

“Love Thyself”: A Comparison between the English and the Japanese Versions of the Title Song in *Frozen* (Walt Disney Pictures, 2013)

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Abstract

This paper will focus on the animated movie *Frozen* (directed by Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee) and its title song “Let It Go”, translated into Japanese as “Ari no mama de” (literally “The Way I Am”), and will explore its role in the redefinition of femininity as a site of acceptance and compassion, instead of an active interplay of competition and power, as presented by the historical reality modeled by the 60-year-long feminist movement. Released in the year 2013 and highly acclaimed in Japan, *Frozen* (translated as *Anna to yuki no joō*, literally: Anna and the Snow-Queen) became the second in terms of total earnings, after USA, with 247,6 USD, the third-highest grossing film of all times (after *Spirited Away*, 2001, and *Titanic*, 1997), the second-highest grossing imported film (following *Titanic*) and the highest-grossing Disney film. Taking into account two other animation movies released in the same year by Studio Ghibli – *The Wind Rises* (*Kaze tachinu*, director: Miyazaki Hayao) and *The Tale of Princess Kaguya* (*Kaguya-hime no monogatari*, director: Takahata Isao) – this paper analyzes the structural and semantic transformations in *Frozen*’s title song from its English version into the Japanese adaptation, referring to the three levels of significance emerging in the translation-adaptation process: emotional ambivalence, the dynamic reconsideration of legends and myths, the subtle highlighting of the spiral-like dialectics of cause and effect.

Keywords: *Disney animation, Japanese popular music, entertainment industry, translation, love, feminism*

Introduction: the quest for fresh gender paradigms in popular culture

Searching for answers to general questions about humanity and nature, femininity and masculinity, war and peace, technology and emotions, truth and integrity beyond the good-and-evil Western dualism, it has

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become a common endeavour to move across cultures, times and spaces, in an active, honest effort to accomplish different results to the same old challenges. The year 2013 saw the release of three animated masterworks: *The Wind Rises* (*Kaze tachinu*, Studio Ghibli, director: Miyazaki Hayao), *Frozen* (Walt Disney Pictures, directors: Chris Buck & Jennifer Lee) and *The Tale of Princess Kaguya* (*Kaguya-hime no monogatari*, Studio Ghibli, director: Takahata Isao). Miyazaki's work might be, by far, considered the gentlest animated feature about war, dealing with the fictionalised biography of Horikoshi Jirō (1903-1982), the aeronautical engineer who designed Mitsubishi's A5M fighter and its successor, the Mitsubishi A6M Zero, employed by Japan during the Pacific War. On a deeper level, *The Wind Rises* tells the all-too-known story of great dreams, the individuals harnessing them, and the way these dreams and their carriers are taken over by the waves of history. On the other hand, *The Tale of Princess Kaguya* and, to a certain extent, *Frozen*, tackled the problematic of femininity and its position in late modernity, while referring to the narrative foundation of old legends and folk tales (Barker, 1989: 31; Drazen, 2003: 211; Gluck, 1985: 42; Grajdian, 2008: 49). Furthermore, in soft tones of emotional transcendence, *The Tale of Princess Kaguya* bravely displays heartbreaking parables of the risks and responsibilities of uncontrollable power in the hands of individuals, and thus provides symbolic undertones of female empowerment through the prism of personal choices in the midst of increasing popularity and solitude, so that the old Japanese folk-tale became a space of longing, and, paradoxically, of belonging.

This paper will focus on *Frozen* and its title song, "Let It Go", in the original English version and in the Japanese translation (*Ari no mama de*, literally "The Way I Am"), and will explore its role in the redefinition of femininity as a site of acceptance and compassion, instead of an active interplay of competition and power, as the feminist movement and the historical reality have been constructing it for the past 60 years. My approach will follow three stages. Firstly, in an initial explanation about the technical data of *Frozen*, I shall refer to its characteristics, idiosyncracies and intricancies, as a typical product of the popular culture industry, with its complicated dynamics of compliance and resistance (Eagleton, 1990: 278; Habermas, 1981:I/32). Secondly, I will examine the title song in its original English version as "Let It Go", in an endeavor to connect late-modern feminism and feminist paroles with the original ideals and claims of proto-feminists. Thirdly, I shall analyse the Japanese translation of the song, "Ari

