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Reinventing Fantasy: The Reception of Fairy Tales

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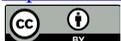
Abstract

The fairy tales are a cultural legacy continuing to have a powerful enchantment. The story became traditional not by being created but by being retold over the centuries and accepted in changing environments. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, fairy tales are still thriving and have diverse forms of narrative representations. Mainstream cinema today even shows great interest in producing fairy-tale films that seek to hold the attention of a global market with innovative and spectacular adaptations. This paper takes historical retrospect to survey dominant shifts in the reception of fairy tales, in particular the shift in a unique art form and narrative formula. From the féerie, Georges Méliès, Walt Disney, Angela Carter, and the twenty-first-century postmodern hybridity, the findings suggest that the representation of fairy tales shows a certain attitude towards the story, which reflects an aspect of cultural values, beliefs, and viewer preferences in the reception of fairy tales. Findings from this study also indicate that fairy-tale transmission is a feedback loop rolling around with tradition and innovation, taking on a meaning of their own.

Keywords

Reception, Fairy Tales, Representations, Narrative, Transformation

1. Introduction

Fairy tales have been with us for a long history and influenced our culture profoundly. Originated in traditional oral storytelling, developed as the literary genre with the help of the printing press in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and reshaped employing new technological forms of the mass media, fairy tales have evolved and continue to transform themselves vigorously to the present

day (Zipes, 2006a). The most telling stories even have become a handy metaphor or shared knowledge of the fantasy code for communication in the popular culture (Cahill, 2010; Haase, 2004; Warner, 1990). For example, the big wild wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood* can be alluded to be a malicious person or a villain who wants to seduce a girl. In the story of *Hansel and Gretel*, the evil stepmother can represent the theme of abandonment and child abuse, and the candy house may symbolize oral greed that children must learn to overcome. The reader or viewers can rely on their knowledge of pre-text, the original, to quickly identify others such as wicked witches, trolls, wolves, fairy godmothers, dwarves, princesses, and princes charming from the rich body of the subject.

Based on popular text sources like Brothers Grimm, Charles Perrault, or Walt Disney, the adaptable nature of literary fairy tales has continually inspired creative writers, artists, and filmmakers to make the responses, reactions, and revisions (Elliott, 2010; Haase, 1993a; Inge, 2004; Wertag, 2015). Innovation depends on tradition. Working with a plot, a character, images and motifs already familiar to the intended reader or audience, gives freedom to retaliate, protest and reinvent (Warner, 2014). Feminism approaches (Cahill, 2010; Haase, 2004; Lieberman, 1972; Warner, 1990), postmodern irony (Bacchilega, 2013; Joosen, 2011; Smith, 2007), cinema's visual spectacle (Elliott, 2010; Hayton, 2012; Moen, 2013), and diverse narration offer the potential to attract widespread appeal. Successful retellings of well-known fairy tales usually bring new insights and transformation, imbuing stories with added significance and meanings in their reception.

According to Cristina Bacchilega (2013), creative writers, artists, and filmmakers are the active recipients because their fairy-tale adaptations usually take an activist stance in response to authoritative pre-texts and hegemonic uses. Yet, meanings are not fixed. In actual social existence, creators appear or intend to create stories encoded with a set of dispositions and preferences. Still, they are not in complete control of the meanings that are subsequently made since readers' decoding positions are "no necessary correspondence," says Hall (1993). In other words, readers are also active recipients who can organize information through deduction and induction. And people who are from different social and cultural contexts have different ways to interpret and determine the meaning from the same text.

Therefore, a fairy-tale adaptation turns to be widely accepted, which is a dynamic process that may involve scholarly reading, technical uses, and viewers' tastes. This paper aims to understand how fairy tales grant tellers and readers the freedom to respond to the text and generate meaning and function in reception. It takes the process of historical retrospect to survey dominant shifts in the reception of fairy tales, in particular the shift in a unique art form and narrative formula. This paper discusses the féerie, Georges Méliès, Walt Disney, Angela Carter, and the twenty-first-century postmodern hybridity individually, focusing on the performance techniques, connotation, cultural resonance, and the contemporary cultural field of fairy tales their ongoing dynamics of distinction.

