Seifert Fairy Tales 30). Accordingly, “[a]dvocates of the Christian merveilleux, and particularly Perrault, argued that the plausibility of the marvelous was relative to the culture in which it was produced” (Seifert Fairy Tales 30). The crux of the matter is that in this debate, merveilleux
literature had to bear the stamp of *vraisemblance* which in turn, “denoted a mode of writing in which texts evoked in direct and unmediated fashion the world at large and its social functioning” (DiPiero 86). This in turn brings us back to the point that Perrault, belonging to the Christian *merveilleux*, conceived *Little Red Riding Hood* to exhibit elements of seventeenth-century society, thus possessing this key notion of *vraisemblance*. This notion is indeed present in the *conte*, when considering Rodriguez’ point that *Little Red Riding Hood* includes “food from the treats of the days of old (the little pot of butter, [and] the galette)“ (44).

Furthermore it is essential to remember that “the creative purpose of fairy tales […] [concerns] the depiction of changing social structures and alternative forms of behavior so that new developments and connections between humans and things could be better grasped by the people” (Zipes *Breaking the Magic Spell* 191). In relation to this, Zipes also maintains that often fairy tales would function as a critique of social structures and institutions and notes that in the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries, “Europeans […] sought to make progress and change nature, they supervised their own behaviour in a most diligent and often self-defeating manner” (*Trials and Tribulations* 71).

Further to this, one must also take into account the political situation at the time of Perrault’s writing. The collection of eight *contes* in which *Little Red Riding Hood* appears, was supposedly written by Perrault’s son, Pierre Darmancour, and were dedicated to Elisabeth-Charlotte d’Orléans, Louis XIV’s niece (Bottigheimer 220). Furthermore, Bories-Lu suggests that “the narrator addresses his story not only to an adult narratee […] but also to a child narratee, […] the official addressee of these stories: Elisabeth Charlotte d’Orléans. […] Moreover, knowing that the young d’Orléans is about to marry, the qualification of child could have something to do with
the question of marriage and therefore sexuality” (77). A similar assertion is also held by Kirkman, who states that

Female virginity was a requirement of the aristocratic marriage de raison, which was central to forging profitable social and economic alliances. For this reason, a woman's "honor" was a serious issue that affected family name and livelihood, as well as the dignity of court society as a whole. In this respect, Perrault's concern with the chastity of French noblewomen is an extension of his vested interest in defending court society, which is clearly demonstrated in his modernist manifesto The Parallel of the Ancients and the Moderns. The tragic ending of Perrault's version, which culminates in Red Riding Hood's death, demonstrates the dire consequences of a young woman's choices (144).

In addition, the future husband of d’Orléans was the Duke of Lorraine (Bories-Lu 77). Therefore, given Perrault’s high standing in the court, any comments or observations regarding the marriage would have to be underhand, so as to avoid provoking any upset in the court, as Shavit (in Dundes A Casebook) notes. This topical point has indeed been read in Little Red Riding Hood by Zipes who infers the importance of saving oneself for marriage from the overall significance of the conte.

Little Red Riding Hood reflects the seventeenth-century society as it displays elements of the importance of agriculture at the time. For example, Rodriguez’ (49) comment that one of the few details which is in fact present in the conte is the moulin in the distance, which signifies the strong ties to the land for the seventeenth-century people (Soriano 88). Furthermore, Perrault used turns of phrase which were already considered old at the time (Soriano 154), for example mère-grand (grandmother) and chaperon (hood) (154) to name but a few. What is more, wolves were not just an imaginary danger at the time, with a number of children and adults killed each year by them (154); the chance of encountering a wolf in the forest was real.
Thus, seventeenth-century society certainly influenced *Little Red Riding Hood*. In a similar way, Mulvey also acknowledges the influence that contemporary society has over the films produced within it. She states that cinema “reflect[s] the physical obsessions of the society which produced it [...]” (59). This is indeed true of *Belle de Jour* as it exhibits Buñuel’s dislike of the bourgeoisie, such as an obsession with objects, fashion, and clothing (Wood *Belle de Jour* 19). Wood having noted how “Buñuel gets Yves Saint-Laurent to dress [Catherine Deneuve] in neat, shortish suits and dresses and coats” (19), which were representative of bourgeois fashions at the time. William Evans also notes how Séverine’s “first appearance at the brothel sees her in darkly coloured clothes and black sunglasses, both of which [are] suggestions of authority as well as bourgeois blindness” (156), within this Braudy observes Buñuel’s “hatred of the bourgeoisie” (72). Also, in *Belle de Jour*, “the idiosyncrasies of language, dress, dinner-engagement […] of late Sixties’ and Seventies’ bourgeois French society” (Wood *Belle de Jour* 15) are all put under inspection. This is illustrated by the way in which we see Séverine socialising at the tennis club; the dinner parties the couple frequent; their trips to the mountains and the seaside, to name but a few elements of the bourgeois life which they lead.

