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Závěrečná práce

**Angela Carter's Variations on Perrault:
Persecution and Rescue in "Little Red
Riding Hood", "The Snow Child" and "The
Sleeping Beauty"**

Variace pohádek "O Červené Karkulce",
"Sněhurce" a "Šípkové Růžence" u Charlese
Perraulta a A. Carterové

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Proclamation

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Poděkování

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Anotace

Hlavním cílem této závěrečné práce je komparativní analýza vybraných pohádek: „O Červené Karkulce“, „O Sněhurce“ a „O Šípkové Růžence“. V práci budou srovnávány tradiční pohádky od Charlese Perraulta a moderní volné adaptace od A. Carterové publikované ve sbírce *Krvavá Komnata*. Na pohádky bude nahlíženo také z pohledu psychologie S. Freuda. Pozornost bude věnována pohádce jako samostatnému literárnímu žánru a její historii. Do závěrečné práce bude taktéž zahrnut srovnání tradičních a moderních pohádek a vysvětlení klíčových pohádkových symbolů. Popsány budou postmoderní a feministické vlivy, které ovlivnily Angelu Carterovou během její literární tvorby. Opomenuta nebude ani genderová problematika ve vztahu k pohádkám.

Klíčová slova: Červená Karkulka, Šípková Růženka, Sněhurka, vlk, Angela Carter, Charles Perrault, psychologie, feminismus, postmodernismus, pohádka, gender

Abstract

The main aim of the final work is a comparative analysis of the following fairy tales: “Little Red Riding Hood”, “Snow Child” and “The Sleeping Beauty”. The traditional versions written by Charles Perrault and the modern adaptations published in *The Bloody Chamber* collection, penned by Angela Carter, will be compared. The similarities and differences in the stories as well as various symbols are analysed. The stories are discussed against the psychoanalytical background. The fairy tale as a literary genre and its heritage are also dealt with. Attention is paid to feminist ideas projected into Angela Carter’s writing, as well to particular postmodern influences on fairy tales. There will be briefly discussed the problem of gender in the connection with the fairy tales.

Keywords: Little Red Riding Hood, The Snow Child, The Sleeping Beauty, Angela Carter, wolf, Charles Perrault, psychology, feminism, postmodernism, a fairy tale, gender

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Introduction

The first chapter of the final work entitled: “Angela Carter’s Variations on Perrault: Persecution and Rescue in “Little Red Riding Hood“, “The Snow Child“ and “The Sleeping Beauty“ introduces the fairy tale as a literary genre, its heritage and history. Typical fairy-tale characters are described here. The similarities and differences between traditional and modern adaptations are also discussed.

The second chapter deals with the brief description of the writers’ biographies. The subchapters describe the postmodern and feministic influences on Angela Carter’s writing, which are essential for better understanding of her literary work including *The Bloody Chamber* collection.

The third chapter explains different symbols used in fairy tales, e.g colours, numbers, a journey, the presence of wolf ,etc.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to the detailed analysis of “Little-Red- Riding-Hood“ various adaptations.

The fifth chapter describes the short story about the Snow Child.

The sixth chapter introduces two variations on “The-Sleeping-Beauty“ fairy tale.

The seventh and the last chapter puts the light on perceiving female characters through various perspectives. It tries to break prejudices about submissive and naive women and dominant men. It is explained through gender.

1 Fairy Tales in Literature

Fairy tales exist in various foreign languages and they are a part of the national heritage of each country. We could even say they are multicultural or worldwide. Germans call this kind of stories „Marche/Märchen”, the English call it “fairy tale”. The term “fairy tale” has three different meanings: a telling about fairies, an unbelievable story or an illusion. ¹

Based all stories only on fairies as main protagonists would be too narrow-minded and shallow as these supernatural tiny creatures are not always presented in these stories even though they are responsible for its name. Mythology describes fairies as protectors of wells and streams. Folk- tales used to be originally classified as tales with the presence of the supernatural without the occurrence of fairies. ²

Traditional fairy tales reflect timeless world wisdom, desire for fulfilling the good and the power of words expressed through the story. Moreover, they should have educational, moral, entertaining, artistic and therapeutical effects.³

1.1 The Most Famous Authors of Fairy Tales

The history of fairy tales is dated back into the times of ancient Greece and Egypt, where archaeologists found the tales written on papyrus. Among the first pioneers in collecting tales belonged the Brothers Grimm and also Charles Perrault. The Brothers Grimm tried to record fairy tales in the most realistic way. Due to their long- lasting work in scientific research the basics of academic literary analysis of this genre were established. The original fairy tales penned by the Grimms were found to be cruel and absolutely not suitable for children because of the chosen topics, description of scenes and the plot.⁴

¹ ČEŇKOVÁ, J. a kolektiv. (2006). *Vývoj literatury pro děti a mládež a její žánrové struktury*. Praha: Portál

² Ibidem

³ Ibidem

⁴ SIROVÁTKA, O. (1998). *Česká pohádka a pověst v lidové tradici a dětské literatuře*. Brno: Ústav pro etnografii a folkloristiku AV ČR

In Perrault's point of view, the traditional tales were those which were spread generation by generation orally and contained some folk motifs. He adapted the tales in order to reflect political, social and moral situation in France. His works are usually rather ironic and sarcastic.⁵

Though the tales of the European canon (the Grimms or Perrault) are thought of as "original" fairy tales, there is no genuine or authentic version of a fairy tale. In fact, fairy tales are constantly being reworked and adapted to reveal new facts of a particular culture or the creativity of an author or a storyteller. The scientists claimed that the reason for repetition of motifs, e.g. characteristics of human or supernatural beings and other motifs, took an inspiration in one best original.⁶

In the 19th century, the authors of fairy tales tried to reflect contemporary issues, e.g. social problems, nationalism and patriotism. Their aim was to implement these topics into the tales as Perrault did, for an example.

1.2 Characters in Traditional and Modern Tales

The main fairy tale characters are depicted in a "black and white" combination of perceiving world around us, like two counterparts, the good and the evil, the positive and negative ones. Female protagonists should embody the qualities like attractiveness, beauty, being warm-hearted, patient, modest, grateful and kind. Both sexes should be depicted only in the superlatives. Male protagonists should embody characteristics like being brave and courageous, witty, loving and caring at the same time.⁷

V. J. Propp divided fairy-tale heroes into subcategories: a helper, a wanted person, a sender, a giver, a saboteur, etc. He was interested in finding the same repetitive characteristics among them. He found out that particular functions and parts of the fairy tales remain unchangeable. It is typical of elementary structure of fairy tales that the reciprocal relationships between functions and parts are the same so that it is possible to predict the upcoming sequences of the events.⁸

⁵ Ibidem

⁶ Ibidem

⁷ Ibidem

⁸ Ibidem

If the hero is an animal, it does not act out as an inhabitant in familiar environment, it lacks its animal's instincts. It is an anthropomorphic being which mirrors or projects our human nature and behaviour, virtues or sins. One of the evil/good characteristics is either suppressed as a negative one or praised as a positive one.⁹

- A Traditional fairy tale is an epic and prosaic genre of literature spread by oral tradition, which is based on fantasy. The original author is unknown. It is very hard to distinguish any national fairy tales as they all belong to the European Literary Heritage.

