From Naïve Girl to Tough Female: Many Versions of Belle from *Beauty and the Beast*

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Fakulta humanitních studií
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur
akademický rok: 2017/2018

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE
(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení: **Nikol Kulišťáková**
Osobní číslo: **H15674**
Studijní program: **B7310 Filologie**
Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk pro manažerskou praxi**
Forma studia: **prezenční**

Téma práce: **Od naivní dívky po silnou ženu: Různé verze Belle z** *Krásky a zvířete*

Zásady pro vypracování:

Shromáždění odborných materiálů k tématu
Studium odborné literatury
Formulace cílů práce na základě prostudované odborné literatury
Analýza verzí postavy Belle
Vyvození a formulace závěrů práce

Rozsah bakalářské práce:

Rozsah příloh:

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**

Seznam odborné literatury:

Allen, Graham. Intertextuality. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2011.

Carruthers, Amelia. Beauty and the Beast – And Other Tales of Love in Unexpected Places. Bristol: Pook Press, 2015.

Davis, Amy M. Good Girls and Wicked Witches: Changing Representations of Women in Disney's Feature Animation. New Barnet: John Libbey Publishing, 2006.

Gregor, Lukáš. Typologie a chování postav v animovaných filmech Walt Disney Company. I. díl, Klasická éra a současná 2D produkce. Zlín: VeRBuM, 2011.

Ward, Annalee R. Mouse Morality: The Rhetoric of Disney Animated Film. Austin, Tx: University of Texas Press, 2002.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **prof. PaedDr. Silvia Pokrivčáková, Ph.D.**
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **10. listopadu 2017**

Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **4. května 2018**

Ve Zlíně dne 14. prosince 2017

L.S.

doc. Ing. Anežka Lengálová, Ph.D.
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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce analyzuje postavu Belle ve zvolených převyprávění příběhu *Kráska a zvíře* a v mýtu o Amoru a Psyche. Teoretická část práce se zaměřuje na vysvětlení pojmu „intertextualita“, jeho typy a historii jeho zkoumání. Dále pak tato část obsahuje vývoj *Krásky a zvířete* od Amoru a Psyche až po převyprávění *Na lovu* z roku 2017. Praktická část práce se pomocí průzkumu intertextuality mezi mýtem o Amoru a Psyche, zvolenými literárními díly a animovaným filmem od společnosti Walt Disney již zabývá konkrétní analýzou postavy Belle ve třech zvolených aspektech: změna v popisu její postavy, její motivace a ve vývoji její postavy.

Klíčová slova: Kráska a zvíře, Kráska, Belle, intertextualita, převyprávění, adaptace, motivace, pasivita

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis analyzes Belle's character in the chosen retellings of *Beauty and the Beast* and in the myth of Cupid and Psyche. The theoretical part of this thesis focuses on the explanation of the term "intertextuality", its types and the history of its research. Furthermore, this part also contains the development of *Beauty and the Beast* form Cupid and Psyche to the retelling from 2017, *Hunted*. By examining intertextuality between the myth of Cupid and Psyche, the chosen literary works and the Walt Disney Company's animated movie, the practical part deals with a concrete analysis of Belle in three chosen aspects: the change in her character description, her motivation and in her character development.

Keywords: Beauty and the Beast, Beauty, Belle, intertextuality, retelling, adaptation, motivation, passivity

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's/Master's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

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INTRODUCTION

"Tale as old as time, song as old as rhyme, Beauty and the Beast."[1] This is one of the most prominently famous quotes from the Walt Disney Pictures' animated motion picture *Beauty and the Beast* (1991). The quote truly does fit the fairy tale's character. A vast majority of fairy tales have their roots in folklore and mythology. They are the stories which are passed down through generation until they ultimately become recorded and well established fairy tales. *Beauty and the Beast* is said to have its origins in the Ancient Roman myth, *Cupid and Psyche*, which tells the story of a young woman being destined to marry a horrid beast and go to live with him at his palace while in reality she ends up being married to a god, *Cupid*. This story is what supposedly inspired the following Madame Gabrielle-Suzanne de Villeneuve's *La Belle et la Bête* (1740) which is by many literary critics considered to be the original *Beauty and the Beast*.

It was more than one hundred pages long story which contained among others also fantastical features in the form of supernatural beings and magic as well as complex Beast's and Beauty's back-stories. Twelve years after the publication, Madame de Villeneuve's fairy tale was retold by Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont who shortened and simplified the plot. She deleted a lot of the characters including for example Beauty's siblings and the supernatural creatures and removed also the characters' back-stories. Her version is what the world recognizes as *Beauty and the Beast* now and what Walt Disney Pictures' animated movie from 1991 is based on.

Beauty and the Beast has since been a favourite choice for many retellings. The biggest popularity was gained after Wald Disney Pictures' released their movie in 1991 and since then the story has found its way also to the popular literature with novels such as *Cruel Beauty* (2014) by Rosamund Hodge or *Court of Thorns and Roses* (2015) by Sarah J. Maas. One of the most recent retellings, which was also chosen for this thesis, is *Hunted* (2017) by Meagan Spooner.

With so many variations of the story there are some aspects that did not remain unchanged. This thesis is going to analyse the main character, Belle, in the chosen works and is going to prove that she changed in three main elements: the change in the description of her

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[1] *Beauty and the Beast*, directed by Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise, DVD, Los Angeles: Walt Disney Pictures, 1991.

character, the shift from a passive into an active protagonist and last but not least, this thesis examines the differences in her motivation.

I. THEORY

1 INTERTEXTUALITY

The definition of intertextuality may vary, since each linguist may have different interpretation of the term. However, in theory, intertextuality means that a text does not function on its own and does not exist as an independent unit, but is influenced by many different external references.[2] The meaning of a text is generally constructed from various codes, systems and traditions which are already embedded in other literary works. Therefore, many literary theorists nowadays believe that the meanings of texts do not typically stand on their own and that the texts are as a result intertextual. Allan Graham in his book *Intertextuality* (2006) claims that reading a text means actually going through these textual references and relations and that the meaning of the text becomes "something which exists between a text and all the other texts to which it refers and relates."[3] This makes the text become an intertext.[4]

Intertextuality as a concept began to be studied by literary theorists and linguists in the twentieth century. The literary theory of intertextuality itself comes from the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. In his works, he promoted the concept of intertextual theory and his approaches helped establish foundations of this phenomenon. His work provides the basic principles of relation between a meaning and a text. Theory of intertextuality was later developed also by the Russian literary theorist M. M. Bakhtin with his literary and linguistic theories.[5]

In the second part of the twentieth-century, Julia Kristeva combined the approaches of Saussure and Bakhtin which led to the initial creation of intertextual theory. The term was first used in her work *Word, Dialogue and Novel* (1966). Kristeva argued that "each word is an intersection of other words where at least one word can be read."[6] In other words, in majority, texts and words are not independent since there are other texts and words attached to them. Throughout the years, several other approaches to this idea emerged and

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[2] Michael Worton and Judith Still, *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 1.

