



Comics and Myths

KEYWORDS

R. SENKAMALAM

Assistant Professor, Guru Nanak College, Velachery, Chennai

ABSTRACT Since childhood, reading for pleasure makes students, get the spark for amusement in reading stories of adventure, thrill and of course, humour. Every child has the wonderful privilege to get such an exposure. Thus enrichment of the language is obtained. Students often tend to be involved in reading while their schooling starts. So no child is driven away or ignored from such kind of pass time. I have always been one such student, greatly fond of reading stories by Enidblyton, James Hardley Chase and "The Adventures of TinTin". The story often seemed to have originated from the age old myths with all the fun projected characters. The occurrences from the story, depict the mythical beliefs. The characters are often humorous, yet they reveal the ideologies of the myth. They portray strength, will power, tenacity, intelligence and of course valour. There is great relevance to the characters and ideologies which are very dearest, of great values. They are overt. We, readers, feel the presence of the many universes. Any myth can be retold and dramatised even for the sake of fun lovers. So the myths often play a predominant role in a comic being delivered in its picturesque manner. The most powerful "Hercules and Atlas" is a Greek mythology, about the power Gods. The characters have found a great for as "He man and his powers of the Universe". The comics have very minute segments all for the sake of humour and the power of mythical values. Much of the canonical work is derived from Greek mythology. It showcases traditional culture. The old source content is re-interpreted in the modern serialized comic books. The myths and comics often lay emphasis on the mythological kings and knights of valour to be portrayed as fast and furious heroes in the modern comic books, all with unique and distinct dialogues or conversations, to make the readers be enthralled and carried away to other worlds.

INTRODUCTION:

Myths – originally meant speech or discourse, later came to mean 'fable' or 'legend': It is a story of forgotten origin that is often vague. The base of a myth is only an appearance without substance or significance, of course more aspects of the world. At a point, all myths (substance) are believed by the society of people, from where it was originated. Thus a myth is any unreal or imaginary story. It has never been assumed to be true. Some (actual) real historical events are described from myths, by story-tellers, in the most appealing, manner. None can know what really happened.

1. The universe and all that is contained in it is often explained in myths and mythologies. The scientific study of the origin, structure of the universe and the history of it is made known to the societies.

1.1. Emblematic and Figurative-Mythology

Myths created, provide an explanation of the universe and all its complexity. They beget primal gods and animals, titanic struggles between opposing forces or the death and dismemberment of these gods or animals as the means whereby the universe and its components were created. Creation of the universe is explained, also of every day natural phenomena.

The Egyptian Scarap God Khepri, who rolled the ball of the sun across the sun each day is the nature's story of the sun rising each day, its progress across the sky and its setting in the evening. Myths are often used to explain human mind check and practices as well. Pelops and Poseidon are Greek heroes winners of a Chariot race. They became famous and started the Olympic Games. They beat Hippodameia.

1.2. Celtic Mythology:-

The Celts were an ancient Indo-European people of the 4th

Century. Their religious beliefs and practices were spread up to their territories in the length of Europe.

1.3. Greek Mythology –

is the body of traditional, tales concerning the Gods, heroes and rituals of the ancient Greeks. A mythological or legendary figure often of divine descent endowed with great strength or ability; an illustrious warrior, a man admired for his achievements and noble qualities and one that shows great courage.

As described by dictionary – Mythology is a set of stories, tradition or beliefs associated with a particular group or beliefs associated with a particular group or the history of an event, arising naturally or deliberately fostered. Myths are traditional stories about Gods and heroes. They often account for the basic aspects of existence – to explain, how the Earth was created, why people have to die, or why the year is divided into seasons¹.

