# Snow White in American Movies and TV Series

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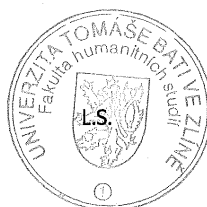
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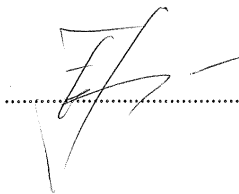
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2

## ABSTRAKT

Tato práce se zabývá rozborem filmových adaptací pohádky Sněhurka. Jako originální text je použita sbírka pohádek od bratrů Jacoba a Wilhelma Grimmových *Pohádky pro děti a domov* (Kinder- und Hausmärchen, 1812). Uvedená teorie se věnuje důvodům k vytvoření adaptací, adaptačním přístupům a cílovému publikumu. Analyzovány jsou čtyři rozdílné americké filmové adaptace této pohádky. Podobnosti jsou porovnány mezi jednotlivými verzemi a původním textem a také mezi sebou navzájem. Analyzovány jsou témata brutality, kanibalismu a sexuální motivy nenáležící k žánru pohádky a jejich ztvárnění ve filmových verzích. Práce dochází k závěru, že každá filmová adaptace není založena pouze na původním textu, ale je ovlivněna jinými filmy, ať už o Sněhurce nebo s ní vůbec nesouvisející. Tímto dochází k vytvoření nových uměleckých děl se zaměřením na specifické prvky originálního textu nebo na požadavky cílového publika.

Klíčová slova:

Sněhurka, adaptace, film, lidová pohádka, originální text, aluze, adaptační přístupy.

## ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with film adaptations of the Snow White folk-tale. The original text used is taken from Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's collection of fairy-tales *Children's and Household Tales* (Kinder- und Hausmärchen, 1812). The thesis focuses on the purposes for making an adaptation, adaptation approaches and target audience. Four different American film adaptations of this folk tale are analysed. The similarities are compared between the different versions and the original text and between each other. The topics analysed are brutality, cannibalism and sexual themes not belonging to the genre of fairy tales and their representation in film versions. The thesis concludes that each film adaptation is not based solely on the original text but is influenced by different films, about Snow White or not related at all. This leads to the creation of new works of art focused on specific elements of the original text or needs of target audience.

Keywords:

Snow White, adaptation, film, folk tale, original text, allusion, adaptation approaches.

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# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this bachelor thesis is to analyse four American adaptations of the Snow White folk-tale, their differences and their similarities. All four versions are adaptations of this folk-tale taken from the book *Kinder und Hausmärchen* (1812) by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. The theory introduced in the first chapter covers matters like adaptation approaches, purposes for making adaptations and the target audience is applied to each version together with an analysis of allusions to other texts. In this thesis, the term *intertextuality* is used based on Allen Graham's statement about the use of this term not only for literary works but also for other media.

> Intertextuality … is found in discussions of cinema, painting, music, architecture, photography and in virtually all cultural and artistic productions. … It is possible to speak of the "languages" of cinema, painting or architecture: languages which involve productions of complex patterns of encoding, re-encoding, allusion, echo, transposition of previous systems and codes. … Films, symphonies, buildings, paintings, just like literary text, constantly talk to each other as well as talking to the other arts.[1]

My analysis explores allusions to other texts from three perspectives. The first of them is focused on the links between the films themselves and what common features they share. The second describes the links between the original text and film versions of it. It analyses how the original structure, theme and characters are maintained or changed. The third perspective comments on allusions to other films unrelated to the theme of Snow White.

For the purposes of this thesis, I chose four adaptations while being fully aware that I am not able to include all film adaptations of this story in this thesis. Under these circumstances, I chose the following adaptations because they cover a wide range of interpretation possibilities. The selected films demonstrate different concepts of adapting one specific text, from the classical through the modern to an extreme version of it. Through this selection, I demonstrate various options of making adaptations.

The analysis is done in chronological order. The first film to be introduced is the oldest and the most significant adaptation *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Dir. David Hand, 1937). This film was an important milestone for the animated film industry and gave us the first idea about how a full-length animated movie should look. The second film *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* (Dir. Michael Cohn, 1997) is included because of its

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[1] Allen Graham, *Intertextuality*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 160–170.

demonstration of the brutal aspects of the folk-tale and its intercultural aspect. The third film presented in this thesis is *Mirror, Mirror* (Dir. Tarsem Singh, 2012) and is mentioned because of its reverse themes to the original text. The last one presented is *Snow White and the Huntsman* (Dir. Rupert Sanders, 2012), and is included for its reflection of the desire of modern consumers based on special effects, references to other blockbuster movies and popular actors.

As I will show in this thesis, each film adaptation is based not only on the original text but is influenced by different films about Snow White - or not related at all. I point out that every adaptation mentioned is a new modern work of art. Some are focused on specific elements of the original text such as brutality or the easy-going story line for children, some on the allusions to other successful films unrelated to the Snow White theme.

# 1   BASIC PROBLEMS OF FILM ADAPTATIONS

In the following chapter I will introduce basic terms concerning adaptation as medium carrying transformed information and present brief overview of the history of adaptation. I will discuss where the term *adaptation* originated and define how this term is used in my thesis. Several adaptation approaches and their features will be presented and shown on examples. Further I will deal with purposes for making an adaptation and last but not least I will introduce several types of target audience. Importance of the target audience and defining the purpose for making an adaptation will be the most discussed topics.

## 1.1   Term Adaptation

First we have to ask a question what we can actually describe as an adaptation. *Oxford Dictionary* offers us the definition of adaptation from biological point of view as: "*... the process of change by which an organism or species becomes better suited to its environment.*"[2] This definition is of course too simple for our use but it offers a possibility from where the original concept of the term adaptation comes.

In my analysis will be the term *adaptation* defined further according to academics in the fields of literary and film theory David Bordwell, Linda Hutcheon and Brian McFarlane. My thesis shows how each adaptation represents the time in which it was made. Also every filmed adaptation I will be dealing with is made for a specific purpose and specific audience. Purpose and target audience relates to the definition above in way that adaptations are changed from the original to better suit to the new environment. David Bordwell refers to Aristotle and his view of imitation. The first is the means of imitation which includes description of the medium which could be painting or language, the second is the object of imitation which includes action of the actor and the third one is mode of imitation which describes by which tools is imitation done.[3] Aristotle's term *imitation* is the basis of term *adaptation* and how it is used nowadays. Based on David Bordwell's research of *Poetics* by Aristotle I assume that the adaptation is one of the oldest mechanisms of transmission of information.

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[2] "Oxford English Dictionary," Oxford University Press, accessed April 28, 2013, http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/adaptation?q=adaptation.
[3] See David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, (London: University of Wisconsin, 1985), 3.

