POSTMODERN RED RIDING HOOD: BELLA SWAN IN *TWILIGHT* SERIES[*]

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Abstract

Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series presents its protagonist Bella Swan in a fairy tale-like world where she is surrounded with vampires and werewolves. In this world, Bella, as a figure of the girl in the woods, displays similar characteristics with those of the fairy tale type Little Red Riding Hood in Charles Perrault's "Little Red Riding Hood" (Le Petit Chaperon Rouge, 1697), and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's "Little Red Cap" (1812). However these characteristics are ideologically rewritten and based on postfeminist politics that foreground female subjectivity through sexual agency, freedom of choice, and consumerism. In this postfeminist context, this study aims to examine Bella Swan in *Twilight* series as an embodiment of the deconstruction of the classic fairy tale type in terms of the politics of personal agency, sexuality and power relations. In this deconstruction, the girl victim of the classic fairy tale becomes a twenty first century postfeminist girl who, in accordance with her consumerist choices, is free to play with and manipulate werewolves and vampires in the woods.

Keywords: *Twilight series, Red Riding Hood, Postfeminism*.

POSTMODERN KIRMIZI BAŞLIKLI KIZ: *ALACAKARANLIK* SERİSİNDE BELLA SWAN

Özet

Stephenie Meyer'in *Alacakaranlık* serisi, serinin başkarakteri Bella Swan'ı vampirlerle ve kurt adamlarla örülmüş masalsı bir dünyada sunmaktadır. Bu dünyada, ormandaki kız figürü olan Bella, Charles Perrault'nun 1697 tarihli "Küçük Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız" masalı ile Jacob ve Wilhelm Grimm'in 1812 tarihli "Kırmızı Şapkalı Kız" masalındaki Kırmızı Şapkalı Kız tipinin özelliklerine benzer özellikler sergilemektedir. Ancak bu özellikler ideolojik açıdan tekrar yazılmış ve kadın öznelliğini cinsel eylemlilik, seçim özgürlüğü ve tüketimcilik gibi konular vasıtasıyla ön planda tutan postfeminist politikalar üzerine kurulmuştur. Bu postfeminst bağlamda, bu çalışmanın amacı, *Alacakaranlık* serisindeki Bella Swan'ı kişisel yetkinlik politikaları, cinsellik ve güç ilişkileri doğrultusunda klasik masal tipinin yapısökümü olarak incelemektir. Bu yapısökümde, klasik masaldaki kurban kız, tüketimci tercihleri doğrultusunda, ormanda kurt adamlar ve vampirlerle oynamakta özgür olan ve onları manipüle eden 21. yüzyılın postfeminist kızı haline gelir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Alacakaranlık serisi, Kırmızı Başlıklı Kız, Postfeminizm*.

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1.INTRODUCTION

Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series presents its protagonist Bella Swan in a fairy tale-like world where she is surrounded with vampires and werewolves. In this world Bella represents the figure of the "girl in the woods" characterized and maintained by fairy tale tradition. Having left her mother Renee in her home, and heading to the woods of Forks where her father Charlie lives, Bella creates her own story of the "girl in the woods" within the norms of Red Riding Hood type of the classic fairy tale tradition. However, she is a twenty-first century Red Riding Hood type that becomes the embodiment of the deconstruction of the classic fairy tale heroine rewritten within the norms of postmodern and postfeminist ideology. Thus, the aim of this paper is to present Bella Swan as a postmodern version of the Red Riding Hood type within a framework of Deconstruction and postfeminist ideology.

Deconstruction, as theorized by Jacques Derrida, is based on the subversion of the ideal meaning of a text. This subversion is realized by acts of rereading a text through which "*essentially and lawfully, every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other, to other concepts, by means of the systematic play of differences*" (Derrida, 1982: 11). Within this concept of the "systematic play of differences", Bella Swan is examined as a rereading and a rewriting of Charles Perrault's "Little Red Riding Hood" (Le Petit Chaperon Rouge, 1697) and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's "Little Red Cap" (1812) that refer to "other concepts" related to postmodern postfeminist ideology. This rewriting is a de-centering Perrault's and Grimms' texts by distancing them from their original ideology via putting them within "*a network of differences*" (Derrida, 1988: 137). Despite the fact that there are numerous versions of the Little Red Riding Hood in many cultures, Charles Perrault's version *Little Red Riding Hood*, and Brothers Grimm's version *Little Red Cap* are considered as basic versions which helped to shape the ideological discourses of the tale on the issues of gender norms, sexuality, and politics of body and female identity. Jack Zipes notes that Perrault has undertaken the task of arranging the tale in accordance with the sexual and moral codes in order to "*make it the literary standardbearer for good Christian upbringing*" (Zipes, 1993: 348). Likewise, Grimms' Little Red Cap is "*a coded message about rationalizing bodies and sex*" (Zipes, 1993: 34).   Girls' sensations, desires and curiosity are considered as their besetting sins that are to be kept in control and in conformity with patriarchal authority. Girls who are possible Red Riding Hoods are expected to stick to social expectations that prevent them from going astray (straying from the path and roaming within the depths of the forest). Message is that the girls' behaviors are to be regularized within submission and marriage rather than having free contacts with men. Red Riding Hood strays from the path, walks into the depths of forest, meets wolf and informs him where she is going and why she is going. Accordingly, she falls into the clutches of the wolf as a result of her recklessness and her ignorance of social expectations. Bella Swan's deconstruction of the Red Riding Hood type creates a network of postmodern, postfeminist units that mobilize the politics of individual agency and advocates active female individual in terms of desire and sexuality. Themes of sexuality and power relations are the common grounds of both the fairy tale and the *Twilight* series.