¹⁰

- A Modern fairy tale was distinguished out of the traditional one. This type of fairy tale does not show "the fight" against the good and the evil description of reality so strictly. Their authors were inspired by folk tales and legends but the stories mainly mirror personal artistic style of writing. Literary critics find this type of a fairy tale just a story enriched with some magical features. They are not so optimistic and attractive for the readers, the moral is not explicitly presented either.¹¹

⁹ TOLKIEN, J.R.R. (1992). *Pohádky*. Praha: Winston Smith

¹⁰ Ibidem

¹¹ ČERNOUŠEK, M. (1990). *Děti a svět pohádek*. Praha: Albatros

2 Biographies

2.1 Charles Perrault

Charles Perrault was a French writer and poet born on the 12th of January in 1628 into a rich bourgeois family and died on the 16th of May in 1703 in Paris. He had a lot of siblings, and was well brought up. His first writing attempts were shared with his brothers. He also entered politics and belonged among the closest friends of the French minister Colbert. He believed that progress was possible only through the Catholic faith and was the main defender of the Modernism trend. Perrault is well-known for his collection of fairy tales including “Little Red Riding Hood”.

Perrault was elected to the French Academy, where he actively participated on publishing the “Dictionnaire.” The book explained and showed what kind of language is acceptable or not for a writer and artist to use, e.g. too vulgar, too formal style of writing. ¹²

All his stories are written originally in prose with the versed moral at the end. He was supposed to have collected all those tales, which primarily originated in traditional folklore, for his children’s amusement. ¹³

2.2 Angela Carter

„Reading a book is like re-writing it for yourself. You bring a novel, anything you read, all your experience of the world. You bring your history and you read it in your own terms.“¹⁴

Angela Carter was an English journalist, novelist and fiction writer. She was born on the 7th of May in 1940 in Eastbourne and died on the 14th of February in 1992 in Yorkshire. She passed

¹² Charles Perrault Biography. com.[online]. [Last accessed 20.4.2017]. Retrieved from: <http://www.biography.com/people/charles-perrault-9438047>

¹³ TRAMES. (2007). *Charles Perrault’s Paradox: How Aristocratic Fairy Tales Became Synonymous With Folklore Conservation*. Volume 11. Lydie Jean University of Paris IV Sorbonne, pp.276-283

¹⁴ The Famous People-Angela Carter. [online]. [Last accessed 2.5.2017]. Retrieved from: <http://www.thefamouspeople.com/profiles/angela-carter-715.php>

away due to lung cancer. Her father worked as a journalist and his job became an inspiration for later years of her life. When the World War II broke out, she was sent to seek a hiding place and security at her grandmother's place. As a teenager she suffered from extreme mental eating disorders. She studied English literature at the University of Bristol. Being a passionate traveller helped her in mastering fluency in other two foreign languages, German and French. Having explored different parts of the world inspired her for writing her works. She temporarily moved to Japan, where she worked as a journalist for three years. Her stay in Japan enriched her personal and professional self- discovery. The issue of gender relations became more urgent and actual to write about for her. *Love* (1971) and *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972) came out during her stay abroad.¹⁵

She interpreted and explained very positively Marquis de Sade's views of female sexuality in her essay, *The Sadeian Woman and the Ideology of Pornography*, in 1978. She tried to justify him for accepting women also out of the frame or scope of being "factories for producing babies".¹⁶

While writing and publishing her works she also taught and held academic titles at several prominent universities like University of Adelaide, University of East Anglia and University of Sheffield. She also contributed with articles to *The Independent* and *The Guardian*.¹⁷

Among her major works belongs *The Bloody Chamber*, a short-fiction book, which was published in 1979. It became one of her most significant short-story books, receiving a lot of controversial criticism. Some literary critics have been very sharp when viewed the collection as a modern pornography for both genders. They said that sex is and always was the trade commodity which sells the best no matter the quality of the literary work. She re-wrote Perrault's traditional fairy tales in modern, feministic, more challenging, erotic and exotic way at the same time. Especially the story *The Company of Wolves* was later on adapted for a movie and other stories also for a stage performance. *Nights at the Circus* (1984) is regarded as her best-known book, which implies ideas of postmodernism, feminism and magical realism.¹⁸

¹⁵ Ibidem

¹⁶ Ibidem

¹⁷ British Council. Org. [online]. [Last accessed 2.6.2017]. Retrieved from: <https://literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/angela-carter>

¹⁸ Ibidem

2.2.1 Postmodernism

I have added this subchapter due to considering Carter also as a postmodern writer using literary techniques through which she tried to break mainly social and sexual taboos.

The term ‘postmodernism’ employs certain specific characteristics in the post WWII period. The postmodernist literature does not have to necessarily refer only to the postmodern period. The writers belonging to the Theatre of the Absurd, the Beat Generation, and Magic Realism could still be called postmodernists. There are some literary contributors worth mentioning as Samuel Beckett, William S. Burroughs, Jorge Luis Borges, Julio Cortázar and Gabriel García Márquez.¹⁹

Common themes and techniques of postmodern literature are changes in narrative and plots, the use of dreams, myths, legends and fairy stories, expressionistic and even surrealistic descriptions, the element of surprise or shock, the horrific and the inexplicable.²⁰

The main techniques used by authors are irony, playfulness, black humour, metafiction, fabulation, paranoia, intertextuality. Intertextuality in postmodern literature can be a reference to another literary work, e.g. to folk and fairy tales or different genres or styles.²¹

Magic Realism can be classified either as an independent literary genre or a technique popular among Latin American writers. It draws on the theory that supernatural elements (figures, objects) are depicted as ordinary or with a light surrealistic manner. The themes and subjects are often imaginary, fantastic and with a certain dream-like quality.²²

¹⁹ SHARMA, R. and CHAUDHARY,P.(2011).*Common Themes and Techniques of Postmodern Literature of Shakespeare*. International Journal of Educational Planning & Administration. Volume 1, Number 2, pp. 189-198 © Research India Publications. [online]. [Last cited 22. 4. 2017]. Retrieved from: <http://www.ripublication.com/ijepa.htm>

²⁰ Ibidem

²¹ Ibidem

²² Ibidem

3 Symbolism in Fairy Tales

3.1 The Symbol of Colours

The red colour of Little Red Riding Hood's velvet cap, which was sewed and given to her by her grandmother, stands for passionate feelings including the sexual ones. It can also mean the transmission of attractiveness from the old grandmother to her granddaughter, who will be the wolf's postponed prey. *"She is too young to fulfil the "duty" which the red cap represents but not too small to wear it on her head."*²³

In other analysed stories the red colour can symbolise love, desire or blood shed either from murdering or through menstruation. In contrast to it, the white colour in "Snow Child" usually expresses innocence, virginity, naivety, purity or snow.

