LITERARY ARTICLES & ESSAYS

Colonizing the fantastic: Reading Stephenie Meyer's *Breaking Dawn* as all-in-one text

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Abstract

As the life on the planet gets more and more complicated due to the rapid changes in the socio-cultural paradigms, the task of boundary drawing, categorization or classification appears as a hazardous task. Likewise, while Stephenie Meyer's *The Twilight* series is generally classified as fantasy, all four novels in the series resist such a simplified classification when tested with the key ideas of Todorov's insistence on hesitation, Rosemary Jackson's perception of the fantastic as a deconstructive mode or Rabkin's idea of fantastic effect. The article will argue that the last novel of the series, *Breaking Dawn*, exploits various genres while trying to remain in the realm of fantasy. These genres may be listed as romance, erotic romance, uncanny (or the fantastic), epic and, finally, the fairy tale. The novel surpasses the drawn boundaries of different genres without committing itself to any of them and, therefore, the text becomes what might be called an 'all-in-one text'. It is not just a singular fantastic text but a pluralistic all-in-one text enabling the reader to experience different reading pleasures in one text, which might provide valuable ideas to better understand the general spirit of the postmodern age and the consumerist habits of postmodern readers.

Keywords

Fantastic fiction; boundary crossing; *Breaking Dawn; Twilight;* popular fiction

Submission date

27.10.2019

Acceptance date

08.06.2020

APA Citation

Tanıyan, B. (2020). Colonizing the fantastic: Reading Stephenie Meyer's Breaking Dawn as all-in-one text. *The Literacy Trek, 6*(1), 74-89.

Introduction

Breaking Dawn is the fourth and the last novel in *the Twilight* series. The novel is divided into three books. The first book covers the marriage ceremony and the honeymoon that Edward Cullen and Bella Swan, the couple, take on the Isle Esme. This

part is narrated by Bella herself, then Jacob narrates the second book of the novel, which relates Bella's pregnancy and her painful labour. The narration in the last book of *Breaking Dawn* returns to Bella. This book details her transformation into a vampire, how she adapts to this new life and her newly acquired skills, the Volturi's attempt to destroy the child and, finally, the happily-ever-after ending. These three books are also divided into chapters. Within the novel, there are shifts in the narrative voice; that is beginning from Bella, then turning to Jacob and shifting back to Bella. Even though there are two narrators to the novel, the narration of the events by the two narrators is linear; in other words, both narrators follow a standard narrative style. There are no shifts in time, neither forward nor backward. The chain of the events is never broken. All the events follow the pattern of cause and effect. It is therefore fair to say that *Breaking Dawn* is traditional in terms of narratology. However, when it comes to classification in terms of genre, the novel becomes puzzling. Even though *the Twilight* series often finds itself under the umbrella term of the fantastic, many elements found in the final novel defy such an easy and quick classification.

The fact that the series is generally classified as fantasy is mostly due to the presence of supernatural creatures like vampires and werewolves in the text. However, as David Sandner (2004) states, fantastic is a genre that "is difficult to define" (p. 2). Moreover, it is quite difficult to suggest that the novel conforms to the noble qualities of fantastic fiction such as Rosemary Jackson's perception of the fantastic as a subversive literary mode (2009, pp. 8-25); Tzevatan Todorov's insistence on hesitation (1973, p. 41); or Ursula Le Guin's description of fantasy as "a game played for very high stakes" (2004, p. 145). For Eric Rabkin (1979), "the fantastic is the affect generated as we read by the direct reversal of the ground rules of the narrative world" (p. 22). Rabkin identifies fantastic not "in simple comparison with the real world but in examination of the reading process" (1979, p. 20). In other words, fantastic can be determined by checking the reader's response to the text that requires a cognitivist approach, which is beyond the scope of this study.