Yet, Bella Swan repeats these themes by making them "*transplantable into a different context*" (Derrida, 1992: 64) within postfeminist ideology. In this context, Bella prompts Red Riding Hood type "*to leave behind* [her] *''old'' self and change into the ''new woman'' of the moment*" (Genz, 2010:97) of postfeminist ideology. Accordingly, this paper aims to examine Bella Swan as a twenty first century Red Riding Hood type who changes into the new woman of the moment and, thus, who represents "*the active, freely choosing, self-reinventing subject of postfeminism*" (Gill and Scharff, 2011: 7). In the frame of postfeminist ideology, the classic Red Riding Hood type, who is at the target of the wolf as a result of her carelessness, becomes a free woman consciously flirting with the wolf, enticing him and playing with him according to her pleasures.

A Postfeminist examination of Red Riding Hood and Bella Swan requires an analysis of the understandings of femininity. In her examination of postfeminisim and its articulations of femininity in media culture, Rosalind Gill states that "*Postfeminism should be conceived of as a sensibility*" that is mainly based on a variety of understandings of cultural manifestations of femininity (2007: 148). This variety grounds on the postfeminist politics of choice that enable woman to do or become whatever they want to. Gill points to recurring images in media culture that constitute "*a postfeminist discourse*" (2007: 149), and says that they

> "*include the notion that femininity is increasingly figured as a bodily property; a shift from objectification to subjectification in the ways that (some) women are represented; an emphasis upon self-surveillance, monitoring and discipline; a focus upon individualism, choice and empowerment; the dominance of a 'makeover paradigm'; the articulation or entanglement of feminist and anti-feminist ideas; a resurgence*

of ideas of natural sexual difference; a marked sexualization of culture; and an emphasis upon consumerism and the commodification of difference"(2007: 255).

Likewise, Genz and Brabon give emphasis to postfeminism's convergence with multiple discourses, and say that "*Rather than being tied to a specific contextual and epistemological framework, postfeminism emerges in the intersections and hybridisation of mainstream media, consumer culture, neo-liberal politics, postmodern theory and, significantly, feminism*" (2009: 5). Postfeminism is a multi-layered theory that consists of various understandings of woman and femininity. In accordance with this view, postfeminism, in a very postmodern manner, approaches skeptically to feminism's general discourse of "we" that claims for a common struggle and common purpose of all women in the name of equality. As Banet-Weiser (2008) stresses, the politics of "we" is actually found problematic because of its totalizing, universalist approach to women. Accordingly, questioning "the feminism"'s attempt to universalize the problems of women as if they are one and same, postfeminism argues for the existence of difference among women that gives way to "*different voices*" (Gilligan) and different problems that are taken into consideration by "*feminisms*" (Banet-Weiser, 2008: 210). Postfeminism offers a discourse of individual politics on identity, race and sexuality, which is more a politics of individual choice and freedom. However, postfeminism is mostly critiqued for its "*complex and ambiguous portrayals of femaleness, and feminism, exploring the contingent and unresolvable tension between these subject positions*" (Genz, 2010: 98). Postfeminism's discourse of free individual who chooses whatever she wants creates a "*double entanglement*" (McRobbie, 2009:12) which unites the politics of freedom of choice and individual empowerment with traditional and objectified role models. McRobbie says that "*This comprises the co-existence of neoconservative values in relation to gender, sexuality and family life [...] with processes of liberalisation in regard to choice and diversity in domestic, sexual and kinship relations*" (2009: 12). Accordingly, "*assuming full economic freedom for women, postfeminist culture also (even insistently) enacts the possibility that women might choose to retreat from the public world of work.*" (Tasker and Negra 2007: 2). Elspeth Probyn renders this coexistence of liberal values with traditional ones under the rubric of the term "*choiceoisie*" (1990: 152) which she borrows from Leslie Savan in 1990s. Marking the coincidence of choiceoisie with the ideology that inevitably foregrounds a domestic life behind the successful business woman presented in television series, Probyn states that "

the world's a crazy place and you have to fight for yourself but at the end of the day you can always go home. In television terms, this means that you can be a top corporate lawyer and be pregnant (LA Law); a hot shot current affairs anchor and consider single parenthood (Murphy Brown); or you can just choose to stay home, and indeed be home (thirtysomething)" (1990:151).