2. The Meaning of Fairy Tales

Fairy tales emerged from an oral tradition, and they existed in thousands of versions. The ancestors retold and listened to these stories at the fireside, in taverns, and in a spinning room that offered opportunities to talk, negotiate, deliberate, chatter, and prattle on endlessly (Tatar, 2004). Fairy tales were told initially by an adult to adult audiences, presenting with a multi-voiced discourse, blending the wit and the coarse humor, combining the local culture of peasants with poetic literacy of aristocrats. Many tales have been traveling through the world for centuries, refashioning into the form of traditions in every location. It is a continuous recycling process in which anyone can pick up a tale and make it over. It is also evidence that tales exist in various degrees of similarity and differences among countries.

In the transmission of oral culture, fairy tales are one of the most ancient and honorable functions of art for entertaining people (Carter, 2005). The pleasure of wonder offers hope of release from poverty, maltreatment, and subjection. Moreover, "storytelling can act as a social binding agent," says Marina Warner, a celebrated cultural historian, critic, and novelist. "The enchantments in the tales also universalize the narrative setting, encipher concerns, beliefs, and desires in brilliant, seductive images that are themselves a form of camouflage, making it possible to utter harsh truths, to say what you dare" (Warner, 1996). The shared experiences of human society inspire people to echo emotions, conflicts, and thoughts, giving the genre its fascination and power to satisfy.

It was until the nineteenth century that fairy tales took a turn to the field of children's literature. When Brothers Grimm collected the tales as a cultural archive, the Children's Stories and Household Tales, they thought they were recovering a German Mythology and a German attitude to life. Although the Grimms had tried to collect these tales in as pure a form as possible and sought to construct a national identity, they had taken care to eliminate "every phrase not appropriate for children" and erased the off-color humor of tales for popular demands and expectations (Tatar, 2004). Despite some critics arguing that the Grimms tampered with their sources in irresponsible ways, they believed that fairy tales would remain the same when it comes to essentials even if they continually transform themselves in their outer manifestations.

The moral dimension is one of the profound meanings in the classic fairy tales that stems from human conduct of the past and still speak to today's audiences about valuable life lessons and universal truth (Haase, 1993b; Jones & Schwabe, 2016; Zipes, 2006b, 2011). Before the Brothers Grimm, in French writer Charles Perrault's *Mother Goose Tales*, Mother Goose plays as a figure of seer, godmother, teacher, or grandmother to transmit the message of a praiseworthy and instructive moral by the tale (Warner, 1996). Whether the Brothers Grimm or Charles Perrault, literary fairy tales incorporate a moral code that reflects upon the basic instincts of human beings as moral animals and suggests ways to channel these instincts for personal and communal happiness (Zipes, 2006a).

Moreover, in fairy-tale studies, the psychological perspective focuses on children's struggles between positive and negative forces in the self. The renowned child psychologist Bruno Bettelheim (1989), in his influential study of fairy tales, The Uses of Enchantment, claims that "nothing can be as enriching and satisfying to child and adult alike as the folk fairy tale." He illuminates an understanding of fairy tales which can function as a powerful therapeutic value. By opening the world of fantasy and imagination, children find the life of meaning through fairy tales which can be seen as a way for navigating reality (Cashdan, 1999), helping them develop the wit and courage needed to survive in a world ruled by adults.

3. The Reception of Fairy Tales in the Féerie

The theatrical genre of the féerie was born shortly after the French Revolution (Kovács, 1976), which was known for its dazzling scenes and marvelous stage effects. In nineteenth-century popular culture, the féerie provided "a multifaceted entertainment of dance, comedy, and action while exploiting new technologies and extravagant stagecraft" (Moen, 2013) for a mass audience.