[3] Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, (London: Routledge, 2006), 1.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., 3.

[6] María Jesús Martínez Alfaro, "Intertextuality: Origins and Development of the Concept," *Atlantis* 18, no. 1/2 (June – December 1996): 268, accessed March 26, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41054827?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

plenty of literary critics elaborated on and made contributions to the concept of intertextuality. As a result, the idea of intertextuality has led to the focus on individual texts being shifted to the relation between texts and their connections.[7]

1.1 Origins of intertextuality

It can be said that the intertextual theory has its roots in the beginnings of modern linguistics which were developed from the work of Ferdinand de Saussure. In his collection of lectures, *Course in General Linguistics*, he examined linguistic signs and concluded that signs do not refer to a specific object in a word but rather to a concept. For him, the signs carry meaning due to how they work within a linguistic system, and are also differential because they have a certain position within the language system based on their related sounds and words. To use a sign, the sign needs to be selected out of related sounds and related words. Saussure's interpretation of signs and linguistic structures gave way to a linguistic turn, also called structuralism, which can be taken as one of the basis of the theory of intertextuality.[8]

Following Saussure, the other contributor to the origins of intertextual theory was a Russian literary theorist Mikhail Mikhailovitch Bakhtin. He, as opposed to Saussure, dealt also with the social contexts of the exchanged words.[9] Bakhtin developed the theory of dialogism which is a theory that involves the study of human dialogue and states that an utterance is inevitably related to other utterances. Dialogism can be considered to be closely linked to intertextuality.[10] Bakhtin believed that language and its words are "half someone else's" and that they are always filtered through other words and uses. Out of Bakhtin's work, this is what inspired Kristeva for her new term, intertextuality.[11]

In the 1960s, the French field of linguistics was going through a transformation caused by structuralism. This is when Kristeva entered the linguistic scene. One of the most prominent journals at that time was *The Quel* where Kristeva published her opinions and elaborations on Bakhtin's theory of dialogism. Based on structuralism and dialogism,

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[7] Alfaro, "Intertextuality: Origins and Development of the Concept," 268.

[8] Allen, *Intertextuality*, 8-10.

[9] Ibid., 11.

[10] Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 60.

[11] Allen, *Intertextuality*, 28.

Kristeva develops her theory of intertextuality.[12] She presented several definitions of intertextuality:

"Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read at least *double*."[13]

"Dialogue and ambivalence lead [her] to conclude that, within the interior space of the text as well as within the space of texts, poetic language is a "double".[14]

"The writer's interlocutor is the writer himself, but as reader of another text. The one who writes is the same as the one who reads. Since his interlocutor is a text, he himself is no more than a text rereading itself. The dialogical structure, therefore, appears only in the light of the text elaborating itself as ambivalent in relation to another text."[15]

The concept of intertextuality soon became popular not only in France but also in the rest of Europe and in America. It had a major impact on literary theory and history. Throughout the years, linguists and literary theorists developed their own approaches and adaptations of intertextuality and therefore, the concept has not remained unchanged but rather adapted to different cultures.[16]

1.2 Categories of intertextuality

The French literary theorist, Gerard Genette, is one of many who studied intertextuality and his attempt was to specify the definition of intertextuality from the several alternatives presented by Kristeva, Barthes and others. As opposed to Bakhtin or Kristeva who focused on the concept from wider perspective involving not only linguistic but, also social or philosophical interests, Genette addressed mostly only the literary text itself. As a matter of fact, Genette even proposed that the term "intertextuality" is ill-suited suggested "transtextuality" instead. For him this means everything that connects texts. For that reason, even though he concentrates on one specific text, he recognizes that the text cannot be analyzed solely on its own but rather with relation to other texts.[17]

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[12] Allen, *Intertextuality*, 30-31.

[13] Alfaro, "Intertextuality: Origins and Development of the Concept," 277.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Alfaro, "Intertextuality: Origins and Development of the Concept," 280.

Genette understands transtextuality as "all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts" and in his book *Palimpsestes* he differentiates several subcategories of transtextuality putting intertextuality only as one type:

1. Intertextuality, being one of the types of transtextuality, has a different meaning for Genette than it has for Kristeva because of his more specified focus on the term. He differentiates between intertextuality as quotation, plagiarism and allusion. Genette also distinguishes whether intertextuality of a particular text is implicit or explicit, whether it is covert or overt, and whether it is hidden or open. The difference between implicit and explicit intertextuality is that in explicit intertextuality the author of the text the presence of other text is well known and made obvious by the author. This type of intertextuality is known as "quotation". On the other hand, in implicit intertextuality, the author is trying to hide the reference of the other text present. Implicit intertextuality is also called "plagiarism". The last form of intertextuality, "allusion", occurs when the author of the text is not trying to hide the intertextual reference to other text and uses specific signs that tell the reader about the presence of intertextuality. However, this action is hidden and not explicit.[18]

2. The second type of transtextuality Genette lists is paratextuality. This type is defined as "the relation between a text and its 'paratext'" which is all that belongs to the text such as titles, acknowledgements, footnotes, illustrations, etc. According to Genette, paratext consists of "peritext" and "epitext". Peritext are those elements which relate closely to the text such as title, the title of a chapter, preface, etc. Epitext, on the other hand, are those elements that relate to the text indirectly. Epitext can be for example a journal review, newspapers, interviews given by the author, the cover design, etc.[19]

3. Metatextuality is the third type that Genette classifies as transtextuality. He defines metatextuality as a connection of "a given text to another, of which it speaks without necessarily citing it (without summoning it), in fact sometimes

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[18] Sayyed Ali Mirenayat, Elaheh Soofastaei, "Gerard Genette and the Categorization of Textual Transcendence," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 6, no. 5 (September 2015): 534, accessed April 1, 2018, http://www.mcser.org/journal/index.php/mjss/article/viewFile/7520/7202.

[19] Ibid., 534-535.

even without naming it." Generally, metatextuality in texts is represented by the act of explanation, denying or approving of some text. In other words, metatextuality is connecting two texts by the means of commentary.[20]

4. Another type of transtextuality is called architextuality. This type deals with the genre of the text and its relation to it. It is the most abstract and implicit of all the categories.[21]

5. The last type is hypertextuality. Hypertextuality works with two types of texts – hypertext and hypotext. Hypotext is the one that is being referred to by a hypertext. The hypertext does not necessarily have to openly indicate the reference to hypotext but nevertheless, it could not exist without it. This means that the hypertext is basically created from the hypotext through either direct or indirect transformation that does not involve commentary.[22]

While these transtextual subcategories may appear separately, they also oftentimes overlap. For instance, it can be sometimes difficult to differentiate between intertextuality and hypertextuality since both of these subcategories are defined by the fact that within a text there is another text present.[23] This thesis deals mainly with these two subcategories. From the perspective of hypertextuality it could be said that the Beauty and the Beast retellings which this thesis analyzes are considered to be hypertext and the Madame de Vileneuve's *La Belle et la Bête*, and possibly the myth, *Cupid and Psyche*, are the hypotext from which those retellings developed. The presence of intertextuality comes from the fact that those retellings are influenced by the myth and by the French tale which makes both of these texts present in the later adaptations.

