

The main tendencies of symbolism in folktales

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Annotation

Every culture has passing its heritage from ancestor to their mature generation through folktales. They play crucial role in development of child's worldview, as well as his psychological upbringing. There are several reasons of it, first of all folktales are short and meaningful, that's why they are memorable and easy to share.

Key words: folktales, symbol, Irony, image, literal work, Metaphor.

Folktales share a number of common characteristics. As young readers are not available to accept cognitive impact of irony or complex sentence structure, folktales follow straight forward story lines with traditional and easy plotlines. Sometimes folktales are criticized for being "flat" and misunderstandable with several nuances. Nevertheless, folktales with simple plotlines make it easier for kids to follow the action, remember critical details, tell characters apart, and understand consequences. Symbolism has great influence on folktales being quite appealing to young literature lovers.

Symbolism distinguishes humans from other living beings; Man displays his superiority and uniqueness by using symbols. Philosopher Ernst Cassirer said, "In the beginning was the symbol", and French poet Baudelaire described the world as 'forests of symbols'.¹ According to Online Dictionary, the word 'Symbolism' derives from the Greek 'symbolon' meaning token or watchword. It is an amalgam of 'sym'- "together" + 'bole' "a throwing, a casting, the stroke of a missile, bolt, beam." The sense evolution in Greek is from "throwing things together" to "contrasting" to "comparing" to "token used in comparisons to determine if something is genuine." Hence, "outward sign" of something. The meaning

¹ <https://folkculturebh.org/en/?issue=25&page=article&id=832>

"something which stands for something else" was first recorded in 1590, in Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*.² Symbolism refer to the use of an object, action and name to represent an idea or quality. Writers associate any important meaning with simple things, which leads to deep morality of literal work. According to Jean-Paul Sartre, a French philosopher and writer. symbolism is divided into several tendencies:

1. Allegory – A narrative in which characters, events, and settings represent abstract ideas or moral qualities, often used to teach a lesson or convey a deeper philosophical or political meaning.
2. Irony – A form of expression where the intended meaning is opposite to the literal meaning. In literature, irony can manifest in different forms, including verbal irony, situational irony, and dramatic irony.
3. Metaphor – A direct comparison between two unrelated things to highlight similarities, often used to create symbolic meaning in the text.
4. Simile – A comparison between two things using "like" or "as" to make an implicit connection between the two. Though less complex than metaphor, similes can still be symbolic.
5. Symbol – A concrete object or image that stands for something abstract. In literature, symbols can represent larger themes, ideas, or concepts.
6. Synecdoche – A figure of speech in which a part represents the whole, or vice versa. For example, using "the crown" to refer to the monarchy.
7. Metonymy – A type of symbolism where something is represented by something closely related to it, like "the White House" to refer to the U.S. president or government.
8. Personification – Giving human qualities to non-human things or abstract concepts, often to express symbolic meanings about those things.³

² <https://www.oed.com/search/dictionary/?scope=Entries&q=symbolism>

³ Sartre J. P., *What is literature?*, London, 1949, P.258

Besides Jean-Paul Sartre's tendencies, there are also 8 other types of symbolism in literature: religion, socio-cultural, science, economic, arts, nature, time and psychological.

Symbolism is important literal device in folktales. Many writers make sure that none of these symbols and images are ever brought to their readers' attention, although they do it for different reasons. Although these symbolic and image elements generally go undetected by the average reader, uncovering them would reveal what the things that are common in many novels mean. Many themes of literature such as illusion versus reality, and death and rebirth can be seen in many of the symbolic and imagery references that are placed in the story we know as fairy tales. The Grimms' fairy tales containing either action or connecting symbolism between action and the meaning of the story itself are: Hansel and Gretel, Rumpelstiltskin, and The Ugly Duckling, which will be concentrated on.⁴ Mostly described symbolic objects were mirrors, rose, houses, sun and moon etc. They refer to general morality of human characters and worldview.

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