

## **Anthropomorphism in Animation - Disney's movie Zootopia and Animated Series Beastars**

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**Abstract-** “Anthropomorphism “can be recognized as a literary technique that is utilized for entrusting humanistic tendencies to inhuman creatures which may consist of animals as well as life-less organisms. The two animated works that are included are Beasters and Zootopia. BEASTARS is a Japanese anime series released between (2019- 2021) adapted from a manga series. It is written by Paru Itagaki. The anime series is directed by Shinichi Matsumi . The animated movie "zootopia"(2016) is directed by Byron Howard and Rich Moore .The present paper is focussed on pointing out the possession of humanistic characteristics in animals, represented in animated works and also reveals that animalistic appearance, structure and style of the animated characters and its influence in the narrative and characterization of different characters. This study shows how Anthropomorphism has progressed throughout time. Both of the works are eminent and have created a breakthrough in the field of animated works. After researching the two animated works, it is identified that even though both of the above works are from two different continents, the idea of Anthropomorphic world presented in these animated works is quite unique, and the present study also points out the relevance of such animated films in the real world.

**Key words:** Anthromorphism, furry-fundom, Zoomorphic, Humanoid

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

**Anthropomorphism** is basically related to the phenomenon of non-living things acquiring humanistic tendencies, which includes of human like behavior, intelligence, and appearance .For example, the rocks developing abilities to talk like humans. The term “anthropomorphism “is assumed to be originated from the Greek word anthropos , which means(“human”) and word morphe which means (“form”). The popularity of anthropomorphism in art , literature and broadcasting media resulted in formation of cultural tradition of” Furrydom” or Furry- Fundom” , which is mainly focussed on the universal tales of furry animals, actually linking anthropomorphic animals, and the inspection and elucidation of humankind by the means of anthromorphism. From the initial stages of the Upper Paleolithic age, "Cave Paintings of Zoomorphic Entities" were exposed; these paintings can be regarded as the earliest proof of anthropomorphism. Even today the role of anthropomorphism is unbreakable, and because of the development of anthropomorphism, many writers used it as a literary device, as a result, many novels were instigated into the field of literature. During the period of the 19th century ,emergence of “Children's literature” led to the acknowledgment of fables and fairy tales, and it also enhanced the popularity of works such as Alice's Adventures In Wonderland (which was written by Lewis Carroll in 1865., The Adventures of Pinocchio actually written by Carlo Collodi in (1883) and The Jungle Book written by Rudyard Kipling, all these works utilizes anthropomorphic elements in their narration. It is observed that most of animes and mangas of Japanese culture is based on the setting of anthropomorphic realm as well as themes. For example, “Beastars” is based on anthropomorphic animals, “Aggretsuko” deals with a non-human protagonist (“A red panda”), Haiyore! Nyaruko-San W displays interspecies-relationship .The development of animation have advanced to another

level, it is observed that, due to the excessive hard work of the animators, they were able to introduce humane-like characteristics or “Avatars” into lifeless manifestations. Gradually, animators and other artistic writers were able to merge anthropomorphic elements in their own creation also in such a way that, they were able to add facial expressions, locomotion of body as well as human-like postures to lifeless, non-human characters. If the audiences are not able to properly connect with animation then it may result in deficiency of their interest in the animation or artistic creation. With the help of inducing myths into the animes, the viewers commemorate feelings of a beast, and experience their emotion, and construct images of characters in their mind. Disney’s movie, “Zootopia” overflowing with anthropomorphic animals, is nothing less than a work of a mastermind, bringing the world of animation and storytelling to a whole new level. It’s a chronicle about an enthusiastic young Rabbit cop (Judy Hopps, voiced by Ginnifer Goodwin), and her investigation.

The animated series “Beastars” showcases the globe of anthropomorphic animals; a cloistered Wolf’s convoluted association with a kindly rabbit is tested by a classmate’s murder, a fascinating deer’s manipulation, and his own mushrooming rapacious instincts of inner beast. Both the animated works are assembled upon a very inventive plot; the works explore the vigor of human deliberation and sensation and reveals the secrets of human unconscious mind and subconscious mind. Both of the animated works presents the world of beasts and shows how it has influenced the real world and the human race.