no *mama de*” within the interplay of Western and Eastern flows as reflected in the products of popular culture, as well as in its representation of femininity, as the driving force for progress and enlightenment. Moreover, the dialectical relationship between love, empowerment and identity construction will be evaluated in terms of cultural production, marketing, consumption/perception and reproduction. This relation implies three main strategies – emotional ambivalence, the dynamic reconsideration of legends and myths, the subtle highlighting of the spiral-like dialectics of cause and effect – employed in the process of reconstructing the past as a repository of emotional energy and socio-cultural role-models, beyond economic and political compulsions.

These ideas and concepts are the result of an extensive fieldwork over more than a decade of intensive research on *anime*, animation and the representation of reality in products of the entertainment industry. The fieldwork included numerous interviews with anime producers and anime research, both directly related to the field of animation and its adjoining fields (entertainment industry, cultural consumption, the politics of leisure, etc.) and also tackling the theoretical dimensions of Cultural Studies, Media Anthropology, feminism, semiotics, poststructuralism, Post-Colonial Studies. Apart from the methodological approach, this paper takes into account the aesthetic-ideological dimensions of animation within the broader Soft Power spectrum on an international level via specific creative strategies. Its goal is to point out the intricate levels comprised by the phenomenon of the “feminine self” as a media-related construction in the unstable stress-ratio between individual aspirations and social acceptance (Clarke, 2004: 25; Clammer, 2000: 212). Beyond physical appearance, which clearly defines standards of “inside” and “outside”, the “feminine self” related to the socio-cultural context of its emergence and to the economic-political path of its development, remains a highly personal concern. In times of the ubiquitous *cool self*² symptomatology, the reinvigoration of local myths and legends provokes a nostalgic return to a more classical worldview, rejecting the increasing intellectualisation of popular culture, and supporting the rather conservative message that love, happiness and

² The ‘cool self’ refers to that existential attitude displayed by certain categories of citizens in highly developed post-industrialized nations, and characterized mainly by a lack of emotional attachment to fellow-citizens and by a lack of commitment to any goals and long-term pursuits (Bauman, 2001: 132).

existential fulfillment are more than ever individual choices in late-modernity. This message is contained by *Frozen* as well: without aggressively displaying femininity as the solution to all evils, the two sisters, Elsa and Anna, struggle with innate differences and deep-rooted needs for togetherness and validation, and they eventually find answers to the questions that troubled them, healing pains which previously seemed insurmountable.

1. Animation, language and their representation of reality as mediation

As a high-caliber institution of the entertainment industry, Walt Disney Pictures has established specific ideological and aesthetical standards in delivering its products to the all-too competitive market. *Frozen* was released in a historical context with cultural, social, economic and political implications which led to an gradual pressure to redefining “gender roles” in practical terms, allowing larger segments of the population to choose and learn to cope with the new realities of the 21st century. Intentionally or not, *Frozen* employs a well-known plot based on an old fairy-tale, committing to a process of re-semanticization of the storyline through the creative employ of characters and their interactions in a state of the art production with a two-fold structure of significance: firstly, femininity and its core element, “love”, and secondly, identity and the interplay of “love” as a manifold force.

1.1. Frozen and the quest for a new feminine identity

Loosely based on *The Snow Queen*, a Danish folk tale collected and re-written by Hans-Christian Andersen in 1845, *Frozen* extracts from its original the Nordic setting, several trolls and the basic idea of sorcery, which gives the powers of wintry transmogrification not to an evil queen, but to the elder sister, Elsa, a blonde, brooding princess, born with the ability of turning anything she touches into ice, frost and snow. One night while playing, Elsa accidentally injures her younger sister, Anna. Their shocked parents, the king and queen of Arendelle, seek help from the troll king, who heals Anna and removes the memories of Elsa’s magic. The royal couple isolates the sisters in the castle until Elsa learns to control her magic, but warn her not to reveal her powers to the people because she could be misunderstood. Still unable to to control her magic abilities, Elsa spends most of her time alone

in her room, refusing even to speak to Anna and, over the years, the two sisters grow quite disconnected with each other until the sudden death of their parents in a storm at sea.

