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مسرحية ستيفن سوندهايم وجيمس لابين "في الغابة": دراسة ما بعد حداثة

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المستخلص

ما بعد الحداثة هي حركة فكرية تتبنى التفكك ولا معنى. سمتها الغالبة هي مفهوم الشك. ويعني الشك تحدي النظرة الثابتة لمعتقدات معينة والتشكيك فيها. أن مسرحية سوندهايم "في الغابة" هي مسرحية موسيقية تتكون من القصص الخرافية التقليدية الشهيرة. يفكك سوندهايم حبكة هذه الحكايات لتكون مناسبة لعصر ما بعد الحداثة. ومن المؤكد أن القصص الخرافية هي قصص رائعة لها بنية بسيطة ولكنها في الوقت ذاته تعكس العناصر الأيديولوجية والثقافية للمجتمع. ستتم دراسة حكايتين ضمن مسرحية "في الغابة"، وهما: حكاية "سندريلا" وقصه "جاك وشجره الفاصولياء" وفقاً لاستراتيجيات وتقنيات نظرية ما بعد الحداثة مثل التناص والتفكيك والتجزئة للتشكيك في العناصر الثقافية والأيديولوجية الموجودة في ظل الهيكل البسيط لهذه الحكايات التقليدية.

كلمات مفتاحية: ما بعد الحداثة، الحكايات الخرافية، التناص، في الغابة، ستيفن سوندهايم.

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Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's Play “*into the Woods*”: A Postmodernist Study

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Abstract

Postmodernism is an intellectual movement that embraces meaningless and fragmentation. The concept of scepticism will be its dominant feature. Scepticism means to challenge and to question the fixed view of certain beliefs. Sondheim's *Into the Woods* (1986) is a musical play that consists of traditional famous fairy tales. Sondheim deconstructs and challenges these traditional fairy tales in order to be appropriate for postmodern age. Definitely the fairy tales are marvellous stories that have a simple structure but at the same times it reflects the ideological and the cultural elements of the society. Two tales in *Into the Woods*; *Cinderella* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*, will be studied according to postmodern strategies and techniques such as intertextuality, deconstruction theory and fragmentation to scepticise the cultural and ideological elements that exist under the simple structure of these traditional tales.

Keywords: postmodernism, fairy tales, intertextuality, into the woods, Stephen Sondheim.

Introduction

'Postmodernism' is a wide-ranging term and can be applied in literature, architecture, philosophy, music, etc. This term has no unified definition. Many theorists and critics differ in their explanation of Postmodernism. Jean Francois Lyotard in his work *The Postmodern Condition* (1984) defined Postmodernism as "incredulity toward metanarrative" (p.74), while Linda Hutcheon in *The Politics of Postmodernism* (1989) defined as "rather like saying something whilst at the same time putting inverted commas around what is being said" (p. 1).

Postmodernism, as a philosophical movement, believes in the scepticism of Western philosophical assumptions about the ultimate reality and objective truth. Many postmodernist theorists and philosophers believe in the collapse of the objective reality. There is no external point of reference in life upon which one can construct his philosophy and serve as the basis of his actions and thoughts. According to postmodernist thinkers and philosophers, the truth is relative and not objective (Bressler, 2011, p. 89).

Its relationship with Modernism articulates Postmodernism in literature. Postmodernist literature differs from the literary form of Modernism. Postmodernist writers reject "originality" and uniqueness" in the written text, while the modernist writers believe in an " original" text. Fredric Jameson suggested that "the difference between the two is that the creation of an individual style can characterized modernist writing. While Postmodernism is best understood in term of exhausted style (the death of originality) and the pervasiveness of pastiche and imitation" (as cited in Mason, 2017, p.10).

In his work *The Postmodernist Condition* (1987), Brain McHale explained that Postmodernism is entirely different from Modernism "because it deals with the ontology and the textualization of reality". It focuses on how postmodernist literature creates different types of textual worlds. On the other hand, Modernism is more concerned with the question of epistemology and focuses on how reality can be reached in the material and fragmented world". That means the modernist writers are only interested in creating new types of texts to find what is called an original text to get real in the material and fragmented world. In contrast, postmodernist writers embrace the fragmentation and meaninglessness of the world. Thus, they prefer their literature to be recycled or recreated from other texts (Mason, 2017, p. 10).

