

UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLOMOUCI

FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Klára Horáčková

**Beasts and Beauties: The
Evolution of Classic Fairy Tales**

Bakalářská práce

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. David Livingstone, Ph.D.

OLOMOUC 2019

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucího práce a uvedla úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

V Olomouci dne

Klára Horáčková

I would like to thank my supervisor Mgr. David Livingstone, Ph.D. for his patient help, advice and encouragement.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	5
2. HISTORY OF THE FAIRY TALE	7
2.1. Folk Tales.....	8
2.2. Tales of Magic.....	9
2.3. Oral and Literary Fairy Tales	9
3. FEMINIST THEORY AND FEMINIST CRITICISM	12
3.1. A Room of One's Own	13
4. ANGELA CARTER	15
4.1. Biography of Angela Carter	15
4.2. Summary of Carter's other works	16
5. CLASSIC FAIRY TALES AND INTERPRETATIONS.....	19
5.1. Little Red Riding Hood.....	20
5.1.1. Bloody Chamber: The Werewolf	22
5.2. Beauty and the Beast.....	23
5.2.1. Bloody Chamber: The Courtship of Mr. Lion, The Tiger's Bride	24
5.3. Snow White.....	27
5.3.1. Bloody Chamber: The Snow Child	28
5.4. Puss in Boots	30
5.4.1. Bloody Chamber: Puss-in-Boots	31
6. CONCLUSION.....	34
RESUMÉ	36
BIBLIOGRAPHY	39
ANNOTATION.....	42
ANOTACE	43

1. INTRODUCTION

People come into contact with fairy tales ever since they are born and basically, fairy tales are one of the first stories people hear, passing them on from generation to generation. They learn from these stories and due to them learn for the first time about good and bad. Fairy tales have always been here for us a way that lead us to the world of dreams, fairies and princesses, reflecting truthful personal experiences and customs. Ever since people existed and learned how to communicate, they shared stories to shorten long nights. *Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty*, these are just a few out of the many fundamental fairy tales.

However, as time went on and fairy tales were rewritten many times, authors begun to look for more than just love stories and fairies. Why did authors choose females to struggle and why is it always the princess that has to be rescued by the prince, those are few of the questions I am going to be dealing with.

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to introduce the readers to fairy tales not only as everybody knows them but also for readers to learn about the history of fairytales and their modern interpretations and elements of feminism that are often hidden between the lines. Many fairy tales are influenced by feminism, for example, it is common for the main heroine to struggle, in *Cinderella* it was the main protagonist herself who had to face several obstacles in order to find love.

The work's primary focus is on Angela Carter for her interpretations in her collection of stories *Bloody Chamber*. Carter is considered as one of the most significant writers of the twentieth century and most of her works are feminist-oriented.

The thesis will be divided into several sections, the first one will be dealing with the topic of history of fairy tales, how they were made, the evolution through time and different kinds of fairy tales. The following chapter will take an interest in feminist theory and feminist criticism, dealing with gender inequality, where I am going to mention one of the most fundamental books by Virginia Woolf: *A Room of One's Own*, giving us the basis of feminist theory from 1928.

The next chapter will include information about Angela Carter, her feminist ideas and influences, since she is the author this thesis is based on the most. The chapter will also mention her other feminist-oriented works.

The last section will include some of the classic fairy tales as everybody knows them and their interpretations into the modern literature with the author Angela Carter and her collection *Bloody Chamber*. Stories from this collection are modern variations on classic fairy tales and often include elements of feminism, which I am also going to touch on.

2. HISTORY OF THE FAIRY TALE

This chapter will be dealing with the origin of fairy tales. Most people believe that they were created by passing stories from one person from another but there is, in fact, no proof of that. There will be mentioned folk tales and the main difference between those and fairy tales, tales of magic and types of fairy tales. It is generally believed that classical fairy tales represent certain cultures: Hans Christian Andersen represents Danish, The Brothers Grimm are German etc. That is partially true, though they also have a multicultural origin, from Africa, Orient, to the Middle East.

When talking about history of fairy tales, most opinions are about someone who invents the fairy tale and someone who passes it from generation to another generation. That is a general opinion about how fairy tales were invented. However, it can be a surprise that fairy tales' origins are being doubted by literary, publishing and social history. There is weak proof of fairy tales being invented this way. In order to believe in fairy tales' oral origin, there needs to be a lack of the written evidence, that is, because the belief in oral evidence requires to have no records of written fairy tales. Ruth B. Bottigheimer mentions:

People who subscribe to a belief in fairy tales' oral origins and dissemination are not embarrassed by the fact that all references to old women or other people's telling tales or stories before 1550 are just that—references to old women or other people telling stories.¹

Most people learn about these stories in a way that there appeared witches and monsters in them. A fact that has never been doubted is that fairy tales appeared already in the ancient or medieval ages, however, this fact was never proved, yet is generally considered to be true.

¹ Bottigheimer, Ruth B. *Fairy Tales: A New History*. Albany, NY: Excelsior Editions/State University of New York Press, 2009, 2.

2.1. Folk Tales

There are two terms in terminology – fairy tales and folk tales. For the past three hundred years, literary critics have tried to distinguish the difference between them. As Jack Zipes states:

This is an impossible task because there are very few if any records with the exception of paintings, drawings, etchings, inscriptions, parchments, and other cultural artifacts that reveal how tales were told and received thousands of years ago.²

This difference was not really differentiated until the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century³, when scholars started to pay closer attention to this difference.

Folk tales, sometimes described as “realistic tales”⁴, reflect the world as we know it – stories about doctors or lawyers, people having affairs, making off with a person’s wealth or goods. Usually folk tales do not have a happy ending, they describe the difficulties of an ordinary life. They are different mainly in their structure, also in the nature of the characters (how their plot is evolved or their age) and are easy to read because of the familiar environment of an ordinary person.

An example of a folk tale is a story of a peasant who wanted to sell a jug of honey for a flock of chickens. From money earned by selling their eggs, he desired to buy a pig. That pig would grow other piglets that he would sell for even bigger amount of money and from that money he wanted to earn even more to buy a cow, then a horse. Eventually he planned to build a house and to have a family. While he was imagining all these things, he accidentally threw the jug of honey off the table, it fell, broke, and all his dreams were destroyed. This is a very common ending for stories like that – such endings were documented 1500 years ago in *Panchatantra*, an Indian collection of stories and fables.⁵ There are even stories about a goose-girl marrying a prince or a pig owner marrying a princess. However, what differs all those stories from fairy tales is that there is no magic in their endings.

² Zipes, Jack. *Why Fairy Tales Stick the Evolution and Relevance of a Genre*. New York: Routledge, 2006, 42.

³ Bottigheimer, Ruth B. *Fairy Tales: A New History*. Albany, NY: Excelsior Editions/State University of New York Press, 2009, 7.

⁴ *Ibid*, 5.

⁵ *Ibid*, 4.

2.2. Tales of Magic

Magic can be found in fairy tales but also in other stories. Probably the most famous example of a tale of magic is when a prince rescues a princess from a dragon by killing it. The princess then marries the prince and they live happily ever after. There are also legends about gods or goddesses intervening into person's life or turning them into an animal, like a cow, horse or into a tree. Tales with angels and religious characters are called religious tales⁶ (for example 14th century *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer are based on religious tales). Another example of magic tales are wisdom tales. There is a story about a contest between sun and wind: "When the wind blows as hard as it can, the traveler holds his coat more tightly about him. But when the sun shines gently, he takes it off."⁷ This example of a wisdom tale was to demonstrate that sometimes, too much effort can cause more damage than use.

2.3. Oral and Literary Fairy Tales

First theories about the origin of the fairy tale come from the nineteenth century and have been elaborated till the twenty-first century. For example, The Brothers Grimm considered fairy tales to have derived from religious beliefs, nevertheless this opinion was widened by Theodor Benfey in the nineteenth century to the theory that fairy tales come from ancient India to Persia and Arabia. Later fairy tales came to Europe via Greece or Spain due to migration and trade. However, there were opinions diverging, considering the formation of folk tales. Benfey and the Brothers Grimm claimed that there was only one place of where fairy tales come from. Others, for example Joseph Bédier (a French folklorist) or Edward Burnett Tylor (anthropological scholar) believed that fairy tales come from more than one place.⁸

It is generally believed that fairy tales have an oral origin. That is how folk tales (also known as genuine fairy tales, pure fairy tales, real or uncontaminated fairytales) were created – an unnamed folk who told stories about fairies and princesses passed

⁶ Bottigheimer, Ruth B. *Fairy Tales: A New History*. Albany, NY: Excelsior Editions/State University of New York Press, 2009, 4.

