Gender Stereotypes, Feminist Revision, and Political Correctness in Disney's Animation Film *Tangled* (2010)

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Abstract

     The influence of "feminist revision" can be discernible in recent Disney animation films, and Tangled (2010) is not an exception. By comparing the 2010 animated movie with a classical fairytale, Rapunzel (1812), authored by the Brothers Grimm, this article examines to what extent Disney's animated movie Tangled was influenced by the philosophy of "feminism" and "political correctness". A critical and careful re-examination of the animated film reveals that Disney's Tangled is more progressive in terms of feminist elements in comparison with its original novel version by the Brothers Grimm. At the same time, however, this research pays attention to anti-feminist elements of this film, such as lingering gender stereotypes as well as use of violence by two main female characters, Rapunzel and Mother Gothel. Finally, this article seeks to investigate implications of Disney's policy on "diversity, equity, and inclusiveness" (DEI) inherently congruous with political correctness for the 2010 animation film compared with other non-Disney adaptations of the Rapunzel fairytale.

Keywords: Feminism, feminist revision, gender stereotype, political correctness, Rapunzel, *Tangled*, violence

1. INTRODUCTION

Disney's *Tangled* (2010) is a 3DCG animation film about a girl called Rapunzel with magical long hair who has spent her entire life in a tower (IMDb, 1990-2025a). The 2010 animation film is based on a German fairytale first published by the Brothers Grimm in 1812 (Gibb, 2010). Still, it has to be noted that the German fairytale is regarded as an adaptation of a French fairytale, titled "Persinette" by Charlotte-Rose de Caumont de La Force, which is considered to be inspired by an Italian fairytale, titled "Petrosinella" authored by Giambattista Basile (Tujare, 2022: 77). The portrayal of the female protagonist in the novel version by the Brothers Grimm appears to be "submissive, silenced, passive character with no choice or agency throughout the story" as pointed out by Komal Tujare from the feminist perspective (Ibid). Indeed, Rapunzel in the fairytale version is socially isolated without a friend ("Paskal" the loyal chameleon), representing "woman's isolation" (Schaad, 2024). Thus, Rapunzel in the original version possesses similar characteristics with orthodox princesses in classical Disney princess films, such as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), *Cinderella* (1950), and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959). From the feminist viewpoint, it can be argued that the novel version of *Rapunzel* by the Brothers Grimm contains gender stereotypes, although the influence of feminism on the adaptation of children's books can be discernible (Smith, 2014).

The Rapunzel fairytale has been revised as animation films and live-action adaptations overtime in the changing media history. After the end of the Second World War, a stop-motion animation film, *The Story of Rapunzel* (1951), was produced by Ray Harryhausen (IMDb, 1990-2025b). Also, a live-action adaptation, *Faerie Tale Theatre: Rapunzel* (1983), was filmed for television (IMDb, 1990-2025c). The Rapunzel fairytale was incorporated in a musical, *Into the Woods*, which was filmed for television in 1991 (IMDb, 1990-2025d). In 2002, *Barbie as Rapunzel* was produced as an aminated fairytale film for young female audience. In 2014, Rapunzel appears in the *Once Upon a Time* episode *The Tower* as a live-action television drama ((IMDb, 1990-2025e). In the same year, *Into the Woods* (2014), was filmed as a live-action musical fantasy by Disney, in which Rapunzel plays a supplemental but integral role (Disney Fandom, 2025a). Thus, there are several types of Rapunzel in animated versions and live-action adaptations, but Disney's animation adaptation film *Tangled* (2010) is one of the significant examples of feminist revision of the original fairytale by the Brothers Grimm.

Obviously, there exists a discrepancy between Disney princesses of the classical age (Snow White, Cinderella, Aurora) and princesses of the modern age (Ariel, Jasmine, Rapunzel), which has educational implications for young audience (Cardoso and Maravilha, 2019). This article examines to what extent Disney's animated movie *Tangled* (2010) has been influenced by "feminist philosophy" and "political correctness". A critical and careful re-examination of the animated film reveals that Disney's *Tangled* is more progressive in terms of feminist elements in comparison with its original novel version by the Brothers Grimm. Moreover, this research pays attention to anti-feminist elements in *Tangled*, such as traditional "gender stereotypes" represented in the film and use of violence conducted by two main female characters, Rapunzel and Mother Gothel. Finally, this article seeks to investigate implications of Disney's policy on "diversity, equity, and inclusiveness" (DEI) inherently congruous with the idea of political correctness for the 2010 animation film by comparatively scrutinizing other non-Disney adaptations of the Rapunzel fairytale.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: EARLIER RESEARCH ON DISNEY PRINCESS FILMS

