

VISUAL PRESENTATION OF FOLKTALES THROUGH ILLUSTRATIONS: WITH REFERENCE TO ‘PANCHATANTRA’, AESOP’S FABLES AND GRIMM’S FAIRY TALES

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ABSTRACT:

Worldwide, the folktales are shared from generation to generation and finally classified into various categories called the ATU Index. The splendid oral tradition of folktales has been conserved in credentials by folklorists and storytellers from several countries. The research paper is an endeavour to understand the folk narratives and the illustrations. It's a genuine effort to study the origins of folk stories, their relevance in daily life and the noteworthy role of illustrations in communicating them through expressive figures and landscapes. The folktale illustrations play an important role in memorising the happenings, problems and their potential solutions. Thus, more wisdom and social understanding through these narratives is supported by the illustrations composed by brilliant artists of the Harrapan civilisation (India), which dates back to 3000 B.C.- 2500 B.C., to Grimm's Fairy Tales illustrations (Germany) from 1812 and further various other artists represented the folktales all over the world in different mediums, such as woodcuts, lithographs, reliefs and animation graphics.

Keywords: Folk Stories, Wisdom, Illustrations, Expression

INTRODUCTION:

In the old world, the primary purpose of folktales was to engage the community and bring thrill and happiness to monotonous life, although researchers have seen and found that the purpose of the folktales was also to promote certain forms of behaviour to provide explanations. The world of tales, i.e., the images, the places, people and landscapes, objects & events in folklore, transports the listener to realms of fantasy and reflects the reality of everyday life. The stories being told from one generation to the next always have a sensible plot and solution. While the narration of events from different walks of life is the most beautiful part of folklore, it is particularly notable for its characters of adolescence and their obsession with animals. The characteristics of birds, their melodious voices, are matched with human behaviour. For example, the fox, wolf, and crow are shown as clever, while the lamb, sparrow, or cow are considered innocent and timid. Sometimes, the weak overpowers the beast by taking a quick, wise decision.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. The stories of 'Panchatantra' (Tales of wisdom in five volumes) by Vishnu Sharma (200 B.C.)
2. Aesop's fables (620 B.C.-564 B.C.)
3. Grimm's Fairy tales and illustrations (1812-1858)
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15. Ashliman, D. L. Extensive analysis of Grimm's fairy tales and Aesop's Fables (1977-1986)
16. Folktales of Hungary animated by Marcell Jankovics (1980-2012)

Objective: To understand the philosophy and wisdom behind the folk fables and find the similarities in content. The research paper aims to understand the ancient knowledge system and symbolic characterisation in the animal tales. Another objective is to find the logical aspect and moral values embedded in the folktales. It's an effort to review the illustrations composed by the artists to bring clarity and visualise the textual knowledge.

FOLKTALES, A LITERARY WISDOM

From the beginning of civilisations all over the world, the communication between the young generation and the elderly was not only through language or gestures, but the composition of both was storytelling. It was not a tradition but part of the routine when everyone gossiped after dinner, sitting under the starry night in summer and also around the firewood in chilling winters in North India. Usually, the stories were told by grandparents or the talkative uncles who not only shared their life experiences but also imparted wisdom through the narratives, which include elements of real life blended with imaginative characters. The stories included magnificent castles made of gold and silver with diamond chandeliers and highly decorative interiors. The stories also have dense forests with wild animals, which are scary and at the same time helpful, according to the behaviour shown by the human beings. There are devils who create obstacles in the path of the hero or the heroine, and there are saints who support them with magical potions, magical horses and swords so that there is the victory of truth. The imaginative characters, like flying dragons with many heads, talking serpents, and cursed princes as frogs. In many folk tales, the princess or a poor girl is shown to be helpless, weak and is abducted and saved by the strong male, who can be a poor villager or a wealthy boy. Sometimes the stories are simple and bring a wise lesson for the little listener, and also help the

community to understand diverse situations. There is an essence of entertainment for society, which relaxes after a busy day, and an interesting narrative makes everyone hopeful and positive, as the folk stories always end on a healthy note, which is the best part. The storyteller truly understands the expectations of a listener, so he keeps the dramatic elements alive during the narration. He or she keeps adding up more episodes if the crowd is enthusiastic. Most loved folk tales include magical characters, places, objects and adventure.(Vaghani, 1968)