The process of re-writing Andersen's story with the focus on the two royal sisters involved a less aggressive approach to individualism and feminism, but still assertive in its reflection of socio-cultural reality in late modernity, combining direct references to the targeted audiences with enticing mysteries and the fantasy environment, in a manner similar with *Tangled*, another Disney great hit, or with the Broadway musical, *Wicked* (Bryman, 1995: 62; Do Rozario, 2004:47).

Hans Christian Andersen's original version of The Snow Queen is a pretty dark tale and it doesn't translate easily into a film. For us the breakthrough came when we tried to give really human qualities to the Snow Queen. When we decided to make the Snow Queen Elsa and our protagonist Anna sisters, that gave a way to relate to the characters in a way that conveyed what each was going through and that would relate for today's audiences. [...] There are times when Elsa does villainous things, but because you understand where it comes from, from this desire to defend herself, you can always relate to her. [...] We do try to bring scope and the scale that you would expect, but do it in a way that we can understand the characters and relate to them (Connely, 2013).

There are three episodes in *Frozen* which depict stages of maturing femininity, while taking into account the necessity of communal responsibility and personal accountability. The first episode is Elsa's coming-of-age celebration, when the kingdom prepares for her coronation. Excited to be allowed out of the castle again, Princess Anna explores the town, meets Prince Hans of the Southern Isles and feels attracted to him. Despite Elsa's fears, her coronation takes place without incident. During the reception, Hans proposes to Anna, who hastily accepts. However, Elsa refuses to grant her blessing and forbids their sudden marriage. The sisters argue, culminating in the exposure of Elsa's abilities in an emotional outburst. It is a moment of crisis, of open conflict between the two sisters, with uncontrollable repercussions. Declared a monster by one of the guests, the Duke of Weselton, Elsa flees the castle, while inadvertently unleashing an eternal winter on the kingdom. Up in the nearby mountains, she abandons her restraint, vowing to never return to her kingdom, and builds herself a solitary ice palace. On this occasion she sings the title-song "Let It Go" – the central piece of ideological statement in the entire animation movie, as to be shown below.

A second sequence of vital importance in the growing-up process is the moment when Anna and Elsa reunite in Elsa's ice castle. Elsa refuses to return to her kingdom, still fearing that she might hurt her sister. When Anna insists that Elsa join her, she becomes agitated and her powers lash out, accidentally striking Anna in the heart. Horrified, Elsa forces Anna, Kristoff, the iceman who accompanied Anna on her journey to the mountains, and the snowman Olaf to leave by creating a giant snow creature named Marshmallow who chases them away from her palace. As they flee, Kristoff becomes concerned when he sees Anna's hair turning white. He seeks help from the trolls, his adoptive family, who explain that Anna's heart has been frozen by Elsa, and that unless it can be thawed by an "act of true love", she will become frozen solid forever, and eventually die. Believing that only Hans can save her with a true love's kiss, Kristoff races back with her to Arendelle. The scene in the ice palace brings forward the sisters' open, aggressive confrontation, when Elsa's powers grow uncontrollably and hurts the very person she wanted to protect. In fact, this second sequence is a brutal lesson in humility and self-discipline, warning us that precisely those abilities which make us special might also destroy us and those around us.

The third key episode in the heroines' increasing awareness of their position in the world is the final confrontation between Elsa and Hans, after she escapes the palace and heads out into the blizzard on the fjord. Because she is told that her sister is dead due to her actions, Elsa sinks in quiet desperation, while the storm suddenly ceases, giving Kristoff and Anna the chance to locate each other. Nevertheless, Anna, seeing that Hans is about to kill Elsa, throws herself between the two just as she freezes solid, blocking Hans' attack, and saving her sister from a deadly blow. As Elsa grieves her sister, Anna begins to thaw, since her decision to sacrifice herself to save her sister is an "act of true love", the only way to break the spell. Elsa realizes thus that "love", deep, unconditional, meaningful love, is the only means to controlling her powers, and she eventually thaws the kingdom and gives Olaf his own personal flurry so he can survive in summer.

