

# **Adaptation of Fairy Tales into Films**

**A Study of two Disney Movies:**

***Cinderella (2015) and Beauty and the Beast (2017)***



**Inspiring Excellence**

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## Abstract

Movie adaptation is the way to convert a play, book or novel into a movie. The aim of this paper is to discuss the adaptation of two popular fairy tales *Cinderella (2015)* and *Beauty & the Beast (2017)*. The primary focus of this paper is to the efficiency of adaptation by the movie directors and how they presented the story in the movie. Did there any changes made in the movie or not, is there any fact that was overhyped or understated in the story. In conclusion the issue of gender in translation is also discussed briefly considering the films

## Introduction

Most of us have the experience of reading or hearing about inspirational characters from true stories, story books and fairy tales in our childhood which helped us build our moral and ethical behavior. Some of those characters are from historical movements of different periods. Now, if we consider only fairy tales then we can say that each fairytale delivers a message to its readers or listeners who are usually children. These fairytales are either written down and collected in book, or orally transmitted. There are story tellers in rural communities who are receptacle of such stories. Later, when television emerged as the most powerful form of entertainment some of these stories became television productions. These adapted versions on television have been widely accepted by mass audiences both children and grownups.

The process of translating a story into a film has become a very common phenomenon in recent times. This is called adaptation in which a work in one genre gets transformed into another genre. Today, much plays and even true stories are turned into films. This process of adaptation- which is a form of translation is a complex work, but this is possible if there is no distortion or drastic changes. If we look at the fairy tales then we can see that all the popular fairy tales are now available in the form of movies, and most importantly these are very popular to children and teenagers. There are many movies like *Cinderella (2015)*, and the *Beauty and the Beast (2016)*. Besides there are children's and adolescent's favorite movie productions like *Harry Potter (2001)*, *Spiderman (2002)* which have fairy tale based, which is either explicit or implicit. Though these were initially written in book form, they are being transformed into movies.

Adaptation is popular among film and television makers and audiences alike because of its ability to bring universal elements in one frame into another. Disney movies in USA are particularly on a global scale appealing to children and teenagers. These are popular because the message a fairy tale contains can be delivered quite strongly and appealingly in a movie version. For example, evil always get defeated in a fairy tale by good, greediness can bring danger, ego can ruin the image etc. In addition, these messages are still relevant to people's lives and they can relate their condition along with the fairy tale story line.

Adaptations have increasingly become a tool of reaching diverse cultures across the globe. Due to the technological advancement, like the Internet and electronic devices, adaptation of literary and non-literary works into visual medium has become very popular. Language to language translation is mostly limited to book forms; but adaptation of novels for films can represent the story of the novel on screen. Thus, whenever a literary work is adapted for film, it can reach a wide range of audiences within a short time. There is a difference between filmic language and written language. The filmic language is based on sound, action of characters and movement of colorful images on screen. Audiences can understand the meanings of these images easily even if the language is different. However, written language is particularly based on word images and the power of imagination is strongly present as the reader goes through the story. Filmic language, in contrast, is comparatively simpler to understand for people. This is the strength of audio-visual image. In this regard, Peter Verstraten comments "...words and literature stimulate our thoughts, while images and film provoke our senses. And whereas a novel can dedicate ample space to describe characters or landscapes, a film can show them at a glance." (Verstraten 174)

In general, translation understood as the process of transferring meaning; the transition from one language to another language. An essential requirement for any translation is the transference of a source language into a target language without omitting the meaning of the original language. Knowledge of culture of both source and target languages is very important in translation. Language is an inseparable aspect of a culture, and literature is the finest practice and expression of a language. Translation facilitates the transmission of one language of a particular culture to another cultural sphere.

A fairytale narrates a story based on number of interrelated paraphernalia- magic, witches, dragons, goblins, mermaids, princes and princesses. Fairytales are not available in original documented versions as these are universally oral productions, and they are part of folklore. Though fairytales originated in oral traditions these stories can be translated into different forms. Oral literature can be translated to and adapted for cartoons, TV serials, stage shows, films etc. Movie adaptation of fairytales is an example of the use of folklore or oral literature as a source text. This often falls under criticism for deviation from the source text, distortion, and bias and lack of theoretical accuracy. This becomes problematic as there is no fixed, documented form of source text available to transfer. Translating and adopting fairy tales for the visual media have become a bit problematic as fairytales primarily originate in oral traditions.

The concept of text has also become problematic in over the time. In poststructuralist thought the notion of text goes beyond linguistic form or written language. In this perspective, anything can assume the position of a text. A found definition of text is something that can be subject to interpretations, something that contains a cultural and contextual meaning. For example- silence can be a text. Silence can signify deep meaning in certain context. Umberto

Eco emphasized the importance of emotion and storytelling power of a literary work in translation. According to him "...translating is not only concerned with linguistic competence, but with intertextual, psychological, and narrative competence. ... Translation does not concern a shift from language A to a language B." (Eco 13) Therefore, it is possible to argue that fairy tales or folklores do not have any issue of untranslatability. Rather, fairy tales have universal themes which are still relevant to human emotion. The characters and themes provide a basis of a translation and adaptations.

