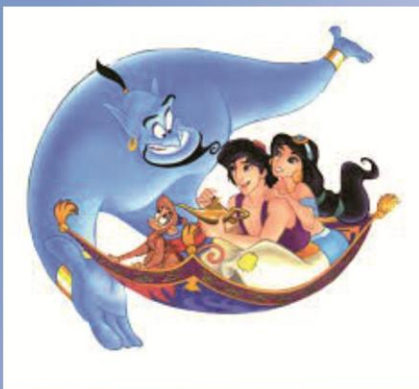


National Webinar on Enchanted Narratives: A World of Fairy Tales in Children's Literature



Organised by

Shikshan Mandal, Karad's

Department of English, Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad

in Collaboration with

English Language Teachers' Association of India (Satara Chapter)

Editors

Prof. (Dr) Ujjwala Tathe and Prof. (Dr) Snehal Prabhune

National Webinar on
Enchanting Narratives: A World of Fairy Tales in
Children's Literature

February 26, 2026

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Editorial

“Once upon a time”—four simple words that continue to enchant generations, opening doors to worlds where imagination meets reality. Fairy tales, among the oldest narrative forms in human history, have travelled across time from oral traditions to written texts, and now into cinematic and digital spaces. Despite these transformations, their essence remains unchanged—they reflect human experiences, values, and aspirations while nurturing imagination and emotional growth.

Recognizing the enduring significance of fairy tales, the Department of English, Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad, in collaboration with the English Language Teachers' Association of India (Satara Chapter), organized a National Webinar on “*Enchanting Narratives: A World of Fairy Tales in Children's Literature*” on February 26, 2026. The webinar aimed to critically examine fairy tales as important literary and cultural texts, analyse their narrative structures and ideological frameworks, and explore their role in the moral, emotional, and psychological development of children. It also sought to encourage interdisciplinary perspectives and identify new avenues for research in children's literature.

The webinar commenced with an inaugural session that set an intellectually engaging tone. The keynote address highlighted storytelling as a powerful force that stimulates imagination across generations and emphasized the timeless relevance of fairy tales in both childhood and adulthood. The presence of eminent academicians and dignitaries further strengthened the academic spirit of the event. Equally significant was the intellectual contribution of the resource persons and chairpersons, whose insights enriched the academic discourse. The keynote speaker emphasized storytelling as a powerful stimulus for imagination across generations, highlighting the timeless relevance of fairy tales. The plenary sessions featured distinguished resource persons who traced the historical journey and evolution of fairy tales and explored their therapeutic and psychological dimensions. Their discussions moved beyond surface narratives to reveal deeper symbolic, emotional, and cultural meanings embedded in fairy tales. The chairpersons provided thoughtful reflections that connected traditional narratives with contemporary critical perspectives. Their observations highlighted fairy tales as a rich field for academic research, capable of addressing issues ranging from morality and identity to gender and cultural representation. The valedictory session further reinforced the relevance of fairy tales in both literary studies and lived human experience.

What made the webinar particularly meaningful was the collective contribution of resource persons, chairpersons, and organizers. Their scholarly engagement transformed the event into a vibrant platform for dialogue, where traditional narratives were revisited through contemporary critical lenses. The sessions highlighted that fairy tales are not merely stories of fantasy but powerful cultural texts that engage with issues such as morality, identity, gender, and society. Fairy tales endure because they balance imagination with reality. In today's fast-paced digital world, they provide a much-needed space for reflection, creativity, and emotional connection. Their adaptability across time and media proves that they are living narratives, continuously reshaped by cultural and intellectual currents.

The webinar successfully reaffirmed the relevance of fairy tales in contemporary academic discourse and everyday life. As we revisit these timeless narratives, we realize that fairy tales do not belong only to the past—they continue to inspire the present and illuminate the future.

Principal's Message

It gives me immense pleasure to present this journal issue inspired by the webinar on “Enchanted Narratives: A World of Fairy Tales in Children's Literature.” The theme revisits the timeless charm of fairy tales, which continue to enchant readers across generations while carrying deep cultural, moral, and psychological significance. As highlighted in the webinar, these narratives are not merely simple stories for children but are rich, layered texts that reflect shared human experiences, values, and imagination. The discussions and scholarly contributions presented in this webinar underline the need to engage with fairy tales from interdisciplinary perspectives and to recognize their importance in contemporary literary studies.

I commend the organisers, resource persons, and participants for their thoughtful engagement and valuable contributions. This journal stands as a reflection of their collective intellectual effort and commitment to exploring children's literature in meaningful ways. I am confident that this publication will inspire further research and dialogue in this important field.

I extend my best wishes to all contributors and readers.

Prin. Dr. Bharat B. Ballal
Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad

About the College

Shikshan Mandal, Karad's Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad, established on 7th August 1986, is the first women's college in Karad as well as in the Satara district. Founded under the visionary leadership of Shikshan Mandal, Karad, the institution was established with the aim of empowering women through higher education, particularly catering to the needs of rural and semi-urban communities. The college stands as a testament to the belief that education is a powerful means of fostering self-reliance, confidence, and social responsibility among women

Affiliated to Shivaji University, Kolhapur, the college achieved permanent affiliation in 1994 and was recognized under UGC 2f and 12 B in 1998. It has consistently maintained a strong academic foundation supported by dedicated faculty, efficient administration, and enthusiastic students. The institution has earned recognition for its quality education, including NAAC accreditation with a commendable grade, reflecting its commitment to academic excellence and institutional growth. Guided by its vision and mission, the college is committed to nurturing women who are not only academically competent but also socially conscious global citizens. It aims to instill pride in cultural heritage while fostering openness to diversity, critical thinking, and ethical values. The institution emphasizes holistic development by integrating intellectual growth with moral and social awareness, preparing students to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

The college offers undergraduate programmes in Arts, Commerce, and Science, along with postgraduate and research opportunities in Geography. Several departments contribute to a multidisciplinary academic environment, while the Geography Department runs a recognized Research Centre for M.Phil. and Ph.D. scholars. The institution follows NEP guidelines and provides instruction primarily in Marathi, with English and Hindi used where appropriate, ensuring both accessibility and academic rigor. In keeping with contemporary educational needs, the college has introduced new programmes such as B.Sc. and B.Com. (IT), and continues to expand its academic offerings. It also focuses on skill development and employability through its Centre for Skill Development, which offers a variety of certificate, and diploma courses. These initiatives aim to enhance students' professional skills, promote entrepreneurship, and create employment opportunities. The institution strongly believes in holistic education and actively engages students in curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities. These include NSS, cultural programmes, sports

events, study tours, research projects, counselling, and health initiatives. Such activities contribute significantly to the overall personality development of students.

The college is well-equipped with modern infrastructure, including a computerized library, reading room, ICT-enabled classrooms, computer labs with internet access, free Wi-Fi, auditorium, gymnasium, yoga facilities, Lokmanya Competitive Exam centre, Soil Testing lab., and a well-maintained hostel for girls. Administrative processes are fully computerized, ensuring efficiency and transparency in operations .

The institution also promotes creativity and academic expression through its annual magazine *Samvadini*, which provides a platform for students and faculty to showcase their literary talents. Additionally, the college supports students in competitive examinations through a dedicated guidance centre and facilitates access to national-level tests through its NTA centre. Since its inception, Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad, has consistently strived to provide a rich and meaningful learning experience. Through its commitment to quality education, skill development, and value-based learning, the institution continues to nurture confident, capable, and socially responsible women who contribute positively to society and nation-building.

About the Webinar

“Once upon a time”—four words that instantly signal magic and invite readers into a world of wonder. Regardless of age, fairy tales continue to captivate audiences through their familiarity, imaginative appeal, and emotional resonance, reminding us of the enduring power of storytelling. From enchanted objects and talking animals to heroic quests and moral trials, fairy tales have occupied a central place in cultural memory across societies.

Fairy tales are among the oldest narrative forms in world literature, rooted in ancient oral traditions and transmitted across generations long before being shaped into written, illustrated, or cinematic texts. Initially fluid and communal in nature, these tales were not intended exclusively for children but addressed audiences of all ages, reflecting shared cultural values, anxieties, and aspirations. While often perceived as simple narratives of good triumphing over evil, fairy tales possess considerable thematic, psychological, and symbolic depth. Through fantasy, archetypes, and metaphor, they explore universal human experiences and convey moral and emotional truths in accessible yet profound ways. Their continuous reinvention through modern retellings and media adaptations further underscores their dynamic and evolving nature.

Despite their widespread popularity, fairy tales remain a relatively underexplored area in academic research. Their narrative complexity, symbolic structures, representations of gender and identity, and diverse cultural adaptations offer rich scope for interdisciplinary inquiry. The webinar aims to critically examine fairy tales as significant literary and cultural texts, analysing their narrative forms, ideological frameworks, and cultural meanings, while exploring their role in the moral, emotional, and psychological development of children. It also intends to encourage interdisciplinary and contemporary perspectives on fairy tales and identifying new avenues for scholarly research in children's literature.



Shikshan Mandal, Karad's
Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad
National Webinar
Organised by Department of English
in Collaboration with
English Language Teachers' Association of India
Enchanted Narratives: A World of Fairy Tales in Children's Literature
February 26, 2026 Time: 11.00 a.m. Online Platform: Zoom

Dear Sir/Madam,

Warm greetings from Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad. We are immensely pleased to invite you to join us and share your valuable thoughts at the One-Day National Webinar on Enchanted Narratives: The World of Fairy Tales in Children's Literature on Thursday, Feb. 26, 2026.

“About Karad

Karad is situated on 180° confluence of rivers Krishna and Koyana, a rare geographical phenomenon, in Satara district of Maharashtra. It is a well-known educational hub and is the stronghold of the Co-operative movement. Its name features in history as Karhatak, the capital of Pandava king Sahadev. Adding to Karad's ancient heritage are the Agashiv Caves, dating back to around the 3rd century BCE. These rock-cut caves, linked to early Buddhist monastic life, stand as evidence of the region's continuity from ancient spiritual traditions through medieval political history, including its association with the broader legacy of the Maratha Empire.

“About the Institution:

Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad came into being on Aug. 07, 1986, under the auspices of Shikshan Mandal, Karad, a reputed educational organization in Western Maharashtra. The organization is over hundred years old and is a living memorial of the ideal of national education visualized by Lokmanya Tilak. The alma-mater of Late Y. B. Chavan (Ex- Defence Minister and Deputy PM of India and the architect of modern Maharashtra), Ex- CM Hon. Prithviraj Chavan, the first individual Olympic medalist Late Khashaba Jadhav and of many more illustrious personalities, Shikshan Mandal, Karad displayed its visionary outlook by starting this college to cater to the need of quality higher education of girls in the vicinity of Karad. Affiliated to Shivaji University, Kolhapur, we received permanent affiliation in a record period of eight years. Recognized under 2f and 12B by the UGC, the college has Arts, Commerce and Science programmes at UG and a PG programme in Geography. The college also has Ph.D. research centre in Geography recognized by Shivaji University, Kolhapur. The college has been reaccredited B+ (CGPA 2.85) by NAAC in the fourth cycle in February 2025.

“About the Webinar

“Once upon a time”—four words that instantly signal magic and invite readers into a world of wonder. Regardless of age, fairy tales continue to captivate audiences through their familiarity, imaginative appeal, and emotional resonance, reminding us of the enduring power of storytelling. From enchanted objects and talking animals to heroic quests and moral trials, fairy tales have occupied a central place in cultural memory across societies.

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The webinar invites original, unpublished research papers for publication purpose only from academicians, researchers, scholars, and postgraduate students on the following thematic areas, though submissions are not limited to these themes:

Sub-themes for the Webinar:

- Narratives Structure and Motifs in Fairy Tales
- Role of Fairy Tales in Moral and Emotional Development of Children
- Fairy Tales as Reflection of Culture and Society
- Gender Roles and Stereotypes in Fairy Tales
- Contemporary Reinterpretations of Fairy Tales
- Fairy Tales in Films, Animation and Digital Media
- Feminist, Postmodern and Revisionist Fairy Tales
- Multicultural and Indigenous Fairy Tales
- Fairy Tales across Cultures and Nations
- Indian Fairy Tales
- Fairy Tales in Twenty-First Century
- Pedagogy and Fairy Tales in Education
- Subversive and Counter-Narratives

Call for Papers:

Interested participants are requested to submit their original work related to the webinar theme. The papers and the abstracts should be submitted through e-mail to webinarmck@gmail.com in PDF format. The papers will be subjected to plagiarism check. Select papers will be published in e-ISBN.

Submission Guidelines:

Font Type: Times New Roman
Font Size: 12 pts.
Spacing: A4 size spacing 1.5
Reference Style: MLA 9th Edition
Word Limit: 2500 words
Abstract: 250 words along with key words
Final Date of Submission: February 25, 2026

Schedule:

Inauguration	11.00 to 11.30 a.m.	Inauguration by Chief Guest Shri. Chandrashekar Deshpande Secretary, Shikshan Mandal, Karad
Keynote Address	11.30 to 12.30 p.m.	Prof. Dr. Prabhakaran Mane, Head, Dept. of English, Shivaji University, Kolhapur
Plenary Session I	12.30 to 1.30 p.m.	Smt. Swati Rajee Renowned Writer of Children's books, Critic and President, Bhaashaa Foundation, Pune
Plenary Session II	1.30 to 2.30 p.m.	Dr. Lal Mathews Principal, Rajagiri College of Management & Applied Sciences, Kakkand, Kochi
Valedictory Function	2.30 to 3.30 p.m.	Chief Guest Dr. Shyam Sudhakar Asst. Prof. Dept. of English, St. Thomas College, Thrissur Bilingual Poet (Children's Poetry) Editor and Translator

Registration Fees for Participation

Participant	Fees	QR Code for Registration
Teachers	800/-	
Research Scholars / Students	500/-	
Join WhatsApp Group	https://chat.whatsapp.com/B8uEjB3Rj9FoH6a9	

Registration Form Link: <https://forms.gle/b8uEjB3Rj9FoH6a9>

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Summary of Sessions

The one-day webinar on “Enchanted Narratives: A World of Fairy Tales in Children's Literature” jointly organised by Department of English and English Language Teachers' Association of India (Satara Chapter) was conducted on February 26, 2026 at Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad on zoom platform. The webinar aimed at critically examining fairy tales as significant literary and cultural texts, analysing their narrative forms, ideological frameworks, and cultural meanings, while exploring their role in the moral, emotional, and psychological development of children. In Addition, it aimed at exploring the magical, symbolic, and cultural worlds of fairy tales and their enduring relevance in children's literature and beyond. It also intended to encourage interdisciplinary and contemporary perspectives on fairy tales, while identifying new avenues for scholarly research in the field of children's literature.

The webinar commenced with a prefatory address by Convenor and president of the ELTAI (Satara Chapter), Prof. (Dr.) Ujjwala Tathe. She emphasized that fairy tales transcend their identity as children's stories, serving as powerful narratives that shape imagination, values, and human understanding across generations. She highlighted the timeless appeal, cultural significance, and academic value of fairy tales as narratives that shape imagination, emotions, and moral understanding across generations. Noting the symbolic coincidence of 26th February as “Tell a Fairy Tale Day,” the address highlighted how fairy tales use fantasy to communicate complex life lessons and remain relevant beyond children's literature. She concluded her speech by expressing the hope that the webinar would spark new ideas, broaden perspectives, and inspire innovative approaches to exploring and researching the vibrant and fascinating world of children's literature.

The inaugural session set an insightful tone for the event, beginning with the welcome address by Prof. (Dr.) Snehal Prabhune, Head of the Department of English and Co-convenor. She warmly welcomed the participants and introduced the dignitaries, emphasizing that fairy tales extend far beyond mere entertainment and hold deep psychological, moral, cultural, and educational significance.

