

Post Scriptum and Research to

FABLES OF THE WEST – Winnetou & Shatterhand on the Trail

Karl May's Winnetou—a famous Apache chief, and an uninterrupted best-seller since 1893. Winnetou was, and still is, an 'Indian', one of many. Why did Karl May's 'Indians' become so famous? They are not even sketched in an authentic manner, not to mention that Karl May led them to their enormous popularity victory during a time when the literary 'Indian fad' in Europe had long since passed. But, as paradoxical as it sounds, maybe that was May's recipe for success. May's 'Indians' are 'Indians', of course, otherwise, the drama of his fiction would not work. But besides being 'Indians', they are also 'German' (at least the Apache), or 'French' (the Comanche), good friends, or treacherous enemies. They are cutouts in a shadow-play with gruesomely beautiful, bengaline, illuminated fairground *Kulissen*. May once said that he was telling German stories in exotic *Gestalt*. (H. Postma, 1996; KMGNachr.110)

Fables of the West - Winnetou & Shatterhand on the Trail is set inside one such gruesomely beautiful, bengaline, illuminated fairground *Kulisse*. One of the most romanticised of all backdrops in the New World was the Wild West, Karl May's fairground of the 19th Century, where Winnetou and Old Shatterhand dwell.

Two timelines and at least three* Karl May universes cross over in this work, *Fables of the West—Winnetou & Shatterhand on the Trail*: the universe and timeline of '*Waldroeschen*'—with characters such as Matava-Se, Itinti-ka, 'The Griffon', Grandeprise, Captain Joop Helmers—and the universe and timeline of *Winnetou*—with characters such as Winnetou, Old Shatterhand, Old Surehand, Apanatshka, Old Firehand, Mr Henry. In addition, characters cross over from May's universe of the boys' adventures (of which there were eight), such as Bloody-Fox, Bob and Sanna, Juggle-Fred, John and Barbara Helmers. What's more, the real-life inspiration for the title character of the German 19th century original, '*Waldroeschen*' makes a cameo appearance—Princess of the Wild-Rose. The English version of *Waldroeschen*, an abridged and adjusted translation of Karl May's original, is titled *The Rodriganda Romances*. References within are of the latter, with one exception, see ⁽¹⁸⁾ in *Referenced Works* at the end of the novel.

(* If one counts *Winnetou IV*, his last work, the plot of which is set thirty-five years after Winnetou's death, then this adds another dimension to May's universe. Characters and locales, and last but not least, specific horses and mules that appear only in *Winnetou IV* already find their origins in this work.)

Karl May's Wild West was based on a fantasy universe, the adventures were fairytales. It is not up to me to judge whether or not he was aware of actual events in the New World. He wrote the Wild West adventures in the first person narrative, which meant, he got into much trouble for 'lying' to his readers, because he insisted that it was he who had travelled through the Wild West and experienced all of the adventures as Old Shatterhand.

The main protagonist of *The Rodriganda Romances*, Dr Karl Sternau, suddenly, and without explanation, had a nom de guerre, Matava-Se, or Lord of the Rockies. Where and when did he receive it?

One of Karl May's early pseudonyms, Fred Sommer, caused much speculation about Karl May's own 'early, undocumented travels' in the Wild West. Where and when did Karl May travel to the Wild West? In the *Winnetou* universe he tells us: 1860. But where or who was Fred Sommer?

Because Karl May insisted throughout his literary career that he had indeed gone to America very early on, the rumours about his 'early, undocumented travels' persisted. After his death, someone went to great lengths in attempting to make it a fact, including faking a letter sent from Fred Sommer in St. Louis, to Karl May in Germany.

Purposeful duplicity and obsessiveness come to mind on the part of the hobby detective in the early 20th century. The facts are that Karl May never travelled outside Europe (Germany, Bohemia, Switzerland) until 1899. Yet, those rumours about Fred Sommer, a friend who had supposedly travelled with Karl May in the Old West, supported by the fake letter from St. Louis, persisted. This opportunity to add a little more mystery must not be wasted; Fred Sommer went to America just a few years ahead of young Charley May (at least he did in this part of the fictional Karl May universe).

