

A Structuralist Approach in Some Selected Manipuri Folktales

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Owing to Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (1915) and the inauguration of French structuralism in the 1950s by Claude Levi Strauss and many others of the class including members of Russian formalist, especially Roman Jakobson, established the literary movement which entails the practice of critics analysing literature on the explicit mode of structuralist linguistics. The importance stance on the structure in the very name of the movement "Structuralism". As to the structure, it the structure of the poetic language; the form of expressions applied in literature. In the expositions provided by Saussure's *Course in general Linguistics*, it renders the concept that the elementary cultural phenomena like the elements of language, being purely rational entities, derives its identity from the relationship of differences and binary opposition to other elements within the cultural system. In addition, its exposition includes the notion that each individual person in a given community associated with similar culture, unconsciously has mastered the entire mechanism of internal relationship and "of codes" that produce significant combination.

Having applied its method on literary studies, literature is conceived to be a second – order signifying system on being "the first – order structural system of language" its utility. Analysis of literary text by structural critics is undertaken, exercising the variety of linguistic concepts. Such an instance maybe taken into account, of the analysis of the structure of a literary text undertaken on the mode of the syntax in a well-formed sentence. The tasks of understanding the competent readers 'mastery of the significant literary structures and conventions making the accountable built of a particular literary work belongs to the province of structuralism. Structuralist rather takes langue to be its prime importance, providing that it provides excess to the entire cosmic rules and conventions that engenders its significance. However, parole operates under the command of the langue, given the fact that a parole being any meaningful utterance, spoken or written, is made understandable by the conventions and rules engendered by the langue.

Under two factors, structuralism is closely associated with semiology,

The first being that social and cultural phenomena are identified by a network of relations internally and externally but are not purely rational entities themselves.

The second being the slight difference on how structuralism and semiology carry its meaning; the structure or system of relations on the identification of certain cultural objects from one another by difference is studied in structuralism, however, the cultural objects are studied by semiology of its self content signs that carry meanings.

Standing on an explicit opposition to any concepts or views that literature serves to be a medium of communication between author and readers, structuralism opposes mimetic criticism and the explicit criticism. The long established view of being called a literary "work" is reduced to a "text" in structuralism. Additionally, the so-called author, being the origin or producer of a work is reduced to "an imputed space". It is converted to text from work on the application of its concept of langue, the application of the literary established convention of the mode of writing with its content of internal elements. Likewise, serving as only "an imputed space", the author being the only medium of precipitating the existing system and structure of literary conventions, codes signs language to a particular text, in structuralist view there exist no author or producer or origin, but only a medium of transacting the already available structure. As to the readers, structuralist maintains no credit for the intelligible skill set utilized in the perception of a certain work, but readers are replaced by the impersonal activity to undertake through the impersonal process of reading by exercising the already existed conventions, codes and expectations that constitutes a text.

By and large, structuralism is not strictly maintained in literary studies alone. It is applied in any province of humanities and social sciences, may it be in the common practices of social and cultural, ranging from mythical narratives to advertisements or fad and fashions of the time. Under such analysis, it is maintained that certain social decorum has come into existence on certain regular practices being significant signs of a particular culture which have reached its cultural significance.

Structuralist reading in the six preferred folktales of Manipur

Attempts of critical attention having made in the general application of structuralism upon folktales, folklorists are well aware of the potential scientific structural approach that structuralism has offered. The application of structuralism in folktales is designed to the mark of capturing the underlying logic to the elements and the configuration of folklores and understanding the logic, which in turn serves to decipher the alien coded structures of culture, folklore, language and the designed thinking procedure that runs in our human brain. Laying forth the common grounds of the advantage in employing of the scientific structural approach that folklorist would gain, the primary interest, as developed by Ferdinand de Saussure stands on the langue but not in the cultural parole so as not to provide interpretation of a single text. No much attention is given to any particular cultural phenomenon or event except it provides access to the structure, features and rules of the general system. The importance given to the synchronic studies (studies at a given point of time) rather than the diachronic studies (studies of language over a period of time) providing a self sufficient system has played significant role in the act of enhancing the profound study on capturing the entire anatomy of logic embedded in the folktales. The achievement made by Saussure in linguistics gave inspirations to the researchers in many disciplines to adopt similar methods with the aim of initiating a scientific precision to the study of aspects of human culture, human psychology and artistry. The inspiration drawn from Saussure made Jacques Lacan, Jack Burnham and E. H Gombrich possible to explore the mechanism of psychoanalysis, propose a structuralist approach to the analysis of works of art and study on the systems shaping the development of artistic technique respectively.

