

OF THE 'FAIRY' ARCHETYPES IN THE GERMAN GRIMM BROTHERS' AND JAPANESE YEI OZAKI'S TALES

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ABSTRACT

Fairy tales are stories intended for children, featuring fanciful and magical characters. They are traditional stories passed down orally from one generation to the other before being recorded in books by authors and translators. These tales have no individual ownership; they are owned by the traditional community that produced them. Hence, this study focused on a comparative analysis between the German fairy tales compiled by the Grimm brothers and the Japanese fairy tales compiled by Yei Theodora Ozaki by enumerating and expatiating on the 'fairy' archetypes in these tales. On the one hand, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, popularly called the Grimm brothers, were born in the German city of Hanau and are responsible for collecting and recording the oral storytelling tradition of their countryside titled Grimms' Fairy Tales in 1812. The popular tales that resulted from their collection are the likes of 'Cinderella', 'Snow White', 'Rapunzel', and 'The Elves'. On the other hand, Yei Theodora Ozaki, an early 20th century translator of Japanese short stories and fairy tales, was born into a Japanese family of Baron and Bathia Ozaki. Her first publication of Japanese Fairy Tales was in 1908. The popular Japanese tales that resulted from her collection are the likes of 'The Jelly Fish and the Monkey', 'The Story of Princess Hase', 'The Ogre of Rashomon' and 'The Mirror of Matsuyama'. According to the Archetypal critical approach adopted for this study, it is believed that archetypes determine the form and function of literary works and a text's meaning is shaped by the cultural and psychological myths that are used to drive them. It is also discovered that these archetypes served as the basic mode of expressing the beliefs, fears, and anxieties that the writers pass across to their readers. For the purpose of this study, the fairy godmothers, fairy elves, fairy names, fairy actions, and fairy locations were revealed as the fairy archetypes that serve as symbols to represent the mythical essence of the selected texts. This study revealed outstanding similarities between the German Grimm Brothers' tales and the Japanese Yei Ozaki's tales with the use of magical powers, mystical world, mystical affairs, and luminous spirit in the expression of their sociocultural experiences. Meanwhile, certain differences discussed in the study are discovered in their mode of cultural expression based on their topicality and cultural beliefs. Attention was also given to the stirring literary qualities replete in these tales.

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INTRODUCTION

Children's Literature, like its name implies, is usually targeted towards entertaining and educating children about issues of life, especially culture. The genre of children's literature ranges from alphabet books, to novels and informational books. Chapleau (2005:12) opines that "children's literature, through academic discussions, has acquired a variety of meanings which makes its study an intricate enterprise". According to Hunt (1999:10), a critical reading of children's literature "may provide a starting point for the study of myth, legend, folk and fairy tales". He further expatiates that "children's literature criticism in different cultures is united by speaking of the *child* as an existing entity – even though this *existing entity* may be described differently in different cultures". While considering the growth of children's literature in Asia, it is often believed by critics that the term 'children's literature' is best described as a Western import. Tadashi Matsui, a Japanese critic, as mentioned by Hunt, notes that

...in 1920s Japan, the growth of large cities with dense population generated the birth of a middle class...among [whom] the ideas of European liberalism, the urban mode of living, free mass education and a modern concept of the child were being fostered. (Hunt, 1999:20)

This probably led to the awakening of fairy tales in the continent to educate, and at the same time, entertain children, teaching them of their cultural values and sentiments in form of stories.

The existence of fairy tales, being a genre of children's literature, is known world over by several encounters in readings, hearings or even viewing on the Television. Meanwhile, the persons that made efforts at collecting and publishing them are usually known by just a few. This is because oral traditions have no single author but owned by the community of that tradition. Therefore, these tales are extracted from the traditional stories passed down orally from one generation to the other.

