



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of English Language and Literature

**DISENCHANTING PATRIARCHAL FAIRY TALES THROUGH  
PARODY IN ANGELA CARTER’S *THE BLOODY CHAMBER AND  
OTHER STORIES* AND EMMA DONOGHUE’S *KISSING THE  
WITCH: OLD TALES IN NEW SKINS***

Cemre Mimoza BARTU

Master’s Thesis

Ankara, 2014

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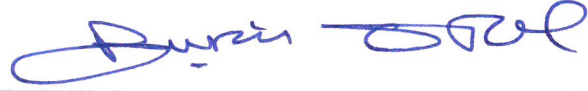
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## KABUL VE ONAY

Cemre Mimoza BARTU tarafından hazırlanan “Disenchanting Patriarchal Fairy Tales through Parody in Angela Carter’s *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* and Emma Donoghue’s *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins*” başlıklı bu çalışma 3 Temmuz 2014 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.



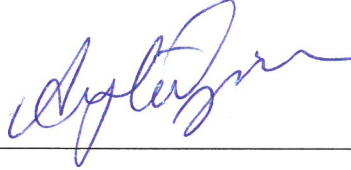
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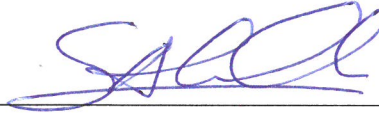
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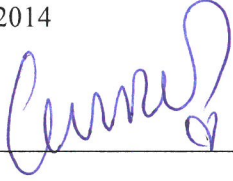
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## ÖZET

BARTU, Cemre Mimoza. Angela Carter'ın *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (*Kanlı Oda*) ve Emma Donoghue' nun *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* (*Cadıyı Öpmek: Eski Masallar Yeni Bedenlerde*) Eserlerinde Ataerkil Peri Masallarının Büyüsünün Parodi Yoluyla Bozuluşu. Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2014.

Peri masallarının başlangıcının insanlığın başlangıcıyla aynı zamana rastladığına inanılmaktadır. Bu masallar sözlü edebiyata dâhil oldukları için zaman içerisinde türlü değişikliklere uğramışlardır. Gelişimleri ve değişimleriyle beraber, peri masalları hâlâ dünya edebiyat tarihinin ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak kabul edilir. Özellikle klasik Avrupa peri masalları ulusların kültürel, sosyal ve toplumsal cinsiyet özelliklerini yansıtan başlıca edebi türlerden biridir. Sözlü edebiyattan yazılı edebiyata geçişte, kadına özgü işlerle bağdaştırılan sözlü peri masalları, erkek yazarlar ve koleksiyoncular tarafından yazıya geçirilmiştir. Bu nedenle, yazıya geçiriliş aşamasında eril söylem ve ataerkil ideolojiden etkilenmişlerdir. Kadın karakterlerin genelde masalların başkahramanları olmasına rağmen, yazılı versiyonlarında ses, cinsellik ve özgür irade konularında önemleri azımsanmıştır. Mevcut ataerkil söylemden ötürü, peri masallarının kadın karakterleri erkek karakterlere göre ikincil olarak temsil edilmiş ve hem yazarların hem de karakterlerin cinsiyetçi tutumlarına maruz kalmışlardır. Peri masallarının ayrımcı niteliğini gören yirminci yüzyıl kadın yazarları cinsiyetçi ideolojiyi değiştirmek için geleneksel masallara el atmışlardır. Buna bağlı olarak, bu tez peri masallarının cinsiyetçi ve geleneksel öğelerinin yeniden yazım yoluyla biçim ve içerik açısından parodisini Angela Carter'ın *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* ve Emma Donoghue'nun *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* eserlerinde incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. İncelenen bu yeniden yazılmış peri masalları koleksiyonlarında parodi farklı amaçlarla kullanılmıştır. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979)' da Angela Carter kadın konusunda cinsellik, arzu ve özgürleşme bağlamlarını altüst ederken, Emma Donoghue *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins*' de lezbiyen arzu, kadın dayanışması ve masallardaki kadın karakterlerin özgürleşmesini yeniden tanımlamak için parodiyi kullanmıştır. Sonuç olarak, hem Carter hem de Donoghue klasik Avrupa peri masallarını ataerkil ideolojiyi altüst etmek ve kadın temsilini yüceltmek için yeniden yazmışlardır. Bu nedenle, bu yazarlar kadın karakterler için

barışçıl ve eşitlikçi bir sonuç evresi sunan alternatif sonsuza kadar mutlu bitimini yeniden hayal etmişlerdir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Peri masalları, yeniden yazım, parodi, Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber*, Emma Donoghue, *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins*.



## ABSTRACT

BARTU, Cemre Mimoza. Disenchanted Patriarchal Fairy Tales through Parody in Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* and Emma Donoghue's *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins*. Master Thesis, Ankara, 2014.

It has been believed that the beginning of the fairy tales is as old as mankind. Due to the fact that they previously belonged to oral literature and later became part of the literary tradition, the formal and thematic qualities have gone through various changes in time. With their development and transformation, fairy tales are accepted as the integral part of the literary history of the world. Especially, the classical European fairy tale is one of the major genres which reflect the cultural, social and gender characteristics of the nations. At the turn of the transition from oral to literary tradition, oral fairy tales, which are associated with women and their works, were transcribed by male writers and compilers. Therefore, since they were transcribed by the male scribes, the tales were under the influence of patriarchal ideology and discourse. Although female characters were mostly the protagonists of the classical fairy tales, in terms of voice, sexuality and free will they were underestimated. Because of the prevalent patriarchal discourse, the female characters in fairy tales were represented as secondary to the male characters and they were exposed to the sexist attitude of both male writers and fairy tale heroes. Having seen the discriminative nature of the fairy tale genre, twentieth century women writers took interest in the traditional tales in order to change the sexist ideology. Thus, this thesis aims to study the rewriting of sexist and conventional elements of fairy tales through thematic and stylistic parody in Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979), and Emma Donoghue's *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* (1997). In the rewritten fairy tale collections that have been examined, parody is used for different aims. In *The Bloody Chamber and the Other Stories* Angela Carter subverts the themes of sexuality, desire and liberation in relation to women by parodying the conservative fairy tale genre. In *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins*, Emma Donoghue employs parody to redefine the lesbian desire, sorority and liberation of female fairy tale characters. As a result, both Carter and Donoghue rewrite the classical European fairy tales to subvert the patriarchal ideology and to promote the

female agency in various aspects. Therefore, they reimagined alternative ‘happily ever after’ which offers a peaceful and egalitarian final state for the female characters.

**Key Words:** Fairy Tales, parody, rewriting, Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, Emma Donoghue, *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins*.

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## INTRODUCTION

“The realm of fairy-story is wide and deep and high and filled with many things: all manner of beasts and birds are found there; shoreless seas and stars uncounted; beauty that is an enchantment, and an ever-present peril; both joy and sorrow as sharp as swords. In that realm a man may, perhaps, count himself fortunate to have wandered, but its very richness and strangeness tie the tongue of a traveller who would report them. And while he is there it is dangerous for him to ask too many questions, lest the gates should be shut and the keys be lost.”

J.R.R Tolkien- “On Fairy Stories”

The aim of this study is to examine and show the rewriting strategies of conventional elements of classical European fairy tales in the twentieth century postmodern works of *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979) by Angela Carter and *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* (1997) by Emma Donoghue through parody in theme and style. As parodies, these works borrow the original version of the fairy tales and rewrite them from various female perspectives in order to break free the figures from restrictions of the sexist and patriarchal ideology and entrenched structural elements of the genre. Belonging to postmodern literature, these rewritten fairy tale collections employ postmodern parody to subvert the traditional values of the fairy tale genre.

Parody, in general sense, is a subversive imitation of an original text with the purposes of mockery and criticism. As Simon Dentith puts forward in his book entitled *Parody*, parody “includes any cultural practice which provides a relatively polemical allusive imitation of another cultural production or practice” (9). In this study, scope of parody is limited with literature and Chapter I and II discuss the thematic and stylistic features of Angela Carter’s *The Bloody Chamber* and Emma Donoghue’s *Kissing the Witch* through postmodern parody. Parodied works require an overall comparison with the original texts in analysing the reason and argument lying behind the parody, therefore so as to analyse the postmodern parody in these rewritten fairy tales, it is useful to explain the characteristics and the origin of fairy tales as a genre.

In this respect, this study provides detailed information about the features/elements and origin/historical background of the fairy tale genre. The analysis of the thesis is based upon Angela Carter's rewritten fairy tale collection *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* and Emma Donoghue's *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* through the subversive strategy of rewriting and parody of the fairy tale genre.

## 1. FEATURES OF FAIRY TALE AS A GENRE

Throughout history, fairy tales and folk tales have always been accepted as one of the primordial parts of literature that have come a long way from tradition of oral literature to the twenty-first century. For ages fairy tales and folk tales have constantly evolved by being nourished by the sources of both Western and Eastern literature. Because of the fact that there are not any inscriptive and reliable sources regarding the origin and early history of fairy and folk tales, oral period of the genre remains obscure and open to speculation. In order to study the origin and the whole process of evolution of fairy and folk tales, it is beneficial to refer to the definitions of fairy and folk tales.

First of all, going back to the ethymological origin, the word *fairy* as given by Thomas Keightly originates from the Latin word *fata* meaning "some sort of superior being" which later on derived from the verb *fantare* "to enchant." Hence, from *fata* came "Faée" (fée) and "Faerie" (féerie) (12). In 1300 circa English adopted the word and transformed it into "fairy". However, the term "fairy tale" dates back to 1759 when it first entered English dictionaries from then on the term has been used to cover the whole genre (Opie 14). More than a genre, the term fairy tale is perceived as a concept by J.R.R. Tolkien "which touches on or uses Faerie, whatever its own main purpose may be satire, adventure, morality, fantasy" (4). Although the stories of each tale are not similar to each other, when analysed closely, common and main elements constitute a set of structure that conventionally form a classical fairy tale.

Although there has been a controversy about naming these tales, fairy, folk and wonder tales are the most accepted and widely used terms whose meanings are in fact discrepant from each other. According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, though it is widely accepted as a reductionist and general view by the contemporary fairy tale scholars,

fairy tale is “a tale about fairies” (“Fairy Tale”) whereas, folk tale traditional story originally transmitted orally “with the sense of pertaining to, current or existing among the people” (“Folk Tale”). According to Russian structuralist Vladimir Propp the term “wonder tales” can be accepted as an alternative coinage for fairy and folk tales which encapsulate both in the greater scheme and under the big title of folklore (5).

Yet, tracing the origins of the fairy tale, folktale and tales of magic genres are rather problematic. Starting with the folktale, as Ashliman points out, since folktales are “fluid by their nature, are not easy to define and to categorize. Even the word folktale resists easy definition” (34). In the index titled *The Types of the Folktale* (1961), which was designed by the Finnish folklorist Annti Aarne and later enlarged by the American folklorist Stith Thompson, folktales have been categorized according to their plot patterns, narrative structures, motifs and these subcategories are listed as follows:

**Aarne-Thompson Folktale Types**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Type Numbers</i>
Animal tales	1-299
Ordinary folktales	300-1199
Tale of magic	300-749
Religious tales	750-849
Novellas (romantic tales)	850-999
Tales of stupid ogre	1000- 1199
Jokes and anecdotes	1200-1999
Formula tales	2000-2399
Unclassified tales	2400-2499 (qtd. in Ashliman 34-35)

Evidently, on the scheme above fairy tales are not listed, however the tale of magic can be accepted to “serve as a synonym” due to the alternate usage of the terms in similar meaning and context since the “folklore specialists generally prefer magic tales over fairy tales” (Ashliman 34).

Apart from that, fairy tale scholar Ruth Bottigheimer draws a comparison between folk and fairy tale in order to distinguish and clarify their “differing histories and separate

identities” emphasizing the fact that “[i]nterchanging the two terms leads to terminological misunderstandings and results in confounding difficulties for any discussion of fairy and folk tales” (*Fairy Tales* 3). At the heart of this differentiation lay the qualities of structure, cast of characters, plot trajectories and age of the two genres. Starting with folk tales, Bottigheimer underlines the brevity and linear plot of folk tales. Their focal point is the familiar world and common aspects of the human condition, correspondingly the characters of the tales are ordinary husbands, wives, peasants, rascals. Hence, folk tale plots are interwoven with the predicaments and punishments of ordinary people in regard to their social and private lives. In the typical folk tale, “one person makes off another person’s money, honour and goods” and in their social frame, they do not end happily (Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales* 4). The same rule applies to marriage as well, the joy of being married is not depicted, rather the difficulties of being married are underlined. Stemming from the social lives and the plausible fictional incidents encountered by the public, it is true to state that folk tales are easier to follow and remember compared to fairy tales.

In the same manner, the formation of fairy tale can be regarded as controversial as the folktale. In English, fairy tale implies the qualities of “fantasy, magical, ideal, fictitious or untrue” or events which are make-believe and have miraculously happy endings (Ashliman 32). However, the tales that are named as fairy tales in English do not necessarily contain any fairy. Hence, it is fair to remark that “stories with genies, ogres, imps, wizards, brownies, witches, sorcerers, oni or fairies are all fairy tales” (Lane 3). Although these tales are intrinsically preoccupied with magical and wondrous transformations by means of magic, according to the German folklorist Hans-Jörg Uther, they encompass “etiologies, fables, animal tales, moralistic stories, jests, exempla, religious and other legends, and mixed forms, such as humorous religious tales and humorous magic tales” (qtd. in Haase, *The Greenwood* 39). The term fairy tale is a relatively new word in English, yet it is not the exact translation of the original term in the other languages and cultures in which the fairy tale tradition flourished. *Zaubermaerchen* in German, *contes merveilleux* in French correspond to the accurate translation of magic/wonder tale which is especially preferred in academic studies, but the term has been thoroughly established in general usage (Ashliman 32). Despite the fact that there are some tales that do not employ fairies, the misnomer fairy tale and



magic/wonder tales are the subgenre of a broader genre called folk narratives and are mostly used synonymously.

Because of the oral nature of the first examples, the background and origin of fairy tales cannot be easily traced. Fairy tales, both as a term and a genre, do not specifically address a single formation and a development of a country or culture, yet they reflect the cumulative and common evolution of humanity. Due to their “timeless, ageless and dateless” qualities they “offer insight into universal human dilemmas that span differences of age, culture and geography” (Harries 1). In reflecting the origin of fairy tales, Angela Carter metaphorically challenges a single origin of fairy tales as follows: “Who first invented meatballs? In what country? Is there a definitive recipe for potato soup? Think in terms of the domestic arts. This is how I make the potato soup” (*The Virago* x). Carter proposes the diverse and multicultural origins of fairy tales that change from their places of origin to their evolution. Due to the impossibility of having “access to any original versions or urtexts” it is highlighted that the most recognised tales, such as “Beauty and the Beast,” can be traced world over, “yet it varies radically in texture or flavour from one culture to the next” (Tatar, *The Classic* ix). From an entirely different perspective, Donald Haase also draws attention to the misleading aspects about any ownership of fairy tales and claims that:

The problem –indeed, the danger- with both the nationalistic/ethnic and universal views of fairy tales is that they prescribe forms of thought and behaviour, and modes and models of humanity, that are meant to be normative. That is, they stereotype us- either as members of a nationalistic or ethnic group, or human beings defined by a certain concept of what is not normal. In both cases, fairy tales are supposed to depict or prescribe for us what is true, as well as what forms of behaviour are typical, normal and acceptable . . . From these perspectives, fairy tales own us, we don’t own them. (“Yours, Mine” 360)

Despite the common belief about fairy tales’ universality amongst notable critics and scholars, Haase goes against the grain while rejecting all the localisations and constraints. Defending the confining and determining impact of fairy tales, Haase answers the question of ownership by challenging attitude underscoring the fallacy of fairy tales’ universality and nationality. Like the disparate views about the origin and ownership, contextual peculiarities of the tales diversify in sundry aspects. Different stories and narrations create the fairy tales of different cultures and backgrounds,

however structural qualities of the tales can be considered as one of the common denominators of the whole genre.

As a template, basic structural features of the tales, such as the order of the events, character types or settings show similarities in their sequences and consequences. Therefore, it is possible to observe that the specific details such as setting, obsessions, characteristics of the characters and messages are different from each other; outlines of the tales lead the reader to a single fundamental formula. To begin with, they start in a remote, unknown place at an uncertain time with the famous phrase of “once upon a time”. This phase constitutes the first equilibrium of the opposing forces in the tales, however the preset peace, naturally the equilibrium, is to be upset by the antagonistic forces that vary in each tale. Then, at the second phase, antagonistic forces spoil the peace by means of a curse, abduction or black magic which brings trouble and gloom to the course of the tale. This phase can be associated with the key word of “suddenly” since the former condition is jeopardized by an unwanted and unexpected threat. Upsetting of balances in the tale causes the great conflict between the antagonist and the protagonist, and also a disequilibrium, which results in victory of the latter. The third phase of the tale adopts the key word “luckily” since this time the villain and evil forces are defeated by goodness and innocence and by means of an outer help, usually identified with male power, that create sort of a situation of rags to riches. Lastly, the second stage of equilibrium is restored on new terms such as marriage, wealth and regained life that promise a new beginning with “happily ever after.”

Apart from the roughly outlined fairy tale narrative structure given above, an in-depth study was made by one of the most substantial scholars in the formalist folkloric studies, Vladimir Propp. In his widely acclaimed book entitled *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928) he analyses “the forms of the tale” exactly as “the morphology of organic uniform” by specifying “the labyrinth of the tale’s multiformity, which in the end will become apparent . . . as an amazing uniformity” (xxv). Making use of a hundred and fifty Russian folktales, Propp, undertook an extensive comparison of the folktales so as to demonstrate that “[a]ll fairy tales are of one type in regard to their structure” (23).

Within his structuralist study, Propp comes up with two different classifications of the common and fixed folktale components in terms of characters and their narrative functions. The former encapsulates seven *dramatis personae* to entitle the particularly basic or archetypal qualities of the characters not only in Russian folktales but also in various types of texts such as “comedies, myths, epics, romances and indeed stories in general” (Selden 112) ranging from medieval to contemporary. Therefore, these *dramatis personae* can be enumerated as follows:

1. The Villain
2. The Donor (Provider)
3. The Helper
4. The Princess (a sought-for-person) and her father
5. The Dispatcher
6. The Hero
7. The False Hero (Propp 79-80)

Although these characters are the basic units of a story they are not clear-cut categories and they are not necessarily employed as a whole in a tale. Just the opposite, in different occasions these may bear several roles and multiple characterisations.

The latter classification Propp establishes is called ‘functions.’ It forms the “morphological foundation of fairy tales in general” and generates a “consecutive story” (Propp 25). These thirty one functions are the acts of the characters and they constitute the generic sequence of the tales. Regardless of who or which character fulfilled those functions, they appear in the narrative in sequential order. Yet, some of the functions might be absent in accordance with the story of the folktale, in other words, no tale includes all of the functions. Therefore, making use of these thirty one functions, a fairy tale can be analysed thoroughly by being dissected into the fundamental units.

Almost forty years after the publication of Propp’s *The Morphology of the Folktale*, Joseph Campbell, in his book entitled *A Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949) outlines the mythic journey of the hero from various epics, tales and legends from all over the world. In the book, the writer summarises the progress of the journey as follows: “A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there [sic] encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his

fellow man” (28). What he concentrates upon in his book bears some similarities with Propp’s categorization in terms of *dramatis personae* and the thirty one functions, yet Campbell’s method can be considered as more thematic and recursive. In other words he represents the principal formula of the corpus of the myths which he calls “monomyth” since every one of them carries similar patterns.

Monomyth, or the journey of the hero, is the common and basic denominator of many narratives all around the world. Accordingly, its most important component is the tripartite formula that can narrow down all the legends, tales or epic into a simple pattern of “rites of passage” (Campbell 28). This formula consists of separation-initiation-return where the hero or heroine embarks on an adventure, struggles against the obstacles on the way and finishes the journey in better terms. Thus, the very formula can be found in and applied to many narratives including fairy tales since they bear resemblances to legends and epic regarding structure, pattern and images.

Besides the structural qualities of fairy tales, common contextual characteristics comprise the most substantial points of the genre. Since the tales embrace magical transformations, enchantments, wonders, resurrections that make the reader “. . . remain curious, startled, provoked, mystified and uplifted” (Zipes, *Spells* xv), “refusal of verisimilitude” (Sellers 9) becomes the essential principle. Grappling with reality is also reinforced by the conventional fairy tale qualities of the remote and nameless kingdom, palace or forest, lack of particularity with the cast of the characters who were named only king, queen, Beauty, Goldilocks, Fair, Prince Charming and with the impossibility of their belonging to any realistic environment.

In accordance with the mentioned properties, as a general and “derogatory” term, in relation to their contextual and narrative qualities, fairy tales are said to imply “fantasy, escapism, invention, the unreliable consolations of romance,” yet these are not the only elements that makes a tale a fairy tale (Warner, *The Absent* 15). Marina Warner also draws on the primary features of a fairy tale asserting that “presence of fairies, moral functions, imagined antiquity, oral anonymity of the ultimate source, happy ending and metamorphosis . . . define the fairy tale” (*From the Beast* xx). Therefore, any tale which starts with once upon a time and ends with happily ever after cannot be accepted

as a fairy tale, the genre comprises not only particular conventional elements but also a trajectory of its own.

Moreover, the folklorists Iona and Peter Opie also point out the nature of fairy tales by the established qualities of the characters. According to their analysis, a tale should be “about one person, or one family, having to cope with supernatural occurrence or supernatural protagonist during a period of stress.” The protagonist generally is “the youngest member of the family,” if not, probably an orphan or already disowned/abandoned one by the society and the family. However, the antagonists are generally the ones that envy and bear grudge against the protagonist and her/his family for unjustifiable reasons. These reasons are the major indications of their evil nature and therefore they are delineated as the stereotypical evil stepmother, femme fatale, treacherous vizier, ill-hearted sorcerer. Nevertheless, these characters are stock figures, who are either utterly good or evil, and the tales give the reader no evolution of the characters. Hence, it can be said that “[f]airy tales are more concerned with situation than with character” (15). In the words of Bruno Bettelheim, the fairy tale heroes “personify and illustrate inner conflicts” and provide solution to them with the promise of happy life (26).

In fairy tales life is a linear concept that starts in the unknown past and continues in the unknown future. As the genre itself is timeless, the stories that are recounted do not have a designated time period. Hence, the time concept posits itself as before the past and after the future to encompass vaster passage of time and refer to all humanity rather than a specific period or group of people. As Max Lüthi aptly puts “[t]he fairy tale conquers time by ignoring it” (44). Accordingly, the victory over time and place gives the reader an enjoyment of transcending the humanly borders.

Since the fairy tales are not concerned “about the here and now”, traditional openings always inform the reader that what s/he will encounter is the stories about afar and timeless concepts (Lane 10). “Once upon a time, in a kingdom far away,” “Long, long ago when the stones were soft,” “Not in your time, not in my time, but in the old time, when the earth and the sea were new,” “Once long ago, in a little town that lay in the midst of high hills wide forests” (“Folktale Openings”); these conventional openings do not stand for the “past designations” but refer to “futuristic” qualities, “timelessness”

and “lack of geographical specificity” of the tales (Zipes, *Spells* xiii). Time markers can be considered only as cultural markers to highlight the period of time between two specific points. Symbolic and magic combinations of time such as three, seven, a hundred years, days or nights, a thousand and one days neither reflect the “literal measurements” nor portray the aging process, they are the cultural designations to indicate that time has changed, so it is likely that similar cases will appear in the course of the tale (Ashliman 49). As in “Sleeping Beauty,” the princess sleeps for a hundred years and when she rises with a smile after the kiss, she is still young and beautiful and ready to get married to the prince. Hence, it can be considered that the hundred years she has slept do not indicate the time continuum but signify the alteration and maturation processes of the princess.

Likewise, fairy tale endings mark specific characteristics about the tales. Generally they “seal off the story world from the ‘real’ one” (Lane 14) making use of the phrases such as “and now, my story has gone that way, and I’ve come this way,” “they grew to be very old, and lived happily all the days of their life,” “the happy pair lived long in peace and happiness by day and night” (“Folktale Closings”). While these phrases introduce the reader to a new world beyond time and place, they finish the tales in a similar fashion in order not to enchant the readers. Hence, Max Lüthi asserts both opening and ending of the fairy tales “. . . remove us from the time continuum and make us feel that there is another way of viewing and experiencing life, that behind all birth and death there is another world, resplendent, imperishable, and incorruptible” (45).

Beside the time concept in the fairy tales, setting and place are other crucial points that constitute the prevailing patterns of the fairy tale corpus. In the same manner with the time concept, setting also prepares the essence of fairy tales in terms of their “lack of geographic specificity” which reinforces the notion of the utopian place where hope reigns (Zipes, *When Dreams* 4). While fairy tales acquaint the reader with the theme and actions that take place in the course of the tale, they also avert the rigidity of time and space making the tale more removed from the quotidian life and known histories. In other words, fairy tale setting establishes a bridge between real and imaginary realms by binding them together. Like in the Grimms’ “Mother Holle,” two realms in the tale are prevalent in terms of reflecting the peace and distress. The world she lives in is a place

where her mother maltreats her. However, the underworld where she goes down to through the well is a heaven-like place where she is happy and industrious with the companionship of the fairy godmother figure Mother Holle (Grimm 133-136). The well functions as a bridge between the two opposite worlds and it creates a shift from the ordinary to the magical. Joyce Thomas also supports the aforementioned view as such:

. . . In itself the setting holds significance as a physical place while also providing a landscape that generates an appropriate atmosphere to the tale's action and theme. Further, setting often exists as one manifestation of the fairy tale's ongoing dialectic between matter and magic, between the material world and the marvellous forces that transcend, transmute it. Ultimately, setting functions as an external, tangible correspondence to things internal and intangible. (127)

Typical fairy tale settings comprise definite places such as castles, gardens, cottages, forests and moreover it is possible to categorize all these places according to the trajectory of the plot. To put it in other words, stratification and the quality of the characters determine the features of the setting while they serve diverse ends of the miscellaneous tales. For instance, the tales dealing with royalty and higher class predominantly are set in castles, big gardens, affluent living spaces reflecting the high class standards and privileged life. "Sleeping Beauty," "Cinderella," "Rumpelstiltskin" are the most significant examples of the spacious castle settings where the royal family of the unknown land live. However, when evil actions and dark forces are involved in the tale, the setting and the atmosphere change in correspondence to the theme hence, towers, dark rooms, forbidden parts of the residence come to the fore out of the "houses of pleasure" (Gould 101). These parts "especially . . . small and humble room tucked out of sight in a grand house" are there to be explored by the heroine of the tale who is at stake of also discovering herself and her womanhood (Gould 102).<sup>1</sup> Therefore, discovering the magic power in the house, garden or castle by breaking the borders enables the character to explore more about the outer world while having an inner journey into the unknown, the uncanny and adulthood.

With the help of the setting, time and actions, the hero or heroine of the tale seeks to fulfil his/her journey throughout the tale where "destiny has summoned the hero [or heroine] and transferred his [or her] spiritual centre of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown" (Campbell 53). Yet, the journey at times demonstrates

itself as a physical one that involves travelling, experience and knowledge, or a psychological one which results in character's maturation and self-discovery. Although the journeys and predicaments that the heroes or the heroines go through are discrepant, the traits and features of the leading characters have some common points and resemblances. Heroes and heroines, in particular, the other characters can be categorized as stock characters such as the evil stepmother, the passive virgin, the active prince, the powerful king, the malignant witch, the fairy godmother. Like the stereotypical characters, fairy tales have also brought along "certain . . . patterns, motifs, and models which constantly arise in our life and in literature which appear to have been preserved" for ages along with the fairy tale tradition (Zipes, *Don't Bet* 9). Hence, when the characters along with these patterns, themes, setting and time are moulded together the contours of the genre are determined.

To continue with another element of this unique composition of fairy tale it is substantial to examine and classify characters that vary in every single tale. Were the characters are classified according to their ranks in the social structure it is possible to note that "[a]t the bottom are woodcutters, tailors, cobblers, peasants, swineherds, goose-girls, kitchen maids, cottagers, crofters, and discharged soldiers" and at the top royal family members such as kings, queens, princesses and princes can be listed (Ashliman 45). Merging of the rich and the poor, the low and the high classes, is an important theme of fairy tales that stresses the characters' transition between the different stratum.

According to Jack Zipes, the world of folktales is a place where kings, queens, princes princesses, peasants, soldiers, animals and supernatural creatures lead a life in a non-mechanised, non-industrialised town life of commerce. The life is set on the feudal system, class struggle and competition for power among the aristocrats and between the lay people and aristocracy. Thus, the focus of the fairy tales can be summarized as "might makes right", in other words "[h]e who has power can exercise *his* will, right wrongs, become ennobled, amass money and land, and win women as prizes and social prestige" (*Fairy Tales* 7). However, the borders between the rich and the poor, the noble and the common are not impassable, quite the opposite, "nobility . . . lies not in birthrights but in intangibles" (Lane 17). As one of the most typical examples in the



tales, the poor farmer's son can be the next king of the country by means of her heroic deeds or the plain country girl can be appointed as the most suitable for the prince or the king.

It is necessary to expand on the subject of the stereotypical features of the heroines and the heroes of the tales to conduct a proper analysis of these figures according to their sexes. Since the function and stance of the characters are determined by gender, appearance and social status, there is a great discrepancy between heroes and the heroines when their characteristics are in question. Beginning with the heroines of the fairy tales, either royal or from other classes, they are frequently nameless. As Maria Tatar remarks, in Grimms' collection "only one in every ten [heroine] has a name. But it is also no secret that the most celebrated characters. . . [such as] Cinderella, Snow White, Little Red Riding Hood, and Sleeping Beauty . . . have left so vivid an imprint on childhood memories" ("Born Yesterday" 95). Though these characters and their tales are amongst the most renowned works, it is rather misleading to call their sobriquets their names since they are not proper. However, they are "designations of a quality or a talent or the secret that the characters possess" with a slightly demeaning or complimentary sobriquets that emphasize their features regarding their conditions (Lane 18). Like in the case of Cinderella, the proper name of the girl is unknown to the reader, yet being a housemaid in her own house and living next to a fireplace in the kitchen playing with cinders and being smudged with it gets her called Cinderella, the girl who is like cinder. The same feature is seen in Little Riding-Hood, in the Grimm's tales and Thumbelina in Andersen's collection, Little Riding-Hood is named as such since she never wears anything but "her a little cap of velvet, which suited her so well" (Grimm 139) and for Thumbelina, she is "not above an inch tall," and therefore she is called Thumbelina (Andersen 31).

The female protagonists and their familial backgrounds can be classified under two types that are just the opposite of each other. In the first one, the heroine is typically the least favoured child of the family in which she is disregarded or ignored by the others. Moreover, the heroine usually happens to be the last one of the three siblings whose elder sisters are virulent towards her for arbitrary reasons. Being one of the most prevalent motifs of the genre, the three combination is frequently employed in the fairy

tales. A classical fairy tale often involves an act, question or a trial which is repeated three times. Every time this act, question or trial is repeated, it gives away a different information or secret about the hero/heroine or the villain. In the last one, the final purpose and the result of these three acts is settled either by a crisis or a blessing. In the same line with this three combination, three sibling motif highlights the position of the heroine in the family as the youngest daughter, stepchild or simple minded girl who is “openly unwanted by [her] parents” (Ashliman 45). In addition to the aforementioned qualities, sibling rivalry is another widespread motif insofar as it creates a foil to the protagonist’s particular qualities. As D.L Ashliman states:

Sibling rivalry expresses itself in numerous fairy tales, and nearly always between same-sexed siblings. A brother and a sister usually cooperate with one another (think of Hansel and Gretel). Sisters (or even worse stepsisters) compete with one another for a wealthy suitor. Brothers compete for an inheritance or for a beautiful bride. (47)

The other type is typical of the genre since there are several tales sharing the same motif in similar fashion. In this case the heroine is the apple of her parents’ eye and the people around her. She is kind to everyone, correspondingly she is loved and cherished by them. This motif generally involves a couple wishing for a child, after the baby is born under miraculous but troublesome circumstances s/he is threatened by some demonic forces, abducted by a witch or diabolic figure or put under a spell or prophecy that will affect her/him in the years to come. Fairy tales such as; “Rapunzel,” “Briar Rose,” and “The Frog Prince” set a good example for the quality given above. Heroines of each tale are the most precious ones for their parents. While Rapunzel and Briar Rose suffer from the consequences of their parents’ fault, the princess in “The Frog Prince” is compelled to put up with the frog because of a promise she made. Yet, in the end, having paid the dues of the past misdeeds and faults, the heroine is ready to reach out to the ultimate happy ending that awaits her.

Before the female protagonist achieves her goal in the end of her journey she needs to tackle ordeals in order to gain experience which prepares her final transformation from maidenhood to womanhood. Vladimir Propp in *Morphology of the Folktale* and Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* analyse the journey of the hero or the heroine thoroughly and Jack Zipes summarises this journey as follows:

Initially the young protagonist must leave home or the family because power relations have been disturbed. Either the protagonist is wronged or a change in social relations forces the protagonist to depart from home. A task is imposed, and a hidden command of the tale must be fulfilled. The question that most of the . . . tales ask is, how can one learn—what must one do to use one's powers rightly to be accepted in society or re-create society in keeping with the norms of the status quo? The wandering protagonist always leaves home to reconstitute home. (*Fairy Tales* 70)

The journey inevitably changes the basic dynamics in the heroine's life. The ultimate transformation neither happens overnight nor is it commenced with a flick of a finger or by magic, it necessitates suffering and time to last longer. Joan Gould expresses her ideas about transformation as such:

What, then, is transformation? All we know for sure is that it's a process that can't be stopped or reversed once it has started. It's a constant transit from the known to the unknown, including death as well as birth. . . . It's not a magic wand that turns a poor girl's rags to riches. That particular trick can be done by winning the state of lottery, which is good luck indeed, but *only external* (my italics). True transformation, which is never reversible, happens internally and involves pain- it involves rising (or falling) from one level of consciousness to the next, gaining a new sense of where we are in our lives and what must come next. (xvii)

As the consequence of this transformation the heroine is rewarded by marriage, wealth, prestige and a man to protect her from any other dangers. However, in spite of both the external and internal changes she has gone through, the female protagonist never plays an active role in her own story. She does not struggle for her freedom, for that reason she "[has] never stood as [model] of an enterprising spirit." The fact that they "suffer silently and . . . endure hardships in a hopelessly passive fashion" sheds light upon the fact of how the characteristics of fairy tale heroines should be (Zipes, *Fairy Tales* 70). Thus, she realises that she should be industrious, patient, resigned, obedient and self-sacrificing.