Prior to the analysis of Disney's animation film *Tanged* (2010), it is important to conduct literature review to overview earlier research on Disney princess films. As an analytical frame work, this article utilizes "feminism" that is defined as "the belief that women should be allowed the same rights, power, and opportunities as men and be treated in the same way, or the set of activities intended to achieve this state" in *Cambridge Dictionary* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2025a). Related to feminism, this article employs the term "gender stereotype", which can be defined as "a set idea that people have about being male, female, or another identity, especially an idea that is wrong" in *Cambridge Dictionary* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2025b). Indeed, gender stereotypes can be observable in Disney princess films, which have influenced the female audience to the extent that is called "Disney princess phenomenon" (Muir, 2023).

As an earlier work on Disney animation films in terms of genre theory and gender studies, Eve Benhamou authored a book, *Contemporary Disney Animation: Genre, Gender and Hollywood* (2022), specifically focusing on a period from 2008 to 2018. Benhamou examined the collaboration of Disney and other media companies, such as Pixar and Marvel in terms of a variety of genres, including romantic comedies

and superhero stories. Especially, Benhamou employed the gender studies perspective, especially the theory of post-feminism, to investigate contemporary Disney animation films (Benhamou, 2022). In terms of genre, Disney's *Tanged* (2010) can be categorized as a romantic animation film, and it contains conventional gender stereotypes.

Karen Eisenhauer and Carmen Fought authored a book, *Language and Gender in Children's Animated Films: Exploring Disney and Pixar* (2022), and analyzed Disney princess movies from the perspective of language and gender, and classified them into the three periods, the Classic Era (1937-1959), the Renaissance Era (1989-1997), and the New Age Era (2009-2019) (Eisenhauer and Fought, 2022). Moreover, Eisenhauer and Fought observed both negative and positive linguistic messages of Disney princess films, linguistic features, such as talkativeness, compliments, directives, insults, and apologies, as well as gender implications, such as femininity, masculinity, and queerness. Their research stems from both qualitative and quantitative data, and hence it can be considered to be one of the comprehensive earlier works on Disney princess films.

As another analytical framework, this article uses the term "political correctness", which can be defined as "the act of avoiding language and actions that could be offensive to others, especially those relating to sex, gender, and race" in *Cambridge Dictionary* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2025c). Walt Disney himself has been analyzed by several researchers in the light of cultural and political discourse in earlier studies (Smoodin, 1994), although they do not focus on contemporary issues regarding political correctness. Alexandre Bohas investigated the Walt Disney Company itself from the perspective of the political economy, pointing out the existence of the cultural capitalism of Hollywood (Bohas, 2016). Johnson Cheu authored a book, *Diversity in Disney Films: Critical Essays on Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexuality and Disability* (2013), and addressed several issues related to "political correctness" (Cheu, 2013). Having said that, earlier studies do not necessarily examined Disney's *Tangled* (2010) in the light of feminism as well as political correctness, and this article attempts to analyze the 2010 Disney animation film from the interdisciplinary perspectives in reference to earlier research on this research case.

3. DISNEY'S ANIMATION FILM *TANGLED* (2010) AS FEMINIST REVISION

It has been discussed that classical fairytales of the Brothers Grimm and their Disney adaptations contain gender inequity by depicting "submissive heroines, masculine heroes, and evil witches", insinuating "how feminine beauty ideal, sexism, marriage, and binary opposition are dominant themes in these adaptations" (Khalid, 2015: 1833). However, earlier research suggests that Rapunzel in Disney's *Tangled* (2010) is given a stronger and more independent role than previous Disney princesses, let alone Rapunzel in the original classic tale, and the 2010 animation film overcomes the conventional gender stereotype (Ibid). This "woman representation" in *Tangled* (2010) is consist with female characterization of liberal feminism or mainstream feminism as examined in earlier research (e.g. Kartini, 2020). In this sense, it is fair to argue that *Tangled* (2010) is a "feminist retelling" of the original novel by the Brothers Grimm.