"Folklore developed, and continues even now, in the communities where few if any people can read or write" (Abrams and Harpham 104). Folklores traveled and still travel orally across human societies. Though fairytales belong to oral tradition, the old oral tradition they represent have some key characteristics on which an adaptor can concentrate. There might be absence of structural elements, technical issues and other forms, but the impact, character and themes of fairytales dispatch themselves easily into a translated or adapted work.

The dichotomy between good and evil is perhaps the most common feature in any fairytale. A fairytale is narrated in a way that teaches us that good always triumphs over evil. The power of charismatic story telling always captures our attention. This impact is even more intense in children's mind. As a result the moral meanings of fairy tales can easily be conveyed to them in any form – oral transmission, written form, translation or adaptation.

With the rise of media and its dominance over society in the last few decades, literature started to adopt a particular mechanical form for dissemination. Intersemiotic translation makes a space so that literature can pursue its aim in the electronic media. In discussing the nature of film as art in the context of the power of media and technology James Monaco comments, "The

application of digital technology to film and audio, which begun to gather momentum in the late 1980s, points to a new level of discourse: alone that is about to revolutionize our attitude toward the recording arts.” (Monaco 27) Television is the most popular example in this regard, as television or a movie presents moving pictures. This is an example of the recording art.

Translation can be a helpful tool to make literature present in visual form or recording art form. An oral or written story must go through the procedures of transmutation or adaptation to exist in the visual form. This transition makes a work capable to exist in visual forms. However, there are some parameters accepted by translation theorists. Generally accepts as essential in any translation or adaptation exercise.

Movie adaptation- which can also be describe as transmutation- transfers a source text onto moving images as target text. These two are forms of language yet they have different mechanisms and instruments. Camera, sound, light, words are of prime concern in filmic language whereas work of fiction or a fairy tale requires the author’s/ narrators imagination, use of emotions and investment of memory. A good intersemiotic translation can successfully transfer the source text onto screen. According to Kiene Brillenburg Wurth “Screens are frames, or rather, they frame, and framing is crucial to literature as it is a condition of possibility for fiction-- a demarcation of the imaginary.”(Wurth 2)

Translation theorists believe that exact translation is almost an impossible task. Even, self-translation surprisingly has many problematic issues. Thus, the question of loss and gain is a common discussion that translation theorists examine in order to determine the success and acceptability of the translated work. In the same way, the process of fairytales adaptation demands answers to some questions: Whether source text the characters are the same in the film version, whether the director maintained the chronology of events of the story; whether the

moments depicted in the source text are also present in the film version, and whether we are influenced by the movie as a fairytale. These are important issues to look at to conclude whether the adaptation is successful or not.

In discussing movie adaptation from the point of view of literature Peter Verstraten comments "...a director should grab the basic idea and then take a distance from the literary language in order to develop a specific film language." (Verstraten 177)

According to Roman Jakobson's "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" there are three types of translation-- Intralingual translation, Interlingual translation and Intersemiotic translation. (Bassnett 22) Each of these types is supported by interpretation of texts. Any interpretation of a source text is done in particular way of understanding and experiencing a text. In the same way adapting fairy tales for movie making also needs interpretation. In an intersemiotic translation decoding of the source text and transferring it to filmic language as a recoded meaning is a necessary task. In this regard DeWitt Bodeen, in his work "The Adapting Art", (*Films in Review*) comments: "Adapting literary works to film is, without a doubt, a creative undertaking, but the task requires a kind of selective interpretation, along with the ability to recreate and sustain an established mood." (7)

It is possible to claim that time and space are important parameters in the translation process. They determine the state and condition of a culture of the source text as well as the cultural aspects of the target language. For translation theorists, translation of a source text to a target text is essentially an interpretation and requires cultural knowledge. According to Umberto Eco "...every interpretation is in the first place a translation" (Eco73)

If interpretation is one's requirement for understanding things, or particularly a way of understanding things, then ideology, power relations and the issue of gender can aid the task of interpretation. A translator can be influenced by certain ideological state. So, a translation work would be affected if the translator interpreters the source text from inside any ideology. Ideology, power-relations, the issue of gender or a particular racial or political bias can alter and manipulate the translation process. For example-- a Marxist translation would be different from a capitalist translation. Similarly a feminist translation has some key characteristics that would be different from a male-centered translation work. A translation work conducted by a translator, who thinks women are inferior or maintains a patriarchal supremacy, would definitely minimize a strong female character and reduce its impact.

