



ISSN 1989 – 9572

DOI: 10.47750/jett.2023.14.01.030

Conveying Narrative Items Through Music: An Analysis of the Adaptation of Hansel and Gretel's Fable to Opera

Sancar Tunalı^{1*}

Tuna Fıncıoğlu²

Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers, Vol. 14 (1)

<https://jett.labosfor.com/>

Date of reception: 13 Dec 2022

Date of revision: 23 Jan 2023

Date of acceptance: 13 Feb 2023

Sancar Tunalı, Tuna Fıncıoğlu (2023). Conveying Narrative Items Through Music: An Analysis of the Adaptation of Hansel and Gretel's Fable to Opera. *Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers*, Vol. 14(1). 348-358.

¹Associate Professor , Anadolu University State Conservatory, Performing Arts Department, Opera Department, Eskişehir

²Anadolu University State Conservatory, Performing Arts Department, Opera Department, Eskişehir



Conveying Narrative Items Through Music: An Analysis of the Adaptation of Hansel and Gretel's Fable to Opera

Sancar Tunalı^{1*}, Tuna Firincioğlu²

¹Associate Professor , Anadolu University State Conservatory, Performing Arts Department, Opera Department, Eskişehir

²Anadolu University State Conservatory, Performing Arts Department, Opera Department, Eskişehir

*Corresponding author

Email: stunali@anadolu.edu.tr¹, tunafirincioğlu@gmail.com²

ABSTRACT

A prominent artist well-known for his remarkable productivity and provision of informative content, the composer Engelbert Humperdick has pioneered in a special music style that might inspire new forms of music even after his death. Humperdick also stands out among other artists since he has attached great importance to the role of music education during the chaotic times of the romantic era. This paper focuses on how music and literature are integrated by intellectuals. It also makes some comments and evaluations regarding the adaptation of Hansel and Gretel to opera. The presence of aesthetic elements in Hansel and Gretel opera significantly contributes to its artistic value. Thus, the steps taken by Humperdick to contribute to the attempts aiming to integrate literature and music are unique and noteworthy. Based on the principles of qualitative research methodology, the present study employs document analysis technique while accessing the related data. The findings revealed that Humperdick was inspired by his music style while adapting this popular fairy tale to opera. The study also showed an apparent artistic accord between the musical approach adopted in Hansel and Gretel opera and the fairy tale narration. The findings regarding this accord were reported, evaluated and interpreted within the scope of the study.

Keywords: Music, opera, children's opera, Hansel and Gretel

INTRODUCTION

The most general context of this article is the adaptation of works of art into opera. Opera, which is a discourse-based act, draws attention as a complementary component of music based on literary works and sound. Opera and fairy tales whose authors are known are handled within the scope of "art". Therefore, in these introductory narratives of the article, a narrative that transitions from the more comprehensive fields of art and music to the field of opera and artistic fairy tales was preferred.

Art is expressed in two main ways. In its first form, the work of art is transformed into a physical object as a result of the activity. In the second form, a language-based (semantic) text is revealed. The second type, which has a linguistic/semantic quality, is expressed with the concept of "free arts" (Bozkurt, 2014: 19).

Tragedy and comedy genres were written and staged in the Ancient Greek period. Plato, who is accepted as the founder of systematic philosophy, was also greatly influenced by such works. This influence is understood from the fact that the works he wrote are generally shaped in the form of dialogues (just like in tragedy and comedies) (Keskin and Büyük, 2013: 403). On the other hand, Plato (Platon, 2018: 349) expressed negative views on this subject by adopting a negative attitude towards art in general, especially poetry and tragedy. As a justification for the opposition to art, he argued that the works of art do not produce products that are beneficial in a concrete sense (Platon, 2017: 42). Plato's student Aristotle (Aristoteles, 2017: 131-134) argued that artists engage in activities based on imitation. Therefore, he continued his understanding of seeing artists as low status. The low status seen by Plato and Aristotle for artists was generally accepted and continued until the eighteenth century, especially in the Western world (Özlem, 2006: 26). On the other hand, especially German local music and rhythm started to have significant effects in Europe of the nineteenth century. In this article, it has been tried to explain, albeit partially, the positive approach to art that developed in the Western world after the eighteenth century, by emphasizing how German folk songs were adapted to children's opera and that this music was found to be expressed through fairy tales, which is a special branch of written literature.

With the eighteenth century, the general approach towards art began to follow a positive course. By moving

away from the aging patterns of previous periods, the romanticism movement has come to the fore as an understanding against the elite minority (Gasset, 2017: 20). Engelbert Humperdinck, who drew attention with his productivity and educativeness in the mentioned time period, which is expressed as the "Late Romantic Period", became the pioneer of the style that could become new forms in music in the years after him, with the works he composed. Humperdinck stands out as a composer who gave importance to the role of music education in the turbulent years of the romantic period. In addition, he is among the main artists who can best analyze the local music of the geography he lives in and transfer it to his own music. In this article, conveyances, explanations and evaluations are made about the adaptation of the tale Hansel and Gretel to opera by Humperdinck.

