

Hinke de Jong, 3668320

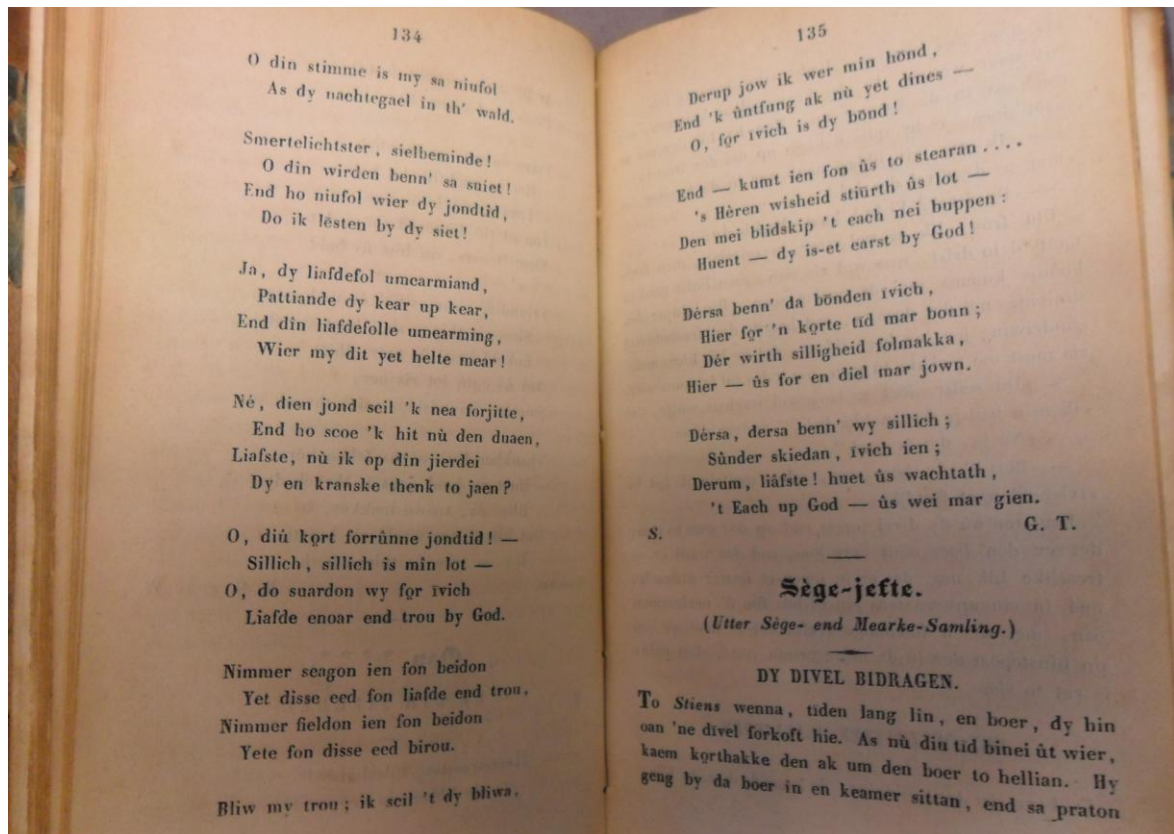
Bachelor Thesis Literatuurwetenschap

Supervisor: Dr. B.M. Kaiser

Second reader: Dr. F.P.C. Brandsma

June 2013, Utrecht University

The Frisian identity invented through folktales



Content

Introduction	2
1. The study of folklore and folktales in Friesland and the search for identity	4
2. National sentiments in Friesland	8
3. The original Frisian identity	13
4. Folktales and the Frisian spirit	20
5. Reflection	28
Conclusion	30
Bibliography	31
Appendix A	33
Appendix B	35
“Diu Heinprôve”	35
“Fen in faem dy er wêse doarst”	37
“De falske Tsiis”	40
“Fen thrye domenys”	43
“Dy Divel Bidragen”	44
“From Poepesetten”	45

Introduction

From the early nineteenth century Europe experiences a rising interest in folktales. Its own folklore becomes the source of interest of countries. Suddenly it becomes important to ‘define’ a nation, it is believed that each nation possesses its own ‘volksgeist’. In order to find this national spirit, authenticity is sought in the nation’s history and, even more, its folklore. Nowadays, people still value and take pride in their national identity and feel positively related to other people belonging to the same national community. However, what it is specifically what they take pride in is not easily identified and usually remains an abstract idea. This sense of national pride originates in the early days of Romanticism, the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. Nationalism and its political dimension have developed throughout the last few centuries and have sometimes taken on extreme and negative forms. This thesis will only focus on the early stages of nationalism.

A famous example of the start of the interest in and rise of the collecting of folktales are the achievements of the Grimm brothers in nineteenth century Germany. By collecting the German ‘Märchen’ they attempted to unify the scattered nineteenth century Germany by providing it with a collective German identity that was found, and formed, in these folktales. Similar developments are found in the Netherlands, not only on the national scale, but on a regional scale as well. The area of investigation of this thesis will be the province Friesland. From about 1825 the Frisian intellectual and cultural sphere is characterized by an increasing and passionate collecting of folktales. During the same period the ‘Frisian emancipatory movement’ arises. These two developments are closely related and cooperate in the attempt to present the Frisian identity.

The research done in this thesis will serve to give a clearer view on the concrete mechanisms that are at work in the creation process of this abstract phenomenon. It will be very interesting to study how culture and folklore are intertwined with a politically motivated agenda. To examine how this is done six of the most popular Frisian folktales will be looked at. I have chosen these particular stories, because they are classified as the story types that appear most frequently. I have used the oldest available, original versions from the nineteenth century of the stories. These are nowadays preserved in the archive of ‘Tresoar’, the Frisian Historical and Literary Center in Leeuwarden. One of the stories I have found in the ‘Special Collections’ department of the library of the Utrecht University. The question that will be the

guideline and starting point for this research is: *How did the Frisian search for a cultural identity in the early nineteenth century make use of popular folktales in order to construct such an identity via folklore?*

1. The study of folklore and folktales in Friesland and the search for identity

From the period before 1800 there are barely any documented Frisian folktales left. There did exist an oral tradition of folktales, but people were just not interested in preserving the stories that were circulating, there does not remain much information on folktales before the nineteenth century. In the early decades of the nineteenth century a considerable shift is taking place in this field. Several individual people and groups start active campaigns to collect, publish and bundle as many folktales as they can find. From this moment folktales are regarded as cultural heritage of the nation and therefore preserved and treasured.

One of the first influential persons who is known to have done this is Joost Hiddes Halbertsma. Halbertsma lived from 1789 to 1869 and was born and raised in Friesland. He was an enthusiastic 'Frisiast', he collected and published everything he could find about the history and culture of Friesland. The information and documents he found were published in small books. Halbertsma's work and passion were an important stimulant for the collecting spirit that really burst free in Friesland after 1825. Halbertsma came from a simple, not very wealthy, family from the Frisian countryside and had climbed his way up the social and political ladder into the climate of the intellectual, urban elite. He was an established intellectual who could move freely in the cultural and political circles. He had (correspondent) contact with several known intellectuals, one of them happened to be Jacob Grimm. Instead of neglecting his rural Frisian 'roots', he eagerly held on to them and presented this to the intellectual elite. By doing so, he drew the elite's attention to them and inspired other Frisian and Dutch intellectuals to follow his example. Halbertsma's motivations behind his intense study and collecting of Frisian folklore and Frisian history was that he was seeking the 'Frisian identity'. He believed this identity was an intrinsic property of the Frisian community and the Frisian people. The Frisian identity was unconsciously present in the population. This is an essentialist view, it was believed that there existed an authentic core that was hidden in the traditional rural communities. This core identity was thought to be a continuous and stable factor that descended from primal traditions, therefore the Frisian identity could be found in the past and folklore of a nation. According to Halbertsma the primal Frisian identity could be found in the country life amongst the middle class, because there were the origins of Friesland.

In 1827 the “Provinciaal Friesch Genootschap ter Beoefening van Friesche Geschied-, Oudheid- en Taalkunde” (“Provincial Frisian Society for the Performance of Frisian History, Ancient Studies and Linguistics”) was founded. In this group a few literary, intellectual citizens gathered. This group was only accessible for the elite and is considered to be very elitist and aristocratic. At first it was not the middle class itself that was concerned with finding its own identity, but it was primarily the upper class elite that studied the middle class and its traditions from the outside. These Frisian intellectuals presented study of the Frisian to the Dutch intellectual audience instead of the Frisian people themselves. Why they did this will be elaborated on in the next chapter.

In 1844 a less elitist group was initiated, the “Selskip for Fryske Tael- en Skriftekennisse” (“Society for Frisian Language and Literature Studies”). The founders, Tiede Roelofs Dykstra, Harmen Sytses Sytstra and Jacobus van Loon were greatly inspired by German Romanticism. The “Selskip” was more open to people from all classes in society. From this moment a storm of publications of folktales burst out. These were published in newly established magazines on Frisian literature, folklore and history. These two groups together form the ‘Frisian Movement’. Related to this movement and the work they did in the cultural and literary field is their effort in the area of the Frisian language. Their main goal was to recreate or re-establish a Frisian mythology. They actively went looking for folktales and called upon the people to send them folktales. So they could construct this Frisian mythology through the folktales. They were however thwarted in their success by the competition of Waling Dykstra. Waling Dykstra was less intellectual and less Romantic than the other collectors and therefore he obtained more popularity amongst his countrymen. He saw folktales as a reflection of the Frisian character and attributed more value to the way in which folktales could promote and stimulate national sentiments. The unity that could be established through folktales was more important to him than reconstructing a Frisian mythology. Waling Dykstra had a broader vision on folklore as well. Instead of focusing primarily on the more traditional, historical folktales, he also published contemporary folktales.