Similarly, a gender biased translation would usually strictly maintain the binary category of Self/Other or male/female. In such the representations male figures are usually powerful and female representation is submissive. In *Sexual Politics (1969)* American feminist theorist Kate Millett points out how ideological and sociological factors work to suppress women. Literature is a cultural domain, there; if a translator believes in patriarchy and translates a source text from a radical gender biased culture then, manipulation on his part to reduce the feminist content can be expected.

The paper aims to discuss the movie adaptation process in the Disney movies namely *Cinderella (2015)* and *Beauty and the Beast (2017)* in the context of the ideas and issues that have been raised so far. This paper attempts to investigate the difference between the source texts and their movie versions. In this regard it will take into account the directorial view, visual composition and cinematography. Since accurate translation/ adaptation is never possible, this paper also tries to look at how successfully the adapted movies represent the main themes of the

fairy tales. In addition, the aspects of the fairy tales that are absent in the movie version will also be discussed in this paper.

## Chapter 1

## Cinderella adaptation in Disney Movie

*Cinderella (2015)* is one of the most popular fairytales and the storyline has been transformed into several movie forms. This movie was first released on 13 February 2015 simultaneously in USA and Germany. The reason behind multiple adaptations of a single fairytale in different times is that the story remains important to the audiences. The adapted movies are Clyde Geronim and Wilfred Jackson's *Disney's Cinderella (1950)*, Robert Iscove's *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella (1997)*, Mark Rosman's *A Cinderella Story (2004)* and Kenneth Branagh's *Cinderella (2015)*. This chapter attempts to examine the adapted film *Cinderella (2015)* by Kenneth Branagh under Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures Company. For this purpose the audio book of *Cinderella* by Brothers Grimm has been considered as a source text. This paper argues that the director of *Cinderella (2015)* could successfully transfer the story of Cinderella onto screen with some changes in the movie version.

Before analyzing the question of adaptation of the fairy tale, it would be helpful to briefly recapitulate the story of Cinderella. The fairy tale, in Brothers Grimm's version, is set in an unknown country and narrates the story of a gentle girl Cinderella who lost her mother at a very early age. Her mother was buried in the garden of the house. Later her rich father married another woman who had two daughters of her own. Time became very painful for Cinderella, as her step mother used to torture her routinely by assigning household work. She was engulfed by the pain of loss of her own mother and continuous humiliations. To find solace and relief she kept weeping in front of her mother's grave. Even her fine clothes were taken away and the kitchen became her permanent residence. However one day the father asked the daughters what

gifts he should bring them from the fair. The two sisters asked for expensive gifts but poor Cinderella only demanded a hazel bush. She planted that in her mother's grave and she cried three times a day and eventually the plant grew, watered by her tears. A little bird built a nest on the tree; and the little magical bird talked with her and brought everything that she wished for. One day the king of the land arranged a feast where all the young women of the country were invited so that the young prince could find the most beautiful girl as his bride. Cinderella tried to join the king's feast but her step mother did not allow her to participate; she was rather accused of having no dancing skills and owning dirty clothes. As a reaction, to solve her problem she cried under the hazel tree: "hither hither....come and help me". The magical tree solved her problem and Cinderella participated in the king's feast and could dance with the prince. But, nobody could suspect that it was poor Cinderella. All these happened with the help of magical power of the birds. Each day the birds rescued Cinderella from the excessive hard work assigned to her by her stepmother. The prince could trace the house of that beautiful girl but could not unmask the mystery of who the girl was. In the last day of the feast the prince found the golden slipper that Cinderella left behind in her hurry to return home before the expiring of the magical hour. He used the golden slipper to detect the maiden who has stolen his heart. Despite the stepmother's cunning plotting the prince finally could find the beautiful girl he danced at the party.

Kenneth Branagh is one of the few directors in the arena of cinematography who also is an expert in translating literary texts onto screen. In the making of *Cinderella* (2015) he is successful, despite some changes and modifications that were made from the original texts. The essence of the fairy tale- the struggle of a motherless girl- is effectively portrayed in the film version. Oral literatures, e.g. fairy tales, like any other forms of literary creations have their own

distinctive aura, which is not difficult to transform in the language of a film. From this perspective, Kenneth Branagh's work can be considered successful. As discussed earlier, translation demands an interpretation of the source text and then it becomes possible to transfer the meaning of the source text into different forms and mediums. Like any other translation work, obviously, this film has some gains and losses. The gains are an intensification of appeal and the addition of spectacle; while the losses have to do with a certain disruption from the plotline and intrusion of technical style. The director has created a lively and fresh image for crafting the character of Cinderella.