There is more than a silent revolution in terms of bold feminism in *Frozen* (Bichler, 2004: 115; Brode, 2004: 31; Wells 1998: 83) because of its discursive, media-reinforced message to be true to oneself, to believe in oneself and to search for solutions within oneself (while observing the environment and learning from ongoing experiences). Indeed, Elsa and Anna are Disney princesses per se, with dishy suitors and glamorous gowns, but in *Frozen*, the status of a typical princess is solely a superficial layer in

the process of creating a credible fantasy universe in which tales are told and lessons are taught in a comprehensible, yet entertaining manner. While Anna learns the hard way that there is no short-cut in love and in pursuing one's true heart, Elsa has to learn to forgive and accept herself, to "let go" of the past pain and the responsibilities and to enjoy her life as a continuous journey amid those she loves and cares about. At its very core, *Frozen* turns into a rhapsody of life and love with the profound message of savouring the "little things" which count, after all, the most.

1.2. Let It Go and the dialectics of despair

At its very origins, feminism started out in an effort to re-capture femininity from the all-consuming jungle of industrialization and urbanization, the two main elements of modernization. Proto-feminists saw themselves in cross-fires within a society rapidly changing, which required their reproductive and educative abilities and their skills to be hardworking employees at the workplace and obedient beings, patterned upon male necessities and ambitions. In the historical context of a brutal and increasing de-feminization of women as potential members of the active workforce and of male voices in the political, medical, technical/technological and cultural discourse, the intellectual women in the first half of the 20th century slowly developed a counter-movement targeted at disclosing female citizens as equal to the male citizens, but different in their biological and emotional structure. The main ingredient within this discourse was "love", as the core element of the female identity, which mistakenly led decades later to "sex" and to the "sexual revolution", as the climax of female liberation and empowerment.

Proto-feminists meant through "love" what sociologists would later on identify as the "missing link" in the late-modern societies, which drive their members to loneliness, isolation, alienation. According to sociologists, love is a vital force residing within the human being, the catalyst of all emotions and actions, connecting the universal energy and the individual aspirations into one powerful flow of intent, which consequently leads to profound bondings on the surface of the social network and in the depth of the family cell (Kawakita, 1992:33; Riesman, 1950: 18-22). More concretely speaking, "love", as it is referred to in terms of gender affiliation to femininity, is the ineffable strength deep-down in women which allows them to be mothers and

educators, thus protecting the species from extinction, even in times of economical recession, political destruction (wars) or social disintegration.

Within this semantical contextualization of feminism, the song “Let It Go”, the central piece of the ideological statement in the entire animation movie, plays a fundamental role in highlighting the direction of the narrative. In its original English version, it is a song which deeply roots in Elsa’s own fears and regrets. It expresses the need to turn inwards, towards her hurt and confused self, solidifying her past-oriented negative experiences, and rejecting any possibility of healing or of positive development.

The snow glows white on the mountain tonight
Not a footprint to be seen.
A kingdom of isolation, and it looks like I’m the
The wind is howling like this swirling storm inside
Couldn’t keep it in; Heaven knows I’ve tried
Don’t let them in, don’t let them see
Be the good girl you always have to be
Conceal, don’t feel, don’t let them know
Well now they know

Let it go, let it go
Can’t hold it back anymore
Let it go, let it go
Turn away and slam the door
I don’t care what they’re going to say
Let the storm rage on.
The cold never bothered me anyway

It’s funny how some distance
Makes everything seem small
And the fears that once controlled me
Can’t get to me at all
It’s time to see what I can do
To test the limits and break through
No right, no wrong, no rules for me, I’m free!