Dr. H.V. Deshpande, in his Keynote address, presented a comprehensive and nuanced exploration of the fairy tale genre, extending its significance beyond children's literature to underscore its universal appeal and literary depth. He traced the evolution of fairy tales, defining them as narratives rooted in magic, enchantment, and imaginative worlds, and distinguished them from fables through their symbolic richness and expansive creative

scope. Drawing on traditional Indian narratives such as the Vikram and Vetala stories and Marathi storytelling traditions, he highlighted the enduring charm and cultural resonance of these tales. At the same time, he connected them to broader literary traditions by referencing works like John Keats' *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and illustrated themes of illusion, reality, love, betrayal, and the supernatural. Emphasizing their psychological and cultural significance, he noted how fairy tales reflect universal human experiences, shape moral understanding, and contribute to collective memory. Addressing contemporary challenges posed by digital media, globalization, and artificial intelligence, he advocated for adaptive reinterpretations to sustain their relevance. By citing modern works, he reaffirmed that fairy tales continue to evolve as dynamic, complex narratives that nurture imagination, inspire creativity, and offer rich possibilities for contemporary research and reinterpretation.

Chief Guest Prin. Shri. G.V. Kulkarni, a distinguished English teacher and author, in his inaugural address, commended the organizers for their thoughtful initiative and formally declared the seminar open. He underscored the timeless appeal of fairy tales across generations and their vital role in fostering reading habits, expressing optimism that such academic engagements can rekindle interest in reading and research in today's digital age. Reflecting on the enduring charm of the phrase "Once Upon a Time," he described fairy tales as timeless narratives enriched with magic, mythical elements, and meaningful moral insights, capable of engaging both children and adults across generations. Drawing on Marina Warner's observation that fairy tales are "more than true," he emphasized their unique ability to blend imagination with deeper truths about human experiences, emotions, and relationships. Through illustrative anecdotes, he demonstrated how even ordinary or tragic realities can be transformed into compelling imaginative narratives. Highlighting their cultural and psychological significance, he advocated for preserving and reinterpreting fairy tales in contemporary contexts, encouraging scholars and students to create new versions that resonate with modern audiences. Concluding his address, he reaffirmed the importance of fairy tales as a vital literary form that nurtures creativity, critical thinking, moral understanding, and urged scholars, teachers, and students to engage seriously with fairy tales as a significant literary form.

Prin. Dr. Bharat Ballal presented a brief overview of Mahila Mahavidyalaya, highlighting its diverse academic and research initiatives, including skill development courses, laboratory services, notable faculty publications and patents, and significant student achievements, along with extensive NSS-led community engagement activities. He

appreciated the organizers' efforts and extended his best wishes for the success of the webinar. Vice-Principal Dr. Parag Sontakke while extending vote of thanks, expressed gratitude to the keynote speaker, chief guest, dignitaries, institutional leaders, and participants for their valuable contributions and support, and formally concluded the inaugural session.

In the first plenary session "From Once Upon to Ever After: Narratives Under the Spell", the resource person, Ms. Swati Raje, an award-winning writer, journalist, and researcher, a recognized author of children's books and the president of the Bhasha Foundation, Pune presented fairy tales as a genre existing at the intersection of reality and imagination, creating enchanted worlds where animals speak, witches fly, magical carpets exist, and good ultimately triumphs over evil. She traced the origin of fairy tales to ancient oral traditions rooted in collective human consciousness, noting their emergence as a means of survival and imagination in harsh environments. She distinguished fairy tales from myths and legends based on their themes and social functions, while highlighting early European collections by Straparola and Basile, which were initially intended for adult audiences. She discussed the transformation of fairy tales into children's literature through Charles Perrault and the influence of French salon culture, as well as the significant contribution of the Grimm Brothers in preserving cultural narratives. Emphasizing that fairy tales are not limited to Europe, she drew attention to rich Indian traditions such as the *Panchatantra* and *Kathasaritsagara*. Concluding her talk, she reflected on the genre's continuous evolution into a global cultural force, underscoring its enduring relevance in literature, media, and contemporary storytelling.

Prof. (Dr.) Trupti Karikati, a professor at Shivaji University, Kolhapur as a chairperson of the session appreciated Swati Raje's insightful historical and cultural overview while critically addressing contemporary concerns surrounding fairy tales, including their sanitization and portrayal of gender roles. She highlighted their therapeutic and moral significance in preparing children for real-life experiences and emphasized the need for deeper research into their reinterpretations, ideological influences, and reader reception. Acknowledging the impact of Indian narratives on Western traditions, she urged scholars to examine how fairy tales shape values, gender norms, and cultural perspectives, while also recognizing their potential to rekindle children's interest in reading through imaginative literature. Concluding her remarks, she acknowledged contemporary writers like Swati Raje for revitalizing the genre and inspiring new academic inquiry.

In the second plenary session on the theme “*Beyond the Ever After: What Do Fairy Tales Really Tell?*”, the resource person Dr. Laly Mathew, Principal of Rajagiri College of Management and Applied Sciences, Kakkanad, Kochi, explored fairy tales as universal, cross-generational narratives rooted in oral traditions and functioning as crossover fiction for both children and adults. She presented fairy tales as cross-over fiction that appeals to both children and adults, embodying collective human wisdom shaped through oral traditions and later formalized by writers such as Charles Perrault, the Grimm Brothers, and Hans Christian Andersen. She highlighted recurring themes such as transformation, identity, and the struggle between good and evil, emphasizing their therapeutic and psychoanalytical role in helping children process emotions, fears, and conflicts. Addressing motifs like the orphan figure and the presence of dark elements, she argued that such features support emotional growth and resilience, while also critiquing the sanitization of these aspects in modern adaptations. Drawing on theorists like Bruno Bettelheim and Gerard Jones, she underscored the importance of fairy tales in fostering moral understanding, emotional development, and cultural continuity. She concluded her talk with the therapeutic and cathartic dimensions of fairy tales highlighting their role as a powerful medium for the externalisation of inner thoughts and moral reflection.

Dr. Savita Kelkar, Adjunct Professor of German at Deccan Education Society, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, and Chairperson of the second session, reflected on the enduring therapeutic and cultural significance of fairy tales. Expressing a sense of nostalgia, she highlighted the richness of India's diverse linguistic and cultural traditions and underscored storytelling as a powerful medium for transmitting moral values and cultural identity. She also emphasized the need to encourage both children and adults to engage with fairy tales as a source of lifelong learning and enrichment.

In the valedictory session, Dr. Sam Sudhakar, Department of English, St. Thomas College, Thrissur, Kerala, and a bilingual poet, reflected on the deep connection between land, memory, and storytelling, showing how his work is shaped by childhood experiences, oral traditions, and indigenous folk beliefs. He described fairy tales and folk narratives as socially constructed memories closely linked to cultural identity, highlighting themes of fear and the unknown in South Indian traditions. Through examples of local legends featuring yakshis, demons, and spirits, he explained their symbolic meaning and their lasting presence in collective consciousness. He also pointed out that in the Indian context, the boundaries between folk and fairy tales are often blurred, with magic and realism existing together. While modernization has reduced many traditional fears, he noted that these narratives

continue to influence cultural expression. Emphasizing that social memory is collective and evolves over time, he highlighted the lasting cultural impact of folk beliefs. Concluding his address, he stressed the importance of preserving oral traditions, local myths, and elements of magical realism as essential parts of literary and cultural heritage.

In his closing remarks, the Chairperson Prof. (Dr.) Sunil Sawant, Principal, Shriram Institute of Information Technology, Paniv, congratulated the organizers for presenting diverse perspectives on fairy tales through scholarly, critical, and creative approaches. He offered his thoughtful reflections on the traces of fairy tales in Romantic poetry and presented insightful perspectives aligned with the central theme of the webinar. He emphasized the importance of revisiting childhood narratives, particularly the role of oral storytelling traditions in shaping memory and identity, and evoked a sense of nostalgia through a poetic reflection on childhood and familial bonds. Concluding his remarks, he encouraged continued scholarly engagement with fairy tales and children's literature as significant cultural expressions.

The webinar concluded with Prof. (Dr.) Ujjwala Tathe extending vote of thanks. She highlighted the webinar's success in rekindling childhood memories, deepening understanding, and opening new avenues for research, and encouraged continued scholarly engagement with fairy tales as a culturally, psychologically, and pedagogically significant genre.

Key Insights and Conclusions

The webinar highlighted fairy tales as a complex and multifaceted genre that bridges fantasy and reality while embodying deep psychological, cultural, and moral dimensions. It underscored their therapeutic, educational, and cultural significance in helping readers navigate emotions and social realities, and traced their ancient, global origins across diverse traditions. The discussion emphasized their evolution from oral narratives to children's literature through cultural mediation, alongside the need for critical examination of ideology, gender roles, and adaptation practices. Recognizing the richness of indigenous and regional narratives, the session affirmed the continued relevance of fairy tales in contemporary literature, media, and education, ultimately reinforcing their importance as a vital area for academic research, creative exploration, and cultural preservation.

Overall, the webinar reaffirmed that fairy tales are not merely imaginative stories but complex narratives that reflect human experiences, cultural values, and psychological realities. Their continued relevance in contemporary literature and research highlights their enduring power as a medium of imagination, learning, and cultural expression. The event

successfully created a platform for scholarly dialogue and critical engagement with fairy tales as significant literary and cultural texts.

Research Papers

Little Red Riding Hood: Metamorphosis From A Moral Tale of Caution to A Tale of Subversion Celebrating Feminine Agency

Dr Sunita Prasanna Kulkarni

Associate Professor

Dept of English

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Abstract

'Long long ago' and 'once upon a time' are words that transport us to a magical parallel universe. Fairy and folk Tales have been considered popular and suitable reading material for children through ages, as they blend instruction, entertainment and moral education. Every country has its own repository of fairy, folk and wisdom tales, which were traditionally passed orally from generation to generation with a little embellishment or variation region or culture-wise. These tales were later collected, compiled and edited by people such as Charles Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, Madame d'Aulnoy, and Andrew Lang among others. The present paper aims to explore the story *Little Red Riding Hood*, its origins, versions, and narrations, while also attempting to study its modern re-workings and interpretations, before presenting the conclusion.

KEY WORDS: Fairy, Wisdom, Moral, Caution and Feminist.

Introduction

Fairy or folk Tales are short stories that feature fairies, ogres, witches, magical creatures and anthropomorphic characters and fall under the genre of folklore. These tales evolved out of age-old stories passed orally from generation to generation and were later collected, compiled and edited by people such as Charles Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, Madame d'Aulnoy, Andrew Lang and others. These tales date back thousands of years and many find their roots in Greek and Roman legends, with several elements common in many stories worldwide.

Though originally intended for adults, in the 19th and 20th centuries, fairy tales were edited and considered suitable reading material for children as they combine entertainment and moral education. Special editions of stories with colourful pictures were specifically printed for children and continue to do so even today. The present paper aims to explore the story *Little Red Riding Hood*, its origins, versions, narrations, while also attempting to study its modern interpretations and relevance before presenting the conclusion.

The prototype of the *Little Red Riding Hood* story can be found in Greek and Roman legends and several similar elements in Russian, African and Taiwanese stories, which vary in some minor details. Sometimes the attacking beast is a werewolf or a ravening tiger, but

the victim is often a young and innocent girl.

Objectives

- To study the versions of the tale in different forms and time periods
- To study its modern, feminist interpretations and relevance

Methodology

Close reading of some versions of the story and to explore its contemporary relevance and significance.

Hypothesis

The tale of Little Red Riding Hood begins as a moral fable of caution and female helplessness but in the modern and feminist retellings, becomes a subversive tale of female confidence and agency.

The Story and its Versions

The story depicts a young girl dressed in a red hood visiting her sick grandmother living in the woods and carrying some food for her. She is met by a wolf who befriends her and rushing to the grandmother's house, eats her up, and dressing in her clothes and cap, later, eats up Little Red Riding Hood as well.

Charles Perrault's *Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passe, avec des Moralities. Contes de ma Mere L'Oye* (Stories or Tales from Past Times, with Morals or Mother Goose) 1697 is credited with the earliest printed version of the story known as *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge*. The protagonist is a 'well-bred young lady', who naively gives the big bad wolf information about her plans to visit her grandmother and her address. He eats the grandmother and having deceived Red Riding Hood into climbing into bed with him, eats her up too. Perrault's moral at the end of the story cautions children, particularly pretty young girls, against listening to strangers, among them wolves, as the wolves may be gentle, obliging and may follow them in the streets, or into their homes. He calls these gentle obliging wolves the most dangerous.

The Brothers Grimm published their *Kinder und Hausmarchen* (Children's and Household Tales) in 1812 that included *Rotkappchen* (Little Red Cap). This version introduced the brave huntsman who cuts open the wolf's belly and rescues Little Red Cap and her grandmother. The wolf's belly is then filled with stones and it dies. An additional part of the story describes how Red Cap and her grandmother kill another wolf who attempts to attack them by drowning it in a trough.

A different version of the story is featured in Andrew Lang's *Red Fairy Book* called

The True History of Little Goldenhood. Here the girl is called Blanchette who wears a magical golden hood made out of sunshine. Her grandmother is not home and does not get eaten, nor does Blanchette, as the magical hood burns the wolf's tongue and throat. The grandmother catches the wolf in a sack and drowns it in a well and Blanchette promises never to speak to any wolves in the future.

There are many other versions of the story such as the Polish/German *Little Red Hood*, the Italian *Little Red Hat*, the French *The Grandmother* and *The True History of Little Golden-Hood* by Charles Marelles, but it is not possible to explore them all in the present paper.

In 1977 Angela Carter translated *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault* and inspired by them, published *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* in 1979. The stories are based on fairy tales and Carter maintains that her intention was not to write versions of fairy tales, or to write fairy tales for adults, but "to extract latent content from the traditional stories and to use it as the beginnings of new stories" (Carter 2006). The collection contains three stories that are based on *Little Red Riding Hood*. In *The Werewolf*, a girl goes to visit her grandmother and is attacked by a big wolf in the woods. Being brave, she is ready with a knife and cuts off the wolf's paw. It is discovered later that the paw has turned into a human hand, that of her grandmother, proving her grandmother to have been the werewolf attacking her. The old woman is killed and her property inherited by the girl.

The Company of Wolves describes the wolf with evil intentions meeting the young girl posing as a handsome hunter. Extracting the promise of a kiss from her, he races to her grandmother's house. He devours the grandmother and as he prepares to eat the girl, she seduces him, rendering him harmless. *Wolf Alice* is a coming of age tale featuring a feral girl, living with a werewolf coming to terms with her humanness as well as the awareness of her female body and physical maturation.

The musical *Into the Woods* (1986) by Stephen Sondheim shows Red Riding Hood as a greedy but naïve girl initially, who is eaten by the wolf, but later, rescued and empowered, undergoes a transformation, becoming wise and street-smart and skinning the wolf, uses its pelt as a cape/hood.

Analysis

The earlier versions of the story are tales of wisdom or fables with Morals at end, aimed at young and innocent girls, warning them of dangers of disobedience. Perrault's

version shows the direct result of disobedience as death, with no help at hand. The moral points out two types of dangers young women may encounter: one, the explicit danger of being mauled by a hungry beast and being eaten, and the second, of sexual assault, being deceived and seduced by a predatory male. In this context, his tale cautions girls against straying from the straight path factually or figuratively as this will place them in danger. His tale cautions girls and places complete blame on them for any misadventure befalling them as a result of their disobedience.