As the word "féerie" indicates, this genre was based upon fairy tales and other fantastic objects. These plays staged material drawn from familiar stories such as French fairy tales written by Charles Perrault and Catherine d'Aulnoy. However, the féerie emphasized neither the temporal continuity of narrative nor the depictions of moralistic intent, but rather an emphasis on spectacle. According to Théophile Gautier, a well-known commentator on French theater, féeries presented rapidly changing onstage wonders which invite spectators into a shared environment filled with fantastic transformations. The reception of fairy tales in the féerie is a dazzling vision and an incoherent collection of brilliant spectacles, which had become a central visual trope of popular entertainment. Marvelous stage effects and transformations largely displaced the narratives of féeries. Moen (2013) highlights the importance of how fairy tales in féeries resonated with modernity. The féerie departed from the narrative basis of fairy tales by employing new lighting and stage machinery technologies to transform, shaping modern fantasy with a dazzling visual form of instability, "ephemeral and mutable, technological and enchanting" (Moen, 2013).

Therefore, the féerie is a creative world's response to represent a visual regime of the nineteenth-century media culture, embody a pre-cinematic sensibility in Charles Baudelaire's modernist aesthetics that "modern art can dispense with classical art as its authoritative past because the temporal or transitory beauty implicit in the concept of modernity engenders its own antiquity" (Jauss, 2005). Through a fairy-like aesthetic, the féerie pursue visual pleasures and celebrate a fleeting moment of beauty, rather than engaging with art's relation to the narrative structure, moral lessons, and social values. Using complex theatrical machinery to achieve its "magic" effect, the féerie inspired the early cinema, notably in Georges Méliès films (Grøtta, 2015).

4. The Reception of Fairy-Tale Film-Georges Méliès

At the turn of the twentieth century, influential French filmmaker Georges Méliès, a pioneer of fairytale film, devoted himself to experimenting with creating narratives in cinema. As Jack Zipes (2010) noted, among the early filmmakers and directors in the western world, it was Méliès who paved the way for fairytale films and experimentation with cinematic storytelling. Ever marveled at the spectacular effects achieved in féeries, he sought to use féeries as a source of techniques, plots, and themes in his motion pictures. Therefore, féeries could be a vital force shaping Melies's film aesthetic.

Between 1896 and 1913, Méliès made over 520 films in his Montreuil studio in a Paris suburb. Among them, Zipes recognizes that "there are about thirty or more that can be called fairytale films in a strict sense," a classification based on the Perrault's tales, melodrama féeries, vaudeville féeries, literary fairytales, and original screenplays that Méliès wrote. Although Méliès was not the only filmmaker at the time to adapt fairy tales for the cinema, his innovation and passion for rendering dreams and imaginings with a greater reality made his fairytale films have continued to make an impact on contemporary filmmakers.

In 1899, Méliès directed the first film adaptation of Cinderella, *Cendrillon*, a compact version of about six minutes. Inherited from féeries, Méliès presents a series of tableaux and events loosely based on the viewer's familiarity with the story. *Cendrillon's* first scene is Cinderella sobbing in a kitchen because her stepmother departs for the ball, leaving her alone. Then soon after, the fairy godmother appears. Here, Méliès employs a series of stop-camera substitutions and mixes stock of theatrical techniques to show transformation in an instant, turning mice become footmen, the pumpkin becomes a coach, and Cinderella's appearance becomes dazzling. Innovative photographic techniques created new magical changes allowing Méliès to link single illusions together in rapid succession.

Furthermore, according to the influential literary critic and essayist Remy de Gourmont, the stop-action technique enables Méliès to create new meanings through visual transformations in his films. In the same example, *Cendrillon*, Méliès elaborates on the notion of "time" in ways that transformation could be understood, figured, and negotiated. The clock is incarnated in the human form of an older man. He appears in the ball to warn Cinderella of the coming of midnight, followed by the fairy godmother, who changes her back into a girl in rags. Through a series of cuts to make characters appear and disappear or show the substitution of something onscreen rapidly, transformation functions to generate implications in the story. The older man transformed from the clock is reminiscent of the anthropomorphic "time" role in Greek mythology. Like an ancient Greek philosophy of "time reveals the truth," Cinderella transforms back into her true nature. The truth has nowhere to hide in the light. Poor Cinderella suffers the scold from people in the palace. Although Cinderella returns home with regrets, the older man still haunts her in the dream in a ridiculous way for not being home on time. Until the prince arrives and recognizes her, the happy

ending comes.

