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Europe illustrates the Grimms' fairy tales

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Marnie Campagnaro

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# Clothing the Child in Red: A Historical and Comparative Analysis of Italian Visual Retellings of the Grimms' *Little Red Riding Hood*

Marnie Campagnaro

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## Introduction

- 1 Clothing frequently plays a relevant role in fairytales. It has been used to embody identity features, to confer magical power on characters or to help them escape a fatal destiny. Sometimes, clothing can even be transformed into a character, as in some of H. C. Andersen's popular tales such as *The Red Shoes* or *The Shirt-Collar*. Finally, clothing can be used to convey symbolic meaning, social status or aspirations. By selecting the design and setting for the clothing of the characters, many illustrators place the text in a unique historical, social and literary context. For instance, Roberto Innocenti's *Cinderella* and Fiona French's *Snow White in New York* are both set in the 1920s. The two artists emphasise fashion and glamour in their illustrations. They devote special attention to accessories such as white fur coats, cosy cloche hats and long pearl necklaces. This visual fashioning operation, which holds a special allure for readers, has also artistically enhanced the two works.
- 2 In many cultures, fairytales describe protagonists wearing a particular type of clothing and carrying certain personal objects. These protagonists frequently set off on long and adventurous journeys and encounter various trials and meet frightening, perhaps deadly, enemies; but in the end – in the stories with a happy ending, at least – they manage to return home. One such fairytale is *Little Red Riding Hood*, a story which – possibly more than any other – is embedded in the history of Western imagination and sticks particularly well in our minds, partly because of the protagonist's personal and exceptionally famous red hood.<sup>1</sup> There are other fairytales, of course, such as *Puss in*

*Boots, Princess Mouse-Skin, The Knapsack, The Hat and the Horn, The Shroud, The Shoes that Were Danced to Pieces*, and so on – referring solely to the Brothers Grimm’s repertoire – with titles and plots which point to the strong and vital presence of clothing and accessories. This is also the case for *Cinderella*, whose gold and silver gowns and precious glass slippers bewitch us with their regal splendour, beauty and sumptuousness. It is important to bear in mind, however, that the items of clothing in these stories are fairytale objects. They are fantastical, extra-ordinary, excessively precious or filthy to be worn, and often the bearers of prodigious revelations. In contrast, the evocative power of how the little girl in red is dressed stems surprisingly from such a simple, frugal item of clothing as a hood and its red colour. Though we are told it is made of velvet,<sup>2</sup> a precious fabric, a hood is an item of clothing that has nothing extraordinary or magical about it.

- 3 By using this angle of research, I aim to answer the following research questions: is there an established standard for dressing Little Red Riding Hood in Italian visual retellings of the Grimms’ fairy tale? And what about the relationships between dressing the “little girl in red” and the subsequent developments of the tale? In this chapter, I will analyse the representation, the role and the symbolism of Little Red Riding Hood’s clothing, starting from a selection of picturebooks inspired by the fairytales by the Brothers Grimm and published in Italy in the last 20 years. I will focus on several specific features of clothing (hoods, bonnets, headscarves and cloaks) that characterise the different illustrated depictions of the main protagonist.

## Relevant clothing in fairytales: contemporary historical and theoretical perspectives

- 4 Contemporary research has confirmed the close relationship between sartorial studies, history, visual culture and fairytales, and a growing number of studies have attempted to draw hitherto-unseen parallels between clothing and fashion, as described in many popular fairytales.<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this chapter, I will focus solely on a few recent studies.
- 5 An interesting approach to sartorial studies can be found in the volume *Fairy Tale Queens: Representations of Early Modern Queenship*,<sup>4</sup> which aims to trace a link between the queens represented in fairytales and the queens who really lived between 1500 and 1700. Jo Eldridge Carney compares the wardrobes of the princesses of classic fairytales, such as *Cinderella* and *Donkey-Skin* by Charles Perrault, with real queens such as Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Anne of Cleves, Catherine Parr, Catherine de Medici and Elizabeth the First. In describing these female figures’ lives at court, the American scholar draws some audacious comparisons between fashion styles and fairytales. She recalls, for instance, how the magnificence of a wardrobe served two main purposes: first, a queen’s sumptuous gowns enabled her to underscore the superiority of her social standing; second, they enabled her to convey a certain image of herself.<sup>5</sup> The ostentation of a queen’s wardrobe was not only a royal spectacle staged to satisfy the curiosity and yearnings of her people, but also – and much more importantly – the mediatic fulcrum through which to convey her power, prestige and authority. In multiple versions of the tale, the gown that Cinderella wore to the ball appears to have several features that bring to mind the sumptuous gold brocade gowns that Mary Tudor donned when making her entrance at the French court as queen and wife of King

Louis XII: Perrault describes Cinderella's dress as "a gown made of golden and silver cloth, all beset with jewels",<sup>6</sup> and the Brothers Grimm describe it as "a gown made of gold and silver, with little shoes quilted with silver and silk".<sup>7</sup> Much the same can be said of Catherine de Medici's superb wardrobe, which boasted a rich collection of splendid gowns and an incredible quantity of jewels and accessories, including lace-edged handkerchiefs, fans, corsets, luxury underwear, trims of lace and fur, and gilt gloves<sup>8</sup> that must certainly have inspired storytellers as well.

- 6 Other literary studies have underlined how a closer analysis of clothing and fashion can contribute to a deeper understanding of texts, their contexts, and their innovations, "even challenging, in some cases, traditional readings".<sup>9</sup> In a relevant study entitled *Fashioning Alice*, by Kiera Vaclavik,<sup>10</sup> a new "dress-based approach"<sup>11</sup> was designed to investigate the evolution of Alice in Wonderland's iconicity throughout a clearly delineated time period (1860-1901). The author provided an extensive analysis of the relationship between Lewis Carroll,<sup>12</sup> Alice and her clothing (such as her pinafore, skirt, striped tights, shoes, hairband, etc.). Her dress-based approach proved to be highly useful in contributing to debates concerning Alice's identity, "shedding light in particular on the vexed issues of age and gender since sartorial cues shaped both how old and how feminine Alice would have been seen to be by the initial audiences".<sup>13</sup> She also demonstrated how key features of Alice's dress and pinafore were continually modified and modernised according to the evolving fashions of the times.
- 7 An interesting perspective on the importance of fashion in fairytale research was also developed during the "Fairy Tale Fashion" exhibition which was held at the Museum of Fashion Institute of Technology in New York from January to April 2016. This study<sup>14</sup> succeeded in offering a lively account of as many as 15 famous fairytales through an unusual choice of clothing and accessories, from Little Red Riding Hood's cloak to Cinderella's glass slippers. Displayed inside glass cases, there were over 80 objects, including accessories, shoes, and items of clothing, made from the 18th century onwards by famous stylists and designers,<sup>15</sup> which highlighted the relevance of clothing in fairytales, its capacity to help recontextualise the significance of sartorial choices in various popular fairytales, and also the ability of fairytales to inspire fashion designers.
- 8 Finally, in a recent article titled "Crowns and Berets, Drapes and Cloaks, Pearls and Scarves: A New Classification of Fairytale Accessories Amidst History, Fashion and Childhood",<sup>16</sup> I analysed some items of clothing and accessories in fairytales. The traditional classification of magical objects proposed by Vladimir Propp is based on the grounds of a shared origin.<sup>17</sup> He proposes a first group of objects deriving from parts of the body of animals, such as nails, hair, skin, teeth; he then describes a second group of objects as instruments that work without being guided by a human hand, and in its stead; finally, he refers to a third group of objects that evoke the spirits; these objects produce abundance or have been carried from the kingdom of the dead.
- 9 I have devised a new classification governed by the narrative function and the position of the accessory on the body of the hero or heroine. This arrangement is the outcome of a personal analysis and takes shape largely as a working hypothesis that must be refined in future investigations.
- 10 My classification consists of three groups. The first concerns accessories that contribute to defining the wearer's status and behavioural profile. This first group includes diverse headgear, from crowns to caps, hoods and scarves. The second group concerns items that "conceal the body" and includes accessories that help the wearer