Beside the rise of folklore and literature, another field that received a boost in this period is the philology, the study of the Frisian language. Philology was a field of study that existed in Friesland since the sixteenth century, when it made its rise after the Frisian language had been disposed as the official language that was used in the formal circuits. However, the way the

language was studied changed, this was largely influenced by the Romantic period. In his book *Het rode tasje van Salverda: Burgerlijk bewustzijn en Friese identiteit in de negentiende eeuw* (*The red pouch of Salverda: Civil awareness and Frisian identity in the nineteenth century*), Goffe Jensma provides the example of Joost Hiddes Halbertsma and describes how Halbertsma felt about language: “Hij deelde de opvattingen van Duitse romantische taalgeleerden als Grimm en Bopp en beschouwde taal als een organisme dat groeit, kwijnt en sterft.” (Jensma, 72) (“He shared the thoughts of German romantic linguists like Grimm and Bopp and considered language as an organism that grows, withers and dies.”) Halbertsma disapproved how some intellectuals studied language as a mechanism.

Taal was daarentegen een levend wezen met een eigen onvoorspelbare geschiedenis, met een eigen genius, een ziel, een instinct. Eigendom van een volk. (...) De taal geeft, zo meende Halbertsma, in haar ontwikkeling de geschiedenis ook van haar sprekers weer, en verbindt de dode en de nog levende sprekers van een taal tot een volk. (Jensma, 1998, 73)

(Language on the other hand was a living creature with its own unpredictable history, with its own genius, a soul, an instinct. Property of a people. (...) The language reflects, according to Halbertsma, in her development the history of its speakers too, and unites the death and the living speakers of a language to a nation.)

The language of a nation contained the history of the nation and its inhabitants, the speakers of the language and it connected the speakers of a nation to each other. The language of the nation also contained and reflected the identity of the nation. One of Halbertsma's most famous expressions is that “De taal is de ziel der natie, zij is de natie zelve.” (Jensma, 77). (“The language is the soul of the nation, she is the nation itself.”) Therefore, the Frisian language needed to be, just as much as the folklore, kept alive and preserved. That is in fact the goal all these different groups with their different views had in common. They wanted to save the Frisian identity, the soul of the nation and its culture, while they still could.

Op een finalistische manier wordt de stof gezocht en geordend vanuit het ideaal van een komende, Friestalige samenleving, die op zijn beurt een afspiegeling is van de

onverdeeld Friese maatschappij die ooit in het verleden zou hebben bestaan. (Jensma, 1998, 31)

(In a finalistic way the material is sought and ordered from the ideal of an approaching, Frisian society, that in its turn is a reflection of the undivided Frisian society that would have existed once.)

There was a finalistic experience in society and this triggered different people and groups to start digging for the authentic Frisian past. They needed to save the Frisian identity and the Frisian culture while they still could, before it had all gone lost. In his book *Nationaal denken in Europa: Een cultuurhistorische schets* (*National Thought in Europe: a Cultural History*) Joep Leerssen describes this tendency as being part of the 'Salvation Paradigm'. A romantic tendency that took place in other European countries as well. Even though there were different (political) motivations to this development. Which developments in the Frisian society caused this need for preservation and what different political motivations have triggered this process, will be examined in the next chapter.

2. National sentiments in Friesland

In 1795 the ‘Bataafse Revolutie’ started which led to a restless political climate in Friesland and the Netherlands. Before this period, Friesland had been a sovereign region for a few hundred years. In 1815 it became a province of the ‘Koninkrijk der Verenigde Nederlanden’ (Kingdom of the United Netherlands) and lost her individuality and prominent position. This change had an impact on the social climate in Friesland. There were two different ways in which the people dealt with their new position. There were the people who tried to adjust to the situation and integrate as part of the ‘Koninkrijk der Verenigde Nederlanden’. The other movement was one of cultural resistance, these people refused to conform to the Dutch dominance by holding on to, more than before, and salvaging their own ‘unique’ Frisian identity. It would seem logical to rank the Frisian Movement, as described in the previous chapter, as an example of the cultural resistance. However, this can and will be debated in the next chapter. The integration of Friesland into the Netherlands was a slow and difficult process which took more than the first half of the nineteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, the Frisian society was divided in higher and lower classes. Between these different classes there was a gap that was difficult to bridge. It were mainly the upper classes that occupied themselves with political matters. They were also concerned with the education and development of the lower classes. Joost Hiddes Halbertsma, who had travelled between the different classes himself, tried to serve as a mediator between the classes and bring them closer to one another. He did so by presenting the urban elite with the rural Frisian culture, which he thought was a representation of the authentic unique Frisian identity. He did not entirely succeed in bridging the gap between high and low, but gained the elite’s interest in the behaviour and habits of the common people. One of the motivations behind the work of Halbertsma and others with him, was to distinguish Friesland as a nation. Having a national identity provided a country the moral right to autonomy. In his book *Nationaal denken in Europa* Joep Leerssen explains this:

In dit klimaat spreekt het vanzelf dat het publiceren van een corpus van oude balladen en orale volksliederen een ‘nationale’ daad van de eerste orde is: men demonstreert daarmee de culturele wortels van het eigen volk, de historische aanwezigheid en bestendigheid van dat volk in het Europese cultuurlandschap, de eigen identiteit van dat volk en zijn cultuur – en dus, bij implicatie, het morele recht van dat volk om een

eigen plaats in te nemen, ook in zijn politieke besluitvorming, tussen de overige volkeren van Europa. (Leerssen, 87)

(In this climate it is clear that publishing a corpus of old ballads and oral folk songs is a first class ‘national’ act: it demonstrates the cultural roots of the population, the historical presence and permanence of that population in the European cultural landscape, the own identity of that nation and its culture – and therefore, implicates, the moral right of that nation to take its own place, as well in its political decision, amongst the other nations of Europe.)

The authentic Frisian identity, which was found in the nation’s history and folklore, justified the claim to sovereignty. It supported the resistance against the central Dutch government, because it demonstrated the historical right to independence of Friesland. The Frisian identity was proof of the Frisian individuality. Very important to this claim was the existence of the Frisian language. Having a national language meant to be in possession of a written historical tradition and the language of the nation was considered to be the ‘soul of the nation’.

Another very influential factor came from outside the country. The spirit of Romanticism made its way into Friesland in the first half of the nineteenth century with increasing impact. Before Romanticism a feeling of national particularism and patriotism already existed. This, however abided more on a social level within a country and was not a means to differentiate from the world outside the country, but was directed against the own government and the ruling, aristocratic classes. What changed this were, according to Joep Leerssen, the ‘zeitgeist’ and the social and cultural developments in this period that determined the ‘zeitgeist’. What first motivated countries to distinguish themselves on a national level from other countries was a resistance against French neo-classicist dominance under the government of Napoleon. As a counter-reaction to the French rule, they claimed their nation’s sovereignty. They did this by emphasising and developing their own culture. It was believed that when a country had its own particular, unique identity, this provided them the right to independence. This is initiated by the cultural philosophy of the German philosopher Johan Gottfried Herder. Herder inspires a renewed interest in the country’s own history, culture and folklore and is the father of the belief that a country has a ‘volkgeist’. This is a feature of

Romantic idealism, which turned the national particularism that was already present in societies into a nationalistic ideology, as Joep Leerssen formulates this:

Kenmerk van de romantische visie is haar *idealisme*. De dingen worden niet slechts in hun specificiteit beschouwd, maar in hun ideële, transcendente meerwaarde. (...) Met name in de Duitse filosofengeneratie na Kant (Fichte, Schelling, Hegel) wordt deze gedachte aan een platonische *Geist*, de transcendente essentie van de dingen, dominant. Net zoals elke historische periode onder de auspiciën staat van een essentiële, transcendente specificiteit, de *Zeitgeist*, zo worden ook de natiën en volkeren gekarakteriseerd door hun onderscheiden *Volkgeist*. Het is dit abstracte principe dat de morele ziel vormt, of moet vormen, van de staat. (Leerssen, 60)

(Characteristic of the romantic vision is its *idealism*. Things are not just regarded in the specificity, but in their ideal, transcendent value. (...) In particular in the generation of German philosophers after Kant (Fichte, Schelling, Hegel) does this thought of a platonic *Geist*, the transcendent essence of things, dominate. Like every historical period is characterised by an essential, transcendent specificity, the *Zeitgeist*, nations and populations are characterised by their typical *Volksgeist*. It is this abstract principle that shapes, or should shape, the moral soul of the nation.)

Under the influence of Romantic ideals this idea that the nation possesses a collective soul, a 'volksgeist' is further developed. The 'volksgeist' transcends the individual, yet applies to each individual member of the nation. The Romantic developments in Europe, especially in Germany, have been of great influence on the Frisian developments. One example of how this is still seen is in the Frisian word for fairytales. The Frisian word 'mearkes' is derived from the German word 'Märchen', the word was created by Tiede Roelofs Dykstra, who was a member of the "Selskip for Fryske Tael- en Skriftekennisse".

Another feature of the 'zeitgeist' that is of great importance in the increase of the cultural interest in a country's own past is the experience of modernisation. People knew that they were living in a turbulent period. They were aware of the changes that took place in society in this period. Besides the impact of the French revolution and the Bataafse revolution, there was also the Industrial revolution. Times were fast, the new modern world was large-scaled and

impersonal. This caused people to feel overwhelmed and lost and made them nostalgic. They returned to their history and folklore, which provided them with an identity and the feeling of belonging to a community. The national past was thought to be continuous and stable and therefore the national identity provided people with continuity and stability, something to grasp, in a quickly changing historical process. In Friesland people suffered from these sentiments too. Even though the modernisation and industrialisation processes hit Friesland relatively late, not until the second half of the nineteenth century, it still had an important influence on the historical awareness in several ways. First there was a sense of modernisation which lead to insecurity about the self, the own identity. Second, there was also the awareness of delay, of staying behind the other, fast going forward countries, like England and Germany, but staying behind on the national level, within the Netherlands as well, which also lead to insecurity. The Frisian society had been agricultural for centuries and remained unilateral aimed at agriculture throughout the nineteenth century. Modern developments were introduced quite late and since they were regarded as negative developments they were deliberately kept off for a while too. In the meantime, everywhere in Europe countries made efficiently use of modern growth and manifested themselves. Friesland had been a prominent region for a long time and now saw its strong position decline. This damaged the Frisian pride and self-esteem. This provides another political reason for the ‘salvation paradigm’, that was mentioned in chapter two. By awakening their own, great, past, the Frisian could justify their feelings of pride and superiority. The Frisian nation could establish itself in a new, modernised world on the base of its past. One example that can be demonstrated is the way Halbertsma contextualised the Frisian language by his philological and linguistic study.