Now, in this part of my paper, I am going to precisely discuss the plotline of Kenneth Branagh's movie *Cinderella* (2015). This movie picturizes Ella, the central character, as a loving daughter of happy parents. She was told by her mother to believe in magic and to possess a kind heart and good behavior to face the challenges and cruelties in life. Her mother dies and her father remarries a widow named Lady Termaine. Lady Termaine has two daughters namely- Drisella and Anastasia. In the meantime, the father goes on a business trip and dies, unfortunately leaving behind Ella under the tutelage of a cruel Lady Termaine. One day Ella goes on a horse ride in the woods and meets Prince Kit who was involved in a hunting party. She of course did not know he was the prince of the land. In their short conversation Ella criticized Prince Kit and requested him to free the stag he was chasing. Kit was fascinated by Ella's kindness, soft and loving approach to life. Soon after a ball was arranged and Ella wished to join the party wearing her mother's old pink dress but Lady Termaine did not allow Ella to participate in royal ball. Being very upset Ella went to the garden and there she found a fairy godmother, by dint of magic power who prepared Ella for the royal ball. Prince Kit was enchanted by the beautifully dressed Princess; Ella herself was surprised knowing Kit's original

identity. At the time of Ella's departure she left one of her glass slippers. Thus, the Prince starts search for the beautiful unnamed princess. Finally he found his destined partner, Ella and married her.

The opening scene of Cinderella is very important as it lays the foundation of the entire story. "Once upon a time there was a girl called Ella" is the opening sentence of this film. Ella belongs to a happy family and a beautiful magical world. In the movie it is said that "She was the ruler of **her** own little kingdom." (Cinderella 2015) Most importantly, the strong mother-daughter relationship is present in the opening part of the film. This relationship forged Cinderella's character as she was told at her mother's deathbed to "be kind and have courage". For Cinderella, magic lies in kindness. Through the entire movie Cinderella has shown her courage and kindness to everyone. She was kind even to her stepmother despite all the hard work she was forced to perform.

Cinderella's mother died but the grave scene was omitted in the film version. The mother's grave in the garden had an important role in the plotline of Brothers Grimm's story. The lamentation for her mother is present though there is no particular grave scene in the film. However, there is a beautifully decorated garden with green plants where she cries for her mother. Thus the tone and mode of loss of her mother have been expressed quite poignantly in the film. Ella does all the house hold works including cooking, washing, collecting eggs, making fire, feeding the animals.

In parallel to the Brothers Grimm's story the father marries a widowed woman who had two daughters. The arrival of the stepmother made the circumstance difficult for Ella. Ella left her own bedroom for her stepsisters and got her place in the attic. In the attic she was alone and

sad, but she fed the house mice and talked with them. Hearing Ella's conversation in the attic the stepsisters remarked "She is mad."(Cinderella 2015) Then, there is a close father daughter-relationship present in the movie version as well. There is slight change in the action of the character of father character but the main purpose has been carried out successfully. In the Brothers Grimm's story the father was mentioned as a rich man and he was alive in the story. On the other hand, in film version, the father is a big merchant who travels across the globe and unfortunately dies during one of his business trips. In the fairy tale account, the father asked his daughters what to bring them from the fair, but in the film version the father asked his daughters what to bring them when he would return from the business trip. In the film the father says to Ella "What would you like me to bring you home from abroad? You know, your sisters...stepsisters, have asked for parasols and lace."(Cinderella 2015) Ella replied "Bring me the first branch your shoulder brushes on your journey."(Cinderella 2015) The gift Cinderella asked in the fairy tale version is similarly displayed in the film.

Another important element in the fairy tale is the significant role of animal characters that assist Cinderella. In the Brothers Grimm's story there are many doves and birds, but in the film version there are mice, lizards, ducks, doves, cats, horses and so on. One difference between the film and the fairy tale is that in the fairy tale the birds directly talk with Cinderella but in the film the birds send messages to mice and then the action is performed. For example- at the end part when the prince is desperately searching for the mystery princess and the troops are heading toward Ella's house, two blue doves inform the house mice- Jaq and Gus. If Jaq and Gus did not open the window glass then Ella's singing would not have been heard by the official knights. In this way, the magical influences of the animal characters are present in the film version.

In the Brothers Grimm's story magic came from Cinderella's mother's grave and birds from the hazel tree. But in the film only a fairy godmother helps Ella to participate in the royal party. She appears in a dramatic manner to test Ella's kindness. She says "Excuse me. Can you help me, miss? Just a little crust of bread, or better, a cup of milk?" (Cinderella 2015) In the movie the length of the royal party was shortened, whereas in the fairy tale there was a ball for three days. Each day Cinderella cried under the hazel tree and each day she was rescued from the problems by the magic doves. In the film, the magical help from a fairy source is similar, though the length and depth are shorter in the movie version. It was this fairy godmother who provided the glass slippers. Through her magical touch she turned the pumpkin into a carriage, the mice into beautiful white horses, converted the torn pink dress into nice blue dress and black slippers into glass slippers.