The postmodern philosophy depends on scepticism, while the postmodern literature avoids original text, so most of the texts in postmodern literature are intertextual of other texts. That consequently leads for deconstructing the surface meaning of these texts. Postmodernism is related to poststructuralist in deconstruction theory to prove the instability and the flux of the meanings in the

text. Postmodernism and deconstruction give the reader freedom to interpret the text from a different perspective (Ibrahim, 2016, p. 287).

Postmodernist writers find in the traditional fairy tales the fertile ground of their literature because these classical tales supply the postmodernist writers with what they seek, such as the challenge of the originality and scepticism of the meanings and the values of these tales. Fairy tales are marvellous stories that reflect the fundamental cultural elements of the western society despite its simple structure. Postmodern literature emerges in the late 1950s and 1960s as a reaction against modernist literature. Postmodern literature avoids absolute meaning and emphasizes play, metafiction, intertextuality, and fragmentation.

The Main Strategies and Techniques of Postmodernist Literature

1. Deconstruction Theory

The term 'deconstruction' first appeared in American literary criticism in 1966 when the French philosopher Jack Derrida (1930-2004) introduced his paper *Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human sciences* at a John Hopkins University. Derrida borrowed this term from the work of the German philosopher Martin Heidegger. Through his deconstruction theory, Derrida questions and rejects all the metaphysical assumptions held to be accurate by Western philosophy (Bressler, 2011, p. 107).

At first, Derrida uses his deconstruction approach to language. Derrida argues that language is unreliable and unstable to communicate meaning. He depends on structuralism in formulating his strategy. According to structuralism, the word is a linguistic sign. Language consists of the signifier, which means the image and the word's sound, and a signified that stands for the word's concept. Therefore, the meaning in language consists of unifying the signifier the signified. According to structuralism, language is non-referential because it refers to our perception of things in the world rather than actual things. Deconstruction takes this idea even further, stating that language is non-referential since it refers neither to objects in the world nor to our perceptions of things but, solely, to the play of signifiers that language is made up of. That means language meanings do not consist of the union of the signifier and signified but consist only of chains of signifiers that constantly postpone or defer meanings (Tyson, 2006, p. 252).

The Main Assumptions of Deconstruction Theory

1.1 Transcendental Signified

Means "an external point of reference upon which one can build a concept and philosophy" (Bressler, 2011, p.109). Derrida saw that the Western thinking from Plato to the present is built on a fundamental error because they search to find a concept or a transcendental sign that would give an ultimate meaning.

1.2 Logocentrism

The history of Western philosophy since Plato is built on cosmic principles from which one might figure out the meaning of life (Tyson, 2006, p.256). According

to Derrida, the Logocentrism is any concept such as God, Self, essence, being, Logic, origin... etc. which can serve as transcendental signifieds and be the basis of all actions and thoughts. Derrida rejected the Logocentrism of the Western metaphysics and beliefs that for each concept, an opposing concept de-centres it and shakes it as a transcendental signified, creating the "Binary oppositions".

1.3 Binary Oppositions

This term means "for each centre an opposing centre", such as (e.g. God/ human, good/ evil, truth/ deception and. etc. One of these terms is privileged, and the other is unprivileged, one is Centre, the other is margin, one is superior, and the other is inferior. Western metaphysics depends on such binaries to be the basis of its philosophy. Derrida disputes these hierarchical binaries, believing that there will be no transcendental signified or absolute standard (Bressler, 2011, p. 110).

1.4 Phonocentrism

This term 'phonocentrism' refers to the hierarchy of speech/writing. Western thought has always considered speech as superior to writing, and speech always implies a presence because it presupposes the presence of self while writing signifies absence. Derrida reversed this hierarchy of speech/writing and demonstrated that both speaking and writing have "Writerly" characteristics; both denote processes that lack a natural feeling of presence (of the speaker and the writer) (Carter, 2006, p. 110).

1.5 Metaphysics of Presence

The term 'metaphysics of presence' was coined by Derrida, which embraces all those concepts such as 'logocentrism', 'phonocentrism', 'binary oppositions' and all the notions of the Western thought that suggests language and metaphysics. Derrida aimed to prove that the deconstruction of the Metaphysics of presence will shake the foundations of such beliefs (Bressler, 2011, p. 112).