Dean Burry (2013) records that Jacob (1785- 1863) and Wilhelm (1786-1859) Grimm were born in the German city of Hanau and were the oldest in a family of nine children. Phillip their father was employed as a local magistrate. It was a position that came with a large house, servants and a high social standing but this came to an end when he died in 1796. By that time, the family was forced to move to more modest accommodations and rely on the charity of relatives. Thus, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm made exploits not regarding these challenges. They excelled in school studying Law, Philology, and medieval German literature at the University in Marburg. Their study of Philology and medieval German literature has been said to be the source of their perpetual interest in folk tales.

In 1806, assisted by their friend Clemens Brentano, the Grimm brothers set out to systematically collect and record the oral storytelling tradition of the local countryside. They sought to record common stories that were told around campfires or to children at night, some of which had been passed down for centuries. Travelling around the local district and inviting individuals into their home allowed them to accumulate a vast amount of raw material which included everything from magical fairy tales to parables, local legends, fables, and other moral lessons.

According to Fraser (2018), Ozaki is from an unusual background. She was born in 1871 into the family of Baron Saburo Ozaki, one of the first Japanese men to study in the West, and Bathia Catherine Morrison, the daughter of William Morrison, one of their teachers. Her parents are said to have separated after five years of marriage. At that period, Yei was sent to live in Japan with her father. After refusing an arranged marriage later in her life, she became a teacher and secretary to earn money. She had to shuffle between Japan and Europe for several years to balance her career and family duties.

Yei Ozaki's marriage was later grounded on the premise of frequent mistakenly delivered letters. She was receiving a letter meant for an unrelated Japanese politician, Yukio Ozaki, while he was also receiving hers for years. They eventually met in 1904 and got married.

This study foregrounds the 'fairy' archetypes in the Grimm brothers' and Yei Ozaki's fairy tales.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study employs Archetypal criticism to appreciate the 'fairy' archetypes of the Grimm brothers' and Yei Theodora Ozaki's fairy tales. Archetypal critics are otherwise known as myth critics. Stanley Kunits has said in his quote that "old myths, old gods, old heroes have never died. They are only sleeping at the bottom of our mind, waiting for our call. We have need for them. They represent the wisdom of our race."

The realm of human experience that is expressed in fairy tales, most especially, is usually deeper than rational thinking in the critical sense. Archetypal criticism believes that magical realism is expressed in the great literature with enduring appeal to humans over the centuries. It is therefore the interest of archetypal critics to discover mythical elements that give a literary work a deeper meaning and importance. Myth, being essential to human culture, can be said to be universal. Traditionally, myths are not just used to explain the natural world but they are also used in stories to serve as models (archetypes) for living and to offer insights on life matters such as birth, love, or death.

Archetypal criticism has its anthropological and psychological aspects. On the one hand, in its anthropological aspect, it helps to reinforce the knowledge of mythology and also to consider the fact that there are essential experiences and wishes common to people and places. In lieu of this,

the hero of a story, for instance, is regarded as important across cultures. This, in itself, illuminates our common humanity. On the other hand, in its psychological aspect, it provides different views to life. The trials and triumphs of people's lives are put together in the context of a personal heroic journey. According to Gillespie (2010:60), "watching mythic or literary heroes struggle, fail, learn, persevere, and experience all possible forms of joy and sorrow is a rehearsal for all that life may bring to us". In other words, archetypes are travelling tickets to the foundation of rituals and beliefs, plunging us deeper into the understanding of human consciousness.

In essence, archetypal criticism ranges across the fields of mythology, cultural history, and anthropology.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAIRY TALES

The art of telling tales (otherwise known as oral narrative) has immense significance to its audience and society at large. It helps to correct anti-social criminal behaviours. To this end, characters willingly behave in a way that will shock and might even mislead the so-thought morally upright. To portray this, incest, jealousy, selfishness, betrayals are common languages of these tales as can be seen in The Grimm brothers' *The Goose Girl* and Yei Ozaki's *The Tongue-cut Sparrow*. Connecting this to Plato's view, he stated in his *Republic* that literary creations should be made available to the cognoscenti only because of their focus on the anti-social vices. The cognoscenti in this state are the children who have superior knowledge of certain cultural beliefs, practices, and values of a particular society. Taking the Grimm brothers' *Cinderella* for example, the issues of love and kindness are portrayed through hatred and wickedness. This is also replicated in Yei Ozaki's *The Story of Princess Hase*. With this, the reader would opt for the good seeing the reward of the bad portrayed. While the German Grimm brothers often have a

brutal ending for their evil characters, the Japanese Yei Ozaki often gives room for the repentance and forgiveness of her evil characters. In actual fact, these stories are based on the anti-social ills in order to generate suspense and promote their entertainment value.