Cinderella in the folk version did not make any horse ride into the woods but in the movie she met the prince during a horse ride. In their short conversation, she insisted that Kit be not cruel to the stag.

Some comical elements are introduced in the film version. For instance-the appearance of a fat woman who claimed to be the owner of the glass slippers, but seeing her too large feet the soldiers fainted. This is a good use of comic element in the film.

In the movie some additional characters are introduced. For example, the house maid in Ella's house and the messenger and the Grand Duke. Each of these characters has a specific role to play in the development of the key theme, and characters are properly contextualized. To put it differently, their actions have enriched the structure of the story as well as given a filmic resonance to the original fairy tale. The house maiden was compassionate and friendly to Ella.

And when Ella's father dies Lady Termaine releases the house maiden and put all the burden of household work on Ella. Ella sometimes meets her former house maid in the local market and they have friendly conversations. This also reassures the kindness that Ella possesses in her character. Since it has been shown in the film that the father died in his business trip therefore the messenger character is relevant, otherwise the news would not reach in Ella's house. In the film the messenger broke the news thus: "He took ill on the road and passed away." (Cinderella 2015) Then, the most important additional character Grand Duke is very relevant to the plot line. Especially, the Grand Duke is engaged in conspiracy to marry off Princess Chelina. The Grand Duke and Princess Chelina are absent in Brothers Grimm's story. These introductions of additional characters are relevant, because Kingdoms always have conspirators and in literature conspiracy is perhaps a constant theme. As Cinderella tells a story associated with the Kingdom, these characters help to intensify the tension of the film. This also gives a complete picture of a King's palace.

However, the greedy and cruel nature of Lady Termaine has been portrayed in the film in a more elaborate and telling manner. She could know that it was Ella who appeared as the beautiful princess in the royal dance ceremony. She expresses her aspiration to be rich and powerful this way:

Now, here is how you will pay me, if you are to have what you desire. No one will believe you, a dirty servant without a family, if you lay claim to the princess heart. But with a respectable gentlewoman to put you forward, you will not be ignored. When you are married you will make me the head of the royal household. Anastasia and Drisella will pair off with wealthy lords. And I shall manage that boy. ...how would you rule a Kingdom? Best leave it to me. That way we all get what we want. (Cinderella 2015)

In addition, Lady Termaine joins in the plotting against the prince. She could know that it was Ella her step-daughter who appeared in the royal ball and fascinated the prince. If she can prevent Ella meeting the prince then it would be helpful for the Grand Duke to marry off Princess Chilena to the Prince. Lady Termaine confirms this “From a ragged servant girl in my household.”(Cinderella 2015) And she demands favor from the Grand Duke in return. She says “I should like to be a countess. And I require advantageous marriages for my two daughters.” (Cinderella 2015) Thus a deal is done between these two devious characters. So as a result, the Grand Duke can create pressure on the prince to marry Princess Chelina. He says “...then for the good of the Kingdom, you must marry Princess Chelina.” (Cinderella 2015) This plotting adds a bit of tension to the main storyline.

Cinderella’s character is kind and soft in both the fairy tale and in the film version. But the Cinderella of the movie version has more courage and can stand up against her stepmother. But the Cinderella in fairy tale is weak and routinely laments in her mother’s grave. In the fairy tale she says “Hither hither...come and help me!” (Cinderella, Brothers Grimm version) In movie she says “Why are you so cruel? I don’t understand it.”(Cinderella 2015) She even rejects Lady Termaine’s proposal to conspire against the prince. She empathically says, “I was not able to protect my father from you, but I will protect the prince and the Kingdom, no matter what becomes of me.” (Cinderella 2015)

In conclusion, it can be said that there are some changes in the film version but the essence of the Brothers Grimm’s story remains in the movie version. This movie is mainly made for children and adolescents, and to transmit the central theme of the Brothers Grimm’s story, director Kenneth Branagh makes some changes yet remains faithful to the central idea of the

fairy tale. The film also shows the dichotomy of the good and evil; and that in a cruel world a helpless girl can gain victory over oppression through kindness and courage.

## Chapter 2

*Beauty and the Beast (2017)* is one of the movies by Walt Disney. This is an adapted version of a fairy tale. The fairy tale that the film uses as the source text has been written by a French novelist. This paper, however, will consider the French version made by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve. There are many movie versions of the story available, and has been told in many ways in many cultures but Bill Condon's *Beauty and the Beast (2017)* is the latest. This chapter attempts to discuss the adapted film version in the context of the fairy tale. For this purpose the audiobook of Brothers Grimm has been considered as a source text. The director is successful in representing the main story of *Beauty and the Beast* in the film version though there are some changes and modifications.