Achter de taalhistorische beschouwingen, komt hier een (taal)politiek standpunt voor het licht: het Hollands komt voort uit de ‘dialecten’ van de perifere provincies, uit het Fries en het Saksisch. En als de taal de ziel van de natie is (zo verwoordde Halbertsma), dan loopt de weg tot zelfkennis van de Nederlandse natie noodzakelijkerwijs via het Fries en het Saksisch. (Jensma, 1998, 76)

(Behind the linguistic historical reflections, a (language)political point of view is demonstrated: the Dutch language is derived from the ‘dialects’ of the peripheral provinces, from the Frisian and the Saxon. And if the language is the soul of the nation

(as Halbertsma stated), hence the path that leads to self-knowledge of the Dutch nation necessarily goes through the Frisian and the Saxon language.)

He defended the idea that the Dutch language was derived from the Frisian language. As the language of a nation and the nation itself were connected and considered as one, this meant that the Netherlands had come forth from a great primal Frisian realm. Regarding this, it could be claimed that the roots of the Netherlands lay in Friesland. From this thought there could be gained pride and superiority, it gave Friesland a historically positioned right within the Netherlands.

3. The original Frisian identity

The Frisian identity was thought to be a moral property every original Frisian person intrinsically possessed, as is demonstrated in the previous chapters. Two characteristics that were seen as determining for the Frisian identity were the character of the Frisian people and the Frisian language. Goffe Jensma compares the way the concept of the Frisian identity is treated in the nineteenth century to that of the treatment of a religious gospel.

Dit quasi-religieuze ideaal heeft als uitgangspunt dat de Friese identiteit niet een historisch gegeven is, maar als het ware in de hemel is gemaakt. Ze is boven historische kritiek verheven. Er *bestaat* een Fries wezen, een Friese ziel, een duidelijk afgebakende Friese identiteit; ‘... een kleine maar heel aparte cultuurgemeenschap’.
(Jensma, 1998, 31)

(This quasi-religious ideal has as its starting point that the Frisian identity is not historically given, but is as it were, created in heaven. She is raised above historical critique. There *exists* a Frisian essence, a Frisian soul, a clearly distinctive Frisian identity; ‘... a small but very distinguished cultural community’.)

The Frisian identity could be found in the Frisian history, its folklore and in its traditions. The cultural community that contained and maintained the authentic Frisian soul was found on the country side, where the Frisian commoners from the lower classes lived in the same, traditional, continue way as centuries earlier. This was where the origins of the character of the nation lay. An opposition was assumed between the modern, urban culture and the historical, rural culture. The modern culture was without personality, while the historical culture was personal and authentic. Folktales were thought to provide immediate and direct access to the past. They were a tool to gain access to the authentic national spirit:

Immers, wat vanuit de volksmond wordt opgetekend, wat uit het reservoir van volkscultuur aan het licht wordt gebracht en in gedrukte edities het geletterde protestandspubliek wordt getoond, is meer dan alleen historisch: het gaat om *tradities*.
(Leerssen, 81)

(Surely, what was recorded from the population, what is revealed from the reservoir of the folklore and in printed editions is shown the literate aristocracy, is more than just historical: it is about *traditions*.)

Folktales were seen as the connection between the past and the present; this is similar to the way language was regarded. It did not matter how old stories were, collectors were eager for everything they could get their hands on. The study of the folktales led to statements on the character of the Frisian spirit. One of these statements is declared by Halbertsma in a contemplation titled “Over het volkskarakter der Friezen” (“On the national character of the Frisians”), Jensma gives an enumeration of the words Halbertsma uses to typify the Frisians:

zucht tot vrijheid; behoedzaam, wantrouwend, schuw; geen liefhebber van vreemdelingen, wel gastvrij; afkeer van pochen; eerder geneigd tot doen dan tot spreken; niet vrolijk, maar neigend tot zwaarmoedige ernst; door zwaarmoedigheid stroef, stug en soms besluiteloos; onrustig; arbeidzaam; eerezuchtig; door eerezucht kittelorig; egoïst die naar onafhankelijkheid zoekt; volhardend; stijfhoofdig; slecht en recht; soms lichtgelovig; indien bedrogen, onverzoenbaar; afkerig van naäperij; daardoor meer originele karakters dan elders; afkeer van militarisme en soldaten.
(Jensma, 1998, 87)

(longing for freedom; cautious, distrustful, shy; no lover of strangers, yet hospitable; dislike of boasting; more likely to act than to speech; not merry, but a tendency to melancholic seriousness; because of melancholy rough, stiff and sometimes undecided; restless, industrious, ambitious; through ambition touchy; egotist that strives for independence; determined; stubborn; straightforward and upright; sometimes gullible; if betrayed, irreconcilable; aversely of mimicry; because of this more original persons than elsewhere; dislike of militarism and soldiers.)

This also took place on a comparative level, an example of this is the comparison by the reverend Lofvers, who lived from 1869 to 1954. Lofvers compared the character of Frisians to the character of the Groningers (inhabitants of the province Groningen) and listed his findings, this full list can be found in appendix A. What can be derived from these results is that the Frisians were considered very independent, very proud and very musical. Some other

traits they should possess according to this list are persistence, seriousness, depth, irritability, honesty, loyalty and the ability to speak pleasantly. Some traits they lack as a nation are sensitivity and tolerance. There can be found more descriptions on the Frisian identity and they all include pride, stubbornness, ambition, the desire for freedom, independence and determination. The basic image of the Frisian is a proud, strong, independent, temperate and self-conscious person. This is the image of the common Frisian individual, but was seen as a general character as well.

Bovendien werd, eveneens passend bij de tijd, deze Friese identiteit niet alleen gesitueerd in het collectief van alle Friezen samen – het Friese volk – maar ook beschouwd als een onderscheidende eigenschap van iedere afzonderlijke Fries. Volkskarakter en individueel karakter vielen samen, net zoals een taal – in dit geval het Fries – in een personalistische metafoor tot de ‘ziel van een volk’ kon uitgroeien. (Jensma, 2003, 13)

(Moreover, in accordance with the spirit of age, the Frisian identity was not only situated in the collective – the Frisian population – but was also regarded as a distinctive feature of every individual Frisian. The character of the population and the individual character coincided, similarly as a language – in this case the Frisian – in a personalist metaphor could grow into the ‘soul of a nation’.)

Jensma explains that the Frisian identity applied to both the individual and the collective. It was seen as a metaphor for the spirit of the nation. However, what is problematic is that while the Frisian spirit applied to the whole nation, it had to be found among the lower classes and their traditions. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century a tension existed between the higher and the lower classes and the higher classes felt superior to the lower, common people. It is paradoxical that it was the nineteenth century elite that occupied themselves with a Frisian identity, that arose from the lower classes, yet applied to the collective community. The Frisian identity belonged to the whole Frisian nation, high and low. Joep Leerssen explains this paradox by using Benedict Anderson’s concept of the ‘imagined community’. The image of a united Frisian society was an ideal, but was not real.

Dit ideaalbeeld van harmonie tussen de klassen en een spontane, instinctieve solidariteit gedragen door een gezamenlijke cultuur betekent dat het de *volks*cultuur is die de hogere klassen als het ware nieuwe levenskracht inboezemt. (...) Het woord ‘gemeenschap’ is in deze context zwaarwegend. Het was een ideaalbeeld van harmonie voor de verscheurde samenlevingen van na de Franse Revolutie, met hun economische ongelijkheid en hun dreigende klassenconflicten.” (Leerssen, 83)

(This ideal image of harmony between the classes and a spontaneous, instinctive solidarity carried by a common culture means that it is the *folklore* that apparently breathes a new life force into the higher classes. (...) The word ‘community’ is important in this context. It was an ideal of harmony for the torn societies after the French Revolution, with their economical inequality and their threatening class conflicts.)

There was no united Frisian community. With his work and his ideas Joost Hiddes Halbertsma tried to serve as a mediator between the different classes. A national identity is an abstract idea, but was not acknowledged as that. Instead an essentialist view was applied to the notion of a national identity, it was regarded as an intrinsic property, that was equal to everybody and applied to everybody. With this idea Halbertsma tried to establish a false sense of coherency between the different classes. This never fully succeeded and Halbertsma’s own position remains very ambiguous in the sense that he has always been in between different classes, but never fully belonged to one particular class. Not only offered the (imagined) Frisian community coherence, it also provided continuity. In a modern, divided society the Frisian identity was a stable and safe place to hold on to. An important role in the community is played by language, the Frisian language validates the Frisian community.

What has resulted from the intense study of Frisian history and folklore as the Frisian identity is not the finding of the Frisian soul. In search for the Frisian core, what this intellectual elite actually did was impose their own ideas onto the Frisian identity. In the process of searching, they invented the Frisian identity. They projected their own view of how the original Frisian should be on the Frisian rural culture. The combination of nostalgia and idealism led to a notion of the Frisian identity that was more formative than explanatory. Goffe Jensma

remarks on the description of the Frisian soul in ‘Over het volkskarakter der Friezen’ by Halbertsma that:

Er is natuurlijk geen sprake van dat al deze eigenschappen op alle Friezen van toepassing zouden zijn geweest en ook niet dat hier een gemeenschappelijke deler wordt gegeven. Halbertsma’s bedoeling was het, dat de lezer – de Friese burger – zich bewust werd van zijn Friese karakter, dat hij voor hen had afgeleid uit de ‘volkseigendommelijkheden’. Hij vertelde ze wie ze waren geweest en wie ze op dat moment waren. Of beter: wie ze zouden moeten zijn. Of nog beter: wie ze zouden moeten blijven. Harde, zelfbewuste Friezen, toonbeelden van burgerlijke deugd. (Jensma, 1998, 87)

(It is of course not the case that all these characteristics applied to all Frisians and neither that what is given here are communal features. It was Halbertsma’s intention that, the reader – the Frisian citizen – would become aware of his own Frisian character, that he had extracted for them from the ‘national properties’. He told them who they had been and who they were at that moment. Or better, who they should be. Or even better, who they should stay. Tough, self-conscious Frisians, examples of civic virtue.)