to escape, hide or mask their identity to save their own skins (in the case of the hero or heroine) and/or as a camouflage to deceive or cast an evil spell (in the case of the antagonist). This second group of items for concealing the body includes blankets, drapes, hoods and cloaks. The third group “adorns the face” and includes those accessories that enable a protagonist to emphasise and embellish their visual appearance or that give the antagonist a chance to exploit the protagonist’s vanity and to attack and injure, causing harm or even death. This third group includes brooches, ribbons, combs and pearls.

- 11 These different research perspectives which scholars have recently adopted regarding fashion confirm that a relevant relationship exists between fairytales, sartorial studies and clothing, and that many protagonists’ identities can be connected to what they wear. These studies have enabled me to develop new hypotheses concerning Little Red Riding Hood.
- 12 The tale of the little girl and her adventure with the wolf has a lengthy oral tradition, not only in Europe, but also in other world regions, including Africa and East Asia.<sup>18</sup> The folktale *Little Red Riding Hood* and its various motifs of pursuit, outrageous knowledge, and brutal and cruel ends were able to attract not only the passion of notable writers such as Charles Dickens, who declared his love for the little girl dressed in red in one of his articles,<sup>19</sup> but also the interest of visual artists and painters intrigued by the image of the unsupervised girl wearing her red cape. It is undeniable that the girl in red has exerted an immense impact on popular imagination across time. According to Jack Zipes,<sup>20</sup> it is because the fundamental themes of this fairytale, rape and violence, found common roots in patriarchal cultures of the West, and this affinity has brought the tale great fame and fortune. *Little Red Riding Hood* is one of the few fairytales capable of moving “from the oral traditions of yore into the contemporary web of multimedia recreations”.<sup>21</sup> Part of the powerful attraction of the tale, which was able to originate innumerable visual and literary retellings along with many movie adaptations, appears to rely on the red garment. Numerous studies and essays have examined this tale using different methodological analyses and from various perspectives,<sup>22</sup> but only some of them have primarily focused their analysis on the symbolic power of the cape of Red Riding Hood. None of these studies, however, have focused specifically on the items of clothing and accessories used by the illustrators to dress and characterise the protagonist of this appealing story. The aim of my investigation is to contribute to filling this gap.

## Dressing the child in red: a comparative analysis

- 13 In Europe, the Grimms’ version of this folktale is possibly the most represented and rewritten version; to this day, it continues generating new interpretative theories and investigations. When Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm published “Rotkäppchen” [Little Red Cap] in the first edition of their collection *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* [*Children’s and Household Tales*] in 1812, the story was presented as belonging to German oral folk tradition, though it had been influenced by both Perrault and Tieck.<sup>23</sup> In fact, the Brothers Grimm heard the tale from Jeanette (Johanna Isabella) and Marie Hassenpflug, educated women of French Huguenot ancestry who were well-acquainted with the stories by Perrault.<sup>24</sup> The Brothers Grimm subsequently adapted it. They would continue to revise it in further editions which were increasingly aimed at children. In

all their various editions, however, the Brothers Grimm only tell us that Little Red Riding Hood was a dear little girl, well loved by all, and particularly by her grandmother, who made her a red velvet head covering that became her distinctive feature. As in many fairytales, the character is presented as a “type”, with no psychological characterisation or any detailed description of her physical appearance. The only elements that a reader can use to sketch the identities of the protagonists are their actions, their relationships with other characters, and, in the case of a picturebook version, the images that the illustrator uses to bring the story to life.

- 14 As highlighted over the centuries, “Little Red Riding Hood” has been illustrated by countless artists, and memorable works by illustrators such as Gustave Doré, Walter Crane and Arthur Rackham have continued to influence today’s artists. The classic fairytale has inspired many major contemporary illustrators, including Eric Battut, Klaus Ensikat, Nikolaus Heidelbach, Roberto Innocenti, Susanne Janssen, Binette Schroeder, Svend Otto Sorensen and Lisbeth Zwerger.<sup>25</sup> In their works and in those of many other contemporary and past artists, there are some elements of the girl’s clothing which appear to be essential in defining the character’s visual appearance, quite relevant for the subsequent development of the plot.
- 15 The hood and redness are two of these essential elements, and many scholars of either traditional versions or contemporary feminist retellings<sup>26</sup> have drawn insightful analogies between the character and her clothing. Questioning the hypothesis of Delarue, who considered the red hood an influential accessory feature only in the Perrault version, Verdier, conversely, claimed that the girl’s headgear plays a central role not only in the Perrault version but also in other versions of the tale from oral tradition.<sup>27</sup> She argued that the red hood could be a valuable accessory helpful to investigate the “sartorial language”<sup>28</sup> of this tale, a language that emerges, for instance, when the choice of two roads (the road of the pins or the road of the needles) is offered to Little Red Riding Hood by the wolf. This reference to pins, needles and sewing can be fully understood as referring to the ethnographic context from which this oral version is derived, namely the Loire basin, the Nivernais, the Forez, the Velay, the northern Alps and the Italian Tyrol.<sup>29</sup> In her analysis of this oral tradition, Verdier considered the symbolic implications of the red garment, building witty connections between the red hood, the pin and the arrival of female puberty.
- 16 Vaz da Silva<sup>30</sup> also analysed the symbolic implications of the red hood in various versions of the tale. He claimed that the motif of the red hood could embody the uninterrupted *fil rouge* of the story across time and that “[r]edness is indeed front and central in the modern story of ‘Little Red Riding Hood’, which first appears fully formed in Perrault’s ‘Le Petit Chaperon rouge’ and then reappears transformed in the Grimms’ variant, ‘Rotkäppchen’”.<sup>31</sup> For him, the various and contrasting symbolic interpretations given to the red hood over time suggest the constant centrality of this garment in the tradition, which is most likely due to its capacity to replace “other images of feminine blood extant in the oral variants”<sup>32</sup>.
- 17 All these meaningful insights regarding the girl’s garment underline its interpretative importance and offer a theoretical background to examine the representation of this clothing in contemporary visual retellings of *Little Red Riding Hood* by the Brothers Grimm. The goal of my investigation is to analyse whether there is a dress code for Little Red Riding Hood in contemporary Italian illustrated versions of this story and to what extent tracing her clothing (and her visual appearance) may help us to gain a

better understanding of the tale and discover implicit aspects of the conceptualisations of girlhood in these Italian versions of the famous fairytale.