Postfeminism's discourse of free individual who chooses whatever she wants is also underpinned by its advocacy for consumerism that is directly associated with feminine body and a youthful femininity. "*Woman as empowered consumer*" (Tasker and Negra, 2007: 2) is at the center of postfeminist agenda. This consumerist approach is backed up with the idea of "*'girling' of femininity*" (Tasker and Negra, 2007: 18) that regulates women to consume to look better and younger. This is a "*celebration of the young woman as a marker of postfeminist liberation" that "treat*[s] *women of a variety of ages as girls*" (Tasker and Negra, 2007: 18) .

Compared from these various perspectives, Charles Perrault's "Little Red Riding Hood" (Le Petit Chaperon Rouge) in 1697, and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's "Little Red Cap" in 1812 manifesting a girl victim who faces the dire consequences of her choices are taken into consideration under the fabric of Bella Swan's postfeminist character in *Twilight* series. Red Riding Hood type becomes a model of personal agency in Bella Swan's character, an example of youthful femininity and an embodiment of subjectification in a postfeminist manner. As a figure of the girl in the woods, Bella leads her own adventure with the wolf Jacob Black and the vampire Edward Cullen in line with the ideologies of freedom of choice, youthful femininity and consumption. In that respect, this paper aims to examine Bella Swan as a new and deconstructed Red Riding Hood who displays the characteristics of a free woman who is playful both with the wolf and the huntsman according to her desires and consumption choices.

2.DISCUSSION

In *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood,* Jack Zipes examines Charles Perrault's "Le Petit Chaperon Rouge" (Little Red Riding Hood) in 1697, and indicates the transformational process of the fairy tale from its oral version to a written one by expressing the ideological markers in this process. He remarks on the ideological formation of Charles Perrault's "Le Petit Chaperon Rouge" by highlighting the patriarchal ideology in editorial efforts of transforming the tale from oral tradition, which was once under the control of peasants and

women, to a written one with many coded norms for upper class audience of 17th century France. Zipes notes that the oral version of the tale which was once circulated through peasants and told mostly by women had an optimistic view in its depiction of the little girl visiting her grandmother and saving herself from the violent attack of hungry wolf with the help of her wits. It is stated that Perrault has undertaken the task of arranging the tale in accordance with the sexual and moral codes. As stated by Zipes, Perrault, under the guidance of patriarchal point of view, changed the oral tale which presents a courageous girl escaping the wolf's attack thanks to her sharp intelligence, and, created an edited version in which the young girl is presented as a transgressor deserving a punishment of being eaten. This punishment is symbolically taken as a representation of rape, because of her "*stray from the path*" on the way to grandmother in the woods, and her contact with the wolf (Zipes, 1993).

Zipes notes that "*Perrault fixed the ground rules and sexual regulations for the debate, and these were extended by the Brothers Grimm and largely accepted by most writers and story-tellers in the Western world*" (1993:7). Perrault's fixed ground rules reflect an "*en-gendered violence*" (Zipes, 1993:8), and, constitute the center of gender debates of the early modern European society in which marriage, control of female sexuality and permanence of patriarchy were major social issues. In accordance with the maintenance of patriarchy, society was ordained by the supremacy of male authority and any occasion that might cause nonconformity was eliminated or ended with punishment. Female sexuality was at the target of punishments that inscribed standard behaviors for females within the frames of self-control, total submission to husband and child-care. As Henry Kamen notes in his work entitled *Early Modern European Society*, "*The security was deemed to be basic to the functioning of society. Transgressing the role was a fundamental threat to patriarchal relations*" (2000: 154). To keep the order of society on behalf of patriarchy, it was fundamental to educate individuals at very early ages in their childhood according to proper gender manners and behaviors. In *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*, Laurence Stone indicates the emphasis in child rearing and highlights the endeavors to "*suppress the sinfulness of children*" :

A pedagogic movement, which had begun a century earlier with the Italian Renaissance as a glorification of the purity and innocence of the child, was twisted in its late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century northern religious transplantation into a deadly fear of the liability of children to corruption and sin, particularly those cardinal sins of pride and disobedience (1977: 174).