As a matter of fact, being acutely aware of the recent developments made by Saussure in linguistic theory, folklorists like Vladimir Propp occasion to engender *Morphology of the Folktale* to the conformity designed in Saussure's structuralism that it redirects away from Formalism. The advancement of the functions made in the narrative unfolding of the fairy tales is acutely stressed in the *Morphology of folktales*. The focal point of the cosmic content of the Morphology of Folktale stands on the constant element rather than the variable details that characterize the creative input of individual storytellers.

Highlighting the drawn inference and formulation of Vladimir Propp in the abstract:

"A tale often attributes identical actions to various personages." (Propp 21)

"Functions of characters serve as stable, constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled." (Propp 21)

Several affairs occupying the core of the preferred six Manipuri folktales, "Pabet Coming of Age", "Ita Thangmei", "Khamba Has a Dream", "Toppa Lannaba", "Sandrembi and Chaishra" and "Hingchabigi Wari", this research paper ventures to pursue an experimentation in support of the inference and formulation drawn.

Settling its primary interest into the developed theory of structuralism of Saussure of its emphasis on langue rather than the parole, Vladimir Propp made a structuralist enquiry in Arne's system of classification of fairytales. The inadequacy in establishing standard rules in case of Arne's classification due to its lack of consistency made Vladimir Propp reached to the terms of making some changes conforming to his understanding, inclusive of the developed theory of Structuralism by Ferdinand de Saussure. No proper uniform rule that stands firm in the process of classifying various folktales is established by Arne's method, further analysis of it reveals the categorization of certain types based on important incident, some by motifs and the others by key characters. Having considered the entire system of the study of tale construction unacceptable, a cross study and in depth study of the personages of Arne with the co- related actions which are held responsible by the personages are undertaken by Vladimir Propp to uniformly classify the fairy tales with consistencies in its classification. Applying the langue and parole of Saussure's structuralism, Vladimir Propp drew inferences as per his own findings to establish standard rules of the general system of classifying his preferred fairy tales so as to achieve uniformity in its classification. The mechanism employed in designing the whole pattern of consistent classification of fairy tales of Arne's, in its study of the configuration of the character with its executed actions serves as parole segment of the Structuralism, and further attempt to draw inference forming its established standard and consistent rules displays the play of the configuration of the langue in the theory of Structuralism.

The storyplot of the six selected Manipuri folktales are as follows

1) "Pabet coming of Age"

A wild cat had stolen a baby bird (Pabet) from its mother and waited for it to grow bigger feeding worms and grains. Big enough to satisfy his insatiable appetite but ironically the baby bird feeling insecure flew away under its mother's guidance and escaped the sly intent of the wild cat.

2) "Ita Thangmei"

The story depicts the predicament of a vulnerable old woman who lives alone in her house. One night, while the woman is working on her spinning wheel with a lamp burning nearby. A thief broke into her house and waited for a chance to loot her property. The old woman being aware of the situation created a story to provoke the foolish thief to prove his own existence in the house. It ended with the thief revealing his own scheme to loot the old woman's house.

3) "Khamba has a Dream"

The animosity between the characters Khamba (an orphan) and Nongban (a royal) runs throughout the story with one being a rival to the other. Winning the wrestling match against Nongban's party, Khamba earned a great favour from the royals that implanted jealous feelings in Nongban. In addition to it, Khamba when his true identity as the son of Purenba (a loyal member of the the king's court who died of a curse), was bestowed with wealth, title and job in the royal court.

Besides his popularity, Nongban got jealous of Khamba's love affairs with his fiancée, Thoibi (king's niece). Thereupon, owing to his high social position, Nongban manipulated the King's proclamation of the standard dress code to attend "Lai Harouba" festival. But it ended up revealing his scheme to subdue Khamba of his new social status.

4) "Toppa Lannaba"

The main theme of the narrative deals with the fight between son of Chengngancha (a kind of bird) helped by other characters and Toppa (a wild cat) on account of Toppa mercilessly devouring Chengngancha (the father) by deception.

Having high regard for Toppa, Chengngancha (the father) gave special treatment to him even to the point of offering his own eggs to consume. This treatment however, makes him more greedy, contemptuous and so, scheme to devour Chengngancha himself betraying their trust for friendship. Thereupon, Chengngancha's wife hiding with its baby in the thick forest waited for it to grow to its full maturity and gave a true account of its father's murder by Toppa. Thereupon, it bowed to take revenge to bring justice to their family. Then, the son scheming with other characters - Mairenn, Pandum, etc ... wage war against Toppa and ended with his triumph killing him.

