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## 21<sup>ST</sup>-CENTURY CINDERELLA IN BASQUE: AN INTERMEDIAL ITINERARY THROUGH ILLUSTRATED VERSIONS AND A PLAY<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

*Cinderella* is a classic work greatly permeable to intertextual and intermedial influences. This article raises questions about adaptations of works in children's literature and intermediality and reviews studies related to the evolution of *Cinderella* in order to analyze, with attention to text-image relationships, narratological elements and descriptions of female characters in thirteen versions of *Cinderella* in Basque-language children's literature from the 21st century. The dialogue between versions presented here responds in large part to the line drawn by Disney, whose influence, reflected both on a textual level as well as that of illustration and image, affects not only the story, but also the development of the characters.

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**Keywords:** Cinderella. Children's literature. Intermediality. Basque literature. Translation and rewriting.

## Resumen

*Cenicienta* es un clásico con gran permeabilidad a influencias intertextuales e intermediales. Apuntaremos cuestiones sobre el versionado de obras en LIJ y sobre intermedialidad y revisaremos estudios en torno a la evolución de *Cenicienta*, para analizar, atendiendo a relaciones texto-imagen, elementos narratológicos y descripciones de personajes femeninos en 13 versiones de *Cenicienta* en la LIJ en euskera del siglo XXI. Daremos cuenta de un diálogo entre versiones que responde en gran medida a la línea marcada por Disney, cuya influencia, reflejada tanto a nivel textual como a nivel de ilustración o imagen, afecta no solo a la historia, sino también a la caracterización de los personajes.

**Palabras clave:** *Cenicienta*. Literatura infantil y juvenil. Intermedialidad. Literatura vasca. Traducción y reescritura.

## 1. Introduction

“Any popular tale is a good example of the way in which works are dispersed in multiple forms over time” (Colomer *et al.* 2018: 55).<sup>2</sup> Thus begins “La circulación cultural de las obras”, a chapter in which *Cinderella* is mentioned as a paradigmatic example. The Basque cultural field is not unconnected to that process: it functions in relation to other cultures, creating, in turn, a branch in the history of *Cinderella* through various versions.<sup>3</sup>

Considering cultures in which intersectionality between literature, image, and the digital gain ever greater force, in addition to analyzing literary, linguistic, and cultural transfers, there is reason to inquire into cross-media transfers that have ever greater importance as much as in the creation as in the analysis of children's literature.

The processes of adaptation and translation of classic texts in children's literature are not independent of each other. They occur in a joint manner:

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2. Quotes will be translated into English for this version.

3. We use the term “version” as an umbrella concept to refer to adapted and re-written versions, and versions made through inter- and intra-linguistic translations as well as intersemiotic ones.



an original work is translated at the same time as it is adapted or rewritten, or adaptations are translated, or adaptations are departed from in order to produce new ones. Adaptations can affect the work in its setting, in a passage, or in particular words. Moreover, all of those combinations can occur within a single textual genre or transfer genres, even mediums. In this sense, it becomes indispensable to overcome, combine, or weave together concepts related to the distinct types of translation proposed by Jacobson: intralinguistic, interlinguistic, and intersemiotic translation (1959) or relative to the modes and strategies of adaptation that affect the text in its grouping or part of it such as in the case of transcriptions from the original, omissions, expansions, exoticizations, updates, and creations conditioned by differences between codes, situational adaptations, changes in genre, and disruptions in the communication process (Bastin 2008: 7).

Intermediality offers a suitable frame for the study of different versions of a classic text, and the processes of change that are described in this work with respect to translations and adaptations are valid for the analysis irrespective of version types and can also lend themselves to and must be studied from an intermedial perspective.

Given that the goal of this article is to establish a dialogue between the versions of *Cinderella* in the 21st century in Basque literature and those versions that came before both in the same literary tradition and in others, we will outline the versions in children's literature as well as intermediality, before contextualizing a few studies about the evolution of the versions of *Cinderella*. In the section on methodology, we will present the body of versions analyzed and the tables<sup>4</sup> created for analysis, in order to then present the principal characteristics of the intermedial itinerary of the Basque versions of *Cinderella* in the 21st century, with respect to the elements related to the narrated story and the description of female characters.

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4. See the appendix: <<https://drive.google.com/file/d/14UjkiSA6pyWtahs6IGNDBRx-Do4O5XDxy/view?usp=sharing>>



## 2. Adapting children's literature classics: translation, adaptation, and intermediality

### 2.1. *Translation and adaptation in classics of children's literature*

According to Colomer *et al.* (2018: 56), the entire amalgam of fiction directed to a children's audience centers on that which is considered comprehensible and adequate for that audience, and it varies according to the artistic and moral coordinates of each age. We include in this amalgam versions of classic works: that is to say, translations as well as adaptations and rewrites.

Along these same lines, Lathey (2006: 4) noted that translating for children differs from translating for adults in two respects: the social position of childhood and the status of children's literature resulting from that status, as well as changing aspects that determine the success of writing for children. Lathey (2006: 8) also recalls that changes in translation of children's literature are more frequent than in literature for adults. Keeping in mind that it is always the adult who mediates between text and the children's audience, translators must keep that mediator always in mind (Lathey 2006: 5). Following the same author, and accounting for that which respects ideological differences that can arise in the translation process, it is important to emphasize that didactic and censorial acts come along with it, above all related to violent passages or scatological references. In particular, Lathey (2006: 6-7) highlights the example of the versions of *Cinderella* in which are omitted the scenes in which the stepsisters mutilate their feet in order to fit them into the glass slipper, or those in which the birds peck out the stepsisters' eyes. Considering that understanding of cultural, linguistic, and geographical realities in childhood is more limited than in adulthood, in children's translations, tools such as footnotes are frequently avoided, instead frequently opting for adapting names, locations, and cultural references. However, there are voices that maintain that the text should be modified as little as possible and that adaptations must be restricted to details. In addition to these questions, the translator must consider intrinsic qualities tied to children's literature, such as simplicity, condensation of meaning, or rhythm... Therefore, translating elements that affect the phonic plane (such as onomatopoeias, rhymes, repetitions of words or syllables,