The description of the Frisian character is actually more a prescription. The image of the Frisian identity is an instruction of how the ideal Frisian should be. Not only is the constructed Frisian identity a formation of the nation, it is also a representation. It is the artificial creation of a civil elite from an urban, intellectual modern, elitist climate. The people who were engaged in the search of the Frisian soul were the opposite of the original, authentic, rural Frisian from the country side. However, the authentic Frisians that were the subject of the intellectual study were not aware of their identity. They unconsciously possessed the Frisian identity and that attributed to their charm and authenticity. The intellectual Frisians could only adhere to the Frisian identity on a conscious level. They themselves could not be the original, rural Frisian. As Goffe Jensma explains this:

We zouden kunnen spreken van an sich-Friezen en für sich-Friezen, van Friezen en Friese Bewegers. De eersten zijn de mensen die onbevangen, instinctief, naïef Fries

zijn. Zij spreken Fries omdat ze Fries spreken. Zij zijn Fries omdat ze Fries zijn. De laatsten zijn Fries omdat ze het willen zijn, omdat ze ernaar (terug)verlangen. (Jensma, 1998, 200)

(We could speak of an sich-Frisians and für sich-Frisians, of Frisians and Frisian Movement Members. The first are the people that are unprejudiced, instinctive, naive Frisian. They speak Frisian because they speak Frisian. They are Frisian because they are Frisian. The last are Frisian because they want to be, because they long (back) for it.)

The group of people that actively profiled themselves as Frisians were the people that had invented the identity and that is how they presented themselves towards the Netherlands. In this way the ‘high’ culture made use of the folk culture to present the Frisian identity to the Netherlands in order to determine the Frisian position in the Dutch society.

Looking back at what was said at the beginning of chapter two of this thesis, the Frisian emancipatory movement was not just an operation for the Frisian liberation. The different interests and mechanisms behind these groups are much more complex when it is regarded that the Frisian identity is a nineteenth century construction. The establishment of a Frisian identity was not just for the benefit of Friesland, but for the benefit of the intellectual groups that were situated in Leeuwarden, they wanted to establish themselves and therefore made practical use of the Frisian identity. The “Provinciaal Friesch Genootschap ter Beoefening van Friesche Geschied-, Oudheid- en Taalkunde” is a good example of this. On their celebration days lectures were given on the Frisian roots and the collective identity. However, one of its members actually declared that the Dutch identity should have priority. The Frisian province had to remain subordinate to the larger construct of the “Koninkrijk der Verenigde Nederlanden”. Although the “Selskip for Fryske Tael- en Skriftekennisse” was a less elitist group and Waling Dykstra handled from and for the common people, there is a certain ambiguity in the rise of folklore. There is a political dimension beneath this nineteenth century process. The renewed interest in the Frisian folklore in the search for the Frisian identity serves in the first place to give Friesland a position in a society in which they are no longer superior. No matter how pure and pro-Frisian Halbertsma’s thoughts on Friesland and its culture were, his works are still situated in the bigger, Dutch framework. Joost Hiddes

Halbertsma himself wanted to be an authentic Frisian with all his heart, even though this was impossible. Perhaps that only encouraged his interest in the Frisian folklore, by collecting folktales he could come closer to the authentic Frisian.

4. Folktales and the Frisian spirit

Since about 1825 a large increase in the collecting, documenting and publishing of folktales in Friesland, that lasted through the nineteenth and twentieth century, was occurring. What caused the rise of the interest in folktales has been defined in the previous chapters. What will be explored in this chapter is the content of these folktales and most important, how this relates to the existing image of the Frisian identity. In his PhD thesis *Volksverhalen in Friesland: Lectuur en mondelinge overlevering, een typencatalogus* (Folktales in Friesland: Print and oral tradition, a type catalogue) Jurjen van der Kooi has collected all the folktales he could find in Friesland from 1800 to 1980 and made a catalogue of them. As he explains, there is a visible continuity as to the presence of certain genres and story types, the macro-structure remains the same. He notices that the amount of published tales increases. Van der Kooi has classified the folktales according to the international classification system that was first used by Antti Aarne and has been revised by Stith Thompson. Van der Kooi has ordered the folktales on base of their story types. A story type is a tale which appears in several versions, because it has been reworked and retold several times, but all these versions have a common basic narrative structure. The stories are organised in different categories, such as 'Fairytale', 'Animal Tales', 'Funny Tales' and 'Formula Fairytale', each category is divided into subcategories. Besides providing an overview of the different circulating stories Van der Kooi also listed the frequency of appearance of the story types and ranged them in a hierarchy. This hierarchy clearly shows what sort of tales are most present in the Frisian society and which tales are retold most frequently. What is noticed is that the category that stands out most is the 'Funny Tales'. Which is mainly due to the enormous popularity of the subcategories; 'Dom Volk' (Stupid People), 'Kerk en Geestelijkheid' (Church and Clergy), 'Leugenverhalen' (Lie-tales), 'De Slimme Man' (The Clever Man), 'De Domme Man' (The Stupid Man), these last two categories overlap each other, because where there is a stupid person, there is usually a clever person who tricks him as well. Another popular category is the 'Fairytale', but this is also the result of the large popularity of a subcategory, the 'Novellensprookje' (Epic Fairytale) and within this category mainly due to a few specific story types. In the case of the 'Fairytale' Van der Kooi remarks that:

Sprookjestypen zijn in Friesland vooral dan populair als ze sterk humoristisch zijn, als ze inhoudelijk of structureel tenderen naar de sage en de legende of als zodanig verteld

worden, of als ze, eventueel gecombineerd met dit laatste, een duidelijk didactisch moralistisch karakter hebben gekregen. (Van der Kooi, 180)

(Fairytale types are mainly popular in Friesland when they are strongly humoristic, if their content or structure tends to the saga and the legend or when they are told in such a manner, or when they, potentially combined with this last, have a clearly didactic moralistic character.)

In a letter dated from thirty-one December 1834 Jacob Grimm asked Halbertsma whether he could collect the Frisian fairytales. Halbertsma answered him that:

(...) het gezond verstand der Friezen reeds vroeg de ergste bijgeloovigheden verworpen heeft zoodat er zeker gene natie is, waar minder Märchen zijn dan bij hun. Wat er is wordt bedekt gehouden omdat men zich schaamt voor de meerderheid. (Van der Kooi, 277)

((...) the common sense of the Frisians early rejected the worst superstitions so that there is found no nation, where less Märchen are than there. What is existing is kept hidden, because they are embarrassed in front of the majority.)

The type of tales that is meant in this correspondence is the type of ‘Märchen’ the Grimm brothers collected. Halbertsma has collected and published Frisian folktales, these were however not the traditional type of fairytales. According to this quote by Halbertsma, there are in the early nineteenth century not many fairytales present in Friesland, at least not that he knows of. What this could mean is that the Frisian fairytales that are known now, originate from a later date. Which means they are not old fairytales, but have been invented in the nineteenth century. Another possibility is that there were fairytales present in the Frisian society, but that they were presented in a different shape, a more humorous or moralising form and therefore not recognised as the type of fairytales the brothers Grimm collected. This confirms the idea that in the Frisian nineteenth century society circulating folktales are a different kind of stories. They are the kind of stories Van der Kooi ranks as the ‘Funny Tales’, whose popularity has been discussed above. In relation to the rates that are common in AT-classification, the outstanding position of the ‘Funny Tales’ in Frisian folktales differs from

the standard. This is related to the Frisian character and to the Frisian identity. The Frisians were identified as proud, strong, independent and morally, self-conscious people. The folktales that have gained their preference are humorous and often moralising tales. Halbertsma claims that the Frisian character is too ‘down to earth’ for them to fully appreciate supernatural fairytales. Their preference of folktales, and the content of the Frisian folktales express the Frisian character. This is at least one hypothesis that would explain the outstanding popularity of these kinds of folktales. Whether there is any truth in this hypothesis will be investigated next in this thesis. Do the Frisian folktales help to form the Frisian identity?

In the following part of this research six stories are closely analysed in regard to their expression of the Frisian identity. The stories that have been chosen to research in connection to the Frisian identity are the stories that Van der Kooi has listed in his catalogue as the most frequently occurring Frisian story types. For this research the oldest, original available printed version of the tale has been looked upon. I have deliberately chosen to look at the seventh most popular tales (with two equally often retold tales) instead of using the third and fourth most popular story types, because the earliest available edition originated from the twentieth century. The examined stories can be found in their original Frisian form in appendix B. Selected passages will be used to demonstrate if and how the Frisian identity is expressed through the selected folktales.

The most popular story type is called ‘de appelsingproef’ (the apple-catch test), it is classified as a ‘Fairytale’. This version was published by Harmen Zylstra, one of the founders of the “Selskip for Fryske Tael- en Skriftekennisse”, in 1858 in a book called *Iduna*, that contained many folktales and was published by the “Selskip” once a year. In “Diu Heinprôve” (“The Catch Test”) a farmer and his wife are visited by their new landlady, whom they have never met before. The farmer has his concerns about her, because the landlady is remarkably big and blunt for a woman. That night a lone man is travelling on his horse, but it is dark and it is raining, so he asks the farmer for lodging. The man also notices the oddness of the landlady and together with the farmer he comes up with a scheme to test if she is really a woman. He will offer her an apple and throw it at her lap. If she spreads her knees to bounce the apple with her skirt, she is a woman, because that is how women catch things. If however she pulls her knees together to catch the apple, she is a man. When they try this and the landlady pulls

her knees together they are sure that she is a man in disguise. They overpower him and find that he is a robber, he carries a sword with him and a whistle to give his gang a sign. The farmer, the man and the servants set up a trap for the gang and blow the whistle. The gang of robbers, who think the coast is clear, are entrapped and killed and justice has prevailed. The following day the travelling man leaves again, but not before he has received a great reward from the farmer. The remark Van der Kooi makes on the popularity of fairytales, that the popular Frisian fairytales are very humorous or contain a moral message, applies to this story as well. Even though the story has the appearance of a fairytale, the manner in which it is presented is very humorous. The subject of the tale is the trickery. This is performed in the most important part of the story, the scheme with the apple, that is what the title ‘Diu Heinprôve’ points at. Another trick that is performed in the tale is when the farmer and the man trap the robbers, they stretch a cord over the terrain so the robbers will trip and can be defeated easily. The farmer and the man are both mindful people who swiftly suspect that something is not right with the landlady. Suspicion and cautiousness are both features that are attributed to the Frisian identity.