The huntsman coming to Little Red Cap's rescue in the Grimm Brothers' version introduces outside agency assisting the protagonist, but the second section shows the girl learning her lesson well and killing the wolf resourcefully. Sondheim's *Into the Woods* shows Red Riding Hood and her grandmother being eaten by the wolf but are rescued and Red gaining new survival skills, skins the wolf and uses it for a cape. Andrew Lang's version introduces a magical element to the tale, but Carter's triad of stories introduces modern, gothic and feminist elements to the story.

Critical Analysis

There are several interpretations of the *Red Riding Hood* story in its various forms and versions. It seems to have come a long way from a simple moral tale or fable warning young innocent girls of dangers of interacting with strangers with predatory intentions, to a post-modern feminist fable with complex and layered interpretations. Some of the interpretations and motifs associated with the story are:

- The red hood: Red of the hood represents violence as well as the deflowering of a virgin and sexual maturation. At the end of *Into the Woods*, the red hood becomes a warning for wolves not to mess with the girl.
- The big bad wolf archetype: the term has come to be associated with a sexual predator, preying particularly on innocent and virginal young girls.
- Disastrous effects of disobedience: disobedience in the traditional stories leads directly to death or rape of the female protagonists. Perrault's tale in particular sounds a preachy, moralizing note to well-bred young girls and instead of empowering them, shows them as helpless.
- Death and rebirth: In the Grimm Brothers' version, Red Riding Hood is eaten by the wolf, but is rescued by the huntsman. Her rebirth makes her wise and resourceful and saves her from the next attack.
- Patriarchal elements: The traditional version is a prescriptive tale preaching

precaution and safety to young girls, and places the blame on them if they disobey, thus indulging in victim-blaming. Also, the female characters in the earlier versions lack complete agency and either suffer misfortune or need to be rescued by a male character.

Modern and Feminist Interpretations

The Red Riding Hood story has been discussed by many modern and feminist critics, and has been reworked into stories, musicals and films portraying the female protagonist with power and agency, lacking in earlier versions. The rescued girl from *Into the Woods*, as well as all three of Angela Carter's stories portray female protagonists with agency as they refuse to play subjugated and docile victims and emerge victorious.

Jack Zipes, who has studied fairy tales extensively, in *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood* explores the historical evolution of the story from its earliest oral origins to the modern Feminist readings. Zipes claims that the earlier printed versions,, namely of Perrault and Grimm, used the story as a tool of socialization of young girls, turning them into obedient, docile victims in need of male protection. He also critically comments on the punishing aspect of the earlier versions where disobedience or straying from the prescribed path of female virginal purity and indulging in sexual curiosity and experiment, may lead to sexual assault and violence.

The story of Little Red Riding Hood was given a completely different guise by Angela Carter in her *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979). In the Introduction to the 2006 edition, Helen Simpson commented on Carter's fascination with Gothic and horror elements and themes dealing with the unconscious. Carter's stories are not retellings of the traditional tales, but different stories that take off from the original and find content undiscovered by them. They contain radical elements using the form and imagery of fairy and fantasy tales. Simpson further comments that Carter's stories portray human nature as mutable as they all deal with metamorphoses, that of a young female protagonist into a confident, empowered entity, not rescued or assisted by outside source, but by her own maturation and understanding. Thus, Carter's *The Werewolf* has a young girl engage with a huge werewolf and cutting off its paw; *The Company of Wolves*, showcasing the female protagonist celebrate her sexual awakening and sexual power by seducing the wolf and subverting the narrative and the power structure; and *Wolf Alice* portrays her feral girl protagonist being able to fuse her animal senses with the awareness of her human body, menstruation, budding womanhood, and maturation by helping to heal the Duke werewolf's wounds by licking away the blood.

There are several types of transformations or metamorphoses in the triad of stories:

that of human into werewolf; docile girls changing into assertive, even aggressive women determined to achieve their desires and true selves; transformation from smothering patriarchal restraints to liberating self-confidence; from virginal, pure, naïve girlhood to self-conscious, sexually aware diva and the transformation of the moral, punishing fable into an empowering, evocative gothic romance. By fusing the form, style, imagery and setting of the fairy tale and subverting the traditional, patriarchal tropes by replacing helpless women with liberated self-aware female protagonists, Carter has invented a hybrid far more effective and enchanting than the original.

Using the 'demythologization' technique, Carter has rewritten and subverted traditional fairy tales, freeing them of their traditional, patriarchal elements and connotations and has established liberated, autonomous and evolved female characters deconstructing the myth of male superiority and female vulnerability. In doing this she has also freed female sexuality from the shame, guilt and taboo traditionally associated with it.

Conclusion

After having explored several versions of the story and their connotations, the researcher has established that the original story in its oral and earlier printed versions was a tale of caution warning young girls travelling alone, of the dangers of straying from the known and well-trodden path, dangers either of being attacked and eaten by a hungry animal, or assaulted by a sexual predator. Though well-meaning and favourably received at the time, the story was patronizing in the extreme as it depicted girls as lacking in commonsense and self-reliance, who deserved to be punished for their disobedience and rebellion. They also presented the binary depictions of a naïve and gullible female protagonist and a deceitful, hypocritical male predator.

Modern critics and writers alike, however, have commented on the simplistic prescriptive tone and representation of the characters in the story and have provided nuanced and more realistic narratives as well as more evolved characters. A case in point is Angela Carter's triad of werewolf stories based on the *Little Red Riding Hood* story that showcases resourceful, confident and self-aware women, who, knowing their desires, embrace them and explore their sexuality, liberated from the age-old, patriarchal restraints of shame, guilt and public censure.

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An Enchanting World of Spirits in Easterine Kire's Novel *Spirit Nights*

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Abstract

Spirit Nights is a novel by Naga writer and poet Easterine Kire, published in 2022. It received the Sahitya Akademi Award for English 2024. Easterine Kire, born in Kohima, Nagaland, (ancient tribal hill country) Northeast India is a poet, short story writer and novelist. She writes from 'the frontline of contemporary indigenous literature'. The novel is an account of sudden darkness descending on the land which exists in at least two tribal histories of the Naga people, the Rengma and the Chang. The story of the novel is inspired by a story of darkness narrated by the Chang Naga tribe. The names and incidents are borrowed from the original tale, but it follows the path of fiction to achieve its telling. The present novel has a fine blending of natural with the supernatural. While portraying Naga tribal life authentically and faithfully, Kire intends to pass Naga culture, history, and lifestyle with minutest details to the rest of the world. She unravels the various colourful layers of the tribal agrarian life which consists of their own beliefs, code of conduct, moral and philosophical system, tradition and rituals. The stories and beliefs regarding the spirits occupy a large part of their lives. From the title of the novel itself, they pervade the whole novel. The spirit world builds an enchanting and enigmatic ethos in the novel. The present research paper analyses the blend of natural and supernatural elements in the novel and how it creates an enchanting world. The novel has also been analyzed as a subversive postcolonial narrative.

Keywords:

Supernatural elements, enchanting ethos, subversive narrative, folktales, tribal life, spirit world.

Objectives:

- To study the blend of natural and supernatural in the novel
- To explore and analyze how the 'spirit world' in the novel imparts an enchanting and enigmatic ethos to the novel
- To analyze the novel as a subversive narrative

Introduction:

Easterine Kire is the first Naga poet in English to have her poetry published in 1982. Her novel *A Naga Village Remembered* (2003) has been the first Naga novel in English. She is the first Naga writer to write books for children. She was honored with the Governor's medal for excellence in Naga literature in 2011. Her novel *Bitter Womanhood* was shortlisted for the Hindu Lit Life prize in 2013. Her novel *When the River Sleeps* has been awarded The Hindu Literature prize in 2015. *Son of the Thunderland* won both the Bal Sahitya Puraskar of the Sahitya Academy and the 2017 Tata Literature Live Book of

the Year award. Norwegian PEN invited E. Kire to Tromsø, inside Norway's Arctic Circle, where she has been living since 2005. She is a member of Norway-based band, Jazzpoesi, and a founder member of Barkweaver publications which gathers folk tales and people stories.

Easterine Kire's Novel *Spirit Nights* is a tale of Nagaland folklore, of eternal darkness and of fulfilling one's destiny. While speaking about the formation of this novel she mentions:

I harvested community memory of the Naga tribes in their remote village homes to gather the tales that fuel this novel. These stories reflect their spiritual world and while some might think of the stories as fantasy or magical, for the villagers, and for me, they are our reality. From them, I have learned about trusting my own power as a woman, and how a storm of forces are at work behind the observed world of our everyday lives. In Nagaland, we live our lives in great intimacy with the spiritual world and I hope this novel helps return western readers to such a place of awe for nature.(Kire)

Nature in *Spirit Nights*:

All of Kire's novels can be analyzed for their eco-critical elements. The novel deals with a small Naga tribal life of about 20 households, with nearabout 50 people. Kire portrays their tribal life as-simple, in the company of and harmonious with nature-hunting, farming in terrace fields, in the vicinity of the mountains and forest. It is a pure life unaffected by the pollution and vices of modern, advanced societies. The people though superstitious, their lives are pure and profound like nature itself. The novelist portrays their agrarian lifestyle with minutest details. Like all of her other novels, this novel also can be analyzed from an eco-critical point of view. The narration has a picturesque quality- utilizing the third person narration, mingling the perspectives of the two protagonists-Namu- a young warrior and Tola-his grandmother, a dream receiver, seeress, a wisest woman; Kire beautifully creates the tribal village- Shumang Laangnyu Sang before the readers' eyes. In a lucid and rhythmic narration like oral tales, Kire depicts the day-to-day routine of the tribal people along with their traits like industriousness, patience, oneness with the nature, gratefulness to the nature and the creator deity, unity to face difficult times, obedience and so on. It is an authentic depiction of their daily lives along with their culture, strictly abiding by the code of conduct and

moral values, rituals and traditions deeply rooted in their agricultural lifestyle, beliefs and faith shaping their lives, led by their own philosophy of life developed out of experiences of the generations. While portraying a tightly-knit unit of a tribal community, she delineates how indigenous identities have been defined by gender and life-stages, the roles and responsibilities of a Naga village for example, the headman, the seer in the community as well in the family. The readers have a clear picture of the tribal village with the community hall, the protective wall and gate of the village, the drum beating with different rhythms, etc.

Supernatural in *Spirit Nights*:

From the title of the novel itself the presence of spirits is all pervasive. They are an inseparable part of tribal life. Like all other supernatural elements here, spirits too, are 'good' and 'evil'. They believe that good spirits protect provided that people follow code of conduct, morality. The evil spirits are believed to be destructive, enemy of the community, ready to allure and pounce. The individuals and the community should follow the norms of morality to save themselves from them. The seer is the spiritual guide of the community, dream receiver and he gets the premonition of upcoming events especially threats, calamities upon the community. He interprets the dreams and guides the whole village in difficult times when all are perplexed.

Many folktales about the spirits are well-known and widespread. They are transmitted orally in the tribal communities. These folktales shaping the people's lives abound in the novel, E.g. The story of two brothers carving a log at night which tells that the two brothers whose mother has been wronged by their father undertook a task of carving a log expressing the innocence of their mother. It is said that they were assisted in this work by the spirits in the nights. The wooden drum which is a means of communication for the whole community is made up of a log. It is believed that the spirits also dwell in the trees, so only seers can choose a tree to be cut for the log. One more account of the spirits is in the naming of babies. It is the fear of spirits casting an evil spell on nameless babies, so the ritual of naming is considered essential. Another one interesting is that of grain- pounding spirits at night. The women considered grain pounding after sunrise as a taboo. The upcoming event of village massacre at night was predicted with the grain-pounding voices at night. The beliefs regarding the spirits living in the forests, animals, and humans are shared by all. The village compound wall is constructed for the protection and the big gate is also there to prevent the entry of evil spirits. The seer's powerful spell on the huge gate protects the village. The village whose

seer is morally strong and wise is well guarded. Whereas if the seer is morally weak and not 'the chosen one', the village is vulnerable for the spirits' attack. The main storyline of the novel is an account of such an attack. The spirit in the form of a huge tiger with six tails has eaten the sun, so the village was covered with darkness for many days. It is learnt afterwards that something sacred in the spirit world has been profaned. To correct it, someone has to cross the human world and enter the spirit world. Namu-the great warrior under his grandmother Tola's (the seeress') guidance rescues the village. Tola too, has to send her spirit, leaving the flesh, to fetch Namu back. The whole account is supernatural and yet thrilling.

Enchanting and Enigmatic World:

The blend of natural with the supernatural enables Kire to build an enchanting and enigmatic ethos in the novel. The main storyline along with the story-within-story pattern are narrated in oral style. The lucid and oral story style narration in simple words with its own rhythm has become marvelous, captivating and profound. It is full of suspense and many revelations are done step by step. This short action packed adventure novel arouses curiosity as well enchants the readers. The readers surrender their disbelief to witness and enjoy this enigmatic world. By fusing simple philosophical thoughts along with the profound events, Kire builds a beautiful and systematic world effectively.

***Spirit Nights* as a Subversive Narrative:**

Easterine Kire is an ambassador of Naga indigenous culture connecting it to the rest of the world. She brings forth the hitherto unassessed life of tribal people. Like her other novels this novel can also be considered as a reclamation of indigenous voice, land, culture, history and sovereignty. Once again through this novel she resists the narratives of indigenous disappearance providing an alternative narrative. It serves to pass on the precolonial Naga culture. She inspires the current and future generations through her tale. Instead of mainstream narrative techniques like magical realism of postmodern/postcolonial fiction- she employs simple oral tradition. One thing is noteworthy here is that 'Magic' or 'supernatural' is a part of narrative, but not as a narrative technique. It is a part of reality, part of life. So, it can be said that the supernatural/spiritual becomes beautiful not ugly or incredible. It dispels the darkness bringing the light. Moreover, it celebrates woman power depicting Tola as a protagonist, the savior of the village.

Conclusion

Easterine Kire's novel *Spirit Nights* is a fine blend of natural and supernatural faithfully depicting the Naga tribal life. The enchanting and enigmatic ethos of the novel captures the readers' minds and leaves them spell bound. The novel can be called as a subversive postcolonial text cherishing indigenous culture and history.

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Timeless Tales: Reinterpreting Indian Fairy Tales For the 21st Century

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Abstract

The research paper examines the contemporary reimagining of Indian fairy tales in the 21st century. The traditional narratives have been explored differently for new audiences. The research is three dimensional: It reinterprets fairy tales from feminist revisioning and challenges patriarchal norms. It analyses fairy tales in cultural context comparing them with western fairy tales and thirdly it observes various other media through the fairy tales are represented. These media can be cinema, animation, series, etc.

Key words: Indian fairy tales, feminist revisioning, reinterpretation, culture, media.

Fairy tales are part and parcel of not only children and adolescents but also. They represent culture, concept of heroism and godliness and values. They preach and teach life lessons. They have enchanted children's lives for decades with the stories of princess, ghosts, animals, birds and magical aspects. There are young damsels captured by demons and young and handsome heroes who rescue them.

India has provided the world a rich tapestry of fairy tale and folkloric tradition from *Panchtantra*, *Jataka Tales* to regional oral narratives and the great epics and the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Indian fairy tales is a rich story house of Indian heritage and culture. They are *Jataka Tales* (tales based on birth stories of Buddha). *Aesop's Stories*, *Kathasaritasagar*, *Panchantra*, *Vikram and Vetala*, etc. They exhibit wit and humour. They are different from western fairy tales that often focus on "happily ever after." As Santa Ray Chaudhury observes decolonizing fairy tales academic discourse requires moving beyond the predominantly western focus that has characterised the field, acknowledging instead the diverse Indo-European roots of story telling traditions that have woven themselves across borders through human migration and trade over thousands of years.