The seventeenth-century principles of rearing pure and innocent children deployed women to perform various tasks as wives and mothers. Women had to keep their children in line with the moral codes of the age, for "*the only hope of preserving social order was to concentrate on the right disciplining and education of children*" (Stone, 1977: 174). Especially girls had to be under moral control, and be in conformity with the stringently coded behavior, for they are the prospective future wives and mothers. Marriage was regarded as a fundamental backbone of patriarchal order and a best regulator of girls' moral control. Determined roles for women and men are empowered through marriage: "

[…] *the emphasis* [is] *placed by the state and the law on the subordination of the wife to the head of the household as the main guarantee of law and order in the body politic* […] *Women were now expected to love and cherish their husbands after marriage and were taught that it was their sacred duty to do so*" (Stone, 1977: 202).

In that respect, marriage was considered as an institution that kept women under strict social codes, and maintained their conformity with the code of moral behavior especially relating to sexuality: "*Chastity for example, was traditionally considered a fundamental part of female honour, and women who lost it outside the normal course of marriage were 'dishonoured'. Women who habitually restored to sex without marriage were of course quite dishonourable, or 'whores'*" (Kamen, 2000: 169), or as Orenstein notes: "*Under seventeenth-century law a marriage without parental consent was considered a form of rapt – meaning seduction or abduction, which was punishable by death*" (2002: 36). Role models are strictly determined around the subjects of morality, religion, sexuality and gender. Those who do not conform to norms of society are viewed as deviants. Women had a special place in this categorization. They were the first targets of accusations and punishments for the destruction of social regularity.

Reviewed within such a social background, "Le Petit Chaperon Rouge" (Little Red Riding Hood) becomes a text that is coded with moral and sexual messages. From the very beginning of tale Little Red Riding Hood is dressed with a red hood that signals her inclination for promiscuity and sinfulness. Orenstein states that "*Perrault cloaked his heroine in red, the color of harlots, scandal and blood, symbolizing her sin and foreshadowing her fate*" (2002: 36). Zipes also points out the red hat and its symbolism for sinfulness: "*First, she is topped with a red hat, a*

chaperon, making her into a type of bourgeois girl tainted with sin, since red, like the scarlet letter A, recalls the devil and heresy" (Zipes, 1993: 348). Red Riding Hood is marked with a deviant nature from the beginning, and, as the fairy tale aims to give as a message, she is to be punished violently. Rape and violence are of major issues of the fairy tale treated by many scholars. Description of Red Riding Hood, mentally and physically, contributes to the depiction of a rather idle, ignorant girl who is held responsible for wolf's lustful act of eating. Cristina Bacchilega, in her comment on Perrault's version of Red Riding Hood, reviews the girl both as a victim and a seducer in this lustful act:

He [Perrault] foregrounds the dynamics between the wolf and the girl, and justifies the tale's violent outcome by pointing to the devil-associated red garment as evidence of the victim's complicity. Perrault thus narrows down the oral tale to a heterosexual scenario in which girls are 'naturally' both victims and seducers (1997:57).

Female agency is strictly restricted by male power and women are obliged to "*stick close to the path, better not to be adventurous*". Otherwise they are the targets of male violence. There is no option left to the women but to abide by the rules put by patriarchal authority. If they do not conform to the rules, they are punished by men and again it is men who will save them from their predicament. So while men are enabled with authorial role, women are denigrated as victims deserving punishment because of their "*promiscuity*" (Zipes, 1993). Examining the moral messages of the fairy tale, Jack Zipes highlights Little Red Riding Hood's lying with the wolf in her grandmother's bed as a marker of promiscuity and wolf's attack of swallowing Little Red Riding Hood as a punishment for which she is held responsible. Zipes notes that "*Playful intercourse outside of marriage is likened to rape, which is primarily the result of the little girl's irresponsible acts*" (Zipes, 1993: 348- 349). In this respect "Little Red Riding Hood" becomes a message-loaded text that dictates the proper sexual behavior for girls and warns them against what might happen to them if they are not conforming to sexual regulations of society. Zipes states that "*Little Red Riding Hood is a projection of male phantasy in a literary discourse considered to be civilized and aimed at curbing the natural inclinations of children*" (Zipes, 1993: 31). As a projection of male phantasy, "Little Red Riding Hood" is a prescription written especially for women to shape their sexual behavior and their attitude toward marriage.