5) "Sandrembi and Chairshra"

The story deals with the jealousy between two stepsisters Sandrembi and Chairshra and their mothers. Sandrembi's mother being deceived by Chairshra's mother's trickery was murdered by consuming raw lives snakes blindfoldedly. Her various attempts to reincarnate herself into new form as well failed leaving Sandrembi alone to bear her stepmother's abusive nature.

Despite her vulnerable position, she was able to climb up the social ladder through marriage to a king. Yet her generosity leaves a chance for Chairshra and her stepmother's wickedness to intervene. She falls victim to their plan to assassinate her on the pretext of her homecoming party.

Later, Chairshra impersonates Sandrembi in her absence snatching away her social position as queen to the king of the land. However, justice is brought in the end through Sandrembi's reincarnation and her subsequent triumph in the duel set up against Chairshra by the king.

6) "Hingchabigi Wari"

The stepmother attempted to conspire with her mother (a demoness) to murder her stepdaughter by sending her on an errand to drop a letter to the demoness's house. But, the letter mentioning her request to kill the stepdaughter was fabricated by a stranger while she fell asleep on her way to the Hingchabi's (demoness) house. Due to the fabricated letter she rather than being killed received special treatment as the Hingchabi (the demoness) mistaken her for her own granddaughter even to the point of sharing her secrets of embodying her soul in arrow and bow.

Later, driven by the demoness's instinctive feeling she could sense the girl's flesh as human, she attempted to devour her. The girl knowing her secrets of survival broke the arrow and bow and killed the demoness indirectly. Thereafter, she confided the atrocities of her stepmother to her father and he killed her.

Bouncing back to the first preferred inference drawn by Vladimir Propp:

"A tale often attributes identical actions to various personages." (Propp 21), the inference per se amounts to bear the weight of its built on its universal application, rendering it to align with the configuration of langue in Structuralism.

Under the prospect of its universal application, the given inference is entitled to execute and make a play of the faculties of the inference upon the six preferred folktales of Manipur:

"Paybet Coming of Age"
"Ita Thangmei"
"Khamba Has a Dream"
"Toppa Lannaba"
"Sandrembi and Chaishra"
"Hingchabigi Wari"

Bearing in mind that the above mentioned folktales of Manipur constitutes "various personages" and "identical actions", which is the fundamental make of the inference drawn, the experimentation is rendered in support of the inference in the following standard:

Under plain terms of the existing universal fact of the prevailing existence of the magnitude and intensity of act associated with the status of the personages, the personages is counted responsible for the consequence of its performed act.

Embarking on the folktale, "Sandrembi and Chaishra", the personages taking part in the story includes Sandrembi, Chaishra, the birth mother of Sandrembi, the birth mother of Chaishra, the King, the gardener. With the dramatic personages contributing to the plot of the narrative, it proceeds with Sandrembi becoming queen through marriage to the king despite being exposed to the ill treatment of her stepmother and her stepsister, Chaishra. Her generous and humble attitude opens up a chance to her stepmother and stepsister to intervene in her life. She fall into her stepmother and stepsister's wicked plan to assassinate her on the pretext of her homecoming party. After her death, she however, reincarnated to reveal the atrocities of them especially of Chaishra who impersonated her for her social position as queen and finally the narrative ended up with the two stepsisters entering in a moral confrontation.

A clean-cut status of positive and negative moral intent is assigned in the personages Sandrembi, Chaishra, the birth mother of Sandrembi, the birth mother of Chaishra, the King and the gardener: Sandrembi, the birth mother of Sandrembi, the King, the gardener occupying the status of positive moral intent and the personages like Chaishra and the birth mother of Chaishra belonging the status of negative moral intent.

Action exerted setting the structure of the tale.

Setting forth the assigned roles upon the personages, the displayed actions of the personages are bound on rendering classification of identical actions of different personages.

Under the provided circumstances of the affairs in "Sandrembi and Chaishra", the typical European "Cinderella" equals "Sandrembi and Chaishra." Undeniably striking attributes of the framework of the entire mechanism in both the tales initiate to drive to the point of view that step-mothers are wicked mothers to its step-daughters at all times. Regardless of the difference in the medium of the action executed by the characters in the stories, both the stories arrive to the vantage point that step-mothers are wicked mothers to its step-daughters. Certain mediums of actions differ in the two identical tales like "Sandrembi", the protagonist identical to that of the "Cinderella" in terms of the ill-treatment by her wicked step-mothers and step-sister like "Cinderella". Though the medium and intensity of treatment differ, the same magnitude is applied.