2. These are the varied ways of understanding myths as they occur or have been formed and created. Thus, myths form a source of powerful thoughts, beliefs and perceptions about all what/that exists in the creation. They tend to enthrall the minds of the readers with great powers of beliefs in the ways they have originated. In Greek mythology, Atlas was the son of the Titan Lapetus and Nymphs Clymene². The Titans were defeated by the Zeus. Since then Atlas was punished to hold up the heaven on his shoulder. He had to stand at the western most end of the world. Hence the ocean near him was called Atlantic in his honour. The family of giants, the Titans, were all powerful, ruled the earth. The greek Gods of Olympus nymph over threw the Titans. Nymph is the young and beautiful minor goddess of nature. Prometheus was the brother of Atlas. Their family was an illustrious family. Prometheus was known to be the God of fire and creator of mankind. Pleia-

des, Goddess of nature, Hyades, goddess of rainy season, nymph calypso of the beautiful nature were all daughters of Atlas. Atlas was responsible to hold up the heavens. The Titans family guarded a tree bearing the golden apple guarded by Hesperides, granddaughter of Atlas. The Titans believed in a prophecy that a son of Zeus would one day steal the golden apples of the Hesperides. So he refused to offer Perseus, son of Zeus and slayer of the Gorgon Medusa, hospitality, when he visited their homeland. It is such a belief that Atlas was turned into a stone, when the insulted Perseus showed him the severed head of Medusa which had the power to turn living beings into stone. Gorgon Medusa is one of the three ugly monsters, with snakes as hairs, staring eyes and huge wings.

2.1 Another Story -

Hercules and Atlas outshine each other. Hercules, the grandson of Perseus, wanted to help his worker, to get some of the golden apples that were guarded by the Hesperides. He went to Atlas for help. The latter wanted to get rid of his burden of holding up the heavens. So he acted to his thinking wisely. Hercules stood to hold up the heavens while Atlas would fetch him the apples. He came to Hercules with apples, and said that he would deliver them to his labourer. He only had wanted Hercules to be left with the burden of holding up the heavens. Instantly, Hercules only asked Atlas to take back the heavens for a moment, to help him hold it properly. When Atlas had agreed, Hercules walked away with the apples.

As how myths can be read and experienced for worldly ways of the different worlds, comics too have the quality to give such pleasures to the readers to be fascinated by the fun factor through images and dialogues for the convenience of the creator writer.

3. COMIC:

The comic is a form of narration at a certain pace. It is often dialogues in an expressive way, in balloons. Comics found greater acceptance with the public and within academia towards the end of twentieth century. They combine images and texts which are sequenced along with other images and texts relations and facts pertaining to history. It can be a narration of information with sound effect through textual devices².

4. COMIC STUDIES:

4.1. Comics can be comprehended as the manner in which one cuts Gordian Knot. It is enigmatic and a complicated and difficult problem³.

4.2. Comics can even be seen and smiled at. The pictures create the humour sense in every reader. The ultimate reaction is laughter.

4.3. Some comics are often full of adventures, which makes the reader thrilled and they end up with lots of thinking.

4.4. Images for fun can be created for many true life incidents⁴.

4.5. Comic figures are structures, have now been replaced by cartoons, funny animated shows with rigorous ideas conceived and featured.

My little cousin had come home for a visit. He loved to chew gum and blow bubbles. He was greatly impressed by a TV advertisement where a little boy scares away bullies

by blowing a huge bubble at them. On the Annual Day at School, I took my cousin along. In one of the plays that was put up, a bully started beating up a boy. Quick as a flash, my cousin ran up onto the stage and was bravely blowing bubbles at the bully. The audience was in splits. I had to run up and remove my brave cousin from the stage⁵.



Perceptions and real life incidents thus enable the writer to give fun and frolic through their comical pictures, instantaneously. Fun and laughter keeps the reader merry.

5. There are Fairy Laws, which make a reader wise in his thinking and divine in his beliefs. One such Fairy law is found in welshland legend.

5.1. A shepherd boy and a beautiful maiden from the lake, Tegwen of the Fair white Hand; the lady of the lake is Mythological belief. The appearance of the beautiful maiden from the lake was the belief of the fairy law⁶.

5.2. Story in brief:

"The Shepherd of Myddvai-A shepherd boy from the Welsh mountains of the Myddvai country, often led his lambs to graze beside a lake. A beautiful maiden rose from the lake and walked up to the shore.the shepherd boy,Allunand the beautiful maiden, Tegwen had fallen for each other.Allun and Tegwen get married .Made love and embraced children.Allun had forgotten the promise made to his fairy bride. Tegwenregretted .She left him saying that she had to go away, from where she had been happy".