Tales also have a way of serving as a means of entertainment. This is achieved through the use of dramatic situations, fantastic plots, exciting imagery coupled with creative performance, mode of narration and musical accompaniment. The Grimm brothers' *Rapunzel* and Yei Ozaki's *The Tongue-cut Sparrow* is full of these attributes. In actualizing this, the nature of moral conflict, the events and language deployed are also sources of pleasure in the narrative.

The oral tales do not only comprise aesthetic role but also educative significance. In traditional societies, elders tell stories about animals, using animal characters, first, as seen in the Grimm brothers' *The Fisherman and His Wife*, *The Frog King*, and *The Goose Girl*, and second, in Yei Ozaki's *The Adventures of Kintaro the Golden Boy*, *The Tongue-cut Sparrow*, *The Jellyfish and the Monkey*, and *The White Hare and the Crocodiles*. These stories are used to teach the young about the major social values of life; to teach the lessons of honesty, kindness, hard work, helpfulness, good faith, obedience and endurance. Other than that, they are also used by elders to correct other elders about specific codes of behaviour.

Be that as it may, the telling of a story helps to ease emotional tensions and to express, dissolve and resolve repressed antisocial passions of anger, hatred, and jealousy, among others. Since the act of telling a horror story helps to exercise and resolve his fears, the story teller feels better after telling it. It is this process of resolving negative feelings that are referred to as catharsis or the purgation of emotions. Generally, the process of writing and watching a play performed has a cathartic effect on both the audience and the actors. Moreover, tales are woven around the events of daily life. Therefore, they reflect or mirror social realities. In essence, they preserve for the

future generation the events of the past and present. However, folklore may mirror the familiar details of culture and an incorporate common situation from everyday life, the unusual event is an important ingredient of myth and folktales.

In its most likely form, the oral narratives are artistic aesthetic creations. This opportunity is therefore wisely used by the artist to invent and mould ideas and to transpose imaginative experience into vivid verbal forms which can please and delight the audience. The use of fantasy serves a wide range of functions during the process of oral narration. It serves as a means for creating narrative suspense- a means for fluctuating the audience's emotional response. In this way, the audience is held in rapt attentiveness to the narrator. It provides the traditional mind with an appropriate context and mode for artistic self-expression and the development of human culture and civilisation. Therefore, they can be seen as a source of moral and humanistic value.

As far as it is concerned, the society desires its individual members to be psychologically adjusted and freed from persistent anxiety and bad behavior since the individuals will be able to devote their energies more efficiently to social purposes. In this regard, the oral narratives serve as a tool to bring to realization these desires.

NORMS AND FORMS: 'FAIRY' ARCHETYPES

What attributes make a tale fairy? Why refer to them as fairy? How can they portray their fairies? The word 'fairy' in itself, brings to mind magical powers, mystical world and affairs, and luminous spirit. It is therefore on this note that fairy tales are not complete without baring fairy archetypes like fairy godmothers, fairy elves, fairy names, fairy actions, and fairy locations. These are attributes that transform these tales from the ordinary to the realms of fairies,

especially for the attraction of children. In other words, they are regarded as being ‘fairy’ because they suggest mystical affairs and feelings.