The tale that follows the “Diu Heinprôve” in popularity is called “Fen in faem dy er wêse doarst” (“About a tough girl”). It was published in 1865 by Waling Dykstra, who was the biggest competition to the “Selskip for Fryske Tael- en Skriftekennisse”. In this folktale trickery again plays a very important role. The story is a version of the story type ‘Spookspelen: Twee witten met een zwarte erop’ (Ghost plays: Two white with a black on top of them) in the subcategory ‘The Stupid Man’ from the category ‘Funny Tales’. The main character of the story, a girl called Minke, is being tricked when a former lover, Tabe, who is the ‘Stupid Man’ of the story, wants to take his revenge on her. Minke, who is a maid in the service of the reverend and therefore leads a very organised and decent life, closes the gates of the yard every evening around ten o’clock. Tabe knows this and pretends, when Minke wants to close the gate, to be a ghost, by standing on the shoulders of a friend and both being fully dressed in white clothes. Minke is a bit scared at first, but sensible enough to realise soon that there are no such things as ghosts and that it must be a trick of Tabe. Playing along with the trick she says: “Nou, dit is freamd! twa wite op elkoar, - dat ha ‘k al ris earder sioen: mar twa wite en dêr yet in swarte boppe op! – dat liket raer, hear!” (“Well, that is strange! two white ones on top of each other, - I’ve seen that before: but two white ones and on top of that a black one! – well, that looks strange!”) She remarks the oddness of seeing two white with a black

one, the devil, on top of them. The friend of Tabe, who carries Tabe on his shoulders, gets scared by this remark, because he thinks that on top of Tabe the devil dwells. From shock he drops Tabe, who then falls to the ground. Minke is kind enough to help Tabe get up of the ground. She promises she will not betray what he has done, if he will promise not to try to harm her again. The main character, Minke, possesses a lot of the characteristics Halbertsma attributed to the Frisians. She is strong, independent, proud, rightful and sensible. What is seen is that the observation Halbertsma presented to Jacob Grimm applies to this tale. Minke is to sensible and religious to be tricked into seeing ghosts, something she has been thought by the reverend. The story provides a moral and religious example for its audience. In the story the behaviour that the society disapproves of is demonstrated by Tabe, and he receives his punishment.

The poem “De falske Tsiis” (“The Fake Cheese”) is an 1858 version of the frequently occurring story type ‘Diving for Cheese’. This story again belongs to the category ‘Funny Tales’, this time to the subcategory ‘Stupid people’. It is an example of the ridiculing of foreigners, especially Germans, which appears very frequent in Frisian folktales. In the story three ‘poepen’, which is a mocking Frisian word for Germans, are coming to Friesland to work on the fields during the harvest period. Those days it happened a lot that farmers hired German labourers. The three Germans are portrayed as lazy and greedy. When one evening they come across a bridge, they see a cheese floating in the water. What they do not understand is that the cheese is actually the reflection of the moon. The Germans want to have the cheese, but do not want to get wet in getting it, so they think of a plan. They decide to form a human chain to hang of the bridge, so the person who hangs closest to the water can take the cheese. The plan fails and results in the three Germans falling into the water and from shock they completely forget about the cheese. Part of the image of the Frisian identity is that Frisians have an aversion of strangers and foreigners. This is certainly demonstrated by the large amount of folktales that mock strangers and especially Germans. In “De falske Tsiis” the ‘poepen’ are stupid and greedy people that can be made fun of by Frisians, to whom such a stupid thing would never happen.

In the short tale “Fen thrye domenys” (“About three reverends”), published in *Iduna* in 1863, it is the reverend that is mocked. This story type ‘The Sawed Pulpit’ belongs to the subcategory ‘Church and Clergy’ of the ‘Funny Tales’. The tale is about a reverend who is

always bumping against the front of the pulpit, when he is preaching. A few students who have noticed this loosen the front of the pulpit by taking out the pins. While saying the words “Ziet, als ik kom, dan kom ik haastelijk!” (“Behold, when I come, I come in haste!”) during his next sermon, he flies through the front of the pulpit and lands below the churchgoers. The tale is funny, because it is funny to see a reverend falling from his pulpit, but perhaps also hides a critique. The reverend always preaches while standing above the people. Now he falls beneath them. Perhaps it is the church’s prudishness that is simply ridiculed. In this case, the moral of the tale contrasts the moral message of the tale “Fen in faem dy er wêse doarst”, in which temperate and religious behaviour are promoted. What it may tell on the other hand is that Frisians do not like it when someone tries to place himself above them. The Frisian pride is one of the main parts of the Frisian identity. Someone who acts as a superior can be brought down to earth with a lesson, as is literally done with the reverend.

In the folktale “Dy Divel Bidragen” (“The Devil Deceived”) it is the devil that is made fun of. A religious topic is again the subject of the folktale. The story is an 1853 version of the type ‘Unfinished Work’ and belongs to the category ‘Domme Duivel Sprookjes’ (Stupid Devil Fairytales). It was published in *Iduna* by one of the other founders of the “Selskip for Fryske Tael- en Skriftekennisse”, Tiede Roelofs Dykstra. In the tale a farmer has sold himself to the devil and now the devil comes to claim him. The farmer asks the devil if he will wait with taking him until he has fastened his coat. The devil agrees to this. Then the farmer declares that he never is going to fasten it again. The devil, who realises his loss, gets so angry he flies out of the window straight into the wall of the neighbours. This crash has left a hoofprint that is, according to the tale, still visible today. If the previous story already had a questionable religious moral, then this tale has a debatable moral for sure. The farmer is able to save his soul by outsmarting the devil himself, he is superior in cleverness to the devil. Pride is a very important part of the Frisian identity. A story about a Frisian that is superior to the devil suits the Frisian feelings of pride and superiority. Another element of the Frisian identity that is demonstrated through this tale is that the Frisians are too sensible to be afraid of the devil. The wife of the farmer, who overhears the conversation of her husband, conforms to the Frisian identity by her cautiousness.

Diu frou, lîk as wol mear, nysgierich, men dôch naut ol to drîst, woe wol ris sian, men liafst naut in kennis kumma mei da suarte mon. Hiu glûpte den sunichjes nei der doar

ta, end hearde den freamde mei oandriwing jen 'ne boar sidzan, det er hin klear meitzia most um mei him to gean, um 't diu tīd forroun wier.

(That woman, like others, curious, but not too reckless, wanted to see, but rather not get in touch, with the black man. She sneaked carefully to the door, and heard the stranger urge the farmer that he should prepare to come with him, because his time had run out.)

She is curious when she finds that the devil is present in her house, but she is careful enough to avoid actually meeting him. The characters from the story express a self-awareness and self-control that adheres to the Frisian spirit.

The type of the last researched folktale is 'The Hanging Game'. This tale also belongs to the category 'Funny Tales' to the subcategory 'Stupid people'. The tale is part of a framework of stories called "Poepesetten" ("Stupidities by Poepen"), that are all short tales about the foolish deeds of 'Poepen'. It was published by Waling Dykstra in 1851. In the story two German labourers are at work in the field, taking the hay from the field and bringing it to the farm on a cart. However, the beam that is used to keep the hay from falling from the cart, held in its place by two tightly drawn cords, breaks. The one German suggest to the other, Heinrich, that, since he is tall, he should replace the beam himself. The other one agrees to that, but is concerned that since one of the cords has to be tied around his neck, he might choke. To prevent this they agree that Heinrich will whistle when he has trouble breathing. Soon Heinrich runs out of air and wants to give his pal a sign. However, he does not succeed in whistling, because he has no breath left. The other sees that Heinrich is putting out his mouth, but makes clear that just putting out his mouth does not count, and keeps on pulling the cord. This folktale is another example of the ridiculing of Germans.

As six of the most frequent retold folktales, these tales can be regarded as quite representable for the Frisian folklore. What can be noticed is that even though these stories were from different categories and include 'Fairytale' as well as 'Funny Tales', humour is a very dominant element in all the folktales. It is curious that many of the discussed stories are ridiculing people. This can be interpreted as a sign of the Frisian sense of superiority or, since Frisians have the image of strong, independent and wilful people, their aversion of people

who do not have those characteristics. What can also be noticed is that all these folktales are about common people. None of the six investigated tales involve someone of higher birth. Most of them are set in the countryside as well and involve farmers or farming. It becomes clear why the Frisian identity was thought to be of the common people and could be found in the countryside, because that is what the folktales are about. They do not involve heroes, warriors or great heroic deeds. There is a fighting scene present in “Diu Heinprôve”, but even in this tale it is the trickery that is the main subject. The tales are about scenes from everyday life, in which someone uses his cleverness to save himself or trick a bad person. Or in some tales, the outsider lacks cleverness and therefore gets into trouble. Some of these folktales contain a social or religious moral message that would seem proper for the Frisian society. What is seen is how it was possible for the nineteenth century intellectuals to create a Frisian identity from folktales. The stories are rich and offer what can serve as the basic image of the Frisian spirit. It is not hard to find how they express the Frisian character.

5. Reflection

It is easy to see how these folktales can be employed to express the Frisian identity. The characteristics that have been attributed to the Frisian spirit are expressed in the stories and therefore could have been extracted from the tales by the nineteenth century intellectuals. This should however be nuanced. It must not be forgotten that the Frisian identity is a nineteenth century elitist invention. In the search for an inherent Frisian soul the intellectuals not only looked in the tales, but they also projected their own visions on the material they found. They selectively extracted the character traits they wanted to find and used it to shape the Frisian identity. This could also have been a pitfall for this research. Although the characteristics of the Frisian identity are found present in the folktales, because of the intentions of the researcher the objectivity gets lost. The features that are found are indeed present in the tales, but they are also present, because they are highlighted, to serve the researchers purpose. The nineteenth century identity searchers, most likely, already had existing ideas as to the content of the Frisian identity, to which they adjusted what they read. There can also be found elements in the stories that can be seen as contradicting the image of the Frisian identity. For instance in the tale “Fen thrye domenys”, the way in which the reverend is humiliated does not adhere to the image of the morally correct, religious Frisian civilian.