1.6 Differance

'**Differance**' is coined by Derrida. It means "deferral" and "difference". Derrida derived this term from the French word *différance*. This term demonstrates the instability of meaning and the text has multiple interpretations. The term is "the alternative of and to escape from the Logic of the transcendental signified" (Hendricks, 2016, p.5). Derrida suggested that utilising *différance* in textual analysis proves that the text is a play of signs and the meanings of the text are always in the process of *différance*; thus, texts can no longer have a presence. In isolation, texts cannot possess meaning. Because all meanings and knowledge are based on difference, no text can simply mean one thing. Texts become intertextual (Bressler, 2011, p. 115). One can conclude that the text is a combination of different types of texts. This leads to the assumption that the meaning of the text is always in the process of differentiation.

Deconstruction, as a critique of textual analysis, assumes that the text has multiple interpretations and its meaning is undecidable. Deconstructionists seek to find the binary oppositions in the text, and by reversing these hierarchical binaries, they challenge the fixed views of the Western thought about these hierarchies.

2. Intertextuality

Intertextuality is a postmodern concept that depends on allusions and quotations. The intertextuality of postmodern fairy tales depends on Kevin Paul Smith's method. Although his method of intertextuality is examining the way in which the novelists and the filmmakers utilise the fairy tales in their works, it provides a vital insight into how fairy tales are utilised in drama. The aim of Smith's study is to show why the fairy tales is becoming so important in the postmodern work. Thus, his study can be utilised to trace the elements of fairy tales in drama:

Interrogating the fairy tale, examining the way in which formulaic stories hold a grip over the human imagination has become increasingly popular among novelists and filmmakers, so to the extent that it is necessary to examine precisely why the fairy tale had become so important. That is the aim of this study. I will contend that the fairy tale is being intertextuality used for ends which can be called 'postmodern'. (Smith, 2007, p. 1)

Smith mentioned eight elements of intertextuality in his book, *The Postmodern Fairytales: Folkloric Intertexts in Contemporary Fiction* (2007). They are: Authorised, Writerly, incorporation, Allusion, Re-vision, Fabulation, Metafictional and Architextual, and Chronotopic (Smith, p.10).

2.1 Authorized: It is an "Explicit reference to a fairy tale in the title". This element explicitly refers to fairy tale titles' old and present versions (Khan, 2017, p. 61).

2.2 Writerly: This means an "Implicit reference to fairy tale in the title" (Smith, 2007, p.16).

2.3 Incorporation: It means an "Explicit reference to a fairy tale within the text". This element interweaves the old story with the new story. The postmodern writers use these elements to unfold a new meaning of the story from the postmodern perspective (Khan, 2017, p. 620).

2.4 Allusion: It indicates an "Implicit reference to fairy tale within the text". This element of intertextuality means any quotations, characters' names, the pattern of structures, and the pattern of motifs of the previous text in the present text (Smith, 2007, p 16).

2.5 Re-vision: It refers to "putting a new spin on the old tale". This element is the favourite tool of the postmodernists because they can utilize new ideas and perspectives in the present text (Khan et al., 2021, p. 1393).

2.6 Fabulation: It means "crafting on the original fairy tale". Postmodernist writers sparsely use this element. This tool creates a new story of fairy tales that differ entirely from the older tales (Khan, 2017, p. 620).

2.7 Metafictional: It denotes "the discussion of the fairy tale". This tool is used when fairy tales are analysed critically (ibid).

2.8 Architextual/ Chronotopic: These two terms refer to the "Fairy tale setting/environment". This element of intertextuality does not apply immediately to the genre. However, the use of specific objects and elements, kingdom, and

indefinite time and place refer to old tales of the fairy tale (Khan et al., 2021, p. 1395).

2.3 Fragmentation in Postmodern Literature

Fragmentation is a common technique in both Modernism and Postmodernism. Many elements of characters, plot, themes, factual references, and imagination are fragmented throughout the text (Goisova, 2014, p. 62).

Peter Barry, in his book *Beginning of Theory* (1995), suggested that the Modernism differs from Postmodernism in the use of fragmentation in that Modernism has "a tone of pessimism and despair about the world which finds its appropriate representation in 'fractured 'art form'". (p. 84). While in postmodernism, "fragmentation is an exhilarating, liberating, phenomenon symptomatic of our escape from the claustrophobic embrace of a fixed system belief" (p. 84). That is to say, modernism laments fragmentation while Postmodernism celebrates it (ibid).