- 18 For my analysis, I examined more than 60 picturebooks and illustrated collections and selected a set of 20 with highly diversified shapes and graphical solutions. The Grimms' fairytale may be presented in its original version, adapted or rewritten. I made my selection based on three criteria. The first criterion was temporal; I selected only those published in the 21st century. The second criterion was aesthetic, relating to readers' judgment of the quality of the work. I used an Italian search engine called Liber Database,<sup>33</sup> which is an online research archive specialising in books for children and youth distributed in Italy since 1987. I chose picturebooks that had been awarded 3, 4 or 5 stars, meaning that these books have an aesthetic and literary quality that had been judged as distinguished and excellent. Finally, my third criterion was geographical. I only considered picturebooks written, illustrated and/or published in Italy by Italian authors, illustrators or publishing houses.
- 19 The picturebooks I used for this research are listed in the table below:

N.	TITLE	AUTHOR	ILLUSTRATOR	YEAR	PUBLISHER	VERSION
1	Cappuccetto Rosso	Anna Laura Cantone	Anna Laura Cantone	2001	Fabbri	Original
2	In bocca al lupo	Fabian Negrin	Fabian Negrin	2003	Orecchio Acerbo	Rewriting
3	Cappuccetto Rosso	Roberto Piumini	Alessandro Sanna	2005	Edizioni EL	Adaptation
4	Cappuccetto Rosso	Grimm/ Parazzoli	Pia Valentinis	2005	Fabbri	Adaptation
5	Cappuccetto Rosso	Nicola Cinquetti	Stefano Morri	2006	Arka	Adaptation
6	Cappuccetto Rosso	Jacob e Wilhelm Grimm	Massimo Podda	2009	Aìsara	Original
7	La vera storia di Cappuccetto Rosso	Agnese Baruzzi	Sandro Natalini	2010	IdeeAli	Rewriting
8	Cappuccetto Rosso e il sentiero nel bosco	Pino Pace	Chiara Dattola	2010	EDT	Rewriting
9	Cappuccetto Rosso	Enza Crivelli	Peppe Bianchessi	2010	Uovonero	Rewriting
10	La storia di Rosanna detta Cappuccetto Rosso	Tinin Mantegazza	Tinin Mantegazza	2012	Gallucci	Rewriting

11	Cappuccetto Rosso, una fiaba moderna	Roberto Innocenti	Roberto Innocenti	2012	La Margherita	Rewriting
12	Chissà se oggi incontrerò il lupo?	Cristina Petit	Cristina Petit	2014	Valentina Edizioni	Rewriting
13	C'era una volta una bambina	Giovanna Zoboli	Joanna Cocejo	2015	Topipittori	Rewriting
14	Cappuccetto Rosso	Roberto Piumini	Elena Temporin	2015	Emme Edizioni	Adaptation
15	La vera storia di Cappuccetto Rosso	Laura Simeoni	Luna Colombini	2015	Orecchio Acerbo	Rewriting
16	Cappuccetto Rosso	Attilio	Attilio	2017	Lapis	Adaptation
17	Cappuccetto Rosso	Jacob e Wilhelm Grimm	Francesca Cosanti	2017	White Star	Adaptation
18	Cappuccetto Rosso	Ester Tomé	Nadia Fabris	2017	Sassi Editori	Adaptation
19	Cappuccetto Rosso	Mauro di Leo	Micaio (Mika Hirasa)	2017	Atmosphere libri	Rewriting
20	Cappuccetto rosso in Pittogrammi	Sandro Natalini	Sandro Natalini	2019	EDT	Rewriting

- 20 I focused my analysis exclusively on particular elements, using the proposed classification I outlined previously, which involves considering clothing on the basis of its narrative function and position on the protagonist's body combined with a reflection on how the character is represented as a whole. As the protagonist's hood gives this fairytale its title, I will focus my investigation primarily on the first group of my classification, which includes hoods, headgear, bonnets and caps. I studied and compared two aspects. First, I investigated some of the protagonist's physical traits and characteristics, particularly the colour of her hair and of her clothes. Secondly, I analysed the type of clothing Little Red Riding Hood wore and especially what she had on her head.
- 21 What emerged from this comparison? What are the most salient points worth emphasising? The manner in which the visual representation of Little Red Riding Hood has evolved in Italian fairytales can be briefly explained in terms of three fundamental elements. The first concerns the physical characterisation of the girl herself. With the red hood in their story, what do the Brothers Grimm tell us about her? Very little, as a matter of fact, as the opening paragraphs of several Italian versions of the fairytale demonstrate:

Once upon a time there was a little girl who was so sweet and pretty that, just from looking at her, everyone fell in love with her, especially her grandmother, who really could not think of what else to give her. Once she gave her a little red velvet hood and because it suited her so well and she wanted to wear nothing else, everybody called her Little Red Riding Hood<sup>34</sup>



Once upon a time there was a sweet young girl; who everybody loved as soon as they saw her and especially her grandmother who could think of nothing else to give her as a present. Once she gave her a red velvet hood and as it suited her so well that she never wanted to wear anything else, so she was always called Little Red Riding Hood<sup>35</sup>

There was once a young girl so sweet that, just from looking at her, anyone was bound to love her, but especially her grandmother, who could think of nothing else to give her. Once she gave her a red velvet hood and because it suited her so well and she never wanted to wear anything else, everyone called her Little Red Riding Hood [...]<sup>36</sup>