Source Browsing

It can be seen that scientific studies are carried out in different fields related to the Hansel and Gretel tale discussed in this article (Aslan, 2015). Although Hansel and Gretel remain faithful to the name of the fairy tale, there are also books with narratives that transform their narrative into various forms (Gerhardsen, 2017). In such studies on Hansel and Gretel, it can be seen that elements such as tension and additional adventures are usually added to the mystical aspects of the tale. In addition, it can be seen that some behavior patterns in the Hansel and Gretel tale are used in metaphorical ways and discussed in terms of consumer behavior, semiotics and behavioral psychology (Boynukalm, 2015; Cochoy, 2008; Demir, 2017; Güneş, 2006; Karabulut, 2021; Şahin, 2018). Although many scientific publications have been written on the Hansel and Gretel fairy tale, it is seen that the studies on the adaptation of this fairy tale to the opera are relatively limited (Sırmalı, 2021). Therefore, the scarcity of studies on the adaptation of Hansel and Gretel fairy tale to opera highlights the original aspect of this article, which makes significant contributions to the field of study.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

In the sub-titles below, there are frame narratives that constitute the theoretical and conceptual background of the article.

Theoretical framework: Opera music

It is known that classical music has a very long journey in history. Especially with the influence of the Renaissance, some values in art began to change. The opera first emerged with the predictions of the artists gathered at the house of Count Giovanni Bardi in Florence, Italy. Composers, poets and singers gathered here, put forward their views on a new musical genre and enabled opera to be there. According to the group that started this movement, the reason for the music was to save it from the pressure of the church and to turn to singing music, which the church calls barbaric music, rather than polyphonic music as we know it. These people of art took the music of ancient Greece as an example because they aimed to increase the influence of poetry and create a musical drama.

In the course of its historical development, opera has gained the appreciation of people by creating its own expression language within classical music. In the period when there was no church and no musical theater plays were constructed, great composers left a rich legacy by performing valuable performances. In this way, while combining polyphony and solo music, importance was given to singing music. In this path followed, opera has created a culture in classical music for its own sake. While Italian opera culture appeared on the stage in the middle of the seventeenth century, German schools began to form in the nineteenth century. Although opera started as a later addition to classical music, it has shown how important the human voice has become in front of the instrument in the historical process, and that it is a combination of more than one arts. Opera is basically a combination of theater and music. It is a type of art that gathers many mixed and spiral elements in a single center.

The theater, which is one of the oldest events in the world, started to need music during its staging. The need for music and rhythm led to the emergence of various professions/performing groups in the Dionysus Festival. The first examples of ragedy and satire began to appear in Ancient Greek Choirs six centuries ago. The Greek Choir, consisting of dancers and songs that speak in unison and interpret the action, is among the pioneering performances that connect music and rhythm. This unity enabled a collective power to emerge thanks to the play performed on the stage.

In masked choirs in many cities in ancient Greece, "goat songs" were sung in praise of Dionysus, the God of Wine. Tragedy, which means "goat song" in Greek, emerged depending on this tradition (McNeill, 2003: 214). Over time, it began to be written in accordance with clear patterns. Speakers were added to the choral songs in question, which began to take on a poetic character, and thus, it ceased to be a religious ritual and turned into an art show (Sağkol, 2005: 22). These plays began to be performed on the theater stages of the period in question. Scenes are usually set under a slope. This is because nature can create an acoustic environment by using the power of sound reflection. In this way, they figured out that they could convey their voices to the audience. The stage arrangement, located between two hills, is shaped in a way that the audience can sit and watch between the

orchestra pit (the part where the instruments of that period sit) and the stage and the orchestra, according to the similarities of today. These theatrical performances have continued on their way by giving themselves new names over the centuries. Basically, this type of art was shaped by activating human emotions and searching for a way to tell people's events in life.

After Aeschylus, who took leading roles in Greek theater by transforming myth-based songs into tragedy, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes gradually raised the level by making original contributions (Güntekin, 1976: 45). The subjects of the tragedies written and staged in this period were taken from the narratives that the Ancient Greeks produced about gods and people, which are expressed as "myths" today, transmitted from generation to generation from time immemorial and known by the general public (McNeill, 2003: 216).

The most radical transformation in the field of art in world history has started to take place since the Renaissance period. During the Renaissance period, significant developments were seen in branches such as painting, sculpture, literature and music. Efforts were made to move away from the influence of religion in art and to include human emotions. In music, which is the melodic branch of art, religious polyphony (polyphony) was avoided, and individual and singing music was given importance. In this way, a suitable ground was formed for the emergence of the opera. New steps have been taken in art through opera. Because opera, along with the music, offered different storytelling options to the characters. Music geniuses, who combined the classics that have been read for centuries with music, gave up the known methods, played with music forms and made their own created their original languages. The type of art that is told with words, thanks to opera, has brought the possibility of expressing every emotion by combining it with music. The artists who revealed this have acquired a unique place in history due to their contribution to the comprehensive transformation in the field of music. After these changes, a perspective centered on the artist began to be followed in opera. Expressionism has become the main goal and most of the great music people have started to produce works that contain different stories.

