

SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES

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INTRODUCTION

This Research Paper, 'Generators of Values, violence and stereotypes in the fairy tales of the Grimm's Brother' attempts to explore a hidden area of retold fairy tales. This paper seeks to present the Generative, Violent and stereotypical representation of gender, class, race, Generators of Value, Medieval Studies of German Literature and Historical Linguistic in the fairy tales of Grimm's collection like 'Once Upon a Time', famous book "Nursery and Household Tales" first published in two volumes, in 1812 and 1815, (deals with a mysterious wonder world of enchantment, fantasy, magic and entertainment. The beautiful angles and fairies that fulfill all desires and wishes and children come in contact with candy houses.), 'Cinderella' in 1812 (Elaborates the pious and innocent little Cinderella is not oppressed by a patriarchal man, but by women- her stepmother and stepsisters.), 'Rapunzel' in 1812 (the women are imprisoned in tall towers because the patriarchal society that fears 'women power' ties to seclude them from the normal social living into the isolated "Walled" buildings.). It ends with the justification of the rationale behind retelling the classical tales in a new light. Fairy tales transport children out of the everyday surroundings in which they read, away from the bedroom, or the living-room floor, into an intensely realised other place where what is read becomes somehow more real than reality itself. In fairy tales, internal processes are translated into visual images. In short, those who have heard such fairy tales, the image and feeling of being lost in a deep, dark forest are unforgettable.

The analysis of classic fairy tales brings one to an awareness that the apparently fascinating fantastic world of fairy tales actually bulges with class, race and gender stereotypes and a well rooted patriarchal value system and gives a realization of manipulation of this world of entertainment and enlightenment by the adult world. The fact that children are exposed to fairy tales at an early age indeed is important since it is the formative period in life and as such implicit message of the manipulated tales condition the process of socialisation and acculturation.

The present Research paper argues in favour of such manipulation by Grimm's fairy tales genre in order to replace the discriminating, stereotypical worldview in it with an egalitarian one wherein human being are viewed and assessed sans the labels of gender, class, race, medieval studies of German Literature, historical linguistic,

Once Upon a Time, Cinderella, Rapunzel, The Second Sex by Simone de Beauvoir and so on.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. Generators of Values, violence and stereotypes
2. Fairy tales
3. Grimm's Brother
4. Medieval studies of German Literature
5. Historical Linguistic
6. Once Upon a Time
7. Cinderella
8. Rapunzel
9. The Second Sex by Simone de Beauvoir

GENERATORS OF VALUES, VIOLENCE AND STEREOTYPES

The present paper argues in favour of such manipulation by the fairy tale retellings, of the liberating potential of the fairy tale genre in order to replace the discriminating, stereotypical worldview in it with an egalitarian one wherein human beings are viewed and assessed sans the labels of gender, class, race and so on. For this purpose it aims and attempts to study selected retold fairy tales and justify the rationale with which retellings are attempted. This aim is achieved in the conclusion derived at the end that underlines the need to retell classical fairy tales to suit the standards and contexts of the contemporary times and the democratic, humanitarian values of all times. Dealing with children and with the literature transmitted to them are our important routine concerns. Hence the argument of the thesis regarding the adult awareness about alert transmission of fairy tales to children and for this purpose, positive and conscious acceptance of retold fairy tales, which uncover the prejudiced parochial patriarchal value system and make us visualise an egalitarian democratic social set up bears considerable relevance to modern society and times. If this study creates slight ripples about this awareness and alertness in transmission of fairy tales to children, I think, the purpose of the research would be served.

FAIRY TALES

According to Bruno Bettelheim, "Fairy tales, which speak in a language well understood in the modern world, remain relevant because they allude to deep hopes for material improvement, because they present illusions of happiness to come, and because they provide social paradigms that overlap nearly perfectly with daydreams of a better life."¹

According to C. S. Lewis, "Many children do not like fairy tales whereas many adults love to read them. Children are increasingly fascinated by fairy tales from their early childhood till about the age of ten years. Particularly the age between six and

eight years shows remarkable attraction towards the genre."¹ However, as the child outgrows or sheds its animism and egocentrism – Freud is significant in this respect – and gets engaged with the process of conscious independent social interaction and socialisation, especially by the age of 10, its interest in the genre starts declining. This decline continues well till the child reaches adulthood when once again there erupts a nostalgic attachment to and attraction for fairy tales. These shifts in the love for, refusal of and a revised interest in fairy tales at different stages of human life are well recorded by Andre Favat in his *Child and Tale* using Piaget's cognitive theory and approach as the base for explanation. Jack Zipes in his article "The Potential of Liberating Fairy Tales for Children"¹ documents Favat's exploration of this idea.