Many interesting folk tales contain spontaneous wisdom with humour in them and are very helpful even today. There are different types of characters who are kind, courageous, cowards and misers. The stories present people with different professions, and they possess the same behaviour too. There were travellers who told their experiences to the community and they were soldiers and traders.

Before being part of the oral traditions, the folktales must have been composed by a person with literary wisdom.(Thind Dr. Karnail Singh, 1973)

The similarities in the folk tales of North India and Hungary are seen in so many narratives, which are more than twenty-five. Researchers feel that the earliest folk stories are from ancient India, and that is so true when the treasure of wisdom is found in 'Panchtantra', the five-volume book of stories written by Pandit Vishnu Sharma in the Vedic Period after the Indus Valley Civilisation in century 300 AD. The book includes different chapters, which are divided into five sections: The Loss of Friends, The Winning of Friends, On Crows and Owls, Loss of Gains and Ill-Considered Action. Many of the folk stories in North India originate from this Book of Wisdom.(Ryder, n.d.)

Similar content in folk tales of India and Western countries

Sr. No.	Stories from India	Stories from West	Common Motif and elements
1.	Lal Ghora (The Red Horse) ATU 575	Cinder Jack	Both heroes are from a poor background and, by luck, get married to the princess
2.	Peasie & Beansie ATU 480	The Girl with Golden Hair	Step-sisters shown, one is good, helpful, and other is neglecting work and behaving rudely.
3.	Sonekesi	Forget me not	The heroine with golden hair is going through a lot of struggle and is helped out by a prince.
4.	King Vikramjit aur Pariyaan(fairies)	The Slipper-Tearing Princesses	The mysterious story where two worlds are shown. The female characters, a king or a prince, rescue and solve the mystery.
5.	'Tota' (Parrot)	The Crow's Nest	Step-mother kills the step-son, but his sister keeps the bone, and he comes alive as a bird and narrates the happenings through a song.
6.	'Sauteli maa'(Step-Mother)	Cinderella	The girl who suffers under the cruelty of her stepmother is eventually found by the prince.
7.	'Bhartha'(Brinjal Dish)	Cibere(Thick soup)	A man eats a delicious dish at someone's place, and when he reaches home, he forgets the name of the food, but suddenly, an event happens, thus a similar word is said and it reminds him of the name.
8.	'Giyaan di gall'(Matter of	That's Not True	Wisdom and wit make a man rich. Sometimes spontaneous answers to weird

	Knowledge) 'Kaali majh te cheppu' (Buffalo & Bird)		situations also bring luck to the characters of the story.
9.	'Kalyugi pehra' (Age of Downfall)	Truth wins over False	Initially, Story depicts the wrong person winning over the right, but the end is fairly depicted.
10.	'Bopoluchi', 'Ku-ku Bhataa' (Sparrow and stepmother)	Uletka and the White Lizard	The heroine of the folk story goes through a lot of struggle created by the people who appear as relatives but show their selfish personalities.
11.	'Rangaa Siyar' (Blue Jackal)	Cat and Fox	The animals in disguise take advantage of their new.
12.	'Beri ne kaha' (Told by the Berry tree)	Salt princess	An innocent girl is cheated or abandoned by her own near ones.
13.	'Bander aur Brahmin' (Monkey and the Priest)	Jack and the Beanstalk	A weak one with presence of mind defeats a Demon.
14.	'The Miser Old lady and A Soldier'	The Stone Soup	The stone is used as an illusion to make it seem like the soup or dish is made of it.