When presenting adaptation as a medium carrying specific information there is place for the context changes and for the core changes as well. Context change is a particular feature of the text, which is also dominant for identification of the adaptation. Linda Hutcheon in *The Theory of Adaptation* (2006) states that adaptation is medium allowing context changes when analyzing several films.

> … film tells Adela's story, adding scenes to establish her character and make it more complex and interesting than it arguably is in the novel. ... in offering a different ending in the film version of Michael Ondaatje's novel *The English Patient*, Anthony Minghella, in his film script and in his directing, removed the postcolonial politics of the Indian Kip's response to the bombing of Hiroshima, substituting instead another smaller, earlier bomb that kills his co-worker and friend. In other words, a personal crisis is made to replace a political one.[4]

Every story, folk tale or depiction of historical events inspires authors to make new adaptation of it for specific reasons. Those reasons are to maintain the knowledge of history, summarize events, to improve original story and many others, which I deal with in section Purposes for Making an Adaptation below. Those reasons and forms are influenced by the creator's bias as well.

Telling a story based on memory is not the same as using written text. Using memory is more difficult to keep the original story without bigger changes. However when using original written text there is no doubt about how much is the story revised and we have to analyze if it is an adaptation or remake. Every story told by people was most likely transformed. For determining whether something is original or adaptation there must be a physical medium. Those media were paintings first then written texts as physical originals.

Modern adaptations strive to get closer to the target audience through the usage of modern technology, contemporary music and basic life issues as love, beauty, funny or even embarrassing situations of the characters even though the original does not provide such situations. This I perceive as important aspect of the process of adaptation corresponding with the definition above. Adaptations tend to satisfy as wide range of audience as possible through every possible tool there is available. Number of these tools increased in last of couple years according to social studies and researches which gives us accurate information about target audience. I will discuss this issue in greater detail in part four of this thesis.

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[4] Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*. (London: Routledge, 2006), 11 – 12.

Adaptations were produced from the early beginning of the cinematography. The first film was presented to the public in 1895 under the name *La Sortie de l'Usine Lumière à Lyon* by brothers Auguste and Louis Lumière. However this film did not have any story line. In 1901 the first film adaptation by Georges Méliès *Le petit chaperon rouge* (Little Red Riding Hood) was made. After this point the film industry evolved from silent film to the motion picture in color we know today as Pavel Aujezdský notes.[5] Earlier throughout the evolution of film adaptations available to viewers were mostly science-fiction, psychological, political or historical adaptations. I selected several adaptations as examples of successful films both financially and in critical reception to better show what is perceived by an audience as film of high quality.[6]

From the genre of science-fiction I want to mention *Fahrenheit 451* (dir. François Truffaut, 1966) adapted from the novel of the same name by the American author Ray Bradbury (1953) and *Clockwork Orange* (dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1971) adapted from the novel of the same name by Anthony Burgess (1962), from psychological adaptations I want to point out *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (dir. Miloš Forman, 1975) based on the same name novel by Ken Kesey (1962). A historical adaptation worth mentioning is *Schindler's List* (dir. Steven Spielberg, 1993) based on Thomas Keneally's novel *Schindler's Arc* (1982). From the 1990s I chose the most popular adaptations such as *Batman* (dir. Tim Burton, 1989) adapted from the comic book created by the DC Comics (Bob Kane, Bill Finger, 1939), psychological film *Shawshank Redemption* (dir. Frank Darabont,1994) adapted from the Stephen King's novel *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption* (1982), *Forest Gump* (dir. Robert Zemeckis, 1994) based on the novel by Winston Groom (1986) described by film theorists as romantic comedy but I perceive it as mostly psychological film about controversial subject and *Fight Club* (dir. David Fincher, 1999) adapted from novel critical of society of the same name by Chuck Palahniuk (1996).

All of these adaptations try to appeal to human insecurities, doubts people have about themselves or society and typical issues such as injustice, fair play, regrets, common sense and because of that they were successful with both critics and audience. Financial success of Snow White adaptations is not questionable but the quality is arguable.

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[5] See Pavel Aujezdský, *Od knížky k televiznímu filmu*. (textbook, Janáčkova akademie múzických umění v Brně, 2009).

## 1.2 Adaptation Approaches

Linda Hutcheon's framework was simplified by Pavel Aujezdský who uses division of approaches into three points. The first defined approach is *Adaptation faithful to the original* which strictly follows the original text. The second is *Adaptation with creative contribution by screenwriter* allowing context changes and adding various features with maintaining the core. The third and the last defined approach is *Open Adaptation* which is the one most open to context changes, adding features and even core does not have to be maintained.[7] I will use those three models to point out the differences between specific adaptations of the *Snow White*.

Linda Hutcheon deals with all those three approaches in wider context. She refers to *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (dir. Christopher Columbus, 2001) with conclusion that certain adaptations are not suitable for any other approach than adaptation faithful to draft. She states that it would be cinematographic suicide to use any other approach when considering the expectations of the target audience.[8] This means that for *Harry Potter* it would be irrational to use different approach than this one with uncompromising fidelity to the original book because of the target audience. Adaptation faithful to the original text is usually used adapting for the first time to a different medium – from book to movie, from story to picture and other medium transformations. In case of remakes, the director has more materials to work with and he can improve or add sections which were not so successful first time.

When applying the first approach problem with different ways to understand the original text could appear. The creator has different idea about what he wants to transmit through the adaptation and the audience has different idea about what they want to receive. This could be one of the explanations for failure of adaptation *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* (dir. Michael Cohn, 1997) and others I will discuss further. On the other hand *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* (dir. Peter Jackson, 2012), *Krapp's Last Tape* (dir. Ian Rickson, 2007) and *Waiting for Godot* (dir. Michael Lindsay-Hogg, 2001), are the perfect example of the adaptations faithful to draft approach. Those adaptations are filmed to be

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[6] See "Top 250," Internet Movie Database, accessed April 30, 2013,
http://www.imdb.com/chart/top?ref_=nb_mv_3_chttp.
[7] See Aujezdský, "*Od knížky k televiznímu filmu.*" However this cite Linda Hutcheon.
[8] See Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 113 – 133.

without exception close to the original medium including certain dialogues and settings. The film *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* is interesting for its connection with *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy which was filmed before *The Hobbit* but as original medium *The Hobbit* is a prequel of the *The Lord of the Rings*. This is just one of many curiosities in film adaptation industry of 21st century.