Beside the heroine's passive and yielding qualities, the most important prerequisite is her beauty. Perfect beauty and innocent nature of a female figure are the key terms that pave her way to the happy ending since she is worth fighting for by a dashing and gallant prince. Marcia Liebermann underlines that "[g]ood-temper and meekness are so regularly associated with beauty" that "[g]irls win the prize if they are the fairest of them all." Therefore, "[t]he beautiful girl does not have to do anything to merit being chosen; she does not have to show pluck, resourcefulness, or wit; she is chosen because she is

beautiful” (188). It is true to remark that the exquisite refinement is the reflection of the character’s inner beauty, kind heart and compassion. In order to stress the bond between physical beauty and inner beauty, fairy tales draw “strong association between beauty and goodness and rewards” (Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz 724). This also underlines a very important fact of the genre that if a woman is beautiful she must be inactive to build her own life. On the other hand, in the grand scheme of the things, it would be correct to say that beauty is a bliss and a curse for the heroine, because she is generally dispatched from her home by the antagonistic ambitions of the stepmother, stepsister or a witch regarding her charm and then, she finds herself in a condition that a hero or a prince is endeavouring to make her his wife only because of her beauty.

In the corpus of the fairy tale genre, heroines of this kind are quite typical and the subgenre classified as “The Innocent Persecuted Heroine Genre” recounts the tales of passive, beautiful but oppressed female figures. Steven Swann Jones categorises some separate episodes that an example tale of the specific genre shares as follows:

They [the tales] frequently share individual episodes, such as heroine being victimized by the jealousy of her mother, stepmother, or stepsisters . . . or being expelled from her parents’ home [or] . . . the rivalry between the heroine and her antagonist who tries unsuccessfully to duplicate the heroine’s quest. (16)

There are many tales concerning the mentioned traits of a heroine that share a plot pattern specific to this subgenre, yet the most common ones include: “Rapunzel,” “The Sleeping Beauty,” “Rumpelstiltskin,” “Cinderella,” “Goose Maiden” and “Snow White”. Along with the episodes, Swann highlights the three major acts in the plot outline that the exemplar tales carry. “Act One” is mainly about her life at home before her departure where she is constantly bothered by the family members; “Act Two” concerns the heroine’s journey toward the desired union of her marriage; the last one, “Act Three” is primarily related to the troubles she has in her husband’s home, especially after giving birth to her children (16). Yet, it should be noted that not every tale in this subgenre covers all three acts, generally they represent at least two. Thus, with the Acts, the heroine seems to learn and “accept what it is physiologically to be a woman, that is,” to be able to get married and give birth (Jones, “The Innocent” 33).

Although “. . . popular fairy tales have celebrated the triumphs of girls and young women like Cinderella, Snow White, and Red Riding Hood, [s]cholarly investigations,

especially feminist ones, have followed that lead, with many studies devoted to the fates of heroines” (Bottigheimer, “Luckless” 259), male tales have also been widely read and evaluated in fairy tale studies. Due to the marked differences between the tales with female and male protagonists, scholars seek to distinguish the tales according to the sex of the protagonists. First, the Russian formalist Aleksandr Isaakovic Nikiforov in his “Towards a Morphological Study of the Folktale” and then the Danish folklorist Bengt Holbek in “Hans Christian Andersen’s Use of Folktales” state the division of the tales as “masculine” and “feminine” along with their particular contextual features. Besides, their opinion on this division is also confirmed by Jan Ziolkowski as follows: “. . . [They] drew a distinction between “masculine” and “feminine” wonder tales or magic tales. Whereas, the latter deal with key crisis and transitions in the lives of young women, the former present the achievements of male heroes” (62).

As mentioned above, feminine tales are mainly occupied with the predicaments and the alteration of the heroine in the wake of a happy ending which is marriage, child bearing and mobilizing to a higher social status, while the masculine tales generally deal with justifying and proving how valiant, bold and active the heroes are over the course of their journey. In order to get married and give birth to a child, in other words to justify her maturation, the heroine needs a partner who functions as a threshold between her former and later lives in various perspectives. In the feminine tales, male characters generally play a secondary role in the course of the events due to the fact that they are tools to save the heroines from distress, upgrade their social status, in short, to transform them. For Maria Tatar, heroes are best to be divided into two separate categories of “active heroes and passive heroes,” extending the limits of these two classes it is possible to add other categories of formal heroes and ideal heroes, dragon-slayers and male Cinderellas, tricksters and simpletons to the basic division (“Born Yesterday” 96).

In the first category, the protagonists of masculine tales predominantly carry similar traits in each tale. Likewise, when compared with the female counterparts, heroes of the tales share the analogous track while they demonstrate their progress in the tale. For instance, this category chiefly consists of commoner and ignoble boys in particular that can be attributed as “innocent, silly, useless, foolish, simple, and guileless” (Tatar 96). Again, they are generally the youngest one of the three brothers and the favourite of

their parents. However, in masculine tales, male protagonists, unlike the female ones, are usually inclined to be more foolish than innocent due to the fact that if the hero is naïve it means that he is also foolish in the tales. As Lane asserts;

[t]he youngest child is frequently the “fool of the world,” neither the strongest nor the smartest, but [he] will inevitably succeed where the others fail. In some stories the youngest child will have to overcome not only the trials and tasks of the story, but also the animosity and deceits of the older siblings. (18)

Another trait of this kind of hero is his being stagnant in the face of a challenge or an ordeal. Besides the foolery, the hero is also unfortunate when he has an encounter with a rivalry among his brothers, a journey or a search for a unique object. He always has the worst luck compared to his elder brothers, for example in “Three Feathers” by Grimm Brothers, the youngest one of the three, whose name is Simpleton, is the perfect epitome of the witless hero. Because when their father, the King, wants them to go on a journey to appoint his successor, he throws three feathers into the air and each goes towards the direction where the feathers land. However, Simpleton’s feather drops just in front of him (318-322). In such a case like Simpleton’s, when typical the witless hero finds himself desperate about the ordeal, he “do[es] absolutely nothing at all to deserve whatever largess eventually befalls [him]” apart from “sitting down and sobbing” (Lane 19). Eventually, a help from outer magical forces lend a hand to the hero. Functioning as an activator, magical helpers stir the hero and carry him from inactive foolish position to a praiseworthy one. Max Lüthi also emphasises this change by highlighting the tendency of partiality of the fairy tales towards “the insignificant, the neglected, the helpless” ones who “unexpectedly prove to be strong, noble and blessed” (145).

Apart from naivety and foolishness of the heroes, Marcia Lane also underlines the series of ordeals that they will endure in order to have a total transformation at the end. Not contextually, but functionally similar transformation is also experienced by the heroes when compared with the female protagonists in feminine tales. The motive of this change is to assure that the simpleton but golden-hearted hero deserves the reversal of fortune and also radical changes can happen to the characters. Concerning the change, Tatar writes: “In the world of fairy tales, a simpleton can easily slip into the role of the cunning trickster; a humble miller’s son can become a king; a cowardly fool can emerge as a stout-hearted hero” (“Born Yesterday” 97). Therefore, here characters display the

“capacity for change” in general (Lüthi 138). Moreover, no matter what features they have, their success and change will not be affected at all even if they are “slovenly, unattractive, and lazy” (Stone 44).

Good looks and physical attractiveness are other significant points that separate feminine tales from masculine ones. As mentioned above, even though she is in rags and dirty, beauty is an essential element through which a heroine gains her end by marriage. That is to say, female protagonists are triumphant as long as they are remarkably beautiful. As Lori Baker-Sperry and Liz Grauerholz states, “[a]lthough the tales are not devoid of references to men’s beauty, or handsomeness, it is women’s beauty that is emphasized in terms of the number of references to beauty, the way it is portrayed, and the roles feminine beauty plays in moving the story along” (719). Even though the physical beauty of the hero is not strongly stressed, it is possible to find some references indicating that they are not misshapen or ugly. However, for the heroes beauty is not a prerequisite to cope with the predicaments, while gallantry, prowess and chivalry are. As Kay Stone aptly explains, “[h]eroes succeed because they act, not because they are. They are judged not by their appearance or inherent sweet nature but by their ability to overcome obstacles, even if these obstacles are defects in their own characters” (45). Marcia Liebermann also supports the same perspective by writing: “Girls win the prize if they are the fairest of them all; boys win if they are bold, active, and lucky” (188).

Fairy tale heroes and heroines are practically binaries regarding their interests at the end of their journeys. In other words, the heroine should be beautiful, industrious and patient to win the heart of the bold, active and intrepid hero or vice versa. Despite the fact that the naive heroes are not likely to earn awards for their courage, the active heroes are identified with this conventional pattern. Nevertheless, the latter type heroes are not the protagonists of the tales but they generally appear as the saviours of the damsels in distress. Unlike the first type of heroes, second group of heroes, who are frequently from high rank, do not need the hand of the supernatural helpers to stave off or trick the obstacles that exceed their power limits instead, they slay dragons, kill giants and get in the unsurpassable fortresses or dwellings. As Bottigheimer suggests, “anger is the prerogative of authority figures, whose authority is often constituted by

their maleness” (“Luckless” 267). Therefore, aggression and violence in fairy tales can solely be attributed to the masculine realm.

To clarify the features of the active hero, it will be useful to refer to some of the most renowned feminine fairy tale heroines’ saviours. For instance, in “The Sleeping Beauty” Briar Rose is awakened by a kiss from the dashing prince who has cut off the thorny plants that spread over the whole palace. Moreover, in “Snow White” while she is lying dead in the glass coffin she is brought back to life again by the kiss of the prince. All in all, in “Cinderella” the prince wanders the whole country to find the real owner of the glass shoe by making the girls try on the shoe one by one. As a common point, all the princes of these tales emerge from the outer realms to save the princesses in trouble. They function as tools to disenchant the wicked designs, demonic powers that put curses on the heroines and in the end they win their hands to have a ‘happily ever after.’ Jack Zipes’ opinion about this condition is that the goal of this “active, competitive, industrious hero” is “money, power, and a woman (also associated with chattel). His jurisdiction is the open world. His happiness depends on the just use of power” (*Fairy Tales* 70). Therefore, both the first type and the second type of heroes can be gathered under one roof where they share many common aims. Hence, those can be listed as such: “The fairy tale depicts its heroes not as observing and fearful but moving and active . . . The fairy-tale hero . . . breaks away from his home and goes out into the world . . . [T]he fairy-tale hero enters strange lands all alone and there has the decisive confrontation” (Lüthi 141).

The power relations in the fairy tales are set upon the balance between the good and evil. The heroes and heroines are placed in between this power conflict where they are cursed by the villain and then conducted by the magical helper to their salvation. These three categories of characters shape the quintessential fairy tale relations that are conventional to the genre. Since “heroes/heroines [are] balanced by villains on one side, and by magical helpers on the other, . . . they form the triumvirate of fairy tale characters . . . and create endless plot possibilities as they are juggled with other classic elements to form fairy tales” (Lane 20). Despite the typical happy endings of the tales, there needs to be a villain to destroy the formerly set up rules so as to reconcile the hero/heroine’s bonds with goodness.



According to Propp's detailed analysis of the folktales in his work *Morphology of the Folktale*, the villain whose function constitutes "villainy . . . [and] a fight of or other forms of struggle with the hero," (79) is there to hamper the hero/heroine from reaching the desired end. In fairy tales, villains are particularly associated with female figures who are depicted as intelligent but evil spirited, malevolent characters. In particular, these characters are associated with alien female characters who do not have any blood relation with the hero/heroine. Being one of the most recurrent characters, the mother as a general character type bears various dimensions within. Regarding this point, Carl Gustav Jung states that the mother archetype ". . . appears under an almost infinite variety of aspects," therefore the symbols that have been ascribed to the character show a wide range of meanings (156). "All these symbols can have a positive, favorable meaning or a negative, evil meaning" and the mother figure can as well be divided into two as the evil and the good mother (139). The stepmother character is the appropriate example for the evil aspects of the mother archetype which ". . . may connote anything secret, hidden, dark; the abyss, the world of the dead, anything that devours, seduces, and poisons, that is terrifying and inescapable like fate" (139).

"[U]ntil the mid- nineteenth century," the word mother-in-law was used instead of stepmother addressing the situation that "the new wife becomes the mother of the former wife's children by law, not by nature" (Warner, *From the Beast* 219). Not every fairy tale contains stepmothers due to their plot and contextual differences, yet whenever a stepmother enters into a tale, as a stock character, she is never characterised with kind heart and goodness but with evil deeds and intentional motives to mislead and abuse the hero/heroine. James Frazer describes the stepmother as a figure awaking "awe and dread" throughout the tale (161). In accordance with Frazer's words female villains such as stepmothers, enchantresses, ogres, witches, sorceresses or hags are delineated as ugly and diabolic figures who are in search of villainy.

In general terms, these characters can be named as ogres that mean ". . . a bizarre and dangerous antagonist whose main ambition is to catch and devour humans" (Haase, *Greenwood* 704). However, devouring human beings does not necessarily mean literally eating them, in the social sense it can also mean abusing the meek character by oppression and injustice. Maria Tatar classifies the ogres in three groups, the first group

covers beasts, monsters, wolves, man-eating giants as the giant in “Jack and the Beanstalk” tale, the second group consist of social deviants who are robbers, highway-men like the murderous crew which intend to kill the young maiden in “The Robber Bridegroom.” The last group is allocated for the evil female characters who are “various cooks, stepmothers, witches and mothers-in-law” with an insatiable appetite for human flesh and examples for this group are the ravenous witch and stepmother in “Hansel and Gretel” and “Snow White” (*The Hard Facts* 139).

In Charles Perrault’s collection of the classical fairy tales, the evil queen of “The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood” and the stepmother of “Cinderella” are also depicted as the examples of malice and wicked design. In Perrault’s version of “The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood,” after the awakening of the princess from a hundred years’ long sleep and marriage with the brave prince, her story does not end, in this instance she has to struggle with the mother of her husband, the evil queen. While Perrault depicts the features of the evil queen, he refers to some inhuman properties:

. . . [S]he came from a family of ogres, and the King had married her only because of her great wealth. It was even whispered at court that she herself had ogreish tendencies, and that when she saw small children going by she found it almost impossible to prevent herself from jumping on them, which is why the Prince would never say anything. (Perrault 93)

The second example of the same collection is from the widely known tale “Cinderella” where the downtrodden girl is mistreated by her father’s new wife and her two ugly daughters. Thus, in the tale the stepmother and the stepsisters are portrayed as the relentless figures as opposed to Cinderella’s benevolence and mild-heart.

His second wife was the proudest and haughtiest woman who had ever been seen. She had two daughters, and they were just the same; they resembled her in everything . . . No sooner was the wedding over than the stepmother gave free rein to her bad temper. She could not endure the child’s good nature, which made her own daughters appear even more detestable. The worst of the household chores were given to her stepdaughter: it was she who washed the dishes and scrubbed the stairs, she who cleaned out the mistress’ bedroom, and the bedrooms of the young ladies her daughters. (Perrault 130)

As a stock type, the evil woman, be it a witch, stepmother or mother-in-law, generally lacks some elements that are associated with womanhood. These elements, which are the main reasons of the conflict in the tales, can easily be found in the female protagonist. Hence, jealousy and grudge are the chief motives of the stepmothers.

Because of their vicious feelings, what they see deficient in themselves drags them into a competition with the heroine and the strife begins. For example, in “Rapunzel” the enchantress is childless and she grows rampions in her garden. Because of her desire for a child she exchanges the rampions with the unborn baby. Regarding the condition of the enchantress, Marina Warner emphasises the fact that in fairy tales, single, “unattached and ageing” woman can be a threat to society (*From the Beast* 229).

Moreover, in “Snow White” the evil stepmother is obsessed with being the fairest woman alive and when her magic mirror informs her that her stepdaughter Snow White is the fairest woman alive she starts to think about a plot against her. From a different perspective, Barziali in her article asserts that “. . . beauty itself is a cover-up for the sexually motivated competition between two women. Nor is it an entirely gratuitous transposition on the part of a mother and daughter. The woman endowed with the greater portion of beauty has a better chance of seducing the king” (Barziali 518). Thus, it can be understood that the competition between the stepmother and the orphaned girl is not only limited to the matter of beauty but power is another issue to strive for. Likewise, in “The Juniper Tree” the stepmother tries to kill her stepson in order to enable her own daughter to inherit her husband’s wealth. In order to accomplish her wicked design, the stepmother cuts the boy’s head off with the lid of the chest. Yet, her own daughter helps the dead stepson by revealing the situation. Thus, the stepmother’s plans and greed for money result in disappointment.

It is evident that the enmity between the stepmother and the orphaned girl/boy arises from the rivalry of the things they share. Sometimes with the help of magic or psychological repression, the fate of the protagonist is reversed. In other words, if the antagonist has supernatural and magical powers, she tries to disqualify the hero/heroine with spells, curses and bewitchery. The same situation can be observed in psychological repression but in this instance the hero/heroine is perpetually humiliated and this causes him/her to be intimidated. In a similar vein, Maria Tatar puts forward that: “As alien intruders, they disturb the harmony among blood relations. They may not always have the power to perform a metamorphosis from woman to beast, but they can turn even the most aristocratic and beguiling girl into the humblest of scullery maids” (*The Hard Facts* 142).

Contrary to the evil mother character, the good mother is the other end of the general mother archetype. The qualities associated with the good mother “. . . are maternal solicitude and sympathy; the magic authority of the female; the wisdom and spiritual exaltation that transcend reason; any helpful instinct or impulse; all that is benign, all that cherishes and sustains, that fosters growth and fertility” (Jung 139). Other fairy tale scholars show similar approaches to the double identities that the mother archetype holds in one figure. Bruno Bettelheim explains the opposite identities of the mother by stating that the mother as an “all giving protector . . . can change into the cruel stepmother if she is so evil as to deny the youngster something he wants” (67). Besides, Maria Tatar mentions the nurturer and provider but also cannibalistic dual identity of the mother figure by threatening “to turn children into their own source of nourishment, reincorporating them into bodies that gave birth to them” (*The Hard Facts* 140). Consequently, two mother types, the evil and the good, are two variations of a single figure whose traits and functions are utterly different from each other.

Even though the stepmothers are the most prominent mother figures of the fairy tales, there is another type who is always invisible to the reader, yet her influence is felt: absent mother. As one of the common occurrences of the genre, death of the mother is a poignant moment for the heroine that gives hint about the tentative background of the times when the fairy tales emerged. According to Sheldon Cashdan, the absence of the mother in tales can be attributed to historical reality. Because “[b]efore the nineteenth century, childbirth was one of the major causes of death, and repeated pregnancies constantly placed a woman’s life in jeopardy. . . It thus was not unusual for the children to find themselves motherless before they were able to fend for themselves” (42). Consequently, with the female mortality, the surviving baby is entrusted to the second wife that the father has to replace with the deceased one so as to uphold the domestic life at home.

Hence, the second wife of the father figure is frequently associated with the evil stepmother qualities, whereas the deceased mother, who is the biological good mother of the protagonist, is associated with the magical helpers. Being the common denominator of these stock types, goodness is their reason to oppose the unfairness and cruelty that were meant to be imposed upon the protagonist. That is to say, the magical

helper is included in the lasting balance between the good and evil in order to retain the continual strife. Despite the absence of the mothers in the course of the tales, the magical helpers, who support the hero/heroine, substitute the dead mother and they stand for the benignity and “symbolic representation of all that is good in the world” (Cashdan 41).

According to Donald Haase “[a] magic helper is a character, whether supernatural, human, or animal, who renders an extraordinary kind of assistance to heroes or heroines in folktales and other related narrative forms” (596). Helpers do not need to be a human being, but they must be humane in manner. They may appear as animals or plants and supernatural beings like fairies, goblins, fairy godmothers when the protagonist is thoughtful and worried about him/herself to “offer advice and magical assistance” (*Greenwood* 638). Emergence of the magical helpers requires a problematic situation where the heroine is left alone helpless, expelled from home or the hero finds himself desperate about the solution of the journey he sets off. The perfect example of the magical helpers can be found in “Cinderella” since the fairy godmother, animal and plant helpers take part in different version of the tale. In Charles Perrault’s version, having been left alone by her stepmother and stepsisters, she cries on since she wants to go to the Prince’s ball, too. Then, the fairy godmother suddenly emerges to help her to go to the ball by turning the animals of the household into servants and a big pumpkin into a coach, finally making Cinderella unrecognizable with a sumptuous ball dress and glass slippers by a flick of her wand (133-134). However, as can be seen in the example, helpers stand for “assistance rather than leadership,” besides they are “supportive, their power is limited, and they do not demonstrate a broader view of the situation,” hence the result of the tale does not depend upon the magical helper’s power (Lundell 153).

In Grimm Brothers’ version, the magical helper is not the fairy godmother but the animals and the hazel tree. In the tale, to take Cinderella to the ball, the evil stepmother throws a dishful of peas into the ash-heap and assigns Cinderella the task of picking them all out in two hours. Yet, Cinderella, unaware of the fact that her stepmother is fooling her, calls the bird for assistance as follows:

You tame pigeons, you turtledoves, and all you birds beneath the sky come and  
 help me to pick  
     The good into the pot,  
     The bad into the crop. (Grimm 122)

Marina Warner explains the help of the birds as the embodiment of the dead mother which in later European versions structurally changes into the fairy godmother (*From the Beast* 204). Later on, Cinderella realises that she has been fooled by the stepmother and starts whining under a hazel tree. The tree is an important token for her since it brings her what she wants. As a talisman, the hazel tree is a sealed one that connects the dead mother and the girl by bestowing on her gold and silver when she wishes “Shiver and quiver, my little tree, / Silver and gold throw down over me!” (Grimm 124). Because, the hazel tree’s ground is the place where the dead mother is buried under and “her bones transform it into a powerful wishing tree, to work her daughter’s revenge and triumph” (204).

As can be seen above, the formal and contextual features of fairy tales show great similarities when the tales are evaluated and analysed according to the specific characteristics, spatial and temporal elements that they share. In addition to these similarities regarding the tales themselves, on the historical level it is also possible to find interactions and common features among the fairy tales of different nations. Although the written language and cultural backgrounds are totally dissimilar, some shared knowledge and collective elements of the fairy tales are used successively in the phases of the development of the tradition.

## **2. THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE FAIRY TALE**

Beside the difficulty of defining what precisely fairy tale means, in the long fairy tale tradition and fairy tale studies the question of origins and outlet has been another problematic issue. Yet, obscurity of the origin and location of the fairy tale genre is one of the common points that the fairy tale scholars come to terms with. Hence, the “impossibility to locate and study the history of stories and the evolution of genre” is the prevailing idea among the critics where they can only speculate on since history gives no credible knowledge about the provenance of the genre (Zipes, *The Irresistable* 4). However, although it is rather hard to trace the historical roots and evolution of fairy

tales, Jack Zipes stresses that “. . . we do know that humans began telling tales as soon as they developed the capacity of speech” (2). The critic also emphasises the lack of history and social history and explains “[n]onhistory is history. Or, the acceptance of the gap means that brief descriptive outlines and chronologies of the fairy tale pass for history” (*Fairy Tales* 1). In addition, Zipes puts forward that the historical studies attribute agelessness and universality to the tales since “it does not matter when or why they were written” (1).

He also notes that according to “. . . historical, sociological and anthropological studies . . . the folk tale originated as far back as the Megalithic period [time period in Stoneage around 3000+ BC] that common people have been the carriers and transformers of the tales” (*Breaking* 5). In another essay he exemplifies how memoirs of a primitive can be transformed into a tale as follows:

...[I]n the stone age if a man returned safely from an expedition into the forest where he had encountered a monstrous beast and killed it, his mind would have been preoccupied or already occupied by this clash, and he would have wanted to relate his experience to others in his clan as a warning or heroic deed. Undoubtedly, he would have used a particular simple form of narration to recount the salient aspects of his encounter, such as an anecdote, fable, exemplum, proverb, or fairy tale. Or he might have combined the forms to tell his story. What was and is crucial for this storyteller (and all storytellers) is shaping a tale so that it becomes alive, effective, and relevant. Indeed, he sought and seeks to make himself relevant. (*The Irresistable* 10)

As the origin of the fairy tales dates back to ancient times, and when the time span between the onset of oral accounts and the present is taken into consideration, it is correct to remark that they were “living entities” which have survived for ages in different forms (Opie 17). Thus, from its beginning they have been continuously recalled, recited and told by the various tellers from different nationalities to pass on to the modern-day. In spite of their current name, those tales were neither called fairy tales nor categorized under feature specific titles. Since they were neither written down, nor were influenced by any outer literary sources, they were part of the folk tradition, genuine property of folklore as a non-inscriptive traditional narrative.

Alan Dundes asserts that in order to conduct a “complete oral performance,” there must be a “raconteur [male tale teller] and audience” so that, oral transmission without any help of written source can take place along with creativity and nuances (259). However,

what has been stressed in this oral performance phase is not the pure nature of the tales but the continuity and sustainability throughout the ages. Like the origin and definition of the fairy tale, its fineness is another problematic issue to be discussed. Regarding that point Dundes further remarks that:

Any true fairy tale, like all folklore, is characterized by the criteria of “multiple existence” and “variation”. An item must exist in at least two versions in order to qualify as authentic folklore. Most items exist in hundreds of versions. Usually, no two version of an oral fairy tale will be exactly word-for-word the same. That is what is meant by the criteria of multiple existence and variation. When one studies the Perrault or the Grimm text of a fairy tale, one is studying a single text. This may be appropriate for literary scholars . . . But it is totally inappropriate for the study of folklore wherein there is no such thing as *the* text. There are only texts. (261)

What Dundes tries to explain is the impossibility of the pureness of a tale like all narratives that have ancient origins such as the Bible, myths and epics. Therefore, the ultimate text or tale is not a matter of discussion in the fairy tale studies since the following texts do not show any consistency with the allegedly urtext in terms of context, title and cultural variances. During the evolution of the genre, in other words through its own history, “fairy tales circulate over hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of years in multiple versions, adapted by different narrators in a style or manner specific to each narrator, often in very different historical circumstances” (Jones, *The Fairy Tale* 3).

As Jones also indicates above, when narrators tell their tales, they add or omit some parts, information, elements of the tales correlated with their cultures or ideas. Each narrator obliterates the original perspective and removes it from its initial state by reinterpreting it with his/her experience and reformulating “the contents with a new ideology” (Zipes, *Breaking* 8). Concerning this issue, Jamie Tehrani studied 35 versions of “Little Red Riding Hood” from around the world by adopting taxonomies of biology researchers to create a tree of life showing how every species came from a common ancestor in order to reach the very source of the tale. Tehrani summarises the conclusion of his study as follows:

Over time these folk tales have been subtly changed and have evolved just like a biological organism. Because many of them were not written down until much later, they have been misremembered or reinvented through hundreds of generations . . . By looking at how these folk tales have spread and changed it tells



us something about human psychology and what sort of things we find memorable.  
(Gray n.pag.)

The impossibility of reaching the genuine texts links us to the written or collected versions by different writers/collectors from various nationalities. Though different collections bear similarities in terms of plot structure and story, the process of inscriptive recording alters the original ones in terms of ideology, culture and message. Hence, the conclusive remark about the change can “. . . be understood as a reworking of orally composed and transmitted tales” under the name of “literary fairy tale” (Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales: A New History* 7). Moreover, the way that a tale is told or written depends on the writers/collectors’ own initiative about what to emphasize or highlight. Since the tales are used to “stabilize, conserve, or challenge the common beliefs, laws, values, and norms of a group” the capacity to change or manipulate the tale rests with the writer/collector’s choice. In line with this idea, Zipes aptly puts that, “. . . the sense of wonder in the tale and the intended emotion sought by the narrator are ideological” (*Spells* xv). Last but not least, Harold Bloom also highlights that “. . . even the simplest fairy tale tends to be a palimpsest, a textual jungle in which one interpretation has grown itself upon another, until by now the interpretations have become the story” (n.pag.).

In the same fashion with the contextual changes of the tales, changes in narrative technique make a big impact on its own characteristics, too. Once the tale is written down, it begins to be read and interpreted rather than listened to and memorised. So the change in the narrative perspective reveals the fact that passivity of reading a literary fairy tale replaces the interactive live performance of hearing an oral fairy tale. Correspondingly, the chart below lays bare the differences between oral and written fairy tales, as well as folklore and literature.

<b>Folklore</b>	<b>Literature</b>
Oral	Written
Performance	Text
Face-to-face Communication	Indirect Communication
Ephemeral	Permanent
Communal (Event)	Individual (Event)
Re-creation	Creation
Variation	Revision
Tradition	Innovation
Unconscious Structure	Conscious Design

Collective Representations  
Public (Ownership)  
Diffusion  
Memory (Recollection)

Selective Representations  
Private (Ownership)  
Distribution  
Re-reading (Recollection).  
(Zipes, *Breaking* 14)

As indicated above, oral story telling as a collective performance is associated with folkloric elements which bear interactions with the public. As a pastime activity, tale telling was common for the pre-modern societies where the rate of literacy was low, “as a result . . . narrative genre of the fairy tale [was] widely practised by the folk” (Jones, *The Fairy Tale* 32). In these gatherings, women played a great role in telling stories since they were generally depicted as the tale-tellers in various cultures and folklores. Karen Rowe dwells upon the female tale-tellers by indicating that: “. . . [T]he lineage of women as tale-tellers in a history stretches from Philomela and Scheherazade to the raconteurs of French *veillées* [evening gatherings] and salons, to the English peasants, governesses and novelists, and to the German *Spinnerinnen* [Female spinners] and the Brothers Grimm” (53-54). Thus, it is true to state that the role of women in the circulation of the fairy tales is highly significant.

Along with the female tale-teller figure, the spindle and distaff are substantial symbols for fairy tale history. In *The Watkins Dictionary of Symbols*, the spindle is associated with “the mother goddess and women generally” (“Spindle”). Maria Tatar also touches upon a metaphor about the relation between spinning and womanhood by highlighting that in English “*spindle side* or the *distaff side* refer to the female line of the family” and spinning is therefore “quintessentially a female activity” (*The Hard Facts* 114). In the earliest depictions of fairy tales the woman teller has a spindle and distaff in her hand while recounting tales. One of the best pieces of evidence for this correlation can be seen in Figure 1.1. in the frontispiece of Charles Perrault’s 1695 collection *Histoires ou Contes du Temps passé* subtitled *Les Contes de ma Mère l’Oye* .



Figure 1.1. Frontispiece. *Histoires ou Contes du Temps passé,*

*Contes de ma Mère l'Oye.*

Woman and spindle association can be traced back to “2500 years before the 19<sup>th</sup> century” since spinning “had been carried on exclusively by women” (Bottigheimer, “Tale Spinners” 143). In Greek mythology too, there are several female figures such as; “Penelope, Helen, Circe, the Fates and Philomela” who act as weavers and spinners. These women are the most significant ones who tell their stories by weaving and spinning, thus “they do not speak, they weave” (Rowe 300). Likewise, tale telling is equated with spinning in the fairy tale tradition in terms of weaving the plot.

While women spin and weave different clothes or yarn in their own fashion, they tell tales, and naturally create new variations of the original tale. The fact that the tellers, nurses, older women, governesses or mothers tell their stories when they spin their yarn, thus repetitive rhymes of work and tale telling merge making two occupations connected with each other. Seeing that, “[t]he alliance of spinning with tale telling is therefore an especially congenial one, for the labour of the one is lightened by the activity of the other” (Tatar, *The Hard Facts* 113). However, it should not be presumed that “storytelling was an exclusively female activity” just because of the female

attributions of spinning, contrary to the common belief “it varies from country to country from one people to another” (Warner, *From the Beast* 34).

Even though the oral phase of fairy tales is associated with women, with the first written examples of fairy tales male collectors or writers become prominent. Oral tales were told by women and thus it is believed that they carried the concerns about their gender. Yet, they were recorded and written down by male scribes “since women in most cases were not allowed to be” one of them (Zipes, *Spells* xvi). As the chart given above also shows, during the transition period from the oral to the literary tradition, along with the changes, the gaps which were open and vulnerable to any kind of ideological intrusion appeared in the tales. Therefore, while the oral fairy tales were being written down by the male scribes, these gaps were exposed to the patriarchal ideology of these scribes. For that reason, the former ideologies or messages of the tales were altered by the male discourse and intention of the scribes. When they had been written down according to “male dictates or fantasies,” (Zipes, *Spells* xvi) male voice and hegemonic interests “dominated the production and dissemination of popular wonder tales” (Warner, *From the Beast* 17). Utterly disparate from the female voice, male writers and collectors also differ from each other in terms of tone. American cultural historian Richard Darnton characterises “. . . the French tales as ‘Cartesian’ and ‘dramatic,’ . . . the English ones as ‘more genial’ and ‘whimsical;’ the Italian ones of Basile, Pitre and Calvino as ‘burlesques’ full of ‘humour;’ and the German ones as ‘macabre’ and full of ‘horror’(qtd. in Bottigheimer, “Fairy Tales” 345). Therefore, the oral tales which sprung out from the domestic milieu and household carrying female voice and influence are introduced to the world through written texts and male ideology and brand new tones totally different from their previous versions.