- 22 As is typical in fairytales, we learn nothing about her age, her body shape, or her physical features. It is paradigmatic, therefore, to see how – in the 20 illustrated versions that I examined – 17 (85%) of the protagonists had hair that was black or not visible. It was only in three versions that Little Red Riding Hood was blonde. This is rather unusual because, generally speaking, girls in fairytales are pictured with long blonde hair – with the exception of Snow White (since, right from the start of the fairytale, the queen wished to have a girl as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the wood of the window-frame.). Another difference lies in the fact that, in addition to being black, Little Red Riding Hood’s hair is generally short, reaching to her chin at most, with a charming bob that frames her face. If her hair is long, it is generally bound into a braid or ponytail. This hair seems to be one of the symbols which the illustrators employ to reveal fundamental characteristics of the protagonist: she is innocent, sweet-natured, good, kind and loving. Above all, the black hair framing the child’s pale face provides a perfect counterpoint to her red hood, confirming the visual symbolic perspective in terms of the use of a ternary colour arrangement in this fairytale. I will return to the colour red in the last portion of my chapter. Here, it is worth recalling that, for centuries if not for millennia, the primitive chromatic triad – white, red and black – has had a more clearly distinct symbolic role than any other: white for purity, red for danger and black for death.<sup>37</sup>
- 23 Here is the ancient symbolic system based on these three poles, wherein a little girl dressed in red carries a white object (the jar of butter) and encounters a black wolf. It is apparent in other fairytales as well. For instance, Snow White received a red apple from a black witch. In *The Goose Girl*, the old queen hurt her finger with a black knife and three drops of red blood dropped onto a white handkerchief. The narrative movement around these three colours “form a system with narrative and symbolic powers exponentially greater than the simple sum of the meaning of each of the three colours operating alone”<sup>38</sup>. Indeed, in all the picturebooks I analysed, the illustrators repeatedly play with this chromatic triangulation, and they reinforce it, playing with chromatic clothing arrangements: a white or pale face, a red hood or cloak, and black hair and black stockings, shoes or boots.
- 24 The second aspect that I considered was the protagonist’s headgear. How was her famous red riding hood depicted? In 19 of the 20 picturebooks I considered, the girl was wearing her famous red hood. In one, namely a modern retelling of the fairytale entitled *Once upon a time there was a little girl* (therefore without any reference to the red hood), the little girl wore no headgear, but her black hair was tied up in two pigtales with two deep red ribbons. Therefore, the red hood is clearly a pivotal element in the representation of this story, a fundamental component of Little Red Riding Hood’s dress code, though it can be depicted in varying shapes and sizes.

- 25 In the first version, the red hood becomes a single inseparable element of a red uniform covering the protagonist's entire body (Fig. 1).



Figure 1: The red hood as a single inseparable element of Little Red Riding Hood's dress code. Fabian Negrin, *In bocca al lupo*, Rome, Orecchio Acerbo, 2003.

- 26 In the second version, the red hood is attached to a long red cape which reaches down to her ankles (Fig. 2).



Figure 2: The long, wide, sleeveless red hooded cloak. Roberto Piumini, *Cappuccetto Rosso*, ill. Elena Temporin, San Dorligo della Valle, Emme Edizioni, 2015.

- 27 In the third version, the red hood constitutes an integral part of a cape (or sometimes stitched into a jacket, or a sweatshirt, or a little coat) that covers little more than her shoulders (Fig. 3).



Figure 3: The red hood covers little more than her shoulders. Enza Crivelli, *Cappuccetto Rosso*, ill. Peppo Bianchessi, Crema, Uovonero, 2010.

- 28 Finally, the last version depicts a red head covering in its own right, as a separate, autonomous item of clothing (Fig. 4).



Figure 4: The red hood as a separate item of clothing. Attilio, *Cappuccetto Rosso*, Rome, Lapis, 2017.

- 29 Whether it is a head covering in its own right or attached to a hood, quilted or rounded, in the shape of a bonnet, or a simple scarf or a veil, there is no doubt that the hood has a profound narrative impact in this story.

30 In fact, it is important to observe that the shape and size of the red hood do not play a neutral role in the choices adopted by the different illustrators. On the contrary, they convey significant characteristics of the protagonist's personality.

31 The use of this item of clothing has a long history which is linked to varying cultural and historical contexts. During the Middle Ages, for instance, long, wide, sleeveless hooded cloaks were quite popular. They were worn by monks and knights, but they were not widespread during Perrault's epoch and certainly not among women. At that time, in fact, women hardly wore coats. If necessary, they could eventually use capes. However, it was highly common for them to wear *chaperons* or caps, made of black cloth such as satin, damask or velvet. As Micheline Baulant has stated:

On [Le chaperon] le rencontre dans le vestiaire de jeunes femmes ou même dans le trousseau de mariage de jeunes filles. C'était une des prérogatives de la femme mariée et il coiffait les têtes les plus distinguées de la ville. [...] Les femmes du peuple, celles du crieur, de l'ouvrier en laine, du maçon par exemple, portaient plutôt le bonnet de drap noir, mais de nombreuses Meldoisaises avaient à la fois chaperons et bonnets.<sup>39</sup>

32 Intriguingly, this historical analysis can be compared to the study by Jack Zipes, who confirmed that in Perrault's *Little Red Riding Hood* tale, he preferred to use:

the word *chaperon*, which was a small stylish cap worn by women of the aristocracy and middle classes in the 16th and 17th centuries. Since clothing was codified and strictly enforced under Louis XIV, it was customary for middle-class women to wear cloth caps, whereas aristocratic ladies wore velvet. Bright colours were preferred, especially red, and the skull cap was generally ornamental. For a village girl, in Perrault's story, to wear a red *chaperon* signified that she was individualistic and perhaps nonconformist.<sup>40</sup>

33 In terms of my analysis, my investigation supports the connection between the type of hood worn by the little girl and her nonconformist attitude and independence developed throughout the story. The study reveals that the girl's autonomy and independence seem to be inversely proportional to the length and dimension of her red clothes, as in *La vera storia di Cappuccetto Rosso*, illustrated by Luna Colombini (2015). In this story, Little Red Riding Hood is highly independent and self-assured enough to build a relationship with the wolf. Her agency is marked by the presence of a pair of informal trousers, sweatshirt and boots. Her clothing is highly contemporary, highlighting a major difference from other girls in red whose garments retain "a distinct flavour of olde-worlde otherness and nostalgia".<sup>41</sup> This visual perspective can also be noted in the *Cappuccetto Rosso*, illustrated by Micao (2017). The protagonist is wearing a shorter hood (and dress), which contributes to emphasising the protagonist's mobility and agency. From this viewpoint, the illustration's portrayal of a self-confident Little Red Riding Hood riding the wolf with a riding crop in her hand evokes allusive references to her agency and brings this retelling much closer to the climax of the oral tradition than to the one told by the Brothers Grimm. Additionally, the choice of the visual language appears to support this affinity. The illustrator employed "sartorial language" to retell the story. She concretely used pins, needles, and black and red threads to embroider her visual story. Here, there is a fascinating intertextual play between the drawing tools selected by the author to illustrate this contemporary retelling of an active and impudent Little Red Riding Hood and the sewing tools described by Verdier when contextualising the ethnographic background of *Little Red Riding Hood* from the oral tradition. The sewing tools had a great impact on the education of girls at that time (the end of the 19th century), as:

girls were sent at the age of fifteen to spend one winter with the seamstress. This had less to do with learning to “work”, to sew or to use needles, than with refining herself, with polishing herself and learning to adorn herself, to dress up. [...] When they reached fifteen, both the winter with the seamstress and their ceremonial entry into the age group consecrated to St. Catherine signified their arrival in maidenhood (*la vie de jeune fille*), that is, permission to go dancing and to have sweethearts, of which the pin seemed to be the symbol. [...] Finally, it is the biological phenomenon itself, menstruation, making the girl into a “*jeune fille*”, with which the pin is associated. [...] The story can now be told thus: a girl is sent on the road of the pins, that is, in sewing apprenticeship, upon arriving at puberty.<sup>42</sup>