The 21st century is remarkable for reinterpretation of fairy tales and folk lores. This effort involves subverting traditional narratives to address modern issues like gender equality, moral ambiguity, political critique, etc. Feminist revisioning deconstruct divine characters into relatable human figures. The silenced female characters speak; Western fairy

tales are analysed through Indian lens. Actually, European or Western fairy tales are different from that of Indian *Panchatantra fables* or *Amar Chitra Katha* that provide moral instruction and not free and boundless imagination of the fairy world. Though the old tales were written to inculcate values, modern tales are written to amuse and delight.

The fairy tales' genre has historically been dominated by Western framework. The stories of Brother Grimm, Charles Perrault and Hans Christian Anderson have formed a canon against which all fairy tales are measured. Joseph Jacobs in 1892 compiled *Indian Fairy Tales*. He comments that India is rich in the practice of writing fairy tales. In the introduction of the book *Indian Fairy Tales*, he comments "some-as Benfey in Germany, M. Cosquin in France, and Mr. Clouston in England have declared that India is the Home of the fairy tales, and that all European fairy tales have been brought from thence by crusaders, by Mongol missionaries, by Gipsies, by Jews, by traders, by travellers." According to Jacobs Europe derived many fairy tales from India.

Jacobs' collection compiles *Panchatantra* and *Jataka Tales*. His collection is remarkable as his retellings and translation have cultural richness, rhythm and the flavour of the original stories. These stories were and are told in Indian families, villages and classrooms. The reinterpretation of fairy tales from the feminist revisioning tradition is quite common in European culture where writers like Margaret Atwood and Angela Carter have retold the fairy tales from the perspective of female characters particularly villains or marginalised figures. They tear off patriarchal assumptions. The feminist revisioning, thus, becomes a method for making "heroes or heroines." In the Indian context, the mythological stories, legends and folklores are reinterpreted from the female eye. Surpanakha, who was Ravana's sister who represented lust is punished by Rama and Laxman in the mythology. But the story of Surpanakha as an oppressed woman who has to face unjust treatment is retold. Kavita Kane's novel *The Lanka's Princess* (2017) offers a radical revisioning from Surpanakha's point of view. Surpanakha from a demoness becomes a woman with desire. There are many stories which are reinterpreted from the feminist lens.

Secondly, culture plays a pivotal role in the tradition of story-telling. Through the process of cultural indigenisation global narrative forms are adapted to local contexts. Western tales, in this process are Indianized by using Indian settings. Indian tales are also reimagined in such a way that these tales are accessible to global audiences. So, through a hybridity western stories fit in Indian context and Indian stories are reinterpreted to suit global context. The novella *When Sita Met Belle* engages with the Beauty and the Beast

narrative written from an Indian woman's perspective and set in a South African context. Both Sita and Belle are alike in their voiceless qualities. From this novella we find out how patriarchal structures operate across cultural boundaries.

Through animated films too fairy tales are retold. The animated short film *Humey Choodiyan Pehi Hai* written and created by Himanee Aary and Bhatiya, released in December 2025, by the Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival, offers yet another model of feminist revisioning – one rooted not in critiquing patriarchy but in recovering alternative traditions within Indian culture itself. The film represents women not as a princess waiting to be saved but a warrior and a divine force rising furiously to defend her land. Bhatiya illustrates, “Our story is not about a Prince saving a Princess but about an Indian woman embracing her divine feminine strength and saving her village. In Indian culture, women are recognized as Goddesses and warriors and this fairy tale is meant to inspire the next generation.” Indian myths and folktales have thousands of strong women who are heroes, warriors and strong leaders. It is the female heroism that is more important in 21st century tales.

Culture plays a pivotal role in literature. As stated earlier western tales differ from Indian tales. Rajesh Talwar's Children's book *The Witch, The Princess and the Tower of Doom* offers a delightful example of cultural indigenisation. Rapunzel is a German fairy tale. Rapunzel, an innocent young girl is locked up by her overly protective mother. Her wish to escape into the world outside finally comes true when she meets the good-hearted thief, Flynn. Walt Disney transformed the story in an animated film *Tangled*. The book *The Witch, The Princess and the Tower of Doom* depicts a young princess Pihu who is locked away in a tower by a witch named Churailamma. The princess learns many new things while she is in tower. The story moves around Pihu and her complicated relationship with the witch. Pihu is a strong female protagonist. The Prince Sukumar is not like the prince depicted in earlier tales, he is frail, sickly and wearing spectacles but projected as a determined person. Princess is curious and brave, Churailamma is also a fascinating character, quirky, stern but still likable. So, the story of Rapunzel takes an Indian guise.

Shobhita Narayn's *Midaash and Maitreyi's Magical Mayhem* (2024) takes a different approach to cultural indigenisation. She creates an original fantasy world – the village of Gold Gumbad in which multiple Western fairy tales reimagined within coherent Indian framework. All tales like “Snow and White and the Seven Dwarfs, Rapunzel, Hansel and Gretel, The Pied Piper, The Three Little Pigs” all appear in new guises, representing Indian set up. These characters are given Indian names of stars like *Rohini, Ashwini, Bharani*. A

boy is named *Korou* (Manipuri Language) and a girl with a spotted skin *Chitta* (Hindi Language). So, the names reflect Indian culture and vernacular authenticity. The expanded edition of Joseph Jacob's *Indian Fairy Tales* published in 2025, explicitly addresses this concern. The new edition presents both Jacob's original stories and several newly written adaptations inspired by Indian folk tales.

Animation has emerged as a promising medium for reinterpreting Indian fairy tales. Children, families and adults watch animated films with interest. Animation visualise the distinctive textures of Indian story telling traditions. Neil Gaiman's *Cinnamon* can be cited as the best example. *The Legend of Hanuman* by Sharad Devarajan and Jeevan Kang represents the same. There are other animated films like *Chotta Bheem and the Throne of Bali*, *Mahavatar Narsimha*, *Bal Ganesh*, *Krishna*, *Dashavatar*, etc.

Indian fairy Tales have often presented imaginative tales packaged as moral or religious instruction, preserving social norms rather than subverting them. The contemporary story tellers are shaping Indian childhoods through their fresh and meaningful stories. These stories make the silenced voices to speak, the weak are presented as strong and the villains are painted grey and depicted as individuals who have been treated unjustly. Thus, these tales at one hand reflect Indian cultural heritage and at the other hand grant them freedom of imagination.

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The Transformation of *Beauty and the Beast* from Literature to Film

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Abstract

The story of *Beauty and the Beast* has travelled across centuries, languages, and artistic forms, yet it continues to touch the human heart with the same emotional force. Originating in eighteenth-century France, the tale was first written in a detailed and aristocratic form by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve in 1740. Later, it was reshaped into a shorter, morally instructive narrative by Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont in 1756. Over time, the story moved beyond printed pages and entered the world of performance and cinema, most notably through the 1991 animated adaptation by Walt Disney Productions and its 2017 live-action reinterpretation directed by Bill Condon. This research paper examines how *Beauty and the Beast* evolves as it shifts from literary storytelling to cinematic expression. It explores changes in narrative structure, characterization, thematic meaning, gender roles, and emotional depth. The study argues that adaptation is not simple repetition; it is an act of cultural conversation. Each retelling reshapes the story to reflect the values, anxieties, and hopes of its time. In particular, modern adaptations move away from obedience-centered morality and toward themes of individuality, emotional maturity, and mutual transformation. Through this analysis, the paper demonstrates that *Beauty and the Beast* remains alive because it continues to grow alongside human society.

KeyWords

Beauty and the Beast, Fairy Tale Evolution, Character, Development, Thematic Transformation, Gender Roles, Cultural Context, Adaptation Theory, Emotional Depth, Moral Shift, Individuality, Mutual Transformation

Introduction

Fairy tales are often seen as simple children's stories, yet they preserve cultural values, social norms, and unspoken fears. Emerging from oral tradition and later written forms, they reflect the societies that produce them. Among them, *Beauty and the Beast* stands out as a tale of appearance and truth, fear and compassion. The earliest well-known literary version was written by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve in 1740, intended for aristocratic adults and marked by detailed narration. Later, Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont simplified the story to offer moral guidance for young girls. The tale gained worldwide fame through the 1991 animated film by Walt Disney Productions and was reimagined in 2017 as a live-action film directed by Bill Condon. This study examines how the story changes from text to screen, showing that adaptation is not mere copying but creative reinterpretation

shaped by cultural shifts.

The Literary Origins: An Aristocratic and Symbolic Tale

In 1740, Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve introduced the world to *La Belle et la Bête*, a richly detailed and layered narrative that differed greatly from the shorter, simplified versions known today. Her work was not originally designed as a children's fairy tale. Instead, it was a sophisticated literary creation written for adult readers within the refined circles of eighteenth-century French society. The story reflects the intellectual atmosphere, social structures, and aristocratic values of its time.

Villeneuve's version unfolds with remarkable complexity. Rather than focusing only on the central romance between Beauty and the Beast, she constructs an expansive fictional universe. The backgrounds of both characters are developed through elaborate storytelling. Beauty is eventually revealed to have noble origins, hidden from her by circumstances of fate and secrecy. Her identity is connected to royal bloodlines, which reinforces the importance of lineage and inheritance in aristocratic culture. Similarly, the Beast's condition is not merely the result of a simple curse. It is entangled in a wider magical framework involving rival fairies, political tensions within supernatural realms, and broken promises. These elements transform the tale into something closer to a romantic fantasy novel than a brief moral fable.

The narrative also contains multiple subplots and extended dream sequences that deepen the emotional and symbolic texture of the story. Beauty often dreams of a handsome prince who guides her morally and emotionally, creating a psychological bridge between the terrifying Beast and the possibility of hidden nobility. These dreams function not only as romantic foreshadowing but also as symbolic expressions of inner conflict and hope. Villeneuve carefully describes palace life, luxurious settings, and ceremonial customs, highlighting the grandeur and rigidity of aristocratic existence.

Marriage plays a central thematic role in this version. In eighteenth-century France, marriage among the upper classes was often shaped by family alliances, property concerns, and social advancement rather than personal affection. Villeneuve's narrative reflects these realities. Beauty's eventual union with the Beast is not based on impulsive passion but on rational evaluation, moral duty, and gradual emotional understanding. Love develops slowly, shaped by conversation, reflection, and shared experience. This portrayal suggests that true companionship arises from character and virtue rather than physical attraction.

The Beast himself is a deeply tragic figure. While his appearance is terrifying, his inner world is sensitive and intelligent. He suffers from rejection and isolation, embodying the pain of being judged solely by outward form. His vulnerability invites sympathy rather than fear.

Beauty, in contrast, demonstrates reason, patience, and ethical maturity. Her acceptance of the Beast emerges from thoughtful decision-making. She learns to see beyond his physical form and recognizes his kindness and emotional sincerity.

Ultimately, Villeneuve's tale mirrors aristocratic concerns such as family honor, social responsibility, and moral integrity. The magical transformation at the story's conclusion operates on two levels: it is both a literal breaking of a curse and a symbolic affirmation that inner nobility surpasses superficial beauty. Through this elaborate romance, Villeneuve presents not merely a fairy tale, but a meditation on identity, virtue, and the hidden depth of the human soul.

Beaumont's Moral Adaptation (1756)

In 1756, Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont published a shorter and more instructional version of *Beauty and the Beast*. As a governess, she intended the tale to guide young girls in proper behaviour. She removed the complex subplots found in Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve's earlier narrative and emphasized a clear moral lesson. Beauty is portrayed as obedient, gentle, and selfless, representing the ideal daughter. The story highlights inner virtue over outward beauty, and the Beast's transformation becomes a reward for moral goodness. This simplified, didactic version became widely popular and influenced many later retellings.

From Page to Screen: The Nature of Adaptation

When a literary story becomes a film, the transformation is far deeper than a simple shift in medium; it is a shift in expressive language. Literature speaks through carefully chosen words, descriptive passages, narrative voice, and access to a character's inner thoughts. A novelist can pause the action to explore a memory, describe a feeling in detail, or explain a character's hidden fear. Readers move at their own pace, imagining scenes based on textual clues. The experience is intimate and imaginative, shaped by personal interpretation.

Film, however, communicates through a different set of tools. It relies on images, sound design, facial expressions, gestures, music, lighting, editing, and camera movement. Instead of telling the audience what a character feels, cinema often shows it. A trembling hand, a lowered gaze, or a lingering musical note can reveal emotions without a single spoken word. Meaning is created visually and aurally rather than through direct narration.

In written form, readers imagine the grandness of the castle, the frightening yet sorrowful appearance of the Beast, and the subtle shifts in Beauty's emotional world. Each reader may picture these elements differently. In cinema, those imaginative possibilities are shaped by creative decisions. Directors, costume designers, and visual effects artists must

determine exactly how the Beast will look—how fierce or vulnerable his eyes appear, how heavy his movements feel. The castle must be designed to express mood: is it dark and haunting, warm and enchanted, or both at once? Even silence becomes meaningful. A quiet pause between characters can communicate tension or tenderness. Music can intensify fear, highlight romance, or signal transformation.

Thus, adaptation from page to screen requires translation—not of words alone, but of emotion, atmosphere, and symbolic meaning into visual and sensory experience.

Adaptation is a creative and interpretative process that reshapes a story to suit a new medium and a new audience. It often begins with **condensation**, where lengthy explanations, detailed background information, and complex subplots from the original text are reduced or removed. Since films have limited screen time, directors must decide which parts of the story are essential and which can be simplified. At the same time, adaptation may require **expansion**, adding new scenes, dialogues, or character moments to enhance emotional depth or dramatic tension. Certain visual sequences or backstories may be invented to make the narrative more engaging on screen. Adaptation also involves **interpretation**, as filmmakers highlight themes that resonate with contemporary social values, sometimes shifting emphasis from the original moral focus. Finally, **visualization** transforms abstract ideas—such as inner conflict, love, fear, or transformation—into visible and audible elements through performance, setting, music, and cinematography. Through these combined processes, adaptation becomes both transformation and re-creation. Thus, adaptation is creative transformation rather than mechanical reproduction.

The 1991 Animated Film: A Cultural Landmark

The 1991 animated adaptation of *Beauty and the Beast* by Walt Disney Productions stands as a milestone not only in the history of fairy-tale cinema but also in the broader development of animation as a serious artistic medium. Released as *Beauty and the Beast*, the film achieved both critical and commercial success. Most notably, it became the first animated feature ever nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture. This recognition was groundbreaking. Until then, animated films were often viewed primarily as children's entertainment rather than as works of cinematic depth and artistic sophistication. The nomination signaled a shift in perception, proving that animation could combine emotional storytelling, musical composition, visual innovation, and thematic richness in ways equal to live-action cinema.

The film emerged during what is often described as the “Disney Renaissance,” a period marked by renewed creative energy, memorable music, and character-driven storytelling.

However, what truly distinguished *Beauty and the Beast* was its emotional maturity. While maintaining the enchantment of a fairy tale, the film addressed themes of loneliness, prejudice, pride, and emotional growth with surprising nuance.

Reimagining Belle

One of the most significant transformations in the 1991 adaptation is the reimagining of Belle. Unlike the obedient and morally instructive heroine of earlier literary versions, Belle is portrayed as intelligent, curious, and self-aware. She is introduced as an outsider within her provincial village—someone who does not conform to the expectations of those around her. Her love of books immediately sets her apart. Reading becomes a symbol of imagination, education, and intellectual independence.