etc.) and translating the visual are fundamental aspects. The visual dimension of children's literature and its evolution have also made it necessary for the translator to navigate between text and image (Lathey 2006: 9-11). Oittinen *et al.*'s chapter "The translator between images, words and sounds" is revealing, recalling ideas such as those of Barthes, who attributed two functions to images: either to fix or to alternate ideas in relation to the text. The authors point out that images illustrate stories, add or subtract, characterize spaces and characters, situate stories in spaces, time, and culture, and direct the reader to specific elements (Oittinen *et al.* 2018: 54-56). The interaction between verbal narration and the visual creates complex, multimodal spaces that influence the characters' identity (Oittinen *et al.* 2018: 74) and, in addition, illustrations frequently represent abstract elements such as thoughts, concepts, emotional state, and situations. Also worth considering is the ideological content of illustrated children's books, such as the debate that exists in relation to the mediating role of the translator when it comes to conducting cultural transfer, opting (or not) for the domestication of the illustrations of origin to the target culture (Oittinen *et al.* 2018: 83-84). And the distinct interventions and manipulations that are produced in the process of translation and adaptation also respond to a variety of motivations (considerations about the recipient, commercial values...), and bring with them effects such as incomprehension or references that are not shared (Lorenzo & Ruzicka 2015), and help, in our view, either to forget some imagery, or make them endure.

## 2.2. *Intermediality and versions in children's literature*

Far from being a product of postmodernity, multiple possible relationships between various mediums of artistic communication have taken place since the beginning of history (Massgrau-Juanola & Kunde 2018: 626-627). However, studies on intermediality do constitute a relatively recent field of study with respect to Comparative Literature and Literary Theory.

Spurred by the comparative trend between literature and other arts since the 70s, literary theory was urged to develop a theoretical apparatus that could be used for the relational analysis between written literature and other modes of artistic expression (Sánchez-Mesa 2017: 6-7). Thus,



since the 90s and in places like Germany, Québec, the United States, and England, a broad development of critical studies took place that addressed literature from an intermedial perspective.

That shift in gaze towards medium has entailed a widening of parameters in order to analyze artistic works, giving way to that which Wolf (2011:2) has termed the “intermedial turn.” As such, in literary and intermedial studies, the medium, mode of communication of conventional and cultural distinction, begins to raise itself as a determining part of the artifacts to be analyzed, and even as an urgent object of study.<sup>5</sup> Thus, in order to offer a definition broad enough to encompass different possible means of artistic communication, yet sufficiently compliant with analytical necessities, Wolf (2002: 17, 2011: 3), dealing with, among others, the work of Rajewsky (2000, 2002), resolved to consider intermediality as any transgression of the established borders between conventional means of communication.

As O’Sullivan (2005: 192-193) notes, Intermediality Studies should constitute one of the principal axes in the field of study of children’s literature, given that the culture of that sector is characterized more by its intermediality than that of adults. In the case of adaptations of classics, the intermedial processes are diachronic, but synchronic aspects can also be studied, such as, for example, the impact that new *media* have on texts directed to juvenile audiences, as much in thematic respects as in aesthetic-formal aspects. For their analysis, the theory developed by Wolf (2002, 2011) must be recalled, as it has already been used in various studies undertaken in that field (Pérez 2016; Ariza 2018; Masgrau-Juanola & Kunde 2018), and must be distinguished from the phenomena of “transmediality,” “intermedial transposition,” “re-mediation,” “multimediality,” and “intermedial reference.”

As Wolf (2002: 17-26) explains, transmediality references the appearance of content disseminated in various means, so as, in order to complete

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5. It is worth mentioning, in that sense, the collection “Diálogos intertextuales” published by Peter Lang press, in which since 2010 six volumes have been published dealing with relations between works children’s literature and their audiovisual adaptations.



a transmedial narration, it is necessary to follow its trail in different media such as, for example, social networks. A clear example of this phenomenon would be transmedia storytelling. Intermedial transposition is the result of the adaptation of content from one medium to another, distinct from plurimediality, which consists of the appearance of distinct media simultaneously in a single expression. In some cases, plurimediality can result in re-mediation; that is to say, in the creation of a new medium, of a genre, fruit of the fossilization of a particular plurimedial formula. Finally, when in one medium an expression is cited or imitated or it appropriates the technique of another medium, this would have to do with a case of inter-medial reference.

### 2.3. *Studies on the Evolution of Cinderella*

The evolution of *Cinderella* has been the subject of study of various works, which, from a diachronic and comparative perspective, address various aspects of the versions of the traditional tale. This line of research has been developed taking not only preceding versions from a variety of cultures and literary traditions, but also products of a specific literary tradition.

One of the most recent and wide-ranging studies on the evolution of *Cinderella* is that of Torres Begines (2015), who undertakes a comparative review of the key versions, encompassing a wide range of texts distant from each other as much in reference to time as space. One of the study's basic characteristics is that it places the focus on changes in medium or intermedial transposition. It classifies the versions into four groups: "1) Move from the oral to the written," "2) Move from the oral to the printed," "3) Move from the oral to the screen," "4) Move from the oral to the cybernetic." Although it does not make use of the theoretical tools of intermediality, one can observe the interest given to the phenomenon of changes in medium, taking it as a protagonistic element and index that brings forth one of the key elements of the process of adaptation.

Although Torres Begines (2015: 181) concludes that "the tale has gone on changing in order to adapt itself to the audience to whom it was directed, from the illiterate populace of its first oral narrations to the digital natives who hear the story through use of social networks and mobile apps," thus



highlighting medium as a factor related to adaptation for audience, in the study an analysis is not undertaken of the effect that is produced on the narrative story by these intermedial transpositions, which frequently also yield multimedia products such as illustrated books, to name one clear example. By contrast, just as in the pioneering work by Lluch (2003), analysis of certain elements is something more detailed and even qualitative-evaluative, given that in the section that aims to analyze the transfer from the oral to the printed, space is dedicated to revisions of the classic tale, in the framework of the aforementioned hypertextual relationship where a change in the role of the protagonist is observed from a the point of view of gender, in line with that which Torres Begines notes referencing the work of Rodríguez Mallorquín (2012) about the cinematographic rewrites from the 90s on, when “a turn towards a much more feminist presentation of Cinderella is produced” (Torres Begines 2015: 178).<sup>6</sup>

Rodríguez Mallorquín (2012) focuses on the already-mentioned evolution of the role of the woman Cinderella incarnates, taking traditional oral accounts as a point of departure and delving deeply into North American cinematographic versions. It is important to highlight that along this trajectory, the previous study of Ramos Frendo (2007) about iconography in the visual arts and film: it offers a panoramic view of the representations of Cinderella from the realm of painting to that in film, and goes over the illustrations in children’s stories. Unlike in the previously mentioned works, in this case, special attention is dedicated to the intermedial aspect, given that the object of study is precisely iconographic representation. In this case, as in the rest, the influence of medium on the narrated story or its reception is not an object of study, that is to say, the analysis does not adopt a specifically intermedial perspective.