Evidently, the Rapunzel fairytale animation adaptation by Disney is under the influence of feminism. Rapunzel in *Tangled* is portrayed as an active, independent, and strong woman, who can take control of her own life and destiny with a help of a thief, Flynn Ryder, also known as Eugene Fitz Herbert (Sirohi and Mehta, 2023: 1701). Rapunzel moreover possesses feminist elements, such as "artistic, intelligent, cautious,

and well-read", and she is willing to learn a variety of things (Shahid, Riaz and Imtiaz, 2019: 221). Hence, the portrayal of Rapunzel in the film can be seen as an influence of feminism, and *BBC News* reported that Rapunzel in *Tangled* is not a typical "damsel in distress", citing a comment by an American actor Mandy Moore who voiced Rapunzel in the film (BBC News, 2011). Even for casual observers, therefore, it is evident that Rapunzel in *Tangled* has feminist elements in comparison with previous Disney princesses.

For this reason, some analysts observed that by creating *Tangled*, "Disney has taken a few more baby steps on the path to feminism" (Letsome, 2011). Disney's movie *Tangled* is not "too girly" as the film begins with a male narration by Flynn Rider. It was examined that "This temporary hijacking of a princess's tale by her square-jawed love interest seems like a crude commercial calculation, a sign to the anxious boys in the audience that things aren't going to be too girly, or to Disneyphobes that the studio can bring some DreamWorks-style attitude" as reviewed in *The New York Times* (Scott, 2010). Hence, it is natural to consider that *Tangled* was influenced by feminist philosophy combined with Disney's commercial strategy, and the film is a feminist revision, though it was described as "baby steps" on the path to feminism.

Disney's *Tangled* is not the first feminist revision on the Rapunzel fairytale, however. In 2002, *Barbie as Rapunzel* as an animated fairytale film was produced by non-Disney filmmakers. Unlike the original story by the Brothers Grimm, Rapunzel in this animated film is capable of going outside of the high tower by herself, albeit accidentally. It connotes that Rapunzel in the 2002 animated movie is more empowered in terms of feminism, because she does not need a help from a man to free herself out of the tower (IMDb, 1990-2025f). Rapunzel in this 2002 animation film has positive characteristics and the film conveys positive messages to the audience, such as "loyalty, friendship, courage, being true to your dreams, and most significantly, believing in yourself" (Common Sense Media, 2002). Therefore, it can be argued that the 2002 animation film is in the same line with Disney's *Tangled* (2010) in terms of empowerment of women and feminist revision.

Notably, Rapunzel in the 2010 animation film does not fall in love with Flynn Rider at first sight, unlike other previous princesses in Disney's animation films (Sirohi and Mehta, 2023). This is the tendency and patterns of romance in Disney princess films since the 1990s (Ogiue, 2014: 242-243), and it contains educational implications on romance for young audience. Clearly, Rapunzel in the animated film represents a "brave and persistent" female image, and the Disney animation film reflects both the oppression of women and the awakening of women's self-consciousness due to the influence of feminism (Tian and Yang, 2024). With regards to the female image and "woman representation" in this 2010 animation film, some earlier research examined the physical characteristics of the protagonist in terms of camera shots and dialogues of scenes in the film (Utamie, 2014).

Gender representation of Rapunzel in the 2010 animation film depicts her as a beautiful white woman with a long blond hair wearing a pinkish purple dress. For one thing, some critics might argue that Rapunzel's skin color should be considered to be Disney's "whitewashing" just like other classic Disney princess films (Prydwynn, 2018). Moreover, Rapunzel's blond hair can be regarded as a "symbol" to understand traditional woman representation and gender stereotypes (Dattagupta, 2018). Meanwhile, Rapunzel's personality is active and rather manly, and she does not hesitate to resort to violence with a frying pan when she meets Flynn Rider at the beginning of their relationship. The depiction of "strong" female protagonist in the 2010

animation film can be regarded as the influence of feminist revision. Notably, this feminist revision can be already seen in the Ladybird novels of Rapunzel (Smith, 2014).