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[20] Mirenayat, Soofastaei, "Gerard Genette and the Categorization of Textual Transcendence," 535.

[21] Ibid., 536.

[22] Alfaro, "Intertextuality: Origins and Development of the Concept," 281.

[23] Ibid.

2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Fairy tales are stories that are said to have their roots in folklore, tradition or mythology and *Beauty and the Beast* is no different. In fact, all around the world, there are many variations of the folktale. For example, there is a Norwegian folktale called *East of the Sun, West of the Moon*, that tells about a marriage between a young girl and a white bear which is in some aspects similar to the Belle and the Beast's story. Other folktales similar to *Beauty and the Beast* come from Africa, such as *The Snake with Five Heads*, and from China, *The Fairy Serpent*. Both these folktales deal with a beast that is in a form of serpent-like creature. In all of these tales, the animal, which the young girl must marry, is transformed into a human by the end of the story.[24] Nevertheless, most literary critics lean towards the idea that the inspiration for the original *Beauty and the Beast* may come from the Roman myth, *Cupid and Psyche*.

The original story called *La Belle et la Bête* comes from a French author, Madame Gabrielle-Suzanne de Villeneuve. She published the tale in *La Jeune Américaine, et Les Contes Marins* in 1740. Her version was more profound and had a bit more depth than later retellings. *La Belle et la Bête*, being over one hundred pages long, had a room for Beast's back-story and Beauty's true family roots as well as other subplots such as the war, which preceded the actual story, or the development of Beauty's parents' relationship.[25]

In 1756, another French author, Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont, edited and published her own version of Villeneuve's tale in her elementary book for children, *Magasin des enfants*. Beaumont's version of *Beauty and the Beast* served mainly to educate children and to provide them with moral lessons.[26] Since this version was intended for children, Beaumont simplified the plot and took away some of the characters such as the faeries that were present in Villeneuve's version. She removed Beast's and Beauty's back-stories and the element of otherworldly creatures all together. Furthermore, making Belle not a royal was a very interesting decision on Beaumont's part and it was well received by the public.

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[24] James Deutsch, "The Storied, International Folk History of Beauty and the Beast," *Smithsonian.com*, March 15, 2017, accessed February 5, 2018, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/storied-international-folk-history-beauty-and-beast-180962502/.

[25] Amelia Carruthers, *Beauty and the Beast – And Other Tales of Love in Unexpected Places* (Bristol: Pook Press, 2015), 5-6, Kindle.

[26] Anne E. Duggan, Donald Hasse, with Helen J. Callow, *Folktales and Fairy Tales [4 volumes]: Traditions and Texts from around the World, 2nd Edition* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2016), 379.

Since this version was written only thirty-three years before the French Revolution, it shows the social movements happening at that time. The monarchy and the church were losing power and people demanded change. The fact that Belle is in Beaumont's version "a simple, working class girl – able to tame the aristocratic beast, spoke directly to the social concerns of the day."[27] Beaumont's version became the one that is most commonly retold and its probably most notable retelling is the Walt Disney Company's *Beauty and the Beast* (1991).[28]

2.1 Cupid and Psyche

The inspiration for *Beauty and the Beast* most likely comes from myths such as for example the Ancient Greek tale about Hades and Persephone and the one that is most commonly associated with *Beauty and the Beast*, the Ancient Roman myth of Cupid and Psyche.[29] The tale of Cupid and Psyche was first published in the second century by a Roman storyteller, Lucius Apuleius Madaurensis. It was a part of a novel called *The Golden Ass*, formally known as the *Metamorphoses*. *Cupid and Psyche* is one of the legends that are incorporated into the story.[30] According to its symbols and motifs, it is closely related to the ancient Indian tale *The Girl Who Married a Snake* from *Panchatantra* tales. *The Girl Who Married a Snake* deals with motifs like a beastly groom, breaking a curse and eventually a handsome prince, which are obviously quite similar to the *Beauty and the Beast*'s motifs.[31]

In the myth, Psyche is the youngest daughter of a king. She is the most beautiful out of all her sisters and men from all over the world praise and admire her beauty. The goddess of love and beauty, Venus, becomes jealous of Psyche and sends her son, Cupid, to shoot Psyche with one of his love arrows and make her fall in love with a monster. Cupid,

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[27] Amelia Carruthers, *Beauty and the Beast – And Other Tales of Love in Unexpected Places*, 6.

[28] Ibid., 8-9.

[29] Sckylar Gibby-Brown, "The Origin of Beauty and the Beast and the Tale of Cupid and Psyche", *HubPages*, July 30, 2014, accessed February 5, 2018, https://hubpages.com/literature/The-Origin-of-Beauty-and-the-Beast-and-the-Tale-of-Cupid-and-Psyche.

[30] Amelia Carruthers, *Beauty and the Beast – And Other Tales of Love in Unexpected Places*, 11.

[31] Ruth B. Bottigheimer, "Cupid and Psyche vs. Beauty and the Beast: The Milesian and the Modern," *Merveilles & contes* 3, no. 1, Special Issue on "Beauty and the Beast" (May 1989): 5, accessed February 6, 2018, http://users.uoa.gr/~cdokou/MythLitMA/BOTTIGHEIMER-R.-B.-1989.-Cupid-and-Psyche.pdf.

however, upon seeing Psyche, uses the arrow on himself and falls in love with her. Since Psyche cannot find a husband, the king decides to go to the oracle and ask for help. The oracle tells him that Psyche's destiny is to marry a monster and advises him to leave her at the top of the mountain. Psyche is then swept from the mountain by the wind and carried down to a palace. There she meets her husband, but she can only hear his voice. He tells her that she can never try to see him. After some time Psyche becomes bored and homesick and her husband allows her to invite her sisters over. They become jealous of Psyche when they see her riches and convince her to try and see if her husband is actually a monster. At night, after her husband falls asleep, Psyche lights an oil lamp to try and see him, but when she sees that he is actually the beautiful Cupid, she gets distracted and spills some oil on him making him wake up. Angered by her betrayal, Cupid leaves. Psyche then goes to Venus and begs her for help. Venus makes her go through series of impossible tasks, which Psyche completes. However, during the final task, she is tricked by the goddess Proserpina and falls into a coma. In the end, Cupid finds her and Jupiter, the god of the sky, gives her ambrosia which makes her immortal and able to live forever with Cupid.[32]