⁷ Ibid, 5.

⁸ Zipes, Jack. *Why Fairy Tales Stick the Evolution and Relevance of a Genre*. New York: Routledge, 2006, 46.

them onto other folks. These stories were told thousand years ago but we are still not sure about who told them, why, or how.

Basically, all fairy tales have an oral (or “real” or “genuine”) origin and were later written down by literary authors – scribes – who began writing stories that reflected culture, customs or religious rituals and beliefs. This was deeply important because it is how all these tales were preserved for future generations as on oral tradition. A literary fairy tale is a fairy tale that is made of an oral told one. The first literary tales appeared in the fifteenth century when the printing press was discovered.⁹ It is a tale that is reworked by authors such as the Brothers Grimm etc. Concerning the Grimms, Ruth B. Bottigheimer mentions following:

It was long—and erroneously—believed that they had made great efforts to preserve existing, but nearly extinct, folk versions of the tales published in their collection, whereas in fact their fifty years of editing can be fairly characterized as having turned widely available tales from literary sources into carefully crafted reflections of contemporary folk grammatical usage and contemporary bourgeois beliefs about folk social values.¹⁰

A literary fairy tale also gave birth to the “*conte merveilleux*” – marvelous tale or to “*Zaubermärchen*” – wonder tale. These represented the genre of literary fairy tale since there were more and more tales written in Latin or other folk languages from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries.¹¹ Writers then began to base their stories, plots, motifs or characters on those stories, that were developed from oral tradition. They altered their tales for the middle class and aristocracy and differentiated between court or urban people.

Concerning the history of fairy tales, the terms “literary” and “oral” incorrectly imply that there exists a set of differences, whose existence cannot be proved before the nineteenth century. Although there is no proof of both literary or oral fairy tales existing before the Medieval period, we do have evidence that people shared all kinds of stories – animals, gods, religious beliefs or everyday customs. However, it is difficult to tell

⁹ Bottigheimer, Ruth B. *Fairy Tales: A New History*. Albany, NY: Excelsior Editions/State University of New York Press, 2009, 7.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Zipes, Jack. *Why Fairy Tales Stick the Evolution and Relevance of a Genre*. New York: Routledge, 2006, 45.

what the oral tale really was because the evidence is based primarily on documents written by scribes.¹²

To conclude this section, the notion of an unknown writer who invented fairy tales has become a proposition that is questionable, however, it can surprise many readers that this assumption was never really verified as it is necessary to have written evidence of fairy tales. There are several types of fairy tales, such as folk tales or oral and literary fairy tales that give us an evidence about the history of fairy tales and based on those evidences, it is more obvious that fairy tales did not arise only from passing them on various generations or passing them from one country to another. As Bottigheimer mentions: “thinking about fairy tales begins by thinking about the differences between them.”¹³

¹² Bottigheimer, Ruth B. *Fairy Tales: A New History*. Albany, NY: Excelsior Editions/State University of New York Press, 2009, 8.

¹³ *Ibid*, 3.

3. FEMINIST THEORY AND FEMINIST CRITICISM

This chapter will be dealing with the meaning of feminist theory and feminist criticism. In its subchapter Virginia Woolf's feministic ideas will be mentioned along with her book *Room of One's Own*. Feminist writers are interested in writing new texts which portray women from a different perspective. In the past thirty-five years, there has been a huge impact of feminism on literary criticism.

There are many feminists that celebrate (biological) differences between men and women, what feminists try to deal with is the superiority of men in our today's culture. From a feminist perspective, there are traditional gender roles for women, as women are considered weak, emotional, carrying elements of submissiveness. It is not feminine to be successful or powerful, highly intelligent, for women to be in leading work positions.

There are even several of related fields, such as history, sociology, linguistics, religious studies and many others that have been influenced by feminist literary research. This impact changed the study of literary texts and did a great change on what is taught today. It also had influence on publishing or on literary reception.¹⁴ The term feminist literary criticism partially comes from the women's movements at the time of Civil Rights movements in 1960-s. The whole feminist idea developed as the time went on, by women writing about women rights, or men writing about women ideas and bodies. Professor Gill Plain with Susan Sellers mention:

A History of Feminist Literary Criticism thus begins by illustrating the remarkable 'protofeminist' writing that would eventually form the basis of modern feminist thought.¹⁵

When it comes to fairy tales, there can be found a classic women stereotype – the main protagonist (woman) is expected to be cheerful, get married (potentially be saved by a man) and take care of the household. *Cinderella* might be an example of such stereotype where we can see two types of women, one who is "evil", old, ugly and a kind, young, beautiful one. This can be viewed as a "competition" for social standing or love. There

¹⁴ Plain, Gill, and Susan Sellers. *A History of Feminist Literary Criticism*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 2.

¹⁵ Ibid, 2.

is observed a classic stereotype of beautiful but unintelligent girl which is represented in the characters of the two evil sisters – beautiful but not intelligent at all, who need to win love and reach a good economic standing. Another of the stereotypes is the role of the main protagonist, a poor maid versus the wealthy prince.

Angela Carter built her reputation on these ideas, mainly considering male and female sexuality, sometimes she is referred as having a great sexual knowledge, she is even called “the high priestess of post-graduate porn.”¹⁶ Her ideas are considered very avant-garde, although the literary establishment has not always approved of these ideas. Carter developed sexual debates during 1980-s and 1990-s, first of those debates was the pornographic role being harsh or emancipatory, second gender construction as a form of a scripted performance.¹⁷

3.1. A Room of One's Own

“Woman, as Virginia Woolf observes in *A Room of One's Own*, her formative text of feminist literary criticism, is ‘the most discussed animal in the universe’.”¹⁸

Virginia Woolf is considered one of the most significant writers of the twentieth century. She was part of the Bloomsbury Group which is a group of people – mostly writers and artists, focusing on traditional views and sexual liberty. *To the Lighthouse*, *Mrs. Dalloway* or *A Room of One's Own* (from which comes the famous quote “a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction”.¹⁹) are some of her most famous works. Woolf liked to point out on women in literature and how they were perceived and portrayed by male writers.

The above-mentioned book-length essay *A Room of One's Own* justifies women's independence and rights and comes from Woolf's lectures given by her at Newnham College.²⁰ The essay mentions the following quote, pointing out on women's inequality: “It would have been impossible, completely and entirely, for any woman to

¹⁶ Bristow, Joseph. *The Infernal Desires of Angela Carter: Fiction, Femininity, Feminism*. Routledge, 2016, 1.

¹⁷ Ibid, 2.

¹⁸ Plain, Gill, and Susan Sellers. *A History of Feminist Literary Criticism*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 2.

¹⁹ Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own: Virginia Woolf*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1957, 2.

²⁰ Snaith, Anna. *Introduction to Room of One's Own*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, 3.

have written the plays of Shakespeare in the age of Shakespeare.”²¹ Virginia Woolf points out on women having to fulfil their role as a mother and on women being a man’s property.²²

In *A Room of One’s Own*, Woolf compares herself to a fish in a stream: not able to move and change direction and unable to describe the stream.²³ This comparison touches the subject of women trying to reach their goals and fulfil their career dreams – writers, artists etc. – positions and professions originally meant for men. The beginning of the first chapter continues with a fictional story. A woman is walking on a grass at campus of a university, when a beadle approaches her and tells her she cannot walk on the grass as it is meant only for “Fellows and Scholars”²⁴ and women should stay on the gravel. The narrator then tries to walk into a library but is told that women are not allowed to go into the library. Woolf points here on women unable to get a proper education.

Virginia Woolf is without any doubt an icon of the twentieth century among British writers. *A Room of One’s own* was quite radical, it considers inequalities between men and women and the effects these inequalities cause, unconscious and psychological. Although the essay is almost ninety years old, it still is accurate nowadays, dealing with the stereotypical placement of women, struggling to find a job or working motherhood.