- 34 Unlike the characters in the aforementioned stories, in the other selected picturebooks, the character is substantially more passive and helpless, and this attitude is marked by longer, enveloping clothes that seem to limit the girl’s movement, thus making her appear more rigid, docile and inert, as in *Cappuccetto Rosso* illustrated by Nadia Fabris (2017); it also makes her more suitable for the role of prey or victim, as in *Cappuccetto Rosso*, illustrated by Francesca Cosanti (2017). Conversely, the presence of a simple red head covering underlines her confidence, strength and bravery, thus contributing to her active role.
- 35 The hood has a symbolic value which is partly due to the historical evolution of this item. As we are reminded by Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli,<sup>43</sup> the head is not just like any other part of the body. What we wear on our heads has a special visibility, value and significance. In various historical and geographical settings, a veil (or any other comparable item) placed over the head signifies something beyond the mere need for protection against the heat or cold, depending on the time of year. It becomes a powerful indicator of sense. History shows that an object that goes on a woman’s or girl’s head has always been ambivalent, not to say ambiguous. It covers, it conceals, it protects, but it also alludes, adorns and attracts. It is allocated a significant role in defining female identity, personal identity (distinguishing an unmarried from a married woman), social identity (an aristocratic lady or a nun), and often – possibly most importantly – religious identity (headgear distinctive of Christian faith or symbolising Muslim faith).<sup>44</sup> In the late Middle Ages, for instance, all women kept their heads covered with veils or scarves when they left their homes, and even at home. This head covering was essentially compulsory. It was a recommended practice from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards. From its origins, the female veil or head covering was often worn with the purpose of lending visibility to the female role, a role of humility and subjection to the male figure.<sup>45</sup> Headgear was also often related to “rites of passage”, such as a wedding or a bereavement.<sup>46</sup> For a wedding in Ancient Rome, for instance, the bride wore the *flammeum*, a rectangle of fine transparent fabric of a reddish colour.
- 36 As a further example, we can consider another significant head covering in the story of Little Red Riding Hood, and that is her grandmother’s bonnet. In the past, the habit of wearing bonnets was widespread among peasants and the lower classes.<sup>47</sup>
- 37 In the story of Little Red Riding Hood, the white bonnet is worn not only by the grandmother, but also by the wolf, who dons her clothes (usually glasses) and her bonnet (Fig. 5).

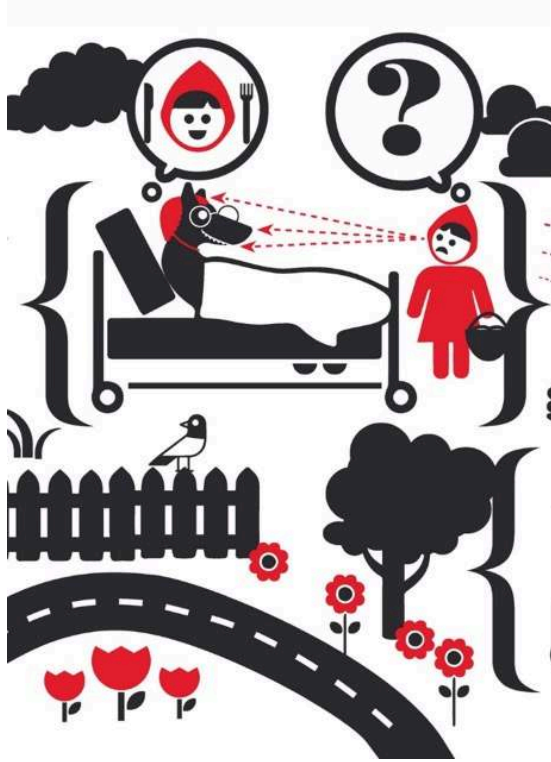


Fig. 5: The wolf and the bonnet. A case of rare “male” transvestitism. Sandro Natalini, *Cappuccetto rosso*, Turin, EDT, 2019.

- 38 This disguise (camouflage) also contains the typical three-colour combination of white, red and black (white bonnet, red ribbon or tongue and black wolf). In the various picturebooks analysed in the present study, the wolf wore either a bonnet or another type of headgear, from a knotted scarf to the scary black helmet of Roberto Innocenti’s hunter-wolf. It is, however, important to underline that most of the illustrators preferred to show the wolf wearing a bonnet. The bonnet appears to downplay the emotional impact and pathos of the most crucial (and cruel) scene, thus diminishing the distressing impact of the aggression. With its lace and embroideries, the bonnet makes the wolf look less threatening and dangerous. This effect is certainly emphasised by the visual counterpoint between the big black wolf and the presence of this elegant female accessory: a bonnet is either too small or too cute to be worn by a wolf; it makes the wolf look ridiculous. This visual feature literally transforms the situation, dissolving the narrative tension with its irony and light-heartedness (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6: Transforming a scary wolf into a harmless one. Roberto Piumini, *Cappuccetto Rosso*, ill. Elena Temporin, San Dorligo della Valle, Emme Edizioni, 2015.