Postmodernists avoid portraying events and characters in their stories in a realistic manner. This method is used to show multiple endings, in which instead of providing only one possible outcome in their work, they use two or more endings, leaving the reader to pick which is best and most plausible (Abootalebi, 2015, p. 72).

The Discussion

Into the Woods (1986) is a musical play by the playwright Stephen Sondheim and an influential book by James Lapine. It was premiered on Broadway in 1987. It consists of four famous fairy tales which are *Cinderella*, *Rapunzel*, *Little Red Riding hood* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Sondheim has interwoven the plot of these famous fairy tales with the childless baker and his wife in order to show a new perspective that are suitable for the postmodern age. The play consists of two acts. Each act has a journey that entirely differs from the journey of the other acts. The first act displays the same plot as these fairy tales. However, in the second act, the original plots of these tales have overlapped together to form a new plot that completely differs from the plots of the traditional tales to be shown from another angle which is the postmodern angle.

Stephen Sondheim is a lyricist, playwright, and composer. On March 22, 1930, he was born in New York and died on November 26, 2021, in Roxbury. Sondheim's talent in mixing words and music in dramatic settings broke new ground for Broadway musical theatre. In his collaboration with the playwright James Lapine, he made many successful works such as *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984), *Into the Woods* (1987: Film 2014), and *Passion* (1994). Sondheim and his collaborator won Tony Award for the best shows (see Britannica).

Into The Woods is a postmodern text since many of the techniques and strategies of postmodern theory can be applied in this text. *Into the Woods* is a recycled text. Any recycled text is an intertextuality of other ones and then, will be a deconstruction and fragmentation of these previous texts and the emergence of alternative meanings. Sondheim utilises four traditional fairy tales to be sceptical of their meanings and assumptions in his text. *Into the Woods* can be studied

according to the method of Smith for intertextuality. Although his method of intertextuality traces the elements of fairy tales among the novelists and the filmmakers, but in this study, his method is utilized to trace the elements of fairy tales in drama because the aim of his study is to show the importance of fairy tales in postmodern works. According to his method, *Into the Woods* has four elements of intertextuality (out of the eight that he proposed in 2007): Incorporation, Allusion, Fabulation, and Re-vision. In this study, two fairy tales of *Into the Woods* will be analysed: *Cinderella* tale and the tale of *Jack and the Beanstalk*

1. Incorporation

The element of incorporation can be utilised to show explicit references to fairy tales within a text. Incorporation means integrating the old story within the new one to show new perspectives. Sondheim uses four famous fairy tales in *Into The Woods*. Then he has interwoven the plots of these tales and puts the main characters in the first act on a journey that reflects the same plots of these tales. However, in the second act, the journey is different altogether. For example, the narrator mentions in the first act:

Narrator: In a far-off kingdom--
 Cinderella: More than anything--
 Narrator: Lived a young maiden--
 Cinderella: More than life
 Narrator: A sad Young lad-- Light on Jack and the cow.
 Cinderella: I wish to go to the Festival--
 Jack: I wish my cow would give us some milk.

(Sondheim and Lapine, 1987, p. 1-2)

Here the narrator has not only mentioned the names of these famous characters of traditional fairy tales but also given a complete synopsis of these tales displaying an explicit reference for these tales within the present text of *Into the Woods*, but in the second act, these tales has another journey indicating for another plot and consequently to scepticise and challenges the traditional journey of these tales such as in the following quotation;

BAKER:

Into the woods
 It is always when
 You think at last
 You're through, and then
 Into the Woods, you go again
 to take another journey

(Sondheim and Lapine, 1987, p.117)

This quotation explains that there will be a new story that has incorporated with these traditional tales (*Cinderella* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*) in order to scepticise its original meanings.

2. Allusion: "Implicit references to fairytales within the text", and this implicit reference refers to any quotations, characters' names, characters' descriptions, the

pattern of structures, the pattern of motifs of the previous text in the present text. This intertextual allusion is like the text's unconscious (Khan,2017, p.620).

2.1 Quotations: Are the most notable intertexts that show an implicit reference between the old text and the new text. *Into the Woods* has the most notable quotation of *Cinderella's* tale, especially when Cinderella wants to go to the ball and her stepmother replies: "I have emptied a dish of lentils into the ash for thee. If thou hast picked them out again in two hours, thou shalt go with us." (Grimm, 2016, p. 79). This quotation is repeated in *Into the Woods*, indicating an implicit intertextual between the two texts.