²¹ Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One’s Own: Virginia Woolf*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1957, 39.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid, 5.

²⁴ Ibid, 6.

4. ANGELA CARTER

This section will focus on Angela Carter, primarily because this thesis is based on her ideas the most. Her biography and summary of her other works will be mentioned. Angela Carter's works are unique in stylistic, narrative, or in a linguistic way. Carter combines genres, strategies and narrative perspectives and, wide range of characters and environments surrounding them, from real, realistic (sometimes even unrealistic) to surreal, supernatural or bizarre. She is one of those British writers who writes about a fictional world based on the repetition of several basic rules and features, including some that are against traditional novel realism or naturalism. Her writings often include theme of physical maltreatment of women, women facing their sexuality and fighting against men's views.

What is also worth mentioning is the kind of language she uses, which well fluctuates between metaphorical richness and everyday prosaicism and straightforwardness. Sometimes there are even elements of rudeness or vulgarity, as Merja Makinen mentions:

But far from being gentle, Carter's texts were known for the excessiveness of their violence and, latterly, the almost violent exuberance of their excess. Many a reader has found the savagery with which she can attack cultural stereotypes disturbing, even alienating.²⁵

However, these elements of vulgarity and sexuality are what Carter uses to describe her protagonists and to highlight the position of women in a patriarchal society led by men and to break from the above-mentioned stereotypes. Her female protagonists are portrayed and strong and fearless, unlike they are presented in classic version of these stories. Not only the language she uses is sometimes vulgar, it is also sexual and controversial.

4.1. Biography of Angela Carter

Carter was born on May 7, 1940 in the post-war period and was educated in school in Balham. In 1960-s she married her first husband Paul Carter but in 1972 they

²⁵ Makinen, Merja. "Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber and the Decolonization of Feminine Sexuality*." *Feminist Review* 42, no. 1 (November 1992): 2–15.

divorced. In 1966 she published her first novel *Shadow Dance* and a year later she won a prize for her second novel *The Magic Toyshop*. Her third novel, *Several Perceptions*, won another award (Somerset Maugham Award) in 1968.²⁶

Later, Carter moved to Japan, where she lived for two years, working for the NHK Broadcasting Company. She spent the rest of her life in South London. In 1983 she had her first son with her second husband Mark Pearce, whom she married shortly before she died. She spent 1980-s teaching at university of East Anglia in Norwich. Her last published novel was *Wise Children*, published in 1991, Carter died a year later at the age of 51.²⁷

4.2. Summary of Carter's other works

Angela Carter is well-known for her feminist-like oriented fairy tales. She held to the opinion that there are dark elements in the fairy tales that authors from the seventeenth and eighteenth century tried to “fix” by adding moral tags and editing them into versions more suitable for children. However, according to Angela Carter these elements of darkness and magical content were not erased at all. Her works (including *Bloody Chamber*), such as *Heroes and Villains*, *The Magic Toyshop* (where aspects of fairy-tales were already present) or *Passion of New Eve* written between 1960-s to 1970-s, are so called analyses of society led by men. Other works of her with a similar theme, written in 1980-s to 1990-s are, for example, *Nights at The Circus* and her last novel Carter wrote after being diagnosed with cancer - *Wise Children*.²⁸

Heroes and Villains belongs to the popular 1950-s genre post-apocalyptic novel. Carter created here a fictional world after the Third World War. In this world only three communities exist– the Barbarians, the Professors and the Savages. Here she examines Rousseau's utopian beliefs and makes subversion of the romantic approach to love. The novel ends with the main protagonist Marianne, who becomes a tribal leader and replaces the dominance of men.²⁹

²⁶ Sage, Lorna. *Angela Carter*. Tavistock: Northcote House, 2007, 9.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Makinen, Merja. “*Angela Carter's The Bloody Chamber and the Decolonization of Feminine Sexuality*.” *Feminist Review* 42, no. 1 (November 1992): 2-15.

²⁹ Zirange, Rajaram. *Angela Carter's Heroes and Villains: A Dystopian Romance*. 3L: The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies, 2013, 89-98.

Jean Wyatt argues that Carter based her stories on Freud's tales. For example, an oedipal conversion in *The Magic Toyshop*, where power relations are exposed and are camouflaged by Freud's emphasis on women having certain type of anatomical lack. He also sees these elements in *Passion of New Eve*.³⁰

Night at The Circus is a feminist novel set at the beginning of the twentieth century, specifically 1899. Carter, nevertheless, makes clear that 1899 and 1980 are not two worlds apart. From the first page, we can see the elements of sexual hierarchy or gender construction. The scene is set in strange places, like a circus, a museum for feminine monsters, a prostitute house, or Siberia and the whole novel takes places at three different locations, Petersburg, the above-mentioned Siberia and London. This movement to various foreign places signifies the movement from the reality and heading towards fantasy. The two main characters Lizzie and daughter of her Fevvers, represent in the novel agents of feminism. The novel pursues to resolve the pressure that is in a difficult relationship between postmodernism and Marxist feminism.³¹

In *Wise Children*, Carter makes a fictitious try to challenge classical gender stereotypes. She offers a point of view based on her family history and in doing so, she develops a feminist point of view on this history. This novel historicizes various sexual differences and is biased on Carter's admiration of Shakespeare. Carter describes here the typical stereotypes of patriarchal family, such as the role of man and woman if the family.³² Jeffrey Roessner mentions:

Carter presents the patriarchal family as a social construct and suggests that although the gender roles ascribed in it cannot be utterly escaped, they can be contested by an agent working within history.³³

Carter made a significant difference in her newer works, she still focused on feminism but changed the foregrounding – violation or women abuse were no longer the main theme. It is not that these themes no longer appear, it is that Carter focuses more on

³⁰ Wyatt, Jean. "The Violence of Gendering: Castration Images in Angela Carters *The Magic Toyshop*, *The Passion of New Eve*, and "Peter and the Wolf". " *Womens Studies* 25, no. 6 (1996), 549-570.

³¹ Michael, Magali Cornier, and Angela Carter. "Angela Carter's "Nights at the Circus:" An Engaged Feminism via Subversive Postmodern Strategies." *Contemporary Literature* 35, no. 3 (1994), 492-591.

³² Roessner, Jeffrey. "Writing a History of Difference: Jeanette Winterson's "Sexing the Cherry" and Angela Carter's "Wise Children". *College Literature* 29, no. 1 (2002), 102-122.

³³ *Ibid.*

women's ability to survive through sexual ideologies and on derision of cultural stereotypes.

Angela Carter did not consider fairy-tale aspects as a definite genre until the late 1970-s. She made a translation of fairy tales from seventeenth century by Charles Perrault and later, in 1979 *Bloody Chamber* was published as a collection of her re-written stories of Madame Leprince de Beaumont and Charles Perrault. In 1982 she translated and added two more stories by Madame de Beaumont, those were *Sweetheart* and *Beauty and the Beast*.³⁴

³⁴ Makinen, Merja. "Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber* and the Decolonization of Feminine Sexuality." *Feminist Review* 42, no. 1 (November 1992), 2-15.

5. CLASSIC FAIRY TALES AND INTERPRETATIONS

Third chapter will be dealing with classic fairy tales and their variations by several authors but mainly Angela Carter and her collection of stories from the *Bloody Chamber*. Carter based her stories on these classic ones and rewrote them into her feminist-oriented variations. Some of the stories are similar as the original ones, some are completely different.