Another consideration is that the characteristics that are emphasised and branded as Frisian are not exclusive possessions of the Frisians. They are universal features that appear not only in Friesland, but all over the world. Similar folktales appear in different countries, so determining that a story is typical for the Frisian folklore only is difficult and risky. Since the forming of a national identity is an abstract area, the lines of this area are often blurred. Also the lines between what is really there and what is there because it is wanted to be seen, are vague. In how far the Frisian spirit is really expressed through the folktales or invented with the use of the folktales remains debatable. Especially since it was the urban elite that was occupied with this issue, while the authentic Frisian did not care about forming his own identity or being authentic, he just was himself. Nevertheless, the Frisian folktales are used to establish the Frisian as an independent culture and distinguish the Frisians from other populations and posit Friesland in a new Dutch climate. It is in this process that they acquire an ambiguous position. The meaning of the folktales changes because of the politics and ideologies of the nineteenth century.

These developments have had a long-lasting impact, that is still present in the contemporary Frisian society. The Frisian identity as it has been invented in the nineteenth century is the modern accepted image of the Frisian people. In a public opinion poll that was held by the 'Kenniscentrum economie en management Provincie Friesland' (Research centre economics and management Province Friesland) in 2010, 1090 Frisians were questioned about the Frisian identity. The five positive characteristics the Frisians attributed to themselves most frequent were: Temperate, hard labourers, honest, loyal and proud. These characteristics are even nowadays thought to be inherent qualities that have belonged to the Frisians for centuries. The investigation also demonstrates that a lot of inhabitants of Friesland feel a strong connection to their province. The nineteenth century Frisian nationalism is still very much alive today.

Conclusion

In the Frisian climate of decline the preservation of folktales was part of the ‘salvation paradigm’. There was, however, more behind this sudden rise of folktales. Hopefully this thesis has clarified the complexity of the different forces that are at work in the area of folktales in the nineteenth century. What is demonstrated is how folktales were of great influence in the forming of a Frisian identity by the nineteenth century upper class. Bearing this in mind, an answer can be provided to the main question of this research; *How did the Frisian search for a cultural identity in the early nineteenth century make use of popular folktales in order to construct such an identity via folklore?*

What is seen is that folktales were both the subject and the means of interest of the intellectuals. The collectors employed the material that was presented to them in connection to their own visions. A combination of circumstances changed the valuation of the folktales. Pressure from outside was felt and that made people turn inwards to their own community to search for the Romantic notion of the ‘volksgeist’. This was intertwined with political motivations in an unstable period and led to nostalgia for a stable and harmonious (imagined) community that embraced everybody. Of course, the Frisian pride had to be restored after it had received some blows and folktales reflected the great former Frisian society. Folktales were attributed an idealistic value, they were regarded as a transcendent way of gaining access to the authentic Frisian history and the Frisian character. The tales also present an image of the Frisian society and the Frisian people as they should be and are used as an example of the Frisian character.

What has started in the nineteenth century still finds its way in the contemporary Frisian society. Frisian nationalism is blossoming. Not only the image of the Frisian soul is still alive as it was invented, the ‘Fryske Beweging’ (Frisian Movement) that was initiated in the nineteenth century still plays an active role in the modern Frisian society as well. Campaigns for the preservation of the Frisian culture and language are pursued. One can wonder whether all this is the result of the nineteenth century inventions, that have been very effectively integrated in the Frisian society, or if there perhaps really is an internalised Frisian identity. Whether the Frisian identity will indeed remain continuous during the modern developments today will be a curious development to watch.

Bibliography

Primary literature

Brouwer, K.F. “Fen thrye domenys”. *Iduna: Frîske rîm end unrîm*. Leeuwarden: H. Kuipers, 1863. 48. Print.

De Jong, H. L. “De falske Tsiis”. *De Bye-koer, Frîsk Jierboekje for 1858*. Franeker: T. Telenga, 1858. 21 – 24. Print.

Dykstra, T. R. “Dy Divel Bidragen.” *Iduna: Frîske rîm end ûnrîm*. Leeuwarden: D. Meindersma, Wz., 1853. 135 – 136. Print.

Dykstra, Waling. From: “Poepesetten”. *Blommekranske for da Fryske berntsjes*. Franeker: E. Ippius Fockens, 1851. 14 – 15. Print.

Dykstra, Waling. “Fen in faem dy er wêse doarst.” *Twa Utfenhûsers by Nammen-Om: Forhalen en Teltsjes*. Leeuwarden: H. Kuipers, 1865. 64 – 70. Print.

Zylstra, Harmen. “Diu Heinprôve.” *Iduna: Frîske rîm end ûnrîm*. Leeuwarden: Selskip for frîske tael end skriftakinnisse, 1858. 93 – 96. Print.

Secondary literature

Jensma, Goffe. *Het rode tasje van Salverda: Burgerlijk bewustzijn en Friese identiteit in de negentiende eeuw*. Leeuwarden: Fryske Akademy, 1998. Print.

Jensma, Goffe. “Uit een dodenboom te Lutjelollum.” *Regionaal besef in het Noorden*. Ed. M.G.J. Duijvendak. Assen: Koninklijke van Gorcum BV, 2003. 8 – 27. Print.

Kenniscentrum economie en management. “Opiniepeiling vraaghetdevries.nl”. *NHL Hogeschool*. June 2010. PDF file.

Kuiper, Jacques. *Een revolutie ontrafeld: Politiek in Friesland 1795-1798*. Franeker: Uitgeverij Van Wijnen, 2002. Print.

Leerssen, Joep. *Nationaal denken in Europa: Een cultuurhistorische schets*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999. Print.

Van der Kooi, Jurjen. *Volksverhalen in Friesland*. Groningen: Stifting FFURUG, Stichting SASLAND, 1984. Print.

Appendix A

De verschillen tussen Friezen en Groningers volgens dominee Lofvers. (Jensma, 2003, 8)

Overeenstemming en verscheidenheid van karakter

	de noord- Groninger	de Fries
regelmatig actief	++	+
emotioneel actief	-	+
volhardend	+	+
zelfstandig	+	++
verdiept	-	+
sensitief	-	-
heftig	-	±
idealiserend	-	±
verdraagzaam	+	-
systematisch	+	+
wisselende stemming	-	-
prikkelbaar	±	+
geldzucht	++	±
trots	+	++
eerzucht	-	+
ernstig	-	+
godsdienstige levensopvatting	-	+
consciëntieus	+	+
eerlijk, waar	+	+
betrouwbaar	+	+
gevoel voor muziek	-	++
talent voor wiskunde	+	+
punctueel en praktisch	+	±
aangenaam prater	-	+

+	= karaktertrek aanwezig	(character trait is present)
-	= afwezigheid	(absent)
++	= zeer sterke aanwezigheid	(strongly present)
±	= midden houdend tussen al of niet aanwezig zijn	(not evidently present and not evidently not-present)

Appendix B.

Note: Due to the limitations of the used word processing programme Word, some of the graphemes may differ slightly from the original sources.

Type of folktale: ‘The apple-catch test’

Category: ‘Fairytale’; ‘Epic Fairytale’

“Diu Heinprôve”

(Utter Sège end Mearke-Samling)

Der wîer i’s en bûor, dy wenna up en hîerde plêats, end hie hîede en nye londhêra kriga. Do kaem er i’s up en eftermiddei en froumenske to sines, diû wîer thige mòì upklâid, end se sei, hîu wîer diu londfrou. Di bûor wîer naut t’hûs; diu bûorinne sei, se most mar înkumma, end ûnthella se thige. End do di bûor des jûnds t’hûs kaem, sei se him dalik det diu londfrou kummen wîer, end di bûor harka der ny fon up, men sei er naet fon, end hy wîer mar thige friundlik jen londfrou. Men hy fûnd hit nûver, det londfrou sa ‘n grêat froumenske wîer, end sa but end ûnbihowen în ol huet se sei end dîede, men hy koe se naut, went hy hîede da nye londfrou yete naut eardor sioen.

Do bigûn hit jen da nacht thige to reinan, end hit ward pik thiuster. End der wîer en mon up en hînsen up ‘a wei, dy wîer dêadskien forlegen, went hy koed nen hōnd foar êagon sian. Do thoct hy, hy scoe mar uprida nei da bûor ta, end fregia, as er der for dá nacht nen herberch krya koed. Men as er up ‘a bûor sîn uprêd wier, koed er ‘t hînsen hast naut forth krya, end hit wîer as er hêltîd koppen en suirden în ‘a ûnderwal sêach, der ‘t bêst bang fon ward, en mei fulla muoite kaem er einling up ‘a bûor sîn hîem.