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimms' version with the title "Little Red Cap" in 1812, displays the difference from Perrault's version at the end of the tale: Little Red Cap and her grandmother are rescued by a huntsman in the woods, an act which, as Zipes states, is the celebration of male authority and supremacy. In addition to presence of male savior that proves male authority as a power that solves problems and preserves order, Brothers Grimm added mother figure as a female justifying this patriarchal order. Little Red Cap is instructed by her mother as such: "*Don't tarry on your way, and don't stray from the path*" (Zipes: 1993: 135). In this respect Brothers Grimm supported the same plot (little girl and her grandmother's being eaten by the wolf), by adding some details such as mother's dictating the girl to stick to the path which is a symbolical representation of social rules and norms. They also strengthened the male supremacy and female dependence on that supremacy at the end of the tale presenting little girl's and grandmother's rescue from the belly of the wolf with the help of the huntsman. Zipes points out the patriarchal intervention in girl's initiation process in Brothers Grimm's version, and stresses that Grimms' "*Little Red Cap*" is "*a coded message about rationalizing bodies and sex*" (1993: 34). Cautionary effect is continued in Grimms' version and the girl both reminds herself at the end of the tale and is reminded at the beginning by her mother not to stray from the path. As Bacchilega points out "*In the Grimms' version, all bodies must be regulated, contained, or rendered as unfeeling and sterile as the wolf's stone-filled belly*" (1997:58), otherwise punishment is inevitable. The common ground of Perrault's and Grimms' version is the act of eating/ being eaten which is taken as a symbolic act of sexual intercourse and rape. Zipes comments that "*The eating or swallowing of Little Red Riding Hood is an obvious sexual act, symbolizing the uncontrollable appetite or chaos of nature*" (1993: 78).

It is obvious that "Little Red Riding Hood" tale circles around the issues of gender norms, sexuality, and power. Socio-historical background of the tale reveals debates that condition women and women's sexuality within negative terms. So, returning back to *Twilight* series, what can be said about Bella as a twenty first century Red Riding Hood? Perrault and Brothers Grimm's versions manifest a girl victim who faces the dire consequences of her choices. Should Bella be considered as a victim or as a heroine? Bella's situation relies on the same grounds with that of Little Red Riding Hood: sexuality and power relations are the dynamics of her tale. However, Bella's tale, though decorated with patriarchal intervention, becomes a site of personal agency, that situates her as a heroine gaining profit in her process of maturation. Bella as a rewriting of Red Riding Hood reconstructs the idea of little girl passing through maturation. Like in many fairy tales, the little girl has to leave her home and

find her own "path" in order to complete her individuation process. Red Riding Hood is sent to her grandmother by her mother. She has to pass the forest which is full of dangers and the unknown. She has been warned by her mother to walk properly and not to stray from the path. Bella is in the same situation: she has to leave her mother and her home and lead to the unknown. In her case, it is not her mother who sends her, but Bella herself decides to leave home. In her case, Bella deconstructs the fairy tale figures of Red Riding Hood in a postmodern sense, and becomes a new type of Red Riding Hood that draws her social and sexual politics within a postfeminist point of view.

Postfeminist discourse celebrates active and decisive woman type. In that respect, Bella draws an image of a woman who always pushes the limits consciously and wants more rather than being a recipient of what life gives her and staying within boundaries. Unlike the fairy tale figure Red Riding Hood who is naïve and unconscious of the dangers of the wood and its wild animals, Bella is eager to discover the unruly forces of nature and roams in the woods and strays from the path actively and willingly. She roams in the forest which becomes a place remote from civilization where she is surrounded with spurces, hemlocks, yews, maples, and the trees covered in green parasites:

> "As that started to ebb, I slowed. […] leaned my hooded head back against the living tree. This was the wrong place to have come. I should have known, but where else was there to go? The forest was deep green and far too much like the scene in last night's dream to allow for peace of mind. Now that there was no longer the sound of my soggy footsteps, the silence was piercing. The birds were quiet, too, the drops increasing in frequency, so it must be raining above. The ferns stood higher than my head, now that I was seated, and I knew someone could walk by on the path, three feet away, and not see me" (Meyer, 2005: 118-119).

Bella strays from path and goes into the deep parts of the forest, which also represents her journey into the deepest part of her psyche. She is aware of the danger, yet she likes to be there, for it gives her a peaceful mind. Forest becomes a place of warmth and home though it also consists of terror for her through the novel. It becomes a marker of her wild and free nature. Unlike the simple Red Riding Hood, she is consciously adventurous, which can be taken both in positive and negative terms: she is free to act as she wishes but she also puts herself in dangerous situations: "

> […] *my hood pulled close around my face, becoming surprised, as I nearly ran through the trees, at how far I had come. I started to wonder if I was heading out at all, or following the path farther into the confines of the forest. Before I could get too panicky, though, I began to glimpse some open spaces through the webbed branches*"(Meyer, 2005: 121).