"Sandrembi", the protagonist of positive moral intent, parallels the other different protagonists in the story like "Chaishra", "King", "the gardener," and "Chaishra" with its birth mother, in its act of performing identical act. Certain actions exerted, setting the structure of the tale, "Sandrembi and Chaishra" may be drawn here for a deep study: the event of Sandrembi reacting with positive act upon the antagonist, despite receiving illtreatment from her step-mother and step-sister, aligns with the character King's neutral output, performing no negative actions despite the suspicion raised in him by the act of the stepsister's impersonating Sandrembi which further aligns with the identical positive act of the gardener regardless of being witnessed of the negative intended act of Chaishra.

The negative act carrying negative moral intent executed by Chaishra and the step-mother: the incident of Chaishra and the step-mother abusing Sandrembi; killing Sandrembi by pouring boiling hot water on account of

stealing her position in life and several incidents of emotional abuse inflicted upon Sandrembi by the step-mother with harsh force of emotional torture that induced Sandrembi to kill the tortoise in which her mother's spirit is instilled in it and the step-mother of Sandrembi making sly use of the technique of killing her birth mother by pouring snakes down her throat on the contrary of the consent made by the stepmother to pour the fig fruits down Sandrembi's throat, on her closing her eyes.

Such identical act is witnessed to be executed by Sandrembi in the form of revenge at the end of the tale, when the King projected his intervention of conducting a match between the two step-sisters in order to identify his queen, as both claim to be his wife. With no ounce of mercy left in the protagonist Sandrembi, in defiance of her position in life, the killing of her evil-step sister serves to be an identical act to the negative moral intended act pursued by Chaishra and the step-mother.

Regardless of belonging to different tales, the identical protagonists like "Sandrembi" and "Cinderella" performed identical act, the act of receiving the ill treatments of their stepmothers and step-sisters. Despite the contrast in their magnitude of their act, the identical act of negative moral intent is executed by the step-sisters and step-mothers in the two different tales, "Sandrembi and Chaishra" and "Cinderella." In fact additionally, laying forth the situation of Cinderella along with the comparative study occasion to be out of scope of this research, bringing into play of the situations of Cinderella, making it aligned with the drawn inference of Vladimir Propp, the conditions provided in "Cinderella" drives to settle a conclusion that the inference, "A tale often attributes identical actions to various personages" (Propp 21) proves to be applicable on general terms setting itself to be the rules of the general system rendering it to make possible the running of the configuration of langue in the theory of Structuralism.

In close proximity of the above fashion of applying the inference, "A tale often attributes identical actions to various personages" (Propp21), it may be applied on "Paybet Coming of Age". Encountering the cat's (Pabet's) act of mocking and sneering playfully which is caught in the act of keeping the baby bird away from its mother, feeding and looking after the baby bird by the wild cat "Pabet" with the negative intent of eating the bird is quite aligned with the satirical and indirect mocking directed towards the cat by the baby bird and the mother bird in successfully designing its strategy for a rescue of her baby bird from the wild cat; being installed the vision of eating a bigger bird in its brain, the wild cat fed the baby bird to increase its growth but ironical to the cat's design, the flight of the bird at the end serves to be the victory of the bird defeating the cat.

An identical situation posits to render the corresponding application of inference in the tale, "Ita Thangmei". It is imperative to note the similar act of mocking and sneering spotted in the previous tale is found in "Ita Thangmei." The indirect mocking and sneering directed towards the baby bird and the mother bird bears a stark resemblance to the indirect mocking and sneering directed towards the old woman by the thief. In his successful attempt of cheating the vulnerable old woman, the thief indirectly sneers and mocks the old woman in the room, in his belief that he has made successful attempts in deceiving the old lady. Moreover, the indirect, psychological witty sort of mocking and sneering directed towards the cat by the baby bird and the mother bird in the previous tale renders to serve as a parallel account to the mock and sneers directed towards the thief by the vulnerable old lady in the different tale, "Ita Thangmei", the intended psychological witty sort of mocking and sneering directed towards the thief by the old lady is heightened by the weight of the triumph of the desired designs of the old lady generated by the effortless attempts made with her intellect of ingenuity in creation of a story at the spur of the moment: the sort of a story that equals her situation of the moment, the story that involves a harsh shout-outs in defiance of a thief, "Oh neighbours, please help there is a thief in the house!" Considering the fact that he has made successful attempt in the act of deceiving by keeping himself hidden from the vulnerable old woman, the thief bears no prior knowledge of the intent of the old woman's narrating him the story to provoke him to prove his existence. This segment of outwitting the thief by the old woman parallels the situation of cat outsmarted by the baby bird and the mother bird in the tale, "Pabet Coming of Age."