Today, opera has revealed its own aesthetic and continues to develop. In the musical literature, it has begun to be accepted as the science of emotional knowledge. The emergence and development of opera is aimed at holding together emotional visions and is a great legacy for humanity. When it comes to expressing emotions, it is possible to reveal them through art. When it comes to expressing emotions by loading them into the human voice, the opera tells what it means. The competence of mental knowledge and the competence of sensible knowledge come together in the opera. Thus, opera continues to exist on the stage as the art of thinking about the beautiful.

The opera, which liberates people, does not directly give the message it keeps in its content. He argues that a person should spend effort and think. Therefore, since the art of opera is a set of codes, the audience and listeners are expected to clarify those codes. In fact, this expectation tells what the real meaning of art is, when it comes to opera; forms their codes with the materials they use. What the opera is and should be is evidenced by the fact that they are a part of the world of phenomena.

Conceptual framework

Before moving on to the findings of the studies within the scope of the article, it is necessary to address the main concepts that guide the examination process. Depending on this requirement, the definitions and explanations in the literature are given briefly in the following explanations.

Children's Opera

Opera can be seen as marginal in some cases, while in other cases it can be expressed in an insignificant position. On the other hand, the children's opera, which has produced little in history, has managed to exist without prejudice, although it is light and cheerful (Adorno, 2018: 222).

Children's opera aims to bring music into social life in a functional way. Many composers; He achieved this goal by adapting lullabies, rhymes and well-known stories to music. In this way, they are directed to the world of children as much as possible. Parallel to the development of nineteenth century Western romanticism and literature, children's opera became a very special legacy of the musical people of this period. Requirements such as the use of a neutral language and performance based on visuals on the stage are the features that distinguish children's opera from other stage performances, as it appeals to all ages and all segments.

Opera emerged as a developed outcome of theatre. What makes theater effective for children is that it is a play within a play. In this way, opera owes its own parody to play fiction. Understanding the codes to be conveyed in the staged children's opera creates different effects in adults, and in children, it creates different effects against the theater-opera, or rather the play that is set on the stage. These effects activate the child's imagination. The spectator plays the action on the stage and the whole of the sounds by completing the symbolic events in his mind. The personalities of the characters in the fairy tales converted into music within the scope of children's opera should be accurately reflected by the composer. Changing events, especially in works based on the child's knowledge, leads to the disappearance of credibility.

METHODOLOGY

This article was written with the qualitative research method. The musical qualities of Hansel and Gretel opera, which is emphasized in the article, were evaluated through content analysis. In the article, the content of Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel opera in the context of opera music and children's opera has been examined. Since the article focuses on evaluating Humperdinck's opera style, it stands out with its descriptive aspect. In the article, which was written in line with the document review, a narrative research design was adopted. As a matter of fact, according to Gürbüz and Şahin (2018: 112), narrative-based research design is used because it has superior aspects in terms of emotion. In the research design in question, the facts can be enriched by strengthening them with interpretation-based narratives.

The late romantic period represents the last periods of romantic narrative forms. This ending constitutes a new beginning for realistic narratives. Considering this aspect, Humperdinck's works have a unique value in terms of the emergence of realistic narrative forms. Therefore, based on the assumption that they pioneered realistic narrative forms, the judgment that Humperdinck directly reflects the past experiences he has experienced and the environmental conditions he is in, to the way his works are processed. In this article, the following propositions are made by accepting the assumption in question as the starting point.

First Proposition

The narration that Humperdinck uses while structuring his work has the quality of reflecting the tendency towards realistic narrative forms as a result of the interaction of his current and past experiences.

Second Proposition

Humperdinck's compositions reflect the environmental elements and individual realities of the experiences that affect him, and this contributes to revealing the interaction of music and literature.

Based on these propositions, it can be evaluated that the composition style that Humperdinck resorted to constitutes the essence of the individual realities of the composer who puts his artistic fairy tale narratives into notes. Therefore, Hansel and Gretel opera undertakes the function of an indicator that can meaningfully reflect the composer's understanding of making music. Thanks to such an indicator/reflection function, the composer's approach to making music can be evaluated in a more understandable way. Considering all these issues, in this article, the answers to the following research questions are tried to be given through the above propositions.

Research Question 1

Can the composer (Humperdinck) adequately reflect the realities related to his personal environment elements through his notated narratives?

Research Question 2

Do the evaluations made on the way of making music applied by the composer show a parallelism with his understanding of life?

Analysis: Adaptation Of Hansel And Gretel Fairy Tale Into Opera

The composition process of Hansel and Gretel started with the songs that Humperdinck's sister Adelheid composed for the fairy tale. The songs composed by Humperdinck and this work have been staged on the world stages for years.

Hansel and Gretel opera is mostly played by adults. Theoretically staged roles seem possible to be played by older children. However, in practice, voices that can be heard against a large orchestra and overcome musical difficulties are very difficult from a technical point of view. The role of the witch, one of the important characters in the work, is portrayed on world stages with tenor voices for a funny narration. This role is played by the same actor as the mother (<https://opera-inside.com>) to emphasize the need to consider the events in the parents' house and the witch's house as a whole. The reason for this is to prove in a different way that the mother in the fairy tale is a stepmother and treats children badly. On the other hand, considering the roles of the mother and the witch mentioned in the opera independently of each other expresses a more reasonable approach. In the symbolic language of the tale, the witch sometimes represents the cruel reality.