The character of Psyche has many traits in common with Beauty. During Psyche's last task, she was instructed by Proserpina not to open the box she received. Nevertheless, Psyche did not listen and opened the box. This, and also the fact that she tried to see who Cupid was despite his wishes, draws a clear picture of Psyche's curiosity. Beauty's curiosity is represented in her love for books and knowledge and in her urge to explore. Both characters are also similar in their physical attractiveness and in the fact that they are the ones who save "the beast" in the end. *Cupid and Psyche* and *La Belle et la Bête* have the overall theme in common which is the tragic true love. This similar theme is one of the major factors that make them seem related and also the reason why many scholars came to the conclusion that Madame de Villeneuve based her story on the Roman myth.[33]

2.2 *La Belle et la Bête* by Madame de Villeneuve (1740)

Madame Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve was a French novelist of the eighteenth century and she is believed to be the author of the oldest known written version of *Beauty and the Beast* which she called *La Belle et la Bête* and published in 1740 in *La Jeune*

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[32] Sckylar Gibby-Brown, "The Origin of Beauty and the Beast and the Tale of Cupid and Psyche."

[33] Amelia Carruthers, *Beauty and the Beast – And Other Tales of Love in Unexpected Places*, 11.

Américaine, et Les Contes Marins.[34] Her original story was stretched to over one hundred pages and it contained, among other themes, also the real-life marriage expectations that were placed on women in the 18th century. Back then women's future husbands were typically chosen by their fathers and the daughters "had to 'learn to love' the men they were bequeathed to."[35] Similarly to this, Belle also does not immediately fall in love with the Beast but rather learns to love him during the story. De Villeneuve's version is quite unique because it is not the typical mundane story that people are used to nowadays. It plays with the element of otherworldly creatures, in this case fairies. The story contains good fairies as well evil ones. One good fairy helps Beauty to break the curse by providing her with guiding advices, and other one is Beauty's mother. It turns out that Beauty is actually a fairy princess and not just a low-born merchant's daughter.[36]

The original *La Belle et la Bête* is also special in its intended audience choice. The story is not only addressing the higher class readers but it is also meant for the middle class which was not as common in the 18th century as it is now. The intended reading purpose of the fairy tale changes as well. As opposed to the public reading it was rather targeted to "the isolated reader". Suggested by the length of more than one hundred pages that de Villeneuve's fairy tale comprises of, it was meant for people to read privately for themselves rather than in a public setting like a gathering in a salon and such.[37] Being the oldest known written version of *Beauty and the Beast*, Madame de Villeneuve's fairy tale is the base for any future retellings of this story.

2.3 The Walt Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* (1991)

Beauty and the beast is one of the original Disney animated movies. It was directed by Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise, and produced by Don Hahn. It is based on the Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont's rewritten version of the old French tale. The movie came out in 1991 and it has since been considered a classic among Disney movies.[38] What is incredible about this animated motion picture is that it was a six-time nominee in the 1992

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[34] Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve, *Madame de Villeneuve's The Story of the Beauty and the Beast* (Ilminster: Blackdown Publications, 2014), 141, Kindle.

[35] Amelia Carruthers, *Beauty and the Beast – And Other Tales of Love in Unexpected Places*, 5.

[36] Ibid., 6.

[37] Jack Zipes, *Fairy Tale as Myth/Myth as Fairy Tale* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 29.

[38] "Beauty and the Beast (1991)," IMDb, accessed February 8, 2018, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0101414/.

Academy Awards. The nominations included the prestigious Best Picture award. However, the movie lost to *The Silence of the Lambs*. It was also nominated for Sound and it won the awards for Original Score and Original Song for the song *Beauty and the Beast* by Alan Menken and Howard Ashman.[39]

It took The Walt Disney Studios about 60 years to finally be able to make this movie. They had been meaning to make *Beauty and the Beast* since 1930s but as it turned out the story of Beauty and the Beast proved to be quite challenging and daunting for the Disney story team and later on for the animation team as well. The turning point came in late 1980s with the release of *The Little Mermaid* which was a Disney film that gained enormous success and it opened the door for Disney animations to advance their storytelling. After *The Little Mermaid*, Disney was looking for a new project to work on and they decided to start developing *Beauty and the Beast*. Initially, the story team could not seem to work out the story because it appeared to be somewhat static and with not many opportunities for development. But ultimately, when the songwriters Howard Ashman and Alan Menken joined the team, they helped to mold the story into a clearer structure and the development could proceed in its fullest.[40]

Finally, the long-awaited adaptation of the 18th century fairy tale was completed on 22nd November 1991 and it turned out to be Disney's huge triumph. What initially started as an unfinished project picked up by unsure animators and directors became a movie that shaped the Disney animations renaissance and inspired later advancement in storytelling. Described by the critics as "the closest thing Disney has ever gotten to perfection"[41], *Beauty and the Beast* remains one of the most memorable Disney movies in animation history.

2.4 *Hunted* by Meagan Spooner (2017)

Meagan Spooner, the author of *Hunted*, is a young American author who writes mostly young adult literature. In the past Spooner's family travelled a lot which provided her with

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[39] "The 64th Academy Awards | 1992," Oscars.org, accessed February 8, 2018,

https://www.oscars.org/oscars/ceremonies/1992.

[40] "Tale As Old As Time, The Making Of Beauty And The Beast (Extended Version)," Youtube video,

51:04, posted by "Movies By Da Fans," February 26, 2017,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=boFEksyRWAg.

[41] Ibid.

foreign experience and inspiration that she then incorporated into her writing and her books.[42] Her latest book, *Hunted*, is often associated with Russia. The main reason why this book is associated with Russian folklore is the inclusion of the famous Russian fairy tales which are closely connected to the main characters, Beauty and also the Beast. There are several characters form Russian myths and fairy tales incorporated in this novel. The most prominent ones are the Firebird and Ivan Tsarevitch which are both important for understanding Beauty's character.

Beauty in some ways identifies with Ivan. She says that her story is very similar to his due to the fact that she believes that the fairy tale is about always wanting something and never being satisfied with what you have. Beauty demonstrates that she feels the same way by saying: "Because I thought I wouldn't be happy until I left town to live in the wood, and then I thought I wouldn't be happy until I could hunt every day, and then I thought I wouldn't be happy until I avenged my father's death."[43] This indicates the importance of the story in the novel and how Spooner tried to structure her own narrative around it so that the reader could see the similarities.