There is also a significant body of criticism that attempts to define the fantastic fiction within the scope of gender studies. As Murat Goc (2008) suggests, "critical

approaches to fantasy, were founded on a sexist assumption that while science-fiction is characterised by 'cognitive estrangement' and it operates according to a rationalist/scientific mindset" (p. 50). Goc further elaborates a feminist perspective of fantasy fiction, asserting that

> Women [are] archetypal storytellers and bearers of oral tradition ranging from stories, folk tales, fairy tales, mysterious thrillers to legends whereas written literature, with its norms, rules, canonical hierarchies and totality, is perfectly masculine. Women have deliberately created alternative realities and universes to redefine and reconstitute the patriarchal domination of the Symbolic Order by envisioning an alternative reality that either corrects or intensifies the ills of the present. (2018, p. 51)

While it is true that Bella is the storyteller, some of the feminist readings of the novel, however, have not been favourable. For instance, Sophie Spieler (2012) points out that masculine and feminine roles in the saga are constructed largely with regard to prevailing perceptions of gender depending on dual nature of binary oppositions (p. 129). Spieler also describes Edward "as the hegemonic male and Bella as the marginalized Other relegated to the periphery of the power dynamic due to her status as a woman and a human" (2012, p. 120). Moreover, for Reni Eddo-Lodge (2010), Bella "remains a passive, stagnant, character who, every so often, momentarily jerks into life- but only when it is required of her by her male counterparts" (p. 1). On the other hand, by highlighting the ambiguous attitude of the saga towards beauty, marriage and consumerism, Christine Jarvis (2013) claims that "*Twilight* offers all the self-righteous satisfaction of resisting normative femininity, combined with all the rewards of submission to it and, thereby, offering fantasy resolutions for some of the tensions facing young women today" (p. 113). These readings suggest that the novel has no or little interest in redefining or reconstructing femininity and that it abides to the dominant gender conceptions.

Additionally, the novel itself exhibits characteristics of its own making the task of classification even more arduous. What will be argued in the article is that the last novel of the series borrows many elements from various genres while trying to remain in the realm of fantasy. It surpasses the boundaries between genres without committing itself to any of them and oscillates among the genres enjoying the richness that those genres offer. Through this stylistic strategy, the text violates and disturbs the

boundaries that separate the genres and it does not hesitate to exploit certain key concepts that have been attributed to individual genres for centuries.

This strategy is similar to what Gary K. Wolfe (2002) identifies as "the colonization of the scientific fiction" (p. 11). However, in my study, the argument is that by welcoming certain key concepts from distinguished and distinctive genres, the fantastic text is, in turn, colonized by these genres. It will further be argued that the oscillations and shifts in the genre in this specific novel may help us acquire a better understanding of the consumerist habits of the postmodern reader, for whom, it seems, an all-in-one text is obviously appealing. By all-in-one text, I mean that the reader experiences all distinct reading pleasures of distinct genres in one single text. These genres may be given as postmodern popular fiction, romance, erotic romance, marvelous (or the fantastic), epic and fairy tale. These genres make themselves felt in the novel's style since in the postmodern world the rigid boundaries of the previous ages are blurred. That may also explain why the task of boundary drawing, categorization or classification is always bound to failure.

> The important contemporary debate about the margins and boundaries of social and artistic conventions is the result of a typically postmodernist transgression of previously accepted limits: those of particular arts, of genres, of art itself. The borders between literary genres have become fluid – the conventions of two genres are played off against each other; there is no simple, unproblematic merging. (Hutcheon, 1995, p. 15)

Postmodernism is therefore not only, as Fredric Jameson (2014) claims, the dissolution of the thick line between the high and low art, but also destruction of the secure borders between distinctive genres (p. 165). A postmodern reader should not be surprised to see a knight fully dressed in shining armour in the streets of twenty-first century London. The merging of the genres becomes more dramatic in the case of fantastic fiction since this genre is relatively a new one, full of uncertainties, and lacks a well-established genre description with neatly drawn boundaries. Wolfe also points out the position that the fantastic finds itself in:

> Because of the uncertainty of these genre markers, the fantastic genres contain within themselves the seeds of their own dissolution, of a nascent set of postmodern rhetorical modes that would, over a period of several decades, begin to supplant not

> only the notion of genre itself but also the very foundations of the modernist barricades that had long been thought to insulate literary culture from the vernacular fiction of the pulps and other forms of noncanonical expression. (2002, p. 15)