Fairy Godmothers – The fairy godmother is that mystical woman that is benevolent with magical powers which is usually to assist the protagonist. For example, in the Grimm brothers’ *Jorinda and Joringel*, the old woman that appeared to be against the protagonist “Jorinda” became a source for helping her at last. It was the same charm which she used in caging Jorinda that was used against her when Joringel came to deliver Jorinda. The manner in which she was described in the narrative explains her supernatural nature:

The owl flew into the thicket, and directly afterwards there came out of it **a crooked old woman**, yellow and lean, with large red eyes and a hooked nose, the point of which reached to her chin. (62)

Another example can be seen in the Grimm brothers’ *Snow White*. The jealous Queen can be referred to as a fairy godmother with mystical powers (her talking looking glass, ability to make a poisonous apple and comb, and ability to change her looks). Although directed against the protagonist, these powers are later used to direct her to her fortune of becoming the wife of the Prince (the young queen).

In Yei Ozaki’s *The Story of Princess Hase*, the step mother who seems to be an archetype of a fairy godmother has no mystical powers. Her position as Princess Hase’s stepmother is rather used against the girl. This is intended for her death but it is used to catapult her happiness and peaceful living. This step mother is described as “very different in character...this woman had a cruel, bad heart”. (51)

Fairy Elves – These, in fairy tales, are luminous spirits presiding over nature and fertility and dwelling in the mystical world or elf land. An apparent example of this is in the Grimm brothers’

The Elves. Of the three tales in this particular narrative, it is fascinating to observe the projection of beauty, magnificence, and most importantly time in the Elf land as opposed to the real life in the second tale. Having consented to the invitations of some “folks”, three elves took the industrious but poor servant-girl to a “hollow mountain” being the residence of these “folks”. She realised that everything there was more beautiful and tiny than it appears in the real life she came from. The most fascinating part of this narrative is the aspect that explains how she accepted to work for just three (3) days before returning home, only to return home and without meeting her masters in the house but strangers. She then realised that she had not spent “three days with the little men in the mountains, but seven years...” (93)

In the Japanese fairy tales, Yei Ozaki portrays the fairy elves in stories like *My Lord Bag of Rice*, *The Jellyfish and the Monkey*. In the former, the huge serpent dragon living under the water at the bridge of Seta-no-Karashi, also known as the Dragon King of the Lake has fire and smoke from its nostrils when it breathes. The warrior, Hidesato has never seen such sight when he visits the Dragon King’s palace to save him from his enemy, the centipede. In the latter, the monkey, described as a cunning animal, cleverly refuses the Jellyfish’s offer to visit the Dragon King of Sea, despite his interest in viewing its beauty, when he gets to know that they are only interested in his liver to save the dying Dragon Queen.

While the German Grimm brothers portray the elves in elf lands, the Japanese Yei Ozaki portrays Dragon King and Queen in the lake and sea.

Fairy Names – These are mystical words or phrases used to indicate persons, places, classes, and things, identifying them as part of mystical world of the narration. Instances of this in the German tales are ‘Tom Thumb’ in *Tom Thumb*, a mystical child as small as a human thumb, and ‘Snow White’ in *Snow White*, a mystical child as white as snow, red as blood and with black

hairs and overwhelming beauty. In the Japanese tales, instances of this are ‘Kintaro’ in *The Adventures of Kintaro the Golden Boy*, the little boy with strange powers and ‘Suzume San’ in *The Tongue-cut Sparrow*, the fairy sparrow that grows back her tongue after it is cut off.

Fairy Actions – These are activities done to accomplish a purpose which is usually spurred by mystical affairs. This can be described as universal in the world of fairy tales. Some examples of fairy actions are portrayed through animals that talk like human beings. This can be seen in some of the German tales. *The Fisherman and His Wife* where the flounder was pleading to be released and the fisherman commented that “a fish that can talk I should certainly let go” (27) is an example. This is also replicated in *The Frog King* where the frog accosted the princess of weeping so much and in *The Goose Girl* where Falada’s (horse) head talked to the King’s daughter every morning she passes the path where the head is hung:

Alas, young queen, how ill you fare.
If this your mother knew
Her heart would break into two. (43)