2.2 Characters' Names: Are the other examples of allusion to show intertextuality within a text. The name of 'Cinderella' in the original story is the same in the play *Into the Woods*, and the name of the hero in the original story of *Jack and the beanstalk* is also the same which is in *Into the Woods*.

2.3 Characters' Descriptions: The descriptions of the characters are generally more critical in fairy tales than the characters' names because most of the characters of fairy tales are known for their acts or unique characteristics that contribute significantly to the plot (Khan, 2017, p. 621). For example, the most notable description of Cinderella is a poor maiden who has two sisters and a wicked stepmother, and she wants to go to the king's festival. Then, at the party, she loses one of her glass shoes and, by this shoe, the prince finds and then marries her. These descriptions will show implicit references to the original tale of *Cinderella*.

In the tale of *Jack and the Beanstalk*, the most notable description is that Jack is a poor boy who lives with his mother and then he exchanges their cow with a magical bean that enables him to explore the kingdom of the giants. All these descriptions are repeated in *Into the Woods* showing an intertextual reference to the original story.

2.4 Patterns or Motifs: "motifs are essential elements. A tale type can consist simply of one motif or a chain of motifs linked together. The removal or addition of certain motif may make the difference between one tale type and another" (Smith, 2007, p.26). Sondheim uses many motifs from the traditional fairy tales in his text, indicating an implicit intertextual to the original text in *Cinderella's* tale. He uses the motifs of the wicked stepmother, the helper animals such as the bird when helping Cinderella picking the lentils from the ashes and the motifs of punishment (Kalway and Martin, 2001, p.9). Sondheim also exploits the motifs of helper objects such as the glass slipper and the motifs of magical transformation (Kalway and Martin, p.13). Sondheim also utilises the motif of the helper animal, such as the Milky white, and the motif of magical beans in Jack's tale, which allows for higher social status and fortune.

The central motif that Sondheim concentrates on is the motif of the journey. In the first act, it is portrayed as the traditional adventure of classical fairy tales. However, in the second act, these motifs are exploited to form a new tale that questions and challenges these tales' traditional subjects.

2.5 The Unconscious Text: This intertextual analysis tool depends on Freud's theory of condensation and displacement. This theory is used to discover the

hidden meanings of dreams. The critics argue that the meaning of the text can be unfolded by this technique (Smith, 2007, p. 26). The tales of *Cinderella* and *Jack and the Beanstalk* condensate the idea of happy endings of the traditional fairy tales but the displacement takes place when the characters Jack and Cinderella are taking another journey that completely differs from that in the original tales. The writer aims to show another side of these traditional tales. The writer attempts to show the characters the consequences of their action when they achieve their wishes. The writer wants to prove that such wishes in the traditional tales represent or depict the cultural and the ideological elements of the society. Thus, whenever the character achieves her/his wishes, s/he, thereby, has applied the cultural factors of his society.

3. Fabulation: "crafting an original fairy tale". This tool creates a new story of fairy tales that differs entirely from the older ones. That means the fairy tale genre is present, but the structure and the plot is entirely different (Khan, 2017, p. 620). For example, the tale of the baker and his wife is different from stories of fairy tales, but at the same time, it contains elements that make an implicit reference to traditional fairy tales. The baker and his wife have been under the curse of infertility, and to break this spell, they have to collect four items:

WITCH: Go to the woods and bring me back

One: the cow as white as milk,

Two: the cape as red as blood,

Three: the hair as yellow as corn,

Four: the slipper as pure as gold,

(Sondheim and Lapine, 1987, p.17)

These items implicitly reference familiar fairy tales such as *Cinderella*, *Rapunzel*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and *The Little Red Riding Hood*. However, the plot and structure of the tale of the baker and his wife are completely different.