Working the first preferred inference, "A tale often attributes identical actions to various personages," (Propp 21) on the remaining tales, "Hingchabigi Wari", "Toppa Lannaba" and "Khamba has a Dream."

Further attempts to ascertain the validity of the general use of the above mentioned inference can be made by employing the inference upon the remaining tales like "Hingchabigi Wari", "Toppa Lannaba" and "Khamba has a Dream" in addition.

Consequently, in a single tale itself like, "Khamba has a Dream," several different characters like Khamba, Thoibi, Khamnu display an act of positive moral intent. Taking into account the part of the story, bearing the personage Khamba, with no imposition of resistance to any commands and orders of the King and his sister, the role of Khamba stands on to carry out an act of positive moral intent. This role of Khamba bears the same positive moral intent with the role of Thoibi, which is supported by the act of Thoibi in admiring and giving constantly a helping hand to Khamba and Khamnu, making its role to fit in the same attributes of actions

of Khamba and Khamnu. Khamnu in its role play of a great mother of substantial importance to her brother, befits its role in the same attributes of actions of Khamba and Thoibi.

The antagonist, Nongban in the tale, "Khamba Has a Dream", formed no major damage in the flow of the tale. Be that as it may, he fails to fit into the same attributes of actions belonged to Khamba, Khamnu and Thoibi, on account of his sly attempts and manipulations invested towards Khamba and Khamnu; the incident of Nongban scheming to wear off the energy of Khamba on their journey to obey the command of the king, to collect certain flowers from the particular hill and adding the other incident of Nongban twisting the order of the King to magnify the vulnerability of the financially deprived situation of Khamba and Khamnu by conveying the order of the king that everyone must be present on the occasion of worshipping lord Thangjing, well-clad with golds and silvers. This part of the role certainly bears its resemblance to the role of the wild cat in "Pabet Coming of Age" as sly conduct of the cat fails to give any major negative impact to the baby bird and the mother bird.

Moving onto the tale of "Hingchabigi Wari", it is observed that the configuration of the construct of the tale of "Sandrembi and Chaishra" is exceedingly on par to the tale of "Hingchabigi Wari". Provided the settings of the affairs of the unhealthy relationship between the step-mother and step-daughter on both the tales, with the fathers being out of the picture, exhibiting the lone affairs between the step-mothers and step-daughters. Under the provision of the above stated settings, both the tales on equal terms achieved to give the identical effect of the ill-treatment imposed by the step-mothers to their step-daughters. Despite the difference in the scale of intensity of the actions carried out by the antagonists- the stepmothers of the two different tales, the incident of the step-mother, Wasareima, the daughter of the demoness (Hingchabi) scheming and plotting to terminate the existence of the stepdaughter by sending her with the letter to her demoness mother, in which the letter lays forth a request to her mother to kill her step-daughter, such exceeding negative moral intent of the step-mother bears its resemblance to that of the step-mother of Sandrembi in the tale "Sandrembi and Chaishra". In addition to the negative moral intended role played by Wasareima in the tale, "Hingchabigi Wari" strikingly parallels the role played by her mother, the demoness (Hingchabi), though the intensity of the negative act differs, both the act fits into the same category of negative moral intended actions, which renders to succeed in proving that "A tale often attributes identical actions to various personages." (Propp 21). The act of defending herself that we observed in the role played by the daughter in "Hingchabigi Wari" equals the role played by the Sandrembi at the end of the tale.

On a common ground of the disposition of the stretched configuration of the above folktales of Manipur, we witness the same attributes in the last preferred folktale, "Toppa Lannaba", the occasion imposed upon different personages like the character Toppa (wild cat) and the son of Chengngacha bear the identical actions. Be that as it may, the identical actions of the two different personages equal none of its setting one's sight on. On account of Toppa performing the negative intended act in heavy intensity, carried out to satisfy his personal requirement to the extent of killing and consuming the bird, Chengngacha, who assuming the crafty wild cat Toppa to be a true friend, offered his own eggs to the cat for his meal, whereas in the case of the son of Chengngacha, in co-operation with the other minor characters like egg, bamboo splinter, fish, pumpkin as such undertook the same magnitude of negative intended act in revenge for his father Chengngacha, against the cat, which ended up with the death of the cat.