Meanwhile, in *Rapunzel*, when the wicked enchantress suspected the love affair between Rapunzel and the prince, she confirmed by realising the prince’s visit at Rapunzel’s tower through her long hair. She did not only cut her hair, but also casted her into the desert and tricked the Prince so that he fell for her trick and became blind. Having wondered around the forest for years, the prince heard Rapunzel’s voice in the desert she was casted, and recognised it. He met her with the twins she had given birth to. The fairy action took place by the time they met. “Two of her tears wetted his eyes and they grew clear again, and he could see with them as before” (67). However, in *The Brave Little Tailor*, the little tailor had tricked several people by pretending to be very powerful just because he killed seven flies at one stroke. He had frightened several people with a placard which read – “**Seven at one stroke**” but was not able to get it

easily when he attempted a trick on the boar. The fairy action then took place between this little tailor and the boar which led to his appraisal as a real hero:

When the boar perceived the tailor, it ran on him with foaming mouth and whetted tusks, and was about to throw him to the ground, but the hero fled and sprang into a chapel which was near, and up to the window at once, and in one bound out again. The boar ran in after him, but the tailor ran round outside and shut the door behind it, and then the raging beast, which was much too heavy and awkward to leap out of the window, was caught. The little tailor called the huntsmen thither that they might see the prisoner with their own eyes. (87)

Other examples of fairy actions in the Grimm brothers' fairy tales are in *The Star Tales* and *The Wolf and Seven Young Kids*. On the one hand, the former, being highly didactic, explains how a little girl gets her reward of being merciful. Having given out everything she had including her clothes, "suddenly some stars from heaven fell down, and they were nothing else but hard smooth pieces of money, and although she had just given her shirt away, she had a new one which was of the very finest linen" (89). On the other hand, the latter explains how an old goat saved her six young kids from the wolf's belly. The seventh was the only one who had escaped the swallowing of the Wolf and therefore explains how the event transpires to his mother as a result of her absence from the house. The old goat had noticed some movements in the Wolf's belly who was fast asleep and tried cutting his stomach to see if her kids were still alive. Hence,

...hardly had she make one cut, than one little kid thrust its head out, and when she cut farther, all six sprang out one after another and were all still alive, and had suffered no injury whatever, for in his greediness the monster had swallowed them down whole (96).

In some of the Japanese tales, fairy actions are likewise replete. The tale of *My Lord Bag of Rice* for instance portrays Hidesato as a very powerful warrior. Despite his skills, he couldn't kill the monstrous centipede with most of his arrows. When he has only one arrow left, he remembers

the myth that “human saliva [is] deadly to centipedes” (10) and decides to put the end of his arrow first in his mouth before aiming at the monstrous centipede which works at last. In the same tale, as a reward for Hidesato’s accomplishment for the Dragon King of the Lake, he is presented with mystical gifts, one of which is the bag of rice that never gets exhausted no matter how much he serves his family. In *The Tongue-cut Sparrow*, the old man’s sparrow speaks

It is I who have taken the starch. I thought it was some food
put out for me in that basin, and I ate it all. If I have made a
mistake I beg you to forgive me! Tweet, tweet, tweet! (12)

By the time the old woman cuts the tongue of the sparrow as a punishment for eating her starch, the sparrow’s tongue grows back to the amazement of the old man. This is how he gets to know that she is a fairy.

Kintaro, in *The Adventures of Kintaro the Golden Boy*, after having a nice experience organising wrestling competition among the animals, “pulls over a tree by the roots and throws it across the stream to form a bridge” (44) for the animals to cross over on the sea. This cannot be done by an ordinary power especially because Kintaro is just a little boy. In the *The Story of Princess Hase*, we also see fairy action playing out when this Princess writes a poem and reads it to the roaring torrent disturbing the health of the Emperor and “the waters ceased their roaring, and the river was quiet” (54). We can as well identify a play out of fairy action in *The Ogre of Rashomon* where the old woman, the supposed old nurse of Watanabe transforms to the giant ogre after deceiving Watanabe to have her take a look at the arm of the Ogre he has been able to cut off as a sign of victory.

