EDITORIAL

The Poetics of Enchantment: Dialogues in Myths, Fantasy and Fairy Tales

The question that triggered the editing of an issue on "the poetics of enchantment" is derived from our wondering whether fantasy, myths and fairy tales are still relatable in a posthuman contemporary world. With the fast pace of life, myriads of scientific inventions, emerging every day, as well as various manifestations of digital media, especially that Artificial Intelligence has come to the fore, does "the world of magic" still have a place in our world? This issue postulates that, in spite of the difference in guise, the presence of this magical world is as strongly sensed as ever in contemporary culture. Indeed, despite the fact that it might strike one that the imaginary and unreal are outdated, they are, in fact, very much *en vogue*. In the twenty-first century, an imaginary world is not only based on fairy tales recounted, written and published by renowned writers, nor is it a mere imaginary world constructed in the form of a fantasy world, such as the world of Disney. In fact, the world of enchantment, fantasy and magic proves to constantly contend with the real. Indeed, the boundaries between the real and the non-real are very much blurred, whereby they become interchangeable and indispensable to each other.

 In the present time, fantasy and fairy tales are at our fingertips, where we become active agents and players in the world of magic. It has dawned upon us all that what was previously deemed mere fantasy and futuristic has now become a reality (Smart, Hatcher 2023). Interestingly, if you attempt a google search, you will find out that *The World of Magic* is the name of a video game, which involves many players from all over the world. It only requires downloading the app on our cellular device. Google Play advertises the game as "a magical world in the palm of your hand! Imagine whatever you want and enjoy! We invite you to the fantastic world of magic, where exciting adventure begins." In fact, the world of enchantment, fantasy and fairy tales is concretized by digital media, as well as materialized in Magical Kingdom Disney World, for instance, together with its appended theme parks (Epcot Center, Disney's Animal Kingdom, Hollywood Studios, etc.). The dazzling Kingdom interweaves the imaginary world of enchantment with a futuristic view of our planet. In fact, the French philosopher and postmodern thinker Jean-François Beaudrillard commented on the socio-cultural implications of creating a "disneyfied" world.

Myths are also stories, which offer themselves as highly symbolic representations of different cultures and the rhetoric of various nations. Interestingly enough, mythologists attempt to define what is a myth by describing it in relation to reality: myth is "a traditional narrative that is used as a designation of reality." (Thury and Devinney, 3). It thus becomes obvious that what distinguishes fantasy and the imaginary from the real is a very fine line that is almost indiscernible.

The present volume encompasses a number of articles that address various manifestations of myths, fantasy and fairy tales. The articles range from an

examination of incorporating myths in literature, tracing adaptations of fairy tales and how they take on new meaning according to their socio-historical context, delving into the concept of enchantment in animation, as well as blending the fictional and non-fictional against the backdrop of a board game, and, hence, attesting to the assumption that in our contemporary world the 'world' of magic is, indeed, at our fingertips.

Ingy Hassan's "*La Llorona* Revisited: A Post-colonial Ecocritical Reading of Josephina López's *Unconquered Spirits*" explores the adaptation of the Mexican *La Llorona* myth in a contemporary twenty-first century play by the Chicana playwright Josephina Lopez. A re-envisioning of the well-known myth yields new meanings, highlighting a feminist viewpoint, which dismantles an early paradigm of the myth.

In her article entitled "Post-Modern Re-enchantment in Disney's Animated Film *Encanto* in Light of Max Weber's Critique of Rationality: Promoting Diversity, Tolerance, and Coexistence", Mai Abbas bases her analysis of the animated film in light of Max Weber's view and assessment of rationality. Against a historical-cultural backdrop, Weber argues that rationality undergoes three stages of enchantment, disenchantment and re-enchantment. In conformity to the development of these three stages, Abbas equally recognises a similar structure in Disney's animated film *Encanto*. The pattern of the animated film elaborates on the importance of such human values as diversity, tolerance and coexistence. This is accounted for by the development of human civilisation from a pre-modern stage, to a modern and a postmodern world.

In "A Cognitive-Narratological Analysis of Counterfactual Historical Fiction in *Warhammer*: The Metaphor of Im/Possible Blends", Manar El Wahsh attempts to examine an alternative account and adaptation of a historical component into a board wargame, namely *Warhammer 40,000*, which has also developed into online and video games. The study raises the question whether it is possible to combine a game of fantasy with history, whereby the factual and the non-factual blend.

Mona Hamza's "The Employment of Mythology as a Means of Empowerment in Selected Poems by Yeats, Dunqul and Lorde: An Intertextual Reading" highlights the symbolic function of myths in selected poems by Irish and Egyptian poets. The selected myths are pertinent to different cultural and historical contexts; and hence, they lend themselves to carry implications that enrich the poems in question and give substance to the comparative perspective.

Olfat Nour El-Din's "Reinventing Bluebeard: A Sociopragmatic Study of the Folktale Genre" is concerned with investigating variations of the folktale of "Bluebeard" and how the social and pragmatic dimensions develop across time, as the tale is adapted by different writers, who produce different versions of the famous tale. Through a sociopragmatic lens, an examination of this particular folktale's stylistics generates various meanings and implications.

Sama Dawood's "A Multimodal Analysis of the Arabic-English Translation of Selected *Juha* Animated Tales" probes into the cultural implications generated by the translation of animated *Juha* films/picture books from Arabic into English. The *Juha* stories are seeped into Arabic culture, the translation of which requires adequate

knowledge of the source culture so as to accurately render and communicate it to its Western counterpart. Nevertheless, the author detects, records and analyses the discrepancies that are encountered in the translation process and which shed light on possible cultural challenges.

As the title points out, Loubna A. Youssef's review of *The Routledge Companion to Media and Fairy-Tale Cultures.* (Pauline Greenhill, Jill Terry Rudy, Naomi Hamer, and Lauren Bosc, Editors. Routledge, 2018), is an all-encompassing invaluable Routledge publication that explores various fairy-tale and media cultures, which currently overpower the printed literary material.

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