Cendrillon is one case to understand that Méliès can capture a metaphorical effect through playful images, making the unreal real and the invisible visible in his work. The reception of fairy tales in Méliès's films is the impulse and the pleasure to revisit stories and transform. In his charming cinematic version of *Bluebeard*, Georges Melies adds magical revival to the finale, with all the murdered brides revived and happily paired off at the end (Short, 2014). The fairy tale was a vehicle for Melies to express his artistic talents, make fun of traditional stories, and leave the people staring in wonderment. The advent of film technology changed the fairy tale genre; Georges Méliès adopted photographic tricks in the service of magic. His fairy-tale films elaborate on a fantastic world of new perspectives, playing merrily with echoes.

5. The Reception of Fairy-Tale Film-Walt Disney

In the twentieth century, the birth of modern culture, fairy-tale production revolves around the transition from print to electronic text, like film. After the experimental fairy-tale films of Georges Méliès, Walt Disney became a dominant role in the production and reception of fairy tales with his aesthetic interest in the newly developed possibilities of the art form (Brode & Brode, 2016; Haase, 2006; Inge, 2004). Disney's first feature-length fairy-tale film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), has been admired as a masterpiece of cinematic art. A dazzling full-color screen with musical and technical marvels changed the pop culture landscape. Until now, Disney's artists have made a lasting impact on the art of animated film.

Followed by *Cinderella* (1950), *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), *The Little Mermaid* (1989), and *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), Walt Disney retold the tales through animation and film with such consummate skill that they became the authoritative modern versions (Inge, 2004). At the same time, he reshaped the fairy tales to reflect his utopian vision of the good women and good life. For example, Disney's heroines are passive and pretty and usually patient, obedient, diligent, who treat animals like children, creating a sense of domestic harmony (Stone, 1975). It reflects the traditional public attitude toward the place of women in Western culture, as portraying princesses as passive vessels of innocence and virtue. Moreover, Disney is emphatic in its depiction of good triumphing over evil. Eventually, the evil lousy person is punished, and the innocent good person is rewarded (Wasko, 2001). Love and devotion, fun, and happiness are consistent ideologies projected in Disney's reception of fairy-tale animations and films.

However, scholars have struggled for critical reception while analyzing Disney films despite their enormous popularity and commercial success. Some scholars such as Marcia R. Lieberman (1972) and Kay Stone (1975) argue that Disney spells false magic on children for amplifying the stereotype of innocent, passive beauty. In their argument, good-temper and meekness pretty girls are invariably singled out for reward fortune and happiness from some Prince Charming

(Beauvoir, 1953). This fairy tale's patriarchal ideology must influence children's expectations. They put the concern for Disney's social responsibility since its animated film versions of fairy tales have achieved widespread popularity, affecting the mass audience. Lieberman and Stone echo the fairy tale's socializing power, a rising discourse of the feminist fairy-tale research, incubating the advent of modern fairy-tale studies (Haase, 2004).

Some critics noted an emphasis on Disney's monopoly on the fairy tale. Jack Zipes (1995) had contended that Walt Disney sought to replace all fairy-tale versions with his animated version, casting the commodity spell with the so-called American fairy tale and colonizing other national audiences. Giroux and Pollock (2010) also closely examined Disney's messages through movies, merchandising, and attractions. He claimed that Disney, "as one of the most influential corporations in the world," plays a dominant role in various public spheres. Disney's animated films are a vehicle for generating dreams, entertainment, and corporate profits. They also promote Disney's cultural pedagogy, helping children and adults define themselves through an artistic language, shaping their identities and desires, and editing public memory. It is the expanding role that Disney plays in shaping education by its authority in popular culture.