Although the earliest examples of these literary folk narratives made a great impact on the spreading and recognition of fairy tales, the use of tale renderings and modifications were not totally absent in earlier literary works. From Roman period’s Numidia Lucius Apuleius’ “Cupid and Psyche” in his ancient frame narrative *Golden Ass* or *Metamorphoses* (late second century A.D) can be regarded as the first and most significant example of this type. As the title of the book *Metamorphoses* suggests, tales deal with the transformations which are “perhaps the key theme of the fairy tale up to

the present” (Zipes, *Spells* xvi). Also Bruno Bettelheim emphasises that “[t]he Western tradition of the animal-groom stories begins with Apuleius’ story of Cupid and Psyche” (291). Moreover, *Panchatantra* (c. 200 A.D.) the ancient Indian narrative collection of fables, stories, proverbs, and animal tales eighty-six in number and in Sanskrit is another prominent text of early tale renderings. Being another tale collection of frame narrative, in the initial frame of *Panchatantra*, Visnu Sharma the Wise;

. . . is entrusted with the education of three stupid princes, and so devises a course of instruction using stories as a sort of sugar coated method to educate them. Many of the stories are animal fables and are set up to illustrate various ethical and moral principles . . . ; the book is thus also an early example of the *speculum principis* (the “mirror of the prince,” that is, a book intended to teach statecraft). (Haase, *The Greenwood* 724)

*Alf Laila Waleila* translated as *The Arabian Nights* or *Thousand and One Nights* is an Arabic collection of stories in frame story told by the clever Scheherazade, daughter of the royal vizier. King Shahryar, deceived by her wife and “lost all trust to mankind” and women decides that women no longer deserve his love but they are the object of his sexual lust (Bettelheim 87). Thenceforth, he sleeps with virgin girls and kills them in the morning till Scheherazade volunteers for the post. She “ensnares the king with the tales she carries over from night to night until, after 1001 nights, the king reprieves her” (Wehse 246). Among the great number of stories, the most renowned ones like “The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor,” “Aladdin’s Wonderful Lamp” and “Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves” have influenced the Western perspective of fairy tales.

Regarding the fact that these works are the earliest examples of literary fairy tales, they could neither support nor strengthen themselves since they “did not have a receptive audience and had to be included within a frame story or in a collection of instructive and amusing stories and anecdotes” (Zipes, *When Dreams* xvii). Drawing near to the Middle Ages when the tales migrated easily among the classes of society and the recordings of the tales “[do] not necessarily indicate anything about where they originated,” the significant medieval works profited from the form and content of the former tales (Ziolkowski 5). For example, Boccaccio’s *Decameron* (1348-53) in Italy and Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* (fourteenth century) in England are the major substantial works which were highly influenced by the frame story technique and tale contents of both Oriental and Western venerable tales.

With the major effects of the Italian Renaissance at the beginning of the sixteenth century, fairy tale as a literary form was nourished by the changes in the social milieu in Europe and prospered as a newly emerging genre. Italy was the first and foremost country in Europe where the fairy tale as an independent genre progressed and marked off its own boundaries. Italy as the centre of the cultural and social development in Europe was also the birth place of European fairy tales. Jack Zipes explains the interaction between Italy and the fairy tale as follows:

It is not by chance that the literary fairy tale began flourishing in Italy before other European countries. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Italian cities and duchies had prospered by developing great commercial centers, and the literacy rate had grown immensely. Cultural activity at the courts and in the city-states was high, and there was a great deal of foreign influence on storytelling as well as strong native oral traditions among the people. Although it cannot be fully documented, it is highly likely that the Italian literary fairy tales were gradually spread in print and by word of mouth throughout Europe. (*When Dreams* 11-12)

There is little evidence supporting the idea that literary fairy tales emerged and developed in Italy. Yet, with the help of the information gathered from the first literary fairy tale writers and their tales, it is possible to have an idea about the characteristics of the genre. Two major and most significant writers, Giovan Francesco Straparola and Giambattista Basile, played highly substantial roles in the rise of literary fairy tales in Europe and were strong influence on their European successors. However, before analysing these writers it is important to notice that

[t]he rise of the literary fairy tale as a short narrative form stemmed from the literary activity that flourished in Florence during the fourteenth century and led to the production of various collections of *novelle* in Italian and Latin under the influence of Boccaccio's *Decamerone*. The *novella*, also called *conto*, was a short tale that adhered to principles of unity of time and action and clear narrative plot. The focus was on surprising events of *everyday* life, and the tales . . . were intended for amusement and instruction of the readers. (Zipes, *Fairy Tales* 13).

Being influenced by Boccaccio, Straparola (born in Italy circa 1480) published his first book *Le piacevoli notti* (1550-1553) containing “some 75 novellas and fairy tales, some of oriental origin” (Ashliman 22). In English it is translated as *The Nights of Straparola*, *The Facetious Nights* or *Pleasant Nights*. Due to lack of reliable sources and records, Straparola is said to be born around 1480 in a small village called Caravaggio near Naples, north of Italy. Even his surname is not known since “Straparola” means “loquacious one,” in Italian it might have been his pen name (Zipes, *Fairy Tales* 14).

According to the researches of the scholars, it is stated that Straparola may have lived in Venice for some time and his educational background might be the proof of his urban life. Besides, Bottigheimer also underlines the fact that Straparola's works "[make] it clear that he knew Venice and had experienced the repelling reek of rank poverty and had known the beguiling softness of great wealth" (*Fairy Tales* 91). However, Jack Zipes prefers speaking speculatively about this subject because of the lack of sources, yet he assumes that the tales he read and heard came to Venice ports from different European regions and countries, since the city was a "thriving and wealthy city in the sixteenth century" he had the chance to interact with foreign people and their tales (*Fairy Tales* 15).

Straparola was also influenced by the structures of the former literary tales. For example, he modelled his most significant work *Pleasant Nights* in similar fashion to Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Both utilize frame narrative in order to deliver their stories to the readers. "Straparola depicts 13 nights of revelry in a luxurious villa on the island of Murano" and the participants of this festivity take part in the entertainment by telling different tales which are "supernatural, bawdy jokes, anecdotes" and folk and fairy tales (Ashliman 22).

Although Straparola claims that he has heard the tales in *Pleasant Nights* from ten young women and then recorded them, paradoxically "the majority of his tales have been identified so clearly with stories from books printed in Venice within the previous hundred years that his claim to oral sources is unsustainable" (Bottigheimer, "Giovan" 20). However, his claim about recording the tales of the ladies is parallel to the idea of fairy tales' female oral tradition. In addition to that Straparola also defends himself with these words:

. . . [T]he pleasant tales which I have written and collected in this volume and in the other small one are not mine but stories that I have feloniously stolen from various people. To tell the truth, I confess they are not mine, and if I were to say otherwise, I would be lying. However, I have faithfully written them down according to the manner in which they were told by ten ladies during our gatherings. (Waters 871)

Based upon the limited information, it is unlikely to find the real origin of Straparola's tales. According to W.G Waters the only aim of his tales

. . . was to lead his readers into some enchanted garden of fairyland; to thrill them with woes and perils of his heroes and heroines; to shake their sides with laughter over the misadventures of some too amorous monk or love sick cavalier, rather than to send them into ecstasy over the measured elegance of his phrases. (Waters 877)

The second important figure in Italian literary fairy tale history is Giambattista Basile with his book of fairy tales which were published posthumously, *Lo cunto de li cunti overo lo trattenemiento pe peccerille* (*The Tale of Tales, or Entertainment for Little Ones*), also known as *Pentamerone* (1634-1636). Following the footsteps of his predecessor Straparola, Basile also played a central role in the development of the European literary fairy tale. Like Straparola, Basile made use of frame narrative in *Pentamerone*, too. However, his dialect and themes were not similar due to Basile's hometown. Unlike Straparola, Basile did not transcribe his tales in Venice, rather he spent his life in the province of Naples and employed the Neapolitan dialect in his tales. He focused on the locality by bringing "the fabulous into relation with actual daily life, with life of his own time and his own Naples" (Croce 884).

Basile was also a courtier who travelled widely in Italy and worked with different patrons. Hence, he accumulated "a wealth of folklore, anecdotes, and events that celebrate miraculous changes and communion" that he used in his fairy tales and he had the chance to see and experience the profile of various people of entire Italy (Zipes, *Spells* xviii). What he collected from his experience helped him to write a work "distant from nobility . . . [and] Boccaccio's elevated discourse," (Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales* 80) but it was a part of popular literature of old hags which was "unusual, rustic, absurd . . . 'witty' comedy" whose aim was to mock and laugh with vulgar humour (Croce 880).

Since Basile's work was written in the Baroque period in the seventeenth century, he was influenced by the exuberant and exaggerated style in his tales different from the preceding writers. His aim was to parody rather than to praise, his venues were piazzas/streets rather than sumptuous saloons. "Human beings, their bodies and their emotions" were materials for him to study, rather than to address or teach directly (Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales* 79). In addition, Donald Haase sums up Basile's peculiar fairy tale collection which employs typical ogres, fairies, non-human and super human beings as follows:



The fifty stories in *The Tale of Tales* are like no other fairy tales: just as informed by elite literary culture as by folkloric traditions and the formulas of orality; bawdy and irreverently comic but also tender and whimsical; acute in psychological characterization and at the same time encyclopedic in description. Basile engages critically with dominant discourses by deformatively citing the most diverse authors and traditions through his hyperbolic descriptions and pyrotechnical metaphoric play; this parodic intertextuality has as its preferred targets courtly culture and the canonical literary tradition. (*Greenwood* 101)

The beginning and development of the literary fairy tale in Italy had impact on the rest of Europe by word of mouth and through print. Although there is no accurate information about the transmission and spreading of the tales from Italy to Europe, it is believed that Straparola and Basile's tales were memorised by the storytellers and passed on to other countries. With the help of literacy and translations great number of Europeans found a chance to reach the significant and first examples of literary fairy tales, while the illiterate heard them from tellers. However, out of all the European nations, France had the more convenient conditions to adopt the development and the genre bloomed there towards the end of the seventeenth century between 1690 and 1714. Though there are several reasons of this development in France, Jack Zipes elaborates upon the most important ones in the introduction part of his book *Spells of Enchantment*. First of all, he asserts that French was "the most cultivated language" of the time in Europe. With the evolution of printing, France supported the "experimentation with different kinds of literature" and in the cultural sense the country also gave importance to novelty and creativity in literature. Finally, the blooming tradition of tale telling was in vogue at courts and in literary salons which popularised various storytelling activities of men and women and eventually led to their publication (xix).

Prior to French literary fairy tales, French salons were the venues where the nation's fairy tale tradition flourished and specified its own French design. Salon gatherings were typical of the seventeenth century France in terms of social and intellectual development and awareness of the people of that age. Terri Windling, defines the use and scope as follows:

These salons were regular gatherings hosted by prominent aristocratic women, where women and men could gather together to discuss the issues of the day. At court, contact between men and women was socially constrained and ritualized; and many topics of conversation were considered inappropriate for well-bred ladies. In the 1630s, disaffected women began to gather in their own living rooms

(*salons*) in order to discuss the topics of their choice: arts and letters, politics . . . , and social matters of immediate concern to the women of their class: marriage, love, financial and physical independence, and access to education. This was a time when women were barred from schools and universities; when arranged marriages were the norm, divorce virtually unheard of, birth control methods primitive, and death by childbirth common. (“Les Contes” n.pag)

On the one hand, these gatherings provided women equal social rights with men since they were discussing and sharing their ideas in collaboration and had the chance to broaden their perspectives at a time when they were restrained due to some social and private limitations. On the other hand, the salon tradition had a great impact upon the evolution of literature, especially the fairy tale genre, inasmuch as it “fostered tale composition and amicable competition among the *conteuses* and *conteurs*” (Jasmin 43). Since these male and female tale tellers were from high social status, their life style inevitably affected the way they composed and told their tales. Despite the fact that the tales they made use of were originally folk tales or peasant tales, during their gatherings they polished and embellished the tales so as to make them sound more authentic to compete with the other tale tellers since there was an ongoing rivalry among them.

Ruth Bottigheimer harshly comments on the change in the style of these pure oral tales with these remarks: “The original peasants’ tellings had been pure oral narratives passed along from person to person for centuries, but the *conteuses* and *conteurs* had contaminated the peasants’ simple tales with literary style and borrowed embellishments, elaborating and embroidering the peasants’ genuine tellings” (*Fairy Tales* 54). Although Jack Zipes agrees that the tale tellers “differed in style, perspective, and content” while changing the original story, he does not call it contamination, rather he underlines the “anticlassical” quality of the new compositions which “were implicitly written in opposition to the leading critic of the literary establishment” (*Why* 70-71). French tale tellers coined an original expression of *conte des fées* for this new blend of traditional and fresh fairy tales they had come up with. It emerged in France by “1697 with the publication of Marie-Catherine d’Aulnoy’s first volume of *Les contes des fées* (*Tales of the Fairies*)” and by the end of the seventeenth century the expression became popular in France, and the English version ‘fairy tale’ was adopted around that time (Haase, *Greenwood* 233). Since French salons were highly prolific places for the fairy tale tradition, members of these salons were not only composing tales for oral performances but also they were recording them to publish their own books.

As mentioned above, Marie-Catherine D'Aulnoy was the conteuse who used the term *contes de fées* first. She was accepted as the most prodigious and innovative one of the French tale writers due to her novel *L'histoire d'Hypolite, comte de Douglas* (1690) in which she inserted the first French literary fairy tale "The Island of Happiness" (Haase, *Greenwood* 80). Being skilled as a tale teller, she was thematically preoccupied with *tendresse* and nobility which the quality of her characters depend upon. In other words, she celebrated the courteous emotional relationship between woman and man which stresses "their manners and the ways they uphold standards of civility in defending their love" (Zipes, *Spells* xix). Apart from Mme D'Aulnoy, a great many names can be listed under the title of French fairy tale writers and some of them are the pioneers that helped to establish the genre. Jeanne- Marie Leprince de Beaumont is another renowned French fairy tale writer who is associated with the famous tale "Beauty and the Beast" she published in her *Magazin des enfants* in 1756. Mme Beaumont, as a French governess in England, gained her success through the moralised tales she published in England written in French. Her tales, unlike D'Aulnoy's, carried edifying purposes for the European middle and upper class gentlewomen of the age and she also "... understood the value of fiction, and particularly fairy tales, as part of her educational project" (Harries 87).

The other two important French fairy tale writers are Henriette-Julie de Castelnau, Comtesse de Murat and Marie-Jeanne L'Héritier de Villandon who had also contributed to the French fairy tale tradition with their tales and books. Comtesse de Murat, despite her scandalous life, had been the interest of scholar's for her *Histoires sublimes et allégoriques* (*Sublime and Allegorical Stories*) which was published in 1699. Her tales revolve around the themes of "marriage and constraints on female desire" (Haase, *Greenwood* 647). Since she was from the upper class, Murat always favoured the "aristocratic, certainly well born, well dressed, and well housed" *conteuses* as her literary contemporaries by insisting on the "distinction between the traditional lower-class female storyteller and the late-seventeenth-century *conteuses*" (Harries 57). Her view stems from the activity of transforming the lowly traditional material of the peasant women into an elevated version by the "magical power of discourse" of the female aristocratic storytellers (58). Therefore, Murat accepts all the female upper class storytellers as the contemporary *fées* [fairies] who reflect the distinction and supremacy

of the salon culture. Last but not least, L'Héritier is one of these modern *fées* who became prominent with her works. Though she had been one of the important figures of the salon culture, due to her familial relation to Charles Perrault, L'Héritier's works were not utterly innovative and authentic tales. Three of the tales in her *Oeuvres meslée* (1695), "The Discreet Princess," "The Enchantments of Eloquence," and "Ricdin-Ricdon," bear some fundamental similarities with Basile's tales. Yet, despite the similarities, L'Héritier does not mean to benefit from the old and famous tales, rather she pursues "recapturing the elegant simplicity of the language current in the salons" (Harries 63). Hence, so as to hint at the salon culture of the age, re-composition made in the tales of Basile was not about plot and structure, but style and language.

Because of the French women fairy tale writers' purpose of reimagining the old tales in embellished style, towards the end of the seventeenth century the influence of Italian fairy tales on French fairy tales was clearly evident. Not only the women writers, but also the most reputable male writer of the French fairy tale tradition, Charles Perrault, transformed the oral and former Italian tales with a new style. As an influential man of letters and man of court, Perrault was highly acquainted with the literary salons in Paris and he "purposely sought to establish the literary fairy tale as an innovative genre" which reflects "the greatness of French *civilité*" (Zipes, *Spells* xix). His first collection entitled *Contes de ma mère l'oye* (*Tales of Mother Goose*) appeared in 1695 in manuscript form containing five tales of "Sleeping Beauty," "Little Red Riding-Hood," Bluebeard," "Puss in Boots," and "The Fairies". In 1697 *Histoires ou Contes du temps passé. Avec des moralité* (*Stories or Tales of Bygone Times. With their Morals*) was published by the leading publisher of the age anonymously. The latter work of Perrault was in fact the second edition of the former since "[t]hree tales were added to those in the manuscript: "Cinderella," "Ricky the Tuft," and "Hop o' my Thumb". The only passages in verse were the 'Moralités'," which were inserted to the end of the tales inferring the moral and message of the tale (Betts xv). Along with this novelty, Perrault also differed from his contemporaries in terms of his style and language. For instance, unlike the women writers, he dismissed the function of frame narrative and recounted his tales "without impatience, without mockery, and without feeling they required any aggrandisement" (Opie 22). With the help of his unique style and language Perrault

became continentally famous and also had a great impact upon British fairy tales with his translations.

Regarding the corpus of the French fairy tales, the situation was just the same with all French salon writers; most of them borrowed, benefited from and were influenced by the tales of their predecessors. Beside the issues about the structure and originality of these tales, the major points that should be taken into consideration are the rewriting process, innovative approaches and main aims of *conteuses* or *conteurs* while writing or recounting their tales. Being the indispensable link in the chain of fairy tale evolution, French writers had opened the doors of European fairy tales wide by feeding upon their precursors and also influencing the following writers. Yet, the preliminary effects and aftermath of the French Revolution ended this endeavour. Thus, “[i]nterest in fairy tales moved across the Rhine to Germany” where it paved the way of Brothers Grimm’s success (Ashliman 25).

Until the institutionalisation of the genre in Germany, the process of the literary fairy tale interaction among the European countries had survived almost over four hundred years. It was the beginning of the nineteenth century when Germany took over the literary tradition which had already flourished in Italy and France. With the help of “German classicist and Romantics” the genre was ameliorated and its sustainability was secured in its natural evolution (Zipes, *Spells* xxii). In addition to this, Germany provided the genre a continental stance and transformed it into “a totem of Western cultural identity” (Hettinga 135). Despite the similarities in the development of fairy tales, Germany changed the style and audience of the tales drastically compared to the situation in France. Unlike France, German tale tellers both from middle-class and aristocratic families gathered in coffee houses, rather than upper-class salons, to share their common cultural heritage of tales “that they had collected from servants, carters and country folk or that they had encountered in their reading” (139).

Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, frequently known as Brothers Grimm, were the pioneering writers of Germany who appealed to both aristocratic and common classes of the nineteenth century German society due to their academic background and usage of oral folktales. The two-volume *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (*Children’s and Household*

*Tales*) was the paramount work of Brothers Grimm whose first volume was published in 1812 and second in 1815. However, because of the popularity of the work, it had been issued seven times and some tales were added or omitted, from one edition to the next. Finally in the seventh edition it completed its evolution with 211 tales. Jack Zipes, highlights the popularity and Germanic spirit of the tales as follows:

The brothers Germanicized their material to stay in touch with the concern and sensibility of the German people, and this is their accomplishment not their “crime”. In response, the German people have made the Grimms’ collection the second most popular book in Germany and during the last 150 years only the Bible has exceeded it in sales. (“The Grimms” 275)

The Grimms did not only contribute to the development of the genre with their collection but also they added different dimensions particularly to the definition of the tale. The term *Märchen* was “the German word for brief narrative,” in connection with the title of their work it did not necessarily stand only for the folk or fairy tales (Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales* 32). Including many sorts such as “animal tales, tales of origins, burlesques,” (Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales* 32) and “legends, fables, didactic narratives . . . journeyman tales” *Children’s and Household Tales* covered a wide variety of orally produced narratives (Zipes, “The Grimms” 274-275).

The source of Grimm Brothers’ tales has been a problematic issue for the fairy tale scholars when the origin is in question. Studies about the issue of originality of Grimm Brothers’ tales point out various outcomes. Yet, if one needs to reach a single outcome about the originality of Grimms’ tales, meticulously borrowed and collected folktales will be the common ground in which the scholars are in agreement. Donald Hettinga remarks that “the most pervasive misconception” about Grimm’s tales is the belief that “they were collected directly from peasants” (138). This remark persisted through years because of the demands of the nineteenth and twentieth century German readers who were “interested in German identity or romantic literary principles” (139). Moreover, what Wilhelm Grimm asserts about the nature of the *Märchen* in the preface of *Children’s and Household Tales* is in line with the common fact, as he argues that these tales “were a natural phenomenon, that is, part of Nature itself. *Märchen* were the plants whose seeds had fallen into hedgerows or hidden places and had managed to survive an all-destructive storm of political events and social change” (qtd. in Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales* 32-33). Indicating the organic and inartificial features of the tales, Wilhelm

Grimm tries to prove the sustainability of the tales even in hard times in safe havens such as works of the writers.

In this respect, Grimm Brothers reckoned themselves and all the other storytellers as the important steps on the development of the fairy tales and each of them had “a certain right to retell the tales in his or her version” (Neumann 975). Allied with different dynamics and the national environment, Grimm Brothers institutionalised the genre in Germany with the amendments they made in the tales. In content, they emphasised the German middle class and peasants in order to enable the readers to “gain pleasure from different depictions of power transformation” and to provide hope by depicting the rise of the mediocre “seemingly ineffectual, disadvantaged” people to privileged status (Zipes, “The Grimms” 280). In terms of style, in stark opposition to the French writers, Brothers Grimm preferred simplified and unadorned tales taking their middle class audience into consideration. In their attempt to establish a conventional form and content for the tales, the Grimms “combined the elegance of the simplistic, paratactical oral narrations with the logical succinct businesslike prose” (Zipes, “The Grimms” 280). Having reached the desired stage in German fairy tale tradition with style, content and influential aspects, the Grimms, improved the genre by the innovations they had made in the developmental chain of the genre.

The last writer of the classical literary fairy tale tradition in Europe who brought new qualities is Hans Christian Andersen from Denmark. Born in the middle of the political and social changes into a working class family, Andersen is the only writer whose origin and upbringing were not from upper class, rather from “the humble class to whom story telling was a living tradition” (Opie 27). About the genesis of his tales Andersen remarks the importance of the stories he heard during childhood, yet in one of his letters he stresses the emergence of his best tales in following way: “I dip into my own bosom, find an idea for the older people and tell it to children, but remembering that father and mother are listening” (qtd. in Tatar, *Off With Their Heads* 50). Different from his predecessors, Andersen is accepted as the first writer of fairy tales since he did not recompose or rewrite the tales he knew but made use of the contextual elements to create new ones. In one of the collection of Andersen’s tales Ned Halley states the difference:

But what was all fairy tales did have in common before Andersen was that they were from the oral tradition, passed on from generation to generation, from long, long ago, disseminated by wandering storytellers from region to region, culture to culture. Before Andersen there were no authors of fairy tales. There were only collectors of fairy tales. (vii)

Andersen, as an author, did not gain a considerable success with his works. However, he influenced many people with his originality and approach in writing authentic fairy tales. In 1835 he published his collection *Eventyr, fortalte for Børn (Fairy Tales Told for Children)* and in 1837 he added some new tales to the first one and published it as the second installment. *Fairy Tales Told for Children* contained some world famous tales such as “The Little Mermaid,” “The Emperor’s New Clothes,” “The Steadfast Tin Soldier” and in later editions he added “The Red Shoes,” “The Snow Queen,” and “The Ugly Duckling” to his collection.

According to Jack Zipes, Andersen “. . . focuses on lower-class or disenfranchised protagonists, who work their way up and into society. Their rise is predicated on their proper behaviour that must correspond to a higher power, which elects and tests the hero” (*Fairy Tales* 95). In his tales, Andersen employs autobiographical patterns and references and parallel to this, he wished to hint how he became world famous out of a humble lower class Danish family. Disregarding the personal conditions, no matter where and which condition he was from, Andersen “brought a new kind of wonder into” fairy tale writing, while “championing the oppressed and daring to ridicule the entrenched order” (Halley xii).

Therefore, in accordance with their age and style, Andersen and all the other pioneering writers compiled a shared experience and authentic fairy tales which helped the genre to improve. The effects of these innovative works were so great that by the time England started to be influenced by the European literary fairy tale genre, the flourishing of it in Europe had come to an end in Denmark through the mid-nineteen century.

England had been an important ground for the folklore in Middle Ages where the people told their tales as a pastime activity during long nights and daily labours. Since folktales were the genuine stories of “miraculous events, superstitions, folk customs, and pagan rituals” they became blended with the major English literature works by “Chaucer, Spenser, Swift, Marlowe, and Shakespeare” (Zipes, *Victorian* xiii). However,



in terms of its influence in the advent of European literary fairy tale genre, England fell behind France and Germany since it could not experience the development of the literary fairy tales until the mid-nineteen century when Victoria was queen regnant.

Before the Victorian era, the period leading up to the Glorious Revolution in 1688 deeply affected the progress of fairy tales with its restrictions and banning of amusements in arts and literature. At that time fairy tales were considered as the works which were written only to entertain and instruct children and adults, yet the creative and imaginative nature of the fairy tales were not regarded as the “good subject matter for the cultivation of young souls” (Zipes, *Victorian* xiv). Thus, the essence of these tales was changed according to the rules and expectations of the new conservative system. According to Zipes,

... [T]he stories, poems, and novels written for children were mainly religious and instructional, and if literary fairy tales were written and published, they were transformed into didactic tales preaching hard work and pious behaviour. Moreover, most of the fairy tales which circulated in printed form were chapbooks and penny books sold by peddlers to the lower classes. It was not considered proper to defend the fairies or elves- neither in literature for adults nor in literature for children. (*Victorian* xiv)

In the Victorian era, chapbooks were generally written and published for children readers. Therefore, “these later chapbook producers catered directly to the young Victorian appetite” and “these cheaply produced and acquired books” (Lam, “Chapbooks”) had no longer “stringent didactic and heavily moralistic tone,” yet “integrate[d] a less harsh view of a child’s reading world that could incorporate fantastical elements such as godmothers, fairies and elves” (Lam, “Fairy Tales”). Apart from that, the collections and selections of English translations of the popular fairy tales by Perrault, Grimm Brothers, *The Arabian Nights* and the tales of Madame D’Aulnoy became prominent in England. As one of the first examples of this wave, in 1729 Robert Samber translated Perrault’s *Histoires ou Contes du temps passé avec des Moralitéz*, with the title of *Histories, or Tales of Past Times. Told by Mother Goose*. In 1804 Benjamin Tabart began publishing various European fairy tales in his *Popular Fairy Tales* series, in 1823 Edgar Taylor translated Grimm Brothers’ *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* under the title of *German Popular Stories*, and in the same year John Harris also edited *The Court of Oberon; or The Temple of Fairies* which contains English translations of Perrault and D’Aulnoy. Moreover, in 1846, 150 of Andersen’s

tales arrived in England and five different collections appeared in English by various translators such as Mary Howitt, Charles Boner, and Caroline Peachey (Opie 28).

In later years of the nineteenth century, with a change in the trajectory of the fairy tale genre, English writers began to write fantasy literature for children under the influence of the fairy tales. As J.S. Bratton states, there was “a didactic takeover of fantasy tales derived from fairy tales” in the works of Mrs. Trimmer’s *Fabulous Histories* (1851), Mrs. Gatty’s *The Fairy Godmother* (1851), Charles Kingsley’s *The Water Babies* (1863), and George MacDonald’s *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871) (70). Hence, there are some examples in this tradition which started with fairy tales and transformed into fantasy literature such as Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* (1865), Christina Rossetti’s *Speaking Likenesses* (1874), Oscar Wilde’s *The Happy Prince and Other Stories* (1888), and Rudyard Kipling’s *Jungle Book* (1894).

In the twentieth century, fantasy literature and fairy tale genre progressed in the works of both adult and children literature. However, with the advent of postmodern literature, the alliance of the fairy tale genre and contemporary postmodern fiction was a contradictive one, since the main purposes of the postmodern works were to destroy the barriers, dismantle the hierarchies, disrupt the grandnarratives and allocate a ground for otherness. Therefore, the fairy tale genre was called into question for its highly conservative nature, discriminatory relations and the sexist and patriarchal system that they reflected. Postmodern writers, both men and women, started to alter and subvert the original tales through their rewritings and they either caricatured the original versions, reimagined different stories for the same characters, setting and plot or wrote prequels and sequels for them.

Especially in the twentieth and the twenty-first century English literature, postmodern fairy tales and rewritten fairy tale genre were favoured by various writers. The first and the foremost example of this tradition was Angela Carter’s *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979) and the writers who were influenced by her innovative style and themes were called “Angela Carter Generation” by Stephen Benson (2). Later on, in English literature Roald Dahl with *Revolting Rhymes* (1982), Tanith Lee with *Red as Blood, or Tales from the Sisters Grimmer* (1983) and *White as Snow* (2000), Robert Coover with *Briar Rose* (1986), Salman Rushdie with *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*

(1990), A.S. Byatt with *Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye* (1994), Emma Donoghue with *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* (1997), Chris Pilbeam *The ASBO Fairy Tales* (2008) and many more postmodern writers followed the footsteps of Carter with their works.

Employing different strategies in rewriting the classical fairy tales, the writers mentioned above emphasised various aspects and points and they aimed to change the deep-rooted elements of the genre. In particular, Angela Carter and Emma Donoghue, in their works which were mentioned above, made use of both postmodern parody and rewriting strategy to subvert the nature of the classical fairy tales. The reason why these two writers and their rewritten fairy tale collections are selected in this thesis is that they used parody in their rewritings to challenge the sexist nature and to problematise the women's issues in their works. They also altered the conventional female representations with the new and the unorthodox female characters and their social, sexual and romantic relationships.

## 1. CHAPTER I: ANGELA CARTER AND *THE BLOODY CHAMBER AND OTHER STORIES*

“All art is political and so is mine. I want readers to understand what it is that I mean by my stories.”

Angela Carter- *Fireworks*

Born in Eastbourne, England, Angela Carter (1940-1992) started her career as a journalist and then received her education on medieval literature at Bristol University, English Department and presented a versatile writing manner with the works she produced. She started her career with “. . . children stories, radio plays, film scripts, poetry, journalism and criticism of various kinds” however, she is primarily accepted as a writer of fiction with “nine novels and four collection of short stories between 1966 and 1993” (Day 1).

Carter employs an argumentative manner in her fiction, as she also states in a humorous way in the Introduction of *Expletives Deleted: Selected Writings* that: “A day without an argument is an egg without salt” (4). Although her subject matter varies in each work, Carter principally focuses on the idea of disrupting and challenging the long-established, quotidian and ordinary notions. Raising an argument is not the sole aim of her works, yet she also wants to show the alternative options in perceiving these notions such as gender, sexuality and multifarious perceptions which were inculcated into people’s minds. Having analysed the strife of the oppressor and the oppressed, Carter elaborates upon these experiences as follows:

I spent a good many years being told what I ought to think, and how I ought to behave, and how I ought to write, even, because I was a woman and men thought they had the right to tell me how to feel, but then I stopped listening to them and tried to figure it out for myself but they didn’t stop talking, oh, dear no. So I started answering back. How simple, not to say simplistic, this all sounds; and yet it is true. (*Expletives* 5)

As it is clear in the passage, Carter's argument, on a large scale, concentrates upon the problems of women's issues. Carter endeavours to emphasise the relativity of the ideas and circumstances in regard to the gender differences. In addition, in her works she deliberately promotes and reflects her belief in discrepant perceptions among genders. In the interview made by John Haffenden, Carter firmly expresses the fact that "women are people, too" and depending upon the different circumstances, she asserts that "circumstances of women are different from those of men" (94). However, she does not put her fiction to the service of a particular idea of feminism using her works as a tool for propaganda and agitation. Carter writes about the general condition of her gender in life and culture and incessantly defines the ground her gender is standing upon. In this respect, she consistently mentions the relationship between her work and feminism:

It's been amazingly difficult, trying to sort out how I feel that feminism has affected my work, because that is really saying how it has affected my life and I don't really know that because I live my life, I don't examine it. . . Oh, hell. What I really like doing is writing fiction and trying to work things out *that* way. ("Notes" 30)

What she proposes above is the manifestation of her own writing style in which she mingles the feminist discourse with her idiosyncratic fiction. In her works, Carter protests against the patriarchal and entrenched ideologies by means of her imagination, distinctive language/wording and wit. Moreover, she does not try to banish the male literary tradition, instead she redeploys and parodies it for the good of feminism. One of the major qualities of Carter's style is her twisting and shifting the narratives of patriarchal discourse in order to problematise the unquestionable matters. Referring to the revisionist aims of her works, Salman Rushdie emphasizes: "She opens an old story for us, like an egg, and finds the new story, the now-story we want to hear, within (xiv).

The focus of Carter's works is parody through rewriting. According to Selen Aktari, ". . . [Carter] aimed to change the conventional perceptions of people and transform dominant cultural understandings, particularly of gender. Through seeing universally accepted notions from a different angle, Carter aspired to uncover the ideologies of old narratives and to open new ways of plural thinking via narratives" (157). By re-visioning the old narratives, Carter questions the ideas that texts tried to convey. Since the ingrained ideas of these texts are familiar to the readers, she aims to estrange the reader from the text they read by altering, using Jean-François Lyotard's term, the

‘grand narratives’ (xxiii). In this sense, none of her fictions are realist or social realist, for this reason via her non-realistic fiction she puzzles, de-familiarises and confuses the reader. Angela Carter deals with everyday things and “raise[s] them above the level of the obvious and automatic” by rewriting the common and unshaken narratives (Peach 7). Carter’s rewriting and de-familiarisation in “non-realistic fiction usually presents the reader with new insights into how society is structured, into the forces behind it and into how it is organised according to the interests of particular powerful groups” (Peach 7).