The fairy tale in Brother's Grimm version narrates the story of a rich merchant. He had six children, three sons and three daughters. The youngest daughter was so beautiful and well-mannered that everyone called her Beauty. She was a good reader and a kind, soft-hearted girl whereas her elder sisters were harsh and party-loving girls. However, the merchant lost his business fortune and was forced to leave town. As a reaction, the elder sisters become upset but Beauty stayed with her father despite the misfortune. Beauty could adjust her life in the county and there the merchant received a letter concerning a business deal. Having received a business task again the merchant asked his daughters what to bring from town. The elder sisters asked for expensive gifts, but Beauty only asked for a rose. The merchant again had his misfortune in the business and returning back he faced bad weather. Consequently, he took shelter in a large palace in the forest. While leaving for his village he took a branch of a rose plant from the palace garden. As he took the rose branch a Beast appeared to threaten him, and only allowed him to return for home on one condition that one of his daughters would suffer in his place. Hearing all

the details from her father Beauty agreed to suffer to save her father's life. However her two sisters turned back from their father as Beauty starts living in the palace she becomes familiar with the Beast. At some point, Beauty could know through the magic mirror that her father was ill and cries to visit him. In response, the Beast allowed her one week for visiting her father but when she arrives her elder sisters plot against Beauty to make her stay longer. Beauty dreams that the Beast is dying and she decides to return to the palace. There she finds the Beast lying senseless in the garden. Beauty expresses her love for the Beast and suddenly the entire palace becomes illuminated with light. And Beauty sees that Beast has transformed into a handsome prince. A fairy lady appears to reveal the mystery. At last the greedy sisters are punished and Beauty lives a happy life with the prince.

In the making of *Beauty and the Beast (2017)* Bill Condon has handled the main theme of the fairy tale in an expert manner. The devotion and sacrifice of a young daughter is the core story of the fairy tale. And that has been successfully transferred onto the screen. To meet the formal demands of a film, the director has made some changes in the film. Translating a fairy tale to a film requires an interpretation of the source text and any interpretation reflects the need for perspectives and causes identification of certain issues. As a result, there are always some loss and gain in translation process. However, *Beauty and the Beast (2017)* portrays the devotion and sacrifice of a loving girl, who is called Belle in a remarkably telling way. More specifically, the director is successful in creating a live image of Beauty's character.

Bill Condon's film *Beauty and the Beast (2017)* starts with the projection of a dark castle and a hand picking up a red rose. The story is set in a village in France. An enchantress assumes the form of an old woman and seeks shelter in the palace of a king but the arrogant prince rejects her. The old woman reveals her real form and turns the prince into a Beast. The beast can regain

his human form only on one condition, and that is if a beautiful virgin girl loves him. However, as the movie progresses, we find Gaston who tries to convince Belle to marry him. Maurice, an artist, Belle's father, asks Belle what to bring from his business trip. While returning from the unsuccessful business trip he faces bad weather and takes shelter in the castle. The Beast finds Maurice taking a white rose from his garden and imprisons him. Philippe, the horse, rushes back home and brings Belle to the castle. Belle plays a trick to release Maurice by imprisoning herself. She remains captured in the castle and befriends the servants. Maurice returns to the village and asks for help to rescue Belle but only Gaston agrees to help him so that he can marry Belle. Meanwhile, Belle develops a friendly relationship with the Beast. On the contrary, Gaston convinces the villagers to kill the Beast. So, they attacked the palace. At some point, Gaston shoots the Beast. Finally, Belle expresses her love and kisses the Beast. The enchantress, Agatha, appears and releases the prince from his beastly body. Belle and the prince are united and live happily ever after.

The opening scene of *Beauty and the Beast* gives a wonderful glimpse of the entire story. The film starts with a tested story telling technique. It says "Once upon a time in the hidden heart of France; a handsome young prince lived in a beautiful castle. Although he had everything his heart desired; the prince was selfish and unkind" (Beauty and the Beast 2017) As the prince was cruel he rejects the old woman's shelter on the stormy night, so the woman, who is actually an enchantress transforms the prince into a beast. The incident of prince becoming a beast is also present in the fairy tale version. However, in the fairy tale the prince character is not cruel or selfish and becomes a beast as he does not agree to marry one of his governesses. The key action is the prince's transformation from a beast to a human form; and that is evidently portrayed in the film version.

In the film the central female character is named as Belle but in the fairy tale she is called simply Beauty. Though the name is slightly changed the characteristics of Beauty are properly transmitted into Belle's character. Belle is a loving daughter; she has the habit of reading books and tries to teach others as much as she can. She helps her father in his work, and most importantly she is ready to sacrifice her life for her father. Belle is an ambitious and intellectual character. She is a keen reader of books, unlike other women in the village. As she says "I want much more than this provincial life. I want adventure in the great wide somewhere." (Beauty and the Beast 2017) Her aspiration to teach a young girl to read is criticized by villagers. "What on earth are you doing? Teaching another girl to read? Isn't one enough? We have to something." In the fairy tale we find no detailed accounts of Beauty's reading habit and teaching of other girls. But in the film this characteristic has been elaborated properly within the socio-political circumstances of the Villeneuve village. A film adaptation requires interpretation of certain issues in the language of film, and in Condon's film this expansion of the character of Beauty is a very good example of interpretation of an ideal character.