4. Re-vision: It means "putting a new spin on the old tales". This element is the favourite tool of postmodernist writers because they can utilise new ideas and perspectives in the present text (khan et al., 2021, p. 1393). The theorist Jack Zipes, in his book, *Fairy Tale as Myth/Myth as Fairy Tale* (2013) suggested a definition of re-vision;

is to go over again, to examine, in order to improve or amends, He adds that purpose of producing a revisited fairy tale is to create something new that incorporates the critical and creative thinking of the producer and corresponds to changing demands and testes of audiences, as a result of the transformed values, the revised classical fairy tale seeks to alter the reader's view of traditional pattern image and codes. (p.9)

Sondheim revisits the traditional fairy tales in *Into the Woods* in order to display the cultural factors of these traditional tales and then deconstruct it and to demonstrate that these cultural elements have no longer value in postmodern age. For example, Sondheim has scepticised the theme of marriage in Cinderella's tale.

Sondheim makes Cinderella's desire of getting marriage in *Into the Woods* on the contrary from the original tale, For example, in the traditional tale Cinderella had wished to go to the festival of the king. She picked two dishes of lentils that her stepmother emptied in ashes in order to get a permission form her to go to the festival. She had done a difficult task, such as the following quotation: "Then the maiden carried the dished to the stepmother and was delighted, and believed that she might now go with them to the festival. But the step mother said, "All this not help thee" (Grimm, 2016, p. 81).

In *Into the Woods*, Cinderella changes her decision about the subject of marriage completely. She does not want to get marriage or to be in her father's house, she wants something between as if she wants to find herself as an independent woman, such as the following quotation:

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE: Is that what you wish?

CINDERELLA: My father's house was a nightmare. Your house was a dream. Now I Want something between. please go.

(Sondheim and Lapine, 1987, p.186)

So when Cinderella says, "I want something between", She does not want to be under her father's authority or her husband's authority. She wants to be herself as a woman not as an object. Sondheim revisits this tale in his text in order to scepticise the theme of marriage that exist in culture of the Western Society in the time of Brothers Grimm. Zipes explains in his analysis of the Grimm version of Cinderella's tale, "Cinderella undergoes her most complete transformation, from an "active" young woman into a passive "girl.... who must obediently wait to be rescued by male"(As cited in Levin, 1992, p. 24). Sondheim is sceptical of Cinderella's image in the traditional tale as a heroine character who alters her destiny by marrying the prince. Sondheim changes the character Cinderella from a passive girl who follows the conventions of the society to change her destiny into active girl who can depends on herself to decide what is wrong and what is right. Sondheim makes Cinderella as brave girl who can fight with other characters to destroy the giantess not as a weak girl who spent her time by weeping and complaining. Cinderella in the version of Brother Grimm portrays the theme of marriage as a dream and the man as a prince and the woman as a servant. So the subject of marriage in the Western culture in time of Brother Grimm is built on a false hierarchy because it makes the male superior and privileged while the female is inferior and unprivileged.

To scepticise such a wrong belief that a woman should depend on a man to change her destiny can be applied to the concept of the binary opposition of male/female in deconstruction theory. Bressler (2011) stated that "deconstructionists search for the binary oppositions operating in the text and reverse them. By reversing these hierarchies, deconstructionists wish to challenge the fixed views assumed by such hierarchies and the values associated with such rigid beliefs" (p. 116). According to this concept of binary oppositions, the male is superior and the

female is inferior, and the man is privileged. In contrast, the female is unprivileged. Thus, this hierarchy of male/female makes the subject of marriage is the Logocentrism in the Western metaphysics that can serve as a transcendental signified. Derrida questions this hierarchy and shows how fragile the foundations upon which such hierarchy has been established are. Cinderella in the original tale is marginalized and becomes inferior to men since Western philosophy has always privileged the male. This hierarchy becomes the basis of their thought and action, but in *Into the Woods* play, Sondheim deconstructs this hierarchy and demonstrates that Cinderella can be an active and brave woman without a male's help.

Sondheim also revises the tale of *Jack and the Beanstalk* as a moral tale which represents a needy boy who enters the Giant's house and steals his property to get a fortune and becomes a hero. Sondheim scepticises this theme, and depicts Jack as a thief and greedy boy, such as in the following quotation:

CINDERELLA (TO JACK):

Well, if you had not gone

Back up again-

JACK: We were needy-

CINDERELLA: You were greedy

Did you need that hen

JACK: But I got it for my mother-!

(Sondheim and Lapine, 1987, p.173).

Sondheim also depicts Jack as a killer because he is not only stolen the Giant but he also kills him, such as in the following quotation when the wife of the Giant comes to take revenge: "GAIANT: And who destroyed my house? That boy asked for shelter, and then he stole our gold, our hen, and our harp. Then he killed my husband." (Sondheim and Lapine, 1987, p.126).