Not only in the contextual sense, but also in stylistic issues Carter appreciates blurring the boundaries of genres and shifting the structures between narratives. Owing to the period she writes in and the content of her works, she can be regarded as a postmodern writer in English literature. The interconnection among her short-fiction, children’s fiction and novels proves that she challenges the structural standards of the genres. She practised in several modes in a single work by blending or employing them together in a single narrative. In her works of fiction, it is possible to see the wide spectrum of modes including fantasy, science fiction, the Gothic, magical realism, fable, pornography and folklore. Playing with the modes is favoured by Carter as a method to mark her own miscellaneous style. Thus, her extensive use of different styles and genres intertwine with each other in texts and represents the postmodern quality of her narratives.

As can be deduced from her blended and varied style, her works carry the traces, influences or references from other narratives. In one of her interviews she notes that in the past she associated postmodernism with Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges’ idea of ‘books about books’ meaning that new books are inevitably influenced by the old ones. But then, she underlines that later on she considered the idea of postmodernism “mannerist” and idea of Borges as “frivolous” (Haffenden 79). Yet, when her works are taken into account, by means of parody, pastiche and intertextuality, perhaps Carter does not write books about books but she definitely makes use of other narratives in the production process of her works. Furthermore, as mentioned above, she assorts different genres and styles, and her works “are best read not as independent texts, but as part of an ongoing process of writing” due to her use of different narratives in her works (Peach 22).

By cumulating stories on each other, creating a “continuous interweaving of texts,” Carter places these texts into the heart of her own text, has them absorb and penetrate into each other for a fresh, intertextual narrative (Sage 74). As defined by Gérard Genette intertextuality is “[a] textual transcendence. . . a relation of co-presence between two or more texts, that is to say, eidetically and most often, by the literal presence of one text within another” (8). She makes use of the situation that she is not content with, yet she also criticises it by irony. Carter also comments on her fiction as “very often a kind of criticism” of her own works (Haffenden 79). Her fiction, providing reflexive commentary on its workings, goes hand in hand with its own criticism. In postmodernism, Linda Hutcheon calls this condition “paraliterary space” where the distinctions between fiction and criticism are blurred and “this is the space of postmodern” (*A Poetics* 11). Another coinage for the sub-genre is ‘fictocriticism’ which also refers to the same end and “results in a hybrid mixture of fictional and nonfictional genres” (Joosen, *Critical* 43).

Her works which are postmodern in content and structure aim to de-naturalise the ordinary and dominant features of our lives. Postmodernism raises awareness about the general experiences and assumptions of life, such as capitalism, conventions and patriarchy. Owing to the fact that these assumptions of life were not available ages ago and were not given to people on purpose, they were generated and spread through culture to a degree where their spheres of influence can reach. Thus, considering the fact that through various techniques postmodernism aims to question the grand narratives, which were written under the influence of these elements, postmodern works aspire to blur the clear-cut distinctions between the genres.

Parody as a term, as given in the *Oxford Literary Terms Dictionary* is, “a mocking imitation of the style of a literary work or works, ridiculing the stylistic habits of an author or school by exaggerated mimicry” (Baldick 185). Notwithstanding the dictionary definition, Linda Hutcheon objects to the opinion of the mere ridicule or lampoon since parody is rather playful and critical and “implies a distance between the backgrounded text being parodied and the new work” and the “distance usually

signalled by irony” (“Parody” 202). In addition, Frederic Jameson advocates another feature of parody as follows:

Now parody capitalizes on the uniqueness of these styles and seizes on their idiosyncrasies and eccentricities to produce an imitation which mocks the original. I won't say that the satiric impulse is conscious in all forms of parody. In any case, a good or great parodist has to have some secret sympathy for the original, just as a great mimic has to have the capacity to put himself/herself in the place of the person imitated. Still, the general effect of parody is—whether in sympathy or with malice—to cast ridicule on the private nature of these stylistic mannerisms and their excessiveness and eccentricity with respect to the way people normally speak or write. (3)

Furthermore, Simon Dentith in his book *Parody* also defines parody in the intertextual stance where the types of parody vary widely according to its purpose and form. Apart from its “rejoinder” aspect or “mocking response” to the original text, parody also creates a polemical atmosphere in order to “attack, satirise, or just playfully to refer to elements of the contemporary world” by drawing on “the authority of precursor texts” (9).

Correspondingly, in the fictional works of Angela Carter, postmodern texts raise this awareness through postmodern parody in which she “does not imitate earlier art forms in any nostalgic way” but looks back (Tucker 5). The reason why Carter uses parody is to establish a way of looking back with the aim of restoring the assumptions about Western culture and gender. In most of the works, Carter employs parody to change and rewrite the old stories of European fairy tale tradition. Based on this idea, in particular with fairy tales, *The Bloody Chamber* was written in this very fashion.

*The Bloody Chamber*, a collection of ten classical revised fairy tales, uses postmodern parody for the purpose of creating independent content and ideology. Angela Carter rewrites the classical fairy tales of Charles Perrault, Grimm Brothers and Madame Le Prince de Beaumont in a parodic manner while paying homage to the tradition. As a feminist reviser, “her writing is almost anti-fairy<sup>2</sup> tale in texture, yet her tales paradoxically retain their fairy-tale identity despite linguistic profusion” (Tiffin 66). Moreover, she takes action against the heterosexual and common love relation by deconstructing and assaulting “the system of assumptions about gender and sexuality” (65). Anna Altmann in her “Parody and Poesis in Feminist Literary Fairy Tales” puts



forward the distinction between parody and poesis. She explains the two types of literary style stating that parody generally looks back with anger to the original narrative with “emancipatory criticism” with rather pessimist and critical tone; however poesis lacks the anger and looks at the “hopeful future than rather than the negative past” in a more optimist manner (qtd. in Joosen 93).

However, regarding *The Bloody Chamber* Vanessa Joosen remarks that rewriting or retellings “can be interpreted as parodic in some aspects and poetic in others” (93). Carter, in the work, does not only shatter the conventional representations and cultural stereotypes through deconstruction of the prevalent ideology, but also with her idiosyncratic style and well adapted tales she aesthetically reconstructs the classical texts. Thus, it can be said that *The Bloody Chamber* carries both parodic and poetic elements as a postmodern parody and via feminist rewritings of Perrault, Grimm Brothers and Madame de Beaumont.

### 1.1. ANGELA CARTER AND FAIRY TALES

After Carter’s death in 1992, due to her interest in the fairy tales and folklore, the praises and compliments she received were highly about the fantastic figures and elements of the fairy tales genre. Margaret Atwood calls her ‘the Fairy Godmother,’ BBC *Late Show* presenter ‘white witch of English literature,’ English science fiction novelist J.G. Ballard ‘friendly witch,’ and Salman Rushdie entitles her as the ‘high sorceress,. . . benevolent witch queen.’ Though she is preoccupied with fairy tales in most of her fictions, *The Bloody Chamber*, published in 1979, is her pivotal work of rewriting and demythologising of the classical fairy tales. Unusually of its year 1979, in which the feminist narratives of various woman writers were in vogue and successful in gaining recognition with awards, the collection “received more than marginal recognition” with its content of highly accentuated sexuality and desire of woman through the medium of fairy tales (Simpson viii). In the introduction of Carter’s short story collection of *Burning Your Boats*, Salman Rushdie asserts that *The Bloody Chamber* is her master work “. . . in which her high, perfervid mode is perfectly married to her stories’ needs” (xi).

Carter remarks that “A fairy tale is a story where one king goes to another king to borrow a cup of sugar” and Carter’s tales deal with the original story whose kings are lampooned, sugar gone rotten and cups are broken (Sage 68). For that reason her aim in rewriting is to convey new messages and realities within the contours of the old tales which enable the reader to compare and contrast two different but similar stories. In other words, original tales are “sugar coated lies” which deceive people with their happy endings and emphasis on wealth, beauty and gallantry; however when critically analysed, the hidden messages and assumptions are bitter and undesirable (68).

In one of her interviews Carter notes: “The short story is not minimalist, it is rococo. I feel in absolute control. It is like writing chamber music rather than symphonies” (Simpson xix). As it is understood from the emphasis, Carter’s controlled style moulds them into a desired shape so as not to “betray its readers into false knowledge” (*Fireworks* 5). She defines her preoccupation with fairy tales as an activity of deconstruction and reworking rather than cherishing the old tales and writing a tribute to the genre in the same fashion. Thus she clearly expresses that “reading is just as creative an activity as writing and most intellectual development depends upon new readings of old texts. I am all for putting new wine in old bottles, especially if the pressure of the new makes the old bottles explode.” In the same line with her “new wine in old bottles,” Carter also refuses “the mythic quality” of her works since myths are the products of “human mind and . . . human practice” whereas Carter’s aim is to shatter and distort myths so she explicitly announces her intention by saying that “I’m in the demythologising business” (“Notes” 24-25).

In Carter’s fiction, feminist rewriting of myths and fairy tales dispossesses the former owners of the narratives to make a radical change in their inner dynamics. Hence, in accordance with feminist discourse, alterations are made in such a way that new stories parody the old ones in terms of their patriarchal and Western culture stereotypes. To repel these entrenched ideas from the valuable narratives Alicia Ostriker defends revisionist mythmaking and states the following:

Whenever a poet employs a figure or story previously accepted and defined by a culture, the poet is using myth, and the potential is always present that the use will be revisionist: that is, the figure or tale will be appropriated for altered

ends, the old vessel filled with new wine, initially satisfying the thirst of the individual poet but ultimately making cultural change possible. (72)

From the seventeenth century fairy tale tradition among French female tale tellers to the writers of today's feminist postmodern fairy tales or reworking, women writers have come a long way to reach the current position to write their ideas from their own perspectives. As the female tale tellers of the seventeenth century tried to gain the title of "tale spinner" by spreading their tales all over Europe and expecting to be accepted by the male dominated literary fairy tale circles, in the nineteenth century, women writers endeavoured to "[retailor] the classical fairy tales they had inherited" (Haase, *Feminist* 22). Nevertheless, they could not help falling prey to the patriarchal language in their narratives despite the divergent subject matters and content. All in all, in the late twentieth century, feminist writers such as Anne Sexton, Olga Broumas, Margaret Atwood, Tanith Lee, A.S Byatt and Angela Carter succeeded in changing the language and content of these classical fairy tales in their works. Therefore, they came up against the attributions of "tale spinners" and "tale tailor," by becoming utterly free writers who were viewed as the "thieves of language" who pilfered their well-deserved rights to veer and rewrite the old tales.

Carter, in her own manner, applies those rights to ten rewritten fairy tales which are the re-workings of fairy tales. However, Carter's fascination with fairy tales has much deeper bonds than the act of rewriting and postmodern parody. Contrary to the lexical definitions of the term fairy tale, Carter explains the genre with a special stress on its limitlessness and flexibility:

... [F]or the term 'fairy tale' is a figure of speech and we use it loosely, to describe the great mass of infinitely various narrative that was, once upon a time and still is, sometimes, passed on and disseminated through the world by word of mouth – stories without known originators that can be remade again and again by every person who tells them, the perennially refreshed entertainment of the poor. (Virago ix)

The perennial and flexible nature of the fairy tales appeals to Carter in terms of practical reasons to write and reframe the old tales again. Unlike myths, fairy tales are more suitable for the re-visioning owing to their straightforward characteristic and easy structure in order to change the tale into a feminist one "where the curiosity of the women protagonists is rewarded (rather than punished) and their sexuality is active

(rather than passive or suppressed altogether)” (Makinen 4). What Carter seeks to show is how women are compelled to be under patriarchal dominance and are shaped by the wishes of men which require women to be pure, virtuous, patient, humble and submissive. By shifting the structures she aims to give voice to the female characters who have been long restrained and muted in desire, voice and sexuality. Moreover, she grants them the freedom of ‘going on top’ to raise the awareness of the fleshly cravings and inquiring minds of the women.

With the emancipatory quality of rewriting, Carter goes against the grain of hierarchical and patriarchal set of rules with the 1970s feminist approaches and discourse, and she “expresses hostility towards cultural myths of sexuality” in the system antagonistic towards women (Aktari 164). Merja Makinen elaborates on the detailed rewriting process of Carter in *The Bloody Chamber* as such:

Narrative genres clearly do inscribe ideologies (though that can never fix the readings), but later re-writings that take the genre and adapt it will not necessarily encode the same ideological assumptions. . . . When the form is used to critique the inscribed ideology, I would argue, then the form is subtly adapted to inscribe a new set of assumptions. Carter argued that *The Bloody Chamber* was a book of stories *about* fairy stories' and this ironic strategy needs to be acknowledged. (4-5)

Yet, pointing out the faults of conventional representation and cultural stereotypes in the tales through rewriting is not the only aim of *The Bloody Chamber*; it is also concerned with offering different representations in unorthodox versions. Therefore, it is quite right to observe that “Carter’s telling of fairy tales was designed to help kill giants in the everyday, patriarchal world” while it also presents the possibility of the utopian life that would come true (Day 133). In this context, this chapter is going to discuss the subverted fairy tale elements with the help of the feminist perspective and postmodern parody by analysing the six reimagined fairy tales in *The Bloody Chamber* in four parts with regard to the source <sup>1</sup> tales from which Carter benefited.

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<sup>1</sup>The term “source text” will be used in Chapter I and Chapter II to indicate the basic plotline of the fairy tales disregarding the minor nuances between the different editions and versions.

## 1.2. “THE BLOODY CHAMBER” AS A PARODY OF CHARLES PERRAULT’S “BLUEBEARD”

Angela Carter, who places herself in “the demythologising business,” retells and reconstructs the classical European fairy tales from a feminist perspective to shatter the myths of sexuality and the patriarchal system. With the aim of creating a free space for the conventional women in terms of sexuality, desire and representation she dwells upon the sexist ideologies that fairy tales seem to promote. In her retellings, Carter parodies the source texts in various aspects, yet she also changes the discourse and subverts the discriminatory elements. While the echoes of the source text are still kept in the new rewritten tale, major changes and differences are made against the former sexist ideology.

The first tale of her collection is the namesake tale “The Bloody Chamber” which is the rewritten and parodied version of Charles Perrault’s “Bluebeard” from the 1697 fairy tale collection entitled *Histoires ou contes du temps passé*. Though Perrault’s collection is thought to be written for children in today’s literary media, “Bluebeard” “has little to recommend . . . as a children’s story” (Windling, “Bluebeard” 1). Unlike the other tales, “Bluebeard” contains almost nothing as supernatural or magical with one single exception of the indelible blood stain on the key. Thus, it would be true to say that rather than an edifying or moralistic children’s tale, it is, as Bettelheim asserts, “. . . the most monstrous and beastly of all fairy-tales” (299). In addition, by the gruesome and violent aspects, the tale targets the dangers of hasty marriage and hazards of excessive curiosity and greed. Strikingly, it is easy to perceive that Disney has not filmed the particular tale perhaps due to its cruel context. Yet, “Bluebeard” has become a great source of inspiration to the gothic and dark horror films and different texts.

The grotesque tale of Perrault can be summarised as follows: A wealthy but elderly thrice widowed man wishes to get wed to one of the two young daughters of his neighbour. However, neither girl wants him as their husband because of his strange blue beard. In order to impress the girls and their mother Bluebeard invites them to his country estate and gives a splendid party. Falling for the luxurious life of Bluebeard, the younger daughter agrees to get married to the elderly man at once. After the marriage the girl becomes the mistress of the household, yet Bluebeard needs to leave her for

business matters for almost six weeks. Before his journey, Bluebeard entrusts everything to the young bride saying that she can do anything she wishes and makes sure that “she enjoys herself properly” with the all riches and goods of the house. Moreover, he gives a bunch of keys of the house but emphasises a small key as follows:

As for this small key here, it will unlock the private room at the end of the long gallery in my apartment downstairs. You may open everything and go everywhere, except for this private room, where I forbid you to go; and I forbid it to you so absolutely that, if you did happen to go into it, there is no knowing what I might do, so angry would I be. (106)

Disobeying what her husband has said to her, the new bride goes to discover what lies behind the door. With temptation of curiosity and greed, as the text implies, the girl opens the door and finds a room of carnage clotted with blood. In the bloody room she sees the three former wives of Bluebeard, dead, whose throats are slit, tied up on the walls. Petrified with the scene, the young bride drops the key of the room in to the puddle of blood making it stained. When she is back to her room she notices the bloodstain, but no matter how hard she washes and scrubs it the stain will not come off.

The same night the husband returns and reclaims the keys. Seeing that the key is stained with blood he understands that her new bride has entered the room and seen the dead wives. Decreeing that her fate will be the same with his former wives, Bluebeard lets the girl pray for a while before he decapitates her. Meanwhile, the bride asks for help from her sister Anne asking if her brothers who were due to visit that day are coming. In the end, two brothers come just as Bluebeard is about to chop the new bride’s head off and kill the murderous husband. With the inheritance she receives, the bride lives off and marries again with a new decent gentleman (Perrault 104-114).

Angela Carter’s rewriting of “Bluebeard,” “The Bloody Chamber” progresses in the same structural line with the source tale. Adapted and developed into modern times, characters, setting and atmosphere of the tale are more sophisticated than the “Bluebeard” tale. Like the new bride, Carter’s seventeen year old protagonist is also nameless but her only important feature is her advanced talent in playing the piano. While living a life in humble conditions with her mother, she is easily seduced by the elderly Marquis and his genteel manners and agrees to accept his marriage proposal. Well aware of the fact that she is too young for marriage, she says that the Marquis “. . .

invited me to join his gallery of beautiful women, I . . . with my mouse-coloured hair that still bore the kinks of the plaits from which it had so recently been freed” (Carter, *The Bloody Chamber* 5).

Despite her young age and economic insufficiency, the young girl does not surrender herself to the wealth and happy dreams of marriage after her wedding. Unlike Bluebeard’s wife, she is generally alert to the situations going around her and her alertness is not merely out of curiosity. She tries to make sense of the new and mutual life she has just got into, thus she questions and wonders about the answers of her questions. As a wife and woman-would-be, the girl, like a typical teenager, wavers between her love and logic. As Kathleen E.B. Manley points out in her essay, “[s]he is not always passive, however, but rather oscillates between being insecure and feeling sure of herself. She is a woman in process, someone who is exploring her subject position and beginning to tell her own story” (83).

Since the story is narrated in the first person, it is obvious that she is not killed by the Marquis. However, the progress of the story is more important than the ending in terms of the change the girl has gone through. The nameless heroine finds herself trapped between two identities: a daughter and a wife. The marriage ring which is given by the Marquis with “fire opal the size of a pigeon’s egg” (*TBC*<sup>2</sup> 4) can be interpreted as a symbol of the change of role in her life since she “. . . in some way, ceased to be her child in becoming his wife” (1). The relationship between the Marquis and her bride is a passionate love relationship on the surface, however as the story progresses the mutual interests of the husband and wife are hinted. Carried away by the wealthy and affluent lifestyle of the Marquis, the poor piano player with “twice-darned underwear, faded gingham, serge skirts” supposes that she is infatuated with the Marquis (2). Yet, in fact, in the subtext it is highlighted that the relation is a commercial one in which the young girl receives the luxurious dresses from Poiret, costly Bechstein pianos, huge mansions and the prestige of being the wife of “the richest man in France” (8).

It is also a commercial relationship since the Marquis indirectly purchases the heroine like a commodity for his castle in Breton. By means of his wealth, the Marquis entraps the girl into his remote castle as the mistress of the household and forces her to lead a

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<sup>2</sup> *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* will be abbreviated as *TBC* in parenthetical references.

domestic life. Although the heroine has an occupation as a piano player, she yields to her husband's wish to seclude her. She also willingly relinquishes the opportunity of being an economically independent piano player, instead she chooses to be the docile and passive marquess at home. In her *The Sadeian Woman*, Carter explains the process as follows:

[R]elationships between the sexes are determined by history and by the historical fact of the economic dependence of women upon men. This fact is now very largely a fact of the past and, even in the past, was only true for certain social groups and then only at certain periods. Today, most women work before, during and after marriage. Nevertheless, the economic dependence of women remains a believed fiction. . . (6-7)

By these words, Carter explicitly parodies the obedience and economic dependence of women through her heroine's stance in the Marquis' medium of oppression. As a feminist and postmodern writer, she subverts the idea she believes in and exhibits it as an ironic situation in the tale. Linda Hutcheon also supports Carter's perspective by correlating feminisms and postmodernism.

While feminisms and postmodernism have both worked to help us understand the dominant representational modes at work in Western society, feminisms have focused on the specifically female subject of representation and have begun to suggest ways of challenging and changing those dominants in both mass culture and high art. (*The Politics* 150)

Since the marriage between the Marquis and the heroine is based on benefits of which the heroine is totally unaware, the newly wed heroine supposes that those gifts, genteel manners and sexual desire are the major elements of their courting period. Yet, in the course of the tale, the aim and true nature of the Marquis are revealed along with his features. First of all, like Bluebeard, the Marquis can be regarded as the other in terms of his extreme qualities. Bluebeard, as his name suggests, has a blue beard which makes him look bizarre and outlandish and is not able to attract the girls whom he wants to marry. In the case of the Marquis, unlike Bluebeard, he is like a perfect being with no wrinkles on his face despite his old age as if "experiences. . . have washed it [his face] perfectly smooth" (*TBC* 3). In contrast to Perrault's Bluebeard, the Marquis is quite well educated, wealthy and a "devotee of opera, an admirer of Baudelaire, and a collector of books and paintings" almost without any fault (Sheets 645). For ordinary, poor and uninteresting girls like the heroine and their lives, the Marquis, with his appearance,



knowledge and social status, is a figure who is utterly the other. Thus, with the help of those prestigious qualities and position as the other, he traps and preys on his wives.

Like an animal, the Marquis is a true predator whose sole aim is to eat and consume the things he sets eyes on. In this context, the heroine depicts him like a lion because of the shape of his head and big and well-built body. As a perfect predator, the Marquis, with his whole body, eats up and devours the things with his eyes, body and money. His obsession with consumption appears in various aspects in his life. Summarising this obsession, Roemer highlights that:

On the surface, the Marquis's appetites are varied: they are perversely sexual ("[H]ad he not hinted that he was a connoisseur of such things?" [16]), economic ("bankrupt[ing] a small business in Amsterdam" [25]), criminal (he was engaged in some business in Laos that must . . . be to with opium" [25]), elitist ("My husband liked me to wear my opal over my kid glove, a showy, theatrical trick" [13]), literary (in his library, "[r]ow upon row of calf-bound volumes" [16]), artistic ("the picture gallery, a treasure house filled by five centuries of aid collectors" [20]) as well as sensual and mortuary, among others. (114)

The peak point of the predatory hunger of the Marquis is heavily focused on the sexual and pornographic elements. Since he is like an animal whose aim is to deplete people and things, the Marquis regards everything as material to be consumed. In this case, the heroine is one of his victims, ostensibly she is his lover, yet the Marquis sees her as his prey. In other words, the heroine is the Marquis' puppet by means of whom he can satisfy his sexual and sadistic needs. In the story, when he sees the heroine in an elegant dress, the heroine as a narrator explains how he watches her:

I saw him watching me in the gilded mirrors with the assessing eye of a connoisseur inspecting horseflesh, or even of a housewife in the market, inspecting cuts on the slab. I'd never seen, or else had never acknowledged, that regard of his before, the sheer carnal avarice of it; . . . When I saw him look at me with lust, I dropped my eyes but, . . . And, for the first time in my innocent and confined life, I sensed in myself a potentiality for corruption that took my breath away. (*TBC* 6)

Here, Carter inserts the act of objectifying the woman and her body as meat before male eyes. In this respect, the heroine's body is transformed into meat by the Marquis who endeavours to make his wife the sole object of his desire. The French feminist Luce Irigaray speculates upon the term 'male gaze' which has been proposed by Laura Mulvey supporting the idea that man is the subject and the looker, whereas woman is the object and the one who is looked at.

As a perfect predator, he is devouring the bride with his eyes and makes her feel as if she is just a body or a piece of meat. Lust, as his biggest frailty, is the main reason of his piercing looks since he first starts consuming the girl with his eyes. His look carries a voyeuristic manner, rather than a loving look he spies and molests the girl through his glance. He is sickly fond of looking at and hurting women whom he has an involvement. Similarly, it would not be wrong to say that the Marquis bears a perverted and sadistic nature within his decent appearance. Quite close to the deviant situation of the Marquis, Laura Mulvey sets a reciprocal analogy between voyeurism and sadism:

Voyeurism, . . . has associations with sadism: pleasure lies in ascertaining guilt (immediately associated with castration), asserting control and subjecting the guilty person through punishment or forgiveness. This sadistic side fits in well with narrative. Sadism demands a story, depends on making something happen, forcing a change in another person, a battle of will and strength, victory/defeat, all occurring in a linear time with a beginning and an end. (840)

When the power of his look and control over the heroine is considered, Carter's Marquis is both voyeuristic and sadistic because he arranges the same plot which he previously applied to his dead wives. In other words, he builds his wicked design perfectly but changes his object continuously.

In the source tale, the reason of Bluebeard's violence and obsession with killing women is not thoroughly explained. On the one hand, fairy tales set neither reliable nor logical causal relation but rely on prohibition/violation sequence. Therefore, it seems fair to kill the bride since she has entered the room though she was warned not to. On the other hand, Bluebeard is represented as an ogre who does not eat his victims literally but kills them after sex and disobedience. Marina Warner sheds light on this issue stating that “. . . ogres like Bluebeard eat their wives, we are told, even though the story itself reveals their bodies hanging whole in the secret chamber they are chopped into pieces apparently uneaten,” yet “the metaphor of devouring stands in for sex” (*From the Beast* 259). Thus, Bluebeard as an ogre and a simple punisher character appears as a one dimensional figure lacking credible motives in his acts.

However in Carter's “The Bloody Chamber” the Marquis is represented as a monstrous husband because of his sick mind, perverted attitudes and acts. As Aytül Özüm remarks, “Carter does not hesitate to play with the gaps in the source fairy-tale to subvert the

balance between the Marquis and the bride in terms of gender, intention and free will” (3). As a matter of fact, Carter manipulates the gap in Bluebeard’s character while creating the Marquis and equips him with various morbid psychological ailments. By doing so, Bluebeard as a flat character is subverted when the Marquis is created. That is, Carter employs the pattern of Bluebeard, yet she parodies it by the new multi-dimensional Marquis.

The Marquis’ obsession with sadism and voyeurism is strengthened when the heroine finds pornographic books showing women who were being tortured or immolated by men due to their curiosity. With the titles such as “Reproof of curiosity”, contexts dealing with oriental sultans and their harems and the pictures depicting “the girl with tears hanging on her cheeks like stuck pearls, her cunt a split fig below the great globes of her buttocks on which the knotted tails of the cat were about to descend, while a man in a black mask fingered with his free hand his prick”, the library of the Marquis is set on the themes of sexual violence of men towards women who disobey (*TBC* 13). Since these books embody highly pornographic descriptions, the Marquis uses them to arouse his sexual drive and satisfy his sadistic needs. Yet, seeing the severely punished women in the book, the heroine does not feel afraid or insecure because of the content of the book. On the contrary, she displays a curious manner towards the books and like the Marquis she is sexually aroused. Unlike a stereotypical innocent and virgin fairy tale heroine who is distant to obscenity and pornographic sex, Carter’s heroine enjoys looking at the book and feeling sexually excited.

Moreover, the nuptial night preparations and the attitude of the Marquis towards the bride also reflect his perverted tendencies. The room bears “the grand, hereditary matrimonial bed” and is furnished with “mirrors on the walls, in stately frames of contorted gold” and filled with lilies (*TBC* 10). Before their sexual relation, in the disrobing scene the Marquis strips the virgin new bride “as if he were stripping the leaves off an artichoke” (*TBC* 11) again with his “underlying dynamics” of consuming (Roemer 114). The mirror motifs in the tale serve the function of the Marquis’ gaze, because whenever the heroine sees herself in the mirror she does not feel like a subject but rather as an object which is watched by her husband. In addition, Manley suggests

that the mirrors also indicate that the protagonist oscillates “between girlhood and womanhood, between a patriarchal view and her own definition of herself” (87).

In the story, maturation of the heroine from a seventeen-year-old piano player to a ‘disobedient wife’ can clearly be observed. Through this process she uncovers her desires of sex, wealth and knowledge. As explained above, in the first step of her maturation she discovers her sexuality through the Marquis and the “potentiality for corruption” comes true with her very first sexual experience (*TBC* 6). The second step of her desire is concerning the drastic change of the social status through which she earns prestige as the wife of the richest man in France. Just like the bride of Bluebeard, the bride of the Marquis is bedazzled by the wealth. As the typical motif of fairy tales, the poor and the virgin bride marrying into wealth and nobility, the heroine is somehow infatuated with the possibility of a well-off future, not the Marquis as an ideal husband. The delusional situation between love of a man and love of money is openly exposed when her mother asks her “[a]re you sure you love him?” She unwittingly replies “I’m sure I want to marry him” (*TBC* 2).

Nevertheless, the heroine fails to realise that the first two steps of her initiation, the sexual desire and the seduction of luxury, are the traps that are about to close around her. Her real initiation starts when she is faced with the grim reality of the secretive nature of her husband. Like in “Bluebeard,” the heroine is left with a bunch of keys and a prohibition of entering the chamber whose key leads to her husband’s hell. Assuming that the key is the key of his heart, the heroine inadvertently finds out that the key in fact leads her to his bleak heart and intentions. The room symbolically reflects the Marquis’s monstrous and bloodthirsty nature. On the way to the bloody chamber, the heroine finds herself in an ordeal where she will experience the utter awakening. Thus, regarding the last but the major step of her initiation Kari E. Lokke states that “[a]s she illuminates every room of the once dark castle, she sees herself as searching for her husband’s true nature, for his soul. Her exploration of the torture chamber under his castle becomes an archetypal descent into hell. . .” (10). As a matter of fact the search she embarks on is not for the chamber which her husband prohibited her to enter, but her husband’s evil spirit. Furthermore, in her essay, Cheryl Renfoe aptly asserts that:

... [S]he is completely unaware that her true initiation is not first intercourse, but the ordeal of the bloody chamber . . . Yet it is not the girls rescue, but her daring and disobedient exploration of the forbidden chamber that actually changes her, develops her and allows her to see her husband and more importantly herself, from a more knowledgeable perspective. Her eyes are opened to her own mistakes as well as to the reality of her desperate situation . . . (97)

Sharing the same fate with the former wives of the Marquis, the heroine disobeys his husband's order and opens the door like the others. Yet, the wives open the door not only because of their curious natures, but because the Marquis elaborately explains the location of the chamber and what happens if somebody opens it. In this manner, Lydia Millet points out that

Blue Beard wanted his new wife to find the corpses of his former wives. He wanted the new bride to discover their mutilated corpses; he wanted her disobedience. Otherwise, he wouldn't have given the key to the forbidden closet; he wouldn't have left town on his so-called business trip; and he wouldn't have stashed the dead Mrs. Blue Beards in the closet in the first place. Transparently, this was a set-up. (n.pag)

Thus, it is true to remark that the Marquis is not testing the obedience of his wives but he tempts them to disobey the rules. As expected from her, by opening the door the heroine realises the fatal mistake she has made. Unlike the wife of Bluebeard, the heroine changes and develops after this incident and this time she truly experiences her initiation.

By means of her noncompliance with the rules, the heroine follows the footsteps of the disobedient archetypal figures of mythology and the Bible such as Eve and Pandora. As a daughter of Eve, the heroine's desire of knowledge jeopardises her life, yet by opening the door she breaks the rules, orders and cautions which have limited her. Carter alludes to Eve so as to underscore the oppressive power of male desire and the inequalities of patriarchal society in the tale. By means of the key and a door, symbolically, she lays bare the corruption and carnage which were performed in the room and draws a parallelism between the chamber and male domination. Therefore, Carter de-doxifies the rooted doctrine of the "disobedient wife is punished" through her feminist rewriting and deconstructs the fairy tale heroine figure by portraying her ordeal "as a necessary and bold initiation into self and worldly knowledge rather than as an act of foolish disobedience" (Renfoe 95).

Both in the source tale and Carter's version of it, the new brides get away with decapitation, hence at the end of the tale it is evident that the doctrine of the disobedient wife fails. Though she is not killed by the Marquis, she does receive a permanent mark from her husband as a reminder of her disobedience. Once the Marquis sees the key with the heart shaped bloodstain he understands his wife's unpardonable mistake and performs the following:

I knelt before him and he pressed the key lightly to my forehead, held it there for a moment. I felt a faint tingling of the skin and, when I involuntarily glanced at myself in the mirror, I saw the heart-shaped stain had transferred itself to my forehead, to the space between the eyebrows, like the caste mark of a brahmin woman. Or the mark of Cain. And now the key gleamed as freshly as if it had just been cut. He clipped it back on the ring, emitting that same, heavy sigh as he had done when I said that I would marry him. (*TBC* 36)

As the key is a token of his corrupt side, the heart shaped bloodstain of the key transfers itself as an indelible mark on to her forehead. As her death draws close, in a lethargic mood of fear and shock she passively accepts her decapitation.

In "The Bloody Chamber" the narrator is the heroine and this constitutes the most important parody of the tale. Because from the beginning of the tale it is certain that the heroine will be rescued and will not die. Yet in "Bluebeard" the suspense is maintained till her brothers come to save her. Although her sister Anne is there to help her, the bride waits for help from her brothers and when they come she is saved from her felonious husband's design. Again, as in this example, impositions of the patriarchal system are promoted when the bride seeks the help of a male figure against male oppression. Whereas in "The Bloody Chamber" the heroine is the only child of an "eagle-featured, indomitable mother" who "had outfaced a junkful of Chinese pirates, nursed a village through a visitation of the plague, shot a man-eating tiger with her own hand and all before she was as old as [her daughter]" (1-2).