According to Wolfe, each subgenre of the fantastic, science fiction, horror etc., "developed its own share of characteristic and clichéd narrative formulas, only that such formulas were never sufficient to be the defining characteristic of the genre" (2002, p. 16). While horror has its roots back in the Gothic, science fiction began to mature especially with the writings of H. G. Wells in the beginning of the twentieth century. Wolfe proposes that "fantasy – the oldest genre of all, but one whose principal pulp identity had been largely confined to sword-and-sorcery tales – did not really develop a clear market identity until fairly late in the paperback revolution (e.g. Tolkien)" (2002, p. 16). What Wolfe points here is Tolkien's *the Lord of the Rings* trilogy, which has now become a classic and has been acknowledged as a standard for fantastic fiction. He further notes that the fantastic as a genre "quickly moved to catch up with its sister genres in the process of dissolving its own borders, as its authors began to discover that the Tolkien quest formula was but one expression of the genre's potential and not a totalizing definition of it" (2002, p. 16). Due to marketing, profits, literary trends and consumer habits, the fantastic as a genre had to enter into a dialectical relationship with other genres in order to "define itself in the recapitulation of, or reaction against, the world-views of these central figures[i]" (Wolfe, 2002, p. 16). The dialectic relationship leads to two different directions:

> In each field the dialectic seemed to offer two possible routes for later writers: either expansion of the discourse to the edges of genre and beyond or collapsing of the discourse into an increasingly crabbed and narrow set of self-referential texts. Both kinds of results tend to promote the dissolution of the original genre – the one by integration with other modes of fiction, the other by implosion – and both are abundantly in evidence in each genre today. (Wolfe, 2002, p. 17)

Wolfe concludes that both these routes lead to the dissolution of the original genre. Gradually, the fantastic distances itself from its original core. However, Wolfe's stance is rather a conservative one. It is not that fantastic fiction is open to transgression because it is relatively a new genre compared to genres with well-established and secured boundaries. This development is the inevitable consequence of the postmodern age in which even the most secure genres cannot escape such contamination or blurring. On the contrary, this merging of genres provides fresh possibilities for varied narrative

styles that nourish and vitalize fantastic fiction and other genres. Moreover, if plurality and the acknowledgment of differences are the key concepts of postmodern era (Lyotard, 1984, pp. 81-82), then the existence of a genre which is particular and singular obviously seems impossible. Suggesting that "pluralizing is a distinctly postmodern phenomenon", Hutcheon (1995) also argues that "the sense of uniqueness, closure and authority once demanded of theory gives way to intertextual play and the admission of intellectual contingency" (p. 54). While warning that "fantasy is evaporating", Wolfe also accepts the new possibilities that arise out of such merging:

> I meant to suggest not that the genre was in a state of collapse but quite the opposite: that it had grown so diverse and ubiquitous that it seemed a central part of the fabric of contemporary culture – infiltrating other genres… The writers who contribute to the evaporation of genre, who destabilize it by undermining our expectations and appropriating materials at will, their fiction shaped by individual vision rather than the conventions of fictive traditions, are the same writers who continually revitalize genre: a healthy genre, a healthy literature, is one at risk, whose boundaries grow uncertain and whose foundations get wobbly. (2002, p. 27)

Being open to new influences revitalizes the genre and perhaps that is what makes *the Twilight* saga appealing to the postmodern readers. It is not only a fantastic text which is based on a single fairy tale[ii], but a pluralistic, hybrid, all-in-one text in which it is possible to come across traces of commercial art, TV programs, movies, the classical epic, romance, mythology.

Analysis of the Novel

The predominant tension in the first three novels of the saga is the prolonged sexual tension between Edward and Bella. While the core theme of these novels is love for the opposite sex (Bella's love for Edward, Edward and Jacob's love for Bella), the final novel deals with this type of love only superficially. Love remains present, but in the form of love for one's kin, more specifically Renesmee, Edward and Bella's daughter. The sexual tension, which defines the previous novels, is released as the couple are finally able to consume their love on their honeymoon on the Isle of Esme. As a result, Bella becomes pregnant, which leads to the events resulting in her

transformation into a vampire. While Bella is transformed, the reader also witnesses the transformations in the genre of the novel.