Significantly, in the original version by Brothers Grimm, Rapunzel becomes pregnant as a result of the encounter with a prince who climbs up the tower and finds Rapunzel. Nevertheless, Rapunzel in the 2010 animation version does not have a sexual relationship with Flynn Rider whatsoever, and hence, there exists another feminist revision here, in the light of sexuality or gender role in literature and animation for children or young audience. This has been analyzed as a "body autonomy" in some earlier research (Wilcox, 2021), indicating the physical independence of women from men. Furthermore, Rapunzel in *Tangled* (2010) ends up with short hair, which symbolizes the influence of feminism. This is because "short hairstyle" of women has been recognized as a "feminist statement" although it is still part of a conventional gender stereotype (Cerina, 2021).

4. ANTI-FEMINIST ELEMENTS AND CRITICAL REVIEW OF *TANGLED* (2010)

Despite all the evidence on feminist revision in Disney's animation adaptation of the Rapunzel fairytale, it has been argued that it is still questionable whether Disney's *Tangled* is a feminist film. Dawn C. Chmielewski and Claudia Eller analyzed in *The Los Angeles Times* that "Disney restyles 'Rapunzel' to appeal to boys" because they do not want to see a film with "princess" in the title. As a matter of fact, some boys might feel embarrassed to watch a princess story in a theater. For this reason, it has been observed that Disney renamed the film with the girl-centric name "Rapunzel" to the less gender-specific "Tangled" (Chmielewski and Eller, 2010). Floyd Norman, a retired Disney and Pixar animator, commented that *Tangled* is not a typical princess movie. It was also pointed out that "Disney is wringing the pink out of its princess movies" (Ibid). Nevertheless, *Tangled* as a new princess story undoubtedly attracts female audiences who wish to become a princess (Norilee, 2016). In particular, the color of Rapunzel's dress is pinky purple, but "pink" is a commonly acknowledged as a girly color, which represents a typical gender stereotype.

In the 1812 original fairytale by the Brothers Grimm, Rapunzel is a daughter of a gardener and his wife, rather than that of a king and a queen. In the original fairytale, the young couple suffers from "infertility" at the beginning of the story. This background information regarding infertility is a sharp contrast to an issue of teenage pregnancy. The issue of infertility implies that the role of women in a male-centered society is to give birth to babies and stay at home as a mother and a housewife rather than pursue occupation, social status, or self-actualization. From the feminist viewpoint, moreover, infertility has been medically explained by "women's sexual promiscuity, pursuit of professional career advancement, and psychological immaturity" (Shattuck and Schwarz, 1991: 331). The infertility as a background story was revived in *Into the Woods* (2014) as a live-action musical fantasy by Disney, which contains darker and complicated scenarios than *Tangled* (2010) (Disney Fandom, 2025a). However, *Into the Woods* is not necessarily designed for young audience because of several inappropriate scenes for children, such as sexual connotations (Robledo, 2014). It is logical to comprehend that Disney attempted to remove the sexism and gender stereotypes regarding "reproduction" as anti-feminist elements.

However, Eliza Goldstein pointed out that Disney's animation film *Tangled* (2010) "may be less feminist than it initially appears" since audience might feel accustomed to "unachievable body types, female passivity, and heterosexual marriage as a happily ever after" (Goldstein, 2022). Abigail Peterson also analyzed anti-feminist aspects of the 2010 animation film, too. Indeed, the main characters, including Rapunzel and Flynn Rider in the 2010 animation film are represented as "stereotypically feminine or masculine" (Peterson, 2025). In other words, Disney's animation adaptation of Rapunzel potentially reinforced the conventional gender stereotypes by depicting the femininity and masculinity as traditional images.

In addition, this Disney animated adaptation of the Rapunzel story represents several harmful scenes which might disturb the feelings of young audience. At the beginning of the film, Rapunzel is "abducted" by Gothel in order to use the magical power of Rapunzel's hair. With a view to occupying the magical power, Gothel keeps Rapunzel in an inaccessible tower in the forest. As well as the child abduction and imprisonment, Gothel controls the mind of Rapunzel by telling her that going outside is dangerous and staying inside the tower is safe (Australian Council on Children and the Media, 2006-2025). Therefore, it is fair to consider that Gothel mentally abused Rapunzel in form of "mind control" so that the imprisonment of Rapunzel could be sustainable.