Stressing the preferred second inference drawn by the Vladimir Propp

"Functions of characters serve as stable, constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled." (Propp 21)

Applying the above mentioned inference, an in depth critical analysis of the six preferred Manipuri folktales designs to discover the functions of identical moral and immoral designs being operated by the characters render to the construct of the fulfilling marked and desired moral values of the society; provided the six folktales, "Pabet Coming of Age," "Sandrembi and Chaishra", "Toppa Lannaba" "Hingchabigi Wari" and "Ita Thangmei" and "Khamba has a Dream", it is witnessed that the antagonists of all the tales bring into play their negative designs, casting their intent upon the trains of actions of which the characters are held accountable for their performed acts, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled, the laid out functions remains unchanged, stable and constant in a tale.

For a deeper understanding of the second inference, stressing on the course of action in the Manipuri folktale, "Pabet Coming of Age", keeping the built of the characters out of the picture, we witness the actions performed by the character in the tale, the stable, unchanging and a constant functions, the action of separating the baby bird from its mother bird by the wild cat, "Pabet" and the flight of the baby bird to its mother with no possibility of returning back to the cat, are observed to be an unchanging, constant and stable function and at no time, the existence of any characters could exert an elimination of the already happened and recorded incident in a tale.

Corresponding configuration of the process certainly applies to the other incidents of tales.

In “Sandrembi and Chaishra”, important course of action that form the narrative are as follows:

The incident of murdering the mother of Sandrembi twice. The murder of Sandrembi. Sandrembi marrying the King. The death of Chaishra killed on par with the Sandrembi. The incidents in a tale follow track of sequence which proceed until it settles the disturbed affairs in a tale. Irrespective of how and by whom the course of action stretched out in the tale, the flow of the tale moves with the sequence of the incidents. Exploring into the folds of the tale, “Sandrembi and Chaishra”, it is evident that on account of the course of the exerted action of the antagonists, Chaishra and her mother, throughout the tale, certain length of action of the antagonist is being laid out, balancing the stressed action, in the form of revenge.

In the sense of a critical depth of analysis, the peak of the Vladimir Propp’s drawn second inference locates in the factor that is to be taken into account that “Sandrembi’s state of being submissive and the coordinated actions associated with her submissiveness has provided high volumes of provisions in the narrative for the characters that bear negative moral value according to the standards raised in our society, the antagonist Chaishra and her mother to exert an action of negative moral intent towards the antagonist with an audacity that paves a way to produce a temporary and comfortable situation of their own. We witness Chaishra and her mother, being situated in a comfort zone of their lifetime, exercising their intended superiority and act upon the vulnerable protagonist and the mother of Sandrembi in the form of different degrees of different forms of abuse like deceiving and killing the mother of Sandrembi, abusing and killing Sandrembi. However, we observe the transformation of narrator’s being made through the course of the actions in the tale; the transformation of the varying construct of the character, Sandrembi, from the state of being submissive to the state of being brave and daring to initiate revenge at the end. Regardless of the change in the behaviour and situation of the character, the executed and the performed actions of the character’s remain constant and the very performed action is responsible for further executed actions in a narrative.

In “Hingchabigi wari”:

The move of the stepmother Wasareima, deceiving the ignorant stepdaughter in her scheme of killing her. The incident of a man correcting the letter leading to the protection of a stepdaughter. Pertaining to the letter, the mother demoness being carefree revealed the entire secrets of her protection to the stepdaughter. Gaining the secret leads to the act of protecting herself when an attack is exerted upon by the demoness by killing the demoness making use of a secret obtained.

The actions executed remains stable under any circumstances of what state the character and situations are being transformed into. For an instance, the antagonist, demoness, “the Hingchabi” in the tale, being conscious of the protagonist to be someone trustworthy per her daughter’s recommendation, revealed her secrets with no associated consciousness that it would put her to an end of her own life. Further, when she threatens the protagonist (the stepdaughter of her daughter), to her great advantage, the demoness’s secrets are being put to a very useful application by the protagonist which in turn puts her life to an end. The performed act of revealing her own secrets remains unchanged, stable and constant regardless of the demoness’s entire transformation of her state of being, from being carefree, which we observe when she reveals her entire secret with no concern to the protagonist, to being at the highest peak of the danger zone. Additionally, her own executed act expands itself to haunt her state of existence through the protagonist’s intervention.