The novel starts with Bella's narration. The very first chapter clearly reminds the reader that what he or she is reading is not a classic fantastic novel or a traditional romance. In fact, the first chapter almost appears as a commercial ad for a car presented to Bella by Edward before their wedding. This car is an armoured Mercedes Guardian. Bella stops at the traffic lights and she is disturbed by the gazing eyes of the surrounding crowd; these eyes were not gazing at her but at the car. When the green light is on, she pushes hard on the accelerator in order to escape:

> The light turned green and, in my hurry to escape, I stomped on the gas pedal without thinking – the normal way I would have punched it to get my ancient Chevy truck moving.
> Engine snarling like a hunting panther, the car jolted forward so fast that my body slammed into the black leather seat and my stomach flattened against my spine. (Meyer 2008, p. 3)

Bella describes the engine of the novel as "snarling like a hunting panther" and stresses "the black leather seat". She also compares this new car to her old "ancient Chevy truck" which she owned before her marriage. Later, two men approach her and ask questions about the car:

> "I'm sorry to bother you, but could you tell me what kind of car you're driving?" the tall one asked.
> "Urn, a Mercedes, right?"
> "Yes," the man said politely while his shorter friend rolled his eyes at my answer.
> "I know. But I was wondering, is that... are you driving a Mercedes Guardian?"
> The man said the name with reverence. (Meyer, 2008, pp. 4-5)

A Mercedes Guardian makes the man pronounce the brand name with reverence. While the horizon of expectation in a classic fantasy warrants a place that is alternative to the known universe, or at least a deconstructed version of the known physical world, the reader is confronted with a description of a car with "body armor, four thousand pounds of body armour, and missile-proof glass", which also exists in their universe (Meyer, 2008, p. 6). For Rabkin, "fantasies must give some minimal sense of continuity, of reality" (1979, p. 22). However, a Mercedes Guardian is not a thing one comes across in the fictional universes of Tolkien or Pratchet. In other words, a real-life object is placed in a real-life location (Forks, Washington) in a fantastic text.

In a postmodern manner, the text undermines the expected characteristics of a fantastic text by increasing the physical reality of its universe. On the other hand, the use of brand names, such as Levi's, Mercedes or Versace in postmodern fiction is thought to be a reflection of the prevalent consumer culture in which the objects are bestowed a meaning that surpasses their use value (Featherstone, 2005, pp. 83-84). A car is not only an object for transportation, but also an identity marker. In Bella's case, her Mercedes, later turned into a Ferrari, signifies her rise in social position. She was using an ancient Chevy truck and leading a moderate life. When she becomes engaged to Edward, she moves up the social ladder and in order to assert her new identity, she uses expensive cars, such as a Mercedes or a Ferrari.

After the first chapter, the novel turns its focus to romance, particularly from the second ("Long Night") to the fifth chapter ("Isle of Esme"). Romance novels are "love stories that focus on the heroine rather than the hero, in which, after diverse obstacles have been overcome, the plots end happily with the betrothal or marriage of the lovers" (Abrams & Harpham, 2012, p. 351). As in the previous novels and as a characteristic of traditional romance writing, the focus in these chapters is on the love and relationship between Edward, Bella, and later also Jacob. Bella enjoys the wedding preparations, visits her mother with Edward, marries him, dances with Jacob, and leaves Fork for the Isle of Esme, situated in Brazil, for their honeymoon. Bella's attention turns from the car to Edward in this paragraph:

> In that moment, as the minister said his part, my world, which had been upside down for so long now, seemed to settle into its proper position. I saw just how silly I'd been for fearing this – as if it were an unwanted birthday gift or an embarrassing exhibition, like the prom. I looked into Edward's shining, triumphant eyes and knew that I was winning, too. Because nothing else mattered but that I could stay with him. (Meyer 2008, p. 45)