Douglas Brode overturned the idea of "Disney bashing" by arguing that Disney's work absorbed the zeitgeist and shared its view. "Even those who dismiss Disney on various critical grounds cannot deny that he and his company performed that virtual magic acts better than anyone else" (Brode & Brode, 2016). As Christopher Finch (1973) had declared, "Disney is a primary force in the expression and formation of American mass consciousness." The Disney version of Snow White established the Classic Disney formula and relayed new ideas about the American dream of success, illuminating the spirit of the times and infusing hope and positivity into society during the 1930s and 1940s, when America was suffering an economic depression. Through the reception of Snow White's good, diligence, patience, and virtue, and her ability to love and dream, Disney, transformed her into the leading role from plight to eventual "happily ever after."

On the other hand, other voices have queried Disney's adaptation, losing the meaning and value system attached to the "original" tale. But American academic M. Thomas Inge views the matter from a different standpoint. He argued that Disney's version does no violence to the traditional patterns of the meaning of the original fairy tale but instead renews and affirms the story's relevance for another century (Inge, 2004).

Donald Haase raised the question of ownership about the reception and cultural ownership of fairy tales. Haase suggested that if adults and children can avoid regarding fairy tales as models of behavior and normalcy, like the Disney model, these tales can become for them "revolutionary documents that encourage the development of personal autonomy" (Haase, 1993b). He examined that teachers and parents should present children with various fairy tales, helping reinterpret the stories in new ways. Since a wide variety of narratives can en-

courage diverse responses, questions, and significant comparisons, children can be helped discover their ownership of fairy tales through experiencing the classical canon in new contexts and understanding to assert their proprietary rights to meaning. Therefore, from this perspective, it is not Perrault, Grimm, or Disney who possesses the fairy tale, but people must take possession of it on their own terms.

6. The Reception of Fairy Tales in the Angela Carter Generation

From the 1970s into the late twentieth century, a group of influential writers such as Robert Coover, A. S. Byatt, Margaret Atwood, Salman Rushdie, and Angela Carter is christened "the Angela Carter generation" by Stephen Benson. The reason is that they have innovatively engaged with the fairy tale genre in a sustained way, producing the alternative fashion of the fairy tale (Benson, 2008). Their fairytale adaptations establish an essentially postmodern awareness of the fairy tale, which invites more critical exploration and creative possibilities in narratives, consequently releasing a story's many other voices.

Among these prominent revisionist writers and storytellers, the English novelist Angela Carter is best known for her explicit fairytale reworking with the strong narrative style of magical realism. She wrote dazzling, erotic variations on Perrault's *Mother Goose Tales* and other familiar stories. There are no naive princesses or soppy fairies but are pretty maids and old crones; crafty women and bad girls; rascal aunts and odd sisters (Carter, 2005).

Carter believed that fairy tales transmit unofficial, cross-culturally varied, entertaining knowledge (Bacchilega, 1999). She put old wives' tales together, intending to give pleasure on her own part. Carter's stories have one thing in common, which all center around a female protagonist. She may be clever, or fearless, or good, or foolish, or cruel, or sinister, or awesomely unfortunate. According to Carter (2005), she wanted to demonstrate the richness and diversity of how femininity responds to the same common dilemma by its strategies, plots, and hard work.

Angela Carter's (1990) partisan feeling for women in all her work, including her renowned collection of fairytale revisions, *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. She "lifted Beauty and Red Riding Hood and Bluebeard's last wife out of the pastel nursery into the labyrinth of female desire," says Maria Warner, "Taboo was her terrain, and nothing was sacred" (1996). The reception of Carter's fairytales, mixed with exuberant fantasy and postmodernist philosophy, offers readers an extended exploration of notions, notably desired, gender and power.

7. The Reception of Fairy Tales in Postmodern Culture— Hybridity

7.1. Fairy Tales in Postmodern Popular Culture

Nowadays, popular fairy tales have become global cultural icons and are enjoy-

ing a massive rise in popularity and influence in symbiosis with the internet. Countless fairytale contemporary retellings and reinterpretations are produced every year to keep pace with new social media and communication networks in the twenty-first century. They constantly pervade through television series and commercials, fashion magazines and artistic drawings, comic books and cartoons, and performance art and pop commodities. Fairy tales have become part of the rich treasury of "texts" available to the adaptor.