As a matter of fact, the Australian Council on Children and the Media assesses that this 2010 animation film is not recommendable for children under five-years-old, and that parental guidance is recommended for children under eight-years-old due to the existence of frightening scenes and use of violence in the film. As previously pointed out, it has to be noted that Rapunzel "repeatedly hits Flynn over the head with a heavy frying pan. When Flynn regains consciousness, she knocks him out again and stuffs him into a cupboard" (Ibid). In the last part of the film, Gothel "stabs Flynn in the back, and it looks like he's about to die" (Ibid). Here, two main female characters in this film resort to violence, and it indicates that women can use violent power in a way that can overwhelm and surpass men. Nonetheless, the resort to violence should not be viewed as a radical feminist message but it should be considered to be an anti-feminist message. Additionally, the 2010 Disney animation film contains obscure but recognizable sexual references during a conversation between Gothel and bandits. In the middle of the film, Gothel "uses her beauty to charm and seduce the bandits" (Ibid), and it would be perceived as an anti-feminist message and sexism. Having said that, although there are a number of anti-feminist elements, the film *Tangled* was influenced by the feminist philosophy and underwent feminist revision as previously examined.

5. THE GENDER ROLE OF GOTHEL AND THE INFLUENCE OF PATRIARCHAL CULTURE

Gothel as a nurturing parent of Rapunzel plays a significant role that has symbolical implications for gender representations in the film *Tangled* (2010). Rapunzel's hair has a magical power to help retain Gothel's youth and beauty, and this is why Gothel keeps Rapunzel in the isolated tower in the forest. Here, the captivity of Rapunzel symbolizes the traditional patriarchal culture in which women are expected to stay at home. Rapunzel becomes pregnant in the original fairytale by the Brothers Grimm, but there is no sexual relationship between Rapunzel and Flynn Ryder in *Tangled*, because Rapunzel in the Disney animated adaptation is "protective" enough to beat Flynn Ryder

as a trespasser. Rapunzel is extremely protective and cautious about the intruder, because she was taught that the outside world is cruel and dangerous by Gothel as an "overprotective" foster mother. In this sense, Gothel in the Disney animation adaptation succeeds in protecting the "virginity" of Rapunzel and avoiding "teenage pregnancy" by her strict discipline, which is also a reflection of the traditional expectation of men for women in the male-dominated culture.

Unlike the original fairytale by the Brothers Grimm, Rapunzel resorts to violence with a hard frying pan to protect her safety from the invader. Rapunzel uses violence without hesitation, and her attack against Flynn Ryder is effective enough as she literally tangles him in captivity by using her hair. Meanwhile, Flynn Ryder is a well-trained and professional thief, but Rapunzel is also sufficiently trained by Gothel as her protector. It can be inferred that Rapunzel uses the cooking tool as a weapon, because she was raised and taught to protect herself by Gothel. Still, Rapunzel's attacks against Flynn Ryder could be perceived as "excessive self-defense", because he shows no intention to harm her. On the other hand, however, if evil bandits intrude on the tower, Rapunzel's self-defense capability might be effective enough to expel them. Likewise, a violent nature of Gothel can be observed at the end of the film, when Gothel stubs Flynn Ryder with a knife to death. Gothel thus kills Flynn Ryder with knife without hesitation, and it is logical to consider that Rapunzel's self-defense attitude must have been influenced by Gothel's views on use of force for self-defense and self-realization.

It can be argued that Gothel mentally controls Rapunzel to the extent which Rapunzel does not wish to go outside or escape from the tower. A simple question might arise while watching this Disney animation: "If Rapunzel can secure her tresses to a hook to allow the witch to climb up and down, why can't she hook the end of her coiffure and climb down it?" as reviewed in *Time* (Corliss, 2010). It can be considered that Rapunzel does not intend to use her hair to escape from the high tower prior to the encounter with Flynn Rider, because Rapunzel believes that Gothel is her real mother who cares for her so much, and also because Gothel mentally controls Rapunzel's behavior by her discipline as well as rather abusive words. The abduction of Rapunzel and the following mental control to continue the captivity in the tower by Gothel should be regarded as a crime and mental abuse or psychological violence that deprives Rapunzel of the right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness (Shanley, 2018).