As explained in the Introduction, in fairy tales, the good mother figure is generally absent in the tale. Either dead or identified with another object, the mother, as a magical helper, rescues her daughter or son from the prevailing predicaments in the end. When the heroine is faced with death the mother figure emerges unexpectedly and saves the heroine or hero. The same case applies to Carter's rewriting when the intrepid mother

gallops to the remote gothic mansion to rescue her daughter. The heroine states the sensorial communication as follows: “I can only bless. . . the *maternal telepathy* that sent my mother running headlong from the telephone to the station after I had called her, that night. I never heard you cry before, she said, by way of explanation. Not when you were happy. And who ever cried because of gold bath taps?” (*TBC* 41). Despite the fact that her mother is not a magical figure, she senses her daughter’s restlessness via the telephone call. Moreover, being fully aware of the fault and uneasiness of her daughter, the moment she reaches the crime scene of the Marquis “without a moment's hesitation, she raise[s] [her] father's gun, [takes] aim and put[s] a single, irreproachable bullet through [her] husband's head (41).

Briefly, with the happy ending, both tales achieve annihilating the pure evil husbands with the help of the family members. Although Perrault, in his moral of the tale, indicates that the master of the house is the woman, Carter does not set a hierarchical relationship between the wife and the husband, rather she depicts how a woman develops and expels the monstrosity she has been exposed to in her marriage (Perrault 114). In “The Bloody Chamber” by means of contextual parody, feminist issues such as independence of women, mother-daughter relationship and women’s sorority are strongly emphasised and they helped the heroine to find her way out of the sadist marriage trap. Apart from that, the postmodern parody which is employed by Angela Carter also strips off the simplistic style and reasonings of the tale while refurnishing it with the more sophisticated and credible elements. To sum up, with the power of woman initiation and mother-daughter bonds Patricia Duncker asserts that “. . . Carter’s tale, perhaps unwittingly, carries an unpromisingly feminist message; for the women’s revolution would seal up the door of the bloody chamber forever” (qtd. in Aktari 196).

### **1.3. “THE COURTSHIP OF MR. LYON” AND “THE TIGER’S BRIDE” AS PARODIES OF MADAME LEPRINCE DE BEAUMONT’S “BEAUTY AND THE BEAST”**

In the collection of *The Bloody Chamber*, Angela Carter makes use of the typical animal-bridegroom fairy tale of “Beauty and the Beast,” in rewriting her “The Courtship of Mr. Lyon” and “The Tiger’s Bride.” Since the stories employ a tiger and a lion as the

partner/groom of the virginal girls/brides, they are referred to be the “feline stories” due to the physical transformation the characters undergo (Makinen 10). Two tales, involving the lion and the tiger respectively and their sexual/emotional relationship with innocent young girls, are written in a revisionist style to parody Madame Leprince de Beaumont’s tale “Beauty and the Beast” which was published in *Magasin des enfants* in France in 1756.

In the source tale of de Beaumont the rich merchant who has six children loses his fortune and has to move to their country house at a great distance from town. His two eldest jealous daughters do not want to live in the countryside, but the youngest daughter who was called little Beauty helped her father with the household. One day, the merchant goes on a business trip and before his departure Beauty wants a rose from her father. The merchant’s trip results in disappointment and on his way back he is stuck in a dense forest due to harsh weather conditions. While looking for help, he sees a light at a distance, after going a little further he comes to a luxurious palace. He makes haste to the palace and cannot find anyone inside so he eats and drinks the things he finds there. When he is leaving the palace, the merchant sees a rose in the garden and plucks it. The moment he picks the rose, the owner of the palace, the Beast, rushes with a great roar and wants to kill him because of his theft. Hearing that the merchant has a daughter, the Beast wants her in return for the rose.

The merchant goes back home and explains the situation to his youngest daughter sadly. The youngest daughter accepts to leave her home and goes to live with the Beast. At first she is afraid of the Beast but later she gets used to his company. Meanwhile, the Beast regularly asks her to become his wife and Beauty gently refuses him. After three months, the Beast requests Beauty to stay with him in the palace forever. Beauty promises to do so, but in return she wants to see her father again. The Beast does not object to her wish yet he gives her one week to come back. When she is back at her father’s house, Beauty is swept away with happiness and newly affluent lifestyle of his father which the Beast provides him with. Losing track of time in her father’s house, Beauty forgets to keep her promise to the Beast and during the tenth night she dreams of the Beast speaking in a dying voice. Recollecting her promise she wishes to be back at the palace of the Beast and in an instant she is transported to the Beast’s garden. The



beast is about to die and has starved himself with the affliction of having lost Beauty. With the anguish of losing the Beast, Beauty says that she gives her hand and wants him to be her husband. Beauty scarcely had uttered these words that the Beast turns into a handsome prince and they live for many years happily ever after (*De Beaumont* 1-15).

Concerning the traditional tale of de Beaumont, Bruno Bettelheim points out that “. . . this story is all gentleness and loving devotion to one another on the part of the three main characters: Beauty, her father, and the Beast” (303). However, Carter does not see that the relational triangle of the tale is built upon the elements of love or devotion, rather upon “much more mercenary terms . . . in which Beauty is passed around between males and never given the chance of self-determination” (Day 138). Hence, the traditional tale is parodied in terms of female objectification, female desire and sexuality. Different from the previous tale “Bluebeard,” increasing desire and sexual initiation of the heroines are not overtly depicted but hinted at in the tale. Nonetheless, these implied sexual awakenings are not directed to a human being but to an animal, a tiger, which is in human attire and to a human, living in the body of a lion. Regarding the animal dimension of the tales Merja Makinen remarks that:

. . . [T]he lion and the tiger signify something other than man. . . The felines signify otherness, a savage and magnificent power, outside of humanity. In one story, women are pampered, in the other treated as a property, but in both cases the protagonist chose [sic.] to explore the dangerous, exhilarating change that comes from choosing the beast. (10)

Although “The Courtship of Mr. Lyon” and “The Tiger’s Bride” are the rewritten versions and postmodern parodies of “Beauty and the Beast”, their focuses and styles are different from each other. As Crunelle-Vanrigh remarks, “Mr. Lyon” and “Bride” are “dark twin piece[s]” (128). With these two structurally different tales, Carter aims to point out faults and constraints of the male dominated system by offering alternative perspectives through shedding light on the problematic issues through her parodic narration.

However, her parody of the fairy tale conventions and oppression of the patriarchal system in each tale vary according to the message that the rewritten tale intends to convey. Carter makes use of parody with two contrasting functions of “reversals and amplifications” in the source tale (Brooke 68). In other words, in the “Mr Lyon” the

conventions and entrenched rules of fairy tale tradition are accentuated so as to work against “masculinist representations of women” by ridiculing the whole tale (Brooke 69). Yet, regarding the revised tale, Cristina Bacchilega remarks that it is “more a version or imitation than a transformation” (*Postmodern Fairy Tales* 91). On the other hand, in “Bride,” patriarchal manner and commodification of women are harshly criticised through fairy tale plot, and the narrative structure is distorted in order to serve the parodic style. According to Sylvia Bryant:

... “The Courtship of Mr. Lyon” a hip, contemporary ‘60s-style parody featuring a cigarette-smoking Beauty, is an overt expose of the contrived gender differences and positionalities that inform the original tale. In the companion piece, “The Tiger’s Bride,” Carter takes re-visioning a crucial step further, subverting “that old story” by re-positioning and redefining woman’s desire on her own terms. (85)

To begin with, “The Courtship of Mr. Lyon,” as mentioned above, is more a version than a transformation of the source tale. Compared to de Beaumont’s fairy tale, “Mr Lyon” carries almost the same plot structure and features except for certain anachronistic elements and some omitted characters. In the story, Carter alters the tale in accordance with her perspective and aims of caricature but at the same time, she holds high esteem for the fairy tale tradition. Some of the structural elements of Carter’s tale tally with the traditional tale properties. Nevertheless, they are recast in an alternative style to create the same effect in the continuum of the tale. For example, like in every fairy tale, as well as in the “Beauty and the Beast”, the time concept is not definite but rather contingent on the personal experiences and individual flows. The “Mr Lyon” also bears the same time concept which does not progress equally in different places according to the emotional condition of the characters. Carter builds a familiar atmosphere of common fairy tales while at the same time she creates a sense of alienation by means of anachronistic twentieth century elements such as broken down cars, ringing phones, florists, Beauty’s photograph. Adopting these elements, she portrays representation of both the old times and the present day. Regarding this issue, Crunelle-Vanrigh indicates that: “Carter thus creates a double textuality, relying on imitation and insistent differentiation. Her text depends on intertextuality and pastiche to proclaim its sense of belonging and simultaneously on anachronism and travesty to advertise its difference” (129).

However, preserving the “once upon a time” atmosphere, the tale begins with the docile daughter waiting for her father at home busy with chores. The reason why the heroine is called ‘Beauty’ as her pet name is an important fact about the nature of the heroine. According to Jack Zipes:

The name Belle or Beauty assumes meaning through the behavioral traits that the young woman displays as a good housekeeper and domesticated woman: industrious, diligent, loyal, submissive, gentle, self-sacrificial. Not all these traits are necessarily bad, but in the context of the plot, Beauty’s behavior leads to the denial of her own desires. In fact, we never really know her desires, but we certainly know what her father and the Beast want. (*Why* 140)

Meanwhile, her father is bargaining her daughter with a lion in order to save his own life. Having been accused of stealing a single white rose for his daughter, the father is forced to make a deal with the Beast. Upon showing the photograph of Beauty, the Beast sets the rules of exchange with the father, he says that “[t]ake her the rose, then, but bring her to dinner” (*TBC* 47). Mixed up in an exchange without her consent, Beauty not only becomes the object of desire of the Beast with her appearance but also the price of her father’s fault. She is literally equal to a white rose in terms of exchange and a “trade material in a male dominated world” (Aktari 201). Another point explaining Beauty’s condition in the tale is the name her father uses to call her. Referring to her daughter as “his pet,” the father also lays bare the very system of the tale with his so called compliment (*TBC* 43). According to Jack Zipes in animal-bridegroom fairy tales the young girl needs to “demonstrate courage and perseverance. But in many other beast-bridegroom tales, there is another emphasis: the female is expected to prove how submissive she is, first to her father and then to her future husband the beast” (*Why* 140).

When the father and Beauty go to have dinner with the Beast she, as Zipes puts forward, proves to have courage to meet and live with the Beast and her perseverance in transforming him into a human being. However, this situation cannot hide “the rottenness of a social order that trades (female) bodies to sustain some privileged souls” (*Postmodern Fairy Tales* Bacchilega 96-97). On meeting the Beast for the first time face to face, Beauty’s inner voice is heard through the narration. Unlike de Beaumont, Carter discloses Beauty’s real ideas about the Beast and it can be inferred that although she is performing the task out of obligation she cannot suppress her own voice:

How strange he was. She found his bewildering difference from herself almost intolerable; its presence choked her. There seemed a heavy, soundless pressure upon her in his house, as if it lay under water, and when she saw the great paws lying on the arm of his chair, she thought: they are the death of any tender herbivore. And such a one she felt herself to be, Miss Lamb, spotless, sacrificial. (*TBC* 48)

Attributing to women the qualities of a lamb, Carter again deliberately uses the theme of the female body as meat. Since the Beast is a carnivore and the lamb is a herbivore, Beauty becomes his prey to be devoured. As mentioned before, devouring stands for consumptive male sexuality and in this case Beauty is there to be sexually exploited by the Beast. Dwelling further on the animalistic dimension of the tale it can be said that Beauty appears to lack the sexual independence and initiation. Yet, in the same line with all the stories in *The Bloody Chamber*, Angela Carter does not designate clear-cut divisions between the binaries and again the predator and prey, active and passive intermingle. Accordingly, Margaret Atwood pertinently highlights that: “. . . [T]he distinctions drawn are not so much between male and female as between ‘tigers’ and ‘lambs’, carnivores and herbivores, those who are preyed upon and those who do the preying. In a world in which one has only these two choices, it is of course preferable to be a tiger” (118). However, further in the story Carter underlines the transitional nature of the tiger and the lamb where “[l]ambhood and tigerishness may be found in either gender, and in the same individual at different times (Atwood 121-122).

The fact that Beauty is kept in the Beast’s “Palladian house” (44) with “a sense of obligation to an unusual degree” because of her father’s mistake does not make Beauty grieve so much over the issue, since “she would gladly have gone to the ends of the earth for her father, whom she loved dearly” (*TBC* 48). However, in terms of the dominant male power Beauty “simply changes masters from a beastly father to a fatherly beast” (Rose 223). Represented as a stereotypical fairy tale character of a kind-hearted beast in de Beaumont’s tale, Carter’s Beast demonstrates alternative behaviours which are reinforced by his willpower, courtesy and desire. Therefore, it is evident that “Carter actually substitutes modern stereotypes for old ones” (Crunelle-Vanrigh 131). As a genteel and kind host, the Beast does not reflect the beastly qualities, rather when he asks Beauty to stay with him he maintains a reserved attitude towards Beauty with words of “hint of shyness” and “a fear of refusal” (*TBC* 48).

In the house, Beauty does not feel desolate due to the newly achieved wealth and prosperity provided by the Beast. With the rich library of French fairy tales, hearty meals and a King Charles spaniel servant, Beauty slowly gets accustomed to her new way of life. Moreover, the long hours of chatting with the Beast leads to self-awareness about her desire.

At that, they both fell silent, as if these strange companions were suddenly overcome with embarrassment to find themselves together, alone, in that room in the depths of the winter's night. As she was about to rise, he flung himself at her feet and buried his head in her lap. She stayed stock-still, transfixed; she felt his hot breath on her fingers, the stiff bristles of his muzzle grazing her skin, the rough lapping of his tongue and then, with a flood of compassion, understood: all he is doing is kissing my hands. (*TBC* 50)

Along with the awareness of her autonomous desire, Beauty, who previously characterised herself as a lamb, turns into a fully articulate tigress who wishes to explore the maps of her desire and the desire of the Beast. As Crunelle-Vanrigh also underlines, “[m]oving from woman’s traditional inarticulateness . . . to (frivolous) language, she is also seen to be the mistress of the sexual game. . . She is quite capable of decoding similar sexual awareness in the Beast” (131). Thus, by hearing her own voice and disclosing her real identity, Beauty explores the hidden parts of her own body and her language which uncloaks the oppressed desires.

When Beauty asks for permission to see her father in London the Beast makes a deal, yet this time his addressee is Beauty. As a result of this deal, Beauty promises to come back to the Beast’s palace before winter is over. Upon arriving at her father’s house Beauty not only finds his father in his former affluence, but also she loses herself in this state of wealth. Ironically, she feels “a sudden sense of perfect freedom” away from the Beast (*TBC* 51). Regarding Beauty’s situation Patricia Brooks states that “[i]n fact, she is experiencing an economic freedom previously unknown that allows her some degree of control over her actions (though not full independence, for though she wants for no consumer possessions or entertainments, she remains still dependent on her wealthy father)” (75). The jealous sisters in the source tale are the deviator figures who make Beauty stay longer in their father’s house, however in “Mr Lyon” it is Beauty and her wealth-besotted nature. Hence, Carter here also tries to indicate that the criticism directed on the tale is about the exchange system that is nestled in patriarchy.

During this period, timelessness also shows itself in two diverse concepts in “the parallel existence of two worlds” (Crunelle-Vanrigh 132). In other words, Beauty cannot keep track of time during her stay with her father. Since the temporal indicatives are absent in the tale such as “the flowers in the shop were all the same all the year round,” Beauty cannot understand that winter is over (*TBC* 52). But her biological and maturation clock ticks away, leaving her more a spoiled and narcissistic person who is fond of smiling to the mirrors. Yet, when she remembers that she has broken the promise she rushes to the Beast. In the Beast’s parallel existence, time has passed in a harsh way and the radiant palace of the Beast has turned into a derelict place with “cobwebs,” “dust,” “exhaustion,” and “despair” (*TBC* 53). Along with the palace the Beast is on the verge of dying and when Beauty arrives at his deathbed the Beast utters his last words and expresses that he is happy to see her before he dies.

Nevertheless, Beauty with a radical and unexpected change, takes her leap of faith by saying: “Don’t die, Beast! If you’ll have me, I’ll never leave you” and upon kissing the Beast, he turns into a man. In the finale of the tale they are referred to as Mr. and Mrs. Lyon rather than Beauty and the Beast. According to the critics there are multiple and various comments concerning the final transformation. Betsy Hearne states that “[f]ocal transformation is clearly and overtly Beauty’s, never the Beast’s, and is completely inner. The Beast’s physical form is a matter of revelation and permanent acceptance” (100). Therefore, in the same vein with Hearne’s ideas, Beauty is the one who undergoes a total change by accepting to marry the Beast and becoming Mrs. Lyon, however the Beast has always been Mr. Lyon and he tested his future bride. Apart from that, the transformation of the Beast is not only physical but a taming process. According to Jessica Tiffin “[t]he Beast is tamed, not only by his smoking jacket but also by the innocence and beauty of the girl, in the classically patriarchal, very Victorian process that idealizes virginal girlhood as a sort of talisman against unbridled masculine lust” (91).

Angela Carter’s parody of “Beauty and the Beast” shows itself in the last line, too. The kitsch image of Mr. and Mrs. Lyon walking in the garden with the servant dog is in fact, not a “happily ever after” representation yet it is “. . . a parody of the ideological representation of conventional bourgeois marriage” (Day 139). As mentioned earlier,

Carter does not reject the fairy tale narratives but challenges the ingrained stereotypes of woman, desire and marriage in her postmodern parodies. In addition, by means of an ironic revision which is in the same line with the domestic marriage plot, “she lays the ground-work for the desirability for beastly passion over domestication” (Brooke 76).

The second feline tale, “The Tiger’s Bride”, is totally different from the former rewriting with its structure, themes and narration. Although it is a repetition in the rewriting of “Beauty and the Beast,” it also “substitutes for and appends it” in ameliorating the classical fairy tale (Brooke 69). In this tale, Carter shifts her strategy in rewriting; this time the parody of “Bride” is not conducted by amplifications or ironic narrative like in “Mr Lyon” but direct reversals and harsh criticism of the elements in the source tale. Crunelle-Vanrigh underlines the fact that “[w]hat “Mr Lyon” merely adumbrates, “Bride” brings to the fore” (138).

Primarily, Carter changes the narrative voice to the first person singular from the third person point of view and making the tale sound more like a personal experience. Hence, the reader hears the story from the heroine of the tale and sympathises with the girl. Her story starts in medias res and she abruptly announces that: “My father has lost me to The Beast in cards” (*TBC* 56). Travelling from Russia down to Italy, father and daughter find themselves alien to the environment. However, the girl’s father has so incorrigible an obsession with gambling that though having lost all his fortune on cards he still plays with Milord, the Beast.

Worse than the father in “Mr Lyon,” the gambler father becomes the reason of his wife’s death due to “his gaming, his whoring and his agonizing repentances” in the past (*TBC* 57). In the hapless gamble night of her father, the girl is literally lost to Milord and she contemplates on her situation as follows:

Gambling is a sickness. My father said he loved me yet he staked his daughter on a hand of cards. He fanned them out; in the mirror, I saw wild hope light up his eyes. His collar was unfastened, his rumpled hair stood up on end, he had the anguish of a man in the last stages of debauchery. The draughts came out of the old walls and bit me, I was colder than I'd ever been in Russia, when nights are coldest there . . . You must not think my father valued me at less than a king's ransom; but, at *no more* than a king's ransom. (*TBC* 59)

Similar to “Mr Lyon,” commodification of women is clearly problematized in “Bride,” as well. Since the gambler father has nothing to offer to the Beast, unlike in the former tale, the exchange of the girl is not inadvertent, yet a ruthless decision. Correspondingly, as Aras states, “[t]he role of woman as an item in an economic system of exchange and her struggles to be out of that system are overtly seen” in the tale (70). Being the winner of the card game, the Beast does not want the girl to be his hostage or wife as a prize. His only desire is to see “the pretty young lady unclothed nude without her dress . . . only for the one time” and besides he will return the money her father lost at cards along with fine presents (*TBC* 64). Considered as the focal point of this gambling deal, the girl sheds light upon the imbalance of the sides in this ill-considered equation. When the equation between the naked woman body and money is scrutinised, it is also true to say that the father in a way prostitutes his own daughter to the Beast. Nevertheless, the problematic issue of victimisation of woman in this economic-emotional system is not only hinted at in the narrative, but it is highlighted and declared by the heroine herself.

During her childhood the heroine’s nursemaids told her tales about a tiger-man who snatches the children that misbehave in order to “scare [her] into good behaviour” (*TBC* 61). Thus, brought up with the idea of the children-devouring beast as a fearful image, the heroine is afraid of being the prey of the destructive sexual activity of the Beast. Even though the girl already went through a latent sexual consciousness with the old nursemaid tales, her encounter with the Beast in human attire becomes the very first real awakening of her desire. Knowing that she will be the object of the voyeuristic intentions of the Beast she openheartedly summarises her transition to womanhood from childhood as follows: “Old wives’ tales, nursery fears! I knew well enough the reason for the trepidation I cosily titillated with superstitious marvels of my childhood on the day my childhood ended. For now my own skin was my sole capital in the world and today I’d make my first investment” (*TBC* 62). Regarding the heroine’s transition from girlhood to womanhood, Aidan Day argues that:

This girl/woman/ Beauty is not being easily and lovingly transferred from girlhood into womanhood. She is making the shift apprehensively: her mind filled with factual knowledge of sex on the one hand, the contrasting rhetorics of fear of animality and of superstition about sex on the other; together with an awareness of her own role as a flesh-object in a commodity system and a determination to play the game for all it was worth, since that was the hand she’d been dealt. (140)



Upon arriving at the estate of the Beast to pay her father's debt, she comes to a derelict palace with untidy household goods inside. The Beast is waiting for the girl inside with a garment of "Ottoman design, a loose, dull purple gown with gold embroidery round the neck that falls from his shoulders to conceal his feet" emblematic of his affluence (*TBC* 64). In addition to the bleak palace, the valet who translates his master's words and Milord himself are quite peculiar and grotesque figures. Hence, it can be said that the atmosphere of the estate is established both by the valet and the Beast as an ". . . embodiment of the uncanny, familiar yet not" (Brooke 79). Among all these grotesque elements, the most important figure is the Beast himself. Unlike the Beast in "Mr Lyon," he is not an enchanted human being in animal form; on the contrary, he is a tiger in human garments, mask and wig. On their first encounter, the heroine indicates that with the "mask conceal[ing] all the features" and "cr pe hair" the Beast looks like a "carnival figure made of papier mach " (*TBC* 57-59).

The appearance of Milord is a parodic representation of the Beast in de Beaumont's tale. Although he is a tiger with the manufactured human costume, it is easy to see the echoes of his animal shape. As Sylvia Bryant remarks, "[h]e never desires to alter his nature permanently, and his temporary attempts at a false disguise cause him to appear a garish parody of the beast in humans that is so thinly and disingeniously covered" (92). Neither of the Beast characters of "Mr Lyon" and "Bride" succeed in having a single identity because of their physical qualities, however when the humane nature of the creatures is considered Milord presents a distinct attitude. Disregarding the fact that he is a real animal character, compared to the Beast of the former tale, in terms of consideration and sensibility, Milord is far more superior. Furthermore, he is "never in complicity with the dominant, oppressive ideology," rather he is against "double standards and short-sightedness" (Bryant 92). For instance, in the scene where the negligent father laments for the loss of his precious pearl, the heroine, Milord roars as follows: ". . . If you are so careless of your treasures, you should expect them to be taken from you" (*TBC* 60).

As underlined above, in this tale, Carter employs parody through reversals and subversions of the traditional elements of the classical fairy tales in order to give voice to the role and function of female identity through her characters. As proof of her

intention, neither Milord nor the heroine demonstrates the expected behaviours or speak in the traditional sexist discourse. During the process of the bargain, Milord does not show any sign of stern attitude towards the heroine, in addition “he does not assume the prerogatives of patriarchy, does not ask Beauty to marry him” (Rose 224). His only wish is to see her without her clothes, naked as a reward of the deal. Yet, the heroine regards this as an insult and develops a drastic passive aggressive attitude towards her ‘new owner’ out of fury. Rebelling against him with a rather ironic reaction she says:

You may put me in a windowless room, sir, and I promise you I will pull my skirt up to my waist, ready for you. But there must be a sheet over my face, to hide it; though the sheet must be laid over me so lightly that it will not choke me. So I shall be covered completely from the waist upwards, and no lights. There you can visit me once, sir, and only the once. After that I must be driven directly to the city and deposited in the public square, in front of the church. If you wish to give me money, then I should be pleased to receive it. But I must stress that you should give me only the same amount of money that you would give to any other woman in such circumstances. However, if you choose not to give me a present, then that is your right. (*TBC* 65)

Struck at the heart, Milord sheds a single tear upon the heroine’s ironic words and goes out of the room. Upon her brave remark, the heroine is put into a cell with a companion “to assuage her loneliness” (*TBC* 66). Being a clockwork twin of the heroine, the simulacra maid is at her disposal to put make-up on the heroine or serve any so-called feminine activities that the patriarchal system ascribed to women. In the same appearance as the heroine yet wound up by a male force the automatic maid stands for the image of an ideal heroine who is supposed to make his father and the beast happy. Aidan Day suggests that “Beauty sees that her culturally defined self was no self at all, merely an imitation in the male-dominated order” just like the wind-up maid (142). The mirror the simulacra heroine holds also shows the desire of these men by reflecting the face of her father. Thereby, the mirror makes her realise the object position between her father and Milord. Awakened to her position, the heroine rejects paying her father’s debt with her own skin and body.

However, after a while the valet visits the heroine to invite her to a hunting trip. Badly in need of open air, she accepts the invitation and the three of them ride through the dense forest. Meditating on her own being in the idyllic nature, the heroine finds a resemblance between the clockwork maid and herself. Contemplating on this

correspondence she experiences a revelation about her own state in the male-dominated system: “. . . how I had been bought and sold, passed from hand to hand. That clockwork girl who powdered my cheeks for me; had I not been allotted only the same kind of imitative life amongst men that the doll-maker had given her?” (*TBC* 70). Reaching the river bank the valet announces that the Beast will be naked if she does not let him see her without her clothes. Seeing that the tiger strips off all his manmade identity and exposes his real self, his animal side; the heroine nerves herself to seal off the reciprocal bargain. After unfastening her jacket she continues:

I showed his grave silence my white skin, my red nipples, and the horses turned their heads to watch me, also, as if they, too, were courteously curious as to the fleshly nature of women. Then The Beast lowered his massive head; Enough! said the valet with a gesture. The wind died down, all was still again. (72)

Although the mutual display of fleshly nature of a woman and a tiger is momentary, the transformation they have undergone is ground-breaking for both of them. Patricia Brooke purports that since the activity of disrobing is communal, it “shifts their relation from the domain of the patriarchal contract” and dismantles the former animal/human, winner/prize binary relationship (82).

Having completed her duty towards her father and the Beast, the heroine is free to go back home. But before she leaves, she looks at the mirror and sees her father’s image counting the banknotes with a great greed, indifferent to his daughter. Discerning the fact that she is still an object for her father, she decides to send the “simulacra maid” to her father “to perform the part of [her] father’s daughter” (*TBC* 74). On second thought, she also decides to pay a short visit to the Beast’s den. Finding the tiger, not Milord, pacing back and forth without “the empty house of appearance,” she does not sacrifice but gives herself to the Beast voluntarily (74). Being on equal terms, warding off the androcentric value, “[b]oth Beauty and Beast . . . shrug off the disguises that society forces them to assume, and in this way predator/prey dichotomy is shattered with the establishment of a harmonic and mutually beneficial relationship between man and woman” (Gamble 134).

This harmony is established through the transformation the heroine undergoes. Unlike the source story, the Beast is not the one who transforms into a human being, but it is

the girl who is transformed into a tigress by being licked by the Beast. Taking the final step of her sexual awareness and autonomous desire the heroine embarks on a new existence by means of the tiger, as his tongue peels her skin off of her the heroine states her feelings as follows: “And each stroke of his tongue ripped off skin after successive skin, all the skins of a life in the world, and left behind a nascent patina of shining hairs. My earrings turned back to water and trickled down my shoulders; I shrugged the drops off my beautiful fur” (*TBC* 75). The kiss that breaks the spell in “Mr Lyon” and changes the Beast into a human being is now replaced by the tongue of the Tiger. It enables the heroine to break free from the boundaries of her own sex and the oppressive patriarchal system, bestowing upon her self-reliant power, beauty and new union with the Beast.

Both “The Courtship of Mr. Lyon” and “The Tiger’s Bride” end with “an ultimate union between Beauty and the Beast” which is an alternative similar finale of “happily ever after” (Brooke 84). Although these two tales are the parodic rewritten versions of the source tale “Beauty and the Beast,” they successfully attain equal ground for animal/human and woman/man favouring neither side. Shrugging off the sexist, anthropocentric and patriarchal limitations, the beauties and the beasts remould the traditional and entrenched elements of fairy tale into more politically correct ones. Moreover, underlining the heterosexual and animalistic desire of female characters in “Mr Lyon,” Carter critically reflects the “comfortable patriarchal order” (Bacchilega, *Postmodern Fairy Tales* 101) of a relationship by her ironic narration, yet in “Bride” she rejects the imposed categorisations and “the patriarchal solutions of the French original” (Tiffin 92). In conclusion, with repetitions and differences, Angela Carter in her feline tales proves that a tiger can lie down with the lamb and also the lamb can as well learn how to run with the tigers.

#### **1.4 “SNOW CHILD” AS A PARODY OF GRIMM BROTHERS’ “SNOW WHITE”**

Being the sixth tale of *The Bloody Chamber*, “Snow Child” is one of the three tales which evolve around “magical beings” as Merja Makinen remarks (10). One and a half page long, Carter’s “Snow Child” is the postmodern rewriting of Grimm Brothers’

“Snow White” which was first published in *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* in 1812. However, different from the former stories, Carter in “Snow Child” parodies both the content and the form of the fairy tale. Soman Chainani indicates that “[w]ith the understanding of Snow White’s significance, Angela Carter believes that a successful retelling delicately reimagines the story’s content while preserving the boundaries of a form that led to such remarkable narrative stability”(215).

In order to understand the difference between “Snow White” and “Snow Child” it is useful to go through the source text. In the German fairy tale, on a snowy day while needle work the pregnant queen of a kingdom pricks her finger and it bleeds, upon this she wishes her daughter to be as white as snow, as black as ebony and as red as blood and she is called Snow White. Her wish comes true but she dies soon after. Later, the king marries another woman who is very beautiful but vain in soul. She has an obsession with her beauty and always asks her magic mirror who the most beautiful woman is in the land and it always answers “Thou, O Queen, art the fairest of all.” As Snow White grows more beautiful the evil queen grows jealous and asks her mirror the same question again. Yet, this time it says that the most beautiful woman is Snow White. With rage and envy she orders her servant to take Snow White into the woods and kill her. Unable to do what he is ordered, the servant leaves her to her fate. After a while she comes across a cottage and goes in to take shelter. When the masters of the cottage, seven dwarves, arrive they see the beautiful girl sleeping on one of the beds. They accept her as their housekeeper and let her stay in their cottage.

When the evil queen asks the mirror the same question, it turns out that Snow White is not dead and she is still the most beautiful woman in the land. Furious as she is, the evil queen dresses up as an old woman and goes to the cottage to kill Snow White with her tricks. On the first occasion she tries to suffocate her with lace, on the second one she uses a comb to poison her and on the last try she gives her a poisonous apple and this time she succeeds. When the dwarves arrive home, they find Snow White senseless lying on the ground. So they make a glass coffin and put her inside. After a long time, a prince rides through the forest and sees Snow White in the coffin. With the consent of the dwarves, the prince lifts the coffin to take it but at that very moment a piece of apple falls from Snow White’s mouth and she wakes up. The prince and Snow

White fall in love with each other and get married with a splendid marriage and she becomes queen. When the evil queen learns that Snow White is still alive and the most beautiful woman in the land she dies of rage and the couple live happily ever after (Grimm 249-258).

Similar to the source tale “Snow Child” also begins in a snowy day of “midwinter-invincible, immaculate” (*TBC* 105). With the second sentence the Count and the Countess are introduced with an explicit colour imagery which evolves around red, black and white. Since these colours are associated with Snow White, before the story starts whiteness of snow, blackness of the Countess’ “glittering pelt” and “high, shining boots” and redness of the boots’ heels are given in detail (105). However, out of the three colours black is the dominant one in the depiction and the Countess is the one who wears black predominantly. Regarding the comparison between the Queen in “Snow White” and the Countess, Aytül Özüm propounds that: “[Countess] does not do the needle work while staring outside her window like the queen does in Grimm’s story. She is more active and wicked” (7).

Another difference is the existence of the father, the Count, in the tale. Conventionally, in the classical fairy tales “male figures tend to be portrayed as weak or unavailable. . . It is just that fairy tales are maternal documents and so place greater emphasis on the relationship between mother and child, particularly as it relates to the development of the self. As a result, the role of fathers tends to be devalued or given short shrift” (Cashdan 94). On the contrary, in “Snow Child” Carter reverses the conventional element upside down making the father the most effective character of the tale with the power of his desire.