Adaptation with creative contribution of a screenwriter has few differences from the first approach analyzed above. Film-makers are usually creative individuals and they want to build their own artistic identity through their work. Allan Graham in his book *Intertextuality* quotes Frederic Jameson:

> ... the producers of culture have nowhere to turn but to the past: the imitation of dead styles, speech through all the masks and voices stored up in the imaginary museum of a now global culture.[9]

It is becoming harder and harder to create something genuinely new. This approach is more open to changes and for the film makers it could be more creative process with space for their own ideas and understanding to the original than the first Adaptation faithful to draft approach. In this case the film maker can decide which part of the original he wants to keep unchanged. Adapters have many options how to operate with the original: setup the scenes to different surroundings, different period and different culture. In this case the definition from the beginning of my work can be applied here. This approach is more open to changes than the first one and allows readjustment to the new environment. Great examples of this are filmed versions of books that are required reading and films based on historical events. *The Adventures of Huck Finn* (dir. Stephen Sommers, 1993), *The Great Gatsby* (dir. Robert Markowitz, 2000), *Lolita* (dir. Adrian Lyne, 1997) and many other books were adapted to keep alive the traditional literature.

Open adaptation approach is the one most open to changes and provides the film maker with plenty opportunities for their own ideas and changes. They can also work with the original and make their own interpretation of it as a whole concept. Completely rewrite the original work which preserves few particular characteristics of it but without the original structure. *Snow White and the Huntsman* (dir. Rupert Sanders, 2012) is example of open adaptation approach but could be consider combined adaptation. This film is combination of few adaptations using just small piece of the story from every original or adapted text. Main story line is maintained and put together from more original works but

as a whole it is something new and completely different as Pavel Aujezdský states.[10] In case of *Alice in Wonderland* (dir. Tim Burton, 2010) it is questionable if this film can be classified as open adaptation or combined adaptation analyzed below because the original text of Lewis Carroll *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) is different in many ways (setting, period, age of the characters, characters added or omitted, storyline, ending) but structure is in a large scale maintained. More than twenty adaptations have been created based on *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and those adaptations could be inspiration for making this last one and in such case it should belong to the fourth possible approach I present in the next paragraph.

I did not find approach which defines such specific adaptation as *Snow White and the Huntsman* and most of modern adaptation based on fairy tales or folk literature as *Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters* (dir. Tommy Wirkola, 2013), *Mirror, Mirror* (dir. Tarsem Singh, 2012), *Once Upon a Time* (dir. Adam Horowitz, Edward Kitsis, 2011). Combined adaptation is the most suitable term for this kind of adaptations, because these adaptations are combination of more works of art created before. The folk tales these are based on had many different forms and interpretations throughout history. They are inspired by previous texts and filmmaker inserts his own ideas and tries to complete his vision in how those link together and appeals to the target audience in specific time and specific place. Nevertheless the filmmaker's perspective and understanding of the main theme may differ from the audience's expectation.

## 1.3    Purposes for Making an Adaptation

Creator makes an adaptation for more than one particular reason. Inevitable is economic profit which will be discussed in greater detail further. Brian McFarlane comments on the phenomenon of adaptation as very attractive also because of the vision of the success based on success of the original. Typical example of this is *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997) by Joanne Kathleen Rowling which was filmed after huge success of the book among the readers. The midnight release of the book *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000) by Joanne Kathleen Rowling was huge marketing triumph which prompted interest of the film industry to adapt the books into films. Success of *Harry Potter* series (1997–

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[9] Graham, *Intertextuality*, 179.
[10] See Aujezdský, *"Od knížky k televiznímu filmu."*

2007) by Joanne Kathleen Rowling books was presupposition of the success of the film adaptation. One year after this "midnight sale" event the first film *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (dir. Chris Columbus, 2001) was released. Brian McFarlane and Linda Hutcheon indicate that the common and inevitable reason for adapting is economic profit.[11] It seems that the economic motive is the main reason for making adaptations and the film industry is nothing more than entertainment industry with the novels becoming films, films becoming videogames, successful videogame or film becoming a comic book, comic books are becoming novels or films and this process is taking place again and again and everything is becoming one big transformed unity for making money and entertain increasingly consuming audience. This is not necessarily always true but profit is always at least one major aspect.

Linda Hutcheon distinguishes besides economic reasons also the legal constraints, cultural capital, personal and political motives.[12] When making film, adaptation, parody or remake, creator has to consider the copyright law. Each production deals with different copyright issues depending on the specific scenes, ideas, dialogues. For example the distinction between films, adaptation, remake, parody, who is considered as original author, who has to pay for copyrights to whom, etc. For each country different version of the copyright law is valid. Comments on cultural capital by Brian McFarlane are following:

> Film-makers reasons for this continuing phenomenon appear to move between the poles of crass commercialism and high-minded respect for literary works.[13]

On the other hand there are many adaptations made for student to help them with literature classes. Penguin Readers offer shortened versions of books of world literature for lower level of English.[14] Also the film adaptations of literary classic commonly help to better understand the original works. I do not want to argue that respect for original works is not common when making adaptations. I want to point out that respect for original works, educational element and commercial success do not exclude each other. Cultural heritage maintained through mixing of many transcripts of the original work such as Shakespeare's plays, fairy tales and folk literature is popular and sometimes even successful as following

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[11] See Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 85 – 95; Brian McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 7.
[12] See Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 85 – 95.
[13] McFarlane, *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*, 7.
[14] See Penguin readers, accessed April 30, 2013, http://www.penguinreaders.com/.

example shows. *Romeo + Juliet* (dir. Baz Luhrmann, 1996) is adaptation of William Shakespeare's play of the same name. Dialogues are maintained the same as in the original play but setting is changed to modern big American city and war between houses is portrayed as war between gangster's families. This adaptation won 13 awards and is still popular among young students.[15] Maintaining the cultural heritage and educational purpose of adaptations tend to be prevalent in modern education system. Question is if adaptation of one of the classics of literature has the same value as the original itself. It is difficult for the audience to understand archaic languages used in many books of required reading and old valuable literary works. For many recipients it is easier to understand the main points of the work itself when watching an adaptation rather than reading the original or watching original performance of the play. This is caused by the level of education of the recipients and the level of interest in the topic among other reasons.

Adaptations tend to be shorter but include every important scene and idea. This largely depends on the filmmaker's approach and purpose for making an adaptation.  Problem could appear with creator's bias and individualism, more specifically the difference between what the creator and audience value as most important aspects of the original. Linda Hutcheon comments on examples of criticism of approach to adaptation and creator's statements about motives to make an adaptation focused on particular feature of the text.

> Sally Potter's ideological motivation for doing a film version of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, as articulated in the introduction to the published screenplay, is different from Woolf's feminist aim, but equally political: Potter wanted to adapt—and therefore inevitably to alter—the text not only to tell a story she loved but also to permit "a more biting and satirical view of the English class system and the colonial attitudes arising from it"  (Potter 1994: xi).[16]

This quotation corresponds to the fact that adaptation is individual work and is influenced by bias. Every creator has his own reasons why and vision how to make his work. Some are focused on the generally known core without any political or historic agendas as in *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* (dir. Michael Cohn, 1997). However there are different purposes as personal reasons, highlighting the hidden meaning or explaining the text between the lines of the original text.