Like Lluch (2003), Torres Begines (2015) carries out a comparative exercise between the various versions brought up, establishing items of reference as elements to compare: origin, title, author, footwear, fairy godmother,

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6. The evolution of the Disney stereotypes is a certainty too in the translations of films, as is noted in the contributions carried out in Pascua *et al.* (2019), where various original films are compared with their translations to different languages and cultures. The original text of the quote reads: “se produce un viraje hacia una presentación de la Cenicienta mucho más feminista.”



and other distinctive features. These characteristics are organized in a table (2015: 180). This exercise was already undertaken by Lluch (2003: 99-116), in a study in which the number of versions is more reduced but the comparative analysis is more detailed, given that the items for comparison are more abundant.<sup>7</sup> Lluch compares the Spanish and European versions of Basile (1636), Perrault (1697), Grimm (1812-1857), Alcover (1896), and Espinosa (1987), which she considers to be the most representative (Lluch 2003: 100), in order to then hit upon the influence of the Disney version (1950) and end applying the schema to the versions by Disney (1950), Dahl (1982), Finn Garner (1995), and Company & Capdevilla (1985). However, references to intermediality as such do not exist in Lluch's work, given that they are outside the scope of her study. In this respect, it is important to highlight that in the tables used for comparison (Table 1: 105-106, Table 2: 111-112), one can observe how the description of words are substituted for illustrations in the most recent versions. In any case, what the study does evince is that the Disney version, based on that of Perrault, is converted into a reference point for the later rewrites that are analyzed, a version which, although systematically questioned, ends up concealing the symbolic richness of the versions in other traditions (Lluch 2003: 115). Lluch & Salvador (2000: 50) note that even parody adaptations of the text that try to upend the values of the traditional vision of femininity (Dahl, Finn Garner and Company & Capdevilla), use it as a model for rewriting.

In the realm of Basque studies, Gómez Zubia (2004) identifies and analyzes, from the perspective of Polysystem Theory, the evolution of translations and adaptations of the tales of the Brothers Grimm in Basque appearing between 1920 and 2000. As is indicated by López Gaseni (2000: 98), it deals with the authors most translated in children's literature in Basque and, in the case of the illustrated albums, the presence of their stories numbers a third of the total number of published books (Gómez Zubia 2004:

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7. The indexes Lluch selects make reference to elements that can appear or not in the versions, or appear in a different manner. In the majority of the cases she makes use of +/- to indicate presence/absence, except in certain cases where she includes various data. Lluch's indexes are included in Table 1 of this work (see appendix: <<https://drive.google.com/file/d/14UjkiSA6pyWtahs61GNDBRxD04O5XDxy/view?usp=sharing>>).



15). As Gómez Zubia (2004: 347-358) indicates through his analysis, the translations analyzed from the years 1920-1940 have a marked sociolinguistic function (to make the Basque language endure) and are, in turn, foundational texts of children's literature in Basque. They also have a pronounced moral and ideological function in favor of national culture and Christian ethics.

In the adaptations made between 1960 and 1980, the influence of Disney can begin to be noted in the sweetened versions of the stories. From 1980 on, oral literature gains force in the school environment and translations as much as adaptations of traditional tales by the Brothers Grimm made in Basque fulfill an important didactic function. The typology of adaptations grew exponentially in the 1980s, and there appeared, for example, audiovisual versions that picked up stage performances. In the 90s, translations helped to reinforce the prose of the literary system and translators seemed to award a greater literary value to tales told in Basque. The versions that stand out are those in which values are accentuated and which try to deal with equality, ecology, or old age. Parody versions begin to appear in which the meaning of the traditional tale is upended. The care of publishing houses for aesthetic function also gains strength, although the tendency to look after aesthetic pleasure creating books in which images are interpreted together with the text coexists alongside the trend making use of the universality of stories to publish albums with an eye toward merchandising, filled with stereotypical images in which reductive or strange fantastical characteristics negatively affect the text. The plot, the images... mirror, in those cases, the Disney version. It can be said that the tales of the Brothers Grimm did not lend themselves to re-adaptation at the time they were adapted, and few are the versions that have maintained the storyline of the original (Gómez Zubia 2004: 347-358).

In the case of *Cinderella*, Gómez Zubia (2004: 232-233) identifies 26 versions and concludes from analyzing translation strategies of some of those versions that adaptations that retain motifs from the Brothers Grimm version are the minority (in agreement with the trend identified by Lluç 2003), and that in those which retain those motifs from the original, the bloody passages are omitted and the punishment of the stepsisters is toned down. The two motifs that remain in all of the versions of the 90s are those



introduced by Perrault: midnight and the carriage (Gómez Zubia 2004: 217).

The Basque author Yolanda Arrieta created an adaptation of the story *Mari Xor* included in *Kontu Zaharrak* [Old Tales] by Arratibel (1980), by considering a Basque version of *Cinderella* and published by Emakunde, the Basque Institute of Women. That work was published again, illustrated by Aitziber Alonso, by Denonartean press in 2018 and the author published an essay in 2018 in which, following the work of Igerabide (2002), she analyzes the symbols (salt, spaces, magical objects...) of this version, as well as the characteristics of the characters and the phases of the narration based on readings by Bachelard, Bettelheim, Kurlansky, Propp... and describes the adaptations that she herself makes in her version.

New Cinderellas do not cease to appear in Basque, and we will try in this article to give continuity to the studies by Gómez Zubia and Arrieta, including an intermedial perspective.