- 39 This subtle triangulation of headgear that is created between Little Red Riding Hood, her grandmother, and the wolf who wears the bonnet to hide his real identity is an intriguing element of this tale.
- 40 Condemned in many societies, cross-dressing (wearing the clothing of the opposite sex) is nonetheless practiced or narrated around the world in ritual, dance, balladry, theater, folktales, fairytales, short stories and novels. While many of these forms feature cross-dressed girls, there are few tale types specific to male cross-dressing.<sup>48</sup> This is no marginal issue. It points to the close link established between fairytale, fashion and history. During the Middle Ages, for instance, and for decades thereafter, women and girls with purportedly loose morals (meaning prostitutes) were prohibited from wearing a bonnet or a hood. Head coverings – the veil in particular – are associated with specific meanings; headgear symbolises personal and family honor, and it transports us back to a moral world of submission and honesty.<sup>49</sup>
- 41 It might seem hazardous to extend these historical inferences to *Little Red Riding Hood*. However, this ancient fairytale has been the object of numerous explorations, from psychoanalytical studies that highlight various sexual connotations contained in the plot, to socio-cultural studies that remind us how “dressing young children in red was a very old practice, especially among the peasantry”.<sup>50</sup>
- 42 Finally, a brief note about the use of the colour red: determining, inescapable, very powerful and often associated with attractiveness and sexual receptivity,<sup>51</sup> redness was present in all 20 fairytales I analysed. Even more than the hood, it was the colour red that characterised these modern Italian illustrated fairytales. There are numerous reasons for this. First, we know from neuroscience that human beings need to be guided by colours to interpret the world.<sup>52</sup> Colours are powerful cognitive attractors for our neural system. They provide us with useful information about the world around us,

and they often orient our choices. As a simple example, imagine the colour of food – like a fruit that we may or may not find appetising. Every tone of colour also arouses different reactions in us because, when we perceive colours, three different areas of our brain are stimulated: the linguistic area, which enables us to recognise and name colours; the associative area, which connects them to emotions or memories; and the neurovegetative system, which leads us to react to the perceived stimulus with bodily signals<sup>53</sup>. That is why a colour can be calming, relaxing, helpful for concentration, arousing or alarming.

- 43 This was already known in the 1940s to the historian Max Lüthi, who posited that fairytales tend to have clear, pure colours – gold, silver, red, white, black, and possibly pale blue. Gold and silver have a metallic splendor, black and white are objective contrasts, and red is the most violent colour of all, the first to attract a child's attention.<sup>54</sup> The illustrators who make their figurative architectures revolve around the core role of this colour are well-aware of this, sometimes transforming the little girl into a red being from head to foot and even occasionally rendering her without a face.
- 44 History and science have taught us that red is colour *par excellence*, and for three reasons. First, the chemistry of the colour red has an ancient, primeval history. As early as 30,000 years before Christ, red earth was used in Paleolithic art. Though highly valuable, red pigments were relatively easy to obtain and consequently widely used in painting and fabrics dyeing already in ancient times. The second reason relates to the fact that, after white and black, the colour red is the first colour infants perceive, and it is also the first colour that people all over the world tend to name. The third reason is of a cultural and symbolic nature: the principal characteristic of the colour red is that it is polyvalent.<sup>55</sup>
- 45 In most versions of the fairytale about Little Red Riding Hood, including the most ancient known to us – which dates back to the year 1000 and refers to a red baptismal dress – the little girl always wears the colour red with a protective and salvific function. The choice of this colour partly derives from the peasant world, where children had always been dressed in red to make them more readily visible from afar. They were also often dressed in red on feast days because a red dress was considered the most beautiful and precious. The colour red could also refer to the day of Pentecost, the day on which Red Riding Hood was likely born, and a day when everything was decorated in red.
- 46 Beyond these historical references, however, the colour red impresses the reader with the polysemous and ambivalent power of the symbols it represents, namely fire and blood. Red is the symbol of love and passion (for instance, it incarnates the unconditional love of Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother), but also of anger and revenge (and the tragic end of the wolf who dies with a bellyful of stones). It is also the symbol of blood as a source of life (the young and lively Red Riding Hood) and a pubertal maturity (menstruation); it also symbolises blood spilled in battle, as a result of hatred and violence (and this brings us back to the deaths of the grandmother and Little Red Riding Hood, and then of the wolf). It is a metaphor for the sun, energy and vitality (the bright red hood that the hunter glimpses after cutting into the wolf's belly), as well as death. Thus, the colour red contains countless juxtaposed symbolic implications that lend an extraordinary narrative power to the fairytale – from the bright red colour of the little girl's clothes to other objects that recall them (a bottle of red wine, red flowers, the grandmother's house with its red roof, the red furnishings),



red objects sometimes represent positive symbols of light and human warmth, a joyous life that pulses in the veins, or the life-saving force of passion and courage. They contrast with the darker, near-black tones of red that announce the wolf's ravenous appetite, the danger overshadowing Red Riding Hood, or the bloodstained body of the wolf (though it is never revealed) after his belly has been cut open.

- 47 These considerations highlight a significant component in the analysis of Little Red Riding Hood's clothes in the 20 Italian picturebooks discussed in this study. Apart from rare exceptions, most of the illustrators neglect these various symbolic implications and adopt a reassuring, protective, anachronistic dress code (e.g., a long, romantic enveloping cloak, long skirts and clothes with cosy ribbons that may hinder her escape, the protagonist only wears trousers and boots in a single case) for Little Red Riding Hood. This apparently innocuous approach perpetuates the reassuring (simplified?) image of a passive, helpless, static little girl. Whenever Little Red Riding Hood is described as a more self-conscious and combative protagonist, she is portrayed with shorter and more comfortable clothes, often showing her knees and without the hindrance of heavy capes or cloaks like *Cappuccetto Rosso*, illustrated by Micao (2017). The hood is sometimes only hinted at, as in the case of the presence of a pair of red hair ribbons in *C'era una volta una bambina*, illustrated by Joanna Concejo (2015). This visual choice contributes to a more combative and resilient characterisation of the protagonist, a girl who can move with freedom and awareness through the story.

## Conclusions

- 48 Clothing described in fairytales is a field of study that has yet to be thoroughly explored but is capable of opening up new and interesting research pathways into the world of fairytales. This is true for several reasons: first, clothing manifests the qualities of a hero or heroine, their social class and status, their power and prestige. It also conveys symbolic messages linked to her puberal maturity. Secondly, it fosters a deeper understanding of fairytale texts, their contexts, and their innovations.
- 49 A selection of 20 visual re-writings of the Grimms' *Little Red Riding Hood* published over the last 20 years have been analysed using a "dress-based approach". What Little Red Riding Hood wears or does not wear is equally interesting because it enhances our understanding of this enigmatic heroine. My investigation confirms that there is a dress code in the contemporary visual reinterpretation of this fairytale in Italy, and that this code, with its key elements (such as the hood), unquestionably contributes to conveying a certain image of girlhood: more independent, nonconformist and self-determined in some cases, and more conformist and passive in the majority of the picturebooks analysed. In these fairytales, the main element used by the illustrators to achieve this was the shape of the red clothing. Despite that, however, the image of girlhood that this selection conveyed is not uniform. Two aspects emerge in these picturebooks. On the one hand, we have the image of a small, sweet and charming, innocent and compliant child, who inexorably pursues her destiny unaware, were it not for the hunter who saves her. This is an image of a child for the more conservative (possibly adult) reader who is less responsive and less willing to grasp the complexity and ambiguity of this fairytale, and more interested in the conformist and reassuring idea of a girl as a symbol of innocence and obedience. Her clothing (long, romantic

enveloping cloak, long skirts and clothes with cosy ribbons) contributes to present a highly stable, immovable, passive and reassuring protagonist.