Fictional Winnetou was born in 1840, in a pueblo along the Rio Pecos, in what today is New Mexico; the only pueblo known in New Mexico, along the Rio Pecos, is Pecos Pueblo also known as Cicuye (Ciquique) Pueblo, a Native American community abandoned in historic times. It is situated along the Rio Pecos, in central north New Mexico, and once was inhabited by the Jemez Pueblo people and could have housed a population of as many as two thousand; Apache did not build pueblos. However, since there is a pueblo situated along the Rio Pecos, in Karl May's fictional universe some bands of the Mescalero Apache may well have taken the by then uninhabited pueblos as their permanent dwellings. In real life, the Santa Fe Trail went through there.

In 1840, the region now known as New Mexico, was wholly Mexican. Fictional Winnetou was born a Mexican national. When he was eight years old, the US annexed northern Mexico, and with it the part now known as New Mexico. He had become an American Indian, without the privileges of US citizenship. Mexico, unlike the United States, gave Indians full citizenship and recognized that Indians had rights to their land.

1860 is the fictional year in which Karl May aka Old Shatterhand first met Winnetou. They were eighteen and twenty years old respectively.

And then there is the 'when' for the time before this time—the mystery about Matavase, or Matava-Se. Truth be told it can never be reconciled to everyone's satisfaction. The 'Lord of the Rockies' simply suddenly was.

During a conversation in aristocratic company the young hero gave the explanation that he, Dr Sternau, and the established Matava-Se, were one and the same person. One might reasonably expect that Matava-Se would also have revealed that the native inhabitants of the Rocky Mountains and the

Prairies of the Wild West had given him his nom-de-guerre, and why they had done so, but he did not.

There are not only Charley's and Fred's mysterious 'undocumented' and 'early' travels, Dr Karl Sternau also has a blank in his early *curriculum vitae*, rumoured to be travels to America, Africa and Asia, with all kinds of exciting adventures; Karl May did not leave more than those hints about Matava-Se to posterity.

Matava-Se was travelling through the pre-1848 Mexican Rocky Mountains, which means, Winnetou would still have been a boy. It is entirely possible that Matava-Se and Inshu-Chuna met at some point around the early 1840s.

Matava-Se, aka Don Carlos de Olsunna, aka Dr Karl Sternau, has two childhood/student friends. One is Captain Joop Helmers, the other is his brother, Anton Helmers, or Itinti-ka. All three men are of the same or similar age, with Anton being the youngest.

One character in *The Rodriganda Romances* said about Joop and Anton Helmers: "[Joop's] family did not have enough money, the parents were poor. He had a friend by the name of Sternau, who also went to High School; Sternau's father paid for Helmers' schooling, but died before the boy could complete his studies. Joop had a younger brother, but I don't know what became of him; it is not my place to ask." The 1840s were not only turbulent in Mexico and the United States, but also in Europe, which was in that era a place of mini-ice-ages, summers of snow, rotting crops in the fields, starvation, industrial revolution, unemployment, uprisings, and general misery; they were called the Hungry Forties.

A short statistical note about the German heroes in Karl May's novels, and derivative works. German people are one of the largest groups who emigrated to the United States. Modernization caused a shift in traditional jobs leading many Germans to leave the country during the late 19th century. By 1870, German-born farmers made up one third of the agricultural industry in rural areas of the East Coast, particularly concentrated near the port region of Pennsylvania and eventually migrating to Wisconsin in the Midwest. There were more than 4 million Germans who arrived in the United States between 1850 and 1897 through the ports of Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, New York, and Philadelphia. This is according to the National Archives and Records Administration. According to another online statistics agency, between 1820 and 1957, more than six million people emigrated from Germany to the United States. The period with the highest levels of migration came during the 1850s and the 1880s, and over 250 thousand documented migrants came to the US from Germany in 1882 alone.