Belle yearns for “adventure in the great wide somewhere,” revealing her desire to move beyond limited domestic roles. Unlike earlier ideals of womanhood centered only on patience and sacrifice, she values education, independence, and personal growth. She rejects Gaston's proposal not because she opposes marriage, but because she desires genuine understanding and equal respect instead of shallow praise.

Her independence reflects late twentieth-century discussions about women's autonomy and empowerment. In a cultural context increasingly attentive to female agency, Belle represents a heroine who balances compassion with self-respect. She is kind and empathetic, yet she does not surrender her individuality. Through her, the film subtly encourages viewers to value inner life and personal growth over societal approval.

Humanizing the Beast

The Beast in the 1991 film is crafted with emotional complexity. Rather than being portrayed simply as frightening or cruel, he is depicted as deeply wounded and isolated. His anger appears less as inherent brutality and more as the result of long-standing loneliness and shame. The curse that transformed him into a beastly figure serves as a metaphor for emotional immaturity and pride.

As Belle gradually interacts with him, layers of vulnerability emerge. Small gestures - awkward attempts at politeness, moments of embarrassment, visible sadness - reveal his humanity. The relationship between Belle and the Beast develops slowly through shared experiences: dining together, reading in the library, walking in the snow. These moments build trust and emotional connection.

Importantly, transformation in this version is mutual. Belle learns to look beyond appearances and confront her own fears, while the Beast learns patience, kindness, and

humility. Love is not portrayed as instantaneous or purely romantic. Instead, it grows through communication and emotional openness. This emphasis on shared growth marks a significant evolution from earlier moralistic interpretations of the tale.

The Role of Music and Animation

Music plays an essential narrative role in the 1991 film. Songs are not merely decorative; they reveal character psychology and advance the plot. Through musical expression, characters articulate desires and insecurities that might remain hidden in dialogue alone. The score enhances emotional atmosphere, whether through joy, longing, or suspense.

Animation allows the enchanted castle to feel alive in ways literature can only describe. Household objects such as Lumière, Cogsworth, and Mrs. Potts are transformed into lively personalities, blending humor with warmth. Their presence softens the darker elements of the narrative and reinforces the theme of community within isolation.

The transformation scene at the film's conclusion is visually striking. Swirling light, rising music, and dramatic colour shifts combine to create a moment of awe. Yet beyond spectacle, the scene symbolizes inner change made visible. The Beast's physical transformation reflects emotional maturity already achieved. The magic confirms what the characters—and the audience—have come to understand: true change begins within.

The 2017 Live-Action Remake: Modern Depth and Inclusivity

In 2017, director Bill Condon revisited the beloved narrative with the live-action adaptation *Beauty and the Beast*. While closely inspired by the 1991 animated version, this reinterpretation expands character backstories and introduces themes aligned with twenty-first-century sensibilities.

In this adaptation, Belle's intellectual curiosity is further emphasized by portraying her not only as a reader but also as an inventor. She designs a mechanical washing device intended to ease daily labor. This addition underscores creativity and practical intelligence. Belle's independence becomes more pronounced as she actively challenges the limitations imposed by her village society. Her resistance to narrow gender roles is clearer and more assertive. She seeks education, innovation, and freedom of thought. In doing so, the film resonates with contemporary conversations about women in science, education, and leadership. Belle embodies both compassion and capability.

The Beast's characterization also gains additional depth. The film explores his upbringing and emotional environment, suggesting that his arrogance stems from neglectful influences and learned pride. The curse becomes less arbitrary and more

symbolic of character flaws that must be consciously overcome. His transformation requires introspection and genuine change, not simply romantic affection. By highlighting psychological development, the film frames redemption as a deliberate and painful process of self-improvement. Technological advancements in computer-generated imagery create a richly detailed environment. The castle feels tangible—its textures, shadows, and architecture contribute to a sense of realism intertwined with fantasy. Costumes and lighting enhance mood, balancing grandeur with intimacy. Additionally, the film subtly acknowledges themes of diversity and inclusivity, reflecting evolving social awareness. These elements suggest that fairy tales are not static relics but adaptable narratives capable of engaging with modern cultural discussions.

Together, the 1991 animated film and the 2017 live-action remake demonstrate how *Beauty and the Beast* continues to evolve. Each version honors the emotional core of the story while reshaping it to reflect the artistic possibilities and cultural concerns of its era. All versions teach that true beauty lies within. However, the meaning of inner beauty changes. In Beaumont's tale, it means obedience and modesty. In modern films, it means empathy, courage, and emotional honesty. Eighteenth-century Beauty represents ideal femininity defined by patience and sacrifice. Modern Belle challenges this image. She seeks independence and intellectual growth. This shift mirrors historical movements toward gender equality. Earlier versions treat love as a moral reward. Film adaptations portray love as shared transformation. Both characters change, suggesting partnership rather than hierarchy. Beaumont's story functions as instruction for young girls preparing for marriage. Disney's adaptations emphasize emotional discovery and self-realization. The narrative moves from duty to desire, from obedience to authenticity. The journey of *Beauty and the Beast* demonstrates that stories are not static objects. They are living conversations between past and present. Literature provides the foundation; cinema adds sensory experience. Words become images. Description becomes music. Internal thought becomes visible expression. Film adaptations do not erase earlier versions; they reinterpret them. They invite new audiences to rediscover familiar themes in contemporary language.

Conclusion

The transformation of *Beauty and the Beast* from eighteenth-century literature to modern cinema illustrates the dynamic nature of storytelling. From Villeneuve's aristocratic romance to Beaumont's moral tale, from Disney's animated musical to the live-action reinterpretation, each version reshapes the narrative according to cultural values and artistic possibilities. While the central message—that love sees beyond appearance—remains constant, its

expression changes. The heroine evolves from obedient daughter to independent thinker. The Beast transforms from cursed figure to psychologically complex character. Love shifts from moral reward to mutual emotional growth. The enduring popularity of *Beauty and the Beast* lies in its adaptability. It speaks to universal human experiences: fear of difference, desire for acceptance, hope for transformation. As long as societies continue to question appearance, identity, and love, the story will continue to evolve. Thus, *Beauty and the Beast* is not merely a fairy tale of the past. It is a living narrative that grows with each retelling—proving that true stories, like true love, possess the power to transform across time.

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Indian Fairy Tales: A Powerful Tool for Teaching Valuable Life Lessons

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Abstract

The origin of Indian fairy tales dates back to thousands of years ago in Vedic period. They are greatly influenced by Hindu, Buddhist and Jataka narratives. It is considered that Sanskrit classic 'Panchtantra' and Buddhist 'Jataka Tales' laid foundation of Indian fairy tales. The oral traditions are ancient but formal collections began in the late 19th century, with Joseph Jacobs publishing his famous *Indian Fairy Tales* in 1892. Indian fairy tales are world's oldest short stories deeply rooted in India's rich ancient oral traditions. They emphasize moral lessons. Further, many stories were passed down orally from generations to generations and from centuries to centuries before being recorded in 'Kathasaritasagar'. With amusement, they were designed specially to teach ethics and wisdom. They served as a collection highlighting cultural storytelling traditions, featuring motifs similar to the referenced narratives. They also include different stories that impart moral lessons and reflect the richness of Indian folklore. This research paper tries to explore the valuable teachings taught by Indian fairy tales.

Key Words: *fairy, tales, children, amusement, values, teaching, cultural*

Introduction

The rich culture and vast landscape of India come alive in their ancient folk tales and folklore. Indian folklore and fairy tales have entertained and enlightened generations, since the dawn of language to modern time, with ballads of heroes, so beloved, they are deified and worshiped around the continent, and with epic poetry that strengthens and heralds a community's shared values. This was especially true for the 'Hitopadesha stories' written by Narayana, whose title literally translates as "to counsel or advise with benevolence." Collections of the region's folk tales include *Tales of the Punjab: Folklore of India* by Flora Annie Steel, *Tales of the Sun or Folklore of Southern India* by Ms. Howard Kingscote, and *Indian Fairy Tales* by Joseph Jacobs. 'Singhasan Battisi' is a collection of 32 Indian folktales where statues on King Vikramaditya's ancient throne narrate stories of his courage, wisdom, and justice to King Bhoja. When Bhoja tries to ascend the throne, each of the 32 nymphs (Apsaras) challenges his worthiness, sharing a tale before becoming free.

Following are some of the Indian short stories for kids with good morals. The kids can enjoy important lessons from the different characters in the tales.

The Wedding of the Mouse: The story is about a sage who found a mouse while praying by the river. He turned the mouse into beautiful girl and he and his wife raised her as their own daughter who grew into a beautiful girl. When the sage decided to get her married, he first

approached the Sun God, but she refused due to his intense brightness. The sage then asked the Lord of the Clouds, but she declined because of his dark and thunderous nature. Next, the sage approached the Lord of the Wind, but she rejected him for being too feeble and restless. Finally, the sage asked the Lord of the Mountain, but she found him cold-hearted. Eventually, the sage asked the Lord of the Mountain for another suggestion, and he proposed a mouse as a groom. The girl happily agreed, as she had started her life as a mouse. The sage then turned her back into a mouse, and she got married to a suitable mouse. Moral of the story is to appreciate what you have and do not take blessings in life as granted.

The Story of Akbar and Birbal: One day, Akbar and Birbal went for a walk near the lake on a cold winter day. Birbal mentioned that a man would do anything for money. Akbar dipped his finger into the lake but quickly pulled it out. He doubted if a man would spend a night in the cold lake for money. Birbal accepted the challenge to find such a person. Akbar promised a reward of a thousand gold coins. Birbal found a beggar willing to do it. The beggar stayed in the lake all night. Akbar questioned him the next morning. The beggar survived by focusing on a street lamp nearby. Akbar decided not to reward him. The beggar asked Birbal for help. Birbal avoided court the next day. The king went to Birbal's house and found him cooking Khichdi with a unique method. The king and his servants laughed at the sight. Akbar asked how the Khichdi would cook so far from the fire. Birbal explained that the beggar got warmth from a street lamp that was even farther away. Akbar then realised his mistake and immediately rewarded the beggar. Moral of the story is to never give up, put in effort and make your dream come true.

The Monkey and the Crocodile (Panchatantra): A clever monkey befriends a crocodile, but when the crocodile's wife tries to trick him into giving up his heart, the monkey uses quick thinking to escape, teaching that intelligence overcomes danger.

Tenali Rama Story: Vidhyulatha, a woman known for her arrogance in the Vijayanagara Kingdom, took pride in her intelligence and accomplishments. She challenged anyone to outsmart her wit, wisdom, and intelligence by offering 1000 gold coins and put a challenge board outside her home. Despite many scholars attempting to defeat her, she remained unbeaten until a firewood vendor arrived. The vendor cleverly asked for a 'handful grain' as payment for his firewood, which Vidhyulatha misunderstood. After a dispute, they went to the provincial court where the vendor explained that he meant a singular grain filling a hand. Unable to comprehend this, Vidhyulatha was defeated and had to take down her challenge board and give the vendor the 1000 gold coins. The judge agreed with the vendor's explanation, and the matter was settled. Vidhyulatha was surprised to learn that the vendor was actually Tenali Raman in

disguise, who aimed to teach her a lesson in humility. Moral of the story is to be humble about the talents and gifts you have.

Vikram Betaal Story: King Rajendra and Queen Prema had a lovely daughter named Sona. She excelled in archery and sword fighting. When she was old enough to marry, the king wanted her to find a husband. Sona decided she would only marry someone who could defeat her in combat. Many princes tried, but Sona defeated them all. Uday, a young man, watched Sona and learned her techniques. He eventually defeated her. When asked about his training, Uday admitted he learned by observing Sona. However, Sona refused to marry him, and Uday respected her decision. The Betaal asked King Bikram why Sona didn't marry Uday even though he won. The king explained that since Uday learned from Sona, she was like his teacher. In their culture, a teacher cannot marry a student, so they both understood and accepted it. Moral of the story is if you learn anything from anyone, you should consider them as your teacher.

The Honest Grass Cutter (Folk Tale): An old man's generosity with a gold bracelet catches the attention of a king and fairies, leading to a life-changing reward. It illustrates that good deeds bring unexpected blessings.

The Three Magic Pumpkins (Folk Tale): A poor but kind brother helps a sparrow, which later gives him three magical seeds. These grow into pumpkins filled with food, jewels, and gold, rewarding his kindness while his selfish brother gets nothing.

The King and the Foolish Monkey: In an ancient Indian legend, there was a king who owned a pet monkey. This monkey was treated like a royal servant and was allowed freedoms that no other animal had. However, the monkey was not very smart and couldn't tell the difference between doing something helpful and causing trouble. One day, while the king was sleeping with his head on the monkey's lap, a fly started bothering him. The monkey tried to get rid of it but failed. Determined to protect the king, when the fly landed on the king's face, the monkey grabbed the king's sword and accidentally killed the king while trying to kill the fly. Moral of the story is to sometimes having a wise enemy is better than having a fool as a friend.

Indian famous folk tales and short stories are not just ancient entertainment but also teach morals and values. These famous folk stories are rich in wisdom and reflect India's culture and philosophy. They captivate children's imaginations and teach important values. Each Indian famous folk tale has a timeless moral, making them essential for children's literature.

We value these famous folk tales and the lessons they teach, and we also understand the

importance of early childhood education. Mother's Pet Kindergarten is dedicated to nurturing young minds, providing the perfect environment for these morals to take root and helping children develop with a mix of traditional wisdom and modern learning.

Conclusion

Every night, when it's time to sleep, kids love to listen to stories from their elders whether it's funny animal tales, fairy adventures, or Indian stories for kids, these short bedtime stories for kids make bedtime special. A small story for kids in English not only helps them sleep peacefully but also teaches important values in a fun way. These moral stories written in different Indian languages are easy to understand and even better when told as moral stories with pictures helping children imagine each scene clearly. These inspirational short stories not only entertain children but also fill their minds with imagination and their hearts with values. Influenced by Hinduism, Indian folk tales have a robust canvas with central religious figures and moral lessons. They are used to preserve history, important people and places, as well as the religious rites and ceremonies of various Indian regions. Most Sanskrit fables were written as children's stories to teach youth important life philosophies, so they would grow up to be wise and responsible adults. Folk stories are typically anonymous, timeless, and placeless tales passed orally among various individuals. They are part of the Indian oral heritage and are closely linked to multiple storytelling traditions like fairy tales, myths, and fables. These stories are important sources of historical context, knowledge, and information shared within every human being. Most of these Indian tales influenced European fables and fairy tale collections.

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From Page to Screen: Evolution of Fairy Tales in Film and Digital Media

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Abstract

Fairy tales, an integral part of human storytelling traditions for centuries, from oral-to written literary classics. These stories were first passed through communities as moral lessons, as entertainment and as cultural memory. Later, these stories were written down and published as books as important literary classics. They have transformed considerably with the coming of the modern media. The shift "from page to screen" represents a significant cultural change in the way fairy tales are made, consumed and interpreted. With the rise of the cinema, especially through the studios like The Walt Disney Company, fairy tales have been adapted into animated films and live-action films which have changed the stories, characters and themes to suit modern audiences. In today's digital age, fairy have made their way into interactive and participatory space through streaming platforms, animation technologies, web series, video games which enable audiences to actively participate as listeners instead of passively listening. This research paper discusses the development of fairy tales from printed texts to cinematic interpretations and now in the modern digital platforms and analyzes the impact of technological advancements and culture on the practices of storytelling. The journey from page to screen illustrates the wider patterns of globalization, media convergences and narrative invention of digital age.

Keywords: Fairy Tales, Film Adaptation, Digital Media, Narrative Transformation, Trans media Storytelling.