Additionally, Forcer asserts that the “shift into the world of prostitution is […] viewed as a gesture of sexual liberation, the emergence and exploration of a set of desires formerly repressed by the convention of marriage” (Forcer 23). Durgnat notes that Buñuel “has declared that for him bourgeois morality is an immorality” (14), he adds that “Buñuel’s films remain extremely disturbing and destructive as criticism of our culture” (14).

In regards to the notion of the film as an expression of culture, Higginbotham considers that “[w]hen understood as a fairy tale, […] the full range of Buñuel’s study comes into view. The film is not merely a vision of an individual’s torment, but an expression of established patterns of
behaviour of the myths and legends reflecting Western culture” (138). A statement which refers to her study upholding that Belle de Jour bears resemblance to Beauty and the Beast. Higginbotham exemplifies this in stating that, “Belle (whose names means “beauty” in French) goes willingly to the brothel, as the Beauty of the legend voluntarily surrenders herself to Beast” (133). Higginbotham also maintains that “Pierre thus appears to be the equivalent of the beautiful prince in fairy tales whom lonely young girls long for” (133). She also upholds however, that he has a double personality and calls him “bestial” (133) and “demonic” (133).

Women in society and film

Higginbotham’s assertions that Pierre may be considered handsome and beastly implies a double aspect to his character. Higginbotham illustrates this concept in stating that Pierre possesses a “dual character as handsome lover and cruel tormentor” (133). This in turn demonstrates a way in which “Belle de Jour actually codifies sexual intercourse as an extension of the male hegemony that orders her married life” (Forcer 23). As such, Pierre’s dual personality is a reflection of a patriarchal society, which in turn reflects gender stereotypes and a woman’s position in society. This section will reflect upon this concept, with reference to women in society and consequently, film, as a production of that society.

In relation to this idea, Evans considers that “Séverine has become a creation of culture […]” (Spanish Cinema 155) in herself, and therefore “[…] reflects this willing confinement or entrapment within the social order” (155). This parallels similar views of women during the seventeenth-century which “involve[d] the unreasonable and immoral exploitation of women, children, and minority groups” (Zipes Trials and Tribulations 72) in “Christian morality” (72). Lavignette-Ammoun considers that women’s roles at this time are reflected in Little Red Riding
Hood and states that “submission, obedience, humility, dexterity and patience are the virtues assigned to [women]” (137). Indeed, Zipes brings up the interesting point that the tales are written from a male’s perspective, it is therefore the male (Perrault’s) projection of how women and children should behave and fulfill their roles at the time (“Second Gaze: 107). In relation to this, Lavignette-Ammoun asserts that “the woman of the [seventeenth-century] contes is passive or insignificant […]” (137).