3.2 The Symbol of the "Journey"

It can mean either travelling through woods, which Little Red Riding Hood set off, or there could be more metaphorical meaning representing the personal "path" of new experience on the way to adulthood. The way of finding the heroine's true self and the place in the world as in "Wolf- Alice".

3.3 The Symbol of the "Wolf" in Fairy Tales

At first, we should mention that this ravenous predator, the beast disguised in fur, the inhabitant of the animal kingdom is not the main negative or perhaps positive character only in all traditional or modern variations of the story about "Little Red Riding Hood."

It is quite particular about its diet among which usually belong small lambs, piglets and other kinds of cattle. Even small children and young pretty girls are its witnesses, if lucky enough,

²³ CARTER, A. (1979). *The Bloody Chamber and The Other Stories*. England: Penguin Books

they might be consumed as a whole and therefore there is some hope left for being found and rescued.

The etymology of the English word for “wolf” was “wulf”. It is dated back to the period of the Old English, having Indo-European roots. The terms “werewolf” and “werewolves” are combined from two words “wer” =man and “wolf”). Linguists work with the proper term, “lycantrophy” (lycos- wolf and antropos- human being), which means the transformation of a human being into an animal/ a wolf under certain circumstances or conditions. It was believed by that time doctors that the person suffering from a mental illness, insanity or madness can metamorphose into a wolf. This transformation should have been one of the symptoms of the disease. The sever forms of the illness made people inhuman and let the animal side fully develop.²⁴

Generally, a wolf is depicted in very negative light in stories and fairy tales. It bears quite contradictory attributes in some religions and cultures, too. In some of them it is pictured and hyperbolised as horrible, monstrous and bloodthirsty beast which terrify people and particularly children. On the one hand, it embodies the qualities of bad nature and behaviour like slyness, untruthfulness but, on the other hand, also the desire for victory, being competitive and ambitious. In Christianity the wolf represents Evil, Devil and cruelty. It is a destroyer and sometimes even a heretic.²⁵

The exception out of the rule is the legend about founding the city of Rome by two brothers, Romulus and Remus, who were saved and bred by a she-wolf. A female-wolf represents the symbol of maternity. Following the legend, the Italians and Italian art and craft portray wolves as fearless animals.²⁶

The belief in werewolves was the most widespread in Europe. The medieval literature sometimes described a werewolf as a human being changed into a wolf due to the possible influence of the full moon as a furious “wolf demon”. Those creatures were active only during

²⁴ COOPEROVÁ, C. J. (1999). *Ilustrovaná encyklopedie tradičních symbolů*. Praha: Mladá Fronta

²⁵ Ibidem

²⁶ *Animals – symbols.com: Symbols and their meaning* [online]. [Last accessed 2.6.2017]. Retrieved from: <http://www.animal-symbols.com/dog-symbol.html>

the night. According to legends, a werewolf could be killed only by the use of a sharp silver tool. This act resulted in reciprocal metamorphosis back into human-like appearance. The same procedures as with revealing witchcraft were applied on finding werewolves among people at that time.²⁷

The history of psychology is aware of the cases of so called “wolf’s children”. These are the stories of kidnapped, lost or abandoned children who were raised and bred by a she-wolf or other animal females. Those children spent their childhood in a pack or a herd. Their further assimilation among people seemed to be impossible. By copying animal’s behaviour, they absolutely lost the ability to speak, barking or howling substituted the human speech for them. They were able to acquire basic human hygienic habits and social skills, e.g. walking on two limbs instead of four. These and other stories with the wolf motif have become inspiration for movie makers and writers.

²⁷ Ibidem

4 “Little-Red-Riding-Hood’s” Versions

4.1 Charles Perrault’s traditional version of “Little Red Riding Hood”

His fairy tales were not meant only for entertaining but also addressing moral, social and psychological issues of the 17th - century society. He is mostly compared with the tales of the Brothers Grimm. The story itself is known under many titles as *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Red Riding Hood*, *Little Red Cap*.²⁸

At the beginning of the story Little Red Riding Hood is pictured as “the prettiest girl ever seen.” Her good grandmother sewed a red cap for her so that she started to be called Little Red Riding Hood after it. Everybody was fond of her. Having been told that the grandmother was sick, she set on the journey to the village but had to go through the forest first. The grandmother’s dwelling was located beyond the mill in the first house in the village. Her mother prepared the basket with a baked cake and a pot of butter. In other variations she usually carried a bottle of wine, some flowers and a cake. She met a wolf during making her way through the wood. Its first intention when seeing her was to savour this little sweet creature. She was saved for the moment because of the wolf’s fear of being witnessed by the woodcutters working on duty nearby. He bet with the girl whether he or she would arrive first at the grandmother’s. Due to her naivety and innocence she did not realise the wolf’s real intention and honestly told him the truth. The activities like running after butterflies or picking up flowers occupied her time so soon she found herself distracted and lost the bet. Meanwhile the wolf managed to find ill granny lying in the bed, faked her granddaughter’s voice, persuaded granny to let him in by telling him how to unlock the door, ate her up and dressed into her nightclothes. Lying in the bed the wolf was desperately awaiting Little Red Riding Hood.

There is no happy ending compared to later versions. No huntsman appeared to save the grandmother and the girl from the wolf’s stomach. They are both eaten up without no hope of rescue.

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PERRAULT, CH. (1891). “*Little Red Riding Hood*.” *The Blue Fairy Book*. Trans. Andrew Lang. Ed. Andrew Lang. London: Longmans, Green, and Company

Neither in Perrault's version nor in Carter's one is the figure of the gamekeeper mentioned or described. The representation of the male character is presented only in Brothers Grimm, where it is divided between the role of the gamekeeper and wolf.

"Grandmother, what big arms you have!"

"All the better to hug you with, my dear."

"Grandmother, what big legs you have!"

"All the better to run with, my child."

"Grandmother, what big ears you have!"

"All the better to hear with, my child."

"Grandmother, what big eyes you have!"

"All the better to see with, my child."

"Grandmother, what big teeth you have got!"

"All the better to eat you up with."²⁹

In comparison with the traditional old rhymed moral the modern one could be translated as a message to young French ladies, who Perrault wanted to address in his stories. This tale was not targeted primarily for young readers but adults. Attractive and charming women should not have loose manners and let themselves being treated as a "wolf's prey" or dinner. Perrault tried to warn them in advance that especially those types of charming, polite, handsome, sweet young gentlemen might be the most dangerous kind of temptation. The prevention against tempting is to avoid them. There are many types of "wolves". Those "wolves" can ask you out in the street or even invite you into their homes.