Jack and the Beanstalk is a story in the form of colonialism since the hero goes to a place he does not own and steals its belongings, then kills the people when all they offer him are shelter and hospitality. As Szumsky (1999) stated:

This idea is clearer in Jacobs's story, where Jack causes the infringement by entering the Giant's house and stealing his belongings. If Jack's actions cannot be justified along purely (good/ bad) moral grounds in Jacobs, they can be legitimized in the context of a capitalist-colonial mind set, which must consume and exploit in order to remain viable. (p. 19)

Thus, the original tales of Jack and the beanstalk are not valued according to (good/ bad) moral grounds but according to the system of capitalists-colonial mind-set, which is based on the exploitations of the other resources to remain viable such as the following quotation:

As he passing the ogre he took one of the bags of gold under his arm, and off he pelters his arm till he came to the beanstalk, and then he

threw down the bag of gold which of course fell to his mother's garden, and then he climbed down and climbed down till at last he got home and told his mother and showed her the gold and said "well, mother, wasn't I right. (Jacob, 2005, p. 47)

This demonstrate that Jack is a thief and he does not regret but on the contrary he is so glad by his action as if he has done a heroic work. However, the traditional fairy tales is like the mirror that reflects the cultures of the society "Although fairy tales are characterised by simplicity and pervasiveness, they also carry with them significantly cultural and ideological element" (Leonardi, 2020, p. 2).

Sondheim rewriting this tale in order to scepticise this cultural element of colonialism that exists in the traditional tale of *Jack and the Beanstalk* and how people at that time legitimate this ideology in order to get power and fortune. Sondheim deconstructs this tale according to moral grounds, (good/ bad), to show the passive image of the ideology of colonialism; therefore, according to deconstruction theory which observes the binary oppositions that are operating in the text in order to reverse it and challenge the fixed views of these hierarchies. Deconstruction shows that the system of binary oppositions that operate in the tale of *Jack and the Beanstalk* in Sondheim's text will be according to the binary oppositions of needy/ greedy and good/ bad. So, by reversing these binaries, the primary meanings of this tale are deconstructed completely. These hierarchies of needy/ greedy shows that Jack in the original tale is a needy boy who goes to the kingdom of the Giants and steals their gold and becomes a hero. In Sondheim's text, these hierarchies are reversed and Jack is depicted as greedy bad boy who has no right to exploit a foreign land and steal gold. Then, as Jack depicts the mind-set of colonialism, Sondheim questions and challenges the legitimization of the ideology of colonialism and demonstrates that this ideology is about conquerors who exploit the other's resources under the argument they are needy for power and domination.

Sondheim also uses fragmentation to scepticise the theme of a happy ending in these traditional fairy tales. Postmodernist writers avoid depicting the events and characters realistically to provide multiple endings. Sondheim deconstructs the plots of these traditional fairy tales and interwoven them into one story to question the consequences of the characters' actions when they follow society's ideological and cultural elements. Sondheim takes the play's events to begin from the middle, not from the beginning, to provide two or more endings or to make an open-ending that challenges the happy endings of the traditional fairy tales.

Conclusion

This study concludes that these traditional fairy tales such as the tale of *Cinderella* and the tale of *Jack and the Beanstalk* have no longer valuable in a postmodern society because these are built on false values and beliefs. These tales do not give moral lessons but on the contrary they give false lessons for the audience (especially the children). They show persons who exploit others, among killing and stealing, for instance. Moreover, the classical fairy tales show that the person

who violates the accepted behaviour and her/his societies moral value(s), like in killing others and stealing their fortune, is a hero like in the traditional *Jack and the Beanstalk* and also the girl who solves her own problems by getting married and being a princess.

Moreover, these traditional fairy tales reflect the cultural and the ideological elements of the society at their times. Accordingly, these cultural factors are also challenged and questioned in postmodernism. These cultural norms about marriage in *Cinderella* and this ideology of colonialism in *Jack and the Beanstalk*, according to Smith's method of intertextuality and according to deconstruction theory, are shown from another perspective which is the postmodern perspective. This perspective demonstrates that these cultural factors are built on a wrong beliefs and false hierarchies that no longer serve the audience; consequently, will not serve the society. Therefore, these values of traditional fairy tales are sceptical in postmodernism since is not built on moral values.

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