In the fifth chapter, "Isle Of Esme", the couple begins to enjoy their honeymoon, which means that the reader is finally able to observe the couple consume their love for the first time. This also signifies the novel's transition from romance to erotic romance. This subgenre of romance is "essentially a romance – complete with happy ending – in which the love relationship between the protagonists develops through and is inextricably linked to sexual interaction which is explicitly described" (Ramsdell, 2012,

p. 533). The setting is exactly as the reader might expect, which allows for a genre-shift; the events take place on an isolated tropical island within a grand mansion. The bedroom of the mansion is also noteworthy with its "*huge* white bed in the centre… hung with billowy clouds of mosquito netting" (Meyer, 2008, p. 73). That the hugeness of the bed is stressed by italics is significant in this context. The eroticism of the scene continues to escalate as Bella opens her luggage to look for her swimwear but instead discovers "an awful lot of sheer lace and skimpy satin in my hands. Lingerie. Very lingerie-ish lingerie, with French tags" (Meyer, 2008, pp. 74-75). Having found nothing but silk and satin lingerie, Bella gathers her courage and goes towards Edward, who is lying naked in the ocean, with only a towel covering her body, which she disposes of as she approaches Edward:

> He wasn't hard to find. He stood, his back to me, waist deep in the midnight water, staring up at the oval moon. The pallid light of the moon turned his skin a perfect white, like the sand, like the moon itself, and made his wet hair black as the ocean. He was motionless, his hands resting palms down against the water; the low waves broke around him as if he were a stone. I stared at the smooth lines of his back, his shoulders, his arms, his neck, the flawless shape of him.... The fire was no longer a flash burn across my skin – it was slow and deep now; it smouldered away all my awkwardness, my shy uncertainty. I slipped the towel off without hesitation, leaving it on the tree with his clothes, and walked out into the white light; it made me pale as the snowy sand, too. (Meyer 2008, p. 77)

However, most probably due to marketing tactics, age limit and availability for varied markets, the narration skips the sexual intercourse. The reader only receives information about the immediate aftermath. During their first attempt at intercourse, Edward tears apart a pillow, filling the bedroom with feathers. He also bruises Bella's body. This worries Edward and in order to avoid a second faux pas he tries to distract Bella with tiresome activities such as sightseeing or scuba diving. However, Bella cannot control her dreams and after one of them, she awakes in tears. In the dream, she is likely to have had a sexual intercourse with Edward, but the exact nature of this dream is also not revealed. All the reader can learn comes from Bella's declaration that she is crying because she did not want to wake up from the dream in which Edward featured. The dream and Bella's tears lead to their second sexual intercourse, in which Bella's nightgown, the silk bedsheets and the frame of the bed are seriously damaged.

In the seventh chapter, titled “Unexpected”, the genre passes into the fantastic and at some points to the genre of marvelous in Todorov’s terms. When Bella realizes that she is pregnant, the news shocks Edward and his family to the bone. Edward is surprised and terrified and he decides to take Bella to Carlisle, his father and a doctor. This is an unexpected situation as the couple has no idea whether a vampire can father a child with a human. Even Edward has difficulty in predicting what is to come:

> “You’ll be fine. Carlisle will be ready when we get there. We’ll take care of this, and you’ll be fine, you’ll be fine.”
> “Take care of this? What do you mean?”
> He leaned away and looked me in the eye. “We’re going to get that thing out before it can hurt any part of you. Don’t be scared. I won’t let it hurt you.”
> “That thing?” I gasped. (Meyer, 2008, p. 120)

The pregnancy is therefore a supernatural phenomenon, potentially would result in the birth of a supernatural entity. Not only is the reader unaware of what would become of the pregnant Bella, but Edward and Jacob also have no idea about what is to come. This is an unexpected turn of events both for the physical world of the reader and for the supernatural universe of the werewolves and vampires, which creates a dominant mood of “hesitation”. For Todorov:

> The fantastic lasts only as long as a certain hesitation: a hesitation common to reader and character, who must decide whether or not what they perceive derives from “reality as it exists in the common opinion. At the story’s end, the reader makes a decision even if the character does not; he opts for one solution or the other, and thereby emerges from the fantastic. If he decides that the laws of reality remain intact and permit an explanation of the phenomena described, we say that the work belongs to another genre. The uncanny. If on the contrary, he decides that new laws of nature must be entertained to account for the phenomena, we enter the genre of the marvelous. (1973, p. 41)

When Jacob meets Bella, he is shocked, puzzled and terrified. “I’d seen her just a month ago. There was no way she could be pregnant. Not that pregnant” (Meyer, 2008, p. 160). Even Edward’s family have no idea about the creature that seems to be slowly killing Bella. When Jacob asks Edward what it is, the Cullens are desperate to provide any answer: “None of us have any idea. But it is stronger than she is” (Meyer, 2008, p. 168). When Jacob’s pack learns about the mysterious child, Sam, as the alpha

werewolf, decides to infringe the peace agreement between the two families and attack the Cullens to kill it before it becomes even more dangerous.