Rhymed moral:

„Little girls, this seems to say,

Never stop upon your way,

²⁹ PERRAULT, CH. (1891). "Little Red Riding Hood." *The Blue Fairy Book*. Trans. Andrew Lang. Ed. Andrew Lang. London: Longmans, Green, and Company, p. 54

*Never trust a stranger-friend;
No one knows how it will end.
As you're pretty so be wise;
Wolves may lurk in every guise.
Handsome they may be and kind,
Gay or charming-nevermind!
Now, as then, 'tis simple truth- Sweetest tongue has sharpest tooth!*³⁰

Bruno Bettelheim in his work *The Use of Enchantment, The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* disagrees with Perrault's version of the story. As his "Little Red Riding Hood" was never meant to be a fairy tale for children, it lacks a lot of features of this literary genre. Perrault wrote the story for amusement at the French Court and as a warning for declining social morals in the society. In Perrault's version, everything is explicitly expressed, there is nothing left unanswered. As children grow, they have tendency to read the fairy tales in a different way and discover new hidden meanings which they have not seen before and could not understand because of their age. When reading fairy tales, children do not need anybody to explain or persuade them what the story really should be about.³¹

Little Red Riding Hood is advised by her mother, who stands for security, not to go astray from the right path. As a mother she is aware of her daughter's longing for adventure. Little Red Riding Hood resigned to keep the virtues of a small child and take the mother's advice for granted, and let herself be driven by desire. She was protected in the cottage by the wood and at her home which presented safety. The threatening danger is her changing sexuality for which she is not emotionally matured yet. A person who is prepared for the first sexuality initiation can manage it and take a benefit from it, if not, it can lead to regression. Children perceive and

³⁰ PERRAULT, CH. (1891). "Little Red Riding Hood." *The Blue Fairy Book*. Trans. Andrew Lang. Ed. Andrew Lang. London: Longmans, Green, and Company, p.60

³¹ BETTELHEIM, B. (1976). *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. London: Thames and Hudson.

equal the sexual act as an act of violence. After the experience with the wolf, Little Red Riding Hood lost her children's naivety.³²

We can read the story about the girl with the red cap differently in modern days compared to Perrault's period and time when "Little Red Riding Hood" simply embodied a young promiscuous young lady who falls for the charm of a womanizer, represented by a wolf whose prior intention is to "eat his prey", to get her into bed. The old slang French phrase for losing girl's virginity could be translated into English as "*She had seen the wolf*" and is dated back into the 17th century. Marriages were arranged by parents and the virginity was an absolute requirement for the successful business trading of young women and the economic prosperity of the bride's family.³³ The French intellectuals believed that this female promiscuity "was destroying family life and social values."³⁴

The symbol of the sexual intercourse is the situation when the girl got undressed in the tales being just so curious to see how her grandma (the camouflaged wolf) might look in her nightgown. Despite picturing a wolf as a trouble-maker and a villain in the story, Little Red Riding Hood is an accomplice of her faith. She could not escape her destiny of being eaten as the temptation of being seduced by a wolf was irresistible.³⁵

4.2 "The Werewolf"

Angela Carter's first variation on "Little Red Riding Hood" is called "The Werewolf".

The story brings us into the times of practising witchcrafts and secret devoted murders. The opening of the story refers to beliefs in witches and Devil having a picnic at a local graveyard digging up and savouring corpses of the dead. People tried to protect themselves against vampires and werewolves. Then the storyline continues with a description how a little girl set up on her journey to visit her sick grandmother.

³² Ibidem

³³ Ibidem

³⁴ ORENSTEIN, C. (2002). *Little Red Riding Hood Uncloaked: Sex, Morality and the Evolution of a Fairy Tale*. New York: Basic Books.

³⁵ Ibidem

The quote below tries to introduce the appearance and the nature of the wolf to the reader. Moreover, it tells a lot about the courageous heroine in the tale who was always prepared for any danger coming around. Equipped by her father's hunting knife she faced the beast in the forest.

*“It was a huge one, with red eyes and running, grizzled chops, any but a mountaineer's child would have died of fright at the sight of it. It went for her throat, as wolves do, but she made a great swipe at it with her father's knife and slashed off its right forepaw.”The child wiped the blade of his knife and wrapped up the wolf's paw in the cloth.*³⁶

Reaching the house when her sick grandmother was lying shivering and half unconscious

³⁶ CARTER, A. (1979). *The Bloody Chamber and The Other Stories*. England: Penguin Books.p.110

in bed, she wanted to give her cold compresses, one of the attributes of the modern variations of the tale closely connected to a real world when a person is suffering from a fever.

After finding out that the wolf's paw turned into her grandmother's old, wrinkled hand with a wart, with marks of the tough life and work, she was not afraid of facing the truth. Under the bed sheet was lying her granny with a hand chopped off at the wrist heavily bleeding. Shouting and screaming out loud, neighbours rushed to help and recognised the wart as a witch's nipple. They drove old woman out of the house, chasing her through the forest, beating her with sticks until she ended up dead.

With biting irony and sarcasm, we could even say it was the happy ending. The grandchild was safe and happy because she inherited the grandmother's house and lived happily ever after.

4.3 “The Company of Wolves”

“One beast and the only one howls in the woods by night. “Fear the flee the wolf, for, worst of all, the wolf may be more than he seems”³⁷ Werewolves were carnivore creatures longing for meat and blood, murdering and hunting so it was better to avoid them if your life seemed precious to you.

We are first introduced with legends about deeds which were made by werewolves in the town and villages in the far away cold country. Men voluntarily joining pack of wolves only transformed into their animal parts when naked. The life story of one family whose husband left during the wedding night and then returned once the wife was remarried with children who were harmed by the werewolf is also presented.

The story is about a blond beautiful child who did not have to grow up so fast as the others in husky, tough and unwelcome conditions because she was the beloved only child of their parents. This time is Little Red Riding Hood described as a blond child with a “bloody” red cap celebrating her 15th birthday. Having not experienced much of cruelty and being always protected, the girl set off the journey through woods to deliver some food and drinks to her sick grandmother. On the way she met a stranger whom she was in favour with and so that accepted

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 110

the suggestion proposed by him.” *Is it a bet: he asked her. Shall we make a game of it? What will you give me if I get to your grandmother’s house before you?*³⁸

Not suppressing her flirty character, she went on in the same nature: *”What would you like? She asked disingenuously. “A KISS”*³⁹

Due to the girl’s bet with an unknown man, the werewolf disguised for a hunter, came into the hut and ate the grandmother. *“She has her Bible for company, she is a pious woman.” He strips off his shirt, his nipples are ripe and dark as poison fruit but he’s so thin [...]. He strips off his trousers and she can see how hairy his legs are. His genitals, huge. Ah!huge.*⁴⁰

The quote below shows the familiar question, just slightly changed to fit Carter’s notion of the story:

“What big eyes you have.