Nû kloppa er òn, end frega um to bliwan. Di bûor dîe da dôar îepen, end sei, det koed naut, um ‘t londfrou wîer to hîares. Di mon liûnta al wakker, went hy koed naut reisgia, um ‘t hit sa thiuster wîer, end hy sêach ak nen kans um den rêd wer lōngs to kumman; men di bûor blêw er by. Uppa th’ lēst sei di mon sîntzes jen hin: “Hit koed wol wesa, bûor, det ik jû fon nacht yete wol thige fon thianst wesa koed; ik rîed ju, ak ta juw’ egin bêst, my în to niman.” – Do dorst di bûor hit naut langor wegeria, end di mon kaem în, end kriga en plak în ‘a hirdsherne um hin up to warmian, end sîn hînsen ward în ‘ne stâl brocht. Do dî man da sabêra londfrou sêach end pratan hearde, bigûn er noch mêar erch to thenkan, end hy joech da bûor în stilte en

wink, um ris mei him bute to gêan. In th' bûthûs telde hy da bûor, huet him up 'a rêd wederfarren wîer, end ho er skalk êach up 'a londfrou, sa 't hîete, hîede. Di bûor sei him nû, det hy er sines ak al fon thocht hîede; men ho scoedon se er gûod efter kumma? "Det is nen bît," sei di mon, "ik hab en manich apels in 'a doek, as wy nû strak wer by enòr um 'ne hîrd sitta, den scil ik dá to lōnde hellia end bîta in ien. Den fregie 'k jima ef jima elk er ien fon ha wolla. Den smît ik jima elk ien ta, end londfrou ak. Den mot j' er mar um thenka: as se d' apel heinth end se ducht wiles da knibbels fon ien, den is hit en froumenske, went sa dugga da frouliude as se en ding heina, um 't den krya se en brede holle skêate, der hit oltîd infalt as 't by da honden thruch giet; men slacht se da knibbels nei enòr ta, den is hit en monmenska, um 't en monmenska, sittande, en ding oltîd tuiske da knibbels heina scil, as 't mei da hondon mis is. End blîkt hit ûs sa, den hit en monmenska is, den mota wy ûs naet skina leta, men den scil ik hin wol ònpakka end hald hin, end jy mota dalik ta springa, went hy scil den wol skerp by him ha." Do gengon se wer inna hûs, di mon kriga sîn apels, lîk as se upspritzen hîedon, frega da bûor end hiar ef se ak ien habba woedon, end do se ollegeare seidon fon ja, dîelde er elk ien ût. Do seide er: "Wol londfrou ak ien?" end wiles smîet er hir ak ien ta, end se sloech da knibbels gêar um dîen to heinan. Nû wiston se genōch, men se bêardon det se nêarne nen erch in hîedon. Men al gau derup geng di mon, der up th' hînser kummen wîer, oer ein, end sei, det er efkes in th' waer sian woed. Men hy pakte da sabêre londfrou fon efteren by da earmon bêt, end di bûor fûol ak mei òn, end se wieron se gau oermonsk. Do kaem hit ût, det hit wol thige en gewante kèrel wîer, der en hêl rēst skerp by him hîede, end se fûndon ak en gauthiâfs-flöittze by him. Nû bûndon se him hōnden end fuoten, mei towon, end bifēstigon hin do gûod up en sté der hy naet beginna koed. End do stâidon se duers oer 't bûthûs en line, end di bûor end sîn feinten gengon up 'a stallen, elkmes gûod enōch wapena, end do dîede' di mon, der up th' hînzer kummen wîer, den bûthûsdôar iepen, end blaesde uppa 't gauthiâfsflöittze. Do kamon er en hele smite gauthiâven òn, der in 'a ûnderwâl fon da rêd leid hîedon, end runnon in 't bûthûs. Men se fûolon ollegeare oer da line d' iene oer d' òre, end di bûor end sîn feinten mei da freamde mon slogon se ollegeare dêad. Do hellon se 't liacht er by, end do sêagon se, det hit en hele bende moardjers wîer. d' Ore deis ward det geriucht er by hella, end di mon rîed wer forth; men di bûor joech him êarst en gûode bileaning, um 't er him sa 'n deugd dîen hîede; went di bûor wenna olhêl up der rumte, end wîer di mon der naut kummen, den hîedon se ollegeare formoarda werden.

Type of folktale: ‘Ghost plays: Two white with a black on top of them’

Category: ‘Funny Tales’; ‘The Stupid Man’

“Fen in faem dy er wêse doarst”

Us mem het my faker as ienris forteld, do hia yet by hiar alden in ‘e hûs wier, do wenne dêr by hiarres in faem by de domeny, dy hie ris in prôefstik dien dêr men oan sjen ken dat se net gau forbûke wier.

Dy faem hiette Minke, en hia hie in sib fryer, dat wier in weinmakers soan, Tabe hiet er. Dy hie al in hele poas trou by hiar roan, en de liu dêr tochten net oars as dat scoe wol trouen wirde. Lîkwol wieren der wol ris goeds dy’t Minke ôfretten om mei Tabe oan to halden, hwent hy wier gâns in bîtsje oan de losse kant. Sa troch in tiid hearde nimmen dêr folle fen, hwent dêr by hiarres wier hast gjin gelegenheid; dat wier dêr sa’n stil en bistendich lîts dorpke, dêr ’t gjin mode wier om in ‘e herberge to gean. Mar as Tabe ris in bîtsje bûten ôf in set of in pret kaem den gîng er hast altiid troch de wîn en koe ‘t soms ris tige mâl dwaen.

Minke koe dat oars net wîs wirde of ‘t moast hiar fen in oar sein wirde; hwent hia wenne by domeny en mocht nei gjin merken en sokke spillen ta, dat lîkwol gjin swiere straffe for hiar wier; hwent hia wier in klôek oppassen faem, hia hie hiar jild to lieaf ta de mallichheid. En as er hiar den sokke dingen fen Tabe forteld waerden, den woe se ‘t net leaue; hwent hia hie in boel mei him op, en as hy by hiar wier den wist er de bîsen wol in ‘e sek to halden. Dôch makke er ‘t op ‘t lêst sa bot, dat hia moast it wol leaue. Do hied er in ‘t iepenbier in in herberge oer Minke mei oare feinten gek-jage, op in menear dy lang net moai wier, en dat waard hiar sa goed en sa dûdlik oerbrocht fen immen dy se bitroue koe, dat er foel net mear oan to twifeljen of it wier wier. Do wier ‘t den ek in ienen út mei de fryery; hy mocht heech springe of leech en hy mocht moai prate of lilke: hia woe gjin dwaen mear mei him ha. Dat stiek him ontsettend, hwent it borst siet him biustere heech, en hy halde oars ek wol fen Minke, waard er fen sein. Mar ik sids den oars, as dat echt wêst hie, den hied er sokke gemiene praetsjes net oer hiar ha kend. Mar hy wier der great op dat er by domenys faem kaem; hy wist wol dat er mear feinten smucht op hiar hiene, hwent hia wier in gnap froumenske, dy goed in rak en dak siet en ek wol hwet in de sparpot hie, dat wier bikend, hwent er gîng nea nen duit ôf mei hiar. En Tabe wier ek al ien dy fen sîn alden net folle to forwachtsjen hie. Hy hie earst yet in stille hope, as Minke hiar lilkens hwet bisakke wier, den scoe ‘t wol wer toriuchte komme twisken hiar togearre. Mar ‘t dûrre net lang of hia krige wer

in oare fryer, dy kaem er ris wer en yet ris wer. Do waerd it minder. Tabe krige hiar yet ris onder fiouer eagen to sprekken, do frege er hiar as hia nou alhiel end al sa mar fen him ôfsjen woe. Hia sei: “Ja, it is út for altiid!” Do keard se hiar om en roan by him wei. Hy rôp hiar efternei: “Dêr scil ik dy yet ris in loer for draye, dy dy net in ‘e klean sitten giet!” – Hwent do haette er hiar mei in grimmitige haet.

Tabe hie in spûlfeint dy wakker iens mei him wier. “Lieue,” sei er tsjin him, “it sit my stomme dwars in ‘e hûd dat Minke my de skop jown het en nou mei Japik oanhaldt; ik woe hiar wol in koal bakke dêr se for hiar libben genôch oan het. Wost dou my helpe?”

“Hwet wost den dwaen?” sei Lieue.

“Ik wol hiar bang meitse. En as se den in kjeltme op ‘t liif kriget dêr se for altiid de goarre fen skipet, den hab ik mîn sin.”

“Jonge!” sei Lieue, “biste sa ingrimmitich op hiar? Nou, ik mat ek sidse, as ik in dîn sté wier, den wier ‘k mogelik neat better. Mar ho wost it den oanlidse?”

“Dat scil ‘k dy sidse. Hia mat alle jounen grif om tsien ûre de poarte slute, dat wit ik. Hwet ha ‘k hiar dêr faek op in joun in ‘e wike opwachte om efkes in wird twa mei hiar to wikseljen en ris oan to stietten! en as ik nou kom klapt se de doarren mar gau ta en strîkt se op ‘e skoattel. Wel man! ik koe hiar trochstekke! – Mar as dou en ik nou ris hinne gîngen en wy teagen elk in wite brêk oan, en din in himd oer de boppeklean hinne, en elk in wite sliepmitse op, en wy gîngen den tsjin tsienen boppe op elkoar stean, riucht by de mûrre fen de poarte scoe dat net heislike raer likje?”

“Nou, dat scoe ‘k er al for halde,” sei Lieue; “ik wit wrachtich net host it sa útfoun heste.”

“Nou, weagest it?” sei Tabe. “As ‘t ûttrent sa ‘t ik it winskje, den traktearje ‘k dy goed, en wy swye foar elkoar, dat ‘s fen sels. Weagest it, Lieue?”

“Nou,” sei Lieue, “ja, ik weagje ‘t, - mei ien bitingst: den wol ik onder stean. Ik ken dy op mîn skouders wol in poas tille en ‘k stean lieaver onder as boppe, den ha ‘k gjin gefaer fen fallen.”

“Dat giet mar oan,” sei Tabe.

Dominys tûn dêr wier in ringmûrre alhiel om hinne. Der waerd altiid sein dat dy pastorye dêr yet in oerbliuesel wier fen it ald kleaster, en ‘t praet gîng ek wol ris dat dêr soms spôek sioen waerd. Oan de side dêr ‘t gongpaed lâns roan wier in dy ringmûrre sa ‘n alde poarte mei doarren der foar, en jouns tsien ûre, as dominy en hiarre nei bêd gîngen, moast de faem altiid dy poarte slute. Dat gîng sa goed as op ‘e klokslach ôf, hwent dominy wier in bysonder orderlik man; ‘t gîng dêr allegeare krekt op ‘e tiid en op ‘e streek.