Lavignette-Ammoun also states that Little Red Riding Hood’s “credulity throws her literally into the wolf’s mouth. This negative image of the female is [also] found in numerous fairy tales” (137). This “negative image” (137) arises from numerous possibilities. Firstly, she dallies on the way to her grandmother’s house, taking “a roundabout way, entertaining herself by gathering nuts, running after butterflies, and gathering bouquets of little flowers which she found” (Perrault Histoires 50). Secondly, she fails to distinguish between the grandmother and the wolf, as does the grandmother between the little girl, despite the obvious difference in size (Rodriguez 50). The conte details how “[s]he was greatly amazed to see how her grandmother looked in her nightclothes, and said to her, "Grandmother, what big arms you have!"” (Perrault Histoires 54). Thus, Lavignette-Ammoun argues that women in general were not portrayed as independent visionaries of their own future, and if they were, as in the case of the girl in Little Red Riding Hood, they were punished. Zipes reinforces this notion in affirming that “from a contemporary perspective, the tales are filled with incidents of inexplicable abuse, [and] maltreatment of women […]” (Breaking the Magic Spell 191). For instance, the character of the wolf has been argued by Zipes to have been aimed at inciting better comportment regarding female roles during Perrault’s time. Zipes substantiates this point as he indicates that “[...] werewolf crazes were aimed at regulating sexual practices and sex roles for the benefit of male-dominated social
orders, which were depending more and more on economic rationalization in the production and reproduction spheres” (*Trials and Tribulations* 71).

Zipes’s previous comment indicates that a male-dominated society bore *Little Red Riding Hood*. Mulvey considers that a patriarchal society still remains today, as she discusses the position of the female in modern-day cinema. She states that “[w]oman […] stands in patriarchal culture as signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his fantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning” (58). This point certainly bears weight when taking into consideration the fact that, like *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Belle de Jour* was also conceived by a male director, who, as we have already seen, has imparted his foot fetish onto the film given the lingering close-up shots of Séverine’s feet as she ascends the stairs to the brothel.

Thus, Little Red Riding Hood and Séverine can be considered to be the objects of male desire in their respective narratives. With reference specifically to cinema, Mulvey considers that the camera’s gaze is inherently male. She states that “[t]he determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly” (62). Mulvey also describes the relationship as “active/male and passive/female” (62). A notion which would suggest that in cinema the viewer always identifies with the male protagonist, and the female is the object of spectacle. This may be felt in *Belle de Jour* by the lingering camera shots on parts of the body, as just described.

Additionally, the idea of the gaze has been examined by Mulvey, who asserts that there are certain types of ‘look’ in cinema. Those being “that of the spectator in direct scopophilic contact
with the female form displayed for his enjoyment (connoting male phantasy) and that of the spectator fascinated with the image of his like set in an illusion of natural space” (63), which suggests that the spectator always identifies with the male protagonist. This sort of identification brings about “a satisfying sense of omnipotence” (63) in that the presence of the male may be felt throughout the film. Mulvey also addresses the fact that “[a] male movie star’s glamorous characteristics are thus not those of the erotic object of the gaze, but those of the […] more powerful ego ideal conceived in the original moment of recognition in front of the mirror” (63). When applying these observations to Belle de Jour, it offers a new take on the film when approaching it from this angle. It appears that the viewer is no longer witnessing Séverine’s daily life as she experiences it, but from a fantasized, male perspective.

The staying power of the fairy tale genre

Zipes comments on how fairy tales were indeed an educational tool, but that they also had the potential to incite rebellion (Breaking the Magic Spell 29). Zipes remarks that a notion upheld during the seventeenth-century was that “the people should be educated and learn how to read – but the contents of this education and reading was to remain controlled” (29). This relates to certain themes or topics which were considered taboo subjects. Therefore any allusion to such ideas would be made in an underhand way, which in turn points to the fairy tale’s subversive nature as a genre.

Claude Levi-Strauss insists that “[…] what gives the myth an operative value is that the specific pattern described is everlasting; it explains the present and the past as well as the future” (430). Levi-Strauss adds that “[…] a myth is still felt as a myth by any reader throughout the world. Its substance does not lie in its style, its original music, or its syntax, but in the story which it tells”
This implies that the structure of a fairy tale does indeed follow an expected pattern. Smith and Riley support this concept, in stating that “[t]here is […] a pleasure to be derived from encountering a story with a predictable plot” (24).

Certainly, the fairy tale has also had such an enduring presence throughout the evolution of society because of its adaptable nature. Different societies bend and mold the fairy tale to suit the context and values within their own. Zipes notes how “[folk tales] were cultivated in an oral tradition by the people and passed on from generation to generation in essentially different basic patterns which have been kept intact over thousands of years” (*Breaking the Magic Spell* 39).