The Firebird appears throughout the novel more in metaphorical form than in a physical one. In fact, the only indication of its actual existence in the story is the feather that Beauty finds in the Beast's book. Other than that, it is never truly clear that the Firebird physically exists. It serves mainly as an embodiment of Beauty's desire for change. Throughout the story the desire which the Firebird seems to embody tends to vary. Beauty used to want to catch the Firebird because she is a huntress and the Firebird is considered to be uncatchable, which makes it to be the biggest prize. As the story progresses her desire to catch the Firebird is no longer caused by the idea of being the best huntress, but rather by the wish to be free from the Beast since he tasked her with killing the creature and does not want to let her leave before she accomplishes the task. In the end, catching the Firebird symbolizes the Beast's rescue which Beauty desires the most.

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[42] "About," Meagan Spooner, accessed February 10, 2018, http://www.meaganspooner.com/about/.

[43] Spooner, *Hunted*, 360-368.

II. ANALYSIS

3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF BELLE

Beauty and the Beast is an extremely popular story to explore by many authors, which is proved by the continuous number of retellings that are being written even to this day. Not only are the people reminded of many moral lessons that come with this story such as taking care of family, being selfless or judging people by their actions and not by their looks, but these many retellings also give a way for the readers to get to know different versions and sides of those familiar characters present in the story.

Throughout the history of *Beauty and the Beast* retellings the character of Belle goes through several changes. From all the transformations, there are three key areas that were chosen for this thesis: the shift in the description of Belle's character, the motivation that drives her through the stories and the development from her being the passive character into her being a more proactive heroine.

3.1 Character description

"When you take on a Disney animated feature, you know you're going to be affecting entire generations of human minds,"[44] said Linda Woolveton, the screenwriter for *Beauty and the Beast* (1991). Ever since Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise's *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), Belle has generally been seen as a good role model for women. Among the people who believe this to be true is also Emma Watson, who plays Belle in the 2017 live-action adaptation of the original Disney movie directed by Bill Condon. She described Belle as "curious, compassionate and open-minded..." She added that "there's this kind of outsider quality that Belle had, and the fact she had this really empowering defiance of what was expected of her... She manages to keep her integrity and have a completely independent point of view."[45]

In Trousdale and Wise's movie, Belle was portrayed as a selfless and intelligent protagonist, who was brave enough to stand up to the beast and save her father. Her intelligence is mainly indicated by her love for reading. Throughout the film Belle is repeatedly seen with a book in her hand and when she is given access to the Beast's library

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[44] Annalee R. Ward, *Mouse Morality*: *The Rhetoric of Disney Animated Film* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 113.

[45] Zach Johnson, "Emma Watson Argues Belle Is a Better Role Model Than Cinderella," *ENews*, January 17, 2017, accessed March 2, http://www.eonline.com/news/822544/emma-watson-argues-belle-is-a-better-role-model-than-cinderella.

it is clear that she values this gift immensely, which can also be understood as a fact that she genuinely values knowledge. Furthermore, her love for books is also what makes her stand out in the society. In fact, what the audience could probably gather from Gaston stating that "It is not right for a woman to read," is that the people in her town might even be against the idea of a girl being smart. Another characteristic indicating her intelligence is the fact that she seems to be the only one in the whole town who is not satisfied with her static life as it is. Others appear to have accepted their stereotypical uneventful lives, but Belle believes that there is more to it than living in the "poor provincial town." She appears to be the only one to realize this and often escapes from her boring life to the fictional worlds of her books.[46] In *Hunted* (2017), Meagan Spooner wrote her intertextual main character also as this woman who wants more from life and made it one of the major features of Beauty's character. In this version, Beauty is led by her tendency to always want something more from her life and this want grew to be so important for the story that it even took a physical impersonation in the form of the Firebird.

The overall good nature of Belle's character is one of the intertextual features that remained unchanging throughout the many retellings and adaptations. Ever since the Madame de Villeneuve's *La Belle et la Bête* (1740), Belle has always been a character who values her family. She is the one who sacrifices herself in order to save her father, which makes her character fall into the trope known as "the good daughter". The good daughter is a quite common motif that appears in fairytales such as Little Red Riding Hood or Cinderella. This motif is also described by Amy M. Davis in her book *Good Girls and Wicked Witches: Changing Representations of Women in Disney's Feature Animation* (2006) as "a young woman who, out of loyalty to her good but naive father finds herself in a potentially threatening situation and must use all her personal resources to survive."[47] Apart from *Cupid and Psyche*, where Psyche was abandoned by her father and therefore displayed no apparent loyalty or love for him, Beauty was always put into the position where she willingly endangered her own life and safety in order to save her father. In all the retellings, Beauty has always been very family oriented, starting with *La Belle et la Bête* where her happiness is directly influenced by her family's judgement. In one of the

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[46] Amy M. Davis, *Good Girls and Wicked Witches: Changing Representations of Women in Disney's Feature Animation* (New Barnet: John Libbey Publishing, 2006), 192.

[47] Ibid., 190.

passages she even states that "her happiness could not be perfect as long as she was denied the pleasure of informing her relations of it."[48]

Moreover, what all the versions seem to have in common as well is Belle's bravery. However, the circumstances under which she originally displays her bravery differ and with some versions of the original tale, Belle is proving to be braver than before. The story is always similar in the sense that Beauty needs to leave her home and go to the Beast, but the versions differ in the facts about her departure and what is going to happen to her after she leaves her father. For instance, in Disney's film and in *Cupid and Psyche*, Belle is supposed to go live with the Beast in his castle, which would mean that she has to sacrifice her freedom. For a young lady such as herself this clearly is a considerable sacrifice. On the other hand, in *La Belle et la Bête*, Beauty believes that she is going to her death when she accepts to trade her position with her father, which obviously puts her into much more difficult and dreadful position than in the 1991 animated movie or the Roman myth. Despite knowing how horrible the Beast is and understanding that he will kill her, she is willing to sacrifice her life in order to save her father which again indicates that she is truly a fitting example of a good daughter.

Nevertheless, what is worth mentioning about the description of Belle's character is the fact that with more recent retellings there is a slight transition in the way her character is being portrayed. Ever since *Cupid and Psyche*, she was described as a perfect young woman because of her looks and kind personality. However, modern retellings are beginning to change this trope and shift her character into more human-like individual with imperfections. This is likely due to the idea that readers are going to relate to her better that way.

In *La Belle et la Bête*, the author describes her as "a perfectly beautiful young creature" with a generous heart that can be seen in anything she does.[49] Beauty was a skilled musician, who knew how to play on almost every instrument and outstood "all other women as far in the qualities of mind as [she did] in beauty."[50] Moreover, as was already mentioned, Beauty truly valued her family's opinion as well as their judgement and was even willing to overlook the jealousy of her sisters. She obeyed her father no matter what

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[48] Madame de Villeneuve, *Madame de Villeneuve's The Story of the Beauty and the Beast*, 48.