The actions of significance that established the built of the narrative “Pabet Coming of Age” are as follows:

The wild cat, “Pabet” capturing the baby bird and separating it from its mother. The strategic framework of the mother bird with an evil design in his head. The baby bird under the strategic guidance of its mother, grows bigger in size with daily practice of flying. The flight of the baby bird to its mother that reduced the solid expectation of the cat to a solid dissatisfaction.

Certain common factors may be drawn here.

As in “Sandrembi and Chaishra” and “Hingchabigi Wari”, the antagonists in both the negatives initiated actions of inflictions upon the protagonist paving the way to make a point that it is a constant fact that the first negative action carried out with the negative designed in the heads of the antagonists in the narrative comes first in the configuration of actions at all times in narratives.

Parallel account may be drawn here in the terms of “Pabet Coming of Age” in the negatively moral intended act of the cat separating the baby bird from its mother bird.

In “Sandrembi and Chaishra”, the vulnerable protagonist and her mother are being inflicted upon by the antagonist with villain being the appropriate term applicable giving the size of the negative action executed and the infliction bearing its negative moral value has its payback with the action of the same value which comes

with the term revenge. Regardless of the types of the characters bearing different moral value in terms of their actions, the same actions are being performed under different circumstances. As to exercise its power of superiority in proving its validation of their status of superiority, the antagonist Chaishra and her mother, the stepmother of Sandrembi inflicted with deceptions, murders, imposition of action upon the vulnerable protagonist and her mother which is made with passive reception of the infliction by the submissive protagonist and the protagonist's mother. Further, reception of the entire infliction shaping its way to the built of character's emotion, uniting its built emotion through the process of its reception of the inflictions from the antagonist to make a character exceedingly contrary to the first encountered vulnerable protagonist, the character built in the protagonist, the daring and brave one at the end of the tale returns its reception of the infliction with the same amount of inflictions that she, the protagonist experienced, which put the antagonist, Chaishra to an end of her life. Hence, bearing different purpose, the action of the same amount and same magnitude is produced by characters of different moral worth. In a comparative study of the tales, it is observed that inflictions exerted by the antagonist, the character of negative moral worth in the narratives are made the same amount of inflictions from the protagonist, the character of positive moral worth. Likewise, having made the same critical study in the above mentioned narrative, "Hingchabigi Wari" and "Pabet Coming of Age", the exploration of the preferred second inference of Vladimir Propp that, "Functions of character serve as stable, constant element in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled" (Propp 21) is proved in the constant fact that inflictions exerted by the character of negative moral worth are met with the same amount of inflictions from the character of positive moral worth. Therefore, leaving the character of different moral worth out of the picture, it is only left with the actions of stable and constant elements; independent of whom and for what purpose the action is being exerted upon, the actions are found to be stable and constant element in a narratives. In addition, it implies that the transformation of the character from the state of being submissive to the state of being daring and brave at the latter segment of the narrative doesn't change the fact that protagonist submissively received the inflictions from the antagonist in the past, regardless of the later transformation in the character of the protagonists, are performed action of being submissively receiving the infliction remains constant and stable.

The same application may be made used in the narratives, "Hingchabigi Wari" and the "Pabet Coming of Age":

In "Hingchabigi Wari", the psychological transformation in the character built of the protagonist is witnessed, from the very state of being ignorant to the state of being clever as it is encountered in the segment of the narrative when she was ordered to act as a messenger to the antagonist mother by the antagonist. Acting as a messenger giving no doubt on the content of the letter of the stepmother gives her the label of ignorance. The shift in the character of the protagonist is encountered at the later segment of the narrative, in her making use of the secrets of the demoness, in her defiance, putting an end to the life of the demoness. However, the change in the psychological segment of her character from being ignorant to the stage of being clever doesn't change the fact that in the past, she once exerted an act that proves her to be an ignorant girl by not doubting the content of the letter. Therefore, regardless of the change in the character, the action remains constant and stable.