The chapter will also focus on feminist perspectives of fairy tales. In the past, women had to deal with difficulties of life, life was short and hard, brutal – and especially for women. Centuries later, women in today society deal with similar problems – and that is one of the topics Angela Carter tries to point out in her versions of stories in the *Bloody Chamber*. The classic fairy tales could be considered as a kind of warning for women throughout centuries. We see women being punished, trapped in cruel marriages, silenced and basically, same things are still happening to today women all around the world.³⁵

There is not a thing as single fairy tales. There is not only one *Cinderella*, not only one *Little Red Riding Hood*. On the contrary, there are so many versions of each fairy tale: *Catskin* in England, Italian *Cendrillon* or German *Aschenputtel*. Maria Tatar states: “Angela Carter tells us that fairy tales are not “unique one-offs,” and their narrators are neither “original” nor “godlike” nor “inspired.””³⁶ Take, for example, *Little Red Riding Hood*. The Brothers Grimm ended the tale when hunter rescued the grandmother with the girl from the belly of the wolf. However, in the Chinese version, a “Goldflower” rescues everyone by killing the wolf by throwing a sword.³⁷

Though there is no “original” fairy tale, all the variations tend to stick to the same pattern – so called plot structure: a) the monster being a husband, b) disillusionment of the monster, c) husband gets lost, d) looking for the husband, e) husband recovers.³⁸ Usually, the monster can take a form of basically any beast – lion, dragon, bear etc. Looking for the husband may be a difficult task for the heroine, she

³⁵ Sparks, Amber. “*The Useful Dangers of Fairy Tales.*” Literary Hub. August 11, 2017. <https://lithub.com/the-useful-dangers-of-fairy-tales/?fbclid=IwAR1p49I7peeOSNhUezaC5LzbUrRjFjLygvfsO-w1PIFTIUNrjuf4oaDPxo>.

³⁶ Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 9.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid, 10.

must face obstacles like sorting peas in impossibly short amount of time. Tatar also mentions: “Despite certain limitations, the tale-type index is a convenient tool for defining the stable core of a story and for identifying those features subject to local variation.”³⁹ Although fairy tales are mainly tales forming a part of a child’s age, they still permeate into an adult’s world as our cultural importance.

5.1. Little Red Riding Hood

This is a classic fairy tale that has been stuck in people’s heads since at least the seventeenth century.⁴⁰ It managed to spread all over the world, from telling stories to shorten long nights or domestic work. In this subchapter, I am going to mention the classical fairy tale as we know it and then its variations by several literary authors.

We all know the story of a *Little Red Cap* by the Brothers Grimm: a little girl is supposed to bring food and wine to her grandmother. Her mother warns her not to stray from the path and to walk directly to her grandmother’s house. She tells her that if she strays from the path, the bottle of wine will break and there will be nothing for her grandmother. And as she comes into the room, she must not forget to give her grandmother a good day and is not supposed to go to all the corners of the room. On her way she meets a wolf who asks her where she is going, she tells him about his grandmother and the wolf runs to her, eats her, dresses as her by wearing his clothes and waits for the little girl so he can eat her too. Then a hunter comes, opens wolves’ stomach and rescues them both.

Nonetheless, as the tale was repeated and retold many times, there actually were created multiple variations of the story: one by French folklorist Paul Delarue, who claims to have created an authentic variation to the *Little Red Riding Hood* called “*The Story of Grandmother*”, a story from the end of the nineteenth century but probably dating even century before. Though the story is completely different as we know it. The girl joins the bad side, by unwittingly eating and drinking her grandmothers’ flesh and

³⁹ Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 10.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

blood. She then performs a striptease for the wolf, gets into bed with him and begs him to set her free.⁴¹

A very similar version of the Grimm story was written by Charles Perrault with his version *Little Red Riding Hood*. At the end of the story, Perrault added a moral for young girls who are wrong to listen to anyone. James Thurber created a short story, with a different kind of moral, claiming that young girls these days are not easy to fool, and ending with the little girl shooting the wolf: “So the little girl took an automatic out of her basket and shot the wolf dead.”⁴² A similar ending can be also found in Roald Dahl’s funny rhymed interpretation from *Revolting Rhymes - Little Red Riding Hood and The Wolf*, where the wolf is also killed by the little girl who then makes a coat of his skin: “The small girl smiles. One eyelid flickers. She whips a pistol from her knickers. She aims it at the creature's head and bang bang bang, she shoots him dead.”⁴³ The Italian journalist and writer Italo Calvino wrote a completely different interpretation called *The False Grandmother*. Here, the little girl must pass the Jordan River by giving it her ring-shaped capes. Then she must pass the Rake Gate by giving it her bread with oil. Instead of a wolf, in the grandmother’s bed lies an ogress. The story ends with the girl escaping the ogress and going back home.⁴⁴

There are even some authors who claim that the Little Red Riding Hood was a stupid girl because of her failure to fight back or resist the wolf. Bruno Bettelheim claims the girl probably wants to be seduced or she is simply stupid. Eric Berne mentions:

No mother could really be that stupid, so it sounds as if her mother didn't care much what happened to LRRH, or maybe even wanted to get rid of her. No little girl is that stupid either. How could LRRH look at the wolf's eyes, ears, hands, and teeth, and still think it was her grandmother? Why didn't she get out of there as fast as she could?⁴⁵

Berne is trying to point on the unmoral message the story sends, unlike the Brothers Grimm in the *Little Red Cap*, who made the heroine responsible for the violence, thus sending a moral message to the reader. Maria Tatar comments on this by claiming that

⁴¹ Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 17.

⁴² Ibid, 3.

⁴³ Dahl, Roald, and Quentin Blake. *Revolting Rhymes*. London: Puffin, 2016, 22.

⁴⁴ Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 17.

⁴⁵ Berne, Eric. *What Do You Say after You Say Hello*. The Psychology of Human Destiny. New York: Batam Book, 1972, 43.

“Red Riding Hood courts her own downfall.”⁴⁶

5.1.1. Bloody Chamber: The Werewolf

In Angela Carter’s version of the story, called *The Werewolf* from *the Bloody Chamber* collection, the story gets slightly different. The beginning of the story starts with a sentence “It is a northern country; they have cold weather, they have cold hearts”⁴⁷ which is a reference to local people who lead poor lives and do witch-hunts. The story focuses on a young girl whose mother sends her to the forest to bring her grandmother some food – which is the basis of the story that everyone knows. What is different is that her mother gives the girl a knife and warns her against the possible danger that awaits in the forest – but the girl is not afraid at all. In the forest she encounters the wolf and cuts off his paw and takes it with her. When she gets to her grandmother’s house, she sees her grandmother having fever and while she is trying to take care of her, the paw falls on the floor and changes into her grandmother’s hand. She then finds out why the grandmother is having this terrible fever, and the reason is that her arm is rotting. The girl begins to cry, which her neighbors hear and rush into the house. They think the grandmother is a witch and send her outside where they stone her to death. The story ends with the girl inheriting her grandmother’s possessions, which is a prosperity for her after all: “Now the child lived in her grandmother’s house; she prospered.”⁴⁸

In this story, Angela Carter portrays the grandmother as the beast, meaning an enemy of a woman can be another woman as well and not only men - women here conspire. The story shows the rival among women, similarly as in *The Snow Child*, even though she cut her grandmother’s arm in self-defense. This points on women always being rivals. She does not mind helping with stoning her grandmother which shows us how women try to destroy each other. The girl is described similarly as her hometown – superstitious but brave, not scared of hunting. This is an example of breaking the stereotype of gender roles where women are often referred to as fragile and fearful.

⁴⁶ Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 6.

⁴⁷ Carter, Angela, and Helen Simpson. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. London: Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016, 108.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 110.

In the classic version of the *Little Red Riding Hood*, the reader empathizes with the heroine, in Carter's version it is quite opposite, and the reader becomes separated from her. Unlike the classic version of the story, the reader does not trust the heroine and therefore, the werewolf is not necessarily presented here as the bad character – on the contrary, the reader can even feel sad for the werewolf and pity him, even consider him blameless.

At the end of the story, the heroine could be considered as a bad and immoral character, she can be also viewed as brutal and even it might be the main protagonist herself who represents the evil in this story. Carter here forces the reader to think about what is good or bad in this story, similarly as in life. Not only does the reader criticize the werewolf but also the main protagonist herself or the townspeople with their moral clearness.

5.2. Beauty and the Beast

The original meaning comes from earlier traditions forcing young women into an arranged marriage. Many of these arranged weddings must have been quite similar as marrying the Beast from the novel, thus the story may be therapeutic for such women, they could find isolation and comfort in reading *Beauty and the Beast*.