> This is not something our treaty anticipated, Sam said. This is a danger to every human in the area. We don't know what kind of creature the Cullens have bred, but we know that it is strong and fast-growing. And it will be too young to follow any treaty. ... And we can't take chances with the unknown in this case. We can only allow the Cullens to exist while we're absolutely sure that they can be trusted not to cause harm. This ... thing cannot be trusted. (Meyer, 2008, p. 184-185)

Neither werewolves nor vampires have any idea of what is to happen. They share the anxiety and the mystery with the reader and this is the genre of the marvelous as defined by Todorov (1973, p. 41). Thus, with regard to Todorov's definition, the novel stays in the borders of the fantastic and the marvelous as long as the hesitation caused by the mysterious baby continues. However, the transformation of the genre continues as Carlisle, the doctor, gradually learns more about the creature and how it reacts to Bella. This time the pendulum swings to science fiction in which "an explicit attempt is made to render plausible the fictional world by reference to know or imagined scientific principles, or to a projected advance in technology" (Abrams & Harpham, 2012, p. 356). In the part of the novel where Bella is lying down full of tubes and other high technological medical instruments, Carlisle applies modern medical treatment:

> "I wish I could get a better idea of what exactly it is," Carlisle murmured. "The fetus is well protected. I haven't been able to produce an ultrasonic image. I doubt there is any way to get a needle through the amniotic sac... The more I know about the fetus, the better I can estimate what it will be capable of. What I wouldn't give for even a little amniotic fluid. If I knew even the chromosomal count..." (Meyer, 2008, p. 218)

The vocabulary choice, or the terminology used, is explicitly scientific. Carlisle's attempts to save Bella and her child are not informed by any sort of sorcery or witchcraft but directly by the medical science. Therefore, the novel gets closer to science fiction in this part. Then, towards the end of the second book, Bella gives birth to Renesmee, who turns out to be a female half-vampire and half-human with the ability to grow very quickly. The birth nearly kills Bella. However, Jacob and Edward cooperate to keep her alive. While Jacob performs cardio pulmonary resuscitation, Edward transforms Bella into a vampire and this ends the second book.

In the third book, narrative voice is restored to Bella. She gradually recovers and begins to enjoy her new vampire life with Edward and their beautiful daughter

Renesmee. The third book portrays Bella maturing and adapting to her new identity. Just like a heroine of a classical epic, with the aid of the Cullen family, she learns how to master her new skills and embraces a new way of life. In this sense, the third book introduces another genre; the epic. The process of maturing of the heroine is presented in great detail and the obstacles on the way are presented. These are not merely difficulties in adapting to this new life style, the greatest obstacle and danger for her and the Cullens is the rival Volturi family, based in Italy, who aspire to dominate all other vampire families. When the news of Renesmee reaches to the Volturi, they suspect that Edward and Bella have an immortal child, which would mean they have disturbed the Law, which means punishment with death. Thus, the Volturi gather their forces to meet the Cullens in Forks. Vampires from all around the world come to see Renesmee who, with her beauty, persuades them of her innocence. The arriving vampires create a scene not dissimilar to the gathering of armies in a classical epic. During the meeting, which is also epic in proportion, Edward introduces each vampire and their special power/ability:

> "Alec and Jane are their greatest offense," he said emotionlessly, like we were talking of a basketball team. "Their defensive players rarely see any real action."
> "Because Jane can burn you where you stand – mentally at least. What does Alec do? Didn't you once say he was even more dangerous than Jane?"
> "Yes. In a way, he is the antidote to Jane. She makes you feel the worst pain imaginable. Alec, on the other hand, makes you feel nothing. Absolutely nothing. Sometimes, when the Volturi are feeling kind, they have Alec anesthetize someone before he is executed. If he has surrendered or pleased them in some other way."
> "Anesthetic? But how is that more dangerous than Jane?"
> "Because he cuts off your senses altogether. No pain, but also no sight or sound or smell. Total sensory deprivation. You are utterly alone in the blackness. You don't even feel it when they burn you." (Meyer, 2008, p. 533)