Such statistics made it very easy for Karl May to include German-born characters in his works (having worked as an editor in a publishing house, he would have had access to what is now known as 'current news'), and it is not difficult to create new characters and link them with established ones, or cross-link established characters from his different genres of novels. Finding names such as 'Sommer' and 'Helmers', and so forth, in the US of A, is both interesting and entertaining, especially when discovering that Helmers' Home

in the Llano Estacado, being built of stone, is probably based on Hank Smith's stone house in Blanco Canyon, on the eastern escarpment of the Llano Estacado. Hank Smith was German-born. Refer to the more extensive essay of Karl May's 'real life' Mr Henry in *The Treasure in Silver-Lake* (2012 Anniversary Edition), or *Karl May and Josiah Gregg*.

Although Hatatitla (Old Shatterhand's horse) and Ittshi (Winnetou's horse)—two black Indian horses, stallions from Winnetou's famous breed—are part and parcel of Karl May Wild West adventures from 1893/4 onward, these two horses do not make an appearance in the entire *Winnetou* trilogy text as published during May's lifetime. The first mention of Hatatitla and Ittshi occurs in *Die Felsenburg*, (*The Rock Fortress*) (1893/4). The *Winnetou* trilogy was written and compiled for publication in 1893, by utilising four much earlier stories. The minor editing changes carried out by Karl May in 1909, the last version from the author's pen, did not encompass the inclusion of Hatatitla and Ittshi.

Karl May mentions the 'tireless Dakota Trotter', a breed of horse that was bred by northern American Indian tribes and "with its uninterrupted constancy [referring most likely to 'being gaited'] achieved more than the best race horse". In *Winnetou IV*, after researching the 'Dakota Trotter' I wrote: "The Dakota Trotter didn't exist. [...] May's depiction of the Dakota Trotter in *Wanda* (1875), when Peter Polter is riding such a horse (the only one to ever make an appearance in May's works, with another mention only in *Winnetou IV*), includes attributes like 'obstreperous', 'bad' and even 'rascal', pointing to an insufficiently docile, or semi-feral animal. Likewise, Winnetou's special breed of elegant horses (Ittshi and Hatatitla being the two most famous) did not exist in reality, either. Plains tribes, generally, took what horses they could find and by any means they were able to acquire them. This, in part, reflects the fact that they were living off the land in every respect; selective horse breeding would not have been realistic.

The time window during which the iconic image of the 'proud American Indian on his painted Indian pony' had been created was relatively short, perhaps two hundred years. When in 1680 Pueblo chief Po'Pay and his agriculture puebloan army sent their Spanish oppressors packing, and south, the Iberian horses were left behind. The animals were traded among the Indian nations, or left to become feral, and quickly grew in numbers to become the Plains Indians' most valued possessions, because these animals afforded them fast travel as well as the raising of formidable armies, to go up against both, each other and the foreign invaders. The latter eventually proved too strong and when the US army destroyed the American Indians' herds, two hundred years later, the short era of the 'noble savage on his courageous painted mustang' ended.

After revisiting the research of the elusive, though fictional Dakota Trotter for *Fables of the West*, I found that the early history of the feral horses, called Lakota horses by some, and which were roaming the Little Missouri River Badlands, so noted by early travelers such as George Catlin during the 1830s, lead to today's Nokota Horses, and with two brothers engaged in the rescue and breeding of the rare horses in those regions, uncannily fits fictional

Leo and Fred Bender's horse breeding ranches of which one foundation horse is the fictional Dakota Trotter.

In *Winnetou IV* Karl May describes Old Surehand's horses as *Fliegenschimme*. The most accurate English transliteration of that noun is 'Fleabitten Grey' (*Schimmel* is the German word for 'Grey' in horse coat colour).

When translating *Winnetou IV*, a *Fliegenschimme* most logically morphed into a 'Leopard Appaloosa'; anything else would have been lost on a reader.

For this work, I have revisited Old Surehand's special horse breed.

Firstly, a *Schimmel*, is simply a 'Grey' horse. It is a coat colour brought about by the Grey-Gene. Any breed can have a *Schimmel* (Grey).