Humperdinck expanded the tale of Hansel and Gretel into a song play and eventually into a full opera. Humperdinck offered a softer and lighter version of the story. Hansel and Gretel's mother asked them to pick strawberries just to keep them from going out and causing trouble, instead of sending the children to die as the Grimms did in the original. In addition, friendly new characters and religious expressions about prayer have been added to the story. As a matter of fact, it can be seen that this tale of the Brothers Grimm is written in ways that show partial differences in written sources (Grimm and Grimm, 1999; Grimm and Grimm, 2021).

Humperdinck's relationship with Wagner has not gone unnoticed by music people and will not be ignored in this article either. Wagner's invisible influence almost spread to the notes coming out of Humperdinck's pen. In the work, the witch's walk with a broom is a reference to Wagner's famous Walkurs. Compared to Humperdinck's

other works, Hansel and Gretel has a large romantic orchestra structured. An opera was composed to announce a romantic orchestra party as a reflection of the musical influences of the period. In terms of music, the possibilities of coloring with the effect of the fairy tale subject were used as much as possible. For this reason, a prominent role has been attributed to the orchestra thanks to the preludes and transitional music.

In order to make the fine details of the opera clear, it is necessary to mention the style of expression that Humperdinck initiated with this piece in the history of music. "Sprechstimme" (speech-voice), as musicians know, recitative (rhythmic reading or singing with sounds). Examples of this are first encountered in Mozart's works. Especially in *The Abduction from the Palace* and *The Magic Flute* operas, "zingspiele" appears in the form expressed as a spoken song form. In the music of the 20th century, it is used as a transition between singing and speaking in music, where the quality of tone is raised and lowered, courtesy of melodic contours, by setting musical notes. Although it is used especially between dialogues, it has transformed into a different form in theatrical speeches like the Mozart period. The impression gained in the melodrama *Königskinder* in the 19th century can be seen later reflected in Arnold Schoenberg's famous and important work "*Pierrot Lunaire*". The change of form here needs to be explained. Because "Sprechstimme", along with Schoenberg, took its place on musical notation with different notation techniques. It can be seen that spoken singing, developed by Humperdinck by taking Mozart as an example in the history of music, has developed over the years and found a way to be performed in different ways.

Humperdinck took more than one composer as an example while producing his works. The most prominent name for this after Mozart is R. Wagner. It adopted many of Wagner's elements such as orchestration and harmony expression. In fact, he used it during the curtain transitions in *Hansel und Gretel* opera that the music was not composed by different arias, but in connection with the transitions. Fortunately, he has decided to avoid using excessive symbolism and constantly push the action forward. In this respect, it is thought that everything is used in dose. This has been a great success in terms of preserving the entirety of his works. However, thanks to these attitudes, while listening to the piece from beginning to end, *Hansel and Gretel* is the most prominent piece that can show itself as "Wagnerian" in the post-Wagnerian period.

Engelbert Humperdinck, inspired by his teacher, mentor and friend in their relationship after years, not only explained the music perspective, but also applied it. While creating the music in his mind according to the rules of music, he also revealed other music rules in his own way. He expressed his philosophy by reflecting the philosophy of the work to music and revealing his own musical language. Rather than systematic music, he developed controllable effects, interpreting it as reality rather than fantasy. In a way, this approach has already pushed him to change the plot-person-plot of the tale in *Hansel and Gretel* opera. Despite the similarity in name and subject, *Hansel and Gretel* opera became Engelbert's tale and placed its own imagery in its music.

The point of view towards opera needs to be positioned differently in this context. Because opera should not be seen only as a classical play with music in the subject work. There is a perception from outside to inside that the mind supports music and melodies and moves together after a certain point. While thinking from an external perspective that the tale meets the melodies and calls out, one can suddenly witness how much the experiences coming from the subconscious are found in the events and are compatible with the opera. Witnessing the duet, which is the prayer for sleep at the end of the first act, actually addressed to the spiritual spirit in the minds and hearts, is the most visible form of this. This aspect of children's opera, which can be seen as a way of expression, is an indication that the balance of audience-actress-work is achieved.

Although Wagner made a name for himself with the political events of his period, the fact that he used epic themes in his compositions shows that he was trying to activate the spiritual and nationalist memory of his society. When it comes to Engelbert, it can be seen that the same orientation becomes evident again with a different image. Therefore, it emerges that the tale, which is one of the first examples of written and oral literature, has a different place in the consciousness of society not only as a language of expression, but also as a fictionalized one.

Engelbert reunited German literature with his interpretation of the *Hansel and Gretel* fable. While revealing the learned information through fairy tales, it also made room in the musical memory of the mind with music (with its harmonious harmony). This point answers the question of how much space a composer can make in the memory of society. Just as the Grimm Brothers' writing of works that have become the memory of society is a kind of touchstone for German literature, so is the path followed by Engelbert. How much the composer reminded the fairy-tale journey of his people with music, actors and characters; He recorded the German culture in history with a different perspective in the music literature.