The earliest version of *Beauty and the Beast* called “*Cupid and Psyche*” comes from the second century A.D.⁴⁹ *Beauty and the Beast* is a different kind of fairy tale than the others. It shows development of challenges for Beauty, and we also see the mental (and physical) development of the Beast. It is a story about pure love facing many obstacles, moral and economic. The story was also written by folklorists under names as *The Search for the Lost Husband* or *The Man on a Quest for His Lost Wife*.⁵⁰

The best-known version was written for *Magasin des Enfants* by Madame Beaumont in 1757⁵¹ and represents a canonical text for both European and Anglo-American cultures. The moral of Beaumont's novel though, teaches and focuses mainly

⁴⁹ Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 25.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Zipes, Jack. *Why Fairy Tales Stick the Evolution and Relevance of a Genre*. New York: Routledge, 2006, 77.

on young women who are either praised or blamed. The novel teaches us about power of love, about the importance of valuing person's features over their appearances.

In the Norwegian version of the story called "*East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon*"⁵², the story is slightly different from as we know it. Here, the heroine must be convinced into marrying a white bear = the Beast, by her father. However, there are many other variants of the story: Russian "*Snotty Goat*"⁵³, where, in fact, the heroine is considered as "not a bit squeamish"⁵⁴ or Italian version: "*Mouse with the Long Tail*", where the beast is presented as a mouse with "a tail a mile long that smelled to high heaven."⁵⁵ In the Grimm version "*Three Little Birds*" the beast is represented by a dog who later becomes a handsome prince.⁵⁶ Other authors who did variations are, for example, Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont and her "*Beauty and the Beast*", Giovanni Francesco Straparola and "*The Pig King*" or Angela's Carter "*The Tiger's Bride*".⁵⁷

In Angela Carter's version "*Courtship of Mr. Lion*", Carter tries to avoid the typical stereotype of patriarchal norms, a woman's obligation into marriage by making the heroine like the Beast, she likes to spend time at his mansion and is only forced to leave because she needs to see her father.

5.2.1. Bloody Chamber: The Courtship of Mr. Lion, The Tiger's Bride

The Courtship of Mr. Lion is Carter's similar version to the classic fairy tale *Beauty and The Beast*. The story begins with the main protagonist Beauty, worrying about her father who has not come home yet. The reason why the father is not coming back is that he got stuck in the snow on his way back where he found out his fortune is gone. He does not even have money to buy Beauty a white rose she wanted from him to bring her.

On his way home he sees a mansion which looks deserted except for a window where he sees light. That is when he sees a white rose, blooming on a bush near the

⁵² Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 26.

⁵³ Ibid, 28.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Calvino, Italo, and George Martin. *Italian Folktales*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980, 653.

⁵⁶ Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 28.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 29.

mansion. He then hears a lion roaring from the house, knocks on the door and the door opens and closes by itself. When leaving, he wants to pluck another rose thinking that the master of the house probably would not mind. That is when the Beast appears next to him. He tells him the rose is for his daughter Beauty but must promise to the creature that he will bring her there for dinner.

When she comes to dinner and meets the Beast, she notices the sadness in his eyes. They like each other's company, though Beauty thinks that the Beast is a bit shy. She spends time there, around midnight, the Beast lies into Beauty's lap and licks her hands and then runs on all fours. The following quote comes from Carter's story:

He drew back his head and gazed at her with his green, inscrutable eyes, in which she saw her face repeated twice, as small as if it were in bud. Then, without another word, he sprang from the room and she saw, with an indescribable shock, he went on all fours.⁵⁸

Beauty is happy at the mansion. One day her father calls and tells her he got his fortune back and she can come home again from which the Beast is devastated. She makes him a promise that she would come back before the winter is over. Her father becomes rich and as Beauty lives in a wealthy environment, she becomes spoiled and only enjoys all the money, forgetting about Beast, whom she only sends white roses and because the weather in London does not change much, she does not notice that the winter is over.

One day Beauty hears scratching on the window – it is the Beast's dog. She runs to his mansion which looks like is all empty but there is one light in the attic. The Beast is lying there on the bed, dying of starvation because he was not able to feed while she was gone. The story though has a happy ending just like the original story, her tears make him human again, they get married and probably live happily ever after. The story ends with "Mr and Mrs Lyon walk in the garden; the old spaniel drowns on the grass, in a drift of fallen petals."⁵⁹

As it is usual with Angela Carter, even here we can find elements of feminism. We can see the heroine trying to discover who she really is, refusal with traditional female opinions. We can also see a typical description of men versus women – Beast,

⁵⁸ Carter, Angela, and Helen Simpson. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. London: Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016, 47.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 51.

who is big, strong, wild, ugly and Beauty, fragile, kind, beautiful and innocent which Carter shows by comparing Beauty to the bright, flawless snow that she is watching from the window.

Carter compares humans to animals by food being a symbol of animal and human nature. She tries to imply that humans and animals are not so different as we all need food in order to survive. An example of this was when the Beast prepared an excellent dinner for Beauty's father even though he does not eat human food or the exquisite meals he prepared for Beauty. At the end of the story, the Beast is dying of starvation, similarly as human would starve without food. This shows that humans are animals too.

Symbolism can be observed as well in this story which Angela Carter used to show that people need both masculine and feminine sides in their lives in order to live a fulfilled life. She uses the city as a place of men (masculine) and country (feminine) as an element of purity. However, what Carter does is undermining the gender stereotype by the Beast being trapped in the country and Beauty being able to live freely in the city, but the two main characters are unhappy when they are stuck in one place. We can observe the country being so pure it makes the Beast ill. The city also changes Beauty - her inner beauty fades.

The second story is *The Tiger's Bride*. The main protagonist (as in the story *Bloody Chamber*) is the narrator of the story. We find out about her background, and that her father has a gambling addiction. He gambles all their money and eventually, loses her as well, and so the protagonist must move to the Beast's mansion. When she arrives to his place, she notices how the place looks dirty.

The Beast wishes to see Beauty naked, claiming that when she does so, she can return home. Beauty says she would only pull up her skirt, hiding her face which makes the Beast so sad that he cries a tear. Beauty stays in a room which resembles prison cell and she even threatens to kill herself. The Beast tries to give her presents in form of two diamond earrings, but she throws them away, being angry she is prisoned in her cell (Carter here shows us elements of objectification because the Beast treats the main protagonist like an object).

Then they take a ride and the girl is thinking that men treat her like she is less than them just because she is a woman: "I was a young girl, a virgin, and therefore men

denied me rationality just as they denied it to all those who were not exactly like themselves, in all their unreason.”⁶⁰ As soon as they reach the river, she is told that if the Beast cannot see her naked, she must see him. She sees him as who he really is, without the masks, and feels sorry for him, so to show him that they are equal, Beauty takes her shirt off. Beauty is sent home like promised, but she realizes she does not want to go home. She gets naked and dresses in fur and diamond rings the Beast gave her and walks to see him. The story ends with the Beast finally realizing Beauty accepts him, licking her skin and seeing her fur underneath it.

From the beginning of the story, the reader can notice the objectification of women which continues throughout the whole story (Beauty’s father lost her while playing cards, he did not have money anymore so he bet his daughter instead of money, similarly as in *The Courtship of Mr. Lion* where Beauty’s father also had to give his daughter to the Beast because he stole a white rose from his bush). Thus, from the very beginning, main protagonist’s perception is as something that can be bought. She often mentions pearls, again as a thing that men buy for women. When Beauty and the Beast are out riding, she makes a comment on how men view women: as soulless creatures and comparing them to animals. That is why she feels empathy for the Beast because unlike other men, he is “a soulless animal” just like she is.

The heroine compares herself to a doll she got from the Beast. She finds the same stereotypes with women and the doll – unable to decide for themselves, being where society wants them to be, unable to think for themselves. She even powders the doll’s face so they look more alike and because she wants to break free from these typical stereotypes, she becomes an animal at the end just like the Beast is – because animals are not judged by society, they are wild and free.

5.3. Snow White

Snow White is sometimes described as a development of a young woman. It is mainly known from Disney’s movies as a heroine who eats a poisoned apple and falls asleep. However, little do we know about the stories’ variations where Snow White falls

⁶⁰ Carter, Angela, and Helen Simpson. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. London: Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016, 63.

into a toxic crypt or eats a poisoned cake.⁶¹ In Grimm's version, the evil queen wants to eat her lungs and heart in order to stay forever young. This seems a bit cruel but in Spanish version the story gets even crueler, and the queen desires to drink her blood along with the heroine's toe.⁶² In other words, *Snow White* has many variations but still, keeps its core.