## **II.Style of Approach**

“Beastars” anime series basically portrays a world of anthropomorphic animals; the series begin with the death of Tem the Alpaca who is mysteriously murdered by a carnivore. Tem’s buddy, “Beastars” central character Legoshi the grey wolf, does not have much time to mourn to his friend’s demise because the relationship between herbivores and carnivores are so weak that they constantly fight among themselves. Almost immediately after, Legoshi discovers that he has an indescribable feeling towards the small rabbit. Bewildered whether he is confusing his carnivorous instincts with romantic interest, Beastars explores the relationship between Legoshi and Haru as they meet head-on the discrimination and unfairness inbuilt in their society. The hypothesis for Beastars is that it is based on Romeo and Juliette narrative style; in the anime it is observed that there is a clash between the herbivores and carnivores. Similar type of narration can be seen in the animated movie “Zootopia”, even though the carnivores and herbivores living together in a civilized manner, there is always a seed of doubt in herbivores about carnivores, which is clearly projected in the movie, at instance; when the carnivores turn savage due to the intake of flower drug “Night Howlers”, the herbivores blame carnivores for their DNA. The technology used in the anime is quite fantastic. Legoshi’s fretfulness is projected through his unvarying twitching of his fingers, and the 3D allocates logic of degree between the small herbivores and large carnivores that cannot be possible in 2D. The operation of 2D in anime series is quite impressive, setting a divergent impression to the high-school drama that is delivered in 3D. The series also dictates that the characters should be animalistic. The anime became much popular because the characters were animals, the narrative and themes of Beastars would not work if the characters were human beings, with the categorization of each character reliant on which beast they are. The features of canines are well-known for their greater senses of smell, deers can be easily startled, and tigers are ferocious creatures. The characters’ exceptional behavior compels the plot in ways detailed in this world, as character stimulus and reaction make parallel with their species. It also opens the show to go beyond a simple romance; instead, Beastars brings into play the divergence between its characters to inquire what it means to be, satirically, human. In case of “Zootopia”, the film known as “the movie for furies”, which made people notice that there hasn’t been a film with such a well-built (and well-

made) “animals that live like humans” theme for ages. Zootopia masters when it comes to furry animal design which is projected throughout the movie, the designers, modelers and riggers really provided utmost concentration to the features to convert this alluring look from 2D to 3D. Is produced by its residents: It is divided into diverse climate zones, for example; In city of Zootopia the trains have small, medium and large doors, a smoothie booth is revealed with a pipe utilized to take drinks up to giraffe customers, cars come in all shape and sizes to fit their drivers, and there is even an entire neighborhood that is minuscule – perfect for its rodent inhabitants.

This is a blast of innovative ideas only achievable in animation. It’s also mesmerizing to see those cartoony designs from older times communicate with modern technology like smart phones and computers. The set- up of animalistic world linking an eternal message in a modern-day environment is an energizing vision.

### III. Influence of Anthromorphismin the Characters

Both BEASTARS and Zootopia utilize the” Talking Animals ‘as an allegory to communicate a more complex message to the audience. Storytellers can employ talking animals as allegory for their human audiences. The storytellers can apply this concept in two ways. One technique is that by treating the animals as successfully humans who, save for the skins they dwell in, believe and act just like ordinary people. The other technique involves treating the animals as basically animals, from how they reflect to how they operate, with the exclusion that they can converse. Speech is kept as an invariable in talking animal stories so that its characters can achieve a minimum amount of readability with viewers. Zootopia inclines harder into the human relationship in contrast to BEASTARS with its more animalistic cast.

BEASTARS the Japanese anime deals with the story of the main protagonist “Legosi”. He is a lonely gray wolf isolated and completely feared due to his dreadful appearance and from childhood itself he has faced discrimination from other herbivores. Cherryton academy is a place where herbivores and carnivores co-exist with each other. The greatest “Sin” in this particular anthropomorphic world is the act of “Predation “which means (killing of animals for food). The main character Legosi appears in the anime with his body covered with a bluish gray fur coat. He is commonly seen wearing his school uniform which consists of a white shirt and indigo vest, dark gray tie, gray pant with a dark vertical line pattern and brown loafers. He is a kind- hearted; mild-mannered and docile gray wolf of the Canine family. He is often misjudged by the other herbivores due to his outer appearance. He possesses an imposing appearance with his tall body, he tends to hunch over other herbivores, and his often awkward and weird personality scares his schoolmates. At the beginning of the series, Legosi can be seen as an introvert because of this reason he became a socially mistreated personage, behind his stone-faced behavior and pretense, there lies a substantial quantity of self-abhorrence. From his childhood itself, his self-consciousness as a large carnivore and awareness of his familial character made him inferior to others and this made him isolate himself from others. As a result, this made him undervalue his own value, crippling, and his self-estimate. Regardless of this, Legoshi is pretty skilled at being very commanding and firm when the situation calls.