In summary, this chapter has addressed five of the functions which occur towards the end of the *Morphology*, and their place in the sequence of narrative events, which, accordingly with the placement of the functions in the *Morphology*, was nearing the end of the *conte* and the film. They have been demonstrated to occur in the order in which Propp asserted is specific to a fairy tale. The chapter has also examined the structure of the events which take place in *Belle de Jour* and *Little Red Riding Hood* in relation to how they correspond to Propp’s *Morphology*, and how the principle of dissociation is present in both fairy tale and *Belle de Jour* and how it can be related to the seventeenth-century notion of the *merveilleux*. Subsequently, an investigation of the way in *Little Red Riding Hood* reflects the society in which it was created was undertaken, followed by a consideration of whether *Belle de Jour* can be said to reflect aspects of twentieth-century society. This then lead to an examination of what makes fairy tales endure, and it was concluded that they follow an inherent pattern and are therefore adaptable.
CONCLUSION

The present work attempts to contribute to the existing corpus of work relating to the genre of fairy tale. It combines Proppian theories relating to the properties of fairy tale, and fuses these with socio-historical considerations of the fairy tale. Further pistes of exploration are certainly possible, this study having only begun to scratch the surface of how we may consider contemporary creations to be considered within the genre as ancient and time-honoured as the fairy tale.

Chapter one explored the notion of adaptation, and how it is an important concept within this thesis, as Buñuel’s Belle de Jour is an adaptation into film of a novel. Correspondingly, Perrault’s conte has been adapted throughout the ages. Various similarities and differences between Kessel’s novel and Buñuel’s film were also explored at this point, and why the film serves as a better point of comparison with Perrault’s seventeenth century conte than Kessel’s novel. Chapter one also highlighted the importance of the role of the unconscious and its relation to the film and Little Red Riding Hood.

Chapter one also focused on the presence of the archetypal characters, or dramatis personae in the film and the conte, whose presence Propp maintains is essential for a fairy tale to be considered to be present. Lastly, the presence of the first five functions, those being absentation, interdiction, violation, reconnaissance and delivery, was considered in both works. All five functions were found to be present in Belle de Jour. In analyzing the actions we are able to facilitate a comparison of a literary text and a film. From the method presented to us in Propp’s Morphology we have been able to form a clear comparison of the text with the medium of film, and in doing so we have seen that indeed, the functions in the fairy tale are also present in the film, with some functions being additionally present or absent either side of both. It was also
demonstrated that the functions unfold in the expected pattern of fairy tale narrative as set out by Propp.

The previous point emphasizes Orenstein’s observation that “[w]hat Propp pointed out, however, is that not only individual tales but also entirely different tale types share the same basic structure and fundamental characters […]” (231). Orenstein calls these characters “part of a collective mental universe, and even as they change names and swap plots, we recognize and come to expect things from them, sometimes without even realizing” (pp 231-232).

Chapter two then focused on the different strands of desire which are present within the film and the conte. This chapter demonstrated a way in which not only the structure, but the themes within the film can be likened to those present in Little Red Riding Hood. This angle of comparison was facilitated by Brooks’s notion of desire within the narrative, by the way in which it operates as the driving force behind it. This notion was examined within literature as well as film. This chapter also considered the theme of voyeurism in the film, followed by its presence within literature, compared to film.