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[15] See "Awards for Romeo + Juliet," Internet Movie Database, accessed February 25, 2013, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0117509/awards?ref_=tt_awd .

[16] Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 94.

## 1.4   Audience

Audience is very important when making an adaptation for several reasons. The main reason is that audience determines which direction the adaptation will take. The author has to take every possible purpose for making adaptation and decide which one is the most suitable for his intention. If the author's intention is focusing more on economic profit then the author has to take into consideration wider range of people. This means that he has to make adaptation suitable for example for people of different age with different economic and social background.

I discuss two examples of film adaptation, *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* (dir. Peter Jackson, 2012) which is adaptation faithful to the original text and open adaptation *Snow White and the Huntsman* (dir. Rupert Sanders, 2012). These two films are different because *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy succeeded in wide audience which makes to audience certain that *The Hobbit* will be great movie as well and the adaptation will be done the same way as *The Lord of The Rings*. While *Snow White and the Huntsman* is made as family movie appealing to teenagers and adults for the reasons I will discuss later in my thesis. Approaches are templates by which the author of the adaptation addresses his audience after he decides the purpose for making his work. When the purpose is more political, personal or cultural the audience is even more important. It demands higher level of familiarity with the original work and its background, such as historical events, political affairs or social situation in specific time and place. When this knowledge is missing the author has to be aware of this problem and adjust his or her work and try to explain the context the best he or she can. When the knowledge of original work or event background (political, historical) of the audience is sufficient the author can add personal ideas into adaptation. Such text gives audience new perspective of the original work through the art of filmmaking. For example in the film *Schindler´s List* (dir. Steven Spielberg, 1993) adapted from the novel written by Thomas Keneally *Schindler's Ark* (1982) we can observe playing with the colors when in black and white movie the colors are used to emphasize specific objects or give the feeling of documentary using color changes for crossing from the past to the presence.

> That distant long take could support both suppressed emotion and temps morts. By not breaking the scene into close-ups, filmmakers could maintain a sense of muted drama.[17]

Quotation above describes how to preserve and show emotional moment of the story. This and other similar techniques were used when making the *Schindler´s List*.

David Bordwell defines three schemata by which the audience perceives the story. The first defined schemata are *prototype schemata* that include characters, place and events. Meaning that the audience is focused on personality and physical appearance of presented characters, settings associated with atmosphere and actions connected with happenings. The second presented schemata are *template schemata* containing the original narrative story. In case of adaptation this feature could be missing when the audience is not familiar with the original text. Nevertheless the audience captures the original narrative story through the text but mixed with additional information. Great example is adaptation made for educational purpose. Students are not familiar with the original text because instead of reading it they choose to watch it. The third and the last defined schemata are *procedural schemata* include exploring of the theme and links between time and space. Those schemata contain plot, duration, structure, order; all these are parts of the *procedural schemata*. Despite the fact that the audience does not have to be fully aware of those single pieces, but put together they perceive the work as a one whole unity.[18]

Those schemas are applicable to every audience no matter the age, nationality, gender, culture or origin of the audience. Different audiences perceive the film from different perspective based on their origin, age, gender etc. In case of the adaptations there is one thing that connects all people no matter how big the differences between them are. The original text is the connection even when the knowledge of the original text is not satisfactory. *Template schemata* are in most cases unfulfilled because the original narrative story is told to the audience through the projection and therefore it could be mixed with transformed information or information not occurring in the original.

Last but not least, the target audience could be extended by casting the famous actors, choosing popular scenery, using special effects as CG or 3D or co-production with another country.

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[17] David Bordwell, *Figures Traced in Light: on Cinematic Staging,* (London: University of California Press, 2005), 153.

[18] See Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 48-53.

## 2 SNOW WHITE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WORLD LITERATURE

From the initial occurrence fairy tales were not the same as we know them today. Through history the nature of folk tales changes with culture, social behavior or social background. Jana Čeňková presents several theories about origin of fairy tales such as mythological (pieces of old myths put together), anthropological (theme came from religious rituals), migration (with migration of the population stories travel as well) and historical-geographical theory (expanding of the migration theory).[19]

Even in one specific culture fairy tales are interpreted in many different ways. This differentiation is done consciously to become closer to the target audience and environment or unconsciously. In the following statement Jana Čeňková explains the process of changing the original text to the adaptation.

> … most adaptations simplify the original text in terms of composition (for example giving the chronological order to ancient Greek myths), in terms of themes (omission of irrelevant episodes which complicate or slow down the story line), in terms of language (simpler syntax, omission of archaisms) or even choosing different literary genre (verse epic transformed to the prose) … .[20]

Several versions of one story provide us with possibility of comparison or give us space for various interpretations. Migration theory is suitable because of number of the texts in many languages in Europe, America and Africa.[21]

With many versions of folk literature there is always an argument about its origin. And because of that there are two specific origins – folk tale and author's tale.[22] For centuries they were transmitted only verbally, constantly changing before being collected and written into books. Author is unknown but we know the names of the collectors and editors instead for example brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. Author's tale is completely new work but also it can be inspired by folk tales. When inspired by folk tales we are talking about the author's tale adaptation.[23] Original text used for analysis in this thesis is clearly the folk

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[19] See Jana Čeňková, "Teorie vzniku pohádek a adaptace lidové pohádky," in *Vývoj literatury pro děti a mládež a její žánrové struktury*, ed. Jana Čeňková et al. (Praha: Portál, 2006), 107–111.

[20] Kateřina Dejmalová, "Mýty v adaptacích pro děti a mládež," in *Vývoj literatury pro děti a mládež a její žánrové struktury*, ed. Jana Čeňková et al. (Praha: Portál, 2006), 87.

[21] See Christine Kawan, "Innovation, Persistence and Self-Correction: the Case of Snow White," *E.L.O*, 11, no. 12 (2005): 237-252, https://sapientia.ualg.pt/bitstream/10400.1/1671/1/11-12-Kawan.pdf (accessed April 30, 2013).

[22] See Čeňková, "Teorie vzniku pohádek a adaptace lidové pohádky," 108.

[23] See Čeňková, "Teorie vzniku pohádek a adaptace lidové pohádky," 107–126.

tale which suggests that more than one version is known and speculations about its origin are possible. The first collectors and editors of the tale Snow White were brothers Grimm and from their version all adaptation were made into many languages.