Thus, Gothel is depicted as a selfish female person and a wicked witch who exploits the magical power of Rapunzel to retain her youth and beauty. From the feminist perspective however, it can be argued that the nature of Gothel as a witch was socially constructed by the influence of patriarchy and male-dominant culture (Tian and Yang, 2024: 33). To be more specific, the image of a witch is a reflection of the unequal distribution of power between men and women in the male-centered society. Unlike ordinary witches in other fairytales, Gothel does not have an evil magical power, but she is depicted as an evil villain who becomes a hindrance to the freedom and self-realization of Rapunzel as a protagonist in this animated film. Having said that, Gothel wishes to stay young and beautiful, and her obsession to the pursuit of aesthetics stems from traditional values that men expect for ideal women. In this sense, it is possible to argue that Gothel as a witch can be perceived as a "victim" of male-dominant culture and patriarchal society (Ibid).

From the feminist perspective, which views the witch as a victim of the male-dominated society, feminist revision was made in the form of retelling stories. For example, Rapunzel in the Brothers Grimm fairytale is not allowed to go for adventure, but the protagonist in a revised version, *Rapunzel's Revenge: Fairy Tales for Feminists*

(1985), can go outside for adventure and "revenge" (Attic Press, 1985). *Rapunzel's Revenge* was republished as a graphic novel in 2008, authored by Shannon Hale and Dean Hale and illustrated by Nathan Hale. Importantly, the book revised the storyline of the original fairytale so that the protagonist is brave enough to go for adventure, just like Rapunzel in *Tangled* (2010) (Hale, et.al., 2008). Likewise, Serena Valentino authored another side story of Gothel in her book, *Mother Knows Best: A Tale of the Old Witch* (2018), in which Valentino added an original account for where Gothel comes from and how she turns into a wicked witch (Valentino, 2018). Jamie Campbell also published a novella on the side story of the witch in *Saving Rapunzel* (2020) (Campbell, 2020). In this way, Gothel has been depicted as a more understandable and considerate woman than in the original storyline in the process of feminist movement, which has inevitably influenced the filmmaking process of Disney princess films.

6. REPRESENTATION OF "POLITICAL CORRECTNESS" IN DISNEY'S TANGLED (2010)

The original storyline of Rapunzel by the Brothers Grimm has been analyzed as less politically correct, and hence, some authors have attempted to revise the original story in terms of feminism and political correctness. For example, an American writer, James Finn Garner, authored a book, *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories: Modern Tales for Our Life and Times* (1994), in which he depicted the Rapunzel fairytale in the light of political correctness (Garner, 1994). Garner's Rapunzel is a parody of the Rapunzel fairytale and the storyline was completely modified for the purpose of political correctness as well as entertainment. Garner's revision was based on the critique of capitalism and exploitation, so the revision could be regarded as a Marxist revision as well (Ibid).

In the Rapunzel fairytale by the Brothers Grimm, a prince approaches the tower in the forest and instantly falls in love with Rapunzel. Rapunzel in the original fairytale is an ordinary girl, but Rapunzel in the 2010 Disney animation film is a princess who was abducted as a baby, whereas Flynn Rider is a thief rather than a prince unlike the original tale. In the original version, a prince has a social status, and hence, it can be inferred that he is confident enough to approach Rapunzel as if she were a prize to win. Accordingly, the status change in the Disney adaptation in 2010 can be regarded as a feminist revision and a result of political correctness. In this respect, is fair to argue that Disney intended to achieve political correctness by visualizing romance based on free love rather than arranged marriages or male-centered asymmetric romance.

Furthermore, the 2010 Disney animation adaptation contains more politically correct scenes than the Brothers Grimm version as pointed out by Toshio Okada, a visiting professor at Osaka University of Arts (Okada, 2020). After Rapunzel escaped from the isolated tower in the forest, she finds a pub in the middle of nowhere. It turns out that there are several thugs in the pub, drinking and singing together. One of the thugs, Big Nose, shows Rapunzel his left foot with six toes (Disney Fandom, 2025b). This scene is depicted in a comical and musical manner, but it can be perceived as a message of diversity and anti-discrimination for physically handicapped people. Additionally, there is a drunken-looking old man in almost naked only wearing a diaper in the pub, but the inclusiveness of this character could be regarded as a hidden message for diversity and inclusiveness, too (Okada, 2020). These scenes and characters

might be considered unnecessary for ordinary Disney fans, but these elements should be understood as a reflection of Disney's DEI policy as well as political correctness.