Lastly, chapter three approached the role which society has to play in influencing the creation of a narrative. The seventeenth-century, which bore Perrault’s Little Red Riding Hood was explored in relation to the politics and literary debates at the time, as well as a consideration of the potential ways in which the contes addressed themselves to different classes of society. The twentieth-century, which saw the release of Belle de Jour is a much more liberal arena in which to explore the themes of sex and desire. Yet the film was still exemplified to have demonstrated twentieth-century notions, such as bourgeois fashions, and the adherence to the conventions of marriage, which Séverine disrupts by working at the brothel.
This demonstrates the evolution of fairy tales within society, and also its technological advances such as film which allow for further expansion of the medium in which fairy tale is passed down. This thesis has exemplified, through a comparison of Belle de Jour and Little Red Riding Hood through Propp’s Morphology that certain narrative functions can be drawn from the film and that these also follow Propp’s set sequence. Given that the hypothesis of this thesis aimed to argue whether we may consider Belle de Jour a modern day fairy tale, the research produced within this thesis has shown that Belle de Jour demonstrates Propp’s archetypal characters as well as exhibiting the narrative structure of a fairy tale. Therefore by Proppian standards we may call Belle de Jour a fairy tale due to the presence of the functions examined, as well as exhibiting the archetypal characters required. The film has also been demonstrated to exhibit other markers which are pertinent to the fairy tale genre, such as the way in which it deals with the conscious and unconscious mind, as well as spatio-temporal dislocation. Whether the presence of these themes means that we can consider the film a fairy tale merits further investigation. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note the similarities which the film draws with the conte. To re-state, the purpose of this thesis was to investigate whether the film conforms to the Proppian definition of fairy tale, which the present analysis has achieved.

There are certainly many unexplored avenues as well as other potential actions in the film which could also be considered to fulfill different functions. One of the difficulties encountered in the analysis was applying a linear sequence to the actions, as indeed, there are several events in the film which merit classification under numerous functions. Furthermore, there also lies many signs which lend themselves to the possibility of interpretation in a surrealist film such as Buñuel’s, yet often one cannot be sure what significance was intended. Interpretations from various critics have served as a formidable source from which to nourish the association between the actions in the film and Propp’s morphological functions.
To conclude, Zipes comments that

Folk and fairy tales remain an essential force in our cultural heritage, but they are not static literary models to be internalized for therapeutic consumption. Their values depend on how we actively produce and receive them in forms of social interaction which lead toward the creation of greater individual autonomy. Only by grasping and changing the forms of social interaction and work shall we be able to make full use of the utopian and fantastic projections of folk and fairy tales (Breaking the Magic Spell pp 199-200).

Thus, it is essential that the fairy tale genre continue in other mediums which are not literary ones. Due to the conclusion that Belle de Jour can be considered to be a (Proppian) fairy tale, the framework of fairy tale may be examined under a new light as film is a modern medium which changes the way in which the framework of fairy tale is perceived.

In relation to this idea, T.S Eliot writes in Tradition and the Individual Talent that every time a new work of art is introduced into a genre, the total meaning of all artistic monuments that came before it is altered, so that each new work of art changes the relations between all works of art ever produced. He states that

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. [...] what happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it. The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new [...] work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever
so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new (37).

Thus, a new work of art will alter the encoding of art’s historical organisation whilst acknowledging its predecessors. Eliot states that “[…] the difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past’s awareness of itself cannot show” (38).

The requirement that one must acknowledge the past whilst still engaging with one’s own present temporality has also been commented on by Zipes, with respect to the oral and literary traditions of fairy tale. Zipes states how “[b]oth the oral and literary traditions continue to exist side by side today, interact, and influence one another, but there is a difference in the roles they now play compared to their function in the past. This difference can be seen in the manner in which they are produced, distributed and marketed” (Breaking the Magic Spell 2). He alludes to technology’s crucial role in the continuation and survival of the fairy tale genre, which means that as new technologies emerge, they must be made use of so as to continue the fairy tale tradition and preserve its place in society.

With this in mind, Zipes adds that “[t]he ultimate cultural value of folk and fairy tales today depends on how we convert technology to give us a stronger sense of history and of our powers to create more just and equitable social orders” (Breaking the Magic Spell 21). He adds that “[t]echnology […] can actually help liberate and fulfill the imaginative projections of better worlds which are contained in folk and fairy tales” (21).
This assertion is crucial because it implies that the qualities and messages within a fairy tale may be imparted via the medium of film. It is almost necessary that it must continue in this way in fact, if the genre is to continue to adapt and survive with the changing societies in which it exists.
ENDNOTES

1 Originally entitled *Morphology of the Wondertale*, the last word was changed to *Folktale* by his editor to make it more attractive to readers (Propp and Liberman 70).

2 Translated from the original French « Les spécialistes n’aiment pas trop que l’on tente de regrouper les thèmes des contes types ».