Similarly, in the fairy tale, the good old man or Beauty's father encounters bad weather and that forces him to take shelter in the prince's palace. In the fairy tale "It rained and snowed terribly, besides, the wind was so high, that it threw him twice off his horse; and night coming on, he began to apprehend being either starved to death with cold and hunger, or else devoured by wolves whom he heard howling all around him,". And the same action is expressed in the movie in a more elaborate and suspense filled manner. To save his life from ferocious wolves Beauty's (Belle's) father Maurice was riding very quickly on his horse Philippe. The tension doesn't release till he arrives at the palace where he finds fire and food. While returning Maurice picks up a red rose from the Beast's garden. Then he became imprisoned in the castle. This is an

important moment in the fairy tale and the main action began with the good old man picking a rose for his daughter. The film contains indifferent flow of action.

In the fairy tale Beauty is informed by her father that a Beast is going to imprison, enslave him whereas the film depicts that it was his horse Philippe who brought Belle to the palace. Belle insisted to have a private talk with her father inside the prison which was her trick to set her father Maurice free. But she herself got imprisoned but let her father released. The Beast accuses Maurice as a thief. In response Belle bravely asks “A life sentence for a rose? I asked the rose, punish me not him.” (Beauty and the Beast 2017) The cruel Beast questions Belle “Do you choose to take your Father’s place?” (Beauty and the Beast 2017) The sacrifice Beauty made in the fairy tale is also present in the film. The mode of devoting life for her father is different but the sacrificing mentality is aptly presented in the movie as well.

In parallel to the fairy tale, there is a strong father daughter-relationship present in the movie version. Maurice asks what to bring from the business trip and loving Belle demands only a rose. Apart from this we see Belle happily helping her father in work. The most touching scene is the conversation between Maurice and Belle is in the prison that reassures their strong bond. Belle says her father is everything in her life and she is ready to save him by sacrificing her life. But Maurice thinks he is old and would not live long so he forces Belle to leave the prison. He says “Live your life, And forgot me...” (Beauty and the Beast 2017)

The minor characters have played an important role to support the main story in the film. The most interesting issue about the film is that the minor characters in the castle were turned into furniture and household items. The Beast lost all hope to become human again; but Lumiere, the head of the household, thinks Belle is the right girl who can break the strong spell cast on his

master. Lumiere even unlocks Belle from the prison and provides her a comfortable bedroom. In addition, Lumiere arranges a grand dinner to entertain Belle. Lumiere says to Belle "...in every passing day we become less human." (Beauty and the Beast 2017) The minor characters try to familiarize the Beast to Belle in a loving way. One of the minor characters says, "The Master is not as terrible as he appears. Somewhere, deep in his soul there's a prince of a fellow just waiting to be set free." (Beauty and the Beast 2017)

Even as the Prince is rude and unkind the Beast thinks of Belle as a criminal or perhaps unaware of his love for the beautiful Belle. He angrily says, "She's the daughter of a common thief. That's the most ridiculous idea I've ever heard! Charm the Prisoner?" (Beauty and the Beast 2017) It is Lumiere who rejuvenates everyone's hope to become human again. He says, "... this girl is the one who can break the spell." Though in the fairy tale there is no minor characters in the palace, Beauty reads a book where it is written in gold "Welcome, Beauty, banish fear, You are queen and mistress here; speak your wishes, speak your will, swift obedience meets them still." (Beauty and the Beast 2017) On the contrary, in the movie, similar message has been delivered to Belle through Lumiere. He says "Castle is yours so feel free to go anywhere you like." The minor characters in the castle encourages the Beast to expresses his love for Belle. This was very important to regain their human body otherwise if the last palate of the rose fall then they would never become normal.

Library space has an important impact on the story. As Belle is a good reader of books so in the film there is a large library where she takes books to read. The Beast happily shows his library to Belle. The library space provides them a common ground to start their conversation. Belle says *Romeo and Juliet* is her favorite play and asks the Beast if he had ever read William Shakespeare. The fairy tale of *Beauty and the Beast* does not name any particular playwright but

the presence of William Shakespeare makes the scene fruitful. Readers can connect their experience of reading William Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet* in the romantic relation between the Beast and Beauty. In the library space Belle first sees the magic mirror and a magic book. In fairy tale version, Beauty sees through a looking glass that her father is sick. But in the movie Belle finds that her father Maurice has fallen under a conspiracy and Gaston is manipulating the case. This is very essential to any fairy tale, magical elements always captures readers attention. The film also tells this magical intrusion.