Snow White is taking place of Cinderella as the most adapted fairy tale nowadays.[24] Cinderella was used as inspiration for many films seemingly unrelated to it's theme such as *Pretty Woman* (dir. Garry Marshall, 1990) or most popular Czech fairy tale *Tři oříšky pro popelku* (dir. Václav Vorlíček, 1973) and the last film adaptation for cinema released was *Cinderella man* (dir. Ron Howard, 2005). In the last twenty years the creators chose to make adaptation of Snow White more and more with four TV and film adaptations in the last two years only.

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[24] See "Snow White," Internet Movie Database, accessed April 30, 2013, http://www.imdb.com/find?q=snow+white&s=all; "Cinderella," Internet Movie Database, accessed April 30, 2013, http://www.imdb.com/find?q=cinderella&s=all.

# 3   IDENTIFICATION OF FILM VERSIONS OF SNOW WHITE

In the next chapter I will present four American adaptations of folk tale Snow White. Three of them are based on the brothers Grimm's folk tale *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812) by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. The fourth one maintains the generally known basic characteristic of the original folk tale but contains many features used in other films. I will analyze all four adaptations using compiled theory presented in the previous chapter. I will focus on the reasons for making each adaptation, target audience and analyze how each film is presented. I also will focus on links between analyzed adaptations and other films and related works.

## 3.1   Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (dir. David Hand, 1937)

This film was released in 1937 as the first full-length animated film by Walt Disney studio. Animators used traditional animation which is technique using objects drawn by hand on a celluloid – transparent sheet. Each sheet was placed over a static background drawing. This technique was invented by the Earl Hund in 1914 and lasted till it was replaced by the computer assisted animation represented by the first full length animated movie made only by computer-animation the *Toy Story* (dir. John Lasseter, 1995).[25]

This leads me to the first purpose for making *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (dir. David Hand, 1937) which is to set a new form of the full length animated movie. American society was going through the Recession during the Great Depression. It means that American society was willing to pay for entertainment to forget troubles such as unemployment, life changes and questioning government usefulness. The Great Depression led to Hollywood's "Golden Age" and that was the time for reaching new frontier in the film industry field.

Another purpose is the economical profit. Despite the fact that society was depressed, broke and unhappy there were cinemas and theatres to help them forget for a while and just live their American Dream. There were certain doubts about economical profit of such expensive film as the total cost of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was $1,480,000.[26] In

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[25] See Erica Lau, Samantha Caps, and Alison Fujimotto, "Walt Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," January, 2013, http://68435157.nhd.weebly.com/index.html.
[26] See Lau et al. January 20, 2013.

the end the economic purpose was more than fulfilled because the film grossed $8 million.[27]

Judging by the content of the film children population is target audience but considering background of American society in 1937 the secondary target audience were adults. Everybody was curious about innovation of film industry Walt Disney was introducing to the world.

As the original text *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812) by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm was used. The main storyline follows the German folklore original with adjustment to the environment on which the adaptation is focused (American society). Features suggesting adjustment to the target environment are for example typical haircut and dress of Snow White once as a lady from higher class and once as a servant and strong focus on melodic, appealing, romantic music.

Personification of the dark forest as evil prepared to eat Snow White is assimilation to fear of the unknown and loneliness. This could be understood as a reflection of the American situation corresponding to the quote by Franklin Delano Roosevelt: "Only thing we have to fear is fear itself."[28] The forest is friendly and tries to help to Snow White but she is paralyzed by the fear to the extent that she does not recognize the opportunities and friends represented by the animals in the forest. After she calms down she starts to communicate with the animals which lead her to the new opportunity in live – the house of the seven dwarfs. Those are characteristic features to get closer to adult audience. The dwarfs are symbols of happiness, child innocence and charm represented by their behavior and appearance. Identification of children with dwarfs invokes feeling of security and appeals to children's innocence.

In comparison with the original text is this version of Snow White rather incomplete. Instead of the liver and lungs as a proof of Snow White's death and also for dinner the queen wants only Snow White's heart just as a proof of her death. Heart is a symbol of emotions and life while viscera evoke disgust and degradation of the human being to animal. Combined with intention of cooking and eating the viscera is the superiority of the queen and humiliation of Snow White evident. Cannibalistic feature is completely

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[27] See Lau et al. January 20, 2013.
[28] "History Matters: The U.S. Survey Course on the Web," Last modified April 10, 2013. Accessed April 20, 2013. http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5057/.

abandoned in this adaptation. Black is the color with negative associations as darkness – you cannot see in the dark, fear – something unknown, racism – especially in the American culture. In the film there are only bright pastel colors except for the black coat of the queen and her laboratory, black raven and black vulture. All those represent the threat or danger in the story. The raven symbolizes the serious threat posed by the apple. Allusion to Edgar Allan Poe's poem "The Raven" (1845) is clear because of location of the raven in the window on the stone wall and the fact that the queen is talking to the raven – sign of madness. The raven is scared of the poisoned apple – symbol of greater danger than the fear and madness (raven) itself. Another passing reference is to the Bible when the evil queen is punished by the lightning when running away in the rainy storm as in the story Sodom and Gomorrah in the Book of Genesis. In the original text the punishment is done by Snow White on her wedding day. Queen is forced to dance in hot iron shoes till she dies. This form of penalty is inspired by the Scandinavian nations' traditional punishment.[29]

Primarily is the film focused on children audience because four fifths of the length of the movie is about living with dwarfs and animals with musical accompaniment. Sexuality presented is socially acceptable and covered by short innocent kiss on the lips when bringing Snow White back to life. Story does not include coughing out the piece of the poison apple which makes it look like Snow White resurrected. Snow White is described as an adult woman instead of the seven year old child with intention not to stir up the society by the controversy of relationship or intercourse with someone under age. This is shown in the original text through the wedding after Snow White's awakening, she is cursed at the age of seven and the length of her being in the glass coffin is defined only by time specification "… long, long time."[30]

## 3.2   Snow White: A Tale of Terror (dir. Michael Cohn, 1997)

As another adaptation I choose from many film adaptations this one, because of the intercultural aspects, focus on extreme theme of brutality and personal preferences. Also

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[29] See Wilhelm Grimm, Jacob Grimm and Edgar Taylor, *German Fairy Tales and Popular Stories,* (London: Strangeways and Walden, 1864), 149.
http://books.google.cz/books?id=LVgqAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA147&redir_esc=y
[30] See Grimm, *German Fairy Tales and Popular Stories,* 156.

the theme of cannibalism, sexual abuse and focus on horror aspects of the folk tale are the differences and uniqueness from other mentioned adaptations.