Secondly, the term *Schimmel*, in a compound noun that includes a colour e.g. *Schwarz-*, *Braun-*, *Rot-*, *Rapp-*, *Fuchs-*, *Grau-*, *Blau-*, *Apfel-*, *Fliegen-*, *Rosen-schimmel*, denotes names of coat colours.

Karl May was fond of Ulysses Grant for the creation of national parks, especially the Yellowstone; he would therefore have read other newspaper articles about the American President as well, perhaps this one: "General Grant is the happy own[e]r of two Arabian horses of the purest blood—a gift from the Sultan of Turkey. One is of a dapple gray color, and called Djeytan the Panther, and the other is a magnificent black fellow with a white star on his forehead and named Missirli. They are on board a steamer on the way from Constantinople to New Haven. They are housed on deck and treated like saloon passengers."

Please note that the 'grey' is called 'Djeytan the Panther', and in America then 'Leopard'—some depictions of the time show this horse with dapples. The other horse is a black fellow with a white star on his forehead, named Missirli, and in America later 'Linden Tree'—a newspaper article a month later, though, states that "Missirli (the one from Cairo), is a grey also, with a white star [on] his forehead."

One of Old Surehand's *Fliegenschimmel* in May's description had a small, bright, white spot, right over his nose, hardly as large as a Penny.

Karl May would not have had the required knowledge of horse coat colour genetics to differentiate between markings. However, his respect for Ulysses Grant inspired him to give Old Surehand and Apanatshka a breed of horses that stood out, and was special.

Old Surehand and Apanatshka had begun to create their own horse breed, based on Apanatshka's "beautiful Comanche breed with Winnetou's favourites [presumably Hatatitla and Iltshi] and the best Dakota Trotters to raise horses that combined the merits of the three breeds." [...] "Both owned several large stud farms, the most important of them near Bijou Creek, a tributary to the South Platte River"[, in Colorado].

Online one finds that the Colorado Ranger was named after the Colorado High Plains in the USA. In 1878, when General U.S. Grant visited the Sultan of Turkey, the latter presented the General with two stallions. Fifteen years after arriving in the US, the stallions were brought to Nebraska (neighbour state of Colorado) for the summer, where General L.W. Colby bred Leopard and Linden Tree to his ranch mares, laying the foundation for the Colorado Ranger breed. Inevitably, horsemen in Colorado heard of the fine horses of Colby Ranch. While priority was given to breeding superior ranch horses,

spotted coat patterns became increasingly common, and they eventually became part of the breed standard.

Karl May: [The horses were] “wonderfully speckled, not just black on white but black and red-brown, a very unique and noble colouration, which could only have been achieved by lengthy and laborious breeding efforts”.

The Appaloosa breed is a different horse to the Colorado Ranger breed; however, the Appaloosa coat pattern is common in the Colorado Ranger breed. It means that a horse with a spotted coat is not necessarily of the Appaloosa breed. Karl May based Old Surehand and Apanatshka’s horse breed on the special provenance of the Colorado Ranger breed, before the breed existed as such.

Old Surehand and Apanatshka’s horse ranch is situated along the Bijou Creek (in the Colorado High Plains), a tributary to the South Platte River in Colorado, which is situated in the north-east corner of the state, bounded by the borders of the south-west corner of Nebraska. Instead of ‘Leopard Appaloosa’ (definitely instead of ‘Colorado Ranger’), this fictional horse breed could be called ‘Bijou Leopards’, it would tally with May’s description of the fine, intelligent, and nobly coloured animals.

Enough horsing around.

About the Bender family, the time and place of it.

There are a few Benders: Travelling trader Bender (who never had a first name in Karl May’s original *Old Surehand*), courts and marries Tehua, a Moqui Indian, and she becomes Tehua Bender. Tehua has a sister called Tokbela, and a brother called Ikwetsih’Pa; he is a padre, and known as Padre Diterico. He and his two sisters travel to the ‘East’ for further education. Karl May never elaborated where in the ‘East’ that was to take place.