This fairy tale is actually based on a true, dramatic story. The story of *Hansel and Gretel* used by the Brothers Grimm in their collection of children's fairy tales is not a folk tale. The work was created as a result of the murder of the baker Katharina Schrader (1618-1647). Schraderin was murdered at his home in Spessart by Hans and Grete Metzler in one of their bakeries for not wanting to reveal their gingerbread recipe. This shows that the Brothers Grimm follow the agenda and present the events as a work (<https://opera-inside.com>).

Parts of Hansel and Gretel Opera

Prelude: Humperdinck started to compose the prelude of the piece by taking the lives of children as reference. The first notes of evening prayer announce to us the action that children take in their lives. These first notes calmly reveal the motif of vespers. It draws us through a bridge to the content of the divine work, because the tunes that come later are the joyous dances of children lost in the forest, reflecting their happiness after they were found.

Act One: Hansel and Gretel wait for their parents in the living room. They both try to complete the task assigned to them. Hansel is making a broom and Gretel is knitting socks by the stove. Years of hunger and misery. They have been hungry for days and eat only dry bread. Seeing Hansel's unhappiness and grievances, Gretel reminds him that when needed, God extends his hand as their father told them. However, Hansel says they can't get enough of it. In the next scene, Hansel quits his job and convinces Gretel to dance. The dance performed here is one of the German folk songs. It is the only piece that remained unchanged in the song and piece, which was composed by Adelheid Wette.

When Getrud (the children's mother) returns home, he is greatly disappointed after seeing the children quit their jobs and make fun of him. He sends the children to punishment, to the forest to collect food. But in the next scene, she is very happy when she sees her husband coming home with a basket full of supplies. Seeing that the children are not at home, Peter (the children's father) asks Getrud where the children are, and Getrud says he sent them to the forest for punishment. Then Peter excitedly says that it is very dangerous for the children to be in the forest. He says the witch in the forest can harm children.

Second Act: The transition from the first fret to the second fret is with a soft instrument transition. Preparations are made for the transition from the events experienced at home to the events experienced by the children in the forest. The first event we encounter with the opening of the curtain is Gretel picking a bunch of wild flowers. Gretel sings, holding the sheaf in her hand. Hansel, on the other hand, is zealous with the excitement of taking home a basket full of strawberries. Gretel makes a crown of flowers and wants to give it to Hansel. Hansel, on the other hand, says that boys do not wear flower crowns and puts the flower crown on his sister's head. Meanwhile, the sound of a cuckoo resounds in the forest. The hungry children start to eat the strawberries they picked with the sound of the bird, but a commotion ensues because of Hansel's gluttony. Gretel tells Hansel, who eats all the strawberries they collect, that their mother will be very angry because of this selfishness. Having lost their way in the forest, the brothers seek shelter in the dark of the night. During their time in the forest, the children sing 'Ein Männlein steht im Walde'. This song is one of the German folk songs and has been adapted into an opera. As the end of the second act approaches, the darkness of night and the horror of the sounds coming from the forest cause the children to clump together. Meanwhile, the Sleeping Fairy appears on stage and sings the favorite aria of the second act, 'Der kleine Sandmann bin ich'. Before going to sleep, the two brothers pray (Abendsegen) and fall asleep in the forest, so as not to be afraid of what happens next.

Act Three: The opening of the third act takes place when the Fairy Dew wakes the children. This fairy sprinkles dewdrops on the children to wake them up. Gradually, the children begin to wake up. It's a beautiful morning. Both dreamed that angels would protect them. The morning mist begins to dissipate. Suddenly, the smell of gingerbread spreads in the air. Moving deeper into the forest, Hansel and Gretel come across a house made of sweets. This is the witch's house in the forest, as expected. The witch made the walls of the house from sweets and candies in order to draw attention to the eyes and hunger of children. With the greed of hunger, Hansel wants to enter this house, but Gretel tries to pull him back as much as possible. Hansel then persuades him to try the gingerbread. It takes a piece of the house. Just at this moment, someone's voice is heard from inside the house: 'Nibbling, nibbling, little mouse! Who is gnawing at my tiny house?'. The witch leaves the house and meets the children. The two children are terrified of the old and strange woman. Realizing that Hansel and Gretel want to escape, the witch enchants them and locks Hansel in the cage. He begins to feed Hansel nuts and raisins to make him fat and round. He gives Gretel the task of setting the table. Because what the witch wants is to cook Hansel. With the happiness of the witches, she gets on her magic broom and starts to wander around the house. Gretel steals the magic broom secretly from the witch and memorizes the magic word. In this way, he breaks Hansel's spell and frees him from the cage. The witch tells Gretel to look inside the oven to see if the gingerbread is done. Gretel pretends that she doesn't understand what the witch is saying and asks the witch to show her. When the witch approaches the stove, the children push the witch into the stove. Throwing the witch into the stove, Hansel and Gretel flee the house in a fury, and the witch's delicious little house explodes loudly. Gingerbread crates fall from the gingerbread figures in the garden. The children that the witch has turned into gingerbread come to life one by one. Gretel wakes the children by touching them with her hand. The two brothers hear their father's voice in the distance. Peter is reunited with his lost children in the forest and is happy. Peter, who witnessed when his other children lived, also witnessed their happiness. The choral section, which is the final scene of the opera, is performed by the children and the closing of the curtain is prepared.