### 3. Methodology: corpus and tables of analysis

The primary objective of this study consists of describing and analyzing the path of Basque versions of *Cinderella* in the 21st century, with the aid of the methods already used in other analyses and adding intermedial aspects. For this, a corpus of versions in Basque published since 2000 has been drawn up, in which we will analyze intermedial relations with respect to the motifs related to the story and descriptions of female characters. Organizing the information into tables,<sup>8</sup> we will try to visualize the itinerary of intermedial changes, always paying special attention to the relationship between narrated text and image. The itinerary described by Torres Begines in the Hispanic sphere will serve as a comparative reference with respect to the case of *Cinderella* in Basque children's literature.

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8. Appendix: <<https://drive.google.com/file/d/14UjkiSA6pyWtahs6IGNDBRxD04O5X-Dxy/view?usp=sharing>>



### 3.1. *Corpus of 21st-Century Basque Cinderellas*

We take into account a corpus of 13 Cinderellas from Basque-language children's literature from the 21st century, for whose sourcing we have consulted catalogues of the network of public libraries, as well as the database *Nor da Nor* of works translated from and into Basque. The greater part of the titles that make up the corpus are translations of versions originating in other literary traditions. Here we have organized the list of works into two groups (versions created in Basque or translations), also noting whether a work is an adaptation, or a rewrite (in the case in which modifications exist beyond adaptation and entails substantial changes to the storyline):

#### **Versions created in Basque**

- *Mari Xor* (2018). Yolanda Arrieta. Berriozar: Denonartean. Adaptation.
- *Mari errauskin* (2020). Glu-glu teatro. Rewrite.

#### **Translations of versions in other languages**

##### **In anthologies of stories:**

- “Mari Errauskin” (2001). In *Errima errebeldeak*. Author: Roahl Dahl. Bilbao: Zubia. Trans.: Joseba Santxo. (Trans. from English). Rewrite.
- “Errauskine” (2005). In *Andersen, Grimm eta Perrault-en ipuinak*. Madrid: Susaeta. Trans.: Iñaki Mendiguren. (Trans. from Spanish). Adaptation.
- “Errauskine” (2010). In *Ipuintxo bat gauero*. Ada García, Gustavo Mazali, Fernando Noriega & Angeles Peinador). Bilbao: Aizkorri. Trans.: Aintzane Atela, Hitzurun hizkuntza zerbitzuak). (Trans. from Spanish). Adaptation.
- “Mari Errauskin” (2012). In *Ipuin Klasikoak guztientzat*. Madrid: Susaeta Ediciones. Trans.: Iraitz Urkulo. (Trans. from Spanish). Adaptation.

##### **Standalone works:**

- *Mari Errauskin* (2001). San Sebastian: Ttarttalo. Collection: “Txikiklasikoak”. (Trans. from French). Adaptation.
- *Errauskiñe* (2002). San Sebastian: Ttarttalo. Collection: Klasiko distiratsuak. Trans.: Bakun. (Trans. from Spanish). Adaptation.



- *Errauskiñe, Cinderella* (2010). Madrid: Susaeta Ediciones. Collection: “Ipuin elebidunak”. Trans.: Antton Irusta. (Trans. from Spanish and English). Adaptation.
- *Errauskiñe piktogramekin* (2010). San Sebastian: Ttarttalo. Trans.: Joxan Ormazabal. (Trans. from Spanish). Adaptation.
- *Bazen bitan Errauskiñe* (2015). Belen Gaudes. Madrid: Cuatro Tuercas. Trans. Idoia Gillenea. (Trans. from Spanish). Rewrite.
- *Errauskin* (2019). Vivim del cuentu. Zaragoza: Ibaizabal. Collection: “Txilinbuelta”. Trans.: Amets Santxex Muniaín - Bakun. (Trans. from Catalan). Rewrite.
- *Errauskine* (2020). Madrid: Susaeta. Collection: “Nire ipuintxo klasikoak”. (Trans. from Spanish). Adaptation.

### 3.2. Method for an intermedial analysis of narration: text-image relationship

One aspect to analyze is the narrative argument itself and the narratological elements (related to characters, time and space, symbols, etc.) in the corpus’ various versions. Taking Lluch’s work (2003, 2005) as primary reference and adding the elements analyzed by Gómez Zubia (2004), a table has been designed (see Table 1 in the appendix) where the presence/absence of each of the elements is indicated, as well as the type of presence in the form of Text (T) Image (I) or both (TI). In this manner, it is intended to throw into relief the importance that illustration has in each one of the versions of illustrated stories. In the case of theatrical representation, it does not have to do solely with visual representation, but rather audio-visual, and the story-image relationship is constant, all of the elements of the story appear continuously represented visually. This first methodological step will permit the explanation of questions such as which original versions of *Cinderella* are most prevalent in children’s literature in Basque in the 21st century and whether the same trajectory described by Lluch (2003), Gómez Zubia (2004), and Torres Begines (2015) can be observed. Likewise, one can outline a panoramic of the text-image relationship in the case of illustrated books, the prevalence of one medium or another, as well as the most illustrated elements and motifs, including in this section plays



as well, where it is interesting to observe which elements are represented and which are omitted.

### 3.3. *Method for the analysis of the characterization of female characters: image-text*

The next methodological point will center on the characterization of female characters, given that following Lluch & Salvador (2000: 46), *Cinderella* does not cease to be a women's tale, "full of envy and jealousy, where the role of the man is reduced almost to someone who needs woman and at the same time object of feminine desire, desire which is identified with the source of power." Although the images in illustrated books to be analyzed tell the same story as the written text, it must not be forgotten that images can add information absent in the text, and might be considered text-images. This is especially relevant in the case of *Cinderella*, given that neither the Grimm version nor that of Perrault offers a detailed description of the female characters, as is typical in fairytales from the oral tradition (Marteens 2016). In short, special attention will be given to how information in the text is materialized and specified through images, the result of a constant intermedial dialogue.