Children between 6 and 8 years of age perceive the world around them in a peculiar way, according to Piaget. During this phase of their development "children believe in the magical relationship between thought and things, regard inanimate objects as animate, respect authority in the form of retributive justice and expiatory punishment, see causality as paratactic, do not distinguish the self from the external world, and believe that the objects can be moved in continual response to their desires."¹ Favat shows a corresponding relation between such perception of the world on part of children and the form and content the classical fairy tales of Grimm, Perrault and Andersen present. The universe of even those fairy tales which were not necessarily intended initially for children meet the children's emotional and psychological needs and worldview in this phase of development. Children seem to desire for an ordered world different from the real one which they actually experience. The pattern in most fairy tales involves the reconstitution of home as a new plane, and this accounts for the power of its appeal to both children and adults.

GRIMM'S BROTHER

The Brothers Grimm Jacob Ludwig Karl (1785–1863) and Wilhelm Carl (1786–1859), were German academics, philologists, cultural researchers, lexicographers and authors who together collected and published folklore during the 19th century. They were among the first and best-known collectors of German and European folk tales, and popularized traditional oral tale types such as "Cinderella" ("Aschenputtel"), "The Frog Prince" ("Der Froschkönig"), "The Goose-Girl" ("Die Gänsemagd"), "Hansel and Gretel" ("Hänsel und Gretel"), "Rapunzel", "Rumpelstiltskin" ("Rumpelstilzchen"), "Sleeping Beauty" ("Dornröschen"), and "Snow White" ("Schneewittchen"). Their classic collection, *Children's and Household Tales* (Kinder- und Hausmärchen), was published in two volumes - the first in 1812 and the second in 1815.¹ The tales this paper undertakes to consider confine to the Grimms' collection, the *Nursery and Household Tales*. This collection went through as many as seven editions during the Grimms' lifetime. The movement and growth of the tales from manuscript to print in these editions gave the tales a special character.

The Grimms were greatly concerned about the values of their time and responded to these values. They seemed to be considering the enlightening function of the tales as well. Using different editorial practices, odd at times, they are said to have transformed adult folk materials into a hybrid form of folk lore and literature for children.

MEDIEVAL STUDIES OF GERMAN LITERATURE

Some people do not know is that some of the fanciful stories we tell our children have origins, or at least mirrored stories, in real, medieval European history. These origins could be just as dark as the Grimm brothers' imagination. The majority of folktales that are to be found in large compilations are exemplary in character and were often used in sermons to illustrate a particular point of Christian doctrine or morals. Much of the material is monkish and may appear artificial to modern ears, but it does contain a fair number of genuine folktales of a popular kind. Important collections were made by Jacques de Vitry (c.1180-c.1240) and Etienne de Bourbon (died c.1261), although probably the most extensive compilation was the *Summa praedicatorum* of the English Dominican, John of Bromyard (died 1418), of which the 1614 folio edition runs to 971 pages. 5 There are, of course, many other similar collections. As they were written in Latin their circulation was not confined to any one country. New compilations naturally drew on the work of their predecessors.¹

HISTORICAL LINGUISTIC

As a scholar of mythology professor Levi — Strauss explains: “In present times myths and folktales exist side by side. One genre cannot then be held to be a survival of the other, unless it is postulated that tales preserve the memory of ancient myths, themselves fallen into oblivion.”¹ Again he says: “Language and metalanguage, which, united, constitute folktales and myths, can have certain levels in common, though these levels are shifted in them. While remaining elements of the narrative, the words of myth function as bundles of distinctive features. In his book *The Semiotic Challenge*, Roland Barthes writes that the world's fairy tales are innumerable. The presence of which is found in legend, myth, fable, epic, comedy, tragedy, pantomime, news item, conversation and many others. It is known to everyone that “Linguistics stops at the sentence”¹ from the linguistic point of view, there is nothing in discourse which is not be found in the sentence.

ONCE UPON A TIME

Max Luthi in his book “Once Upon A Time: On the Nature of Fairy Tales” concentrates on some inner aspects of the fairy tales. Fairy tale impulses have been adopted by noble literature of every age and it frequently shows the fanciful characteristics of the fairy tales. The fairy tales appeal to us not only for its judgment

but the method by which it is presented before us. It may vary from one person to another and in different story tellers, but it still allures us. The marvelous phrase “One upon a time” is not only found in German fairy tales, it is known and loved by all European people. “Once there was”, “One day there will be”- this is the starting point of every fairy tale. In the extensive sense, the fairy tale exposes a congruous world.

CINDERELLA

Man’s earliest beliefs and fears are also projected in the fairy tales of the modern writers. Present versions of this popular fairy tale was gathered and also published by a Frenchman named Charles Perrault in the seventeenth century. **Grimm’s Fairy Tales** was a collection of hundreds of folk tales by the Brothers Grimm of Germany and published in the nineteenth century.

