



IMPACT OF CULTURE IN CHINESE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE THROUGH THE FOLKTALE *BIRD WITH NINE HEADS*

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Abstract: Children's literature is a genre which has been solely devoted for the children because of its readability and moreover to teach the young minds about the goodness of imbibing the Cultural Ethics at the very young age thereby, making them a great citizen at large. The folktale selected for the study "Bird with Nine Heads" which is about a young man who through his kindness and courage though with adversities meet his destiny. The folktale highlights how it serves as a tool of cultural heritage to the readers.

Index Terms - Culture, kindness, courage, ethics

I. INTRODUCTION

Children's literature is a genre which is solely devoted for children. It aims at shaping up the minds of young readers with moral and religious ideas. It has always been treated as a subgenre until eighteenth century but soon it became a separate genre in the field of literature. Even before the printing of books for children, Chinese literature is very much rooted in folktales and these folktales served as a tool for the children to understand the legacy, the heritage, and the cultural value.

II. CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

Cultural Geography is a study in which culture and landscape plays an important role. It analyses regions with distinct cultural characteristics. It examines how culture shapes the physical environment. Cultural geographers use various aspects like language, ethnicity, social practices, religion affects and modifies the society. The Cultural Geography plays a significant role in Chinese Children's Literature influencing both the culture and themes present in the literary works.

III. BIRD WITH NINE HEADS

The fairy tale taken for study *The Bird with Nine Heads* is a story of a young man who save the Princess from a bird which has nine heads. The story starts with a bird which has nine heads taking away a princess to a mountain top and her parents make announcement to their countrymen to save their daughter for which they will be rewarded with the daughter in marriage. A young brave man goes to the mountain top and devices a plan when another two young men pass by that way. They device their own plot and they put the young man inside a cave and take away the princess with them. The young man looks after the nine headed bird with at most care without fearing for his life as it was badly wounded and treated her with kindness. He was then let out by the bird and was taken to a sea. There at the sea, he saves a small fish and it turns out to be a prince of the Sea World. His father treats the young man as his own son and gives him various gifts. He then at last comes to the shore of his country and tries to find his ladylove but she has been arranged for a marriage with another young man who plotted evil against him. After proving his stan, the young man was able to get back to his ladylove and marries the princess.

IV. FINDINGS

The above folktales highlight China's Confucianism which teaches the three essential part of a man's life that is to be kind. When the bird was badly wounded, he did not care about his life but without any delay he helped the bird by cleaning its wound and the bird on the other hand returned the favour by getting him out of the cave.

He next asked the dragon how he could get away from the cave, and the dragon nodded his head in the direction of his tail, as much as to say he should seat himself upon it. So he climbed up, and in the twinkling of an eye he was down on the ground, and the dragon had disappeared. (Faizi 3)

The folktale also teaches the young minds how one must be courageous at the time of adversary. Throughout the folktale, one can identify the young man was not afraid about his life but was very courageous at each step he takes. Though he had to meet the King of the Sea World, he was not afraid because he was courageous.

"If that is the case," said the dragon, "then come into the sea with me and we will live there together." Then the youth recognized him for the same dragon whom he had seen in the cave. And with him was the youth with whom he had formed a bond of brotherhood: He was the dragon's son.

"Since you have saved my son and become his brother, I am your father," said the old dragon. And he entertained him hospitably with food and wine. (Faizi 6)

The Select Folktale points out how good always triumphs over evil ultimately though it may look like the evil is winning over every time. Though the young man must lose his lady love at the beginning of the folktale because of the evil plan devised by another young man, he was able to prove and validate his points that he is the real hero who saved the princess and was able to marry her at the end.

And this was on the very day that the litter arrived. The king's daughter saw the half of her silken handkerchief in the youth's hand, and filled with joy, she led him to her father. There he had to show his half of the long pin, which fitted the other exactly, and then the king was convinced that he was the right, true deliverer. The false bridegroom was now punished, the wedding celebrated, and they lived in peace and happiness till the end of their days. (Faizi 12)

V. CONCLUSION

Through the folktale, one can make out how ethical value has formed as the integral part of Chinese Culture. Thus, it can be shown that folktales served as a tool for the children to understand the legacy, the heritage, and the cultural value.

References

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