3 Translated from the original French « Perrault souhaite offrir aux enfants un moyen de s’instruire tout en se divertissant. […] Cependant, Perrault n’oublie pas que ce sont les parents qui vont lire les contes à leurs enfants et n’a de cesse de glisser quelques clins d’œil et pointes d’humour dans son texte qu’il destine aussi, implicitement, aux adultes ».

4 Translated from the original French « Nous pensons enfin que la scène où sont successivement énumérés les bras, les jambes, les oreilles, les yeux et les dents du loup est un calque de ces exercices amusants ou de ces blasons enfantins utilisés par des pédagogues d’hier et d’aujourd’hui pour inculquer au petit enfant la connaissance de son propre corps ».

5 Translated from the original French « Le conte d’avertissement qui constitue la forme d’ensemble du Petit Chaperon rouge, n’est-il pas lui aussi une variété de récit spécialement destinée aux enfants ».

6 Translated from the original French « Dans la moralité, « On » est employé comme nous dans le sens de « moi », le narrateur, et « vous », qui venez de lire la fable. Ce « on » s’adresse à un narrataire adulte et informé du sujet qui va être discuté dans la moralité. L’auteur déclare de manière franche et directe son appartenance au groupe narrataire adulte. Le « on » désigne, dans ses deux emplois, des narrataires adultes en connivence avec un narrateur adulte ».

7 Translated from the original French « Ce conte, sans doute, n’est qu’une « adaptation » ».

8 Translated from the original French « la moralité unique […] est justement un avertissement et qui n’est que cela »

9 Translated from the original French « La morale finale, qui évoque toutes « sortes » de loups suivant « les jeunes demoiselles jusque dans leurs maisons », explicite cette association implicite entre la dévoration du loup et le coït. »

10 In the original German is entitled *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*

11 Translated from the original French « les œuvres de tradition populaire sont non seulement anonymes, mais apparemment spontanées, c’est-à-dire élaborées sans élaboration, individualisées sans un individu […] ». 
Translated from the original French « Va voir comme se porte ta mère-grand, car on m’a dit qu’elle était malade, porte-lui une galette et ce petit pot de beurre ».  

13 Translated from the original French « ce méchant loup se jeta sur le Petit Chaperon rouge, et la mangea ».  

14 From here on, references to Belle de Jour will be to the film, unless otherwise stated.  

15 Shavit considers Perrault’s Little Red Riding Hood a folktale. Though, she does not distinguish between folk and fairy tale and notes his stance on the literary existence of the folktale, stating that “[u]p until the nineteenth century, folktales were told and read […]” (in Dundes A Casebook 137).  

16 Although Andonovska-Trajkovska argues that Little Red Riding Hood does fulfill this function (1699).  

17 Further inspiration connecting Buñuel to the overall fairy tale setting may be found in his enjoyment in short stories by Ramón Gómez de la Serna, as Buñuel (My Last Sigh 103) states in his biography. Short stories, whose style relates back to the design of Perrault’s contes.  

18 Translated from the original French « une petite fille de village ».  

19 Translated from the original French « partit aussitôt pour aller chez sa mère-grand, qui demeurait dans un autre village ».  

20 Translated from the original French « [p]ar son absence de contextualisation, le conte fonde une histoire qui se réalise dans un passe immémorial et un monde étranger »  

21 Translated from the original French « Un jour sa mère ayant cuit et fait des galettes lui dit : - Va voir comment se porte ta mère-grand».  

22 Except the little girl’s qualification as ‘Little Red Riding Hood’.  

23 Translated from the original French « Je ne touche pas une balle aujourd’hui, remplace-moi. »  

24 Translated from the original French « Demeure-t-elle bien loin ? »  

25 William Evans notes how Buñuel “brilliantly keeps in focus questions relating simultaneously to the quasi-demonic urges of human sexuality” (174). The film’s relevance to society will be explored in more depth in chapter three.  

26 Translated from the original French « Il était une fois une petite fille de village, la plus jolie qu’on eût su voir »  

27 The prologue in Belle de Jour could also be symbolic of l’amour fou, which was a concept with which the surrealists were entranced by. It was a form of ‘mad love’, where an intensity of feeling for someone changes their mental state. Surrealists enjoyed this idea because love should be mad, or not at all. This demonstrates the notion of desire and love as a form of altered state.  