- 50 On the other hand, some witty illustrators have opted to present the image of a girl with more mature features, who is more independent, mature and seductive. In this visual pattern of Little Red Riding Hood, the idea of attractiveness and seduction is conveyed through her particular clothing: clothes (trousers, boots, short skirts, no cloaks) which help her mobility and agency (Fig. 7).



Figure 7: Clothing the Child in red: a more independent, brave and seductive Little Red Riding Hood. Laura Simeoni, *La vera storia di Cappuccetto Rosso*, ill. Luna Colombini, Rome, Orecchio Acerbo, 2015.

- 51 Informal hooded sweatshirts, shorter skirts, which are a far cry from the olde-worlde and nostalgic garments contribute to depicting a girl with a greater degree of awareness and a sense of freedom. She is more attractive, uninhibited and appealing as a heroine to young readers, more similar to the Little Red Riding Hood of old tradition than the one narrated by the Grimms, who clearly transformed her into a disobedient, helpless and discouraged little girl.<sup>56</sup>

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## NOTES

1. Jack Zipes, *The Trials & Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood*, New York/London, Routledge, 1993.
2. "Once upon a time there was a dear little girl who was loved by everyone who looked at her, but most of all by her grandmother, and there was nothing that she would not give to the child. Once she gave her a little cap of red velvet, which suited her so well that she would never wear

anything else. So, she was always called Little Red Riding Hood” (my translation). Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Fiabe*, Torino, Einaudi, 1992 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1951), p. 99.

3. See for example, Marjory Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety*, New York, Routledge, 1992; Shahrukh Husain, *Handsome Heroines: Women as Men in Folklore*, New York, Anchor Books, 1996; Carole Scott, “Magical Dress: Clothing and Transformation in Folk Tales”, *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly*, 21 (4), 1996-1997, p. 151-157; Victoria Ivleva, “Functions of Textile and Sartorial Artifacts in Russian Folktales”, *Marvels & Tales*, 23 (2), 2009, p. 268-299; Rori Bloom, “Miniature Marvelous: The Petit as Personal Aesthetic in the Fairy Tales of Marie-Catherine d’Aulnoy”, *Marvels & Tales*, 29 (2), 2015, p. 209-227; Rebecca-Anne C. Do Rozario, *Fashion in the Fairy Tale Tradition: What Cinderella Wore*, Cham (Switzerland), Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

4. Jo Eldridge Carney, *Fairy Tale Queens. Representations of Early Modern Queenship*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

6. Charles Perrault, *Tutte le fiabe. Nuova edizione con l’aggiunta della fiaba inedita I desideri strampalati*, Rome, Donzelli, 2016, p. 94 (my translation).

7. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Fiabe*, *op. cit.*, p. 85 (my translation).

8. Jo Eldridge Carney, *Fairy Tale Queens*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

9. Cynthia Kuhn, Cindy Carlson (eds.), *Styling Texts: Dress and Fashion in Literature*, New York, Cambria, 2007, p. 3.

10. Kiera Vaclavik, *Fashioning Alice. The Career of Lewis Carroll’s Icon, 1860–1901*, London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

12. Vaclavik found that “Carroll usually has a very clear vision of how he wants his characters to be dressed [...]. He demonstrates an extraordinary attention to detail, right down to embroidered hems and the correct direction of folds”. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

14. Colleen Hill *Fairy tale fashion*, New Haven (CT)/London, Yale University Press in association with the Fashion Institute of Technology, 2016.

15. Fashion designers such as Dolce & Gabbana, Christian Louboutin, Prada, Tom Ford, Alexander McQueen and Thierry Mugler have been invited to update clothing in fairytales.

16. Marnie Campagnaro, “Corone e berretti, drappi e mantelli, perle e fazzoletti. Per una nuova classificazione dell’accessoristica fiabesca fra storia, moda e infanzia”, *ZoneModa Journal*, 8 (2), 2018, p. 61-75, URL: <https://zmj.unibo.it/article/view/8664> [last connection: 15 January 2020].

17. Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folk Tale*, transl. by Laurence Scott, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1968.

18. Jamshid J. Tehrani, “The Phylogeny of Little Red Riding Hood”, *PLoS ONE*, 8 (11), 2013, e78871, DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0078871.

19. Molly Clark Hillard highlights that “Halfway through this essay written halfway through his career (one might say at the very heart of Dickens) lie the remains of a boyhood passion for a fairy-tale child: ‘She was my first love. I felt that if I could have married Little Red Riding-Hood, I should have known perfect bliss’”. Molly Clark Hillard, “Dickens’s Little Red Riding Hood and Other Waterside Characters”, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 49 (4), 2009, p. 945-973, URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40467512?seq=1&cid=pdf> [last connection: 28 February 2021].

20. Jack Zipes, *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood*, *op. cit.*

21. Francisco Vaz Da Silva, “Charles Perrault and the Evolution of ‘Little Red Riding Hood’”, *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy-Tale Studies*, 30 (2), 2016, p. 185.

22. Cristina Bacchilega, *Postmodern Fairy Tales. Gender and Narrative Strategies*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997; Jack Zipes *La fiaba irresistibile. Storia culturale e sociale di un genere*, Rome, Donzelli, 2012; Jack Zipes, *Fiabe con le ali. Due secoli di immaginario fiabesco nelle cartoline illustrate*, Rome, Donzelli, 2017; Sandra Beckett, *Recycling Red*