Introduction

Fairy tales hold an important role in world literature and world imagination. Fairy tales were assembled into literary collections and popularized by such writers as Charles Perrault, the brothers Grimm, and Hans Christian Anderson. All these stories were transferred from oral folklore to printed forms and were codified to literary collections, which were fluid and adaptable. In the twentieth century, a new mode of storytelling was introduced with cinema, so their movement to cinema represented an important phase of change for storytelling. It re- shaped fairy tales using visual imagery, sound and performance. Where visual storytelling revolutionized the way the story was experienced by the audience. This paper examines the ways that fairy tales have evolved through

literature, film, and digital technology with an emphasis on story structure and ideology, as well as audience involvement.

Literary Foundations of Fairy Tales

To understand how fairy tales made the transition from the pages of a book to the screens of a cinema and digital platforms, an examination of the origin in their beginning is important. Fairy tales did not begin as written stories. They were a part of oral traditions, shared and relayed aloud in homes and villages and communities. These stories evolved slightly each time they were told as they reflected the fears, hopes, beliefs and moral values of the society they were located in. Being shaped as a group, they developed characters that many would recognize, repetition in their patterns, and a strong moral theme. When such stories were finally put to paper, those patterns became more rigid, the basis for later adaptations in film and digital media. A major turning point in the literary development of fairy tales came in seventeenth century. France at the hand of Charles Perrault, in his collection of tales *Histoires ou contes du temps passé* published in 1697, Perrault reworked old folk tales into graceful literary pieces suitable to the French court. He added a clear moral lesson at the end of his tales, emphasizing such virtues as patience, obedience, and wisdom. Stories such as *Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty* were better organized in plot and clear in character roles. This sense of order and narrative clarity went on to make these tales easier to adapt into structured film tales.

In the nineteenth century Jacob Grimm and *Wilhelm Grimm* have further consolidated the literary presence of fairy tales in their collection, *Grimms' Fairy Tales*. Their aim was not only literary but cultural - they wanted to preserve German folk traditions during a time of national change. The early versions of their tales were in a darker and more violent vein, and closer to oral storytelling. However, seeing their audience grow to include families and children, they reworked the stories to be more appropriate for a young audience. This gradual adaptation to audience expectations illustrates that the fairy tale had always adapted to the needs of culture - a flexibility that we still see in the cinema and digital re-enactments of the day. The genre progressed farther with Hans Christian Andersen who went far beyond collecting folk tales, and began to write original literary fairy tales. Inspired by traditional motifs, Andersen invested his stories with his own emotion and further psychological themes. In the works such as *The Little Mermaid* and *The Snow Queen* he examined longing, sacrifice, loneliness, and identity. His storytelling gave the genre a new emotional depth and artistic individuality. This personal and introspective approach has a

strong influence on many of the adaptations that are current today and attempt to impart a new emotional meaning to familiar tales. Scholars have also examined the reason for the adaptation of fairy tales across different media forms which is so obvious. *In Morphology of the Folktale* Vladimir Propp proposed patterns common to traditional storytelling such as the journey of the hero, as well as challenges and magical assistance that make up the story and its resolution. These unambiguous narrative structures lend themselves to cinematic narrative. Similarly, the psychiatrist Carl Jung emphasized universal archetypes in fairy tales, the hero, the villain, the wise guide, suggesting that these figures represent deep psychological patterns common to humankind. Because of a sense of familiarity to these archetypes across cultures, fairy tales always mean something whether they are transformed into movies, animations, or digital stories. Overall, the literary foundations of fairy tales, formed through the tradition of orally related stories, that were developed and honed through literary writing, and fortified through universal narrative structures has given the genre a remarkable durability. When fairy tales were brought from page to screen, the filmmakers were not creating completely new stories but reworking stories that had strong structural and emotional roots. This rich literary history is the reason why fairy tales remain popular in the cinema and digital medium today.

Fairy Tales in Early Cinema

When cinema was first developed at the end of the nineteenth century, filmmakers immediately looked to fairy tales as a source of inspiration. These stories were already commonly known: visually imaginative and filled with magic events - this was already perfect material for a new medium, fascinated with spectacle and illusion. Early cinema did not yet place great emphasis on dialogue, relying instead on powerful images, excesses of gestures and transformation. Fairy tales with their castles, fairies, witches, and unpredictable magical changes lent themselves naturally to this visual way of telling a story. One of the first pioneers to take the fairy tales to the screen was Georges Melies, a French Illusionist turned director. Melies employed creative techniques such as stop motion, double exposure, and theatrical set design to create magical effects that amazed audiences. His movies, such as *Cinderella*, showed filmmakers how the cinema was capable of visually recreating magic. Instead of retelling a story, Melies made fairy tales into spectacles of visual wonder. In doing so, he demonstrated the power of film as a means of not only narrating, but because of its visual medium, performing magic. As cinema evolved in the early stages of the twentieth century, fairy tales still continued to appear in silent movies throughout Europe and the United States. These adaptations frequently reduced complex stories to echo

simple moral contrasts of good versus evil. Because the audiences of the early years included families and children, the filmmakers relied on fantasy, romance, and visual fantasy rather than on the darker or violent aspects of the stories as found in earlier literary versions of the story. This shift is indicative of how fairy tales were again adapting to meet a conceptual new audience and new medium. The move from the silent film to animation was another significant stage. Early animators realized that drawn pictures offered the ability to depict transformation, talking animals, and enchanted worlds without the technical controls of the live action filmmaking. This potential was fully realized by Walt Disney, whose feature-length animated film *Snow White* (1937), *Cinderella* (1950), and *The Seven Dwarfs* became a lore in cinematic history. Disney's adaptation was a moderation of darker themes from previous literary versions and was focused on romance, music, and morality. The success of the movie showed that fairy tales could be powerful commercial cultural products in the age of mass entertainment. Early cinema did more than retell fairy tales - it had re-shaped them. Visual imagery replaced descriptive language, music enhanced the emotional tone and special effects made magic seem believable. In the process, fairy tales started to transform from the literary experience to the shared visual spectacle. This transformation paved the way for further developments in color film, digital animation and modern fantasy movie cinema. In essence, fairy tales in early cinema constitute the first big step in the progression from page to screen. Filmmakers found these traditional narratives to provide a sense of familiarity as well as freedom to create new images. Their universal themes and powerful visual elements made them ideal for experimentation in a young medium whose sense of creative possibilities was just being explored. The fairy-tale and film partnership established in these early years and plays an important role in the world of cinema today.

Hollywood and Mainstream Adaptations

As fairy tales became movies for Hollywood cinema, they entered a cultural space characterized by commercial cine-making and mass entertainment. The American film industry did not simply retell these stories, but placed them in new and different contexts in ways that would be appealing to wide and diverse audiences. In the process Hollywood had a considerable effect on the modern generation's vision of characters such as princesses, witches, and magic kingdoms. The rise of animated films in the early twentieth century was an important factor in this change. One of the most effecting persons who came into this shift was Walt Disney. When *Snow White* and *The Seven Dwarfs* were released, it proved to be an established fact that a successful fairy tale could also be made into an entire animated

movie film. The movie used emotional storytelling, great music and visuals that made it seem like a magical, although accessible experience. This approach influenced the way fairy tales were viewed by the general public for decades. Later movies like *Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty* were on a similar vein, showcasing visually appealing worlds, while stressing obvious moral consequences. In adapting these stories, Hollywood often made milder those aspects that were portrayed more harshly in earlier versions. Scenes of violence or severe punishment, occurring in some literary and folk traditions, were diminished or eliminated. Instead, the emphasis had changed to hope, perseverance, romance and emotional satisfaction. This change reflects the way that fairy tales gradually became identified primarily with childhood entertainment in American culture. Filmmakers made a point of adjusting the narratives to make them comfortable and uplifting so that they could be enjoyed by families. However, the mainstream cinema did not stay still. Over the years, filmmakers started to experiment with in-depth characterization and other angles of the story. The Defiance of Conformity: The animated movie *Beauty and the Beast* brought more emotional complexity and the theme of inner transformation. Later reinterpretations even went further. In *Maleficent*, the film gives the traditionally bad character a new spotlight in a more sympathetic, if not the character. This is part of an overall trend in culture towards questioning easy distinctions between good and evil and viewing things from more complex perspectives. The twenty-first century saw the population of live-action remakes of popular animated classics grow. Productions such as *Cinderella* and *The Little Mermaid* tell old tales in high-tech visual effects and new interpretations. These films appeal to the sense of nostalgia as well as updating some of the themes to represent modern values. Their popularity is evidence of the fact that fairy tales still change in accordance to audience expectations and technological progress. Some mainstream adaptations too have turned to dark tones and action driven story telling. Films such as *Snow White* and *The Huntsman* combine fairy tale stories with fantasy and epic battle scenes with mass visual having a strong focus on the dramatic conflict and large scale visual spectacle. This blurring illustrates that fairy tales can adapt to the point that they will satisfy the new modern cinematic trends without losing any recognizable meaning. In conclusion, Hollywood has played a significant role in modifying the fairy tales to suit the global audience. Through animation, remakes of live action and reinterpretations, mainstream cinema has always been remaking these narratives as befitting new cultural moments. While the style will vary and the tone might change, the primary and dominant themes of transformation, struggle, and imagination, however, remain. The leaping from page to screen in Hollywood represents not

only adaptation but reinvention at a constant rate.

Digital Media and Interactive Storytelling

The digital age has opened a new chapter in the life of the fairy tales. Unlike printed books or traditional films, digital platforms encourage audiences to interact with stories in more active and personal ways. Fairy tales which used to go around via oral narration, and later, written texts than printed, cinema, are now moving around streaming services, video games, mobile applications and social media spaces. This shift has changed not only the way these stories are told, but how it has changed their experience. Streaming platforms like Netflix and Disney+ have played an important role in how fairy tales are being brought back to the present-day audiences. Through high-definition visual and global distribution, these platforms help to bring both classic translations and new reinterpretations across the cultural divide. Digital effects have enabled filmmakers to produce landscapes of fantasy that feel real and vast. As a result, enchanted forests, mythical creatures and magical transformations can be presented with a realism previously unimagined by earlier generations of filmmakers. Visual enhancement aside, one of the biggest changes that the digital era has made is the development of interactive storytelling. In this format, the audience is not merely following a set narrative, rather being a part of the shaping of the narrative. Video games with fairy tale inspired themes, like *The Wolf Among Us*, have the familiar characters put in new narrative contexts and given a chance for gamers to alter the course of events. Choices that the player makes can alter relations, determine results and/or reveal alternative endings. This interactive structure defies the traditional notion of the one and only conclusion. Digital storytelling has also spread via children's applications and multimedia storybooks, in which the reader taps on screens and causes animations or listens to narrated dialogue. These features promote interaction and make storytelling a more immersive activity. The act of reading becomes participatory, combining entertainment and exploration. In addition, online communities have been established in which audiences offer up their own interpretations. Through fan fiction, digital artwork, and discussion forums, users reconjure classic narratives and try their hands at alternate points of view. This collaborative creativity reflects the flexibility of oral traditions, in which stories evolved each time that they were told. In a way digital media has brought fairy tales back to a more communal form-and yet the community is now on a global scale. Overall, the adaptability of fairy tales that has led to their transition into the digital media world is remarkable. While the format continues to evolve -- from printed page to cinematic screen to interactive platform -- the essential themes of imagination, transformation, conflict and questioning of

moral values remain intact. In the digital environment, fairy tales are no longer limited to being read or watched but they are explored, reshaped, and experienced in new and dynamic ways.

Trans media Storytelling and Globalization

In the modern media culture, there are no longer any fairy tales that exist in a specific format or medium. Instead, they oftentimes develop into multiple platforms - film, television, novels, video games and merchandise, as well as digital - creating interconnected narrative worlds. This phenomenon is regularly explained as trans media storytelling, wherein a single story or fictional universe expands in different types of media forms each adding new components to the total narrative experience. For fairy tales, this particular approach has greatly broadened the social perspective and cultural significance. Large entertainment companies have been at the center of this development. Studios such as The Walt Disney Company have created entire story universes around classic fairy tale characters. A story can start out as an animated movie and then move on to sequels or spinoffs, become part of television shows, and then become part of theme parks, digital games, and even online content. Rather than retell the same story, it's easy for each platform to present new dimensions of the story - background stories, different views or character arcs, etc. This interconnected model encourages audiences to interact with the story in different formats, building a greater level of emotional investment. Trans media storytelling is also a proponent of globalization. Through international distribution networks and streaming services such as Netflix and Disney+, fairy tales are circulated quickly across national borders. A film made in one country can rapidly be made available across the world, with the stories of European folklore being seen and re-invented in very different cultural settings. As such fairy tales are no longer enclosed in their places of origin as a result, they become global cultural products. This global dimension is further reinforced by digital participation. Social media platforms are enabling fans from various parts of the world to respond with interpretations, artwork and discussion around shared narratives to foster a global fan base and community. Online engagement turns audiences from passive consumers into active contributors, in a way similar to the communal nature of early oral storytelling, but on a global scale. Through trans media expansion and global circulation, fairy tales in trans have transcended literary or cinematic texts and become more than literary or cinematic works as they become media franchises in the context of international popular culture. Their migration between platforms and countries shows great flexibility. While technology and distribution methods adjust and transitions continue to be made, it is

the imaginative heart of fairy tales that allow it to exist in interconnected global networks that ensures its continued relevance in the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

The path of fairy tales from the oral to the printed word, from the cinema screen to the digital screen shows the incredible malleability of these ancient tales. What had started out as storytelling that was communal and based on folklore later lead to literary collections that were shaped by such authors as Charles Perrault and Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm whose versions reflected the moral frameworks and social hierarchy of their times. With the emergence of modern cinema and especially due to the impact of Walt Disney and the worldwide reach of The Walt Disney Company, fairy tales entered a new visual era which enhanced the emotional appeal of the story whilst retaining traditional narrative structures in many respects. However, the transition from the page to the screen has been more than a change of medium; it is a change in meaning, ideology, and audience involvement. Twentieth and twenty-first century adaptations increasingly re-read traditional themes, questioning

previous representations of gender, power and morality. Films such as *Frozen* are a good example of contemporary storytelling putting more focus on autonomy, relational complexity, and self-discovery, rather than simple romantic resolution. In the digital age, fairy tales go even further - through streaming media, interactive media and participatory online cultures - to encourage audiences to reinterpret and reshape familiar stories. The evolution of fairy tales, therefore, represents wider cultural and technological changes. Each stage, from oral tradition, to literary codification, to cinematic adaptation, to digital expansion, has recontextualized these stories in relation to the prevailing social values and communicative possibilities. While their forms have changed, their basic story elements of conflict, transformation, moral tension, and hope continue. This balance between continuity and innovation is the reason why they remain relevant.

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The Role of the *Panchatantra* in the Overall Development of Children

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Abstract:

Fairy tales are traditional stories passed down from one generation to the next, originally shared orally and eventually recorded in written form. These are not just entertaining stories but powerful tools that contribute to the cognitive, emotional, and moral growth of children. The *Panchatantra* is one of the most influential collections of moral and political fables in world literature. Traditionally attributed to Vishnu Sharma, it was composed to educate young princes in wisdom, ethical conduct, and practical intelligence. First, it explains moral values and consequences then, through specific tales, it demonstrates how intelligence, cooperation, emotional control, and ethical thinking shape personality. The *Panchatantra*, more than a collection of fairy tales, is a powerful educational tool that nurtures moral, emotional, cognitive, and social development in children. Its timeless lessons continue to guide young minds toward wisdom, ethical understanding, and practical intelligence. Through animal characters and engaging narratives, it teaches life lessons that remain relevant in child development today. This paper expands each major area of child development with specific examples from *Panchatantra* tales as well as its role in the overall development of children.