Nou wier 't den ris op in joun by helder moanneskîn waer, do scoe Minke nei alderwenst de poarte wer slute. Hia kaem it strietsje del rennen, en siugge jy wol! dêr stie dat lange wite skînsel by de poarte op, en as hia de doarren slûte woe, moast se deun oan dat skînsel lâns. Dat kaem hiar onforwachte oer, hwent hia tocht op dat stuit om gjin ding minder as om spôeken. Hia skrilde tobek en hia krige siker wier in kjeltme op 't liif. Lîkwol dat gîng hiar net sa heel nei, en hia bidarre hiar gau wer, hwent it gelove oan spoeken hie dominy hiar al út de holle praet. En do wier 't krekt as 't hiar sa mar in ienen injown waerd, dat dat in ûtfînsel wier fen Tabe, omdat er hiar sa 'n drîgement dien hie; en dêrmei krige se al hiar moed en bisinning werom. Hia stie dêr efkes nei to sjen en koe 't goed onderskiede dat dat skînsel út twa personen bistie. En do sei se, sa bearre in hiar sels, mar lûdernôch dat de spoeken it hearre koene: "Nou, dit is freamd! twa wite op elkoar, - dat ha 'k al ris earder sioen: mar twa wite en dêr yet in swarte boppe op! – dat liket raer, hear!"

"Yet in swarte der boppe op?!" tocht Lieue, "den is dat de dîvel!" en sonder fierder nei to tinken wier er dalik biredt om de stap to setten, mar 't sprekt, sa gau as hy sîn plak forliet, tommele Tabe fen boppen; en dy krige dêr in smet op dy hirde striette, dat er lidsen bleau as in stien en ûtrôp: "O, dîvel!"

Do Lieue dy man sîn namme neamen hearde do tocht er dat ûs maet Tabe al beet hie, en dêrom file er yet hwet hirder út.

Minke kaem by Tabe en hia sei: "Ho is dit? Ik tochte dat ik in skînsel seach, mar 't benne ommers mensken."

Tabe kreunde en stinde en sei: "Minke, aste yet in bîtsje hert for my heste, help my den oerein; ik wit net as ik wol stean ken."

Nou, hia holp him oerein; hy koe yet al stean, mar hy spriek net fen de romt, en sîn wraeksucht wier troch hiar opriuchte bidaerde frymoedicheid en troch de ôfrekken dy er fen sîn ondogensheid krige hie, in ienen forslein. Hy krige yet in goede fodskeerring fen Minke; hy moast hiar onthiette dat er nea wer hwet ta hiar neidiel dwaen of sidse scoe. Sa gau as hia dêr hwet fen fornaem, scoe hia sîn spoekery oan alle mensken fortelle; mar as er him goed halde scoe se swye dêr koed er steat op meitse.

Hy onthiette hiar dat en krukke nei hûs sa goed as er koe. En sont dy tiid het er Minke mei frede litten.

Type of folktale: 'Diving for Cheese'

Category: 'Funny Tales'; 'Stupid people'

“De falske Tsiis”

It teltsje seit, it is foar jieren
Ris bard, dat op in foarjiersdei
Hier trye pôepen oankomd wieren, -
Ik wit net sa goed wêr earne wie –
Mei 't plan om hiar as hantsjemieren
Hier oan in greidboer to forhieren.

It wier dy deis mar tige hiet,
Sadwaende roan hiar gau it swit
Mei strielen by de holle del;
En Evert pleage hiar sa fel,
Dat hia bisleaten mar ten lêsten
Om yn it koele beameskaed
Hiar wirge lea hwet út to rêsten;
En as de sinne siet yn 't westen
Wer foart to reisgjen op hiar paed.

Hia gângen dêr do by elkoar
In 't nochlik skaed der beammen lissen;
En 'k hêf it stellich net to sissen,
Dat hia hiar magen dêr mei smoar
En spek en skinke goed forseagen.
Ek dien' se nou en den hiar eagen
Ris ta, den leyen se as yn fearren
En den wier 't snorkjend, bromjend lûd,
As kaem it út in bargehûd,
Bynei in ûre yn 't roun to hearren.

Sa waerd it niunkelîtsen joun,
De sinne sake nei de groun;
Hia founen 't goed om op to stean,
En mar wer op 'e siou to gean.
't Wier net mear waerm en hia net loai;
Er waiden seafte frisse winen,
En 't moantsje dat bigoun to skinen,
Bysond're helder, klear en moai.

Al niunkelîtsen kamen hia
Sa oan de Skoter brêgge ta,
En siuch! (ho nuver kin it sa!)
Dêr dreau in moaye tsiis in 't wetter,
In tsiis men seach se nearne fetter,
Sa like alteast op 't each 't hiar ta.
Mar 't wier it skînsel fen it moantsje,
Dat speegle in 't wetter. Gâns in toantsje
Stien' se op 'e wal, en rôpen út:
“Hatte ich das brochsken in mein puut!”

Mar ho dy tsiis der út to kryen?
Dat wier, forsiker, min to dwaen.
Hiar sa in 't wetter to bijaen
Dat woe gjin ien fen alle trye, 'n
In fartûch seagen se ek dêr net;
Dus stie 't al slim. Mar lang en let
Bitocht er ien fen hiar in set.

Hy stelde 't oan sîu maten foar,
Om alle trye mei elkoar,
Hiar by de brêgge del to litten;
Dat wier de kortste wei om gau
It tsiiske in eindom to bisitten;

Howol, it waerd yet al in siou.
Hy woe dit weachstik sa folbringe,
Dat de iene oan de oare s' skonken hinge,
En ien hald' goed de brêgge fêst:
Paste elk hwet op, den koe dat bêst.
It wier fen sels, den koe de jinge,
Dy allerneist oan 't wetter hinge,
De tsiis mar pakke, en kladsje sa
Dêrmei den wer nei boppen ta.
Dat foarstel founen de oare twa
Heel snoad, en mei gemiene stemmen
Waerd fêststeld om it t' ondernimmen.

Der waerd in ienen wirk fen makke;
En fol fen blêde hope sakke
Dat tryetal nei 't wetter ta;
Gau scoen' se wis it tsiiske ha;
Dy onder hinge scoe 'm al pakke,
Do rôp de boppeman oerlûd:
"Ich halt es so nich langer oet!
Ich wol 'n mal in die hante spôegen."
Mar ôch, hwet waerden hia do kjel!
Hia ploften plomp in 't wetter del:
't Wier brîk, ho se in 'e feart om slôegen!
Hia klauden gau wer op 'e wal;
Do wie'n se krekt sa wiet as sletten:
Mar do hie elk – ho koe 't sa mâl? –
Yet troch de haest de tsiis forgetten.

Type of folktale: 'The Sawed Pulpit'

Category: 'Funny Tales'; 'Church and clergy'

"Fen thrye domenys"

De domeny fen en akademiêstêd fleachúnder 't preekjen altîd mei hoärten jin 't foärste fen 'e preekstôel oan. De studinten dy dit seagen, makken nu dat foärste los thruch de houtene pinnen der út to nimmen. De sneins kaem domeny up 'e stôel end hie ta text: *Ziet, als ik kom, dan kom ik haastelijk!* In sín preek kamen disse wurden wer to pas, end únder 't útsprekken der fen fleach domeny hals ôer kop fen 'e stôel end kaem midden únder 't fults del.

Type of folktale: 'Unfinished Work'

Category: 'Domme Duivel Sprookjes' (Stupid Devil Fairytales)

"Dy Divel Bidragen"

(Utter Sêge- end Mearke-Samling)

To *Stiens* wenna, tīden lang līn, en boer, dy hin oan 'ne dīvel forkoft hie. As nū diu tīd binei ût wier, kaem korthakke den ak um den boer to hellian. Hy geng by da boer īn en keamer sittan, end sa praton hia huet mei enoaren. Underwiles wier dy feint, ik wit naut werum, by der keamersdoar kummen, end seach sa īn da kaemer up. Men hy hie der pas ūs maet sioen, as hy spila hakken up nei der frou ta:

- "Ik gea mīn libben naut wer īn da keamer, sa lang as dy dīvel der is!"

- "Dy dīvel? Ei ju! huet skeelth dy?"

Diu frou, līk as wol mear, nysgierich, men dōch naut ol to drīst, woe wol ris sian, men liafst naut īn kennis kumma mei da suarte mon. Hiu glūpte den sunichjes nei der doar ta, end hearde den freamde mei oandriwing jen 'ne boar sidzan, det er hin klear meitzia most um mei him to gean, um 't diu tīd forroun wier.

- "Du scilste dōch sa lang wol wachtia wolla, det ik mīn baitsje fēst makka hab?" andere disse.

- "Nū ja, det is goed."

- "Bēst!" dy boer wer, "den meitzie ik hit īn ivicheid naut fest!"

Der stoe nū dy dīvel forset end up der noas to siau, det er den boer naut krya koe, end der ward er sa freaslike lilc um, det er īn ienen-et finster ūtfleach, end īn sīn upsternatens jen-et hūs fon d' oerburmon oan, mei sa 'n fūleindige kreft, det-et hoefīser fon sīn hinstepoat der īn da mure printa ward. Det print is yet to sian.

Type of folktale: 'The Hanging Game'

Category: 'Funny Tales'; 'Stupid people'

From "Poepesetten"

Twa oare poepen wieren bij 'n boer yn der oengetiid. Dy scoene ienkear to gearre 'n weide hea út it lân helje ; de iene wier opstekker en de oare loeyer. Mar do se den pontsjer der op lizze scoene, briek dy stikken : do wieren da honnen yn 't hier. Op t' laest sei de iene tsjin da oare : "*Doe bist ein langen kerl, Heinrich, goâ doe dar op liggen!*" Nou, Hendrik wier der oars sa freamd net fen, mar den moast him da efterbine om'ne hals litsen wirde, en den koe 'r wol ris smoare, hie 'r sorch. Op 't laest stelden se, dat as't him den to binaud waerd, scoe er bigjinne to fluitsjen, en den scoe syn maet ophalde fen lûken : mei dy bitingst gyng er oppa weide lizzen. Syn maet loek da efterbine oan, en it doerre net lang, doe scoe Hendrik ol fluitsje, mar hy koe net ienris mear : hy stiek den snût ol wakker foarût, mar der kaem gjin lûd. Do rôp syn maet : "*Jau! bek-oetsteken geldt nich! Flaiten sund de afsproâk!*" En hy loek mar oan.