Characters in Hansel and Gretel Opera

Hansel: Gretel's brother (mezzo-soprano)

Gretel: Hansel's sister (soprano)

Gertrud: Hansel and Gretel's mother (mezzo-soprano)

Peter: Hansel and Gretel's father, broom maker (baritone)

Witch: The sorceress character (mezzo-soprano) that Hansel and Gretel meet in the forest

Sleeping Fairy: Soprano

Fairy of Dew: Soprano

Echoes and children's choir

Composer of Hansel and Gretel Opera

Music requires great composing talent. It's more than just a composer's skill to compose chords and create melodies. Because this should be thought of as playing a game with the rules of music. Just as a child has mastered bouncing the ball in the street, a composer has mastered the moment he announces the chords and melodies in the order he has established. As in other types of art, the process of formation comes from within the artist. All musical works that have been transferred to art lovers for centuries are presented to the taste and understanding of the listeners from the soul of the composers. This situation, in principle, includes not only the natural talents of the composers, but also their past, life experiences and their joys and tragedies.

Engelbert Humperdinck, the composer of the Hansel and Gretel opera, is an artist and composer who has lived through the stages mentioned above throughout his life. Humperdinck; He is an artist who received the appreciation of important composers such as Wolf, Strauss and Mahler. In addition, the aforementioned composers have made it clear that they respect his musical talents. The composer, who started his composition studies at the age of seven, wrote his first work at the age of thirteen. These two works he wrote are a musical play with conversation, which the Germans call 'singspiele'. After completing his music education, he won the Mendelssohn Prize in the competition he entered in 1879 and then went to Italy. During this trip, he became close friends with R. Wagner and experienced a period of change in terms of his view of life and his understanding of composition.

Humperdinck's musical style was highly tied to the German folk tradition. But it was clearly Wagner, and his music, that the composer was essentially influenced by his path and did not give up. He worked as Humperdinck Wagner's assistant for a serious time. Moreover, in 1882, he assisted in the change of scenery and contributed to the music at the premiere of Wagner's opera Parsifal. This event took its place in the history of music in Beirut, together with his relationship with Wagner. After the death of the German composer Wagner in 1883, Humperdinck tried to maintain his contacts with Beirut and continued to notate his own compositions. Despite all his discoveries, he did not find his distinctive expression and voice until 1890.

Returning to academic life in 1890, Humperdinck was appointed professor at the Frankfurt Conservatory. In the same year, he started working on the Hansel and Gretel opera. This opera is the composer's most vocal work. The opera was premiered in Weimar by Richard Strauss on December 23, 1893, and was a huge success. Hansel and Gretel opera is an opera that is frequently performed on stage around the world. The fact that Humperdinck achieved this success that he could never imagine again, and the complete intertwining of the subject and artistic sensibility, made a great impression in those years.

Humperdinck aimed to collect all the components in his works as his understanding of composition. German history, culture, traditions and musical memory are all together in Humperdinck's works. The composer, who ostensibly produces works for children, has won the admiration of audiences and listeners of all ages, in many ways, thanks to his blend of the weight of the Wagnerian expression. Humperdinck's bringing a children's story to the music world in a monumental and orchestral way is considered to be a successful synthesis of Hansel and Gretel opera of German mastery style.

Characteristics of the Period in which Hansel and Gretel Opera was Composed

Humperdinck had important titles such as composer, music teacher and conductor after his name throughout his life. His productivity and works are generally included in the late romantic period, in other words, post-romanticism. Especially between 1850 and 1890, the works of some composers took place during this period and the preparations for the modern period began.

Romanticism is not only a movement in art branches such as music, painting, literature, but also an image for an entire era and has made people live in a certain style. As Ahmet Say makes an analogy in his book; "Romance is quite similar to the fairy sultan's daughter in our oral literature. Because it is a fairy tale, it tinkers with the universe of dreams and expresses the introverted feelings of people. To put it more clearly; The romantic movement is based on subjectivity, individualism, subjective sensibility" (Say, 2013: 83). Based on this explanation, it is possible to arrive at the following inference; Transparent performance and perfect harmony in the romantic period of music should be considered as the autobiography of the composer in musical notes.

One of the main issues in the late romantic period is the political events in Europe, and the effects of romanticism revived with the French Revolution and influenced people. The failure of the results of the revolution was reflected as a revolution in other societies. The enlightenment process in Germany greatly

influenced the thinkers living in its own and the lands to its east. Intellectual and political movements have brought a different perspective to national consciousness. “According to the musicologist Alfred Einstein, in the nineteenth century, the sympathy of romantic composers for their own people was actually a “nostalgia for the land” (Say, 2013: 118). However, this situation may vary from composer to composer. Because an artist with universal values can only have the qualifications to notate the language of love in his own land.

Independence, local sounds and rhythms are the formula of national identity in music. Considering the works of music people who are members of seven continents and try to establish universal music, it can be seen that the way to be effective is mostly by using the rhythms and melodies of the region. Folk songs, dance figures, rhythms form the styles of nations. These figures can appear as musical motifs in the works, and in some cases, they can be heard as an emotional expression of the artist's skillfully integrating with the harmony of the stream of consciousness. The point to be seen is that; The establishment of national styles is one of the elements that feed romanticism. Still, he nourishes himself with the innerness of emotion and reflects this movement and lifestyle to history (Finkelstein, 1995; Say, 2013).