[49] Ibid., 4.

[50] Ibid., 33-35.

and eventually saved him from the Beast which made her a perfect daughter. In the end, Beauty's father weeps because of her departure and is not sure whether it is because of "the pleasure of seeing the happiness of Beauty, or [because of] the sorrow of losing so perfect a daughter."[51] Essentially, Madame de Villeneuve created a character about which it could be assumed that she is rather too perfect to be relatable.

As for *Cupid and Psyche*, the myth does not provide much character description as *La Belle et la Bête* does. Psyche's perfection is mainly indicated by her beauty. She is supposedly so beautiful that even gods envy her, which makes her perfect in the eyes of ordinary people. In the myth, Psyche does not appear to put as much importance on her family as Beauty does in *La Belle et la Bête* and where Beauty overlooks her sisters' jealousy in order to maintain good family relationships, Psyche is completely oblivious to the corrupt intentions of her sisters. In this sense, Psyche is being naïve and her gullibility is what eventually caused her misfortune. Under these circumstances it could be said that if *Cupid and Psyche* is truly the inspiration of *La Belle et la Bête* and therefore of all the other retellings, Beauty's character had some flaws from the beginning, namely her naivety, and the shift comes into play only with the comparison of the Beauty and the Beast retellings with Madame de Villeneuve's original *La Belle et la Bête.*

Taking Madame de Villeneuve's novel as the intertextual base for the following retellings and adaptations, the development in description of Beauty's character becomes visible with the modern retellings such as Maegan Spooner's *Hunted*. When it comes to the Walt Disney animated movie from 1991, Belle is looked down upon by the people from her village for being "different". For the supporting characters in this movie, Belle is a flawed character, as opposed to *La Belle et la Bête*, where she is mostly praised and admired for being "submissive and docile."[52] In the movie, her character lacks this submissiveness as she refuses to obey the Beast as well as the idea of a life in her village. Nevertheless, for the audience, she still appears to be like the perfect princess that is known form Madame de Villeneuve's novel. She remains to be the most beautiful girl in the village; she is well-read and also able to see past the appearance of a person in order to detect their true personality (e.g. Gaston and Beast). Furthermore, she is also brave enough to sacrifice her own life and agree to live with a beast. Ultimately, it could be said that Trousdale and

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[51] Madame de Villeneuve, *Madame de Villeneuve's The Story of the Beauty and the Beast*, 137-138.

[52] Zipes, *Fairy Tale as Myth/Myth as Fairy Tale*, 30.

Wise's animated movie is to some extend a bridge between the perfect Belle and the Belle with imperfections since both of these versions are present in the movie.

Having said that, the modern retellings of *Beauty and the Beast* are in some ways returning to their original French fairy tale and in others they are moving even more apart. As was previously mentioned, in Madame de Villeneuve's *La Belle et la Bête*, there can be found the element of magic and the author also chose to incorporate supernatural beings – fairies. Recently, this feature is coming back to the retellings such as for example *A Court of Thorns and Roses* (2015) by Sarah J. Maas, which story involves fairies as main characters, or the already introduced *Hunted* where supernatural beings and magic are also present. The retellings however differ in the portrayal of the main character. Whereas in the past, Beauty outstood all the other girls in her good looks, in *Hunted* her beauty is not so rare and specifically distinguished because even among her sisters she is not the most beautiful one but together they are being "spoken of as beauties."[53] Her passivity and obedience of every rule is gone as well and instead of a girl who "always chooses to fulfil her obligations rather than follow her heart,"[54] *Hunted* introduces a protagonist who is no longer submissive and ignorant towards her own wishes. She refuses to follow the rules of society and does not want to marry because to her, marrying would mean "surrendering what little freedom she still [has]."[55] Furthermore, in this retelling, Beauty is presented as a girl with wild personality who needs to be "tamed"[56] by the service to her tutor, the baronessa, whereas in *La Belle et la Bête*, Beauty is an obedient young lady who is praised by the surrounding characters. Due to these characteristics, the modern Beauty is no longer the perfect obedient creature but rather a more relatable person who is inclined to also think about herself and not only about others.

3.2 Motivation

A character's motivation is a part of the character's mental processes that has the power to stir the character's actions. It is linked directly to the character's behaviour. The term "usually refers to a part of the psyche, the inner life and personality traits: the entirety of physical processes that initiate, maintain and regulate behaviour. This definition includes

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[53] Madame de Villeneuve, *Madame de Villeneuve's The Story of the Beauty and the Beast*, 10.

[54] Zipes, *Fairy Tale as Myth/Myth as Fairy Tale*, 30.

[55] Spooner, *Hunted*, 9.

[56] Ibid., 12.

aims, wishes, feelings and drives."[57] That being said, the character's motivation is quite important to the development of a story and for the character itself as well as for the audience. By knowing the character's motivation the audience is able to predict their actions.[58]

For the majority of *Beauty and the Beast* versions and retellings, Beauty's motivation has been the love for her family which in the beginning of the story led her to the decision to save her father and towards the end of the story it motivated her to leave the beast and visit her family. Nevertheless, from the chosen works analysed in this theses, two of them stand out when it comes to the intertextuality of Beauty's motivation. In the Roman myth, *Cupid and Psyche*, Psyche's motivation differs from the usual sense of duty and love for her family since her father along with her sisters more or less abandon her which in turn makes Psyche less likely to show any affection towards them. Overall, the myth does not seem to possess any strong family-oriented moral lessons and therefore it is clear why it cannot be the main characters driving force which due to her actions pulls the story forward.

With this in mind, Psyche's motivation is represented by a different element in the story and this element is the love for her husband, Cupid. As will be discussed in the following chapter, Psyche is not an active character of this story which means that the majority of action comes from the doings of supporting characters. Due to the fact that the motivation of a character can be deducted from their actions Psyche's motivation is not easily spotted in the first half of the story. However, in the following development of the story where Psyche goes to the goddess, Venus, and is assigned several tasks which after completing save Cupid, it can be seen that she is truly a character motivated by the love for her husband and by the wish to save him. This reality is what influences her decision in going to search for Cupid and subsequently going through the tasks. Were she not in this state of mind and her motivation was different, her actions would in all probability be contrasting and she would not feel the need to save her husband.

The contrast occurs in the version inspired by the myth and with its retelling. The intertextual relationship between *La Belle et la Bête* and Disney Company's animated

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[57] Jens Eder, Fotis Jannidis, Ralf Schneider, *Characters in Fictional Worlds: Understanding Imaginary Beings in Literature, Film, and Other Media (Revisionen)* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG, 2010), 24.