His thoughts about himself reveal through his conversation with” Els” the sheep (crush of Tem Alpaca, Legosi’s dead friend) **“I am pretty used to it, so it’s okay, I’ve always lived life being feared and hated”**. (BEASTARS, SEASON 1, EPISODE 1) these sentences are uttered by Legosi in the presence of Els the sheep. Els the sheep being suspicious of Legosi’s constant, staring and unusual behavior, she lashes out at him, calling him “stalker” and “Blood thirsty killer” without knowing the kind intentions of Legosi. Legosi was actually fulfilling the last wishes of his dead friend Tem. He approached Els to give her the love letters of Tem, but Els’s prejudice against

Legosi as a predator made her believe that he was trying to devour her. Legoshi is a character who can be considered a significantly unrestricted and compassionate personage. Legoshi is very protective of others on different occasions he has proved that he is able to protect his fellow mates from dangerous situations. For example, he protects Louis from the attack of another character named “Kai the Mongoose”. Kai was not satisfied with his position in “Drama Club” so he argues with Louis to attain “Tem’s role in the play as result both of them fight and Legoshi chose to stop the fight, so that none of them will be hurt. This simple incident reveals that Legoshi can be considered as an unprejudiced character. Legoshi acknowledges the identity of every living creature even an insect. He even has pet named Kabu (Stag beetle). He tends the beetle like his own child. He is a very genuine character, who displays leniency towards, the antagonist character like “Riz” The Bear, who is disclosed as the real culprit behind the mysterious, assassination of Tem. Legoshi does not kill Riz but he gives a new chance to redeem himself for his mistakes. Legoshi develops a sort of passion towards the character named Haru, (the rabbit), she possesses a sort of diminutive physical appearance. she is also a senior student of Legoshi’s academy, but he frequently thrash about accepting these feelings, he is totally confused about his real emotions, his inner Alpha instincts were awakened by meeting Haru, till then he has constantly suppressed his inner beast from attacking herbivores but, the very essence of Haru has invoked a new feeling in him, he is totally puzzled about his actual feelings, Legoshi is continuously shattered by the feeling of unadulterated love towards Haru but at same time, he is fighting against his unquenchable hunger to devour his one and only love Haru as a “Delicious Delicacy”. Legoshi’s greatest ambition is to lead his life in a solitary condition but every single day, he struggles to smother his rapacious cravings towards blood.

The advancement of animated series creates certain changes in the character of Legoshi. He started to accept his physical traits of his wolfish form, from his childhood days itself, Legoshi was very conscious about his physical appearance, he was very scared to approach others, and he believes that, one day he would hurt them. Later in series it is observed that bit-by-bit he would attain self-esteem.. Legoshi will grow up to be a much more gregarious in nature.. Haru is a pure white dwarf rabbit who can be considered as the important character of anime. Legosi and Haru can be considered as the “Star- crossed Lovers”. It can be clearly observed in the anime that this peculiar couple defies the very rule of nature. She is clearly attracted to Legosi the Wolf. For most of the time in the anime, Haru is displayed dressed in her Academy uniform. As per Paru Itagaki words, character of Haru, is described using these words from “Beastars” Chapter 25: "Soft looking cheeks and arms" and "Childish and acts like an old lady". The true nature of the character Haru can be related to women of the contemporary society, she portrays virtuous nature as well as appalling ones. Throughout the series Beastars, Haru is the only character, who is seen acting genuine towards her own notion and aspirations and she is also not afraid to disclose her real nature in front of any person. Other characters in the anime “Beastars” can be seen wearing some kind of mask for example, in the case of Legosi and Louis, Haru is a self-sufficient character, she is not cautious about other people’s judgment, she clearly enjoys her unflappably ways of living. Legoshi and Haru, both possess the quality of childish sincerity. Haru is over and over again represented as a weak creature by the other fellow Beasts, especially by “Raptorial Beasts” and she strives to be respected as a plant-eating and a female animal. Haru builds a barrier around her and has a tendency of secluding herself from the company of other Beasts. She is very vigilant of Legoshi despite of the fact that he sees her as a potential lover. Her assumption about kinship between other living species can be considered very peculiar. She assumes that kinship between different species are easily broken and shallow. She is very conscious of her level in the food chain as a plant-eating animal, since she could be easily captured by other raptorial creatures. Due to her sexual promiscuous nature her communications with other living species can be considered to be superficial in nature thus she started to confine herself from the sight of other species. **“These , plants need me, if they are gonna make it, actually I need them too, none us very strong, we**