The ulterior motive of the Volturi family is to capture Edward and Alice, a vampire who can see the future, and destroy the rest. Renesmee is just an excuse for them to attack. When the child is found to be innocent, the Volturi kill Irina in order to taunt Kate and Tanya, sisters to Irina, who are sided with the Cullens. The Cullens prevent the sisters from reacting. However, when Aro, the leader of the Volturi, continues his attempts to find an excuse to destroy the family, Garret, an English

vampire, delivers an eloquent speech, typical of the epic, to persuade the vampires siding with the Volturi and to show them the real intention of that family.

> "These ancient ones did not come here for justice as they told you. We suspected as much, and now it has been proved. They came, misled, but with a valid excuse for their action. Witness now as they seek flimsy excuses to continue their true mission. Witness them struggle to find a justification for their true purpose – to destroy this family here." He gestured toward Carlisle and Tanya.
>
> …
>
> "I have witnessed the bonds within this family – I say family and not coven. These strange golden-eyed ones deny their very natures. But in return have they found something worth even more, perhaps, than mere gratification of desire? I've made a little study of them in my time here, and it seems to me that intrinsic to this intense family binding – that which makes them possible at all – is the peaceful character of this life of sacrifice. There is no aggression here like we all saw in the large southern clans that grew and diminished so quickly in their wild feuds. There is no thought for domination. And Aro knows this better than I do." (Meyer, 2008, pp. 665-666)

Then, Alice, the adopted daughter of the Cullens, and Jasper arrive with Nahuel, another vampire-human like Reneesme, in order to prove that the little girl is no threat to anyone. Seeing that, the Volturi have no chance but leave. The novel reflects epic characteristics in the meeting of the vampires, in the introduction of each vampire in terms of personal skills and abilities and in the change in language. This part also serves as the climax of the novel and is followed directly by the resolution which presents the last shift in the genre. At that moment the epic ends, the genre is transformed into a fairy tale, as the title of the last chapter also suggests: "The Happily Ever After". The title explicitly announces that the novel's ending is a happy one, as in a fairy tale. This is the point in which the novel exhibits fairy tale qualities. The reader is informed that Edward and Bella will live happily forever. Moreover, it is also heralded that Renesmee and Jacob are sealed, which means that Jacob will be her guardian and the two will be eventually united. The evil loses the unfair battle and the good is victorious, providing a fairy tale ending to the novel.

Conclusion

Breaking Dawn is generally included in the fantastic genre as the text features werewolves and vampires. However, a careful reading and analysis of the text proves

that the novel is not a pure fantasy, but a postmodern hybrid text of various genres. The novel first starts as a postmodern story or a commercial, then turns, respectively to romance, erotic romance, the fantastic (or marvelous), science fiction, epic and finally fairy tale. These oscillations may be attributed to the fact that the fantastic as a genre is relatively new. However, these very oscillations and boundary crossings are the characteristics of the postmodern age in which nothing can stay firm and stable.

Borrowing distinctive features of various genres and incorporating them into a single text is appealing to the postmodern reader whose consumerist habits have made such all-in-one texts popular. The text might be appealing for the reader as a shopping mall is appealing to the consumers since they can find different stores under one roof. The rapid pace of the life in contemporary world renders it important for the consumers to be able to satisfy their various needs in the shortest possible time. While it is true that the novel as a best-seller is far from being acknowledged as serious literature, and while it is also true that the novel's literary value is open to question, this tactic of merging quite distinctive genre features and qualities into a single text, which brings forward violation of boundaries, may serve to better understand the consumerist habits of postmodern readers.

Notes on the contributor

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Footnotes

[i] Wolfe credits "Robert A. Heinlein in the case of science fiction, Howard Phillips Lovecraft in the case of horror, J. R. R. Tolkien in the case of fantasy" as central figures. (2002, p. 16)

[ii] Fleur Diamond studies the novel as "as a contemporary rewriting of the 'Beauty and the Beast' fairy tale" in her article "Beauty and the Beautiful Beast: Stephenie Meyer's Twilight Saga and the Quest for a Transgressive Female Desire" (2011, p. 41).

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