Folklore concentrates on the entire range of folk life, its customs, conventions, tales and traditions, transmitted without being written down. In other words, it provides us with an intimate knowledge of various sociological factors governing primitive life of man.

Cinderella, cannot be imagined without their lyrical pattern. However the poems which are an integral part of these stories are presented in terms of a repetitive formula. It seems that these brief lyrical pieces are admirable not merely for their splendour of lyricism. Certain brief lines and expressions have been repetitively hammered in order to create a formulaic effect.

In this fairy tale, the pious and innocent little Cinderella is not oppressed by a patriarchal man, but by women-her stepmother and stepsisters. The loss of her real parents denotes a kind of loss that is prevalent in gothic tales. With Aschenputtel’s mother dead and her father off busy somewhere else, it allows the evil stepmother to abuse and ostracized her stepdaughter. Aschenputtel is forced, to become a servant in her own home. After having to endure the death of her mother, she then has to endure the behaviour of her stepmother and stepsisters, even when they call her “stupid” and say things like, “Out with the kitchen maid!” The stepmother of Cinderella never wanted her to join the royal feast of the King’s palace, and therefore asked her to perform even more menial tasks than before: I have emptied a dish of lentils into the ashes for thee, if thou hast picked them out again in two hours, thou shalt go with us.” Cinderella, however, was able to complete the appointed task within the time allotted to her. But even then she was not permitted to attend the royal palace as her stepmother tells her: “All this will not help thee; thou goest not with us, for thou hast no clothes and canst not dance; we should be ashamed of thee”. Living with shame often breeds violent children, and if Aschenputtel had not been in the proximity of magic and good fortune, she might have grown to be a vengeful and evil person.

RAPUNZEL

Rapunsel’s abandonment was fixed long before her birth. Her mother’s desire

for the rampion, led her father to clamber down the wall of the enchantress' garden and steal the fruit for her. But when the enchantress discovered this, she with angry looks said, "Thou shalt suffer for it!" the father of Rapunsel begged for mercy and said, "My wife saw your rampion from the window, and felt such a longing for it that she would have died if she had not got some to eat." But the clever enchantress allowed the man to take rampion only on the condition, "...thou must give me the child which thy wife will bring into the world". Surprisingly, "the man in his terror concented to everything, and when the woman was brought to bed, the enchantress appeared at once, gave the child the name of Rapunzel, and took it away with her".

CONCLUSION

Most children are delighted to act out "Cinderella" in dramatic form, but only after fairy tale has become part of their imaginary world, including especially its happy ending to the situation of intense sibling rivalry. Many of girl is so convinced at moments that her bad stepmother is the source of all her troubles that, on her own, she is not likely to imagine it could all suddenly change. But when the idea is presented to her through "Cinderella", she can believe that at any moment a good fairy mother may come to the rescue, since the fairy tale tells her in a convincing fashion that this will be the case.

Fairy tales indicate that, somewhere hidden, the good fairy mother watches over the child's fate, ready to assert her power when critically needed. The fairy tale tells the children that although there are witches, don't ever forget there are also the good fairies, who are much more powerful. The same tales assure that the ferocious giant can always be outwitted by the clever little man- somebody seemingly as powerless as the child feels herself or himself to be. While the fantasy of the evil stepmother preserves the image of the good mother, the fairy tale also helps the child not to be devastated by experiencing the mother as evil. In the fairy tale rescuer, the good qualities of mother are as exaggerated as the bad ones were in the witch. But this is how the young child experiences the world: wither as entirely blissful or as an unmitigated hell.

In most of the fairy tales of Brothers Grimm, the hero has a body which can perform miraculous deeds. The child can fantasize that he too, like the hero can climb into the sky, defeat giants, change his appearance become the most powerful or most beautiful person- in short, have his body be and do all the child could possibly wish for.

Fairy tales are the psychodramas of childhood.; Beneath the surface of these fanciful excursions into fantasy are real-life dramas that mirror real-life struggles", says Sheldon Cashdan in his book *The Witch Must Die: The Hidden Meaning of Fairy Tales*. The rivalry between Cinderella and her sisters is not that far removed from the real life sibling rivalry. This is why fairy tales are so captivating. Not only do these

tales entertain, but tap into powerful feelings that might otherwise remain hidden.

Carl Jung posited the existence of an impersonal and ahistorical collective unconscious that was a reservoir of images and forms universally shared by all humans. According to Carl Jung, the symbolic language of myths, dreams and fairy tales was composed of these timeless symbolic forms, which he called archetypes. From the Jungian perspective, archetypes were universal symbols showing the way to transformations and development.

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