5.3. Elaboration of Story:

After many a meeting, Alun falls for Tegwen. He asks her hand for marriage. She agrees, if Alun could follow their

fairy's law, after marriage. Alun should never strike her even for fun. If at all it should happen she would return to her father's palace, beneath the lake – the fairy law. Tegwen even promised a rich dowry from her home –

The shepherd boy promised to be so. Tegwen also stated that he would be blessed with a dowry from her home. As stated the fairy bride brought a rich dowry as she stepped from the waters of the lake. A splendid herd of cattle came along with the fairy bride as she sang.

Brindle cow, White speckled,
Spotted cow, bold freckled,
Old White Face and Grey Geringer.
And the White bull from the King's court,
Grey ox and black calf
All, all, follow me home.

The Myddvai folk had never seen before such a rich dowry from any girl's side. The shepherd grew rich, the young couple was happy and blessed with a daughter and son. The children grew to be half fairy and half mortal and were beautiful.

Low, below! The shepherd broke his promise one day. He just gave a sharp tap on Tegwen's shoulder, for a trifle. The fairy bride, her eyes filled with tears turned pale. She wept and said that he had struck him in anger, when he had promised not to do so even for fun. The fairy bride Tegwen, regretted saying that she was to go away from there where she had been very happy.

The story concludes thus that a promise is, a promise, be it a fairy tale or folklore.

6. Speaking about comics, Dennis the Menace was contrived by Hank Ketcham, immortalized by Marcus Hamilton and Ron Ferdinand. Dennis's world is all unique yet common. From the cranky, adorable neighbour, to the groomed, good girl next door, and from the harassed and affectionate mother to the friendly little kid. All the characters join together to entertain Dennis.

6.1. This is a comic which still holds a high position as illustrious worldly known symbol. Distinctions – July 2010, the United States Postal Service unveiled a Dennis postage Stamp in homage to the popularity of Hank Ketcham.

6.2. Yet another comic is "The Adventures of Tintin".

"Tintin series was created by Georges Remi under pseudonym Herge. He first made them appear in French in a children's newspaper in Belgium, in 1929. It is an entire research work, reworked. They present a world of reality with true characters in varied settings⁷".

Tintin is a journalist who always keeps getting in strange and dangerous situation, manages to overcome them, albeit with the help of his friends. Tintin cartoon character is a very bold young investigative reporter. He is accompanied by his faithful fox Terrier, Snowy. He travels the world in the service of truth and justice. Tintin travels to the moon. He explores into varied worlds and has ventured into a world of perfection. He has been a beloved character ever. The adventures of Tintin present a world of reality with true characters in varied settings. The series has forever, remained a favourite for readers. It is a titular character with captain Haddock a cast included. It has drawings very lively, in Herges signature "Ligne Claire" style.



6.3. "The Phantom is the first marked mystery-man hero who had been carry for the wicked heart"⁸

The first print was made six decades ago. The character had been the grim champion of justice for about four hundred years.

The modern phantom has been the law in the dangerous part of the world, a one man police force, a silent avenger who appears and vanishes like lightening. His home is the fearsome "skull cave" deep in the heart of his jungle. His great white horse hero, his savage grey wolf Devil and his lovely American sweet heart Diana, Palmer are his only inmates.

The current Phantom and Diana Palmer were espoused in 1977. Their scrappy little son is being trained. He would be the 22nd Phantom, some day, taking the "Sacred Oath of the skull".

CONCLUSION:

Mythology dates back to ancient history which has unique religious beliefs and superstitions as well. They have great fascination for readers who wish to drown into a world of different existence. The readers are driven into a deep slumber, immersed in dreams and carried away to many worlds. They invoke knowledge about the Gods and Goddesses of ancient beliefs. The creativity of the reader blooms into many colourful, imaginative, and astounding horizons.

Comics are the world of fun, thrill and wide thinking. The creator of a comic is often the ruler of his world, his thinking, his knowledge. Comic time is always fun time. Many readers read and read again the fun filled talks and adore the picture of characters. Many characters are even portrayed during festival and seasonal celebrations. They are even made in the form of stickers and badges. These are greatly loved by people all over the world irrespective of age.

From the above stated works and findings it is evident that the theme selected has proven measures of content that comics and myths often are the much sought after reading articles for pleasure. They facilitate enhancement and enrichment of reading and communicative skills in the learning of the English Language, besides reading for pleasure.

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