The stories from the ATU index, K112.29(K100–K299 Deceptive bargains)

“**The Stone Soup**” from western folk tales and ‘**The Miser Old Lady and A Soldier**’ from Punjab (North India) are famous folk stories that possess the same content and moral values and have been part of the children's folk stories and share similar plots. In these stories, the characters are a soldier and an old woman. (Thompson (1946)

The North Indian version of the story ‘The Miser Old lady and A Soldier’, which tells about a soldier or a traveller who plans to spend the night in the village and travel to his home the next day.

In the western version, the folk tale says that its morning and a single starving soldier tries to get food from villagers. He comes upon the house of an old woman and tricks her by saying that he can cook soup by using a magic little stone. The woman is a miser and wants to see how the soldier will make the soup, so she gives him the ingredients one by one, such as salt, fat, sausage, vegetables, pepper, etc., needed for the soup. He keeps stirring the soup and tasting it after putting in the elements, and gives an ecstatic expression as the delicacy gets more and more delicious. Then he tells the woman to taste the soup, which she finds very tasty. Now he tells her to put some rice in the soup so that it can be a perfect dish, and she immediately does so. At the end of the tale, they share the soup made out of the magical rock, and he gifts the rock to the woman. The woman doesn't feel cheated, and the soldier prepares a meal that was beneficial for the old lady, also. The wise thought in the story is that the youth can handle the elderly with patience and love. The story also depicts the behaviour of old people who feel good if someone helps and supports them. The character of soldiers as active, wise and resourceful is presented in the story. (Magyar népmesék: A Kólevés, Hungarian Folk Tales season 5, Storyteller: Szabó Gyula)

The main moral of the "Stone Soup" story from both regions is not only about wisdom, but it also provides a perspective towards a sense of harmony needed to be developed between the youth and the older generation. Understanding elderly people and working with them can be a wonderful and

positive move that benefits everyone. The illusion being created by the soldier of a "stone" or 'axe' into a delicious meal is a clever act and simultaneously hilarious. The behaviour of senior old people is depicted in a very accurate manner. The old lady was indeed hungry, so she offered many ingredients to the young soldier, which speaks about the beautiful idea behind the story. At the end, she also buys the stone, which she assumes was magical and will provide her with a tasty soup or porridge forever. Although every time she prepares the soup, she will definitely add all ingredients for a tasty dish, as the soldier did. The folk story also clarifies that there are no results without effort, and there cannot be a tasty soup without the proper components required for a scrumptious food.

Comparing the two versions, one can feel the local effects in speech and the geographical surroundings. In the Hungarian kind, the soldier steps into the village in the morning, whereas in the North Indian narrative, the traveler reaches in the night. The reference of the use of earthen pots and firewood to prepare the dish is similar as the means of cooking food in villages in medieval times, which was the same, although in some villages of North India, firewood and cow dung cakes are used and thought to be a natural way. In the Hungarian version, the food is being prepared by the soldier, and the old lady keeps bringing the fresh vegetables from her home garden, which include carrots, etc., because its day time but in the North Indian version, the soldier is travelling throughout the day and seeks shelter at night. The Hungarian story consists of the main elements as 'stone', whereas in the North Indian story, it has 'axe', which the soldier uses to prepare the meal, and in both versions, the man washes the material before putting it into the vessel. The term used for the dish is 'soup' in the Hungarian tale and 'porridge' in the North Indian narrative.

The folk story of this kind is a lesson for the young generation to understand the elderly and help them enjoy life. The character of the soldier is joyous and witty as he handles the situation so cleverly.