Forest displays many characteristics in Bella's narration. It is both a place of danger and a place of pleasure which provides a romantic setting. Although Bella is conscious of its danger she likes to be there that keeps her out of social norms. Projected within a romance narration, Bella as a postmodern Red Riding Hood in the woods becomes an active seducer in the wake of her sexual consciousness. What is significant in her individuation process, and what makes her a postfeminist Red Riding Hood is that she is an active agent in expressing her sexual desires to be with Edward the vampire huntsman and in presenting her intimate feelings for Jacob, the wolf. Unlike the 17th and 19th century Red Riding Hood who was under strict social control and "taming" in terms of female body, 21st century Red Riding Hood, Bella, is in an identity formation through her free expression of desire. Feona Atwood, describing the role of sex in the creation of feminine identity, says that sex is a "*source of physical pleasure, a means of creating identity, a form of body work, self-expression, [and] a quest for individual fulfillment*" (Atwood qtd in Evans and Riley, 2015: 1).

In a similar manner to Atwood, Rosalind Gill, examining the images of women in contemporary media, marks the emergence of a "*new woman*" type which derives its discourse from the subjects of subjectivity, agency, and mainly sexuality. The figures of this new woman type celebrate the powerful sexual femininity that helps women to position themselves as subjects, not objects, of desire, power and agency. Their empowerment lies in the freedom of choice. It is not male desire and manipulation that define and position female sexuality, rather "*she is*

> *a 'sexy' and playful subject, who uses her knowledge of the power her appearance may give her over male viewers to tease them, with humour. A crucial aspect of the shift from objectification to sexual subjectification is that this is framed in advertising through a discourse of playfulness, freedom and, above all, choice*" (Gill, 2008: 437).

What Gill elaborates is the presentation of self with a more sexiness and beauty-centered agenda. It is mainly a politics of the power of choice that enables women agency. Women do have the control of their body in terms of determining how they would like to be or what they would like to become. They create a "*more 'successful' version of themselves*" (Gill, 2008: 442). They have the power to transform their body into what they would like to be. Gill indicates this situation as "*a discourse of 'can-do' girl power*" (Gill, 2008: 442) constituted by politics of personal choice made with a full freedom. Within such a postfeminist background, Bella represents a "*female sexual entrepreneur, who works on herself and body to maintain an 'up for it' sexual agentic identity*" (Evans and Riley, 2015: 6).

In her story, Edward, the vampire lover, is in the role of the huntsman who rescues Red Riding Hood from the wolf, who is Jacob in her case. In contrast to Edward, Jacob draws the image of a grotesque wolf roaming around Bella, stalking and disturbing her at times with annoying physical contact. Jacob the wolf, in a manner of the wolf in the bed in the fairy tale, is in wonder of how Bella would taste (Meyer, 2006: 176). Although Bella is mostly observed to have pleasure in Jacob's partnership, and mostly allows him to go too far as to touch her, she is anxious in his approaches. Compared to Edward, Jacob is not in control of his sexual instincts, he is very stubborn in demanding Bella's love. Relationship between Bella and Jacob both resemble and also differ in some ways from the relationship between Red Riding Hood and the wolf described in the fairy tale. Different from the fairy tale, postmodern Red Riding Hood flirts with the wolf willingly, encourages him to be intimate with her and accordingly presents an active young female who maintains a politics of free sexual identity. Thus Bella is in conformity with Catherine Orenstein's description of twenty first century Red Riding Hoods. Orenstein states that:

> "In the second half of the twentieth century, a proliferation of revisions of "Little Red Riding Hood" turned the tale around to teach a new lesson. Storytellers from the women's movement and beyond reclaimed the heroine and her grandmother from male-dominated literary tradition, recasting the women as brave and resourceful, turning Red Riding Hood into the physical or sexual aggressor, and questioning the machism**o** of the wolf. Their new heroines dominate the plot, sometimes with humor or strength and frequently with a libido more than equal to the wolf's" (2002: 161).