All the better to see you with.

What shall I do with my shawl?

Throw it on the fire, dear one. You won’t need it again.

What shall I do with my blouse?

Into the fire with it, too, my pet.

What big arms you have.

All the better to hug you with.

What big teeth you have!

*All the better to eat you with.*⁴¹

Once entering the grandmother’s house, she found the wolf dressed into the old lady’s garments lying in the bed. She joined the werewolf in the bed. Feeling no shiver or fear as she did not believe in the supernatural power or the evil connection between werewolves and Devil. Carter used the same pattern for describing a virgin soldier in *The Lady of the House of Love*, where the werewolf was substituted by a charming vampire Countess.

³⁸ Ibidem, p.116

³⁹ Ibidem, p.118

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p.120

⁴¹ Ibidem, p.120

*“The girl burst out laughing, she knew she was nobody’s meat. She laughed at him full in the face, she ripped off his shirt for him and flung it into the fire [...] the old bones under the bed set up a terrible clattering but she did not pay them any heed.”*⁴² It was her grandmother’s bones which tried to give her a warning not to devote herself to a wolf. It used to be acceptable behaviour between women of different generations that they sometimes did not wish good to each other. So there is no notice why the girl did not pity her dead grandmother.

Angela Carter stresses out the importance of the girl’s virginity which saved her from being devoured by wolves. *“She stands and moves within the invisible pentacle of her own virginity. She is an unbroken egg; she is a sealed vessel; she has inside her a magic space the entrance to which is shut tight with a plug of membrane; she is a closed system.”*⁴³

Little Red Riding Hood gave the wolf her “flash but not meat”, which a lot of other women in reality, too. Even though women were considered the weaker second sex in the society and their ordeal was to sacrifice themselves during a sexual intercourse and marriage, Carter never accepted this depiction.

*“Carter’s women, who ‘give’ themselves to men even though, because they are objects, men already own them. Since the heroine claims her sexual desire and her flesh as her own, she can give her “immaculate flesh” willfully to the werewolf and also take of him.”*⁴⁴

Not being fully aware of the potential danger coming from a wolf, even though physically prepared and matured but still remaining childish, she managed to face the wolf. Her naivety and trust in people let her to be willingly disarmed when she let the hunter carry her basket with food, drinks and a sharp knife which could be misused against her will.

*“The blizzard died down. All silent, all still. See! sweet and sound she sleeps in granny’s bed, between the paws of the tender wolf.”*⁴⁵

At the end of the story we can find a reference to the title as the werewolf says, *“Those are the voices of my brothers, darling; I love the company of wolves. Look out the window and you’ll*

⁴² Ibidem, p.121

⁴³ Ibidem, p.121

⁴⁴ Ibidem, p.115

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p.124

*see them." The child looks out upon a multitude of wolves howling in the snowstorm.*⁴⁶ Instead of being afraid, she takes pity on the wolves for being so cold.

4.4 “The Wolf- Alice”

In this tale the main heroine is not a girl dressed into red clothing and wandering through the wood to bring her sick grandmother some food. The presence of wolves stands in the centre of another’s attention. The key motif which unites all the mentioned stories is the occurrence of wolves/werewolves. Alice was found as a little girl in a wolf’s den, lying next to her shot mother. She survived because of being brought up by wolves. Having the wolve’s company around, she got used to hunting, howling, walking and running on four paws instead on two limbs, biting and scratching. No matter how much time she spent in the convent with nuns who desperately tried to teach her basics of hygiene, eating and drinking. She never acquired the human speech. She was not always treated nicely by nuns and other people and later she was sent to the castle where the Duke lived. He was an outcast, feared person, a vampire, a corpse-eater, who was not afraid of anyone or anything.

He abused her as his maid. Sharing the living space with such inhuman creature made her recall and remember flashbacks from her early childhood. There was a piece of furniture she made a friend with. It helped her out of feeling blue and lonely. Even though she later on realised the mirror reflected just her image and there was no one else present, it still made her feel happy and sufficiently substituted the missing companion she had never had. The mirror served as an important evidence of transformation of a half- beast into a human being. At first, Alice had to face and cope with two identities. The fact that she was born as a human and never fully accepted among the wolf’s pack made her wait at the “junction.”

As the time passed she spent a lot of years in the presence of the Duke growing up from a girl into a young lady in the puberty. This period in human life is always marked with finding the individual identity and discovering self. So did Alice, too. Except mental changes she had to face also the physical ones like menstruation and her changing body. The red colour symbolizes the blood: the Duke is a blood-sucker but there is also the blood from menstruation and blood which was shed during shooting.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, p. 126

5 “The Snow Child”

“The Snow Child” is a very short version of a classical fairy tale, “Snow White”, by Angela Carter. The plot of the story is rather simple. The Count and Countess went for a ride on their horses during one winter afternoon. The Count expressed his wishes of having a daughter but the couple remained childless. They saw snow falling down, a hole filled with blood and the black raven sitting on a twig during passing through on their journey. *“I wish I had a girl as white as snow, I wish I had a girl as red as blood. I wish I had a girl as black as that bird's feather.”*⁴⁷ Once he finished his ideal description of the girl, she suddenly appeared in front of him as a miracle. She had white pale skin, scarlet red lips and black dark hair, wearing no garments. The girl was absolutely admirable and adorable and the Countess hated her at first sight. The Countess mind was occupied by only one thought: *„How to get rid of the girl as soon as possible?”*⁴⁸ she wondered.

The Countess firstly dropped her glove in snow, secondly she threw a diamond brooch into the frozen pond, thirdly her boots slipped off her feet and every time she ordered the girl to fetch it for her being fully aware of the possible danger. *„Now the Countess was bare as a bone and the girl furred and booted.”*⁴⁹ The Count commented it on each time: *‘I'll buy you new gloves .’**“Is she a fish, to swim in such cold weather?”*⁵⁰

The last task was to pick up a rose. The Snow Child pricked her finger on the thorn and started to bleed and scream and finally fell down dead. The Count burst into tears and jumped off his horse and satisfied his sexual needs with the girl’s dead body.

There were only some marks left reminding us of the girl’s presence, a blood stain in snow and a rose lying next to it. All the clothes and stuff were back on the Countess. At the end of the story the Count picked up the rose and handed it to the Countess. She dropped it with final words that “it bites.”