As a result of the influence of political correctness, the Rapunzel fairytale has been adopted by authors of several countries in multicultural backgrounds. Rachel Isadora authored a revised version of Rapunzel in the African setting (Isadora, 2008). Furthermore, a board-book of Rapunzel was published in India, and the skin and hair of the protagonist are therefore depicted in brown and black color in the picture book (Perkins and Sreenivasan, 2017). Moreover, a wheel-chair using Rapunzel is portrayed in *And They Lived … Ever After* (2024) published by Rising Flame as a non-profit organization based in India, working for recognition, protection, and promotion of human rights of people with disabilities, particularly women and youth with disabilities (Rising Flame, 2024). This Rapunzel story is part of "disabled women retell fairy tales" which is influenced both by feminism and political correctness (The Guardian, 2024). This tendency of retelling of the Rapunzel fairytale is also a reflection of multiculturalism and diversity on the basis of political correctness. These revisions with multicultural backgrounds are consistent with Disney's DEI policy, and it is logical to infer that the filmmaking process of *Tangled* (2010) must have been influenced by the DEI and political correctness which could be reflected in the current media culture in the world.

7. CONCLUSION

This article has examined Disney's animation film *Tangled* (2010) in the light of the influence of feminism and political correctness. In comparison with the original Rapunzel fairytale by the Brothers Grimm, Disney's 2010 animation film *Tangled* reflects the elements of feminism over the character of the protagonist who is more active and independent compared to classical Disney princesses. Significantly, it can be viewed that the captivity of Rapunzel in the tower by Gothel is a metaphor of the traditional role of women in the patriarchal society. Therefore, it is fair to contend that Disney's 2010 animation version of Rapunzel was influenced by the feminist movement. At the end of the film, Rapunzel's hair is cut off, which means that she made a significant decision on her life and romance, symbolizing a feminist statement. More importantly, the heroine saves the life of hero in this film unlike the classical Disney princess stories in which a prince rescues a princess from her adversity and a villain.

Still, this article has confirmed that there are some criticisms by feminists who argue that *Tangled* contains anti-feminist elements, especially gender stereotypes and violence. In fact, Rapunzel possesses typical feminine physical characteristics, especially her long blonde hair. The color of Rapunzel's dress is pinkish purple, and it can be viewed that the color is based on a traditional gender stereotype as well. In terms of "violence", this film has been critically reviewed, because Rapunzel resorts to violence when she encounters with Flynn Ryder who has no intention to threaten or harm her, repeatedly knocking him down with a hard frying pan. Gothel also resorts to violence against Flynn Ryder by stabbing his back to death. Thus, not only the villain, but also the protagonist resorts to violence against a male character in this film. Use of physical force by a woman against a man represents a sort of extremely radical feminism, but violence itself should not be justified in the name of feminism. Moreover, negative aspects of Gothel have been examined by some observers from the perspective of mental abuse or psychological violence. From the perspective of feminism however,

Gothel, who is obsessed with youth and beauty, can be regarded as a victim of the patriarchal culture and male-dominated society.

Notably, it has been discussed that political correctness can be seen in the Disney animation film *Tangled*. In James Finn Garner's book, *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories: Modern Tales for Our Life and Times* (1994), Rapunzel is depicted as a more independent woman due to the influence of feminist philosophy, which must have been adopted by Disney in the filmmaking process of *Tangled* (2010). This article has pointed out that an issue of teenage pregnancy was deliberately deleted in the animated film due to the influence of political correctness as well as feminism. Moreover, Disney's 2010 animation version intends to send Disney's DEI policy as a message for various global audiences. Additionally, Disney dared to visualize Big Nose who has a left leg with six toes and a drunken-looking naked old man who only wears a diaper. This non-discriminatory depiction indicates that Disney values the importance of diversity and inclusiveness. In conclusion, although there are gender stereotypes in this film, it can be argued that Disney's *Tangled* was influenced by the philosophy and movement of feminism as well as the idea of political correctness in the changing media production culture.

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