One of the significant characteristics of postmodern culture is its paradoxical nature (Foster, 1983). Anything can be juxtaposed to anything else, like opposing emotions in love and hate, cognitions in belief and doubt. This phenomenon is readily observable in art, literature, advertising, and other media. Therefore, fairy tales can yield a new meaning by juxtaposing with other differential elements through an artist's consciousness of the world. Preston (2004) has observed that the stuff of fairy tales, in postmodernity, exists as fragments acquired through some possible forms of cultural production. For instance, the British designer Alexander McQueen found inspiration in Grimms' fairy tales, infusing the Gothic sensibility of fairytales into the boundaries of fashion, making him one of the most creative visionary designers of his generation. Fashion photographers, such as Annie Leibovitz and Eugenio Recuenco, create their own visual narrative in this fairytale trend, putting their contemporary gloss on familiar tales with fresh fashions and brilliant casting. Their collaboration with the well-known fashion magazine *Vogue* offers stunning images and an unparalleled notion of fairytale haute couture (Figure 1).

Although the focus of photoshoots is with an advertising aim for the prestigious

Figure 1. The fairy tale in popular culture exists as fragments in haute couture. Beauty and the Beast, photographed by Annie Leibovitz, Vogue, April 2005. Source from: https://www.vogue.com/article/from-the-vogue-archives-fairy-tale-fashion.

brands, they highlight a glimpse of selected fairy tales in an elaborated, dramatic, and elegant style, provoking people's understanding of how fashion photography portrays a fairy tale in the way of visual art. Fairy tales are capitalized on the potential of hypertext and appropriated as "blocks of text" in fashion and contemporary culture. This encourages the viewer to follow different pathways and travel in the nonlinear presentation of images and electronic text, experiencing a "hypertextual" aesthetic with intertextuality, multivocality, and de-centeredness (Landow, 1992).

7.2. The Postmodern Fairytale Films

DreamWorks' *Shrek* series, since 2001, prominently illustrates a postmodern approach to fairy tales in contemporary cinema. *Shrek* functions as some watershed in cinematic fairytale awareness, with subsequent films adopting and exaggerating the commercially successful ironic formula it presents (Tiffin, 2009). By parodying the supply of characters, situations, and tropes of the fairy tale, particularly as they have been associated with Disney (Moen, 2013), S*hrek* presents a multilayered fairy tale remix wherein old and new collide, merge and blend.

Shrek's strategy of cultural references and fragmentary narrative disrupts what is commonly understood as a classic fairytale frame, transforming the meaning of the well-known tales to be doubling and double, which "both are affirmative and questioning, without necessarily being recuperative or politically subversive" (Bacchilega, 1999). The Three Little Pigs, The Big Bad Wolf, Pinocchio, Puss in Boots, Fairy Godmother, Prince Charming, numerous familiar characters exist as fragments and are embedded in *Shrek's* fairyland. They function naturally, either meaning and implication or attempting to distance themselves from their fairytale prototypes. Jeana Jorgensen (2007) called these fragments "fairytale pastiches," using fairytale motifs, characters, or plots to build blocks of new media texts, inspired by fairytales but not quite fairytales themselves (Figure 2).

The successful reception of *Shrek* represents a considerable step away from Disney's magic formula, which opens the recent proliferation of fairytale films. It challenges standard notions of the fairy tale and normative standards of beauty and true love and offers playful intertextuality and greater self-awareness of the fairy tale symbol.