**help each other out in order to survive. And if get too stubborn, I mess things up, i may even risk my life.”**(BEASTARS, SEASON-1, EPISODE-2). These touching words are actually uttered by Haru towards Legoshi when they meet in academy’s garden. Haru has a very special bond with flowers and plants. She compares herself as fragile to plants; both of them can be destroyed easily, so she takes care of plants, the in garden and treats them as her own babies. While taking care of plants she finds a sort of comfort in the fact that as a weak prey she can also protect someone. Through sexual relationships, Haru finds some kind of satisfaction for her inferiority complex. According to Haru only time she feels superior in her life is when she has sexual affairs. She felt it was a lot better than being treated like a defenseless creature. The anime portrays a love triangle between Legosi, Louis and Haru. In the anime it is observed that Haru is in physical relationship with Louis the Red Dear, he can also be considered as a deuterogamist of the series Beastars. The learners of “Cherryton Academy” assume that, in the coming future, Louis would attain the “The Great Label of Beestar”. The Label of Beestar is awarded to an animal who is very talented in every field and should stand out in every single thing, he or she does. Louis is the “Top Banana” in the play conducted by Drama club of Academy. Later in the series, at some point Louis also attains the position of Mafia Head of Black Market Crime syndicate named “Shishigumi” comprising of members of the Feline community such as Lions. He is projected in the anime as character possessing a supercilious and priggish nature. Nevertheless at certain times, Louis is submerged in self-doubt because of his vulnerable anatomy as a plant-eating prey animal. He has a very complex relationship with Legoshi. He is at times jealous and at the same time admires Legosi for his physical abilities and nature. Louis is one of the characters of the anime who believes that an animal should possess both muscular strength as well as, a genuine behavior to survive in an animal based society, both the qualities makes animals superior in society. At the beginning of anime the series it is observed that Louis, detests the meek nature of Legoshi, he is not making use of his “Gigantic Beastly physique”. His real feeling towards Legosi is conveyed through these words, **“There is something I have meaning to ask you, for a while, why don’t you take responsibility for who you are. If you can’t hide it completely, I rather you show me your true self.”**(BEASTARS, SEASON-1, EPISODE-3).

Judy Hopps can be considered as the main heroine of the animated detective movie Zootopia. Judy is the first rabbit of the herbivore community to attain a position in Police force of Zootopia. Judy may look a very mild and harmless creature, but at times she surprises the viewers with her instinctive traits and her agile movements when she senses some sort of danger. “She is sweet, but she cannot be underestimated.” She was a very hasty person, she jumps into certain situations without thinking about its consequence, this habit of Judy has caused many problems in her life especially during the investigation time, she was almost fired by Head Bogo for destroying and endangering life of residents the town of Little Rodentia for catching the thief Weaselton. But in later part of the movie, it is observed that there is a change in her character, she becomes more mature, understanding and she also gets rid of her past prejudice against the predators and also mends her strained relationship with Nick and together they unveil the real truth behind the missing cases and protects the Zootopia from the evil plans of Bellwether.

Her childhood incidents have somehow molded her character. From childhood, Young Judy held on the notion that, every single animal should be subjected to an un-biased vision. They should not be torn apart for their race. These thoughts were aroused when she was badly bullied by her childhood nemesis, Gideon Grey the fox. **“I want you to remember this moment the next time you think you will ever be anything more than just a stupid, carrot-farming, dumb bunny!”** These words were uttered by Gideon Grey towards Judy at the carrot festival. These were the words that encouraged her to move forward and break the stereotypical beliefs about the herbivores. Judy strives to prove Gideon wrong. At last through her hard work she was able to fulfill her ambition of joining the police force of Zootopia. Even though she believes that every prey