Beauty's elder sisters played the role of negative character in the fairy tale. However, Belle had no sister in the movie but the negative role has been performed by Gaston. Gaston is an arrogant former soldier who desires to marry Belle. Gaston is the conspirator; he does everything so that he can marry Belle. When Maurice was seeking help to rescue Belle, then only Gaston agreed to help him. But later we see his real intension. He convinces Maurice almost forces to marry Belle to him. As he became rejected, he ties Maurice to a tree so that wolves eat him up in the deep forest. Even, he proceeds to prove Maurice as mentally imbalanced man. Some of the villagers think that Maurice is making unbelievable claims on haunted castle and about the Beast. In addition, he even motivates and instigates the villagers to kill the beast and destroy the haunted castle. He asks for proof that the Beast exists, as Belle shows it through the magic mirror the villagers were surprised. And Belle assures them "No, no, don't be afraid! He's gentle and kind. He's not a monster, Gaston! You are! The Beast wouldn't hurt anyone." (Beauty and the Beast 2017) To counter Belle's argument Gaston states "The monster has her under a spell! I've heard the effect of dark magic, but I've never before see it with my own eyes! This is threat to our very existence" (Beauty and the Beast 2017) However, in the fairy tale the elder sisters created plot so that they can stop Beauty to be rich. But, here in this movie it is Gaston

who creates obstacles to resist Belle to go beyond his control. Even, Gaston says that Belle has sent him to kill the Beast. This message makes the depressed Beast weaker, so that the Beast loses all hope for her and then shoots him.

The last scene is also similar to the fairy tale version. Belle expresses her love for the Beast, she laments over the Beast's death. She says "Come back! Please don't leave me. I love you." And she kisses him. The enchantress, Agatha, observes the action closely and removes the magic spell so that the injured Beast can regain his human body. All other household servants also become human. Then, Belle and the prince united forever to live a happy life.

In conclusion, it is clear that despite some changes in the film the fairy is translated successfully into a film. To meet the technical and formal requirements of a film the changes have been created, but the main theme of the story is present in the film. Director Bill Condon remains faithful to the key theme of the fairy tale.

## Conclusion

Movie adaptation is the process of transferring a text onto screen. Some translation theorists have concluded that a movie cannot capture a full text within the short time span. The more detail a movie can represent from the original text the more successful the translation process would be. On the other hand some theorists propose that the language of film is different from any literary text. There are some formal demands of a movie construction and the director must keep the issue of target audience in mind while making an adapted film.

Every fairy tales have some key features and key moments that always enchant and touch us. The magical power of storytelling is the most mesmerizing aspect of fairy tale. In our childhood we were influenced by some of the fairy tales. Strong father-daughter relationship, the intervene of fairy god mother, the hypocrisy of elder sisters, the cruel nature of stepmother, the dichotomy of good and evil are the most noticeable issues that constitute the final impact of a fairy tale. If a film can represent these issues properly then it would be possible to argue that the translation process is completed successfully.

Cinderella and Beauty are two very important characters to evaluate the success of these Disney films. In the source text both of them are beautiful, kind and soft, and they have proved this through their actions as they are same in the film. Another crucial aspect is present in film that both of the girls suffered until they are united with their Princes. Thus, keeping this issue in mind it could be claimed that both the films have maintained their patriarchal attitude in making the films. In other words, the binary division of self and other has been carried out in the film versions as well. As women Cinderella and Beauty are bound to depend on their Prince charming. Male figures particularly the Princes stand as transcendent. Though in case of *Beauty and the Beast* the situation seems in favor of Beauty but eventually the marriage with prince

proves male as socially superior to woman. It is discussed in the introductory part of this paper that translation can serve agenda of power and politics. It could be claimed that the question of power politics in the context of gender has remain present in the making of the films.

Nevertheless, *Cinderella (2015)* and *Beauty and the Beast (2017)* are two Disney movies that present the fairy tale in a way that captures our attention. Especially, for teenagers and young audiences these films are successful to convey the essence of the fairy tales. Directors change some parts of the story to make the story more appealing and reverent to audiences without disrupting the main gist of the fairy tales. These two films provoke our emotions and we feel for the characters. In this paper the adaptation process of the classical fairy tales has been viewed from theoretical standpoint. Indeed, no translation is errorless so the translation of these two Disney movies. But these films aptly resonates the essence of source texts.

Finally, this dissertation has tried to discuss the theoretical concepts of translation and evaluate the success of film adaption. The aim of a translated work is to transmit the source text to target text. Audience, power relation and translation medium are other factors related with a translation process. It is clear from the above discussion that the Disney films are successful in picturizing the characters of Cinderella and Beauty. This makes the films more appealing and exciting for audiences.

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