There is an interesting comparison of the two probably most famous tales – Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and Grimm brothers' *Snow White*, where the heroine must do the hard work, she was told to do by the dwarfs even though there is, in fact, really no need of doing the housework:

If you will keep house for us, cook, make the beds, wash, sew, knit, and keep everything neat and clean, then you can stay with us, and we'll give you everything you need.⁶³

This is, in contrast to Disney's version, where Snow White sees an empty house and decides to surprise the dwarfs with cleaning it. Other variations of this fairy tale are for example *The Young Slave* by Giambattista Basile or a rhymed poem *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* by Anne Sexton.⁶⁴

5.3.1. Bloody Chamber: The Snow Child

The story opens during a cold winter. The Count with the Countess are riding their horses, when the Count says he wishes he had a girl as white as snow. They continue riding when there is a hole filled with blood and the Count wishes again, he had a girl as red as blood. They keep on riding when he sees a raven. He wishes he had a girl as black as raven's feather. As soon as he finishes his sentence, there before them stands a girl, white as a snow, her lips red as blood and her hair black as raven's feather. The Count takes the girl onto his horse and the Countess gets jealous and immediately thinks of how to get rid of the girl.

Her first idea is that they would leave her in the snow, so she drops her glove on the ground and tells the girl to pick it up for her but the Count tells her he will buy her

⁶¹ Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 74.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid, 78.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 77.

new gloves and so they keep on riding. In that moment, the fur from Countess's shoulders jump onto the girl. The Countess has another idea – she throws her diamond ring into a pond, thinking the girl would drown. She tells her to swim there and get it, but the Count would not allow her as the pond must be freezing. In that moment, Countess's boots leapt off her feet and jumps onto the girl's legs – so the Countess was bare foot without her fur and the Count felt sorry for her. They kept on riding when they came to bushes of roses. The Countess tells the girl to pick one rose for her, which the Count agrees with because he cannot deny her of that. When the girl picks the rose, she pricks her finger, she bleeds and screams and after that dies.

The Count is weeping. He gets off his horse and rapes the corpse of the girl. He soon finishes and the corpse of the girl melts away. The Countess stays on her horse and watches the whole thing. There is nothing left of the girl, except a bloodstain, a raven feather, and the rose the girl pulled from the bush. Suddenly the Countess has all her clothes back. The Count wants to give the Countess the rose, so he hands it to her, and the story ends with her touching it, dropping it and saying, “it bites”.⁶⁵

This is a loose adaption of the brothers Grimm version of the story, where it is the father and not the mother who wishes for the child. Carter decided this on purpose to show the masculine power over the feminine. The Count is the one who has the power to tell the girl she does not have to pick the gloves or swim in the lake. We can see an innocent girl, unable to defend herself and being completely dependent on the man.

The Snow Child is a weak girl, meaning she fits in a typical feminine role – submissiveness, she has a certain purpose to fulfill. She is a product of his desires, mainly sexual and physical (being naked, which signifies a role the girl has) ending with the Count raping the girl, showing his dominance. He only cares and is interested in her looks and appearance (his wishes to have a girl as white as snow, as red as blood and as black as raven feather).

In contrast to that, we can see the Countess in her typical position, being there just to listen to the Count's orders – he is the one who buys her clothes and, also the one who can undress her only with his mind, and there is nothing she can do about it (an

⁶⁵ Carter, Angela, and Helen Simpson. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. London: Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016, 92.

example of this can be the very last scene, where the Countess simply stays and watches the Count rape the dead girl and doing nothing about it).

Throughout the whole story, we can see the rivalry between two females, showing that women can co-exist only as rivals and in the end, of them must die, because there is no place for the two of them. At the end when the Countess gets bit by the rose, Carter shows us that females must suffer. When it comes to the girl – the Snow Child, it is obvious that she is not a real person but only a subject of the Count's sexual desires. When she pricks her finger, it signalizes she became a woman (blood as a symbol of menstruation). Her purpose was here obvious – to be a sexual object, which she fulfilled and now can die.

5.4. Puss in Boots

Originally, *Puss in Boots* was written by Charles Perrault. The story is about a cat, who can speak human language and brings luck to its owner, a son of a poor miller who has three sons and when dying he gives his sons all the fortune he has. The third son gets the cat. He wanted to sell the cat because he thought it would be no use for him, but the cat spoke human language and told him to buy him clothes and then he would be a great help and a source of fortune to him. There are several situations when the cat helps him, including saving him from drowning. The story ends by the cat eating a sorcerer transformed into a mouse, and the son marrying king's daughter.

There are several variations of the story, the earliest version was written by Giovanni Francesco Straparola around the sixteenth century, although the cat had no actual boots.⁶⁶ Another version called *Le Piacevoli Notti* is quite similar as Perrault's version of the story, the difference is that the cat is female and is a disguised fairy.⁶⁷ Giovanni Battista Basile wrote his version of the story as well, in his collection *Il Pentamerone*. In Britain, it was, for example, John Harris who published a version of the story *Puss in Boots* around 1830.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999, 305.

⁶⁷ Daniels, Morna. "The Tale of Charles Perrault and Puss in Boots." "Electronic British Library Journal", 2002, 1-13.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

The main theme of the story is a cat wearing boots – which arises a question - why does the cat wear the boots. The boots were an original invention of Perrault and the explanation comes from another collection of stories of his called *Le Petit Poucet*. In this story, the ogre wears magic boots to transfer him across large distances. Poucet is here a variation of the Puss and he also puts on these boots (which become small on him).⁶⁹

5.4.1. Bloody Chamber: Puss-in-Boots

Puss in Boots is narrated by the Puss itself. He lives in Bergamo, Italy and speaks Italian and French (because it is the only language he can purr in). He describes his voice as “fine and musical”.⁷⁰ He mentions how his fans at his concerts throw presents at him, for example vegetables, fresh water or fine boots. Those presents are, in fact, things thrown on him by anger. When a young fellow throws boots at him and sees the Puss putting them on, he wants Puss to become his chamber. They become best friends – Puss becomes his helper in many things, he helps him with gabbling, he delivers messages for women or steal food for both him and his master. They were perfectly getting along until one day his master fell in love, which was hard to believe for Puss as he saw so many women with his friend and so he decided he would seduce her thus the master will not be interested in her anymore.

The princess he fell in love with was married to an old, impotent man and forced to live in a tower in a company of an old lady, who resembles a witch. His master followed the young lady to church every Sunday, he even stopped seeing other women, and there was nothing Puss could do to make him stop loving her.

Puss befriended the woman’s cat called Tabby who agreed to help Puss. Together they invented a plan: Puss with his master will come to the tower dressed as rat-catchers so they can get inside easily. The master with the lady had a passionate sex inside her chamber and when the old lady came back to the chamber, she saw

⁶⁹ Daniels, Morna. "The Tale of Charles Perrault and Puss in Boots." "Electronic British Library Journal", 2002, 1-13.

⁷⁰ Carter, Angela, and Helen Simpson. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. London: Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016, 68.

bloodstains on the bed. They explained that as Puss having a battle with an extremely huge rat.

Tabby told Puss that her mistress's husband is very rich and that they all can live the rest of their lives out of his fortune, and that she knows how to get rid of him. She told him that every morning he walks on the stairs without lighting the candles so it would be easy to kill him – and so he did. The narration ends with Puss settling down with Tabby, later they had three kittens. At the same time, his master with Tabby's mistress got pregnant as well. The story ends with Puss saying:

So may all your wives, if you need them, be rich and pretty; and all your husbands, if you want them, be young and virile; and all your cats as wily, perspicacious and resourceful as: PUSS-IN-BOOTS.⁷¹

Puss in Boots himself is an example of superiority, he is dressed like a man and therefore he resembles man. Unlike Tabby, who is female and wears no clothes and Puss enjoys looking at her naked body. His boots are an example of chauvinism, they represent his superiority over Tabby, and his traditional and stereotypical perceptions on women, which he will have (probably) until he takes them off.