should be treated equally. Judy is moderately cautious about the true nature of ferocious carnivores. This particular phobia of predators emerged due to her childhood fight with her arch-nemesis Grey. She has slight uncertainty towards the foxes which was developed by her incident with Gideon Grey. Judy appears to be very suspicious of Nick Wilde when she first saw him. But later in the movie it is observed that with Nick, she forms feelings of companionship which she started to extremely value. **Nick Wilde** the hypnotic Red fox, can be considered as one of the important character as well as, the deuterogamist of the movie Zootopia. Nick actually from a very poor family background. He is a very well known Hustler fox in the metropolis of Zootopia. Due to some unlikely circumstances, he comes into contact with Judy and somehow, was forced to work with her in the investigation process of finding missing animals. Nick's character is very mysterious, he appears to be tricky, stoic, and unreachable, and he has intentionally masked his true nature because of the prejudices of herbivores towards the predator like him. At first glance, Nick displays a very harsh mentality but actually, deep down he is a very genuine guy and often appears in facade of sarcastic, cynical in nature so that he can easily fool others without revealing his weakness to others. He is very slick and very intelligent and very skillful in acquiring knowledge about people, he is quite observative in nature and through observing people he is able to identify the real character of people and he often use these trait for his own benefit for example he finds that Judy very kind and honest person who does not has any prejudice against predators so he tricks her to conduct his illegal popsicle business and earn money, but after some time he was of also tricked by her in same way. Judy accuses Nick of "Tax Theft" and compels him to join her investigation process. He was traumatized by his childhood experiences. He was oppressed by the prey members of Boy scouts, he was repeatedly abused by the prey members because of the mere fact that, he is from carnivores community. He was gagged using a mouth guard, and publicly ridiculed by them, thus Nick attains sort of Phobia towards exposing his true nature in front of other animals. **"If the world's only gonna see a fox as shift and untrustworthy, there's no point in trying to be anything else."** These lines were used by Nick towards Judy to reveal his true feelings about himself. So he presented himself as an untrustworthy person, but hopefully Judy was able to change the attitude of Nick.

## II Concept of Prey and Predator

BEASTARS and Zootopia are based on a similar setting. Both consist of the same narrative that is talking animals in a society, both BEASTARS and Zootopia are based on talking animal stories: carnivore/predator and herbivore/prey living together in a society. Both stories have a pre-established history of carnivores predating on herbivore prey. Both stories mark carnivores as the minority of the inhabitants and herbivores as the majority. Zootopia is the saga of an assiduous, wannabe bunny cop named Judy and a sly huckster con-artist fox named Nick. With ideas of making it as a highly regarded cop doing significant police work to protect the community, Judy crashed into a prejudicial reality of her larger -animals colleagues. She is cast away for her pocket-sized appearance and allocated to the boring labor of a meter maid. As a youngster with hopes of being initiated as a respectable member of the boy scouts, Nick is muzzled by the homogeneously herbivore membership of the troop. He is insulted for thinking that he'll ever be acknowledged by highly regarded folk like them, they made him consider henceforth that the only way he'll make an honest living at all in this detrimental reality is to become an ignominious fraud. The world becomes a villain to both Judy and Nick by reviewing them for what they were born and discharging their individual potentials and virtues. They both decide to work as one to prevail over these detrimental hindrances whilst cracking an ongoing case of carnivores going out of control, with Nick serving Judy into being taken seriously as a cop and Judy signifying to Nick that he could join the police like her.

BEASTARS, based on the tale of a kind-hearted but self-deprecating grey wolf named Legosi and a

self-deprecating yet free-spirited dwarf rabbit named Haru. In the first meeting, Legosi almost gobbles Haru. In the second, he falls in love with her. Legosi is tormented from a condition that most carnivores share: namely, a powerful and at times uncontrollable yearning for meat that's seared into his genes. Legosi is used to herbivores giving him a higher position as one of the alpha predators of the animal kingdom. Legosi is awestruck and find its irresistible when he sees the rabbit, he almost attacks her but Haru affectionately encourages him into her companionship and hangs out with him. He is neither pretentious nor repugnance. He is used to existing with unvarying reminders of threat as one of the animal kingdoms weakest herbivores. Haru attracts and gives confidence, and constructs a bond with her canine attacker. She was prepared to accept herself that, someday, she would be devoured by some predator

#### IV.CONCLUSION

The present paper is an attempt to analyze the role of Anthropomorphism in the animated works *Beastars* and *Zootopia*. *Beastars* is a Japanese anime series released between (2019- 2021). It is adapted from a manga series written by Paru Itagaki. The anime series is directed by Shinichi Matsumi. The movie "**zootopia**"(2016) is directed by Byron Howard and Rich Moore . Both works are a perfect example of a dystopian state of the world in which animals behave like humans, and they showcase human emotions. This study aims at showing how humanization of animals is represented in both the animated works. This study also explores the quest for truth, love, and suffering and also discusses various kinds of possibilities of animalistic humanoid world. Both animated works projects the isolation and detachment of characters in the anthropomorphic society. The works reveal how animals behave if they are subjected to real human beings and how they will act if they are given the same attributes of human beings.

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