Previous adaptation was important for animated film industry, show business and target audience for reasons I noted above. Film *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* (dir. Michael Cohn, 1997) has intercultural aspects. This adaptation was filmed by combination of the American and Czech cast and crew. Main character is portrayed by Sigourney Weaver and supporting actor is Miroslav Táborský. Czech crew was involved in music, costumes, production, assistant director office, camera and electrical department, casting and others. Filming locations were only in Czech Republic's castles and in the Czech Republic's capital city, Prague.[31]

Another reason for mentioning this adaptation is demonstrating the different point of view of the same original text. This film has rating evaluated by MPAA as "R" which means that the film is not recommended for children but not restricted.[32] In other words if parents have sufficient information about the movie and decide it is no harm to their children and they accompany them then they are allowed to watch the movie. Adaptation was not filmed for children and based on presented rating the intended audience were adults. I classify the movie as adaptation with creative contribution by screenwriter based on the fact that the structure of the original which is again the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812) by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm is kept. In this case story is focused on the dark side of the book and pushed to the extreme. The purpose for making this adaptation is underlining the brutal subtext of folk tale and connection with other culture based on co-production with the Czech crew.

Snow White's name is Little Lilli. She is born by cesarean section in the middle of the forest by her father with hunting knife. In the original text: "… she was looking out upon the snow, she pricked her finger, and three drops of blood fell upon it."[33] Mirror is shown not as a counselor but as the queen's other younger self which points out the schizophrenic subtext. The theme of jealousy is very intense. The queen is jealous of the dead wife of the king but when expecting a child she calms down. After miscarriage she becomes the evil

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[31] See "Snow White: A Tale of Terror," Internet Movie Database, accessed April 30, 2013, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0119227/fullcredits?ref_=tt_ov_st_sm#cast.
[32] See The Film Rating System (CARA), last modified 2013, accessed April 20, 2013, http://www.filmratings.com/.
[33] Grimm, *German Fairy Tales and Popular Stories,* 148.

queen from the original and sends her brother instead of the huntsman to kill Lilli and bring her viscera. As in the original text the murder of Little Lilli fails and queen gets only animal viscera. Theme of cannibalism is intense and visible. The queen prepared a dinner from animal viscera in the belief that they are Snow White's. Viscera are served on the table to the king and queen and they are eating them together. Translated original says: "And it was salted and cooked, and the wicked woman ate it up, thinking that there was as end of Snow White."[34]

Black magic is represented by voodoo, satanic features and disrespect for Christian symbols. As a punishment the queen uses spider as voodoo doll and hurts her brother through the voodoo doll for bringing animal viscera instead of Lilli's. The king is chained on the other side of the cross than Jesus and hanged upside down. Inverted cross is symbol of Satanism and desecration of the church. After the queen gives birth to the dead child she resurrects him by ritual at its grave. Theme of the grave and corpse desecration and resurrection is also shown when bringing Little Lilli back to life during her funeral – she is torn from the grave by one of the dwarfs who shakes her dead body and she coughs out piece of the poisoned apple. This fits the original: "… but the moment he lifted it (coffin) up to carry it home with him, the piece of apple fell from between her lips."[35]

The infamous apple is in this adaptation represented as a sacrifice. The queen rips out her brother's heart and by ritual involving rape of the king the heart becomes the poison apple. This leads me to sexual features in presented adaptation. Little Lilly is attracted to two men. One of them is prince who is seduced by the queen while she keeps the king as her slave and the other is dwarf who saved her from being raped by the other dwarfs. In this adaptation dwarfs are adult men of shorter stature make a living by thievery and gold mining. Their leader is tall and can be considered attractive. In the original text the dwarfs are in love with Snow White because of her beauty. This is an adult interpretation of similar feelings which manifests in sexual attraction amplified by the fact that seven men live in the middle of the forest by themselves. Controversy of rape and sexuality is repeating. Little Lilli is a teenage girl and she kisses the leader of the dwarfs which is in his thirties. Even nowadays the love between young woman/girl and old man is judged.

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[34] Jacob Grimm, Wilhelm Grimm, *Snow White and Other Fairy Tales (Dover Children)* (New York: Dover Publications, 1995), 3.
[35] Grimm, *German Fairy Tales and Popular Stories,* 156.

This adaptation is full of controversial topics and is set in Middle Ages during Black Death epidemic for amplifying frightening effect. The end is similar to another adaptation *Mirror, Mirror* (dir. Tarsem Singh, 2012) because of saving of the cursed king.

## 3.3    Mirror, Mirror (dir. Tarsem Singh, 2012)

Hindi cinema is one of the aspects that influenced form of this adaptation. Director is from India and he is part of the Bollywood. Considering the director's nationality there are several aspects of the film influenced by director's bias. Tarsem Singh directed also *Immortals* (2011), *The Cell* (2000) and in the film *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* (2008) he was an assistant director.

As original text for discussed adaptation *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812) is used and inspiration was also drawn from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (dir. David Hand, 1937). However the combination of two different cultures when making traditional movie similar to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* could be definitely consider an attempt to innovate and gain more viewers of different nationalities which leads to bigger economic profit. Director's aim is to make a movie for the children without any serious or thought-provoking moments but with simple funny spark. Also in this case the target audience is only children. Following quotation is statements from the director about intended target audience and purpose for making this adaptation.

> I think when I make it, I just do it if there's enough of me in it, unless I really need the money or something, which I don't. I make it and say, "No, this is the movie I want to make. Will these people let me make it?" When I'm making it, I don't think of what the crowd is going to think…. keeping in mind that you could bore an audience and don't go too wild for the kids, this is just one-on-one body language kind of stuff.[36]

Movie is deliberately avoiding controversial aspects of the folklore folk tale by Grimm brothers and even changes some of them to be more suitable. It explains uncertainty about Snow White's age, why the king is dead, dwarfs are lovely, clean, harmless, funny and cheerful old men, viscera are maintained but showed together with sausages supported by funny scene of hiding the sausages from the queen in order for her to not notice that viscera were taken from the kitchen. This shows effort to lighten or to omit the repulsive aspects of

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[36] Tarsem Singh, (Director), interview by Jack Giroux, "Interview: Tarsem Singh on 'Mirror Mirror' and What Michael Bay Was Like in College," *Film School Rejects*, April 6, 2012, April 16, 2013, http://www.filmschoolrejects.com/features/interview-tarsem-singh-mirror-mirror-jgiro.php.

the original text. The schizophrenic aspect is the only one maintained through the reflection in the mirror. The representation of the mirror counselor looks exactly like herself.

In the film scenes similar to older successful movies appear. I will discuss this feature further below in the analysis of *Snow White and the Huntsman* (dir. Rupert Sanders, 2012). Opening scene is presented as telling the historic background of the story through the puppet show strikingly similar to scene from *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1* (dir. David Yates, 2010) in which is told the story of the ''The Tale of Three Brothers'' Castle, Snow White's dress and ability to talk to animals are portrayed exactly as the ones from the *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (dir. David Hand, 1937). In the scene on the ball prince has big black hat with rabbit ears and long black coat. This costume is arranged as combination of the characters of The Hatter and The White Rabbit from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865).