From the Moqui homelands, on the south-western side of the Rocky Mountains, the nearest place to obtain some sort of ‘white people’s education’ in the ‘East’, would have been frontier towns such as Westport, today’s Kansas City, Kansas. So be it; this sidequel determines that the three Moqui siblings travelled to Westport, and lived there for about three or four years. Anything further away from the setting of the ‘Wild West’ adventure would have been near impossible to overcome in terms of distance to travel when time was of the essence.

Then there is trader Bender’s step-brother, actually called Daniel Etters, but because his widowed mother married trader Bender’s father, he is renamed to John Bender. In the English translation of *Old Surehand*, I took the liberty of giving trader Bender a first name. He is thus known as Ethan Bender. As a part of their baptism into the Christian faith, Tehua Bender will subsequently be known as Emily Bender, and her sister, Tokbela, as Ellen Bender because she married John Bender (aka Daniel Etters), although the marriage ceremony was interrupted.

Karl May’s *Old Surehand* contains a number of passages where the initials ‘E.B.’ are mentioned. One needs to consult his text in great detail to discern which of the E. Benders is meant by each set of ‘E.B.’ initials. From Westport, where Ethan Bender died in prison, the three siblings (not all at once—Padre Diterico, Emily and Ellen Bender), Tehua/Emily Bender’s two baby sons, and a gaol warden who assisted their escape, fled to Denver.

The marriage between Ethan Bender and Tehua/Emily took place in 1842 (so engraved in her wedding ring). As was custom, babies used to appear quite soon after a wedding. Tehua/Emily and Ethan's sons are two and three years old when the villainous step-brother John Bender (Daniel Etters) destroys the family in 1845 (with the wedding ceremony being the flashpoint), the same year they flee to Denver...which did not exist until 1858 or thereabouts.

But Pueblo on the Arkansas River did since 1842. The Arkansas River back then was also the boundary, or border, between Mexico and the United States. The Mexico-America war of 1846-1848 changed that. Pueblo was sitting on that border, almost 1000km west of Westport (Kansas City, Kansas). Sidequels have their uses, such as filling in gaps.

Karl May wrote for the entertainment of the workers, it was his sole income. As it so happens, I like first person narrative fiction, I like Winnetou and Old Shatterhand, and I like the challenge of fitting Winnetou and Old Shatterhand and friends into non-fictional settings, and historical events of the era in question, namely the time between the fictional characters' first meeting in the fictional Wild West of 1860 and Winnetou's death in the fictional Wild West of 1874, with characters based on historical figures of the era in the regions of the prairies, the Rocky Mountains, California, and Mexico.

I also like the additional dimension of crossovers. A crossover is the placement of two or more otherwise discrete fictional characters, settings, or universes into the context of a single story; unofficial crossovers are created solely because of the artistic pleasure derived by their creators (so Wikipedia tells me).

And if the original author's sources of inspiration can be found, more dimensions can be added, as in the case of the 'Princess of the Wild Rose'. *Prinzess Waldroeschen* was the German nickname given to young Elisabeth of Wied, who later published her literary works under the pseudonym of Carmen Sylva.

One fictional character based on a real-life person of historic importance (Charles Goodnight, Texas), is George Gutknecht. In the narrative, George Gutknecht mentions his forebears who had immigrated to the new world during the 'Palatine Migration' of the 17th and 18th century (Wikipedia has a wonderful article on the 'Palatines'). Mr Charles Goodnight's Palatine forebear's name was 'Gutknecht' (also see Wikipedia for the biography of Charles Goodnight). Having said that, the German name of 'Gutknecht' literally translates to 'Goodknight'. Somewhere along the anglicisation of the German name, the 'k' was dropped. The online etymology dictionary gives this detailed history of the term 'knight':

Old English *cniht* "boy, youth; servant, attendant," a word common to the nearby Germanic languages (Old Frisian *kniucht*, Dutch *knecht*, Middle High German *kneht* "boy, youth, lad," German **Knecht** "servant, bondman, vassal"), of unknown origin. [Emphasis mine]

(Not to be confused with the German noun *Ritter* (knight, or mounted man-at-arms), as this has a different etymology, and applies to a societal class of lower nobility, whereas *Knecht* (*cniht*) is of servant class, on foot, and not on horseback.)