Let it go, let it go
I am one with the wind and sky
Let it go, let it go You’ll never see me cry
Here I stand

And here I'll stay
Let the storm rage on

My power flurries through the air into the ground
My soul is spiraling in frozen fractals all around
And one thought crystallizes like an icy blast
I'm never going back, the past is in the past

Let it go, let it go
And I'll rise like the break of dawn
Let it go, let it go
That perfect girl is gone
Here I stand in the light of day
Let the storm rage on
The cold never bothered me anyway!³

Based on the progressive concept fueled by the historically proven law of the "strongest who wins and continuously moves forward", *Frozen*, as exemplified by its main song "Let It Go", relies on the fact that successful life is measured in materialist accomplishments, while the deeper levels of contentment or happiness are simply closed-off through education and role-models imposed by the media (Luhmann, 1996: 32; Bauman, 1997: 22). Elsa should have pondered her position as a woman, a sister and/or a newly crowned queen in her immediate socio-cultural environment, but, instead, when she is confronted with an unexpected challenge, she runs away and hides in an ice palace, building physical, mentally and emotional walls and refusing to face the reality. *Frozen* reads as a media-reinforced attempt to keep the individual away from its fundamental need of the "others", and touches on the problematic of the necessity to return to the tales which made humanity a soft, warm place for all inhabitants. The message of the movie is neither that "the charming prince might come one day" nor "you can be, nevertheless, fine without him", but rather expresses the effort to find a balance between two extremes: the dissolution of the individual within stifling communities, as too often the case in traditional, nowadays idealized human settlements, on the one hand, and a worldview based on the cultural consumption of emotional pre-fabricated illusions and instant gratification, on unconditional individualism, on the other hand. The combination of a long-term vision within established human interactions with the mindful

³ The lyrics can be found on Buck, C. and J. Lee. 2013. *Frozen*, DVD, Burbank: Walt Disney Studios.

employment of discipline and hard-work, humility and respect, and the freedom to follow one's own dreams and goals while steadily moving towards them, in spite of the obstacles and the burdens along the way, might be a better alternative to pre-/early-modern and late-modern existential patterns. In promoting this middle-way, *Frozen* overcomes the classical paradigm of popular culture and opens the gate to a future in which intellectual and cultural products might have a voice of their own, reflecting a definite, powerful zeitgeist.

1.3. Ari no mama de and the dynamics of hope

The reconsideration of the concept of "love", as the core element of female identity, and the very force, which generates the female spirituality, appear as the main focus in the Japanese version of *Frozen*'s main song "Ari no mama de", which consists of three main ideas. The first theme refers to the failure of the paternal figure and, generally speaking, of the classical family model, given the fact that many works of popular culture rarely deal with functional families and communities, but rather with dysfunctional structures. Parental love appears as a means to restrict children, leading them into inevitable crises which, should, eventually, strengthen their sense of self. In the original "Let It Go" the focus is placed on the relationship between parents and children, with the former advising the latter to "conceal, not feel", and, thus, fully ignoring their basic emotional needs, while "Ari no mama de" underlines the statement of being complete, without any necessity to rely on anyone else. Secondly, we cannot help but notice the failure of romantic entanglements. Elsa clearly shows that she does not need any man to help her out of a situation and to assist her to find her place in the world. Elsa's fulfilment as an individual results from the transcendence of gender limitations and the sublimation of her own fears, by acknowledging that escaping the emotional burden and loneliness are not effective alternatives. She must also learn how to take responsibility for her choices and decisions taken in a moment of rage. The only control one might have over circumstances is one's own reaction and the power to move on. Thirdly, the solution proposed by "Ari no mama de" is one of astonishing simplicity: to love oneself. Elsa understands that running away is no solution and no alternative to facing the realities of growing up and of confronting the outer world with her innermost fears, yearnings and desires. She learns that accepting herself leads, inevitably, to accepting the others, as well as to acquiring a deep sense of authenticity and liberation.

降り始めた雪は足跡消して
真っ白な世界にひとりの私
風が心にささやくの
このままじゃダメなんだと

The snow that started to fall erases my
footprints
In a pure white world, I'm all alone
The wind whispers to my heart
That I can't stay like this (anymore)

とまどい傷つき
誰にも打ち明けずに悩んでた
それももうやめよう

Confused and hurt
With no one to open up to
I was so disturbed, I've had enough!