The Adaptation of the Fable to the Opera

The tale of Hansel and Gretel has turned into an art form that will hold the visual and musical feast together on the stage and has been revealed with the melodies of Humperdinck. When Humperdinck adapted the tale into opera, he ignored many of the eerie details. This hidden detail attracted the attention of some music critics and the work began to be called Humperdinck's tale. Looking at the characters constructed by the composer, it is possible to say the first change for Peter. In the original text of the tale, Peter is a father frustrated by famine. He cannot afford the food his family needs. This situation becomes a great burden that touches the honor of paternity. The character of Getrud is the stepmother of the children, the second wife of Peter. She is the person who sends children into the forest and in a sense causes them to disappear. She is the one who drags the children to that road, knowing that they cannot come from the dark, enchanted forest road. Therefore, Getrud is actually the character that causes the formation of the tale (Fisher, 2000).

Tragedy writers of the ancient Greek period felt free to change some details of traditional stories to serve their own purposes (McNeill, 2003: 216). A similar kind of freedom also emerges in the process of adapting the Hansel and Gretel fairy tale to opera.

The Effect of the Formal Form of the Fable on Opera

Regardless of the art branch, the competence of the resulting work must meet some questions. “How valuable is the work?”, “How authoritative is the work?” and “How strong is the work?”. If the answers to such questions can be obtained, it can be discussed whether there is an artistic competence in the content of that work, and an art distinction can be made according to the original material used. The genres of fairy tales and operas that are at the forefront of this article are completely composed of prime materials in terms of both content and form. In addition, it should not be overlooked that the tale with artistic value is an art tale.

The harmony in the formation of fairy tale and opera art, which can be associated with each other, draws attention. Because the expression language of the works aims to make a pure contribution to art. Issues such as the flow of events in the content of the tale, the preservation of the whole from beginning to end, and the way words are explained with notes draw attention as indicators of artistic effort. Art, which is a set of codes, does not directly give the message it wants to give, but creates an opinion of its own and leaves it to the subject (listener-spectator) to understand and comprehend it.

The tale of Hansel and Gretel has a historical character. Although there are mystical elements in its content, it is basically a story that has left a mark on society. These traces should be seen as the codes of the work in the carefully written text. Seeing mystical events as a value that adds richness to the language of expression expresses a more correct approach. When this detail is evaluated in terms of opera, the combination of the beautiful singing art of the characters and the art of drama, together with the music of Humperdinck, creates new codes.

Thanks to Humperdinck's original efforts, the work has ceased to be an image created by children or adults only in their dreams, and has become a phenomenon (the world of phenomena) with visuality and melodiousness. The purpose of adapting the tale to the opera is to bring the aesthetic attitude to the highest level. Humperdinck's sister was the first to compose the songs of this tale, but Humperdinck liked the songs and the tale so much that she adapted it into an opera. From this point of view, it is understood that the aesthetic level is tried to be carried to higher levels by two musicians. The audience, who watches the plot of the tale in opera form, goes back to the first time they heard or read the tale without thinking of any other purpose and tries to make predictions about how the events will be exhibited. Therefore, the adaptation of the fairy tale to the opera should not be thought of only as the staging of the writings by turning them into notes. As a matter of fact, the work follows the traditional way of storytelling known as medium-free narration or straight narration, and enables the opera singers to tell the story with their facial expressions, making eye contact with children, using their voice and body. There is no need to use any other tool in this form of explanation.

The plot consists of lay-out-knot-solution parts with its organic integrity and exactly coincides with the imaginary settlement and texture of the tale in minds. Therefore, Hansel and Gretel has not only remained a fairy tale, but also a melodic fiction with the support of music, and has turned into a play that is followed with admiration for its theatrical aspects. The success of the animated characters, on the other hand, should be seen as their acting style and the way they present themselves on the stage with the arias they sing. When Hansel and Gretel are handled in a theatrical form, the action with meaning, in other words drameno, comes to the fore as the element to be emphasized. Because while the audience witnesses the excitement of the people playing the play while watching the tale on stage, they understand the basic idea of the tale adapted to the opera by establishing an emotional and organic bond with them. The bond established has the qualities that explain the plot in terms of literature. Composed music, on the other hand, increases the mystical effect of the events and the arias performed ensure that all events carry the value of reality during the performance of the animated roles.

CONCLUSION

Works of art such as opera can be transferred to a large number of people thanks to the attractive qualities of music. It can be freely announced to much larger communities, especially through mass media. Tales, which are the product of written works, can also be the subject of opera. Therefore, it can support opera, which is a branch of art, in terms of content. Tales are in many ways compatible with opera, which is an oral musical form, in terms of introduction, development and conclusion.