George Gutknecht should be remembered as a 'good knight'. In the end, Charles Goodnight did act in the spirit of a good knight, namely the preservation of the last bison group of the southern herd, and the deal with Quannah Parker to give him two beeves every second day for leaving the bison alone.

Much of *Fables of the West - Winnetou & Shatterhand on the Trail* is set in the Llano Estacado. Karl May set several adventures in or around that 'terrible desert, the Sahara of the USA'.

Setting the record straight about the High Plains with information from people who live there, namely Marfa Public Radio, an award-winning, non-profit, listener-supported radio station serving far West Texas. In a programme titled 'Gems on the Prairie: the Playa Lakes of the Llano Estacado', Andrew Steward said:

"West Texans often have cause to cuss the wind. But in the playas, the wind has done a great service. Over millenia, it carved shallow depressions into the flatlands, exposing buried clay. The clay becomes impermeable when saturated with rain, and these low spots can hold water for months. The shallow lakes average about 17 acres in size. Most of the playas hold fresh water. But where soil is alkaline, salt playas, or salinas, form. Playas are found in arid regions around the world. **But the High Plains contain 95 percent of the world's playas—as many as 50,000 ephemeral lakes. Eighty-five percent of these are found on the Llano Estacado.** The Llano Estacado stretches from eastern New Mexico and Amarillo to Midland."

[Emphasis mine]

Wow! The secret oasis hideaway that Bloody-Fox made his home is suddenly very possible, especially since this part of Texas represents also the southern extent of the Ogallala aquifer.

And that thing with the railroad attacks in the *Winnetou* trilogy. There are two in succession—one in *Winnetou II*, in the part with Old Firehand; the sequence of events would put it along the northern border of Nebraska Territory. There was no railroad at that time. The next railroad attack takes place in the first part of *Winnetou III*, with Sans-Ear, near the Platte River on the eastern fringes of the Rocky Mountains. There was a railroad at the time. So, considering things, it seems best to bring the ride before and after the first railroad attack a little further south to the Platte River, and then continue on as in the 19th century plot.

In 1910 Karl May wrote *Winnetou IV*, in which the character Tatellah-Satah is a central figure, and his myth, about the Mountain of the Kings' Tombs, a fabled necropolis, is underpinning the plot. Karl May had travelled to the United States in 1908 for the first time, and spent two months visiting Niagara Falls, Toronto, Lawrence, New York, and undertaking a number of short visits in a few other locations in the East. It would be a fair assumption that the fictional myth is probably based on the 1904 events centred on the exploits of one mysterious J.C. Brown, on Mount Shasta, California. As a writer, Karl May would have actively searched for inspiration to foster the creation of future works, of which he had promised a great number to his

readers. He succeeded in writing *Winnetou IV*, his last novel before he passed away.

Fables of the West—Winnetou & Shatterhand on the Trail is set along famous trails through the American Southwest during 1873. After their return to the Old West from San Francisco, Old Shatterhand intends to travel to St. Louis, to visit his old friend, Mr Henry, and also to begin his search for Fred Sommer from there.

For *Fables of the West* is (as it was for *Out of Vandaemonia* and *Clipper Run*) two dates are important: the fictitious years of Winnetou's birth, 1840 and death, 2nd Sep 1874. All stories with Winnetou must be slotted somewhere in between the first meeting of Sharlih and Winnetou (ca 1860) and the Apache chief's death, during an imaginary time span of fourteen years; ⁽³⁾ and ⁽¹¹⁾ refer.

No amount of applied arithmetic can ever straighten out May's chronology; it shall forever be a wonder to behold. Winnetou and Sharlih had only fourteen years together, on and off. Sharlih came and went as he wished, Winnetou had to stay put in the Wild West (uncannily reminiscent of the notion of reservation life), except for a few rare occasions—the sea voyages; he visited Germany three times: the first time after capturing a pirate, the second time to fetch Sharlih from Dresden to pursue two villains across the Sahara, and the third time when Turnerstick invited him on his clipper to visit Old Shatterhand at home, but he had already left for Australia, so they followed him there.