Fairy Locations – These are mystical places and regions partitioned for the mystical affairs inherent in the narrative. They are usually aired with fairy auras; being fanciful, delicate, surreal, and diminutive. An explicit example of this is in the Grimm brothers’ *Snow White*. When little

Snow White ran from her wicked and desperate step-mother, she landed in a sort of fairy location:

Everything in the cottage was small, but neater and cleaner than can be told. There was a table on which was a white cover, and seven little knives and forks, and seven little mugs. Against the wall stood seven little beds side by side, and covered with snow-white counterpanes. (73)

This becomes a fairy location for Snow White because it is different from what she is used to seeing every time.

In the tale of *Sleeping Beauty*, the thorn-hedge castle suddenly turned to a fairy location after a hundred years that the princess has been sleeping;

When the king's son came near to the thorn-hedge, it was nothing but large and beautiful flowers, which parted from each other of their own accord, and let him pass unhurt, then they closed again behind him like a hedge. In the castle yard he saw the horses and the spotted hounds lying asleep, on the roof sat the pigeons with their heads under their wings. And when he entered the house, the flies were asleep upon the wall, the cook in the kitchen was still holding out his hand to seize the boy, and the maid was sitting by the black hen which she was going to pluck. (25)

In the Japanese fairy tales, fairy locations are abounding. The palace of Rin Jin at the bottom of the sea in *The Jellyfish and the Monkey* is an example. The description of his palace explains its beauty;

The Palace of Rin Jin was at the bottom of the sea, and was so beautiful that no one has ever seen anything like it even in dreams. The walls were of coral, the roof of jadestone and chrysoprase, and the floors were of the finest mother of pearl. (116)

The Tongue-cut Sparrow also reveals the fairy sparrow's lodge in the Bamboo grove as a fairy location;

The sparrow asked him to follow her, and flying before him she led him to a beautiful house in the heart of the bamboo grove. The old man was utterly astonished when he entered the house to find what a beautiful place it was. It was built of the whitest wood, the soft cream-colored mats which took the place of carpets were the finest he had ever seen, and the cushions that the sparrow brought out for him to sit on were made of the finest silk and crape. Beautiful vases and lacquer boxes adorned the *tokonoma* of every room.
(15)

These fairy locations are implemented to create a mystic ambiance for the tales in order to make them appealing to children being the main target.

CONCLUSION

Oral narratives help as a means for social building and development of the sense of community. Whatever mode the story is portrayed through, stories are of necessity told about someone else, about what happens as a result of somebody's action or inaction in order to amuse the other person listening or develop the relationship, promote intimacy and prepare grounds for some other kinds of discussion.

It has been discovered in this study that storytelling serves as information storage. It is not possible for an individual to accumulate through personal experience all knowledge potentially useful to survival and reproduction. When trying to understand why humans do what they do, it is often worth noting what they do not do. Hence, the story world and the real world correspond in several consistent and predictable ways, giving room for individuals to apply narrative information to tasks associated with subsistence and reproduction in their local environment.

Examining the Grimm brothers' and Yei Ozaki's lives and their tales, it is noted that the former achieved recognition in their days as scholars of German and Serbian grammar, legal antiquities

and Latin poetry but their collections of over 200 fairy tales ensured their place in history. This is because their tales have sustainable information to pass across. The latter has also been able to express the Japanese tradition through the fairy tales. Both the Grimm brothers and Yei Ozaki can be said to unite in the topicality of their tales ranging from war, to power, and courage. It is at the point of cultural expression that Yei Ozaki projects more. We see the different cultural beliefs and myths of Japanese traditional society being expressed through the tales.

Story telling is indeed a vehicle of fantasy ready to transport people's mind through the lanes of culture, tradition, and beliefs. It is obvious not only that we enjoy listening to stories, but also that we enjoy listening to them repeatedly. Stories provide a highly effective means of stimulating critical features of the environment in which people struggle to survive and raise their children.

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