⁴⁷ CARTER, A. (1979). *The Bloody Chamber and The Other Stories*. England: Penguin Books, p.93

⁴⁸ Ibidem, p.93

⁴⁹ CARTER, A. (1979). *The Bloody Chamber and The Other Stories*. England: Penguin Books, p.94

⁵⁰ Ibidem

In connection with this story, I would like to mention the term “Electra’s Complex” coined by the Austrian psychologist and psychiatrist with Moravian roots, S. Freud. It is a sexual desire to have an intimate relationship between a daughter and her father, who is an idealized man in her life. So the daughter and the mother become rivals as they try to compete to win the father’s love and attention. In this story, the Countess representing the Snow White’s step- mother in the traditional version is jealous of the girl’s charm and thrilling beauty which she does not have.⁵¹

There can be traced the same colourful symbols, the white colour of snow or the pale girl’s complexion, which might mean purity, innocence and naivety. The red colour might have associations with menstruation, sex, passion, love, blood etc.

From the psychoanalytical point of view, the Snow Child is only an unreal representation of the Count’s wish to have a child. She is a product of an “embodied project “of his imagination. He is the one from the couple who desperately dreams about having such a beautiful daughter, as Angela Carter thought about him when writing the story. His main interest lays in having sexual relationship with her because his marriage probably lacks it.

Joosen claims that in modern and postmodern retellings of traditional fairy tales as this story is we can trace a decline in magical features so typical of this genre. By doing this they try to make a fairy tale more realistic but it can also be ambiguous for the audience.⁵²

Bruno Bettelheim, neo- Freudian, in *The Uses of Enchantment*, describes the symbol of a mirror in the traditional version of “Snow White” as representation of the girl herself. She passes her complexes on her mother. From the Freudian point of view, she becomes the mother’s rival on gaining her father’s attention and love and also the possibility of replacing her position. The mirror which has an ability to talk shifts its function from being a magical object into a real one. The disenchantment and disappearance of magic may help to bring a closer attachment to reality and understanding for readers.⁵³

⁵¹ Ibidem

⁵² JOOSEN, V. (2007). *Disenchantment of Fairy Tale: Retellings of “Snow White” between Magic and Realism. Marvels and Tales*. Vol.21 No.7. p. 228- 239

⁵³ PROPP, V.J. (2008). *Morfologie pohádky a jiné studie. H plus H*.

6 “The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood”

This version of the well-known fairy tale about the sleeping princess awaiting the arrival of her dear prince is penned by Charles Perrault. There are some similarities but also deviations from the original we are mostly familiar with. This fairy tale has many adaptations, where the title changes or the magical number varies from 3, 7 up to 13. The side characters are changed too, e.g. the ogress queen mother, fairies, godmothers, etc.

In English it is known as “The Sleeping Beauty”, in German as “Dornröschen”. In other languages the motif of sleeping is not stressed out but the attention is drawn to the protection mechanisms like rose thorns, walls, etc.⁵⁴

For example, the number of three good fairies who are invited for the christening of the little princess to become her god-mothers is counted with magical number 7. There is not only the wish of being the most charming and beautiful person in the world. Fairies bestowed other gifts upon the princess. *“She should have a voice like nightingale, play every musical instrument with excellency, dance with perfection, have the temper of an angel, do everything with wonderful grace”*.⁵⁵ The evil fairy, having felt abounded and forgotten, casted a spell on the princess. She was supposed to die after being pricked by a thorn or any sharp object. The youngest fairy’s spell was not so powerful but at least she was able to save the princess’s life and change the spell into a hundred-year sleeping, not dying.

The chosen prince who broke the spell and saved the princess and the whole kingdom kept one dark secret. His ogress mother was the reason. He tried to hide his secret about the marriage and having children with the Sleeping Beauty until his father died and he had to become a new king and rule his kingdom. His father married the ogress only for the promise of wealth, not love. The new king had to leave his family and the whole kingdom to help his soldiers in the war against the enemies. The fact that she was the prince’s mother did not stop her from wanting to destroy his happiness as she was in favor of eating and devouring small children for lunch and supper. She sent the Sleeping Beauty with children away from the palace so that no one

⁵⁴ PROPP, V.J. (2008). *Morfologie pohádky a jiné studie.H plus H.*

⁵⁵ The Sleeping Beauty: Charles Perrault. [online]. [Last accessed 20.5. 2017]. Retrieved from: <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/perrault01.html>

could find them in their secret hiding place in the woods. The servant dwelling in the place was once asked to prepare the children for her feast. As he belonged to the loyal ones who liked them so much and was even willing to risk his own life, children and their mother were hidden and saved for some time. Instead of having been served tender children's meat, she dined a young slaughtered lamb. The same deception was done when the wicked ogress asked for the Beauty to be killed. Finding out that she was cheated on when wandering in the woods one day as she heard high-pitched kid's voices from the hiding, she planned even more cruel revenge for all of them. The king was supposed to be in the war for a long time, the ogress did not expect him to return back at all. To hide her terrible deed, she made up an excuse. The Beauty and her children should have been torn up and devoured by ravenous wolves in the woods

Oedipus complex, coined by Sigmund Freud, is embodied in the ogress queen mother, who is so jealous of her son's wife that she decided to kill her grandchildren and her daughter-in-law instead of taking care of them during the king's absence.

The vat full of toads, snakes and various kinds of serpents was brought to the courtyard for the family and the servants. The terrible plan was not fulfilled as the king just in time rode into the yard and, being a witness of such misery, he saved them all. The cruel ogress queen could do nothing more or better than to throw herself into a vat as she would be punished anyway.

Moral:

*„Many a girl has waited long
For a husband brave or strong;
But I'm sure I never met
Any sort of woman yet Who could wait a hundred years,
Free from fretting, free from fears.
Now, our story seems to show
That a century or so,
Late or early, matters not;
True love comes by fairy-lot.
Some old folk will even say
It grows better by delay.
Yet this good advice, I fear,
Helps us neither there nor here.
Though philosophers may prate
How much wiser 'tis to wait,*

*Maids will be a-sighing still --
Young blood must when young blood will!*⁵⁶

Modern moral could sound: Some problems in our lives can be only solved out at the right time, no sooner no later until we are ready for them to deal with.

There is no need to explain the title of the story. The woods, where the queen ogress sent the whole royal family for upcoming death, were added to this version because of the secret place of the Sleeping Beauty and her children. The fairy tale ends with a surprising happy ending but as always goodness wins and evil is defeated.