Key words: morality, wisdom, social understanding, life lessons, overall development etc.

Introduction

Fairy tales are traditional narratives that have been transmitted from one generation to another, first through oral storytelling and later in written form. During the nineteenth century, collectors such as the Brothers Grimm and the writer Hans Christian Andersen played a significant role in preserving and popularizing many classic fairy tales. These stories commonly feature magical happenings, mythical beings, and imaginative settings, often portraying a clear contrast between good and evil. It plays a significant role in a child's overall growth and development. They stimulate creativity and imaginative thinking by introducing magical settings and remarkable characters. At the same time, they help build moral awareness by teaching values such as honesty, bravery, kindness, and perseverance. By portraying challenges and their resolutions, these stories help children understand choices, consequences, and ways to handle problems effectively.

The *Panchatantra* is one of the most ancient and influential collections of Indian fables. Traditionally attributed to Vishnu Sharma, it was composed in Sanskrit around 200 BCE. The book is divided into five sections, or *tantras*, each focusing on a particular aspect

of life. The *Panchatantra* has had a wide influence beyond India, being translated into languages like Persian, Arabic, and many European languages. Its universal themes of wisdom, morality, and social intelligence make it relevant even in modern education.

The primary purpose of these stories was to educate young princes in wisdom, ethics, and practical decision-making. The stories use animals as main characters, which symbolize human qualities such as courage, cleverness, greed, and loyalty. Morally, it teaches the importance of honesty, loyalty, patience, and self-control. Emotionally, children learn to manage fear, anger, and disappointment by observing how characters respond to challenges. Intellectually, the tales encourage logical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making. Socially, the tales highlight cooperation, friendship, and careful judgment in choosing companions. Another important aspect of the *Panchatantra* is its contribution to language and communication skills. The stories, often written in a frame narrative with dialogues, help children improve vocabulary, listening, and storytelling abilities. They also instil cultural values and ethical understanding, as many stories are rooted in Indian traditions like karma (consequences of actions), dharma (duty), and niti (practical wisdom).

Moral Development

Moral development refers to a child's ability to distinguish right from wrong, understand consequences, develop values, and make ethical decisions. In early childhood, morality is often understood through concrete outcomes—good actions are rewarded, and bad actions are punished. Stories help children internalize these lessons in a natural and memorable way. In the story *The Blue Jackal*, a jackal accidentally falls into blue dye and pretends to be a divine king among animals. Eventually, he forgets his disguise and howls like a jackal, exposing himself. The other animals kill him for deception. This story clearly demonstrates that as well as dishonesty eventually leads to downfall. Children learn that pretending to be something they are not succeeds permanently.

The importance of wise judgement seen in the story *The Brahmin and the Mongoose* in which a Brahmin kills his loyal mongoose in anger, believing it harmed his child. Later, he realizes the mongoose had actually saved the child from a snake. The lesson is that impulsive decisions and uncontrolled anger lead to regret. This helps children understand the importance of patience and careful thinking before acting. In the story *The Lion and the Bull* jackal creates misunderstanding between a lion and his loyal bull friend. The lion, influenced by suspicion, kills the bull. This story teaches children not only jealousy can destroy relationships but also the importance of loyalty. It focuses on not to trust gossip blindly

Cognitive Development

Cognitive development involves the growth of thinking skills, reasoning ability, memory, problem-solving, and logical understanding. Stories that include challenges and strategic solutions stimulate analytical thinking and decision-making abilities in children. In the story *The Clever Rabbit and the Lion* a cruel lion demands animals as daily food. A small rabbit tricks the lion into jumping into a well by showing him his own reflection. The rabbit's intelligence saves the forest by his problem solving qualities which encourages children to think creatively and understand that intelligence is more powerful than physical strength.

Children observe a clear cause-and-effect relationship from the story *The Talkative Tortoise* where two geese try to help a tortoise fly to safety. They warn him not to speak while holding a stick in his mouth. Unable to control himself, he talks and falls to his death. This teaches a lesson that lack of self-control leads to negative consequences. The story *The Jackal and the Drum* teaches children not to fear blindly and to investigate situations logically. In this story a jackal hears a frightening sound in the forest and is initially scared. Later, he discovers it is only a drum blown by the wind. It directs critical thinking. Emotional Development Emotional development includes understanding feelings, managing emotions, and coping with fear, jealousy, anger, and disappointment. Stories allow children to experience emotions safely and learn healthy emotional responses. In *The Lion and the Hare*, the rabbit overcomes fear through courage and intelligence. Instead of panicking, he plans carefully. Children learn that fear can be controlled through calm thinking and bravery. The importance of controlling anger is shown from *The Brahmin and the Mongoose*. The Brahmin's uncontrolled anger leads to tragic regret which teaches children the importance of emotional regulation. The lesson from the story *The Weaver Who Became a Vishnu* emphasizes humility and warns against excessive pride or ambition where a weaver disguises himself as the god Vishnu to win a princess. Eventually, his deception is revealed.

Social Development

Social development refers to the ability to build relationships, cooperate with others, understand social roles, and resolve conflicts. Through stories involving friendship, betrayal, and teamwork, children learn social skills. In the story *The Four Friends* a deer, mouse, crow, and tortoise, work together to escape a hunter. Each animal uses its unique skill to save the others which promotes cooperation, teamwork and mutual support. In another story *The Lion and the Bull* the jackal manipulates both friends through clever speech. Children learn to be cautious of those who create misunderstandings and to value honest communication. From *The Monkey and the Crocodile*, the crocodile attempts to betray his monkey friend to please his wife. The monkey survives through intelligence. The story teaches children to be careful

in choosing trustworthy companions.

Language and Communication Development

Stories help develop vocabulary, listening skills, narrative structure understanding, and expressive communication. Dialogues between characters enhance persuasive and conversational skills. The frame narrative of the *Panchatantra*, where stories are told within stories, strengthens memory and comprehension. Dialogues between the lion and jackal in *The Lion and the Bull* demonstrate persuasive speech and rhetorical strategy. Children improve their ability to follow complex narratives, retell stories and express ideas clearly.

Cultural and Ethical Identity

Stories reflect cultural values, traditions, and philosophical ideas. Exposure to culturally rooted tales strengthens identity and ethical awareness. The *Panchatantra* reflects Indian concepts such as Dharma (duty), Karma (consequence of actions) and Niti (practical wisdom). In *The Blue Jackal*, the false king's downfall reflects karmic justice. Through such stories, children internalize cultural ethics while also learning universal moral principles.

In conclusion, fairy tales are not just entertaining stories but powerful tools that contribute to the cognitive, emotional, and moral growth of children. By simplifying complex life experiences, these stories support emotional growth and help build confidence. Unlike ordinary fairy tales, the *Panchatantra* emphasizes moral lessons, intelligence, and social understanding rather than mere magic or fantasy. Thus, the *Panchatantra* is not merely a collection of fairy tales but a structured educational system that nurtures moral reasoning, cognitive growth, emotional maturity, social awareness, and cultural identity in children. It plays a comprehensive role in children's overall development. Therefore, fairy tales remain a meaningful and influential part of children's literature and cultural tradition.

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Role of Fairy Tales in Moral and Emotional Development of Children

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Abstract:

Fairy tales are crucial part in the childhood phase of our life for they are not only performing the role as a tool of amusement but also as powerful tool of moral and emotional development. The said research paper observes the role of fairy tales in forming children's ethical understanding, emotional intelligence, and psychological growth. It is based upon theories from developmental psychology, folklore studies, and literary criticism. It attempts to illustrate how fairy tales contribute to the formation of moral values such as sincerity, kindness, courage, and empathy, while also aiding children in understanding and managing emotions. The paper employs an analytical and Interpretative research methodology. It is also based upon theoretical insights from scholars such as Bruno Bettelheim and Jean Piaget. It throws light on how moral dilemmas are the key concerns in fairy tales to educate the children to differentiate between what is right and wrong through narrative frameworks which sings the glory of victory of the good over evil. Additionally, fairy tales comprises of the symbolic and imaginative elements which assist children in processing complex emotions such as fear, anxiety, jealousy, and hope in a safer and more controlled environment. The present paper illustrates through cross-cultural examples, including Indian fairy tales like the Panchatantra and Vikram and Betal. These examples show how special and widely important these developmental functions are. The findings recommend how fairy tales are crucial in nourishing emotional, moral and social Comprehension. The paper concludes that fairy tales are inseparable in child development, particularly in an age where digital media is going to replace traditional storytelling. Continued use of fairy tales in pedagogy and parenting can remarkably help in attaining holistic development of children.

Keywords:

Fairy Tales, Moral Development, Emotional Development, Children, Folklore, Psychological Growth, Ethics, Imagination, Cultural Learning, Storytelling, holistic development.

Introduction

Fairy tales are one of those ancient forms of literature that children get acquainted through oral storytelling, books, visual media etc. Even though these tales are generally connected with elements of fantasy and imagination, their significance goes beyond pure amusement. They are important mediator in the moral and emotional development of children by moulding not only their understanding of right and wrong but also their ability to process emotions. Developmental psychologists opines that the learning process becomes more smooth in case of complex concepts due to the simple and sweet art of

storytelling. These fairy tales are medium in imparting ethical values due to their simplicity and clear moral distinctions. The values like honesty, punctuality, justice, kindness, and tolerance assist children in comprehending social norms. Children feel at more ease while experiencing the feelings like fear, anger, sadness, and happiness through fairy tales. The cycle of conflict and resolution trains children to combat with challenges which are inseparable part of our human life and can be overcome. Theorists like Bruno Bettelheim insist that allegorical form of fairy tales promote children to face challenges with courage and confidence. In the Indian context, traditional tales like the *Panchatantra* and *Vikram and Betal* have been used to impart moral lessons and life skills. These stories can be employed as a crucial tool in the holistic development of children due to their universal nature. Hence, the research paper attempts to investigate the multifaceted role of fairy tales in the moral and emotional growth of children by stressing their applicability in both traditional and modern contexts.

Hypothesis:

Fairy tales perform a significant role in children's moral and emotional development through allegorical narratives that impart ethical values and assist in processing complex emotions.

Aim and Objectives:

Aim

To analyze the role of fairy tales in fostering moral and emotional development in children. **Objectives**

1. To observe how fairy tales contribute to moral education
2. To analyze the role of fairy tales in emotional development with reference to psychological theories related to Child Development
3. To illustrate fairy tales from different cultures, including Indian traditions.
4. To evaluate the relevance of fairy tales in contemporary childhood education.

Research Methodology:

The present research paper employs analytical and interpretative approach. It adopts theoretical framework of child development theories put forth by Jean Piaget and Bruno Bettelheim.

Interpretation and Discussion:

Fairy tales influence children's development at both cognitive and emotional levels by following ways:

1. Moral Development through Fairy Tales:

Fairy tales play a crucial role in shaping children's moral understanding. They present clear distinctions between good and evil, allowing children to recognize ethical behavior. Characters such as heroes and villains serve as models of virtue and vice.

In stories like "Cinderella", kindness and patience are rewarded, while cruelty is punished. Similarly, Indian tales from the Panchatantra teach practical wisdom and ethical decision-making. For example, the story of "The Monkey and the Crocodile" emphasizes intelligence and presence of mind as essential virtues. According to Jean Piaget's theory of moral development, children initially understand morality in terms of rules and consequences. Fairy tales align with this stage by presenting simple moral frameworks where good actions lead to positive outcomes.

2. Emotional Development through Fairy Tales:

Fairy tales help children to understand and manage emotions by presenting them in symbolic forms. Feelings such as fear, jealousy, anger, and happiness are depicted through characters and situations. For instance, the fear of abandonment is often represented through stories where children are separated from their families, as seen in Hansel and Gretel. These narratives allow children to confront their fears indirectly and develop coping mechanisms.

Indian stories like "Vikram and Betal" also present emotional challenges through moral dilemmas. The repeated questioning by Betal reflects internal conflicts, encouraging children to think critically and empathize with different perspectives.

3. Role of Imagination and Symbolism:

Imagination is a key component of emotional development, and fairy tales stimulate creativity through magical elements and symbolic characters. Witches, talking animals, and enchanted objects represent deeper psychological realities. Bruno Bettelheim argues that fairy tales provide symbolic solutions to emotional conflicts, helping children understand complex feelings. For example, monsters may symbolize fears, while magical helpers represent hope and support.

In Indian fairy tales, animals often stand for human traits. The clever fox or wise crow in the "Panchatantra" embodies intelligence and strategy. This symbolic interpretation assist in making abstract concepts accessible to children.

4. Growth of Empathy and Social Skills:

Fairy tales encourage empathy by allowing children to identify with characters and their experiences. By understanding the struggles and emotions of characters, children learn to relate to others in real life. Stories involving friendship, betrayal, and cooperation teach important social skills. For example, Stories from “Hitopadesha” emphasize trust and the consequences of deceit, helping children understand the importance of relationships. Empathy developed through fairy tales contributes to better social interactions and emotional intelligence.

5. Facing Challenges:

Fairy tales help children to cope with psychological challenges by presenting difficult situations in manageable forms. Themes such as loss, conflict, and transformation are common in these narratives. For instance, stories where characters overcome adversity teach resilience and perseverance. Children learn that challenges can be faced and resolved, which builds confidence and emotional strength. The repetitive structure of fairy tales also provides a sense of security and predictability, which is important for emotional stability.

6. Cultural Learning:

Fairy tales are deeply rooted in cultural traditions and values. They introduce children to societal norms, customs, and ethical principles. Indian fairy tales emphasize concepts such as dharma (duty) and karma (action and consequence), providing a moral framework for understanding life. These stories not only teach individual values but also promote cultural identity and continuity.

7. Contemporary Relevance:

Despite the rise of digital media, fairy tales remain relevant in modern education. They are used in classrooms to teach language, values, and emotional skills. Educators recognize the importance of storytelling in holistic development. Fairy tales can be adapted to address contemporary issues such as environmental awareness, gender equality, and social justice. Thus, fairy tales continue to play a vital role in shaping well-rounded individuals.

Conclusion:

Fairy tales are powerful tools for the moral and emotional development of children. Through their engaging narratives, symbolic elements, and moral lessons, they help children understand ethical values and manage complex emotions. This research has shown that fairy tales contribute to the development of moral reasoning, emotional intelligence, empathy, and resilience. By presenting challenges and resolutions, they prepare children for real-life situations and foster psychological growth. The inclusion of

cross-cultural examples, particularly Indian fairy tales, highlights the universal significance of these narratives. Despite cultural differences, the core functions of fairy tales remain consistent, emphasizing their importance in child development. In conclusion, fairy tales should continue to be an integral part of childhood education and parenting. Their ability to combine imagination with meaningful lessons makes them indispensable for nurturing morally and emotionally balanced individuals.

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Gilligan's Care Ethics and its Relevance to *Indian Fairy Tales*

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Abstract:

It is the duty of the doctor to prescribe the medicines for the ailments of the patient. Likewise, Buddha used to preach the people, unveil the truth in simple manner including morals, ethics and universal human values through the stories. The present research paper proposes the Care Ethics proposed by Carol Gilligan in *A Different Voice* and its relevance to Indian Fairy Tales. Throughout this research paper care ethics will be elaborated and will throw the light on how children's psychology is developed with rational skills along with care ethics and different psychological stage elaborated by Gilligan. Most of the time stories are being told by mothers, grand parents and friends and by many others across the world. The question is that how much that child is transformed. This expected transformation or fruitful change in the psyche of the children is possible through the stories or short tales at early stage of his childhood. The psychological stages in Gilligan's work will help the readers to observe it in the development of the child.