With an active and wicked Countess and an effective and present Count, the tale has two capable figures yearning for a prey. Hence, in the story the Count spawns their prey with the manifestation of his desire:

‘I wish I had a girl as white as snow,’ says the Count. They ride on. They come to a hole in the snow; this hole is filled with blood. He says: ‘I wish I had a girl as red as blood.’ So they ride on again; here is a raven, perched on a bare bough. ‘I wish I had a girl as black as that bird’s feather.’ As soon as he completed her description, there she stood, beside the road, white skin, red mouth, black hair and stark naked; she was the child of his desire and the Countess hated her. (*TBC* 105)

As can be seen, the young girl emerges right after the Count's expression of his desires about his child. Regarding the fact that his wish is not a fatherly but a manly wish, it is possible to state that the Count creates "a masculine fantasy image of woman," not a long wished beautiful daughter (Bacchilega, *Postmodern* 37). In addition, Carter demonstrates that she is not a new born baby or a toddler yet a young girl who is naked and old enough to be the object of the sexual desires of a man.

Another important point is the hatred and jealousy of the Countess towards the girl. Since the Count's "phallogocentrism creates a female according to his whims" it is reasonable to assume that the girl sets a competition between herself and the Countess for the Count (Bonnici 12). With the single idea on her mind, the Countess wishes to eliminate her like the evil queen in the source tale and she tries to kill her three times. First she drops her glove and wants the girl to get it, second she orders the girl to fetch her diamond brooch through the ice of a frozen pond. Every time the Countess wants the girl to do something for her, the Count denies her by defending the girl of his desires. Moreover, every time she is rejected by the Count, the belongings of the Countess, her fox fur and high heeled boots are taken by the girl. Concerning the fact that "Snow White" heavily relies on the confrontation of female-female binaries, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in *The Mad Woman in the Attic* lay bare the very reason of the rivalry: "the one fair, young, pale, the other just as fair, but older, fiercer; the one a daughter, the other a mother; the one sweet, ignorant passive, the other both artful and active; the one a sort of angel, the other an undeniable witch" (36). Infuriated by her loss, salient differences and the fear of losing the Count, the Countess requires the girl to pick a rose from a bush as a fatal blow.

Pricking her finger on the thorn, the girl "bleeds; screams; falls" (106). Weeping, the Count rapes the dead girl by thrusting "his virile member into" her (*TBC* 106). Then the girl begins to melt. Dissolving into her components, a feather of a bird, bloodstain and pure snow, she finally disappears and the Countess succeeds in her wicked plot. Witnessing the necrophiliac sexual affair with the girl, the Countess becomes a part of this evil activity by remaining passive and silent. Yet, her resigned attitude towards evil does not make her an oppressed figure of the patriarchal system, rather; she acts in accordance with her wishes by collaborating with her husband. As Gökşen Aras states;

“the evil female is not destroying the patriarchal authority, but she is helping her evil husband to destroy that young girl. The heroine is killed by the demonic woman, who is hand in hand with the male evil, supportive of power with her desire” (72).

After the death of the girl, the structure of the tale reverts to its former state where the traditional fairy tale atmosphere is relatively dominant. Having all her clothes and the interest of the Count back again, the Countess is quite content to regain her place. Later, the Count offers her the rose which kills the girl, forgetting the fact that it is the weapon, but concentrating on the romantic value of it, the Countess drops it stating that “It bites!” (*TBC* 106). For Soman Chainan the biting rose still carries the “metonymic power of the martyred child” and that is why it still bites, yet does not kill (228).

“Snow Child,” being the thematic and formal parodic version of Grimm Brothers’ “Snow White,” in *The Bloody Chamber* stands out among the others of its rewriting strategy and subversive style. While preserving the boundaries of the fairy tale form, Carter establishes a desire/power relationship among the Count, the Countess and the young girl, which is unfamiliar to the fairy tale plot. Besides, at the end, by means of violence and recklessness, the antihero and the heroine of the tale gain their rewards while the innocent girl is killed by their design. Briefly, with the unusual balance between good and evil, traditional fairy tale structure is utterly destroyed in “Snow Child,” leaving the ground to the villains.

#### **1.5. “THE WEREWOLF” AND “THE COMPANY OF WOLVES” AS PARODIES OF GRIMM BROTHERS’ AND CHARLES PERRAULT’S “LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD”**

The last two tales of Carter in *The Bloody Chamber* are the two different rewritings of the renowned tale “Little Red Riding Hood,” which can be found in the collections of both Charles Perrault and Grimm Brothers separately. In these tales, Angela Carter’s parody progresses through both textual and sexual subversion of the idiosyncratic qualities of the source tale. These two tales, like in the former two feline tales, “[approach] the notion of animal sexuality” and human-animal transformation by



replacing the felines with “lupine[s]” (Tiffin 93). As Jessica Tiffin suggests, these lupine tales “place the wolf symbol within a peasant agriculture context, harnessing the mystique of the beast as an icon of fear power and terrible attraction” (93). However, for Cristina Bacchilega, these “women-in-the-company-of-wolves” tales first revision the source tale’s “dialogue with the tradition and social history” and secondly “transform the commonly accepted and fixed representations of gender and sexuality” (*Postmodern* 53).

Although in the source tale the main action takes place between a naïve little girl and a wolf, in Carter’s revisionist tales the girl is “an adolescent who has just reached her sexual maturity” and brave enough to resist the wolf on her way to her grandmother’s house (Gamble 135). Besides, Carter also changes the big bad wolf into a werewolf who holds both animal and human qualities at the same time. Therefore, the relationship between this brave young woman and werewolf can be analysed both from the point of “unruly libido” of the woman and “the half-human manifestations” of the werewolf (Makinen 11).

So as to distinguish the alterations between the source and the revised version, it is useful to observe the source plot beforehand. In the source version of “Little Red Riding Hood” in Charles Perrault’s *Histoires ou Contes du temps passé. Avec des moralité*, there is a little girl who is adored by her mother and grandmother. Since she wears a red riding hood all the time she is called Little Red Riding Hood. One day, her mother wants her to take some buns and butter to her ill grandmother who lives deep in the forest. On the way to her grandmother she comes across a wolf which wants to eat her but cannot dare. Instead, the wolf asks her where she is going and on learning her destination, in order to gain time he says that “See, how pretty flowers are here- why do you not look around? I believe, too, that you do not hear how sweetly the little birds singing; you walk gravely along as if you were going to school, while everything else out here in the wood is merry” (140) and upon his words Little Red Riding Hood spends some time to pick flowers for her grandmother.

He reaches the house before Little Red Riding Hood and by imitating her voice he gets in the house. Without losing any time it devours the grandmother and lies down in the bed. Soon after, Little Riding Hood arrives and this time the wolf imitates the grandmother's voice to invite her in. After she enters the house, the wolf wants her to get in the bed. Surprised to see her grandmother so different, the girl cannot hide her astonishment and asks "What arms, legs, ears, arms and teeth you have!" and in the last question the wolf says "They are all better to eat you with!" and eats Little Red Riding Hood up (Grimm 139-143).

Though the version of Perrault has a rather grim ending, the Grimm Brothers' version promises a solution for the little girl and her grandmother. Grimm Brothers' tale has an identical plot until the devouring scene of Little Red Riding Hood. After the wolf eats the grandmother and the girl, he falls asleep with a full stomach. Meanwhile, a hunter passes by the wolf and sees him in the grandmother's house. He notices that the wolf has eaten the grandmother and cuts the animal's belly and takes out the girl and her grandmother. After that the hunter puts some rocks inside and sews the wolf's belly. When the wolf wakes up, he wants to move away but falls dead (Perrault 143-147).

The first one of the Lupine tales, "The Werewolf" begins in a similar winter atmosphere as in "The Snow Child." However, in "The Werewolf" winter is not peaceful or immaculate, rather the cold weather brings hardships to the lives of the poor northern country people. The hostile nature of winter in a poor lifestyle paves the way for demonic forces which haunt the country people. In this drab town, the Devil and its allies, such as witches, vampires, werewolves, are known to the people and they make great effort to repel those cruel supernatural beings. The fact that the tale starts with a dark and gothic depiction reflects the parody of typical fairy tale town setting in spring time with green meadows and flowers. Therefore, those dark elements in the tale's atmosphere foreshadow an evil design that will happen in the course of the rewritten tale.

Since the tale is highly associated with "legend, superstition and folk belief" (Lau 81), Bacchilega suggests "danger is real and ordinary" for those people and they learn to live

in a cautious manner (*Postmodern* 60). For example, in order to discern these wicked peasants they develop methods: “When they discover a witch--some old woman whose cheeses ripen when her neighbours’ do not, another old woman whose black cat, oh, sinister! *follows her about all the time*, they strip the crone, search for her marks, for the supernumerary nipple her familiar sucks. They soon find it. Then they stone her to death” (*TBC* 126).

In line with the atmosphere, the plot and the features of the characters show stark differences compared to the original tale. The story begins with the common motif of the little girl taking some oatcakes and butter to her sick grandmother. Her mother gives her a hunting knife in case she comes across any wild and starving animals, especially wolves. Moreover, she warns her against straying from the path on the way to the grandmother. Unlike the source tale, the girl is not wearing a red riding hood but a “scabby coat of sheepskin” and she is neither naïve nor frightened. Hence, upon her encounter with the wolf deep in the forest she draws her knife and slashes off its right paw instead of talking to the wolf and allowing herself to be cheated by it (*TBC* 127). It is clear that the characteristics of the little girl and the wolf are somehow changed in the tale. Regarding this, Kimberley J. Lau asserts that “[u]nlike clever, fast-talking wolves of Perrault and the Grimms, however, this wolf goes straight for her throat. She responds quickly, severing its paw with her father’s hunting knife, at which point the wolf limps off” (81).

Having taken the paw, the girl sets off towards her destination again. Upon reaching the house, she finds her grandmother sick and wants to help her with a cold compress. While taking out a cloth from the basket the wolf’s paw falls to the floor; however, it is “. . . no longer a wolf’s paw. It was a hand, chopped off at the wrist, a hand toughened with work and freckled with old age. There was a wedding ring on the third finger and a wart on the index finger. By the wart, she knew it for her grandmother’s hand” (127). Realising the astonishing fact that the hand belongs to the grandmother, the girl also sees the “bloody stump where her right hand should have been” as the reason for her fever (*TBC* 128). In the end, the girl calls for help, neighbours come to stone her until she is dead and the child lives in her grandmother’s house and she prospers.

The formal and contextual qualities of the tale reconcile with a traditional fairy tale ending. Though it starts rather grim and dark, in the end of the tale Carter tries to set a happy ending where the brave girl overcomes the werewolf, yet she also parodies the tale by changing the conventional elements. To start with the grandmother, Carter deliberately depicts her as the werewolf to distort the gender stereotypes in the fairy tales. Generally werewolf figures “asses the relationship between the wild and the civil, the human and its others” and in fairy tales, wild animals with desires of devouring bear undertones of irrepressible libido (Wiseman 87). Thus, in the classical “Little Red Riding Hood” the encounter between the girl and the wolf stands for the search for the sexual desire. According to Jack Zipes the reason of this encounter is subconsciously known by the reader/viewer, thus,

... Little Red Riding Hood is not really sent into the woods to visit grandma, but to meet the wolf and to explore her own sexual cravings and social rules of conduct. Therefore, the most significant encounter is with the wolf because it is here that she acts upon her desire to indulge in sexual intercourse with the wolf, and most illustrations imply that she willingly makes a bargain with the wolf, or, in male terms, “she asks to be raped.” (*The Trials* 87)

In “The Werewolf” sexuality between the girl and the wolf is not the question but the double identity of the grandmother is an important point regarding the gender roles. As mentioned above, Little Red Riding Hood is expected to be an innocent and gullible girl whereas the wolf is expected to be active, cunning and also the representative of unbridled male libido. Yet, as a shocking fact, the wolf turns out to be a woman, moreover this woman is the grandmother who is a werewolf. Regarding this double identity Andrea Gutenberg asserts that

The Grandmother’s werewolfishness is a specific kind of perversity. Not only does she change species, but also she take up a traditionally male position- that of the aggressor- and thereby loses all attributes of femininity and motherliness. This loss of femininity also applies to Little Red Riding Hood, who acts the part of a castrating male and ruthless defender of the symbolic order. (163)

By doubling the characters, Carter strips the grandmother of her single dimensional character and makes her a werewolf while preserving her appearance. The same situation is observed in the little girl, as well. While the grandmother and the wolf merge into a single character, the girl and the hunter are combined together. Since Carter’s Little Red Riding Hood is bold enough to kill the werewolf grandmother while

she is taking food to her grandmother, it would not be wrong to remark that the hunter and the girl are a single character in “The Werewolf.” Therefore, the characters can be coupled with regard to their relation as such: grandmother- the girl, wolf –hunter. So it is apt to say that former characters fall prey to the latter ones in order to reset the textual equilibrium of the new fairy tale. Even though thematic parody establishes a new balance and an outcome in “The Werewolf,” the same echo of the source tale is still heard and with a totally alternative method, the happy ending of Grimm Brothers’ tale is preserved.

Another of the Lupine tales, which is again a rewriting of “Little Red Riding Hood,” is “The Company of Wolves.” The second tale is preoccupied with the transformative quality of the sensual and sexual relationship between the Little Red Riding Hood and a werewolf. Similar to the former tale, the atmosphere of “Company” revolves around the harsh winter time but this time the plight of the wolves is highlighted instead of the country people. Lack of food and shelter jeopardise the lives of the wolves living in the forest, therefore they pester the houses and the people and threaten their lives. For that reason, like the methods used to repel witches in “The Werewolf”, in “Company” Carter introduces lore and urban legends to identify the role of wolves in the particular culture.

Drawing upon four folk stories about wolves, Carter devotes a lengthy introduction to the tale to recite the “thick physical descriptions, tales of transformation, stories in which the wolf is always sexed male” (Lau 85). Apart from the stories, wolf themed “fairy tales, superstitions, the fantastic and old sayings” are employed to indicate the devilish nature of the animal which is the incarnation of cunning and a ferocious male figure (Gutenberg 163). On the other hand, she also reminds the reader that wolves are simply not cunning and devilish animals, but also they bear a “vast melancholy in their canticles” and “inherent sadness” as if “they would love to be less beastly if only they knew how and never cease to mourn their own condition” (*TBC* 131). Correspondingly, Bacchilega remarks that “[f]ear and sympathy are common and traditional attitudes toward the damned” (*Postmodern* 62). Hence, it is right to say that the wolves are the damned animals since human beings are afraid of them. The last one of these folkloric elements is an old saying, which is also a warning, used to identify a werewolf: “Before

he can become a wolf, the lycanthrope strips stark naked. If you spy a naked man among the pines, you must run as if the Devil were after you” (*TBC* 132). Associating the werewolf with the Devil again shows that the amalgam of a human being and a wolf is treated as more dangerous and wicked than a wolf.

After the wolf themed introduction the revised version of “Little Red Riding Hood” begins. Similar to the source tale, the girl who is adored by her mother and grandmother is sent to her reclusive grandmother to take her some food. Having placed the oatcakes and jam in the basket she also takes a knife in case of an encounter with a wild animal and sets off with a red shawl over her head. Nevertheless, the girl is neither little nor fainthearted, but a virgin like “an unbroken egg” who “has just started her woman’s bleeding” (*TBC* 133). At the beginning of her sexual maturity, she is unaware of the ways of the world so she is “afraid of nothing” (133).

On the way to her grandmother, she does not come across a wolf but a dashing gentleman whom she finds attractive and they go through the snowy forest joking and laughing. Soon after, the gentleman shows her a compass claiming that he can arrive at her grandmother’s house before her while she is lumbering along the snowy path. Similar to “The Bloody Chamber” and “The Courtship of Mr Lyon” Carter introduces an anachronistic object to the natural flow of the tale, undoing the organic unity by means of alienation. Parodying the classical bet between the wolf and the little girl, the gentleman and the relatively mature ‘Red Riding Hood’ make a deal about reaching the house first and for his potential win he requests a kiss from the girl.

As a substitute for the wolf character in the classical tale, the gentleman reveals that his real aim is not controlled by his hunger but by his libido. Moreover, as can be seen by her attitude, the girl’s silence gives consent to the handsome gentleman and she is eager to experience the upcoming result of their deal. Furthermore, as indicated in the tale, the forest as a setting is the “commonplace of a rustic seduction” where all the rules of the society are invalid (*TBC* 135). As a matter of fact the relationship between the girl and the wolf are never judged since the forest, as a natural place, justifies the natural sexual drives of the two characters. In relation to this Jack Zipes points out that

. . . [I]t is possible to interpret Little Red Riding Hood's desire for the wolf as a desire for the other, or a general quest for self-identification. She seeks to know herself in a social context, gazes into the wolf's eyes to see a mirror reflection of who she might be, a confirmation of her own feelings. She wants to establish contact with her unconscious and discover what she is lacking. . . The woods are the natural setting for the fulfillment of desire. The conventions of society are no longer present. (*The Trials* 93)

When the two are parted, the girl dawdles on the way "to make sure the handsome gentleman would win his wager" (*TBC* 135). Yet, the gentleman promptly reaches the house of the pious grandmother who is reading the Bible. First, he tricks her by imitating her granddaughter's voice and then, as the old saying has suggested, strips off his disguise and stands naked before her. The disrobing scene, erotic as it is, has overtones of a striptease while it also lays bare the fact that the stripping man of the forest is a werewolf indeed. Though depicted before as a fine gentleman, now he is ambiguously described as a wolf: "He strips off his shirt. His skin is the colour and texture of vellum. A crisp stripe of hair runs down his belly, his nipples are ripe and dark as poison fruit but he's so thin you could count the ribs under his skin if only he gave you the time. He strips off his trousers and she can see how hairy his legs are. His genitals, huge. Ah! Huge" (*TBC* 136).

Upon devouring the grandmother, the werewolf waits for 'Red Riding Hood.' When she comes, seeing that her grandmother is absent but the only remnant of her is a tuft of white hair burning in the fireplace, she understands that the gentleman who is stark naked has eaten her up. Along with the howls of the company of wolves outside, she ceases to be afraid since she "explores the notions of fear and desire conflated within the figure of the wolf" (Tiffin 93). It is her turn to perform striptease this time; layer by layer, exposing her intact and virgin skin she remains "clothed only in her untouched integument of flesh" (*TBC* 138). The stripping of the girl turns into a highly flirtatious play and builds up the reciprocal sexual desire. As Lau asserts, ". . . Little Red Riding Hood's striptease is much more playful, a slow and sweet seduction, as thrilling in its act in its defiance of both Perrault's moralizing tale and the cautionary old wives' tales" (87).

Both naked and equal, they go through the tale's "ritual questions" of what big arms/eyes/teeth he has (Lau 87). Evidently, the main reason of all those big features and limbs leads to the final answer "All the better to eat you with" (*TBC* 138). However, the girl who is not afraid but keen, "bursts out laughing" knowing that "she [is] nobody's meat" (138). By this critical assertion, Carter draws a line between the meat and flesh in *The Sadeian Woman* and upon this issue she asserts as follows:

In the English language, we make a fine distinction between flesh, which is usually alive and, typically, human; and meat, which is dead, inert, animal and intended for consumption. . . If flesh plus skin equals sensuality, then flesh minus skin equals meat. . . Flesh has specific orifices to contain the prick that penetrates it but meat's relation to the knife is more random and a thrust anywhere will do. (137-138)

Hence, as mentioned above, the werewolf's motives are controlled not by the hunger for meat, but by the desire for flesh. However, unaware of the differences between these two, the werewolf is taught and tamed by the girl who "wins the herbivore-carnivore contest by refusing fear . . . by refusing to allow herself to be defined as somebody's meat" (Atwood 130). Moreover, the werewolf breaks the shell of this "unbroken egg" by enabling her to taste her hidden lust and making her realise her own autonomous sexual desire. Therefore at the end of the tale, with this reciprocal relation, the scene shows that "two young heterosexual beings satiate their hunger not for dead meat, but flesh" (Bacchilega 64) while "sweet and sound she sleeps in granny's bed, between the paws of the tender wolf" (*TBC* 139).

As the major aim of her postmodern rewritings Carter both transgresses the frame of the traditional tale and unfolds the implicit sexual references. She makes use of intertextuality by inserting different lore and sayings as a preparation phase of the tale. Thus, enlarging the boundaries of the tale, she refashions the textual unity and subverts the conventional nature of classical tales. The act of resetting the firm rules of the tale leads to a thematic parody in which the structural and thematic limitations are altered. Along with the structural changes, Carter also alters the contextual qualities of the tale. Although the rewritten plot bears some similarities to the traditional plot in terms of flow, Carter adds other dimensions to the context and characters. Thus, with these changes, the tale is no longer a simple cautionary tale but a postmodern parody of it which highlights the sexual awakening and mutual desire between animal and human. With regard to the differentiated context, Charlotte Crofts states that:



Reversing the traditional telling of “Little Red Riding Hood” in the short story, “The Company of Wolves,” Carter foregrounds the latent sexual content of the original tale, so it becomes a tale of repression being liberated by libido, symbolised by the wolves. Rather than a rape myth, punishing female sexuality, Carter’s version portrays a girl embracing the animal side of herself, asserting her sexuality, reversing the moral of the fairy tale, “she eats the wolf in effect.” (45)

Finally, as mentioned and analysed above, with thematic and formal parody, Carter first reformulates the boundaries of classical fairy tales and then with a careful approach she reveals the ignored and problematic issues of fairy tales such as sexuality and gender. Thus, by changing the tale, she does not underestimate the significance of the old traditional texts; on the contrary she shows her gratitude to the genre by her rewritten tales which consist of her own idiosyncratic style and the traditional felicity of the classical tales.

## 2. CHAPTER II: EMMA DONOGHUE AND *KISSING THE WITCH: OLD TALES IN NEW SKINS*

“A woman  
who loves a woman  
is forever young.  
The mentor  
and the student  
feed off each other”

Anne Sexton, “Rapunzel”

Emma Donoghue, born in Dublin, Ireland in 1969, is one of the expatriate Irish writers currently residing in Canada. Due to her Irish background and higher education at University College Dublin, English Department, she is predominantly associated with Irish literature and also with Irish lesbian fiction. Having received her Bachelor of Arts degree in UCD, she attended the Girton College, Cambridge University where she earned her Ph.D.

Being one of the children of a literary critic (Dennis Donoghue) and an English teacher who is a “passionate reader,” she states “her family [is] the ideal environment for a young writer” (Moloney and Thompson, *Irish Women* 170). With this familial influence, Donoghue’s fascination with writing and reading bloomed at an early age making her decide that “English [is] a perfectly credible thing to be obsessed with [her] whole life” (Bensyl 73). Based on this idea, beginning from her childhood Donoghue has written in different genres including fiction, radio plays, short story collections, historical novels. However, as it is evident from her first work titled *Passions Between Women: British Lesbian Culture 1668-1801* published in 1993, she is highly preoccupied with lesbian and LGBTQ issues both in the literary and cultural spheres. As Donoghue points out, her only non-fiction and historical survey “. . . is a ground breaking and influential survey of printed texts on lesbian themes (trial records, newspapers, medical tracts, poems, novels, plays, etc) in English between the Restoration and the end of the eighteenth century” (Donoghue, “Passion Between Women”)

With the initiation of her historical survey, Donoghue is also interested in writing historical accounts of real characters especially in British history. Utilising historical fiction methods, she rewrites the stories of marginalised figures from the eighteenth century and Victorian England in her *Slammerkin* (2000), *Life Mask* (2004) and *Sealed Letter* (2008). Donoghue, in her interview with Sarah Ann Johnson, asserts the significance of her historical research as follows: “Historical research has been crucial for me in becoming comfortable and confident and happy in libraries. I don’t think I ever would have written *Slammerkin* if I hadn’t done a PhD and written *Passions Between Women*. I think I tend toward historical fiction” (106).

Although she is of Irish origin, she does not include Irish nationalism and Irish history as subject matters of her works but, the tradition only affects her language and style (Bensyl 75). Apart from her interest in historical fiction, as a self-proclaimed lesbian, Donoghue predominantly makes use of lesbian issues about identity and lesbian feminist perspectives in her works. Moreover, she also tries to find an answer to the long term question she has been asking herself ‘How is a woman who loves woman to live as an Irish woman?’” via her works (Quinn 147). In the broader sense, as Smyth argues, she is preoccupied with “interrogat[ing] and expos[ing] the received narratives of the dominant culture” (qtd. in Moloney and Thompson 169). Therefore, as a lesbian writer, Donoghue endeavours to reveal and take the lesbian identity out of the closet by means of her characters that are in search of their true sexual orientation. Drawing upon her own lesbian revelation, Donoghue underlines the pursuit and establishment of the lesbian relationships in her coming-of-age novels as follows:

Discovery at the age of fourteen that I was a lesbian certainly gave me plenty to write about, and researching lesbian history has left me with a feeling of having so many unknown stories to tell, but sexuality is not a motive exactly; I write because I need and love to. All writing has a political impact, and I am aware that doing interviews, etc., is my form of lesbian activism, but the motive for writing is not propaganda: I just want to tell stories in a language as powerful as I can make it. (“Ann Arbor”)

After her first non-fiction work concerning the lesbian relations, Donoghue published her first two novels *Stir Fry* and *Hood* in 1994 and 1995 respectively. These two early fictional works are the living and loving stories of the lesbian characters at a university and in a lesbian community. Later, in 2007 she published *Landing* which also revolves

around the matter of long-distance lesbian love relationship between Canada-England-Ireland. These three novels, dealing with the lesbian question, bear autobiographical traces that inspire Donoghue in terms of the experience of accepting and adapting to her own lesbian identity. In line with the development of her homosexual identity, she does not maintain a radical lesbian attitude, rather she lays bare the facts and features of the lesbian lifestyle with the aim of manifestation. Therewith, Rachel Wingfield summarises her attitude as follows: “Donoghue does not find it necessary to avoid either her gender or her sexuality to appeal to the mainstream, although she too has certainly been influenced by the backlash against feminism” (69).

Apart from her historical and Irish lesbian fiction, with her *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* published in 1997, Donoghue made a great contribution to the fairy tale rewriting genre. As the title of the work suggests, in her work Donoghue rewrites the classical European fairy tales of the famous writers such as Charles Perrault, Grimm Brothers and Hans Christian Andersen. Like Angela Carter, Emma Donoghue, too, makes use of rewriting, parody, and other intertextual methods in recasting fairy tales in order to create an alternative narrative from different perspectives.

## 2.1. EMMA DONOGHUE AND FAIRY TALES

*Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* (1997) is the first rewritten fairy tale collection of Emma Donoghue. The collection comprises twelve rewritten versions of the classical European fairy tales and a final unprecedented “purely fictional” tale written by the writer (Johnson 106). With the self-referential title, Donoghue announces her aim in the collection by underlining that she puts the old tales in new skin through rewriting and parody. In parallel with Angela Carter’s *The Bloody Chamber*, Donoghue’s collection is also an example of revisionary writing which is explained by the American feminist poet Adrienne Rich as an “. . . act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction. . . an act of survival” (18). Therefore, so as to sustain the survival of these tales, Donoghue “adopts a postmodern perspective, advertising the fictionality of the motif by introducing” these classical tales both in structural and thematic parody (Palmer 30).

These twelve rewritten tales predominantly concentrate upon the tales of conventional ‘innocent persecuted heroines’ from renowned fairy tale writers/collectors such as Perrault, Grimm Brothers and Andersen. As mentioned in the Introduction of this study, at some point of the tale, these heroines always encounter a wicked plot or a deal of the antagonists such as evil stepmother, wicked witch, ogre, rival sibling or evil queen. However, because of their passivity, good and naïve nature, heroines fall prey to these pernicious traps and finally they are rescued by a helper figure, like fairy godmother, or a magical token, like the kiss of a prince. Since the ‘happily ever after’ endings of these tales are the most striking points, secondary characters are not given much importance and solely used as tools either for misdoing or helping. Whereas, in *Kissing the Witch* the tales mainly progress through a lesbian relationship and sorority between the heroine and female villain or fairy godmother. By doing so, as Ann Martin indicates, Donoghue tries to criticise “the established norms of femininity and alters the traditional power structures within and surrounding the narration of the tales” (7).

In fairy tales, the relationship between female characters has two extreme features; they are either thoroughly good or thoroughly vicious. Thus, Donoghue aims to break down the restrictive nature and reconcile the female characters of the genre. By giving voice and realistic feature to the evil characters, who are mostly older than the protagonists, Donoghue provides them with an opportunity to represent the “human and vulnerable” sides while she is symbolically “rehabilitating the witch” (Harries 130). Donoghue’s rehabilitation can also be interpreted as a parody of the characters in several ways. First of all, none of the secondary characters bears pure evil or good nature, in the course of the tale they are represented as both evil and helper figure with their attitude. Putting it differently, these secondary characters are in fact the mentors of the heroines but in the course of the tale they present unhelpful attitudes towards the heroines so as to teach them to stand on their own two feet. For that reason,

... [O]lder female characters are shown to possess an understanding of themselves and the world that the younger characters lack and often reject, and the conflicts of the stories often revolve around the gaps between these perspectives, particularly where the protagonist cannot acknowledge the wisdom of the older woman. However, the potential mentor figures are less invested in teaching specific lessons and more interested in prompting the younger characters to experience difficulties and hardships for themselves, especially when it comes to finding love. (Martin 7-8)

Secondly, the tales also present a possibility of uncovering the deviant and perverse versions of these classical tales in terms of the relationships portrayed. Since the classical fairy tales assume heteronormative love and desire of women, *Kissing the Witch* offers a challenge to the stereotypical elements “of gender roles and sexual desire and derail the straight path of female destiny encoded in the tales” (de la Rochere 14). Hence, the notion of conventional sexuality is turned upside down with the lesbian love between the heroine and the evil/helper figure through the parody of the thematic concerns of the classical fairy tales.

In addition to that, Donoghue also parodies the classical fairy tale form by making drastic changes in the structure. Although fairy tales, as narratives, have a linear plot with no flashbacks or flash-forwards, *Kissing the Witch* shows a great difference in this aspect from the source tales in terms of its formal strategy. The collection with thirteen successive tales is structured in such a way that each tale becomes a prequel to the one which precedes it. In other words, with the innovative device, “a character in each tale becomes the narrator of the following tale” (Harries 131). Correspondingly, the secondary character/mentor becomes the narrator and the heroine of the following tale, telling her own story in first person singular. Thus, linking the ending of a tale with the beginning of the following one through the device of asking the same question in each tale, Donoghue merges them and creates a new tale-telling system which reminds the reader of the female tale telling tradition in the oral period. Reciting the tales of independence and sexual awakening to each other, female narrators also become the heroines of their own stories and they pass on the liberational tales to the next generations rather than the classical tales of male discourse.

For example, the Beast in “The Tale of the Rose,” the third tale of the collection, becomes the narrative voice and the heroine of the fourth tale “The Tale of the Apple.” Moreover, on the page following the conclusion of the tale, the heroine asks the mentor character the basic question of “Who were you before?” and the mentor offers to tell her own story as follows:

Another summer in the rose garden,  
 I asked,  
 Who were you  
 Before you chose a mask over a crown?  
 And she said,  
 Will I tell you my own story?  
 It is a tale of an apple. (KTW 41)

Furthermore, the narrative voice also bears differences compared to the classical fairy tale narrative voice. In the classical tales, the conventional mode of narration is always the third person singular, where the reader and the narrator have limited knowledge about the subject they read or narrate. This mode also reduces the individuality of the narration into a single and apathetic voice. Yet, Donoghue employs the first person singular narration in thirteen tales each in a particular voice. The heroines of the tales tell their own story from their own perspectives and this strategy enables them to control their own narratives while revealing their “autonomous agency” (Aktari 272).

What is more, Jennifer Orme asserts that:

In the recounting of her tale, each protagonist discovers and reveals her own desires. Not all of these desires are sexual, but each in their own way is disruptive of the ideologies and normative behavioural codes embedded within their pre-texts. In speaking their desires, these characters reveal the normative and therefore usually invisible, restrictive behavioural codes at the intersecting points of gender, sexuality, class, and/or cognitive ability. (124)

Another structural innovation is the titles of the tales in which Donoghue makes use of the symbolic objects or things that the original tales were remembered with. So as to imply the bonds between the rewritten version and the original tale, titles play a significant part in parodic alterations. For example, the first tale “The Tale of the Shoe” is the rewritten version of Perrault’s “Cinderella” whose both thematic and structural features are all parodied. However, the word “Shoe” is the biggest signifier of the title evoking the original plotline of “Cinderella” in the reader. Since Cinderella drops one of her magical glass shoes on the stairs while trying to reach her home before midnight, the very shoe becomes one of the symbolic objects that evince the original tale. Therefore, the last words of the titles in *Kissing the Witch* carry the metonymic value through which the original tales are comprehended. In the same fashion, the other tales are entitled according to the symbolic objects as the examples below: “The Tale of the Handkerchief” is the revised version of “The Goose Girl” by Grimm Brothers, “The Tale of the Cottage” is parody of Grimm Brothers’ “Hansel and Gretel.”

Through their symbolic meanings, emblematic objects indicate the protagonists' outlet of their awakening. Thus, these objects can be associated with the particular awakenings that the heroines experience to reach their desires. As Orme underlines above, the tales of the collection intend to discover the autonomous desires and wishes of the female protagonists in their own story. Shaking off the stereotypical plots and aims of the original tales, Donoghue gives them a voice and will of their own to articulate and strive for their desires. These desires do not only concentrate upon the sexuality of the protagonist, but they vary from gender liberation to monetary issues, sibling devotion and life experiences.

## **2.2. "THE TALE OF THE SHOE" AS A PARODY OF CHARLES PERRAULT'S "CINDERELLA"**

"The Tale of the Shoe" as the first tale of *Kissing the Witch* is the rewriting of Charles Perrault's "Cinderella" which was published in his *Histoires ou contes du temps passé* in 1697. The original tale, as Bettelheim underlines, is "the best-known fairy tale and probably the best-liked" which is also mainly about "the agonies and hopes which form the essential content of sibling rivalry; and about the degraded heroine winning over her siblings who abused her" (236). The tale has another version in Grimm Brothers collection, which bears some differences and they are not compatible with Donoghue's version in terms of characters and plotline. It is evident that Donoghue basically recasts Perrault's tale, therefore it is useful to remember the source story so as to examine the parodic strategy used in rewriting.