ありのままの姿見せるのよ
ありのままの自分になるの
何も怖くない 風よ吹け
少しも寒くないわ

Let's stop that now! I'll show them me just
as I am
I'll become myself, just as I am!
I'm not afraid of anything.
Let the wind blow!
I'm not even a little bit cold

悩んでたことが嘘みたいね
だってもう自由よ 何でもできる
どこまでやれるか自分を試したいの
そうよ 変わるのよ私

All my worries seem like a lie
Because I'm free now, you know
I can do anything! How far can I go?
I want to test myself
That's right, I'm going to change

ありのままで空へ風に乗って
ありのままで飛び出してみるの
二度と涙は流さないわ

Just as I am, I'll ride the wind to the sky
Just as I am, I'll try to take flight
Never again will tears fall

冷たく大地を包み込み
高く舞い上がる 想い描いて
花咲く氷の結晶のように
輝いていたい もう決めたの

Cloaking the earth in an icy cold
I paint my feelings, soaring high,
Like flowers, the ice crystals bloom
I want to shine, I've already decided

これでいいの 自分を好きになって
これでいいの 自分信じて
光あびながら歩きだそう
少しも寒くないわ⁴

I'm fine just like this, I'll start to love myself
I'm fine just like this, I believe in myself
As I bask in the light, I'll keep walking
ahead
I'm not even a little bit cold⁵.

⁴ The lyrics can be found on C. Buck, and J. Lee. 2013. *Frozen*, DVD, Burbank: Walt Disney Studios.

⁵ The translation of the lyrics is my own, with the assistance of a Japanese friend and colleague, Prof. Dr. Ikeda Yukie, to whom I express my deepest gratitude.

The most important element in the construction of individual identity is, thus, an in-depth crisis, followed by a conscious commitment towards one's own self, ideals and flaws, irrespective of the outer compulsions. Overcoming the individual levels of self-questioning and self-recovery, this process of identity construction can be interpreted in two ways. In the original *Frozen* song, the stress is on the revival of the community and the restoration of family, since sisterly love saves the frozen kingdom (Arima, 2004: 125; Barrier, 2003: 98). The Japanese version of the title song highlights those dimensions of the movie which hide beyond its originality in the tender acuity with which it observes the relationship between the two sisters. While sisterhood feels, indeed, like an abiding interest of the filmmakers and not a tacked-on afterthought, mapping the contours, twists, intimacies and estrangements of siblinghood, in the "Ari no mama de" song, the recognizable plumb-lines and lingering spells reside in the portrayal of the two sisters as individuals, with Elsa's bold decision to love herself, a decisive move towards herself as worthy of acceptance and compassion. This emotional distance from the original "Let It Go" fuels self-love as a basic emotion, necessary within the spiral-like process of identity construction.

Love, the "invented emotion" intensively negotiated by proto-feminists in their quest for a working definition of femininity and its features, creates individual fulfillment and a clear sense of self which emerges from self-love. In historical terms, it allows the transfer of significance, which leads to a socio-cultural affiliation based on everyday events and accumulated life experience. Emotional ambivalence delivers the impetus to intellectual activism, transgressing time and space. Social actors, as Pierre Bourdieu put it, grow into responsible, self-aware citizens (Bourdieu, 1979: 128-137, Morley and Robins, 1995: 79-81). *Frozen* is more than a *bildungsroman* in terms of classical education and formation. It creates, via its Japanese translation "Ari no mama de", an aesthetic-ideological space where the overcoming of loss and fear leads to the creation of a mature individual, deeply rooted in the historical reality as a responsible, self-aware and self-loving citizen, able to "seize the day" and to respect life as the most precious asset. Instead of running away without looking back and rejecting any responsible awareness, the "feminine self" of late modernity accepts its role in a larger community as the messenger of love, gratitude and acceptance.