Keywords: care ethics, fairy tales, moral stages of child

Introduction

"Historically, most of the stories are being told from the perspective of telling the truth, morality and percolating the justice. The listener should follow the path of the truth and justice. The reflected justice and morality through the tales dominated by 'Justice' frameworks. That is a rigid systems of rights, autonomy, and hierarchical rules showing the morality in the stories. Jacob's collection of stories of Indian Fairy Tales shows the truth, reflects the morality in Indian society. The present research paper throws light on the Carol Gilligan's perspective of moral development of the child and it also shows its relevance to the selected stories from the collection of stories in Jacob's book. Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral development, long considered the gold standard, often side-lined narratives that prioritized empathy over equity. However, Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* (1982) revolutionized this field by introducing the Ethics of Care, an alternative moral logic centered on responsibility, relationship maintenance, and the prevention of harm. This paper seeks to map Gilligan's three stages of moral development—Pre-conventional (Self-care), Conventional (Self-sacrifice), and Post-conventional (Interdependence)—onto the landscape of Indian fairy tales. By analysing stories such as 1. *The Lion and the Crane*, 2. *Punchkin*, 3. *The*

Tiger, the Brahman, and the Jackal 4. *The Charmed Ring* 5. *Sun, Moon, and Wind Go Out to Dinner* and 6. *The Talkative Tortoise*, this study argues that Indian folklore does not merely provide 'fables' for entertainment but offers a sophisticated 'Web of Connection' where moral maturity is measured not by individual triumph, but by the strength of one's relational ties. Gilligan's theory posits that moral development is not just about learning "rules" (Justice), but about the refinement of relationships and the prevention of harm. This is shown with the following tales and systematic explanation leading towards clarification of three stages and its relevance of Indian morality.

The Lion and the Crane Summary of the story

A crane removes a bone from a lion's throat, but the lion refuses a reward, claiming survival was payment enough. It highlights the reasonable reality that justice is rare when dealing with the greedy.

Moral Stage: Post-Conventional (Universal Care & Non-Violence)

- **The Deep Analysis:** In this story, the Crane (the Bodhisatta) encounters a predator in agony. A "Justice" perspective might argue that the Lion deserves his pain as a natural consequence of his violent life. However, the Crane operates from a Care Perspective, where the immediate reality of suffering creates a moral imperative to help the lion.
- **Key Care Feature:** The Crane balances Care for Self with Care for the Other. By placing a stick in the Lion's mouth, he minimizes his own risk while fulfilling his responsibility to the suffering animal. When the Lion later proves ungrateful, the Crane does not seek punitive justice (revenge). Instead, he chooses "Soft Withdrawal."
- **Observation of the story:** This story illustrates that the highest level of morality is not about punishing the "bad," but about maintaining one's own integrity through compassion and non-violence.

Punchkin Summary of the story

A prince rescues his family by locating a wizard's "soul" hidden inside a distant parrot. By destroying the bird, he kills the magician, illustrating the trope of hidden biological vulnerabilities.

Moral Stage: Conventional (The Web of Connection)

In *Punchkin*, the prince's journey is redefined not as a quest for power, but as a "Relational Quest" aimed at restoring a broken family unit.

- **The Deep Analysis:** This narrative is a masterpiece of Collective Nurturing. The seven

sisters raise Balna's son in a shared environment of care. Gilligan describes this as the "Web of Connection," where individuals define themselves through their relationships rather than their autonomy.

- **Key Care Feature:** The son's quest is not a typical "Hero's Journey" for gold or power; it is a Relational Quest. His motivation is to restore his broken family. He uses a "Language of Care"—a gold ring—to communicate with his mother, proving that emotional intelligence is as powerful as physical strength.
- **Observation of the story:** *Punchkin* demonstrates that in Indian folklore, a person is never an "island." Success is the restoration of the family unit, and morality is the labor of keeping that unit alive.

The Tiger, the Brahman, and the Jackal Summary of the story

A Brahman frees a tiger who then threatens to eat him. After various entities justify the tiger's ingratitude, a clever jackal saves the Brahman by trapping the tiger back into its cage.

Moral Stage: Transition from Justice to Care

- **The Deep Analysis:** The Brahman represents the limitations of Kohlberg's Justice Ethics. He is trapped by a rigid "Social Contract" (I promised the Tiger, so I must die). He seeks **justification** from the Tree and the Buffalo, who provide a cold, detached logic: "Life is unfair, accept your fate."
- **Key Care Feature:** The Jackal functions as a Relational Mediator. He realizes that abstract rules (the promise) are secondary to the Prevention of Harm (the Brahman's life). He uses wit to reset the situation, returning the threat to its cage.
- **Observation of the story:** This story evaluates "Blind Justice." It suggests that a moral system that leads to the destruction of the innocent is flawed, and that "Care" (protecting the vulnerable) must override "Rules."

The Charmed Ring Summary of the story

A youth spends his inheritance to save animals, receiving a magical ring in return. When the ring is stolen, the rescued animals recover it, proving that kindness to nature ensures future protection.

Moral Stage: Post-Conventional (Interspecies Interdependence)

The story *The Charmed Ring* suggests that moral maturity extends beyond humans to include a "Universal Care" framework for the natural world.

- **The Deep Analysis:** The protagonist practices Unselfish Care by spending his last resources to save a dog and a cat. This moves beyond human-centric morality into a "Universal Care" framework.
- **Key Care Feature:** The relationship between the boy and the animals is one of Mutual Responsibility. There is no legal contract between them, yet the animals travel great distances to save him. This highlights Gilligan's concept that "Self" and "Other" are knotted; the boy's survival is a direct result of his previous act of care.
- **Observation of the story:** Morality in Indian tales often extends the "Web of Care" to the entire natural world, suggesting that compassion for the smallest creature is a marker of high moral development.

Sun, Moon, and Wind Go Out to Dinner Summary of the story

In this celestial myth, the Moon is blessed with cool light for sharing a feast with her mother, while the Sun and Wind are cursed with heat and harshness for their selfishness.

Moral Stage: Pre-Conventional vs. Conventional

- **The Deep Analysis:** This story serves as a psychological experiment. The Sun and Wind represent the Pre-Conventional Stage (Morality of Self-Interest). They consume the feast and forget their connection to their primary caregiver (the Mother).
- **Key Care Feature:** The Moon represents the Conventional Stage (Morality of Care for Others). She exhibits Relational Memory; even while enjoying the feast, her mind remains connected to her mother's hunger.
- **Observation of the story:** The "Blessings and Curses" in the story are a cultural validation of Care Ethics. The Moon is rewarded not for a "heroic act," but for the quiet, consistent act of remembering her mother—placing the relationship above her own appetite.

The Talkative Tortoise Summary of the story

A Jataka tale where a tortoise falls to its death because it cannot stay silent while being carried by geese. It serves as a warning against the dangers of unrestrained or untimely speech.

Moral Stage: The Breakdown of Reciprocal Care

The tragedy of the *Talkative Tortoise* serves as a metaphor for how individual ego can disrupt a "collective safety net" and shatter a care plan.

- **The Deep Analysis:** While the Ducks exhibit high-level Active Care (creating a complex solution to save their friend), the tragedy occurs because the Tortoise fails to uphold his end of the Relational Agreement.

- **Key Care Feature:** In Gilligan's framework, Care is a Dialogue. For the "Web" to work, both parties must be responsible. The Tortoise's ego (the need to speak/defend himself against onlookers) is a "Pre-Conventional" impulse that shatters the Ducks' "Care Plan."
- **Observation of the story:** This story illustrates that care is fragile. It requires the person being cared for to respect the safety of the bond. The Tortoise's fall is a metaphor for what happens when individualism disrupts a collective safety net.

Reflection of Strategic Values through the tales.

1. **Dharma as Care:** "Dharma" in these tales is often synonymous with Gilligan's "Responsibility."
2. **Gender Archetypes:** It can be noted that "Care" is not just for women; the Crane (male) and the Jackal (male/ambiguous) also exhibit high-level Care Ethics.
3. **Conflict Resolution:** These stories show that Indian folk wisdom often favours ediation and wit (Care) over battle and conquest (Justice).

While Gilligan's theory was originally developed to highlight a "care-based" feminine ethics (contrasting with Kohlberg's justice-based model), it provides a fascinating lens for this fable's transition from survival to disillusionment.

Synthesis of Findings and Conclusion

The application of Carol Gilligan's Care Ethics to the 29 stories in Joseph Jacobs' collection—specifically the six analyzed in depth—reveals a profound moral architecture that prioritizes relationality over autonomy. While traditional Western analyses might categorize these tales through Lawrence Kohlberg's "Justice" lens (focusing on rewards, punishments, and contracts), this research demonstrates that the "voice" of Indian folklore is distinctly one of Responsibility and Connection.

1. Redefining the "Hero"

In these narratives, the hero is rarely a solitary figure achieving a "win" through individual rights. Instead, as seen in "Punchkin" and "The Charmed Ring," the protagonist's success is a direct result of their ability to build and maintain a "Web of Connection." Morality here is not an abstract set of rules but a living practice of care that extends even to the "other"—whether it be a dangerous predator in "The Lion and the Crane" or a domestic animal.

2. The Critique of Rigid Justice

The story of "The Tiger, the Brahman, and the Jackal" serves as a vital cultural critique of "Blind Justice." It suggests that a moral system based solely on contracts and "word of honor," without the contextual intervention of "Care" (the prevention of harm), is inherently

destructive. The Jackal's wit is not a violation of morality but a higher form of Post-Conventional Care that resets the balance of the relational web.

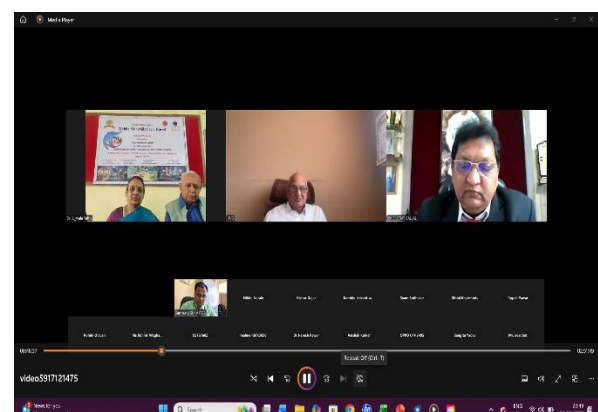
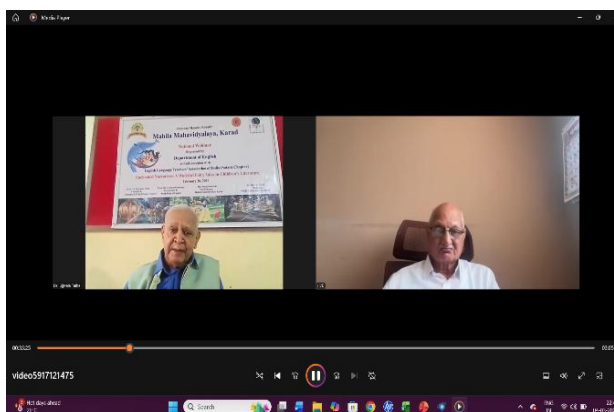
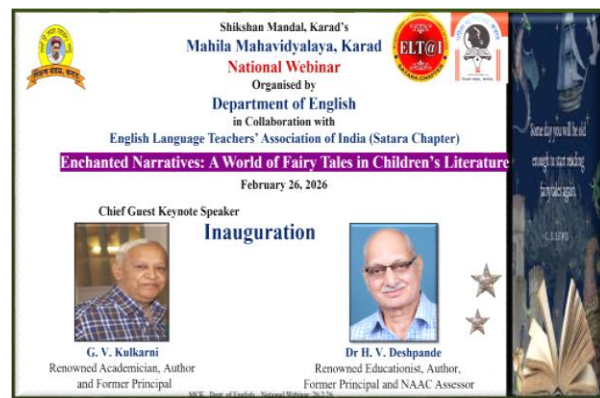
3. Cultural Universalism

The "Blessings and Curses" in "Sun, Moon, and Wind" act as a final moral judgment on the stages of care. By rewarding the Conventional Stage (the Moon's relational memory) and punishing the Pre-Conventional Stage (the Sun and Wind's self-interest), Indian folk tradition aligns perfectly with Gilligan's assertion that the highest virtue is the maintenance of the bond between the self and the caregiver.

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Screenshots:



Shikshan Mandal, Karad's
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Enchanted Narratives: A World of Fairy Tales in Children's Literature
February 26, 2026

Chairperson

Prof. (Dr) Trupti Karekatti
Dept. of English, Shivaji University, Kolhapur President.

Resource Person

Swati Raje
Bhaashan Foundation, Pune

Plenary Session I
**From Once Upon to Ever After:
Narratives Under the Spell**




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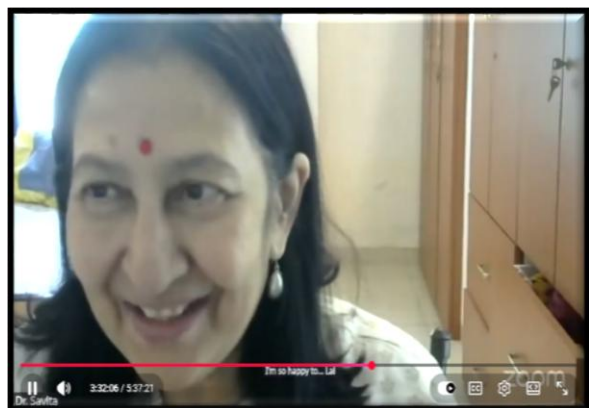
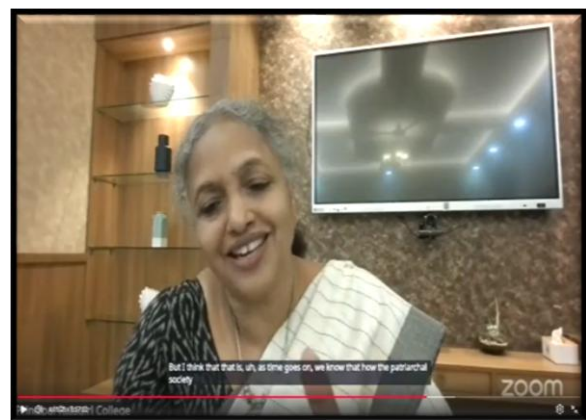
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Plenary Session II
**Beyond the Ever After:
What Do Fairy Tales Really Tell?**



Fairy Tales- therapeutic potentials

- Non-threatening conditions to try out different approaches & perspectives
- Dark elements as reassurance
- Vicarious pleasures
- Duality motif to preserve good image in a guilt-free state of mind
- Transformation/ splitting up of personalities- externalization of inner pressures
- Menacing figures- parent replacements
- Dead mother/ orphan motif - to achieve self-hood



Unhappily for a while, so that the wolf can go into the grandmother's house, avoid the woodcutter and also

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Chairperson

Prof. (Dr) Sunil Sawant
Prin. Shiram Institute of Information Technology, Pune

Valedictory Session
The Stories that Wrote Me: Fairy Tales and My Craft

Resource Person

Dr Syam Sudhakar
Asst. Prof. St. Thomas College, Thrissur
Author, Poet, Editor and Translator

MCK, Dept. of English, National Webinar 26.2.26

Memories

- Grandmother's Stories/experiences
- Lullabies & Local myths
- Fairy Tales Translated as Yakshi Kadhakal (Fear!)
- Orality (My Story!) - Fear & Freedom from fear
- Social Context of Kerala (19th Century)
- Magic realism
- Electricity brought Logic! (Light of Modernity) –Odiyan, Yakshi

uh... stories





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