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Fairy Tales in Georgian Theatres for Young Audiences

During the twentieth century, fairy tales became an important part of theatre, radio, television, video games, and other varieties of social media. Fairy tales' success as literary and musical genres was at least partly due to their ability to make use of and respond imaginatively to the interests and daily lives of a growing mass-reading public and the needs of an expanding and diversifying media. This article is a part of the project "Fairy Tale and Music: Intermedial Study of Georgian Narrative and Musical Genres" supported by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (SRNSFG, FR-23-2808).

The paper deals with intermedial studies of fairy tales, in particular, Georgian stage adaptations of fairy tales by Charles Perrault, the Grimm Brothers, and Hans Christian Andersen. These tales spread in Georgia through literary and oral narrative ways. They have been retold and adapted in various forms throughout the years. The integration of Little Riding Hood, Town Musicians of Bremen, Cinderella, Thumbelina, The Steadfast Tin Soldier, and other iconic fairy tales in the national repertoire of Georgian theatres for young audiences may be explained by the popularity of European fairy tales in Georgian children's literature. Grimm Brothers' and Perrault's fairy tales owe some of their success because they were closer to the traditional oral folktales and had their oral narrative versions in Georgian folklore. Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales were different and outlandish from Georgian oral narrative tradition but as an author, Andersen was admired by Georgians. Andersen's fairy tales allow readers and listeners to read their own Andersen.

The Study of transitions and intermediate forms between oral, written, and visual communications gives folklorists a chance to explore various processes of cultural transfer in traditional folklore. Georgian translations of European fairy tales in the late nineteenth century and multimedia adaptations since the twentieth century have cultural-historical value in terms of cross-cultural contamination of one tradition by another.