Illustrations of female characters, just as their representation on the stage, will be analyzed by means of tables (see Table 2, 3, 4, and 5 in the appendix),<sup>9</sup> where the versions have been organized chronologically by publication date, although it is important to emphasize, as has been suggested earlier, that two important subgroups exist: adaptations that reproduce the story established by Disney (white columns) and those that rewrite it (gray columns), in which elements related to prosopography stand out (skin color, eyes, hair, age, etc.) and to etopeya (emotional state, general facial expression, character, etc.) represented through images. The female characters are divided into positive ones (*Cinderella* and the Fairy Godmother) and negative ones (Stepmother and Stepsisters), and the characteristics indicated by the Disney illustrations (1950) will be taken as a point of departure, given that it is the most influential version whose

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9. Appendix: <<https://drive.google.com/file/d/14UjkiSA6pyWtahs6IGNDBRxD04O5X-Dxy/view?usp=sharing>>



motifs are primarily based on the Perrault version (Lluch 2005). As such, it is indicated in the table whether the Disney characteristic is repeated in the version analyzed (SI [YES]), if it does not appear (-), or if it is distinct (in the latter case, it is specified). It is to be expected that the influence of the Disney version can be seen reflected not only in the text of the stories, but also in its illustration or images, in general. Thus, on the one hand, it will be interesting to analyze the difference between the quantity of descriptive information offered by versions inspired by adaptations vs. the illustrated books themselves, as well as comparing those results with the quantity and quality of the information brought by the illustrations. On the one hand, the possible correlations existing or not between the actual prevalence of one version and a type of representation of the female characters can be observed, that is to say, it will be able to be deduced whether the Disney route (based mainly on that of Perrault) has prevailed solely on the level of story, or if together with the story level it has established a specific characterization of the characters. Taking a close look at characterization, the similarities and differences of pictorial representations will be studied, on the basis of objective or external characteristics (prosopography) and subjective or internal ones (etopeya). Finally, the current trend of representations will be able to be compared with the earlier situation described by Ramos Frendo (2007) and the cultural transposition that has been carried out through the translation of children's literature will be brought to light in reference to the pictorial representation of positive and negative female characters.

## 4. Cinderellas of the 21st Century in Basque

### 4.1. *Multimedia adaptations and rewrites: translations and creations in Basque, illustrated books and a stage play*

Considering intermedial aspects and dealing with adaptations of a classic of traditional literature, the object of study are works that are the result of a process of intermedial transposition, first from oral to written and then to illustrated book or to the stage. In each case, the result dealt with is one of plurimedia: in the case of illustrated books, text and illustration are united and in the case of the play, the (oral) text is united with all of the elements



of its scenographic representation, which in this case, additionally, is musical. It is important to mention that illustrated books are frequently read aloud, for which, as in the case of the play, the text could be considered oral, including the voice as a medium. In any case, we ought to consider both illustrated books and musical theater as phenomena resulting from re-mediation, given that more than a simple one-off conjunction of media, we are dealing with two mediums in themselves.

Almost all of the works to be analyzed are illustrated books, with the exception of the stage play. Four versions form part of anthologies, while the rest constitute independent works. In the majority of cases, the works proceed from other languages (11 out of 13), with the exception of two originally written in Basque: *Mari Xor* (2018) by Yolanda Arrieta and illustrated by Aitziber Alonso and *Mari Errauskin* (2020) by Glu-glu theater company. Castillian Spanish reigns as language of origin (9 out of 11 versions), and English, French, and Catalan are objects of translation in isolated cases. On the other hand, it is important to note that the majority of translations of illustrated tales coming from other traditions have been published by the publishing houses of Ttartalo (3) and Susaeta (4) and the three remaining by Zubia, Cuatro Tuercas, and Ibaizabal.

#### 4.2. *Analysis of intermedial narration: story of the text-image relationship*

A first remarkable question with respect to the intermedial aspects of the works is the fact that all the versions in the corpus have abundant illustrations, both narrative and decorative, or a combination of both. This systematic and ever-more-central insertion of the image is also easily interpretable as a result of the influence of the development of audiovisual products, in the particular case of *Cinderella*, the Disney animated film. This trend becomes patently clear in all the versions, but it varies in terms of quantity and quality. In general, a clear correspondence of adaptation-predominance of the Disney-type image versus rewriting-rethinking of the distribution and relevance of the image can be observed.

While in the majority of versions the illustrations are in color and they appear on every page and occupy at least 50% of the space, in the case of the rewrite of Dahl (Zubia 2001) they are in black and white and they do



not take up as much space, putting the focus on specific elements. A similar case is that of the version by Susaeta from 2012 where, with no room for doubt, the text has more content than the image, the latter simply accompanying the former: a few elements from the narration are chosen for the illustrations and the story cannot be followed without the text. Similarly, in the case of the version by Gaudes, Macías, and Marcos (2015), the image occupies a minor space, providing above all illustrations of the characters without filling up the page with background elements like landscape, furnishings, etc. Just as in the cases of more spread-out illustrations there is the tendency to imitate the medium of animated films directed towards a children's audience where the image takes over the entirety of the screen, in these last two examples a different aesthetic is adopted. In the case of Arrieta (2018) the images have considerable protagonism, but they consist of darker tones than those that predominate in the versions translated from other languages, which have the Disney version as their antecedent.

With respect to the stage play (Glu-glu 2020), it is, from an intermedial point of view, closer to the audiovisual medium of animated film, given that it combines moving images and sound. Additionally, one must keep in mind that for this version they have opted for a colorful set and costumes, as well as for a musical, that is to say, it is a work of musical theater where ordinary text and direct singing is combined with instrumental background music. These choices denote, once more, the clear aesthetic-medial influence of the animated film and the tradition marked by Disney.

Looking to strictly quantitative facts, as can be observed in table 1 of the appendix, there number 51 cases (15.2%) in which a narrative motif can be seen represented only by means of text (T), while there are 22 cases (6.6%) in which the opposite occurs (I). The rest of time (262) the motif of the narrations (78.2%) appear represented by means of text and illustration (IT). Significantly, detailed physical descriptions of both characters and objects is always effected by means of illustration, as is the coincidence in the most illustrated scenes: the initial scene in which the protagonist is shown carrying out the difficult chores they have assigned her (this appears in 12 versions, represented via image in all of them), the scene with the fairy godmother who attends to help (narrated in 12 versions, represented via image in 11, including the stage play), the ball (this appears



in all of the versions, represented by means of image in 10, including the stage play), the moment of the loss of the slipper (appearing in 11 versions, represented via image in all of them, including the stage play), and when Cinderella tries on the slipper (appearing in 12 versions, represented via image in 11, including the stage play). By contrast, all the narratological elements related to the Grimm version disappear from all of these versions, following the trend observed by Lluch (2003), but it is important to note that, despite the fact that the influence of Disney is clear, is not shown in the element of magical assistance by animals, proceeding from the Grimm version, whose presence is only observed in *Mari Xor* (2018).