Bruno Bettelheim explains in his work the importance of “sleeping” in the title of the fairy tale but also the personal development of human beings from childhood to puberty and then adulthood. The symbol of the “path” in the heroine’s life is important. Bettelheim says that the puberty is the most complicated period of our life which is full of excitement and activity on one side, and finding out proper self when being passive on the other side. These two processes are connected and without fulfilling one or the other there is no result in growing up into a fully mature and independent personality.⁵⁷

There are some ridiculous moments displayed, e.g. the prince commenting on her garments as rather old-fashioned which his grandmother would have probably worn a century ago. Time usually passes and stops with events around the main hero. The world should remain the same till princesses’s awaking not the way Perrault did. Fashion changed and the people got older. He combined too many things together to create a story. According to Bettelheim, Perrault’s stories lack “the timelessness”, which is an essential element for making a right impression on readers.⁵⁸

The core of the tale lies in the sexual awakening of a young lady. To be fully prepared physically and mentally she needs her beauty “sleep” to mature enough for the first menstruation, sexual initiation and marriage. No parents can protect their children against

⁵⁶ The Sleeping Beauty: Charles Perrault. [online]. [Last accessed 20.5. 2017]. Retrieved from: <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/perrault01.html>

⁵⁷ BETTELHEIM, B. (1976). *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. London: Thames and Hudson

⁵⁸ Ibidem

what is natural and inevitable in their lives. Only by experiencing all the necessities they understand their own needs and desires.⁵⁹

All the years the loving king tried to protect his daughter but when she reached the critical age of 15 she pricked her finger and fell asleep. This event must have happened without the assistance of the caring parents. Fifteen years is the age associated with the first menstruation, which was called “a female curse” as it is explained by Freudian scholars.

The reason why among all the admirers who came to rescue the Sleeping Beauty only our chosen prince could win her heart and return her back to life is a good timing. The princess was not ready to be “awaken” and rescued sooner than the right moment came. She was not passive during her long sleep. She actually grew up from a child to a pretty young lady who is mature and fully responsible for her deeds. All the destructive walls and thorns turned into beautiful flowers and allowed the prince to enter the palace where his love was awaiting his arrival for a century.⁶⁰

6.1 “The Lady of the House of Love”

“During the daylight lying in her wooden coffin just a single kiss woke up the Sleeping Beauty in the Wood. “Be alive or be he dead. I’ll grind his bones to make my bread.”⁶¹

The story is Carter’s loose variation on “The Sleeping Beauty.” The title, “Lady of the House of Love” presents the main heroine, the Countess, who desperately tried to find true love but brought about only sadness and death. The Lady, was a vampire queen, living in a haunted castle in a deserted village in Romania. This country was always associated with vampires because of the Vlad Dracula. She dwelled in the castle only with ghosts of her ancestors and a mute governess, who was helping her to find her “preys” during the daylight and setting up the “blood feast” later on. At the very beginning, her place of dwelling seemed very dark, spooky and frightening to stay and visit, it was more “the house of despair and

⁵⁹ Ibidem

⁶⁰ Ibidem

⁶¹ Ibidem, p.69

torment". With the arrival of a cyclist some things changed positively for the Countess and got new meanings.

As we expect from Angela Carter, the story is full of erotic symbols and gothic elements. On the one hand, the Countess represents the supernatural world, the evil side, darkness and torture. On the other hand, she is also a victim of her own destiny, being isolated and entrapped in her loneliness. Desperately longing for love as every human being does, her wish is fulfilled at the end. Having prepared first a plan for seduction and the loss of virginity with an attractive soldier, she is left dissatisfied and deeply hurt.

*"She herself is a haunted house. She hovers in a no-man's land between life and death, sleeping and waking, behind the hedge of spiked flowers [...] She is so beautiful, she is unnatural, her beauty is abnormality, a deformity. Her beauty is a symptom of her disorder, of her soullessness. Her hair falls down like tears."*⁶²

The English soldier on his holidays was riding on his bicycle through the country. To refresh himself in the heat, he stopped near a fountain to have a rest. The Countess's governess met him there and invited him for dinner. The unknown traveller was happy to be offered some accommodation. He represents the human reason because of the technical machine constructed by humans, a bike, and refuses to believe in the irrational and mythical creatures who the Countess belongs to. *"To ride a bicycle is in itself some protection against superstitious fears, since the bicycle is the product of pure reason applied to motion."*⁶³ He never thought of her as a vampire but rather a physically and mentally sick person who needs some help. *"We shall take her to Zurich, to a clinic, she will be treated for nervous hysteria. Then to an eye specialist, for her phobia, and to a dentist to put her teeth into better shape. I shall cure her of all these nightmares."*⁶⁴

Despite the initial surprise from the unknown, he was not scared to death to run away. His clear mind, naivety, the virginity saved his life and protected him against any harm. *"Due to his virginity, he does not yet know what there is to be afraid of. This lack of imagination gives his*

⁶² CARTER, A. (1979). *The Bloody Chamber and The Other Stories*. England: Penguin Books, p.70

⁶³ Ibidem, p.71

⁶⁴ Ibidem, p. 73

heroism to the hero. “⁶⁵ He broke the spell unconsciously and made the Countess human for a while. She cut herself when trying to sweep shattered broken pieces of her glasses and experienced the feeling of shedding her own blood. To calm her down he sucked her running blood.

*“So delicate and damned, poor thing. Quite damned. He would like to take her into his arms and protect her from the ancestors. There is no room in her drama for improvisation, and this unexpected, mundane noise of breaking glass breaks the spell in the room, entirely. What is she to do now?”*⁶⁶

The fortunetelling out of the pack of Tarot cards is the Countess ‘s only pastime activity which she is fully devoted. Trying to change and foresee her destiny and future keeps her occupied. The key card which is later picked up by the young soldier showed the lovers in embracement near death. That is the sign she was waiting for.

*“She sits at her round table in her white dress, with the cards laid out before her. She has dropped off to sleep over the cards of destiny [...]she is not sleeping.I will vanish in the morning light, I was only an invention of darkness“.*⁶⁷

The Countess is also very fond of her scarlet red roses planted in her garden. There roses are fed from the bones and flesh of the Countess’s victims. Due to their sharp thorns, it is very easy to be pricked. A rose is also considered to be the “queen” among flowers because of her beauty. The Countess is found suddenly dead only with the Tarot cards and a red rose. After returning back to his regiment in France, the soldier tried to resurrect the “dead” rose to life as if he could do the same with the Countess.

The vampire queen herself mentioned the fact of disliking sucking blood, and being a human killer. She would have loved to have a pet and a husband to love. Now, when she is an adult,

⁶⁵ CARTER, A. (1979). *The Bloody Chamber and The Other Stories*.England: Penguin Books, p.73

⁶⁶ Ibidem, p.74

⁶⁷ Ibidem, p.75

she no longer can be fed on animals but needs a man for fulfilling her tastes. In fact, she lacks sexual experience and the pleasure of the intercourse.