- Riding Hood*, New York/London, Routledge, 2002; Sandra Beckett, *Red Riding Hood for All Ages: A Fairy-tale Icon in Cross-cultural Contexts*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 2008; Ute Heidmann and Jean-Michel Adam, *Textualité et intertextualité des contes. Perrault, Apulée, La Fontaine, L'héritier...*, Paris, Classiques Garnier, 2010, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/feeries.746>; Hans Ritz, *Die Geschichte vom Rotkäppchen: Ursprünge, Analysen, Parodien eines Märchens*, Kassel, Muriverlag, 2013 (15<sup>th</sup> ed.); Susanna Barsotti, *Bambine nel bosco. Cappuccetto rosso e il lupo fra passato e presente*, Pisa, ETS, 2016.
23. Cristina Bacchilega, *Postmodern Fairy Tales*, op. cit.
24. Jan M. Ziolkowski, "A Fairy Tale from before Fairy Tales: Egbert of Liège's 'De puella a lupellis seruata' and the Medieval Background of 'Little Red Riding Hood'", *Speculum*, 67 (3), 1992, p. 549-575, URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2863656> [last connection: 28 February 2021].
25. Sandra Beckett, *Recycling Red Riding Hood*, op. cit.; Sandra Beckett, *Red Riding Hood for All Ages*, op. cit.
26. See Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1981.
27. Yvonne Verdier, "Little Red Riding Hood in Oral Tradition", *Marvels & Tales*, 11 (1/2), 1997, p. 101-123, URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41388448> [last connection: 28 February 2021].
28. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
30. Francisco Vaz Da Silva, "Charles Perrault and the Evolution of 'Little Red Riding Hood'", op. cit., p. 167-190.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 171.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
33. Liber Database is a website that contains the booklist of books for children and adolescents published and distributed in Italy since 1987.
34. "C'era una volta una bambina tanto carina e dolce che solo a vederla, tutti se ne innamoravano, e specialmente la nonna che non sapeva davvero più cosa darle. Una volta le regalò un cappuccetto di velluto rosso, e poiché le stava tanto bene e lei non voleva mettere che quello, tutti la chiamavano Cappuccetto Rosso" (my translation). Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Tutte le fiabe*, Compton, Milan, Newton 2003.
35. "C'era una volta una cara ragazzina; solo a vederla le volevano tutti bene, e specialmente la nonna, che non sapeva più cosa regalarle. Una volta le regalò un cappuccetto di velluto rosso, e, poiché le donava tanto ch'essa non volle più portare altro, la chiamarono sempre Cappuccetto Rosso" (my translation). Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Fiabe*, Torino, Einaudi, 1992.
36. "C'era una volta una dolce fanciullina, che vederla e amarla era un tutt'uno per chiunque, ma specialmente per la nonna, che non sapeva più che altro regalarle. Una volta le regalò un cappuccetto di velluto rosso, e poiché le stava proprio bene, e lei non voleva indossare nient'altro che quello, tutti la chiamavano Cappuccetto Rosso" (my translation). Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Tutte le fiabe*, Rome, Donzelli Editore, 2015.
37. As Michel Pastoureau highlights, this chromatic system was already established during the year 1000 in liturgy and Christian symbolism, "white, the symbol of purity, was used for all celebrations of Christ as well as for those of the angels, virgins, and confessors; red, which recalls the blood spilled by and for Christ, was used for celebrations of the apostles and the martyrs, the cross, and the Holy Spirit, notably Pentecost; as for black, it was used for times of waiting and penitence (Advent, Lent), as well as for the masses for the dead and for Holy Friday". Michel Pastoureau, *Black: The History of a Color*, Princeton (New Jersey), Princeton University Press, 2008, p. 39-40. For several centuries, these three colours also represented an aesthetic canon. In the 17th century, for example, feminine perfection was represented by a combination of three white elements (skin, teeth, face), three black elements (eyes, eyelashes, hair) and three red elements (lips, cheeks, nails). Piero Camporesi, *Il sugo della vita. Simbologia e magia del sangue*, Milan, Edizioni di Comunità, 1984.

38. Michel Pastoureau, *Red: The History of a Color*, Princeton (New Jersey), Princeton University Press, 2017, p. 139.
39. Micheline Baulant, “Jalons pour une histoire du costume commun. L'exemple de Meaux (1590-1670)”, *Histoire & mesure*, XVI (1/2), 2001, URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/histoiresmesure/107> [last connection: 28 February 2021].
40. Jack Zipes, *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood*, *op. cit.*, p. 75-77.
41. Kiera Vaclavik, “Dressing down the rabbit hole: How to become Alice in Wonderland”, *The Conversation*, 29 april 2015, URL: <https://theconversation.com/dressing-down-the-rabbit-hole-how-to-become-alice-in-wonderland-40398> [last connection: 28 February 2021]
42. Yvonne Verdier, “Little Red Riding Hood in Oral Tradition”, *op. cit.*, p. 106-107.
43. Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli *A capo coperto. Storie di donne e di veli*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2016.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
47. A very good example is the Breton peasants painted by Paul Gauguin in his picture *Vision after the Sermon* (National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1888).
48. “Common among the few men who cross-dress in tales are the devil, adulterers, thieves, and the infamous wolf that tricks Little Red Riding Hood”. See the paragraph by Christine A. Jones “Cross-Dressing”, in Donald Haase (ed.) *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Folktales and Fairy Tales*, vol. 1-3, Westport/London, Greenwood Press, 2008, p. 241.
49. Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *A capo coperto*, *op. cit.*, p. 89-91.
50. Michel Pastoureau, *Red: The History of a Color*, *op. cit.*
51. Leonard S. Peperkoorn, S. Craig Roberts, Thomas V. Pollet, “Revisiting the Red Effect on Attractiveness and Sexual Receptivity: No Effect of the Color Red on Human Mate Preferences”, *Evolutionary Psychology*, 2016, p. 1-13, URL: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1474704916673841> [last connection: 20 May 2020], DOI: 10.1177/1474704916673841.
52. Stefano Calabrese, Federica Fioroni, Sara Uboldi, *Letteratura per l'infanzia. Fiaba, Romanzo di formazione, crossover*, Milan, Bruno Mondadori, 2013, p. 111.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
54. Max Lüthi, *La fiaba popolare europea. Forma e natura*, Milan, Mursia, 2015 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1947), p. 41.
55. Michel Pastoureau, Dominique Simonnet, *Il piccolo libro dei colori*, Milan, Ponte alle Grazie, 2006, p. 26-27.
56. Jack Zipes, *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood*, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

## ABSTRACTS

Many cultures have tales in which the main character wears a particular item of clothing or is invariably portrayed with a specific accessory. This character then embarks on an adventure-packed journey during which he or she must face a ferocious and sometimes deadly foe. *Little Red Riding Hood* is perhaps the fairytale that is the most deeply woven into the history of Western imagination, which is probably why it is still capable of inspiring continual and original rewritings and adaptations. Italy's lively telling of this tale is epitomised in the visual re-writings of the classic version by the Brothers Grimm.

This paper analyses the relationship between clothing and fashion in fairytales. A selection of the

visual re-writings of the Grimms' *Little Red Riding Hood* published in Italy over the last 20 years will be compared, focusing on the clothing and accessories created by illustrators to dress and distinguish the tale's characters. Capes, hoods, earmuffs, cloaks, rucksacks, skirts, dresses, blouses, collars, shoes, boots, ribbons and yarns are just some of the items that comprise *Little Red Riding Hood's* garb. By adopting this perspective, my essay posits answers to the following research questions: is there an established standard for dressing Little Red Riding Hood in Italian visual retellings of the Grimms' tale? And what about the relationship between dressing the "little girl in red" and the developments of the tale?

## INDEX

**Geographical index:** Italie, Italy

**Keywords:** clothing, fashion, fairytale, Little Red Riding Hood, Grimm (Jacob and Wilhelm)

**Mots-clés:** vêtements, mode, conte, Petit Chaperon Rouge, Grimm (Jacob et Wilhelm)

## AUTHOR

**MARNIE CAMPAGNARO**

University of Padua