SIGNIFICANT ROLE OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS:

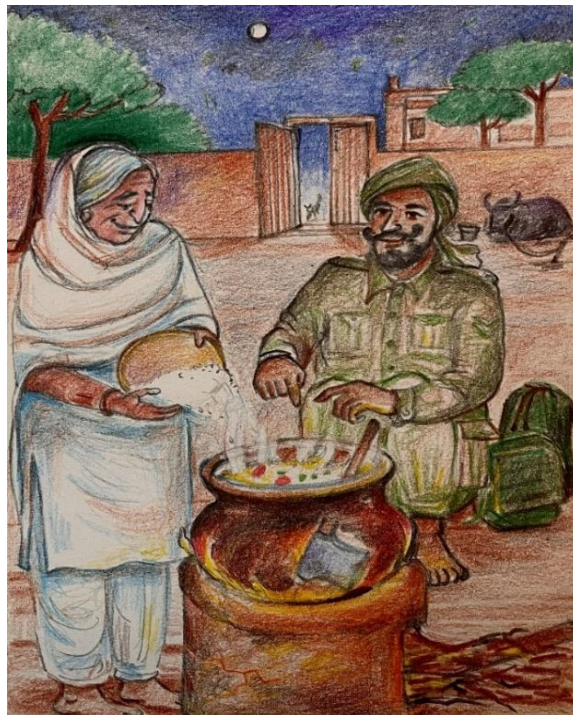
An illustration plays a very important role in conveying the story to its readers. The visuals create much interest in the narratives and keep the children engaged. To create interest in folklore, images and compositions with a variety of landscape and colour media can play a vital role. While reading the story, a drawing gives a very ecstatic experience. The children get attracted to pictures with hue and horizons, shades and shadows, bright and beautiful flora that hides all its innocent creatures.

The story "**The Stone Soup**" has been illustrated (Figure-1) in Hungarian (Western country) Folk tales and shows a uniformed soldier wandering from one village to another with his shoes on his shoulders, wearing a cap and a shaved head as army men look. The houses in the illustration of the Hungarian version are like those of the 13th-century rural village 'Holloko' in Northern Hungary and 100 kilometres northeast of Budapest, with wooden architecture, clean streets, vine meadows and lush green trees all around. The old lady wears a typical attire of a village woman, which is double-layered, and she wears a white scarf on her head covering her ears and knotted under the chin, which gives an idea of a cold region. The cooking is being done inside the house and traditional pots with beautiful designs are shown in the illustration. The interior has wooden tables, cabinets and racks. The entrance of the house has a low-height boundary wall with a wooden door in the wooden doorframe, which same as in the North Indian version.

‘The Miser Old lady and A Soldier’



*Figure 1: Illustration of ‘The Stone Soup’,
Image from Maygyars Nepmesek, Directed
by Jankovics Marcell, Pál Nagy Balázs*



*Figure-2 : ‘The Miser Old Lady and A
Soldier’, Illustration by Deepti Kanda*

illustration (Figure-2) has the typical Punjabi Village (North India) with mud houses and trees with outdoor kitchens. The old lady wears a basic traditional suit and covers her head with a ‘chunni’ (long cloth). The soldier is wearing an Indian army uniform. The meal is cooked in the open yard of the house, where a buffalo is shown in the background, representing the typical home of a Punjab village. There is a moon that shows that it is nighttime. The old lady pours rice into the earthen pot, which is placed on an earthen stove with firewood. The soldier has washed the axe and put it in the pot, and in the sketch, it is visible through the pot’s outer layer to make the onlooker understand the content of the story. The bright colours are used to make the illustrations attractive for the children.

CONCLUSION

The folktales are a valuable treasure of every society, providing witty, wise and worthy solutions to everyday problems to be solved in the absence of the internet but presence of mind. In the ancient book of ‘Panchtantra’ and ‘Aesop’s fables, one finds the quick tricks to manage the biggest troubles while understanding the nature of the other person. The symbolic presentation of human behavioural traits through animals, birds, reptiles and mythological creatures is illustrated with great precision and thoughtfulness. The moral values taught through the fables and folk tales are significant for society and an enriching experience for not only the children but everyone who wants to learn the social set-up of any civilisation.

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