All kinds of gains from the Hansel and Gretel tale and opera actually contain aspects that can appeal to all age groups. While producing within the scope of children's opera, the qualities of the age group are taken into consideration. The state of shaping the fairy tale characters of the work, which was adapted into an opera by Humperdinck, reveals how important musical saturation is. When the reader or listener encounters a work of art, he adheres to his aesthetic motives. Of course, there are differences such as age differences, life experience, but basically, art makes itself felt in an irresistible way. Although children's opera seems to appeal to certain age groups in terms of subject, processing and even staging, it provides meaningful contributions to art audiences in many ways by acting as a bridge between two branches of art in terms of which every adult encounters in their childhood.

Adapted by Humperdinck, the opera remained connected to German folk songs with interaction with Wagner. In this way, the weave of possibilities in the opera appeals to auditory as a unique musical theme. The situation in question highlights this work, which is an example of how the fairy tale should be revealed and adapted into an opera, rather than its processing. Humperdinck also adopted the legacy left by other great composers to the history of music. In addition to this, the way Humperdinck gives direction to the ideas created by his sister while giving consistency to his expression and musical expression draws attention as an indicator of the value Humperdinck places on participation. The narratives in this article, which has an exploratory nature due to the scope of the subject covered in the study, can only reveal a certain framework. Comprehensive and qualified studies on the subject are expected to be written in the future.

REFERENCES

1. Adorno, T.W. (2018). Müzik yazıları, Çev. Şeyda Öztürk, Yapı Kredi.
2. Aristotles, (2017). Nikomakhos'a etik, Çev. Furkan Akderin, Say.
3. Aslan, E. (2015). Uygulamalı folklor bağlamında Cırdan Masalı ile Hansel ve Gretel masalına karşılaştırmalı bir bakış. *Gazi Türkiyat*, 17, 157-167.
4. Boynukalın, N. (2015). Açlık, fakirlik, çocuk işçi, yamyamlık ve toplumsal cinsiyet bağlamında Hansel ve Gretel. *Mavi Atlas*, (5), 115-125.
5. Bozkurt, N. (2014). Sanat ve estetik kuramları, Sentez.
6. Cochoy, F. (2008). Hansel and Gretel at the grocery store: progressive grocer and the little American consumers (1929-1959). *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 1(2), 145-163.
7. Demir, D. (2017). Hansel ve Gretel adlı masalın Greimas'ın eyleyenler modeline göre incelenmesi. *Itobiad: Journal of the Human & Social Science Researches*, 6(5), 3303-3315.
8. Finkelstein, S. (1995). Besteci ve ulus müzikte halk mirası (M.H. Spatar, Çev.) *Pencere*, p. 30-34, 108-165.
9. Fisher, B.D. (2000). Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel (opera journeys mini guide series). *Opera Journeys*.
10. Gasset, J.O. Y (2017). Sanatın insansızlaştırılması ve roman üstüne düşünceler (N. G. Işık, Çev.) Yapı Kredi.
11. Gerhardsen, C. (2017). Hansel ve Gretelin intikamı (B. Sever, Çev.) Pegasus.
12. Grimm, J. & Grimm, W. (1999) *Masallar 1* (K. Kaya, Çev.) MEB.
13. Grimm, J. & Grimm, W. (2021) *Hansel ve Gratel* (M. A. Ayyıldız, Çev.) Dorlion.

14. Güneş, H. (2006). Grimm masallarının çocuklar üzerindeki etkileri [Yayımlanmamış doktora tezi]. Anadolu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Eskişehir.
15. Güntekin, R. N. (1976). Reşat Nuri Güntekin'in tiyatro ile ilgili makaleleri, (K. Yavuz, Haz.) Milli Eğitim.
16. Gürbüz, S. & Şahin, F. (2018). Sosyal bilimlerde araştırma yöntemleri, Seçkin.
17. Karabulut, M. (2021). Grimm Kardeşler'in "Hansel ve Gretel" adlı masalının korku ve cinsellik bağlamında analizi. Zeitschrift für die Welt der Türken, 13(3), 189-206.
18. Keskin, U. & Büyük, K. (2013). Antik Yunan yazınsal oyunlarında yönetim düşüncesi. Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi, 18(1), 385-404.
19. McNeill, W. H., (2003). Dünya Tarihi (A. Şenel, Çev.) İmge.
20. Murphy, L. (2003). The true story of Hansel and Gretel, Penguin Books.
21. Özlem, D. (2006). Kavram ve düşünce tarihi çalışmaları kavramlar ve tarihleri II, İnkılâp.
22. Platon, (2017). İon (F. Akderin, Çev.) Say.
23. Platon, (2018). Devlet (S. Eyüboğlu ve M. A. Cimcoz, Çev.) Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür.
24. Sağkol, T. (2005). Aiskhilos'un "Zincire Vurulmuş Prometheus" tragedyasında başkaldırı kavramı ve 18-20. yüzyıl batı resim sanatına yansımaları [Yayımlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi]. İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
25. Say, A. (2013). Müzik nedir, nasıl bir sanattır?, Evrensel Basım, 83-111.
26. Sırmalı, A. (2021). Operalarda yer alan seçilmiş solo keman partilerinin incelenmesi, Hacettepe Üniversitesi Güzel Sanatlar Enstitüsü, Sanatta Yeterlik Çalışması Raporu.
27. Şahin, H. (2018). Grimm masallarındaki cadı imajı. Anadolu Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, Prof. Dr. Seyyare Duman (Özel Sayı), 113-127.