NOVATEUR PUBLICATIONS
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIONS IN ENGINEERING RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY
[IJIERT] ISSN: 2394-3696 Website: ijiert.org
VOLUME 8, ISSUE 4, Apr.-2021

MORALITY IN CHARLES PERRAULT FAIRY-TALES

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ABSTARCT

Today, our children will not be surprised with fairy tales, of course, against the background of the adventures of Harry Potter and Lemony Snicket, filmed with a full set of special effects and causing an adrenaline rush, Perrault's soft and unhurried tales do not cause enthusiasm. Modern heroes are pragmatic and rational, and fairy-tale plots are so dynamic that it takes your breath away, but, drawn into the adrenaline maelstrom of modern fairy tales, our children, unfortunately, very early cease to be children. Remember, for sure the kind Cinderella or the clever Boy-with-Finger were your favorite heroes and you wanted to be just as beautiful and kind or just as brave and resourceful! Immersed in the world of the latest technologies and the problems generated by this world, we, what is the saddest thing, stopped believing in good fairies, our childhood is over. But, admit, sometimes you really want to return to it. So why don't we remember today a man, on whose kind and cheerful fairy tales more than one generation of people grew up in many countries of the world?

INTRODUCTION

At the time of the Sun King Louis XIV, there lived in Paris one rich nobleman and he had four sons and three daughters. The eldest, Claude, was a famous architect, author of the East façade of the Louvre, physicist, archaeologist and mechanic, one of the middle brothers of Nicolas became a priest, the other Pierre a financier and lawyer, and the younger, Charles, a storyteller. True, long before he began to write fairy tales, Charles became a lawyer and academician.

At about 25, Charles began writing poems, some of which he dedicated to the king. Apparently, the poems were talented and the young lawyer was noticed at court.

Perhaps it will surprise someone, but before Perrault, folklore and elite noble culture existed without actually intersecting. Of course, noble ladies and gentlemen consoled themselves with fantasy, but it was of a completely different kind, more about knights, their exploits and lovers.

"Peasant fables" were too coarse and vulgar, and therefore unworthy of refined taste. And so Perrault, himself to the depths of his soul adored these "nanny" tales, volunteered to justify the folklore genre in front of a noble audience, to introduce the folk tale into the high society.

In 1696 he makes the first test and publishes the fairy tale "The Sleeping Beauty" in the magazine "Gallant Mercury". Without a signature. The Audience at Court is more than successful, and next year Charles publishes a full-fledged collection of Tales of Mother Goose, or History and Tales of Bygone Times with Teachings, which he signs with the name of his 11-year-old son and dedicates to his daughter Louis XIV. The author went to this hoax for a reason, well, a frivolously respectable 69-year-old man to entertain the respectable audience with such "nonsense"!

Perrault justified himself in vain. The enlightened public appreciated this "nonsense", and fairy tales became no less popular than gallant novels. However, Perrault himself did everything possible to prevent the rejection of the nobility from the "grassroots" culture.

All of Perrault's goodies are well-mannered, gallant in a noble manner and are expressed almost exclusively in "high calmness." However, in fairy tales there is also an image of the life of the common people. So, the peasants of that time, who fell into complete poverty, really often took their children to the forest and threw them to their fate (as in "Little Boy"), and the deprived YOUNGER son of the miller could well dispose of his "inheritance" as he was going to do in a fairy tale to eat cat, and from his skin to make a clutch.

The World Encyclopedia of Fairy Tales calls Perrault the kindest storyteller in history. Indeed, one of the many merits of Charles Perrault is that he, probably for the first time, created real children's fairy tales, kind and happy. Indeed, in folk tales, the plots of which he used, the heroes are very cruel, they completely lack kindness and compassion.

In his work, Perrault more than once turned to fairy tales, such as "Griselda", a poetic adaptation of Boccaccio's short story, and "Donkey's skin", a folk tale sustained in the spirit of poetic short stories. In the preface to the tales, Perrault writes that his tales are better than the ancient ones, as they contain moral instructions. But even the moralizing did not arouse much interest in these tales.

Probably, the greatest merit of Perrault was that his fairy tales laid the foundation for children's literature, because no one had written especially for children before him, but with the publication of his fairy tales, children's books began to appear like mushrooms after rain.