Drawing inspiration from *Shrek*, Walt Disney Studios' *Enchanted* (2007) turns the reflecting mirror at itself, allowing its classic fairy tale films to self-parody. *Enchanted* positions itself as a warm, lighthearted spin through poking affectionate fun of fairytale conventions while remaining true to their spirit. The relationship between fantasy and reality is a prominent motif to demonstrate that a classic animated Disney fairyland collides with modern-day New York City, bursting into double-layer amusement. The approval from critics and audiences reveals that Disney has successfully mined deconstructive fairy tale gems not plundered by the "Shrek" franchise. Whether an elaborated or

Figure 2. In *Shrek the Third* (2007), the pastiche of fairytale princesses offers playful intertextuality and greater self-awareness of the fairy tale symbol. Source from https://images5.fanpop.com/image/photos/28000000/Princess-Fiona-princess-fiona-28090761-1024-768.jpg.

freewheeling blend of the "Snow White," "Cinderella," and "Sleeping Beauty" fairy tales, the worldwide reception of *Enchanted* also indicates that the twenty-first-century viewer has been enjoying taking a "fairytale hybridity" ride.

Hollywood's spate of fairytale films confirms the recent resurgence of interest in fairy tales. A brilliant example from Disney's *Frozen* (2013), an animated film based on Hans Christian Andersen's story "The Snow Queen." *Frozen* has an instant classic hallmark and won a massive commercial success. It is not the first time a traditional fairy story has been seized, disarticulated, and recast, but its defining elements radically altered. Watching a girl worldwide stamps her foot and spread her arms, singing "Here I stand, and here I stay" with such cheerful energy shows that the young generation receives a massively powerful message, self-affirmation, and autonomy. True love exists not only between lovers but also between sisters, in family, and everywhere. The sequence of twists and variations *Frozen* has undergone reveals how fairytales respond to social values and needs over time (Warner, 2014). Followed by *Maleficent* (2014), *Cinderella* (2015), *Beauty and the Beast* (2017), their box office success encourages the entertainment industry to engage creatively with the old tales.

These old motifs weave together in the form of combination and juxtaposition, turning contemporary fairy tales to play out a multiplicity of "position takings" that do not polarize ideological differences as they did during the 1970s but, instead, produce complex "alignments and alliances" (Greenhill & Matrix, 2010). Given this, fairy tales have adaptable nature, and they offer a variety of

voices in the production and reception. When the social context keeps making a difference, they are altered and updated, interpreted in varied ways that speak to specific social concerns and possibilities. Therefore, within twenty-first-century new media, a diverse body of fairytale texts exists, reaching an enormous global market depending on the recipient's ability to perceive intertextual relationships.

8. Conclusion

In today's convergence culture, there is compelling evidence that the public has acquired or has the potential to access a more complex and extensive sense of the fairytale than what was typically available some decades ago (Bacchilega, 2013). A diversity of symbolic codes is woven into fairy tales since writers, creative artists, and filmmakers refresh them from new angles, resulting in the significance of reception. Once whatever it is that makes people care, be drawn in, and get to talk, it is the key to opening the door to the meaning and keeping the story rolling around.

Fairy tales have variability, a route to flexibility and robustness, dealing with shifting circumstances. Adaptation to new aesthetic and cultural contexts is at the heart of survival for the fairy tale. Yet, the meaning of the fairy tale is also a reader's process of discovery. In the words of Marina Warner, "the meanings they generate are themselves magical shape-shifters, dancing to the needs of their audience." The times change, and the story changes accordingly. By attending to the reception of fairy tales, this study reveals a great understanding of how fairy tales generate meaning and function in contemporary society. It's not only creators, scholars but also actual recipients who can equally illuminate the story's meaning. Their responses reflect how fairy tales become meaningful in their reception.

Significantly, the reproduction of contemporary fairy tales is no longer limited to specific authoritative formulas or parody strategies but intextextual transformation. Intertextual links are activated with versions of the story and its critical interpretations and contemporary intertexts. When the internet and globalization provide greater possibilities for reader response in new media, fairy tales become more multiplicity of position-takings for their social uses, effects, and whom they speak. Therefore, it can be an avenue of research to understand further how critical receptions or fans' reactions via online discussion and sharing platforms comment, compare, collaborate, and impact the production and reception of the contemporary fairy tale.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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