In the majority of the versions of illustrated books, images have a narrative-descriptive function and bear many details that go unmentioned in the text, although in some cases, as in that of Susaeta in 2005 and Aizkorri in 2010, the narrative thread of the story cannot be followed without the text. It is important to note that in those two versions, the images bring detail, in addition to facilitating which elements to focus on and helping to understand the narration, as well as bringing descriptive details of characters and settings. In Tarttalo's 2001 version, for example, two types of images are combined, and the story can be followed at all times by means of the images of scenes on odd-numbered pages and the focus on some elements in the decorative versions of the even-numbered pages together with the text. In the version published by Aizkorri (2010), however, the combination of the two types of image is achieved alternately (the story can be followed thanks to the images in some scenes, but not in others).

#### 4.3. Analysis of the characterization of female characters: image-text

We must note that the Cinderellas of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm are very sparse with reference to the characterization of the characters. Etopeya and prosopography are summed up in general terms. For example, Cinderella is, in the Grimm text translated to Basque by Gómez Zubia (1999): *errukiorra eta onbera* [compassionate and benevolent], *gajoa* [poor], *beti zikin eta hautsez betea* [always dirty and dusty], *ederra* [beautiful], *ezezaguna* [unknown], *marizikin itsutsi txikitxo* [a little ugly girl], *zikinegia* [too dirty]. In Perrault's text, also translated by Gómez Zubia (1993),



Cinderella is: *bere gozoan eta ontasunean parerik ez zeukana* [unmatched in sweetness and goodness], *gajoa* [poor], *ahizpak baino ehun bider ederragoa* [a hundred times more beautiful than her sisters], *gusto ona bai baitzuena* [of good taste], *printzesa txit handi eta ezezagun bat* [a great and unknown princess], *printzesarik ederrena*, *inoiz ikusi denik eta ederrena* [the most beautiful princess ever seen], *ederra* [beautiful], *lehendabiziko aldi hartan baino dotoreagoa* [more elegant than before], *neska gaztea* [young girl], *dama ederra* [beautiful lady], and *ederra bezain ona* [as beautiful as she was good]. Most striking and repeated in both versions is that she is good and beautiful, but no details about her physical appearance are offered. The Fairy Godmother, who does not appear in the Grimm version, is not described in Perrault's version, only mentioned. The stepmother, however, is not described in the Grimm version but is in that of Perrault, and she is *inoiz ikusi den emakumerik harroen eta puntzontziena* [the most arrogant and bad-tempered woman ever seen]. The stepsisters, for their part, are in the Grimm version: *aurpegiz ederrak eta zuriak* [beautiful and fair faced] and *bihotzez itsusiak eta ilunak* [ugly and dark-hearted]; and in Perrault's version: *izakeraz ezpalekoak* [like their mother by nature], *haren aldean gorrotagarriago* [more hateful than their mother], *alaba zaharrena bezain gaizkihezia ez baitzen* [the youngest was not as ill-mannered as the oldest], *dotore baino dotoreago jantziak* [very elegantly dressed], *entzute handikoak* [very well known], and *buru-iritzitakoak* [conceited].

In short, the descriptions by means of words are simple and brief in both versions, never detailed, which leaves the formulation of what is “beautiful,” “elegant,” “ill-mannered,” et cetera to the imagination of each culture. Along these same lines, as can be observed in the last row of the tables dedicated to the analysis of the characterization of the characters,<sup>10</sup> the trend towards the succinct with respect to descriptive terms in the narrative text is maintained in the versions analyzed from Basque children's literature, and in fact even decrease in quantity. For example, the bad temper of the stepmother disappears from the text in 8 of the 13 versions in which the stepmother is described. The stepmother is, in the versions

10. See appendix: <<https://drive.google.com/file/d/14UjkiSA6pyWtahs6IGNDBRx-Do4O5XDxy/view?usp=sharing>>



in our corpus, *bihozgabea* [cruel] or *harro eta gaiztoa* [conceited and evil] or *harroa* [conceited] or *munduko emakumerik harroena* [the most conceited woman in the world] or *bihotz onekoa zirudien alarguna* [a seemingly good-hearted widow] or *harroputza* [very conceited], *berekoia* [egotistical]. Accordingly, the idea of the conceited stepmother with respect to Perrault's version is maintained, but only in one of the versions is the superlative description maintained *munduko emakumerik harroena* as in Perrault's version (Ttarrtalo 2010). Wickedness and lack of empathy (which are seen by means of actions in the original versions) take the form of images in the versions analyzed. What is more, it seems that the images reinforce the idea of malice. Something identical happens with the rest of the negative characters, given that the stepsisters are only described in text in 6 of the versions in our corpus and are *zatar maltzurak* [ugly and wicked], *zatarrak* [ugly], *ama bezain harroak* [as conceited as their mother], *bekaiztiak* [envious], *ama bezain harro eta gaiztoak* [as conceited and evil as their mother], *harengandik ongi ikasiak* [well trained by their mother], *gaiztoak* [wicked]. In this case, the description by comparison that appears in the original versions is also only maintained in the versions of Ttarrtalo from 2020 and in that of Cuatro Tuercas (2015). By contrast, these versions rely on illustrations that specify and materialize that which appears completely indeterminate in words, and that which is played down on a verbal level is represented by means of images: the female form of goodness, badness, beauty, etc.

The image's conquest of space in the book, sees itself clearly affected by the influence of the animated film by Disney. In addition, the design of the image is affected in a manner similar to the text, that is to say, the versions that reproduce the story in the style of Disney also do so at the level of illustration, and the versions that negotiate with said version, looking for a critical, divergent, or alternative angle, also systematically differ from it in pictorial representation, especially in the case of the main character. With respect to the stage play, it is interesting that, although the character who plays Cinderella is not cast in precisely the same mold as the Disney version, in the poster announcing the play a drawing of a Cinderella that has identical traits to the Disney version, together with a fairy godmother who is also very similar. In addition, as we indicated in earlier sections, the



similarities with the Disney production at an intermedial level are many, given that the very features of a musical production (making use of microphones and with karaoke-type background music), would be without doubt the modality that can most mirror the animated film. Thus, despite it being a rewrite that also questions the role of the protagonist, similar characterization schemes to those in the Disney version are observed.