In this story, there is a common fairy tale stereotype – the objectification of women, as well as the theme of enslavement of women that could be seen in the young lady forced to live in a tower. In a classic fairy tale, we see princesses being imprisoned in a tower that is guarded with a dragon, in the story the lady lived in a tower in the middle of a town. The townspeople do not care and do not make any attempts to rescue her as it is common for the man to have control over woman's life.

There is also an example of a typical masculine role – a man controlling his wife, locking her in a tower and only lets her go out to church on Sundays. He even only lets her look out of the window for an hour a day, under condition that she does not smile. The young woman is also treated as the old man's possession during the little sex activity they have. He explains his impotence as not wanting to spend his precious time on having sex with her. He slaps her and claims that she is his possession, a subhuman.

⁷¹ Carter, Angela, and Helen Simpson. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. London: Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016, 84.

The lady is later revealed to be passionate, in fact, very passionate and vibrant as she was having sex with Puss's master which surprised Puss. Very similarly as the old man behaves Puss – he thinks by having sex with Tabby he is doing her a favor - he considers sex as an animal act. He compares the master's first sex with the lady to a sport where the lady represent man's equipment:

As if the whirlwind got into their fingers, they strip each other bare in a twinkling and she falls back on the bed, shows him the target, he displays the dart, scores an instant bullseye.⁷²

By this statement, Puss describes his master as a strong athlete and the lady as an athlete's tool he uses.

This chapter included the classic fairy tales and their interpretations from the *Bloody Chamber*. In each of the story, based on a classic fairy tale, there were elements of feminism and breaking fairy tale's stereotypes. Carter did those variations to point out on today society often ruled by man and women being represented as fragile and feeble. With her *Bloody Chamber*, Carter made a significant difference in understanding sexuality and gender and set a core for postmodern feminist literature.

⁷² Carter, Angela, and Helen Simpson. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. London: Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016, 78.

6. CONCLUSION

The aim of the thesis was to demonstrate the approach to fairy tales in the past versus in the present. Present-day society often points out in equality between men and women, which is often criticized in modern literature. However, in the past, these stereotypical roles were common when it comes to fairy tales.

I chose Angela Carter as the feminist author I would focus this thesis on as she is known for her works having a feminist focus and for not being afraid to use a controversial language in her stories. She is influenced by surrealism and considered one of the most radical writers of fiction. There are social norms that dictate to us how to behave, however, Carter's characters do not behave according to these norms. She uses controversy with her protagonists as the way to highlight the escape from male dominance and the empowerment of females.

There are certain stereotypes in fairy tales that are usually repeated, and one of those stereotypes is the typical male superiority. We see princes saving princesses, kings imprisoning their daughters in towers, females are usually presented as weak and unable to stand up for themselves. For over centuries, women have been viewed as passive, weak, compliant, considered as objects and things. They represent typical roles in fairy tales, such as fairies, princesses or witches and Angela Carter felt women often fall into the trap of these typical roles.

Carter is known for her approach to fighting against these stereotypes and she was not afraid to mock them, not only in her collection of stories *Bloody Chamber* but also in most of her other works. Carter can completely rewrite the classic fairy tales, but she is still able to keep the storytelling tradition. A reader who is unaware of Carter's style of writing might be mortified while reading her stories because of her fearless attacking of cultural and gender stereotypes.

With her collection *Bloody Chamber*, Angela Carter has inspired many other literary authors to make their heroines stronger and sexier. What at first appears to be simple stories loosely based on classic fairy tales, is, in fact, a deep analysis and criticism of today's patriarchal society and gender stereotypes. She became a role model not only for the writers, but inspired other fields, including television. The novelists from the next generation acknowledged her, such as Ali Smith or Jeanette Winterson,

who likes to read Carter's fairy tale retellings and projecting them into writing her own fairy tales.⁷³

To conclude, Angela Carter did not create collection of stories that are one hundred percent feminist, instead she took traditional fairy tales and made them more feminist. She looks at problematic parts of the stories and allows us to see them in a completely different light. Sometimes, these rewritten stories seem even darker than the original ones, in order to present the clear difference between fairy tale worlds and today's world we are living in.

⁷³ Winterson, Jeanette. "*Jeanette Winterson: The Books That Changed My Life.*" The Telegraph. November 08, 2014. Accessed April 12, 2019. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/11209010/Jeanette-Winterson-the-books-that-changed-my-life.html>.

RESUMÉ

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá tématem klasických pohádek a jejich moderními pojetími, a to převážně Angelou Carter, která sepsala sbírku příběhů *Krvavá komnata*, založenou právě na klasických pohádkách. Cílem této práce tedy bylo popsat a poukázat na stereotypy opakující se v klasických pohádkách, jako je *O červené Karkulce*, *Kráska a Zvíře*, nebo například *Kocour v botách*, které byly v páté kapitole zmíněny. Příkladem takovéhoto stereotypů může být typická mužská nadřazenost v pohádkách, vidíme prince zachraňující princezny, nikoliv naopak.

Autoři z dřívějších dob považovali jako samozřejmost předem dané genderové role, které jsou pro pohádky typické. Dnešní doba se, avšak, zabývá tímto tématem mnohem více a snaží se bořit tyto stereotypy, převážně mužské nadřazenosti a ženské slabosti.

Angela Carter se stala hlavní literární představitelkou boření těchto mýtů, stala se inspirací pro mnohé ostatní autory, a to nejen v literární sféře. Její díla jsou naplněna erotikou a hrdinky jejích příběhů jsou popisovány jako chytřejší, silnější a svůdnější, než bývají v klasických pohádkách.

V rámci postupu, práce začíná s historií pohádek, která byla rozebírána v první kapitole. Bylo zjištěno, že ta začíná v době tisíce let zpět a může být překvapující, že ne všechny pohádky vznikly způsobem, jako si většina myslí – a to předáváním pohádek z generace na generaci, tedy orálně. Rovněž bylo také zjištěno, že existuje velice málo důkazů o tomto původu pohádek. Lidový vynález pohádek a jejich přenos z generace na další generaci nemá ve skutečnosti žádný základ a není nijak ověřen. Literární historie jej odmítá, sociální historie zavrhuje a publikační historie popírá.⁷⁴ Jsou zde popisovány druhy pohádek, jako jsou lidové pohádky, či literární a ústní pohádky.

V následující části práce, třetí kapitole, s názvem Feministická teorie a feministický criticismus, je objasněno toto téma feminismu, jak v širším pojetí, tak ve spojení s pohádkami, kde mají protagonistky obvykle již předurčenou roli. V práci je zmíněna a analyzována také jedna z nejhlavnějších autorek feministicky laděných děl a feministického hnutí Virginia Woolf, která ve své esejí *Vlastní pokoj*, pocházející ze dvacátých let minulého století popisuje nejen problémy žen s dosažením vyššího

⁷⁴ Bottigheimer, Ruth B. *Fairy Tales: A New History*. Albany, NY: Excelsior Editions/State University of New York Press, 2009, 1.

vzdělání a která úzce souvisí s myšlenkami Angely Carter. Zde Woolf popisuje problémy žen ve světě, kde dominují muži. Samotný název této eseje pochází z jedné z úvodních vět, a to, že žena musí mít peníze a vlastní pokoj, pokud chce psát literaturu.⁷⁵ Esej zkoumá, zda ženy byly schopny svobodně produkovat díla kvality Williama Shakespeara a řeší omezení, kterým ženy v minulosti a současné spisovatelky čelí. Carter sdílela podobné názory jako Virginia Woolf, v podstatě svou kariéru na těchto feministických názorech založila. Bylo zjištěno, že Woolf se zde zabývá již zmiňovaným tématem mužské nadřazenosti a společností, považující ženy za obecně slabé.