[58] Ibid., 24.

feature, *Beauty and the Beast*, in the case of Beauty's motivation is quite similar. In both of these versions, Beauty is to a large extend a family-oriented character and has a great love for her siblings (which appear only in *La Belle et la Bête*) and most prominently for her father. Madame de Villeneuve's tale proposes Beauty's character as someone willing to give up her life for her family. As a consequence of her being motivated by the love for her father, she belongs to "the good daughter" trope which has been mentioned in the previous chapter. Her motivation is evident in the beginning when she trades her life for her father's as well as towards the end when she feels the need to see her family and decides to go visit them after she is permitted to do so by the Beast. Furthermore, she is also willing to sacrifice her own wishes for her siblings in order for them having what they desire. In the scene where her father is about to leave the house and go to the city, he asks his children what they wish for him to bring them and Beauty's first instinct is to not wish for anything so that her father is able to bring her siblings everything they want and instead tell him that she wishes only for "the gratification of seeing [him] return in perfect health."[59] Moreover, even after Beauty found out that she is actually the daughter of the king she never stopped calling the man who raised her "father" and her former siblings "brothers and sisters", showing how much she truly values family.

As for the Trousdale and Wise's animated feature, Belle is similarly to *La Belle et la Bête* motivated by her love for her father. At the same time however, the movie deviates from the previous version and depicts Belle as a character who desires adventure and more interesting life. She is motivated by wanting and discovering more fulfilling life somewhere more appealing and entertaining than the town where she lives now. There is even one song – *Belle* – and its reprise where she sings about wanting more than what she has now and what is planned out for her. Moreover, her sense for adventure is what motivated her to go and look for her father when he went missing which inevitably led to her meeting the Beast. Her being driven by the wish for adventure goes hand in hand with her wanting to understand new ideas. Belle is a natural learner who is motivated by the idea of discovering new things and gaining information whether it is for example about a place (the Beast's castle) or about a person (the Beast). This is proved by her love for reading and finding out about new stories. In addition, this aspect of her character is also displayed when she decides to explore the Beast's castle.

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[59] Madame de Villeneuve, *Madame de Villeneuve's The Story of the Beauty and the Beast*, 7.

Having said that, Meagan Spooner's *Hunted* contains a completely different side of Beauty's motivation than the previous versions did. Nevertheless, what remained constant even in this novel is Beauty's family-centred point of view and her behaviour based on that. While in Disney Company's *Beauty and the Beast* desisted from having Beauty being a part of a large family and having siblings as opposed to *La Belle et la Bête*, in Spooner's novel this feature appears again and Beauty is the youngest of three sisters. However, in contrast to Madame de Villeneuve's version where her sisters were jealous and deceitful, in *Hunted* this is not the case. In fact, Beauty's sisters are quite loving and supportive of her youngest sister which even more supports Beauty's love for her family and therefore strengthens motivation which is derived from it.

Moreover, which intertextual element also remained and is even more explored in this novel is Beauty's desire for adventure and for something meaningful in her life. As much as Belle feels trapped in her provincial town in *Beauty and the Beast*, Beauty in *Hunted* feels equally as trapped in her own life. She is a hunter at heart and likes to spend her time in the forest but she is also a daughter of a well established gentleman and therefore is expected to act like a lady which makes her feel less herself. She feels "a yearning in her, something that had lodged deep in her heart since the first time her father had told her of the wonders that lived in the forest's heart."[60] It is clear that she is looking for something, but not even Beauty herself is aware of what she is looking for. At one point her sister asks her what she is searching for in the forest and Beauty replies: "I don't know. Something more."[61] In this sense, the forest is most probably a metaphor for her life in which Beauty wants to find something extraordinary. Her motivation in this story therefore also partially comes from this. She is driven by the desire to find out what she wants from her life and then actually acquiring it.

What makes this novel different from the other *Beauty and the Beast* versions concerning Beauty's motivation is the fact that throughout the majority of the story Beauty is motivated by a desire for revenge. This is a completely new concept for this fairy tale since it embodies a nature quite prone to violence. After her father disappears Beauty goes to look for him and finds out that he is dead. She then comes to the conclusion that the Beast killed him. After she is taken to his palace and is kept there and trained by the Beast for his

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[60] Spooner, *Hunted*, 69.

[61] Ibid., 57.

task of killing the Firebird, she begins to plot her revenge. Although she is kept at the palace under a threat that if she were to try and run away the Beast would kill her family, she nevertheless chooses to stay for her own reasons. She even states that "even without the Beast's threats against her family, she would return to his castle by choice [and that] vengeance, not fear, would bring her back."[62] The simple fact that even if he set her free she would stay to get her revenge shows her true motivation for her actions. She is driven by the idea of avenging her father and that is what motivates her and keeps her going for the vast majority of the book. This motivation disappears only after she finds out that the Beast did not actually kill her father after which she becomes disinterested in her goal to kill the Beast and for a short while is also uncertain of what to do next. These facts indicate that the desire for revenge as a motivation is truly important for Beauty in this novel.

3.3 Character development

Beauty's character has not only gone through the changes in her character description and motivation, but her character also developed from a passive individual into a proactive heroine. One of the ways to define proactivity is that it is an active decision for action. When a character is confronted by some obstacle in a difficult situation, a proactive character would choose to act in order to change the situation and in doing so overcoming the obstacle. In a way, an active character is a part of the action which is happening in the story as opposed to a passive character which would be simply standing aside observing the happenings.[63] The majority of characters that are protagonists are active. Nevertheless, as will be discussed in this chapter, when *Cupid and Psyche* is taken into consideration, it can be seen that even though Psyche is the protagonist, she is not an active character and her passivity is evident throughout the story.

Psyche is on one hand portrayed as a brave person but simultaneously also rather passive. Ever since the beginning she was not an active participant in her own story. Her future has always been set due to the fact that the Oracle predicted her destiny to be marrying a beast. As opposed to the following *La Belle et la Bête* and its retellings, in the myth, Psyche does not actually choose to go live with a beast as an act of bravery and selflessness which

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[62] Spooner, *Hunted*, 201-202.

[63] Lukáš Gregor, *Typologie a chování postav v animovaných filmech Walt Disney Company. I. díl, Klasická éra a současná 2D produkce* (Zlín: VeRBuM, 2011), 57.

would spare her father. As a matter of fact, it is her father who makes the decision and takes her to the top of a cliff from where she is subsequently taken to the beast's palace. Moreover, as opposed to the later versions where Beauty makes the choice to marry the Beast, in the myth Psyche is never actually given this choice and she is on the other hand simply introduced to the fact that from now on she is going to live in the palace and the supposed beast is her husband. However, she does not in fact ever question this reality. She seems to merely accept her "destiny" without contemplating whether she is satisfied with it. Of course, this might be due to the fact that her destiny was predicted by the oracle which was believed to be able to speak to the gods. Therefore, she might have believed that her future was predetermined by the gods and as a result she does not have any other choice but to accept it. Nevertheless, the fact that Psyche never questions her situation very much contrasts with what is going on in Trousdale and Wise's movie and in Spooner's *Hunted*, since in both of these versions Beauty is repeatedly stating how unsatisfied she is with her life and that she wants "something more"[64] from it. Psyche's characteristic passivity is also evident later on in the story when she is supposed to complete several tasks in order to save Cupid. It is true that she made the choice to go and find him and in doing so had to go through these tasks. However, she in fact is not the one who completes the given tasks. For every task there are always some enchanted creatures or other gods who do it for her. In the final trial she even has to be saved by Cupid. Given these points, it could be seen that Psyche, as a base for Beauty's portrayal, is essentially a passive character.