*“She has not eaten for three days. It is dinner-time. It is bedtime...She has waited for him all her life without knowing it. She will assure him, in the very voice of temptation:”My clothes have to fall and you will see before you a succession of mysteries.”*⁶⁸

There are some similarities being traced with either Perrault’s version or the Grimm’s one. The Countess is awaiting her “prince”, the “hero”, dressed up in fancy clothes. This time she wore her mother’s wedding dress which went out of fashion decades ago. So the young handsome English soldier found it rather old fashioned but very nice in contrast to her enchanting eternal beauty. *„See how I’m ready for you. I’ve been ready for you, I have been waiting for you in my wedding dress, why have you delayed so long...it will all be over very quickly. You will feel no pain, my darling.”*⁶⁹

*“The carnival air of her white dress emphasized her unreality, like a sad Columbine who lost her way in the wood a long time ago and never reached the fair.”*⁷⁰

Another symbol explained is the kiss meant to wake up the princess from the hundred-year sleep worked via versa over here. The young soldier had “maternal feelings” and instead of seducing the Countess he put her in the bed for good night and slept on the floor minding Countess’s “Sleeping Beauty” sound sleep.

The story ends relatively positively as the young man is saved but the Countess is dead. In the language of fairy tales, goodness won and evil was defeated. The Countess’s wish of unchaining from immortality and eternity was fulfilled. She was freed like her lark which she kept in the cage to make her company. She was “imprisoned” in her castle waiting for her hero to come over and save her.

⁶⁸ CARTER, A. (1979). *The Bloody Chamber and The Other Stories*. England: Penguin Books, p. 78

⁶⁹ Ibidem, p. 80

⁷⁰ Ibidem, p. 83

7 Fairy Tales and Feminism

*“There are two definitions of woman in fairy tales. There is the good woman. She is a victim. There is the bad woman. She must be destroyed. The good woman must be possessed. The bad woman must be killed, or punished. Both must be nullified [...] the ending of these tales tells us that happiness for a woman is to be passive, victimized, destroyed, or asleep.”*⁷¹

Angela Carter presented her protagonists in fairy tales in multiple ways. They could be sexual exploits, victims but, at the same time, heroines. Her stories have only one in common [...] *“they all centre around a female protagonist, be she clever, or brave, or good, or silly, or cruel, or sinister, or awesomely unfortunate, she is centre stage, as large as life[...]*”⁷²

One of the purpose of fairy tales is to present the cultural norms and help to develop gender roles among children through the process of socialization. The norms play a large part in the development. The characters depicted in stories help children to determine what it means to be a male or female even though we cannot think about fairy tales as the main representatives of gender. They might affect the way children are treated by peers and adults and influence future behavior expectations.

According to feminist criticism, the traditional canon of European fairy tales reflects and reproduces the patriarchal values of the society at that time. *“These stories portray fairy women as “weak, submissive, dependent, and self-sacrificing, also beautiful objects, powerless to influence the events in their lives while men are powerful, active, and dominant.”*⁷³ If there is a presence of a powerful women in a fairy tale, she is usually ugly and evil (e.g.an ogress, a witch, a step-mother).

⁷¹ KUYKENDAL, L.F., STRURM, B.W.(2007).*We Said Feminist Fairy Tales, Not Fractured Fairy Tales! The Construction of the Feminist Fairy Tale: Female Agency over Role Reversal.* Children and Librarians.The Journal of the Assosication from Library Service to Children. The USA, p. 8

⁷² Ibidem, p.9

⁷³ Ibidem, p. 10

The early wave of feminism (1950s and 1960s) analyzed the roles of women embedded in the folktales and fairy tales and found them “*an unfortunate source of negative female stereotypes . . . [and] . . . one of the many socializing forces that discouraged females from realizing their full human potential.*”⁷⁴ Fairy tales and folktales considered to be “feminist” were rewritten during the late 1970s and 1980s, presented the feeling that women were naturally separate from men and rightly superior. Recent feminist studies on fairy tales show that a truly feminist children’s story has a strong, empowered main character, regardless gender. Children are able to see through “fake characters” in tales and are most likely not to identify with anyone at the end.

⁷⁴ Ibidem, p.11

CONCLUSION

Like the fairy tales written by the Brothers Grimm, Perrault's and Carter's stories were not originally aimed at children's audience. They rather focus on the noble or adult readership and, therefore, this is not a common pattern in endings that evil must be overcome and defeated by goodness and happiness. Nevertheless, some of the tales in *The Bloody Chamber* might seem to end on a positive note.

There are some questions which might probably arise in our minds if we want to characterise the main protagonists. At first sight, they might be perceived or observed as innocent, submissive, naive and weak creatures of "the second sex", even though, as feminists would say, the most powerful ones. Little Red Riding Hood could be also seen as a wolf's seducer, a flirt and provocateur seeking her own fortune.

Their persecution can lay in not having being treated as equal ones just because of being the second sex. Others might have had higher expectations about them which were not fulfilled and, therefore, they were "punished" by the family, the society, by the destiny. In case of the "Sleeping-Beauty" tale, the princess is persecuted and punished by her enchanting beauty and wit, which make other characters jealous and envy.

Rescue and saving might have many forms, e.g. from the handsome huntsman in the woods, protective and caring parents, always ready-to-help fairies, wise grandmother's advice or even good luck. Being brave and courageous, using common sense and devoting virginity are other advantages which can be taken into consideration.

Carter's heroines are not naive, innocent, submissive young ladies or girls. They are courageous and determined, aware of their own sexuality. They do not want to be treated as men's prey. All men can seem to be beasts for women. So either the heroines can try to riot against it or rather accept it either dominantly or submissively. They might even seem to be an aggressor for a victimised position of the wolf, trying to fulfill their libido, sexual needs. The wolf can represent women's inner secret wishes which were suppressed and restricted.

RESUMÉ

První kapitola závěrečné práce s názvem „Variace pohádek A. Carterové na základě Ch. Perraulta: Perzekuce a záchrana v příbězích „O Karkulce“, „O Sněhurce“ a „O Růžence“ představuje pohádku jako literární žánr, její kulturní dědictví a dlouhou historii. Popisuje typické pohádkové představitele a hlavní shody a rozdíly mezi tradičními a moderními pohádkami.

Druhá kapitola stručně pojednává o biografiích obou autorů, A. Carterové a Ch. Perraulta. Následující podkapitoly se věnují postmodernismu a feministickým vlivům, které ovlivnily tvorbu A. Carterové a které jsou nezbytné pro pochopení celé sbírky *Krvavé Komnaty*.

Třetí kapitola se věnuje významu symbolů použitých v analyzovaných příbězích např. symboliky barev, čísel, cesty, přítomnosti vlka atd.

Čtvrtá kapitola představuje adaptace pohádek „O Červené Karkulce“ a jejich srovnání.

Pátá kapitola popisuje krátký příběh „O Sněhurce.“

Šestá kapitola analyzuje dvě variace pohádek „O Šípkové Růžence“. „The Lady of the House of Love“ od A. Carterové a „The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods“ od Ch. Perraulta.

Poslední sedmá kapitola poukazuje na sepětí genderové problematiky ve vztahu k pohádkám.

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