It is true that Bella as a new heroine has a libido more than equal to the wolf's, Although Bella mostly defines Jacob within friendship terms, she is in love with the wolf. She, as a postmodern Red Riding Hood, dares to gaze wolf's powerful body, expresses her admiration of it, and flirts with it. In a playful manner, Bella's desire mechanism gives hope to the wolf Jacob for a possible love between him and Bella. Bella, in her playful nature, becomes a torment to Jacob because she both refuses her love for Jacob and also declares it passionately both by her physical response and by her expressions. She is now a friend to Jacob and now a passionate lover. Wolf takes her to the bed and she lies there with him consciously and even in a nestling manner in his body: "*He surrendered, leaning back with a gasp of pain, but he grabbed me around my waist and pulled me down on the bed, against his good side. I curled up there, trying to stifle the silly sobs against his hot skin*" (Meyer, 2007:528-529). In this sense, Bella, the postmodern Red Riding Hood, stays remote from becoming a victim of the wolf, rather she puts the wolf in a dual situation which keeps the wolf both in hope for love and in a desperate dismay at the same time. On the one hand, unlike in the fairy tale, wolf becomes a victim of impossible love that will not let him have her as he wishes. On the other hand, in a very similar manner to the master wolf of the fairy tale, he is in the role of stalker. When he is with Bella, he can transgress the borders so as to disturb Bella with his physical suppression:

> "I joined him with a sigh. He looked like he was thinking about blurring more lines. Sure enough, as soon as I sat down, he shifted over to put his arm around my shoulders. "Jake," I protested, leaning away. He dropped his arm, not looking bothered at all by the minor rejection. He reached out and took my hand firmly, wrapping his other hand around my wrist when I tried to pull away again. Where did he get the confidence from?" (Meyer, 2006: 186).

Bella describes Jacob both in positive and negative terms such as "*a brother*", " *warm and comforting and familiar*", and "*a safe harbor*" (Meyer, 2006: 329), "*a miserable monster*" (2007: 154), and " *pushy, obnoxious, moronic DOG*" (Meyer, 2007:294). She displays a multi-layered emotional diversity which enables her to play with the wolf as she wishes, which positions the love affair between Jacob the wolf and Bella the Red Riding Hood in a subject/object relationship. Jacob is positioned as an object of love which Bella manipulates in accordance with her priorities. As a playful subject, Bella becomes a flirtatious subject, which can also be seen in her words:

"*Maybe it would be fun. A date with Jacob, a date with Edward… I laughed darkly to myself*" (Meyer, 2006: 310). While the classic fairy tale type Red Riding Hood is deconstructed in terms of politics of desire and free choice, the Master Wolf figure remains within the same symbolism of danger. Although the wolf is reconstructed as an object of desire, he is still dangerous in terms of male violence. In the series, although Jacob is described within friendship terms indicating him as a safe and cautious person, he becomes, both physically and psychologically, an oppressor character which Bella defines as a beast or monster. Even if Bella refuses him as a lover, Jacob insists on behaving physically intimate and this situation easily turns him into a stalker kissing Bella violently without her permission:

"His lips crushed mine, stopping my protest. He kissed me angrily, roughly, his other hand gripping tight around the back of my neck, making escape impossible. I shoved against his chest with all my strength, but he didn't even seem to notice. His mouth was soft, despite the anger, his lips molding to mine in a warm, unfamiliar way. I grabbed at his face, trying to push it away, failing again. He seemed to notice this time, though, and it aggravated him. His lips forced mine open, and I could feel his hot breath in my mouth" (Meyer, 2007: 293).

Moreover, he becomes a male oppressor who displays obsessive characteristics. Even if Bella declares her choice of Edward many times, Jacob insists that he will not stop loving Bella, and additionally he tries to manipulate Bella's emotions and mind as will be seen in the quotations: " *'But don't get mad at me for hanging around, okay?' Jacob patted the back of my hand. 'Because I'm not giving up. I've got loads of time'*" (Meyer, 2006: 187). Jacob is again in the role of an obsessive lover in these lines: " *'I hate you, Jacob Black.' 'That's good. Hate is a passionate emotion'*"(Meyer, 2007:295). Jacob tries to exert a manipulative and oppressive power on Bella, especially after his first kiss: " *'You're going to think about it tonight. When he thinks you're asleep, you'll be thinking about your options'*" […] " *'Just think about it, Bella.' 'No,' I said stubbornly. 'You will. Tonight. And I'll be thinking about you while you're thinking about me'*" (Meyer, 2007: 295-296).

Besides being a stalker who forcefully employs a manipulative oppression on Bella's thoughts and feelings, Jacob is a physical danger to Bella. He turns into a beast wolf easily:

"With another sharp tearing sound, Jacob exploded, too. He burst out of his skin—shreds of black and white cloth blasted up into the air. It happened so quickly that if I'd blinked, I'd have missed the entire transformation. One second it was Jacob diving into the air, and then it was the gigantic, russet brown wolf—so enormous that I couldn't make sense of its mass somehow fitting inside Jacob—charging the crouched silver beast" (Meyer, 2006:286).