The negative action exerted upon by the antagonist in narratives serves to lay the ground work of the stressed configuration in any narratives. For an instance, the account of the infliction upon the protagonist by the antagonist in "Sandrembi and Chaishra" strikes the chord of the entire structure of the narrative. From the weight of the infliction and its impact on the life of the protagonist, the configuration of the narrative, is determined that the narrative is not to be ended on a light note. As to the exerted action with negative impact from the antagonist, the stepmother (the biological mother of Chaishra), the first act of deceiving and murdering the mother of Sandrembi lays the groundwork of the narrative and this very act renders to give an assurance of the tragic end of the narrative.

The same principle may be applied to the rest of the tale, like in, "Pabet Coming of Age", the first act that initiates to say the configuration of the narrative lies on the sly and witty act of the wild cat; separating the baby bird from its mother bird and raising the baby bird with its sly intent of consuming the bird when it gets bigger. The moral intent behind the good act of raising the baby bird may be a negative one. Despite its negative moral intended action rendering negative impact bearing physical damage of any form, has not been exerted upon by the character, setting the configuration of the narrative on a lighter note. The lighter negative moral intended act imposed upon produce the easier balancing of the act giving the ends of the narrative on a light note. The sly and witty act with negative moral intent of the cat is balanced out with the victory of the baby bird and its mother bird with a strategy; the kinds of a victory that implies an indirect witty and psychological laughter to the sly design of the wild cat. The sly intent of the cat in raising the baby bird equals its pay-back; the easy escape of the baby bird on its first attempt to check its capability of flying which arouse not a lowest form of alert in the cat's mind until the mount of the flight of the bird as it gets higher and higher. Having made a comparative study of the two narratives, it is observed that heavier the weight of the negatively impacted

actions imposed initially, heavier is the act involved in balancing of the actions imposed. Therefore, lighter the weight of the negatively impacted actions imposed initially, lighter is the action involved in balancing of the actions imposed.

Adding further, its application in “Khamba has a dream”, parallels the accounts of application of the above given principles applied on “Pabet Coming of Age”. The antagonist Nongban strikes the chord on a lighter note which amounts to complete the narrative with the act of balancing out of act with less action involved.

Its application of the principle in “Hingchabigi Wari” bears its resemblance to that of “Sandrembi and Chaishra”. Having initiated the first negatively moral intended action on a heavier note, much work is involved in the balancing out the imposed action. The same fashion of account is observed in “Toppa Lannaba”. The fact that the murder of the bird by its friend, the cat, sets to initiate a tragic tone to the entire configuration of the narrative from the beginning.

The heaviest weight of action which is found in the form of murder is reacted with murder. The reaction given with the murder to the initial act of murder by the antagonist requires enormous work in the act of balancing of the initial imposition of the action.

The prime interest of this research paper lies on its venture of applying Sasure’s theory of structuralism in the folktales of Manipur in support of the two inferences drawn by Vladimir Propp. First inference being, “A tale often attribute identical actions to various personages.” (Propp 21). The second inference being, “Functions of character serve a stable, constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled.” (Propp 21)

“Langue” and “Parole” being the significant aspects of structuralism successful application of the two aspects is made giving the entire structure of this research paper with the division of langue and parole segment. The prospect of parole is stressed in the detail application of the two inferences upon the six selected folktales of Manipur while the two inferences of Vladimir Propp itself serves to function as the “langue” in structuralism, is identified as the general and standard rule made for the purpose of applying it on different forms of narrative.

Taking the structuralist dimension, the supply of thoughts involved in this paper, being engaged with the experimentation of the six folktales of Manipur in support of the two chosen inferences of Vladimir Propp, is not a construct of an individual self but it is generated from the existing system of language, conventions, coded and rules of combination prevail in the present structure of the social affairs of Manipur and the associated customs of Manipur.

Making use of the purpose of the langue, Propp’s two drawn inferences are found to be successful in operating as a general rule in the folktales. The first inference - the action inflicted to Sandrembi by Chaishra is found to be similar to the act conducted by her to Chaishra, the villainous conduct of Toppa is balanced out with he being assassinated by Chengngacha’s son and though on a lighter note similar is the case to that of the tales of “Khamba has a dream”, “Pabet coming of age”, “Ita Thangmei”, “Hingchabigi Wari” thereby proving the attribution of identical actions to various personages in a tale. Certain common grounds in the analysis using the first inference are observed to pave a way to the application of Propp’s second inference in the selected tales. The striking attributes of morally negative action by the antagonist to the protagonist and the balancing act of this negative action which often comes in the form of revenge is observed to remain unchanged, constant and stable independent of who and by whom it is being fulfilled. This ever repeating stock action carrying the same impact serves well in the study of Propp’s second inference.

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