28 For a detailed discussion, see Orenstein’s discussion of the conte (100).
Metz (in Lapsley and Westlake) talks extensively about the effect of the cinema on the viewer, with specific consideration of the cinematic gaze by the way in which the viewer identifies with the camera’s position.

Translated from the original French « je veux aller la voir aussi ; je m'y en vais par ce chemin ici, et toi par ce chemin-là, et nous verrons qui plus tôt y sera »

Translated from the original French « la petite fille s'en alla par le chemin le plus long, s'amusant à cueillir des noisettes, à courir après des papillons, et à faire des bouquets des petites fleurs qu'elle rencontrait »

Translated from the original French « Le loup tira la chevillette et la porte s'ouvrit. Il se jeta sur la bonne femme, et la dévora en moins de rien ; car il y avait plus de trois jours qu'il n'avait mangé ».

Translated from the original French « ce méchant loup se jeta sur le Petit Chaperon rouge, et la mangea ».

Translated from the original French « je m'y en vais par ce chemin ici, et toi par ce chemin-là, et nous verrons qui plus tôt y sera »

Original French « Le loup joue ici tant de rôles, qu'il se substitue à l'enfant comme à la grand-mère dans une relation ambivalente mais essentiellement agressive. Mais c'est qu'il est le signifiant même de cette composante agressive, son double rôle résultant seulement d'une transformation de surface ».

Translated from the original French « la nourriture de nos goûters d'antan (le petit pot de beurre, la galette) » (44)

Translated from the original French « Le narrateur adresse son récit non seulement à un narrataire adulte […], mais aussi à un narrataire enfant, explicite parce que le narrataire enfant est le destinataire officiel des histoires ou contes : Elisabeth Charlotte d'Orléans, et que le protagoniste est une fillette « Le Petit chaperon rouge ». De plus, sachant que la jeune d'Orléans est sur le point de se marier, la qualification d’enfant pourrait avoir quelque chose à voir avec la question du mariage et ainsi avec la sexualité ».

Translated from the original French « Soumission, obéissance, humilité, habileté et patience sont les vertus qui lui sont attribuées »

Translated from the original French « La femme des contes est passive ou insignifiante […] »

Translated from the original French « Sa crédulité la jette littéralement dans la gueule du loup. Cette image négative de la femme se retrouve dans de nombreux contes de fée »

Translated from the original French « [la petite fille s'en alla] par le chemin le plus long, s'amusant à cueillir des noisettes, à courir après des papillons, et à faire des bouquets des petites fleurs qu'elle rencontrait »
Translated from the original French « elle fut bien étonnée de voir comment sa mère-grand était faite dans son déshabillé. Elle lui dit :

- Ma mère-grand, que vous avez de grands bras ? »

Of which Little Red Riding Hood was one of them.
WORKS CITED


APPENDIX OF PROPPIAN FUNCTIONS

Function one *absentation.*
Function two *interdiction.*
Function three *violation.*
Function four *reconnaissance.*
Function five *delivery.*
Function six *trickery.*
Function seven, *complicity.*
Function eight *villainy.*
Function nine *mediation, the connective incident.*
Function ten *beginning counteraction.*
Function eleven *departure.*
Function twelve *the first function of the donor.*
Function thirteen *the hero’s reaction.*
Function fourteen *the provision or receipt of a magical agent.*
Function fifteen *guidance.*
Function sixteen *struggle.*
Function seventeen *branding or marking.*
Function eighteen *victory.*
Function nineteen, *liquidation.*
Function twenty *the hero returns.*
Function twenty one *pursuit.*
Function twenty two *rescue.*
Function twenty three *unrecognized arrival.*
Function twenty four *unfounded claims.*
Function twenty five *difficult task.*
Function twenty six *solution.*
Function twenty seven *recognition.*
Function twenty eight *exposure.*
Function twenty nine *transfiguration.*
Function thirty *punishment.*
Function thirty one *wedding*. 