On the other hand many themes from the original text and film are changed. For example instead of the comb, bodice laces and apple puppets are used as a part of the voodoo ritual to destroy dwarfs lair. The Beast, who is cursed father of the Snow White, is used as threat to society controlled by the queen. The kiss is used to rescue the prince who is cursed by the queen to love her, marry her and financially safe the kingdom. Also the story is focused on the rivalry between Snow White and the queen because Snow White wants to get her kingdom back as her rightful heritage after her father and she fights for it. Queen's death happens on Snow White's wedding day where queen eats the apple which is another reverse aspect of this film similar to the kiss.

This adaptation shows how different aspects of different cultures can work together. Through the fairy tales and movies for children is it very easy to maintain the core and add new aspects, change the background and completely change background music at the same time.

## 3.4 Snow White and the Huntsman (dir. Rupert Sanders, 2012)

This movie is rated by MPAA as PG – 13 for intense sequences of violence and action, and brief sensuality.[37] This rating indicates that the movie is not recommended for children under the age of 13 but not restricted under parental guidance. Apart from the children this

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[37] "Parents Guide for Snow White: A Tale of Terror," Internet Movie Database, accessed April 30, 2013, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0119227/parentalguide?ref_=tt_stry_pg

film is focused on really wide range of audience. Target audience is basically popcorn viewer or standard consumer. Monumental fight scenes, impressive scenery of the setting and distinctive traits of characters are basic features of the analyzed film. Many of those features were already shown in other movies but about that later. Following quotation is reaction of the director to implication that he copied some scenes and took inspiration from other films.

> There's overlap with this film and a lot of other films because we're reworking a fairy tale and the fairy tale is an archetype and that archetype is borrowed throughout literature and cinema. I think ours is definitely very different to *The Lord of the Rings*, but I think it's probably closer in the genre than anything else really. We're very different directors though, with very different visions of our worlds.[38]

The director refers only to the one specific film as possibility of similarity and he clearly denies resemblance between the two. He also does not include other possible films or scenes which were inspiration to him. On the other hand the promotion says that the same crew which filmed *Alice in Wonderland* (dir. Burton Tim, 2010) is involved in this film as well. This is considered beneficial because of the "label" the film receives, meaning that it will be done in the similar way as the previous successful one and viewers know what they can expect. This shows that typical consumer does not mind or really care about borrowing or copying ideas. On the contrary he perceives it as a positive sign as he knows a little bit of what to expect. As I comment above in *purposes for making an adaptation* when previous work is successful the success is expected from the new work as well.

References to other films are in form of an allusion and there are two main aspects of allusion. One is done by visual scenes referring to the other films and another is references to the original text. Based on the citation above I do not consider these allusions intentional even though my analysis clearly shows many allusions to other films. Roland Barthes describes the formation of the author in following statement: "*The author is a modern figure, a product of our society … .*"[39] Author is not always aware of all of the things which influence him. This leads me to support director's statement about unintentional allusions to other films.

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[38] Rupert Sanders, (Director), interview by Louisa Mellor, "Rupert Sanders interview: Snow White and the Huntsman, Kristen Stewart, Lord of the Rings," *Den of Geek*, May 28, 2012, April 16, 2013, http://www.denofgeek.com/movies/21484/rupert-sanders-interview-snow-white-and-the-huntsman-kristen-stewart-lord-of-the-rings.

[39] Roland Barthes, *Image – Music – Text*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 142–149.

First of all the actors in the main roles were chosen to appeal to teenage audience. Actress Kirsten Steward was very successful in the *The Twilight Saga* movies and the actor Chris Hemsworth had leading role in film *Thor* (dir. Kenneth Branagh, 2011). Both of them happened to be sex symbols for the teenage audience.

The mirror taking shape looks exactly like the Terminator's ability to transform from liquid form in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (dir. James Cameron, 1991). Madness of the queen is preserved through the fact that only she can see the figure (counselor) rising from the mirror. The scene where Snow White runs through the dark forest and the trees are trying to catch her is modernized version of the same scene from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (dir. David Hand, 1937) with use of special effects. In the middle of the dead kingdom is place called "Sanctuary" remarkably similar to the moon Pandora from *Avatar* (dir. James Cameron, 2009). In the "Sanctuary" everything is bright, flying mushrooms looking like jellyfish are everywhere, there are small fairies that look close to smaller different colored avatars, and the music in this scene resembles the background music from *Avatar* when Pandora was introduced for the first time. The final scene with the main character portrayed as heroin in shiny armor leading the whole army is just like in *Joan of Arc* (dir. Luc Besson, 1999). Moreover the magnificent speech supported by resurrection is similar to *Joan of Arc* as well. When meeting the mystical White heart (white stag) Snow White looks at its eyes and it bows down to her. This evokes scene from *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (dir. Alfonso Cuarón, 2004) when hippogriff Buckbeak bows down to Harry Potter. Last but not least when our heroes leave the destroyed "Sanctuary" to fight the evil queen there is a scene almost completely same as in the end of *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (dir. Peter Jackson, 2001) where group of travelers walk on the ridge of a mountain or hill in a row.

After presenting visual allusions to the films above I will focus on references to the other texts. Queen is taking the bath in milk and sucks life from young virgins. This leads me to the story of Hungarian countess from $16^{th}$ to $17^{th}$ century know as *Elizabeth Báthory de Esced* or The Blood Countess. The rumor about her was that her ritual was to bath in the blood of the virgins to prolong her life and beauty. The number 9 is used in the film with the same symbolic as in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Seven dwarfs, Snow White and the huntsman form a group of nine to defeat the evil queen which clearly refers to The Fellowship of nine again from the *Lord of the Rings* books. And again nine dark riders on black horses chase Snow White who is riding a white horse. Snow White and the white

horse were seemingly destined to meet in a similar way as Gandalf and Shadowfax. The scene when Snow White is being chased down by the dark riders is almost identical to the moment when Gandalf or Glorfindel with Frodo are being chased by the Nazgûls also known as the Nine.

Concerning Disney version I will focus on birds and queen's desire for the heart. Birds are portrayed as guides showing the right way to the safe place. The queen eats the uncooked bird's viscera with her iron claw ring as a delicacy right from the dead bird's bodies. This is as a symbol of no hope for Snow White and light evidence of maintaining cannibalistic features from Grimm's version. Also corresponding with Grimm's version is the huntsman who spares her life. The queen has the same power to kill people just by touching their chest to crush the heart as in the series *Once Upon a Time* (dir. Adam Horowitz, Edward Kitsis, 2011).