In the versions created by rewrites, works that attempt to break with the stereotype of Cinderella laid out by Disney constitute the majority, representing her in a different way, taking her hair color as a favorite element. Likewise, in the majority of the illustrations that reproduce the Perrault/Disney story, Cinderella is blonde, in the other group, this characteristic is departed from (Dahl 2001; Cuatro Tuercas 2015; Denonartean 2018; Glu-Glu 2020). In the case of the translation of Dahl, it must be kept in mind that the illustrations are in black and white, which constitutes a significant difference from the Disney version. In the version by Ibaizabal (2019), despite maintaining the hair color, the difference is also considerable and radical in that the protagonist is a male character. It must also be noted that in the Glu-Glu (2020) production poster, the Cinderella appears entirely similar to that of Disney (she is also blonde), but the character in the actual play is not blonde but rather brunette and the plot departs clearly from the story of this production questioning to a large extent the role of Cinderella, which leads us to believe that the similarities it maintains with the super-production play with the child audience's horizon of expectations. In the case of Arrieta's publication (2018), it totally breaks with the tradition laid out by Disney, given that it reproduces the Basque version gathered from oral tradition with its own symbolic repertoire, and in this case Cinderella is brunette. Finally, it is worth mentioning that in all of the female illustrations of Cinderella she is represented as a young girl/boy, white, long haired (except in Ibaizabal 2019), slender body, harmonious and proportionate features, of cheerful demeanor even though at times sad or worried by his/her circumstances. Only in the case of Cuatro Tuercas (2015) does she appear also represented with a gesture of anger.

Another characteristic of the illustrations that is maintained in almost all of the versions and is seen to be influenced by Disney is the difference between Cinderella—who is essentially always represented following



certain parameters of beauty, whether she is blonde or not—, the stepsisters, and the stepmother. In this aspect, the only substantial divergence that we can discover between the versions of one group and another is that in some of the publications that do not reproduce the Disney story, those characters vary in gender (Ibaizabal 2019 and Glu-Glu 2020) or that other characters who are not exactly stepmother and stepsisters fulfill their role (Arrieta 2018). However, what is always maintained is the number (one stepfather/mother and two stepbrothers/sisters) and the pictorial difference with respect to Cinderella, as much on the level of *etopeya* as *prosopography*. The objective external traits are almost always different from those of Cinderella, in the color and length of hair (Cinderella's is practically always the longest), for example, but also above all in the proportion of dimensions as much in face as in body. The three negative characters almost always appear in a group, as though they were a single character (the antagonist), and are represented in opposition to Cinderella, who extends herself as a model and measure of the beautiful and good, by being the protagonist and triumphantly ending the story. Thus, the stepmother usually appears characterized as huge, tall, thin, and bony or plump, with a big nose and very marked features, which are less proportionate than those of the protagonist. The sisters share physical features with their mother, with the difference being that they are smaller, and normally they can be distinguished from each other by hair color or because one is thin and the other plump, etc. In this respect, however, the Susaeta version from 2005 differs, as there the sisters share traits as proportionate as those of Cinderella, differentiating themselves almost exclusively by hair color. Traits that provide subjective information also coincide with respect to gestures of disdain, anger, or mistrust, usually with a furrowed brow. Most remarkable is that the illustrations mark a logic that determines a definite relationship between *etopeya* and *prosopography*, given that the negative characters are characterized physically in an opposite or very different manner to the positive characters, not only with reference to subjective traits, but also to objective ones.

It is interesting to observe the difference between the fairy godmother, who in almost all of the cases maintains the traits laid out by Disney, and the rest of the characters, above all the stepmother, with whom she shares



maturity. Just as the latter is an antagonistic character, the godmother is a helpful one, but both are of a more advanced age in all of the cases except in Ibaizabal's 2019 version, where we could not find anything, and that of Susaeta from 2005, where the godmother is almost identical to Cinderella, except with a different hair color. In the rest of the cases, she is always an older, plump woman. She might be of greater or smaller size, although diminutive fairy godmothers predominate and she almost always carries a wand. It is worth noting that in four of the versions analyzed, descriptive qualities are attributed to her in the text that do not appear in the versions by Grimm and Perrault: she is *jatorra* [pleasant] in *Errima errebeldeak* (Zubia 2001), *babeslea* [advocating] in Susaeta's 2005 version, *zintzoa* [honest] in that of Aizkorri (2010), and *zaharra* [old] in *Mari Xor* (2018).

If according to Ramos Frendo (2007: 412), previously the reader could find themselves in the distinct translation-adaptations of Perrault or the Grimms with "a Cinderella that according to the illustrator could be blonde, brunette, or redheaded, according to taste," the versions that, in the 21st-century Basque literary panorama, following that wake of the Hispanic one, reproduce the story laid out by Disney adopting absolutely their patterns of characterization, and the rewrites alone are the ones that systematically decide to change, above all, hair color, with the exception of the translated version published by Ibaizabal, which going a step beyond, modifies the protagonist's gender. Something similar occurs with the fairy godmother, who on several occasions has been depicted as a woman advanced in years, plump and good natured, while on other occasions appearing bonier and with more angular, witch-like traits, like a forest creature similar to a gnome, or in the form of a young and slim woman (Ramos Frendo 2007: 412-414). This variety has been clearly impoverished in contemporary versions, as much with reference to adaptations of the predominant story as in its rewrites, despite the fact that the latter insert some variations. Finally, it seems that prior to the Disney production, there already existed marked differentiation between the stepsisters and Cinderella, for example, with respect to hair color, as can be observed in the illustrations of Carl Offterdinger or Harry Klark, but, as a general rule, are not represented with features very distinct from those of Cinderella with reference to remaining the physical traits.