When it comes to *La Belle et la Bête* and to the Disney Company's animated feature, Beauty's character already appears to be quite different. The portrayal of her is no longer as passive as it was in *Cupid and Psyche*, although, she does in some ways still lack some proactivity. The major development present in these versions is the fact that Beauty does actually make the active choice of sacrificing her own life and freedom and going to live with the Beast in exchange for her father's life.[65] This choice is what sets her apart from Psyche and makes her someone who is an active participant of her own story. While

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[64] Spooner, *Hunted*, 57.

[65] Gregor, *Typologie a chování postav v animovaných filmech Walt Disney Company. I. díl, Klasická éra a současná 2D produkce*, 57.

Psyche was from the beginning told by the oracle of her destiny to marry a beast, Beauty is presented with a choice which makes her determine her own future.

Nevertheless, there are some cases within these two retellings that still display Beauty's passive tendencies. For instance, in *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), ever since the beginning Belle is singing about how unsatisfied she is with her "provincial" life but she does not do anything about changing her situation. It is only when her father goes missing and she is forced to save him that she does indeed make a choice which affects her life and the course of the story. Furthermore, in the scene at the end where Beauty saves the Beast and discovers that he is in fact a human, she is not actively trying to save him because she was not aware of the fact that she could be the one who is able to save him. Throughout the story, Beauty was not told of how to save the Beast nor was she told about the fact that there is a curse to be broken. This deprived her of the option to be active and work towards breaking the curse and in doing so saving the Beast. For that reason, Beauty was not conscious of the effects of her actions which altered the story.

Meagan Spooner's *Hunted* presents Beauty's character in a different light. Whereas in the previous adaptations as well as in the roman myth Beauty's character was always to some degree passive, in *Hunted* she became a wholly conscious character who is aware of how her choices and actions affect her future. In this retelling, the similarity between the versions shows that Spooner took all the intertextual aspects which in the past made Beauty a determined character and included them in her story while also taking the step towards making Beauty actively working towards saving the Beast. The fact that she is fully aware of being able to save him is mainly possible because she knows about the Beast's curse as opposed to the previous versions, where Beauty was uninformed almost throughout the whole story. Furthermore, in this retelling, Beauty is actually the one who figures the curse out on her own without any help. By observing the Beast, she is able to come to the conclusion that he is a human as well as a beast. Halfway through the story Beauty states that "she'd long known that the Beast had two natures, and that they fought within him. She'd seen him use his hands... saw the humanity in his eyes..."[66] As a result of her discovering the nature of the curse she is able to act and intentionally save the Beast at the end of the story, whereas in the previous versions, Beauty was oblivious to the fact that she was the reason of the Beast's rescue.

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[66] Spooner, *Hunted*, 235.

Moreover, as was discussed in previous chapter, for the majority of the story in *Hunted*, Beauty's motivation is vengeance. She is set on plotting and carrying out her revenge for the death of her father which she believes is the Beast's doing. This is the reason why she would choose to stay with the Beast and not try to run away even though she is in fact his prisoner. This is proved by her thoughts following a conversation she has with the Beast in which he, in order to keep her motivated to stay, states that he did kill her father: "With those words the Beast had renewed her dedication to vengeance, shored up her determination to remain here. Even if he said she could go free tomorrow, she would stay..."[67] Beauty has set a plan for herself and is actively working towards achieving. Not only that, but she does in fact manage to carry out her plan and tries to kill the Beast. In other words, Beauty actively planning and subsequently achieving her goal is also one of the reasons that make her a proactive character in this retelling.

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[67] Spooner, *Hunted*, 201.

CONCLUSION

This bachelor thesis aimed to analyse Belle as a character in the chosen retellings of *Beauty and the Beast* and to prove that her character went through several developments – specifically in her character description, in her motivation and in her character development. It is true that in many ways she is still quite similar to the original Beauty, mainly in her thirst for knowledge and the love for her father and family. Nevertheless, Belle's character has undergone a series of changes which transformed her and made her different.

The first transforming feature that was discussed in this thesis is her character description. In the beginning her character used to be portrayed as a quite perfect human being. That goes for the myth of *Cupid and Psyche* and also for Madame de Villeneuve's *La Belle et la Bête* (1740). Being the most beautiful and praised by the people as well as gods while additionally also being admired for having mastered any skill and having outstandingly good character traits is what makes her appear to be perfect. However, after some retellings her character description changed and in the most recent *Beauty and the Beast* version, *Hunted* (2017), she is described as a character who is no longer as obedient and submissive and is rather someone who is not afraid to selfishly go after her own desires and wishes instead of following the rules of society.

Beauty's character also developed in her motivation. While previously she was being driven solely by the love for her family, in the Walt Disney Picture's movie Beauty is motivated also by the hunger for adventure and the idea of a different life. The biggest contrast however comes with *Hunted* where Beauty is no longer as innocent as she was in the previous versions and her main motivation is the desire to avenge her father's death by killing the Beast.

Last but not least, this thesis analysed Beauty's character development and her transforming form a passive character into an active protagonist. Psyche, being the original inspiration for the character of Beauty, is in the myth depicted as a quite passive character who is mainly observing what is happening around her rather than being part of the action. In contrast, Madame de Villeneuve's story and the Trousdale and Wise's Disney movie already show Beauty to be more active in making decisions and questioning her role in life. Having said that, she is still not fully conscious of all of her actions, since she for example still does not save the Beast intentionally. The all in all active protagonist can eventually be seen in Spooner's *Hunted*. There Beauty is setting a plan for herself to take revenge for her

father's death and continuously works towards achieving it. Furthermore, in this retelling Beauty is also aware of the fact that the Beast is cursed and that she has the power to save him which she in the end does thanks to her wits and will proving once more that she is an active character.

Overall, the aim of this thesis to prove the changes in the analysed aspects of Belle's character can be considered to be successful and it draws a conclusion that through the many retellings Belle's character became quite diverse and that the same story can be portrayed in different ways. Her character is inevitably one of the elements that shape the story and her susceptibility to change is what gives each retelling a fresh start.

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