Co se týče hlavní části práce, to jsou klasické pohádky a jejich moderní interpretace, tato část se zaměřovala převážně na již zmiňovanou spisovatelku Angelu Carter a na její nejznámější sbírku příběhů *Krvavá komnata*. Byly vybrány čtyři příběhy, a ty byly porovnány s klasickými pohádkami. V každém z těchto příběhů byly nalezeny nějaké prvky, ať už prvky genderových stereotypů, či častěji se opakující téma v pohádkách objektivizace žen. Tyto genderové stereotypy jsou pro pohádky typické, často je možné pozorovat typickou rivalitu mezi ženami, kdy lze vidět žárlivou královnu, která se chce pomstít jiné mladé ženě, či muže zachraňující ženy před zlem. Pro pohádky není typické a jaksi se do nich nehodí, aby princezna přišla zachránit prince, a právě na to Carter poukazuje. Tyto stereotypy také nejen zahrnuje do *Krvavé komnaty*, ale i do většiny své tvorby, která byla zmiňována ve čtvrté kapitole.

Ačkoli Carter byla ctěna mnohými z jejích vrstevníků a její psaní ovlivňovalo úspěšné autory, jako například Jeanette Winterson, Anne Enright, či Salmanu Rushdie⁷⁶, Carter samotná nikdy nevyhrála literární cenu a její knihy se staly bestsellery až po její smrti v roce 1991. Dříve byla její díla považována za nadčasová, v současnosti jsou tato díla akurátní.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own: Virginia Woolf*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1957, 2.

⁷⁶ Winterson, Jeanette. "Jeanette Winterson: The Books That Changed My Life." The Telegraph. November 08, 2014. Accessed April 12, 2019. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/11209010/Jeanette-Winterson-the-books-that-changed-my-life.html>.

⁷⁷ "Books Features - Radical Writing: Was Angela Carter Ahead of Her Time?" BBC Arts. Accessed April 12, 2019. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/46Nd1ztGJzp8TSHC9TLX7FQ/radical-writing-was-angela-carter-ahead-of-her-time>.

Spousta příběhů z *Krvavé komnaty* popisuje sexuální scény, které jsou hlavní protagonistky nuceny prožít, a na konci jsou popsány jako silné za to, že je zvládly, nebo je mít chtějí a ve výsledku si je užívají. Carter tyto sexuální scény popisuje ať už z důvodu toho, udělat příběhy zajímavějšími, či poukázat na to, že i Popelky a Sněhurky nebyly zcela tak nevinné, jak si lidé jako děti myslí – a jak je klasické pohádky nutí tyto příběhy vidět.

Angela Carter je bezpochyby jednou z nejvýznamnějších feministicky laděných autorek. Nebála se psát otevřeně, dokonce v době jejích publikací si lidé nebyli jistí, do jakého žánru její psaní pro kontroverznost zařadit. Autorčiny verze příběhů nejsou klasickými moderními pojetími pohádek, naopak, v příbězích Angely Carter se ze zvířete nestane princ, ale z princezny zvíře. Carter používá sexuální tematiku jako způsob ke zvýraznění postavení žen a jejich svobody ve světě mužské dominance. Její sbírka *Krvavá komnata* se bezpochyby zapsala do literárních dějin kontroverzně laděných příběhů založených na klasických pohádkách a dodnes ovlivňuje nejen literární sféru.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Berne, Eric. *What Do You Say after You Say Hello. The Psychology of Human Destiny*. New York: Batam Book, 1972.

Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. New York: Vintage Books, 2010.

"Books Features - Radical Writing: Was Angela Carter Ahead of Her Time?" BBC Arts. Accessed April 12, 2019.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/46Nd1ztGJzp8TSHC9TLX7FQ/radical-writing-was-angela-carter-ahead-of-her-time>.

Bottigheimer, Ruth B. *Fairy Tales: A New History*. Albany, NY: Excelsior Editions/State University of New York Press, 2009.

Bristow, Joseph. *The Infernal Desires of Angela Carter: Fiction, Femininity, Feminism*. Routledge, 2016.

Calvino, Italo, and George Martin. *Italian Folktales*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980

Carter, Angela, and Helen Simpson. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. London: Vintage Classics, Penguin Random House, 2016.

Dahl, Roald, and Quentin Blake. *Revolting Rhymes*. London: Puffin, 2016.

Daniels, Morna. "The Tale of Charles Perrault and Puss in Boots". "Electronic British Library Journal", 2002.

Grimm, Jacob, and Wilhelm Grimm. *Fairy Tales: By the Brothers Grimm*. New York: Macmillan, 1963.

Makinen, Merja. "Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber* and the Decolonization of *Feminine Sexuality*." *Feminist Review* 42, no. 1 (November 1992): 2–15.

Michael, Magali Cornier, and Angela Carter. "Angela Carter's "Nights at the Circus:" *An Engaged Feminism via Subversive Postmodern Strategies*." *Contemporary Literature* 35, no. 3 (1994)

Plain, Gill, and Susan Sellers. *A History of Feminist Literary Criticism*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Roessner, Jeffrey. "Writing a History of Difference: Jeanette Winterson's "Sexing the Cherry" and Angela Carter's "Wise Children"." *College Literature* 29, no. 1 (2002).

Sage, Lorna. *Angela Carter*. Tavistock: Northcote House, 2007.

Snaith, Anna. *Introduction to Room of One's Own*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Sparks, Amber. "The Useful Dangers of Fairy Tales." *Literary Hub*. August 11, 2017. <https://lithub.com/the-useful-dangers-of-fairy-tales/?fbclid=IwAR1p49I7peeOSNhUezaC5LzbUrRjFljLygvfsO-w1PIFTIUNrjuf4oaDPxo>.

Tatar, Maria Ed. *The Classic Fairy Tales*. New York.: W.W. Norton., 1999.

Winterson, Jeanette. "Jeanette Winterson: *The Books That Changed My Life*." *The Telegraph*. November 08, 2014. Accessed April 12, 2019. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/11209010/Jeanette-Winterson-the-books-that-changed-my-life.html>.

Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own: Virginia Woolf*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1957.

Wyatt, Jean. "*The Violence of Gendering: Castration Images in Angela Carters The Magic Toyshop, The Passion of New Eve, and "Peter and the Wolf".*" *Womens Studies* 25, no. 6 (1996).

Zipes, Jack. *Why Fairy Tales Stick the Evolution and Relevance of a Genre*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Zirange, Rajaram. *Angela Carter's Heroes and Villains: A Dystopian Romance*. 3L: *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 2013.

ANNOTATION

Name: Klára Horáčková

Faculty: Faculty of Arts

Department: Department of English and American Studies

Title of the thesis: Beasts and Beauties: The Evolution of Classic Fairy tales

Supervisor: Mgr. David Livingstone, Ph.D.

Number of pages: 43

The aim of the thesis was to compare classic fairy tales with their modern variations by Angela Carter and her collection of stories *Bloody Chamber*. The first part of the thesis dealt with the history of fairy tales. The following chapter focused on feminist theory and feminist criticism and mentioned one of the most fundamental feminist works *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf. The next section mentioned Angela Carter, her biography and a summary of her other works. The last chapter dealt with the classic fairy tales, their interpretations by several authors from all around the world and then especially interpretations by Angela Carter in the *Bloody Chamber*.

Key words: FAIRY TALES, ANGELA CARTER, FEMINISM, BLOODY CHAMBER, VIRGINIA WOOLF, FEMINIST THEORY, MODERN FAIRY TALES

ANOTACE

Jméno: Klára Horáčková

Fakulta: Filozofická fakulta

Katedra: Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Název práce: Zvířata a Krásky: Vývoj klasických pohádek

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. David Livingstone, Ph.D.

Počet stran: 43

Cílem této práce bylo porovnat klasické pohádky a jejich moderní pojetí Angelou Carter s její sbírkou příběhů *Krvavá Komnata*. První část práce se zabývala historií pohádek. Následující kapitola se zaměřovala na feministickou teorii a feministický kriticismus a zmiňuje jednu z nejhlavnějších feministických esejí *Vlastní pokoj* od Virginie Woolf. Další část zmiňovala samotnou Angelu Carter, její biografii a shrnutí jejích ostatních děl. Poslední kapitola se zabývala klasickými pohádkami a jejich interpretacemi od nejrůznějších autorů po celém světě a poté převážně interpretacemi od Angely Carter v *Krvavé Komnatě*.

Klíčová slova: POHÁDKY, ANGELA CARTER, FEMINISMUS, KRVAVÁ KOMNATA, VIRGINIA WOOLF, FEMINISTICKÁ TEORIE, MODERNÍ POHÁDKY