Until now, literary critics argue about who was the real author of fairy tales himself Charles Perrault or his son Pierre. By the time the first fairy tales were written, Pierre was already 19 years old. According to some researchers of Charles Perrault's work, he himself wrote this book in order to glorify his son as a writer and help him make a career at court. And so it happened: Pierre Perrault presented the young princess of Orleans, niece of Louis XIV, a book of fairy tales dedicated to her, received the title of nobility and entered the circle of close friends of the princess. However, six months later, in a street fight, he stabbed his peer Guillaume Coll, the carpenter's son, with a sword.

Some of Perrault's stories were adapted from oral tradition, some were inspired by episodes from earlier works, (including Boccaccio's The Decameron and Apuleius' The Golden Ass), and some were inventions wholly new to Perrault. What was most significantly new was the idea of turning magical folk tales into sophisticated and subtle forms of written literature. While we now think of fairy tales as primarily children's literature, there was no such thing as children's literature in Perrault's time. With this in mind, we can see that the "morals" of these tales take on more worldly purposes, despite their slyly clever packaging within the fantastical universe of fairies, ogres, and talking animals.

While Perrault's original tales are hardly the versions that were fed to us as children, they also can't be expected to be the feminist and socialist alternate versions that we might wish them to be (see Angela Carter's 1979 story collection, "The Bloody Chamber," for this kind of modern twist; Carter had translated an edition of Perrault's fairy tales in 1977 and was inspired to create her own versions as a response).

Perrault was an upper-class intellectual during the reign of the Sun King. Unlike the fable-writer Jean de La Fontaine, whose rich narratives often criticized the powerful and took the side of the underdog (in fact he himself was not in favor with the megalomaniacal Louis XIV), Perrault didn't have much of an interest in rocking the boat.

Instead, as a leading figure on the modern side of the "Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns," he brought new forms and sources to literature to create something that even the ancients had never seen. La Fontaine was on the side of the ancients and wrote fables in the vein of Aesop, and while La Fontaine was much more lyrically sophisticated and intellectually clever, it was Perrault's modernity that lay the foundation for a new kind of literature that's created a culture all its own.

Perrault may have been writing for adults, but the fairy tales that he first put on paper spawned a revolution in what kinds of stories could be made into literature. Soon, writing for children spread throughout Europe and eventually across the rest of the world. The results and even his own works may have gone far out of Perrault's intent or control, but that's what often happens when you introduce something new into the world. It seems that there's a moral somewhere in that.

In "Puss in Boots," the youngest of three sons inherits only a cat when his father dies, but through the cat's wily scheming the young man ends up wealthy and married to a princess. Perrault, who was in favor with

Louis XIV, provides two interconnected but competing morals to the tale, and he clearly had the machinations of the court in mind with this witty satire. On the one hand, the tale promotes the idea of using hard work and ingenuity to get ahead, rather than just relying on your parents' money. But on the other hand, the story warns against being taken in by pretenders who may have achieved their wealth in unscrupulous ways. Thus, a tale that seems like a didactic children's fable actually serves as a double-edged send-up of class mobility as it existed in the seventeenth century.

Perrault's "Little Red Riding Hood" reads much like the popularized versions that we all grew up with, but with one big difference: the wolf eats the girl and her grandmother, and nobody comes along to save them. Without the happy ending that the Brothers Grimm supply in their version, the story serves as a warning to young women against talking to strangers, especially against "charming" wolves who seem civilized but are perhaps even more dangerous. There's no heroic male to slay the wolf and save Little Red Riding Hood from her own gullible innocence. There's only danger, and it's up to young women to learn how to recognize it.

Like "Puss in Boots," Perrault's "Cinderella" also has two competing and contradictory morals, and they likewise discuss questions of marriageability and class connection. One moral claims that charm is more important than looks when it comes to winning a man's heart, an idea that suggests that anyone can achieve happiness, regardless of their conventional assets. But the second moral declares that no matter what natural gifts you have, you need a godfather or godmother in order to put them to good use. This message acknowledges, and perhaps supports, society's profoundly uneven playing field.

The most strange and amazing of Perrault's tales, "Donkey Skin," is also one of his least known, probably because it's shocking grotesqueries have no way of being watered down and made easily palatable. In the story, a dying queen asks her husband to remarry after her death, but only to a princess even more beautiful than her. Eventually, the king's own daughter grows to surpass her dead mother's beauty, and the king falls deeply in love with her. At the suggestion of her fairy godmother, the princess makes seemingly impossible demands of the king in exchange for her hand, and the king somehow fulfills her demands each time to both shimmering and terrifying effect. Then she demands the skin of the king's magic donkey, which defecates gold coins and is the source of the kingdom's wealth. Even this the king does, and so the princess flees, wearing the donkey skin as a permanent disguise.

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