Uniqueness of this adaptation is in rendition of the queen's story. Version *Mirror, Mirror* had some ambitions to tell the queen's story in the beginning but the idea was not finished. Queen comes from the poor servant family that is attacked by an army in a time of war. Queen's mother gave her the white potion with three drops of queen's blood with enchantment "By the fairest blood it was done and only by a fairest blood can it be undone."[40] At this moment her blood was considered the fairest. After drinking the potion she gains magic powers. She was kidnapped by soldiers and became a queen because the king fell in love with her. On their wedding day she kills the king and takes his kingdom. Other king defeats her army and she becomes his queen. This process is repeating and the queen is less "fairer" by her own fault. At the end of her glory Snow White appears as the new fairest blood that can broke the spell. The queen also consumes the youth of the young virgins to stay beautiful and Snow White's heart would provide her with immortality.

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[40] "Snow White and the Huntsman" Internet Movie Script Database, accessed April 30, 2013, http://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Snow-White-and-the-Huntsman.html.

# 4 COMPARISON OF DIFFERENT VERSIONS

In this section I will compare the analyzed adaptations of the folk tale Snow White. Each version has different setting, representation of the characters, different target audience and even reasons for making every one of them. Nonetheless all of them have some features in common besides the original text.

First of all I comment on common features of the films that differ from the original text by brothers Grimm *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812). In version *Snow White and the Huntsman* (dir. Sanders Rupert, 2012) and *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* (dir. Michael Cohn, 1997) the character of huntsman is replaced by the brother of the queen and the brother has almost the same character function in both films. On the other hand the huntsman has similar character function in *Snow White and the Huntsman* and *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* and *Mirror, Mirror* (dir. Tarsem Singh, 2012). He spares Snow White's life, becomes her guardian and teaches her how to defend herself in a fight. Another different feature from the original text is appearance of mystical creatures. In *Mirror, Mirror* Snow White's father is cursed and turned into the dragon and in *Snow White and the Huntsman* troll attacks main characters in the middle of the forest. The raven as symbol of evil or madness is included in *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (dir. David Hand, 1937). Imprisoned Snow White is another common feature of film versions different from the original text. In *Mirror, Mirror* and *Snow White and the Huntsman* Snow White is locked up in a tower for several years after her father's death in the battle. Love triangle is common feature of the *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* and *Snow White and the Huntsman* as in both adaptations two men are in love with Snow White. In both versions one of them is the huntsman and the other one is either childhood friend or one of the dwarfs. The adaptation *Mirror, Mirror* is absolutely unique because the Snow White has to kiss the cursed prince to break the Queen's spell but in all the other versions the prince is the one kissing.

Now I focus on common features with the original text that are included in all presented adaptations. I will not include detailed comparison between each adaptation as I did above. Since all presented adaptations of Snow White are based on the brothers Grimm's folk tale there are several maintained features and symbols. All of those common aspects do not have the same application but the primary core is maintained. Viscera are present in each adaptation but *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. In case of this film heart is used instead of viscera and functions mostly as a symbol of life than anything else. The

kiss is preserved and fulfills the same function in the films adaptations as in the original text. One exception is in *Mirror, Mirror* when the kiss is performed by the Snow White to save the prince and not vice versa. The most consistent aspect is the Mirror on the wall and its dialogues with the queen. There is lightly different look and design of the mirror in each adaptation but the most visible change of the appearance is in the *Snow White and the Huntsman* as I commented in previous chapter. The apple has its important place almost without any changes in each adaptation. Only two differences are visible. In *Mirror, Mirror* Snow White recognizes danger and gives the apple to the queen and kills her by doing so. In *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* the cursed apple is not made using a potion but by intercourse with imprisoned king as symbol for conceiving of a child.

Folk tales have common features all around the world such as magical creatures, characters and objects and these features combined in a coherent narrative create a structure.[41] In case of presented films similar process is visible. Each adaptation is connected to another through the original text but all of them have their own structure, interpretation and features. Similarities to other films are presented by directors only as an inspiration or outright denied. I want to point out that source of inspiration can be not only one text but several of them as in case of *The Snow White and the Huntsman* and *Mirror Mirror*. In those two films literature and film were mixed as I discuss in previous chapter.

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[41] See Jiří Horák, *O pohádkách*, (Praha: SNDK, 1962), 25 – 63.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis analysed four American film adaptations of the Snow White folk-tale. The films were chosen specifically to demonstrate the wide range of possibilities how one text can be interpreted in many different ways. Analysis was done by applying the theory presented in the thesis of the first chapter to each film. Together with the applied theory, each film was analysed using the intertextual figure *allusion* to the original text *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812) and to other texts about Snow White or unrelated to it.

At the beginning of this thesis, the term *intertextuality* is defined according to Allen Graham's research. He claims that intertextuality is possible not only between the same media but also between different media. This leads to the first proved statement that it is possible for the literary text to be intertextual with a film. In the case of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Dir. David Hand, 1937), nearly identical motifs and the theme with the original text are apparent without many allusions to other films or literary texts. On the other hand, *Snow White and the Huntsman* (Dir. Sanders Rupert, 2012) is more complicated in terms of intertextuality. This film has only a few common motifs with the original text and mostly has a different main storyline. This is not an issue in the case of adaptations, on the contrary. Linda Hutcheon's research shows that adaptation is a medium allowing context changes. This leads me to the conclusion that even text not maintaining the main story but keeping some motifs is considered adaptation. The main problem occurs when too many allusions to too many different texts (films in this case) appear. The film becomes a chaotic mixture of familiar scenes from successful movies which makes it seem rather more like a copy than the author's individual work. The problem with the intentional or unintentional process of the author being influenced by their background is further specified in Roland Barthes's *Image – Music – Text* (1978).

The film *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* (Dir. Michael Cohn, 1997) shows perfectly how adaptation can simultaneously maintain the theme, motifs and topic but portray them in a completely different way. In terms of the story-line, this film is closer to the original text than *Snow White and the Huntsman* but is focused more on brutal scenes, cannibalism and sexual abuse. Those topics are present in the original text and the director only had to read between the lines and focus on unspecified situations to create such a particular perspective. This leads me to the possibility of the adaptation being completely different while simultaneously keeping the original story intact.

Every culture has its own understanding of the world, including fairy tales. In the case of *Mirror, Mirror* (Dir. Tarsem Singh, 2012), the director captures most of the themes from the original text and reverses them. Influenced by the director´s bias and purpose for making this adaptation, the text - mixing two cultures, was created successfully. Based on the facts presented in the conclusion, it is possible to make an adaptation of the text from one culture and transform it into another.

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