Jacob is dangerous because he is not able to control neither his change nor his emotional state. He can easily hurt Bella: "*'Jake!' I started to complain, but I fell silent when I realized that his whole body was quivering with anger. He glared at me wildly, a growling sound building in his chest. I froze in place, too shocked to remember how to move. The shaking rolled through him, getting faster, until it looked like he was vibrating. His shape blurred…*" (Meyer, 2007:162). On this point, Jacob is aware of the fact that he can be a real danger for Bella, and he admits that he can place her in peril: "*'The hardest part is feeling… out of control,' he said slowly. 'Feeling like I can't be sure of myself—like maybe you shouldn't be around me, like maybe nobody should. Like I'm a monster who might hurt somebody'*" (Meyer, 2006: 304).

Jacob maintains the dangerous characteristics of the wolf which could be controlled, restricted and eliminated by "the huntsman" vampire Edward. Although Edward is a vampire and can be considered as another figure of danger, he is always in control of his feelings and always in the role of the protector of Bella the Red Riding Hood. Edward the huntsman presented within a noble character saves Bella from the wild, monster wolf by marrying her. Marriage backgrounds both the fairy tale and the *Twilight* series. While fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood" is settled on strict social moral codes that punishes women who display free sexuality out of marriage, *Twilight* series presents a setting in which the postmodern postfeminist Red Riding Hood acts according to her own sexual politics and chooses to marry the huntsman for her individual opportunities. In line with the postfeminist politics of identity that maintain a "*focus on autonomous choices*" (Gill, 2008: 436), Bella conditions marriage not as a destiny but, rather, as a vehicle to individual targets. Her choice of marriage is not a last resort in order to stay safe from the wolf. Marriage, which was a means of controlling female sexuality and of subordination of women within strict roles of wifehood and motherhood, becomes a means of using male power for her own interest and individual profits in Bella's tale. Marrying Edward is a way to her transformation from human to a vampire, which will provide her with supreme physical strength, and, infinite beauty and youth. Thus her choice of marrying Edward is a choice of profit. Situating Edward and Jacob as samples of her love experiment, Bella goes on her way

which is majorly shaped with priorities of personal pleasure and profit. Thus, in a very postmodern manner, she chooses what she can consume best for her needs, and her consumerist approach to her relationships involves sexual discourse in great extent. She loves both Edward and Jacob, and wants to 'taste' them both, yet, within this consumer sensibility, she is always calculating pros and cons in her relationships with Edward and Jacob. In this manner, Bella becomes a postfeminist Red Riding Hood exemplifying a youthful consumer who chooses Edward as a partner in accordance with her consumerist approach.

From a postfeminist perspective, Bella conforms to the ideological discourses of the politics of body and "*beauty myth*" (Wolf, 2002) in accordance with a postfeminist "*formulation of an expressive personal lifestyle and the ability to select the right commodities to attain it*" (Negra, 2009: 4). In this vein, Edward, becomes a provider of wealth and infinite beauty, which characterizes him as "the right commodity" to be attained by Bella for her personal benefits. Bella's choices are inscribed on her body. In parallel line with the postfeminist approach to female body as a site of individual identity marker, Bella reads her body as a means of transformation and personal achievement.

3.CONCLUSION

Bella in *Twilight* series deconstructs the fairy tale type Red Riding Hood by reconstructing her as an active postfeminist female who displays politics of free speech of desire and free choice. Bella is eager to act rather than being acted on. She has free expression of her desire both for the wolf and the huntsman. In a very playful nature, she becomes a free sexual subject who places the wolf as the object of desire by keeping him both in hope and in hopelessness. However Jacob keeps the dangerous nature of the wolf of the fairy tale, he becomes a love toy for the Red Riding Hood Bella. Bella as a postfeminist Red Riding Hood strays from the path willingly and creates her own politics of choice and agency in terms of her sexual subjectivity. Thus she deconstructs the simple Red Riding Hood by transforming her into a playful subject willing to express her desire both for the wolf and the huntsman, yet marrying the huntsman for her individual profits. These profits are the cornerstones of postfeminist ideology that situates women at the center of the discourses of freedom of choice, consumerism and beauty politics Rather than becoming a victim, like the Red Riding Hood type of Perrault's and Brother Grimms's, Bella portrays a transgressing female that uses male power for her own interest and profits. In her deconstruction of Red Riding Hood, Bella creates a new woman type who is an active speaking subject expressive of female sexual desire. In this creation, Bella celebrates the consumption based femininity with a special emphasis on beauty and youthfulness. Bella becomes a postfeminist Red Riding Hood type who chooses the huntsman Edward for her individual profits while flirting with the wolf at the same time. Accordingly, she deconstructs Red Riding Hood with a postfeminist ideology celebrating individual choices made by women themselves regarding the issues of social and sexual identity that brings an end to masculine hegemony in descriptions and determinations of preferences on behalf of women.

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