## 5. Final considerations

All of the versions of Cinderella from the 21st century in Basque children's literature analyzed throughout this work are the result of a constant intermedial evolution, similar to that described by Torres Begines (2015). In a process of intermedial transposition, the tale from the oral tradition became a written text and, resulting from the plurimediality that finally resulted in re-mediation, has also been adapted into an illustrated book and musical theater. All of this is the result of the influence of the introduction of new *media* in communicative-cultural processes, in general, and especially with relation to juvenile audiences. It is a matter of influences that have given way, primarily, to intermedial transposition and, in this respect, confirms the predominance of the influence of Disney on the analyzed corpus, not only on the level of story as had already been announced (Lluch 2003; Gómez Zubia 2004), but also that of the image, as much on a quantitative as a qualitative level, running into notorious differences in both aspects with respect to the analysis of the illustration carried out by Ramos Frendo (2007).

The abundance of illustration in the versions of the corpus analyzed denotes a trend identical to that which is perceived in Lluch's (2005: 111-112) analysis, where it can be confirmed that since the Disney version (1950), all of the analyzed versions (Dahl 1982; Company 1985; Garner 1995) have illustrations that bring with them physical descriptions of several of the story's female characters (Cinderella, Stepmother, and Stepsisters), as well as of certain elements such as the ballgown. The trend to reduce the characterization by words is clearly observed together with the incorporation or increase of the pictorial portrait, which, in addition, counteracting the descriptive scarcity of the written text, provides abundant additional information that does not exist in the original literary texts. In this sense, the insertion of the image entails the materialization of narrative elements that previously were left to the imagination, such as for example the characterization of the female characters.

All or nearly all of the versions have the Perrault-Disney version as a point of reference, whether adapting it directly to the format and audience, or rewriting it questioning above all the role of the protagonist following the



identified trend (Lluch 2003; Rodríguez Mallorquín 2012; Torres Begines 2015), or to offer a local alternative version and break with the hegemonic version; but it can be affirmed that behind them all lies the same version and that, in addition, some profoundly essential traits are maintained: the violent elements or those related with death in the Grimm version as well as in the variant from Basque oral tradition *Mari Xor* are removed.

Following a similar trend on the level of the story, the influence on the growing predominance of the Disney-style image is especially noticeable in the case of adaptations, while rewrites manage to offer another approach, leaving less space for illustrations, presenting them in black and white, in a minimalist style, or one simply not as striking. However, even in this last case, many resemblances on the level of image exist, as can be observed with regard to the characterization of the female characters. It is also important to note the evident intermedial influence of Disney in the case of the Glu-Glu company (2020) at the moment of choosing to make a musical theater production, the format that most resembles the animated production. Ultimately, a similar appearance of the Disney influence in the spheres of written narration and images can be observed, taking said version as much as a reference for adaptations/direct translations as for an axis around which rewrites and other approaches to the story turn.

The Basque canon reproduces Cinderella from other languages and cultures, except on two occasions: *Mari Xor* (2018) and the stage play (2020). In the case of the former, we rely on literary-symbolic elements that do not appear in other versions; in the latter, gender roles are questioned, and another narrative plane appears that frames the story relating it to values around “friendship” and “envy.” The Basque canon, reproduces, therefore, adaptations and rewrites and cultural points of view of mediators and authors from other literary systems, without any type of domestication. It is important to note, in that sense, the counterpoint is the *Mari Xor* version (2018), a version made on the basis of a local version. Just as has been observed in the analysis, it deals with the version that retains symbols and narratological elements that do not appear in the majority of the other adaptations and rewrites (all of them made on the basis of Perrault) which, in turn, do not modify the images and reproduce the illustrations of Cinderella appearing in other systems. *Mari Xor* (2018)



is also a counterpoint with respect to the image: the illustrations created by an author from the Basque artistic system demonstrate a narratological context considered from Basque culture: the landscapes, the characters' clothing, the characterization... all respond to local characteristics and the version is carried out from another gathered in a compilation of traditional oral tales from the Basque Country. However, along general lines, there is no doubt that the 21st-century Basque children's literary canon has opted for translation (without intervention on both verbal and pictorial levels) of adaptations arising from other western cultures, where the Perrault story has predominated with a clear influence from Disney.

The majority of the adaptations imitate the animated film's images, both on a chromatic level and on one of more represented scenes and characterization of the female characters on the levels of *etopeya* and *prosopography*, without forgetting the genre of musical theater, which imitates the medial aspect to the greatest possible extent. The female characters also appear clearly classified and pictorially differentiated between positive and negative, a scheme that is respected in each and every one of the adaptations, whether rewrites or not. In the adaptations, the illustrations of said characters follow models identical to or very similar to those of Disney, a novel characteristic when compared with the trend of constant variation identified by Ramos Frendo (2007), but also in the case of the rewrites, the outlines are reproduced. That is to say, variations of characterizations exist in the versions that consist of rewrites (a clear example is the change in hair color for Cinderella to any color that is not blonde, or even change of gender), but Cinderella is always the canon of what is good and beautiful, the fairy godmother good, and the stepsisters and stepmother the opposite, which is revealed more by means of image than written text. Likewise, a model of representation that unites *etopeya* and *prosopography* has been set, making goodness coincide with agreeable physical traits and wickedness with the opposite, following the Disney outline, nonexistent in the versions of Grimm and Perrault, where in no case is it suggested that negative characters are physically disagreeable, rather even the opposite.

As such, we can summarize that the Basque panorama is, with regard to adaptations of Cinderella in children's literature, a clear reflection of the trends that prevail in the wider world, and that the modern-day canon of



the classic has been built with versions that are foreign to Basque tradition, through translation both of written text and of text-image. With regard to this last point, it is important to highlight the quantity of new information added by the image, as the dominant element in the majority of intermedial works analyzed and the special relevance of the ethical-aesthetic nexus that has been reinforced in the characterization of the female characters after the appearance of the Disney animated film. This reality demands the consideration of Cinderella as an already-intermedial classic, given that its presence in the repertoire of the juvenile audience occurs in the present day through word and image. This implies the necessity of exhaustive analysis of the illustrations in order to, in a second step, integrate critical work on the image in the classroom from a didactic point of view and establish criteria of selection for versions for school libraries, which serve, among other educative-literary functions, to activate a critical-comparative capacity in the student body.

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