In the source tale, the widowed man who has a beautiful and meek daughter, marries again a proud and haughty woman who also has two daughters just like herself. After the marriage, the new wife and her cruel daughters start to mistreat the girl by making her do all the housework. After all her work is done, the heroine sits by the fireplace among the cinders to rest. Thus, smudged with ash and cinder in the household she is called Cinderella. However, with her dirty appearance and ragged clothes she is still more beautiful than her wicked stepsisters.



One day, the Prince gives a ball at the palace and invites all the good families. Having been invited to the ball, the wicked stepsisters get ready by choosing dresses and hair styles in order to impress the Prince. They also want Cinderella to help them while they dress and adorn themselves. During the preparation, they trick Cinderella asking whether she wishes to go to the ball as well. When Cinderella says that these kinds of things are not for girls like her, the sisters confirm that she cannot go to the ball since everyone will laugh at her. When the day of the ball comes, after the girls set off to the palace Cinderella starts to cry because she wants to go to the ball, as well. All of a sudden, her fairy godmother emerges and says that she is ready to fulfil her wishes. Cinderella says that her wish is to go to the Prince's ball and the godmother accepts it. With the help of magic, she transforms the vegetables and the animals of the household into a coach and finally she dresses her with a gold and silver gown and a pair of glass shoes. Yet, the godmother warns her that she must come back before midnight. Upon her arrival, Cinderella becomes the centre of attention of the other guests and the Prince with her beauty. The Prince cannot take his eyes off of her all night long and they dance till she leaves the palace with courtesy at midnight.

On the second day, she goes to the ball again and due to her beauty she receives compliments from the Prince. Swept away by the Prince, Cinderella forgets the time and when the clock strikes midnight she rushes to the coach and the Prince runs after her. However, while she is running she drops one of her glass shoes and the Prince picks it up. Next day, the Prince makes an announcement stating that the girl whose foot fits the glass shoe will be his wife. When the Prince arrives at Cinderella's house, two haughty sisters try on the shoe and it does not fit their feet. Later on, the gentleman who is fitting the shoe wants Cinderella to try the shoe and as a surprise it fits her foot. In addition to that, Cinderella takes out the other one of the pair proving that she is the girl in the ball. When Cinderella's identity is revealed, her sisters recognise her and ask for forgiveness. Finally, Cinderella gets married to the Prince and forgives her sisters (Perrault 130-141).

Donoghue's "The Tale of the Shoe" is a retrospective tale which happened in the past and now is told by the heroine as an anecdote. As it is evident from the first sentence of the tale, the heroine states that "Till she came it was all cold" and then begins telling her story (*Kissing the Witch* 1). Starting at the same condition with "Cinderella," upon the loss of her mother, the heroine is very much grieved with her mother's absence and goes through a melancholic phase in her life. Feeling abandoned and depressed she explains the futility of her life after her mother's death as follows:

Ever since my mother died the feather bed felt hard as a stone floor. Every word that came out of my mouth limped away like a toad. Whatever I put on my back now turned to sackcloth and chafed my skin. I heard a knocking in my skull, and kept running to the door, but there was never anyone there. The days passed like dust brushes from my fingers. (1)

Unlike the source tale, Donoghue's rewritten version does not comprise the passive father, evil stepmother and jealous stepsisters as the antagonistic characters. The heroine is alone and lives her melancholia at the utmost level. Since she is severely afflicted with the loss, in order to ease the pain she devotes herself to the household chores by raking out the hearth with her fingernails, scouring the floor until her knees bleed, counting the rice and beans (*KTW*<sup>3</sup> 2). Nevertheless, different from the source tale, these drudgeries are not assigned to her by the cruel stepmother or the sisters. Donoghue's Cinderella is doing these chores not because they are obligatory, but because her inner voice tells her to do so. She underlines the echoes of the self-inflicted punishment as such: "Nobody made me do the things I did, nobody scolded me, nobody punished me but me. The shrill voices were all inside. Do this, do that, you lazy heap of dirt. They knew every question and answer, the voices in my head" (2).

Donoghue emphasises her parody by equipping Cinderella both with the traditional helpless representation and the features of the hostile stepmother. In other words, the protagonist of the tale has recovered from her superficial character by gaining double feature both from herself and the stepmother who is absent from the tale but still felt thorough the inner voices of Cinderella. Commanding Cinderella to do all the housework, the stepmother, in the classical tale, tries to "disempower the heroine from creating her own destiny" and confining her in the boundaries of the male-dominated

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<sup>3</sup> *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* will be abbreviated as *KTW* in parenthetical references

system (Gladwin 65). Being the representative of the patriarchal system, the evil stepmother is identified with her oppressed will therefore, as Ann Martin asserts, the heroine “internalize[s] these voices, just as she has internalized the discourse of” the patriarchy (15).

One day the heroine is in her sorrowful mood, all of a sudden, a stranger appears behind her. She takes her into the garden and shows her a hazel tree which her deceased mother loved so much. Being similar to “Cinderella,” this figure emerges as the fairy-godmother of the heroine. However, this figure is the combination of both Grimm Brothers’ and Perrault’s fairy godmother, because she first emerges as a living figure as in Perrault’s version and then she also introduces the hazel tree to the heroine which is the symbolic fairy godmother on her mother’s grave as in Grimm’s version. Seeking to restore the bonds between the mother figure and the heroine, the fairy godmother enters the story as a close friend of her mother. Along with the fairy godmother, transformations of the heroine start at once foreshadowing the real significance of the character. For her drastic change the heroine expresses her feelings as follows: “How can I begin to describe the transformations? My old dusty self was spun new. This woman sheathed my limbs in blue velvet. I was dancing on points of clear glass” (*KTW* 3).

The transformation she goes through is the greatest clue of the thematic parody in the tale. Normally, in the classical version, Cinderella experiences the real transformation when her identity is revealed by means of the glass shoe. However, as the heroine expresses, she has already begun her transformation on meeting the fairy godmother. Rehabilitated by the fairy godmother, she wants to go to the ball but ironically she still says that “Isn’t that what girls are meant to ask for?” (*KTW* 3). Regarding the ironic wish of the heroine, Karlyn Crowley and John Pennington state that:

We see how Donoghue evokes the residue of the Perrault and Grimms tale [...] yet she revises the old tales into an original retelling. Cinderella is acutely aware of how she should act as a girl, but she is simultaneously defiant. Cinderella even has a meta-awareness that she is in a fairy tale that has certain expectations, ones that this Cinderella will challenge. This Cinderella is aware of the construction of gender and subverts it; she is aware of the form of the fairy tale and rewrites it. (307-8)

The heroine's awareness of her situation makes the text self-reflexive, because the heroine knows that she is a fairy tale character and she feels obliged to obey the rules of the fairy tale tradition. When she goes to the ball, she complies with the tenets of the fairy tale heroine by not eating anything in order not to gain weight, dancing with different men, speaking without meaning anything. Thus, as she also reflects she plays a game in which she should keep up the appearance of a young beautiful Cinderella. Yet, at midnight she is picked up by her godmother. Feeling confused, she examines her role as "a girl with . . . fortune to make" and her godmother's role as a woman who is old enough to be her mother and decides to go the ball again next night (*KTW* 4).

When they are together with the godmother, the heroine is looked after by her and she learns how to behave like a lady at the ball. At the second night, she begins to get used to her role, this time when she is dancing with the prince, he asks her favourite colour and her name but the girl leaves the questions unanswered since she does not remember. On the way back to her home, her godmother asks "Had enough?," knowing that in the end she will have a future with the prince she puts herself to the same test once again and wants to go to the ball next night (*KTW* 4).

Because of the fact that the fairy godmother cares for her, she makes the heroine laugh, feeds her with a silver spoon, she simply devotes herself to the heroine. On the last night, the heroine is dressed in a red silk dress by means of the godmother's little finger which can do spectacular things like a wand. However their relationship is no longer a mother-daughter one and according to Selen Aktari:

. . . [T]he scenes which show the relationship between Cinderella and the woman have flirtatious overtones. The woman always makes her laugh and shows Cinderella the sparkle in her eyes, Cinderella leans her head on the woman's "shoulder when they drive back together from the ball and their fingers draw "pictures in the ashes on the hearth, vague shapes of birds and islands. (279)

Another interpretation by De La Rochere explains the parodic side of the text, as it is a lesbian love not a naïve friendship between the fairy godmother and the heroine. Hence the fairy godmother's "her little finger," "a magic wand" can be interpreted as a sexual connotation which caricatures the magic wand and magical transformations.

The (sexual) joke, which plays with the idea of the body as capable of wielding a very special kind of magic, is more than a queer (that is to say funny and irreverent) reinterpretation of the traditional motif of the wand, since it celebrates lesbian love as the site of magic in the otherwise simple, ordinary and homely world of Donoghue's tale. (21)

At the ball, this time fully aware of her situation, the heroine rejects courtly etiquette rules she is meant to obey, and eats everything she is offered and throws up, dances like a "clockwork ballerina" to the same old music played over and over again and smiles "till her face twist[s]" (*KTW* 6). Tired of the same old plot for the third time, Donoghue's Cinderella cannot be a fairy tale heroine that she is supposed to be. However, at that point the Prince comes to propose. Regarding the setting, the heroine asserts that it is "all fairy-tale," thus with this sentence, she, as a character, refers to the constructed and unnatural features of the tale and her alien situation in the system (6). While the Prince is proposing to her, she cannot hear him but the shrieking patriarchal voices commanding her to say yes. The voices which were ordering her to do all the drudgery at the beginning of the tale are the same ones which now order her to accept the marriage proposal. Identified with the patriarchal ideology, these voices try to confine her into a life where she is ruled by domestic toil and male domination. Yet, she determines her future life with the silent answer she gives:

I opened my teeth but no sound came out. There was no harm in this man; what he proposed was white and soft, comfortable as fog. There was nothing to be afraid of. But just then the midnight bell began to toll out the long procession of years, palatial day by moonless night. And I leapt backward down the steps, leaving one shoe behind. (*KTW* 7)

While running, she tears off her dress and with one of her shoes, she comes back home in the same condition as she started, she finds her godmother on the lawn. Then, in an epiphany she starts hearing her real voice which tells the fault and the truth about herself: "I had got the story all wrong. How could I not have noticed she was beautiful? I must have dropped all my words in the bushes. I reached out"(7). The woman asks her about the shoe, which symbolises marriage in "Cinderella." She answers, "It was digging in to my heel" (8). With that answer she implicitly indicates that the shoe which can help her gain a wealthy future through the marriage is just an obstacle for her. After that, the woman asks about the prince and the heroine answers "He'll find someone to fit, if he looks long enough" (8).

In the final scene of the tale the godmother asks the third and the last question as follows:

What about me? she asked very low.  
 I'm old enough to be your mother.  
 Her finger was spelling on the back of my neck.  
 You're not my mother, I said. I'm old enough to know that.  
 I threw the other shoe into the brambles, where it hung,  
 glinting.  
 So then she took me home, or I took her home, or we were  
 both somehow taken to the closest thing. (*KTW* 7-8)

As it is indicated above, the tale provides a new kind of happily ever after which gives importance to real love and same sex desires rather than fairy tale conventions and heteronormativity. Hence, while the “queer moments” of the tale are magnified by means of the love and the relationship between the heroine and the godmother, the source tale is parodied both thematically and formally (Orme 123). Thematic parody is based upon the shattering of patriarchal and heteronormative ideology through the sexual and emotional affair, whereas formal parody is structured by means of self-reflexivity and self-awareness of the text and the character. In relation to parody and the sexual revelation Maria Micaela Coppola suggests that

Cinderella gradually understands she cannot fit into the story prescribed and repeated by the voices. Consequently, she starts ignoring them and rewrites her story. This new tale has been, she realizes, already written; the new ending of the story (which she perceives, now, as completely and truly her own) has always been at her disposal, needing only to be re-read. The only thing that Donoghue's Cinderella (and with her, the reader) has to do is to read the signs in a different way. Only then can she consciously interpret her self-narrative and, consequently, deviate from its pre-established, hidden designs. (135)

The fact that the tale is both structurally and thematically recast, the new version does not affect the promise of happy ending of traditional fairy tales. By reimagining the source tale, Donoghue provides the characters with independent voices and freedom of choice that make them act differently from the stereotypical characters. Therefore, with their alternative characteristics and stories, female figures write their own tale in accordance with their orientations and expectations from their lives.

### 2.3. "THE TALE OF THE ROSE" AS A PARODY OF MADAME LEPRINCE DE BEAUMONT'S "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST"

Like Angela Carter, Emma Donoghue also makes use of "Beauty and the Beast" in her collection *Kissing the Witch*. As the title of her collection suggests, she puts "Beauty and the Beast" into new skin by changing the characteristics of the Beast and the happily ever after ending of the tale. The traditional tale is an animal-groom tale in which the groom, the Beast, is a nonhuman being only with human manners. As analysed in Chapter I, Angela Carter's two versions of "Beauty and the Beast", in terms of the rewriting method, are mainly based upon the sexual awakening of a woman and desire between a woman and an animal figure. Sharing the same common denominator with Carter's tales, Donoghue's "The Tale of the Rose" is rewritten in a parodic strategy in order to "disturb the unquestioned and normative binary of sexual relations" (Orme 119).

Hence, disrupting the stereotypical fairy tale heterosexual love and marriage, Donoghue promises a reimagined tale with an alternative lesbian relation and a peacefully ever after ending without a marriage. Compared to Carter's "The Courtship of Mr. Lyon" and "The Tiger's Bride," Donoghue's "The Tale of the Rose" dwells on the disclosure of the heroine's lesbian tendency and possibility of romantic love between women. As the summary of Madame Leprince de Beaumont's tale is already given in Chapter I, in this chapter the summary will not be provided again.

The tale begins with an exposition paragraph in which the heroine talks about herself before she tells her story. Since she is the mentor character of the previous tale, "The Tale of the Bird" and the Beauty character of "The Tale of the Rose" she makes an introduction by underlining her beauty. Due to her beauty, she always has plenty of suitors but she wants none of them. Her perfectionist nature causes her to pursue the extraordinary in her life such as "something improbable and perfect as a red rose just opening" (KTW 27). Hence, by this utterance, she gives hints about the progression of the tale which starts with a rose. However, with a reversal of fate, her father loses all his

wealth because of the lost ships at sea, like their money the heroine's suitors disappear and they do not wish to marry her anymore.

Just after the bankruptcy, the transformed version of the tale begins. Similar to the source story, the family move to a cottage and the girl is the only one who helps the father as they are trying to survive. Along with the changed life style, the heroine adapts herself to her new life and she pushes the limits of her strength and diligence. Unlike her lazy and proud sisters, in the house, she takes over all the household chores so as to help her father. However she does not transform herself into a passive domestic slave but becomes a helpful girl who copes with housekeeping. Doing the housework is not just a duty but a way of understanding herself, while she is doing the household chores she feels she is renewed and expresses her feeling as such: "I tucked up my skirt and got on with it. It gave me a strange pleasure to see what my back could bend to, my arms could bear. It was not that I was better than my sisters, only that I could see further . . . I was washing my old self away, by midsummer I was almost ready" (*KTW* 28-29).

Parallel to the source tale, one day the father is informed that some of his ships have reached safe ashore. Before his journey, he asks what his daughters want as presents. The proud sisters want "heavy dresses, lined cloaks, fur-topped boots" while the heroine asks for a "red rose just opening" (*KTW* 29). When the father is back with the things they asked for, his daughters find him in an ill condition. The same night, while he is in a delirium in his bed, he suddenly wakes up and confesses to the heroine that he has sold her for "a red rose and a box of gold" (30). In the source tale and Carter's tales, the rule of the bargain is the youngest daughter for a rose. However, this bargain's rule is the first thing the father sees when he reaches home. As a loving daughter, the heroine runs to greet her father when he is back, thus she inevitably becomes the first 'thing' her father sees and has to give to the Beast in return for the rose.

Yet, this cruel deal made between the Beast and the father is not received in the same fashion by the heroine as it was in the source tale. In de Beaumont's tale, Beauty accepts her fate of being a commodity between the Beast and the father. For the sake of her father she willingly goes to the Beast as a hostage. As the scape-goat of her own



father's fault, she internalises the passive, obedient and meek fairy tale heroine features. However, Donoghue's heroine, on the contrary, perhaps accepts going to the Beast's palace but she never assumes the attitude of the helpless heroine who is commodified by the father. According to Quinn "Donoghue's heroines are likeable rather than perfect persons" so, Donoghue puts aside the stereotypical fairy tale heroine conventions making the heroine more down-to-earth and individual rather than a sacrificial figure (149). Correspondingly, the heroine shows her independent spirit and reflects her determined attitude to win the conflict as follows: "Now you may tell me that I should have felt betrayed, but I was shaking with excitement. I should have felt like a possession, but for the first time in my life I seemed to own myself. I went as a hostage, but it seemed as if I was riding into battle" (*KTW* 31).

When they reach their destination, the palace of the Beast is a gothic place which is avoided and feared by the townspeople. It is described in the tale as follows:

The castle was in the middle of a forest where the sun never shone. Every villager we stopped to ask the way spat when they heard our destination. There had been no wedding or christening in that castle for a whole generation. The young queen had been exiled, imprisoned, devoured (here the stories diverged) by a hooded beast who could be seen at sunset walking on the battlements. No one had ever seen the monster's face and lived to describe it. (*KTW* 32)

Since there has been a series of unconventional practises in the castle for so long, the people find the place and the owner extremely terrifying and outlandish. The fact that they do not have a reliable source and information about the owner of the palace, they inevitably rely on the rumours. Therefore, it is the reason why the townspeople call the owner the Beast. When the heroine enters the castle, the Beast waits for her at the top of the stairs. Because of the mask and its clothes the Beast seems to be sexless. Moreover throughout the tale the Beast is referred to as 'it' and Donoghue does not use any gender specific connotations not to mislead the reader.

When the heroine settles down in the palace she explores the castle to find a trace in order to get to know the Beast but she only comes upon a room with her name on it. Similar to "Beauty and the Beast," she is provided with a luxuriously furnished room and a bunch of keys to every room of the palace apart from the Beasts'. Carrying the similar undertones of the "Bluebeard" tale, the heroine is curious about the lacking part

in her new life which solely concerns the Beast. She expresses her ideas as follows: “I didn’t know what to ask for. I had a room of my own, and time and treasures at my command. I had everything I could want except the key to the story” (*KTW* 34). Having pinpointed the reason of her “sense of restlessness and unhappiness with her life,” the heroine starts “rewrit[ing] her personal narrative by consciously re-reading the existent tale” (Coppola 136).

Getting the chance to know the Beast by means of the long talks, the heroine begins to define herself as the Beauty of the tale. Since she writes her own tale, she identifies herself with the Beauty character where the Beast becomes her foil figure highlighting what she is not. Comparing herself with a figure unknown to her, as the ‘other’ of the tale, she feels capable of defining herself. Spending more time before the mirror, like Carter’s Beauty, she supposes she is getting more and more beautiful. Thus, she says:

I sat in my satin-walled room, before the gold mirror. I looked deep into the pool of my face, and tried to imagine what the beast looked like. The more hideous my imaginings, the more my own face seemed to glow. Because I thought the beast must be everything I was not: dark to my light, rough to my smooth, hoarse to my sweet. When I walked on the battlements under the waning moon, the beast was the grotesque shadow I threw behind me. (*KTW* 35)

Apart from the thematic changes of the tale, Donoghue parodies the structural convention of ‘the three combination’ in the tale which has been explained in the Introduction. Therefore in “The Tale of the Rose,” Donoghue parodies this convention by inserting it into the tale instead of the marriage proposal of the Beast to Beauty. Rather than being direct about its emotions, the Beast tries to learn the heroine’s ideas about itself. Therefore, it makes use of this convention by asking three questions to the heroine throughout the tale as follows:

You have never seen my face. Do you still picture me as a monster?  
I did the beast knew it.  
...  
You have never felt my touch. Do you still shrink from it?  
I did. The beast knew it.  
...  
What if I let you go? Would you stay of your own free will?  
I would not. The beast knew it. (*KTW* 35-36)

While hinting its interest in the heroine, the Beast asks such questions whose affirmative answers would make it happy, however the questions are left unanswered.

In the following part of the tale and the same in the source tale, the heroine needs to go to her father's house for the reason that he is ill with remorse. Before she goes, the Beast confesses to the heroine that:

. . . I am not a man  
I knew it. Every tale I had ever heard of trolls, ogres, goblins, rose to my lips.  
The beast said, You do not understand.  
But I was riding away (*KTW* 37).

Although the Beast uses its last chance to reveal its real identity that it is neither a man nor a monster, the heroine does not listen to it since she is in a rush. Yet, she promises to come back to the palace on the eighth day.

During her stay in her father's house, like the Beauty figures of de Beaumont and Carter, Donoghue's heroine loses track of time, too. Engaged in curing her father's illness, she totally forgets her promise and the Beast. But, one night she finds herself before the mirror looking at "the castle garden" with "a black shape on grass," she remembers her promise and gallops through the forest towards the palace (*KTW* 38). Upon finding it on the grass covered with frost she tries to revive it her by warming and kissing it and at the same time she pulls off the veils disregarding what kind of a monster she will see. Yet, her expectations are not fulfilled by the scene she encounters:

I saw hair black as rocks under water.  
I saw a face white as old linen.  
I saw lips red as a rose just opening.  
I saw the beast was a woman.  
And that she was breathing, which seemed to matter more. (*KTW* 39)

Seeing that the Beast is a woman, the heroine, in the tale, summarises her transformation period to the woman and the new system she finds herself in. Unlike de Beaumont's Beauty, the heroine makes the first difference by interpreting her captivity in the palace as her freedom, thus with her distinctive understanding the heroine sets the framework of her own story and rewrites it with her rules. Even though she has been rewriting her own story since the day she left her father's house, now she endeavours to learn a new language to appreciate the true meaning of it. In order to express her

eagerness to learn the real story of the woman and the missing part of her life she explains as follows:

I was a slow learner but a stubborn one. It took me days to learn that there was nothing monstrous about this woman who had lived alone in a castle, setting all her suitors riddles they could make no sense of, refusing to do the things queens are supposed to do, until the day when, knowing no one who could see her true face, she made a mask and from then on showed her face to no one. It took me weeks to understand why the faceless mask and the name of a beast might be chosen over all the great world had to offer. After months of looking, I saw that beauty was infinitely various, and found it behind her white face. (*KTW* 39-40)

Having explained the story behind her veil and choosing to be a beast, the heroine tries to write an ending for her story, as well. Awakened to her hidden lesbian tendencies, she orientates herself both to the newly out of closet identity and a life with the woman. As the woman refused to perform the rules that the queens are supposed to do, she challenges both the fairy tale conventions and roles that are assigned to women. Thus, being with her in the palace, accepting the lesbian romantic relation also make the heroine resist the ingrained ideas of the genre by parodying it both thematically and formally.

Even though, the end of the tale is not defined with the stereotypical phrase ‘happily ever after,’ it frankly demonstrates a peaceful scene where the beauty and the Beast of the tale are living in harmony in their palace. Donoghue equips them with new identities foreign to the traditional tale. Because of their sexual orientation and cohabitation, some of the people who see them on their battlements appreciate their way of life and call them “two beauties” or some despise their lesbian love stigmatising them as “two beasts” (*KTW* 40). However, disregarding all those comments, the heroine and the mentor leave behind their former identities of Beauty and the Beast, they establish their own happy ending and introduce it as an alternative to the conventional nature of fairy tales.

## 2.4. "THE TALE OF THE APPLE" AS A PARODY OF GRIMM BROTHERS' "SNOW WHITE"

"The Tale of the Apple" is the fourth tale of the collection following "The Tale of the Rose." Concluded with the ritualistic question of the young heroine, the Beast figure starts to tell her own story before she "chose a mask over a crown" (*KTW* 41). While she is associated with the features of the Beast in the third tale, she exposes the fact that she was Snow White in her former life. Having attested her lesbian identity explicitly, in this tale she tells her lesbian love with her stepmother while underlining the coming-out-of-the-closet story when she was younger. In this tale Donoghue presents the whole story of a lesbian character via the retrospective method. In addition, she parodies the long lasting fairy tale convention of the enmity between the protagonist and her evil stepmother. "The Tale of the Apple" is the rewriting of "Snow White" the summary of which is given in Chapter I.

Due to the death of her mother while she is giving birth to her, Snow White is left motherless and has been looked after by her maid. However, unlike in the source tale, her father is neither a passive nor an indifferent figure towards her daughter. He does not make haste to find a new wife to get married, but cares for the time he spends with his daughter. Donoghue deliberately establishes a strong relationship between the father and the heroine in order to emphasise the strong conflict between the stepmother and the daughter. Portrayed as a responsible and caring figure, the father is described by the heroine as follows: "In the summer time he liked to carry me through the orchard and toss me high in the air, to swing me low over the green turf. He was my toyman and my tall tree. As I grew and grew, he bounced me on his lap till our cheeks scalded" (*KTW* 45). Yet when her maturation is sealed with a "patch of red on [her] crumpled sheet" her father brings home a new wife who is not much older than her daughter. Because of their similar age, the heroine feels the possibility of the unrest that might occur between them since she knows that there is "only room for one queen in a castle" (45). In "Snow White" the conflict between the young princess and the stepmother arises from the princess' beauty which the stepmother is highly jealous of. Because of her obsessive nature, the two women end up in a conflict where the stepmother plots against Snow White out of her jealousy. Nevertheless, in Emma Donoghue's retelling "the black-and-

white distinction between good and evil fades, and flat characters are replaced by round ones” (Joosen, *Critical* 14).

Oscillating between the ideas of compromise and rivalry, the heroine knows that she “would have liked her if they could have met as girls, ankle deep in river” rather than in a hierarchical relationship where they compete to be the queen (*KTW* 46). However, she is also aware of the fact that “a stepmother’s smile is like a snake’s,” therefore she tries not to yield to her stepmother’s friendly attitude by keeping herself prejudiced towards her (46). However, failing to fulfil her promise, eventually the heroine becomes friends with the young stepmother and they are drawn into a relationship similar to the one between teenager girls. Different from the evil stepmother in the source tale, Donoghue’s young stepmother cares for her stepdaughter. When they are together she arranges her garments, combs her hair, and even feeds her fruit with her own hands. Yet, one day the harmony between them ends when it is upset by the King’s comparison between the two women of his life as such

Once when he came to [my stepmother’s] room at night he found us both there, cross-legged on her bed under a sea of velvets and laces, trying how each earring looked against the other’s ear. He put his head back and laughed to see us. Two such fair ladies, he remarked, have never been seen in one bed. But which of you is the fairest of them all?

We looked at each other, she and I, and chimed in the chorus of his laughter. Am I imagining in retrospect that our voices rang a little out of tune?

...

He let out another guffaw. Tell me, he asked, how am I to judge between two such beauties?

I looked at my stepmother, and she stared back at me, and our eyes were like mirrors set opposite each other, making a corridor of reflections, infinitely hollow. (*KTW* 47–48)

Similar in appearance, both the heroine and the stepmother have hair black as coal, lips red as blood and skin white as snow. But, they are “not the same, not comparable” (*KTW* 48). Even though both of these women have incomparable beauty, the king endeavours to make a comparison between the two making them confront each other. By asking a rhetorical question how he is to judge between such beauties, the king identifies himself with the magic mirror of the evil stepmother in Grimm Brothers’ “Snow White” (48). Since the voice of the mirror in the source tale is in fact the voice of the patriarchal power, the king unwittingly “instigates jealousy between two women so that they start competing for his affection” (Joosen, “Disenchanted” 233). Taken

aback by the question of the King, the heroine and her stepmother look at each other like “the mirrors set opposite each other, making a corridor of reflections, infinitely hollow” (48). Regarding the mirror imagery in the eyes of these two women, Vanessa Joosen emphasises the awkward situation as follows:

The mirrors in the women’s eyes function as an intertextual marker, drawing attention to the object that speaks the father’s words in the traditional tale. In addition, these mirrors show that Snow White and her stepmother have internalized the king’s voice [. . .] Before the king’s ominous words, the two women tried to enhance each other’s beauty as friends. Once the competition has been instigated, they can no longer take each other for what they are, it is suggested, but only see the other in comparison to themselves. (*Critical* 222)

Despite the fact that there is not any sort of friendly relation between Snow White and the evil stepmother in the source tale, Donoghue parodies the arbitrary enmity between these two women by making them friends in her retelling. Moreover, in order to stigmatise the oppressive patriarchal notions and the male gaze, which are associated with the magic mirror, Donoghue makes the only male character of the tale take over the function of the magical object. Therefore, with this strategy Donoghue ruins the bonds that she has earlier constructed between the women and leaves the ground to the young and beautiful women to re-establish their relationship. Although the King is caricatured by being identified with an inanimate object, the impact of his words is more profound than the mirror’s, because the magnitude of his influence surrounds both his daughter and his wife, reducing them “to competing beauties” one of which is “expected to produce a male heir,” while the other one is expected to be a dutiful daughter (Bacchilega, *Fairy Tales Transformed* 55).

After this incident, the heroine and the stepmother drift apart and this separation is accelerated when the stepmother is confined in her room until she is pregnant. Being prey to the patriarchal system, the stepmother, who grows bitter and aggressive, wants to receive a reward in return for her efforts for bearing an heir for the kingdom. Desiring to be queen, she wants to eliminate the heroine and threatens her:

Say that I am queen,  
You are my father’s wife, I replied.  
I will be queen after he is dead, she said.  
I made no reply.  
Say that I am queen, she repeated, her fingers whitening  
around the scepter.  
If you really were, I told her, it would need no saying . . .

I could have you cast out.

Indeed.

If you cross me in this, she said confidingly, I could have a huntsman take you into the forest, chop out your heart and bring it back on a plate. Strong meat, I murmured. (*KTW* 50)

Upon hearing the death of her father the same night, the heroine flees from the palace and her stepmother into the forest. Unable to find a place to take shelter, finally Snow White is taken in by “a gang of woodsmen” who function as the seven dwarves in the Grimm Brothers’ tale (52). In a reciprocal relationship with the woodsmen, she maintains their household while they let her stay in their house. Similar to the heroines of the two tales that have been analysed earlier, the heroine also devotes herself to housework in order to keep her mind busy with daily routine and forget the predicaments she has experienced with her stepmother. But no matter how hard she tries, she cannot help being “haunted by the image of [her] stepmother” (53). She is aware of the fact that the bond between them is not as strong as it was but “stretched thin, wound trees and snagged in thickets, but never broken” (54).

As the bond between them still exists, one day the stepmother finds the heroine in the depths of the forest. In Grimm’s “Snow White,” the evil queen comes to the cottage to kill her stepdaughter, yet Snow White cannot recognise her since she is disguised as an old hag. Whereas in “The Tale of the Apple,” Donoghue rehabilitates the witch by presenting her in her own appearance, and the reason of her visit is to reconstruct the bond between them. After a short conversation, without any intention of misdoing, the young widowed queen tries to revive the old memories and she tries to adjust her garment by lacing up her stays tight like she used to do before. Since the stepmother laces up the stays very tight, the heroine is out of breath and when the woodsmen come they find her in a kind of a stupor. On the second visit of the stepmother, she finds her stepdaughter sitting on a rock and wants to comb her hair as she used to. While combing, the heroine gets numb with pleasure and falls asleep on the side of the rock. On both of the occasions, the heroine is found in an unconscious position by the woodsmen who think that the stepmother intends to commit a murder.



In the source tale, the aim of the evil queen's visits is to kill Snow White. Using exactly the same methods in the rewritten version, the queen first tries to suffocate Snow White by lacing up the corset very tight and on her second visit she aims to murder her with a poisonous comb. Nevertheless, Donoghue parodies the traditional plot both in theme and structure. She still employs the structural elements and makes the source tale echo through the corset and the comb. But by subverting the intention of the stepmother, she lays bare her own parodic strategy which underlines the romantic love between the characters.

On the last occasion, as the conventional object of the tale, the stepmother comes with an apple to feed her with her hands. Seeing her holding an apple, finally the heroine shows her real ideas about her stepmother: "Stepmother, yes, that was the word, there was nothing of the mother about her" (*KTW* 57). Seized to regard her as her mother, the heroine reveals her inner desire and the voice of her conscience by biting the apple the stepmother offers to: "The apple was half ripe. One side was green the other red. She bit into the green side and swallowed and smiled. I took the apple from her without a word, bit into the red side, and began to choke. Fear and excitement locked in a struggle in my throat, and blackness seeped across my eyes. I fell to the ground" (57). The apple they share is the symbol of their mutual lesbian love. When the stepmother bites the apple and gives it to her, she symbolically offers her love to the heroine and by one bite, the very apple takes her to an unknown realm where she finds herself in a peaceful rupture. When she comes to her senses, Donoghue's Snow White finds herself in a glass coffin. Happy to see her alive, the woodsmen inform her that she is going to be taken to another kingdom "where they'll know how to treat a princess" (58). With a piece of apple in her mouth, she understands that it is not a poisonous one but the first apple of her father's orchard. Having appreciated the meaning of the queen's kind gesture, she immediately takes action in order to change her fate as follows: "I made them set me down, and I got out of the box, deaf to their clamor. I stared around me till I could see the castle, tiny against the flame-colored forest, away up the hill. I turned my face toward it, and started walking" (58).

In conclusion, getting out of the coffin which determines her fate without her own consent, the heroine takes a step for her love and her developing lesbian identity. Although the tale has an open ending, Snow White determines the end of the tale implicitly by revealing her repressed but real emotions towards her stepmother with her final attitude. Since Snow White denies the fact that she is her mother, she transfers their bond to another level rather than a stepdaughter-stepmother relationship. With an eye-opening ending, Donoghue charts out a new destination for Snow White which emphasises the passion between women. Rather than making the protagonist another persecuted innocent heroine who finds happiness within the boundaries of “patriarchal vision of comfort,” Donoghue redefines the comfort zone of Snow White by sending her to explore her newly acquired feelings (Martin 19). As Harries states, the woman characters of Donoghue choose “freedom instead of security, self-possession instead of marriage” and with those priorities in “The Tale of the Apple” Snow White and the stepmother destroy their traditional characteristics with an intention of embracing pure lesbian love and women sorority by means of the parodic nature of the tale.