2. Conclusion:

feminism's paradigm shift and the dissolution of dualism

Liberation and empowerment are important mindsets in defining individuality and happiness as well as one's position within the society and world. They are also significant mental assets in fashioning a sense of self, both as a result of one's own structure and dynamics, and in correlation to other people. A liberated and powerful human being acknowledges the responsibilities which come with the right to be free, and is always aware of the others and of one's own fragility and vulnerability. "Liberation and empowerment" never meant selfishness and self-centredness, lack of morality, contempt for pain and longing, which often lead to the social crisis in the post-industrialised societies. The translation of *Frozen's* title song refers, in this reading, to the necessity to reconsider femininity and its loss through a wrongly conceptualized and applied feminism and to re-think its position in the larger context of late-modern humanity.

Feminism, as it was envisioned and outlined by its Founding Mothers, was the effort to win back femininity from the unstoppable, all-consuming modernization, amplified by industrialization and urbanization. When the proto-feminist, Simone de Beauvoir, wrote *The second sex* (*Le deuxième sexe*) in 1949, she referred to the culturally constructed differences between men and women, naturalized through education and role-models. According to Beauvoir, raising awareness of the differences between genders and of the necessity to accept them, did not mean disempowering of men and over-powering of women. Furthermore, in her seminal work, *La révolution du langage poétique* (1974), Julia Kristeva referred to motherhood and motherly love in the semiotic spaces of language and arts. Their impact on politics and economics sets in motion societies and technologies of power, and is supposed to awaken awareness and caution. Kristeva pointed at the lurking dangers within the modernization project, which is based mainly on predictable features such as physical strength, the pressure to advance in career and to dispose of those unable to keep up, either by killing or by displacing them – a worldview mostly associated with masculinity (Giddens, 1990: 131; Meštrović, 1997: 32). Emotions and tender nurturing are not part of the modernity project, as pursued and developed by technocrats and idealists, but the fuel on which the engine of femininity works as well as the polarization between masculinity and femininity which creates a beautiful contrast in life and in the world.

Unlike "Let It Go", which portrays the female main character as a victim of her own fears under the rule of a failed patriarchal system, "Ari no mama de" outlines the "feminine woman" in an empowering and liberated manner, transcending the fears and limitations imposed by the feminist discourse and transforming them into solutions and visions of the future. The "feminine woman" in late modernity does not reject her gender or her sexuality, but regards them as assets. Her freedom of choice does not include promiscuity and dishonesty, but living with integrity and facing challenges with courage, in harmony with herself, with other humans, with the nature and with the whole universe. A soft sense of calm enthusiasm brings her to deeper levels of inner peace in the eternal flow of coherent human interactions and exchanges.

"Let It Go" stemmed from the contorsioned, aggressive movements of the 1950s and the 1960s, and the successive feminism waves which flooded the Western world during the subsequent decades which created the image of the "feminist woman" as void of femininity and emotions, always ready to compete with her male counterparts in any field. The instruments of political discourse encouraged the woman to be assertive and bold, to reject her feminine side as "weak and objectified". In other words, the late-modern woman found herself in the new millennium confronted with expectations and pressures she could not possibly deal with (Kimmel, 2015: 129-37). The decline of masculinity and the dissolution of social structure due to the existence of a huge number of single persons, single households, single parents and an unprecedented rate of divorces in the rich, post-industrialized nations are direct consequences of the crisis of femininity, of the impossible choices and loyalties of the late-modern women who had to march against nature and to defy the fundamental laws of the universe.

As portrayed in "Ari no mama de", the "feminine woman" of late modernity learns to love herself with her flaws and vulnerabilities. She keeps a child-like joy of experiencing life in its everyday transcendence and incorporates in it new experiences and challenges. Media and public opinions may still objectify and sexualize her presence, but the "feminine woman" knows that anger and combative display of contempt are destructive, therefore she has to distance herself gracefully from the mass-mediated image and stereotypes and to focus on creating a life of her own.

Rising above impossible standards of success and likeability, the late-modern "feminine woman" decides that her destiny lies in the very choices she makes. According to "Ari no mama de" song, both Elsa and Anna find

fulfillment in themselves, and in the love they share for each other, as well as in their decision to pursue their own paths in life. Their determination and commitment to stay true to themselves prove, once again, that love is not something to take, but something to give, to oneself and to the others, a conscious choice made day by day as an ineffable promise of a better world emerging from chaos and confusion.

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