## **2.5. “THE TALE OF THE HAIR” AS A PARODY OF GRIMM BROTHERS’ “RAPUNZEL”**

“The Tale of the Hair,” the sixth tale of the collection, is the rewriting of Grimm Brother’s “Rapunzel.” Consistent with the prevalent narrative strategy of the collection, Rapunzel is both the heroine and the narrator of the tale. However, the tale of Donoghue’s Rapunzel shows some major differences compared to the source plot. Donoghue reimagines the awakening desire and the love relationship of the heroine by giving a subversive twist to the elements in the traditional tale. Hence, in “The Tale of the Hair,” too Donoghue’s parody functions to foreground lesbian identity and the sexual awakening of the heroine.

However, so as to pinpoint the differences and the parodic strategy employed in Donoghue’s revisited version, the source tale can be summarised as follows: A couple who wishes for a child is granted their wish. One day the pregnant woman craves for the rampion which grows in the garden of their neighbour. Their neighbour is Mother

Gothel, the enchantress with a great power and is dreaded by everyone. As the woman cannot eat the rampion she gets paler day by day. Alarmed by his wife's condition, the husband sneaks into the garden of the enchantress and steals a handful of rampion. Having satisfied her cravings with the rampion salad, the pregnant wife wants more of it and sends her husband to the garden again.

Yet, this time he is caught by the enchantress and asked the reason for his being in her garden. After the husband states his wife's condition, the enchantress' heart softens and offers a deal to the husband. According to the deal, the husband can take as much rampion as he wishes but when the baby is born, the enchantress will get the child and take care of it like a mother. After a while, the woman gives birth to a baby girl and the enchantress comes to get her at once. She gives the child the name of Rapunzel, when she is twelve years old, the enchantress shuts her in a tower without any door or stairs but a single window. When the enchantress wants to get in she cries "Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair to me!" Upon hearing the voice of the enchantress she lets her magnificently long blond hair down from the window of the tower and the enchantress climbs up by it.

After a couple of years, while passing through the forest, a prince hears the song of Rapunzel from the tower and he is deeply touched by it. Unable to find a door into the tower, he comes to listen to the song every day. Once, while he is listening to the song, he sees the way the enchantress climbs up to the tower. Next day he takes his chance by imitating what the enchantress has done the day before and when Rapunzel lets her hair down he climbs up to her. Frightened by the prince, Rapunzel, the first time in her life, sees a man and they get on very well. Impressed by each other, the prince asks her to be his wife and Rapunzel accepts it. She wants to go away with the prince, however she does not know how to climb down the tower. Thus, as a solution she asks the prince to bring a skein of silk every time he comes so that they can weave a ladder and when the ladder is ready they can elope.

The enchantress does not suspect their plan, but when Rapunzel lets the secret slip out, the enchantress is raged with fury and cuts off her long hair. She also banishes her from

home to a desert where she lives in misery. At the same night the prince comes again and the enchantress informs her about the situation with anger. While leaping down from the tower in pain, he falls down. His eyes are blinded by the piercing thorns. After many years the prince wanders around in misery and anguish, one day he happens to come to the desert where Rapunzel lives in poverty with her daughter and son. In the desert they recognise each other and Rapunzel hugs him weeping. Her tears wet his blind eyes and then he starts seeing again. In the end, they go to the kingdom and live happily ever after. (Grimm 73-76)

Emma Donoghue tells the story of the heroine's secluded life in the tower which was built by the enchantress. Yet, in the revised version, the Rapunzel is a blind girl who leads a dependent life to the Mother Gothel. By this change Donoghue tries to stress the heroine's ignorance of life. Moreover, she makes the heroine twice gullible and naïve both by shutting her into the tower and shutting her eyes to the reality that surrounds her. Knowing that she is not her biological mother, the heroine asks questions about the beginning of their relationship and each time she is replied with a different scenario that tallies with the source tale: "Sometimes she would say that she had found me growing in a clump of wild garlic; other times, that she had won me in a bet; other times, that she had bought me for a handful of radishes. Once she claimed that she had saved me, without saying from what" (*KTW* 84).

Secluded by Mother Gothel, the heroine knows nothing about life except the things she has learnt from the enchantress. Since the heroine is "blind as a mole," she defines her foster mother as her "cache of wisdom," she trusts in the enchantress as the source of knowledge since she is the only human being that she trusts her life upon (*KTW* 84-85). Living in an indifferent universe where nobody is aware of their existence, Mother Gothel assumes herself as the creator of the heroine. By providing everything she wants, she tries to establish a symbiotic relationship where the heroine is incapable of doing anything on her own. As the other side of this relation, the enchantress is fed by the existence of the heroine.

Although the mentor female character is an enchantress, unlike the other similar figures in classical fairy tales such as witches and sorceresses, she does not hold malignant intentions towards the girl. Her only fault is her obsession with the girl and this excessively possessive attitude brings her downfall. Regarding Mother Gothel's protective nature Sheldon Cashdan remarks that ". . . [W]itches, despite their wicked nature, have maternal longings. They are, after all the other side of the good mother. As such, they harbour the same maternal feelings. This can be seen in the witch's promise to cherish and protect the child. 'I will care for it like mother,' she tells the husband" (157).

As the years pass by, the heroine grows up and she feels the change in her body and spirit. Along with her physical development, her sexual awareness comes to prominence. Owing to the fact that she has never seen a man before, the heroine cannot notice her sexual development. However, her sexual maturation is symbolically represented through her hair. As Marina Warner emphasises "[m]aidenhair can symbolize maidenhead- and its loss too, and the flux of sexual energy that this releases" (*From the Beast* 374). Therefore, both in the source and rewritten tale, her magnificently long hair corresponds to the greatness of premature sexual development she goes through at the age of twelve. Moreover, her wish of living in a tower can be referred as another clue of her sexual development. In Freudian psychology, the high and vertical objects, such as towers, are described as phallic objects and they are associated with the phallus. Hence the heroine, with her extremely long hair and wish of living in a tower, is represented as the figure who is in search of separation from her foster mother because of the sexual urges she has. Furthermore, when the tower is built, she wants to measure the girth of the tower by stretching her arms around however she unwittingly embraces the gigantic phallic object saying that "it was just what [she] needed" (*KTW* 87).

On the day of her first bleeding, the heroine has a nightmare of the hunt. In the nightmare she dreams that:

The wood was full of men who were also stags and also the dogs that chased them. My hair was caught in a tangle of hedge, my clothes shredded by the thorns. There was no safety. There was no cover. There was no door to the tower, when in my

dream I stumbled through the thornbushes and found it at last, clubbing my fists on the stone walls to be let in. (KTW 88)

Although she is soothed by the enchantress at that night, she cannot get over her nightmare and develops a fear of the forest. Due to her secluded life and blind eyes, she leads a very limited and intact life within the tower, so with a rather violent and threatening nightmare, she is afraid of the outer forces that can destroy their peculiar system. However, as the protector of the girl, when the enchantress learns that she is afraid of the forest, she wants her to trust her by uttering the following sentences: “Do you think I’d let you be hurt? . . . Trust my ears to hear the horn, and my fire to scare the wolves, and my arms to keep out the wind” (89). Nonetheless the heroine does not trust anything except the stone walls of the tower. So she wants the enchantress to block up all the windows except the one on the top. In Grimm Brother’s “Rapunzel” Mother Gothel locks up the girl in the tower, yet ironically in Donoghue’s version the heroine wants to be confined in the tower in order to make sure that she is secure and away from the threats of the forest.

As she is living in her enclosed life, one day she sings a song about “the moon and a prince and a ring” to amuse herself (KTW 90). Since the heroine was raised in a highly isolated space where the patriarchal values and culture are absent, hearing the song, the enchantress wants to learn where she has heard it and she answers:

In the stories.  
What stories? she said. I never told you such stories.  
Who’s been telling you stories?  
I must have heard them in the time before.  
She said, You have never even seen a man.  
No, I answered, but I can imagine. (KTW 91)

Ignorant of the real meaning of her songs, she keeps singing them in order to please herself and also to annoy her foster mother, and one day an answer comes for her songs. Due to the fact that she is still afraid of any outer figure that is alien to her life, on the first visit of the prince, she cannot shake off the fear, thus she remains without a reaction. Yet, the next night she has the courage to talk to him and in the end of their conversation the prince climbs up to the tower by means of a rope. Even though the heroine is blind, she makes herself believe that the prince is all she has ever imagined.

Trying to figure out how he is, she describes the prince as follows: “His hand grasping mine at the window was strong as a willow; his neck smelt of lavender, and the shirt on his back as clean as water. His voice was rough, but musical, and his lips against my cheek were soft as rabbits’ whiskers” (*KTW* 93). In the end of their conversation, they kiss each other and make an elopement plan to get married soon.

However, as the biggest twist of the tale, the prince is the enchantress in disguise. In the morning, when the enchantress sees her smiling face she asks the reason of her happiness and the heroine answers in an impertinent way: “Nothing you need to know, or maybe something you never will” (*KTW* 94). The enchantress, who is totally aware of everything that has happened the night before, yells at the heroine: “There is nothing I do not know. . . Everything you think you know you have learned from me . . . Yet you have deceived me” (94-95). The harsh reaction of the enchantress starts an ardent quarrel between the heroine and the enchantress. Yet, the quarrel comes to an end when the heroine declares that she will run away with the prince when she hears his horn that night. Upon her foster daughter’s declaration, the enchantress also confesses that the horn belongs to her and she imitates the voice of the prince showing that she is the prince that the heroine wants to elope with. This time the heroine gets very angry with the enchantress since she has played with her feelings by fooling her. Thus, in equal terms, both the enchantress and the heroine reveal the treacherous plots they weave for each other and also they notice the deception they live in. Concerning the mutual betrayal, Ann Martin describes the situation between them as follows:

At the crisis, they both realize the deceptions they have practiced upon each other: while Rapunzel has been deceived, she has also betrayed as trust, and neither has been true. The roles that both have accepted and assumed thus shift the critique from a condemnation of the patriarchal order to a questioning of the individual’s capitulation to that system. (18)

The relationship between Rapunzel, Mother Gothel and the prince in the classical fairy tale is parodied by the same kind of relationship existing between the heroine and the enchantress in Donoghue’s version. In Grimm Brothers’ “Rapunzel” the enchantress’ love for the girl is a selfish one towards the girl. She does not want to share Rapunzel with anyone that is why she locks her inside the tower. Yet when she discovers the fact that Rapunzel wants to share her love with someone else the enchantress cannot help

damaging the possible happy ending between the prince and Rapunzel. About the same issue Bettelheim emphasises that “[t]o love so selfishly and foolishly is wrong, but not evil. The sorceress does not destroy the prince; all she does is gloat when he becomes deprived of Rapunzel as *she* is” (149).

However, in Donoghue’s version the enchantress’ love for the girl is not a selfish but a protective one. Unlike Mother Gothel, the enchantress does not aim to keep the girl away from sexuality, but from the patriarchal order. Since neither of the two is familiar with the patriarchal order, the enchantress does not want to risk their private system in the forest for the sake of an outsider. Parodying the conservative atmosphere and Mother Gothel of the Grimm’s tale, Donoghue sets a new plot with the same elements but in her tale the heroine herself wants to be secluded from the outer world and she brings her own downfall with her faults. The enchantress is aware of the fact that the heroine is in search of love and sexuality and by means of her disguise as the prince, she tries to release her foster daughter’s desires by introducing an imitation of a heterosexual love to her. Away from the patriarchal values and system, all she can provide for the heroine is her own love and lesbian desire. Unlike the source tale, the enchantress does not direct her anger and jealousy towards the sexual curiosity and desire of the heroine, rather she is angry with the girl just because she tries to fool her.

After the mutual revelation of their betrayal, Donoghue’s Rapunzel, all alone in the tower, cuts off her long hair since she feels that it is her only possession. In “Rapunzel” Mother Gothel cuts Rapunzel’s hair off in order to punish her. Yet, in “The Tale of the Hair” the heroine makes use of her plaits as a tool to run away from the enchantress and the tower, creating an opportunity towards her own liberation. Since she is blind, she cannot go further into the forest. Still close to the tower at night, the heroine hears the voice of the enchantress sobbing and calling her to let down her hair at the base of the tower. As she cannot have an answer from the tower she begins climbing up. The heroine cannot see but hears the voices she makes: “I heard the puffs of breath as she began to climb. When she got to the top and looked in at the empty room, there was a wail like an animal in a trap, and then a sound like a hollow tree falling in the first storm of the winter” (KTW 98).



Upon finding the room empty, the enchantress prefers death to life without the heroine and she lets herself fall from the tower. However, she does not die but gets blinded by the thorns when the heroine finds her lying on the ground. Depicting the same scene in the source tale, the heroine embraces the enchantress and picks up the thorns from her eyelids. Nevertheless, Donoghue shifts the prince figure with the enchantress and establishes a new bond with lesbian undertones by destroying the former foster mother-daughter relationship. At the end of the tale, both are blind, Donoghue's Rapunzel starts to cry: "I took her head on my chest and wept over her, salt in her wounded eyes. It was the only way I knew to clean them. I didn't know whether they would heal, or whether she would have to learn the world from me now. We lay there, waiting to see what we would see" (KTW 99).

In the rewriting of the Grimm Brothers' "Rapunzel," Donoghue challenges the patriarchal and incontestable values of the fairy tales by celebrating the female agency and unity through the revised female figures. In her parody, Donoghue creates another version of the tale where the protector-protected relation is transformed into a lesbian romantic relationship. Although the heroine of the tale is not aware of her lesbian identity, the enchantress takes over the role of mentor to guide and reveal her hidden desires. Since the tale ends with a rather sad condition, Donoghue redefines and reconstructs the happy endings of fairy tales by introducing an unhappy moment but a promising future at the end. Even though they are blind, the fact that they are together and eliminate their lies and betrayals show the final state of their relationship where they can 'look' at the future with hope and enjoy their existence in a different romantic phase.

## **2.6. "THE TALE OF THE VOICE" AS THE PARODY OF HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN'S "THE LITTLE MERMAID"**

Different from the other fairy tales that have been studied so far, "The Little Mermaid" does not end happily rather ends with an acceptance of the failure and symbolic death of the heroine. In Donoghue's version, Andersen's tale is restructured with a happy result

outside the source plot of the story. In order to add a joyous ending to the tale, Donoghue first changes the thematic structure of the story and places the characters in an unconventional mode. Since the fairy tale characters are flat characters, Donoghue transforms them in to more down-to-earth position where they can make mistakes and take lesson from them rather than being the victim of the other's faults.

Creating flawed characters instead of flawless ones, Donoghue imagines a new tale for these characters in which they write their own stories according to their wishes. Therefore, in "The Tale of the Voice," the heroine is educated through the redemptive processes of making a mistake, suffering due to it and learning a vital lesson from it. This process of education parodies the traditional plotline of the source tale which involves neither self-learning nor development of the heroine. In a distinct fashion from the other tales, Donoghue in her reimagined version of "The Little Mermaid" does not dwell on the sexual desire and lesbian awakening of the heroine. Yet, she accentuates the significance of identity and the wisdom of women. Thus, when the motivation of the tale is taken into account, "The Tale of the Voice" will be analysed through the search of identity of the character while she tries to reclaim her own voice.

In Andersen's classical tale the story progresses as follows: An eleven year old little mermaid lives in an underwater kingdom with her sea king father, five sisters and grandmother. When she turns fifteen she is permitted to swim to the surface of the sea to see the world above. Her sisters who are older than her go up to the surface each year and tell what they experience and see there. Upon their return, the little mermaid loves listening to their stories and longs to see how the above world is.

When she is fifteen, she swims up to the surface and sees a dashing prince on a ship and falls in love with him. However, all of a sudden a storm breaks out and the mermaid saves the prince from drowning. She leaves the half-conscious prince on a beach and watches him from a distance every day while waiting to be recognised by him. Curious about the human world and life, the little mermaid desires to be a human as well in order to be with the prince. So as to make her dream come true, she goes to the Sea Witch and sells her voice for a pair of legs which will enable her to live in the human

world. However, the mermaid is warned by the Witch about the irreversibility of the magic. In other words, once she is human she will never be able to return to the sea. Moreover, if the prince loves her and kisses her, she will be able to gain a soul and in the opposite case, when the prince marries another girl, the little mermaid will perish brokenhearted the day after the marriage.

Upon drinking the potion, the Little Mermaid meets the prince and he is charmed by her beauty despite her muteness. However, the king wants his son to marry the daughter of another king. Although the prince does not love her, he marries the daughter of the king having learnt that the girl is the one who saved him from drowning. Even though the Little Mermaid knows that the whole story is a lie, she cannot tell the truth since she is mute. The wedding is announced and the Little Mermaid waits for her death. However, her sister brings her a knife which they get from the Sea Witch in return for their hair. If she kills the prince with the magical knife she will be a mermaid again and return to the sea. Unable to kill the prince, the mermaid jumps into the sea and her body turns into foam. However in the end, by means of her strong wish the mermaid obtains an immortal soul and rises up to the kingdom of God (Andersen 76-106) .

In Donoghue's version, the tale starts with a regretful statement that the experienced heroine remarks for the predicament she has gone through before. Dissimilar to the source tale, the heroine is not a mermaid but the daughter of a poor fisherman in a fishing village. As the narrator of her own story, the heroine underlines her maturity when she has made such a mistake which changed her life at that time. With this detail, Donoghue also parodies the idea of innocence and inexperienced nature of the young fairy tale heroines by making her own heroine older and mature in age.

Like the Little Mermaid, the heroine falls in love with a man at first sight who is totally incompatible with herself. Although the distinction between them is not as far-fetched as it is between a prince, a human, and a mermaid, nonhuman creature, the gravity of the gap between the poor heroine and the affluent man makes it an impossible love. Knowing the fact that they do not belong to the same class the heroine emphasises the major differences as follows:

His eyes were black like ink; mine blue as the sea. His hands were pale, gripping purse and quill; mine were scored red fish scales. His boots looked like they never touched the ground; my toes were caulked with mud. He was as strange to me as satin to sackcloth, feathers to lead, a heron to herring. (*KTW* 186)

Changed after the first encounter with the man at a distance the heroine describes her unusual behaviours towards her family as the symptoms of her unexpected love. As a result, the heroine becomes estranged to herself. In order to avert the strange feeling and to find a solution for her love sickness, she decides to consult the witch. By means of the witch motif, Donoghue establishes a parallel situation between the Little Mermaid and the heroine. Due to the fact that they are incapable of making the men fall in love with themselves because of their insufficient sides, the mermaid and the heroine make a deal with the witch to compensate their deficiencies. However, since every magic comes with a price, for the sake of her love, the heroine also takes the great risk that is going to change her life.

As she climbs up the steep slope, she tries to imagine the witch by relying upon the rumours she has heard from the townspeople. However, when she reaches the cave of the witch, a typical fairy tale witch with “a stoop, a stick, a wart on her nose and whisker on her chin” welcomes her (*KTW* 189). As if she knows what the girl would ask for she begins asking questions about the man:

Is he worth it? she asked.  
 Worth what? The climb? What climb she said dismissively. I meant the price.  
 He's worth any price, I said, steadying my breath.  
 ...  
 How did you know about him? I asked.  
 There's always a him, she pointed out. A girl comes here for three reasons. To catch him, to quicken his blood, or to bring her own.  
 ...  
 Tell me now, what would you do for him?  
 I stopped to think. If he was drowning, I said slowly, I suppose I'd jump in the sea to save him. (*KTW* 190)

With the last sentence, the tale highlights the echo of Andersen's classical tale. Since the mermaid saves the prince from drowning, when the heroine is asked about the possible limits of her love, jeopardising her own life for him is her answer to the question. In addition, having skills in magic for years, the witch expresses that she has seen enough men in her life who are not worth what she will pay.

Trying to warn and dissuade the heroine, the witch as a mentor figure lays bare her wisdom about men to show the heroine that her efforts are all in vain. However, utterly different from the stereotypical helping figure, Donoghue demonstrates a type of mentor who is more of a misleading figure than a helper. As Ann Martin also indicates; “the potential mentor figures are less invested in teaching specific lessons and more interested in prompting the younger characters to experience when it comes to finding difficulties and hardships for themselves, especially when it comes to finding love” (8). Parallel to the explanation of Martin, the witch does not try to teach the heroine how she should behave in order not to be heartbroken, yet she allows her to suffer from the unrequited love in order to experience the hardships.

Finally explaining what she wants from the witch, the heroine pours her heart’s desire: changing into a better kind of woman a man could like. As an important detail, her wish is not about changing the man into a perfect lover but changing herself into a modified figure that deserves the love of the man. Seeing themselves inferior to their unrequited lovers, both the Little Mermaid and the heroine make the mistake of wishing a redundant change for the sake of the men. Being the voice of wisdom, the witch articulates the moral of the tale: “Change for your own sake, if you must, not what you imagine another will ask for you” (*KTW* 192).

However, blinded by her own desire, the heroine insists upon having her wish come true. The witch accepts her wish in exchange for her voice. Hence, when she meets him she will have him but she “won’t be able to laugh or answer a question, to shout when something spills on [her] or cry out with delight at the full moon” (*KTW* 193). When her wish is done by a single touch of the witch, the girl finds herself totally mute and rushes to the house to head directly to the city. Since she knows what she is looking for, the heroine finds the man in the city easily.

The heroine impresses the man immediately and he takes her to his home. Since the heroine is mute, he calls her “his little foundling” (*KTW* 196). In other words, by virtue of the fact that she has sold her identity and lost her voice for the sake of the man, she

willingly has chosen to be defined by him and be dependent on him to exist in an alien environment. Her words are replaced by the kisses signifying unconditional acceptance and in return she gains a life dependent upon his wishes. The sexual dimension of the relation also makes the heroine happy since she thinks that it is the guarantee of their future marriage. As her sense of belonging to him increases by the very first intimate intercourse, she wants to ask about marriage. Wishing to express her expectations and learn the consequence of their relation but finding herself unable to do so, the heroine feels the loss of her voice for the first time.

Yet, when the heroine observes the other ladies at the ball for the first time, she notices that her predicament is not a special one since the women whom she sees at the balls also suffer from the same voicelessness. Although they are able to speak, when something spills on them they only sigh or when they see the full moon they watch it in silence. Having chosen the voiceless life, these women are the symbols of willingly oppressed female figures of the patriarchal system. Being one of the objectified, mute or inaudible victims of the system, they are treated as ornamental objects of the balls who merely appeal to the eye.

One day, when the heroine dances at the ball she cannot see the man around. Searching everywhere, finally she finds him cheating on her and describes the scene she has witnessed as follows: "When I found him on his back in the garden he was not singing, but whimpering in delight. I couldn't see which girl was on top of him: her smooth head was turned away" (*KTW* 199). However, having lost her voice as well as her identity, the heroine cannot leave him at first. Later on, when she becomes aware of her situation in the house she starts to question herself for the first time. Despite the fact that she is muted by the witch, she cannot stop the questions asked by her inner voice and by means of these she eventually awakens to her pathetic condition before the man. Finally, she comprehends the severity of her condition by noticing the bitter reality of her self-prostitution in return for his insufficient love which does not exist anymore.

After spending some time to make money in the city, the heroine realises that she misses her small fishing village and sets off for home. When she reaches the village, she

goes straight to the witch's cave with the aim of questioning the result of the spell. After the heroine throws stones to the cave, the witch comes out and starts speaking as if she knows the question: "I said you'd catch him, she remarked, leaning on her stick as if we were resuming an interrupted conversation. I never said you'd keep him. There's no spell long enough for that" (*KTW* 201). Later on, the witch informs the heroine about the sacrifice that her sisters have made so as to get her back. Her sisters, like in the source tale, give their hair to the witch for the sake of the heroine and apparently their wish comes true.

Since she goes to the witch to reclaim her voice and former identity, she finds out that reversing a spell is a task which is not easy and requires free will of the person who is subjected to it. The witch emphasises that if she wants to have her voice again she will have it, just the same way she has wanted to lose it before. Having appreciated what the witch has said, the heroine gains her voice back never to lose it again. When she reaches home, her family welcomes her with their embraces and love. After one year, the happiness she has had before begins to settle again and the heroine marries a fisherman "who liked to hear [her] sing, but preferred to hear her talk" (*KTW* 204).

In conclusion, in the rewritings of classical fairy tales Donoghue reverses the stereotypical and sexist elements that have not been questioned for ages. Employing the same strategy in "The Tale of the Voice," Donoghue parodies the sexist dynamics and the stereotypical roles of the tale either by changing the plot of the tale or providing a free will to the characters to create an alternative and peaceful ending. Like in the other tales revised by Donoghue, this tale also carries an unconventional and peculiar happy ending. This time the tale ends with a marriage, but it is not the one that the heroine has longed for, rather it is the healthier and promising one where the groom is more compatible with her. Apart from the parodic strategy and issues of happy ending, Donoghue also tries to shed light upon the power and significance of the bond and interaction between the heroine and the witch. Although at first sight it seems that the witch tries to accelerate her downfall, later on it is understood that the witch endeavours to make her realise the value and importance of the things she has taken for granted. Upon reclaiming her voice, the heroine appreciates the significance of her identity and

her free will which make her the person who she really is. Therefore, the witch as a mentor, as a parodic character of the stereotypical wicked design and as an indirect provider of the heroine's happy ending makes the heroine realise herself, write her own story and create an opportunity for her own happiness.



## CONCLUSION

Written in the second half of the twentieth century, postmodern rewritten fairy tales maintain a negative attitude towards the conventional, conservative and sexist ideologies of the classical European fairy tales. Angela Carter and Emma Donoghue, who practised the tenets of postmodernism along with anti-patriarchal values, rebel against the common and unquestionable rules of the fairy tale genre by rewriting the classical tales in a totally different tone and style in their acknowledged works. The major reason of their revisionist rewriting of the fairy tales was to emancipate the oppressed female characters from the sexist discourse and well-established standards of the fairy tale genre.

The classical fairy tales are the quintessentials of the genre and they perfectly represent the conventions, moral and stereotypical aspects of setting, time, characters, narrative style and happy endings. However, in the twentieth century, the exemplary works of the fairy tale genre do not include the stereotypical aspects and the conventional structure. Along with the influence of postmodernism, the literary works have challenged the long established rules and authorities, and allocated a new ground for the marginalised and oppressed voices to make them heard. Postmodernism is “incredulity toward metanarratives” and “postmodern knowledge is not simply a tool of the authorities,” but “it refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable” (Lyotard xxiv-v). Since postmodernism follows a challenging and sceptical attitude to the limitations of the prevalent systems, it also resists the patriarchal and sexist ideologies which degrade women and make them secondary to men. Accordingly, the fairy tale genre, as the perfect target of postmodern literature, received negative reaction for its sexist discourse, which debases the female figures, and for the entrenched rules of its metanarrative quality.

Hence, the postmodern women writers, who were fascinated with the fairy tales’ potential of change, also challenged the conservative essence and the discriminative qualities of the genre with their works. While some of them wrote new postmodern fairy tales with totally different aspects and messages, the others rewrote the classical European ones in accordance with subversive and revisionist aim. Through their

rewriting process of the traditional fairy tales, the women writers utilise postmodern parody in order to subvert the tenets of patriarchy and the fairy tale tradition. As a transformative strategy, parody is used both in the structural and thematic sense by these writers. In structural parody, the fairy tales are dismantled through reversing or changing the plotline, narrative style and other structural elements. However, in thematic parody the set of relations, the moral of the tale and the contextual qualities of the original tale are altered. In both structural and thematic parody, the traces and echoes of the original tale are still visible and audible to the reader. Therefore, the postmodern reader can recognise the altered tale through its structure and context of the newly constructed version and understand the reasons for the change.

Some of the fairy tales in *The Bloody Chamber and the Other Stories* by Angela Carter have been studied in terms of fairy tale rewriting and postmodern parody so as to reveal the changes that have been made in the ingrained rules of fairy tales. In this collection, Carter rewrites the classical fairy tales of “Bluebeard,” “Beauty and the Beast,” “Snow White,” and “The Little Riding Hood” from a feminist perspective by reimagining them through both thematic and structural parody. Owing to the fact that these classical tales internalised the restrictions and oppressive rules of the patriarchal ideology, their female characters are deprived of independence, autonomous desire, sexual freedom and egalitarian state with men.

Thus, with the aim of distorting these orthodox elements, Carter parodies the love and sexual appeal between woman and man by presenting a bestial love between a human and a non-human magical being or an animal. Emphasising the act of devouring as the representation of the unruly male libido, Carter attributes the female characters the task of taming the literally and metaphorically animal male figures. By setting an equal relation between the female and the male, Carter also challenges the idea of passivity of women in sexual, romantic and social affairs. Transforming the traditional ‘innocent persecuted heroine’ into an independent and sexually active figure who is not afraid of having sex with an animal or a man, she destroys the traditional representation of woman as passive and subdued. Furthermore, the author also opposes the notion of commodification of women in an exchange system. Being a commodity between two men, the female figure is liberated through her own free will and independent nature by

unleashing herself from patriarchal restrictions. Apart from that, Carter also changes the style of the classical European fairy tales with her own idiosyncratic language. Rather than rewriting the tales in typical fairy tale language, Carter makes use of her highly detailed, symbolic, courageous and sophisticated style in her versions so as to fully rewrite and challenge the classical fairy tales.

The reason for Carter's rewriting of these classical fairy tales is to problematize the essence of the fairy tale genre and to offer an alternative solution to the restrictive form and context of the genre with its own elements. Dispossessing the tales of their traditional elements of structure, narration and themes, Carter rewrites them by changing these elements into unconventional and nonconformist ones which aim to raise questions and create awareness about the metanarratives in the fairy tale genre. Although her reimagined fairy tales did not contribute to the fairy tale genre and even destructed its deep-rooted rules, they made a great impact on the postmodern fairy tale genre with the alterations and problems they revealed.

Pursuing the same goal as Angela Carter, Emma Donoghue in her *Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins* demolishes the restrictions of patriarchal ideology by parodying the well-known classical fairy tales in her revised versions. Making use of the classical European tales of "Cinderella," "Beauty and the Beast," "Snow White," "Rapunzel" and "The Little Mermaid," Donoghue mainly dwells upon the possibility of lesbian desire between the female figures of the tales. Deconstructing the dominance of heterosexual romantic and sexual relationship, Donoghue celebrates the power of the bonds between the woman characters by rewriting their relationship. Donoghue offers an alternative to the single dimensional antagonistic or supporting relationships between the female characters of fairy tales by rehabilitating these bonds between the female protagonist and secondary female characters presented as evil stepmother/fairy godmother/sorceress.

Since the sexually passive and virgin figure is a conventional representation of women the classical fairy tales, Donoghue highlights the twice marginalised women by representing them as sexually active lesbians. Hence, she contextually parodies the innocent female figure in her new creation of the fairy tale heroine who is homosexual and aware of her own desire. Apart from the lesbian desire, Donoghue also parodies the

enmity between these characters who have solely good or evil qualities. Disregarding the stereotypical characteristics, she redefines the personalities of the female characters by depicting the heroines prone to making mistakes and endowing the antagonists with benevolence and support. Moreover, the classical tales are parodied in terms of structural changes. Since these tales exist separately from each other and progress in a linear plot, Donoghue sets a new linking narrative strategy for them in which the secondary character becomes the narrator/heroine of the following tale. By these linking questions she merges the tales of different narrators and makes them a single long tale whose tellers and listeners also heroines and helping figures pass on their experiences of emancipation and love to the other women characters and readers. Furthermore, like Carter, Donoghue alters the language of the fairy tales by rewriting them in her own style. Showing similarities with the conventional fairy tale language, Donoghue also uses her individual style of simple and direct tale telling within the first person singular voice in narrating her revised fairy tales.

Unlike Carter, Emma Donoghue not only focuses on heterosexual love but also sheds light on homosexual love between the characters. Her purpose of rewriting the classical European fairy tales in various aspects is to give voice to the marginalised people, neglected notions of gender and defuse the strong heteronormativity in the fairy tales. By depicting the female characters as strong and bold in terms of liberation and sexuality, Donoghue demolishes the taboo of sexuality in fairy tales and she replaces the naïve heroines with sexually active lesbian ones. She contributes to the postmodern fairy tale genre by introducing the homosexual female characters and the notion of sorority between women to the highly conventional tales in order to protest against the very nature of the classical tales.

In conclusion, regarding the rewriting of fairy tales Maria Micaela Coppola summarises the common ground where both Carter and Donoghue stand as follows:

Carter and Donoghue do not merely recombine traditional motifs, but they re-create and, at the same time, undo the link with tradition and with the literary canon; in doing so, they make this link visible to the reader. Starting from their experience . . . the writers assume the role of performers of new meanings. They use and manipulate the material at their disposal, and invite the reader to do so. (134)

Although these two postmodern women writers make use of similar strategies and stress the similar subjects in their fairy tale rewritings, they differ in their approach in dealing with the sexist ideology and restrictions of the fairy tale genre. With the aim of revisiting and subverting the ingrained rules of the genre, they contribute to the genre with their individual style, structure, theme, and pave the way for the other writers who wish to expand the horizons of the classical fairy tales. Hence, these two women writers with their provokingly subversive rewritten fairy tale collections, both in theory and practise, deconstruct the original state of the tales by postmodern parody and reconstruct them by rewriting with the aim of liberating women in the sexual, social and literary realms.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In his *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, the founder of psychoanalytic approach Sigmund Freud states that “regular representation of the human person as a whole is in the form of a house.”

<sup>2</sup> Despite the lack of exact definition “anti-fables serve to oppose, re-imagine, subvert, invert, deconstruct or satirise elements of fairy tales and to present an alternative narrative interpretation, outcome or morality” (Çizakça 1).

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